

ART. XI.—*The so-called “Danish Camp” at Gosforth.* By
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Read at Carlisle, April 30th, 1903.

HALF a mile due north of Gosforth Church, near the edge of a plateau 260 feet above the valley below, and 440 feet above sea level, stands the farmhouse called “Windhall,” a refinement of Wyndehowe, probably made by the Brownrigg family, people of sufficient local importance to be styled “gentlemen” in old documents.

From the Brownriggs, Windhall passed to Christopher Irton, a cadet of the local family, who died there in 1639. Since then it has passed through many hands. On a stone in an out-building is the date 1705, and the initials of Thomas Dixon and his wife.

The estate includes the site of a bygone house still known as Windermeresteele, a corruption of Wind-Hall-moor-stile; also several curiously named fields, such as Edwin’s Bower, Carolina, Red Stile, Claremont, Wellington Close, Waterloo Park, Herbert Wife Brow, Outgang, and Danish Camp, the appearance of the two last named being such as to deserve investigation.

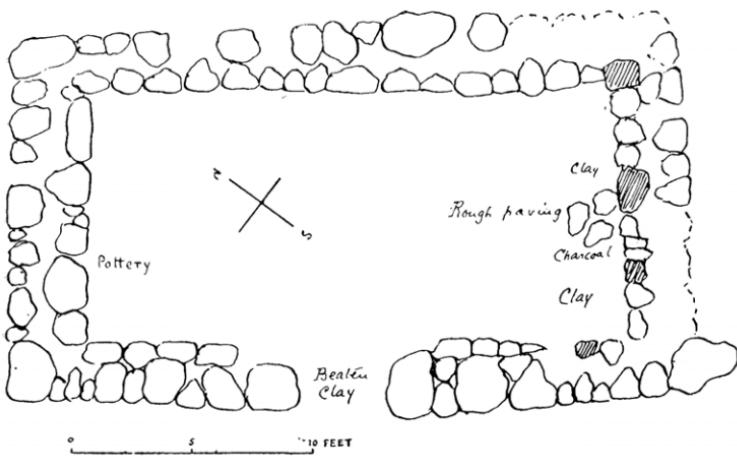
Danish Camp, a field rudely triangular in shape, about 275 yards long and 150 broad, was formerly part of Blengfell Common, having been allotted to Windhall at the division in 1812, and is bounded on the north and west by roads laid out at that date. A little stream runs through it from north to south, forming a pool in the south corner. At the east end of the field, the apex of the triangle, the strip called “Outgang” goes off at right angles, 175 yards long by 20 broad.

The greater part of the field is taken up by a pear-shaped plot of ground more or less elevated above the rest, on the west of which the ground descends somewhat sharply to the stream. At A.A. on the plan are recent gravel holes. On the north, a wavy ditch and bank can be distinctly traced, inside of which is a shallower ditch and smaller bank. On the south is a large ditch 8 feet deep at the west end and growing less till it almost fades out at the east. It is faced with stone on the Windhall side. The apex of the triangle is crossed by three concentric curved banks and shallow ditches on a small scale. Down "Outgang" runs a ditch and mound, faintly marked, following an irregular course past trails of walls, and in three places foundations of stone buildings.

Permission having been obtained from the owner and tenant, Mr. Collingwood, Mr. James Tyson, and I set to work to test the ground. A trench was dug from C to D and the foundations in "Outgang" excavated. We found the triple trench and bank evidently artificial, as in the banks patches of red clay and black top soil were mixed together above the normal level of hard undisturbed red clay and stones. The banks were about a foot high and seem never to have been much higher. They are not found on the common to the north, but if this was an angle the line may have coincided with the present road: the fields to the south and east have been ploughed.

The foundations excavated were all of the same character, two of three being mere fragments. The third, at the south end of "Outgang," was an oblong building with doorway in the middle of the longer south side, the threshold of which was hard trodden clay. The thick walls were very roughly built of large cobbles and free-stone, which is abundant close by. There was no débris, the building having probably been robbed to build fences. In the middle of the south end was apparently a fireplace paved with burnt stones set in red clay; at the south

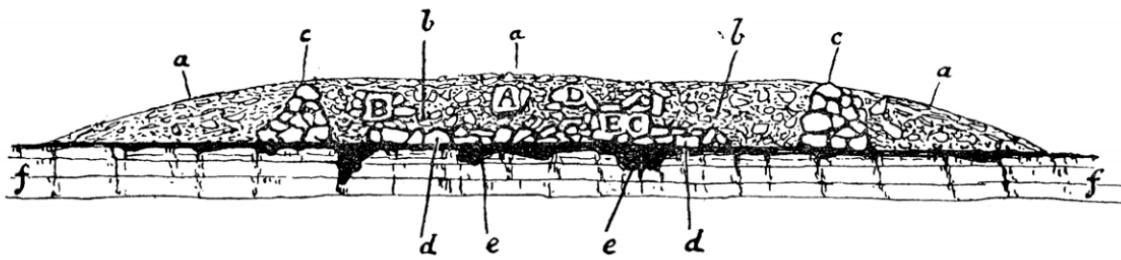
corner, under about 1 inch of clay, a layer of soot, charcoal, and burnt clay about 1 inch thick. At the north end, about a foot deep, were fragments of three sorts of glazed pottery, resembling the seventeenth and eighteenth century pottery found in the ruin at Rakefoot, Derwentwater, and at both ends flat sandstone slabs, apparently for roofing. It appears to have been a dwelling-house of the old type, a substantial stone house with outbuildings, not a clay daubin', and may date from the seventeenth century.



FOUNDATIONS NEAR DANISH CAMP, GOSFORTH.

We came to the conclusion that the triple trench might possibly be the corner of some early garth, though on a miniature scale compared with other triple trenches. Through this on the south of the field seems to have been dug the deep ditch which formed a kind of sunk fence, bounding the Windhall estate against the common. By the side of this, where it is continued down "Outgang," a wall appears to have been placed, which has since been removed. The deeper ditch and bank on the north side we considered to be the old road to Whineray, which became in time a hollow way with a secondary track

beside it, as often occurs. The new road was made in 1812, replacing this old road from the stream to the east cross fence. The whole arrangement of ditches, mounds, &c., appears to have been caused by a succession of things, and the name "Danish Camp" seems to be one given by a past generation of antiquaries, who called many earthworks, here and in other districts, by that vague appellation; and though the name is traditional, it may not be more than a hundred years old. The suggestions thrown out by the Rev. James Wilson in connection with the *curia* or early mediæval *court* at Bromfield may perhaps help to explain the fragment of ancient moated enclosure which seems to exist here.



SECTION OF TUMULUS ON SIZERGH FELL.
Scale 10 feet to one inch.