

ART. VIII.—*Urswick Stone Walls*. By JOHN DOBSON.

Read at Penrith, September 13th, 1906.

I.—THE SITE.

ON the slope of the mountain-limestone hill which shelters the village of Little Urswick from the full fury of the westerly winds are to be found the remains of ancient workmanship known as the Stone Walls.* They are the foundations of the walls of two enclosures—one rudely oval in outline, lying on a fairly level platform on the eastern slope of the high ground called the Craggs, and the other quadrangular, in the field below, where the ground slopes gently to the east-south-east. The exact position of these structures is well shown on the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map—Lancashire, sheet xvi., 14—the distance from the tower of the parish church of St. Mary, Urswick, to the central mound of the oval enclosure being 900 yards west-by-south, and from the ancient Grammar School on Little Urswick Green 580 yards north-west-by-north.

To reach these interesting ruins easily the visitor should take the footpath which runs from the northern corner of the school buildings at Little Urswick to an old and picturesque stile in the western angle of the field behind

* The following are the most important previous notices of these remains:—*The Antiquities of Furness*, by Thomas West, Close's ed. (Ulverston, 1805), pp. 395-398; *Furness and Furness Abbey*, by Francis Evans (Ulverston, 1842), pp. 108-110; *Sketch of Furness and Cartmel*, by Charles M. Jopling (Ulverston, 1843), pp. 97 to 99; Letter by Charles M. Jopling to George Godwin, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A., published in *Archæologia*, vol. xxxi., pp. 448-453; *The Pre-historic Remains of Furness and Cartmel*, by Henry Barber, M.D., a paper read before the Royal Archæological Institute, July, 1868 (printed in pamphlet form, Ulverston, 1869, pp. 16-19); a paper read at the site by Mr. John Fell, August 16th, 1877 (these *Transactions*, o.s., iii., pp. xxvi.-xxvii.); "The Ancient Settlements, Cemeteries, and Earthworks of Furness," communicated to the Society of Antiquaries by H. Swainson Cowper, F.S.A. (*Archæologia*, vol. liii., 1893). No other reference, so far as known, contains any original observations.



R. Dobson, photo.

PLATE I.—URSWICK STONE WALLS.
Footing-stones of a 100 ft. wall within the wood.

TO FACE P. 73.

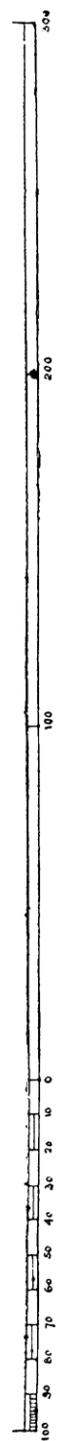
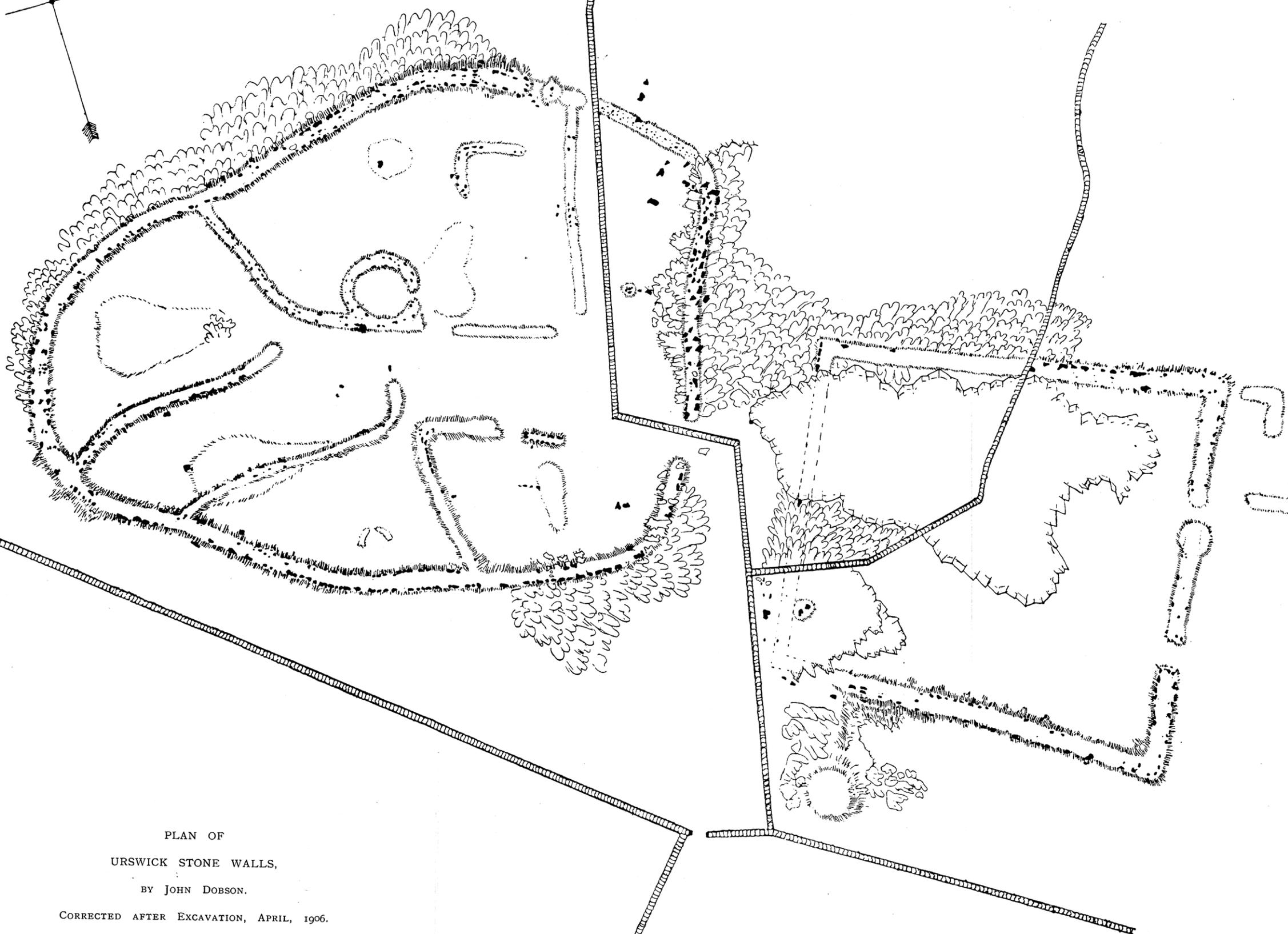
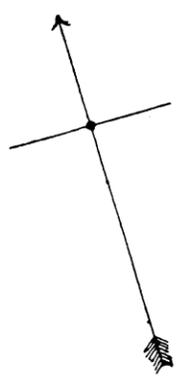
the schoolhouse. On the right, as he breasts the hill in this field, he will notice a small grove of beech trees, under the shade of which stands a ring of stones with a cluster of upright blocks in the centre. This little structure is mentioned here to avoid future misunderstandings, because not many years ago a party of visitors wishing to find the Stone Walls was directed to this place as the object of their search. Those who know call this the Summer House, and its construction is due to the late James Cranke, artist, son of James Cranke, the elder artist, and grand-uncle to Mr. Malachi James Cranke, the present owner of this field (see Mr. Gaythorpe's article on the Crankes of Urswick, these *Transactions*, n.s., vi., art. 3). Between his removal to Urswick in 1816 and his blindness, which afflicted him for some years before his death in 1826, James Cranke, mainly with his own hands, built the Summer House in question, and here he loved to sit and chat with his friends, enjoying the fair scene spread out before him.

