ROMAN MANCHESTER
A FRONTIER SETTLEMENT

GREATER MANCHESTER
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
UNIT
ROMAN MANCHESTER

A FRONTIER SETTLEMENT

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

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER CONTENTS PAGE

LIST OF FIGURES
LIST OF PLATES
LIST OF TABLES
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
INTRODUCTION TO THE VOLUME

1 PREVIOUS WORK 1

2 MANCHESTER: ITS EARLY POLITICAL HISTORY 5

   Introduction
   The Roman Conquest of the Area
   The Roman Consolidation of the Area
   From Hadrian to Severus
   The End of Roman Rule and the Emergence of Kingdoms

3 THE DUKE PLACE EXCAVATIONS ON THE NORTH WESTERN CORNER OF THE LATER FORTS 13

   Introduction
   Summary
   The Excavation
   Phase O: Early Activity
   Phase 1a: The Early Defences
   Phase 1b: The Later Large Turf and Timber Fort
       The Cess Pit
   Phase 2: The Stone Fort
       (a) The Stone Wall and Rampart
       (b) The Stone Drain
       (c) The Well
   Acknowledgements

4 NORTHGATE EXCAVATIONS 21

   Introduction
   Site Location
   Excavation Organisation
   Modern Deposits
   Excavation and Recording Techniques
   Post Excavation and Publication

   Phase 1 Area A
       Description
       The Northgate
       The West Tower
       The East Tower
       The Gateway Portal
       The Rampart
   Discussion

   Phase 1 Area B
       Description
       The Ditches
       The Exit Road
   Discussion
       The Ditches
       The Exit Road

   Phase 1a Area C
       Description
       Discussion

   Phase 2a Area A
       Description
       The Northgate
       The Rampart and Intervallum Road
       Discussion
Phase 2a Area B
Description
   The Defensive Ditch System
Discussion

Phase 2a Area C
Description
Discussion

Phase 2b Area A
Description
Discussion

Phase 2b Area B
Description
Discussion

Phase 2b Area C
Description
Discussion

Phase 2c Areas A and B
Description
Discussion

Phase 2c Area C
Description
Discussion

Phase 3a Area A
Description
   The Northgate
   The Rampart and Intervalum
Discussion

Phase 3a Area B
Description
Discussion

Phase 3a Area C
Description
Discussion

Phase 3b Area A
Description
Discussion

Phase 3b Area B
Description
Discussion

Phase 3b Area C
Description
Discussion

Phase 3c Area A
Description
Discussion

Phase 3c Area C
Description and Discussion

Phase 4a Area A
Description
   The Northgate
   The Rampart and Intervalum
Discussion

Phase 4a Area B
Description
Discussion

Phase 4a Area C
Description
Discussion

Phase 4b Area A
Description
   The Northgate
Discussion

Phase 4b Area B
Description
Discussion

Phase 4c Area B
Description
Discussion

Phase 5 Area B
Description
Discussion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 6 Area B</th>
<th>Page 56</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Anglo-Saxon Burh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 7 Area B</th>
<th>Page 58</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 8 Area B</th>
<th>Page 58</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 9 Areas A, B and C</th>
<th>Page 59</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE NON-CERAMIC FINDS FROM THE NORTHGATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Page 61</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) COINS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vicus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) METAL OBJECTS</td>
<td>Page 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) BROOCH REPORT</td>
<td>Page 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) SMALL FINDS</td>
<td>Page 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Objects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron objects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead objects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) THE NAILS</td>
<td>Page 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) THE ROMAN GLASS</td>
<td>Page 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) THE STONE OBJECTS</td>
<td>Page 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Stone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Querns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) THE FAUNAL REMAINS</td>
<td>Page 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large species</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimating number of animals present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragment count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Human Diet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An estimate of bone loss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Species</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Yellow-Necked mouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) GRAFFITI</td>
<td>Page 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j) FURNACE DEBRIS AND SLAGS</td>
<td>Page 84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE CERAMIC FINDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) THE COARSEWARE</th>
<th>Page 85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Recording the Pottery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Recorded Characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Measurement of Attributes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Statistical Tests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fabric Groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) THE SAMIAN WARE</td>
<td>Page 121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Phase 2 Fort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorated Ware</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Phase 3 Fort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorated ware</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Phase 4 fort
  Stamps
The Phase 2a, 2b and 2c Vicus
  Decorated Ware
The Phase 3a, 3b and 3c Vicus
  Stamps
  Decorated Ware
  Unstratified Contexts
  Stamps
Footnote
(c) THE BRICK AND TILE
(d) THE CLAY MOULDS

7
(a) THE NORTHGATE RECONSTRUCTION
Introduction
  The Wall and Rampart
  The Ditches and Roads
  The Civilian Buildings
  The Gateway
Conclusion

