Hadrian’s Wall
A study in archaeological exploration
and interpretation

David J. Breeze
Contents

List of Figures .................................................................................................................. ii
List of Tables ..................................................................................................................... v
Preface ............................................................................................................................... 1
1848. The year of revolutions, on Hadrian’s Wall .......................................................... 3
The twentieth century: the age of archaeology ............................................................... 32
The purpose and operation of Hadrian’s Wall under Hadrian ...................................... 61
The Wall after Hadrian: changing functions? ................................................................. 93
The impact of Rome: life on and around the frontier ..................................................... 122
Hadrian’s Wall today and in the future ......................................................................... 151
Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................... 174
Abbreviations ................................................................................................................. 175
Further Reading ............................................................................................................. 176
Index ............................................................................................................................... 185
Hadrian's Wall near Twice Brewed, Northumberland. The most famous Roman remain in England is Hadrian's Wall. It is not by any stretch the most northerly point of the Roman advance; they reached as far north as modern Aberdeen. It isn't even the most northerly wall built by the Romans in Britain. That honour goes to the Antonine Wall, an earthwork defense between the firths of Clyde and Forth. It is, however, an impressive engineering feat, and well worth visiting. Hadrian’s Wall was the north-west frontier of the Roman empire for nearly 300 years. It was built by the Roman army on the orders of the emperor Hadrian following his visit to Britain in AD 122. At 73 miles (80 Roman miles) long, it crossed northern Britain from Wallsend on the River Tyne in the east to Bowness-on-Solway in the west. The most famous of all the frontiers of the Roman empire, Hadrian’s Wall was made a World Heritage Site in 1987.