

The Pictish Tattoo: Origins of a Myth

By Richard Dibon-Smith

“All the Britons dye themselves with woad,
which produces a blue colour, and makes their
appearance in battle more terrible.”

J. Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, 5.14

The above observation is the only remark Caesar ever made about Britons dyeing themselves, and apparently the only notice of this practice ever made by an eye-witness. But this one sentence, casually included in Caesar's *Gallic Wars*, would fuel the imagination of Greek and Roman poets for centuries, and would lead to one of the most widespread beliefs concerning the peoples of ancient Britain: the tattooing of the Picts. This belief was consciously nurtured by a number of poets and historians over several centuries until it has today become an accepted 'fact', one of the few known about the Picts.

By tracing the extant literary references based on Caesar's remark it is possible to see just how the innocent observation came to apply to a totally different people—how the myth was born.

The first of the poets who is said to have Caesar's reference is Ovid. Born almost to the day one year after Caesar's assassination, into a proud family of the Equite rank, Ovid could have become a Roman senator had he wished. But while still a teenager he was to evince a talent and a love for verse. He wrote a series of love poems and had them published about 23 B.C. Four more series, or books, were soon published, and together they went under the collective title *Amores*.

For the second edition of *Amores* Ovid reduced the work to three books. (“Even if we give no pleasure the pain will be two books less.”) Pleasure he did give; the young poet had a best-seller.

In Book 2, verse 16, lines 37-40 of this second edition, the poet laments his lost love:

it's as though I'm not at Sulmona
on the farm where I was born,
but far away in Scythia, wild Cilicia, woad-painted Britain,
or perched on Prometheus' murderous crag.*

Ovid then would seem to be the first to transform Caesar's military observation into poetic imagery. But his claim rests on the interpretation one gives to the word *virides*.

The first meaning of this word is 'green' and the usual non-English translation given the passage is simply *green Britons*. Thus Franco Munari (Florence, 4th ed., 1964,

*References of all quoted material, both in the original and in English, are given at the end of this paper.

172): *verdi Britanni*, but the adjective is bothersome, and Munari adds the note: “Green because the island was largely covered with forests.”

The Germans have had equal difficulty, as in the translation by Friedrich Walter Lenz (Berlin, 1966, 107): *grünen Britanniern* with the note (p. 205): “The adjective used with *Britannos* has different explanations, either the greater part of the island is wooded or it is surrounded by the sea ...”

The German version by Walter Marg and Richard Harder (Munich, 1968, 95) produced the identical *grünen Britanniern*. Their note is somewhat more comprehensive: “It is unclear why the inhabitants of Britain are called *virides*—is it because of the surrounding green sea? or because of the numerous woods? Both are rather unlikely. Concealment as in *Macbeth*? *Warpaint*? Probably the latter.”

The Frenchman Henri Bornecque (Paris, 1930, 64), evidently taking the word *virides* to mean sea- green, wrote “... des Bretons entourés d’eau ...”

These few examples show the difficulties of interpretation that can occur in translation. Never mind the poetic nuances of entire phrases; just one common word is enough to entail lengthy explanatory notes. For the passage in question only the last German suggestion (‘warpaint’) brought in the idea of woad, but the translators ignored the problem of Caesar-blue becoming Ovidian-green.

English versions accept this colour change without comment, and having done so, proceed to the next step, stating that the Britons are covered in woad. This was Grant Showerman’s approach: ‘the woaded Britons’; Rolfe Humphries: ‘the woad-using Briton’; Guy Lee (whom we have quoted on the opening page): ‘woad-painted Britain’.

Thus it has been constant practice for English-speaking translators to write of the ‘woaded Briton’ despite the failure of others to do the same.

Perhaps the problem can be solved by answering the following question: was Ovid in the habit of employing the word *virides* in other than its primary meaning (green)? Throughout his career as a poet Ovid employed the word fifty-one times, mostly in *Metamorphoses*, but also in *Heroides*, *Ars Amor*, *Fasti*, *Tristia*, and *Amores*. By far the most frequent use of the adjective was applied to the colour of trees (branches or forests); sometimes water was meant, but above all grass. For example in *Amores* 1.14.22 we have ‘green turf’; 3.5.5 ‘deepest green ... grass’ and 3.5.22 ‘verdant ground’. Then suddenly in Book 2, verse 16, line 39 of *Amores* we are faced with ‘woaded Britons’.

