

Institution: Newcastle University
Unit of Assessment: 17a Archaeology
Title of case study: Material culture of the Roman frontier
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research from Newcastle on the material culture of the Roman empire, particularly its frontier zones, has created impact across a range of users from the general public to commercial archaeologists. In particular, it has enhanced public understanding and education outside the HEI through key museum exhibits and learning resources, community involvement and participatory research, non-academic publishing and engagement activities. It informs policy, commercial work and consultancy, particularly through the on-going partnership between Newcastle scholars and the wider archaeological community.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Newcastle scholars have created a leading international centre for research on the material culture of the Roman world, benefitting particularly from engagement with the best-researched of Roman frontiers, Hadrian's Wall. Ian Haynes (Professor, 2007-), Jim Crow (Senior Lecturer, 1990-2007), John Dore (Director, Archaeological Practice, 1995-2002; Visiting Fellow, 2002-08), David Breeze (Visiting Professor, 2003-) and Lindsay Allason-Jones (Curator of Museum of Antiquities, 1989-2009; Director of CIAS 2009-11; Visiting Fellow, 2011-) have led development of significant and distinct research on Roman material culture: key areas of activity include original fieldwork, analysis of small finds and ceramics, and epigraphic research.</p> <p>Since 1993 field-based research has included work at important Roman forts such as Maryport, Birdoswald and Housesteads. In 2009 Haynes and Tony Willmott (Visiting Fellow, 2009-) directed excavations of funerary contexts at Birdoswald demonstrating dramatic shifts in military burial practices. In 2011 and 2012 Haynes and Wilmot led excavations at Maryport in Cumbria, working alongside students, community volunteers and staff from Senhouse Roman Museum (SRM). This work revealed that the pits in which the altars were discovered were not ritual deposits, as was widely believed, but that the altars were re-used in the construction of large the late or post-Roman timber buildings. These new discoveries are significant and overturn previous interpretations and widespread beliefs about religion and the Roman army (1). In the 1980s and 1990s, Charles Daniels (Professor of Archaeology until 1996) and subsequently Jim Crow and Alan Rushworth (Visiting Fellow, 2011-) led research at Housesteads. This research encompassed the whole layout of the fort rather than a particular building, and as a result Housesteads is amongst the best-understood forts in the Roman Empire (2).</p> <p>Post-excavation research on major sites such as Housesteads, Haltonchesters and Wallsend has included preparation for publication (2, 3). Research on small finds has been led by Allason-Jones (for example, Great Chesters, Haltonchesters, Newcastle, Piercebridge) (6) and Haynes (for instance, on the Clayton Collection now housed at Chesters and Corbridge). Analysis of ceramics led by John Dore (from e.g. Haltonchesters, Housesteads) (3) contributed directly to the creation of the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (1998). In addition, Allason-Jones and Haynes have led research on epigraphy in the collections of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle and the Clayton Collection Trust. The research base is further enriched by international projects focussed on Roman frontiers in north Africa (Allason-Jones, Dore), the Middle East (Crow and Mark Jackson (Lecturer, 2005-)); and the Danube (Haynes). All this basic research has made a fundamental contribution to syntheses and analyses by Newcastle scholars (1, 4, 6).</p>
<p>3. References to the research</p> <p>1) Haynes, I. (2013) <i>Blood of the Provinces: the Roman Auxilia and the making of provincial society from Augustus to the Severans</i>. Oxford University Press. (REF2 output: 157290)</p>

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- 2) Rushworth, A. (ed) (2009) *Housesteads Roman Fort - the Grandest Station: excavation and survey at Housesteads, 1954-95, by Charles Daniels, John Gillam, James Crow, and others*. 2 vols. Swindon: English Heritage. (Available from HEI on request)
- 3) Dore, J.N. (2010) *Haltonchesters: Excavations directed by J.P. Gillam at the Roman fort, 1960-61*. Oxford: Oxbow. (Published posthumously. Available from HEI on request)
- 4) Breeze, D. (2006) *J. Collingwood Bruce's Handbook to the Roman Wall*. Newcastle: SANT.
- 5) Collins, R. and Allason-Jones, L. (eds.) (2010) *Finds from the Frontier: material culture in the 4th-5th centuries*. York: Council for British Archaeology. (Available from HEI on request)
- 6) Allason-Jones, L. (ed.) (2011) *Artefacts in Roman Britain: their purpose and use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Available from HEI on request)

Key research grants:

Principal Investigator	Grant Title	Sponsor	Period of Grant	Total Grant
Ian Haynes	Altar Pits at Maryport	Senhouse Museum Trust	2011	£49,580
Ian Haynes	Maryport Excavations	Senhouse Museum Trust	2012	£58,898
Ian Haynes	Maryport Excavations	Senhouse Museum Trust	2013-2016	£180,000
Ian Haynes	Clayton Collection Project	Clayton Trust	2011-2016	£49,500

4. Details of the impact

Newcastle's research on Roman material culture has had impact through enhancing public understanding of the material culture of the Roman empire, contributing to conservation policy and commercial practice, and informing education outside the HEI and academy.