From the stile, with its limestone steps worn smooth by the tread of many rough-shod feet, the visitor now turns off the footpath towards the right along the western side of a coppice, where on the green springy turf of the upland pasture he will find an indistinct cart-track, which will bring him in the northern corner of this field to a gate. Passing through this gate and following the hedge on his left hand, he will soon begin to notice on his right the footing-stones and grassy ridge of the rampart of the oval enclosure. (Plate I.)

This oval enclosure, with its broad end towards the east-south-east and its point towards the west-north-west, is somewhat irregular in outline, as its rampart does not run for more than a short distance in any regular curve. The ancient builders would seem to have been more anxious to take every possible advantage of the natural features of the ground chosen for their fortress than to make its boundary wall conform to any regular figure;

indeed, one of the most striking features about this very interesting enclosure is the wonderful extent to which its builders have made use of the natural configuration of the site in setting out their work. (See Plan.)

The longest line which can be drawn across this oval enclosure is about 320 feet in length, the extreme breadth 250 feet, and its area, including the part at the eastern end overgrown with wood, about 1.375 acres. The surrounding rampart appears to have been a wall of some considerable height judging by the width of its foundations; the footing-stones give a breadth at base of nine to ten feet. These same footing-stones and the ridge of earth and rubble out of which they now arise are the sole relics left; we can only conjecture the appearance of the walls when first constructed. William Close, in his edition of *The Antiquities of Furness*, by Thomas West, published in 1805, is the first writer we know who mentions these Stone Walls (pp. 395 to 398); and he gives no data from which to form any opinion as to the height of the walls in his day, except that he speaks of "the remains of the foundations" in the case of the angular enclosure, and of "the remains of a wall" when speaking of the oval one. The impression conveyed is that though the angular enclosure was much in its present condition when he wrote, the walls round the other one still rose to some height. The Craggs at that date were uninclosed, and the site of this oval enclosure was overgrown with wood just as the south-eastern part is at this day, so that an exact survey was rendered difficult, and the plan Mr. Close gives is not very accurate, though in some respects more so than that of Mr. Jopling in 1843. The large plan which accompanies this paper will give a better idea of the details of the enclosures under review than many pages of verbal description, and it has the advantage of having been corrected from the results of the excavations undertaken by the Society in the spring of this year (1906).



SCALE OF FEET

PLAN OF
URSWICK STONE WALLS,

BY JOHN DOBSON.

CORRECTED AFTER EXCAVATION, APRIL, 1906.

TO FACE P. 74.

The internal arrangements of the oval enclosure seem to have been somewhat as follows. From the entrance gateway on the south-east side a broad avenue or roadway appears to have run for some 200 feet towards the north-west. On the southern side of this roadway a series of garths has been arranged, separated from one another by walls of less massive construction than the outer rampart, generally some four feet to five feet wide at their foundations. No great attention to regularity has been observed in the setting out of these interior walls; to take the greatest possible advantage of the natural ridges of limestone rock seems to have been the chief idea in the minds of the ancient builders. On the northern side of the avenue there would appear to have been another series of garths, the boundary walls of which may have run more in straight lines than those on the south, though this is hard to determine from the fact that here more than elsewhere the stones used in the construction of the walls have been removed down to the very foundations on the bare limestone rock.

Near the middle of the oval enclosure, but nearer to the northern than to the southern rampart and abutting on the central avenue, the remains of a circular hut of large size can still be plainly traced, and it was to the exploration of this hut circle that the chief part of the excavation was directed.

The angular enclosure which lies east-south-east of the oval one, and some twenty yards away, can be readily traced along its southern, eastern, and about half of its northern sides; but the western rampart, and about one hundred feet from the northern angle along that side, is situated within the borders of a thick coppice, and the appearance of the ground had been so altered by quarrying operations, even when Mr. Close wrote in 1804, that in this part the boundary is very difficult to make out. Fortunately one large footing-stone is still in its place on the very brink of the quarry opposite the southern side of

the entrance to the oval enclosure, and on the opposite side of the quarry two large and two smaller footing-stones enable the last sixteen feet of the rampart to the northern angle to be determined. From this point the hundred feet of the northern boundary wall through the wood and along the edge of the quarry to the fence wall of the field, where the chief part of this enclosure lies, can be followed with comparative ease by footing-stones here and there, and by the ridge of small stones and earth which help still to mark its course.

