

ART I.—*An Ancient Village near Yanwath.* By C. W. Dymond, F.S.A.

Read at Grasmere, June 25th, 1891.

THESE remains—unknown by any distinctive name, but sometimes called “Castlesteads;” not marked in the Ordnance map; and, I believe, hitherto undescribed,—consist of (*a*), an intrenched area, nearly circular, surrounded by an earthen rampart; (*b*), a bank and ditch prolonging the western side of this rampart toward the north; (*c*), a similar bank and ditch—with a triangular hollow behind it—continuing the line toward the south; (*d*), an outlying bank and ditch, some distance toward the east; (*e*), an alignment of stones under cover of (*d*).

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS.*

With a slight exception, the whole of the above are in a large grass field, known as the “cow pasture,” on Woodhouse farm, in the parish of Yanwath and Eamont-bridge, $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. due S. from Mayburgh, nearly $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. S.S.E. from Yanwath, and about the same distance N. by W. from Lowther Castle. The position has an outlook southward and eastward; its highest point—the upper end of (*b*)—being about 630 feet above ordnance datum, and nearly on a level with the adjoining field extending back over the top of a gentle swell to the end of a lane marking the commencement of the descent to Yanwath. There is a fall of about five feet to the northern rim of (*a*); a farther fall of about fifteen feet to its southern rim; and one of about ten feet more to the 600-ft. contour-line

* See inset map in corner of plate, copied from the 6-inch Ordnance map of Westmorland, sheet vii.

which

which crosses just below the triangular hollow. From (a) the surface dips extremely gently east and west. The whole of the field, except, I think, the part within the ring, has formerly been ploughed.

At the same level as the ring, half-a-mile S. of it, in Yanwath wood, on a little promontory near the river, are the remains of a circular camp, defended by three concentric earthen banks, with intervening ditches, now overgrown by a tangle of vegetation. In the Ordnance map it is named "Castlesteads"*—a common appellation also borne by the ruined foundations of a square "peel," or fortified building, about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. farther south, in Lowther park, 400 yards from the castle.

600 feet W.S.W. from the ring, a *tumulus* of earth and stones, about 7 feet high, and averaging 70 feet in diameter, has escaped the notice of the ordnance surveyors. There is no indication that it has ever been opened; and it might repay examination.

