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## Responses to Research Framework Questionnaire: Romano-British: Compiled by Dr J L Davies

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### ***Research Agenda for Wales: Romano-British Themes***

1. *Settlement Patterns:* For large tracts of Wales the basic character of the settlement pattern is either unknown, or sketchy at best, whilst there has been a heavy geographical bias in the exploration of some settlement zones to the exclusion of others. Questions: (a) To what extent did the pre-existing settlement pattern determine that of the Roman period? (b) How did the Roman communication infrastructure affect pre-existing and subsequent settlement patterns? (c) Do voids in the distribution pattern reflect an absence of RB occupation or a failure to search for such evidence?
2. *Interaction between Roman occupiers and the indigenous population:* Relationships should be assessed by investigating high-status settlements, which can include hill-forts, 'small towns', villas and especially military *vici*.
3. *The archaeology of the early campaigning years: (a) pre-Flavian (b) Flavian.* In both instances new site evidence has begun to question previous interpretations. The number of firmly dated pre-Flavian installations remains small and geographically limited. Does this represent the total picture insofar as the military grip on Wales in the period AD 47-69 is concerned? The Flavian period has also been oversimplified in respect of the character and chronology of its military installations. A much more complex pattern is beginning to emerge.
4. *Funerary and Ritual:* Whilst there is strong evidence about beliefs and funerary practices in most parts of the Roman world, Britain included, we have little knowledge of them in Wales where the study has languished. Desk-top survey in respect of sacred landscapes has the potential to unlock an important repository of data, while a number of enclosure types have been tentatively categorised as being of ritual character, but none have been investigated.
5. *Technology and Industry:* Technological innovation and changes in the scale of production of the Roman period has, with some few exceptions, been grossly under-researched. The analysis of ceramic distributions plus the study of 'industrial' complexes of all types, ranging from large and small-scale production of ceramics to the exploitation of metals is urgently required.

**Request for information/questions:**

- (a) Relevant research undertaken in the Welsh RB field in the last five years
- (b) Identifying how (or if) this research ties in with the above themes
- (c) List relevant literature to add to the bibliography for the period
- (d) Suggested amendments to the research themes/new priorities
- (e) Has the Research Framework been used as a means of justifying research funding?

**Research undertaken, per theme, compiled by J L Davies**

*1. Settlement Patterns.*

Four Stones (Walton) excavations (CPAT); Domgay Lane (Four Crosses) excavations (CPAT); Bryn Parc Cegni (Llandegai) geophysics and excavations (GAT); Tai-cochion (Anglesey) geophysics (GAT); Parc-Cybi, Ty Mawr ( Anglesey) excavations (GAT); Talgarth (Powys) excavations (CPAT); Troedyrhiw (Ceredigion) excavations (DAT); Abermagwr (Ceredigion) geophysics (RCAHMMW); Vaynor Farm, Llanddowror excavations (DAT); Upper Norton Farm , Herbrandston excavations (GGAT); Trowbridge, St Mellons excavations (GGAT); Ifton Manor excavations (GGAT); Undy excavations; Trelech Grange excavations; Rumney Great Wharf excavations (GGAT); Roman road Newtown, Montgomeryshire (CPAT); Roman road, Powys (Cotswold Archy.)

The results of the CADW-sponsored *Roman Roads Project* will be published in the forthcoming *Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches* volume.

*2. Interaction between Roman occupiers and indigenous population.*

Publication of *Iron Age and Roman Coins in Wales* (Guest & Wells 2007).

Rural: All sites listed in (1) above.

Urban, including 'small towns': Caerwent, geophysics (Guest & Young); Cowbridge, excavations (GGAT); Monmouth, excavations (Mon. Arch.).

Interaction with the army: geophysics in the Caerleon *canabae* as part of *Mapping Isca Project* (Cardiff Uni.); Bulmore excavations

(GGAT); Caersws II (CPAT); geophysical survey and selective excavations in the *vici* of the following auxiliary forts largely as part of the Cadw-sponsored *Roman Forts Environs Project* - Caerhun (GAT), Bryn y gefeiliau (GAT), Tomen y Mur (GAT), Caer Gai (GAT), Llanfor (GAT); Pennal (GAT), Caersws I (Aberystwyth Uni.), Caerau, Beulah (CPAT), Trawscoed (DAT), Llanio (DAT), Colwyn Castle (CPAT), Llandovery (DAT), Brecon Gaer (CPAT). Pen y Gaer (CPAT), Llandeilo (NT & DAT), Gelligaer I (GGAT) and Neath (GGAT).