(b) THE ROMAN GARRISONS OF MANCHESTER

8
SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY MANCHESTER

9
ASPECTS OF ROMAN IMPERIALISM AND ITS IMPACT

10
AGRICULTURE: THE MAJOR INDUSTRY

11
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE UNDER THE ROMANS

12
THE ROLE OF THE FRONTIER SETTLEMENT AT MANCHESTER

BIBLIOGRAPHY
LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 Castlefield Roman Finds.
1.2 Roman Castlefield: Investigations up to 1907.
2.1 Major Roman Sites.
2.2 Post Roman Settlement.
3.1 North West Defences General Plan Duke Place.
3.2 North West Defences Composite plan 1907, 1975.
3.3 Pits Period O Duke Place.
3.4 North West Defences Period 1A Duke Place.
3.5 North West Defences Period 1B Duke Place.
3.6 North West Defences Period 2 Duke Place.
3.7 North West Defences Period 2 Duke Place.
4.1 The Northgate Excavations.
4.2 Plan of Areas and Sections.
4.3 Northgate Area A Phase 1.
4.4 Northgate Section A.
4.5 Northgate Phase 1 Reconstruction.
4.6 Northgate Area A Phase 1, 2a and 2b.
4.7 Northgate Section B.
4.8 Northgate Area C Phase 1.
4.9 Northgate Area A Phase 2.
4.10 Northgate Phase 2a Reconstruction.
4.11 Northgate Section C.
4.12 Northgate Area C Phase 2a.
4.13 Northgate Section D.
4.14 Northgate Phase 2b Reconstruction.
4.15 Northgate Area C Phase 2b.
4.16 Northgate Area A Phases 3a and 3b.
4.17 Northgate Phase 3a Reconstruction.
4.18 Northgate Area B Phases 3 and 4.
4.19 Northgate Area C Phases 3a and 3b.
4.20 Northgate Phase 3b Reconstruction.
4.21 Northgate Section E.
4.22 Northgate Area A Phase 4.
4.23 Northgate Phase 4a Reconstruction.
4.24 Northgate Area C Phase 4.
4.25 Northgate Phase 4b Reconstruction.
4.26 Northgate Phase 4c Reconstruction.
4.27 Northgate Area B Phase 5.
4.28 Northgate Area B Phase 6 and 7.

5.1 Small Finds (Excluding Nails): % of Total Numbers from Each Phase.
5.2 All Finds: % of Total Numbers from Each Phase.
5.3 Small Finds: % of Material by Phase.
5.4 Bronze Small Finds.
5.5 Bronze Small Finds.
5.6 Iron Small Finds.
5.7 Iron and Lead Small Finds.
5.8 Stone Plinth.
5.9 Stone Querns.
5.10 Graffiti.
5.11 Phase Diagram.
6.1 Total Coarseware Distribution: Numbers, Percentage, Weight and % Weight.
6.2 Frequency Categories Chosen by All Four Recorders.
6.3 Data Transformation.
6.4 Early Coarseware.
6.21 Ceramic Architectural Fragments: Fort 2; Fort 3a and 3b.
6.25 Brick and Tile Fragments: Fort 4a and 4c; Fort 5.
6.26 Brick and Tile Fragments: Vicus 2a and 2c; Vicus 3a and 3c.
6.27 Clay Moulds.
7.1 The Reconstructed Northgate of the Early 3rd Century.
8.1 Graph of Datable Coarseware, Phases 1 and 2.
8.2 Graph of Datable Samian and Coarseware, Phase 3.
8.3 Graph of Datable Coarseware, Phases 4 and 5.
8.4 Graph of Datable Samian, Coins and Brooches.
12.1 Model of Vicus Development.

LIST OF TABLES

5.1 Coins from the Northgate Excavations.
5.2 Roman Bronze Objects from the Northgate Excavations.
5.3 Roman Iron Objects from the Northgate Excavations.
5.4 Lead Objects from the Northgate Excavations.
5.5 Roman Glass from the Northgate Excavations.
5.6 Measurements of Bone Pieces from the Northgate Excavations.
5.7 Minimum Number of Individuals.
5.8 Dressed Meat Weight by Species for all Phases.
5.9 Sample 1: Context No 709 Area A Phase 2 Fort.
5.10 Sample 2: Context No 85 Area B Phase 4 Fort.
6.1 ANOVA Variance Table.
6.2 Means, Variances and Standard Deviations of the Untransformed and Transformed Data.
6.3 Chi-Squared Test for the Goodness of Fit of LJB Data to the Overall Sample Data.
6.4 Coarseware Group Descriptions.
7.1 Source Ranking.
7.2 Primary Evidence Used in the Reconstruction.

LIST OF PLATES

7.1 The Reconstructed Site Showing Gateway, Roads and Vicus Buildings.
7.2 The Outer Face of the Reconstructed Northgate.
7.3 The Outer Face of the Gate Seen from the Inner Defensive ditch.
7.4 The Inner Face of the Northgate.
8.1 Reconstruction Painting of the First Timber Fort During Construction.
8.2 Vicus Street Scene cAD 200 - 250 Based on Jones and Grealey's Findings.
8.3 Reconstruction Painting of the Fort Showing the North Gateway from the Interior.
The production of this report, the excavations and the reconstruction of the site were the result of the initiative and co-operation of the following bodies:

The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit during the directorships of Mr PE Holdsworth FSA and Mr P Mayes BA FSA.

City Architect's Department, City of Manchester.

City Planning Department, City of Manchester.

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The Manchester Museum, University of Manchester during the directorship of Mr A Warhurst MA FSA FMA.

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.

Research work was undertaken by; GZA Machin (pottery), J Farrant, M Petch, J Potts (Bibliography). Drawings were produced by; L Blainey, S Brown, H Lees, GZA Machin, M O'Neill, N Strachan, M Warburton, H Warren, J Wilkin.

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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.