

HARROW IN THE ROMAN PERIOD

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SUMMARY

In 1999 the author undertook a review of all known Roman period sites and finds in the London Borough of Harrow. Original sources for each discovery were examined, and a gazetteer compiled of both the genuine and the spurious. The purpose of this exercise was to enable conclusions to be drawn on the nature of Roman Harrow from a sound knowledge base. Here it has been updated, taking into account the work carried out in the Borough during the last ten years.

INTRODUCTION

The original version of this account of Roman remains in the London Borough of Harrow was written for a volume of essays produced by the Stanmore & Harrow Historical Society to mark the millennium, and distributed free to the Borough's schools and libraries with funding from the Millennium Festival Awards for All scheme (SHHS 2000). The purpose of the paper was to set out as accurately as possible what has been found, using the original sources, and to draw some conclusions on the state of present knowledge. This had not been done before. The only available recent account was a very brief summary in the Victoria County History which on examination turned out to be less than reliable, and in any case did not include Brockley Hill.

The original paper included all Roman sites and finds in the borough to 1999 (including a chronological list of archaeological discoveries on Brockley Hill itself), with references and full bibliography. I also thought it important to identify and examine the local legends and fanciful stories, as these derive from antiquarian speculation and have been repeated ever since in local histories.

Since 1999 several excavations have taken place, as a consequence of PPG16. These have for the most part been on either side of Watling Street, and have added a good deal to the available information. We may not yet be able to answer some of the long-standing questions about Brockley Hill and *Sulloniacis*, but we are in a better position now to discuss what was going on along the Roman highway (Smith *et al* 2009). The opportunity has been taken here to update the earlier account, and to make it more widely available. This is not because Roman Harrow as a whole was of any particular importance; as far as we know it was a rural backwater, with the exception of the pottery factory on Brockley Hill and the constant bustle of traffic along Watling Street. But examination and collation of all the original written sources was a highly useful and revealing exercise, one which no doubt could be carried out with profit elsewhere. Re-evaluation in detail of what we think we know is essential before we can address such objectives as those set out in the *Research Framework for London Archaeology* (Museum of London 2002, 29–43).

THE SOURCES

How the Roman period in Harrow has been understood derives from two different strands, archaeological evidence and antiquarian speculation. The presence of remains where Watling Street tops the ridge at Brockley Hill, on the northern periphery of the London basin, has been known from the late 16th century onwards, but the true nature of those remains has only been revealed by excavations in the later 20th century. All the older local histories and guides are based on views rooted in 18th-

century romantic antiquarianism. Virtually the only tools for study available to these writers were topography, place names (the scientific study of which had not begun), and the very limited references to Britain in the classical literature. Interpretations using these had to compensate for the lack of real data from the sites themselves. This was the case right up to, and including, the writings of Sir Montagu Sharpe and Hugh Braun in the earlier part of the 20th century, which were used extensively in popular works on local history by Druett and others. Into the 1950s the site on the summit of Brockley Hill was assumed to be a small town, with streets and houses, the successor of a 'British' settlement which was itself entirely supposition. The archaeological evidence which has been gathered since 1937 enables us to view Brockley Hill, and the rest of the borough, very differently. It is easy now to dismiss the earlier accounts as wishful thinking, but the popular versions — which do not allow facts, or lack of them, to get in the way of a good story — tend to persist. It was Druett, a journalist, who said in print (1937, 4) that 'when little can be stated definitely conjecture becomes an interesting occupation'.

Excavation, of course, can provide masses of new data, something that documentary evidence cannot. Each piece of evidence is subject to critical examination and later revision; new work can do wonders for the interpretation of what once seemed difficult. Also, the study of objects has made tremendous progress in the last three or four decades. When the excavations began at Brockley Hill only samian sherds and coins were considered useful for dating. Since then work on the pottery of Roman Britain has led to a great increase in understanding of the site, and re-examination of all the excavated finds can as a result shed new light on dating and interpretation. It is clear that there is much that can still be done with the excavated archive (re-assessment of the Brockley Hill pottery, for example: Seeley & Thorogood 1994, 228).

One of the key factors to remember is Harrow's position, halfway between *Londinium* (London) and *Verulamium* (St Albans), both large wealthy towns, and too far from either to be more than a rural backwater. We may as well admit now that there are few

remains of the period within the borough away from Watling Street itself, and at present it does not look likely that this will greatly change. But there is a scatter of unstratified or residual finds spread across much of the borough, and more will be found. It is still possible that a single excavation will uncover *in situ* evidence of occupation.

HARROW AT THE TIME OF THE ROMAN CONQUEST

In AD 43 Harrow was far from the major centres of the Iron Age chieftains. To the south, there was no London before *c.*AD 50. The nearest place to Harrow of any importance was *Verlamion*, St Albans, 12 miles to the north, where a few decades previously a chieftain had established a new focus of religious and domestic settlement at a marshy crossing of the river Ver (Niblett & Thompson 2005). Its establishment there may have much to do with the fact that the Bulbourne valley and the adjacent Ashridge estate in the Chilterns constituted one of the largest and most important sources of iron ore in Roman Britain. Extraction of the ore began in the Late Iron Age, and the route for its transport to the major settlements at Welwyn and Braughing, and on to Colchester, crossed the river Ver at *Verlamion*. This west to north-east route and the places along it made up the axis of activity in the early 1st century.

THE LONDON BASIN IN THE ROMAN PERIOD

At present Late Iron Age presence in the London basin (in great contrast to what was going on beyond it to the north) appears sparse, except for some occupation on the river gravels. Greenwood (1997) summarises what is known, and new sites have been found since. The foundation of London itself, however, did not bring a massive change in this scattered settlement pattern. It is not merely that archaeological sites have been destroyed without record by modern building; there does seem to be a genuine absence. In general, the known sites relate to the better soils, and there are not many of these in the London region. London Clay has always been avoided if there is an alternative, and the Middlesex plain is 'heavy

land, difficult and expensive to drain and work' (Bird 1996, 217). 'Currently available information suggests that Iron Age and Romano-British settlement around London was strongly influenced by the distribution of good soils. In particular the London Clay was largely avoided' (*ibid.*, 220). No Roman field-systems are known in Harrow, although some have been seen elsewhere; like the Iron Age settlements, mostly on the gravels.

The Harrow area, on the London Clay, is likely to have been largely wooded. This does not mean that it was uninhabited, and unexploited. Roman London needed large quantities of wood in its many forms, for structural purposes, for fuel, furniture, objects large and small, boxes, crates and baskets. The enormous timbers used to construct the Thames waterfront in its various stages were oak, and suggested 'the use of managed woodland with selective felling' (Bird 1996, 226; Brigham & Watson 1996). Oak is the timber noted most on the ridge at Brockley Hill, and found under the post-Roman bank in Pear Wood with hazel and field maple (Castle 1975), and in one of the kilns with beech (Castle 1974). Oak and ash were noted in the 1950 excavations, with some birch and willow or poplar associated with the 4th-century occupation (Applebaum 1951, 223–4). All these were in the form of charcoal, and are useful woods with a variety of purposes. Charcoal production and coppicing are likely to have been actively pursued. 'Some kind of coppice system must have stood behind' all the various industries of Roman Britain (Rackham 1976, 51). The woodland was also used for the raising of pigs, and possibly the small cattle of the period. Assemblages of animal bone found in London include both these animals, as well as sheep, and small amounts of deer and hare. Sheep are not likely to have been found in Harrow, as they were pastured on heathland and saltmarsh. Deer and hare may possibly have been hunted in Harrow.

Of the 61 certain or probable villas identified in a survey of the five counties around London north of the Thames (Beds, Bucks, Herts, Essex, Middlesex), not a single one lies within Middlesex; and this dearth of villas closest to *Londinium* has also been noted south of the Thames (Green *et al* 1997). Various reasons have been put forward for

this. The villas closest to Harrow are a group around Verulamium, with another at Moor Park, Rickmansworth, on the alluvial soil along the river Colne. In the south-eastern parts of the province villas are generally within 10 to 20km of a major town, with the exception of London, which had few villas near it. The villas are very often closely linked with waterway systems, possibly for moving bulky agricultural produce. Harrow is too far from the Colne valley and Verulamium for villa estates to be expected. The likelihood of large stretches of woodland need not in itself preclude a villa, but the evident lack of them around London suggests instead that land may have been divided into estates owned by men who lived in London itself, and used local tenant workers. The research into how these 'non-villa' landscapes may have been organised and run has not yet been done (Boyce 2007, 264).

