

ROMAN INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURE OF SCOTLAND

ENCOUNTERING AMERICA

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In the course of researching the culture of what is now the country of Scotland I was assaulted by an inordinate number of maybe's and possibly's, a few theories, and a few less facts. It seems that up to this day not enough archeological evidence has come to light to support the theories which are the primary invocation for this paper.

It is through the three sciences of History, Philology, and Archeology from which all the evidence available has been accumulated. Many times the facts from one of these three fields of endeavor will not agree with those of the other two and so the theorist finds himself back at the proverbial "drawing board" trying to make a theory that fits the new facts.

Although parts of these theories may yet be inconclusive and maybe down right wrong, for the most part a history of the developement of the modern country of Scotland can now be traced from the time of the Ice-age to the present. This paper attempts only to show part of that larger picture, the effect the Roman Empire had on the people of Scotland.

It must be pointed out at the beginning that the early history of Scotland is a confusing melee of immigrants from many places arriving in different parts of the country-many at the same time, so that a accurate account of the history up to Roman times is difficult to relate in a paper as limited as this. I do not doubt that my account may be in error in places but I have tried my best in the time allotted.

*Very good  
introduction  
well-worked,  
concise, and  
tells reader  
precisely what  
writer intends  
to say, and  
within ~~the~~  
certain time frame*

movement from the North Sea route, coming from homelands likely to have been in the main between the Elbe and the Rhine rivers in Germany.

The first two groups were largely stone-using but interested in metal tools so that trade was later possible with the westerners. The third group, I believe, were the Beaker-using people, and maybe the Bronze-age Urnfield people. They are called Beaker people because, "in their graves, the crouched burial could be accompanied by a pot, either of the beaker or the food vessel type, or tools and weapons appropriate to the two sexes; Stone battle-axes or bronze awls with women."<sup>5</sup> It is apparent that these people believed in an afterlife.

#### TRANSITION TO BRONZE-AGE

In the Hebrides, Orkneys, Shetlands, and the North Sea regions around Inverness and northwards to Caithness, by the middle of the second millennium B.C., agricultural colonies had been established along the Atlantic seaway for four or five centuries. People were using stone for tools and implements, agriculture was of the primitive hoe-type and a limited animal ~~animal~~ husbandry was being practiced. Each settlement was marked by monumental family vaults, or chambered cairns. Trade amongst the Neolithic communities was limited but present. The exploitation and distribution of raw materials such as mined flint for making weapons, also may have included organic trade such as fish as evidence suggests that many Neolithic communities were familiar with the sea and boats. Mined flint was valuable and preferred as it was easier to work with than that from any other source. It remained valuable until the people began to learn to use, trade, and produce copper, bronze, and gold for tools and adornment. "Centers of metal-working in Ireland soon influenced the Atlantic province of Scotland, as well as areas outside it, within the ambit of a common Hiberno-Scottish school of metallurgy."<sup>6</sup>



## II. C. THE BRONZE-AGE

The Bronze-age centered on the sixteenth century B.C., a period of immigration and colonization from the low countries of what are now Belgium and the Netherlands, and the Rhineland. This could have been the intrusion of the Urnfield Celts and was that of the Beaker-using peoples. The east coast from the Moray Firth to the Border of Scotland and England was effected by the new immigration.

We know it was the Beaker people because of their burial habits, and the burial itself which was single inhumation. These people were definitely Bronze-age as they possessed considerable skill in metallurgy in copper, bronze, and gold which was brought over by technicians from European workshops.

Previous to the Beaker peoples influx, cremation was the prevalent method of dealing with corpses but was dropped completely in the initial years of Beaker influence. In the middle of the second millennium however it made a sudden comeback and became the dominant form of burial. Experts explain this as "a result of the indigenous process of assimilation, with a subsequent re-emergence of older traditions."<sup>7</sup> It was within this time period that the Megalithic builders were also constructing their circular ritual enclosures, a re-emergence of secondary Neolithic ceremony and burial customs after the influence of Beaker people single grave inhumation had worn off. Some of these enclosures had cemeteries at their centers with both cremation and inhumation burials.

From the coming of the Beaker-using culture for over a millennium thereafter the British Isles depended on central Europe for technological innovations, trade, and the interchange of ideas. Somewhere in the time around the middle of the second millennium there was a short period of contact between Britain and the Mediterranean. This may have been a result of the continental Celts who also were in contact with areas in the Mediterranean at about the same time.

## II. D. THE IRON-AGE; THE COMING OF THE CELTS

The line separating the Bronze-age from the Iron-age is difficult to ascertain. Before getting into the Celtic intrusions I would like to state that in my opinion the Urnfield Celts and the Beaker-using peoples are one and the same. I do not offer evidence for this for it is only a conclusion from the facts which are present in this paper. Therefore, I shall let the reader come to his own conclusion.

### LATE URNFIELD

In comparison with continental Europe, the Bronze-age made very little impress on Scotland. The Iron-age however was a different matter. The Iron-age began circa 300 B.C. In the years preceeding the Roman conquest the population of Scotland and all Britain was increased, agriculture was facilitated, a ruling class came into existence, and from the influence of the new residents, all learned a taste for war.

To tell the story of the Iron-age in Scotland is to tell the story of the Celtic inundation of the British Isles. The Celts were recognized by the Greeks and Romans as a distinct people occupying middle and western Europe until the days of Julius Caesar. Their immediate place of origin was the trans-Alpine region and they were recognizable by their own total national characteristics in appearance, arms, manners, and customs.

Three distinct cultures developed among these people over the many centuries of their existence. The earliest was the late Bronze-age, early Iron-age Urnfield culture. "The original north Alpine Urnfield cultures were the outcome of amalgamation between indigenous crafts and new impulses, the latter especially in improved husbandry, metal techniques, and other skills, all of more easterly origins,"<sup>9</sup> (perhaps from the Danube region.)

