

the histories shaping its interpretation cannot be fully discussed, as Hingley acknowledges. However, although the quantity of evidence overall supports the broad thrust of the narrative, individual cases do not always incontrovertibly support claims made. Ambiguities are not always made clear and important contradictory evidence is also sometimes omitted. For example, the evidence from Maiden Castle does not prove that it was attacked by Vespasian (p. 82) – a traditional explanation first expounded by Mortimer Wheeler – but can, as Miles Russell has argued, suggest the site had been largely abandoned as military, political and economic centre before the first century C.E. and was then re-used (or taken over) by the Durotriges as a cemetery. Although osteological evidence suggests those inhumed were victims of violent conflicts, specific episodes varied greatly in date and the weaponry used may not be Roman. Redfern's osteological re-analysis of adult females buried at Maiden Castle shows they received perimortem weapon injuries, the pattern of their injuries differed to those of the adult males, and this cemetery's evidence may also be atypical for Dorset. It cannot prove whether or not Durotrigian 'women fought in armed contexts alongside men' (p. 83), although they certainly were present and among the victims.

Difficulties of inscriptional evidence are likewise underplayed. For example, Tomlin suggests in *RIB* that a part-preserved epitaph (*RIB* 3364) might be a cenotaph. He connects this with Pliny's tale of a haunting laid to rest by a proper funeral to illustrate Roman motivations for providing epitaphs. Hingley extends this plausible conjecture to portray soldierly comrades who could not recover the body and, being afraid of their fallen friend's ghost, then put up an inscription (p. 199). What survives of the text, however, states that the soldier's son and other heirs, conceivably freedmen and women, were responsible for the monument. The problems of fragmentary *RIB* 1051 are similarly undiscussed (p. 213).

There are some minor irritations – Diodorus Siculus' Library of History and Statius' *Silvae* are referred to but not listed under ancient authors' works in the bibliography. Inscription numbers are not always given in endnotes. These are minor flaws in what is overall a reasonably priced, engaging and useful volume for a general reader wanting to know what most probably happened.

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*The Roman Baths at Wallsend*. By N. Hodgson. Arbeia Society Roman Archaeological Studies 2. Arbeia Society and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, South Shields, 2020. Pp. x+91, illus. Price £18. ISBN 9781527257696.

Wallsend is the most thoroughly excavated and, more importantly, most completely published auxiliary fort on the line of Hadrian's Wall. Over the last few decades several major volumes have appeared (by Hodgson, in 2003; by Rushworth and Croom, publishing the 1975–81 excavations by Charles Daniels, in 2016; and by Bidwell, in 2018), and this book is a worthy addition to this corpus. The discovery, or rather, rediscovery of the fort bath-house in 2014, and the subsequent excavation of the site as a community archaeology project under the banner of 'WallQuest', is a riveting archaeological detective story. WallQuest was established in order to undertake community-based archaeological research on the easternmost 30 miles of Hadrian's Wall and was funded through a patchwork of grants.

The bath-house was first observed in 1814 during the building of a coal staitth, and the site was subsequently lost to view. Hodgson carefully navigates the conflicting antiquarian accounts, which had resulted in a 'general awareness' of the approximate position of the site. The demolition of the Ship Inn in 2013 prompted the WallQuest volunteers to do cartographic research, which confirmed that the site of the demolished pub was a strong candidate for that of the bath-house. Trial trenching through 4 m depth of industrial debris on the site resulted in the discovery of the lost Roman facility in 2014, exactly two centuries after it had first been seen and recorded.

The bulk of the volume is the detailed excavation report, which is prefaced by an introduction to Roman baths, with glossary, and a summary of other fort bath-houses on Hadrian's Wall. These, as has long been recognised, conform to a standard original Hadrianic plan, though the ways in which this was later amended varies from site to site. Although only a relatively small area of the building

was excavated, due to the constraints of its depth below ground, this was sufficiently diagnostic for Hodgson astutely to recognise another example of this original Hadrianic plan to add to the five already known. The rooms exposed are confidently identified, and the probable complete plan extrapolated, with a convincing analysis of the metrological scheme. Importantly, Hodgson sees the aqueduct found some years ago passing through Hadrian's Wall from the north-west (reported in Bidwell's 2018 report on Hadrian's Wall at Wallsend) as the source of water supply for the bath-house, suggesting that the fort, Hadrianic narrow Wall and bath-house were planned together as an 'integrated whole'.

Two structural phases were identified of which the second, dated to the third century, is a reduced version of the Hadrianic scheme, with a somewhat different circulation pattern. It is suggested that the rebuild was necessitated by a landslip, as the building was situated some distance from the fort, close to the river's edge. Abandonment appears to have occurred in the late third or early fourth century, but extensive damage did not take place until the 'ruthless reduction' of the building during its discovery in 1814. This might also account for the relative paucity of finds, including ceramic building materials, but those that were recovered are published in detail.

The structural report is meticulously presented, with a wealth of detailed excavation photography, essential to an appreciation of the text, along with very clear plans and reconstruction drawings. The final discussion section is wide ranging and demonstrates Hodgson's unrivalled understanding of Roman Wallsend.

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*Roman County Durham: The Eastern Hinterland of Hadrian's Wall.* By D.J.P. Mason. Durham County Council, Durham, 2021. Pp. 557, illus. Price £30. ISBN 9781907445712.

Knowledge and understanding of Roman County Durham has been transformed over the last 20 years, thanks to an increased pace of both commercial and research-driven fieldwork, in some cases still unpublished. As a County Archaeologist who has overseen commercial work and developed and participated in many research projects within the county (e.g. Binchester and Sedgfield), Mason is well placed to bring together published and unpublished information in this comprehensive, lavishly illustrated, book-length treatment of the Roman archaeology of the county, the first of its kind.

The volume extends into North Yorkshire in order to give full coverage of the emerging evidence from the Tees Valley. On the other hand (and wisely) it omits South Shields, in the historic county of Durham but now usually covered in the many works dealing with Hadrian's Wall. Until the late twentieth century, the Roman archaeology of the County Durham was seen as largely military. This has changed with the arrival of developer-funded archaeology, and we can now say much more about Roman-period rural settlement, both of the traditional Iron Age type and new site types such as villas, small towns (e.g. East Park, Sedgfield) and agricultural and pottery production sites (e.g. Faverdale). This wholly new insight into the rural settlement of the county is richly documented in the book. We also get a glimpse of what the rural settlements of the non-elite population looked like in the late Roman period, e.g. Symmetry Park, near Darlington (p. 427). For the long-known military sites this will become a standard work of reference. It gives comprehensive coverage of the excavated and geophysical evidence which has transformed our knowledge of the forts in recent decades, synthesising information from long-delayed publications of sites examined in the 1970s and '80s (Piercebridge, Binchester) and from more recent but unpublished fieldwork (Lanchester; Binchester again).

Although rich in empirical data from structural and historical sources, Mason admits direct material culture analysis is minimal as he 'is not an artefact person' (p. 6). Some aspects seem somewhat old-fashioned: the book relies heavily on concepts such as 'Romanization', which some academic readers will find problematic, although often the terminology and concept is hard to avoid. It also sees the development of an infrastructure of military supply in the area as a benign development for the indigenous population, assuming that they prospered by supplying military needs. Despite increasing knowledge of the rural settlements and villas in