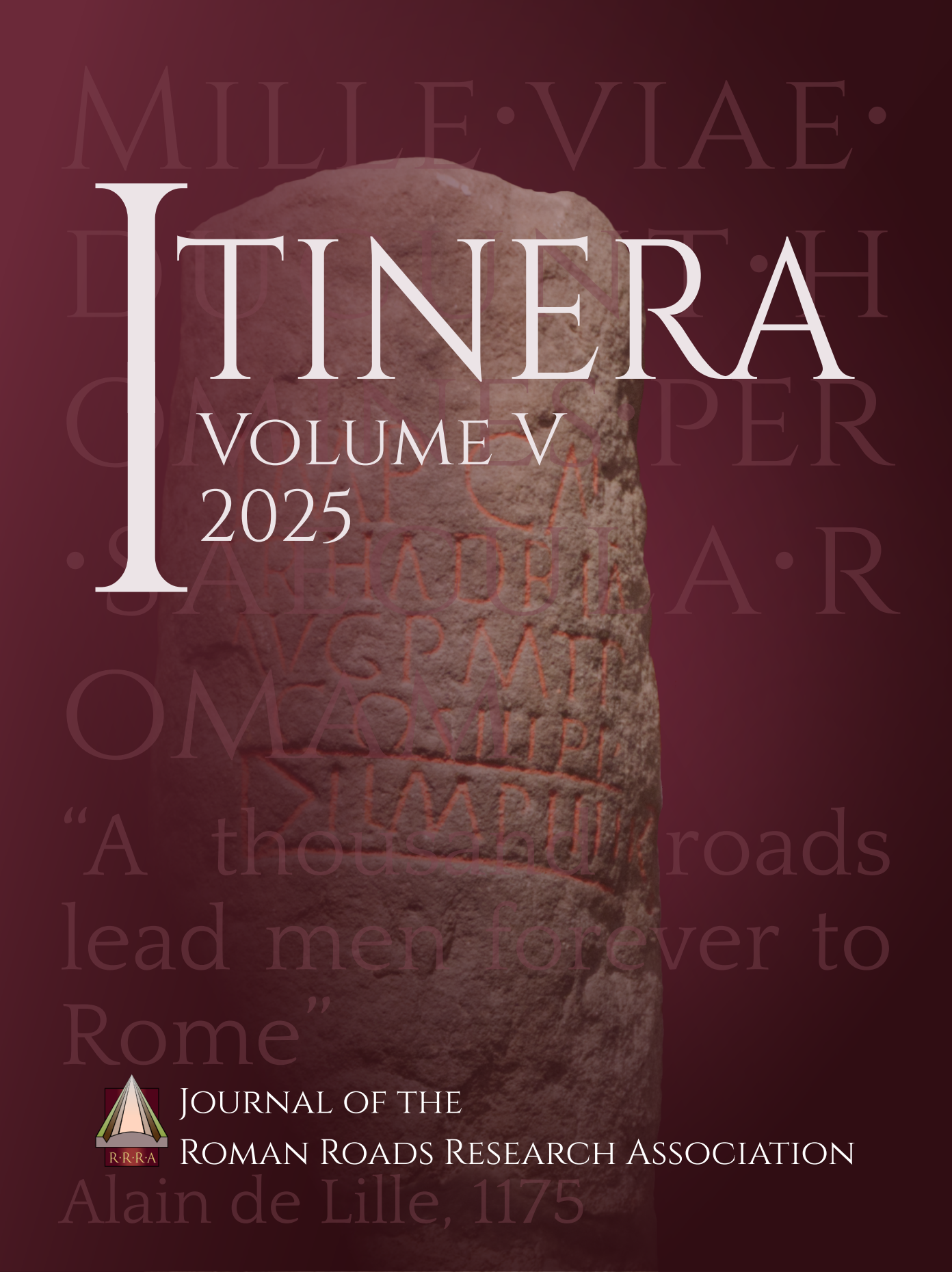


ITINERA

Volume V

2025

"A thousand roads lead men forever to Rome"

Alain de Lille, 1175

Journal of the
Roman Roads Research Association

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Editorial

Robert Entwistle



Welcome to the 2025 edition of *Itinera*, Volume V. *Itinera* continues to hold a unique position among academic journals of Roman studies, with roots in both the academic and grassroots communities. We focus upon the study of Roman roads, transport technology and systems of surveying. We welcome reports and contributions from all researchers able to extend knowledge in these areas to professionals and the public alike, through the format of a formal academic paper.

