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Britain from Agricola to Gallienus

Introduction and acknowledgments

In a historic context, archaeology can be used with greater precision than it can in the prehistoric period. With sufficiently clear documentation it may be possible to produce absolute dates for various forms of pottery and other artefacts; these artefacts may in turn be used to date other sites on which they occur. Unfortunately the historical sources rarely produce a clear and incontrovertible story which can be precisely linked to archaeological evidence; often two or three interpretations of the same documentary evidence are possible, and further subjective judgment is required to produce any connection at all with the archaeological material. It is perhaps fair to say that students of Roman Britain have too frequently been prepared to accept a current interpretation of the historical evidence, without devoting to it the attention and critical examination which it requires.

It is the aim of this paper to reconsider the military and political history of Britain from the recall of Agricola in 84/85 to the establishment of the Gallic Empire in 258. The discussion involves the whole of the documentary evidence, together with as much of the numismatic and epigraphic evidence as has seemed relevant. Much of this source-material is now conveniently collected in J. C. Mann (ed.), *The northern frontier in Britain from Hadrian to Honorius: literary and epigraphic sources* (Newcastle upon Tyne 1969). At all times the attempt has been made to distinguish clearly between the statements of the sources and our interpretations of those statements.

Archaeological evidence has been used to establish relative dates; never to provide absolute dates. To use it in this way would be to deny the primacy of the historical

The following extra-abbreviations are used in this paper:

AA ₂₋₄	Archaeologia Aeliana, second to fourth series.
CW ₂	Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, new series.
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies.
PBSR	Papers of the British School at Rome.
PIR ₁₋₂	Prosopographia Imperii Romani, first and second editions.
PSAS	Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.
Birley, RBRA	E. Birley, <i>Roman Britain and the Roman Army</i> (Kendal 1953).
RIB	R. G. Collingwood – R. P. Wright, <i>The Roman Inscriptions of Britain I</i> (Oxford 1965).
RIC	H. Mattingly – E. A. Sydenham et al., <i>Roman Imperial Coinage</i> (London 1923 ff.).

material, and to produce confusion; for the conclusions of this paper, if accepted, may lead to changes in the dating of artefacts. Clearly the conclusions cannot be made to depend on any one scheme for the dating of pottery or brooches, since it is possible that such schemes may require modification. It is our belief that a failure to recognise this proposition has led to considerable confusion in recent years. Our conclusions may or may not win approval; they have at least the merit of producing a coherent, consistent and credible story from the historical material, and from that alone. If others wish to say that the solutions proposed will not suit the dating of their artefactual material, the onus is on them to produce a better interpretation of the historical evidence; at least this paper will have made that evidence more readily available.

Much of what we have written derives from discussions with various scholars over a period of several years. Wherever we have been able to do so, we have acknowledged the source of our suggestions. If we have inadvertently incorporated the ideas of some other person without acknowledgment, we can only offer apologies and name here, *honoris causa*, some at least of those with whom we have discussed various problems. Professor Eric Birley has generously placed his time, library and files at our disposal over a long period. Mr. J. P. Gillam, who has written two recent discussions of the later second century¹, has read and commented upon an early draft of this paper. The key to the re-assessment of the Antonine period is his revision of the (relative) dating of the coarse pottery from Period II at Mumrills². Others who have discussed various points with us, and thereby contributed to our own interpretations, include Mr. Leslie Alcock, Dr. A. R. Birley, Dr. Brian Dobson, Dr. J. P. C. Kent, Dr. J. Morris, Mr. C. E. Stevens and Dr. John Wilkes. Professor S. S. Frere kindly commented on an earlier version of this paper. To all these friends our gratitude is due. The substance of this paper was communicated to a research seminar at the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London in March 1967.

Domitian

Our story begins with the departure from Britain of Cn. Iulius Agricola in the winter of 83/84 or (more probably) 84/85. Here the continuous narrative of Tacitus ends, and we find ourselves in a historical desert, with few documents, and those of dubious meaning or reliability. On the whole Flavian period the comment of Tacitus is *perdomita Britannia et statim omissa*³ – Britain was thoroughly conquered, and abandoned at once. Excavation at the legionary fortress at Inchtuthil (Perths.), has revealed a single period of occupation, ending in a deliberate dismantling by Roman troops not long after A. D. 86⁴. Similar evidence comes from Fendoch (Perths.), though no date can be fixed for withdrawal⁵. By contrast, forts in southern Scotland reveal two

¹ Calpurnius Agricola and the northern frontier. *Trans. Durham & Northumberland Arch. & Arch. Soc.* 10, 1953, 359–375. – Id., Roman and native, A. D. 122–197. In: I. A. Richmond (ed.), *Roman and Native in North Britain* (Edinburgh 1958) 60–90.

² J. C. Mann and J. P. Gillam (forthcoming, AA4 48, 1970).

³ Tac., *Hist.* I 2.

⁴ Annual summaries in 'Roman Britain in . . .', *JRS* 43, 1953–56, 1966. – I. A. Richmond, The Agricolaean legionary fortress at Inchtuthil. *Limesstudien* (Basel 1959) 152–155. – R. M. Ogilvie – I. A. Richmond (eds.) *Cornelii Taciti, De vita Agricolae* (Oxford 1967) 69–74.

⁵ I. A. Richmond – J. MacIntyre, The Agricolaean fort at Fendoch. *PSAS* 73, 1938/39, 110–154.

Flavian periods, the first ending peacefully, the second in violent destruction⁶. Destruction can be detected as far south as Corbridge (Northumberland), but there the evidence suggests a single Flavian occupation ending in the early years of the second century⁷. Corbridge was rebuilt, but forts further north were abandoned. If, as seems likely, the destructions at Corbridge and at sites in southern Scotland were contemporaneous, we may detect two stages in Roman withdrawal after the departure of Agricola. In the first, ca. 90 A. D., only Strathmore seems to have been abandoned. Evidence is almost entirely lacking in the area of the Forth-Clyde isthmus, although Ardoch may have two or even three pre-Antonine periods⁸. In the second withdrawal, fifteen or so years later, the whole area north of the Tyne-Solway line appears to have been abandoned.

It is clear that the *statim omissa* of Tacitus refers to the earlier withdrawal – and it must surely have been written before Trajan abandoned a far greater part of Britain than Domitian had done⁹. At first glance the Tacitean comment seems deserving of a recent criticism that it is 'exuberant rather than exact'¹⁰. But further reflections may suggest that the comment is in fact a fair statement, if viewed in the correct light. Agricola's conquests had taken the Roman military forces into the Highlands; later dispositions show that there was subsequently no thought of occupying them. With the occupation of Strathmore the Romans effectively controlled the entries to and the exits from the Highland massif, and there seems little doubt that this was, of necessity, the Flavian solution to the British problem. The Highland tribes had been beaten in a pitched battle, and a substantial number of their warriors had been killed. The alternatives were control or occupation, and whatever may have been Agricola's aim, his successors chose control. Even if Inchtuthil was built under Agricola (which is not proved), it may have been his base for occupation further north, rather than what it became, the king-pin of a purely defensive system. Even with the large army available, it is clear that occupation would have been a difficult proposition; troops were still needed throughout the part of the Highland Zone already occupied, and many more would have been needed for a network of forts extending as far north as Cape Wrath.

However, the exigencies of warfare on the continent led to the withdrawal of one of the four legions of Britain, together, we assume, with a substantial number of auxiliaries; this must have happened within a year or two of Agricola's recall¹¹. Already, in 83, detachments from all four legions had been serving on the Rhine¹². For a time Strathmore was held; but by ca. 90 it had become clear that all three remaining legions were needed further south. Inchtuthil was abandoned, and with it Strathmore¹³. Thereafter Roman policy in Britain seems to have been mainly directed to the attempt

⁶ J. Clarke, in: I. A. Richmond op. cit. in note 1.

⁷ I. A. Richmond – J. P. Gillam, AA4 31, 1953, 219.

⁸ Arch. Journ. 93, 1936, 312–314

⁹ R. Syme (Tacitus [Oxford 1958] 118 f.) suggests that early books of the Histories were written before 105. The end of the second Flavian period in Scotland must presumably be placed later than this or under Domitian.

¹⁰ K. Wellesley, Tacitus, The Histories (Harmondsworth 1964) 22.

¹¹ For the date see E. Ritterling, RE XII 1433. – Birley, RBRA 22.

¹² Dessau 9200.

¹³ See note 8.

to find a satisfactory northern frontier which could be held with a total strength of only three legions. The history of the second century is the history of the various experiments which were made; only with Caracalla is something like success apparent. At some date between the departure of Agricola in 85 and the death of Domitian in 96 A. D., one Sallustius Lucullus, governor of Britain, was executed, probably for tampering with the loyalty of the troops under his command¹⁴. Professor Birley has suggested that it may be this episode which explains the presence in Upper Moesia by 103 of the *pedites singulares Britannici*, the personal guard of the governor of Britain¹⁵. The date, he suggests, is probably after the death of Agricola in 93. He has further suggested to us that Sallustius Lucullus is probably the same man as P. Sallustius Blaesus, suffect consul in 89. If we make this identification we solve a problem of the consular fasti, for these are complete for the years 87 to 92 inclusive, and do not include a Lucullus. A consulship in 86 seems too early, one in 93 too late for Lucullus. His place in the history of Britain remains obscure.

There is just the possibility that there was warfare in Britain under Nerva or in the last years of Domitian. An inscription from Cyrene mentions a certain C. Iulius Karus who received unparalleled military honours for his part in a *bellum Britannicum* while commanding *cohors II Asturum*¹⁶. That unit was in Lower Germany in 89, but had been transferred to Britain by 105, and Professor Birley suggested that Karus was decorated by Trajan. Since he wrote, new evidence suggests that this may be too late. From II Asturum Karus moved to the tribunate of legio III Cyrenaica. His tombstone was erected by soldiers from the two legions of Egypt, III Cyrenaica and XXII Deiotariana *missi in provinciam [C]yrenensem dilectus caussa*. A milestone found just outside Cyrene indicates the use of recruits in a programme of road-building: the year is 100 A. D.¹⁷. While there is no need to connect the two inscriptions, it is tempting to do so, and to place the *bellum Britannicum* in the mid or late 90s. If it occurred in the last years of Domitian, it might be the occasion on which the forts of southern Scotland were abandoned, leaving the limit of control somewhere close to the Tyne-Solway line. Of the second period at Newstead Sir Ian Richmond wrote 'It would be rash to carry the occupation much beyond A. D. 100 on existing (archaeological) evidence'¹⁸.

The destruction which ended the second Flavian occupation at forts in southern Scotland is however generally placed in the opening years of the second century. The best evidence for this date comes from Corbridge, where the sole Flavian occupation ends in destruction by fire. A terminus post quem is suggested by a burnt hoard of coins, the latest one of 98 A. D.¹⁹. It was followed by rebuilding, and the defences of the new fort incorporated a coin of 103²⁰. But while Corbridge was rebuilt, forts in Scotland lay empty until the reign of Antoninus Pius.

¹⁴ Suet., Dom. 10; cf. Birley, RBRA 20.

¹⁵ CIL XVI 54.

¹⁶ AE 1951, 88; cf. Birley, RBRA 23.

¹⁷ PBSR 18, 1950, 87.

¹⁸ PSAS 84, 1949-50, 26.

¹⁹ AA₃ 12, 1915, 250-254.

²⁰ I. A. Richmond - J. P. Gillam, AA₄ 33, 1955, 230 f.

Trajan

We may reasonably deduce that the reign of Trajan opened peaceably enough. There is virtually no literary evidence for events in Britain under Nerva and Trajan, but a little information can be gleaned from a handful of inscriptions, of which three military diplomata, of 98, 103 and 105, are amongst the most useful²¹. Those for 98 and 105 probably relate to the Chester legionary command, that for 103 to the Caerleon command²². From these the names and approximate dates of a number of governors can be established:

Metilius Nepos (cos. suff. 91) – 98
T. Avidius Quietus (cos. suff. 93) 98 –
L. Neratius Marcellus (cos. suff. 95) – 103 –

The name of the governor does not survive on the diploma for 105; it will probably not have been Marcellus, for a letter of Pliny addressed to him suggests that he was about to leave for a province in 101²³, presumably replacing Quietus after the usual triennium.