In reviewing the English translations given to Ovid’s entire output of *virides*, it becomes clear that Ovid was not a poet to require great feats of imagination from his readers. When he wrote ‘*virides*’ he meant ‘green’. Only once, in *Ars Amor*, does the second meaning of the word emerge (3.557): ‘tender youth’. Never in all his works is there any reason to give the reader a colour-shift or to offer any explanation of what Ovid ‘really meant’. One is left then with the firm opinion that Ovid did not have in mind the blue-stained bodies of Britons when he wrote of the *viridesque Britannos*. The claim that Ovid was the first to use Caesar’s colourful description of the Britons must be denied.

Pomponius Mela, born in southern Spain (just when is not known) wrote a popular geography of the world around A.D. 44, a short work in which—following the current custom—he freely borrowed from many predecessors. This work, *De Situ Orbis*, is the earliest extant geographical work of its kind in Latin. Regarding the Britons he made this observation: “it is uncertain why they paint themselves with woad”, then goes on to discuss their warlike tendencies, including a reference to chariots equipped with scythes—something not found in Caesar and probably untrue. With Mela’s account we have the first clear, unequivocal reference since Caesar’s time to a woad-using people in Britain.

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About fifty years after Mela’s account, Caius Silius Italicus wrote the longest Latin poem still extant, over 12,000 verses. This poem, *Punicorum*, tells the exploits of Hannibal during the second Punic War. Many times the poet pauses to recount the military accomplishments of Rome’s illustrious rulers and describe the wild tribes they encountered. In Book 17, lines 416-7, he writes:

Even so the woad-stained native of Thule drives his chariot
armed with scythes round the close-packed ranks in battle.

Thule, meaning the ‘end of the world’, is usually taken to represent the northernmost islands off Britain, either the Shetlands or Iceland, but we may assume in this case that the poet was using his imagery to evoke the peoples of the far north of Britain, for he mentions not only the blue-painting but also the scythed chariots. Both of these images, as we have seen, were first presented together in Mela, and it is not unlikely that the geographer was the source for Italicus. The importance of Italicus lies in the fact that he displaces the native up to the farthest northern reaches of the island. It was an idea that would eventually take hold, particularly as the Romanized native tribes of south and central Britain came to be seen as devoid of poetic promise.

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A contemporary of Italicus, but much more influential, was Marcus Valerius Martialis. He spent most of his life in Rome, making a living by writing and publishing epigrams under the name of ‘Martial’. Loving, biting, satirical, trenchant epigrams they were too, about the people and the city he knew well: gladiators and gourmets, lawyers and undertakers, doctors and drunkards—no one escaped his observation. In Book 14, number 99, he wrote:

I have come, a barbarian basket, from the woad-stained Britons;
but Rome now prefers to call me her own.

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One hundred years and more would pass before a Syrian imitator of the Cilician poet Oppian would write a long rambling poem on hunting. This poem, *Cynegetica*, or *The Chase*, was dedicated to the emperor Caracalla, who reigned 211-217. It can therefore be dated at A.D. 211 or later. Lines 468-471 of the first book read:

There is one valiant breed of tracking dogs, small indeed but as worthy as large dogs to be the theme of song; bred by the wild tribes of the painted Britons and called by the name of Agassaeus.

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Thus, two hundred and fifty years after Caesar's initial remark, the 'painted Briton' had become an occasional poetic image, for Roman and Greek, but nothing more—until later in the third century, when an obscure Roman grammarian made the imaginative leap from fact to fable, and the myth was born.

Of the life of Caius Julius Solinus we know practically nothing. His existence has been narrowed down roughly to no later than mid-third century based on particular references found in his writings.

To better appreciate Solinus, one must first be acquainted with Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.). In a thirty-seven volume work called *Natural History*, Pliny wrote of all things found in the world, from elephants to bees, from human physiology to the sex life of flowers, from the geography of the civilised Mediterranean to the darkest corners of India and Africa. The *Natural History* is the only extant work of this phenomenal writer and early scientist, and it was an invaluable resource for scientific investigation for a thousand years and more. It also contains a great deal of the supernatural, the bizarre, and the absurd ("Sheep are very weak in the head, and consequently must be made to graze with their backs to the sun." [VIII, lxxv]). The farther from the provable that Pliny wandered, the more mysterious his discoveries. Ethiopia "produces many monstrosities", such as 'winged horses armed with horns, called pegasi'; and unicorns were found in India.

