

ART. VIII.—*Maiden Castle, and Raycross, Stainmore.* By
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Communicated at those places, August 18th, 1880.

PART I. MAIDEN CASTLE.

LELAND says of this place in his time :

“There is a place an eight mile plaine west from Bouis, a thoroughfare in Richmondshire, cawled Maiden Castle, where is a great round keepe, a sixty feet in compace, of rude stones, some smaule, sum big, and be set in *formam pyramidis*, and in the top of them all is set one stone in *conum*, being a yard and a half in length, so that the (w)hole may be counted an eighteen foot high, and is set on an hill in the very edge of Stainmore, and this is a *limes* between Richmondshire and Westmorland. Maiden Castle is hard by the east side of Watheling Street, five miles a this side Brough.”

Hutchinson, in his Excursion, says of this building :—

“As we began to descend the hill towards Brough and leave the deserts of Stainmore, we passed an ancient Roman fortification, called Maiden Castle—the Roman road led immediately through it, its form is square, built of stone, each side forty paces in length—it is defended by outworks, the nearest being a small ditch with a breastwork of large stones set erect, and the outward a ditch and rampart of earth. This place has been of great strength in former times, from its natural situation, commanding the pass from Brough.”

Camden says a Roman road led from hence to Caervoran in Northumberland, but I believe that road starts from Kirkbythore. I give you these two descriptions, written at an interval of about 200 years, and would ask whether they can apply to the same building. Leland describes it as “a great round keepe sixty feet in compace.” Hutchinson says its form is square, each side forty paces in length ; both cannot be right.

Prebendary

Prebendary Scarth, in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1862, reported the masonry at Maiden Castle as Roman, and that five courses were standing at one angle; that the corners were rounded, the wall six feet thick, and the interior of the wall rubble with powdered brick and 'gravel.*

PART II. RAY-CROSS.

Raycross on Stainmore is said to have been erected as a boundary mark between England and Scotland at the time when great portion of the district now known as Cumberland and Westmorland formed a part of the latter kingdom. The base and part of the shaft still exist on the south side of the turnpike road a few hundred yards east of the place where the Spital tollbar once stood. It is on the Yorkshire side of the boundary between the two counties. It may, perhaps, be doubted whether the base of the cross is *in situ*.† In Gibson's "Camden" the cross is described as standing in a large camp.

"The Roman road, it is said, passes through a large camp where the stone of king Marius formerly stood instead whereof there is another erected called Rerecross."

In "Hutchinson's Excursion to the Lakes in 1773 and 1774" its position is thus described:—

"It stands within an old oblong intrenchment which has two openings on each of its four sides exactly opposite to each other about ten yards wide, and having a mound of earth five feet high in front of them; the eastern side is 270 paces long, standing on the edge of a long gradual descent; the western 278, on a swift descent; the north end 269 paces, inaccessible by a deep morass, and the south end 181, defended by a high precipice. In the highest part

* On the conclusion of this part of the paper, which was read at Maiden Castle, an investigation was made by some of the party into the ramparts. At first little appeared that looked Roman, but ultimately bits of Roman pottery and mortar were found. Time did not suffice, nor were the implements at hand for a further investigation. There can be no doubt that Maiden Castle is Roman: indeed Mr. Wharton the clergyman of the parish stated that Roman coins had been found there.

† In the plan given in "Roy's Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain," and made shortly after 1745 the cross is represented exactly where it stands now. But Hutchinson in his "Excursion to the Lakes in 1773 and 1774," published 1776, gives a plan, showing it much further to the east. No doubt Hutchinson is wrong.

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of the area is a square mound, three feet high and fifty-three paces in circumference. The moles which defend the openings are ten paces from the main vallum and thirty-six in girth. At the neighbouring turnpike house is a cylindrical stone, with "C.O.H.V.," probably a Roman military mark."

Maitland says:—

"In commemoration of this treaty between William and Malcolm a stone cross was erected on Stainmore, with the effigy of the kings on the northern and southern sides thereof, by the English denominated Rarecross, by the Scots, Recross, that is the king's cross, and to serve as a boundary between the two kingdoms."

