

ART. XLIII.—*On Ancient Remains, chiefly Prehistoric, in Geltsdale, Cumberland.* By the Rev. G. ROME HALL, F.S.A., Vicar of Birtley, Wark, Northumberland.

*Read at Carlisle, August 7th, 1882.\**

SOME observations connected with various remains, chiefly of prehistoric interest, were made by the writer and noted down a few years since, during excursions in the beautiful vale of the river Gelt. Geltsdale is but little known except in its lower reaches, where amongst the picturesque wood-embowered ravines near the village of Hayton, appears the famous "Written Rock" of the Roman Wall-builders. Lovers of natural scenery, as well as archæologists, make this favoured spot a place of frequent pilgrimage.

As the rest of the valley has been but seldom visited for the purpose of antiquarian research these notes on one small corner—a minor dale—of Cumberland, may serve to prove that it possesses many other remains of considerable interest and value.

The river Gelt† rises amongst the lofty mountains of the Cross Fell range (the water-shed also of the South Tyne) in the royal forest of Geltsdale, which, with the neighbouring forest of Briarthwaite, formerly belonged to the great Priory of Hexham. On the suppression of the monasteries it was granted to the powerful Barons of Gilsland, and is now the property of the Earl of Carlisle. From the furthest source of the Gelt in its rivulet "The Old Water" in the wild fastnesses of fell and moor its course does not much exceed twelve miles; until,

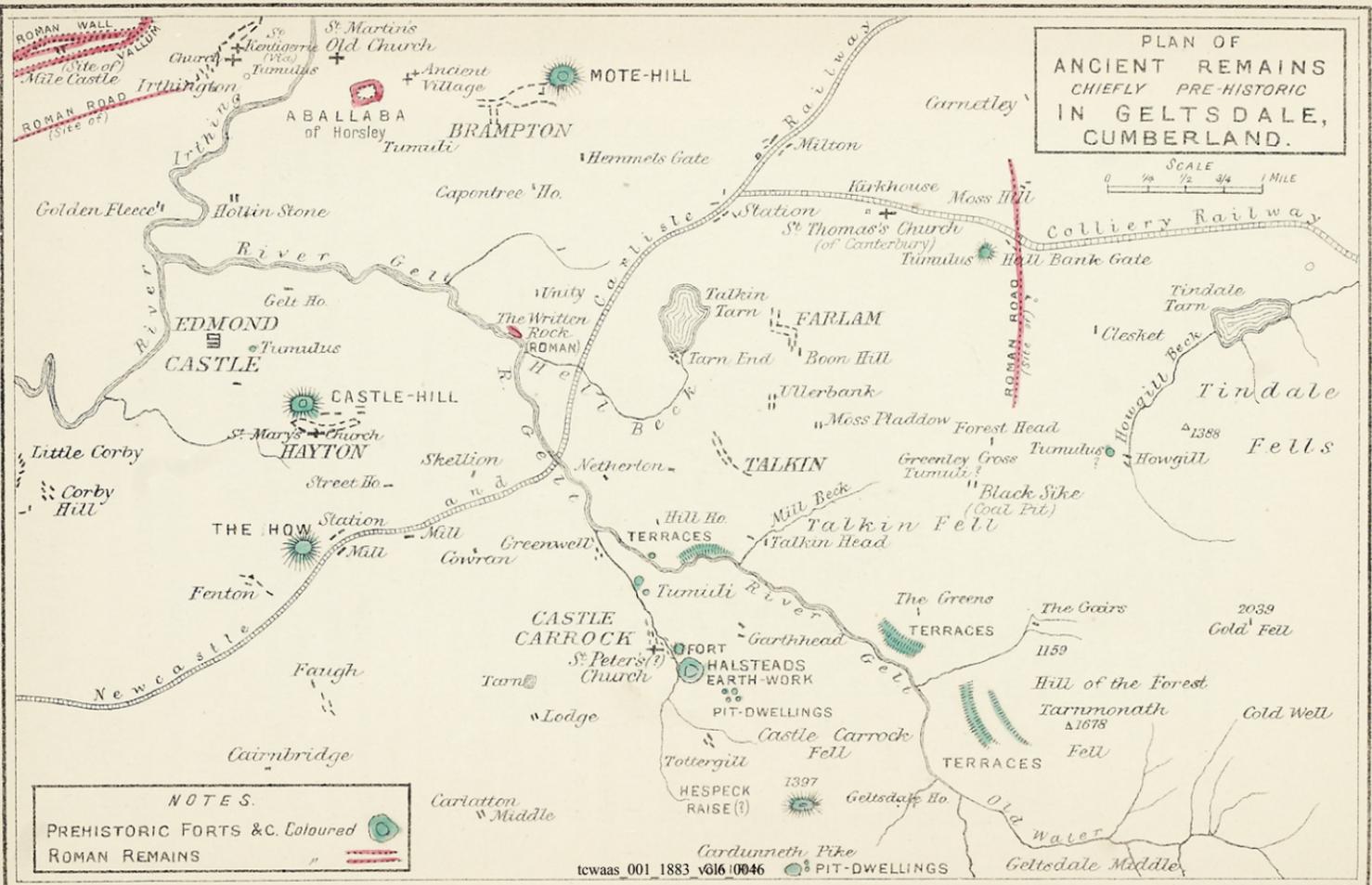
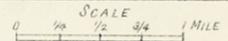
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\* At the joint meeting of this Society and the Royal Archæological Institute.

† Probably from the Celtic "*gwilt*," *wild*; a descriptive epithet which is very appropriate throughout most of its course. Cf. Glenwhelt, near Carvorran, the "wild glen," and *Gwilt Gwallin*, "Wild Wales."

near

PLAN OF  
ANCIENT REMAINS  
CHIEFLY PRE-HISTORIC  
IN GELTSDALE,  
CUMBERLAND.



NOTES.  
PREHISTORIC FORTS & C. Coloured  
ROMAN REMAINS

Cardunneth Pike  
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near Edmond Castle, in the fertile plain, it becomes a confluent of the river Irthing, which again in its turn, about three miles farther down, falls into the Eden near Warwick Bridge.

High up in the royalty of Geltsdale "Old Forest," near the angle formed by the infant river and its small affluent, the How Gill or Tarnmonath Burn, lie two well-defined parallel ledges near a ruinous cottage, the Gairs, on the hill slope. These are the first ancient remains to be noticed.