When Solinus was preparing his own geography, *Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium*, he based most of it on the *Natural History*. In fact over three quarters of it was copied out of Pliny. But in the two hundred years that separated the two Romans, popular interest in the bizarre had considerably escalated. If Pliny could find flying horses in Ethiopia, Solinus would faithfully say so, but he would not stop there:

In the furthest nations of the East are people of monstrous shape. Some are ugly, having no nose, others have their lips grown together except for a tiny hole ... through which they draw in their sustenance. Some have no tongues, but use beckonings and gestures instead of speech. ... There is a great store of dragons. Moreover, the true dragons have small mouths, not gaping wide to bite with, but narrow, through which they breathe and flick out their tongues. For their strength does not lie in their teeth, but in their tails; they hurt by beating and not by biting.

A gifted imagination and a knack for knowing the public's taste made the *Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium* a phenomenal success. It became the standard geographical reference even into the Renaissance and was as widely read as Pliny himself.

In the sixth century the work came to be called *Polyhistoriæ*; about the same time Solinus himself became known as Polyhistor (he who tells many things). In Chapter 22 of *Polyhistoriæ*, as recorded in the *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, Solinus discusses the British Isles. After telling of the 'Chapel of Fire' devoted to the Goddess Minerva, which burns continually for her worshippers, he relates:

That region is partly held by barbarians, who from childhood have different pictures of animals skillfully implanted on their bodies, so that as the man grows, so grow the marks painted on him; there is nothing more that they consider as a test of patience than to have their limbs soak up the maximum amount of dye through these permanent scars.

The tattooed Briton has arrived.

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The Syrian born historian Herodian was a contemporary of Solinus. Like his colleague, he borrowed heavily when writing his own *Historiarum*, a still extant account of the Roman Empire from A.D. 180 to 238. Strabo may have suggested the decor to Herodian, and Dio Cassius the *dramatis personæ*, while tradition lent the ancillary props, but Solinus was responsible for the rest:

... then know not the use of clothing, but encircle their loins and necks with iron; deeming this an ornament and an evidence of opulence, in like manner as other barbarians esteem gold. But they puncture their bodies with pictured forms of every sort of animals; on which account they wear no clothing, lest they should hide the figures on their body. They are a most warlike and sanguinary race, carrying only a small shield and a spear, and a sword girded to their naked bodies. Of a breast-plate or an helmet they know not the use, esteeming them an impediment to their progress through the marshes; from the vapours and exhalations of which the atmosphere in that country always appears dense.

Herodian's picture of the country is straight out of the fabled past. Compare 'the vapours and exhalations of which the atmosphere in that country always appear dense' with Strabo: "even in their clear days the mist continues for a considerable time, insomuch that throughout the whole day the sun is only visible for three or four hours

about noon.” Strabo wrote his geography no later than the last decade B.C. The meteorological conditions of northern Britain by Herodian’s time (c250 A.D.) have degenerated into poetic nonsense. The observation that ‘[they] encircle their loins and necks with iron’ calls to mind the traditional custom of wearing the torc about the neck—but not around the loins—by continental Celts. But then, rather than faithfully repeat the story of a woad-painted people ready for battle, Herodian adopts Solinus’ version, presenting them permanently tattooed, and naked, as if this were their normal state. Dio Cassius, a contemporary of Herodian, in his history of Rome, wrote of the northern Britons: “They live in huts, naked and barefooted ...” But Herodian seems inordinately concerned about this nakedness; in the short passage quoted, he makes a total of three references to it, and on one occasion he appears to provide a reason for the lack of clothing: ‘on which account they wear no clothing, lest they should hide the figures on their body.’ Herodian here seems to be making the attempt to reconcile Dio with Solinus—nudity complements tattoos; the existence of the one is the basis for believing in the other.

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Claudian (c370-c404) was a sycophantic court poet under the reign of Honorius. His epic panegyric *De Bello Getico*, written shortly after the battle of Pollentia, in the spring of 402, describes Stilicho’s defence of Rome against the barbarian hordes led by Alaric the Goth¹. In a poetic flashback, Claudian describes Stilicho’s stand against the invading barbarians in northern Britain, just prior to the removal of Roman troops along that border:

the legion that protects the remotest Britons, curbs the fierce Scot, and
watches life leave the tattoos on the dying Pict.

As a poet, Claudian made a poor historian. The ‘dying Pict’ was to rise to be the greatest political power in northern Britain. Regarding this quote, Professor Collingwood stated that “the reference to Picts and Scots is conventional padding”, in other words, poetic licence, not historical description. Its source is unclear; both Solinus and Herodian were widely read in 400.

