

ART. VI.—*Roman Papcastle*. By ERIC BIRLEY, F.S.A.

Partly read at Papcastle, July 7th, 1961.

ROMAN Papcastle was first brought to our Society's attention in 1870, when Dr Bruce read at Maryport a posthumous paper by F. L. B. Dykes (1800-1866) of Dovenby Hall, originally prepared for communication to the Archaeological Institute at its Carlisle meeting in 1859, printed privately in 1868 (with an excellent map and two photographs) and reprinted without illustrations in the first volume of the Old Series of our *Transactions*:¹ its title, "A survey of the Roman road from Maryport to Papcastle", conceals the fact that it has a good deal to say about Papcastle itself. We have an additional reason for interest in this particular site, for it was here, in 1912, that R. G. Collingwood (1889-1943) took charge of his first excavation, and his report on it² was the first of his long series of papers communicated to the Society, of which he was to become President in due course in succession to his father. In that report, he stressed that much work still remained to be done at Papcastle; but circumstances combined to turn his mind to other sites and other problems, and it has never yet received more than casual attention from later students of Roman Britain. Yet a case can be made out, I think, for regarding Papcastle as a key site in the Roman occupation of our territory, and for resuming the investigation which the Society began in 1912. In the present paper, I have aimed at giving a conspectus of what has been recorded by previous writers (omitting much that is not based on first-hand investigation), summarising the results of Collingwood's excavations and setting forth the evidence of inscriptions, coins, pottery and other finds of which

¹ CW1 i (1874) 169-175.

² CW2 xiii 131-141.

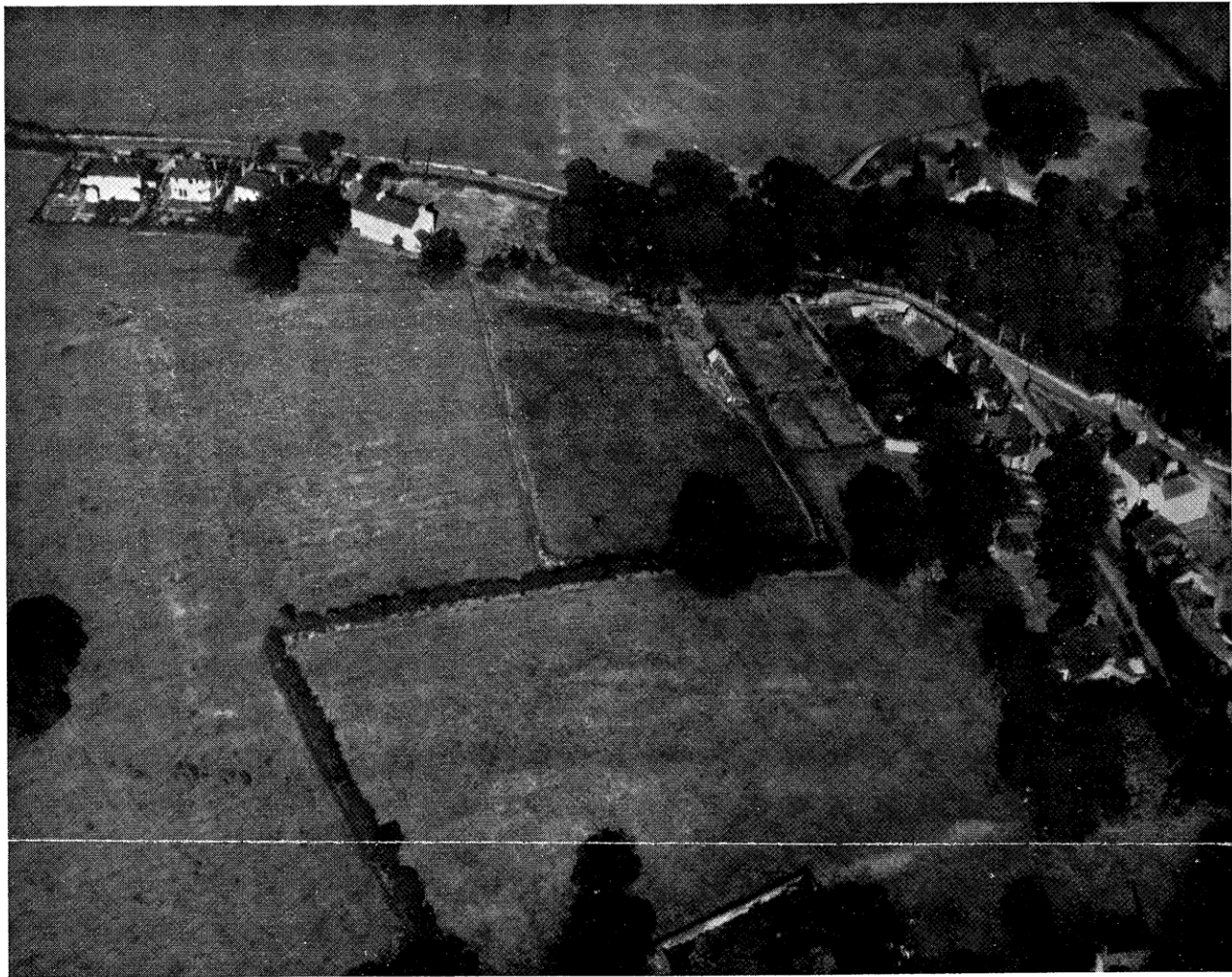


photo: J. K. St. Joseph
facing p. 96

Papcastle fort-site from the air, looking East.

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there is adequate record or which still survive; that, I hope, should provide a firm basis for the further work of which there is evidently serious need. It gives me all the more pleasure to offer such a study of Papcastle, because I can link it with the memory of R. G. Collingwood, to whom I owe my first introduction, in 1926, to this Society and to active research into the Roman sites and problems of Cumberland and Westmorland. It may also serve as an introduction to the resumption of work on the site, in 1961, under the direction of our member Miss Dorothy Charlesworth, F.S.A., whose discoveries are of course reserved for publication in a report by her.

I. Visitors' Accounts.

Camden's early editions (1586, 1587, 1590 and 1594) call Papcastle "the carcasse of an ancient fort whose Roman antiquity is attested by not a few monuments" and, without discussion, equate it with Ptolemy's *Epiacum* (one of the "towns" of the Brigantes, the precise location of which still remains an unsolved problem); his 1600 edition retains the original text and equation, but adds somewhat diffidently the suggestion that the place might perhaps be that *Guasmoric*, recorded by Nennius as having been fortified by Vortigern "near Carlisle" and known to the English as Palmcastle: he had doubtless learnt of the suggestion during his northern tour of 1599 — but we know now that the real Palmcastle was the site whose modern name is Old Carlisle.³ His 1607 edition adds one further point, which I cite in Philemon Holland's translation of 1610, p. 768:

"Where among many monuments of antiquitie, was found a broad vessell of a greenish stone, artificially engraven with little images: which whether it had bin a Laver to wash in, or a font, or as one calleth it, *Sacrarium Regenerationis*, for which purpose it serveth now at *Brid-kirke*, that is, at *S. Brigids Church* hard by, I dare not say."

³ Cf. CW2 li 16 f., citing Canon James Wilson in *The Antiquary* xli, 1905, 409 f.

This is the famous Bridekirk font, in fact "of the common red free-stone of the country" (so Henry Howard of Corby Castle, writing in April 1801, *Archaeologia* xiv 114), which carries a runic inscription now generally accepted as recording its late 12th century sculptor, Master Richard of Durham; Camden's source has been placed on record by Haverfield as Reginald Bainbrigg (1545-1606), the schoolmaster of Appleby, whose exact words deserve quotation (CW2 xi 351):

"This inscription was in a stone found at Papcastle and now made a font stone at Bridekirk. It is curyouslie wrought with faire and gallant pictures. I send it to you for the barbarous straingnes of the characters. I think them to be either the Arabians or the Syrians letters before Esdras."

