

ART. II.—*Unpublished excavations by the late Miss K. S. Hodgson, F.S.A.* By G. G. S. RICHARDSON, B.Sc., and CLARE I. FELL, F.S.A.

Read at Keswick, April 5th, 1975.

OWING to ill health in her later years the late Miss K. S. Hodgson found herself unable to complete the papers which she had begun to write on her excavations in the White Lyne valley, Bewcastle, and at Broomrigg, Ainstable. In 1972 she asked the present writers to prepare reports on this work, utilising her field books, sketches and photographs. Miss Clare Fell undertook to deal with the Broomrigg excavations, and Mr George Richardson with those at the White Lyne, in which he had assisted.

- I. *Excavations in the White Lyne valley, Bewcastle, 1952 to 1955* (NY 570808). By G. G. S. Richardson, B.Sc.

The setting of the sites to be described is best outlined in the words which Miss Hodgson herself wrote in 1955 as an introduction to her intended paper:

“The stream called the White Lyne rises almost on the County boundary between Northumberland and Cumberland near Christenbury Crags, and flows down a deep valley between high moors (Black Lyne Common and White Lyne Common) nearly to High Onsett, where the character of the country changes to meadow and pasture. Such a well-defined and uncultivated valley obviously ought to be studied as a region.

At the lower end of this valley is the important cairn called the Shiel Knowe, where three food vessels were found in 1939 (CW2 xl 154). To emphasize its relation to the region I suggest that it should be classed as White Lyne Site I. Whilst this excavation was being carried out I noticed two hut circles a little over a mile farther up the stream. I revisited the site, which it is proposed to call White Lyne II, later, and saw that