The foundation of London brought a new and expanding market for locally produced goods from *c.*AD 50; Bird (1996) suggests increasing specialisation in the London region dependent on the suitability of the soil. Harrow was well able to provide building materials (timber and tiles), other wood products, and pottery to the new city, and send it along the new highway; it may also have been exploited for chalk and flint (see below). The importance of London may have waxed and waned during the Roman period, but it probably always had a large population. The Brockley Hill pottery factory, however, was the southern outlier of the Verulamium region potteries. Harrow can be seen to occupy a borderline position between *Londinium* and Verulamium, just as it does today on the present county boundary.

ROMAN REMAINS IN HARROW

There is a scatter of finds across the borough, some well known and others not; an attempt has been made here to make sense of them. To this end the original account of each discovery has been consulted wherever possible. The gazetteer (at the end) gives a brief summary of each find and the sources. The finds are discussed in groups: Watling Street itself, the main highway from *Londinium* to Verulamium and hence all the way to *Deva* (Chester), and which marks the

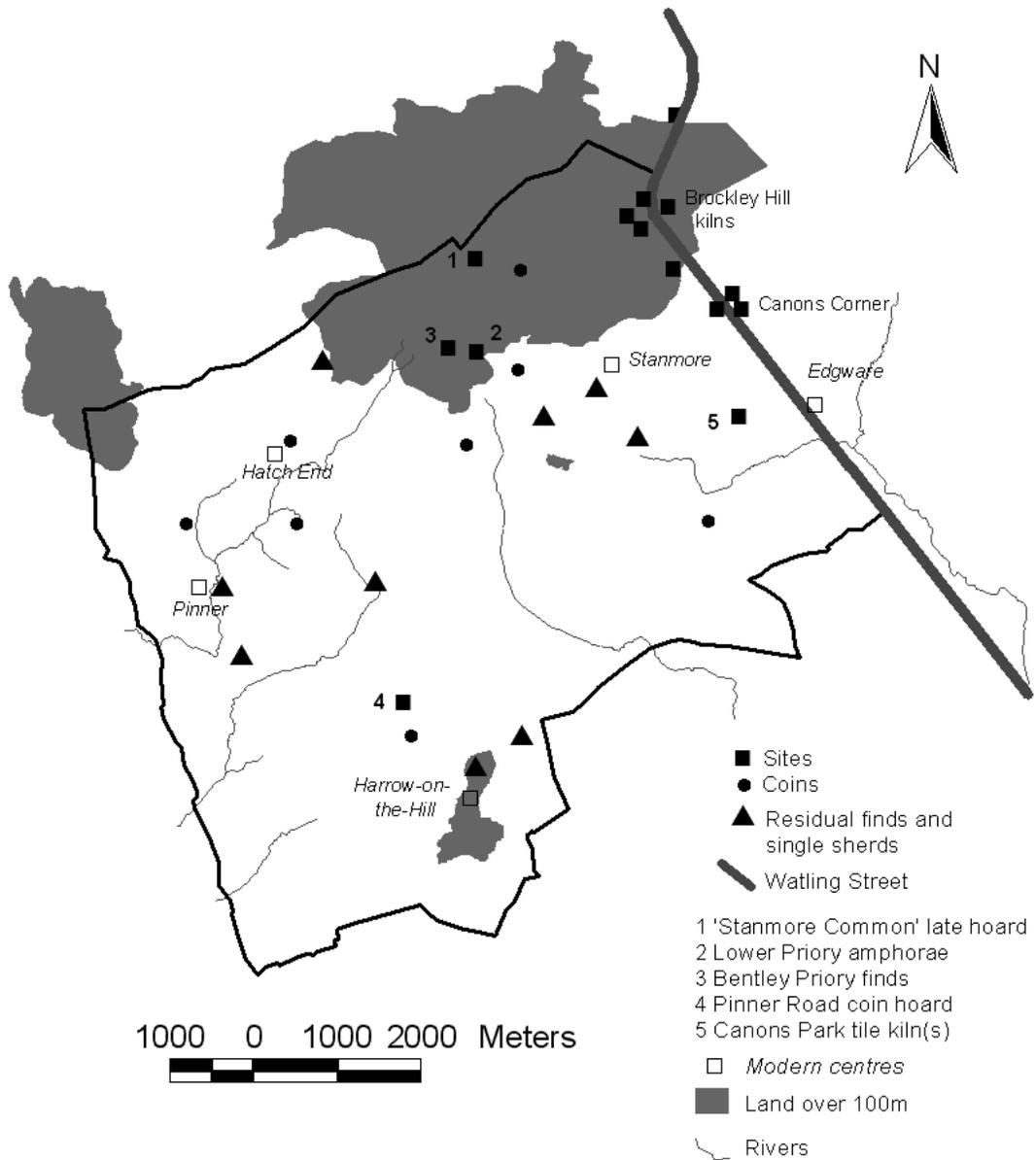


Fig 1. Map showing location of finds in the Harrow area

modern borough's eastern boundary; the position of *Sulloniacis*; the pottery factory on this road, on the summit of Brockley Hill; and finds on the ridge west of Brockley Hill. There are also three areas of finds away from the highway: in Stanmore and Harrow Weald below the ridge; in the Pinner area; and around Harrow-on-the-Hill.

Watling Street

The road was laid out fairly soon after the conquest in AD 43, but not immediately; it may date as late as c.AD 50. Watling Street out here in the countryside was an impressive piece of engineering. It had the usual cambered surface to drain off rainwater, and

side ditches. At Verulamium, south of the original town limits, the side ditches were 'over a metre deep, nearly 3m wide, and set 10m away from the edge of the street, so that the whole arrangement — street, berm, and flanking ditches — occupied a tract 28m across' (Niblett 1993, 86). The wide berm between the ditch and the metalled surface could have been for the fast passage of unshod horses. South of Brockley Hill several recent excavations have provided piecemeal information on the road's course and form. It is only assumed to be represented by the straight line of the Edgware Road through the built-up area south of Canons Corner, as excavations here have so far found only that all trace of it has been removed. On the steep slope of Brockley Hill, the road has shifted to east and west, to avoid ruts and mud, over many centuries (many of the excavation reports discuss the various metallings seen: O'Neil 1949, Suggett 1954, Castle 1973b, Braithwaite 1987 for example). It now appears that the Roman line runs west of the modern road from Canons Corner to the top of the hill (Castle & Warbis 1973; Castle 1976a, fig 1; Bowsher 1995), although putative roadside ditches found in recent excavations have complicated this view. Castle & Warbis (1973, 89) found in 1968 that the Roman road narrowed as it climbed the hill, from a little under 8m to 4m wide; the flanking ditches were up to 2m in width. In 1995 the road was partly excavated on the lower slope, north of Canons Corner; the western ditch was 1.60m wide and nearly 1m deep, but had silted up and been recut several times. Further up, where the slope becomes more acute, the ditch was shallower but much wider, at least 5m, and there were traces of an extra rainwater gully. In both excavations the road surface was of compacted gravel layers on a thick clay bedding. Dating evidence, in the silted ditches, consisted of 1st to late 3rd-century debris, including a rare Late Roman folding-knife with an iron blade and copper-alloy frame in the form of a dolphin (Bowsher 1995, 54–6). Nowhere on the hill does there seem to be a wide berm between the road itself and the flanking ditches. Clearly there are differences in construction along the road, but little study of these has been done. The small trenches of the 1968 excavations

and the minimum intervention policy of the 1995 and later work mean that the road has nowhere been exposed on any scale; only keyhole glimpses have been seen.

The highway was maintained right through the Roman period into the 5th century. In the early 8th century Bede wrote of Verulamium, by then called Verlamchester or Waec-lingchester by Wacol's people, Saxon settlers who lived there. By the late 9th century their name was being used for the road. It has never entirely fallen out of use, which is why it still serves as a highway and a boundary today.

