

A History of the Congress of Roman Frontier Studies 1949-2022

A Retrospective to mark the 25th Congress
in Nijmegen

David J. Breeze, Tatiana Ivleva,
Rebecca H. Jones and Andreas Thiel

ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIVES

ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING • OXFORD
2022



ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD

Summertown Pavilion

18-24 Middle Way

Summertown

Oxford OX2 7LG

www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978-1-80327-302-0

ISBN 978-1-80327-303-7 (e-Pdf)

© Archaeopress and David J. Breeze, Tatiana Ivleva, Rebecca H. Jones, Andreas Thiel and those who provided reminiscences 2022

Cover images: The participants at the First Congress in 1949 and the Twenty-fourth Congress in 2018.

The authors and publishers are grateful to the Municipality of Nijmegen, the Netherlands, for a generous grant towards the publication of this book



All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.

This book is available direct from Archaeopress or from our website www.archaeopress.com

For Siegmar von Schnurbein

who led the Congress of Roman Frontier Studies for many years

Contents

List of figures	iii
Preface	1
Introduction.....	3
The Sixth International Congress of Archaeology, Berlin 1939	6
The First Congress, Newcastle, England, UK 1949	13
The Second Congress, Carnuntum, Austria 1955	21
The Third Congress, Rheinfelden/Basel, Switzerland 1957	23
The Fourth Congress, Durham, England, UK 1959	26
The Fifth Congress, former Yugoslavia 1961	28
The Sixth Congress, Arnoldshain, Germany 1964.....	31
The Seventh Congress, Tel Aviv, Israel 1967	36
The Eighth Congress, Cardiff, Wales, UK 1969.....	39
The Ninth Congress, Mamaia, Romania 1972	43
The Tenth Congress, Xanten and Nijmegen, Germany and the Netherlands 1974	47
The Eleventh Congress, Székesfehérvár, Hungary 1976	54
The Twelfth Congress, Stirling, Scotland, UK 1979	58
The Thirteenth Congress, Aalen, Germany 1983	66
The Fourteenth Congress, Carnuntum, Austria 1986.....	73
The Fifteenth Congress, Canterbury, England, UK 1989	80
The Sixteenth Congress, Rolduc Abbey, Kerkrade, the Netherlands 1995.....	85
The Seventeenth Congress, Zalău, Romania 1997.....	91
The Eighteenth Congress, Amman, Jordan 2000.....	97
The Nineteenth Congress, Pécs, Hungary 2003.....	106
The Twentieth Congress, León, Spain 2006	113
The Twenty-first Congress, Newcastle, England, UK 2009	119
The Twenty-second Congress, Ruse, Bulgaria 2012.....	126
The Twenty-third Congress, Ingolstadt, Germany 2015	134
The Twenty-fourth Congress, Viminacium, Serbia 2018.....	142

Reflections on the Congress 151

- The structure of the Congress meetings..... 151
- International influences..... 153
- The cycle of meetings 154
- The location of Congresses 154
- Planning a Congress 158
- Special features..... 159
 - The logos 159
 - The ‘singing’ bus 160
 - Entertainment: the folk dancing and re-enactors 161
 - Mementos 164
 - A retrospective 170

The Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage property 171

Further reading 180

Appendix 182

The Frontiers of the Roman Empire multi-language books..... 182

Acknowledgements..... 184

List of figures

Figure 1.	Map of the provinces and frontiers of the Roman Empire in the mid 2nd century AD	4
Figure 2.	The 1929 excavations at Birdoswald.....	5
Figure 3.	Participants at the Sixth International Congress of Archaeology relax in a beer garden in Berlin: Andreas Alföldi turning to his right with behind him and to the right seated Eric Birley and Howard Comfort with the bow tie	6
Figure 4.	Table of attendance at the Congresses.....	8
Figure 5.	Map of the locations of the Congresses	9
Figure 6.	Covers of some of the Congress proceedings	11
Figure 7.	Eric Birley with his wife Peggy and John Gillam and Brenda Swinbank	12
Figure 8.	The participants in the First Congress at Newcastle in 1949 with partners.....	14
Figure 9.	Anne Robertson, first female speaker at the Limes Congress	16
Figure 10.	Guda van Giffen-Duyvis and Albert Egges van Giffen in 1949 at the Congress	17
Figure 11.	Congress participants visiting an archaeological site in 1949	18
Figure 12.	The museum at Augst (<i>Augusta Raurica</i>)	24
Figure 13.	The museum at Augst (<i>Augusta Raurica</i>)	25
Figure 14.	Four Congress stalwarts on the 1959 Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall	27
Figure 15.	Sirmium, visited in 1961 and in 2018.....	28
Figure 16.	Group photo of participants during the visit to Ptuj	30
Figure 17.	The Evangelical Academy in Arnoldshain.....	31
Figure 18.	Telegram from Prof Emil Condurachi from Bucharest asking for an entrance visa.....	32
Figure 19.	Albert van Giffen, Maurice Euzennat (?) and Arend Hubrecht	32
Figure 20.	Communication at Arnoldshain.....	33
Figure 21.	Hans Schönberger's copy of the Arnoldshain lecture program	34
Figure 22.	Mordechai Gichon's formal invitation letter to host the next Congress in Tel Aviv.....	37
Figure 23.	The 'high table' at the Congress in Tel Aviv	38
Figure 24.	Congress participants attending a lecture in Israel in 1967	38
Figure 25.	The visit to the fort at Brecon Gaer during the Welsh Congress	40
Figure 26.	Visiting the excavations at Usk in South Wales.....	41
Figure 27.	The paddle steamer <i>Decebal</i> passed on the Danube	44
Figure 28.	The late Roman fort at Cappidava	44
Figure 29.	Congress participants on a ferry to visit Dinogetia	45

Figure 30.	Jules Bogaers, one of the organisers of the 1974 Congress	47
Figure 31.	Visiting an excavation at Xanten	48
Figure 32.	Harald von Petrikovits examining a section at Haltern in 1974	48
Figure 33.	Participants returning to the hotel ship moored at Xanten	49
Figure 34.	The Congress welcomed to the G.M. Kam Museum in Nijmegen by Arend Hubrecht	50
Figure 35.	The Congress names in Nijmegen.....	51
Figure 36.	Epigraphists at work at Nijmegen.....	51
Figure 37.	The fort of Tokod being inspected in 1976	54
Figure 38.	The Valentinianic watch-tower at Steinbruch, Visegrád.....	55
Figure 39.	<i>Contra Aquincum</i> , now covered over, in Budapest	56
Figure 40.	The Heidentor, visited on the pre-Congress tour of 1976.....	56
Figure 41.	David Breeze inviting the Congress to Scotland	58
Figure 42.	The core team for the Stirling Congress.....	59
Figure 43.	Visit to the watch-tower above Fendoch	60
Figure 44.	The visit to the fortlet at Duntocher	61
Figure 45.	The bath-house at Bearsden	61
Figure 46.	Bearsden bath-house explained in German	62
Figure 47.	John Wilkes' excavation at the Severan legionary base at Carpow	63
Figure 48.	An attentive audience in Aalen, 1983.....	67
Figure 49.	Sheet music of the 'March of Ala Flavia II'	68
Figure 50.	The timber tower at Mahdholz	68
Figure 51.	Margot Klee explains the fortlet at Welzheim, Rötelsee	69
Figure 52.	The late Roman fort at Zurzach	70
Figure 53.	Mordechai Gichon and C. Sebastian Sommer in Aalen.....	71
Figure 54.	Hermann Vettters with Eric Birley	73
Figure 55.	Guiding by Herma Stiglitz.....	73
Figure 56.	The Roman tower at Tulln	74
Figure 57.	Visiting the site of Zeiselmauer	75
Figure 58.	Guiding by Hannsjörg Ubl.....	76
Figure 59.	A Grubenhaus at Bratislava-Dúbravka, Slovakia.....	76
Figure 60.	Vivien Swan leads the singing at Canterbury in 1989	80
Figure 61.	The Roman lighthouse in Dover.....	81
Figure 62.	The late Roman fort at Portchester Castle	82
Figure 63.	The Ermine Street Guard on parade.....	82
Figure 64.	Tom Parker gets instructions from the Ermine Street Guard	83
Figure 65.	Peter Guest guiding.....	84
Figure 66.	The participants of the Congress at Rolduc, 1995	85
Figure 67.	The pre-Congress excursion in 1995 included a visit to Kalkriese	86
Figure 68.	The post-Congress tour in 1995 explored sites and excavations in Belgium	87
Figure 69.	Tongeren in 1995	88
Figure 70.	The forum at Bavay	88

