A COMPANION TO ROMAN BRITAIN

Edited by

Malcolm Todd

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Abbreviations

BAR	British Archaeological Reports.
CBA	Council for British Archaeology.
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin.
CSIR	*Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani.*
Gallic Chronicle	*Chronica Minora*, volume I, ed. T. Mommsen, Berlin, 1892 (= *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, AA9).
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. H. Dessau. 3 vols, Berlin, 1892–1916.
RCAHMS	Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Scotland.
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales.
RCHM(E)	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England).
RIB	*The Roman Inscriptions of Britain I. Inscriptions on Stone*, ed. R. G. Collingwood and R. P. Wright. Oxford, 1965. Revised edition, with addenda and corrigenda, by R. S. O. Tomlin. Stroud, 1995. *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain II. Inscriptions on Other Objects*, ed. S. S. Frere and R. S. O. Tomlin. Fascicules 1–8, Stroud, 1990–5.
Tab.Sul.	The curse tablets, by R. S. O. Tomlin. In B. Cunliffe, *The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath*. 2. *The Finds from the Sacred Spring*. Oxford, 1988, 59–277.

Introduction

MALCOLM TODD

For four centuries Britain was part of an empire the centre of which was Rome. Although in later centuries Britain, and especially southern Britain, was intimately engaged politically and culturally with the adjacent Continent, it was never again so closely bound up with a European power for so long a time. The involvement of Britain with the world of Rome was by no means confined to the long period during which the island was directly subject to the rule of Rome. For a century and a half before the army of Claudius invaded Britain in AD 43, the island had been drawn by political and commercial forces into relationships with the western provinces of Rome. And for long after the end of Roman rule the literate inhabitants of Britain still looked to Rome as the fount of culture and knowledge in a world utterly changed from that of Claudius and Hadrian.

Despite this long association of Britain with Rome, the study of Roman Britain for long enjoyed a somewhat equivocal status. The reasons are complex and they are involved with the character of university education in Britain. Down to the 1950s, Roman Britain played a relatively minor role in the curriculum of universities. The subject was taught in a number of centres, including London, Durham, Newcastle, Exeter and Reading, but few lectureships were reserved for Romano-British and related studies. After about 1960, there was steady development in this direction elsewhere, notably at Leicester, Manchester, Nottingham, Cardiff and Bristol. Some of the specialists appointed then moved on to university chairs and, as many of them had been trained in the study of the Empire as a whole, Roman Britain was given an increasingly firm basis within the historical, Classical and archaeological curriculum.

It is a central fact that several academic disciplines contribute to the study of Britannia and these are deployed in this volume. They include the interpretation of Greek and Roman texts, the study of inscriptions, the excavation of Roman sites, and more recently the investigation of biological and environmental data. No one scholar could aspire to master all of these exacting fields, hence the large number of specialists represented here. Excavation has tended to dominate the subject; fresh discoveries continue to add to the record, and in some cases to transform it. The excavation of Roman sites in Britain reaches back to the seventeenth century at least and the record of this activity is as good or better than that of any other part of the Empire. Yet the organized study of Britannia made slow progress until the mid-nineteenth century. Work on individual sites and monuments such as the frontier walls (see p. 114) made significant advances, but these efforts were severely constrained by the lack of reliable

dating media, notably pottery. Stratigraphic investigation was, at best, inchoate and usually non-existent before 1880. Another obvious gap was the inadequate record of inscriptions, Emil Huebner's collection published in 1872 having many weaknesses (see p. 457). This lacuna was recognized by Francis Haverfield, who took steps to remedy the situation. Progress was slow, and the first successor volume to that of Huebner did not appear until 1965.

The quality of excavation on Roman sites in Britain remained at a low level until after the First World War. To take only one example, the work at Corbridge was very loosely supervised before 1914; the rich haul of finds was taken to justify the means. The record of work at Richborough and Wroxeter tells its own story. R. E. M. Wheeler commented on the fact that the ordered record of work in the 1880s and 1890s was not followed up in the following thirty years. While Wheeler tended to overstate his own contribution to the development of field archaeology in the 1920s and 1930s, there is no doubt that he did much to promote exacting practice in excavation and recording, and to train a new generation in field techniques, notably through his work in Wales and later at Verulamium. There was still much to do, and progress before 1939 was slow, largely for economic reasons. The outbreak of war brought many projects to an abrupt conclusion, but its aftermath was to provide a much-needed stimulus. The destruction of several historic city centres offered an opportunity for the examination of the early history of such cities as London, Exeter and Canterbury. Numerous opportunities were missed elsewhere, partly for lack of funds, partly because no local organization existed to supervise the necessary work. But there was a major advance in research on Romano-British cities, which was to provide a basis for more deliberate research programmes at, for example, Verulamium, Silchester, Wroxeter and Leicester.