The appointment of Quietus in 98 suggests that Britain was then peaceful, and that Trajan did not anticipate any fighting. Little enough is known about the career of Quietus, but what we know suggests a man of little military distinction, well past middle-age at the time of his appointment²⁴. Pliny records that he was a friend of Thrasea Paetus, who was executed by Nero in 66²⁵. It is therefore difficult to believe that he was born later than A. D. 45, and an earlier date seems far more likely. He will have been consul at the age of 50 or so at least, and in his mid-fifties when appointed to Britain; by contrast, the *viri militares*, destined by the emperor for the highest military commands, held the consulship in their late-thirties²⁶. Agricola was governor of Britain at 38. The slow career of Quietus is suggested by his proconsulship of Achaia – probably early in the 90s²⁷ – and emphasised by his command of legio VIII Augusta when he was about 40²⁸. Clearly such a man is unlikely to have been appointed to Britain at a time of crisis, or when military activity was expected. The only event or policy which we can, with confidence, ascribe to his governorship suggests that the administration of Trajan had no thought of military advance or adventure in Britain, but sought rather to hold the dispositions it had inherited. Rebuilding in stone of legionary fortresses, hitherto built of earth and timber, is first attested at Caerleon in 100, but must have begun a year or two earlier²⁹. Similar work is recorded at Chester in the period 102–117³⁰, and at York in

²¹ CIL XVI 43. 48. 51.

²² E. Birley, Roman garrisons in Wales. *Arch. Camb.* 102, 1952/53, 9–19. – M. G. Jarrett, in: M. G. Jarrett – B. Dobson (eds.), *Britain and Rome* (Kendal 1966) 28 f.

²³ Pliny, Ep. 3, 8. – The beginning of his governorship is the most likely time for him to be able to offer a tribunate.

²⁴ PIR₂ A 1410. – For a list of governors, with dates and references, see A. R. Birley, *The Roman governors of Britain*. *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (Düsseldorf 1967) 63–102.

²⁵ Pliny, Ep. 6, 29, 1.

²⁶ E. Birley, Senators in the emperors' service. *Proc. British Academy* 39, 1954, 197–214.

²⁷ Cf. PIR₂ A 1410.

²⁸ Dessau 6105 (A. D. 82). – It is possible, but unlikely, that his command ended some years before this.

²⁹ RIB 330; note that the date has been altered from *cos. II* (98/99) to *cos. III* (100).

³⁰ RIB 464.

107/108³¹; in both cases the inscription is likely to refer to a gate and presumably to the adjacent walls. We are perhaps justified in suggesting that such a policy is more likely to follow than to precede the loss of southern Scotland. The completion of this rebuilding was slow. It may have been continuing at York under Hadrian³², and ceramic evidence indicates that barracks were being rebuilt at Caerleon many years after the start of the rebuilding programme³³.

Modifications to two or three auxiliary forts are also attested under Trajan. At Gelligaer (Glam.), a change of garrison gave the opportunity to build a new, smaller fort of stone on a site adjacent to the Flavian fort of turf and timber³⁴. The date is 103–111³⁵; similar work may have been in progress at Lancaster³⁶. Trajanic work may also be recorded at Castell Collen (Rads.)³⁷, though most of the rebuilding in stone is apparently later.

Little further is known of Britain under Trajan. Nothing is recorded of the governorship of L. Neratius Marcellus³⁸, and only one further governor, M. Atilius Metilius Bradua is known³⁹. The date of his governorship is not certain, though it should probably be placed in the closing years of Trajan's reign⁴⁰. At some date between 103 and 117 the cohorts I Cugernorum received the battle-honours *Ulpia Traiana*⁴¹, a clear indication that fighting had occurred. The further title *civium Romanorum* was probably won at the same time, or perhaps in the opening years of Hadrian's reign, for the accession of the new emperor in 117 was marked, according to the Augustan History, by rebellions and wars in many parts of the Empire, and 'the Britons could not be kept under Roman rule'⁴².

The end of legio IX Hispana

It is necessary at this point to break the narrative to discuss the fate of legio IX Hispana. In Britain from 43 onwards, it is last attested in 107–8, when it was rebuilding its fortress at York⁴³. A stone inscription set up in Rome under Severus lists the legions then in existence⁴⁴. The legions created before 165 are arranged in geographical order, those raised by Marcus and Severus merely added at the end of the list.

³¹ RIB 665.

³² RIB 666.

³³ Cf. G. Simpson, *Arch. Camb.* 111, 1962, 105. – The rebuilding may have taken even longer than she suggests.

³⁴ RIB 397–399. – Cf. M. G. Jarrett, *Excavations at Gelligaer, Glamorgan, 1963*. *Morgannwg* 8, 1964, 66–69 (= *Proc. Gelligaer Historical Soc.* 2, 1965, 9–11); G. C. Boon, in: V. E. Nash-Williams, *The Roman frontier in Wales* (Cardiff 1969) 88–91.

³⁵ RIB 397–399.

³⁶ RIB 604.

³⁷ RIB 414.

³⁸ Groag, *RE XVI* (1935) 2542–2545; note that he was *cos. II ord.* in 129.

³⁹ See A. R. Birley, *op. cit.* (note 24) 68–69 and 100.

⁴⁰ Two other consuls of 108, Hadrian and Pompeius Falco, were out of favour till the last years of Trajan. Bradua appears to be *comes Hadriani*; he survived into the reign of Pius.

⁴¹ Not recorded on CIL XVI 48 (A. D. 103); first attested on CIL XVI 69 (A. D. 122).

⁴² SHA Hadrian 5, 2.

⁴³ RIB 665.

⁴⁴ Dessau 2288.

IX Hispana is missing. It had thus been disbanded before the end of Severus's reign. The inscription proves nothing more.

Popular legend and incautious scholars have spoken of the destruction of IX Hispana during the British rebellion which marked the beginning of Hadrian's reign. It seems quite certain, as Ritterling and Birley have pointed out, that the legion must have remained in being for some years after the suppression of that rebellion in 119⁴⁵.

The evidence for its survival comes from the careers of a number of its officers, whose service with IX Hispana cannot reasonably be placed before 119. Trying to get the best of both worlds, some scholars have suggested that the legion may have 'lingered on in a weakened state' – still apparently retaining at least its most senior officers. This can hardly be so. To the best of our knowledge there is no evidence whatever to support the suggestion, and no parallel case can be cited. Under the Principate a legion which suffered a severe and bloody defeat was either brought up to strength (as was IX Hispana in 60–61⁴⁶) or disbanded. The evidence indicates that IX Hispana survived into at least the middle years of Hadrian's reign, and we are not justified in supposing that it survived as anything but a full legion.

Birley has instanced the careers of two tribuni laticlavii, L. Aemilius Carus and L. Novius Crispinus, who can scarcely have served with the legion before 120; for Crispinus a date just before 130 might be expected⁴⁷. He also cites the case of M. Cocceius Severus, primus pilus of the legion, who seems unlikely to have reached that post before ca. 125⁴⁸.

To these we may now add the case of a legate of the legion, L. Aninius Sextius Florentinus. He was already known to have moved from the command of IX Hispana to the proconsulship of Narbonensis and thence to the governorship of Arabia⁴⁹. New evidence attests him in this last post in 127 – and not appointed before 125 at the earliest, for his predecessor is attested in that year⁵⁰. While he could conceivably have commanded IX Hispana before 119, it is far more likely that he was with the legion in the period 120–125.

The cumulative effect of these inscriptions is to provide a case, which it seems difficult to deny, for supposing that the legion survived for several years after the British rebellion of 117–9 was crushed.

Whether it survived as part of the garrison of Britain is another question. Birley has indicated various possibilities – transfer to the East under Trajan or in the latter part of Hadrian's reign, or destruction in Britain during fighting in the 130s⁵¹. There is no positive evidence to point to one solution rather than another. We may note however that milecastle 73 (Turf Wall) is of a pattern not paralleled on the Stone Wall; Mr. Stevens suggests that this might be the type of IX Hispana⁵². It would then follow that the legion remained in Britain during the building of Hadrian's Wall. We may also observe that we have remarkably little evidence from the eastern

⁴⁵ Ritterling, RE XII 1668 ff. – Birley, RBRA 25–28.

⁴⁶ Tac., Ann. XIV 38.

⁴⁷ Birley, RBRA 26. – L. Aemilius Carus: PIR₂ A 338. – L. Novius Crispinus: Dessau 1070.

⁴⁸ CIL V 7159.

⁴⁹ CIL III 87 with 14148.10.

⁵⁰ H. J. Polotsky, Israel Explor. Journ. 12, 1962, 259; cited by R. Syme, Historia 14, 1965, 355 f., q. v.

⁵¹ Birley, RBRA 27–28. – Also, The Fate of the Ninth Legion, in: York Commemorative Volume (forthcoming).

⁵² C. E. Stevens, The Building of Hadrian's Wall (Kendal 1966) 84.

provinces for the legions stationed there. XII Fulminata was despatched to Melitene in Cappadocia in 70, and when the *Notitia Dignitatum* was compiled it was still at Melitene. No Cappadocian inscription records its presence in the intervening period. Further, the lack of evidence for IV Scythica (in Syria) is such that we do not even know its station during the principate. Absence of a precise record of IX Hispana therefore does not necessarily mean that it did not serve in the east before its final loss. A dubious record supervenes in a stone from Puteoli, which purports to record one Aelius Asclepiades, apparently from Cilicia, with eight years' service in a legio IX⁵³. He would be a recruit of Hadrianic or later date; but the stone may well be a forgery.

Tiles and mortaria from Nijmegen with stamps of the ninth legion have engendered speculation. If IX Hispana (or a part of it) was needed at Nijmegen, then we must look for an occasion. The most obvious is the second Dacian War, 104–106, when, with the removal of I Minervia to Dacia, the only complete legion remaining in Lower Germany was VI Victrix. The gap at Bonn was partly filled by a detachment of XXII Primigenia from Mainz⁵⁴. It may be suggested that IX Hispana similarly was called upon to hold the lower reaches of the Rhine at Nijmegen. The men will have returned to York before the stone building there was far advanced.

Hadrian and Hadrian's Wall

To suppress the British rebellion which marked the beginning of his reign, Hadrian sent Q. Pompeius Falco⁵⁵. He appears to belong to a group of men who lost Trajan's favour ca. 108 and did not regain it until the closing years of the reign. Since the same pattern can be detected in the career of Hadrian, it seems reasonable to suppose that these men (of whom M. Atilius Bradua may be another) were Hadrian's partisans.

Falco appears to have been successful in restoring order, for coins of 119–128, generally dated to 119, record a victory in Britain⁵⁶. In any case the building of Hadrian's Wall must imply that the rebellion was over, and may suggest that it occurred in the area of the northern frontier. It has left no recognisable archaeological trace. Falco remained in Britain until early in 122, when he was replaced by A. Platorius Nepos⁵⁷, who probably brought with him from Lower Germany legio VI Victrix⁵⁸.

In the same year the emperor himself visited Britain⁵⁹. His visit was apparently followed, if we believe the Augustan History, by the building of Hadrian's Wall. Mr. C. E. Stevens has recently made the attractive suggestion that the building of the Wall was initiated by Pompeius Falco in 120⁶⁰. While this accounts for the absence

⁵³ CIL X 1769.

⁵⁴ Cf. J. C. Mann, *Bonner Jahrb.* 162, 1962, 162–164. – For the Nijmegen material: J. E. Bogaers, *Numaga* 12, 1965, 10 ff.; also *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms* (Beihefte der *Bonner Jahrb.* 19 [Köln-Graz 1967]) 63 ff. For a different view, cf. H. v. Petrikovits – H. Nesselhauf, *Bonner Jahrb.* 167, 1967, 268 ff.

⁵⁵ Dessau 1035. 1036. – CIL XVI 69.

⁵⁶ RIC 577a. b.

⁵⁷ *Cos. suff.* A. D. 119. – Dessau 1052; CIL XVI 69. 70; and many inscriptions from Hadrian's Wall. – SHA Hadrian 4, 2; 15, 2; 23, 4.

⁵⁸ The date of its transfer is unknown; it is attested in Britain under Nepos.

