

ANCIENT MONUMENTS LABORATORY

REPORT 1708

SERIES/No

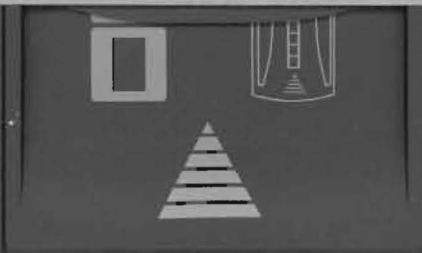
Environmental 37/74

AUTHOR

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TITLE

Catterick Bridge - Soil.



ANCIENT MONUMENTS LABORATORY

MATERIAL	SOIL
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CATTERICK BRIDGE

SITE: (DATE: 1972)

SHEET: 1

AM No	My No	Sample Depth (cms)	Description and Report	PH
			<u>Site 1 P7 "Turf" in situ on the rampart</u>	
723527	HK251	15-17½	} Possible "turf" layer } Organic matter content: 5.9% (mean of 6 samples)	6.35
723526	HK250	17½-20		6.42
723525	HK249	20-22½		6.70
723524	HK248	22½-25		6.79
723523	HK247	25-27½		6.50
723522	HK246	27½-30		6.30
			<u>Site 2 Old ground surface</u>	
723533	HK257	70-72½	} Iron pan } Possible old ground surface } Organic matter content: 5.3% (mean of 5 samples) compared to 3.57% in the } iron pan, confirming that this is a buried surface	7.00
723532	HK256	72½-75		6.90
723531	HK255	75-77½		6.80
723530	HK254	77½-80		7.20
723529	HK253	80-82½		6.80
723528	HK252	82½-85		7.15
			<u>Site 3 P3 - Section through "turf" line which runs through ditch</u>	
723541	HK265	130-132½	} Brown leamy occupation (?) layer	6.60
723540	HK264	132½-135		6.80
723539	HK263	135-137½	} Grey mottled clay } Organic matter content: 6.3% } This appears to be a buried surface similar } to that in P7 (site 1)	6.80
723538	HK262	137½-140		7.25
723537	HK261	140-142½	} Iron pan	7.20
723536	HK260	142½-145		7.35
723535	HK259	145-147½		6.86
723534	HK258	147½-150		7.20
			<u>Site 4 River section</u>	
			<u>A. Through old land surface (?)</u>	
723596	HK277	140-142½	} Light brown silt Layer 7 } Organic matter content: 6.62%	7.00
723595	HK276	142½-145		7.10
723551	HK275	145-147½		7.20
723550	HK274	147½-150		7.20
723549	HK273	150-152½	} Grey clay- old land surface (?) Layer 6 } Organic matter content: 7.67% } Organic matter content: 9.15% } Light brown mottled river silt } Layer 3 } Organic matter content: 6.65% } The mean organic matter content of Layer 6 (3 samples is 7.9% which is slightly higher than } in layers 7 and 3. The narrow 157½ to 160 cm } band may be the actual buried surface	7.10
723548	HK272	152½-155		6.90
723547	HK271	155-157½		7.00
723546	HK270	157½-160		6.76
723545	HK269	160-162½		6.70
723544	HK268	162½-165		6.60
723543	HK267	165-167½		6.80
723542	HK266	167½-170		6.70

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MATERIAL	SOIL
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SITE: CATTERICK BRIDGE (DATE: 1972)

SHEET:2.....

AM No	My No	Sample Depth (cms)	Description and Report	PH
			<u>B. Further into the river</u>	
723609	HK290	550-552½	Light brown silt	6.25
723608	HK289	570-572½) Beds of yellow and grey silt Layer 7	6.00
723607	HK288	572½-575		6.37
723606	HK287	575-577½		6.80
723605	HK286	577½-580		6.70
723604	HK285	580-582½		6.50
723603	HK284	582½-585		6.60
723602	HK283	585-587½		6.45
723601	HK282	587½-590		Grey clay Layer 8
723600	HK281	590-592½		6.55
723599	HK280	592½-595		6.60
723598	HK279	595-597½		6.50
723597	HK278	597½-600	<u>C. Madera river section</u>	6.90
723610	HK291	0-2½) Brown silty loam containing roots Layer 1	6.35
723611	HK292	2½-5		6.40
723612	HK293	5-7½		6.35
723613	HK294	7½-10		6.30
723614	HK295	10-12½		6.30
723615	HK296	12½-15		6.40
723616	HK297	27½-30	Brown silt Layer 3	6.30

Catterick Bridge, Yorks.