It is a curious fact that a major history of Roman Britain did not appear until 1967. R. G. Collingwood's contribution to the first volume of the *Oxford History of England* in 1936, following his *Archaeology of Roman Britain* in 1930, for long served as the basic textbook on the province. This brilliantly written work of a moral philosopher held the field for thirty years, but it left many areas unexplored. No major competitor appeared before Sheppard Frere's *Britannia* in 1967. Thereafter, several general histories have made the history and culture of Roman Britain more accessible and familiar to a wide public.

Several approaches to the study of Roman Britain have developed over the past century. For long the dominant approach was from Rome down to this distant island. Those who studied and exposed the Roman past of Britain down to the mid-twentieth century were inclined to emphasize the Roman aspects of Britannia. Given the prevailing Classical education and cultural ethos of the time, this is no surprise. Francis Haverfield was the first major scholar to raise the matter of the degree of Romanization in Britain in a paper of 1905, later expanded into an influential volume which went through several editions and which accompanied his Ford Lectures of 1907, eventually brought to the press by George Macdonald in 1924. Seen as a whole, Haverfield's publications presented a clear and distinctive picture of a Roman frontier province and, in its essentially pre-1914 context, it probably could not have been bettered. But a firm and full basis for the study of Roman Britain still did not exist, a fact which Haverfield clearly recognized. Not only had few major sites been well excavated and published before 1914. The record of inscriptions was inadequate,

and a major project conceived and begun by Haverfield, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, was designed to set this to rights. Ninety years later this enterprise continues in an expanded form.

As a frontier province which contains the remains of two massive frontier works and a multitude of forts and camps of varied date, Britain has naturally figured prominently in the study of the Roman army and its operations. Research on Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine frontier in Scotland occupied a distinguished series of observers and investigators from the eighteenth century onward, chief among them John Horsley and William Roy, and opened a rich vein of information on the organization and practice of the Imperial army. The inseparable association of the army with its frontier works placed Roman Britain at the centre of the study of the Roman provinces in the twentieth century, leading roles being taken by George Macdonald, F. G. Simpson, I. A. Richmond, E. B. Birley and Kenneth St Joseph among others. This work was perhaps more seriously appreciated outside Britain than at home; and tension between *Limesforscher* and those more closely concerned with other aspects of Britain has taken many years to dissipate. But no one can seriously doubt the importance of the British evidence to knowledge of Roman military affairs in the widest sense. If there were any doubts, they were dispelled by the discovery of the astonishingly informative texts at Vindolanda, superbly read and interpreted by Professor A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas. Before the early 1970s, no one would have predicted that such documents would be recovered from northern Britain. It is likely that there is more to come.

In counterpoint to the study of military works, and partly in reaction to it, the contribution of the Britons to Romano-British culture has been increasingly highlighted over the past half-century. Although this field was entered by both Haverfield and Collingwood, the basis for examination of the Romanization of Britannia has been greatly expanded since 1950. The destruction of several historic city centres in 1940–5 provided an opportunity for investigation on an unprecedented scale, although available funding remained at a modest level. But the foundations for study of urban and rural communities were laid and quickly built upon. As 'rescue archaeology' developed in the 1960s, excavation of multi-period settlements enlarged knowledge of the native population of Britain and its relations with the cultures of the western provinces in particular. Urban archaeology came into its own after 1950, with major programmes at Verulamium, Wroxeter, Winchester, Silchester and York. Study of rural sites and their environmental evidence began to contribute hugely to knowledge of Britain over time. No longer was the emphasis upon villas, though investigation of many continued and illuminated the gradations from luxurious estates to modest farmsteads, to all of which the term villa might be applied.