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In one of History’s little ironies, the next source comes from those very people who were threatening the Rome of Claudian. Writing in the mid-sixth century the Goth Jordanes, a self-admittedly ‘unlettered’ historian, wrote a one volume account of the twelve books that constituted Cassiodorus’ (now lost) history of the Goths. After a three day look at Cassiodorus’ work, Jordanes penned his own version, still extant. This work, *Getica*², is of some importance, especially as a history of the collapse of the Hun empire upon Attila’s death.

A curious feature in an early section (§2) of this work is a brief discussion of the geography and peoples of Britain. Admitting to using Dio Cassius, Jordanes says:

All the people and their kings are alike wild. Yet Dio, a most celebrated writer of annals, assures us of the fact that they have been combined under the name of Caledonians and Mæatæ. They live in wattled huts, a shelter used in common with their flocks, and often the woods are their home. They decorate their bodies with an iron instrument, whether by way of adornment or perhaps for some other reason.

It should be noted in passing that the *Monumenta Historica Britannica* translation (from which the above was based) begins the last sentence: “They paint their bodies with iron-red”, an interpretation that makes one believe that Jordanes did not hold to the tattoo myth, and that adds a colour that Jordanes probably did not intend. The original phrase is *ferro pingunt corpora*; the reader may form his or her own opinion.

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The authority cited most often among today’s writers as ‘proof’ of the tattoo cult is Isidore. This indefatigable bishop of Seville (c570-636) left behind an impressive list of works, including the short but important “History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi” and the twenty volume *Etymologiæ* (c600), a compilation of all knowledge available up to his own time, gleaned from his wide range of readings. As a repository of ancient writings, the *Etymologiæ* is invaluable; as a cultural record of ancient peoples, it is somewhat defective. Isidore’s entire epistemological work was based on the widespread yet naive notion that words which sounded alike were considered to have come from the same source. This approach often led Isidore to erroneous conclusions, as when he says that the Goths and the Getæ were the same people, ‘for when one letter is altered and another is removed’ the names are almost alike. This example also shows Isidore’s penchant for making his results fit his data. He took great pains to ‘prove’ what was already widely accepted, however erroneously.

In his *Etymologiæ* Isidore discusses the origins of quite a number of races. “The Britons,” he informs us, “were so-called according to the Latin because they are stupid (*bruti*)”. This, then, is the savant who has furnished the most widely quoted reference to the Picts:

The Scots derive their name from their painted body which is noticeable because of the black markings of different figures made with sharp iron instruments.

The word ‘Scots’ was later changed, in the *Pictish Chronicle* (compiled in the tenth century), to read “The Picts derive their name ...” and it is obvious that this is what Isidore means, for later on he writes:

The name of the nation of the Picts is derived from their body, which a fine needle plays upon by making tiny punctures, filled by the juice extracted from a native plant, so that by the means of painted limbs, the true nobility carries these marks as a way of identification.

These two quotes have become the common reference to a tattoo tradition among the Picts because, as one current authority puts it, Isidore “seems to have hit upon a reasonable explanation”. Isidore has hit upon Solinus, nothing more; he simply let his interpretation of the word *Picti* reflect his belief, derived from Solinus, that these people did tattoo themselves. George Kish, in his introductory remarks to a recent reprint of the Arthur Golding translation of Solinus, points out Isidore’s debt: “Solinus’ word was taken for unchallenged truth by the great bishop Isidore of Seville, when he wrote his encyclopedic *Etymologiae* in the seventh century.”

It may be argued that this kind of exposure of Isidore’s sloppy use of logic cannot prove that the Picts did not tattoo themselves. Few historians ever remark on the commonplace. Thus, the total lack of eye-witness accounts of a tattooed people in northern Britain may simply mean that tattoos were so much taken for granted, like hair styles or clothing, that they received no attention from contemporary historians at all. This is a useful explanation to resolve the problem of having to rely on classical authors who had a tendency themselves to rely more on imagination than on verifiable evidence. And yet, if we look to ‘tradition’ for help, we must admit that there is more traditional evidence of fairies on Skye or witches in Fife than there ever was of a tattooed people living in pre-historic Scotland.

Another defence claimed by supporters of tattooed Picts is the name itself. ‘Picti’ is assumed by some to be the descriptive adjective that the Romans applied to the northern inhabitants of Britain. As this means ‘painted’, the conclusion is obvious. Then to move from the verb ‘to paint’ (*pingere*) to the verb ‘to tattoo’ (*pungere*) is a minor problem, for as Isidore would have put it, “when one letter is altered ...”