Successive generations of antiquaries were hardly less puzzled than Bainbrigg, but the approved reading is simple: "Richard he me wrought, and to this beauty eagerly me brought." Bainbrigg's account implies a local tradition (of which we shall hear more presently) that the stone had been brought from the ruins of Papcastle and made into a font for Bridekirk church, not that the font itself was found among the ruins. We may therefore disregard Bishop Lyttleton's reasons for doubting Camden's attribution of it to Papcastle (*Archaeologia* ii 131, read on 3 December 1767):

"for there is not the least tradition, nor are there any signs of there ever having been a church or chapel at Pap Castle."

As it happens, the late Canon Bouch discovered a record of a chapel of St Osyth at Papcastle (*Prelates & People*, 160), but he informed me, by letter, that it is dated 1492/3; unless the font was taken to Papcastle after that date, which seems highly unlikely, it will be best to suppose that Bainbrigg's account is correct. It would be reasonable enough for Bridekirk church as well as Cockermouth castle to draw on the convenient supply of ready-dressed stone which the ruins of the Roman fort and settlement afforded; and that will no doubt ex-

plain Camden's reference to "not a few Roman monuments", for which some Cumbrian antiquary, such as the Rev. Oswald Dykes (-1618), must have been his source.

After Camden, our next reference is in Gale's edition of the Antonine Itinerary and of the British section of the Ravenna Cosmography (1709), in which the following gloss is appended to the *Derventio* which follows *Olerica* and precedes *Ravonia* in Ravennas:

"forte *Pap Castle* non procul a fluvio *Derwent* in *Cumbria*" — "perhaps Papcastle not far from the river Derwent in Cumberland".

Gale's identification of the Roman place-name held the field for almost 150 years, and may now be accepted with confidence, as a result of Professor Richmond's new survey of the evidence.⁴

Specific records of Roman finds at Papcastle begin with Alexander Gordon and William Stukeley, both of whom visited Cumberland in 1725. Gordon's *Itinerarium Septentrionale*, published in the following year (though some copies carry a fresh title-page dated 1727), notes under the site which we now know as Maryport, at p. 98:

"From this great *Oppidum* two different military Ways run, the one to the South East, by *Pap-Castle*, where several medals, of *Antoninus* and other Emperors, have been found . . ."

His informant was evidently Humphrey Senhouse (1668-1738) of Netherhall, whose kindly reception he acknowledges very handsomely. Gordon himself never went to Papcastle, but Stukeley and Roger Gale picnicked there with Mr Senhouse who, as we shall see, gave them an account of the Roman road, while William Gilpin (1698-1736) of Whitehaven told them of Roman coins that had been found there. Stukeley's account is so good that it deserves quotation in full (*Iter Boreale*, p. 51):

"A mile off Cockermouth, on the north side of the river, lies this Roman station. The river water is very clear, according to

⁴ Cf. AA4 xii (1935) 339, in his important study of the Rudge Cup, and more recently, *Archaeologia* xciii (1949) 10-13, 18 and 31.

its name, notwithstanding the floods here, owing to its running through rocky ground. The Roman *castrum* lies upon the top of the hill, above the village. I soon traced out its whole circumference, though the inhabitants had not the least notion of where it stood, supposing it to be lower down. I saw a bit of the Roman wall, which they wonder at, because it strikes fire when struck upon with a pick-axe, by reason of the hardness of the mortar: it lies by the road-side going to Wigton; and there the ditch is plainly visible, though half filled up with the rubbish of the wall. The whole town, and perhaps Cockermouth castle and town, are built out of it; likewise the walls of all the pastures and corn-fields adjoining. Free-stone cut is very common, which they say must have been fetched a good way off, because there is none such in the neighbourhood; and a good deal of ashlar is still left in the ground. The field upon the top of the hill, the highest part of the *castrum*, is called the Boroughs. A man told me he found a hand mill-stone about the bulk of his hat, which he admired for its prettiness: he found a Roman coin too of Claudius, and others; but they are lost. Several other people told me they found coins upon the side of the hill; and the children pick them up after a shower of rain. Mr Senhouse showed me a silver Geta, *pont.* reverse, *princeps juventutis*, among others found here. The famous font, now at Bridekirk, was taken up at this place, in the pasture south of the south-east angle of the city, by a lane called Moor-went. In the same place lately they found a subterraneous vault, floored with free-stone, of very large dimensions; the top of it made with the same sort of stone, all brought a distance off. The name of Boroughs includes both closes where the old city, or rather *castrum*, stood; for they find stones and slates with iron pins in them, coins, and all other matters of antiquity, upon the whole spot below the *castrum*, toward the water-side. This was a beautiful and well-chosen place, a south-west side of the hill, a most noble river running under it, and a pretty good country about it, as one may judge by the churches; for that I find generally a good criterion of the goodness of a country, as Mr Senhouse observed, who accompanied me hither. On the side of the hill are many pretty springs: at one of them we drank a bottle of wine, to the memory of the founders; then poured some of the red juice into the fountain-head, to the nymph of the place. A person told us he had dug up, in the Boroughs, the foundation of a wall where the stones were laid slanting side by side, and liquid mortar poured upon them, as was often the Roman method; likewise several floors made of cement. The kind of slates dug up here, are brought too a good way off. Mr Senhouse says he can trace

the remains of the Roman road between this place and Elenborough in many places. This certainly was a town thoroughly peopled; and perhaps its name was *Derventio*, because standing upon this river Derwent. Fitz-house is on the south side of the river. Mr Gilpin of Whitehaven has seen many Roman coins found at Papcastle, especially of Adrian."

There are many points of interest in this account, which we shall be having occasion to refer to later on; for the time being it will be sufficient to note that Stukeley correctly identified the site of the fort, on the top of the hill, and that chance discoveries of Roman material had been made here and there downhill as far as the riverside; the visible remains of the fort-wall were at its north-east angle, close beside the road to Wigton — where in 1912 R. G. Collingwood was to excavate. But until that year it was downhill and outside the fort that further discoveries were made.

It was perhaps because no Roman inscriptions had been recorded here that Horsley paid no more than incidental attention to Papcastle, which he can hardly have visited; in his *Britannia Romana* (1732) he gives only two brief references, in discussing the road-system:

P. 112: "I must add farther, that there is a military way, tho' now much ruined, which goes out from *Old Penreth* towards *Keswick*, but not quite so far west. This, I take for granted has joined the other way, that passes from *Elenborough* by *Papcastle* to *Ambleside*; and that a branch has gone off from this latter to *Moresby*."

P. 483 (after Moresby): "The next station which appears this way, is at *Ambleside* in *Westmorland*. To this place I believe the military ways have gone, which pass by *Papcastle*, and through *Graystock* park."

He, too, no doubt had his knowledge of the road to Papcastle from Humphrey Senhouse, whose collection at Netherhall he had examined with great care; it need not surprise us that Horsley says nothing about coin-finds at Papcastle, for there is only minimal attention to such finds in his book.

The next detailed record of discoveries comes in a

letter from Thomas Routh (1717-1748+) to Roger Gale, under date 16 January 1741/2; it was first printed in the *Reliquiae Galeanae* (1782), p. 445 f., illustrated at pl. vii 9 by a diagram (which it is not easy to make sense of), and copied in Hutchinson's *Cumberland* ii 257, but it will be best to quote it from the definitive publication in the *Stukeley Correspondence* ii (Surtees Society 76, 1883), p. 106 f.:

"As to the ruins at Papcastle, I made as particular enquiry as I could of the man in whose grounds they were discovered, and of some of his neighbors who were present at the finding them; the close in which they lay is a little to the southward of the fort, on the declivity of the hill towards the river, and is bounded on the west by a narrow lane, probably the Via Militaris continued, and is usually shown to strangers as a place the most remarkable here for finding of Roman coins.

