Early studies in Roman Britain: 1610 to 1906

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'For great part of four hundred years, the Romans occupied this island in a state of peace and tranquility: and a colony so fertile, and abounding in beautiful situations, must have been inhabited by many Roman adventurers, who migrated hither with their families, and built villas or country seats, where they lived in some degree of opulence and elegance. Even the Britons of rank might have built houses in the Roman taste. Whenever we talk of the Romans in Britain, we think of nothing but rapine and hostility.'

Thomas Warton (1783), 59

Introduction: images of civilization and barbarity

This paper explores the origins of the study of Roman Britain, addressing the period from the late sixteenth century to the early twentieth. It compares and contrasts the accounts of *Britannia* created by William Camden (1610) and Francis Haverfield (1906). It also reviews some of the variety of other ideas about Roman Britain that developed between these times, exploring the ways that discoveries of archaeological objects and sites were used to support and/or transform a number of semi-contradictory ideas about British origins (*cf.* Hingley 2008a; 2011; 2012a).

This paper commences with the publication of the first English edition of William Camden's seminal work, '*Britannia*' (1610). Camden was the first author to

provide a detailed account of the evidence for the Roman province of *Britannia*, information that was used to provide the background for his history of Britain up to his own time. It ends with the publication of Haverfield's seminal lecture, '*The Romanization of Roman Britain'*, in 1906. This lecture was later published as a small book (Haverfield 1912) that was republished on a number of occasions (Freeman 2007). In 1907, Haverfield was elected to the Camden Professorship at Oxford, a post that commemorated William Camden (Freeman 2007, 164). Haverfield and Camden followed broadly comparable agendas, but in very different historical contexts. Both authors pursued a common theme, addressing the introduction of 'civility' (Camden) or 'civilization' (Haverfield) to the native population of the British Isles conquered by the Romans.

Despite the considerable difference in the details of the tales told by Camden and by Haverfield, the common element in the thematic structure of these two highly influential accounts drew directly upon the Roman writings that had emphasized the introduction of Roman ways to indigenous Britons under imperial rule. Of particular significance to both authors was the section of text in Tacitus' *Agricola* (21) that described the training of the sons of British chiefs in Roman ways and their consequential enslavement (Hingley 2008a, 10). This theme has provided a complex myth that played a significant role in ideas about the origins of English civilization from the late sixteenth century to the present day, although the terms in which this debate have been conceived have by no means remained constant (*cf.* Hingley 2008b). This origin myth communicated directly with the classically-educated landed elite living to the south of Antonine Wall from the late sixteenth century and, as Norman Vance has observed, came to act as the foundation of Victorian British pride (Vance 1997, 265; *cf.* Hingley 2010). It helped to communicate the humble origins of

contemporary British greatness and, from the late sixteenth century to the twentieth, provided ideological support for the conquest and control of foreign territories incorporated into the British Empire (Hingley 2000; 2008a).

This was not by any means the only myth of origin that was drawn from the Roman past by the British (for myths of origin, see Broklehurst and Phillips 2004; Samuel and Thompson 1990; Hingley 2008a, 4). Another powerful image of Roman Britain that dominated in the nineteenth century was soundly dismissed by Haverfield when he observed that, in 'Britain, as it has been described by the majority of writers, we have a province in which Romans and natives were as distinct as modern Englishman and Indian, and the "departure of the Romans" in the fifth century left the Britons almost as Celtic as their coming had found them' (Haverfield 1906, 190; *cf.* Haverfield 1896, 428-9). Haverfield noted that this inaccurate image had arisen as a result of both an over-reliance by the Victorians on the writings of Caesar and Tacitus and also 'the analogies of English rule in India'. I have defined this image elsewhere as that of the 'Celtic subaltern and Roman officer' (Hingley 2000, 10). In this context, the term 'subaltern' refers to representatives of a perceived inferior race subject to the hegemony of a ruling class (*cf.* Spivak 1994). For much of the period that separated Camden from Haverfield, this idea dominated the perception of the character of Roman Britain, leaving little room for antiquaries to explore the potential civilizing influence of the Romans on the ancient Britons.

