

# Britannia

Roman Britain from Caesar to Arthur

7

Late Roman Britain and the End of Empire

SAUL  
at the Time of  
Caesar.  
1:2000000



**Britain.**  
1 Upper Britain  
2 Lower Britain

**Gaul.**  
1 Germania Inferior  
2 Germania Superior  
3 Belgica  
4 Lugdunensis  
5 Aquitania (Aquitaine)  
6 Narbonensis

**Spain.**  
1 Tarraconensis (Hispania)  
2 Lusitania  
3 Baetica (Farther Spain)

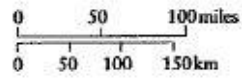
Provinces annexed after the time of Augustus are marked with a colored border. The names of the Gallic and German names are those used by Caesar and Tacitus. Names printed thus, *in italics*, are of German origin.  
Prom. Fromantorium - cape or promontory.  
--- Main roads  
--- Route of Hannibal.


Scale 1:2000000.  
0 50 100 Miles



**Italy** (The eleven Augustan Regions)  
1 Latium and Campania  
2 Apulia and Calabria  
3 Lucania and Bruttium  
4 Samnium 5 Picenum 6 Umbria  
7 Etruria 8 Cispadane Gaul  
9 Liguria 10 Venetia and Istria  
11 Transpadane Gaul



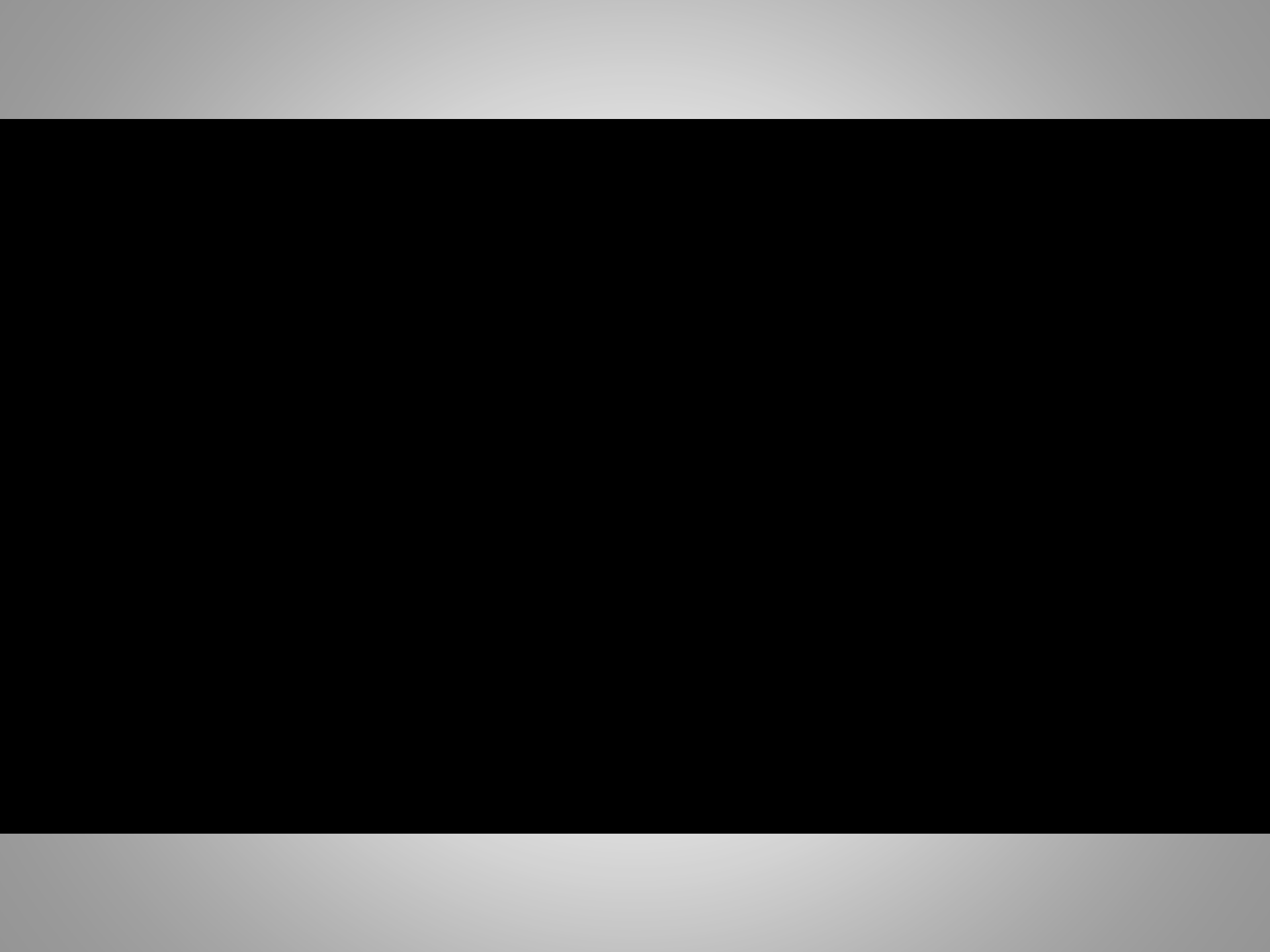


 Mineral resources













Mona  
(Angles)

Segontium  
(Carnarvon)

Mancunium  
(Manchester)

Deva  
(Chester)

Cotinani

Cornovium  
(Cornwall)

Cambrian Mountains

Uxiconium  
(Wroxeter)

Letocetum

Ratae  
(Leicester)

Manduessedunum

Venonae

Glevum  
(Gloucester)

Cornium  
(Cirencester)

Verulam  
(St. Albans)

Isca Silurum  
(Caerwent)

Venta Silurum  
(Caerwent)

Bidroci

Sabrina Aest.  
(Bristol Channel)

Aquae Solis  
(Bath)

Spinae  
(Speen)

Atrebatum

Sarbiodunum  
(Old Sarum)

Venta Belgarum  
(Winchester)

Isca Dumnoniarum  
(Exeter)

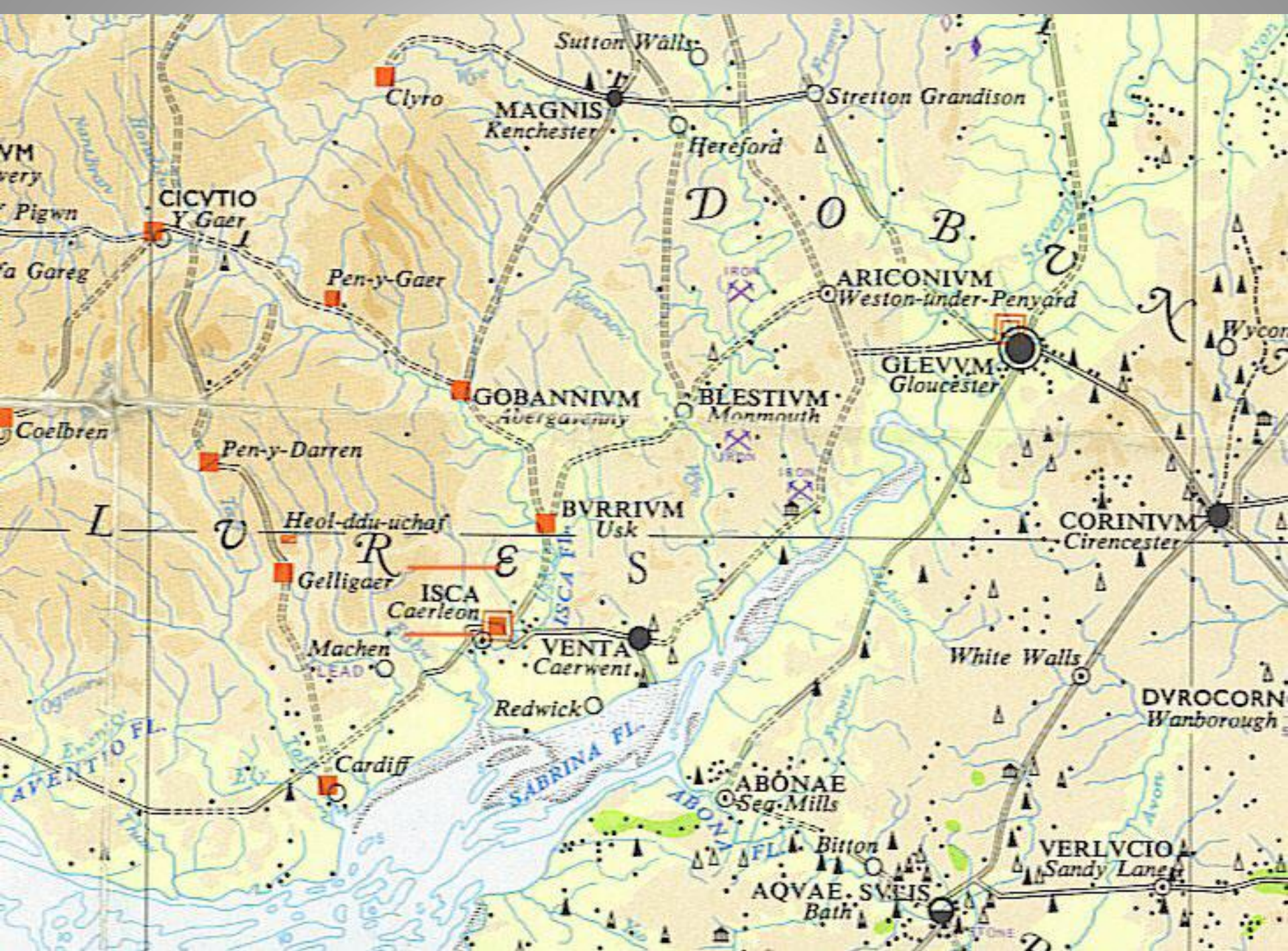
Vindogladia

Clausentum  
(Bittern)

Durnovallia  
(Dorchester)

Vectis  
(I. of Wight)