"These are the largest ruins ever known to be discovered in these parts, for they mett with three walls besides the pavement. The first, layd E and W, was covered with earth nigh a foot high; parallel to it, at the distance of about 7 yards, they found a second; between those two, about 2 yards deep (the highth of the walls) [Fn.: R. Gale adds, 'The walls were 6 yards broad, and strongly cemented', *perhaps from a later letter of Routh's which has not survived.*] they came to a pavement curiously laid with large flags, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yard square, and 2 or 3 inches thick, as I measured them; but imagining money must have been hid there, they covered it again till night, when they tore it all up as far as they had opened it. It was composed of flags of different thicknesse, under the thinner we found a coarse strong cement, which has caused all those to be broken in the taking up, whereas the thicker are pretty intire. Part of the wall stood upon the floor, and the edge was secured by a fine red cement 2 inches thick, which they suppose was intended to keep the floor drye. They imagin they were at a corner of the building, the 3d wall standing at right angles with the first and second, and parallel to the stony lane, upon which was an old hedge.

"Upon the floor they found a sort of stone trough, or rather base of a pillar, about a foot high, the hollow part square, and 2 inches deep.

"In digging likewise they mett with a small earthen vessel, which I procured, of the fine red clay, beautifully smooth, with letters impresst on the bottome, but so defaced as not to be in-

telligible; the people call it a salt-seller, from its shape. Some years ago this man's father, who found these ruins, dug up a conduit at the place marked in the plan.

"The owner had no coins when I saw him, nor knew of any that had been dug up there for some time. I was shewne a large brasse piece by one of his neighbors, but it was <so> corroded that not the least impression could be discerned upon it. They both promised me faithfully to procure and preserve for me whatever coins could be found here."

Unfortunately, there is no record to show if he ever returned to Papcastle in search of later discoveries — though Hutchinson, following Gough's 1789 edition of Camden, mistakenly gives under Papcastle Routh's account of a find of Roman material at Tullie House, Carlisle, in 1743.⁵ But we must be grateful to him for his careful account of what was evidently the external bath-house of the fort — according to the late Miss Fair, in a letter of January 1954, in a field known locally as Sibby Brows; one day it will be worth while seeing if any of the building survives and can be made accessible to the spade.

Only one further 18th century observation has anything fresh to add; on his tour of 1772 Thomas Pennant (1726-1798) noted (i, p. 51) that

"In a field on the left, on descending into the village, are the remains of some dikes."

There is nothing original in Hutchinson (or, of course, in Nicolson & Burn) or in the Bishop of Cloyne's account of the site in the Lysons brothers' volume on Cumberland (1816), but they themselves have two brief references to recent discoveries:

P. clxxxix: "Many coins and other Roman Antiquities have been lately found near the station at Papcastle, in digging the foundations of a house for Thomas Knight, Esquire."

P. 37: "Thomas Knight, Esq. is building a handsome mansion for his residence, on some ground lately purchased within or adjoining to the site of the Roman station; many antiquities have been discovered in sinking the foundations."

Parson & White's *Cumberland & Westmorland* (1829),

⁵ Surtees Soc. 76, p. 112.

p. 305, has a brief and not entirely accurate summary account:

“On the top of the hill above the village is the site of a ROMAN CASTRUM, where a great variety of coins, urns, inscriptions, the remains of baths, and other antiquities have been found.”

The inscriptions, alas, were imaginary — except for one found a few years before, in Cockermouth Castle, no. 1 in section IV, below.

John Hodgson's *History of Northumberland*, II iii (1840) 247 f. has a conscientious note on Roman Papcastle, mentioning incidentally that Benedict of Papecaster occurs as party to a deed about Wygeton in 1277 (that date is given in his corrigenda, p. 439, and the document is cited from AA1 ii 406); all that we need quote is this:

“Samian ware and coins are frequently found both in the fort and its suburbs. The two fields in which the fort stood are called the Boroughs, which, as well as Burels, and Birens, is a common name for the site of a Roman station. Its situation on the banks of the charming Derwent is very beautiful.”

He had seen a drawing of the inscription found in Cockermouth Castle in 1803, probably that by the Rev. John Wilkin (1797-1823), shown him by John Atkinson of Carlisle (cf. HN II iii 237).

The account by Dykes, to which reference has already been made, deserves quotation at length, for it is evidently based on a careful examination of the site in 1858 or 1859; I quote it from CW1 i 173 ff.:

After a careful description of the course of the Roman road from Maryport, “the eye meets the Papcastle station, which now comes into view . . . A more direct approach to the station would have entailed a long and laborious ascent of the steep face of the hill on which it stands, or bridging the sharp gully at the bottom. The ground falls to the west, and the line thus passing over it has an easy ascent.

A piece of rubble formation appears at its junction with the present Broughton Road, the line of which, though modernized,

probably carries the road up to the station. The old lane is a curious deep and sunken one, evidently a cutting.

The immediate approach to the station would appear to have been at the lower part of the farm buildings belonging to Mr Steel, M.P. But from the great changes made in the ground by the other buildings at Papcastle, that can only be conjectural.

The fields in which the station has principally stood are called 'Burrens' or 'Borrems' in curious coincidence with their opposite neighbour across the Solway, 'Burrenswork'.

174: The rampart, partly on the west, and round the north and east side to the Pinfold, may be well traced by the fences and otherwise.

The ditch is plain on the east, down past the Pinfold, through Mr Wybergh's and Mr Dodgson's grounds, and, in a somewhat irregular line, through Mr Waugh's property to the river.

There is a very fine line of rampart at the river's edge for some little distance, giving apparently a river frontage. Nothing can be traced up the hill again on the west, all having been obliterated by a considerable wash and run on to the land from the town.

At the foot of the hill is a very distinct track of a road sweeping round to the south, and crossing the Derwent by a ford. It is popularly termed the Friar's Walk. This has greatly the appearance of a junction with the road lately discovered in Mr Harris's pleasure-grounds and running under part of his house. And in the direction of the junction are large blocks in the foundation of a wall on the road to Cockermonth, where it would have crossed.

I happened to be looking over the locality a day or two after the discovery of a perfect Roman well, in Mr Harris's pleasure-grounds. It had shortly been cleaned out, but no remains had been met with. I found it very neatly walled, about 2 ft. 4 in. in diameter, and 25 to 30 ft. deep, very similar to the one in the Maryport camp. As soon as it had been cleaned out, the water began to flow rapidly. Mr Harris has put in a pump, and finds an unexpected piece of good fortune in a supply of water, that it might have been difficult otherwise to have met with; the well itself being an object of the greatest interest.

If the ditch bounded the camp, I thought that the well, being outside, might perhaps have appeared strange, but it was evidently used for other purposes. Close to it a sort of receptacle was discovered, in which was a large mass of unworked pottery-clay of a fine red colour and quality, unknown in this country. Along with the clay were also pieces of finished pottery and fragments. And the well, no doubt, was used for tempering the

clay, and for other purposes of the workmen, who seem to have hastily left the locality. Mr Harris hopes to be able to have the clay made up.

In the upper part of the ditch a quantity of charred grain also was found a few years ago.

175: The site of this station, no doubt a large one, must be considered to have been well chosen. It is a tract of fine dry land sheltered from the north, with a sunny aspect and slope to the south, on which side it communicated with, and was bounded by, a broad river.

Its elevated position to the north afforded a very commanding view of the country, whilst the long and steep ascent to it on that side rendered defence easy."

