The Scottish campaigns of Septimius Severus 208-211

A reassessment of the evidence

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Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   The aim of the research

When discussing the Roman military presence in modern day Scotland, the campaigns of governor and generalGnaeus JuliusAgricola between 79/80-83/84 usually get the most attention from both scholars and the general public. Tacitus' biography of his father-in-law and the remains of the Gask Ridge frontier system, consisting of a chain of forts, fortlets and watchtowers, illustrate the first military presence of the Roman Empire in modern day Scotland and its desire to conquer the entirety of the British main island, only to be followed by its retreat only several years later. The second major series of campaigns, ordered by the newly appointed emperor Antonius Pius in 139, left its mark on Scotland with the construction of the relatively short lived Antonine Wall, of which remains can be clearly seen in the landscape to the present day. Multiple books and articles have been written about both subjects since the 19th century, including new research in the last decade (e.g. Woolliscroft and Hoffman 2006 and Breeze 2016).

This brings us to the last major series of campaigns and the focus of this research, the Severan campaigns between 208-211, from now on referred to as just the 'Severan campaigns'. Despite the large and extensive deployment of troops, possibly eclipsing the 30-35.000 troops serving in Agricola's campaigns (Mattingly 2007, 116), little research has been done regarding these campaigns. Reed (1976) and more recently Hodgson (2014) are exceptions to this rule. Both scholars have rather successfully tried to explain the campaigns from an archaeological perspective, with the available historical sources having a secondary position in their research. This thesis will give a wider overview and context of the available evidence, including the known historical sources.

The main goal of this thesis is, therefore, to gather all the available evidence that is known about the Severan campaigns, creating a single clear overview, and opening a new discussion. It is crucial that this needs to be done, because at the moment much of the archaeological evidence is scattered throughout multiple works, each focusing on different aspects of the Severan campaigns in a wider context or on one site in particular. Both the archaeological and historical evidence that has been gathered will be subjected to a critical analysis and weighted to other data before being included in the final conclusion.

1.2   Research approaches and questions

The research that has been conducted for this literature study has three main approaches. First of all, there are four historical accounts which detail the Severan campaigns. These works are Cassius Dio's *Historia Roma,* Herodian's *History of the Empire*, Eutropius' *Breviarium* and the *Augustan History,* better known as the Historia Augusta. These works can give a better perspective of the Severan campaigns, or at least how the Roman (historians) viewed them.

Secondly, books, articles and papers will be the main resource for this research. The resources that will be used solely consist of peer-reviewed articles, papers and books, of which the sources are regarded as reliable. The majority of these resources have an archaeological focus, although ancient literary sources play to some degree a part in most works. The archaeological data that is most widely used in these sources can be divided two main categories: excavations and aerial photography. Each category has its own set of specific advantages and disadvantages, which will not be discussed in depth for that this has been done in numerous books, articles and papers (e.g. Renfrew and Bahn 2012 78-88; 104-118).

Lastly, online databases are equally important as the books, because they give researchers who do not reside in the United Kingdom access to archaeological finds which are located throughout the United Kingdom in various museums and private collections. Pictures, however, are not always displayed and the information given of certain objects is not always adequate. These various problems, if encountered, will be made clear discussing the individual objects. The main online databases that have been used in this research are the Roman Inscriptions of Britain and the Tyne&Wear Archives&Museums.

These different approaches help to answer the three main research questions that this thesis will answer:

- What historical and archaeological evidence of the Severan campaigns is currently available?
- Are the current and past perspectives of the Severan campaigns still applicable with recent evidence?
- How can our understanding of the Severan campaigns be enhanced?

1.3 Chapter layout

After the general introduction (chapter 1), a short introduction to Scotland, describing the geography of the research area and the local population that the Roman army would have first encountered in the late first, second and early third century, is presented (chapter 2.1). Hereafter, the Roman army on campaign will be introduced (chapter 2.2) followed by a brief summary of the Flavian and Antonine activity in Scotland (chapter 2.3).

In the next chapter, necessary background information about the reign of Severus up until the campaigns in Scotland is discussed (chapter 3.1). This will be followed by examining his connections with the province of *Britannia*(chapter 3.2)and an outline of the campaigns, according to the available historical sources (chapter 3.3). Lastly, the current state of the historical and archaeological image of the Severan campaigns, mainly focussing on the articles by Reed and Hodgson, will be given (chapter 3.4).

In chapter 4, the currently available archaeological evidence for the Severan campaigns will be presented and discussed, divided by location, in- and outside Scotland, and category, like forts and temporary camps.

Chapter 5 will discuss the course of the campaigns on the basis of the evidence presented in chapters 2, 3 and 4. The chapter is divided in the preparation phase (chapter 5.1), the campaign phase (chapter 5.2) and the aftermath phase (chapter 5.3).

Lastly, in the concluding chapter 6, the research questions presented in chapter 1.2 will be answered.

Chapter 2: Background information

2.1 Iron Age Scotland

The Iron Age in Scotland is normally defined as the period from the 8th century BCE till the arrival of the Roman military in the second half of the first century CE. There is, however, some debate to the differentiating between the Iron Age and the Roman Age in Scotland, due to a lack of significant changes in the archaeological record (Armit and Ralston 2003, 169). For this reason, no difference will be made between the Iron Age and Roman Age in the archaeological data used in this thesis.

Illustrating howthe Iron Age communities in Scotland, which the Roman army would have encountered, operated on both a social and an economic level is a difficult task. Herodian and Cassius Dio, both key historians for the second and early third century CE, haven given descriptions of the local people of Scotland in their historical accounts, but these accounts are far from reliable. Herodian describes them for example as:

> *"the barbarians usually swim in these swamps or run along in them, submerged up to the waist. Of course, they are practically naked and do not mind the mud because they are unfamiliar with the use of clothing…"* (Hdn. 3, 14, 6).

Although Dio's account is more detailed and somewhat more realistic at places, he too exaggerates:

> "*They can endure hunger and cold and any kind of hardship; for they plunge into the swamps and exist there for many days with only their heads above water, and in the forests they support themselves upon bark and roots, and for all emergencies they prepare a certain kind of food, the eating of a small portion of which, the size of a bean, prevents them from feeling either hunger or thirst.*" (Cass. Dio 77, 12, 4).

The accounts of Roman historians, who have most likely never personally set foot in Britain,should thus not be consulted for reliable information on the local population. The tribes of Britain themselves had no writing tradition, so the archaeological record is the only trustworthy source of information when discussing the people living in Scotland during the Severan campaigns.

Round houses were the predominant residential structures for the local population in eastern and southern Scotland, which were placed inside enclosed and fortified settlements (Armit and Ralston 2003, 169), but open and non-defended settlements are also known, sometimes coexisting with defended settlements in the same area (Davies 2007, 271). Settlements could have had a wide variety of defensive structures, like ring ditches, palisades and uni- or multivallates, which were used in single or multiple layers of defence. Throughout the centuries there was a prevalence of certain combinations, or lack, of defences (Armit and Ralston 2003, 176-7). The multivallate sites that could have been dated, however, date to 800-400 BCE, so they were presumably not occupied when the Roman army arrived (Davies 2007, 272-3).

In eastern Scotland, round houses with low stone walls, also called 'Votadinian' houses, replaced to some degreesubstantial houses around 500 BCE. These larger houses could contain large individual domestic units and/or various economic and social activities and were likely in use during the Roman military campaigns (Armit and Ralston 2003, 175-6). This was also the case in southern Scotland, were in the Tyne-Forth area a dense pattern of unfortified settlements was established before the first Roman contact in the 70s/80s CE. This dense pattern could be interpreted as evidence for a period of stability and larger population numbers (Armit and Ralston 2003, 179).

Hillforts are, alongside (un)defended roundhouse settlements, another common structure in both Scotland and mainland Europe. These large enclosed sites would have demanded the command and mobilization of labour on a vast scale. Hillforts are, however, not always defended and do not have a pure military function, instead implying authority on the surrounding land, and can be compared to stone circles and henges from the Neolithic time (Armit and Ralston 2003, 182). Most of the known hillforts in Scotland are concentrated in the southern part and are usually smaller than 1.2ha in size. Although there is great regional variation, these smaller hillforts were not occupied solelyby wealthy residences (Frodsham*et al*2007, 258).

The people living in Scotland implemented several different survival strategies, which depended on the type of soil, topography, climate and previous Bronze Age patterns that were used. On higher altitudes this is reflected in the use of broad spectrum economics complemented with pastoral herding and agriculture, predominantly barley. In- and extensive agriculture in the east and south of Scotland was more reliable and had less of an impact on the environment than on higher altitudes which suffered from

podsolization and the expansion of peat bogs. In the Lowlands, there is even evidence for a highly organized patterns of landscape division, in the shape of pit alignment systems and linear earthworks. Although what was grown is not certain, wheat, spelt and barley are attested for in pollen samples (Armit and Ralston 2003, 188-90).

One last important matter to discuss is impact that people had on the environment before and during the Iron Age in Scotland. Pollen research has shown that there is an increase in grasses, weeds and charcoal in the Iron Age, which has been argued to be evidence for an increase in population, so more grazing pastures and agricultural land would have been needed. Wood, used as fuel for heating and cooking which produced charcoal, would also be in greater demand. A change from wooden to stone structures and the use of stone and earth enclosures for defensive purposes with the Votadinian houses could be seen as an indication for the increasingly limited availability of wood. Roman temporary camps, which will be discussed in depth in chapter 4.1, were alsoenclosed by earthworks, contrary to the usual wooden defences. Even though the pattern that has just been described is not universal in Scotland, the description of the massive 'Caledonian forests' mentioned in the classical sourceshould be taken with a grain of salt (Armit and Ralston 2003, 191-2).

It is evident that the Romans would not have encountered 'barbarians' described by Dio and Herodian, rather observing people who lived in familiar circumstances. Families largely living in open, non-defended settlements depending on large scale agriculture would have been common in the Lowlands and the valleys further north were the Roman army would march through, with the hillforts being the exception. Through the earlier presence of the Roman army in both the first and second centuries, both the Romans and the native tribes of Scotland knew of each other's existence from firsthand experience and had some contact, as Roman material culture present in Scotland illustrates, before the arrival of Severus and his forces. The impact that this relation had on the local population is still heavily debated, but what is certain is that after more than a century of contact and two previous invasions, both the local population and the Roman army knew what they could expect. Who this Roman army would have marched into Scotland for the third time and how it was organized is the subject of the next chapter.

2.2 Roman military

The Roman military that marched into Scotland was highly experienced and organized.To understands its decisions and the marks that it left in the archaeological record, a short description will be given about the organisation andthe marching tactics.

2.2.1 Organisation

At the beginning of the reign of Septimius Severus, in 193 CE, there were around thirty legions active in the whole Roman Empire who formed the backbone of the Roman army. The newest additions were Legio I, II and III Parthica created by Severus in preparation of the Parthian campaigns from 195-202. Legio II Parthica was unique, because they were, together with the recently reformed Praetorian Guard, stationed with mounted units and military police some thirty kilometres from Rome. This mobile field army of some 21.500 men was the first legionary presence in Italy in Imperial Rome's history (Elliot 2014, 29). These new units consisted of the most loyal troops under Severus' command, with most of them being formerly part of his Danube legions. Furthermore, the combination of multiple positive changes to the Roman army, like a raise in pay, soldiers given the right to marry and making it possible for equestrians to become legionary commander, made the soldiers extremely loyal to Severus, but at the same time made them more powerful and the emperor became increasingly depended on keeping them on their side. This was particularly the case with frontier troops, who became more favoured and who became more loyal to their own generals than the emperor (Elliot 2014, 22-3).

Each legion was similar in size, consisting of ten cohorts of 480 heavy infantry each, with the exception of the prestigious first cohort which consisted of 800 veterans who would likely lead the frontal assault. These cohorts in their turn consisted of six eighty-men centuries. Each century was further divided into ten eight-men 'tent parties'. In addition to the soldier on foot, each legion had his own cavalry detachment for scouting, long range patrol and courier duties when it was not protecting the flanks of the legion during marches through hostile territory (Elliot 2014, 24-6). Each legion was also equipped with ten stone-throwing *ballistas* and sixty metal dart and spear-firing *scorpios.* Catapults are also known from this time (Dando-Collins 2010, 70-1), but it unlikely that they were taken on this series of campaigns due to the lack of cities or heavily fortified sites.

Legions were supported by individual auxiliary cohorts (*auxilia)*, made up by non-citizens from (recently) conquered provinces. Mounted *auxilia* supported the Roman cavalry, for the simple fact that most frontier people had a (long) tradition of horseback warfare (Elliot 2014, 26). These auxiliary units were, most of the time, connected to specific legions and travelled with them. They were armed like their legionary counterparts, but wore lighter ringmail armour and can therefore be regarded as light infantry units. Even though they consisted of non-citizen, they were commanded by prefects from the equestrian class. There were, however, exceptions to this rule, with local nobles leading their own tribes from time to time (Dando-Collins 2010, 50-2).

At the beginning of the reign of Severus, the use of individual legionary detachments in wars had become common place. These *vexillations* consisted of one or multiple cohorts of a single legion. Multiple *vexillations* from different legions could be called upon during times of war and sudden crisis without shifting whole legions away from their critical frontier positions. Severus, however, did not exclusively used *vexillations* during his wars. The campaigns against the Parthian Kingdom in 197 and the Caledonians in 208-211 saw the movement of whole legions to assist in his campaigns (Elliot 2014, 27-8).

2.2.2   The Roman army on march

Marching was an important part of Roman warfare. According to Vegetius' fourth century *De Re Militari*, Roman military experts regarded the march to be far more dangerous than the actual battle itself, with the troops being off guard and not fully armed when attacked (Veg. Mil. 3, 6). Marching would involve travelling a distance of around 30 kilometres (18-20 miles), depending on the speed of the baggage train, which on its turn depended on the local terrain and potential hostilities. This baggage train consisted of around 650 mules and 100 additional carts for each legion, which were both managed by civilians, and carrying almost everything that the soldiers needed, including tents, food, (cooking) equipment, and much more. A large amount of followers, including merchants, prostitutes, families and slaves, usually followed the train (Dando-Collins 2010, 69-70). It is questionable how large this group would have been during the Severan campaigns, keeping in mind the hostile territory and the harsh weather. Never the less, the march would have looked absolutely massive, to both the Romans and natives. The sheer size of the whole operation should not be underestimated. For example, a soldier's daily ration would consist around 1kg (2-3lb) of bread, 1 kg (2lb) of meat, two pints of wine and half a pint of oil (Breeze 1983, 269). While on campaign,

this could of course differ. The daily ration of, for example, meat and wine could in theory be lowered to be less of a burden on the baggage train. Even when taking into consideration a smaller daily ration, the Roman army would still consume several tens of thousands kilograms of food and water during the Severan campaigns. The logistics to arrange this feat would have been extremely complex and would demand a lot of planning, although the previous campaigns into Scotland would have provided a rough idea of the route the soldiers would take.

