

I.

THE PREHISTORIC FORTS OF PEEBLESSHIRE. WITH PLANS AND SKETCHES. BY DAVID CHRISTISON, M.D., F.S.A. SCOT. (PLATES I.-VII.)

The prehistoric forts of Scotland are perhaps worthy of more attention than has yet been devoted to them. No less an authority than Dr Daniel Wilson has, indeed, expressed the opinion that "the subject has already been treated of, with ample details, in Chalmers' *Caledonia*, and little that is worth recording can be added to his researches"; but, on the other hand, Sir James Simpson, in his presidential address of 1860, included the hill forts among "the many departments of Scottish antiquities urgently demanding at the hands of the numerous zealous antiquaries scattered over the country, full descriptions and accurate drawings of such vestiges of them as are still left." And surely it can hardly be maintained that the singularly dry details of Chalmers,—for the most part a *réchauffé* of the vague descriptions in the old *Statistical Account of Scotland*, Gordon's *Itinerarium*, or other works of last century, and illustrated by a solitary plan,—form an adequate record of remains which must have played an important part in the early history of our country. It is true Chalmers and the earlier authorities are not our only sources of information. Occasional plans and descriptions of Scottish forts by various writers are to be found in our *Proceedings*; and Miss Maclagan has taken a comprehensive view of the

subject, illustrated by many useful plans and drawings, in *The Hill Forts and Stone Circles of Scotland*. But, without detracting from the merit of her work, there can be little doubt that a great mass of materials still remains to be gathered—from a field too vast perhaps for any single labourer—before the subject can be effectually studied as a whole.

My own investigations originated in frequent visits made to the hill forts during a residence in Peeblesshire in the years 1885 and 1886. My interest rapidly grew as I discovered in them a variety of design and construction, not sufficiently noticed, as it seemed to me, by the earlier writers. I resolved therefore to study these remains carefully, to describe them as they are, rather than to speculate as to what they may have been, and by means of plans and descriptions to afford facilities for comparing them with similar works in other districts. In choosing limits to my observations it would have been desirable to have adopted natural boundaries, instead of confining myself strictly to the county, but in that case the field of observation would have been extended much beyond what I could have investigated with the degree of attention which the subject appeared to demand.

The Peeblesshire forts have already been described by the late Sir William Chambers in a paper read to the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1865, but only a short abstract of it appeared in their *Proceedings*. In his *History of Peeblesshire*, published in 1864, a number of the forts are described and planned, but by no means accurately. On taking up the subject myself, I expected to get much assistance from the plans in the 25-inch Ordnance Map. In this expectation, however, I was largely disappointed, as in many cases, even when the existing remains are quite substantial, the site only is indicated, in others the plans are defective or inaccurate, while, even in the best of them, the details are insufficient for archæological purposes. I have been obliged therefore, while making use of the Ordnance Map when available, to trust mainly to rough plans of my own, taken by pacing; and although I visited most of the forts two or three times to solve doubts and correct errors, I am well aware that for such plans no greater degree of accuracy can be claimed than is sufficient for an adequate review of the forts as a whole.

The order which I have adopted in dealing with my subject is—first, to describe the forts; secondly, to make some general remarks on them; thirdly, to touch very shortly on theoretical questions. In order to understand the general scope of the work, it is not necessary to read the descriptive part, which is intended mainly as a record of facts and for reference.

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE FORTS.

The total number of Peeblesshire forts, of whose existence now or formerly we have any authentic knowledge, is 83. This may seem a very large number for so small a district, but it is probably equalled in other parts of Scotland, and exceeded in Ireland, where in the single Barony of Corcaguiny, county Kerry, the Ordnance Map gives 11 cahirs or stone forts, and 376 raths or earthen forts (Mr Hitchcock). The number in Wales must also have been prodigious, as 53 castells, 53 camps, 17 raths, 6 intrenchments, and 7 gaers are marked on the Ordnance Map of Pembroke alone (Mr E. Laws). Of the 83 Peebles forts either no trace or very little trace of 17 remains, 42 are much decayed, and 24 may be considered as in fair preservation. The damaged condition of by far the greatest number of them forbids any attempt at a strictly scientific classification; still, as some order must be observed, I have adopted a system, founded rather on present resemblances than upon supposed original similarity of design.

Before describing the forts it is necessary to explain the plans and drawings which illustrate them.

1. The forts are all laid down roughly as if the north were at the top of the page.
2. The plans in the text of the work are on the scale of 120 feet to the inch, and represent comparatively well-preserved forts.
3. The plans, Plates I.–VI., are on the reduced scale of 240 feet to the inch. They represent the ill-preserved forts, together with a few of the better-preserved ones which are too large to be shown on the other scale.
4. Sections, when complete, are on the same scale as their respective plans. When only partial, they are on double the scale of the plans.

The sections are not laid down accurately to scale, but the accompanying figures show the principal measurements in feet.

5: The height of the ramparts given is not at the point of section, but is their greatest height at the side through which the section passes.

6. The nature of the site is shown roughly by arrows, which indicate the steepness of slopes by the amount of feathering, an arrow without feathering representing a very gentle slope, and one with four feathers a slope so steep as to be climbed with difficulty. These arrows are sometimes in connection with the plans, sometimes with the sections, as may be most convenient. The figures with them represent in a very general way the perpendicular height of the slopes above the nearest stream or tolerably level ground. The sides without arrows are level or nearly so.

In the sketches I have omitted the trees which encumber several of the forts represented.

Owing to the smallness of the scale the details in some of the sketches are given more distinctly than they are seen in reality; yet it is astonishing how distinct they may become under a favourable light. When strong shadows are cast by the setting sun, it is possible from a distance of a mile or more to count "rings" which make but a poor show at mid-day when viewed close at hand.

Satisfactory general views of the forts can hardly be got, unless they happen to be closely overlooked from neighbouring heights. In several instances I have been obliged to represent ramparts and trenches as they would appear from a standpoint several feet higher than it was possible to reach.

CLASS A. FORTS APPARENTLY ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED MAINLY OR ENTIRELY OF STONE.

This class includes twelve forts. They are characterised by the absence of earthen ramparts and trenches, and in nine instances by the presence of stony debris. In the case of the other three we possess trustworthy evidence that they had been constructed of stone.

a. Stone Forts with a Single Circumvallation.

1. *East Fort of Cademuir.*—Cademuir Hill, running south-west from Peebles for 2 or 3 miles, is one of the few completely isolated hills in the county. It may be described as a mountain chain in miniature rather than

as a mere hill, and, although rising only 800 feet above the Tweed, has a fine appearance owing to its varied outline, particularly as seen from the southward (fig. 1), and in comparison with the flat-topped, although much loftier tablelands around it. The range consists of a northerly and southerly division. The summit of the northerly division, 1350 feet above the sea, and the highest point of the range, is seen in the distance in the sketch. On the rounded eminence at its foot (at the extreme right in the sketch) the fort is situated, 400 feet above the plain. It consists of a single ring, and measures only 50

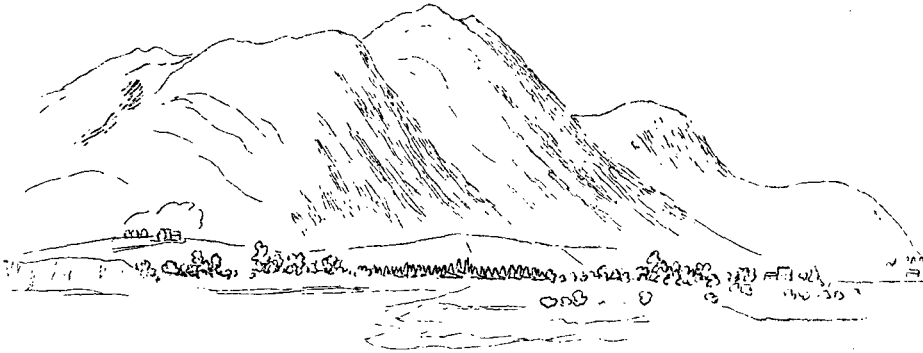


Fig. 1. Cademuir Hill from the South-West.

yards in diameter over all. It is much decayed, but the stony debris remains in some places 20 feet wide by 2 in height.

2. *Horsburgh* is also a small circular fort of one circumvallation, measuring only 120 yards in girth. It has an unusually sequestered situation, overlooked by massive heathery ranges, on the dome-shaped summit of a short spur projecting from the west into Horsburgh Hope, 1394 feet above the sea and 500 above the burn. Little more than grass-grown foundations remain, and its title to be called a fort may be questioned, but its strong position, the width of the foundations, and the relics of two circular enclosures within, seem to settle the question in its favour.

3. *Chester Lees, Tweedsmuir* (Plate IV. fig. 61), is the last known fort up Tweeddale. It is perched, about 1300 feet above the sea, on the north-west end of a narrow ridge, whence it looks on the river, 600 feet below, and commands an extensive view up Tweeddale and over a great range of hill country. The approach from three sides is very steep, but along the ridge is level. The fort is oval, measuring 44 by 34 yards in the slightly hollowed interior. The defences on the sides are almost gone, but at the ends the stony debris measures from 7 to 8 yards across. In one or two places the limits of the foundations seem well marked, but whether they indicate the casings of a

single wall 20 feet wide, which had been filled in with rubble, or two concentric walls, cannot, as in many other cases, be now determined unless by excavation.

4. *Henry's Brae*, as the larger of two detached hills at Tinnis is named, rises about 900 feet above the sea, and 250 above Drummelzier Haugh. This remarkable site is fully described under *Tinnis*. The debris on Henry's Brae encloses a space measuring 600 yards round about, but the remains of a transverse wall cuts off a smaller part at the higher south-west end, measuring 60 by 40 yards, which possibly constituted the true fort, the much larger space sloping away from it to the north-east having been a subordinate enclosure. In the Ordnance Map the small enclosure is marked as a "sheepfold," but stony debris, as much as 30 feet wide in some places, could hardly have been appropriated to so peaceful a purpose. Moreover, I think there are indications of a second wall, parallel and close to the first, on the north-west face. At the narrow south-west end the stones are loosely built to a height of 3 or 4 feet in some places, but there is no carefully-fitted masonry.

b. Stone Fort with a Double Circumvallation.

5. *Upper Cademuir Fort* (Plate IV. fig. 57), 1314 feet above the sea, is very strongly placed on the summit of the southerly division of Cademuir Hill, the apparently highest point in fig. 1. Towards the south-east it is perched on the edge of the extremely steep "scree," of 600 feet, shown in the view; a still higher and scarcely less steep descent to the Manor water protects it on the north-west, while even along the ridge it can only be reached after a stiff climb of several hundred feet. The defensive line is irregularly oval, diverging to take every advantage of the ground, and is skilfully drawn just where the steep ascent begins to ease off towards the top. The stones have no doubt been extensively plundered, but multitudes remain which it would take several men to lift, and the amount of debris still left is very great. From its arrangement in some places, the original structure may have been a wall 15 feet wide. A few yards below and in front of this main defence there is a breastwork, probably of stone, but covered with turf. The great natural strength of the south-east side has enabled the defenders almost to dispense with artificial works there. The two entrances, one on the east the other on the west, are well placed, particularly the latter, which is in a re-entering curve, so as to be protected by a cross fire. The circumference within the defences measures about 600 yards, and the interior, with its irregular surface, rising considerably above the lines, offers better shelter from the wind than is usual in these hill forts.

c. Stone Fort with Triple Circumvallation.

6. *Cardrona* (fig. 2), 1073 feet above the sea, looks down on the modern mansion house, 600 feet below, from the edge of a steep slope descending

northwards to the valley of the Tweed, There is also a steep but short descent to the west; but in the other directions the approach from Wallace's Hill (1507 feet), which rises in the rear of the fort, is easy. On the south and



Fig. 2. Cardrona.

east there are three belts of debris, with a supplementary one under the rocky knoll, forming the highest point of the fort at its north-east corner. On the other sides there are but two belts; but this may have arisen from the

ruins of two walls having run together on the steep slopes, thus forming a mass measuring from 45 to 50 feet in width and several feet in depth, as is shown by some excavations in it. There is an entrance at the south-west

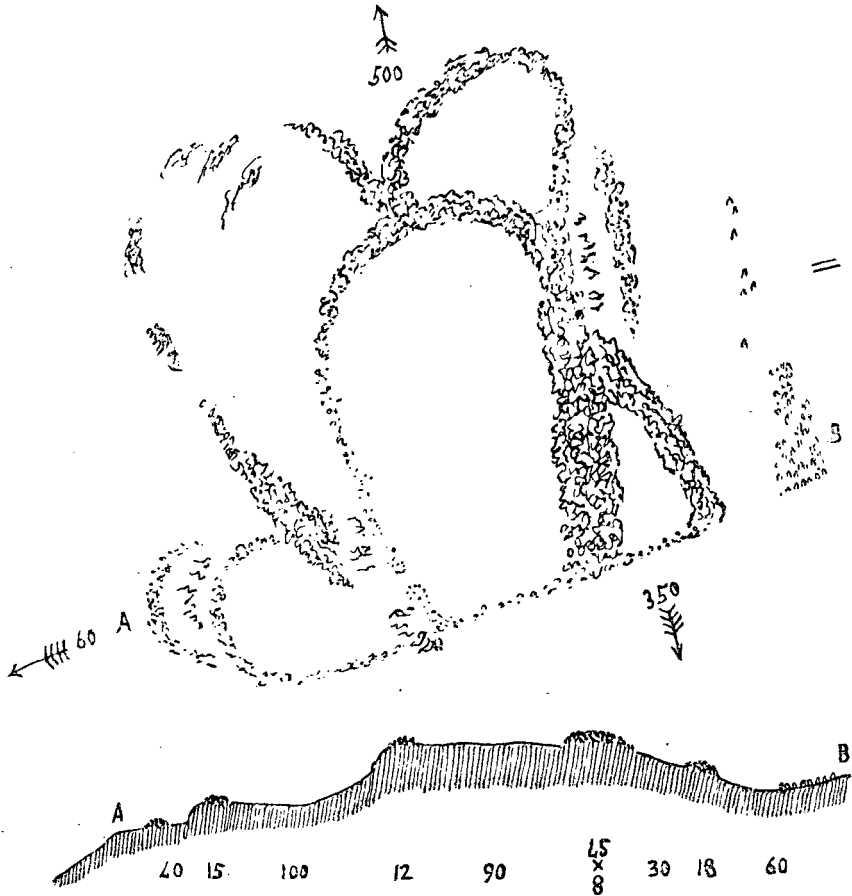


Fig. 3. West Cademuir Fort.

corner, and another on the east face, but they have been so much tampered with that it is impossible to tell whether they are ancient or modern. I have omitted in the plan the walls of a modern sheep-pen. There are traces of

traverses, if they are not modern walls, across the wide spaces between the lines of circumvallation.

d. Stone Forts with Connected Outworks.

7. *West Cademuir Fort* (figs. 1, 3, 4, 5), 1087 feet above the sea, is situated 700 yards south-west of the upper one, and fully 200 feet below it. The site resembles that of the upper fort in its natural strength to the north, south, and west (see p. 18), but the eastern approach is across a series of slight ridges and hollows on a general level not much below that of the fort. The works consist of a central part, about 230 by 150 feet, with five connected outworks at a lower level. The front towards the east, 300 feet in length, is almost straight, and bounds one side of a shallow natural trench, about 20



Fig. 4. East Front of West Cademuir Fort, with stone *chevaux-de-frisc*.

yards wide, which separates the fort from the ridge beyond. On this, the weakest side by nature, the main wall has been of remarkable strength, the ruins at its southern end being no less than 45 feet wide and 8 feet high, a height, however, which is partially due to a natural ridge. It is further strengthened here by a little outwork, enclosing a small space in front. Towards its northern end the wall is not so strong, probably because the natural trench is deeper in that direction and the ridge higher and more rocky. At the foot of the rocks here there is a quantity of debris, which may either have been thrown down from above, or may have formed another rampart. In the natural trench, at its shallow southern end, and occupying a space of 25 by 10 yards, stands a remarkable group of about 140 stones (figs. 3, 4). Most of them have fallen down, but a considerable number are

still upright. They have been set up at irregular intervals of a foot or so from each other, and stand from 2 to 3 feet above the ground; they are mostly somewhat sharp-edged or sharp-pointed, and although a monumental character has been assigned to them, I think it much more likely that they are the remains of a stone *chevaux-de-frise*. A few similar stones stand apart from the group, and numerous little grass mounds probably conceal others, so that, making allowance for the ease with which such detached stones could be carried off, I have little doubt that originally the hollow was quite filled with them. This method of strengthening a weak front I have found also at Dreva, in Peebleshire. It has not been met with elsewhere in Scotland, but is found in one Welsh and four Irish forts. The single entrance has been skilfully placed at the south-west angle of the main work, which it enters between two rocky knolls. Before reaching this point, an attacking party would be exposed to a cross shower of missiles from two outworks, one at least of which would need to be stormed before the main gate could be assaulted.

