ART. III.—*The Roman fort at Brough-under-Stainmore.*
By ERIC BIRLEY, F.S.A.

Partly read at Carlisle, March 20th, 1954.

UNTIL recently, it is fair to say, the Roman fort at
Brough-under-Stainmore has been taken for granted
more frequently than it has been studied. Camden,
indeed, rightly identified it as the *Verterae* of the Antonine
Itinerary and of the Notitia Dignitatum, but Horsley
seems never to have examined the site, and it was left
to Pennant and Hutchinson to point out that there are
visible remains of the fort's platform around the ruins of
Brough castle. The only excavations there, before 1954,
were merely incidental to the work of conservation carried
out on the ruins of the castle by the Office of Works in
1923 and the following years, and for our knowledge of
the place's importance in Roman times we depend mainly
on the results of chance finds, and on *a priori* considera-
tions of military geography. It has only yielded two
inscribed stones, found in 1879 during the restoration of
the parish church, in the fabric of which they had been
built up; and the bulk of the remaining archæological
material comes from the valley below, where the Swin-
dale Beck, reinforced by its tributary the Augill, eroded
what seems to have been a Roman rubbish-tip, mainly
in the period 1820-1860. The Office of Works recovered
a handful of Roman pottery from its trial shafts within
the castle walls, and a certain amount of pottery has been
found on the escarpment to the north, and south-eastward
as far away as the vicarage garden in the valley below.
But the most important material available for assessing
the character of the place in Roman times is the series of
lead seals, the fullest study of which is that which Pro-
fessor Richmond contributed to these *Transactions* in

1936;[1] the same writer produced a brief survey of the evidence for the site as a whole, for incorporation in the report on the Society's visit to Brough on 3 September 1946.[2] In the present paper I have attempted to set forth the history of attention to the site and its problems, from Camden's day until the present time, and to define the course which further study of it should take; at the end, I add an account of the trial excavations carried out at Brough in April 1954.

I. VISITORS' ACCOUNTS.

William Camden is the earliest modern writer to refer to the Roman site; it is not clear whether he himself ever went to Brough, or whether he relied upon some local correspondent (such as Reginald Bainbrigg of Appleby) for his knowledge of it. His account does not vary substantially in the successive editions of the *Britannia*,[3] apart from increasing attention to the origin and significance of the term *burgus,* inserted as a parenthesis in the edition of 1600, and somewhat expanded in that of 1607. I quote his account in Philemon Holland's authorised translation of 1610, p. 760, placing the parenthesis in square brackets:

"Here *Eden* doth, as it were, make stay with his streame, to give meeting unto other pety rivers: upon one of which scarce two miles off, from *Eden* it selfe stood VERTERAE a towne of ancient memorie, mentioned by Antonine the Emperour and the booke of Notices: wherein it is notified, that in the declining age of the Romane Empire, a Romane Captaine made his abode there with a band of the *Directores*. But now the towne is decaied and become a small poore village fensed with a little Fortresse, and the name turned into *Burgh*. For it is commonly named, *Burgh under Stanemore*. [For in the time of the later Emperours (and willing I am to note so much once for all) little castles meete for warre occasions, and furnished with store of

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[1] CW2 xxxvi 104-125; cf. also Mr R. P. Wright's account of some further specimens, CW2 liv 103 f.

[2] CW2 xlvii 199 f.

[3] 1586 ed., p. 449; 1587, p. 519; 1590, p. 627; 1594, p. 593; 1600, p. 687; 1607, p. 626.

corne, beganne to be tearmed *Burgi,* that is, *Burghs* by a new
name, which after that the Empire was translated into the East,
the Germans and others may seeme to have borrowed of the
Greeke word .πύργος. Hence also came the name of Burgundians,
because they inhabited *Burghs;* for so, in that age they used to
call those dwelling places which were planted heere and there,
along limites and marches.] Neither have I red any thing else
of that *Burgh,* but that in the beginning of the Norman govern-
ment, the Northern English conspired heere against William the
Conqueror. That this *Burgh* was VERTERAE I dare be bold
to affirme, because the distance thereof from *Levatrae* of the
one side, and from *Brovonacum* on the other, being reduced
into Italian miles doth exactly agree with *Antonines* numbers:
and for that the high streete of the Romans as yet evidently
apparent by the ridges thereof, leadeth this way to BROVONA-
CVM . . .''

Several later writers content themselves merely with
translating or paraphrasing Camden's account; it will not
be worth our while to transcribe them, but it seems desir-
able to give references to them in a footnote.[4]

John Horsley is disappointingly brief in his account of
Brough; when one compares it with what he has to say
about Kirkby Thore to the west, and of Bowes on the
other side of Stainmore (both of which he clearly visited),
it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that he diverged
from the line of the Roman road to pass through Market
Brough, on the other side of the valley, and never went
up to the castle. But, after all, Horsley's main interests,
away from the Wall, were in Roman inscriptions (none
of which had yet come to light there) and roads (and in
this case, even if he had kept to the Roman trunk-road,
we shall see that he would have passed some way below
the fort-site). His reference is as follows:[5]

"*VERTERAE* is no doubt rightly fixed at *Brugh under Stane-
more.* The course of the military way is absolutely certain. The
remains are generally so grand, and it is so rarely interrupted,

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[4] Burton, *A Commentary on Antoninus his Itinerary, 1658,* 109 f.; Daniel
Fleming, *A Description of Westmorland, 1671* (= this Society's Tract Series
i, 1882), 18; Gibson's Camden, 1695, 806 and 1722, ii 989; Nicolson & Burn,
1777, i 577.
[5] *Britannia Romana, 1732,* 410.

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and then only for so short a space, that we never have the least difficulty about it. And thus it continues to go on by *Bowes* to *Cataract*."

He was clearly only concerning himself with the course of the road, and left the mere mileage to take care of the fort and its Roman name.

The first printed reference to the site of the fort itself comes in William Hutchinson's *Excursion to the Lakes* (I quote from the 1776 edition, p. 21):

"BROUGH CASTLE. In former times this was a formidable fortress, and of Roman original; its situation on the Roman road leading to BROVONAICVM (*sic*) by ABALLAVA, and its distance from LAVATRAE prove, that this was the antient VERTERIAE (*sic*) mentioned by Antonine and the Book of Notices, where, in the decline of the Roman empire, a band of the *Directores* were stationed . . . to the south and east the access is not so steep, but is guarded by a deep ditch and rampart, which appear to be the remains of the old Roman station, forming an area to the castle."

Hutchinson's debt to Camden, and the poor quality of his scholarship, are both apparent; but at least he deserves credit for identifying the Roman fort. He had visited it in 1773; in the same year, Thomas Pennant was there too, but his account of that particular tour was not published until 1801; the Roman character of the earthworks around the castle did not escape his notice: [6]

"It had been protected by vast fosses; those on one side are double, and have between them a high space, possibly the very site of the *Roman Burgus*."