Other approaches have been opened up over the past twenty years, partly in reaction to long-established themes, partly in response to post-modern approaches and partly also reflecting the general decline of traditional Classical scholarship. The application of theoretical archaeology has lain at the centre of important reassessments of the evidence provided by the four centuries of Roman Britain. Not all of the results are likely to be enduring, but at the very least these interventions have stirred debate about major issues. More traditionalist observers may wonder at the passing over of inconvenient evidence in silence.

What is undeniable is the fact that public interest in the Roman past of Britain is higher than it has ever been. Anyone admitting to an interest in Roman Britain is at risk of a bombardment of questions and opinions, many of them well informed. This interest has been fed and nurtured by a wide range of accessible books, many of high quality. The surviving and visible monuments of Roman Britain have been displayed and promoted with much greater effectiveness than ever before. The fragmentation of the heritage between a variety of official and private bodies was far from ideal, but the resulting basis for conservation and public education is sustainable and sound.

No single volume can now encompass all aspects of Roman Britain and, in consequence, several subjects do not receive direct coverage here. Thus, Roman art in Britain and Romano-British art are not given specific treatment, though they appear in Henig's chapter and have been extensively discussed by him elsewhere. Likewise, burial and memorial of the dead are not directly discussed, though they figure in several chapters. The Christian religion and its impact appear in the chapters by Henig, Esmonde Cleary and Wood. The complex subject of Romanization could have come in for separate treatment, but it has been well aired in numerous recent works; and study of this volume as a whole should allow the reader to arrive at a balanced, independent judgement.

The editor's particular thanks go to all contributors for their prompt responses and their forbearance of inevitable delays. Equal or greater debts are owed to Tessa Harvey, Angela Cohen and Tamsin Smith for their kindness, guidance and above all patience over the past three years. It has been a pleasure and a reward to work with these members of staff of Blackwell Publishing.

Britain and the Continent: Networks of Interaction

BARRY CUNLIFFE

The Channel which has divided Britain from the Continent for the last 8000 years or so has seldom been a barrier to the movement of people and goods. Indeed the sea, to those who understood its ways, could provide easier access and speedier travel than a journey of equivalent length on land and it is a reasonable supposition that sea-going vessels had developed already in the Mesolithic period. From the latter part of the fourth millennium BC there is direct archaeological evidence of a flow of commodities to and from the island, and by the beginning of the first millennium BC Britain was part of an exchange system which bound the peoples of Atlantic Europe together in a complex network of maritime interactions.

Some pale reflection of the shipping plying the Channel can be glimpsed in a few invaluable Classical texts. The earliest reliable account, transmitted by Diodorus Siculus, evidently comes from an earlier source, quite possibly originating in the now lost book written by the Massalliot, Pytheas, following his journey to Britain in about 320 BC (Cunliffe 2001). Diodorus (*Bibliotheca historica*, 5.1–4) describes a trading port called Ictis sited on an island just off the coast of south-western Britain, where merchants buy tin from the friendly natives and sail with it to Gaul, from where it is taken overland on a thirty-day journey to the mouth of the Rhône. In a rather more obscure text Pliny, probably describing the same system, refers to the Britons' use of hide boats (*Nat. Hist.* 4.104). There is no suggestion in either text that the carriers were other than people from the south-west of Britain and Armorica, and what was described may have been simply one of a series of frequently used routes linking the coasts of Gaul and Britain.

That trade was a norm is certainly implied by Caesar's famous account of the Veneti and their fleet. 'They have a great many ships,' he writes, 'and regularly sail to and from Britain' (*De Bello Gallico*, III.8). He goes on to say that since they control the few harbours they are able to extract tolls from others who sail in these waters. The same general point is reiterated a little later by Strabo (*Geography*, 4.4.1). Elsewhere Strabo provides details of the routes in frequent use. There were four, from the Rhine, Seine, Loire and Garonne, though vessels coming from the Rhine sailed down the coast to the territory of the Morini before making the crossing (*Geography*,

4.5.2). Elsewhere he tells us that from the territory of the Lexobii and Caleti, coastal tribes on either side of the Seine estuary, it is less than a day's run to Britain (*Geography*, 4.1.14). Later on he writes that 'people sailing on the ebb tide in the evening land on the island about the eighth hour on the following day' (*Geography*, 4.3.4).