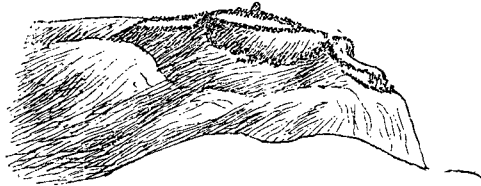
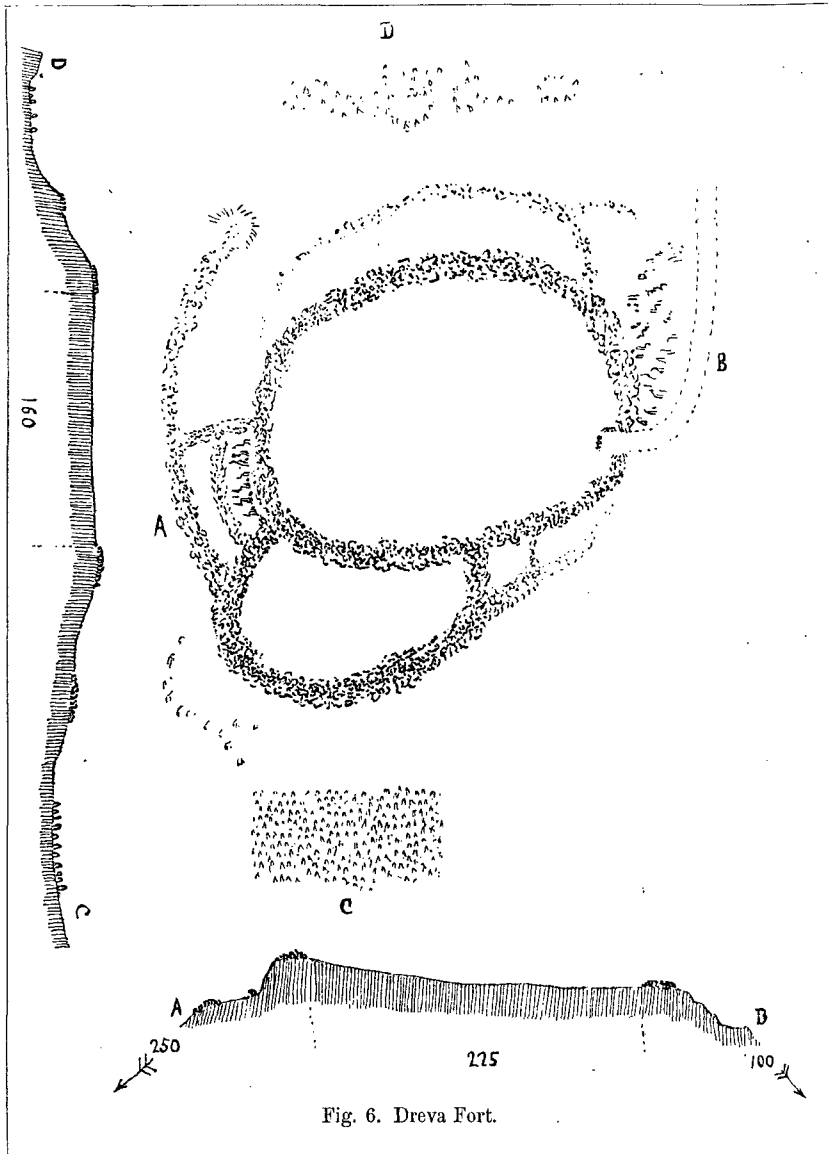


Fig. 5. West Cademuir Fort, from above Woodhouse.

Besides the three forts on Cademuir Hill already described, there are some apparently prehistoric remains on the neck of land between the northerly and southerly divisions of the chain. They form a connected group of mounds, mostly curvilinear, apparently of mixed earth and stones, suggestive of an ancient settlement of some kind, but not resembling the forts. Probably they represent the fourth fort on Cademuir of the Old Statistical Account, mentioned by Armstrong (*Companion to the Map of Tweeddale*, 1775) as being "above the Wham," which is the name given in the Ordnance Map to the hollow below it. Close to these remains are two low circular mounds, which I believe to be cairns overgrown with turf.

8. *Dreva* (figs. 6, 7, 8).—Trehenna Hill, rising 1798 feet above the sea, east from Broughton and north of the Tweed, sends an offshoot southwards, which, after bending westwards and falling 1000 feet, rises slightly once more to form the rocky eminence on which stands Dreva fort. It is 898 feet above the sea, and about 250 above the junction of Holmswater with the combined Biggar, Kilbucho, and Broughton Burns, a little above their union with the Tweed. It is thus not far from the openings of five glens, an important position which it holds in common with two other strong forts,



Helmend and Rachan. Like Cademuir it consists of a central work with annexed enclosures. Steep descents make it very strong on the east and west. But on the north and south it is only slightly raised above the



Fig. 7. South Front of Drava, with stone *chevaux-de-frise*.

Trehenna spur, and is separated from it by easily traversed hollows, like that on the east front of Cademuir. It is interesting, therefore, to find that in like manner Drava has been protected by stone *chevaux-de-frise* in both

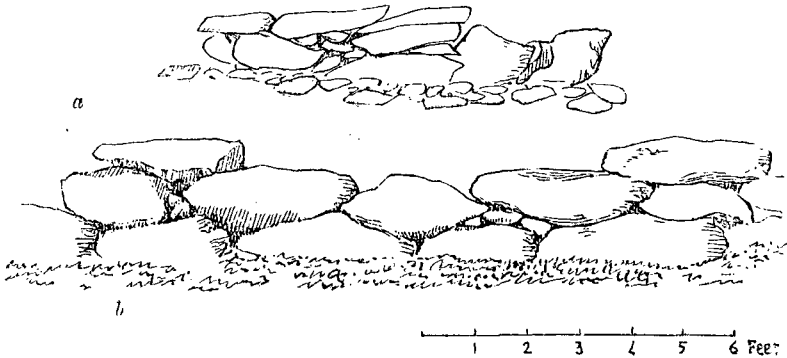


Fig. 8. Masonry—(a) West Cademuir, (b) Drava.

hollows. The one to the south (fig. 7) occupies a well-defined space, 30 by 20 yards, and consists of several hundred stones, mostly fallen, but a few still standing. That on the north has apparently suffered more, and the remaining stones are arranged in various artificial-looking figures, probably merely the chance result of plundering. The entrances are on the east face, and at the north-west angle. Natural rock contributes to the defence of the inner enceinte on the east and west sides.

In all my investigations of the stone forts I looked out for remains of building, in order to solve the question whether their circumvallations were originally built walls or were composed merely of heaped-up stones. In several of them I saw doubtful margins of foundations which might have sufficed for walls from 9 to 15 or 20 feet in thickness. At Henry's Brae I observed stones loosely built to a height of 4 feet; and at West Cademuir I found a fragment of masonry of dubious character, fig. 8; but it was only at Dreva that I was fortunate enough to discover a piece of wall which, although only 13 feet long and 2 to 3 in height, might with some confidence be pronounced to be of ancient construction. As shown in fig. 8, the massive stones are carefully fitted in courses, the larger interstices being filled in with small stones. In presence of this evidence we can hardly doubt that the ruins of Dreva originally stood as massive walls; and when we reflect that choice stones such as these—which probably formed wall-casings—would be the chief attraction for the plunderers who dismantled these structures, it seems probable that the other forts which so much resemble Dreva in their ruins also resembled it in their original construction.

9. *Macbeth's Castle* (fig. 9, Plate III. fig. 53), beautifully situated 1100 feet above the sea, in the midst of the finest scenery in Peeblesshire, is not recognised as a prehistoric fort either by Chambers or the Ordnance Survey. Its name—how acquired is not known—may have led to this, but as attested by masses of stony debris, without a trace of mortar, it is evidently as much a prehistoric fort as Dreva or Cademuir. The site is a grand one on the top of Woodhill, a completely isolated, finely formed, narrow, and now



Fig. 9. (A) Macbeth's Castle, (B) Hallmanor Fort.

treeless green ridge, half a mile long (of which the north end is seen in fig. 9), which rises to a height of 300 feet above the Manor water. The fort is oblong. Steep slopes give it great natural strength on the east and west sides, and masses

of debris attest that they had been defended by a wall at the top and by fortified natural platforms which run along from 15 to 20 feet lower down. The inner wall has been thrown down the slopes, but on the west side there are indications of foundations 9 feet wide close up to the edge. The approach along the ridge from the north is easier, and here three defensive lines have been constructed, the outer two being now mere low grass-covered mounds. Towards the south a sloping projection is annexed to the fort; beyond this the ridge is level for 80 yards, and then rises slightly before the final steep descent to the valley. On this rise there is a detached oval outwork of one ring, 45 by 28 yards inside, the stony debris being in places 6 yards wide. This is the only example I have met with of a detached outwork in the county. There are two entrances to the main fort, one on the south, the other on the west. The latter is peculiar, and is described on page 75.

e. Forts believed on trustworthy Evidence to have been of Stone.

10. *Pirn* (fig. 10).—Although but few stones are to be seen on the grass-covered remains of this fort, there is strong evidence that it was constructed of uncemented masonry, from the statement in the Old Statistical Account to the effect that “a fortification was erected on a rising ground adjoining the village of Innerleithen, an immense quantity of stones having been collected to form the three lines, in which no cement seemed to have been employed, the loose stones being built, however, with considerable care.” The narrow ridge of Pirn Craig, after descending with extreme steepness from the north-east towards Innerleithen for about 400 feet, abruptly rises about 60 or 70 feet to form a short narrow ridge on which stands the fort, 700 feet above the sea and 300 above the Tweed. The abrupt descents of Pirn Craig and the fort face each other closely, but as the interior of the fort falls towards the south-west it is not so much overlooked as might be expected. Only two defensive lines can be traced at the sides, but at the ends three are visible, with a fourth on the west side of the north entrance. At the north angle three of the lines, and at the south end two of them, take the form of terraces. It is doubtful whether these terraces were intended as foundations for walls occupying their whole width, or as platforms on which the defenders could stand, protected by breastworks. I believe that the latter was the case, because, in general, traces of walls are found only at the outer edges. The two entrances are well protected; one, from the north, takes a curved course between the three terraces and inner rampart on the east side and a triple rampart on the west; the other, from the south-west, penetrates the three ramparts by a sinuous course, and has been further guarded by passing between two circular structures in the space between the inner and middle rampart.

11. *Rachan* (Plate II. fig. 51).—From Chalmers’s statement that the British camp at Rachan was “enveloped with an enormous quantity of stones,” it in

all probability was a stone fort, although only a few heaps of stones now

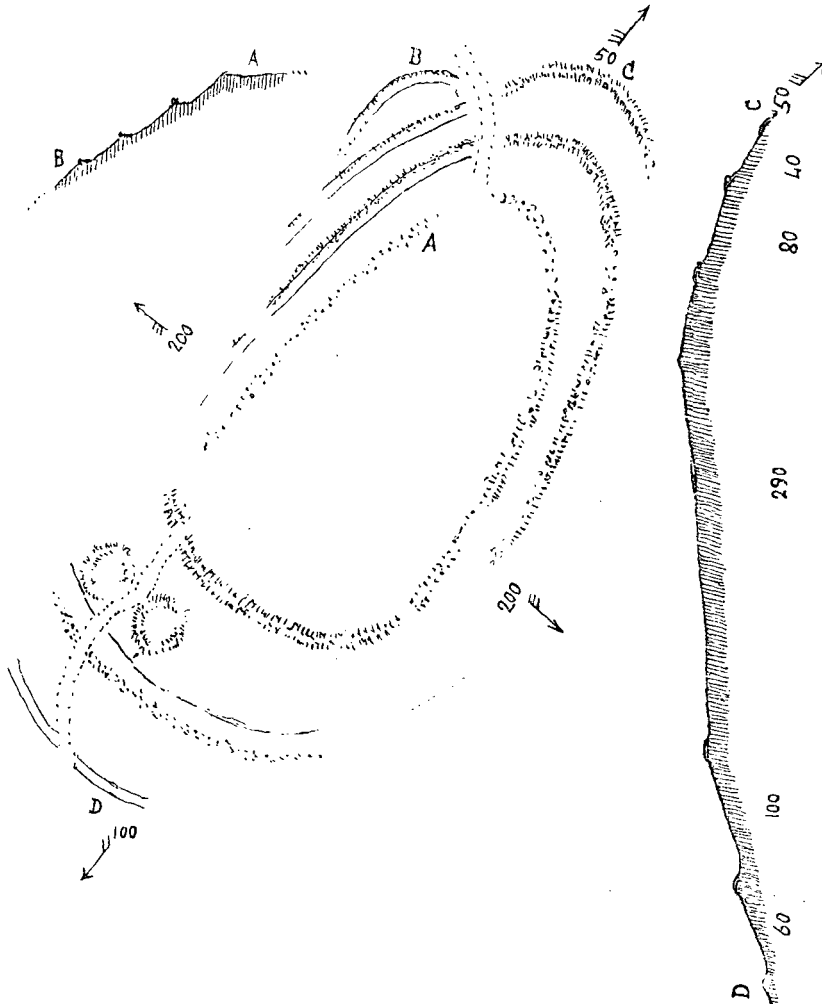


Fig. 10. Pinn.

remain. The site is on the top of a perfectly isolated hill, 400 feet high,

1041 above the sea, commanding extensive views, and overhanging the great eastward bend of the Tweed, not far from where it receives the united Biggar, Broughton, Kilbucho, and Holms waters. It faces in different directions the strong forts of Dreva, Helمند, and Tinnis. The defences apparently have consisted of a single circumvallation, with additional lines to the south, and an outwork annexed to the east. The fort does not occupy the whole of the flat top of the hill, as a slight hollow separates the outwork from a small height to the east. The grass-covered foundations in some places have a double character, often met with in forts of which foundations alone remain, suggestive either of two closely concentric walls, or of outer and inner casings, which had been filled with rubble to form a single wall. In this instance, if the wall were single it must have been 21 feet thick.