Hodgson's *Westmorland* devotes a brief paragraph to the site,[7] based on Camden and Hutchinson, and adds a useful reference to coin-finds (p. 38, below); he also notes that "In Henry the Fifth's time a vacancy (*sic*),[8] or cow pasture near it, was called *Burwan*-thwayt". But it was

[6] *A Tour from Downing to Alston-moor*, 1801, 136.
[7] Beauties of England and Wales, N.D. [1813 — cf. CW2 liv 275 f.], 160 f.
[8] Hodgson made the correction to *vaccary* on his proof (now in the Blackgate library, Newcastle), but the printers evidently preferred their own devilry!

outside the scope of the volume to attempt a full study of any individual site.

The next reference comes from Parson & White's *History, Directory & Gazetteer of the Counties of Cumberland & Westmorland,* 1829, p. 534 (I owe it to Mr C. Roy Hudleston, F.S.A.):

> "A few years ago, some boys discovered in the bed of the river, near the Castle, a large quantity of Roman coins, brooches, jewellers' working tools, &c., now in the possession of Mr John Rumney, sen."

Whellan's *Cumberland & Westmorland,* 1860, p. 728, adds further details; to judge by his practice elsewhere, we may suppose that he relied in the main on the incumbent of the parish, in this case the Rev. Lancelot Jefferson (who had been vicar of Brough since 1828, and incidentally built the present vicarage in the following year). He notes that Brough castle occupies the site of the Roman station, and that Brough "has been fertile in Roman remains", adding a passage which would accord well with the view that Mr Jefferson was his informant:

> "During the last thirty years large quantities of Roman coins, fibulae, &c., have been discovered from time (*sic*) in the bed of the river, and also in its north bank opposite to the castle, at a depth of about six feet. The river has changed its course, and is now much nearer the castle than formerly."

There follows a footnote on coin-finds, which I reproduce later in this paper. But Whellan himself had obscured the issue by inserting, immediately before the passage given above, a quotation from Leland which really refers to Burrow in Lonsdale and not to Brough at all.

The most considerable contribution to the study of the site, however, was to come a few years later. In 1865 Henry Ecroyd Smith paid a visit to Brough, perhaps as a result of reading Charles Roach Smith's accounts, in the *Collectanea Antiqua,* of Brough seals (of which, more presently); and the upshot was a paper, read to the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire on 4 January

1866 and published in its *Transactions*[9] later in the same year — which witnessed, it will be recalled, the foundation of our own Society. The title of his paper might almost have served for my own: "Some interesting features of a neglected Roman station, Brough-under-Stainmoor." It is too long to quote at length, and its principal value is to be found in its account of the precise circumstances in which the lead seals and other Roman material had been found, and of a considerable quantity of finds made there, some of them acquired for his own collection. There will be occasion to quote him on the finds later on, but this seems to be the appropriate place to insert his careful description of where and how they came to be discovered: [10]

"A little below the adjacent bridge, but higher than the castle-mound, two mountain streams, the Augill Beck, from Market-Brough,[11] and the Swindale Beck unite, and the vastly increased volume thence accruing, more especially after heavy rains, undermines the north base of the mound and the bank of an opposite meadow, when the earthy matter being carried away, coins and other relics in metal, &c., are deposited among the stones and pebbles of the river's bed. From the medieval castle having been occupied for many centuries, the result is the occurrence here of numerous coeval remains mixed with others of Roman fabrication, the latter, however, greatly preponderating."

He adds the best description to date of the fort-site itself, noting that the Norman castle had been erected

"upon part of the naturally elevated mound, abutting upon the river, *originally* occupied by the *Roman Castrum*; the area being at the same time divided in twain, through the formation of a fosse or moat, yet remaining and of considerable depth near the stream . . ."

Chancellor Ferguson's *History of Westmorland,* 1894, p. 49, refers briefly to the fort, and is the first to note its position in relation to the Roman road; he mentions the two Roman inscriptions, found in 1879, but he does not

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[9] N.S., vi 137-152.
[10] *Ibid.*, 144.
[11] Here he is mistaken; it is the Swindale Beck which comes through Market Brough (cf. fig. 1, below).

seem to have been greatly impressed by the site. Nor, indeed, can our Society be said to have devoted much attention to it, though we have visited Brough on a number of occasions — and I have a vivid recollection of the excursion of 16 September 1926, when R. G. Collingwood described the Roman fort, and the discoveries that had been made there by the Office of Works during the previous three or four years, showing us the plan of some Roman walls found at a low level beneath the foundations of the Norman keep: for it was the first meeting of the Society that I had attended, and Brough was the first Roman fort in our territory that I had seen.

It only remains to refer to the brief description of the site, supplemented by a good plan, in the Royal Commission's Westmorland volume,[12] which also gives a useful select bibliography and a short list of coins found there (cf. p. 39, below); and to Professor Richmond's important study of the Brough seals, already cited.[13] But it will be well to put on record that a particular reason for excavation being planned specifically for 1954 was the interest shown in the site by Mr Gavin Simpson, then a schoolboy at Sedbergh, who during the previous two or three years had devoted much of his leisure to visiting Brough and searching for Roman material; he reported his discoveries to me, and some of them were of such interest, and his own enthusiasm was so clear, that I decided to put into effect a long-standing resolve to devote direct attention to a site which must on any showing have been of more than usual importance for the Roman control of our district.

II.   PREVIOUS FINDS.

(a) Coins.

Ecroyd Smith (p. 146) provides us with a perfect text for this section:

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[12] *RCHM Westmorland* 47 f.
[13] CW2 xxxvi 104-125; one or two brief notes on specific finds will be referred to under the appropriate headings, below.

"It would appear that most of the coins found here in recent times have, by sale, been dispersed through the country, and it is greatly to be feared are mainly lost to Brough and its history."

But there is a certain amount to go on. The earliest reference comes from Hodgson (p. 158):

"Many Roman coins have been found near the castle; and, about thirty years since [i.e., *circa* 1783], an earthen vessel, full of Roman silver quinarii, one of them of Vespasian, in fine preservation."

Parson & White (p. 534) give an account of what is plainly the same hoard, from an independent and better-informed source:

"In digging the foundation of a house near the castle, about 40 years ago, was found an urn full of Roman silver coins, in high preservation, especially one bearing a fine impression of the head of Titus Vespasian, and on the reverse a female figure in a weeping posture, representing, as is supposed, the city of Jerusalem, which that emperor destroyed."

It is to be regretted that no further information about this hoard has been come across.