There is much of interest in this account; some points we shall be coming back to later on, but at this stage it is worth drawing particular attention to the suggestion that the whole Roman site was enclosed by a rampart

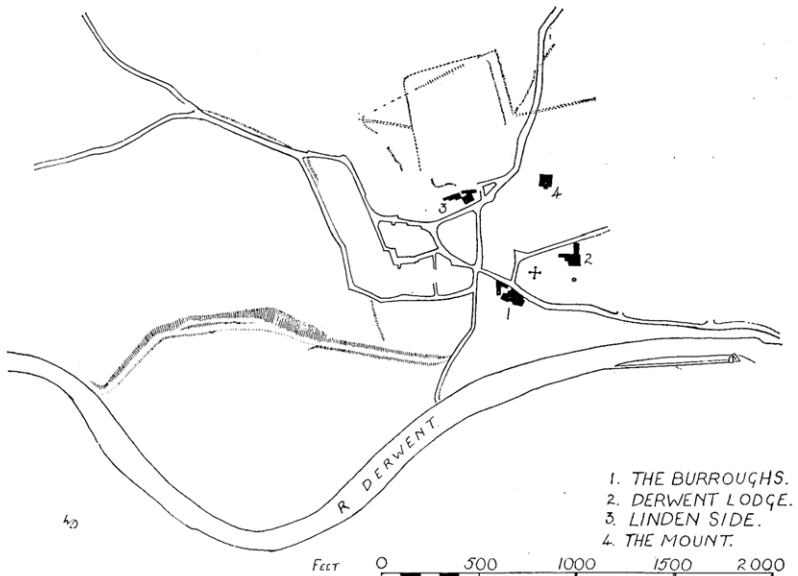


FIG. 1.—Papcastle, showing the principal houses:

1. The Burroughs (Edward Waugh).
2. Derwent Lodge (Jonathan Harris).
3. Lindenside (Mrs Harris).
4. The Mount.

and ditch carried down the hill and along the north bank of the Derwent, thus in effect enclosing the *vicus* downhill from the fort. If Dykes was correct, that would mean that Papcastle, like Maryport and Kirkby Thore in our own territory, and Corstopitum in Northumberland, developed (no doubt in the 3rd and 4th centuries) into a substantial place in its own right, the area ultimately defended by a rampart being substantially larger than that occupied by the fort under shelter of which the civilian settlement had grown up.

Whellan's *Cumberland & Westmorland* (1860) 293 notes that the fort stood on the summit of the hill and that traces of the road to Maryport are still visible; the only fresh points adduced are in his last two sentences:

"The new road from Cockermouth is cut through a portion of the field where the castrum stood. The large edible snail (*Helix pomatia*) is said to be common in the adjoining hedges and may have been introduced by the Romans as an article of diet."

On this last point, it will be recalled that when our Society visited Papcastle in 1948, a local resident mentioned that a party of Italian farm-workers had recently been seen collecting such snails with the intention of feasting upon them, and had stated that Papcastle was the only place in England which they had yet visited where such snails, familiar to them in Italy, had been noted (CW2 xlviii 204).

Bruce's *Roman Wall* shows no signs of interest in or original thought about the site,⁶ but in the *Lapidarium Septentrionale* (1875) he has some useful incidental references to discoveries there, including "some recent excavations in the camp" which yielded some Roman leather for Robert Ferguson's collection (cf. p. 117, below), and during building operations "a few years ago" in Mrs Harris's grounds — namely Lindenside, close to the south-west angle of the fort. It is a pity that

⁶ RW1 (1851) 366=RW2 (1853) 344, RW3 (1867) 373=folio issue 295 f.

no other record of the excavations can be found; but we shall be seeing that Robert Ferguson acquired a variety of other Roman material from Papcastle, and it may be that one day his papers may come to light and provide more information: in any case, it seems to have been in the period from 1870 onwards that he was building up his collection, the bulk of which in due course found its way into the Carlisle Museum at Tullie House.

II. The Excavations of 1912.

In 1912 our Society decided upon an investigation of the site. A small steering committee was formed, comprising Mr H. B. Dykes of Dovenby (the owner of the land where digging was to be done), Colonel Edwin Jackson and Mr J. H. Martindale, and the direction of the work was entrusted, on Haverfield's advice, to R. G. Collingwood, then just 23 but already an experienced excavator — he had dug with his father at Ewe Close, and had two or three seasons' work at Corstopitum to his credit. The excavation lasted a mere fortnight and only cost £20;⁷ its primary object was "to fix the limits of the camp", but as work was confined to the north-east angle and its immediate neighbourhood, that object was not really achieved. But Collingwood's report, CW2 xiii 131-141, shows that results of real interest were obtained; before we turn to consider details, it will be an act of justice to quote his conclusions:

"So brief an exploration was not intended to be exhaustive, and its results are not final. The whole site has been so thoroughly disturbed in the search for building stone that a complete excavation would perhaps be of little service. Our positive conclusions may be briefly put. There were two Roman forts at Papcastle: the earlier, of which we have only the north-east corner, built in good ashlar and lime masonry, and the later, less well built but probably larger, constructed late in the second century A.D. There does not seem to be any interval of time between the two occupations; but we may perhaps connect the

⁷ CW2 xiii 134, 403 f.

second with the general reorganisation of the frontier district associated with the name of Severus. Of this we have the north and east walls, the former complete and the length of the latter suggested by the position of the gate from which the Old Carlisle road started. It appears to have been a roughly rectangular fort, measuring perhaps 620 by 540 ft. But the comparative poverty of its internal remains might lead us to suppose that it was not an important military station.

Other problems remain, and new ones have arisen. If excavation should ever be renewed, it might determine the size of the earlier fort by following its north wall, and reveal some of its interior buildings. The principia of the later camp are still to seek, and the whole of its western area is untouched."

The report had been prefaced by a brief and good description of the fort-site, and a somewhat perfunctory account of earlier finds, together with notes of what Collingwood himself had been able to hear of from local people or to examine:

"Samian ware and coins have been found in considerable quantities in the village itself at various times, especially in the laying of sewers, gas-mains, etc. The pottery is described by eye-witnesses as having been both plain and figured. The only examples of it seen by myself are a bowl (Dragendorff 27) in the possession of Miss Harris, and two late decorated fragments (Dragendorff 37) in the possession, of Mr Waugh. Of the coins, I was shown ten by Mrs Dover . . . These were found, with many others, in the garden of the Mount. More recently coins were discovered near the south-east angle of the fort, in making a garage . . ."

He was shown some of the clay from the discovery recorded by Dykes, noting that it

"so closely resembles the ordinary Samian fabric that it almost suggests an attempt at making Samian ware on the spot, though this is, of course, highly improbable. But it is certainly not the local clay, and must have been imported."

And he was able to report the recent discovery of a clay lamp, coins and a pavement "near the west side of the fort".