12. *Chester Hill, Hundleshope* (fig. 11), 1000 feet above the sea, on the east ridge of Hundleshope, immediately before its descent to the plain 300 feet

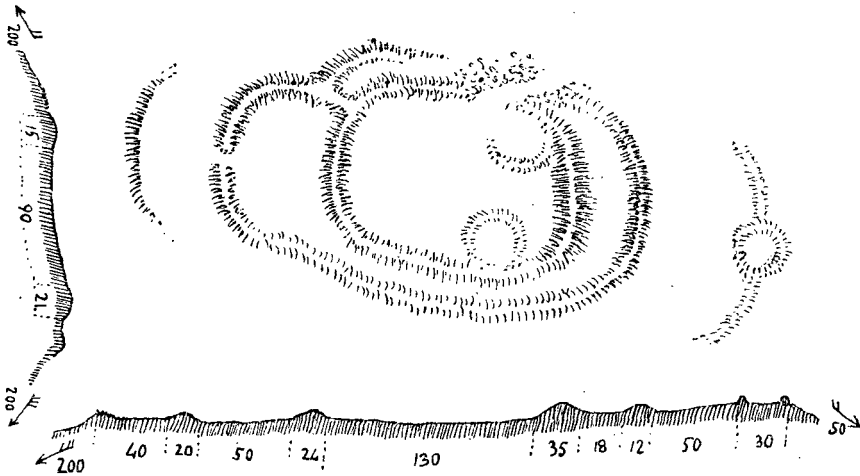


Fig. 11. Chester Hill, Hundleshope.

below, is strong by nature, as the spur on which it stands is somewhat isolated, and the slopes from it on three sides are long and steep. The interior is oval, and is slightly hollowed. The ramparts are much demolished, but the inner one at the east end still measures 7 feet in height and 36 across. The plan of this fort is peculiar, as the outer rampart, closely approximating to the inner one at the sides, diverges from it at the ends to enclose crescentic spaces of unequal size. Beyond, on the west, another similar space has probably been enclosed, and another mound runs from the outer rampart on the north

side to the entrance. 16 yards in front of the east end, on the crowning point of the ridge, there is a small circular foundation, and there are obscure signs of this having been connected by mounds on each side with the fort. The ramparts appear to be of stone, for the most part overgrown with turf. In the interior are two circular foundations. This fort must have suffered great dilapidation in recent times, as in the New Statistical Account the Rev. James Cruikshank, who gives a very accurate description of its form, adds, "the fortifications consist of loose stones piled on each other to a breadth varying from 9 to 11 paces, and within the last twenty years were upwards of 5 feet high."

CLASS B. FORTS, THE REMAINS OF WHICH ARE ENTIRELY OR PARTIALLY
OF EARTH.

This class comprises twenty-one forts, which, owing either to decay or to original complexity of design, or to a combination of both these causes, cannot now be strictly classified into subdivisions. The simplest kind have been made by digging trenches and throwing up the earth so obtained to form ramparts. In some instances, besides the stones naturally found in the soil, larger stones seem to have been purposely mingled with the earth. In other cases the materials for the ramparts have apparently been obtained, not by excavating trenches, but in the process of carving the ground into the form of a fort, and in these there are no true trenches. In others, part of the *enceinte* appears to have been of earth and part of stone. All these kinds have been so variously combined in some instances as to defy classification; we therefore place the whole of them under one head, taking first those in which the earthen type is most strongly marked, or such as are of very simple design.

1. *Upper Houndhill*, 1137 feet above the sea, stands on the edge of a westward slope to the Tweed, 540 feet above it, and commands a fine view towards Dawick and Stobo. In other directions it has no natural strength. It is circular, and measures 190 yards round the top of the single rampart, which is in some places 20 feet wide and 6 feet high to the outside. There are very dubious traces of a fosse; and altogether this is the simplest of all the Peebles forts. It has two entrances.

2. *Shaw Hill, Kirkurd*, 900 feet above the sea, stands on a slope of Shaw Hill towards the east. It is 200 feet below the top of the hill, and about as much above Tarh. It is the most insignificant of the Peeblesshire forts, measuring only about 100 yards in girth. A single oval rampart, apparently of earth, and generally not more than 2 or 3 feet in height, forms the main defence, but it is strengthened towards the west, where the hill slopes down upon it, by a trench 4 to 6 feet deep. The single entrance is towards the descent of the hill eastwards. There is a curious small triangular projection from the rampart, and at a lower level than it, into the trench.

3. *Holmswater* (fig. 12), 800 feet above the sea, is also a small circular fort, measuring about 55 yards in diameter internally. Its site is remarkable, as, in strong contrast to almost all the other forts, it is in the bottom of a valley,

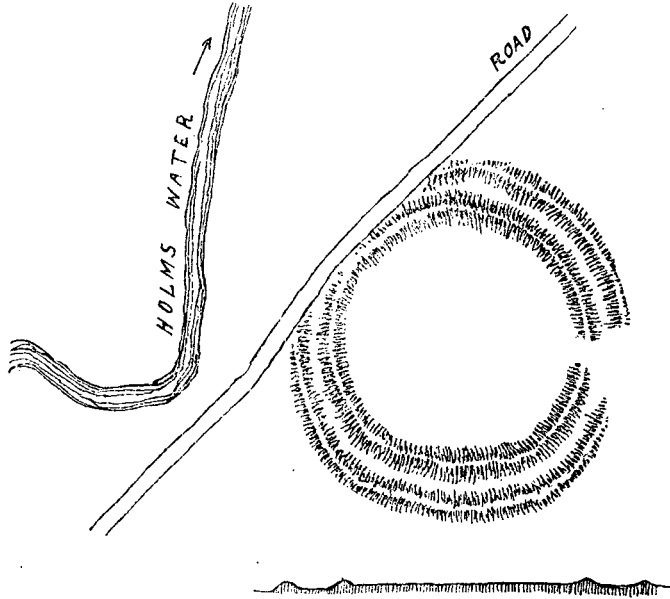
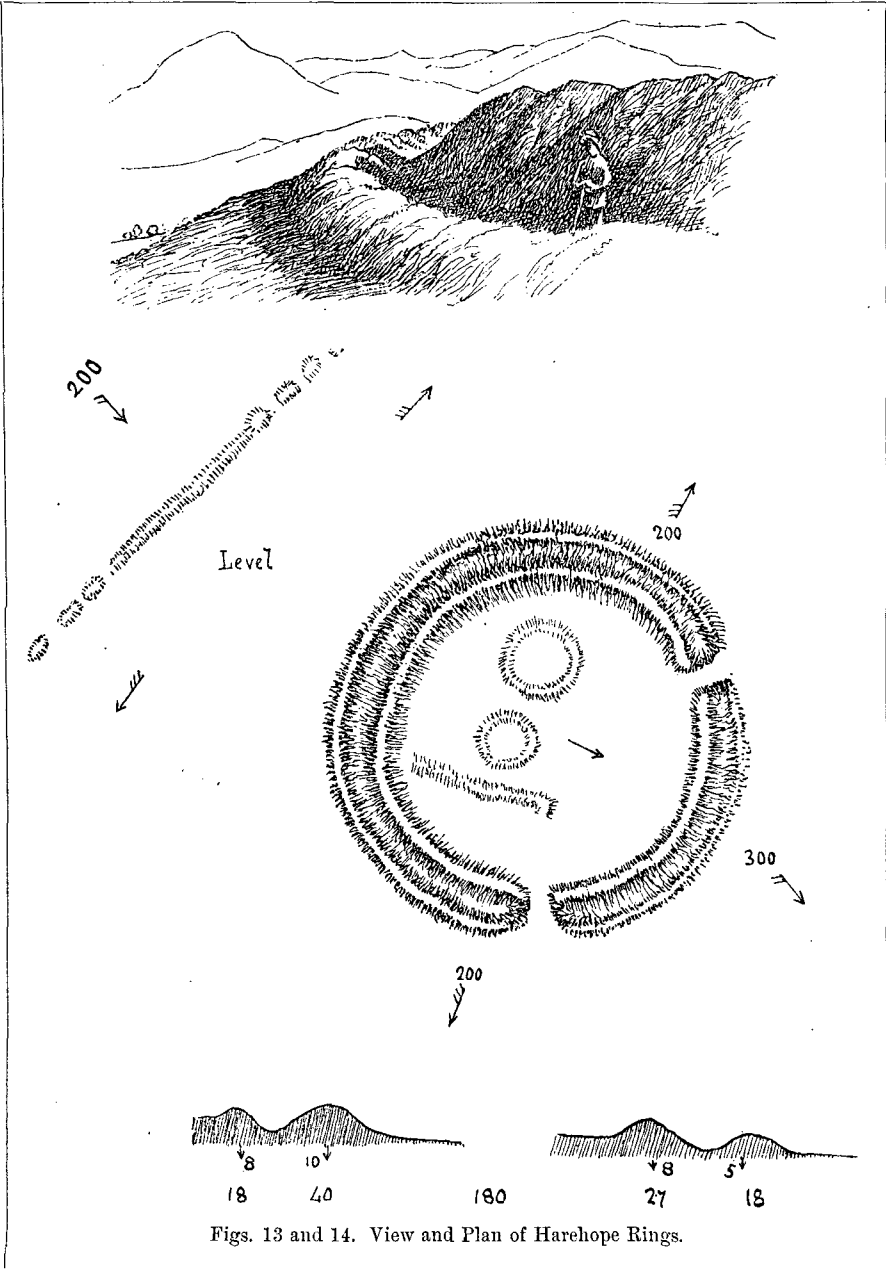


Fig. 12. Holmswater.

on a flat boggy moor. It has an unusually good command of water, as the Holmswater is only about 20 yards off. The defences consist of two ramparts with a trench between. The ramparts are low, nowhere more than 4 feet above the trench, but where well preserved are 20 feet wide; and the flat-bottomed trench is nearly as wide. The only entrance is from the north-east. This fort is only about a third of a mile from the much stronger Chester Rigs Fort on the hill behind.

4. *Harehope Rings* (figs. 13, 14), 1295 feet above the sea, crown the summit of a short rounded spur of Crailzie Hill (1561 feet), and from a height of 300 feet look down on the solitary farm on its skirts, and an extensive marshy flat, embosomed in hills. This very sequestered fort is perhaps the most perfect in the county. It is nearly circular, and measures about 60 yards in diameter inside. The defences consist of two ramparts with a trench between, and the former are most massive on the north-west, where the approach is



level, the inner rampart being here 8 to 10 feet high. Forty-four yards from the fort a low mound and trench, flanked by three or four little oblong pits, is drawn across the level neck; but as immediately beyond this Craizie Hill rises so steeply as completely to command it, this work must have been quite

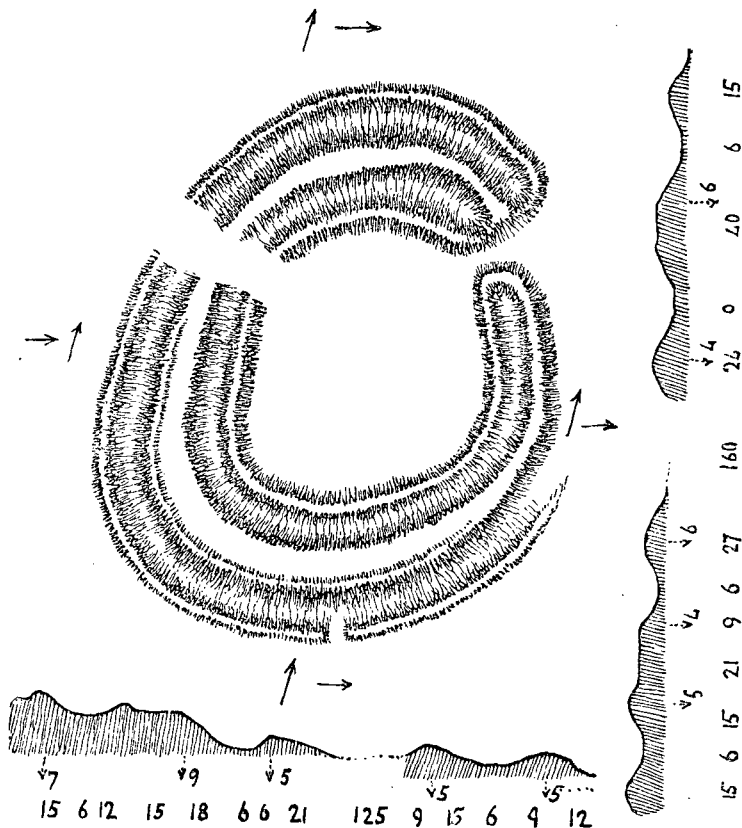


Fig. 15. Harehope Fort.

untenable by the garrison, and unless it was constructed by besiegers I am at a loss to account for it. There are two entrances to the fort, not opposite to, but rather near each other, which is not an unusual arrangement. Both are well preserved. In the interior are the turf-covered remains of two circular structures.

5. *Harehope Fort* (fig. 15), about 1100 feet above the sea, and 200 below Harehope Rings, from which it is distant half a mile, has little advantage from position, as it is placed on the long gentle south-eastern descent from Craillie Hill. In form it is broadly ovate, and its three concentric ramparts vary a good deal in width and height, particularly the middle one, which, for three-fourths of its course, and on the weakest sides of the fort, expands into a flat-topped platform, 9 to 15 feet in width. The two trenches are broad and level, so that a carriage could be driven all round them. On the west and weakest side the front is nearly straight and the mounds are strongest and highest, but they nowhere exceed 6 feet in height towards the outside, although from the fall in the ground they attain to 9 feet inside. There is a well-preserved entrance at the north-east corner. A broad opening through all the ramparts at the north-west corner, and a narrow one, through the outer rampart only, on the south front, appear to be modern.



Fig. 16. Upper Fortifications and part of Interior of Hoghill Fort.

6. *Hoghill* (figs. 16, 17, 18) is one of the most remarkable forts in Peeblesshire, on account of its extraordinary site. Viewed from the opposite side of the Lyne (fig. 17), it seems simply carved on the middle of a steep hillside, 600 feet high. Why such a position was chosen it is difficult to imagine, as the top of the hill is only 1181 feet above the sea, an elevation far below that of many other forts. Descending from the hill-top, we come rather suddenly on the fort, and find ourselves on the edge of a deep trench, with the works so close below that it seems as if an active man might jump on to the nearest rampart (side view and section, fig. 18).

The defences get gradually weaker downwards, but quarrying operations have entirely destroyed them at the lower end, where the downward slope

eases off considerably. At the upper end (section, fig. 18) the counterscarps necessarily greatly exceed the scarps in height; halfway down the counter-

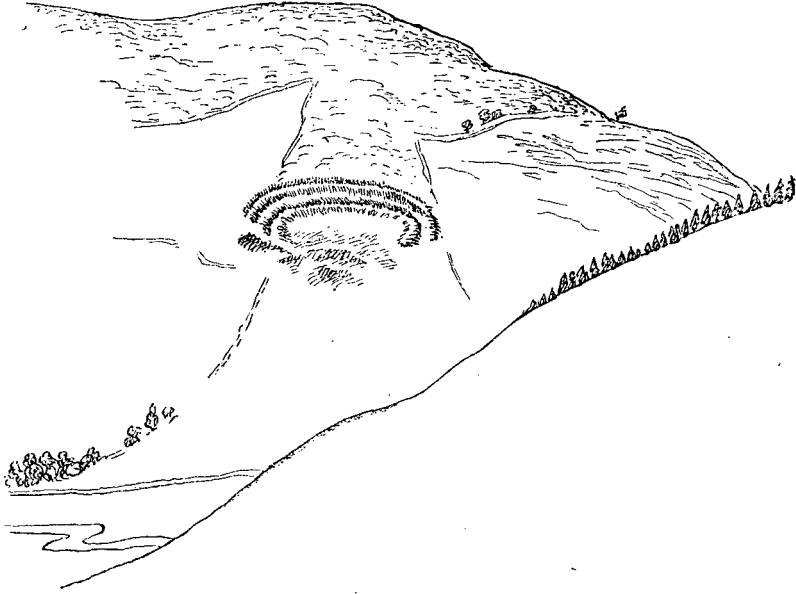


Fig. 17. Hoghill Fort, from the opposite side of the Lyne.

scarp of the inner trench there is a platform of varying width, but much too far below the top of the rampart to act as a banquette.

7. *Henderland* (figs. 19, 20, 21, 22), 1000 feet above the sea, is one of the most prominent of the forts. It stands on an elevated, tolerably level site, but, as it comes up to the very edge of a steep slope, its massive ramparts are very conspicuous from the opposite side of the valley (fig. 19), and even from the public road, 200 feet below. The works are closely commanded from the south-west by a mound, which, singularly enough, although quite small in extent, is not included within the works. From this mound it is cut off by a deep trench and two massive ramparts, which are carried round by the south and east, but losing much of their strength, to terminate at the steep slope.

