

ART. XXII.—*Report on a further exploration of the Romano-British Settlement at Ewe Close, Crosby Ravensworth.* By W. G. COLLINGWOOD, M.A., F.S.A.

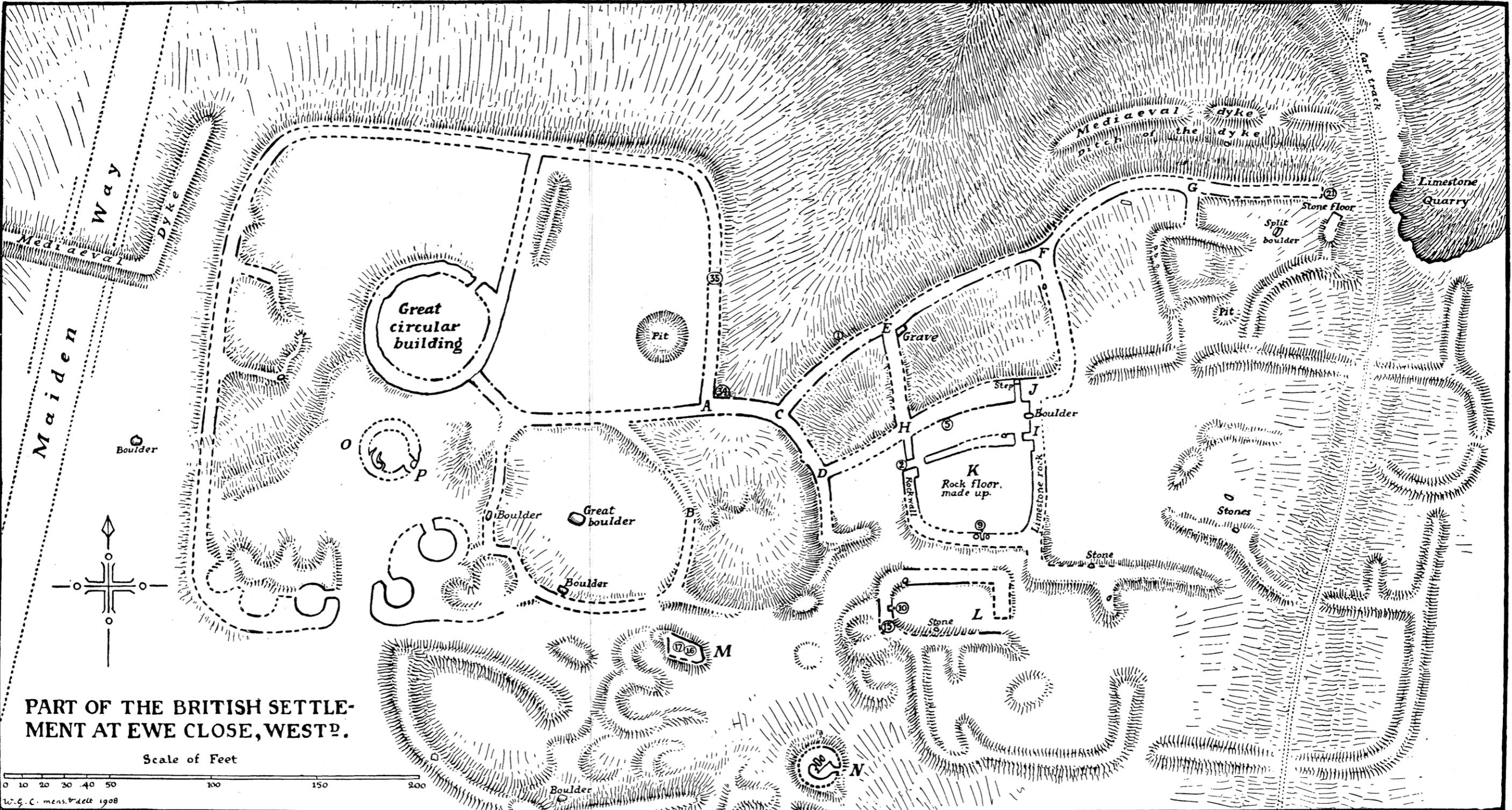
Communicated at Appleby, September 10th, 1908.

IN continuation of the work at this site, as reported in these *Transactions*, N.S., viii., further exploration was made in September, 1908, with the object of examining the enclosures lying to the east of the portion already described. Two hut circles were also cleared. The writer had the assistance of Mr. Herbert Maryon and Mr. R. G. Collingwood, and six workmen engaged by the Rev. Sidney Swann, vicar of Crosby Ravensworth. Thanks are due also to the Earl of Lonsdale, through Mr. W. Little, and to Mr. R. J. Todd of Crosby Hall, for permission to excavate; and to the subscribers to the Research Fund of the Society for defraying the expenses, which amounted to £3 14s. 6d.

