

Daycroft Field, Castleshaw

An evaluation of extra-mural activity
south of the Roman fort complex

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Summary

An evaluation involving the excavation of a trial trench and 31 test pits was undertaken in Daycroft Field immediately south of the Roman fort complex to test for evidence of extra-mural activity. Roman deposits occurred in a number of test pits and the trial trench revealed well preserved Roman stratigraphy under a thick layer of plough soil.

Evidence for buildings, drains, a hearth, trackway, and a system of boundary ditches was found. The main Chester to York road, popularly believed to run outside the fort's south gate was not encountered and is likely to be located elsewhere.

Only one major phase of building construction was evident in the very small area excavated, dated by pottery analysis to the early 2nd century AD, ie. contemporary with the adjacent fortlet.

1. Introduction

In 1995 North West Water Plc generously undertook to fund a short evaluation of the flatish upper part of the field immediately south of the Roman forts at Castleshaw. This field is known as Daycroft Field. The evaluation aimed to test for evidence of extra-mural activity in the Roman period, with the results to be added to the more general survey of North West Water's Castleshaw and Piethorne land holdings. The evaluation was directed by Norman Redhead of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

2. Location, Topography and Geology

The Roman fort and fortlet at Castleshaw (SD 9988 0965) lie on a spur (called Castle Hill) on the eastern slopes of the Castleshaw valley. The site is at 275m OD, at the foot of Standedge, the summit of the Pennine ridge (450m OD), and is overlooked by higher ground on all sides. The site is, nevertheless, extremely well placed, with clear visibility up and down the valley. The top of Daycroft Field occupies the remaining flatish part of the spur immediately south of the Roman forts. This hill top area forms a rough triangle with the ground falling steeply away to the south towards Waters Clough but on the west side it shelves away much more gently (fig 1 and plate 1).

The geology of the central Pennine region dates from the Carboniferous and is formed of alternating beds of coarse grained sandstone (Millstone Grit) and soft, quickly rotting shales. The Castleshaw site lies on a step formed by the 'Grindslow Shale', a little below its junction with the 'Kinderscout Grit' of Standedge.

3. Archaeological Background

The Roman fort and fortlet which form the Castleshaw Scheduled Ancient Monument have been investigated many times. The spoil heaps and scars of some of these campaigns reduced the site to a derelict condition. From 1984 to 1988 a programme of restoration was undertaken at the fortlet which is now landscaped and laid out to public view. Investigations carried out by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit as part of the programme of restoration revealed that the site consisted of a fort built around AD79 which had two phases of development. This was overlain by a smaller fortlet built around AD105 which also had two phases of occupation. The fort was probably built as part of Agricola's consolidation of the newly conquered North-West, whereas the fortlet existed until the AD120s (Walker 1989).

Despite intensive investigation of the fort and fortlet, virtually no Roman features have been discovered outside of the defences. In 1984 several possible building slots and gulleys were recorded during the digging of a toilet drain for the compound site on flat ground beyond the easternmost ditch of the Roman fort. The only other evidence for extra-mural activity has come from chance finds.

The spur upon which the Castleshaw forts stand is one of the better drained and more intensively cultivated areas in the valley and although used as a hay meadow in recent memory, it was ploughed throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, indeed Bruton refers to this in his excavation report of 1907, 'the ground has been so far levelled by the plough and by the accumulation of soil, that it was not easy to make out even the features shewn in earlier plans' (referring to Percival's plan of 1753), (Bruton 1908).

As part of the 1984-8 project a resistivity survey was carried out over the whole area of the forts and extending some 30m south of Drycroft Lane into the current study area. The results in the latter were inconclusive. The intention was to pick up the line of the main road coming up the valley and, so it was believed, running just outside the south gate of the fort complex. The results seemed to be complicated by geological patterns, and no evidence for this road could be found.

On 11 September 1994 a one day evaluation was undertaken by a team of 4 excavators. Two small test slots were opened up opposite the south west corner of the Roman fortlet to examine what was believed to be a cropmark indicating a three cell building. One slot was 3x1m and located on top of the low bank running south in line with the fortlet western rampart, the other, 1x2m, was 20m to the west (see fig 1). Both slots were 5m south of the wooden fence marking the Scheduled area of the fort and fortlet. In both trenches there was a dark grey topsoil c 25cm deep overlying a 25cm deep brown plough soil. In the eastern slot several sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the lower part of the plough soil, including amphora, a flagon rim and handle, rusticated grey ware, burnished ware and tile – an assemblage in keeping with the late 1st/early 2nd century Roman occupation at Castleshaw. Roman stratigraphy was encountered and recorded but not excavated. On the surface it appeared complex, with frequent flecks of charcoal and possible negative features such as post holes and building slots. More pottery projected from this layer. By contrast the western test slot was sterile, the plough soil giving on to natural yellow clay.

This very short evaluation showed that the cropmark was almost certainly misleading and that there was considerable overburden of c 50cm covering Roman archeology. Given that Roman remains are likely to be slight anyway, ie. timber-framed buildings and a total occupation of probably no more than 50 years, it was no surprise that the resistivity survey had failed to locate features and that no previous archaeologists had detected remains here. The effect of ploughing

had been to smooth out the contours of the field and mask any terracing, road cambers and ditches that might have shown on the ground and in aerial photographs as earthworks.

One exception to this was the low bank already mentioned above. This could be clearly seen in the field and on aerial photographs (plate 1) and it was believed represented the denuded remains of a rampart enclosing extra-mural settlement, perhaps a military annexe. As a result this feature was worthy of further evaluation.

4. Evaluation Methodology

The 20m grid system used for the 1984-8 excavation and survey of the fort and fortlet was extended to incorporate the upper slopes of Daycroft Field. Total Station readings were used to plot the earthwork survey shown in fig 1 and to a give ground surface height for the north-west corner of each test pit.

Based on the 1994 test pit results it was felt that test pitting was an appropriate way of identifying the extent of Roman deposits. 31 test pits, each measuring 1m square, were set out on a 10m interval grid pattern (fig 1 and fig 5). Each test pit was given an identifying number. Finds from the top soil and plough soil were kept separate and, if relevant, it was noted where in the plough soil Roman finds occurred. A photographic record was made of the south facing section of each test pit, together with measurements of the depth of top and plough soil. A written record of each test pit is produced as Appendix B. Excavation stopped at the first clear indication of a Roman level or, failing this, natural. Where appropriate a small sondage was made through the Roman level to facilitate meaningful interpretation, this generally occurring when the material was of uncertain character or when it was felt to be ditch fill.

To assess the nature of surviving Roman stratigraphy, a 15m by 2m trench was located across the low earthwork running south in line with the western rampart of the fortlet. Trench 1 ran on a west to east axis (fig 1). Time constraints and the great depth of plough soil limited the area actually excavated to a slot 0.6m wide by 10m long, with a further 1.5m square area opened up at the east end of the trench. All Roman deposits were excavated down to natural and were recorded by: 4 phases of plans at a scale of 1:20, a measured section drawing of the south facing side of the trench at the same scale, photographs in colour slide, print and monochrome, and context sheets.

The work was carried out by a team comprising professionals from the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit, undergraduate students and experienced volunteers. The evaluation took place over an 8 day period, from 26 August to 2 September, with a team of 8 people for the first 3 days, c 15 for the subsequent 4 days and 8 for the last day. All excavation was by hand.

Finds have always provided a special challenge at Castleshaw with the damaging affect of the acid soil making even Samian ware 'soapy' when damp and powdery when dry. To counter this all Roman pottery was swabbed with the chemical WS24. Careful cleaning could then be attempted once the pot had stabilised. Even with this chemical treatment certain local cooking wares tended to crack on drying, but did hold together. Metal work also suffers from the acid soil and iron and bronze objects usually exhibit extensive corrosion products. Glass, on the other hand, survives remarkably well. The finds received first aid on site from a qualified conservator. More information about conservation of the pottery appears in Appendix C.

5. Results

Trench 1

This trial trench was located at right angles to what appeared to be a low linear earthwork running south from and in line with the western rampart of the fortlet. It was believed that the earthwork represented the denuded remains of a rampart running around the top of the hill and defining the defences of a military annexe. Excavation showed that this premise was incorrect; however, other Roman features were revealed.

In the following account all directions are orientated to grid north.

The very dark grey topsoil layer [001], which was c 20cm deep, contrasted with the light- to mid-brown plough soil [002]. The change was very clear except over the top of the low linear earthwork (see section, fig 2). Here there was much more mixing and evidence of disturbance and, although [002] was the same colour and texture as elsewhere in the trench, it was characterised in this part by substantially more frequent small pieces of coal and flecks of charcoal. The depth of plough soil was quite remarkable, ranging from 20cm at the east end of the trench to 52cm in the middle part. The greatest depth of [002] coincided with the position of the low earthwork. At no point was there any evidence for a turf constructed rampart.

The bottom part of [002] gave on to a mixed horizon where the plough had disturbed the top of Roman levels. An arbitrary spit c 10cm deep, given context number [012] at the east end of the trench and [006] just west of this, was removed before 'clean' Roman stratigraphy, [013], was encountered. [012] and [006] were effectively of the same material and were characterised by finds of daub and sherds of Roman cooking ware. The interface between plough soil and Roman archaeology was much clearer further west in the mid part of the trench where two linear spreads of stone [008] and [005] were evident (plan 1, fig 3).

[008] comprised a mid to light grey brown silty clay loam with 30% small to medium pieces of angular sandstone and 10% medium sized smoother rounded gritstones. This proved to be the upper fill of a drain [F003] which ran from north-east to south-west. The drain was c 60cm wide with a maximum depth of 30cm. In the 70cm before the drain ran into the south facing section of Trench 1 [008] came off to reveal capping stones [016] (plan 2, fig 3 and plate 3). There were 3 flat angular sandstones (from the local shale bedrock) and 1, more rounded, flat gritstone at the west end (this one not shown in plan). Close to the trench edge these flat capping stones were replaced by smaller less flat stones slumping into the drain base. Although it is difficult to be certain in such a small trench, it did appear that the capping stones protected the exit mouth of the drain.

Beyond the western edge of the stones the dark brown silty clay loam [014] which filled the narrow channel at the base of the drain (18cm wide by 14cm deep) spread out into a shallow depression which marked the drain's terminus. It was evident that the channel curved slightly to end on an east to west axis. Here, at the terminus, [014] merged with [008] and also a fine sandy material [009] consistent with water flow in this area. Initially [009] seemed to contain stakeholes (plan 1, fig 3) but investigation suggested that they were the result of root or rodent activity. The terminus of the drain marks the edge of Roman activity on the west side of the site. West of the drain was a thin layer [010], 4cm deep, of mid to dark yellow orange silty clay with 30% small to medium patches of light grey silty clay with frequent flecks of charcoal. This layer overlay natural and appeared to be a thin washed-down spread just beyond the fringe of Roman activity.

A number of finds came from [008]/[014], including Roman pottery and glass, burnt bone fragments, daub, a piece of tap slag, an iron strap hinge and a decorated bronze terminal. These confirm a Roman date for the drain. The tap slag is of particular note as, being securely stratified, it suggests that iron smelting was undertaken by the Romans in this vicinity. Whether the slag derived from an area of metalworking identified (but not excavated) in the fortlet interior is uncertain.

[005] comprised 30% small to medium fragments of angular sandstone (much of it on edge or pitched) and 30% small pieces of shale in a matrix of mid grey yellow silty clay loam. There was a clear edge against [006] on the east side but a western boundary was harder to define. [008] proved to be the fill of a linear depression [F004], which was c 2.3m wide and 0.26m deep and ran in a north-north-west to south-south-east direction, indeed it followed the line of the low earthwork mentioned above which cuts off the flat upper part of the field. The base of [F004] was formed by [026] which was in fact the upper fill of another negative linear feature immediately under and on the same line as [F004]. On the east side [F004] had a sloping edge cut into the occupation deposit [013]; however, on the west side there was only a very gentle edge leading into the flat wide base of [F004]. Here the depression's edge was formed against or on [007] which may be a continuation of [013] (section, plan 2, figs 2 and 3).

[F004] represents a late phase of activity at this site. With its shallow depth and gentle sides it is hardly a defensive ditch but may be a boundary ditch, perhaps originally associated with a palisade (of which no firm evidence was found). The evaluation trench was only 60cm wide at this point so any interpretation must be tentative. Given the shallowness of [F004] it is possible that it was a product of slumping into ditch [F018] below and [005] would therefore be a deliberate attempt to backfill this sunken area. In support of this theory is the nature of [005] which is stony and mixed as in deliberate backfilling – there is no silting at its base. No finds occurred in [005]. Of further note is the plough soil layer which is at its thickest above [F004] and may represent additional, later importing of material to cure slumping at this point.

[F018] was a linear cut into natural occurring as a first phase of activity at this site, later abandoned and partly overlaid by occupation deposits [013]/[007]. As far as one can tell in such a narrow trench, it ran in the same direction as [F004] above it.

Its upper fill [026], maximum 8cm deep, was a friable dark red brown silty clay loam with moderate flecks of charcoal and almost no stone inclusions. [026] was sealed by [005] and [007]/[013]. Beneath [026] was the major fill, c 15cm deep, of [F004] comprising a dark brown silty clay loam with frequent flecks of charcoal [015], with again very few stones. Along the east side were 3 shallow lenses of charcoal. [015] was characterised by a number of finds, including various sherds of cooking wares together with one piece each of amphora, tile and daub. [027] formed the primary fill of [F004], being a creamy/light yellow silty clay with 20% small patches light grey silt and frequent flecks of charcoal. This layer included one large oval patch of charcoal c 30cm long which proved to be a shallow lens 1cm deep.

