

ART. XXVI.—*An Ancient Village in Hugill.* By the President, Chancellor FERGUSON, F.S.A.

Reprinted, with corrections, from the *Manchester Guardian*, of Nov. 16, 1896.

With some Notes thereon by C. W. DYMOND, F.S.A., and H. S. COWPER, F.S.A.

SOME years ago the curiosity of Mr. Addison, of Kendal, was aroused about a field on his farm at High Hugill, near Ings, in Westmorland, of which farm Mr. Addison's father then was, and had for more than twenty years been, the tenant. The field in question—a quarter of a mile nearly due north from the farmhouse of High Hugill—is enclosed by a modern stone wall. In extent it is nearly 2 acres [1a. 3r. 28p.] and is occupied by the ruins of ancient works, which have been thoroughly despoiled at some period or other to furnish materials for stone field fences. Nothing appears on the Ordnance map but the modern fence-wall of the field, and it cannot be ascertained that any name is attached to the remains. They were unknown to the late Mr. Clifton Ward, and do not appear in his list of "Archæological Remains in the Lake District."* Mr. Addison besought the assistance of the experts of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, of which he was a member, and several of them paid visits to the place. Some little excavation was made, and also a survey, from which a plan was prepared. In July, 1881, the Society visited the place; a paper by Mr. T. Wilson, the Society's secretary, was read, and Chancellor Ferguson added some remarks, pointing out that the remains were those of an ancient British village, containing several ruined hut-circles, and surrounded by a fallen wall, whose line is nearly defined

* These *Transactions*, Vol. iii., pp. 241-265.

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by the modern fence. The plan, Mr. Wilson's paper, and the Chancellor's remarks were published in the Society's *Transactions*.* The plan, however (no blame to the surveyor, who had no previous experience in planning prehistoric remains), was not very satisfactory; it was, in fact, too ingenious, and showed rather too many hut-circles, the mistake being made of taking and completing on the plan as hut-circles sundry curvatures, turns, and corners in internal division walls and natural banks. In 1890 the editor of the *Transactions*, Chancellor Ferguson, being, on second thoughts, somewhat sceptical about this plan, induced Mr. C. W. Dymond, F.S.A., a gentleman of great experience in planning prehistoric remains,† to re-survey the Hugill remains for the Society. This he did, and his plan, with a paper, appears in the Society's *Transactions*, and may be thoroughly relied upon for accuracy.‡

The remains cover nearly two acres, and are surrounded by an ancient enclosing bank or rampart, which is shown by the edge stones remaining in various places to have been from ten to fourteen feet broad. The principal gateway is in the middle of the north-western side. It was approached by a short hollow way, screened—in military phrase, covered—by a low rocky scarp, crowned with a great heap of stones. From this entrance a passage, with openings on either hand into several enclosures, led into the interior. There were probably two other entrances in the south-western and south-eastern sides respectively, of which the last gave ready access to a spring some 65 feet from the south corner of the village. This spring would be the source from which the villagers got their water

* Vol. vi., pp. 86-90.

† See his "Worlebury, an Ancient Stronghold in the county of Somerset." Also in these *Transactions*, Cumberland Megaliths, Vol. v., pp. 39-59; Mayburgh and King Arthur's Round Table, Vol. xi., pp. 187-219; An Ancient Village near Yanwath, Vol. xi., pp. 1-5; Barnscar, *Ibid*, pp. 179-187.

‡ These *Transactions*, Vol. xii., pp. 6-14.

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supply. There may, perhaps, have been a fourth gate, but it is difficult to be certain. The area enclosed by the ancient boundary wall falls in level about 30 feet from the northernmost and highest corner to the south corner, the lowest; and is divided into four successive stages or shelves. (i.) First, under the scarp of the rampart is a shelving terrace about 60 feet wide, containing towards its western end a small hut-circle, about 7 feet in diameter. The lower edge of this terrace has been artificially improved and heightened so as to shelter the next stage or shelf from the north wind. (ii.) The next, or second, shelf is 90 feet broad at its western end, dwindling to a point at its eastern end; its surface is broken by several banks, one of which, a spur-shaped bank, has been improved in the earlier plan into a hut-circle of the diameter of 56 feet.* This stage, however, contains the foundations of one oblong and two circular huts of the several diameters of 18 ft., 24 ft., and 10 ft. (iii.) The third stage occupies the southern angle of the village, and contains a hut-circle 13 feet in diameter. (iv.) The fourth stage occupies the western angle, and is completely covered by the ruins of courts and hut dwellings; of these last the first plan makes out four circular ones, whereas Mr. Dymond's plan shows six, of somewhat rectangular shape—a not very material matter. The little excavation that was done when attention was first called to these remains resulted only in the discovery of calcined stones and a little charcoal. Careful search has been made for cup and ring markings; only three that could at all be ascribed to the hand of man have been discovered—three cups without rings, whose positions are noted in Mr. Dymond's plan. These three cups are rather slender evidence on which to hazard a shot as to the date of the village, particularly as

* It may have been a kraal for cattle.