Vegetius states that the baggage train is to be placed in the middle, with a van- and rearguard consisting of both infantry and cavalry protecting it (Veg. Mil. 3, 6), although this is likely a simplified version. Such a drawn-out line, especially when tens of thousands of troops are involved, hampers communication within the column, making coordination during an attack difficult. Employing a parallel column, something that Agricola used, could be a solution. This strategy is, however, countered by its slow speed and difficulty to properly coordinate (Thorne 2007, 226). Splitting an army in multiple sections would, of course, be another solution which could be deployed. Evidence for these tactics will most likely not survive in the archaeological record, with the exception of multiple lines of marching camps, and we are therefore mostly reliant on the historical record for this information.

Marching would begin in the morning, while building, digging and the gathering of local supplies, such as food, water and wood, by small parties took place in the afternoon and evening. The building of a new marching camp was prepared by a party that would have been send out in advance, finding a suitable and strategic patch of ground. This party would level the campsite as much as possible and draw up the layout of the camp. The perimeters of the rectangle camp would have been made of a rampart of around 3-4 metres (10-12 feet) high, preferable made from turf, with a 4 metre (12 feet) deep and 1 metre (3 feet) wide ditch. These numbers are, however, averages and the specifics would depend on the camp commander and the local terrain. Within the camp, tents would be placed to accommodate the soldiers, with open space for the baggage train and any plunder or prisoners that would have been taken. When the soldiers were told to leave, which could be the next day or week, they would break the camp up and burn what could not be carried with them (Dando-Collins 2010, 65-7; Jones 2011, 29; 39-45). There are, however, examples of camps that were not levelled after the departure by

the army, indicating a possible desire to reuse the camps or leaving a symbol of Rome and its occupation of the area (Jones 2011, 90).

Along the route that they took, they would have had a significant impact. Temporary camps were not always occupied for just one day, but they could be used for several days or even weeks (Jones 2011, 121). From their camps, Roman soldiers would have scavenged the surrounding countryside, searching for food, water and other natural resources needed to maintain an army. Patrolling would have also been an important part of everyday live. Scouting the path ahead to the next camp site was one half, with the other being the daily patrolling of the countryside around the camp. While on patrol, soldiers and their superiors would be free to do as they please. Although Severus had raised they pay of all ranks for the first time since the reign of emperor Domitian (81-96), filling their own pockets with plunder would still be common practice among the soldiers.

Classical sources describe three distinct types of camps, the *castra aestira* (summer camp), the *castra hiberna* (winter camp) and the *castra stativa* (permanent camp; Jones 2011, 5). These categories are, however, problematic to differentiate, so modern scholars have instead organized camps in four different classifications (Lepper and Frere 1988, 260-1): Marching camps, or sometimes referent to as campaign camps, were temporary bases were tented armies stayed in on campaign or during manoeuvres. This type of camp is the most common in Britain and lay at a distance of around an one-day march from each other. They could have a large variety, and often a combination, of functions, like conquest, supply, manoeuvres, reconnaissance, policing and intelligence gathering. A large variety of shapes and sizes is attested for, due to difference in numbers of soldiers and/or the preferences of the camp commander that was in charge (Jones 2011, 7).

The second type of camps are called practice camps. These were small camps and were used for practicing military tactics and the construction of ramparts, ditches and gates. Neither the marching camps nor the practice camps used by the Romans give abundant archaeological material due to their short occupation, the use of tents instead of barracks and practice camps usually lack defensive measures (Jones 2011, 7-8).

The third and fourth types of camps are the siege camps and construction camps. The siege camps were employed in the course of a long and drawn-out encirclements of

enemy forces in fortified settlements. Construction camps were deployed as a temporary fortified housing structure for soldier building a fort or other defensive structure, like the Antonine Wall (Jones 2011, 7).

Even though modern scholars have this set of distinct types to help them classify (un)known Roman camps, making a distinction between them has remained difficult if not impossible due to a lack of archaeological material present (Jones 2011, 7). The absence of internal features and archaeological material is due to the lack of proper excavations of these camps and to some degree to the temporary occupation (Jones 2011, 38). When thousands of soldiers are stationed in the same enclosed area, however, some traces should have been left.

Table 1: Timeline of important events taking place before the reign of Severus (after Birley 1988, 1; 74-88; Mattingly 2007, 98-123).

Dates (CE)	Events in the wider Roman empire	Events in Roman Britain
70s		First Roman contact with Scotland by governor Cerialis
79/80-83/84	Death emperor Titus and ascension Domitian in 81.	Agricolan campaigns to crush the resistance by the Caledonians
87-100	Domitian's Dacian Wars in 86-88. Death Domitian and ascension Nerva in 96. Death Nerva and ascension Trajan in 98.	Withdrawal of Roman forces to the Southern Uplands and later to the Tyne-Solway isthmus
100-119	Dacian Wars 101-2 and 105-6. Start Roman–Parthian Wars and Trajan's Column in 113. Death of Trajan and elevation to the purple of Hadrian in 117.	
119-139	Death Hadrian in 138.	Rebellion in Britain in 119. Construction of Hadrian's Wall and outpost forts on the fringes of the Lowlands from 122.
139-42	Antoninus comes to power after the death of Hadrian	Antonine campaigns with reoccupation of the Lowlands and the construction of the Antonine Wall across the Forth-Clyde isthmus.
144	Birth of Septimius Severus	
Early-160s	Death of Antoninus 161. Beginning of Roman-Parthian War 161-166.	Abandonment of the Antonine Wall by Roman forces, but maintaining outpost forts north of Hadrian's Wall.
Mid-180s	Severus governor of *Lugdunensis*. Pertinax consul to Commodus.	Outpost forts in Scotland are abandoned.
191	Severus governor of Upper Pannonia	

2.3   Roman military campaigns into Scotland prior to Severan campaigns

The Roman presence in Britain before the arrival of Severus in 208 was a long and violent one (tab. 1). During the years 43-76, no less than a dozen individual Roman campaigns against native tribes and rebellions were held in Wales and in southern and central Britain (Mattingly 2007, 98-99). These campaigns were quickly followed by the conquest of northern Britain and large parts of Scotland between 77-83 by governor Agricola, made famous by his son-in-law Tacitus' biography of him. With his estimated 30-35.000 troops at his disposal, he conquered northern England and the Lowlands of Scotland in the first two years. The year 80 saw a consolidation of power in the conquered area with a series of forts along the Forth-Clyde isthmus, where 70 years later the Antonine Wall would be build. The next two years saw further campaigns into the south-east of Scotland and crossing the Forth-Clyde isthmus into the north-east. In 83, a famous battle, at a location called *Mons Graupius* by the Romans, was fought between the Romans and the main army of the Caledonians, after the advancement of the Roman army into the Moray Firth area. The Caledonians lost this possibly decisive battle, but Rome failed to capitalize on this. After the building of multiple garrison points along the Gask Ridge in Scotland by Agricola's successor, the system was abandoned because troops were needed in the Dacian Wars on the continent (Mattingly 2007, 116-7).

After the retreat, a new frontier line was drawn at the Tyne-Solway isthmus, the same area where Hadrian's Wall would be build, around the year 100 (Breeze 2016, 45). Trouble continued, with a major rebellion at the time of the accession of Hadrian. This continued throughout the second century, even after the start of the building of Hadrian's Wall in 122 (Breeze 2007, 355-6). Hadrian's Wall was not to last long, because the newly appointed emperor Antonius Pius ordered an expansion into the Scottish Lowland around 140 and the building of the Antonine Wall on the Forth-Clyde isthmus (Mattingly 2007, 119-121). The exact date and reason of the abandonment of the Antonine Wall and the conquered area is not known, but it can be stated with relative certainty that it was abandoned around the year 160. Several reasons have been proposed for the reason, with the retirement and death of key figures around Antoninus Pius, the declining numbers of troops stationed in Britain and the costly and drawn-out programme being among them (Breeze 2016, 169).

Continued problems would occur in the 160s, 170s and early 180s, escalating in 184 with an attack by the tribes north of Hadrian's Wall. Ulpius Marcellus, who was a former governor of *Britannia*, was sent to Britain and ordered by emperor Commodus to deal with the crisis. Marcellus campaigned possibly beyond the Scottish Lowland and was apparently successful, with victorious coins struck in celebration (Mattingly 2007, 122-3). There is even possible evidence for a brief incorporation of the previous abandoned Antonine Wall and outposts forts such as Cramond following this campaign (Casey 2010, 233). Marcellus was, however, quickly recalled and left the legions stationed in Britain mutinous, probably due to his harsh methods, with the legionary legate Priscus being elevated by the soldiers to the title of emperor in 184. Priscus refused the title however, and was probably dismissed. The Guard Prefect Perennis apparently used the commotion to establish men of the equestrian rank in positions occupied by men of senatorial rank, which caused him to be killed by Commodus in 185. The new governor Pertinax was send to Britain as a response to quell a potential mutiny of the legions stationed there (Breeze 2007, 363-4). The rowdy legions ensued to nearly lynch Pertinax during a munity, possibly as a reaction upon his declining of the elevation to the purple by the troops. He subsequently asked to be relieved of his command and travelled back to Rome in 187 (Birley 1988, 74-88).

Now that the reader has been brought up to speed with both the organization and practices of the Roman army on campaign, and with the relevant history of Roman Britain up until the beginning of the reign of Severus, it is time to focus on the historical narrative regarding the life, reign and campaigns of Septimius Severus.

Chapter 3: Historical sources and consensus of the Severan campaigns

Although understanding the history of Roman Britain before the reign of Severus is relevant in explaining the Severan campaigns, the live and reign of Severus is arguably as, if not more so. The live and reign of Severus, including the Severan campaigns, are well documented by several (contemporary) Roman sources. To properly interpret these sources, it is important to know why and by whom they are written. This will be the subject of the first subchapter.

3.1 Roman sources regarding the reign of Severus

There are two primary sources that are widely used when discussing the reignandthe (Scottish) campaigns of Septimius Severus. These sources are Cassius Dio's *Roman History* and Herodian's *History of the Empire*.

The first historian to be discussed is Cassius Dio. Dio was the son of a Roman senator of Greek origin who later in life became a senator himself (Millar 1964, 8; 14). Born in 163/164 (Millar 1964, 13), he personally witnessed or heard part of the history that he was writing about, making him an important contemporary and primary source when researching the late second and early third century.

Dio's narrative is, like that of all classical sources, biased in certain ways and towards various persons. Earlier scholars thought there was a positive bias at play in Dio's narrative of Severus, being that Dio was a friend, consul and advisor toSeverus. Furthermore, the start of his writing wasat the time of Severus' ascension to the role of emperor. This fact would suggest that Dio could not be too openly critical towards Severus and his sons (Millar 1964, 16-7). Dio's final conclusion of the emperor were therefore words of respect, althoughhe had strong criticism regarding the role of Severusin the civil war (193-7) and the Parthian campaigns (197-200; Millar 1964, 138-9). Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that the version that has survived, and which we still have access to, would not have been in circulation during the reign of Severus (Kemezis 2014, 146). More recent scholars have, however,emphasised a more negative bias in Dio's work. For example,Kemezis states that Dio wrote an oppositional history about Severus, countering the narrative that Severus wanted to promote to the people(Kemezis 2014, 146).Whether there was a positive or negative bias towards

Severus, the narrative that Dio produced about the Severan campaigns should be critically examined.

Besides personal biases, Dio's account has two further major drawbacks that have to be acknowledged. First of all, Dio's narrative largely consists of anecdotes and descriptions, rather than details, in his narrative of the Severan campaigns, as he tends to do throughout his work. As a consequence, acquiring useful information from his account ischallenging. Secondly, chapters 77 and 78of Dio's *Roman History*are not original copies. It is an 11[th]century epitome written by the Byzantine monk Ioannes Xiphilinus, who selected and/or condensed certain pieces. Although not an original copy, it is assumed that this epitome does give a mostly complete view of Dio's work (Millar 1964, 2-3). Some parts were, however, left out or rewritten. It is therefore possible that this is the case with the account of the Severan campaigns, but it is impossible to know for certain if, where and how this has happed and where not.

The second historian is Herodian with his *History of the Empire*, which covers the periodfrom emperor Marcus Aurelius (180) till emperor Gordian III (238). Herodian was a minor civil servant of Greek descent, although his exact position is debated. In his history, he claims to be writing about what he has personally witnessed in his own lifetime. This claim is, however, rather unlikely due to the fact that he would havehad to travelthroughout the empire to witness every single event in person (Whittaker 1969a, IX-XII).

Herodian's history, in contrast to Dio, does not follow a grand narrative. The history is kept simple, linear and detached, giving the reader a narrative of political events. It gives a pessimistic view of the Severan world. The chaotic, fragmentized, alien and defunct Severan world that is sketched is in sharp contrast to the ideal, orderly, united, comfortable and familiar Antonine world (Kemezis 2014, 227-9). This is an important statement to take into consideration when discussing Herodian's account of the Severan campaigns.Numerous inconsistencies in the text, that make his account somewhat more unreliable, should also be taken into consideration (Whittaker 1969a, XII).

The two secondary Romanhistorieshave been written in the fourth century and are less extensively used. The *Historia Augusta* is one of these sources. It is a collection of imperial biographies, written by a single author assuming the identity of six pseudonym writers, who share multiple characteristics in their 'separate' works. Created at the

earliest in the 390s, the works lack an overarching political or religious agenda and are filled with hundreds of unusual and fictional details, which are often intended to be humorous. Historical accuracy was not the primary goal of these biographies, because these details were added to create an allusion of other literary works and therefore histories were altered when the writer deemed it necessary. The biography of Severus is part of the primary emperors category. This means that the text is rich in names and dates that can be attested for in other sources, and is therefore regarded as more reliable than the biographies of usurpers and co-emperors (Rohrbacher 2016, 3-12). The *Historia Augusta* must, however, still "be studied as literary fiction, not as history." (Rohrbacher 2016, 14).

The last work that will be discussed is Eutropius' *Breviarium,* roughly translated to 'summary'. Eutropius completed his *Breviarium* during the reign of emperor Valens in 369, who gave him the task of writing an abbreviated version of the history of Rome and its empire for uneducated provincials. Eutropius wrote his *Breviarium* while joining Valens in a campaign in 369, limiting the availability of a library and archives for his work. These were, however, not needed to complete a work intended to be a simplified version of Roman history(Bird 1993, XIX-XX; XLV).

It is obvious that both works were not written with historical accuracy and completeness in mind. Both works did most likely rely from the same source for their information, the so called *Kaisergeschichte* (Rohrbacker 2016, 11-2; Bird 1993, XLVII-IX). Completely disregarding them would not be advisable, so they should regarded as a possible addition to the first two sources mentioned.

The availability of our historical sources is a mixed blessing. While they communicate perspectives and information that would be difficult or even impossible to find in the archaeological record, all sources that are available to us are to a certain degree unreliable. The fourth century works are in this case the most unreliable, being that their writers did not write for historical accuracy and completeness. The third century writers have their own personal biases that place a role in their narrative, especially the fact that they are contemporaries to Severus. What these sources tell about Severus, his personal relations with *Britannia* and the Severan campaigns will be the subject of the next subchapters.