OCEANUS BRITANNICUS



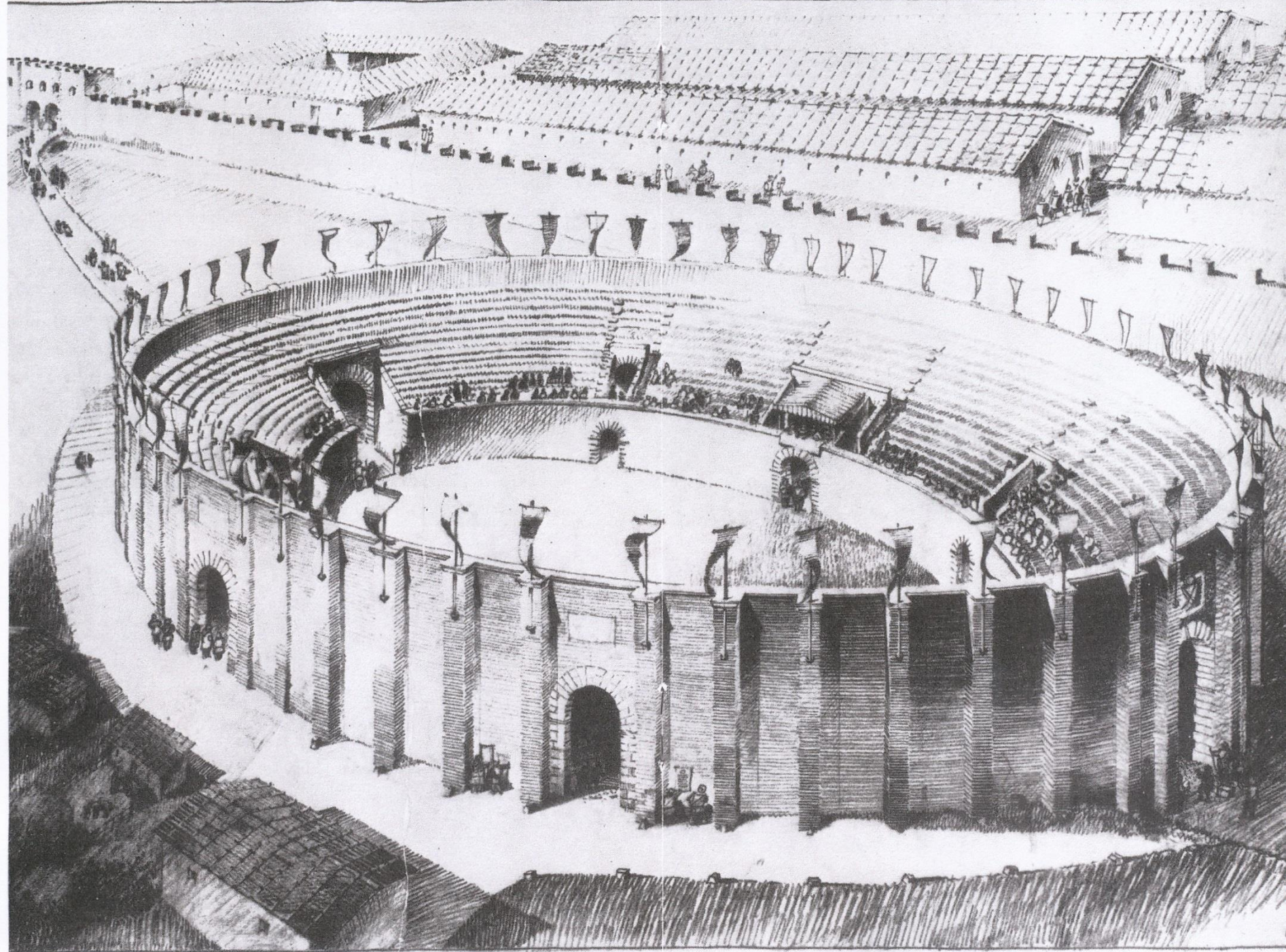


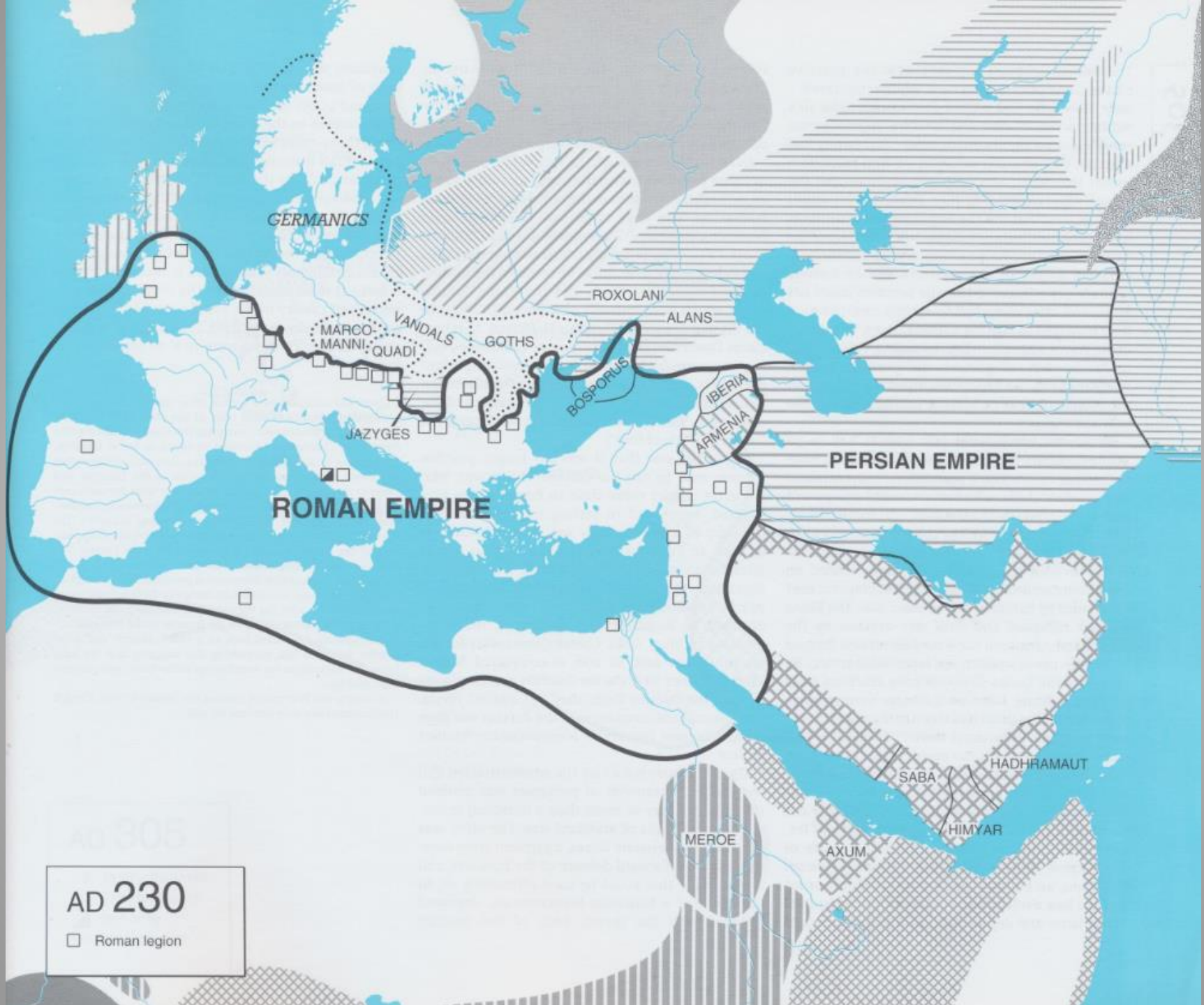
**The amphitheatre at Isca (Caerleon), headquarters of the Second Augustan Legion, was an essential feature of military life and was used for weapon training, parades, religious ceremonies and sport.**  
ST 3390 © Crown copyright RCAHMW





XII The amphitheatre  
at Caerleon (*Isca*)  
in South Wales.





GERMANICS

ROXOLANI

ALANS

VANDALS  
MARCO-MANNI, QUADI

GOTHs

BOSPORUS

IBERIA  
ARMENIA

PERSIAN EMPIRE

ROMAN EMPIRE

JAZYGES

SABA

HADHRAMAUT

MEROE

AXUM

HIMYAR

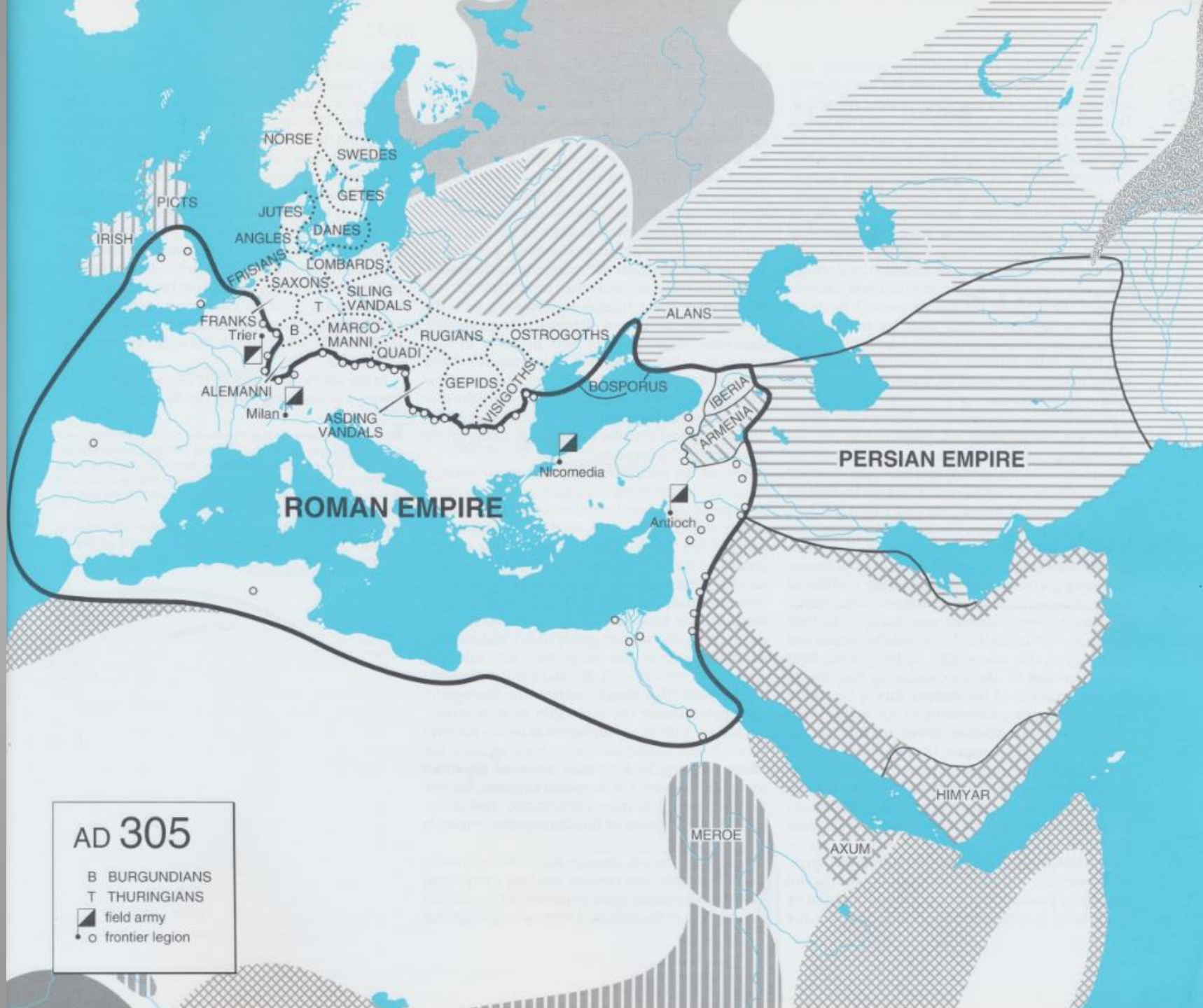
AD 230

□ Roman legion



The Roman Empire in the 3rd cent.

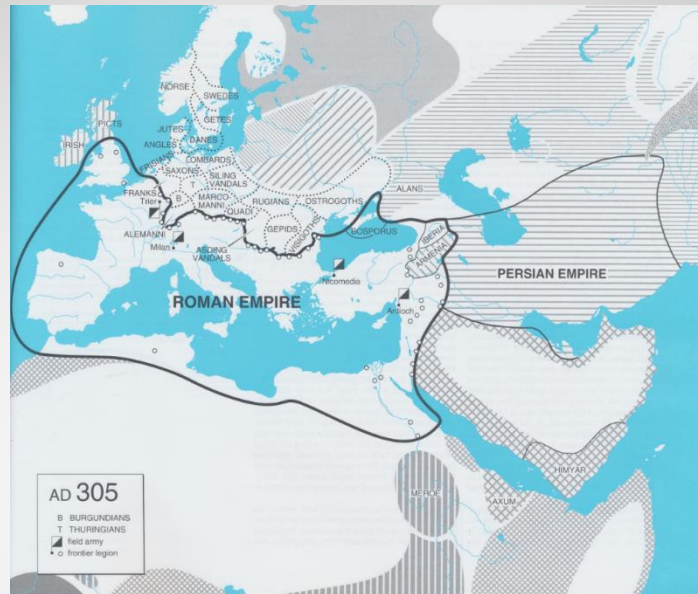




AD 305

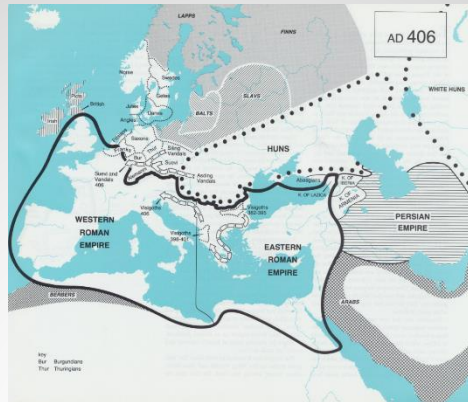
- B BURGUNDIANS
- T THURINGIANS
- ▣ field army
- frontier legion

## The Late Roman Empire: Major changes



- The Emperor was now a full autocrat, with no pretense of sharing power with the Senate.
- The Empire was divided into eastern and western halves, each with its own (co-)emperor.
- Intrusive government was strengthened at all levels, with authorities regulating everything from city governments to taxes to mandatory employment at professions passed on from father to son.

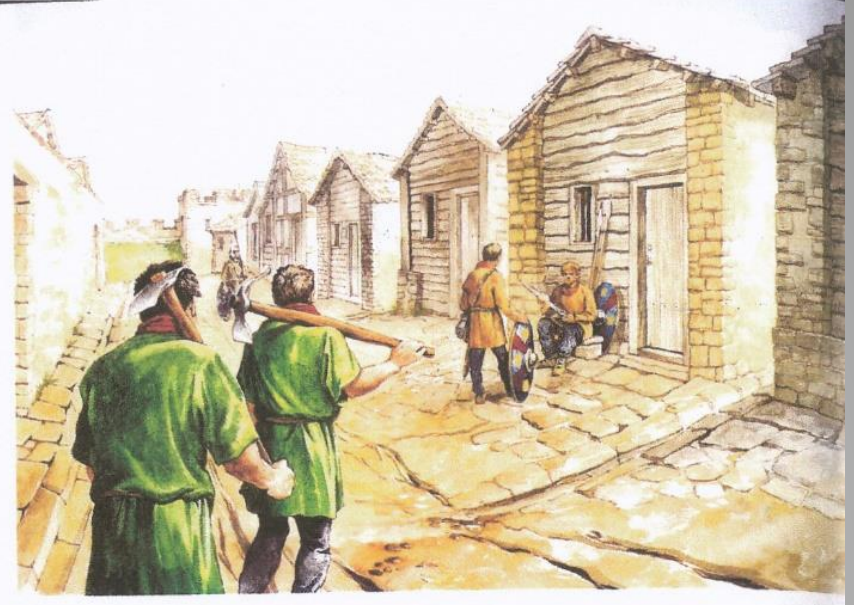
## The Late Roman Empire: Major changes



- After Constantine’s conversion, Christianity became the official religion of the Empire, gradually growing in influence and reducing the status of pagan religions.
- The Army was reorganized, ending the old division between legions and auxiliaries and creating an entirely defensive system of local defense forces (*limitanei*) in fixed spots along with powerful mobile field armies, able to respond to crises at threatened points on the frontier.
- Neighboring tribes and peoples (German and others) provided a growing part of the Army’s strength, either as personnel in the Army (including commanders) or as *foederati* (allied forces on call in case of emergencies).



**79 (above)** The barracks at Housesteads fort are shown as they were first built in the 2nd century, with a single long building divided into separate rooms, each containing room for up to 8–10 men. A colonnade along the street provides more space, and, at the far end of this view, the centurion's quarters. To the left is the fort rampart, with the back of one of the interval towers.

