wall, and beyond them was a U-shaped defensive ditch. Perhaps it was all constructed on orders from Count Theodosius in *c.* 380, but, curiously, this was only on the eastern side of the city, so does this represent an incomplete defensive work? Subsequently, streets ceased to be maintained, drains became clogged, and there is no certain evidence of house occupation beyond *c.* 380, though at the south-east corner of the walled city, in the Tower of London, has been found some defensive work built during or after 388.

London had become a deserted Roman city in the fifth century, and about 450 a visiting Saxon dropped a bronze brooch in the Roman ruins of a private bath at Billingsgate. Roman London had died, and a new Saxon London was soon to be born three miles to the west of the City of London at Aldwich.

The book ends with a list of the numerous sites referred to in the text, and there are extensive notes and a huge bibliography. A vast amount of work has gone into writing this book, and the author is to be congratulated on what has been a daunting effort. By introducing his interpretations and referring to numerous publications, he has opened the door to the possibility of further research and discussion by others. Four examples where further research is needed illustrate this.

The first is whether or not there was a Roman invasion camp in A.D. 43 at the very beginning of London, as Perring suggests. Certainly, there are V-shaped military-style ditches, but I think we need more evidence of date, extent and rather more military occupation debris before this is accepted, but Perring is right to suggest this possibility.

The second is to refer to the enigmatic 'long walls of Knightrider Street', whose purpose is unknown. These two straight Roman walls, almost 10 m apart, extend over more than 115 m. This suggests that they are part of a public building, and may have formed the north side of a circus. If so, where was its south side? And what was its date, for it overlies a pit with late first-century pottery, and pottery of the third–fourth century was dumped against its side. The walls need a detailed study in their own right.

The third relates to another enigmatic feature – the monumental public building complex by Cannon Street station found by this reviewer and interpreted as a palace. Later discoveries cast doubt on that interpretation, so what was it? Perring suggests that it was a huge public bath building, but as baths have extensive hypocaust heating systems, and as only one room has been found with this, this view seems unlikely. We are left with a great puzzle.

And finally, the purpose and date of the curious Cripplegate fort is considered in a whole chapter. Perring suggests that the Hadrianic fire that consumed London occurred in A.D. 125–6, and was the result of a British uprising against the Romans. The fort, he suggests, was built just after the event when troops occupied London, and adds to a growing list of possible explanations for its purpose: that the fort could have housed the military staff of the Governor of Britain, that it may have housed troops that controlled trade, and my own suggestion that it might have housed the Praetorian guard for Hadrian's visit in A.D. 122, for it was in use only for a short time. We simply do not know, and there are arguments in favour and against each proposal. So, however the presence of the fort is explained, Perring enables us to focus in on an important event in London's early history.

Dominic Perring has brought together an enormous amount of information and has drawn out many new threads of reconstruction that are essential reading for anyone studying Roman Britain. It should be read for alternative interpretations with Richard Hingley's study, *Londinium: A Biography. Roman London from its Origins to the Fifth Century*, published in 2018. It is interesting that both authors felt that now is the right time to take stock of what we think we know of Roman London, and is a vast step forward from when the first detailed assessment was made in the *Victoria History of London* in 1909. But it does leave us with many, many questions.

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Dying Young. A Bioarchaeological Analysis of Child Health in Roman Britain. By A. Rohnbogner. BAR Publishing, Oxford, 2022. Pp. xvii + 174, illus. Price £50. ISBN 9781407359595

In recent decades, childhood-centred research has become a steady feature of the modern exploration of Roman society, challenging the centrality of adult-, and especially male- and elite-centred approaches to the ancient world. Anna Rohnbogner's analysis of child heath in Roman Britain takes this approach

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further in illustrating how the study of bioarchaeological evidence informs not only our appreciation of ancient childhood, but of society more broadly.

