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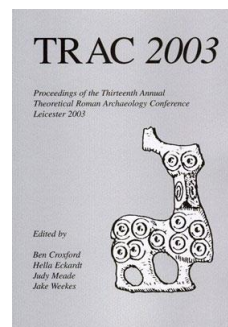
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Author: Adrian M. Chadwick

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‘Heavier burdens for willing shoulders’? Writing different histories, humanities and social practices for the Romano-British countryside

Adrian M. Chadwick

For the Britons, their fears allayed by the absence of the dreaded legate, began to canvass the woes of slavery, to compare their wrongs and sharpen their sting in the telling. ‘We gain nothing by submission except heavier burdens for willing shoulders.’ Tacitus *Agricola* XV.

Introduction

In the past fifteen years there have been several seminal publications on the Romano-British countryside (e.g. Dark and Dark 1997; Fulford 1990; Fowler 2002; Hingley 1989; Miles 1989). These have comprehensively outlined the spatial organisation and physical character of the Romano-British countryside, and the economic and/or military forces involved. But there are problems with these accounts, which focus on villa estates, road networks, the role of urban centres and a coin-based economy. They emphasise the improved agricultural techniques, crops and livestock breeds that were introduced in *some* areas following the Roman occupation. In contrast, non-villa settlements have received less attention (a notable exception being Hingley 1989). The late Iron Age and Romano-British peoples of northern England (and indeed of other ‘marginal’ areas) continue to be regarded as relatively uninteresting by many archaeologists, and portrayed from very functionalist perspectives, rooted firmly in post-Enlightenment, Western capitalist ideas. The Romano-British countryside therefore becomes the setting for meta-narratives of evolutionary rationalism. As archaeologists, we investigate the material conditions of past people’s lives. In our desire to understand wider-scale and long-term landscape patterning and economic processes, however, we are largely ignoring how social practices including agriculture and industry were constituted at more local levels. In place of these meta-narratives, we should be aiming to write archaeologies of inhabitation or experience (Barrett 1999, 2001; Meskell 1996; Shanks 1992).

In order to address these problems, I believe that theoretical approaches to landscapes and taskscapes that have emerged in social geography, anthropology and archaeology have much to offer (e.g. Bender 1993; Gregory 1994; Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Ingold 1993, 2000; Tilley 1994). Recent explorations of materiality within archaeology have also been productive. I would like to see much more discussion in Romano-British studies of seasonality, access and restriction, persistence and discontinuity, labour and power, structure and agency, memory and identity. We must examine the movements of people around their landscapes, and the materiality of their embodied and meaningful social practices. Landscapes were not neutral *spaces* where people carried out a series of normative activities, but were the *places* where people built up their own biographies, reflected on the past, and acted on those experiences for the future. Landscapes were and are inextricably bound up in a web of relational links between humans, plants, animals and the material world.

The study area

The focus of this paper is the later Iron Age and Romano-British period in Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: Location map of the study region, and some of the sites mentioned in the text.

From the Trent Valley in Nottinghamshire and up to the Rivers Idle and Don in South Yorkshire, the landscape has broad, shallow alluvial valleys interspersed with gentle gravel ridges. The Sherwood sandstones are the principal hard geology, and the soils are light and well drained on higher ground. Many of the river valleys were prone to winter flooding until

nineteenth century drainage, but during the study period these floodplains provided lush summer grazing, and fish and wildfowl. Rivers were vital communication routes, and place names such as 'carr' reflect areas of standing water or marsh, where plants such as willow and reeds would have been important resources, but biting insects and disease a problem. To the north and west of the Rivers Trent and Don, the ground rises onto the Magnesian limestone and Coal Measures deposits, forming more elevated and undulating landscapes, cut by occasional river valleys, with greater topographic contrasts and sharper ridgelines. The Lower Coal Measures form an elevated plain with subtle, localised folds of ground. Further west again, the land rises higher to the gritstone shelves and Carboniferous limestone plateau of the Peak District.

Aerial photographs of this region have revealed field systems and enclosures dating to the later Iron Age and Romano-British periods (Cox 1984; Deegan 1996, 2001; Riley 1980; Whimster 1989). There are, however, differences apparent across the study area. On the Sherwood sandstone areas of north Nottinghamshire and southern South Yorkshire, Derrick Riley identified three types of fields – irregular, nuclear, and brickwork, the latter in particular forming extensive coaxial field systems orientated on a roughly north-south axis. Some field systems on the Coal Measures and Magnesian limestone also show coaxiality and regularity, such as those to the east of Barwick-in-Elmet in West Yorkshire (Deegan 2001: 21). Most do not however, and also do not have clear north-south orientations. They appear to be more irregular and nucleated, and long, linear boundaries and trackways often seem to have been more important in these areas than blocks of rectangular fields.

A few concentrations of enclosures are known, at sites such as North Collingham in Nottinghamshire, and near Ledston, Dalton Parlours and Aberford in West Yorkshire (Deegan 2001: 21; Whimster 1989: 77). These may result from stratigraphic and historical depth rather than reflecting larger, nucleated settlements. For much of the study area the predominant settlement type was dispersed farmsteads within rectangular or subrectangular enclosures. Detailed work on the brickwork field systems has shown that there were localised variations in slope, aspect and alignment (Deegan 1996, 1998; Robbins 1998), with the lines of rivers, shallow valleys and ridges affecting orientations. On the Sherwood sandstones the density of field ditches and enclosures is often high, but with notable exceptions this appears to be less so elsewhere. The geology of the Coal Measures and Magnesian limestone areas is not conducive to cropmark formation, and there has been less aerial photographic coverage. Nevertheless, this phenomenon may not simply be an artefact of study, and *might* hint at some differences in practice between those Iron Age and Romano-British communities living to the south and south-east of the River Don, and those to the north and north-west.