Many involved arguments have been advanced to prove that a tattoo tradition existed with these people, all based on etymological evidence. The variety and the scope of these efforts to link up the word with the tradition compare favourably with anything the Bishop of Seville ever wrote. Yet, one should recall that the first time the word ‘Pict’ was used, in reference to a specific group of people of a particular geographical region, was in 297 A.D. Eumenius, or whoever it was that first penned the word *Pict* in that poem of 297, was most likely well acquainted with the poetic imagery that had developed over a three-hundred year period of the painted people of Britain, and he too, like Isidore, no doubt knew well his Solinus.

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Notes

1. Claudian is here confusing the Goths with the Getæ—see Note 2.
2. If Claudian was one of the first to confuse these two people, he was not the last. Jordanes’ *De origine actibusque Getarum* (better known as *Getica*) is actually a Gothic history, and Isidore was to follow, compounding the error with a typical Isidorian explanation, as we shall see.

The Original Quotes

- Caesar**
(54 B.C.) Omnes vero se Britanni vitro inficiunt, quod coeruleum efficit colorem, atque hoc horridiore sunt in pugna adspecta.
(De bello Gallico, 5.14)
- Ovid**
(c23 B.C.) non ego Paelignos videor celebrare salubres, non ego natalem, rura paterna, locum, sed Scythiam Cilicasque feros viridesque Britannos quaeque Prometheo saxa cruore rubent.
(Amores, 2.16, 37-40)
- Mela**
(44 A.D.) incertum ob decorum, an quid aliud, vitro corpora infecti.
(De Situ Orbis, 3.6)
- Italicus**
(c90) Caerulus haud aliter, cum dimicat, incola Thules Agmina falcifero circumvenit arta covinno.
(Punicorum, 17, 416-417)
- Martial**
(c100) Barbara de pictis veni bascauda Britannis, sed me iam mavolt dicere Roma suam.
(Epigrams, Book 14, 99)
- ‘Oppian’**
(c211) Ἔστι δέ τι σκυλάκων γένος ἄλκιμον ἰχνευτήρων,
Βαίον, ἄτ ρ μεγάλης ἀντάξιον ἔμμεν’ ἀοιδῆς.
Τοὺς τράφεν ἄγρια φύλα Βρετανῶν αἰολονώτων.
Αὐτ ρ ἐπικλήδην σφ ς ἀγασσαίους ὀνόμηναν.
(Cynegetica, I, 468-471)
- Solinus**
(c235) Regionem partim tenent barbari, quibus per artifices plagarum figuras, jam inde a pueris variae animalium effigies incorporantur, inscriptisque visceribus hominis incremento pigmenti notae crescunt: nec quidquam mage patientiae loco nationes ferae ducunt, quam ut per memores cicatrices plurimum fuci artus bibant.
(Polyhistoriae, c.22)

Herodian
(c238)

Οὐδ' ἄρα γὰρ ἐσθῆτος ἴσασι χρῆσιν, ἀλλὰ τὰς μὲν λαπάρας καὶ τοὺς τραχήλους κοσμοῦσι σιδήρῳ, καλλώπισμα τοῦτο καὶ πλούτου σύμβολον νομίζοντες ὥσπερ τὸν χρυσὸν οἱ λοιποὶ βάρβαροι, τὰ δὲ σώματα στίζονται γραφαῖς ποικίλαις καὶ ζώων παντοδαπῶν εἰκόσιν. ὅθεν οὐδ' ἀμφιέννυνται, ἵνα μὴ σκέπωσι τοῦ σώματος τὰς γραφάς. εἷσι δὲ μαχιμώτατοί τε καὶ φονικώτατοι, ἀσπίδα μόνην στενὴν περιβεβλημένοι, καὶ δόρυ. ξίφος δὲ παρηρητημένοι, γυμνοῦ σώματος. θώρακος δὲ ἢ κράνους οὐκ ἴσασι χρῆσιν, ἐμπόδιον νομίζοντες πρὸς τὸν δίοδον τῶν ἔλων, ἐξ ὧν τῆς αναθυμιάσεως καὶ παχύτητος, ὁ κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν χώραν ἀῆρ ζοφώδης ἀεὶ φαίνεται.

(*Historiarum*, Book 3, 14.7)

Claudian
(402)

Venit et extremis legio praetenta Britannis,
Quae Scoto dat fraena truci, feggoque notatas
Perlegit exanimis Picto moriente figuras.