### GAIRS\* TERRACES.

They have been apparently built up in places, like so many similar terraces that attract the notice of travellers in Palestine, China, and various countries of Europe. Archæologists consider such artificial or partly artificial parallel ledges to have been utilised by the early inhabitants of Britain for the limited cereal cultivation possible in their semi-savage condition. They are very numerous in Yorkshire, especially in Wensleydale and on the Eastern Wolds, and in Northumberland on the flanks of the Cheviot, in the vales of North Tyne, the Breamish, and the Colledge near Flodden Field. In the latter county these ancient remains are usually in the near vicinity of "British Camps," so-called, as if directly connected in their origin; whereas in Yorkshire these "camps" or prehistoric hill and vale forts are few and far between, compared with the great frequency of the terrace-culture lines. Though a natural origin has been claimed for them by geologists, as ancient river-margins or parallel outcrops of rock-strata, particularly in the carboniferous limestone formation, there remains but little doubt in the minds of those who have studied the subject that they have been either purposely constructed, or, where partially natural, adapted for culti-

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\* Perhaps so-called from the Celtic name of the adjoining burn, tumbling over its steep, rocky bed; *garw*, rough, as in Garry, Yare, and Yarrow.

vation.

vation. On the bank or slope of the hill to the south and west of the great Roman Station of "Borcovicus" on the Roman Wall, "The Tadmor of Britain," several terraces of this kind are plainly visible, that would be used in Roman-British and perhaps still earlier times. Dean Stanley, Dr. Norman Macleod, and others have considered that if the broken terraces encircling the hills around Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Holy Land were again reformed, and the rich soil, once covering them and now lying useless in the bottom of the *wadis*, were re-placed, much of the pristine fertility of Palestine would be brought back ere long. The purpose they subserved is to this day well illustrated by similar terraces in the Rhineland, France, and Italy. They were evidently formed to prevent both soil and seed from being washed down the declivities of valley-basins, where in ancient days the rainfall would be much more considerable than at present. Then the site of these terraced slopes would be mere clearings in the wide-spreading primeval forests, midway up the hills, or sufficiently elevated above the rivers for security from floods.

The Gairs terraces are about fifteen to twenty feet high and eighty yards in length; the lower line being less distinctly defined. Their direction appears to be from north-west to south-east. Some distance above is a limestone ridge of small shivered and weathered stones, about twenty feet high; and upon it are traces of wall-foundations of unhewn stones with other remains of former occupation. Beyond lies "*The Hill in the Forest*," thus named *par excellence*, from being known as the last frequented haunt of the fallow deer. Old dalesfolk, my informant remarked,\* used to tell of the time when, from West Dun Hill and Hartchyside, the deer descended into the inclosed fields of "The Middle," which is a tract of land between the New and Old Water of Gelt, south of "The Forest." Marks of

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\* The late Mr. Richard Watson of Hill House, near Talkin.

former

former cultivation can still be seen below the Gairs terrace lines. For though the higher portions of the fell are rugged and sterile, the lower moorland, being dry, is covered with a fine herbage and affords good pasturage, and would also repay tillage.

### GREENS TERRACES.

Following the course of the Gelt we arrive at the Greens Terraces, near the "Greens Cottage" on Talkin Fell. Here are three culture-lines of a similar character on the limestone formation, about fifty yards in length and of considerable height. There are sheep-folds beneath, and some oblong inclosures that may have been "night-folds" for cattle, or the rude "shieldings" used by shepherds in the old "summer feeds." I was unable to ascertain if any "camps" existed in this neighbourhood.

Still continuing our way down the valley on the right bank of the Gelt we come to another and yet more remarkable series of ancient terraces, which are nearly opposite to the village of Castle Carrock.

### TALKIN HEAD WOOD TERRACES.

This striking series covers the southern face of a high escarpment above the winding margin of the river, on a well-wooded bank. The terraces, of extraordinary length and great variety of dimensions and appearance, rise one above the other, six or eight in number; some of the ledges stretching in parallel lines, and a few "inosculating" or running not horizontally but *diagonally* into each other; thus proving that they cannot be ancient river-margins. They vary from four to about ten feet in height, and curve into the hill-slope towards its base. While examining these—the most accessible of the Geltsdale examples—I was informed of a singularly ingenious but fanciful idea respecting the origin and purpose of the terraces; still recognising, however, their evident artificial character. An  
intelligent

intelligent local antiquary asserted his conviction that the whole series was designed and formed by the victorious *Romans*, who, as all are aware, used the Gelt quarries for the construction of their Mural Barrier and nearest stationary town—the site is about four miles south of Hadrian's Wall. During their long occupation of the country, when seated on these curving ledges, as in a kind of amphitheatre, all the cohorts of the neighbouring stations and the subject Britons would be interested spectators of the movements of the Roman *galley*s, and perchance of British canoes and coracles, in the naval reviews and regattas, which, as he conceived, must have often taken place on the bosom of the broad lake beneath, now merely a great depression of fertile “haugh” land by the margin of the river!\*

It is worthy of remark that the local name of “desses” is given to these terrace-lines, which rise in steps one above the other, on the sunny side of the vale of Gelt. Brockett, in his “Glossary of North Country Words,” (*sub voce*, 2nd Edit.), supposes that “Dess” is a verb signifying “to lay close together, or pile up in order”; but he does not give this special substantival usage. Yet in this way it is commonly applied to that portion of the stack of hay which in the winter season is cut by the husbandman into miniature terraces or ledges, such as may be observed in every “garth” or farm-yard in the northern counties. Chaucer uses *deis* for a seat, or rather for the raised step or platform for the lord and his companions in the great hall of the mediæval castle. Spencer has *desse*, a desk or table.†

Another, but less usual local name for such ledges is

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\* See “*Natural History Transactions of Northumberland and Durham*,” Vol. iii., New Series, p. 44. Also cf. *Ibid.* pp. 32-53, “*An Enquiry into the Origin of Certain Terraced Slopes in North Tynedale*,” in which the writer has discussed the whole question. Their artificial character is well illustrated by a remarkable instance at Birtley on the North Tyne, where two series run at right angles to one another, each having five or six distinct gradations from six to ten feet high, and in length three hundred and one hundred yards respectively.

† The word in its various forms seems to be derived from the old French *dais*, *deis*, *dois*, a dining-table, Provencal, *deis*; from the Latin *discus*, a dish, a table; Anglo-Saxon, *disc*; a plate, a dish, a table; cf. Ital. *desco*, Germ. *tisch*.

