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ROMAN FINDS GROUP
NEWSLETTER XIX

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ROMAN FINDS GROUP

NEWSLETTER XIX

January 2000

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EDITORIAL

My most important job as your new Editor is to express the Group's appreciation of my predecessor, Hilary Cool.

With her expertise in both glass and small finds, Hilary's work-load would daunt many a fainter heart, but she has been generous in giving so much of her time to developing the Newsletter and gently chivvying people into producing text. The ten issues that she has produced stand as a tribute to her enthusiasm, dedication and sheer hard work. She may have retired as Editor, but she has nobly contributed to this edition and I hope will continue to be a major source of equally lively and fascinating articles.

Thank you, Hilary! You will be a hard act to follow.

To me in the south-east, Hilary has always produced a fresh northern perspective, which I will find difficult to maintain without the help of you, the Group members. I would welcome notification and reviews of any new publications from all areas of the country, most of which I am unlikely to hear of very rapidly as the cost of new books has forced my local museum library to restrict most of its new acquisitions to those directly relevant to this region. Notification of exhibitions, events, courses and web pages that might be particularly useful for our members would also be welcome. Also, any research student wishing to track down data and material for a Romano-British finds-based project is invited to appeal through the Newsletter as Hella Eckardt and Paola Pugsley have done in this edition.

Details of our next meeting, at Birdoswald, can be found on page 13. With its minibus transport, overnight accommodation in bunk beds, and exhortation to bring wellies, Peter Guest has certainly come up with a meeting with a difference!

Please could members note that subscriptions are now due to be paid (p 13). Your cheques and any other membership matters, such as changes of address, should be sent to Angela Wardle at 1 Stebbing Farm, Fishers Green, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2JB.

The deadline for the next Newsletter will be 15th June 2000. Any material will be gratefully received, but please let me know in advance if you wish to contribute an article longer than about 1,000 words. To make sure I can access any text sent by email, it should be in a fairly basic format, preferably as a .txt or .rtf file.

Please send all contributions to:

Nina Crummy,
2 Hall Road,
Copford,
Colchester,
Essex CO6 1BN.

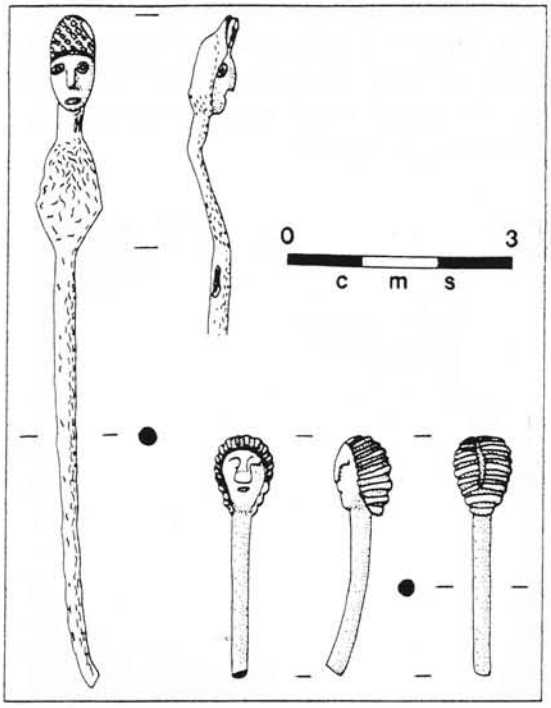
Telephone 01206 210255
Email: nina@crummy.ndo.co.uk

Hairstyles and Lifestyles

Hair pins are an ubiquitous element of most Romano-British assemblages. Indeed it would not be exaggerating much to suggest that any site that produces more than a handful of small finds, will normally produce at least one or two pins. The numbers recovered have allowed the development of dated typologies that show how fashion changed from the first to fourth centuries. For bone there are those of Nina Crummy (1979) and Steven Greep (probably best seen in Greep 1995, 1113-23). For the jet examples Lindsay Allason-Jones' account of the York ones provides an excellent starting point (Allason-Jones 1996, 38-45), and for the metal examples there is my own article (Cool 1991).

