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No 18

THE SAXON SHORE

Edited by D E Johnston

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1977

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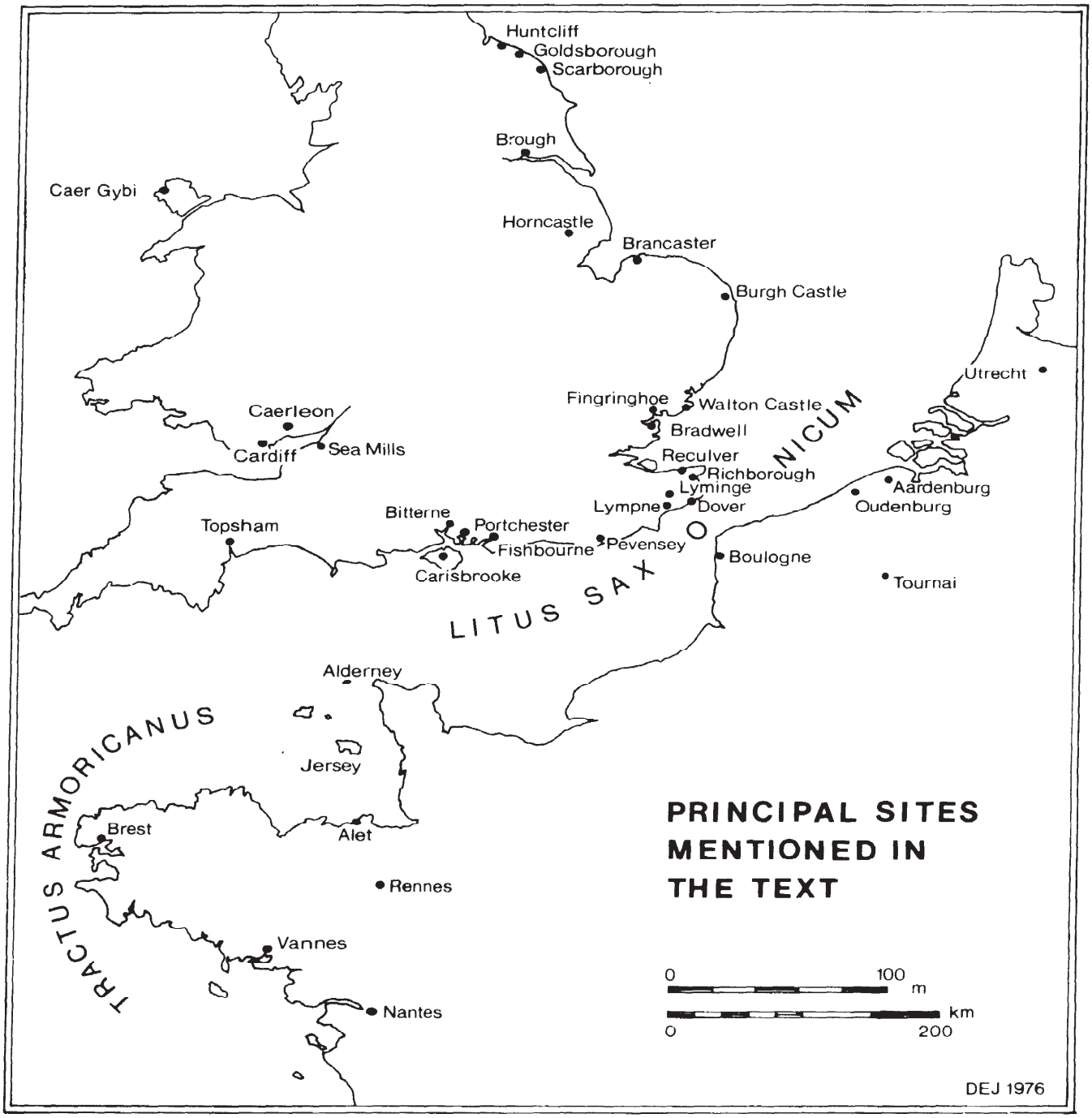
The Council for British Archaeology



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List of Contributors

H F Cleere, BA, FSA, Director, Council for British Archaeology
B W Cunliffe, MA, PhD, FSA, Professor of European Archaeology in the University of Oxford
D A Edwards, Norfolk Archaeological Unit
C J S Green, BA, Norfolk Archaeological Unit
M W C Hassall, MA, FSA, University of London, Institute of Archaeology
J S Johnson, Department of the Environment
D E Johnston, MA, Department of Adult Education, University of Southampton
L Langouët, Centre Régional Archéologique d'Alet, France
J C Mann, BA, PhD, FSA, Department of Archaeology, University of Durham
J Mertens, BA, Centre d'Archéologie National, University of Louvain, Belgium
B J Philp, Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit
S E Rigold, MA, FSA, Department of the Environment
K Sanquer, Directeur des Antiquités Historiques de Bretagne, Brest, France
C L Seillier, Conservateur, Musée Municipal de Boulogne, France
J J Wilkes, BA, PhD, FSA, Professor of the Archaeology of the Roman Provinces, University of London, Institute of Archaeology

Editor's Foreword

D E Johnston

This is the record of a research symposium held at West Dean College, Sussex, from 30 May to 1 June 1975. It was organized by the Editor of these papers for the Southampton University Department of Extra-Mural Studies, and was attended by 50 invited delegates from Britain, France, and Belgium. One of the speakers had recently completed a monograph on the Saxon Shore (Johnson 1976) and the publication of the Portchester excavations was impending (Cunliffe 1975), but it was felt that research in the last few years had advanced to the point where a review of current problems and unpublished research was desirable. Illness and excavation commitments deprived us of contributions on Boulogne and Dover respectively at the Symposium; however, both speakers have kindly supplied the texts of their papers for publication in this volume. It was a particular pleasure to welcome our continental colleagues and to discover the extent of common ground provided by the archaeology of the *Litus Saxonicum.*

An important feature of the symposium was the discussion, formal and informal, of the papers. This is not summarized separately here, but has been incorporated by the authors into their texts for publication. One topic, however, deserves special mention, as it appeared early in the proceedings and became a recurring theme: the nature of our evidence, material and historical. The inadequacy of the material was generally agreed, but a current of unease at the way in which it is sometimes handled was soon apparent. The most outspoken critic of some attitudes was Dr Richard Reece, who has provided the following summary of what was said.

'The Saxon Shore is a historical problem, if it is a problem at all. It can probably never be an archaeological problem because it is a written term appearing in only one document, and the one historical source, at the moment, cannot be equated with anything archaeological, with anything like certainty. In this period of uncertainty, which I would expect to be infinite, but which some people may hope and believe will some day end, we must be extremely careful to ask the right questions of the right evidence. We must ask historical questions of historical sources and archaeological questions of archaeological sources, and never get the two mixed up. This seems so obvious when put on paper that it is scarcely worth saying; it would not have been worth saying if there had not been unhappy examples at the Symposium of just this sort of muddle.

Stephen Johnson raised the matter of the meaning of the term "Saxon Shore". He raised it, very properly, in order to consign it to an archaeological limbo, but his lead was not followed and there was improper (in my terms) discussion on whether this was the shore settled *by* the Saxons or *against* the Saxons, using archaeological evidence. The discussion got nowhere because no simple answer is extractable from a muddled question addressed to the wrong sources. If the discussion had centred on the use of similar terms in the *Notitia* and associated documents, that is, if the historical question had been asked of historical sources, we might have got somewhere.

In general I think we can make the sweeping statement that archaeological evidence in its simple form can never answer historical questions. In all cases there has to be a "calibration" of the simple archaeological evidence before it can be used in historical research. Thus the simple number of coins found in different chronological periods on a site can never be used as historical data. It quite simply is no such material. The fact that the coins at Richborough and many other Shore Forts end in the decade 400–410 does not of itself even suggest that occupation ceased in the same decade, because every site in Britain and most sites in France and Italy which have coins of the period 388–402 have no later coins. In fact, the mints supplying the West with copper coinage seem to have stopped large-scale production at this time. In this example then we have a raw archaeological fact that coin lists of Saxon Shore Forts end at 410 at the latest. This fact is not yet ready to be asked historical questions; we must "calibrate" it with other facts, both archaeological and historical.

First, we look at other sites in the same country, for we can only say that some unusual historical event happened at the Shore forts, as demonstrated by the coins, if this archaeological fact is peculiar to those forts. Inspection of other sites shows that our essential fact is to be found at all other sites in Britain, and many others. Secondly, we need to look at the coin lists of sites known to be deserted in the decade from historical evidence, and to compare our site with these calibrated sites. In fact, the second course is vitiated by the results of looking around at other sites.

Exactly the same reasoning applies to rises and falls in the number of coins at, say, Richborough and Portchester. The crude archaeological fact of a rise or fall is historically useless; worse, it is often misleading. First in the process of calibration comes the look to see if this change is peculiar to the site, and then, if it is, a connexion must be made with another site which shares the peculiarity and has the added advantage of a historical explanation safely chronicled in historical sources.

The case has been argued from coins; it would be very sad if people assumed that the case only applies to numismatic evidence. It applies to all artifactual and material evidence which is not inscribed (and much that is!). No such evidence can be used for historical reasoning in its crude form; it must be proved unusual and it must be calibrated by reference to similar material which can be linked to a historical source. Where there are no historical sources there can be no proper use of historical terms. But that is straying too far outside my brief. First let us wage a serious battle to tidy up the thinking of Romanists and other historical archaeologists; only when this has been done can we tear to pieces prehistorians who still talk about dynasties and invasions.'

In conclusion, the participants wish to record their thanks to the Edward James Foundation, and to the Principal and staff of the West Dean College for the agreeable surroundings in which the Symposium took place, and to the Council for British Archaeology for making possible the publication of the proceedings. Contributions that were written in French have been translated by Mr H Cleere. The Editor would add his personal thanks to the contributors for revising their papers for this volume.

The Saxon Shore—some problems and misconceptions

Barry Cunliffe

Summary

With four exceptions, archaeological investigation of the Shore forts has been inadequate. A Carausian date for them all is untenable and a broad historical development, open to modification, can be traced. The limitations of coin evidence for close dating are demonstrated; typoloy and structural evidence are useful for chronology, while Portchester is the only site for which a full occupation sequence has been produced by excavation. Internal arrangements of other forts are incompletely known. The forts were all purely military establishments. Future excavation elsewhere may show that civilian occupation in the 4th century was the norm, and explain the Germanic-style equipment (possibly evidence for laeti). *The place of the forts in an evolving scheme of coastal defence is discussed, and the uncertainties noted. The need for a more rigorous approach to excavation, analysis, and publication is emphasized.*

There can be few major topics in Romano-British archaeology for which the factual base is so slight, but about which so much has been written, than the forts of the Saxon Shore. The very name inspires the imagination, whilst the paucity of hard fact has allowed unbridled freedom to creative minds in the past. The purpose of this short paper is to array the principal classes of evidence available to us at present and to suggest some possible directions for future study.

There are two sources of direct evidence: chapter xxviii of the *Notitia Dignitatum,* which lists the garrisons of nine coastal forts under the command of the *comes litoris Saxonici,* and the physical remains of the forts themselves, ten in number (or twelve if we include Carisbrooke and *Clausentum*). The potential significance of the *Notitia* is discussed in detail by Mr Hassall below (p 7): here we will concentrate largely upon the extent and limitations of the archaeological evidence.

History of Shore fort excavations

Apart from Walton Castle, which has disappeared into the sea, the remaining forts are partially or substantially complete, and all, without exception, have been dug into at one time or another.

The three East Anglian forts, Brancaster, Burgh, and Bradwell, are the least extensively examined, excavation for the most part having been restricted to trial trenches through the defences (St Joseph 1936 for Brancaster and VCH Essex III for Bradwell), but at Burgh more extensive trenching of the interior has been carried out by Mr Charles Green but is unpublished (Morris 1948; Morris and Hawkes 1949 for summary of early work).

The sites of Kent are better known. Reculver, on the north coast, has been the scene of seventeen seasons of excavation under the direction of Brian Philp (1952–68). Although the work has not yet been published in detail, an interim account (Philp 1969) gives some idea of the significance of the project. Richborough, Reculver's south-easterly neighbour, has also been subject to a seventeen-season campaign of excavations (1922–38), but the complexities of the site and the early period at which the excavation was undertaken has meant that our knowledge of the 3rd and 4th century levels is incomplete and obscurities remain (Bushe-Fox 1926, 1928, 1932a, 1949; Cunliffe 1968, 245–51).

Undoubtedly one of the most important recent projects in Shore fort studies has been the recognition and excavation of the *Classis Britannica* fort and the superimposed Shore fort at Dover. Brian Philp's work here cannot fail to greatly improve our understanding of the theme here under discussion (Philp 1971 a, b).

The fourth Kentish site, Lympne, is still virtually unknown. Limited excavation by Roach Smith (1850, 1852) has done much to whet the appetite but problems abound. It is hoped, however, that the potential of the site may soon be further tested (below p 29). Much the same can be said of Pevensey. Roach Smith (1858), Salzman (1907, 1908 a, b), Bushe-Fox (1932b), and later Cottrill (unpublished) have all undertaken limited excavations, but the evidence needs to be gathered together for re-assessment.

Of the western group of sites only Portchester has been examined on a large scale: between 1961 and 1972 the author directed a campaign of excavations concerned first with the defences and later with the total stripping of about one-eighth of the interior (Cunliffe 1975). *Clausentum* (Bitterne), whatever its status, was partially examined some years ago (Waterman 1947; Cotton and Gathercole 1958), while Carisbrooke, another enigmatic site possibly belonging to the Shore fort category, has received some attention (Rigold 1966) but the results are still unpublished in detail.

In summary, of the twelve relevant sites, one (Walton) has been washed away, one (Richborough) has been excavated on a large scale but before excavation techniques had advanced sufficiently to cope with complex stratigraphy, one (Dover) is being excavated under rescue conditions; two (Reculver and Portchester) have been subject to extensive modern research excavations; and the remaining six have all been sampled with varying degrees of competence.

The first archaeologist to attempt to study the Shore fort problem using the results of excavation was Charles Roach Smith. In three works (1850, 1852, 1858) he dealt first with Richborough, Reculver, and Lympne, next in more detail with Lympne, and finally with Pevensey, integrating the results obtained by previous workers as well as his own researches into a coherent account of each site. By the standards of the day his work was outstanding. It was not until Bushe-Fox gathered together some new material (1932b), derived largely from Richborough and the Office of Works clearance programmes carried out elsewhere, that any further advance could be made. The situation was summed up by Donald Atkinson in 1933 in a paper unsurpassed for 30 years. Atkinson followed Bushe-Fox and others in accepting that the Shore forts were probably of different construction dates, while agreeing that most remained in use throughout the greater part of the 4th century.

Here the matter rested until Donald White, in a PhD dissertation later to be published (White 1961), put forward the view that all the Shore forts were built by Carausius, probably as a defence against the re-occupation of Britain by Imperial troops. This interpretation did not accord with the evidence available even in 1961 and has not met with

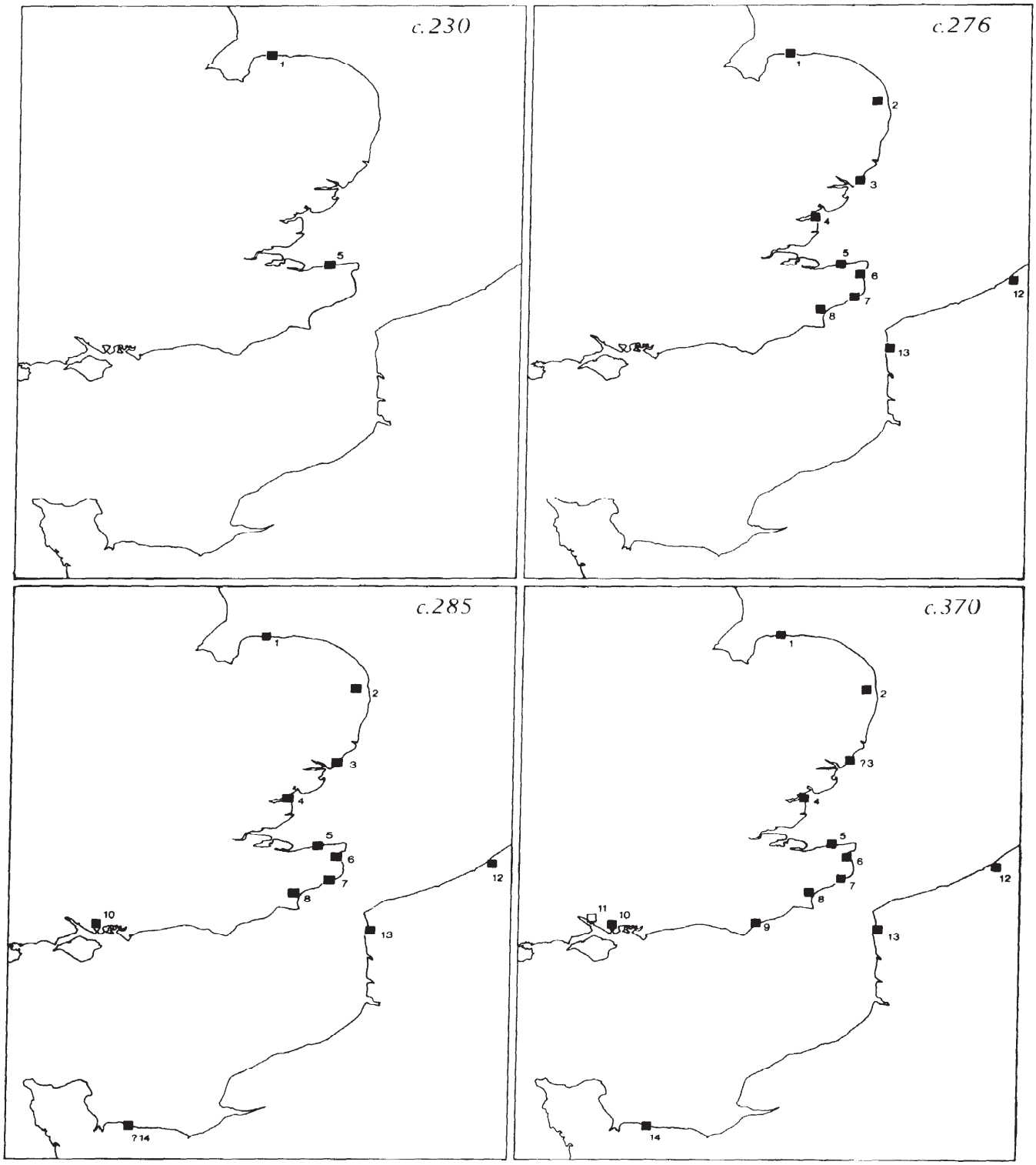

Fig 2 The Shore Forts: chronology

1 Brancaster
2 Burgh Castle
3 Walton Castle
4 Bradwell
5 Reculver
6 Richborough
7 Dover
8 Lympne
9 Pevensey
10 Portchester
11 Clausentum
12 Oudenburg
13 Boulogne
14 Garrianonum

general acceptance. A few years later the present writer Cunliffe 1968) restated the arguments for forts being of varying construction dates and attempted to present the evidence in terms of a broad historical development, While this general thesis still holds good, many points now require correction or modification (this volume, *passim).*

Origins and chronology

The 2nd century forts of the *Classis Britannica* will be dealt with elsewhere in this volume (pp 16–19); here we are concerned with the forts constructed in the 3rd and 4th centuries.

Conventional dating evidence for the construction phases of the forts is sparse and may be summarized in a few paragraphs.

At Pevensey Bushe-Fox claimed to have found a coin of 330–5 in a void beneath the wall (Bushe-Fox 1932b, 67). If the void was formed by the rotting of a timber baulk used in the foundations, as seems likely, there are two possible interpretations—either the coin was sealed between timber and masonry at the time of construction or the coin reached its position after the timber had rotted. While it is tempting to accept the former explanation, not least because it accords well with other dating indications, the evidence quite clearly must remain ambiguous.

At Portchester, however, coins can be directly used to date the construction of the fort. In a thin lens of mud deposited during the construction phase, two coins were found, one of Tetricus and the other of Carausius (Cunliffe 1975, 60–l) the latter providing a *terminus post quem* in the mid 280s. At Richborough, on the other hand, coin evidence has been used to argue convincingly for a construction date in the 270s (Johnson 1970). Close dating has also been claimed for the wall which defends *Clausentum* where a coin of Valens was found in an occupation layer pre-dating the construction of the wall and partly sealed by a mortar spread deposited at the time of building (Waterman 1947, fig. 3, 157).

Unlike the forts of northern Britain, building inscriptions are virtually unknown in military contexts in the south. Only at Reculver has a fragmentary example been found and, although a date in the early decades of the 3rd century was originally proposed for it (Richmond 1961), Mann has shown that it cannot be more closely assigned than to the 3rd century in general (p 15 below).

Another approach, of more limited value, derives from the consideration of the coin histograms prepared for the individual sites. If it is assumed that coin lists fairly reflect coin loss on the site and that coin loss is related to the duration and intensity of occupation, individual histograms must bear some relationship to the history of the site. In practice this kind of evidence cannot be used too tightly, since the assumptions are totally unproven and some forts have produced are too few coins to be significant. Nevertheless there is some value in comparing histograms. This approach was briefly discussed by the author elsewhere (Cunliffe 1968, 262–6), where the contrast between the histograms of Portchester, Lympne, and Richborough and that from Pevensey was used to suggest that the first three forts originated in the late 3rd century, while Pevensey was probably not built until the 340s or even later. This general hypothesis is still acceptable.

There are, however, dangers in this approach. Stevens (1941, 138), impressed by the absence of coins post-dating 369 from Portchester, used this to argue that Portchester could not be the *Portus Adurni* listed in the *Notitia* since, he believed, the *Notitia* list reflected the situation after 369. When, after six years of digging at Portchester, the coin list had not significantly altered, the present writer was prepared to accept the abandonment of the fort in 369, but used the assumption to argue that since the histogram from Lympne ended at the same point and Lympne clearly was listed in the *Notitia,* Portchester *could* be identified with *Portus Adurni.* From this followed the conclusion that the *Notitia* must reflect a pre-369 situation (Cunliffe 1968, 269–71). The argument, while tenuous, held together. Within a few months of putting it forward, however, the first post-369 coins began to appear at Portchester, and the number has subsequently grown. The situation now is that not only can Portchester reasonably be identified as *Portus Adurni* (p 8), but the author's objection to the *Notitia* list post-dating 369 has conveniently been removed. The dangers of using coin evidence too dogmatically cannot be overstated.

Given that direct dating evidence is sparse and somewhat unreliable, it is legitimate to attempt a typological approach. That the forts vary in size and shape is well established. Structurally the earliest should be Brancaster and Reculver. Both are without bastions, but have rounded corners and internal banks and Brancaster has corner turrets. Moreover, the internal arrangements, so far as they can be gauged from the air photographs of Brancaster and the interim note on the excavation at Reculver, conform to 2nd and early 3rd century layouts. On these rounds both may reasonably be placed before the middle of the 3rd century, possibly in the early decades of that century, a suggestion borne out in the case of Reculver by associated finds (Philp, 1969, 15–19). Next typologically comes Burgh, less regular in plan but with rounded corners, and apparently, internal turrets begun but not finished. That its external bastions butted to the lower part of the wall but bonded into the upper courses strongly supports the view that the fort is a transitional example between 2nd/early 3rd century types and those of the late 3rd and 4th centuries.

The divergence from strict rectangularity noted at Burgh is also demonstrated by the forts of Bradwell, Richborough, Lympne, and Dover. A date in the 270s has been argued for Richborough but the others, apart from displaying some evidence for late 3rd and 4th century occupation, are at present undated. It is tempting to regard tham all as broadly contemporary and possibly belonging to the 260s and 270s, but such a contention must be regarded as highly tentative pending further evidence.

Portchester differs from the forts already described in that it is strictly regular in plan and somewhat larger than those discussed so far (8½ acres compared with an average 6–7½ acres). Moreover, dating evidence would point to construction some time in or soon after the mid-280s. It is the only fort for which a Carausian building date can still be argued.

Excluding Walton and Carisbrooke, for which no reasonable evidence is available, the remaining two sites, Bitterne *(Clausentum)* and Pevensey, both show novel features, in particular in their plans, which are determined largely by the contours of the land upon which they were built. We have seen that there is some suggestion that Pevensey dates to the 340s or later, while the wall of *Clausentum* must postdate a coin of Valens (364–79). Both are therefore likely to belong to the latter half of the 4th century.

The establishment of an occupation sequence at each fort

The question of an internal chronology for the activity within each fort is particularly difficult to approach. Some, like Reculver and Brancaster, were probably occupied for more than 150 years, others like Pevensey for 60 or 70 years. During this time there must have been rebuilding, re-arrangement, and possibly periods of non-use, but to recognize this archaeologically is a difficult matter. The only fort for which a reliable sequence has been produced is Portchester. Here, using the evidence from the stratified levels against the fort wall and correlating it with the stratigraphy of the interior, it has been possible to define six phases, some with sub-divisions (Cunliffe 1975, 38–63). Each phase can be dated with tolerable accuracy by the associated coins.

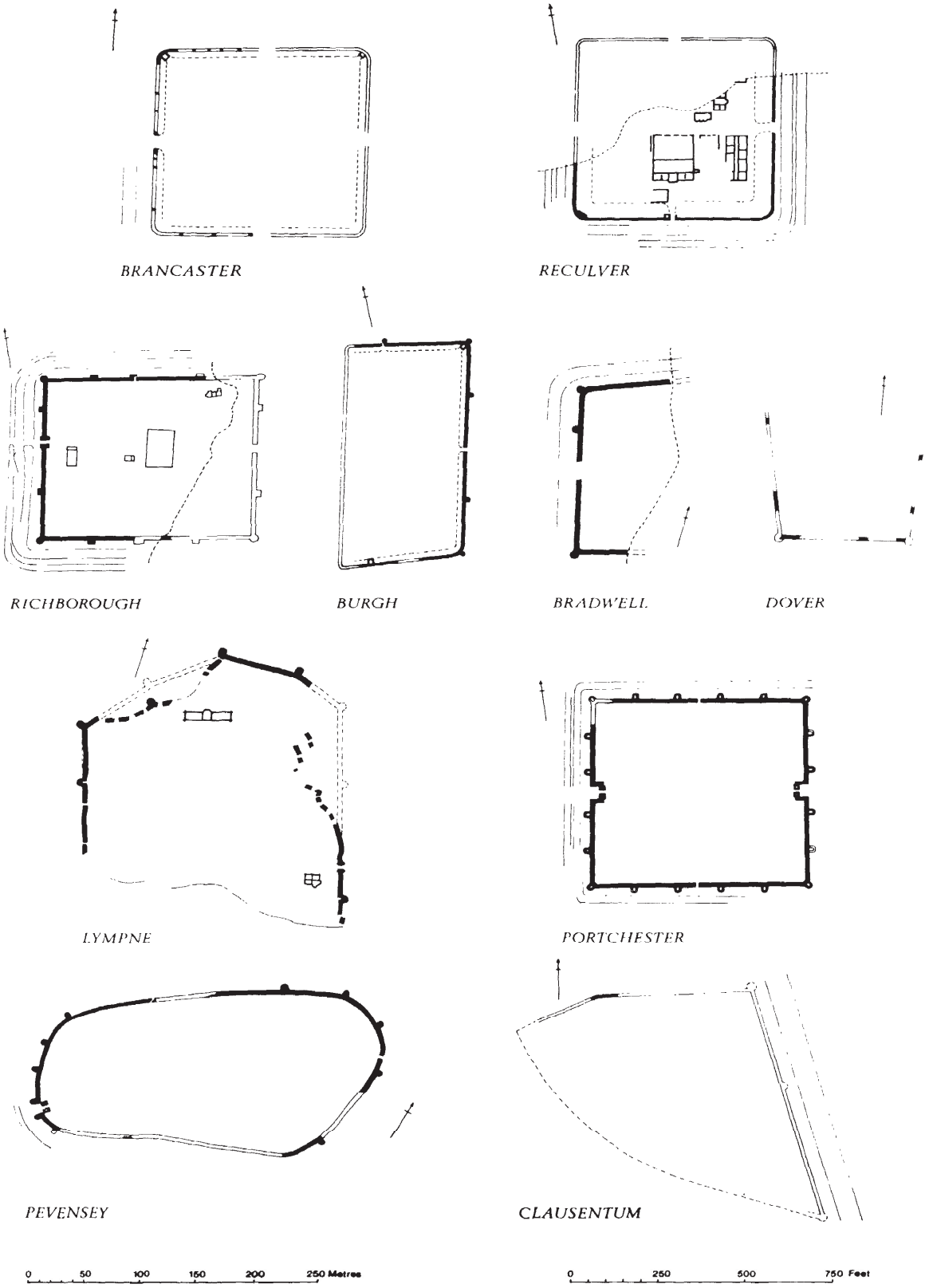

Fig 3 The Shore Forts: comparative plans

Elsewhere the evidence is sparse. At Reculver, three different phases have been recognized (Philp 1969, 18–19) and one might anticipate similar results from Dover. At Richborough regrettably little stratigraphy of the late 3rd and 4th century survived. At other forts excavation has been on too limited a scale.

Only when a detailed framework of phases has been constructed for the internal occupation of a fort, as is now the case at Portchester, is it possible to examine structural, economic, and social change within the site. Without this the limits of interpretation are very strictly circumscribed. Moreover, we cannot begin to make meaningful historical comparisons until this kind of information is available from several forts.

Internal buildings

Evidence for internal buildings is not plentiful, but it is clear that Reculver, with its *principia* and orderly planned buildings of masonry, including what is presumably a commandant's house with baths (Philp 1969, 7–13) represents the traditional type of fort plan. Recent aerial photography at Brancaster (below p 21) has here too demonstrated the existence of a *principia* and another large building, possibly the commandant's house. There can therefore be little doubt that both forts were built for, and occupied by, regular military garrisons, whose presence is now attested by stamped tiles; *cohors I Aquitanorum* from Brancaster (Hassall, below p 7) and *cohors I Baetasiorum* at Reculver. Whether or not these garrisons were the first to occupy the forts is impossible to say, but the latter was still in residence at Reculver later in the 4th century, since it was so listed in the *Notitia.*

In the later forts military-type buildings are virtually unknown, with the exception of the *principia* (?) at Lympne and the small bath buildings at Lympne and Richborough. Beside these Richborough can boast a masonry structure, possibly a *principia,* which was erected on the foundation of the old *quadrifrons* and two other buildings which may be guild rooms (Cunliffe 1968, 247–8).

No masonry buildings have yet been found at Portchester, where one-eighth of the interior has been excavated, but traces of widely spaced timber structures built on horizontal ground sills have come to light together with metalled streets, all belonging to a phase of rebuilding dated to the 340s (Cunliffe 1975, 64-70). Before this, apart from temporary structures of the construction period and masses of occupation rubbish which accumulated over the next half century, there is little evidence of permanent building. Much the same situation appears to be true for most of the interior of Richborough (Cunliffe 1968, 246–7), for Pevensey (Salzman 1907, 4–10), and for the other forts. Whatever the status of the occupants, they were not provided with the same ordered facilities as a military detachment of the 2nd or early 3rd century.

Social and economic implications

So far we have assumed, along with most scholars, that the Shore forts were purely military installations, but even this assumption should not go unchallenged. There can be little reasonable doubt that Brancaster and Reculver housed garrisons, at least in the first half of the 3rd century, and that nine of the forts were similarly manned in the late 4th century, but what of the later 3rd and early-mid 4th century? Again we must rely on Portchester, which has produced the only extensively published collection of material from a Shore fort, uncontaminated by earlier rubbish survival. Briefly summarized, the site has yielded weapons, horse gear, and Germanic-style belt fittings much as one would expect, together with evidence of domestic activities including iron and bronze smelting, lead working, the manufacture of objects from antler, bone, and horn, spinning and weaving, and baking. In addition to this, fishing is attested and there is the strong probability that cattle were brought into the fort, there to be slaughtered and butchered. In short, the activities represented throughout the 4th century are little different from those of a normal civilian settlement site.

The structure of the population, too, is interesting. The presence of women is hinted at by jewellery and women's shoes and is confirmed by the large number of infant burials found in pits or rubbish layers: four before 325, eighteen between 325 and 345, and five after 345. The clear implication is that women were part of the resident community throughout the 4th century.

To assess the ethnic origin of the population is extremely difficult. The Germanic-style belt fittings can no longer be taken to imply immigrants or mercenaries, but one of the shoes from a mid-4th century well is considered to be of Germanic inspiration (Ambrose 1975, 260). The strong probability is therefore that Portchester was inhabited by a community of families, perhaps serving in a confederate capacity and possibly including people drawn from the continent. It is not impossible that we are looking at the archaeological manifestation of *laeti.* The apparent disorder within the fort, the digging of cesspits in profusion, and the tipping of masses of stinking occupation debris against the inside of the fort walls throws an interesting light on the style of life in at least one of the Shore forts in the 4th century. Similar evidence, but less extensively explored or published, from several of the other sites suggests that the situation in Portchester may have been the norm.

The historical context

In the foregoing sections we have examined some aspects of the direct archaeological evidence derived from Shore forts, and have attempted to arrive at broad conclusions; it remains now to consider these conclusions in the context of the history of the Province.

Elsewhere in this volume (p 16) the evidence for the *Classis Britannica* is discussed and it has been suggested that the fleet bases were abandoned at the end of the 2nd or beginning of the 3rd century (Cleere 1975). If this is so, it is very tempting to link this event with the construction, probably early in the 3rd century, of Brancaster and Reculver, the former guarding the Wash, the latter the Thames Estuary. Much will, of course, depend on the accurate dating of the end of the *Classis Britannica* bases at Dover and, when it is found, of Lympne. Equally important will be the establishment of the precise construction dates of Brancaster and Reculver. On present showing, however, it seems unlikely that a significant period existed between these two events. If this is so, some explanation is required.

While it is possible that changes in sea level were in part responsible, the Severan campaigns in Scotland provide a more likely context. Massive naval support would have been necessary to mount the seasons of campaigning, support for which is most likely to have been drawn from the home bases of the fleet along the Channel coast. After the advance was over and the frontier re-established along the old Hadrianic line, it is not impossible that the fleet remained in the north, their functions in the south being replaced by military cohorts established at Brancaster and Reculver. This explanation, while containing the available facts, is at best highly tentative.

The next development would seem to have been the construction of Burgh, perhaps to guard the Yare inlet, and the digging of the triple ditch system at Richborough around the old *quadrifrons,* which must now have served as a look-out post, possibly functioning in relation to Reculver. The exact date of these works is obscure but some time in the middle of the 3rd century seems likely.

It is to the third quarter of the 3rd century that many of the rest of the Shore forts probably belong, the type which is defined above as characterized by integral bastions and a lack of strict rectangularity in plan. These include Bradwell and possibly Walton in East Anglia and Richborough, Dover, and Lympne guarding the Channel crossing. The forts of this latter group were probably all built on, or close

to, the sites of earlier *Classis Britannica* bases. If all five sites were constructed in response to a single stimulus (and the matter is extremely difficult to prove), a likely occasion might well have been in the aftermath of the events of 276, when Gaul was overrun by barbarians from the north and the situation only narrowly saved by Probus. British administrators cannot have failed to have been alarmed by European events. The addition of new forts to an already partially defended coast would have been an understandable response. Once again, however, one must stress that without precise dating evidence this suggestion remains unproven.

The appointment of Carausius in 285 with the stated task of 'pacifying the seas in the region of Belgica and Armorica' (Eutropius ix, 21) was a highly significant event in the history of Shore defences. If we are correct above, Carausius would have inherited eight forts protecting inlets from the Wash to the Channel, together with Boulogne and Oudenburg and possibly other forts on the French and Belgian coasts. In other words the installations necessary to protect the sea of 'Belgica' (the North Sea) were already in existence, needing only an efficient fleet to convert them into an effective weapon against roving pirate bands.

The sea of 'Armorica' (the English Channel west of the Straits of Dover) was, on the other hand, undefended, but it was precisely at this time that Portchester was built. The clear implication would seem to be that Portchester was designed to function as a long-stop in the event of any raiding party breaking through the defensive barrier created bv the forts on either side of the Straits of Dover. Portchester may have been used in conjunction with one of the northern French forts, each having a navy capable of striking at an enemy far out to sea (Cunliffe 1975, 431-2). The structural details for this phase of Portchester have been fully considered elsewhere (Cunliffe 1975, 428-9): suffice it to say that there is some evidence to suggest that the Carausian occupation was slight and short-lived. Indeed the fort was probably abandoned early in the 290s and not re-occupied until the early years of the 4th century. This would be understandable if, as the historical sources imply, Carausius achieved rapid success over the pirates. In these circumstances a rearward base soon would have become unnecessary.

The main historical events of the Carausian period and its aftermath are well known and need not be repeated here (Frere 1974, 376-82). The re-establishment of central government control over Britain in 296 would have created the occasion for the re-assessment of the shore defences. It was at about this time or a little after that Portchester began to be occupied by a community, including women and children, which may have been at least partially civilian. The ethnic origin of the group, whether native or immigrant, remains obscure. If the situation at Portchester is found to be true of the other forts, it may well be the Constantinian policy involved the deliberate settlement of the old coastal forts by a peasant militia. The problem is an intriguing one, but difficult to examine further without more evidence.

About the middle of the 4th century, raids began to be recorded again. it was at this time that Pevensey was built, and there is some evidence to suggest tidying up and rebuilding at Portchester. Whether these works were carried out at the instigation of Constans, who paid a rapid visit to Britain in the winter of 342, or were later is impossible to decide, but it was probably at this time that the command of *comes litorus Saxonici* was established (Frere 1974, 388-9). Much has been written on the exact implication of these words (summarized in White 1961, 73-82), but if a Germanic element was present among the garrisons, as now seems possible, the views of those who believe that the title refers to the shore *settled* by 'Saxons' is somewhat strengthened

The 'barbarian conspiracy' of 367 and the re-establishment of order two years later, after a period of virtual anarchy, must have left some mark on the shore defences. Count Theodosius, the restorer of the Province, may well have been responsible for the troop deployments listed in the *Notitia* (Hassall, below p 7). All the old forts from Brancaster to Portchester were garrisoned, with the possible exception of Walton. (It should not be overlooked, however, that Walton may have headed the original *Notitia* list only to be subsequently omitted by error: the way in which the names of the forts seem to be paired geographically would support this view (Hassall, below p 8). That *Clausentum* is not mentioned is significant. It is very much like a Shore fort in situation and style of building, and its wall was erected after 367. Its absence from the list must mean that it was not at this time under the Count's command and presumably therefore did not house a garrison.

After 370 the history of the Saxon Shore becomes obscure. Occupation probably continued in all the forts, while Richborough must have engaged in an activity which led to the loss of a very considerable number of coins (Reece, 1968). Explanations are not readily apparent, but Richborough may have served as some kind of currency control post between Britain and the Continent in the last years of Roman rule.

The forts would have provided convenient strongholds in the first half of the 5th century when Germanic mercenary settlement was giving way to widespread immigration, but so far it is only at Portchester that evidence of 5th century settlement is clearly attested. It would be surprising, however, if other forts had not been similarly used.

The title of this paper was intended to emphasize that the study of the Shore forts is fraught with difficulties. Evidence is sparse and what little exists is open to a variety of interpretations. The problems are nonetheless fascinating. But until the recent excavations have been published in detail and more large-scale work has been initiated, the major questions raised here will remain largely unanswered. Significant advances in our understanding will require a far more rigorous approach to excavation, analysis, and publication than has hitherto been evident.

The historical background and military units of the Saxon Shore

M W C Hassall

Summary

The Notitia Dignitatum *is our prime source for the officials, military units, and forts of the* Litus Saxonicum *and the* Tractus Armoricanus, *with support from inscriptions etc. The nature and purpose of the* Notitia *are stated, and the difficulties of detailed identification of units and forts discussed. The problems of the division of command between the governors in Britain and the Continent are noted; major and minor transfers of units on both sides of and across the Channel were probably dictated by events rather than initiated by an all-prescient Roman higher command.*

This contribution might equally have been entitled 'the Saxon Shore and the *Notitia Dignitatum',* since it consists basically of a commentary on what that document has to say about the forts and units under the command of the *Comes Litoris Saxonici.* The attempt to do this requires no apology in the conference on the shore, since *without* the *Notitia* there would be no Saxon Shore at all; at least, historians and archaeologists would have to think up a new name for it, since the term *Litus Saxonicum* is found only in the passages of the *Notitia.* Some such survey is also rendered timely by the appearance of Hoffmann's *Das Spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum* (1969). This massive work, though confined to 4th and early 5th century field armies, is relevent to the nominally limitanean command of the *Comes,* since the relation between *comitatenses* and *limitanei* would appear to be more fluid then the rigid distinction found in the *Notitia* might suggest.

The precise character of the *Notitia* is, of course, relevent to the information that it contains and it would be as well to say something first of the nature and purpose of the *Notitia.* There are in reality two *'Notitias':* the *Notitia dignitatum omnium tam civilum quam militarium in partibus Orients,* and a similarly entitled *Notitia in partibus Occidentis.* The names reveal the function. They are handbooks or calendars of offices, both military and civil, in the eastern and western parts of the Empire respectively. The *Notitia,* as the two together are often loosely called, survives in manuscript copies made at three or four removes from an early 5th century original, and the most important of these copies are now in libraries in Munich, Paris, and Oxford. The lost originals from which they were ultimately derived should have belonged to the departments of the chief secretaries of the Imperial chanceries in the east and west, the *Primicerii Notariorum.* In fact, the archetypes for both the western and the eastern *Notitia* may have originated in the department of the western *Primicerius,* a copy of the eastern *Notitia,* which is less up-to-date, being kept by him for reference purposes. One important aspect of the *Notitia* is explained by the actual function of the *Primicerius:* it was his task, among other things, to issue to appointees the illuminated commissions of their appointment to office in the form of small books or codicils. These codicils were embellished with the insignia of office of the official concerned, and it may well have been one of the main functions (if not the main function) of the *Notitia* to provide a series of exemplars of all the insignia. This explains why certain sections of the *Notitia* are 'out-of-date', a statement which immediately begs a question. The exemplars of all insignia would remain in date and on file until a particular post was known to have been abolished for good. Thus the inclusion of so-called 'obsolete' British material in the *Notitia* after a date at which the British provinces had been abandoned is interesting as a statement of official policy towards Britain: the island had not yet been written off by the Roman higher command even if there was as yet no immediate possibility of recovering it.

Besides the insignia of office, the sections or chapters of the *Notitia* also list the hierarchical subordinates of the particular officials concerned. Thus among the lists of *comites* (counts) and *duces* (dukes) in charge of regional frontier armies subject to the *Magister Peditum* in the west, we find the Count of Britain in charge of a small field army, and the Count of the Saxon Shore and the Duke of the Britons in charge of the garrisons of Hadrian's Wall and the Wall hinterland. This aspect of the *Notitia* is a valuable one, since it allows historians to define the military and bureaucratic structure of the Empire of the 4th century. Similarly, at a lower level, the individual sections devoted to the Duke of the Britons and Count of the Saxon Shore list the commanders, prefects, and tribunes of the different units under their command and the names of the forts which they garrisoned.

Turning now in detail to the command of the Count of the Saxon Shore and his section in the western *Notitia (Not. Dis. Occ.* XXVIII), his insignia consists of a stylized 'map' of Britain with nine garrison sites represented by pictures of forts (in some manuscript versions looking more like fortified towns) dotted over the island. The forts are labelled with their names but their positions on the 'map' do not correspond to geographical reality; instead they correspond to the order of forts in the list of units and bases that follows. This list is in part defective, for the names of two of the bases *(Rutupis* and *Anderidos)* have dropped out from the manuscripts but they can be supplied from the captions of the forts on the insignia. Indeed, it is likely that the captions initially derived from the list, and so we are justified in using them in this way. This can be shown to be definitely the case elsewhere, e.g. the 'fort site' *Corumosismis* on the insignia of the *Dux tractus Armoricani (Not. Dig. Occ.* XXXVII) obviously derives from the text entry *Praefectus militum Maurorum Osismiacorum Osismis (ibid.* line 17), or the 'fort site' *Nuncinercisa* on the insignia of the *Dux provinciae Valeriae (Not. Dig. Occ.* XXXIII) from the text entry *Cuneus equitum Constantianorum, Lusionio, nunc Inercisa. (ibid.* line 26).

With the names of the two missing fort sites restored, the list runs as follows:

Praepositus numeri Fortensium, Othonae
Praepositus militum Tungrecanorum, Dubris
Praepositus numeri Turnacensium, Lemanis
Praepositus equitum Dalmatarum Branodunensium, Branoduno
Praepositus equitum stablesianorum Gariannonensium, Gariannonor
Tribunus cohortis primae Baetasiorum, Regulbio
Praefectus legionis secundae Augustae, Rutupis
Praepositus numeri Abulcorum, Anderidos
Praepositus numeri exploratorum, Portum Adurni

Most of the nine garrison sites can be identified with certainty, partly due to the similarity between ancient and modern names (e.g. *Branodunum* = Brancaster, *Othona* = Ythanceaster, the old name for Bradwell) and partly through ancient geographical sources such as the Antonine Itinerary or the Peutinger Table, which though defective for most of Britain does include the south-east coast. The only difficulty arises from the fact that there are only nine names whereas if one counts Walton Castle, Essex, whose site has now been eroded into the sea, there are ten sites which are strong candidates to be included in the Shore fort series. C E Stevens (1941) explained the anomaly by eliminating Portchester (usually identified with *Portus Adurni)* from the series as listed in the *Notitia,* since on the archaeological evidence then available it did not appear to have been occupied in the second half of the 4th century. He then attached the name to the otherwise unnamed site at Walton. We now know, however, that Portchester did remain in occupation, so that the formal resemblance between the first element in the name and that of *Portus Adurni* should allow one to draw the natural conclusion that the two sites should be identified.

A second reason for defending this identification can be found in a phenomenon pointed out by Stevens himself: although the fort sites of the Saxon Shore do not follow a strict geographical order in the *Notitia,* as for example is followed by the forts of Hadrian's Wall listed under the command of the Duke of the Britains in *Not. Dig. Occ.* XL, they are not listed in a random fashion but appear to be paired on a geographical basis. Thus Dover makes a pair with Lympne in Kent, Brancaster with Burgh Castle both in East Anglia, Reculver with Richborough once more in Kent, and Pevensey and Portchester on the south coast. Only Bradwell at the beginning of the list is not paired, yet it would form a natural twin to Walton Castle. The omission of Walton from the manuscripts could be explained by the faulty manuscript tradition. Here one can compare the omission of the two fort names in the list of units and note the suggested position of the Walton entry at the beginning of the list: both the bottom of the folio containing the illustration or the top of the folio with the main body of the text would be particularly prone to damage. Alternatively the Walton unit could have been transferred (perhaps sea-erosion had already begun to threaten the site) and the entry deleted from the archetype. That the pairing of fort sites corresponded at least in part to an actual administrative pairing of units, a feature found elsewhere in the military organization of the 4th century, is suggested by the recurrence of the *Abulci* and *Exploratores,* the units at Pevensey and Portchester, as a pair under the command of the *Magister Equitum per Gallias (Not. Dig. Occ.* VII = *Distributio Numerorum* lines 109, 110). A detailed examination of these two and the other units of the shore system is now called for.

The Numerus Fortensium, Othonae (Bradwell)

There are difficulties in explaining the epithet *Fortenses.* Both Böcking (1839–53) and Hoffmann (1969) were of the opinion that units of *Fortenses* which are found both among troops of limitanean and comitatensian status were in origin vexillations of the old legion of Egypt, *II Traiana Fortis.* There are problems, however, though not necessarily insuperable ones, in accepting this view. In the first place the total number of *Fortenses* units is rather larger than one might have expected for all to have been derived from a single parent unit. Secondly legionary detachments ought, obviously, have given rise to infantry units, yet in the *Notitia* lists we find two cavalry units, a *cuneus equitum Fortensium* and a *cuneus equitum Dalmatarum Fortensium.* Hoffmann explained the former as a unit formed from the legionary cavalry like the calvalry units of *promoti* who are thought to have originated in this way. The latter he believed could have been accounted for by the amalgamation of a detachment of legionary cavalry with a cavalry unit of *Dalmatae.* The unit at Bradwell he thought should have belonged originally to the field arm. Its presence with the frontier forces on the shore could, he held, be explained as a transfer to Britain under Valentinian as a consequence of the troubles of 367. It is possible, however, to envisage a much earlier context for the transfer of a detachment of *legio II Traiana Fortis* to Britain. Victorinus complimented *II Traiana* among the legions honoured by him with special issue of *aurei* in the late 260s or early 270s. Ritterling (1924–25) interpreted this to mean that he had been accompanied by a vexillation of *II Traiana* when he came from the east to squash the independent Gallic empire, and that the detachment followed him when he went over to the rebels. After the final defeat of the Gallic Empire it would not have been inconceivable for Aurelian to have sent the disgraced unit to help hold the expanding Shore defences in Britain rather than return it to Egypt.

The Milites Tungrecani, Dubris (Dover), and the Numerus Turnacensium, Lemanis (Lympne)

Stevens linked these two units on the basis of their names and, indeed, the *Tungrecani* from Tungri (Tongres, as Aduatuca Tungrorum became in the later empire in the same way that Lutetia Parisiorum became Parisii) and the *Turnacenses* from Turnacum (Tournai) seem at first sight to be obviously connected in some way. He suggested that they had been sent from Tournai and Tongres after the strategic Cologne-Boulogne road had ceased to be garrisoned by regular Roman troops during the reign of Gratian (375–83). There are two objections to this. Firstly the fortified posts along this road—e.g. at Liberchies (Mertens 1969)—may here continued in occupation into the beginning of the 5th century. Secondly the different adjectival form of the geographical epithets of the units could be significant. The *Turnacenses* may well have been limitanean but the *Tungrecani,* as we know from the pages of Ammian, were a famous regiment of the field army. In fact there were two units of *Tungrecani,* the *Tungrecani Seniores* and *Tungrecani Iuniores* created from a single parent body after the division of the Imperial armies between Valentinian and Valens in 364 (Tomlin 1972). The presence of a detachment of the *Tungrecani* in Britain Hoffmann explained in the same way as the presence of the *Fortenses*— as a loan from the field army to the Shore drastically weakened as a result of the crisis of 367. But again another possibility would be that they were the *Tungrecani Iuniores* who proclaimed the usurper Procopius at Constantinople in 365 *(Amm.* XXVI, 6, 12). This unit unlike the *Seniores is* not specifically attested in the *Notitia* and a demotion to limitanean status would be perfectly natural, though the actual arrival of the unit in Britain might well not have taken place until reinforcements were sent after the disaster of 367. If the *Tungrecani* arrived at this late date, we may be justified in thinking that they were not the first unit to be in garrison at Dover.

The Equites Dalmatae Branodunenses, Branoduno (Brancaster) + cohors Prima Aquitanorum and the Equites Stablesiani Gariannonenses, Gariannonor. (Burgh Castle)

Units of Dalmatian cavalry were, we are specifically told by the Byzantine writer Cedrenus (Bonn edition I, 454) first raised by Gallienus (260-68). They also played a distinguished part in Claudius' wars against the Goths *(S.H.A. Claudius* 11.19). A unit of Dalmatian cavalry could therefore have come to Britain at any time after the recovery of the island with the rest of the Gallic Empire on the defeat of Tetricus in 274 but not before. This might be thought to cause difficulties for those who, like the present writer, would see in Brancaster a fort that is typologically among the earliest of the Shore forts, with rounded corners, internal bank, and no external bastions. This difficulty is, however, resolved by the recent find of a tile stamp of *Cohors I*

Aquitanorum just outside the Shore fort, since this unit can now be regarded as the original garrison *(Britannia* **6** (1975), 'Roman Britain in 1974', part II, inscriptions no. 25). *Cohors I Aquitanorum* has been previously attested at Carrawburgh on Hadrian's Wall under Hadrian *(RIB* 1550), and at Brough-on-Noe under Antoninus Pius *(RIB* 283), and there is no evidence as yet that it was ever stationed at a site in the Wall hinterland with easy access to the east coast. The point is important because it is just conceivable that the tile came to Brancaster as ship's ballast in the same way that a tile of *Legio VI Victrix P.F.* found at Gayton Thorpe, Norfolk, must almost certainly have come from York *(JRS* **47** (1957), 233). Professor J M C Toynbee (1962) has linked the Dalmatian cavalry at Brancaster with parts of two fine cavalry helmets found in the river Wensum which she dates stylistically to the 3rd century, a date which receives support from the recent study by Russell Robinson of Roman armour (1975).

