

FIG. 8. Magnetometer survey of Ladyward fort. (By courtesy of Dr A. Posluschny)

ENGLAND

3. HADRIAN'S WALL

By PETE WILSON

NORTH TYNESIDE

(1) **Wallsend fort** (*Segedunum*) (NZ 300 658): more of the baths discovered last year⁵² 120 m due south of the fort was exposed, and excavation completed on the accessible portion (FIG. 9). It was established that the baths had originally been built to the 'standard' Hadrian's Wall bath-house plan recorded at Benwell, Chesters, Carrawburgh, Bewcastle and Netherby. The Wallsend baths were built on the edge of a stream valley and the building had suffered from land-slip: walls had shifted out of alignment and the southern part of the building had broken away and slid south and east down the slope. The northern parts of the Hadrianic structure were incorporated into a drastic rebuild in a simpler block arrangement of *frigidarium*, *tepidarium* and *caldarium*.

⁵² See *Britannia* 46 (2015), 291.

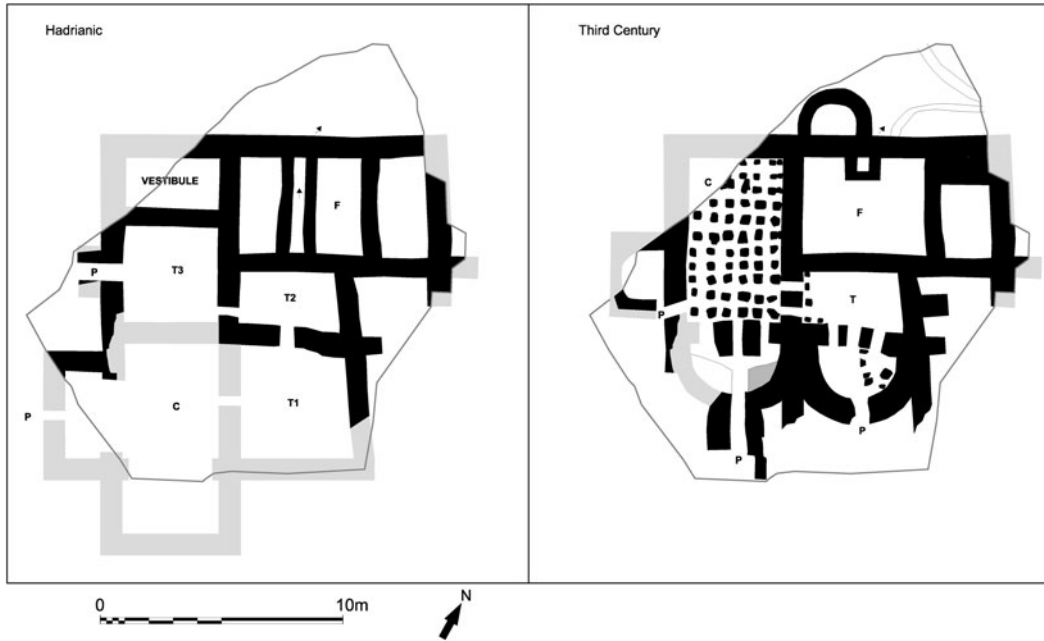


FIG. 9. The Wallsend baths in their original Hadrianic and reconstituted states. (© Tyne and Wear Museums and Archives)

ApSES projected from the latter two rooms to the south where the former principal heated rooms had been.⁵³

SOUTH TYNESIDE

(1) **South Shields fort (Arbeia)** (NZ 365 679): excavation continued in the same area,⁵⁴ 20 m south-west of the south angle of the extended supply-base fort. Preceding the construction of the ditches of the supply-base extension, more was revealed of the complex of remains described in previous years, consisting of an east–west-running stone-lined drain and a road interleaved between elements of a substantial clay levelling or mound of unknown purpose. It is no longer thought that this material can be upcast from the extended fort ditches, which it predates. This construction overlay a layer of rubbish and demolition material from wattle-and-daub structures, containing pottery of second-century date. This lay directly over a soil horizon lying on natural clay and scored with ard-marks.⁵⁵

(2) **The Lawe, Roman Road, South Shields** (NZ 364 679): a watching-brief revealed evidence for multiple phases of Roman occupation 124 m south of the Roman fort at a depth of 1.1–1.3 m. Previous works conducted within the vicinity of the Roman fort suggested that the Roman civilian

⁵³ Excavations directed for Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums and the WallQuest Community Archaeology Project by N. Hodgson and T. Frain, supported using public money by Arts Council England and by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and R.W. Mann Trust. Dr Hodgson sent information.

