REGREG RE

ROMAN FINDS GROUP NEWSLETTER XI

ROMAN FINDS GROUP

NEWSLETTER XI CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Marlowe Revisited	2
Colchesters in the North	5
A find in the North	9
An enigmatic object from Scole	12
Metal detecting and Finds	13
The RGF questionnaire	14
Notes and News	15

April 1996

Data Protection Act

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

Editorial

Casual comments of mine in two previous Newsletters have had the excellent effect of provoking responses in the form of articles on bone pins and Colchester brooches. They are both so interesting that I am tempted to be deliberately provocative in future to see what results! Needless to say, all views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Roman Finds Group.

An interesting theme that arises from these two articles, and from some of the papers at the Norwich meeting (see pages 12-3), is the regionality that is increasingly being noted in Romano-British finds. Richard Reece published an interesting little article about this last year ('Models in collision; east and west in Roman Britain' Oxford Journal of Archaeology 14(1), 113-5) which I urge you to read if you have not already done so.

The deadline for the next Newsletter will be July 31st, 1996. As ever. all contributions gratefully received - including notes, news, reviews, notices of forthcoming attractions and, of course, articles putting me right. Please send all contributions to:-

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

Phone/Fax 0115 9819 065

Marlowe Revisited

I was amused/bemused to see in the last RFG Newsletter reference to the Canterbury Marlowe volume (Blockley, K.M. & P, Frere, S.S. and Stowe, S. Excavations in the Marlowe Car Park and surounding Areas Archaeology of Canterbury V) the phrase 'members will be delighted to discover that this is the volume that includes 'Greep forthcoming' the bone pin typology we have all been waiting for! (editors exclamation mark).

My contribution to this volume (pp. 1112-54) was originally written some 12 years ago, in 1983, and remained substantially unchanged after that date, although the Canterbury Trust were able to offer several opportunities to update the report. The Marlowe excavations produced a large assemblage of material (of Roman and later periods). Of the 524 Roman bone, antler and ivory objects reported on. 392 (74.8%) are Roman hair pins.

It was never (and remains so) my intention that the Marlowe assemblage should represent a typological sequence of bone and antler hair pins from Roman Britain for example:

the overwhelming majority of the Canterbury Marlowe types are the more common forms and are well represented (and discussed) in the Colchester (1) and Leicester (2) typologies;

there is an under-representation of earlier Roman types;

the picture is almost certainly biased by the presence of a local workshop.

This does not, of course, diminish the significance of such a large group of material, but it needs to be put into perspective. My (alas unpublished) thesis (Objects of worked bone, antler, ivory and teeth from Roman Britain University of Wales, Cardiff 1983) included a catalogue of almost 9,000 hair pins with recognisable heads. In addition I had studied several thousand from other provinces of the Empire, and I have continued to add (and report upon) many further examples in recent years. This total represented approximately 50% of all the material covered in my thesis (which included, incidentally, the majority of the Canterbury material). In the course of the last 18 years, since I first became interested in the subject, I have been requested to write numerous sections as contributions to excavation reports, I have often referred to the Canterbury Marlowe report since:

it represented the largest assemblage from modern excavations known to me;

it included a well-dated (although not broad) assemblage;

it was originally to have been published soon after my initial report;

it included the best recorded workshop/waste assemblage from Britain:

it included much of the discussion on the function of (hair) pins from my original thesis.

It should not be forgotten that bone and antler were cheap and readily available materials. Objects manufactured from them represent (on the whole) local products. The typology of finds reflects this fact and, while it is possible to group the majority into a relatively small number of 'forms', there remain a plethora of examples which do not fit within any existing typology. It has never seemed pertinent to me to list all those examples upon which I have reported by the typological denominator of my thesis. While this has remained unpublished, it seemed pointless to do so. For the record, however, my thesis lists 10 early and 10 later Roman types (including numerous sub and miscellanous groupings). It did not seem logical to me, for example, to report that the isolated (but important) late Roman hair pin (Marlowe report fig. 498, 933) was my type B9.1 (my thesis p. 363 fig. 84, p. 1162, fig. 257-8). There are, however, a number of broader points to be considered:

> Roman bone and antler hair pins are broadly dateable as there are significant typological changes with time of both head and stem form.