Paired with the *Dalmatae* at Brancaster were the *Stablesiani* at Burgh Castle with its fine bastions and hints (if one could trust the indications of air photographs) of resemblances in the planning of buildings in the intervallum space to similarly sited buildings at Eining on the Rhaetian Limes. The name *Stablesiani,* which is applied to a large number of units in the *Notitia,* has recently been studied by Speidel (1974). His conclusion is that just as the legionary cavalry seem to have been promoted *('promoti')* to self-standing units under Gallienus, so the *stratores,* grooms or equerries on the staffs of provincial governors serving under the command of an officer, hypothetically named the *'stablensis',* were elevated to independent status at the same time. The explanation of the name is not entirely convincing but the date of the creation of these units seems on general grounds reasonable, in which case the arrival of the *Stablesiani* in Britain should have taken place like the *Dalmatae* after the recovery of the island together with the rest of the Gallic Empire by Aurelian in 274. If the British *Stablesiani* were identical with the unit of *Stablesiani* attested by the inscription on the famous Deurne helmet and associated coin finds in Holland under Constantine (Klumbach 1973). its arrival would have to be set even later and there might be a temptation to link its transfer with that of the *Turnacenses* from the same general area. There is, however, no compelling reason to identify these two units of *Stablesiani.* It is possible on the other hand that the *Stablesiani* at Burgh Castle, are the same unit listed in *Not. Dig. Occ.* VII, the *Distributio,* as serving (later) under the command of the Count of the Britains.

Cohors Prima Baetasiorum, Regulbio (Reculver), and Legio Secunda Augusta Rutupis (Richborough)

Both were units of the garrison of the early Empire in Britain and for this reason an administrative pairing quite apart from the proximity of their two garrison sites seems reasonable. But the real twin to Reculver is Brancaster which is typologically so close to it—at both there are the same rounded corners, internal earth banks, and lack of bastions and tile course, all early features. The siting of these two, protecting the approaches to the Thames estuary and the Wash respectively, both particularly vulnerable avenues of attack for seaborne raiders, also suggests that the two sites were the earliest elements in the defensive system of the south east. *Cohors I Baetasiorum,* attested at Reculver not only by the *Notitia* but also by tile stamps (e.g. JRS **51** (1961), 196), would then be matched by *Cohors I Aquitanorum,* now shown by a tile stamp to have been at Brancaster. The *Baetasii,* like the Aquitanians, can be traced by finds of inscriptions at other forts in Britain: at Maryport in the late 2nd century *(RIB* 830, 837, 838, 842, 843), and at Bar Hill on the Antonine Wall *(RIB* 2169, 2170). A recently found altar from Old Kilpatrick *(Britannia* **1** (1970), 310-I) set up by the unit has been dated by Professor E Birley to the time of Severus, but more probably indicates that the unit was stationed at the fort in the second Antonine occupation of the Wall (Breeze and Dobson 1969-70). Reculver is unique in having produced a building inscription which one day may give us a hard date for the construction (or reconstruction) of part of the *principia (JRS* **51** (1961), 191; *JRS* **55** (1965), 220). Unfortunately the governor of Britannia Superior, mentioned on the stone, probably Aradius rather than Triarius Rufinus, cannot be precisely dated. Professor A R Birley (1967) dates his governorship very tentatively to the period AD 238–44.

Legio II Augusta, a vexillation of which formed the garrison at Richborough, has been the subject of a study by Jarrett (1964), who has pointed out that the latest epigraphic evidence for the unit at its old base at Caerleon is a building inscription *(RIB* 334) recording the buildings of barracks *a solo* for the seventh cohort of the legion under Valerian and Gallienus, which, Jarrett suggests, might imply the cohort's return to Caerleon after a prolonged absence, perhaps at Corbridge. If Johnson (1970) is right and the construction of Richborough dates as early as the reign of Probus—or even his predecessor Aurelian, who took the title *Britannicus Maximus* (it occurs on one inscription and one papyrus only, *CIL III,* 12333 and *Pap. Lips.* I. 119)—the section of *Legio II Augusta* that is found there could be the first unit in garrison, whether or not a part still remained at Caerleon. Jarrett correctly points out that there is no evidence that the other half of the legion went to garrison the 4th century fort of Saxon Shore type at Cardiff (although there is no evidence that it did not in fact do so). Finally the view often expressed that the detachment of the legion at Richborough is identical with units of *secundani* in the *Distributio (Not. Dig, Occ.* VII) is not at all certain, for even if the parent body of the units in question were *Legio II Augusta* it need not be the part stationed at Richborough. In fact the *Secundani Britones* (VII 84) have an ethnic name that, under the early Empire at any rate, would suggest a non-legionary origin: compare the existence of *Numeri Brittonum* in Upper Germany, while Hoffmann argues that the *Secundani Iuniores* (VII 156) were one of a small number of new units created by Stilicho in 399 or 400.

Numerus Abulcorum, Anderidos, (Pevensey), and Numerus Exploratorum, Portum Adurni (Portchester)

The name of the *Abulci* has puzzled commentators: it may be a tribal designation but this is not certain. Hoffmann has identified it with a homonym that took part in the battle of Mursa in Pannonia in 351 when Magnentius was defeated by Constantius II (Zosimus II 51 f.). If this is correct, it provides a *terminus* post *quem* for its arrival in Britain. Was it the first unit in garrison ? Pevensey is a late fort typologically, or at least it is typologically different from most of the Shore fort series, while stratified coins may give a date of post 335 for its construction, although this is not quite certain. *(JRS* **22** (1922), 67), but it could still be earlier than 351 or the post-367 period if that is the context in which the arrival of the *Abulci* should be placed. In fact, as Stevens has pointed out, we have traces of the previous garrison actually in the *Notitia,* for the *Classis Anderetiana* at Paris *(Not. Dig. Occ.* XLII, 23) and the *milites Anderetiani* at Mainz *(Not. Dig. Occ.* XLI, 17) both bear geographical epithets that show that they once formed the garrison and associated fleet detachment stationed at Anderetia/Anderida. The tile stamps reading HON AVG ANDRIA have been shown by Peacock (1973) to be modern forgeries, but it is just possible that the *Abulci* have left traces of their presence in the form of other stamped tiles at Chester-le-Street, where tiles read as ΛBOΛCI (conceivably for ΛBOλCI) have been found *(JRS* **49** (1959), 138; *Proc. Sos. Ant. Newc,* **6** (1934), 120). If this were indeed correct, then it would link the *Abulci* with the *Numerus Exploratorum* at Portchester with which it is paired, for this almost certainly had seen earlier service with the army in north Britain: there is epigraphic evidence for two certain units of *exploratores* at the outpost forts north of

Hadrian's Wall of Risingham and High Rochester, while in the Antonine Itinerary Netherby is called *Castra Exploratorum,* which strongly suggests that a similar unit was stationed there. A possible context for the transfer of *exploratores* from north Britain to the south coast could have been the abolition by Count Theodosius of the *Areani* patrols north of the Wall after the troubles of 367 as recorded by Ammian.

The Gallic Saxon Shore

The two commands in the *Notitia* that appear to have superseded an earlier 'Gallic' Saxon Shore are those of the *Dux Belgicae Secundae* and the *Dux tractus Armoricani (Not. Dig.* Occ. XXXVIII and XXXVII). The former has only three units listed under his command: the *Equites Dalmatae* at *Murcis in litore Saxonico,* the *Classis Sambrica,* attested by tile stamps from Etaples *(CIL* XIII 12560), and *Milites Nervii* regarded by Hoffmann as a loan from the field army. The *Dux tractus Armoricani,* or more fully *Dux tractus Amoricani et Nervicani,* has no less than ten units under his command. The first listed, a *cohors prima nova Armoricana,* stationed at *Grannona,* again qualified as *'in litore Saxonico',* sounds like a unit of the early Empire although it is not attested on inscriptions or military *diplomata.* One might compare it with the *cohors prima Cornoviorum* under the command of the Duke of the Britains at Newcastle *(Not. Dig. Occ.* XL), also otherwise unattested: both look like attempts, in the 3rd century perhaps, to raise units more or less locally from areas that had not previously supplied troops. Of the other units, some have geographical epithets derived from their places of garrison, which suggest that they were limitanean units of long standing: these include two infantry units of *Mauri* and one of *Dalmatae,* thought by Hoffmann to be downgraded cavalry regiments, for the *Mauri* no less than the *Dalmatae* were enrolled in Gallienus's new cavalry regiments. Others, such as the *Martenses* have names typical of field army units and may be detachments sent to strengthen the coastal defences. The *Ursarienses, exceptionally,* are attested epigraphically in the general area of their garrison town of Rouen by a tombstone from Amiens *(CIL* XIII 3492), and they, or a homonym, are also known by tile stamps from the Rhineland. These units under the *Dux tractus Armoricani* appear to be listed in a fairly random geographical order, although this is not absolutely certain since many of the fort sites are not as yet securely located. However, seven of the ten units concerned are also listed in *Not. Dig.* Occ. VII, the *Distributio Numerorum,* where they are described as under the command of the *Magister Equitum Galliarum.* In this chapter they do not form a precise block, but they do seem to be listed in a rough geographical order running from north-east to south-west. This suggests that the command might not have been broken up at the time that the *Distributio* was compiled. That the actual command of the *Dux Tractus Armoricani* as found in the *Notitia* had in fact become subject to the *Magister Equitum Galliarum,* though nowhere stated in the *Notitia,* should be implied by its absence from the list of ten ducates subject to the Western *Magister Peditum* at the beginning of Chapter V.

Conclusions

The earliest dispositions on the British Saxon Shore, probably predating the Gallic Empire, would appear to be the old-style cohorts of Aquitanians and *Baetasii* holding the typologically early forts of Brancaster and Reculver. These units, as the Reculver inscription with its mention of the governor of Britannia Superior shows, were not as yet under a joint command that extended to both sides of the Channel, although the position of the praefect of the *Classis Britannica,* with important bases at Dover and Boulogne, already provided a precedent for such a command. If forts were built across the Channel, they too would have been under the command of the relevant provincial governor, the *Legutus Augusti propraetore provinciae Belgicae,* or possibly the governor of Germania Inferior. After the collapse of the Gallic Empire the south-east coastal defences were strengthened, Richborough built, and part of *Legio II Augusta* transferred from Caerleon to hold it. At the same time, the new cavalry arm developed under Gallienus began to make its appearance, units of *Dalmatae* and *Stablesiani* being stationed at Brancaster and Burgh Castle in East Anglia, where the open terrain particularly favoured their deployment. The *Fortenses* could now have been 'banished' to Bradwell, and a unit (conceivably the Aquitanians from Brancaster) established at Walton Castle.

The main defect will have been the division of the overall command between the governors in Britain and the Continent and the prefect of the *Classis Britannica.* But the logical solution, the creation of a single unified command of all the coastal areas threatened by Saxons, was shown by the Carausius episode to have its own inherent dangers. In the early 4th century there would thus have been two offices on each side of the Channel, but co-ordination was to some extent ensured by the fact that both were responsible to the Western *Magister Peditum.* With the creation of the post of *Magister Equitum Galliarum,* virtually the whole of the *tractus Armoricanus et Nervicanus,* as the continental command was known, was transferred to him, a rump ducate of Belgica Secunda remaining subject to the *Magister Peditum.* Other changes can also be traced: the change of garrison at Pevensey from a unit of the fleet to the *numerus Exploratorum* and the new arrival of fresh units, sometimes in disgrace and as an act of demotion from the field army—the *Abulci* after *Mursa* in 351 and the *Tungrecani* shortly after 365 and Procopius's abortive coup. Finally the transfer of some units such as the *Exploratores* and *Abulci* to the continent during the early 5th century can also be detected from the *Notitia.*

Hoffmann has argued strongly (1969; 1974) that transfers from the western field army to the Gallic channel defences, the Mainz Ducate, the British Ducate, and the command of the Count of the Saxon Shore took place during the reign of Valentinian during the course of a general reorganization of frontier defences, for Britain particularly important after the barbarian inroads of 367. No doubt Valentinian and his great general Count Theodosius were responsible for fundamental changes. Perhaps for the British Saxon Shore these included the removal of the *Classis Anderetiana* and the substitution of *exploratores* at Pevensey (compare the transfer of the naval *Supervenientes Petuarenses* from Brough-on-Humber to inland Malton, which probably took place at about the same time). But the detailed examination of the units of the British Saxon Shore given above suggests, in some cases, other and earlier reasons for the transfer of certain field army units to Britain. *Tungrecani, Abulci,* and *Fortenses* could all have been sent to serve with the *limitanei* in Britain as a punishment for backing the wrong side during periods of civil war. As with the large-scale changes in the way the Shore defences were organized, so the small-scale alterations, such as the redeployment of individual units, may often have been dictated by events rather than initiated by an all-prescient Roman higher command.

Duces and comites in the 4th century

J C Mann

Summary

By the end of Diocletian's reign, two important developments had begun: first, the supplementation of the frontier armies by new units—the 'units of the Laterculum Minus' *and (at a higher level) the* ripenses: *second, the separation in a few provinces of civil and military functions. Subsequent developments are: first, the placing of virtually all frontier forces under the command of* duces *(whose commands did not always coincide with the civil provinces); second, the development of permanent field armies, the* comitatenses; *third, the removal of military functions from Pretorian Prefects, Vicars, and* praesides. *The creation of the title* comes *by Constantine indicates a new nobility of service, not necessarily military. By the mid-4th century, most frontier forces were commanded by* duces, *the higher commands under* comites, very few *under* praesides. *Frontier troops were now termed* limitanei, *the regional field armies still* comitatenses. *The command of the Saxon Shore was a new command in the early 4th century, first under a* dux, *and later a* comes. *The* comes Britanniae *was a distinct field army post.*

The keynote of Diocletian's army reforms was consolidation rather than innovation. By the time that he abdicated, in 305, the frontier system of the principate could still be discerned, strengthened and intensified but not essentially altered. The frontier provinces were still, for the most part, governed by men with both civil and military responsibilities. The legions still played a prominent role in the frontiers. New legions created by Diocletian brought the number up to about 50, approximately double the number under Augustus, but new auxiliary units were raised also. And the frontier forces still constituted the main bulk of the army. Campaign forces were formed, as of old, by drafting vexillations from quiet areas, the *ad hoc* field armies thus created dispersing after the campaign was over. No large mobile forces were held in permanent reserve. All that was to be found with the emperors were the small number of infantry and cavalry bodyguards. Recruitment at the beginning of Diocletian's reign still consisted primarily of a combination of voluntary recruitment and somewhat erratic conscription.[1]

By the end of Diocletian's reign, however, a number of developments had been instituted which, culminating under Constantine, produced the armies of the late Empire, the armies which, at least in the east, were to undergo no serious modification before the reign of Justinian. In recruitment, a law of Constantine's indicates that military service had become compulsory for the sons of soldiers.[2] The institution of this hereditary service is usually, and no doubt correctly, attributed to Diocletian. As to the bodyguards, although Lactantius refers to Praetorians at Nicomedia in 303, the Praetorian Cohorts in general seem to have been reduced to little more than an urban militia in Rome, fit for disbandment, when they supported Maxentius's bid for the throne in 306. (Lactantius, *de mort. pers.* 12, 5 and 26, 3) This sealed their fate. By the time that the Praetorians came to an end in 312, the Emperors had equipped themselves with new bodyguards.

When Diocletian abdicated in 305, two developments which are important for present purposes had begun to take place.

First, new units were added to the frontier armies which were neither legions nor auxiliary units. They were not entitled *legio, ala* or *cohors.* They were either given no specific title at all, or else were referred to indifferently as *numeri,* or as *esquites* or *milites.* They ranked with the legions in status. Under Diocletian himself, formations at this level were actually derived from the existing legions (these include the *lanceariі* and the *equites promoti)* but evidently units with this status soon began to be created independently. From Diocletian then, the frontier forces fall into two grades. The lower grade, the old *alae* and cohorts, were commanded by officers who in the 4th century and later received their codicils of appointment from the Quaestor of the Sacred Palace. These are the units which in the eastern half of the *Notitia Dignitatum* are referred to as 'listed in the *Laterculum Minus',* and for convenience they can be referred to as 'units of the *Laterculum Minus'.* The higher grade, legions with alongside them new cavalry and infantry units, at first had no distinctive classification. It is only in 325 that a distinctive name is attested: in a law of that year they are referred to as *ripenses.*[3] Before long, units entitled *auxilia* and *cunei* are classified as typical of *ripenses.*[4] The name was appropriate for troops stationed on riverbanks, and may originally have been specifically applied thus, more especially perhaps to the *auxilia,* or *auxiliares,* and *cunei equitum* listed in the Danube ducates of the *Notitia Dignitatum.*[5] But it seems to have been accepted as a convenient term for the upper grade of units stationed on the frontiers, and can reasonably be adopted as such.

The purpose of these higher-grade troops, the *ripenses,* was to supplement the legions as mobile support troops for the *alae* and cohorts. The latter had everywhere remained so long in the same place that they had become practically immobile, able to perform effectively little more than mere frontier police duties. The new units were clearly intended to supply the mobility which the old *alae* and cohorts had lost. This function seems particularly well illustrated in the entry for the Duke of the Britains in the *Notitia Dignitatum. (Occ.* XL) In second place in the list, the section *per lineam valli* gives the units of the *Laterculum Minus,* virtually immobile in their old frontier stations, where most of them had been since the 3rd century, or even the 2nd. The leading section of the list, headed by the legion at York and including *numeri* and *equites* stationed in support positions on the roads leading up to the frontier line, represents the mobile reserve. The important point to note is that under Diocletian the mobile reserve was still under the control of the frontier commanders.

The second important development under Diocletian is the beginning, but no more than the beginning, of the process of separation of civil and military functions in the frontier provinces. In most of these provinces under Diocletian,

as of old, civil and military functions were in fact still combined in the hands of the governor; by the end of his reign all frontier provinces were governed by men with the title *praeses* and the rank of *vir perfectissimus* (Jones 1974, 263—79 =*JRS* **44** (1954), 21—9). The old general term for governor has become a technical term for a governor of equestrian rank. The *praeses,* as has been said, was still in most provinces also the military commander. Thus in Britain the Birdoswald inscription *(RIB* 1912: (297/305) records military building under the governor Aurelius Arpagius. Clearly no *dux* had yet been appointed to the northern British frontier. Elsewhere, *praesides* are still recorded as involved in military duties in Numidia (as late as 303), Mauretania Caesariensis, Arabia, and Augusta Libanensis, and also in the new province of Tripolitania.[6] The *praeses* of Mauretania Caesariensis even carried out military operations in Mauretania Sitifensis in the 290s against the Quinquegentanei *(CIL, VIII,* 8924: 290/293). Even for these important operations Diocletian was content to leave matters in the hands of one combining both civil and military powers. And the fact that Diocletian was not dogmatically wedded to the idea of separation of civil and military functions is attested by his treatment of the province of Tripolitania. This is first known as a separate province in his reign, and was almost certainly created by him. Here he could have established separate civil and military officers from the beginning, if he had been strongly attached to the idea, but he was not, and so we find that the *praeses* also had military duties.

Only in a few provinces, and those presumably the most hard-pressed, do we find separation of military powers under Diocletian. When such separate military commanders were created, it is not surprising to find that they are given the title of *dux,* and have the rank of *vir perfectissimus.* As in the case of *praeses,* a term used earlier non-technically and in a general way for a military commander has become a technical term for a permanent frontier military commander. (It is worth noting in passing that, particularly in literary sources, the non-technical use can continue, and such use must be carefully distinguished from the technical use of *dux* to indicate the holder of a permanent frontier command.)

Permanent ducates are attested under Diocletian only in Valeria, Scythia, and Augusta Euphratensis.[7] It is not certain whether the *dux* attested at Trier in 293/305 held a permanent post or not *(CIL,* XIII, 3672: 293/305). More ducates are attested very shortly after Diocletian's abdication: in Egypt in 308/9 *(AE* 1934, 7—8), in Noricum in 311/313 *(CIL* III 5565 (= *ILS* 664) = 11771), and in Phoenice Libanensis in 312 (Eusebius, *HE IX.* 5, 2). The most recent study of Diocletian's reforms has suggested that when a *dux* was thus appointed he commanded only the mobile forces, the *ripenses,* while the *praeses* in the same province continued to command the old units of the *Laterculum Minus* (van Berthem 1952, esp. 17 ff). This suggestion is based on what seems to me a mis-reading of a passage in John Malalas describing Diocletian's military reorganization on the eastern frontier. Malalas's work, dating to the 6th century, is a popular chronicle centring largely on Antioch, with no particular claim to precision. He merely indicates the great reinforcement of the eastern frontiers under Diocletian.[8] Examination of the situation in any single frontier province of the Empire in Diocletian's time shows everywhere *either* that the *praeses* was still also military commander of all forces *or* (in the few cases mentioned) that *all* the forces in a province had come under the control of a *dux.* Assignment of the military forces in a province to two separate commanders would have been a recipe for confusion and bickering, and there is no reason to think that Diocletian prescribed it.

At the same time the appointment of *duces* as separate permanent military commanders had a further important consequence: it was no longer necessary for a military command to be confined to one civil province. His command could range over several civil provinces, as in the case of the *dux* who is attested in 308/9 commanding troops in all the provinces on the Nile and also the two Libyas *(AE* 1934, 7-8). In practice, as the *Notitia Dignitatum* shows, most *duces* did in fact command troops in only one province, but it is important to note the flexibility which the separation of powers permitted. It is also worth noting that the subdivision of provinces and the separation of civil and military powers did not originate in any fear on Diocletian's part of the possibility of usurpation by governors or commanders. They were simply practical answers to the practical problems of the period, in particular the increasing burdens on individual governors.

The processes initiated under Diocletian progressed after his abdication. During the struggle for power which ensued, and the whole period down to the death of Constantine, further developments can be listed under three heads.

First, by the end of Constantine's reign virtually all frontier forces had come under the control of *duces.* A law of 333, dealing with the military service of the sons of veterans, refers to *duces singulorum limitum,* implying that the *dux* was the normal commander on all frontiers.[9] Very probably the northern frontier in Britain, which in 297 was still under the command of the *praeses* of the York province, had acquired a *dux* by 337, and he probably simply took over the forces which had been controlled by the York *praeses:* in other words his command, which the *Notitia* shows stretched south to approximately the Mersey—Humber line, was probably coterminous with the York province. The only province in which it can be shown that there was no separate *dux* after 337, and in which the *praeses* remained military commander as well as civil governor, is Tripolitania. Inscriptions attest his military functions after the mid-4th century *(IRT* 562 (= *AE* 1948, 6), 563, 565). There was no *dux* when the forces taken from Count Romanus were assigned to the *praeses* in 364 (Amm. 28, 6, 5-11). In general, frontiers away from the Rhine, the Danube, and the east were rather less pressed, and this may help to explain why no *dux* was thought necessary in Tripolitania: certainly no *dux* is known before 393 *(CTh* XII 1, 133). The same consideration may apply to the situation in western Britain. In contrast with the northern frontier, it is very difficult to make a coherent military system out of the scanty remains of military organization in Wales in the 4th century. The area clearly does not come within the purview either of the northern *dux* or of the Count of the Saxon Shore, nor, as will be seen, can it be assigned to the *comes Britanniae.* I would suggest that such military forces as remained in Wales were left under the control of the *praeses.* As I have argued elsewhere (Mann 1961), this will have been the *praeses* of Britannia Prima, with his capital probably at Cirencester. This will have remained the situation until the time of Magnus Maximus. As is evident from the prominence given to Maximus in the Welsh king-lists (Wade-Evans 1938, 101-14), he remained an honoured figure in Welsh tradition, and honoured more specifically, it may be suggested, as the originator of the political powers which congealed into the Welsh kingdoms. This must surely mean that he assigned political and military powers to local figures, not necessarily (or even probably) to begin with on a hereditary basis, but who nevertheless took over military defence in Wales, and consolidated their power on a *de facto* hereditary basis in the confusion which ensued after 410. This will explain why there are no military dispositions in Wales in the *Notitia Dignitatum.*

The second important development under Constantine was the change whereby mobile forces came to be permanently organized away from the frontier *duces.* The origins of the permanent field armies of the 4th century probably lay in the long struggle of Constantine for power. During the long period from 306 to 324, Constantine apparently found it necessary to maintain a large force permanently with him, in preparation either to defend himself against

his rivals or to attack them. The longer this force remained at his disposal, the more convenient and indeed essential he seems to have found it, and the more permanent it became. To begin with, as under Diocletian, supreme command lay with the Praetorian Prefects.[10] Although the Praetorian Guard was disbanded in 312, its tribunes continued to be appointed, and were available at the disposal of the Prefects as they wished.[11] Just as one of the tribunes was appointed to control the *officia* with the title *magister officiorum,* eventually separating off as a powerful official in his own right (Jones 1964, 103, 368–9), so it appears probable that other tribunes were appointed to control the cavalry and infantry units under the Prefects, with the similar title of *magister equitum* and *magister peditum.* The title *magister* on 3rd century analogies suggests that they were in origin largely concerned with training and discipline.[12] But when the Prefects, along with Vicars and virtually all *praesides,* lost their military functions—and this is the third important development under Constantine; it happened at some time after 326, probably about 330[13]—the *magistri* remained in office, now as the commanders of the mobile forces, without change of title.

The mobile forces were attached to Constantine, later to the Caesars also. By 325 they are referred to as *comitatenses.* A law of that year *(CTh* VII. 20, 4) shows that they had much the same status and privileges as the *ripenses,* of which they were basically an offshoot.

Thus by the end of Constantine's reign, the situation is that

1 Permanent field armies existed, known as *comitatenses,* attached to the Augustus and occasionally at least to some of the Caesars. They were commanded by *magistri equitum* and *peditum.*
2 The frontier forces were controlled by *duces,* whose commands did not alwayts coincide with the civil provinces.
3 The Praetorian Prefects, Vicars, and almost all *praesides* were now purely civilian officials with no military functions.

But under Constantine yet another development had taken place which was to modify this situation. His failure to convert the senatorial order to his religious views was probably the main reason why Constantine attempted to counterbalance that order with a new nobility of service. To the members of this order he gave the title of *comes* (Jones 1964, 104–5). It was thus specifically *not* basically military. They were ranked in three grades. Possession of the title did not imply appointment to a particular post. However, an individual with the rank of *comes* who was appointed to a post, whether civil or military, could prefix the words *comes et* to his title. Thus we find *comes et magister officiorum* as well as *comes et magister equitum* or *comes et dux* or *comes et praeses.*[14] When Ammianus (33, 7, 2) refers to Gratian, the father of Valentinian I, as serving in Africa and Britain with the rank of *comes,* it is very probable that, if indeed he served as a regular frontier commander, an inscription in either case would have referred to him as *v.p. comes et dux.* Appointment to some of the more important offices came to carry with it elevation to the rank of *comes,* as with the palatine financial officers, the *comes sacrarum largitionum* and the *comes rei privatae,* and the commanders of the bodyguard, the *comites domesticorum.* This soon began to happen with the most important of the frontier ducates, that of Africa by 347 *(Optatus III.* 4) and of Egypt by 391 *(CTh* XVI. 10, 11). But frontier commanders with the rank of *comes* appear also in the Thebaid before 345 *(P. Abinn.* I. 5, 7) and in Mauretania Tingitana probably before 367 *(CIL* XII. 673 *=ILS* 2788). The principles on which other commands were put permanently under *comites rei militaris* (as they came to be known, simply to distinguish them from other *comites)* instead of *duces* are not clear. Not all of the commands so elevated seem the most important. This is relevant to Ammianus's reference (27, 8, 1) to Nectaridus in 367 as *comes maritimi tractus.* If we may assume that this is merely a literary version of *comes litoris Saxonici* (which may be disputed), it is legitimate to ask why this commander had apparently achieved a rank higher than that of the commander of the northern frontier. The latter has far more troops, at least in the *Notitia Dignitatum* and apparently on the ground—unless indeed the 'Saxon Shore' extended far beyond the eight or nine forts which can be confidently assigned to the Count.

Of course, it is possible that Nectaridus was simply *comes et dux,* but this still does not explain why the commander of the Saxon Shore ranks as a *comes* in the *Notitia Dignitatum.* The origins of the command are obscure. Whether or not Carausius had the rank of *dux,* it is impossible that any command covering both sides of the Channel could have survived his usurpation. The command must have been effectively established anew at a later date, after 297. Extending over several provinces, as the element *per Britannias* indicates, the command as we know it will have been set up, some time in the early 4th century, under a *dux.* The later elevation of what does not seem to have been a very important command to comitival rank is a puzzle, to which I see no obvious answer.

If we look at the military dispositions of the empire shortly after the middle of the 4th century, we find the following situation:

1 The frontier forces are for the most part controlled by *duces,* only the most important commands having been put under the higher ranking *comites rei militaris,* while a very few unimportant areas have forces still under the civilian *praeses.*
2 The establishment and permanence of the field armies had made it at length necessary to coin a word to describe the frontier forces. So long as we—as during the principate and under Diocletian—virtually all permanent military stations were on the frontiers, obviously no special word was needed to identify frontier troops. Only when other kinds of troops had established themselves in sufficient numbers was it necessary to coin such a word. Thus it is only in the 360s that the appropriate word, *limitanei,* appears for the first time.[15] Nor does it mean anything more than 'troops stationed on the frontiers'. The troops covered by the term, both *ripenses* and the troops of the *Laterculum Minus,* were at least in theory still full-time soldiers. *Limitanei* who officially cultivated land in connection with their military duties are only known in the period after the end of Roman rule in Britain *(CJ* XI. 60, 3 (443)).
3 The field armies have expanded to include not only the armies specifically attached to the Augusti (those serving *in praesente,* now described as *palatini)* but also regional field armies, to which the term *comitatenses* could still, now rather inappropriately, be applied. In the west, a normal situation was the one in which the praesental army was in Milan, with a regional army based on Trier, while there might also be a regional army in Illyricum. In the east, the praesental army would be with the Emperor in Constantinople, with a regional army of the East based on Antioch. All the field armies were commanded by *magistri.*

In the east, the only important change before the *Notitia* was the addition of further regional field armies in Thrace and Illyricum (that is, of course, the small eastern Illyricum of the period after 395, containing only the dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia.

Only in one respect in the east has the simple division, between field armies under *magistri* and frontier armies under *duces* or *comites,* been modified: the *Notitia (Or.* XXIX) lists a small field force in Isauria under a *comes rei militaris.* Only in this very small respect is there any reflection in the east of the momentous changes which are attested in the western *Notitia.* In the west, the *Notitia* lists no additions to the regional field armies commanded by *magistri.* Instead,

new small field armies have been created, too small in size to warrant the appointment of a *magister.* They were thus naturally put under the command of officers with the next lower rank below *magister,* which was that of *comes.* In effect, this was to put into permanent form the practice of organizing small *ad hoc* field armies for particular campaigns, usually put under men with the rank of *comes,* such as the small force brought to Britain by Count Theodosius in 367.[16] In Africa and in Tingitania, exceptionally, these field forces (which it should be noted consist of *comitatenses,* not *ripenses)* were in fact put under the command of the existing frontier *comites.* The *comites* of Africa and Tingiania thus commanded both field army troops and frontier forces. This did not happen elsewhere. In the other parts of the west, the commanders of these small field armies are quite distinct from the frontier commanders. There is thus a fundamental distinction between the Count of the Saxon Shore (who ranks as a more important frontier commander) and the *comes Britanniae* (who ranks as a less important field commander). There is no evidence for *comites* as permanent commanders of field armies before the reign of Honorius, and I think it almost certain that it was Stilicho who devised what was a very practical solution to the problems of military defence in the west. Given the scattered nature of the western provinces, particularly with long stretches of sea between the different areas, a larger number of small field armies was far more useful than unwieldy centralized forces. The small field army under the *comes Britanniae* was probably established early in the reign of Honorius, when Stilicho reorganized the defences of Britain, shortly after 395 (Claudian, *de cons. Stilichonis* ii, 250–5 (AD 400)). The post cannot have lasted more than about 15 years, before the abandonment of Britain in 410. The *comes* must have had a headquarters somewehere in Britain. On balance, one would expect it to have been somewhere within easy reach of both the northern frontier and the Saxon Shore system. It could have been anywhere between York and London. Lincoln and Leicester are obvious possibilities, but we are really reduced to guesswork. I do not think that scattered finds of late metalwork will be found to be particularly relevant. They in any case can hardly be all crammed into the 15 years between 395 and 410. They may be more relevant to settlements of *laeti* and *gentiles* (Hawkes and Dunning 1961)[17], such as those listed in chapter XLII of the *Notitia* (although the supposed lacuna in that chapter, which it has been suggested can be filled up with lists of *laeti* and *gentiles* in Britain, may be no more than an unnecessary invention of Seeck's).

The study of the history of the military commands in the 4th century is essential if we are to place a command like the Saxon Shore in its proper context. Unfortunately, the main result of this study is to tell us rather what the Saxon Shore was not than to help us elucidate its real character. But at least we may be able to avoid some of the pitfalls which have bedevilled its study.

We can at least say the following:

1 There must be no confusion between the Count of the Saxon Shore and the Count of Britain. The Saxon Shore is a frontier command analogous to the northern frontier under its *dux.* [18]

2 The Saxon Shore command will have been in effect a new command established in the early 4th century, at first under a *dux* but later elevated to have a *comes rei militaris.*

3 We have no grounds for extending his command northwards or westwards along the coast. Any stations to the west will have come within Britannia Prima, probably under the control of its *praeses,* but after Maximus probably under native leaders. The north Yorkshire posts between the Tees and Flamborough Head have surely nothing to do with the Saxons. They certainly came under the northern *dux,* and are better placed in context if they are nicknamed the 'Pictish Shore' (Mann 1974, esp. 41–2).

4 It is however possible that the importance suggested by the appointment of a *comes* may refer to an extension of the command inland. Walling of small towns, as well as cities, in the lowland zone *could* have provided posts for men under his command. But this is an aspect that we would expect to have been later taken over by the Count of Britain.[19]

Notes

1 *General reference may be made to Jones 1964, esp. ch. VII—The Army.*

2 CTh. *VII 22, 1 (313).*

3 CTh. *VII 20, 4. Troops which would later rank as* ripenses *appear in 311 in* AE *1937, 232 (the Brigetio Table),* tam legionarii quam etiam equites in vexillationibus constituti Inlyriciani, *and in 371/313,* equites Dalmatae Aquesiani comites, CII, III *5565* (= ILS *664) = 11771.*

4 *Especially* CTh. *VII 13, 7 (375),* referring *to those* qui in ripa cuneos auxiliaque fuerint constituti. Ripenses *(or* ripariensis) *appear also in* CTh. *VII 4. 14 (365) and* CTh. *VII 22, 8 (372), and are constrasted with* comitatenses *in* CTh. *VII 1,18* = CJ *XII 35, 14 (400).* Auxiliares cunei *also appear in* CTh. *VII 13, 1 (326/354).*

5 Or. *XXXIX-XLII,* Occ. *XXXII-XXXIII. In* Or. *XXXIX and XL* cunei *and* auxiliares *are associated with* legiones riparienses, *the latter under* praefecti ripae. *A* ripa prima *appears in* Occ. *XXXV 18.*

6

Numidia:		CIL *VIII* 2529 = ILS *2291 (283/4),* CIL *VIII 2572* = ILS *5786 (28/1293);* AE *1942/3, 81 (303),* CIL *VIII 4764 (= ILS 644) = 18698 (303).*
Mauretania	*Caesariensis.*	CIL *VIII 8924, and VIII 9324* = ILS *628 (290/293);* CIL *VIII 20215* = ILS *6886 (after 293).*

Arabia: CIL *14149* = AE *1895, 182 (293/305)*
Augusta Libanensis: CIL *III 6661 (293/303)*
Trtpolitania. CIL *VIII 22763* = ILS *9352 (shortly before 303).*

7

Valeria:		CIL *III 10981 (303).*
Scytthia.		CIL *III 764* = ILS *4103 (293/305).*
Augusta	*Euphratensis*	*Acta SS Sergii et Bacchi,* Anal. Bolland *XIV, 1895, 375ff*

8 *I would translate Malalas (308.* 17 *Bonn): 'On the frontiers from Egypt as far as the borders of Persia, Diocletian built forts* (castra), *establishing in them frontier troops* (limitanei); *and choosing duces, he stationed one in each province within the ring of forts, with large numbers of men as a mobile reserve. And he set up inscriptions to the Augustus and the Caesar on the frontier of Syria.' The last sentence is a rather unintelligent reference either to milestones along the* strata Diocletiana (AE *1931, 85–6 and 101–10) or to building inscriptions such as* CIL *III 6661.*

Malalus suggests that Diocletian appointed duces *in all the eastern provinces. As has been seen, this is improbable. His use of* limitanei *is anachronistic, (see note 15 below). He was writing long after Diocletian's time and cannot be expected to be very precise. But he does not suggest that the frontier forces remained under the* praesides

9 CTh. *VII 22, 5. Cf. Zosmus II 33. (Tripolitania apart, the latest* praeses *with military authority known to us appears in Mauretania Sitifenses in 315,* CIL *VIII 8713, 8476, 8477* = ILS *695).*

10 *E.g., Asclepiodotus under Constantius I, Eutropius IX 22, Aur Vict* Caes., *39, 42; Ceionius Rufius Volusians under Maxentius, Aur. Vict.* Caes., *40, 18, Zosimus II 14, 2*

11 *E.g., Stilicho,* CIL *VI 1730* = ILS *1277*

12 CIL *V 8278* = ILS *2333;* CIL *III 10307* = ILS *2540:* CIL *VIII 21568* = ILS *9227;* P. Dura *83 Cf. von Domaszewski 1967, XVII, 48, 59 and 61.*

13 *The Praetorian Prefects still apparently had military authority in* CTh. *VII 20, 2 (326). Zosimus II 33 refers to the establishment of independent* magistri equitum *and* peditum *at about the same time as the foundation of Constantinople in 330.*

14 Comes et magister officiorum: CTh. *XI 38, 11.*
Comes et magister equitum et peditum: CTh. *VII 1,2;* CTh, *VII 8 .*
Comes et dux: AE *1941, 12,* AE *1909, 108;* IRT *529,* CTh. *XI 36, 33,* P. London *234.*
Comes et praeses: IRT *562 3, 565.*
(Of course, we must also distinguish the occasional reunification of civil and military authority, such as attested in Notitia, *for instance, in the* dux et praeses *in Arabia* (Or. *XXVII) and in Mauretania Caesariense*s (Occ. *XXX).)*

15 CTh. *XII 1, 56 (363); Festus,* Brev. *XXV (written c. 369).*

16 *Amm. 27, 8, 7. Similar cases of men with the rank of* comes *commanding small* ad hoc *field armies include Charietto in the two Germanies in 365, and his associate Severianus, Amm. 27, 1, 2–6;*

Nannienus in northern Gaul in 370, Amm. 28, 5, 1. Gratian's commands in Britain and Africa may have been of field forces, Amm. 30, 7, 2. Cf. *also Amm. 21, 12, 2; 26, 7, 5.*

17 To *judge by* Not. Dig. Occ. *XLII,* gentiles *were always barbarians from outside the empire (cf.* CTh. *VII 15, 1 (409) for* gentiles *settled in Africa), but* laeti *could include people from inside the empire (cf. the Asians settled in Thrace by Diocletian,* Pan. Lat. *VIII(V) 21). Both groups were closely controlled by prefects, in contrast to* foederati. *The latter term originally referred only to peoples living outside the imperial frontiers, but they retained the title when they moved inside the empire under their own rulers. While it seems clear that the Franks who had settled south of the Rhine mouth had forced the Roman government to accept them as* foederati *(Julian thought better of trying to subject them to Roman provincial government, Amm. 17, 8, 3–5, Libanius* Or. *XVIII 75), there is no evidence for* foederati *in Britain before the end of Roman rule. Fraomarius (Amm. 29, 4, 7) commanded a regular army unit.*

18 *It is worth remembering the simple rule that frontier units are allocated a station in the* Notitia, *field army units are not.*

19 *The mention of units in the* Notitia *as stationed* in litore Saxonico, *although subordinate to the* dux Belgicae Secundae (Occ. *XXXVIII 7) and the* dux tractus Armoricani (Occ. *XXXVII 14), has been thought to preserve a memory of a period when the command covered both sides of the Channel. But it is worth remembering that the* Notitia *is an administrative document, not a strategic or tactical 'operations handbook', and it could be suggested that these units are so listed because they were administered by the* duces *mentioned, but operationally formed part of the Saxon Shore defensive system.*

The Reculver inscription—a note

J C Mann

In publishing the Reculver inscription, Richmond (1961; cf. *JRS* **51** (1961), 191–2) attempted to identify the – – – R – – – IO RUFINO COS. who appears in it. He plumped for A. Triarius Rufinus, *cos. ord.* in 210, and suggested that he governed Britannia Superior shortly after that date. But in the 3rd century it is not enough merely to consult the extant consular *fasti.* For most years in the 3rd century we have only the names of the consuls who gave their names to the year, the 'ordinary' consuls. Auxiliary diplomas and the city *fasti* of Italy, which supply us with so many names of suffect consuls in the 1st and 2nd centuries, now fail us. The kind of man who was appointed governor of an Imperial province like Britannia Superior is most likely to have attained a suffect rather than an ordinary consulship. Where 3rd century governors of Britannia Superior (A R Birley 1967, 80–5) are known, as with C. Junius Faustinus Postumianus *(Ephem. Epigr.* V. 270; *PIR*[2] I. 752), T. Iulius Pollienus Auspex *(ILS* 8861; cf. 5050n), or Desticius Juba *(RIB* 334; *PIR*[2] D53), it is significant that no dates are known for their (suffect) consulships.

It is therefore most improbable that the governor recorded at Reculver is Triarius Rufinus. With our lack of evidence for suffect consuls in the 3rd century, we are unlikely to find this Rufinus in extant material. The best we can hope to do in fact is to work from the inscription itself, in particular from the title *consuluris.*

The literary use of *consularis* to indicate a *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of consular rank goes back to a much earlier date: Tacitus could use it of the earliest governors of Britain *(Agricola* 14, 1). The earliest appearance of the word in inscriptions found in Britain seems to be for Calpurnius Agricola, governor in the period between 161 and 166, as shown by *RIB* 1149, where Lucius Verus's second consulship is recorded (161), but not yet his third (167). This is in a dedication at Carvoran *(RIB* 1809, cf. 1792). *Cos.* then becomes a fairly regular substitute for *leg. Aug. pr. pr. (e.g. RIB* 1329, under Commodus; 1234, 1337, 1909, under Severus). Our Rufinus could then have been consular governor of Britain in the last third of the 2nd century, or of Britannia Superior at any time after the reign of Severus (for the reign of Severus, whatever the disposition of the provinces, we probably know the names of all the consular governors in Britain). He is not, on the other hand, likely to have been a 4th century governor of Maxima Caesariensis (cf. Mann 1961). Diocletian assigned all but a few exceptional provinces to governors with the title of *praeses.* By the time that Constantine reintroduced *consularis* as a title specifically for governors of senatorial rank, civil government was in the process of being separated from military command. The *consularis* of Maxima Caesariensis is never likely to have commanded military forces, least of all a station which fell squarely within the Saxon Shore system.

The Reculver inscription may thus date to any time in the 3rd century after the reign of Severus, or less probably to the late 2nd century. We have no way of pinning down its date more closely.

Summary

The paper briefly reviews the evidence for the role and history of the Classis Britannica. *It was established in AD 40 or 43 and played a close-support role for army operations in Britain and the Low Countries. Its main function was, however, the supply and transportation of material to army units in Britain; this included the operation of a major iron-producing industry in the Weald. The fleet disappears from the archaeological record towards the middle of the 3rd century, when the Dover base and the iron-producing establishments were closed down.*

Introduction

In any consideration of the Saxon Shore, it should be borne in mind that this defensive system represented an adaptation and extension of existing installations. It is for this reason that it has been thought worthwhile to devote some attention to the naval force known to have been based in the English Channel from the conquest of AD 43 to the 3rd century.

Knowledge of the *Classis Britannica* is tantalizingly fragmentary. The first attempt at a survey was made by Atkinson (1933), on whose work the major treatise on the Roman imperial navy (Starr 1960) draws heavily. There are short accounts in standard works on the Roman army (e.g. Stein 1933; Webster 1969) and a valuable essay by Cunliffe (1968) in his concluding Richborough report, much of which, however, is concerned with a discussion of the Saxon Shore system. The most recent study of Roman fleets and their organization (Kienast 1966) adds little to what is contained in the earlier works, apart from some prosopographical data based on recently discovered epigraphic material. The present paper does not claim to introduce new evidence, with the exception of some information on the role of the fleet in the iron industry of the Weald of Kent and Sussex; it is intended as a background survey that may pose some additional questions about the origins and organization of the Saxon Shore system.

The role of the Classis Britannica

Most early surveys of the Roman imperial fleets make an assumption that is not borne out by the evidence, namely that these fleets can be equated directly with the fighting navies of modern times. As a result, certain earlier commentators have found difficulties in interpreting the information at their disposal.

Following the defeat of Sextus Pompeius at Naulochus in 36 BC and the great naval battle at Actium in 31 BC, the two praetorian fleets of Misenum and Ravenna, heirs of the battle fleet created by M. Vipsanius Agrippa in 37 BC, assumed what was essentially a supply and transportation role in the peaceful waters of the Mediterranean. During the expansionist years of the early Empire, a number of provincial fleets were established—the *Classes Africana* (about AD 40), *Pontica* (AD 64), *Moesica* (20 BC – AD 10), *Pannonica* (about 25 BC), and *Germanica* (about 12 BC)—disposed around the long Imperial frontiers. These fleets were all founded to support a military campaing (with the exception of the *Classis Pontica,* which was the former Royal Pontic Fleet, embodied into the Roman forces); for example, the *Classis Germanica* was raised by Drusus for his German campaing, apparently from Mediterranean sailors (cf. *CIL.* XIII. 8322, 8843). It is clear from contemporary historians that they had two major functions: the transportation of fighting troops and the supply of stores and matériel. At the conclusion of the campaing and the pacification of the new provinces, the fleets were not disbanded, But continued to exercise these functions, which are essentially the 'support' role of modern military jargon.

It cannot be gainsaid, however, that the sailors of the fleets retained a military function. It is known that the crew of every vessel constituted a military *centuria* (irrespective of size) and that there was a separate and parrallel command structure for fighting purposes under the command of a centurion which co-existed alongside the structure required for the management of the ship, each crew member having dual responsibilities. This is acknowledged in epigraphic material, where fleet personnel are more often described as *milites* than as *nautae.* The military competence of naval personnel is perhaps best illustrated by the I and II Adiutrix Legions, which were raised from sailors of the Mediterranean fleets by Vespasian following their prowess during the civil wars of AD 69.

The distribution of known sites of the *Classis Britannica,* as represented by stamped tiles, emphasizes this non-fighting role. Stamped tiles are known only from Bouloyne and a group of sites in the south-east of Britain; there are no proven fleet establishments in the military zones of the north and west, which would point to a support role for the fleet. There were certainly harbour installations in association with the legionary fortresses and auxiliary forts of Wales and the north (Fryer 1973), but there is no indication in the form of stamped tiles that these were operated by the Fleet. An inscription from York referring to a *gubernator* or river pilot of the VI Legion *(RIB.* 1. 653) would seem to indicate that these ports were, to the contrary, the responsibility of the army units concerned. The designation by the excavator of the Brough-on-Humber port (Wacher 1969) as a base for a naval detachment' during the second half of the 2nd century seems to be largely unsubstantiated, especially since stamped tiles occur in profusion on *Classis Britannica* sites in the south-east during this period.

The 'close support' plus fighting role of the *Classis Britannica* during military campaings is, of course, attested in the contemporary records, as will be discussed below, and it would seem likely that 1st century harbour installations at, for example, Fishbourne, Fingringhoe, Hamworthy, Sea Mills, and Topsham may have been operated directly by the fleet during the conquest period (Cunliffe 1968, 255–6), when fighting men could, perhaps, not be spared for such work from the legions and auxiliary units. However, since the practice of stamping tiles appears not to have been introduced until the 2nd century this must remain speculative.

further support for the view that the role of the fleet was essentially one of supply and transportation may perhaps be gained from a study of the careers of the very few prefects of the *Classis Britannica* that are known. Inscriptions

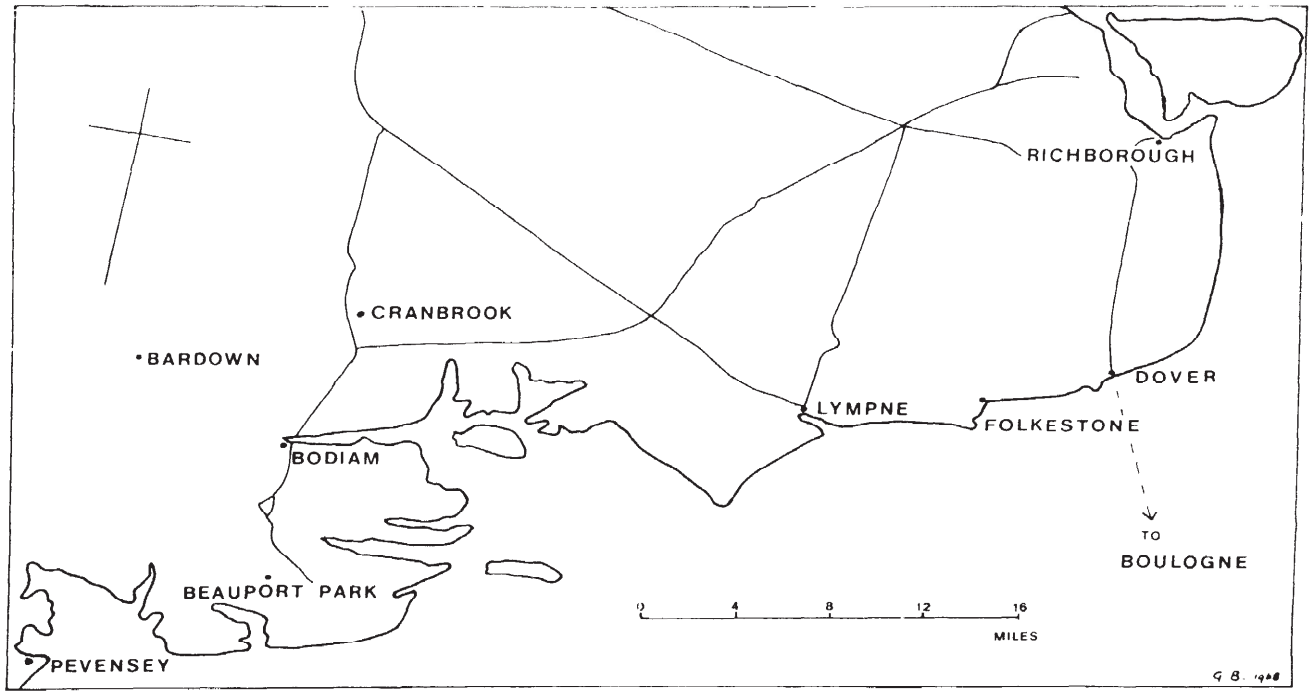

Fig 4 Sites producing CL BR stamped tiles (from Brodribb 1969)

show that a fleet prefecture often formed part of a *cursus honorum* that embodied one or more procuratorships (Kienast 1966, 35 ff.), and this is well illustrated for the British fleet by M. Maenius Agrippa L. Tusidius, who under Antoninus Pius combined the offices of *praefectus classis britannicae* and *procurator provinciae britanniae (CIL.* XI. 5632; Pflaum 1960-61, No. 120). This would appear to support the attribution of a basically non-fighting role to the fleets and their commanders.

That the command of the British fleet was an important one is demonstrated by the fact that only this and that of the *Classis Germanica* qualified as centenary commands, all the other provincial fleets being ranked as sexagenary commands (von Domaszewski 1908, 153, 160 ff.). This is perhaps best understood by reference to the long coastline of Britain, which would require a considerable force of men and vessels. The German fleet probably qualified for equal ranking by virtue of the long and troubled frontier formed by the Rhine.

The Evidence

Evidence for the extent and role of the *Classis Britannica* comes from three main sources: stamped tiles, inscriptions, and literary references.

