

ART. XXXI.--*On and off the Roman Road from Papcastle to Lamplugh Woodmoor.* By WILLIAM DICKINSON, ESQ.
Read at Whitehaven, December 11th, 1877.

IN tracing the route of the Roman way from Papcastle to the southward, the line of the crossing of the Derwent has been ascertained and the whereabouts approximately defined. The campstead and the road from the Maryport camp is known from the careful survey by the late Mr. Dykes,* and in a field between the village of Papcastle and the river is a portion of the road well-marked; and a continuation is seen in the next field, leading to the river, where some traces of buildings are discernable, and where the crossing by ford or bridge has been. Sufficient evidence of the camp or castle is found at Papcastle, and the final abandonment by the Romans, in a hurried manner, is told by the discovery there of a large quantity of grain at the depth of a few feet from the surface. The grain is chiefly barley, and in a blackened state, as if charred by fire, or by heat, generated on the buried grain becoming moistened in the soil or under the *debris* of the buildings.

Being "on and off" the line of road, it may not be irrelevant to occasionally notice outside matters and things as we go along; and here may be mentioned, that Salathiel Court,† a self-taught eccentric, was a native of Papcastle, who over a hundred years ago, earned notoriety and transportation by certifying that—

" Behind a hedge in stormy weather
 He join'd a w—— and rogue together."

* Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society's Transactions, Vol. I., p. 169.

† For Salathiel Court, see Hutchinson's Cumberland, Vol. II., p. 115.

A specimen of his penmanship, now exhibited, will shew that the untaught genius had attained a tolerable degree of perfection in old times.

There are strong indications of Cockermouth Castle having been built, in a great measure, of roughly squared stone from the ruins of the Roman stronghold, supplemented from the millstone-grit quarries of Brigham, and occasionally the quarrymen meet with ancient wedge-marks when quarrying the surface stone there. Entering Brigham township, the track of the road runs diagonally through a field belonging to Mr. William Fletcher, of Brigham Hill; and, skirting the wood, gradually ascends the limestone bluffs of Hotchberry and Tendlay, where six skeletons and a sword were found, and from whence an extensive view of the country is had, including a long stretch of the Roman road. It passes on the west of the village of Eaglesfield to another elevation southward.

This village has the honour of being the birth-place of the philosopher Dr. John Dalton. From the first-named hill may be seen, on the east, Moorland Close, the birth-place of Fletcher Christian, whose connection with the mutiny of the *Bounty*, and with the peopling of Pitcairn island, is a matter of history. Moorland Close is a farm building of the olden time, and is one of the very few still having the arched entrance to the farm-yard, with strong folding doors; and it also possesses some interesting mementos of Christian.

About thirty years ago a twisted ring of fine gold was found by a quarryman in clearing the surface of the limestone rock at Eaglesfield, near the line of the Roman road. It was sold to a watchmaker at Cockermouth, who was of opinion it was of Roman workmanship. The line is traceable half-a-mile to the south of Eaglesfield, where it tops a hill having a good out-look on every side.

From here, to eastward, may be seen the earthen ring of a British enclosure, containing an acre or more, called

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Castlesteads,

Castlesteads, and in the same direction the rock terraces of Pardshaw Crag are seen ; which though not in connection with our present subject, claim a passing notice as having been the occasional arena from which George Fox addressed his followers in the times when his tenets were in disfavour. And from the same rock pulpit, in 1857, Neil Dow harangued his thousands with greater favour and present effect.

At the northern base of and near to this prominent crag of Pardshaw is a stony platform called "White Causeway," and adjoining this is a raised ring of compact gravel and small boulders, enclosing an acre or more of swampy basin, and nearly surrounded by more of the same snipe-ground character. Whether this moss ring is of natural or artificial origin is matter of conjecture, and it is very singular and curious.

Before the commons were enclosed a number of small terraces, or small raised earthworks, were dotted here and there irregularly from this ring to Cockermouth. Now these have been partially reduced or obliterated by the operations of agriculture, but some are still visible on the several declivities facing northward. No tradition exists relating to the origin or uses of any of these works, but many of them have the appearance of the hastily constructed defences of advancing or retreating warfare.

A little to the west of the line of road passing Eaglesfield were found the two battle axes, or stone celts, now before us. Duly mounted, they are formidable implements of destruction. One is $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, with a chip lost from the point, by $3\frac{3}{4}$ broad and two inches thick, and weighs $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. The other is 8 inches long, by $2\frac{1}{2}$ broad, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ in thickness, weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.