⁵⁹ SHA Hadrian 11, 2.

of inscriptions of Nepos in the eastern sector of the Wall – they occur in the central and perhaps in the western sectors⁶¹ – it poses other problems. In particular it appears to clash with the evidence from other provinces, where frontier construction seems to follow the imperial tour of inspection. We need better evidence than is so far available if we are to believe that the most complex and costly of Hadrian's new frontiers was started before the emperor himself had visited the province where it was erected.

It is clear that the building of the Wall was the main activity of the governorship of Nepos. Not merely was the work on the primary scheme in progress: before that was finished the secondary scheme, involving the forts, the Vallum, the Narrow Wall and the Wallsend extension, was initiated⁶². Such evidence as we have suggests that the signalling structures of the Cumberland coast should be assigned to the primary scheme⁶³, and some at least of the forts in this sector to the secondary scheme.

Mr. Stevens suggests that in the later years of Nepos's governorship (124–125) there was a further crisis on the northern frontier, which led to delays in the building of the Wall, as well as to modifications in its planning⁶⁴. That the building of the Wall provoked violent native opposition seems implicit in the secondary scheme outlined above, whose purpose was clearly to exert closer control over native movement, and to have a fighting garrison nearer to a northern attacker. But the Britannia-coins mentioned by Stevens are more probably to be assigned to the period between the trouble attested in 117 and the beginning of Hadrian's Wall (not later than 122) – the numismatists put them in 119; and 124/125 still seems too early for the disappearance of IX Hispana⁶⁵.

The careers of two equestrian officers, T. Pontius Sabinus and M. Maenius Agrippa have been taken to refer to trouble in Britain in or about the year 130⁶⁶. Both use the phrase *expeditio Britannica*. The career of Maenius Agrippa is not susceptible of close dating⁶⁷, but that of Pontius Sabinus suggests that the *expeditio Britannica* is to be dated ca. 125–130. The native resistance which led to Hadrian's second scheme for the Wall might just be late enough. Sabinus was in command of vexillations, each 1000 strong, from legions VII Gemina, VIII Augusta and XXII Primigenia – the first from Hispania Tarraconensis, the others from Germania Superior. One of these vexillations may be attested by a shield-boss, the property of a soldier in VIII Augusta, found in the Tyne at South Shields, though we cannot exclude the possibility of a later (e. g. Caracallan or Severan) date⁶⁸.

Further modifications to the Wall took place in the later years of Hadrian, though

⁶⁰ C. E. Stevens, *op. cit.* (note 52).

⁶¹ Central sector: e. g. RIB 1634. 1637. 1638. – Western sector: RIB 1935.

⁶² For the probability that these all form part of a single revised scheme, rather than a series of separate modifications, see M. G. Jarrett, *Aktuelle Probleme der Hadriansmauer*. *Germania* 45, 1967, 96–105; Some current problems of Hadrian's Wall. *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies*, Tel Aviv, forthcoming.

⁶³ See especially R. L. Bellhouse, *CW*₂ 54, 1954, 48–50; *CW*₂ 69, 1969, 54–101.

⁶⁴ C. E. Stevens, *op. cit.* (note 52) 50–56.

⁶⁵ See above, p. 184.

⁶⁶ T. Pontius Sabinus: Dessau 2726; cf. M. G. Jarrett, *CW*₂ 65, 1965, 121 f. – M. Maenius Agrippa: Dessau 2735; RIB 823–826.

⁶⁷ Cf. M. G. Jarrett, *CW*₂ 65, 1965, 124–126.

⁶⁸ CIL VII 495.

it will be rash, in the absence of precise evidence, to follow Swinbank and Spaul in assigning these changes to individual governors⁶⁹. At a date in or after 128 Great Chesters was built⁷⁰. At an uncertain date within the reign building was in progress at Hardknot and Maryport (Cumb.); similar work may have taken place at Lancaster⁷¹. The easternmost part of the Turf Wall was rebuilt in stone some time after the construction of the Vallum in this sector; the pottery is nevertheless earlier than that from the first occupation of the Antonine Wall. Also later than the Vallum was the construction of an extra fort at Carrawburgh, perhaps under Sex. Iulius Severus⁷². Under the same governor rebuilding is attested at Bowes⁷³.

A little further evidence is relevant to the later years of the reign. 'Hadrian sent against them (Jewish rebels in Judaea) his best generals, of whom the first was Iulius Severus. He was despatched from Britain, of which he was governor'⁷⁴. The date is 131/132, and the presence of a man of this calibre in Britain suggests that Hadrian's new frontier had not brought peace to the province. The undatable reference by Fronto to heavy casualties in Britain might reasonably relate to the last few years of the reign⁷⁵; at least the Jews are named before the Britons, and the Jewish War was in progress 132–135. Numismatic evidence of 128–138, assigned to 134–138 by RIC, has been thought to indicate further fighting in Britain at this period⁷⁶; but in fact the coins fall into place as a 'commemorative series', recalling the emperor's earlier attention to Britain, and can be paralleled for other provinces⁷⁷. That the legends should not be taken literally is indicated by the reverse legend *ADVENTVI AVG. BRITANNIAE S. C.*⁷⁸; a second imperial visit to Britain is incompatible with what we know of Hadrian's movements and health at this period.

The first Antonine occupation of Scotland

It is then against a background of continuing unrest in northern Britain that we should see the decision of Pius, not later than 139⁷⁹, to abandon Hadrian's frontier and occupy southern Scotland, building a new wall between Forth and Clyde. 'He fought many wars through his legates. He conquered the British through his legate Lollius Urbicus, and built another wall of turf in the territory of displaced barbarians...'⁸⁰. An undated reference of Pausanias probably refers to this advance into Scotland⁸¹;

⁶⁹ B. Swinbank – J. E. H. Spaul, The spacing of forts on Hadrian's Wall. *AA*₄ 29, 1951, 221–238.

⁷⁰ RIB 1736.

⁷¹ Hardknot: *JRS* 55, 1965, 222 no. 7; R. P. Wright, *CW*₂ 65, 1965, 169–175. – Maryport: RIB 851. – Lancaster: RIB 604, which might be Hadrianic.

⁷² RIB 1550: the name has to be restored from the letters *VERO*. R. W. Davies (*Epigr. Stud.* 4 [Düsseldorf 1967] 109 note 25) suggests that it may refer to Cn. Iulius Verus, ca. 155–158 A. D.

⁷³ RIB 739.

⁷⁴ Dio 69, 13, 2.

⁷⁵ Fronto (ed. Naber) p. 218.

⁷⁶ RIC Hadrian 845. 882. 912. 913.

⁷⁷ Cf. RIC II pp. 315 f. 331.

⁷⁸ RIC 882.

⁷⁹ RIB 1147 (Corbridge) is of that year; and re-occupation at Corbridge seems best regarded as a preliminary to the occupation of southern Scotland.

⁸⁰ SHA Antoninus Pius 5, 4.

⁸¹ Pausanias VIII 43, 3–4.

but since it is virtually unintelligible, its date is of little importance. The move forward to the Antonine Wall involved the abandonment of Hadrian's Wall as a frontier line: turrets were given up⁸², and the Vallum was systematically slighted by breaching its mounds and filling its ditch. Of Hadrian's frontier, apparently only forts remained in use, in some cases at least with legionary rather than auxiliary garrisons – an indication of the extent to which the needs of the new frontier stretched the military resources of the province⁸³. The size of these garrisons is of course unknown; they probably constituted only a care-and-maintenance force. And it is not certain that all forts on Hadrian's Wall were occupied even on this basis. Legionary garrisons are also found at Newstead (Roxburghs.), and at Auchendavy on the Antonine Wall.

It is presumably to the early years of the reign of Pius, and not to the end of the second century, that we should assign the systematic dismantling of some parts of the curtain of Hadrian's Wall. As Mr. C. E. Stevens has suggested to us, such destruction is scarcely the work of barbarians. Barbarians will remove portable loot from undefended settlements, and set fire to anything combustible; but it is not to be expected that they will demolish substantial lengths of mortared stone wall 'down to its very foundations.' Such systematic demolition implies a disciplined and well-equipped force: the Roman army.

There is no direct evidence for the date of this destruction of the Wall curtain, but logic suggests that it should be regarded as contemporaneous with the removal of milecastle gates and the slighting of the Vallum, both of which imply that the Wall had ceased to be a barrier. The indirect evidence points to the early years of Pius as the period. Confirmation is provided by the rebuilding of part of the Wall curtain in 158⁸⁴.

The question is how the Wall actually came to be demolished. The answer perhaps lies in the occupation of some of the forts under Pius. It is generally assumed that the auxiliary forts of Hadrian's Wall were built completely of stone, though the assumption is not necessary. It seems possible, in view of the amount of building involved in the new frontier, that (in some cases at least) barracks and other internal buildings may have been of timber under Hadrian – they would have been quicker and cheaper to erect, and would not require the presence of masons; and skilled masons must have been hard-pressed at this time. No evidence of timber barracks has yet been found in forts *per lineam valli*; but it is possible that the evidence would have been removed by the subsequent erection of stone barracks to the same plan. If Hadrianic barracks were of timber, Antonine legionaries and auxiliaries might well have sought and obtained permission to rebuild them in stone – and to use the obsolete Wall as a convenient quarry; even if timber barracks did not exist, re-arrangement of accommodation for new garrisons might account for the removal of stone from the curtain.

Archaeology attests two major occupations of the Antonine Wall, and of forts in southern Scotland – though it is possible that some of the latter will have been occupied as outposts of Hadrian's Wall, at periods when the Antonine Wall was not the frontier. The two periods on the Antonine Wall are not precisely dated by either literary or epigraphic material. There is clear evidence that the earlier occupation

⁸² C. Woodfield, *Six turrets on Hadrian's Wall*. AA4 43, 1965, 87–200.

⁸³ B. Swinbank, *Trans. Durham & Northumberland Arch. & Arch. Soc.* 10, 1953, 382–403.

⁸⁴ RIB 1389.

began under Lollius Urbicus, in the opening years of the reign of Pius⁸⁵; thereafter the evidence is scanty, and often ambiguous.

The withdrawal to Hadrian's Wall

Such evidence as there is suggests that the governorship of Cn. Iulius Verus is of vital importance for the northern frontier. Suffect consul probably in the early 150s, he was subsequently governor, in succession, of Lower Germany, Britain and Syria⁸⁶; he died, while consul-designate for the second time, in 179. He was certainly in Britain in 158, and it appears likely that he arrived in 155 or 156, after a fairly brief period in Lower Germany. Trouble may have arisen before his arrival in Britain; coins of 155 have been taken to imply a Roman victory, not necessarily correctly⁸⁷. A number of important (if inexplicit) inscriptions attest the activity of Verus in Britain. One of these, found in the Tyne at Newcastle, indicates that he brought from Germany (perhaps at the time of his own appointment) reinforcements for the three legions of Britain⁸⁸. We cannot necessarily assume that these are trained men from the legions of the Two Germanies, brought over to replace men lost in recent serious fighting⁸⁹. This is one possible explanation; but the inscription may imply the raising of new recruits in Germany, presumably because recruits in sufficient quality or numbers were not available in Britain; or it may refer to the return to Britain of detachments of the legions of Britain which had been serving on the Rhine, if *conrbuti* is merely a bungling of *conducti* or the like.

The other inscriptions of this governorship are from Corbridge, Brough-on-Noe (Derbys.), Birrens and possibly Carrawburgh, all naming Iulius Verus (except possibly that from Carrawburgh), and from the curtain of Hadrian's Wall near Heddon-on-the-Wall⁹⁰; this last inscription is dated to 158, although it mentions no governor; it records rebuilding of the curtain. The inscriptions from Birrens and Brough-on-Noe certainly indicate rebuilding at those forts – at Birrens in 158 – though the significance of the fragmentary Corbridge inscription is not clear. It is certainly not a major building inscription – and archaeology has not provided a building period to which it could be assigned; other inscriptions suggest that the two Antonine periods at Corbridge begin with Lollius Urbicus in 139–140 and with Calpurnius Agricola, in 163 if the restoration is correct⁹¹. The Iulius Verus inscription is usually interpreted as a dedication to Mars Ultor, but the evidence for such a restoration is inadequate. The original photograph, and our own examination of the stone, indicate that the letters *VL(tori)* should really be read *VE(xillatio)*⁹². In form the stone closely resembles

⁸⁵ E. g. RIB 2139. 2191; cf. note 80.