Stamped tiles The distribution of finds of stamped tiles of the *Classis Britannica* is shown in Fig. 4, taken from a recent survey (Brodribb 1969). The sites may be divided into coastal and inland locations. Of the former, only Richborough (Cunliffe 1968) and Dover (Philp 1971 a, b) may be said to have been excavated or interpreted recently, and of the latter only Bardown (Cleere 1970) and Beauport Park (A G Brodribb and H F Cleere, unpublished work). Dealing first with the *Boulogne* finds, these are undated and can serve only to confirm the fleet's association with the port of Gesoriacum/Bononia. Only one tile was found at *Richborough,* apparently in association with the postulated supply base of AD 44-85 (i.e. before the erection of the Great Foundation). Cunliffe (1968, 258) does suggest, however, that the main base of the fleet during the later 1st century may lie outside the existing Saxon Shore Fort.

Excavations at *Dover* have revealed a major *Classis Britannica* base, discussed elsewhere in this volume (pp 20-1). It appears from the provisional interpretation to date from the early 2nd century to the early 3rd century, and so it may have succeeded (or have been built to supplement) the hypothetical base at Richborough.

The evidence from *Folkestone* comes from a villa located on a magnificent site overlooking the Channel, excavated in the 1920s (Winbolt 1925, 103 ff.). Complete tiles with the CL BR stamp were found *in situ* in part of the villa dated to the mid-2nd century. It has often been suggested that this villa was in fact the residence of the prefect of the *Classis Britannica,* and the location and luxury of the complex make this an attractive hypothesis.

Lympne was excavated by Roach Smith (1850, 257-8) and produced, in addition to the Aufidius Pantera inscription referred to below, a number of stamped tiles built into the walls of the later Saxon Shore fort. It is possible therefore that there was a fleet establishment there before the Saxon Shore fort was built. *Pevensey* has been examined only once in the present century (Salzman 1908). Unfortunately, there is no indication in an otherwise admirable excavation report (having regard to its early date) of the exact provenance of the tiles found. However, here again it is not unreasonable to postulate a fleet base antedating the surviving Saxon Shore fort.

Tiles from the inland sites *(Bardown, Beauport Park, Bodiam,* and *Cranbrook)* are all associated either directly or indirectly with the iron industry. Their significance is discussed in a recent paper by the present author (Cleere 1975). Briefly, it is believed that the *Classis Britannica* took over a small-scale pre-Roman industry in the area of Hastings and Battle, and expanded it, shipping finished iron from one or more ports on the estuaries of small rivers opening into the area now covered by Romney and Wal-

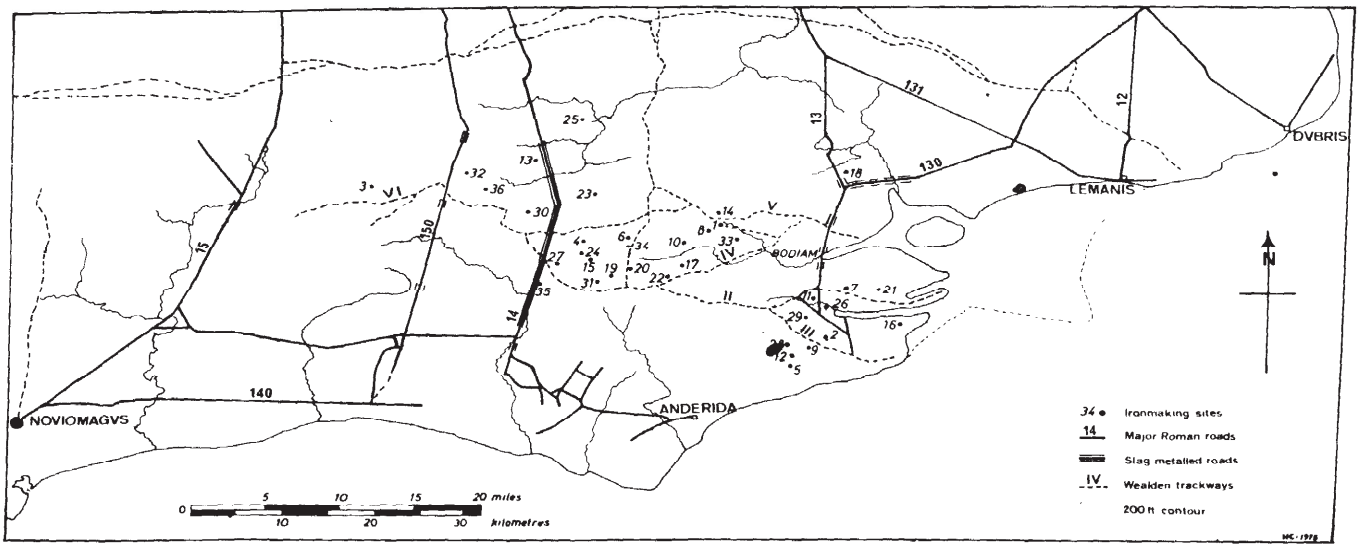

Fig 5 Distribution of Roman ironmaking sites in the Weald (from Cleere 1975). Sites mentioned in the text are Bardown (1) Beauport Park (2), and Cranbrook (18)

land Marshes to fleet bases at Richborough, Dover, Lympne, and/or Pevensey. In the first part of the 2nd century the industry expanded inland to the High Weald, but came to an abrupt end around 235-245, when Bardown and Beauport Park at least were clearly abandoned. Of the four sites listed above, Bardown and Beauport Park were iron-producing centres, Bodiam was an estuarine port on the river Rother, and Cranbrook appears to have been an administrative centre of some kind. The distribution of Roman ironmaking sites in the Weald is shown in Fig. 5 (from Cleere 1975). There is a strong case for describing the Weald as an Imperial mining estate, examples of which are known from elsewhere in the Empire.

Inscriptions The best known inscription is probably the barnacle-encrusted altar built into the east gate of the fort at Lympne, dedicated by Aufidius Pantera, prefect of the *Classis Britannica* and dated to c. AD 140 *(CIL.* VII. 18 = *RIB.*1.66). There are also two inscriptions on Hadrian's Wall, from Netherby and Birdoswald, recording the work of detachments from the fleet *(CIL.* VII. 864, 970 = *RIB.*1.1944, 1945). A building slab found in the portico of the granaries in Benwell fort *(RIB.*I.1340) records construction work by a vexillation of the fleet. These are the only inscriptions from Britain specifically naming the *Classis Britannica,* but the Lydney Park dedication by Flavius Senilis, who describes himself as *praepositus reliquationis classis,* should not be overlooked (although the interpretation of this mosaic inscription is still a matter of dispute).

Outside the province, there are a number of interesting inscriptions from Boulogne *(CIL.*XIII. 3540-3547). Among the officers whose names are recorded is that of T. Claudius Aug. L. Seleucus *(CIL.*XIII. 3542), a freedman of the Emperor Claudius from the eastern Mediterranean. Also of importance is the inscription from Arles *(CIL.*XII. 686) relating to Satuminus, an officer of the fleet during the reign of Philip in the mid-3rd century; this is the latest reference to the *Classis Britannica* by that name, by which time it was following the custom of the day and naming itself after the reigning Emperor by the addition of *Philippiana.*

The fleet is referred to as part of the *cursus honorum* on a number of inscriptions from other parts of the Empire. An unknown knight of the 2nd century *(CIL.*VI.1634), following appointment as sub-prefect of one of the praetorian fleets, commanded the Pannonian, Moesian, German, and British fleets—successively, according to Starr (1960, 161, fn. 58) or jointly, for the purpose of the campaign in Britain of Septimus Severus (Kienast 1966, 44). Another member of this order, Bla . . . *(CIL.*XIV.5341), followed procuratorships in Armenia and Cappadocia with the command of the *Classis Britannica,* and then graduated to command the praetorian fleet based at Ravenna. A more modest career was that of S. Flavius Quietus, who was promoted from the rank of *primus pilus* of the XX Legion to prefect of the *Classis Britannica* in the reign of either Antoninus Pius or Caracalla (Pflaum 1960-1. No. 156bis).

Literary sources There is no literary reference in the classical historians to the *Classis Britannica* by that name. However, Dio (lx.19.4ff.) stresses the role of the fleet used, in three squadrons, for the invasion of AD 43. A fleet from Britain ferried the XIV Legion to the Low Countries at the time of Civilis's revolt and was virtually destroyed in a surprise attack by the Canninefates (Tacitus, *Hist.,* 4, 79).

Fleet operations in a war situation are perhaps best illustrated by the campaign of Agricola. He conceived of it as an integral part of his invasion of north Britain, both as a supply arm and in an aggressive role. Tacitus tells us that it was used as a raiding force: *igitur praemissa classe, quae pluribus locis praedata magnum et incertum terrorem faceret, (Agric.,* 18, 24). The fleet also carried out a major feat of navigation for a Roman fleet, notorious for a fear of Ocean, in rounding the north of Scotland, subjugating the Orkneys en route, and sailing a little way down the west coast before returning to its operational base on the Forth of Tay *(Agric.,* 10. 12. 38).

Beyond these somewhat sporadic references, little is to be learned of the work of the fleet during the subsequent two centuries, which in itself would appear to support the view that it had reverted to its permanent support role.

Historical summary

From the information presented in the preceding sections, it is possible to construct an outline history of the *Classis Britannica* during the first two centuries of Roman rule in Britain.

The fleet's foundation is usually attributed to Claudius, as part of his provisions for the invasion of AD 43. However, there is a case to be made out for the initial establishment being due to Gaius, at the time of his abortive invasion

preparations in AD 40. These extended to the construction of the harbour installations at Gesoriacum, and it is likely that the fleet assembled there at that time would not have been totally disbanded.

Its activities in the first century were at first in a close support role-for the invasion, the suppression of the Boudiccan revolt, and the campaigns in Wales and Scotland. It was also engaged in military operations across the Channel on at least one occasion. However, during this period it also appears to have been engaged in build&g up a supply and ordnance base in the south-east, which included the exploitation of the iron-ore deposits of the Weald. Up to AD 85 the base was probably at Richborough, and was then transferred or extended to Dover (and perhaps also to Lympne and Pevensey). The function of the cross-Channel establishment at Gesoriacum is not easy to understand. The close link with the army (and also possibly with the procurator's department) in Britain would seem to militate against the unit's headquarters remaining there, as is usually assumed. However, tombstones of at east three trierarchs found there imply a fleet establishment of some importance. It is possible that Gesoriacum was the continental base, loading goods and supplies for shipping to Britain, and perhaps distributing materials originating from that province; the production of iron in the Wealden installations was so large as to imply a considerable export outside Britain (Cleere 1976).

During the 2nd century the fleet would appear to have carried out primarily a support role, supplying and servicing the army units in the military zones of the north and west and occasionally helping in other ways, as on the Wall, although it was doubtless called upon for close-support activities from time to time. The Severan campaign obviously required a return to close support on a massive scale, since the operations were such as to require no fewer than four fleets to be brought under a single command. It seems likely that the rebuilding of the bath-house at Beauport Park dates from this period.

The Classis Britannica as a unit disappears from the record some time towards the middle of the 3rd century. The Dover base was abandoned and slighted so comprehensively that the later Saxon Shore fort was built on a different alignment, and the iron-making establishments at Bardown and Beauport Park came to an abrupt end. This was apparently not the result of any kind of incursion, since the Beauport Park bath-house was systematically stripped of re-usable materials such as lead piping and window glass and allowed to collapse. The latest coins found were of Caracalla and Severus Alexander at Bardown and Beauport Park respectively, not incompatible with the date for the Aries inscription. It is interesting to observe that the *Classis Germanica* appears to have disappeared from the record at about the same time, at least under that name.

Further studies

This incomplete survey of the history and role of the *Classis Britannica* raises several interesting lines of research. The most obvious relates to the mid-3rd century and its disappearance from the archaeological record. It would appear that the British Fleet as such ceased to exist: the large numbers of stamped tiles from the later phases at Beauport Park and Dover make it seem unlikely that this practice would have been abandoned when the formation was relocated, although the fact that the abandonment of the practice of stamping tiles may have coincided with this move means that the end of tile stamping must not be interpreted as firm evidence of disbandment of the fleet. The abondonment of Dover and the two ironmaking establishments is less easy to explain in this way. Nevertheless, the army would continue to require naval forces for supply and close-support purposes, and so it seems reasonable to postulate a radical reorganization, which may well have affected fleets on both sides of the Channel, perhaps involving the disbandment of the fleets as such and the reallocation of their vessels and personnel to army units on the frontiers. This would go some way to explain the move from the relatively long-established base at Dover. That there was a well organized naval force is amply borne out by the adventures of Carausius later in the 3rd century.

The other areas for possible future study concern the Organization of the fleet during the 2nd and early 3rd centuries. The role of Gesoriacum vis-á-vis Dover needs elucidation, and also the relationship of the *Classis Britannica* to the army on the Rhine frontier. On this side of the Channel, the relationship of the fleet in organizational and logistic terms to the army units in the west and north is by no means clear, and it is to be hoped that greater attention will be paid to the implications of harbour installations adjacent to legionary fortresses and auxiliary forts in the future.

In conclusion it may be stated that a greater knowledge of the Organization and distribution of the *Classis Britannica* is potentially of great interest for Saxon Shore studies. The extent of the 2nd century establishments and the 3rd century reorganization could throw a great deal of light on the structure and growth of the Saxon Shore defensive system.

The British evidence

Dover

Brian Philp

The Roman settlement at Dover (Fig. 6) covered at least 10 acres of steeply sloping ground on the west bank of the tidal estuary of the river Dour. Massive harbour walls and smaller quays, located in the 19th and 20th centuries (Wheeler 1932 and Rahtz 1958) prove the existence of an adjacent major Roman harbour extending over many acres. Significantly, the entrance of the harbour was flanked by the only two masonry lighthouses known in Roman Britain.

The site of the Dover 'Saxon Shore' fort, listed in the *Notifia Dignitutum,* was first described on the ground in 1929 (Amos and Wheeler 1929), but a series of post-war excavations totally failed to confirm this identification. Indeed, a detailed study of the available evidence, published in 1970 (Rigold 1969), issued 'a sentence of dismissal' on the Shore fort.

Urgent and large-scale rescue excavations, by the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, ahead of a major bypass, the town-centre redevelopment, and other schemes, started in 1970 and have continued non-stop into 1976. The work, programmed towards answering specific questions, but still remaining highly flexible, has spread across 8 acres of the modern town-centre. The whole area is deeply buried, in part by blown sand and hillwash from the adjacent Western Heights, sometimes to a depth of 7m. The evidence, which ranges from late Neolithic to post-medieval, includes substantial areas of two Roman forts, the *Classis Britannica* fort and the late Roman Shore fort (Philp 1975).

The Classis Britannica fort

This fort, totally unpredicted by any writer, was found under the bypass in 1970, being centred on present-day Queen Street (Philp 1971a, 1971b,). It covered more than 2 acres and its delimitin defensive wall enclosed at least 14 major buildings, including granaries and barracks. Many of these had survived to an extraordinary extent, some reaching a height of 3m and collectively representing the most intact series of Roman military buildings known anywhere in southern Britain. At least two major periods are represented and about 800 tiles stamped CL BR (or variant) have been found in association.

The fort appears to have been built in the first half of the 2nd century. It seems to have been largely abandoned about the turn of that century, but whether just before or after AD 200 must await the cleaning and study of the critically placed coins. An extensive extra-mural settlement has

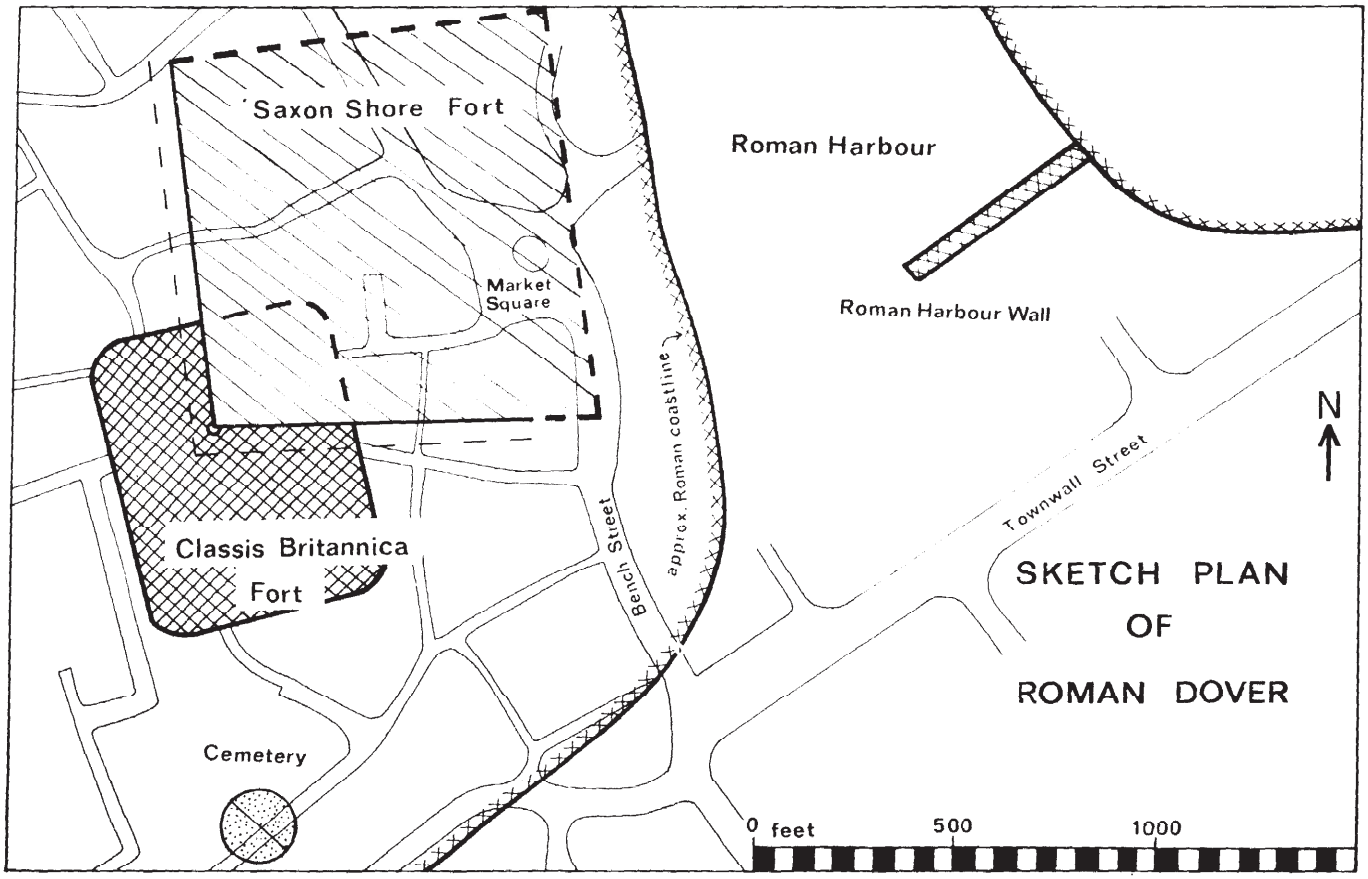

Fig 6 Sketch plan of Roman Dover, showing the two forts and the harbour

been located on the north side of the fort, and this includes prime buildings, such as the famous 'Painted House', again surviving to a most remarkable extent. Present work aims to determine the precise nature, extent and date-range of this extra-mural settlement.

The late Roman Shore fort

This fort was located within metres of the predicted Wheeler line within hours of the start of the 1970 excavation (Philp 1973). It had been built across and beyond the north-east corner of the *Classis Britannica* fort which it so clearly superseded. Only one corner and parts of the south and west walls have so far been located. Four certain bastions have been examined in detail, including both integral and added. The shape appears to be trapezoidal, strongly reminiscent of Burgh Castle (Morris 1948), reflecting the general asymmetry of Shore fort architecture. Little is so far known of the internal arrangements, and this is one of the priority areas for work in 1976.

The fort appears to have been constructed in the second half of the 3rd century AD, and it is hoped that rather more critical dating evidence will be forthcoming from the present excavations. Exactly when the fort ceased to function in a formal sense is as yet unresolved and the problem of continuity of occupation at Dover into Saxon times appears probable, but awaits confirmation.

Discussion

The major programme of rescue work, with its imposed deadlines demanding non-stop operations at all times of the year in very trying conditions, but still conducted on a flexible research-rescue basis, has transformed knowledge of Dover over a period of four thousand years. In particular, partly due to the exceptional circumstances, this work has demonstrated:

1 That Dover probably contains the richest 10 acres of buried archaeology anywhere in Britain, in terms of both structures and stratified deposits.
2 That Dover was the 'Gateway to Roman Britain' (as later and still) with its very extensive harbour, two lighthouses, and major military establishments covering the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries AD.
3 That the *Classis Britannica* had a major fortified base at Dover, very likely the headquarters of the fleet on the British side of the Channel. It seems this may have matched the base at Boulogne (26 miles away) and that both may have served as Imperial posting-stations, serviced by the fleet.
4 The accuracy of the *Notitia* in respect of Dover in that the Shore fort there listed certainly exists and that this fort broadly conforms with the general asymmetrical pattern of late Roman coastal defences.

In addition it seems likely that the discovery of both the *Classis Britannica* fort and the late Roman Shore fort at Dover may well provide the key to the story of Roman military arrangements along the south-eastern seaboard of Britain during the 2nd-4th centuries. Clearly the *Classis Britannica* can now be seen to have been omnipotent on both sides of the Channel, primarily based at fortified positions at both Dover and Boulogne. An absolute date for its departure from Dover may yet be forthcoming and this will clearly be a crucial factor in determining the events of the 3rd century. In this respect it seems that the survival of the *Classis Britannica,* specifically as such, in the second half of the 3rd century has yet to be finally established. Possibly the removal of the fleet from its Dover fort may coincide with the Reculver-Brancaster phase (Period I) of the Shore-fort system of the early 3rd century (Philp 1959), though equally the two events could be largely unrelated. Certainly both the old fort at Reculver and the new fort at Dover formed part of the greatly expanded Shore fort system of the later 3rd century (Period II). This in turn to be extended in the early 4th century (Period III) and ultimately extended by the east Coast signal-stations (Richmond 1963) in the latter part of the 4th century (Period IV).

The writer was only able to give a qualified agreement to take part in the Symposium, first priority being given to major rescue work in Kent. The Symposium coincided with six major motorway, Dover, and other rescue situations which precluded both participation and preparation. This brief note has been compiled under similar pressure.

The British evidence

The Saxon Shore fort and settlement at Brancaster, Norfolk

Derek A Edwards and Christopher J S Green

To the casual visitor the Shore fort at Brancaster must rank as one of the most unimpressive of the series, so thorough has been the process of stone robbing and levelling by agricultural operations. But, viewed from the air, under amenable conditions, the fort and some internal buildings become clearly visible, set amongst a remarkable complex of enclosures and roadways which cover an area of 23 ha. No other Shore fort has revealed traces of similar extra-mural settlement and indeed, with few exceptions, there is almost no evidence for the cemeteries, settlements, and harbour installations which must have been an integral part of every coastal defence establishment.

Previous work at Brancaster has been limited to investigation of the much denuded defences, save one trench excavated within the fort (Warner 1851, 9-16; St Joseph 1936, 444-60; Mottram 1960). Recent fieldwork within the defences has produced a wealth of finds illustrating the site's history and has also emphasized the damage being done by continued cultivation, The first crop marks were recorded by Dr St Joseph in 1949 (Plate I), but the present known extent of the road and enclosure system (Fig. 7) only became clear with the comprehensive aerial reconnaissance programme conducted by one of the present writers (DAE) or the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (Edwards 1976). This work has also revealed details of the internal arrangements of the fort. Recently excavations have been conducted for the Unit by the other writer (CJSG) on part of the western extra-mural settlement scheduled for development (Green forthcoming). The results of excavation combine with those of geophysical and aerial survey to place the complex within its archaeological context.

The Shore fort and settlement, situated between the present villages of Brancaster and Brancaster Staithe, occupy a slight elevation overlooking the salt marshes to the north and are flanked to the east and the west by natural erosion gullies. The geology of this section of the north Norfolk coastal plain generally consists of Pleistocene gravels and loams amenable to the development of crop-marks. To the south above 75ft OD chalk outcrops.

The state of the coastline in the Roman period is uncertain, but considerable silting has occurred at the nearby ports since the medieval period. One must therefore

been located on the north side of the fort, and this includes prime buildings, such as the famous 'Painted House', again surviving to a most remarkable extent. Present work aims to determine the precise nature, extent and date-range of this extra-mural settlement.

The late Roman Shore fort

This fort was located within metres of the predicted Wheeler line within hours of the start of the 1970 excavation (Philp 1973). It had been built across and beyond the north-east corner of the *Classis Britannica* fort which it so clearly superseded. Only one corner and parts of the south and west walls have so far been located. Four certain bastions have been examined in detail, including both integral and added. The shape appears to be trapezoidal, strongly reminiscent of Burgh Castle (Morris 1948), reflecting the general asymmetry of Shore fort architecture. Little is so far known of the internal arrangements, and this is one of the priority areas for work in 1976.

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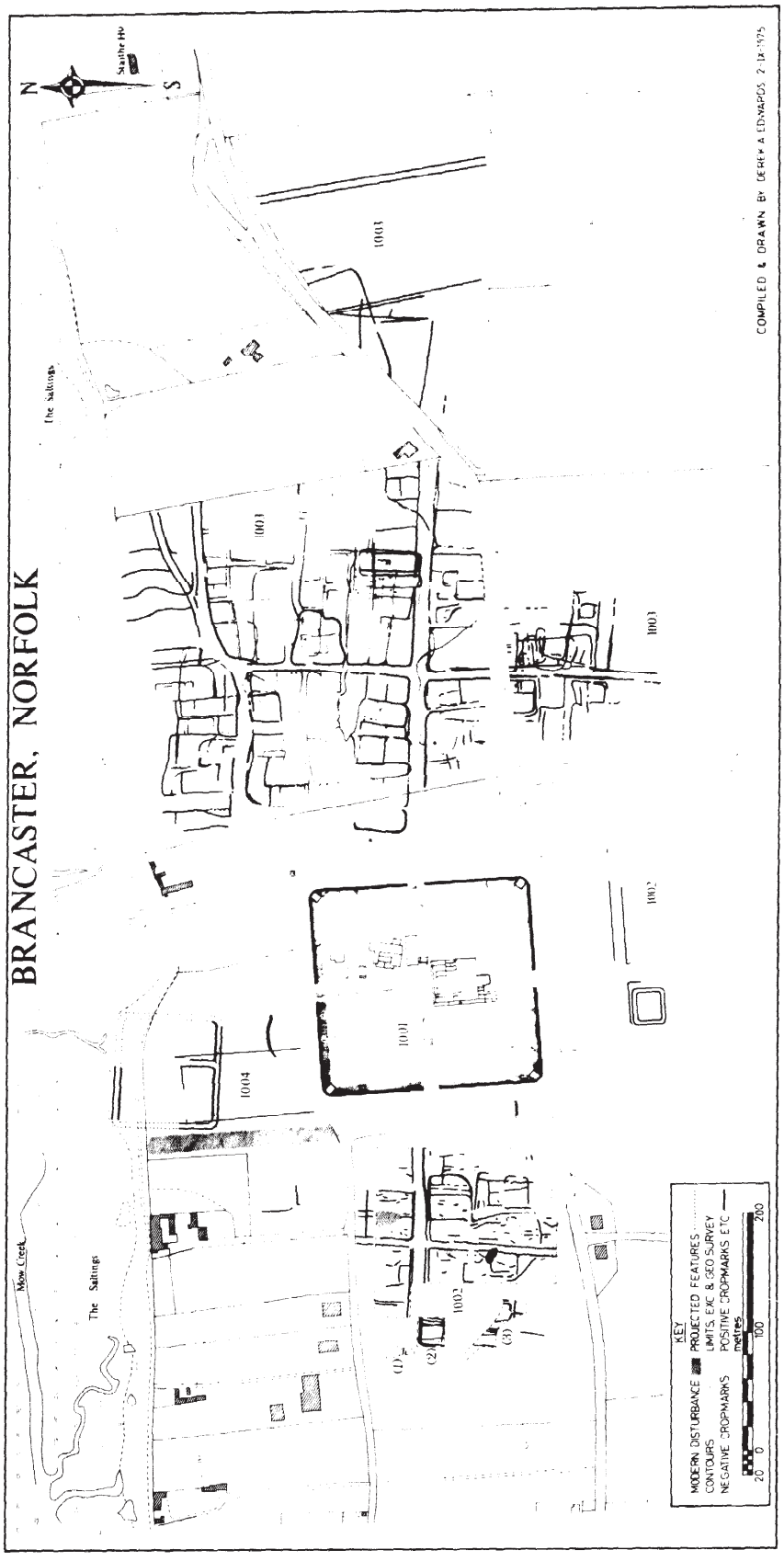
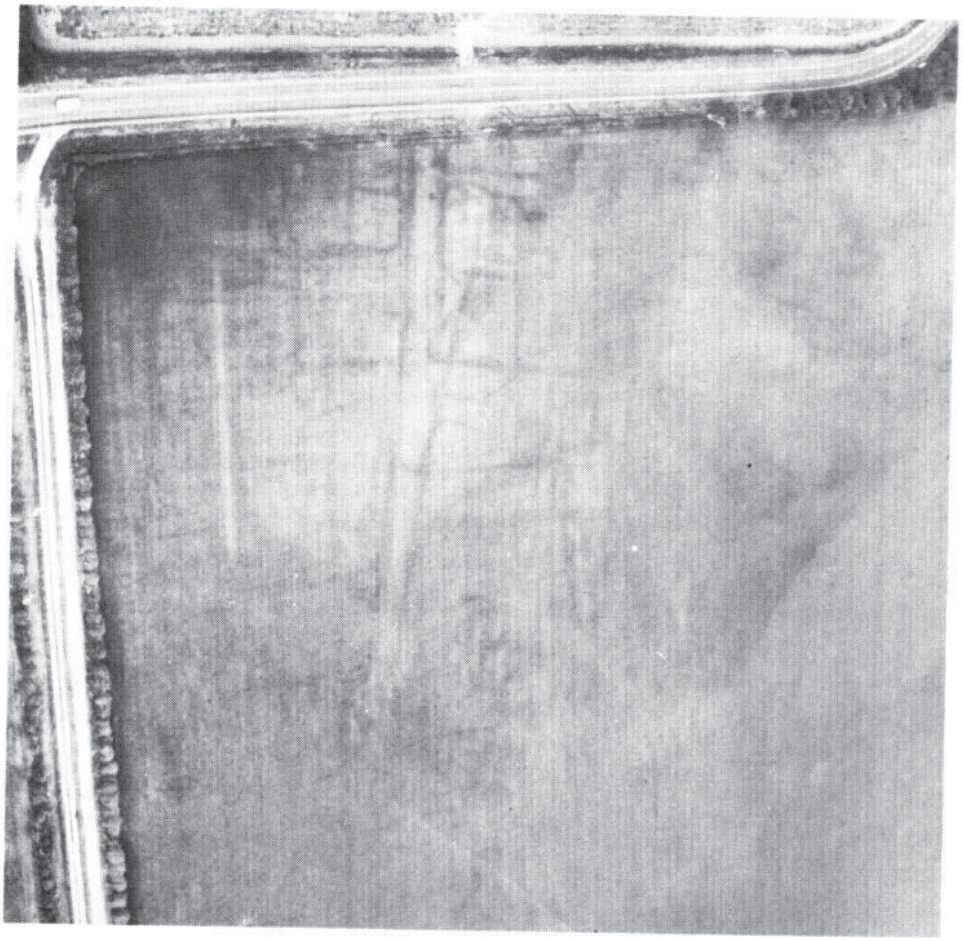
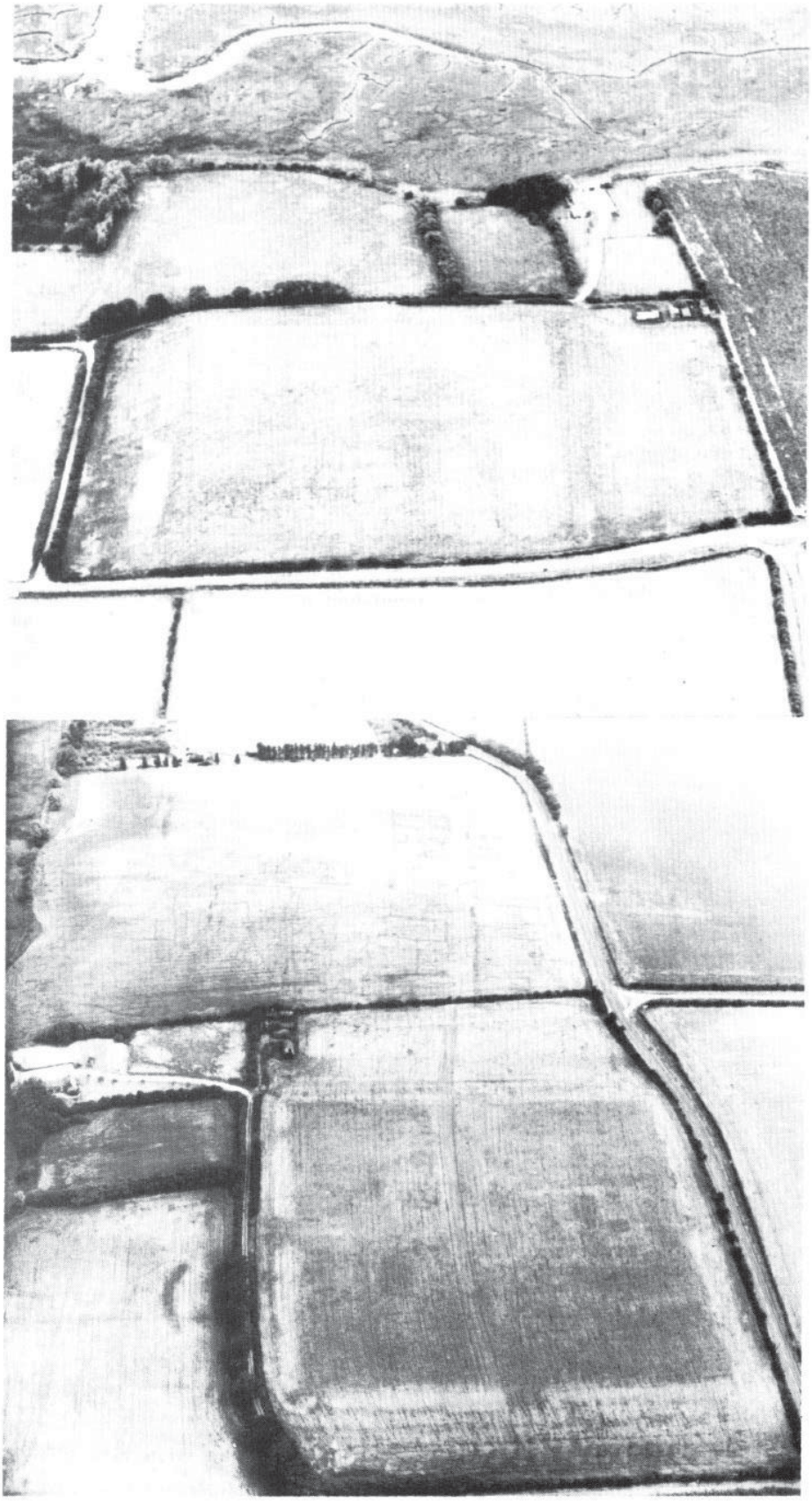


Fig 7 Brancaster: the crop-mark evidence, results of geophysical survey, and excavation illustrating the Shore fort and the extra-mural settlement and a possible fort to the north

I
Brancaster: the area of the fort and crop-marks to the west, viewed from the south-east, 24 June 1949
Photograph J K S St Joseph



II
Brancaster: crop-marks of the settlement complex to the south-east of the fort (near-vertical view), 25 June 1974
Photograph Derek A Edwards



III
Brancaster: crop-marks of the fort and the internal structures, including the *principia*. viewed from the south, 10 July 1974
Photograph Derek A Edwards

IV
Brancaster: crop-marks of the Shore fort, earlier fort, and settlement complex viewed from the west, 16 July 1975
Photograph Derek A Edwards

imagine the present Mow Creek to the north of the forts, as being both deeper and less tidal. Two smaller branches of this creek, one to the forts, the other 500 m north-east, could well have allowed access, the latter being more extensive and suitable as a port site.

Within the area of aerial survey, severe erosion of the topsoil appears to have taken place since the first crop-marks were recorded in 1949 by St Joseph. The higher areas of the site have been almost denuded of topsoil, which has been removed to the bottom of the natural erosion gullies. It is noteworthy that the crop-marks to the south of the fort manifest themselves upon the sides, not on the areas between or at the bottoms of these gullies where, presumably, any archaeological features have either been completely eroded away or masked by down-wash. This erosion is clearly visible in Plate V (top) as alternating bands of light and dark crop. As erosion continues under agricultural stimulus, it becomes increasingly important that both excavation and aerial surveillance be maintained if the site cannot be removed from cultivation (Plate VII).

The programme of research flights for archaeology commenced in 1973 and in the same year an Air Photographs Index was established, by one of the writers (DAE) for the Norfolk Archaeological Unit, and in which all material from these flights is deposited and cross-referenced to the National Monuments Record. Brancaster, as a site of both regional and national importance, was selected, amongst others, for continued surveillance and ten flights over the site were made from 1973 to 1975.

The area of settlement to the east of the Shore fort (site 1003, North) was first recorded on 4 July 1973 (Wilson 1975, plate XIXB) and the continuation of this to the South (site 1003, South, Plate II) was recorded in the following year when five flights were made, on 12 February, 7, 20, 25 June, and 10 July. It was in this, the second year, that the fort to the north of the Shore fort (Plate IV), the rectangular enclosure to the south, the *principia* (Plate III), and other structures within the fort were discovered. The flights during 1975, on 16, 21, and 25 July (Plates V and VI) confirmed and enhanced the evidence of previous years.

In plan the fort is a roughly square enclosure 175 m east-west by 178 m north-south; the area within the ramparts is thus 2.56 ha. The rounded corners are furnished with internal square turrets contemporary with the construction of both wall and rampart. The east and west gates have been examined, but their bad state of preservation makes interpretation difficult. In both instances areas of rubble and fragmentary structures marked the position of guard towers flanking the gate, the fronts of these towers projecting slightly forward of the wall. On the west the total width of the road and gate towers was 12 m. Gaps in the northern and southern defences indicate the position of the other gates but nothing is known of their character. Projecting bastions do not seem to have existed, either as additions or original features, since there is no evidence for them from excavation, fieldwork, or aerial reconnaissance. The natural gullies, enhanced on the west at least by the cutting of two ditches, afforded a considerable defence and separated the fort from the main settlement areas. They also dictated the orientation of the fort, a fact which may explain the disparity of alignment between it and the east-west roads.

Within the defences the principal feature, visible both as a crop mark and a rubble spread, is the *principia,* facing the north gate and fronting on to an east-west road. Three ranges of rooms, round the central courtyard, register as crop marks and, less clearly, the site of the *basilica* to the south. Projecting from the centre of the *basilica's* southern side is a substantial structure, approximately 10 m square, with a polygonal or semi-circular south wall and other smaller rooms to either side. This must be the *aedes* and offices ranged along the side of the main hall. The *principia,* measuring 36 m by 46 m, seems unusually large but the form of the *aedes,* with projecting apse, is a feature of other late forts such as the Severan base at Carpow or the shore fort at Lympne (Wilson 1969, 202, fig. 27; Collingwood and Richmond 1969, 51, fig. 18b).

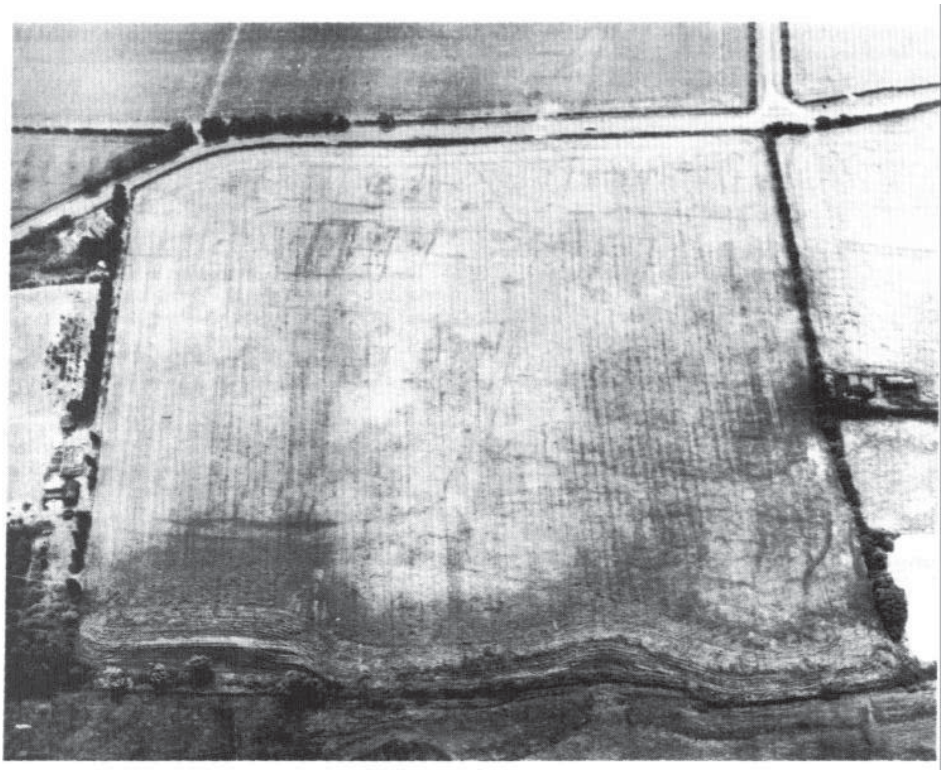
Other buildings existed in the southern half of the fort, to judge by the extensive scatter of rubble. In St Joseph's excavations, behind the west rampart, two phases of floors and stone foundations were encountered which, on pottery evidence, can now be dated to the late 4th century AD (see below) (St Joseph 1936, 450, plate LXXXIII.1). This arrangement may recall that in other late forts where the intervallum road is replaced by a range of buildings backing on to the defences. This system is, however, usually associated with free-standing enceintes, the buildings actually abutting the internal face of the wall, as at Burgh Castle (Cramp 1973, 105, fig. 1b; Schönberger 1969, 182, fig. 24). Two bands of lighter soil, running north-south, in both the south-west and south-east quarters of the fort may represent internal roads.

In the northern half of the fort, two major buildings can be discerned. North-east of the *principia,* a rectangular structure 26 m long and 9 m wide lies on the northern side of the *via principalis,* while, to the north, a complex of rooms may represent the *praetorium.* The alignment of this building is noteworthy since it corresponds more to that of the extra-mural roads than the defences; if not fortuitous, it may suggest a construction date prior to that of the fort. Further buildings are visible to the north, while to the east and parallel to the *via praetoria,* a light crop-mark may mark another internal road.

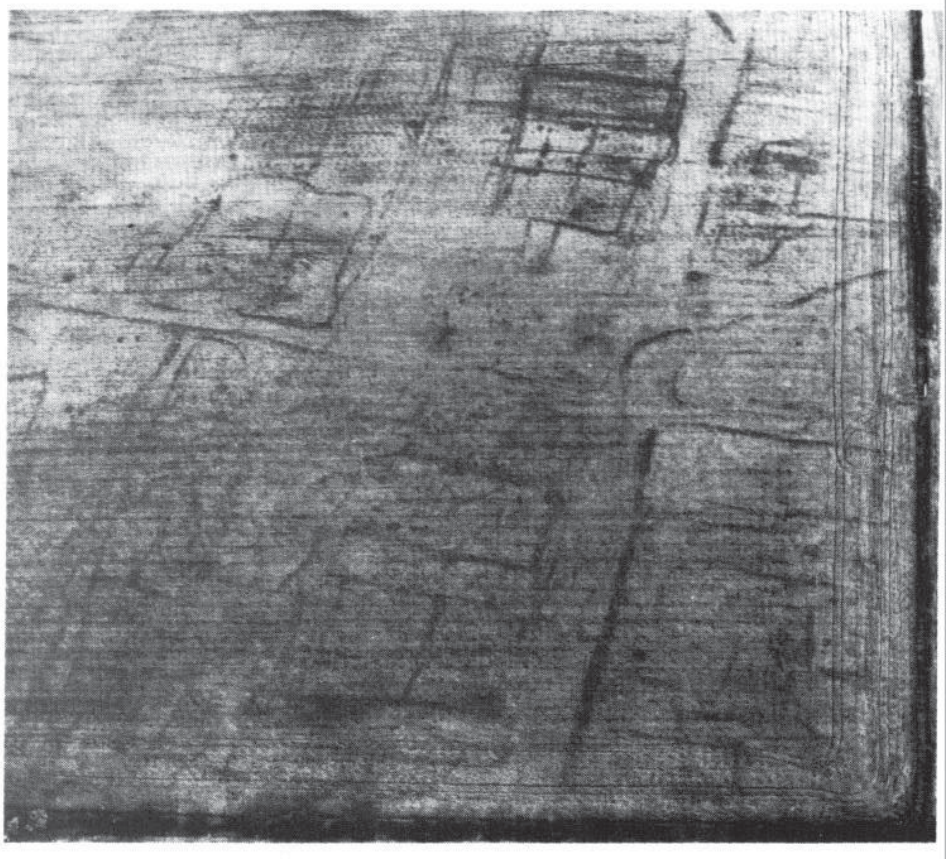
The reconstruction of the fort's history must, at present, rely on the typology of the defences, unstratified finds, and the results of very limited excavation A revised coin list shows the normal dearth of early 3rd century coins followed by a rapid increase in the second half of the century, leading to an unusual peak in the first quarter of the 4th century. Coin loss in the second and third quarters of the 4th century seems unusually low, but there is a marked revival in the last quarter. The pottery series commences with unabraded sherds of Antonine or 3rd century samian, but the bulk consists of late 3rd or 4th century types, including 'Romano-Saxon' pottery and shell-tempered ware, which does not seem to reach Norfolk before the middle of the 4th century. The fort defences are clearly of 2nd or 3rd century type, and a construction date within that range would be supported by the pottery evidence, even though no contemporary stratified levels were revealed in excavation. The early finds seem not to be derived from previous occupation, since the rampart material proved sterile and the old ground surface bore traces only of fires from site clearance. Both coin and pottery evidence show continued occupation to the end of the 4th century, the late 4th century peak coinciding with the construction of the building behind the rampart, since 4th century pottery, including shell-tempered ware, was sealed beneath it.

Other loose finds include a fine gilt-bronze cross-bow brooch and a triple bronze ring decorated with a male head in Celtic style. The latter is clearly an item of horse harness, similar to an example from Richborough and conceivably a relic of the cavalry unit recorded in the *Notitia.* The discovery, in the last century, of a gold ring decorated with two confronted busts and the inscription VIVAS IN DEO is a reminder that 4th century military personnel were nominally Christian and that several other Shore forts have now produced Christian artifacts and structures of the Roman period, or were the sites of religious foundations of the early post-Roman period.

Lastly, two franciscas ploughed from the interior may represent equipment from some irregular garrison placed here at a very late date, but not recorded in the *Notitia,* or may be debris from post-Roman activity. The discovery of scattered human remains, on the berm outside the west wall, hints at some violent event late in the fort's history, an occasion on which the loss of weapons such as barbarian throwing axes might well be expected. Alternatively these



V
Brancaster: crop-marks of the settlement complex to the east of the fort, viewed from the north, 16 July 1975
Photograph Derek A Edwards



VI
Brancaster: detail of crop-marks of the settlement to the east of the fort, illustrating many recut property boundaries and the alignments of pits, or post-pits of a possible structure, viewed from the west, 16 July 1975
Photograph Derek A Edwards

remains may represent late burials, since disturbed.

In the extra-mural settlement 23 ha of crop-marks have been recorded, the majority east of the fort. This is by no means the full extent, since the field near Staithe House, 700 m east of the fort, is known to contain Roman structures and pottery has even been found 1 km to the east at Brancaster Staithe harbour. The majority of the crop-marks represent a network of small plots based on roads leading from the east, west, and south gates, but to the north another enclosure, almost certainly a fort, can also be recognized.

Firstly, site BRC1002, the enclosures west of the fort, will be considered. The main feature revealed by aerial and geophysical survey is an east-west road 10 m wide flanked by narrow ditches. Where excavated (area 1), the two ditches were found to have been recut on several occasions and to contain pottery groups, one of late 2nd or early 3rd century date, the other of the late 3rd or early 4th century. No road metalling survived, although this must once have existed on the clay and sand subsoil.

Towards the west gate the road line becomes more complicated. The roadside features indicate two varying alignments, one heading for a point north of the west gate, the other more to the south, towards the gate itself. Since the former, northern alignment coincides approximately with the projected line of the road in the eastern settlement it could represent its continuation and therefore the line of a road earlier than the fort. Further work in the vicinity of the west gate and the ditch system outside it is needed to establish this point.

To the west the road line is lost, but must turn near Brancaster Church to meet the road from Hunstanton. This road can be traced in the straight section of the Al49 at Titchwell and, further west, at Thornham and Holme next the Sea, heading for a settlement at Old Hunstanton.

The course of another road, defined by ditches 6m apart, crosses the first at right-angles, 130 m west of the gate, the two roads setting the alignment of the enclosure system.

Excavation of the enclosure system (areas 2 and 3) in 1974 revealed the north-west and south-east corners of a plot, 38 m east-west by 73 m north-south, facing on to the main road. This enclosure had been subdivided by the addition of further ditches bounding an area 22 m east-west by 18 m north-south within the north-west corner. Total excavation of this sub-enclosure proved occupation to have been sparse, the only features consisting of two hearths and a single post-hole. Occupation debris was likewise rare, the ditch fills producing only odd sherds of late Roman pottery, including Nene Valley and Oxfordshire colour-coated wares and shell-tempered ware. This enclosure was preceded by a north-south ditch of 3rd century date and later cut by other ditches including two recent field boundaries parallel to the existing western limits of the field.

More settled occupation was encountered north of the road in area 1. A series of post-holes or bases of a poorly constructed timber building of uncertain plan were revealed, the pottery again dating to the late 4th century and including a complete shell-tempered ware jar. One notable object, re-used as packing in a post-hole, was a tile stamped with the name of the *Cohors I Aquitanorum.* This would imply the presence of this unit at Brancaster prior to the Dalmatian Cavalry, for, although a sherd of Derbyshire ware suggests a possible trading connection with the area where this unit was based in the late 2nd century, the import of tiles, even as ship's ballast, seems unlikely (Wright, Hassall, and Tomlin 1975, 288, no. 25).

Nearer the fort, building rubble on the surface of the field indicates more substantial structures and the geophysical survey shows areas of disturbed ground within the enclosures. A bronze plaque, dedicated to Hercules, came from one possible building site (Wright and Hassall 1974, 461, no. 2 and plate XLIIA).

In addition to the regular system of enclosure boundaries, other more sinuous features can be traced in the southern half of the field. Similar marks occur east of the fort, but whether the remains of a pre-Roman settlement or simply glacial features is not known.

The remainder of the extra-mural complex has not been so thoroughly investigated, the available information being derived from aerial survey. South of the fort (site BRC1002) two parallel features suggest the existance of another east-west road 60 m from the defences. This could link with other similar roads outside the eastern and western defences to form a 'ring-road' around the fort. Opposite the south gate a break in these features may indicate a road heading south. A double-ditched enclosure, 30 m square, lies nearby.

The most impressive area of crop-marks lies south-east and east of the fort (site BRC1003), where the same basic road pattern can be recognized with a main east-west axis and a cross-road 165 m from the east gate. North-east of the fort this road meets another in a T-junction, the eastern arm splitting, one branch heading for a silted-up inlet, the other heading due east. Within the area served by this road system a large number of rectangular enclosures can be discerned, arranged with their shorter sides facing on to the roads. Some, evidently, had their ditches re-cut on several occasions or have been subdivided but the majority do seem to conform to a remarkably standard size of 17 m × 35 m, a size also recognized in the system to the west of the fort. These dimensions may be of significance, as they approximate to 60 × 120 Roman feet or one-quarter of a *iugerum* in area. Narrow gaps between the enclosures may be minor lanes or paths, but could equally result from the redefinition of old boundaries. Dark patches within enclosures suggest pits but in one case, where they form a regular pattern, may mark the post-pits for a substantial timber structure. Late Roman coins have been reported from this field, while 'beads and pots' are reported near the east gate, the latter perhaps from a Saxon cemetery.