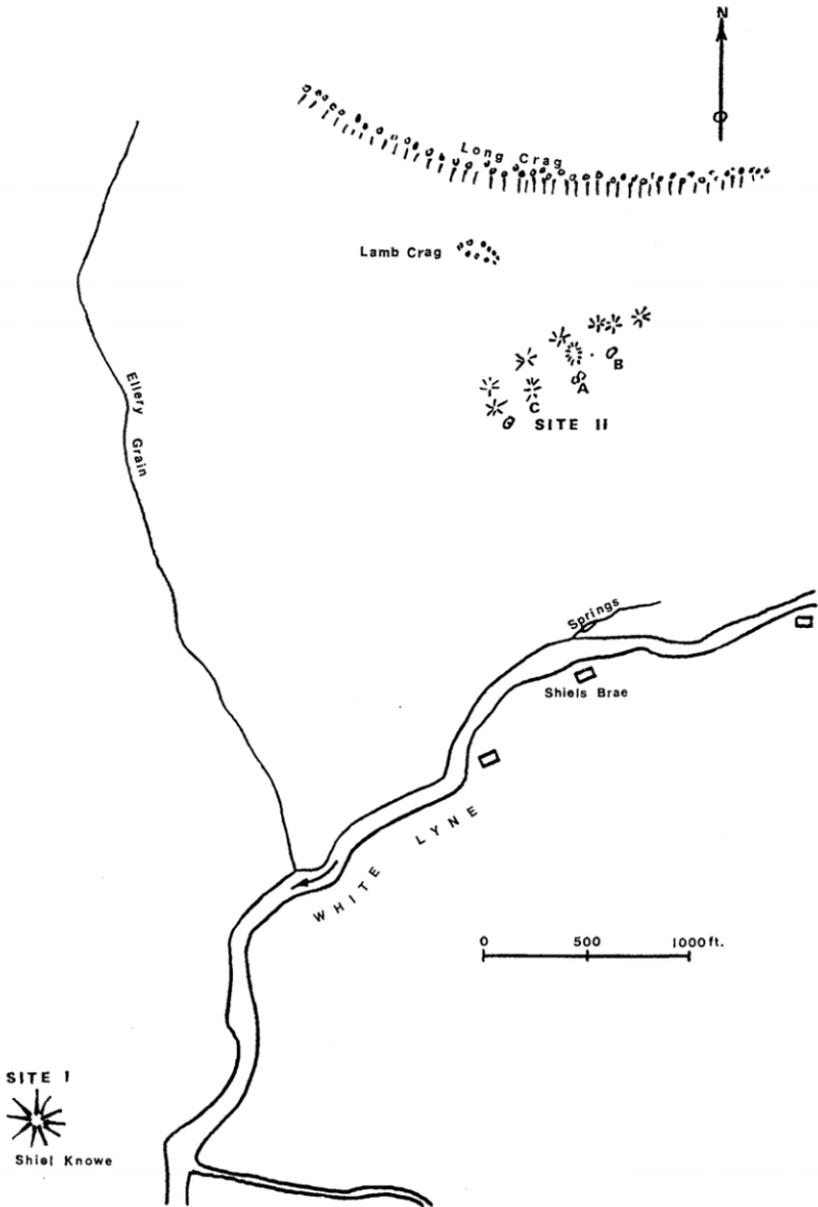


FIG. 1.—Sites on the White Lyne, Bewcastle.

there appeared to be more remains in the vicinity. The whole site is an interesting complex of two, and possibly three, hut circles, and seven piles of stones which look like cairns. It lies on the slope facing south between the 900-ft. and 1,000-ft. contour lines, near some rocks marked as Lamb Crag on the 6-inch O.S. map. Below it, close to the White Lyne, are several springs. The subsoil is the usual boulder clay, with a large proportion of sand and gravel."

A survey of "White Lyne II" was carried out in 1967 by Messrs R. L. Bellhouse and B. Ashmore; see sketch plan, Fig. 1.

In all, three sites were excavated: Site IIA, a definite hut circle; Site IIB, a probable hut circle; and Site IIC, a long cairn.

Site IIA. This was a hut circle about 10 ft. 6 in. in internal diameter, with an entrance 4 ft. wide on the south side. On the west side of the entrance there was a small circle — or more accurately an oval 4 ft. 7 in. x 6 ft. 4 in. — with an entrance 2 ft. 6 in. wide leading into the entrance passage of the main circle. The east side of this passage was formed by a southward extension and thickening of the main wall. Of the small circle Miss Hodgson later wrote: "We called it the 'dog kennel' in jest, but I have wondered whether, in the light of Eskimo practice, this may not have been a 'true word'."

The floor of the hut was scooped back into the hillside, to a maximum depth of 1 ft. 10 in. below the modern turf-line, giving a roughly level platform, but with a raised bench about 2 ft. wide and 9 in. above the general level in the north-east quadrant. The floor was marked by an occupation layer of greasy grey clay.

The walls consisted of a foundation course of long thin slabs set transversely, surmounted by roughly piled stones of very varying size and shape. They were from 1 ft. 7 in. to 2 ft. 6 in. thick, but increasing

to 4 ft. 8 in. on the east side of the entrance passage, and stood to a height of about 18 in.

No artefacts of any kind were found on this site.

Site IIB. Before excavation this site looked very similar to IIA, although there was no obvious entrance, and no "dog kennel". It was taken to be another hut circle, but Miss Hodgson seems later to have had doubts, and suggested that it might have been a very much denuded cairn.

Excavation showed what appeared to be a definite wall of roughly piled stones, with an internal diameter of about 10 ft. A flat stone about 2 ft. x 1 ft. 6 in. interrupted the perimeter on the north east side; Miss Hodgson, in her field notes, interpreted it as a threshold stone. The interior had again been scooped back into the sloping hillside, as at Site A, and there were also traces of a bench in the north quadrant. There were traces of the greasy grey clay layer, although less clearly defined than on Site A.

Some fragments of pottery were found at the floor level. One of these was identifiable as the rim of a cordoned beaker (Fig. 2, 1): the decoration consists of horizontal rows of fine rectangular-toothed comb impressions. The ware is hand-made, poorly fired, reddish brown on the outer surfaces, and showing black in the fracture. (Ref. CW2 lxviii 5.)

