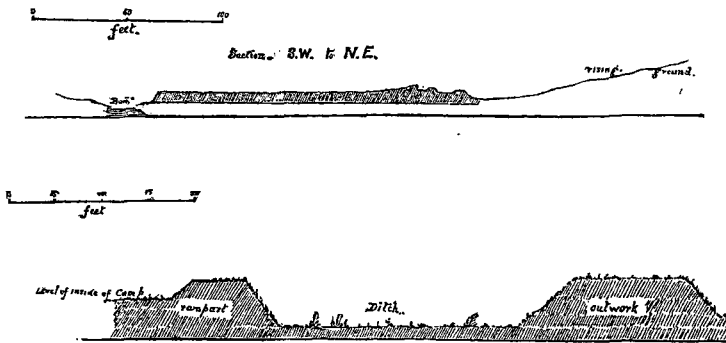


II.

NOTES ON A CAMP AND FORT ON THE GARPOL BURN,
NEAR MOFFAT. BY R. H. BLYTH, F.S.A. Scot.

On the Garpol Burn, about two miles from the point where it runs into the river Evan, lie the remains of two fortified places, one of them apparently a camp, the other a fort. They are on opposite sides of the burn, but quite close to it, the camp being on the left bank, the fort on the right bank; both lie on low ground, and are surrounded by slopes and points of considerably greater elevation.

The Camp.—Following the course of the stream upwards, we arrive at the camp first. It is roughly rectangular in form—that is to say, the north-west, north-east, and south-west walls are at right angles to one another; but the remaining wall, instead of forming the fourth side



Figs. 1, 2. Section of Camp south-west to north-east and enlarged Section of Ditch and Rampart.

of the square, juts out into a point towards the south-east, the southern portion of this side being about twice the length of the eastern portion. (See the ground plan, fig. 3.)

The height of the rampart, from the bottom of the ditch outside, varies

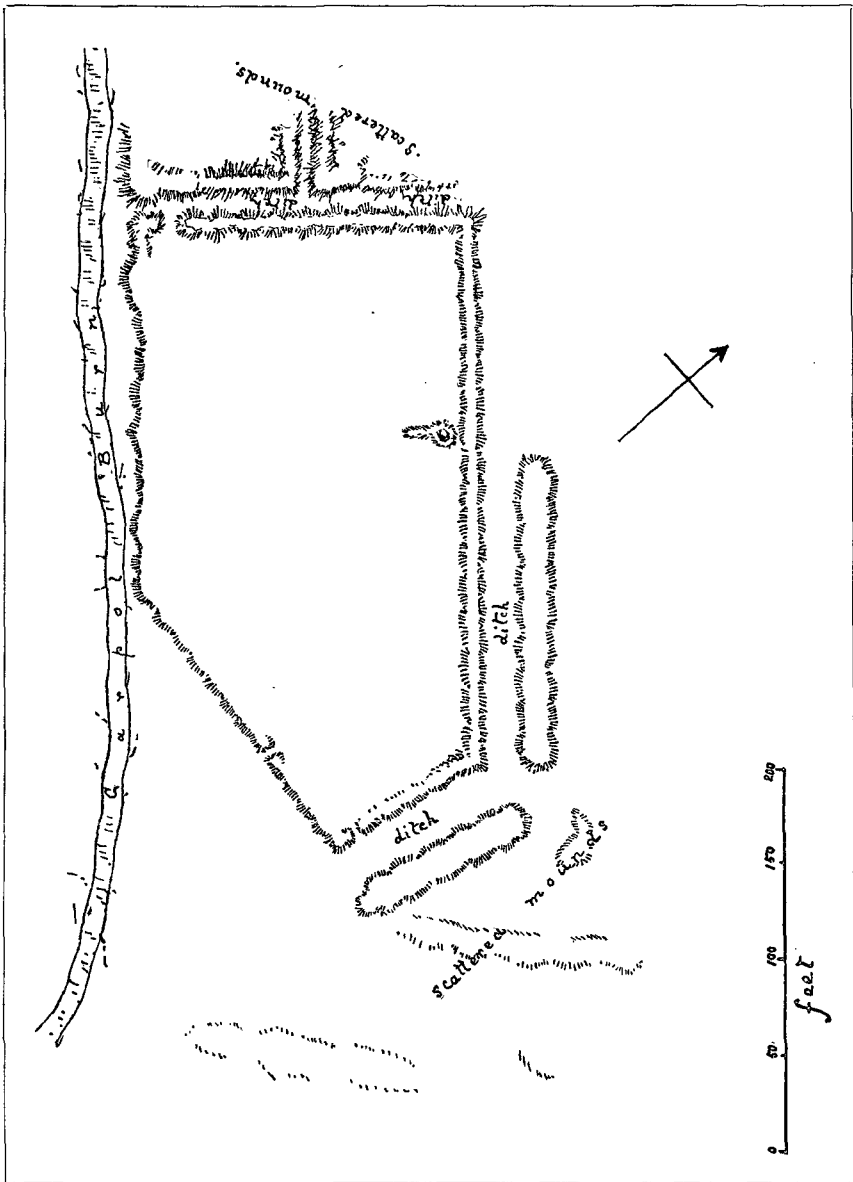


Fig. 3. Plan of the Camp at Garpol Burn, near Moffat.

from 6 feet at the north-west side to 2 feet at some of the more dilapidated parts; the ground falls away on the inside of the rampart, on the north-west and north-east sides, but is level with the top of it on the remaining sides. There is some appearance of a fortified entrance to the camp at the north-west end, but it is not very distinct; there is also a break in the south wall, but it seems to be comparatively modern.

