

ART. VII.—*Extinct Cumberland Castles* (Part II). By
T. H. B. GRAHAM.

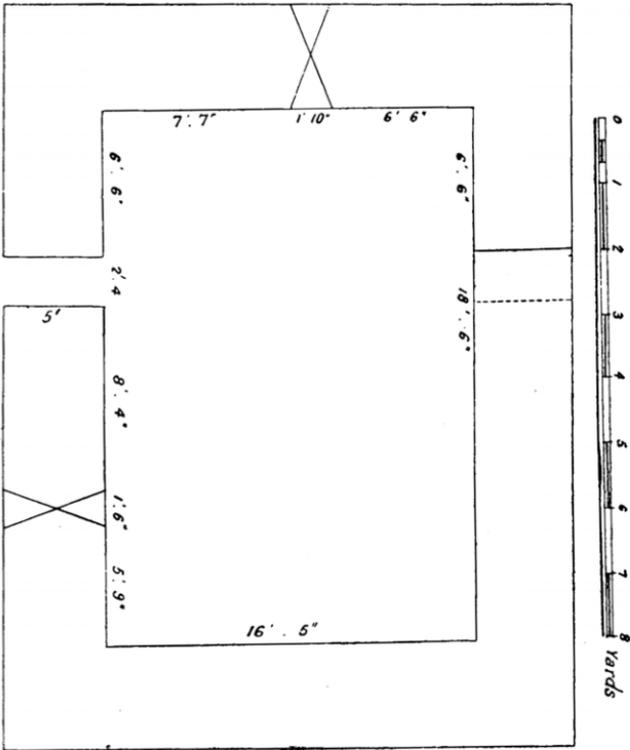
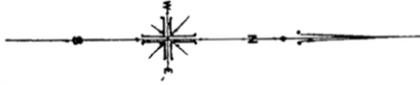
Communicated at Carlisle, July 8th, 1909.

THERE are in Cumberland several "castles" besides those which I have already mentioned (in these *Transactions*, N.S., ix., art. xv.) whose history is very obscure, and whose names and sites are apt to be overlooked. In this paper I have noted the remarks which the historians of the county have made in reference to them, and added the little I can discover by personal inspection and inquiry concerning their original character.

CREW CASTLE.

The ruins of Crew Castle in Bewcastle parish are marked on the Ordnance map, and consist of a quadrangular tower facing nearly due north, and measuring internally 16 feet from north to south, and 25 feet from east to west. It is solidly constructed of stone, and rises at the east and west sides to the height of 9 feet 6 inches from the ground inside, which is quite free from rubbish. All its sides are 5 feet 3 inches in thickness, but the inner faces of the east and west walls, at the height of 7 feet from the ground, are set back, so as to leave a ledge 7 inches broad, designed to support the floor of an upper story. They remain standing to the height of 2 feet 6 inches above the ledge. The north and south walls are much reduced in height, but the angles of the tower indicate that they were of similar construction. Access to the upper story must have been obtained by means of a ladder. There is an entrance 2 feet 4 inches wide in the south wall, and in the north wall there has been a corre-

Plan of CREW CASTLE



sponding entrance, which is now blocked with loosely piled stones. The south and west walls are pierced with port-holes, which I will presently describe.

Against the western front a lean-to shed with a zinc roof has been built, and it forms a conspicuous mark on the hillside to guide the traveller to the site of the ruin. A range of stone sheep pens adjoins the tower on the south, and outside its eastern face there is a mound of débris so high that it is possible to climb from it to the top of the walls.

I append a ground plan of the tower, together with its internal measurements, from which it will appear that the building is of rude construction and not symmetrical. The north wall, from the north-west angle to the western side of the blocked doorway, is 6 feet 6 inches in length. The western side of this doorway is still perfect and stands to the height of 4 feet, and the entrance, no doubt, corresponded in breadth with the existing one on the opposite side of the tower. From the western side of the blocked doorway to the north-east angle is 18 feet 6 inches, so that the total length of the north wall is 25 feet.

The south wall, from the south-west angle to the western side of the existing doorway, is also 6 feet 6 inches in length. The doorway itself is 2 feet 4 inches wide. From the eastern side of the said doorway to the western side of the south port-hole is 8 feet 4 inches. The port-hole is 1 foot 6 inches wide, and from the eastern side of the port-hole to the south-east angle is 5 feet 9 inches, so that the total length of the south wall is 24 feet 5 inches.