Site IIC. Miss Hodgson consistently classified this site as a long cairn. The only traceable record of its overall dimensions is a rough field-sketch, which is clearly not drawn precisely to scale. This shows it as about 50 ft. x 30 ft. with its long axis aligned NNW. Running southward from it down the hillside there was a double line of large stones, extending for 7 ft. 3 in., and set 3 ft. apart, with a few stones over them. Miss Hodgson regarded this as a possible cremation site, but noted that there was no clear evidence of burning.

Within the cairn, towards the upper (north) end, there was "a huge circular stone, which taxed the strength of the entire party to lift". This apparent capstone was more exactly an irregular hexagon about 5 ft. x 4 ft. x 12 to 18 in. thick, which Miss Hodgson considered to have been obviously hammer-dressed. It covered a thin layer of greyish-white greasy material in which there were three fragments of white bone, too small to be identifiable. These were the only finds, and no other structural features are recorded.

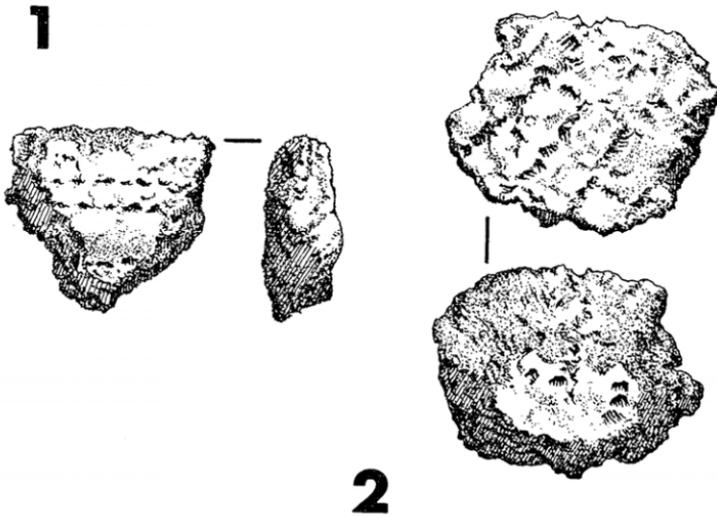


FIG. 2.

1. Rim sherd of Beaker, White Lyne.
2. Sherd from Site N, Broomrigg.
(Both actual size).

These notes may perhaps best be concluded by quoting from a note which Miss Hodgson evidently intended as a basis for the final paragraph of her report. After recording her thanks to Sir Fergus Graham and the tenant of The Flatt Farm for leave to carry out the excavations, and to all the members

of the Society and others who helped in the work, she went on: "Lest future archaeologists should be misled I put it on record that one of our party, Mr J. Johnston built for us a round shelter, in the traditional manner of alternate courses of stones and turf, which when roofed with a tarpaulin kept us 'as snug as an auld yowe'. It was a few yards below Site IIA."

(The pottery is housed in the City Museum, Tullie House, Carlisle, under Registration No. 67/1974. The original field sketches and survey notes, and a copy of Sheet IV6 of the 25-inch O.S. map with the sites plotted, have been lodged in the Society's Library at Tullie House).

2. *Broomrigg*. By Clare I. Fell, F.S.A.

In 1960 Miss K. S. Hodgson obtained permission from the owners, Messrs Watson of Croglin Low Hall, and from the tenants, the Forestry Commission, to carry out further excavations at Broomrigg and Wallmoor Plantations, Ainstable and Cumwhitton parishes respectively, a brief mention of which is recorded in CW2 lx 202. The sites had been scheduled under the Ancient Monument Acts (Cumberland, No. 70) and permission for the investigation had also been given by the then Ministry of Works. Sheet XXX. II. 9. Cumberland of the 25-inch O.S. covers the area concerned.