The majority of the forms are covered by the published typologies from Canterbury and Colchester (1). While I am in agreement with Nina Crummy's basic chronology there are slight disagreements concerning dating.

Most but not all Roman bone and antler hair pins are of (very) local manufacture, but there are recogniseable geographical distributions (both *intra* and *extra* provincial). Not all the common forms are well represented at all major sites. There is widespread evidence of manufacture throughout the province.

Given that the overwhelming majority of examples are manufactured locally, local typologies (within a provincial framework) would seem to make sence.

The industrial evidence from the bone and antler industry of Roman Britain is important, tangible evidence for the economy of the 'lesser' industries of the province.

In my reports over the years on bone and antler hair pins I have tried to adopt an approach based on the above principles. I have typically used the Canterbury Marlowe report as a point of reference as it does contain the majority of the relevant forms. This should not, however, disguise the fact that these objects were produced on a very localised scale and should be treated as such. Although they are common objects, relatively few are closely dated. There remains much to be learnt about their chronology. I should not wish for my Canterbury Marlowe report to be taken as the final statement to chronology, function or geography of this important group of objects.

I hope that the above places the Canterbury Marlowe material in perspective. This is an important collection but it is not a diagnostic point of reference for all hair pins of bone and antler from Roman Britain, nor must it be treated as such. Yet, although my contribution was written some time ago, I would not wish to change much. If this does not help my fellow finds researchers seeking a fuller reference point for these prolific objects, I apologise. My thesis (like many) remains unpublished. It consists of 4 large volumes, almost 400 plates/figures of objects. As far as hairpins are concerned I would willingly publish these in full, based on my original thesis, as long as an acceptable A4 medium would be willing to take it.

Stephen Greep 19 Haversham Close NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE7 7LR

Editorial Notes

- (1) Crummy, N. 1979. 'A chronology of Romano-British bone pins' *Britannia* X, 157-63
- (2) Kenyon, K.M. 1948. The Jewry Wall site, Leicester RRCSAL XV (Oxford)

Colchesters in the North

Newsletter IX arrives, and I scan it eagerly. There is, I see, a review and, what is more, the book is about brooches. I read it carefully, and discover that I am mentioned. Not only that, there is almost an invitation to reply to the problem raised by brooches seemingly out of their normal chronological horizon, the principal culprit being the good old, honest Colchester. There is no need to define what kind of brooch it is, that was done many years ago by the late M.R. Hull (Hawkes and Hull 1947, 308-310), but there are always traps, snares and delusions, and one of these appears to be the kind of Colchester Margaret Snape refers to in her recent volume on brooches from the Stangate (Snape 1993, 84, fig. 18.235).

I have five of these from Roman Britain: the one from Nether Denton (ibid and my thanks to Margart for allowing me to cull it from her thesis), one from South Shields (Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, 106, 3.72); East Kennet Wilts (Devizes Museum, B.C.9); Cambridge (Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, no number), Wilcote, Oxon (Hands 1993, 27 fig. 23.1). They are all characterised by having a sharp bend at the head, a definite angle and not a curve, and all have rounded to square-sectioned bows. The last feature is marked on the two from the north of England where, of course, the Colchester is hardly to be expected on ordinary grounds. As it happens, I was puzzled by the appearance of a Colchester at Zugmantel (Böhme 1972, Taf. 1.15). This fort, along with Saalburg (dealt with Böhme in the same volume), is accepted as dating form the 80s to c. 260 (ibid 9). However, there is some undoubted earlier material (ibid. Taf. 1.17-21) and this causes some problems, but the Colchester's bow profile is matched by that of a whole group of Nauheim and Drahtfibel Derivatives (ibid Tafn. 3-4, passim) and there are too many of these to be laughed off as survivors from an unlocated earlier site.