Problems with the traditional archaeological narrative of the region

Traditionally, it is thought that after the invasion of Britain in AD 43, Roman forces moved north into Corieltauvi territory, establishing forts at Chesterfield and Lincoln. The Brigantes, a client tribal state ruled by Queen Cartimandua, are believed to have protected this early northern frontier (Hanson and Campbell 1986; Hartley 1980). From around AD 54 elements within the Brigantes purportedly clashed with Rome, and it is likely that the fort at Templeborough and the fortress at Rossington were established at this time. A Brigantian leadership dispute led to the Roman invasion of the north in AD 70–71, and forts were built at

York, Castleford, Slack, Ilkley, Doncaster and Burghwallis. Settlements or *vici* grew up around some forts such as Chesterfield, and Doncaster was a substantial town by the second century AD. Aldborough became the *civitas* capital of the Brigantes, and smaller settlements grew at Adel, Littleborough, Wetherby and Leeds. Nevertheless, there was remarkably little urbanisation. There were villas at Cromwell in Nottinghamshire (Whimster 1989: 78–79), and possibly at Bingley, Birstall and Ossett in West Yorkshire (Faull and Moorhouse 1981). The Dalton Parlours villa complex was partly excavated (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990). In South Yorkshire, the Stancil villa excavations were poorly recorded (Whiting 1943), and two possible villas may have been located at Conisborough Park and Oldcoates (Buckland 1986: 38). It has been suggested that this limited distribution was partly due to the 'conservatism' of the native population (Branigan 1980).

Accounts of the Brigantian 'civil war' fall within the common trope of Classical authors who presented the indigenous peoples of northern Europe and Britain as exotic 'Others' locked in continuous internecine warfare (Webster 1996b), a stereotype that some modern scholars perpetuate. Romans and modern Iron Age and Romano-British archaeologists have presented northern England as a primitive periphery (Robbins 1999; Webster 1999). Such culture-history accounts of the Roman colonisation also rely heavily on Roman sources, including third century AD descriptions of British 'tribal' groups. Yet the Roman map of Britannia was an imposition of administrative convenience, so we *cannot* assume that those tribal groupings reflect peoples' understandings of their own affiliations and identities (James 1999; Jones 1997). The presence of Roman forces on this frontier for around twenty years before the invasion of the north would have had profound effects on native societies on the far side of the River Don. Roman patrols and raids would have encouraged tensions and insecurities. In addition, there would have been mapping expeditions, and political missions to curry favour and set faction against faction. There may have been gifts, trade, and sexual relationships both official and illicit.

Earlier archaeological accounts assumed a marked intensification of agriculture and reorganisation of land use following the Roman conquest. The apparent planned regularity of many field systems and the presence of later first to fourth century Romano-British pottery in field and enclosure ditches supposedly reflected the introduction of Roman estates (Branigan 1989: 164). The brickwork fields in particular have been explained as primarily for sheep pasture (Hayes 1981), established as part of a growing wool 'industry' related to the imposition of ten percent taxation, and the demands of the Roman army for grain, meat, wool and hides.

However, across much of the region mixed farming seems to have taken place, both in the late Iron Age and the Romano-British period (e.g. Bastow and Murray 1990; Berg 2001; Giorgi 2001; Jones 1987; Richardson 2001; van der Veen 1992). The post-PPG16 increase in developer-funded excavation has also demonstrated that many major trackways, boundaries and farmsteads had their origins in the later Iron Age, and pottery of Iron Age type or tradition has been recovered from an increasing number of sites. Some Iron Age pottery in Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire was East Midlands Scored Ware that was brought up the Trent Valley (Elsdon 1992; Knight 2002, in prep.), with other fabrics and vessels perhaps coming from Lincolnshire or Northamptonshire. Quite long distance movements of people and goods were thus taking place. Other fabric types were produced locally in South and West Yorkshire (Burgess 2001; Cumberpatch n.d., Evans 1995b; Runnacles and Buckland 1998). Nevertheless, this material is still uncommon, and many settlements may have been largely aceramic in the first centuries BC and AD, employing wooden and leather containers instead. The region is interesting, however, precisely because of these diverse procurement and

production traditions, again showing that mention of 'Brigantes' or 'Corieltauvi' is too simplistic.

There were complex histories to these landscapes, with apparently planned, regular field patterns resulting from many different phases of activity (Chadwick 1999; Deegan 1998). Roman roads and forts at Rossington and Burghwallis were superimposed across earlier trackways and fields (Buckland 1986: 8; Riley 1980: 94–95), but at Finningley and elsewhere, later fields were clearly orientated *to* roads. Recent work in West Yorkshire suggests that although many trackways and major boundaries were laid out in the Iron Age, there was an expansion of enclosure in the third and fourth centuries AD (Roberts *et al.* 2001: 287). Across the region the aceramic tradition may have proved surprisingly resilient, for on some settlement sites pottery remained relatively scarce until the earlier second century, and in some cases did not become ubiquitous until the third or fourth centuries. Vessels of Iron Age form or fabric continued to be made, used and deposited well into the second century (Cumberpatch n.d.; Darling 1995; Elsdon 1992; Evans 1998).

