Hadrian’s Wall
(c. 122 CE)
Distance slab of the Twentieth Legion, recording the completion of 4411 feet of the Antonine Wall, found near Old Kilpatrick Ford (Scotland), c. 142–180 CE (Glasgow, Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, GLAHM F.15)
Military tombstone of Gaius Saufeius, from Lincoln, 1st century CE
(London, British Museum, 1873.0521.1)

inscription:
G SAVFEIO | G F FAB HER | MILITI LEGIO | VIII | ANNOR XXXX | STIP XXII | H S E
London, Billingsgate Roman House and Baths
(first discovered in 1848, hidden under the buildings on Lower Thames Street)
Roman Baths at Bath
Roman temple to the goddess Sulis Minerva at Baths (reconstruction)
Gilt bronze head from the cult statue of Sulis Minerva from the Temple at Bath, found in Stall Street in 1727
(Bath, Roman Baths)
Among the Naharvali is shown a grove, the seat of a prehistoric ritual: a priest presides in female dress; but according to the Roman interpretation (interpretatio Romana) the gods recorded in this fashion are Castor and Pollux: that at least is the spirit of the godhead here recognised, whose name is the Alci. No images are in use; there is no sign of non-German superstition: nevertheless they worship these deities as brothers and as youths.
Cast bronze figure of the Roman deity Mars, from Southbroom (Devizes, Wiltshire), 3rd century CE (London, British Museum, 1811.0309.2)
Altar to Matres Campestres and Britannia, found at the Antonine Wall near Castlehill Ford (Scotland), c. 142–180 CE

inscription: CAMPESTRIBVS ET BRITANNI Q PISENTIVS IVSTVS PR(A)EF COH IIII GAL V S L L M (Glasgow, Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, GLAHM F.31)
Mother goddesses from the Cologne workshop of Fabricius, 2nd century CE (Köln, Römisch-Germanisches Museum)
London, Roman temple in Greenwich Park (digital reconstruction by Channel 4’s Time Team)
London, Roman amphitheatre beneath the Guildhall
St Albans (Verulamium), Roman theatre
London, Romano-British mosaics
(London, British Museum,
1806.1115.1; OA.290)
St Albans, Roman Mosaic and Hypocaust
Model of Fishbourne Roman Palace (West Sussex)
‘To Neptune and Minerva, for the welfare of the Divine House, by the authority of Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus, great king of the Britons, the guild of smiths and those in it gave this temple at their own expense ...ens, son of Pudentinus, presented the forecourt.’
Writing-tablet from Vindolanda (modern Chesterholm), Northumberland, c. 100 CE
‘birthday invitation from Claudia to Sulpicia’
(London, British Museum, 1986.1001.64)
Writing-tablet from Vindolanda, c. 100 CE
‘intelligence report’
(London, British Museum, 1986.1001.34)
Manuscript of some of the works of Tacitus
Tacitus, *Agricola* 10.1–3

‘The geographical position of Britain and the races which inhabit it have been recorded by many writers: if I record them it is not to challenge comparison in the matter of accuracy or talent, but because it was Agricola who first thoroughly subdued it: accordingly, where earlier writers embroidered with rhetoric a theme still legendary, there will be found only a faithful narration of facts.

Britain is the largest island known to Romans: as regards its extent and situation it faces Germany on the east, Spain on the west; on the south it is actually within sight of Gaul; its northern shores alone have no lands opposite them, but are beaten by the wastes of open sea. Livy and Fabius Rusticus, the most graphic of ancient and modern writers respectively, have likened the shape of Britain as a whole to an elongated shoulder-blade or to an axe-head. This is in fact its shape up to the borders of Caledonia, whence also this idea has been extended to the whole; but when you cross the border a vast and irregular tract of land runs out forming the final stretch of coast-line and eventually tapers as it were into a wedge.’ [Loeb edition]
Tacitus, *Agricola* 11.1–4