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this class of markings range in date from the bronze to the late iron age, and even into early Christian times.

These interesting remains are not the remains of a camp; the site was not selected from any military advantages it possesses; it is, in fact, dominated on three sides by rising ground or projecting knolls, within easy sling or bow shot. It was a fortified village, fortified either against hostile surprise or attacks by wild beasts. The situation may have been chosen on account of the spring of water already mentioned, and also of proximity to a large tarn, now drained, whence fish could be obtained. Mr. Dymond pointed out that the Hugill village was similar to others in various parts of England, and particularly to that of Grimspound, on Dartmoor, a village consisting of twenty-five well-built circular huts, in a squarely oval enclosure of about four acres, defended by a massive rampart of granite 10 feet in thickness, about 5 feet in height, and pierced by three gateways. As at Hugill, so at Grimspound, the inhabitants could be easily annoyed by hostile archers and slingers. The remains at Hugill were about the year 1886 menaced with destruction, to make way for the pipes of the Manchester Waterworks,* but an appeal to the authorities was most courteously received, and the village left untouched. In October, 1896, an alarm was raised that the village was in danger; more, that mischief had actually been done. An appeal for its rescue appeared in a local paper, the *Westmorland Gazette*, and letters were written to several persons likely to be able to intervene. At the suggestion of more than one archæologist, Mr. Dymond, on the 2nd of this month,† revisited the village,

* See a report in these *Transactions*, Vol. x., pp. 271-275. Also printed in *Proc. S.A.*, 2nd Series, Vol. xii., pp. 91-94. This report, dated October, 1886, also mentions that the prehistoric settlement on Threlkeld Knott, near Keswick, "is doomed to ruin, as the cliff on which it stands is rapidly being converted into paving setts." Ten years have elapsed; the cliff is still being quarried away, and the paving setts find a ready market as fast as they can be loaded into the railway trucks.

† November, 1896.

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and as a result reported to the President of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society that nothing was amiss; that the place was as it was in 1890, when he surveyed it. Personally, the present writer, after allowing for the enthusiasm of the earlier plan, is of opinion that the remains have not been interfered with since 1880, nor for a considerable period anterior to that date. The late Mr. Addison, who occupied the farm for over thirty years prior to 1890, part of the time as farmer, and afterwards as owner in succession to his son, was thoroughly alive to the value of these remains, and protected them during his time. The difficulty is to provide for their future protection. The estate is now in the hands of trustees, and the question arises—How far, in these days of agricultural depression, are trustees and farmers justified in omitting to bring into cultivation an acre or two of land because covered with remains which are *caviar* to the multitude, and which only an expert like Mr. Dymond can read? That recent agricultural depression is responsible for the destruction of many interesting remains working archæologists will soon find out, if they have not already done so. Is there any means of protecting for the future the Hugill village? I fear not. The Act for the Protection of Ancient Monuments is of no avail; the village is not scheduled under it, and cannot now be put under it, as the Act is a dead letter. The Treasury will not find the money necessary for its working, and the Government decline to allow ancient monuments to be voluntarily put under it. It has been suggested that a subscription should be raised and the farmer asked to sublet the field; but to whom, and for how long, and who is to periodically inspect it to see that no damage is done? And to whom is he to report? The only effectual remedy the present writer can see would be an Act of Parliament appointing County Councils protectors of such remains, with power to compensate

pensate farmers or owners, and to appoint officials, who should inspect and report once or twice a year. Competent local antiquaries would readily undertake the work for little more than out-of-pocket expenses. But there is no chance of getting such an Act passed; the compensation would deter people. What would be the compensation to be paid in case of Threlkeld Knott, mentioned in a previous footnote? The landlord of the quarry, the tenant of the quarry, and the skilled workmen would all have claims.

NOTES BY C. W. DYMOND, F.S.A.

The Editor of these *Transactions* has kindly given me an opportunity of adding to my former paper on this subject a few supplementary remarks on certain features of the works.