3.2 Septimius Severus

Although it is an odd place to look for information about the Severan campaigns, the personal life and reign of Severus prior to 208 contains a wealth of information. It is therefore important to research these subjects to fully understand the reasons why Severus decided to invade Scotland in 208-211.

3.2.1 Personal life

Thischapter will briefly discuss the life of Septimius Severus. P. Elliot has written a compressed introduction to the early live and reign of Severus in his book *Legions in crisis*(2014), on which largelywill be relied. Another important source is the biography *The African emperor: Septimius Severus*(Birley1988).

The lifeand reign of emperor Septimius Severus was filled with struggle and turmoil (see Table 2). Born in North Africa in April 144 CE (Birley 1988, 1), he climbed his way up to the rank of senator and took in 180, the year of the death of emperor Marcus Aurelius, command of Legio IV Scythica in modern day Syria. Severus was, most likely, in this position in close contact with then acting governor of the province, Helvius Pertinax. Pertinax advanced after the dead of emperor Marcus Aureliusto the position of consul alongside the new emperor Commodus. Severus meanwhile, after firstassuming the position of governor of *Lugdunensis*, modern day southern France, had been given the governorship of the province of Pannonia Superior, a frontier province in parts of modern day Hungary, Austria, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Slovakia. The Danubian frontier in the northern part of the province had been a hotspot for conflict with tribes opposite of the border for many decades, so the three legions that were stations in the province were tough and battle-tested (Elliot 2014, 16-7).

After the murder of emperor Commodus on New Year's Eve 192, Pertinax, supported by the Praetorian Guard, was declared emperor. Due to the many changes Pertinax wanted to make in a short period of time and his attempt to curb the influence of the Praetorian Guard, he was killedby the Guard after only eighty-seven days. After the murder, the title of emperor was sold off to the wealthy senator Didius Julianus. The governor of Syria, Pescennius Niger, the governor of Britain, Clodius Albinus, and the governor of Upper Pannonia, Septimius Severus, were immediately proclaimed emperor by the legions under their command after news of the murder of emperor Pertinax reached them in April 193. Severus, being nearest to Rome at this time, and presumably having gotten news of the murder first, rushed to Rome at the head of a detachment of his

legions and othersstationed along the Danube frontier, were his brother Geta was governor of *Moesia*. He took the city and discharged the entire Praetorian Guard, replacing them with men loyal to him (Elliot 2014, 17-9).

Following the capture of Rome, Severus dealt with issues of state, issued coinage and agreed with Albinus that he would become 'Caesar', junior co-emperor, under Severus. After the government of the western and middle part of the empire brought under his control, Severus directed his forces against Pescennius Niger, the eastern pretender to the title of emperor. After beating Niger's forces in several battles in the fall and winter of 193 and the spring of 194,Niger was finally killed during the decisive battle at Issus in May 194 and the civil war had come to an end for now (Elliot 2014, 19-20).

After his final victory, Severus stayed in the region to prepare to invade the weakened Parthian Kingdom, which was torn by civil wars at this time. During the 195 CE campaign against the Parthian Kingdom, Severus declared his seven-year-old son 'Caesar'. After receiving the news, Albinus decided that it was time to rebel against Severus, something that both men would have thought was inevitable, and take the title of emperor for himself. In 196, Albinus crossed the channel to gather forces in Gaul, were his main support, besides the legions stationed in Britain, lay and marched on Italy with around 40.000 troops. He was, however, blocked at the Alpine mountain passes, rendering a quick march to Rome unachievable (Elliot 2014, 20-1). Severus responded quickly, gathering his troops and marched towards *Lugdunum*, modern day Lyon, were Albinus and his troops had made camp. On February 19th 197, the forces of Albinus and Severus clashed outside the city.After a long and drawn-out battle, with possibly as much as 150.000 men participating in total, Albinus and his legions were defeated. Evidence for Albinus taking at least part of all three legions stationed in Britain with him for this battle would indicate that the security of the province, both during and after his rebellion, would have been severely undermined, especially after this fierce battle (Dando-Collins 2010, 472). After the defeat of Albinus, the attention of Severus was shifted back to the Parthian campaigns. Between 197-200 Severus finished his war against the Parthian Kingdom, with the help of 'European based' legions, Legio I and III Parthica and part of the Praetorian Guard. Aftertwo rather successful years, Severus was eventually halted at the city of Hatra. When he lost thousands of troops and subsequently the loyalty of his European legions in 199-200 (Dando-Collins 2010, 476-80), he made peace with the Parthian Kingdom. Afterwards, he organised two newly

conquered provinces in the East and toured Judaea and Egypt before returning to Rome in 202 (Elliot 2014, 21).

3.2.2 Personal involvements with Britain

So what were Severus' connections with the province of *Britannia* before arriving in 208 CE? The first, and maybe most influential, person that has to be discussed in order to answer this question is Severus' brother, Publius Septimius Geta. Geta, named after his father (Birley 1988, 1), held a prominent military position in *Britannia* as a senatorial tribune of the Legio II Augusta during the turmoilof the early 160s. During this period, Rome lost part of its control on the territory north of Hadrian's Wall and abandoned the Antonine Wall completely (Birley 1988, 39; 171-2). It can be presumed that Geta told his younger brother about his experiences in Britain, which would have influenced the young Severus greatly. Geta died in 204 (Birley 1988, 161), and bydoing so, he probably was not consulted about a possible campaign into Scotland, except if this campaign was planned several years before it commenced.

During his stay in Britain, Geta was likely to have come into contact with Helvius Pertinax, who served two military post in the 160s CE (Birley 1988, 39). Pertinax' first position while stationed in *Britannia* was that of equestrian tribune, which was essentially a staff officer, of the Legio VI Victrix at York. Sometime later, he was made commander of the First Tungrians at Hadrian's Wall, which was being restored following the retreat of Rome north of the Wall (Birley 1988, 65). The second time Pertinax arrived in Britain, around 185, was as its governor after the recalling of governor Ulpius Marcellus. Pertinax was send to Britain to quell a potential mutiny of the legions stationed there. The rowdy legions ensued to nearly lynch Pertinax during a munity, possibly as a reaction upon his declining of the elevation to the purple by the troops. He subsequently asked to be relieved of his command and travelled back to Rome (Birley 1988, 74-88). During Pertinax' short governorship of Britain, Severus was governor of *Lugdunensis*, modern day southern France, and probably heard of the events that took place in *Britannia* (Elliot 2014, 16).Pertinax' negative experience in Britain, with the retreat in the 160s and the rowdy legion around 185, would have been subject during both professional and personal communication between himself and Severus, further influencing the opinion of the latter of the province.

A few years after the attempted mutiny of the legions stationed in Britain another pretender to the title of emperor was proclaimed. This time it was the then governor of

the province of *Britannia*, Decimus Clodius Albinus. After an initial cooperation between Severus and Albinus against Niger, conflict was brewing and escalated in 195-7, climaxing with the battle at *Lugdunum* (Birley 1988, 121-5). The British legions had thus rebelled twice within the span of a decade, which could not have been a good sign to Severus. There was a purge of Albinus supporters, including around sixty *equites* officers in the British legions, following the victory of Severus at *Lugdunum* (Birley 1988, 128), but how far this purge extended has not been determined.

Following Severus' rise to power, he became, for the first time, personally involved with Britain (tab. 2). This involvement was predominantly the appointment of his own governors and procurators.The first governor that Severus appointed to *Britannia* after the death and defeat of Albinus was Virius Lupus, the former governor of *Germania Inferior*who fought with Severus in his war against Albinus (Birley 1988, 122; 171). The second known governor, who arrived in 202, was Valerius Pudens and was prior to being assigned tohis new position governor of the important province *Pannonia Inferior* during the rise of Severus and was the successor of Lupus in *Germania Inferior*. Pudens was sometime later replaced by L. Alfenus Senecio, who was the former governor of *Syria* during the Parthian campaigns of Severus at the end of the second century (Birley 1988, 172).

The choice of one of the procurators by Severus is just as interesting as those of the governors. Oclatinius Adventus, a procurator selected by Severus to serve in *Britannia* between 205-7*,* was an expert in military intelligence (Birley 1988, 170-1). He served with 'the spies and scouts, and upon quitting that position had been made one of the couriers and appointed their leader' and 'had performed the various duties of executioners, scouts, and centurions' (Cass. Dio 79, 14, 1-3). Being among the *exploratores* (spies and scout), he was a *speculator* to a provincial governor. This position included him being the public executioner and being a senior member of the headquarters staff of a provincial governor. Part of the job as member of the headquarters staff was the processing of intelligences gathered by patrols. It can be presumed that he filled this position in the 170s and 180s, a period when there were multiple incursions in Germany, Pannonia and Britain with ample opportunity to gather experience in intelligence works. In these years, Adventus could even have been a *beneficiarii consularis*. These were special intelligence officers detached to the provincial governor on the Rhine or Danube frontier (Rankov 1987, 244-7).

Later in his career he became a centurion and probably a camp commander in the *frumentarii*, a sort of secret police of the emperor, during the early reign of Severus. Later in his distinguished career, after the death of Severus, he became Praetorian Perfect in 213, senator, co-consul with later emperor Macrinus in 218 and City Perfect in Rome (Rankov 1987, 244-7). Adventus was thus exceptionally good at his variousassignments and earned power and respect from his executives, whether from the army, the governor or the emperor himself.

While working with the *frumentarii*, Adventus probably enhanced his own intelligence gathering skills. The *frumentarii* were used, from the beginning of the reign of Severus, as a sort of secret police, gathering intelligence on possible enemies and assassinating enemies of the emperor and state. Adventus was thus an experienced intelligence man, possibly focused on frontier intelligence gathering, at the time of his appointment as procurator of Britain (Rankov 1987, 245-7).

Evidence for Adventus' personal involvement at the frontier in Britain can be seen in two inscriptions found at the fort of Risingham, north of Hadrian's Wall, and Chesters at Hadrian's Wall itself. Rankov suggest that Adventus main goal was the reoccupation of Risingham, but directed it from the relative safety of Chesters at Hadrian's Wall. The fort of Risingham would be occupied by an unit of *exploratores*, but if they occupied the fort before or after the Severan campaigns is unclear, because the earliest inscription mentioning them dates to 213. Adventus' experience would have been vital to organize such a force, partly consisting of natives. Given the local name of these scouts, *exploratores Habitancensus*, and the fact that these are the earliest securely dated *exploratores* known in Britain make this an interesting piece of information.If the date of reoccupation was prior to 208, the *exploratores* could have surveyed the area that the campaigns would cross several years in advance, giving Severus ample opportunity to make specific preparations (Rankov 1987, 247-8).

Appointing such a man as procurator can, of course, be a coincidence and be a natural part of his ascension through the ranks of power. Adventus, with his personal involvement in military matters, seems to be sent with a (partly) different goal in mind however. His choice would have been a calculated one by Severus or one of his close advisors.This assumption is compounded by the possibility that besides the gathering of military intelligences he could also have dealt with re-establishing the loyalty of the local garrisons (Rankov 2009, 170). Furthermore, Rankov gives one last interesting piece of

information. Severus could, according to Dio, not press home a decisive victory at the city of Ctesiphon, which was part of the Parthian Kingdom, during his campaign in 198 due to a failure in intelligence gathering, suggesting that Severus did not want this to be repeated (Rankov 1987, 248-9).

Adventus was, after he apparently fulfilled his duties, eventually succeeded by the son-in-law of Severus' wife Julia's brother-in-law, Sex. Varius Marcellus of Apamea, in 207 (Birley 1988, 175). Although little is known about him, appointing a, presumably trusted, family member right before the arrival of Severus indicates that this move and probably the campaigns toowerecalculated.

Besides contemporary contacts, it is possible, according to Birley, that Severus might have been inspired by the earlier campaigns of Agricola. These campaigns are one of the highlights in the biography written by Agricola's son-in-law, Tacitus (Birley 1988, 173). A further possible suggestion given by Birley is the insatiable curiosity, a love for foreign travel and of novelties by Severus. These trades, in combination with the fact that he had not previously visited Britain, could be a reason for the personal involvement of Severus in the campaigns in Scotland (Birley 1988, 174). Due to the lack of any personal testimonies by Severus himself, we cannot be certain if any of these factors did play a role. Severus consulting the biography of Agricola can be deemed possible, but the use of a book that was more than one hundred years old is questionable. The trades alone are not likely to be the sole reason for the personal involvement of Severus. After his return to Rome in 202, while never staying a full year in Rome in over forty years, he did not set sail to Britain for another six years.Other factors would have contributed to the fact that Severus went on campaign in 208.

To conclude, Severus' connections to the province of *Britannia* were plentiful. Through the pre-emperor contacts of his brother Geta, friend and emperor Pertinax, and co-emperor and rival Albinus, Severus would have probably not have had the best impression of the province and its legions. He thought, however, that it was important enough to send his most experienced and loyal governor to the island. It can be argued that this had to do with the large amount of troops, three full legions, stationed in Britain at the time and Severus wanted therefore loyal men commanding them. Lastly, the appointment of Adventus as procurator is perhaps the most important hint to a campaign that Severus was already planning to subdue to northern tribes and/or bringing the possible rebellious legions back into order.

Table 2: Timeline of important events during the reign of Severus prior tothe Scottish campaigns (Birley 1988, 1; 170-2; Elliot 2014, 16-21).

Dates (CE)	Events in the wider Roman empire	Events in Roman Britain
193	Commodus murdered. Pertinax emperor and murdered shortly afterwards. Albinus, Niger and Severus are proclaimed emperors.	Albinus is proclaimed emperor by his troops and is made 'Caesar' (junior co-emperor) under Severus.
194	Niger is defeated by Severus in battle. Preparations for a Parthian campaign.	
195-6	First Parthian campaign. Severus proclaims Caracalla as Caesar.	Albinus rebels after losing title of Caesar and crosses with troops the Channel to gather his support.
197	The Parthian campaign has been successful ended and two new provinces are added to the empire.	Albinus is defeated by Severus at the battle of *Lugdunum*, modern day Lyon.
198-200	Second series of Parthian campaigns is stalled at the city of Hatra and Severus briefly loses the support of his European legions.	Virius Lupus is made governor of *Britannia* and is forced to pay for peace with the *Maeatae*.
205-207	Severus resides in Rome.	Lucius Alfenus Senecio is made governor and Oclatinius Adventus is made procurator of *Britannia.* They begin with the restoration of Hadrian's Wall and outposts north of it.

3.3   Historical accountsof the Severan campaigns

Now that the life of Severus and his personal involvements with Britain prior to the campaigns of 208-211 have been discussed, the next step is to analyze these campaignswith the available historical sources. These sources can be divided in (primary) third and (secondary) fourth century histories, due to the fact that the sources in these categories are quite similar in context. The third century histories will be discussed first, after which the fourth century histories will be examined.

