

ART. V. *Report of the Cumberland Excavation Committee for 1899.* BY F. HAVERFIELD, M.A., F.S.A.

THE excavations which were carried on last August by the Cumberland Excavation Committee had three objects: to examine the Roman fort at Drumburgh, in the western part of the Wall, to search for the line of the Wall at Burgh Marsh, immediately east of the fort, and thirdly, to test an intrenchment which Mr. Mac Lauchlan mentions as existing at Walby, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Carlisle, and which deserved consideration as a possible relic of a Turf Wall. The results obtained were satisfactory, though not sensational. (1) The fort at Drumburgh seems to have been either an ordinary Milecastle or a fort slightly larger than that, resembling the fort now called the King's Stables, at the crossing of the Poltrossburn, near Gilsland railway station. In either case it was somewhat different from what has been usually supposed. (2) The line of the Wall at Burgh Marsh was not discovered, and is probably beyond the reach of discovery. But the evidence obtained was adequate to shew that it did not run round the Marsh; either it was carried straight across the Marsh or this section was left undefended. (3) The alleged intrenchment at Walby proved to be no intrenchment at all, and the Turf Wall remains as before, known solely near Birdoswald. In addition to these results, our excavations illustrated, in some curious details, the danger of trusting to the look of the surface when one is exploring Roman remains, and some remarks on this point have been added at the end of the Report.

As before, the excavations were greatly aided by the kindness of land-owners and farmers, who granted all necessary

necessary permissions most readily. The Society is especially indebted to Lord Carlisle, for many facilities, to Lord Lonsdale, for leave to excavate on Easton Marsh and on Howcroft at Drumburgh; to Mr. Nixon Lawson for leave to excavate at Drumburgh on the site of the fort; to Mrs. Fitzgerald, for leave to excavate at Walby; further to Mr. Rickerby and Mr. Lightfoot of Drumburgh, and to Mrs. Haugh of Walby, tenants of the ground excavated, for leave and kindly help, and lastly to the North British Railway Company, for facilities at Drumburgh. The preliminary arrangements, which were more intricate this year than usual, were made by Chancellor Ferguson and Mr. T. H. Hodgson. All the digging was done under supervision, and we may explain here that by this we mean continuous and (as we hope) competent supervision. One or more of the supervisors named in the Report were present during practically the whole of each working day. We do not claim to have reached any ideal standard in this matter, but we may express our opinion that no ordinary excavation can be said to be adequately supervised where less than this is done. For surveying and planning, the Society is once more indebted to the skill and patience of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson. The usual statement of accounts is appended.

Our plans for 1900 are not yet sufficiently formed to be stated here. We have now achieved our sixth campaign, but there are still sites on and near the Wall which deserve attention. Such are the line of the Vallum near Castlesteads, the 'camp' at Watchcross, some possible traces of a 'civil' settlement at Stanwix, and some items west of Carlisle.

I. DRUMBURGH FORT.

Drumburgh is a hamlet on the south-east slope of a little hill which rises from the south shore of Solway, about 9 miles west of Carlisle. Low as the hill is, for its
highest

highest point is only 60 feet above the sea, it commands a fine view over the surrounding country. North, the long sullen mass of Birrenswark is prominent and conspicuous. East, you may look over Burgh Marsh and the lowlands of Carlisle to Northumberland and the Nicks of Thirlwall. South are the Lake hills, and westward the lofty mass of Criffel. It is a panorama such as a little eminence frequently enjoys in a low-lying country. The Roman Wall ran across the top of this hill, and on the top all archæologists have agreed to place a Roman fort. Their accounts of this fort do not, however, agree so well. Horsley, the first writer to mention it in any detail, writing about 1730, described it as five chains square, the ramparts large and the ditch very deep. According to this account it would have contained two and a half acres, and would have been one of the smaller forts, about the same size as Castlesteads and Stanwix. Unfortunately Horsley does not describe the exact situation of the fort. The next to visit and record was William Hutton, in July 1801. He says that "the site of the Station, now an orchard, garden, &c., is perfectly plain;" he adds that the Great Wall crossed the turnpike road at the Station, that is, the fort. His account, as we found, is quite wrong. Thirty years later, in 1833, John Hodgson came to the place.* He, like Horsley, omits to say where exactly the fort stood, but asserts that, if it had ever had stone walls, they had been removed, and that an earthen terrace which (he alleges) flanked their inside had been smoothed into a glacis, to efface the scar made between it and the ditch by the removal of the foundations. In 1851 Dr. Bruce, in the first edition of his *Roman Wall*, alludes to the fort as on the grounds of Richard Lawson, Esq.; its ramparts and ditch were well defined, he says, the northern rampart being some few

* *History of Northumberland*, II. iii. 302.