The front towards the slope is scarped for a height of 15 to 20 feet, and has a narrow terrace at the foot of the scarp, close to the banked-up edge of the long slope down to the valley. The southern half of the interior is about 3 feet higher than the northern, the descent from the one to the other being by an

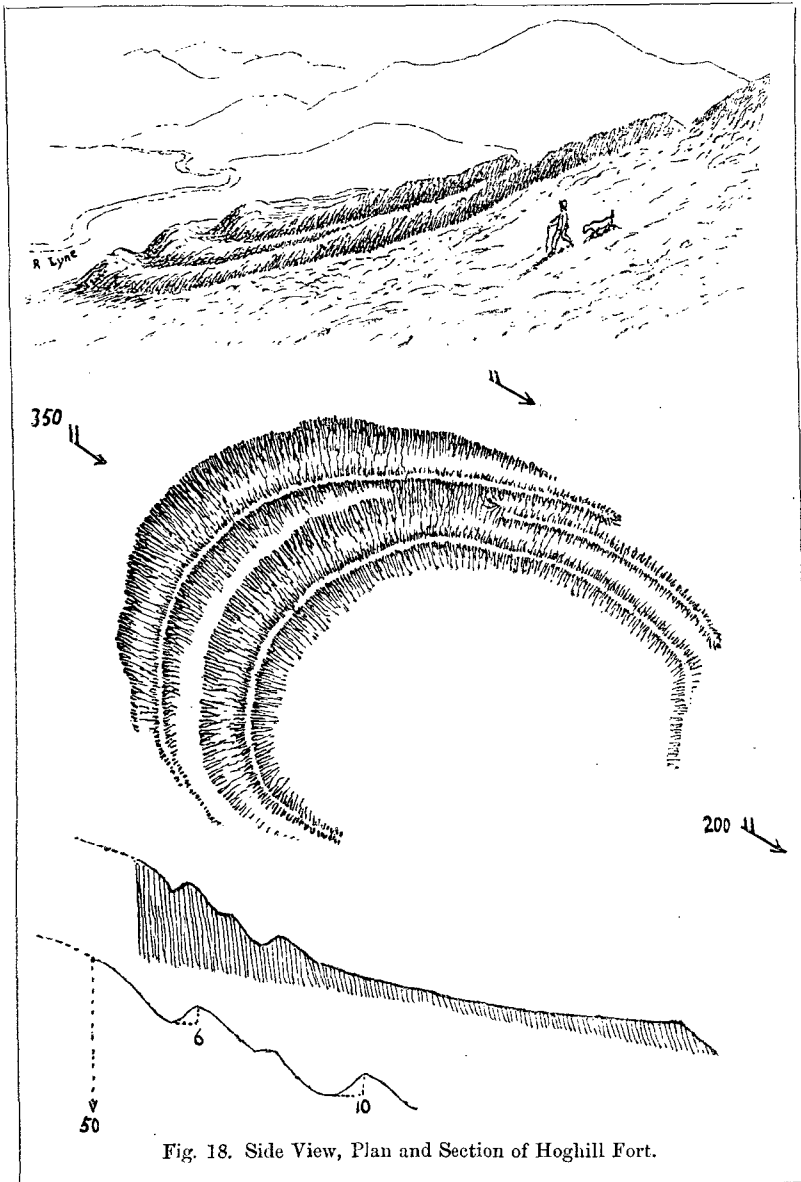


Fig. 18. Side View, Plan and Section of Hoghill Fort.

artificial slope. The sole entrance, on the north-east face, is strengthened by an additional trench and rampart on the west, and by flanking *places d'armes* on the inner ramparts.

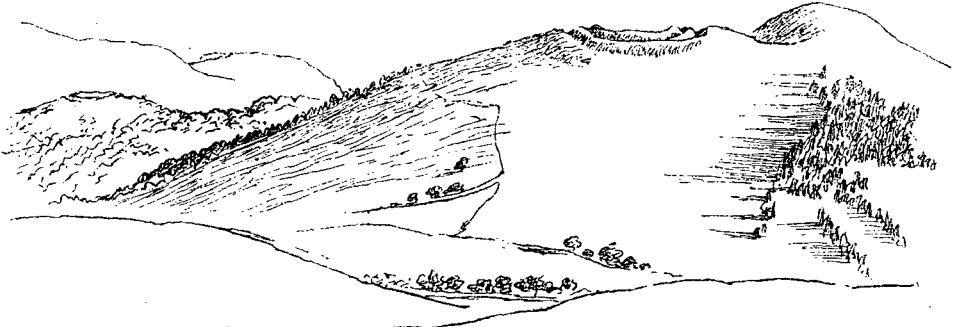


Fig. 19. Henderland, from the North-West.

The works of Henderland are well preserved and substantial. Chambers calls them "gigantic," an exaggerated term, particularly when we consider

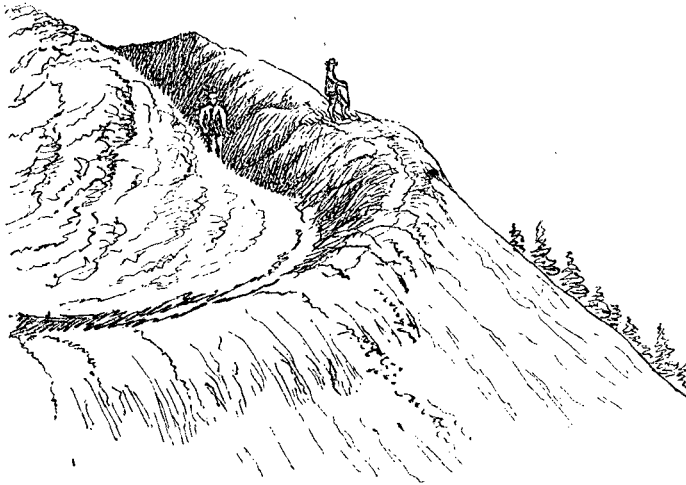
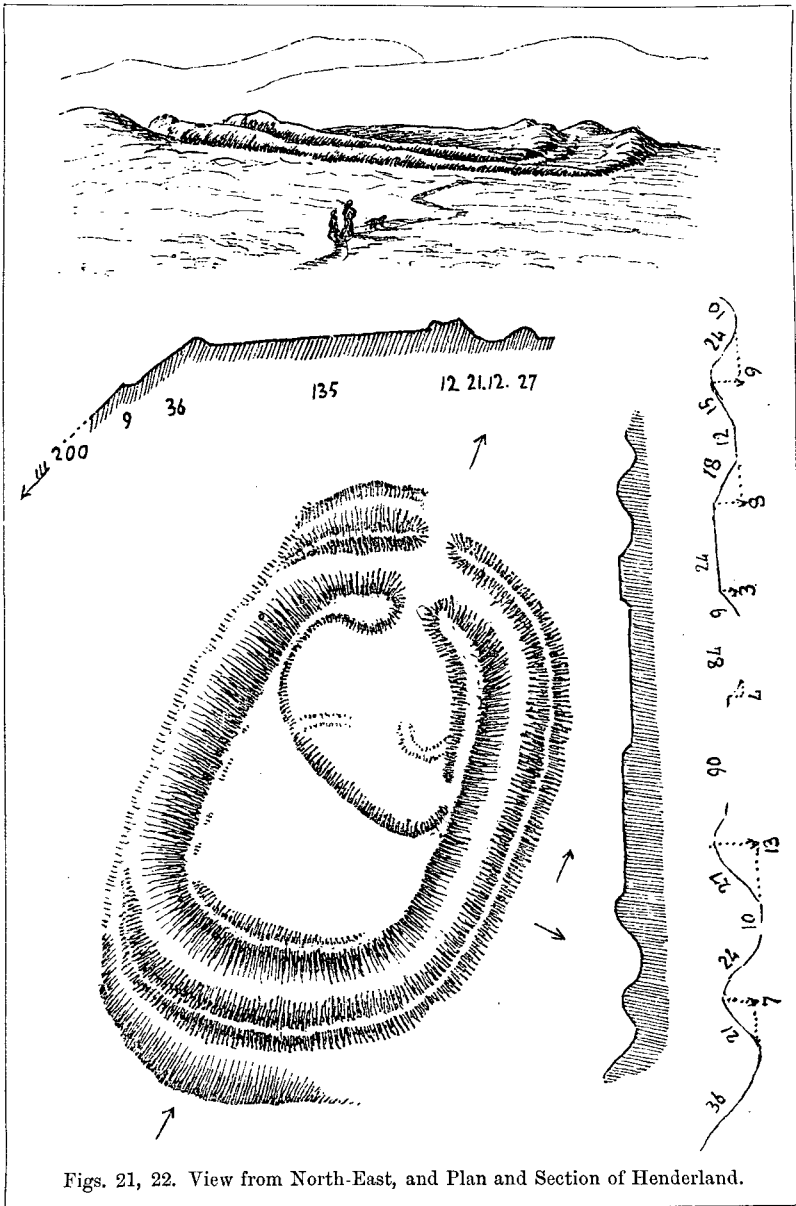


Fig. 20. South-West Angle of Henderland.

that the ramparts are only in part artificial, being, as in many other instances, to a great degree carved out of the natural inequalities of the ground.



Figs. 21, 22. View from North-East, and Plan and Section of Henderland.

and three trenches, which are well preserved, the ramparts in some places being from 7 to 8 feet in height. The two outer and principal ramparts expand here and there into platforms of varying breadth, so that it would seem as if the defenders in some places fought from behind them, in others on the top of them. Vestiges of parapets remain on some of these platforms on both the inner and outer sides. Two small platforms, one at each side, look as if intended either to flank the trenches or to carry some warlike engine. They are not probably of modern origin, as the trenches bend sharply behind them. The inner circumvallation is merely a low parapet round the edge of the interior. The entrances are not well preserved: one is on the north-east, another on the south-west; a third opening on the south being probably modern. From natural breaks in the ramparts they appear to be of earth and small stones, but a few large stones lie about, and the ground outside on the north and east feels as if the turf concealed others which seem fitted to each other, so smooth and regular is the surface. This fort does not make such a fair show as other well-preserved ones, as it is covered with coarse heather instead of beautiful smooth short hill-pasture. The interior also is very irregular and rough, with shapeless structural remains.

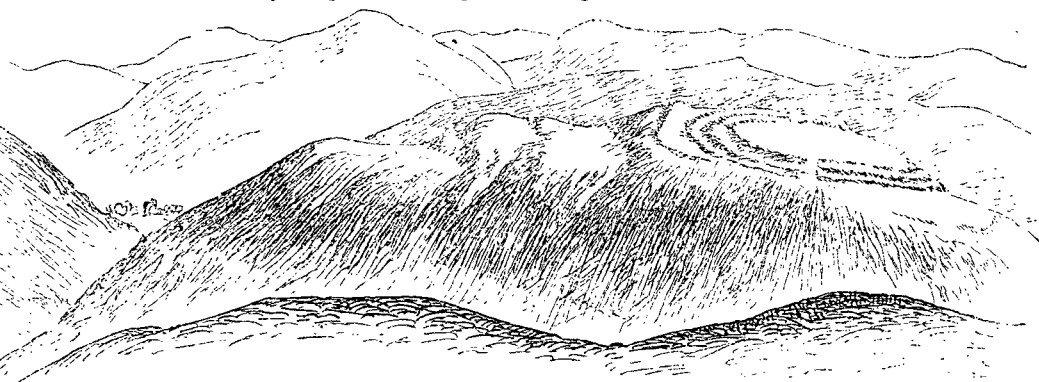


Fig. 24. Whiteside Fort, from Drum Maw.

9. *Whiteside* (figs. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28), 1204 feet above the sea, stands at the north end of a short ridge, on the east side of, and parallel with, the Lyne River. This ridge rises very steeply for 500 feet from the Flemington Burn on the south, and has equally steep descents to the east and west, but to the north falls only about 60 feet by a gentle slope, to rise again into the hill Drum Maw (1453 feet). The fort occupies the full width of the ridge, and therefore is very strong by nature on the east and west sides, which no doubt accounts for the comparative simplicity of the artificial works there,—

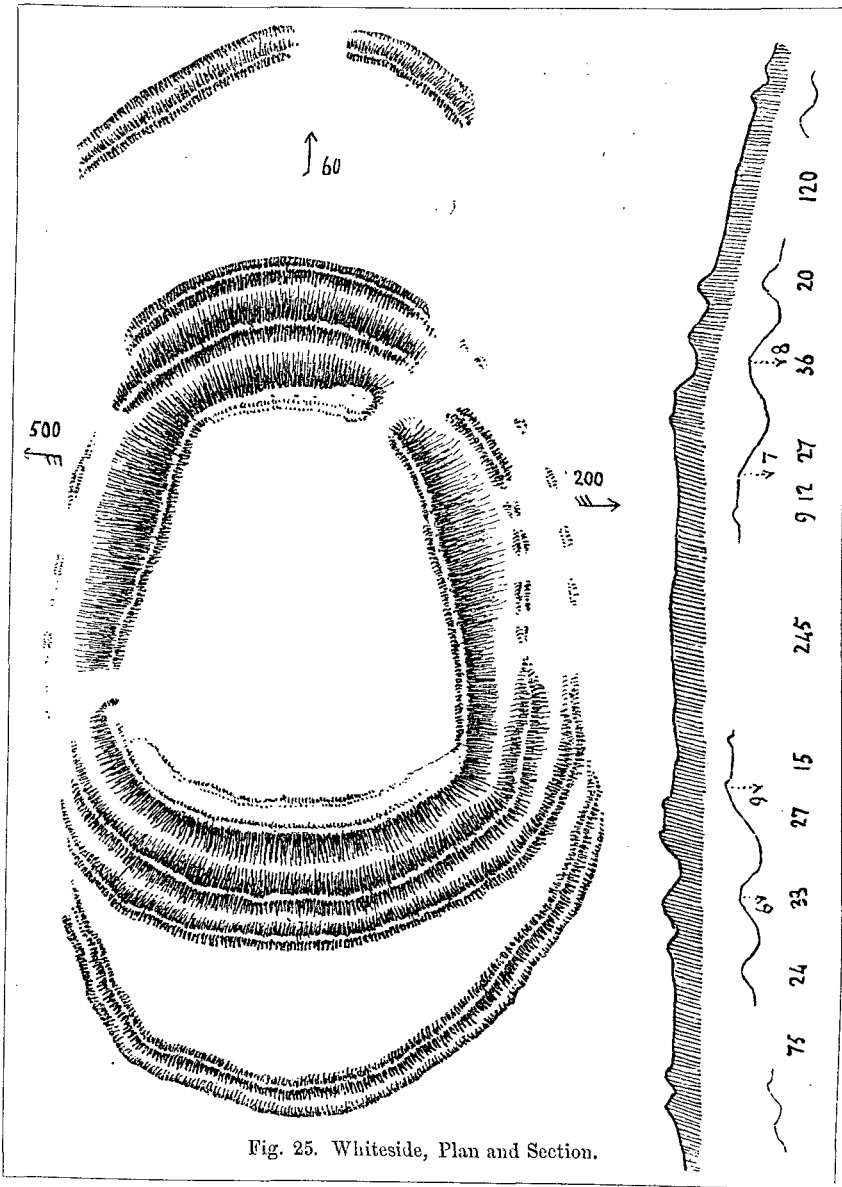


Fig. 25. Whiteside, Plan and Section.

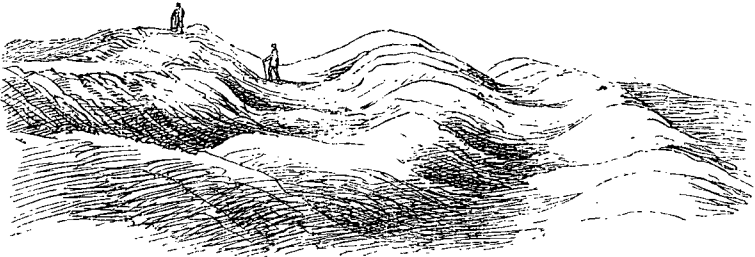


Fig. 26. Whiteside, South End.



Fig. 27. Whiteside, South-East Angle.