The sketch-plan opposite gives a rough general view of the whole site, as far as it can be made out at present. It shows in the centre of the northern part the somewhat square-shaped, stone-walled inclosure dug last year, with the great circular building in the middle, and immediately to south of this building a hut-circle which was not then dug but will now be described. To the west is the Roman road called the Maiden Way, crossed by two later dykes, of which one, the northern, is accompanied by a ditch, and ends at the Stone Walls. It is found again on the north-east, though in a broken condition, perhaps owing to limestone digging, which has formed the quarry; and beyond the quarry to the east it continues as far as the fence, to east of which is a ploughed field where all traces

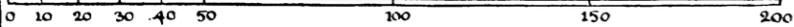
of the dyke are lost. A similar ditched dyke contains a small space south of the Romano-British stone walls. This for part of its length serves as a section of another dyke, without any ditch, which at its western end turns sharply northward and crosses the ditched dyke, following the direction of the modern fence which, though partly ruined, seems to have been built to supersede it as boundary of an intake. The ruined length is represented on the six-inch Ordnance map as a dyke, but it is of no antiquity. We have therefore to distinguish four different sets of inclosure on the site:—(a) the modern fence; (b) the ditchless dyke which marked out the intake before stone walls were built; (c) the earlier ditched dyke, bounding the mediæval farmer's intake on the banks of the valley lying to north, and apparently intended to take in the whole of the British settlement, using some of the old ramparts as parts of its line; (d) the stone walls of the settlement, which in the sketch plan are put in with thick lines—the parts not yet dug being inferred from stones in the banks and from probing, but subject to emendation in details.

The greater part of the Stone Walls is given on a larger scale in the folded plan titled "Plan of part of the British Settlement," &c. In this, the continuous lines show wall-faces of great stones actually exposed in digging; broken lines represent faces inferred from rows of stones in the turf, or the edge of solid rubble found in digging where the facing cobbles have been carried away; and "mountain shading" stands for the banks yet unexcavated, but pretty certainly containing stone walls. All the walls as yet examined are built in the manner described in the former paper, having massive faces of granite, red sandstone or blue cobbles with an occasional limestone block (the site being on the limestone but strewn with erratics), and these faces are filled in with rubble of limestone fragments and small cobbles. In figures 1 to 7 the rubble is represented with scribbled shading, while the facing stones



PART OF THE BRITISH SETTLEMENT AT EWU CLOSE, WEST.

Scale of Feet



W. G. C. mens. & delt 1908

are drawn with care (except in the corner to the west of figure 2); and all these figures are to the same scale, so that the relative sizes of the stones and the mason-work of the builders can be seen at a glance. The figures in circles refer to the finds in order of discovery; they are described at the end of this report.

The inclosure explored last year had much of the appearance of a rude imitation of a Roman camp, though one part of the wall which would have made it into a quadrilateral was missing. Attention was directed to this point to see whether the eastern inclosures were additions or whether the wall was continuous. At the point marked

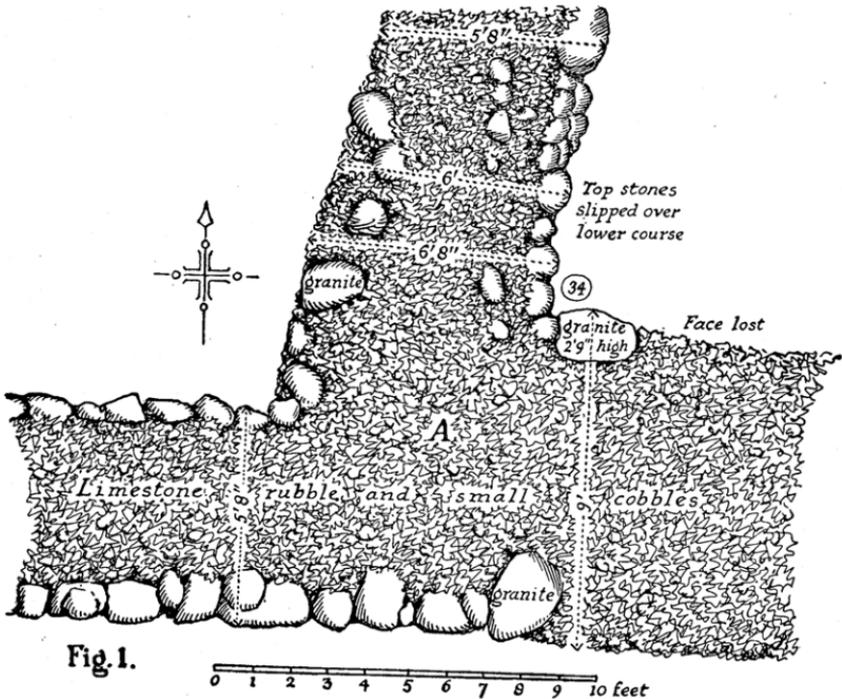


Fig. 1.