When being excavated the fills of [F004] came off to reveal a shallow, flatish base rather than the deep 'V' shape ditch that had been expected (section, plan 3, figs 2 and 4). The eastern edge had a definite step in it, which coincided with a change in the natural to a band of sticky, light yellow clay. It was interesting to note that the charcoal lenses found on the edge of [015] coincided with the location of this step and may represent evidence for a palisade, although no post holes were identified. The base appeared to have a flatish layer of compacted, cobbling (rounded sandstones) which suggested this may in fact have been a trackway in the form of a cobbled hollow-way. But the width of 1.4m for the flat base made it rather narrow. Also, the same stone formation, packed into the natural yellow-orange clay surface, could be seen in other parts of

the trench where natural was exposed. Taking all things in to account, the preference is for a shallow boundary ditch, perhaps with a palisade along the east edge (plate 4).

The eastern 3.5m of Trench 1 were taken up by a thick deposit [013] which was up to 25cm deep. This was a very mixed layer mainly comprising mid to dark brown silty clay loam, with frequent flecks/small patches of charcoal, moderate small to medium angular sandstones, moderate small to medium patches yellow/cream clay or silty clay, occasional small to medium patches red or grey clay. Its extent was not defined in Trench 1 as it ran into all sections exposed; however, test pit data indicates that this is a very extensive deposit (see page 11).

[013] was mixed throughout and came off onto natural. [013] was full of occupation debris in the form of numerous sherds of pottery, nails, daub and burnt bone. It clearly represents occupation material but its mixed nature suggests that it is a dumped layer, perhaps associated with clearance of the site when it was abandoned.

Within [013] was [017], a linear deposit comprising large patches/lumps of clay which had been fire reddened, including one large lump at the western end of the deposit which gradually changed from a dull mid grey clay to a dark burnt red. Also in this part of the deposit was a concentration of fire reddened pieces of daub. Elsewhere there were 25% small to medium sandstones, many at an angle and many fire reddened, mixed with frequent patches of charcoal (plan 3, fig 4). [017] appeared to be material associated with a burned down structure and was collapse or dump as part of [013]. It certainly indicated a nearby building. Only 20cm south of [017] was a possible dwarf stone wall [019] which was laid on to natural, having no foundation trench, and with [013] running right up to it and above it. The stones were flat and deliberately laid, being up to 3 courses deep. Unfortunately [019] ran into the southern edge of the trench and there was not enough showing to be certain of its extent or direction, the matter being further complicated by the curved edge to some of the stones (plan 3, fig 4). There did appear to be an eastern edge to the stone feature and in the space between it and the eastern side of the trench was a post hole [F022] which had been sealed by [013] (plate 5).

The post hole was 40cm wide and 25cm deep. It was filled by a light to mid grey silt loam with moderate flecks of charcoal, with 50% of the fill being taken up by small to large sandstones. These stones clearly formed packing around a post; a large angular stone laid flat blocked up the southern half of the hole (plate 6). This appeared to act as a wedge rather than a padstone as two small sandstones were set on edge in the northern half leaving a stone free, silted hole that represented the siting of a c10cm diameter post (plan 4, fig 4). When the stones were removed the hole was found to have good, near vertical edges and a flat base. One sherd of red cooking ware or flagon came from the post hole's fill.

At this stage it is only possible to speculate on the relationship of this post hole to the stone structure. The evidence of daub and clay and charcoal hints at a timber framed building at this location, which was consumed by fire at the end of its life. Certainly the evidence points to a building of some description here. This is a key area for future research.

The only other possible feature found under [013] was a small, shallow depression located 80cm north of the terminus of the stone structure [019]. This was filled with mid-grey brown silty clay loam. Oval in shape [F024] was 40cm long by 24cm wide but only 10cm deep. It may have related to building activity in this area and was perhaps of the same phase as post hole [F022] and structure [019]; however, it was much less convincing than [F022] and at best indicated where a post had been wedged into the ground surface.

The finds from the Trench 1 excavations are listed at the beginning of Appendix A and discussed in detail following the section on the test pits.

Test Pits

A detailed description of the 31 test pits, including height, depth of top soil and plough soil, salient features and finds, is given in Appendix B. The location of the test pits is shown in fig 1. Overall the test pitting was very successful in giving a broad indication of the extent and nature of Roman deposits (plates 7 and 8). The following text describes the most important results from this evaluation technique.

Figure 5 indicates which test pits produced evidence for Roman activity. As a general observation, those test pits downslope of the crest of the triangular flatish area most suitable for Roman occupation were sterile, including TPs 2,3,4,8,12,15,16,19,20,21 and 22. In all of these the plough soil came off onto natural silty clay and stone. This negative evidence helped to confirm the limits of settlement already suggested by topography.

Two test pits, TP1 and 7, which might have been expected to be sterile, did in fact each have a shallow slot or gully yielding Roman pottery from the upper fill. In TP1 the feature was only 3cm deep and 30cm wide and ran north-east to south-west. It was cut into and surrounded by natural and seemed to be peripheral to Roman activity on the hill top, especially as its neighbouring test pits (including the part of Trench 1 directly north) were all sterile. In TP7 there was a cut linear feature running east to west in the south part of the test pit, with the southern edge hidden under the section. This feature may be of significance as it runs in the direction of the hearth/oven base located in TP11 which is c 10m to the east.

Within the triangle of flatish ground on the hill top, test pit evidence suggested that the Roman activity was divided into two areas. TP20-22 were all negative and created a band of sterile archaeology running north to south through the Roman occupation area. This effectively created a larger area of activity to the west running roughly from the west edge of the line of the demolished drystone wall to the drain encountered in Trench 1 (see fig 5). To the east was a smaller triangle of activity defined by the Roman fort defences on the north and a steep slope to the south. In this interpretation it is necessary to be very cautious given the 10m spacing of the test pits.

Taking firstly the western block of Roman occupation evidence, two test pits, TP6 and TP13, produced deposits which had the character of ditch fills. Judging by the nature of the fill material, TP6 could be seen as a continuation of [F004] and its fill [008] in Trench 1. However, in TP6 the deposit, which was 15cm deep, gave onto natural mid-brown yellow clay loam rather than earlier Roman levels. A hill-wash origin for this material has been suggested as an alternative interpretation but this theory is negated by the absence of the same material in any other test pit.

TP13 is perhaps the most perplexing test pit. Beneath the deep plough soil was a mid- to dark-brown grey silty clay loam mottled with frequent pieces and flecks of crushed and decayed orange sandstone. This matrix was very similar to that encountered in the upper fill of the fortlet ditches. A sondage showed it to be 14cm deep before giving on to a darker, more silty layer. This then appeared to represent a ditch fill with, unfortunately, no edges visible within the confines of the 1m test hole. There was no evidence for a ditch in adjacent test pits. If there is a ditch at TP13 which way is it running? Does it relate to the fort/fortlet defences, or perhaps to a defended boundary for the extra mural settlement? **The character and function of this ditch is crucial to our understanding of the site.**

Evidence for building occupation levels were found in the 1994 test trench, the eastern end of Trench 1 and TP5 and 9. The deposits encountered were all similar to [013] in Trench 1, containing much broken pottery and considerable charcoal. With a distance of 16m separating the 1994 test trench from TP9 it is evident that this area of potential occupation layers is quite extensive. Its width can only be guessed but will be over 6m which represents the distance from the north edge of the 1994 trench to the southern edge of the 1995 Trench 1, across which [013] was present.

TP10 and 17 were both characterised by the presence of large quantities of stone. In the former there appeared to be a fairly smooth surface of closely compacted shale and gritstone fragments within a matrix of mid-grey brown clay loam. A badly decayed bronze coin came from just above a surface tentatively interpreted as a floor. TP17 provided a layer of densely concentrated angular and rounded stones which were varied in shape and size and appeared to slope away to the north, possibly representing a rut or camber (plate 9). TP17 seemed to be showing evidence of a trackway, the stones not being well laid or deep enough to be the major Roman road coming up from the valley. If TP10 was also interpreted as a trackway then it could link up with TP17 forming a spinal access route within the extra-mural settlement.

Further evidence of occupation came from TP14 which yielded material similar, in terms of its matrix and proliferation of Roman finds, to [013] in Trench 1. Of special note was TP11 which was fortunately located to reveal the edge of a hearth or oven base (plate 10). A domestic function is postulated for this feature as there was no evidence of smithing or smelting debris. The hearth appeared to be sited close to the edge of the occupied area, almost within the southerly point of the 'triangle'. If TP10 does have a floor surface then a continuous band of occupation deposits stretches nearly 30m from TP14 to the north edge of the 1994 test trench. **Based on the evaluation results, this area, with the proof of structural remains provided by the dwarf wall and post hole in Trench 1 and the hearth/oven in TP11, provides the greatest research potential for investigating extra-mural settlement.**

One other test pit from this 'block' is worthy of mention. TP18 was found to contain a line of large flat stones, partly disturbed by ploughing, that appeared to be the capping stones for a drain (not excavated). This feature ran north to south against the western side of the test pit, with the eastern half of the pit yielding many Roman finds from the top of a charcoal flecked mid yellow-brown silty clay loam. Unlike drain [F003], which was clearly peripheral to Roman settlement at this site, the drain in TP18 appeared to be adjacent to occupation layers and therefore very much within the area of settlement activity. If this is the case, then the 'band of occupation deposits' mentioned in the previous paragraph can be extended to nearly 40m.

The smaller triangular area to the east of the sterile line of test pits (TP20-22) also yielded good evidence for occupation. TP27 showed several layers running one under another from north to south, indicating a complex stratigraphy. The Roman finds material, including a well preserved large sherd of decorated Samian bowl recovered from the top of a dark brown silty clay loam in the north part of the test pit, defined these layers as deriving from Roman occupation. A deposit of similar nature occurred in the south east corner of TP26, 10m to the north.

TP28-31 all provided good evidence for ditches. TP28, which was located just at the start of the steep slope forming the southern edge of the triangle in this area, revealed the northern side of a feature cut into natural. Despite the confines of the test pit this feature did appear to run in the direction of the edge of the hill top, ie. south-west to north-east. The fill of the feature was a light brown silty clay loam with frequent flecks of charcoal and occasional flecks of decayed orange sandstone. It was excavated against the west side of the test pit and found to be c 35cm deep. A sherd of amphora and pieces of an unusual gritstone (hand quern?) came from this feature which sealed a charcoal rich layer. The feature's edge sloped down at c 45 degrees before flattening as if this was the base. At this flat point there was a primary silt of light grey silty clay,

running for 20cm into the south section. A stake hole of 8cm diameter and 10cm deep occurred at the junction of the flat base and the start of the cut slope. This evidence suggests a defensive boundary ditch defining the southern extent of the extra-mural settlement on this part of the hill top.

Although not excavated, the fills of TP30 and 31 had the appearance and feel of Roman ditch fill. TP29 had a similar fill and a sondage revealed a west to east cut edge across the middle part of the test pit, with a steep slope running into the southern section. Deposits in TP26 were not excavated but it contained a linear feature running west to east across the northern-most part of the test pit. This may represent a continuation of the ditch seen in TP29. It seems reasonably certain that a ditch system cut off the triangular spur at this point of the site. TP31 may represent the junction of the two ditches. Clearly this ditch system needs to be more tightly defined by future investigation.

To the west these ditches were not evident in any of the test pits excavated in this area. TP23 was not taken down to natural. As with TP26 the top and plough soil contained a loose deposit of c 70% small to large angular stones and shale fragments. The high density of stone probably represents upcast from the digging of the post medieval ditch known as Drycroft Lane just 8m to the north.

In TP24 a thin spread of crushed shale with frequent stones overlay a mid-brown clay loam with c 60% angular and decayed/crushed sandstones. In a sondage this was found to be 12cm deep and overlaying a grey-brown clay loam with closely spaced angular stones. Although a high percentage of stone was evident within the test pit, the matrix did not seem representative of a road or track surface. No Roman pottery was found in this test pit.

Lastly, TP25 had a deep (38cm) layer of plough soil, giving onto a charcoal flecked light cream-brown silty clay loam which appeared to be an occupation level or fill and the finds from this test pit corroborate this.

The small triangle on the eastern part of the hill top, enclosed by ditches, appears to contain further Roman settlement with the greatest potential in the area centred around TP 27; a smaller area than that to the west but of great importance in understanding extra-mural activity south of the Roman fort complex.

6. Specialist Finds Reports

SAMIAN REPORT BY DR R J POLLARD

The collection is very abraded, and slip survives only on some sherds. The fabric of every piece exhibits the high lime content typical of South Gaulish Samian Ware. Mica on the surfaces would appear to be a soil residue.

The proportion of the Drag 37 type hemispherical bowl is unusually high, and this is not due to the fragmentation and scatter of a single vessel; the rim of the vessel from context [015] has a deeper plain zone than that from TP27 [002], and the context [013] bowl has a less blurred border than the latter.