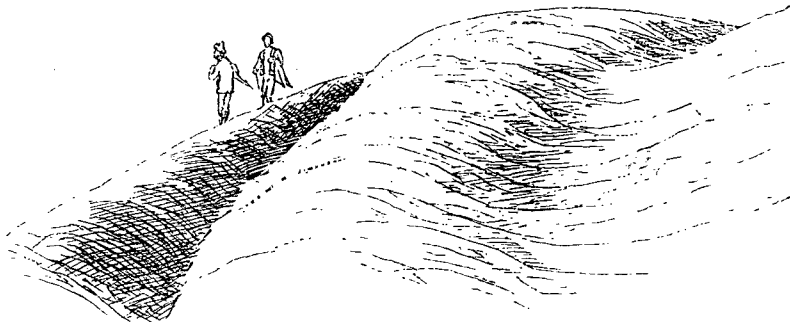


Fig. 28. Whiteside, West End.

the west front having apparently consisted merely of the scarped hill-face with a narrow parapeted terrace below, and the east of three low ramparts. The north end, on the other hand, is protected by three strong ramparts with intervening trenches, besides an advanced rampart and trench less than half-way down the slope towards Drum Maw, now quite disconnected with the main work. The broader southern end is the weakest, as it fronts the undulating approach of some hundred yards along the ridge. Here, therefore, are three strong ramparts and two trenches, with an advanced rampart and trench joining the main work at the flanks, but thrown forward to the edge of a hollow which forms a natural wide trench in front of it. The defence is aided on this front by a platform, probably of stone overgrown with turf, raised behind the inner rampart. There seems to be a similar arrangement at the north end, particularly close to the north-east entrance, but the works are less perfect there. It is worthy of remark that the ramparts on the north front (fig. 28) are very regular, while those on the south front (fig. 26) are of rude workmanship, following the irregularities of the ground, and not keeping at regular distances from each other. Of the three openings into the fort, probably those at the north-east and south-west corners alone are ancient, but all are too much broken down for identification.

10. *Mitchell Hill Fort* (Plate VI. fig. 68) encircles the summit and south-west end of the isolated Mitchell Hill, 1307 feet above the sea, situated opposite the northern spurs of Culter Fell, from which it is separated by an exceedingly steep ravine nearly 400 feet in depth. As the fort comes to the edge of the ravine, it is practically impregnable on this, the south, side; and the long ascents from all other directions are very stiff, except along the ridge from the north-east, where the rise is gentle. The defences consist of a single rampart and fosse, enclosing an oval space about 200 by 120 yards, with an advanced weak rampart and trench about 50 yards down the slope to the west, traceable for about 170 yards beginning at the steep ravine. The main rampart is low, rising not more than 2 or 3 feet above the trench, but the united width of the rampart and trench is from 25 to 30 feet. The rampart has a rude character, as it slavishly follows all the inequalities of the ground. It seems to be of earth and stones thrown up from the trench, but must surely have lost much of its original height. A few large stones lie about. Altogether this fort impressed me as being of a very primitive type.

11. *Lower Houndhill* (fig. 29), half a mile south-west from the old tower of Barns, 1000 feet above the sea and 400 above the Tweed, on ground sloping gently to that river to the north and east, is rather weakly placed towards the south, as the ground rises from it in that direction.

On the west side the fortifications are almost gone. They are best preserved on the south, where a massive rampart still rises 8 feet above the deep and wide fosse. In rear of this a low, wide, stony but moss-covered mound indicates an inner defence on this side. The interior has apparently been much

quarried, but some of the little precipitous rock-faces look as if they might have formed part of the original defensive lines, particularly on the east, where the lines from the north and south seem to converge on a small preci-

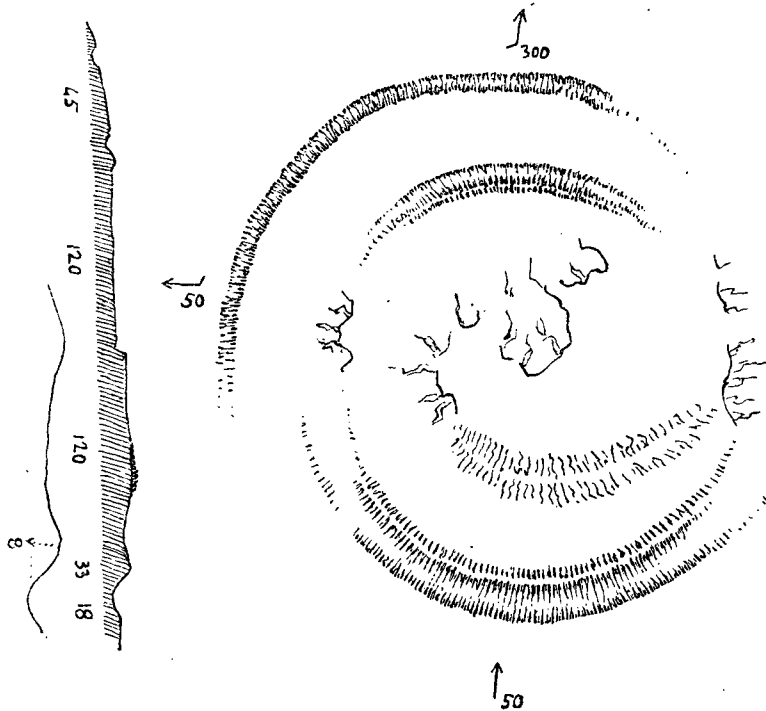


Fig. 29. Lower Houndhill.

pice. There are not a few large stones lying about, and the fort has probably been partly of earth, partly of stone.

12. *Janet's Brae* (fig. 30), 1000 feet above the sea, is situated at the south end of the eastern ridge of Soonhope, where it suddenly descends by a steep declivity to the Tweed, 500 feet below. Nowhere in Peeblesshire are prehistoric forts as numerous as hereabouts, in the vicinity of the present capital and the best land in the county. On the eastern ridge of Soonhope and its subsidiary heights, within a radius of half a mile, there are five. On the opposite side of Soonhope there is another. On the opposite side of the Tweed, within a mile and a half of Peebles, there are two. And

within a radius of 3 miles round the capital there are or have been not less than twenty in all. The position of the fort is strong to the south, where the fort comes to the edge of the declivity, and to the east and west where the ground also falls, though less steeply, but from the north the main rampart is commanded at a distance of only 25 yards by a sharp rise of the ridge. Here therefore the fortifications are strongest, the massive rampart being still 8 to 10 feet above the fosse, which has a low breastwork in front. Moreover, in

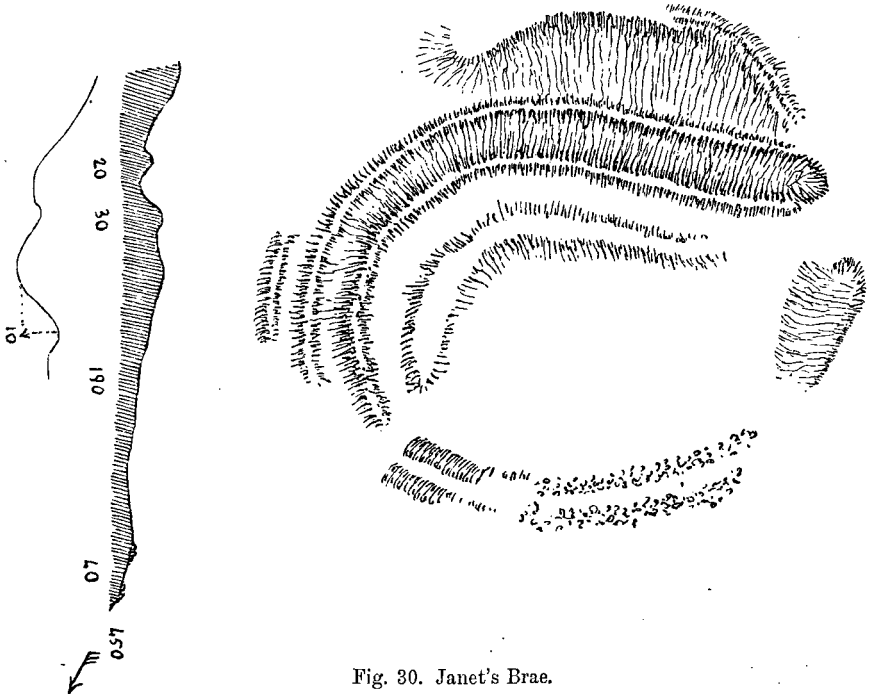


Fig. 30. Janet's Brae.

rear of the rampart an additional mound has been raised, and, as in rear of it the ground falls away, the interior is invisible from the commanding ridge, all that is seen being three lines of defence, rising one above another. The fortifications sweep round to the western entrance, getting weaker as the natural defence improves, but strengthened near the entrance by a third rampart and trench. On the south the little that remains indicates that a double stone wall had been carried round there, passing again into earthworks towards the eastern entrance. A depression in the interior, with some rushes growing, is the only sign I have seen of a spring within the Peeblesshire forts.

13. *Blythhill* (fig. 31).—The northern part of Peeblesshire is formed by the southerly slopes of the Pentland hills and a wide shallow depression separating these slopes from the hills, or elevated table lands, which form the mass of the county on the south. It is remarkable that in this northern part of the county

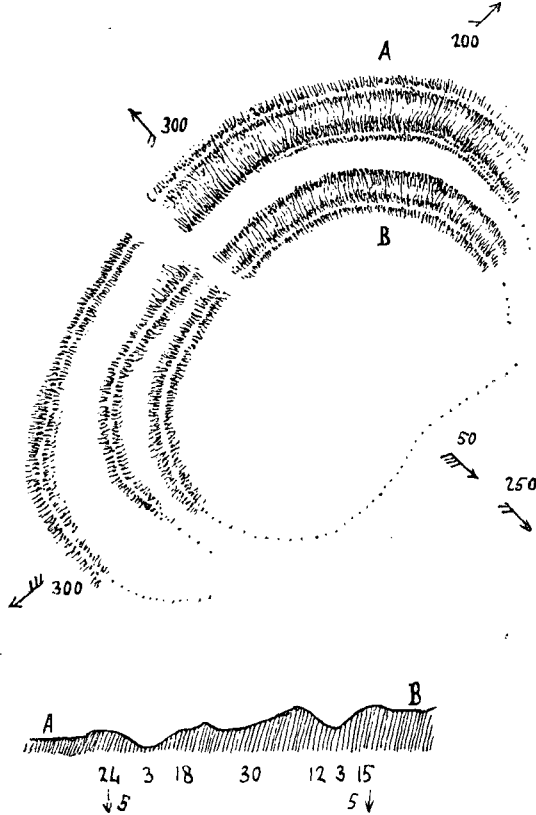


Fig. 31. Blythhill.

there are no forts. Blythhill and its neighbour Blythbankhill can scarcely be deemed exceptions, because, although the isolated ridge on which they stand lies to the north of the table lands, it runs parallel and quite close to them. The Blythhill ridge begins about a mile south-west of Romanno bridge, and, after a course of about a mile and a half in that direction, attains its

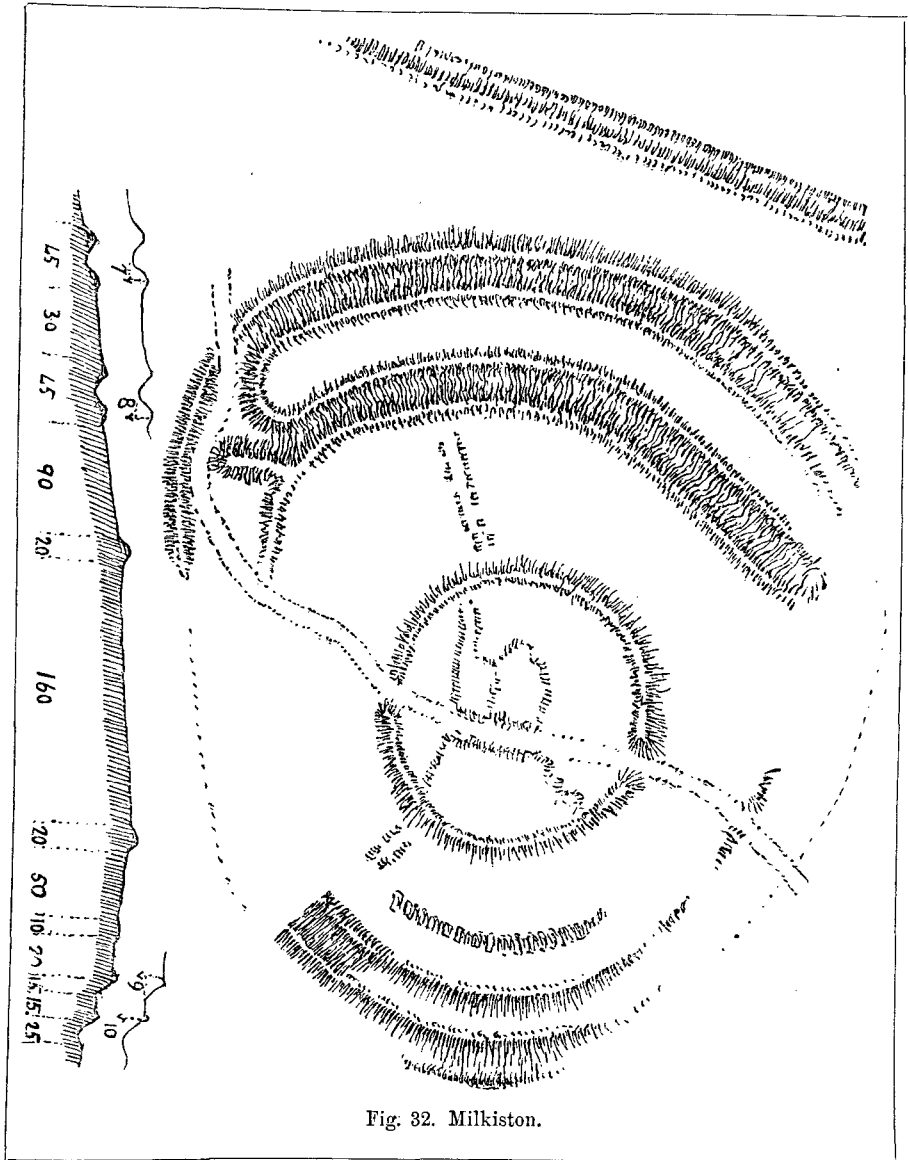


Fig. 32. Milkiston.

greatest height of about 300 feet above the adjacent hollows; it then falls 200 feet, to rise again and form the summit of Blythhill, 1009 feet above the sea, on which stands a tolerably well preserved fort. It is strongly placed, fully 300 feet above the Tarth, which flows round the west and south sides of the hill. The weakest face is towards the north-east, and here accordingly the fortifications are strongest, consisting of three ramparts with two trenches. The massive middle rampart, partly carved out of the ground, is in some places 20 yards across, and is flat on the top. On the west face the ramparts stand on a steeper slope, are weaker, and have no true trenches. Southwards they are gradually lost, and the south-east face has no trace of defence, the natural strength given by a 50-foot slope, so steep as to be almost insurmountable, having been probably thought sufficient, with a palisade. There is an entrance from the north-west, and some indications of another from the south-west. Sixty yards in front of the fort on the north-east are the remains of a small circular enclosure, a short distance beyond which is a mound, possibly ancient.

14. *Milkiston* (figs. 32, 33), 1100 feet above the sea, one of the most elaborate works in the county, has been much demolished in the present century, but the north front is still well preserved, although injured in the gales of recent years by the uprooting of many of the trees grown upon it. The fort is situated about half way along and 100 feet below the highest point of a ridge running south-south-east from Eddlestone village for a mile and a half. It is broadly pear-shaped, the widest end towards the north. The long lateral slopes of the ridge give it much natural strength on the sides, but the ends are easily accessible along the ridge. The defences on the sides are almost totally gone; those at the south end in their present state consist of two broad platforms, the inner one 9 feet above the outer, which is 10 feet above a shallow fosse with a low counterscarp. In rear of the inner platform, which is 20 feet wide, are the remains of a rampart, and 50 yards in rear of this comes the inner *enceinte* or citadel. The north face consists first of two concentric lines of defence, each constructed of two ramparts separated by a fosse, with a platform 30 feet wide between the two lines. At the west end this platform is cut off from the west front by a traverse in the manner shown in the plan and sketch, fig. 33. If, as the Ordnance Map indicates, the east end was formerly similarly constructed, the platform B must have been a kind of detached ravelin,—a unique structure in these forts. A space 90 feet wide separates these outer defences from the central circular space or citadel, which is 160 feet in diameter. The latter is surrounded with a rampart, but has no fosse, and the interior is filled with grass-covered ruins, excavated in presence of Sir Wm. Chambers, who found “the imperfect foundations of two buildings of stone without mortar, each measuring about 32 feet in length.” In the wide space surrounding the citadel there are also remains of building, two or three appearing to have been straight traverses. The structure has been so much tampered with that the plan of the entrances cannot be satisfac-

torily made out. At present one enters at the north-west angle and slants up to the citadel as shown in the plan; another enters more directly by the middle of the east side.