A in the folding plan and shown enlarged in Fig. 1 there was no indication of a break in the building of the wall running east and west, and no suggestion of a wall

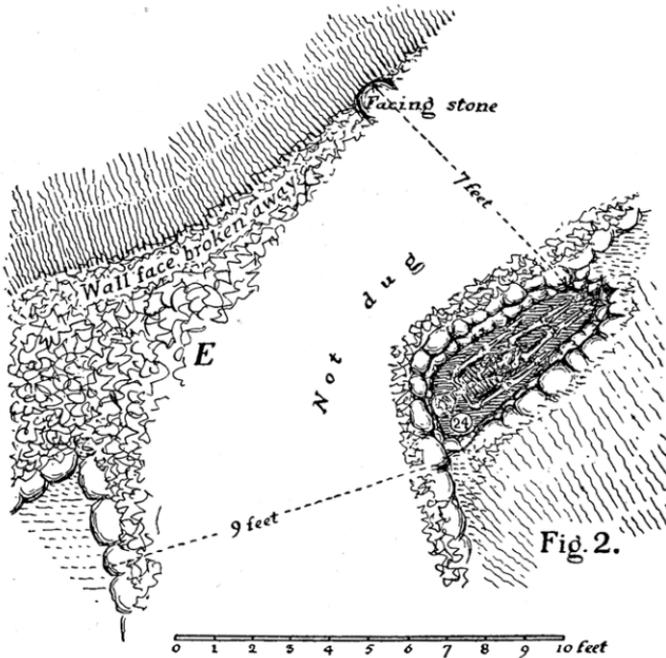
running south of *A* towards *B*. But though continuous, the wall east of *A* is much thicker, and at *B* the wall coming from the south stops without any apparent reason. It is possible that the building has been remodelled; the finding of a quern built into the pavement of the great circular building shows that the whole group of inclosures was not formed at one effort; and some of the features of the eastern half are perhaps of a later type than the strictly round huts of the western inclosure, which after all may have been the original settlement.

Immediately east of *A* the facing stones are gone from the wall. This is accounted for by a cart track driven across at this point, possibly for leading limestone to the kiln to the north-east. The scar south-west of the great circular building and a break in the western wall of the quadrilateral seem to have been made by limestone diggers, and to be no part of the British work.

Going east from *A* and comparing the new plan with that given last year, a discrepancy will be noted in the form of the walls at *C*. The new plan shows the actual detail as found by digging, which (as often occurs) differs from the apparent shape under the turf. The dimensions of the walls vary considerably. Between *A* and *C* the thickness increases to 10 feet, and from *C* southward the wall decreases from 8 feet 6 inches to 6 feet at *D*. Here there is a bonded angle (if the term can be used for such rough work) on both sides of the wall running east, which measures 6 feet 9 inches. From *C* the wall going north-east starts at 6 feet 6 inches, increasing slightly and curving round to *E*, shown in Fig. 2.

Here, in the eastern interior angle, a grave was unexpectedly found. The skeleton lay at length on its back, with the head to the south-west. The base of a red pot and fragments of another lay at the dexter side of the head. The grave was built of cobbles and floored with stones 20 inches below the surface, measuring 4 feet 11 inches in length, 2 feet 2 inches across the shoulders of

the skeleton, and 1 foot 10 inches across its shins. The covering of the grave was of small cobbles, with one rather large stone over the head; this accounts for the crushed condition of the bones, which are described with other finds under No. 24. The sketch in Fig. 2 roughly indicates the position of the skeleton rather than its actual appearance during excavation, found as it was in a fragmentary condition and encrusted with mud.



From *E* to *F* the wall again trends outward, measuring 7 feet 6 inches midway between the two points, but narrowing to 5 feet west of *F*, where all the angles are rounded into concave curves. The faces are continuous, and the whole mass of masonry in one piece. South of *F* the wall broadens; the double face shown in the plan, making the breadth 9 feet 2 inches, may have resulted from the slipping down of a row of stones. From *F* the wall starts north-eastward at 5 feet 4 inches and takes a

bold outward curve, widening to 7 feet 4 inches midway between *F* and *G*. At *G* the south-western internal angle is rounded, though the south-eastern angle is square. The wall running south is 7 feet 5 inches broad; that running east is 7 feet. At the eastern end of this wall, marked by the figure 21, there seems to have been an opening, 14 feet broad, with a stone-paved floor, and great boulders on each of the opposite quoins. Beyond this is a limestone quarry which may have destroyed some, but not much, of the remains. The ditched dyke to north of this portion, *F-G-21*, looks at first sight like the ramparts of a British camp, but a section proved the dyke to be exactly similar to the dyke west of the Stone Walls. There are no outlying ramparts or ditches to the settlement to make it resemble an earthwork fort.