⁵⁴ See *Britannia* 45 (2014), 317–18; 46 (2015), 291–2.

⁵⁵ Excavations directed for Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, South Tyneside Council and the WallQuest Community Archaeology Project by P. Bidwell and N. Hodgson, with the support of Earthwatch Institute, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Arbeia Society. Dr Hodgson sent information.

extramural settlement bordered the stone fort at its northern, eastern, western and southern extents. The archaeological remains identified below the northern extent of Roman Road were, therefore, considered to be predominately associated with the civilian extramural settlement bordering the mid-Antonine Roman fort at South Shields.

The earliest identifiable phase was dated to the late first or early second century A.D. It incorporated a north-east–south-west-orientated boundary, a stone-lined culvert and a fragmentary stone surface, all potentially linked to an extramural settlement bordering a timber fort which pre-dated the mid-Antonine stone-built fort.⁵⁶

The overlying third-century archaeology principally consisted of four separate stone surfaces and a north-east–south-west-orientated drainage ditch bordered by a flagged stone surface to the south and a 0.10 m-thick garden soil deposit to the north. The ditch may have divided a path or road from a possible allotment or have been within the settlement. The later Roman archaeological evidence included a variety of stone surfaces attesting to an extensive network of paths or external yards within the later *vicus* south of the stone fort. The third-century activity characterised by the stone surfaces and their associated occupation deposits may also correlate with previously identified phases of modification and expansion to *Arbeia* Roman fort during the early and mid-third century.

A well-sorted, silty-sand deposit overlay the third-century archaeology and was interpreted as a probable wind-blown deposit related to a decline in activity, within the *vicus* south of *Arbeia* Roman fort, during the late third or early fourth century.⁵⁷

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

(1) **Benwell Fort** (*Condercum*) (NZ 2162 6477): a trench immediately north of West Road, 45 m from the east fort wall, was dug to test the observation recently made during water-main renewal 10–60 m further east that the Wall-ditch apparently swung north as if to respect the site of the fort.⁵⁸ The present trench located the Wall-ditch, 10 m wide, at a depth of 1 m. This confirms that the ditch continued on the conventional alignment, presumably underlying and pre-dating the fort. There was evidence that the ditch had been filled with clay in the Roman period, so perhaps close to the fort the Wall-ditch was replaced with an out-turning ditch at a later date. The original Wall-ditch was on the same alignment as recorded 200 m further east and lay immediately north of the pavement: it did not veer north as claimed in 1941.⁵⁹ This has implications for the size of Benwell fort, placing the east and west gates further south than thought by Simpson and Richmond, who had perhaps been misled by the outward-turning replacement.⁶⁰

NORTHUMBERLAND

(1) **Corbridge**, *land off Milkwell Lane* (NY 9898 6523): a fifty-trench evaluation focusing on medieval and post-medieval agriculture discovered Romano-British pottery in colluvium associated with an escarpment. Minor undated features were also present.⁶¹

⁵⁶ P. Bidwell and S. Speak, *Excavations at South Shields Roman Fort, Vol. I* (1994).

⁵⁷ Work by Archaeological Research Services Ltd on behalf of Northumbrian Water. Report by R. Lotherington. Dr C. Waddington sent information.

⁵⁸ Northern Archaeological Associates Archaeological Investigation Summary (Project No. 1164: *Hadrian's Wall and Benwell Fort, Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne* (2014)).

⁵⁹ F.G. Simpson and I.A. Richmond, 'The Roman fort on Hadrian's Wall at Benwell', *Archaeologia Aeliana* ser. 4, 19 (1941), 5.

⁶⁰ Excavations directed for Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums and the WallQuest Community Archaeology Project by N. Hodgson, with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Make Your Mark and Sir James Knott Trust. Dr N. Hodgson sent information.

