

*An Enquiry into the Antiquity of an ancient Entrenchment, called
WARDLEY, in the Parish of Jarrow, and County of Durham, by the
Rev. JOHN HODGSON, Sec.*

WARDLEY, in the parish of Jarrow, is a place of considerable antiquity, and probably derives its name from a deep fosse or entrenchment, which surrounds a plot of ground, on which, in former times, the priors and monks of Durham had a camera or summer residence.

The dimensions of the entrenchment are as follow, viz.:—A, Plate ~~HEV~~ the area within the ditches, containing six acres and thirty-five perches.

BBB, the ditch, which is every where very perfect, excepting at p, where it has been filled up, and a road leads across it.

C o c m, a mound of earth on the outside of the ditch, which is still very perfect.

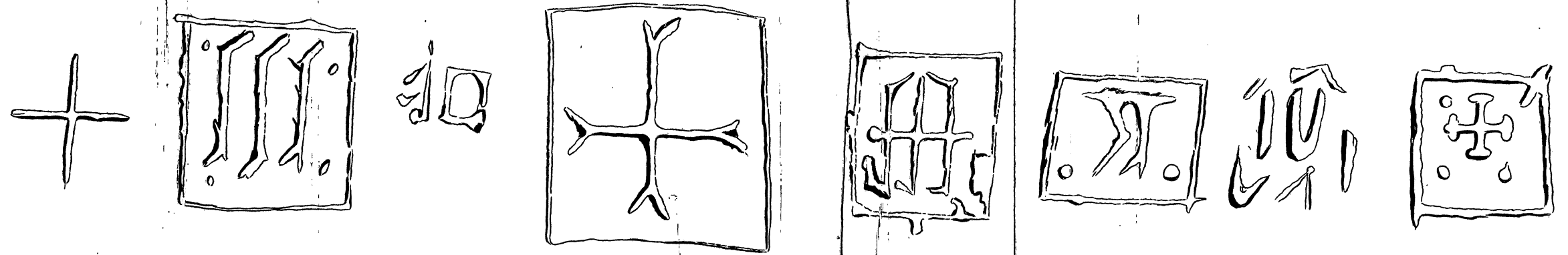
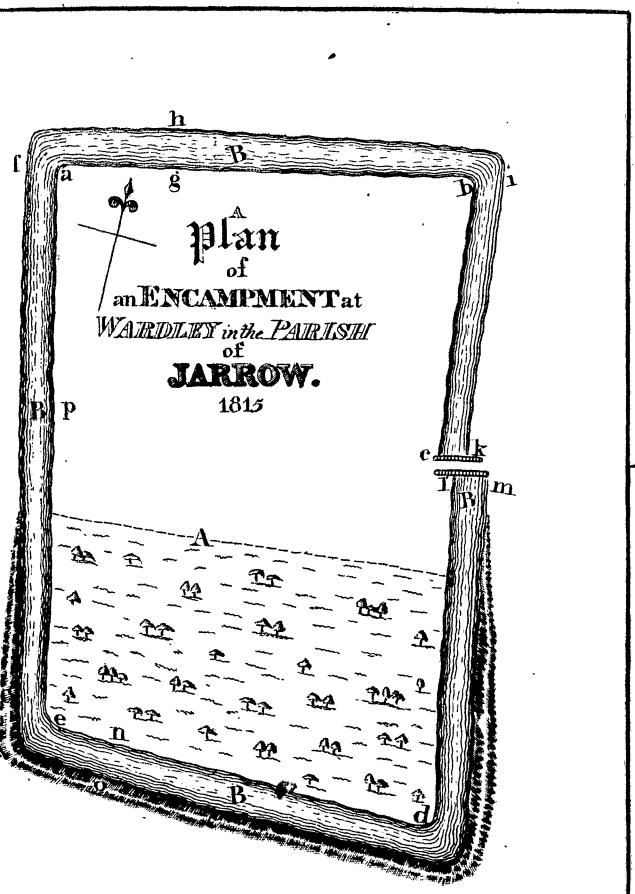
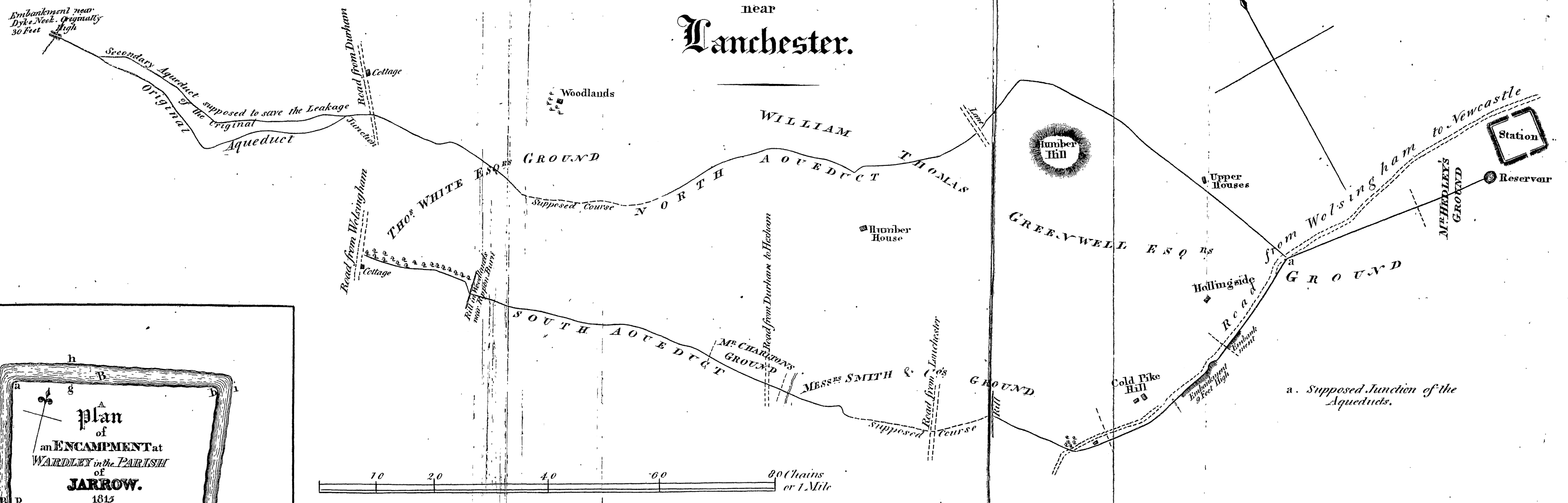
The length of the sides of the entrenchment is, from a to b, 149 feet; from b to c, 99, and c to d, 112—together, 211; from d to e, 143; and from e to a, 197 feet.

