SOIL COLUMNS FROM THROCKLEY, TYNE AND WEAR

By Helen C M Keeley

During the earlier part of 1980 excavations were carried out by the DOE Central Excavation Unit of Turret 10A, the wall and vallum (Hadrian's Wall) at Throckley, in advance of a drainage scheme. Several soil columns were collected; these were examined by the author and found to be essentially similar. A representative description is given below and one of the columns is shown in Plate 1. 0 to 4 cms was pale brown (10YR 6/3) friable coarse loamy sand with occasional medium distinct strong brown (7. 5YR 4/6) mottles and moderate medium angular blocky structure. Stones were abundant, gravel (mainly rounded), mica fragments were noted and roots were few coarse woody. 4 to 9cms was yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) moderately friable medium sandy loam with many medium distinct strong brown (7·5YR 5/8) mottles and moderate medium subangular blocky structure. Stones were few (gravel), roots few, coarse woody, and pieces of charcoal, brick, ? coal and other occupation debris were present. 9 to 9.5 cms was a concreted yellowish red (5YR 4/6) iron pan, coarse sand in texture, with few stones (gravel and small sandstone lumps); roots were few, medium fibrous.

9 to 25cms. was dark brown (10YR 3/3) friable humose fine silty loam with occasional
bApg medium distinct strong brown (7. 5YR 4/6) mottles and moderate medium blocky structure. Earthworm channels were noted, stones were occasional small to medium bright orange lumps of weathering sandstone and roots were few, coarse to fine fibrous and woody. Charcoal fragments occurred.

Below 25cms. was firm, slightly friable pale brown (10YR 6/3) medium sandy clay loam
Bg with abundant (about 30%) coarse distinct strong brown (7. 5YR 5/8) mottles and moderate medium blocky structure. Occasional small to medium mudstone and sandstone fragments occurred (angular) and rounded, gravel to small pebbles. Roots were few, coarse to fine fibrous and woody; charcoal and ?coal fragments were noted and manganese oxide concretions occurred.

Plate 1.

The profile had roots throughout but few earthworms were present.

Comments

The burial soil appeared to have been disturbed and the presence of ard marks confirmed that cultivation had taken place. The soil was poorly drained, but some of the iron and manganese movement may have occurred after burial, and is tentatively classified as a cambic stagnogley.