Clearly, at the time that Strabo was writing, probably at the end of the first century BC, communication between Britain and the Continent was well established. What we are probably seeing here are long-used routes now invigorated by the Roman presence in Gaul. Strabo provides lists of exports from the island, noting hides, slaves and hunting dogs as well as grain, cattle, gold, silver and iron (*Geography*, 4.5.2). In exchange the Britons received 'ivory chains, necklaces, amber gems, glass vessels and other pretty wares of that sort' (*Geography*, 4.5.3). In other words, in exchange for consumer durables the Roman world acquired raw materials, exotic animals and manpower.

Of the ships involved in these cross-Channel exchanges there is some evidence. Substantial plank-built vessels have a long pedigree in Britain going back to the beginning of the second millennium BC (McGrail 2001: 184–94). The earliest so far known is the Ferriby boat now radiocarbon-dated to *c*.2000–1800 BC (Wright et al. 2001) and such is the quality of the carpentry and of the boat-building skills that there can be little doubt of the deep antiquity of the tradition. The robust high-prowed sea-going ships of the Veneti with their massive timbers nailed together, their raw-hide sails and iron anchors and anchor chains, so vividly described by Caesar (*De Bello Gallico*, III.13), clearly belong to this Atlantic plank-boat tradition. No vessels of this kind have yet been found, but a schematic depiction on a coin of Cunobelin (Muckelroy, Haselgrove and Nash 1978) and an iron anchor and chain from a Late Iron Age context in the Dorset hillfort of Bulbury (Cunliffe 1972) are tangible indicators of the Channel-going vessels of the first century BC. Nor should we forget the hide boats mentioned by the Classical writers, carrying tin from the south-west. There is a long tradition of hide-boat construction in Atlantic waters (McGrail 2001: 181–3) and there can be little reasonable doubt that substantial craft capable of long open-sea journeys were in operation in the first millennium BC. The famous gold model from Broighter in the north of Ireland was evidently a square-rigged craft accommodating seven rowers. Light vessels of this kind were well able to ride the Atlantic weather as their modern equivalents still do (MacCullagh 1992).

To what extent Mediterranean vessels ventured into British waters in the later first millennium BC is a matter of debate, but the discovery of a lead anchor stock of Mediterranean type, dating to possibly as early as the second century BC, off the north Welsh coast at Porth Felen, Aberdaron, is an indication that some vessels were exploring these distant lands, though whether they were reconnoitring or trading is difficult to judge (Boon 1977). Until the conquest of Gaul it is probable that the Channel traffic was in the hands of local communities of sailors, and even after Gaul was fully incorporated into the Roman world there is unlikely to have been any significant change. The Blackfriars boat found in the Thames (Marsden 1994) and the wreck in St Peter Port harbour, Guernsey (Rule and Monaghan 1993), both of the later Roman period, were built in the 'Romano-Celtic' tradition and were probably little different in design from those three or four centuries earlier.

In the Early and Middle Iron Age (*c.*600–100 BC) it may reasonably be assumed that the entire Channel, from Cornwall to the Thames estuary, was frequently crossed by shipping using a number of preferred routes. The shortest, from east Kent to north-east Gaul, would have been the simplest to follow. A middle route from the Cotentin to the Solent would have served the Gaulish coast from Tregor to the Seine, with a western route linking the north coast of Finistère to the south coast of Devon and Cornwall (McGrail 1983).

Direct archaeological evidence for these contacts is not particularly profuse. Two pyramidal iron ingots found at Portland probably come from Armorica (Grinsell 1958: 137), a small collection of fibulae from Harlyn Bay, Cornwall, and Mount Batten, Devon are of western French type (Boudet 1988) and a sherd of haematite painted pottery from Poundbury, Dorset, is of an Armorican fabric (Cunliffe 1987b). Further east there are close similarities between certain pottery found in Kent and the adjacent Continent, and some at least of the very large number of early Mediterranean coins found in southern Britain must have arrived at this time (Cunliffe 1991: 431). These archaeological scraps are only a pale reflection of the volume of cross-Channel contact that must have gone on (Cunliffe 1982: 1990). How much of this contact can fairly be regarded as 'trade' is a debatable point. In all probability metal exportation from the south-west was on an appropriate scale, as the Classical authors' interest in tin implies, and there is a wreck site producing ingots of tin in the Erme estuary in southern Devon which, though undated, could belong to this early period (Fox 1997). One of the main ports of trade at this time was Mount Batten, a promontory jutting into Plymouth Sound, where casual discoveries and excavations have produced ample evidence of copper ingots and copper scrap in contexts dating from the Late Bronze Age to the Middle Iron Age. Mount Batten is well sited to serve as a collecting base for a range of metals, copper, tin, gold and silver, from the fringes of the Dartmoor massif (Cunliffe 1988).

