

NOTE ON THE PRESENCE OF PREHISTORIC FIELD SYSTEMS IN DERBYSHIRE.

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THE presence of ancient field systems, taking the form of lynchets and "Celtic Fields" has long been known from Wessex and the South Downs, where valuable work on their extent and dating has been undertaken by such notable field workers as Curwen and Crawford. In recent years their presence has been noted in the West Country by Raleigh Radford and Lady Fox and in North Wales by Hogg.¹ It has long been felt that in the Peakland of Derbyshire, an area similarly little touched by the plough or extensive settlement since prehistoric times, traces of field systems should be visible on those areas of extensive grassland on the Carboniferous Limestone that are at present given over to sheep-grazing.

The presence of such traces was first brought to the notice of the writer in the company of Mr. G. Mosley in the Youlgreave area in 1955. Particularly outstanding examples of lynchets can be seen on the hillside facing the Five Wells tumulus at Taddington (National Grid Reference SK c. 72/14), and also on the slope across the main road from Haddon Hall (National Grid Reference SK c. 23/65). In both these cases the system takes the form of parallel strip lynchets running contourwise along the hill in the latter instance and transversely down and around the hill in the first instance. The writer also saw a fine series of "fields" and lynchets in the Cromford area (around National Grid Reference SK 29/55) from Black Rock in the late evening sun in July, 1956.

It is particularly gratifying to hear that the Hunter Archaeological Society is engaged in mapping such traces and it is to be hoped that such extensive field-work in the Peakland combined with excavation, pollen and soil studies in South Derbyshire, the Sheffield region and on Stanton Moor will throw much valued light on the early agriculture of Derbyshire.

¹ An account of recent field-work is contained in the report of the Prehistoric Society's conference on Prehistoric Agriculture in *The Archaeological News Letter*, 1954, V, pp. 8-15.