These finds, as he duly noted, all came from outside the fort itself, and showed that "Roman Papcastle was

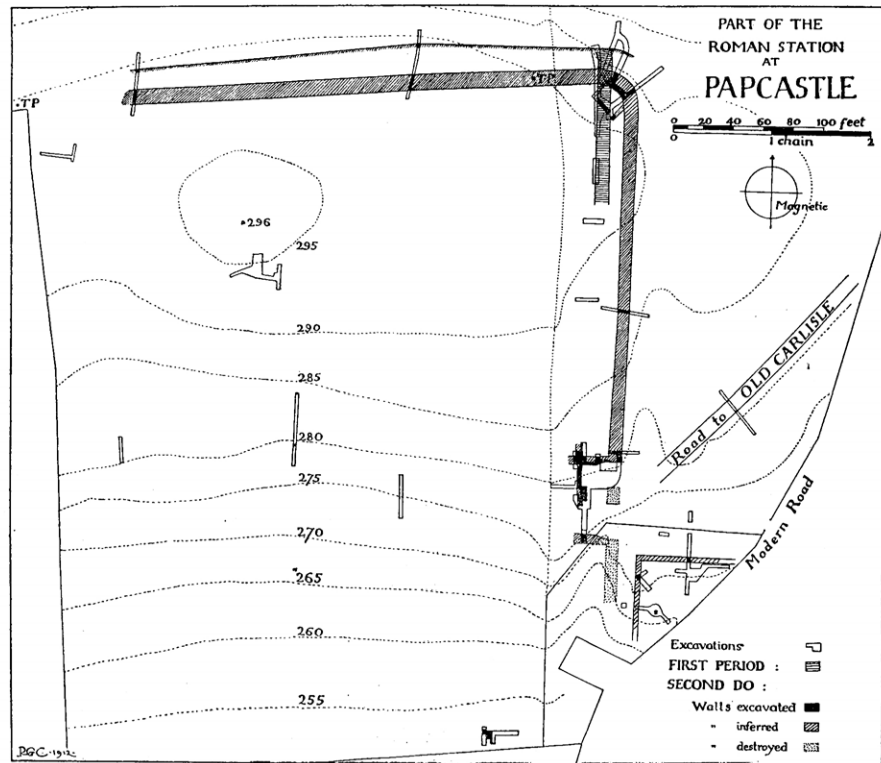


FIG. 2.—Collingwood's excavations of 1912.

more than a mere fort" — "The remains extend from the top to the bottom of the hill and cover a large area". But it was with the fort itself that his excavations were concerned.

Trenches were cut across the east rampart and the eastern part of the north rampart, the north-east angle-tower was located and examined and so was the east gateway: see Collingwood's plan, reduced from that given with his report (fig. 2). There was also some random trenching inside the fort. The main positive results of the work may be summarised as follows:

1. The gateway and angle-tower belong to a secondary stone fort, the finds from which show it to be post-Hadrianic, though perhaps hardly as late as the time of Severus (to which Collingwood was inclined to assign it).

2. A fragment of an earlier stone fort's east wall was found, a few feet west of its successor and extending some feet further north; but no traces of it were recognised at the east gateway position, where we might have expected at least some remains of it to have survived.

3. There was a stone building immediately outside the east gateway, comparable in its position to that just outside the south gateway of the Wall-fort at Housesteads; but the excavation did not prove that this building was of the Roman period.

For the rest, the most useful result of the excavation was its yield of Roman pottery, of which Collingwood's report gives drawings without attempting to provide either descriptions or dating. There were nine scraps of figured samian, one of them (to judge by the drawing) conceivably South Gaulish and another East Gaulish or German, the rest straightforward Lezoux ware of the Antonine period; they have nothing significant to tell us. But the coarse pottery includes a carinated bowl with reeded rim and some mortarium rims that point unequivocally to a pre-Hadrianic and possibly Flavian occupation of the site; and there is at least one Crambeck wall-sided mortarium (Collingwood's fig. 4, j) which attests occupation continuing into the closing years of the 4th century. That is to say, the site was occupied — as

indeed we should expect it to have been occupied — throughout the Roman period in our district; but the structural remains which Collingwood explored can hardly represent more than two out of the five or six periods of occupation which we are entitled to postulate, starting with a Flavian turf and timber fort and ending with the Theodosian reconstruction.

III. Later Discoveries.

Later discoveries have been infrequent, but one or two require mention here. Collingwood's excavation had revealed a layer of blackened grain close outside the east gateway of the fort; in 1923, a trench was cut through the layer to take a new gas-main, and Wilfred Irwin furnished a careful analysis of the grain, probably all wheat, and an account of the deposit in which it occurred, for printing in our *Transactions* (CW2 xxiv 371 ff., followed by an analysis of some blackened oats "found about 1904 in the Brewery Field, just outside Cocker-mouth", 373 f.).

In 1929, as Collingwood recorded in the *Journal of Roman Studies*,⁸ when a tennis lawn was being made at the Mount, not far outside the south-east corner of the fort, "Roman coins and pottery, together with large stone slabs, 5½ ft. by 1½ ft., were dug up at a depth of 6 ft."

But the most important discovery was made from the air, by our member Dr Kenneth St Joseph, F.S.A.; in his paper on "Air reconnaissance of North Britain" (JRS xli 54) he records that the fort-wall is visible on three sides, the west exhibiting the guard-chambers of a gate, and a road leading out eastwards from the east gate. Dr St Joseph has been kind enough to allow me to reproduce his fine air-photograph in illustration of this paper, to which it forms a frontispiece (plate facing p. 96): taken in conjunction with the Ordnance Survey

⁸ JRS xix 186.

plan, it allows us to put forward the first reasoned estimate of the fort's dimensions, approximately 500 ft. E.W. by 600 ft. N.-S., giving it an area of just over $6\frac{3}{4}$ acres. That makes it substantially larger than most of the forts in our district, and adds to the urgency for finding more about its internal layout, and about the garrison for which it was designed. But that is a question to which we shall have to return after we have completed our survey of the other evidence for the history of the site.

IV. Inscriptions.

There are only five inscriptions attributable to Papcastle, three of them in fact found in Cockermouth Castle, in the walls of which much Roman ashlar is still to be seen. We will take them in the order of their discovery.

1. CIL VII 416, Lap. Sep. 906; first published in *Gent. Mag.* 1807, pt. ii, p. 1009: "dug up amongst the ruins of the Court of Cockermouth Castle . . . in lowering the ground of that Court in 1803."

—]nsium [—] *ex v(oto) p(osito) XIII k. et XIII kal. Nov. v. s. l. m., Gordiano II et Pompeiano cos.*

The dates are 18 and 19 October, A.D. 241; for the significance of them see under the more complete version of a nearly twin text, no. 2 below.

2. CIL VII 415 with EE III p. 130=ILS 2635, Lap. Sep. 907; communicated to Dr Bruce by the Rev. William Farmery, in time to be reported to the Newcastle Antiquaries on 1 November 1865, found in Cockermouth Castle.

—]eg. Aug. in c[u]neum Frisionum Aballavensium Philipp., XIII kal. et XIII ka. Nov., Gor. II et Pompei[ano] cos., et Attico et Pre[t]xtato cos., v.s.l.m.

Two vows are commemorated, on 18 and 19 October 241 and 242, but the altar has been set up after Philip (244-249) had succeeded Gordian (238-244) as emperor; the loss of the opening lines prevents us from putting forward a confident interpretation of the text as a whole, but it records the transfer of someone to the *cuneus* (of which, more presently) of Frisians, which in the 3rd century manner has two additional titles, *Aballavensium* (as stationed at Aballava) and *Philippianorum* (from the reigning emperor). The discovery of this stone was for many decades supposed to clinch the identification *Aballava*=

Papcastle; but Professor Richmond has put it beyond question that Papcastle was Derventio, as Gale first deduced, and *Aballava* was the Wall-fort at Burgh-by-Sands. It seems best to suppose that both this altar and no. 1 above commemorated the dedicatory transfer from Papcastle to Burgh, after a tour of duty which started at Papcastle in 241, to a more senior command than that of the unit, whatever it was, in garrison here.

The *cuneus* was a new-style cavalry unit, named after the wedge-shaped attacking order long customary amongst the German tribes; the only other certain instance recorded epigraphically in Britain is the *cuneus Frisiorum Verser. Alexandrianus* (by the imperial title, datable 222-235) of an inscription from Housesteads (EE VII 1041=ILS 4761), which is in fact the earliest known record of a unit of this type. But by the time of the *Notitia Dignitatum* (to whatever period we assign its military contents) there were at least 48 such units in the Roman army. In 345, as we happen to learn from the Theodosian Code (V 4, 1) they were all part of the field army, on a par with its *vexillationes comitatenses*.