## IRON-AGE CELTS

The first truly Iron-age Celts to come to Britain were peoples of the Hallstatt cultures. They developed from the Urnfield by input of new cultural factors from prehistoric Bavaria late in the Bronze-age. Hallstatt is a town deep in the Salzkammergut region of Bavaria. By this town archeologists found a rich find of artifacts, enough to put together and elaborate on a cohesive picture of Celtic life-styles of that time. From this evidence and that found elsewhere it was determined that the Celtic nation had once been very widespread, reaching its peak expansion in the seventh century B.C. This was just the the Hallstatt Celts. Later another culture was to appear which would sweep the areas of Hallstatt domination and add to it newly conquered lands. These were the La Tène Celts, those with which Rome had to deal with in their quest for Empire in Europe.

During the expansion of the Hallstatt I culture, warriors invaded the lower Rhenish Urnfield culture. Some of these Urnfield peoples of the Rhine had earlier moved there to escape similar invasions in the west Alpine regions of what is today south eastern France. Once again the Urnfield people fled, this time to the Isle of Britain where they established themselves and dominated the former inhabitants there.

If the Urnfield culture was still a Bronze-age culture as I suspect then the first Iron-age people to arrive on the British Isles were the Hallstatt peoples who were pushed off the continent by a second generation Hallstatt culture. Soon after the La Tène Celts pushed the Hallstatt II peoples into Britain and then followed them over perhaps as a result of the emerging Roman empire.

## LA TÈNE CELTS

The La Tène Celts brought a renaissance of prosperity to the continental Celtic nation. During their era they expanded their domain

once again by overrunning Italy, the Balkans and parts of France as far as the Pyrenees.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS OF CELTS TO SCOTLANDS IRON-AGE

The Celts helped phase out the Bronze-Age and initiated the Iron-age in Scotland. The Urnfield culture initiated the last of the Bronze-age advancements bringing into Scotland the technology required to make such things as bronze horse-driving harnesses and coach mountings. The Hallstatt I peoples were the first Iron-age Celtic speaking people to arrive in southwest Scotland and evidence shows that they were trading with Ulster in Ireland soon after settling in Scotland, (as finds of "aristocratic" metal-work, such as sword scabbards and chariot-gear in Ireland suggest.) Large numbers of this culture group did not arrive in the area north of the Tyne river until the first century B.C.

"The appearance of the Iron-age Celts in southern Scotland is marked in the main by the archeological evidence for the arrival of a warrior aristocracy-fortifications, fine metal-work, weapons and chariot gear. Stylistically it is immediately apparent that these elements were not brought direct from the continent, but are characteristically southern English in all respects."<sup>10</sup> All three branches of Celtic Iron-age culture spent several centuries in southern Britain before coming into the wild northlands of Scotland. Even the La Tène Celts had time to modify their culture in southern England before migrating to Scotland. They had arrived in England in the fifth century B. C. but did not emigrate north until about the same time as the Hallstatt II culture. This movement may have been caused by the invasion of the Belgae.

THE FIRST CENTURY B.C.

Two invasions took place within a relatively short time of each other. The Belgic invasions were just ending and the Roman invasion was soon

to come to Britain. The Belgae came into south eastern England and forced many of the Celtic population to flee northwards. "A great tribal confederacy of the Brigantes, stretching from sea to sea south of the Tyne-Soway line, at first inhibited the passage of refugees through its territories, and access to the northern lands was gained by sea."<sup>11</sup> These were the immigrants who came to the coasts of north eastern Scotland and settled in the area of the Tweed river. Along with these, (or perhaps these people were originally from Gaul,) came a Gallic influx though perhaps the Gauls were earlier arrivals as some records indicate. (It is thought that Gallic invaders from the continent arrived in two waves. The first in 600 B.C. and the second in 300 B.C.) Whatever occurred it is commonly acknowledged that these people were the builders of the Murus Gallicus or timberlaced forts the burning of which are thought to have produced the Vitrified forts.

A second group of emigrants from England, either contemporary or later than the North Sea movement just described, followed the Atlantic route between Ireland and Scotland and settled the western islands (Hebrides, Orkney, the Shetlands,) and parts of the northwest mainland (Caithness and the coastal fringes of Southerland.) These are considered to be the Broch builders and "the evidence of pottery, and still more the specialized weaving techniques and house-types, imply a more complete migration than that affecting the Tweed basin, with entire families taking the road to the isles."<sup>12</sup>

#### FORTIFICATIONS AND DWELLINGS

Here we have the beginnings of the pre-Roman peoples some of whom their movement into Scotland perhaps may be attributed to the Romans themselves. If not the Romans then certainly the Belgae were the cause. "We see a Gaulish people arriving and building their forts over half

of Scotland. Soon after, a second people, coming perhaps from the south of Britain, occupy the other half with fortified farms. Both races are thought to have spoken Welsh, and yet all the descendants of the second group, some perhaps from Cornwall a district that was Welsh-speaking two hundred years ago, speak Gaelic!"<sup>13</sup>

The eastern Gallec Celts built the Murus Gallicus (vitrified) forts. The forts were situated strategically for defense, perhaps from the western Celts. "They were built by the first and most formidable of the first century B.C. Celtic intrusion who took over the best land and controlled the principal maritime entries and land routes thus forcing other immigrants to go farther north by water"<sup>14</sup>

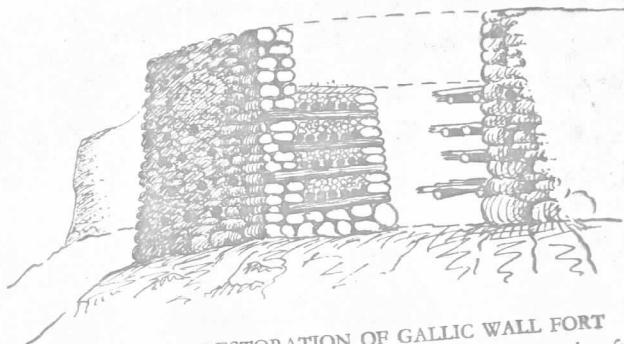
CONSTRUCTION OF GALLIC WALL FORT (see next page)

"The Gallic forts were constructed with timber tie-beams in a manner well known in Gaul, and are consequently described as of murus-Gallicus construction. Several of them have produced brooches, which are thought to have gone out of use on the continent about 250 B.C."<sup>15</sup>