3.3.1   Third century histories: Dio and Herodian

The most widely used third century history is Dio's *Roman History*. It gives a description about the supposed origin and cause of the campaigns, a rough outline of the course and conclusion of the campaigns itself and the aftermath (Cass. Dio 77, 11,1-77, 15, 4; 78, 1, 1-3). The lack of detail of the course of the campaigns and putting a large focus of the narrative on the family scene, however, leaves much to desire. Herodian's *History of the Empire*is the second third century source. The information given about the Severan campaigns resembles the general narrative of Dio's work. Herodian, however, focuses on different aspects of the campaigns (Hdn. 3, 14, 1-3, 15, 8). For example, Herodian does discuss the preparations done by Severus, while Dio does not. Due to their similarities, it is possible to present a general narrative that covers the Severan campaigns as described by both historians. This general narrative will be present in the paragraph below.

Both Dio and Herodian begin their accounts of the Severan campaigns by discussing an ongoing conflict in Britain before the arrival of Severus in 208 and that he did not tolerate this anymore. Interesting is the fact that Dio claims that Severus did not like the fact that other were winning the conflict in Britain on behave of him (77, 10, 6), while Herodian claims that the governor asked for help (3, 14, 1).Although the conflict was quite serious, it is unfortunately not further elaborated upon and our knowledge is therefore very limited.Additional reasons for starting the campaigns given in these narratives include Severus' desire for personal glory, the conquest of the remainder of the British main island and restless legions, possibly Legio II Parthica and the Praetorian Guard stationed near Rome at the time or the three legions stationed in Britain. Following his decision to campaign intoScotland, Severus travelled with his sons Caracalla and Geta, whose behaviour had become unacceptable, causing himto the island. A large amount of money and the imperial administration accompanied themto

keep both the campaigns and the empire going while they were on campaign. Following his arrival in Britain in early 208, preparations for the first campaign into Caledonian territory began almost immediately. These preparations were focused on overcoming the difficult natural terrain that the Roman army would have come to face, implying a good knowledge of the local area prior to the arrival Severus. According to Herodian a delegation from the Caledonians arrivedaround the same time. Although it is not mentioned where they met, it is stated that they were send away by Severus because he did not want to go back to Rome without a fight (Hdn. 3, 14, 4-5). Ones the preparations were finished, Severus gathered his troops, most likely Legio II Parthica and the Praetorian Guardfromthe continent and the three legions stationed in *Britannia* at this time (II Augusta, VI Victrix and XX Valeria Victrix) and set off into hostile territory. The starting pointis not mentioned, which can lead to widely different theories, as will be discussed in chapter 5.

The local environment that the Roman army encountered has described by both Dio and Herodian as hostile. Despite their extensive preparations for this type of environment, the Roman army suffered quite a high casualty figure. This was for the most part due to a combination ofthe difficult surroundings and the guerrilla tactics employed by the local warriors of Caledonia, referred to by Dio for the first time as the *Caledonii*. The employment of these guerrilla tactics was the reason why no battles were fought, with only short skirmishes being fought with the local warriors before they disappeared into the countryside. According to Dio, Severus made peace with the tribes after at least full year of campaigning.The tribes involved had to surrender a large part of their territoryas part of this peace(Cass. Dio 77, 13, 4), thus confirming some minor victory for the Romans. Unfortunately, it is not clear which tribeswere involved and the whereabouts of theland that was surrendered is not given. Through a passage from Dio describing the attempted murder of Carracalla of his father, it is mentioned thatthe Caledonians were certainly a partof this peace treaty (Cass. Dio 77, 14, 3).

Furthermore, the local inhabitants of the island revolted against the Romans not long hereafter according to Dio. As a response, Severus send his troops back into enemy territory with a more destructive objective. Soon after the Caledonians joined the *Maeatae* in their revolt (Cass. Dio 77, 15, 1-2), possibly due to a sort of pact that was made between them. Herodian, however, does not describe two separate campaigns, but states that Severus was too ill at one point to go on personally with the campaigns

and send his son Caracalla who did not want to fight (Hdn. 3, 15, 1). Why and if there was a peace and two campaigns is therefore debatable and will be further discussed in chapter 5.

Severus did not live to lead the legions ones again and finish his campaigns. He died on February 4th 211 in Eboracum, modern day York. After his father's death, Caracalla tried to get the army to side with him against his brother Geta. When this attempt failed,he signed a peace with the local tribes and immediately went back to Rome with his brother, mother and armies, most likely to consolidate his hold on power and to please the army.

There are some important and unusual quotes in the accounts of both Dio and Herodian. To begin, there is a quote from Dio regarding the guerrilla tactics employed by the tribes in Scotland:

> *The enemy purposely put sheep and cattle in front of the soldiers for them to seize in order that they might be lured on still further until they were worn out; for in fact the water caused great suffering to the Romans, and when they became scattered, they would be attacked. Then, unable to walk, they would be slain by their own men, in order to avoid capture, so that a full fifty thousand died* (Cass. Dio 77, 13, 2-3).

If the casualty numbers that Dio uses here are correct, then this would be a defeat of a magnitude not seen since the Second Punic War. The immense casualty figures that is given by Dio is quite remarkable, given that ten full legions would have died during the campaigns. Why would he exaggerate these figures, which would have been around ten full legions? As discussed before, Dio was not always favourable towards Severus, so exaggerating the casualty figure would confirm the perspective he tried to sell his audience. It could also be that Dio wanted to showcase the sheer sacrifices that Severus was willing to make and how loyal his troops were to him. The loyalty of his own troops towards Severuswas, however, already(partly) diminished after the disastrous campaigns against the Parthian Empire (199-200). Likewise, the legions of Albinus, including the three British legions,would not have been favourable towards Severus after their defeat in 197. Furthermore, Severus would not have lost fifty thousand troops during one battle, but over the course of his first campaign, or possibly both campaigns, which took one to two years. Soldiers confronted with these casualty

numbers, many of who were slain by their own comrades (Cass. Dio 77, 13, 2), would have become disorderly and possibly mutinous.It is quite likely that the casualty numbers were above average, taking into account the rough terrain and guerrilla tactics employed by the local tribes, during the campaigns. Fifty thousandcasualties, however, is such an exaggerated number that it should not be taken seriously when any of the historians fails to mention unfavourable opinion and actions taken before or after the death of Severus.

The previous quote is immediately followed by a description of Severus' journey further into hostile territory:

> *But Severus did not desist until he had approached the extremity of the island. Here he observed most accurately the variation of the sun's motion and the length of the days and the nights in summer and winter respectively. Having thus been conveyed through practically the whole of the hostile country (for he actually was conveyed in a covered litter most of the way, on account of his infirmity), he returned to the friendly portion, after he had forced the Britons to come to terms, on the condition that they should abandon a large part of their territory* (Cass. Dio 77, 13, 3-4).

Dio claims that Severus had approached the extremity of the island, but which exact location is implied is not specified. The fact that Dio was not personally present in Scotlandpresents the possibility that it could be argued that the northern coast of modern Aberdeenshire and Moray was seen as the end of the island (Birley 1988, 181), but also .

The next line implies that Severus stayed for a long period of time at the edge of the island, where he observed the daylight changes in summer and winter. The claim implied by Dio that Severus had a winter camp at the northern extremities in the middle of hostile territory is highly unlikely. The changes in daylight can already be clearly seen during a campaign season stretching from April to September, with a four-hour difference in daylight time in the vicinity of modern day Glasgow alone (www.timeanddate.com). A march further north would not be necessary to explain this quote.

Dio furthermore describes how Severus allegedly forced the Britons to come to terms and made them abandon a large part of their territory. This is an important piece of information that will be further discussed in chapter 5.

The last quote of Dio that will be discussed is the one regarding the revolt by the *Maeatae* after the first peace was made.

> *When the inhabitants of the island again revolted, he summoned the soldiers and ordered them to invade the rebels' country, killing everybody they met; and he quoted these words:*
>
> *"Let no one escape sheer destruction, No one our hands, not even the babe in the womb of the mother,If it be male; let it nevertheless not escape sheer destruction."* (Cass. Dio 77, 15, 1-2).

The fact that Severus send his troops back into the rebels' country is important, because it seems that Severus did not realize one of his main reasons provided by Dio, namely the subjugation of the whole island. It could therefore be that Severus' goal was not occupation, but controlling the native population to some degree. Birley suggests that the revoltby the *Maeatae* was caused by their realisation that the Romans had come to occupy their country, rather than as fighting a penal campaign. Evidence for this could be found in the location of the Carpow fort, which lay very close to one of the main tribal centres of the *Maeatae*. Whatever the reason for the revolt, Severus' response was a quick and violent one. The words that he quoted were directly taken from the Iliad and have been interpreted asa genocidal against the local population (Birley 1988, 186). This quote was almost certainly added in by Dio while compiling his history for dramatic effect.

Besides the work of Dio, the narrative of Herodian alsocontainsone interesting quote that deserves a deeper analysis.

> *After the army had crossed the rivers and fortifications which marked the borders of the empire, there were frequent clashes and light skirmishes in which the barbarians were put to flight. The enemy found it easy to escape and hide in the woods and marshes because they were familiar with the terrain; but the same conditions all hampered the Romans and made the war considerably longer drawn out* (Hdn. 3, 14, 9-10).

After the completion of his preparations, Severus ventured across 'the rivers and fortifications which marked the borders of the empire'. The border at this timewas most likely Hadrian's Wall, which crossed several rivers, and not the Antonine Wall. Herodian describes that the Roman army was involved in several minor clashes, in contrast to Dio's account. According to Herodian, these clashes could have already began between the Antonine Wall and Hadrian's Wall. Although knowing where and when these clashes took place is almost completely impossible to known, it can be reasonably to assume that the Caledonians and/or *Maeatae* were in control of this region and clashes were possible.

3.3.2   Fourth century histories: Eutropius and the *Historia Augusta*

When discussing and researching the Severan campaigns, the fourth century histories, Eutropius' *Breviarium* and the *Historia Augusta*, are far less widely used. This is due to the fact thatboth worksonly mention the Severan campaigns briefly in their histories. They claim that Severus secured the province, that he recovered the island from the barbarians and that he build a rampart or wall, likely Hadrian's Wall, crossing the island (Eutr. 8, 19; SHASept. Sev. 18, 4-5). The two most important facts are givenare that the major restoration of Hadrian's Wall by Severus in 205-208 was mentioned and that *Britannia* was heavily suffering internal and/or external threats.Due to the fact that the original construction of the Wall was not mentioned in both accounts, it can be stated that the fourth century sources viewed this reconstruction as a, or the, major construction phaseof Hadrian's Wall. The second fact gives us two possibilities, either Dio and Herodian were downplaying the ongoing conflict in Britain, or the fourth century sources are exaggerating.

Now that the different histories and their content has been examined, the next step is to discuss the current scholarly image of the Severan campaigns, which has been heavily influenced by the previously mentioned histories.

3.4   Current image of the Severan campaigns

There are roughly three different views of the Severan campaigns (tab. 3). First of all, there is the general view (e.g. Birley 2007, Breeze 1982 and Fraser 2009). Usually, thissimplified view is superficially and relies heavy on the historical accounts of Dio and Herodian to explain the campaigns. Two campaigns are usually mentioned, of which the second would have been genocidal in nature. The routes that have been claimed to have been used during these campaigns are based on series of camps. The camps in these series are connected to each other on the basis oftheir similar sizes and/or gate typesand close proximity to each other (e.g. St Joseph 1958: 93; 1969: 113-9; 1973: 228-33; 1977: 143-5). The alleged routes of the campaigns have sometimes been claimed to go to the north, to Moray, following a line of 110-acre camps. The 63-acre and 130-acre camps series are also ascribed to the Severan campaigns. The exact locations of these series can be seen in fig. 1.

Secondly, there is the more detailed view by N. Reed. In his work, published in 1976, he examines the Severan campaigns with both archaeological and historical material. It must be remembered that radiocarbon dating was still quite new to the practice of archaeology and that he was reliant on the limited excavations reports available from Carpow and Cramond, aerial photography and numismatics. In his research, Reed challenges the view of the simultaneous arrival of Severus and his two sons in Britain. Based on coins found in Gaul and Britain, he claims that Caracalla arrived already in 207 in Britain, while Severus arrived in the same year in Gaul. Imperial rescripts dating to 208 would support this claim, revealing two issued by Caracalla solely in February 208, while from March 208 Caracalla and Severus jointly issued them (Reed 1976, 98). The first campaign would have started in 208 with the preparations described by Herodian taking place in the Fife area, what allegedly would have been the territory of the apparently non-hostile *Maeatae*. Two bridges with a possible road were constructed, with the possible locations of Queensferry and Carpow; both bridges were depicted on coins that have been found (Reed 1976, 92-5). The first campaign, against the *Caledonii*, would have started in 209. Two series of 63-acre are attributedto this campaign.The northern series would have been led by the battle tested Severan commanding the Praetorian Guard and Legio II Parthica. The troops of the southern series, the three British legions, were being led by Caracalla. Both armies would have gone back to Hadrian's Wall in the winter. The next year, Caracalla merged the two armies and travelled north again, leaving a trail of 165-acre camps in southern Scotland and north of the Antonine Wall a

series of 130-acre camps (Reed 1976, 95-6).Victory was declared, with Severus and Caracalla receiving the title of *Britannicus*, and the troops were brought back to Hadrian's Wall once again. The *Maeatae* revolted late in 210 and Severus' genocidal reaction on them provoked the Caledonians to revolt as well (Reed 1976, 97).

Lastly, there is the view brought about by the recent work of Hodgson (2014, 31-51). Gathering new evidence that has come to light since the publication of Reed, he has some new ideas and theories. Hodgson states that the *Maeatae*, possibly a conglomeration of multiple tribes as a reaction to the Roman aggression, occupied the northern Scottish Lowlands, the Antonine Wall and the Fife, with the *Caledonii* in north-eastern Scotland (Hodgson 2014, 34). He goes on to agree with the suggestion that Severus went to Britain in person because of the potential disloyalty of the British legions and the aggression shown by the *Maeatae* and/or *Caledonii* (Hodgson 2014, 35-6). Regarding the archaeological evidence found, the well known Severan supply bases at South Shields and Corbridge are highlighted (Hodgson 2014, 36-8). He furthermore argues that the 130-acre and 165-acre marching camps are likely part of the Severan campaigns, with the 63-acre and 110-acre camps being rather unlikely (Hodgson 2014, 38-41). The Roman fort at Carpow gets a lot of attention by Hodgson. After arguing why the fort has a Severan dating (Hodgson 2014, 42-44), he suggests that Carpow was an individual fort to establish Roman presence, but it was not meant to directly govern the surrounding area (Hodgson 2014, 45-6). Lastly, Hodgson suggests that there is apossibility that the renovation of Hadrian's Wall was precautionary (Hodgson 2014, 45).

Now that the reader has been brought up-to-date regarding the primary historical sources and the current scholarly view of the Severan campaigns, it is time to take an in depth look at the available archaeological evidence.

Table 3: Currents historical and archaeological views of the Severan campaigns (Birley 2007, 367-370; Hodgson 2014, 31-51; Reed 1976, 92-102).