This image of the Celtic subaltern suggested that ancient Britons retained their barbarian, or semi-barbarian, manners throughout the period of Roman rule in Britain; it also suggested that Roman officers lived in their Roman stations (forts, towns and villas) alongside, but at some remove from, native peoples. Many nineteenth-century accounts of Roman Britain had drawn deeply upon the cultural analogy provided by

British rule in India, just as British officers had drawn upon Roman parallels to inform their actions and policies (Hingley 2008a, 240-1). Haverfield's account of Roman Britain was intended to point out the bias in the British-India analogy by documenting the progressive influence of Roman civilization on the peoples in the south of the province. Haverfield stressed the common factors that linked the Romanized people of Britain to populations across the Roman empire, including urbanism, villas, forts and Roman material culture.

Haverfield synthetic account of the Roman province mapped ancient British civilization and subservience onto two different geographical areas of the province, the 'military district' and the 'civil district' (see Hingley 2000; Webster 2001). It elevated the importance of the civilized Romano-British populations; stressing the ancestral introduction of civilization to the people of the south and east of the British Isles and emphasizing the ancient barbarity of the people of the north and west (*cf.* Hingley 2008b, 319-21).

William Camden: chorography and British civility

During the late sixteenth century, a growing appreciation of the value of surviving classical texts transformed earlier more directly mythical accounts of the early history of Britain. Central to this new thinking was William Camden's fundamental contribution, the first synthetic account of Britain's Roman past that drew deeply on recently rediscovered classical texts and material objects. The first edition of his influential volume, *Britannia*, was published in Latin in 1586. Subsequent editions published over the following two and a half decades updated and expanded this review of the surviving Roman relics across England, Wales and southern Scotland. *Britannia* communicated information derived from local informants who recorded and

illustrated ancient sites and objects. The first English edition of *Britannia*, published in 1610, contained a detailed account of the Roman province, including the artefacts that had been identified, Latin inscriptions and a handful of pre-Roman coins (Hingley 2008a, 26-40).

The 1610 edition, subtitled *'a Chorographicall Description'*, brought the evidence for the Roman province into a direct engagement with Camden's Britain (Hingley 2012a, 8-9). Chorography is an analytical concept originating in the ancient Mediterranean world and used by early modern scholars in their accounts of the landscapes of England. Howard Marchitello observed that chorography delineates 'topography not exclusively as it exists in the present moment, but also as it has existed historically', since the concept is based on the idea that the character of the land described in particular places persists through time (Marchitello 1997, 78, 55). By the early seventeenth century, chorography had a close relationship with growing notions of landed property. As a method, it drew upon the history of the past of selected locations to help to justify the local aristocracy's lineages and rights to estates (Swann 2001, 101-7). By connecting the modern kingdom of England with the civil zone of the Roman province, Camden constructed a longer ancestry for the civilization and religion of the Elizabethan and Jacobean English, an idea that placed the Welsh, Scots and Irish in a subservient position.

For Camden and his peers, the Roman history of Britain had a particular relevance as an ancient context for the introduction of civility and Christianity to Britain. The concept of civility in turn derived from the Latin *civilitas*, meaning the art of government or the qualities of citizenship (Bryson 1998, 43-58). I have discussed the concepts of civility and civilization/Romanization in the writings of Camden and Haverfield elsewhere (Hingley 2008b). It also contributed to a

developing Jacobean fixation with exploring the unity and disunity of the new Great Britain (Hingley 2008a, 53). British policies in Ireland and North America at this time were informed by ideas derived from these ancient sources, a developing knowledge that helped to conceptualize and justify colonial exploration by providing models for dominating 'savages' and 'barbarians' (Hingley 2008a, 60-6).

This fashion for looking to the Roman past for the origins of contemporary civility ceased to be popular during the troubled decades of the early seventeenth century, but the idea was reinvented in the works of the eighteenth century antiquaries such as the Reverend William Stukeley (For 'Augustan' England, see Ayres 1997, xiv). Early eighteenth-century society was dominated by a landed aristocracy that drew deeply on classical Roman models (ibid. 2-47). Stukeley's ideas about the prehistoric henges of southern Britain, including Stonehenge, are more well-known today than his contribution to Roman studies, which was of equal significance during his own lifetime. Fascinated by the Roman remains of Britain, Stukeley travelled along the Roman roads of the south, producing a volume entitled *Itinerarium Curiosum* (Stukeley 1724; cf. Sweet 2004, 166). This itinerary provided an account of the towns and remains that lay along the routes, glorifying the surviving remains of Roman civilization across Britain.