Figure 71.	Alexandru Matei explaining his excavation in 1997	91
Figure 72.	Group photo of Congress participants from Zalău Congress.....	92
Figure 73.	Walking through the Carpathian Mountains in Romania.....	92
Figure 74.	Relaxing after a long walk.....	93
Figure 75.	The army provided lunch at Poroilissum	94
Figure 76.	Inside the tent; standing Willem Willems	94
Figure 77.	Inspecting an excavation at Alba Iulia on the post-Congress excursion	95
Figure 78.	HRH Prince Hassan arrives to welcome the Congress to Jordan	97
Figure 79.	The Congress in Jordan.....	98
Figure 80.	Siegmar von Schnurbein addresses the Congress	98
Figure 81.	Colin Wells at Qasr el-Azraq.....	100
Figure 82.	Crossing the desert to visit Qasr Bshir	100
Figure 83.	Tom Parker greets the Congress	101
Figure 84.	Gabriele Rasbach, Andreas Thiel, Kirsten Thiel and Franz Joseph Maier at the British Ambassador’s reception	102
Figure 85.	Rebecca Jones, Fraser Hunter, Carol Davies and Jeff Davies at the British Ambassador’s reception	102
Figure 86.	Mark Steel, Walter and Helen Cockle and Roberta Tomlin at the British Ambassador’s reception	102
Figure 87.	David Kennedy with David Breeze and Zsolt Visy	103
Figure 88.	Delegates boarding the helicopter for a flight over Amman and Jerash.....	103
Figure 89.	Martina Meyr in the desert	105
Figure 90.	Zsolt Visy gets the Congress delegates ready for a group photograph	106
Figure 91.	Participants discuss applying for European funding for the Frontiers of the Roman Empire project	107
Figure 92.	Local school children perform a dance for the delegates	108
Figure 93.	Visiting the Roman fort at <i>Gerulata</i> on the pre-Congress excursion....	109
Figure 94.	80th birthday celebrations for Klára Póczy with a presentation from Orsolya Lang	110
Figure 95.	Tony Wilmott and other Congress delegates waving the flags at León	113
Figure 96.	Eduard Nemeth, Ioana Bogdan Cătăniciu, Felix Marcu and Ovidiu Tentea in Spain	114
Figure 97.	The spectacular landscape of the Roman mines at Las Médulas	114
Figure 98.	Esperanza Martín and Ángel Morillo explaining Numancia	115
Figure 99.	Boris Rankov and Geoff Morley taking the ultimate photo looking up the Tower at A Coruña	116
Figure 100.	David Breeze at the wooden carving of Scotland’s Stone of Destiny in the Council Chamber at A Coruña	117
Figure 101.	Matt Symonds on a bus between sites	118
Figure 102.	Congress participants at the closing assembly.....	120

Figure 103.	Nick Hodgson at Piercebridge	120
Figure 104.	Paul Bidwell explaining Piercebridge.....	120
Figure 105.	David Petts explains Binchester	121
Figure 106.	Visit to Whitley Castle	122
Figure 107.	Visiting the Roman cemetery of Petty Knowes near High Rochester..	122
Figure 108.	Post-Congress tour at Chesters	122
Figure 109.	Bill Hanson explains the watch-tower of Muir O’Fauld	123
Figure 110.	Lyudmil Vagalinski.....	126
Figure 111.	A reception during the Ruse Congress.....	127
Figure 112.	Congress participants relaxing by the Danube after a visit to the Roman fort Dimum.....	127
Figure 113.	Florian Matei-Popescu, George Cupcea, Călin Timoc enjoying lunch	128
Figure 114.	Nicolae Gudea at Medzhidy Tabiya	128
Figure 115.	Piotr Dyczek explains the fortress at <i>Novae</i>	129
Figure 116.	<i>Legio I Italica</i> at <i>Novae</i> (Svishtov).....	129
Figure 117.	Carol van Driel-Murray at <i>Sexaginta Prista</i>	130
Figure 118.	Martin Lemke and Sebastian Sommer at Ruse	131
Figure 119.	Sebastian Sommer addresses the Congress	134
Figure 120.	The Congress participants gathered at the fort at Eining	135
Figure 121.	The ‘Freiburger Truppe’ from Freiburg University at Ingolstadt	135
Figure 122.	The miniature reconstruction at Ruffenhofen	136
Figure 123.	Boat trip on the Danube	137
Figure 124.	Markus Gschwind introduces the fort at Eining.....	137
Figure 125.	Some of the Limes ladies at the Kelten Romer Museum at Manching.	138
Figure 126.	The limes at Zandt: watch-tower 15/15	138
Figure 127.	Walking in fog to visit the <i>limes</i> at Zandt	139
Figure 128.	The high table at the opening ceremony in Belgrade	142
Figure 129.	Delegates catching up in Belgrade at the start of the Congress	144
Figure 130.	The entrance to the replica Roman fort at Viminacium.....	144
Figure 131.	Boris Burandt gives a lecture.....	145
Figure 132.	The winner of the debate in Viminacium	146
Figure 133.	Visiting the Iron Gates in Serbia	147
Figure 134.	The Congress participants at the Roman fort of <i>Diana</i>	146
Figure 135.	Visiting the late Roman / Byzantine city of <i>Justiniana Prima</i>	148
Figure 136.	A reception in the courtyard of the replica Roman villa – the <i>Domus Scientiarum Viminacium</i>	149
Figure 137.	Fireworks at the end of the closing session	149
Figure 138.	Leaflets and books from the 2003 Congress	155
Figure 139.	David Breeze receiving his Festschrift in Newcastle in 2009.....	156
Figure 140.	The celebration for the launch of Bill Hanson’s Festschrift in Ingolstadt in 2015.....	156
Figure 141.	Bill Hanson receiving his Festschrift.....	157