⁸⁶ Dessau 8974 + 1057. – Cf. PIR₂ I 618; A. R. Birley, *op. cit.* (note 24) 72 f.

⁸⁷ RIC Antoninus Pius 930. 934. – The Britannia type may merely indicate production in Britain, see C. H. V. Sutherland, *Coinage and currency in Roman Britain* (Oxford-London 1937) 30. – Cf. M. Todd, *Num. Chron.* 76, 1966, 147–153.

⁸⁸ RIB 1322 = Dessau 9116.

⁸⁹ E. g. G. P. Welch, *Britannia* (London 1963. 1965) 187–189.

⁹⁰ Corbridge: RIB 1132. – Brough-on-Noe: RIB 283. – Birrens: RIB 2110. – Carrawburgh: RIB 1550; cf. note 72. – Near Heddon-on-the-Wall: RIB 1389.

⁹¹ Lollius Urbicus: RIB 1147. 1148. – Calpurnius Agricola: RIB 1149; cf. AA₄ 15, 1938, 284.

⁹² AA₃ 8, 1912, 188. – A print of the original photograph is in the possession of Mr. J. P. Gillam, in an album presented to him by Professor Donald Atkinson.

RIB 1154; both could, at different periods, have fronted the dais in the sacellum of the headquarters-building of the Antonine fort. At Brough-on-Noe the fort was being rebuilt in stone after a long abandonment; it is not certain whether we should assume from this that there had recently been a rising in the southern Pennines, or simply regard it as an indication that troop-movements were taking place.

Dr. Anne Robertson has recently suggested that the occupation periods at Birrens (Dumfries.) are parallel with those of the forts of Scotland, rather than with those of Hadrian's Wall⁹³. This might be thought to indicate that the inscription of 158, recording building by cohorts II Tungrorum, can be used to date the beginning of the second Antonine occupation of Scotland. The end of Antonine I will have occurred a few years earlier, probably just before the appointment of Iulius Verus. The reinforcements from Germany will, whatever their precise character, reveal a strengthening of the army of Britain.

But that strengthening is in the area of Hadrian's Wall, not in Scotland, which argues against a beginning for Antonine II under Verus. Other, and graver problems are involved in that hypothesis, for it is certain that this governorship marks the beginning of Period I B on Hadrian's Wall. The most obvious difficulty is, or should be, that two Walls will be occupied simultaneously. This makes no real sense; we do not expect the Romans to think in terms of expendable garrisons in Scotland whose only function is to delay invaders who will ultimately be checked at the line of Hadrian's Wall. There is no parallel for this double line on any other frontier, and it seems certain that the army in Britain cannot have been large enough to garrison an area from the Antonine Wall to Derbyshire. In all logic, the two Walls should not be occupied simultaneously.

The original publication of the report on recent excavations at Mumrills on the Antonine Wall suggested that Antonine II must have ended ca. 170–180⁹⁴. Mr. Gillam has now reconsidered the coarse pottery⁹⁵ and believes that the latest vessels from Period II are significantly later than those from Period I B in the turrets and mile-castles of Hadrian's Wall – in effect a return to his earlier views⁹⁶. It should be stressed that the forts of Hadrian's Wall must be left out of account, since they may have been occupied at periods when the frontier lay further north – as some of them certainly were during the first occupation of the Antonine Wall. Nor is it certain that all forts will have the same history. As a result of the revision of the pottery dating – and we stress that this is its relative dating; for our purposes the absolute date is less important – it is now possible, and indeed necessary, to place Antonine Wall Period II after Hadrian's Wall Period I B and before Hadrian's Wall Period II. The actual dates of these various phases we shall consider in due course.

If Antonine Wall II follows Hadrian's Wall I B, and the latter begins ca. 158, it must follow that at this period at least Birrens was held as an outpost of Hadrian's Wall. Similarly, it is now clear that the dedication *numinibus Augustorum* by cohorts IV Gallorum at Risingham cannot date to the reign of Pius⁹⁷. A fresh study of this

⁹³ A. Robertson, *Trans. Dumfries. & Galloway Nat. Hist. & Ant. Soc.* 41, 1962/63, 133–155.

⁹⁴ *PSAS* 94, 1960/61, 86–130.

⁹⁵ See note 2. An early date is still preferred for the Samian ware.

⁹⁶ *Op. cit.* in note 1.

⁹⁷ RIB 1227.

dedicatory formula shows that it must refer to a plurality of reigning emperors. Since the dedication cannot date to the reign of Severus or later (when another garrison is known), it must belong to either 161–169 or 176–180. Risingham thus falls into place as another outpost of Hadrian's Wall in Period I B.

The return to Hadrian's frontier did not mark the beginning of a period of peace for Britain. The next governor whose career survives in detail, M. Statius Priscus, was clearly one of the outstanding military figures of his day⁹⁸. Consul ordinarius in 159, he governed Upper Moesia before coming to Britain, which he can scarcely have reached before 161; soon after the outbreak of the Parthian War he was transferred to Cappadocia. The presence of a man of his stature in Britain must surely indicate that the imperial government still expected trouble in the province.

Trouble there certainly was early in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. In its usual list of the disorders facing a new regime, the Augustan History tells us that in 161 there were threats of war in Parthia, Germany and Britain, 'and against the Britons a certain Calpurnius Agricola was sent'⁹⁹. Little is known about this man¹⁰⁰. In Britain he is attested at Corbridge between 161 and 166, perhaps in 163, where his work apparently represents the beginning of the second Antonine occupation¹⁰¹. He is also named on two altars from Carvoran erected by cohorts I Hamiorum sagittariorum, the only unit of archers attested in the army of Britain¹⁰². The unit is also recorded at Carvoran in the last years of Hadrian and at Bar Hill on the Antonine Wall, probably during the second Antonine occupation¹⁰³. Much has been written recently in attempts to date Antonine Wall II from the movements of this unit and of cohorts I Baetiasorum c. R., the other known garrison of Bar Hill¹⁰⁴. These arguments have not carried conviction. For if I Hamiorum was at Carvoran under Hadrian and in the opening years of Marcus, it is likely to have remained there throughout the reign of Pius; Antonine Wall II should not therefore begin before 163 or later. Calpurnius Agricola is also attested at Ribchester, Chesterholm and possibly at Hardknot, and a dedication from Ilkley (Yorks.) to Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (161–169) might also belong to this governorship¹⁰⁵. Possibly relevant is an inscription from Kirksteads (Cumb.), set up *ob res trans vallum prospere gestas*¹⁰⁶; though not closely datable, Period I B seems the most probable period for its erection. It cannot be later than the creation of praetorian Britannia Inferior.

Some years ago Mr. J. P. Gillam suggested that it was under Calpurnius Agricola that Hadrian's Wall was re-occupied¹⁰⁷. His views have never received the attention which they deserved, though the hypothesis implicit in the title of his paper must now

⁹⁸ Dessau 1092. 2311. – SHA Marcus 9; Verus 7.

⁹⁹ SHA Marcus 8, 4.

¹⁰⁰ Cos. suff. 158 or 159. – PIR₂ C 249; A. R. Birley, *op. cit.* (note 24) 73–74.

¹⁰¹ RIB 1149.

¹⁰² RIB 1792. 1809.

¹⁰³ Carvoran: RIB 1778. – Bar Hill: RIB 2167. 2172. K. A. Steer (AA₄ 42, 1964, 26–27) argues unconvincingly for its presence in Antonine I. Cohors I Baetiasorum c. R. was certainly at Bar Hill during the reign of Pius (RIB 2170).

¹⁰⁴ For this unit see M. G. Jarrett, *op. cit.* (note 22) 37–39.

¹⁰⁵ Ribchester: RIB 589. – Chesterholm: RIB 1703. – Hardknot: RIB 793. – Ilkley: RIB 636.

¹⁰⁶ RIB 2034.

¹⁰⁷ Gillam, *op. cit.* (note 1).

be modified. The significance of RIB 1389 is clearly that the curtain of Hadrian's Wall was being re-furbished under Iulius Verus; and this must surely imply that the Wall was being re-occupied as the northern frontier of the Empire. Just as the destruction of the curtain seems best associated with the slighting of the Vallum and the abandonment of the milecastles, so the re-cutting of the Vallum and the re-hanging of milecastle gates ought to be contemporaneous with the restoration of the curtain. It is difficult to see the logic of rebuilding of the Wall if the milecastles are to be without garrisons and their gates to be open. It is of course possible that the changes initiated by Iulius Verus were not completed before the appointment of Calpurnius Agricola. The new frontier scheme initiated by Verus was not identical with that operative at the death of Hadrian. As we have seen, Birrens on the west and Risingham on the east were apparently added to the outposts of Hadrian's Wall. Under Calpurnius Agricola at least two of the Stanegate forts, Chesterholm and Corbridge, were rebuilt¹⁰⁸; Hadrian had abandoned both when the forts were added to the Wall, ca. 124/125, though Corbridge had been held during the first Antonine occupation of Scotland.

For the remainder of the reign of Marcus, little is known. Several governors are attested or may be inferred¹⁰⁹, but only two incidents are recorded. Trouble appears to have been imminent in 170–172¹¹⁰. A few years later, after the Marcomannic War (175 A. D.), 'the Iazyges (came to terms with Rome) . . . and . . . promptly furnished in accordance with the treaty 8000 cavalry, of whom he (sc. Marcus) sent 5500 to Britain'¹¹¹. We do not know whether these 5500 horsemen were organised in standard units of 500 men apiece, or whether they provided recruits for existing units. A *numerus equitum Sarmatarum* is recorded in Britain in the third century (*ala* is presumably unofficial, judging by the *cuneus* of the Notitia); but it is the only such unit. It seems unlikely that all the others have escaped record, if they existed, and we may reasonably suppose that a high proportion of the 5500 were drafted to existing units. The imperial government may have believed that the British garrison was seriously below strength, or it may have thought an island province the best place for a group of men who were hostages as well as soldiers. We have no evidence for men or units being withdrawn from Britain for service in the Danube campaigns, but such withdrawals are not inherently improbable.

Under Commodus, evidence becomes more plentiful. Inscriptions are rare, as they are throughout the empire: clearly the rehabilitation by Severus of the memory of Commodus did not lead to the re-erection of many of the inscriptions thrown down after his condemnation. However, both Dio and the Augustan History supply important information. The first recorded event of the reign was a serious disaster for Rome. 'The greatest (of the wars of Commodus) was the war in Britain. The tribes in the island crossed the Wall which separated them from the Roman forts. They did much damage and killed a certain general and the troops that he had with him. Commodus became alarmed and sent Ulpus Marcellus against them. Marcellus ruthlessly

¹⁰⁸ Chesterholm: RIB 1703. – Corbridge: RIB 1149.

¹⁰⁹ For a list see A. R. Birley, *op. cit.* (note 24).

¹¹⁰ SHA Marcus 22, 1.

¹¹¹ Dio 71, 16.

put down the barbarians in Britain'¹¹². Regrettably, Dio's text does not survive in its original form, and what has been left to us by the Byzantine epitomator poses serious problems. The word translated 'general' is *στρατηγός*; this would normally mean the governor, rather than a legionary legate, but certainty is impossible in the state of Dio's text. One cannot help suspecting that he may have named the general in question, and described him as *ὁ στρατηγός*, in which case we should certainly be correct in regarding the man as governor. But we cannot now exclude the possibility that it is a legionary legate who is in question. If the governor was killed, we have an event without precedent in the history of Roman Britain. Leaving this aside, the crossing of 'the Wall' by the northern tribes clearly constitutes a major disaster. Regrettably, the epitome of Dio gives no hint as to which Wall was crossed; but if the interpretations which we have advanced above are correct, the Wall will have been that of Hadrian, and the disaster will mark, for milecastles and turrets, the end of Period I B. The problem of the forts is more complex, and cannot be solved with the evidence currently available.