Presumably there were minor roads, but none have been identified. Two roads leading north-west from Watling Street were suggested by the Viatores (1964). But many of their 'roads' have since been shown not to be roads at all, or not to run where they thought, or can only be shown to be medieval or later in origin. Their suggested routes (apart from the main well-known ones, which survived in whole or in part) must be regarded as doubtful until proven. Route 169, branching north-west from Watling Street at Elstree, was not found when the putative junction at Elstree Hill South was excavated (Castle & Hammerson 1978, 151). The other suggested route, 169c, was the old road to Watford, diverted by the Duke of Chandos in the 18th century; there is as yet no archaeological reason to suggest it is earlier than medieval. The Viatores admitted that they could find no actual trace of it. In fact it ran from its junction with Watling Street opposite Stonegrove Park 'in an almost straight line' to a point near Spring Pond on Stanmore Hill, and was visible 'for most of its distance' in 1929 (Baylis 1957, 5); it has been seen in aerial photographs (Wilson 1991). Its straightness of line here, and fragments of Roman tile and tesserae found 500m north-east of it in Chiltern Avenue, Bushey Heath (Whitford Anderson 1928a, b), cannot in themselves prove that the road to Watford is Roman in origin.

Sulloniacis

The name is known only from one source, the Antonine Itinerary. It is assumed that this is a list of places where official posting-stations were located, although even this has been subject to discussion (Sheldon 1996, 235). It is unclear whether all the places

mentioned had the full facilities of bath-house and sleeping accommodation as well as a change of horses. What sort of place *Sulloniacis* was is as yet uncertain; no remains of anything that could have been the posting-station itself have yet been discovered. There may have been no town in Roman Harrow, but it is certain that people would have been attracted to the opportunities in service industries along the highway, providing goods and food; especially in the vicinity of the posting-station, which was only for those with official passes. It is now generally thought that *Sulloniacis* was the proper form of the name, and it is interesting because, by analogy with similar place names in Gaul, it may contain the name of a native landowner, and mean 'the estate of Sullonios'. It is only mentioned once, in one of the routes of the Itinerary, where it is described as being 9 Roman miles from Verulamium and 12 miles from *Londinium*. The other routes run straight from *Londinium* to Verulamium, omitting *Sulloniacis*. Roucoux (1984) suggests that as the facilities available at *Sulloniacis* would not have been as varied as those at the next stations to north and south, travellers might prefer to press on to Verulamium or *Londinium*. The distances are not so very great, and the large towns had much to offer.

A major assumption to clear out of the way is that *Sulloniacis* was at the top of Brockley Hill. The hilltop was identified as *Sulloniacis* by Camden, at the end of the 16th century, on the grounds that he knew of Roman remains there, on Watling Street and at more or less the right distance from Verulamium. His identification has been followed ever since. But the Roman remains are of pottery kilns, which were probably only used seasonally; the only domestic occupation on the top of the hill is Late Roman (after the closure of the kilns), and insubstantial. The 'native' (Late Iron Age type) pottery from the site has all been found in association with Roman material, and as this 'native' pottery was in use at Verulamium at least into the Flavian period (after AD 69) there is no reason to suppose that any of it at Brockley Hill predates the kilns. The posting-station, less formal inns, and the more or less ramshackle wayside facilities that would have gone with them, must be looked for elsewhere. We have no information on the place apart

from the name and the mileage given, and as Brockley Hill is about 9 Roman miles from the limits of Verulamium, but 15 miles from *Londinium*, not 12, the distances do not add up. There may be an error in transcription from the original document that we know nothing about. The distances, then, are too vague to be useful. Where might *Sulloniacis* have been? Common sense indicates a place at the foot of the hill, where the traveller from *Londinium* could get fresh horses or other beasts able to cope with the ridge over Brockley and Elstree Hills. Pottery and tile kilns were to be found on the summit of both hills; no archaeology has been recorded in the slight valley between them. Trial trenches at the Aldenham bus depot at the foot of Elstree Hill South in 1989 found nothing but undisturbed heavy clay. The topography suggests that the posting-station was south of Brockley Hill; and as Sheldon suggests (1996, 233), and Braun (1937, 388) did before him, the name of the Silk Stream east of the highway may derive directly from *Sulloniacis*. So many river names are ancient that such a derivation is no surprise.

Until recently no remains along Watling Street south of Brockley Hill had been identified, but this is surely because the highway served a similar function in the coaching era; 18th- and 19th-century inns, and roadhouses in the 1930s, are the direct descendants of the Roman wayside inn. The road and the buildings along it have been rebuilt so often, and the ground levelled, without any thought of archaeological recording, that the earliest traces have been lost (several sites along the road in Edgware and Burnt Oak, excavated in recent years, were found to have been truncated to natural in previous developments). Both travellers and animals would have generated wayside facilities: blacksmith, wheelwright, fruit and vegetable stalls, the Roman equivalent of McDonalds, and some sort of animal feed supply. On the road, horses were much less common than oxen, mules and donkeys. Bird (1996, 224) suggests that rye and oats (not hay) might have been grown locally for sale as animal fodder (although it has not been established that these two crops were cultivated in the London area during the Roman period).

Excavations at the Ministry of Defence site in London Road, on the north-west side

of the Canons Corner roundabout, have revealed something of this roadside activity (McKinley 1998; Smith *et al* 2009). This was where an enclosure had been recorded before the Ministry buildings were erected (SMR 052018, from OS records). The evidence suggests a road-maintenance depot, a drovers' watering-place, and some sort of industry such as charcoal-burning, as well as hedged enclosures and wells; the date is later than the potteries. The adjacent highway ran northwards past a few burials to the east (Suggett 1956), and as it narrowed to take the steep slope it approached the kilns on the hill. Roman burials were, of course, by law kept beyond the limits of settlement, and domestic occupation has still not been found up here. How much there may have been, we do not know. The pottery kilns on the hilltop ceased operating in the later 2nd century, but the posting-station was listed in the 3rd century, and local occupation was certainly independent of the presence of the potteries. Rubbish was still getting into the roadside ditches on the hill until the end of the Roman period. A little 3rd-century material is known on the site of the potteries, although nothing structural has been identified; at the end of the 3rd century or early in the 4th century some levelling took place on the summit of the hill and cobbled floors were laid out, apparently for timber buildings (Applebaum 1951; Suggett 1956; Castle 1972b, 151; Castle 1976a, 225). The redeposited sherds, coins, and glass fragments found in the various trenches across the Pear Wood bank and ditch (Castle 1975) confirm the period of greatest activity on the hilltop in the 1st and 2nd centuries, as well as some in the 4th century. But more investigation is needed before we can form much of an opinion as to what was going on here in the Late Roman period. On the flatter land at the foot of the hill, east of Canons Corner and the MoD site, Late Roman ditches, pits and postholes were excavated in 2005. Rubbish pits found by HADAS in Thirlby Road, Burnt Oak, in 1971 contained potsherds, animal bones, tile fragments, and a coin of late 3rd to early 4th-century date (Taylor 1989, 46). These finds and the Canons Park tile kiln (more than 500m west of the road, but likely to have been beyond residential areas) suggest occupation strung out along Watling Street.

Most of it, especially the occupation nearest Brockley Hill, is later Roman.

The Brockley Hill pottery factory

The Brockley Hill pottery kilns begin in the 50s. This is a significant date, as prior to this the highway had not been built, *Londinium* had not been founded, and Verulamium was still under the rule of a client king whose fortunes were founded on the control of the iron-ore route from west to north-east. Once *Londinium*, the new port, was in place the axis changed to the new route from south-east to north-west. The Brockley Hill kilns were on the outskirts of a whole group of pottery factories found in and south of Verulamium. These commercial Roman potteries, in receipt of military contracts, were dependent on the new road, and the foundation of London.