The large decorated piece (TP27 [002]) would repay further study from the point of Samian research: the ovolo appears to be the same as on Boon 1986, nos. 14-17, the associations are with Vespasianic and Domitianic schemes of decoration, and no.15 also has the large rosettes present here. The vessel resembles some work in the style sometimes referred to as 'The Potter of the Large Rosette', cf Atkinson 1914, plates IX.50, the commencement of production of which is given a terminus ante quem of AD79 by its association with Pompeii, however, this piece is stylistically Flavian rather than Neronian as it lacks the lateral subdivision panel derived from Drag 29 (cf *ibid.* nos. 43-47, 49, etc). The subdivided vertical panel suggests very late 1st century work.

THE COARSE POTTERY BY RICHARD CLARK

Introduction

A total of 490 sherds weighing 2.48kgs were recovered from the excavations at Castleshaw. The bulk of the Roman pottery came from Trench 1 (TR1), with a smaller but significant amount from the Test Pits (TP). The assemblage can be summarised as follows:

	ROMAN	MEDIEVAL	POST MED.	UNCLASSIFIED
TRENCH 1:	155/1249gms	- / -	26/247gms	23/30gms
TEST PITS:	52/488 gms	1/8gms	223/423gms	10/12gms
TOTAL:	207/1757 gms	1/8gms	249/670gms	33/42gms

Methodology

The assemblage has been recorded by sherds and weight (gms) with Estimated Vessel Equivalents (EVEs) calculated for the stratified Roman deposits from TR1. The pottery has been catalogued by broad fabric groups identified by visual examination aided by a X10 magnification handlens. Vessels have been identified with reference to a Form Series established for the examination of pottery from the Roman vicus at Deansgate (Eltoft St./Tonman St.), Manchester (Clark 1992). The latter facilitates the identification of broad vessel Classes (dish, jar, flagon etc.), and the subdivision of these classes into Types (ring-neck flagons) and individual Forms.

The assemblage will be examined in two groups: the stratified deposits from TR1, and the TP groups. The latter comprise a series of 'assemblages' generally too small to merit individual examination.

Trench 1

Trench 1 produced the bulk of the Roman pottery, 155 sherds weighing 1.27kgs. A ceramic link was noted between contexts [012] and [013], with a possible link between [013] and [023]. The assemblage is generally fragmentary and in poor condition, with surfaces abraded. This is largely a product of soil conditions (Clark in Walker (ed) 1989, 74), however, the low average sherd weight (ASW: 8.2gms) and high brokenness (BRK: 119.2) suggests redeposited material rather than primary occupation deposits.

The TR1 assemblage can be divided into a series of stratigraphic groups. The earliest, the linear cut [F018], includes pottery from its backfill [015]. The latter can be dated to the late 1st to early 2nd century AD. The dating is suggested by the presence of an early ring-neck flagon, a Trajanic reed-rim bowl and rusticated grey ware (GW) body sherds. The absence of black-burnished ware (BB1) may indicate the feature predates its appearance during the early to mid-2nd century.

Also cutting the natural was [F022], a post hole at the east of TR1. The fill produced a single sherd possibly linking with [013].

The key group is formed by the occupation deposits [007]/[013], these partially seal [F018]. Both contexts [006] and [012] have been considered as part of the deposit, a conclusion supported by the identification of a link between the contexts. The deposit produced the largest single group (103 sh/807gms) and can be dated to the early to mid-2nd century AD by the presence of a BB1 bowl (illustration 1, Gillam 219-220). This is supported by sherds of a white ware (WW) flanged segmental bowl, and two GW Trajanic reed-rim bowls; both can date from the late 1st century, however, the form suggests an early 2nd century date (illustration 2). The main GW vessel classes include bowls and jars, the latter characterised by a rusticated finish and everted rim. The deposit shares the generally low ASW (7.8gms) and high brokenness (114.4).

The occupation deposits were cut by two features, [F004] interpreted as a boundary ditch, and [F003] the drain to the west of TR1. Pottery came from the top of both features, with the upper fill of the drain including BB1, thus supporting a post 120AD date for the ditch. The presence of a GW lid among the [008] assemblage represents a vessel class uncommon after the mid-2nd century AD. GW recovered from [005] also indicates a late 1st to early 2nd century date. It seems likely that the final backfills of each feature date to the second quarter of the 2nd century AD.

Test Pits

The test pits yielded a small assemblage largely comparable with the TR1 material. The Roman pottery comprised a total of 52 sherds, weighing 488gms; the bulk of the pottery came from the plough soil (context [002] in each test pit). The pottery is generally abraded, particularly the oxidised sherds (OW). Unsurprisingly, given the nature and size of the assemblage, no links or joins were noted between the test pits or with TR1. It is interesting to note the contrast between the ASW of the Roman and Post-medieval pottery (Roman: 9.4gms, Post-medieval: 1.9gms) suggesting the latter represents manuring scatters.

The distribution of the pottery reflects the area of Roman occupation suggested by the stratigraphy. The largest groups come from TPs 5,7,9,11,18 and 27; this suggests a concentration of activity to the west of the area tested, defined by the falling ground to the south and south-west. Four separate areas are suggested: TP5 and 9 together with TR1, TP7 and 11 to the south, TP18 (and 21), and finally TP27 (and 28) to the east. The small sample size limits the conclusions that can be drawn, however, the remaining areas may represent areas where the loss or disposal of 'domestic' refuse was unlikely, possibly workshops, or areas that were kept clean.

Discussion

The limited amount of material recovered from the Castleshaw excavations prevents extensive discussion of the ceramic assemblage. However, the Samian, all of South Gaulish manufacture, and the coarse pottery indicates a broad date range for the occupation of the site (cAD80-130).

There is no ceramic indication of a pre-Roman presence at Castleshaw. The assemblage comprises exclusively 'Romanised' forms characteristic of the late 1st and early 2nd centuries AD; these include a ring-necked flagon, everted rim jars, and a range of bowls including the ubiquitous reed-rim form. The vessels and fabrics can be closely compared to material from early features at the Manchester vicus (Clark 1992) and the 'Stream deposit' at Melandra (Webster 1971); all are dominated by coarse pottery of broadly Flavian-Trajanic date with the presence of small quantities of BB1 indicating activity into the second quarter of the 2nd century AD. Webster (1982, 16) has suggested the arrival of BB1 must be dated to the early Hadrianic period, therefore the identification of the fabric from the occupation deposit [007]/[013] indicates a *Terminus Post Quem* of c AD120 for the subsequent features.

The new BB1 forms and the absence of Central Gaulish Samian, both imported in increasing quantities from c AD120 onward, suggests the site was abandoned during the early Hadrianic period. This is tentatively supported by the remaining assemblage, with few vessels that can be dated later than the early 2nd century AD.

THE GLASS BY SIAN DAVIES

A total of 34 fragments of glass were recovered from the site, of this 14 fragments have been identified as Roman, 5 as post-medieval and the remainder are too fragmentary to allow identification.

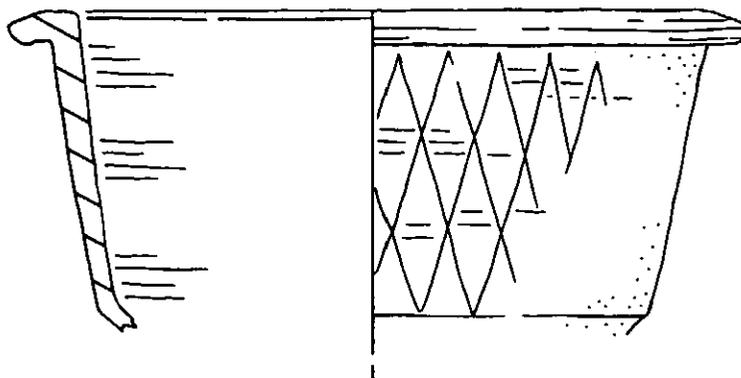
The post-medieval fragments included 2 of 'frosted bathroom glass' and 3 fragments of dark green, thick bottle glass.

The Roman material consisted of 13 fragments of blue/green vessel glass and single fragment of cast window glass. One vessel could be accurately identified as a tubular rimmed jar (illustration 3). These were common domestic storage vessels of varying sizes in use from the mid 1st to early 3rd century AD (Cool & Price 1995 no. 757). The remainder included two ribbed body fragments one possibly optic blown (context [008]), ie. moulded then free blown, from either a jug, bowl or jar and fragments of cylindrical and prismatic storage bottles. All were common domestic vessels in use from the mid 1st to late 3rd century AD.

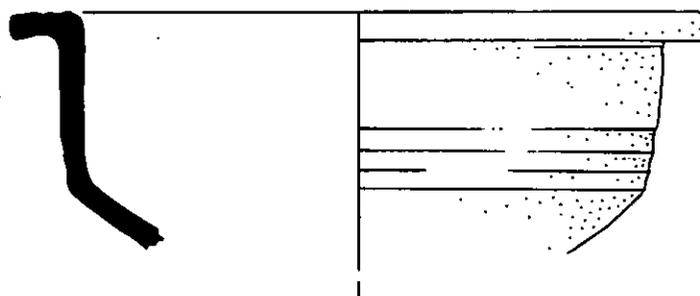
COARSE POTTERY AND GLASS ILLUSTRATIONS

Scale 1:2 Drawn by Richard Clark

1.



2.



3.



Catalogue of Illustrated Vessels

1. Context [013], Catalogue No. 0014.

BB1 flanged dish (B4.2/1). The vessel is hand made with a burnished interior and exterior. The fabric and form are consistent with production in the Dorset region. Cf Gillam 219-220 dated c AD120-160.

2. Context [013], Catalogue No. 0013.

GW carinated reed-rim bowl (C9.1/2). The vessel appears poorly fired, with a coarse sandy fabric. Three grooves are visible above the carination. Cf Gillam 214 dated c AD80-125.

3. Context TP21 [001]

Blue/green rim fragment of a tubular rimmed jar. Slightly outbent rim with thickened edge bent out and down. Rim diam. 75mm, present height 21mm, wall thickness 2mm. Cf Cool & Price no. 757. Dated mid 1st to early 3rd century AD.

THE METALWORK BY IAN GETHING

Metalwork was in general badly affected by corrosion. Apart from a number of nails, noted in the finds lists in Appendices A and B, the only readily identifiable metal objects were a broken decorative bronze terminal and half of an iron strap hinge. Both objects came from the drain [F003] and are illustrated here.

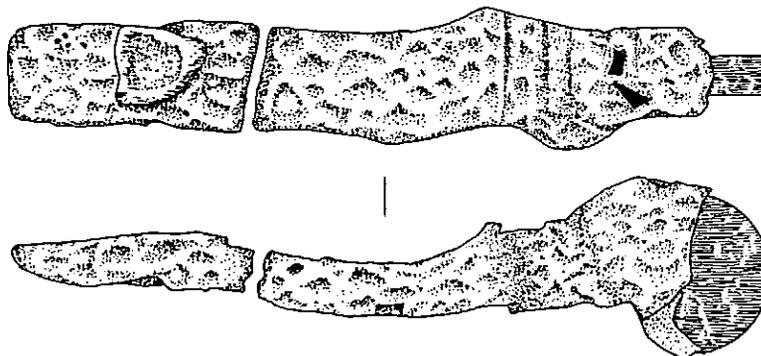
METALWORK ILLUSTRATIONS

Scale 1:1 Drawn by Ian Gething



1. Context [008].

Decorative bronze terminal. Domed head, poorly defined, shallow groove around middle. Thin fragment of material protrudes from the tapered neck. Cf Bishop & Dore fig 79 (no. 71) p167-8 Corbridge



2. Context [014].

Half of iron strap hinge. Heavy corrosion products but solid disc clearly visible at one end. Slight traces for pivotal hole. Evidence for nail head on smaller (broken) piece. This may represent where strap was nailed to door. Numerous pieces of charcoal embedded into corrosion suggest this fitting was on a door destroyed by fire. Cf Cunliffe fig 56 p128-9 Fishbourne

7. Discussion

It is clear from the results of the evaluation that a substantial extra-mural settlement existed at the Castleshaw Roman fort site. Evidence from previous excavations indicated activity beyond the fort's defences on its flat eastern side and this year's evaluation proved beyond doubt that a flatish triangular area of c 90m long by a maximum 30m wide was occupied alongside the southern defences. Buildings, drains, a trackway, ditches, and a hearth have been revealed in this southern area but it is not clear whether these remains represent a civilian settlement or a military annexe.

A number of fascinating research questions have arisen as a result of the discovery of extra-mural activity:

Where does the major trans-Pennine highway, the Chester to York road, run? One of the most surprising elements of the evaluation was a lack of evidence for this road. It has generally been assumed that the road continued in a straight line from the valley floor, running just outside the southern fort's gate before climbing up to Standedge. The road is clearly visible as an earthwork 100m south of the fort and 100m north of it. Given the spacing of test pits it is highly unlikely that a road of this scale can have been missed; yet the evaluation covered the only suitably flat ground capable of carrying the road on the southern side of the fort. It would be unusual but not inconceivable that the road was channelled through the western fort gate and exited from the eastern one. This potentially symbiotic relationship could add a new dimension to our understanding of the Roman occupation at Castleshaw. Another possibility is that the road was deliberately removed during the fortlet phase, being replaced by a military annexe. The road was then re-routed around the north side of the fortlet. Certainly Bruton, in his excavations, found evidence for a road curving through the west and east fort gates to run outside the fortlet's north entrance (Bruton 1911). The location of the main road must form a major component of future investigations.