In that article, I was able to show that the changing lengths and head details of the pins were directly related to the contemporary hairstyles. The long pins with elaborate heads were popular in the 1st to 2nd centuries when high-piled hairstyles were fashionable. The shorter pins of the 3rd to 4th centuries were ideal for the styles at that period where braids and curls hugged the contours of the head more closely. Prior to the Roman invasion hair pins are a great rarity, but by the later 1st century regional metal forms of British origin were being made. This clearly indicates a rapid adoption of Roman hairstyles by the indigenous population as it is unlikely there would have been a sufficient market for the development of regional styles if the only customers with need of them were amongst the immigrant community.

There is nothing inherently unlikely about Romano-British women adopting the latest fashionable hair-styles. Pictures of them would, after all, have been circulating in miniature on the images of the empresses on the coinage. Perhaps an unappreciated use of coinage in the province is as the



Left: iron, with face details on attached copper-alloy sheet (Museum of London 19224); Right: copper-alloy (Cirencester Museum B456). From Cool 1991.

equivalent of the glossy magazines with pictures of hairstyles found in the waiting rooms of modern hairdressing salons.

What is interesting is how far through the population the new hairstyles penetrated. They were clearly not confined to the urban and rural elite. The early pin forms are found on rural sites of no great pretension in the south and east. The picture is harder to establish for the north and west where bone, the material of the majority of the pins, does not survive so well. The inhabitants of many northern rural sites displayed a pronounced lack of interest in most elements of Romano-British material culture. It is, therefore, unlikely that the new fashions made much impact in some of these communities. Elsewhere, it is likely that most women would have worn their hair pinned up in more or less elaborate styles, with the elaboration depending on how much help an individual had. The hairstyle incorporating five and six strand plaits preserved in the burial of a woman at

Poundbury (Farwell & Molleson 1993, 206 no. 817) could only have been achieved with the help of a friend or maid; whereas the more simple bun held in place by jet pins preserved in a grave at York (Allason-Jones 1996, 22 fig. 17) could have been arranged by the teenager herself.

Late 4th-century female skull with two copper-alloy pins still in position. Butt Road, Colchester. Courtesy of Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Hair pins provide the main evidence of hair dressing styles in Britain, with the preservation of hair itself as in the York and Poundbury burials being rare survivals. There are a few other sources of additional information. Some grave monuments include portraits of the deceased. Where these are clearly from local workshops for a local clientele, such as the 3rd century group at Carlisle (Phillips 1976), it seems reasonable to assume that these portraits reflect what the women were wearing in the area. These portraits also show what may be termed the international Roman style of hair dressing. They habitually show the women bare-headed with the hairstyles clearly visible. A similar picture emerges from small items which have female busts as part of their decoration such as the 1st to 2nd century bone hair pins and mounts such as that from Silchester (Read and Henig 1985). From the late 1st to 4th centuries, therefore, we get a picture of Romano-British women as being habitually bare-headed with more or less elaborate coiffures.

A recent survey of late finds assemblages has suggested that another major change of women's appearance was under way during the second half of the 4th century. As it is hoped that the paper outlining the full survey will be published soon (Cool forthcoming), the data will not be given in full but merely summarised here. Effectively when assemblages from contexts belonging to the first half of the 4th century are quantified hair pins are as numerous as bracelets, if not more common. In the late 4th century assemblages, they become much rarer both in absolute numbers and compared to bracelets. The pin to bracelet ratio falls during this time from approximately 1:1 to 1:3. Women are clearly no longer wearing their hair pinned up as much as they had done before. The implication in such a fall in the number of hair pins is that an increasing number of women must have been choosing to wear their hair short; or to wear it long and loose; or to wear it tied back more simply; or perhaps even to wear it bundled into a bonnet or behind a veil.

The impetus for this change may just have been due to the vagaries of fashion, but it is tempting to wonder if it could be related the increasing influence of Christianity. The Church Fathers included the appearance and behaviour of women amongst the topics they thought appropriate to write about. Their essays often take as their foundation remarks in various of St Paul's epistles. One that is particularly favoured is I *Corinthians* 11, 5-15 on the iniquities of women praying with their heads uncovered, or even worse,

shaven. The apostle asserts women should have long hair. In I *Timothy* 9 and I *Peter* 3.3 he includes braided hair as something Christian women should not indulge in. In the late 2nd century works of Tertullian such as *On the Apparel of Women* (*AoW*) and *On the veiling of Virgins* (*VoV*), these remarks are glossed with enthusiasm. A few quotations can give a flavour of this:

'*What profit, again, do you derive for your salvation from all the labour spent in arranging your hair? Why can you not leave your hair alone, instead of at one time tying it up, at another letting it hang loose, now cultivating it, now thinning it out? Some women prefer to tie it up in little curls, while others let it fall down wild and dishevelled--a hardly commendable kind of simplicity. Besides, some of you affix to your heads I know not what monstrosities of sewn and woven wigs, now in the form of a cap as if it were a casing for the head and a covering for the crown, now in the form of a chignon at the back of the neck.*' (*AoW* 2.5)

After considering these iniquities further he concludes, '*God commands women to be veiled. I imagine He does so lest the heads of some of them should be seen!*' In another work (*VoV* 18) he outlines his ideal of the extent of an appropriate veil: '*Its limits and boundaries reach as far as the place where the robe begins. The region of the veil is co-extensive with the space covered by the hair when unbound; in order that the necks too may be encircled.*' His ideal, one feels, were the Arabian women whom, he notes approvingly, cover not only their heads but their faces.

Admittedly Tertullian is extreme in most things, but similar sentiments can be gleaned from the writings of other Church Fathers. Here is St Jerome writing in AD 385 to Marcella comparing the behaviour of earlier widows with what good Christian ones should do (*Letter* 38. 4.2). '*In those days maids arranged her hair, and her head, which had done no harm, was forced into a waving head-dress. Now she leaves her hair alone, and her only head-dress is a veil.*' As bad as arranging the hair elaborately though, was cutting it off. This was to ape man and not to accept the lowly place of women in the orthodox Christian hierarchy. In AD 390, for example, Valentinian and Theodosius issued an edict banning women with shorn hair entering churches and taking part in the services (Elm 1994, 218).

This then, was the intellectual background to hairstyles in the late Roman empire. As Christianity made inroads in Britain, one might expect that increasing numbers of women would have been subject to similar diatribes by their pastors. If the change in women's appearances, as demonstrated by the hair pin decline, can be attributed to Christian influence, then we might have in hair pin numbers a much better index of the spread of the religion than is provided by such measures as artefacts with Christian symbols, church plans etc.

What a woman does, or is allowed to do, with her hair is frequently making a statement that goes beyond mere fashion, and reflects her role in society and the image she wishes to project. The Martyr Perpetua knew this, and that dishevelled hair was a sign of mourning in her society. She did not want anyone to think she went sadly to her death in the arena at Carthage in AD 203.

'*[She] fell upon her loins. And when she had sat upright, her robe being rent at the side, she drew it over to cover her thigh, mindful rather of modesty than of pain. Next, looking for a pin, she likewise pinned up her dishevelled hair; for it was not meet that a martyr should suffer with hair dishevelled, lest she should seem to grieve in her glory.*' (*The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* 20)

We don't have vivid written narratives like this for Roman Britain. We do,

however, have an awful lot of small finds which still have many interesting stories to tell, with just a little help on our parts.

Hilary Cool,
16 Lady Bay Road,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham NG2 5BJ

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FROM RICHES TO RAGS!

No sooner had we recovered from the discovery of the Roman sarcophagus and coffin in the northern cemetery at Spitalfields, than in the summer of 1999 archaeologists from the Museum of London Archaeology Service found two intact Roman wooden coffins in an amazing state of preservation. They had been excavating a small part of the western cemetery in Holborn. The site lay on the western bank of the river Fleet and fronted onto the Roman road that left Londinium at Newgate, heading for Silchester and the south-west. Each coffin contained a skeleton lying in a layer of wet silt due to the fact that the site had become flooded in the post-Roman period.

Once the skeletons had been removed it was possible to inspect the coffins. They were made of oak planks butted together in a simple fashion to make the joints. The bases were complete and the four sides of each coffin had been preserved. The lid of one coffin had also survived, but was in a poor state of preservation because the weight of the soil above had compressed the wood and moulded it around the skeleton. The weight of one of the skeletons had also caused indentations in the softened wet wood of the base and the outline of the rib cage could be clearly seen. The structures had been made of re-used low-quality wood, and each of the four 'side' boards fitted tightly against a wall of the grave pit. Rather than being true coffins, they appear to have acted as simple wooden linings to the graves.