The Brockley Hill site was a major complex, one of the most important producers of pottery in the province during the later 1st and earlier 2nd centuries. The earliest kilns were in operation during the 50s; the site ceased production *c.*AD 160. Only piecemeal excavations have been carried out, but traces of all the elements of a large concern have been identified, on both sides of the road at the top of the hill: clay extraction pits, dumps of weathering clay, signs of workshop areas, the kilns themselves, and wasters. The attraction was the combination here of all the required elements for large-scale production. The sandy clay of the Claygate Beds deposit on the hill made good potting clay; the trees provided an abundance of charcoal for fuel; and the high water-table and numerous springs provided the water necessary for pottery making. All these were adjacent to the highway which provided the means of distributing the products. The original choice of this particular place for what appears to be the earliest of the 'Verulamium region' kilns, however, has recently been considered by Bird (2005), who questions what it tells us about the ownership of land shortly after the Conquest.

About 20 kilns have been found (Castle 1976a, 225–6; Grew & Thorogood 1992; Smith *et al* 2009); others were certainly destroyed in recent centuries, but 'it seems likely that many more pottery kilns await discovery'

(Castle 1976a, 224). The kiln products are in the pale grainy fabric characteristic of the Verulamium factories (and known as Verulamium Region Fabric). The range includes various jugs, bowls, 'unguent pots', cordoned jars, and most notably the mortaria stamped with the potter's name. These have been found over much of Britain, including the frontier forts, although by far the largest markets for Verulamium Region products as a whole were *Londinium* and Verulamium itself (Tyers 1996, 132–4). Brockley Hill is also one of only a very few places in the province to make amphorae, which were usually imported as containers of olive oil, olives, wine, and other things which were in great demand but not produced in Britain. Amphorae were useful vessels which even when broken were put to other purposes, once their contents had been decanted. Sherds of amphora used for mixing a resin glue have been found on the site, and all the basal spikes were missing from the dump of broken amphorae found at the hospital gate (Castle 1978). These could have been turned into kiln supports, or perhaps used as pestles with mortaria. The fact that one and probably two varieties of amphora (Seeley & Thorogood 1994, 225) were made at Brockley Hill suggests a contract for the supply of containers for a home-grown product. A Roman period vineyard has been identified in Northamptonshire, and there were certainly others; there is some unpublished recent evidence for several in the Stort valley. The amphorae made here may have been intended for wine.

The mortaria and amphora stamps give us the names of more than 25 potters, who were master craftsmen, not locals (lists: Castle 1976a, fig 9; Tyers 1996, 132). Study of the use of the dies has shown that one or two previously worked at Colchester. The possibilities of the Verulamium Region potteries, far more central than Colchester, attracted these men, at least two of whom had kilns operating at Radlett as well as at Brockley Hill. In time two or three moved to the Mancetter-Hartshill potteries in Warwickshire. During the earlier 2nd century, for economic reasons that are still obscure, Brockley Hill faced increasing competition from new factories in Oxfordshire and Warwickshire as well as elsewhere (and in

London itself, in the Walbrook valley: see below), and by *c.*AD 160 the Brockley Hill factory had closed. The potters presumably employed some local labour. In the nature of the work the operation of the kilns was seasonal. Perhaps the master potters arrived each spring, hired local men, and left in the autumn, having supervised the dispatch of their products off south to *Londinium*, to the ships which carried them to the forts on the frontier, and north up Watling Street to be used all over the province.

It has been suggested (Suggett 1956; Taylor 1989, 42) that there was perhaps a roadside shop on the hill, to sell local and imported products to the passing trade. This is offered as an explanation of the unweathered condition of the good samian and glass groups (Castle & Warbis 1973, 106–8) and other imported wares found in dumped deposits on the site. Traffic accidents on the road have also been suggested as a source of this material (Taylor 1989, 44; Castle 1978, 392). However, one deposit was found in a large clay pit, up to 2m deep and 20m across, which for safety's sake needed filling; it contained 'a truly astonishing variety of material', mostly of the early 2nd century (Suggett 1956, 2). The majority of the kiln products recovered from the site have been found used as backfill in quarry pits (Grew & Thorogood 1992, 2). So the exotic finds at Brockley Hill may also be landfill; these broken goods may have come from some distance away, perhaps carted out from *Londinium* on wagons returning from a delivery of pottery. In addition, the recent discovery that Verulamium Region wares were being made in the earlier 2nd century in the Walbrook valley (the Northgate House site) led to petrological and chemical analysis, which showed that the raw clay from these pits was being delivered as well (Seeley & Drummond-Murray 2005, 176; Hartley & Tomber 2006, 96). This sheds new light on the organisation of the pottery industry and its relationship with *Londinium*. A roadside shop is proposed as one explanation of a deposit of unused samian in a pit at Northgate House (Seeley & Drummond-Murray 2005, 141–2), but this view is derived from Suggett's suggestion of a shop at Brockley Hill.

How the tile kiln at Canons Park relates to the pottery factory is unclear. Two large dumps of tile have been recorded, and a

floor of black vitrified tile 15m west of one of these was assumed to represent a kiln (*London Archaeologist* 4/2 (spring 1981), 46). No precise dating has been established. The tiles are of the usual types, *tegulae* and *imbrices* for roofing, and some box-flue fragments; they could have been intended for local consumption only. Similar fragments, but worn, were found in the Roman roadside ditch on the lower west slope of Brockley Hill (Bowsler 1995), and a large amount came from the recent excavations on the London Academy site in Spur Road.

Bentley Priory

There is a scatter of finds in the vicinity of Bentley Priory, on the southern slopes of the ridge west of Brockley Hill. They are chance finds, and few exact details have been recorded; but they have been found over a period of 200 years, in a variety of circumstances. Little development of the ridge has taken place, so it is unclear if this concentration of finds is largely a product of clay extraction for the Blackwell brickworks. Certainly not all the finds relate to the brickworks, and other discoveries have been made since their closure in 1914.

On the slope of the ridge the finds appear to comprise 1st-century coins and possible cremation vessels, which, with the pair of amphorae from Lower Priory Farm, should be contemporary with the pottery factory. The presence of burials has not been confirmed, and the nature of this Roman period activity in the area is obscure. Charcoal-burning is one possibility, as well as clay- and gravel-digging. The amphorae are particularly interesting; although these two are apparently imported from Gaul, they belong to the type which was actually made at Brockley Hill.

The discoveries nearer the top of the ridge date to a period long after the closure of the pottery factory: the 5th-century hoard of coins and jewellery, and a chance find of Late Roman coins. The hoard is noteworthy for the interesting objects with the coins, and for having been buried up here on the hill and never retrieved. How it relates in date and significance to the Grim's Dyke earthwork is unknown. This runs along the ridge, partly on the present county boundary,

from Pinner to Harrow Weald Common. The main earthwork has usually been thought to be Iron Age; its extension in Pear Wood, Brockley Hill, however, contained 4th-century pottery in both bank and ditch (Castle 1975) and should be post-Roman. With the discovery of Roman sherds near the Pinner end it can now be argued that the entire earthwork is post-Roman (Bowl 2008; Maloney & Holroyd 2008).

Stanmore and Harrow Weald south of the ridge

South of the ridge the land is still comparatively high, but has been settled and farmed since at least later Saxon times. Scattered finds of Roman date are known, notably ceramic building materials found at Stanmore Park south of the pre-1800 line of the Uxbridge Road (Carew & Sabel 2002). But these had been brought from elsewhere for re-use in the medieval period, and this is unlikely to be the only instance. Once a useful source had been found, it would have been exploited. These tiles perhaps came from the tile kiln dump in Canons Park (close to the medieval parish church); presumably from somewhere along Watling Street. The other finds in the area are single coins and redeposited sherds; there is no evidence yet for any genuine Roman presence.

