# CONTENTS

List of Plates \hspace{15em} page viii
List of Figures \hspace{15em} ix
List of Tables \hspace{15em} xiii

Acknowledgements \hspace{15em} xv

## PART I  UNDERSTANDING LITERACIES, MATERIAL CULTURE AND PRACTICE IN THE ROMAN WORLD

1  INTRODUCTION: LITERACIES, POWER AND IDENTITIES \hspace{15em} 1
   Approaches to Ancient Literacies \hspace{15em} 4
   Literacies in the Roman World \hspace{15em} 9
   Understanding Material Culture and Identities \hspace{15em} 14
   Conclusion \hspace{15em} 16

2  THE PRACTICALITIES OF LITERACY: WRITING IMPLEMENTS IN THE ROMAN WORLD \hspace{15em} 21
   Writing Implements Used on Wax and Lead \hspace{15em} 22
   Writing in Ink: Media and Implements \hspace{15em} 27
   Conclusion \hspace{15em} 40

3  LITERACY AS TECHNOLOGY AND PRACTICE \hspace{15em} 41
   Who Wrote in the Roman World? \hspace{15em} 42
   From Object to Practice: How and Where Were Writing Implements Used? \hspace{15em} 45
   Conclusion \hspace{15em} 49

## PART II  A CASE STUDY

4  MATERIALS AND PRODUCTION \hspace{15em} 51
   Inkwell Materials \hspace{15em} 54
   Metal Inkwell Production \hspace{15em} 59
   Makers’ Names \hspace{15em} 61
   Conclusion \hspace{15em} 66
# CONTENTS

5 METAL INKWELLS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE 68
   Typological Discussion 69
   Related Forms 98
   Chronology and Conclusion 105

6 A PRACTICE TURN: THINKING ABOUT INKWELL USE 108
   Portability and Double Inkwells 108
   Volumes and Materials 109
   Conclusion 112

7 THE SPATIAL AND SOCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF INKWELLS 114
   Social Distribution: Who Used Inkwells? Site Level Analysis 118
   Social Distribution: Who Used Inkwells? Context Level Analysis 123
   Conclusion 135

PART III  WRITING EQUIPMENT IN FUNERARY CONTEXTS
AND THE EXPRESSION OF IDENTITIES 137

8 LITERACY AS PERFORMANCE: SELF-PRESENTATION OF THE EDUCATED ELITE? 139
   Depicting Writing Equipment as a Badge or Symbol 140
   Depicting the Act of Writing: Provincial Elites 146
   Depicting Elites with a Scribe in Attendance 149
   Conclusion 149

9 LITERACY AND THE LIFE COURSE: GENDER 154
   Female Literacy 155
   Inkwells from Female Graves 158
   Inkwells from Male Graves 165
   Conclusion 173

10 LITERACY AND THE LIFE COURSE: AGE 176
   Children’s Education from Written Sources and Iconography 177
   Inkwells from Children’s Graves 182
   Inkwells from Adult Double Burials and Family Groups 187
   Conclusion 189

11 LITERACY, THE BODY AND ELITE IDENTITIES: WRITING AND STATUS 190
   Graves with Sets of Writing Equipment — Professional Scribes? 190
   Graves with Game and Accounting Equipment 200
   Professional Identities: Doctors and Other Healers 204
   Graves with Objects Associated with Grooming 208
   Conclusion 220
## CONTENTS

12 CONCLUSION: WRITING EMPIRE THROUGH MATERIAL CULTURE 224

Future Work 230

Bibliography 233

Index 261