yards

yards south of the line of the Great Wall. Finally, in 1854, Mr. Mac Lauchlan estimated the size at 80 by 50 yards (three quarters of an acre), and marked on his map the north and west ramparts as still visible in a field which is the field obviously meant by Dr. Bruce. These accounts are each of them precise, and their writers had, or ought to have had, definite objects before them, but it is not plain that they had the same objects. The spot mentioned by Mac Lauchlan and Bruce can still be identified, but the description of Hutton is vague and even those of Horsley and Hodgson are not easily explicable. The hamlet has not greatly altered since they wrote. Four and a half centuries ago Leland tells us that the Roman Wall had been already rooted up. The survey made on the attainder of Leonard Dacre in 1589 gives nearly the same number of houses as there are at present, and Lord Lonsdale's estate maps of 1749-65 closely resemble the present Ordnance Survey maps. One or two houses and barns are known to be recent additions, but many of the buildings are old-fashioned 'clay-daubins,' and the general appearance of the hamlet cannot have greatly altered for three hundred years. Probably Horsley and Hodgson intended to indicate the same site and the same north-west corner as Bruce and Mac Lauchlan, but their language is not so clear as we could wish.

Our excavations were on the site noticed by Bruce and Mac Lauchlan. This is a two-acre field on the top of the hill, belonging to Mr. Lawson. A lane called Sandy Lonning, now thrown into the field, once ran along its north side, and its south-east corner is cut off from the rest by a substantial open ditch, forming an elbow. This is the ditch which Mac Lauchlan notes as the north and west sides of the fort; it may be that to which the earlier writers allude. Our work was beset with many difficulties. The long drought of July and August had

had hardened the ground to a terrible obstinacy. The ground itself, clay and rubble for the most part, with a clay sub-soil, would at any time have been troublesome ; as it was, we were practically quarrying, and since the Roman remains were found to lie at the unexpected depth of 5 or 6 feet, we were compelled to content ourselves with the minimum necessary for our purpose. Had it not been for the excellence of our workmen we should have had to content ourselves with even less. In the end, however, our trenches shewed that the Great Wall ran across the field from east to west, with its fosse in front of it, and formed the north rampart of the fort. The junction of the Great Wall and the west rampart of the fort was also determined, and part of a building inside the fort was uncovered.

The lines of walling thus ascertained do not in the least agree with the lines of the ditch now visible on the surface, which is the open ditch mentioned above. As Plan II. shews, they run obliquely to it, and measurements demonstrate that their foundations are too deep to be reasonably connected with it. The whole site of the fort seems, indeed, to have been buried since Roman times under an accumulation of soil and stones 4, 5, and, in places, 6 feet thick. Part of this accumulation is debris, but part seems to have been intentionally placed there to fit the spot for use. Two reasons suggest that this accumulation is of early date. In the first place, when Leland wrote (about 1540), the Roman Walls had already vanished. In the second place, we met, in trench 8, with the remains of a mediæval or modern house, not improbably the foundations of a 'clay-daubin,' which yielded fragments of pottery, assigned by Mr. C. H. Read, to whom we submitted it, to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. This house stood above and obliquely to the Roman Wall, from which it was separated by a solid layer of clay and debris two feet in thickness. It was
destroyed