Whellan, no doubt deriving his information from Mr Jefferson, speaks of Roman coins, as well as metal objects in great variety, having been found "during the last thirty years" in the bed of the Swindale Beck or in its north bank, and adds the following note on the coins from the site as a whole:

"Few gold coins, but many of silver, and thousands of brass ones. They are of various periods; and some of the inhabitants of Brough are in possession of hundreds."

Ecroyd Smith, in the course of his visit to Brough in 1865, was able to examine or to learn about its coin-finds in some detail, as will be seen from his account:

"The earliest are of silver, of the Roman consular families — Antonia, Cassia and others — with large and middle brass of the Caesars, from Claudius to Domitian and the immediate successors of the latter. Small brass of the later empire are numerous, in very poor condition, showing long service, with *minimi,* or the small pieces presumed to have been made in imitation of these by the abandoned Roman-British population about the fifth century."

Later records are disappointingly brief: a coin of Commodus found in 1902, "in removing the steps of an ancient cross, not far from the church gates, in order to set up a maypole in honour of our King's coronation" (CW2 iii 406), and "a Constantinian coin" found by H.M. Office of Works in 1924 (JRS xiv 219) — which Mr R. Gilyard-Beer, F.S.A., kindly tells me was listed as 3AE of Constans, found under the cobble paving north-west of the keep. In addition, *RCHM Westmorland*, 48, gives a list of 33 Roman coins found at Brough and preserved in the British Museum, as follows:

Republican, 1; Vespasian, 2; Julia Titi, 1; Domitian, 4; Nerva, 1; Trajan, 4; Hadrian, 4; Faustina II, 1; Crispina, 1; Gallienus, 2; Claudius II, 2; Victorinus (?), 1; Tetricus I (?), 1; Uncertain fourth century, 1; Barbarous and uncertain radiate, 2.

Mr J. W. Brailsford, F.S.A., who has been good enough to check the British Museum records for me, reports that these coins were acquired from Ecroyd Smith, so that there need be no doubt as to their attribution to Brough; I hope that Dr John Kent will be able to take them into account in his report on the coins from the site in due course.

(b) *Inscribed stones.*

Only two Roman inscribed stones have been found at Brough, both of them coming to light during the restoration of the south porch of the church in 1879. The standard publication of them is by Haverfield in *Ephemeris Epigraphica* VII, 1892.

(i) EE VII 951, now built up in the west wall of the south porch, just inside the door, has in its day been a fine building-record, with exceptionally large letters in its first line; its text, incorporating R. G. Collingwood's revision of the consular date in the last line (JRS xiv 248) is as follows:

imp(eratori) Caesa(ri) | L(ucio) Sep(timio) Severo Pe | [rtin]aci Aug(usto) et | [M(arco) Aur(elio) Anton]ino Caes(ari) | [———] | [Later]a[n(o)] et R[uf]ino co(n)s(ulibus).

The date is A.D. 197, in February of which year the army of Britain, under Clodius Albinus, had lost the decisive battle of Lugdunum to Severus and the armies of the Danube and the Rhine; it is clear that Virius Lupus, Severus's first governor of Britain — whose name was perhaps mentioned in the illegible fifth line of the text — had taken rapid steps to recover control of the Stainmore road, even if he was not yet in a position to reoccupy Hadrian's Wall. The inscription was presumably incorporated in one of the first structures rebuilt at Brough after the destruction recently wrought by the northern tribes, for which we have ample evidence from a dozen and more other sites in the north of Britain; but there is now no evidence for its original position in the fort.

(ii) EE VII 952, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, is the famous Greek text which was at first thought to be runic; readers who are curious may like to consult the paper by George Stephens of Copenhagen, printed in CW1 v 291-310, which puts forward an elaborate interpretation of it on that assumption. Haverfield's reading incorporates the observations of a good many scholars; for a convenient summary of how it was arrived at, reference may be made to a short paper by Prebendary Scarth.[14] It is an epitaph, composed in recognisable but not impeccable hexameters, its twelve lines of text (the last two partly lost) giving six lines of verse; and it proclaims itself as the memorial of one Hermes, sixteen years old, from Commagene. The language is properly poetic, and we are given no clue to the lad's status, or how he came to be at Brough at all: he is perhaps likelier to have been the son — or the freedman — of an officer, a doctor or even a merchant, rather than a member of the clerical staff of a procuratorial office, as suggested by R. G. Collingwood.[15]

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[14] CW2 xxxvi 116, footnote.
[15] British Archæological Association's *Journal*, 1886, 294-299.

(c) *Lead seals*.

Undoubtedly the most interesting of all the small finds from Brough are the lead seals; it will be sufficient, in general, for me to refer to Professor Richmond's comprehensive paper, CW2 xxxvi 104-125, for details of them. But it seems worth while to quote two sentences from Ecroyd Smith's account, which gives us the clearest conception of the bulk of the deposit:

"When first noticed they were of frequent occurrence, and being undervalued were destroyed . . . The writer was assured by an old vandal-blacksmith who, with one of his sons, first collected these pieces, *melting them down by half a pound at a time,* that the produce was ever in the greatest request for soldering purposes by all the tinkers of the country side!"

This last point is the less remarkable when we take into account the results of Dr J. A. Smythe's analysis of two Brough seals, as reported by Professor Richmond (CW2 xxxvi 123): "the composition of both is close to that of plumbers' solder, 67% of lead, and 23% of tin." There is now no doubt, as Professor Richmond pointed out, that the Romans worked the lead-mines of Alston Moor, but the tin must have come from a more distant source.

It should be added that in one respect Professor Richmond's account needs to be qualified, by reference to that of Ecroyd Smith. Though the seals all seem to have come from the same deposit, it also included a great quantity of objects in various other metals; we must therefore treat with caution the suggestion that the deposit was "a Monte Testaccio of lead seals", or "a homogeneous dump, ultimately derived from the same office or store": the possibility cannot be excluded that the seals had been disposed of as scrap, like much of the other material found with them, and it might even be that the parcels from which they came had, in some cases at least, been opened elsewhere rather than at Brough itself.

(d) *Miscellaneous metal objects*.

By far the fullest list of small objects from Brough is

that given by Ecroyd Smith, p. 146 f. It will be convenient to quote him for the items which fall within the present category:

"ORNAMENTS [He specifies brooches, studs, &c., and beads "of brass, glass and amber, all plain"].

"AMULETS.—Chiefly of bronze, including many varieties of the heart shape . . . and a large proportion of phallae [*sic* — presumably *phalli* is intended]; one of pewter, lately found, bears an imperial or other bust.

"DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS, &c.—Pins and needles; nails; handles and basins; ligulae and other spoons, all in bronze; keys, in bronze and iron.

"WEAPONS.—Spear and lance heads, various.