The army had a penchant for the old-styled, witness the quite extraordinary survival of La Tène II brooches amongst the military, the roll-call of whose sites is enough to demonstrate the point (e.g. Hull and Hawkes 1987, Type 3C, pl. 2-3). And then there is the amazing iron Kragenfibel from Alcester (Cracknell and Mahany 1994, 167-8, fig. 80.64) whose possible pre-Conquest deposition is ignored, but almost by implication could be associated with a possible military presence (*ibid* 164). What, it seems to me, we have at Nether Denton and South Shields is nothing more than a specific variety made out of its proper time for a specific clientele. There is nothing here which reflects the development of an earlier type into a later one, such as the one



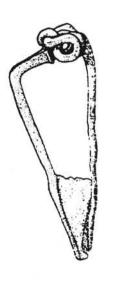
The Colchester variant under discussion.

which can be demonstrated at Saalburg and Zugmantel when it comes to the Hod Hill; the sequence runs for normal ones right through to patent late 1st - mid 2nd century types (Böhme 1972, Taf. 2.31-8, Taf. 5.320-41 etc)

There is still the matter of the date in the north of England. The South Shields example could easily have come from the tentatively identified Flavian occupation (Bidwell and Speak 1994, 14) where it would match the evidence from the two German forts. It seems to me that there is no need to extend by a generation the *floruit* of the entire tribe of Colchester because two of an abherrant form have been published from the north of England. What really counts is the bias of the bulk of the evidence and scores of dated examples support a general closing date of 60-65 for the latest native forms.

It almost looks as though the attitude in the north of England is that the south is of no account, except where its dating can be corrected by reference to the north. This may appear to be harsh, but it arises directly from recent published comment on the kind of Colchester just reviewed. It is not good enough, when speaking of the dating of the type to say that it is 1st century and that continental finds confirm a pre-Flavian date (Snape 1993. 84, no. 235), even if I get a kind mention. This completely ignores the British evidence. Similarly, to put Nauheim and Drahtfibel Derivatives together (ibid 12, fig. 12: fig. 19.251), lumping them with others given an early to mid 1st century date (ibid. 97, Table 6, 1.1-1.6) without discussion of them or the rest of the same group, is to ignore well-known evidence. There are two of the general family from that classic northern reference site, Newstead (Curle 1911, 318, pl. 85.1; Curle 1917, 231-2, fig. 1.1) as is noted, but that evidence is well-known to, and used by any student. It is worth a thought that the four-coil-internalchord brooch, may have been deliberately chosen by soldiers, just as the La Tène II brooches must have been, and I suspect the peculiar Colchesters were.

The omission seems to be a comparison of these 'northern' Colchesters with the common run published from Camulodunum (Hawkes and Hull 1947) and the King Harry Lane cemetery (Stead and Rigby 1989), both in the bibliography. The second is arguably the most important site published so far when it comes to dating in the first half of the 1st century AD. The Colchester is there in abundance in most of its common British manifestations. Whether students in the north like it or not, they cannot know what is truly northern without having a very good knowledge of what is common in the south.



South Shields Allason-Jones & Miket 1984, 106 no. 3.72

The sad truth is that practically all the brooches in the north of England date after brooch-wearing became a relatively common habit. That only happened with the arrival of the Roman army. One might go further and ask whether the ordinary native in the north, outside romanised nucleated sites, ever took to wearing bow brooches. No single brooch type I can think of is specifically northern. There are varieties of types which betray a northern bias in their distribution, but that only becomes clear when the whole of Roman Britain is looked at. In other words, what makes northern assemblages peculiarly northern, when compared with those in the south, is the significant absence of varieties of broochs whose date-ranges end before 80/100.

Donald's Big Book of Brooches?, it progresses. One hurdle was the writing of Appendix 1. This deals with the dating of the King Harry Lane cemetery and seeks by statistical means to show that, on that site, almost everything must be earlier than 45 and the best thing to do is to start the cemetery at BC 15, as the authors allowed, but did not follow (Stead and Rigby 1989, 83). The authors have seen the text and figures, and have not yet objected. But before anyone tries to deduce that I want the latest brooch types in the cemetery to end everywhere at c. 45, I must stress that it is dating arising from ordinary deposition on ordinary sites which must prevail. What King Harry Lane uniquely offers is a largely uncontaminated view if what was really common in that part of the world in 50 years before Claudius' political necessity forced a change in political control.