3. EE III 95, Lap. Sep. 909: found "a few years" before its publication in *Lapidarium* — "when the foundations were being prepared for an addition to Mrs Harris' house" (sc. Lindenside, close to the S.W. corner of the fort). Still there in 1912 (CW2 xiii 133).

—]vi Victorini.

Collingwood (*ibid.*) wrote that "The inscription is not fragmentary, so that it cannot read, *e.g.*, FLA]VI VICTORINI; there is a blank space before the first letter, and there has never been more than one line of letters. The first two letters of the name may possibly have been repeated by mistake." But the illustration in Lap. Sep. certainly suggests that the stone has been trimmed down on the left-hand side, and it seems better to suppose it to have been a centurial stone, no doubt from the fort-wall, recording the century of Flavius Victorinus or the like.

4. CIL VII 1329 (wrongly equated there with Lap. Sep. 503 and attributed to Carlisle), Lap. Sep. 908; found "In the course of some recent excavations in the camp", when "a quantity of leather and sundry other materials were thrown out of such a nature as to induce the belief that they formed the *débris* of a Roman shoemaker's shop." Thus Bruce, no doubt on information from Robert Ferguson, M.P., in whose collection they were; his woodcut shows four pieces of leather, the outermost piece stamped

Victo

In EE VII 1178 Haverfield gives a different reading, provided

by Sir Arthur Evans, but it is certainly incorrect. Bruce took the leather to have been intended for the uppers of shoes or sandals; but the late James McIntyre was able to show that it represents tent-flaps: cf. CW2 xxxiv 86 ff. (where, however, Huebner's incorrect attribution to Carlisle is accepted).

5. JRS xviii 212; R. G. Collingwood, under *Roman Britain in 1928*: "In the Second Dungeon in Cockermouth Castle, close to the ground on the right as you go in, built into the wall, is a stone, 10 by 6 in., inscribed LEG VI / VIPFF in a style not unlike the Sixth Legion's records in the Birdswald sector of Hadrian's Wall. It therefore probably indicates work by that Legion at Papcastle in the first half of the second century."

In addition, the Tullie House collection includes a small un-inscribed altar, once in Robert Ferguson's collection, "found in the river Derwent, probably near Papcastle" (CW1 xv 500, no. 106; THCat., 1922, no. 56).

It will be convenient to note, under the same heading, the fragment of a stone pine-cone mentioned in Lap. Sep. under no. 910 (which, however, a corrigendum at p. 475 shows to come not from Papcastle but from Old Carlisle): "The fragment of another stone of a similar nature was found a few years ago when some alterations were being made in the house of Mrs Harris in Papcastle; it is preserved in the garden."

In sum, these inscriptions have little to tell us about the site or its history: no. 5 may well indicate Hadrianic construction of the earlier of the two stone forts identified by Collingwood's excavation of 1912, and nos. 1 and 2 at least show that it was occupied in the middle of the 3rd century, though they do not enable us to say what unit was in garrison there.

V. Other Finds.

It will be convenient to deal with other finds from the site by categories, taking metal objects first, then coins, then leather and finally pottery — adding no more about that from the excavations of 1912, except for the amphora stamp.

(a) *Metal objects.*

1. "A small bronze statuette . . . 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, representing some deity akin to Bacchus, of that hybrid character belonging

to the Romano-British mythology": PSAL2 vii 263, recording its exhibition to the Society of Antiquaries by Robert Ferguson on 28 June 1877.

2. (fig. 3) *Fibula* of the so-called Aucissa type but uninscribed, acquired by Tullie House in 1899 as from Papcastle, but without a record of the precise findspot; mentioned and discussed but not illustrated by Haverfield in his catalogue of the Tullie House *fibulae* (CW2 xix 10 f.), observing that "it appears to belong properly to the beginning of the first century A.D., and it is therefore somewhat earlier than the origin of the fort of Papcastle can well be put . . . Or our dating of the type may

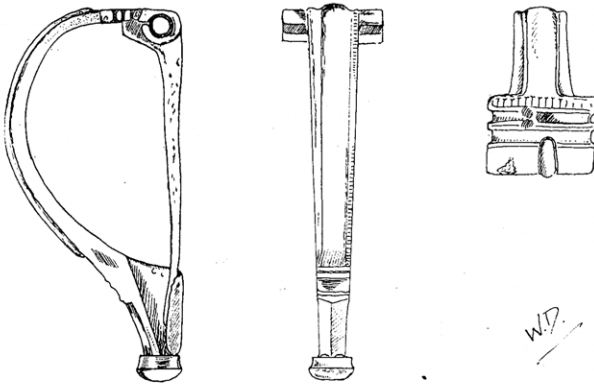


FIG. 3 (†).

be incorrect." Mr Wilfred Dodds points out that the distinctive feature of this type of brooch is that the pin is on a hinge instead of a spring, and at times made of a different metal from that of the bow; some examples are certainly pre-Claudian, but one has been found at Wroxeter in a deposit dated by Bushe-Fox to the period A.D. 80-120, and one from Corstopitum need not be earlier than the Flavian period, to which it will perhaps be safest to assign the Papcastle brooch. But it might conceivably represent pre-Roman occupation of the site — though it should be noted that it seems to be an imported type, more likely to have been brought into Britain after the Claudian invasion than to have found its way to Papcastle in an earlier period.

(b) *Coins.*

With the exception of no. 10, all the coins listed below have been mentioned in earlier sections of this paper, to which bare

references back seem sufficient; the total of 19 items is manifestly far less than the real number of Roman coins found at Papcastle in the past 250 years.

1. Claudius (or Claudius Gothicus?): Stukeley's informant.
2. Galba, AR: found 1912.
3. Vespasian, 2AE: Mr Wadham's (RGC).
4. Trajan, 2AE: Mrs Dover's (RGC).
5. Trajan, 2AE: Mr Waugh's (RGC).
6. Hadrian: Stukeley.
7. Antoninus (Pius — or Caracalla?): Gordon.
8. Severus: Mrs Dover's (RGC).
9. Geta, AR: Stukeley.
10. Urbs Roma: *Newcastle Courant*, 12 August 1780:⁹

"Whitehaven, August 3. A few days ago a very antique medal was dung (*sic*) up at Papcastle, the scite of a Roman station near Cockermouth. On one side is a head, supposed *Julius Caesar*; the motto *Urbs Romae*. On the reverse, *Romulus* and *Remus* suckled by a wolf. Below that figure, the initials of *Duce Julius Caesar*; and, a little to the sinister of the inscription, a representation of a Roman ship, very much defaced. The piece, which is copper, and in the possession of a gentleman of this town, is in other respects quite perfect." The writer supposed the coin to have been brought over by Caesar on his first invasion of Britain, 55 B.C.! But it is evidently a Constantinian issue of the 330s, its mint-mark misread.

11. Constantius II, 3AE: Mrs Dover's (RGC).
12. Illegible, 1AE: Routh.
- 13-19. Illegible: Mrs Dover's (RGC).

(None of the coins recorded as found at the Mount in 1929, JRS xix 186, have yet been identified).

(c) *Leather*.

Reference has already been made to the portions of leather tents from Robert Ferguson's collection, now at Tullie House, found shortly before 1875 in some otherwise unrecorded excavations inside the fort. The only other item under this head is a pair of "Roman military shoes" from Papcastle, in the Whitehaven Museum, a photograph of which was exhibited to this Society by the late Miss Fair on 11 September 1924 (CW2 xxv 364).

⁹ I owe this reference to Mr C. Roy Hudleston, F.S.A.

