OLD TRIMONTIUM WEBSITE PAGES

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ABOUT

About Trimontium Museum

The Trimontium Museum (aka the 'Three Hills' Roman Heritage Centre) is located in the triangle-shaped Market Square of the small town of Melrose in the Scottish Borders.

The collection derives from the 370 acre Romano-native complex at the village of Newstead, one mile to the East, in the lee of the three Eildon Hills (pronounced eel-don) which dominate the area and give the fort and its associated features its Roman name Tri(um)montium – the place of the three hills.

The Museum is situated in a red sandstone building, The Ormiston, in the Square under a large black clock (next to the white-walled Burt's Hotel), the entrance being marked by two figures – one Roman, one native.

The Museum is entirely operated by the volunteers of the Trimontium Trust.

HIGHLIGTS

The Synton Hoard

The story of how the 2nd century 228 silver denarii hoard found at Synton Hill near Ashkirk, off the A7 en route to Hawick, came to be purchased for £10,000 under Treasure Trove in a partnership between the Trust and Scottish Borders Council, for display by each partner for half the year. The hoard is prominently displayed in the Museum for the 2015 season along with the Kippielaw hoard – a total hoard of 300 silver denarii of the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

Trimontium Man

Meeting the Ancestor

A skull which is thought to belong to a 1st or 2nd century Roman soldier has had its face reconstructed more than 150 years after it was discovered by workers building the Waverley railway line near Trimontium (the Roman Fort at the foot of the three Eildon Hills) in the Scottish Borders. He was found at the bottom of a well and died under suspicious circumstances as his skeleton was found 'erect or nearly so' with a spearhead by his side. His reappearance was made possible by the enthusiasm of the local

Trimontium Trust who gathered sponsorships and donations to find the collaborative reconstruction of this Trimontium residents face. Mr Donald Gordon, honorary secretary of the Trust said 'He will be an important item in the exhibits in the Trimontium Museum in Melrose and we hope the public will want to come along and meet him'.

Dr John Reid, Chairman of the Trimontium Trust, and consultant radiologist at the Borders General Hospital in Melrose, proposed the reconstruction: 'I suggested to the Trustees that we ask the advice of Dr Ian Macleod of the Edinburgh Dental Institute who helped reconstruct the face of Robert the Bruce'. With his advice the skull came from the National Museum of Scotland, who supported the venture, to begin the reconstruction process by having a CT scan at the Borders General Hospital. It travelled under the watchful eye of Fraser Hunter, curator of Roman Antiquities, who said 'It's a rare thrill to see the dry bones of this Roman brought back. to life. It reminds us of the people behind Roman Scotland.'

On its journey of reconstruction the electronic data for the skull travelled from Melrose to Wales where the University of Cardiff has a medical modelling facility which can produce an exact replica of any human skull. Then to Dr Caroline Wilkinson, Medical Artist, at the University of Manchester to put 'flesh' back on the bones:' Sometimes we end up with a rather bland image. This man's skull was in good condition and the face produced has, I feel, some personality and character'.

Walter Elliot, Past Chairman of the Trimontium Trust, expressed his delight. 'We are very grateful to the many organisations who contributed funding for this reconstruction including the National Fund for Acquisitions; the local William Hill Trust; the Russell Trust and the Tweed Forum Heritage Lottery Fund. We would also like to thank Dr Richard Bibb at the National Centre for Product Design and Development Research at the University of Wales who collaborated with the technicians of Vantico Limited (who donated the material for the plastic model) to create the exact replica using the technique of stereolithography. We hope that the public will come to see Trio Montanus Vertex, as we have named him, at the Trimontium Exhibition.

Did he fall down the pit, or was he pushed?

Walter Elliot – Medal Award

Dorothy Marshall Medal Laudation

"The Medal commemorates Miss Dorothy Marshall who in her own long lifetime contributed so much to Scottish archaeology and especially in the area of her beloved Island of Bute and marks the Society's gratitude for the bequest to the Society following her death in 1992. It is given to an individual who, in a voluntary capacity, has made an outstanding contribution to Scottish archaeological or related work". *Dr Simon Gilmour, Director of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.*

On Monday 31 January, 2011 the President of the Society read the following tribute to Walter in the Royal Society building in George St, Edinburgh, before making the presentation.

"We are delighted this year to award the prestigious Dorothy Marshall medal for an outstanding voluntary contribution to Scottish archaeology to Walter Elliot of Selkirk. Walter has been involved in the archaeology and history of his native Borders for over fifty years, in active fieldwork, in popularising and in preserving the area's past.

