

Eitelkeit fremd ist. Dem entspricht die übersichtliche Anordnung der Kapitel und Bildteile. Der schmale Band enthält alles, was sich zur Zeit über die helvetische Relief-sigillata zusammentragen ließ.

Frankfurt a. M.

Charlotte Fischer

P. T. Bidwell, Roman Exeter: Fortress and Town. Exeter City Council, Exeter 1980. X and 96 pages, 49 figures and 1 table.

Exeter has been fortunate in its archaeologists. Lady Aileen Fox, doyenne of the archaeology of the South West, put Roman Exeter firmly on the map in 1952 when she published a general account of the excavations which she had carried out in the city during the post-war rebuilding phase. Now, almost 30 years later, Paul Bidwell presents a new account of Roman Exeter based upon the work of the Archaeological Field Unit since its establishment in 1971. The centre of gravity has shifted dramatically to the earliest phase of Roman occupation, the legionary fortress, which in the fifties and sixties was only a matter of surmise. What one knows of the later civilian town now looks meagre by comparison.

After a brief review of previous archaeological research in Exeter, the author makes a bold attempt to chart the dispositions and activities of Roman military units in South-West England. There can now be little doubt that Exeter housed part (if not all) of the Second Legion between c. A. D. 55/60 and c. 75; but since we cannot be sure which units lay at Gloucester or Kingsholm (missing on map fig. 4), the limits of the zone of influence of the Second Legion must remain hypothetical, *pace* Bidwell. It is also over-optimistic to think that we can distinguish legionary from auxiliary equipment at this date (p. 12). Nevertheless in this chapter the author demonstrates that he is widely read and well informed, and his arguments are stimulating, if not immediately convincing.

Recent excavations (many of them directed by Bidwell) have revealed the outline of the legionary fortress in Exeter and some of its internal buildings. A clay rampart, fronted by one or perhaps two ditches, enclosed an area of about 15 ha (fig. 7). A palatial bath-building is the most impressive structure so far uncovered, and Bidwell presents here again some of the more important conclusions and suggestions which he advanced in the final excavation report on the site published in 1979. The *fabrica* and parts of two granaries and four barrack-blocks have also been identified. Although the fortress is comparatively small, Bidwell argues from the proportion of the interior taken up by the barracks in the north corner that Exeter could, under pressure, accommodate a full legion. The dating evidence points unequivocally to abandonment about A. D. 75 after 15–20 years of occupation.

Recent work in Gloucester and Colchester has shown how the transition from legionary fortress to civilian *colonia* was achieved. (The reviewer still prefers a Nervian date for the foundation of the *colonia* at Gloucester.) The situation at Exeter was closely comparable, although Exeter did not become a chartered town. During the handover from military to civil authority Bidwell sees the need for a *praefectus civitatis*; but only the present interpretation of the archaeological dating evidence, and a *horror vacui*, make that plausible. The legionary bath-building was first modified, then largely demolished to make way for a basilica and forum, probably erected as part of the urban building programme of the Flavian governors of Britain. Fragments of a new bath-building have been recognised south-east of the forum (fig. 27), and traces of timber buildings have been found lining the streets of the former fortress within its still upstanding ramparts.

Urban expansion was probably a continuous process, as one might expect of the only Roman town in the south-west peninsula; but at the end of the second century new defences were erected around a settlement which had more than doubled its first-century size. (Whether the wall and internal bank are elements of a single building scheme or are separated by a significant interval of time remains in the reviewer's opinion indeterminate.) Within the town there is evidence for dense occupation, substantial well-appointed stone houses and all the archaeological trappings of prosperity. It is a pity – but in some ways perhaps proof of its success – that so little can be said of the history of the later Roman town.

The 'interested layman' will find sections of this book tough going; but the chronological summary at the beginning and the glossary at the end may help him to master the technicalities. The illustration is on the whole first-rate, and there are few printing errors. In places, however, the typesetting is rough, perhaps the result of the insertion of proof corrections. These are minor blemishes. We owe a debt of gratitude to Exeter City Council and the other sponsors of this volume for their enterprise and to the author for an introduction to a Roman town that should be on every provincial archaeologists bookshelf.

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Limes. Akten des XI. Internationalen Limeskongresses (Székesfehérvár, 30. 8.–6. 9. 1976), herausgegeben von J. Fitz. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1977. XIV und 766 Seiten, zahlreiche Abbildungen und Tabellen.

Eine bisher fast einzigartige Leistung hat J. Fitz in der schnellen Herausgabe des Berichtes zum 11. Internationalen Limeskongreß vollbracht, der vom 30. 8.–6. 9. 1976 in Székesfehérvár stattgefunden hat. Zwischen Beendigung der Tagung und dem Erscheinen des Buches verging gerade ein Jahr. Dies hängt teilweise mit dem Druckverfahren des anzuzeigenden Bandes zusammen. Die eingelieferten Manuskripte, deren äußere Form vorher schon redaktionell festgelegt worden war, konnten gleich als Druckvorlage benutzt werden. Man sieht bei dem schnellen Erscheinen des Berichtes gerne darüber hinweg, daß bei diesem Verfahren naturgemäß das sonst gewohnte einheitliche Druckbild eines Buches nicht gewahrt werden konnte. Auch haben sich nicht sämtliche Autoren an die redaktionell geforderte äußere Form bei Anlage des Manuskriptes gehalten, vor allem was die zitierte Literatur, die verwendeten Abkürzungen und Siglen betrifft. Die herausgeberische Leistung von J. Fitz ist daher um so höher zu bewerten, als es ihm gelungen ist, unter den oben geschilderten Voraussetzungen ein gut lesbares und leicht benutzbares Buch zu schaffen. Den angefügten Index hätte sich derjenige, der neben epigraphisch-althistorischen Interessen auch noch topographisch-geographische Wünsche hat, gerade zu diesem Punkt etwas ausführlicher gewünscht. Im Hinblick auf militärgeschichtliche und onomastische Probleme wird dem Leser allerdings mit dem Index ein interessantes kleines Kompendium an die Hand gegeben, mit dessen Hilfe man sich leicht, alleine durch das Herunterlesen der einzelnen Spalten, ein Bild über die militärhistorischen Probleme machen kann, die während des 11. Limeskongresses diskutiert worden sind.

Zum Inhalt läßt sich viel, in einer Anzeige wie dieser aber kaum alles sagen. Dies wird schon bei einer Anzahl von 54 Einzelbeiträgen klar. Der Meinung J. Garbschs zu diesem Thema (Bayer. Vorgeschbl. 43, 1978, 179): „Es würde den Rahmen dieser Anzeige sprengen, auch nur alle Titel aufzuführen“, kann ich mich nur anschließen.