Returning now to *D* on the folding plan and going north-east along the wall, we find at *H* a junction of four walls, with interior angles rectilinear. The wall to the north of *H* is 7 feet 8 inches broad; that to the south is only 4 feet 6 inches. It ends square, near the figure 2, which represents a find (described below) lying on a floor of native rock. The limestone has been hacked out, and a ridge left to form the footing of the wall south of 2. From this point eastward runs a party wall, 4 feet 4 inches to 7 feet broad, towards *I*, where also the wall is shaped out of the rock. Between *I* and the party wall is a doorway 3 feet 3 inches wide, leading into the long inclosure or chamber *H I*, of which the floor is partly rock. Its breadth varies from 14 feet 2 inches to 11 feet 8 inches, and its length is 60 feet. On its eastern wall *I J*, inside, is a large boulder set up on the rock-cut wall footing. The wall *H J* is 10 feet 9 inches at its thickest; near *J* it diminishes to 9 feet. Just to west of *J* a passage runs through it, 1 foot 3 inches broad, at the north end of which is a step leading downwards into the inclosure *H F*, which is at a lower level and slopes downwards towards the north, as do the inclosures east and west of it.

The inclosure *K*, south of the party wall between 2 and *I*, has a rock floor, in places made up with pieces of limestone. The inclosure is not rectangular—for its south-eastern corner is rounded internally, and its south-western corner can be traced by lines of facing-stones in the turf in a curve. In its south wall is a recess in which occurred the mortarium (No. 9) and a circular hole, the bottom flagged or paved and level with the floor of *K*, is on each side of the recess. The western hole is 2 feet in diameter; the eastern is 1 foot 6 inches (Fig. 3). These

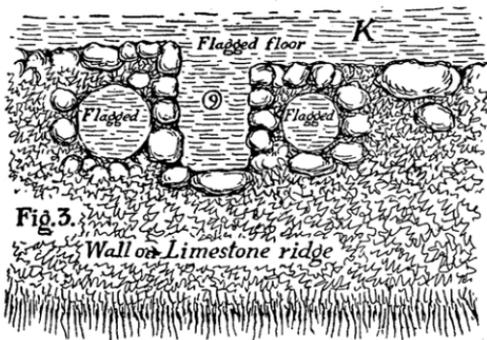


Fig. 3.

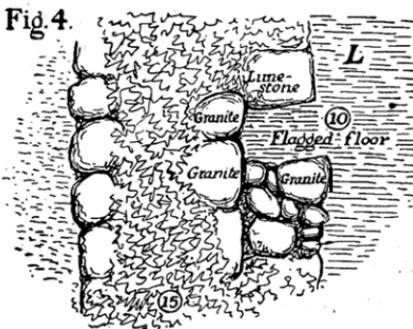


Fig. 4.

may have been for storing grain; compare the somewhat similar forms in the hut *N* (Fig. 5), which may also have been a kind of cupboard.

Another recess was found on the western side of the oblong inclosure *L*, which is separated from *K* by a narrow passage. The north wall of *L* is 8 feet thick; the west wall is 6 feet 10 inches thick, and the recess with its masonry is shown in Fig. 4. As one of the stones framing it was limestone, and as there was no evidence of strong heat, the recess cannot have been a fireplace.

