

## MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY EXCAVATIONS AT BROUGH-ON-NOE (NAVIO), 1966

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**D**URING the second season at this small, two-acre fort, on which Roman control of the Peak District was based,<sup>1</sup> work began on the untouched north-western area of the site. In the north-eastern quarter Richmond's exploratory trenching, terminated by the outbreak of war in 1939, had suggested a three-period sequence<sup>2</sup> that was confirmed and amplified by this year's work. The occupation periods involved were: (i) an initial Flavian (-Trajanic?) timber phase which after demolition was covered by a layer of dumped clay; (ii) a lengthy re-occupation assumed from the evidence of *RIB* 283 to have begun in the governorship of Iulius Verus *c.* A.D. 158; and (iii) a late 3rd-century occupation extending for an unknown period into the 4th century. Excavation in 1966<sup>3</sup> consisted of a 27-ft. square containing four trenches (each 12 ft. by 12 ft.) in the angle formed by the junction of the *via principalis* and the *intervallum* road on the second- and third-period forts. Each trench was stripped to the shale subsoil and the results are summarized by periods below.

### *Period I*

Traces of the Flavian timber phase took the form of construction trenches visible in the shale subsoil (pl. IIIa). They were generally 12 to 15 in. wide and packed with dirty grey clay flecked with charcoal that occasionally yielded pottery. The plan recovered occupied too small an area to allow definite identification of the type of building involved, but it was probably not a barrack block. At the same time the absence of any external walls in the cleared area and the fact that period I features continued under the period II *via principalis* confirmed Richmond's suggestion that the period I layout was markedly different from its successors;<sup>4</sup> it may have involved a 90° re-orientation of road and building alignments. The absence of any mid-2nd century pottery in the overlying clay seal was further evidence that this layer had been spread (from rampart material) at the time of the orderly demolition of period I. When this occurred is still open to dispute; the great majority of the pottery is Flavian-Trajanic but, as in 1936, the discovery of a single sherd of black burnished ware dated to the years immediately preceding A.D.

<sup>1</sup> J. Garstang, *D.A.J.*, XXVI (1904), 177-204; *cf.* F. Haverfield, *V.C.H. Derbyshire*, I, 207 with a bibliography of earlier accounts of the site. I. A. Richmond, *D.A.J.*, LIX (1938), 53-65; *cf.* *J.R.S.*, XXXIX (1939), 206 and XXX (1940), 168; the full account of the 1939 excavations by I. A. Richmond and J. P. Gillam is unpublished; for the 1958-9 excavations see *J.R.S.*, XLIV (1959), 108 and L (1960), 216. For the start of the Manchester University programme in 1965 see G. D. B. Jones and F. H. Thompson, *D.A.J.*, LXXXV (1965), 123-6, *cf.* *J.R.S.* (1966), 201.

<sup>2</sup> I. A. Richmond and J. P. Gillam, unpublished account of 1939 excavations.

<sup>3</sup> The excavators express their thanks to G. & T. Earle Ltd. for permission to excavate. Thanks are again due to Mr. R. W. P. Cockerton, F.S.A., and to Mr. and Mrs. J. Eyre and family for their interest and practical help, and to all the Manchester University students who took part in the work.

<sup>4</sup> Richmond and Gillam,

125 probably indicates that occupation continued into the early Hadrianic period.<sup>5</sup>