"HORSE TRAPPINGS.—Rings, hooks, hasps, buckles, tags and ornaments of straps (some mediæval) including the head of a stag in brass and originally gilt."

Other such objects have been described in earlier volumes of these *Transactions* — by H. S. Cowper (CW2 iii 70 f., now in the British Museum) and R. G. Collingwood (CW2 xxxi 81-84, in the Craven Museum, Skipton), and further Brough material is preserved in a number of museums, including Tullie House.[16] The most interesting group consists of the brooches, many of which were clearly made at Brough itself; this is not the place to attempt an inventory of traceable specimens, but I hope that Mr Edward Hildyard, F.S.A., may be able, in due course, to give us a paper on Brough brooches to match Professor Richmond's study of the lead seals.[17] Meanwhile, it may be stressed that no site in the Society's district has yielded a richer harvest of this particular kind, and we must share Ecroyd Smith's regret that so much of it has been dispersed and lost.

(e) Pottery.

The only early references to pottery found at Brough are those to the "earthen vessel" or "urn" in which the

[16] Cf. Mr John Cowen's paper, CW2 xxxvii 67-71, on "A Celtic sword-pommel at Tullie House": found at Brough in 1875, possibly brought there in Roman times as scrap-metal for melting down (and not necessarily made there, though it is of a characteristically Cumbrian type).
[17] Cf. CW2 lv 54-58 for Mr Hildyard's discussion of a brooch found in Church Brough two or three years ago.

coin-hoard was found, soon after 1780, and Ecroyd Smith's summary note that the finds from the Swindale Beck included "pottery, various, including some Samian and a little mediaeval." The Office of Works secured a certain amount of Roman pottery from its shafts in and near the keep, including some pieces which R. G. Colling-wood, in 1926, recognised as of Flavian date; and in 1931 Collingwood published five pieces of 2nd century pottery from Brough, preserved in the Craven Museum, Skipton, with drawings of them by Dr A. Raistrick (CW2 xxxi 85 f.).[18] I myself have contributed two brief notes on Brough pottery to these *Transactions*: in 1931 I was able to examine the whole group of finds made there by the Office of Works, noting not only a couple of undoubted Flavian pieces, but also half a dozen vessels attributable with certainty to the closing years of the 4th century (CW2 xxxiv 217); and in 1946 I found a further piece of the same late period, in a small deposit of occupation-earth on the lip of the escarpment, just north of the castle (CW2 xlvi 294). The material thus available is sufficient to show (what might in any case have been inferred with confidence) that the site had been occupied as early, and had remained in Roman — or sub-Roman — hands as late, as any in our district.

III. THE SITE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

Our member Dr Kenneth St. Joseph, F.S.A., has kindly placed at my disposal two of his splendid air-photographs of the site, which will enable me to dispense with a lengthy description of it; see Plates I and II, facing pp. 44 and 45. The Roman fort occupies the widest part of a hogback ridge, running east and west, which falls steeply northwards to the Swindale Beck, and less steeply southwards into a marshy tongue of land (perhaps in ancient times a lake, if not a backwater of the Swindale

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[18] His sixth piece is neither Roman nor ancient, as was noted by the late Thomas Sheppard, who identified it as a cage-bird's drinking-trough.

Beck), beyond which the ground rises steadily towards Garner Brow. The only practicable line for an approach-road is that taken by the lane from Church Brough to the modern farm, along the crest of a neck of land which connects our hogback with the higher ground to the south-east; to west, the ridge falls gradually to a point at the level of the haughs, and there has never been a road in this direction, though at some period steps have been taken to bar access from the west by the formation of a rampart and ditch, cutting off the western end of the hill (whether this feature is Roman or later, remains to be seen). The outline of the Roman fort is clearly defined in both photographs, its long axis running north and south, with the Norman castle inserted in its northern part; surface indications were clear, before digging began in 1954, that the Roman ditch had been re-cut by the Normans and the material thus obtained heaped over the Roman rampart and gateways, so that the remainder of the fort could be used as an outer bailey. For that reason, the positions of the Roman gateways are no longer visible, and the present contours of ditch and rampart are un-Roman in character; the implication, which was confirmed in 1954, is that a great depth of Roman stratification is sealed by the Norman capping of rampart and gateways.

There are two further earthworks on the hill, the inter-pretation of which is less clear: (a) a length of rampart, with ditch to west of it, runs parallel to the west wall of the fort, barely a hundred yards west of it; and (b) to the east there is another rampart and ditch, less prominent now, which seems once to have cut the neck of land, barring access to the site of the fort — or of the castle. The western rampart has a Roman look about it, but at present it lacks visible connection with any other structure, and its interpretation must await further study.

The relationship of the fort to the Roman road-system may best be understood by reference to the sketch-map
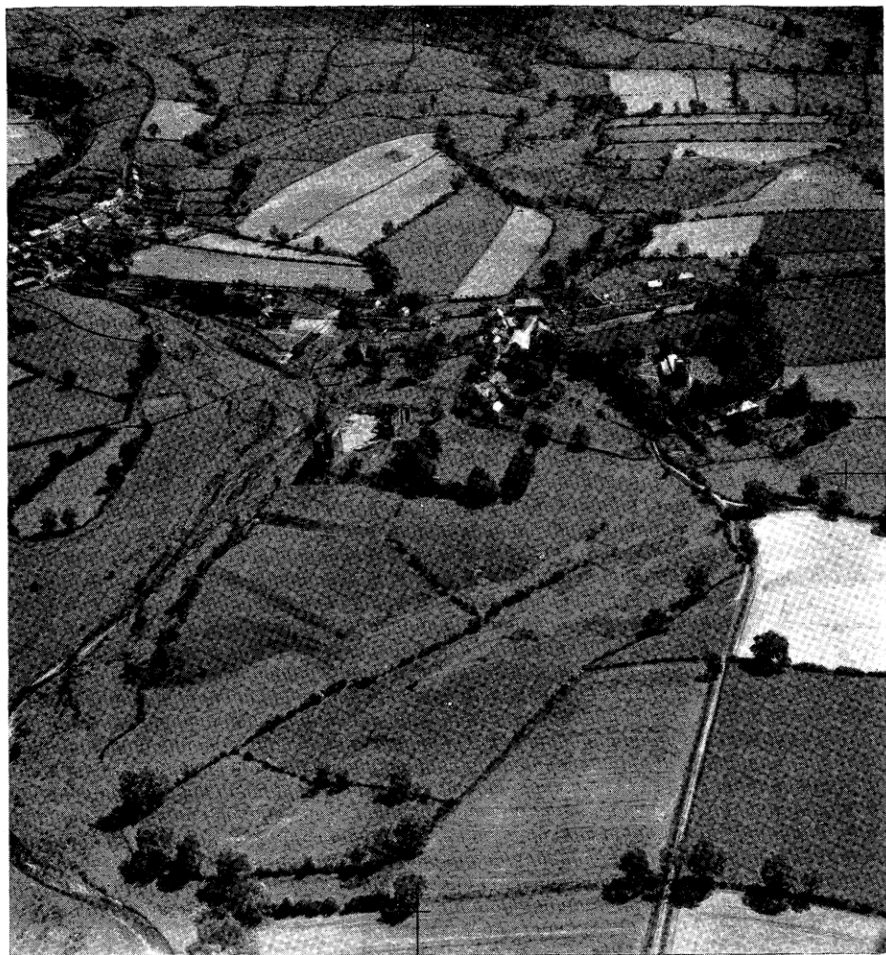
PLATE I.—General view from the west.