### 3. *The archaeology of the early campaigning years.*

Discussion of pre-Flavian and early Flavian campaigning in Davies & Jones 2006.

Marching camps: Publication of *Roman Camps in Wales & the Marches* (Davies & Jones 2006); discovery and excavation of camp at Gwanas-fawr (Mer.) (Barker et al. 2007); discovery of camp at Gwehelog, Nr. Usk (RCAHMW); publication of Barri Jones' excavations at Abertanant and Clawdd Coch (R J Silvester 2008).

Work on pre-Flavian forts: Colwyn Castle, excavation (S S Frere) geophysics (CPAT); Clyro geophysics (CPAT); Wonastow excavations (Monmouth Archy.); Monmouth excavations; Abergavenny excavations; Usk geophysics; Cardiff Castle excavations.

Work on early Flavian forts: Ruthin excavations (CPAT); Llanfor geophysics and excavations (GAT); Bryn y gefeiliau geophysics (GAT); Tomen y Mur geophysics (GAT and NP); Caer Gai (GAT); Caersws 1 geophysics (Aberystwyth University); Erglodd geophysics (DAT); Pen-llwyn geophysics (DAT); Trawscoed geophysics (DAT); Llandovery geophysics and excavations (DAT); Waun Ddu geophysics (DAT); Abergavenny excavations; Monmouth excavations (Monmouth Archy.); Caerleon geophysics and excavations (Cardiff University); Caergwanaf geophysics and excavations (T. Young); Cardiff Castle excavations.

### 4. *Funerary and Ritual*

Publication of *The Evolution and Role of Burial Practice in Roman Wales* (Pollock 2006).

Smithfield, Welshpool 'hoard' excavation (CPAT); Abernant Farm, excavation of cremation/inhumation cemetery (GGAT); Bulmore, excavation of cremation burials (GGAT); Bulmore Road, cremation in cist, ceramic altar bases, altar tables and sacrificial remains (GGAT); Undy, cremation (GGAT); Church Farm, Caldicot

excavation of cremations (GGAT); Church Hill, Penmaen, excavation of possible religious site (GGAT).

#### 5. *Technology and Industry*

Tremadoc, excavation of corn-drier (GAT); Llangynfelin, Ceredigion excavation of late 1<sup>st</sup>-early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD lead-silver smelting furnaces (DAT & Birmingham University); Lower Machen excavations (GGAT); Caergwanaf, excavation of iron-smelting on site of early Flavian fort (T. Young); Celtic Manor and Bulmore, excavation of pottery kilns (GGAT).

### Response to circulation of questionnaire:

#### W H Manning

- (a) Bill considers themes 1-3 as still worthy, though all require a large-scale excavation input (but unspecific here).
- (b) *Funerary and Ritual*. He considers a desk-based survey would be useful (though unaware of Pollock's contribution), as well as geophysical survey in the vicinity of Caerwent which might reveal cemeteries and funerary monuments.
- (c) *Technology and Industry*. Large-scale survey and excavation is required (though unspecific as to direction or topic).
- (d) *Suggested amendments*. A large-scale study of the material already known as a result of rescue work by the WATs as well as other organisations who undertake watching briefs and small excavations. He furthermore identifies research funding as a major issue insofar as excavation to pursue the above themes is concerned. University funding has been limited. As for the WATs, Developer Funding is not always useful in respect of meeting research objectives, whilst Cadw funding is frequently not directed at excavation. His outlook is pessimistic insofar as undertaking any major research project within the present structure of field archaeology.

#### D Hopewell, for GAT

He comments upon the five themes as follows:

- (a) *Settlement patterns*. Comments on the settlement at Tai-cochion (Ang.) which he believes may represent a wholly unrecognised level of Romanisation among the local population. David considers that there is

a dearth of knowledge about Roman Anglesey in general, and that this is a regional research priority.

- (b) *Early campaigning*. Flavian period sites require further work e.g. Brithdir and Pennal.

He points out that the *Roman Roads Project* has been particularly significant in emphasizing the way in which the character of the upland road system was forced to work around the topography and highlighted the difference between this and the traditional lowland road system.

- (c) *Technology and Industry*. Tremadoc (Mer.). The settlement has now produced evidence of a lime-kiln of RB date and a stack of roofing-slates. The character of this site remains obstinately undefined.