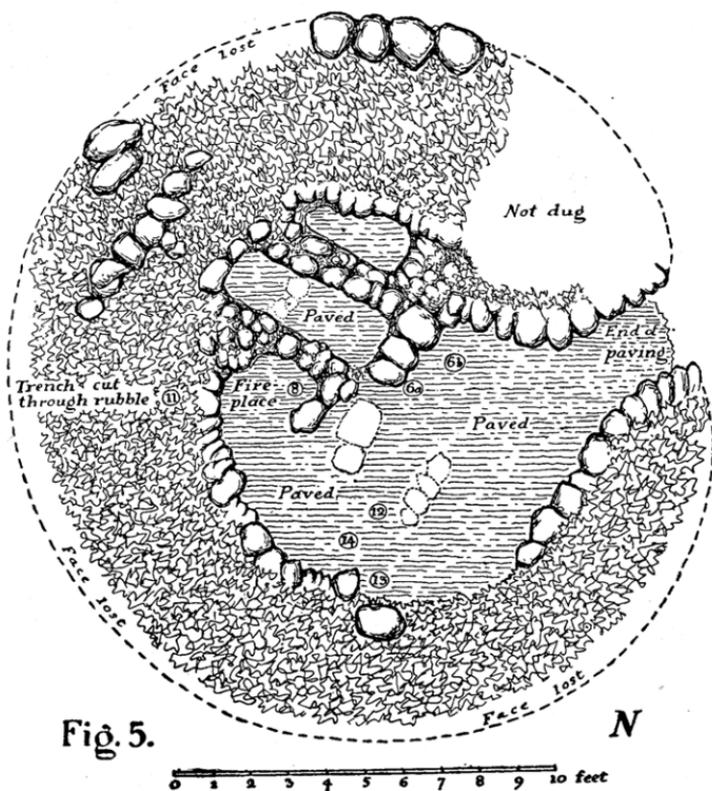
Pieces of horn and perhaps cannell (No. 10) were found at the entrance to this recess. A little to the south, bits of pottery (No. 15) turned up in

the rubble of the wall; they may have been dropped in building. The doorway to south-east was excavated, and the facing of its south side was found; but that on the north was gone. The opening is 8 feet wide, but allowing for the lost face it must have been narrower.

These three buildings, roughly oblong, with their cupboard-like recesses, carefully constructed doorways, and flagged or rock-hewn floors, seem to be more than cattle-pens, and yet we hardly venture to suggest that they were roofed dwellings until we know more of this little explored class of remains in our district. They are, however, of apparently later and more advanced construction than the round huts of the western inclosure, and any problems of roofing extended spaces may have been met by a system of posts and beams, with thatch over all. There is no need to suppose that the roofs were vaulted in stone.

We have now to describe some attempts to explore samples of the hut-circles on the site. South-south-west of *L* there is a kind of street or lane of hut-circles and circular recesses, leading to a well-marked hut at the southern end (see the sketch plan). No. 1 in this street, the hut marked *N*, was excavated (Fig. 5). The massive wall is of rubble with a facing of cobbles which remains externally at the north, and is almost complete internally. The row of cobbles in the rubble on the north-west side suggested that the hut might have been square in plan externally, but nothing confirmed the idea: these stones may have fallen accidentally into line. Other stones which perhaps are accidentally placed have been drawn as found but with broken outlines, for though the floor was paved in a rough manner, and the paving distinctly ended near the mouth of the doorway, it is not distinct enough to show whether these stones were meant to be laid in this position as footing of walls. Various fragments of pottery and metal and bits of a quern were found on the floor, and in the rubble of the western wall was a

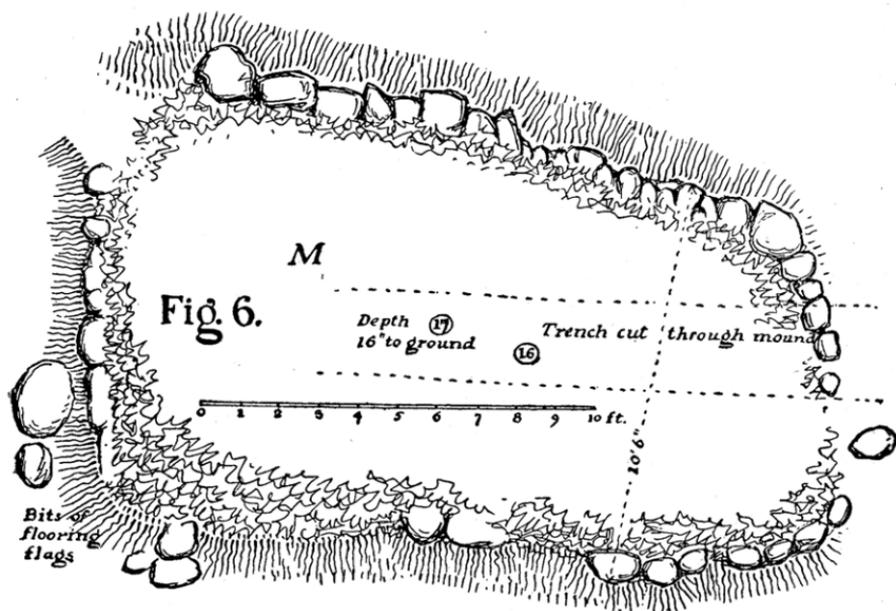
scrap of metal (No. 11) perhaps dropped in building. The space marked "Fireplace" was much burnt and covered with black matter. Separated from it by a wall about 1 foot thick was a flagged hole or depression, 4 feet 2 inches by 1 foot 3 inches, across which lay a few stones in a row, probably accidental. Beyond this again was a smaller depression, 2 feet 8 inches by 1 foot 6 inches at its widest.