The second occupation of the Antonine Wall

To resolve what was, on any showing, probably the most serious crisis since the Boudican rebellion, Ulpus Marcellus was appointed as governor. His success is indicated by coins recording a victory in Britain. The epigraphic evidence relating to him is more difficult to assess. In addition to the account of Dio which we have quoted, he is mentioned on three inscriptions from forts on Hadrian's Wall. Two from Chesters name him as legate under a single emperor, and record building by the *ala II Asturum*¹¹³. The unit is attested as the third century garrison of Chesters. This creates difficulties for those who assign the end of Period I B to a great defeat in 197. An argument used for that interpretation is that the third century garrisons on Hadrian's Wall are not the same as those of the late second century; the value of this argument is nullified by the absence of inscriptions of Commodus. On our interpretation the two inscriptions from Chesters pose no problems, for we should expect that in many cases the third century garrison would prove to have been installed by Ulpus Marcellus. The third inscription, from Benwell, creates difficulties for any interpretation, for it mentions two emperors, though Marcellus was clearly not appointed until the sole reign of Commodus¹¹⁴. Some have postulated two governorships by the same man, one just before and one just after 180; others, more ingenious, argue for a later homonymous governor, probably in 211/212, and attribute to this man the Chesters inscriptions also. This hypothesis creates certain difficulties of its own. Economy demands that we reject it until further evidence is forthcoming. It is possible that Tineius Longus of the Benwell inscription became *quaestor designatus* before the death of Marcus Aurelius, but did not erect his dedication to Anociticus until after the appointment of Marcellus. He may have been retained in his equestrian command as a result of the crisis which led to the appointment of Marcellus. One problem still

¹¹² Dio 72, 8, 1-5.

¹¹³ RIB 1463. 1464.

¹¹⁴ RIB 1329.

survives, for the excavators believed that the temple in which his altar was erected was destroyed at the end of Period I B.

We have already seen that the warfare which led to the appointment of Ulpus Marcellus must have marked the end of Hadrian's Wall Period I B. If we accept this, we must also accept that Marcellus was responsible for initiating the second occupation of the Antonine Wall. This accords well with the relative dating of the coarse pottery from the two structures, once we accept that the forts on Hadrian's Wall might be held in periods when that Wall was not in commission as a frontier. It also accords with the coins of Marcus and Commodus from sites in Scotland.

One inscription, from Castlecary on the Antonine Wall, lends support to the suggestion that occupation on that Wall continues after the time of Marcellus¹¹⁵. It is a dedication to Mercury by soldiers of legio VI Victrix, *cives Italici et Norici*. This must indicate the transfer to VI Victrix of a vexillation from II Italica, the one legion of Noricum¹¹⁶. II Italica was, as its name implies and as other evidence indicates, raised in Italy, as were most new legions¹¹⁷; future recruits would normally be natives of the province where the legion was stationed. In other words a body of *Italici et Norici* is only likely to be found within twenty-five years of the formation of the legion in 165, perhaps late rather than early within this period, since the proportion of Norici will have been small in the early years. The general killed ca. 181 was not alone; he lost 'the troops that he had with him'; be he governor or legionary legate, many of those troops are likely to have been from VI Victrix, the legion nearest to the northern frontier; the Castlecary inscription suggests that the legion was brought up to strength with trained men from Noricum. Such men can hardly have been spared from the Danube until a few years after 180.

Soon after the victories of Marcellus, commemorated by coins of 184/185, and by the imperial title *Britannicus*, we find trouble of a new kind in Britain¹¹⁸. Perennis, praefectus praetorio, had apparently placed equestrians in command of legionary troops; the army mutinied and sent a deputation (of 1500 men, according to Dio) to Rome, where their complaints led to the fall and death of Perennis¹¹⁹. As reported to us by the Augustan History, Herodian and Dio, the incident seems improbable; but possibly there were already British soldiers at Rome who took up the cause of their fellow-soldiers. H.-G. Pflaum has recently suggested that the incident which led to the mutiny was the suppression of a rising in Brittany, when L. Artorius Castus, previously praefectus castrorum of legio VI Victrix was placed in command of two of the British legions¹²⁰. If we accept this suggestion, it will be necessary to ignore the association in the Augustan History of the British war (presumably under Ulpus Marcellus) and the supercession of the senatorial legati.

¹¹⁵ RIB 2138.

¹¹⁶ Cf. E. Birley, in: Beiträge zur älteren europäischen Kulturgeschichte (Festschrift für Rudolf Egger I [Klagenfurt 1952]) 178. 183–185.

¹¹⁷ AE 1956, 123. – Cf. J. C. Mann, The raising of new legions under the Principate. *Hermes* 91, 1963, 483–489.

¹¹⁸ Coins: RIC Commodus 437. 440. 451. – *Britannicus*: Attested in 184 by RIC 437. 440.

¹¹⁹ SHA Commodus 6, 2; 8, 4. – Dio 72, 9, 2–4. – Herodian I 9, 2–9. – For a discussion of the problem, see F. Millar, *A study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford 1964) 128–130.

¹²⁰ H.-G. Pflaum, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le haut-empire romain* (Paris 1960–61) 535–537.

Few would rush to defend the Augustan History as a reliable historical source, though the second century lives clearly derive some of their factual content from a fairly competent history (now lost) written in the early third century. In this case the evidence is not sufficiently strong to justify a rejection of the story in the Augustan History: Artorius Castus cannot be dated, though it is tempting to follow Pflaum in thinking that the Armorican rising might be that of Maternus in 185/186. But this will not fit the chronology well, for Perennis fell in 185.

Soon after the fall of Perennis, P. Helvius Pertinax was appointed as governor of Britain¹²¹. Clearly his first task will have been to restore discipline and morale in the army. For this task he was apparently well-suited by a long career in the emperors' service, both as an equestrian and as a senator. He had already governed four consular provinces – though possibly he held the two Moesias together – before his appointment to Britain¹²². Despite this experience, his governorship does not seem to have been a success. One legion (we do not know which) mutinied, and Pertinax almost lost his life. He finally asked Commodus to relieve him of his post because the army was hostile to him¹²³. To judge from his brief career as emperor, the hostility may well have resulted from an attempt to restore discipline too rapidly.

The reign of Severus

The death of Commodus on the last day of 192 was followed by a period of political confusion, in which Britain was inevitably involved by the claim of its legate, D. Clodius Albinus, to the throne¹²⁴. He had been appointed before the death of Commodus, though we do not know the precise date. The confusion lasted until the ultimate triumph of Severus in February 197, when he defeated Albinus at the battle of Lugdunum. According to accepted interpretations, based largely on a single inscription found at Birdoswald in 1929¹²⁵, the departure of the army of Britain with Albinus was the signal for an invasion by the northern tribes, involving widespread destruction.

The extent of this destruction has been increasingly challenged in recent years, and several scholars have expressed verbal doubts about the dating of events normally assigned to 196/197¹²⁶; but, as far as we are aware, the last forty years have seen no critical re-examination of the evidence. Closely linked with this interpretation is the view that Hadrian's Wall was occupied as the northern frontier down to 196/197, the destruction assigned to that date marking the end of Period I B.

We have already seen that the evidence from the forts on Hadrian's Wall must be discounted, since they may be occupied at a time when the Wall is not in service as the

¹²¹ SHA Pertinax 3, 5–10. – For his career see PIR₂ H 73.

¹²² SHA Pertinax 2, 10–11.

¹²³ SHA Pertinax 3, 10.

¹²⁴ PIR₂ C 1186.

¹²⁵ RIB 1909.

¹²⁶ Note, e. g. the reviews of Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Eburacum Roman York (1962) by D. Baatz, *Gnomon* 36, 1964, 87–90; S. S. Frere, *Arch. Journ.* 118, 1961, 256–257 and H. Schönberger, *Germania* 42, 1964, 320–324. – The point, for York, was first made by G. Webster, *Yorkshire Arch. Journ.* 39, 1956–58, 389–390.

northern frontier. We have also seen that the evidence best fits the dating of Period I B (in turrets and milecastles) to 158 – ca. 181, with the Antonine Wall being re-occupied under Ulpius Marcellus. Other scholars have pointed out that there is no evidence for destruction at Chester or York at this date¹²⁷. We must now look at the remaining evidence, which is mainly in the form of inscriptions relating to the rebuilding of forts. This is likely to be more helpful than evidence of destruction, for that destruction will not necessarily be susceptible of precise dating, and it will not always be possible to distinguish accidental from deliberate burning.

Dio tells us that there were 150000 soldiers on each side at the battle of Lugdunum¹²⁸. While this figure is, in the manner of ancient authors, manifestly far too high, it seems clear that Albinus must have taken with him to Gaul most of the army of Britain. Soon after the battle must have come the appointment of Virius Lupus as governor of Britain; if we assume the normal triennium – and long governorships were by now increasingly rare – he will have left Britain ca. A. D. 200.

Within this period a certain amount of activity is attested in Britain, and several inscriptions mention Lupus by name. Rebuilding is attested at Ilkley in 197/198, and probably at Brough-under-Stainmore in the same period¹²⁹. Dated only by the reference to Virius Lupus is the rebuilding of a bath-house at Bowes after destruction by fire – which could be accidental¹³⁰. Less certain is the date of work by a vexillation of VI Victrix at Corbridge¹³¹: attribution to this period depends on the restoration of the name of Virius Lupus from the letters *LV*, and certainty is not possible. Also relevant is a passage of Dio: 'Since the Caledonians did not keep their promises and made ready to assist the Maeatae, and since at that time Severus was devoting himself to the Parthian War, Lupus was forced to purchase peace from the Maeatae for a very large sum, receiving back a few prisoners'¹³². The passage is a detached excerpt, depending for close dating on internal evidence. We have followed Hübner in reading Πάροικος for πάροικος; the latter makes no sense at all, for the only war 'near home' was that against Albinus which ended at the battle of Lugdunum, and Lupus can scarcely have come to Britain before the defeat of Albinus. The Parthian War, 198–200, is contemporary with the governorship of Virius Lupus; no other Lupus is recorded in Britain under Severus.

Dio tells us a little more about the Maeatae: 'The Maeatae live next to the wall which cuts the island in half, and the Caledonians are beyond them'¹³³. The Wall in question is that of Pius; few would contend that we are to think of the Maeatae close to Hadrian's Wall. There is little to support the view that the Maeatae lay south of the Antonine Wall. The reference here suggests that the Antonine Wall was still occupied early in the reign of Severus, for Maeatae were more likely to cause trouble there than further south, and the reference is to 'the Wall', and not 'a former Wall'.

The events described by Dio pose several problems. Apparently some Roman official

¹²⁷ Chester: I. A. Richmond – R. P. Wright, *JRS* 39, 1949, 102. 114. – York: See note 126.

¹²⁸ Dio 75, 6, 1.

¹²⁹ Ilkley: RIB 637. – Brough-under-Stainmore: RIB 757.

¹³⁰ RIB 730.

¹³¹ RIB 1163.

¹³² Dio 75, 5, 4.

¹³³ Dio 76, 12, 1.

had made a treaty with the Caledonians, but not with the Maeatae. The Maeatae had initiated the opposition to Rome. It may be that, as Mr. Gillam has suggested¹³⁴, the territory of the Maeatae in Fife and Strathmore was regarded as part of the Roman province in this period; in this case Virius Lupus was faced with a rebellion rather than an external war. We cannot now name the official who had made a treaty with the Caledonians. Albinus seems to be the most likely, in view of the reference to the Parthian War. It is then reasonable to interpret this as a treaty made by Albinus but not broken until 198–200: our source does not date the breach of the treaty 196/197, when Albinus and the army were in Gaul. Nor is it logical to do so; if Britain was in fact suffering from barbarian invasion in February 197, it is difficult to understand why Severus did not either visit the province himself, or at least send sufficient troops to deal with the crisis. Doubtless reinforcements did accompany the army on its return from Lugdunum; it was clearly not under imperial orders to attack a combination of the Caledonians and Maeatae, and we must presume that many of its casualties had been replaced by new recruits. The opposition may well be related to the weakness of Roman forces in 198–200, even if it cannot be linked to the absence of the Roman army in 196/197. The account of Dio, which is manifestly incomplete in its present form, does not suggest that this trouble was serious. The Maeatae had evidently taken a few prisoners, but there is no indication that they had effected an invasion; compared with the events of 181, as described by Dio, or with what we may reasonably postulate for 205–207, this is very small beer. The purchasing of peace from the Maeatae 'for a very large sum' may, in reality, be the payment of subsidy, and mark a diplomatic revolution. The treaty with the Caledonians had presumably included an element of subsidy: they had failed to keep that treaty, and Roman support was now switched to the Maeatae. The first fighting in 209 was apparently against the Caledonians, and the Maeatae were not involved until the following year¹³⁵.