Date (CE)	Events (general view)	Events (Reed's view)	Events (Hodgson's view)
207		Arrival of Caracalla. Arrival of Severus in Gaul.	
208	Arrival of Severus. Possible peace delegation from Caledonians send away.	Start of preparations in the Fife. Establishment of bridges at Queensferry and Carpow.	Departure for Britain by Severus and his sons.
209-210	First campaign by Severus. No battles fought. Peace treaty with local tribes.	Caracalla takes the 3 British legions along old Agricolan route(63-acre camps) to Keithock. Severus takes Legio II Partica and Praetorian Guard to Carpow and Kinnel (63-acre camps)	*Caledonii* surrender in winter 209-210.
210	Title *Britannicus* awarded to Severus and Caracalla in early 210. Revolt by *Maeatae* in late 210, joined by *Caledonii*. Possible Roman retaliation campaign by Caracalla.	Advance of all forces, with supplies, from Corbridge to Inveresk, planting 165-acre camps. Army, under Caracalla planting 130-acre camps. Late in year, *Maeatae* revolt. Severus' attempted genocide provokes Caledonians to revolt as well.	Title *Britannicus* awarded to Severus and Caracalla in early 210. Revolt by *Maeatae* in late 210, joined by *Caledonii*. Possible Roman retaliation campaign by Caracalla.
211	Withdrawal of the Roman military to Hadrian's Wall.	Caracalla makes peace and leaves to Rome in early 211.	Possible continued occupation Carpow and Cramond.

Chapter 4: Archaeological evidence for the Severan campaigns

Archaeological evidence isgenerally more important than the previously mentioned historical sources. This is due to the fact that archaeological evidence itself is far more objective than historical sources, although their interpretation can be as subjective and thus convoluted. Given the overall lack of details that the various histories have provided, as discussed in chapter 3.3, archaeological evidence is highly valuable when discussing the Severan campaigns. The currently available archaeological data will, in this thesis, be divided in two main categories, namely data from Scotland (chapter 4.1) and data from outside Scotland (chapter 4.2). This has been done to create a better and clearer overview of the evidence.

4.1   Scotland

The Roman presence in Scotland from the first to third century has been primarily military in nature. The archaeological evidence that this presence has brought with it consist, for the most part, of temporary camps with defensive enclosures and to a lesser degree of forts and fortlets. Clustered around these forts and fortlets, camps with auxiliary troops are present for the mustering of troops. Legionary bases are rare in Scotland and the associated vici, which are usually also present at Roman forts, are even more rare (Hanson 2003, 202). The archaeological remains of the Severan campaigns in Scotland can be divided into two categories, the temporary camps and the forts at Carpow and Cramond. Both categories present a different aspect of the campaigns themselves, with the temporary camps being indicators for the route the campaigns followed and the forts being indicators for the logical aspect of the campaigns. The fort at in particular is essential to help understand the Severan campaigns, as will now be presented.

Table 4: Sites with (possible) archaeological evidence for Severan activity

Nd = not dated   D = dated   *= see chapter 4 for further explanation

Site (fort/ camp/ other)	Unlikely	Possible/ Not dated	Certain/ Dated	References
Birdoswald (f)			X (d)	Wilmott 1997; Wilmott, Cool and Evans 2009.
Burnswark (c)	X (d)			Campbell 2003, Davies 1972, Breeze 2011 and www.archaeology.co.uk
Carpow (f)			X (d)	Hodgson 2014, 42-44
Cramond (f)			X (d)	Hodgson 2014, 41
High Rochester (f)		X (d*)		Austin and Rankov 1995, 194
Risingham		X (d*)		Austin and Rankov 1995, 194
South Shields (f)			X (d)	Hodgson 2014, 37-8
Vindolanda (f)			X (d)	Roach 2013
63 acre camps				
Ardoch II		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 111; 129-31.
Auchtermuchty		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 133-4.
Carpow		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 162-3.
Craigarnhall		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 176.
Eassie		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 194.
Edenwood		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 198-9. MacGregor and Leslie 1998, 90-2.
Forteviot		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 205-6.
Innerpeffrey West		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 111; 230-1.
Keithock		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 243.
Kinnel		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 245.
Kirkbuddo		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 248-9.
Lintrose		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 254-5.
Longforgan		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 266-7.
Marcus		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 271-211,
Scone Park		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 302.
110 acre camps				
Kintore		X (d*)		Jones 2011, 246-7.
Logie Durno		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 264-5.
Muivryfold		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 281-2.
Normandykes		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 285-6.
Raedykes		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 296-7.
Ythan Wells I		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 321-2.
130 acre camps				
Ardoch I		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 111; 129-31.
Balmakewan		X (nd)		Jones 2011, 135-6.

Battledykes, Oathlaw		**X (nd)**		Jones 2011, 141-2.
Cardean		**X (nd)**		Jones 2011, 158-9.
Grassy Walls		**X (nd)**		Jones 2011, 220.
Househill Dunipace		**X (nd)**		Jones 2011, 225-6.
Innerpeffray East		**X (nd)**		Jones 2011, 111; 230-1.
Kair House		**X (nd)**		Jones 2011, 241.
165-acre camps				
Channelkirk		**X(nd)**		Jones 2011, 171-2.
Newstead V		**X(nd)**		Jones 2011, 282-4.
Pathhead III		**X(nd)**		Jones 2011, 292.
St Leonards		**X(nd)**		Jones 2011, 299.

4.1.1 Forts

Roman (legionary) forts are often associated with the occupation of newly conquered lands that have to be controlled by Roman military force. Although Roman forts are not uncommon in modern day Scotland, few have been associated with the Severan campaigns. Two exceptions are the forts at Carpow, Perthshire, and Cramond, Edinburgh (see fig. 1).

Carpow

The Roman fort at Carpow is the only known Roman fort north of the Forth-Clyde isthmus that is dated to the Severan campaigns. Originally excavated in 1961-2 under supervision of professor R.E. Birley, the site, situated a few miles south of the river Tay (fig. 1), came to light after extensive land clearing in the middle of the 18th century (Birley 1963, 184). During the 19th century, antiquarians took note of several structures, describing them as apartments, houses and baths, several urns containing human remains and at least two coins. A small square camp, capable of holding a full sized legion according to the antiquarian recording it, was discovered somewhere in the vicinity, although were exactly is unfortunately not mentioned. Lastly, a piece of terracotta has been found with the letters VIC stamped into it, indicating the presence of the sixth or twentieth legion, was found out of context in the rubble of the camp (Birley 1963, 184-6).

The fort was around 30 acres large and could be garrisoned by about 3500 soldiers, which was not quite a full legion. Birley argues that this was caused by leaving a skeleton garrison of the sixth legion back in York, which would have been a logical decision (Birley

1963, 197). This garrison occupied the large stone buildings for a short period of time. After the occupation, the soldiers began 'a methodical withdrawal and dismantling of the fortress', removing moveable parts and destroying some of the floors with hammers (Birley 1963, 197-8).

Two largesculptured fragments have been found, being interpreted as parts of a dedication slab (RIB 3512). If this interpretation is correct, the mention of a single emperor (IMP(erator)), and not of multiple emperors (IMPP (imperatores)), on it is quite remarkable. Severus had his son Caracalla as co-emperor from 197 until his death, and was succeed after his death by the co-emperors Caracalla and his brother Geta until 212. It could thus every well be that this inscription was pre-Severan or Caracallan, with both suggestions having the possibility to completely altering our understanding of the fort. Another possibility, however, is that there were a complementary pair of inscriptions for both co-emperors (Casey 2010, 226). Without additional(epigraphical) evidence, scholars canat this moment only guess what the truth is behind the dedication slab. The coins that have been found at Carpow can be this additional evidence. Mint condition coins from 205 CE are the youngest coins to have been found at the site. This fact is interpreted by Casey to be *terminus ante quem*evidence for the establishment of the fort in the 180s in the reign of Commodus and being abandoned before the Severan campaigns(Casey 2010, 228). The abandonment of Carpow could be an indicator of a threat that forced the Roman to withdraw back to Hadrian's Wall, which would have triggered a military response from Severus. This could possibly also explain the timing of the major reconstruction phase of Hadrian's Wall. The fort could, however, also be build during, or just slightly before, the Severan campaigns and paid with the 'large amount of money' that Severus brought with him in 208 according to Dio (77, 11, 2). This would not be exclusively coins minted in 207/8, but also earlier. The argument that Casey uses is, therefore, very questionable. Furthermore, coins from 206-7 have been found in Carpow (Dore and Wilkes 1999, 534-5). This would mean that Carpow would be abandoned right before the Severan campaigns and during the reconstruction of Hadrian's Wall, which would be highly unlikely.

The limited amount, some 55 pieces, of pottery found in a stratified context at Carpow roughly date to between 180 CE and 225 CE, making both a Commodan and Severan dating possible (Dore and Wilkes 1999, 540-1). The predominance of Black-Burnished 2 (BB2)pottery, a type of round rimmed bowls, which are also found in the Severan era

South Shields and other Tyneside forts, is regarded as proof for a Severan date. This type of pottery was made in south-eastern England and saw its last influx during the Antonine campaigns, connecting this type of pottery to both the mid-2nd and the early 3rd century Roman campaigns. (Hodgson 2014, 43-4).

Cramond

The Roman fort at Cramond was first build and occupied during the Antonine campaigns in Scotland in the early 140s. The fort was (re)occupied during the Severan campaigns, with the same BB2 type pottery being present as at Carpow. An altar (RIB 2134) dedicated by the commander of the Fifth Cohort of Gauls, the same unit that was present in South Shields, and an annex that was build during the Severan campaigns (Hodgson 2014, 41) suggests an extension of the supply line to the north.
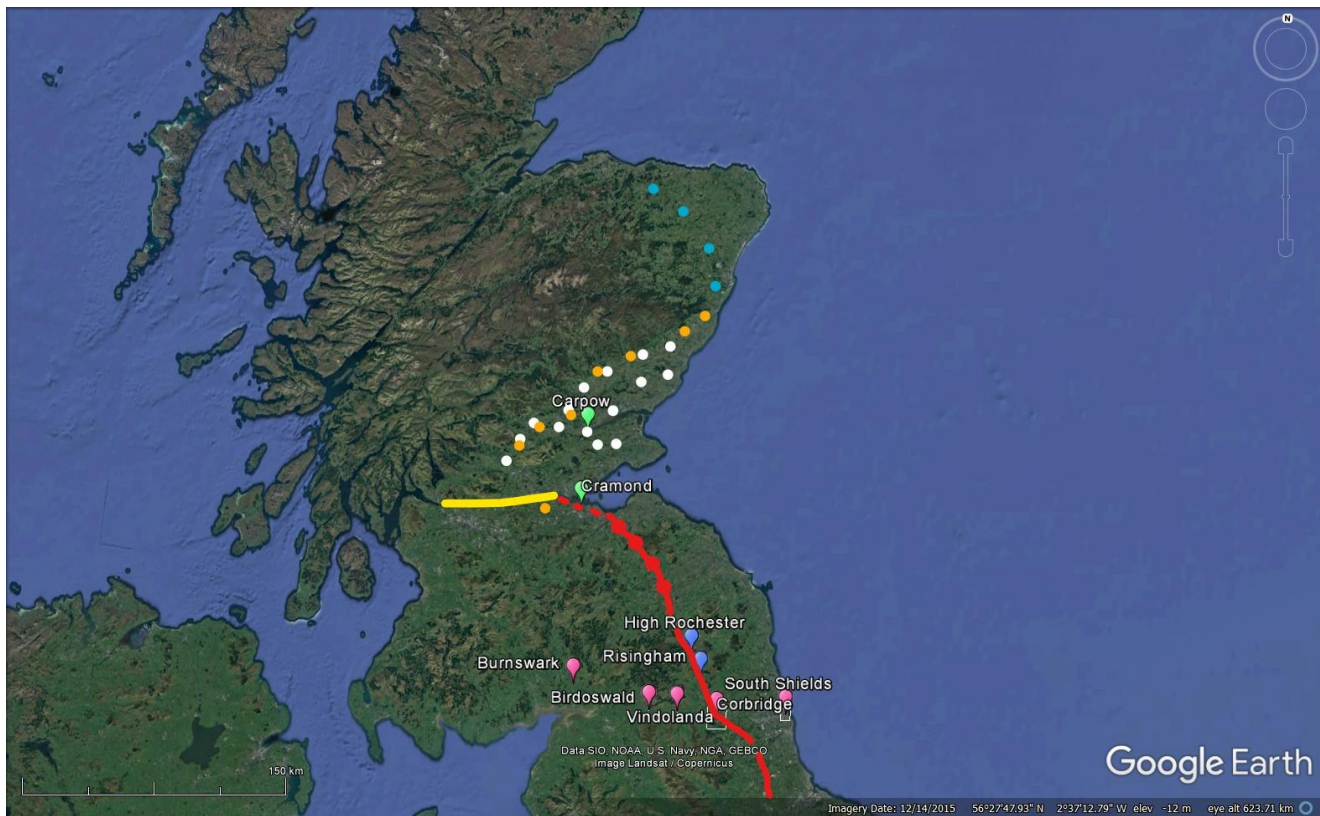

Figure 1: Sites in Scotland and England which are discussed in chapter 4 and 5 (www.google.com/earth; Jones 2011, 100-103).

Legend:

Yellow line:	The Antonine Wall	**Red dots**:	165-acre camps
Red line:	Dere Street	**Pink markers**:	Sites on and around Hadrian's Wall
White dots:	63-acre camps	**Blue markers**:	Outpost forts
Blue dots:	110-acre camps	**Green markers**:	Roman forts
Orange dots:	130-acre camps		

4.1.2 Camps

A large number of temporary camps have been discovered in Scotland, with about half of the total amount of camps known in Britain being present in Scotland. Looking at a wider context, the number of camps known in Britain is far higher than any other part of the Roman empire. This can, however, be due to the fact that Britain has a long and distinguished (aerial) survey history in contrast to other countries. Most of these camps are located near known Roman roads and forts, likely because of the fact that these were the logical places to look by aerial surveyors in their search (Jones 2011, 29).

Temporary (marching) camps were not only a fundamental part of the three Roman military expeditions into Scotland, but likewise a fundamental cornerstone of the strong antiquarian tradition beginning in the 18th century. Famous pioneer like Generals William Roy and Robert Melville discovered and described over 30 Roman camps during much of the 18th century (Jones 2011, 18). The camps that were identified hadat least part of their defensive earthworks still intact. This helped antiquarians to draw detailed plans of them. Due to the increase in ploughing at sites, which lay almost exclusively on arable land, earthworks were frequently destroyed, together with the local and scientific awareness of these sites. The old plans drawn by antiquarians have helped to focus research on rediscovering these important sites (Jones 2011, 13-8).

More recently, aerial surveys have had a massive impact on our knowledge of the Roman camps in- and outside Scotland. An extraordinary total of 82 percent of the known Roman camps have been discovered with aerial surveys, most of which took place from the 1940s to the 1980s. This contribution on the one hand is incredible, although it immediately created a huge bias in how most of the research has been done. Moreover, aerial surveys have had a tendency to follow the known northern Roman campaign routes starting at Hadrian's Wall. Although the (now former) Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), one of the lead contributors to the aerial surveys being done in Scotland, had begun with a more varied programme, this has not made up for the large bias (Jones 2011, 22).