Figure 142. Carol van Driel-Murray receiving her Festschrift in Viminacium in 2018.....	157
Figure 143. Collage of the logos from the Congresses	159
Figure 144. Tom Parker leads the singing on the bus in 2015.....	161
Figure 145. Two of the re-enactors greeting Congress participants at Binchester....	162
Figure 146. Re-enactors dressed as soldiers greet participants at Binchester	162
Figure 147. Actors following the ‘fight’ between the Romans and Iron Age people in Viminacium	162
Figure 148. Children doing traditional dances during the Congress in Bulgaria in 2012	163
Figure 149. The stamped samian bowl from Pécs reading: MMDCCLVI SOPIANAE	164
Figure 150. Bags for delegates for the 2018 <i>Viminacium</i> and 2015 Ingolstadt Congresses	165
Figure 151. Some of the T-shirts spotted at the Congress.....	165
Figure 152. Proportion of male/female delegates in the last 30 years.....	166
Figure 153. Gender balance by province	166
Figure 154. Gender balance by topic.....	168
Figure 155. Baby Ariana accompanying her mother Renate Kurzmam to the Limes Congress in Jordan in 2000	169
Figure 156. Frontiers of the Roman Empire Culture 2000 partners at their first meeting in Sopron, Hungary, in 2005.....	172
Figure 157. Frontiers of the Roman Empire Culture 2000 partners meet with colleagues from the Netherlands.....	173
Figure 158. Anna Adamczyk, designer of most of the multi-language books, holding the first copy of <i>The Roman Frontier in Egypt</i> by Michel Reddé	174
Figure 159. Erik Dobat and Sandra Walkshofer filming in Bulgaria in 2007	174
Figure 160. Final workshop of the Advanced Limes Applications project in Landshut, Bavaria in 2019	176
Figure 161. Building the ‘ <i>Danuvia Alacris</i> ’ replica ship to row down the Danube in 2022.....	176
Figure 162. The UNESCO World Heritage branding outside the Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery in Carlisle	176
Figure 163. The UNESCO nomination team for the Danube Limes (western segment) visiting the wall of Regensburg legionary fortress	177
Figure 164. Hadrian’s Wall visit to the Great Wall of China in 2019 as part of the Wall-to-Wall project	178
Figure 165. Limes Co-Chairs and members of the Nijmegen organising committee at the 2019 Pilgrimage of Hadrian’s Wall	185

A note on terminology. The Congress is referred to as the International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies or Limes Congress or Limeskongress. 'Limes' is the Roman term for a frontier, though, just to complicate matters, it originally meant a road. In this book, we will refer to the Limes Congress, but when referring to the frontier, *limes* will be used, as in the German *limes*. Even this leads to complications because the correct name for the World Heritage Property is the 'Obergermanisch-Raetischer Limes'. We crave the indulgence of our readers for our efforts in seeking uniformity of expression.