References

- Allason-Jones, L. and Miket, R. 1984. The catalogue of small finds from South Shields, Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne Monograph 2 (Newcastle upon Tyne)
- Bidwell, P. and Speak, S. 1994. Excavations at South Shields Roman Fort Vol 1 (Newcastle upon Tyne)
- Böhme, A. 1972. 'Die Fibeln der Kastelle Saalburg und Zugmantel' Saalburg Jahrbuch 29, 5-112
- Cracknell, S. and Mahany, C. (eds) Roman Alcester: southern extramural area 1964-1966 excavations. Part 2, finds and discussions CBA Research Report 96 (York)
- Curle, J. 1911. A Roman frontier post and its people, the fort of Newstead in the parish of Melrose (Glasgow)
- Curle, J. 1916/7. 'Note on additional objects of bronze and iron from Newstead' *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.* LI, 231-3
- Hands, A.R. 1993. The Romano-British roadside settlement at Wilcote, Oxfordshire: I Excavations 1990-92 BAR
 British Series 232 (Oxford)

Hawkes, C.F.C. and Hull, M.R. 1947. Camulodunum. First report on the excavations at Colchester, 1930-1939. RRCSAL XIV (Oxford)

Hull, M.R. and Hawkes, C.F.C. 1987. Pre-Roman bow brooches BAR British Series 168 (Oxford)

Snape, M.E. 1993. Roman brooches from northern Britain: a classification and a catalogue of brooches from sites on the Stanegate BAR British Series 235 (Oxford)

Stead, I.M. and Rigby, V. 1989. Verulamium: the King Harry
Lane site English Heritage Archaeological Report 12
(London)

Don Mackreth 126 London Road, PETERBOROUGH PE2 9BY

A Reviewer responds

'the attitude in the north of England is that the south is of no account, except where its dating can be corrected by reference to the north'. Strong words indeed but I refuse to stand in a corner suitably chastened. It seems to me that brooch studies in Roman Britain are dominated by a picture of what is normal in the south; not least because we owe so much to Don's own researches and that is the area from which most of his published reports stem (no doubt he will correct me in the next Newsletter if I am wrong). Surely, if the northern pattern is at odds with that expected from the south, this needs to be pointed out. This is not to consider that the south is of no account, but to try to push forward what we know about Roman Britain in general. The longevity of certain early types may well be a facet of what makes a northern assemblage different (as summarised by Margaret on page 101 point 2i of her book). Don has suggested a model of how this apparent longevity might have come about; others might be possible. Did the canny northerners look after their brooches for longer? Margaret's excellently useful book helps us explore the pattern in the north, and it is to be hoped that it will help generate more discussion articles of the type Don has given us above. No doubt when the Big Book of Brooches appears even more debate will be possible. The arid minutiae of typology is, after all, only the first step on the road to doing something useful with all classes of artefacts.

Hilary Cool

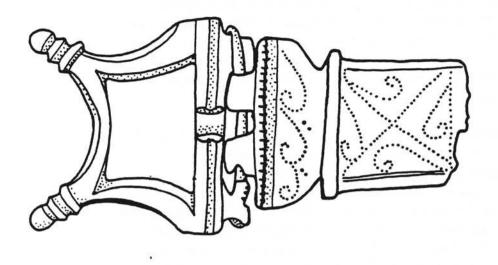
A find in the north

During the 1995 'season' much of my centurion's equipment - helmet, sword and scabbard, belts and phalerae - was stolen**. One fortunate aspect of this regrettable experience was to establish contact subsequently with Mr Brian Stobbs who in my view must be regarded as one of the most accomplished armourers making Roman period reproduction military equipment in this country. He lives in the Newcastle area and after service in the RAF he became the custodian of one of the English Heritage administered forts on Hadrian's Wall. Not surprisingly, his knowledge of the Wall and nearby areas, as well as that of Roman military equipment, is extensive. Once I had established contact with Mr Stobbs after the loss of my equipment we agreed a replacement programme which went ahead with speed.

A first replacement belt featured the well known lupercal theme and the second was due to be based on the equally well known subject of the comucopiae. However this has now been set aside in favour of something much more exciting. Mr Stobbs has the land owners' permission to use a metal detector in various areas near the Wall and shortly before Christmas he was doing so close by Nether Denton on the Stanegate. Situated between Chesterholm and Carlisle, Nether Denton has not been excavated but aerial survey and other evidence (Breeze 1982, 68-9) dates its establishment to the late first century - with extensive modifications taking place probably during the reign of Trajan.