Figure 1 here

Occasionally Stukeley's tales about the early origins of Britain communicated the idea of a continuity of civilization that served to link the classical provincial past with early eighteenth-century Augustan England. Very little excavated evidence was available to Stukeley but, in his account of a place that he calls '*Mantantonis*' (Chichester), he describes an inscription that had been found the previous year during the digging of a cellar in the town (Figure 1) (Stukeley 1724, 194). This was the

Cogidubnus inscription, which had already been recognized by another influential antiquary, Robert Gale, to be of considerable significance. Gale used the inscription to argue that Cogidubnus was a Roman citizen of British origin, who was 'Romanised' and took the name of his benefactor, the emperor Claudius (Gale 1723, 393-4). Stukeley built on Gale's account by arguing that the name 'Pudens' in the final line of the inscription referred to a man mentioned in Martial's *Epigrams* (IV, no. 13). Martial's Pudens was married to a British woman called Claudia Peregrina (Martial *Epigrams*, XI, no. 53), who Stukeley assume to have been identical to Claudia Rufina. Stukeley drew upon and transformed earlier traditions to suggest that Claudia was Cogidubnus' heir and also a Christian (Stukeley 1724, 193; *cf.* Hingley 2008a, 187-8). Earlier versions of this legend had claimed that Claudia Rufina was the daughter of Caratacus and had become a Christian while in Rome with her father. Stukeley later suggested that Claudia and Pudens invited St Paul to visit them in Chichester during the mid-first century AD and that he preached to the local population (Stukeley 1740, 233).

The reconstruction of the Roman history of Britain inspired Stukeley to reflect on an ancestral civility that mirrored the growing imperial ambitions of the British elite (Haycock 2002, 119). Stukeley sought to project the Roman remains of Britain into his neo-classical present, with the apparent grandeur of these material traces, in turn, reflecting on the contemporary greatness of Augustan England (Ayres 1997, 96-7; for the complexities of the term 'neo-classical', see Sachs 2010, 30). Stukeley had access to all the Roman materials studied by Camden, since *Britannia* was republished in an expanded form in 1722, but he also recorded a variety of new discoveries. Stukeley was involved in the recording and illustration of a number of Roman towns and he also encouraged friends and associates to uncover and document

the remains of several Roman villas, such as Cotterstock and Weldon in Northamptonshire (Hingley 2008a, 171-2). During the 1740s, a local man called John Stair conducted the first excavations at the Roman city at Silchester and produced a plan that included the town walls, street system and central forum (ibid. 181-4; Hingley, 2012b).

Roman settlers and 'Celtic subalterns'

These early excavations began to provide evidence for the civil elements of Roman Britain, including towns and country houses. Important discoveries were reported at the meetings of the Society of Antiquaries and in regular short papers on Roman matters in the *Philosophical Transactions* and *The Gentleman's Magazine*. The idea of the civil province was to be developed further as a result of more extensive excavations of villas and towns conducted at the end of the eighteenth century and during the early nineteenth. The increasing appreciation of a substantial civilian settlement across the Roman province was, however, often accompanied by the idea that these were the homes, not of Romanized Britons, but of Romans who had settled in Britain from overseas.

How did this idea of two separate populations come about? Until the pre-Roman date of 'Celtic' metalwork came to be clearly demonstrated during the early nineteenth century, the main source for thinking about the ancient Britons were the classical authors who referred (mostly dismissively) to the semi-naked and animal skin-covered barbarians of ancient Britain (Smiles 1994). In addition, the sixth-century writings of monk Gildas projected the idea of subservient semi-barbarian and semi-naked Britons living alongside the Romans, who lost their valour and fighting spirit before succumbing to the invasion of the fifth-century Anglo-Saxons (Hingley

2012a, 170-1). Of course, some contrary views idealized the ancient Britons, including the antiquarian works that tied Stonehenge and the megalithic monuments in with the druids (*cf.* Morse 2003, 41-7; Smiles 1994, 77-9). This image remained highly popular from the sixteenth century to the early twentieth. Despite Tacitus' comments about the civilizing (and enslavement) of the Britons in *Agricola* (21) (above), it was usually felt that these people did not become particularly Romanized under Roman tuition.