Apparently when Mr. Close wrote his description and made his plan the walls round the oval enclosure, those of its included garths and that round the central hut, were much higher than they are at present, though he does not definitely say so. The Rev. Francis Evans, whose *Furness and Furness Abbey* was published in 1842, merely mentions (p. 109) that the stones had been carried away in many parts, without even approximating the time at which this was done. In his *Sketch of Furness and Cartmel*, published in 1843, Mr. Charles M. Jopling, speaking of the oval enclosure (p. 99), says he was told that "a great part of the walls were taken down about twenty-four years since, in order to construct others with the materials." This would make the date of the spoliation about 1819. In his letter to George Godwin, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A., published in 1846 in *Archæologia*, vol. xxxi., pp. 448-453, Mr. Jopling says:—"The walls which enclose Figs. 2 and 3 (the oval and angular areas) were stated to have been of considerable height about thirty years ago"—that is, about 1816. Dr. Barber, in a paper on "The Pre-historic Remains of Furness and Cartmel," read before the Royal Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, July, 1868, merely mentions (p. 17) that "immense quantities of stone have been removed for building purposes," but gives no clue as to the time at which this was done; while John Fell, Esq., in his remarks made when the members of this Society visited

these remains on the 16th August, 1877, gives (these *Transactions*, o.s., iii., p. xxvii.) certain particulars communicated "by an old inhabitant of Urswick, who himself worked upwards of thirty years ago at the process of destruction." This would make the date of the removal of the stones of these walls somewhere not long before 1847, but we know from the evidence of Messrs. Evans and Jopling that this spoliation had taken place long before 1843. Had Mr. Fell's informant said "upwards of fifty years ago" we might have evolved some sort of agreement between authorities, and have set down 1816 to 1819 as the probable period at which the demolition took place. Documentary evidence concerning most of the enclosures in the ancient parish of Urswick in the early part of the nineteenth century seems to be non-existent, but Mr. M. J. Cranke of Midtown, Great Urswick, whose memory carries him back well into the early thirties of that century, and whose knowledge of such matters as a landowner and keen sportsman is most clear and convincing, declares that the Cragg enclosures were made before his day, and thinks that 1815 to 1820 would cover the period during which the walls of the oval enclosure were finally robbed of their materials, though it is not unlikely when we remember that Mr. Close in 1804 mentions quarrying operations on the ground within the angular enclosure, that a great deal of material had been removed, and the Stone Walls very much reduced from their original height even in his day. Mr. Cranke is quite clear that since he was a boy in the early thirties the Stone Walls have been practically in the same condition as that in which we see them to-day.

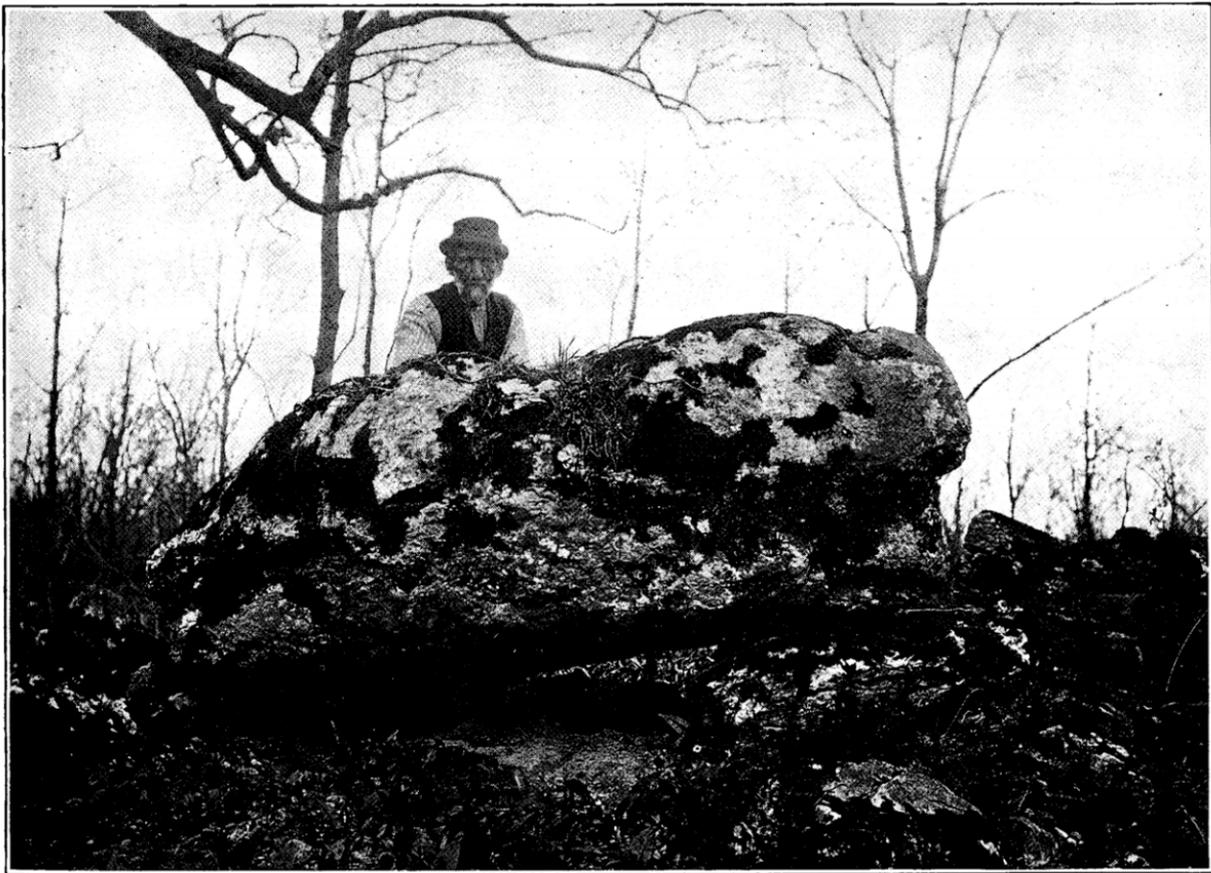
Outside the oval enclosure on the west and north and beyond a narrow band of outcropping weathered mountain limestone, on whose southern and higher edge the rampart has here been built, the ground falls away in a series of terraces, showing traces of ancient cultivation with "linces" or balks between; but whether crops were

raised on this ground by the dwellers in the homestead within the enclosure it is impossible to determine, though there is nothing improbable in the suggestion that they were, especially as fragments of querns were found in the course of exploration.