Hector Boethius says it was set up in 1067 as the boundary between Scotland and England, when it was agreed that Malcolm should hold Cumberland and Westmorland by homage to William, and that the effigies or arms of the two kings should be engraved upon it. Of course these statements are open to question, but the cross seems to have existed in 1258, when the Bishop of Glasgow insisted that his diocese extended so far as Rerecross on Stanemoor, and started on a journey to Rome to have this claim confirmed by the Pope; and in 1436, when King Edward offered marriage to the Scotch princess, he offered to give up his English possessions as far as Recross. Whensoever and by whomsoever erected, it is clear enough that it was a boundary mark, and probably owes its name to that fact, as the Brandreth stone at Tebay was probably a boundary in that direction, but has had its name corrupted. The cross may have existed before the Conquest,—set up by Egbert in memory of his victory over the Picts,—but we can hardly believe that it occupied the site of a stone set up by King Marius, who named the county west of it Westmorland.

On the conclusion of the above papers, which were both read at Maiden Castle, the Rev. T. Lees said:—

Dr. Simpson has told us that the people hereabouts have a tradition that

that in early times a great battle was fought in this neighbourhood.

Authentic history tells us nothing about this encounter which seems to have taken place during the interval of time between the Roman abdication and the English Conquest of this district, about which we have very slight record. So far as my knowledge extends the only account we have of this battle of Stainmoor is found in the story of "Horn Childe and Maiden Rinnild," printed by Ritson, in the third volume of his "Metrical Romances," from the Auchinleck MSS. in the library of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh. Though the poem is of the 14th century, yet we may conclude that it embodies a much older story, for Celtic names are given to the Britons and Irish, and English names to the Angles. I may also be allowed to observe, by the way, that as this ridge of Stainmoor was the watershed between the eastern and western seas, so, at this time it was the great boundary between the Christian Britons on the west and the heathen Angles on the east. The story is briefly this:—About the middle of the 5th century an Angle prince named Hatheolf had established himself in the North Riding of Yorkshire. After repelling, at Alerton Moor, a Danish incursion, Hatheolf held a feast at Pickering; and there, on Whitsunday, news was brought to him that three kings, Ferwele, Winwald, and Malkan, had landed from Ireland and ravaged Westmorland. The names Ferwele and Malkan, you will observe, are Celtic. Winwald was apparently an Angle in league with the Irish. Hatheolf immediately marched to meet the invaders, and a great battle took place on Stainmoor in which Ferwele and Winwald perished with sixty thousand men of both armies; and Hatheolf, after slaying five thousand men with his own hand, was beaten down with stones by the Irish, and stabbed by king Malkan. Malkan himself returned to Ireland with but thirteen of his men surviving, and was afterwards slain at the battle of Yolkil by Horn, the son of Hatheolf. Besides the tradition mentioned by Dr. Simpson it is possible that we have another piece of evidence as to this Irish Invasion, in the name of Melkinthorpe a township in Lowther Parish about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-east of Penrith. The Irish King may have made Melkinthorp his halting-place either on his way to or from Stainmoor, and the memorial of the event have been thus embodied in the place-name.

Mr. R. S. Ferguson made the following observations on the camp at Raycross. General Roy in his magnificent work called "The Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain," includes in one class
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the great temporary Roman camps at Kreiginthorpe (Crackenthorpe) near Kirkbythore, Ray-cross, and Birrenswark. In their dimensions, the multiplicity of their gates, and other principal points, they agree so much that it is evident they are all three the work of one and the same legion. As in all their points they differ from the camps known to be Agricola's, they must therefore belong to the sixth legion, which did not arrive in Britain until the time of Hadrian. By that time most of Agricola's conquests in Scotland had been lost, and Roy suggests that these three camps mark the halting-places of the re-conquering expedition, as the sixth legion marched from York. The General estimates that according to the Polybian system of castrametation the camp at Ray-cross would have held about 4000 men, or a legion without its auxiliaries: according to the Hyginian, 9000, or a legion with its auxiliaries.

