

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

"The Circle and the Cross: a study in continuity," by A. Hadrian Allcroft, M.A., author of "Earthwork of England"; Vol. 1 "The Circle" (Macmillan, 1927, pp. 370, with many illustrations.) The author is so well known for his studies of earthworks, and in this book makes so much mention of our district, that we feel sure he will find many readers among our members. In this place we have no intention of reviewing the volume as a whole; we propose only to pick out a few passages of local interest. One such (p. 326) is of general importance, where he supports his contention that the Cumbri were Cimbri with a quotation from the Brough stone. He represents Hermes of Commagene as "a legionary who died fighting against the Cimmerians," a people who "can be no other than the Celts of Strathclyde or Cumbria." "In the face of these facts," he says, "it is absurd for philologists to deny the identity of Cimbri with Cymru." Turning to the inscription, we read that Hermes, in his 16th year, died and was buried at Brough; he "went to the Cimmerian land," which Professor Clark (these *Trans.* o.s. viii, 216) took to mean a simple allusion to the well-known passage in the Odyssey. The boy 'went West.'

Another passage (p. 280) offers a little difficulty. Near Sunbrick in the circle which has been found to contain interments under a paving, Mr. Allcroft says that the name "at once recalls that of Sunburgh, one of the admitted Orcadian *tings*," and on his theory this should be a moot-circle, and the burial urn was the consecration deposit, hallowing the place by human sacrifice. But the name itself does not equate Sunbrick circle with Sunburgh as a thingstead; the one means 'swine-brink' and the other 'swine-burgh,' and we have no reason to believe that Norse settlers held their meetings at the then ancient circle near the slope where they pastured their pigs. The presence of a paving in an interment circle that could hardly be used for meetings is shown at Banniside near Coniston, where the paving surrounds the tumulus (see the plan, these *Trans.* x, 345).

We agree that megalithic circles may have been meeting-places (p. 218f) and that their astronomical intention is not proved; but

if Avebury shows Stone Age relics, we are not ready to class Long Meg, Keswick and Swinside with circles of small stones, as on Moor Divock, 'mainly sepulchral' (p. 220). And the instance of a rather larger ring in a group of hut-circles as at Hugill (p. 223) has been explained, since Mr. Dymond wrote, by the great huts at Urswick Stone Walls and Ewe Close. We do not know how these were roofed, but they were houses.

Perhaps the most interesting of Mr. Allcroft's suggestions is about Mayburgh (p. 198ff). He thinks Bishop Gibson right in identifying it with the meeting of the kings in 926, and that the floor was paved as if for a 'moot-circle.' His description is excellent, though we doubt his statement that Dacre Castle was a stronghold of the Cumbrian kings (p. 200n). The A.-S. Chronicle says that Athelstan met the Celtic kings at Eamotum, which he translates 'the moot by the waters.' Professor Ekwall (*Place-names of Lancs.*, 87) gives 'O.E. *Ēa(ge)mōtu*, junction of streams'; and there are various places of the same name which are that and nothing more. 'Mōt' in O.E. and O.N. came to be used of a meeting of men, but the word, from O.E. *mētan*, O.N. *mæta*, to meet, must have had a general meaning. O.N. *ár-mót*, exactly parallel to O.E. *ēa-mōt* (the *-um* is dat. plu.) always means 'waters-meet.' Now the natural meeting-place of the kings was Brougham, where the Lowther meets the Eamont, and the Roman roads N., S., E. and W. (the last to Ambleside, not to Keswick as p. 219n, where there was not a Roman station) all met. At Brougham, for all we know, the kings found only ruins, and William of Malmesbury says they met at Dacor, probably informed that the abbey there would give them accommodation on neutral ground. That correction of the A.-S. chronicle cannot have been accidental and cannot be neglected. But Mayburgh is 1½ mile from Brougham. There is nothing except Mr. Allcroft's theory to press it into the service of the history; Bishop Gibson's note on the subject is simply negligible. On the other hand, Mawbray in N.W. Cumberland explains the name as a family settlement of Anglian times. Whether Mayburgh was such, or a British fort, this is not the place to discuss; nor is it much use to discuss without digging. But if Mr. Allcroft's book promotes exploration of this and other sites which still puzzle us all, we shall have the greatest reason to be grateful to it and its author.

W.G.C.

"West Kirby and Hilbre, a parochial history," by John Brownbill, M.A. (Liverpool, Henry Young & Sons, Ltd., 1928;

cloth, pp. 395 with illustrations, 10s. 6d.), contains, among much valuable matter, excellently edited, a chapter on the pre-Norman monuments by W. G. Collingwood, discussing their connexion with those of Cumberland.

"The Last Years of a Frontier: a history of the Borders during the reign of Elizabeth," by D. L. W. Tough, B.Litt., M.A. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1928; cloth, pp. xxviii, 299, with illustrations, 18s.) We welcome a work which tells us so much about ourselves; indeed it is certainly one that every local student ought to have by him. The author has "walked many hundreds of miles on the Borders," and consulted not only these *Transactions* and Mr. Curwen's *Castles and Towers*, but all the original sources, including the Carlisle MS. of Richard Bell. It goes without saying that he makes, for the first time, a trustworthy account of this interesting and important subject, on which Nicolson & Burn, now 150 years old, did not say the last word. The long paragraphs are packed with detail and so carefully written that it is not easy to detect more than trivial slips, such as "Hawkshead, a Cumberland village" and its reference, which ought to be, "p. 169." The index is sketchy but the text is full of value.

W.G.C.

"Prince Charlie and the Borderland," by David Johnstone Beattie. (Carlisle; Charles Thurnam and Sons, 1928; pp. 283 with many illustrations, price 7s. 6d.).

This is an interesting account of the ill-fated expedition of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, in 1745, giving a detailed description of the prince's sojourn in Cumberland and Westmorland. It is written by one who has made for years a special study of border history. The numerous illustrations, comprising maps and photographs of local sites connected with "the '45" enhance the value of the book.

"Some Westmorland Wills, 1686-1738," edited by John Somervell. (Kendal, Titus Wilson and Son, 1928; price 7s. 6d.).

Mr. Somervell has rendered a valuable service to all students interested in the domestic life of the period covered by the Wills printed in his book. The wills are those of Quakers, many of them yeoman farmers, tanners, woollen manufacturers, millers, shoemakers, joiners, etc., while mentions occur of several other trades. The wills abound in curious technical terms, a glossary

of which is included. A list of the wills printed at the beginning of the book and a carefully compiled index add to its value. There are several interesting illustrations of old Westmorland farms.

“Index to the Transactions (New Series), Vol. xiii (1913) to Vol. xxv (1925),” compiled by W. G. Collingwood. (Kendal; Titus Wilson and Son; price 12s. 6d.).

All members of the Society owe a debt of gratitude to the President for the labour so generously bestowed upon this indispensable work, a task which no other is so well qualified to perform. The index fills what was hitherto an awkward gap in the volumes of our *Transactions*.