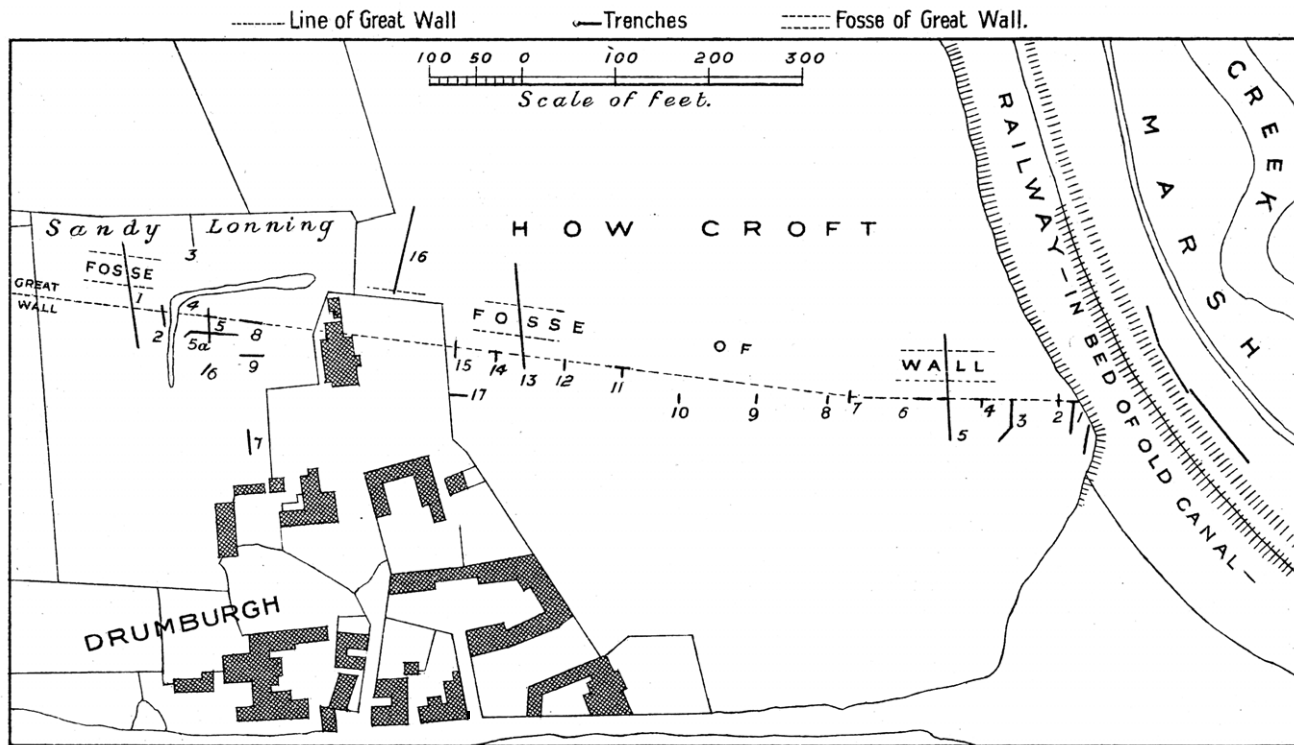


PLATE I. To Face P. 84.

T. H. Hodgson, 1899.

DRUMBURGH AND ENVIRONS.

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destroyed long enough ago to have passed wholly out of local recollection. It is therefore probable that the whole present surface is post-Roman, and that, among other things, the now visible ditch is post-Roman, and belongs to the present and not to the Roman surface level, though it may itself be of some antiquity. Here, then, as in many cases, surface indications prove deceptive, and the theories erected on them by previous writers must be discarded.

The masonry which we found is much ruined. The Great Wall and the west wall of the fort have been 'spoiled' down to their foundation courses or even removed wholly. In each wall the surviving foundation course is faced with large thin red-sandstone slabs, and the width from outside to outside averages $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet. As the foundation courses in Roman work projected beyond the superstructure, the width mentioned would imply a width of $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet for the walls themselves, and this agrees well with the known dimensions of existing pieces, both of the Great Wall and of fort walls and of milecastle walls. At the corner of the fort, where the Great Wall and the fort wall meet, the foundations seemed to be bonded together. The foundations were laid sometimes on a few cobbles, sometimes on the red clay which is here the natural subsoil.

The north-west corner of the fort is not rounded in the manner usual in the large forts of the Wall, nor has it the corner turret, which is also usual in such cases. The fort wall makes with the Great Wall a sheer right angle.* Immediately within the right angle, separated by no more than twelve or thirteen inches from the Great Wall and the west wall of the fort, stands—or stood—a buttressed building. Rather more of this survives than of

* Speaking strictly, we should say that it is not a true right angle. This, however, is a detail of little importance, for very few Roman rectangular buildings have their angles mathematically true.

the

the Walls, doubtless because it is constructed of smaller and poorer stones and has not attracted the later builder. Its wall averages thirty-two inches in thickness, and is faced on each side with courses of thin sandstone slabs, of which three representative specimens measured 21 by 16 by $3\frac{1}{2}$, 18 by 12 by $4\frac{1}{2}$, 16 by 13 by 3 inches; the interior between these facing stones, is filled with rubble, and the whole appears to have been mortared, though the mortar is now mostly decayed. On the west side are buttresses, tied into the wall, averaging thirty-one or thirty-two inches in projection and width, and built of the same masonry as the wall; they are 10 feet apart (see Plate II). Close to the north-west corner there is a small aperture in the wall, as for a small splayed window. It is seven inches wide on the outside, 13 or 14 inches wide on the inside, and at present three courses (about twelve inches) high; the wall being ruined, we cannot tell if it was ever higher. Two courses of stone are below it, and since it was thus almost on the ground level and in a corner, it cannot have been a window. A quantity of black matter was found just outside it (Point B in Plate II), and this suggests a furnace to warm the building. Buttressed buildings are not infrequently found fitted with hypocausts in Roman forts. We were unable to quarry far enough into the rock-like soil to find out whether the building ever had hypocaust pillars and a flooring. The

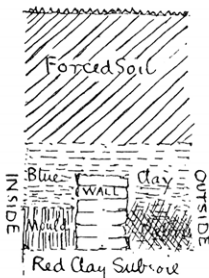


FIG. 1.

strata of earths, as ascertained at point A in Plate II, are, however, curious and deserve illustration. Beneath some three and a half feet of forced soil and one and a half feet of blue clay is a layer of mould one foot thick. Finally, at 5 ft. 10 in. below the present surface, is the natural red clay sub-soil, and resting on it the foundation of the wall. The annexed cut (Fig. 1) drawn roughly to the scale

Black = Wall found. ☉ = Faint Foundations, Shading = Assumed line of Wall.

