

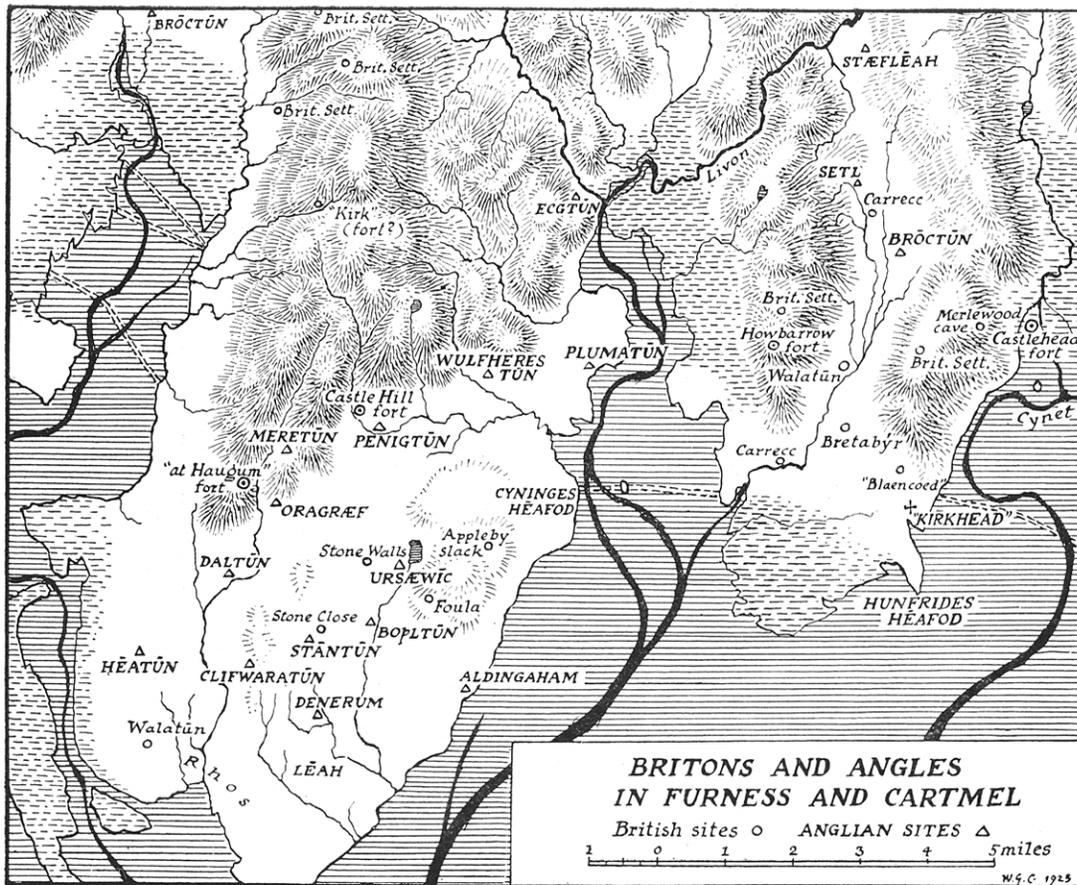
ART. XXV.—*The Angles in Furness and Cartmel.* By
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Communicated at Urswick Church, Sept. 5th, 1923.

BEFORE the period to which its earliest architecture bears witness, there was a chapel at Urswick and pretty certainly on this site. The cross-shaft found in 1911 in the walls of the church tells us by its runic inscription* that Tunwini set it up to Torhtred his lord. The patterns on the stone are late Anglian of the S.W. Yorkshire variety but the names mentioned show that the monument is not so late as the period, in the 10th century, when Vikings settled in Furness. And the fact of such a cross, by no means a small one but rather rustic in its workmanship, suggests that Urswick in the ninth century was a flourishing centre of Anglian population; not highly cultured, but apparently the seat of a lord (whose name is given). The chapel, like others of which we read, was no doubt his chapel, on his estate.