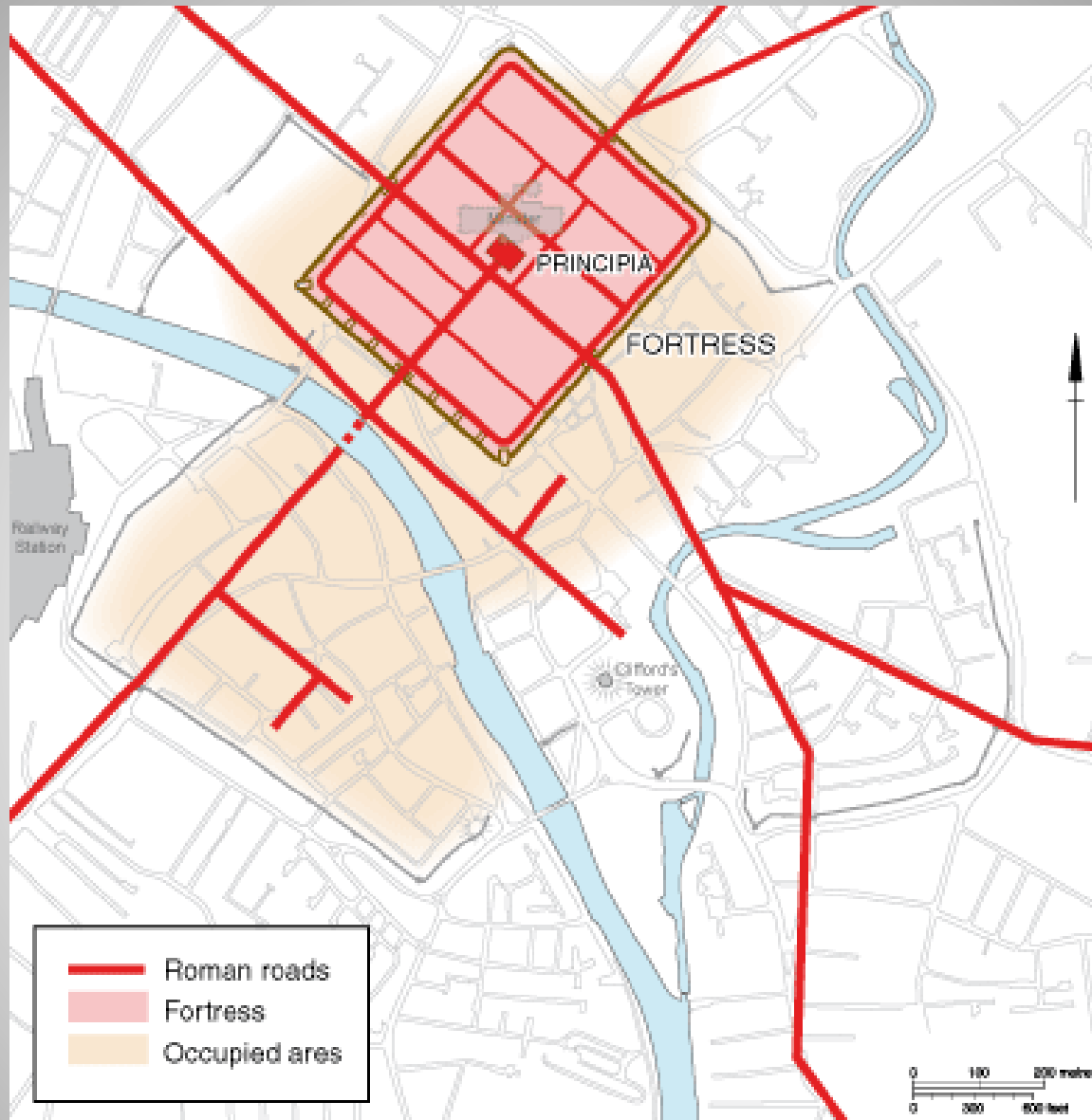


**80 (above right)** The same barracks at a much later stage of the fort's history: by the 250's AD, conditions in the army had changed considerably – including the sorts of uniforms and equipment carried by the men – and instead of long barrack buildings, there were now separate individual buildings. Note in this view how the space behind the fort ramparts has now become occupied by more buildings, and a new tower has been added to the fort wall in the distance.





**Statue of Constantine the Great, proclaimed Emperor at this spot in Eboracum (York), AD 306.**



**Eboracum (York), AD 306.**



**Eboracum (York), AD 306.**





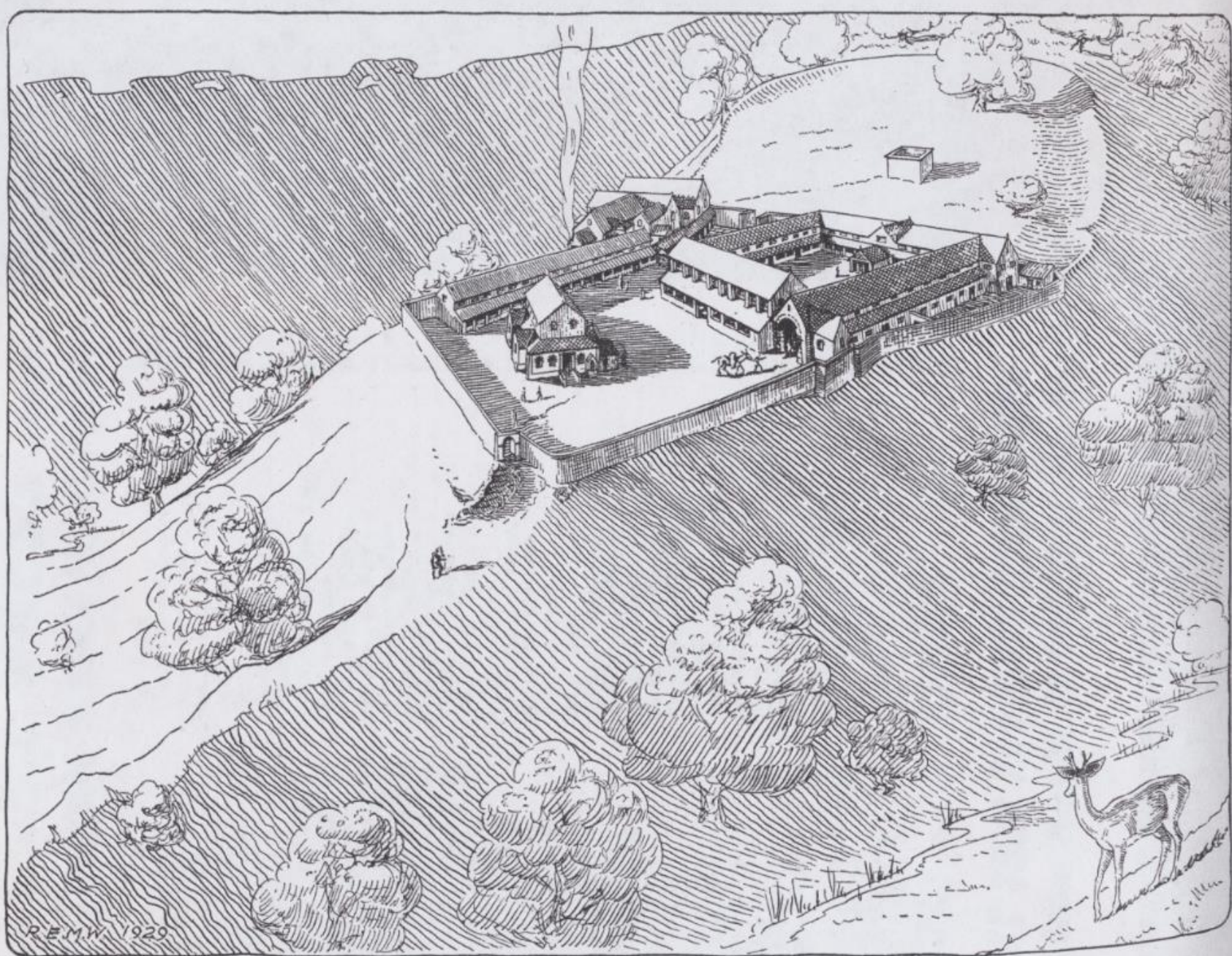


FIG. 7. Reconstruction of the temple-settlement

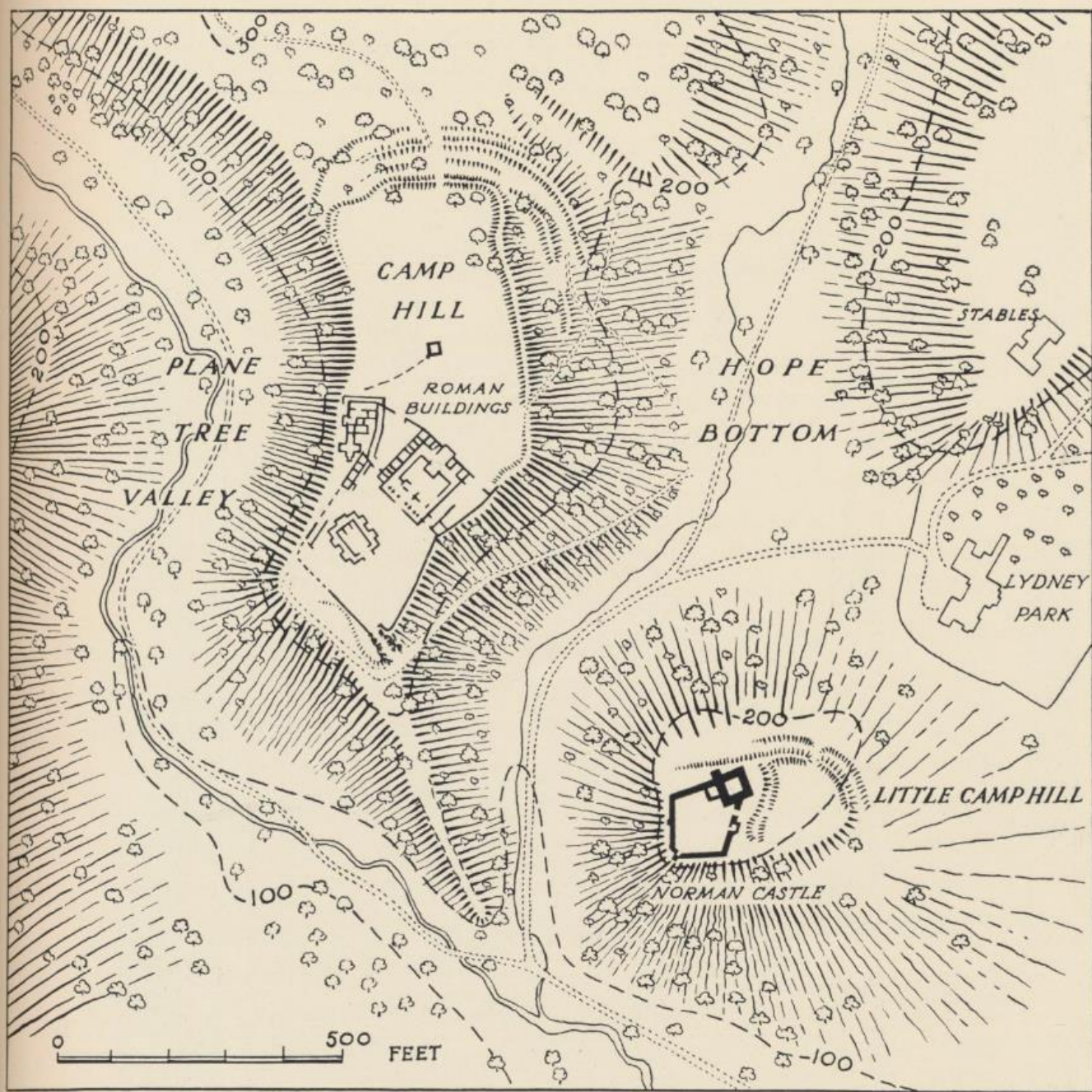
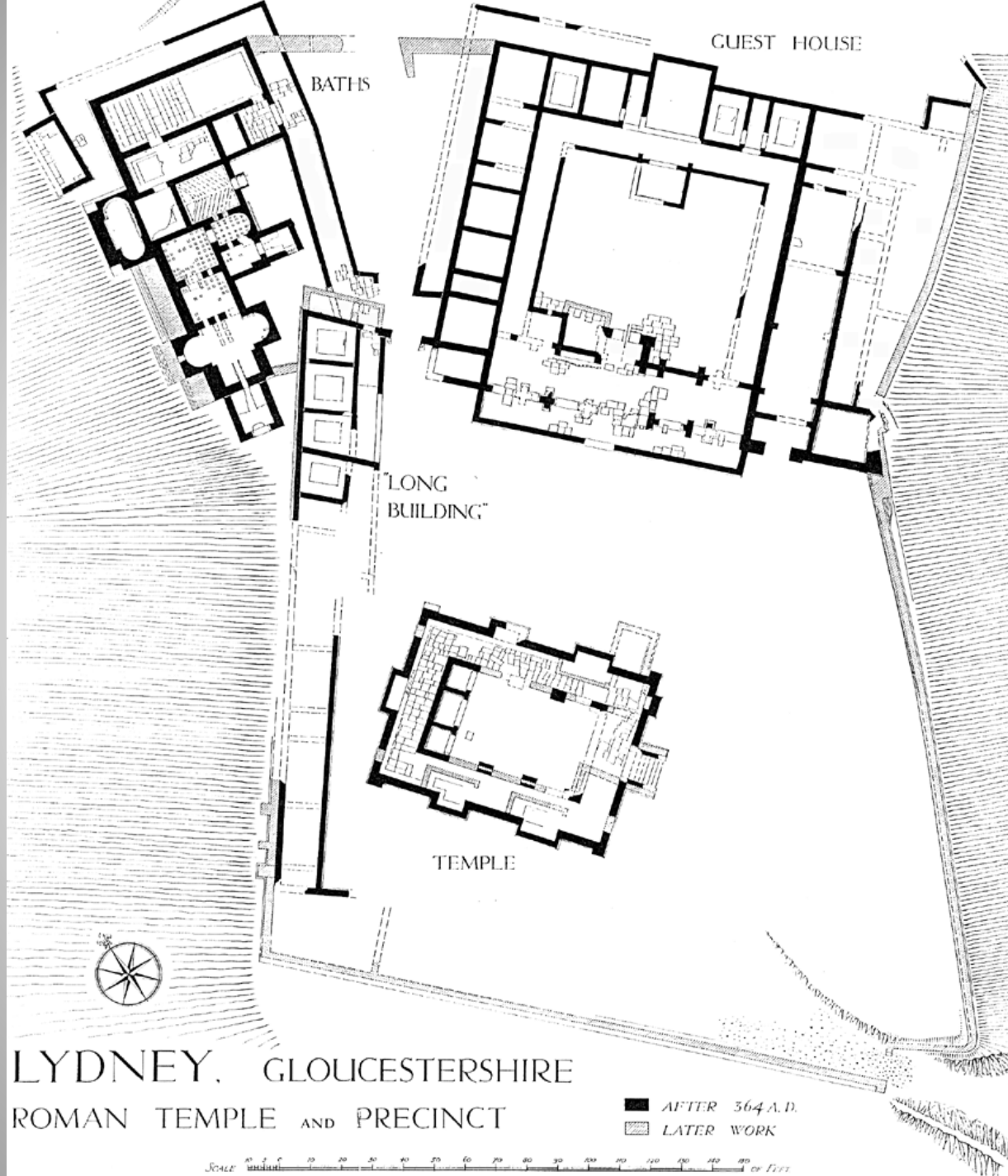