Two other key elements of the Roman site are as yet unlocated: the cemetery and the bath house. The key to the former may be the location of the main road. A possible site for the bath house is beside Waters Clough beneath the southern side of the fort. Such a location would provide a sheltered spot with good water supply, yet close to the fort defences. A curving linear feature running from the fort's south-west corner down towards Water's Clough may be a hollow-way that provided access to the bath house (plate 1). This is, however, pure speculation and the history of intensive water works activity in this area, especially beside Water's Clough, makes any non-intervention interpretation suspect.

The full extent of extra-mural settlement is not known. Within the Scheduled area (marked by the fenceline) it has been identified but not quantified east of the fort. The southern side has now been tentatively defined by evaluation, though we do not know if there were structures beside the stream in the bottom of the valley. The western and northern sides are a mystery. Of the two, the western side has by far the greatest potential. The land slopes gently up to the fort defences and it is possible that the main road runs into the eastern gateway. As elsewhere, ploughing has obliterated evidence for earthworks here and this is certainly an area beyond the Scheduled site that is worthy of evaluation.

The fort established by Agricola, which held a standard auxiliary cohort of 500 infantry, lasted for about 15 years before being abandoned and slighted. Around 10 years later it was replaced by a fortlet, garrisoned by only about 50 soldiers, which survived for approximately 20 years. Both fort and fortlet revealed two phases of timber building. Based on the results of the 1984-8

excavation, the function of the fortlet has been analysed. Two possible roles have been attributed to it: a base fortlet containing the core buildings of a normal unit where most of the troops are out-stationed, or a commissary fortlet dedicated to an administrative role for control or/and supply (Walker 1989 p104-7).

The recent short evaluation produced a finds assemblage of early 2nd century date, tending towards c 120AD. This dating is critical. If it is correct then the settlement in Daycroft Field belongs to the second phase of the later fortlet occupation. We know from the 1984-8 investigations that space was cramped inside the fortlet, that the granary and hypocaust buildings were enlarged and that there was no room for an intervallum on the west side of the fortlet. It would appear that the role of the fortlet changed at this time and further building space was required in Daycroft Field. As has already been mentioned, this would have necessitated diverting the main highway.

The finds assemblage is typically military in character and suggests that Daycroft Field was occupied by a military annexe rather than a civilian settlement. However, it must be stressed that the number of securely stratified finds is statistically small due to the limited extent of the evaluation. Having only 'scratched the surface' of extra-mural evidence at Castleshaw it would be unwise at this stage to attempt definitive interpretations. If a military annexe is shown to belong to the fortlet, around 120AD, then the character of that annexe would throw important light on the unusual lay-out and function of the fortlet. If the remains are shown to be civilian in nature then we have a settlement in an area where current evidence suggests very sparse population in the Romano-British period, at a site which must be considered agriculturally marginal at 275m OD.

The new discoveries at Castleshaw will make it worthwhile re-appraising previous archaeological excavation results:

- At Castleshaw itself did excavators misinterpret evidence in the fort areas beyond the fortlet? In the fortlet phase was the area of fort not re-occupied by the new fortlet left unused or were buildings located there such as those in Daycroft Field?
- At the fragmentary remains of the Roman station at Worlow, Pule Hill, dating of the site is crucial. Was it associated with military re-ordering around 120AD?
- At Slack fort and annexe site 8 miles east of Castleshaw, where Hunter argued the fort site was reduced to one barrack from c 125 to 140AD with the civilian settlement continuing until at least c 160AD (Hunter 1967-70 p87-80). How does this fit in with what was happening at Castleshaw? Could the reduction at Slack be contemporary with the final fortlet phase at Castleshaw or its abandonment?

Throughout the 20th century archaeologists have gradually revealed the nature of the Roman military occupation at Castleshaw. The short evaluation of August 1995 has added a new dimension to our understanding of this short lived but complex site, with firm evidence that an extra-mural settlement existed here. There is a great deal of work to be done to define the extent and character of this settlement and to place it properly in its setting of the Roman occupation of northern Britain.

8. Recommendations

Further evaluation work should be undertaken to better define the nature and extent of Roman extra-mural settlement:

- 1) Excavate sections through the ditch system represented in TP28-31 to record full profiles and identify exact boundary to this part of the settlement. Carry out environmental analysis of primary silts and charcoal as appropriate.
- 2) Examine the sterile area of TP20-21 through test pitting to look for ditches or evidence of edge of Roman occupation here. Reveal profile and orientation of ditch if found.
- 3) Excavate a section through the ditch indicated by TP13 to define its orientation and function.
- 4) Identify edge of Roman activity around hearth found in TP11.
- 5) Using the test pit evaluation technique, locate the line of the Roman road west of the fort complex and outside the Scheduled area. Use same to examine evidence for other Roman remains in the field west of the Roman fort.
- 6) Look for evidence of the bath house beside Waters Clough. Identify features and areas of more recent origin ie. water power features relating to mills and the more recent water works activity close to the stream. Test pit areas deemed to have little disturbance and good potential for undisturbed Roman occupation.

If the above programme of evaluation is successful then the extent of extra-mural settlement beyond the west and south sides of the fort will have been defined, with an indication of its date range. Following this it should be possible to formulate a research design which will selectively examine key areas through larger scale excavation. It is envisaged that this stage would be a collaborative affair involving North West Water, the University of Manchester, Oldham MBC and English Heritage. In any case, following completion of the evaluation phases, the Scheduled area should be extended to include newly located Roman remains.

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Dave Power produced the post excavation drawings. Chris Howarth undertook the desk top publishing.

Arthur Boulton from Bolton Museum undertook finds conservation and cleaning.

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Especial thanks once again to Jayne for her support, encouragement and all those lovely cakes!

Appendix A – Finds from Trench 1

[002] 16 tile fragments
4 sherds amphora
1 sherd Samian
2 sherds black cooking ware

[005] 1 fragment tile
2 iron nails
1 rim grey ware

[008] 1 iron strap hinge
1 decorated bronze terminal
1 piece glass vessel (with optic blown ribs)
5 iron fragments
1 piece tap slag
daub
3 pieces burnt bone
10 sherds orange ware (flagon?)
6 sherds black & grey wares
1 lid grey ware
1 worked flint

[009] 1 piece glass vessel

[012] 1 lead fragment
1 iron fragment (nail head?)
1 sherd orange ware
3 sherds cream ware
2 (conjoining) sherds black ware (burnished?)

[013] 1 tile fragment
16 pieces burnt bone
daub pieces (including fired red)
15 iron nail fragments
1 sherd amphora
1 base & 1 body sherd Samian
3 sherds rusticated ware
14 body sherds & 2 rims of cream ware
45 body sherds, 9 rims
& 3 bases assorted black & grey wares
several unidentified fired clay pieces

[014] 1 worked iron object

[015] 1 tile fragment
1 piece burnt daub
1 sherd amphora
13 body sherds & 1 rim cream ware
3 sherds decorated cream ware
1 sherd rusticated ware

[017] Daub
1 unidentified iron fragment

[023] 1 sherd red ware

[025] 2 iron nails
1 sherd rusticated ware

Appendix B – Test Pit Descriptions

TP 1

Top height (NW corner) *Depth of top soil* *Depth of ploughsoil*
266.92m OD (001)20cm (002)16cm

Shallow plough soil layer came off onto natural mottled cream/ yellow silty clay with 40% small to medium angular sandstones and occasional flecks of charcoal.

A sherd of amphora came from the top of a possible shallow slot running SW to NE. The slot is 30cm wide and a maximum of 3cm deep, and is filled with a light grey brown silty clay loam with moderate flecks of charcoal, occasional small sandstones. This slot is interpreted as probably Roman in origin.

Finds

001 002
post medieval pottery 1 body sherd amphora

TP 2

Top height 266.92 *Depth of top soil* 23cm *Depth of plough soil* 10cm

Very shallow plough soil layer coming off on to natural yellow/white silty clay with 20% sandstones, frequent flecks/small patches iron staining.

No Roman levels.

Finds

001 002
post medieval pottery 1 body sherd red ware
modern glass 1 translucent grey flint (retouched)

TP 3

Top height 268.01 *Depth of top soil* 23cm *Depth of plough soil* 30cm

Base formed of mottled light grey silty clay with iron pan staining, very little charcoal, occasional small sandstones. Thin, weathered layer above natural.

No Roman levels.

Finds

001 002
None 1 post medieval pot
 1 white/cream fabric
 (Roman mortarium or flagon)

TP 4

Top height 267.04 *Depth of top soil* 22cm *Depth of ploughsoil* 15cm

The ploughsoil layer came straight off on to natural with no indication of Roman deposits. Natural was mid-yellow clay loam with small to medium angular sandstones.

Finds

001

1 body sherd of hard fabric
(post medieval?)

002

1 poss. body sherd Samian
1 iron fragment**TP 5***Top height 270.17**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 20cm*

Charcoal flecks evident throughout plough soil together with some stones of maximum 15cm diameter. There was no clear interface with the layer beneath, the plough soil gradually giving way to a mid- to dark brown sandy loam with frequent flecks of charcoal. This layer was similar to [013] in Trench 1 and represents the top of Roman archaeology, evident also from the quantity of Roman finds just above this level.

Finds

001

2 Roman tile fragments

002

3 burnt bone fragments
4 iron fragments
1 large base sherd cream ware
1 base sherd Samian
2 body sherds grey ware**TP 6***Top height 269.24**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 33cm*

Plough soil contained very occasional angular sandstone fragments and flecks of charcoal. It merges into a layer of mid brown silty clay loam with frequent angular and rounded sandstones and very occasional flecks of charcoal. This layer had a maximum depth of 15cm in this test pit, giving on to natural mid-brown yellow clay loam.

The depth of the stratigraphy in this test pit suggests it may contain a ditch or pit fill and could even be a continuation of the shallow ditch type feature [F003] encountered in Trench 1, with the stony, finds free and almost charcoal free fill being similar to [008]. There is also a possibility that this material represents hill wash as it lies on a down slope beneath the crest of the hill.

Finds

001

12 sherds post medieval pottery

002

13 sherds post medieval pottery
1 piece glass**TP 7***Top height 268.21**Depth of top soil 15cm**Depth of plough soil 38cm*

The plough soil overlaid a natural looking deposit of mid brown yellow clay loam with 30% fragments of angular shale and sandstone, there is isolated charcoal flecking to the south. It appears to be cut by a W-E aligned feature. The north edge of this feature was visible but not the south which runs into test pit edge. Feature not fully excavated but contained Roman pottery from its upper surface and is therefore likely to be Roman in origin.

Finds

001

14 sherds post medieval pottery
1 cinder fragment

002

4 sherds post medieval pottery
1 iron stud/nail

From top of feature

4 body sherds red ware
1 rim sherd orange ware

TP 8

Top height 267.02

Depth of top soil 21cm

Depth of plough soil 23cm

Similar to TP 4. No Roman deposits encountered.

Finds

001

16 sherds post medieval pottery

002

7 sherds post medieval pottery
1 body sherd unidentified
2 iron fragments

TP 9

Top height 271.21

Depth of top soil 21cm

Depth of plough soil 10cm

Plough soil wedges out to the south, being 13cm compared with 8cm to the north. Three layers and a possible post hole were revealed. The post hole is ill defined in plan – it is sub-circular with a better defined edge to the south. Not excavated. The layers overlay each other with the most recent appearing in the north part of the test pit base. Here there was a light- to mid-grey brown clay loam with moderate fragments of angular shale and sandstone (maximum 8cm diameter) and occasional flecks of charcoal. This layer overlay, in the mid part of the test pit, a mid- to dark-grey brown clay loam with frequent flecks of charcoal and moderate angular stones, which in turn lay above mid-grey brown silty clay loam with moderate stones and flecks of charcoal. It was noted that none of these layers had a clear edge and we may be seeing one mixed deposit similar to [013] in Trench 1. The nature of the layers and the finds suggest Roman activity at this point.

Finds

001

1 Roman tile fragment

002

1 small tile fragment
3 body sherds cream ware
2 rim sherd coarse wares
2 iron fragments (probably a nail)

TP 10

Top height 270.28

Depth of top soil 18cm

Depth of plough soil 25cm

The plough soil had c 60% angular shale and sandstone inclusions of a maximum of 17cm width. This layer also contained rounded gritstone and frequent flecks of charcoal. The plough soil sealed a surface of closely compacted shale and gritstone fragments within a matrix of mid grey brown clay loam with occasional flecks of charcoal. This layer may represent a floor surface which extends across the whole test pit. It should be noted that the one coin find came from the base of the plough soil just above this compacted surface.

Finds

001

2 sherds post medieval pottery

002

1 bronze Roman coin
3 iron fragments

TP 11*Top height 269.22**Depth of top soil 23cm**Depth of plough soil 30cm*

The plough soil contained moderate fragments of angular sandstone and occasional flecks of charcoal. Running along the west side of the test pit base was an area of hard, burnt red clay which, on its outer eastern edge changed to a mid grey yellow colour (unheated). In the south west corner two burnt red sandstones were set on edge against this clay. A section of the clay, which was removed in the north western part of the test pit to a depth of 10cm, was found to be consistently oxidised red. Just north and east of this was an area of dense charcoal.

The bulk of the test pit base was taken up by a layer of mid yellow brown clay loam, with moderate angular shale and sandstone and moderate flecks of charcoal.

The deposit of red clay would appear to be a hearth with the stones set on edge representing the core of the hearth. There was a distinct lack of slag or cinder debris so it is unlikely that there was a smelting furnace or smithing hearth here. As the hearth was not excavated it is impossible to be certain of its function.

