

ART. V.—*On a Stone Celt found near Cockermouth.* By
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Read at Carlisle, April 27th, 1905.

THE stone hammer-axe of the late neolithic period was found at Moorland Close, one and a quarter miles south-west of Cockermouth on the Egremont road, by the farm tenant, Mr. John Thornthwaite, when digging in his garden, some eighteen inches below the surface, and but a few feet away from the foundations of the dwelling house. Formerly a large sycamore tree grew upon the exact spot, and it is probable that when the tree was cut or blown down the hammer was raised from the subsoil with the roots of the tree. It weighs 7 lbs. 6 ozs., and measures from head to edge nine inches, being thirteen inches in circumference at its widest part. It is in a good state of preservation, and has been shaped out of a piece of greywacke or impure quartzite, which is of common occurrence amongst the sedimentary rocks of the Silurian and Cambrian age in this country. There are several bands of rock of this kind amongst the Skiddaw slates around Bassenthwaite, and it may very well have come from one of them, the hills above Bassenthwaite being clearly visible some eight miles away from the spot where the hammer was found. Moorland Close is at the top of a billowy upward slope from lower ground, which at one time would be marsh land or a morass of some extent.

The site commands a fairly extensive view of the surrounding country, more especially of the north and east, and may have been used as a position fairly easily defendable by the local tribesmen. There are some indications of ground works, but they probably belong to a much later time. Moorland Close is now the property of

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Percy Wyndham, Esq., of the Indian Civil Service ; but at one time it belonged to the Fletcher family of Cocker-mouth Hall, one of whose members entertained the fugitive Mary Queen of Scots on her memorable journey from Workington to Carlisle after her disastrous defeat at Langside. It also is of historical interest as the birth-place of Fletcher Christian, the leader of the mutiny of the "Bounty."