He could not think of any examples whereby the research framework has been used as a means of justifying research funding. He believes that the research framework angle is generally underused.

### **Edith Evans, for GGAT**

She comments on the five themes as follows:

- (a) *Settlement Patterns*. Status of the so-called villa at Church Hill, Penmaen has changed to that of a possible religious site. Has added detail on publications of settlement sites, with excavations at St Athan, Willowbrooke Close, an enclosure at Church Farm, Caldicot and Portskewett.

The Cadw-sponsored *Prehistoric Defended Settlements Project* to be published as a monograph will have a section on SE Wales. The continued use of such sites into the RB period will figure large in the publication.

- (b) *Interaction between Roman occupiers and indigenous population*. Excavations at Bulmore (developer funded). A number of developer-funded excavations in the extramural areas at Caerleon.
- (c) *Funerary and Ritual*. Brings the list of work done up to date, with work on the probable religious site at Church Hill, Penmaen; together with a probable mausolaem near the Caerleon-Usk road to the north of Abernant.

Insofar as Church Hill was concerned trial excavation on the site of an enclosure which produced RB pottery, tile, painted plaster and tesserae began as a straightforward better management exercise. However, one of the questions addressed at the onset was whether or not the site should be seen as part of a sacred landscape including the adjacent prehistoric funerary and ritual sites of Parc le

Breos chambered tomb and Cat Hole. The site is now considered to be most likely to have a religious connection of long duration. When the project proposal was formulated for Cadw there was no explicit recognition of the desirability of investigating RB ritual sites written into it. In this respect it is a classic example of the way in which the Research Agenda was not specifically used as a means of justifying research funding (Question (e)). Evans states that Cadw asked GGAT to frame the grant application with management considerations uppermost.

Does Cadw pay sufficient attention to the Research Framework when it considers applications for funding for excavations? A question for Cadw staff to answer?

A very different approach has governed work at Caerleon where the establishment of the Caerleon Research Committee arose out of the regional review, and was thus an offshoot of the Research Agenda process. GGAT obtained funding from Cadw (hence answer to Q (e)) to carry out a review of Roman Caerleon and its environs.

- (1) Recent assessment of research priorities for the Roman period in SE Wales has identified the environs of the fortress at Caerleon as an area having high potential and value that deserves particular investigation.'
- (2) 'The provision of the research framework is seen as the first step in a new integrated approach to archaeological work in Caerleon, which will identify the extent of our knowledge, the main gaps in it, and the questions which should be asked during any future work in the light of the local, regional, national and international priorities. It will not itself set out to answer these questions, but will provide broad proposals as to how these might be addressed.'

The project cut across the principal themes identified in the Research Agenda. The main theme that it was designed to address was (2) above, though it also had a bearing on (1)

Outcomes:

1. A programme of geophysical survey and excavation to clarify the plan of the fortress and the adjacent civil settlement, carried out mainly under the auspices of Cardiff University as a research programme, but also arising from proposals for minor development in the scheduled area.
2. A programme to publish all outstanding excavations.
3. Geomorphological study of the Usk and Afon Lwyd flood plains

**Peter Guest , for Cardiff University**

Comments on the five themes as follows:

(1) and (2) are still relevant research themes and links with the Research Framework as follows:

a. Mapping Isca: Caerleon and its environs, with geophysical survey within the fortress and without the fortress (rugby and cricket grounds, amphitheatre and fields south of the Broadway). Evaluation excavations following geophysics in Priory Field and Golledge's Fields. Link to Edith Evans' statement pertaining to the Research Agenda and its outcomes. At least in respect of the extra-mural dimension this addresses Point 2 in the RB research agenda. Also the publication of results of geophysical survey in *Arch. Camb.*

Point (e) in the questionnaire is particularly relevant here in respect of the application to Cadw for the funding of excavations on the Priory Field site.

b. Geophysical survey within the walls and outside the West gate at Caerwent. Link here with point 2 and 4 in respect of the five principal themes identified

*Response to query (d)* Suggested amendments to the Research Agenda:

1.To extend the focus of research at Caerleon to the canabae, particularly in relation to discoveries on the W side of the fortress, and also to its immediate hinterland (especially the Bulmore/Abernant area to the East.

2.To undertake an extensive programme of geophysics within the walls of Caerwent (this is something which has already begun and relevant to Theme 2. It is essential to extend this programme to surrounding areas to define any extra-mural settlements.

