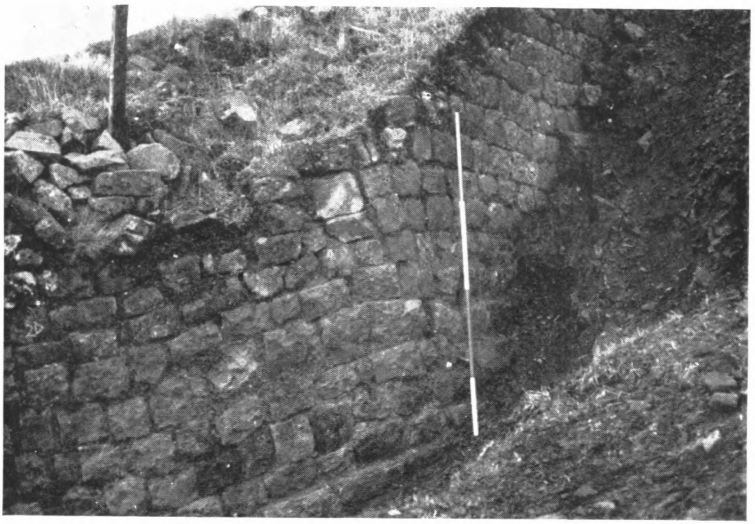

1. Wall east of Thorny Doors

2. Turret 41a, junction of west wall and curtain wall

IV.—RECENT WORK ON HADRIAN'S WALL, CAWFIELDS

Dorothy Charlesworth

The stretch of wall from Caw Gap to Cawfields milecastle (42) is being excavated and consolidated by the Ministry of Public Building and Works (fig. 1). In the course of excavation some interesting features have been found and one, the use of unusually large stones in the bottom course of the north face, has already been recorded in *AA*[4] xli p. 217f.

The main interest in 1966/7 was the problem of the turret sites. A preliminary examination of the south face of the Wall showed that it ran continuously, without the expected recess[1] for either turret. In November 1967 an excavation at the measured site of turret 41a provided the explanation. Here the Wall stands on the Broad Foundation and the remains of the turret were duly found at this level. Only the foundation and one course of masonry remain (fig. 2). The doorway is at the east end of the south wall and there are internal offsets only on the east and west walls. On the north side the re-built Wall runs straight over the demolished turret site. Evidence of the re-building can be seen (pl. X, 2) where the Wall and the west wall of the turret meet. There is a change in the level of the offset course of the Wall and an unusually wide joint in the remaining upper courses. The modern field wall built of Roman stones stands on, and sometimes projects over, the Roman work. Outside the turret at its east junction with the Broad Foundation was a

[1] For the normal relationship of the turret to the Wall see J. C. Bruce, *Handbook to the Roman Wall* 12th ed. I. A. Richmond, p. 23, also for general description of this sector, pp. 139-142.