The eastern wall measures 16 feet 5 inches internally. The western wall, from the south-west angle to the south side of the west port-hole, is 7 feet 7 inches. The port-hole is 1 foot 10 inches wide, and from the northern side of the said port-hole to the north-west angle is 6 feet 6 inches, so that the total length of the west wall is 15 feet 11 inches.

I add a description of the port-holes because they are

of an unusual character, and can only have been intended as a means of ventilation. The south port-hole is a circular opening 4 inches in diameter, cut in a stone 2 inches thick, and placed in the interior of the wall, 32 inches from the outer face and 29 inches from the inner. A four-sided opening splays out from it in either direction, and measures, on the outside, 19 inches broad by 9 inches high, at the height of 16 inches above the soil, and, on the inside, 18 inches broad by 12 inches high at the height of 28 inches above the soil, but its direction is level throughout. The western port-hole consists of a circular opening nearly 5 inches in diameter, cut in a stone 3 inches thick, and similarly placed in the interior of the wall, 28 inches from the outer face and 32 inches from the inner. The similar four-sided opening splaying out from it measures, on the outside, 21 inches broad by 9 inches high at the height of 22 inches above the soil, and, on the inside, 21 inches broad by 8 inches high at the height of only 9 inches above the soil, but its direction is likewise level throughout. I have thus ascertained that the thickness of the wall at both these points is exactly 5 feet 3 inches.

This tower is an example of a Border stronghold complete in itself, and resembles the ruin at Stonehaugh Crook (these *Transactions*, N.S., ix., 216). The north-west angle has been much undermined, but a very little work would restore its stability. The modern erections or heaps of débris which surround the tower make it impossible to obtain a photograph of its exterior.

Crew Castle has no history attached to it, but it is reputed to have been the birthplace of a moss-trooper named "Hobbie Noble." Peelohill farmhouse, nearer to Bewcastle Church, consists in part of a similar tower. The walls of the doorway are nearly 5 feet thick, and contain slots through which were passed bars to secure the door. As in the case of Crew Castle, there were originally no windows on the ground floor.

KIRKLINTON CASTLE.

The land comprised in Kirklington parish was deemed of sufficient importance to form a barony of itself, under the style of the "barony of Levington," a name derived from the river Leven or Line, which forms its northern boundary. According to John Denton's *Accompt* (ed. R. S. Ferguson, p. 150), this barony was granted or confirmed by Henry I. (1100-1135) to Richard Boyvill, whose family assumed the territorial surname of de Levington. The barony soon fell into abeyance through failure of male heirs, but it may almost be assumed that, during the period of its existence, there was a local stronghold which served as *caput baroniæ*—that is to say, the residence of the overlord of its sub-manors.

Now Hutchinson records (vol. ii., p. 569) that

a few hundred yards from the house of the Dacres may be traced the remains of an old mansion or castle, although now grown over with grass and thorns. From this place, it is said, many of the stones were got for building Kirklington Hall. Tradition reports that this was a famous place in ancient times. It commands an extensive prospect in a direct line to the Solway Frith.

Between this place and the church, which is about a quarter of a mile, there seems to have been a town. It is now tillage land, but in many places there are pavements not above ten or twelve inches below the surface.

I am informed by Mr. Robert Armstrong of How Ford, a native of Kirklington, that the high point of land between the hall and the Stubb farmhouse has always been known as the "Castle Hill," and it exactly answers the description of the site of the castle given by Hutchinson.

The site is an ideal one, for it is protected on the northern side by the precipitous bank of the Line, and on the western side by the channel of the same river. But the hill and the surrounding land bear marks of the plough, and it is therefore idle to look for superficial traces of building.

The manor of Kirklington, parcel of the barony of

Levington, became ultimately vested in Sir Edward Musgrave, and he sold it to Edmund Appleby, who died in 1698, and whose descendants assumed the name of Dacre, being representatives of the Lanercost branch of that family. Kirklington Hall was long the residence of these Dacres.

Hutchinson (in a note, p. 569) says that it (meaning apparently Kirklington Hall) was formerly called "Clough Hall," that the name is preserved in Cloughside, Clough Head, and Long Cloughside, and that "Clym o' the Clough," one of the heroes of an old ballad printed in Percy's *Reliques* (1812), vol. i., 158, was named from it; but I can find no corroboration of the statement. He further says, under the heading "Antiquities," p. 570, that there was at the Stubb, near Kirklington Hall, the ruins of an old building which tradition said was called "Levinton Hall," and that it was strongly fortified, but the ground had been tilled, and scarcely any vestiges remained of the ancient edifice. That is evidently a second reference to the old mansion or castle previously mentioned.