Work was carried out in July and August 1960 with the help of members of the Carlisle and South-Western Groups of this Society and other volunteer labour, including the late Commander Lawford and the late J. Inglis. Robert Hogg, Curator, Carlisle Museum, photographed *in situ* the Beaker found at Site N, and Miss D. Charlesworth, Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, visited the excavation. An old bus, brought to the site by Mr Sowerby, served as headquarters.

Miss Hodgson's earlier work in the area has been

published in CW2 xxxv 77-79; l 30-42 and lii 1-8, in which a general description of the area is included, together with plans of the various stone circles then identified. Her notes also record that there were remains of one or two buildings, possibly shielings, and two sets of stack-stands near the present farmhouse. Also that part of Broomrigg Plantation between the farm and Circle B was divided into small fields of which the dykes were still visible in 1960. The vegetation bears witness to former cultivation of the area as mentioned in CW2 l 31. Since 1960 the ground has been replanted by the Forestry Commission.

The 1960 objective was to examine three sites:

- i. M, in Broomrigg Plantation, Map Ref. NY 54674646. A large flat stone surrounded by a heap of smaller stones.
- ii. N, in the same Plantation, Map Ref. NY 54684647. A large glacial erratic set in a boulder-filled hollow.
- iii. D, in Wallmoor Plantation, Map Ref. NY 54984659. A small cairn-circle.

It has not proved possible to draw accurate plans and sections from the surviving notes, but the following account has been made from these. The sketched-out plan of Site D and sections of Site N will be deposited at Tullie House, Carlisle, with the Society's records, together with the notes, photographs and finds.

Site M. Miss Hodgson had thought that the large flat stone might be the capstone of a cist, but on excavation it appeared to be an "earth-fast" boulder bedded in red, sandy boulder-clay with stones from field clearance piled around it. After the discoveries at Site N a second check was carried out but this too proved negative.

Site N. This appeared on the surface as a cup-shaped hollow in which lay a very large, prostrate boulder

protruding through the turf. This boulder was 10 ft. (3.05 m.) long by $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft. (1.36 m.) wide at its broad end, its long axis lying roughly east to west. Several wedge-shaped holes on either side of this stone are probably modern as Mrs H. Parkin, widow of the one-time owner of Broomrigg, told Miss Hodgson that her late husband had stopped estate workmen from splitting a large stone to repair the parish boundary-wall dividing Broomrigg from Wallmoor Plantations.

The excavation was carried out by the quadrant method, baulks 1 ft. (0.305 m.) wide being left, linking the opposed cardinal points. When the turf was stripped off the hollow was found to be lined with large cobbles in a semi-circle round the broad end of the big stone. A well defined kerb giving the appearance of a wall 26 in. (0.66 m.) wide was noticed in the NE. quadrant (BC) (Plate I), but the stones in the other quadrants, especially on the west side, had been much disturbed by tree roots and burrowing of rabbits. In the SE. quadrant (BD) a single sherd of Bronze Age pottery was found 11 in. (0.28 m.) below the present surface, associated with charcoal but with no bone fragments (Fig. 2, 2). In the NW. quadrant (AC) the north side of the big stone had a large curved hollow which the excavator thought might have been hammer-dressed. Immediately below and in front of this hollow, underneath large cobbles in the upper levels, was a deposit of leached sand, ash and charcoal among which, close beneath the edge of the big stone, was part of a small cordoned Beaker which has since been restored by Robert Hogg (Fig. 3, 1). Again no bones were found, but the soil hereabouts is of high acidity. The Beaker lay on its side at a depth of 2 ft. 8 in. (0.81 m.) below the present turf.

The description of the deposit in which the Beaker lay makes one wonder whether it accompanied a cremation, a burial rite which does occur with D. L.



PLATE I.—Broomrigg, Site N from the north.



PLATE II.—Site D in Wallmoor Plantation from the north-east.