Pinner

The Victoria County History of Middlesex (vol 4 (1971), 169) offers a slightly irresponsible summary of Roman remains in Harrow: 'Roman coins, pottery, and brick- and stonework have been found at Waxwell, Bury Pond (Barrow Point) Hill, and Pinner Road in Pinner, in the grounds of Bentley Priory in Harrow Weald, and in the church of Harrow-on-the Hill.' Bentley Priory and Harrow church are discussed above and below. The VCH gives no source for the Pinner finds, and without one the reader might take the sentence to imply Roman buildings. This is certainly not the case. The Gazetteer below gives the known finds and their sources, which (apart from redeposited pottery and the coin from Hall's Farm) amount to a few coins from two fields. These fields, Tan Redding and Wat Redding, were

adjacent to Barrow Point Lane which once ran between Paines Lane and Waxwell Lane. What is interesting about this position is not the 'barrow' of Barrow Point, or its 'Roman stonework', which may both be taken as fictitious (see below), but the fact that this was where the earliest datable exploitation of the chalk began, recorded by the 14th century (Kirkman 1992). Here the Chalk which underlies the London Clay folds and comes close to the surface, beneath loamy soils which were much more attractive than the heavy clay. The medieval quarries are plainly visible on the west side of Waxwell Lane; in later periods the chalk had to be pursued at ever greater depths and distances, and was mined until c.1870. The chalk was of great importance, for improving heavy soil, for mortar, lime, and plaster; and, there being no other available building stone, for the bands of flint within it. I see no reason why this resource should not have been exploited in the Roman period, as at Verulamium, where Roman quarries are known at places where the chalk comes close to the surface. Kirkman quotes Pliny's account of Britons marling their land with chalk dug from pits (*ibid.*, 55–6). The term 'redding' in the field names (Tan Redding is recorded from 1285) denotes a clearance for agriculture, and Kirkman notes that the stream here is at a higher level than the field itself; it is worth considering whether this was an area where the chalk had been extracted in the Roman period and then allowed to revert to woodland.

It is interesting that the single coin from west of Hatch End Station is at a geological outlier of soils similar to those at Pinner (*ibid.*, 42, 44). The pots sherds at Pinner Village Gardens, the High Street, and Headstone Manor are in similar positions, although all redeposited; it may be that these better soils were the immediate attraction.

Harrow-on-the-Hill

The VCH statement (Middlesex vol 4 (1971), 172, n 58) that 'A few bricks embedded in St Mary's church may have come from a Roman temple on the site' is misleading, but worth examination. The VCH source, Done Bushell (1894; 1901) took his information from Gardner (1895; 1918), who had noted

apparently Roman bricks re-used in the structure of the medieval church. Neither of these writers cared to suppose that the 'presumably' Roman bricks came from a building on the hill on which the church stands, still less to suggest that they came from a temple. The confusion of ideas arises from the likelihood that the Saxon church stood on the site of a pagan Saxon shrine. The evidence for the pagan shrine is in the place name, and the topography. Done Bushell (1894) published the charter of AD 767 which referred to '*gumeninga heargae*', the temple of Gumen's people; the word for temple is the origin of the name *Harrow* (Gover *et al* 1942, 51). The dominating position of St Mary's church, visible on its hill for miles across the London Clay basin, reinforces the idea of a Saxon Christian church being deliberately built on a pagan holy place. No physical evidence of the pagan temple has been recorded. Blair (1996, 8) notes that as far as is known, actual structures which were pagan shrines date to the proto-Christian period of the late 6th to 7th centuries; before this period sacred sites were still in the open air. 'It is an interesting question, so far completely unanswerable, whether actual surviving Roman temples could have been reused as Anglo-Saxon ones'; no such site has been identified.

In the Roman period, it is noticeable that only a few religious sites are known to have existed in the London region outside the city, all on the fringes; 'it may be that there are sites yet to be found, particularly in the once wooded areas on the London Clay' (Bird 1996, 223). Harrow Hill will have been as visible on the horizon from *Londinium* as it was depicted in the 16th- and 17th-century panoramas of the city (Ball 1978, 8–11), and the possibility should be borne in mind, although there is as yet no evidence to suppose that Harrow was such a site. The bricks in the church, however, may be genuinely Roman. It is still possible that there was an undiscovered Roman building of some sort on or near the hill, although the four tile fragments from the field below Peterborough Road may have been redeposited; Late Iron Age sherds are recorded as having been found in the Peterborough Road playing fields in 1979 (SMR record). The Pinner Road coin hoard,

of 13 bronze 1st-century coins, was also found not far from the hill. Unfortunately their context was not recorded.

CONCLUSIONS

Having traced back to their original sources all the reported Roman sites and finds in the London Borough of Harrow, I hope we now have a clear picture of the evidence, such as it is. Of course value judgements have had to be made, but the reasoning and the sources are set out here so that others can review the evidence for themselves.

So what do we know about Roman Harrow? It ought to be possible to say something about what was going on *here*, even if relationships with the outside world are more problematic. The best and most detailed evidence comes from Watling Street, from just south of Canons Corner over Brockley Hill to the county boundary. This has long been the case, but the provision since 1991 for archaeology within the planning process has, within its limits, provided much new material. Nothing identifiable as *Sulloniacis* has yet been found, but the archaeology can be interpreted as representing the outskirts of a roadside settlement in the Edgware section of Watling Street. The known roadside occupation dates to a period after the Brockley Hill pottery kilns had gone out of use. The road still offers matters of detail to be resolved, such as changes in its layout, dimensions and structure over time as well as its course up the hill and beyond. The pottery factory itself, and its relationship with both London and Verulamium, will continue to attract the closest attention. Work on its excavation archive, especially the finds, ought to be a priority.

More thought and more information are needed on the Roman use of the ridge away from Watling Street and the kilns. Were there any early burials? How does this area relate to Brockley Hill? The wooded common offers few opportunities for investigation, and post-medieval clay extraction for the brickworks has very likely destroyed much. Are some of the extraction hollows Roman in origin? It may not be possible to make much progress in this area, but there might be some potential in environmental study. The spectacular late hoard found in the 18th

century needs reassessment; it may not tell us much about the nature of Roman Harrow, but it deserves to be better known.

Away from Watling Street, Roman Harrow is still characterised by scattered finds without context. There are as yet no buildings, no cemeteries or single graves, no obvious funerary finds, no cut features. The map suggests activity right across the borough, but how far can we take this? Some of the finds are residual in later contexts; the building materials found in Stanmore had been deliberately re-used in the medieval period; coins may be recent losses. So does this scanty array tell us anything? For the Stanmore area, it could be argued that all the finds are residual, derived from Watling Street/Brockley Hill at a much later date; for the present there is nothing to suggest otherwise. It is worth considering that Harrow Hill could have been a focus of some sort (hence the 1st-century coin hoard found nearby), and there *might* have been a building on it, although the tiles re-used in St Mary's (if they are Roman) could have come from Watling Street. Slightly more, but still circumstantial, evidence is suggested by the finds in the Pinner area, where the scatter appears to relate to the better soils, and the cluster of coins in one area indicates that the outcropping here of the chalk was known about, and used.

Exploitation of natural resources must be the key. As well as large areas of managed woodland, we can put forward the good potting clay on the ridge, and the chalk and flint further west. How these industries, which were presumably closely connected with *Londinium* (and Verulamium), operated is still largely unknown, but this picture is at least coherent, and should help to define the sort of evidence which needs to be looked for and may, with luck, still come to light. It also helps to address the research framework objectives concerned with landscape, environment and the economy.

The conquest period was one of marked change, with the laying out of Watling Street linking the borough directly with both Verulamium and the new *Londinium*; the absence of Late Iron Age material in Harrow (and north London in general) implies that the link with Verulamium was as novel as that with *Londinium*. But we still cannot offer much more than a static picture

of the four centuries of Roman rule, apart from the early pottery factory and later roadside development. For the transition to post-Roman there may be more to say. If the Grim's Dyke earthwork, marking the boundary between the London basin and the territory of Verulamium, was not constructed until after the Roman period, it does at least have some context then, which it does not in the Late Iron Age. This is not the place to discuss this, but it could be addressed.

GAZETTEER OF ROMAN SITES AND FINDS

Other than Brockley Hill

Distinction should be made between those finds which were apparently *in situ*, and those which are single coins or sherds, or clearly redeposited material. All single finds may be redeposited; coins in particular may be modern losses. It should also be remembered that it is hard to distinguish between Roman coarse body sherds and medieval South Hertfordshire Grey Ware, which was certainly used in Harrow, and made at Pinner. A report of 'Roman pottery', when the actual material is now lost, cannot be taken as necessarily good evidence.

