

4. EXCAVATIONS AT THE ROMAN TEMPORARY CAMP, LOCHLANDS, STIRLINGSHIRE

THE site of the camp lies immediately SW. of Lochlands farm (N.G.R. NS 856815) some 520 ft. from the S. bank of the River Carron, on a sand and gravel plateau at an average height of 94 ft. above O.D. It is the northernmost of a group of five temporary camps situated between the fort at Camelon and the river.¹ No traces of the defences are visible on the ground, but aerial photography² has revealed that the camp was rectangular on plan and measured some 1560 ft. from NE. to SW. by 1250 ft. transversely. The positions of four gates are known or can be inferred, and the internal area is 44 acres.³

Proposals to develop the area in which the camp lies as a factory site led the Ministry of

¹ RCAMS, *Inventory of Stirlingshire*, No. 122.

² Air photographs Nos. DN 016-22 in the C.U.C.A.P.

³ Feachem, R. W., *PSAS*, LXXXIX (1955-6), 336 ff.

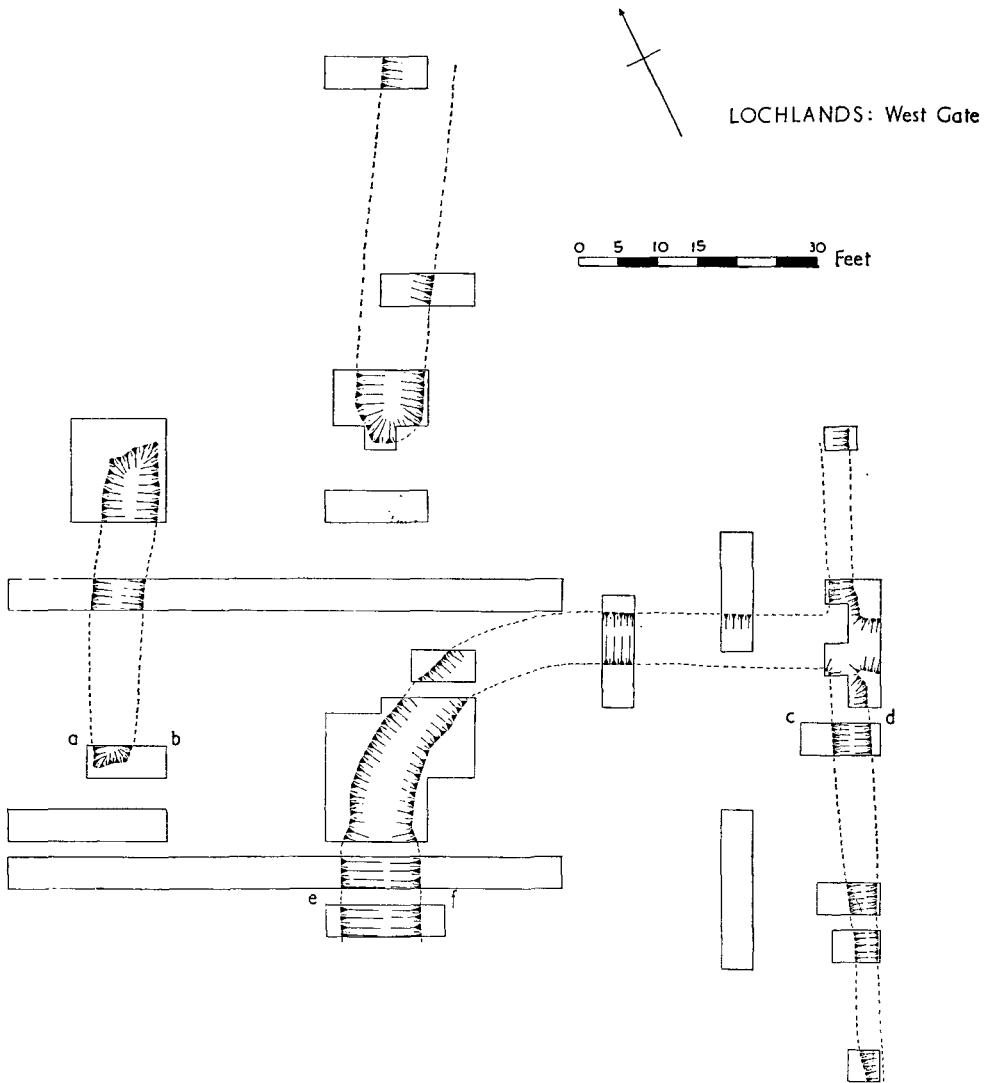
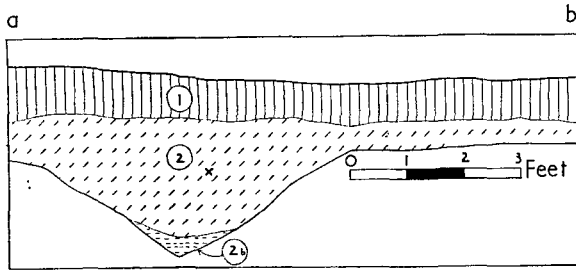