“dales.

“dales.” A farmer observed to me that “it is astonishing how with the cultivation of even twenty years these steep ‘dales’ work down”; and in consequence a change of form is soon apparent. This word is from the Anglo-Saxon *dal*, connected with *daelan*, to divide, (Germ. *thal*, connected with *theilen*). The tribal ground of the ancient Britons, as in Anglo-Saxon days, may have been thus “divided” into separate portions originally, according to the different family necessities. A “survival” of this primitive custom has continued into the memory of some still living, in the similar distribution into separate shares in the “rig and rean” cultivation of the now inclosed arable ground of our village communities, as in North Tynedale and elsewhere in England, and remaining almost unchanged in Russia.\*

An interesting question now presents itself:—Where did the prehistoric cultivators of these terraces live? As in Yorkshire, with numerous fine examples of parallel ledges still remaining, so here, in Geltsdale at least, there are apparently but few of the “camps” or hill-forts and valley-fastnesses so frequently met with amongst the Northumbrian dales. The former appears to imply a more settled condition of the primeval people; the latter a state of chronic warfare and struggle of tribe against tribe.

### EARLY SETTLEMENTS.

These, however, have existed in the district; the sites are yet evident, and are of a note-worthy character. They, too, resemble those of the ancient Brigantian territory; being like the prehistoric settlements on the summits of Ingleborough and Rosebury Topping, rather than the more carefully constructed circular dwellings, with surrounding

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\* “In several English counties there may still be noticed the boundaries of the great common-fields, divided lengthwise into three strips, which again were divided crosswise into lots, held by the villagers; the three divisions were managed on the old three-field system, one lying fallow, while the other two bore two kinds of crops.” Tylor’s “*Anthropology*,” Chap. ix., p. 219. A field still called the “city dales” is shown at Wark-on-Tyne. *Natural History Transactions Durham and Northumberland*, Vol. v., New Series, p. 241.

ramparts

ramparts and ditches, which are so prevalent on the uplands of the Anglo-Scottish Borders.

In the neighbourhood of Castle Carrock, on an outlying spur of the great fell, a portion of the Cross Fell range, whence a magnificent view is obtained over the whole plain of Cumberland to the Solway, and Criffel beyond it, to the Lake Mountains, and the Scottish and Northumberland hills, there yet remain some of the peculiar rounded *pit-dwellings*, described by Professor Philipps\* in Yorkshire, and Sir Richard Colt Hoare in Wiltshire. By these and other competent authorities such circular excavations, clustered together often without fosse or rampart-wall, are considered to have been the habitations of the ancient Britons of a type anterior to the more usual "camp" and its inclosed "hut-circles." The position above Garthead is very strong, on the elevated plateau which is covered with fine green grass, well sheltered by higher and rocky ground on the east and north-east, except where a glimpse of the picturesque hamlet of Talkin appears through an opening in the rugged barrier-wall, which thence descends with the whole projecting spur of the mountain abruptly to the plain. The spot seems to have been partially under tillage at no distant date, and a limestone quarry breaks into the sloping ground. Above it the ancient pit-dwellings have been scooped out. In diameter they vary from nearly thirty to ten feet. The largest has a rampart of the earth thrown out, five feet high, encircling it. The entrance in this instance is plainly visible, facing the east, which is the sheltered side; as if the in-dwellers were specially desirous to avoid the south-west gales, the strongest that are felt in our island. Another is of an oval shape, twenty-one by fifteen feet. One of the group, even in its present state after so many centuries of sub-aerial action, is still at the side about twelve feet in depth. There is a peculiar flank-

\* "Yorkshire," 2nd Edit., p. 203, &c. See Wright's "The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon," 1852, Chap. ii., p. 87, ff.

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ing rampart thrown out at the entrance at the north-west, of sufficient height to afford shelter and protection. Close to the brink of the present quarry is another pit-dwelling, with its engirdling rampart of a different type again; that is, projecting as a guard on *both* sides of the entrance. It measures fourteen by twelve feet across, and is five feet deep above the *débris*, which to a greater or less degree has accumulated in this as in every other primitive dwelling.

Some years since my friend, Mr. Ralph Watson, of Garth-foot House, Castle Carrock, examined by means of a partial exploration one or two of these circular pit-habitations. They are situated at no great distance from his residence. Only some flakes and fragments of the native limestone-rock of very singular shapes, but naturally fractured, rewarded the labour. Antiquaries of a previous generation would perhaps have been inclined to class them amongst implements for flaying animals or dressing skins, and as hammer stones; though I could observe no trace of use upon them. In one dwelling was disclosed a row of stones placed around the bottom as if to serve for seats.

#### EARTH-OVENS.

In the process of quarrying the limestone for agricultural purposes two unmistakeable examples of the primitive manner of cooking of the inhabitants of this early settlement came to light. One of these "earth-ovens" was a stone-lined cavity of circular form, dug out of the rock, two feet in diameter and five feet in depth; the stones set around bearing traces of burning as by long-continued fires. The bottom was the natural rock. The second pit-oven noticed, though other instances may have escaped observation, was four feet in diameter, and had a flagstone placed at the bottom.

In exploring Ancient British circular dwellings I have sometimes been surprised at the few indications of "firing" observable in them; many also, so far as could be ascertained

tained, having no hearth-stones for culinary operations. The earth-ovens found *outside* these Castle Carrock pit-dwellings, (with a similar example which I discovered in a refuse heap of reddened stones, mingled with very numerous bones of various animals, outside the Gunnar Peak "Camp" in North Tynedale,) may serve to explain this apparent anomaly. The early vale-dwellers may have preferred to do their simple cookery in the open air, *sub Jove*, and not, as a rule, within their rude huts. This is the usual custom of many savage and half-barbarous tribes in Africa and elsewhere at the present day. In the "Nile Tributaries of Abyssinnia" Sir Samuel Baker has described like modes of cooking animal food, and the excellent results from a gastronomic point of view.\*

Following the lofty brow, looking westwards, of the great fell for some distance we reach Cardunnoct† or Cardun-neth Pike, over 1300 feet above the sea, where, in close proximity to a mighty cairn, are some circular pit-dwellings, another early settlement. A large stone slab lies near the edge of one of these, which may have served as a hearth-stone. The encircling rampart of earth would increase the size and height of the habitation. Whether the wattled and sod-thatched roofs were thrown horizontally across these dwellings, or were constructed in conical fashion, as usual *more Britannico*, the undoubted advantage of living *beneath* the surface of the ground, like the ancient Troglodytes of the Nile, upon these wind-swept mountain heights, is very manifest.