THE BROCHS AND THEIR BUILDERS

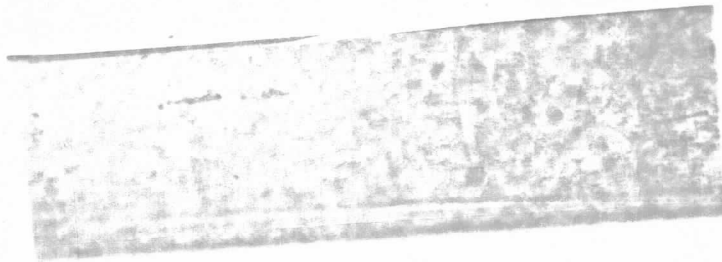
To review, once the western Celts left England and moved along the Atlantic routes, "immigration and colonization proceeded from the Hebrides to Orkney, Shetland and the northern mainland of Caithness and Sutherland, marked particularly by defensive circular tower-houses of a kind evolved from the round stone-walled farmhouse in Scotland and known as a Broch."<sup>16</sup> Broch pottery resembles that of southwest English origin with hints of western French influence. The round stone-walled house from which the Broch evolved is called a Souterrain. "These were strongly-built circular or ovoid structures, without central posts, carefully paved with stone slabs, and apparently roofed in wigwam fashion by boughs wedged into the walls and then covered with bracken and turf."<sup>17</sup>

The Broch peoples pottery was crude and coarse and is known as



#### SCHEMATIC RESTORATION OF GALLIC WALL FORT

The walls were bonded together with heavy oak timbers at about three foot intervals. Other timbers were laid across these and the gaps filled with rubble. It was suggested by Dechelette that once these logs became ignited the gaps between the stones would serve as flues and enough heat would be generated to fuse the rubble core of the walls if the stones were of suitable character. Gordon-Childe proved this to be the case experimentally. Vitrified Forts are Gallic Wall forts which have been burnt. The burning was probably caused by setting fire to the roofs of huts built against the inner side of the wall. Iron arrow-heads for carrying burning material have been found on Roman fort sites in Scotland.





"flat rimmed" because it was constructed with a broad flat rim. It was evidently developed during hard times when some of the population were living in caves. The French influence noted above may have come from Venetic settlers from the Breton peninsula whose ships and towns were destroyed by Julius Caesar a generation after the Belgae invasion. Flat rimmed pottery remained in use into the second century A.D. though by this time the Broch people were well familiarized with more advanced Roman pottery.

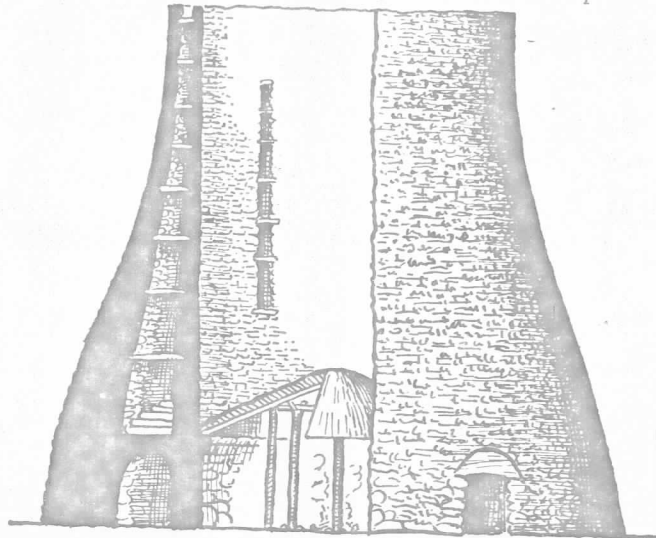
#### CONSTRUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE BROCH (see next page.)

As has been stated the Broch developed from the Souterrain round house-type. They were strongholds of tightly-knit Iron-age communities placed for tactical security and not aggression. Some authorities feel that the Broch is the finest example of Iron-age castle architecture in Europe. They are considered to be an invention made in Scotland itself, and may have been invented to meet the threat of the Gallic wall or of the Picts maritime ancestors. "The Brochs were built to defend the land against a seaborne enemy; distribution makes this incontestable!"<sup>18</sup>

The circular house-types had always been used in Scotland from the time the first mesolithic peoples arrived even through the first millenium B.C. when houses on the continent were being built on variations of the rectangle. This style remained the distinguishing characteristic of the Scottish peoples throughout the total spectrum of their prehistoric existence and lasted into the historic period as well. The smaller Brochs were not too far divorced from the Souterrains and were probably homes for the same types of people. Both dwellings housed farmers and fishermen, and an occasional hunter. The Brochs seem to have been built by men in troubled times who were constantly fearful



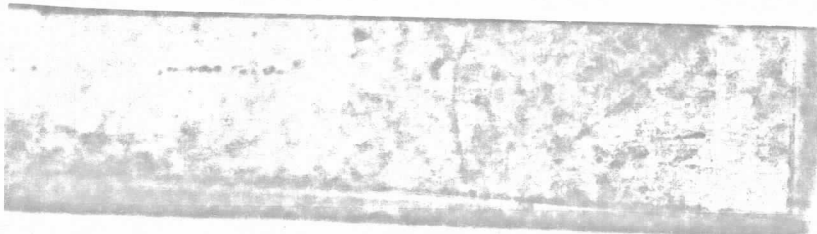
days of peril and went about their daily tasks with their spears in their hands. But who were they? Their pottery, which is coarse and bad, is taken by Scott to have been derived from that of the Veneti of the Breton peninsula, whose ships and



RECONSTRUCTION OF A BROCH TOWER

*This combines features observed in several surviving towers. The Broch of Mousa in Shetland is still 40 feet high. Others were probably lower and many may never have exceeded two storeys in height. 'Wheel-houses' appear to have been similar in general principles but of only one storey and with the posts replaced by stone piers. There was probably no smoke vent in the roof for the draught from the entrance passage would force the smoke up the spiral staircase and out through the hollow walls.*

