

*Updated: 4th January 2023*

Roman Guernsey

Although it was long thought that the Roman name for Guernsey was *Sarnia*, most scholars now believe that Guernsey’s Roman name was in fact *Lisia*. There is similar confusion regarding the names of the rest of the Bailiwick. Scholars believe that Alderney may have been *Riduna* and Sark *Sargia* or *Sarmia*.

✪ - Recommend reading.

❖ - Light introductory reads to the topic.

🔑 – This item is located in the strong room. Please speak to a member of staff to access.

**General Reading**

Bourde de la Rogerie, A., Rev. - **“Un habitant de Sarnia, Citoyen Romain il y a 1850 ans”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1921* – article is written in French.

Bourde de la Rogerie, A., Rev. - **“Some Remarks on Basiel Sarniensis, a Roman Veteran, A.D. 17”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1939* – article is written in French.

Burns, R.B. & A.G. - **“Gallo-Roman Finds from Guernsey and Herm”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1985 –* p.652, paper on the chance Gallo-Roman finds before the discovery of La Plaiderie site and *Asterix*.

Grange, P. – **“Royal site adds to the jigsaw of our history”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 28th October 1999*

Grange, P. – **“Roman house at Royal site?”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 6th January 2000* – includes a summary of La Plaiderie findings.

❖ Johnston, P. – ***A Short History of Guernsey***. Guernsey: Guernsey Society, 2014 [LOC 940 JOH] – pp.21-22

✪ Kellett-Smith, S.K., **“The Old Names of the Channel Islands”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1962*

Kellett-Smith, S.K., **“The Corsican Plaque – a fresh examination of Basiel’s Diploma”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1963*

Marr, L.J. – ***A History of the Bailiwick of Guernsey: The Islanders’ Story.*** London / Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd., 1982 [LOC 940 MAR] –

McCormack, J. - **“The Roman Church in Guernsey: early Christianity in the Channel Islands”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 2010 –* p.720

McCormack, J. - **“Names of the Channel Islands Revisited”.** *The Quarterly Review of the Guernsey Society, Summer 2015 Vol. LXXI No. 2* – p.55, article about the Roman names of the Channel Islands.

McCormack, J. - **“The Castel Church: some comments”.** *The Quarterly Review of the Guernsey Society, Spring 2017 Vol. LXXIII No. 1* – p.10, discusses the Roman foundations of the church.

Monaghan, J. – **“Roman Pottery from the Bonded Store, St. Peter Port”.** *Guernsey Connections*. Guernsey: La Société Guernesiaise, 1998 [LOC 930.1 SEB]

Monaghan, J. - **“Archaeology Section Report for 2017”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 2017 –* p.228, account of Roman finds in June 2017 at Longis Common.

✪ Parkinson, C. – ***Lisia: Vortigern’s Island***. Guernsey: Armoricana Books, 2012 [LL940.1 PAR] – p.69. An interesting book however there are a number of interesting assumptions made that lack supporting evidence.

Sebire, H.R. - **“A Roman Samian Mortarium from Grandes Rocques”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1985 –* p.720.

✪ Sebire, H., de Jersey P. & Monaghan, J. – ***Roman Guernsey***. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2018 [LOC 930.1 SEB] – A thorough account of the two Roman excavations in St. Peter Port as well as a gazetteer of all Roman finds recorded across other sites in Guernsey & Herm.

Winterflood, H. - **“Roman pottery finds point to early settlement”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 20th August 1985* – article on Roman pottery discovered by Castle Cornet.

❖✪ ***The Story of the Romans in Guernsey***. Guernsey: Guernsey Museum & Galleries, 2007 [LOC 936.2 STO] – An activity book intended for children and families but is actually a great light introduction to the topic for adults as well.

❖**🖳 “Guernsey Celts & Guernsey Romans – A Timeline”**. *www.guernseydonkey.com,* https://guernseydonkey.com/guernsey-celts-guernsey-romans-a-timeline/

❖**🖳 “Roman Guernsey - Lisia”**. *www.guernseydonkey.com,* https://guernseydonkey.com/roman-guernsey/

**“Emperor Constantius coin in L’Ancresse garden”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 26th February 1980*

**“Rescue dig pot proves ancient trading links”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 31st May 1980* – short article on the discovery of 1st Century AD samian ware (terra sigillata) at King’s Road. See also article in *Guernsey Evening Press, 27th December 1980.*

**“Midget’s dupondius”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 4th June 1983*

**The Asterix**

In November 1977 Richard Keen, a local diver, discovered two intact amphorae at the entrance of St. Peter Port harbour. This sparked archaeological interest that resulted in the eventual discovery on Christmas Day in 1982 of the wreck of a Gallo-Roman merchant vessel. The ship, which by 1985 had been nicknamed *Asterix* by the locals, is believed to have sunk in the last quarter of the 3rd Century AD.

Pickford, N. – ***Lost Treasure Ships of the Northern Seas***. London: Chatham Publishing, 2006 [GROVES 363.123 PIC] – p.24

✪ Rule, M. & Monaghan, J. – ***A Gallo-Roman Trading Vessel from Guernsey***. Guernsey: Guernsey Museums & Galleries, 1993 [LOC 930.102 RUL] – The definitive publication on the excavation of *Asterix.*

*Newspaper Cuttings* – Numerous Guernsey Press cuttings regarding *Asterix* are located in *Archaeology Folder #1* (a red ring-binder located in the Harris Rom on the 1st floor).

**Other Resources**

*Newspaper Articles* - The Guernsey Evening Press is available to keyword search from 2006 onwards.

*Newspaper Cuttings* – Numerous Guernsey Press cuttings regarding La Plaiderie & Bonded Store Roman dig sites are located in *Archaeology Folders #1 & #2* (a red ring-binder located in the Harris Rom on the 1st floor).

*La Société Guernesiaise Report and Transactions* – The archaeology section reports sometimes contain information concerning the Roman period.

**🗁** *Hanging Files* - Ask a member of staff to see our hanging file with reference material about Roman Guernsey.

**Roman Alderney, Sark & Jethou**

Cataroche, J. – ***The History and Archaeology of Jethou***. Wisley: L&C Press, 2012 [LK 930.1 CAT] – p.46

De Jersey, P. – **“Alderney’s Lost Roman Town?”.** *The Townie, Issue 12* – p.42

Grange, P. – **“Some herringbone Roman masonry at the Nunnery”.** *Guernsey Evening Press, 19th June 1969*

Kellett-Smith, S.K., **“The Sark Hoard”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1988*

*Newspaper Articles* – Many of the Roman discoveries on Alderney such as at the Nunnery and at Longis have been after 2006 and therefore are available to keyword search in the Guernsey Evening Press online on one of our computer terminals.