3. This might lead to the identification of a large RB period inhumation cemetery. Such ought to be excavated with a view to the use of isotope analysis to determine the origins of the skeletal remains together with their health.

4.A greater focus on farms and villas within their local landscapes from the PRIA onwards (this is essentially Theme 2 in the Research Agenda). But Peter wishes to increase the minimum requirement for the excavation of such sites and to stipulate which parts should be excavated (i.e. 25% of

all enclosure ditches, including terminals, corners and central part of sides).

5. Target research on central places such as Dinas Powys and Hen Gastell, also Caerwent, which span the RB/early medieval transition. This should include a comprehensive C14 programme.

6. The survey and excavation of rural shrines/temples/votive centres such as Llys Awel and Porthcasseg (St Arvans, among others). This is theme 4 in the Research Agenda.

Response to query (e). The funding application to Cadw for the *Priory Field: excavating a legionary store house* project referred directly to the Research Framework document.

### **Peter Webster for Cardiff University**

Peter's response was as follows:

1. To add Llys Brychan (DAT excavations) and Llanmaes (NMW excavations) to the list pertaining to theme 1 *Settlement Patterns*.
2. *Interaction with the military*. An on-going review of the finds from the Bear House Field (*canabae*) excavations of the 1950s and 1960s. Also further on-going work on the Celtic Manor/Abertanat sites. The Cardiff Castle excavations can also be added to the list because much of the evidence post-dates the pre-Flavian fort and relates to the *vici* of the Flavian and later forts.
3. *Archaeology of the early campaigning years*. Peter draws attention to the donkey-mill discovered at Clyro. He is also reviewing Jarrett's excavations on the site.
4. *Funerary and Ritual*. He draws attention to a leopard cup from the Abergavenny area now on display in the NMW which is most likely to be a piece of funerary evidence.
5. Peter lays much emphasis upon the theme of *Technology and Industry*. He feels that this theme needs widening to include trade. Although it is important to know what is being made in Wales it is also important to know what is being brought in and how this pattern compares with other parts of the province/empire. A number of more general studies are putting into place the building blocks from which it will be possible to assess elements of trade between Welsh sites and the outside world. The most important of these is the publication and digitisation of the 'Leeds' index of samian stamps (Hartley & Dickinson 2008-2012). This includes a good deal of Welsh evidence which will become available for analysis

once the publication is complete and the resultant Mainz database becomes available for interrogation.

Linking with the 'Leeds' index is ongoing work on the publication of samian by known makers. Already available is the large RGZ Mainz publication of stamped form 29 (Dannel et al. 2003-7). In progress is the digitisation of the Brian Hartley/Brenda Dickinson archive of stamped and decorated wares being achieved currently by Geoff Dannel and Robert Hopkins. Both include a strong Welsh component and, again, will form a starting point for the consideration of trade connections between Wales and other parts of the empire.

One might also add the Mortarium Bibliography (Hartley and Tomber 2006) which provides a review of the Welsh evidence alongside that of other areas of Britain.

### **Toby Driver, for RCAHMW**

RCAHMW aerial reconnaissance continues to investigate aspects of the RB archaeology of Wales, and the Research Framework document is an oft-used and essential tool against which to reference funding applications.

(1) *Settlement Patterns*. At St Donats, Vale of Glamorgan, an extensive RB settlement discovered. RB finds known from the locality.

(1)-(2) *Interaction between Roman occupiers and indigenous population*. The discovery from the air, and the subsequent geophysical survey, of what is apparently a villa within a double-ditched enclosure at Abermagwr, Ceredigion suggests that the question of interaction in this part of mid-Wales may have to be re-assessed. The Abermagwr Project will involve exploratory excavations in July 2010.

(3) *Archaeology of the early campaigning years*. At Gwehelog (Llancayo), Gwent, close to the site of the RB temple found by D. Wilson, aerial reconnaissance has discovered the partial cropmark of a marching-camp. It is probably of pre-Flavian date in the light of its location relative to the Neronian legionary fortress at Usk.