It may however be claimed that the evidence for the rebuilding of forts in the Pennines in 197–200 suggests that there had been a rebellion of the Brigantes during the absence of Albinus and the army. Such an interpretation is not essential: the attested rebuilding is merely an indication that forts were being re-occupied or repaired under Lupus. We may compare the similar evidence for the reign of Severus Alexander.

The successor of Lupus (ca. 200–202) is not known; there is evidence which suggests that ca. 202 the *legatus iuridicus*, M. Antius Crescens Calpurnianus, was acting governor¹³⁶. For how long he served in this capacity we cannot say, but we should expect it to be a period of months rather than years.

The next recorded event is the rebuilding of barracks at Brough-by-Bainbridge in 205 under C. Valerius Pudens, *amplissimus consularis*¹³⁷. Pudens is not otherwise attested in Britain, though he may have been mentioned on an inscription from Corbridge, where the name of Alfenus Senecio is usually restored¹³⁸; this records the rebuilding

¹³⁴ Gillam, *Roman and Native*, op. cit. (note 1).

¹³⁵ This assumes that the Maeatae are outside the province.

¹³⁶ PIR 2 A 781. – Dr. John Morris has suggested to us that he may have held office under Commodus. Cf. now A. R. Birley, op. cit. (note 24) 75–77.

¹³⁷ AE 1963, 281. – Cf. A. R. Birley, op. cit. (note 24) 79. 101.

¹³⁸ RIB 1151.

of a granary by a vexillation of an unknown legion. The inscription from Brough-by-Bainbridge presumably comes from late in the governorship of Pudens, for his successor, L. Alfenus Senecio, is attested rebuilding a gate and walls *vetustate dilapsis* at Risingham in 205/207¹³⁹.

Epigraphic evidence attests rebuilding elsewhere on and close to Hadrian's Wall under Senecio. At Chesters, as at Risingham, he is associated with procurator Oclatinus Adventus¹⁴⁰; at Birdoswald a granary was rebuilt by *cohortes I Aelia Dacorum et I Thracum c. R.*¹⁴¹. Work on the defences at Brough-by-Bainbridge continued, and other work is recorded at Greta Bridge¹⁴². Quarrying near Brampton by a detachment of II Augusta is perhaps to be dated to 207, and if so, therefore to the governorship of Senecio¹⁴³. Severan inscriptions, not precisely dated, also come from Housesteads, Birdoswald, High Rochester, Manchester, Ribchester, Caerleon, and Caernarvon¹⁴⁴.

The inscriptions of Senecio would in themselves provide a strong argument against the destruction of Hadrian's Wall in 197; it is almost inconceivable that no repairs would be effected for eight years or more if such damage had occurred. We have already seen that some of the damage normally dated to 197 will be more reasonably interpreted as the work of Roman troops at an earlier date, and that other damage probably belongs to ca. 181. A careful examination of the evidence will probably encourage us to believe that such damage as did occur under Severus happened at a date some ten years later than is normally supposed – and that Corbridge was perhaps the most southerly site damaged by an enemy attack whose greatest achievement was the destruction of installations on the Antonine Wall.

The number of coins found on the Antonine Wall is too small to allow us to base conclusions on the fact that the latest is one of the reign of Commodus. The great drop in output of coinage at the end of Pius's reign, and the continuing decline thereafter, must be taken into account¹⁴⁵. The Antonine Wall has so far produced about 130 coins, nearly the same number as was found in the 1898 excavations at Housesteads¹⁴⁶. The latter series has a gap between Commodus and Elagabalus; some theorists might postulate a break in the occupation to correspond. But a fragmentary inscription happens to attest military building at Housesteads under Severus¹⁴⁷. We must beware of being misled by the coin-evidence from the Antonine Wall.

A serious attack on the Roman province is amply attested by the historians and confirmed by inscriptions. Dio tells us, in a passage datable to 206/207 and referring to Bulla Felix, that 'Severus was angry at the thought that though he was winning wars in

¹³⁹ RIB 1234.

¹⁴⁰ RIB 1462. – For Oclatinus Adventus see: H.-G. Pflaum, *op. cit.* (note 120) no. 247.

¹⁴¹ RIB 1909. – The cohorts I Aelia Dacorum is copiously attested as the third-century garrison in Birdoswald by a series of altars dedicated to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus (RIB 1874–1896). Cohors I Thracum c. R. was based at Bowes, where it rebuilt a granary under Virius Lupus (RIB 730) and some other structure under Alfenus Senecio (RIB 740). – There is nothing to support the notion that both units were in garrison at Birdoswald in the third century.

¹⁴² Brough-by-Bainbridge: RIB 722. 723. – Greta Bridge: RIB 746.

¹⁴³ RIB 1009.

¹⁴⁴ Housesteads: RIB 1612. – Birdoswald: RIB 1910. – High Rochester: RIB 1277. – Manchester: RIB 581. – Ribchester: RIB 591. – Caerleon: RIB 333. – Caernarvon: RIB 430.

¹⁴⁵ C. H. V. Sutherland, *op. cit.* (note 87) 33.

¹⁴⁶ PSAS 94, 1960/61, 156 f.; AA₂ 25, 1904, 297 f.

¹⁴⁷ RIB 1612.

Britain through others, he had shown himself no match for a robber in Italy¹⁴⁸. We may reasonably link this with an inscription of Alfenus Senecio from Benwell, a dedication to Victoria Augg. by ala I Ast(urum)¹⁴⁹. Also relevant may be an altar to dea Victoria Brigantia from Greetland (Yorks.), dated to 208¹⁵⁰. Nor may we overlook the possibility that the 'war-memorial' from Jarrow belongs to the reign of Severus rather than that of Hadrian – the two fragments (if they belong to the same monument, which is by no means certain) could relate to the imperial campaigns of 208–211; but a date under Caracalla is equally possible¹⁵¹.

Herodian, introducing those campaigns, makes it clear that Britain had suffered from a barbarian invasion; the army in Britain was not adequate for the emergency, and the governor (certainly Alfenus Senecio) appealed for reinforcements or an imperial expedition¹⁵²; though generally less reliable, he is here to be preferred to what survives of Dio's text, where the only reasons for the imperial campaigns are the corrupting influence of city-life on Severus's sons and of idleness on the armies¹⁵³. Herodian provides more credible motives for the imperial visit, not to be dismissed as merely official propaganda. They may be linked with the Benwell dedication to Victoria Augustorum and with Dio's references to British victories in 206/207. We may reasonably deduce from the foregoing evidence that after the commencement of hostilities in 205/206 the Romans were at first successful; in 207 or 208 however there must have been a setback which led to the appeal for assistance. The departure of the emperors in 208 is indicated by coins of both Severus and Caracalla with the legend *PROF(ectio) AVGG*¹⁵⁴. A coin of Caracalla has the legend *TRAIECTVS*, with troops crossing a pontoon bridge¹⁵⁵.

The garbled story of the imperial journey given by Herodian could be taken to indicate that the expeditionary force was drawn from all parts of Britain¹⁵⁶; but commonsense suggests, and inscriptions testify, that it contained troops from other parts of the empire. A centurion of the praetorian guard (and probably most of the guard also) took part, as did (probably) a detachment from an unknown legion with the titles *pia fidelis*¹⁵⁷. A vexillation of legio XXII Primigenia, commemorated on an inscription from the Falkirk area, may belong to this period¹⁵⁸; men from this legion are also recorded at Piercebridge (Co. Durham), perhaps a decade later, in circumstances which cannot now be established¹⁵⁹. We may note also the brigaded vexillations from II and III Italicae, implied by an inscription from Manchester; this seems the most likely date¹⁶⁰.

¹⁴⁸ Dio 76, 10, 6.

¹⁴⁹ RIB 1337.

¹⁵⁰ RIB 627.

¹⁵¹ RIB 1051; cf. E. Birley, *Research on Hadrian's Wall* (Kendal 1961) 159.

¹⁵² Herodian III 14, 1.

¹⁵³ Dio 76, 11, 1.

¹⁵⁴ RIC Severus 225a. 780; Caracalla 107. 108. 431.

¹⁵⁵ RIC Caracalla 441.

¹⁵⁶ Herodian III 14, 3.

¹⁵⁷ Dessau 2089. 9123.

¹⁵⁸ RIB 2216.

¹⁵⁹ RIB 1022. 1026; AE 1967, 259. – Cf. E. Birley, *Troops from the Two Germanies in Roman Britain*. *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (Düsseldorf 1967) 103–107.

¹⁶⁰ RIB 576.

The details of the imperial activity between 208 and 211 are far from clear. There is no clear indication of campaigning in 208, and we may presume that the year was spent in preparation for activity in the following year. Amongst the sites which played a part in the preparations are Corbridge and South Shields¹⁶¹. Lead seals of cohorts V Gallorum (of which at least part was probably in garrison at South Shields) found at Cramond on the Firth of Forth indicate the use of the fleet to carry supplies, and possibly troops, to the Forth¹⁶²; but the use of Corbridge as a supply-base seems to presuppose an army marching north up Dere Street and receiving stores by that route. The land route would almost certainly be necessary for the bulk of the very large army assembled by Severus. Other preparations, not precisely dated, are recorded by Herodian immediately after the arrival of the emperors and the collecting of an army. They include the rejection of offers of peace from the rebellious Britons, and the construction of causeways¹⁶³.

The campaign of 209 was conducted jointly by Severus and Caracalla, with Geta remaining in the peaceful south. Herodian tells us that the army crossed the 'fortifications and rivers which defined the limits of the Roman empire'¹⁶⁴; the phraseology points to the Antonine Wall, rather than that of Hadrian. Dio says that they invaded Caledonia; if used in a technical sense, this ought to imply activity in the Highlands. The Romans appear to have been hampered by their ignorance of the terrain; this again might suggest warfare beyond the territory of the Maeatae, and certainly well to the north of the Antonine Wall. Dio alone preserves the record of serious disaster, though his figure of 50000 casualties is not acceptable. Despite this disaster, the Roman advance continued 'until he (Severus) had almost reached the end of the island.' Part of the army appears to have wintered in this area, for Dio claims that they observed 'most accurately' the length of days and nights in summer and winter. The campaign was a success, despite the earlier disaster, and the enemy made peace and ceded a part of their territory¹⁶⁵.

The year 210, in which all three emperors took the title *Britannicus*, was marked by a further revolt which was ruthlessly suppressed¹⁶⁶. The battle-honour *Britannica* appears to have been granted to VI Victrix, which had doubtless borne the brunt of the fighting, after the comparable title had been adopted by the emperors¹⁶⁷. The campaign of 210 appears to have been undertaken by Caracalla alone, because of the infirmity of his father¹⁶⁸. It ended with the Caledonians joining the Maeatae in revolt¹⁶⁹. References to Victoria Britannica nevertheless appear early in 211¹⁷⁰.

When Severus died at York in February 211, he was engaged in preparations for a further campaign against the northern tribes. The implication of what both Dio and

¹⁶¹ Corbridge: RIB 1143 = Dessau 9124.

¹⁶² Now known to contain at least 22 granaries within the Severan fort.

¹⁶³ Herodian III 14, 4.

¹⁶⁴ Herodian III 14, 10.

¹⁶⁵ Dio 76, 13, 1–3.

¹⁶⁶ Dio 76, 15, 1. – *Britannicus*: RIC Severus 240; Caracalla 116b. 454; Geta 69b. 70a.

¹⁶⁷ Tiles from Carpow (JRS 52, 1962, 197 no. 37) and York (JRS 53, 1963, 164 no. 29) with legend *LEG VI VIC B P F*.

¹⁶⁸ Herodian III 15, 1.

¹⁶⁹ Dio 76, 15, 2.

¹⁷⁰ RIC Severus 808. 812 a.b.