Across eight chapters, *Dying Young* foregrounds the wide-reaching implications of bioarchaeological research of non-adults: surveying the broader archaeological and pathological contexts, Rohnbogner emphasises in her Introduction (1–2) and chapter 2 (3–20) how child health acutely reflects wider societal developments because 'the heightened responsiveness of non-adult skeletons to changing health and living conditions makes them more sensitive to stress and therefore a more reliable indicator of cultural and environmental stressors' (8). In chapter 3 (21–32), a survey of earlier palaeopathological research into child health in Roman Britain sits (uncomfortably) beside impressions from ancient literary sources pertaining to childhood (including baffling summaries of Roman child slaving: 31–2). Following overviews of 'Materials and Methods' in chapter 4 (33–56), the palaeopathology is analysed in chapter 5 (57–91), supported by 72 graphs, tables and images, and complemented by a résumé of the (seemingly unspectacular) relationship between burial practices and child (ill-)health in chapter 6 (93–4). Chapter 7 (95–117) presents the interpretative discussion of the data. A summary outlook in chapter 8 (119–21) closes the book.

The palaeopathology – including skeletal pathologies, stress indicators and enamel hypoplasia – is based on meticulous research of 1643 individuals from 27 sites, largely late antique, and clustering in south-central England. Much of the material stems from Rohnbogner's primary data collection, augmented by data from the published record (33–5). With due acknowledgement of the difficulties behind locational classification (and the interrelated consequences of inter-site migrations), Rohnbogner categorises over 50 per cent of her data as 'major urban' (e.g. Colchester), over 25 per cent as 'minor urban' (e.g. Ancaster), and just under 20 per cent as 'rural' (e.g. Frocester) (35–47). To mitigate different aging techniques in the secondary literature, wide age groups are employed, from pre-natal to age 17, based on age categories and terminology proposed in earlier scholarship (especially Lewis's *Bioarchaeology of Children*, 2007), 'to ensure continuity' (10). The analysis shows a concentration of deaths in the first year of life, and morbidity only markedly decreasing after age 6 (57; table 5.1). Perhaps surprisingly, rural children pull the shorter straw in many of the pathological categories: active *cribra orbitalia*, for instance, indicative of iron-deficiency anaemia, shows up to five times more often in the country-dwelling kids (72–5), 'suggestive of their lower status' (106); high premature rural birth rates likewise indicate 'compromised maternal health' (96), signalling poverty, heavy labour requirements and restricted diets. Comparison with (smaller) data sets from Late Iron Age Dorset (esp. Redfern in *JRA* Supplements 65, 2007) and eighteenth–nineteenth-century London (i.e. Spitalfields, especially Lewis's *Urbanisation and Child Health*, 2002) contextualises the observed pathological patterns, from non-specific infections to congenital conditions, rickets and scurvy, tuberculosis and trauma, etc. (86–91): this produces another surprise – namely a seeming decline in child health in the (late) Roman period, with rural children experiencing morbidity 'even surpassing some of the rates reported from Spitalfields' (114). Rohnbogner emphasises the 'food poverty' (115) among the rural children, concluding moreover that 'ill-health is a distinctly Roman imperial feature' (116).

Notwithstanding superficialities in the earlier chapters and the poor proof-reading throughout, the results of Rohnbogner's research encourage a critical take on traditional views of (insalubrious) urban and (wholesome) rural living respectively and the wider contexts that create general health disparities: undoubtedly, social inequalities promoted the kind of embodied inequalities visible in the studied evidence, illustrating how structural violence impacts the population at large. The concomitant image – and critique – of a society in which 'political, civil and legal matters are deemed more important than the right to food, sound health and education' (116) by those in power strikingly demonstrates the topic's contemporary relevance, not least to modern British society. But gauging the role of Rome in the underlying processes through comparison of provincial bioarchaeological remains with ancient medical literature (especially 24–9), i.e. of real-life artefacts documenting the many with elite conceptualisations and practices of the few, is bewildering: to deduce Roman child health and care practices, osteological data especially from Italy – not Galen – are the essential comparanda, equipped moreover to dispel the notion of a singular Roman approach from which prior British practices can easily be distinguished. Notably, Rohnbogner's reference to 'a relatively varied and satisfactory diet based on agricultural intensification and use of wild resources' (113) to contrast Iron Age from Roman Britain recalls the peasant diet deemed characteristic of Roman Italy – demonstrating the need for a less monolithic view on Roman practices and their impact on provincial society. Rohnbogner's brief reference to Christianity and

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the growing influence of the Church over land and people points towards another obvious avenue for contextualising the Romano-British child health data (116–17). A further desideratum is a gendered analysis assessing the potentially different impact of diverse living conditions on boys and girls respectively and the broader consequences for our appreciation of Romano-British society.