Finds

001

4 sherds of post medieval pottery
1 glass fragment
2 fragments of unknown material
1 body sherd Roman cream ware

002

1 sherd of post medieval pottery
4 iron fragments
3 pieces of glass
3 body sherds Roman orange red pottery
1 base sherd grey ware
1 rim sherd grey ware
Several body sherds grey ware
1 base sherd Samian
1 body sherd cream ware

TP 12*Top height 267.99**Depth of top soil 24cm**Depth of plough soil 28cm*

Plough soil overlay a natural layer of mid brown yellow clay loam with 40% angular fragments of shale and medium sized sandstones. No Roman levels present.

Finds

001

3 sherds post medieval pottery
3 shell fragments

002

4 sherds post medieval pottery
1 iron fragment (nail head)
1 body sherd Roman cream ware

TP 13*Top height 271.19**Depth of top soil 25cm**Depth of plough soil 30cm*

Very few stones in the plough soil. This substantial layer gave way to a mottled mid to dark brown grey silty clay loam with a high percentage of crushed and decayed orange sandstone (which gave the orange mottling affect). This layer also contained moderate angular shale and sandstones up to a maximum of 14cm width. This material was remarkably similar to the upper ditch fill encountered in 1985-7 excavations of the fortlet ditches. A test hole in the south-west corner of TP 13 showed the layer to be 14cm when it became noticeably darker and more silty.

Finds

001

3 iron fragments

002

1 sherd post medieval pottery
 1 rim sherd post medieval pottery
 1 body sherd red ware (Samian?)

TP14*Top height 271.46**Depth of top soil 22cm**Depth of plough soil 30cm*

Mid-brown plough soil had very occasional flecks of charcoal and moderate angular small-medium sandstones, with a single small patch of burnt clay within bottom 5cm of south facing section.

Beneath 002 was a clearly defined layer of mid to dark brown silty clay loam with frequent flecks of charcoal and occasional small patches of decayed orange sandstone and burnt clay. This layer is similar to [013] in Trench 1 and is clearly a Roman occupation layer.

Finds

001

7 sherds post medieval pottery

002

2 sherds post medieval pottery
 1 body sherd Samian
 1 iron fragment
 1 burnt bone fragment

TP 15*Top height 270.32**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 32cm*

The plough soil had a substantial depth. It contained occasional stone inclusions and very occasional flecks of charcoal. Beneath it was a compact dark brown silty clay loam with frequent angular sandstones and shale and occasional flecks of charcoal. This layer had a maximum depth of 2cm, extending across the base of the test pit. It may represent hill wash and lay directly over natural brown yellow sandy clay loam.

Finds

001

None

002

1 rim sherd Roman red ware
 2 iron fragments (nail)

TP 16*Top height 268.86**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 23cm*

Plough soil had c 20% small angular sandstones and shale with occasional flecks of charcoal. 002 came off straight onto natural which was mid-brown yellow sandy clay loam.

No Roman deposits visible.

Finds

001

None

002

None

TP 17*Top height 272.74**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 17cm*

A thin layer of plough soil came off on to a light grey brown clay loam with moderate charcoal inclusions and a depth of 7cm. In plan revealed as localised patches. This lay above a mid to dark brown grey silty clay loam with orange mottling originally believed to be a ditch fill similar to that encountered in TP 13 to the west. This layer turned out to be only 2cm deep and did not extend over the whole test pit area but rather had accumulated in shallow depressions. Beneath this level was a layer of densely concentrated angular and rounded stones (maximum 10cm width) within a matrix of light grey brown sandy clay with very occasional flecks of charcoal. The stones were of varied shape and size and appeared to slope away to the north (rut or camber?). In the north east corner of the test pit a test hole revealed the stone layer to be 7cm deep.

This stone layer could be interpreted as a trackway of unknown width and alignment within the extra mural settlement area. Certainly it is not substantial enough to be a continuation of the main Roman road running through Castleshaw valley.

Finds

001	002
5 sherds post medieval pottery	None
1 piece of glass	

TP 18

Top height 272.07 Depth of top soil 30 cm Depth of plough soil 15 cm

In the base of the plough soil were several large angular, flat stones. These were above a line of large flat stones which ran north to south along the western edge of the test pit base. The stones gave the appearance of drain capping stones. The feature was not excavated. The rest of the test pit contained a layer, 15cm deep, of mid yellow brown silty clay loam with moderate flecks of charcoal. This came off to reveal a mixed creamy coloured clay loam only 2cm deep in the southern half of the test pit. If this was a drain then it was similar to the one excavated in Trench 1. A Roman date is most probable, given the numerous finds from around the feature and its being well sealed beneath the plough soil. Indeed, it was evident that ploughing had damaged the upper capping stones knocking some of them out of alignment.

Finds

001	002
1 sherd post medieval pottery	1 sherd Samian ware
1 piece of black glass	2 body sherds red ware
assorted Roman tile fragments	1 rim grey ware
	1 body sherd amphora
	1 nail
	assorted daub fragments

TP 19

Top height 270.80 Depth of top soil 22cm Depth of plough soil 30cm

The top soil contained large fragments of stone which probably derived from the collapsed old field boundary wall (on a north south alignment) approximately 1m to the west. All the stones were evident only in the west section. The plough soil gave on to natural yellow clay loam which contained 30% angular stones.

No Roman levels evident.

Finds

001

1 sherd post medieval pottery
1 clay pipe stem

002

3 tile fragments

TP 20*Top height 273.18**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 15cm*

The plough soil was similar to that found elsewhere but with more (35%) angular shale and sandstones of varied size up to 9cm width, with very occasional flecks of charcoal. The stone inclusions became denser with depth. No clear evidence for Roman levels.

Finds

001

12 sherds post medieval pottery
1 iron fragment
2 pieces glass

002

None

TP 21*Top height 272.25**Depth of top soil 18cm**Depth of plough soil 17cm*

A thin band of plough soil similar to TP 20 with stones especially concentrated in the lower part of this layer. [002] lay above natural mid brown yellow clay loam. No clear evidence for Roman levels.

Finds

001

1 clay pipe stem
2 sherds post medieval pottery
2 tile fragments
1 body sherd Roman cream ware
1 sherd Samian
1 piece lead
1 piece modern glass
1 rim piece Roman glass

002

5 daub fragments

TP 22*Top height 270.58**Depth of top soil 20cm**Depth of plough soil 20cm*

The plough soil had frequent small sandstones and came down on to loose mid-yellow clay loam with 30% small fragments of shale, frequent small to medium angular sandstones. No evidence for Roman occupation. This was not surprising as the test pit was located well down slope.

Finds

001

1 sherd post medieval pottery
1 tile fragment
2 nail fragments

002

None

TP 23*Top height 274.72**Depth of top soil 15cm**Depth of plough soil 11cm*

The plough soil contained 70% small to large angular stones and shale with very occasional flecks of charcoal. This layer occurs in both section and plan and continues below base of test pit as excavated. The high density of stone may represent upcast from the digging of the post medieval ditch known as Drycroft Lane and adjacent to TP 23, on its north side. This material is not well structured and is unlikely to be remnants of a road. Natural was not revealed in this test pit.

Finds

001

8 sherds post medieval pottery
1 piece green glass

002

1 burnt bone fragment
1 iron fragment

TP 24

Top height 273.63

Depth of top soil 16cm

Depth of plough soil 19cm

A mid-brown plough soil with angular stone inclusions (maximum 10cm width) and occasional flecks of charcoal overlay a mid brown clay loam with c 60% angular and crushed/decayed sandstones. Above this, in the southern half of the test pit was a thin, 2cm, deposit of very compact crushed shale with frequent angular shale and stones (maximum 14cm width). This appeared as a mid-brown grey coloured layer with no charcoal evident. Possibly dumped material.

A small test hole in the south east corner showed that the mid brown clay loam layer had a depth of 12cm coming on to a grey brown clay loam with much decayed orange sandstone and frequent closely spaced angular stones. This layer seemed to have a mixed composition which suggested it was not natural. Although a high percentage of stone was noted within the test pit, it remains unlikely that they represent a road or track surface.

Finds

001

18 sherds post medieval pottery
small burnt bone fragments

002

1 burnt bone fragment

TP 25

Top height 272.08

Depth of top soil 18cm

Depth of plough soil 38cm

In this pit only the north half was excavated below base of top soil level. The plough soil was very deep with some Roman finds towards the bottom. It was characterised by moderate small sandstone inclusions and moderate flecks of charcoal, small bits of sandstone and flecks of cream silty clay. Natural yellow clay loam was encountered against the north edge but just south is layer of compact light cream brown silty clay loam with moderate flecks of charcoal, flecks of decayed orange sandstone and frequent small patches cream silty clay. This appears to be Roman occupation level or fill.

Finds

001

11 sherds post medieval pottery
3 pieces modern glass

002

1 sherd post medieval pottery
1 small sherd red ware
2 pieces Roman glass (1 decorated)
6 pieces burnt daub
1 nail
1 unidentified iron fragment

TP 26*Top height 274.99**Depth of top soil 18cm**Depth of plough soil 35cm*

The top soil and plough soil had a high percentage of angular stone and shale inclusions which, as with TP 23, appeared to derive from the cutting of Drycroft Lane. Under the plough soil was a creamy layer of silty clay with moderate small fragments of sandstone, very occasional flecks of charcoal. This was a thin layer, c 3cm deep, that came off on to natural mid-brown yellow clay loam in the middle part of the test pit. In the west section there appeared to be a cut associated with this deposit which may have represented the bottom fill of a gulley/ditch running west to east (see TP 29) along the northern part of the test pit with only its southern edge visible.

In the south east corner there was a loose mid-yellow brown silty clay loam with 15% small shale fragments, 20% small patches cream silty clay and charcoal. Although there were no finds from this deposit's surface (it was not excavated), it's make up did suggest a Roman origin and may be the northernmost extent of the occupation layer noted in TP 27.

Finds

001

8 sherds post medieval pottery

2 pieces of glass

1 iron fragment

002

1 handle post medieval pottery

1 iron fragment

TP 27*Top height 273.53**Depth of top soil 17cm**Depth of plough soil 18cm*

The plough soil was noted for the sparsity of stone inclusions. It formed a relatively shallow layer sealing Roman occupation levels. These were evident as several layers running one on top of another. At the north end of the test pit was a dark brown silty clay loam which lay under, in the middle part of the test pit, a layer of loose yellow brown clay loam with 30% small fragments of stone, which in turn ran under, to the south, a similar material but with frequent flecks of charcoal and small patches of cream coloured silty clay. Finally, along the southern edge was a dark brown clay loam with frequent angular sandstones.

The Roman finds material, including a well preserved large sherd of decorated Samian bowl recovered from the top of the dark brown silty clay loam in the north part of the test pit, clearly indicate that these layers can be assigned to Roman activity and may even extend northwards as far as TP 26.

Finds

001

1 clinker fragment

002

3 rim sherds Samian

(incl. relief decoration)

1 friable base grey ware

1 piece Roman glass (corner of vessel)

2 nails (slender)

1 nail (large)

TP 28*Top height 271.69**Depth of top soil 18cm**Depth of plough soil 30cm*

The plough soil came off on to a light grey brown silty clay loam with frequent flecks of charcoal, occasional flecks of decayed orange sandstone, occasional small sandstones. This layer is the upper fill of what appears to be a ditch running south west to north east to link with TP 30. When sectioned against the west side of the test pit this fill was found to be 30-35cm deep, it

yielded a sherd of amphora and several fragments of an unusual grit stone (perhaps from a quernstone?) and sealed a charcoal rich layer running into the base of the ditch. The charcoal layer was a maximum of 6cm deep and much thinner towards the top of the ditch cut.

The north slope of the ditch only was visible. It cut the natural from near the north edge of the test pit. The ditch sloped down to the south edge of the test pit where it appeared to be flattening as if this was the base. At this point there was a primary silt layer comprising a sticky light grey silty clay. This layer extended c 20cm north of the south edge of the test pit. A stake hole 8cm diameter and 10cm deep and bounded by small stones on its south side was encountered close to the west edge of the test pit and c 20cm in from the south edge, marking where the primary silt layer ended. The stake hole was filled with clear light grey brown silty clay loam.

The evidence from TP 28 suggests a defensive or boundary ditch defining the southern extent of the extra-mural settlement. The cut line of the ditch indicates it follows the contour of the hill, just where the flatish hill top turns to a steep slope. It seems probable that the ditch runs into TP30 and then TP31. Its course west of TP28 has not been located.

Finds

001	002
5 sherds post medieval pottery (1 vessel)	1 sherd red ware (Samian?)

From ditch fill

1 sherd amphora
1 (sample) grit stone (quern?)

TP 29

Top height 274.93 *Depth of top soil 17cm* *Depth of plough soil 18cm*

This test pit was only three quarters excavated beneath base of the top soil. The plough soil was very loamy, with few stones on the south side and much stonier to the north. Along the north edge of the test pit [002] became very stony at its base before coming off on to natural yellow brown clay loam. In the rest of the area was a mid-purple brown silty clay loam with frequent flecks of decayed orange sandstone. This material is similar to upper ditch fills encountered elsewhere in the fortlet excavations. This material was removed against the west section of the test pit and found to be 10cm deep, sealing a mid-yellow brown silty clay loam with occasional small to medium sandstones, very occasional flecks of charcoal and no finds. This layer was not bottomed in the south west corner of the test pit but came off to reveal the cut of a ditch running west to east. The ditch was represented only by its northern slope which ran into the southern section of the test pit.