### **Ken Murphy, for DAT**

Ken's response to the questionnaire was as follows:

(a) Relevant recent research:

- (1) *Settlement Patterns*. DAT's contribution on Roman roads in SW Wales to the CADW-sponsored *Roman Roads Project*.
- (2) *Interaction between Roman occupiers and indigenous population*. Excavations at Troedyrhiw, Verwig (Ceredigion). Geophysical survey and excavation in the *vici* of the forts at Llandovery and Llandeilo; geophysics at Trawscoed.
- (3) *The Archaeology of the Early Campaigning Years*. Geophysical Survey at Pen-llwyn, Trawscoed, Llandovery, Llandeilo and the fortlets at Waun Ddu and Erglodd. Excavations at Llandeilo and Llandovery.
- (4) Nil.
- (5) *Technology and Industry*. Excavations at the lead-smelting site at Llangynfelin, Talybont, Ceredigion.

Response to questions (a)-(e)

- (b) Work at Troedyrhiw, Ceredigion as well as that on the auxiliary forts in SW Wales ties in well with the existing Research Framework.
- (d) He suggests that the questions as currently set out are still valid.
- (e) The Research Framework has always been referred to when applying for funding, though some of the projects were already under way when the framework was being compiled. With 'commercial' projects the framework can be less relevant, but is nevertheless a useful lever for the planning archaeologist. The Research Framework was very much to the fore when grant applications were made for both excavation and survey at Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo. For one major 'commercial' project (the fort at Llandovery) it was unnecessary to use the framework to obtain funding, but it nevertheless lay in the background.

### **Jenny Britnell, for CPAT**

Jenny provided a list of research-oriented work undertaken by the Trust, together with a list of relevant recent literature.

- (1) *Settlement Patterns*. CPAT's assessment, survey and geophysics on lowland enclosures. CADW-sponsored work on Roman roads, including aerial survey and excavations on the Caersws to Forden Gaer road at Smithfield, Newtown.
- (2) *Interaction between Roman occupiers and the indigenous population*. Geophysical survey outside the fort at Colwyn Castle; geophysical survey and excavations in the *vici* at Brecon Gaer and Pen y Gaer; excavations in the *vicus* at Caersws.

(3) *The Archaeology of the early campaigning years*. R J Silvester has published Barri Jones' excavations at Abertanat and Clawdd Coch in the Tanat valley. Geophysical survey at Nantmel, Clyro and within the fort at Colwyn Castle.

(4) *Funerary and Ritual*. Excavations on the site of the Smithfield 'hoard', Welshpool.

Jenny reports that the Research Framework has been used as a means of justifying funding from Cadw.

### **Jeffrey Davies, for Aberystwyth University**

(a) *Relevant research*. Publication of *Roman Camps in Wales and the Marches* (Davies, J L & Jones, R H (2006). Bringing to completion (with Barry Burnham) of *Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches*, to be published in late 2010. Research on campaign forts in Britain (Davies, J L 2009). Excavations at Gwanas Fawr marching camp (Barker et al. 2007). Geophysical survey of Llwyn y brain (Caersws 1) Roman fort.

(b) All the projects listed above closely linked with the Research Framework, though the *Roman Camps* project was a Board of Celtic Studies project initiated some years before.

(c) *Relevant literature*.

Davies, J L & Jones, R H 2006. *Roman Camps in Wales and the Marches*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff.

Davies, J L 2007. Llwyn y brain (Caersws 1), *Archaeology in Wales* 47, 145-6.

Barker, L., Burman, J., Davies, J L, Driver, T., Hopewell, Roberts, J G., H.Toller 2007, *Archaeology in Wales* 47, 88-90.

Davies, J L 2009. Size Matters: campaign forts in Britain, in W S Hanson (ed) *The Army and the Frontiers of Rome. Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series Number Seventy Four*, Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 44-54.

(d) A much sharper focus on artefactual evidence with a view to expanding the compass of Theme 2 (*Interaction between Roman occupiers and the indigenous population*) and Theme 5 (*Technology and Industry*). Such an approach could provide essential training for students who intend to specialise in the study of specific classes of archaeological material e.g. ceramics, small-finds, coinage etc.

(e) The Research Framework has been a significant factor in the raising of funds for the production of *Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches*, though the desirability of a successor to Jarrett's edition of *The Roman Frontier in Wales* was more influential as such. The Llwyn y

brain geophysical survey project lay firmly within Theme 3 of Research Framework (*The archaeology of the early campaigning years*) and the desirability of determining whether its internal arrangements matched those of the similarly-sized large fort at Llanfor was significant insofar as its application for funding was concerned. Similarly, the application for the funding of exploratory work on the site of the probable villa at Abermagwr, Ceredigion to commence in July 2010.