The diagonal road in the field's north-eastern corner heads for a low-lying area, now marshy and overgrown, but possibly the site of harbour installations. The field beyond has produced traces of substantial brick and flint buildings, while to the south, on the opposite side of the modern road, crop-marks indicate a ditch with an entrance and a curving corner, as if enclosing this area on the landward side. Another enclosure, flanking the northern side of the main east road, apparently coincides with it.

The main road probably continued south-east, heading for the crossing of the River Burn at Burnham Overy and thence to meet the road running southwards along the west side of Holkham Park.

North of the fort, on a slight elevation bordering the marsh, the remains of another fort can also be identified (site BRC1004). The longer sides are defined on the north by the present marsh edge and on the south by crop-marks of a double ditch, thus enclosing an area approximately 75 m by 85 m (0.64 ha). The eastern and western ends and the entrances have not been identified, but the ditches on the south return through the usual rounded corners at either end. The corresponding north-east and north-west angles are reflected in the line of the marsh edge, while two darker growth lines between them may represent the ditches outside the northern defences. Within the enclosure, further features may indicate a reduction in size to a fortlet of approximately 0.2 ha. The lack of building rubble and occupation debris on the site would be consistant with an earth and timber structure occupied for only a short period previous to the main fort. However, occupation debris of 2nd-4th century date from the pipe trench immediately to the west does point to some activity contemporary with the main complex.

The recent surveys and excavation at Brancaster permit the results of past work to be re-assessed but also pose new problems of interpretation which cannot be resolved except by further aerial survey and extensive excavation. However some interpretation of the site's history can be offered.

From its size and plan, the smaller fort should be one of

VII
Brancaster: soil-marks of the fort and settlement complex indicating the destruction, due to ploughing, of the ramparts and internal structures of the fort (near-vertical view), 18 December 1973
Photograph Derek A Edwards

the earliest structures and its most likely historical context the aftermath of the Boudiccan revolt. Whatever its date, the need for communications would cause roads to be constructed linking with other routes in the region, and it is perhaps significant that the road from Hunstanton does head or this fort. However, the orientation of the fort itself and the east-west road to the south is in line with the next section of road, which must head east-south-east to clear the lower reaches of the River Burn on its way to Holkham.

The larger stone-walled fort falls into the system of shore defences created early in the 3rd century and seems comparable to the design of Reculver and Caister by Yarmouth, assuming the latter was a Shore fort replaced in the 4th century by Burgh Castle (Ellison 1966, 60; St Joseph 1936, 451-2). The interior was furnished with an unusually large *principia* and at least three other substantial buildings. The coin list indicates two main periods of activity, one during the times of Carausius and Constantine, the other in the second half of the 4th century, perhaps at the time of Theodosius's re-organization of the province's defences rather than the visit of Constans 25 years earlier. Against this must be set the apparent lack of the bastions so often associated with Theodosius's work.

The extra-mural settlement remains largely unexplored, but the available evidence supports a development broadly contemporary with that of the fort. However, the alignment of much of the complex might argue for an origin in the period prior to the fort's construction. The small size of the plots and their close relationship to the roads suggest that the majority enclosed dwellings, an interpretation reinforced by evidence for structures within at least some. Accepting the majority of the 23 ha of crop-marks as inhabited land, the site becomes one of the largest settlements in Icenian territory, equal to the walled area of the cantonal capital at Caister by Norwich or the major unwalled settlement at Saham Toney and more extensive than anything in the Fenland. Furthermore, the system's resemblance to the *insulae* of a normal Roman town is probably more than fortuitous, and we must recognize the existance here of a planned settlement and a community with some corporate status, probably that of a *vicus.*

Alternatively, does the regular layout indicate the settlement of a community by the central authority at a spot where they can remain under military surveillance, or was the fort planted as a defence for an existing small town?

The later history of the fort is obscure, but there is some evidence for an early Saxon presence. The possible burials outside the western wall and grave-goods from the eastern settlement are pointers to a post-Roman community burying its dead in areas previously reserved for the living. Whether or not the case, the transition from occupation of the fort to that of the village sites is of crucial interest in the study of the local settlement pattern.

The results of the recent work at Brancaster have important implications for the study of Saxon Shore forts. The situation at this site may not be an isolated phenomenon in which military and civil settlements have developed together or been established side by side as official policy.

In future research on the Saxon Shore, as much attention should be paid to the investigation of the hinterland, settlements, ports, and cemeteries as is presently directed to the forts themselves.

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The British evidence

Lympne—a preparatory comment

Barry Cunliffe

Lympne is one of the most delightful of the Shore forts. Situated on the slope of a hill overlooking Romney Marsh, the tumbled mass of its walls, partially buried and weed-grown, still retains the characteristics of the ideal romantic ruin.

Lympne was the scene of a limited excavation undertaken by Roach Smith in 1850 (Roach Smith 1850; 1852) and of some ill-recorded trial trenching undertaken by Sir Victor Horsley in 1894 (Horsley 1894). What is known of the site and what can reasonably be deduced has been admirably summarized in the *Victoria County History* (Wheeler 1932, 55-9) and need not be repeated here in any detail. Suffice it to say that the extant wall, which has suffered considerably from land slipping, is of late 3rd or 4th century type, while within, the only masonry buildings to be identified are a bath building and a structure which in all probability was the *principia.*

Particular interest attaches to the pre-Shore fort phase, the existence of which is implied by the discovery of fragments of tiles stamped CL BR, significantly not incorporated in the Shore fort wall but lying loose, and by the famous altar to Neptune erected by Aufidius Pantera who served as prefect of the *Classis Britannica* some time towards the middle of the 2nd century *(RIB,* 66). The altar, found re-used in the gate of the Shore fort and encrusted with barnacles, had evidently spent some time submerged. Other blocks forming the gate foundation had also been used in previous structures. The obvious implication would seem to be that a *Classis Britannica* fort existed on or close to the site of the later Shore fort, a parallel situation to that recently demonstrated at Dover.

Lympne clearly has a considerable archaeological potential which, it is hoped, will be further explored when a new programme of excavations commences in the near future. Among the questions to be tackled, the location and dating of the *Classis Britannica* base is one of prime importance and the strong possibility exists that harbour installations remain intact in the silts to the south and east of the later fort. Possibilities for environmental studies, including the problem of sea level change, are considerable. The Shore fort, too, poses problems. Its main (east) gate as recorded by Roach Smith is of a curious form and would repay further examination, while the constructional details of its walls and bastions are ill-recorded. The extent and survival

the earliest structures and its most likely historical context the aftermath of the Boudiccan revolt. Whatever its date, the need for communications would cause roads to be constructed linking with other routes in the region, and it is perhaps significant that the road from Hunstanton does head or this fort. However, the orientation of the fort itself and the east-west road to the south is in line with the next section of road, which must head east-south-east to clear the lower reaches of the River Burn on its way to Holkham.

The larger stone-walled fort falls into the system of shore defences created early in the 3rd century and seems comparable to the design of Reculver and Caister by Yarmouth, assuming the latter was a Shore fort replaced in the 4th century by Burgh Castle (Ellison 1966, 60; St Joseph 1936, 451-2). The interior was furnished with an unusually large *principia* and at least three other substantial buildings. The coin list indicates two main periods of activity, one during the times of Carausius and Constantine, the other in the second half of the 4th century, perhaps at the time of Theodosius's re-organization of the province's defences rather than the visit of Constans 25 years earlier. Against this must be set the apparent lack of the bastions so often associated with Theodosius's work.

The extra-mural settlement remains largely unexplored, but the available evidence supports a development broadly contemporary with that of the fort. However, the alignment of much of the complex might argue for an origin in the period prior to the fort's construction. The small size of the plots and their close relationship to the roads suggest that the majority enclosed dwellings, an interpretation reinforced by evidence for structures within at least some. Accepting the majority of the 23 ha of crop-marks as inhabited land, the site becomes one of the largest settlements in Icenian territory, equal to the walled area of the cantonal capital at Caister by Norwich or the major unwalled settlement at Saham Toney and more extensive than anything in the Fenland. Furthermore, the system's resemblance to the *insulae* of a normal Roman town is probably more than fortuitous, and we must recognize the existance here of a planned settlement and a community with some corporate status, probably that of a *vicus*.

Alternatively, does the regular layout indicate the settlement of a community by the central authority at a spot where they can remain under military surveillance, or was the fort planted as a defence for an existing small town?

The later history of the fort is obscure, but there is some evidence for an early Saxon presence. The possible burials outside the western wall and grave-goods from the eastern settlement are pointers to a post-Roman community burying in its dead in areas previously reserved for the living. Whether or not the case, the transition from occupation of the fort to that of the village sites is of crucial interest in the study of the local settlement pattern.

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of the internal buildings would also bear reconsideration.

Roach Smith's work in 1850 laid the basis of our present understandin of Lympne, but in the light of questions now being asked the time has come for a new campaign.

Brief interim report on the excavations of 1976

Excavations took place at Stutfall Castle in July 1976. The work was organized from the Institute of Archaeology at Oxford, and undertaken with the permission and active encouragement of the owner of the site, Mr Harry Margary. Funds were provided by the British Academy, the Society of Antiquaries, and the Haverfield Trust.

The 1976 excavation, conceived as the first of a series of campaigns, was concentrated upon the examination of the east gate, partially uncovered by Roach Smith in 1850 and later reburied. The limited objectives of the work were: to examine the gate and to reconstruct its original ground plan and superstructure, to consider its date, and to assess the potential of the site for further work.

The east gate

An area of c. 100 m^2 was excavated. Within it lay the foundations of the gate, considerably contorted by post-Roman land slips. The structure as exposed was carefully planned, projecting on to a horizontal plane, particular attention being given to the fault or fracture lines which separated the individual masonry fragments. The distortion of the structures was caused by the slipping and slumping of the clay bedrock of the hillside upon which the fort was built. The gate had been torn into thirteen fragments, each of which had been tipped, tilted, and moved laterally. Plans of each fragment were made, each in its own original horizontal plane and the data thus produced re-assembled into a coherent plan of the gate as it would have been before the land slipping began.

Originally the gate consisted of an arched opening 3.15 m wide flanked externally by semi-circular bastions each 3.2 m in diameter. The bastions, which projected forward from the face of the wall, were built on a platform foundation consisting of concrete and rubble edged with three off-set courses of large greensand and ragstone blocks. The massiveness of this foundation was necessitated by the slope of the ground at this point and the fact that the presumed fronting ditch would probably have carried spring water, thus threatening the stability of the projecting towers. In all probability the roadway was taken across the ditch on a wooden bridge, the surface of which would have been flush with the surface of the foundation.

The fort wall measured c. 6.65 m wide. Set within it, flanking the entrance, were two open-fronted guard chambers, floored with rubble and mortar. The superstructure was built of coursed ragstone rubble set in a pebbly mortar and faced with squared blocks of ragstone pointed with hard pink mortar. Double tile courses were provided at intervals.

At first floor level the plan would suggest that a single rectangular chamber existed above the gate. It is highly likely that the bastions, at this level, were hollow and pierced by windows to provide an uninterrupted all-round view of the approach.

Dating evidence

All the structures described above were built as part of a single concept and were contemporary. The platform in front of the gate, upon which the bastions rested, was however built of blocks of stone derived from an earlier structure, and among the rubble core were found an uninscribed altar and part of an engaged pilaster. Evidently an earlier building had been robbed to provide material for the gate. This accords with Roach Smith's discovery of an altar set up by Aufidius Pantera, prefect of the *Classis Britannica,* reused in the foundations.

Two sealed occupation levels were discovered: one lay over the foundation platform south of the south gate-bastion; the other was found behind the wall immediately north of the entrance and sealing the foundation offset. Both produced late 3rd and 4th century pottery, the latter containing several coins of this date range.

The implication would seem to be that the gate was built in the late 3rd or early 4th century, using materials derived possibly from the buildings of an earlier fleet base, and that occupation continued well into the 4th century.

Future work

The potential of the site is considerable. At the east gate, in spite of disturbance by soil slipping, it was possible to recover evidence of every detail necessary to provide a full reconstruction of the ground plan and an outline consideration of its elevation and second storey. Moreover, sufficient of the internal stratigraphy of the site was examined to show that the stratigraphy, though contorted and sealed beneath 1.5 m of soil-slip, is still extremely well preserved.

Many questions remain to be answered, not least the location of the early naval base and the relationship of the later fort to it. It is also highly desirable to excavate an area within the Shore Fort to examine the social and economic status of the community using the site as well as to discover the chronology of the occupation. The silted-up harbour also offers considerable potential.

The Gallic evidence

The Channel Islands

David E Johnston

The Channel possesses very few islands, and none in mid-stream; in its western reaches, however, where France and Britain stand furthest apart, the Channel Islands offer themselves as a convenient staging-point. In a sense they are a navigational hazard, as the Channel is shallow here (a drop of 8 fathoms in sea level would reunite Jersey to the mainland) and fraught with barely submerged reefs, amid complex and powerful tidal races. Moreover, frequent and unpredictable fog adds to the hazards.

Confident and experienced seamanship is therefore the key to their significance in historic times. Commercially, the Islands became important in cross-Channel trade only in the Middle Ages, and even today Alderney, the most northerly and exposed of the group, depends heavily on air transport for its economic survival.

Militarily, however, their importance as offshore islands of the Continent, especially in time of war (real or imagined) has been realized at all periods; the most striking evidence of this is the remarkable investment in fortifications, possibly from Roman times, and certainly from the Tudor period to World War II. Today, in an age of electronic early warning systems, it is understood that the tradition is continued as strongly as ever.

It has long been thought that the Channel Islands could have offered a base or bases for the *Classis Britannica* in its operations in the Channel—perhaps as a terminal point for the chain of bases of the *Tractus Armoricanus* rather than the *Litus Saxonicum* proper. It should be said at once that, perhaps because of the navigational hazards mentioned above, the civilian Roman presence in the Islands was quite insubstantial, the evidence consisting of a few chance finds of pottery and coins, and an unsubstantiated suggestion of a mining interest in Sark. Three important sites, however, should be considered.

Jersey, The Pinnacle [Plate VIII]

On the west coast of Jersey, north of the long sandy curve of St Ouen's Bay, rises the 200ft Pinnacle Rock. Below it, and just outside the Bronze Age defences that cut the narrow peninsula, a Gallo-Roman building was excavated in 1935 (Godfray and Burdo 1949-50). Two concentric walls were dated to the Roman period by pottery (not closely dateable) and a coin of Commodus. The excavators concluded, probably correctly, that this was a temple of Gallo-Roman type; it would thus be one of the shrines known to have existed in out-of-the-way places in Roman times. No associated settlement is known in the Island, though the site is accessible by sea. St Ouen's Bay, unsuitable as a harbour, is ideal for beaching boats.

At the time, however, Jacquetta Hawkes made the interesting suggestion (1937,171) that 'it might be a small guard-room attached to a signal post on the Pinnacle Rock itself, where it would have been absolutely impossible to erect a shelter'. Although the form of the building tells heavily against this suggestion, it would be possible to signal directly in clear weather to the alleged Roman fort on Alderney, where a Roman settlement is now certain. Frequent fog would, of course, lessen its usefulness, but the same conditions would preclude the movement of ships, which it is assumed would be the function of the signal post to report.

Alderney, The Nunnery

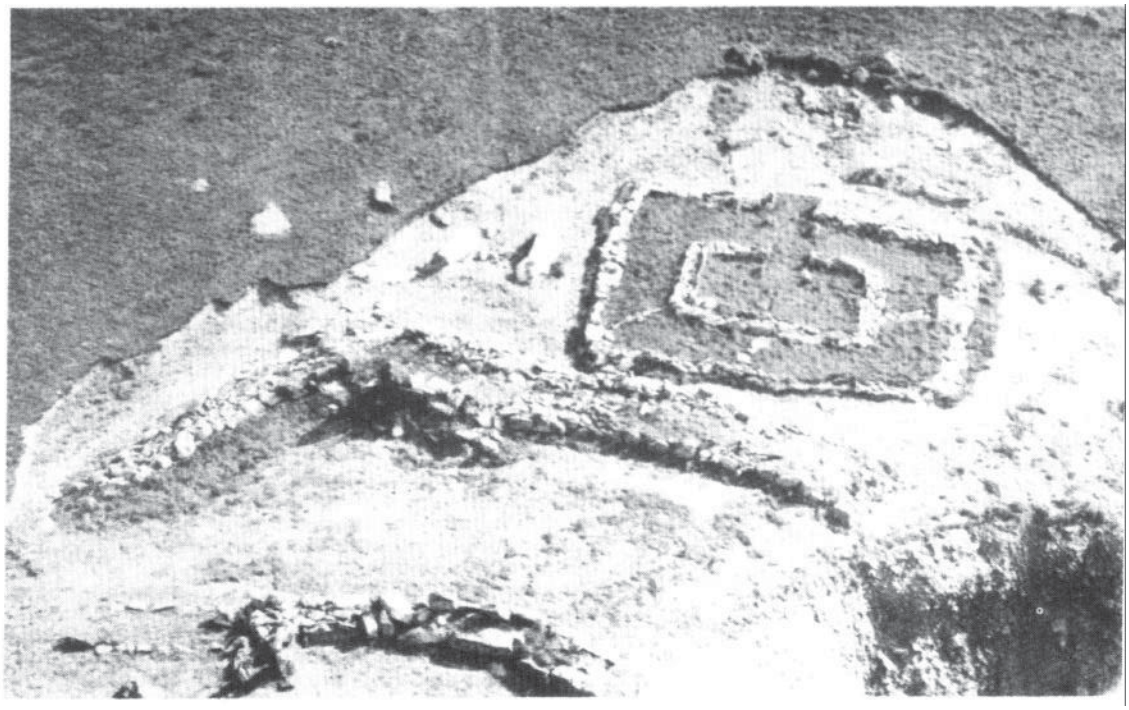
This small fort stands at the north-east end of the Island, at the edge of the low-lying plain of Longy Common, overlooking Longy Bay. Its identification as a Roman fort has long been a matter of dispute, and a recent study (Johnston 1971) has clarified the issues without answering the question. Its first appearance in the written records is 1436 (Patent Rolls) and it has since been a barracks of the Napoleonic era, private house, farm, and flats, the final re-fortification being in 1942, during the Occupation, for small arms and heavy coastal artillery. Its present name was probably awarded in jest in the 18th century.

Kendrick (1928, 254-9) cautiously dates it to the Roman period from its structure and plan. He cites the undoubted re-use of Roman material in the masonry with what appears to be *opus signinum,* and areas of herring-bone masonry, features that could equally be of medieval date. The foundations provisionally shown as a second phase on Fig. 8 are undated; those on those left can still be seen, but the rest (taken from Kendrick) are lost. Phase I, at least, ended with the collapse through erosion of part of the curtain wall, and one bastion. The earthen bank, the steep ramp, and the retaining wall must date from 1540, when cannon were introduced from Castle Comet, Guernsey. Subsequently, the masonry has been rebuilt and adapted beyond recognition, including the addition of an arched gatehouse in the 18th century.

It is therefore to the fragments of bastion and wall on the beach (Plate IX) that we must turn to see the masonry of Phases I and II more or less unaltered. The base, at least, of the fallen bastion was solid, built of undressed sea-worn blocks and Roman bricks. The curtain wall was similarly constructed, with a substantial offset just below ground level, a feature confirmed on the west side by excavation in 1955 (Field Observers' Club duplicated report). This last section showed rubble foundations set on clay. The fallen masonry includes part of a plastered circular opening, either an original round-headed opening or a later cannon-port. Among the forts of the Island the use of largely undressed stone is unique, quarried ashlar being possibly of Norman, and certainly of later date.

On plan, all that we can confidently attribute to Phase I is the curtain wall, the single entrance, and four bastions. The north-west bastion is apparently solid at its base, while the south-west one is at present hollow (adapted as a machine-gun post). The north-east bastion is also probably solid. No original internal structures are known. A chance discovery (Durtnell 1966) recorded Roman material (a 'kitchen midden') underneath the site, exposed by erosion and probably in the foundations. This might be related to other Roman deposits in the neighbourhood.

Comparisons of plan have strengthened the case for a Roman date. Kendrick was struck by the supposed similarity to Caer Gybi (Anglesey), a similarity that rests simply on the use of herring-bone masonry and its small size. A more useful comparison is with the signal-stations of the Yorkshire coast (Fig. 9). Enough is known of three (Goldsborough, Scarborough, Huntcliff) for comparison to be possible. Constant features are: a wide ditch at a considerable distance from the curtain wall; a single entrance; gently curving comers with semicircular bastions, which, judging



VIII
Jersey: The Pinnacle, prehistoric defences and Gallo-Roman structure
Photograph Société Jersiaise and Mr E F Guiton

IX
Alderney: The Nunnery, fallen bastion. Scale in feet
Photograph D E Johnston

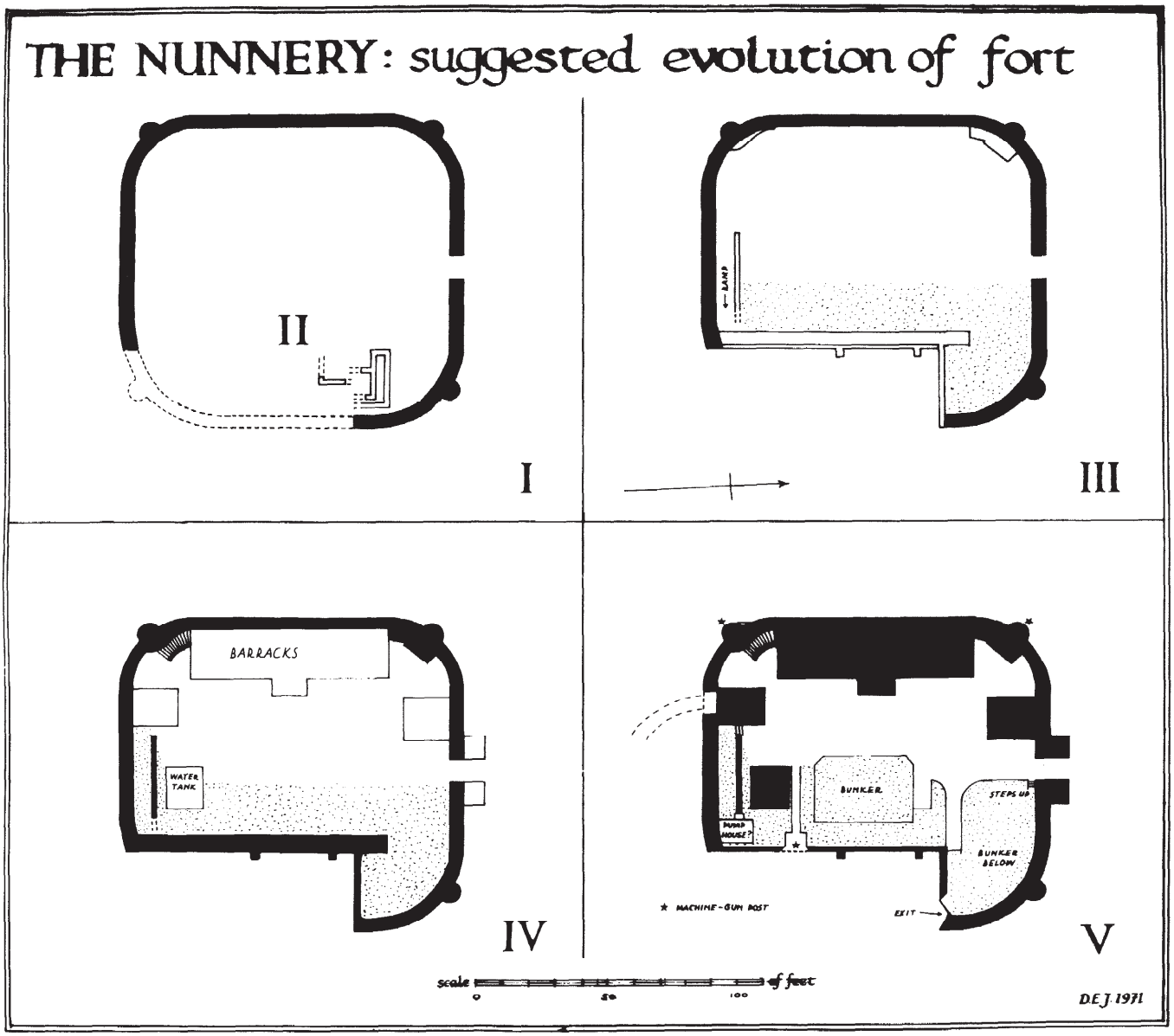


Fig 8 The Nunnery, Alderney

from size and position, were functionally insignificant; and a tall central tower. Within this formula some variation in the details (especially of bastions) was evidently allowed. But the size remains constant. The bastions of the Nunnery are open to the same criticism, and its exceptional size, if it is Roman, could be explained by its having to play a double role, of naval base and signal station. The excavations quoted above established that no ditch existed immediately outside the curtain wall. Nevertheless, a fort of any period is likely to have had a ditch, as the subsoil here is not rock, but several metres of wind-blown sand. A more distant ditch will now be hard to find, as the surrounding land has been thoroughly disturbed over the ages, notably the old course of the Longy Road and the earthworks of what must be a vanished medieval settlement—the legendary 'Old Town' of Longis that was overwhelmed by the sand in a single night. The presence of a central tower might be established one day, though the prospects of excavation are not good for the immediate future at least. In the absence of excavation to establish these points, a Roman date for the Nunnery must remain purely speculative.

Longy Common, Alderney

The presence of a Roman settlement at the east end of the Island is easily explained by the harbour of Longy Bay. This was the only harbour of the Island until the 18th century, and before the Bay was reduced by the causeway leading to Raz Island it could have sheltered a sizeable fleet, even at low tide. Kendrick (1928, 257-9) sets out the tenuous evidence for substantial buildings of Roman date. Two long walls, 70ft and 40-50ft long, are recorded, the first running east-west, the second north-south, dated by what was regarded as Roman pottery and debris. Other buildings, with identifiable rooms, are less precisely recorded, and the debris included roof-tiles of Roman pattern with what sound like stone sockets for doors. The position of these discoveries is lost, and they have probably been destroyed by coastal erosion and the wartime construction of a huge sea-wall. Cremations in urns have also been recorded, near the Nunnery and elsewhere on the Common.

An important find, in 1889, was the excavation by Baron A von Hügel and Dr F P Nichols of a rubbish-pit 'a little

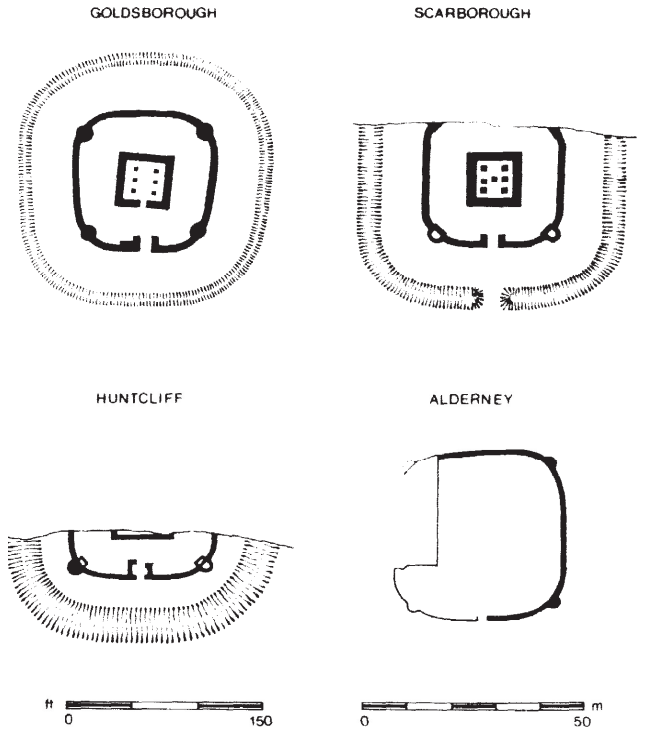


Fig 9 The Yorkshire signal stations and the Nunnery, Alderney, compared

way to the N.E. of the Nunnery' (von Hügel 1889). The contents included fragments of nearly a hundred pots, a glass bead, some chips of lass, bricks and tiles, iron nails, two bronze finger-rings, a bronze thimble, a piece of a bone comb, three bronze pins, a coin of Commodus, and a bronze buckle (Fig. 10). Some of this was preserved at Cambridge, and was recently returned to the Island for study. The glass has been examined by Miss D Charlesworth, who dates it to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. The buckle has no close paralelles; Mrs S Hawkes has examined the drawing, and comments that 'provisionally . . . this type dates from the 3rd century AD, and is a prototype of later and fancier types of buckles, with incurved terminals having zoomorphic decoration . . . At all events, I am sure that this buckle is earlier than the later 4th of 5th century. It is a military type.' The association of buckles of the classic types with Saxon Shore forts is well known, and the presence here of a simple example may imply something more than a straightforward Gallo-Roman settlement.

The settlement may have existed as early as the 1st century. The earliest coin is of Gaius, followed by those of Trajan and Hadrian. Pottery, recorded and illustrated by Kendrick but now untraceable, was of the 1st century; this accompanied a cremation in a chest with iron fittings, found in 1928. More recently, a rescue excavation at The Kennels, on Longy Common (Johnston 1973) produced a quantity of late 1st and 2nd century samian. This was from a level of occupational debris sealing an earlier Iron Age structure of massive stone blocks. Finally, the importance of the Alderney sandstone ballast jettisoned into Chichester Harbour at Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971) should not be underestimated. Although a Flavian date for this is not secure, it implies that a ship discharged its cargo in Alderney, and took on ballast before setting off for Britain to load up with fresh cargo.

This paper has attempted to discuss a possible base for the *Classis Britannica* in the Channel Islands. In conclusion, I would like to suggest an alternative interpretation of the evidence. If we subtract the conjectural elements, such as the Nunnery, the case for a Roman military presence crumbles. The hard facts indicate no more than a settlement and cemetery by a sheltered bay of people using the material equipment of a mainland Gallo-Roman community. However, it has been argued above that Alderney, at this time, was a remote and inaccessible island; could it be that we are looking at the material remains not of the Roman fleet, but of the very pirates that the fleet existed to deal with?

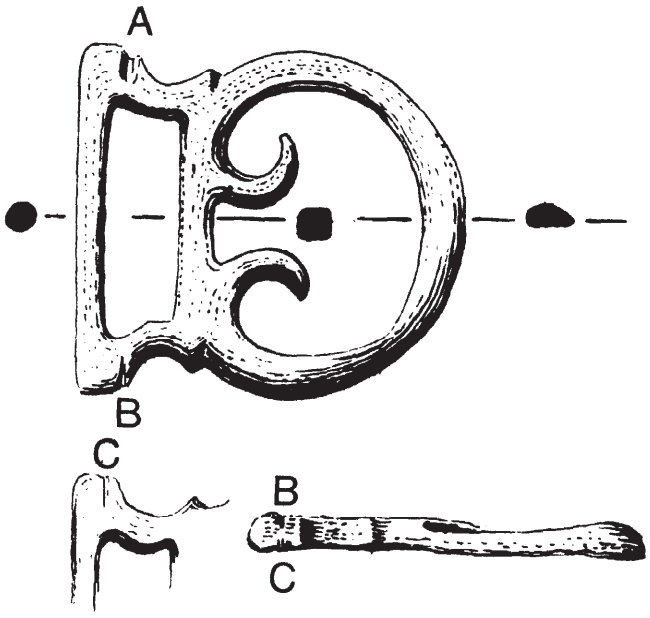


Fig 10 Alderney: late Roman buckle (knife cuts or chip carving at A, B, and C)

The Gallic evidence

Boulogne and coastal defences in the 4th and 5th centuries

C Seillier

Numerous Gallo-Roman sites have been identified on the Channel coast since the beginning of the 19th century but, although some material has been collected, excavations on too limited a scale have in general not made it possible to recognize the nature nor to date with any accuracy the limits of the period of occupation. Some renewal of archaeological activity during recent years has thrown no significant light on these matters. Only the town of Boulogne-sur-Mer (ancient Gesoriacum-Bononia) is a little better known through old or recent excavations.

However, none of the historical problems resulting from the vagueness of the texts that have survived has yet been solved by archaeology. This is the case with the gaps in our knowledge of the coastal defences against seaborne barbarian attacks in the 3rd–5th centuries. Although the defences of Boulogne have been partially identified, the same cannot be said about the location of the fortified places mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum (Occ.,* XXXVIII), which have been placed north of the Somme, essentially using place-name criteria. This problem has been tackled in recent years in France only through textual study or in the context of external events, such as the important discoveries at Oudenberg (Mertens 1962; 1971) or the publication of the work of White (1961) on the *Litus Saxonicum.* In analysing White's work, Will (1966, 528–9), after defending the traditional thesis of a Saxon Shore established from the outset against barbarians coming from the sea, draws attention to the disparity between a British *litus,* of forts or small coastal sites, and a Gaulish *litus,* which includes a larger number of fortified sites, some of which were of *civitas* capital size, and which were sometimes set back from the coast. In exploring this line of thought further, Will noticed another disparity between the eastern and western sectors of the Gaulish *litus* as described in the *Notitia,* the former comparable in size with the British *litus* and the latter comprising only three sites: *Marcis in litore Saxonico, locus Quartensis sive Hornensis,* and *Portus Epatiacus (Occ.,* XXXVIII).

Traditionally, these three sites have been located between the mouths of the Somme and the Aa, and so do not cover the coast of modern Belgium. Here two theories are current. Mertens and van Impe (1971, 230–1) put forward the hypothesis that the *castellum* of Oudenburg can be identified with the *Portus Epatiacus* of the *Notitia.* Will (1966, 532–3) points out that the troops came under the command of a *dux tractus Armoricani et Nervicani,* which implies that the *litus* originally stretched as far as the mouth of the Escaut, in the territory of the Nervians. This may well have been the case at the outset, but it was not so at the time the *Notitia* was drawn up, the anomalies in which, especially the reduced number of places listed for one eastern sector, reflect a residual state subsequent to the abandonment of the coastal region by the Nervians and Menapians—whence the *castellum* at Oudenburg. *Portus Epatiacus* should therefore be sought along the French coast (Will 1973, 72).

The existence of a residual state of the eastern sector of the Gaulish *litus* corresponds to that of a redoubt at Boulogne, to the foundation and dating of which Will (1969) has devoted another study. The letter from St Jerome to Ageruchia *(Epist.,* CXXIII, 15, 3) mentions the occupation of the four *civitates* of the Ambians, the Atrebates, the Morini, and of Tournai, where the invaders remained from 407 to 409. No mention is made of the *civitas* of Boulogne. Moreover, Constantine III landed at Boulogne in 408. The Boulonnais was still defended by the Empire in 407 and prevented the invaders from reaching the sea.

One question remains open: whether in 407 the administrative formula of the *Notitia* had already been put into practice, or whether it was the result of events in train at that time, since the abandonment of Britain is not adequate to explain abandonment of the coast of Gaul (Will 1969, 827).

The texts cannot give the answer to this question. Only comparison of the theories evolved from the interpretation of the texts with data, however fragmentary, from archaeology can supply some additional indications, until new discoveries have been made.

If the existence of a redoubt in the Boulonnais is accepted, it can hardly have been established before 407. The most recent graves in the Oudenburg cemetery date to around 400, and so the *castellum* was not abandoned before the beginning of the 5th century (Mertens 1971; Böhme 1974). It would seem appropriate therefore to seek, to the south of the Aa and more particularly in the Boulonnais, the latest remains of the Roman occupation in an attempt to establish whether this region remained longer under Imperial control. This would also make it possible to confirm whether there is any agreement between the locations suggested for the three sites of the *Litus Saxonicum* and the archaeological evidence.

Let us look first at the case of Boulogne, an administrative centre and major military base. The development of the town owes its origin to the conquest of Britain, and it retained an important role so long as Imperial rule held sway over that island.

The *Classis Britannica* played an important part in the town during the Early Empire. Its stores covered a large area along the port, situated in the Brequerecque inlet, and its barracks were built on the plateau of the Ville-Haute (Seillier 1976), in a layout similar to that recently observed at Dover (Philp 1971a, 81). After being destroyed by fire in the 3rd century, the town was rebuilt but in a smaller area. On the site of the barracks in the Ville-Haute, a regular rectangular defended enclosure was built, slightly over 400 m x 300 m (Fig. 11). Another rampart whose course is still imperfectly known protects the harbour area. Vessels were guided towards the entrance to the harbour by the lighthouse on the cliff, the medieval Tour d'Odre, which may have been built on the orders of Caligula (Suetonius, *Caligula* XLVI), but appears to have been reconstructed later, judging by its brick-coursed masonry.

Will (1960, 377-9) attributes the construction of the Boulogne defences to Carausius, in agreement with 19th century Boulonnais scholars. Research now in progress makes it possible to date this earlier than the reign of Constantine I, which is in agreement with this attribution. This research has also confirmed the homogeneous nature of the defences and has firmly refuted the theory of a late contraction in the 5th century (Heliot 1958, I, 180).

The excavations on the Ville-Haute have produced coin series covering a period from the reign of Constantine I to the Theodosian dynasty (Seillier 1971, 672). Destruction by fire followed by levelling, similar to that in the 3rd century, has been recognized at several points within the defences. It may be dated no more closely than the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century, in our present state of knowledge. Occupation levels of the 5th century have been recognized in places.

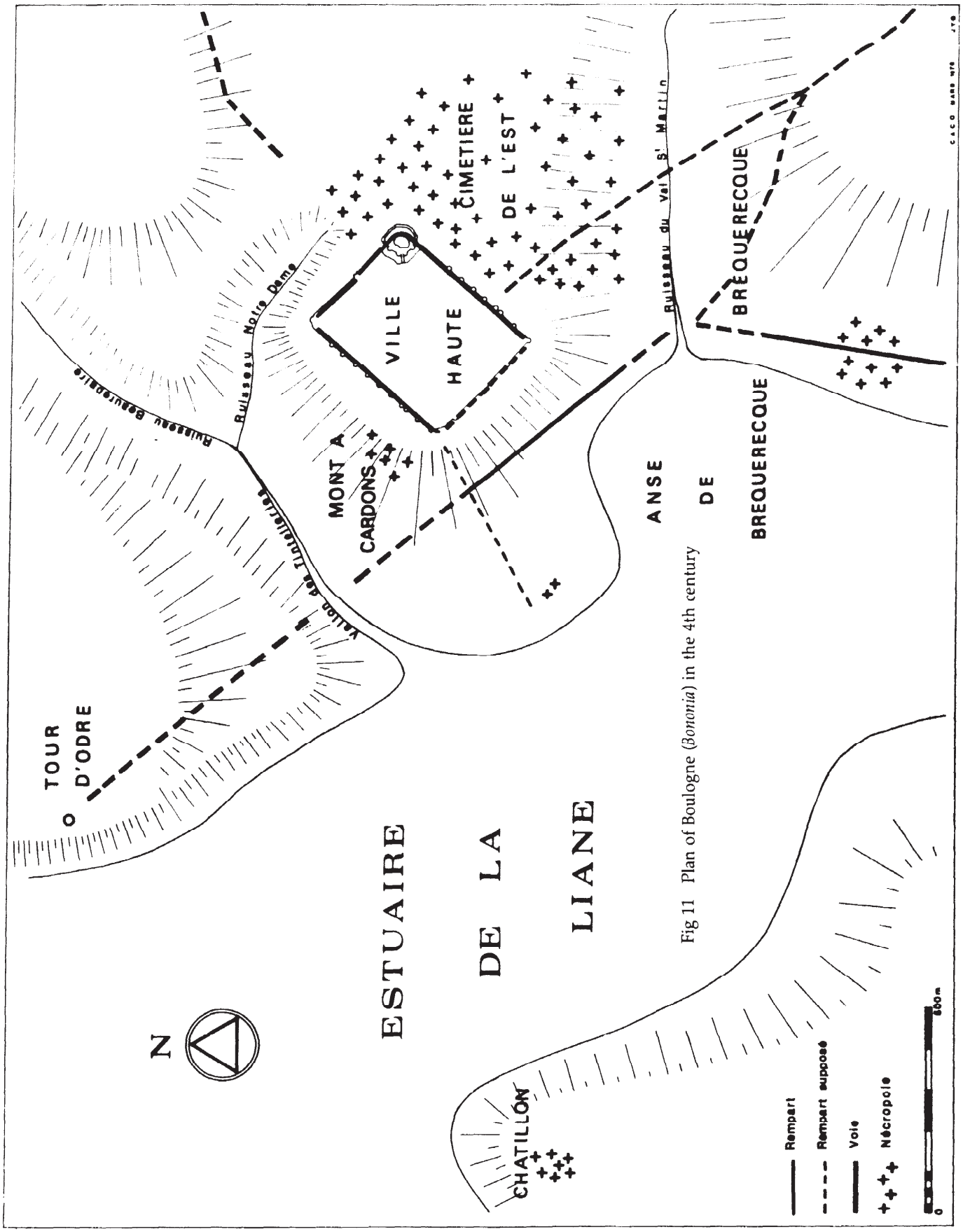


Fig 11 Plan of Boulogne (*Bononia*) in the 4th century

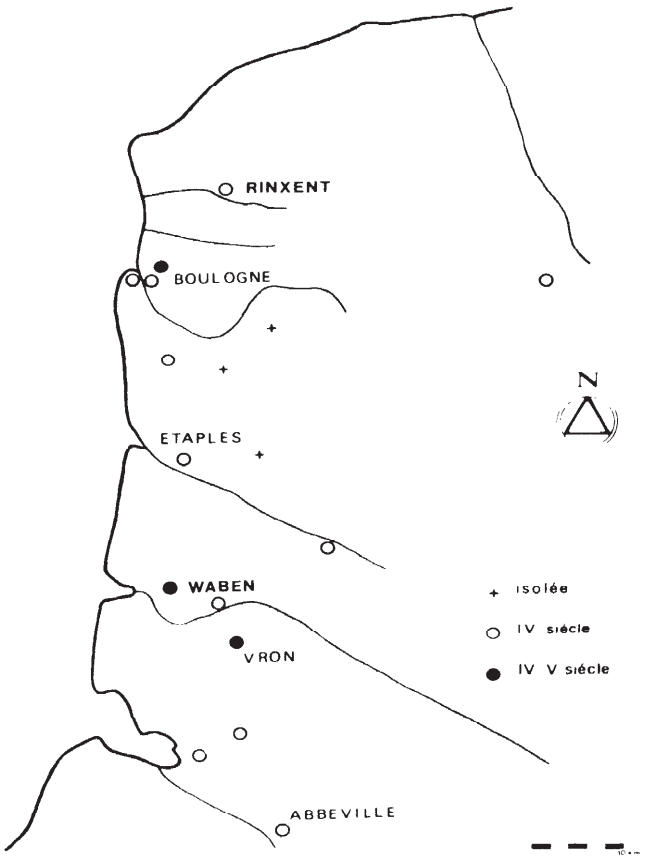


Fig 12 Cemeteries and isolated inhumations of the 4th–5th centuries between the Belgic and Somme frontiers

The coin series from the largest cemetery, the eastern cemetery or the Vieil-Atre, extends to the reign of Zeno (Vaillant 1890, 9, 24). This testifies to the continuity of settlement, but it remains inadequate to confirm the survival of an administration and a military presence. In the absence of weapons the most characteristic material (cruciform brooches, belt plates) belongs, as at Oudenburg, to the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century. Unfortunately incomplete excavations, our lack of knowledge about the distribution of graves in different sections of a very complex cemetery, and the impossibility of reconstituting grave good groups do not allow a more detailed analysis. Other remains of the Roman occupation in the Boulogne region are in general known in an even more sketchy manner, which greatly restricts the range of research, but nevertheless certain interesting observations can be made.

Mertens (1962, 54) very properly draws attention to one fact generally overlooked by those trying to locate the fortified sites of the *Litus Saxonicum,* the changes brought about by marine transgressions in the coastal area. This problem is posed by Oudenburg itself (Thoen 1973). According to one author, the topographical discontinuity between cemeteries A and B can be explained by the rise in water level, which also made it necessary to raise the *castellum* each time it was reconstructed. The Dunkirk II transgression, by cutting the roads, may have been the reason for the site being abandoned.

The Dunkirk transgression also profoundly changed the French coastline between the Belgian frontier and Sangatte. For this reason the identification of *Marcis* with Mardyck, near Dunkirk, would appear to be ruled out. However, the site of Marck-en-Calais, to the south of the Aa, which has also often been suggested, lies on a sandy Flandrian ridge isolated by the Dunkirk II transgression (Somme 1969, fig. 8, 53). There was a settlement of the early Empire there, but none of the objects found belong to the 4th century. As in the rest of the region, the archaeological vacuum lasted until the end of the transgression.

Further south in the Boulonnais and up to the Somme, traces of occupation are numerous but difficult to date, except where cemeteries are concerned (Fig. 12).

First there is Marquise-Rinxent, up the estuary of the Slack, where stone has been quarried since the Gallo-Roman period. In a region greatly broken up by stone quarries only a few traces have survived. They provide evidence of a 4th century occupation, whose nature is not clearly established, in an area where many authors located the *Marcis* of the *Notitia.*

Next come little known isolated graves or cemeteries located behind one coastal area. This was not the case at the site of the Château at Etaples, built on a small eminence which dominates the right bank of the estuary of the Canche, a situation comparable with that of the Ville-Haute at Boulogne. A castle was built here in the 12th century. When it was partially demolished, before 1850, many Gallo-Roman objects, most of which probably came from a 4th century cemetery, were collected (Souquet 1855, 3) and for the most part deposited at the Museum at Boulogne-sur-Mer. In 1864, resumption of the work allowed the rapid excavation of more than 30 tombs from the end of the 4th century. Several cruciform brooches may have come from the same site. These brooches, which were worn by soldiers and officials, only turned up rarely and singly in the cemeteries, with the exception of those at Oudenburg, Boulogne, and Etaples, where they were relatively numerous.

It was in the vicinity of the Château at Etaples that Vaillant found one of the two tiles bearing the stamp CLSA, which has been attributed to the *Classis Sambrica,* a fleet located by the *Notitia 'in loco Quartensi sive Hortensi',* an area usually considered to lie on the estuaries of the Canche and the Somme. Remains of walls were found under the foundations of the Château during the work carried out there, but Souquet's observations (1885, 3–5, fig. 1) were too confused to permit them to be identified or dated.

Its destruction means that it is impossible to confirm whether the Château was a *litus* site. Our very scanty knowledge of the cemetery and the lack of a grave-by-grave inventory makes it impossible to establish the limits of the occupation. However, here too archaeological material covers the period from the end of the 4th to the beginning of the 5th century.

There remain the two sites of Waben and Vron between the Canche and the Somme, in the *civitas* of the Ambians, not of Boulogne. The occupation of both continued without interruption into the 5th century and throughout the whole Merovingian period (Fig. 12). Like those just mentioned, they were situated on an estuary, in this case that of the Authie, which stretches deep inland. Only the Vron cemetery has been excavated systematically. It is characterized by the presence of weapons in the men's graves (Seillier 1973). The cemeteries probably belonged to communities that were Germanic in origin, settled in devastated areas during the invasions of the 3rd century, with the intention of completing the defensive system by watching landing or crossing points.

To summarize, although no Saxon Shore site can be identified with certainty between the Belgian frontier and the Somme, it is nevertheless possible to refute certain site identifications, and also to provide a more or less solid

archaeological basis for others, especially so far as Etaples is concerned. Furthermore, the system seems to have been completed by a number of Germanic settlements which guarded the coast in those areas not defended by the regular army.

New excavations should make it possible to produce a more precise dating, notably the date of the destruction of Boulogne. However, if there was a Bonlonnais redoubt, it could not have been established until after the abandonment of Oudenburg, at the beginning of the 5th century. Thus in our present state of knowledge it is impossible to confirm that the Boulonnais was still part of the Empire after 408.

[Translation: H F Cleere]

The Gallic evidence

The 4th century Gallo-Roman site at Alet (Saint-Malo)

Loic Langouët

The *Notitia Dignitatum* mentions that there was *Praefectus militum Martensium* at a place called Aletum, under the command of the *Dux tractus Armoricani et Nervicani.* All are agreed that this reflects the position at the end of the 4th century. The identification and location of this site are not in question, because there is still a place known as La Cité d'Alet, in the town of Saint-Malo, where many Gallo-Roman remains have been found and where excavations in progress for the past eleven years have provided precise corroboration.

The Cité d'Alet, generally known as 'La Cité', is an impressive rocky promontory with an area of about 14 ha. It dominates the mouth of the river Rance and forms a peninsula which was until ten years ago joined to the mainland by a narrow sandy isthmus, aligned east-west (Fig. 13), which carries a Roman road. La Cité lies about 800 m south of the walled area of Saint-Malo, well known to tourists. Situated in the middle of the bay of Saint-Malo, the site commands access to the Rance, which is navigable for about 20 km. The Solidor Tower, built at the end of the 14th century on a small rocky spur abutting on La Cité, dominates on the one side the Saint Père inlet, a natural maritime haven, known to have been used in the early Middle Ages, and on the other the Solidor inlet.

The site of Aletum has been identified satisfactorily, but this is not the case with all the Gallo-Roman fortifications. In fact, in our present state of knowledge it is by no means impossible that a very small *castellum* and a very large town wall existed side by side, but this has not been proved. It should be remembered that in Armorica certain garrisons mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* appear to have been stationed in urban defended sites (Vannes, Nantes, Rennes) and others in separate *castella* (Brest).

The castellum

At the foot of the bastion in front of the entrance to the Solidor Tower, it is possible to see a 40 m length of masonry composed of small irregularly laid stones with, in places, up to three courses of bricks (Plate X). The mere appearance of this structure is sufficient to justify a Gallo-Roman ascription. Trial trenches were excavated in 1973 inside this bastion; they gave more precise information about the structure and its nature. These began by revealing a curtain wall, 1 m wide on average, with pink crushed tile mortar, superimposed on masonry faced on its exterior but not on the interior (Fig. 14). In several excavations the Gallo-Roman fill has been found, which has been built up against this masonry to level the surface delimited by the wall.

This fill, which dates from the construction of the *castellum* and seals the remains of an earlier building on the same site, has produced locally minted coins of Tetricus and sherds of Argonne ware. Two of the sherds were decorated with rouletting of Chenet type 82, consisting of oblique, vertical, and horizontal strokes, which provides a *terminus post quem* of AD 340–45. From the shape and extent of the 'sugar loaf' rock that had been built up in this way, it has been possible to estimate the perimeter of this military fortification as about 180 m and to assume the existence of a tower (known as the Oreigle Tower in the 9th century) on the site of the present Solidor Tower (Plate XI, Fig. 14).

The town defences

These pose major problems relating to their construction, layout, and dating. Their Gallo-Roman origin, which was not in doubt for some historians and which would seem logical according to certain historical arguments, is not by any means proved, and it must be discussed here.

The defences are referred to in several medieval texts. The Alet wall (then known as Ker Malo) was apparently mentioned indirectly at the beginning of the 10th century b Ibrahim Ben Ya' qub, an Arabian Jew engaged in trade along the Armorican coast. It is described in considerable detail (construction, gates) in a *chanson de geste* of 3000 lines, *Le Roman d'Aquin,* the composition of which originated in the 12th century. However, there is no archaeological evidence until the 17th century.

In 1636 the geographer Dubuisson-Aubenay wrote following a visit to Alet:

> 'On y veoit encor toute la trace des murailles, plantées sur le roc qui sort et paroist à fleur de terre, et en quelques endroits des pans à hauteur d'homme comme sur le havre de Saint Père, un petit pan, puis sur la rade de Rance, et sur le port de Saint Malo, une longue et continuelle suite à la aulteur de deux hommes, épaisseur de 3 piés environ, avec petits flans et *tourettes quarrées par cy, par là,* autant de mortier clue de pierre, et pierre taillée tout d'une mesme grandeur qui est double de celle du reticulum opus. Tellement que test ouvrage, quoyque très dur et insurmontable par les anciens, *ne paroist point romain, sinon en un endroit est et Saint Mâlo, par dedans Aleth, sur une ouverture ou rupture où paroist quelque ceinture de brique large à la romaine.'*

By comparison with similar structures in Touraine and Anjou, Dubuisson-Aubenay dated the defences to the 9th and 10th centuries. In this connexion it should be noted that the remains of the 10th century cathedral, which are still visible at Alet, are similar, from the point of view of masonry, to the surviving stretches of the defences.