The area in which Stobbs has done his detecting is not on the site of the fort itself but in two pastures to the south. The drainage of these pastures used to be so poor that they were in fact water meadows. Improvement work took place not long after the Second World War and at that time there were finds of pottery and other items. During his pre-Christmas detecting, Stobbs found a military belt buckle with a half belt plate still attached. A photograph of the find is reproduced here (Figure A). The general appearance of the buckle is not unlike one from Oberstimm reproduced in Bishop and Coulston (Bishop & Coulston 1993, 96-8) but is more elaborate, having three small knobs on each of the two leading corners. The plate, which was

^{**} The equipment was covered by insurance and payment was made with commendable speed. The loss adjuster said that the theft of my reproduction Roman armour and weapons was quite the most unusual and interesting case he had ever come across!



CMS

Fig. A: The buckle and plate from Nether Denton [Editorial note: The way this Newsletter is produced has meant that the photograph of the buckle and plate sent as an illustration would not have reproduced very clearly. This line illustration has been produced from the photograph]

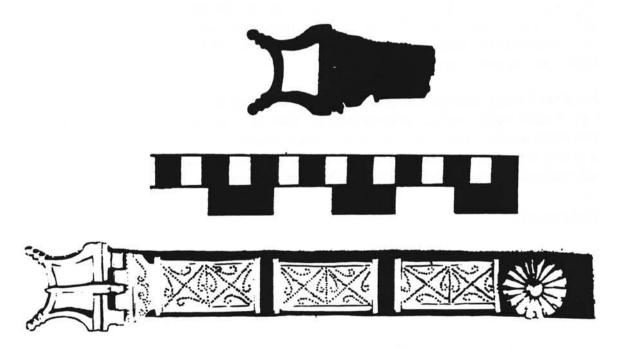


Fig. B: The buckle and replica belt

tinned, is of the normal narrow width with a pattern of straight lines and curves punched in the original bronze. The amount of work that must have been involved in working plates in this way leads Stobbs to question whether the Romans took a cast or casts of original designs and reproduced the belt plates in quantity from those.

Be that as it may, within days of the find he had reproduced the buckle and several examples of the plates which are shown here as Figure B. He is now modifying these reproductions since further research revealed, for example, that only the plate ends fixed to the buckle and frogs of a belt usually had the bar feature which appears at the end of all of the reproduction plates shown here - that part of the original find being missing, of course. When a final design has been arrived at, a master cast will be made from which plates will be produced in bronze. When everything has been assembled, we will have the pleasure of knowing that the belt - composed of elements which at the moment we think may be unique - is based on an original found in a British site at a date which fits well into our chosen Leg II Aug period.

It is probable that the original belt belonged to an auxiliary (Mr Stobbs also found lead slingshot and well as what looks like the chape of a spatha at the same time) but units from the Second Augusta saw considerable service in the north in the early second century so it is not entirely fanciful to think that maybe my new belt mirrors one that might have been worn by a member of the legion that we seek to recreate in 1996.

For Brian Stobbs there is one aspect of his metal detecting and reproduction work which is always present and that is hoping to find major artefacts which are worked in a manner which suggests to his master craftsman's eye that they were made by the same armourer or workshop almost two thousand years ago.

References

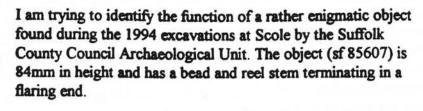
Breeze, D. J. 1982. The Northern Frontiers of Roman Britain
(London)

Bishen, M. C. & Coulston, I.C.N., Roman Military Equipment

Bishop, M. C. & Coulston, J.C.N. Roman Military Equipment (London)

H.J.P. Arnold (chairman Leg. Secunda Augusta) 30 Fifth Avenue HAVANT Hampshire PO9 2PL