Passing from these hill-settlements of primeval Cumberland folk, we may now descend into the plains where traces of early habitations are also to be found. To my knowledge there are no ruins remaining of any "Castle" or even

\* Chap. xxi., pp. 361-2, Edit. 1872; cf. *Archæologia*, Vol. xlv., p. 367, n. "Researches in Ancient Circular Dwellings, near Birtley, North Tynedale," by the present writer.

† From *Caer*, Welsh, related to the Erse *Cathair*, and *dun*, a hill-fort; reduplicated in *knock*, Gadhelic, also a hill. Cf. *Carlisle*, *Dunmow*, *Knockduff*, &c.

Border

Border pele-tower in the village to give significance to the name "Castle" Carrock.\* The old church, rebuilt half a century ago, (the new church retains the ancient bell, bearing the inscription, "Praise thou the Lord, O Castle Carrock"†), was traditionally said to have been constructed with materials brought from two ancient earthworks—so-called "castles" or fortified sites—near at hand. One, in a marshy field about forty yards west of the church, was surrounded by a fosse, now filled up, and is about 100 yards in length by 40 to 50 in breadth. It is rounded at the south-east corner more than at the south-west. An occupation-road has probably run through the north-west end where it narrowed. The other is still called the "Hallsteads," (the field is so-named in the parish books,) and lies about a quarter of a mile to the south. It is an earthwork artificially scarped all round, the height above the meadow varying from fourteen feet on the west to four on the east; its shape being nearly that of half an ellipse cut through its longer axis, and broader at the west than the east. A small stream runs close by the western side; and the ditch and rampart are nearly conterminous with the boundary of the field, which is just over an acre in extent. The field has been ploughed within late years, and the sub-soil is red clay; not gravel and sand as in the adjoining inclosures. There is an outwork across the fosse on the north-west, not unlike a tumulus, as if to defend the entrance. Another outwork appears on the north-east as a kind of rampart outside the ditch where the projecting tongue of land begins. I could hear of nothing being found on this spot, except the lower portion of a massive stake which had been "fired" at the pointed end, and may have had place in some stockade, in British, Saxon, or later times; having its parallel in those recently discovered at

\* Locally pronounced "Carrick," probably from Gadhelic *carraig*, Cymric *craig*, a rock or crag; the "Castle" may be a later repetition of the "car" or hill-fort, on the rocks above, which has been already described.

† The Castle Carrock bell, bearing this quaint inscription, no longer exists, *ante* p. 422.

Carlisle, where the early or the Roman inhabitants defended themselves behind palisaded ramparts.

Lower down the valley at the village of Hayton is an ancient earthwork called, like that at Haltwhistle, the "Castle-hill." In Northumberland such British or Roman "camps" are usually termed "Chesters" (Latin, *Castra*), as Halton and Walwick Chesters, Rochester on the Rede, and another near Birtley, (Rutchester in Camden's map). In Cumberland, although Muncaster or Mulcaster, etc., occur in the southern extremity of the county, the more general name, significant of an early settlement, is "castle." For example, Bewcastle, "Bueth's fortress;" and the *Petriana*? of the Notitia, a little north of the Gelt and Irthing, is called "Castle-steads."

This earthwork at Hayton seems to be of prehistoric origin. It has its well-chosen site, not unlike that of the Brampton Moat Hill, on the extremity of a narrow projecting eminence, separated on the south from the present village by a deep ravine, the sides of which, about fifty feet high, have been artificially scarped for the most part. The position, which is elevated considerably above the country around, commands a most extensive view of the beautiful plain to the west, south and north; which, as the primeval inhabitants, whether Goidel or Brython,\* beheld it, must have appeared, just as it does now, well-wooded and "well-watered everywhere," as Eden, "even as the garden of the Lord."†

On this British fort is a plantation chiefly of scattered branchless Scotch firs with green crowns, beneath which are young larch trees; while, in the adjoining stackyard of the farm, which runs along the bank of the precipitous ravine, and is at a lower level, beech trees flourish. The centre-space of the "Castle-hill" is level across from south to north, but from this depression the ground rises three

\* So the Gaidhel or Gael and the Welsh Briton called themselves. See *Celtic Britain*, by Prof. Rhys, p. 3, *et passim*.

† Genesis, c. xiii., v. 10.

or four feet on the west side and about eight feet on the east. The area, nearly circular within, measures about 120 feet across, not including the double rampart and intervening fosse. The latter varies from five or six to twelve feet in depth. On the south-west there is a broad terrace fifteen feet wide and six high, overlooking the deep ravine; and on the north-west, below the outer rampart, there is a gentle slope down to the cultivated fields. By nature and art this primitive earth-work has been rendered strong for defence; and a plentiful spring of water is at hand, while a perennial stream runs beneath the great southern escarpment. The name Hayton occurs also near Maryport, and there is a Great Ayton in Cleveland.\* It may be connected with the Norman-French "*Haie*,"—that is the "hedged," "fenced" or "stockaded" inclosure, which would form the chief defensive position of the district of Geltsdale near the junction of Gelt and Irthing.

#### CAIRNS AND TUMULI.

From noticing the limited cereal cultivation and settlements, we come to cairns and tumuli. These still represent to us the funereal monuments of the prehistoric dales-folk of the Gelt. Solitary sepulchral monoliths and cromlechs there may be which have not come to my knowledge; as no doubt there are some ancient British and Romano-British towns, with the foundations of their circular hut-dwellings yet remaining, such as are so often met with on the banks of the North Tyne and Rede, with which I am most familiar. On the west side of Castle Carrock Fell, in Cumwhitton Parish, in the midst of a high-lying waste, dark and dreary under the cloudy sky as I beheld it, there is one of those so-called "Druidical temples" or stone-circles, though probably sepulchral. It is like that better known and larger example of "Long Meg and her

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\* *Natural History Transactions of Northumberland and Durham*, Vol. v., p. 249.