Born in Selkirk and brought up in the Ettrick valley, after National Service he ran a sawmill and worked as a fencing contractor. He describes himself as a "poor but honest woodcutter", and this took him across the Border landscape, developing a deep first-hand familiarity with the traces of the past and a curiosity about the antiquities he picked up on the way. This led him to contact the Mason brothers, great fieldwalkers of the Borders, and sparked a passion for fieldwalking, particularly at the Roman fort of Newstead but also over many flint scatters. His practical field involvement included digging with Dorothy Marshall when she excavated at Hangingshaw in Selkirkshire.

Roman Newstead has been a happy hunting ground for many years, and important finds led to a string of papers in our *Proceedings*, both alone and in collaboration with specialists; the finds were donated to the National collections. Walter played a major role in the establishment of the Roman museum in Melrose for the Trimontium Trust, and served as the Trust's chairman for 13 years. His enthusiasm for the Roman past led him to see the value of metal-detecting at a time when many professionals were sceptical, and he has acted as a valuable channel for information and finds over the years.

His interests go beyond the archaeological; he played a key role in ensuring that the Walter Mason Papers, a substantial collection of late medieval Selkirk Burgh Records, were preserved, and has been involved in their translation and publication. He writes poetry, most evocatively in Border Scots, and recently published a collation of Border poets, *The New*

Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, picking up where Sir Walter Scott left off. His desire to spread the word about Borders archaeology and history has seen him writing a regular column for the *Southern Reporter* and broadcasting for *BBC Radio Tweed* and Border TV, as well as advising various TV and radio programmes and authoring a number of books and pamphlets, most recently the first volume of his substantial *Selkirkshire and the Borders*, with his perspective on the area's archaeology and early history.

Walter's work over the decades has greatly improved our knowledge of the past of the Borders, and helped bring it to life for many people. We are delighted to honour this "poor but honest woodcutter" with the Dorothy Marshall Medal tonight".

The recipient (who had been prevented by snow from receiving the Medal in late 2010) thanked the Society and modestly apologised to the assembled archaeologists and historians for pestering them over the years.

RESEARCH & REPORTS

"THE PLACE OF THE THREE PEAKS"

The fort at Newstead, situated on a bluff on the South bank of the river Tweed, commands the Tweed valley.

Eildon North Hill and Trimontium Stone It was a key defensive site throughout the Roman period and was the hub of Roman roads in Scotland. Of these 500 miles of Roman roads only one, so far, has produced a milestone, found at Ingliston near Edinburgh, and giving the distance in Roman miles from the roads HQ – TRIMONTIUM, (perhaps originally 'castra trium montium' – the camp of the three hills or place of the three peaks or Triple Mountain). See the Newstead information shed.

Trimontium is the name given to it in Ptolemy of Alexandria's second century map and in the list of ancient place names, the seventh century Ravenna Cosmography. It is taken to refer to the three Eildon (pronounced 'Eeldon') Hills – Eildon Hill North; the Mid Hill; and the Little or Bowden Eildon – all Bronze Age sites and landmarks visible from all directions. (There is also the Little Hill beside them, the vent of the volcano of long ago.)

It was no accident that the Romans placed their South of Scotland HQ beside such a landmark. The 1986 excavations on Eildon Hill North indicate that there is a 1,000 year gap in the occupation of the hill

between the end of the Bronze Age and the Roman Iron Age ie that the Romans found the hill unoccupied, placed their signal station (still visible with ditch and bank) on the Western tip of the hill and encouraged some reoccupation of it.

General Roy, surveying Scotland after the 1745 rebellion, placed the Roman fort at the village of Eildon, to the South East of Newstead. It was not till the Waverley Railway Line was being laid in the 1840s and Roman artefacts began to be found by the navvies in cutting through the South Annexe that its location became clearer. It was another sixty years later, towards the end of a busy two decades of Roman fort-finding and excavation in Britain (eg Birrens 1896), that James Curle of Melrose, a solicitor by profession, was given permission by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland to excavate. This took from 1905 to 1910, proved a sensation at the time because of the quality of the artefacts found, and was recorded by him in a magisterial work published in 1911 and entitled 'A Roman Frontier Post and its People'.