The Roman presence was marked at forts, urban settlements and along roads. These features would have been reassuring to many occupiers, but for native people these were often landscapes of difference, alienation and powerlessness. Officials, military units and traders would have been those mostly using the roads (Petts 1998: 88). Some native farmers and craftspeople may have prospered, especially if supplying garrisons or urban centres. But away from the forts and roads, there was little visible impact of the Roman occupation, and people continued to use traditional tracks and droveways. For many their taskscapes would have remained relatively unchanged. The continuity of some traditional practices in 'Roman' Britain has been noted before, and may sometimes represent active cultural resistance (Hingley 1997a; Webster 1996a). The 'Roman' military and civilian occupiers were themselves diverse, and 'Romanisation' was a highly complicated series of processes, rather than just simple cultural hegemony or emulation (Gardiner 1999; Hingley 1996; James 2001; Jones 1997).

Meaningful social practices

In previous articles I suggested that the creation, maintenance and reworking of field system and enclosure ditches was implicated in the reproduction of personal and community identity (Chadwick 1997, 1999). The acts of digging ditches, and of constructing and maintaining field systems, were thus socially meaningful activities. In this paper, I wish to concentrate more on the habitual, everyday movements of people and animals in and around enclosures and trackways. I also wish to examine depositional behaviour, including what might be termed 'non-functional' practices or placed deposits. There has been considerable discussion of depositional practices within prehistory (e.g. Hill 1995; Pollard 2001), but also some initial considerations for Romano-British contexts (Aitchison 1987; Clarke 2000; Fulford 2001; Millett 1994; Reece 1988). Recent critical analyses regarding patterns of deposition in and around settlements have also touched upon these ideas (Evans 1995a, 2001; Willis 1997). Despite such preliminary work however, what is required within Romano-British rural studies are detailed archaeologies of past practice examining all spheres of material life. We should consider how people, material culture and the landscape were bound together through these practices, and how these relations were maintained, changed and re-worked over time and in

different landscape settings (Petts 1998: 79–80; Taylor 2001: 47). This is something that my own research seeks to address.

Even if much of the excavated artefact assemblages from Romano-British rural sites were indeed prosaic 'rubbish' deposits, ethnographic work suggests that 'ordinary' household waste and its disposal may nevertheless still be subject to cultural rules and proscriptions (e.g. Hayden and Cannon 1983; Moore 1986). Mundane, everyday activities may still be structured and influenced by wider ideas relating to cosmologies, class or status, gender or age, and notions of pollution and cleanliness, domesticity and liminality (Miller 1985; Yates 1989). Such beliefs are meaningful precisely because they are usually taken for granted by those who carry them through. These ideas are not fixed, and often change over time. They are also open to reinterpretation and subversion.

It is also fruitless to try and separate 'ritual' and 'domestic' activity, as common in post-Enlightenment, Western capitalist thought. Romano-British agriculture has usually been written about in terms of functional food procurement (e.g. Fowler 2002; Miles 1989). But in non-Western or non-modern societies both ritual and secular activities are intended to have practical outcomes (Brück 1999a). The same people who undertake everyday social, political and economic activities may often carry out rituals. Ritual is a field of discourse or social structure fundamental to notions of community and identity (Barrett 1988, 1991; Bell 1992; Giddens 1984). These beliefs and practices may emphasise particular activities or places within the landscape. Individual, embodied and historically situated experiences of rituals also ensure that there are always multiple interpretations and understandings of events (Asad 1979; Barrett 1997). In prehistory and the Romano-British period, we must envisage very different rationalities. Invoking the help of gods or ancestors may have been as vital to these people as ensuring animals did not stray, and crops were properly planted and tended. Through discussion of landscapes and taskscapes, these acts can be put into their broader social context as meaningful but mundane practices, rather than part of some separate 'ritual' sphere.

I will now turn to some of the contextual evidence from the region in more detail, particularly that relating to two key themes of movement and structure in and around settlements, and the structuring of depositional practices.

