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*Photograph by J. K. St. Joseph*

Crop Marks, Roman Signal Station, Wreay Hall, SSE. of Carlisle.

*facing p.49.*

ART. IV.—*A Roman post at Wreay Hall, near Carlisle.*  
By R. L. BELLHOUSE, B.Sc.

*Read at Penrith, April 25th, 1953.*

A RECENT air-photograph taken by Dr J. K. St Joseph, F.S.A., here reproduced facing p. 49, suggested the existence near Wreay Hall of a Roman signal-station or patrol-post similar to that found in 1930 on Little Barrock Fell,<sup>1</sup> and I was asked to make an exploratory cutting through the site in order to determine its Roman character.

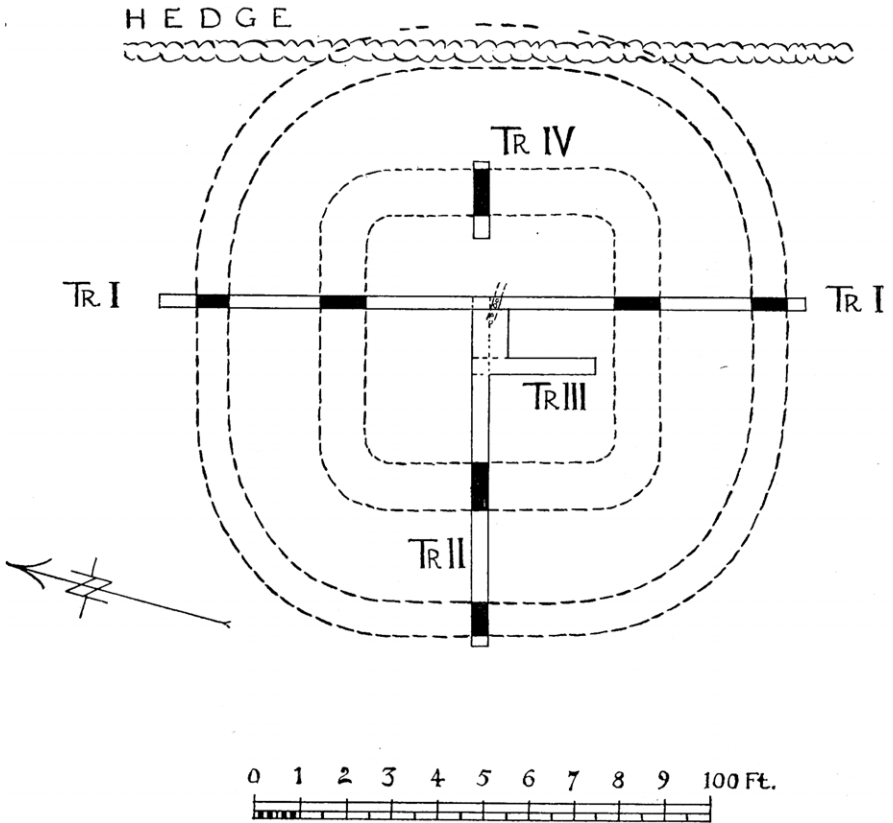
The site is on a hill-top, at 388 ft. O.D., 660 yards west of the sixth milestone on the Carlisle-Penrith road (map reference, 83/448484), and an excellent view is obtained from it in all directions. The exact position of it was readily identified by reference to the trees on the air-photograph, and the digging was done by myself and two of my staff on 17 March 1951. On the ground, a discontinuous circle of reddish soil, surrounding an area of darker soil, was visible in the ploughed stubble; a trial pit showed the soil profile to be nine to ten inches of dark, reddish-brown loam, with some stones, lying directly on a reddish, sandy boulder-clay. The accompanying plan (fig. 1) shows all the features now to be described.

Trench I was marked out 51 ft. from and parallel to the hedge to the east of the site, and the top-soil was removed, starting from the north end, at the reddish marks assumed to be ploughed-down upcast. The first thing found was a ditch, with a grey sandy filling, 10 ft. wide between lips, with well sloped sides and 4 ft. deep; two or three cobbles were found at ditch-bottom, and some

<sup>1</sup> CW2 xxxi 111-118.

small stones on each lip. The trench was continued southward and, at an interval of 27 ft., a small trench 18 in. wide and 9 in. deep, packed with cobbles, was exposed. At a point 27 ft. further southwards, the ditch was found again, with all details as before.

Trench II was laid out at right-angles to Trench I, starting at a point just north of the mid-point between



R.L.B.

FIG. 1.

the two proved ditches; and at 36 ft. westward the ditch was proved again, exactly as above. At the junction of Trenches I and II, the top-soil was cleared over an area 10 ft. by 8 ft., and this produced five pieces of black pot, each with part of a rim, and two pieces of reddish pot, black inside, without rim or foot. Fragments of charcoal and some black stones were seen in this area, as well as the continuation of the cobbled trench noted above.

Trench III was laid out 10 ft. from and parallel to Trench I, and was continued 27 ft. southwards from Trench II, but it revealed nothing. We then turned back to Trench II and continued it westwards, and 20 ft. from the first ditch we found an outer one. It was 7 ft. wide and 2 ft. 6 in. deep, with a grey sandy filling and broken sandstone and cobbles on its west lip. Trench I was then extended similarly, and likewise revealed the outer ditch.

The site was revisited the following day, but as there had been heavy rain during the night, and all the trenches were filled with water, I decided to bring the excavation to a close, since its principal object had been achieved. It had proved the crop-marks to belong to a square, ditched enclosure with rounded corners, separated by a 20 ft. wide strip (which clearly had the remains of an upcast mound upon it) from an outer, circular ditch. The inner ditch enclosed an area 54 ft. square, while the full diameter of the site was about 130 ft. The entrance to the post was not located, neither was anything seen to suggest the existence of a stone wall like that of the Barrock Fell fortlet.

The pottery was submitted to Professor Richmond, who confirmed that it was typical fourth-century "signal-station" ware.

The work was kindly permitted by the owner, Mr Harrison of Scalesceugh, and by the tenants, Messrs Coulthard of Wreay Hall.