The breadth of the ditch from a to f, is 11 feet; from g to h, 13; from b to i, $8\frac{1}{2}$; from c to k, 9; from l to m, 8; and from n to o, 13. Its depth at b i is 6 feet; and a bridge crosses it at c k, l m.

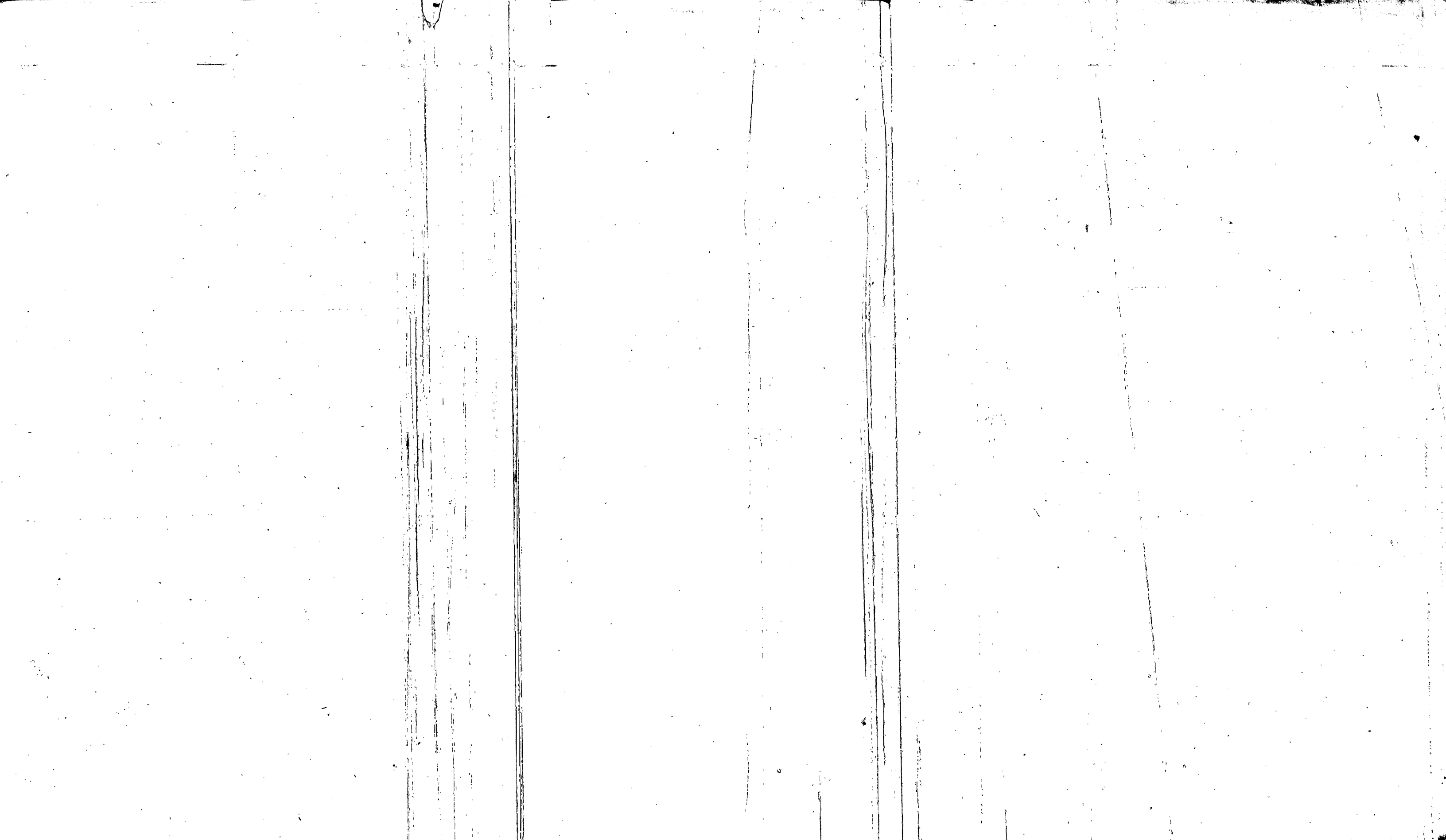
The form and size of this entrenchment, and its contiguity to the Leam Lane, a part of the Roman way, called Wreken Dyke, which runs between Lanchester and the stations at Jarrow and South Shields, are in favour of its Roman origin; but I have not been able to learn, that any Roman antiquities were ever found in it. It is certain that no traces of Roman masonry exist within its area. If, therefore, it was ever a camp of that people, it was one of the kind which they called *Æstiva*, from their being occupied only in summer.

ROMAN STATION, AQUEDUCTS & RESERVOIR.

near Lanchester.



AN INSCRIPTION ON THE BELL OF HEWORTH CHAPEL.



In the year 995, the bishops and monks of Cuneacester, on account of the ravages of the Danes, removed the body of St. Cuthbert from that place to Rippon. "But peace being established in three or four months, as the monks were returning from the former place with the sacred body, and had got into a place called Werdelau, in the eastern country, near to Durham, the carriage, on which the shrine containing the holy remains was carried, became restive and immoveable. All additional assistance was unavailing; to every new accession of strength it continued immoveable as a mountain, plainly shewing, that the incorruptible body refused to be taken to the place where it had been before. But the monks were at a loss whither they should carry it; for the place on which they then were, was in the middle of a plain and uninhabitable. The Bishop, therefore, addressing the people, commanded them to seek directions from heaven, for their future conduct by fasting, watchings, and prayers, during three days. The event was, that it was revealed to a monk called Eadmer, that the body should be removed to Durham, which was accordingly done."*

I am aware that some objections may be started against identifying Wardley with the place where this occurrence is said to have happened.

1. Because the Werdelau of Simeon, or as it is in Bedford's edition, † Wredelau, was "prope Dunelmum ad orientalem plagam"; and Wardley is about fourteen miles north east of Durham, and about seven in the same direction from Chester-le-Street.

2. The word *law*, when it makes a part of the names of places, always means a hill or eminence; and in this signification we find it commonly applied to conical hills, tumuli, fortified grounds, and the places where public assemblies were anciently holden.

The first objections may perhaps yield to the following considerations. The "plaga" in which Wardley is situated, does, in a certain degree, lie to the east of Durham; and "prope" being a relative term, Wardley, and especially the district between the Tyne and

* Sym. Dunelm. inter Hist. Anglic. Scrip. Antiq. col. 27.

† P. 140.

Wear in which it is situated, may be said to be near to Durham, in comparison with their distance from Rippon.