Geology. A.Solid.

Permian Magnesian limestone to the south and west, Carboniferous limestone to the north, Triassic Keuper and Bunter sandstones to the south-east and east.

B.Drift.

Undifferentiated river terraces and some undifferentiated alluvium.

Cataractonium is on Boulder clay.

A six-week season of excavations, by the Department of the Environment (A.M. Branch), took place during July and August on a site north of the river Swale and east of Dere Street. The land belongs to Cadbury Schweppes Foods Ltd., and much gratitude is owed to them for giving permission to excavate and for the many ways in which they helped to excavations.

When Cadbury's factory was constructed in 1968, observation of building trenches produced evidence for an extensive northern suburb of the main vicus over the river. In addition, sections across Dere Street were seen and four ditches, running approximately east-west, were encountered (J.R.S.lix,205). At the time, it was thought that these ditches might be part of a defensive bridgehead associated with the campaigns of Petillius Cerealis in A.D.71-2.

The present excavations confirmed the position of the eastern edge of the earliest surface Dere Street, bounded by a ditch about 4ft. across, and somewhat east of the line later adopted. Some slight evidence was also obtained of timber buildings flanking the road to the east during the same period. There was nothing to suggest that the road had been laid out before c. A.D.80, and its construction presumably followed the campaigns of Agricola.

The innermost of the four defensive ditches referred to above was also discovered. It had been partly cut through the earliest surfaces of Dere Street and it was 20ft. wide and 9ft. deep. South of its inner lip across a berm 9ft. wide was found a turf rampart set on a cobble foundation, 9ft. 9in. wide at the base. The rampart oversailed the earliest road surfaces. Both rampart and ditch, however, were interrupted for a gate at a point 12ft. west of the edge of the earlier road. The gate had been constructed of timber and had been set back slightly from the front of the rampart. The structure was founded on two posts, 7ft. apart, set close to the end of the rampart; a central spina of three posts set in line 10ft. from the former, and presumably a pair of posts on the west side of the gate matching those found on the east. The latter could not be uncovered as they lay beneath a modern track. All the posts were 8in. square in cross section. Posts were also looked for behind the gate, but were not found, and it must be concluded that the portals were not flanked by towers.

Although the presence of a defensive circuit north of the river was not unexpected, the area enclosed and the date of construction must cause some surprise. A trench dug further east to test the line of a later side street picked up also the inside lip of the inner ditch as it curved southwards towards the river. The distance therefore from the gate to the eastern boundary of the enclosed area is about 320ft. Visual examination of an old pasture west of the modern by-pass road (A.1.), revealed what could be the truncated rampart on the western side of the enclosure, at a point some 300ft. west of the gate. The rampart line is faintly visible in one of Dr. St. Joseph's aerial photographs (Soldier and Civilian in Roman Yorkshire (ed. R.M. Butler), pl.6). Certainly the field has never been ploughed recently, as there are no signs of ridge and furrow; the postulated rampart is also cut by a ditch associated with a hedge of considerable antiquity, and which survives only as three stunted hawthorns. The overall dimensions of the enclosed area therefore would seem to be about 650ft. east-west, but little more than 300ft. north-south, as the southern boundary is contained by the river, which can have moved its course but little since the Roman period.

Nothing was found beneath the rampart to indicate a date of construction much later than the early Hadrianic period.