From the late sixteenth century, antiquaries began to collect and study Latin inscriptions derived from sites within the Roman military frontier zone, including the monuments now known as Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. These monuments were also surveyed and mapped at this time (Hingley 2008a, 110-4; Hingley 2012a). Studies of the inscriptions derived from Roman sites across northern England and southern Scotland indicated that individual soldiers had travelled to Britain from different regions of the Roman empire. Latin inscriptions from sites in the south of the province, such as the Cogidubnus example, were far rarer and the vast majority named soldiers derived from overseas (Sweet 2004, 181-3; Hingley 2008a, 160). The urban sites that developed in southern Britain in the Roman period often had a military origin and the Latin inscriptions referring to these soldiers were often taken to indicate stations occupied by a military population of incomers. The excavation of Roman towns and villas gradually led to the interpretation of these buildings as elements of the infrastructure of 'stations' occupied by the Roman officers who had settled in Britain as a result of their imperial and military duties.

Caesar, Tacitus and other classical writers had presented accounts of significant events across the province that fitted with the military emphasis provided by the Roman inscriptions. As a result, from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth, most

antiquaries viewed the Roman occupants of Britain as settlers from overseas who had brought their Roman identity and culture with them. During the eighteenth century, these ideas coincided with the increasing militarization of British society that accompanied the expansion of colonial territories overseas (Hingley 2008a, 161). At this time, a significant number of antiquaries, including Stukeley, began to develop a fascination with the network of Roman roads and stations across Britain, partly recorded by the Latin itineraries (ibid. 161-3).

Roman mosaics began to be uncovered and recorded in some numbers during the early eighteenth century, but were occasionally interpreted as pavements used to floor the tents of Roman generals (Hunter 1995, 196). More observant antiquaries realized that mosaics were usually associated with substantial buildings, probably villas (Hingley 2008a, 166-7; 169-73). The dominant explanation continued to suggest that these elaborate buildings represented the homes of Roman generals or Roman gentlemen from overseas. In 1787, Major Hayman Rooke published an account of the remains of a substantial Roman building that he had uncovered at Mansfield Woodhouse (Nottinghamshire). He suggested that the building indicated that 'the manners of Italy' had been introduced to Britain by Roman settlers, but did not discuss the idea that these Romanized individuals could possibly be Britons (Rooke 1787, 375; *cf.* Hingley 2008a, 235-6).

Figure 2 here

Samuel Lysons conducted a remarkable campaign of excavations at the sites of several Roman villas in southern England between 1789 and 1819. Uncovering the remains of several substantial buildings he produced information that led to a reassessment of the character of Roman culture in Britain. For the first time, remains of the foundations of buildings comparable to the better-preserved classical remains

of Rome, Pompeii and Herculaneum were excavated on a large scale in the British countryside (Hingley 2008a, 247-53). Lysons inferred that the builders and occupiers of these villas were Roman settlers from overseas, although, in the case of the impressive villa at Bignor, the proximity of the remains to Chichester caused him to speculate that it might have been the home of Cogidubnus (Lysons 1815, 219) (Figure 2). During the nineteenth century, however, the concept that the Roman buildings in the cities and villas of Roman Britain were the homes of Roman officers continued to dominate. Impressive buildings were found at the Roman towns of Bath, Cirencester and London during the early and mid nineteenth century, indicating the widespread scale of the Roman investment in Britain, but these urban centres were usually considered to represent military 'stations' with a civilian element to their populations (Hingley 2008a, 279-83).

Until the late nineteenth century, it was not possible to locate the homes and possessions of the pre-Roman peoples of Britain. The few coins with inscriptions including abbreviated names of several pre-Roman leaders referred to by classical authors were the only pre-Roman items that antiquaries could identify with any confidence prior to the nineteenth century (Hingley 2008a, 29-30). As a result, the image of skin-clad semi-naked barbarian Britons survived well into the twentieth century, when it was challenged by new information about the settlements and material possessions of 'Iron Age' people (Hingley 2011). In many accounts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Britons of the Roman period were described as members of a subservient population living alongside the Roman settlers. This was an idea that survived into the twentieth century in some scholarly and popular accounts of pre-Roman and Roman Britain (Smiles 1994, 146; Hingley 2012a, 223-

6). Attested evidence for named ancient Britons on Roman inscriptions was very rare and consequently most evidence indicated overseas origins for the Romans of Britain.