‘Be this as it may, the question who were the first inhabitants of Britain and whether they were indigenous or immigrant is one which, as one would expect among barbarous people, has never received attention. The physique of the people presents many varieties, whence inferences are drawn: the red hair and the large limbs of the inhabitants of Caledonia proclaim their German origin; the swarthy faces of the Silures, the curly quality, in general, of their hair, and the position of Spain opposite their shores, attest the passage of Iberians in old days and the occupation by them of these districts; those peoples, again, who adjoin Gaul are also like Gauls, whether because the influence of heredity persists, or because when two lands project in opposite directions till they face each other the climatic condition stamps a certain physique on the human body; but, taking a general view of the case, we can readily believe that the Gauls took possession of the adjacent island. You would find there Gallic ceremonies and Gallic religious beliefs; the language is not very different; there is the same recklessness in courting danger, and, when it comes, the same anxiety to escape it; but the Britons display a higher spirit, not having yet been emasculated by long years of peace.’
'The sky is overcast with continual rain and cloud, but the cold is not severe. The length of the days is beyond the measure of our world: the nights are clear and, in the distant parts of Britain, short, so that there is but a brief space separating the evening and the morning twilight. If there be no clouds to hinder, the sun’s brilliance – they maintain – is visible throughout the night: it does not set and then rise again, but simply passes over. That is to say, the flat extremities of the earth with their low shadows do not project the darkness, and nightfall never reaches the sky and the stars.

The soil, except for the olive and the vine and the other fruits usual in warmer lands, is tolerant of crops and prolific of cattle: they ripen slowly, but are quick to sprout – in each case for the same reason, the abundant moisture of the soil and sky. Britain produces gold and silver and other metals: conquest is worth while. Their sea also produces pearls, but somewhat clouded and leaden-hued. Some people suppose that their pearl-fishers lack skill; in the Red Sea we are to imagine them torn alive and still breathing from the shell, while in Britain they are gathered only when thrown up on shore: for myself I could more readily believe that quality was lacking in the pearls than greed in Romans.'
Statue of Ausonius in Bordeaux

Map of river Moselle
Ausonius, Mosella 55–74

‘Thou through thy smooth surface showest all the treasures of thy crystal depths – a river keeping naught concealed: and as the calm air lies clear and open to our gaze, and the stilled winds do not forbid the sight to travel through the void, so, if our gaze penetrates thy gulfs, we behold things whelmed far below, and the recesses of thy secret depth lie open, when thy flood moves softly and thy waters limpid-gliding reveal in azure light shapes scattered here and there: how the furrowed sand is rippled by the light current, how the bowed water-grasses quiver in thy green bed: down beneath their native streams the tossing plants endure the water’s buffeting, pebbles gleam and are hid, and gravel picks out patches of green moss. As the whole Caledonian shore spreads open to the Briton’s gaze, when ebbing tides lay bare green seaweed and red coral and whitening pearls, the seed of shells, man’s gauds, and under the enriched waves mimic necklaces counterfeit our fashions; even so beneath the glad waters of still Moselle weeds of different hue reveal the pebbles scattered amidst them.’ [Loeb edition]
Ausonius, *Mosella* 374–388

‘But if to thee, O divine Moselle, Smyrna or famed Mantua had given its own poet, then would Simoïs, renowned on Ilium’s coasts, yield place, and Tiber would not dare to set his glories above thine. Pardon, O pardon me, mighty Rome! Rebuffed – I pray – let Envy withdraw, and Nemesis who knows no Latin name! To thee, O Tiber, belongs this higher praise, that thou dost guard the seat of empire and the homes of Rome.

Hail, mighty mother both of fruits and men. Thy illustrious nobles, thy youth trained to war, thy eloquence which vies with the tongues of Rome – these are thy glories, O Moselle! And withal, Nature has bestowed upon thy sons virtue and a blithe spirit with unclouded brows. Not Rome alone vaunts her old-time Catos, nor does Aristides stand alone as the one only critic of Justice and of Right.’
Trier, Porta Nigra
Head of Jupiter, copper alloy sculpture, showing the combination of classical and native religious traditions from Felmingham Hall (Norfolk), 2nd–3rd century CE (London, British Museum, 1925.0610.1)