The Congress has also taken place over a period of time when several countries have changed their names. We have attempted to retain some consistency but, again, have made a judgement call and hope our readers can tolerate some of our decisions.

Preface

In 1949, in the aftermath of a devastating war, Eric Birley organised the First Congress of Roman Frontier Studies. His aim was not only to pursue the study of Roman frontiers but also to take a step towards restoring harmony in international relations within this field of research. Complete delivery of his aim was not possible as several German archaeologists were still Prisoners of War in Soviet Union. These include Kurt Stade, with whom Birley had planned the First Congress in Berlin in 1939 while attending the Sixth International Archaeology Congress. Stade had excavated with Birley at Birdoswald on Hadrian's Wall in 1929, together with Ian Richmond and Shimon Applebaum. The friendships formed there were to last through decades and Applebaum went on to organise the Seventh Congress in Tel Aviv in 1967 and attend its successor in Cardiff in 1969.

The pattern had been set early on: the exchange of information, networking and friendship. These three elements remain at the core of the approach of those organising and attending the Congress. They are reinforced by the pattern of the meetings, usually held every three years. The programme includes not only lectures but also visits to the local Roman military sites led by appropriate specialists. Over several Congresses, it is possible to inspect many of the iconic Roman military installations around the Roman Empire, and in particular observe them in their landscape settings. Alas, however, not all, as it has proved impossible to hold a Congress in North Africa and several of the countries of the Middle East.

Over the 73 years since the First Congress, membership has grown enormously with more lecture theatres and more coaches being required every meeting. In this year of publication, 2022, we hold the twenty-fifth Congress at Nijmegen in the Netherlands, a city well known to Roman frontier archaeologists and early medieval scholars alike. Here, we anticipate that around 400 archaeologists will gather to continue their voyages of exploration. For newer participants, we hope this book will help them understand the body they have joined; for older friends, this will be a reminder of friendships made and strengthened; for all, we trust that it will be a spur to continuing investigations and research into Rome's greatest monument, its frontiers; for this year, it will be a celebration of the twenty-fifth Congress of Roman Frontier Studies.

The exercise of creating this book has made us realise that there are greater stories to be told than in these pages, through the development of the study of Roman frontiers and the role of the Congress of Roman Frontier Studies in this process. This story is populated by many of the well-known archaeologists of the last 75 years and, indeed, earlier as the genesis of the Congress lies in the inter-War years. It is also a story

of international cooperation and redemption. In preparing this book, we have used known archives, such as that at Vindolanda, as well as that maintained by the first author and now donated to the Römisch-Germanische Kommission in Frankfurt. We have also discovered other archives, such as that of Albert Egges van Giffen in the library of Groningen University and Eric Birley's file at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, and no doubt others exist. These archives, covering the whole history of the Congress, stand ready for further study.

David J. Breeze, Edinburgh
Tatiana Ivleva, Leiden
Rebecca H. Jones, Peebles
Andreas Thiel, Esslingen

Introduction

The remains of Roman frontiers lie in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, physical manifestations of Rome's imperial policy (Figure 1). Known and recorded in various ways for centuries, it was the development of archaeological activities in the 19th century that brought them to greater attention. The history of research into the various frontiers around the Empire is full of the names of famous scholars. They include John Collingwood Bruce on Hadrian's Wall, Flóris Rómer in Hungary, Rudolf Brünnow and Alfred von Domaszewski in Jordan, Antoine Poidebard in Syria, Aurel Stein in Iraq and Jordan and of course, Theodor Mommsen in Germany and beyond, whose magnum opus on *Römische Geschichte* (*History of Rome*) was one reason for his award of the second Nobel Prize for Literature in 1902. The *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (*CIL*) that he established remains the authoritative source for Roman epigraphy.

It was Mommsen's agitation for *Limes* research that led to the foundation of the Reichs-Limeskommission (RLK) in 1892. Two years earlier, in 1890, the Glasgow Archaeological Society had undertaken seminal excavations on the Antonine Wall; also in the 1890s, the Oxford scholar Francis Haverfield started his research on Hadrian's Wall. This and subsequent decades were formative in establishing archaeological understanding of Roman frontiers.

Research into the archaeological phenomena of the border provinces of the Roman Empire continued to gain prominence into the 20th century. The German scholar Ernst Fabricius, (head of the RLK from 1902) was in regular contact with Eric Birley from Britain, whose lifelong interest in Hadrian's Wall began whilst a student at Oxford in the 1920s and further developed during his tenure at Durham University. Fabricius sent his assistant, Kurt Stade, to the excavations at Birdoswald in 1929 (Figure 2). These excavations became famous for the artefacts and inscriptions uncovered, which influenced research on Hadrian's Wall for some 50 years.