Photo: K. St. Joseph.

facing p. 44

PLATE II.—Nearer view, showing Swindale Beck at the foot of the escarpment.

Photo: K. St. Joseph.

of the site (fig. 1). The trunk-road from York and Catterick seems, as Dr Douglas Simpson noted several years ago (CW2 xlvi 231, footnote), to diverge from the modern line a mile or two east of Brough, thus avoiding the ravines which give the existing road much trouble; to judge by surface indications, it ran south of Augill Castle, crossed the Augill Beck and Swindale Beck just above their junction, and thus passed just below the hill on which the fort stood: a short branch-road from the east gate of the fort will have been needed to connect it with the trunk-road. The contours of the site make it reasonably clear that the modern lane is on the line of the branch-road, which therefore gives us the approximate position of the east gate — at about one-third position from the south rampart, thus indicating that the fort faced south, turning its back on the trunk-road and watching the wild country towards the Lakeland hills.[19] That brings with it the assumption that the fort's function was not merely to guard the western approach to the Stainmore pass, but also to watch the hill country to the south — and perhaps to provide patrols along the natural routes though Ravenstonedale to Low Borrow Bridge, and through Mallerstang to Bainbridge, which we are justified in supposing the Romans to have used, even though as yet no clear evidence has come to light for Roman roads linking Brough with those two forts.[20] It has often been noted that Roman forts were most commonly built at nodal points in the road-system, and it seems logical to suppose that Brough occupied such a point.

Its Roman name is preserved, however, as Camden was the first to note, in connection with the trunk-road from York to Carlisle and beyond, in the second and fifth routes of the Antonine Itinerary: in Iter II it is the

[19] The excavations of 1954 confirmed this inference: see p. 51 ff., below.
[20] For Low Borrow Bridge, cf. CW2 xlvii 1-19 (especially p. 18) and li 40-66; the Mallerstang hoard of 138 *denarii*, ending with 33 of Hadrian (CW2 xxvii 205-217), is at present the clearest evidence for occupation in that valley — but a serious search for traces of a Roman road through it has yet to be made.
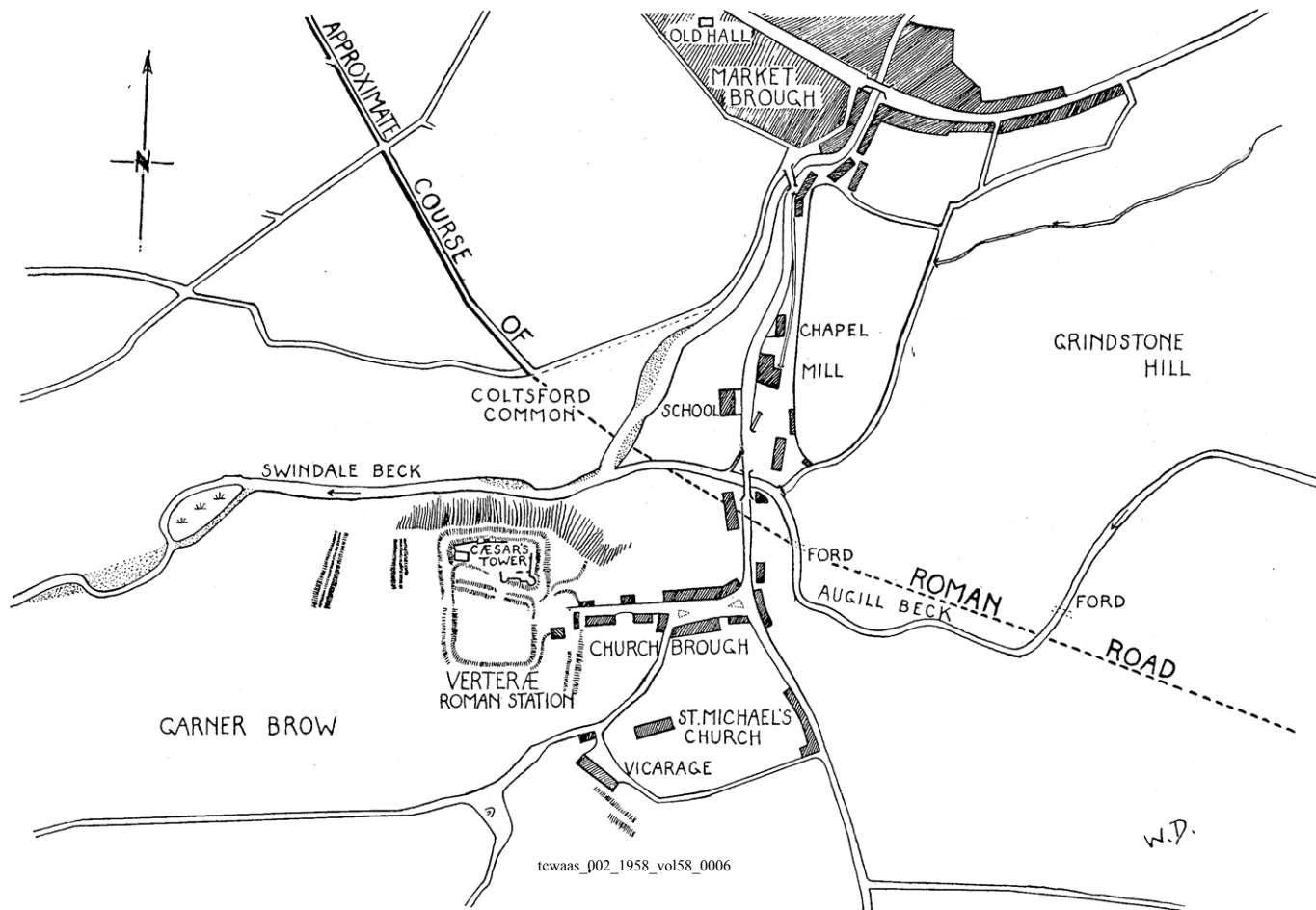
Map labels:

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APPROXIMATE COURSE OF

OLD HALL

MARKET BROUGH

GRINDSTONE HILL

CHAPEL MILL

COLTSFORD COMMON

SCHOOL

SWINDALE BECK

CÆSAR'S TOWER

FORD

ROMAN

AUGILL BECK

FORD

ROAD

CHURCH BROUGH

VERTERÆ ROMAN STATION

GARNER BROW

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

VICARAGE

W.D.