Mr. Close in 1804 and Mr. Jopling in 1843 and again in 1846, both mention a large stone opposite the entrance to the oval enclosure, elevated a little above the surface of the ground. This stone is still to be seen just within the wood near the angle in the fence wall, and it is raised a little from the ground, being supported on several smaller blocks, as may be seen in the photograph (Plate II.), but it appears more like a perched boulder from the days of the melting ice-cap than the work of man, and the removal of the soil from beneath it is probably due, in part at least, to the burrowing of wild animals. Excavation at its base brought to light no traces of fire, nor any signs of the surrounding surface having been previously disturbed.

In the angle of the modern fence wall which passes through the gateway of the oval enclosure and then turns sharply almost due north, within the wood and about fifteen feet from the corner there is a small standing-stone not more than eighteen inches above the surface, with a hole in the top, circular in section, and about an inch and a half deep as if made by an ordinary "jumper," and in a line parallel with the wall towards the north, still within the wood, but some sixty feet beyond the northern rampart, is another similar holed stone. It is very unlikely that these standing-stones have any very ancient origin; most probably they are boundary marks of use before the ground was enclosed.

The walls of the angular enclosure appear to have been of similar construction to those of the oval one, but their rectilinear plan would seem to point to Roman influence, and a somewhat later date than those before described. Here no trace of interior walls has ever been noted by



R. Dobson, photo.

PLATE II.—URSWICK STONE WALLS.
Raised Stone walls between the 1700 enclosures.

TO FACE P. 78.

previous writers, nor is any discoverable to-day. Though permission has been kindly given by Mrs. Egan-Newcomb of Bankfield, Ulverston, the owner of this part of the ground, the time and means at disposal in April, 1906, did not enable us to excavate here, but it might be useful at some time to clear an inner angle and its outer corner to see if they show any traces of more advanced workmanship than were met with in the oval enclosure.

II.—THE EXCAVATIONS.

With the kind permission of Myles Sleigh, Esq., of Eversley, Darley Dale, the owner, and Mr. W. G. Butler, the occupier of the land, and with the aid of a grant from this Society, excavations in the oval enclosure were commenced on the 17th April, 1906, and were carried on until the 21st, under the supervision of Mr. W. G. Collingwood, M.A., F.S.A., Mr. Harper Gaythorpe, F.S.A.Scot., and the writer. Mr. H. Swainson Cowper, F.S.A., who had been elected on the committee for the purpose, was unable to be present, being abroad at the time. The Rev. T. N. Postlethwaite, vicar of Urswick, also took great interest in the work, and spent a considerable amount of time assisting the searchers.

The rampart of the oval enclosure was examined about the middle of its southern side, at the western bend, and on the northern side almost opposite the first-named position. In all three places the footing-stones of this outer rampart were in their original position, and would make the wall at its foundations between nine and ten feet across. They consisted of large stones—in some instances placed on end, and sunk into the soil like gateposts; in others they were placed lengthwise, and not so deeply bedded in soil; and where the rampart ran along the outcropping limestone, they were in some parts merely placed on the rock surface, in others, wedged on end into the crevices of the limestone. In each of these three positions, and in almost every other place where digging

was undertaken to determine the run of a wall, the workmen cut through a bank of rubble stones—evidently the leavings of the spoilers—before reaching the foundations of the structure.

To report in detail on every opening made in the course of the work would prove tedious both to reader and writer, and it will probably be more useful here to give a general summary of results, only entering into particulars where circumstances seem to demand it. The trenches cut are laid down in the key-plan.

No really good junction of an inner with the outer wall was brought to light, though trial was made in several places. The only spot where anything of the nature of a corner was at all clearly marked was near the place where the modern fence wall crosses the north-eastern part of the northern rampart of the oval enclosure; but here, unfortunately, the stones of the outer wall have been almost entirely removed, and, though two courses of the inner wall on its eastern side were uncovered, the junction with the outer rampart was so imperfect that it was hard to say how it had been made, but apparently the inner wall had been built after the outer rampart, and just run up to it without any attempt at binding the two together at the angle. This also seemed to have been the case wherever one inner wall formed an angle with another similar wall, as at the northern corner of the first garth from the entrance on the southern side of the avenue, the only place where more than the foundations of the ancient walls could be traced with any certainty. Here for some fourteen feet a piece of rough walling, five feet wide, was uncovered, and the courses of stone found in position; but, as will be seen from the photograph (Plate III.), the workmanship was of the rudest description, and the short wall which met this one from the east was simply built up to but not, so far as could be made out, in any way bound to the rude wall in question.

Trials were made in several places where gateways



R. Dobson, photo.

PLATE III.—URSWICK STONE WALLS.
Ancient walling at the northern corner of the first garth.

TO FACE P. 80.

might have been expected, to find out how an inner wall had been ended, but with very indifferent success. Only on the western side of the apparent gateway to the first or southern garth, and on the eastern side of the entrance to the third garth just behind the central hut circle, was anything of the nature of a wall end uncovered (except about seventeen feet south-west from the entrance to the central hut), and in both places the hand of the spoiler had removed all but the lowest stones, and even some of these appeared to have been moved.