Herodian tells us is that this campaign was promptly cancelled by Caracalla and Geta¹⁷¹. Both authors are hostile to Caracalla, and it has been suggested this campaign must have been carried to a successful conclusion. Too much however has been made of a coin of Geta with the legend *VICT. BRIT.*, issued in 212¹⁷². It merely continues the earlier series. Neither Caracalla nor Geta took any imperial salutation in 211 or 212.

It is therefore surprising that we have no evidence for further warfare in Britain before, at earliest, the reign of Probus¹⁷³. This may seem unlikely if a campaign was planned for 211 but never executed, despite the fact that the Caledonians had joined the Maeatae in revolt at the end of the previous year. It may be guessed that the withdrawal from Scotland was accompanied by a treaty involving substantial Roman subsidies.

Recent excavations at Carpow (Perths.) have produced evidence to suggest that Scotland was not abandoned as early as 211¹⁷⁴. The site is a fortress covering ca. 12 hectares; it is built of stone, and was presumably intended for permanent occupation. It was perhaps planned to hold detachments from each of the three legions of Britain. The Sixth is attested by numerous tiles stamped *LEG VI VIC B P F*; the *B* must indicate the grant of the title *Britannica*, not earlier than 210 – the general period is evidenced by the discovery of coins of Caracalla and Plautilla. The presence of a part of the Second Legion is revealed by a fragment of an inscription from the east gate, together with one of its supporting panels¹⁷⁵. The panel exhibits a Victory, together with the Capricorn and Pegasus, clear evidence of II Augusta. Only a small portion of the inscription has been found, and it has been suggested that it refers to construction under a single emperor. If so, this could only be Caracalla or one of his successors. But it is by no means certain that the inscription was set up under a single emperor¹⁷⁶.

The murder of Geta in February 212 was not favourably received by all the armies, and some were reluctant to accept the fratricide as sole emperor¹⁷⁷: amongst them, we may guess, was the army of Britain. In 213 we find a series of dedications to Caracalla and Iulia Domna *pro pietate ac devotione communi*¹⁷⁸. Certain examples come from High Rochester, Risingham, Netherby, Chesterholm, Whitley Castle and Old Penrith¹⁷⁹; other possible examples might be cited. All are closely similar in character and phraseology, and are usually set up by the auxiliary unit in garrison under the direction (*curante*) of a governor whose name has been erased. This is almost certainly C. Iulius Marcus, who is recorded on a milestone of 213 from Welton (North-

¹⁷¹ Herodian III 15, 6–7. – Dio 77, 1, 1.

¹⁷² RIC Geta 180; cf. Caracalla 197, 200.

¹⁷³ Zosimus I 66, 3; but see below for troops from the Germanies in Britain under Caracalla or his successors.

¹⁷⁴ R. E. Birley, Excavation of the Roman fortress at Carpow, Perthshire, 1961–62. PSAS 96, 1962/63, 184–207; summaries of later work in 'Roman Britain in . . .'. JRS 55, 1965 onwards.

¹⁷⁵ JRS 55, 1965, 223 f. no. 10. – Cf. R. P. Wright, An imperial inscription from the Roman fortress at Carpow, Perthshire. PSAS 97, 1963/64, 202–205.

¹⁷⁶ RIB 722 might have been similarly assigned if only the first line had survived.

¹⁷⁷ E. g. II Parthica: SHA Caracalla 2, 7–8; Geta 6, 1–2. – Cf. Herodian III 15, 6.

¹⁷⁸ E. Birley, A new inscription from Chesterholm. AA₄ 11, 1934, 127–137.

¹⁷⁹ High Rochester: RIB 1278. – Risingham: RIB 1235. – Netherby: RIB 976. – Chesterholm: RIB 1705. – Whitley Castle: RIB 1202. – Old Penrith: RIB 928.

umberland)¹⁸⁰. His name should probably be restored on a stone from High Rochester, and he is apparently attested on fragmentary inscriptions from Netherby and Whitley Castle¹⁸¹. He may have remained in Britain until 216, for an inscription of that year from High Rochester has the governor's name erased¹⁸²; but the space appears to be too long for the name of Marcus, and we should perhaps restore the name of M. Antonius Gordianus, erased after his brief reign as Gordian I in 238. Gordian may be attested (the first certain praetorian governor of Britannia Inferior) at Ribchester (undated) and Chester-le-Street A. D. 216, and possibly also at Whitley Castle¹⁸³. The inscription from Ribchester is important, for it reveals that forts as far south as the Ribble were in Britannia Inferior; we know from Dio, here probably writing under Caracalla, that legio XX Valeria Victrix (presumably at Chester) was then part of the garrison of Britannia Superior¹⁸⁴. The boundary between the two British provinces at this time therefore lay somewhere between the Dee and the Ribble – perhaps on the Mersey, if RIB 575, probably of third century date, may be allowed to assign Manchester to the command of VI Victrix.

It is not generally appreciated how much epigraphic evidence survives to indicate rebuilding at military sites in the north, not only under Severus, but also under his successors, Caracalla, Elagabalus and Severus Alexander. It is perhaps most readily assimilated if it is viewed in tabular form, as it is set out in the Appendix to this paper (p. 207 ff.). On the evidence of these inscriptions, it is difficult to believe that there was a great destruction of military sites in the area of Hadrian's Wall in 197 – or indeed at any other date – followed by a programme of rebuilding. It is unlikely, for instance, that Great Chesters was without a granary for a quarter of a century – or, for that matter, that a granary erected after 197 was *vetustate conlabsum* by 225. Similar instances could be multiplied from the list; taken as a whole, it points to a policy of renewal and repair of buildings which had first been erected eighty to a hundred years earlier, together with drastic modernisation at some sites – the addition of ballistaria at High Rochester, of a cavalry drill-hall at Netherby or of an aqueduct at Chester-le-Street. The policy was not necessarily initiated by Severus: an aqueduct was being built at Chesters under Ulpius Marcellus¹⁸⁵.

We may be fortified in this interpretation by the results of recent excavations at Housesteads, where barracks were rebuilt in the early third (or late second) century, but did not appear to have suffered violent destruction beforehand¹⁸⁶. Similarly Carrawburgh has recently produced evidence of rebuilding, but not of violent destruction. Destruction on a large scale certainly occurred at Risingham and Corbridge and (possibly less in extent) at Halton Chesters¹⁸⁷. At Corbridge the date is suggested

¹⁸⁰ RIB 2298.

¹⁸¹ High Rochester: RIB 1265. – Netherby: RIB 977. – Whitley Castle: RIB 1205.

¹⁸² RIB 1279.

¹⁸³ Ribchester: RIB 590. – Chester-le-Street: RIB 1049. – Whitley Castle: RIB 1203.

¹⁸⁴ Dio 55, 23, 6.

¹⁸⁵ RIB 1463, 1464.

¹⁸⁶ J. Wilkes, Excavations in Housesteads fort, 1960. AA₄ 39, 1961, 279–299. – J. Leach – J. Wilkes, Excavations in the Roman fort at Housesteads, 1961. AA₄ 40, 1962, 83–96.

¹⁸⁷ Risingham: I. A. Richmond, The Romans in Redesdale (Northumberland County History XV [Newcastle upon Tyne 1940] 73 ff.; at p. 81 he suggests destruction after evacuation. – Corbridge: AA₃ 7, 1911, 165. – Halton Chesters: J. P. Gillam, Excavations at Haltonchesters. Durham University Gazette 1961, 6.

by a denarius of Severus, dated between 198 and 200, found in a burnt layer on and later in date than Site XI¹⁸⁸. Destruction may also have occurred at Benwell, where the temple of Antenociticus was certainly destroyed late in the second century or early in the third (if we may for once use ceramic evidence), but after the erection of RIB 1329, which mentions Ulpius Marcellus. Pottery indicates that these destructions were more or less contemporaneous. This lends support to the view that they are the result of enemy action – though we cannot exclude the possibility of a ‘scorched earth’ policy by the Romans. Significantly all these sites (except Benwell) lie close to Dere Street. It takes but little reflection to suggest that the most likely route for a northern invader will have been the Roman road – we may note the continuing importance of these roads for troop movements well into the Middle Ages. The object of such invaders is likely to have been loot, rather than the expulsion of the Romans and the eradication of all monuments of their rule.

The date of the barbarian invasion which we may deduce from the archaeological evidence cannot be established precisely by the same evidence. Documentary sources suggest three possible dates: 181, 198–200 and 205–207. In our submission the last is most probable. In 181 the barbarians ‘crossed the Wall which separated them from the Roman forts’¹⁸⁹; we have seen that the Wall in question here is probably that of Hadrian, and that this episode marks the end of Period I B in the milecastles and turrets. For 198–200 we only know that it was necessary to buy off the Maeatae after they had caused trouble in an area and on a scale which we cannot define. The best indication that the trouble was serious is the inadequacy of the Roman army to deal with it, though we have seen that the army might not yet have recovered from its defeat at Lugdunum. Disaster on the northern frontier is possible then in 198–200. The great disadvantages of choosing this date are that the only rebuilding which would follow it was in the Pennines (an area the Maeatae are unlikely to have reached), and that we should have no archaeological evidence for the ‘great destruction’ caused by the northern tribes ca. 207.

Although our evidence is neither so detailed nor so reliable as we might wish, it seems clear that the disturbances of 207 constituted a serious threat to the province. They led to the first imperial visit for more than eighty years, to a full-scale ‘expeditio’, and to what were perhaps the most northerly campaigns ever conducted by a Roman army. It is almost certainly to this date that we should assign the destruction of the Antonine Wall at the end of its second period of occupation, as well as damage to forts on or close to Dere Street.

However the fact that repairs and rebuilding continue for some thirty or forty years after this should warn us against regarding the disaster under Valerius Pudens or Alfenus Senecio as of cataclysmic proportions; it seems fairly clear that many of the forts on or close to Hadrian’s Wall must have escaped serious damage in 205–207. If we look more closely at the inscriptions listed in the Appendix, it may be possible to make further tentative deductions from them. They begin with the group of 197–200, all (with the exception of the doubtful example from Corbridge) in the Pennine area: they might point to a Brigantian rising, or to re-occupation of forts not

¹⁸⁸ AA₃ 7, 1911, 165. 214. – The coin is presumably RIC Severus 144b.

¹⁸⁹ Dio 72, 8, 2.

held under Commodus. In 205–208 rebuilding in the Pennines continued at forts (Brough-by-Bainbridge, Greta Bridge) where it is not attested under Virius Lupus, and at Bowes, where the bath-house had been rebuilt earlier; to this is added rebuilding at forts on Hadrian's Wall (Chesters, Birdoswald) and on Dere Street. We may surmise that Alfenus Senecio was contemplating a return to the frontier system of Iulius Verus and Calpurnius Agricola, with Hadrian's Wall being held in conjunction with outposts in both east and west. There is however no clear evidence that Hadrian's Wall was in fact rebuilt in his governorship, nor at any time under Severus, in spite of the claims of fourth-century writers. Their placing of wall-building after the campaigns would in fact best fit a Severan rebuilding of the Antonine Wall.

No building operations are attested by epigraphy during the period of the imperial campaigns, except perhaps at Carpow. It was for long believed that these campaigns were no more than punitive in intention, in revenge for the damage caused by the Caledonians and Maeatae. Recent discoveries at Carpow have made it clear that this interpretation cannot stand¹⁹⁰. Quite certainly Carpow was intended for permanent occupation. Nor is it likely to have stood alone, without supporting forts. These are not easy to find, and identification is rendered more difficult by the short length of Severan occupation. Cramond, to judge from the quantity of Severan coinage, must have been one such fort¹⁹¹. There is no other certain occupation north of High Rochester, though we may note the two altars from Jedburgh and Steer's suggestion of a third-century outpost in this area¹⁹²; such a site could be part of a short-lived Severan settlement based on the occupation of southern Scotland. Vexillations from II Augusta and XX Valeria Victrix attested at Bar Hill (on the Antonine Wall) might best fit a third-century date¹⁹³.