In 1947 Sir Ian Richmond undertook a corroborative excavation with the aid of German prisoners of war. For forty years fieldwalkers from Selkirk – the Mason brothers, J Walter Elliot, Jack Cruickshank and Caroline Cruickshank – gathered evidence from the field surfaces, including many intaglios (soldiers' rings with semi-precious stones). Aerial photography by Professor J K S St Joseph of Cambridge and the Royal Commission in Scotland (G S Maxwell et al) also took place on an annual basis. Bradford University (Drs RFJ Jones and Simon Clarke) were involved in summer excavations from 1987 to 1998, (full report expected in 2006/2007) including the Newstead Project, which attempted to study Romano-Celtic interaction in a 50 sq km area around the fort with parallel excavations at native sites, and in the rescue excavation along the route of the third phase of the Melrose Bypass, which the local authority succeeded, after two public inquiries, in putting through the old railway cutting in the South Annexe, which had been returning to nature since the closure of the railway in 1968, and where, far from there being little to find because of the work of the navvies, forty major archaeological features were recorded, including four wells to add to the 107 wells which Curle had found and which have been the glory and the enigma of Trimontium since his time. Some of the artefacts in these easily dug, stone-lined wells or pits in a high water table area may be rubbish discarded when the fort was abandoned. Some certainly represent votive offerings to appease the gods of the underworld and they range from priceless chased sports helmets, to carpenters' tools, offcuts of tents, and animal heads, given by people obsessed by the spirits of the natural world around them who carefully sealed off these entrances to the underworld when they were filled – and dug more.

There are no upstanding stone remains at Trimontium today but guides on the Trimontium Walk point out the features that can still be seen in the fields, including the swell of the ploughed-out rampart, and the amphitheatre. It is an almost tangible story.

The 'Newstead' artefacts form the greater part of the national collection which is on view in the Early Peoples section of the Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh. Apart from the Trimontium Museuem in Melrose Square there is a small collection of finds in a room of the Commendator's House in Cloisters Road, entry to which is gained by visitors to Melrose Abbey.

A 'ROMAN' SUMMERHOUSE

In the front field of the Nursing home, Grange Hall, on the north bank of the Tweed at Leaderfoot there is an Edwardian Summerhouse built of all sorts of marked Roman stones from the nearby huge 1st/2nd century fort of Trimontium.

You can see it from the weekly Trimontium Walk, away across the Tweed near Broomhill Farm looking like a double garage in the distance. Closer to, you'll need stout shoes or your wellies, as you encounter longish grass, lots of friendly thistles and Leaderfoot sheep – or their calling cards.

The story is that a Mr Roberts, the Edwardian owner of what was Drygrange House took cartloads of stone from Trimontium and had them built into (a) an arch (now demolished) and (b) a summerhouse. The inside is still lined with fumed oak, surrounding selected 16th/17th century stones built into the Roman walls. Just right for tea and muffins – and a lump or two of your very own history to stir your curiosity.

The three 'pillars' that face you have a Roman stone 'basin' or a Roman drain at your waist level; the niche above the middle 'pillar' is filled with a Victorian fumerary urn and the walls are totally made of bits and pieces of Roman masonry and stonework. (Not something that Historic Scotland would encourage today)

The Trust has consolidated the roof, put some slabbing – and a fence with a gate – round the outside, so that folk could have a good look at these intriguing stones; and lately erected sliding doors to protect the inside. The approach to the building is to be made easier by a path round the Hall

The Trust is very grateful for the cooperation of Grange Hall Nursing Home.

THE AMPHITHEATRE

This discovery is yet another exciting finding of Bradford University Archaeological Studies Dept, which worked at the Trimontium site, originally under Dr RFJ Jones and then under Dr Simon Clarke, from 1987 to 1998. Their report is expected in 2006/2007 and will follow in the steps of Curle (1905-10); Richmond (1947); and St Joseph (aerial photography 1948-75). A large amount of information relating to the archaeology of the Trimontium site at Newstead can be found at Dr Simon Clarke's UHI Communities page. The amphitheatre is the first to be discovered in Roman Scotland and, so far, the most northerly in the Roman Empire. (There is possibly another at Inveresk near Edinburgh.) As the Roman Army HQ in Southern Scotland it is not surprising that a fort housing up to 2,500 men at one point in the 2nd century should have had an arena for weapon training, displays of martial skills and exhorting the troops, at a convenient point near its North East corner.

Bill Lonie of Newstead, the retired Scottish College of Textiles lecturer, Trimontium Trustee and former Chairman of Melrose and District Community Council, who in 1991 was the first to wonder if the saucer-like depression, as seen from the Leaderfoot railway viaduct, and half-filled by the embankment of the now-closed minor road B6361, was an amphitheatre, and wrote it up in the 1992 Trimontium Trumpet newsletter, was delighted with the news. "I'm relieved too," he said with a laugh,"and very impressed with the work of Dr Clarke and his colleagues on a difficult site."