The position of the interior walls was proved in many places, and was found to agree in most cases with the surface indications. No wall is shown on the plan whose existence was not pretty certainly made out by excavation.

An attempt was also made to determine the number of huts which had originally stood within the oval enclosure, and, contrary to expectation, the existence of any but the large one near the centre was not at all clearly proved. True, in the second garth from the entrance on the southern side, about fifteen feet from the outer rampart and from the eastern wall of the garth, a circular hollow was examined, and indistinct traces of a semicircular wall from the west round by the north to the east were found. The soil within this semicircle was also examined, and found to have been at some time disturbed, being much darker in colour to a depth of twelve to fifteen inches than that of the surrounding ground. A piece of a broken quern-stone of granite was also found buried some eight or ten inches below the surface near the western side of the excavation within the semicircle, but in the absence of further evidence even these tokens do not seem sufficient to prove the former existence of a small hut in this position. Likely places in the third garth on this southern side, in the western garth, in the one north of the central circle, and also towards the eastern angle made by the

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northern rampart and the inner wall which runs parallel to the modern fence wall were tried, but in every case either the limestone rock *in situ* or previously undisturbed soil was met with under the turf, and no trace of any building was discovered except in the last-mentioned position, where doubtful traces of a short wall making a right angle towards the north were found, and just outside the hypotenuse of this angle two pieces of granite embedded in the turf, but showing on the surface, were picked up. The larger piece contained the bottom or innermost end of a drilled hole which had probably been intended when completed for the central passage of an upper quern-stone. By some mischance the stone would seem to have been broken through before the work was finished, and discarded as of no further use. The smaller piece found within a few feet of the larger shows no signs of having been in any way "wrought," but it fits exactly to the larger piece and is clearly a portion of the same boulder.

It was, however, at the central circle that the excavations produced the most interesting results. Here a trench was first taken across from the south-west to the north-east side of the circle, but slightly nearer the eastern than the western part of the circumference. On the south-western side confused traces of the outer boundary wall of the hut were found, but its inner side was fairly clearly made out by later excavation; while on the north-east the inner foot of the wall was clearly marked by stones of considerable size, and these were afterwards found to extend both towards the east and, less distinctly, towards the north in the almost perfect arc of a circle whose radius was some fourteen feet. The trench was continued over the foundations of the wall towards the north-east, but neither here nor elsewhere did the excavations show at all clearly the outer boundary of the hut wall; but the broad trench which was carried round the outside of the hut circle and some six feet away from the inner footing-



R. Dobson, photo.

PLATE IV.—URSWICK STONE WALLS.

TO FACE P. 82.

The Central Hut-circle: north-east quadrant of the inner wall, looking east.



R. Dobson, photo.

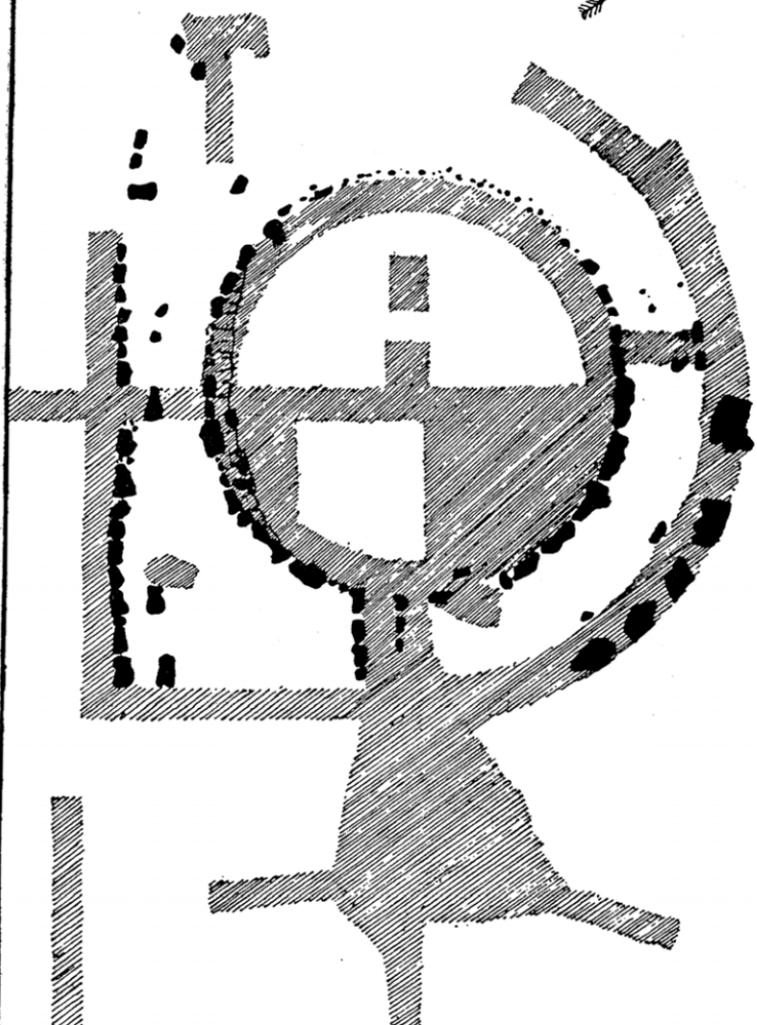
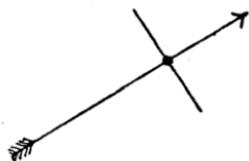
PLATE V.—URSWICK STONE WALLS.

TO FACE P. 83.

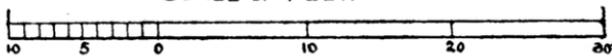
The Central Hut-circle : north-east corner of the inner wall, looking north.

URSWICK STONE WALLS

Central Hut - Plan of excavations.
April, 1906



SCALE OF FEET.