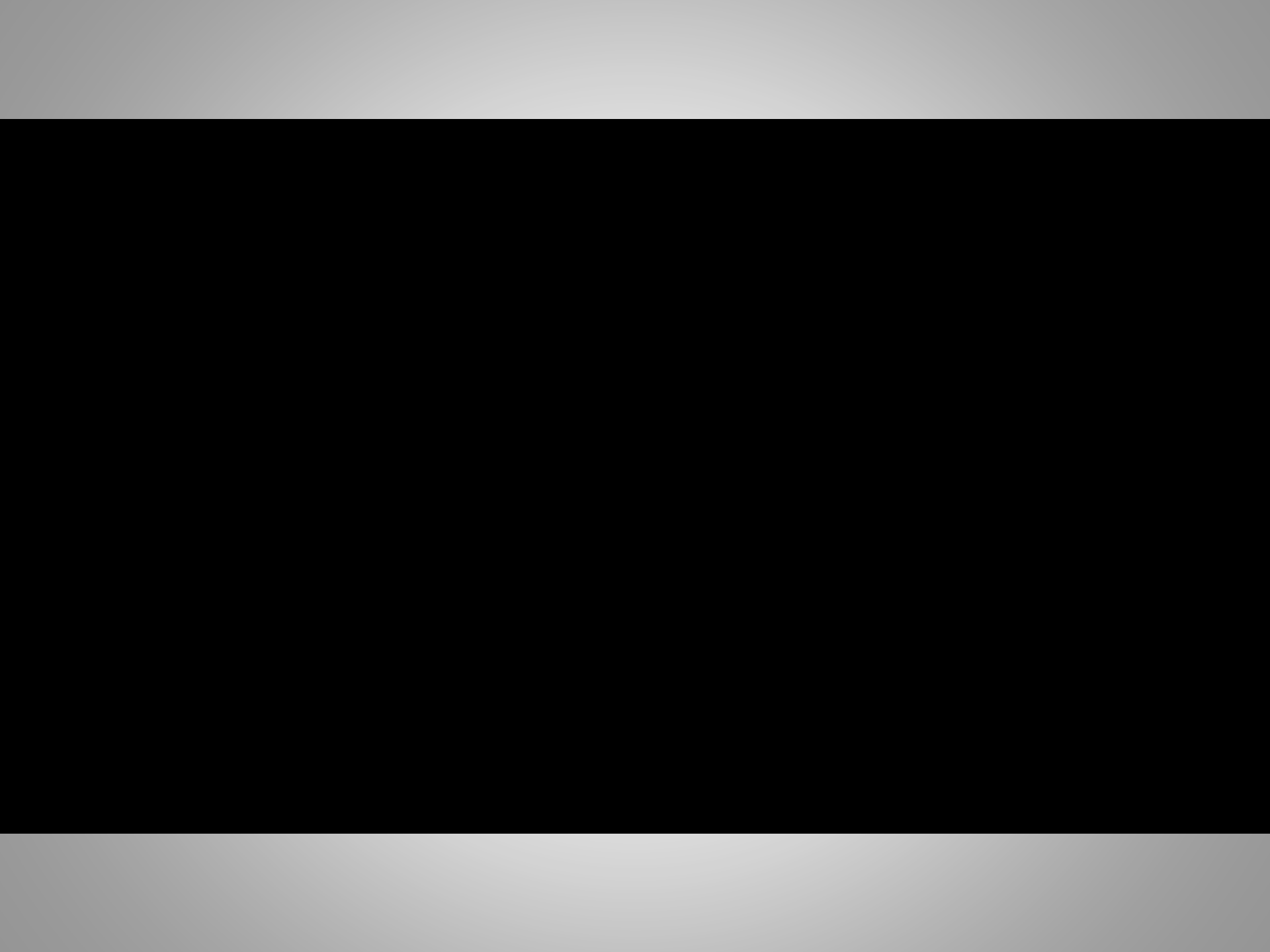
FIG. 1. Map of site and environs

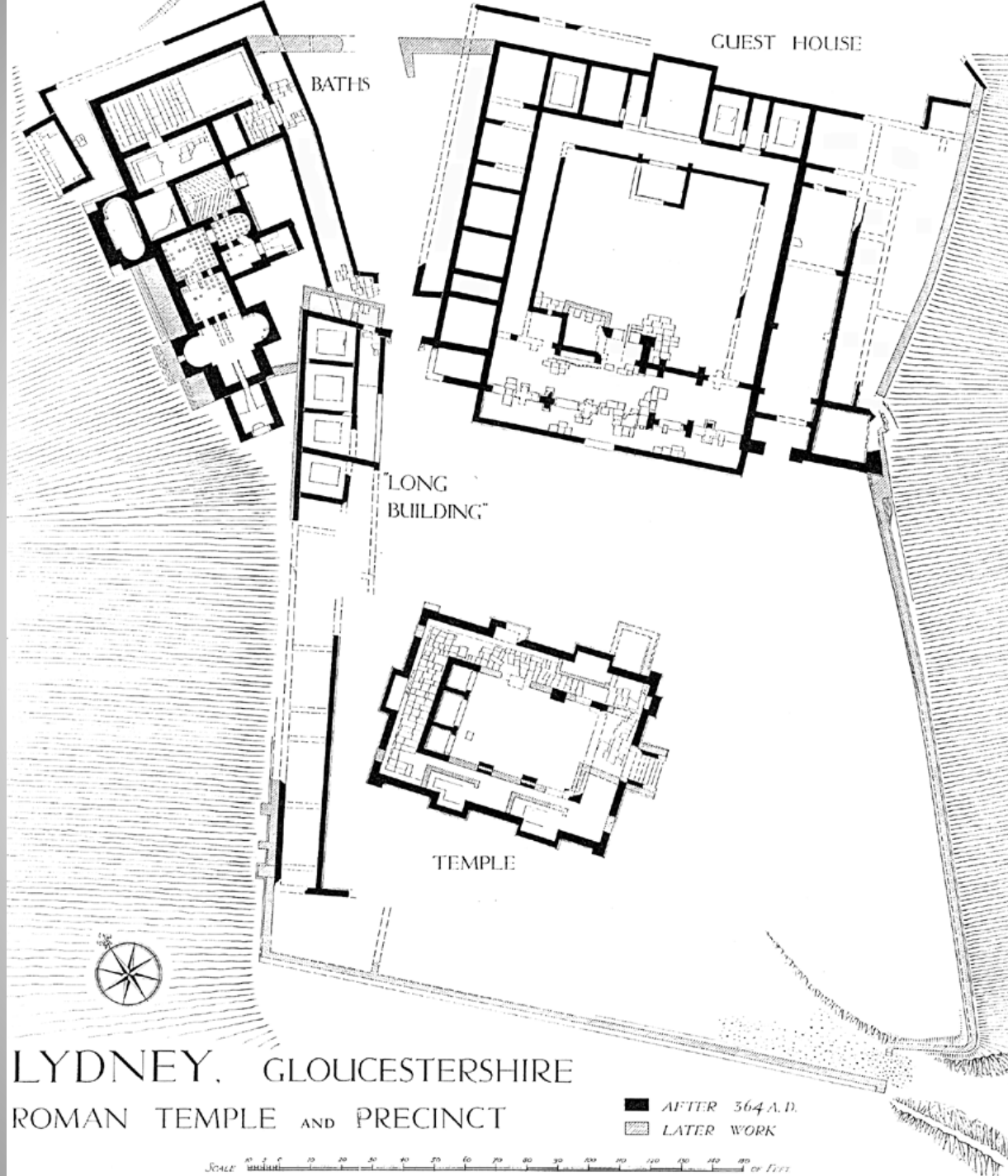


LYDNEY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
ROMAN TEMPLE AND PRECINCT

■ AFTER 364 A.D.  
▨ LATER WORK

Scale 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200  
feet





LYDNEY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
ROMAN TEMPLE AND PRECINCT

■ AFTER 364 A.D.  
▨ LATER WORK

Scale 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 Feet







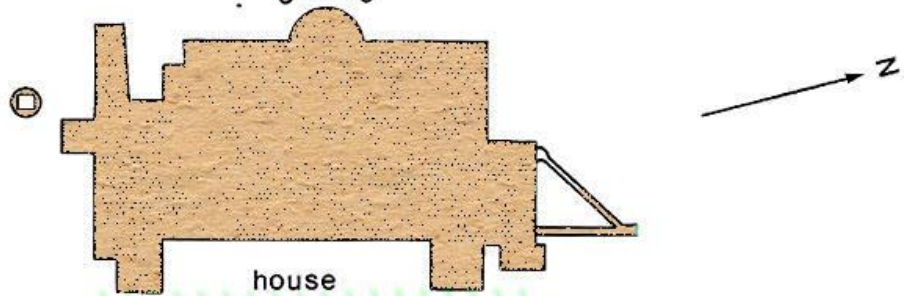
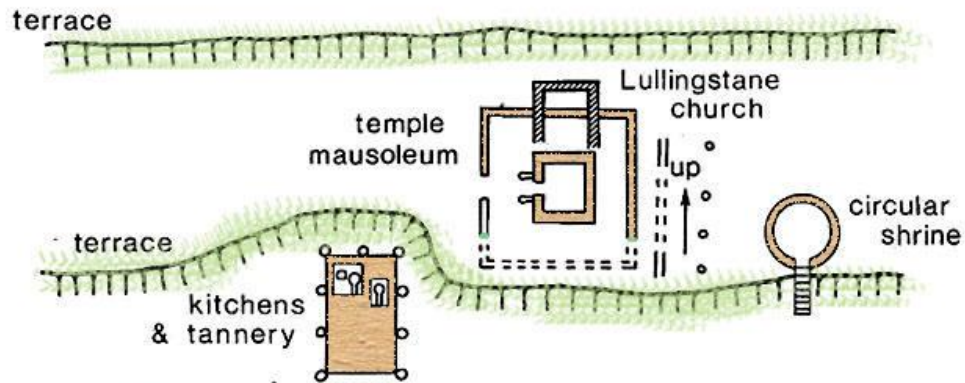