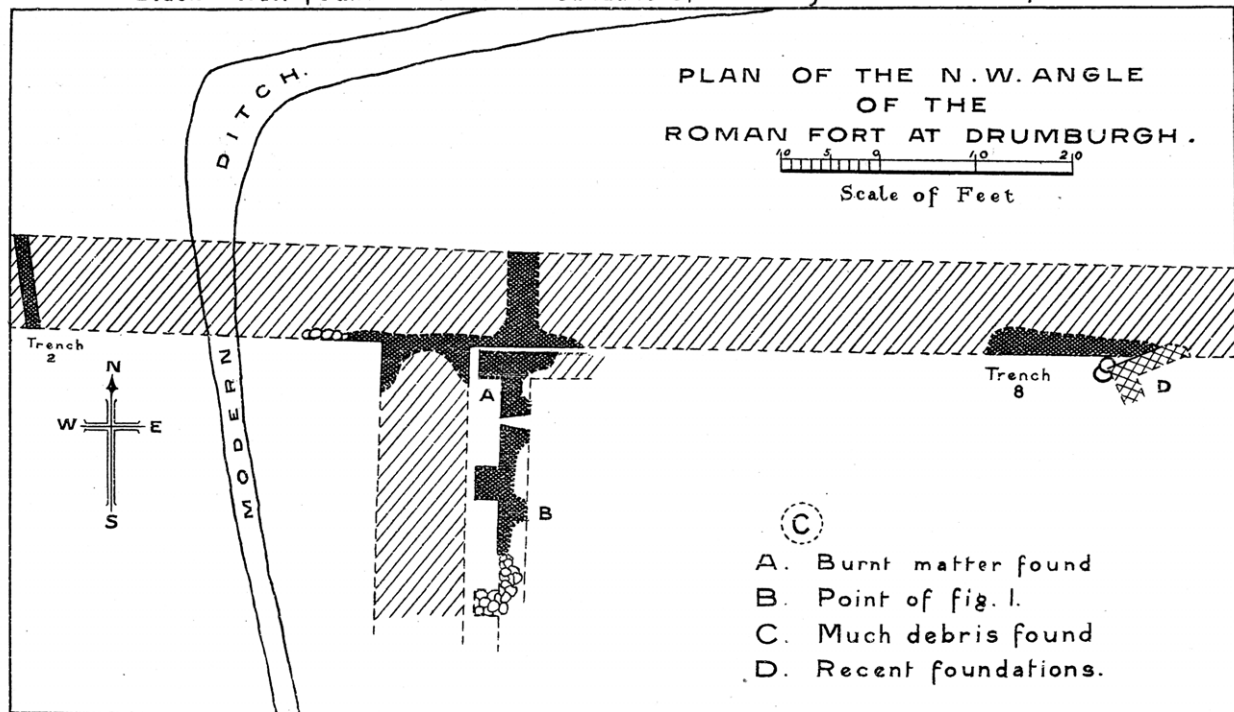


PLATE II. To Face P. 86.

T. H. Hodgson, 1899

DRUMBURGH FORT.

scale of one to sixty, shews the successive formations. It suggests to us that the building had no floor of paving or gravel, but possibly a suspended hypocaust floor. We regret that the condition of the ground made it impossible for us to examine the interior more thoroughly. We should have liked also to discover its dimensions, but the circumstances made this even more impossible. And we confess to doubting whether in any case the examination would have been very profitable. The trench which we dug eastwards across the building, revealed at 16-18 feet east from the buttressed wall a hole full of large stones and debris to a depth of nine feet, but no standing masonry, and it is plain that in many places the walls of the building as well as the walls of the fort have been thoroughly destroyed.

Our efforts to find the east and south walls of the fort were equally unproductive. Thinking, for various reasons to be mentioned below, that the fort might be a milecastle, we followed the north wall, that is, the Great Wall, in trench viii, in the hope that we might meet the north-east corner of the fort and the turn of the east wall at 50, or 60, or 70 feet from the ascertained north-west corner, one or other of these distances being the usual inside length of the side of a milecastle.* Our trench commenced at 55 feet east of the north-west corner and continued to trace the wall for 15 feet, when a modern or mediæval foundation, already mentioned, blocked the way. Some parallel trenches yielded no definite results, and we were obliged, at least for the current year, to abandon the search. Similarly with the south wall. We trenched for this in trench vii across the line of the south wall, as marked by Mr. Mac Lauchlan, at 120 feet south of the north wall's inner face. Our trench

* The Housesteads milecastle measures internally 57 by 49 feet, that at Castle Nick 62 by 50, that at Cawfields 63 by 49 (Bruce). The Birdoswald milecastle which we examined in 1898 measures 65 by 75 feet.

was

was over six feet deep before we touched the subsoil; no walling was discernible.

Small finds were rare. In the place where we found the black matter, which we thought might be furnacere-lics (p. 86 and B on Plate II), we dug up at 5 feet deep some pieces of coarse black ware, such as occurs on Romano-British sites, and a fragment of a grey, slightly glazed ware shewing a rim, of which Mrs. Hodgson has drawn a profile (Fig. 2). As some doubt was felt whether

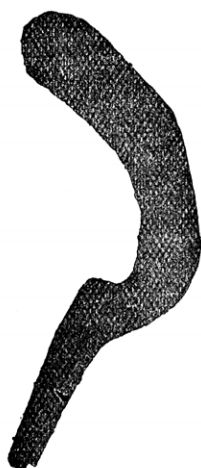


FIG. 2.