Towards the end of the Middle Iron Age, about 150 BC, archaeological evidence for contact between Britain and the Continent begins to increase quite dramatically, though whether this is because of an intensification of contact or simply greater archaeological visibility it is difficult to say.

The earliest evidence comes from the south-east and is reflected in an increasing number of Gallo-Belgic coins found widely in south-eastern Britain but centred mainly on the Thames estuary and to a lesser extent the coast of Sussex. These issues, Gallo-Belgic A, B and C, were made in Belgic Gaul and copies of them were minted in Britain (for a summary, see Cunliffe 1991: 110–18). The context for the movement of the coins no doubt lies in the complex social relationships which must have existed between tribes on the two sides of the Channel. The gold coins would have featured in the cycles of gift-giving by means of which the different groups maintained harmonious relationships. Some hint of this is given by Caesar when he describes Diviciacus, king of the Suessiones, as 'the most powerful ruler in the whole of Gaul who had control not only over a large area of this region but also of Britain' (*De Bello Gallico*, II.4). The implication here is that Diviciacus had probably gained recognition among some of the British tribes as some kind of over-king. In such situations tribute and gifts could be expected to flow (Nash 1984).

It was about this time, or soon after, that a trading network linking the north coast of Armorica and the Solent becomes apparent. In Britain the main, and possibly only,

port of entry was Hengistbury Head, a dominant promontory of sandstone separating the open sea from a well-protected harbour (now Christchurch harbour) sheltering in its lee (Cunliffe 1987a). Hengistbury Head has many advantages as a port of trade. Of prime importance was the comparative ease with which it could be approached from Armorica. By sailing on a northerly bearing a navigator would be able to position himself with little difficulty by reference to the two landmarks of Durlston Head on Purbeck and the Needles at the western extremity of the Isle of Wight. Sailing on, midway between the two, he would soon have recognized the profile of Hengistbury Head and would then have been able to steer on a bearing to take his vessel safely around the headland and into the harbour, beaching his ship on the sloping gravel of the north shore. The attraction of the harbour was not only the protection afforded by the headland but the convenient routes provided by the rivers Avon and Stour, leading deep into the densely occupied parts of Wessex.

Hengistbury lay in the centre of a productive region. Near at hand, on the headland itself, was a convenient source of high-grade ironstone, while the Isle of Purbeck to the west provided salt, Kimmeridge shale, favoured for armlets, and good potting clay. Inland, along the river routes, it was possible to reach the rich farmlands of the Wessex chalk downs. A further advantage lay in its coastal position, easily linked by cabotage to the south-west peninsula productive of metals and hides.

The archaeological evidence, extracted from Hengistbury as the result of several excavations during the course of the last century, is rich (Cunliffe 1987a: 14–20). It shows that around 100 BC or soon after a major trading axis developed with the northern coast of Armorica, probably in the region of the Baie de Saint Brieuc, with the island of Guernsey serving as a port of call en route (Cunliffe 1996, 1997: 40–7).

Evidence of the Armorican link is plentiful, consisting in the main of quantities of Armorican pottery found in the excavations at Hengistbury. Three basic types are represented – black cordoned ware, graphite-coated ware and micaceous wares – all produced around the Baie de Saint Brieuc. At Hengistbury these imports dominate, in some of the stratified contexts amounting to between 45 and 65 per cent of the total pottery recovered (Cunliffe 1997: 47–51). Similarly, among the 27 Armorican coins found at Hengistbury 20 are of the Coriosolites – the tribe controlling the north-eastern coast of the peninsula (Sellwood 1987; de Jersey 1997). The implication seems to be that the trading axis reflects a monopoly held by the Coriosolites with the port of Hengistbury. This raises interesting questions about the status of Hengistbury, which would appear to lie in the borderland between the Durotriges and the Atrebates. One possibility is that the headland was extra-tribal, a status appropriate to a port of trade. As such it may well have housed a small population of Armorican traders, if not on a permanent basis at least seasonally. Some such explanation would account for the high percentage of imported pottery and coins.