Enhancing public understanding of Roman material culture

The university's Great North Museum: Hancock (GNM) opened in May 2009, supported by an investment of £26m from funders including the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). In the bid for the project, Newcastle University and its partners used the Roman collection from the Museum of Antiquities, which had great success under the curatorship of Allason-Jones, to push the concept of the GNM as a gateway to the region's natural and man-made heritage. This was echoed in a HLF press release about the GNM's opening which stated that the visitor attraction would "serve as a gateway to the environment and landscape of the North East of England. The Hadrian's Wall Gallery displays exhibits from the entire length of the Wall in the single greatest collection of artefacts from the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site". This signals its importance as the largest exhibit and its placement at the centre of the new museum. Its inclusion, along with the Shefton collection and Hatton Gallery, also gave the GNM university research status and access to HEFCE funding totalling £920,148 since 2009.

Following her success at the Museum of Antiquities, Allason-Jones was a consultant on curatorial decisions relating to the new Hadrian's Wall gallery. Her research on the collection's inscriptions and on storytelling in museums fundamentally shaped the gallery, which links particular inscriptions to individuals and uses real people's stories to allow visitors to interpret different aspects of life along the Wall. She also used her expertise on Roman artefacts and small finds to create meaning and context for the objects in the gallery. Allason-Jones' research on Roman material culture has therefore created considerable impact on heritage presentation through the new gallery. Visitor numbers to the GNM have been exceptional with more than 2.1 million visitors since opening in May 2009. This represents a major increase in visitors compared to the previous display in the former Museum of Antiquities. In geographical terms, 31% of visitors to Tyne and Wear Museums (TWAM) venues including GNM came from outside Tyne and Wear in 2011, and 40% were from socio-economic groups C2, D and E (**IMP1**). As the principal museum and 'story centre' for the Hadrian's Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), the GNM is a major part of the creative economy of the North East. In this respect Newcastle's research regularly contributes to the GNM's mission by underpinning temporary exhibitions. For example, in early 2013 the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne bicentenary exhibition was curated by Allason-Jones and drew extensively on her research; it attracted 95,482 visitors over 10 weeks (**IMP2**). Specific consultancy has allowed Allason-Jones' work to create even broader impact, for example through

offering specialist advice to movie-makers (e.g. K. Macdonald's \$25m 'The Eagle' (2011)).

Newcastle research has also impacted significantly at other museums on the Hadrian's Wall WHS. During Newcastle excavations at Maryport, there was a considerable rise in visitor numbers to the Senhouse Roman Museum (SRM) and excavation site – for example, there were more than three times as many visitors in 2012 compared to 2010. This impact was facilitated by a media strategy that ensured coverage of the excavations was extensive (including local, regional and online press coverage, with radio and television interviews). People from the UK and around the world (for example, Canada, Australia, and Austria) participated in tours of the excavation site and museum. Community volunteers reported a number of benefits of taking part in the excavations, including training, technical skills and knowledge development, obtaining hands-on experience, and expressed enjoyment of being part of an excavation team (**IMP3, IMP4**).

Crow's work at Housesteads Roman fort, which is visited by around 100,000 visitors each year, informed the display in the new site museum which opened to the public in 2012. The English Heritage curatorial team consulted with Crow and used his work extensively, describing his publications as "*indispensable*". The team's Senior Historian said, for example, "*I spoke with and consulted Jim on several occasions during the recent work on the museum at Housesteads. The two-volume monograph on the excavations [...] transformed our understanding of Housesteads - it was useful throughout my research to understand the site and translate that knowledge into exhibition and graphic panels for the museum and site. I also used the book and consulted Jim on several points of detail in relation to reconstruction drawings I was commissioning of Housesteads at different points in time, and of several different buildings. He was always forthcoming and his deep knowledge of Housesteads and broad knowledge of things Roman influenced the directions I took*" (**IMP5**). The general public has also been informed via popular publications based on our research. For example, Crow has published several popular books on Housesteads including his English Heritage guidebook, *Housesteads Roman Fort* (1999, 2012), which provides a general history and guides visitors on their tour of the site.

Contribution to professional guidelines, conservation policy and practice

As well as producing popular publications, Crow acted as a consultant to English Heritage and co-produced two Conservation Plans for Housesteads (1994, with Rushworth; and 2002, with Peter McGowan Associates and Rushworth). In the 2002 Conservation Plan, Crow drafted much of the text for the landscape and the Wall and his previous work (including joint work with Rushworth) was used to provide historical and archaeological material for the Plan. Research by Allason-Jones, Haynes and Crow underpinned key contributions to the 2009 Hadrian's Wall Research Framework. Funded by English Heritage and facilitated in part by Durham County Council, this framework identified agendas and strategies for future research on the Wall, essential for its future management (**IMP6**). As part of the Hadrian's Wall WHS Management Committee their research also helped inform priorities for the Hadrian's Wall Management Plan 2008-2014 (**IMP7**).