This is the first time that wooden coffins have been found preserved in Roman London, and one will go on display in the Museum of London's Roman Gallery once conservation work has been completed. Usually all that is left is wood stains and iron nails. Do colleagues know of any surviving examples of wooden coffins from their area?

And now, back to where we started! The Spitalfields sarcophagus, lead coffin, and grave goods are now on permanent display in the Roman gallery, along with the reconstructed head produced for '*Meet the Ancestors*'. The skeleton will remain on display for the next year, to be replaced by the wooden coffin.

Jenny Hall,
Early London Dept,
Museum of London,
London Wall,
London EC2Y 5HN

A LATE ROMAN GRAVE GROUP FROM DUROBRIVAE

In June 1998, maintenance work along the A1 near Water Newton, Cambridgeshire, exposed human bones and two stone coffins. Subsequent archaeological recording by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council revealed the inhumed remains of at least 57 late Roman individuals, including infants. The site lies to the south of the Roman town of Durobrivae, in an area where many other burials have been found in the past (Casa-Hatton & Wall 1999).[1]

Some of the burials found in 1998 had been in nailed wooden coffins, there were some possible instances of stone-/tile-packing, and at least two cases of decapitation were recorded. Most of the graves were unfurnished, but one, the burial of a 5-year old child (± 16 months), was accompanied by copper-alloy and ivory bangles, a possible earring, and a necklace of amber and glass beads, apparently place in a pile close to the body (Grave 114). It is the necklace that makes this grave so different from other late Roman graves with deposits of jewellery.

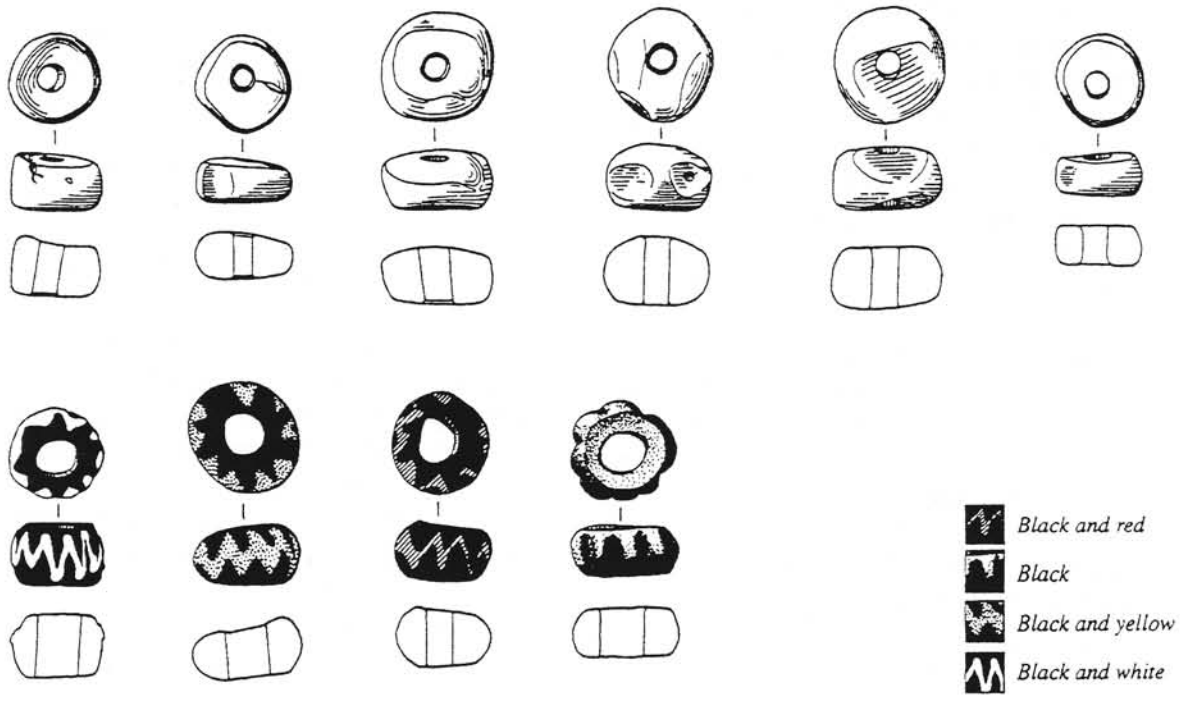
One of the copper-alloy bangles is of plain wire with simple twisted join, another is simply decorated with slanting grooves on both edges, probably a very debased form of imitation cabling. Two are of Clarke's Type E (1979, 307-9), otherwise described as with 'multiple motifs' (Crummy 1983, fig 47) or 'multiple units' (Cool & Mills 1993, 90). Two have alternating plain and hatched panels, and another has panels of alternating diagonal grooving. An eighth armlet, catalogued from a photograph, appears to be of stout construction, but plain. Only one ivory armlet was reasonably well preserved. It is of one-piece construction, with the end butted together and held in a copper-alloy sleeve. Other surviving fragments suggest that at least another two had been deposited.