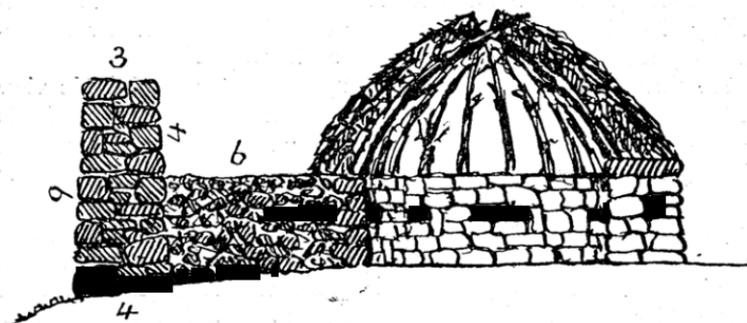
The Ramparts. When writing that paper—having chiefly in view Grimspound,* one of the best examples of a fortified village of this type—I expressed an opinion that it was “not very clear why these [walls] were of such great and, apparently, unnecessary thickness.” There was then nothing to show that the Grimspound rampart had any other than a rectangular section—too thick for economy, and too low for protection. Nor can it yet be said that an apprehended discovery, made two years ago, by an exploring party of local antiquaries, has settled the question as to the original form of its construction. With a strong disclaimer entered by one of the party who is well qualified to form an independent opinion, the majority believe that they found evidence of the rampart having been constituted by two parallel walls separated by a passage 3 feet in width—an arrangement which seems even more inexplicable than the solid wall itself. † Assuming that the two supposed interior wall-faces

* Perhaps Greaves Ash, in Northumberland, might, in several respects, have been a better analogue; but it could not safely be cited, because I had not seen it, nor did I possess an adequate description of the details of its structure.

† Since these notes were written, I have been favoured by one of the Grimspound explorers with the following additional particulars. He says:—“The appearance of an inner and outer wall having fallen into a space in the centre is very marked. There seems to be no regular face to the *inner* sides of the walls.” Again:—“I have obtained less than twenty flint arrow-heads in all the thousands of scrapers, borers, knives, flakes, chips, cores, &c., collected by me on Dartmoor. It all points to a peaceful pastoral people who required folds, not fortifications: and this, of course, increases the puzzle of the wall at Grimspound.”

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were really such, I have been led to query whether they may not indicate that the rampart was built (much after the pattern of those of Worlebury, in Somerset, and of certain camps in Wales and elsewhere, in which the original work remains more or less intact), in three contiguous, but independent, thicknesses, each 3 or 4 feet through: the outer one perhaps 9 feet high, its upper part forming a parapet; the middle one about 5 feet high, its levelled top forming a *banquette* or narrow *chemin de ronde*; the inner one 3 feet high, furnishing a step for easily mounting the rampart. Such a reconstruction gets rid of the most serious difficulties; harmonises the style of fortification with that of the great stone-built strongholds; and enables us to offer a reasonable suggestion as to what may have been the original form of the rampart at Hugill, without setting aside the evidence afforded by its best analogues. Such an hypothetical section (which must be taken for whatever it may be worth)



is shown in the illustration. It represents a parapet-wall 9 feet high on the outer face, 4 feet on the inner, and 3 or 4 feet thick, with a 6 feet walk behind it, raised a few feet above the level of the ground. Easy access to this could be gained at any point by means of a sloping bank of earth. The diagram is completed by a section of one of the huts built against the western portion of the wall. With this mode of construction, the attached huts would offer no obstacle to a free access to the wall behind them.

It is rather singular that the parts of the circuit on the higher ground, toward the north, north-east and east, are just those where the profile of the present bank is the slightest; and it is not evident why these—which, facing up the hill, ought to be much higher than they are—should have been so much more degraded than are the southern portions which, in several places, retain most of their proper height.

Huts,

Huts. The habitable huts, of which traces remain at Hugill, are but few; and the permanent population of the place must have been small. This is the chief difficulty in the way of assuming that the mural cincture was intended to be capable of defence; which implies the existence of a force sufficient to man it. A circuit of 400 yards would probably require at least 200 men and youths to defend it; and, to provide this number, the population, at the time of the attack, should number about 500 souls.

It is most probable that, as at Grimspound, in Devon, Chysoyster, in Cornwall, Tre Ceiri, in Caernarvonshire, and many other places, the walls of the huts would be about 4 feet in height; and that upon them a roof of boughs, covered with turf, would be erected.

In a note on page 9 of my paper* it was stated that "27 feet may be called the standard diameter of hut circles." This I wish to correct; for, where sizes vary so much as they do in these structures, it cannot properly be said that there is such a thing as a "standard diameter."

Cup Markings. † On the occasion of my recent visit, I looked again at these. The 2-inch cup on stone C, first noticed by the late Dr. Taylor, may be artificial. That on stone D, 6 inches in diameter, is not well formed, and part of it is broken away. Much larger than cup-marks usually are, if artificial, which is rather doubtful, it should perhaps be regarded as the remains of a small rock-basin. The cup on stone E is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, semi-ovoid, and so sharply edged that it is questionable whether it may not be the matrix from which a nodule has dropped out. It is very difficult to establish the artificial origin of cups when they occur singly, and in geological formations which often present natural hollows.