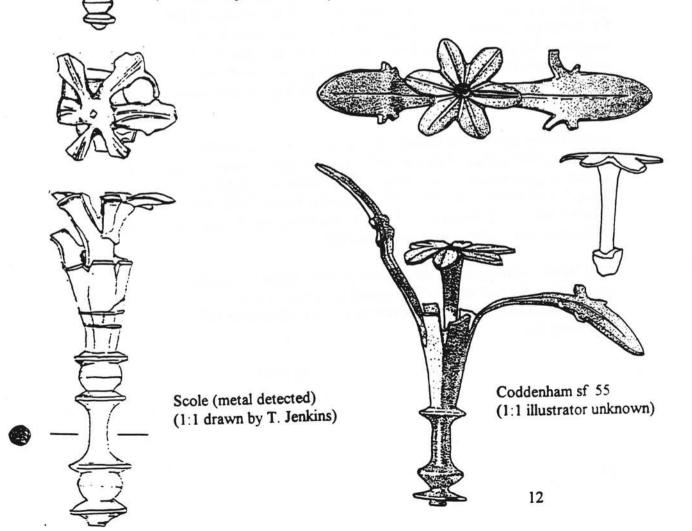
An Enigmatic object from Scole



Similar objects may have been found at Coddenham in Suffolk (archive material deposited by Neil O'Loughlin at Ipswich Museum) and at Scole in Norfolk (metal detected find, now in Castle Museum, Norwich). Although they vary in decorative detail, all have a small rough knob at their lower end which shows signs of soldering. All examples have been tinned and are well-finished.

Any further comparative examples or comments would be very welcome.

Scole sf 85607 (1:1 drawn by D. Wreathall) Fiona Seeley 40 Cargill Road, LONDON SW18 3EB



Metal detecting and Finds

The Spring meeting of the RFG previewed in the last Newsletter was reassuringly well-attended and full of good things. We heard much about the excavations at Scole from John Newman, Fiona Seeley and Myk Flitcroft. There, detectors had played an important role from the evaluation stage onwards. John's paper on the role of detectors within an evaluation framework was particularly valuable as it pointed out that detecting at an early stage could produce evidence for periods of activity otherwise unattested; as well as producing realistic estimates of the amount of metalwork that could be expected from full excavation. We also heard from Barrie Sharrock about his surveys of the sites at Swanton Morley and Billingford where he has been detecting for a number of years. He has noticed a decline in the condition of the metalwork found over the years which he attributes to the intensification of farming practices. Perhaps detectorists are playing a much more important role in salvaging 'the heritage' than they are often given credit for. If modern farming is contributing to the destruction of artefacts in the soil, then the detectorists could provide the only hope of rescuing them before they degrade beyond recognition.

Ralph Jackson brought us up to date on his researches into cosmetic mortars including practical experiments to find out what they were used for. They are impractical for condiments such as pepper, and use for cosmetics still seems most likely. Following suggestions from Augst that Egyptian Blue might have been used for eye shadow, he used it in the mortars. Ralph reports that though it grinds up well, as eye shadow it is a bit of a non-starter given that it is gritty and doesn't stick on to the eyelids very well!

Jude Plouviez reported on an interesting group of brooches from Hacheston, and suggested that hinged Colchester derivatives might be an East Anglian variant. David Gurney spoke about an enigmatic pit group from Billingford which was full of circular things. Enigmatic objects were one of the features of the day and one is shown on p. 12 so that the wider membership can help identify it.

John Davies, who organised the day and gave the first paper on the reality of the Norfolk detector find recording system, is to be congratulated and thanked for organising such an informative and interesting day.

Hilary Cool

The RFG Questionnaire

Many thanks to the 78 members who returned the questionnaire, - an excellent response! We thought that you might be interested in the results which will certainly help us in planning meetings in the future. The original questions are summarised below with your responses - any discrepancies in the arithmetic are because not all questioned were answered.

Number of specialist groups to which members belong An average of 3 -the highest number was 10. Number of conferences attended annually Average 3.5 (greatest number 14) Members able to attend two conferences a year 42 (unable 29) Members who take leave to attend meetings 43 Payment of own expenses Yes 33; No 41 Members able to attend meetings in London 62 73 Members able to attend meetings outside London Areas: Scotland 19 Wales 24

North	42
Midlands	53
E Anglia	44
S West	26
S East	33

Members who travel by train (dependent upon public transport) 36
Preference for a museum-based venue
Yes 32; No 13; No preference 28
Members who would be able to attend a Saturday meeting 58
Members who would attend a practical session 63

Especial thanks to the twenty members who suggested possible venues for our meetings. We shall certainly be following some of these up, but it will take some time to get round to you all. Your other comments and suggestions were also very helpful. The cost of travel and the timing of meetings featured strongly as did the necessity of setting dates for meetings well in advance, particularly in the crowded months of September and October. There were also some good ideas for themes for future meetings. All these points have been noted and we welcome further suggestions at any time.