FIG. I.—Sketch-map of the fort and its immediate setting.

fifth station south of *Blatobulgium* (Birrens), in Iter V the fourth station north of York — for the two routes traverse the road in opposite directions. That should have been sufficient to suggest doubts as to the validity of a view first put forward somewhat diffidently by R. G. Collingwood, which in recent years has come to be reproduced as though it were ascertained fact, that the Itinerary

"may possibly represent the actual routes followed at the time of compilation by the imperial postal service" (*Roman Britain and the English Settlements* = Oxford History of England i, 1936, 241).

But reference to the basic study of the *Cursus publicus* by H.-G. Pflaum[21] will be sufficient to show that the regular series of *mansiones* is a characteristic of the *militaris via,* and that there is no necessity to suppose that the *cursus publicus* operated along every military road. A more important function of the staging-points on such roads, from the early years of the 3rd century onwards, was to collect levies in kind for the *annona militaris,* on which Denis van Berchem's important paper deserves to be far better known than it seems to be in this country.[22] In it, he shows reason to think that the routes in the Itinerary represent a selection of movements planned by the quartermaster-general's department of the Roman war office (as it will be convenient to term it) at one time or another in the 3rd century: on each occasion, whether it was for an emperor's progress through a whole series of provinces, or for an expeditionary force to make its way to the frontier for a campaign across it, or for a series of vexillations to be drawn off cumulatively from the forts of one province for service on campaign else-

[21] "Essai sur le *cursus publicus* sous le haut-empire romain" (Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres xiv, 1940, 189-390, with additional pagination of the overprint 1-203), especially p. 220=32 *et seq.* and p. 350=162.

[22] "L'annone militaire dans l'empire romain au IIIe siècle" (Mémoires de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France, 1936 (1937), 117-202, with additional pagination of the overprint 1-90), especially 166-181=54-69 for the Antonine Itinerary and 181-187=69-75 for the function of *mansiones* as collecting-points.

where, it would be necessary to make detailed plans beforehand for sufficient supplies to be concentrated in good time at the places where the force was to halt at the end of each day's journey; and the direction of each route, as well as its particular course, should serve to provide a clue to its original purpose. Thus, the Second Iter, starting from Birrens and ending at Richborough, presumably records a composite vexillation from the north-west of Lower Britain moving to take part in some campaign on the Continent — detachments no doubt joining it at several of the nodal points, from Carlisle southwards; by contrast, the Fifth Iter, from London to Carlisle, should represent either the return of such a vexillation, or the movement of reinforcements before active operations in Annandale or beyond. There is no need to suppose that there was a regular service of the imperial post to and fro along the Stainmore road: normally, such services would only operate between provincial capitals (in Lower Britain, in the 3rd century, York) and Rome.

The other records of the Roman place-name are in the Ravenna Cosmography, ultimately derived from a road-map, as has been demonstrated in an important study by I. A. Richmond and the late O. G. S. Crawford,[23] in which the meaning of *Verterae* is given as "summit", noted as "a very suitable name for Brough-under-Stainmore, which crowns a bold and isolated bluff above the Swindale Beck"; and in the Notitia Dignitatum (Occ. XL 26, ed. Seeck), where it is shown as one of the forts under the *dux Britanniarum,* garrisoned by the *numerus Directorum.* The unit's name will remind us of the Guides of the old Indian Army; it is not attested otherwise, but its style suggests that it was one of the new creations of Diocletian or Constantine; I take it that the series of units to which it belonged represents the mobile force under the Duke's command, as contrasted to the units *per lineam*

[23] *Archæologia* xciii, 1949, 1 ff.; *Verterae* is discussed at p. 48.

Valli, which the 4th-century system — at least from the time of Constantine onwards — condemned to purely static defence, no doubt on a much reduced establishment.[24]

Before the 4th century the fort was presumably always garrisoned by a battalion 500 strong: its area, some 140 yards by 100 yards, or between $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 acres, would not afford room for a larger unit. As we have seen, the lead seals do not necessarily represent decisive evidence of a local office, and in any case they attest six or seven cohorts (as well as an *ala* and two of the three legions of Britain),[25] but the analogy of *coh. V Gallorum* at South Shields may justify us in supposing that *coh. VII Thracum,* represented by almost as many seals as all the other units put together, was the 3rd-century garrison of the place. It was no doubt a *cohors equitata* (about a quarter of its men mounted infantry), like the other Thracian cohorts; R. G. Collingwood suggested that a troop (*turma*) detached from this fort was probably responsible for the fortlet towards the summit of the pass, at Maiden Castle on Stainmore,[26] but analogy with the milecastles and turrets on the Wall, or with the fortlets along the Antonine road-system in south-west Scotland, might make it more reasonable to suppose that a militia garrison would be responsible for the fortlet and for the signal-towers associated with it, on which reference should be made to Professor Richmond's important paper in the Crawford *Festschrift.*[27]

In any case, the indication that the fort faced southwards, turning its back on the trunk road, surely implies that the most important function of its garrison was to

[24] Cf. D. van Berchem, *L'armée de Dioclétien et la reforme Constantinienne* (1952), *passim,* for the fourth-century military system (though I cannot accept his detailed interpretation of the Duke's command, p. 56 ff.), and my observations in *D. & G. Trans.,* 3rd ser., xxxi 20.

[25] CW2 xxxvi 116 ff.; for *coh. V Gallorum,* 124 and AA4 xi 101 f.

[26] CW2 xxvii 176 f.

[27] "A Roman arterial signalling system in the Stainmore pass" (*Aspects of Archæology in Britain and beyond: essays presented to O. G. S. Crawford,* ed. W. F. Grimes, 1951, 293-302).

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watch over the tangled hills and their unruly inhabitants: it has a magnificent view, south-east to the Nine Standards, southwards to Wild Boar Fell, westward to the Lake mountains, and northwards to the Crossfell range.