When the Norse-descended Vikings came to live in Furness, they do not seem to have destroyed the chapel; for another stone (discovered in the chancel wall in 1909; see these *Transactions* n.s. x, 307) is of the later part of the tenth century and Anglo-Scandinavian in type; it must have been set up by the new people to one of their own race. This, with the survival of many place-names of Anglian origin, suggests that the Viking settlement was not made by an invasion in force, exterminating the older population; though before the settlement there were

* I take this opportunity of making a correction in n.s. xi, 467; for "Lyl this was" (line 17) read "Lyl this wo[rhte]," *Lyl made this*; and on p. 468, line 7, "about 900 A.D." may be nearer the date.



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Viking raids on the coast. The proof of this is in the finds of ninth-century coins at Castlehead and at the Merlewood cave, both near Grange, where the people of Cartmel must have fled for refuge. In a word, the Vikings from across the Irish sea raided our coasts in the ninth century, but settled upon them in the tenth; and when they settled they were more or less Christianized; they came looking for homes, not merely for plunder as in the previous generation.

Now, three hundred years before the Viking settlement there had been an Anglian settlement, traceable in the place-names of which Professor Ekwall has written in his "Place-names of Lancashire." He shows that the settlers came from Northumbria (Yorkshire) and not from Mercia, by the name of Bolton, which contains the northern word *bothl*, a dwelling; and one name, Aldingham, is of the earlier stratum of Anglian place-names, apparently meaning a family settlement of the primitive type.* In the accompanying map are plotted most of the names which appear to show Anglian settlement, and it will be seen that they occupy the main part of the lands which must have been suitable for corn and cattle in those early days in Furness, while in Cartmel they are very sparse indeed. One of the most interesting is Urswick, which Professor Ekwall interprets as *Ur-sæ-wīc*, the "village of bison's lake;" as if the pioneers from Yorkshire had found the tarn haunted by wild cattle. It does not follow that there were no other inhabitants, for wild cattle survived in Inglewood for many centuries (these *Transactions*, N.S. xxiii, 47); one of the Anglian place-names, Hart, seems to indicate the red deer of which remains have been found in various places in Furness, and

* A paper in the *Vasculum* for October, 1923, by the Rev. J. E. Hull, offers a different theory to account for these names in -ing; against which see Prof. Ekwall *op. cit.* 14n. and "English Place-names in -ing" (Oxford Univ. Press, 1923).

the name of Ewedale, a mile north of Pennington*, shows that the Norse, who called it *Ulfa-dalr*, met wolves there. But if there were other inhabitants found by the Angles, who were they?

In Roman times there were, as elsewhere in our district, Britons living in the village sites of ramparted rings enclosing hut-circles, and taking refuge from the raids of the Scots in hill-forts and caves. At Castlehead and in the caves near Grange there are not only ninth century coins, but Roman remains, left there in the fourth century by refugees, not by Roman soldiers, for there are no forts or roads of Roman construction in Furness and Cartmel. But there are many Roman coins and other relics from different sites, especially from the neighbourhood of the "British settlements." These, in Furness, are the Urswick Stone walls, Stone Close at Stainton, probably the two of similar type at Appleby slack and Foula, and a site in Barrow Public Park, where querns and other late stone implements have been found. In Cartmel there are hut-circles on Hampsfell and Holker Bank, and the late Mr. Stockdale (*Annales Caermoelenses*, 253) described a rampart formerly visible on the west side of the Ea in Walton. Now Walton, *Wala-tūn*, is Anglian for Welshmen's village. There was also a Walton (cote) near Barrow. These names mean that Britons still lived in at least some of their ancient "settlements" when the Angles arrived, and that they were not expelled, or we should not have the names still on the map. Further, the name of Birkby (Hall) in Cartmel was anciently Britby and Bretby, meaning that when the Norse came they had reason to call that place *Bretabyr*, the Britons' farm. British inhabitants were still there in the tenth century.

In Cartmel, beside the river-names of Kent and Leven, †

* Anciently *Penig-tun*, the penny-farm, not the "settlement of the Pennings" as formerly explained (Ekwall, *op. cit.*, 210).