Movement and spatial structure

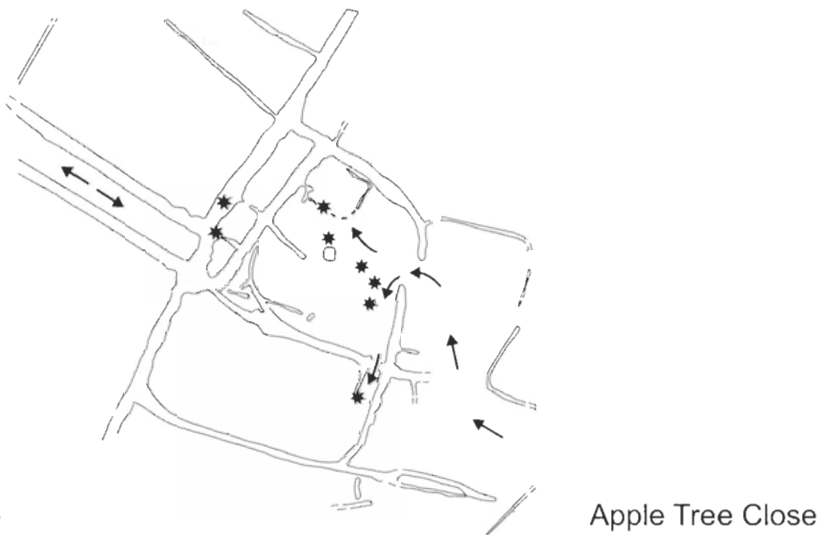
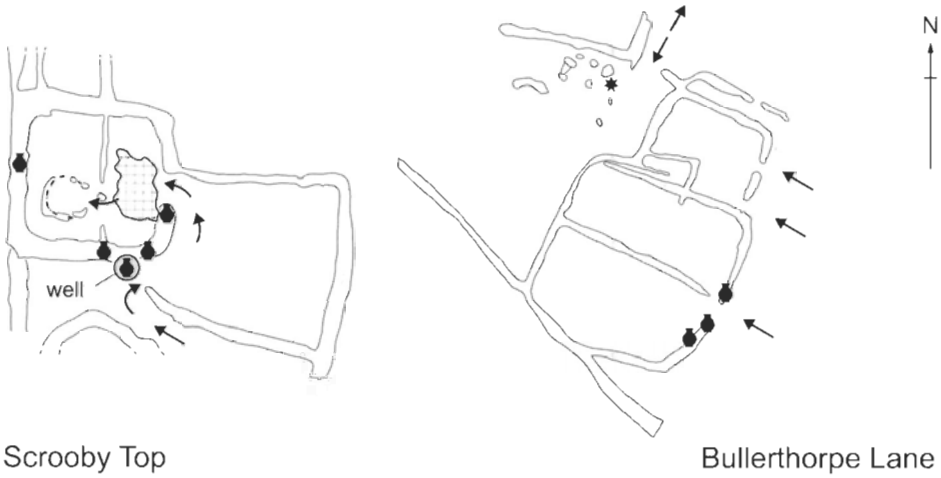
There seems to have been a concern with controlling movement, with a particular emphasis on entrances through enclosures, into fields and into buildings. People and livestock were carefully channelled into prescribed routes, which often had the effect of making them move further, along more convoluted paths. This can be seen at Dunston's Clump (Garton 1987), Hoveringham (Elliott and Knight 1998), North Collingham (Whimster 1989), Scrooby Top (Davies *et al.* 1997), Scabba Wood (Chadwick 1998), Dalton Parlours (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990) and Parlington Hollins (Roberts *et al.* 2001). Internal partition ditches, fences and screens further subdivided and graded social space within enclosures. For strangers, or those of lesser social status, this would have reinforced the position of the person(s) who had dominance within that settlement. In some instances enclosures and the buildings, people and livestock within might have been displayed to people walking past, in others it would have hidden them, or given only partial glimpses. Some routeways may reflect tradition and

memory, and the preservation of certain paths through the landscape despite subsequent alterations to field and enclosure layouts.





It has been suggested that during the British Iron Age, the most favoured orientations for roundhouses and enclosures were east and south-east (e.g. Barrett 2001; Fitzpatrick 1994; Giles and Parker Pearson 1999; Oswald 1997). This may have sometimes been due to pragmatic concerns to maximise daylight, but might also have reflected a concern with the equinox or the midwinter sunrise. Examples of Romano-British enclosures in the region with east or south-east facing entrances were excavated at Dunston's Clump, Hoveringham, Wild Goose Cottage, Menagerie Wood, Chainbridge Lane and Scrooby Top in Nottinghamshire, and Pickburn Leys, Barnsdale Bar and Campsall Quarry in South Yorkshire. Enclosures at Upton, Thorntree Hill, Moss Carr, Apple Tree Close, Swillington Common North, Barrowby Lane and Bullerthorpe Lane in West Yorkshire also had east or south-east facing entrances. Many enclosures had two or three entrances however, as examples at High Street Shafton, Swillington Common South, Methley and Becca Banks demonstrate. Some roundhouses may even have had two doorways, as might have been the case at Dalton Parlours. I am currently compiling detailed statistics on orientations, to include unexcavated cropmark enclosures and GIS analyses, but I believe the final results will demonstrate a much more complex dialectic between structure and agency.

Some buildings in the region had probable foundation and/or closure deposits, such as the Iron Age roundhouse at Moss Carr (Roberts and Richardson 2002) and the aisled, stone-walled rectangular building of Romano-British date at Dalton Parlours (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990). These practices have resonances with ideas regarding the 'life cycles' or biographies of prehistoric buildings (e.g. Brück 1999b; Gerritsen 1999; Giles and Parker Pearson 1999), and we need to consider this for the Romano-British period. There also seem to have been widespread, shared ideas regarding the use of space within Romano-British rural rectangular houses and aisled structures (Taylor 2001: 50–51). This undoubtedly reflected concerns of communal and less communal space, cleanliness and pollution, and status and gender. These were unlikely to have represented a series of simplistic binary distinctions as initially proposed by Hingley (1990b), and there would have been very different notions of 'privacy'.