On one question, evidence is still almost wholly to seek: namely, the size and character of the local population in the Roman period and thereafter. From the spacing of the forts along the Stainmore route, and the evidence that they were retained in military occupation for the greater part of the Roman period, it seems impossible to suppose that there was not a relatively large population and that it provided a serious and continuing security problem to the Roman high command; but it would be reasonable to expect that the Eden valley contained a sizable number of settled agriculturists, ready to welcome the protection of Roman garrisons and to profit from the steady trade which their presence afforded. The growth of a civilian settlement outside the fort, here as elsewhere, could have been postulated in the light of pure reason; and some of the metal objects which it has yielded virtually prove the presence on the site of civilian metal-workers: but neither air-photographs nor structural remains can be cited, as yet, to testify to a *vicus* here.[28]

IV. THE EXCAVATIONS OF 1954.

The main purpose of a fortnight's excavation in April 1954 was to test the stratification within the area of the fort and to obtain a basis for planning more extensive digging, whenever the occasion for it might arise. Grants towards the cost of the work were made by this Society and by the Durham University Excavation Committee, which also made available the services of its experienced foreman, Mr Thomas Batey. Mr Iain MacIvor undertook the surveying and planning and has drawn figs. 2-4, and my wife and Mr J. E. H. Spaul shared in the direction

[28] There is no evidence for the "substantial fourth-century *vicus*" with which the place is credited in *Roman and Native in North Britain*, ed. I. A. Richmond, 1958, 117.

CASTLE

SITE 2
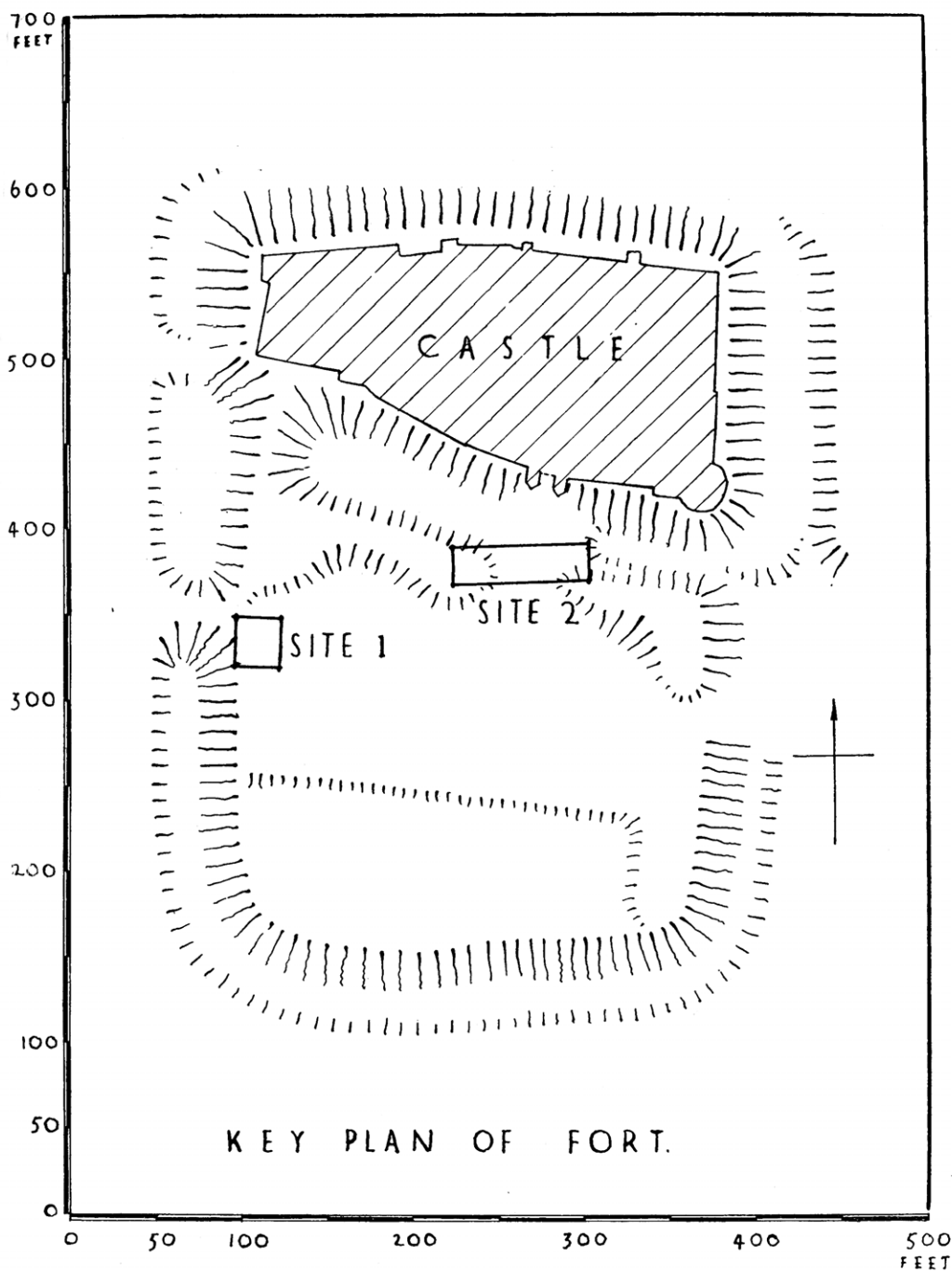
SITE 1

KEY PLAN OF FORT.

FIG. 2.

of the project; the remainder of the labour-force consisted of schoolboy volunteers — Stuart Beare, A. R. Birley, David Jones, Maurice Pigott, David Prosser and Gavin Simpson — with some help from Mr and Mrs R. R. Sowerby and the Rev. J. Breay; our member Mr E. L. Wright kindly made all necessary local arrangements for us, and we experienced every kindness and consideration from the landowner, Mr T. Bainbridge: permission to excavate within the area under its guardianship was readily granted by the Ministry of Works.

Brief accounts of the results have already been printed;[29] one reason for the delay in submitting a fuller report was the desire to include with it an account of the rich series of pre-Hadrianic pottery which came from the edge of the escarpment, east of the north-east angle of the fort, as a result of some trial digging by Gavin Simpson in a small erosion-face: but in the event it has proved necessary to hold the section on that deposit over for separate publication in a later volume of *Transactions,* in which more space can be made available for an adequate discussion of it. Within the limits of two weeks' digging, the most useful work seemed likely to come from an examination of the abnormally high rampart-mound, close to a modern break for a field-track, on the west side of the fort (*site 1*), and from a trench across the interior so laid out as to show to what extent the builders of the Norman castle had left remains of the central block of buildings undisturbed by the digging of the southern arm of their moat (*site 2*): the positions of both excavations, in relation to the visible lay-out of the site, are shown on fig. 2.