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The Romano-British Villa and Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Eccles, Kent. By N. Stoodley and S. Cosh. Archaeopress, Oxford, 2021. Pp. 260, illus. Price £45. ISBN 9781789695878.

Villas have attracted excavators since the very beginnings of archaeology in the eighteenth century. At Eccles, Kent, the investigation of the villa and Anglo-Saxon cemetery began in earnest in 1961 and continued, under the direction of the late Alec Detsicas, for 15 seasons. Detsicas published a detailed series of interim reports in *Archaeologia Cantiana* and sought, with the assistance of grants from the Kent Archaeological Society, to complete the post-excavation study of the site and bring it to publication. Alas, the task was too great and, recognising this, Detsicas passed the excavation archive to the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. That the volume under review has been published stands as a tribute to Detsicas's work. We should also acknowledge the extensive efforts of Nick Stoodley, Stephen Cosh and their contributors, who have taken on the most thankless of archaeological tasks: writing up an old and orphaned excavation.

Stoodley and Cosh are both at pains to emphasise that the volume is not and could not be a traditional excavation report (p. 6). Work on the archive is too incomplete. Instead, we are presented with a work in three parts. The first, excluding preliminaries, comprises a detailed discussion and appraisal of the architectural development of the villa by Cosh (ch. 3). The 64 pages, with copious plans, provide a narrative that is detailed and displays an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of Detsicas's publications and archive notes. The villa developed from a poorly understood Period 1 structure into a long strip building with detached bath suite in the late first century (Period 2). In Period 3 (early second century) the strip building was augmented through the provision of a southern wing and substantially redeveloped baths. All of the spaces were linked and united by a porticus, fronted by an exceptional and large outdoor or garden pool. A smaller garden pool set in front of the large pool probably also dates to this phase. In Period 4 (late third or early fourth century) the baths were demolished and rebuilt once more and the main dwelling house underwent substantial modifications. Period 5 (the later fourth century) is dismissed as 'a period of decline' with occupation 'not at a sophisticated level' (p. 66). The baths went out of use but there was evidence of 'industrial activity', and a hypocaust furnace for one of the rooms in the main house contained two Theodosian coins.

Resources did not permit the publication of any artefactual reports. This means that assessing the chronology of the development of the structure, let alone the economy or status of its inhabitants, is impossible. There is a 'preliminary chart of coin loss' (fig 3.56), which shows coin loss from Claudius to the House of Theodosius, with an expected emphasis on the fourth century. The failure to use standard issue periods, or to present a summary catalogue, is a pity. There are many archaeologists and numismatists capable of producing such a catalogue at minimal effort and the failure to do so here is a lacuna. In many ways this is the point of the chapter: to spur further interest and targeted post-excavation analysis on particular groups and assemblages.

The second part of the volume is concerned with the Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Stoodley: ch. 4). Like the villa, the cemetery has been the subject of a number of published and unpublished interim studies and Stoodley has done us a great service by pulling much information about the burials together in one place. A catalogue of burials, supported by illustrations of grave goods and cemetery plans, is a helpful resource. Interestingly, the cemetery is essentially of Middle Saxon date, beginning in the seventh century and perhaps continuing, on radiocarbon evidence, to the ninth or tenth century. A number of individuals displayed weapon trauma and this may be related to periods of early medieval conflict.

The final section of the volume comprises chapters on place names in the Eccles region (Hawkins: ch. 6) and documentary evidence for the Medway Valley (Konshuh: ch. 7). The first of these contains a discussion of the tantalising Eccles place name (p. 205), arguably indicative of a late Roman Christian community

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