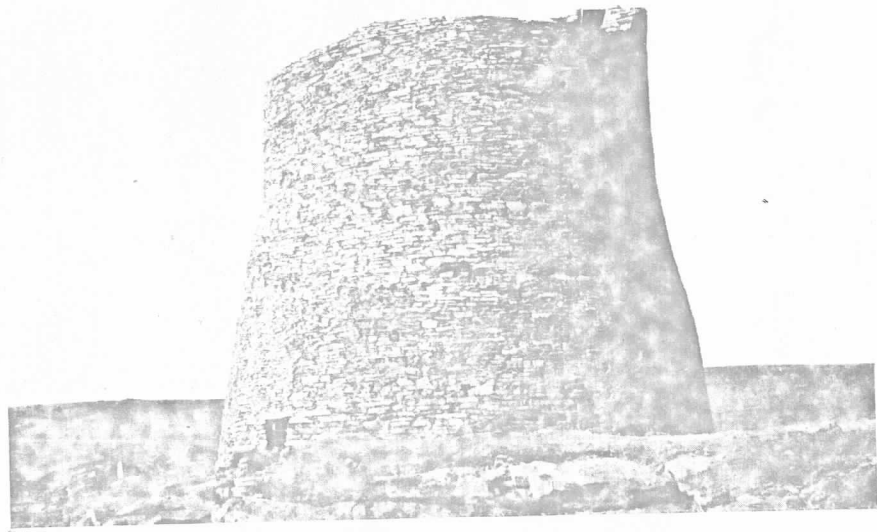
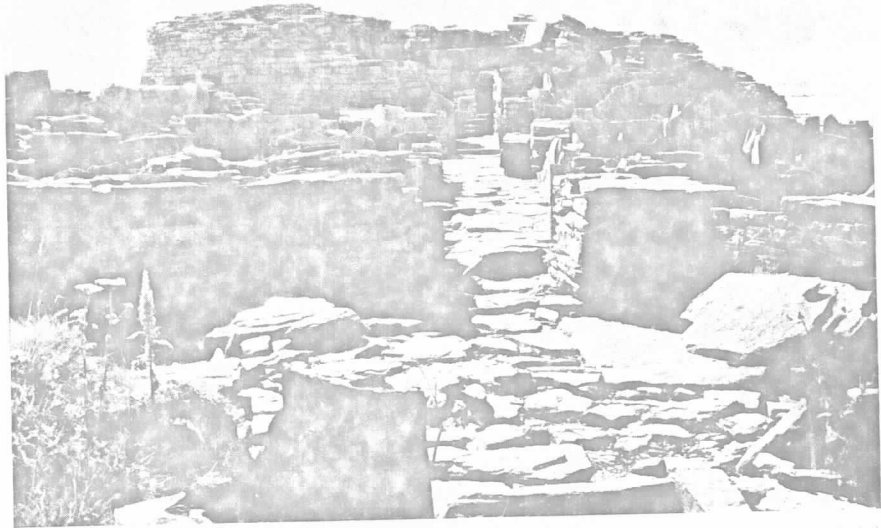
towns were destroyed by Julius Cæsar. I feel myself that the ceramic evidence is not strong enough to be convincing. There may have been some Venetic settlers among the broch builders, but I think that the pottery, and such household



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*Pl. 1a (above) Broch of Gurness, Aikerness, Orkney, surrounded by secondary buildings flanking paved street; b (below) Broch of Mousa, Shetland, showing basal batter, regular coursing of masonry, single entrance and double casement construction (top). (both Crown Copyright)*

of sudden attack from a stealthy enemy and so kept weapons close at hand while going about their daily tasks.

"A curious feature about the Broch, or wheel-house, people should be mentioned here. In North Uist considerable use was made of mattocks formed from the bones of whales, which appear to be identical with mattocks used by the early Eskimos to flense blubber from whales."<sup>19</sup> Here is the influence of the mesolithic sub-artic peoples surviving into Roman times in the Hebrides and other western Scottish islands.

During more peaceful times within the shadow of the larger Brochs small villages of stone-built huts clustered around the towers. Similar structures inside the walls and the presence of late Roman coins, Pictish symbols, and relics from Celtic monasteries in the west indicate that the towers were inhabited up to the eight and ninth centuries A.D.

TRANSITION PERIOD INVOLVING ALL OF SCOTLAND BEFORE ROMES CONQUEST

In the century prior to the coming of the Romans the Iron-age peoples had begun to habitate hill-forts and larger settlements which began to take a more important role in the distribution of the population. This was the result of colonization and expansion, and showed evidence of political cohesion at least between the members of single tribes. Thus such tribes as the Caledonians and Brigantes were fit to be named and, in some cases, dealt with by the Romans. But in most of Scotland there was still little evidence of any substantial urbanization of homesteads into villages. Agriculture remained rather primitive and even into Roman times after the traction plow had been introduced hoe-cultivation remained the main farming method. Meanwhile the method of burial was turning again to inhumation though cremation was still extensively used.

## II. E. THE PICTS

I am dealing with the Picts separately because of the mystery surrounding who they actually were. Pictish archeology can hardly be said to exist due to the small amount of evidence which is directly attributable to them. Even their language is a question mark as there is also very little evidence with which the philologist can work.

It is generally accepted that the original language in Scotland, in the Iron-Age at least, was both Gaelic (Q Celtic of Goidelic Celts), and Welsh (P Celtic of Brythonic Celts). There was also a third language of non-Indo European ancestry which is completely unknown. It is probable that when the Picts first appear in history they spoke a derivative of the combination of P Celtic and the non-Indo European languages. That it was not a purely Celtic tongue is evidenced from a description written by St. Columba's biographer at the time of his visits to the northern Picts. It states that Columba needed an interpreter to converse with these Picts. Again in the works of Venerable Bede, (The Ecclesiastical History of the British People), he notes that Pictish was a distinct language from Gaelic, Britton, and English.

The picture we can derive from the evidence available is that the Picts were a northern maritime people who settled the northern parts of Scotland sometime before the Broch builders had arrived in those same regions. It may be that they actually arrived after the Broch builders as the Brochs appear to have been built in some areas as a defense against seafaring raiders. Regardless of when they arrived, it is considered true that they fused with the culture of the Broch people. This is proven from pre-Christian burial practices which archeologists interpret to mean that the Picts were an agglomeration of once separate peoples, that political unity came late and in fact really did not

become concrete until the Roman Empire had reached the peak of its power in Britain and had begun to decline.