Volume V, if slenderer than the bumper 2024 edition, is typical in its range of papers. Thus, Wayne Kirk extends our knowledge of Roman Northamptonshire in the light of modern findings, through a wide-reaching paper appraising its road network. Mike Luke, well respected for his excavations and publications on Roman Bedfordshire, shows how a developed understanding of the 'small town' of Sandy leads to an improved appreciation of the local roads. The same theme of road networks is explored in a different way by Keith Abbott, who argues that minor roads and trackways are seriously under-represented in our present appreciation of Roman roads.

Neil Godfrey, by contrast, addresses a wholly different issue: the relationship between roads and Romano-Celtic temples, with roads providing not only transport and passing clients, but also planned landscapes within which temples stood. My own paper is different again, examining ancient surveying methods through the features of extant surveyed works, classical literary sources, and modern surveying techniques. This methodological paper ends my series of papers on Long-distance Alignments. We are also pleased to have a paper from an independent researcher, Paul Smith – one of our own members – presenting his thesis of a road formed over time, from the Iron-Age into the Roman period and beyond.

In this volume we further welcome two authoritative papers from leading academics in Romania, demonstrating the growing understanding of Roman roads in a part of the empire that has received limited attention in the UK. In understanding the growth of road networks in a territory newly brought within the empire we see the link between conquest and road construction, and reflect on the impact of recent political change upon research.

As always, I warmly celebrate the work of our academic advisors and our willing team of volunteers who carry out many critical functions: proofreading, creating the Index, reporting updates from across the country, and managing distribution of printed copy. *Itinera* would not be possible without the willing labours of these individuals, and above all without the editorial team who manage the life of our journal across the year. The process moves from gathering papers and archaeological updates, through review, selection, editing and typesetting, through to final publication. Dr Mike Bishop – writer, publisher and archaeologist – was a founder member of our editorial team, guiding us through the formative first four years of our existence. His expert advice on publishing and all matters Roman helped steer us through a period when everything was new. His international contacts extended knowledge of our journal to contributors as far away as Spain (and most recently) Romania. *Itinera* owes him a great debt as he moves on to other things this year.

With Mike leaving, we are delighted to have welcomed to our team Professor James Gerrard of the University of Newcastle. James Gerrard brings great academic distinction, strengthening us with his experience and calm judgements. Already he has inspired the initiative of an annual Prize for the best Dissertation reflecting Roman Transport studies. Details of the prize (readily available on request)

have been distributed through SALON and the RRRA Newsletter and will shortly be available on the RRRA website. We hope to see this prize awarded for the first time in 2025.

I take this opportunity of warmly welcoming submissions, projected or actual, for Volume VI of Itinera, from all corners of Britannia and the wider empire. You will find '*Notes for Contributors*' on the RRRA website.

In the meantime, I invite you to enjoy everything within Volume V.

Robert Entwistle

(Hon Editor, *Itinera)*

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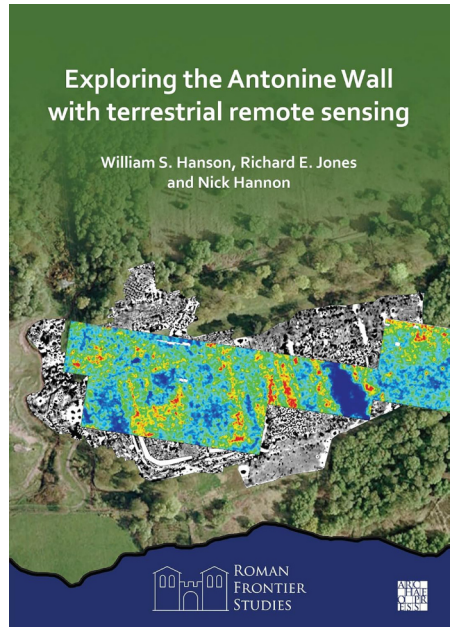
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Book Review

Exploring the Antonine Wall with terrestrial remote sensing.

By William S. Hanson, Richard E. Jones and Nick Hannon.