Immediately in front of the north end is a straight and massive rampart with a fosse beyond. It is quite detached from the fort, and, according to Chambers and the Ordnance Map, is the remains of a work which enclosed $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres of the ridge north of the fort. From the rampart being on the side nearest to the fort and the fosse beyond, this part of the work must have been intended to aid in the defence of the fort, but the remains of the enclosure still traceable some hundred yards northwards in the plantation seem of too trifling a character to be intended for defence. It seems probable, therefore, that the enclosure was intended for cattle, but that the side nearest to the fort was so constructed and strengthened as to be utilised in its defence.

A great deal of stone has been used in this fort, as immense quantities are known to have been carried off to build dykes. The breaks made by uprooted trees in the ramparts at the north end show that they have been constructed of a mixture of earth and large stones.



Fig. 33. North Front of Milkiston, from the West.

The sketch (fig. 33) shows the north-west entrance and the western half of the north face, with its two concentric lines of defence, each consisting of a double rampart with a ditch between, and bounding a platform, which is cut off from the west front by the traverse, seen on the left of the sketch. Above the traverse are seen the continuation of the innermost of the four ramparts, and the wide space between all these outer works and the citadel. The trees which encumber the fort are omitted, and objects are shown as they would appear from a standpoint some feet higher than can be got on the ground.

15. *Goseland* (fig. 34), 1000 feet above the sea, 300 feet above Kilbucho Burn. The fort to which I have given this name is skilfully placed where a ridge descending westwards from Goseland Hill gets quite narrow previous to expanding into a wide eminence beyond. It thus gets the benefit of the steep slopes to the north and south, while it cuts the communication between the two heights to the east and west. In the Ordnance Map it is called a sheepfold, but it is unquestionably a fort. Although small, measuring only 175 yards in girth, this circular fort illustrates well the ingenuity of the

builders; for although it has only a single circumvallation, this is no mere rampart thrown up on the surface of the ground, but is in fact skilfully carved out of the top of the ridge. On the western side, where the interior is no higher than the exterior, a trench cuts off the fort from the ridge, while on the eastern side, where the interior is 4 feet higher than the exterior, the slope of the ground has simply been scarped and furnished with a parapet. As an

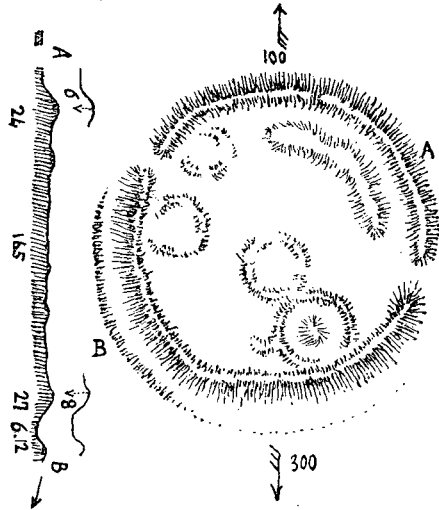
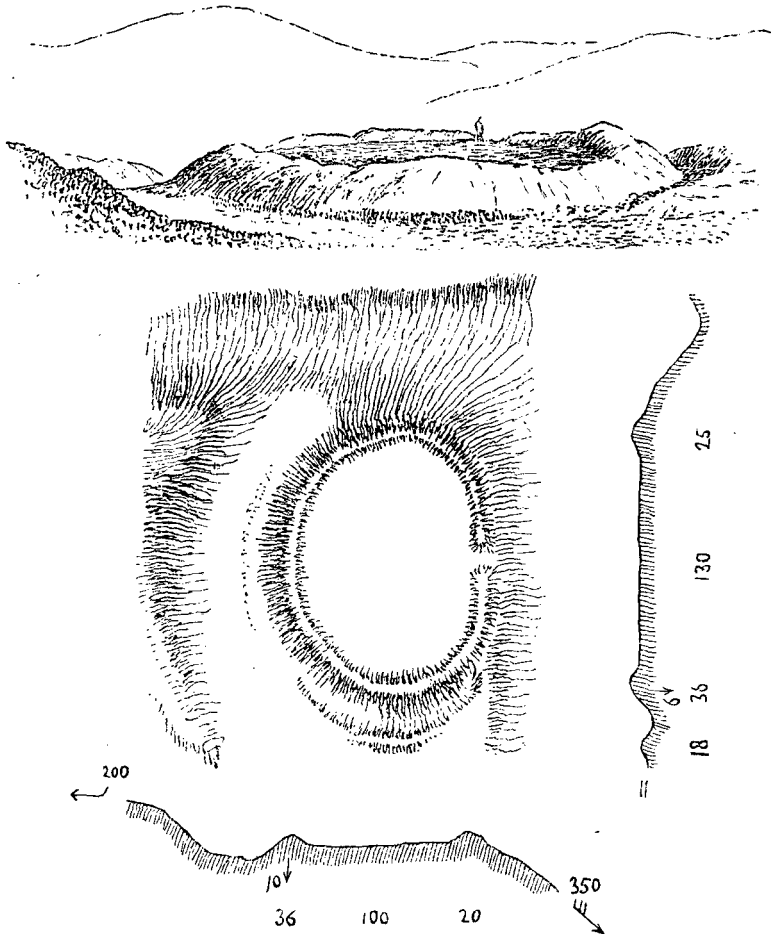


Fig. 34. Goseland.

additional defence here there seems to have been an inner mound; and one of the two entrances has apparently been fortified within by a circular structure on either side. There are also the remains of two other circular structures within the fort, one of which has a mound occupying most part of its interior. All these seeming foundations are covered with turf, and the ramparts are composed of earth and small stones.

16. *Lower Drochil* (figs. 35, 36) is situated on the edge of the final steep slope of a spur of Drochil Hill, 350 feet above the Lyne, and 1000 above the sea. It is oval and very small, the interior measuring only 42 by 30 yards. Like the last, it appears to have been carved out of the hill rather than built on it. The site is cut off from the hill above to the west by a wide natural hollow, and from the level approach on the south flank by an artificial trench, while it is amply protected on the north flank by a natural cut in the hillside, commencing a little above the fort and deepening rapidly downwards, and on the east by the steep descent to the river. The weak point is that it is com-

manded from the other side of the hollow to the west, at a distance of 30 yards, as is shown in the sketch taken from this point. The fort itself appears to



Figs. 35, 36. View from the West, and Plan of Lower Drochil.

have been formed by cutting the trench to the south, scarping the sides of the mound thus cut off, and forming a parapet of earth and small stones.

Close to the west front there may have been a wet ditch, as the ground is slightly hollowed and marshy. The single entrance is on the east face.

17. *Chargelaw* (fig. 37), 1100 feet above the sea, stands on the northerly descent of the ridge which forms the east side of Kailzie Hope. The defences are tolerably preserved only on the south front, where they consist of an outer and inner trench with a platform 12 yards wide between, which seems to have had a wall on its *inner* margin, and in rear of all a rampart, now in low relief. On the northern face there is merely a mass of stony debris, 8 to 10 yards wide, lying on the downward slope, thinly covered with turf or moss. Even on

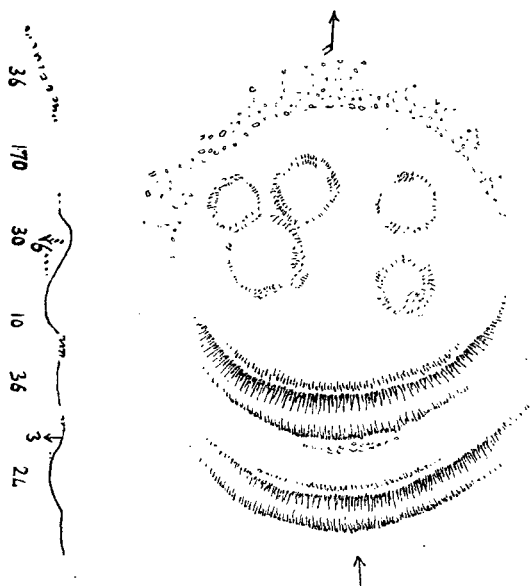


Fig. 37. Chargelaw.

the south front the works feel very stony under foot. I think it likely that this front had but little earth in its composition, and that the north front consisted of one or two stone walls. In the interior are five circular foundations overgrown with turf: three touch each other, and the largest is 48 feet in diameter.

18. *Caerlee* (fig. 38), 848 feet above the sea and 350 above the Tweed, from which it is distant about a quarter of a mile, stands on the last eminence of the descending southerly ridge of Lee Pen. High steep slopes defend it strongly on three sides, but to the north there is merely a slight descent be-

fore the rise of the ridge northwards is resumed. The defences on the north, east, and south, consist of a low rampart, backed by the upward slope of the

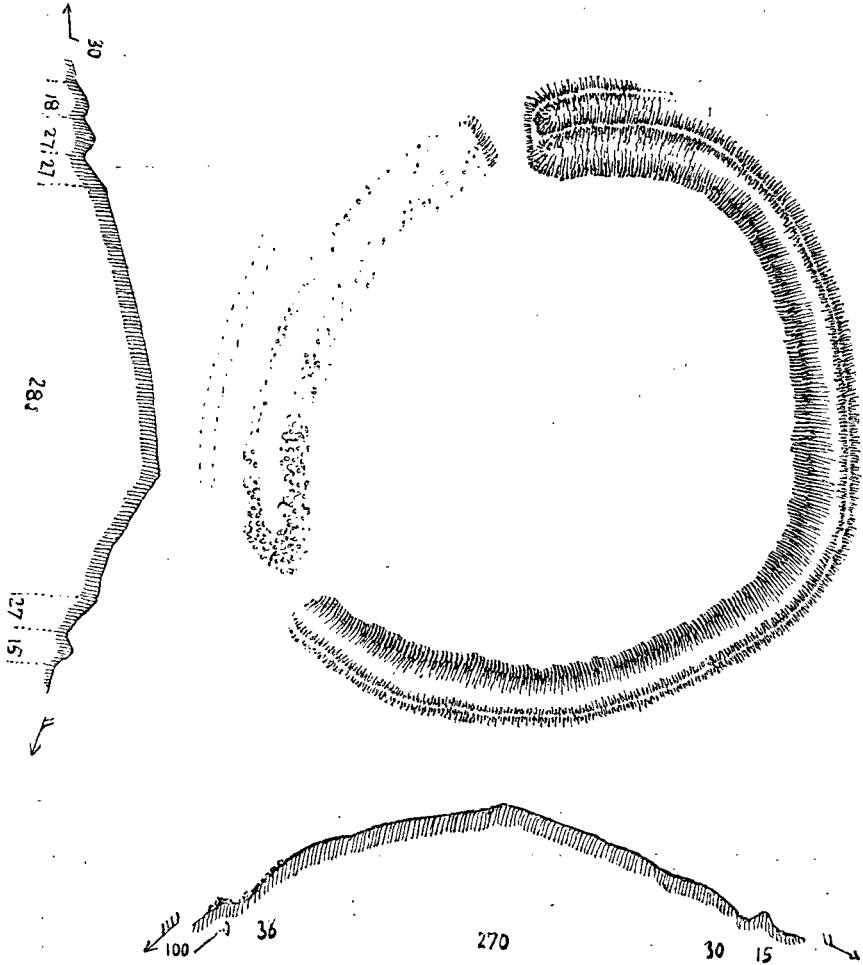


Fig. 38. Caerlee.

interior, which has been scarped for about 10 yards. There is little trace of a parapet at the top of the scarp. Within, the ground continues to rise pretty

the south. The defences on the north are almost obliterated, but on the south-east are in good condition, and well deserve protection from the plough which, on my visit, had grazed them all round. The fort is nearly circular, measuring 60 by 54 yards from crest to crest of the inner rampart. Judging from the best preserved part, the fort has consisted of two ramparts, the inner and more massive of the two being 7 feet high outside, 4 to 6 feet high inside, and as much as 30 feet across. The space between the ramparts is 10 or 12 feet wide, quite flat-bottomed, and above the level of the ground outside.

20. *Dawick* (fig. 40), 700 feet above the sea, is constructed on a slight projection from the gently sloping ground of Wester Dawick, not 100 feet above

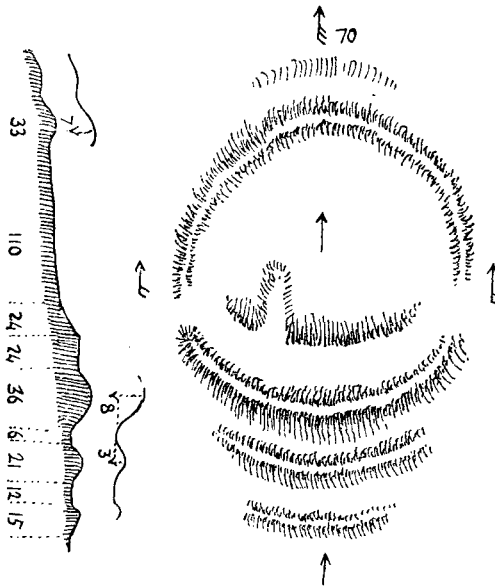


Fig. 40. Dawick.

the Tweed. The characteristic accumulation of defences on the weak side is so marked here that the space occupied by them is actually wider than the interior of the fort. The ground on this side slopes to the interior of the fort, but the three concentric ramparts are carefully constructed so as to overlook each other from within outwards. Between them are level spaces for the defenders, and the inner rampart is backed by a *terre-pleine*, which must have had a banquette to enable the defenders to see over it. The northern half of the fort, protected by steep though short slopes, has apparently had only two

ramparts of slighter make. Although grass-covered, the whole of the works as well as the interior are very stony under foot. There appear to have been two entrances,—one on the east, the other on the west,—but the fort is much damaged there, and the plough has swept away much of the flanks of the defences on the south. Planting has saved the rest of the fort in the meantime.

21. *Boreland* (Plate IV. fig. 59), 950 feet above the sea, and 250 above the Lyne, crowns an eminence to which the ascent from the south-west and north-east is easy and from the other directions only a little steeper. The defences seem to have consisted of two concentric ramparts, separated by a *terre-pleine* 4 yards wide, but only the north and south parts of the outer rampart remain. The fort has been much damaged, but portions of the ramparts, which seem to be mainly of stone covered with turf, are well preserved, the inner one being 13 yards across and 7 feet high where most perfect.

CLASS C.—TERRACED FORTS.

In several of the forts already discussed I have noted the occurrence of terraces on their slopes, sometimes narrow, as if intended merely for the foundation of a wall, in other cases wide enough to accommodate a *terre-pleine*, in rear of a wall or parapet, as well. In these cases the terraces were subordinate to other modes of fortification, but in the following instances terracing and scarping seem to have been the chief means employed.

