



Facing p. 43.

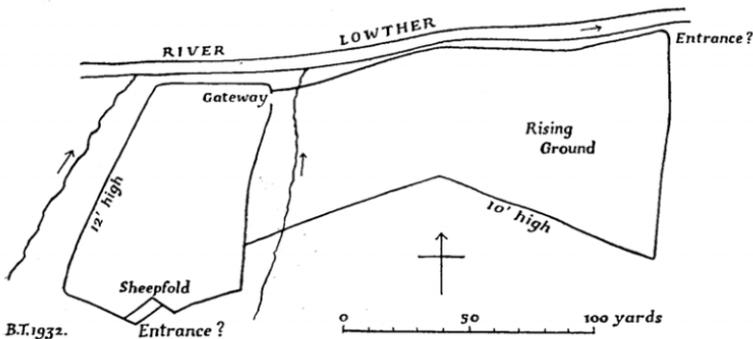
DEER PARK, WET SLEDDALE, 1932.

Photo: B.L.T.

ART. VII.—*A Deer Park in Wet Sleddale.* By BRUCE
LOGAN THOMPSON, M.A.

Read at Carlisle, March 21st, 1933.

WHERE the fields of Wet Sleddale join the open fell there is an ancient enclosure of about three acres known locally as the "buck park." It is a queer shape, partly because of the irregular ground, and is divided near the middle into two rather unequal halves. The walls



"The Buck Park," Wet Sleddale.

were originally at least 2 ft. 6 ins. thick and 12 ft. high, as may be seen in several places where the coping stones yet remain in position, but for the most part they have fallen down and are only kept in repair to a height of 5 or 5½ feet for ordinary farm purposes. No entrance is now visible and we can only guess that the original entrance was either at the N.E. corner or towards the S.W. corner where a modern sheep-fold has been built. The dividing wall swells out at its northern end to a width of 4 feet and is there broken by a 12-foot gap, apparently for a gate- or

door-way; the hinges are still in position 8 ft. 6 ins. above the ground. A syke runs down the enclosure almost alongside this wall and passes through the northern wall by an arched cundreth; another syke runs parallel to, but just outside, the western wall, and both of them are then absorbed by the young River Lowther.

Tradition has it that in this Park the monks of Shap Abbey used to fatten their deer for venison, but there is no record of the place in local history except that we know* the Abbey boundaries included a spot called "Lestablie" (now "Buck Stone" between Shap Abbey and Rosgill) where there must have been some sort of a trap. This suggests that the monks did busy themselves with deer-catching. Mr. R. S. Woof of Lowther kindly tells me that the last deer to be put in this Park were brought here by the second Earl of Lonsdale, as an experiment, in the eighteen-sixties.

* *Transactions*, o.s. x, 187-8.



Photo: THE BUCK PARK, WET SLEDDALE. *B.L.T.*

Facing p. 44.