The monks engaged in this transaction, were undetermined among themselves where they should settle; and may, therefore, be supposed to have wandered out of the way of their former residence at Chester-le-Street, in quest of some other. It is certain that the ecclesiastics of Durham fled to Lindisfarne, in 1069, by the way of Jarrow, Bedlington, &c.; and both Wardley and Chester-le-Street are in a right line between Durham and Jarrow. Is it not a probable conjecture, that when the "*vehiculum, quo sacri corporis theca ferebatur,*" became restive, the monks were on their way to their ancient residence at Lindisfarne; but differing in their councils about the propriety of proceeding thither, the majority determined to turn back to the strong post on Dun-holm? In this conjecture, the true reason, I think, is observable, why we are told that the holy remains refused to be carried to the place "*ubi prius fuerat.*"

To the second objection it may be answered, that, if *law* in this place be admitted as the true reading, and allowed to signify a hill, then Simeon's own description of the place is in contradiction with its name; for they came to a place, "*qui Werdelau dicitur;*" and "*ubi tunc fuerunt, in medio scilicet campo, locus erat inhabitabilis;*" which, with the reading and etymology alluded to, would be as much as to say, "the place they came to was called *Warded-hill*, and that hill was a plain." I apprehend that Simeon wrote *Werdle*, a word which means "guarded or fortified field;" and in that signification answers well to *Wardley*, which is situated in the middle of a very extensive plain; and in a place, which it is probable might at that time be very properly called *inhabitabilis*, by a fraternity of monks searching for a residence; for the ground adjoining it to the south is still wet and marshy, and was formerly covered with a sort of lake, called in old records "*le White Mere.*"

That *Wardley* was the spot, where this occurrence happened, is further evident, from some copies of Simeon having "*Werdele:*" and

Leland in a note to an extract from one of the monastic authors, not named, *De Episcopis Lindisfarnensis and Dunelmensis*, col. v. ii. p. 330, says: "Nunc Wedle ubi ædes olim monachis recreandi gratiâ concessæ." That there were "ædes recreandi," or rooms of recreation for the monks of Durham at Wardley, there is no doubt; a circumstance which evidently shews that Wedle, in Leland's note, is a mere literal mistake for Werdle.

Some authors* have supposed that Weredun-law, a hill on the south side of the Wear, and a few miles from Sunderland, is the place which Simeon calls Werdelau. But I conceive, that *Weredun* is a Celtic name, signifying Werehill; and that *law*, a word of Saxon origin, has been added to it, by a people ignorant that *dun* and *law* are synonyma. But besides the probability that Warden-law went under the same appellation in the time of Simeon that it does now, though it may be said to be east from Durham, and to be "locus inhabitabilis," it is not "in medio campo:" it has no traces of fortification about it to justify the supposition that Werdelau was its ancient name, and that *dun* is a corruption of modern insertion: and it is certain that the monks of Durham never had any "ædes recreandi" upon it.

Hutchinson, in his *History of Durham*, contends, that Werdelau was at Maiden-castle, a fortified hill between Shinkliff and Durham: and that place certainly answers well to its being near to and east of Durham. But where is the evidence of that place ever having been called Werdelau? It was not "locus inhabitabilis," nor "in medio campo;" nor ever had upon it any "ædes recreandi."

The following document, extracted from the Register of Bishop Kellowe shews, that Wardley was a place of some importance in the year 1313, in which William de Tanfield, on account of age and infirmity, retired from his situation as prior of Durham, and in lieu of that accepted of the celle of Jarrow, with the privilege of residing in the manor-house of Wardley.

* See Hutch. Hist. of Durham, vol. i. p. 79. vol. ii. p. 3, &c.; Bedford's ed. of Simeon Dunelm. &c.