This is, however, not the only problem that archaeologists face in researching these camps. First of all, antiquarians, to a large degree, utilized Tacitus' *Agricola* as a reference point and identified most camps as being from the Flavian period (Jones 2011, 15). Secondly, archaeologists, most famously St. Joseph, have tried to counter this problem with grouping certain camps based on their size and/or gate type (St. Joseph

1958: 93; 1969: 113-9; 1973: 228-33; 1977: 143-5). This created newissues, due to contradictory groupings which has been admitted by St. Joseph himself, not taking unusable ground for the placement of tents inside the camps into consideration, and the differentiating that is made has sometimes a small margin.

Thirdly, research on the camps in Scotland, including small-scale excavations and final publications, has almost exclusively been done by aerial surveyers. These very limited excavations consist mainly of small trenches dug in order to analyse the possible presence of V-shaped ditches in order to confirm their Roman origin (Jones 2011, 22; 25-7).Around 70 percent of the camps north of the Forth-Clyde isthmus has been subjected to this kind of excavation by St. Joseph alone, with 40 percent of these camps being re-examined on a later date by other researchers (Jones 2011, 38). This too brings a large bias to our understanding. Furthermore, temporary camps, and their temporary defences like palisades, bushwood and defensive pits, leave little archaeological evidence (Jones 2011, 43-4). These small scale excavations have therefore little potential for finding accurately datable evidence, as will become clear when discussing the individual series of camps.

Lastly, identifying (new) camps presents multiple challenges. Camps with visible cropmarks,indicating the presence of the enclosing rampart, the defensive ditch and/or gate defences, have a far larger chance to be discovered than camps lacking these features (Jones 2011, 37-8). Furthermore, sizes and shapes are known to vary widely in Scotland, in contrast to most known Roman sites. This broad range of shapes and sizes of camps exists in Scotland due to the restricted availability of suitable ground. For example, the camps that have a proposed Severan date seem to have a more rectangular defensive perimeter, but this feature is not exclusive to this period. The same can be stated about the *tituli* gate defences, which were earthen traverses placed some distance in front of gates (Jones 2011, 47-9; 53-4). This the very real possibility that researchers will not or cannot identify them as camps.The potential reuse of sites is also unlikely to be visible from the air, although some very limited excavations at some camps have provided evidence for the re-use of (part of)certain camps (Jones 2011, 27; 87-8).

The evidence that is and can be gathered from the temporary camps in Scotland is very limited. Numerous natural and artificial factors contribute to a limited and possibly flawed understanding of these camps. There are, however, new approaches that can

help archaeologists in their investigation into the Roman temporary camps. Some large scale excavations have taken place at the sites of Dullatur (Lowe and Moloney 2000 in Jones 2011, 25) and Kintore (Cook and Dunbar 2008 in Jones 2011, 25), producing numerous datable finds. Furthermore, the application of new remote sensing techniques, like LiDAR and geophysical surveys, have the potential to radicalize our approach to and understanding of old en new sites in the near future (Jones 2011, 25-7).

Due to a severe lack of dating evidence for most camps, researchers have tried to adopt other ways to help them date the camps. Placing camps in series has been an especially popular one, although there are problems with this approach. These series are most common north of the Antonine Wall and are almost absent in the large cluster of camps south of the Wall. The camp series that are linked to the Severan campaigns will now be discussed individually (fig. 1 and tab. 4):

63-acre (25 ha)

The 63-acre camp group is the most homogeneous group found in Scotland and frequently attributed to the Severan campaigns. Their sizes are roughly the same, each of their six gates is defended by a *titulus*, and they are separated by a rather consistent distance, comparable to a day's march. The camps are spread out along two lines, of which the northern line is largely in close proximity to the 130-acre camps series (fig. 1). St. Joseph suggest that these two lines represent a single (Severan) campaign that travelled in a circular direction (Jones 2011, 102), but other scholars interpret them as two separate lines of troops moving up together, and possibly assembling together for a single push north in the shape of the 110-acre camp series (e.g. Reed 1976, 96-7).

The sites of Ardoch and Innerpeffray have possibly provided evidence that the 63-acre camps are older than the 130-acre camps, although no excavations have been done to verify this claim (Jones 2011, 110-2). Due to a lack of datable evidence found at any of the camps, a precise date is not attached to this group. Both Flavian and Severan dates have been suggested, on the grounds that the groups are located north of the Antonine Wall. If the 63-acre camps were to be older than the 130-acre camps, then this could be contrary evidence to the claim that the 63-acre camps are Severan in date. Without proper dating, however, it could very well be that both camps belong to the Severan campaigns, with the 130-acre camp series belonging to the second campaign. This theory would explain the close proximity of both series to one another. Further evidence

would be the fact that both series share the same morphological features, having a tertiate plan, meaning that the outer dimensions have an 1:1.5 ratio, with six gates protected by *tituli*(Jones 2011, 111). If this theory would be true, however, there is no clear line of camps that would link up with the 110-acre camps at this moment. Dating the 65- and 130-acre camps should therefore be a priority.

110-acre (44 ha)

The 110-acre camp series consist of a line of camps that reaches the furthest north (see fig. 1). Like the 63-acre camps, these camps are attributed to both the Flavian and Severan campaigns. Multiple camps in this series have a somewhat unusual shape, probably due to their position on a (flank of a) hill, but all camps have their entrances defended by *tituli*. Unfortunately, little dating evidence has been gathered from these sites. Recent excavations at Kintore have, however, provided evidence for a primary Flavian occupation. No recutting of the outer defensive ditch has been found, suggesting that a possible Severan reoccupation is unlikely. The excavator hasclaimed that a Severan occupation is possible, but evidence of that statement is still forthcoming (Jones 2011, 109-110).

130-acre (54 ha)

As stated before, the 130-acre camp series share the same morphological characteristics as the 63-acre camps. It is suggested by Jones that the 130-acre camps form the end of the Severan campaigns, being that the last camp (Kair House) in this series is located where the Highlands meet the North Sea. This could be the location of Dio's claim of Severus campaigning to 'the furthest point of the island' and be the end of Caledonian territory. No datable evidence has been found at this moment in time, except for one stray Trajanic coin (Jones 2011, 111).

165-acre (67 ha)

The possible 165-acre camp series has the largest camps known in Scotland known at the moment and is located in south-east Scotland (see fig. 1). Due to their size, it has been calculated that they could contain 40.000 troops (with their baggage train), and morphology, each being tertiate in shape with six gates, they are regarded to be part of the Severan campaigns, but no dating has come available through the limited excavations that have been done on them. Furthermore, the shapes and dimensions

vary widely and it is therefore not entirely certain that these camps evenbelong to the same campaign(s) (Jones 2011, 111-2).

A general lack of evidence for Severan activity at certain sites is in some cases as interesting as actual proof. For example,a dozen camps have been discovered at the site of Lochlands, demonstrating that this site was well known to the Roman military. Excavation have provided evidence for both Flavian and Antonine occupations at this crucial crossing point of the Forth-Clyde isthmus (Jones 2011, 258-62). The question thus remains: why did Severus not use these well known sites as part of his expedition or has (datable) evidence of his use of the site not been found yet?

The first three series that have been discussed contain approximately 45% of all camps that are located north of the Antonine Wall, while the 165-acre camps belong to the 10% of camps which are located between Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. When taken into account that just 30% of known camps north of Hadrian's Wall are located north of the Antonine Wall (Jones 2011, 121), it is clear that there is a large bias in our knowledge of these camps.

To conclude, there is an overwhelming amount of evidence for Roman campaigns into Scotland due to the large number of temporary camps. This evidence, however, consists for the majority solely of their presence alone. The lack of datable evidence constrains our knowledge of these important features and has pushed scholars to look at their size and morphology to make series of them. These series are then, speculatively and largely based on the (unreliable) historical accounts, attached to one of the three major Roman campaigns known to have taken place in Scotland, with a focus on the Flavian and Severan campaigns. This practice is understandable, for people want to have a certain amount of dating surrounding their evidence, even if this means doing so on speculation alone. With new technology and research, this should not to be the case anymore. New evidence at for example Kintore, Ardoch and Innerpeffray has shown that the current dating of the series could very well be false. Completely discrediting the series and attached dates is, however, quite extreme.This research will thus regard them as possible evidence until further dating evidence is available.

4.1.3   Miscellaneous evidence

Native sites give a very limited amount information about the Roman military activity itself. Furthermore, this thesis isnot about the impact that the Roman army had on the native population. This topic is explored more depth by e.g. Breeze (1985), Hanson

(2002) and Hunter (2001).This iswhy the evidence from the miscellaneous sites will only be briefly discussed.

The first category to be discussed are the dozens of coin hoards that have been found throughout Scotland. These coin hoards usually contain Roman denarii and have therefore been used as evidence for the routes that the Severan campaigns have taken (Reed 1976, 95). In total,at least 45 hoards have been discovered, with termination dates of the well recorded hoards, those with more than 20 coins, being between the reigns of Commodus (180-92 CE) and Severus Alexander (222-35 CE; Hunter 2007, 214-5). There is a clear peak visible in the hoards dating to both the reign of Commodus and the reign of Severus, a trend that is attested for across the whole of northern Europe. Coins were in this period given as diplomatic gifts and consequently made their way to the wealthy and powerful leaders of the regions (Hunter 2007, 217-8). Although it is known how these coins made their way into Scotland, it is not always clear in which context these hoards were then buried.They were probably buried for mixed reasons, with motives ranging from safekeeping to being votive deposits (Hunter 2007, 220-1). It can, however, be stated that the argument that these hoards were deposited solely because of the arrival of Roman army in 208-211 or by Roman soldiersthemselves can be discredited. The coin hoards do present evidence for (extensive) Roman contact with the native tribes prior to the Severan campaigns.

Direct Roman contact during the (Severan) campaigns would have occurred on a previous unknown scale. The largest impact that the Roman army probably had on the local societies would have been the elimination of men of fighting age. This would have been the result of battles and skirmishes, the taking of hostages and the selling of captives into slavery. Archaeological evidence supporting these statements is, however, difficult to come by (Hanson and Macinnes 1991, 85-6). Pollen diagrams show a possible rapid decline in the local population in (north)eastern Scotland during and after the Agricolan occupation, although the archaeological record does not support this theory at the moment (Hanson 2003, 214). If this pattern is also visible after the Severan campaigns is not mentioned, although it could very well be possible regarding the lack of hostile actions mentioned in the historical sources after the Severan campaigns took place. This statement brings its own set of problems, such as the unreliability and Incompleteness of the historical sources, so further research will be needed to actually take this possible evidence into consideration.

Brining a force of several tens of thousands of men into hostile territory requires possibly alarge demand of the local resources. The local environment, especially the local woods, for fire and construction wood, and water sources, would be heavily affected by the temporary presence of Roman forces. The exact impact of the Roman army on the local woodlands is, however, unclear. As mentioned earlier, large parts of the local woodlands would have already been cleared due to the expansion of the local population, although if this was a local or regional phenomenon is unclear due to the fact that there is only a limited amount of pollen samples available. Almost all temporary camps found in Scotland have been created with earthworks and ditches as their main defences, indicating that they did not have the time and/or resources available on the mainland (Hanson 2003, 208-210). Foodstuffs were as important as the forts and camps that the soldiers build and lived in. The local emphasis on barley, although this can be disputed due to several difficulties surrounding pollen analysis, would demand the import of the preferred (spelt) wheat (Hanson 2003, 207-8). The large amount of granaries at South Shields, discussed in the next subchapter, would support this view.

One last piece of the(long term) impact that the Roman army had on the region are the sites of temporary camps themselves. The fact that a large amount of the perimeters of the temporary camps in Scotland have survived until at least the 18th century, when ploughing became more extensive, is quite remarkable. Furthermore, only few examples are known of later re-use of the camps. It could be argued that this was as a result of Roman ownership of the land or perhaps because the local population saw it as tainted (Jones 2011, 91-3; 123). Whatever the cause, the local populations would for many generations after the Roman military campaigns still be reminded of it.

Considering the available evidence, it can be concluded that more research is needed to understand the impact of the Roman army on the local population. Some scant evidence would suggest only a limited impact on the local population and environment, probably due to the short presence during the brief Roman campaigns. If the Romans wanted to conquer the region, it would be logical to persevere the native sites and agricultural land to tax later on (Hanson and Macinnes 1991, 87). Lastly, the denarii coin hoards that have been used as evidence for the presence of the Roman army itself (e.g. Reed 1976, 95) can be disregarded.

4.2   Outside Scotland

Besides the archaeological evidence present in Scotland itself, several sites on and around Hadrian's Wall provide evidence for the Severan campaigns, its preparations and its possible intentions. Discussing this evidence is therefore just as important as the evidence from Scotland.

4.2.1   Hadrian's Wall

Hadrian's Wall saw with the arrival of Lucius Alfenus Senecio, the governor of *Britannia* between 205-8, a phase of major re-organization. Evidence can be clearly seen at the extensively excavated forts of South Shields, Corbridge, Vindolanda and Birdoswald (Roach 2013, 107). Before examining the evidence of these forts, some general information that applies to most of the forts must be given.

During the reign of the Severan dynasty (195-235), there is a clear peak in coin loss at these sites in comparison to the average found in the whole of *Britannia* during the same period. It is also a clear increase when compared to previous and later emperors. This remarkable investment suggests a period of prolonged activity and a clear policy regarding the Wall as a permanent and continued frontier (Roach 2013, 111). A parallel pattern can be seen in the number of inscriptions found at the different forts, with a sustained peak between 205-8. This drops down to zero until 213, when as a show of loyalty the then governor Gaius Julius Marcus dedicated numerous inscriptions to Caracalla (Roach 2013, 114-5). This, of course, raises questions about the goal of the Severan campaigns and will be discussed in the next chapter.

Birdoswald

The Birdoswald fort is situated at the western end of Hadrian's Wall, on a strategic high ground overlooking a crossing point of the river Irthing (Wilmott 1997, 1). At the site of this fort, evidence has been found for a major (re)construction phase between 198-219 CE (Wilmott 1997, 197). This phase would have included the building of at least two *horrea* (storehouses) in the north-west side of the fort, together with the rebuilding of the south tower at the entrance near the *horrea* and the recutting of at least one ditch. An interesting fact is that the lower part of the tower has been rebuilt with fine ashlar, which is unique at Hadrian's Wall (Wilmott 1997, 103). This uniqueness demonstrates the special attention that this fort got during its reconstruction and the fact that the

builders, and their client, did not expect that the fort would be abandoned in the near future.

Dating of this phase is threefold. The white mortar that was used in the rebuilding is typical for Severan rebuilding work, pottery (180-240 CE), an intaglio (208-212 CE), a type of glass armlet, and an inscription (RIB 1909) records the building of one of the *horrea* by *cohorts Aelia Dacorum* and *I Thracum CR* during the governorship of Senecio (205-8 CE) (Wilmott 1997, 109-110). Few stratified finds have been found however, making an exact date difficult to determine (Wilmott 1997, 405).