People's embodied daily routines would have woven these ideas into the landscape, and such habitual, unconscious movements are important to the reproduction of memory and social practice within societies (Connerton 1989). Many trackways led to river valleys that would have flooded during the winter, but which would have formed summer grazing for sheep and cattle (Deegan 1996; Robbins 1998). In some cases these would have been daily movements, undertaken with the sunrise and the sunset. At other times people and animals may have been away for days or even weeks. There was perhaps alternation between winter kin-held fields and summer communal grazing. At East Carr, Mattersey in Nottinghamshire, around seventy rectangular structures were found on the flood plain of the River Idle (Morris and Garton 1997: 140). Many might have been hay and fodder ricks or turf stacks, but the larger examples may reflect shieling-like, temporary buildings. Their insubstantial nature and lack of hearths and domestic refuse suggest short-lived, transient occupation during summer. Age, gender and other social divisions may have determined who was involved with these livestock movements. At Ledston in West Yorkshire, two major trackways led to several unusual forms of enclosure and a dense agglomeration of pits (Faull and Moorhouse 1981: 119–120). Perhaps here there was seasonal aggregation, with more widely dispersed extended families or small kinship groups coming together at certain times of the year to store grain, breed and exchange livestock, exchange news and goods, trade, feast, flirt and marry.



KEY

-  midden
-  querns
-  placed deposits / concentrations of pottery
-  movements in / around enclosures

0 50m

Figure 2. Movement and deposition around the enclosures at Scrooby Top, Nottinghamshire, and Bullerthorpe Lane and Apple Tree Close, Pontefract, both in West Yorkshire. Redrawn from Davies, Parker Pearson and Robbins 1997, Roberts, Burgess and Berg 2001 and Wrathmell 2001.

Meaningful materiality

People were exercising distinct choices about where to deposit artefacts, and there is a marked tendency on excavations for even neighbouring features to produce very different amounts of material (Cumberpatch and Robbins n.d.). Ditches and entrances through them were clearly markers of social space, in addition to their functional characteristics (Bowden and McOmish 1987; Chadwick 1997, 1999; Collis 1996; Hingley 1990a; Robbins 1998). The south, south-east or east sides of enclosures, especially southern enclosure ditches, were often preferred for the deposition of pottery, especially coarser wares, and slag, smithing debris and burnt stone. This was the case at Scrooby Top (Davies *et al.* 1997), Apple Tree Close (Wrathmell 2001) and Bullerthorpe Lane (Roberts *et al.* 2001).

In enclosures and out in fields, ditch butt ends, and postholes and pits forming part of entrances or located close to them, were selected for the discard of pottery, animal bone or quern stones, in some instances as placed deposits. The burial or discard of metalwork, coin hoards, and even some individual coins and brooches also formed part of this activity. At Pickburn Leys, two nearly complete late Iron Age-style vessels and animal bone were recovered from an enclosure ditch, on the south-eastern side near to an entrance (Sydes 1993; Sydes and Symonds 1985). A later recut of the ditch at this point produced a rotary quern stone fragment. Towards the southern end of a driveway, where one of its ditches turned to the south-east, there was a deposit of a coin of Valerian I, and sherds from at least seven Romano-British vessels, including an almost complete third century AD greyware jar. At Edenthorpe, portions of a second century bowl were deposited where two field ditches intersected (Chadwick 1995). Glass bracelet fragments were found in a roundhouse gully at Balby Carr, along with animal bone and Iron Age pottery (Rose 2003a), and in a ditch terminal at Shafton Bypass (Rose 2003b), and were of late La Tène and Romano-British date respectively. At Bullerthorpe Lane, in one enclosure ditch most of the second century AD pottery came from around the south-east entrance (Roberts *et al.* 2001).

Large pits, waterholes and wells were also the focus for possible placed deposits. At Hoveringham Quarry a large pond produced a substantial assemblage of second century AD pottery, including samian, stamped mortaria and fine wares (Elliott and Knight 1998). Iron, copper alloy and wooden objects were recovered, too. Textile fragments, leather shoes and many quern stones were also found in this waterlogged feature. A Romano-British well at Dalton Parlours contained iron bucket handles and waterlogged remains of buckets, most clearly from accidental loss. But nine beehive and flat quern stones also came from the fills, along with silver and copper alloy finger rings and coins, and iron objects including knives, a sledgehammer and a reaping hook. There were leather shoes and a large assemblage of pottery, including over twenty-four complete or substantially complete Huntcliff jars (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990: 195–272). There were also numerous animal bones, including seventeen near-complete sheep skulls, ten near-complete cattle skulls, and a large proportion of the pig bones was of foetal or neonatal individuals. This cannot be explained simply as the disposal of butchered remains. There were also horse bones, including four skulls, badger and hare remains, parts of up to thirty-one dogs, and the partial remains of a minimum of three adult humans.

At Wild Goose Cottage, a timber-lined well shaft produced a horse skull from the fill of the construction cut, whilst a backfill deposit within the shaft contained quern fragments (Garton and Salisbury 1995). The presence of querns and quern fragments as part of these closure