Contrasting views of Roman Britain

Although many antiquaries considered that the Roman villas and towns had represented the homes of Roman settlers from overseas, antiquaries occasionally drew upon the idea of the civilizing power of Roman rule in Britain. Thomas Warton suggested that Britons of rank might have built houses in the Roman style (Warton 1783, 59). Warton emphasized, however, that Roman 'adventurers' were mainly responsible for the Roman buildings of Britain. Sir Richard Colt Hoare excavated several ancient 'British villages' on the chalk downs of Wiltshire, going against the trends of the time by deliberately exploring these extensive earthwork sites rather than focusing on the excavation of villas and towns (Hingley 2008a, 255). Colt Hoare planned and partly excavated a number of Roman-period sties with less impressive remains (Figure 3), concluding that it was 'the wise policy of the Romans to civilize, as well as conquer … after having taking possession of the British settlements, both conquerors and conquered resided together; the former introducing many arts, comforts and luxuries of life … to which the Britons had been strangers' (Hoare 1821, 127).

Figure 3 here

The potential relevance of the message of the introduction of Christianity to Britain also caused some Victorian antiquaries and clerics to draw different messages from the Roman past (Hingley 2008a, 271-8). Stukeley's claims for Claudia, Pudens and St Paul at Chichester were reinvented and elaborated by John William, the Archdeacon of Cardigan, while other authors imagined that Claudia was the Christian

daughter of Caratacus or Cogidubnus (Williams 1848; see Hingley 2008a, 271-5; Vance 1997, 205-6). The solicitor and antiquary Henry Coote, who had developed an interest in Roman Britain, was determined to find a Roman root for British Christianity by drawing on an approach which argued for continuity in the urban centres of the province from the Roman province to medieval England (Coote 1878). These perspectives tied into a developing image that supported the concept of the mixed ancestral origins for the contemporary population of Britain, including the ancient Britons, Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Normans (Hingley 2000, 91-3).

Despite the works of antiquaries such as Colt Hoare and Henry Coote, it remained difficult to mount a sustained challenge to the idea that the Roman population of Britain constituted incomers from overseas. Thomas Wright (1810-77) published his popular but problematic book, *The Celt, the Roman and the Saxon*, in 1852. Wright portrayed the population of Roman Britain as a collection of distinct races living in their individual Roman military 'stations' among a population of enslaved and downtrodden Britons (ibid., 266-71). His writing indicates that he considered British peasants and slaves to be genetically incapable of modifying their ways to accommodate themselves to the civilized lifestyles of the occupying power. Wright described the cities, villas and roads, by contrast, as being occupied by a series of semi-independent Roman republics, each derived from a different part of the empire and with contrasting racial identities (Wright 1852; cf. Hingley 2008a, 279-83). Henry Mengden Scarth published a short book on Roman Britain in 1883 in which he desperately sought evidence for Christianity in the country's early history (Scarth 1883). He struggled to find much archaeological support for the idea that Roman civilization was transferred to the Britons in any meaningful way, although he had a greater comprehension of the possibility that Britons might have become

Romanized than many other contemporary accounts (Hingley 2008a, 293). For example, Bertram Windle (1897, 11) published an account of Roman Britain, in which he observed:

> 'The comparison has justly been made between the Roman occupation of Britain and our own occupation of India, for in both cases the intention of the conquering race has been, whilst firmly holding the dominions of which they have become possessed, to interfere as little as possible with the natives so long as they were content to submit quietly to the demands of their conqueror.

One of the most influential works on Roman Britain at the turn of the twentieth century was Rudyard Kipling's collection of tales, *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906). This projected a view of the Roman officers in Roman Britain as settlers from overseas or their descendants. The work had a deep impact on the teaching of Roman Britain in schools and was recommended as a teaching aid to generations of teachers (Hingley 2012a, 220). Kipling's writings indicate that the image of Celtic subalterns and Roman officers was still current at the beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, academic scholarship was beginning to turn to a different explanation for Roman culture in southern Britain. Indeed, Haverfield's contribution to this debate was probably prompted by the publication of *Puck of Pook's Hill* (Rivet 1976, 14).