(*a*) *Site 1.*

To judge by the air-photographs, the visible gap in the west rampart was too far from the south front of the fort to represent the original gateway position, but the

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[29] CW2 liv 319 f. and JRS xlv 128.

possibility could not be excluded that there had been a gateway there: excavation showed, however, the remains of a Roman structure projecting several feet into the south side of the gap; and though the small area opened was
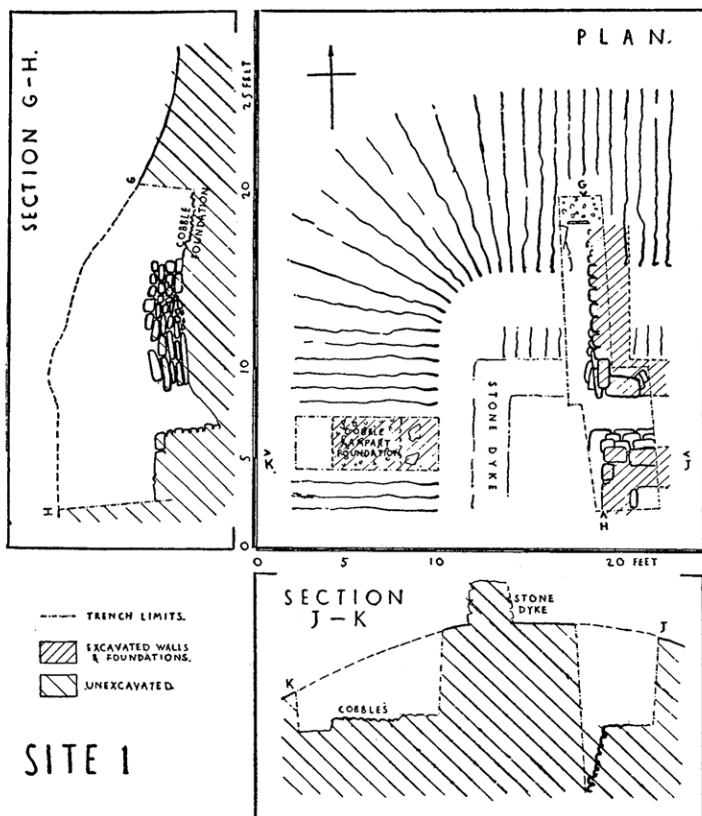

FIG. 3.

insufficient to allow us to recover an intelligible plan, the two distinct buildings represented (fig. 3) seem impossible to interpret as having anything to do with a gateway. They are more likely to come from a series of structures built into or on top of the rampart-mound. The modern

stone dyke, and the very great depth of sterile clay from the Norman deepening of the ditch (which has eliminated all traces of a berm and, on the south front, has completely hidden the gateway position), made it impossible to get down to subsoil level, or to link up the internal structures with the fort-wall: a single trench, on the west side of the dyke, yielded a cobble foundation, at a slightly higher level than the highest surviving portion of the internal buildings, just over 4 ft. broad, which presumably represents a stone outer revetment (not necessarily an early one) whose superstructure had been totally removed by the builders of the castle before they deepened the ditch and used the resulting material to raise the rampart-mound, thus forming an outer bailey for the castle. A consideration of the contours of the site, and of our results from this small trial dig, suggests that a more extensive opening up of the southern third of the fort should yield a very great depth of stratification; but the digging would be deep and costly, owing to the large amount of material heaped over the ramparts and probably within them as well, by the castle-builders. But such an excavation should also yield useful medieval structures and occupation-material, as well as Roman, and in planning it there should be provision for a competent medievalist to take part in the work.

(b) *Site 2.*

The second area selected for examination was on either side of the causeway by which access is provided, across the south moat, into the gatehouse of the castle. Surface indications suggested the possibility that, while the digging of the moat must have removed all traces of Roman structures from the moat itself, there might still be something left immediately south of it; and that soon proved to be the case. On the west side of the causeway (fig. 4) we found a wall running north and south and making a T-join, to north, with an east-west wall; parallel to it,

SECTION E-F

20 FEET

COBBLE FOUND.

E

F

PLAN OF TRENCHES

E
E

A ——————————————————————— B

DRAIN

F

10

5

0

0   5   10   20   30

SECTIONS A-B & C-D.

60   70 FEET

C ——————— D

- - - - TRENCH LIMITS.

EXCAVATED WALLS & FOUNDATIONS.

UNEXCAVATED.

SITE 2

A

B

FILL MIXED WITH PEBBLES

MOUND

COMPACT RED CLAY

DIRTY BROWN SOIL

DRAIN

C   D

DIRTY BROWN SOIL WITH DEBRIS   RED SAND SOIL

BURNT MATERIAL   LIGHT BROWN SOIL

RED CLAY

COBBLES

Fig. 4.

and 6 ft. east, ran a drain, and about 3 ft. west of it we found a length of wall running at right-angles to it but ending — not necessarily as originally constructed — as though to leave a doorway. A short trench on the east side of the causeway revealed a more substantially built wall, also running north and south, with a tightly packed layer of cobbles, overlaid by a mass of burnt material, on its west side.

Here too the digging was laborious and time-consuming, owing to the depth of material from the moat which covered the Roman levels, and they had been very much denuded, no doubt to provide stone for the building of the castle; but it seems clear that it should be relatively simple to obtain at least the outline of a plan of the buildings in the central block, by further digging working outwards from the points established here in 1954. The impression we formed was that the walling on the west side of the causeway would best fit into the plan of the range of rooms at the back of a normal *principia,* and that the more easterly wall belonged to a granary, the cobbling just west of it perhaps representing the foundation of an external buttress.

(c) *Coin-finds.*

Six coins were found in the course of the digging; none of them came from significant stratification, but it seems best to publish them in this report, rather than hold them over for inclusion in the report on the pre-Hadrianic pottery from the escarpment. We have to thank Dr John Kent, of the Department of Coins and Medals in the British Museum, for identifying and reporting on them, as follows:

1. Nero, *denarius* struck A.D. 67/68 (R.I.C. 54). Rev. SALVS.

2. Domitian, *as* (R.I.C. 298, 332, 352 or 370 according to the year of consulship, not decipherable). Rev. FIDEI PVBLICAE.

3. Faustina II, *as* struck *c.* A.D. 155 (R.I.C., Pius 1403). Rev. FELICITAS.

4. Tetricus I, double *denarius*, A.D. 270-274 (as R.I.C. 86, 88 or 90). Rev. LAETITIA ——.

5. Tetricus II, double *denarius* (exact variety uncertain). Rev. PIETAS ——, sacrificial implements.

6. Tetricus II, double *denarius* (R.I.C. 255). Rev. PIETAS AVGG.

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It is hoped that publication of the present report, and of the survey of the recorded evidence for the Roman site, may in due course lead to further work at Brough, on a larger scale than was possible in 1954. Meanwhile, it is a pleasant duty to record our thanks to Mr Bainbridge for permission to excavate, and to all those who took part in the work. Mr Wilfred Dodds has kindly drawn the sketch-map of the fort and its immediate surroundings (fig. 1, above), and he has also already made drawings of most of the pottery which has been held over for publication later.