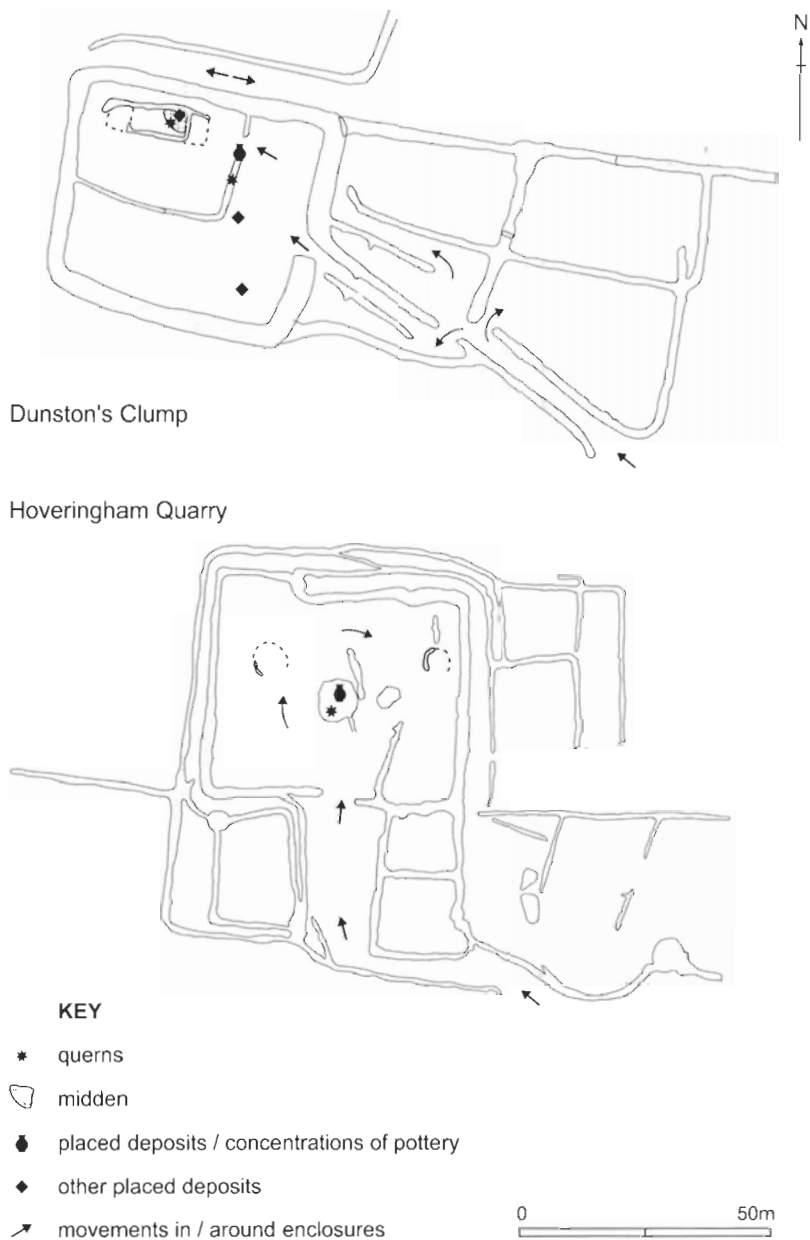


Figure 3. Movement and deposition around the enclosures at Dunston's Clump and Hoveringham Quarry, Nottinghamshire. Redrawn from Garton 1987 and Elliott and Knight 1998.



Dalton Parlours

KEY

- * querns
- + animal burials / placed deposits of animal bone
- movements in / around enclosures

0 50m

Figure 4. Movement and deposition in the Iron Age phases of the enclosures and roundhouses at Dalton Parlours, West Yorkshire. Redrawn from Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990.

deposits is interesting, and reflects practices noted elsewhere in Britain for the Iron Age (e.g. Brown 1984; Buckley 1979, 1991; Hill 1995), although discussion of this is still lacking for the Romano-British period. Querns seem to have marked boundaries of inner areas within enclosures, and thus of spaces deemed as household or domestic. They were deposited in ditch and palisade slots within enclosures at Dunston Clump (Garton 1987), Dalton Parlours (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990) and Apple Tree Close (Wrathmell 2001). At Dalton Parlours and Moss Carr (Roberts and Richardson 2002), querns and quern fragments were found in the ring gullies and postholes of roundhouses.

The fragmentation of many quern stones prior to deposition may reflect the deliberate destruction of objects that held great power and value. At South Elmsall for example, one pit contained sixty-six fragments representing at least twelve beehive quern stones (Howell 1998). Querns may have served as metaphors or metonyms for the agricultural cycle or productivity.

Across the region, Iron Age and Romano-British querns have been found with heat reddening and/or iron deposits on their surfaces, indicating their possible re-use as anvils (Cregeen 1956; Garton *et al.* 2000: 40; Knight 1992; Neal and Fraser 2001: 46; Roberts and Richardson 2002: 32). A functional explanation is that hard stones with flat surfaces were ideal for smithing. However, quern stones, once no longer suitable for grinding, may have still lent any tools or weapons forged on them a variety of efficacious symbolic qualities, especially if these were objects linked to agriculture such as sickles or shears (Hingley 1997b). The association of shoes with abandonment phases of wells at Hoveringham (Elliott and Knight 1998) and Dalton Parlours (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990) is also intriguing. Was this disposal of footwear a material metaphor for a journey to be undertaken? Carol van Driel-Murray (1999) has examined the complex symbolism of feet and shoes during the Roman period, and the use of footwear in rites of commencement and termination.

The preservation of bone is often poor on sites across the region. Nevertheless, where conditions allow, there is evidence that horse, pig, and dog remains, sometimes young or foetal animals, were used for placed deposits. At Chainbridge Lane near Lound, for example, the western section of a Romano-British enclosure ditch produced a waterlogged pig carcass, whilst the eastern enclosure ditch had a bound pig skeleton (Eccles *et al.* 1988). At Garforth, probable Romano-British placed deposits included a headless lap-dog burial, a juvenile pig skeleton, a partial goat skeleton and a partial bird skeleton (Jacques 2000). At Dalton Parlours, in addition to the Romano-British animal deposits, there were several partially articulated Iron Age dog burials (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990), including one buried in a pit lined with sheep and pig bones, near the centre of one enclosure.