#### RACIAL MAKE-UP OF THE HISTORIC PICTS

In all probability, the large majority of the inhabitants of historic Pictland were of Celtic origin, more or less mixed towards its northern and southern extremities. This main group of Pictish Celts are thought to have been Goidelic, kindred with the Celts of Ireland and the Isle of Man.

#### MILITARY SEA POWER

The Picts were not a negligible factor in the northern political scene. They had a large fleet and were skilled in navigation and familiar with difficult waters and the building of ships. These ships were probably similar to the Umiak of Greenland and the Curragh used by the Irish. They consisted of a wooden frame over which animal skins were stretched. Their length could reach to fifty feet as a model found in Ireland shows.

#### <sup>R</sup>FORTIFICATIONS INSIDE PICTLAND

As was said, the Picts were a heterogeneous people of many cultures and races. When political unity did come the people with the name of Picts may have included some of the descendants of the men who built the Vitrified forts. All types of fortifications are found both inside and outside the main area of what is recognized as Pictland.

#### BOUNDARY DETERMINATION

The boundaries of Pictland are certain. They were established by archeologists from the distribution of a distinctive style of monumental art which is the only known group of artifacts of Pictish origin. From this distribution the southern boundary has been set on the line between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, the land across which Antonine's wall

was constructed in Roman times.

#### ORIGIN OF THE NAME PICT

The name "Pict" is an enigma. Philologists are not sure that this is what they called themselves. It is certain that the Romans called them this as history records that they referred to these people as the "painted people" which Picti means in Latin. "There was a tradition over six hundred years old, that the inhabitants of Britain specialized in the practice of applying pigments to their skins."<sup>20</sup> A usually unreliable source (Isidore of Seville) writes that the Picts got their name from the designs pricked into their skins by needles.

#### CIVILIZATION AND ART

Regardless of their name or origin, the historical Picts were a great people. There were scholars and artists among them. They were not remote and isolated barbarians. Their surviving artwork is the Symbol Stone, a style of monumental art which is at once impressive and unique. Their existence proves that some point in time there was cultural unity amongst the Picts and this would indicate that political unity was also a reality. At the same time, there are classes of the Symbol Stones which may represent cultural differences as well as older political divisions.

*(I caught you on one!)*

The art work itself is intricate and formal. "They were strangely addicted to carving symbols which resemble a looking glass and a comb and crescent moons often filled with mushroom shapes, which are split by thunderbolts or branching arrows. Fish, falcons, snakes, geometrical designs and figures not unlike an embryonic elephant may accompany the crescent moons; and beside cavaliers on high-stepping horses go the hieratic figures of a grim priesthood."<sup>21</sup> "The masterly drawing of some of the incised animals is unparalleled in Dark Age art elsewhere."<sup>22</sup> In the late Roman times the drawing of animals and hunting scenes became very popular and the Picts distinguished theirs with a characteristic

scroll on the joints of the animals.

It is unfortunate that no Pictish literary works have survived. The only written document now in the hands of scholars is the Picts Chronicle, a historical document listing some of the kings of Pictland.

#### SUCCESSION SYSTEM

What made the Picts different from the Celts? The most significant difference other than language was their system of succession to the throne. It was a system of matrilinear descent something unheard of with the Celts. "Bede tells us that the Picts having no wives when they arrived, obtained women from the Scots of Ireland on the express condition that when the matter was in doubt they would choose their king from the female rather than from the male royal line."<sup>23</sup> Bede took this story from an Irish source so it can be largely dismissed as a literary invention.

There is actually no way of proving that ~~the~~ the Picts were matrilinear. The Pictish Chronicle does not prove that the right of succession was matrilinear but it does prove that it was not patrilineal. It might be that the early peoples of northern Britain were polyandrous. Julius Caesar and other classical writers wrote disparaging remarks<sup>24</sup> about the marriage practices of the Picti and as polyander would result in matrilinear succession it is quite possible that it was practiced. The remarks of Caesar and others also provides the best evidence that the matrilinear principle applied throughout the social structure, not just the royal families.

The Pictish nobles were constantly fighting over the question of succession. This seems to be because the royal women of Pictland were persistently exogamous. This may account for their unifying with other tribes to form Pictland and most certainly is a reason for the union of the Picts and the Scots under Kenneth MacAlpin in the ninth century. The combination of matrilinear succession and exogamy did not



add strength and stability to the Pictish kingdom. Many of the kings were the sons of foriegners not Picts in their own eyes. Towards the end of Pictish independence the ancient system of succession was probably tending to follow the patrilineal systems of the surrounding kingdoms and with the spread of Christianity even their customary burial rites gave way and were replaced by the Christian rites, and extended inhumation replaced cremation as the form of burial.



### III. THE ROMAN AGE

Before the coming of the Roman Legions to Britain there was, in addition to peoples of ancient Bronze-Age stock, a considerable population of Iron-using, Celtic-speaking immigrants who had only recently colonized Orkney, Caithness, and the coastal fringe of Sutherland in the north and west of Scotland. In the east, other peoples, Gauls and Angles, (the Gauls being of Celtic stock) settled along the coast. In between these new arrivals were the vestiges of the older inhabitants who were to become part of the Pictish nation.

The general culture throughout Scotland at the time was that of an early Iron-Age generally known as the Abernethy culture, so named after a site near the estuary of the Tay, a culture which has never been closely defined. It can be said that when the Romans first came in contact with them, "the inhabitants of that region had long passed the stage of mere barbarism. Various remains that have been found prove that they had attained considerable knowledge of many of the arts of life; and from something like direct evidence we know that they possessed an organized society with civil and religious institutions of some complexity."<sup>25</sup> Several hill-top towns of ten acres or more, sufficient for a permanent population of several hundred families with somewhat regular water supply have been dated as just previous to the Roman conquest indicating a trend towards urbanization.<sup>26</sup>

Roman Legions overran southern Britain in the last century before the birth of Christ and caused the last influx of migrants to areas in Scotland. Many of these joined or were the Broch builders. The Romans proceeded to make southern Britain a colony and later it became a province. It was to maintain this colony in a peaceful manner that the frontiers were extended into the area of southern Scotland and the Roman fleet visited the various islands along Scotlands coast.