This may be a ditch delimiting the northern boundary of the extra-mural settlement. It may be represented in the north side of TP 31.

Finds

001	002
1 piece modern glass	many sherds of post medieval pottery
1 tile fragment	(1 vessel)
1 piece clinker	2 tile fragments

TP 30

Top height 273.44 *Depth of top soil 25cm* *Depth of plough soil 30cm*

The plough soil was very loamy with only a few small sandstones. It was deep and soft and came down on to a light creamy brown layer of silty clay loam which, when sondaged, proved to be c 10cm deep and sealing a light grey brown silty clay loam with frequent large flecks of charcoal. This layer in turn was 10cm deep and came off on to a light grey silty clay containing bits of burnt daub and frequent flecks of charcoal.

These layers appear to represent ditch fill and are probably a continuation of the ditch encountered in TP 28.

Finds

001

6 sherds post medieval pottery
2 small tile fragments

002

4 sherds post medieval pottery
1 clinker fragment
1 tile fragment

TP 31

Top height 274.84

Depth of top soil 17cm

Depth of plough soil 28cm

The top soil was nearly stone free and the plough soil was characterised by its loamy nature with very few stones. It came off on to a mid-brown grey clay loam with frequent flecks and small patches of decayed orange sandstone and occasional medium sandstones. A small test hole showed this layer to be 10cm deep and it sealed a medium yellow brown clay loam of unknown depth. These deposits had the appearance and feel of Roman ditch fill.

Finds

001

6 sherds post medieval pottery
1 clay pipe stem

002

None

Appendix C – Finds Conservation

Contributed by Arthur Boulton

Pottery is amongst the most imperishable of all archaeological finds and is abundant on most sites. But this will depend on the condition that the objects are buried in. In damp soil underfired earthen wares will gradually hydrate to clay, becoming softened and liable to crumble. Crumbling may be exacerbated in acidic or soft ground-water by loss of calcite filler or dispersed calcium carbonate.

At Castleshaw Roman Fort the acidic and wet soil conditions badly affected objects recovered from the ground. Metal objects, particularly iron and copper alloys were found to be very badly corroded. With the pottery the acid soil had leached out much of the fabric thus leaving the pottery fragile and soft to the touch so that careless handling could result in destruction of the object. Grey and orange wares were badly affected and slip was easily lost, though in one case a Samian sherd did survive in a reasonably stable condition.

Pottery was consolidated by applying a 5% Primal WS 24/water solution which was dabbed on using a soft brush. Three or even four coats would be applied, with each coat being allowed to partly dry before applying the next. This technique was generally successful and although some subsequent cracking occurred with the most delicate fabrics upon drying, they did hold together well. If pottery was treated with the solution as soon as it was discovered it would become softer and had a tendency to disintegrate or for the slip to be washed off.

It is recommended that freshly excavated pottery sherds should be left to dry for four to six hours before applying the consolidation solution to the surface.

DAYCROFT FIELD, CASTLESHAW LOCATION OF EXCAVATION TRENCH AND TEST PITS

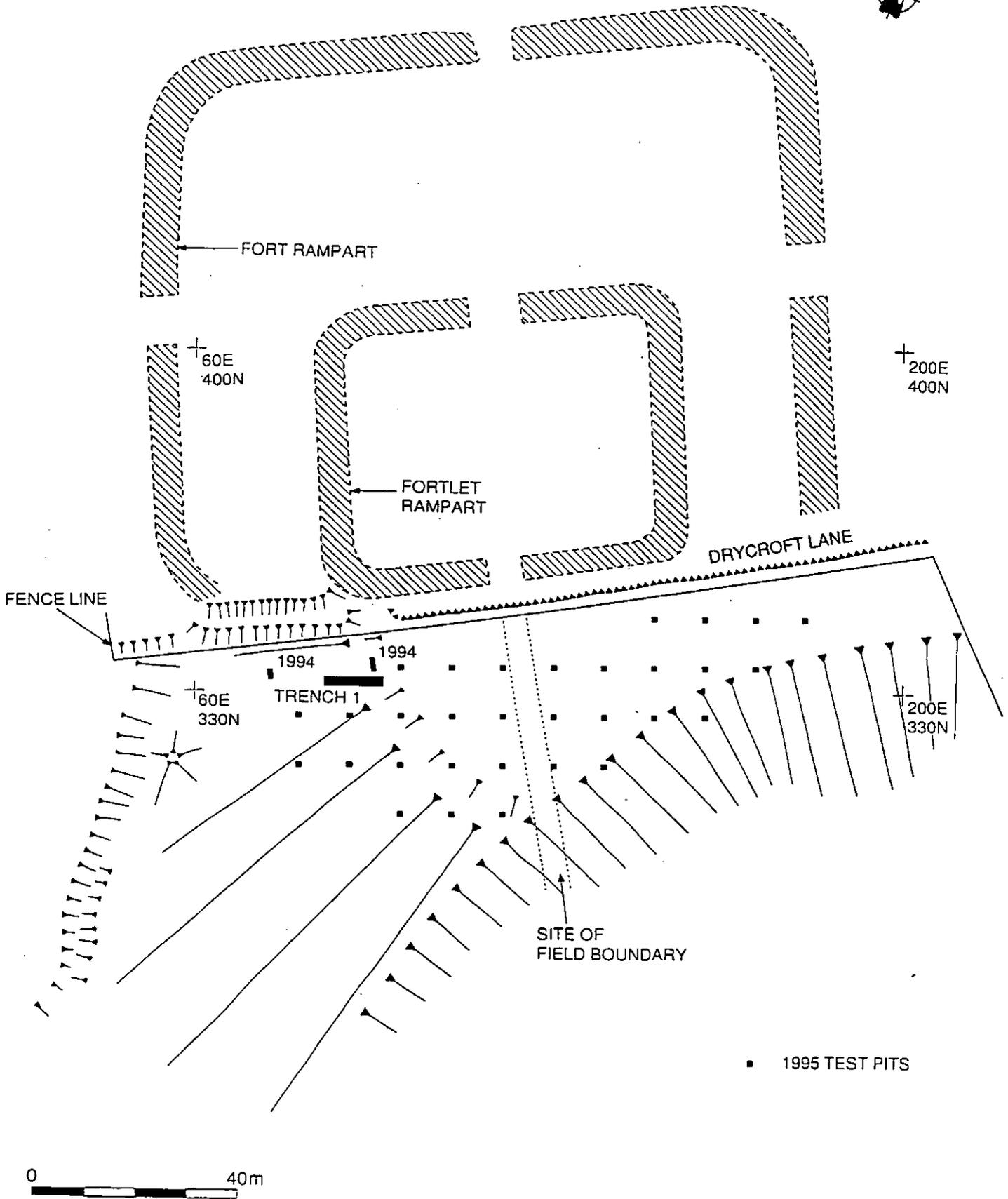


Fig 1

DAYCROFT FIELD, CASTLESHAW
TRENCH 1
SOUTH FACING SECTION

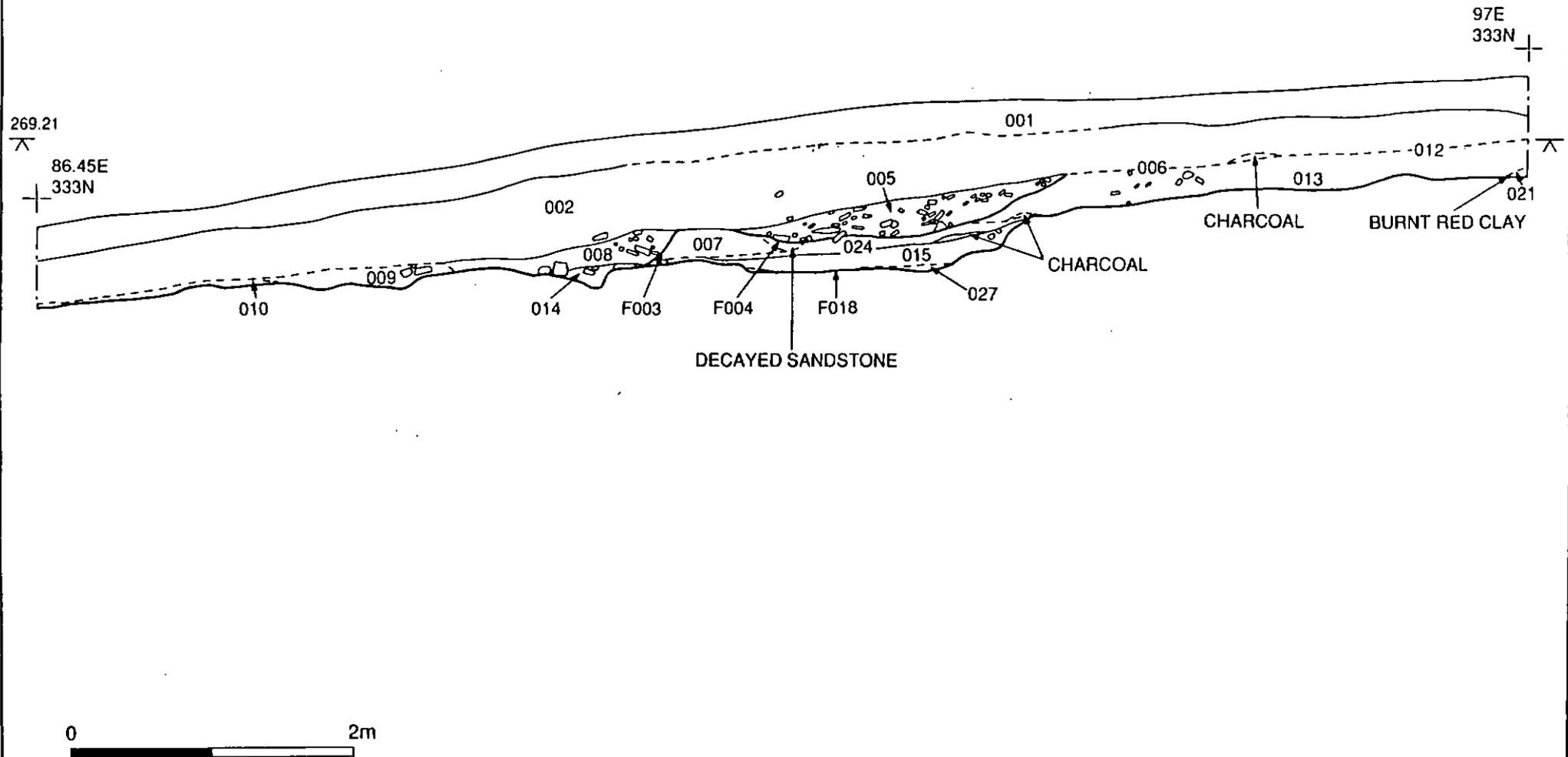
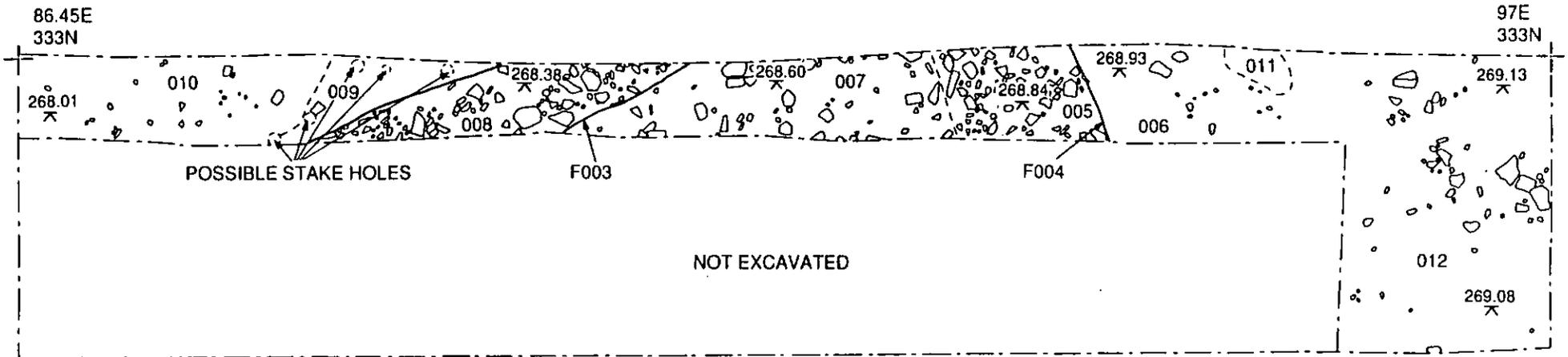
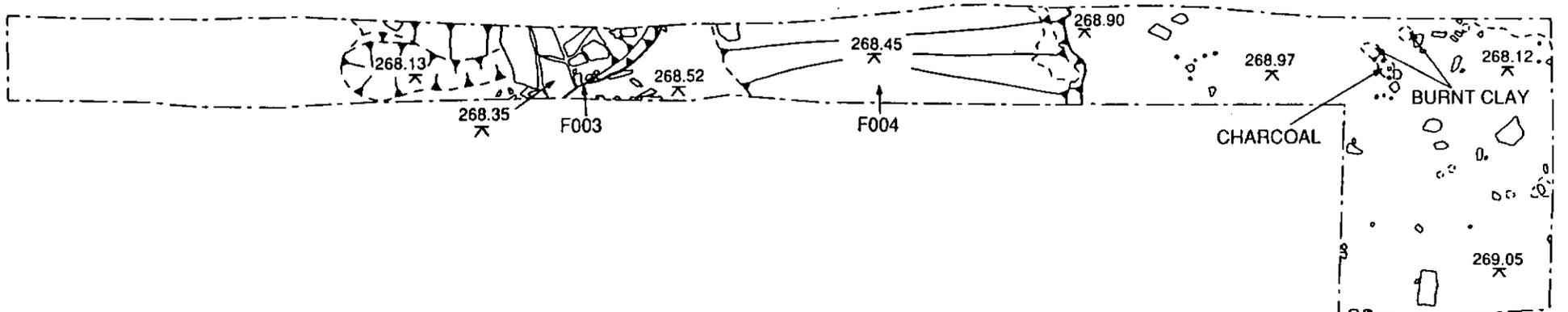