In small-scale communities crops and animals are often imbued with many meanings beyond their subsistence, utilitarian roles. In the Iron Age and Romano-British periods the numbers and health of cattle, sheep and pigs would have been indicators of identity, wealth and status, and favoured animals would have been named and highly valued. They would have been a rich source of cosmological meanings and myths (e.g. Coote 1992; Ingold 1988). Horses might have had connotations of status, long-distance movement, speed and hunting, and the socially ambiguous nature of dogs and complex beliefs surrounding them would also have meant special treatment of their remains on occasion (Serpell 1995). Birds were used in augury. Although such treatment of Romano-British animal remains may have had origins in pre-Roman customs (Dobney 2001; Grant 1989), they had many resonances with Roman cosmological understandings and practices, as described by Roman writers such as Cato and Ovid (e.g. Cato, *On Agriculture* XXXII; Ovid, *Fasti* I). One cannot transpose these ideas directly to northern England, and local deities and landscape features would have been the focus for native beliefs. Nevertheless, the manifestation of such beliefs would not have appeared too alien to many Romans, whose own practices included feasting, boundary offerings, offerings to chthonic and water deities, and animal sacrifices (Beard *et al.* 1998; Henig 1984).

There is some evidence for the manipulation of human remains in contexts that do not seem to be 'straightforward' burials. Within 'occupation deposits' associated with the Roman pottery kilns at Rossington Bridge in South Yorkshire, some human bones recovered showed evidence of cut marks and marrow extraction. A left humerus had been defleshed, cut and trimmed to form a wedge-shaped tool, and this activity was carried out when the bone was still fresh and 'green' (Buckland *et al.* 2001: 82). This bone might have been used as a tool to decorate ceramic vessels. At Adwick-le-Street in South Yorkshire, a tightly flexed inhumation burial was missing both its feet and its left hand (Dolby 1969: 253). These may have been cut off as part of a criminal punishment, but the body was also tightly flexed (Buckland 1986: 36), and

might have been bound for some time prior to its burial. At Newton Kyme near Tadcaster (just inside North Yorkshire), part of a marching camp palisade ditch contained human remains (Monaghan 1991). The inhumation was face down with its arms behind its back, and may have been bound. This person's bones revealed evidence for a severe injury, with a healed break and partially healed but crushed bone. The ditch also contained butchered pig bone. This might have been an execution, or a burial related to warfare, but the location of the burial and its association with pig remains suggests a symbolic element, too.

At Dunston's Clump (Garton 1987), Scrooby Top (Davies *et al.* 1997) and perhaps at Lingwell Gate Lane (Roberts *et al.* 2001: 291), middens were used to mark or emphasise certain areas. This has resonances with later prehistoric practices, where broken pottery, animal bone and hearth sweepings were built up in often substantial amounts, this material then sometimes forming the basis for placed deposits (McOmish 1996; Parker Pearson *et al.* 1996). Concepts of fertility, bounty and regeneration may have been involved, and some of these concepts may have been reworked and reinterpreted in the Romano-British period.

Towards archaeologies of inhabitation: one site-specific narrative

Many of the themes highlighted in the previous two sections can be better understood through the 'thick description' of individual sites. At Dunston's Clump near Babworth in Nottinghamshire (Fig. 3), three rectangular enclosures were situated within part of a brickwork field system (Garton 1987). The enclosure selected for full excavation had an entrance and associated trackway facing south-east, and a substantial portion of a cordon-necked first century AD jar was found in the primary fill of the enclosure ditch. There were several phases of a rectangular timber building with south-facing entrances, located towards the northern side of the enclosure. There was an internal, right-angled partition within the enclosure, which had a narrow east-facing entrance. This created a series of spaces that could have been utilised for different functional and social means, limiting access to the building and 'yard' beyond. The ditched spaces and narrow entrances not only restricted everyday movements of people and animals, but also created a series of graded social spaces. Strangers, and those from other kin groups or of lesser status, may not have had easy access into the inner enclosure. People entering the outer enclosure may have only had partial glimpses of what lay beyond the partition. The fill of this partition slot contained a large portion of a handmade pot of late first century BC/first century AD date (*ibid.*: 29). An entrance posthole through this partition was packed with first century AD wheel-thrown pottery and late La Tène butt beaker sherds.

A pit in the south-eastern quadrant of the enclosure contained a first century AD copper alloy brooch. Opposite the enclosure entrance, at the corner of the internal division, another pit contained charred wood, seeds (predominantly barley) and sheep and pig bones. During a third occupation phase, a midden was allowed to spread over the site of the previous rectangular building. This layer contained the largest Romano-British pottery group on site, of late second to fourth century AD material, in addition to an iron punch and a quern fragment (Garton 1987: 32–33). The midden thus marked the site of previous occupation, but was also the repository for material culture from later inhabitation. A conjoining quern fragment came from a posthole associated with the internal right-angled partition, and a complete rotary quern topstone was found inverted at the bottom of an unphased posthole. A beehive quern fragment was found in a later palisade slot that ran around the north, west and south sides of the enclosure. A pit near the centre of the enclosure contained burnt wood and iron fittings from a wooden box, together with

charred cereal grains (predominantly wheat, with some rye and oats), and the probable remnants of a wicker basket. Although interpreted by the excavators as the result of an accidental fire, the nature and context of these remains suggest that they formed a placed deposit.