Bentley Priory and the Common

'Stanmore Common' (?c.TQ 153 935): 50 coins, of Constantine, Arcadius, Honorius, Valentinian, Valens, Gratian, Magnus Maximus, and Theodosius, found in 1781 with other items: a gold bracelet, gold rings, small silver and copper coins of Valentinian, and a piece of silver marked HONOR set in a triangular iron frame; early 5th-century hoard: Camden's *Britannia* (Gough's edition 1806), ii, 30–1; Brewer 1816, 680; Vulliamy 1930, 204–5; Sharpe 1932, 114. This find is a classic example of the Chinese Whispers effect in archaeological recording; the further one gets from the original account, the more distorted the details become. It appears that the find was not made on Stanmore Common, but found by workmen 'digging near the park-pale' of Mr Duberly's house, which was Bentley Priory. There were two gold rings set with engraved gemstones in the hoard, both illustrated by Gough (reproduced in Ball 1981, 348); 'on one of

Lastly, we can now be confident in what we know about Roman Harrow, even if that body of data is small; it would be useful to be able to compare it in detail with the archaeology of its neighbouring boroughs. Any treatment of the research objectives set out in 2002 needs this confidence, in every part of Greater London; local assessment of known sites and finds, together with good mapping of them, is essential.

the rings two youthful heads, face to face, were cut in gold. The other was ornamented with a blue stone, cut with a representation of eagles tearing a hare' (Brewer 1816, 680; see also Henig 1978, nos 703, 791). SMR 052022.

Lower Priory Farm (TQ 1531 9238): two amphorae, one stamped MAR OF (the workshop of Mar[inus?]); found in 1948. Now in the British Museum, 1949/4-4/1. The amphorae are Dressel 2-4, which was a type made at Brockley Hill, their only known place of manufacture in Britain. These specimens, however, are of a continental fabric. SMR 052016: a 'small trial trench excavated by G F Cole failed to locate Roman occupation'.

Bentley Priory (near) (c.TQ 149 925): coins, including an *aureus* of Vespasian (AD 69–79), from 'Money Dell', and a cinerary urn and a lamp from the brickfield nearby (Sharpe 1932, 114; p 90 in the 1919 edition). Sharpe does not give a source or a date for this find, which was apparently in the area quarried for clay for the Blackwell brickworks at the top of Clamp Hill; no other reference to 'Money Dell' has been located and its position remains an assumption. The brickworks ceased operations in 1914. The SMR grid reference for this is c.TQ 153 933, but this is because it has been confused with the 'Stanmore Common' find of 1781, to which the Lysons reference (1796, 570) applies.

Priory Drive (c.TQ 1580 9335): coins of Tetricus I (c.AD 270–273) and Constantine I (AD 307–337). Found in 1943: VCH Middx, vol 1. The SMR also has another record for the same find, locating it at TQ 1537 9322, the main drive to the house: 'The great drive, Bentley Priory. Two brass coins of Tetricus 237 AD and Constantine the Great, found in drain

repairs 1940–3; ref. Thames Basin Archaeol. Obs. Gp. News 7 (December 1961)'. The latter position is perhaps the correct one. SMR 052023, 052025.

Stanmore to Harrow Weald

Sitwell Grove (c.TQ 158 922): a worn coin, possibly early Roman (Julio-Claudian) or Greek, found in July 1991 and identified by Verulamium Museum; kept by the finder (Verulamium Museum enquiry record, 22/91).

Elms Road (c.TQ 1518 9130): a bronze Roman coin, type unspecified but in good condition, found in garden of No. 27 in c.1946. Morris Gazetteer archive, Hertfordshire Sites & Monuments Record, County Hall, Hertford.

Gordon Avenue (c.TQ 1609 9161): one potsherd found. No date. Ordnance Survey records; SHHS finds list. SMR 052015.

Old Church Lane (TQ 1720 9140): evaluation by the Oxford Archaeology Unit in 1998 at Nos 72–76, near the site of the medieval parish church of Great Stanmore, recovered mixed Roman, Saxon and medieval sherds, and medieval slag, from a shallow feature thought to be a tree hole (Maloney & Holroyd 1999, 12).

Stanmore Park (TQ 1670 9200): excavation of the 18th-century house in 2000 by Pre-Construct Archaeology found a quantity of redeposited Roman brick and tile. Most of it was associated with 12th to 14th-century occupation of the site (on the south side of the old line of the Uxbridge Road), and appeared to have been brought from elsewhere (perhaps Brockley Hill) in the medieval period for re-use (Carew & Sabel 2002, 104).

Pinner

Bury Pond/Barrow Point Hill (TQ 123 904), and Waxwell (TQ 118 904): 'Roman finds'. VCH Middx vol 4 (1971), 169. The source for this is Ware 1955, 18, 52; the only genuine Roman finds appear to be coins, number unknown, 'found from time to time' in two fields (now built over) between Waxwell Lane and Paines Lane. Two coins 'have been identified as belonging to the reigns of Constantine and Valentinian II'. See also below.

Hatch End Station (TQ 131 913): coin (third bronze) of Constantius II, AD 337–361, rev

type FEL TEMP REPARATIO, found during digging for a fence just west of the railway station in Sept 1955. NMARC files.

Pinner Village Gardens (TQ 125 888): 3 unstratified Roman sherds, one possibly from an amphora, found with medieval and later sherds in trenches cut to investigate medieval ridge and furrow, Nov 1985. Harrow Archaeological Surveys no. 10 (Currie 1985; Currie & Borrill 1986).

Woodmans, 19–25 High Street, Pinner: excavation by the Pinner Local History Society in 1977 found that the site had been cleared to natural river-bank clay in the Victorian period and levelled up with redeposited material including Late Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval pottery; there was no indication of where any of it had come from (Reeves 1980).

Headstone Manor (TQ 1410 8970): one redeposited sherd with later material from DGLA excavation inside the Small Barn, 1986 (*London Archaeologist* 5/10 (1987), 275). SMR 052148.

Hall's Farm, Pinner Park (c.TQ 132 903): a Roman coin, AD 345–348; worn; found by metal detectorists in 1994 (info J Golland, Pinner LHS).

Grim's Dyke Golf Club, Oxhey Lane, Hatch End (TQ 1348 9227): residual Roman sherds associated with the linear earthwork Grim's Dyke itself, at the 17th green (Maloney & Holroyd 2008, 19).

Harrow-on-the Hill

Harrow-on-the-Hill (TQ 153 874): 'Roman finds'. VCH Middx vol 4 (1971), 169, and 172, n 58: 'A few bricks embedded in St Mary's church may have come from a Roman temple on the site'. The source given (Done Bushell 1894, 12) refers to 'a few presumably Roman bricks'; the original source is Gardner (1895), 67–8, describing an investigation of the sub-plinths of the nave arcade columns. On the north side of the north transept pier 'several layers of Roman tiles were exposed, and below them rubble masonry'; the south transept pier stood only on flint rubble. 'There appear to be Roman mixed with comparatively modern bricks in various parts of the rubble masonry in the walls of the church'. Gardner, and Done Bushell (1901, 24), considered that the medieval source for this material need have been no

nearer than Brockley Hill, as they knew of no other Roman finds at Harrow-on-the-Hill; 'or none at least of any importance'.

Butler Road, West Harrow (c.TQ 145 878): bronze coin of Marcus Aurelius (AD 161–180), found in a garden; in Harrow School Museum. Druett 1956, 19. SMR 052031.

Peterborough Road, Harrow (TQ 158 878): four pieces of Roman tile from field below Peterborough Road, south of Northwick Walk; SHHS finds list. SMR 052032.

Pinner Road (No. 137a) (TQ 1440 8820): 13 bronze coins of 1st century AD, one a sestertius of Vespasian, found in garden in 1952; now lost. VCH Middx vol 1; Ordnance Survey records; Thames Basin Archaeol Obs Gp News 7, 16. SMR 052029.

Watling Street, vicinity

Canons Park (The Spinney) (TQ 184 916): conjectured tile kiln, represented by laid floor of black vitrified tile, seen c.15m NW of the Spinney by West London Field Group in 1979; spread of tiles covering c.40m recorded with auger by SHHS, 1980 (*London Archaeologist* 4/2 (spring 1981), 46). SMR 052145.

Canons Park (The Spinney) (TQ 1845 9165): tile dump, with one waster and signs of redeposited natural clay, recorded 1988 by SHHS and Museum of London. Sloane 1988. SMR 052033.