Research on Roman ceramics by John Dore and colleagues at Newcastle contributed directly to the creation of the *National Roman Fabric Reference Collection* (NRFRC) (Tomber and Dore 1998). This has become an industry-standard work for Roman pottery specialists and is widely used in commercial and professional archaeology. As noted in the Roman Pottery Research Group's *Research Strategy* (2011: 40), the NRFRC "*...is acknowledged by the majority of SGRP members as being one of the most important and influential publications on Roman pottery and the fabric and coding descriptions are now widely used by Roman pottery specialists*". The project also helped to confirm the value and utility of national fabric reference collections and provides a model for similar projects (**IMP8**).

Informing education beyond the HEI and Academy

The research of Allason-Jones and Haynes has impacted positively on the education of children and young people, particularly through the museum sector and the education programmes of the GNM and SRM. The number of school visits to the GNM is buoyant as a result of the sustained and on-going commitment of the University and museum staff to provide resources for teachers. These include both self-led visits and activities taught by museum staff. Since it opened, more than

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95,000 school-age children have visited the museum on organised educational visits with their schools (**IMP1**), and the GNM consistently records the third highest number of participants in free educational events at any university museum in the UK (2009/10: 31,210; 2010/11: 42,403). The Hadrian's Wall gallery is the museum's central feature and is visited frequently by school groups. Drawing on the research expertise of Allason-Jones and the educational resources developed in the Museum of Antiquities, TWAM museum staff have been able to develop innovative educational experiences which connect cross-curricular topics in arts, humanities and sciences with everyday life on the Roman frontier, as well as developing visual and story-telling skills in school-age children. Taught Roman workshops relate to topics covered in the National Curriculum and learning outcomes include increasing children's knowledge about life on the Roman frontier, and in the last year alone these have been attended by hundreds of school-age children from across the region (**IMP9**). The education programme at the SRM has also benefited from Haynes' excavation work at Maryport. School groups were invited to visit the museum whilst the excavations were on-going to learn first-hand how archaeologists work and how archaeological discoveries help us to learn about life in ancient times. Whilst the excavations were on-going, the number of school visits rose considerably; only 47 children visited with schools in 2010, rising to 715 in 2012 (**IMP3**).

In addition to attracting schools, the Roman display at the GNM is also used for research and academic teaching beyond Newcastle University, sometimes in its own right but often in conjunction with visits to the Wall itself. Staff from many British, European and American universities have visited the display with student groups and have noted the benefits of doing so. For example, a group of staff and students from Department of Latin at Geneva University visited the GNM display as part of a five day visit to explore Hadrian's Wall. Geneva's Professor of Latin reported: "*Since the main purpose of our study trip was to introduce our students to the history and archaeology of Hadrian's Wall, we decided to begin with a visit to the Hancock Museum. Its large and rich exhibit devoted to the Wall offered our students, none of whom had ever been to the north east of England before, a superb overview of the region, including the course taken by the Wall and its strategic importance, the organization of military life along the Wall and the rich epigraphic remains...our students said that the visit had provided them with a valuable survey of the Wall in its geographical and historical contexts, without which their visit to the actual site of the Wall itself would have made much less sense*" (**IMP10**). This impact is complemented by the use of online teaching resources, developed from underpinning epigraphic research, such as Inscripta (<http://cias.ncl.ac.uk/Inscripta/>) and Identifact (<http://cias.ncl.ac.uk/Identifact/>), which are being used by universities all over the world.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- (IMP1) TWAM, Impact Reports 2011/12 and 2012/2013. Available at: http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/geisha/assets/files/TWAM_Appendices_Visitor%20Information.pdf, and <http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/geisha/assets/files/TWAM%20Annual%20REPORT%20v10.pdf>.
- (IMP2) TWAM, visitor data. Available on request.
- (IMP3) Senhouse Roman Museum: visitor, volunteer and school data. Available on request.
- (IMP4) Contact: Maryport Community Volunteer.
- (IMP5) Factual Statement from Senior Properties Historian, English Heritage.
- (IMP6) Symonds, MFA & Mason, DJP (eds) (2009) *Frontiers of Knowledge: A Research Framework for Hadrian's Wall, Part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site*. 2 vols. Durham: Durham County Council, available on request.
- (IMP7) Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site, Hadrian's Wall Management Plan 2008-14. Available on request.
- (IMP8) Perrin, R. (2011) *A Research Strategy & Updated Agenda for the Study of Roman Pottery in Britain*. Study Group for Roman Pottery Occasional Paper 1. Available on request.
- (IMP9) TWAM, Schools Visit Data, Hadrian's Wall Gallery. Available on request.
- (IMP10) Factual statement from Professor of Latin, University of Geneva.