The possible earring is a fragment of a thin copper-alloy wire loop, but the terminals are missing and its exact form is uncertain.

The necklace was composed of six large amber discoid beads of wedge-shaped section, a plain black gadrooned (melon) bead, and three beads of black glass each enlivened with a coloured zigzag, one red, one yellow, one white.

The amber presumably came from the Baltic, though occasionally raw lumps may be washed up on the east Anglian coast, suggesting that amber objects in this area may sometimes have been locally worked rather than imported (Shepherd 1985, 204). The black glass beads are definitely of continental Germanic origin. In her corpus of Roman beads Guido suggested that black gadrooned beads came from southern Bavaria (1978, 99), and that the black glass beads with zigzag were probably of Frankish origin (*ibid*, 135). In her Anglo-Saxon corpus, however, she does not suggest points of manufacture (1999, 21-3), though there can be no doubt that her original instincts were not far short of the mark.

Amber beads are rare in late Roman Britain, and are usually well-made and cut to one of the shapes current in the period, such as a facetted cuboid (Crummy 1983, fig 36, 1419) or a well-formed disc (*ibid*, fig 34, 559). There may be just one or two on a necklace with glass and perhaps jet beads of otherwise conventional Roman style (*eg* Liversidge 1973, fig 52a; Guido 1979, 295). Wedge-shaped examples like those from Water Newton do, however, make their appearance on an armlet or necklace of beads and pendants in a grave at Butt Road, Colchester, dated to the last quarter of the 4th century or the early 5th (Crummy 1983, fig 34, 634; Crummy & Crossan 1993, Table 2.67, grave 15), and are common in the pagan Anglo-Saxon period. The Durobrivae amber beads would not be out of place in a grave from one of Cambridgeshire's Migration Period Anglian cemeteries, several of which have been found in the Nene and Welland valleys within a few kilometres of Water Newton.



The beads from the Water Newton necklace. Courtesy of the Cambridge Archaeological Field Unit & Sue Holden. Slightly reduced from 1:1.

On the black glass beads the yellow and red zigzags are marvered into the surface while the white is not. The latter bead is also smaller than the other two and of slightly different profile, indicating different working practices in a different workshop. The majority of these beads in Britain come from Anglo-Saxon contexts (Guido 1999, Type 2vi,a-c), though there are some unstratified (typical!) examples from Roman Richborough, Silchester, and Segontium. The distribution is wide, with several from Kent (probably the point of entry), and a scatter west to Worcester and north to Fife. They are present, though not particularly well-represented, among the beads favoured by the early Anglians (*eg* West 1985, fig 276.10; Evison 1994, fig 6, D19). Like the amber beads, they probably first trickled into Britain in the very late 4th century, but are much more likely to be of 5th-century date.

Given the Roman character of the armlets and the 'Germanic' nature of the beads, in writing the report on the grave goods I suggested a conservative date-range of c 390-420 for the grave (Crummy 1999).

The well-known burials from Dorchester-on-Thames were initially dated by Kirk & Leeds to the late 4th century (1953, 63-76), but later shifted by White into the first quarter of the 5th century (1988, 109).

So, less conservatively, perhaps I could stick my neck out and suggest instead that 400-25 or 410-430 might be a better date-range. Cemeteries with few grave goods, such as this one, leave those burials that are furnished floating free in a general 'late Roman' sea. Where the grave goods then have both a Roman and an 'Anglo-Saxon' flavour, the difficulty of dating is doubly compounded. Do we launch them unequivocally into the 5th-century, or moor them in the safe 390s?