Trimontium already has a first to its credit, in that the only Roman milestone found in Scotland (out of 500 miles of Roman roads north of the Border) – found indeed at Ingliston, near Edinburgh, 40 miles away – gives the distance from the hub of Roman roads in Scotland i.e. Trimontium. (A replica Millennium Milestone was unveiled at Newstead on 2nd Sept. 2000)

The site itself is in pasture, with sheep and cattle, and has a fine situation above the River Tweed and the three Leaderfoot bridges – the Victorian railway viaduct; the eighteenth century turnpike bridge; and the A68 1974 bridge.

Dr Clarke, whose booklet on the Phases of the Fort (seven in all) was published by the Trust, says that the arena lies NNW – SSE, a little like a rugby ball; the centre of the arena is 40 metres across; and the spectating area is a circular cobbled bank, enclosing the arena.

The Trust was delighted that its investment in the three-week dig in August-September 1996 at the top of the Leaderfoot brae (largely helped by Treasure Trove money from Walter Elliot and his detector friends) was so productive. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and others assisted – and a North Annexe or Vicus was also identified. The details are contained in a 14 page A4 booklet (available from the Honorary Secretary, or the Museum for a small fee) entitled "Newstead 1996 : The Northern Vicus and the Amphitheatre : Excavation and Survey"

The Annexes (Vici)
The Annexes or Vici

During the occupation, settlements, perhaps military in origin but subsequently of Romanised natives, presumably with some form of their own local government, developed all round the fort – to the North (discovered in 1996) and not yet fully measured, but busy with trade and artisan activities; to the South (14 acres eventually; a market township astride two roads – one of the first century, one of the second – coming up to the South wall of the fort; an industrial estate; an agricultural area, leading to the outlying field system which had large U-shaped drainage ditches, as opposed to V-shaped protective ditches); to the East (20 acres; the main entertainment area for the troops; large residential houses for the merchant entrepreneurs; a bazaar for travellers along Dere Street, the later name for the main North-South Roman road, crossing the Tweed at Leaderfoot); and to the West, where the first bathhouse was built (later much extended) and the mansio, a huge half-timbered building, traditionally regarded as a motel for official travellers, and recently suggested to be (perhaps in addition) an official trading station placed outside the fort, where local dignitaries could make their council tax arrangements with the Revenue Department of the Roman State.

The annexes were defended by ramparts of piled-up earth, and by ditches, similar in dimensions to the fort ditch. The West, South and East annexes (and presumably the North also) seem to have had inter-connecting gateways.

The Fort

The Marching Camps and the Fort: First Phase – The Agricolan Fort

The earliest Roman remains on the site are a series (eight at the last count) of large marching camps (the ditches still visible after 2,000 years as dark lines in aerial photos). They represent temporary stopping places for tented armies on the march ie for the first garrison before they completed the fort or, after it was occupied, for visiting troops passing up or down the line, who could not be accommodated in the fort itself. They are of varying sizes, two being 40 and 50 acres in extent, and one being called by Curle 'The Great Camp'. Trimontium may have been a gathering place for armies eg under the Emperor Septimius Severus in 208-10 when he campaigned in the North of Scotland and may have wintered at Cramond.

There are many periods or phases of fort construction at Trimontium. The first in 80 AD probably built by the Ninth Legion from York (not 'lost', according to the latest evidence) during Agricola's northern campaign leading up to his victory at Mons Graupius (in Aberdeenshire?) in 83 AD, was about 10.5 acres in extent, contained wooden buildings, and was defended by a rampart of earth only, built up on a foundation of cobbles, and with two V-shaped ditches, 9′ wide and 3′ deep approx, in front. In shape it was an 'irregular' fort in that it departed from the standard playing-card shape layout. The lines of the rampart in each quarter are staggered, so that people approaching the gates in each side must do so at an angle, thus exposing themselves to side fire. Other Agricolan forts in Scotland display similar characteristics, but the overall idea seems to be exceptional (the work of one engineer?) and examples are rare. See outline drawing. The West Annexe, an enclosure defended by two ditches, seems to have been the first extra-mural development.

It is suggested that the ala Petriana, the biggest in the country, provided the cavalry wing stationed at the fort at this time.

Second Phase – The Domitianic Fort (after the Emperor, Domitian)

About 86 AD the Agricolan fort was extended to 14.5 acres and its defences strengthened. The two ditches were infilled and replaced by a single huge ditch, 20′ across and 12′ deep. The earth rampart, again on a cobble and rubble base, was now 43 ' wide and 28' high (including the palisade on top). The buildings, though still wooden, had stone foundations – to last longer. As with phase I, there is little evidence for the arrangement of buildings and streets within the fort.