Daughters"

Daughters" at Salkeld, and that well-preserved circle which lies under Saddleback on the road to Keswick. This circle at Cumwhitton is called the "Grey Yauds," the latter being the common name among North-country people for a horse—a *jade* or "yad,"\* the grey colour being that of the weather-beaten stones. The "Druid" temple is said to be fifty-two yards in diameter,† and was found to consist, within the memory of my guide, of eighty to ninety stones, none of these being more than about four or five feet high. But their number is now much reduced, he told me, by the supposed necessities of agriculture; the stones having been broken up and used for the adjoining field-walls. These are now approaching calamitously near, invading the waste, just as they are encroaching on Salisbury Plain itself in dangerous proximity to the very site of Stonehenge. The surrounding moor bears the peculiar name of "King Harry," and there is a tradition that one of the Henries, Kings of England, encamped here. The unhappy Henry VI. may have been constrained to pass this way in his hasty flight from the fateful and decisive battle-field of Hexham, on May 15th, 1464, to find refuge for a time in some remote Westmoreland manor-house among the few followers still faithful to the fortunes of the Red Rose.

On Castle Carrock Fell are two great cairns, wonderful accumulations of stones that must have cost immense labour to pile up, because few stones can be obtained in these elevated sites. They resemble the mighty burial heaps of ancient chieftains in the Cheviot range, such as the Hare (or "army")‡ Cairn in Redesdale, and Cairnglassenhope in North Tynedale. These cairns on Castle Carrock

\* Cf. Brockett's "Glossary," *sub voce*.

† Whellan's "Cumberland and Westmorland," p. 673.

‡ From *har*, *her*, "army" or "soldier." "As a prefix this may mean 'army,' but as an ending, where it is often *hari* or *heri* (and perhaps was originally always so), it may be taken, as suggested by Grimm, to mean warrior." See "*Surnames as a Science*," by Mr. Robert Ferguson, M.P., F.S.A., 1883, p. 55, and Note :—an excellent work just published.

Fell are not far distant from one another. One is called Hespeck Raise, reminding us of Dunmail Raise on Ulleswater, the resting place of the last British King of Cumberland. It is an enormous mass of earth and stones, like a Titanic "Long Barrow;" so vast that, with the advantage of its lofty position, 1397 feet above the sea, it breaks the skyline of the lofty fell, to a spectator looking from the north, in such a way as to deserve its local name of the "Giant's Grave."\* The other cairn is towards the western face of the mountain, commanding the whole glorious panorama of the Lake District, and is called by the British name of Car-dunneth or Cardunnock Pike, being near to the ancient British village or second group of circular pit-dwellings already noticed. As the object of choosing such elevated sites for burial places was to ensure that the departed chief or prince, should not in death be forgotten by his people, we cannot conceive any position more effective for such a purpose. Great indeed must have been the importance of the mighty dead, for whom these sepulchres on the mountain's brow were reared; and as when living they were had in honour, so they were set forth on their long journey to the unseen land of *Annwyn*—the Celtic Paradise of the West—it may be with a nation's tribute of reverence and love.

There is recorded, probably of the cairn last named, which is on the mountain verge of Cumrew parish, that a human skeleton was found in it,† but no date or description is afforded.

In a tumulus near Kirkhouse, at a place still named from it the "Howgill," some years since was found, as Major Thompson informs me, a bronze three-legged vessel, with handles at the side. Such utensils or vases were figured by Dr. Bruce in his "Roman Wall" in the first

\* A well-known engraving of "Talkin Tarn," by the late Mr. W. H. Nutter of Carlisle, gives very distinctly this great cairn on the summit of Castle Carrock Fell which is in the background.

† Whellan's "*Cumberland and Westmorland*," p. 672.

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and second editions; but, as they are considered of uncertain date, they have not been definitely claimed as "Roman" in his third and last edition of that valuable work.\*

There is about seven miles from Carlisle eastwards, a hamlet called "The How;" and the adjoining corn mill and railway station derive their name from the same great earthwork under whose pine-clad circular slopes the village nestles. This fine example of the "How"—a common Scandinavian term for a burial-mound,† is about one mile south from Hayton and its "Castle-hill." It is formed apparently of sand rounded by natural forces, and rises about fifty feet high from the bottom of the ravine on the south and west, but lower for the rest of its circumference. The upper portion of the conical hill is probably artificial. No excavation that I could hear of has ever been attempted; but it is one of those large examples of which the Saga legends tell us, wherein is believed still to lie hid the hoard of buried treasure over which the dragon of the "How," the dreaded "cairn-dweller," keeps sleepless watch and ward, till overcome by fearless spoilers like "Grettir the Strong."

It is said that in removing a large cairn near Gelt Bridge about the year 1775, the farmer found a kist-vaen or stone-lined grave, containing a human skeleton. Another came under my own notice not long ago in a field close to the lodge-gate of Edmond Castle. The stone slabs were made into a seat, placed at my suggestion by my venerable friend, the late T. H. Graham, Esq., F.S.A., at the front of his residence. The inclosed urn had been broken to pieces and the fragments lost in the soil.‡

\* See "The Roman Wall," 2nd edition, 1853, Plate xvi. and xvii., p. 435. The vessel is now in the possession of Mrs. Thompson, Kirkhouse.

† Norse *haugr*, a mound; Old High Germ. *houe*; e.g., Fox How, Silver How; cf. Ferguson's "The Northmen in Cumberland and Westmoreland," pp 54-56.

‡ In the library of Edmond Castle I was shown two British Urns of the so-called "drinking cup" type, ornamented with the usual parallel lines, zigzags, and dots, and in excellent preservation. But these were not local, having been found in barrows on Mr. Graham's property near Belford, Northumberland.

Some

Some years since, when visiting the neighbourhood, I heard of a human skull having been discovered near Castle Carrock in a similar stone-lined grave, on the west side of the high-road between Upper Gelt Bridge and the village. Fortunately, through the good offices of a friend (Mr. R. Watson), I was able to obtain it for the collection of the Rev. Dr. Greenwell of Durham, who transferred it afterwards, with many others, to the New Museum at Oxford. At my request he accompanied me to Castle Carrock, where we engaged in some explorations in and near the site of the kist-vaen. His own description may be cited :—