Furthermore, Frotet de Landelle wrote in the 17th century of the Alet defences:

> 'Les murs d'icelle dont nous voions partie à présent renversez et l'autre partie debout à quelque mediocre haulteur, n'ont aucun rapport, ni ressemblance aux murs des autres villes de la province, soit en la disposition et agencements des pierres servans à la construction ou des tours qui servoient à flanquer la muraille pour la déffense. Car en ces murs de QUIDALET phonetic rendering of *Civitas Alet]* se voient les pierres

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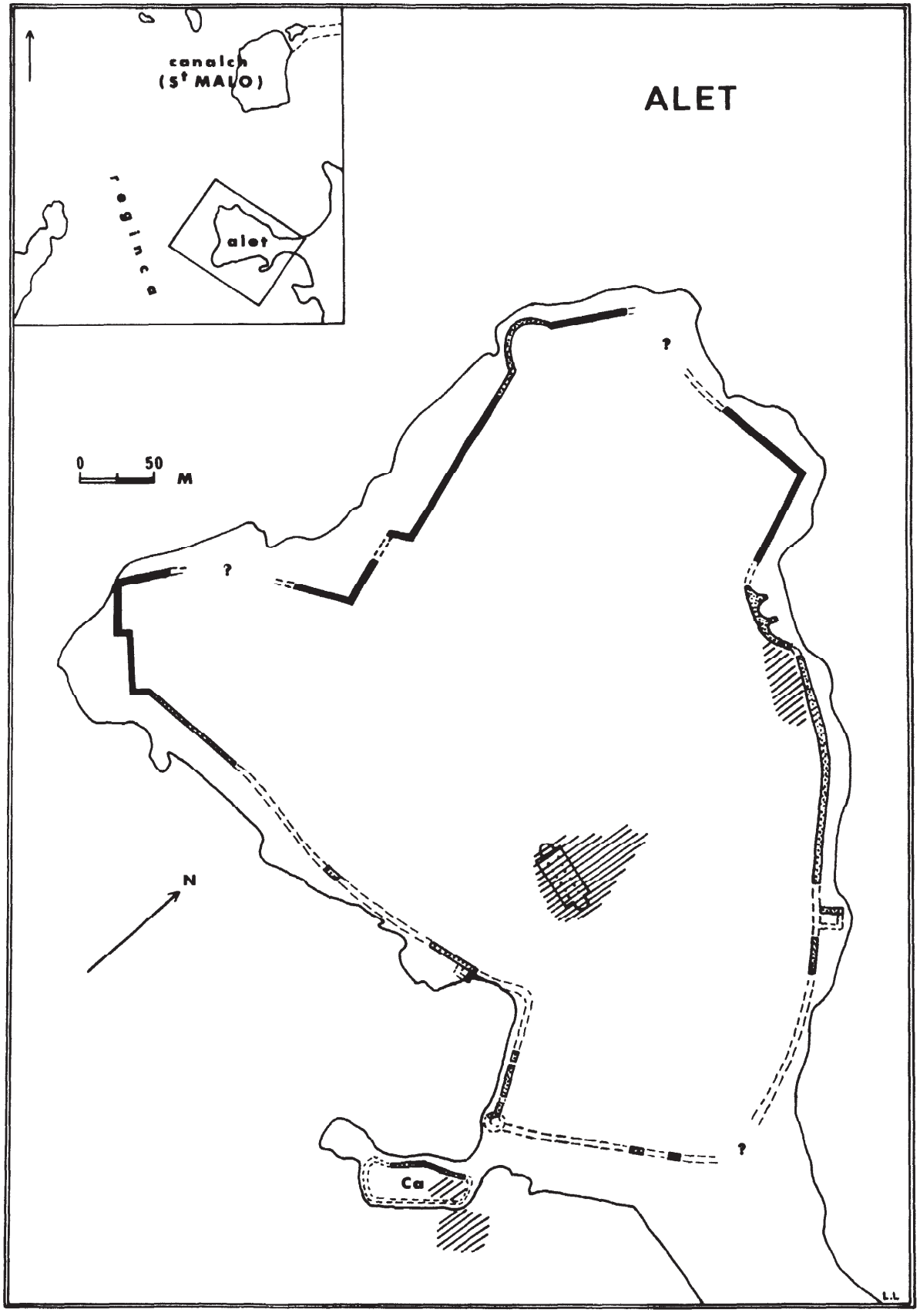


Fig 13 The peninsula of La Cité, Alet

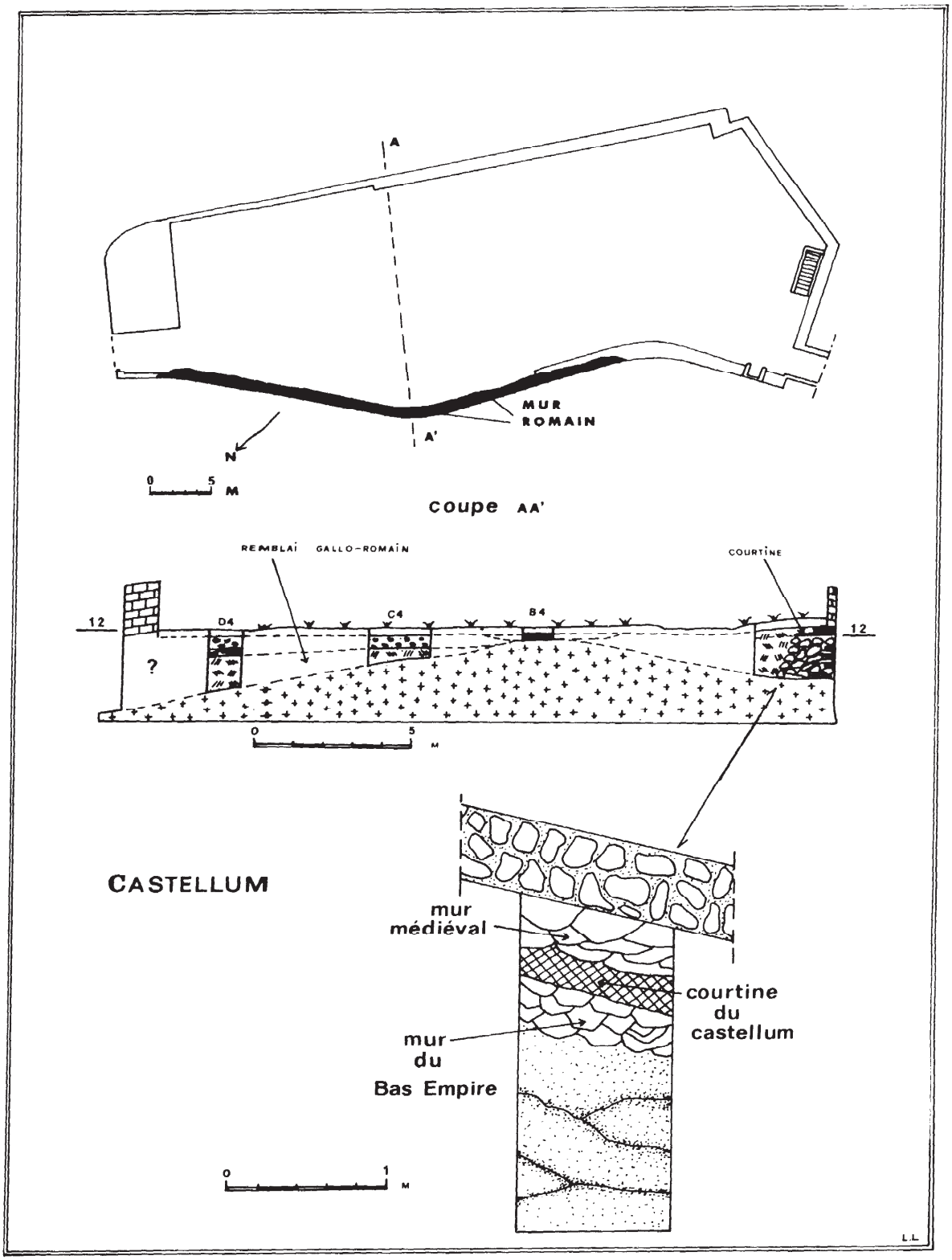
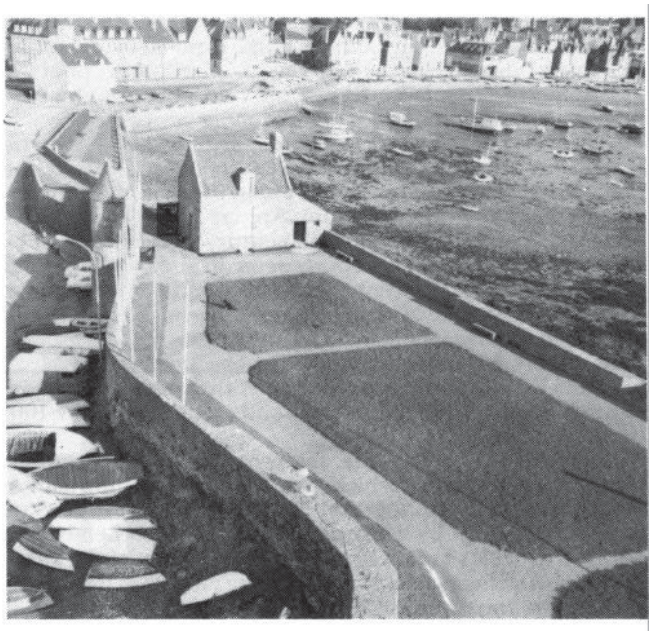


Fig 14 Alet: the *castellum*

X
Alet: masonry at the base of the Solidor bastion, showing brick courses



XI
Alet: the *castellum,* general view

XII
Alet: traces of allegedly 'Gallo-Roman' defences

> de batiment arrangées en assez belle disposition et ordonnance; et au lieu de tours rondes ou en forme ovale desquelles se servoient l'antiquité pour la déffense des places fortes, on void encore autour de ces murailles de *petites tours en forme carrée . . .'*

These two contemporary records are in good general agreement, especially in regard to the masonry and the presence of small square towers along the wall. It is known from a Latin manuscript from Angers that the defences were destroyed in the mid-13th century and so it must be accepted that these two reports refer to their condition at the start of the 13th century at the latest. One may ask whether this medieval structure properly reflected a previous Gallo-Roman wall, in view of the fact that Alet was very important in the early Middle Ages and that rebuilds were likely. It is known, for example, that there was severe fighting at Alet in the 8th century and at the start of the 10th century.

These written records are accompanied by 17th century plans or engravings, which provide precise information about the design and location of one of the square towers. A plan drawn up by a Royal engineer named Lemerle in 1695 in particular indicates in detail the design of the western section of the rampart (black on Fig. 13). This document is the more important in that some forts were built in this area at the end of the 17th century and in the mid-18th century which destroyed these remains. The detail of the eastern section has been established with more certainty by means of photographic records from the beginning of the present century, from discoveries of remains, and from excavations early this century (stippled on Fig. 13). Unfortunately, 200 m of the substructure of this rampart disappeared during World War II.

The length of these defences is about 1800 m and their course is rather sinuous in the western section. The length is particularly great for a wall of the Late Empire: the Gallo-Roman defences at Rennes and Nantes, already very important towns in the early Empire, were a proximately 1200 and 1600 m long, respectively. The wall at Alet was therefore the longest in Armorica in the 4th century. Furthermore, the curving course of the western section is unusual for this period. It is reasonable to ask whether this section is not early medieval whilst the straighter eastern section conforms to a Gallo-Roman alignment. It should also be noted that the wall has to follow the cliff-tops, which may have imposed this unusual course and considerable length. Thus the course of the defences reconstructed in this way, which reflects their condition in the 13th century, poses major problems.

The method of construction and the dating elements are also sources of difficulty. According to the remains discovered in the eastern section, the defences were constructed of fairly regular small stones; in the only substantial surviving portion, 2 m high (Plate XII), the stones in the external face form horizontal lines. The thickness averages 1.50 m (1.90 m at the base, 1.20 m above). The stone used was local in origin: there are many pebbles from nearby beaches. It must be stressed that the remains that have been discovered are similar in appearance, which runs counter to the hypothesis of medieval repairs to Gallo-Roman defences.

Dating also poses major problems. In 1907 coins of Tetricus were found in the mortar of the masonry, but the account of this demolition indicates that 20 coins were found, one of Honorius. Furthermore, Dos (1969) in recent excavations at the foot of the only extant fragment (Plate XII) appears to have observed that the base of the wall rests on an archaeological layer that has produced more than 400 4th century coins, with a *terminus post quem* of AD 395. These two observations seem to indicate construction later than the 4th century, i.e. in the early Middle Ages. In any case, the very different types of masonry of the *castellum* and the defences bespeak different periods of construction. A trial excavation is to be carried out soon at the foot of the sole substantial fragment of the Alet town defences to study in detail the stratigraphy and to attempt to resolve this problem definitively.

There are thus many uncertainties relating to the course, the construction, and the date of the town defences of Alet, and a Gallo-Roman date can only be accepted with major reservations. If they do not date to the end of the 4th century, a date should probably be sought for their construction in the 8th or 9th century. Alet would thus only have had a small *castellum* in the 4th century. It has seemed important to recount in this paper what is known about the defences of Alet, because a Gallo-Roman origin has been attributed to them rather too precipitately in many published works.

The Gallo-Roman town

Alet was not only the station of a military garrison; the site was in fact a town. This comment provides the opportunity for further consideration of the juxtaposition of two sets of fortifications—the *castellum* (obviously (Gallo-Roman) and the defences (which may be Gallo-Roman).

It is more logical to accept that the town defences are later than the *castellum* than the converse, since this later date appears to result from some form of expansion. If this is accepted, the defences must be later than AD 340–45. Do they date from the end of the 4th century? Certain features, such as the brick courses referred to by Dubuissan-Aubenay at one point, support this hypothesis, but the archaeological evidence, despite its vagueness, appears to contradict it. If the defences date to the 8th or 9th centuries, their construction merely reflects the important political and religious roles of Alet. However, the lack of comparative material for this period is tiresome. It is only possible to conclude provisionally that in our present state of knowledge a Gallo-Roman origin for the Alet defences is highly doubtful. Nevertheless, it is logical to accept that the residence of the *Praefectus militum Martensium* was the *castellum,* which is undeniably military in character. However, its slightness is surprising, especially when one considers the dimensions of other Armorican bases such as Brest or the *Litus Saxonicum.*

The development of the town in the Gallo-Roman period helps in the location of the military establishment. For example, if the town defences were Gallo-Roman, they would have been the only ones in the *civitas Coriosolitum;* thus, they could not have been built until after Alet had assumed the role of a capital. Recent studies have enabled the site of the naval station of Reginca, mentioned in the Peutinger Table, to be identified at the foot of La Cité at Alet, at the level of the Solidor inlet; the name Rance has preserved a memory of this ancient site. The sites of Reginca and Alet can thus reasonably be identified, in view of their proximity. A settlement of the Coriosolites, consisting of wooden buildings, is attested by discoveries from the period 80 BC to AD 10–15 on the peninsula. Alet was unquestionably part of the *civitas Coriosolitum,* of which Corseul was the capital. From that time onwards, occupation continued, probably based on sea trade, in the heart of the urban structure, based on the *cardo* and *decumanus,* of modest size. In 1971 an impressive drinking water pumping station (1500 kg of cut timber), dating from the early Empire, was discovered in the Solidor inlet; it was intended partly to supply the town and partly for replenishing boats beached along the Rance. Underwater exploration produced pottery of the 1st–3rd centuries AD, which pinpointed the area where boats were beached. Excavation of the installation revealed that it was abandoned after AD 337; this is an important point when one considers that it indirectly confirms the date of building the *castellum.* It was in fact built at the base of the Solidor Tower, and it became impossible to keep it operational in the immediate vicinity of and outside the military fortifications.

Over an eleven-year period, excavations have been carried out at various places in Alet (cross-hatched areas in Fig. 13), but it has been in the past five years, thanks to an

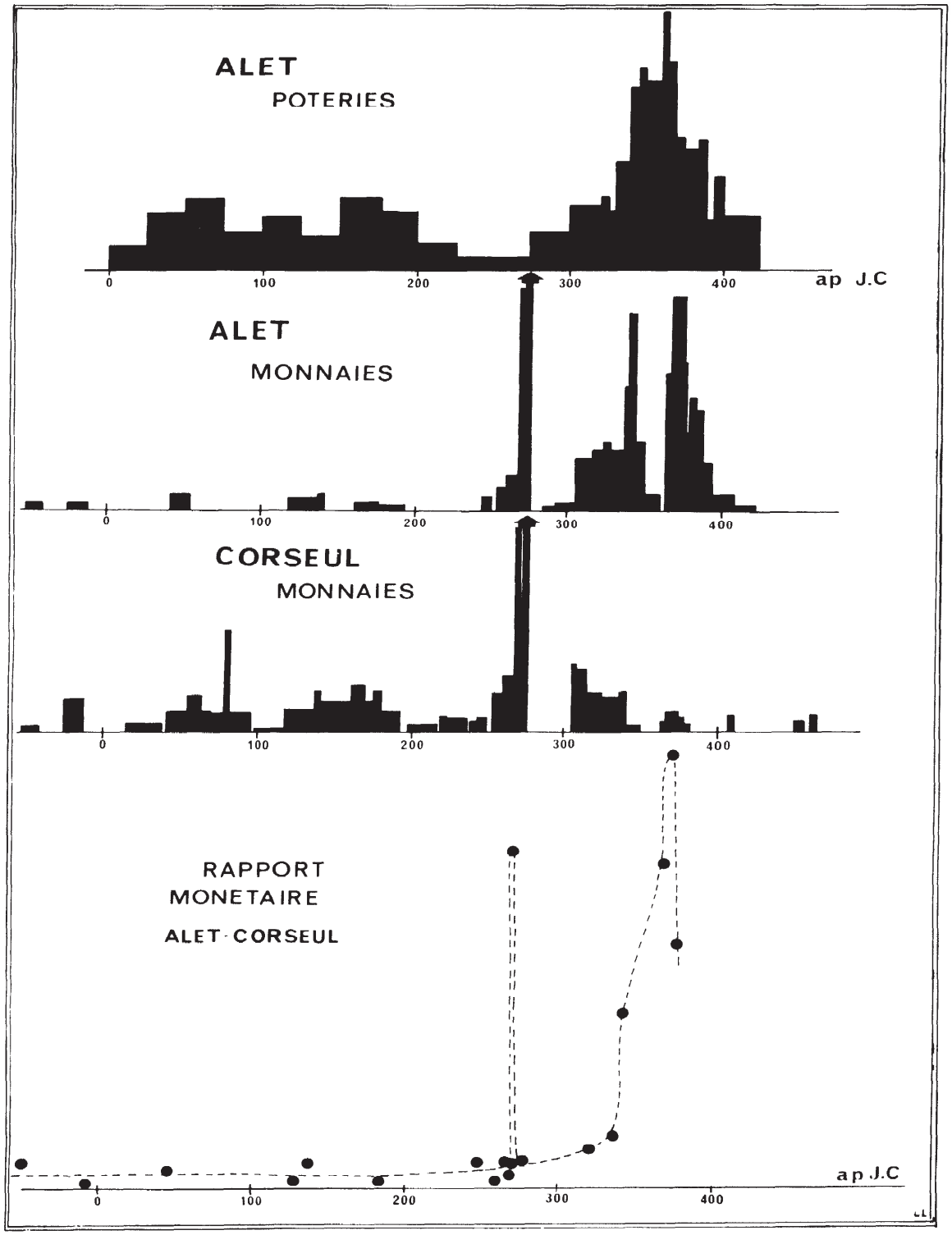


Fig 15 Chronological analysis of pottery and coins from Alet and Corseul

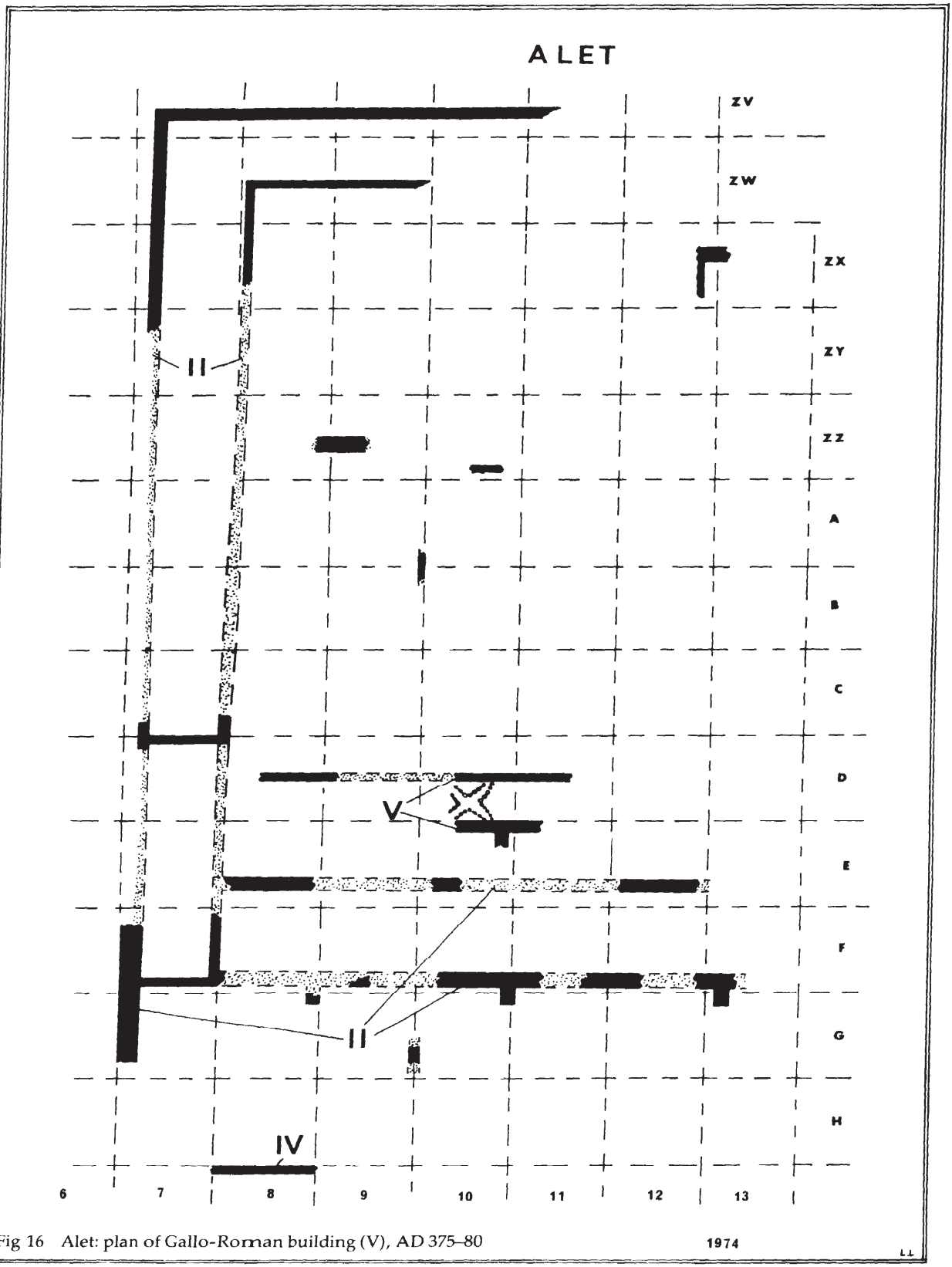


Fig 16 Alet: plan of Gallo-Roman building (V), AD 375–80

increase in resources, due partly to the Ministry of Culture, that the quantity of discoveries has grown considerably. Representative chronological distribution curves can be drawn from the large series of stamped pottery and coins (Fig. 15). The two curves are similar and demonstrate greater activity during the 4th century. Since Alet formed part of the *civitas Coriosolitum,* it is worthwhile to compare these coin series with those for Corseul which, as its name indicates, was still the capital of this *civitas* at the end of the 3rd century. The numismatic similarities and differences are the more significant in view of the fact that these two towns were only some 20 km apart. During the 4th century there is evidence of a reduction in monetary transactions at Corseul. The capital was in fact transferred from Corseul to Alet. This can be proved and dated by means of the numerical relationship, in terms of date of striking, between the coins from Alet and those from Corseul (Fig. 15). It can be seen clearly that around AD 340–350 Alet assumed an overwhelming importance in relation to Corseul; it became the *civitas* capital, and so it cannot logically have been until after AD 340 that it received its large, abnormal defences.

The *castellum* was established in the mid-4th century on a site whose maritime basis dates back to the beginning of the Christian era. Alet received an influx of refugees at the end of the 3rd century but it did not become the capital until around AD 340–350. This date can be related to the building of the *castellum;* ever thing points to the administrative transfer and the establishment of the military camp being linked. This is not surprising in the light of the security that civilian populations derived from the proximity of a military unit. The town was partially and temporarily abandoned in the early 5th century; there was no new development phase until the arrival of Breton immigrants in the 6th century. Dr M Fulford has identified much pottery from the south coast of Britain (New Forest, Oxford, Alice Holt, Dorset, etc.) in the 4th century material from Alet. This discovery, which would appear to indicate a seaborne economic link between Alet and *Clausentum,* provides an archaeological connexion between the *tractus Armoricanus* and the *Litus Saxonicum.* At present it is impossible to say whether it represents commercial imports or an early migration.

Confirmation of Alet's civilian role would seem to be provided by the appearance of a religious role at the end of the 4th century. Excavations in the centre of the town, beneath two cathedrals (one 10th century, the other 8th century) revealed a Gallo-Roman building dating from 375–380 (Fig. 16). Recent studies are tending to prove that this was a religious complex, probably Christian. It should be remembered that in the early Middle Ages, from the 8th century onwards, references are found in manuscripts to bishops of Alet.

Conclusions

Recent archaeological excavations have made it possible to improve our knowledge of the establishment of the *Praefectus militum Martensium* at Alet. Although the *castellum* has been well identified, doubts still remain over the town defences. Being relatively accessible for large excavations, the site of Alet is important for the study of the connexions between the military establishment and the development of the town. Future excavations will obviously make it possible to disperse these doubts and to improve our knowledge about town life in Armorica in the 4th century. In any case, archaeological data indicate that the reference in the *Notitia Dignitatum* can only reflect the position at Alet after AD 340.

[Translation: H F Cleere]

The Gallic evidence

The castellum at Brest (Finistère)

René Sanquer

The existence at Brest of an important *castellum* of the Late Empire is generally unknown in the academic world, both in France and abroad. Blanchet (1907) was interested only in urban fortifications and quoted for western France only those of Rennes in the territo of the Riedones, Nantes of the Namnetes, and Vannes of the Veneti. Von Petrikovits (1971) repeats Blanchet's data and includes no *castellum* in Armorica in his catalogue. This ignores the *castellum* of Alet at Saint-Mâlo, which Langouët's work has brought to light (see pp 38–45 above), the fortifications of Coz-Yaudet, at Ploulec'h (Côtes-du-Nord), which were more difficult to interpret, and above all the Roman fortifications which form the sub-structure of the present castle at Brest.

However, an erudite traveller of the 17th century referred to the existence on the facade of 'old-style towers' (Dubuisson-Aubenay 1636). But this was not followed up. In 1855 the congress of the Association Bretonne, the first regional learned society, was held at Brest and studied the castle walls, led by Bizeul, who expounded the true antiquity of these fortifications (Bizeul 1857). Shortly afterwards Fleury developed this concept, illustrating it with a number of old plans, which demonstrated the gradual disappearance, during the 17th century, of the Roman towers (Fleury 1862–63), as shown in Fig. 17. Finally, in 1914 the congress of the Société Française d'Archéologie was held at Brest and Vannes. The guidebook to the congress contained an excellent paper on this subject (de la Barre de Nanteuil 1914). But the date was unpropitious for the promotion of this publication. In short, therefore, von Petrikovits may be excused, since only local and regional journals made any reference to the existence of a Roman wall at the base of the present-day castle, and only then at a somewhat unfortunate moment, which would explain the ignorance of historians and archaeologists on this subject. For some ten years, following restoration work on the façade of the castle, it has been possible to verify and complete the observations of earlier archaeologists, to make measurements, to take photographs, and to make drawings. I should like to express my gratitude to the Amiral Préfet Maritime, who has kindly made it possible for me to carry out trial work on a site of a restricted character.

What can still be seen today of the ancient parts of the castle (Plate XIII)? Study of the façade from the town side shows that, on both sides of the large towers flanking the entrance, for a distance of 66 m on either side, the lower part of the curtain wall is constructed of alternate courses of brick and stone, in the usual manner of late Empire fortifications. The brick courses, of double layers of 400 mm

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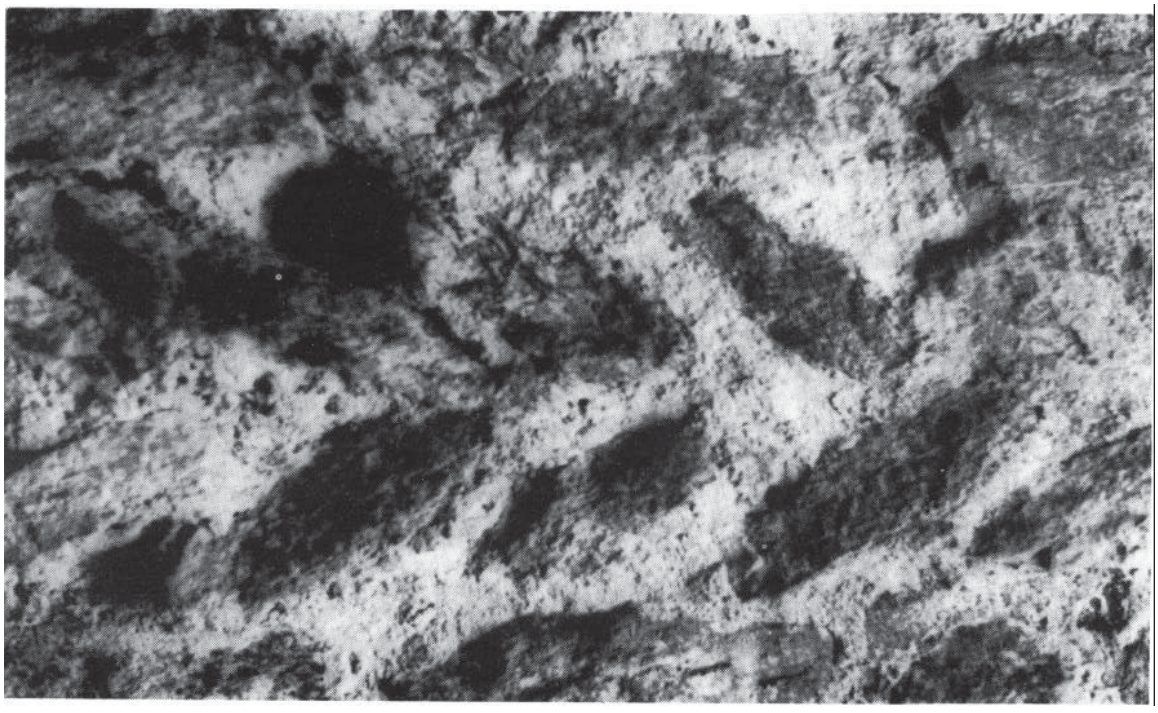
XIII
Brest: *castellum.* In foreground, postern gate; beyond, foundation of tower Photograph R Sanquer



XIV
Brest: *castellum.* herringbone masonary inside postern gate (detailed) Photograph R sanders

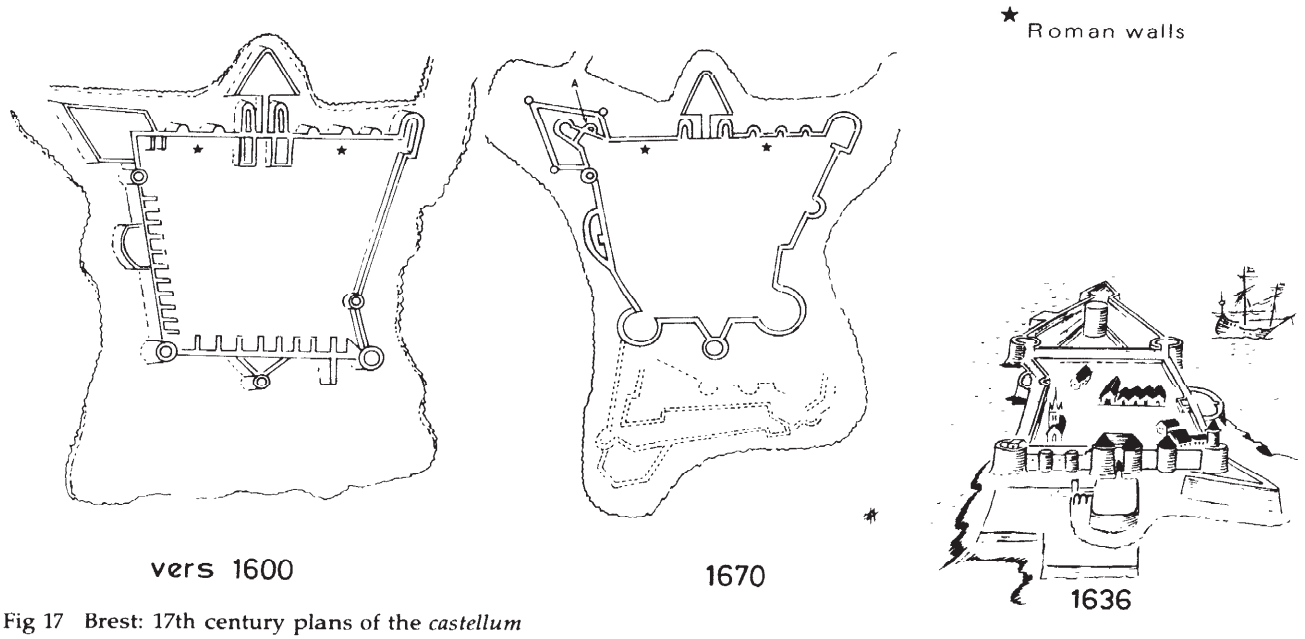


Fig 17 Brest: 17th century plans of the *castellum*

long x 40 mm thick bricks, are separated by six or seven lines of small cubic stones. In those parts that are visible, this alternation is repeated three or four times, to a height varying from 2 m in the south to 7 m in the north. The junction of the wall with the ground at foundation level is nowhere visible since over its entire length a layer of earth has been built up against the wall. However, the base of the northern part was visible for a long time, and it is known that the Roman wall lay directly on the rock. A 19th century engraving (Fig. 18) shows a large relieving arch, to compensate for the unevenness of the subsoil. Other examples of this technique are known from elsewhere.

The regularity of the courses is interrupted at regular intervals by some very poor-quality masonry, quite foreign to Roman practice. These have been identified as the sites of ancient towers. There are three on either side of the entrance, running along the wall at intervals of 21 m. The trial excavation that I carried out brought to light the base of one of these towers. It was cylindrical in plan, with an external diameter of 6.70 m, a quarter embedded in the wall. Its wall was 2 m thick and had the same brick courses as the curtain wall. It seemed to have been built at two separate times, since the mortar of the lower part is lighter than that of the upper part, which contains crushed brick. At the base of the wall there were putlog-holes at 1.25 m centres.

There is a postern gate at the foot of the central tower of the southern part of the curtain wall. Located, according to regulations, so as to be covered by the tower, it passes through the 4.05 m thick wall. The internal structure reveals a facing with the stones arranged in a herringbone pattern (Plate XIV). It is 1.40 m wide and reserved for pedestrians and horsemen; it went out of use during the late medieval raising of the walls and was engulfed in a blocking more than 10 m thick. No explanation is forthcoming for its being open today, since none of the earlier writers refers to it. It was doubtless the result of modifications carried out during the German occupation in World War II.

Other stretches of Roman wall are certainly hidden today by the large corner tower and by the entrance. At the southern corner the enormous Madelaine tower was strengthened in the 15th century and made considerably stouter in the 16th. It is no surprise that the core of the tower is the corner tower of the Roman fortifications. In the basement of the tower, 22 m above sea level (the present base of the tower is 27 m above sea level), a brick-coursed wall can still be distinguished, which forms almost a right-angle with the south curtain wall. On the opposite, northern, side, the keep encloses a small tower, of the same diameter as the Roman towers and situated in the extension of the wall. Its existence is revealed by a curved swelling on the eastern face of the keep, not demanded on defensive grounds (A, Fig. 17). The brick-coursed wall can be seen at its base. The two large towers at the entrance date to the 15th century in their present form, but they would appear to enclose the gate towers of the Roman fortifications. The distance between the two extreme points of the Roman wall is 185 m and there were initially ten towers, which puts the Brest *castellum* among the largest in the Roman Empire.

Was this simply a straight wall across the isthmus or did it form part of a rectangular or trapezoidal enclosure? There are no brick courses on the other sides of the present-day castle, but in 1832, during repair work, the base of a round tower was found inside the line of the castle foundations and unconnected with it. The *Annuaire de Brest* for 1837 mentions another large round tower, of Roman type, which guarded the Penfeld, opposite the Tanguy ditch. The foreman in charge of the 1832 work also referred to a 1 m thick wall. It should be recalled also that the westernmost tower of the castle owes its name, Caesar's Tower, to the discovery of a Roman medallion bearing this name when it was rebuilt in the 16th century. One cannot dismiss the existence of a Roman fortification inside the present enceinte. It would be fruitless to try to date the foundation of the castle with accuracy, because too few data are available. The ground plan, the shape of the towers, their spacing, the quality of the mortar, etc. are constructional techniques that were in use simultaneously and in the same areas for many decades. Two coin hoards from shortly after the reign of Postumus have been found nearby, but they may date a completely different establishment. It is likely, but by no means certain, that the Brest *castellum* was built between

XV
Brest: *castellum.* Brick courses in postern gate (detail) Photograph R Sanquer

XVI
Le Coz-Yaudet, Ploulec'h (Côtes-du-Nord): seaward gate of Roman defences (excavation L Fleuriot, conservation Y Garlan, photograph Y Garlan)

L

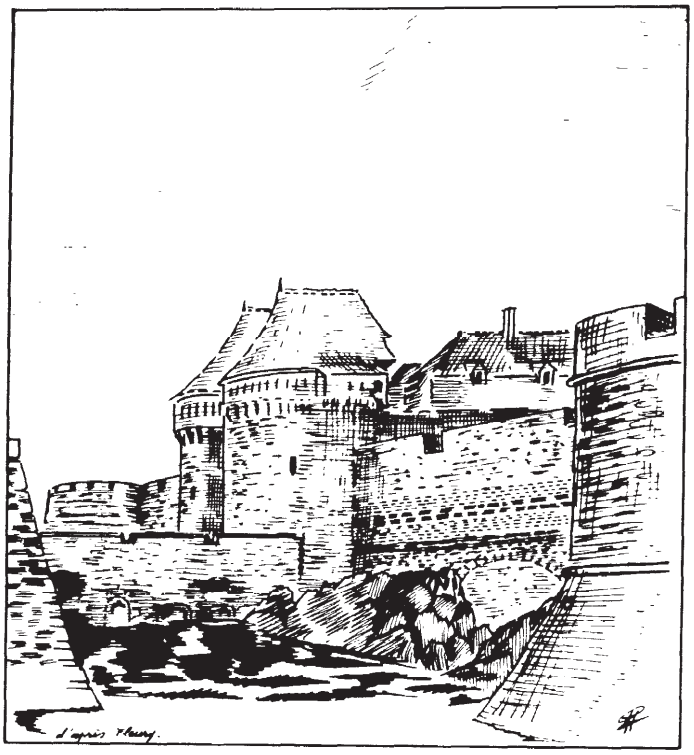


Fig 18 Brest: facade of the *castellum,* after an engraving by E Fleury. Note the relieving arch, which seems to be ancient, and the brick courses. The drawing is not completely accurate, since the brick courses are not shown interrupted by the removal of the Roman towers, which is the case in fact

the last quarter of the 3rd century and the first quarter of the 4th, in association with the Saxon Shore and the *tractus Armoricanus et Nervicanus.*

The name of the fortification will doubtless never be known. However, one theory is rather attractive. The *Notitia Dignitatum* locates a garrison of Mauri Ossismiaci at Ossismis. Logically this name, taken from that of the *civitas* of the early Empire, should be attributed to Carhaix-Vorgium. However, Carhaix was not fortified in the Late Empire and, moreover, it lies nearly 100 km from the sea. On the other hand, an ancient tradition, repeated in the life of St Gouesnou of the 11th century (Sterck and Leduc 1971), identifies Brest, at that time known as *civitas Legionum,* as the capital of the Ossismii, which would have given its name to the whole surrounding region, Léon. Might this not be an indication of the transfer of the capital from Carhaix to Brest, similar to that from Corseul to Alet at the same time and for the same reasons?

It is likely that Brest retained its Roman garrison until the beginning of the 5th century. The departure of the garrison no doubt coincided with the revolt of 409, in the course of which, according to Zosimus, 'Armorica and other Gaulish provinces liberated themselves, expelled the Roman officials, and established a government of their own'. Even if Roman control was restored by 416, there was a gap of several years. Was the see of the bishopric transferred from Brest to Saint-Pol de Lèon at this time? Was the origin of the Abbey of Saint-Matthieu linked with the history of Brest? These are difficult questions, which we are ill-equipped to answer.

The Brest castellum in its context

It is probably useful for a readership unfamiliar with the historical geography of Britanny to locate the castle at Brest in the context of the administrative boundaries of the Roman Empire.

The territory of modern Britanny was occupied in the Gaulish period by five *civitates:* the Namnetes, the Riedones, the Coriosolitae, the Veneti, and the Ossismii. The Roman Empire fixed them within frontiers which in certain cases are still respected today. Of these five tribes, three—the Veneti, Riedones, and Namnetes—followed what might be considered a normal development pattern.

The *civitas* of the Namnetes was the origin of the ecclesiastical diocese of Nantes and later the modern *département* of Loire-Atlantique, without any major divergencies. Even its cantonal capital, Nantes, known as Condevicnum in the early Empire, became *civitas Namnetum* in the 3rd century, was destroyed in the 270s, was walled in the last quarter of the 3rd century and, according to the *Notitia Dignitatum (Occ.* CCCVII, 7) the *Praefectus militum superventorum* commanded a garrison there in the 4th century.

The case was-similar in the canton of the Riedones. The *département* of Ille-et-Vilaine, successor to the diocese of Rennes, has boundaries not greatly dissimilar from those of the Roman *civitas.* Its capital, Condate, became *civitas Riedonum* in the 3rd century, was destroyed in the 270s, was walled in the last quarter of the 4th century, and a *Praefectus* commanded a unit of Frankish *laeti* there in the 4th century (Notitia Oct. XLII, 36). A similar development occurred with the Veneti. The few variations between the boundaries of the modern *département* of Morbihan, the diocese of Vannes, and the Roman *civitas* are attributable only to accidents of history. The capital, Darioritum, according to the Peutinger Table, became *civitas Venetorum* in the 3rd century, was destroyed in the 270s, was walled, and in the 4th century a *Praefectus militum Maurorum Benetorum* was stationed at Benetis (Vannes).

It can thus be seen that the development of these three civitates was parallel, without any anomalies. However, the same cannot be said of the other two, those of the Coriosolitae and the Ossismii.

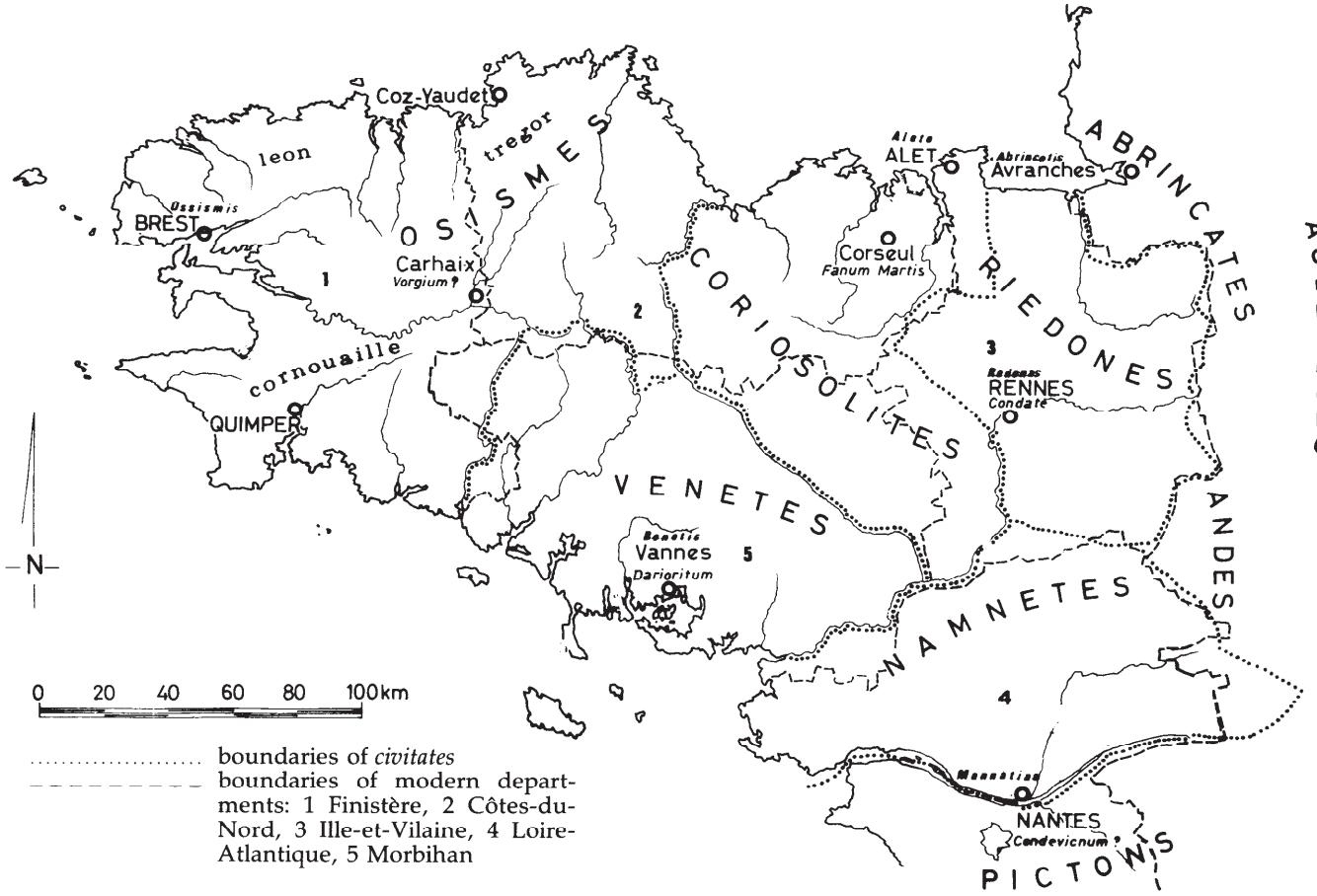


Fig 19 Roman cities in western Armorica. Sources: Pape 1969, 93, and Riche 1969, 129

So far as the Coriosolitae are concerned, there is no longer any relationship between the ancient *territorium* and the present-day *département* of Côes-du-Nord. Since the introduction of Christianity, this *civitas* has been divided between the dioceses of Alet, Saint-Brieuc, and Vannes. The capital, *Fanum Martis*(?) in the Early Empire took the name *Civitas Coriosolitum* in the 3rd century and was destroyed in the 270s, but it was not walled nor did it receive a garrison in the 4th century. It would appear to have been proved (see above p 45) that the capital was transferred from Corseul to Alet during the 4th century, since the *Praefectus militum Martensium* was located at Alet *(Notitia Oct.* XXXVII, 19) and a late Empire defensive wall is to be seen there.

The situation was similar for the Ossismii. The vast *territorium* of this *civitas* formed three Christian dioceses—Léon, Trégor, and Cornouaille—and the modern *département* of Finistère yields the whole of the north-eastern portion of the *civitas* to Côtes-du-Nord. The same proof is not available that the early Empire capital, Vorgium (Carhaix), ever took the name *civitas Ossismiorum.* It was destroyed in the 270s, but was never walled. Is it therefore logically possible to locate the *Praefectus militum Maurorum Osismiarorum (Notitia Oct.* XXXVII, 17) at Vorgium? Without answering this question directly, I would point out that the remains of late Empire fortifications occur in two of the three dioceses that make up the *territorium* of the Ossismii—at Brest, the subject of this paper, and at Coz-Yaudet-en-Ploulec'h (Côtes-du-Nord).

Both sites, like Alet, are located on the coast and both at one time bore the appellation *civitas.* Etymologically, Coz-Yaudet derives directly from *Vetus Civitatem* and Brest is known in early documents, such as the Life of St Gouez-nou, as *Civitas Legionum.* Both, like Alet, gave rise to bishoprics, since Brest is assumed to have preceded Saint-Pol-de-Léon as the see of the Bishop of Léon, whilst Coz-Yaudet was the see of Trégor before Tréguier. This proof would be perfect if the third diocese, Cornouaille, yielded late Empire fortifications at its main town, Quimper. It should be noted that one of the streets in Quimper bears the name Guéodet which, like Yaudet, is derived from *civitatem.*

Lastly, let me put forward a final similarity between the *civitates* of the Coriosolitae and the Ossismii which sets them apart from the other three. It was in their *territoria* that the Breton immigrants settled for preference, as revealed by a distribution map of parish names with the prefix plou-.

There is no doubt that, to solve the problem of the stationing of late Empire garrisons in Britanny, these relationships must be taken into account. For example, what is the relationship between the construction of town walls in certain *civitas* capitals, the abandonment of coastal fortifications such as those at Brest, Coz-Yaudet, and Alet? Is there any connexion between the transfer of certain capitals from the interior towards the coast and the construction of *castella?* Is it permissible to consider the splitting up of the *civitas* of the Ossismii into three smaller *civitates,* corresponding to Léon, Trégor, and Cornouaille? Is there any connexion between this fission and the arrival of the Breton immigrants?

[Translation: H F Cleere]

Oudenburg and the northern sector of the continental Litus Saxonicum

J Mertens

It is a pleasure for me to be able to present to my British colleagues the main results of the excavations carried out since 1956 at Oudenburg, a small Flemish commune now lying 8 km from the North Sea coast.

I shall endeavour to put these discussions into a broader archaeological and geographical setting, but confining myself to the northern sector, corresponding to the coastal regions of present-day Holland and Belgium. The presence of French colleagues relieves me of the necessity of covering the southern sector, which they are better fitted to do than I am.

The main source for our knowledge of the *Litus Saxonicum,* on both sides of the Channel, remains the *Notitia Dignitatum.* This document refers, so far as the southern shores of the Channel are concerned, to two establishments described explicitly as being located *in litore saxonico;* they belong to two separate commands, the garrison of Grannona being part of that of the *Dux tractus armoricani.* For Belgica Secunda, the text makes the following reference:

> *sub dispositione viri spectabilis ducis belgicae secundae: equites dalmatae marcis in litore saxonico; praefectus classis sambricae in loco quartensi sive hornensi, tribunus militum nerviorum portu epatiaci. (Notitia, Occ. XXXVIII.)*

Of the three sites mentioned, only Marcis is specified as being *in litore saxonico.* The other two are simply 'at the disposition of the *Dux Belgicae secundae.* None of these three garrisons has been located with certainty, and I have no intention of reiterating here the various theories that have already been put forward.

Let us compare this literary evidence with the archaeological record. From a methodological point of view it is essential in any study of this region in the 4th century to take the geological development of the area into account (Jelgersma 1961). This underwent significant changes from the second half of the 3rd century onwards, since the second Dunkirkian marine transgression (Dunkirk 2) affected the whole coastline from Calais to the mouth of the Old Rhine. Many investigations have been devoted to these movements, about which the specialists are not always in agreement. However, it can be accepted that, in general terms, the coastline was located some distance inside the present land areas and that it completely bypassed the estuaries of the Escaut, the Meuse, and the Rhine, to join the modern coastline near The Hague. Obviously the late Roman archaeological sites must be sought along this line and not on the present coast. It is possible-indeed, probable-that these changes were not brought about suddenly, but that the occupation of the coastal plain had to adapt gradually to the new situation, perhaps adjusting to it temporarily.

In this paper I shall endeavour to survey the available archaeological evidence, working southwards along the coast.

Near the mouth of the Old Rhine, where the limes of the early Empire reached the North Sea, there is a site whose nature and dating are still the object of considerable debate: Brittenburg, near Katwijk. The site has now disappeared beneath the sea, but it is known from finds and drawings of the 16th century. The archaeological finds, which include stamped tiles of the *Classis Germanica,* seem to be no later than the 3rd century (Bogaers 1974a, 36—8). It was square in plan (c. 75 m x 75 m), with very pronounced semicircular towers, surrounding a double building, also square, with buttressed walls.