First Abandonment or Gap in Occupation: Third Phase

The traditional view is that the first period of Roman occupation lasted from 80 to 105 AD. The Romans gave up trying to have a Tay-Forth or Clyde-Forth frontier line of forts. “In the early years of the second century the costs or risks of maintaining the outposts (in South Scotland) appear to have exceeded the advantages, and they were abandoned. For nearly forty years thereafter the lower isthmus (of the province of Britannia) formed the north-western frontier of the Empire, and the tribes of Scotland were left to pursue their respective ends without the hindrance or help of a resident garrison.” G S Maxwell, 1989.

The Emperor Hadrian’s visit to Britannia in 121-122 AD resulted in the building of the Hadrian’s Wall frontier. Again the traditional view is that Trimontium was re-occupied about 140AD and became a support centre to the rear of the (Forth-Clyde) Antonine Wall, when Hadrian’s successor Antoninus Pius brought an army back into Scotland. Trimontium may well have been re-occupied some time before that as an outpost fort, North of Hadrian’s Wall.

Re-occupation and Refurbishment: Fourth Phase – Outpost Fort

After twenty or even forty years’ absence the earth rampart immediately required an additional ‘dump’ of earth to strengthen it, and the fort ditches seem to have been hurriedly recut, with the inclusion of branches as an easily available additional deterrent. The buildings may have reverted to wooden construction in this ‘precarious’ phase. Extra-mural settlement, with a market place, existed in the South Annexe. There was capacity for 1,500 troops, not counting the South Annexe civilians. Like the initial first century Agricolan phase this second century re-establishment was probably brief.

The Trimontium Stone

The monument, of Swedish granite and ten feet high, is of an exaggerated Roman altar, in the style of that set up by Gaius Arrius Domitianus, centurion of the Twentieth Legion at Trimontium in the second century, with a libation bowl (the ‘focus’) set between ‘bolsters’ on top. Erected by the Edinburgh Border Counties Association and unveiled by

Dr James Curle at a ceremony attended by three hundred people on 8 August 1928, it reads as follows:

"Here once stood the fort of Trimontium, built by the troops of Agricola in the first century AD, abandoned at least twice by the Romans, and ultimately lost by them after fully one hundred years of frontier warfare".

In accordance with the first half of the statement, it is accepted that the Roman occupation of the area covered two periods – 80 to 105 AD and 140 to 185 AD. It is now thought, however, that after the native defeat at Mons Graupius and because of the vast technical superiority of the Roman army, it was not so much 'warfare' that occupied the troops but holding and policing the country. This would have entailed: maintaining communications and supplies by road, bridge and river; negotiating with the tribal chiefs; trading with the natives; raising taxes; and acting as the front-line protection of the province of Britannia which lay to the South.

Buried Treasure
Further Engraved Treasures from Trimontium Fields

The Cruickshank Collection

For over 30 years Jack and Caroline Cruickshank walked the fields of Trimontium chasing the plough furrows to glean fragments of Newstead's Roman past – sherds of pottery and glass, fragments of metal and, rarest of all, decorated gemstones. Over the years they have built up a magnificent and very important collection of material to shed light on life at Trimontium. With Jack's sad death in 2000 a great wealth of knowledge on Trimontium died too. Now Caroline has generously donated their collection to the National Museums of Scotland, where it can take its place alongside James Curle's discoveries and the other finds made by generations of long-suffering fieldwalkers. This will ensure its long-term future and make it available to a wider public – firstly in the Borders, as the cream of the collection will be coming to the Ormiston Institute in Melrose from Easter 2001 for a special display.

The collection is rich and varied. The pottery and glass expand the range of artefacts known from the site quite markedly – the pottery, for instance, includes a fragment of a clay lamp, a rare find for a Scottish site, while the glass features a fine range of gaming counters, beads, bangles and vessel glass.

Individual finds of note include a clay slingshot – a first from Newstead. While there were units of specialised slingers, there is no evidence of such a garrison at Trimontium. The sling was probably an expedient

weapon at times of need, or a hunting weapon. We know from finds of boar's tusks at Newstead that hunting was practised, and an altar from the site to Diana, the goddess of hunting (now on display in the Trust's museum), bears thanks for a good day's sport. While it would be a brave man to tackle a wild boar with a sling, it would be suitable for smaller game such as hares or birds. But it was also used against humans – there is good evidence from the Dutch fort of Velsen that slingshot was used to repel an attack during the Frisian revolt of AD 28, while numerous finds from the artillery training ground at Burnswark in Dumfriesshire show that it was in regular use among the Roman soldiery.

