

Search

VOL 133

HOME / ARCHIVES (2003) / Articles

A walk along the Antonine Wall in 1825: the travel journal of the Rev John Skinner

Lawrence Keppie (Author)

KEYWORD(S):

Antonine Wall, Stones, Pencil Sketches, Documentary/literary sources, sculptures

LOCATION(S):

Antonine Wall; Scotland; UK

PERIOD(S):

Roman, modern, 19th century

ABSTRACT

In 1825 the Rev John Skinner, an Anglican clergyman from Camerton in Somerset, walked the length of the Antonine Wall from east to west, as part of an extensive Scottish tour. He recorded his observations at length in a journal and prepared daily a series of pencil sketches which constitute an invaluable record of the monument at a fixed date. His sketches include sculptures and inscriptions subsequently lost, and a few sites otherwise unrecorded. He also visited the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow in order to view its collection of Roman stones.

DOWNLOADS

 PDF

PUBLISHED

30-11-2004

HOW TO CITE

Keppie, L. (2004). A walk along the Antonine Wall in 1825: the travel journal of the Rev John Skinner. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 133, 205-244. Retrieved from <http://journals.socantscot.org/index.php/psas/article/view/9582>

More Citation Formats

[Make a submission](#)

INFORMATION

[For Readers](#)[For Authors](#)[For Librarians](#)

OUR PUBLICATIONS

[Journals homepage](#)[PSAS](#)[SAIR](#)[Arch Scot](#)[About Us](#)

Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

[About PSAS](#) | [Take Down Policy](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Cookies](#)

Society of Antiquaries of Scotland publications

[Journals homepage](#)[PSAS](#)[SAIR](#)[Arch Scot](#)[About Us](#)

Hosted by the University of Edinburgh Journal Hosting Service.

Society of Antiquaries of Scotland



National Museums Scotland
Chambers Street
Edinburgh EH1 1JF

Tel: +44 (0) 131 247 4145

Email:

publications@socantscot.org

Charity No SC 010440

The Antonine Wall. Great walls stretching across the country from coast to coast. Roads, forts, bathhouses, bridges and art works. All this graphically proclaimed the might of Rome. They brought a style of civilisation which influenced the peoples of Scotland long after they had packed up and gone back to Rome, an influence which was violently resisted by the tribes of the north. Hadrian's Wall. It is a tribute to the skill of the Roman engineers that the great engineers who built the Forth Clyde Canal or the Edinburgh to Glasgow Railway used the same line across the country. The wall's rampart was 39,726 Roman paces or 36 miles, 620 yards long. Made of turf taken from local pastures it rose to a height of around 20 ft from a 24ft stone foundation. The Antonine Wall spans the narrowest portion of lowland Scotland, between the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Clyde. The actual construction of the wall was supervised by Lollius Urbicus, governor of Britain. Unlike its more solid southern counterpart, the Antonine Wall was built of turf fronted by a ditch 12 feet deep. Places to see along the Wall: Bar Hill Fort, Twechar, Strathclyde Bearsden Bathouse, Bearsden, Strathclyde Blackhill Roman Camp, Braco, Tayside Castlecary Roman Fort, Strathclyde Croy Hill, Croy, Strathclyde Dullatur, Strathclyde Muir o' Fauld Roman Signal Station, Clathy, Tayside Rough Castle, Bonnybridge, Central Scotland Seabegs Wood, Bonnybridge, Central Scotland Watling Lodge, Falkirk, Lothian. When complete, the Antonine Wall comprised a bank of turf almost 3m high and 4m wide, topped with an imposing

wooden palisade. Between sixteen to nineteen forts were built along the length of the wall to house the many hundreds of Roman soldiers that manned this brave (but chilly) new frontier. On the north side a deep ditch was dug to further impress and deter the Caledonians, and on the south, a road was constructed in order that the Roman soldiers could be moved to trouble spots quickly. But it appears that even the deep ditch, sturdy structure and imposing palisade of the Antonine Wall fai