Johnston
25th 1906

stones in the north-eastern quadrant, revealed the presence of a number of comparatively thin limestone slabs laid on their flat sides, as if they might have formed the bottom course of a wall built of such slabs, each layer overlapping the inner edge of the course below, and so producing a beehive hut. The large size of the circle (twenty-eight feet interior diameter) would forbid the idea that the hut was entirely roofed in with stone. The beehive huts at Eilean na Naoimh are only thirteen and fourteen feet in diameter respectively, though oblong structures of this type are larger. It is probable that the central portion of the roof may have been of timber, covered with turf or thatch. At the same time, the lowest and only remaining course of the inner wall is massive, and the stones have a distinct inward batter, suggesting the beehive style of building. (Plates IV. and V. and plan of the Hut.)

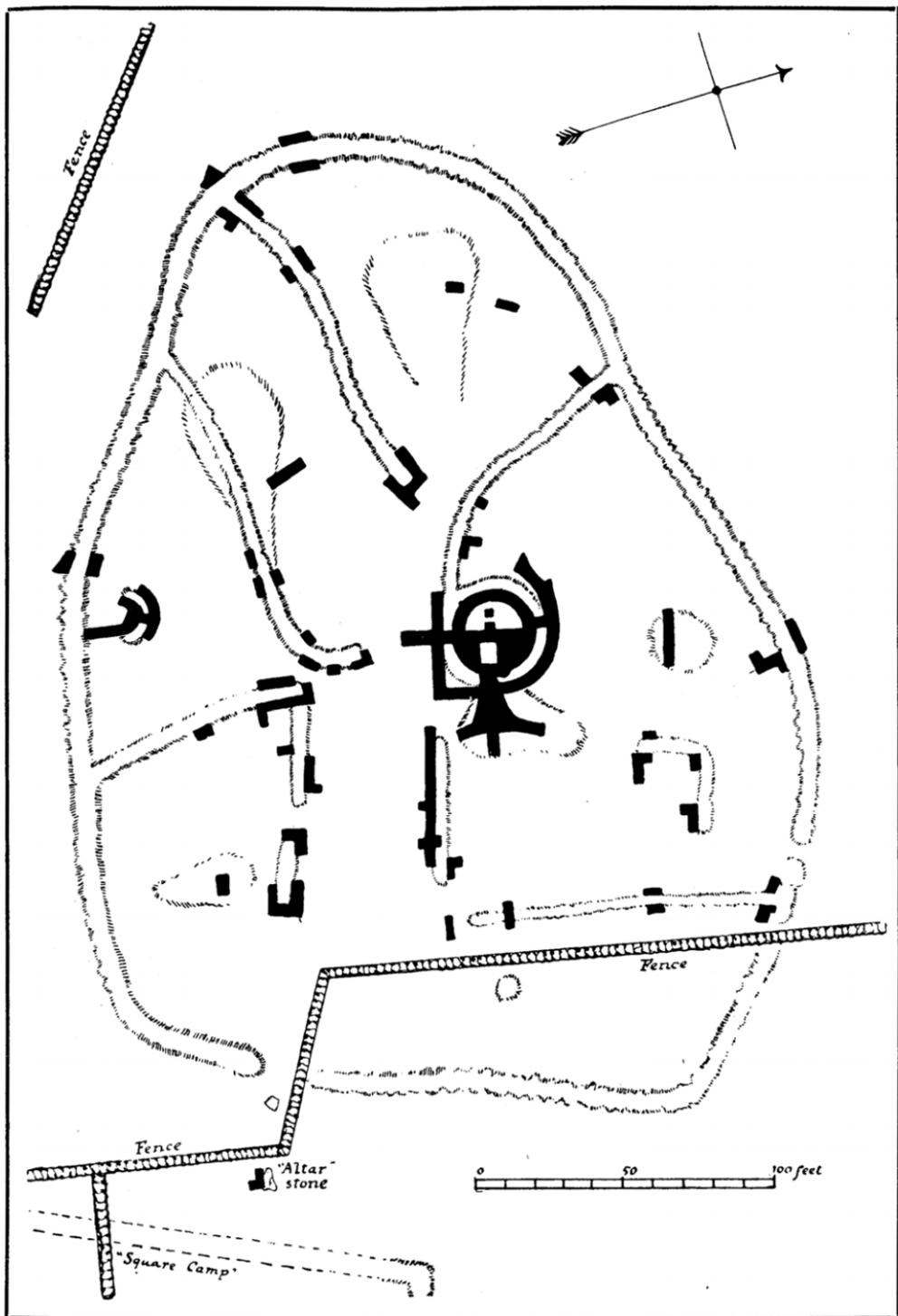
The inner trench was continued round the entire circle, and the foundation of the bounding wall of the hut was found fairly clearly marked, not only in the quadrant between north and east, but in the semicircle round from east by south to west; only between west and north had the inner boundary been rendered indistinct by the removal of the larger stones. The entrance of the hut was located with fair certainty on the east-south-east of the circle. It had been apparently about two feet wide, and had opened out upon a fairly level platform, where the loose surface rubble of the limestone showed, when the turf was removed, some slight indications of having been improved into a rude pavement. The eastern quadrant of the interior of the hut was also excavated, as well as a portion of the south-south-western side; but nowhere, except perhaps close to the foot of the wall on the eastern side, was any trace of a floor or sign of a fireplace discovered. Indeed, it was one of the surprises of the work that, except round the interior wall, the soil inside the hut showed no signs of having been disturbed

when excavated more than two or three inches beneath the turf. A good many small fragments of local millstone grit, as if from the breaking of thin flags, were found within the hut, but hardly enough to warrant the supposition that the hut floor had been composed of flags laid on the original soil, and that these flags had been removed when the stones of the hut were carted away early in the last century.