The metal finds are of particular interest. While iron does not survive well in ploughed soil, bronze fares rather better, and the Cruickshank collection includes some very interesting pieces. Some of the choicest are illustrated in Fig. 1. They include a bell which may have been fitted to horse harness or used as a charm to ward off evil spirits. Unsurprisingly there is a range of military metalwork, such as a strap end from a soldier's belt and pieces of cavalry harness. The dumb-bell toggle would have been a decorative strap fitting from horse harness, but in a style more at home in a Celtic than a Roman Workshop – a reminder that most of the troops at Newstead were recruited not from Italy but from Britain, Gaul or Germany, if not indeed from the Borders itself.

There is a range of ornaments too, especially brooches – the broken 'trumpet' brooch is a typical British-made brooch, the most common type found in Scotland, but the beautiful little 'knee' brooch is in origin from the Rhineland, and was much favoured by soldiers. This example has been decorated by covering its surface in tin or silver.

One of the highlights of the collection looks at first, sight unimpressive – a small piece of enamelled bronze only some 15 mm long. But on closer inspection its true beauty becomes obvious. It is a fragment of an enamelled belt plate, and the quality of the surviving enamelling can only make us marvel at what the intact object must have looked like. The decoration is made up of tiny blocks only a few millimetres square, many of them made by twisting tiny rods of melted glass together – the overall effect must have been stunning.

But it is not just attractive things which are interesting. An example is lead – one of the problem metals of the Roman period. The Cruickshanks picked up a good range of lead objects – but we have no idea what many of them were for! Lead was used for many purposes in the Roman period – for instance as weights, whorls, and slice lining water tanks. Yet many of the Cruickshank finds do not fall into obvious categories. This is an area which will require a lot more work, and these finds should stimulate some new research.

Jupiter However the undoubted highlight of the collection is the gemstones. These are well-known from Walter Elliot and Martin Henig's work. Yet it is only when you see them for yourself that you appreciate the true quality of these tiny, marvellous works of art. Two examples are illustrated here (Fig 3-4) – a magnificent head of Jupiter, the father of the gods, and a scene of two Cupids wrestling. This is the kind of image which really brings the Roman world alive.

Hopefully this will serve as a taster for the 2001 season's exhibition in the Trust's museum, which features all the above and more. It should be both an example of the wealth which Trimontium still has to offer and a fitting tribute to the skill and persistence of the Cruickshanks in their years of treading the Newstead fields.

Looking at this rich range of material should make us ask, what next? How do we continue to exploit Trimontium's wealth? The work of individual stalwart fieldwalkers such Walter Elliot and Bill Lonie is vital. To build on this, the site needs a long term, systematic fieldwalking programme, recording in detail the full range of finds and exactly where they come from. This is no small undertaking but is the kind of project which the enthusiasts of the Trimontium Trust are well-suited to carry out over a number of years – and which the National Museums would be happy to support and encourage. This would allow us to build on the excavation results and on the fieldwalking endeavours of the Cruickshanks, the Mason brothers and Walter Elliot (to name but a few), to develop a broader picture of the Trimontium complex. As the major Roman-site in southern Scotland it deserves no less.

I hope this may spur discussion of how we can deal with this magnificent legacy. In the meantime, we can admire the material in the Cruickshank collection and let it transport us back to Trimontium 2000 years ago.

– Fraser Hunter, Dept of Archaeology, National Museums of Scotland

February 2001

Further Reading

BOOKS ON ROMAN SCOTLAND

Scotland's Roman Remains – Lawrence Keppie – J Donald pub – £9.99) available at the Museum

The Romans in Scotland – G S Maxwell – J Thin pub. 1989 – £16.99

Roman Scotland – David Breeze – Batsford pub. 1996 – c £14

BOOKS ON TRIMONTIUM

A Roman Frontier Post and its People – James Curle, Glasgow University Press 1911- collector's item

Inventory of the Ancient Monuments of Roxburghshire, 1956, 2 vols – Royal Commision on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland – collector's item

The Outpost Forts of Hadrian's Wall in the days of the Romans – Frank Graham, 1983 (illustrated by Ronald Embleton; available (c£2) from Vindolanda, Chesterholm, by Hexham

The Trimontium Story – J Walter Elliot – £1.50 – pub. The Trimontium Trust available at the Museum

Trimontium: A Roman Frontier Post and its Phases – Simon Clarke – £1 available at the Museum