Angela Wardle (Membership Secretary) 1, Stebbing Farm Fishers Green STEVENAGE, Herts SG1 2JB

Notes and News

Northamptonshire Villas - Saturday 27th. April 1996

With luck this Newsletter should reach you just before this meeting which, as a regional meeting, is a new departure for the RFG. It is being held at the Central Museum, Guildhall Road, Northampton. In the morning, starting at 10.00, there is a programme of lectures on finds from Northamptonshire Villas, and in the afternoon at 2.15 reports on reconstruction of Roman military equipment presented by Legio XIV.

The day is being organised by Roy Frindship-Taylor. Contact him at Toad Hall, 86 Main Road, HACKLETON, Northampton, NN7 2AD (tel. 01604 870312)

September meeting of the RFG - advance notice

The next full RFG meeting will be held on Monday September 30th. at the Museum of London. The programme is still being finalised but there will be an opportunity to view the new Roman Gallery. Further details will be sent out nearer the time.

The Golden Age of Northumberland

Members might be interested to know of this conference to be held at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in July (22-26:7:96), even though the subject matter is Anglo-Saxon rather than Roman. The draft programme looks excellent and includes the delightful title What's in the cupboard? Ezra and St. Mathew reconsidered. The conference fee is £35 and bed and breakfast accommodation is available for £21.75 a night. Details can be obtained from Dr. Jane Hawkes, Dept. of English Literary and Linguistic Studies; University of Newcastle upon Tyne, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE1 7RU (phone 0191 222 7619; fax 0191 222 8708;

e-mail: a.j.hawkes@newcastle.ac.uk

Cheap books from English Heritage

English Heritage are selling off some of their excavation monographs cheaply. Those that will interest Romanists include *Verulamium: King Harry Lane* (product code XA 13012); *Gorhambury* (product code XA 10271); *Corbridge - Fort and Town* (product code XA 13008); *Corbridge - hoard* (product code XA 13007) and *Vindolanda* (product code XA 13001). The sale price is £10 for each volume bought singly, £18 for two or £25 for three.

Cheques should be made payable to English Heritage and orders (quoting the product codes) should be sent to English Heritage, PO Box 229, NORTHAMPTON NN6 9QY. They also take Access and Visa and even have a credit card hotline on 01604 781163.

Portable Antiquities - changes in the law?

The Department of National Heritage has just published a glossy booklet entitled Portable Antiquities: a discussion document looking at the vexed question of recording finds and reforming the Treasure Trove laws. The aim of the paper is to provide the background and set out the governments provisional view which is that 'a voluntary Code of Practice, combined with limited reform of the law of Treasure Trove, represents the best and most practical way forward. They are inviting comments on the subject especially on the respective merits of voluntary and compulsory reporting systems and on the details of how such systems would work. Comments should be sent no later than June 28th. 1996 to:-

Iain Newton, Heritage Division, Dept. of National Heritage, 2-4 Cockspur Street, LONDON S1Y 5DH

They are looking for a large and wide response so some of you might like to comment. Copies of the booklet can be obtained from the Dept of National Heritage by writing to them at the above address marking your letters for the attention of Ms A. Middleton.

Coal revisited

In Newsletter IX Martin Dearne contributed a note about the use of this material and promised full details in Antiquaries Journal.

Members might like to note that this article has now appeared. The full reference is:

Dearne, M. J. & Branigan, K. 'The use of coal in Roman Britain' Ant. J. 75 (1995), 71-105

Gladiators

We've had a letter appealing for help from Richard Perry who is working on an MA for the evidence of gladiators in Roman Britain. He says "I would be most grateful if you could give any assistance in this area in the form of helpful sites and actual finds of gladiatorial equipment, tombstones of gladiators, basically anything at all which might help prove their presence in Britain". He does not say whether he has already done his basic lit. search, so it is not clear whether he is looking for new or old finds. Anyone wanting to be helpful should write to him at 8 Aberystwth St., Splott, CARDIFF CF2 2EW.

Hilary Cool