

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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THE
VICTORIA HISTORY
OF THE COUNTY OF
NOTTINGHAM

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VOLUME ONE



LONDON
JAMES STREET
HAYMARKET
1906

A HISTORY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

HARWORTH.—In the extreme north-west of the county, at Martin, about a mile north-north-west of Bawtry, where the ancient road provides the only thoroughfare out of Nottinghamshire in the direction of Doncaster, is a square camp with double vallum and fosse, which is thus described by Mr. W. Peck, writing in 1815 : ‘This camp is now covered with trees and underwood, which have contributed to preserve it to the present time ; the ditches are nearly grown up, though they evidently have been deep. This place most probably was a station to defend the Roman road that passed near to it : several smaller stations are adjoining ; but of late years the ditches have been filled up. A little to the north-east are traces of a Roman pottery, many broken vessels of various forms are now found, several pieces I have seen are made of blue clay and slightly baked. At the time of the enclosure of the adjoining parish of Austerfield several curious remains of arms were found near the site of the great camp, such as parts of swords and heads of battle-axes.’¹

Francis White, writing in 1864, says : ‘Here is the site of a Roman station where, in 1828, three silver coins of Antonius, Adrianus, and Faustina were found, together with part of a Roman vase, and numerous pieces of Roman pottery. The form of the fort or station may still be distinctly traced, and even when the field is covered with full-grown wheat an octagon figure is slightly perceptible, from the stems being shorter on the site of the building than in other places.’² We give this quotation as a contribution to the state of the camp at that date ; but it is of questionable assistance : the writer’s conception of an earthwork was his own, and the ‘octagon figure’ can only be explained by the two four-sided ramparts. The outer vallum was 215 ft. on either side, with rounded corners, and the inner defence, leaving a court 50 ft. wide between the two entrenchments, had its two opposite angles at the north-west and south-east considerably rounded.

HAWTON.—In this parish immediately south-west of Newark is ‘Sconce Hill,’ the largest earthwork of the Civil War in the county. It was the work of the royalist engineers and remains in a well-preserved condition.

This mound, called the ‘Queen’s Sconce,’ is rectangular in form with projecting bastions at the angles, capped with an earthen breastwork, the centre being depressed. It is surrounded by a deep moat and artificially escarped ground stretches away a considerable distance.

It formed the north-west end of the defensive earthworks that constituted a cincture round the town of Newark, the north-east termination having a similar work on a smaller scale, of which some remains may be seen. They each occupied the south-east or right bank of the river. A view of the entire works is furnished in Dickinson’s *History of Newark*. A plan is given in the *Guide to Newark* by T. M. Blagg, F.S.A., who also refers to a somewhat similar earthwork on the east bank of the river which was raised by Cromwell’s army.

KIRKBY IN ASHFIELD : CASTLE HILL CAMP.—This village lies 5½ miles south-west from Mansfield ; and although the name would appear to demand its classification under B, the natural features of the site do not justify so doing.

¹ *Topog. Account of the Isle of Axholme*, p. 6.

² *Hist. etc. of the County of Notts.* p. 680.

ANCIENT EARTHWORKS

The camp immediately south of the church is a small rectangular area surrounded by a vallum, with the remains of a fosse on the southern side. At the south-west angle the entrance is guarded by a projecting platform at the extremity of the western agger, which counterbalances the rampart and ditch on the other side of the entry. Another entrance is at the north-west angle, between two ramparts; and within the area is an agger 60 ft. long lying parallel to the east boundary.

Due east of this camp, 220 ft. distant, are the remains of a work, pear-shaped in plan, consisting of a vallum which possibly joined the south-east angle of the camp.

LITTLEBOROUGH. — Traces of a fosse are perceptible, indicating probably part of the original defences of this Roman station of Segelocum.

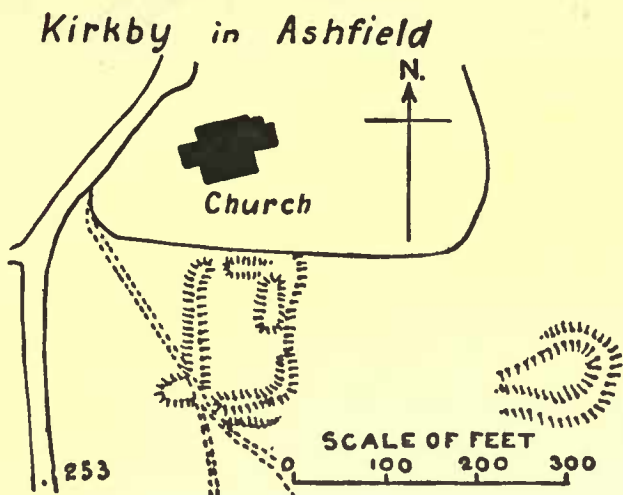
NEWARK. — In the valley of the Trent, on the Fosse Way from Leicester to Lincoln, was a strong military post to control both land and water communication. That it was a very ancient stronghold is seen in the Roman remains discovered.

OXTON: CAMP AT LONELY GRANGE. — About half a mile east of the Oxton camp called Oldox is a field named 'Lonely Grange,' in which, situated on the side of a hill within 200 yds. of the top, was an elongated rectangular camp.

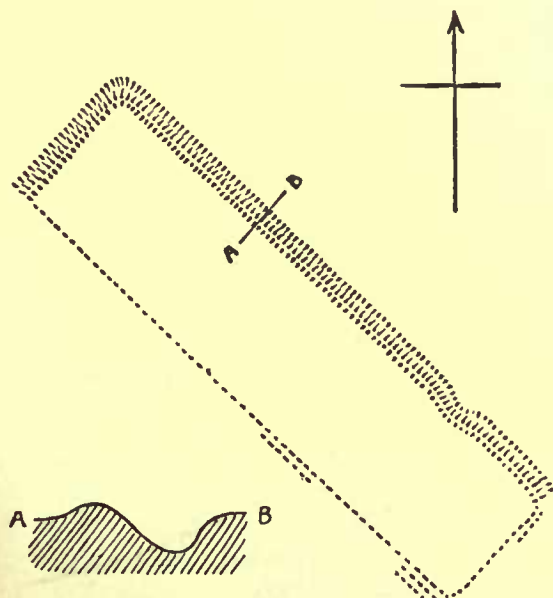
In 1790 Major Rooke¹ described the rampart and fosse on the north-east and north-west sides as plainly distinguished; but with very slight traces on the other two sides. The length of the long axis was 942 ft., the short one 201 ft. Its high position provided an extensive view, whence signals could be seen from other camps.

The site of this camp may now be recognized as 'Grangefield Farm,' $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-east from Oxton and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Southwell.

SCAFTWORTH. — Until recently an earthwork similar to that at Martin, in the parish of Harworth, was situated about half a mile to



CASTLE HILL CAMP, KIRKBY IN ASHFIELD.



CAMP AT LONELY GRANGE, OXTON.

the east of Bawtry; it is figured in some of the old county maps.²

¹ *Arch.* x, 349.

² County Map in Pigot's Directory, 1841. W. Peck, *A Topographical History of Bawtry.*