Figure 1. Map of the provinces and frontiers of the Roman Empire in the mid 2nd century AD (produced for the Frontiers of the Roman Empire EU Culture 2000 project)

INTRODUCTION



Figure 2. The 1929 excavations at Birdoswald, from left to right, John Charlton, Eric Birley, Mr Hunter a student, F.G. Simpson, Mr Addison a student, Kurt Stade, Shimon Applebaum, R.G. Collingwood. Ian Richmond took the photograph

The Sixth International Congress of Archaeology, Berlin 1939

In August 1939, around eight hundred participants from 34 nations joined the Sixth International Congress of Archaeology in Berlin. Among the scientists who met at the invitation of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut were Andreas Alföldy, Eric Birley, Howard Comfort, Hans Dragendorff and many other familiar names in Roman archaeology (Figure 3).

One of the six sessions held at that Congress was on 'Roman Antiquity II - The north and west'. In his opening speech, Rudolph Egger of Vienna set out the motives



Figure 3. Participants at the Sixth International Congress of Archaeology relax in a beer garden in Berlin: Andreas Alföldy turning to his right with behind him and to the right seated Eric Birley and Howard Comfort with the bow tie

behind this special section: 'The reason is not due to external circumstances, e. g. the abundance of material, ... but to the close relations that connect the west of Europe and the Danube countries ... Emphasis should also be placed on ... the distinct independent existence of these provinces...', a confident statement at a time when 'archaeology' was seen as the archaeology of ancient Egypt and Greece.

Nineteen speakers introduced archaeological, historical and numismatic research from Algeria, Austria, Germany, Yugoslavia, Poland, Romania, Switzerland, Serbia, Hungary and the United Kingdom. Several of these were genuine frontier papers. They included Christoph Albrecht on Oberaden, Andreas Alföldi on the Sarmatians, Viktor Hoffiller on Sirmium, Louis Leschi on Lambaesis, Stefan Paulivics on Aquincum and Nicola Vulčić on the Danube *limes*. Papers on Roman frontiers were given in other sessions, on Adamklissi, the Citadel in Jerusalem and the frontier system of Arabia and Palestine.

Surviving letters in the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Berlin demonstrate that since at least 1937 Eric Birley, Ian Richmond and Kurt Stade had been discussing the possibility of holding the First Congress of Roman Frontier Studies in Britain to follow the Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall in 1940 (RGK-A-0373 55a-b). Birley and Stade continued the discussions at the International Congress of Archaeology. But, given the timing of the Congress, August 1939, Eric Birley was there but briefly, having to leave it in a hurry, summoned back to Britain via a coded telegram purportedly sent by his wife but actually from Military Intelligence, who had recruited him three or four months earlier because of his excellent German and study of the Roman army. In his haste, he left his pyjamas behind. After the War they were returned to him by Frau Nesselhauf, washed and ironed.

Turning plans into reality

Needless to say, the Second World War prevented the holding of both the Congress and the Pilgrimage in 1940. But after the War had ended, the time was ripe for a specific Congress on the archaeological issues of the Roman border provinces. Birley resurrected the proposal with the intention of bringing together colleagues from across Europe, restoring international relations and rebuilding harmony between nations. Unfortunately, Kurt Stade could not attend because he was still a Prisoner of War in the Soviet Union.

The first International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies was held in Newcastle upon Tyne in July 1949 and timed to follow the Centenary Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall. It was a small gathering of about 40 archaeologists and historians (together with several spouses), but it included significant figures such as Andreas Alföldi and Mortimer Wheeler. Today, up to 400 people from 25 countries and all five continents come together in a province of the Roman Empire to discuss recent research into Roman frontier archaeology, artefacts, frontier social worlds, Roman military studies

and visit the frontier remains and museums in the area in which the Congress is being held (Figure 4).