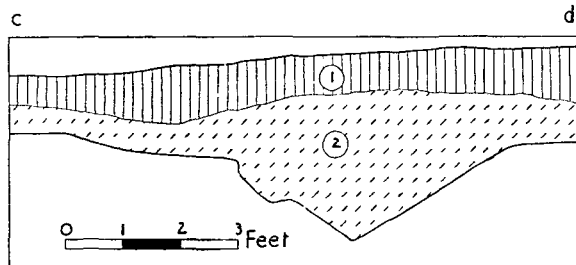
FIG. 4. Lochlands: plan

Public Building and Works to conduct an emergency excavation in November and December 1965 and in June 1966. The objectives of the investigation were to establish on the ground the line of the camp ditch, particularly the NW. angle and adjoining parts of the ditch not visible on the air photographs, and to attempt to date the site. The work was directed by the author.

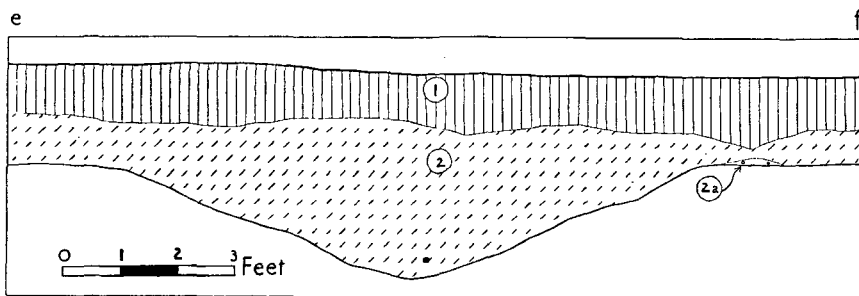
Excavation was confined to three areas in the western half of the camp. In the first of these, two trenches, cut to intersect the ditch on either side of the NW. angle, had negative results. This was disappointing, but enough of the N. and W. sides could be seen in the air photographs for the position of this angle to be calculated with a fair degree of accuracy.



I



II



III

LOCHLANDS: West Gate

Sections: I Tutulus ditch a-b
 II Subsidiary ditch c-d
 III Main ditch e-f

- ① Top soil
- ② Sandy soil
- ②a Rampart material
- ②b Silt
- x Coin (projected)
- Bronze (projected)

FIG. 5. Lochlands: sections

Three trenches, cut across the ditch line on the S. side of the camp in an attempt to catch the ends of the ditch at a possible entrance in the middle of that side, failed to show any sign of the ditch. One of the trenches produced a few sherds of amphora and post-medieval glazed ware.

In the third sector, on the southern part of the W. side 230 ft. N. of the SW. angle of the camp, trenching disclosed certain interesting features (fig. 4). These included the main ditch; an entrance with external traverse ditch; the corner of a ditch turning on the S. side of the entrance to run into the interior of the camp; and a subsidiary ditch whose line crosses this inturn and the entrance gap.