In a recent note, Bogaers (1974c) opts for an early date for the site, seeing it as an auxiliary fort *(Auxiliarkastell)* of the early Empire. However, this is not universally accepted: Holwerda considers it to be a medieval castle, whilst Bijvanck, Oelmann, and recently Rickman prefer to see it as a fortlet or fortified granaries, dating from the late Empire (complete bibliography in Dijkstra and Ketelaar 1965; Rickman 1971, 268–9). A late Roman control post at this point, near the mouth of the Old Rhine, should not be ruled out *a priori* when one recalls that in the 4th century grain was still being imported from Britain into Germany by water-borne transport *(Libanius, Oratio* XVIII, 83; Amm. XVIII, 2,3; cf. Bogaers 1968, 151, 156). However, it should be borne in mind that this traffic may well have been via the Helinium, the great estuary of the Meuse into which, in the Roman period, a western branch of the Rhine, the Waal, and a major branch of the Escaut all flowed. If this estuary lay well to the south of the Brittenburg, which would seem to exclude it from the late Roman defensive system, it nevertheless marked the termination of a route that was used heavily in the late Empire. It was in fact on the Waal that Bogaers (1968; 1974a, 72, 74–5, map on 19) located the military stations of Castra Herculis, fortified by Julian in 359, and Grinnes; the important site at Nijmegen lies on the same river (Bogaers 1974c, 76–9).

These sites were, however, already well protected, being inland; on the coast the situation was more fluid, and military occupation does not appear to have lasted beyond the second half of the 3rd century. In a recent article, Bogaers (197413) has brought together the extant documentation relating to the military presence in Helinium, drawing attention to the almost complete absence of late Roman material (coins of Maximian and Constantine I and a cruciform brooch: Bogaers 1968). The fact that Ammianus Marcellinus (XXVIII, 2, 1) asserts that Valentinian reinforced the Rhine frontier up to the North Sea may well refer to one of the many arms of the river lying to the south of the Rhine *limes* (Van Es 1972). Throughout the region military occupation is particularly attested before the end of the 3rd century.

The situation is identical in the region lying to the south of Helinium: this was the delta region of the great rivers, an area that was almost impenetrable during the late Empire (Jelgersma 1961, 88, fig. 50).

Trimpe Burger (1971 and 1973 [1975]) has drawn an outline archaeological map for this region, which shows that there was virtually no 4th century occupation (see also Boersma 1967), except perhaps at Aardenburg (see below). Several sites seem to have been vaguely military in character; they all lie in the ancient coastal dunes, which seem to have resisted the marine transgressions longer, and were only cut off from the hinterland during the 4th century. None of these sites could be excavated completely, since most of them have been covered by the sea; this was particularly true of the remains located long ago north of Ouddorp, referred to by the chroniclers as 'de Oude Wereld' (the Old World) known from a description dating from the 17th century (Trimpe Burger 1960–61,201–2). The same fate befell the remains observed in the mouth of the Escaut, between the islands of Walcheren and Schouwen, which were still recorded in 17th century maps (Trimpe Burger 1971, 85, n. 126). Several fragments of tile bearing the stamp of the *Classis Germanica* have been thrown up on the beach to the north of Walcheren (Dumon Tak 1968, 133–4); on the same island, near the old Haak Fort, north of Vrouwenpolder, there could also have been a Roman fortification (Trimpe Burger 1971, 85, n. 126). Military stamped tiles were collected during the 1958–59 excavations a few

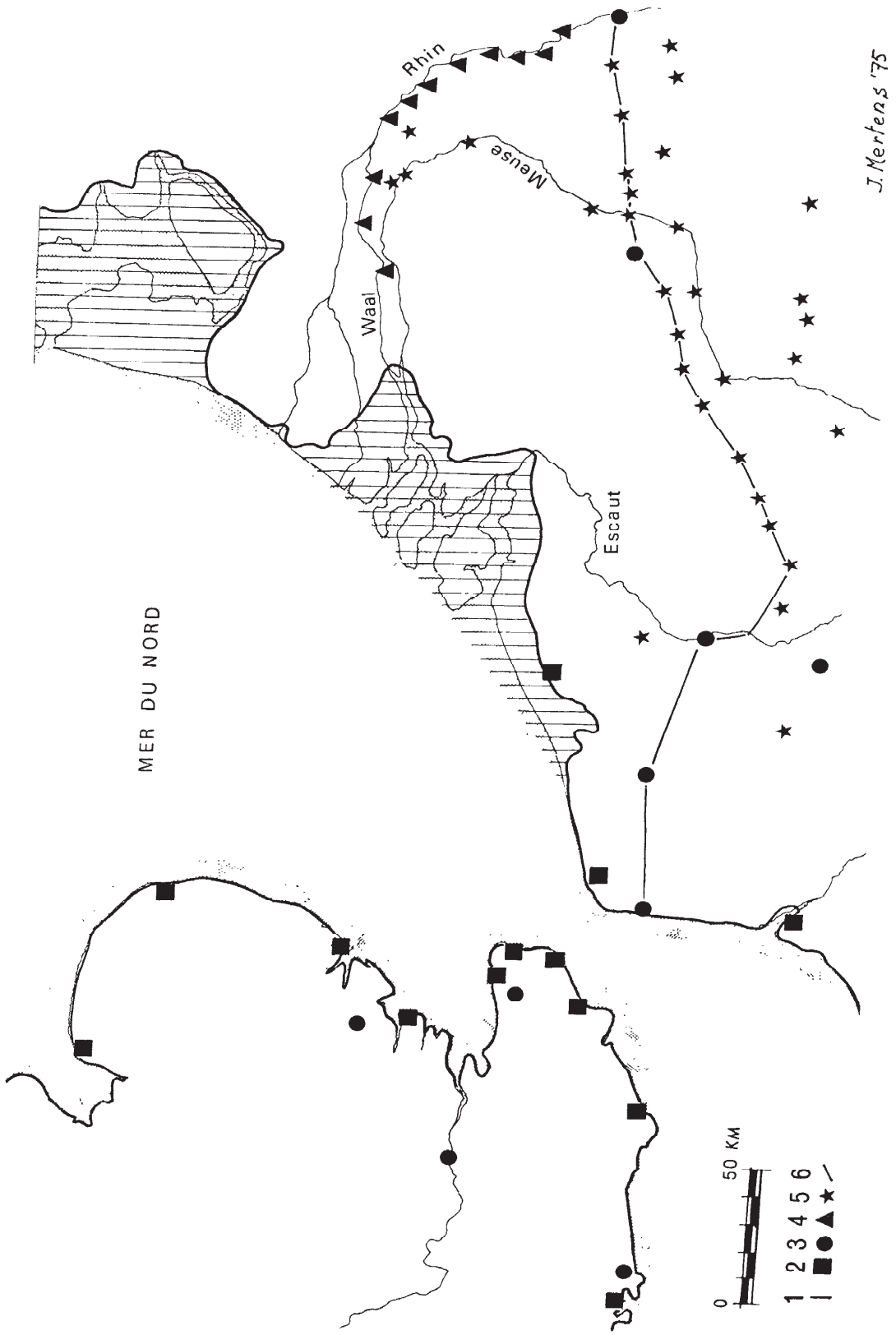


Fig 20 The North Sea coasts: 1 zone flooded in 4th century, 2 *Litus Saxonicum* forts, 3 *civitates*, 4 Rhine *limes* forts, 5 route stations and inland forts, 6 Boulogne–Cologne road

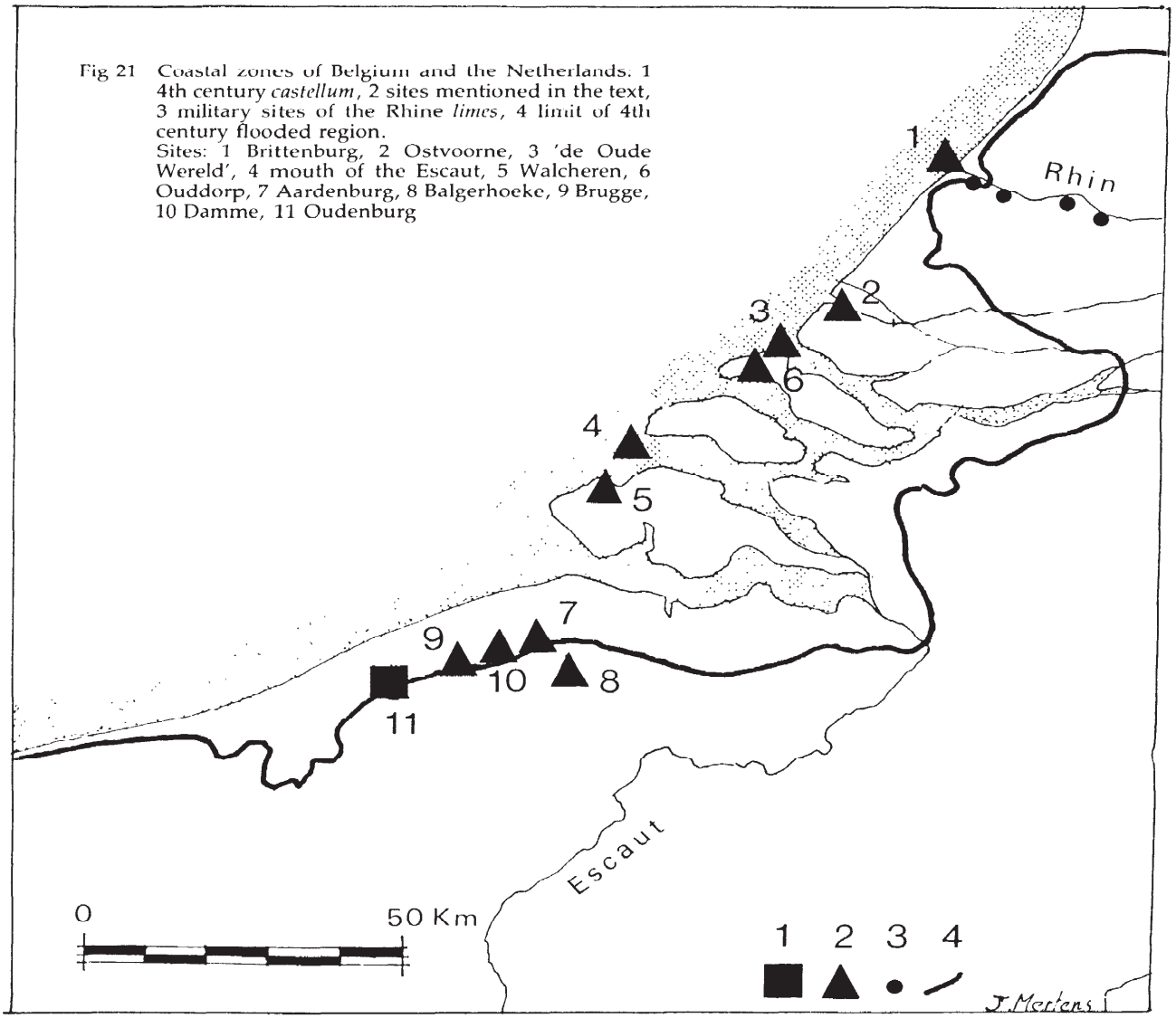


Fig 21 Coastal zones of Belgium and the Netherlands. 1 4th century *castellum*, 2 sites mentioned in the text, 3 military sites of the Rhine *limes*, 4 limit of 4th century flooded region.
Sites: 1 Brittenburg, 2 Ostvoorne, 3 'de Oude Wereld', 4 mouth of the Escaut, 5 Walcheren, 6 Ouddorp, 7 Aardenburg, 8 Balgerhoeke, 9 Brugge, 10 Damme, 11 Oudenburg

kilometres south of 'de Oude Wereld' (Trimpe Burger 1960–61, 202). Whilst the nature and dating of these establishments still remains very uncertain, none of them appears to have been occupied after AD 270.

It is perhaps not presumptuous to see in these possible military installations an echo of the reaction of Emperors, such as Postumus, to the barbarian invasions, which were becoming increasingly severe, probably as a result of the fluid situation, both politically and geologically (Van Es 1972; cf. De Boone 1954). The territorial control of the whole coastal region must have been revised and adjusted around this time. The same phenomenon has been observed all along the west coast of the North Sea, in Britain, where a number of fortifications were built during the 3rd century (see Johnson below, 63–9). An initial attempt to protect the shores of the North Sea in the 3rd century should not be ruled out.

It is against this background that the results of the excavations carried out at Aardenburg (medieval Rodanborgh), which has proved to be the major Roman establishment in Zeeland, should be viewed. Aardenburg lies on the southern edge of the submerged area, near a small river which flows directly into the sea. It was an important complex, with a temple(?) and several large buildings whose official character may be deduced from their very well finished constructional technique. This was especially the case in a large apsidal building, the walls of which rested on a revetment of small wooden piles driven vertically into the ground (Trimpe Burger 1971, fig. 60). The main period at Aardenburg seems to have been between 170 and 173; around the latter date most of the complex was destroyed (Trimpe Burger 1971, 51–2; 1953, [1975]). Some scattered coins seem to attest the presence of man, albeit in much reduced numbers, in the 4th century (Van Es 1972, 95). Certain observations have led the excavator, J A Trimpe Burger, to see in Aardenburg a Roman camp occupied in the 3rd century. Recent discoveries seem to confirm this hypothesis: a length of ditch and a piece of wall with circular tower, roughly aligned with the apsidal building referred to above, have been unearthed. It was set up on a *vicus*

XVII
The coastal zone of Belgium, seen from Oudenburg

XVIII
Oudenburg: aerial view

road and can hardly be earlier than 3rd century. The results of the forthcoming excavations must be awaited for further details, but I must thank my Dutch colleague for allowing me to announce this important discovery.

We are still far from the 4th century, that of the *Litus Saxonicum.* The literature does record some late information from the Aardenburg area; however, it must be admitted that thorough historical study has considerably reduced its documentary value. The first is the discovery long ago of 4th century archaeological material at Adegem-Balgerhoeke, some 10 km from Aardenburg (De Clippele 1968). Unfortunately, the circumstances of this discovery remain obscure; the objects formed part of a private collection, bought as a whole by the Burges Museum. The collection comprised 69 pottery vessels, most of them complete, covering a period from the 1st to the 4th century; 30 per cent of them belonged to the late Empire. If all these objects came from a single cemetery, they imply continuous occupation for four centuries. It is surprising to observe the absence, of any other grave-goods, especially coins. There is no means of ascertaining the number of graves from which they came, and thereby to get some idea of the size of the settlement to which they belonged; it is unlikely that this was Aardenburg, 10 km distant. No other site is known in this area.

Some 20 km west of Balgerhoeke there is another site where 4th century occupation is attested: Bruges (Brugge), Several remains of the Roman period have been found in this town, most of them submerged, destroyed, or abandoned at the end of the 3rd century (Bauwens-Lesenne 1963, 11–17). However, the Bourg, the centre of the town, was spared from flooring and rose, like Oudenburg, above the marshes that surrounded it. Nevertheless, very little archaeolological material has been found there (Devliegher 1965). In a recent and as yet unpublished doctoral thesis, H Thoen of the University of Ghent (to whom I am grateful for allowing me to summarize his arguments) has put forward the hypothesis that there was a Roman military presence at Bruges in the late Empire. Lacking conclusive archaeological material, the author has based his theory on topographical and historical criteria. Since the Roman period a coastal road has linked Oudcnburg, Bruges, and Aardenburg; this road retained its importance in the Middle Ages. Bruges also seems to have been incorporated into the coastal defences built by the Normans in the 9th century (van Werveke 1965), and the fact that the square plan of the Bourg resembles those of Oudenburg and Aardenburg may indicate a common origin. Bearing in mind the element of continuity and the importance of Bruges since the Middle Ages, military occupation in the 4th century cannot therefore be ruled out.

Between Bruges and Aardenburg lies the village of Damme, often quoted in late Roman contexts (van Gansbeke 1955, 23; Favorel 1959-60, 13, 64). This attribution is, however, based on an incorrect interpretation of the available documents, namely, a series of coins purchased long ago by a collector and provenanced as from 'a peat-bog near Damme' (Macquet 1856, 19, n. 1). The coins date from the reigns of Claudius (1st century), Victorinus and Tetricus (3rd century), and Maxentius and Constantine (4th century). Some authors have seen this assemblage as a hoard and have drawn historical conclusions from this. However, numismatists are of the opinion that the composition of the collection is 'rathter unusual, but possible' (Thirion 1967, 67). From the archaeological point of view it presents the same problems as the pottery assemblage from Balgerhoeke, and cannot be used as a valid piece of historical documentation—as Mr Thoen has shown in his paper—any more than the discovery of late coins in a peat–bog can be held to imply that the Damme area was only flooded towards the end of the 4th century, which would completely overturn the dating of marine transgressions on the Continent. The 'Damme hoard', like the Balgerhoeke cemetery, thus seems to provide no valid argument in favour of late Roman occupation in the region.

Travelling further westwards along the coast, we reach Oudenburg, 16 km from Bruges. Here we leave the shifting sands of hypothesis and theory for firmer ground. Oudenburg has provided incontrovertible evidence of a Roman military presence: the remains of three successive fortresses and a cemetery. The situation of the site is a favourable one: Oudenburg lies on a sandy ridge, once projecting from the surrounding coastal plain and linked with the sea by a broad watercourse. The whole Polders region is now diked and dried out, so that the modern village lies 8 km from the coast.

The antiquity of the site is attested, in addition to the archaeological evidence, by topographical, place-name, and historical criteria.

Topography Even more than at Bruges, the plan of the village has preserved in its nucleus a clearly visible square element. This is not of recent date; it can be seen as early as in a map of the 16th century, and certainly existed around 1128, when the ditch surrounding the bourg was dug, taking up a square alignment (Mertens 1958, 1962).

Place-name evidence The place name Oudenburg, Aldenborg—old defended place (bourg)— known from as early as 866 (Gijsseling 1950, 61).

History The chronicle of the abbey of Oudenburg written between 1084 and 1087, tells in detail of the demolition of the fortress in order to build the abbey church. The author, an acute observer, has produced a detailed report on the facts: he describes minutely the constructional technique of the walls, the plan, the materials used, the objects found, especially sculptured vessels of great beauty (Mertens 1958, 20, nn. 51–3; 1963, 127). This document leaves the antiquity and importance of the Oudenburg site in no doubt. These observations have been confirmed by excavation. Although they were systematic, these excavations had to be subordinated to the exigencies of the place and its inhabitants; being sited in the heart of a modern village, they had to be carried out piecemeal, in places often difficult of access and to a programme dependent in large measure on the progress of building work. They began in 1956 and are still in progress.

The fortifications and the cemetery will be dealt with in turn.

The fortifications (Mertens and van Impe 1971) As the chronicle suggests, the fortifications were completely dis-

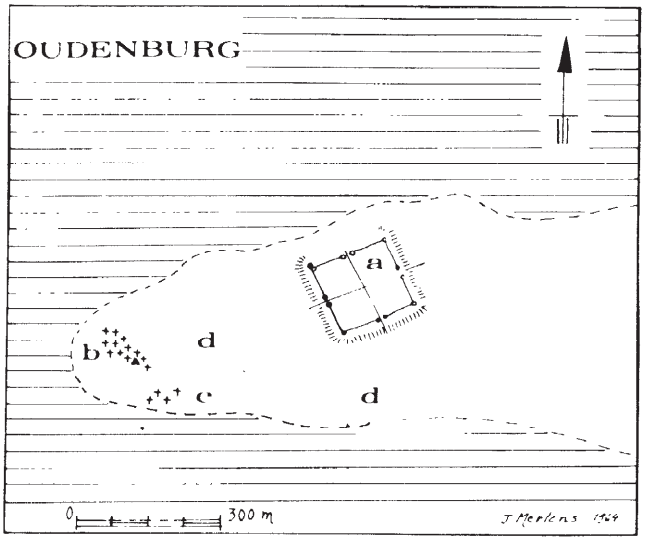


Fig 22 Oudenburg in the Roman period: a fort, b cemetery A, c cemetery B, d settlement

XIX
Oudenburg: the *castellum*, superimposed on the plan by J van Deventer (16th century)

mantled; only negative remains, apart from a few fragments of masonry, have been recovered. Nevertheless, it has been possible to reconstruct from these almost the entire plan of the fortress in its final phase, at the moment of its abandonment. It was a rectangle—almost a square—measuring 163 m x 146 m. The western, southern, and eastern sides were protected by a ditch almost 20 m wide, the depth of which could not be determined owing to the water table. On the northern side the ditch was less distinct; according to the chronicle, the wall here was of special construction: large blocks of dressed stone, joined by iron cramps. It is possible that the fortifications abutted on to the flooded area on this side. At the corners the wall was strengthened with circular towers, 9 m in diameter: only the north-western tower could be uncovered. Towers also flanked the gates, the number of which cannot be determined with certainty, without possibilities for excavation. There were three or four, but only the western gate has been partially located. Its flanking towers, jutting into the interior as well as externally, reveal foundations on an octagonal plan; their diameter is estimated to have been 7 m. The excavations have not yet revealed whether there were additional towers between the corner towers and those of the gates, 76 m apart, as is the case in most late Roman fortifications.

The excavations have revealed that there were three successive fortifications, almost at the same place and and an identical orientation. At present their plan remains very fragmentary, although certain observations seem to indicate that Oudenburg I was smaller than the others (Mertens 1962, fig. 3 shows clearly that the ditch curves inwards to pass beneath the rampart of Oudenburg III; the ditch of Oudenburg I was not cut on the southern side, although it may be possible that it was completely engulfed by the later ditch), and that Oudenburg II did not have a western gate at the same place as that of Oudenburg III. This may be deduced from the fact that the turf rampart was cut in the entrance of the western gate of Oudenburg III.

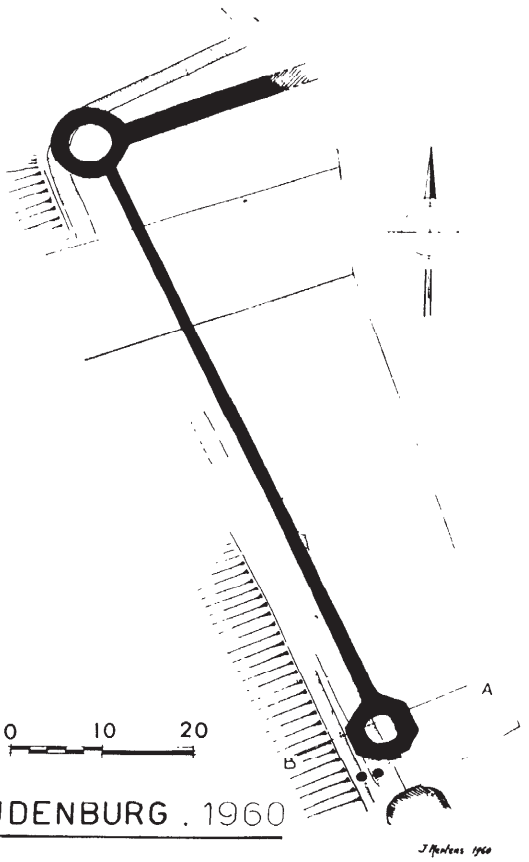


Fig 23 Oudenburg III: north-west sector, with traces of earlier ditches

The sections have been more revealing. Unfortunately, the only complete section cuts through one of the towers, which somewhat falsifies the layout and gives the impression of a double wall, which was certainly not the case. We have also reconstructed an ideal section on the basis of observations made at various points along the ramparts.

This makes possible the following reconstruction:

Oudenburg I The occupation level is at +4·11 m (modern surface at +6·02 m); the ditch was only 1·40 m deep and 4·50 m wide. The rampart was of earth and sand, with perhaps a wooden retaining palisade, some traces of which have been discovered.

Oudenburg II As a result of the construction of this new fortification, the soil level was raised by 0·55 m; the existing ditch was filled in and replaced by a new one, less deep and only 3 m wide. In this second phase, the rampart was made of sand and blocks of heather or turf, laid in horizontal layers. Pollen analysis of one of the blocks indicates a high proportion of heather in a wooded landscape, principally alder, birch, and hazel (analysis by Professor Mullenders, University of Louvain). The thickness of this enclosing rampart now reached 8 m. The external facing has now unfortunately disappeared, completely swallowed up by the wall of Oudenburg III. It was probably constructed, like Oudenburg I, of a serried rank of piles. The main problem, as regards both Oudenburg II and the earlier fortress, relates to the existence or otherwise of towers. It has already been noted that remains of the heather block rampart survived in the western entrance; this implies the absence of a gate and also, obviously, of towers, which is confirmed by the fact that the foundations of the northern tower of the later gate cut through the existing rampart. Furthermore, the ditch of Oudenburg II underlies the north-eastern corner tower of the *castellum* and so antedates it. It should be noted, however, that excavations at these locations were rendered extremely difficult by the presence of water and by the many medieval disturbances. From a technical point of view it is difficult to accept the existence of circular corner towers in an earth and timber enclosure. One should rather assume that the square towers, if there were indeed any, were on top of the ramparts or within them, following the architectural tradition of military camps of the early Empire.

Oudenburg III is the fortress described in the 11th century chronicle, the solid masonry of which evoked the admiration of the people of that day. Resulting from the building of this fortress the level was raised once again, probably to avoid problems from the threatening flooding. The occupation level was now +4·90 m (in the Oudenburg area, the critical level of the second Dunkirkian transgression was +4·50 m). The ditch was widened and deepened, being remade in places; it was about 20 m wide. In all the sections cut through, the rampart follows the contours of Oudenburg II exactly, except at the gates and towers. The earthen bank was everywhere preserved and strengthened; the earlier wooden(?) retaining wall was replaced by a masonry wall, 1·30 m thick, giving a fine regular facing of small blocks of dressed Tournai limestone (mentioned explicitly in the chronicle of the abbey).

Dating The relative chronology can easily be deduced from the sections, but it is more difficult to establish the absolute dating, mainly because of the lack of well stratified archaeological material from within the *castellum,* where virtually no excavation has taken place. There is no doubt that the Oudenburg establishment is military in character;

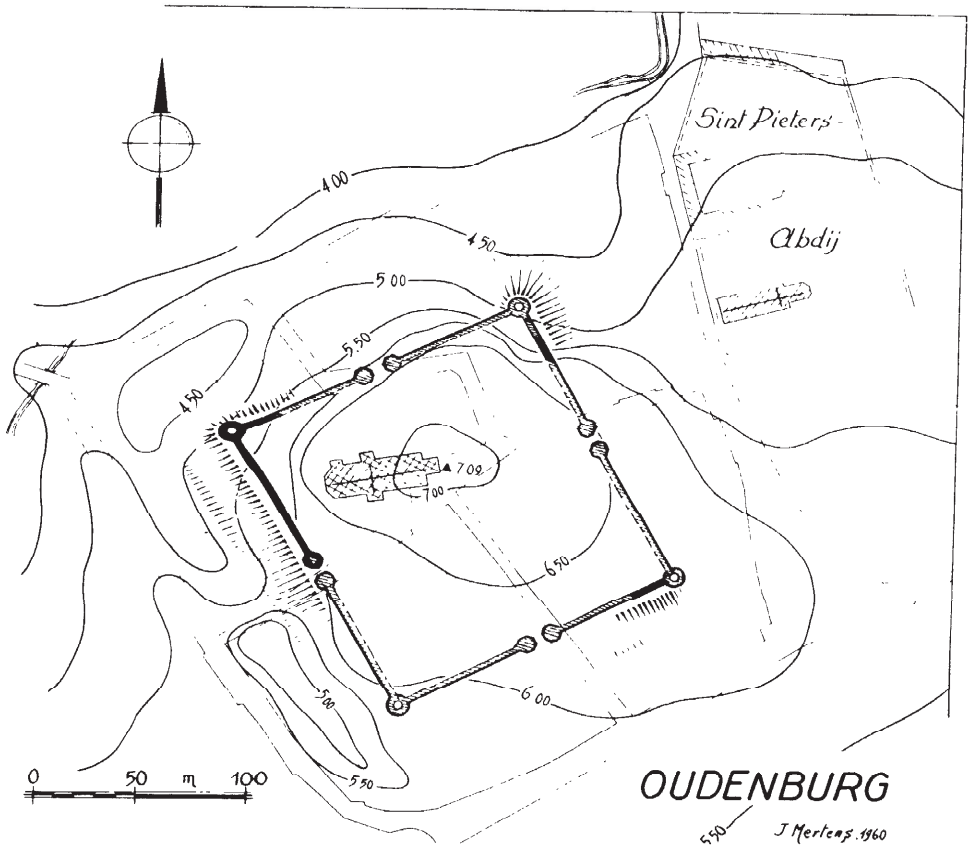


Fig 24 Oudenburg: location of the Roman *castellum* in the present layout

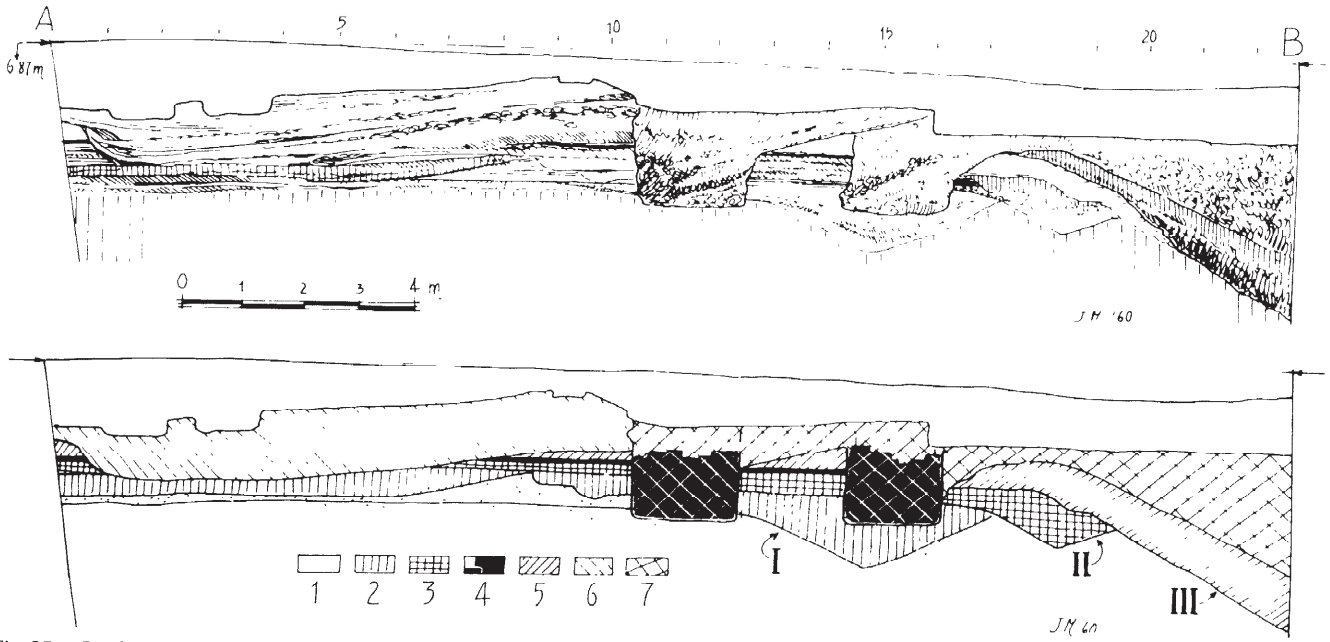


Fig 25 Oudenburg: section of ditches and western tower of fort (see Fig 23, section A–B). 1 level of Oudenburg I, 2 levelling for Oudenburg II, 3 levelling for Oudenburg III, 4 robber trenches of tower walls, 5 bank of Oudenburg III, 6 destruction layer of fort

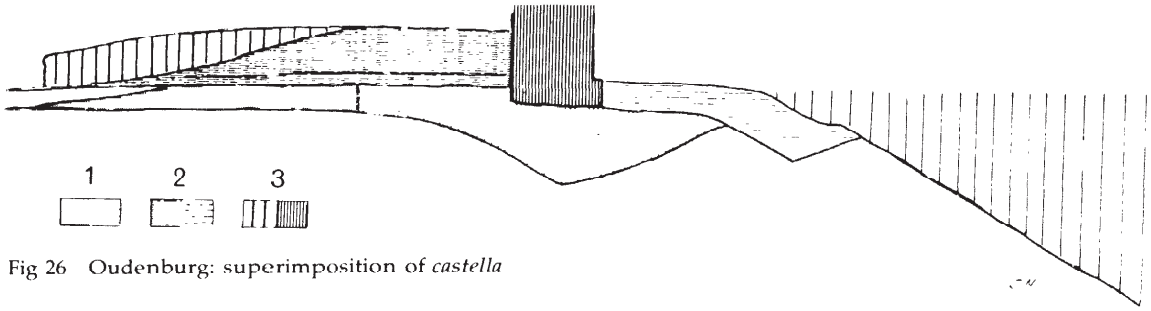


Fig 26 Oudenburg: superimposition of *castella*

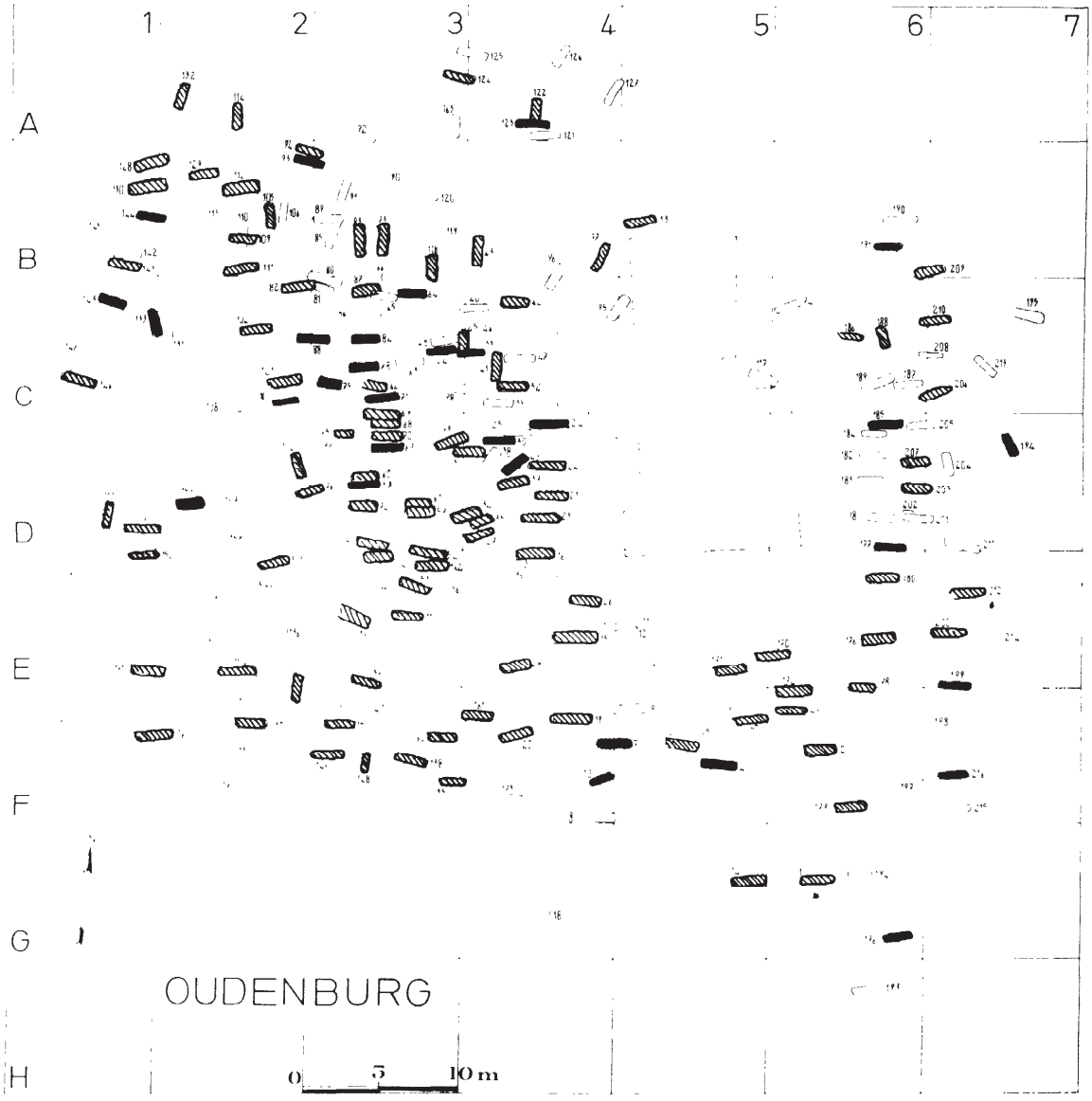


Fig 27 Oudenburg: plan of cemetery. Black = graves with female goods; shaded = other graves with grave goods

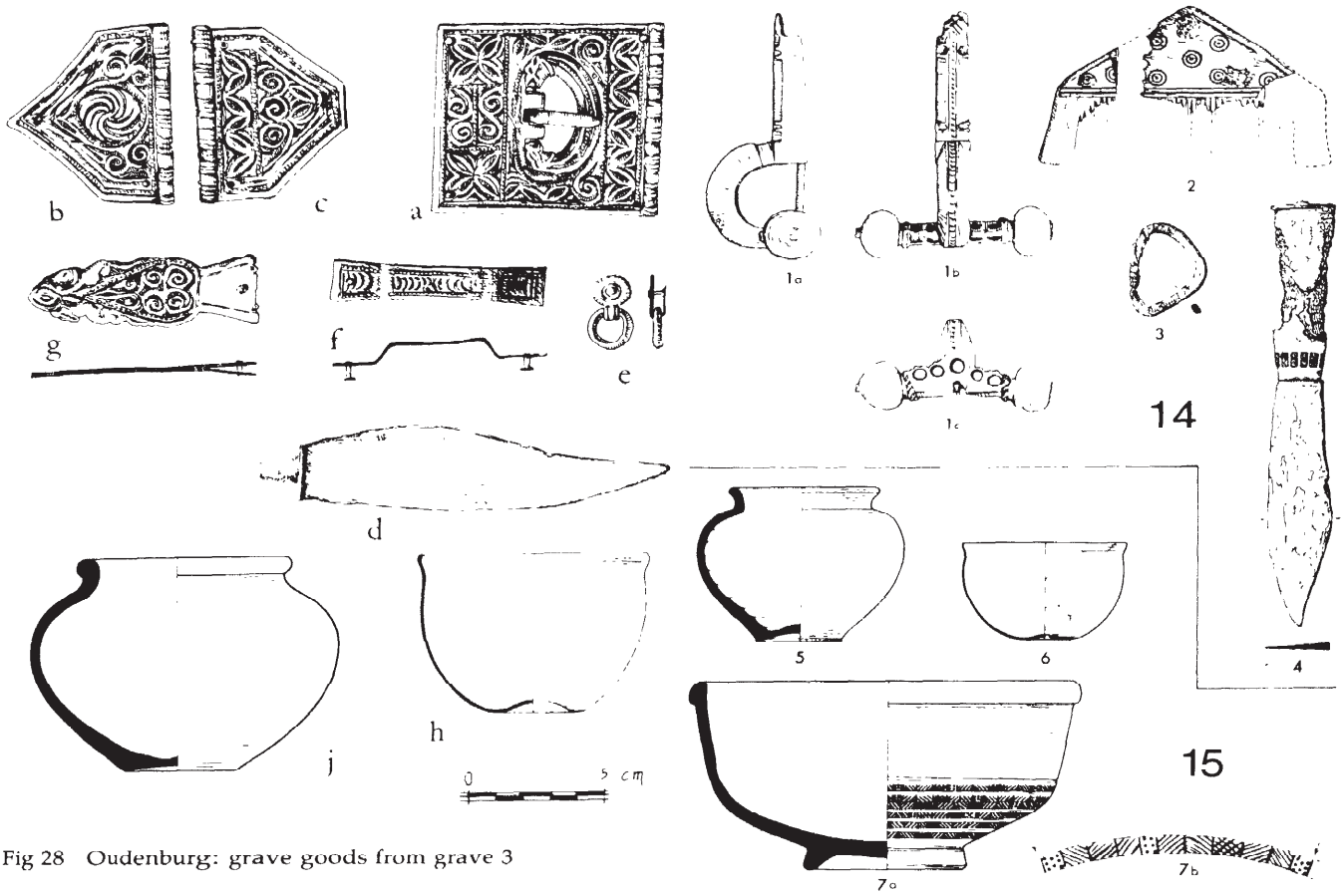


Fig 28 Oudenburg: grave goods from grave 3

the plan gives direct proof of this. An installation of this kind in the coastal region can only be conceived of as a defensive work, a post to control movements or invasions from a seaward direction. Such fortified posts had logically to be built, near the coast. It must be conceded that, when Oudenburg I was built, the coastline had already receded towards the east, towards the interior; these changes did not begin until the mid-3rd century and it is difficult to put the construction of Oudenburg I earlier than that date (the existence of an earlier settlement, non-military in character, on the site of later fortifications, does not affect this conclusion; the entire coastal region was fairly densely settled from the second half of the 1st century AD onwards). Oudenburg II may have been built shortly afterwards (the dating material for Oudenburg II was found in the filling of the ditches of Oudenburg I, and also in the earthen rampart; this was very fragmentary and there was nothing later than the 3rd century: Mertens 1962, 59). Its careful method of construction and its dimensions may be compared with those of certain *castella* of the Constantinian period, such as Köln-Deutz. This is, however, only an hypothesis which needs elaborating and in due course confirming by excavation within the defended area, This applies equally to Oudenburg III; on the basis of the chronology provided by cemetery A, which seems to signal a renewal of military activity at Oudenburg, we believe that we can relate the building of the new *castellum* to the changes resulting from the difficulties of the mid-4th century (Mertens and van Impe 1971, 18; but see also Mertens 1962, 59–60, where a slightly earlier date in the 4th century is proposed).

This brings us to the *cemeteries.* There were in fact two distinct cemeteries, situated at the western edge of the sandy ridge on which the *castella* were built and some 425 m to the west of them. These two cemeteries, A and B, are separated by a strip some 60 m wide without any archaeological material. Cemetery B, to the south, has so far yielded only three inhumation graves, discovered by accident. The land is for the present inaccessible and no systematic research can be therefore carried out. The grave-goods from these three burials consist solely of pottery, notably glazed beakers with painted inscriptions AVETE and VIVETE FELICES (Pirling Group 58–62), dated to the 4th and the late 3rd centuries. The other vessels date to the same period, and more particularly to the first half of the 4th century (Mertens and van lmpe 1971, 18). Judging by this, cemetery B may well be that of the inhabitants of Oudenburg II.

Fortunately cemetery A could be excavated systematically and totally (Mertens and van Impe 1971 for detailed report and catalogue of grave-goods; Gautier 1972 for analysis of animal bones). It covers 450 m² and contains 216 graves, all inhumation burials. It was set up around and on top of the ruins of an earlier settlement, dated to the 2nd century. The burials are more concentrated in the north-western sector; overlapping is rare. Only some general indications will be given here, since a detailed analysis has not yet been made.

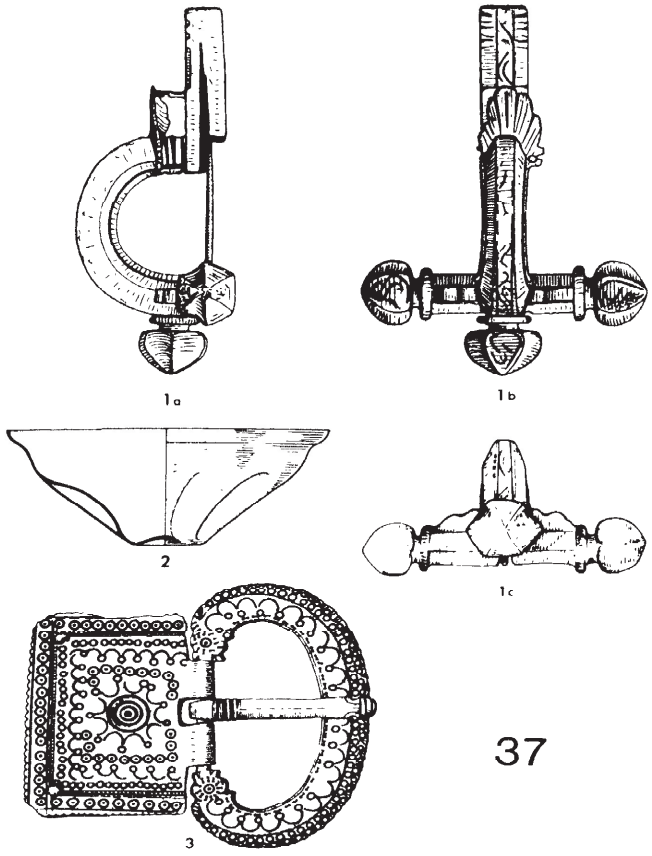


Fig 30 Oudenburg: grave goods from grave 37 (1, 3 × ½; 2 × ¼)

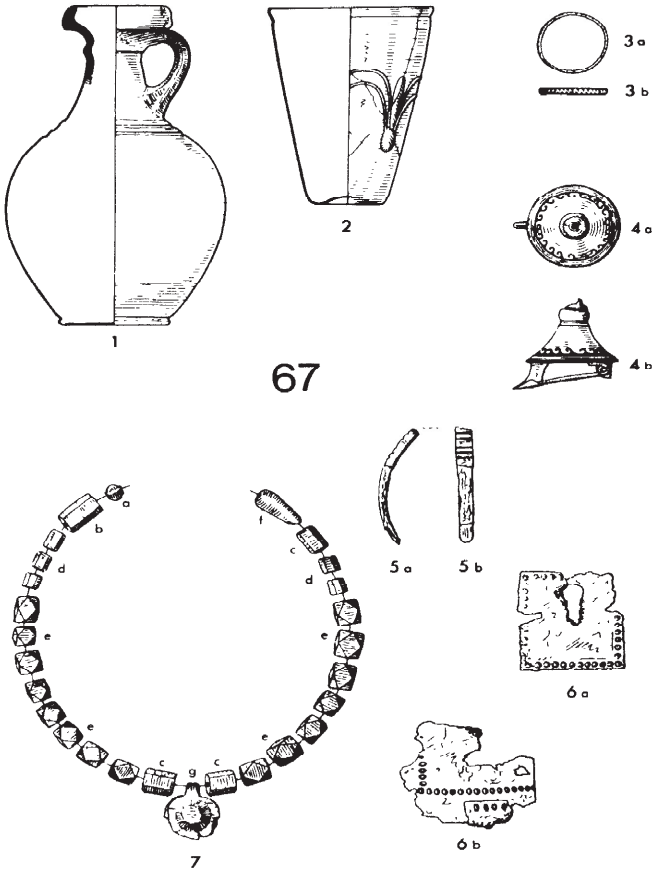


Fig 31 Oudenburg: grave goods (part) from grave 67 (1, 2 × ¼, 3–7 × ½)

Orientation An east-west orientation predominates: 66·5 per cent of the burials had the head to the east, 7 per cent to the west, 11·6 per cent to the south, and 2·8 per cent to the north. In the remaining cases the orientation could not be determined accurately.

Anthropology Anthropological examination (Delsaux 1973) was carried out on 138 skeletons, 54 per cent of the total. It was by no means the case that the skeletons that were not preserved were all those of children, in view of the dimensions of some of the graves. Of the total 138 skeletons, only 12 were those of children under the age of 16, as the following table (Delsaux 1973, 2) shows:

Age	3–5	6–10	11–15	16–18	19–25	26–35	36 and above
Number	7	1	4	6	36	24	28

The average height of the adults was 1706·4 mm. None of the skeletons showed pathological features that might have been the cause of death. In general, all the individuals were tall, strongly built, and well muscled.

It has been judged better to determine sex on the basis of grave-goods. Of 216 graves, 133 contained grave-goods (i.e. 52 per cent); of these only 21 (15 per cent) were feminine in character; there were in addition 9 doubtful cases. The male predominance is thus very marked, something which had already been deduced from the robustness and height of the individuals. The absence of young children can also be explained by the very small number of families established at Oudenburg. The distribution of the graves of women and children in the cemetery is inconclusive; it merely indicates that no particular part of the cemetery was reserved for one or other sex. It should also be noted that the distribution of graves containing grave-goods shows no preference for a particular part of the cemetery: there were no 'rich' sections. Almost all the burials were in wooden coffins, the bodies being on their backs with the arms usually alongside the body but occasionally flexed. The grave-goods were inside or outside the coffin or on a step cut into the side of the grave. A clear distinction can be made between grave-goods proper and objects of dress belonging to the deceased. The latter were either *in situ,* if the body had been placed inside the coffin fully clothed and decked out with ornaments, or placed at the feet.

The archaeological material will not be dealt with in further detail, since the catalogue is to be found in the excavation reports quoted above. However, certain objects do deserve special attention. One of the most notable features of Oudenburg cemetery A is the large number of cruciform brooches that it has produced: 32 specimens, from 24 per cent of the graves containing grave-goods, or 14·8 per cent of the total number of graves. As far as I am aware, this is the highest percentage of cruciform brooches found in any late Roman cemetery, in western Europe at any rate.

Equally worthy of comment is the absence of weapons; in this Oudenburg is distinguished from other late Roman

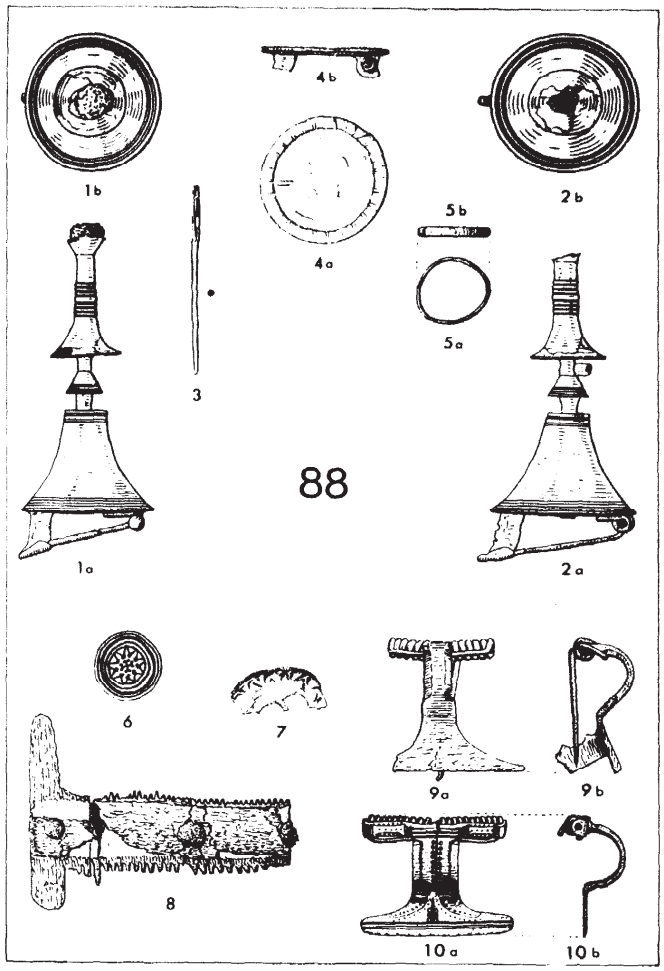


Fig 32 Oudenburg: grave goods from grave 88 (× ½)

cemeteries, especially those of the *laeti,* such as Eprave, Furfooz, Abbeville, or Vermand (Böhme 1974). This peculiarity may illustrate the status of the people buried at Oudenburg, who belonged in all probability to a regular Roman army unit, perhaps *limitanei,* and not to auxiliary units or *laeti* groups. Let us pass over the other material found (pottery, glass vessels, buckles, jewellery, etc.), merely noting the presence in two women's graves of characteristic trumpet or bell brooches, whose Germanic character has recently been emphasized (Böhme 1974, 19–24, 158–60).

Dating The assemblage forms a very homogeneous dating group, covering the second half of the 4th century and the first decade of the 5th century. This dating is in part confirmed by the coins which, it may be noted in passing, were never deposited in the mouth of the corpse. Out of a total of 114 coins (Lallemand 1966, 117–38), 16 were found as single deposits in as many graves, the remainder being grouped in three graves—4 in grave 104,5 in grave 141, and 88 in grave 76. The last–named probably dating from c. 379, the remaining coins spanned the whole 4th century, the latest from after 388. This distribution is not inconsistent with an overall date in the second half of the 4th century, since this also emerges from the analysis of other grave-goods. It would thus appear logical to identify cemetery A as that of the inhabitants of Oudenburg III.

