

ART. VIII.—*An Early Settlement on Moor Divock.* By  
DR. J. E. SPENCE.

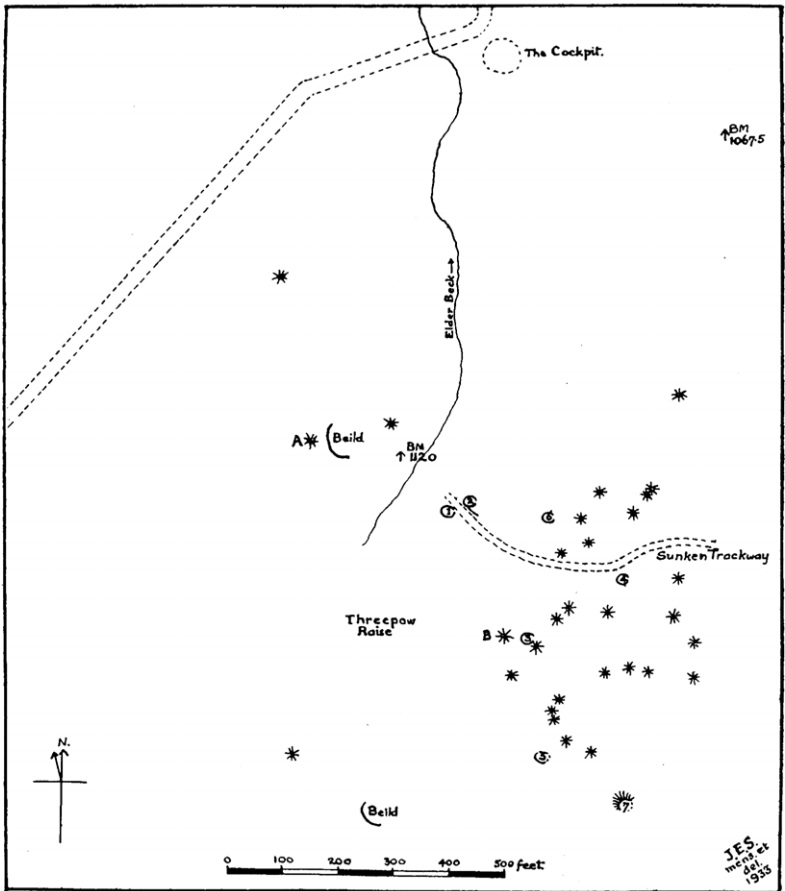
*Read at Lancaster, September 14th, 1933.*

IN an interesting paper read before the Society at Carlisle in 1885 (*Trans. o.s.* viii, 323-347). Dr. M. Waistrell Taylor described the Prehistoric remains on Moor Divock. He divided the remains into two groups, one lying along the north side of the old road leading from Helton Village to Pooley Bridge, the other lying to the south-west in the vicinity of the Roman road known as High Street. In the latter group, Dr. Taylor describes three tumuli lying about 400 yards to the south of the stone circle, "The Cockpit," on a slightly elevated portion of the moor, which, on the Ordnance Survey sheets, is designated Threepow Raise.

This area has been carefully explored during 1930 and 1932 by our member Miss M. Barker of Caldbeck and Miss M. Champness of Newbury, who found a large group of tumuli and hut circles lying to the south-east of the tumuli mentioned by Dr. Taylor. These were pointed out to me by Miss Barker and Miss Champness, and I have since had an opportunity of carefully surveying them.

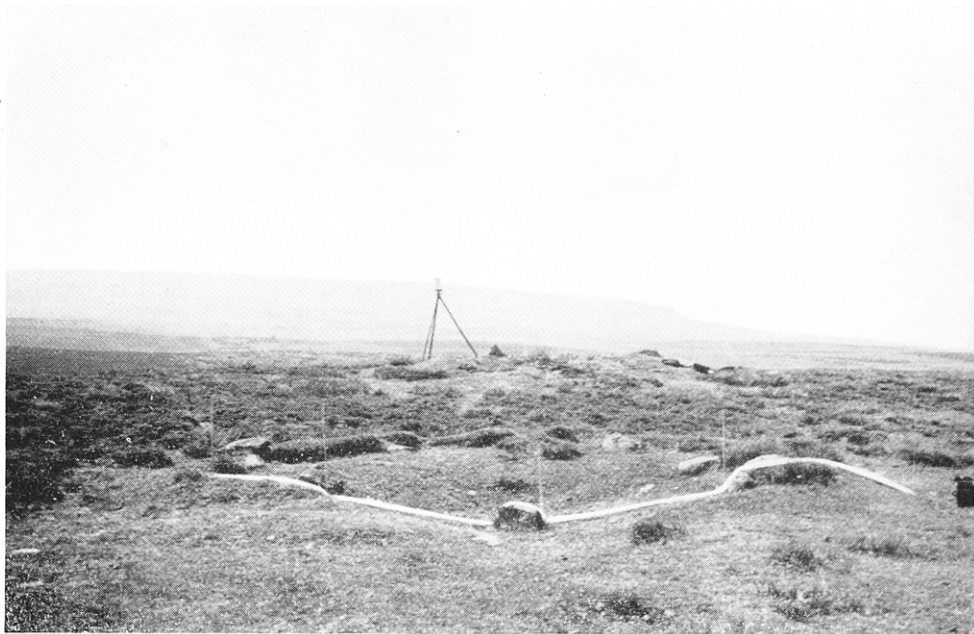
The ridge of high ground running northwards from High Street between the valley of the river Lowther and the lower reaches of Ullswater is crossed at its lowest point by the old road from Pooley Bridge to Halton, which, at its summit near Ketley Gate, reaches an altitude of 1060 feet. The eastern portion of this road marks approximately the limit of the limestone, which towards the south is overlaid by drift containing Borrowdale