More recent excavations have provided possible evidence for the establishment of an extra-mural settlement before 170 CE and, more importantly, remodelling of the entire western half of the fort. Almost every building has shown evidence of some degree of rebuilding and/or modification, with the re-use of building material being the norm. This has been interpreted to have coincided with the arrival of a new unit, the *cohors I Aelia Dacorum*, and the recommissioning of the fort in the late 2nd and early 3rd century. The dating could be Severan of date, although a Caracallan date is also possible (Wilmott 2009, 238-41; 392-3).

Burnswark

The hillfort at Burnswark is the highly debated site of a possible Roman siege some 25-30 kilometres north of Hadrian's Wall. From the 18th century up to the present day there have been arguments between scholars who believe it was indeed the site of a siege (e.g. Campbell 2003, 19-33;www.archaeology.co.uk) or that of a practice siege (e.g. Davies 1972, 99-113; Breeze 2011, 160-188). This thesis will not take a side in this discussion, for its dating is more important than its purpose for the research. The two main (siege) camps have been poorly dated. In the southern camp there have been four coins, of which the youngest is from Trajan, and several pieces of mid-second century pottery found (Davies 1972, 104). An earlier build Antonine fortlet contained within the southern camp has provided second century (Breeze 2011, 179). The camps could thus possibly be constructed during the Severan campaigns. During later excavations, multiple iron arrowheads of a type that was common in the 1st and 2nd century were found (www.archaeology.co.uk).

There is thus little supporting evidence for a Severan involvement at Burnswark. It is possible that the siege, if it was one at all to start with, of Burnswark was part of the

campaigns, but it would probably have been a small part. This is mostly due to the fact that Burnswark is not the main road leading to Scotland, which would have severely slowed down the campaign. At most, a small detachment of the British legions would have been sent to deal with the problem.

Corbridge

Severan evidence at Corbridge is scares. Little pottery has been found in the excavations after the Second World War (Bishop and Dore 1989, 139), but there is structural evidence for a new granary build by one of the governors during the reign of Severus, alongside a new major storage building (Birley 1988, 173).

Furthermore, multiple possible inscriptions have been uncovered that could possibly date to the reign of Severus. All three inscriptions are (parts of) dedication altars by the Legio II Augusta. Two of these have been dedicated to the 'Emperor's Victory' (RIB 1138) and the 'most successful expedition to Britain' (RIB 1143). The last one was dedicated by the officer in charge of the granaries, a job that apparently so important that it was mentioned specific on the dedication. Being in command of the granaries was probably an important task at that time, although what time exactly is not clear. Of these three inscriptions, only RIB 1138 has strong (circumstantial) evidence that can be dated to the reign of Severus, due to the name of the legionary legate mentioned on the dedication.

South Shields

South Shields, situated on the coast in modern day Newcastle, became an important transit port for the supplies needed in the Severan campaigns. The fort was enlarged to accommodate twenty-thee granaries, rather than the traditional two, which left almost no room for any accommodation. These granaries could, if fully stocked, supply around 25.000 troops, although some claim 40.000(e.g. Elliot 2014, 38), for a period up to three months. The supplies would be sailed north, possibly to Cramond and Carpow, to supply the soldiers on campaign in Scotland. The granaries were build in two stages, with the (unfinished) first stage (Period 5A) being dated to the reign of governor Senecio (205-8 CE) consisting of several granaries. The second stage (Period 5B) is dated to the Severan campaigns or immediately after. Other evidence connected to the Severan campaigns are the lead sealings with the heads of Severus and Caracalla, and later in 209 also Geta, pictured on them, dating between 197-209 (Hodgson 2014, 37-8; TWCMS 2002.1267-8; 2002.1304-9).

Vindolanda

The fort of Vindolanda during the reign of Severus is a curious case. Around 208 the previous fort, which was in use from the reign of Antoninus (ca. 160), was demolished and replaced by a "highly atypical "fort-complex" consisting of an annexe defended by a rampart and ditch…" (Roach 2013, 107-8) that re-used part of the western part of the previous fort as its eastern boundary. Some 25 native roundhouses have been excavated on the location of the previous fort, with a total of up to 200 being possible. In 213, a new stone fort was built, demolishing the roundhouses. Interpretations vary, with an interesting example being that the roundhouses were occupied by refugees of the Severan campaigns (Roach 2013, 107-8). One can furthermore speculate that these roundhouses were occupied by native warriors who were loyal to the Romans and who were brought in to help defend the Wall or the hinterland while the Roman military was on campaign to the north. The lack of examples at any of the other forts and during the previous Antonine campaigns would at least indicate that this phenomenon, if true, was unique for Britain.

Whatever the case may be, it cannot be denied that replacing a stone fortress with roundhouses around the start of the Severan campaigns and demolishing them a few years after is unlikely to be purely coincidence.

4.2.2 Outposts at High Rochester and Risingham

The two Roman outposts at High Rochester and Risingham are of key importance to get a better picture of the preparations of the Severan campaigns. Both outposts are situated along Dere Street, the main Roman road leading toward Scotland. Both were probably abandoned during the troubles in the 180s (Austin and Rankov 1995, 193).

Risingham has inscriptional evidence (RIB 1234) of its rebuilding, under the supervision of the earlier mentioned provincial procurator Adventus and ordered by governor Senecio, and being garrisoned in, and possibly before, 213 by a unit of Raetian spearmen and, more importantly, a unit of *exploratores* (RIB 1235). Although there is no earlier inscriptional evidence than 238-44, it is possible that High Rochester was rebuilt and occupied, again by a unit of *exploratores*, around the same time. This unit has had it name, which is attached to the name of the outpost fort (*exploratorum Bremeniensium)*, survive in an inscription (RIB 1262/1270). It seems that at least this unit, and likely also

the unit stationed at Risingham, were stationed permanently, at least for some extended amount of time, at these outposts (Austin and Rankov 1995, 194). Having both the governor and the procurator involved in (re)construction of military buildings was rather uncommon. The involvement of the duo is also attested for at Chesters along Hadrian's Wall (Birley 1988, 170).

The possible arrival of at least one unit of *exploratores* ahead of the Severan campaigns would be no coincidence. Severus probably did not want a repeat of the Parthian campaigns at the turn of the century. A lack of intelligence played, at least according to Dio (Dio 75, 9, 4), a big part in the failure to press home a victory.

To conclude, there is plenty of archaeological evidence for the Severan campaigns both in- and outside Scotland. The majority of the evidence in Scotland, with the temporary camps and the forts at Cramond and Carpow providing the most evidence, is relevant for the course and aftermath of the campaigns. Although a Severan dating for the forts is certain, hardly any datable evidence has been collected from the temporary camps. The majority of the evidence outside Scotland, which are the forts along Hadrian's Wall and the outposts at Risingham and High Rochester, have provided datable evidence for the preparations, aftermath and the possible reasons to start the Severan campaigns.

It is now time to combine this evidence together with the information presented in chapters 2 and 3 to discuss the preparations, course and aftermath of the Severan campaigns.

Chapter 5: Synthesis and discussion

Now that all the relevant data has been gathered and presented in the previous chapters, it is time to draw a synthesis about our understanding of the Severan campaigns in Scotland between 208-211CE.This synthesis, including discussions regarding some of the evidence, will be presented in three time periods. The first period will discuss the events and evidenceprior to 208, which will cover the preparations of and the possible motivations for the campaigns. The second period is between 208-211and will discuss the (possible) course of the campaigns. The last period is after 211and will discuss the how and why of the aftermath of the campaigns.

5.1   Preparations (Pre-208 CE)

To properly and fully understand the Severan campaigns, it is essential that the period leading up to the campaigns is thoroughly discussed. This period is especially important for the reasons why Severus took the decision to invade Scotland.

Although Severus' autobiography has not survived the test of time, it can be argued with a reasonable amount of certainty that Severus was not content with the situation in Britain before and during his reign. The Roman retreat to Hadrian's Wall in the 160's, the continued threat from the tribes north of the Wall from the 160s right up to the 190s and the internal treats due to mutinous legions from the mid-180s till 197would have had a thoroughlynegative influence on Severus' opinion of the province and its legions.

This opinion can be seen in the appointment ofonly highly experienced and loyal men as governor of *Britannia*.The combination of three, although under strength, legions who rebelled multiple times in the last two decades and the continued threat from the tribes living north of Hadrian's Wall, which was a recent as 197, has to be the main reasons why this was the case. A direct reaction against the troublesome tribes north of Hadrian's Wall, and possibly against the mutinous legions, was the appointment of Oclatinius Adventus in 205 as procurator. Hewas an expert in the gathering of military intelligence andwith this speciality likely began the training of the first ever unit of*exploratores*, a type of scout unit, in *Britannia*. The timing of the appointment of Adventus and the start of the campaigns just a few years later would not have been coincidental. This is thus the first argument for a planned invasion of Scotland and that it was not part of some desperate appeal from the governor as Herodian would have us believe. The outposts along Dere Street support this view, with the reconstruction of Risingham and possibly High Rochester around the same time.

Themajor restoration period of Hadrian's Wall under the supervision of governor Senecio (205-208 CE) is the first major piece of archaeological evidence regarding the Severan campaigns. Forts along Hadrian's Wall were this reconstruction is attested for include Birdoswald, Corbridge, South Shields and Vindolanda. The sudden and huge reconstruction of South Shields with an unprecedented number of 23 granaries being build and taking up the whole fort and leaving thus no room inside for any residents is perhaps the most important. If it can be assumed these granaries were built somewhere between 208-210, although dating evidence is not quite specific enough, it can suggest threepossible scenarios. The first scenario is that the decision to start a campaign, or communicating this with the province and its governor, was taken with little time left to built new supply stations and therefore South Shields saw major reconstruction. The second scenario is that supplies were running low during the campaign in late 208-209 and that South Shields was therefore quickly modified. A third scenario, that the placement of the granaries was planned in advance and build around 208, is however the most likely. Having a single central place to store the provisions of a large army is crucial, so choosing a fort along the North Sea that could supply both Hadrian's Wall and the campaign up north would be a logical choice. This could have been made with little preparation time, making the choice of an already existing fort more achievable than building a completely new fort.

The fort at Vindolandaalso experienced a highly curious and unique reconstruction in 208. The whole stone fortress, dating from the reign of Antoninus (ca. 160), was demolished and replaced on the west side with a fort which was defended by an earthen rampart. The site of the former fortress was occupied by dozens, and possibly hundreds, of roundhouses, only to revert to the pre-208 situation in 213. Why these roundhouses were build (on top of a Antonine fort) remains open to debate, with possibilities ranging from refugees from across Hadrian's Wall to the presence of local warriors. More evidence is needed to understand why the fort changed so dramatically for only a short time, althoughthe timing of this change right before the start of the Severan campaigns is not coincidental and understanding its change should therefore be a priority.

The major reconstruction phase at all these forts around the same time is evidence for an order which was part of a deliberate strategy from the imperial court. Such a massive investment into a frontier system should therefore be considered when discussing the

potential reasons as to why Severus invaded Scotland in 208 CE. If Severus legitimately wanted to conquer Scotland and incorporate it directly into the empire, then this would be a radical and sudden change in policy, something that was not mentioned in the classical sources. It is therefore arguable to assume that the campaigns were part of subduing and/or submitting the *Maeatae* and *Caledonii* and making them clients (kingdoms) of the Roman Empire, instead of physically incorporating them into the empire. The physical frontier would still be Hadrian's Wall, but it would be now better supplied by the granaries at South Shields and the region directly north would be less hostile towards the Romans, something that had not been the case in the previous centuries. The fort at Vindolanda is an exception that does not fit this model and further research is needed to know how this fort functioned.

Now that the intentions of the Severan campaigns have been discussed, it is time to analyze the campaigns themselves.

5.2   The campaigns (208-210 CE)

Now that the intentions and goal of the campaigns has been presented, we can now turn our attention towards the course of the campaigns themselves. The total amount of campaigns is usually argued to be two, an initial one beginning in 208 or 209 and a 'reactionary' one in 210. The first campaign would have been fought and led by Severus and Caracalla in person and the second one would have been led by Caracalla alone. However, nowhere in the historical accounts is it explicitly stated that this was the case. If the text of Dio and Herodian are combined into one narrative, then it can be argued that Caracalla led the second, possible genocidal, campaign. Merging these two sources together is troubling, even if they are contemporary. Herodian, for example, does not explicitly refer to two separate campaigns while Dio does.

Although the number of individual campaigns that were fought is not clear from the historical sources, it can be assumed that the campaigning, including the preparations, would have continued throughout 208, 209 and possible 210, with both Severus and Caracalla being commanders. The exact routes that the Roman army took during the campaigns is one of the most essential pieces of information. Unfortunately, the historical sources give neither basic nor detailed information. Therefore, the mention against which tribes Severus fought is the only historical indication on where the campaigns would have taken place. The locations of these tribes, the *Maeatae* and the *Caledonii*, has been heavily debated by scholars for many decades and the historical accounts do not give any clarity. Although the precise location of their homeland is not certain, the fact that Dio refers to two distinct groups of people, instead of the numerous tribes mentioned by Ptolemy in his *Geography,* is an important piece of information. As a larger and possibly more organized group, these people would have had a far greater chance to resist the Roman army (Breeze 2007, 365). The same pattern has been observed in Germany due to Rome's long-term presence (Mattingly 2006, 431-2). How these groups were organized and viewed their own identity is not known, for the sources that speak about these groups are Roman and should therefore not be taken for granted. Later in this subchapter, when discussing the rebellion in 210 by the *Maeatae*, these issues will be further debated.

Unfortunately, the archaeological record is not clear enough to answer the question of where the Roman army campaigned between 208-210/211.The largest body of physical evidence regarding the Severan campaigns are the temporary (marching)camps that the

Roman army left behind during their time in Scotland. These with earthworks and ditches defended camps are widely known throughout the whole of Britain, with hundreds of examples accounted for. Unfortunately, little datable evidence has been found in these camps. A solution that scholars have implemented to counter this problem has been the grouping of camps with roughly the same size and morphological characteristics into series. This has been mainly applied to the camps north of the Antonine Wall, were it can be perceived more clearly than the clusters of camps in southern Scotland. The most conventional camp series, suggested by St. Joseph after doing aerial surveys of the camps, are the 63-acre, 110-acre, 130-acre and 165-acre camp series. Every one of these series has, at one point or another, been linked to the Severan campaigns. None of these camps have provided any datable evidence, which makes claiming them as Severan highly troublesome. On the basis of overlapping camps at Ardoch and Innerpeffray, ithas been argued that the 63-acre camps are older than the 130-acre. A possible Roman road, with a Flavian or Antonine date, overlapping the 63-acre camp at Innerpeffray West could be evidence for the 63-acre camps being Flavian in date. Lastly, recent excavations at the 110-acre camp at Kintore that suggest a primary Flavian occupation, but also having a possible secondary Severan occupation, have provided a new problem, that of possible reoccupation of certain camps during later campaigns.