Fig 2

TRENCH 1 PLAN 1 SHOWING TOP OF ROMAN LEVELS



TRENCH PLAN 2 SHOWING DRAIN PART EXCAVATED AND DITCH POST EXCAVATED

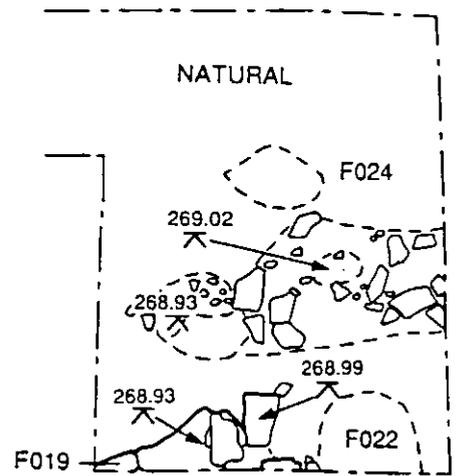
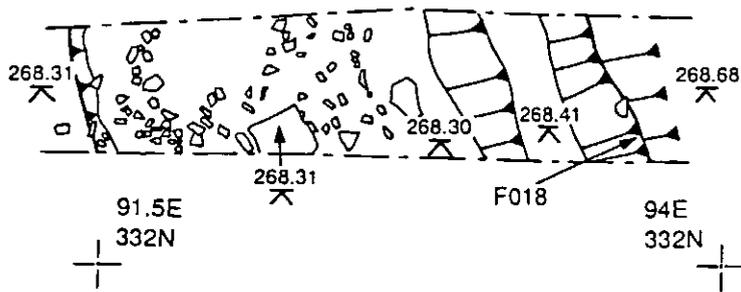


DAYCROFT FIELD, CASTLESHAW

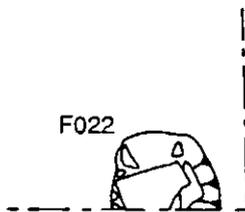


Fig 3

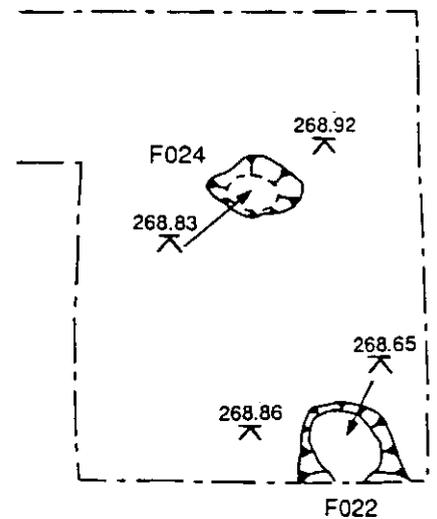
TRENCH 1 PLAN 3
 SHOWING DITCH POST EXCAVATION
 WALL FOOTING AND POST HOLE



TRENCH 1 PLAN 4
 SHOWING POST HOLE
 PART EXCAVATED



TRENCH 1 PLAN 4
 SHOWING POST HOLE AND
 F024 POST EXCAVATION



DAYCROFT FIELD, CASTLESHAW

Fig 4

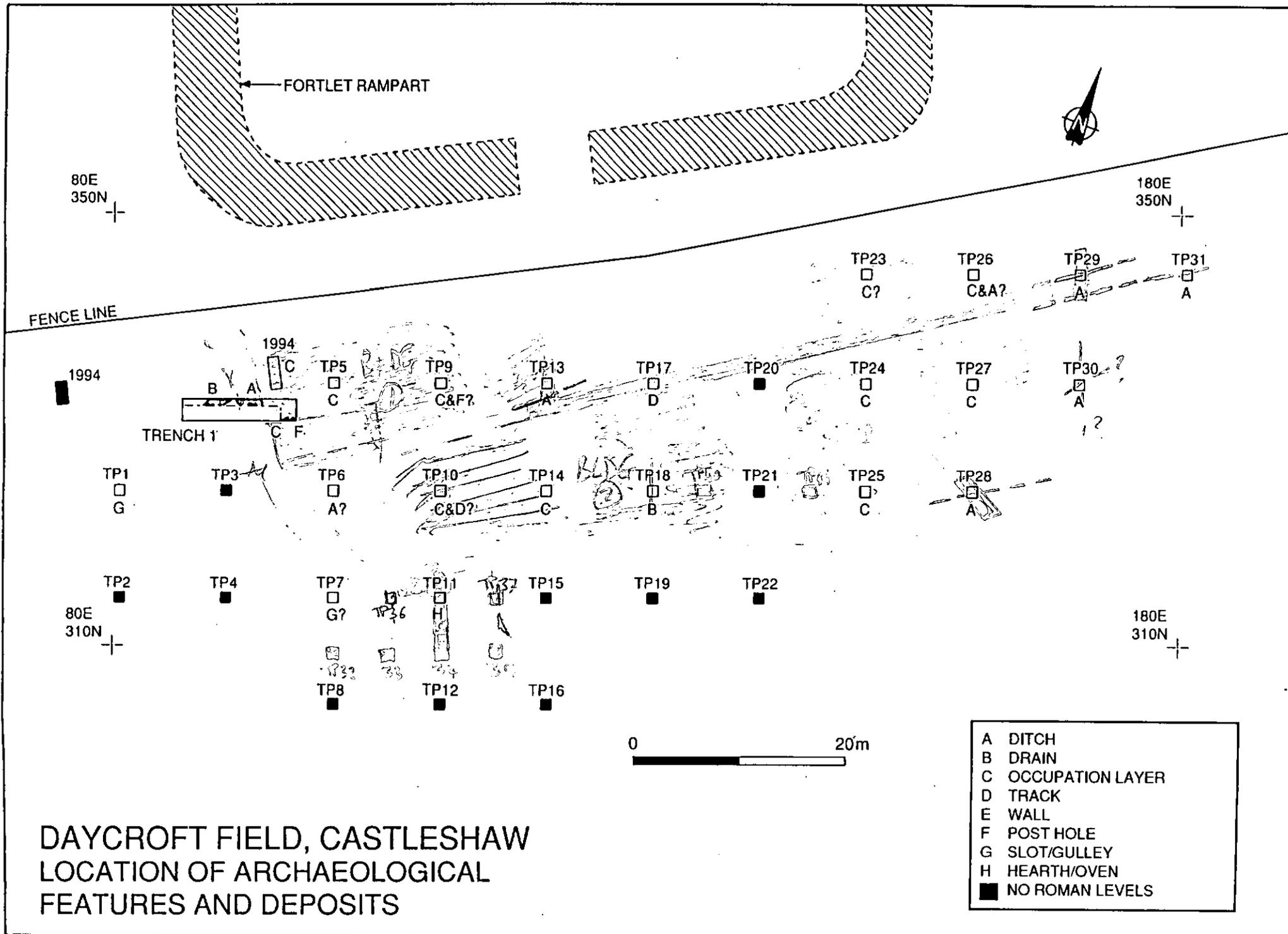


Fig 5

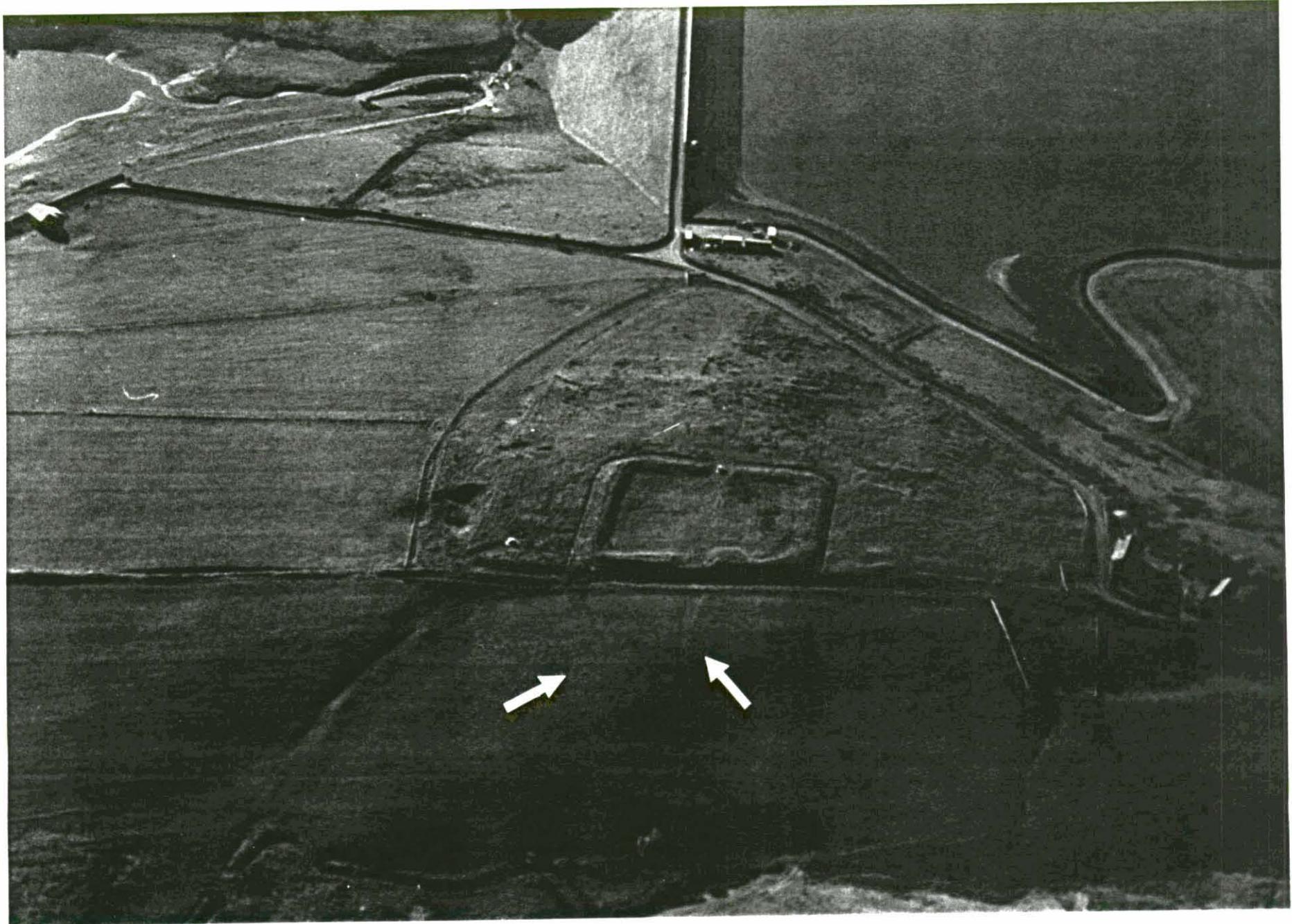


Plate 1 Aerial view of the Roman fort complex, with area of evaluation indicated by the arrows.



Plate 2 Excavation in progress on Trench 1. Looking west.



Plate 3 Capping stones over the drain in Trench 1.

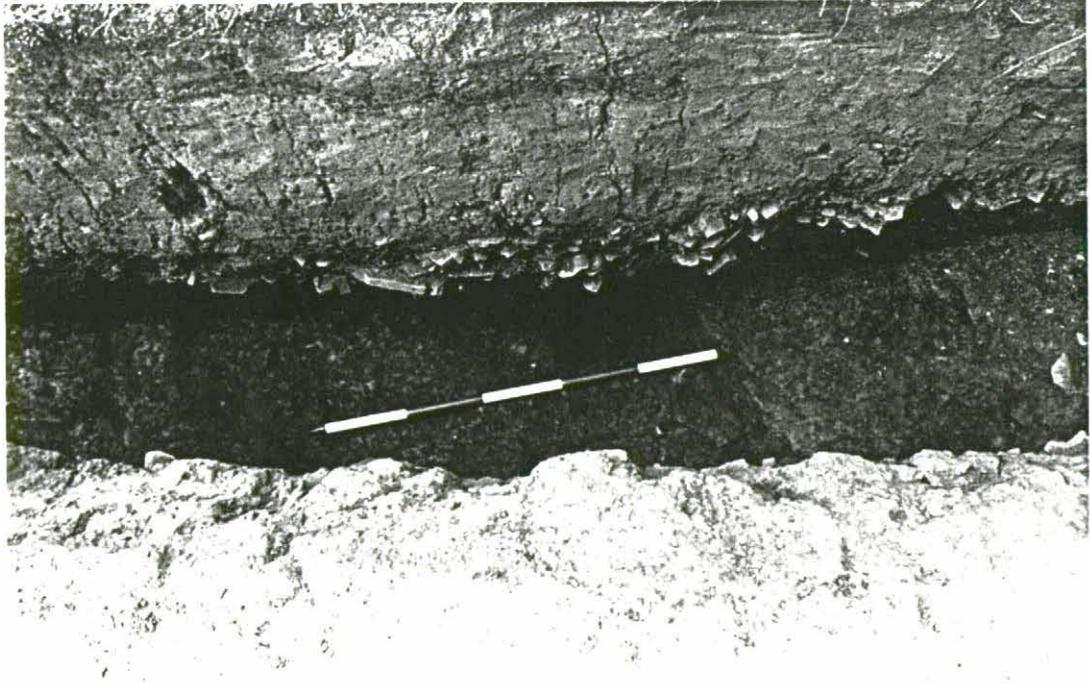


Plate 4 The early ditch [F018] post excavation. Looking north.