Romanization: solving a contradiction

By the beginning of the twentieth century, archaeologists were developing a far more detailed picture of the military works, towns and villas of Roman Britain, Gaul and Germany as a result of a substantial number of new excavations. Knowledge of pre-Roman culture was also improving. This accumulating information would gradually

to lead to a new view of Roman culture as a transformer of indigenous ways of life. Francis Haverfield is usually seen as largely responsible for the coherent new idea of Romanization that arose during the early twentieth century. Haverfield drew deeply upon the improving knowledge of Roman Britain that had resulted from a number of recent archaeological projects, including excavations on Hadrian's Wall, at Aylesford, Cranborne Chase and Silchester. He also drew upon the scholarship of the German ancient historian Theodor Mommsen, who had outlined an approach to Romanization developed by Haverfield in his own work (Hingley 2008a, 317-8). In his article of 1906, Haverfield defined the way that Romanization was thought to have operated (*cf.* Hingley 2000, 114-23). He argued that the Roman empire became fully Romanized and that 'the definite and coherent civilization of Italy took hold of uncivilized but intelligent men, while the tolerance of Rome, which coerced no one into conformity, made its culture the more attractive' (Haverfield 1906, 188). Discussing the spread of Roman architecture and culture to the Western parts of the empire, he argued that 'In material culture the Romanization advanced … quickly. One uniform fashion spread from Italy throughout central and western Europe, driving out native art and substituting a conventionalized copy of Italian art' (ibid). This new knowledge enabled Haverfield to provide a well-informed interpretation of the Romanization of the indigenous inhabitants of the southern and eastern parts of Roman Britain, which he called the 'civil district' (ibid, 191-4).

Figure 4 here

Although Haverfield was the first to apply Romanization in a sustained way to the archaeology of Roman Britain, he was not the first to think about the distinctions between the south and north of the province. The work of the antiquary John Collingwood Bruce had encouraged generations of northern English antiquaries to

focus on the evidence for Hadrian's Wall (Hingley 2012a, 200). Bruce drew a distinction between the Roman 'Camps' and Walls of the north of the province and the 'cities' of the south (Bruce 1860, 343). He also remarked on the 'comparative security and luxury of those who were fortunate enough to live in the south' and noted that no mosaic floors had been discovered in the three northernmost counties of England (ibid., 344). These observations were developed by Haverfield in the definition that he provided of the military and civil districts (Haverfield 1906, 192) (Figure 4).

Figure 5 here

During the second half of the nineteenth century, excavations in London, Verulamium, Cirencester and Silchester indicated that the Roman towns of southern Britain had complex sequences of deep and sustained occupation (Hingley 2008a, 279-93; Hingley 2012b; *cf.* Hoselitz 2007, 173-4). It was realized that the military inscriptions, used by previous generations to provide evidence for the overseas origin of many 'Romans' in Britain, dated to the early stages of the military occupation of many sites, allowing a renewed emphasis upon a potentially indigenous contribution at these locations. Research on Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall indicated that the regular 'stations' along the lines of these two frontier works represented military forts rather than civilian or partially militarized cities (Hingley 2012a, 196-9). Initially, the central building in the Roman fort at Chesters on Hadrian's Wall was interpreted as the forum of a very small classical city (Figure 5). During the final years of the nineteenth century, however, it was argued that buildings of this type actually represented the headquaters buildings of the Roman forts that occurred at frequent intervals along Hadrian's Wall.

The excavation of forts in northern England, Scotland and on the German *Limes* during the final years of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries led to an improved understanding of the military organization of the northern parts of Roman Britain (ibid.). In the south, the extensive excavations at the Roman town of Silchester were to prove equally vital to the changing new perspectives outlined by Haverfield. Extensive excavations were undertaken at the site from 1864 to 1878 by James Gerald Joyce and from 1890 to 1909 by the Society of Antiquaries. This work led to a gradually evolving knowledge of the archaeology of this Roman city (Hingley 2008a, 287-89; 302-6), providing very little evidence to support the idea of a Roman military population at any period of its history. Observing the irregular plan of the town and the variation of the house plans from those of Roman Italy, Haverfield proposed that Silchester represented 'a native copy of a Roman town, such as occurs in countries ruled by a nation of higher civilization than the subject race' (Haverfield 1894). Using this new approach to the Romanization of southern Britain, many urban centres were reinterpreted as civil centres of local self-rule, the outcome of the transformation of pre-Roman tribes into Roman *civitates*. Early military occupation at some of these sites was explained as conquest period activity; the military units later moving further north and west to establish and occupy the military zone.