Archaeopress Archaeology. Open access at <https://www.archaeopress.com/Archaeopress/download/9781803278018>. Pp 256, Price £41.40.
ISBN 978-1803278018.



In contrast to Hadrian's Wall, the development of which is now fairly sorted, the planning, design and construction of the Antonine Wall in Scotland still poses many questions and much debate. In addition, frustratingly, as so often seems to be the case with the Antonine Wall, there frequently is never quite enough evidence for the various possibilities which are mooted to be proven or disproven. Hence the publication of this volume is very welcome. Even though it does not provide all of the answers, by any means, it is certainly valuable to have such a consolidated body of evidence to hand.

What this volume does is to bring together and report on the various geophysical studies which have been carried out along the Antonine Wall, past and present, many reports of which had not been published up to now. As such it forms a significant contribution to the literature for those who are serious students and scholars of the Antonine Wall. This volume does not cover every site along the Wall, though, naturally confining itself to just those sites which have undergone geophysical surveys at some time. To refer to all of the sites along the Wall, the Handbook to the Antonine Wall, edited by Lawrence Keppie and published by the Glasgow Archaeological Society, most recently in 2015, is the source to consult.

In all, thirty-five sites are reported upon, and for each of them a standard format is used, consisting of:

- national grid reference, and Canmore number
- features examined (e.g. rampart, ditch, Military Way, etc.)
- specific references to the site (e.g. Dunwell et al, 2002, etc.)
- a list of the geophysical surveys carried out at the site, by which organisation and when, the instruments used, the areas covered , and the spatial resolutions employed at the time
- a brief history of previous excavations and other investigations at the site
- a description of the geology and other factors which could affect the geophysical surveying at the site
- the results from the geophysical surveys,

and each account is accompanied as appropriate by a variety of maps, geophysical and LiDAR images and, occasionally, aerial photographs.

This corpus of reports is preceded by an account of the development of archaeological understanding of the Antonine Wall, together with textbook explanations of how crop marks are formed, and how LiDAR and the various methods of geophysical surveys work. There is a list of all known geophysical surveys carried out on the Antonine Wall, and by which organisation, and there is another list of the operational techniques and processing procedures used by each organisation.

After the conclusion of the reports there is a Discussion section which summarises the picture which emerges from the surveys with regard to the linear barrier, the forts and fortlets, the Military Way, etc. and also the design, planning and construction of the Wall. The style of the narrative is balanced and authoritative, but it does not shy away from describing the current debate about the planning and design of the Wall. On one side it is proposed that the Antonine Wall had first been planned as a copy of Hadrian's Wall, with forts spaced along it at about eight Roman mile intervals, between which several secondary forts were then inserted into the line of the Wall as a result of a change of plan. On the other side it is argued that the locations of all the military installations had been planned at the outset, and that the undeniable differences in dates of construction had simply occurred through the application of priorities. The authors opt for the former, whereas your reviewer resides in the other camp.

As might be expected, the Discussion section also contains a lengthy commentary upon various aspects of geophysical surveying, and what has been learned about them along the Antonine Wall. Although geophysical surveying lies outside your reviewer's area of expertise this would appear to be a very useful tract for anybody to study who wishes to embark upon a geophysical exercise themselves.

With regard to the Military Way, which runs not far to the south of the Wall, the geophysical surveys were, it seems, not able to cast much new light upon this Roman road. In a few places slight corrections to its line were provided, but perhaps the most significant finding was that, where certain stretches could be identified with some confidence, accompanying ditches were - as it is put in the Discussion - not infrequently notable by their absence.

Overall, although this volume will perhaps be most relevant for students and scholars who area engaged in serious studies upon the Antonine Wall, the result is an up to date and very readable account of the archaeology of the Wall as it stands at present and so should be readily approachable for the general reader.

The volume has a Bibliography which runs to nearly nine full pages, but no Index. However, the structure of the narrative is clear and straightforward, so that the list of the reports on the Contents pages should enable readers to find their ways to what they want quite quickly. The volume is available as an Open Access document on the Archaeopress web site, or else it can be obtained as a printed version for £45, which price probably reflects the cost of printing and binding on demand. An impressive amount of work has gone into this volume and it reflects credit upon the authors, and to Archaeopress for shepherding it into the public domain.

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