On the north-east side, inside the rampart and within a few feet of

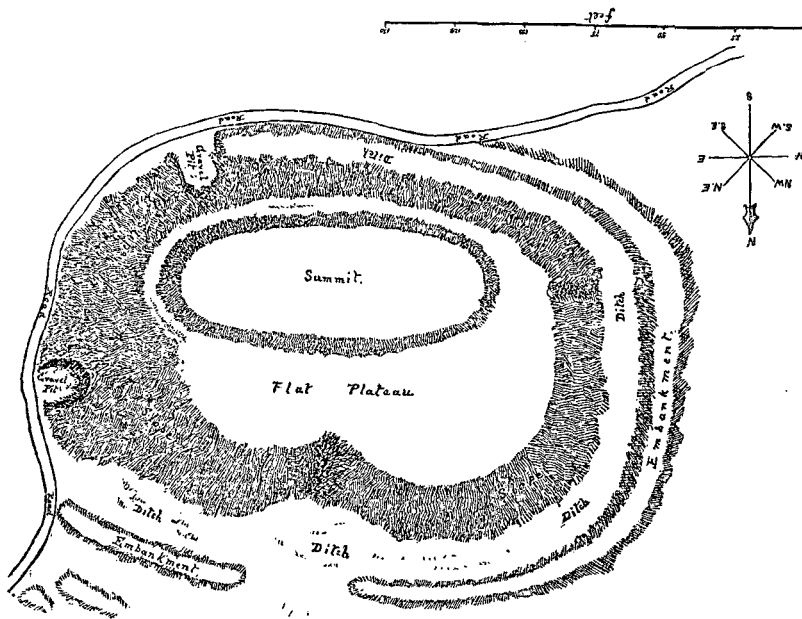


Fig. 4. Ground Plan of Fort.

it, is a somewhat singular structure; it has apparently been a circular building, but has been partially destroyed, the long-shaped mound at one side being composed of the stones of which it was built; it is the highest point on the surface of the camp, and catches the eye at once. I think, judging from the sharp outline of the mound and the comparative thinness of the wall, that what remains of the erection is built of

stone. There are numbers of tolerably large stones lying about, though none of those which I saw appear to have been squared. My experience of such camps is limited, but I think this round building is a somewhat unusual feature. There are a good many irregular mounds at a little distance from the south-east angle of the camp, but they are not distinctly enough marked for one to form a satisfactory idea of the original arrangement. The Garpol Burn flows within a few feet of the south-west wall.

The Fort.—The fort (fig. 4) is two hundred yards farther up the

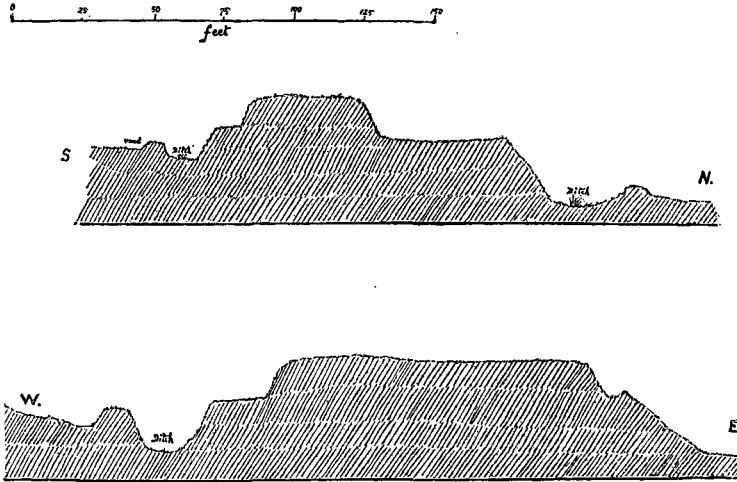


Fig. 5. Section of Fort.

burn, and must have been a place of considerable strength; though originally a hillock of tolerable size, it shows symptoms of having been largely altered to suit the requirements of the defenders, especially at the west end, where the deep ditch (about 12 feet deep at one place) must be entirely artificial. The outer fortification is quite perfect for about half the circuit, but on the south side a country road runs along the top of the embankment, which is lost to view at this point, and I cannot find any further trace of it till one reaches the north-east

side. There is a gap in this bank, rather over 40 feet wide, in front of the centre of the fort on the north side, and just opposite this gap there is a deep depression in the steep bank running up to the level plateau; there is also a small path leading to the plateau on the south-west side, but it is probably quite modern. The ditch ceases abruptly at the south-east corner, and there seems to have been a kind of embankment leading across the ditch; but at this point there is a gravel pit which has obliterated any entrance which may once have been visible; the slope at this point, however, is very steep.

The greatest height is on the north side, the least height is on the south, but the sides of the mound are much more steep on the latter side—it is, in fact, almost perpendicular. The second story of the fort is very regular in its proportions, and the slope all round is uniformly steep; the top is almost flat (see the accompanying section), and the whole of both mounds, with the exception of a part of the plateau, is covered with heather about a foot high. The photograph exhibited is taken from a point to the north-north-west, but it does not bring out details distinctly, and it slightly distorts the shape of the mound; it, however, gives a tolerable idea of its appearance as seen from the opposite side of the stream.

There are several detached mounds of small elevation at the north-east side; and directly east of the fort, at a distance of about 40 yards, there is a long mound about 100 feet long by 25 feet wide, and 8 feet high at the centre; this mound runs north and south, and is not shown in any of the drawings. The Garpol Burn runs parallel with the length of the fort on the north side, and is about 50 feet from it.