The General's account of Ray-cross camp is as follows:—

“The second is situated at Rey-cross on Stainmore, between Brough and Bowes, eighteen miles distant from the former (*i.e.*, a camp on Kreiginthorpe Common, between Kirkbythore and Appleby, also described by General Roy). It is likewise three hundred yards square, with an intrenchment of similar strength. Two gates on the west side are entire, and covered with tumuli. The Roman way leading to Bowes, which is likewise the present turnpike road, hath entered by another gate on that side, and issued by one opposite to it, neither of which could of course have any cover. On the north side three gates, with their tumuli, can be traced; two on the east, and two on the south, overlooking the steep bank of the river Greta. Rey-cross stands within the camp, by the edge of the road, and seems to have been a Roman milestone,* having a fine square tumulus fronting it, on the opposite side of the way.”†

The gates of the Roman temporary camps (Mr. Ferguson continued) were always protected by mounds, traverses, or lunettes, with the exception of those of the ninth legion, who formed their entrances by throwing back one rampart, and throwing the other forward, as for instance at Cawthorn in Yorkshire. The camps of the sixth legion are remarkable for the multiplicity of their gates,—eight, ten, or twelve,—while the legions that came with Agricola never made more than six at most.

With regard to Maiden Castle and its relation to the camp at Ray-cross, Mr. Ferguson said he found, from a careful examination of Roy's plans, that each temporary Roman camp generally had a more permanent and smaller fortification in its vicinity—a “redoubt” Roy

* At pages 109 and 110 of his work, Roy repeats this idea, and instances similar ones. If he is right, one of the three Brough crosses should be a milestone, but he instances as milestones “the Golden Pots” in Northumberland, which Hodgson, the historian of that county, considers merely boundary stones.

† Roy's *Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain*, p. 74.

calls them. Each of the Birrenswark camps had one. It is probable that, when the temporary camp at Ray-cross was no longer needed, the redoubt at Maiden Castle was built as a connecting link between the camp at Lavatræ (Bowes), and Verteræ (Brough).

In reply to a question, Mr. Ferguson said that Chambers, in his Edinburgh Papers, says "Maiden" seems a generic term amongst common people for any ancient work the origin of which is unknown. Mr. Stuart, in his work on "The Sculptured Stones of Scotland," traces it to Celtic *Mag* (pronounced Mai), *campi collis* and *dun*, a fort, and makes it a fort commanding a wide plain or district. Dr. Bruce, in the Lapidarium, p. 391, derives it from *Mai-dun*, the great ridge; while Mac Laughlin suggests *maes*, (British,) a *field*; also a *battle*, a *fight*, and *dun*, a *hill*, a *fortress*.

APPENDIX.

Mr. Mac Lauchlan, in the Archæological Journal, Vol. VI., p. 350, raises some doubt as to whether Rey-cross is a Roman camp or not. He says:

"Reycross, which, it is presumed, took its name from the stone standing within the camp at Stainmoor, is supposed by General Roy to be a Roman work, showing an unusual form of castrametation. It has, however, more the character of a British entrenchment; for though nearly a square, it has not the symmetrical form of a Roman camp: the west and east sides are not parallel by ten degrees, and there seems no reason why they should not have been so, for the ground offers no obstruction. The greater part of the north rampart has become submerged in the peat, and, at the north-east angle within the work, is what appears to be a tumulus. Great part of the interior of the camp has been worked for limestone, and the work necessarily injured, but it does not appear that there ever was a regular ditch round it. In excavating near the "fine square tumulus" mentioned by General Roy, the workmen found some pottery, and, if the interior of the tumulus were examined, some urns would probably be found. The northern side of the camp has three gates, or openings, in the rampart, with a tumulus opposite each opening on the outside. There seems to have been four similar openings in the west rampart, and four in the east, through one of which the Roman way has been made. Two similar openings, at an unequal distance from the others, were in the south side, where the ground falls precipitously

ously to the river Greta. Though these gates or openings cannot have contributed to the strength of the camp, they were covered by tumuli, and it seems difficult to explain why they were made so numerous. The northern side of the camp is the largest; the two obtuse angles about 105 degrees, and the acute ones 75 degrees each, —the side of the figure being about 300 yards.”

NOTE BY THE EDITOR. Many of the Roman camps in Scotland, figured in Roy, present similar deviations from a symmetrical form to the camp at Raycross. The similarity between that camp and those at Birrenswark, which are always considered Roman, is very great.