SECTION
(natural scale)
OF FRAGMENT OF VESSEL
7 INCHES IN DIAMETER
OF DARK GREY GLAZED
POTTERY
FOUND INSIDE THE
ROMAN FORT
AT DRUMBURGH

the fragment was Roman, it was submitted to Mr. A. J. Evans, Keeper of the Ashmolean, who confirmed its antiquity. In the trench (vii) cut across the supposed south side of the fort, at 6 feet deep, two bits of plain 'Samian' and some bits of black ware came out, and at the same level a well-formed flint-scraper, one inch long and half-an-inch broad. It is in itself an ordinary pre-Roman implement, which, as Sir John Evans suggests, may have been lying about in Roman times, and thrown in with the soil and other loose objects. Flint is so rare in Cumberland that its occurrence is, however, noteworthy.

Beyond

Beyond these finds, we have only to record fourteenth and fifteenth century pottery in trench viii found in mediæval or modern ruins.

Our other trenches need no long account. One revealed the fosse of the wall, apparently 38 feet wide at the top and with a berm of feet between it and the line of the wall, here destroyed. Another (No. iii) concerned Dr. Bruce's statement that the Great Wall here ran north of the fort (p. 82); it was cut across a small bank, which may have been taken for the traces of the Wall, and shewed that this bank was an old hedgerow.

The results which we have now described are defective in many details, but it is nevertheless not impossible to deduce some satisfactory conclusions. We believe we are right in asserting that they shew us the north-west angle of a fort, rectangular in shape and almost exactly filled by a buttressed building. The feature indicates the type of fort which once crowned the hill of Drumburgh; it was a milecastle or a fort very similar to a milecastle. The larger forts on the Wall have rounded angles and turrets even where, as at Aesica or Borcovicium, the Great Wall is their northern rampart. But the smaller forts which, from their regular distances, are called milecastles, have sometimes square corners. They have also internal buildings close to the ramparts. Such have been noted at Cawfields and Castle Nick, though no plans seem to exist, and at the King's Stables, near Gilsland Railway Station. This is a fort which was perhaps larger than an average milecastle, and which stands at an irregular distance; but it is of the milecastle type, and the excavations made there in 1886* shewed there interior buildings just two feet from the rampart-wall. We shall perhaps not do wrong in suggesting that Drumburgh Fort was somewhat similar. Our trench viii was not

* These *Transactions* ix., 164.

long enough to determine the extent of its north face, and our other trenches failed to find its south and east walls, and we cannot therefore speak more positively. Moreover, the positions of the milecastles at the western extremity of the Wall are extremely uncertain; in fact, there is no positive evidence that there ever were milecastles west of Carlisle.* We cannot therefore determine whether the site of Drumburgh fits in with any series of such small forts or whether, like the King's Stables, it is independent. But it is obvious that Drumburgh hill is a suitable position for a fort, and not an unsuitable one for a small fort.

It may be convenient to add the details of the trenches dug to obtain the above results :—

Trench 1 was cut across the line of the Wall and the Wall ditch. The former was not found, though there was much debris just where it should have been, and perhaps we did not dig deep enough. The ditch appeared to extend from 64-102 feet, measuring from the south end of the trench; we dug to 9 feet below the present surface without finding its bottom. Apparently there is here a layer of forced soil, some three feet thick, above the natural red clay.

Trench 2 crossed the Wall only; its foundation courses were discovered 40 inches below the present surface, the soil above being forced. The north and south edges of the foundations were 9 feet 6 inches apart; the south edge was a little broken.

Trench 3 crossed the line which we suppose that Dr. Bruce assigned to the Wall when he said it ran clear of the fort (see p. 82). It revealed untouched subsoil, and an old hedgerow of the "Sandy Lonning."

* There is not really any satisfactory trace of a milecastle west of the neighbourhood of Castlesteads. The milecastle at Pike Hill, destroyed by the road trustees in 1870, is the most western example as yet touched by the spade (these *Transactions* i. 214). The surface indications of a milecastle between Howgill and Dovecot, and of another just east of the Black Bull at Walton are at proper distances, but have not been excavated. As Mr. Mac Lauchlan remarks, the further one goes westward, the evidence for the positions of the milecastles is less and less to be depended on (*Survey*, p. 71). Mr. Hodgson's excavation at Old Wall in 1894 was inconclusive in this respect, as were those at Wallhead.

Trench

Trench 4 (joined to trench 5) shewed the outside of the north-west corner of the fort, and the angle made by the south face of the Great Wall with the outer face of the fort wall. The Great Wall had been robbed clean away, except for the piece nearest the corner; there its footings were 42 inches down. The outer face of the fort wall continued beyond the end of the trench southwards.