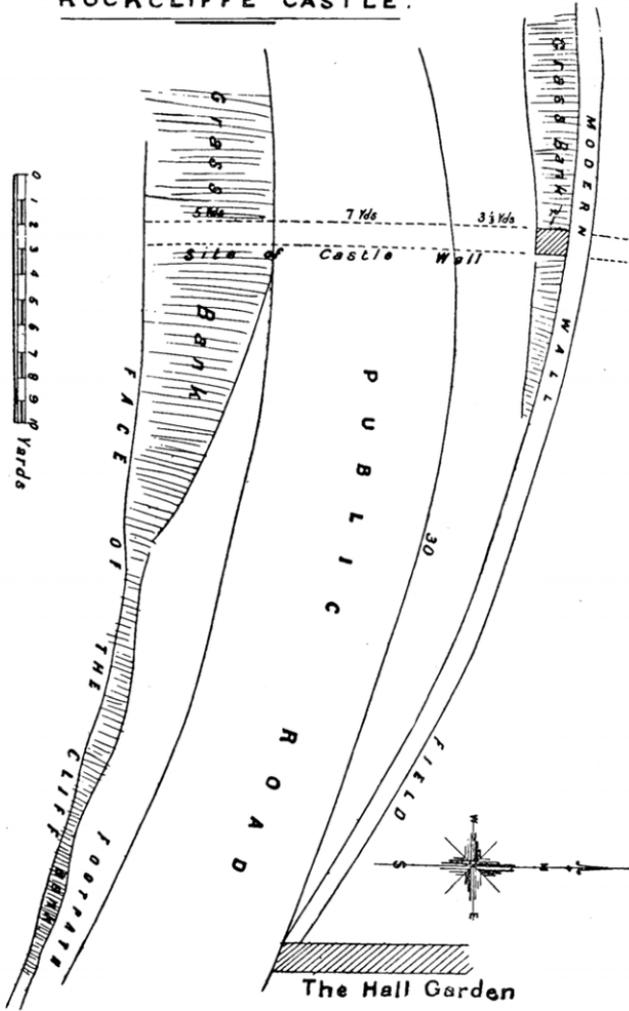
ROCKCLIFFE CASTLE.

Camden, writing in 1607, says "Crossing the Eden, you see Rowcliffe just upon the bank, a little castle built not long since by the Lords Dacres for their own private defence." I quote the edition published by Bishop Gibson in 1695 (page 834).

The old name of the locality was Rothcliffe—that is "Red Cliff," in allusion to the conspicuous escarpment of the river bank at that point. An intermediate form Rowcliffe occurs subsequently, but the modern spelling Rockcliffe disguises its true etymology.

George, the last Lord Dacre of Gilsland, died an infant in 1659, and the manor of Rockcliffe was included in the seigniorship to which he would have become entitled. His uncle, Leonard Dacre, is said to have seized and garrisoned

Plan of ROCKCLIFFE CASTLE.



Rockcliffe Castle against the Queen in that same year (Lysons, p. 150), and it was very shortly afterwards demolished (Whellan, p. 177).

By partition of the Dacre estates and subsequent events the manor of Rockcliffe became vested in Anne, Countess of Arundel (a sister of George, Lord Dacre), and her descendant, Henry, Duke of Norfolk, in 1682 sold the castle and demesne lands of Rockcliffe to the Rev. Charles Usher for £15,000 and from him the subsequent title to this portion of the old manor is derived (Nicolson and Burn, ii., p. 223). From Camden's remarks, it would appear that the castle was not of any great antiquity or importance.

Hutchinson says:—"The road now lies through the place where it stood, and Eden has worked down part of the ground-work" (ii., 525). A few years ago* it was found necessary to set back the road leading from the demesne to the village along the edge of the cliff, and in the course of the work a foundation of the castle was exposed. A fragment of it is still to be seen in the bank of the road at the point where the diversion begins. From the spot a fine view of the tide-way of the river Eden and the country adjacent to it is obtained.

Rockcliffe Hall is said to have been erected about the year 1730 upon the site of the castle, and its garden wall is built upon a very old foundation, parallel in direction with the one which was found buried in the roadway 30 yards westward. The only visible remains of the latter are composed of fragments of red sandstone cemented together with very hard lime, and measure 43 inches broad, 18 inches high, and project 3 feet beyond the face of the wall bounding the road. Many feet of the same foundation were cut away when the road was diverted, and it certainly extended beyond the present face of the cliff, because it has been observed protruding after a fall

* In September, 1901; see these *Transactions*, N.S., ii., pp. 412, 413.