would suggest an Antonine rather than a Hadrianic structure, and a date of construction around the middle of the second century might therefore be envisaged. Unfortunately there was little time to explore the interior of this fortified area. Such parts as were excavated revealed no sign of contemporary buildings, either of stone or timber. It would not appear to be an auxiliary fort of standard pattern, but seems more like a bridgehead defense, although it is difficult to see what historical events caused its erection. In this respect it must also be linked with the sequence which has been established for the known fort south of the river and under Thornborough Farm (Soldier and Civilian in Roman Yorkshire, p.167). The Agricolan fort there appears to have been evacuated early in the Hadrianic period, when a mansio was constructed close to its eastern limit. Few other signs of Hadrianic occupation were noted in the area, and there was an almost complete absence of coins and pottery dated to that principate. Only after c.A.D.160 does the fort seem to have been reoccupied, so that the newly-discovered fortification north of the river falls between the evacuation and the re-occupation. That being so, it could belong to one of two possible occasions: the governorship of Julius Severus (A.D. 130-3), although such an interpretation would imply trouble once more in Brigantia, as well perhaps as further north, but in support there is the renewed activity at the nearby fort at Bowes under the same governor. Alternatively it might have been erected during the Brigantian rebellion of A.D.154-5.

The abandonment of the fortifications north of the river did not immediately cause any further changes there, and a sizeable suburb did not begin to grow until the fourth century. Two houses or shops dating to the later years of the century were uncovered east of Dere Street, and one at least was occupied until the end of the century if not beyond. It is difficult to say to what extent this suburb owed its existence to the post-370 reorganisation of the fortified vicus south of the river, but if civilians were then being forcibly removed to make way for an army detachment, it is more than likely that some would have moved over the river. The two buildings referred to were separated by a narrow side street which was traced eastwards for over 100 yds. South of them, a small temple was found. Slightly trapezoid in shape it measured 30ft. from front to rear, 19ft. across at the front and 15ft. across at the back. It was set back from the main road and access was obtained through a colonnade or arcade, the pier foundations of which were found. The temple itself consisted of a small cella, the side walls of which projected forwards to form a portico, and the whole was placed on a low podium. A remarkable collection of objects were found in wall robbing trenches and included a number of complete, but crushed, late fourth-century Castor-ware bowls, cups and flagons: one of the latter had moulded figures of Mercury in relief on the shoulder; fragments of lamp chimneys and tazzi; and half of a life-size face mask, also in Castor-ware. The latter appears to have been a tragic mask and was equipped with holes and loops for attachment over the face.

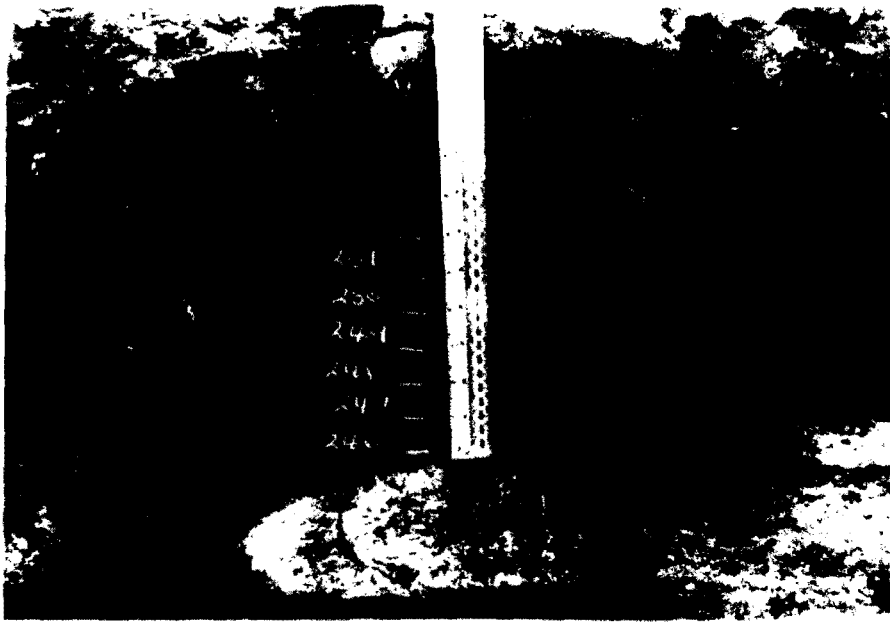
South of the temple was a paved area raised to the same height as the podium, but with little indication of surrounding or internal walls. The east end was semi-circular in shape with a diameter of about 30ft. It seemed to belong to the temple complex and it might be interpreted as a small open theatre for the performance of shows connected with the temple, or else as the podium for a second temple, whose walls had not survived. An Anglo-Saxon grübenhaus had been cut through the east end of this paved area to a depth of about eighteen inches. It measured about 12ft. by 8ft. and a number of post-holes surrounded it. Several crushed domestic pots had been trodden into the floor which was also covered with a litter of animal

large buckelurnen. So far, this is the most northerly grübenhaus to be discovered in Britain, and is yet another piece of evidence for continuity of occupation in the Catterick area.