Recent changes. I observed only two changes since 1890; both of them in modern work. The stone pile, mentioned on page 10 of my paper, has been thrown down; and the sheep-gate in the south-western wall—probably on the site of one of the original entrances—has recently been built up with materials furnished by a small heap of stones which lay hard by against the inner face of the wall; and which has disappeared.

* These *Transactions*, vol. xii, pp. 6-14.

† *Ibid.* p. 12.

ADDITIONAL NOTES BY H. S. COWPER, F.S.A. *

Although these remains are not well preserved they are of considerable interest. They represent a small group of which a few other examples are to be found scattered in the district, but stand out I think quite distinct from a much larger series which cover the fells of Furness close by, and which exist I believe in considerable numbers in the higher ground of the Westmorland fells also. This larger group, as far as it is limited to the Furness hills I have described with some completeness and detail in my paper on the "Ancient Settlements, Cemeteries and Earthworks of Furness" in *Archæologia*, vol. 53, p. 409. As a rule this larger class is characterised by very rude walling, which is never of any width, homesteads of rectangular irregular shape and large attendant enclosures. They are frequently associated with innumerable sepulchral cairns which have yielded interments, which with probability belong to the bronze age.

Of the class to which the Hugill site belongs, however, the sites are few in number, or at any rate but few have been noted. Among these we should notice first one at Kirkby Lonsdale, where we find an ovate enclosure containing two-thirds of an acre contained within a wall about 7 feet wide, the foundations of which consisted of stones set on end. Within the enclosure we find the same curved, rectangular, or meandering lines of division. †

The next site with which we may compare Hugill, is that called Urswick stone walls near Ulverston, a full description of which will be found in the paper in the *Archæologia* by myself.‡ Here again we get in the enclosures a combination of rectangular and ovate forms, the enclosure wall built in the same way 10 feet thick, and the lines of interior wall divisions as well as the hut circles.

To the same class also appear to belong the enclosures at Holmbank and Birkrigg,§ both of which are contained by single ramparts or walls, that of the former being again 10-14 feet in width, and containing a hut circle.

My own opinion is that this small group is analogous in character to the Celtic cashels described so carefully in Anderson's "Scotland in Early Christian times, 1879," to which, in plan, they are remarkably similar. These cashels were of Pagan origin, but in Scotland

* Mr. Cowper's notes are extracted from his Report to the Society of Antiquaries, as Local Secretary for Westmorland.

† See the paper (with plan) by Canon Ware (The Bishop of Barrow-in-Furness in vol. vii. *Transactions* Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society.

‡ *Archæologia*, vol. 43, p. 409.

§ *Id.* p. 396.

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often had grafted into them, at a later date, a Christian settlement and church. It would appear, however, probable that such sites are part Roman, and at any rate a later type than the numerous ones I have alluded to which cover the wilder and more distant parts of the fells.

After reading Chancellor Ferguson's article in the *Manchester Guardian* of Nov. 16th, I was shocked to read in the papers, the reputed destruction of certain stone avenues, hut circles, and menhirs on Dartmoor, the work it is said of the contractors of the Newton Rural District Council, for the repair of roads. This new danger is, in my opinion, a far more living one towards our lesser early sites, than any destruction by farmers. In country districts at present, the road Surveyors appointed by the Parish and District Councils, are energetic men, with absolute ignorance as a rule of all archæology, and anxious to get stone wherever they can for road repair. In many districts hill roads pass through deserted tracts which abound with early settlements, burial cairns, and small stone circles, or standing stones. Such as these will I fear be considered fair game for destruction and blasting by the road Surveyor for his purposes. In many cases no doubt he will be ignorant as to the origin of the material he uses, and often when he has to apply for leave to a landowner, it will be found that the latter is either equally so, or else is quite heedless as to their destruction. In other cases where roads cross unenclosed moors and commons, such remains will probably be attacked without any leave being considered necessary.

In view of the danger, which, it appears to me, now seriously menaces a large and little known class of early remains throughout the whole of England; I think it would be worth while the consideration of the Society of Antiquaries if some memorandum could not be laid before the proper authorities, whereby the County, Parish, and Rural District Councils could be urged to enforce upon their surveyors the great necessity for care, and, if possible, to devise some scheme by which qualified persons might be asked to inspect where necessary, in order that any such demolition might be reported to the local Antiquarian Societies, who would no doubt in all cases intervene and do all in their power to prevent such vandalism.

