

# **ROMAN MANCHESTER**

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## **A FRONTIER SETTLEMENT**

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**GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
UNIT**

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BY: S. BRYANT, M. MORRIS, & J.S.F. WALKER

EDITOR: J.S.F. WALKER

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The overall content and design of the volume is the work of JSF Walker who organised the post-excavation programme. M Morris and V Tanner controlled the day to day work of the post-excavation team which was employed on a Manpower Services Commission scheme. Apart from the authors a wide range of people contributed to the work.

The 20 strong MSC excavation team was supervised by; M Morris, S Bryant, C Hartwell, P Reynolds.

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Most of the work on this volume and the excavations were undertaken by MSC personnel drawn from the City of Manchester's long term unemployed. It is hoped that this report, the excavations and the reconstruction of the Northgate will serve as testimony to the skill, enthusiasm and initiative to be found within the City.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE VOLUME

J Walker

It is hoped this volume will prove to be of value both to the specialist and to the lay reader, in that it is designed to provide both audiences with an idea of how the history of the Roman site at Manchester relates to other developments in Roman and Anglo-Saxon England. This ambitious attempt to relate the development of early Manchester to other sites has been made because of the authors' views that the archaeological sites of Greater Manchester have not been, in general, particularly well studied. This has meant that there is a lack of appreciation, at both popular and academic level, of the historical and archaeological importance of the county's sites and monuments.

In order to enable a general audience to follow the arguments presented, the layout and content of this volume are different to those of most formal archaeological reports. Chapters 1 and 2 provide a broad introduction to the political and social developments in the area, from the 1st century to the 10th century AD. This is followed by chapters 3 to 8 which deal with the discoveries made during excavation along the northern defences of the Roman fort; and also contain an archaeological summary of the development of early Manchester which draws on these discoveries. The final chapters deal in more detail with the changes in agriculture, society, trade and urbanism that took place in the area during the first five centuries AD.

The theoretical viewpoints outlined in the final

chapters were first put forward in 1982 in a Northern Universities Archaeological Research Seminar at Bradford University by Walker and later partly presented by G D B Jones at other venues. The outline data appeared as a joint paper (Jones & Walker) in 1983. The viewpoint appearing in this volume is the result of work by Walker and Morris.

The majority of the work associated with the excavation of the Northgate, the post-excavation analyses and the preparation of this report was undertaken by previously long-term unemployed people with little or no archaeological experience. Both the Northgate excavations and the report writing took place under the control of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit during the directorships of Mr P Holdsworth and Mr P Mayes. The post-excavation work was directly led by Mr J S F Walker, Deputy Director of the Unit. The work force was initially supervised by Mr M Morris and Mr S Bryant and latterly by Mr J Price, Mr B Pearson and Miss V Tanner.

With such a wide coverage and such ambitious aims the volume is unlikely to please in every way; however, the authors hope that this book together with its companion 'Medieval Manchester' (Morris 1983), will finally dispel the view that the history of Manchester is merely the history of the last two hundred years.