On a slightly different note, it is interesting that this is the grave of a young child. Two graves from Butt Road, Colchester, also of young children, contained strings of beads and pendants that show they are also of very late Roman to early 5th century date (Crummy & Crossan 1993, tables 2.52, 2.52, 2.67). In those cases I suggested that the bead strings had an amuletic character, to protect the child either in life, and in particular, during the illness that led to death, or in the afterlife (*ibid*, 141).

Could the Water Newton beads also be amuletic? They are not a jumble of shape and material as were the Butt Road groups, but show a tidy combination of red (amber) and black (glass) that hints at 'style' rather than purpose.

Why then with a young child? A grave deposit of jewellery or other items with a female child, teenager or young adult may represent a dowry rather than simply her best finery (*ibid*, 130). Or does it, as it might well in this case, show a parent giving in to 'pester power', *ie* buying the latest thing in beads to pacify a dearly-loved, perhaps ailing and fractious, child.

Nina Crummy

[1] I am grateful to the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council for permission to reproduce sections of the text and illustrations from Casa-Hatton and Wall 1999 and my appendix in that publication on the grave goods from (114). The drawings are by Sue Holden (freelance), who also kindly gave permission for their reproduction.

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CONFERENCES

Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 (17.4.00)
The spring meeting of the FRG will be held in The Music Room, Norwich Assembly House, Norwich on the topic of 'Fishing and fishing equipment'. Papers on fish remains, fishing equipment, jewellery made from fish parts, and fish motifs and symbols. Further details from: Ian Riddler, Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 92A Broad Street, Canterbury CY1 2LU. Tel: 01227 462062

IFA (4.4.00-6.4.00)
The annual IFA conference will be held at the University of Sussex. Sessions will include 'For love or money'; 'Professionals and amateurs'; 'A theory for archaeological evaluations'; 'Why study buildings'; and 'Archaeologists or artists'. Further details from: Conference Committee, IFA, University of Reading, 2 Earley Gate, PO Box 239, Reading RG6 6AU. Tel: 0118 931 6446; fax: 0118-931-6448; email: admin.ifa@virgin net

TRAC ((6.4.00-7.4.00)
The next TRAC conference will be held at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL. Sessions already proposed include: 'The Roman army in context'; 'Centres of power'; 'Representing the Romans'; and 'The identities of Romano-British artefacts'. The TRAC debate will be - the next 10 years. Further details from: TRAC 2000 Organising Committee, UCL Institute of Archaeology, 31-4 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY' Email: trac2000@ucl.ac.uk

Ancient DNA 5 (12.7.00-14.7.00)
The 5th international conference on ancient DNA will be held in Manchester. Further details from: Terry Brown, Dept of Biomolecular Sciences, UMIST, PO Box 88, Manchester M60 1QD. Email: adna5@bi.umist.ac.uk

***Limes* XVIII** (2.9.00-11.9.00)
The 18th International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies will be held in Amman, Jordan. Further details from: *Limes* XVIII, Dept of Archaeology, SACOS, William Hartley Building, University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 3BX. Fax: 0151 794 5057; email: pfreeman@liv.ac.uk

APPEALS FOR HELP

Roman domestic wood

Britain is particularly well placed for the study of Roman domestic wood. The tourist industry would love this positive spin on what is substantially a rotten climate. But even with the wealth of material from Carlisle, Vindolanda, and London it was soon clear that furniture (the obvious topic) was a non-starter. I wanted to investigate use, variety and manufacturing techniques, but unfortunately, the quantity of furniture remains available is not sufficient.

After a year spent inspecting the material in the care of museums and archaeological units, I have drawn up a list of topics that fits the bill. It includes combs and "related items",wooden soles, carved, turned and bentwood containers and kitchen equipment. Clearly some topics can be investigated more exhaustively than others. Almost half my material are combs: they can be analysed in greater detail than the "related items". But it is important to my mind, to consider the contribution of wood as a medium to the lady's dressing table, and that is what I have tried to do by looking at the scant evidence for its use in mirror boxes, pins and jewellery.