On the south-west a raised ledge of limestone rock was uncovered, and the hut wall on that side had apparently rested on this outcrop; while inside the hut it might have helped to form a seat or sleeping-bench extending along the curve of the wall. The outer trench, working by the north-west, helped but little in determining the construction of the hut, but yielded the most valuable and interesting of the relics found.

The soil was cleared from the platform in front of the entrance, and trial trenches run out in various directions in hopes of finding traces of a kitchen midden; but neither this nor any signs of fireplace, earth-oven, or feasting-place rewarded the labours of the searchers. Outside the hut walls, on the south-western side, the outer or southern foundation of an almost straight wall was traced for about nineteen feet from the cross trench towards the south-east, terminating in what was, perhaps, the best wall-end found during the explorations. From the cross trench towards the north-west this same wall was followed for some twelve feet, where it begins to curve away towards the northern rampart.

From this description of the excavations, taken with the plans and photographs, it will be seen that little or nothing more could have been done towards effecting our purpose—namely, to ascertain the structure of the buildings and their true plan. By turning over the rest of the soil a few more relics might be found. Such as we met with have now to be described.



EXCAVATIONS AT URSWICK STONE WALLS.

The black spaces represent trenches dug.

TO FACE P. 86.

III.—RELICS DISCOVERED.

The objects of interest from an antiquarian point of view found in the trenches may be classified as follows—objects of stone, of metal, of earthenware, bones, and those showing traces of the action of fire.

Perhaps the most interesting, at any rate the most weighty, discovery in the way of stone consisted of nine fragments of a granite boulder which had apparently formed parts of the upper stone of a quern, or it may be of two. The largest of these pieces weighed 12lbs., and contained part of the bowl-shaped hollow, over seven inches in diameter and about four inches deep, into which the grain to be milled was poured; and from the bottom of this hollow, one side of the hole, some three-quarters of an inch in diameter, through which the grain passed to the grinding surface, was visible, beautifully drilled. The bowl-shaped hollow also exhibited very neat and regular workmanship. Another fragment, weighing 11lbs., contained the further end of the hole into which the handle of the quern was driven, and below part of the grinding surface. The hole in this fragment is about two inches deep and one inch in diameter at the top, but tapers off to less than half an inch at the bottom, which is shaped like the inside end of a thimble. Another piece, weighing 7lbs. 2ozs., showed, like the one first mentioned, part of the bowl-shaped receptacle in the upper part of the stone; while the smaller fragments showed portions of the grinding surface—one, weighing $3\frac{3}{4}$ lbs., giving enough of the outer circumference of the stone to enable the diameter of its working surface to be pretty certainly determined as between fourteen and fifteen inches. The total weight of the pieces collected is about $44\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., and as not more than half the stone would appear to have been found, when the quern was in use the “two women grinding at the mill” would not find their work too light. All the pieces of stone referred to, except one weighing 7lbs., were

found within the circle of the central hut, or in close proximity to its outer circumference, several of them showing through the turf. Where the grinding surface had been subjected to the action of the atmosphere it had lost much of the glassy polish given by long use, but in those fragments which had been more deeply buried in the soil the artificial facets of the quartz were as smooth and bright as on the day the mill was last used. As a means of comparison, it may here be noted that a similar quern-stone of granite in the possession of the Rev. T. N. Postlethwaite, vicar of Urawick, found about a mile and a half away at Stainton Quarry in 1903, is seven inches thick, with a grinding surface thirteen inches, and a bowl five inches in diameter. The boulders from which these quern-stones are formed have probably been brought from the western shore of Low Furness or Walney Island, where the wasting of the boulder clay by the action of the sea causes the beach to be strewn with erratic blocks, among which are many of Eskdale granite, and some even from more distant Criffell. Why the quern or querns found at the Stone Walls should have been broken into so many fragments it is impossible to say with certainty, though by no means difficult to surmise.

Two other fragments of granite showing traces of man's handiwork were also found, but, as they have already been dealt with in speaking of the traces of ancient buildings, more need not here be said, except that they had formed about two-thirds of a boulder of granite similar to that from which the quern had been fashioned, and that the hole drilled upwards part-way through the block from its roughly plane to its flattened ovoid surface would give the impression that it might have been intended for the upper stone of another quern.

Flint is not abundant in Furness, though an occasional pebble may be picked up on the shore, and the substitution of the chert found in veins in our mountain-limestone does not seem to have occurred to early man in this part

of Britain, probably because he had no means of quarrying it. This renders the discovery of a flint scraper in the excavations at the Stone Walls the more interesting. The implement, which was picked up a few inches under the turf in the entrance way of the central hut, is of small size, measuring one inch long by seven-eighths wide on its plane face, and weighing about one-seventh of an ounce. It seems to have formed the smaller portion of a pebble of flint, yellowish brown without and greyish white within, weighing perhaps half an ounce, and the secondary working which extends round some three-fourths of its circumference has been most skilfully carried out.

A fragment of whetstone about an inch and a half long, quadrangular in section, tapering with slight curvature towards a point, and composed of sandstone—probably the local millstone grit—was found on the surface, not far south of the semicircular excavation in the second garth on the southern side of the avenue of the oval enclosure, but whether it is of ancient or modern manufacture cannot readily be determined.

Pieces of millstone grit of various shapes and sizes were frequently turned up during the excavations, but none of them, so far as could be ascertained, showed traces of man's handiwork.

Pebbles and small boulders of various Lake District rocks were common under the turf and in the weathered crevices of the limestone rock wherever uncovered in the course of operations, but, although carefully examined, none showed any but the most doubtful traces of firing.

A few pieces of what appeared to be an indurated clay of dark slaty colour and giving off when scraped with a knife a sulphury smell, were picked out of the soil on the floor of the central hut, but nothing in their form would lead to the supposition that they had been in any way modelled or moulded.