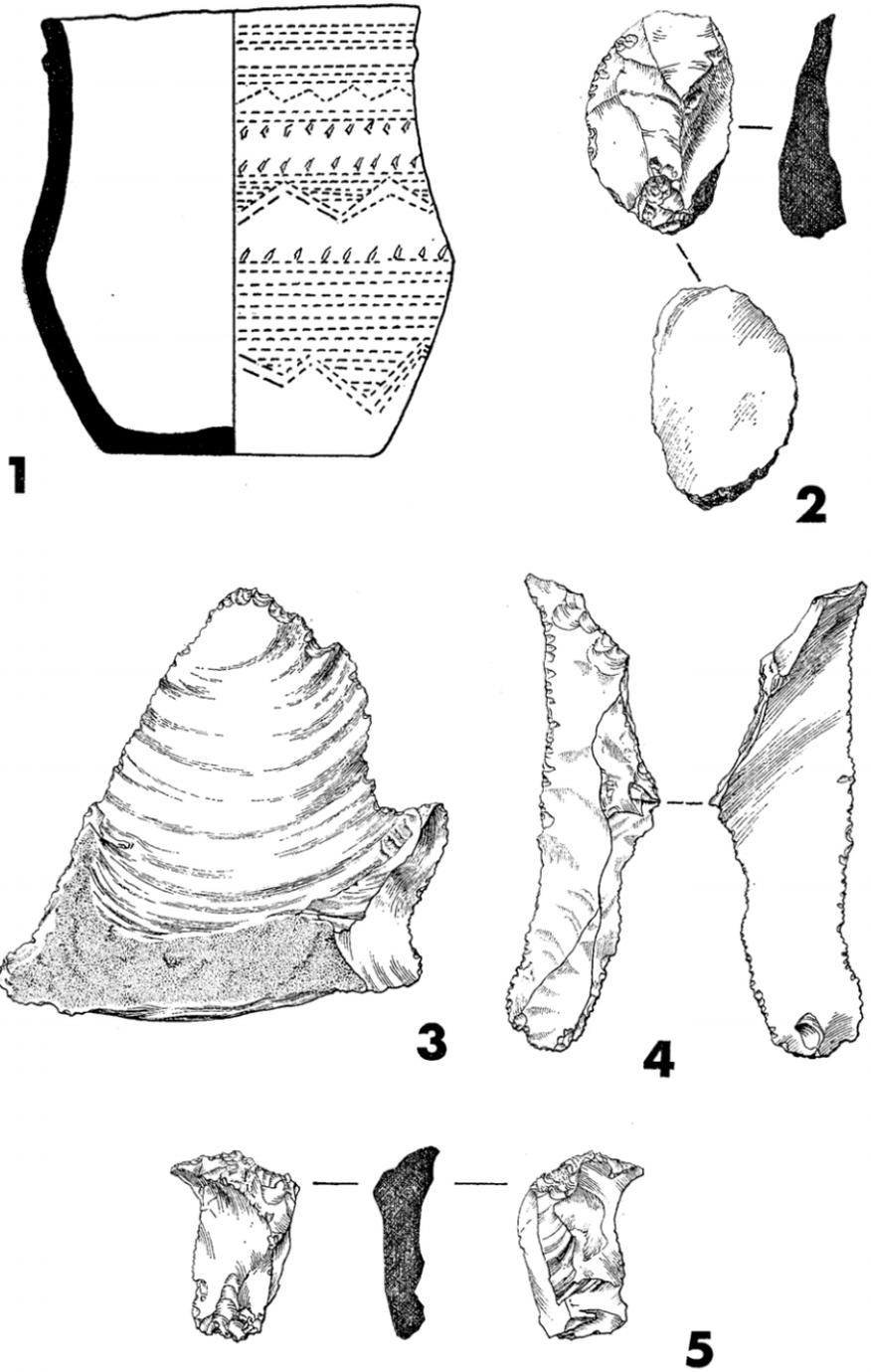


FIG. 3.
 1. Beaker from Broomrigg, Site N ($\frac{1}{2}$ size).
 2-5. Flints from Site D, Wallmoor (actual size).

Clarke's Northern/North-Rhine group — a legacy from the late Corded Ware element of its ancestry. The shape of the great boulder with one rounded end and one much more pointed also suggests that it may have stood upright originally, but time and equipment were not available to test this theory.

