

HADRIAN'S WALL: Boundary Monument for the Northern Frontier of Roman Britannia!

John Brock (Australia)

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SUMMARY

“A man’s worth is no greater than his ambitions.” – Marcus Aurelius

Much hypotheses and over-thinking has taken place over hundreds of years in an effort to attribute purposes for the raison d’etre of the wall across northern Britain erected at the behest of the formidable Roman Emperor whose name has been ultimately used to describe this intriguing edifice.

Was it built for defence, border control, a demonstration of power or any number of associated intentions as a strategic military device at the extremity of the territorial outskirts of the Great Empire? Many postulations have been advanced by engineers, stone masons, clerks of works, military experts, academics, archaeologists, historians, paleontologists and all the usual suspects.

However I have only sourced one other opinion for its creation put forward by another land surveyor like myself having been offered by my very good friend from the US Mary Root who I see at least once a year at the Surveyors Rendezvous held annually in different locations within the USA to celebrate the local Surveying history of many notable places in the Land of the Free and President Surveyors (please note that US Presidents Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln were all land surveyors!). Well it just so happens that I am not just a practising “historical detective” (as I label those involved in my profession!) but I am an active field historian with a Masters degree in Egyptology from Macquarie University in Sydney. In addition to this area of personal and professional interest I have done considerable research into ancient Greek and Roman surveying together with a diversion into the surveyors of China’s antiquity as a background to my paper “The Great Wall of China: The World’s Greatest Boundary Monument!”

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With such a cursory introduction to my own research base I will be making my own offering to the discussion table about what served as the main reasons for the erection of such a notable memorial to the time of the renowned civilization during the second century. After I elaborate further about my analysis of the wall's design with specific attention drawn to certain features not before grouped together along with a focus on the desires and intentions of Emperor Hadrian himself there may be some agreement that this iconic line across the topography is a true boundary monument in the ancient Roman traditions as a demarcation line of the northern limit of the Empire's frontier in the north western territory of its second century enforced tenure.

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