The relationship between that Centenary Pilgrimage and the First Congress set the pattern for many future meetings in that the Pilgrimage served as a pre- or post-Congress tour in the ninth year of each decade thereby drawing the Congress back to Britain. This ran for five decades, but after 1989 it was decided to break the link and hold the Congress every three years; in 2009 the two patterns coincided again and the Congress returned to Newcastle, the location of that First Congress sixty years earlier. At many Congresses there has been a pre- and a post-Congress tour of sites

Year, Location	Participants	Lectures	Lectures published
1949, Newcastle (GB)	40	11	11
1955, Carnuntum (AT)	34	22	22
1957, Rheinfelden (CH)		21	20
1959, Durham (GB)	89	20	
1961, Celje (SL)	69	25	19
1964, Arnoldshain (DE)	100	27	27
1967, Tel Aviv (IL)		41	37
1969, Cardiff (GB)	103	32	32
1972, Mamaia (RO)	177	69	55
1974, Xanten/Nijmegen (DE/NL)	180	68	68
1976, Székesfehérvár (HU)	156	87	57
1979, Stirling (GB)	164	81	77
1983, Aalen (DE)	284	120	115
1986, Carnuntum (AT)	225	104	87
1989, Canterbury (GB)	190	102	100
1995, Rolduc (NL)	200	99	99
1997, Zalău (RO)	204	106	106
2000, Amman (JO)	250	150	100
2003, Pécs (HU)	240	150	99
2006, León (ES)	284	197	138
2009, Newcastle (GB)	350	180	105
2012, Ruse (BG)	300	204	127
2015, Ingolstadt (DE)	370	210	149
2018, Viminacium (RS)	360	260	140

Figure 4. Table of attendance at the Congresses. The figures in pink are unknown and those in yellow are unconfirmed

and museums, normally lasting between one and three days, thereby extending the whole Congress experience up to a fortnight.

A distinct feature of the Congress since the first meeting has been the integration of lectures and site tours, the latter helping to ensure the convivial atmosphere which is the hallmark of the Congress. Over the last 73 years the Congress has travelled to 15 countries in Europe from the Atlantic to the Black Sea and two in the Middle East. In Roman terms, an equivalent number of provinces have been visited (Figure 5).

It is a matter of great regret that a full Congress has not been held in North Africa. In 1954, the exciting discoveries in North Africa beckoned but the death of the organiser Louis Leschi led to its cancellation. The unsettled international situation led a proposed Congress in Morocco in 2018 to be abandoned. The interests of the participants of the Congress has always extended to the lands beyond the frontier and the artefacts found there that had passed through Roman frontiers.

The Congress of Roman Frontier Studies is unusual in that it has no constitution, although a Code of Conduct has recently been issued. At each meeting, the location of the next Congress is decided at a plenary session and the baton passes from the organisers of that Congress to those who will prepare the next (though whenever possible Congresses are planned two ahead). Each Congress is organised by a local Committee but advised by an 'international committee' consisting of those archaeologists who have organised previous meetings. Continuity is also provided by the two chairs of the Congress, recently David Breeze and Siegmund von Schnurbein and now Rebecca Jones and Andreas Thiel. The local Committee take on the bulk of the organisation, and are responsible for seeing through the subsequent publication of their *Acta*, the proceedings of the Congress (Figure 6). It is incredible that two scholars who attended the First Congress in Newcastle in 1949 are still alive: Brenda Heywood (Figure 7) and Norman McCord. The reminiscences of those who attended the Congresses are an important part of our history and so we have invited some colleagues to offer their memories of a key meeting, often the First Congress they attended, although more were submitted and most included below.

This book considers each Congress in turn against the political background of the time. Essential information is provided at the beginning of each account with a bibliography of the Congress at the end. The first item is the proceedings of the Congress, followed by the guide for the Congress, when one was produced, and finally additional publications relating to the Congress. These include reviews, several of which contain critical comments not just on the publications but on the nature of the Congress itself.

The gathering of information on each Congress has not always been easy. In the early days, information on the organisation and organisers of the Congress was frequently not provided, and one report does not even have an editor cited. However,

THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ARCHAEOLOGY, BERLIN 1939



Figure 6. Covers of some of the Congress proceedings



Figure 7. Eric Birley with his wife Peggy and John Gillam (far left) and Brenda Swinbank (later Heywood, far right)

this gradually changed with the editor of the proceedings often providing not only an overview of the event (from 1989 onwards) but also a review of research on the frontiers in his/her country and comment on the impact of the visit of the Congress (starting in 2003). These are valuable accounts in their own right, but also provide useful information on the development of the conferences and therefore an aspect of the history of archaeology in the 20th century and into the 21st.