Fragments of soft and apparently very pure hæmatite were quite common in the soil in and around the central

hut, but all along the southern side of the rampart of both the oval and the quadrangular enclosure, and but a few yards from its outer side, runs a hollow from which iron-ore has been dug, most probably in surface workings—it may be centuries ago—and this may account for the frequency with which fragments turned up in the trenches. On the other hand, both the hæmatite and the clay may have been used as pigments.

By far the most interesting and important find in the shape of metal was a strip of thin bronze, an inch and three-eighths long by half an inch wide, broken off from a larger piece, and having on the one side an engraved pattern. This was found on digging the trench round the north-north-west outer circumference of the central hut, at a depth of between six and eight inches below the surface. Though diligent and careful search was made no other piece could be found. The ornament of this bronze fragment and the conclusions drawn from it form the subject of the following article by an expert authority.

The only object of iron found was a bent and broken nail which when complete would probably measure some three inches in length, very much corroded, and apparently of such workmanship as might warrant the supposition that it had been made by a country blacksmith anywhere from twenty to a hundred years ago. It was found beneath the surface sod on the northern side of the entrance to the central hut, and was probably lost from the "scut" of some farmer's cart when he was taking away stone early in the last century.

In a short trench cut to examine the southern side of what appeared to have been the northern boundary wall of the first garth on the south side of the avenue across the oval enclosure was found, buried beneath five or six inches of turf, a modern buckle of some white metal, very much like those frequently seen on belts worn within the

last thirty years. The only point of interest about this find is that it occurred quite as far below the surface as many of the other objects unearthed, but which are known to be of much more ancient workmanship.

Very little in the shape of earthenware was found in the excavations. On the north-eastern side of the entrance to the central hut, and a few inches only below the surface, a piece of red, unglazed pottery ware was picked up, roughly triangular in plan, and from its form appearing to have been part of a horn-shaped handle worked on the side or the outer rim of a vase of considerable size. The clay from which the vessel had been made was at least as fine as that from which a common flower-pot is formed, but lighter in colour, and showed under the lens occasional grains of silica. Round holes were scattered over its outer surface as if from the presence of organic matter which the firing had burned away, and the fractured surface, where the fragment had been torn from the object of which it formed part, showed a series of ridges as if straw had been used to strengthen the clay when building up the vessel. The baking had been imperfectly accomplished, as the material, especially on the fractured surfaces, easily rubs away when wet, and almost any part of the fragment will mark rough paper like a piece of soft crayon. The workmanship of the vessel would seem to have been good, but no trace of ornamental pattern appears on the piece described.

A tiny angular fragment, not more than half an inch across in any direction, having as an outer surface a glassy coating of mottled green colour and an inner surface rough, grey, cindery, and full of air bubbles, was found in the same trench as the bronze strip before described; but whether it had formed part of any sort of vessel, or was merely a piece of the glassy slag sometimes formed in a limekiln, it would be difficult to determine.

Another small piece, about three-quarters of an inch

across, of what may have formed part of a vessel with sides three-eighths of an inch thick of imperfectly baked clay of a dirty white colour, containing many small fragments of what under the lens appears to be an exceedingly fine-grained red sandstone, was also picked up from the soil when filling in the trenches inside the central hut.

Bones were not found in any great quantity, but close to the inner foot of the wall round the central hut, and from the crevices between the stones forming this foundation, several interesting pieces were taken. Nearly all the fragments found were parts of the long bones of the limbs apparently of the ox, sheep, and hog, and in the majority of cases they were split open in the direction of their length. Not a single vertebra was found, and not more than three or four fragments of ribs. Only one small leg bone showed traces of the gnawing of animals. The pieces of bone from the central hut were almost without exception very much decayed, as if from the long action of the organic acids in the soil. Among the teeth found within or in close proximity to the central hut was a left upper canine of a dog or wolf with the point broken off, the broken right tusk of a boar without signs of having been set or mounted for wear as a trophy, a small lower right canine of a young or a female hog, teeth apparently of the sheep and the ox, and, from the trench running east from the straight wall on the south side of the central hut, but some thirty-six feet from the hut wall, several molar teeth of the horse. These latter, though found together, were not held in position by any portion of the jawbone, and this with their decayed condition would seem to point to the conclusion that they must have been buried here a very long time.

As before remarked, objects showing signs of fire were very scarce. A few fragments of burnt bone, or at least of bone having the appearance of burning, were found

near the western side on the floor of the central hut, and three or four fragments of wood charcoal were picked out of the soil in the same trench close by. Pieces of coal cinder were also found, and a small ellipsoidal fragment slag such as sometimes turns out among the ashes of a stove when the draught has been very strong, were found in the soil in the central hut; but as charcoal burning was a common occupation in the neighbourhood not a century ago, and as the farmers sometimes carted manure, especially lime, containing cinders on to their pasture land and burned heaps of brushwood they had cleared off the ground, these signs of fire may or may not be of very modern origin.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that we have in Urswick Stone Walls the remains of a British homestead. If the date tentatively assigned by Mr. Reginald Smith in the following article to the bronze fragment may be taken as indicating the age of the building in the ruins of which it was found, then we may infer that this homestead was inhabited as far back as the first or second century before Christ.

Up to the present, the discovery of the Hipposandal at Sealford British settlement (these *Transactions*, o.s., x., p. 280) has been almost the only indication of the age of such remains; and this has suggested that they were of the Romano-British period. This new discovery makes it possible to assign, at least provisionally, a still earlier date for this type of settlement.

We find here a family dwelling—there is only one house in the enclosure, so that it is not the residence of a large tribal community. It is ramparted, but the extent of the rampart is so great compared with the probable number of occupants that it could hardly be defended in war, and the rampart must have been meant as a defence against wolves rather than men. It is divided into folds for different kinds of cattle, and supplied with querns, showing

that corn was grown, in spite of Cæsar's often quoted statement to the contrary ; and if, as he says, the inland people were clad in the skins of beasts, we see that they had engraved metal-work of such fineness that, taken with the masonry of the round house, it argues no small civilisation and a considerable advance in the arts of life.