HADRIAN'S WALL, CAWFIELD CRAG

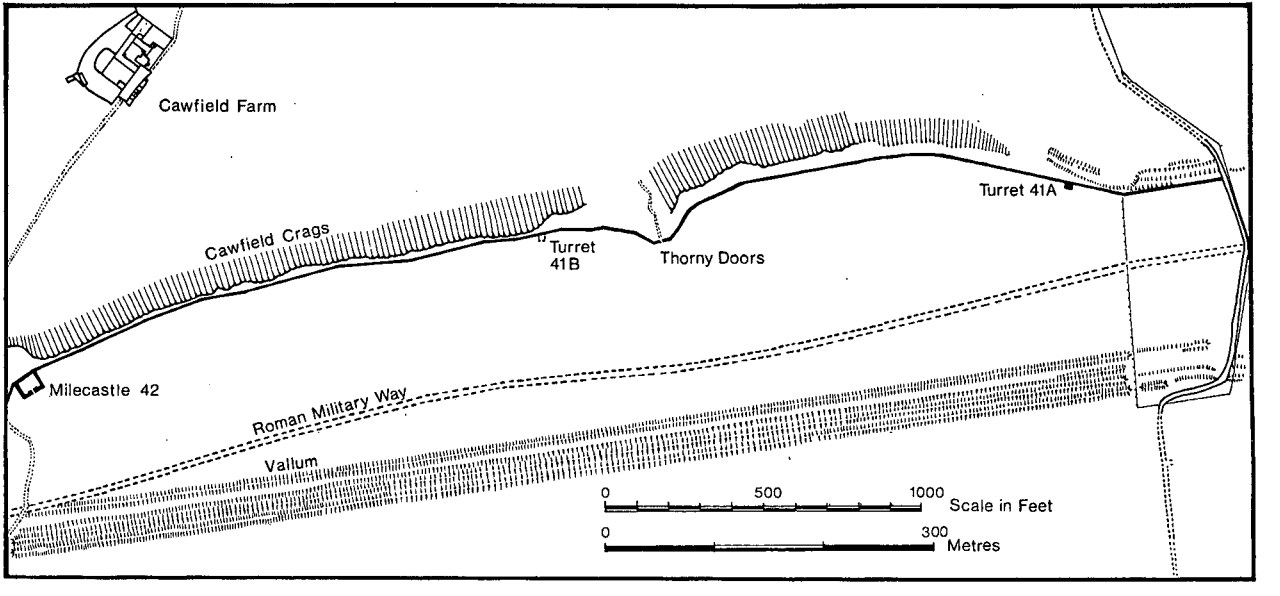

FIG. 1

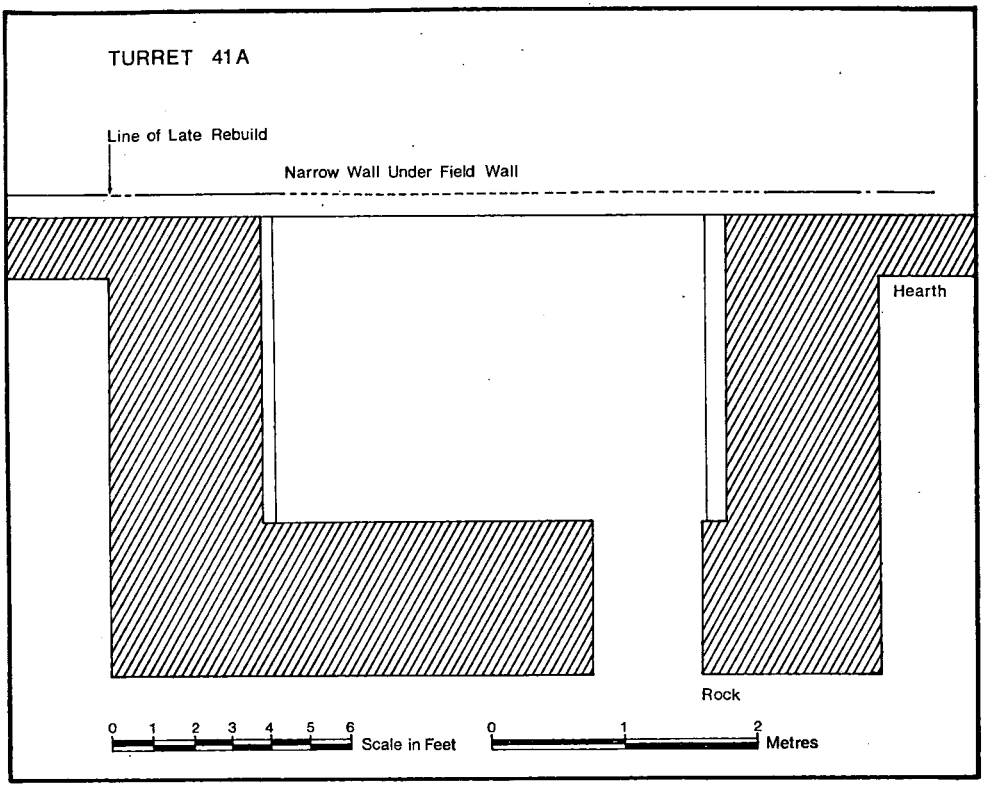

FIG. 2

hearth. The turret had been dug before and no significant finds were made.[2] Turret 41b must have suffered the same fate but here the Wall runs along the outcrop of the Whin Sill and there is no foundation. The turret has apparently been totally demolished.

This is not generally the case. Most turrets went out of

[2] I am unable to find any record of this excavation. Mr. Hepple, who visited the site with Mr. Anderson before the 1967 dig, remembered working there 30 or 40 years ago, but Professor Birley tells me there is no record in Hepple's notebook.

use and were dismantled under Severus but substantial remains of several of them can still be seen today, for example turret 7b (Denton Burn), 26b (Brunton), 51a (Piper Sike) and 52b (Banks). The east wall of 29a (Black Carts) stood 10 courses high in 1873 and only its south wall was reduced to a single course. On the other hand in turrets 39a (Peel Crag) and 39b (Steel Rigg) the recess had been built up. Turret 40a "had been almost completely destroyed during the Roman occupation" (*JRS* xxxvii p. 168) and turret 40b "was badly preserved" (*ibid.*).