⁶¹ By Wessex Archaeology, directed by N. Dransfield, for CgMs Consulting.

(2) **Great Chesters**, *Cockmount Hill Plantation* (NY 696 669): conservation works along Hadrian's Wall at Great Chesters Farm were undertaken in 2013 and 2014 with the exception of a 130 m stretch in Cockmount Hill Plantation.⁶² No structures are attached to the Wall within the plantation but the Narrow Wall and Broad Foundation begin to converge here. Examination and recording showed that there are striking differences in the character of lengths of the Wall that are presumed to be the result of successive interventions by antiquarians or more recent investigators. Stretches of the Wall survive as: a low, broad bank topped with a tumbled dry stone wall; the Wall removed to ground level; an asymmetric bank with no facing stones; and a prominent bank retaining facing-stones to north and south.⁶³

(3) **Henshaw**, *Steel Rigg* (NY 7522 6757): a watching-brief held during repairs to a length of Clayton Wall in Wall mile 39,⁶⁴ which involved the dismantling and rebuilding of discrete areas of bulging and deformed facework, revealed no Roman material. A photographic record was made before and after works.⁶⁵

(4–6) **Newbrough and Fourstones**, *Milecastle 32* (NY 8456 7100),⁶⁶ **Melkridge**, *Milecastle 41* (NY 7302 6705),⁶⁷ **Thirlwall**, *Milecastle 47* (NY 6490 6607).⁶⁸ geomagnetic and earth resistance geophysical surveys of areas at three milecastles revealed small anomalies at Milecastle 32 which may represent an enclosure, a possible shieling at Milecastle 41 and tentative evidence of former tracks at Milecastle 47.⁶⁹

(7) **Vindolanda** (NY 769 663): the 2015 excavations continued on from the work of 2014⁷⁰ in two areas of the site: (a) the south-eastern quadrant of the fourth-century stone fort; (b) below the remains of the third-century extramural settlement into the centre of pre-Hadrianic timber forts dating to the late first century to mid-second century.

(a) The later Roman surfaces of the *via Decumana* roadway were removed to the west of the large fourth-century barracks uncovered during 2014. This work illustrated the sequence of construction and modification of the roadway and adjacent barrack structures from the late second century through to the end of the fourth century. To the north-west of the road, a large late Roman water-tank/shrine was uncovered; its foundations partially cut through an earlier third-century barrack. The water-tank/shrine appears to have outlasted the late Roman period and was retained into the fifth and sixth centuries, perhaps as a baptismal font. The barrack immediately to the east of this structure across the *via Decumana* (Building 1) was demolished in the post-Roman sequence of the site and a large apsidal building was placed above its foundations, a possible post-Roman church site to the south of the *praetorium*. Below the southern ramparts and late Roman barrack buildings 3 and 4, a new set of five well-preserved Severan period (c. A.D. 208–11) roundhouses was excavated (FIG. 10). The roundhouses, although each individually constructed to slightly different specifications, are in a similar style to those encountered elsewhere on the fort site.

⁶² Scheduled Monument (1017535) 'Hadrian's Wall between the track to Cockmount Hill and Walltown Quarry East in wall miles 43, 44 and 45'.

⁶³ Directed by A. Williams for Alan Williams Archaeology on behalf of English Heritage. E. Williams sent information.

⁶⁴ Scheduled Monument (1010966) 'Hadrian's Wall and associated features between the field boundary west of turret 37a and the road to Steel Rigg car park in wall miles 37, 38 and 39'.

⁶⁵ Directed by A. Williams for Alan Williams Archaeology on behalf of The National Trust. E. Williams sent information.

⁶⁶ Scheduled Monument (1010962) 'Hadrian's Wall and *vallum* between the field boundary west of Coventina's Well and the field boundary at Brown Dikes in wall miles 31 and 32'.

⁶⁷ Scheduled Monument (1010973) 'Hadrian's Wall, associated features and a Romano-British settlement between the road to Steel Rigg car park and the road through Caw Gap in wall miles 39 to 41'.

⁶⁸ Scheduled Monument (1010993) 'Hadrian's Wall, *vallum*, section of the Stanegate Roman road and a Roman temporary camp between the B6318 road and Poltross Burn in wall miles 46 and 47'.