They are of olive-grey flinty-ash rock, and no little skill and patience would have to be applied in blocking them out of the solid rock or boulder, and to get them into working shape as they appear. There has been no attempt to
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polish or ornament them. The larger of these, mounted and swung by the powerful and practised arm of the stalwart ancient Briton, would be sufficient to maim and capture a wild bull, or to crack the skull of a wolf or wild boar, and the smaller one would make short work with a man.

Following the same route in nearly a direct line to the village of Dean, we find what are called hiding places of the Britons of old. As such, they have hitherto been undisturbed. They are parallel excavations in a swampy hollow, and of oblong-square form; and though they might be covered with branches for shelter and to deceive an enemy, they would be more uncomfortable than even a wild animal would select for its lair. In the same field are two earthen mounds about seventy yards apart, and which may have been places of sepulchre or, more likely, butts for practice with bow and arrow. Approaching the village of Ullock, the Roman roadway there was plundered of its boulders about twenty years ago to effect an improvement in agriculture. A quarter of a mile to the west of this, in 1876, some very perfect and well-burned vases were found in a railway cutting, by the workmen of Mr. Harrison Hodgson, some of which are in his possession. The figures in the drawings here exhibited represent the exact sizes and colours of two of the smallest.* More, and of different sizes and shades of colour, were injured or destroyed by the workmen before being recognised. They were found within a bow-shot of where stood a circle of large boulder stones, most of which had been from time to time removed, and the last of them was ignominiously sunk and buried within the last half score years.

Passing into the parish of Lamplugh the first indication is Street-gate, a name strongly suggestive of the Roman way which passed near, and its apparent founda-

* They are of the kind called "incense cups," and are exactly similar to those found at Garlands, Carlisle.—*Editor*.

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tions have lately been unearthed between that place and Todhole, where there are some remains of a small building, probably a shelter for workmen.

Proceeding onward, a considerable length of the road is well ascertained in the enclosures approaching to and on the most elevated part of what is called Woodmoor. On this part a stone hammer was found a few years since, and is now in the Distington Museum. Another has since been found, and it is in the possession of Mr. Dickinson, of Redhow, on whose property it was found. It is nearly in the form of the sledge hammer at present used by blacksmiths and freestone quarrymen. The stone is of a light fawn colour, and appears to be of syenite kindred, and no rock of the kind is within many miles of the neighbourhood. The labour of manufacturing this article, with the imperfect tools we may suppose to be then available, must have been very great. It is very hard and well polished, and has a fluted band above and below on the sides, and a well formed shaft-hole suitable for a strong handle. This implement is calculated to crush a man at every blow, and is heavy enough to stun a bison—a more formidable and dangerous animal than any of the beasts of prey then roaming the wilds of Cumberland. Thus far, the line is here and there distinctly traceable, and its onward course, we hope, will be duly investigated ere long.

On the east, and “off the line,” is the family seat of the Lamplughs, whose high, square tower, with walls of nine feet in thickness, was blasted down with gunpowder about 1812 or 1815 to supply materials for building the present offices. The ancient stronghold, having been built to resist the enemies of the country, came to destruction by the hands of the trustee owners of the day. “Off the line” again, at a short distance on the west of the farm of Gatra, is the worn-down earthen ring of a British encampment or place of shelter for cattle in times of danger.

Although the main road between Cockermouth and Egremont

Egremont runs alongside of the line at varying but short distances, it is remarked that no part of the Roman road is utilised as a highway, as is found in other places. The cobble boulders of the neighbourhood, varying in weight from a pound or two to half a hundredweight each, have been borne by hand, at the imperious command of their victors, by our skin-clad and bare-footed predecessors, whose only crow-bars for prizing the stones out of the earth would be their sturdy fingers, or the burned end of a sharpened stake, or the Roman implements supplied to them and compelled to be used.

The Roman carts and waggons could only be available on the roads made by themselves, or by their order in the forced labour of the natives.

Though limestone is abundant along the greater part of the seven miles from Papcastle to Lamplugh Woodmoor, very little of it appears to have been used in the formation of the road. Sandstone has been laid down as a foundation in some parts, though no quarry of it is found in the precise line, but at varying short distances — the main material and the surface covering being cobble. These and the sandstone being more easily obtained, the compact limestone rocks have been avoided.