Newstead 1996: The Northern Vicus and the Amphitheatre – Simon Clarke – £1 available at the Museum

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SCHOOLS

A Trimontium Soldier's Marching Song
(To the tune 'John Brown's body')

I joined the Roman army and became the Emp'ror's man,
I banged my sword against my shield – and off the enemy ran,
I dig the ditches, lay the roads and boil soup in my can,
And my boots go marching on
[TRY -try- monti- monti- montyum] CHORUS **(x3)**
And my boots go marching on

I joined the Roman army and they marched me through the town. '
Twas "sinister ... dexter; shoulder your pack!", parading roun' an' roun',
Centurion's coming! Watch your head! His stick is coming down!
And my poor feet go marching on.
CHORUS + And my poor feet go marching on

I joined the Roman army and they gave me a wee horse,
An oval shield, a great big spear, no stirrrups yet, of course,
I hold on tightly with my knees – he doesn't give a toss,
But his hooves go galloping, on.
CHORUS + But his hooves go galloping on

Pay day, I leave the fort behind, to see what people sell,
The baths are great; I sometimes put an offering down a well.
You watch what you are doing 'cause you might fall down to….. the bottom
And your soul would go marching on
CHORUS + And your soul would go marching on

I joined the Roman army and we bridged the river Tweed,
We pushed Dere Street up Lauderdale, you should've seen our speed.
The boats come up from Berwick docks with everything we need,
And our oars go splashing on
CHORUS + And our oars go splashing on

I left the Roman army, I'm a veteran farmer now,
I have a wife and family, ten acres and a cow,
I fish and hunt and keep the peace – no marching for me – wow!
It's my sheep that go marching on
CHORUS + It's my sheep that go marching on.

Learn a Little Latin

Speak as the Romans did

Although the Romans spread from Italy their language was not the Italian we know today. They spoke a language called **Latin** which still has a strong influence on our own English language and other languages too.

This script is to be **enjoyed as word play** while on the Route March, not as a task. We **don't** use it all!

The **Donald** mentioned is Donald Gordon, the current Route March Guide.

Donald

‘SALVETE, OMNES (Sal-vay-tay om-naze) = Hello, everybody
‘UT VALETIS?’ (OOT Va-lay-tis) = How are you doing/

Pupils

‘SALVE, CENTURIO’ (Sal-vay **k**en-too-ree-oh,) = Hello, sir
‘OPTIME, GRATIAS’ (Op-ti-may gra-ti-as) = Very well, thank you

Donald

QUOT PONTES VIDEMUS?’ (Kwat pon-taze vi-day-moose) = How many bridges do we see?

Pupils

‘TRES PONTES VIDEMUS!’ (Traze pon-taze etc) = We see three bridges

Donald

“ET NOMEN FLUMINIS?, (Et no-men floo-min-iss?) = And the river’s name.....?

Pupils

‘TVEDA EST! (Tvay-da est) = It’s (the) Tweed

Greeting to R Tweed

‘O TVEDA, TE SALUTAMUS’ (Oh Tvay-dah, tay sa-loo-ta-moose) = Oh, Tweed, we salute you!

Donald

‘AD SIGNA’ = ‘To the Standards (ie flags)’ = FALL IN ie prepare to march
‘PROCEDITE’ (Pro-keh-dee-tay) = QUICK MARCH (Sin…. dex etc)
‘CONSISTITE’ (Kon-sis-tee-tay) = HALT
‘QUOD VIDEMUS?’ (Kwod vee-day-moos) = What do we see?

Answer(pupils/**discipuli** (dis-ki-poo-lee)/soldiers/**milites**(mee-lee-taze)

‘PONTEM FERRI-VI-ARI-AM VIDEMUS’ = It’s a railway bridge that we see

Greeting to builder of railway viaduct

'O PONTIFEX, TE SALUTAMUS' (Oh Pon-ti-fex, tay sa-loo-ta-moose (as above) = Oh, bridge-builder, we salute you! Also, under the bridge, to awaken *Echo, the Greek spirit,* all together, Io Triumphe (EE-0H TREE-OOM-FAY) – a shout of excitement (as when a try is scored!)

Donald at amphitheatre

QUOD VIDEMUS? Answer 'ARENAM (ah-ray-nam) VIDEMUS' = We see an amphitheatre, an arena (harena is Latin for 'sand' – ie on the ground, within the circus fence area in the middle of the hollow)

Greeting to Emperor at amphitheatre

'AVE CAESAR, TE SALUTAMUS' (Ah-vay Kye-sar etc as above) = Hail, Caesar, we salute you!