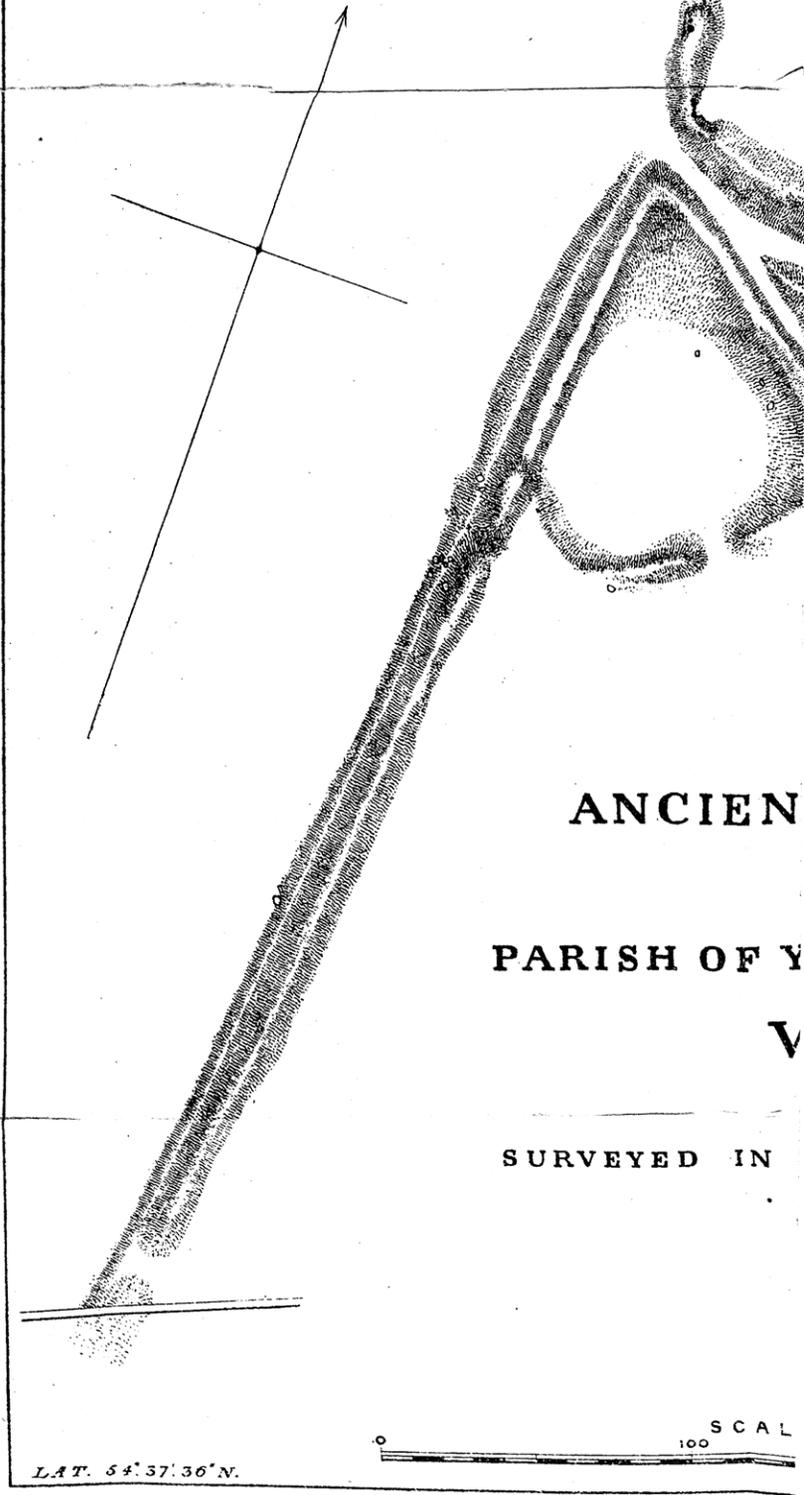
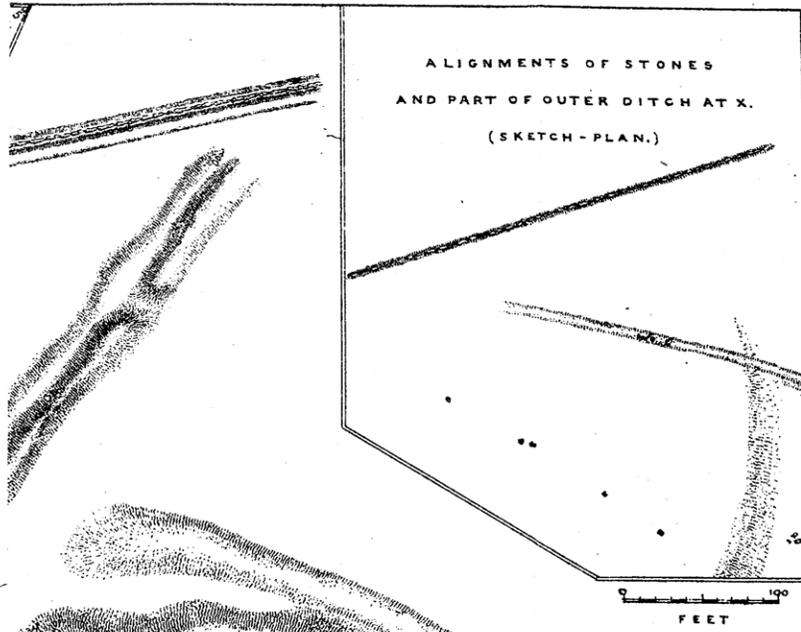
Though not likely to have had any reference to the remains, the subject of this paper, it may be added that $\frac{3}{4}$ m. E. of them, on the other side of the river, in Clifton parish, are two ancient standing-stones—perhaps parts of a ruined dolmen.

THE CIRCUMVALLATION.

The inner ring-embankment is ditched only at those parts of its circuit which are covered by an outer concentric bank. The missing portions of this outer bank and ditch may have been obliterated by the plough, which has much reduced the relief of those yet remaining.

* Thus mentioned by Gough in his additions to Camden, vol. iii., 415, with a reference to Burn, 413:—"About a mile [$1\frac{1}{4}$ m.] from Yanwath, at the end of the wood opposite Lowther hall, is an ancient round fortification called *Castlesteads*." The late Mr. Clifton Ward also notices it in his "Notes on Archæological Remains in the Lake District," published in these *Transactions*, vol. iii., pp. 241-265.