These were paved, like the holes in Fig. 3, but contained no finds. The relics from the floor of the hut seem to prove that it was certainly a dwelling-house.

North-west of this is a mound, *M*, which seems at first sight to form the "horn" of the adjacent hut-circle.

When dug it presented the form shown in Fig. 6, with a very massive wall of which the faces came out fairly clear, but making a bulk of material too great for the mere side of a small hut. On the other hand, there seemed to be no doorway into it, as a separate chamber. A trench through the middle showed rubble closely packed to a depth of 16 inches, and on the ground lay a fragment of pottery and a bit of ironstone which, as in other cases, may have been dropped by the builders, and may prove the long continuance of habitation and the remodelling of



the site. In the space to south-west, in the area of the adjacent hut, were pieces of flooring flags such as were found in the huts of the western enclosure.

One of these last-mentioned huts (*O P* in the folding plan and Fig. 7) was not dug last year, and appeared to have its doorway to the west, where there seemed to be a breach in the turfed bank. On digging we found the doorway on the east and features resembling the hut *N*,

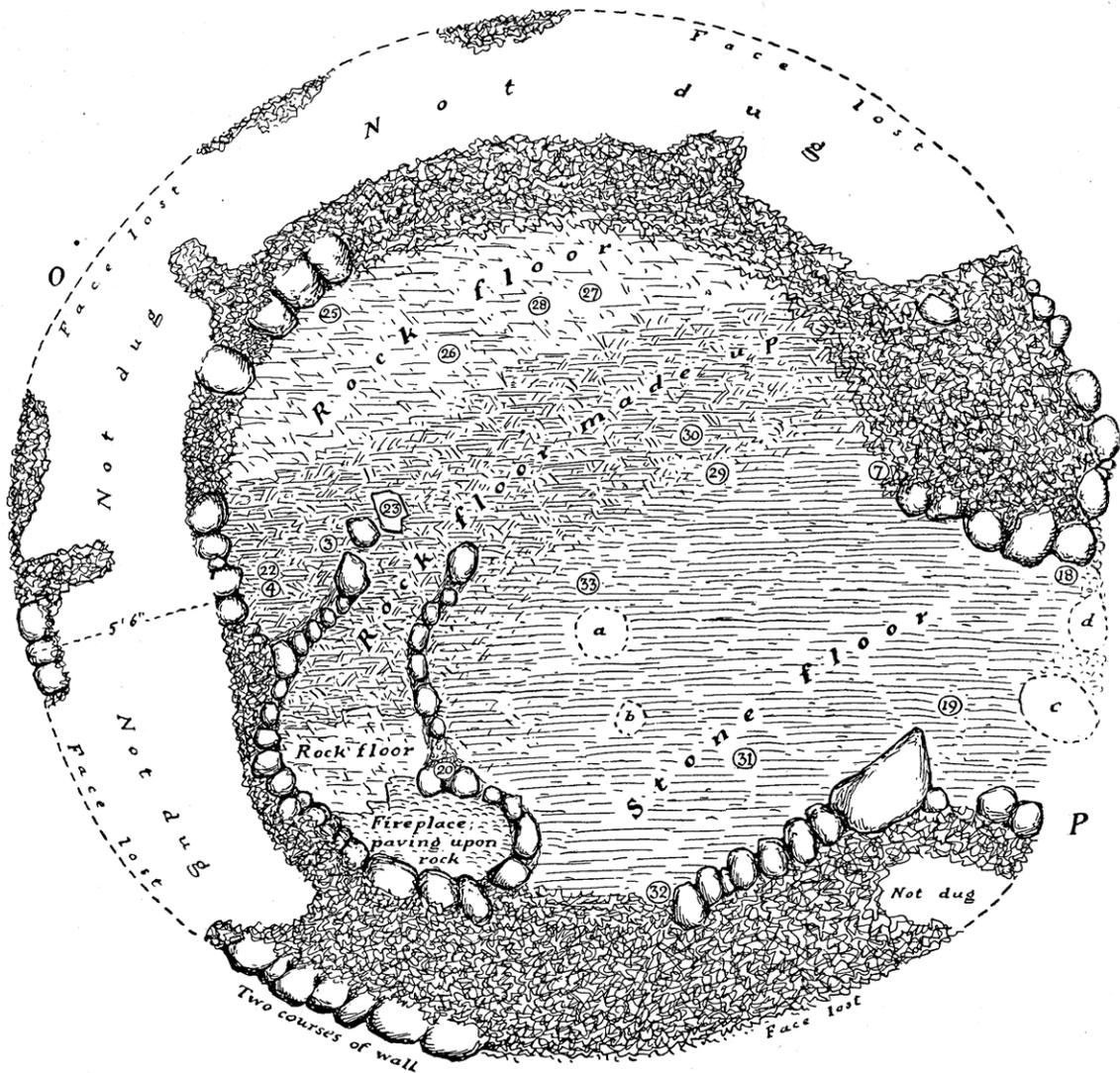


Fig. 7.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 feet

HUT CIRCLE AT EWE CLOSE, CROSBY RAVENSWORTH.

TO FACE P. 304.

though on a larger scale. The external diameter is from 28 to 30 feet, the internal from 18 to 20 feet. There are only two places where the original thickness of the wall can be accurately measured, as most of the external facing is gone; on the west the wall is 5 feet 6 inches broad, and on the south-south-west from the fireplace to the outer wall, where two courses of stones remain, it is only 5 feet. The floor on the north and west is of native rock, or rock with its hollows made up with stones inserted; the rest is rudely paved and many pieces of flat red-sandstone flooring lay loose, showing that the destruction of the place extended to tearing up the floor. The paving reaches to the doorway, but we could not be sure whether the stones *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d* were in their original position or not; probably they are chance fallen, though this would make the door 5 feet wide on its inner side, which is rather more than would be expected; while *a* and *b* might possibly mark the line of a partition forming a depression near the fireplace as in hut *N*. The fireplace itself, however, is well marked; the granite cobbles round it are much burnt, and the paved hearth, raised a little above the rock floor, is covered with black matter. The fragments of pottery and quern suggest, as in hut *N*, the dwelling house of people who grew corn, ground it, and baked bread from it; and the worn teeth of the skeleton show how gritty the rudely-milled and hard-baked food must have been.