Broadcroft Avenue (No. 1), Stanmore (TQ 180 904): bronze coin of Maxentius (AD 306–12), Ostia mint, 'found 2 foot down, possibly not *in situ*'. Thames Basin Archaeol Obs Gp News 10, p 7. SMR 052030.

Watling Street: O'Neil 1942, observation north of Canons Corner; discussion, O'Neil 1949, but planned line may be post-medieval (Suggett 1954; Castle & Warbis 1973, 87–90; Castle 1972a; Ayto 1972; Braithwaite 1987).

Elstree Hill South (TQ 177 951): small-scale excavation on the brow of the hill in 1974–5 found medieval field ditches, and a small pit containing Roman pottery and tile (Castle & Hammerson 1978). SMR 052131. This area, bordering Watling Street on the west, was then in the borough of Harrow.

Brockley Hill

A great many small-scale investigations and discoveries have been made; in the absence

of any large-scale work, it remains true that 'very little is known about the extent, layout or even focus' of the site (Grew & Thorogood 1992, 2). Additions since 1999 have been added, with GLSMR ID numbers from the GLSMR Updates now available on the English Heritage website (which give details, but which are less useful than they might be, as they do not give their sources of information).

Early finds

The earliest record was by Norden, written c.1610 (*Speculum Britanniae*, in Description of Herts, 1723 edn, 23): 'Mr Camden by diligent observance has found that it [*Sulloniacis*] should stand on Brockley Hill'; Norden had visited and been shown where ruined buildings were said to be found, on the east side of Watling Street.

c.1680: ruins, coins, and urns were 'dug up when Mr Napier built his house and in 7 or 8 acres round' (Gough's 1806 edition of Camden). The house was built c.1680 on the east side of the road, and the site identified from records by Trelawny Roberts when the foundations were located in the 1937 trial trenches (Cottrill 1937; Richardson 1948, 4). Stukeley (*Itinerarium Curiosum*, 1776, 118; originally published 1724) stated that when a canal and foundations for buildings for a Mr Philpot were being dug, the workmen came on 'many coins, urns and other antiquities ... many arched vaults of brick and flint ... and the whole of the top of the hill is covered with foundations'. Stukeley can be a notably careless reporter; he is less reliable than Gough, and they are quite likely to be referring to the same discovery. The 'canal' is the long pond, no doubt part of a formal garden.

pre-1816: two small bronzes found on Mr West's estate 'near Brockley Hill', a lion and a head of Apollo. Drawings of them were kept at Walpole's house, Strawberry Hill (Brewer 1816, 626).

1890s: quantities of Roman pottery and tile found during construction of the hospital main block (Castle 1973d, 10).

pre-1895: stamp of BRVCCIVS and other potsherds, from the top of the hill ('Two Boys' 1895).

c.1900: landscaping of the hospital grounds near Brockley Hill House, apparently in the area

of the tennis courts (built 1909): pottery, and a die-stamp of MATVGENVS (Suggett 1955; Castle 1972a, 326). GLSMR ELO5392.

Excavations, first phase

The investigations have been grouped into four areas (Bowsher 1995, fig 3): Area 1 is west of the road and north of the hospital; Area 2 is east of the road; Area 3 is west of the road and south of Wood Lane; and Area 4 is east of the road, further south in the corner north of the junction of Brockley Hill and Pipers Green Lane. Areas 2 and 4 are in the London Borough of Barnet.

- 1937: trial trenches, Area 2 (Cottrill 1937). GLSMR ELO5411.
- 1947: K M Richardson, Area 2 (Richardson 1948). GLSMR ELO5408, 5399.
- 1948–9: P Davenport’s trench in Pear Wood (Castle 1975). GLSMR ELO5176.
- 1950: Sh Applebaum, Area 1 (Applebaum 1951) and an unpublished trench in Area 4 (Grew & Thorogood 1992, 22). GLSMR ELO5394.
- 1951: P Suggett, Area 1 (Suggett 1953; 1954). GLSMR ELO5396.
- 1952: P Suggett, Areas 1, 2 (Suggett 1954). GLSMR ELO5413.
- 1953–4: P Suggett, Area 1 (Suggett 1954; 1956). GLSMR ELO5391.
- 1954–5: G Haynes and L Probert noted cremations and 1st to 2nd-century debris in service trench in Area 4 (Suggett 1956, 4; London Transport Magazine August 1956; the main pot in the photographs is wrongly restored: like the others it had had its rim ploughed off, and had a rounded form). Subsequent adjacent trenches dug by Suggett *et al*, but nothing was recorded (Braithwaite 1987, 4). GLSMR ELO5445.
- 1954: L Probert, trench in Pear Wood (Castle 1975, 270).
- 1955–6: P Suggett, Pear Wood (Castle 1975).
- 1956: A E Ridley, Area 2, bank of pond (Ayto 1972, 379; Castle 1973a, 36).
- 1957: iron axe and pottery ‘found during road works Dec 1957, subsequent trial dig proved it to have come from a pit’ (SMR 052095). This was at TQ 1744 9384, at the bend in Wood Lane; Area 3 (Ayto 1972).
- 1958–9: P Suggett, Pear Wood (Castle 1975). GLSMR ELO5177.
- 1959: Dr J Kent, Area 2. No records (in Castle’s unpublished list of work done).

- 1960–1: SHHS & NMARC, two trenches to look for Watling Street in Field 157, Area 3 (NMARC 1961).
- 1965: Roman pottery recovered from a sewer trench in the grounds of the RNOH. GLSMR ELO5403.
- 1966: J Upton, pots found near tennis courts, Area 1 (Castle 1976a). GLSMR ELO5390.

Excavations, second phase

- 1968: S Castle, Field 157, Area 3 (Castle 1971, 1972a, b; Castle & Warbis 1973). GLSMR ELO5385.
- 1969: S Castle, tennis courts, Area 1; no features (Grew & Thorogood 1992, 28).
- 1970: S Castle, hospital grounds, Area 1 (Castle 1972b).
- 1970: gas trench near Piper’s Green Lane, Area 4 (Castle 1972b).
- 1971: finds from tennis court area (Castle 1976a). GLSMR ELO5386.
- 1971: S Castle, Doinus kiln, Area 1 (Castle 1972c). GLSMR ELO5420.
- 1972: S Castle excavations, ‘sites A–C’, Area 2 (Castle 1973a, b, c; 1974). GLSMR ELO5410.
- 1972: mortarium stamps found at tennis courts, Area 1, and from Site C, Area 2, late 1972 (Castle 1976a). GLSMR ELO5422.
- 1973: S Castle, Pear Wood (Castle 1975). The bank and ditch contained 4th-century material and should itself be later. GLSMR ELO5178.
- 1973–4: finds from tennis court bank, Area 1 (Castle 1976a).
- 1975: pottery from tennis court bank, Area 1 (Hartley 1979). GLSMR ELO5421.
- 1975: trench near hospital main gate, amphora dump (Castle 1978).
- 1977: tile waster found in tennis court area, Area 1.