Trench 5 traced the west face of the buttressed building (p. 85), which survives 12-18 inches high, with the foundation 68 inches below the present surface. It also shewed the inner corner of the fort, and the foundation course of the Great Wall, about 10 feet wide, but broken on the north edge; this was at 30-40 feet from the south end of the trench, and 7 feet deep. The continuation of the trench northwards for 8 feet showed undisturbed subsoil along the berme, which is immediately cut into by the modern ditch.

Trench 5*a* crossed this trench at right angles, running east and west. At its east end we dug down 9 feet into a mass of clay, huge stones, &c., which shewed that the ground had here been irremediably disturbed. The part of the trench lying between this and the buttressed wall was only partly dug out; the results are given p. 86. and fig. 1. The continuation of the trench westwards crossed the line of the west wall of the fort, but it had been wholly robbed and only debris left. At the extreme west end, the subsoil seemed to sink as if there had once been a dip here.

Trench 6 was intended to catch the west face of the fort wall, but shewed only at its east end some probable traces of cobbles laid for a foundation, at 6 feet down; here, as elsewhere, a thick layer of forced soil and debris had to be pierced.

Trench 7 was cut across the line marked by Mr. Mac Lauchlan as the south rampart, 120 feet from the north rampart or Great Wall (measured from its south face). Below a layer of disturbed soil over 5 feet thick, we found the clay subsoil, and on it some bits of Roman pottery and a flint-scraper. At 6-9 feet from the north end of the trench, and again at 17-20 feet, our workmen detected what they thought to be two lines of rotten foundation slabs. We did not, however, consider these to be real.

Trench 8 exposed the inner face of the Great Wall for 15 feet, at 4 feet 6 inches deep. The east part of the trench was occupied by a modern or mediæval ruin, built with modern or mediæval stones, and supported at the corner by two huge cobbles in modern and mediæval

mediæval style; fourteenth and fifteenth century pottery was found here. About 25 inches of soil intervened between the Roman and the later work, and the first was probably covered up and forgotten before the latter was begun.

Trench 9, parallel to trench 8, was dug to catch, if possible, the east wall of the fort. It shewed only confused debris and rough flagging, which seemed to be post-Roman for a depth of $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Probably we did not reach the true subsoil, but the work was so heavy and the remains so confused that we could not go deeper.

The excavations at Drumburgh was supervised by Mr. Booker, Mr. Hodgson, and myself.

II.—BURGH MARSH.

The Roman Wall, if it ran straight from the fort at Burgh-on-Sands to the fort at Drumburgh, would have crossed the wide marshes of Burgh and Easton, usually called Burgh Marsh, for a distance of two and a half miles. But this great plain of grass-grown mud, scarred by watercourses and flooded at springtide, is an ill place for a long line of masonry, and opinions have differed considerably as to the line adopted by the Romans between Dykesfield on the east and Drumburgh on the west side of the marsh. Horsley, the first to examine the question, supposed the Wall to run round the inland side of the marsh, through the hamlets of Easton and Boustead. He adds that the countryfolk in his time often struck upon the Wall, and could thus determine its course. In 1787, Brand, the historian of Newcastle, subscribes to this view, and states that large quantities of the stones of the Wall had been dug up at Easton. Others have affirmed much the same, but no one has ventured to lay down the precise line of the Wall, despite these alleged discoveries. Horsley so little trusted them that he marks the whole section as doubtful on his map, and Dr. Bruce, who inclined to Horsley's view, emphasizes nevertheless the want of evidence for it. He had seen, he said,

some

some stones at Easton which might be Wall stones, but the continuous stony track of the Wall which he expected was wholly absent. On the other hand, John Hodgson asserts that there were no remains or tradition of remains at Boustead or Easton in his time (1843). He argues that the Wall ran straight across the marsh, and identifies it with a certain 'high ridge' which he saw, and which is still visible.* But this ridge is a simple sea bank, and its direction is unsuitable.

Our plan was to find the Wall at Drumburgh, and, if possible, to trace it eastwards either on to or round the marsh. The field which specially concerned us was one called Howcroft, which lies exactly between the fort field and the marsh. It is a grass field, formerly ploughed, eleven acres in extent; its subsoil, as in the other field, is reddish clay, but it is in general close to the turf, and not buried under an accumulation of debris or forced soil. The aspect of the field is easterly, with a gentle slope to marsh level. At the bottom is a steep bank; below that the bed of the Port-Carlisle Canal, now a branch of the North British Railway, and beyond a sea wall and the marsh. We were able to find both Wall and fosse, the Wall represented only by its footings (9½ feet across) and often wholly destroyed, the fosse 25-30 feet from lip to lip. The direction of the works was significant and unexpected. About two-thirds of the way down the field, as you descend it going eastwards, the direction bends, not inland, as if to go round the marsh, but northwards. The bend is slight, but sufficed to throw our trenches out as we dug along the supposed line (see Nos. 9-10), and its meaning is plain. The Wall can never have been taken round the Marsh. At the bottom of the field, the broken end of the Wall was found close to the railway hedge, and beyond that we could not trace it. The bottom of the

* History of Northumberland, iii. 302.

canal bed is far lower than the foundations of the Wall, which must have been destroyed when it was constructed in 1822. Unfortunately, nothing was noted. An account of some antiquities found elsewhere in making the canal was communicated to the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries at the time, but that account only says that the canal crossed the line of the Wall several times.* Beyond the canal we could not trace the Wall, though we dug extensively.