### *Period II*

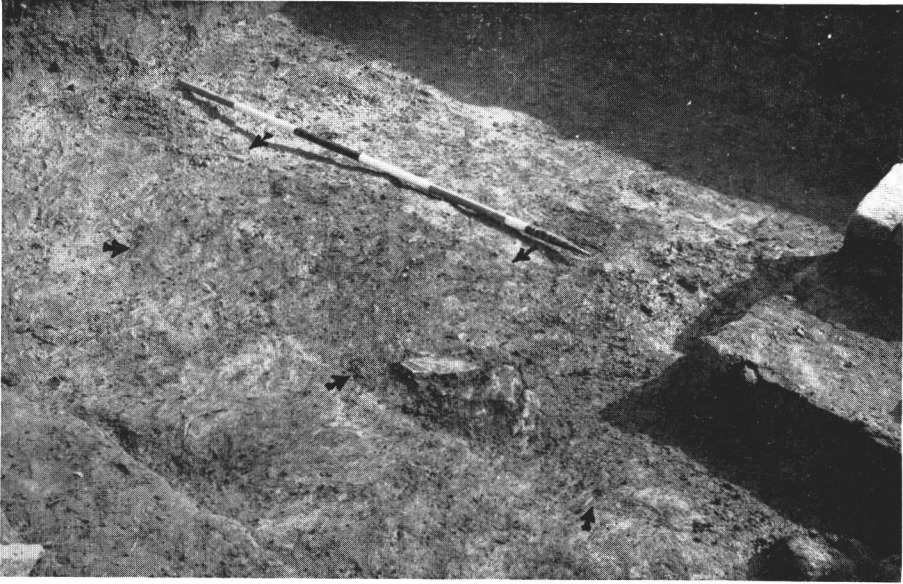
The structure uncovered formed the south-western corner of a substantial timber building lying at the junction of the *via principalis* and the *intervallum* road. The remains consisted of a row of massive post-holes for timber uprights running N.W.-S.E. along the edge of the *intervallum* road and three less substantial series (one aligned N.W.-S.E., the others N.E.-S.W.) forming internal divisions (pl. IIIb) and a frontage facing on to the *via principalis*. Further excavation is needed to establish the building's axis and limits, but, taken with the evidence of the work in 1938-9, it shows that wooden buildings may be expected throughout the *praetentura* in this period.

Internally two structural phases were apparent. The original floor of beaten clay (period IIA) contained one large drain (pl. IVa), a soak-away pit, a series of small post-holes for timber uprights supporting partition-walls and a stone drain apparently running into the eastern edge of the *intervallum* road (pl. IVb). In period IIB the two last-mentioned features were sealed under a floor (13 ft. by 5 ft.) of gritstone paving slabs (pl. Va). The whole structure was methodically demolished by removing the timber uprights before period III construction took place. As part of the levelling process (or possibly at the end of period IIB) a depression immediately south of the paved floor was filled by the upper disc of a rotary quern (diam. 1 ft. 6½ in.) in local gritstone (pl. Vb). In similar circumstances the capital of a gritstone column (presumably derived from the stone *principia* or *praetorium* south of the *intervallum* road) was found packing a post-hole nearby (pl. VIb). The plain cylindrical neck (diam. 11¾ in.) is capped by a narrow (4 in.), slightly convex, moulding; this in turn is surmounted by a fluted cylindrical drum at least 5½ in. high. Its dimensions do not tally with other capitals so far discovered on the site. As already mentioned, the capital was found packing a large post-hole. The care with which post-holes and other depressions, such as drains, had been filled with building rubble suggests that demolition and levelling took place with immediate rebuilding in mind. This would imply no break in continuity of occupation between periods II and III.

