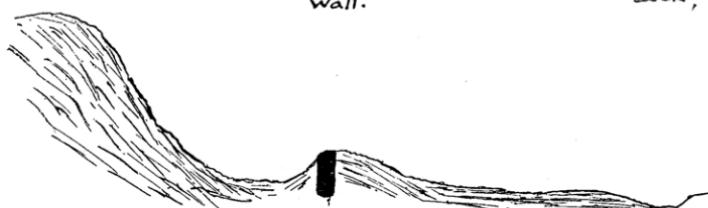


ART. IX.—*Remains near Mawbray.* By HAROLD DUFF.

Read at Kendal, September 8th, 1937.

THREE years ago at the meeting at Melrose, Mr. H. Valentine, our member, called attention to a roughly built stone wall which had been laid bare by the carting away of sand, at a point just south of the Jordan beck in the dunes near Mawbray. The principal feature here is the imposing dune known locally as Cote How, 51 feet high—the highest point southward from Bowness, which falls steeply away to the north as a scarped slope. Just clear of its base is a small mound which before sand-carting operations was fifteen feet high; beyond this a few feet further to the north is the Jordan beck, which rises appropriately enough in Jericho moss two miles westward. The following sketch roughly to scale will make the topography clear.

Cote How 51 fr.

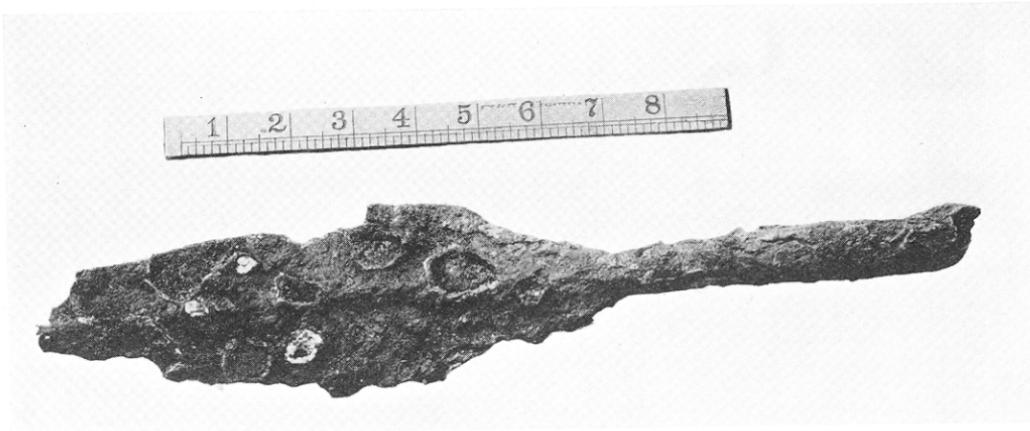
Mound containing
wall.Jordan
Beck,

In the mound was found embedded a rough wall of beach cobble-stones set in the yellow and blue clays which are common below high-water mark here. It was three feet thick and four feet high, and with further operations has now almost disappeared. It would appear that it was

a fragment of some structure which has been buried in blown sand. Its direction was east and west at right angles to the adjacent main road. No trace of any other walls could be found. In their quest for fine sand the workmen had made a dump of cobble stones, blocks of clay and coarse gravel just clear of the mound on the seaward side. In this heap were found two spear-heads one in a very fair state of preservation, illustrated here, and another broken into several fragments. The former is fourteen inches long, the ribbed blade being nine and the socket six; originally the whole piece would have been sixteen inches long. It appears to have been a Roman infantryman's spear, similar in type to 65, p. 263 of Professor Collingwood's *Archaeology of Roman Britain*. No other Roman objects of any kind have been found on the site.

There has always been a tradition that a Roman building of some kind, apart from the Beckfoot fort did exist in this neighbourhood. Camden in his day noted that the coast "hath been fortified all along by the Romans, wheresoever there was an easie landing"; and, Whelan in his *History of Cumberland*, which appeared in 1860 after referring to what we now know to be the Roman fort at Beckfoot as a 'partially fortified farmhouse of the monks' goes on to say—"Mowbray or Malbrey is situated near the seashore two miles above Allonby and is supposed to have been the site of a small Roman encampment." About 1878, that is a few years before the late Mr. J. Robinson started his excavations at Beckfoot and Maryport, the late Chancellor Ferguson was led by the inhabitants to Cote How as a traditional Roman site. (O.S. Vol. V. Art XVI.

Our President's article "Roman Signal Stations on the Cumberland Coast" (these *Trans. N.S.* xxix Art. IX), has accustomed us to the idea that "St. Bees Head is the real western end of Hadrian's wall," and that the function of



Spear Head from Cote How.

To face p. 158.

Photo. by Wilkinson, Wigton.

the three great forts, Beckfoot, Maryport and Moresby, with a system of fortlets in between was to provide sentry groups for this lengthy coast sector. Coming south from Bowness, Cote How is the first point to rise above the 50 ft. contour. Beckfoot and Birrens are easily visible to the north, and Maryport on its promontory to the south, while seawards literally the whole of the Solway and its Scottish coast are under uninterrupted observation, in short, an ideal site for an observation post and signal-station. Such a station exposed to S.W. gales and blown sand would necessitate some sort of shelter at the base of the scarp. It is therefore suggested that tradition, the presence of Roman objects here, and the excellent "command" all round entitle this site to the position of 8a in the hypothetical chain of stations along the Solway coast.
(Map p. 151, N.S. Vol. XXIX.