“ In the year 1865, in the process of cultivating a field called Leafy Hill, the cover-stone of an unsuspected cist was touched by the plough. The cist had been constructed in a natural rise of the land, the cover-stone being but a few inches below the surface. It was of the ordinary form, made with four stones set on edge with a single large slab over all, and was placed in a direction north-east and south-west. It contained the body of an old man laid on the left side, with the head to north-east, having one arm extended, the other across the chest. Behind the head was a ‘drinking cup’ laid on its side; this was broken into several pieces in order that each of the men working in the field might have a portion. From some of the pieces I succeeded in recovering I have been enabled to make out the size, form, and ornamentation of the vessel with sufficient exactness. It is in shape like fig. 81, but widening more towards the mouth, and must have been about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches high, and is  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide at the mouth; it is ornamented over the whole surface with narrow encircling bands, defined by a grooved line on each side of them, every fourth band having upon it short sloping lines, these being arranged on the bands alternately from right to left and from left to right. On the bottom of the cist was some charcoal.”\*

In our search after the scattered fragments of this British urn we happened to enter the cottage of a very aged dame, then in her 96th year. She said she well remembered in her girlhood at harvest time dancing with other village maidens on the Leafy Hill, and if they had

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\* “British Barrows,” CLXIII., p. 379.

then

then known of the grave below it they could not have ventured even near the spot. There were few stones upon or near the site; and if there had been a cairn originally it had long since been demolished—as the quarry used in making the adjoining fence-walls. This ancient dame assured me there would be a heap of stones placed over the grave at first; because “in the old times they always raised a great cairn to prevent the *wolves* from getting at the dead body.” An interesting reminiscence of the origin of “taking stones to the cairns,” as in the Scottish Highlands at this day, when each passer-by adds his stone; a token of respect in the present to the memory of the dead,—a necessary adjunct in the past to the stone-lined sepulchre, to prevent by the great protecting cairn any desecration of the mortal remains by fierce wild beasts. This funereal custom among our ancient British ancestors has its analogous rites in nearly all lands;—from Ireland and Great Britain in the West, to India and Palestine in the East. We read how, about B.C. 1023, when the rebellious son of King David met his strange death, after his army’s defeat by Joab in the battle in the wood of Ephraim beyond the Jordan, “They took Absalom and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a *very great heap of stones upon him.*”\*

The late Professor Rolleston, who examined the skull from the Leafy Hill cist, found its characteristics to bear a considerable resemblance to one from Tosson near Rothbury in Northumberland. He considered it had belonged to a man “much past the middle period of life,” if not to an “aged” man. The lower jaw was unusually powerful. By contour as well as by measurement he deemed the skull to be that of a man of the primeval *brachy-cephalic* or “Round-headed” race, who succeeded to the “*dolicho-cephalic*” or “Long-headed” people in pre-historic times long before the Roman Conquest of Britain. For, en-

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\* 2 Samuel, c. xviii., v. 17.

dorsing the words of Dr. Bernard Davis, in his "Crania Britannica," concerning the Tosson skull, this British skull found at Castle Carrock is " ' of the typical series of ancient British crania,' and of the typical series, I should add, of the Round Barrow or Bronze Period ;" of which Canon Greenwell has found so many interesting remains in his exhaustive researches among the tumuli on the Yorkshire Wolds.\*

In the short time at our disposal for barrow digging at Castle Carrock we fruitlessly tried some sites of supposed interments pointed out to us, where the mounds proved to be natural or had been previously rifled, if they had been originally tumuli at all. The only successful search, besides that already described, was made on a spot in close proximity to the Leafy Hill and its kist-vaen. I will again quote from "British Barrows"† for its account of the interesting discovery :—

"About fifty yards to the south of the cist just described was another swell or rising point of land, upon the summit of which had been raised a small mound of stones and earth about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet high and 8 feet in diameter. Below this was an oval hollow 3 feet by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet, sunk 1 foot 4 inches below the natural surface, and having a direction north-east by south-west. It was filled in by dark coloured mould and a few stones, below which on the bottom was a deposit of burnt bones belonging to an adult of small size. Beneath the bones, and apparently having been placed there before they were laid in the hollow, was a very beautifully made flint knife [fig. 153],  $3\frac{3}{8}$  inches long and  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide at the broadest part. The one face is flat and left in the same condition as when newly struck off from the core; the other, which is convex, has been most delicately and skillfully chipped over the whole surface. There is no appearance upon it of its ever having been actually used, and it would seem to have been made new for the purposes of the burial. It is one of that class of flint implements which I have met with on several occasions, and which when accompanying a burnt body, have still in no case themselves passed through the fire."

\* See description of figures of the Castle Carrock skull, by Professor Rolleston, "British Barrows," pp. 599-601.

† CLXIV., pp. 379, 380.

Among

Among the many relics of the pre-Roman inhabitants of Geltsdale, that have been unearthed chiefly by accident in ploughing or draining, and since lost by unintelligent finders, no doubt bronze as well as stone implements and weapons are included. A bronze celt, I have heard, was found near the principal tributary of the Gelt, a little above the famous "Written Rock,"—the Norse name of which, *Hell-beck*, suits so well its physical characteristics. *Hell-beck* means the "covered" or *unseen* stream;\* for in the deep recesses of the narrow, wooded ravine the beck passes almost without observance on its rapid course.

In my collection I have portions of two or three of the stone-querns which were found near Castle Carrock. Hand-mills were used both in prehistoric, Roman, and later times, even down to a very recent date on the Anglo-Scottish Border-land, especially in its remoter dales. Only one is an *under-stone*, of gritty red sandstone, 16 inches diameter, 3 inches high, with a centre-hole  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches across. Two are *upper-stones*, which are most commonly found in ancient "camps" and settlements; as the Lords of the Manors caused the under-stones to be destroyed to enforce the grinding of corn at their mediæval water-mills—sometimes a fruitful source of litigation, as between the Abbots and townsmen of St. Albans in the fourteenth century. One of these is 12 inches in diameter by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches high; the other

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\* The Hebrew *Sheol*, and Greek *Hades* are the well-known equivalents of the Anglo-Saxon *hell*, which is derived from the A. S. and Old High Germ. *helan*, to "hele," to conceal. Icel. *Hel*, A. S. *Hell*, Old High Germ. *Hella*, *Heltra*, Goth. *Halya*, is the Goddess of Death, "The mistress of the gloomy underworld." Cf. Hellwell in Devonshire, probably only the "covered" well originally. See Taylor's "Words and Places," 2nd edition, p. 327. On the banks of the Hellbeck a sanguinary conflict took place in 1570, when an army led by Lord Hunsdon, then Governor of Berwick, was victorious over the forces led by Leonard Dacres, (Ridpath's Border Hist., pp. 633-4, Edit. 1776); and the tradition is that after the battle the Hellbeck "ran red" with the blood of the slain. There is a similar tradition accounting for the origin of the name of the River *Rede*, (Celtic, *swift running*), which, I have been personally assured, derived its name from the red (locally pronounced *rede*) colour of its waters during the three days following the battle of Chevy Chase at Otterburn! It is singular that the "Red River" of Manitoba, the favourite emigration field of Canada, should have actually obtained its epithet from the same sanguinary result of a fierce battle between Indian tribes.