Oceanus Britannicus



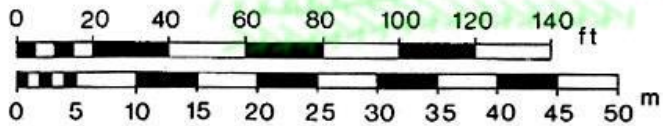




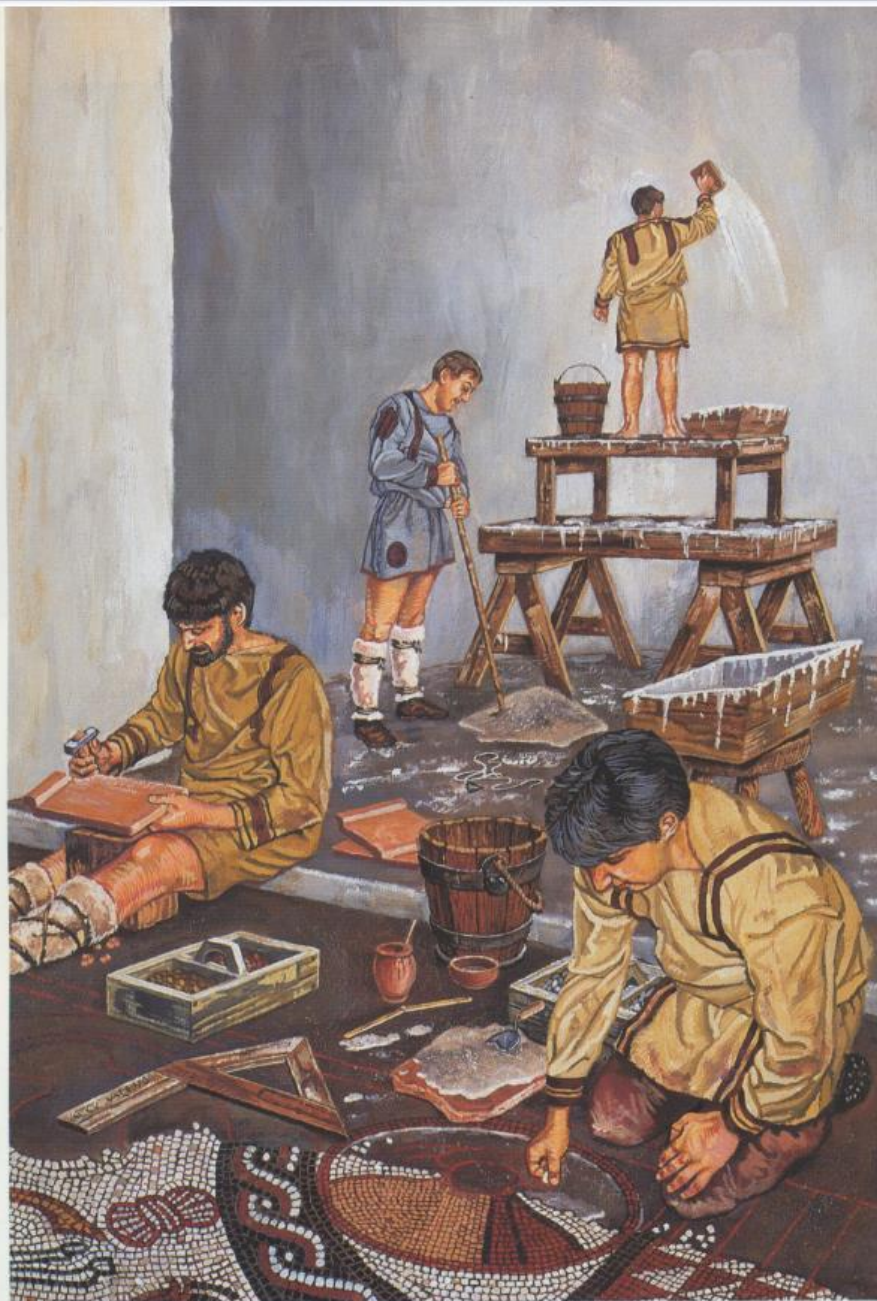


rick & cart standings

garden area



DARENT RIVER →

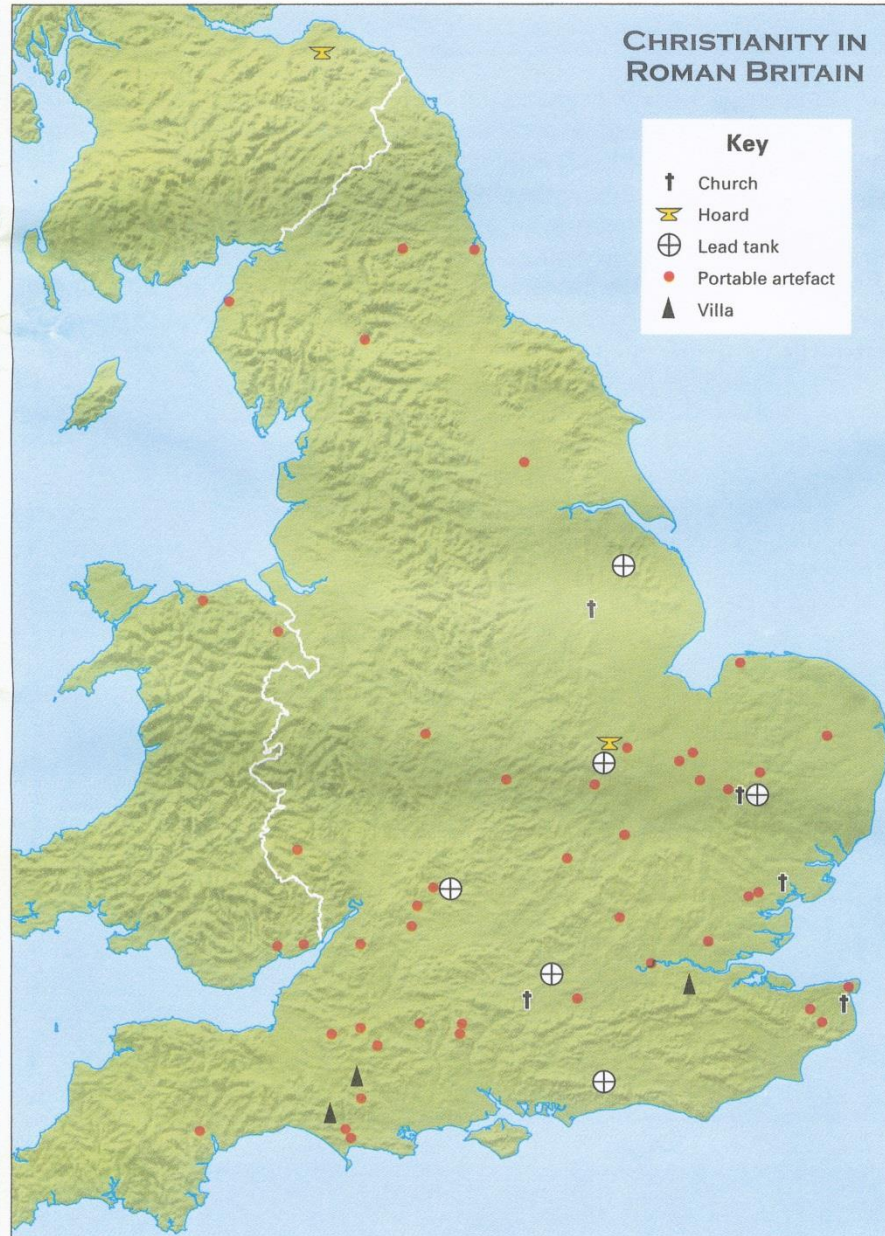


13 *Decorating the Lullingstone villa. A mosaic-worker lays out part of the pavement, while his companion cuts up a tile to make tesserae. In the background one man prepares plaster ready for his fellow-worker to skim the wall preparatory to fresco painting. (Drawn by Graham Sumner; copyright: English Heritage)*

## CHRISTIANITY IN ROMAN BRITAIN

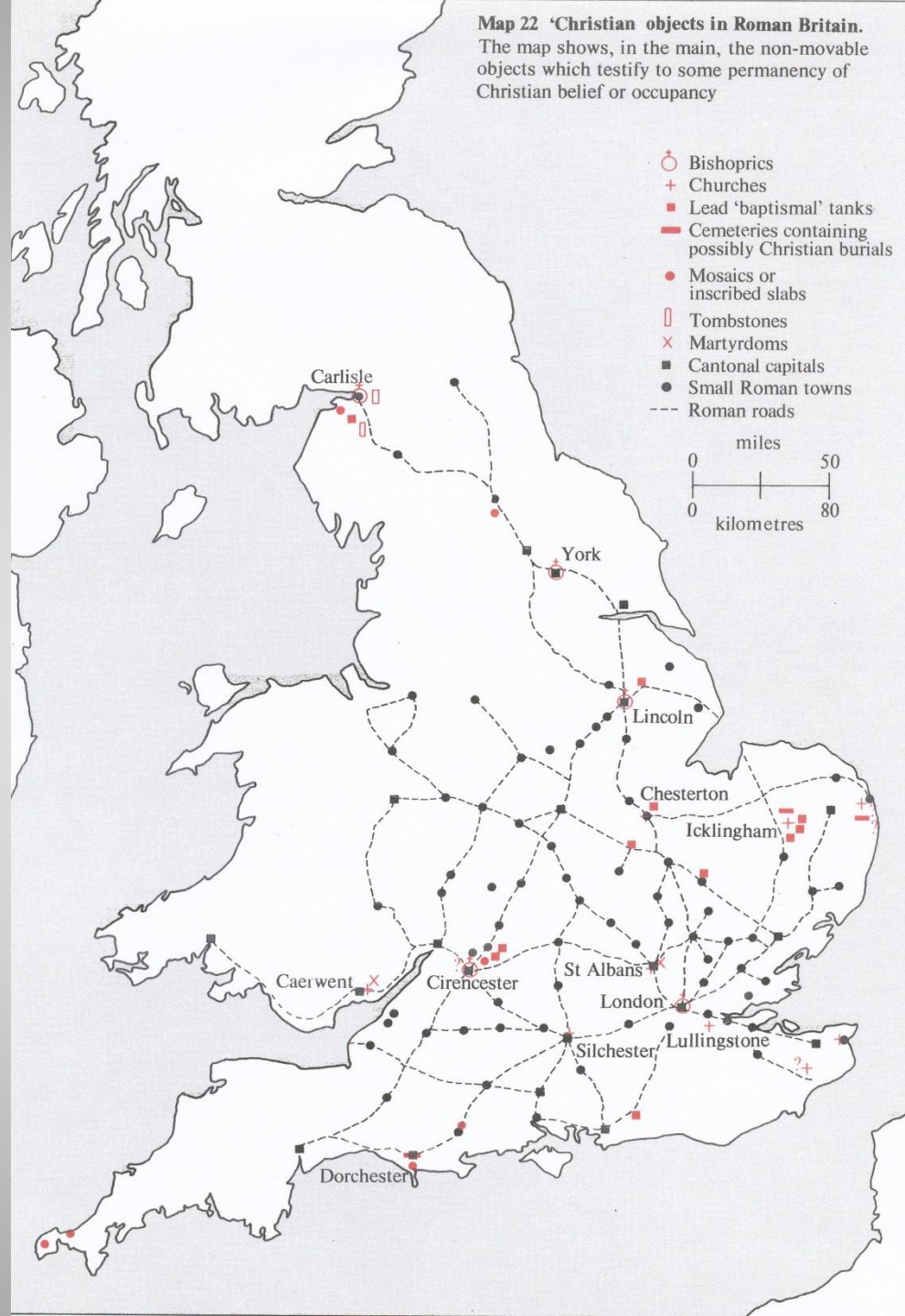
### Key

- † Church
- ⚡ Hoard
- ⊕ Lead tank
- Portable artefact
- ▲ Villa



The evidence for Christianity in Roman Britain is often equivocal, and only the more secure identifications are included here. The objects plotted carry the chi rho or other clear Christian symbol, and the chi rho is incorporated into the decorative schemes at the three villas indicated.

**Map 22 'Christian objects in Roman Britain.**  
 The map shows, in the main, the non-movable objects which testify to some permanency of Christian belief or occupancy





**12.23** Central roundel from a fourth-century mosaic found at Hinton St Mary, Dorset. The chi-rho symbol behind the figure's head is the Christian insignia (the first two letters of the name of Christ). It may suggest that the depiction is of Christ





GUY DE LA BÉDOYÈRE

# DEFYING ROME

THE REBELS OF ROMAN BRITAIN



10 Total Recall 139  
CARAUSIUS AND ALLECTUS

11 The Empire Strikes Back 154  
MAGNENTIUS

12 Ill-Weaved Ambition 173  
MAGNUS MAXIMUS

13 End of Days 186  
CONSTANTINE III





1: Roman cavalry officer, c.AD 400  
2: Roman cavalryman, c.AD 400  
3: Sailors, Saxon Shore Fleet, 4th C  
4: Junior officer, Roman infantry, early 5th C

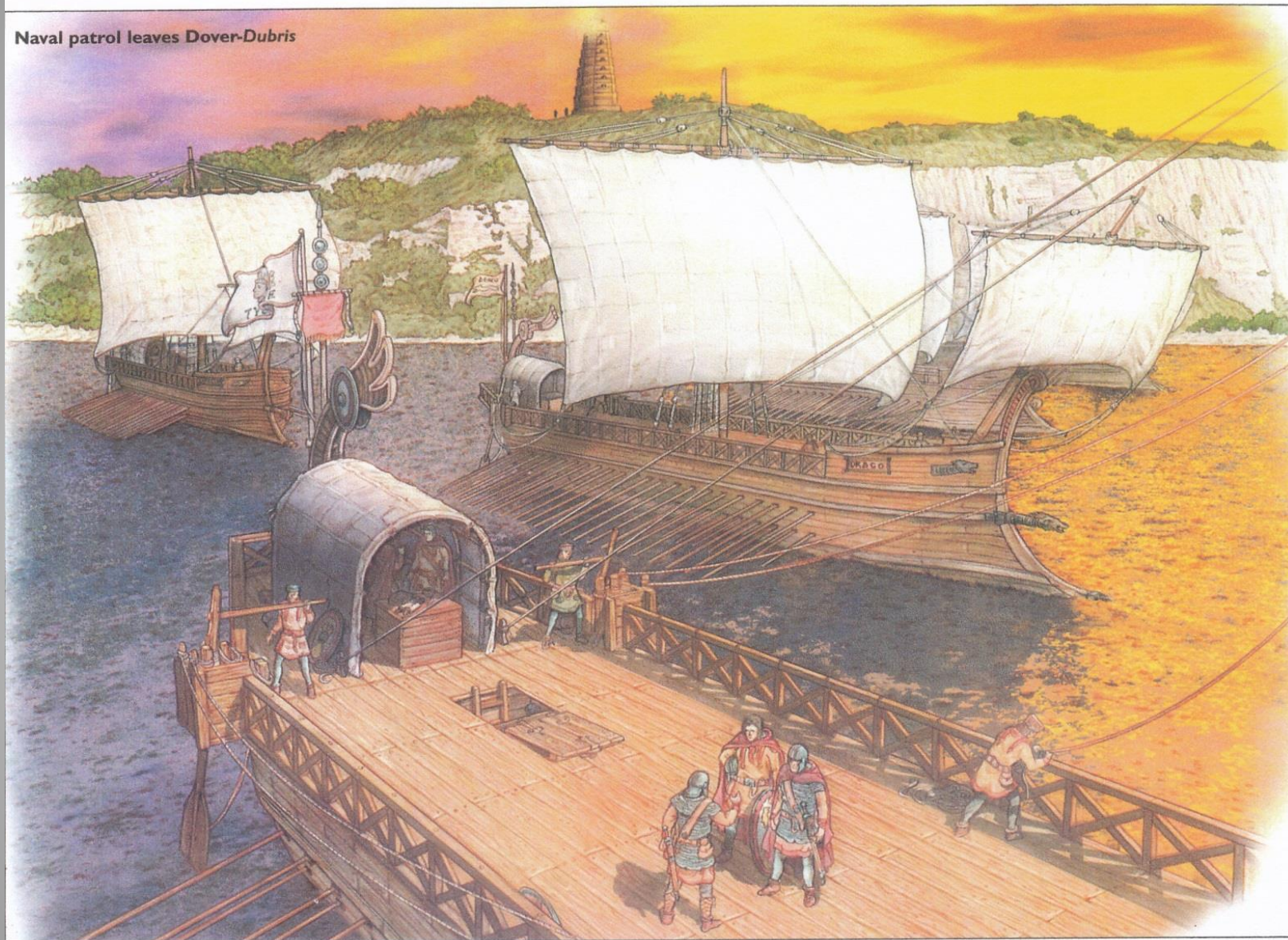
1: Roman cavalry officer, c.AD 400  
2: Roman cavalryman, c.AD 400  
3: Sailors, Saxon Shore Fleet, 4th C  
4: Junior officer, Roman infantry, early 5th C

the king and his  
army seems to  
the Durogala.  
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Merians. Two  
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leason did not  
fences marked  
at of such dyke.  
at the Merians  
in Anglo-Welsh  
I in the many  
a now relatively  
western frontier  
Angian Empire  
the Continent  
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Anglo-Saxon  
is quite well  
among the last  
written records  
I the military  
to Western  
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and whereas the  
it states were  
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easily mobilised  
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in Britain

