

Editorial

In *Britannia* xxiii J.N. Adams commented (p. 1): 'Britain is now the main source of new Latin'. The fact is of considerable significance. The leaf- and stylus-tablets which have been pouring since 1973 from the levels associated with the earlier timber forts at Vindolanda and the leaden *defixiones* recovered from the Sacred Spring at Bath in 1979 allow us to break into conversations – albeit one-sided conversations – in two communities of Roman Britain widely separated in time, place and socio-economic milieu. While the documents are technically archaeological material, their linguistic content is an independent source of information about life in the province which serves to emphasise that the historian and the archaeologist do not between them have a monopoly of Romano-British studies. To some, who see them both as firmly stuck in the mud, theoretical archaeology is an appealing antidote; but there is more than one way of getting a breath of fresh air!

Successive Editors of *Britannia* have always done their best to offer subscribers as wide a range of subject matter as authors can provide. Excavation reports of provincial or supraprovincial importance of course are always welcome, but some canvassing on the part of Editors is occasionally necessary to keep the balance in a given volume right. The present Editor set out to attract contributions on organic materials – wood, leather, textiles, palaeobotanica – and no doubt his successors will seek to encourage writing on topics which they consider neglected, too.

It is perhaps worth repeating here that reviews printed in *Britannia* are commissioned by the Review Editor, but the views expressed in them are the personal opinions of the individual reviewers and not the judgements of the Editorial Sub-Committee or the Roman Society. *Britannia*, moreover, is unable to publish an appraisal of every volume which the Society is sent for review.