“ Omnibus &c. Ric'us p'missione divina &c. V'ra nov'it univ'sitas q'd accedentib. ad nos ap'd Middelham die mercur. p'x. post festu. s'c'e trinitatis anno d'ni Mill'i'o CCC^{mo}. tercio decimo dilectis filiis d'no W. Priore & fratribus Galfr'o de Burdon Supp'iore, Thoma de Aldewode Will'o de Giseburne et Thoma de Hessewell monachis et procurator' monasterii Dunelm. &c. d'n's Will'us proponens coram nob. se non posse cure & regimini d'c'i Monasterii sibi co'mmissis. commode vacare nec onera inde sibi incu'bencia prout convenit suportare p'p't. corp'alem imbecilitatem suā infirmitate & senio confractam qua notabiliter est gravatus cure regimini & officio cessit exp'se & ea in manib' n'ris pure, sponte, et simp'l'r resignavit devote supplicans, &c. Ad ip'ius igitur sustentacionem Cellam de Jarowe sicut mag'ri ejusdem loci antiquitus h'ere consuev'unt cu. suis p'tin. cu. stauro & aliis bonis ejusd'm ta. mobilib. q'm se moventibus & pensione. seu annuu. redditu. dece. librar. argenti qui consuev'it solvi mon. p'd'co p. mag'ros qui pro temp'e fue'int d'c'e celle. Et decimas garbar. de villis de Heworth sup'iori & inf'iori auct'e & potestate nob. in hac p'te attributis de exp'sso consensu sup'ioris & conventus, &c. Tenend. & h'end. &c. Solvendo inde ad s'c'm d'c'i mon. sex marc. st'lingor. ad festa. S'c'i Martini & pent. &c. Et si d'c'us Will's cessavit in soluc'o'e d'c'ar' sex marcar' p. octo dies post terminos assignatos extune liceat bursario Dunelm. levare id quod a retro est de redditib. et exitib. molendinor. de Jarowe sine impedimento &c. Volumus eciam q'd h'eat aisiam-enta Domor. man'ii de Wardeley ad inh'itandum & morandu' ibidem suis su'ptib. p. suo libito voluntatis nich. de exitib. man'ii receptur.— Et q'd h'eat focale p. aula & cam'a sua tam ap'd Jarowe quam Wardeley de Bosco de Heworth & fagotas p. pistrina de bosco ceduo succrescente in le Heghenigh r'onabilit'r p. visum forestarii ibidem. De carbonib. p. coquina & bracina suis su'ptib. sibi faciat p'videri. Ordinamus insuper q'd h'eat setu. unu. vel. duos monachos de d'c'o mon. p. suo voluntate eligendos de consensu prioris, &c. Ordinamus eciam q'd p'd'cus d'n's Will's faciat deservire d'c'e celle laudabiliter in divinis videl't cu. fu'it absens a d'c'a cella infra Ep'atu. tu. per capell'os seculares vel monachos unu. vel plures prout duxerit eligendos. Set cu.

contingat eu. agere ex Ep'atu saltem p. unu. mon'achu. d'c'e celle faciat deserviri & quod liceat sibi p. voluntate sua mora. facere in Ep'atu v'l extra sine impedimento v'l calumpnia prior. Dunelm. vel alt'uis cujusq. Et si ad mon. declinare volu'it p. q'nque vel sex dies suis sumptib. moratur. Hostelar mon. s' faciat decentē cameram assignari. Et p'd'cus Will'us p'd'cam cellam de Jarowe cu. p'tin'ciis suis in adeo bono statu demittet vel meliori sicut eam recepit (vi majori per hostiles incursus & casib. fortuitis duntaxat exceptis). Et si contingat (q'd. absit) p'd'c'am cellam de Jarowe et alia bona sibi superius assignata p. hostiles incursus Scottorum vel p. co'em guerram destrui et consumi ita q'd non posit de residuo bonor. aliquo modo sustentari volumus & ordinamus q'd h'eat una. Cam'a. infra cepta. mon. p'd'c'i Dunelm. & congrua. sustentac'o'em p. se et uno socio uno velletto & quatuor garc'onib. jux. mon. facultates, &c. In quor. &c. Dat. ap'd Middelham die & anno sup'd'c'is Et pont. n'ri t'ercio."

It is further worthy of remark, that Wardley is a manor within the manor of Jarrow, which, with all its appendages, was granted to the Monastery of Jarrow about the time of the Conquest; and soon afterwards to the Priory of Durham. It is still leased under the Dean and Chapter of Durham, to whom it was granted by King Henry the Eighth, May 16, 1561: and in 1567, by an act of that body, its tythes were annexed to the revenues of the Seventh Prebendary.

At present there are no buildings within the area of the entrenchment which bear any marks of antiquity, the scite of the ancient mansion house being occupied by a modern farm house and farm offices. The fish ponds are still distinctly visible, in the wood, on its south side; and the esculent (still common in meadow ground in the neighbourhood of old castles, villages, and monasteries), the polygonum bistorta of Linnæus, and called "Easter-month-gions," in many parts of England, grows on the scite of the old garden, in the north-east corner of the entrenchment.

JOHN HODGSON.