1. *Ring Knowes, Hallmanor* (figs. 9, 41), 850 feet above the sea, and only 100 above Manor Water, is the best-marked example. It is situated on a low regularly-formed oval eminence of trifling elevation, except to the east, where the ground falls, rather steeply at first, to the road 60 or 70 feet below. A neck of land from an adjacent flat gives an easy access to the fort from the south. Here, therefore, the fortifications are strongest. The slightly convex interior is scarped steeply all round the margin to a terrace from 4 to 7 feet lower down and 18 to 27 feet wide, and again, 4 to 12 feet lower, to a second terrace imperfectly preserved for a great part of the way, but quite distinct at the north and south ends. There is no trace of parapets on the sides of the fort, but they could not originally have been left defenceless, as in that case there would have been no object in fortifying the two ends. The weak south end not only has parapets or ramparts of earth and stones, but a trench is added to cut off the neck beyond. The north end is also furnished with ramparts. This fort apparently resembles the Galloway "motes" described by Mr Muir (*Ecclesiological Notes*), except that he says they are never fortified. It is worthy of note that on the Ordnance Map (25-inch) there is a *Moot Hill* at Romanno, and a *Moat Knowe* at Darnhall.

2. *Muirburn* (fig. 42), 1127 feet above the sea, is constructed on the summit of a regularly-formed oval dome-shaped hill which rises 230 feet above the farm to the east. It seems to have been well preserved at the time of the

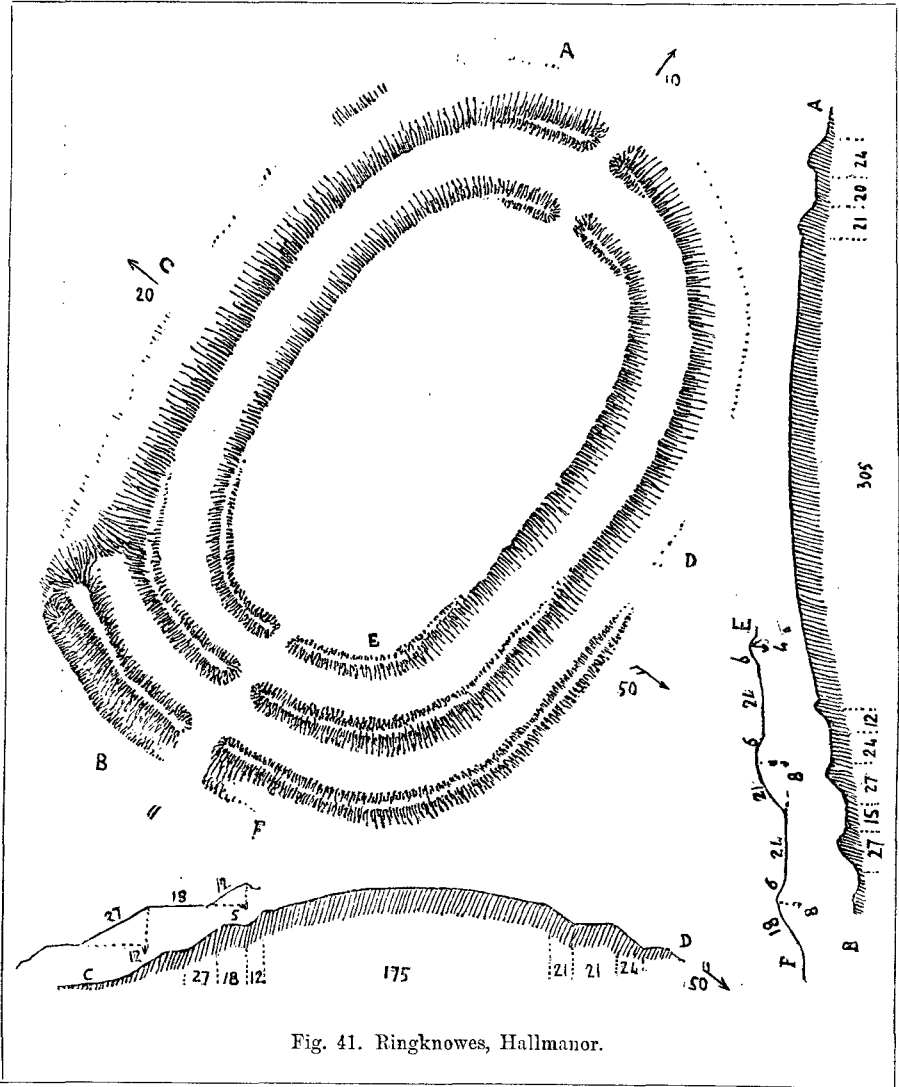


Fig. 41. Ringknowes, Hallmanor.

Ordnance Survey, but has been sadly mutilated since. Apparently it has consisted of two terraces each, 6 or 7 feet high and 18 to 24 feet wide, defended by ramparts, the interior of the fort being elevated only a few feet above the upper terrace, and defended by a wall or rampart. The east front is tolerably

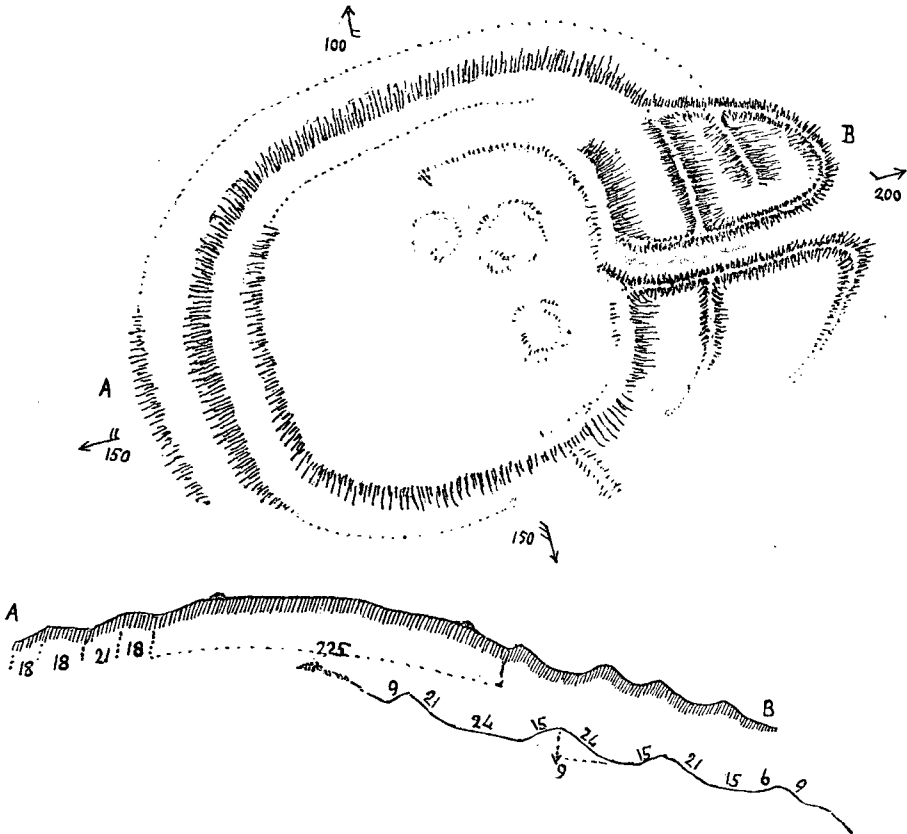


Fig. 42. Muirburn.

entire, with its entrance fortified by a small hornwork thrown out on each side. The interior is rough and stony, and the foundations of three circular structures can be traced under the turf.

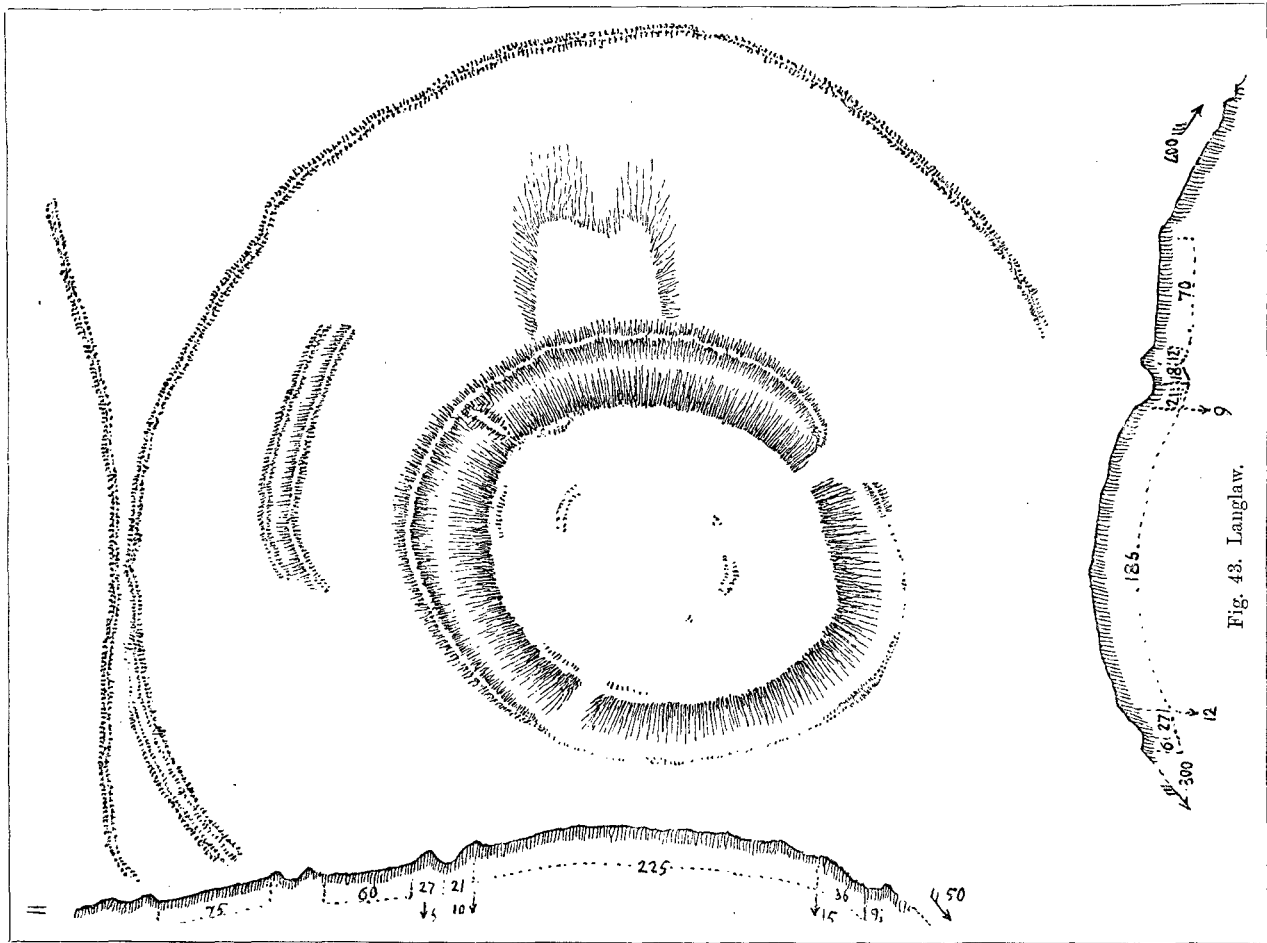


Fig. 43. Langlav.

3. *Langlaw* (fig. 43) occupies the highest point of this well-named ridge, 1208 feet above the sea, and about 400 above the Broughton Burn. The interior is a much-flattened elongated dome, and the fort has apparently been formed by scarping the circumference all round, thus making a steep slope 9 to 14 feet in height, with a terrace below, and a wall or rampart, of which slight traces remain, above. On the south and west sides, which are strong by nature, the terrace has possibly had a slight parapet or stockade, but on the weaker sides an earthen rampart has been thrown up in front of it. This rampart on the weak north side is very perfect, and, from the gradual way in which it diminishes towards the strong western front, I think it is clear that it never was continued round there, unless as a trifling parapet. About 20 yards in front of the north end a detached double rampart and trench are drawn across the hill slope for about 60 yards, and 40 yards further down a trifling rampart and ditch is encountered, which can be traced at intervals all round the fort, though mostly as a slight mound only, and measuring 600 yards in girth. A little further down, but touching the last in one part, is a third detached mound, traceable for 200 yards, but diverging at both ends from the fort. If these mounds had anything to do with the fort, it must have been merely as cattle enclosures, I should think. It is singular that a small plateau projecting eastwards from the foot of the fort does not seem to have been fortified.

4. *Mitchell Hill Rings* (figs. 44, 45), 1100 feet above the sea, stands on a spur of the hill,—described under Mitchell Hill Fort, p. 40,—which bends round from south-west to south-east. The site is a level neck of the ridge, from which the hill descends about 250 feet steeply northward and southward and more gently eastwards, but ascends, and at once, to the west, from which

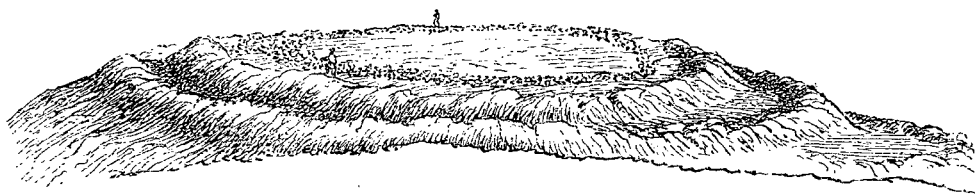


Fig. 44. Mitchell Hill Rings.

direction the fort is commanded by a height of 20 feet at a distance of only 15 yards from the nearest rampart. The defences seem to have consisted of two concentric stony ramparts or walls on the summit-level of the interior, from which the hill is scarped to an outer terrace as much as 12 feet lower on the north side, defended by a rampart of stone and earth. On the south a flat narrow concentric space, at a slightly lower level, has been included in

the defences, so as to bring them to the very edge of the steep descent. The single entrance is from the south-east.

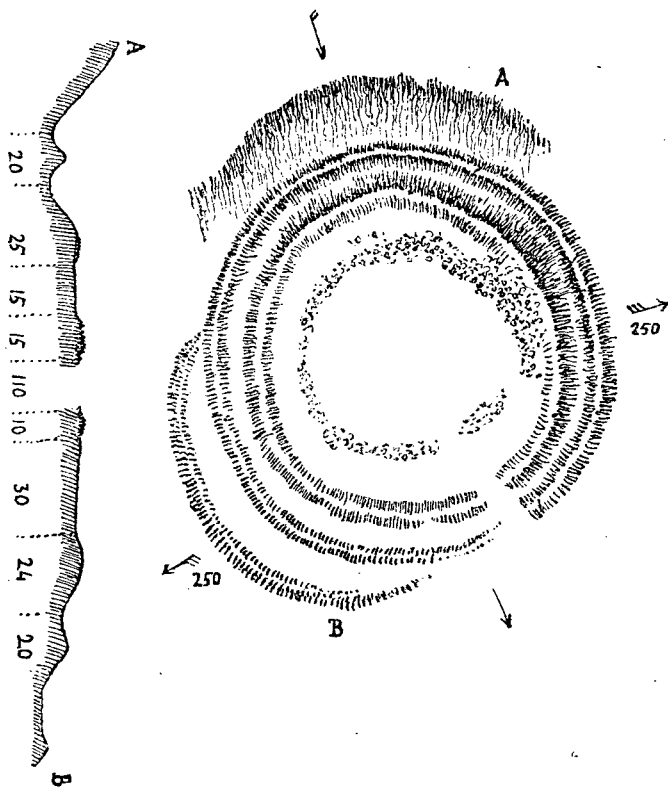


Fig. 45. Mitchell Hill Rings.

5. *The Rings, Chester Rings* (fig. 46), 1100 feet above the sea, stands on a little shelf of the slope descending to Holmwater from the ridge between Wrae and Blackhope Hills, and is 350 feet above the stream. Steep slopes fall from the site all round except at the short narrow level neck which joins it to the hill behind. The fort seems to have been made by scarping and terracing. Encircling the top is a *terre-pleine*, varying from 7 to 10 yards in width, which has but faint traces of a parapet to the outside, but shows ample debris of a wall all round its inner margin. From 6 to 9 feet below this inner defence

a terrace, about 6 feet wide, runs all round, with a low parapet, and a slope 6 feet high to the outside. Towards the weak side of the fort this parapet widens to 12 feet on the top, and becomes the base of what may have been a double wall, or a single wall with casings. The single entrance, from the steep slope to the north-west, is described on page 76.