erratics. About 400 yards south of Ketley Gate is a marshy area, from which the tributaries of the Elder Beck rise, beyond which the moor ascends gently towards Swarth Fell.



EARLY SETTLEMENT, MOOR DIVOCK.

On the southern edge of the marshy ground is situated the stone circle known as "The Cockpit," at the point where the Roman road makes a sharp bend to the east to



*Facing p. 46.*

MOOR DIVOCK. Hut Circle No. 3.

cross the upper part of Elder Beck. 400 yards south of "The Cockpit" is a tongue of land 1130 feet above ordnance datum, running towards the south-east from the source of the Elder Beck, on which is situated the central tumulus of the three described by Dr. Taylor. The tongue of land extends about 700 feet to the south-east and then gradually falls to the level of the surrounding ground, which is about 20 feet lower. The ground, which is firm and dry and is covered with close fine herbage, forms a suitable site for a settlement, and there is a plentiful supply of water near at hand in the Elder Beck.

The remains in the area may be conveniently divided into two groups, one comprising four hut circles and seventeen tumuli, situated on the tongue of land, the other comprising nine tumuli and one hut circle on a slightly lower ridge to the north, separated by a shallow depression through which a sunken trackway approaches from the direction of the "Top Stone" towards a ford over the Elder Beck. Lying on either side of the sunken trackway, about 100 feet east of the Elder Beck and 200 feet west of the nearest tumuli, are two more hut circles.

The hut circles are uniform in size, averaging 21 feet, 6 inches in overall diameter, with a well-defined saucer-shaped depression in the centre. The rims, which are composed of stones overgrown with turf, rise about 12 inches above the level of the surrounding ground and show indications of an entrance facing towards the north-east.

From the hut circle number 2, which lies to the north of the sunken trackway, the foundation of a wall runs eastwards from the south side of the entrance, parallel to the sunken trackway, for a distance of 35 feet. The hut circle number 5 is incomplete, the northern half having been destroyed. Hut circle number 7, which is situated at the south-eastern extremity of the settlement, differs considerably from the others. Its eastern portion has

been disturbed but can be traced on the surface of the ground. The western sector is composed of ten large stones, two to five feet apart, the largest measuring 29 inches by 21 inches, standing 15 inches above the ground. Adjoining the outer side of the western portion is a low mound of stones which may be from the destroyed hut.

The tumuli may be divided into two types. The majority are small circular mounds from nine to twelve feet in diameter and standing approximately nine inches above the level of the surrounding ground; a few of them tend to be oval, and in one instance the elongation is probably due to the confluence of two tumuli. Five of the tumuli are larger, varying from fifteen to nineteen feet in diameter and standing twelve to sixteen inches above the level of the surrounding ground, two of them showing a depression in the centre as though they had been rifled.

On the western side of Moor Divock near the road leading down to Pooley Bridge is another group of tumuli which have not yet been surveyed.

Three of the tumuli lying to the north of the Helton-Pooley Bridge road, described by Dr. Taylor, have been opened. In number 10 a cist containing bones was found, the burial belonging to the early Bronze Age. Number 5 was found to contain a deposit of ashes and burnt bones covered by crude and imperfectly burnt urn, which had been placed upside down, belonging to the middle Bronze Age. In number 4, when opened by Canon Greenwell, an urn of the late Bronze Age was found, 5½ inches high, with four unpierced ears and twisted cord ornamentation which is now exhibited in the British Museum. The hut circles and tumuli on Threepow Raise, together with the stone circle and tumuli described by Dr. Taylor, are probably all remains of a settlement which has been occupied throughout the whole of the Bronze Age, but excavation of some of the hut circles and tumuli is necessary to confirm the period of their occupation.

The ridge of moorland running north from Swarth Fell has apparently been continuously occupied over a very long period as north of Riddingleys Top there are the remains of another settlement, probably of the Romano-British period, which I hope will form the subject of a paper for submission to a subsequent meeting.