Several excursions into the north were made but not until Agricola

became governor of the province did the invasion of Scotland become a major campaign. Agricola's main interest lay in the safety of the province so he led his forces into the northern regions in the year 80 A.D. as far as the narrow waist between the estuaries of Forth and Clyde. All along the way he established forts and garrisoned them to protect his thinly occupied colony against the barbarians of the farther hills.

His main opponents were the Caledonians which seems to be a specific tribe- the leaders perhaps of a coalition of tribes. Agricola's last campaign against the north was in A.D. 82 his sixth. He was replaced at this time because his warfaring ability was needed on the continent. Though he did not conquer Scotland, Agricola and the generals who came after cannot be construed as being bad strategists. The geography of the land just proved to be too much for fast advancement and the Roman Empire was beginning to over extend itself and was losing control of other more vital regions. In addition the natives by this time had learned to avoid direct conflict with the Legions and had turned to guerilla warfare.

Hadrian's wall is thought to have been built not so much to keep the barbarians out as to separate the tribes to keep them from banding together. The Brigantes and other tribes had joined not long before to prevent immigrants, mostly refugees from the Belgic invasions, from using the land routes into the northern lands so they were not above looking for help from neighbors to expell a new foe. The wall "was some eight or ten feet thick and twenty feet high, built of stone with a core of rubble where there was stone to find, and initially of sods and clay on the western side. A thirty-foot ditch protected it in front; along its course stood sixteen stone forts garrisoned by regiments of

auxillaries; and between the forts were mile-castles and signal towers."<sup>27</sup>

The wall was seventy miles long extending along the line between the Tyne and the Solway Firth. An immediate result of the Roman occupation and especially at the wall was the beginning of trade relations between the Romans and the people of both occupied and free Scotland.

Though some conflicts did occur within the intervening years, no large campaign was attempted by the Romans until 140A.D. Hadrians wall was the frontier but even this massive barrier could not hold back the northern hordes so Emperor Antoninus Pius commissioned general Lollius Urbicus to repeat the work of Agricola, to quiet the Roman frontier. Urbicus managed his commission, subduing all the tribes south of the Firths of Forth and Clyde. In order to protect these newly won territories he had another wall built, an earthen rampart which became known as the Antonine wall. During the campaign, which had been instigated to counteract a building up of military power including the building of hill-forts in the upper basins of the Tweed, Annan, and Clyde rivers, many of the upland dwellers were seized and deported to Germany. Meanwhile by 144 A.D. the wall had been completed and stiffened by nineteen forts.

Both the Hadrian and Antonine walls has been situated and built as if the Romans feared no attack from the sea or western islands. This is understandable since the chieftains of the Broch people in the Hebrides and Orkney islands had all made formal submission to Emperor Claudius at the beginning of the Roman conquest. This was done in the manner common to Celtic tribes on the immediate fringes of the Roman province who wished to become client kingdoms. Because of this it can be assumed that the Broch builders were recent settlers of the territories they are found in, immigrants from the south of Britain during the Belgic invasions and also that of the Romans.

The Broch people tolerated the Romans and even shared a few cultural

aspects such as the enameling of their jewelry in several colors rather than just red. The Outer Hebrides were not influenced by Rome at all and remained at their previous level of Iron-Age activity.

It is quite possible that these western peoples "were more hostile to the more recent Belgic invaders and could easily be bought off or placated. The later rise of tribes, like the Iceni, formerly hostile to the Belgae, were apparently entirely due to Roman mismanagement. The same cause perhaps led the Broch people in the end to join hands with the remnants of their former enemies."<sup>28</sup>

Trade and peaceful errands continued between Scotland and England during Roman times. The development of extensive and undefended settlements along Hadrian's wall and annexes at the Antonine wall clearly indicate that trade was in progress. "The comparative dearth of objects does not appear to indicate a lack of commerce; it may only indicate a lack of interest in durable objects."<sup>29</sup> The many Roman coins found in the Orkneys indicate the frequent visits by Romano-British merchants and similar finds of Roman coins minted in Alexandria have been found in free Scotland and Ireland which is peculiar unless trade was indeed being carried on.

#### THE END OF THE OCCUPATION

"The tide of Roman occupation ebbed from Scotland, and the frontier of the province of Britain was established at Hadrian's wall, with a screen of spies, or scouts spread out in front of it. This is often regarded as a defeat for Roman arms, and it may be so."<sup>30</sup> Within less than forty years the south of Scotland was rid of its invaders, the Antonine wall was abandoned and Roman policy became defensive. Though it was abandoned, Antonine's wall remained an important boundary.

This catastrophe occurred as the result of vanity. Clodius Albinus, Governor of the province of Britain had withdrawn the garrisons of both

walls in order to have himself proclaimed emperor at Lyons."He was speedily defeated by Septimius Severus, Clodius committed suicide and Hadrian's wall, left undefended by his folly, was wrecked in a furious insurgence of the native people."<sup>31</sup> Clodius's replacement bribed the natives to return home and the main wall was repaired and re-manned. But southern Scotland was free once again.

In 208 A.D. the Romans made another attempt to quiet the frontier. Septimius Severus had become Emperor and had come to Britain to lead a punitive expedition even though he was old and sick with gout. The Roman army lost many men to the natives guerilla warfare but finally gained a temporary triumph forcing the Caledonians to terms by which they conceded much of their territory. He then had extensive repairs made to Hadrian's wall and for another century the frontier was maintained at the wall.

#### THE APPEARANCE OF THE HISTORICAL PICTS AND OTHER KINGDOMS

It is sometime near this point in history that the Picts become prominent. It is thought that the Broch men may have combined with the Murus Gallicus men (Vitrified fort builders), and the maritime, non-Indo European speaking peoples of the north sometime in the fourth century A.D. if not before.

Within the next century or two several new political units were formed. The Picts were followed by the Brythonic kingdom of Strathclyde which was formed when English invaders pushed the remnants of the Brythonic Celts (who had formed the main population of Britain at the coming of the Romans,) into Wales and the west coast territories as far north as the Firth of Clyde. The kingdom itself extended along the valley of the Clyde from Dumbarton at one extremity to Derwent in Cumberland at the other.