We also investigated some of the sites through which Horsley's theory supposes the Wall to have run, on the inland side of the Marsh. Mr. John Watson, of Easton, very kindly shewed us five large stones, now in his yard, which had been taken (apparently a year or two ago) from a field called Dales.† They were found lying together in a sort of pocket just below the surface. But they do not seem to be Roman wall stones, and, when the field was drained last year, no more were found in any part of it. We also examined a field called Far Grass Dikes, close to the Grass Dike (=brook), which divides the parishes of Burgh and Bowness, and on the farm of Mr. Joseph Watson, of Marsh House. Here the farmer had noted across the field a strip of ground on which the grass grows poorly, and it was suggested that the foundations of the Wall might be the cause. But a trench here, 4½ feet deep, shewed only undisturbed sand, and the direction of the strip is quite unsuitable. Further, we visited Boustead Hill, where Mr. Maughan thought he detected the entrenchments of a fort.‡ We had no trouble in finding the spot meant by Mr. Maughan at the west end of the hamlet, but it did not seem to us to resemble in any degree the entrenchments of a Roman fort. In

* *Archæologia Aeliana* (old series) ii. 115. Hodgson's *History of Northumberland* 11. iii. 302, says the Wall was not met here in cutting the canal, but this cannot be true. Perhaps it was met, but not recognized.

† This is an old name, occurring on estate maps of 1749-65. It is probably connected, as Mr. Hodgson says, with the Common Field system. See an article by the Rev. J. C. Atkinson in the *Antiquary* for March, 1886.

‡ These *Transactions*, i. 152.

addition

addition, we ascertained that no Roman stones were built into any of the neighbouring houses, and that no Roman remains had been found there within the knowledge of our informants. Mr. Maughan himself does not assert any such finds, and their entire absence seems fatal to his theory.*

The conclusion seems inevitable. The Wall did not skirt round the Marsh. Either it crossed it, or it was never built for this section. The former alternative requires the assumption that in Roman times part, at least, of the Marsh was higher and drier than now. We can obtain no direct evidence of this; we have only been able to ascertain that the Marsh and the road straight across it existed a hundred and fifty years ago much the same as to-day, and that Boustead and Easton are ancient hamlets like Drumburgh†. But it is not incredible that the sea washed away some of the Marsh, and then filled it up with the present mud and sand. It is now washing it away rapidly, but a slight change in the Channel would reverse the procedure. The geological guess that in early times the Wampool flowed out by Drumburgh, instead of by Kirkbride, refers to a period far earlier than the Roman Empire.‡ The alternative, that no Wall existed on the Marsh, is unattractive. For it leaves the four miles of Wall between Drumburgh and Bowness isolated on an inaccessible and uninhabitable peninsula, which the Romans can have had no motive to fortify in that particular manner. But here we reach a stage of uncertainty, which admits of vague, *a priori* arguments such as strike each student differently. To the present writer,

* We may add in a footnote that we observed two old stones built in above a byre door at Boustead Hill House, one a bit of seventeenth or eighteenth century ornament, the other part of a mediæval tombstone with the letters *R]oberi' de Carlatur*.

† One would like to suggest that the road is on the top of the Wall, but that seems excluded by our discoveries in Howcroft, and, indeed, the road is covered at spring tides, as we had occasion to note.

‡ I am indebted to Mr. T. V. Holmes, F.G.S., author of the Memoir of the Geological Survey relating to this district, for allowing me to consult him on the point.

it seems best, for the reasons given, not to reject as yet the view that the Wall crossed the site of the Marsh. But our real claim is to have proved, so far as present evidence goes, that the Wall did not go round the Marsh.

The following are the details of the trenches marked on Plan :—

Trench 1 shewed the north face of the Wall (footing) coming to a broken end, 30 feet north of a bend in the hedge and 3 feet below the surface. A great mass of loose stones, some obviously Wall stones, was found for 18 feet south from the north face of the Wall; possibly they were heaped up when the canal was cut. Nothing was noticed to support the idea of a turret; in itself not improbable.

Trench 2.—No results.

Trench 3.—Debris only. The southward continuation of the trench was to test a local tradition that the Wall turned southwards here—as we found, an erroneous tradition.

Trench 4.—North face of Wall very distinct.

Trench 5 shewed the fosse, 26 feet from lip to lip, but the north lip was ill-defined, a berme of 24 feet and the Wall, two courses high on the north face, 9 feet 7 inches across from edge of footing to edge of footing.

Trenches 6, 7, 8 shewed debris in line of Wall.