**Saxon Shore forts as an anti-pirate defence system**



Naval patrol leaves Dover-Dubris





**60 (above) Aerial shot of the fort at Richborough, Kent. In the centre of the fort the cross-shaped foundation is the base of a four-way monumental arch, built towards the end of the first century AD. Surrounding this is a square enclosure constructed in the early third century, forming a military stronghold around the by-then ruined arch that was probably used as a look-out tower. The final major phase of defensive architecture is the tall flint-built wall of the Saxon Shore fort enclosing the whole site, built c. AD 275.**

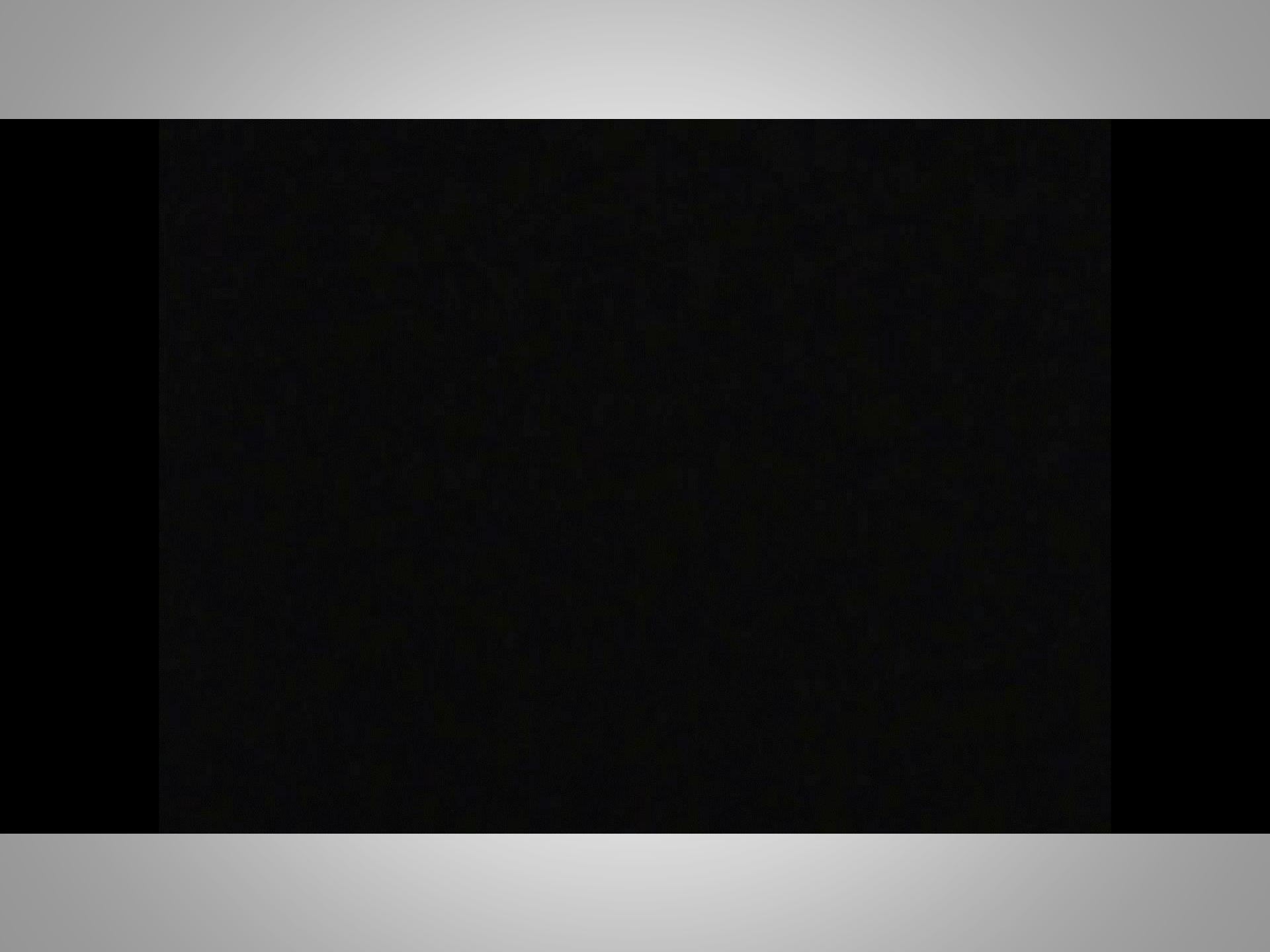








PLATE 13. *One of the few places in England where Roman buildings still stand is Richborough, in Kent. The walls are the defences of a late third-century fort, one of a series constructed to protect eastern England from Saxon raiders. It began life as a protected military store base for the invasion of Britain in AD43 and was replaced about AD85 by a huge masonry monument, apparently commemorating the Roman conquest. A small settlement then grew up around it. Occupation continued until at least the fifth century AD. By the eighth a Saxon church existed here. Perhaps the site was never abandoned.*

XI The most westerly  
of the Forts of the Saxon  
Shore, Porchester in  
Hampshire.

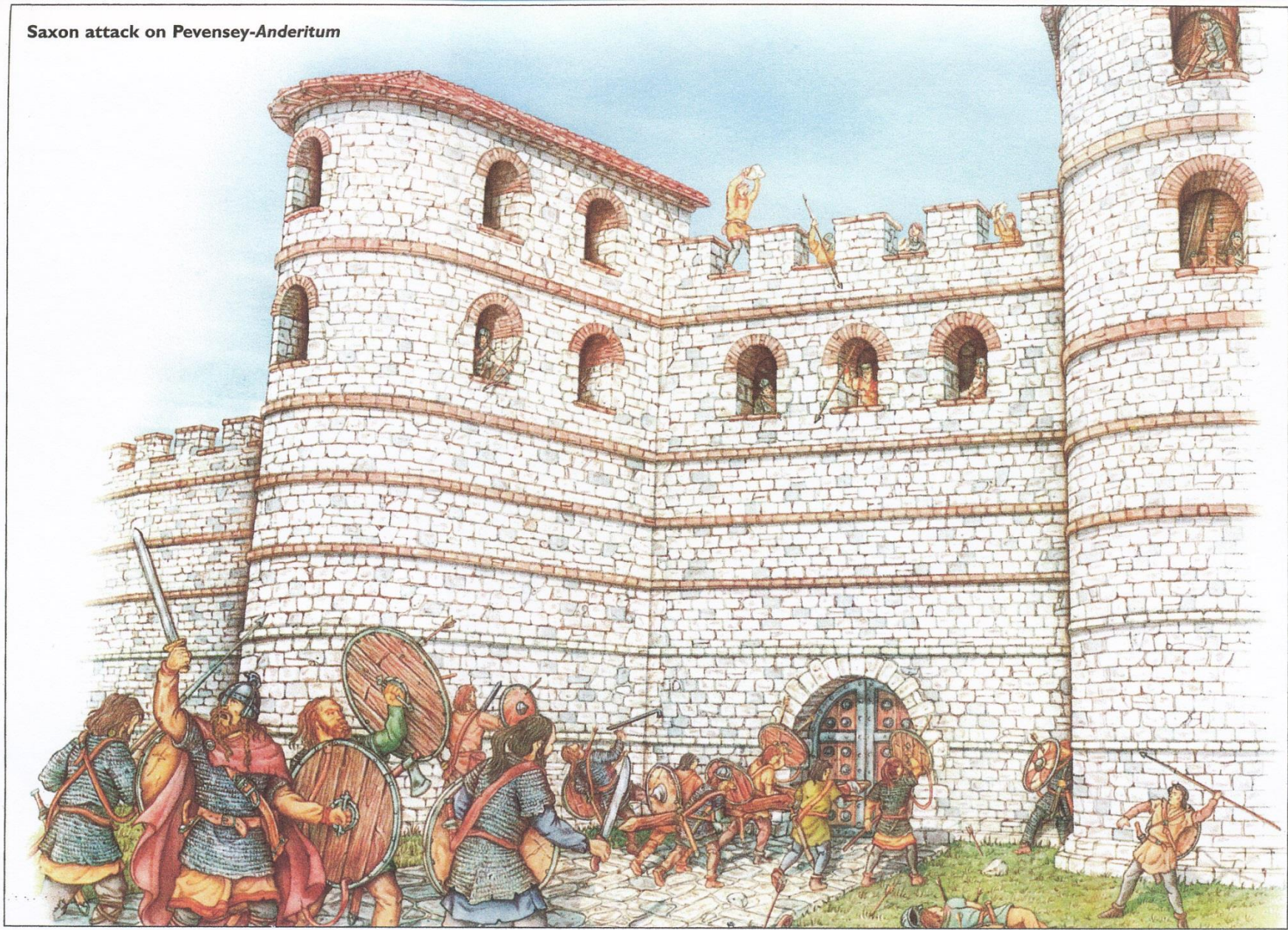




Intercepting Saxon pirates



Saxon attack on Pevensey-Anderitum





**The Roman lighthouse adjacent to the church of St Mary-in-Castro within Dover Castle, Kent, is one of a pair built at Dover in the 1st century, together with another at Boulogne, to guide cross-Channel traffic. Its top storey is 15th-century, but the remainder is Roman work. TR 3241 © English Heritage Photographic Library**





an Britain

## THE MILDENHALL TREASURE

This hoard is one of the most important collections of late-Roman silver tableware from the Roman Empire. Little is known of the precise circumstances of its discovery; the objects were unearthed during ploughing near Mildenhall, Suffolk, in 1942 or 1943, and were reported and declared Treasure Trove in 1946.

The technical and artistic quality of the silver vessels is outstanding, and though we cannot know who owned them, it is reasonable to assume that it was a person or family of considerable wealth and high social status. Owners of tableware of this quality and value would also undoubtedly have possessed many more pieces than were concealed together in this hoard. In particular, they probably owned other large vessels such as flagons, additional sets of small bowls, and far greater numbers of spoons and ladles. As yet little is known about manufacturing centres for silver plate.

No coins or jewellery were associated with the find. A date in the fourth century is clearly indicated by the forms of the spoons and other utensils and the style and technique of the decoration, all of which are typical of that period.





### The Mildenhall Great Dish

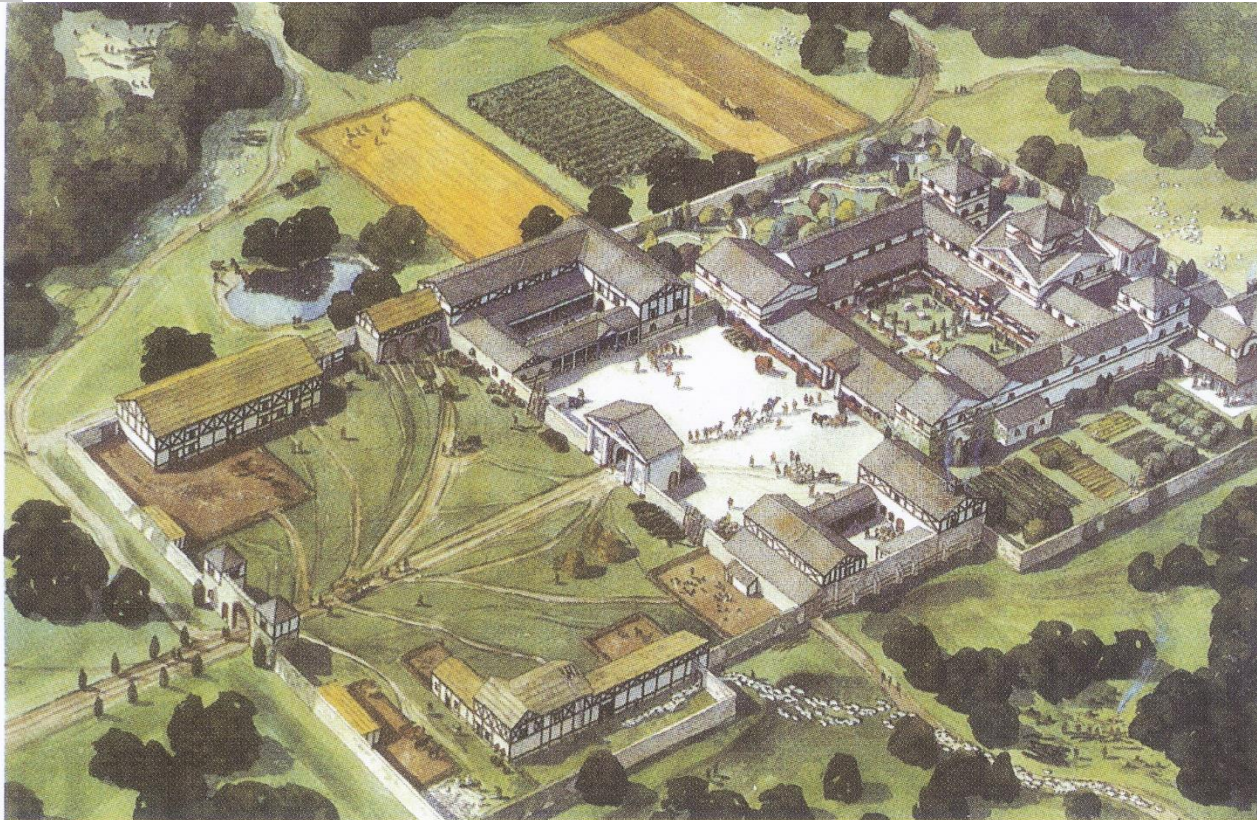
The most famous object in the Mildenhall treasure is the large highly decorated circular platter usually known as the Great Dish, or as the Neptune or Oceanus Dish. Bacchic imagery had a long history in Greek and Roman art, and this example, on a magnificent silver vessel measuring 60.5 cm in diameter and weighing 8,256 g, is one of the finest to survive from the late-Roman period.