The



PLAN
 OF AN
ANCIENT TRENCHED VILLAGE
 IN THE
PARISH OF WATH AND EAMONT BRIDGE,
WESTMORLAND.

SURVEYED IN DECEMBER, 1890, BY C.W. DYMOND, F.S.A.

LAT. 54° 37' 36" N.

LONG. 2° 44' 42" W.

The greatest height of the *vallum* from bottom of ditch is now about five feet. Many edge-stones are *in situ* along its outer, western face; but none are so placed on the inner face as to give the measure of the original width of the bank.

GATEWAYS.

Apparently there were three gateways; one near the N.W. corner, covered by the outwork (*b*); another in the N.E. quarter; and the third in the S.E. Probably the paths crossing the ramparts at other points—one on the east side, and three on the west—are all modern.

THE ENCEINTE,—

Or homestead, as it may perhaps be called; measuring 1 *a.* or 15 *p.*—is divided into two equal parts by a transverse bank, much disfigured near its west end. While the southern half is quite free from marks of occupation, the northern is broken into ridges and hollows, for the most part too featureless to indicate very distinctly their original form. Along the right-hand side of the western hollow are two or three nearly buried stones, possibly marking the original edge; while there is a low standing stone in the eastern one. A well-defined, straight partition bank, of earth and stone, from 5½ to 6 feet in width, and from 6 to 12 inches high, separates this from the adjoining hollow on its west side, in the centre of the area,—just where the dwelling of the chief might be looked for,—a chamber, 40 feet by 27 feet, entered from the west.

OUTWORKS.

The triangular hollow in the angle between (*a*) and (*c*) was doubtless dug for the double purpose of procuring material for the banks and securing additional shelter from the north wind. Along its upper margin runs a low embankment,

embankment, with a shallow ditch, or hollow way, between it and the outer concentric rampart. The straight bank and ditch (*b*) end abruptly at the edge of an old field-side road: but, though no farther traces of them can now be seen, it is most likely that they extended into the adjoining field before it was ploughed. The other straight bank and ditch (*c*) continue beyond the wall, 50 yards into the wood, until lost in low, wet ground—anciently, perhaps, a swamp stretching along the foot of the slopes to and beyond the lower end of the eastern outlying work (*d*). This, with the ditch on its outer or northern side, takes a curved line up to a little brow, above which the ditch alone is visible—dying out about 100 feet short of the point where, if produced, it would meet the line of fence. Looking at the direction taken by (*b*) and (*d*), as shown by the inset map, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that, originally, they were united by a flat curve; thus shutting in 20 acres of pasture. In the part of (*d*) above the brow stand or lie six stones, nearly in a straight line. Six other stones, of no great size or height—two of them in contact, and all but one erect—form a separate alignment nearly parallel to the ditch; while, just below the brow, but not in the same line, rests a group of three stones; two of them, if not all three, fragments of one large stone riven by gunpowder. The inset sketch-plan of these alignments shows their arrangement.

CONCLUSIONS.

Evidently this was a small pastoral station—one of those, in locating which, amenity of situation was chiefly sought. The position was too weak to secure it against an organised assault in force; but that there was an apprehension of occasional danger of attack, the fortified lines are sufficient evidence. It is not, however, quite clear how these were to effect the purpose. A mere bank and ditch, however bold, would, of itself, offer little
 obstacle

obstacle to a stealthy foe. It might suffice if strengthened by a palisade: but this would be nearly as proof without the bank as with it: and so it would seem that the labour expended in throwing up the earthwork was in great part wasted. The same problem is presented by all ancient outlying lines of intrenchment, too extended to be properly watched and manned. In view of this, it has been supposed that some very long works of this class were designed merely as boundaries, and not at all for the purpose of protection. There are, however, grave difficulties in the way of a general acceptance of this theory; and it is clear that whatever element of truth there may be in it when applied to certain cases, such could hardly have been the motive in forming the outworks at Woodhouse.

Was the triply intrenched camp in the wood the stronghold of the village? I think not; partly, for that it seems to belong to a later period; but chiefly because, if designed for a place of retreat in times of danger, the village itself would most likely, as usual in such cases, have been left unfortified. As to the *tumulus*: its proximity to the station suggests the speculation whether it contains the remains of any who may have dwelt therein. Perhaps the spade may find an answer to this question.