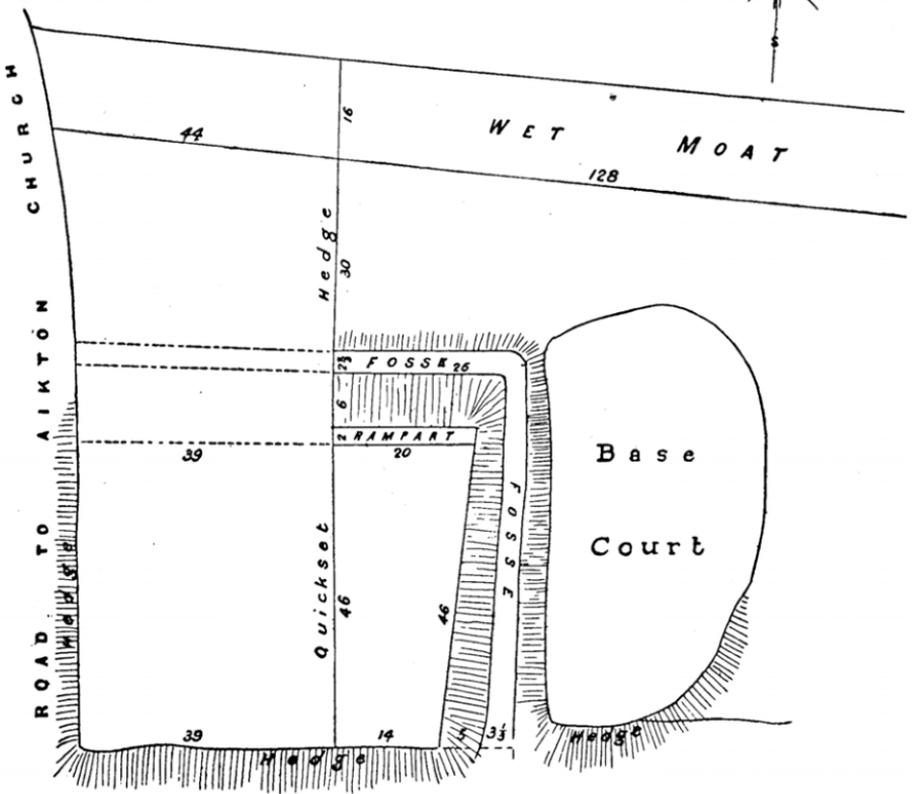
of soil from the summit, for though the base of the cliff is of red sandstone rock, its upper part is composed of very friable material.

DOWNHALL CASTLE.

The remains of this stronghold are to be seen on a piece of pasture land a quarter of a mile south of Aikton parish church, immediately behind the two farmhouses known as Downhall, and they are marked "castle" on the Ordnance map. The site is bisected by a thick quick-set hedge running north and south, so that its shape cannot be seen at a glance, but its north-east angle, situate on land occupied by Mr. Wood of Downhall, shows clearly that it has been a quadrilateral area enclosed by fosse and rampart. There are slight traces of a base court on its eastern side, and Professor Collingwood regards it as a mediæval "mote," for he writes (*Victoria History*, vol. i., 292):—"At Downhall, Aikton, a square platform has been made by cutting ditches across a long narrow hill, and on each side of it." Its northern front is protected by a wet moat, but, as will be seen from the plan, this would have been of no avail without the addition of flanking stockades.

John Denton states (*op. cit.*, p. 71) that the manor of Aikton was parcel of the barony of Burgh, and that at the little hamlet of Downhall (burnt by the Scots) stood its capital messuage, the residence of Johanna, daughter and co-heiress of Hugh de Morville, and her husband, Richard Gernon. This Hugh de Morville may be identified by Mr. Ragg's pedigree printed in these *Transactions*, N.S., ix., p. 264, as the one who died in 1201 (2 John), leaving two daughters, Ada and Johanna, under age. He was probably a nephew of the notorious murderer of Thomas à Becket. His land at Aikton was in 1232 (16 Henry III.), the subject of a partition between Ada, the wife of Thomas de Multon, and Johanna, the wife of Richard Gernon (see Calender, Feet of Fines, 42; these *Transactions*, N.S., vii., p. 221).

