

A Section Through Hadrian's Wall - Lannerton Farm, Appletree, Cumbria by Helen C.M. Keeley.

During August, 1979, a section was cut through the turf of Hadrian's Wall (Plate I) by members of the DOE Central Excavation Unit and this is shown in Plates II and III.

The topsoil was very dark greyish brown (10YR3/2) friable coarse sandy loam with moderate medium blocky structure and common medium distinct rusty mottles. Stones were absent; roots abundant, medium to fine fibrous.

Reddish "clay" was found on the sides (Plate III) which was probably dug out of the adjacent ditch and used to prevent the turves slipping off, and this contained charcoal. The material was reddish brown (5YR4/4) with patches of yellowish red (5YR4/6) slightly friable coarse sandy clay loam with medium moderate prismatic structure. Roots were many medium to fine fibrous and stones many, gravel to large, including many rounded pebbles.

The turf bank (Plate II) contained recognisable turves with black humose tops 1 to 2 cms thick, coarse sandy loam in texture, containing charcoal fragments. The remainder of the turves was pale brown (10YR6/3), with patches of brownish yellow (10YR6/8), coarse sand containing few rusty mottles and charcoal fragments. Structure was weak medium blocky and, apart from occasional large stones, stones were absent; roots common, medium to fine fibrous. Turves in the lower part of the bank were similar but contained more coarse distinct rusty mottles.

The material at the base of the trench was brown (10YR5/3) firm, plastic, coarse sandy clay (loam) with 60% coarse distinct strong brown (7.5YR4/6) mottles. Charcoal was abundant, roots few fine fibrous and stones many, gravel to medium including many rounded pebbles. Patches of sand occurred.

By augering, it was found that reddish brown clay similar to that found on the sides of the bank occurred about 15 cms below the base of the section. Patches

of sand also occurred and abundant stones, including rounded pebbles.

Comments

The turves and the buried soil contained abundant charcoal, indicating considerable human activity in the area prior to building the bank. The buried soil may have been truncated prior to wall construction. At present soil pollen analysis is being carried out on samples from the section by N Balaam (CEU) and, consequently, no further interpretation of the soil will be carried out until the results of this are known.

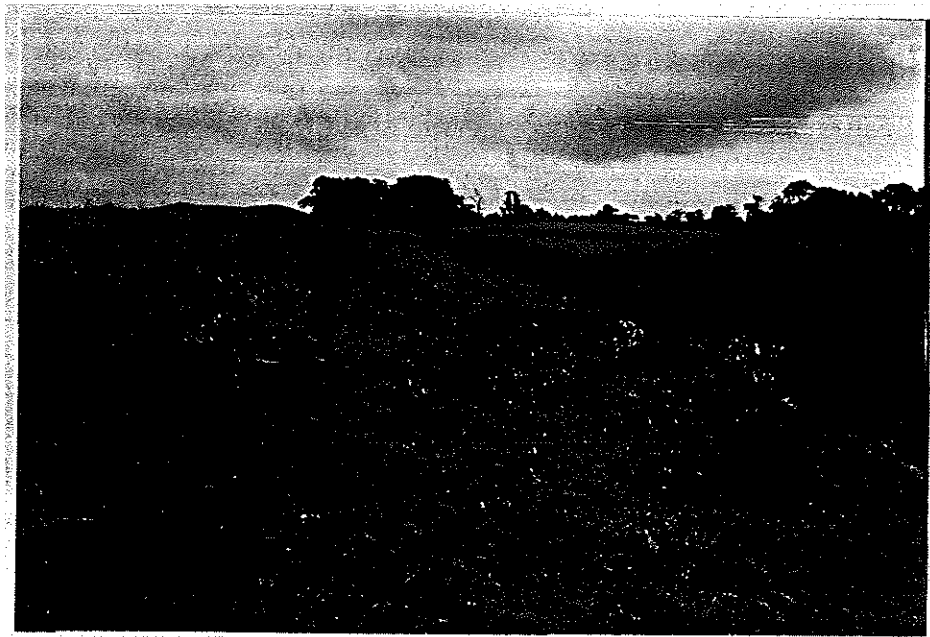


Plate II.

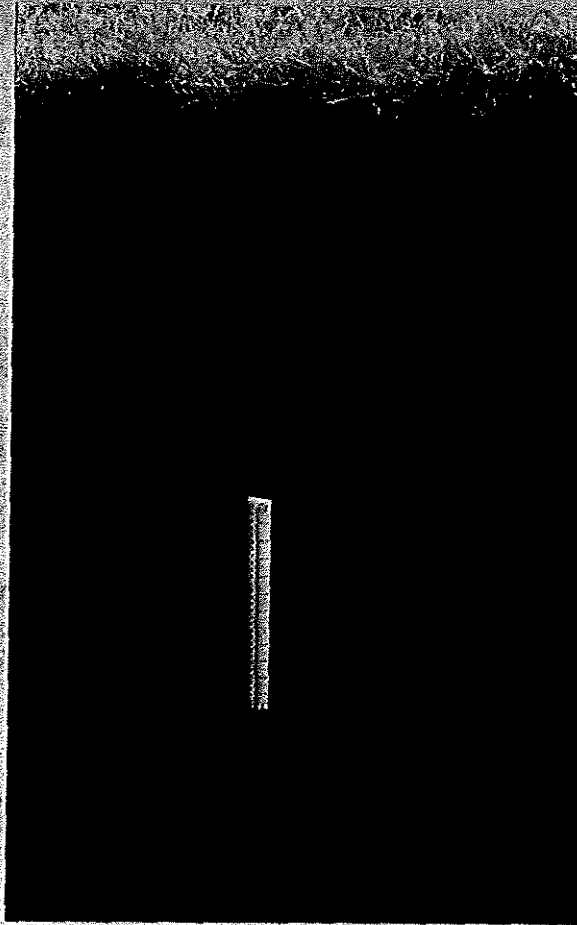


Plate III.

