

# Editorial

Many readers of the journal will now have visited the splendid new Garfield Weston Gallery of Roman Britain in the British Museum, opened last summer by the Prince of Wales. The new displays were made possible by the extremely generous sponsorship of the Weston family who contributed £1.5 million to the gallery. It is hard to believe that such significant new finds have been made in the relatively short period since the opening of the previous gallery of Roman Britain in 1983. While the discoveries of metal detectorists continue to provide the most important source of treasure, the gallery also gives room to more everyday items. The remarkable treasures of Hoxne found in 1992, on the one hand, can be contrasted with the display of part of the façade of the barn-like building excavated at Meonstoke in Hampshire and lifted by the British Museum in 1989, or the continuing accumulation of writing-tablets from Vindolanda. The latter and their counterparts from Carlisle and elsewhere surely represent one of the most important sources for understanding military affairs and life on the northern frontier. Altogether, the range and quality of the material represented in the British Museum is astonishing, and, though we have to remind ourselves that it represents much of the most splendid of the portable antiquities and treasure from Roman Britain, the collection as a whole manages to convey a sense of the unique history and material culture of our islands during the Roman administration. On the one hand there is effective reference back to the material culture of the pre-Roman Iron Age, on the other, the military presence in the province is well brought out. Over-riding all is the impression of the wealth of the island in late Roman times. It is not hard to imagine how different would be exhibitions of comparable scale representing the neighbouring provinces of the Gauls or the Germanies.

Readers will also have seen tributes to Anne Robertson who died on 4 October 1997 aged 87. Her working life was devoted to the Hunterian Museum and the Hunter Coin Cabinet at the University of Glasgow. Following appointment as lecturer in 1938–39, she was promoted to Reader in 1964, and appointed Professor of Roman Archaeology in 1974. Thus she was one of the first women to be given professorial rank at the University of Glasgow. She was a distinguished numismatist who published a volume in the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* (1961) and, in five volumes, a *Catalogue of Roman Imperial Coins in the Hunter Coin Cabinet* (1962–82). She also continued the tradition established by Sir George Macdonald of reporting decennial surveys of Roman coins found in Scotland, and of assessing the finds of Roman material on non-Roman sites in Scotland, undertaken earlier by James Curle. As an excavator she remained active in the field for over forty years, serving regularly as Director of training excavations of the Scottish Field School of which she was secretary between 1948 and 1973. She excavated on sites between the Walls (*The Roman Fort at Castledykes*, 1964; *Birrens (Blatobulgium)*, 1975), as well as on the Antonine Wall itself (*An Antonine Fort: Golden Hill, Dumtocher*, 1957). For many years she had been working on a great corpus, *Romano-British Coin Hoards*, which, happily, after long delays in the press, is soon to be published. Her work received widespread recognition; for example by award of the Medal of the Royal Numismatic Society in 1964, the Huntington Medal of the American Numismatic Society in 1970, election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1975, and the award of a D.Litt. by the University of Glasgow in 1965.

The writing of the editorial takes place about halfway through the production of a volume when first proofs of all the articles, notes and reviews have been received, and the Roman

Britain in 19xx section, the last part of the journal to be completed, has been sent to the printers. Already we can see the look of the new house-style with its combination of simplified arrangements for footnotes and dedicated bibliographies for each contribution. We believe the changes represent a significant improvement, but we look forward to hearing your views after the volume is distributed towards the end of the year!

Other changes are also in hand. This Editor is currently working on his fifth and final volume which will go to press early in 1999 when Dr Lawrence Keppie, at the Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow, currently Review Editor and responsible for the Scotland contribution to Roman Britain in 19xx, will take over for volume XXXI to be published in 2000. At the same time Dr Simon Esmonde-Cleary, of the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham, who currently prepares the England contribution to Roman Britain in 19xx, will now also assume responsibility for Reviews. Addresses will be found below in the Notes for Contributors.

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