Through Hengistbury the movement of a wide range of commodities was articulated. Imports included north Italian wine, mainly in Dressel 1A amphorae, metalwork, purple and yellow glass, and figs, as well as the Armorican coins and the Armorican pottery (or more probably its contents). All this is attested in the archaeological record. The commodities stockpiled and worked at Hengistbury, presumably for export, included grain, probably hides, silver, gold, copper alloy, Kimmeridge shale and possibly iron. The metals and hides were probably transported to the site

from the south-west of Britain by coastal vessels which brought with them local decorated pottery from Cornwall, Devon and Somerset.

How long this cross-Channel exchange system was maintained and at what intensity it is difficult to say with any degree of precision, but there is some evidence to suggest that the activities may have spanned several decades and, judging by the quantity of imported pottery, estimated to have amounted to 12–13,000 vessels and to have included more than 1000 amphorae (Cunliffe 1997: 47), the volume of the exchanges must have been considerable. We are, of course, seeing only the archaeologically visible commodities: other imports could have included fabrics, spices and perhaps barrels of fish sauce, while exports may have numbered the slaves and hunting dogs mentioned some decades later by Strabo. There can be little doubt that trade on this level would have had a significant impact on the social dynamics of central southern Britain. Changes evident in settlement systems and technology in the area in the first century BC may have been caused, or at least exacerbated, by this new imperative.

The possibility that other axes of intensified trade may have developed at this time remains, but if so none has the visibility of the Armorican–west Solent axis. Further west, however, traditional links seem to have been maintained between western Armorica and south-west Britain. The promontory settlement of Le Yaudet, at the mouth of the Léguer on the north Breton coast, has produced a few sherds of British pottery including decorated wares from Devon, as well as a few items of Kimmeridge shale, while the port of Mount Batten has yielded a sherd of Armorican black cordoned ware. Several Dressel 1 amphorae also found their way into Cornish settlements (Cunliffe 1982: figure 12) but the quantity of traded goods is minute compared to Hengistbury and such exchanges as there were must have been on a limited scale.

Further to the east, along the coast of the eastern Solent and West Sussex, there is a suggestion of contact with Lower Normandy and the Seine estuary. It was in this region that new pottery forms and cremation rites similar to those of Belgic Gaul make an appearance by the early first century BC (Fitzpatrick 1997) and it is possible that some local coin types develop from imports from that region (de Jersey 1997: 85–91). The link is evident but its direct cause is not. One possibility, however, is that we may be seeing here the reflection of an actual incursion of people from Gaul. In one of his more often quoted statements, Caesar tells us that the coastal areas of Britain were 'inhabited by invaders who crossed from Belgica to plunder and then when the fighting was over, settled down and began to till the land' (*De Bello Gallico*, V.12). He gives no further geographical precision. However, the fact that following the invasion of AD 43 the region of Hampshire and West Sussex was ascribed by Roman administrators to the canton of the Belgae, with its capital at *Venta Belgarum* (Winchester), lends some credence to the idea that Belgic immigrants may have landed in the harbours of the east Solent and spread into the hinterland (Cunliffe 1984: 19–20). Some further support for this suggestion comes from an event some decades later when in 51–50 BC the Atrebatic king, Commius, who had served Caesar as an ambassador to Britain in the prelude to his invasion of the island, fell foul of Rome and fled to Britain to 'join his people already here'. He reappears in the British archaeological record minting coins, the distribution of which suggests that he settled immediately to the north of the earlier Belgic enclaves with

his capital at *Calleva Atrebatum* (Silchester). A landing among kinsmen in the east Solent, before moving north to establish a territory of his own, would have made good sense.

Caesar's expeditions to Britain in 55 and 54 BC introduced an entirely new dynamic into the relationship between Britain and Gaul. The details of the campaigns need not detain us here except to note that the landings were made in the east of Kent and the military activity was restricted largely to the Thames estuary region, more particularly to the present counties of Kent, Surrey and Essex, during which time Caesar engaged four kings of Kent and the Catuvellauni and Trinovantes to the north of the Thames.