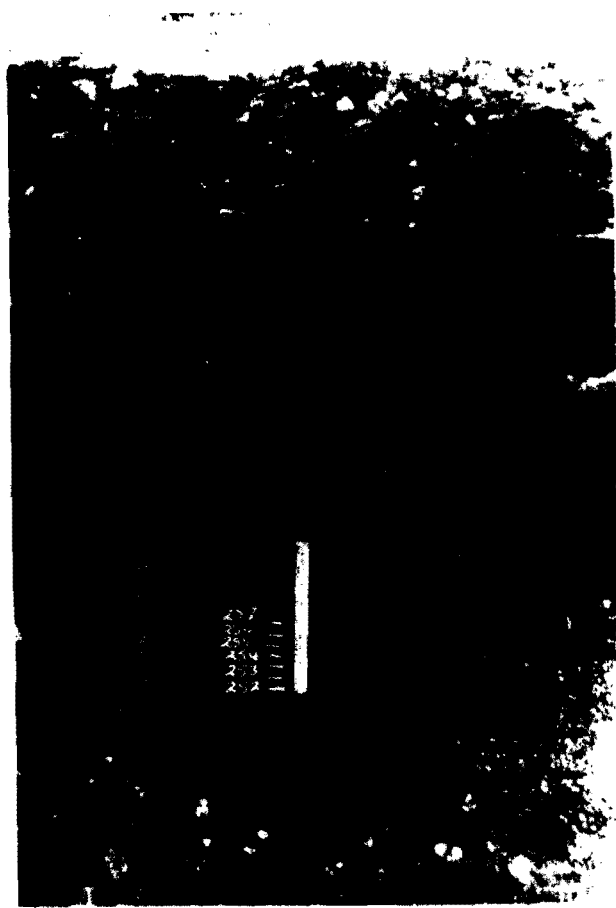
An attempt was also made to find the north abutment of the bridge carrying Dere Street over the river Swale. In view of the nature of the river it must be concluded that a bridge once existed, as a ford alone would have been too uncertain a means of crossing. No standing masonry was found, but a mass of stone and cobbles, which was most likely packing behind an abutment, contained large, roughly squared blocks of millstone grit; they are best interpreted as masons' waste.

For the future, a careful watch should be kept on the fields west of the A.1, and excavation should certainly take place in advance of any possible development, as there will be found the continuation of the second century fortifications, with any internal structures they may have possessed and, unlike the present site, probably unencumbered by later Roman buildings.

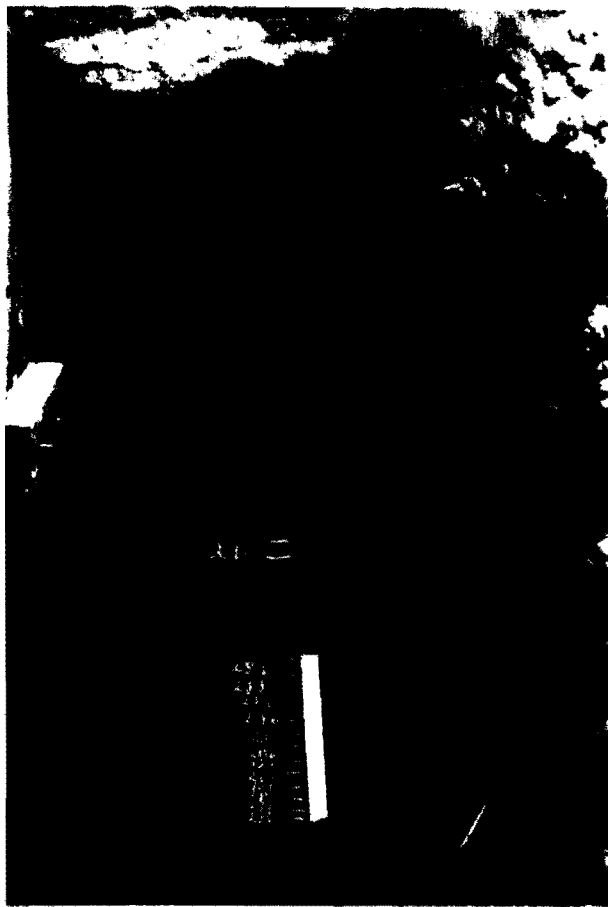
J.S.Wacher
University of Leicester.