⁶⁹ Directed by D. Hale for Archaeological Services, Durham University on behalf of Altogether Archaeology and Northumberland National Park. E. Williams sent information.

⁷⁰ See *Britannia* 46 (2015), 293.

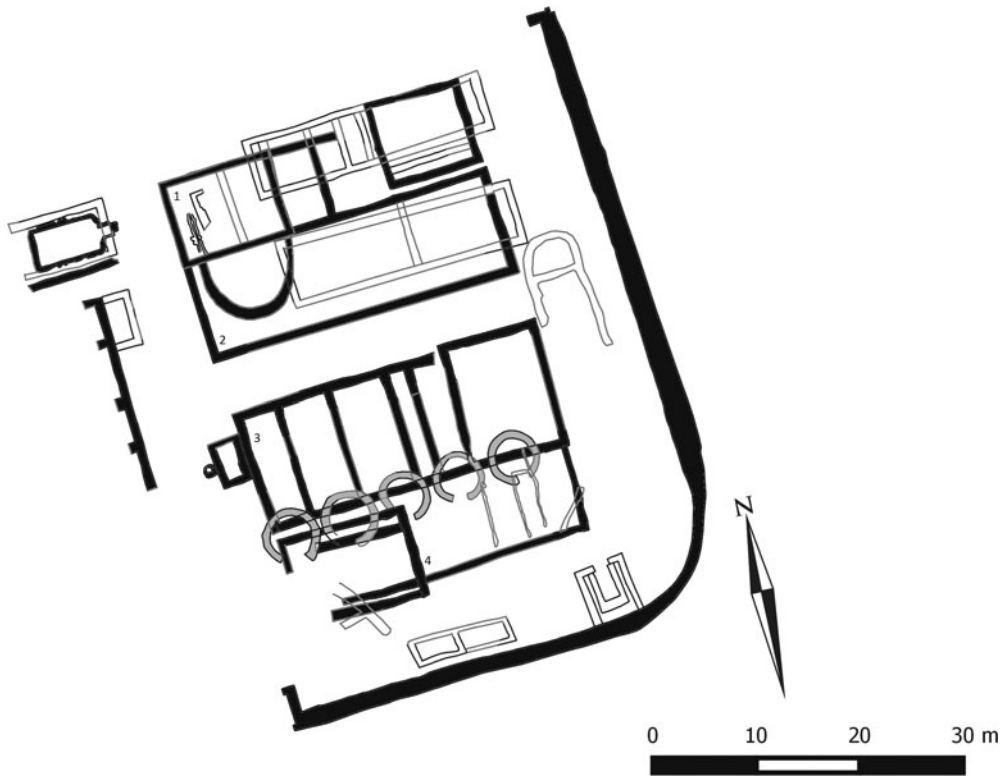


FIG. 10. *Vindolanda*. Plan of the south-eastern quadrant of the last stone fort showing the fourth-century barracks (Buildings 1–4) and Severan period roundhouses.

(b) Below the foundations of the third-century extramural settlement excavations continued to explore a series of timber buildings from the central range of *Vindolanda* forts II–V (c. A.D. 90–140). Although preservation of the various levels varied, the majority of the structures were preserved in anaerobic or waterlogged conditions and produced a wide variety of material culture including writing-tablets, leather, textiles and wooden artefacts. The largest single space explored was a Period IV kitchen (c. A.D. 105–20) which had at its centre a very large oven complex (4 m by 3 m) surrounded by a well-made heavy duty flagged floor. The internal walls surrounding the kitchen were a mixture of wattle and daub (silver birch) and larger oak timber uprights used to support the external superstructure of the building. Artefacts from the kitchen included a stylus-tablet, a wooden bath clog, leather shoes and a number of barrel staves, as well as domestic pottery. However, it was clear through the general paucity of finds that the space had probably been swept clean on a regular basis unlike similar contexts encountered elsewhere. The closest *Vindolanda* parallel to this space is the large oven uncovered within the Period IV *schola* (officer's mess) during the 2001/2 excavations,⁷¹ 15 m to the east of the building examined in 2015.

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⁷¹ See *Britannia* 33 (2002), 297–8; 34 (2003), 311. Dr A. Birley sent information.