The gap in the eastern wall of the western "quadrilateral" (marked by the figure 35 in the folding plan, north of *A*) was noticed last year. This was excavated to see whether it was an original gateway. The wall was much ruined; there was a breach in the rubble and two boulders lay on the north side, three on the south of the doorway, which measured 9 feet 8 inches across. But these boulders did not seem to form parts of a wall-face; the floor was not paved, and the bits of pottery (No. 35) found in the gap on the ground were from a mediæval jug.

This indicates that the breach was cut by the farmer in the dale below to give access to the stone-walled inclosures at the period indicated by the find.

The finds are numbered in order of discovery, and their numbers correspond with the figures in circles on the plans. In the following descriptions, notes marked "L.E.H." have been contributed by Mr. L. E. Hope, curator of Carlisle Museum:—

- 1a.—From the north side of rampart, between *C* and *E*, close to a ruined length of wall facing, about 1 foot below the turf, eleven fragments of fine reddish buff terra-cotta, slightly over $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick, with shallow bands of moulding; no base or lip, but the curve suggests a large vessel ("Ordinary Roman and Late-Celtic."—L.E.H.); and
- 1b.—Small fragment of bright red pot, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick, rather hard in texture.
2. —From the doorway between the inclosure south of *D H* and the space *H K*, west end of the opening, on the limestone rock floor, two small fragments of dark red pottery, $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick. Also burnt yellow freestone and slate, lying on the floor of native rock.
- 3a.—From the hut *O P*, piece of reddish buff pot, with light red surface on one side, $\frac{3}{16}$ inch thick ("Terra-cotta, probably part of ampulla; ordinary Roman and Late-Celtic."—L.E.H.); and
- 3b.—Small bit of grey pot, $\frac{1}{16}$ inch thick; same as No. 28.
4. —From the hut *O P*, lip of a brownish black vessel, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, like No. 12; Romano-British.
5. —From the south side of the wall *H J*, close under the top soil a piece of reddish buff native terra-cotta, light red glaze, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick, with mouldings on both sides.
- 6a.—From the hut *N*, a bit of native terra-cotta, light red with deeper red surface (worn glaze) $\frac{1}{16}$ inch thick; and
- 6b.—Two pieces of the top stone of a quern.
7. —From the hut *O P*, near the surface among ruins of the wall, seven pieces of thick coarse pottery, grey with reddish brown surface, 1 inch thick, like 18, 26 and 27.
8. —From the hut *N*, fireplace, horse tooth and bits of small bones.