These particular problems make determining possible Severan camps challenging. There are many possibilities, but hardly any certainties. Scholars, in their attempt to understand the temporary camps, have relied too much on logical guesswork. With the overlying 63-acre and 130-acre camps, it could very well be that the former are Flavian in date and the latter are Antonine in date. This would completely change the current perspectives of the Severan campaigns. To add to the questionable nature of the methods employed by scholars to understand the Severan campaigns, they have taken for granted that the largest camps should be Severan in date. No solid arguments are given (e.g. Hodgson 2014, Reed 1976) and this assumption is therefore somewhat questionable without hard evidence beside the granaries at South Shields. What is desperately needed is new field research, for example (large scale) excavations combined with geophysical surveys, to counter these problems. This should not only take place on camps that have been included in one of the previously mentioned camps, but also on camps that have not been linked with a series.

Along with the marching camps, two Roman forts were used in Scotland during the Severan campaigns. The Antonine fort at Cramond, located west of modern day Edinburgh, was reoccupied during the Severan campaigns and is suggested to have been used for the transport of supplies from South Shields further north. It is possible that the supplies were taken to the newly constructed fort at Carpow, at the mouth of the river Tay. This stone fort has also been dated to the Severan campaigns and is more interesting in its context than Cramond. Within, structures such as bathhouses and accommodations for a garrison of around 3000 troops are accounted for, indicating that the occupants, likely part the 6th Legion, planned on staying for some time. The fort was the end of the possible supply line by sea from South Shields to the Roman troops on campaign. It is rather interesting that both Cramond and Carpow were occupied for this reason, due to the fact that they were separated by 'just' around 37 miles (60 kilometres). If the supplies were brought in by ship, going first to Cramond and then send to Carpow would have been a rather large detour. Both sites are situated ca 25-30 miles (ca 30-40 kilometres) inland, were the rivers they lay besides flow into a bay which connects to the North Sea (fig. 1). Supplying the Roman troops over land should also be considered as an option, with both forts having the possibility of guarding a river crossing and being a temporary stop for the supply column. Two Roman coins, both depicting a different type of bridge which could have been used for both river crossings, could support this theory according to Reed (1976, 92-5). A combination of supply lines over both land and sea is of course also possible. Supplying an army of tens of thousands of troops would demand vast amounts of resources, which would make a supply line over sea easier and safer. It is therefore likely that the forts at Cramond and Carpow were occupied to secure the river crossings that the Roman army used on its way north and also possibly controlling the surrounding area.

The fort at Carpow could have another interesting purpose according to Hodgson, as mentioned in chapter 3.4. The building of a completely new stone fort at Carpow is an indication that the Roman military command planned for an extended campaign and/or (partly) controlling the surrounding area and its residents. This is a very compelling argument and would contribute to the earlier theory that this series of campaigns was not part of a conquest of Scotland, but rather a strategy to subjugate and control the tribes in Scotland. This would in turn relieve the pressure put on Hadrian's Wall.

Beside the archaeological record, there is one important event described by Dio that possibly took place during the Severan campaigns and, if true, could shed new light on the campaigns. According to him, a (temporary) peace was established following the first (set of) campaign(s) around 210 CE, subsequently followed by a rebellion and a military reaction by Severus. The alleged rebellion of the *Maeatae* is potentially the most important event to understand the true intentions of Severus. To quote Dio, in 209/210 Severus:

> *returned to the friendly portion, after he had forced the Britons to come to terms, on the condition that they should abandon a large part of their territory* (Cass. Dio 77, 13, 3-4).

Which territory is implied by Dio is debatable, with the land between Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall being more plausible than the actual homeland of the *Maeatae*, which lay in the Fife and Tayside according to the present consensus (e.g. Mattingly 2006, 124). This theory is reinforced by the fact that after the inhabitants of the island revolted ones again in 209/210, Severus ordered his troops "to invade the rebels' country" (Cass. Dio 77, 15, 1), implying that he only invaded the area north of the Antonine Wall. The other main question is why, and if, the *Maeatae* revolted against the Romans. They were not mentioned by Dio as the opponents of the Romans in the first part of his narrative and it is therefore possible that they were not involved. Reed argues in his article that the Romans made preparations in the homeland of their (temporary) allies, the *Maeatae,* in 208 (Reed 1976, 96). If this theory would be able to hold true, a rebellion could have been caused by Roman atrocities in their homeland during this period. High collateral damage to civilian communities, like burning villages and crops, were sanctioned by the Roman army command to deliberately provoke and intimidate the population. This was partly done to show the local population, who consisted for the vast majority of simple farmers and their (extended) families, that resistance was futile, but more importantly to draw out guerrilla fighters (Mattingly 2006, 91). Countering guerrilla warfare would have been the primary objective of the Roman army during the Severan campaigns, especially due to the fact that only brief skirmishes were fought during any of the campaigns. However, the rebellion is just as likely to be made up or exaggerated by the Romans themselves as an excuse to invade and physically subdue them. Whatever the true reason was, the response of Severus was rather excessive if we trust the historical sources. It could be that this rebellion would have sparked something

in Severus after finally establishing a peace and thus ending his arduous and unsuccessful campaigns. The possible betrayal by the *Maeatae* and the subsequent reigniting of the conflict could very well have enraged Severus to a point that he ordered his troops to commit near genocide on the local population. However, this series of events is not mentioned in Herodian, who describes a continuation of the campaigns, and the words that Severus 'spoke' were likely put into his mouth by Dio for dramatization. What exactly transpired is not known with certainty, but assuming that a genocidal campaign truly happened is inadvisable.

The rebellion was probably not ended by the defeat of the *Maeatae* and the later joined *Caledonii*, but by the death of Severus on February 4th 211. The aftermath of the Severan campaigns after the death of Severus will now be discussed in the next subchapter.

5.3   Aftermath of the campaigns (post-211 CE)

Both Dio (78, 1, 1) and Herodian (3, 15, 6) narrate the following sequence of events following the death of Severus at York in 211. Caracalla, after unsuccessfully trying to win the favour of the army at the expense of his brother Geta, swiftly signed a treaty with his opponents and travelled back to Rome, abandoning both the forts at Carpow and at Cramond. This was likely a sensible decision, because the brothers urgently had to go to Rome to consolidate their power. Furthermore, the arduous campaigns in Scotland were likely not profitable, the only worthwhile loot being slaves due to a lack of valuable (natural) resources, and the mounting casualties would have made the army restless. After the death of Severus, the high command of the army would have probably urged the brothers to terminate the campaigns. Not having consolidated their power and being far away from the capital surrounded by restless troops, the brothers would have cut their losses and departed for Rome as soon as possible. Although this scenario is hypothetical and cannot be confirmed without new historical sources, it is reasonable to argue that this is a likely course of events.

If Severus had initially intended to conquer Scotland and incorporate it into the Roman Empire, then this goal was not achieved. If Severus wanted to make the tribes north of Hadrian's Wall clients (kingdoms) to the Roman Empire and thus secure the area north of Hadrian's Wall, then this goal would have at least been partly achieved. No mention is given in the historical sources that the tribes north of Hadrian's Wall were subjugated or made clients of the Roman Empire, although ancient sources are notoriously bad when dealing with such matters from the third century onwards. The reoccupation of the outpost forts at High Rochester and Risingham sometime after the Severan campaigns does suggest, however, that the region was back under (a limited) Roman control. The Severan campaigns were therefore apparently successful in this regards.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

In the previous chapters, the historical and archaeological data have been presented (chapters 3 and 4) and discussed (chapter 5). To understand what the data actually represents, we must answer the research questions that have been mentioned in chapter 1 with this data.

What historical and archaeological evidence about the Severan campaigns is currently available?

The historical evidence can be divided into two categories. The first category include the primary third century histories of Cassius Dio and Herodian. Although Dio provides a lot of personal details about the characters involved, both historians give a (negatively) biased and a limited amount of information regarding the Severan campaigns. They sometimes even raise more questions than provide answers, especially regarding the course of the campaigns. The second category include the work of Eutropius and the *Historia Augusta*. Both give almost no information regarding the campaign, with the only worthwhile information being the mention of the reconstruction of Hadrian's Wall.

The archaeological evidence can be just as biased and limited as the historical sources. The largest body of archaeological evidence that is available about the Severan campaigns consists of dozens of temporary camps throughout Scotland, but datable evidence has been allusive for the vast majority of these camps. Other archaeological evidence in Scotland include the Antonine fort at Cramond and the newly constructed fort at Carpow.

Archaeological evidence outside Scotland consist of the between 205-208 CE rebuild forts of Birdoswald, Corbridge, South Shields and Vindolanda along Hadrian's Wall. The deliberate destruction of the stone fort at Vindolanda, its replacement by dozens of roundhouses and the subsequent rebuilding of the stone fort around 213 is in sheer contrast to the refurbishment of other forts along Hadrian's Wall in 205-8.The presence of overtwenty granaries at South Shields is unique in Britain and shows the immense scale of the campaigns and their preparations. North of Hadrian's Wall, the outpost forts at High Rochester and Risingham have provided evidence for their reoccupation sometime before or after the Severan campaigns after their abandonment in the 180s.

Are the current and past perspectives of the Severan campaigns still applicable with recent evidence?

The general narrative that the current perspectives offer is still somewhat relevant. It is known with certainty that forts along Hadrian's Wall were reconstructed between 205-208, the Roman army under Severus and Caracalla campaigned in Scotland between 208-210/211and the fort at Carpow was build between 208-211. Details, such as the route that the Roman army took, the reasons behind the start of the Severan campaigns and the true objectives for the campaign, which are usually given in the books and articles that describe the course of events, should be re-examined. These details largely rely on the historical accounts of Herodian and Dio in particular and are therefore rather unreliable. Some details also rely on shaky archaeological evidence, especially the temporary camps that are regarded to be a part of the Severan campaigns.

How can our understanding of the Severan campaigns be enhanced?

To enhance our understanding of the Severan campaigns and counter the unreliable details presented in most perspectives regarding the Severan campaigns, addition field research is needed. Large scale excavation at temporary camps, for example at Kintore, have proven that this is a valid method to help scholars understand and date themmore properly. The use of geophysical survey techniques could be of significant importance in identifying specific internal structures, such as pits and ovens, within thesetemporary camps. If these structures could be identified, smaller scale excavations would probably have the same results without disturbing the whole site. Furthermore, new techniques such as LiDAR have the possibility to radicallyalter our understanding of temporary camps and sites that are not easily visible from the ground. Sites that were previously not visible from the ground could be more easily identified and registered.

Secondly, further research should be done regarding native sites, with dating being one of the primary focal points. The impact that the Roman army had on the local population is unclear, although it is likely that it would have been large. Conducting further research on native sites, notably in the Fife and around the temporary camps,is therefore crucial.

Lastly, additional research of the finds that have been recovered at the fort at Vindolanda is needed to give scholars a better understanding and a possible explanation for the massive reconstruction that happened around 208. Understanding this reconstruction is key to explaining the true intentions and/or causes of the campaigns.

Summary

Septimius Severus was the emperor of Rome from his ascension in 193CE to his death in modern day York in 211. Severan activity and campaigns in Scotland between 208-211 CE have left tangible evidence in the shape of historical, archaeological, numismatic and epigraphical evidence.

Based on historical sources, it is safe to say that Severus' opinion of and dealings with Britain and its legions was not positive throughout his live. This is reflected in his choice of procurators and governors for the province when he came to power.

Archaeological evidence would suggest that the Severan campaigns was probably planned, with the appointment of Adventus as procurator and reoccupation of the outpost fort of Risingham being the clearist evidence. The major reconstruction of several forts at Hadrian's Wall in the period 205-208 CE would suggest that the Wall was still seen as the permanent frontier and that the campaigns in Scotland did not have the goal of occupying the region. The sudden demolition of the fort at Vindolanda, and replacement by dozens of roundhouses, could possibly be evidence for refugees from north of Hadrian's Wall or the garrison being replaced by local warriors.

The Antonine fort at Cramond was (re)occupied and was probably used as a link in the supply chain from South Shields to Carpow. Carpow was a newly constructed stone fort at the mouth of the river Tay, which could have been built to control the natives after their subjugation.

Several temporary (marching)camp series have also been linked to the Severan campaigns. The 63-acre, 110-acre, 130-acre and 165-acre camp series have all been linked at one point to the campaigns. Recent evidence at one of the 110-acre camps would suggest that these have a primary Flavian occupation and a possibly secondary Severan occupation. Furthermore, it appears that the 63-acre camps would be older than the 130-acre camps. No secure dating has been provided for the vast majority of the camps and the current use of 'series' is questionable and inadvisable.

New research is needed at these camps, at native sites and of the finds of Vindolanda.

Samenvatting

Septimius Severus was de keizer van het Romeinse Rijk van 193 na Chr. tot zijn dood in York in 211. De Severische campagnes in Schotland tussen 208-211 hebben historische, archeologische, numismatieke en epigrafische bewijs achtergelaten.

Op basis van historische bronnen kan het worden gesteld dat de mening van Severus over Brittannië niet positief waren en dit is terug te zien in zijn handelingen richting de provincie. Dit is voornamelijk goed te zien in zijn keuze in procurators en gouverneurs.

Archeologisch bewijs suggereert dat de Severische campagnes gepland waren. De meest duidelijke aanwijzingen zijn de benoeming van Adventus als procurator en het weer in gebruik nemen van de voorpost bij Risingham. De grote reconstructie van meerdere forten langs de Muur van Hadrianus tussen 205-208 laat zien dat dit de permanente grens op het eiland zou blijven voor de Romeinen en dat de bezetting van Schotland niet het primaire doel was van de campagnes. De plotselinge vernietiging van het fort bij Vindolanda en de vervanging in de vorm van tientallen rondhuizen zou bewijs kunnen zijn voor vluchtelingen vanuit het noorden of een garnizoen bestaande uit lokale strijders.

Het fort bij Cramond (her)bezet en was mogelijk een link in de bevoorradingslijn van South Shields tot Carpow. Carpow was een nieuw stenen fort aan de mond van de rivier Tay en kon mogelijk zijn gebruikt om de lokale bevolking te controleren wanneer de campagnes waren afgelopen.

Meerdere series, de 25, 44, 54 en 67 ha series, van tijdelijke (mars)kampen zijn gekoppeld aan de Severische campagnes. Recent bewijs bij een van de 44 ha kampen suggereert een primaire Flavische occupatie, met een mogelijkheid tot een secundaire Severische occupatie. Het lijkt er verder op dat de 25 ha kampen ouder zijn dan de 54 ha kampen. De overgrote meerderheid van de kampen is niet gedateerd en het gebruik van deze series is daarom twijfelachtig, met de uitzondering van de 44 ha kampen.

Nieuwe opgravingen in de kampen en op inheemse sites, en nieuw onderzoek van de vondsten gevonden in Vindolanda zijn nodig om de campagnes beter te begrijpen.

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List of abbreviations

RIB   - Roman Inscriptions of Britain

TWCMS - Tyne&Wyre Collection Museum Serial(number)

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List of figures and tables

Figures

Tables