Trenches 9, 10 were off the line, and helped only to prove the deflection of it mentioned above.

Trench 11 shewed a good line of north face, footings only.

Trench 12.—Debris only—Wall apparently robbed.

Trench 13.—Much debris on line of Wall, berme of 24 (?) feet, and fosse 29 feet from lip to lip.

Trench 14.—Footing courses of north face.

Trench 15.—No results—Wall doubtless robbed.

Trench 16 was chiefly north of the fosse. It shewed the north lip of the fosse close to the brick wall dividing Howcroft from a house and garden; the part of this brick wall, which runs east and west,
stands

stands over the fosse. The trench was continued 175 feet northwards to test Dr. Bruce's theory that the Wall ran north of the fort; we found that there was here only one ditch.

The excavations on Howcroft and Burgh Marsh were supervised by Mr Booker, Mr Hodgson, and myself.

III.—WALBY.

At Walby the line of the Wall appears to make a slight bend, and inside this bend Mr. Mac Lauchlan notes an intrenchment running parallel to the Wall, "very faint, and only seen at the most easterly house." This intrenchment, it was thought, might be a bit of the Turf Wall, and, accordingly, trenches were dug near the most easterly house of the hamlet, occupied by Mrs. Haugh. One trench was taken across an unmistakable dip in the wood just to the west of the house; we went to a depth of 5 feet, entirely through undisturbed soil, except for a modern drain. The other was cut across the Croft Field, immediately east of the house, for a length of 73 feet, but again we found the undisturbed subsoil. As these two trenches covered the line indicated by Mr. Mac Lauchlan, we are obliged to conclude that his faint intrenchment had no ditch, and probably is no intrenchment at all; certainly it is not a bit of Turf Wall.

The opportunity of digging here was utilized to dig in a field east of those just mentioned, a seven acre field called William Croft. Here the modern lane makes a curious turn north, leaving the line of the Wall to go round three sides of a square, and return to the Wall on the other side of the rectangle. This turn has sometimes suggested the idea that a fort or earthwork caused it. Our trenches shewed that this idea is baseless; the ditch of the Wall was found to cross the field in a right line with its general course. The bottom of the ditch was reached at six feet below the present surface, and yielded bits

bits of decayed vegetation, broken freestone from the Wall, and the usual "black matter."

The work at Walby was supervised by Mr. Hodgson and the present writer.

IV.—GENERAL REMARKS.

The lesson of the past summer is the absolute necessity of excavations to test surface appearances and traditional accounts of the Wall. The lesson has been taught us often before in our six years' work, but the deceptiveness of surface appearances has seldom shown itself so markedly as this year at Drumburgh. Here we have in a grass field an open ditch in the shape of an elbow. The elbow contains an angle, which may fairly be called a right angle if you do not measure it too severely, and its appearance, though not the usual appearance of the Wall and Vallum ditches, can unquestionably be paralleled elsewhere—for instance, in the Vallum ditch just east of Bradley, near Housesteads. It might, therefore, be reasonably taken to represent a Roman ditch, and it has been so taken by nearly all archæologists for two centuries. Yet it has nothing whatever to do with a Roman ditch.

The danger of trusting traditional accounts is no less exemplified here. Mr. Mac Lauchlan describes with some confidence the course of the Wall across the field Howcroft. He adduces a cutting made on the side of the canal and the evidence of a person then alive who ploughed up the remains there. Yet the line laid down on his map and described in his letterpress is seriously incorrect, and wants the striking feature which we have found to characterize the real line.

The lesson thus taught needs to be particularly remembered in dealing with the literature of the Wall, and in particular with the work which we have just mentioned,

Mr.

Mr. Mac Lauchlan's "Survey." That "Survey" is the only detailed description of the Wall and Vallum in their minuter features, which has ever been published, and probably the only one which has ever been compiled. It is an admirable work. As I have said elsewhere, it is one of those rare works in which constant use reveals more merits. But, as its author knew well, it has its limitations. It is a surface description of things actually visible and a preliminary to excavation, but in no sense a final account. Over and over again in the course of our work, we have had occasion to admire its accuracy of minute observation. Over and over again, we have had to recognize that its statements about things not actually visible and its interpretations of doubtful remains are erroneous. This would not in the least have surprised Mr. Mac Lauchlan himself. It seems to surprise some who use his book and maps, and, therefore, we have thought it right to use the striking lesson of Drumburgh and its vicinity to point out the true and precise value of a very valuable work. If that work is misused, the advance of Mural investigation will not be accelerated; if it is understood, excavation will receive a substantial impetus and, in some points, an excellent guide.

EXPENDITURE, 1899.

	£	S.	D.
Labour at Drumburgh (including lodging for some of the men) ...	14	9	0
Compensation at the same ...	1	0	0
Labour at Walby ...	2	1	0
Compensation at Walby ...	0	5	0
	£17 15 0		

Of this total, half was defrayed by the Cumberland and Westmorland Society and half by Oxford subscriptions.