Donald at North Gate space

'QUOD VIDEMUS?"

Answer

'PORTAM VIDEMUS' = We see a gate

At North Gate, to the two-headed God Janus

'O JANE, TE SALUTAMUS' (Oh Janny etc) = Oh Janus, we salute you [Do you have a *janitor* – a servant of the God Janus (no kidding) at your school? Back to back (the two heads!) give a loud salute to him!]

Donald at monument

'QUOD VIDEMUS?'

Answer

'ARAM VIDEMUS' (Ah-ram etc) = We see an altar *(which mentions a general called Agricola)*

'O AGRICOLA, TE SALUTAMUS' (Oh A-gri-caw-la etc) = Oh Agricola (famous Roman Governor of Britain, *Britannia,* whose son-in-law Tacitus,*Ta-si-tus,* wrote his life story) we salute you!

Donald at West Annexe

'QUOD VIDEMUS?'

Answer

'VALLUM ET MURUM VIDEMUS'(Val-lum … moo-room etc) = It's an earth rampart we see – and a wall

Donald

'VALE, TRIMONTIUM (Vah-lay, Try-mon-ti-um) = Goodbye, Trimontium. And to the God of Travel (even in a bus or minibus) 'O MERCURI, TE SALUTAMUS' (Oh Mer-coo-ree etc) = Oh Mercury, we salute you!

Mercury has wings on his feet *(as in the Interflora advert).*

Other useful phrases:

To pupil**s** VALETE (Vah-lay-tay) Goodbye
To **one** person, VALE (Vah-lay) Goodbye
GRATIAS MAXIMAS Very many thanks – (Sounded as spelt)
SINISTER (PES) Left foot, shortened to **sin.**..as you step out, left foot first to start the March, followed by DEXTER (PES) Right foot, shortened to **dex**… And so we march **sin**…**dex**…or even

sin: sin:…**sin, dex ,sin**…..

Mons, montis m a mountain. Trimontium = Trium montium = The place of the Three Mountains
Pons, pontis m a bridge. Tripontium = Trium pontium = The place of the Three Bridges
Discipuli – Dis-ki-poo-lee = Pupils
Milites – Mee-lee-taze = Soldiers
Pueri – Poo-er-ee = Boys
Puellae – Poo-ell-aye = Girls

Magister (masculine) – Ma-gis-ter (‘g’ as in ‘go’) = Teacher . The feminine is Magistra (‘g’ as in ‘go’).

dies Lunae – dee-aze Loo-nye = Monday
dies Martis = Tuesday
dies Mercurii (this time Mer-coo-ree-ee) = Wednesday
dies-Iovis (Yo-vis, like Hovis) = Thursday
dies Veneris = Friday (Veh-neh-ris)
dies Saturni (Sa-toor-knee) = Saturday
dies Solis (Saul-is) = Sunday

Poem – On a Roman Helmet, Found at Newstead

The following is a poem inpired by one of the Roman helmets found at the Trimontium site.

On a Roman Helmet, Found at Newstead

A helmet of the Legion, this,
That long and deep hath lain,
Come back to taste the living kiss
Of sun and wind again.
Ah! touch it with a reverent hand,
For in its burnished dome
Lies here within this distant land
The glory that was Rome.

The tides of sixteen hundred years
Have flowed, and ebbed, and flowed,
And yet – I see the tossing spears
Come up the Roman road;
While, high above the trumpets pealed,
The eagles lift and fall,
And, all unseen, the War God’s shield
Floats, Guardian, over all.

Who marched beneath this gilded helm?
Who wore this casque a-shine?
A leader mighty in the realm?
A soldier of the line?
The proud patrician takes his rest
The spearman’s bones beside,
And Earth who knows their secret best
Gives this of all their pride.

With sunlight on this golden crest
Maybe some Roman guard,
Set free from duty, wandered West
Through memory's gates unbarred;
Or climbing Eildon cleft in three,
Grown sick at heart for home,
Looked Eastward to the grey North Sea
That paved the road to Rome.

Or by the Queen of Border streams
That flowed his camp beneath
Long dallied with the dearer dreams
Of love as old as death,
And doffed this helm to dry lips need,
And dipped it in the tide,
And pledged in brimming wine of Tweed
Some maid on Tiber-side.

Years pass; and Time keeps tally,
And pride takes earth for tomb,
And down the Melrose valley
Corn grows and roses bloom;
The red suns set, the red suns rise,
The ploughs lift through the loam,
And in one earth-worn helmet lies
The majesty of Rome.

W H Ogilvie, Ashkirk