Wooden soles (pattens) are also a challenge. I want to get them out of the ghetto. I am not convinced by the standard explanation that they were only intended for use in the baths. Containers, especially the turned ones, offer a great scope for experimental archaeology. I was very lucky in enlisting the assistance of a knowledgeable turner. I managed to replicate the combs and the soles by myself, but I did need some practical assistance for the needlecases and the *pyxides* (small lidded boxes).

I am now halfway through and presently writing up the shoes. I think I have seen all the relevant material but I would like to take this opportunity to check on that. If anyone has Roman domestic wooden material, be it combs, soles, turned, carved or bentwood containers, spatulae, scoops and spoons, and they have not seen me in the past twelve or so months, please get in touch.

Paola Pugsley,
Rockhaven,
St George's Well,
Cullompton,
Devon

Roman lighting equipment

I am currently working on my PhD thesis 'Illuminating Roman Britain' at the University of Reading under the supervision of Professor M Fulford. The aim of my thesis is to study all forms of Romano-British lighting equipment with a particular emphasis on their archaeological context and the social and economic implications of their use. My research focuses only on lighting equipment with a **known** Romano-British provenance, but it includes all forms of lighting equipment (such as lamps, open lamps/lamp-stands, and candlesticks) and objects of all materials (ceramic, metal and stone).

If you know of any unpublished lighting equipment from Roman Britain I would be very grateful if you could contact me:

Hella Eckardt,
Dept of Archaeology,
University of Reading,
FOLSS,
Whiteknights,
PO Box 218
Reading RG6 6AA

email: lar97he@reading.ac.uk

NOTES FROM ROMAN BATH

The RFG meeting at Bath in September was highly successful. The first lecture consisted of a rapid but thorough description of excavators and excavations in the city from the early 18th century, and a guide to the collections of the Museum, founded in the late 18th century to house the wealth of material that was being dug up. The importance of recording and publishing items was stressed by mention of some objects, large and small, gone missing over the centuries. The value of applying new techniques to old objects was also pointed out, as examination of the head of Sulis Minerva found in 1727 has recently revealed that of the six layers of gold on the head only two were contemporary with its manufacture. Four were later applications used to 'smarten' it up.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the day was that the walled area of Roman Bath was not the town proper, but probably an enclave for religious buildings and possibly also for the more important civic buildings. Roman roads tend to disappear 1-2 miles outside the town, but projecting them points to Walcot, where there was a river crossing, as the main area of occupation, not the area around the baths. This has now been confirmed by several seasons of excavation on a variety of sites, revealing 1st- to 4th-century occupation, including strip-buildings, evidence for metalworking, a building with massive foundations, good quality stonework, and late burials.

A villa with a probable courtyard building and its own bath-house was excavated close to the walled area, and another villa, a simple corridor building half a mile east of the Sacred Spring, was found to have been built on top of an Iron Age farm. Late in its life this site was used for the manufacture of millefiori glass, and has produced a large quantity of cullet gathered ready for recycling.

The next paper on Roman lighting concentrated on open lamps. Lamps can be particularly revealing about the social and cultural identity of their users. Dividing the sites with lamps into five major groups: military, high status/large town, villa/rural, and smaller town, with 'unknown' to mop up any strays, shows that pre-Flavian ceramic open lamps come mainly from military sites and the larger urban centres, *ie* are typical of a very Romanised society. In the 2nd century open lamps are usually of iron or lead. The former mainly come from burials on rural sites, mainly rich barrow graves such as the Bartlow Hills, showing that cultured living and dining in the Roman style was expected to continue after death for the Romano-British elite. Lead open lamps, on the other hand, come principally from military sites in Wales. This difference in material may be affected by the location of the lead mines and their control by the military, but is more likely to show that lead lamps were functional items, while iron open lamps had a ritual aspect.

It was back to Roman Bath for two talks on the small finds — recent and not-so-recent. Particularly interesting among the latter were two painted pipeclay dog figurines, rare in Britain but well represented on the continent. These were found close to the Sacred Spring and clearly had a religious importance. Other finds included pre-Flavian brooches, military equipment, a shale table leg, and some later Roman pieces. Among the most recent finds were some very odd stone objects.