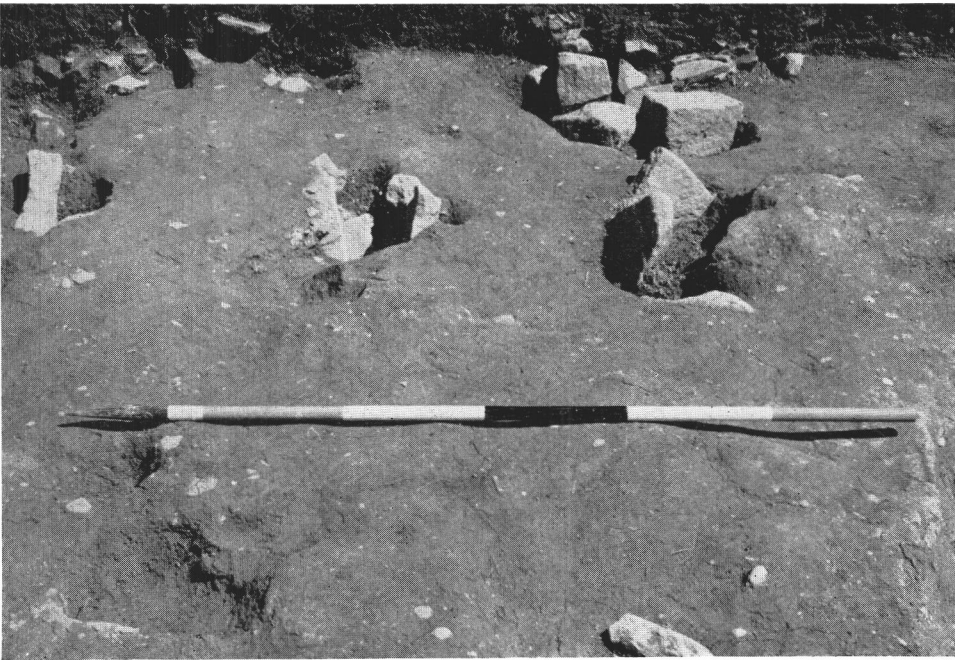
The pottery, which includes many examples of Derbyshire and early colour-coated wares, pointed to a prolonged occupation in period II extending from the third quarter of the 2nd century into the second half of the 3rd century. This supports on the one hand the presumed date for the re-establishment of the fort *c.* A.D. 158 (see above) and on the other Richmond's belief that the *sacellum* represented an early 3rd-century insertion into a pre-existing *principia*. Sealed sherds from period IIA confirmed the suggestion (based on the excavation of the Holbrook kiln) that Derbyshire ware was in production during the second half of the 2nd century.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The pottery was kindly examined by Mr. J. P. Gillam and Mr. P. V. Webster.

<sup>6</sup> S. O. Kay, "Romano-British Pottery Kilns at Hazelwood and Holbrook, Derbyshire", *D.A.J.*, LXXXII (1962), 21, especially 42 n. For the standard account of Derbyshire ware and its distribution see J. P. Gillam, *D.A.J.*, LXI (1940), 26.



a. The dark filling (arrowed) of a construction trench of the Flavian fort.



b. Postholes with stone chocks showing in the floor of the period II building.

BROUGH.



a. Stone-lined drain on the southern side of the period II building.



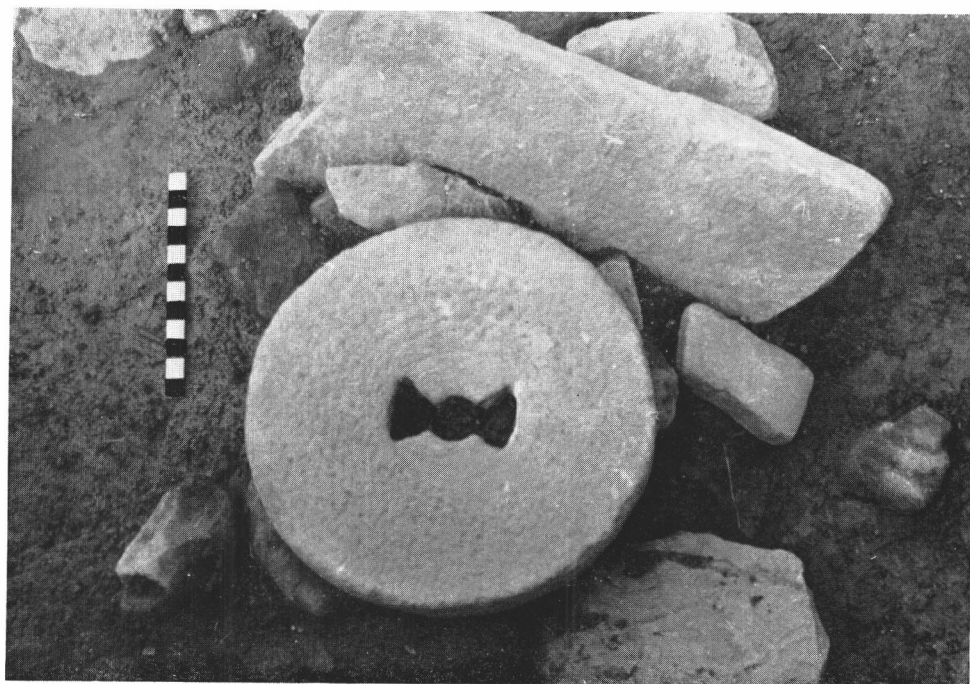
b. Stone drain of period IIa, later sealed beneath period IIb (see plate Va).