Archaeologically, none of the graves is later than the first decade of the 5th century; the cemetery seems to have gone out of use suddenly, as if Oudenbur had been abandoned according to a plan. This is quite different from what happened in *laeti* cemeteries, or those of towns, such as Tongres and Tournai. This phenomenon may perhaps be an argument in favour of the official military character of the occupation of Oudenbur, whose garrison may have been one of the three quoted in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as coming under the command of the *Dux Belgicae Secundae.* In the excavation report (Mertens and van Impe 1971, 36) an identification of Oudenburg as Portus Epatiacus has been made. This identification was made earlier by Gijsseling (1944), but was disputed by Vannerus (1966).

However, this is no more than an hypothesis, and the existence of military stations other than those quoted in the *Notitia* remains a possibility. In this connexion it is interesting to compare a Oudenburg with related sites in Britain, such as Portchester, Brancaster, or Lympne, which are generally situated inland, along a wide zone scored by many inlets of the sea. The site is difficult to locate from offshore, but nevertheless commands the whole region. From this point of view the site of Oudenburg is identical with that of the British forts. However, one significant difference remains: whilst the British *castella* generally defend a port or a town, to which they are linked by a major highway network, the hinterland of Oudenburg is surprisingly empty. There was certainly some occupation in the 3rd and 4th centuries, but this was scattered, and the nearest town of any importance, Tournai (Turnacum) was nearly 68 km away. Despite this descrepancy, I nevertheless believe that the discoveries at Oudenburg are significant enough, and that it may be accepted that this post formed an integral part of the defensive system set up round the North Sea during the late Empire. Oudenburg may have been the most northerly base along the coast of Gallia Belgica, on the edge of a region whose geological and topographical contours were ill-defined and often moving. To the north the Meuse and the Waal again provided a more clearly defined line, linking up with the Rhine *limes* to the east. Between the two—the *limes* and the Saxon Shore—the wide region of the delta and its hinterland (modern Belgium) represented a zone where the defences were laid out in depth, along roads and rivers, thereby constituting a true defensive system, sometimes known as the *Limes Belgicus* (to be discussed in a forthcoming paper).

[Translation: H F Cleere]

Late Roman defences and the *Limes*

Stephen Johnson

Summary

The origins of the term Litus Saxonicum *are discussed, as a clue to the original purpose of the forts. The meaning 'shore settled by the Saxons' is supported by limited evidence for settlement as early as the 3rd century. The value and significance of 'Romano-Saxon' pottery and late Roman chip-carved metalwork are discussed. Literary sources show the Saxons as attackers first, and settlers later; archaeology, however, can seldom demonstrate attack. The meaning 'shore attacked by the Saxons', while linguistically unique, is supported by the forts on both sides of the Channel, forming a frontier. The architecture of Gallic town defences was influential in the design of Shore forts, emphasizing the cross-Channel unity. The tactical siting of forts and their effectiveness is discussed.*

What is the Saxon Shore? Is it a haphazard series of forts, built as occasion arose to meet a variety of threats to the north-western corner of the Roman world and to Britain in particular? If not, what was it? If so, how was it intended to work and against what sort of threat?

The name 'Saxon Shore', *Litus Saxonicum,* has always been awkward. How does one interpret the adjective 'Saxon'? Clearly, we are dealing with the Roman name for a series of garrisoned forts to be identified with the remains which still stand at various points round Britain's southern and eastern coasts. The only source to record the name is the *Notitia Dignitatum,* and its mention in our written sources should therefore be datable to the latest years of the 4th century, or, at the very latest, to AD 430.

Much debate has been lavished on the question whether 'Saxon Shore' means the 'shore settled by' or the 'shore attacked by' Saxons. This problem, perhaps the province more of the armchair archaeologist than the practical fieldworker, is none the less important. Consideration of the name given to this area in later Roman times may give a clue as to the original purpose of the garrisoned forts. Admittedly, we cannot know when the name Saxon Shore was first coined, and the date of the name is important in determining which meaning is to be given to 'Saxon'. Nor is there any real reason why both interpretations of the name should not be correct. It was part of Roman frontier policy to settle barbarians in areas which were subject to attack from their counterparts (or even kinsmen) outside the empire. Those barbarians accorded the special privilege of space within the Empire were required to be self-supporting by farming barren areas, to provide troops to fight for Rome where necessary, and, perhaps most important, guard their hard-won status from assaults on their territory and livestock from other barbarians still outside the Empire's borders *(Pan. Lat.* VIII (V), 21). There is thus no real bar to the belief that there may have been Saxons both on and attacking the *Litus Saxonicum.* Let us, however, look at the evidence for the two theories.

Those who favour the idea that it was from Saxons settling on the Saxon Shore that the name arose have to show that there were sufficient numbers of these tribesmen present in eastern and southern coastal areas before the name *Litus Saxonicum* was written down in the *Notitia.* The recent publication of finds from the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Caistor-by-Norwich has shown that there may have been such a community of Saxons there as early as the end of the 3rd century, though such an early date, which rests on the pottery typology, is not accepted by everyone without question (e.g. D M Wilson 1974). The pottery used in the cremation burials suggests, from continental parallels, a late 3rd century date. But Roman pottery of even earlier date was used as well, and the pots which were used as burial urns may similarly have been already old at the time of their deposition, relics brought across from their continental homelands by later settlers. Whether this evidence is accepted as showing a late 3rd century date for Saxon presence in this area or not, we need to look very carefully at other Saxon cemeteries in this part of Britain to see if a similar early presence can be detected. One candidate which cries out for examination is Burgh Castle, where in the field east of the fort, Saxon urns were found in the 18th century at a depth of about 4 ft. Two are figured in the most rudimentary fashion in Ives's *Gariannonum,* (1803, facing 34) and another find from the same area is more Romano-Saxon in style, but none the less seems to have been used in the cemetery (illustrated in *Proc Suffolk Inst Archaeol* 6(1888), 359). This may point to a continuity of use for at least the cemetery at Burgh Castle from Roman into Pagan Saxon periods, or even an overlap of the two at the site.

Some indication of an early date from Saxon settlement in the south can also be gained by comparing the areas of Saxon settlement in Sussex with the Roman settlement pattern (Welch 1971). In the broadest of terms, Saxon penetration of the Sussex coastal strip seems to have concentrated most in those areas where there was a comparative absence of Roman settlement, suggesting, though there are no really early Saxon finds to substantiate it, that Saxons arrived in vacant spaces—possibly even were placed there as deliberate policy by Roman governmental planners. The phenomenon of barbarians settling in vacant spaces could equally well be explained (as Ammianus Marcellinus does of the Alemanni in the 4th century) by assuming that the Saxons had a dread of Roman cities or settlements and thought that walls were a trap: in Ammianus's terms (16, 2.12) 'they avoided these as if they were the tombs of their ancestors surrounded by nets' (but see also Weidemann 1972, where the author discusses the pattern of settlement of the Alemanni in the area of the *Agri Decumates,* abandoned by the Romans c. AD 260). Some confirmation of this point of view can be gained from what appears to be a positive lack of Saxon settlement at many Roman town and smaller settlement sites. At Burgh Castle, though the cemetery apparently remained in the same place during Roman and Pagan Saxon periods, it is not known whether or not the Saxon settlement lay within the walls. Similarly, at Bradwell, though there was a *civitas* 'Ythancaestir' attested by Bede *(HE* III, 22), it is not known whether this lay in or outside the Saxon Shore fort of Othona. At Portchester, *Grubenhäuser* of Saxon date have been found, but the exact dating of the Saxon arrival has not been fixed with sufficient certainty to attest their presence before the later years of the 5th century (Cunliffe 1970), a date well in accord with the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's accounts not only of the arrival of Port at Portsmouth,

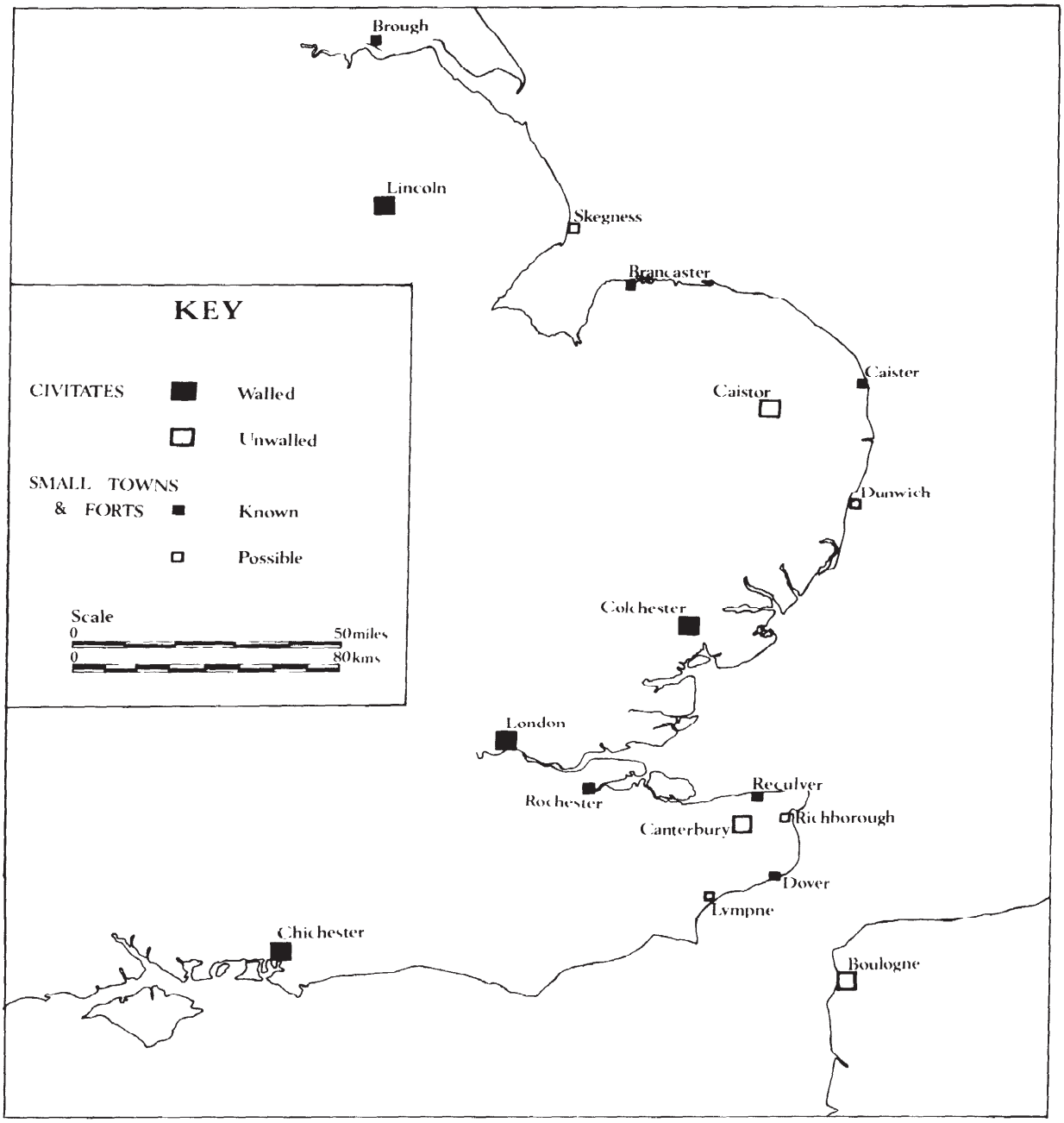


Fig 33 Coastal defences in the early 3rd century

but also of the battle of Andreadsceaster, where native Britons (descendants of the Roman garrisons, as in the life of St Severinus of Noricum, Eugippius, *Vita Severini* 20, 1) were attacked and defeated by invading Saxons *(AS Chron.* ann. 491 and 501, now to be dated about 18–19 years earlier).

But discussion of this belongs more properly to the 5th century, and we must attempt to assess the earlier vestiges of Saxons on the Saxon Shore. One of these is the type of pottery commonly described as Romano-Saxon (Myres 1956, 16ff; 1969, 66–70). This was made in Roman style,

usually wheel-turned, and though in shape and fabric it displays either normal late Roman shapes or a barbarization of them (one of the most distinctive types is a translation into wheel-thrown terms of the Saxon *Buckelurne)* such pottery bears decorations with stamps or bosses and zigzag burnished lines which has close parallels with decorations on Saxon urns of hand-made style. Admittedly, some of the pottery commonly claimed as Romano-Saxon is more Roman than Saxon: possibly the majority of finds come into this category. Associated with the more 'Roman' style is the pottery of red fabric and coat which was being made in the later Roman period at Hadham. Some pieces of this pottery bear zoomorphic moulded decoration as well as dimples and bosses. Animals themselves are not a distinctively Saxon decoration, but neither are the types on Hadham vessels closely related to known Samian figure-types (there were animals on some of the pots from the Caistor cemetery: Myres and Green 1974, 60–1, plate VIb). Other types are more distinctively 'Saxon', with arrangements of bosses and dimples in pendant triangles. Hadham, a late Roman pottery industry in its own right, was certainly one centre for the manufacture of such 'Romano-Saxon' wares; kilns at Mucking were another. The pottery was probably produced at any number of small local kilns in predominantly, but not exclusively, the eastern part of the country. Though it is true that the style of ornamentation with bosses and dimples can be found in native or local wares throughout the Roman period, there is something especially 'Saxon' about the shape and style of these pots, particularly when one takes their almost generally late context into consideration, that singles them out for special attention even in the late Roman period.

Distribution of this style of pottery is widespread through the whole of eastern Britain: of the Saxon Shore forts, Brancaster, Burgh Castle, Walton Castle, and Richborough have produced sherds or vessels to my knowledge, and it is particularly common in East Anglia (Rodwell 1970). At Burgh Castle, examples of this style occurred in deposits of apparently very late Roman date, possibly even belonging to the first or second quarter of the 5th century. The majority of finds, however, are not closely dated in a stratigraphical context. Their very nature means that they belong to the last phases of many Roman sites, and are thus generally in the most recent levels, in any event those most easily disturbed by later activities on the site. The pottery is not confined solely to the eastern areas of Britain: It is clearly more widespread, and has even been found at Continental sites—for example Wijster, a native-style village in Friesland, beyond the Roman frontier in present-day Holland (Van Es 1967, figs. 104, 166). Doubtless pottery of this type remains to be found at a series of sites along the Gallic coastal strip, but its apparent absence from Oudenburg is surprising, considering the late date of the excavated cemetery at the site. The whole question of the presence of pottery of late Roman date at many of the continental Channel sites is one of great importance for assessing the extent of Saxon presence.

What is the significance of this Romano-Saxon pottery? Its existence has been used as the strong point of an argument which seeks to show that the Saxon Shore was settled by Saxons within the Roman period, but it is difficult to press this conclusion from the evidence of this pottery alone (e.g. White 1961, ch. 6, 79–80). One cannot be positive from the mere style of a pot about the people who used it, especially as the style seems to span two quite discrete elements within the Roman world. How can we be sure that the pottery was not used by Romano-Britons with Saxon leanings rather than Saxons with Roman tastes? Of course, much depends on what we mean when we say that Saxons were settlers: if it means the wholesale transference of groups of Saxons to selected spots within the Roman empire, there is every likelihood that, as may have been the case at Caistor, such communities would transport and use their own native styles of pottery. If, however, as is much more likely, there was the odd Saxon family or small group of families integrated gradually into what were essentially Romano-British enclaves, then, given substantial enough numbers to form a ready market, potters might be tempted to produce essentially Roman pots with some concessions to Saxon tastes for this specialised immigrant population.

The argument that the presence of Romano-Saxon pottery indicates the presence of Saxons rests at present on too many imponderables. Unfortunately, there is little criterion for accurate dating: much of the pottery has often been related to an almost sub-Romano-British culture, and, as already explained, its presence in stratified deposits is rare. More recently, however, a chance find of a coin-hoard dating to AD 340 buried inside a pot of Romano-Saxon type near Water Newton (now in the British Museum) has suggested that an earlier date is possible, and even likely, for some of the Romano-Saxon pottery from the eastern parts of Britain. The whole question is now wide open, and will require very close scrutiny in the near future, particularly in the light of my intended publication of groups of late Roman pottery from Charles Green's excavation at Burgh Castle.

A second indication of the presence of barbarians, whether Saxons or other Germanic tribesmen, is often reckoned to be the later Roman 'Continental' style of chip-carved belt equipment, found at several sites in the south of Britain (Böhme 1974). The significance of this type of find, as is the case with Romano-Saxon pottery, is hard to assess. Such metalwork is, however, of military or at least official type: it includes belt-plates, buckles, strap-ends, and various attachments to the official belt worn by the army and civil service.

A connection of the use of this metalwork, quite widespread throughout the continent, with cemeteries of apparently military nature near defended hill-top sites primarily in Gallia Belgica, has led to the perhaps tacit assumption that wherever this equipment is found, it indicates the presence of *laeti.* The *Notitia Dignitatum (Occ.* XLII, 33–44) lists units of irregular mercenaries, called both *Sarmatae* and *Laeti,* who were stationed at various places in Gaul, *Laeti,* unlike the *Sarmatae* who were basically a Germanic tribe, could belong to any one of a group of German people settled within the empire as soldier farmers (see Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopedie der Altertumswissenschaft* s.v. and Böhme 1974, 96ff.). Such evidence as there is suggests that these *barbari* were originally allowed to settle inside the empire by Constantius and Maximian under the Tetrarchy. This process perhaps began in Britain under Carausius and Allectus, but though there is ample evidence for the settlement of Germans and portions of Germanic tribes in Gaul, there is less evidence for their settlement in Britain, as opposed to their employment there in the auxiliary or regular army (Frere 1974, 270, n. 5).

There may have been *laeti* in later Roman Britain, and there almost certainly were barbarian troops employed in the army, following a tradition current for several years. The use of barbarian troops, however, will hardly have occasioned the use of the name 'Saxon' on the Saxon Shore. None of the garrisons recorded by the *Notitia,* though not necessary in every case the original garrison of the fort in which it appears, bears a Saxon or even strictly Germanic name. Saxons themselves are only recorded once in the *Notitia,* in a fort on the Egyptian frontier *(Or.* XXXII, 37).

Though both Romano-Saxon pottery and the late Roman chip-carved metalwork are of doubtful significance in attesting the presence of Saxons in Britain or on the Saxon Shore in Gaul, the fact that two forts, *Marcae* and *Grannona,* are specifically noted as lying 'on the Saxon Shore' may be taken as a clearer pointer. *Marcae* lay in Belgica Secunda, and therefore is to be sought on the coastline between the mouth of the Scheldt and Dieppe. *Grannona* lay in the territory of the *Dux Tractus Armoricani,* and must be sought on the coastline west of Dieppe. Within this large area,

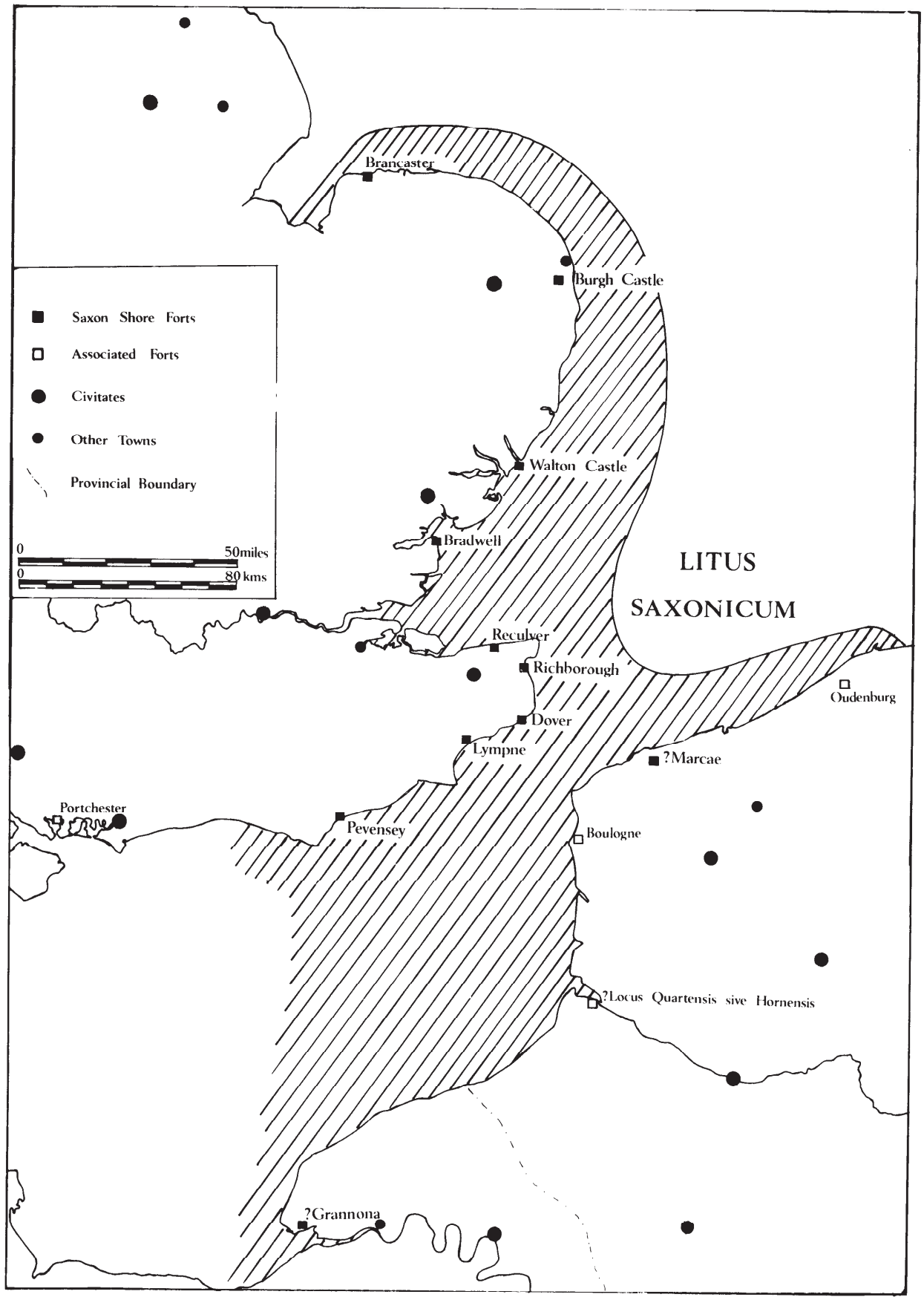


Fig 34 Late 3rd and 4th century channel defences

perhaps the most likely spot for the fort to have lain is at a river mouth, and the one obvious river in this region is the Seine. *Grannona* may have lain at or near Le Havre. But the question of the position of *Grannona* has for a long time been a vexed one: it has often been suggested to lie at Port-en-Bessin; if so, and if *Marcae* lay, as it must have done, in the Boulonnais, this is direct evidence for a Saxon Shore fort in the two places in Gaul where there is some evidence (from a later period) of Saxon presence.

In the Bessin region, there is mention of the *Saxones Baiocasses* (a group of Saxons living near Bayeux) in Gregory of Tours: one of his references to this settlement is dated to 578 *(Hist. Franc.* V, 76), and suggests that the Saxons had been living there for some considerable time. But despite this, and the place-name evidence, which suggests a Saxon rather than a Frankish presence in the Bessin area, there is little reason to suppose that this settlement was already taking place in the fourth century, some 200 years earlier than Gregory. There is even less evidence than this for the Saxon presence in the Boulonnais: it consists in the main of place-name evidence, and this itself does not assert with any certainty that there were Saxons settling here before the late 6th century (White 1961, ch. V, summarizes the evidence).

As another, and perhaps final, argument in favour of the 'settlement' hypothesis, it may be argued that the defences in Britain and Gaul are of very different kinds. The British sites are not towns, but strongly defended ports, whereas the defence of the Gallic shores (where the sites have been identified) are cities *(civitates)* which happen to lie near the sea-coast (White 1961, 63). But here again there are two problems: we cannot be totally sure what significance this difference holds–for example how much of the Gallic coast was called the 'Saxon Shore'? Before comparing one side with the other, we need to be certain that we are comparing the two areas which are parallel. Second, since the sites of both *Grannona* and *Marcae,* the only two Gallic sites specifically described as lying on the Saxon Shore, are not known, we cannot in fact assume that these two posts are different from those of the British Saxon Shore forts. Oudenburg, possibly one of the other two forts mentioned under the command of the *Dux Belgicae Secundae,* certainly is of similar type to the British posts, and if, as I have already hinted, the Gallic posts lay near the sea or at a river estuary, they may have been swept away by the sea long since, as we know to have been the case at Walton Castle and the Brittenburg. Several of the British sites have been severely mutilated by the encroachment of the sea.

When we turn to literary sources for documentation of the Saxons in the Roman period, the results are rather disappointing. Their first mention appears to come in Ptolemy's *Geography* (II, ii, 7), where he places them next to the *Chauci,* at the mouth of the Cimbrian peninsula. But even if Ptolemy's information and text is correct (only one MS has the reading ΣΑΞΟΝΕΣ, most others producing only, ΑΞΟΝΕΣ, possibly a corruption of Tacitus's *Abiones)* the information will date to c. AD 5, the year of a great Roman expedition into this coastal area. The first literary mention of the Saxons after this comes in Eutropius (IX, 21) and Orosius (VII, 25, 3), and refers to Saxon raids on channel areas in 286: their arrival at this time was possibly part of a more general south-easterly movement of Germanic tribes in the same period (Zosimus, III, 6, 3: the Salii moved into the Veluwe region at this period). This is as much evidence as there is in literary sources for Saxon presence in the 3rd and early 4th century. From the 350s onwards, record of them comes thicker and faster. 'The Saxons were occupying an area not far from the Roman frontier, beyond the Rhine and on the western sea-coast, and sent troops to help Magnentius and Constantius II': so says Julian *(Or.* I, 51; III, 124). This is perhaps the best written testimony for Saxon settlement at least near the Roman world at any period within the 4th century. At the same date, a tribe called the Kuedoi (considered to be a part of the Saxons) pushed the Salii south-westwards from the Batavian islands, and as a consequence, they arrived in *Toxandria,* an area still north of the late Roman frontier in the lower Rhine area (Zosimus, III, 6, 3; Amm. Mar. XVII, 8).

In the 360s come several mentions of Saxons plundering Britain and the continental coasts *(Pan. Lat. II (XII),* 5.12; Amm. Mar. XXVI, 4.5; XXVII, 8.5; XXVIII, 2.12), and in 368 Theodosius destroyed a Saxon fleet, possibly on the Gallic coast. By 370, it appears that there was a distinct area which could be defined and called *Saxonia,* though where it lay is at present uncertain (Egger, *Byzantion* 5 (1930), 9ff). In 370, a band of Saxons approached the Roman world by crossing the sea, made a raid, and were stopped by a Count, Nannennus. A truce was concluded and a safe passage out of the Empire guaranteed. But the Romans rewarded the invasion with treachery and slaughtered the Saxons, probably near Deutz, just outside the Empire (Amm. Mar. XXVIII, 5; XXX, 7.7). Further Saxon raids on the Gallic coast continued in the 380s (Ambrosius, *Ep.* 40, 23).

By 400, with the poems of Claudian *(de cons. Stilichonis* ii, 250–5; *in Eutropium* i, 391–3), the Saxons were recorded (admittedly in verse) as savage enemies, a constant threat to the safety of Britain, and liable to turn up as far afield even as the Orkneys. Saxons (as mercenaries) also play a large part in the story of Vortigern, for it appears that, in attempting to prevent a second Roman takeover of his affairs, Vortigern became too deeply involved with his Saxon mercenaries (Ward 1972, 277). From the mid-5th century onwards, there are ever-increasing records of Saxons in the Gallic coastal and even inland areas. In 451, Saxons fought as allies under Aëtius against the Huns (Jordanes, *Getica,* 191). In 456, Armorica was taken over by them, and ten years later, they began to sail up the Loire, and settled on some of the islands which lay at the mouth of that river (Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* VII, 369, 390; Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* II, 18–19). From there, they started a campaign against all the Romans left in Gaul. By the last quarter of the 5th century, they were raiding in the Gironde, and their presence is graphically described by Sidonius Apollinaris *(Ep.* VIII, 6.13, VIII, 3.3; VIII 9.21ff).

It will be clear from the brief run through the written source material that the Saxons first impinged on the fringes of the Roman empire as attackers, not as settlers. Even though this process, attack first followed by settlement, is fairly consistently followed, it does not give a clear lead in establishing that the Saxon Shore was under sufficiently constant pressure to have gained its name from Saxon attack. Archaeological evidence can seldom give clear indication that a hostile attack has occurred at a site, still less be precise about who was the attacker. The number of coin-hoards buried in the coastal areas of Gaul and Britain towards the end of the 3rd century suggests that this area (as related by Eutropius) was under pressure. But the deposition of hoards may have some other significance—a sign of the instability of the economy, for example, or just a normal way of storing large unwanted amounts of money. It need not be a sign of barbarian raids.

If the Saxon Shore gained its name from Saxon attackers, it is a unique example of a Roman military installation which gained its name from the barbarian enemies who usually harassed it. For one of the clearest facts which emerge from the *Notitia* chapter of the *Comes Litoris Saxonici* is that the arrangements there described form a frontier. In other chapters of the *Notitia,* the *Comes* is listed among equals in rank and *Duces* who were commanders of other frontiers. However *Litus Saxonicum* originally gained its name, it is clear that by the time that the *Notitia* lists were written (probably, in the case of Britain c. 395, or even earlier) the name was for the chain of posts forming the frontier command.

The existence of the forts *in litore Saxonico* on the Gallic coastline in a similar military context in the *Notitia* suggest also that the command of the Saxon Shore once extended to the Gallic side of the Channel, as well as to the British one:

this, in turn, leads to the conclusion that the name *Litus Saxonicum* was in current use earlier than 395; for by the time of the *Notitia,* the Saxon Shore command is wholly enclosed specifically within Britain, and the two Gallic forts, *Marcae* and *Grannona,* are joined by others and form part of the continental commands of the *Dux Belgicae Secundae* and *Dux Tractus Armoricani.*

Since the discovery and publication of the building inscription from Reculver in 1960 (Richmond 1961, 224ff), we have had confirmation of the assumption that the extended series of defences in Britain shown in the *Notitia* was not all built at the same time. But though we cannot tie the Reculver inscription down to a secure date within the 3rd century, it is obvious that Reculver and Brancaster were forts of a different, probably older, design from the remainder of the Saxon Shore series. Their design is closer to the typical 2nd century style of fort, with rounded corners and interior rectangular angle turrets, though the defences of both consist of a rather thicker wall than was normal in those forts of the 2nd century

If they were constructed in the first half of the 3rd century, the forts at Reculver and Brancaster were supplemented by a few other, widely spaced, harbours on the eastern-facing coastline of Britain (Fig. 14): at Caister-by-Yarmouth there was a defended port which enclosed an area in many respects similar to that of Reculver and had defences of military style (Ellison 1966). Brough-on-Humber, too, retained until the end of the 3rd century at least some features of a military installation (Wacher 1969, 25). Other early bases have possibly disappeared off Skegness and near Dunwich, perhaps both additional harbours for a defensive chain. Colchester, too, which had already been invested with defensive walls, would have had a nearby harbour, as would Rochester, another recently fortified port on the south bank of the Thames Estuary. Further south, Dover and Boulogne formed twin fleet bases guarding the channel straits, possibly supplemented on the Gallic side by ports at a number of smaller sites, and on the British side at Lympne and Richborough.

There was, then, in the early 3rd century, an existing network of bases for the fleet which could have served to defend the British coastline and the area which later became known as the Saxon Shore. By the end of that century, the British fleet had ceased to be an effective force, and the pirates were in control (Sextus Aurelius Victor, XXXIX, 20–21). Thus the decision was taken to expand the original system, and to provide more specialist forts designed to protect the actual harbours against the new threat.

From the point of view of a student of Roman military architecture, these new forts are an extremely interesting study. It is well known that, towards the later years of the 3rd century, many Gallic cities and towns were equipped, sometimes for the first time in their history, with walls which were both strong and which also, as a general rule, drastically cut down the urban area, though the suburbs clustering round the later walled towns may have been quite extensive. The dating of these walls themselves is by no means certain, but most indications support a date between AD 275 and 290, the walls themselves being a response to the most serious of raids by barbarians across the Rhine frontier between 260 and 275.

Architecturally speaking, these Gallo-Roman city walls represent the greatest advance in defensive architecture since the Augustan era. Then, a city wall was more of a decoration, and though, as at Fréjus or Autun, the walls might be bristling with projecting towers, the rarity of such a defensive type in the Augustan period suggests that their presence there was a luxury rather than a necessity. A city wall of such gigantic proportions was in any case a great liability which threw a great onus of upkeep on decurions and townspeople. The walls of Autun, at least, had been allowed to go to ruin in the 4th century, and the number of towns like Autun, Nimes, Arles, Tongres, Avenches, and Vienne, which in the later period are known to have had walls which enclosed only a corner of the area of the former walled towns, suggests that there were more stringent defensive measures taken, choosing only a realistic area to fortify—an area which could actually be defended both by the manpower available and by city walls kept in good repair.

From these continental examples, we gain many parallels for developments on the British and the continental coastlines. The very walls themselves are paralleled for thickness almost everywhere among the Gallic *civitates* and the late Roman Rhineland forts.

At Evreux and its immediate neighbours, Bayeux and Lisieux, there is also a close parallel for the style of fort at Burgh Castle and Bradwell, or all three of the Gallic *civitates* had walls which in plan roughly follow the 'playing card' pattern. The corner towers, as at Burgh Castle, project from the curve, which to some extent masks potential lines of fire from the tower windows. In general, the Saxon Shore forts closely correspond in plan with others of the continental fortifications: such comparison is, however, not very meaningful, since in most cases there was no standard pattern for late Roman fortifications and the layout tended to follow the lie of the ground, so that parallels in shape and plan are not necessarily significant grounds for believing in the contemporaneity of the sites compared (von Petrikovits 1971, 203).

Of more significance is the style of building. Most of the British forts were built in small blockwork *(petit appareil),* which was also in common use on the continent. Interspersed among the small cubes of masonry were tile-courses, or, in some cases, lacing courses of flat slabs of stone, designed both to level the work and to form a deeper bond with the wall core at frequent intervals. Occasionally, as on the north wall at Richborough, a darker and lighter sandstone was used to produce a mosaic patterning of extremely simple kind, though nothing to compare with the elaborate and almost universal patterning at Le Mans, where a whiter limestone was used to pick out geometric patterns against the more normal brown sandstone.

Towers can also be paralleled on both sides of the channel. The most normal type is the projecting tower of D or U shape. The most complete examples are to be found at Senlis, Le Mans, or Carcassonne, where in places there are traces of two rows of windows in the towers at rampart-walk height and above, Rectangular towers, such as are found at Richborough, are rarer on continental sites. It is often stressed that Burgh Castle is an oddity because its towers were added after the walls were built. At Dax, too, the large U-shaped towers are not bonded with the main wall. This may make us think again about the method of construction of such walls, and to consider that it may have been necessary for some constructional reason to build the towers and walls separately (Morris and Hawkes 1949, 66ff). On the Saxon Shore, no tower now stands much above the height of the rampart wall, though in the pre-war days at Pevensey at least one of the towers held a large arched window similar to those at Le Mans.

The normal later Roman gateway consisted of a narrow, heavily defended entrance passage flanked by double towers. The Richborough gate tower, itself of this type, is copied rather than paralleled at Alzey and a series of forts along the Rhine. Posterns, too, are common at Gallic sites, normally nestling beneath, or to the side of, a tower, as the Pôterne du Moulin d'Avar at Carcassonne or the Grande Pôterne at Le Mans. Posterns similar to these are to be seen at Pevensey, Lympne, and Richborough.

When we consider the defensive architecture of the Saxon Shore forts in the light of the whole range of late Roman fortifications throughout Gaul in particular, the one point which stands out above all others is that they are continental in style rather than British. They are in no way part of the mainstream of British architectural development: even after the construction of these coastal forts,

army commanders in the north of Britain could still construct forts ostensibly of older style at Elslack, Newton Kyme, and Piercebridge, whose defences were still in the old 2nd century mould even if the layout of the interior buildings was different from a fort of earlier date. To the end of the Roman period in Britain, the majority of Roman forts on Hadrian's Wall and its surroundings were never adapted by the addition of external towers as so many forts on other frontiers of the empire were in the later period. The Saxon Shore forts are anomalous to Britain: they were built at the same time as the town walls at Canterbury, but whereas the Canterbury walls were built in the traditional style with an earth rampart, without external towers, the Saxon Shore forts (with the apparent exception of Dover) had free-standing walls and external towers, the latter probably never before seen on a site in Britain except at the gateways of the more important cities of the province (Wacher 1975, 75–7).

Why, then, the close connection between these forts and the continental defences? There are two immediate explanations, which are probably part and parcel of the same one. Some people have seen the forts as the enterprise of an architect or general of initiative who carried over some knowledge of continental techniques to Britain. Such a man was Carausius, Alternatively, one can see the Saxon Shore forts as themselves forming part of the continental defences of the late 3rd century, a military stratagem designed to protect Gaul as much as Britain by cordoning off the Channel. They seem so out of place in Britain precisely because they are an outlier of the main series of Gallic defences—almost an extension to the Rhine frontier (Fig. 14).

To form such an extension to the frontier, the majority of the new forts needed to lie along the coastline of East Anglia, for there the threat was at its most immediate. Pirates could strike very suddenly in that area since they could approach from the open seas, and there must also have been a system of watchtowers and patrols in this area to guard against sudden attacks. The fort at Oudenburg, at whatever date, will have performed a similar function on the coast of *Gallia Belgica.* The East Anglian forts, two of which held garrisons of cavalry at the time of the *Notitia* list, probably all had mounted troops in them, so that not only were the forces mobile by sea to contest pirate landings, they could also effectively curtail any movement by Saxons should they attempt to land. Sited as they were on the main river estuaries, the Saxon Shore forts in the area will have provided an effective bar to the progress of Saxon penetration into the inner reaches of the province: deprived of the use of the main river inlets on which to use their longships, the pirates' raids cannot, with careful watching, have become too troublesome.

In Kent, at the narrowest part of the Channel Straits, there is a concentration of forces, partly, no doubt, due to the continual pressures to which this area in particular was subject. Saxons, Franks, and other sea-borne Germanic tribes always attacked from the same direction, sweeping down from the areas in which they lived into the North Sea and into the Straits between Britain and Gaul. A slight diversion from their course would bring them out either on to the coast of *Gallia Belgica* or into East Anglia. But the richest pickings by far lay beyond the Channel Straits, in the areas of southern Britain and western Gaul, where there were large villas and landed estates with plunder to be seized.

The original importance, therefore, of Dover and Boulogne, bases of the *Classis Britannica* in the lst, 2nd, and 3rd centuries, is not surprising. Not only was the Channel passage the lifeline which linked Britain to Gaul, but whoever held the Dover Straits had some control, albeit limited, over the passage of traffic from east to west. The easiest way to prevent Saxons from raiding the prosperous areas of western Gaul and southern Britain was to seal off the Straits, and ensure that they were not able to reach the areas in which they were so interested. On the British side at the narrowest point between Britain and Gaul are the forts of Reculver, Richborough, Dover, and Lympne, while on the Gallic side of the Channel, besides the late Roman city at Boulogne, which can hardly have ceased being a port, even though it is not mentioned as a garrisoned site in the *Notitia,* there lay the as yet unidentified site of *Marcae,* within the territory of the *Dux Belgicae Secundae.*

The most vulnerable areas, therefore, as far as raiding from Saxons were concerned, were the actual Channel Straits and all of the coastline on both Gallic and British sides to the east of this. If the Straits could be held successfully, there was no real need for complete cover either of the British southern coast or of the Gallic *Tractus Armoricanus,* other than perhaps one or two back-up forts on each side to head off any pirates foolhardy enough to have isolated themselves by sailing through the Straits. Pevensey, sited in just such an ideal spot, had its own fleet, for the *Classis Anderetianarum* (recorded in the *Notitia (Occ.* XLII, 23) at Paris, but originally hailing from *Anderida)* will originally have gained its name from the fort at which it was stationed. Possibly there were similar small fleets at all of the Saxon Shore forts, which could give chase whenever pirates loomed on the horizon: the old *Classis Britannica* was perhaps subdivided and detachments stationed out at all the separate harbours in order to catch the pirates in a pincer movement. If pirate ships came though the Channel Straits, the *Classis Anderetianorum* or another small fleet would put to sea, heading the intruders off, while another detachment of the same fleet gave chase from Dover or Boulogne. Thus *Grannona,* the more westerly of the forts specifically named as being on the Saxon Shore in Gaul lay in all probability in a position roughly co-distant from the Channel Straits as Pevensey (or Portchester) on the British side, and will have held, in addition to the military garrison recorded in the *Notitia,* a small detachment of sailors manning a Similar fleet.

There are even traces of such a system working in the historical accounts of the Saxon raiding. In order to carry out a successful raid on southern Britain, the Saxons had to pass the Straits twice: once on their way in, slipping past the cordon of Roman defences, fleet, and watchtowers, and once laden with their plunder on the way home. In 286, Carausius was accused by Maximian of allowing the Saxons to land and raid, then capturing them with their booty and failing to make full restoration of their goods to the provincials who had been robbed. The nature of the *limes* here described is such that the defending Romans would have had two chances of intercepting the pirates: they might slip through once but with the hue and cry raised after a raid, they can have had little chance of evading capture on the return journey. Carausius, in 286, was merely taking the advantage of the opportunities which the defensive scheme offered.

While Britain remained part of the Roman Empire, there was no reason why the *limes* should not continue to function normally. With forts on both sides of the Channel, the Straits between Dover and Boulogne formed a natural interception point. After the breakdown of Roman rule in Britain, there was no regular manning of the British forts. Saxon pirates were again able to harass the coasts of northern and western Gaul: control of the Channel Straits was lost.

Litus Romanum—the Shore forts as mission stations

S E Rigold

Summary
Most of the Saxon Shore forts, and certain other comparable later Roman strongholds have indications of religious settlements and cemeteries from the first two or three centuries of the Anglo-Saxon church. These always represent a re-occupation and did not always survive the Viking incursions. The archaeological evidence is supported by references in Bede and elsewhere to the siting of Christian missions. Each instance is here examined on its individual claims and the disposition and details of its remains are treated comparatively.

In all the accredited Saxon-shore forts except Brancaster and Pevensey, and in several *castella* of the same general type, litoral or non-litoral, there is some evidence for a Christian occupation, post-Roman but pre-Viking. The evidence, documentary and archaeological, ranges from exceptional strength in the case of Reculver to just enough to support a hypothesis in those of Portchester and Lympne. In every case the occupation was a re-occupation, unconnected with sub-Roman resistance or with Romanizing habits on the part of the 5th century invaders.

The break between the 5th century and the 7th is absolute. Claims once made, in the context of Richborough, for a continuity between barbarous coinages of Roman derivation and the so-called *sceattas* of the late 7th and 8th centuries are now quite rejected,[1] and with them the society that supposedly needed them, Some of the evidence for Christian settlement is indeed numismatic, excessively thin by Roman standards, but significant in its context. Richborough, beside its fantastic wealth of Roman coins, has produced more single 8th and early 9th century pennies than any other site (Cunliffe 1968, 217–23), more *sceattas* than any except Reculver and the comparable religious site of Whitby, and Reculver exceeds all other sites in 7th century tremisses.[2] The most usual context for finds of single unmounted coins at this period seems to be the persistent, if basically un-Christian, practice of offering them in graves (Casey and Reece 1974, 201–5). Other Shore forts have produced such coins in smaller numbers.

Gregory's instruction to recover Christian buildings evidently did not extend to the one church and baptistery, again at Richborough, that has been identified within a Shore fort (Brown 1971, citing parallels): they were probably then unrecognizable (Fig. 35, R). The instruction to adapt pagan buildings to Christian use, now well attested archaeologically (e.g. Stone-by-Faversham: Fletcher and Meates 1969), may have been effective within the forts (cf. p 74) but there was often little to adapt. Only the walls needed no adaptation.

The abandonment or demotion of these Christian establishments in the face of Viking raids is no recommendation for the thesis that the forts were directed entirely seawards. If the missionaries regarded their defensive strength it was as entrenched bridgeheads to cover a possible retreat in the face of resurgent paganism. To a like end the Conqueror seized Pevensey and Robert Courthose Portchester, and by this analogy Professor White should have assigned the lot to Aurelian or Constantius rather than to any 'schismatic' emperor! More probably their appeal to the missionaries was symbolic rather than practical: the starkest of Roman monuments, even more sharply than today they must have proclaimed in the wilderness the Roman discipline that had become identified with the straight paths of the Lord. They provided precinct-walls, *valla monastica,* primarily against ghostly foes, and, incidentally, sources of re-usuable material for stone churches. Other Roman sites did all this, but less immediately.

To Bede any walled Roman site, down to a fort or less, was a *civitas.* Though he had travelled little, in a man of his learning such an extension of use must have been conscious. The *civitas Dei* can be small, a city of refuge for the Israelites, a *Fluchtburg* within a once open settlement, such as played so large a part in Merovingian warfare. Commerce and civic rights are forgotten: what matters is the wall and, in a reduced tribal capital, the church and her bishop within it. No doubt Gregory and Augustine hoped to reconstruct the tribal *civitates* in Britain as they survived in the Gallic church, but they and their close successors only achieved this in Canterbury, London, Winchester, York and, a little later, Leicester. They ignored obvious and extensive *civitas* capitals, such as Chichester and Cirencester, possibly because they were too big for their needs, but seized on forts and other restricted sites both for sees and for independent minsters. In the act of the Clovesho council of 803 the distinction remains in the titles of the participant bishops between walled *civitates* and 'open' *ecclesiae* (Haddan and Stubbs 1871, 545–7). Included with the five proper *civitates* are Rochester and Worcester, small civil settlements, Dommoc, which was probably a fort, and Sidnacester which may have been either. That Selsey, where Wilfrid set up the South Saxon see, is an *ecclesia* is strong

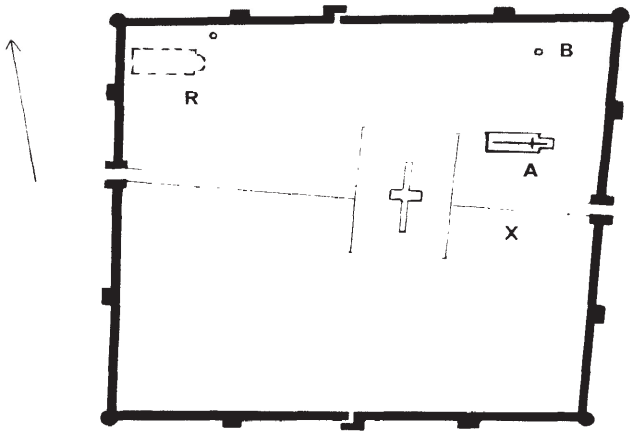


Fig 35 Richborough (1:2500)

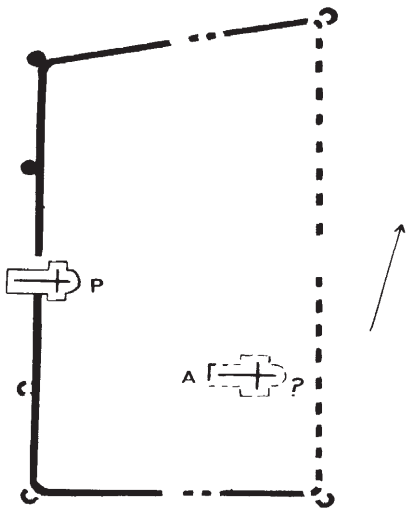


Fig 36 Bradwell (1:2500)

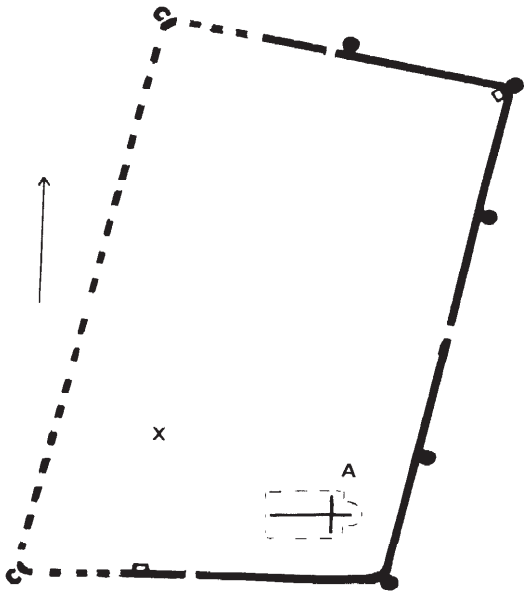


Fig 38 Burgh (1:2500)

testimony that, despite the claims of underwater explorers, it was not the site of a Shore fort, which would assuredly have been reckoned a *civitas.* Bede places Ythanchester (Fig. 36) in this class, following his general usage, though in one passage he calls the quadrilateral and fort-like Rochester a *castellum* and uses the same word in his one reference to a missionary see established in a fort by Anglo-Saxons carrying the work of conversion overseas when that of England was scarcely complete *(HE* iv, 5; v, 11—*Villaburg, lingua Gallica Traiectum).* This is Utrecht/Traiectum (Fig. 40), which grew into a real city, qualified as a *civitas* by analogy. It may not have been unique: the situation of non-episcopal minsters of the missionary phase deserves closer examination. The later Benedictine abbey of Oudenburg in Flanders, a recolonization of the site of a minster earlier than 713, lay *outside* a Shore fort closely comparable with those of Britain, but the parish church may preserve the site of a predecessor within it.[3] The missionary effort, the repacification of the same maritime frontier, the Anglo-

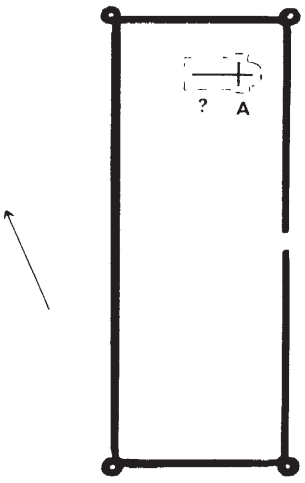


Fig 37 Walton (1:2500)

Frisian commerce with its common coinage, and the grateful reclamation of any firm points from the Roman past typify alike the litoral, riverine, and vulnerable roads of early Christian Saxondom.

This is not to say that the reoccupation of the forts was simultaneous, nor the re-use of them identical. Each fort must be examined individually, with the evidence for reoccupation and the position and date of missionary remains within it. The order proposed is that of the apparent first contact of the site with a mission, whether from Roman Gaul or from the Hibernian church at a time that it was becoming assimilated to Roman usages in buildings if not in calendar. The first, Richborough, is an exceptional case. It is not until the 63Os, when rival missions, under rival patronage, claim 'spheres of influence' independently of Canterbury and against an organized pagan opposition, that Bede cites many instances where they are based in *civitates.* These include forts and small walled townships, of which the best known is Dorchester-on-Thames, and they are in the gift of a local king or kings, the patrons of the mission, imparting both security and *Romanitá.* All but the first in the following list is constituted thus.