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MEETING ON HADRIAN'S WALL

The RFG is heading north in the Millennium — the next meeting will be held at Birdoswald on Monday 20th March 2000. The title of the day is '**Finds from the Roman Frontier**' and speakers will include Lindsay Allason-Jones, Alex Croom, and Tony Wilmott. However, don't feel restricted by the title — all are welcome and there will be spaces for presentations on any aspect of Roman finds work.

We will be using Cumbria County Council's new Hadrian's Wall Residential Study Centre in the Roman fort — a 17th-century farmhouse with unique access to the fort and the Wall. For people travelling from elsewhere in the country, accommodation is available in the Study Centre for the Sunday evening. According to the Birdoswald promotional literature, this 'consists of shared bedrooms, each with a genuine feature fireplace, bunk beds (!), a wash basin and full central heating'. For less adventurous persons there is also a small B & B nearby.

Transport has been arranged to take people from Carlisle railway station to Birdoswald on Sunday evening, and back again on Monday afternoon.

The meeting will cost £12 (including lunch), and the Sunday night accommodation costs a further £26 per person (this includes evening meal and breakfast).

If there is time we might squeeze in a tour of the fort, so bring wellies and warm/waterproof clothing. Further details will be sent to members in the New Year, but if you want to book a place sooner rather than later, contact Peter Guest at 47 Richmond Road, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5EN.

See you there!

SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE!

The RFG subscription year runs from October 1st, so subscriptions are now well and truly due for the year 1999/2000, and long overdue if you haven't yet paid for 1998/1999.

While I am sure most of you are highly efficient, mark the date in your diaries, and pay up promptly, there must be some like me who feel a twinge of conscience whenever you speak to Angela, but never seem to have your cheque book on you at the same time.

Now is the time to cough up!

The rate remains a very reasonable £5.00, so please write your cheque and post it to:

Angela Wardle,
1 Stebbing Farm,
Fishers Green,
STEVENAGE,
Herts SG1 2JB

Prompt paying saves Angela having to send out reminders, and so keeps the running costs of the Group down. You know it makes sense.

BOOKS

Roman Castleford I: The small finds. Edited by H E M Cool & C Philo. 1998
The small finds from the two 1st-century Roman forts and the adjacent *vicus* at Castleford are presented by material, written up by a variety of specialists. The final part, 'Life in Roman Castleford', by Hilary Cool, offers an overview pulling together the information offered in the other sections under various headings, such as 'Soldiers and civilians', 'Trade and exchange', 'Religion and belief', and, most importantly, looks at the assemblages from structures in the forts and *vicus*.
A highlight of the volume is the section on the clay moulds for making spoons and enamelled vessels, mainly flasks.

Yorkshire Archaeology 4, ISBN I 870453 20 4, ISSN 0959-3500, 421 pp, 164 ill, £24.00

The Archaeology of Lincoln VII-2. The Defences of the Lower City: excavations at the park and West parade 1970-2, and a discussion of other sites excavated up to 1994. Edited by M J Jones, 1999.
A companion volume to those on the Upper Defences (1980, 1984), this covers the remains of the lower circuit and the south-western quarter of the Roman and medieval walled city. Includes studies of the Roman and medieval pottery and other finds.

CBA Res Rep 114, ISBN 1 872414 88 5, 304 pp, 164 ill, £36.00

The Glass Beads of Anglo-Saxon England *c.* AD 400-700. M Guido, edited by M Welch.

The follow-up to Guido's 1978 Prehistoric & Roman volume. Some late Roman bead types are repeated here, not always with the same conclusions, and inevitably some recently-published Anglo-Saxon types are not included. So not all beads from current excavations will find a parallel in here, but there should be something reasonably close. After all, the subtitle is *A preliminary visual classification of the more definitive and diagnostic types*. It is at the Roman/Migration period junction that the volume is not really reliable (not surprising), but the problems are compounded by some avoidable errors. For example, in the text (p 23) a bead from Nettleton is given as perhaps the earliest stratified example of Type 2vi (black with white, yellow or red zigag), but is in the Schedules as Type 2vb (black with blue wave). Ordinarily, this would be a minor annoyance, but as it is the piece on which the type might be dated, it means going back to the source.
Enjoy, but use with care.

The Boydell Press, ISBN 0 85115 7181, ISSN 0953-7163, 361 pp, 2 figs, 8 colour pls, 32 maps, £50.00