BROUGH.





a. Coarse paving of period IIb.



b. Upper disc of rotary quern in local gritstone, as found.

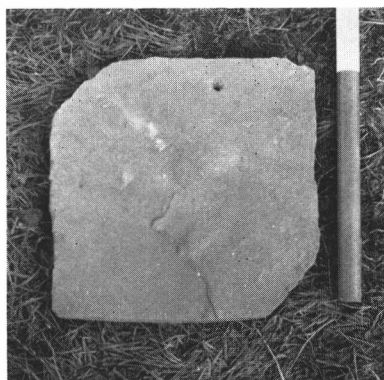
BROUGH.



a. Wall and stone base of period III.



b. Gritstone column fragment found packing period II posthole.



c. Stone roof-slate with nail-hole.

### *Period III*

As all previous excavators had found, nearly all trace of the final period of occupation had been robbed or disturbed by ploughing. Only a single wall and stone base (pl. VIa) belonging to this phase could be identified among the rubble (mainly broken roof-slates) that lay only a few inches below the present ground surface. Its N.E.-S.W. alignment suggested that the latest buildings followed the same general layout as those of period II. The wall (c. 2 ft. wide) was in an extremely wrecked condition and could best be traced by the puddled clay binding the stones together. Richmond had encountered similar conditions in the north-eastern quarter of the site. Owing to its proximity to the surface this phase did not produce any stratified pottery, but the latest unstratified material may be taken as belonging to it. This consists of late colour-coated wares and hammer-head mortaria indicating an occupation extending from the late 3rd century well into the 4th. A hammer-head mortarium fragment found in the final surfacing of the *via principalis* and dated to the latter half of the 4th century forms the latest stratified evidence from the site. The extremely wrecked condition of the remains makes it unlikely that any more precise structural information will ever be recovered from this period. It is possible that the building was timber-framed, as in the previous period, founded on dwarf rubble walls; the stone base recovered could well have supported a timber upright. Roofs were evidently stone-slated to judge by numerous fragmentary and several complete examples of the diamond-shaped type with a single nail-hole at the top common in the later Roman period (pl. VIc).

The work of the 1966 season has started the exploration of an untouched quarter of the fort area. It has already produced valuable evidence of the occupation periods involved, in particular the protracted length of period II. The area cleared, however, was too limited for the recovery of extensive building plans and further work will be carried out with this aim in mind in 1967.

### *The defences*

The opportunity was also taken to extend trench II, started in 1965, to examine the north-eastern defences of the fort for any extension to the ditch system close to the river Noe. In fact a second shallow ditch (9 ft. wide) was located 14 ft. beyond the inner ditch; apparently it belonged to period II of the fort's history, having been cut into tipped material from period I. By the 3rd century the ditch was out of commission and choked with debris, though work in 1965 showed that the inner ditch did not fall into the same condition. The lowest levels above the natural subsoil were found to contain material (burnt wattle and daub, etc.) from the demolition of the Flavian fort.