(d) *Pottery.*

The catalogue of the temporary museum formed for the Archaeological Institute's Carlisle meeting in 1859 records that Mr J. Harris¹⁰ exhibited "fragments of Samian ware, a Samian cup in perfect state, and part of a mass of fine red clay, conjectured to have been used in fabricating pottery of that description, lately found together in a receptacle near an ancient well at Papcastle". The account by Dykes makes it clear that the well is that in the grounds of Derwent Lodge, recorded by the Ordnance Survey as having been found in 1858.¹¹ Reference has already been made (p. 111, above), to the pottery illustrated by Collingwood from the excavations of 1912; for the rest it will be sufficient to say something about the Papcastle material in the Tullie House collection, previously published by Thomas May (CW2 xvii 114 ff., reprinted with pagination 1 ff.) but deserving further consideration.

(i) *Figured samian.*

1. (fig. 4). Dr. 37, by an anonymous early 2nd century Lezoux potter (May's pl. vi 80 with p. 143 = p. 31 of the reprint; *CGP* pl. 46, no. 545, wrongly assigned to Carlisle). Stanfield attributed this interesting piece to the style of DONNAVCVS, but it seems safer to note that its maker, whoever he was, cannot well have been working later than A.D. 120, if so late. A portion of it has gone amissing since Stanfield made his drawing.



FIG. 4 (½).

2. Dr. 37, in panel decoration, with the stamp DOIICCI in one panel (May's pl. v 61 with p. 138 = p. 26; *CGP* pl. 148, no. 22). The well-known Lezoux potter Doeccus is assignable by his

¹⁰ Presumably the Jonathan Harris, thread manufacturer, shown in the Papcastle directory in Mannix & Whellan (1847) 516.

¹¹ Not 1870, as given in CW2 xiii 133.

decorative style and by the incidence of his products to the second half of the 2nd century.

(ii) *Potters' stamps on plain samian.*

In addition to the last item, May published five stamps (three of them from Robert Ferguson's collection) from Papcastle on cups of the plain form Dr. 33, but in most cases he misread them; through the kindness of Mr Robert Hogg I have been able to examine them all, and to offer improved readings.

1. DOIICCVS M (May, p. 181=69 of the reprint, misread — hence Oswald, *Index of Potters' Stamps*, p. 108).

2. $\overline{\text{M}\text{A}\text{K}\text{K}\text{I}\text{I}\text{D}\text{O}\text{M}}$ retrograde (May 186=74, misread as MOGIDI $\overline{\text{M}\text{A}}$, hence Oswald 208). Malledo is a Lezoux potter, represented in the Antonine levels at Newstead. Mogidius is to be deleted from Oswald's list of potters.

3. MAMMI $\overline{\text{k}}$, the $\overline{\text{k}}$ reversed (May 184=72, misread — hence Oswald 182, where the stamp is wrongly given as on Dr. 37). Probably to be assigned to the little-known potter Mammilius, rather than to Mammilianus of Rheinzabern.

4. MAMMI (May 184=72 and Oswald 182). Mammius of Lezoux too occurs in the list of Antonine stamps from Newstead, and his decorative style fits a dating late in the 2nd century (cf. *CGP* pl. 103 with p. 192 f.).

5. MASC[E] $\overline{\text{k}\text{k}\text{I}\text{O}\text{F}\text{E}}$ (May 185=73, less completely read, and Oswald 192). No exact parallel to this stamp has been noted, but it evidently belongs to the well-known Lezoux potter Mascellio, who made the late forms Dr. 38 and 79 and worked as a bowl-finisher for Mercator, so that he will have been a contemporary of Mammius.

All five stamps would be in keeping with occupation in the period A.D. 160-200.

(iii) *Amphora stamp.*

The only recorded amphora stamp from the site, QMR, comes from the 1912 excavation (CW2 xiii 137, fig. 2). Dr M. H. Callender reports that it also occurs at Ambleside, Balmuildy, Chester, Corbridge, London, Richborough and Wroxeter, at Rome and on a number of other Continental sites; it comes on globular vessels of the type in which oil was shipped from southern Spain, and a date in the period A.D. 160-180 seems indicated by the find-spots of the examples from Corbridge and from Rome.

VI. The Site and its Problems.

The foregoing survey of the evidence available up to 1961 has stressed what Stukeley was the first to appreciate, namely that the Roman fort at the top of the hill at Papcastle was accompanied by a very extensive civilian settlement which covered most of the hillside down to the north bank of the Derwent. The fort now visible in the air photograph seems to have had its long axis north and south and its east gateways nearer the south than the north rampart; that is to say that it represents the copybook layout as defined in the *Liber de munitioibus castrorum*, with its *porta decumana* occupying the highest point and the platform of the fort sloping downwards to the *porta praetoria*. The same work observes that the *porta praetoria* should always face the enemy, but Vegetius in his *Epitome rei militaris* notes that there was a choice: it might face east, or the enemy, or the direction in which the army was due to move.¹² Here, on either showing, the inference is plain and logical, that the garrison of *Derwentio* had the special function of watching the Lake Mountains beyond the Derwent and keeping open the Romans' communications southward to Ravenglass. For the fort's place in the road-system as a whole it will be sufficient to refer to Mr R. L. Bellhouse's recent studies in our *Transactions*: CW2 liv 20 f. and 26 f. for the route from Keswick through the Whinlatter pass, CW2 lvi 37-51 for the road from Carlisle and 56-61 for its continuation towards Egremont, throwing off a branch to the coastal fort at Moresby — together with the careful study by Dykes of the road from Maryport, higher up the coast. But it must be remembered that, as Mr Bellhouse has pointed out, the immediate

¹² *Lib. de munit. castr.* 56: Nam quod attinet ad soli electionem in statuenda metatione, primum locum habent, quae ex campo in eminentiam leniter attolluntur, in qua positione porta decumana eminentissimo loco constituitur, ut regiones castris subiaceant. Porta praetoria semper hostem spectare debet.

Epit. rei mil. i 23: Porta autem quae appellatur praetoria aut orientem spectare debet aut illum locum qui ad hostes respicit aut, si iter agitur, illam partem debet adtendere ad quam est profecturus exercitus.

road-links outwards from or past the fort still need further investigation; that applies in particular to the Friar's Walk and the crossing of the Derwent implied by its course as laid down by Dykes, as well as to the behaviour of the roads leading from the east gateway as shown by Collingwood and on Dr St Joseph's air photograph respectively. Dykes thought that the Romans contented themselves with a ford over the Derwent, but a bridge was surely called for, and traces of it and of the road continuing from the south bank ought perhaps to be discoverable.

For the history of the fort, a brief recapitulation will suffice. It has yielded pottery evidence for occupation from Flavian times until the closing years of the 4th century, though there is a hint of a break in the occupation from soon after 120 until 160 or thereabouts; but Collingwood's excavations only yielded structural evidence for two out of the predictable five or six structural periods which an occupation of that length should have involved — and we might properly pose the question whether the fort shown in the air photograph does not represent something larger than the Flavian *castellum* or its Hadrianic successor (if Hadrianic it was)? Its size, seemingly all but 7 acres, puts it outside the usual grouping in our area, in which it is normal for quingenary *alae* or milliary cohorts to be allotted something like 5 acres, quingenary cohorts $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres; does the visible fort represent a Severan or somewhat later enlargement, to give room for a *cuneus* as well as some other unit — or even a radical reconstruction under Constantius Chlorus, when the old standard sizes of units and of forts alike were being departed from more and more? Only further work on the defences, where modern buildings and gardens have not yet covered the surviving Roman levels, can enlighten us; towards the south-west angle, in particular, there seems to be a good prospect of a fair depth of stratification surviving.

As to the main garrison, in default of epigraphic evidence it must at present suffice to note that, in the 3rd century at any rate, an *ala* seems called for rather than a milliary cohort (granted that there was plenty of room in the fort for either), since the known milliary cohorts in the army of Britain are already accounted for while there may be half a dozen *alae* whose forts are still to seek;¹³ it need not disturb us to note that the next fort along the Carlisle road, Old Carlisle, was also garrisoned by a cavalry regiment: compare, in County Durham, the stationing of *alae* at Binchester and Chester-le-Street in the 3rd century, and it seems possible that Kirkby Thore and Brougham provided for a similar pairing of cavalry regiments.