Site D.

A small cairn-circle in Wallmoor Plantation, 15 ft. (4.57 m.) by 18 ft. (5.48 m.) was the last to be examined and had been much disturbed by rabbits. All six remaining stones of varying sizes are now prostrate. A plan and photograph of the site was published in CW2 xxxv 77-79, fig. 3 and plate facing p. 79. The site in an advanced stage of excavation is here shown in Plate 2. It proved impossible to identify a socket for the largest stone and thus to be certain whether it ever stood upright. One socket hole was found in the northern part of the perimeter but no large stones of the peristalith now exist there.

The levels noted were humus, brown earth, a very hard, dark, fibrous soil inside the stone setting, below which was undisturbed red sandy boulder clay. R. L. Bellhouse suggested that the hard dark layer might be the trampled old turf line. No urn or bones were found but a number of worked flints and a few small sherds of undecorated hand-made pottery were recovered. Some of the flints had been burnt and all the finds came from the hard dark layer above the red sandy boulder clay.

The Finds.

I. Pottery.

a) Site N.

- i. A single sherd of soft red-brown well gritted ware, probably from near the rim of a food-vessel, or collared urn came from the SE. quadrant (BD). Fig. 2, 2. Outer surface decorated with stout twisted cord. Suggestions of similar ornament on the inner surface. Maximum thickness 1.1 cm. Museum No. 67, 1974.
- ii. Part of a small cordoned Beaker of somewhat lopsided shape, was found in the NW. quadrant (AC). It has been classified by D. L. Clarke in his Northern/North-Rhine Group, which he tentatively dated 1750/1700-1500 B.C., corrected dates.¹ Other local Beakers in this Group come from Clifton and Newton Reigny,² and Clarke thought the makers of this class of pottery entered the Eden valley via the Tyne Gap. The ware is red-brown on the surfaces, showing grey in the fracture. At first sight the decoration appears to have been incised before firing with a plain pointed instrument, and it was illustrated in this way both by Clarke and by Clough in these *Transactions*.³ However, on close examination it is clearly executed with a rectangular-toothed comb about 1 mm. thick apart from the three rows of oblique stab marks bordering the plain zones on the upper part of the vessel. A schematic drawing is given here in Fig. 3, 1. Here and there where the design had blurred it has been made good with a plain,

¹ D. L. Clarke, *Beaker Pottery of Great Britain and Ireland*. 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970).

² CW2 lxviii 1-21, fig. 4, 9 and 17.

³ D. L. Clarke, *ibid.*, vol. II, fig. 285, no. 108; CW2 lxviii 5, fig. 3, 6.

blunt-pointed instrument. The base shows some internal thickening. Museum No. 78, 1973.

Site D. Museum No. for all finds from this site, 67, 1974.

1. *Pottery.*

Three small sherds of undecorated hand-made pottery were found. They are dark brown and micaceous. The largest sherd, probably from near the base, is 6 mm. thick tapering to 4 mm. thick 2 cms. higher up. The thinness of the ware suggests that they may have come from a Beaker.

2. *Flints* (Fig. 3, 2-5).

The four larger pieces of grey flint are illustrated here. In addition to these six small flakes, three of them burnt and a small core were found. The long serrated flake, No. 4, shows a line of silica gloss on the ventral surface, possibly from cutting wood. Miss Hodgson's notes say that Prof. R. J. C. Atkinson suggested this tool might have been used for nocking arrows. No. 2 has been burnt and No. 5 is very similar to a flint from Site F, Broomrigg (CW2 lii 2, fig. II, 2). No. 3 is a large flake with cortex remaining on one surface, the other side showing a hinge fracture.

3. *Other materials.*

Miss Hodgson also kept a small piece of "rudd" and a small curved stone which she considered significant.

I should like to thank Mr G. Pallant-Sidaway for his fine drawings of the flints in Fig. 3 and of the pottery, Fig. 2.