Another kingdom developed about the same time as Strathclyde, around 449 (the date of the supposed landing of Hengest and Horsa.) Teutonic

peoples found a footing on the east coast of Scotland and northern England and colonized the area. Their colony became the kingdom of Northumbria, south of the Firth of Forth.

Between the fifth and sixth centuries (498 to 503), the Scots from Ireland established their kingdom at Dalriada in Argyll. This particular invasion was of the utmost importance to Scotlands future. The invasion and settlement of the Scots at Dalriada was responsible for the introduction of Gaelic to Scotland and the continuance of the "whole legacy of Celtic institutional survivals that continued into medieval times."<sup>32</sup> Perhaps this settlement was the result of the organization of Ireland by the then High King Nial of the Nine Hostages for the purpose of raiding the rich Roman citizens of south Britain. This caused many wealthy persons to seek safety for their treasures by burying them, sometimes in great haste and many never returned to re-claim them from the earth. One such raid was especially important for both Scotland and Ireland, for on it there was seized the Patron saint of the Irish St. Patrick. If Ireland had not been Christianized by this man, Scotland may never have been Christianized by their patron St. Columba, though St. Ninians followers may have filled the gap.

#### THE FALL OF ROMAN BRITAIN

By 368 A.D. the Roman province of Britain was very insecure. The Picts, aided by the Scots (who were still in Ireland), on the west and the Saxons on the eastern shore (Northumbria), were all raiding the southern lands. Emperor Valentinian dispatched General Theodosius to deal with the invaders and he managed to break the power of the Picts but could not conquer them.

It was a quirk of nature which helped lead to Romes downfall in Britain. The barbarian tribes were being forced south for food by a change

of climate. The return of a cold and wet climate between 300 and 400 A.D. caused the tribes to intensify their assault on Roman defenses. The cattle raid was an institution with the Celtic people as late as the eighteenth century and it was used extensively during this time. The Picts had suffered the most from the change in climate as their territories were farthest north. Everything came to a point in 366 when the whole mass of cold and hungry warriors from north, east, and west attacked in some form of synchronized effort. Roman defenses collapsed and part of the fleet was destroyed by a year later and the Roman army had scattered. reenforcements were hurriedly sent in from other parts of the Empire and peace was re-established. The province was controlled alternately by Romans and the northern invaders until about 450 A.D. when the Legions were removed and the British Roman citizens were left to fend for themselves.

#### ROMES RELIGIOUS TRIUMPH

Though the Romans were forced to abandon their British province they left it only after contributing to it and the still heathen lands a far greater influence than it could ever expect from physically occupying the land. In the last few years that Roman power was present St. Ninian accomplished the conversion of the southern Picts to Christ. It was the might of Rome and Emperor Constantine's edict declaring Christianity the official religion of the Empire that opened the way for St. Ninian's mission at Whitehorn in Galloway from whence he wandered out to do the Lords work and preach the Gospel. The date 397 is the approximate year that Ninian built his church at Wigton Bay known as Candida Casa, the White House, from its being constructed of white stone.

One hundred and fifty years later St. Columba working out of Iona, (part of the Dalriada kingdom of the Irish Scots), accomplished in the north what Ninian had done in the south. Columba had been excommunicated from an Irish synod and he and twelve apostles went to



a small island off Ross of Mull and there established Iona, one of the great creative centers of learning and Christianity to exist in the dark ages. Iona was the religious center for the Dálriada Scots. The ecclesiastical supremacy of Iona gave to the Scots a prestige which extended far beyond the immediate confines of their kingdom and helps explain the cultural and linguistic influence which they later exercised in North Britain.

#### PRE-CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Druidism and nature worship thrived in pre-Christian Scotland. "They had always believed in the transmigration of souls. Here was a religion (Christianity) which explained what really happened to their souls. It was so much more sensible than worshipping a Rowan tree, that we can hardly be surprised at the speed of their conversion."<sup>33</sup> A description of Columba represents him as "half Druid magician, half Christian missionary; ready, as occasion arises, to fight his adversaries with their own weapons."<sup>34</sup>

The northern Picts were converted near Invernesse about 565 A.D. This was the date King Brude accepted Christ and "by the very nature of the tribal system, the religion of the king necessarily became the religion of his people."<sup>35</sup> Christianity did not take hold completely, traces of Druidism, or nature worship, survived in Scotland for more than a thousand years.

Thus did Rome and Roman influence leave the isle of Britain.



#### IV. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND

The political country of Scotland was created from the union of four peoples who by their own characteristics were recognized by the Romans as separate peoples. The Britons, probably the first of these groups to inhabit Scotland, were Brythonic Celts who settled the area now known as Strathclyde and established a kingdom there after Rome's withdrawal. The Picts were also a primary group of inhabitants probably arriving shortly after the Britons and including a great many of their stock (Brythonic Celts) towards the height of their historical life. The origins of the ancestors of the true Picti are not known. Only one thing is probable, that they were speakers of a non-Indo-European language.

The third and fourth groups came late in the Roman period. The third major group which helped to form the country were the Scots of Ireland. They became the major influence politically (as evidenced by the name of the modern country), and linguistically. The Angles were the fourth group. They settled the area known as Northumbria and became a mighty kingdom almost dominating all the other inhabitants completely at times. Their military might was invincible for many years but due to over extension their power and influence dwindled, finally fading before the influence of the Scots.

Raiding became even more of a prevalent activity after the removal of the Roman Legions. Many of the captives taken in these raids were Christians. Taken into heathen Scotland and Ireland they helped spread their religion. St. Patrick was one of these and is an example of the way captives were treated by their captors. "That the servitude of these captives was unpleasant as the experiences of central Europeans forced to labour in Russia is unlikely. 'Till no horse would ever experience

in Ireland at any period of history!"<sup>36</sup>

#### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

At the close of the sixth century A.D. Pictland was north of the Firths (estuaries) of Forth and Clyde with the exception of modern Argyllshire which was occupied by the Scots. The Picts were divided into northern and southern kingdoms the latter which occupied the modern counties of Perth, Fife, Forfar, and Kincardine. At this period one king ruled both north and south and the whole country had been divided into seven provinces. "Like Ireland, Pictland was subdivided among a series of greater and lesser tribes, which acknowledged the king or kings who in turn made good their sovereignty."<sup>37</sup>

The system of succession being what it was among the Picts, produced many rivalries for the throne and from time to time a rebel chief would set up a kingdom of his own, During some periods there were separate kings of the north and south kingdoms and also sub-kings who survived a separate existence from the main Pictish monarchy. Much of the political life of the Picts was shared by the other kingdoms which combined to make modern Scotland though there political divisions were not so much altered internally but by warfare, they were enlarged at the expense of their neighbors.