The fact that the place-name is securely identified as *Derventio*, and that the site has yielded late 4th century pottery, might even raise the question whether this was the *Derventio* recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as the station of the *numerus supervenientium Petueriensium*, one of the mobile units in the Duke's command (whatever the date to which we assign that section of *Not. Dig. Occ.* xl); but most people will no doubt still give the preference to Malton-*Derventio* on the Yorkshire Derwent, where a fort held throughout the 4th century is known, and where it would be logical for the Romans to station a mobile unit to back up their system of watch-towers along the Yorkshire coast. In any case, however, the late occupation at Papcastle need not have been specifically military; we cannot exclude the possibility that here, as elsewhere, a paramilitary or purely civilian population maintained itself for some years after the withdrawal of a regular garrison. How long the site remained occupied, there is no direct evidence to show, but significant continuity of occupation seems excluded in view

¹³ The *alae Afrorum*, *Agrippiana miniata*, *Classiana*, *Picentiana*, *I Tungrorum* and *Augusta Vocontiorum*, if still in Britain in that century, have still to be located; two of them can be accounted for as the garrisons of Chester-le-Street and of Kirkby Thore, but that still leaves four to play with (one of them, it may be, at Brougham, cf. CW2 xxxii 138).

of the Place-Name Society's verdict that the first element in the modern name can hardly be other than ON *papi*, "hermit";¹⁴ that seems a clear enough indication that when Norse settlers first penetrated into the district there was only a solitary hermit living among the ruins of the Roman fort. By the same token, it also serves to discredit the popular tradition that Papcastle takes its name from Gilbert Pipard. Yet it is noteworthy that the Normans chose Papcastle, perhaps because of its plentiful supply of Roman stone, as the *caput* of the barony of Allerdale,¹⁵ only moving the lord's residence to Cockermouth when troubled times made it necessary for them to build a castle on a more easily defensible site. The Romans, as so often, had chosen their fort-site for its amenity value, the unit stationed there being expected to move into the field to deal with trouble, not to await an attack within its defences.

Outside the fort, the bath-house can be located approximately, a little north of Derwent Lodge and east of the southward lane; it seems probable that Routh's letter to Gale was intended to give supplementary information about a structure which Gale and Stukeley had seen seventeen years before, rather than that it describes a wholly new discovery. The only other structures in the settlement for which we have specific evidence are the well and the nearby "receptacle" in the grounds of Derwent Lodge, where we have at least a hint that a potter was at work, presumably in a period when samian ware was still available for him to copy — not later, if so, than the early years of the 3rd century; but perhaps the "large blocks in the foundation of a wall on the road to Cockermouth", cited by Dykes, may represent another Roman building rather further down the hill. It is much to be hoped that it may be possible to obtain further evidence, by careful interrogation of Papcastle residents

¹⁴ *PN Cumb.* ii 308.

¹⁵ Cf. T. H. B. Graham in *CW2* xxix 69.

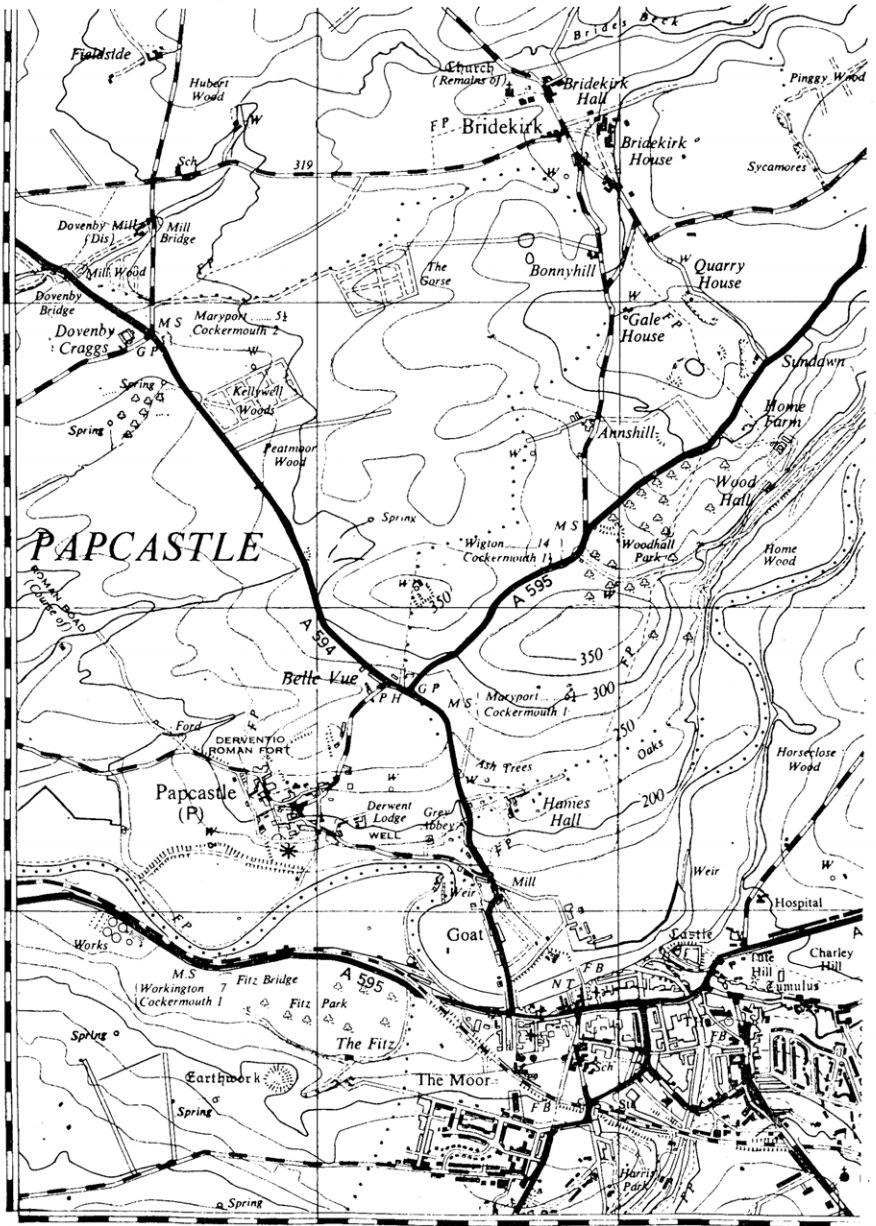


FIG. 5.
The asterisk indicates Field 139.

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and study of chance finds in their possession, even if it should not prove practicable to attempt planned excavation in their gardens or crofts. In any case, there is urgent need for an investigation of the precise course and character of the settlement's defences, as indicated by Dykes in his study. Reference to the Ordnance Survey map, here reproduced as fig. 5, will show that there is still room to excavate in field 139, where there is a strong surface indication of a rampart roughly parallel to the Derwent and of a return which might mark the south-west corner of those defences; given permission to dig, it ought not to require much trenching to obtain useful evidence for the structure and perhaps even for the date of them.

The Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments can intervene to investigate such parts of the site as may be released for building development — and we have every confidence in Miss Charlesworth's ability to obtain the fullest possible evidence from her excavations on behalf of the Ministry of Public Building and Works; but the problems of Roman Papcastle really call for attention on a wider front, and it is greatly to be hoped that other members of our Society may be able to join in the investigation and recording of chance finds, and that the Society may be able to sponsor additional excavations in places where, one cannot but hope, the Ministry will never be required to step in.