

STONE CIRCLE AT GAMLANDS
BLAND HOUSE BROW, RAISBECK, ORTON.
WESTMORLAND.

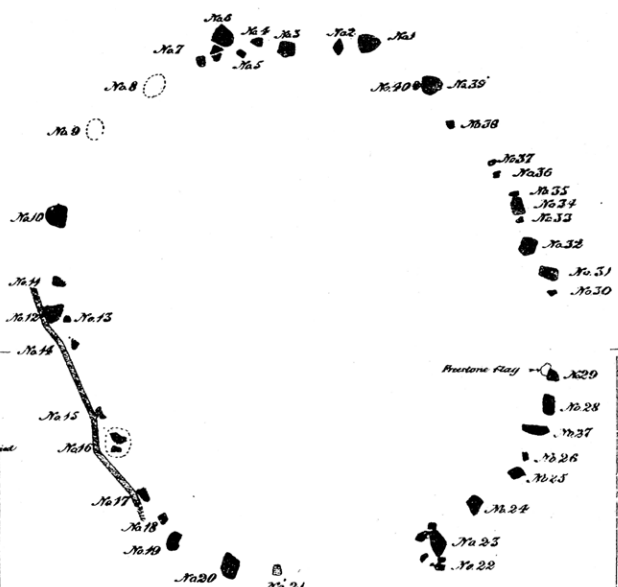


Table of sizes

No.	Circum.	Height	Perch.
1	19.7	2.10	
2	1.8	0.7	
3	16.0	2.0	
4	1.0	0.10	
5	7.0	nearly round	
6	21.10	2.8	
7	Fragsments		
8	Sockle		
9	Sockle		
10	20.6	1.9	
11	9.6	1.0	
12	15.0	2.0	
13	6.0	1.4	
14	8.5	1.4	
15	8.1	0.9	
16	Fragsments		
17	9.0	1.4	
18	9.0	nearly round	
19	14.6	0.8	
20	10.5	1.8	

Table of sizes

No.	Circum.	Height	Perch.
21	9.0	Round	
22	6	Fragsments	
23	15.5	2.8	
24	14.10	2.0	
25	19.5	2.0	
26	7.0	1.0	
27	17.4	1.0	
28	16.0	2.0	
29	9.11	1.6	
30	7.0	0.6	
31	15.0	2.6	
32	16.10	0.5	
33	8.6	1.0	
34	13.0	2.8	
35	6.0	0.9	
36	6.0	0.6	
37	6.0	0.8	
38	5.8	0.8	
39	11.4	1.0	
40	7.0	0.6	

SCALE
Half length of 100 feet

Surveyed by John B. Harvey, Maryport Sept 27, 1850.

The Society is indebted to Miss Bland for this Plan, which accompanied her paper, "A Link between two Westmorlands."—Transactions, vol. v., p. 25.

ART. XVIII. — *Stone Circle at Gamelands, Bland House Brow, Township of Raisbeck, Parish of Orton, Westmorland.*

By R. S. FERGUSON, F.S.A.

Read at Penrith, January 20th, 1881.

DURING the summer of 1880, one of our members, (Miss Bland, author of "A Link between two Westmorlands,*") requested me, at her expense, to have surveyed for the purposes of this Society the important stone circle, whose site is defined (rather in pedantic manner, some may think) at the head of this paper. I secured the services of Mr. J. Robinson and Mr. J. B. Harvey, and armed with a photograph, and guided by Colonel Burn of Orton Hall, we reached the proper place, where a labourer was in waiting; Canon Weston also joined us.

Careful measurements were taken of the circle, and an accurate plan was made by Mr. J. B. Harvey, which appeared with Miss Bland's paper, and is reproduced here. There is no appearance of any tumulus within the circle; indeed the ground is rather hollow than otherwise. Had the tumulus been a cairn of stones, the many stone walls in the vicinity would readily account for its disappearance. Enquiry further shows that the field, in which the circle is, had been ploughed about eighteen years ago, the riggs running right through the circle. On that occasion two or three of the stones forming the circle were buried by being rolled into holes dug under them; one or two others were blasted, and the fragments are now lying about. The stones forming the circle have been forty in number, as shown on the plan; the highest stands about 2 feet 8 inches above the ground, and the circumferences at the ground surface varies from 6 feet to 12 feet. None

* Transactions, vol. 5, between pp. 24 and 25.

appear

appear deeper seated in the ground than 18in. Several appear to have fallen over flat, towards the interior of the circle. With one exception the stones are all of a red coarse-grained granite; the exception is a rough limestone much weathered into holes. The spade, ably wielded by Mr. Robinson, showed any tumulus to have been cleared away down to the natural level of the soil on which it had stood, and that no interments had been made below that level. Two bits of worked flint were found, also a freestone slab, which possibly once formed part of a cist. This was lying next stone 29 (see plan), and my idea is that it was moved there from the centre of the circle when the place was ploughed. The size of this circle (its diameter is 138 feet), makes it one of the most important in England. It is distant a mile only from Orton Hall, the residence of Dr. Burn, and yet he passes it over *sub silentio* in the History of Westmorland and Cumberland, which he and Mr. Joseph Nicolson published in 1777. Not that he ignored it of set purpose; he cannot have known it, for in his account of the parish of Orton he describes a tumulus or British sepulchre thus:—

“Nigh Raisgill Hall, there is a tumulus or British sepulchre, in a regular circle near 100 yards in circumference (*sic*), rising gradually from the extremity to about the height of three yards in the middle. It is composed of loose stones thrown together promiscuously, and in digging lately was found one very large stone supported by one other large stone on each side, and underneath the same was an human skeleton, with the bones of several others round about.”

Whelan (Hist. of West., p. 672), applies this account to the circle of which I have been writing, and so did I at first, misled by him, and by some confusion over the name Raisbeck, which applies to a hamlet, and a township, as well as to a stream of water. Burn's description applies (see Hodgson's Westmorland, p. 143, and the Ordnance Map) to a place on a hill near Raisgill Hall, near the junction of the Raisbeck with the Lune. It is marked “British Sepulchre”

Sepulchre" on the one inch Ordnance Map. I have not yet been able to see it, but Colonel Burn informs me that it is about eighty feet in diameter. No stones are now visible, but some seem buried under mounds of turf. A portion of the cist, mentioned by Dr. Burn, is said to be doing duty as a chimney lintel in a neighbouring house.

The Gamelands circle is not on the one inch Ordnance Map.

The name "Gamelands" is noteworthy, if only that Whelan (Hist. West., p. 762) makes it into "Grantlands." One theory is that it is "Gamelslands," and records Gamel-de-Penington, the first known Lord of the Manor of Orton, who gave Orton Church to the priory of Conishead in the reign of Henry II. Dr. Simpson has a different theory, for which see *ante* p. 177.