In an interesting aside, in his description of the preparations for the 55 BC expedition, Caesar notes that the Gauls knew practically nothing of Britain. 'In the normal way no one goes to Britain except traders, and even they know only the sea coast and the areas opposite Gaul' (*De Bello Gallico*, IV.20). Even the traders rounded up for interview were uninformative, though one may suspect that this may have been reticence rather than ignorance.

The main tangible results of Caesar's intervention in Britain were the treaty relationships he established with British rulers. The Trinovantes and their king Mandubracius (who had fled to Caesar's protection and was now restored) were put under Roman protection and their hostile neighbours (presumably the Catuvellauni) led by Cassivellaunus were ordered not to molest the Trinovantes. With these agreements, and others of lesser significance, firmly in place Caesar could depart, claiming to have brought the two most powerful tribes of the south-east under submission. From now on this northern side of the Thames estuary provided a safe point of entry for Roman merchants.

Caesar's campaigns in Gaul and Britain completely changed the political geography of the region. The Armorican tribes, who previously had played a significant part in the maritime exchange systems, had been severely mauled in Caesar's devastating attack on them in 56 BC following their rebellion. During this time he had destroyed the Venetic navy and there can be little doubt that traditional trading systems were totally disrupted. His political activities in the Thames region, on the other hand, had established a new friendly interface conveniently close to the north coast of Gaul, which was now firmly and finally in Roman hands. It was not long before a network of new roads fanned out northwards from the hub of *Lugdunum* (Lyons) to bring the Channel ports and the Rhine frontier into easy reach of the Mediterranean and thus to make these distant ports directly accessible to its merchants (Drinkwater 1983: 238). In two brief decades in the middle of the first century BC the political map had been transformed and with it the whole economic infrastructure of the region.

In the ninety years or so following the Caesarian raids extensive contacts were maintained between Roman Gaul and Britain, but the pattern of interaction had changed quite dramatically.

At Hengistbury there seems to have been a marked diminution in the volume of trade. This is reflected in the number and type of amphorae recovered (Williams 1987). Two different types of Dressel 1 amphora were found on the site, Dressel 1A and Dressel 1B. The 1A variety circulated quite widely in the period *c.*150–50 BC while the 1B type dated mainly to the later part of the first century BC, though there

was an overlap of one or two decades when both types appear to have been in circulation (Fitzpatrick 1985). If one accepts the rough approximation that the majority of 1A amphorae were pre-Caesarian and most of 1B were post-Caesarian, then the ratio of 1A:1B found at Hengistbury – a ratio of 6:1 – suggests a significant fall-off in the amount of imported Italian wine reaching the port after Caesar's campaigns. That similar figures also apply to Armorica shows that the decline in the transport of Italian wine affected the entire Atlantic seaboard and was not simply specific to the fortunes of Hengistbury. That said, some Italian wine was still being trans-shipped along the Atlantic routes and to this small quantities of Catalan wine in distinctive Dressel 1–Pascual 1 amphorae – a type current until about AD 20 – were now being added. A further indication of Atlantic coastal trade was the appearance at Hengistbury of small quantities of fine pottery imported from Aquitania.

The relative decline in the importance of Hengistbury in the post-Caesarian period seems to be compensated for by the increasing importance of Poole harbour as a port of entry (Cox and Hearne 1991). Late Iron Age occupation focuses on the Ower peninsula, on the south side of the harbour and on the adjacent Green Island and Furzey Island, which may at that time have been part of the mainland. Furzey Island and Green Island both produced small quantities of Armorican imports typical of Hengistbury in its 100–50 BC phase and were therefore part of the same trading network. After about 50 BC the Poole harbour sites begin to yield more imports. At Ower Catalan wine in Dressel 1–Pascual 1 amphorae is comparatively common, amounting to 83 per cent of the total number of amphorae, and a wide range of Gallo-Belgic tablewares now make an appearance, including platters, pedestal beakers, butt beakers and tazze. The earliest of these could be as early as c.15 BC though most probably date to the first half of the first century AD (Fitzpatrick 1991). In contrast, Hengistbury has produced practically nothing of this period. The inescapable conclusion must be that, after the disruption caused by Caesar's campaigns in Gaul and Britain, the trading network previously focused on Hengistbury declined dramatically, but Atlantic coastal trade continued at a reduced volume now favouring the southern shores of Poole harbour. The prominence of the harbour continued up to the time of the Roman conquest, when a Roman military base was established on the north shore at Hamworthy.