Figure 6 here

The concept of Romanized Britons was also becoming popular outside the urban arena. In an important publication of the 'Late Celtic' pottery from the Aylesford cemetery in Kent, the archaeologist Arthur John Evans argued that the pre-Roman ceramics showed 'Romanizing influences', a phenomenon that was also evident in the contemporary coinage (Figure 6) (Evans 1890, 351, n.c. 356, 383). Evans and Haverfield were both influenced by the excavations undertaken by Pitt

Rivers when he explored the homes of people he called 'Romanised Britons' on Cranborne Chase (Pitt Rivers 1888, 65; *cf.* Hingley 2008a, 298). Pitt Rivers' innovative fieldwork drew upon Hoare's earlier studies and was, in turn, influential in identifying the adoption of Roman pottery and personal ornaments by Britons who did not appear from the excavated settlement evidence to have had a particularly elevated social status.

The concept of Romanization was not used in Britain prior to the final decades of the nineteenth century, although authors since the early seventeenth century had sometimes adopted the term 'Romanized' (Hingley 2008b). I have argued that the concept of Romanization focused attention onto a much more directly evolutionary interpretation of Roman identity and cultural change that emphasized progress (Hingley 2000). Haverfield explored this idea in detail in 1906 to provide an account of how indigenous peoples in the lowland civil areas of Roman Britain could gradually adopt Roman ways. The south of the province was then thought to have become fairly fully Romanized, with even the peasants adopting Roman styles of pottery, artefacts and building (Haverfield 1906, 198). The elite were seen as administrators of the towns who lived in the villas excavated across the lowlands.

In the military zone, which covered much of Wales and central Britain (northern England and southern Scotland), evidence for Roman culture was generally found only on Roman military sites (Haverfield 1906, 191-2). In this region, villas were a very rare occurrence and towns were scarce. Where urban centres did occur, evidence was found for continued military associations. The homes of the indigenous people in the military districts usually appeared to change relatively little as a result of Roman control. Excavation work uncovered roundhouses, with Roman pottery and material

culture rarely occurring. Consequently, the idea of Celtic subaltern and Roman officer continues to be popular for the military areas of Roman Britain (Hingley 2004).

Conclusion: ancestral tales

The material remains that were available when Camden, Stukeley and Haverfield wrote their accounts impacted deeply on their interpretations of Roman Britain, but the meaning of the Roman past had also been transformed by historical circumstances. Although the remains of Roman sites had been uncovered when Camden was writing, the techniques of excavation and site recording were generally unknown and there was very little comprehension of the variety of Roman site types across the Roman empire. The only material objects that enabled Camden to tell stories about pre-Roman and Roman Britain were the Latin inscriptions and coins that had been found over the centuries. Haverfield had access to an additional three centuries of information from the surveying and excavation of archaeological sites and the study of inscriptions and classical texts. The careful excavation that had been undertaken at Roman sites in Britain and across Europe had identified a variety of different types of site, including towns, forts, villas, temples, industrial sites and rural settlements. Also available by this time were the initial results of work on the chronology of 'Late Celtic' (late Iron Age) and Roman pottery.

My previous work has explored the ways that ideas outlined by Camden, Stukeley, Haverfield and others were used to define the national and imperial origin of Britain and the British (Hingley 2000; 2008a; 2011). This paper has adopted a different approach by suggesting that Haverfield helped to establish an intellectually coherent and well-informed account of the archaeology of Roman Britain, a body of work that challenged earlier understandings. This is why his work had so much

impact upon later archaeologists. Consequentially, the concept of Romanization remained popular at least until the 1990s; indeed, ideas about the progressive character of Roman cultural change remain influential today. The establishment of the model for the civil and military districts also had a major impact on twentieth-century archaeology (Hingley 2004; although see James 2001).

Many of the archaeologists working on Roman Britain have now rejected the inherently progressive interpretations propounded by Romanization theory. It is important, however, to see Haverfield's work in the context of its time. He was clearly reacting to the influential origin myth that drew an analogy between British India and the Roman rule of Britain. Haverfield's perspective built upon, contradicted and transformed concepts of Roman Britain, developing and giving new attention to an interpretation that had originated with classical writings and had been worked on during the late sixteenth century by William Camden. Haverfield set an agenda that has only recently been challenged by authors who have produced accounts of Roman Britain that adopt a range of different perspectives (including James and Millett (eds.) 2001; Mattingly 2006; Webster 2001).

archaeological study of Roman Britain during the period covered in this article, see Freeman (2007), Hingley (2000), Sweet (2004, 155-88) and Hoselitz (2007).

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