Plan of DOWNHALL CASTLE



It is recorded in Whellan's *History of Cumberland* (p. 201) that when the present buildings were being erected at Downhall in 1826 a portion of the old drawbridge was found. The writer of that article appears to indicate a bridge across the fosse occupied by the farm buildings and not across the moat, which is situate at some distance from them.

From south to north, along the line of the quick-set hedge (which bisects the site of the earthwork) up to the rampart, is 46 yards. The rampart at that point is 6 feet broad and 3 feet high. Six yards further north at the foot of the steep bank is the fosse, which is 8 feet broad, and extends from the said quick-set hedge to the north-east corner of the earthwork—25 yards. From north to south, along the eastern parapet of the earthwork, is 46 yards, but the rampart has been removed. From the said quick-set hedge eastward, along the southern parapet, is 14 yards. Here, too, the rampart has been removed. Five yards further east, at the foot of the steep bank, is the fosse, which on that side is 10 feet broad.

Eastward again of the fosse is an irregularly-shaped space which shows indications of having been surrounded by a low rampart, and which may have been a base-court connected with the principal earthwork. Thirty yards northward of the fosse, and extending 128 yards eastward of the said quick-set hedge, is the great wet moat, 16 yards wide. It also extends 44 yards westward of the quick-set hedge, but the earthwork is effaced on that side. It is probable that the road to Aikton Church has been cut through its western fosse, while the farm buildings of Downhall certainly occupy its southern fosse.

COLLINSON CASTLE.

“At Upper Row on Hutton Common,” says Hutchinson (vol. i., 512), “are the vestiges of Collinson Castle, an ancient square fortification, each side about 100 yards. The remaining trench is about 4 feet deep and 30 wide.

Near it is an excellent spring, still called Collinson's Well . . . There is a tradition that King Charles marched his army by this road and drank at this well."

It was on August 6th, 1651, according to Dr. Todd's MS. History of the Diocese, that Charles II. passed here on his road from Scotland by way of Dalston and Penrith. The route between those two points then lay for the most part across the uncultivated commons of Inglewood Forest.

Upper Row is the name of a farmhouse in the hamlet of Hutton Row, and Collinson's Well is situated one furlong east of the turning to Hutton Grange. Its position is marked on the one-inch scale Ordnance map by a dot in the recess of the road wall. Tradition asserts that the large field on the opposite side of the road contains the remains of the castle, and an unploughed corner at the north-west side has been pointed out as its site, but it seems to be only a spot where stone has been dug. One of the Messrs. Duers of Grassknop tells me that this spring he removed from the west side of the "slack" further down the same field many large stones which obstructed the plough, and which he believed to be foundations, although he did not ascertain their direction or extent. The exact position of the "castle" remains therefore to be identified.

Hutchinson mentions the fact that several hand mill-stones of 13 or 14 inches diameter had been found at or near Collinson Castle, and that it was reputed to have been a place of refuge in perilous times. He further speaks of "many visible marks of trenches" at "Elfa Hills," and on the common adjoining them. The name of "Elfa Hills" is quite forgotten, but his description clearly points to the well-known gravel ridge at Morton, a mile north-west of Collinson Castle. The swampy ground at its foot has been drained, and I cannot find any traces of the alleged trenches.

MONK CASTLE.

This is the name of a residence standing a mile and a half north-west of Broadfield House. It is erroneously styled "Muncaster Castle" on the Ordnance survey. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood cannot give any explanation of the name, but there is a passage in Chancellor Ferguson's *History of Cumberland* (p. 44) which may throw light on the subject :—

In Lyson's "Cumberland," p. cxlvii., mention is made of a Roman road which ran from old Carlisle to Plumpton wall by Broadfields. This is probable, as Roman works once existed on Broadfield Common, and Camden considered Rose Castle to have been a Roman station. Mr. Lees, of Wreay, has traced this road, and makes it run into the second *Iter* at Causeway House. The works on Broadfield Common and *the camp which must have existed at Muncaster* would be points on the western Roman road from Carlisle to Penrith.

The learned Chancellor apparently meant to say from Old Carlisle (Wigton) to Old Penrith (Plumpton), because the earthworks to which he refers are "Castlesteads" and "Whitestones" near Stockdalewath, at the north-west corner of Broadfield Common. But Professor Collingwood regards (*Victoria History*, vol. i., 289) the two last-named earthworks, not as Roman camps, but as *túngarths* of Anglian or Scandinavian settlers, and if there were ever (as might be inferred from the place-name) an earthwork at Monk Castle, it may possibly have belonged to the same category.