11 inches in diameter at the bottom, and 6 inches in height. Half of a third upper-stone, also of gritty red sandstone, is 14 inches across at the bottom, 7 inches at the top, and 7 inches high; and it is ornamented by a set of flutings radiating from the centre at the top. It was found built up at the base of a broken "dry-stone" fence in Whittler's Field, half-a-mile south of the village, where the common "field-dale" goes by the border of it. The ornament does not necessarily denote a comparatively recent date; for Mr. Evans\* describes an upper-stone now in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, which is ornamented with raised lines, an elaborately formed cross with a kind of spectacular termination. It was found in trenching a moss in the parish of Balmaclellan, New Galloway, with some curious bronze objects of "Late Celtic" workmanship. These hand-mills, as Dr. Arthur Mitchell has seen for himself, are still in very common use,—are, indeed, still made and sold for about 3/6 to 5/- in Shetland and in the Hebrides. (Tennant describes them as in use there in his "Tour in Scotland" in 1772†). But they are very infrequent in England. I have one of fine compact white sandstone, that was in *daily use* up to the early part of this century by Mr. John Ellwood, a "stateman" at Breckonthwaite near Castle Carrock; and it is at this hour

\* "Ancient Stone Implements," chap. x., p. 234, fig. 180. This fluted upper stone of a Geltsdale hand-mill was exhibited in the temporary museum of the Royal Archæological Institute at Carlisle, with a similar one (whole) from near Flimby.

† Tylor, in his "*Anthropology*," chap. viii., p. 202, gives a sketch, after Pennant, of two "Hebrides women grinding with the quern or hand-mill." He also illustrates the change from the hand-mill to the water-mill, to which I have adverted—though the essential principle of the revolving stone remains the same in both—by the ancient Greek epigram, which says, "Cease your work, ye maids who laboured at the mills, sleep and let the birds sing to the returning dawn, for Demeter has bidden the water nymphs do your tasks; obedient to her call, they throw themselves on the wheel and turn the axle and the heavy mill." *Ibid.*, p. 204. The music of the grinding of the quern is said (Dr. Mitchell's "The Past in the Present," p. 38,) to be one of the pleasant memories of the childhood of a Shetlander or Lewisman. Cf. Jeremiah, c. xxv., v. 10, and Rev. c. xviii., c. 22.

"The *cronach* stills the dowie heart,  
The *jurram* stills the bairnie;  
The music for a hungry wame  
Is grinding o' the *quernie*.—ROBERT JAMIESON.

capable

capable of doing its work of grinding. (I have heard of a farmer, also within memory, using another hand-mill at Stapleton). The upper-stone is 10 inches in diameter, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches high, with a central opening of 3 inches. The under-stone is a massive hexagon 17 inches in diameter at bottom, deeply recessed to receive the upper-stone; and it has a projecting lip, and a notch 2 inches wide in the middle of one side from top to bottom. The last owner, the grandson of the farmer who used it to supply his household needs for "daily bread," placed within the quern a cross-bar and pin of iron to aid its working, which must be considered an unnecessary and improper innovation. This is an accurate description of the construction of the hand-mill, and the mode of working:—

"Through the upper stone, and near its verge, a vertical hole is drilled to receive a peg, which forms the handle for turning it. When in use it is worked, as in ancient times among the Jews, by two women seated opposite each other, who alternately seize and propel the handle, so as to drive the stone at considerable speed. The corn, highly dried, is fed by handfuls into the hopper in the runner or upper stone, and the meal passes out by a notch in the rim of the nether stone."\*

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

We have now followed the course of the Gelt, and noticed some of the few remaining vestiges of its ancient inhabitants, chiefly of pre-Roman times. We have seen their primitive hill-forts and vale-settlements; their sparse cultivation, probably of, for the most part, the small wheat and barley, and perhaps millet, (as by the Swiss lake-dwellers), on their terraced slopes, made in cleared spaces of the grand primeval forests. We have seen something

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\* Evan's "Ancient Stone Implements," p. 232. This Castle Carrock quern is not unlike to, but smaller than the excellent example, which had been, up to 1850, in use in the cabin of a Kilkenny peasant, and was presented to the Archæological Institute, and is described and engraved in their *Journal*, Vol. vii., p. 393. Cf. Exodus, c. xi., v. 5, and St. Matthew, c. xxiv., v. 41.

—though

—though mere glimpses after all—of the habits and customs of these Ancient-British ancestors of ours; not merely in the common affairs of life as they dwelt among their numerous fellow-dalesfolk, but also in face of the great final mystery of death and the grave. In their stone-lined sepulchres in the plain, in their mighty cairns on the great mountain's summit, we recognise the same tender emotions of reverence and love which still prompt, in these later days, the gravemounds and memorials in "God's Acre" to our own beloved dead. The hieroglyphs of cup, circle, and duct on burial slab; the provision placed in sepulchral urn, with implement and weapon in the cist; all seem to imply the expectation of a future life,—earth-like, indeed,—beyond this mortal life, in the nearer communion with the Great Spirit, or All-Father; like the *Manitou* of the Red Indians of the North American prairie. In many respects, religious and social, the latter are the precise counterpart in the living present of the long-vanished race of Britain's pre-historic past.\*

### THE ROMAN PERIOD.

After a while there came the great wave of Roman Conquest over the whole land, reaching even to secluded Geltsdale. The Emperor Hadrian secured his new dominion by the great Barrier Wall across the Lower Isthmus; and its valleys and plains were henceforth protected by walled towns, (some of them erected as early as Agricola's time), and by *muris* and *vallum*, mile-castle and turret. In building the Roman Wall the subject Britons of the dales of Irthing and Gelt were among those constrained to work under foreign task-masters; thus to strengthen their own chains, while gaining comparative peace and security from

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\* It is not necessary here to discuss the question, "Who were the *earliest* valedwellers of the Gelt?" Anthropologists tell us of a succession of races in pre-historic Britain, Kynesians, Iberians, and of the Aryan Celts, both Goidels and Brythons. See Elton's "Origins of English History," and Prof. Rhys's "Celtic Britain," the two latest authorities.