The narrow break in the crags, Thorny Doors, illustrates the method used by the planners of the Wall to command such vulnerable places and avoid dead ground to the north

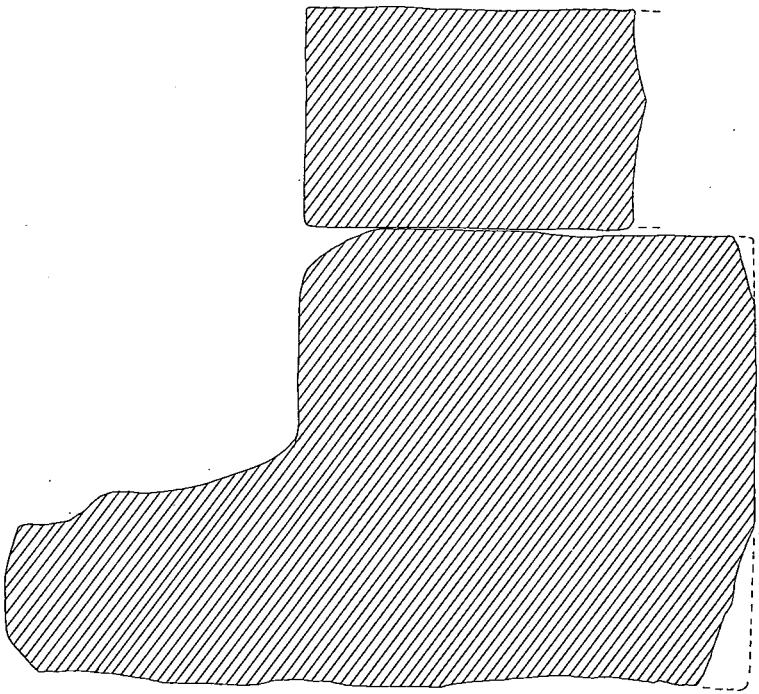

FIG. 3. POSSIBLE PARAPET STONES

of it. The Wall swings southwards forming a "bay" at the gap. The gateway at the bottom is, of course, modern and there was no break in the Wall during the Roman period. The two different methods of building are illustrated here. On the steep east side the courses run horizontally meeting the slope at almost a right angle (pl. X, 1). Near the bottom the Wall still stands over 8 ft. high, buried and untouched until 1966. On the more gradual west slope the courses follow the contours.

From among the fallen stone Mr. C. Anderson put aside three unusual stones, which are distinct from the other

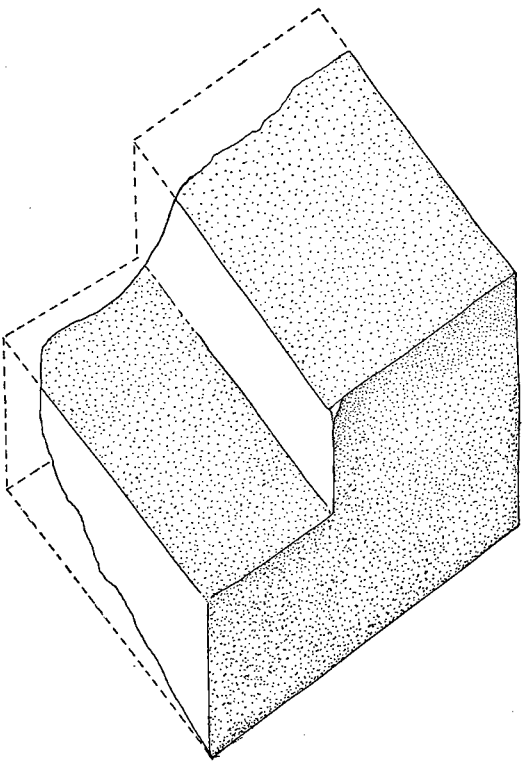

FIG. 4. POSSIBLE PARAPET STONE

dressed stones, the face stones with an almost square face and a "tail" to bond into the core of the Wall. These are two L-shaped and one cube-shaped stone which could well be from the parapet. There is no reason why these three stones should fit together and in fact the cube-shaped stone is too small to fit on to either of the L-shaped ones. In the profile drawing (fig. 3) the small stone is shown standing on one of the L-shaped stones whereas in fig. 4 an L-shaped stone only is shown. With such a small sample the case cannot be proved but this seems the only explanation for these L-shaped stones and the existence of a parapet is not disputed.