Recent work

- 1985: geophysical survey by Chris Currie to find any connection between Grim’s Ditch and the earthwork in Pear Wood, but without result (Harrow Archaeological Surveys). GLSMR ELO7612.
- 1986: ditch clearance, redeposited pottery retrieved on south side of hill.
- 1987: inspection of service trench and flowerbeds near Brockley Hill House by S Castle.
- 1987: trenches and fieldwalking by HADAS in fields east of Watling Street (Braithwaite

- 1987; HADAS 1988); spreads of Roman pottery and tile *etc*, some redeposited as base for one of the lines of the road just east of the present line. GLSMR ELO7542.
- 1990: excavation by the DGLA and HADAS on a pipeline route east of Watling Street involved a section through a gravel road surface with side ditches at TQ 1780 9350. There were few finds, but the road was assumed to be Roman. GLSMR ELO3741.
- 1995: Wimpey Sports Ground, TQ 1786 9343; evaluation by MOLAS (Bowsher 1995). The Roman road seen in series of trenches west of the modern road. GLSMR ELO2797.
- 1995–7: London Road, Stanmore (Ministry of Defence site NW of Canons Corner); Wessex Archaeology and English Heritage. *EH Archaeol Review* 1996–7, 25; *London Archaeologist* vol 8 supplement 1 (1996), 11; McKinley 1998. The area closest to Canons Corner revealed deposits of road-metal-ling material suggesting a repair yard or maintenance depot for Watling Street. To the NW were large ponds, possibly associated with industrial activity to the north (perhaps charcoal burning), or a watering-place for drovers on the road; these were later filled with dumps of worn pottery and stone fragments, perhaps also for road mending. A ditch near the west side of the modern road may have been the western ditch of the Roman road.
- 1998: Bury Farm: fieldwalking by HADAS east of Watling Street to identify concentrations of finds in ploughsoil and assess effects of ploughing (Maloney & Holroyd 1999, 1).
- 2000: Brockley Hill House, TQ 1738 9403; excavation by Oxford Archaeology around three sides of the house after its demolition found a pottery kiln, evidence of industrial production, and a ditch which may have been part of Watling Street. The dating was *c.*AD 50–160, with some later finds (GLAAS Quarterly Review Jan–June 2006, 34; Smith *et al* 2009).
- 2001: Spur Road, Canons Corner (LB Barnet), TQ 1830 9290; excavation by Oxford Archaeology immediately NE of the junction, opposite the 1995–7 London Road site (Smith 2001). A complex of ditches and the surface of Watling Street, with its eastern ditch, on the east side of the modern road. This implies that the London Road ditch was not the western edge of the Roman road, which on its way northwards up the hill swung to the west to meet the line found in 1995; alternatively, it did not curve, but was widened in the later Roman period. Other ditches at Spur Road may have been for drainage, to prevent flooding. All the finds postdated the Brockley Hill kilns, and appeared to be spreads of dumped rubbish.
- 2003: Brockley Hill, MoD site, TQ 1790 9310; excavation by Oxford Archaeology of a number of ditches which may have made up rectangular enclosures; waterlogged worked wood and leather were found in waterholes and wells. The date was mid to late Roman (Smith *et al* 2009). GLSMR ELO6967.
- 2005: Brockley Hill, RNOH, TQ 1700 9400; evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology of this extensive area on the hilltop found Roman pits and ditches and evidence of metalworking contemporary with the pottery production, and a 3rd-century pit (Maloney & Holroyd 2006, 37).
- 2005: The London Academy, Spur Road (LB Barnet), TQ 18437 92926; evaluation by AOC Archaeology of former playing-fields east of Watling Street uncovered ditches, pits and postholes containing Late Roman pottery, and a large amount of Roman tile. The features were parallel to and perpendicular to the Roman road, apparently roadside occupation. Further east, away from the road, there was very little archaeology, although a pit contained a late Iron Age–early Roman terret ring from a horse harness (GLAAS Quarterly Review Oct 2005–Jan 2006, 14).

MISLEADING RECORDS

Stanmore Common (near 'Caesar's Pond') (*c.*TQ 164 935): the NMARC files have a record of Roman tiles and pottery 'found before 1951'. It is not clear that this has any basis other than in the rag-bag of local stories of finds which were always made by somebody else. The Spring Pond was popularly called 'Caesar's Pond' and was even reputed 'to have been dug for the use of the Roman garrison ... all about this spot relics of armour, bones, etc., were turned up, in the memory of the old inhabitants; and I believe also coins and gold ornaments, which were taken away to be sold and melted down' (the words of 'an antiquarian of Stanmore of the highest authority' [*sic*], who nonetheless had no first-hand knowledge; quoted, Anon 1849, 21). This story is likely to derive from

the 1781 hoard. A related legend is that of a rustic bridge in the grounds of Stanmore Hall, just south of Spring Pond, 'part of which is composed of a few fragments of a large specula, or Roman watch-tower, which stood upon the hill until 1795' (*ibid.*, 23). However, even then it was noted that 'there are found incredulous persons' (Armstrong 1849, 26–7), who thought the unevenness of the ground in the vicinity more likely to be the reservoir built by the Duke of Chandos in the early 18th century than a Roman fort. There is redeposited Roman material in Pear Wood, and chance finds at Bentley Priory, but no confirmed remains around Spring Pond. In the mid-20th century the local antiquarians G F Cole and Philip Suggett put a trench across a circular mark in the rugby field north-east of the pond, in search of the 'watchtower'; nothing was found (info A Porter, who helped dig the trench).

Stanmore Common: iron axe dug up in December 1932 during digging of a new water main at corner of the cricket field (letter from O Rhys Gibbon in *Stanmore Observer*, 23/12/1932), and apparently identical with Wheeler 1930, pl xxxiv no. 1. 'They [this type of axe or chopper with split socket] are tools (probably of a woodman or a carpenter) of a kind which may have remained constant for many centuries' (Wheeler 1930, 77), and any isolated specimen need not be Roman.

The Obelisk, Brockley Hill, in the grounds of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital. Erected in the 18th century by William Sharpe, secretary to the 2nd Duke of Chandos, to mark the top of the ridge, which the shaky scholarship and Romantic attitudes of the time led him to believe might be where the Iron Age chieftain Cassivellaunus fought with Caesar. (The inscription is a replacement based on what was thought to be a transcript of the original.) There is no evidence whatsoever to associate Brockley Hill with this event; Caesar's description is vague in the extreme, and Sharpe's placename similarities are nonsense, although typical of the thinking of his day. The obelisk is a monument only to 18th-century antiquarianism.

'Boudicca's Grave', The Limes, Stanmore Common: this mound was excavated in 1954 and found to be post-medieval; it had 17th-century pottery underneath it (North Middx Archaeol Research Committee, 1954). Cf Sealey 1997.

Grim's Dyke House, Harrow Weald Common: 'About a century ago, when the house, Grim's Dyke, was being built, Roman pottery of the time of Hadrian (AD 117–138) and a Roman jar containing fifty Roman gold pieces of his time were discovered' (Druett 1937, 12). The artist Frederick Goodall bought the Grimsdyke estate in 1856; the house was not built until 1870–2. No other record is forthcoming, and the account is suspiciously similar to the 50 gold coins in the 1781 find on 'Stanmore Common', near to where James Duberly was rebuilding Bentley Priory.

Barrow Point, Pinner: 'The Roman occupation [of Pinner] is shown by boundary stones, mounds, coins and brickwork. A mound stood at Barrow Point and it is recorded that Roman stone-work was found at the old house during alterations' (Ware 1955, 52). The only genuine part of all this is probably the coins. The stones are a natural phenomenon, glacial erratics deposited in the last Ice Age. The 'mound' has appeared in all the older accounts, sometimes considered to be Bronze Age and sometimes Roman (Vulliamy 1930, 94; Druett 1956, 19) and has got into the SMR, but the only evidence for it is the name; no one has ever mentioned the physical presence of a mound. The estate was called Barrow Point by the middle of the 18th century, but all earlier records name it Berry or Bury Pond (Gover *et al* 1942, 65, for some of these; also Borrowpoint Hill in 1686). As for the stonework, consider this: 'Much of the rubble from the restoration of the church [Pinner parish church, restored 1879–80] was used for making up Headstone Drive, and Judge Barber of Barrow Point, built some "ruins" in Paines Lane, which caused much speculation amongst strangers' (Ware 1955, 65).

South Harrow Baptist Church: "Roman villa" in South Harrow. Actually foundations of an orchid house with heating apparatus ... heating arrangements suggested a hypocaust' (Local History Collection, card index).

Pinner Hill House: 'The rumoured Roman tiled floor that was exposed when the [golf] course was built could have been a cellar floor of the first mansion' (Kirkman 1993, 10). The foundations of the 17th-century house are occasionally visible as parch marks near the 18th green.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GLAAS Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service
 HADAS Hendon & District Archaeological Society
 LAMAS London & Middlesex Archaeological Society
 MOLAS Museum of London Archaeology Service
 NMARC North Middlesex Archaeological Research Committee
 OS Ordnance Survey
 PLHS Pinner Local History Society
 RNOH Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital
 SHHS Stanmore & Harrow Historical Society
 SMR Greater London Sites & Monuments Record

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