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the attacks of Caledonian foes. In the year before the arrival in Britain, A.D. 207, of the Emperor Severus, and probably long before that time the Romans found out the grand cliffs in the beautiful ravine of Lower Gelt. For repairs of Hadrian's work, they quarried out its red blocks to be conveyed on British shoulders to Bremetanracum, Aballaba, or whatever men called then the *castra* of Old Brampton; and also to that part of the wall lying nearest to it. So the famous "Written Rock of Gelt" assures us in an unique memorial. But ruthless hands have not held sacred this most remarkable of Roman Rock-Inscriptions. Beholding it, I fully endorse the need of Sir John Lubbock and the Lord Chancellor's bill for the better "Preservation" of such "Ancient Monuments." For the Vandals have chipped away the cliff, and carved their own names and initials, the record of their own barbarism, where 1675 years since a vexillation, or company of soldiers, of the Second Legion, under an optio called Agricola, were, in the Consulship of Flavius Aper and Albinus Maximus, [employed to hew stone.]\*

The Roman Conquerors themselves, with nearly every vestige of the Wall, and of the very town which they built or repaired with stones out of the Gelt quarries on a gentle eminence south of the "Old Church" of Brampton, have now passed away. More than a century ago the antiquary Horsley could no longer find the site of the town, called by him Aballaba, because it was then covered with brushwood. There is a legend of a lost town of "Old Brampton," submerged by God's decree in punishment for

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\* After reading this paper I was glad to be informed by Mr. Ferguson, F.S.A., that the ledge underneath the "Written Rock" had been carefully removed to prevent further desecration. For a line engraving of the Gelt Rock-Inscription and expansion of it, see Dr. Bruce's "*Lapidarium Septentrionale*," pp. 234-5. The drilled letters, the holes connected by chiselling, resemble those of the original inscriptions in *Wadi Mukatteb*, the Written Valley of Sinai. There is also a very imperfect second rock-marking about half-a-mile higher up, on the opposite side of the Gelt, on the Pigeon Crag or Clint, the record of a certain JVSTUS, probably also of the second or August Legion.

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the sins of its inhabitants; one pious widow alone being saved like Lot out of Sodom.\* The fisherman, as on Lough Neagh in Ireland, or off the Cornish coast of the lost "Lyonnesse," may still see, it is said, some remains of the ancient city beneath the waters of Talkin Tarn; which is a small lake, about one mile in length, with picturesque banks, the source of the Hell-beck, already named as an affluent of the Gelt. Is this tradition a vague reminiscence of the once-flourishing Roman town which for so many centuries lay desolate—lost to human ken—its buried site only recovered by the careful researches of a genial local antiquary, the late Mr. Robert Bell of the Nook, Irthington, who in 1826 found there a large jar of Roman coins, of late date, from the time of Decius to that of Florianus?

We may conclude these notices of the antiquities of Geltsdale with this, until now, unrecorded tradition of Talkin Tarn; and its probably intimate connection with the Brampton *castra*, as built of stones quarried from Gelt rocks; taken thither most probably by British dale-dwellers of the Gelt, being the nearest Roman station; the streets of which long echoed with the tread of imperial legionaries; which two Emperors at least, Hadrian and Severus, may have trod in passing from Pons Ælii (Newcastle-on-Tyne) to Luguwallium (Carlisle). In its present utter ruin and oblivion, its site furrowed by the ploughshare, the old lesson

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\* The legend relates that in old time a prophet was sent to destroy the town in the streets of which he had preached, but had found no one to offer him hospitality, or to regard the Divine Message of warning. A poor aged widow, living in the outskirts of "Old Brampton," alone showed him kindness, and gave him shelter for the night. In the morning came the fulfilment of the prophecy; but, at the prophet's intercession, the widow's life and property were spared; and the destroying flood, which covered every building and every living thing, reached only to a spot near her cottage, as far distant from it as she had been able to cast the shovel taken from her hearth. Mr. Hugh Miller, F.G.S., tells me that a very similar tradition exists in connection with the beautiful lake called Seamer Water not far from Bainbridge in Wensleydale, —all but the last-named incident. There are also vestiges of a Roman fortification or town in the vicinity, on an eminence called Brough-Hill, where a statue of the Emperor Commodus was found. The same legends of a submerged city occur at Gormire, near Thirsk, in Yorkshire; and, as Camden (in his "Britannia," Bishop Gibson's Edit., 1695, pp. 590, 591) records, at Brecknockmere, and many other lakes, in Wales.

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comes home to us with a fresh impressiveness;—" *Sic transit gloria mundi!* "—the world's and Britain's ancient conquerors vanquished at length by all-conquering Time.

" Sceptre and crown shall tumble down,  
And in the dust be equal made,  
With the poor crookèd scythe and spade."

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NOTE.—The map of the district of Geltsdale, and plan of its principal archæological remains, gives, besides those of prehistoric times, a few traces of the Roman occupation, especially at the north-west corner where we tread *per lineam valli*. At Moss-Hill, near Kirkhouse, I remember to have noticed some years since two Roman stones on which are figures, it is thought, of *Janus* and *Silvanus*. There is a camp at Carnetley not far distant. I have traced on the map the remains of a supposed Roman Way which the late Mr. Joseph Parker of Brampton, who took a painstaking interest in the antiquities of this district, thought he had made out satisfactorily; leading over Greenley Cross through Geltsdale Middle from the neighbourhood of Moss-Hill and Hall Bank Gate. In a letter reminding me of this, (and, *if Roman*, the road may have led from Whitley Castle on the Maiden Way to Petriana on the Wall), Mr. Porteus, of Kirkhouse, adds the information that the two Roman sculptured stones, walled into the building at Moss-Hill, are still in "very perfect" condition. He further mentions that a large barrow, probably as yet undisturbed, exists near Hall Bank Gate School, with "a triangular-shaped stone adjacent to it with the edge pointing north." This, of course, may be recent. Several tumuli seem to be known on Greenley Cross, not far from Talkin Fell, and Geltsdale Middle. This mountainous district, full of coal-mines, is yet much isolated, and might well repay additional archæological investigations.

The Brampton Park "Camp," a Roman fort or town, having an area of about an acre and a half, lies at a distance of one mile and a half south of Castlesteads. The most detailed account of it is printed in the late Mr. MacLauchlan's "Memoir written during a Survey of the Roman Wall," p. 63.

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