Richborough

Augustine landed on Thanet in 597 and there made his treaty, no less, with Ethelbert.[4] That he set foot on mainland Kent at Richborough has no early authority,[5] but there is no reason to question it—it was the obvious step from Thanet. His 'footprint' (? a bonding-tile of the familiar kind) was treasured there as a relic. The chapel of St Augustine of Richborough, alias Fleet, stood within the walls, just north of the east gate (Fig. 35, A): around and, particularly, south of it and east of the Great Foundation was an extensive cemetery (X) and the relatively large number of 7th–9th century coin finds, whenever their precise provenance is known, come from this area and would seem to be either grave-dedications or lost offerings from the chapel (Cunliffe 1968, 217–23). The slight foundations of the chapel indicate a Norman rebuilding round an earlier chapel with small square chancel, narrow nave, and western *porticus*—not distinctively *early* Saxon, but the apparent absence of burials from the earlier building, as distinct from under its Norman extensions, suggests that there was a

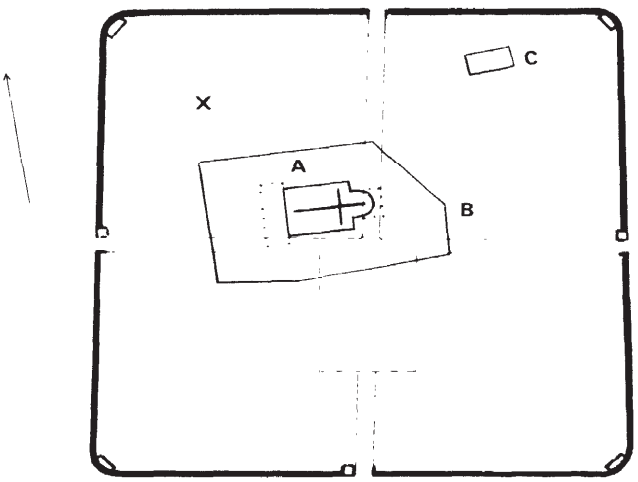


Fig 39 Reculver (1:2500)

building on the site when the cemetery was in intensive use. This is consistent with the documentation: the see of Canterbury acquired Fleet, or most of it, in 798 (Sawyer 1968, no. 1258, with references), by exchange with an abbess Cynethryth, who may well be Offa's widow and, like other Mercian princesses, a pluralist impropriator of nunneries or 'double minsters', in this case perhaps Folkestone, with which Fleet had a later connexion (Douglas 1944, 78). It can be suggested with some confidence that one or other of the Kentish minsters acquired the site in the 7th century, when they were being heavily endowed (Rigold 1968), exploited the relic, encouraged burial around it and built a chapel (an *Einzelkirche,* not for a community) even if nothing of the original fabric remains. It is hard to think that they made nothing of the Great Foundation, which has its own enclosing walls. For a possible baptistry see p 74.

Walton Castle

Though not identifiable in the *Notitia,* drawings and descriptions indicate that this was a typical Shore fort in structure, position, accompanying remains, including a well recorded coin-series,[6] and north–south dimensions. If we can trust the most detailed, but derivative, view, it was atypically narrow east–west, resembled Burgh Castle in its corner bastions bonded at the top, but lacked intermediate bastions (Fig. 37). This same view shows a small ruin at A in the north-east corner, which is not easy to explain as part of a brief re-fortification in the 12th century.[7]

I have argued in detail that, ignoring one tampered manuscript, a multiplicity of earlier medieval tradition is unanimous in placing the *civitas* of Dommoc, where Felix established the East Anglian see in the early or middle 630s at Felixstowe, the site of Walton Castle, and that the alternative site, at Dunwich, is a hypothesis of the 15th century.[7a] A missionary see may be taken to imply a community of some sort: though Bede does not stress this as he does in the case of Ythanchester and, if not by name, Burgh. A 7th century Merovingian coin may be a grave-offering, but from outside the walls. Aethelwald, the last recorded bishop of Dommoc made his profession of obedience between 833 and 870 but may have been unable to assert his authority in the Viking crisis and is omitted from the later list of bishops. To explain the 'small ruin' as the remains of the church would at least be consistent with the position of the church at Burgh. However narrow the fort there would have been room for a single church of 7th century type in this position, but not for two in series.

Burgh Castle

The long-accepted identification of Cnobheresburh, where Fursa set up a Hibernian-type community in the early or middle 630s, with Burgh (though Bede does not call it *civitas* or *castellum)* received strong support from the excavations of the late Charles Green (now being prepared for publication by Barbara Green and Stephen Johnson). The site of a monastic church, apparently of timber, was identified in the south-west corner, with an intramural Christian cemetery to the north of it (Fig. 38, A, X).[7b] What may be monastic cells were found to the north of these, while coins and Ipswich ware carry the occupation well into the 8th, if not the 9th century. The site was the almost simultaneous gift of the same king, Sigeberht, as was Dommoc; its endowment was increased by his more Hibernian-minded successor, Anna. It apparently resembled Walton Castle both in its walling and the suggested site of the church, and we may suppose Felix and Fursa to have been in fairly friendly rivalry at a safe distance, before the issue of Roman obedience was decided. Cnobheresburh was a busy centre of evangelization, under a regular, if not Roman, discipline (Bede, *HE,* iii, 19): Fursa sought a secluded retreat at times, but not here, and, like a true peregrine missionary, left the community in charge of his brother and moved to Lagny in Gaul, to end his life among the 'Scottish' missions. If Fursa was content with a timber church it may be suggested that Felix also was (? but not his third successor, Boniface Beorhtgils, from Kent) and that likewise, in the context of the next example, was Cedd, of the Hibernian practice.

Ythancester/Bradwell

This, again, is a long-accepted identification that there is no reason to dispute (Bede, *HE,* iii, 22). The site, at the end of a peninsula is like that of Richborough, the walling and plan Fig. 36) may be compared with Burgh and perhaps Walton; the east-west extent uncertain but perhaps limited. The timing of the settlement is often misunderstood. During the 650s, when the Hibernian practice, Fursa rather than Felix, had more patronage in East Anglia, Cedd was summoned to carry it into Essex. After some time (? late 650s) the *civitas* Ythancester was granted him as an episcopal see and a community founded numbering more than thirty. After many rapid conversions he removed, disappointed by relapses or outmanoeuvred by the Romanists (?), to his other, northern, monastery and died there in 664, when thirty of his community retreated north. Ythancester was thus depleted or abandoned, but under Cedd's rule surely it resembled Burgh, rather than Reculver.

The existing but mutilated chapel of St Peter-on-the-Wall at Bradwell (Fig. 36, P) closely resembles that of Reculver in its original form. It stands, not within the enclosure, where the church of the community would be expected, but ath-

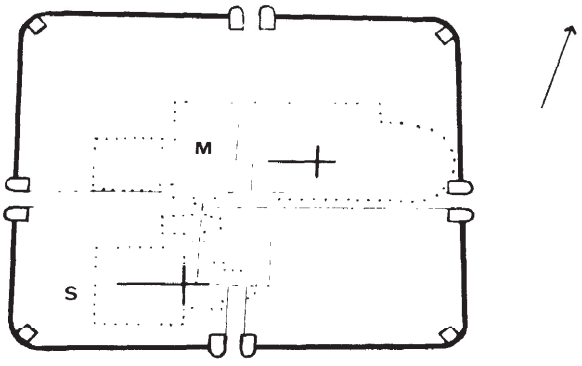


Fig 40 Utrecht (after A E Van Giffen 1934–38; 1:2500)

wart the west wall, flanking, or even overriding, the probable site of the west gate (Lewin 1867). It is a *capella ad portas,* for those coming from the other world and retained its quasi-parochial use until c. 1600. A fragment of rubble over 1 m high, visible on the cliff-edge in 1864 (A), may possibly have belonged to Cedd's monastic church or its successor, in which case it would have lain towards the south-east corner, as at Burgh (cf. also Walton). St Peter's (P) is best explained as a second church, added after Archbishop Theodore had vindicated conformity and Roman obedience, c. 669.

Reculver

This, by far the best documented (not mentioned by Bede, but cf. Sawyer 1968, nos. 8, 22, 31, 38, 1436, 1612) of the minsters established in Shore forts, retained the ghost of a chapter even after it was united with Christ Church, Canterbury (Sawyer 1968, no. 1390). It may never have been truly Benedictine, nor missionary in intent, but a privileged school for the clerical elite of Kent, beginning with Archbishop Berhtwald. A royal foundation of 669, its endowments grew throughout the 8th century and its enlargement included an *opus signinum* floor, just like that added to St Pancras, Canterbury, not earlier than c. 750,[8] and a splendid cross, no earlier in date. The church, largely complete until 1809, stands proudly in the centre of the enceinte, but its correct orientation ignores the setting-out of the fort (Fig. 39 A).

Round the church was a polygonal wall of considerable age; a baptistery at B, on its east margin, is perhaps arguable (p 74). The area of the later priest's house to the south has proved as unproductive of Christian Saxon traces as the rest of the southern half of the enceinte, including the south and east gates. Coin finds would confirm that the ancient cemetery within the walls lay to the north (X) and is largely eroded, but the many *sceattas* found in the late 17th century probably came from north of the walls, an area intensively occupied in the Roman age.[9] Within the enceinte and north-east of the church stood the 'chapel-house' (C) which incorporated much re-used Roman material *(Bibliotheca Topog. Britannica* **1** (1780–90), 170). Engravings show openings in the east and west which indicate a date c. 1200 or later, but the south wall had a round arch turned entirely in bonding-tile and the north had narrow pilaster-buttresses, as on the church. These are consistent with a building substantially of early Saxon date, truly oriented and perhaps indeed a chapel.

Portchester

The north-west and south-west quarters of the enclosure are now totally excavated, indicating almost unbroken occupation but relatively unproductive for the late 7th and 8th centuries. (Cunliffe 1975, 302). However, it would be unsafe to argue *ex silentio* that there was no early religious settlement unless or until the south-east quarter, the most likely spot and the site of the Augustininan priory, is sounded. The priory did not claim to represent an ancient minster: all that is known is that a church was there before it, that the King acquired the fort by exchange with the Bishop of Winchester in 904 (Sawyer 1968, no. 372), and that there is no record how or when it came to the relatively well documented see. This fact alone would suggest an early possession and, if it was, it is fair to ask how so conspicuous and suitable a site could have been neglected.

Portchester lies in the territory of the Meonwara, whom Wulfred of Mercia at a moment of West Saxon weakness assigned to the South Saxons. This was the situation c. 680, when Wilfrid began his intensive evangelization of both peoples, but it was reversed by Caedwalla's *coup d'état* in 685, when the South Saxons were subjected and the Meonwara absorbed. Wilfrid's see at Selsey was later re-established (and insured by a forged charter of Caedwalla)[10] but if he intended a see or minster for the Meonwara at Portchester it was suppressed at the same time as the rival West Saxon see at Dorchester-on-Thames. This is surely the moment for Winchester's 'take-over': if Wilfrid founded a church at Portchester it would have remained, but in complete dependency. This hypothesis explains all the data.

Dover

St Martin of Dover was one of the ancient minsters of Kent, whose endowments, like Reculver's, ultimately fell to Christ Church, which established a new Benedictine priory with them, yet left the old church, within the Shore fort, with its impoverished ghost-chapter.[11] Unlike Reculver, its earlier history is obscure. According to later tradition it was founded in the 630s 'in the castle', which could mean either the Shore fort or the Iron Age fort that ultimately accommodated Dover Castle, and re-founded by Wihtred in the 690s, certainly in the Shore fort.[12] I here respect the possibility that the high position was the original one: it is closely analogous to that of the almost contemporary minster of Folkestone (Rigold 1968; 1972). Hence I assign the first contact with the Shore fort to the 690s. However there is purely archaeological evidence[13] that the process was repeated in 10th and 11th centuries, up to the present church of St Mary-in-Castro which is late Saxon, and down again to the final St Martin-le-Grand after the Conquest, so that there may be some historical confusion in the tradition.

Only two walls of the Shore fort are yet located and the east side may always have been open. It is therefore premature to say much about the precise site of the minster in relation to it, but the final St Martin-le-Grand lay in the south-west part, parallel to the south wall. Hurried excavations in the quire and recent and exhaustive ones in the nave have shown nothing early Saxon within the church but apparent traces of flooring nearer the south wall.[14] This may indicate the principal church, which, if Wihtred's would be little later than Reculver in date, or possibly one of its dependencies, the *monasteria infra civitatem,* which survived as parishes using parts of the great church of St Martin (Douglas 1944, 78).

Lympne

Not only is the fort little explored but the name applies to other locations, including a district and a river. An ecclesiastical settlement is no more than an open possibility. In the *Domesday Monachorum* Lympne is a head-church, on a footing with several ancient minsters, with dependencies in Romney Marsh (Douglas 1944). In its recorded form the arrangement is probably Lanfranc's and so, probably, is the present hill-top church and manor, which belonged to the see and was regularly granted to the archdeacon (Rigold 1969, 260; Livett 1931). This is not the site of the borough and port of *Limen,* whose privileges were moved to Hythe, but which may well have been situated within the Shore fort, which has produced a coin of Edgar. All that can be suggested at the moment is that the privileges of the church may derive from a church likewise in the fort. It was already apparently an archiepiscopal possession early in the 9th century, when the archbishop was exchanging lands somewhere in Lympne (Sawyer 1968, no. 1264). The emergent marshlands were being ecclesiastically organized, even evangelized, in Wihtred's day by one Romanus, seemingly based on Lyminge, not Lympne.[15]

Other comparable uses of forts

Even the Celtic world produces a parallel in the miniature Shore fort of Caer Gybi (Holyhead), but here the hermitage was much earlier and apparently an isolated instance. No such use is recorded in the much more typical Shore fort of Cardiff. At the other end, Sidnacester, where the see of Lindsey was established under Theodore, is another uncertain site, which lost its institutional continuity in the Viking age. On balance the best candidate is Horncastle, fairly accessible by water, whose walls, whatever their precise status, resemble a rather small bastioned Shore fort, the

present church lying in the south-west quarter. Forts and other stone Roman enceintes of manageable size were rare enough in lowland England to be pressed into ecclesiastical service wherever they were. Even the substantial, but strictly unfortified, quadrilateral structure at Castor near Peterborough made a good substitute as the site of Cyneburh's important double minster (Rigold 1968; for recent excavations, *Britannia* **2** (1971), 264; **3** (1972), 320). Given their position and solidity, the Shore forts needed no further recommendation. The problem is rather that of explaining the apparent omissions. Brancaster and, more certainly, because the context is better documented, Pevensey. Carisbrooke, probably unfinished and already ruinous, was less attractive (Rigold 1960). In Northumbria, where forts were much more numerous, though their walls may have seldom stood as high as the Shore forts, the proportion adapted by the church seems little lower. The tale of those that have produced important or plentiful works of Anglian sculpture is impressive: Bewcastle, Lancaster, Ribchester, Ebchester, to name but a sample. At least two considerations that weighed more in the Celtic tradition than the Roman operated here: the *vallum monasticum* was an established feature and it enclosed a burial-place as much as a habitation. Roman overtones, as such, meant less. Augustine accepted his settlement and cemetery *more rumano* outside the walls of Canterbury, rather than say, in Richborough but by the time the Shore forts were generally adopted for church use certain northern habits had become common to both obediences.

Siting and multiplicity of churches

Augustine's monastery had two churches 'in series' (i.e. close to one another on the same axis) and another, apparently for lay dependents, near a south-east gate.[16] Rochester had two but not in series *(Archaeol J* **86** (1929), plan facing 187), yet at Glastonbury, which claimed Celtic antecedents, the churches had a common axis. A multiplicity of churches in one precinct was common to both obediences, but the serial arrangement is probably exceptional in either and difficult to accommodate in a restricted fort site. More significant, perhaps, is the contrast between the proud position at the centre of a set of notionally concentric enclosures, common in the east, fortified with the precedent of Solomon, and still prevalent in orthodox monasteries, and the retired position, in one quarter and close to the pre-existing wall, The second position was long established in the west: it is seen in the Roman church and baptistery at Richborough, in the Roman churches, admittedly in series, that underlie Cologne cathedral,[17] so that the great standing *Dom* rides over the *colonia* wall, and elsewhere in a late imperial context;[18] it seems to be the arrangement in all the earliest churches in Shore forts, so that the relatively late and centrally sited church at Reculver becomes exceptional. Utrecht (Fig. 40) may illustrate the development.[19] Down to the Reformation there were two great churches crowded into the fort-enceinte with the small church of St Cross between them: the Old Minster, St Salvator (S), founded by Willibrord, in the south-west quarter, and the gigantic New Minster, St Martin (M), descending from a church added by Boniface (both by Anglo-Saxon missionaries). Though much of the nave of the latter has been destroyed, the site of the primary building is uncertain: if it was near the later crossing, it would be, like Reculver, almost central. The two churches were not in series but in proximity like the two minsters of Winchester.

The chapel by the gate, as at Bradwell and, probably, Richborough, represents a third and distinct position, but well known later at larger *civitates,* such as Canterbury and Winchester, and, curiously, at such sites as Silchester and Caister-by-Norwich, where apparently no Christian cultus went on within the walls, but the parish church came to occupy that position.

Other architectural considerations

Very little has been recorded of the conventual buildings, and the last and best chance of finding any has probably passed with the erosion of the northern half of Reculver. Traces of cells have been identified in the northern part of Burgh, but it is doubtful whether these are truly representative even of the Celtic type of settlement. It is equally doubtful how close they came to the later Benedictine norm. Certainly, nothing in the forts has been found to support it, despite the two pre-Norman cloisters found at St Augustines, Canterbury, one doubtless very early, and the extensive buildings, including an exedra, apparently revealed at Lyminge (Jenkins 1876, ciii; cf. Rigold 1968). It is equally doubtful whether there were Roman internal buildings in a condition to adapt, e.g. *principia* in the condition of those at York. A possible exception is in the bath-houses. At Reculver two out of the three compartments of the bath block east of the church had been totally demolished, the third (B) converted at some time to a cold bath. Could it have served as a baptistery? And could the relatively complete bath building (B) just north of the chapel at Richborough have been similarly used? This speculation is not inconsistent with the corner-site of several churches in the enclosures.

The actual construction, to judge from the relatively well dated and well recorded Reculver, was at once regular and to some degree Romanizing, but in an idiom not slavishly inspired by the Roman remains immediately present. Apart from the columns, accurate, many-drummed, yet singularly unclassical, the masonry with a small number of ashlar courses banded by three courses of bonding-tile has been found in several other buildings of the period, as has the distinctive *opus signinum* on a thick under-bedding. The whole usage, not a barbarous 'squatter occupation' nor a case of barbarous imitation, is a reclamation of Roman sites in a fairly confident, contemporary Mediterranean mood.

Note on the figures

Fort walls are shown in very heavy, continuous lines where they are recorded with apparent precision or can be restored with reasonable probability, not simply where they are visible at the present day. Heavy broken lines are only used where there is serious uncertainty about the measurement, e.g in the missing sides, of Burgh and Bradwell, where the adjacent entrances are taken as approximately central. The fragments of the missing side of Richbourough can hardly have been displaced for more than a few feet. the plan of Walton is taken at face value and the engraving of the fragments of the wall suggests little displacement, an alignment slightly oblique to the shoreline; the rapid erosion in about 50 years suggests that fort really was very narrow east–west. Probably internal roads are shown in light continuous lines, attested positions of *principa* in light broken lines. Banks and ditches are not shown.

The known maximum extent of churches of the missionary age or as soon after is shown in lines of medium thickness. The approximate extent of latter medival churches is shown in dotted lines. Large crosses show the apparent position of early churches, but sometimes only conjectrually, within the bounds of latter churches. The apsesynthronon of Walton may still exist at Norwich[20]

All plans are oriented in the normal way and to a uniform scale of 1:2,500.

Notes

1 *The last attempt was probably by P V Hill (1950–2, 1–26 and 340–3. The critical hoard was the strange 'Richborough IV' (Amer. Num. Soc.* Numismatic Notes and Monographs *no. 80).*

2 *A survey of gold finds of this period is in R Bruce-Mitford* The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial *I (1975), 653–77.*

3 *For the fort, Mertens and van Impe 1971, esp. 12–18. For the abbey and minster, Mertens 1959, 138. There was a second minster, but north of the* urbs. *For such Hildebrandine reoccupations, cf. Whitby, Bardney, and Felixstowe (Walton).*

4 *It is important to remember the political and diplomatic aspects of the admission of Augustine and his well prepared party. Papal authority might open the way to assertions of imperial, or perhaps Frankish, suzerainty.*

5 *The story occurs in late Canterbury chronicles, e.g. Thorne 1934, 4, who speaks of a long-established cult.*

6 *Collected by W Myers in the years of its destruction: detailed catalogue in B.M.Add. MSS, 19087, fol. 53–70.*

7 *V C H* Suffolk *I, 287–91 and fig. 18. Two (? monolithic) columns are recorded. Were they used like those at Reculver?*

7a J Brit Archaeol Ass *3 ser,* **24,** *55–9;* **37,** *27–37.*

7b *The tentative siting in the south-east corner (as on Fig. 38, and Johnson 1976, fig. 84) is revised by R Cramp in* The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England, *ed D M Wilson (1976), 212–3 and fig. 53. I thank Dr Johnson for this correction.*

8 *The floors, already known, have been re-examined by B J Philp, at Reculver, and F Jenkins, at St Pancras: both follow the extensions to the churches, that at St Pancras after a burial dated by a coin.*

9 *Recorded by Battely (1711) and now in Cambridge (see* Sylloge . . . Fitzwilliam Museum, *1958, pls vii–viii.*

10 *Sawyer (1968) no. 232. The see was permanently established, apparently by 716, and still under West Saxon tutelage.*

11 *The great early Norman church in the middle of the town, St Martin-le-Grand, recently excavated, retained an 'archpriest' and two colleagues until the Reformation.*

12 *The 'move' by Wihtred depends, again, on later Canterbury chroniclers, but Dover is mentioned in his 'privilege' (of 696?), last in a list presumably following the Kentish practice of seniority of foundation.*

13 *That no trace of early Saxon occupation was recorded in Mr Biddle's section across the 'horseshoe-work' round the church, nor in the relatively well noted gutting of the church in the mid-19th century. That all modern opinion agrees that St Mary-in-Castro is late 10th or early 11th century, at which time there may have been an attempt to move the* burh *to the hill-top, and that no religious body existed and that no force was strong enough to need or build such a large church except the chapter of St Martin and the Crown that would have ordered the move.*

14 *Mr Philp's great excavations have established the south and east walls of the Shore fort almost exactly where E G J Amos predicted them 50 years ago, and suggest that their line influenced subsequent planning in the area, but they do not invalidate the negative results of earlier excavations intended to find the west wall of the fort and to explore the eastern parts of St Martin's. Parallels would suggest that the church or churches would have lain in the western part, where traces of flooring have appeared. For the earlier excavations, see* Archaeol Cantiana **71** *(1957), 14ff.; Rhatz 1958. For summaries of the earlier 'state of play' see Amos and Wheeler 1929 (optimistic and ulitmately justified about the Shore fort); Rigold 1969 (pessimistic about the Shore fort, optimistic about the* Classis Britannica *installations).*

15 *Sawyer (1968) nos. 23, 24; but the reading is* Liminiaeae, *which looks equivocal. There is an earlier basilica at Lydd, which is assigned to Lympne in Douglas (1944).*

16 *i.e. outside St Pancras, cf. note 8, quasi-parochial and approached from outside an old precinct-wall. Its origin was ascribed to Augustine; nothing has been found to support a Roman one. For the well known plan of SS Peter and Paul and St Mary, cf. e.g. Rigold 1969, 230, fig. 16.*

17 *Brown (1971) for Cologne; Doppelfeld (1972) has very clear plans; a complete continuity has been worked out.*

18 *Many* civitates, *as Evreux, Tours, Troyes, Angers, Soissons, Orléans; plans in Blanchet (1907); also perhaps Canterbury cf. Rigold 1969, 102, 190. Forts cited by Brown 1971, Boppard, Zürich.*

19 Der Niedergermanisches Limes *Köln (1974), 55–61, citing van Giffen (1944–8), for the fort. v. van Giffen, Vollgraff and van Hoorn (1934–8) for the churches.*

20 *Recognized as a fire-damaged relic of an earlier see by C A R Radford and A B Whittingham; no such damage was detectable at Elmham, therefore it presumably came from Dommoc.*

The Saxon Shore—British anonymity in the Roman Empire

J J Wilkes

Summary

In contrast to other permanent frontier systems in the Empire, the Saxon Shore in Britain utterly lacks inscriptions to tell us who built the forts, why and when. This paper surveys the epigraphic evidence for Imperial self-advertisement from frontiers in several provinces, and concludes that the provision of such information was normally thought necessary to raise morale after periods of crisis and destruction. The dearth of informative inscriptions from the Saxon Shore is not accidental, and the author argues ex silentio *that this may imply a period when such information was not normally provided, viz. c. AD 260–96.*

The problem of identity

For students of Roman Britain the history of Roman frontiers begins with the Fosse Way and its associated garrisons, now assigned to the time of the first provincial governor, and ends with whatever was achieved by Stilicho in the last assertion of Roman authority in Britain at the end of the 4th century. From the three and a half centuries in between, almost every stage in the long evolution of the Imperial army is represented through the remains of fortresses, camps, and other installations. Our general understanding of the Roman army and its works allows us to infer a great deal from even the smallest fragments of camp and fort planning. Dates can normally be assigned with agreeable precision. Obviously major problems remain, such as the persisting uncertainty about the various occupations and re-occupations of Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall.[1] In spite of this we do feel that we can understand how the system functioned, even if we cannot deduce the policies and wider notions of strategic thinking which lay behind the various arrangements in northern Britain during the second century. As J C Mann has reminded us: 'Unless it could be shown that attempts to hold a more northerly line, between Forth and Clyde, were intended to provide a base for further decisive advance northwards (and thus to regain the initiative), then the oscillations between the Hadrianic and Antonine Walls in the second century hold no more than antiquarian interest.'[2] Moreover the student of the 1st and 2nd centuries does not lack for literary, archaeological, and epigraphic evidence. The building of both northern frontiers is described in the biographies of Hadrian and Pius, while a major disaster involving one or other of the walls under Commodus is described, albeit imprecisely, by a leading historian of the age (Cassius Dio, lxxii, 8). Through inscriptions we are informed about the Organization of construction, together with some of the descriptive vocabulary which the Romans used for their operations.[3]

The situation is quite otherwise with the system of fortifications known as the Saxon Shore. Some of the most impressive surviving ruins in the province remain the least understood, although the occupational and structural history of the individual forts becomes clearer through Philp's excavations at Reculver and Dover, Cunliffe's final synthesis of Richborough and forthcoming reports on Portchester, new work at Brancaster, and projected excavation at Lympne. Yet we shall find it hard to understand the system because there is no literary evidence and, save for the tantalizing fragments from Reculver,[4] no inscriptions to create any framework within which the archaeological data can be studied. We require answers to four questions:

1 Did all or even some of the known forts ever form part of an integrated system for coastal operations?
2 Who was responsible for the creation, if not for the actual completion, of the system?
3 When did the creation of any system take place?
4 Why was the system created?

The first is being answered already. Some forts were already in existence at least as early as the first quarter of the 3rd century while others, at least in the state that they have survived, do not look as if they were built before the beginning of the 4th century, and not necessarily early in that century. No doubt we shall be able to answer the first question more or less to our satisfaction when all of the forts have been extensively studied through excavation. It is likely to be another matter with the other three questions of *who?, when?,* and *why?* Together they add up to a single question of identity.

The forts of the Saxon Shore belong to the general category of late Roman fortifications familiar to archaeologists in almost every part of the Empire, with massive walls, small gates, and external towers of various shapes. Together they form one of the best preserved groups of such fortifications to be found in any province. Against this, not one of the forts, neither in Britain nor along the Continental coast, has produced an inscription which tells us anything about the situation in the late 3rd and 4th centuries. If this was a general problem throughout the Empire, this lack of evidence hardly calls for comment. But forts and other frontier works of the late Empire do produce records of their purpose and the names of those directly and indirectly responsible. Is it at all possible that absence of inscriptions from the Saxon Shore amounts to some sort of indication as to when the forts were built and why? In this connection I would like to offer a survey of the numerous inscriptions which illustrate the changes in the fashion of imperial self-advertisement between the 2nd and 4th centuries. At the very least it will be shown what sort of inscription, if they ever existed, we could expect to find in these forts but if, as seems reasonable, the absence of inscriptions could be a pointer to the date of the forts, then the frequency of inscriptions from different periods may assist when the archaeologist has to weigh the balance of probabilities, since it is unlikely that he will ever obtain evidence which will enable him to do much more than that.

The advertisement of *Roman frontiers*

The proper representation and exploitation of public achievement was an essential part of Roman public life during both the Republic and the Empire. Achievements in the service of the Republic were often commemorated in writing, a business in which Caesar the dictator proved himself the master: his *Commentarii* on the Gallic and Civil wars are all the more effective for the seemingly generous credit awarded to subordinate commanders and the courage of the common soldier. The competitive element in public life was removed by the monopoly of power gained by Caesar's heir Augustus. Moreover great achievements by the legions in Germany, Illyricum, and the East took second place in

Imperial propaganda to Peace and the new Golden Age in Italy. Augustus's own pride in military success nevertheless shines through the terse language in his own record of achievement: 'I increased the boundaries of all those provinces of the Roman people on whose borders were people not under our rule' *(Res Gestae* 26, 1). The great conquests up to the Rhine and Danube are summarily mentioned: 'I have made peaceful the Gallic and Spanish provinces, as well as Germany, over an area stretching along the Ocean from Cadiz to the river Elbe' *(ibid* 26, 2). Along the Danube the conquests of Tiberius in Illyricum are mentioned to the effect that 'I brought them [the Pannonians] into the Empire of the Roman people, and extended the boundaries of Illyricum to the bank of the river Danube' *(ibid* 30, 1). The decent and restrained portrayal of military success, following as in so many matters the precept of Augustus, is to be seen on numerous imperial monuments in the 1st and 2nd centuries, described in texts which are terse and devoid of elaboration. Even the inscription of the triumphal arch set up to commemorate Claudius's conquest of Britain seems to have been brief to the point of reticence. With four lines of the nine-line inscription occupied by the stereotype of imperial titles it contains the simple statement that 'the Senate and the Roman people (set up this arch) because he received the submission of the eleven kings of Britain, overcome without any loss, and because he was the first to bring peoples across the Ocean under the rule of the Roman people' (Webster and Dudley 1974, 165–7). The few monuments detailing at excessive length and in improper language the achievements of private individuals could invite disaster or, at least, ridicule.[5]

A brevity that is decorous but at the same time effective appears in the advertisements of Trajan's monuments. The great column set up in the middle of that Emperor's forum at Rome is described as simply 'to make clear the height of the hill, and space for such great buildings, that has been cleared' *(ILS* 294). Great feats of construction accompanied the Danubian operations of Domitian and Trajan. What was the nature of the works undertaken in the gorge of the Danubian Iron Gates by Tiberius and Claudius is not even recorded on their inscriptions *(ILIug* 60 cf. 57 (AD 33–4); 56 (AD 43)). The work recorded under Domitian in 92/3 is briefly described as the replacement of the road along the cataracts because of damage caused through natural wear and tear and the inroads of the Danube *(ILIug* 55 cf. 58). Trajan's own activities in AD 100 are described in six words: 'he repaired the road after cutting back the cliffs and added below the projecting brackets' *(ILIug* 63).[6] The canal constructed in the following year bypassed the rapids at Kostol (at the east end of the Iron Gates): 'on account of the danger from the cataracts he ensured safe passage along the Danube by a by-pass channel of the river' (Sašel 1973, 80–5, pl. IX). Augustan brevity remains. Self-congratulatory epithets are avoided and the most concrete of substantives employed. Where the subject of a text was less spectacular description can be reduced to a matter of two or three words, as with the building of a gate in the legionary base at York in 108 described in two words *(portam fecit)* in a text of more than twenty-five *(RIB* 665).

Leaving on one side questions of language and forms of expression associated with the Emperor, it is nevertheless clear that in the course of the 2nd century a change took place in the way that the Empire addressed itself to any reader of inscriptions describing building projects, especially of military installations in the frontier provinces. It is not clear if the increasingly detailed and elaborate descriptions of what was being done owed their character to any new awareness among the armies and civilian in the military zones. It seems reasonable to assume that, as with the messages of *abundantia* and *concordia militum* on coins indicating outbreaks of famine and civil war respectively, the increase in circumstantial detail reflects the reality of threats on the frontiers and the obvious inability of the authorities to organize defence when it was needed.

It is perhaps not surprising that the earliest explanations about the purpose and benefit of new defences come from Thracia, not actually a frontier province but an area traditionally disturbed by its warlike and recalcitrant hill population. An inscription of Nero's reign records that in 61–2 'huts and command posts' were constructed along the military roads under the supervision of the procuratorial governor of the province *(CIL* III 6123 = *ILS* 231). This threat appears to have been still there a century later under Antoninus Pius when, apart from the constant threat to the exposed cities on the Black Sea coast *(SHA vit. Pii* V, 5; IX, 9), there are at least three records of *burgi* and *praesidia* (watchtowers and military posts) being constructed in the territories of different cities 'for the protection of the province Thracia' *(ob tutelam provinciae Thraciae).* The innovation here is not so much a new series of measures against an old danger but rather the explicit reference to their protective purpose.[7] The Marcomannic wars under Marcus Aurelius caused a real emergency, and at this time there seems to have been a real change in the descriptive language applied to new military installations and an increased specification of their function, sometimes coupled with reference to the threats which had brought them into being. At the height of the crisis, when the invaders had reached Italy and were threatening cities in the north, there appears a new ad hoc command called 'the Italian and Alpine front line' *(praetentura Italiae et Alpium).*[8] The term *praetentura* was by no means new and denoted that part of the army stationed in front of the commander in the *praetorium,* extending to the front of the camp as far as the front gate *(porta praetoria).* Nevertheless it introduces for the first time the idea of deployment for defence in a forward screen, a notion that would probably have been incomprehensible to Augustus and might not have been understood by Trajan. In some frontier areas, notably Africa, the term was to become commonplace within a generation.[9] Another consequence of the Marcomannic invasions was that the defence of cities deep within the Empire was undertaken as an imperial responsibility and the role of the government begins to be acknowledged, as for example at Callatis in Moesia Inferior, where the provincial governor is named not, in the fashion hitherto, as an external dignitary but as the authority responsible for collecting the necessary funds and seeing that the work of building defences was properly completed. It indicates not only an encroachment by the central government on local autonomy but also the intention that its role should be fully advertised.[10] On the frontiers rebuilt after destruction caused by the Marcomanni there first appear details of what had been built, how they would work, and what sort of enemy or threat they were intended to counter. A major overhaul of the military system along the Danube south of Aquincum in Pannonia Inferior was being completed under Commodus in 185. On the inscriptions recording the building, of which a dozen examples have been found in and around the fort Intercisa, following the two and a half lines of Commodus' titles the remaining three and a half lines record that 'the entire bank (of the Danube) has been fortified with watch posts *(burgi),* built completely afresh, and also military bases *(praesidia)* located at the most appropriate places *(opportuna loca)* against the secret crossings of saboteurs *(ad clandestinos latrunculorum transitus).*[11] The exact sense of the last phrase remains disputed but for our interest the detailed advertisement of a frontier reconstruction is a remarkable innovation and marks the beginning of a tradition which continues for nearly two centuries until the reign of Valentinian. It may be that the diminutive *latrunculus* was used to derogatory effect, but if that was the case it can hardly have increased the self-respect of an army, which within living memory had marched with Trajan into Dacia, to label their foe as small-time robbers. The true Roman tradition could never acknowledge the threat of an enemy which was less than a nation in arms under its rulers. Signs of a similar change can be detected elsewhere.

In Mauretania the construction of new and the refurbishing of old *turres* around Auzia by the procuratorial governor is accompanied by the phrase that the emperor was 'attentive to the security of his provincial subjects and built new towers, etc.' (*CIL* VIII 20816 = *ILS* 396). In the same province we hear of 'the province fortified with new *burgi'* in 184 or 185 (*CIL* VIII 22629 = *ILS* 5849), and further east in Numidia 'the *burgus* Commodianus of scouts in the area between two roads was ordered to be built as a new protection *(nova tutela)* for the safety of travellers *(ad salutem commeantium)' (CIL* VIII 2495).[12]

The Severan dynasty rose to power through civil war, and it is not surprising that allusion to the incidents in such conflict appears in inscriptions, but invariably with a tactful vagueness towards the defeated rivals of the regime. While the normal rebuilding of an auxiliary unit's winter base *(hiberna)* was undertaken under Severus in the frequently troubled Mauretania 'for the sake of peace in the province' *(pro pace in provincia) (AE* 1954 143), the same vagueness was employed when the city of Trier thanked the Mainz legion XXII Primigenia for protection during the civil war in Gaul between Severus and Clodius Albinus.[13] The combination of defensive and punitive purposes begins to appear in public documents. In the proceedings of the Arval Brethren at Rome reference is made in 213 to the movement of Caracalla along the *limes* of Raetia 'in order to root out enemies among the barbarians' *(ILS* 451). Later in the 3rd century the frontier caravan route through the Wadi Sofeggin in Tripolitania required protection and in this case the 'shutting out' of barbarian attacks is the stated reason for the construction of a new military post *(centenarium)* under Philip.[14] The protective purpose of another form of defence appears under the same regime at Romula in Dacia Inferior where 'they (the emperors Philip senior and junior) constructed from the ground with military labour a circuit of walls to ensure the safety of the citizens of the colony Romula' *(CIL* III 8031 = *ILS* 510).

Only with the return of some sort of stability under Diocletian and the Tetrarchy could building projects be resumed, and the reconstructions which appear to have been undertaken during those years were merely part of the military system and civilian organization for which the period is best known.[15] One of the more disturbed areas at this time was still the province of Mauretania, and on two separate occasions, in 297 and 304-5) Diocletian's senior colleague Maximian came in person to restore the situation. For the first time inscriptions are explicit about the destruction that had been inflicted by the enemy as well as the repairs which were being undertaken. In this regard the regimes of the late Empire appear as much more realistic than most of their predecessors. Thus at Auzia 'a bridge destroyed through the savagery of war was rebuilt on the orders of Diocletian and Maximian, now that peace had been restored' *(ILS* 627 = *CIL* VIII 9041). At about the same time thanks were offered at the provincial capital Caesarea for the protection which was ensured through the destruction of the *Babari Transtagnenses* and also at Rapidum 'which on several occasions had been captured and laid waste from the attack of rebels and has been restored from the foundations to its original condition'.[16] Even if one may allow that the commemoration of victory and recovery in Mauretania was especially fulsome because of the presence of a senior emperor on two separate occasions, it is significant that the same reference back to successes achieved over invaders appears in the inscription recording the rebuilding of the Danube fort at Transmarisca in Moesia Inferior where the two emperors 'after the forces of the enemy had been crushed and order re-established throughout the world established a military post for all time.'[17] Here we learn for the first time the really defensive function of the frontier. For local people safety was guaranteed through a military force established 'for ever and ever,' something which was probably achieved after defeating an enemy who had crossed into Roman territory.

From the period of Constantine and his house a number of texts elaborate even more fully the circumstances which lay behind reconstruction on the frontier. Under Constantine the building of a fort across the Rhine opposite Cologne at Deutz is described as 'following on the subjugation and control of the Franks through the excellence of Constantine the *castum* of the Divitenses was constructed in their territory in the presence of the emperor himself' *(CIL* XIII 8502 = *ILS* 8937). In the joint reign of Constantine's three sons (337-40) a post was built on the Carcaliu headland on the Danube between Troesmis and Arrubium in Moesia Inferior 'at a site in that part of the frontier, which always appeared most tempting to the rash ferocity of the Gothic peoples, in order to ensure the everlasting security of their provincial subjects, through the construction of defences for this installation have closed off any access to the troublesome raiders through the situation of this everlasting defence' *(CIL* III 12483 = *ILS 724).* About twenty years later under Constantius II the establishment of a new military post in the rough country of Cilicia is recorded: 'on the order of Constantius and Julian the *castellum* which had for a long time past been occupied by bandits and was a menace to the provinces the governor occupied and conferred everlasting peace and security through fortifying Antiochia with a garrison of soldiers' *(CIL* III 6733 = *ILS* 740; cf. Bean and Mitford 1970, 205, ad. no. 231). Although not actually a frontier fortification the rebuilding of the city Tropaeum Traiani in Moesia Inferior in 316 is recorded in similar terms: 'In honour of the champions of Roman security and liberty Constantine and Licinius, through whose excellence and foresight the tribes of barbarian peoples have everywhere been subdued, for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the frontier as well the city of the Tropaeenses was solemnly and happily rebuilt from its very foundations' *(CIL* III 13734 = *ILS* 8938).[18]

By the accession of Valentinian I in 364 the Empire had avoided major disaster on the northern frontier for almost a century. Recovery had been slow and was only achieved at an immense cost in manpower and resources. Nevertheless the Empire was once more intact and military operations in Europe and Asia could take on as much an offensive, even if on a limited scale, as defensive purpose. The building inscriptions from frontier works, while retaining much of that fulsome style of self-congratulation that was characteristic of the late Empire, allude now less to recent dangers and in some respects revert to the more concrete and matter-of-fact descriptions which were the normal practice in the 2nd century. Thus while a granary at Rusicade in Numidia was constructed 'with all speed for the security equally of the Roman people and of the provincials' *(CIL* VIII 7975 cf. 19852 = *ILS* 5910), the imposing commemorations of new frontier works along the Danube exhibit much less flourish: 'this *burgus* built from the ground' *(CIL* III 5670a = *ILS* 774), or 'the walls and towers of this camp ordered to rise up from the base of the foundations' *(CIL* III 10596 = *ILS* 752 cf. *AE* 1941, 12), or again the building of *burgi* at Gran and Visegrad in 371 and 372 *(CIL* III 3653 = *ILS* 775; cf. Soproni 1967, 13843), and the same restraint appears in the record of similar constructions in Arabia *(CIL* III 88 = *ILS* 773) and Germany *(ILS* 8949).[19]

The evidence is uneven but, as far as it goes, the following general conclusions seem justifiable. Rebuilding on the frontiers, which often involved the refurbishing of a long established system of posts, was not normally accompanied by inscriptions giving lengthy explanations as to the purpose and value of the new work. However in the aftermath of a major collapse, such as occurred with the Marcomannic wars under Marcus Aurelius and the Goths in the 3rd century, the great strain of recovery could give rise to an atmosphere where the government had to restore morale and confidence in the army and civil population, especially on the northern frontiers.

The anonymous frontier?

Inspector Gregory: 'Is there any other point to which you would wish to draw my attention?'

Holmes: 'To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time.'

Gregory: 'The dog did nothing in the night-time.'

Holmes: 'That was the curious incident.'

(Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes)*

Our survey of epigraphic records for frontier construction and reconstruction has taken us far, much too far some may feel, from the Saxon Shore forts of south-east Britain and the forts along the Channel coast. Does a combination of evidence from areas as remote as Mauretania, Arabia, the middle and lower Danube, or even the adjacent Rhineland, have any relevance whatsoever to the absence of epigraphic record from the subject of our deliberations?[20] Is it altogether foolish to attempt an application of Sherlock Holmes's principle of the 'dog in the night-time'. Rigorous determinism might insist that the absence of epigraphic record of the type we have seen elsewhere in the Empire might be due to structural details—notably the total absence of substantial internal buildings whose construction was normally commemorated with inscriptions.[21] That objection indeed may seem to gain some force from the fact that it is precisely that type of building which is the subject of the only intact Diocletianic building inscription in Britain, from Birdoswald fort on Hadrian's Wall.[22] Yet to counter this the late 4th century signal posts along the Yorkshire coast have yielded an inscription, unimpressive compared with elsewhere but with language appropriate to the period.[23]

For what it is worth the following suggestion is offered as a contribution to the historical problem of the Saxon Shore. Since it is apparent that large-scale building on the frontiers was at some periods normally commemorated by elaborate inscriptions, the lack of any from the Saxon Shore forts indicates a likely origin in a period which was not one of those when the practice was widespread through the activities of the central government. In that case a date after c. 260 seems, apart from archaeological evidence, an upper limit while, much more significant, a lower limit before the recovery of Britain for the central government by Constantius in 296 seems to be indicated.

As has been observed on more than one occasion the student of the Saxon Shore has long had to be familiar with the *argumentum ex silentio,* and he is likely to have to remain so for a long time to come.

Notes

1 *As may be judged from a study of chapter 8 in the 1967 and the 1974 editions of Sheppard Frere's* Britannia.

2 *J C Mann, The Frontiers of the Principate,* Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt, *ed. Hildegard Temporini, II, 1, Berlin-New York (1974), 508–33. Some criticism of this stimulating paper, at the outset of which the frontiers of the Empire are described as 'a symbol of abdication and failure' (508), appears in a review of that volume of* ANRW *in* J Roman Stud **65** *(1975).*

3 *For example the noun* vallum *and the verb* vallare *on Hadrian's Wall: RIB 2034* (ob res trans vallum prospere gestas), RIB *1816 cf. 1820* (vallavit), *and on the Antonine Wall,* RIB *2200 cf. 2205* (opus valli).

4 Antiq J **41** *(1961), 224–8 cf.* J Roman Stud **51** *(1961), 191–2. Despite persisting uncertainty about the restorations which have been proposed, there seems little doubt that it dates to the late 2nd or early 3rd centuries.*

5 *For example the verbose* elogium *of the Neronian general Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus at Tibur (*ILS *986) and perhaps of his contemporary Tampius Flavianus (*ILS *985). Sometimes the practice could be dangerous, as happened with Augustus's first prefect of Egypt C. Cornelius Gallus, who set up boastful inscriptions at Philae (*ILS *8995: cf. R Syme,* The Roman Revolution *(1939), 309–10).*

6 *See also the recently discovered dedication by legionaries who were 'at the construction of the brackets'* (ad ancones faciendas), Arh. Vest. **23** *(1972), 410, 4 (reading of Šašel).*

7 AE *1927 49 (AD 155); 1954 279 (AD 152): see G Forni,* Diz Epigr. *s.v. Limes, 1091.*

8 *It occurs in the career of Q. Antistius Adventus, (*ILS *8977), where the post of* legatus Augusti *has been assigned to 168 by Degrassi (1954, 116) and A R Birley (1966, 324–5).*

9 *The description of* praetentura *applied to troops stationed in forward positions beyond the main defensive line seems to appear in a slightly different form under the Severi in Africa. At Castellum Dimmidi in Numidia inscriptions describe auxiliary and legionary vexillations as* praetendentes (*in one example* morantes) castello Dimmidi (*cf. Picard 1947, 188–97 nos. 12–22). Further west in Mauretania there is record of* nova praetentura *(*CIL *VIII 22602 =* ILS *5850; VIII 22611). In the middle of the 3rd century Gargilius Martialis commanded auxiliary forces 'deployed forward in the territory of Auzia'* (in territorio [A]uziensi praetendentium) (CIL *VIII 9047 =* ILS *2767) in AD 260. In Tripolitania under Caracalla a detachment of* leg. III Augusta *is described as* [prae]tendent[es Cy]damis *(IRT 907).*

10 AE *1937 246 cf.* CIL *III 764 (Greek version) and* AE *1937 153. The occasion for the building may have been the aftermath of the raid in AD 170 by the Costobocci, who crossed the lower Danube and reached Macedonia and Achaea. Similar work is recorded at Philippopolis in Thracia (*ILS *5337 dated 172 or soon afterwards).*

11 ILS *8913 cf. Fülep et al 1954, 318–20 nos. 297–307 and plates LXXVII–VIII. The most recent discussion is in Mócsy 1974, 196 f. It seems likely that the stone were never actually used because the governor of the province named on them fell into disgrace. As yet no archaeological remains have been associated with this rebuilding. A decade later there is record of one of the* praesidia *being relocated,* praesidium vetustate con(lapsum) mutato loco (CIL *III 3387) in the years 194–7. The expression of siting a post 'at an appropriate place' recurs during the 3rd century in Africa, where an auxiliary fort was built* opportuno loco *by troops from the* Limes Tripolitanus *(*CIL *VIII 22765 =* ILS *8923) in 262 or 263.*

12 *Here at El-Kantara, Numidia, the description is similar to that used for the building of* burgi *and* praesidia *in Thrace under Antoninus Pius, see above note 7.*

13 honoris virtutisq(ue) causa civitas Trevirorum in obsidione ab ea defensa (ILS *419 =* CIL XIII 6800 in 197 or 198).

14 IRT *880 cf.* J Roman Stud **39** *(1949), 91 =* AE *1950 128:* viam incursib(us) barba[ro]rum constituto novo centenario [. . . . .] prae[cl]userunt, *under Philip senior and junior in 244–6.*

15 *For the north-west see von Petrikovits 1971, 181–2. Records of new building refer to a new expression of imperial virtue, that of 'foresight'* (providentia, ILS *617 =* CIL *III 22 and p. 1028;* ILS *620 =* CIL *XII 2229).*

16 ILS *628 =* CIL *VIII 9324:* gratum referens quod erasis funditus Babaris Transtagnensibus secunda praeda facta salvus et incolumis cum omnib(us) militibus dd. nn. Diocletiani et Maximiani Augg. regressus; CIL *VIII 20836 =* ILS *638:* ante plurima tempora rebellium incursione captum ac dirutum ad pristinam statum a fundamentis restituerunt. *At Tupusuctu in the same province a granary was built after Maximian had suppressed the Quingentanei in 304,* CIL *VIII =* ILS *645:* comprimens turbas [Quinge]ntaneorum.

17 CIL *III 6151 cf. p. 1349 =* ILS *641:* post debellatas hostium gentis confirmata orbi suo tranquillitate in aeternum constituere praesidiu(m), *around 297. The site of the fort lay on the south bank of the river opposite the Argeş valley, always a likely invasion route from the north.*

18 Romanae securitati(s) libertatisq(ue) vindicibus *(Constantine and Licinius)* quorum virtute et providentia edomitis ubique barbarorum gentium populis ad confirmandam limitis tutelam etiam Tropeensium civitas auspicato a fundamentis feliciter opere constructa est. *Compare the language in other building records of the same period,* CIL *III 4121 =* ILS *704 = V Hoffiller and B Saria,* Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslawien, *Hft. I, Zagreb (1938), 210, no. 469:* Aquas lasas olim vi ignis consumptas cum porticibus et omnib(us) ornamentis ad pristinam faciem *(Constantine)* restituit, *and the building of granaries at Savaria in Pannonia, under Constans in 346–9,* CIL *III 4180 =* ILS *727 = A Mócsy and T Szentléleky,* Die römischen Steindenkmäler von Savaria, *Budapest (1971), 85, no. 11 (with photograph) = L Barkócsi and A Mócsy,* Die römischen Inscriften Ungarns *I, Budapest (1972), no. 48:* provisa copia quae horreis deerat postea quam condendis horrea .....in securitatem perpetem rei annonariae dedicavit, *and also the building of baths for the Remi in Gaul (*CIL *XIII 3255 =* ILS *703).*

19 *An exception appears to be the remarkable inscription of Valens from Cius in Moesia Inferior (*CIL *III 6159 = 7494 =* ILS *770 and add.), with references to* victis superatisque Gothis *and* ob defensionem rei publicae, *although the restoration remains problematical, especially in line 2, where the restoration* [in fidem recepto rege Athan]arico *has been proposed.*

20 *That some achievements in Britain were commemorated in fulsome language is attested by the two fragments re-used at Jarrow (*RIB *1051a and b). Even if they are part of the same monument, the Hadrianic date suggested by Richmond and Wright (1943, 93) seems less likely than the Severan date suggested by E Birley 1961, 159, and they could well be even later than that.*

21 *An argument amicably communicated by my colleague M W C Hassall, to whom I am most grateful for advice and criticism.*

22 RIB *1912, recording the reconstruction of the commandant's residence (*praetorium*) 'which had been covered over with earth and fallen into ruin' together with the headquarters (*principia*) and the bath (*bal(neum)*). For an attempt to deduce the background to this remarkable document see Dobson and Jarrett 1966, 125–6.*

23 RIB *721 (Ravenscar), where the words* turris et castrum *are, in the fashion of Valentinian's reign, a precise description of what was built.*

Bibliography

Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in the Bibliography follow the *CBA Standard List* of *Abbreviated Titles of Current Periodicals and Series as at February 1976,* reprinted in *Signposts for Archaeological Publication* (1976). The following are not in that list:

A E	*L'Année Epigraphique,* Paris
Arh Vest	*Arheološki Vestnik,* Ljubljana.
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum,* Berlin.
CTh	*Codex Theodosianus*
Ce.R.A.A.	Centre Regional Archéologique d'Alet
Diz Epig	*Dizionario Epigrafico di Antichità Romana,* Rome.
ILIug	*Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX repertae et editae sunt* (Situla vol. V), ed. Anna and Jaro Šašel, Ljubljana, 1963.
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae,* ed H Dessau, Berlin, 1892–1916.
IRT	*The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* ed. J M Reynolds and J B Ward-Perkins (1952). Rome.
Pap Lips	L Mitteis *Griechische Urkunden der Papyrussammlung zu Leipzig* Vol. I, Leipzig, 1906.
Proc Soc Ant Newc[4]	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of* Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Fourth Series.
RIB	R G Collingwood and R P Wright *Roman Inscriptions of Britain,* **1,** Inscriptions on stone, Oxford (1965).
SHA	*Scriptores Historiae Augustae,* text with translation by David Magie, Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass. (1960) (3 vols).

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