9. —From the recess in the inclosure *K*, close under the turf, base of mortarium, grey with red surface, $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick, like the ware 24*a* from the grave.
10. —From the recess in *L*, bits of cannell (?) and horn.
11. —From the rubble of the wall of *N*, small strip of bent iron with rivet; the fragment of some broken object.
- 12*a*.—From the hut *N*, bit of "Samian" dish, $\frac{3}{16}$ inch thick, unornamented; and
- 12*b*.—Three pieces of a Romano-British bowl, with strongly curved lip, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick ("The ordinary coarse grey Late-Celtic."—L.E.H.); also
- 12*c*.—Fragment of blackish brown hard pottery, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick, Romano-British.
13. —From the hut *N*, a bronze object like a button, perhaps part of harness or scabbard, slightly under one inch in diameter and $\frac{1}{16}$ inch thick; the rim marked with an incised line; on the back is a staple, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch high and ornamented on the ridge with two parallel incised lines.
14. —From the hut *N*, three pieces of coarse yellowish brown pottery, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick.
15. —From the rubble of the west wall of the inclosure *L*, four pieces of coarse brown pottery, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch to 1 inch thick.
16. —From the mound *M*, brown potsherd resembling 14 and 15.
17. —From the mound *M*, a bit of ironstone.
18. —From the hut *O P*, doorway, the handle and three fragments of an amphora.
- 19*a*.—From the hut *O P*, a bit of thin red pottery like 1*b* and 6, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick; also
- 19*b*.—Bit of brown pottery with black face, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick; and
- 19*c*.—A scrap of flint.
20. —From the hut *O P*, in the wall of the fireplace, part of a large whetstone, in section 2 by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
21. —From the eastern gateway near the quarry, a piece of the lower stone of a quern, 15 inches long, radius $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches; thickness 3 to $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches.
22. —From the hut *O P*, the lip of a large, coarse red vessel ("native manufacture,"—L.E.H.) $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, with moulding.
23. —From the hut *O P*, piece of the granite lower stone of a quern.

24. —From the grave, the skeleton of a human body, less than 4 feet 11 inches in height. The bones as recovered are somewhat deficient, and very much crushed and broken, especially the skull and pelvis (owing to the pressure of the grave-covering as noted above). This makes the determination of sex less conclusive, though the extreme slenderness of all the bones suggests a female. Professor Austin, of University College, Reading, who kindly examined the remains, pointed out that the angle formed by the shaft and neck of the femur would imply a female, and that the bones of the skull, though smooth on the exterior, were rather thick for the female skull; but that the cranial bones thicken in women of advanced age, which the worn crowns of the molars appear to indicate. The premolars were whole and sound, but the molars and a canine tooth were ground flat with gritty food though sound and free from decay. But only six teeth were found. We heard, however, in the village of Crosby Ravensworth that about a generation ago boys amused themselves with digging in the ruins at Ewe Close, and some human teeth were shown us as found at that time. This may account for the loss of teeth and the disturbance of part of the grave.

There were also, as if upon the breast of the person buried, and from their condition apparently of much earlier date than the disturbance mentioned, a quantity of smaller bones. Among these, Professor Austin found the teeth of a squirrel, and bones of a bird, partridge, or some bird closely allied. These include a femur; two coracoids, one complete, the other imperfect; an ulnar, and a few small toe-bones.

- 24a.—From the head of the grave, the base of a red mortarium, ("Nos. 9 and 24 might be pieces from one vessel."—L.E.H.); and
- 24b.—The lip of a small buff cup, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick. These may have been disturbed and pieces removed by the boys who anticipated our find.
25. —From the hut *O P*, a fragment of brown Romano-British pottery like No. 12.
26. —From the hut *O P*, a piece of coarse light brown mortarium.
27. —From the hut *O P*, two pieces of coarse light brown pot, grey inside.

28. —From the hut *O P*, small bit of dark grey pot, perhaps the neck of a jug or bottle, like Nos. 3*b* and 32.
29. —From the hut *O P*, a scrap of iron, curled into a volute.
- 30*a*.—From the hut *O P*, a bit of brownish red pot, $\frac{3}{16}$ inch thick ;
and
- 30*b*.—Four pieces of thick coarse brown pottery.
31. —From the hut *O P*, two flakes of brown pottery.
- 32*a*.—From the hut *O P*, a bit of hard grey-brown pot, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
("ordinary grey Late-Celtic."—L.E.H.) ; and
- 32*b*.—Two fragments of thin grey pot, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick, the same as 30*b*
and 28.
33. —From the hut *O P*, a piece of coarse pottery, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick.
34. —From the junction of walls at *A*, a piece of bone, dark in
colour, and polished to form a cylinder or tube.
35. —From the gap north of *A*, five bits of a green glazed mediæval
jug with a handle.