Archaeologies of Romano-British praxis

From the first century BC through to the fourth century AD therefore, these small farmsteads, enclosure and field ditches were the locations for acts of patterned deposition. In most instances, these were everyday episodes of refuse disposal, but in places and in ways that were culturally determined. Other deposits may have been the result of very informal, small-scale acts intended to bring good luck to people and households. There were also more specific and formalised ceremonies and propitiations. These ensured the fertility of crops and animals, the favour of the gods, and marked important events such as births, marriages and deaths, spring livestock births or the autumn culling of animals, and sowing and harvesting. These acts involved the structured deposition of human and animal bone, metalwork including coins and brooches, quern stones or quern fragments, and whole or substantially complete pottery vessels. These were not part of a separate 'ritual' sphere of practice, but rather different points on a rich continuum of belief. They were unlikely to have formed a rigid, overarching cosmology, but were part of a 'native epistemology' (Barth 1987: 79); a social structure that created powerful traditions of practice at the same time allowing for active local reinterpretations of them.

Many deposits marked the limits of domestic and household space, the boundaries of fields of extended families and kin groups, or the entrances of fields, enclosures and houses. The spatial praxis of daily and seasonal routines and movements would have been influenced and enriched by wider ideas concerning cleanliness and pollution, boundaries and thresholds, identity and community, and fertility and cosmology. These practices were linked to the continuous social and individual dialectics between structure and agency, the everyday lifeworld of the habitus, and social memory (Barth 1987; Bourdieu 1992; Giddens 1984). There may have been direct continuities of belief amongst these communities following the Roman conquest, but the occupiers would have brought their own ideas regarding fertility, crops and livestock, gods, thresholds and foundation offerings. As these 'Romans' hailed from Italy, Spain, North Africa, Gaul, Germany and other parts of the empire, such beliefs were highly diverse, and these would have been combined with native understandings. New architectural forms permitted existing ideas to be expressed in novel ways, but would also have created the potential for different understandings of social space.

And new social practices did come into being. There was eventually a proliferation of material culture following the occupation, linked to changes in consumption in many communities (Meadows 1994, 1997). However, these changes were not straightforward. Although the Roman conquest of the north began in AD 70–71, Romano-British pottery remained relatively scarce on most rural sites until after AD 130 at least. It was only after this date that large kilns at Rossington, Cantley and other South Yorkshire sites began mass-producing grey wares (Buckland *et al.* 2001; Buckland *et al.* 1980). Before this, was most Roman pottery transported up to the northern military frontier? Was it too expensive for local consumers? Or was there a local timelag in the widespread adoption of ceramics, perhaps because it did not fit into existing material culture traditions, and through conscious or unconscious resistance to Roman forms? At Scrooby Top, samian ware was used for cooking, implying different understandings of its form and function (Robbins 1997). The situation is further complicated as some first century AD post-conquest ceramic forms or fabrics

were similar to or derived from pre-conquest examples. Clearly then, prior to and following the Roman invasion of the north there were extremely complex discourses of materiality taking place.

Conclusions – towards inhabited Romano-British landscapes

The limitations of space and format in this paper mean that I have only been allowed to demonstrate one brief integrated narrative of the kind that I would like to write, although I included more in an earlier draft. This has the unfortunate effect of reifying the modern distinctions we place between different materials and practices in a manner common to most conventional archaeological accounts, even though these differences might not have been understood or recognised by Romano-British people. This will not bring us any closer to the archaeologies of inhabitation I believe we should be exploring, and we need different kinds of writing and publication formats in order to do this (e.g. Chadwick forthcoming).

My consideration of the available information has been necessarily brief, and I have presented only a selection of some published sources and unpublished reports, but I hope that I have demonstrated that this evidence exists. There is considerable scope for future research, but there are still many problems with archaeological practice. Although much of the work of local units has been of a high standard, many excavation reports do not have the quantified statistical and contextual data to allow these patterns to be assessed and compared, nor the visual presentation of detailed spatial information. Curators' briefs and contract units' research designs need to be more closely informed by theoretical discussions regarding context, place and practice. Some field ditches and even enclosure ditches are still sampled at 2% or 4% of their total lengths, and in such cases we will remain uncertain about any patterning we identify. There needs to be a clear outline of how routine developer-funded fieldwork on Romano-British sites can contribute to these research questions (Chadwick 2003).

We cannot restrict discussion of placed deposition to prehistoric contexts, but only allow economic and functional explanations for routine Romano-British practices. We must critically engage with the Roman imperial economy and with the processes of imperialism, but must consider how these affected the everyday routines and practices of these small communities. The complex social and political makeup of the 'Roman' occupiers needs to be stressed, in addition to the effects that indigenous peoples themselves had on the occupying forces. This was likely to have been a complex and fluid series of relationships. As archaeologists, we have a moral obligation to write histories of these past people. They were not merely eking out their lives in materially impoverished, functional routines of rural production, but were engaged in active and dynamic relationships with each other, material culture, plants and animals, and the landscape. Our narratives of their lives should be accordingly interesting and dynamic.

Department of Archaeology, School of Humanities and Science,
University of Wales Newport

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