† See p. 257 of this volume. The Lancashire Leven is most unlikely to be Gaelic and parallel to the Scottish Leven.

there are three places where British names have survived to this day—Cark, High Cark and Blenket farm; the Carcks may mean either “rock” or “stream,” and Blenket is “wood-end” (Ekwall, *op. cit.*, 196, 197), and the Anglian names are very few. In Low Furness, beside Walton, there is only Roose, in Domesday Book Rosse, the Welsh *rhos*, “moor” (*ibid.*, 202). The Anglian settlement of Furness was very much more thorough than that of Cartmel; for in the former the Angles left to the Britons only the southern fringe of land, more exposed and less agricultural (as it must have been in their days), while in Cartmel the whole of the valley was left in the hands of the Britons except Broughton (*Brōc-tūn*, “brook-village”) and further north Seatle and Staveley, which look like rather later foundations, because further away from the route by which the Angles of Yorkshire entered the district—that is, the old track over the sands. At the time, the fells to the north and the swamps to the east were hardly traversable. What then was the reason of this difference between the two sister districts?

It has been doubted that the Cartmel we know was the land given to St. Cuthbert by King Ecgrid, who (according to the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, a book of about 1020-35) “gave him the land which is called Cartmel and all the Britons with it.” The form of the statement seems to imply that the land was called Cartmel (so spelt) at the time of writing, not necessarily at the time of the gift. The gift must have been made about A.D. 685, when the Angles were dominant, and the Anglian king could give away to the church any piece of land not already occupied by Anglian owners. The *Historia* goes on to say that abbot Cineferth acted as steward for the various scattered possessions of the see of Lindisfarne, and it is likely that agents of his simply took the rent from the farmers already on the land, without repeopling them except with some small establishment such as a “cell” of their abbey.

If that were so, the survival of British character in Cartmel is explained; otherwise it would have been colonized by Angles, like Furness.

Where was the "cell" of the Lindisfarne clerics? At Cartmel Churchtown, the priory was founded in 1188, and there is a curious legend* of the search for a site, which was found at last in a place between two streams running in opposite directions. The legend may have no truth in it, but a 12th century abbey was placed in a situation suitable to the needs of a larger religious house, not necessarily at the pre-Norman chapel. Now there was an earlier church of Cartmel, known from the name of its incumbents; in 1391 the parish church of St. Michael was said to have been "where the monastery is now" and it survived in the altar of St. Michael at which parishioners heard mass (*Cal. Papal Letters*, iv, 368, quoted by Mr. T. H. B. Graham). But there was a name "Kierkepol," Norse for Church-pool, existing before the priory. This was near Kirkhead, where Stockdale (*Ann. Caer.*, 505†) says that graves and other remains of a chapel survived to the 18th century. The place is near the first landing that ancient travellers would make after crossing the sands, the most likely place for such a "cell".

This gift of Cartmel, dating about 685, must have been the first step to the general occupation of the land south of the Lake District. The only approach to Furness being by the sands, unless the colonists came in the reverse direction, from south Cumberland, it would seem that the settlement of Furness was later than 685. It is possible that pioneers found their way southward from Workington by Whicham (*Witingham* of the Domesday Book) to Aldingham, if the primitive character of the *-ingtons* and

* Jopling, *Furness and Cartmel*, 200, quoting the old *Lonsdale Magazine*, vol. ii. I owe the reference to the Rev. T. N. Postlethwaite and to Mr. R. O'Neill Pearson.

† He thought it a chapel of Furness Abbey, but no such chapel is mentioned in the records of the Abbey estates there.

*-ingham*s is made good. But still the general movement which formed the Anglian farms of Low Furness can hardly have taken place except through Cartmel, and after Cartmel was allotted to the church. In the fells there are no place-names of a convincingly Anglian character; the uplands were left to the Britons until Norse sheep-farmers came to make use of the mountain pastures, and to introduce a few Celtic names of Gaelic type, like Glenscalan at Coniston, which they brought from over the Irish Sea.