The decoration, worked in low relief and engraved line on the front surface of the silver, alludes to the worship and mythology of Bacchus on land and in the sea. The staring face in the centre represents Oceanus, his beard formed of seaweed fronds and dolphins in his hair. The inner circle, bordered by scallop shells, consists of sea-nymphs riding mythological marine creatures, a sea-horse, a triton, a sea-stag and a *ketos*, a dragon-like sea-monster.

The wide outer frieze features Bacchus himself, holding a bunch of grapes and a *thyrsus* (a staff tipped with a pine-cone) and resting a foot on his panther, presiding over a celebration of music, dancing and drinking in his honour. The participants include the hero Hercules, overcome by wine, the goat-legged god Pan, and sundry satyrs and Maenads (female devotees).

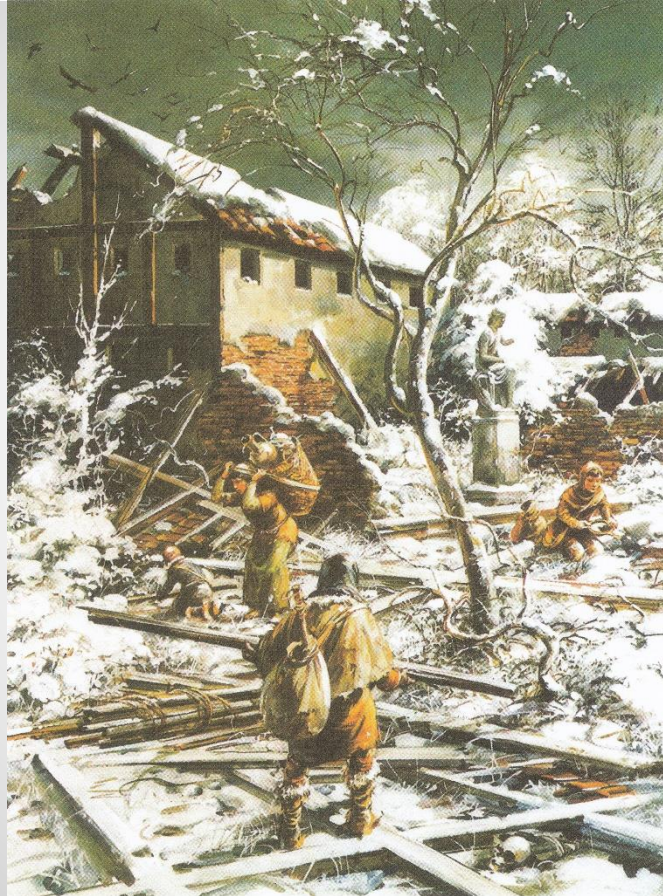
Treasure Trove  
PRB 1946.10.7.1

**Villas were at their most affluent in the 4th century, when Roman towns in Britain were shrinking. The wealthy landowners seemed to be removing themselves from urban responsibilities and retiring to their country estates.**



**22.** Woodchester (Gloucestershire): this painting by Steve Smith gives a good idea of the size and complexity of this grandiose villa.

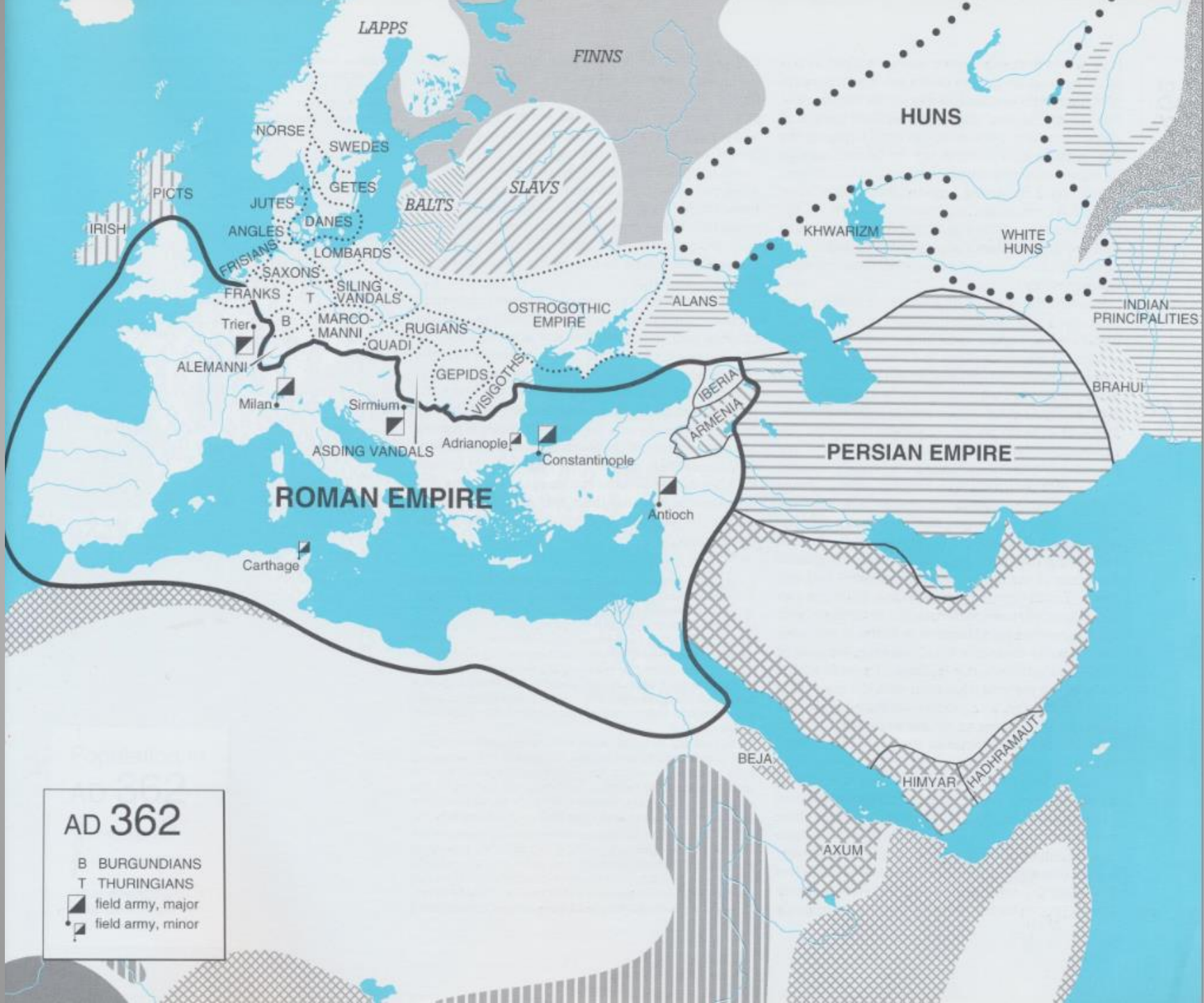
**By the beginning of the 5th century (around 410 AD) many villas were destroyed or abandoned.**



**Not for a thousand years would unfortified country houses return to the British countryside!**

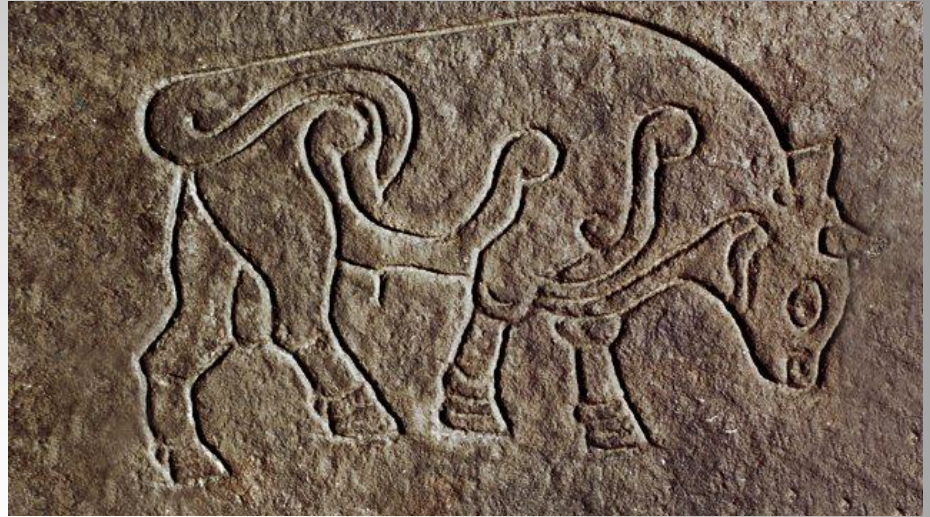
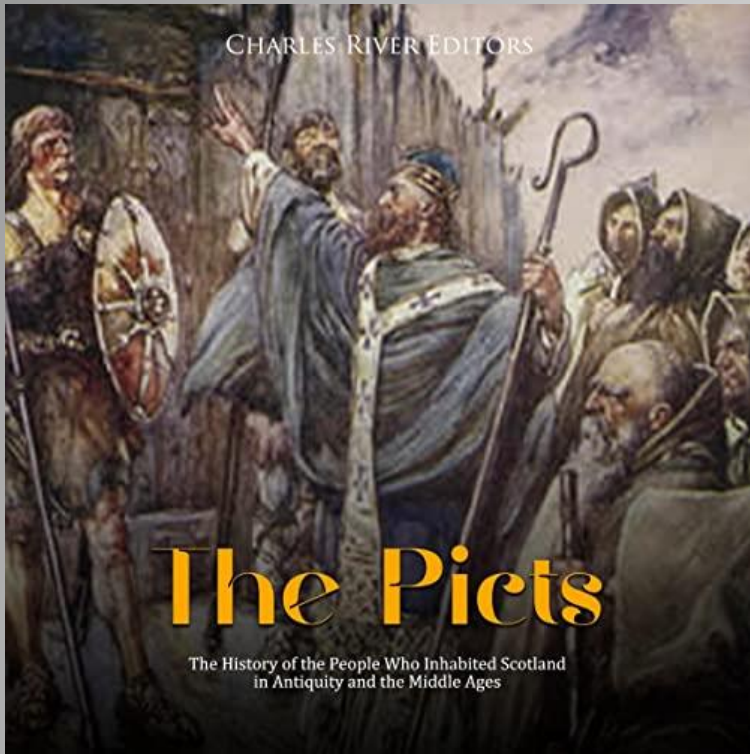
**Saxon Shore forts as an anti-pirate defence system**