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAVEL

Communications were done primarily by sea and inland waterways as the only roads in the country were in the south- those built by the Romans which did not extend much beyond the Antonine wall. Because of this, land travel was restricted but travel by water flourished.

#### CULTURAL CONTACT

Education was probably centered at Iona for all four groups though the more southernly people could probably find St. Ninians missions havens

of learning. The Picts did have contacts with both Iona and Northumbria and it can be assumed that it was the missions which were the main attractions. Their education was not that of barbarians. Among the Picts and Scots especially were learned men who could read Latin and dispute such technical questions as the correct computation of Easter. As Christians they possessed a national church with monasteries and an organized clergy.

#### MILITARY PROWESS OF THE PICTS

The influence of all four peoples varied continually and the size of their kingdoms varied accordingly. The Picts made up the major component of the population in Scotland and so dominated most of the land. For many years the Orkney Islanders were under the control of the Picts and even the Northumbrian army at the height of its successes, when its military was reputed to be invincible, were defeated by the Picts. The borders of Pictland were not infringed significantly until the invasions by the Vikings.

#### POST ROMAN FORTIFICATIONS

Although the older Broch tradition fortifications were still being used they were no longer being built. The timber-laced Gallic forts had been abandoned and a new generation of fortifications arose from the stones and rubble of Scotland's building materials. Ring forts, citadel forts, "long duns" and duns (large and small oval or D shaped fortresses,) <sup>38</sup> all were essentially post-Roman. In building these great battlements the architect always included ~~any~~<sup>any</sup> natural outcroppings or large boulders as was the common custom in works of this type of Dark-Age date. Many of these fortresses reflect a high degree of technical ability.

IN 729 the ANNALS OF TIGERNACH records the wrecking of 150

Pictish ships at a headland called Ross Cuissini. Clearly this indicates that Pictish sea power was pretty well developed. It was the collapse of this power which some authorities feel brought about the Viking age.<sup>39</sup>

The Kingdom of Scotland can probably be said to have begun in 843 A.D. Kenneth MacAlpin became king of the Scots and the Picts because of the matrilinear succession and exogamy of the Pictish system. Thus was joined two of the peoples of modern Scotland and the others soon were annexed until one kingdom existed north of Hadrians wall.

## V. CONCLUSION

The replacement on the European continent of the early languages- Celtic and others- by the Romance tongues of France, Italy, and Spain during four hundred and fifty years of Roman rule is an example of how a small minority, holding political power can change a larger populations ways including their language. In Scotland this did not happen even in the areas occupied by Romans. No Scottish town has its origin traced to Roman occupation, no place name in Scotland has been shown to be of indubitably Roman origin.

Considering the fact that Rome was in control for over three hundred years of at least half of the country though not all at any one time, it may seem remarkable to some that so few Roman ways were adopted by the Scottish people. The reality of the situation is that "the Roman dominion hardly passed the stage of a military occupation held by an intermitant and precarious tenure."<sup>40</sup>

"Scotland had never been a part of the Roman province. Agricola and Severus had penetrated far into the highlands, and for fifty years the lands south of the Firths of Forth and Clyde had lain behind the Antonine Wall; but fleeting contact with the legions and a brief occupation of the south had left no imprint of Roman civilization."<sup>41</sup> It had left the germs of civilization though among all its enemies.

Modern Scotland has arisen from the union of five known peoples. The Angles and the Norse came at the end of Roman influence speaking a teutonic language. The Scots had come earlier and were very influential. They were responsible for the ruling family as well as the language of the country. The Britons and Picts were older migrants to Scotland and possibly included the still earlier inhabitants of the land. Both were firmly established in their respective areas before the Roman conquest.

It is the Celtic rather than the Roman influence which remained the main cause of interaction amongst the peoples of Northern Britain. Even during the half millenium that Roman power existed in the British Isles the Celtic culture predominated in all areas of the north. After the Romans left the Celts remained to continue their culture having recieved few material benefits from the Roman way of life.

It cannot be said that Roman presence had absolutely no influence on the indigenous peoples of Scotland. Even their presence as an enemy produced new aims and endeavors between the tribes- a banding together to defeat a common enemy. Certainly, after the departure of the Legions the inhabitants were no longer a loose aggregate of tribes but had begun the building of coalitions between them which would lead to the final aggrandizement of a new national entity in Britain.

Probably the most significant contribution made by the Roman Empire to Scotlands history and culture is that of the Christian religion. The apostolic missions of Ninian first and then Columba brought the only evidences of Roman culture into the Celtic lands: a part of their culture which they themselves had only incorporated a relatively short time before. "It was Romes religion and Roman influence which allowed him (St. Ninian) to be the first Christian Apostle to north Britain. Roman benefaction went no further."<sup>42</sup> Roman power made it possible for St. Ninian to build his monastery at Whitehorn in Galloway, an important outpost of Christian teaching. With half of the Pictish kingdom already converted by Ninian, Columba was able to concentrate solely on the Northern Picts.

"This conversion of the Picts may fairly be regarded as the governing fact in Scottish history. Through a common religion Scotland was brought into direct relations with Ireland by whose higher

civilization it was influenced for at least a century and a half." 43  
Following this contact with Ireland both countries developed in a manner similar to the rest of Europe.

The only physical effect of Roman influence came after the removal of the occupation forces. Many small towns grew up in the dark ages centering on the old Roman auxillary forts and along the Hadrian and Antonine walls. For the most part though the large masses of Scots, Picts, Britons, and other components of the population probably continued to live in small groups of families, not in isolation, with "their lives dominated by the seasons and social obligation, by agriculture or husbandry, by hunting and fishing; their thoughts by superstition, weatherlore, gossip and ancestral tales, and the faith brought from Ireland by Columba." 44

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