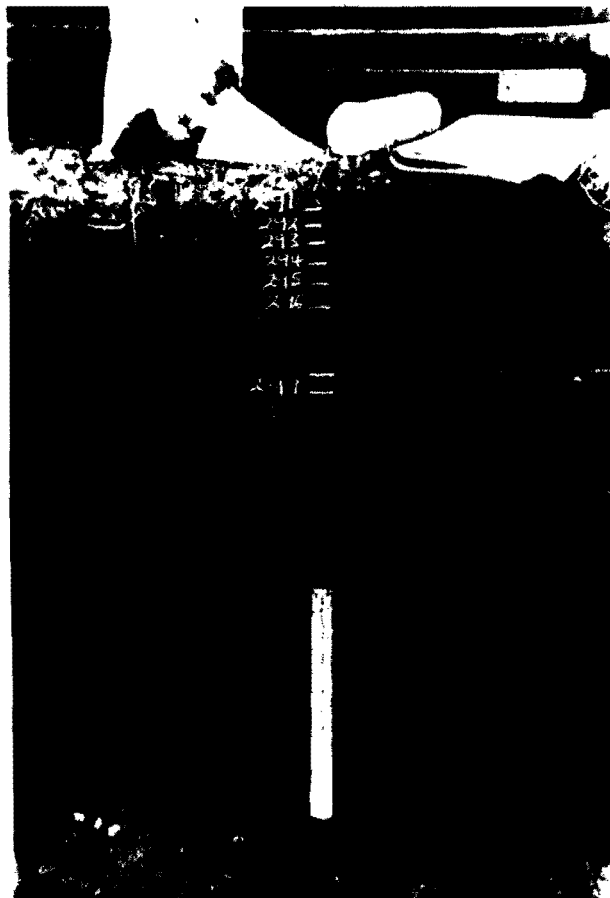
Site ①. P7. Turf in situ on rampart.



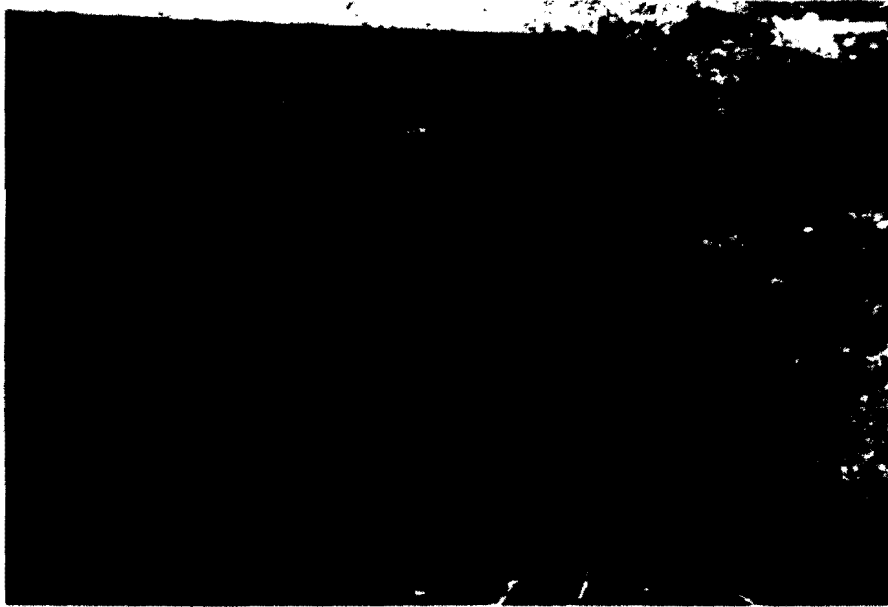
Site ②. Old Ground Surface.



Site (4) . Further into the river .



Site (4) C . Modern section .



River Section . Sequence IV .