The main ditch of the camp, cut in the sand subsoil, is V-shaped in section and measures

9 ft. 9 in. in width by about 2 ft. in depth; its outer face has a more gradual slope than the inner. The entrance was originally *c.* 48 ft. in overall width, and was guarded by a traverse ditch which lies 25 ft. from the outer lip of the camp ditch and measures 41 ft. in length. It, too, is V-shaped in profile and is 6 ft. 6 in. across at its widest part and 1 ft. 9 in. deep. The end of the main camp ditch on the N. side of the entrance is rounded, but that on the S. side has been masked by the extension referred to above.

At its junction with the main ditch, the 'inturn' is reduced in width and depth, while in form its sides are splayed out as it rounds the corner. Once the ditch has completed the turn and runs in a straight course, it assumes a V-shape, but there is no consistency in the ditch's form, for it becomes flat-bottomed at a point 58 ft. E. of the main ditch's inner lip.

Near this position the inturned ditch is crossed by a subsidiary ditch almost at right angles. This lies approximately NNE.-SSW., and was traced for a length of 82 ft. At c-d it is 4 ft. 6 in. in width by 1 ft. 9 in. in depth and is V-shaped. A series of four, shallow, oval depressions occurs on the outer slope of the ditch, spaced about 20 ft. apart and in line with each other (fig. 5, *ii*). The ditch does not appear on the air photographs and its purpose is uncertain.

Apart from the lengths of ditch, another feature found was a layer of reddish brown sand with some gravel lying on the subsoil behind the inner lip of the main ditch S. of the entrance. This possibly represents the remains of the rampart material in the form of upcast from the ditch. Some 5 in. high at the ditch edge, there being no berm, it was traced eastwards in one trench for about 16 ft. before it merged into the subsoil.

Apart from the fragments of amphora already mentioned, the pottery found during the excavation is all post-medieval glazed ware. A piece of bronze sheeting was recovered from the filling of the main ditch near its bottom, at a depth of 3 ft. 3 in. below modern turf-level. The metal had been folded four times to form an oblong $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $1\frac{3}{10}$ in. by $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in thickness. From the filling of the S. end of the traverse ditch at a depth of 1 ft. 7 in. below modern turf-level there came a *denarius* of Hadrian. This was submitted to Dr A. S. Robertson of the Hunterian Museum, who has generously provided the description of the coin which appears in the Appendix.

The excavations have thus not only confirmed the testimony of air photographs of the SW. part of the camp taken by Dr J. K. St Joseph,¹ but have also managed to recover interesting evidence relating to the complexity and sequence of structures at Lochlands. It is quite clear from the plan (fig. 4) that the inturned ditch represents a modification of the original plan; it is, in fact, extremely probable that it is part of a later enclosure which reused the SW. angle of the earlier, 44-acre camp, although we cannot be sure how much later this modification was made.

Finally, while the discovery of a coin in the *tutulus* ditch is most gratifying,² its position high up in the filling of the ditch gives it a doubtful validity for the dating of any of the structures involved.

Appendix on Coin found in the tutulus ditch

Denarius of Hadrian (A.D. 117-38)

AR Size: 0.7 in. Wt.: 2.278 g. Axis: ↙

Obv. IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HA DRIANVS AVG (l. up, r. down)

Head of Hadrian, laureate, r., slight drapery on l. shoulder.

¹ Especially air photographs DN 016-7 in the C.U.C.A.P.

² Coins have been found previously on Roman camp sites, but not in a stratified context; *cf.* *PSAS*, LI (1917-18), 232 (Grassy Walls) and *ibid.*, LVIII (1923-4), 326 (Dalginross).

Rev. P M TR P COS III (l. up, r. down)
 Fortuna, draped, standing l., holding rudder on ground, and cornucopiae,
 l. arm resting on column.

Sp C 1155 (but *obv.* with slight drapery on l. shoulder)

RIC 86b

Cp BMC 170-3 (but *obv.* HA DRIANVS)

Much corroded. Not much worn

Dr Robertson writes:

'This coin is rather below average weight for a denarius of Hadrian, but any loss in weight is due to corrosion, rather than wear.

'This denarius must have been lost after A.D. 119 when Hadrian became COS III, and its good condition suggests that it had not been in circulation for many decades before being lost. The Antonine period would give a much more likely date for its loss than the Severan period.'

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