Why the shift of focus took place is not clear but the decline in the pre-eminence of Hengistbury may well be embedded in local power struggles and political readjustments following Caesar's interventions. It could simply be that the Armorican trading monopoly, disrupted during the Caesarian campaign, was never re-established and what emerged after the chaos was a wider network of contacts affecting a more extensive swathe of the south coast. It would not be surprising to find evidence of exchanges taking place at other nodes in, for example, Southampton Water, Chichester harbour and the Arun estuary, where some pre-conquest imports have been identified at Bitterne, Fishbourne/Chichester and Arundel Park.

While cross-Channel trade with the south coast appears to have been on a comparatively modest level, the Thames estuary developed as a major axis in the post-Caesarian period, a development no doubt involving trading monopolies between Roman merchants and the Trinovantes and Catuvellauni with whom Caesar had negotiated settlement deals. Through direct mechanisms such as these, very large quantities of wine, in Dressel 1B amphorae, entered eastern Britain via the ports of

Essex, together with Gallo-Belgic ceramics appropriate to the tables of the local elites wishing to embrace Roman manners.

But other systems of contact were also in operation. At a more general level the estuary zone (roughly Kent, Essex and Hertfordshire), including the North Downs to the south and the Chilterns to the west, adopted the Gallo-Belgic rite of cremation burial together with an assemblage of wheel-turned pottery closely reminiscent of Gallo-Belgic wares. Although it is likely that these developments had begun before *c*.50 BC, as the result of social relationships between northern Gaul and south-eastern Britain, it was only after that date that what has been called the Aylesford–Swarling culture of the south-east became fully developed (Cunliffe 1991: 130–41). The implication of this is that the native elites on the two sides of the Channel developed closer relationships, the British communities emulating their Gallo-Belgic neighbours. The nature of the relationships is likely to have been complex and multifaceted and must have been deeply embedded in binding social systems. At the very least we may envisage a constant flow of people crossing the Channel.

While these social networks will have accounted for a parallel development of culture, they will also have encouraged a flow of goods embedded in systems of gift exchange and reciprocity. In this way small personal items such as brooches and the like, as well as more elaborate gifts of wine and feasting furniture, will have been introduced into the island.

Yet over and above this there is evidence suggestive of directed trade articulated by Roman entrepreneurs resident in Britain. Enclaves of this kind are known to have existed in Gaul before the conquest. Indeed Caesar specifically mentions the Roman merchants who had settled in the native oppidum of *Cabillonum* (*De Bello Gallico*, VII.42). In Britain there is archaeological evidence to suggest just such a group residing in the settlement of Braughing–Puckeridge (Potter and Trow 1988: 158–9). The list of exotic material recovered here is impressive: a variety of amphorae implying the importation of wine, olive oil and fish sauce, a range of Gallo-Belgic and north Italian tableware, polychrome glass bowls, mortaria for preparing food in the Roman manner, together with bronze toilet instruments and other small items. Most telling, perhaps, are two iron styli and a number of graffiti scratched on a variety of pottery vessels, together demonstrating literacy in the pre-conquest period. Although the evidence could all be explained as an accumulation of traded items arriving through a variety of mechanisms, it is simpler to see it in the context of a community of Roman, or Gallo-Roman, traders who had settled among the local community to organize imports and exports.

Other likely places for enclaves of traders are the two major tribal oppida of Verulamium and Camulodunum. Verulamium occupies a very similar location to Braughing–Puckeridge, both settlements commanding river valleys on the lower slopes of the Chilterns. Camulodunum, close to the estuary of the river Colne, controls a significant point of entry from the sea. It may be significant that the three sites lie at the foci of the dense distributions of imported wine amphorae – the commodity most likely to have been among the principal bulk trade imports at the time. Yet another possibility for the establishment of a Gallo-Belgic enclave towards the end of the first century BC is *Calleva* (Silchester) where a regular layout of buildings and roads and a wide range of imports hint at an alien presence (Fulford and Timby 2000: 545–64). *Calleva* occupies a 'frontier' position in relation to the