For as it seems clear that Severus aimed at nothing less than the occupation of Scotland on a scale comparable only with that achieved in the Flavian period, it is necessary to consider the question of a third period of occupation on the Antonine Wall. At present the fashion in Scotland appears to be to regard this as no more than a modification to Period II, within the time-span of that Period¹⁹⁴. Evidence for Period III is slight, but this is what we should expect if it belongs to the time of the Severan campaigns; there is no necessity to think even of its completion. Nor, since Severus planned a more extensive occupation of Scotland, need Period III concern all forts on the Antonine Wall. The absence of pottery distinctively later than that of Period II will scarcely surprise us if Period II lasts from ca. 184–207 and Period III begins ca. 209 and ends a few years later.

There is then evidence to support Dio's belief that Severus intended to conquer the whole of Britain¹⁹⁵. The legionary fortress at Carpow implies as much, and indicates also a realistic approach to the frontier problems which had been unsolved since the withdrawal of legio II Adiutrix. Agricola's scheme for holding Britain had involved

¹⁹⁰ See notes 174 and 175.

¹⁹¹ G. Macdonald in *PSAS* 52, 1917/18, 213–216.

¹⁹² K. A. Steer, in: I. A. Richmond, *Roman and Native in North Britain* (note 1) 98 f. – The Jedburgh altars: RIB 2117. 2118.

¹⁹³ RIB 2171. – Cf. M. G. Jarrett, *Arch. Cambr.* 117, 1968, 85.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. K. A. Steer, *John Horsley and the Antonine Wall*. AA4 42, 1964, 1–40.

¹⁹⁵ Dio 76, 13, 1.

four legions; since Agricola's day the situation in Wales had changed, and it would have been quite possible to move a legion from the south-west to the more dangerous northern frontier¹⁹⁶.

The evidence now suggests that Corbridge cannot have been intended to become a legionary fortress under Severus. 'Site XI' must be dated before, not after, the destruction under Severus¹⁹⁷. A more probable suggestion is that it was intended as an element in the northward advance of Ulpius Marcellus, but was discarded. The military compounds, manned by legionaries, appear after a long period of military disuse of the central part of the site of the Antonine fort. They may date to the campaigns of Severus, or perhaps to the Caracallan restoration of Hadrian's Wall.

Caracalla to Gallienus

It is clear that under Caracalla all plans for retaining Scotland were dropped. The historians suggest that the Severan conquests were abandoned as soon as possible after 211, and we have seen that no other evidence disproves this. Withdrawal took place, and probably within a very short time after the death of Severus. The third period on the Antonine Wall was certainly short, and indeed may never have been completed. Nor, apart from a few sherds apparently of the late third century, is there any indication of prolonged occupation at Carpow. Once again our list of building inscriptions may assist us.

C. Iulius Marcus is attested as governor in the north in 213; by 216 at latest he had been replaced by (?) M. Antonius Gordianus¹⁹⁸. If the loyalty of Iulius Marcus was suspect (as the *pro pietate* inscriptions and the regular erasure of his name suggest) he may well have been removed early in the years 213–216. Under Iulius Marcus we have records of rebuilding at Netherby, Whitley Castle, and possibly High Rochester¹⁹⁹. These inscriptions begin a continuous series which lasts at least until the reign of Gordian III, and covers the area around Hadrian's Wall, from High Rochester in the north to Ribchester and York in the south. Similar inscriptions also come from Upper Britain. Taken as a whole they must indicate a programme of modernisation, repair and improvement initiated or resumed during the reign of Caracalla; it is tempting to think that the beginning of this programme coincided with the withdrawal from Scotland. As far as our evidence goes – and we must admit that there is virtually no literary evidence before the episode of Carausius and Allectus – the Caracallan dispositions on the northern frontier remained almost unchanged until the end of the third century.

They appear to mark a reversion to the scheme for the northern frontier established by Iulius Verus and Calpurnius Agricola. The basic frontier line was on Hadrian's Wall, and its forts, and some of its milecastles and turrets were held. To the north, outpost forts in both east and west provided centres from which exploratores covered

¹⁹⁶ M. G. Jarrett, *Bull. Board of Celtic Studies* 20, 1962–64, 216 f. – Id., *Arch. Camb.* 113, 1964, 57 f.; 117, 1968, 85 f.

¹⁹⁷ See note 188.

¹⁹⁸ C. Iulius Marcus: RIB 2298. – M. Antonius Gordianus: RIB 1049.

¹⁹⁹ Netherby: RIB 977. – Whitley Castle: RIB 1205. – High Rochester: RIB 1265.

a much wider area²⁰⁰. The whole system was probably supported by a judicious apportionment of subsidy. Unlike its precursors in the second century, this scheme was to stand the test of time: as far as we can tell, there was no major modification to the overall plan until the abandonment of the outpost forts, probably in 369.

For the sake of completeness, one other piece of evidence must be noted here, though its significance is uncertain. Troops from the Two Germanies (in at least one instance from XXII Primigenia) are attested at Piercebridge under Caracalla or his successors²⁰¹. We have already noted an inscription of the Twenty-second legion from the Falkirk area²⁰². Possibly some of the troops brought to Britain for the Severan campaigns remained here; though this seems unlikely, if men from II Augusta were serving on Caracalla's German expedition²⁰³.

C o n c l u s i o n s

We conclude by giving a resume in tabular form, indicating the main occupation periods for the Hadrianic and Antonine frontiers within the period with which we have been concerned; for convenience we also include a column for the important site at Corbridge, whose occupation periods do not coincide with those for either wall. In all cases, dates are approximate, though in no case does an error of more than two years in either direction seem likely. Dates in the first column apply only to the milecastles and turrets: the forts present a different problem, and it may be that all will prove to have different histories.

²⁰⁰ K. A. Steer, *The Severan re-organisation*. In: *Roman and Native in North Britain* (cited in note 1).

²⁰¹ See note 159.

²⁰² RIB 2216.

²⁰³ Ritterling, RE XII 1463.

Hadrian's Wall	Antonine Wall	Corbridge
I A 122-140		(122-125)
	I 140-158	139-163
I B 158-181		163-207
	II 184-207	
II 211-		207-

Appendix: Building inscriptions from 197 to 260

DATE	SITE	STRUCTURE	GOVERNOR	UNIT	REF.
197 ?	Brough-under-Stainmore	-	[L. Virius Lupus]	-	RIB 757
197-198	Ilkley	-	Virius Lupus	-	RIB 637
197-ca. 200	Bowes	bath-house	Virius Lupus	coh. I Thracum	RIB 730
197-ca. 200	Corbridge	-	[Virius] Lu[pus]	vex. leg. VI Vic.	RIB 1163
205	Brough-by-Bainbridge	barracks	C. Valerius Pudens	coh. VI Nerviorum	JRS 51, 1961, 192
ca. 202-208 ?	Corbridge	granary	(Valerius Pudens or Alfenus Senecio)	vex. [leg.]	RIB 1151
205-207	Risingham	(S.) gate & walls	Alfenus Senecio & Oclatinus Adventus	coh. I Vangionum	RIB 1234
205-ca. 208	Chesters	-	Senecio & Adventus	(ala II Asturum)	RIB 1462
205-ca. 208	Bowes	-	L. Alfenus Senecio	coh. I Thracum	RIB 740

DATE	SITE	STRUCTURE	GOVERNOR	UNIT	REF.
205– ca. 208	Birdoswald	granary	Alfenus Senecio	coh. I Ael. Dacorum + coh. I Thracum	RIB 1909
205– ca. 208	Brough-by-Bainbridge	wall + annexe-wall	L. A[lfenus] Senecio	[coh.] VI Nerviorum	RIB 722
205– ca. 208	Brough-by-Bainbridge	–	[L. Alfenus] Sen[ec]io	–	RIB 723
205– ca. 208	Greta Bridge	–	L. Alfenus Senecio	–	RIB 746
207	quarry near Brampton	–	–	–	RIB 1009
198–209	Caerleon	(principia ?)	–	–	RIB 333
198–209	Caernarvon	aqueduct	–	coh. I Sunicorum	RIB 430
198–209	Manchester	–	–	–	RIB 581
198–209	Ribchester	–	–	[vex. leg. VI Vict]ric[is]	RIB 591
198–209	Housesteads	–	–	–	RIB 1612
198–209	Birdoswald	–	–	–	RIB 1910
198–209	High Rochester	–	–	–	RIB 1277
ca. 213	Netherby	–	C. Iulius [Marcus]	coh. I Ael. Hisp.	RIB 977
ca. 213	Whitley Castle	–	[C. Iul. Mar]cus	–	RIB 1205
213–216 ?	High Rochester	–	[C. Iul. Marcus ?]	–	RIB 1265
216	High Rochester	–	[M. Antonius Gordianus]	coh. I fida Vardullorum	RIB 1279
216	Chester-le-Street	aqueduct	[M. Antonius Gor]dianus	ala []	RIB 1049
ca. 216	Ribchester	–	[M. Ant. Gordianus] ²⁰⁴	–	RIB 590
212–217	Risingham	–	–	–	RIB 1236
212–217	Carrawburgh	–	–	–	RIB 1551
212–217 ?	York	–	–	–	RIB 667

²⁰⁴ Note that *Se[m]p.* survives; Gordian's name was M. Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus.

DATE	SITE	STRUCTURE	GOVERNOR	UNIT	REF.
212–217	Carpow	–	–	[vex. leg. II Aug.]	JRS 55, 1965, 223 f.
215–216 ?	Whitley Castle	–	–	coh. II Nerviorum	RIB 1203
219	Netherby	–	Modius Iulius	vex. legg. II Aug. et XX VV item coh. I Ael. Hispanorum	RIB 980
ca. 219–220	Birdoswald	[east gate]	Modius Iulius	coh. I Ael. Dacorum	RIB 1914
220	High Rochester	<i>ballistarium</i>	Ti. Claudius Paulinus	coh. I fida Vardullorum	RIB 1280
221	Chesters	–	Marius Valerianus	ala II Asturum	RIB 1465
221–222	Corbridge	–	–	–	RIB 1153
222	Netherby	temple	–	coh. I Ael. Hispanorum	RIB 979
222	Netherby	cavalry drill-hall	Marius Valerianus	coh. I Ael. Hispanorum	RIB 978
212–222	Combe Down	<i>principia</i>	–	–	RIB 179
222–223	S. Shields	aqueduct	Marius Valerianus	coh. V Gallorum	RIB 1060
ca. 223	Chesters	[bath-house ?]	Claudius Xenophon	[ala II Asturum]	RIB 1467
ca. 222–225	Chesterholm	gate & towers	Claudius Xenophon	[coh. IV] Gallorum	RIB 1706
225	Gt. Chesters	granary	[] Maximus	coh. II Asturum	RIB 1738
ca. 225–235	High Rochester	<i>ballistarium</i>	Cl. Apellinus	coh. I fida Vardullorum	RIB 1281
222–235	High Rochester	–	–	–	RIB 1282
236 ?	Birdoswald	–	–	–	RIB 1922
237	Carrawburgh	–	[Tu]ccianus	coh. I Batavorum	RIB 1553
238–242	Lanchester	<i>principia</i> + <i>armamentaria</i>	Maecilius Fuscus	coh. I Lingunum	RIB 1092
238–242	Lanchester	bath-house + basilica	Egnatius Lucilianus	coh. I Lingunum	RIB 1091

DATE	SITE	STRUCTURE	GOVERNOR	UNIT	REF.
238–244	Maryport			leg. XX VV	RIB 854
238–244	Carlisle area	–	–	leg. VI Vic.	RIB 2027
238	Benwell	temple	–	ala I Ast.	RIB 1334
249–251 ?	Bewcastle ²⁰⁵	–	–	vexx. legg. II Aug. et XX VV	RIB 995
255–260	Caerleon	barracks	–	leg. II Aug.	RIB 334

Note also an inscription, probably of the third century, from Reculver (Kent) referring to the *aedes principiorum* and *basilica*²⁰⁶.

²⁰⁵ The suggestion that this inscription refers to Decius Trajan, and not to Hadrian, was put to us by Professor Birley; brigaded vexillations are a feature of the third century. Cf. now A. R. Birley, *op. cit.* (note 24) 70. 91.

²⁰⁶ AE 1962, 258; cf. JRS 55, 1965, 220 no. 1. – A. R. Birley, *op. cit.* (note 24) 82 f.