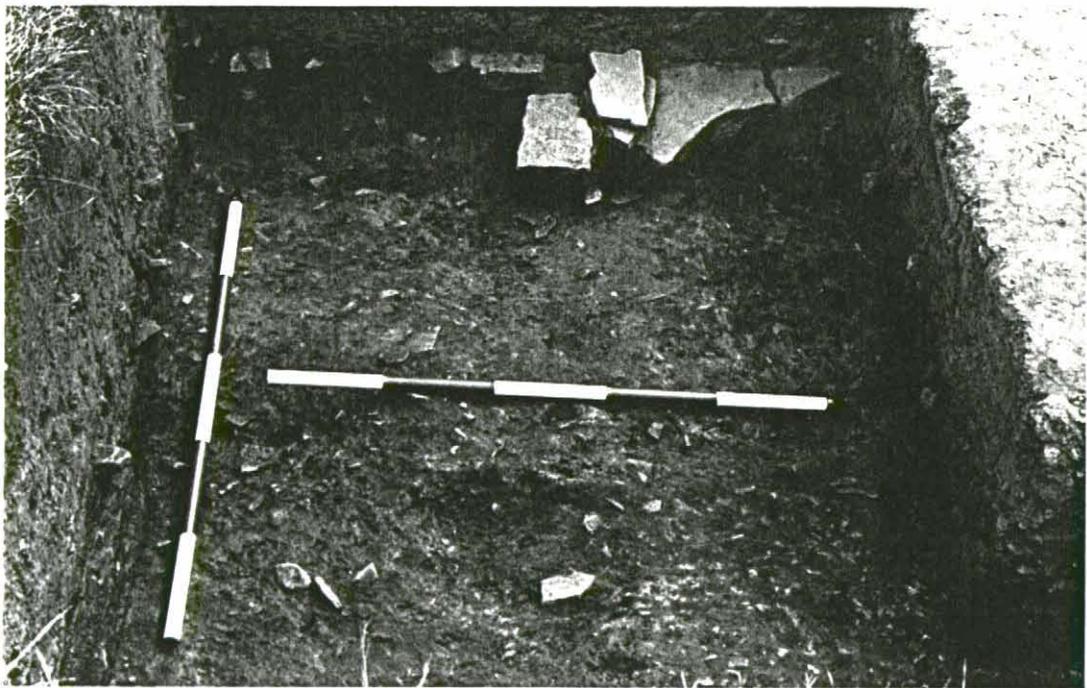


Plate 5 East end of Trench 1 showing wall base [F019] and post hole [F022] (pre-excitation). Looking south.

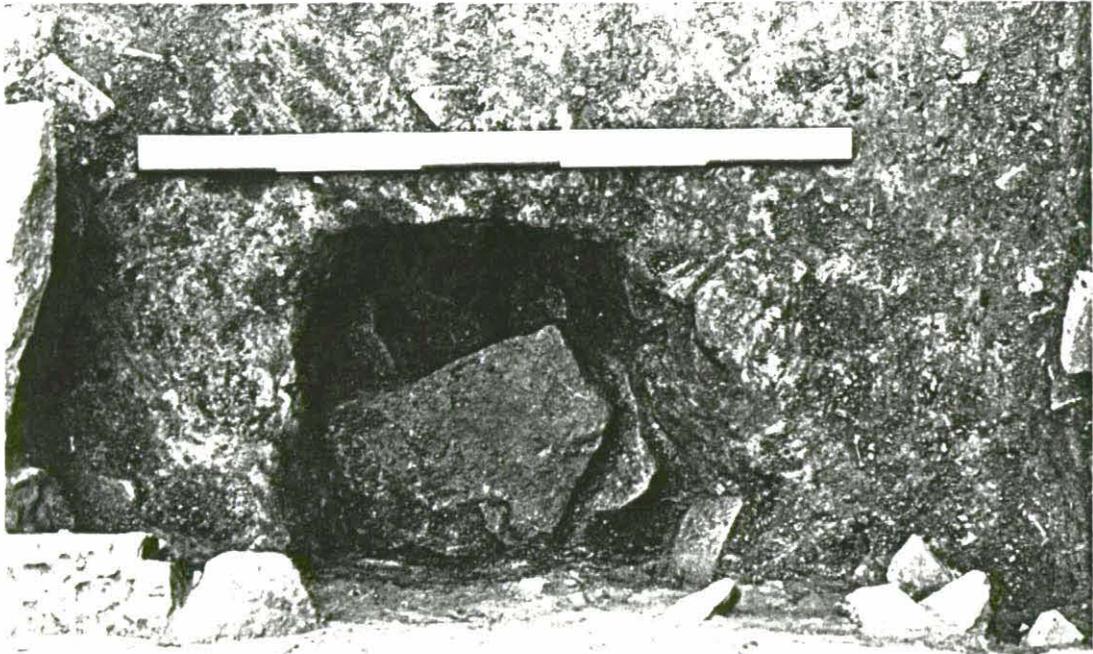


Plate 6 Post hole [F022] part excavation showing stone packing.



Plate 7 Test pitting in progress. Looking west.



Plate 8 Test pitting in progress. Looking west.

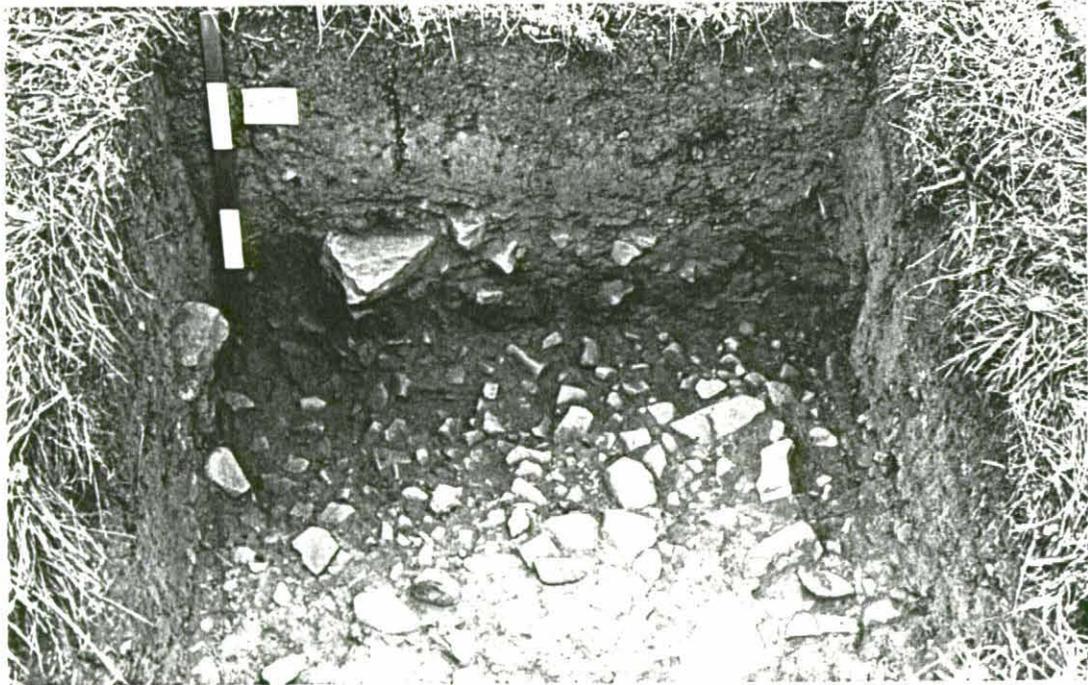


Plate 9 Possible track metalling in TP17. Looking north.

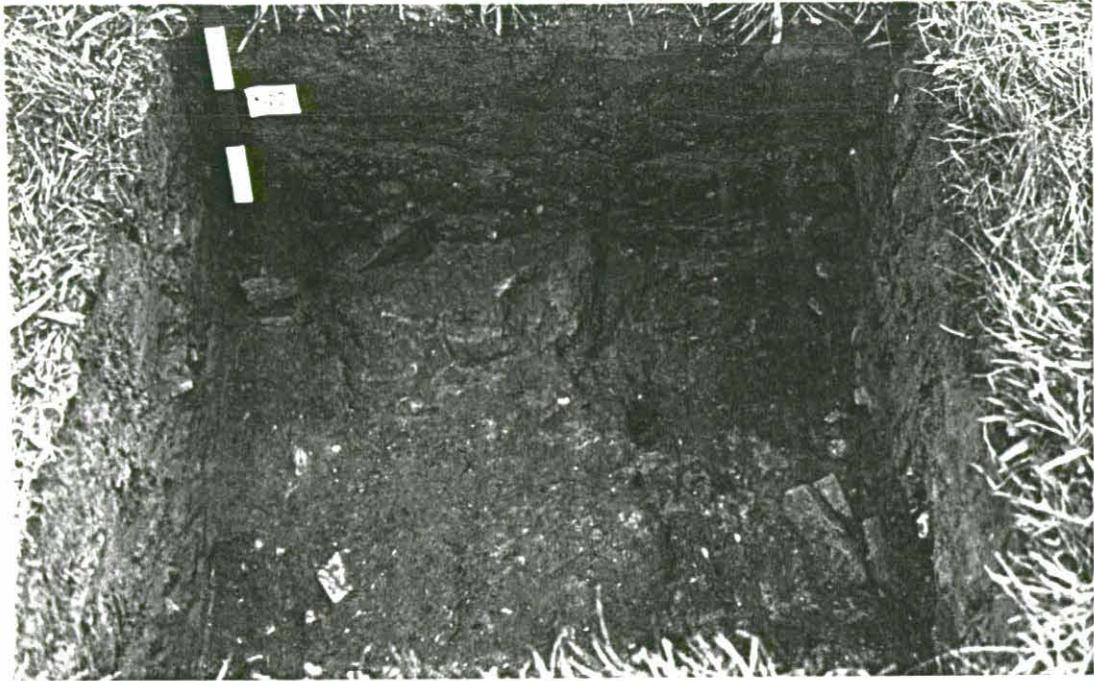


Plate 10 Hearth/oven base in TP11. Looking west.
The scale marks the central part of the feature.

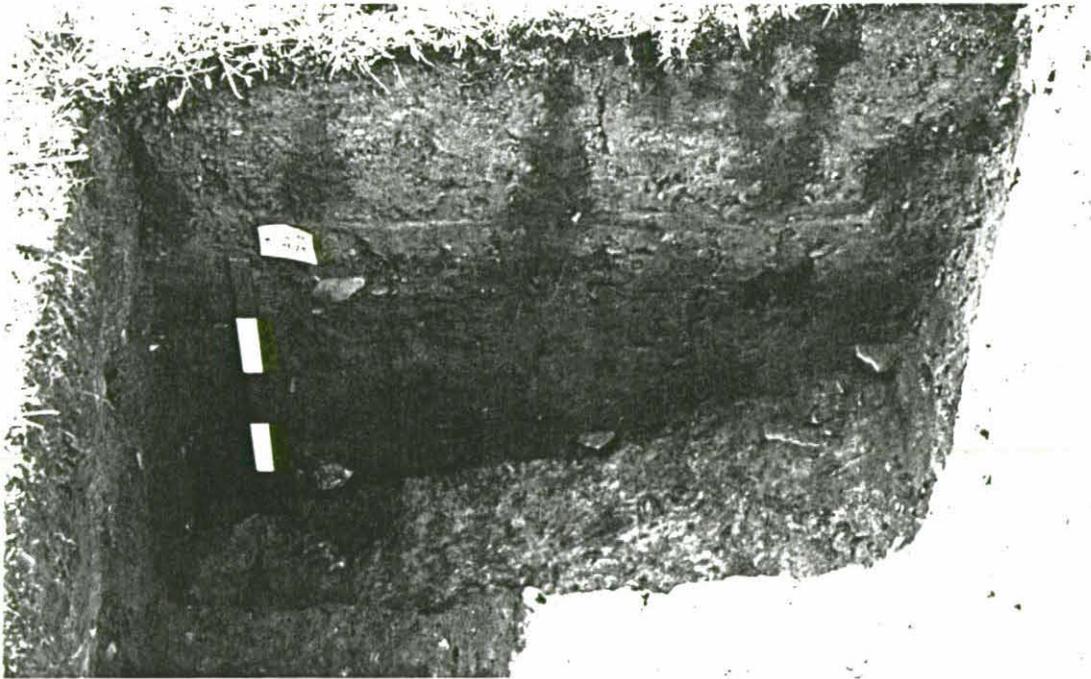


Plate 11 Cut and base of ditch in TP28. Looking east.
The stake hole lies to the right of the scale.