(*De Bello Getico*, xxvi, 416-418)

Jordanes
(c550)

Unde conjectavere nonnulli, quod ea ex his accolae continuo vocatos acceperit, inculti aequae omnes populi, regesque populorum; conctos tamen in Calidoniorum Meatarumque nomina concessisse, autor est Dio celeberrimus scriptor Annalium. Virgeas habitant casas, communia tecta cum pecore, silvaeque illis saepe sunt domus. Ob decorem nescio, an ob aliam rem, ferro pingunt corpora.

(*de Rebus Geticis*, ch. 2)

Isidore
(c600)

Scoti propria lingua nomen habent a picto corpore, eo quod aculeis ferreis cum atramento variarum figurarum stigmatibus annotentur.

(*Etymologiae*, 9.103)

nec abest genti Pictorum nomen a corpore, quod minutissimis opifex acus punctis, et expressus nativi graminis succus illudit ut has ad sui specimen cicatrices ferat, pictis artibus maculosa nobilitas.

(*Etymologiae*, 19.23.7)

[Note: In the *Pictish Chronicle*, compiled in the tenth century by—most likely—the monks of Brechin, the word ‘Scoti’ (9.103, above) was replaced by the word ‘Picti’.]

References

- Caesar:** *Gallic Wars*, V.xiv; original Latin in Henry Petrie (ed.), *Monumenta Historica Britannica* (London, 1848)xxxii (hereafter called *MHB*). Various English versions available.
- Ovid:** *Amores*, II, xvi, xxxvii-xl. Original with English translation by Guy Lee (London, 1968). See also the Grant Showerman version, Loeb Classics edition, 1914. For ‘virides’ in Ovid’s works consult R.J. Deferrari, Sister M. Inviolata Barry and Martin R. P. McGuire, *A Concordance of Ovid* (Washington,D.C., 1939).
- Mela:** *De Situ Orbis*, III, vi; 1646 Dutch ‘handbook’ edition by ‘Hieronymum de Vogel’; other editions vary slightly, including *MHB* vii-viii.
- Italicus:** *Punicorum*, 17, 416-417. See J. D. Duff (London, 1934) for original version and translations.
- Martial:** *Epigrams*, XIV, xcix. Original and English in Walter Ker’s translation. The epigram from Book XI, lxvi was taken from Barriss Mills’ *Epigrams from Martial* (Lafayette, Ind., 1969); his translations are much more colloquial and therefore fresher than the rather prim language of Mr. Ker.
- ‘Oppian’:** *Cynegetica*, I, 468-471. Original Greek and English translation in Alexander W. Mair, *Oppian, Colluthus, Tryphiodorus* (London, 1928).
- Solinus:** *Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium* [also called *Polyhistoriae*], ch. 22 as quoted in *MHB* x. The only English translation, by Arthur Golding (London, 1587), has been reproduced by the University of Michigan (1955) with introductory remarks by George Kish. In this version the passage in question is found at the end of Chapter 34. The two passages quoted above have been modernised by the present author.
- Pliny:** *Natural History*. Several English versions exist. Sheep quote: VIII, lxxv; Fauna of Ethiopia: VIII, xxx.
- Herodian:** *Historiarum* III, xlvi-li. In Greek and English: *MHB* lxiv.
- Strabo:** *Geographiae*, Book IV; Ch. V, 2. H. C. Hamilton translation (London, 1854).
- Dio Cassius:** *Dio’s Roman History*, Book LX; Loeb Series. Also in *MHB* li-lxi, Greek and English.

- Claudian:** *De Bello Getico*, xxvi, 416-418; Theodor Birt (ed.) *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctorum Antiquissimorum*, v. 10 (Berlin, 1892) 274-5. In the *MHB* version (xcviii) 'exanimēs' is replaced by 'exsanguēs'. See R. G. Collingwood, *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* (Oxford, 1937)291 for this historian's assessment of Claudian as a historical reference.
- Jordanes:** *de Rebus Geticis*, II, xiv. In *MHB* lxxxiii. For the English consult Charles C. Mierow, *The Gothic History of Jordanes* (1915)54.
- Isidore:** *Etymologiae*, IX.103; XIX.23.7. [Also known as *Origines*.] W. F. Skene (ed.) *Chronicles of the Picts, Chronicles of the Scots and other early memorials of Scottish history* (Edinburgh, 1867) 393, 395. For the quote on Britons (=bruti): IX.2.102 in Ernest Bréhaut, *An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages: Isidore of Seville* (New York, 1912). For Goths and Getæ: *History of the Goths, Vandals and Suevi*, translated by Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford Jr. (Leiden, 1970)30.