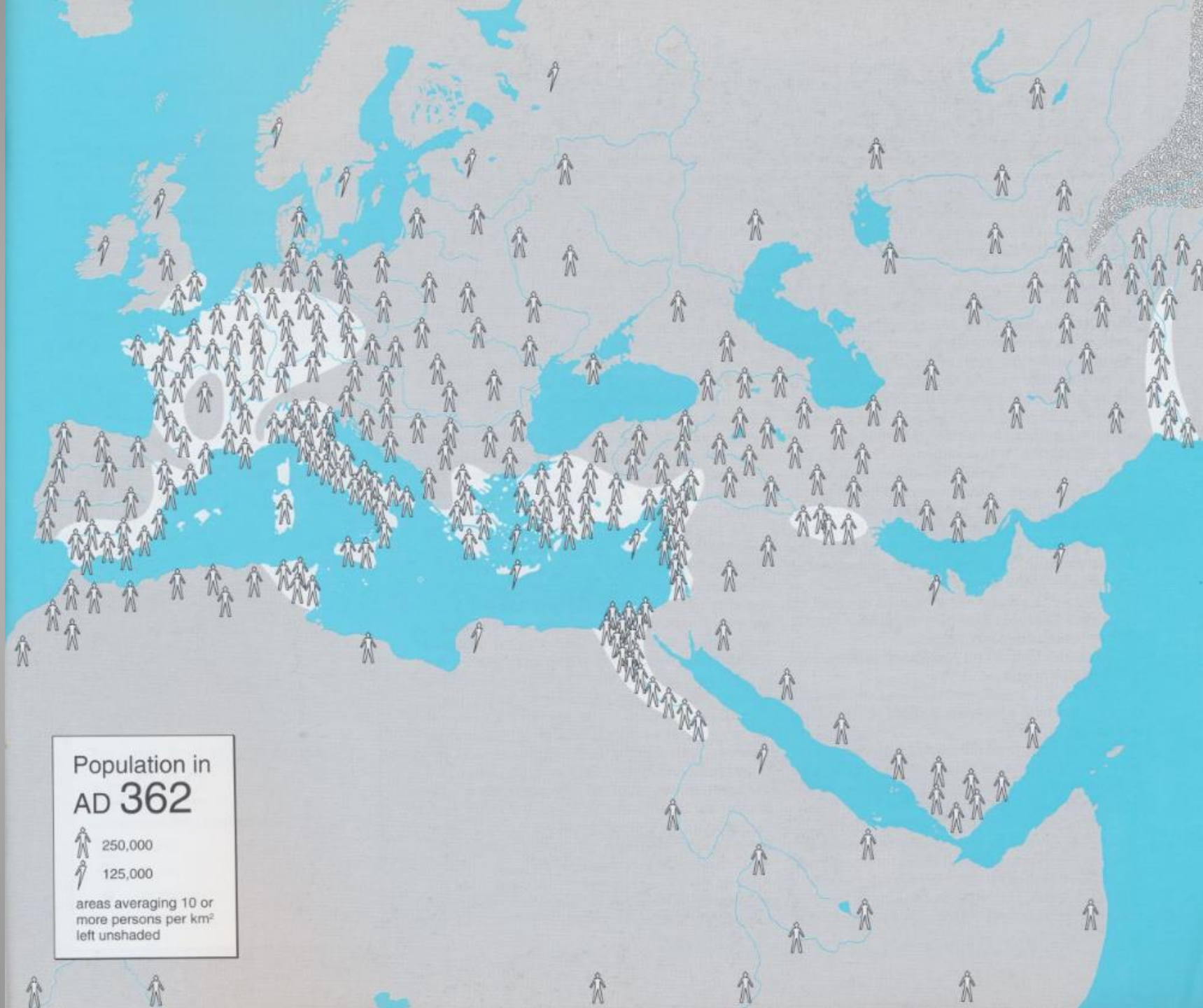




AD 362

- B BURGUNDIANS
- T THURINGIANS
- ▣ field army, major
- ▣ field army, minor



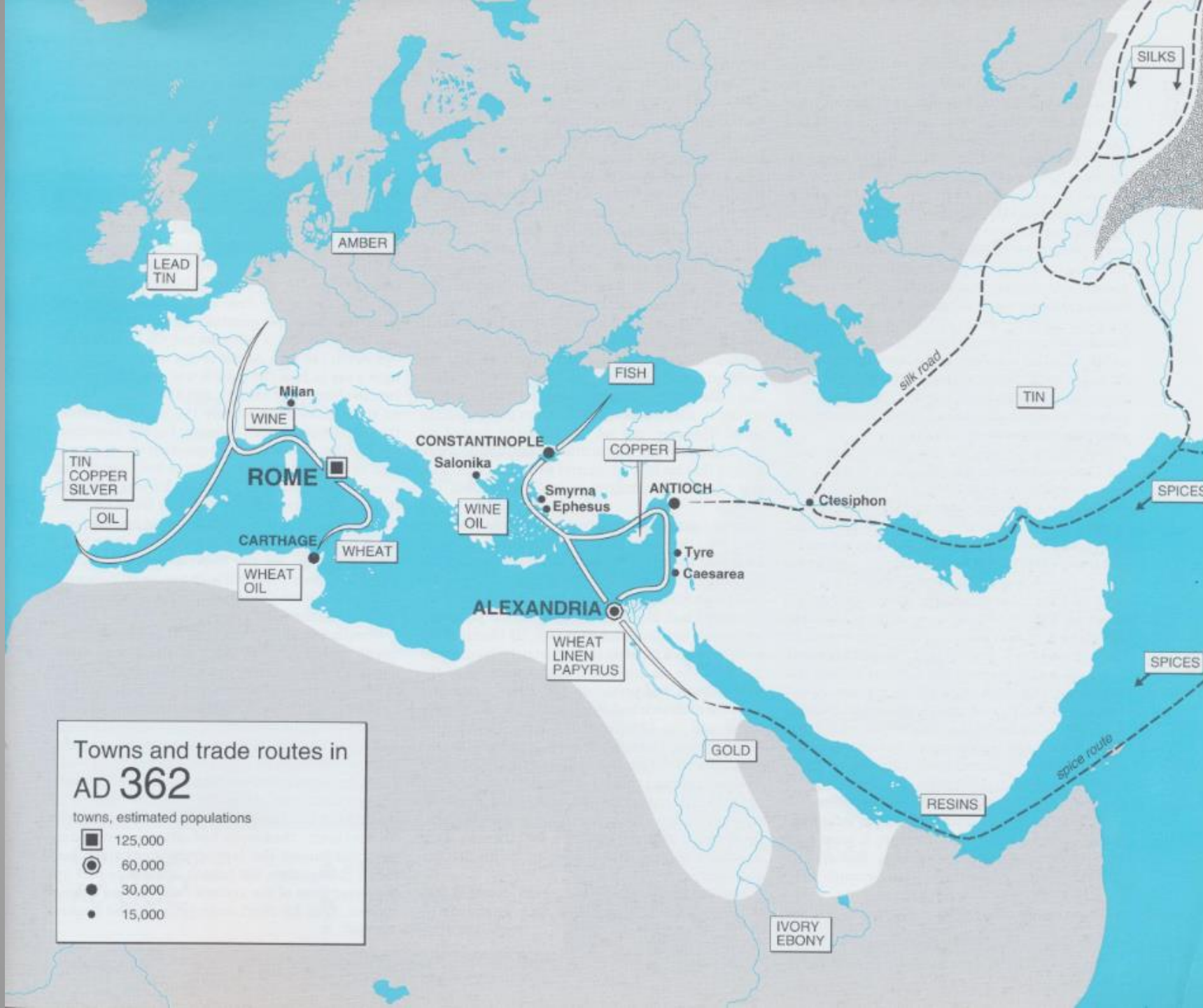


Population in  
AD 362

-  250,000
-  125,000

areas averaging 10 or  
more persons per km<sup>2</sup>  
left unshaded

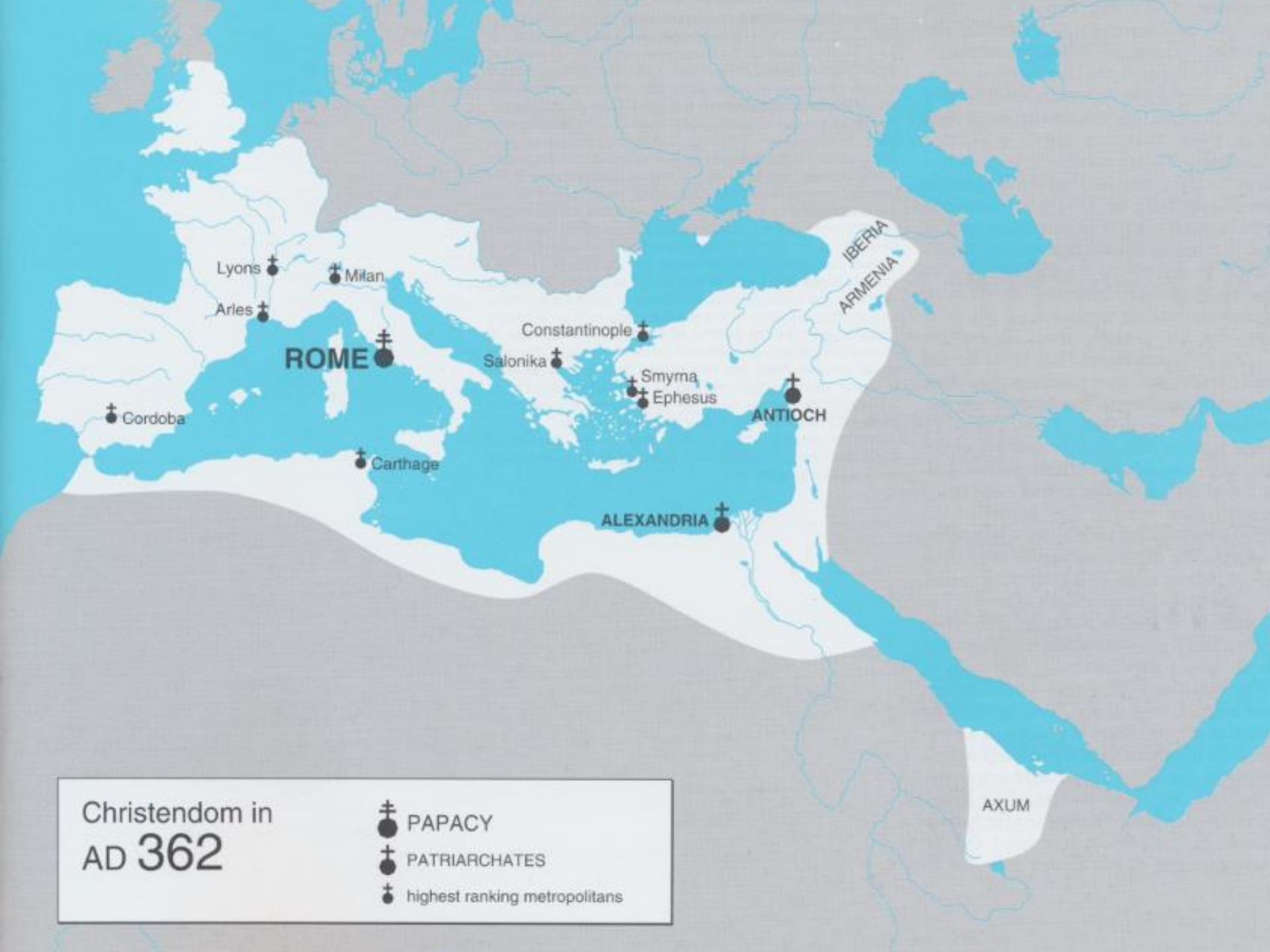




### Towns and trade routes in AD 362

towns, estimated populations

- 125,000
- 60,000
- 30,000
- 15,000



Christendom in  
AD 362

-  PAPACY
-  PATRIARCHATES
-  highest ranking metropolitans

AD 406



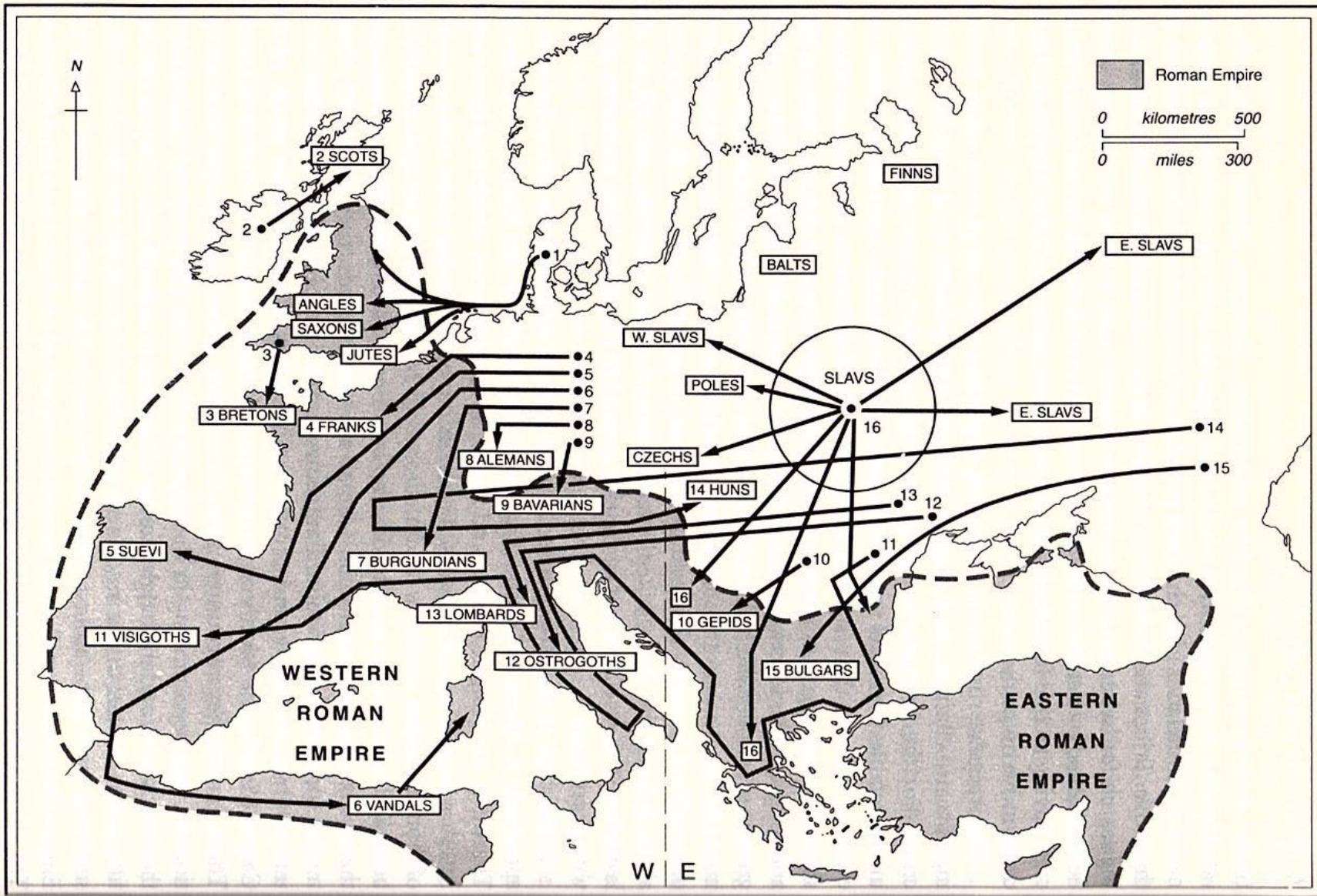
key  
Bur Burgundians  
Thur Thuringians

AD 420



Key  
Bur Burgundians  
Thur Thuringians

Map 10.  
Europe:  
Migrations



AD 451



AD 476



key  
Bur Burgundians  
Thur Thuringians