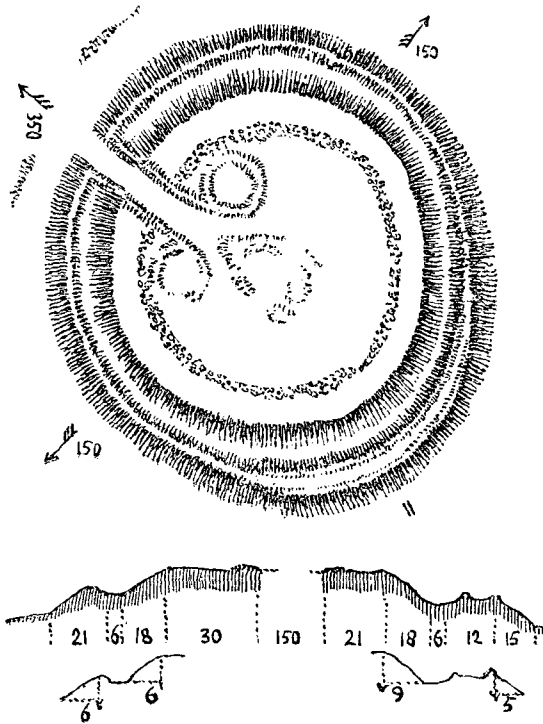


Fig. 46. The Rings, Chester Rigs.

CLASS D.—ILL-PRESERVED FORTS.

The remains in this class generally consist of low mounds, only a foot or two in height but from 15 to 30 in width, covered with turf, but feeling under foot as if the turf thinly covered stones beneath. In general their ground-plan can be made out sufficiently well to prove that most of them were quite as complex in structure as the better-preserved forts in the other classes. They are planned on half the scale used for the better-preserved forts.

1. *Meldon* (Plate I. fig. 47), 1401 feet above the sea, is the largest of the Peebles forts, measuring no less than 900 yards round the inner rampart. The lines are skilfully placed where the steep ascents of 700 feet from the west, and of 500 feet from the east, suddenly begin to ease off towards the top, which rises 100 feet above the girdle of fortification. The remains of the works may be shortly described thus:—On the south-west, a terrace at the edge of the steep descent to the burn; northwards, a single mound for 100 yards; on the less defensible north-west, a double mound thrown out in advance of the main one, and enclosing with it a narrow crescentic space; north-east, almost defaced; east face, two low mounds almost touching each other, and each 9 yards wide, in front of which a level space 25 yards wide, coming to the edge of the steep, has also been enclosed; south end, almost gone, but a triangular gentle slope in front enclosed by a single mound. Entrances: one on the south-east, with a track, wide enough for a cart, up the steep hill-side to it; another, probably, at the north end. The summit of the hill consists of a plateau, probably levelled artificially, 60 by 30 yards, with a little rocky knoll on each side.

2. *Hamildean*, 1261 feet above the sea, has also been a large fort, measuring 500 yards in girth, and consisting of a single circumvallation, according to the Ordnance Map, but is now almost entirely destroyed. It stands on one of those natural domes so often alluded to, steep and lofty on all sides except where connected by a slight descent with the neighbouring range, and looks down on the Lyne 700 feet below, as well as on the Roman Camp less than a mile distant. I could only trace the remains on the north and east faces; at one place on the north the rampart is 5 feet high and 18 feet across. I think there has been a trench also.

3. *Kersknowe* (Plate II. fig. 52), 950 feet above the sea and 400 above the Tweed, stands, half a mile north from Stobo Church, on a dome-shaped isolated height, which determines the regular oval form of the fort. The inner defence seems to have been formed either of two walls 18 feet apart, or of a single wall with casings. Outside this are two concentric mounds, the first 15 yards from the inner mound, the second 19 yards from the first. They are lost on the south and east sides, which are the strongest by nature. Entrances: one at the north-east, another at the south-west, the latter strengthened by an additional rampart at each side. A good many large stones lie on the turf-covered mounds, and this was probably a stone fort.

4. *Helmend* (Plate V. fig. 66), 1067 feet above the sea, on the top of the last height of the watershed between Kilbucho and Holms waters, occupies a rather irregular site 400 feet above Broughton station. The remains consist of a central oval "ring" measuring 75 by 60 yards, not everywhere easily made out; a second "ring" 28 yards farther out, traceable only on the south and west, which probably included a commanding knoll on the north; some fragments of an intermediate ring; and 56 yards further out to the south-west,

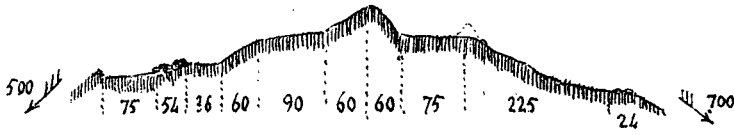
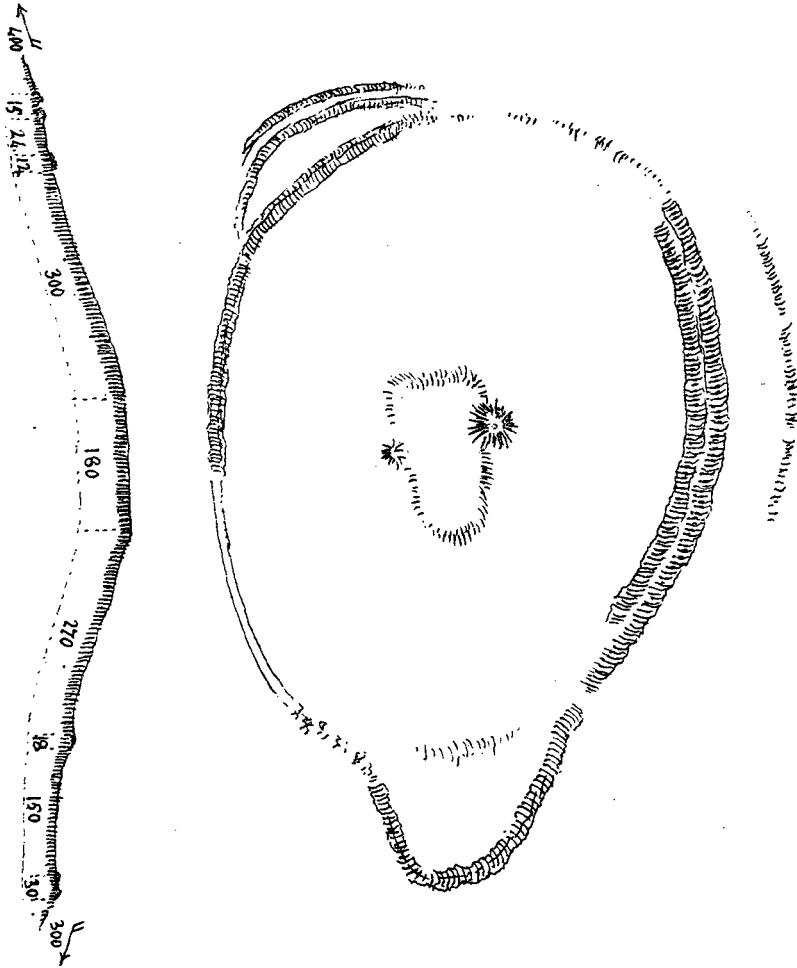


Fig 47



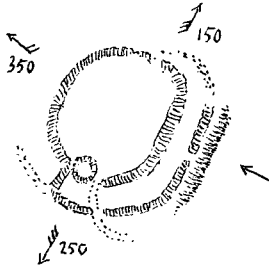


Fig. 48 Kittlegairy

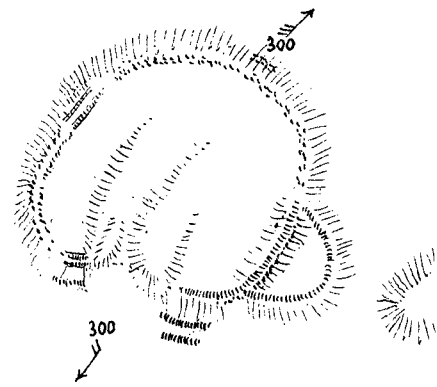


Fig. 51 Rachan

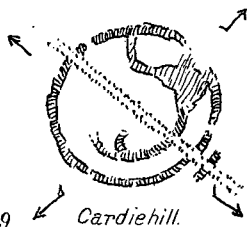


Fig. 49 Cardiehill

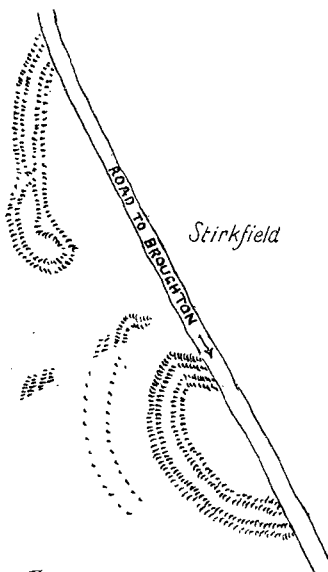


Fig. 50

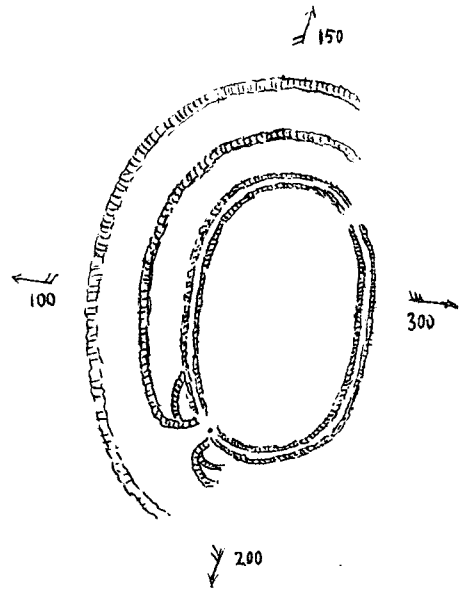


Fig. 52 Kersknowe

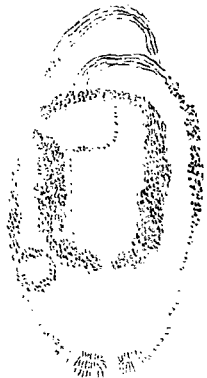
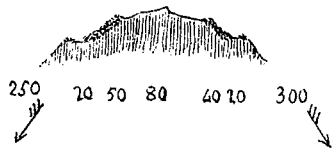


Fig 53 Macbeths Castle

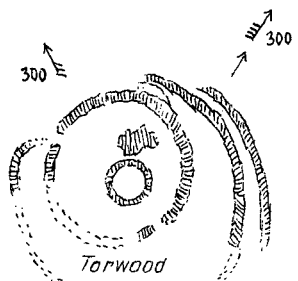


Fig 54 150

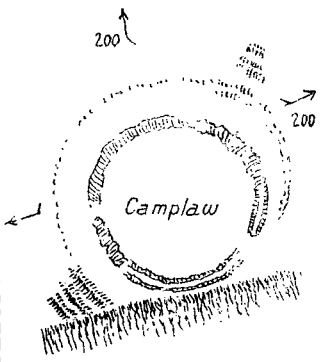


Fig 55

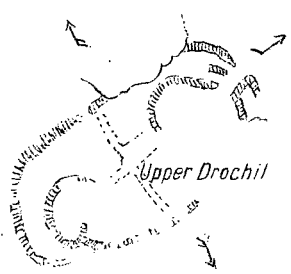


Fig 56

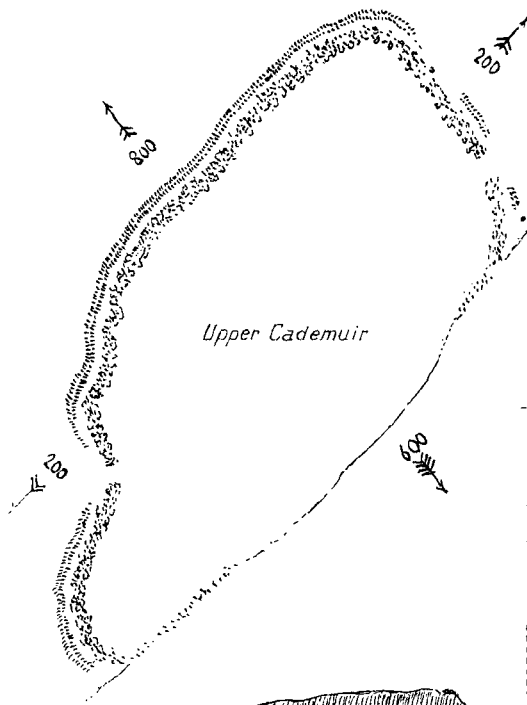


Fig. 57

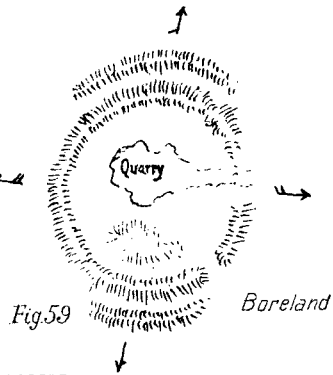


Fig. 59

Bareland

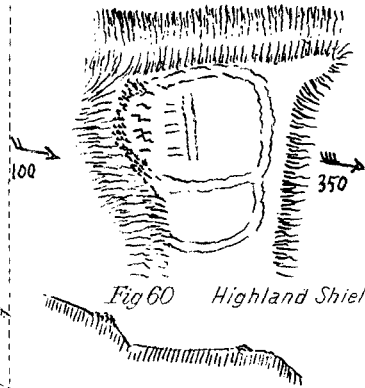


Fig. 60

Highland Shiel

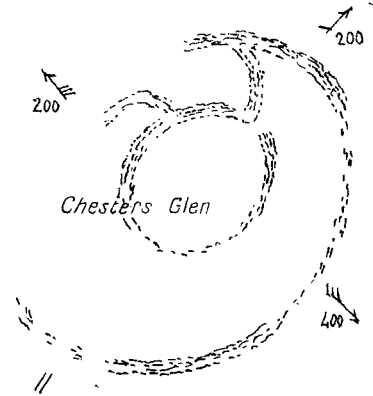


Fig. 58

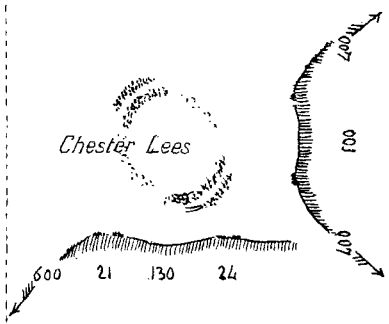


Fig. 61

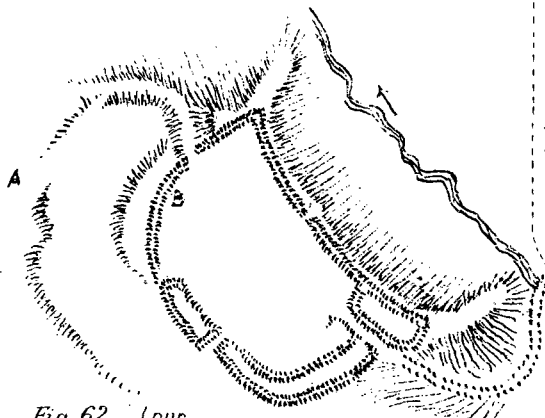
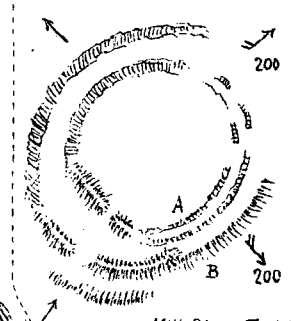
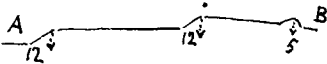


Fig 62 Lour



Mill Rings, Trebtha hill.

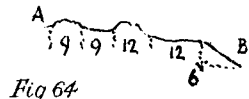
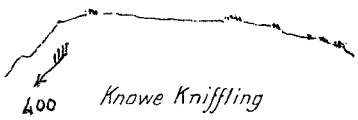
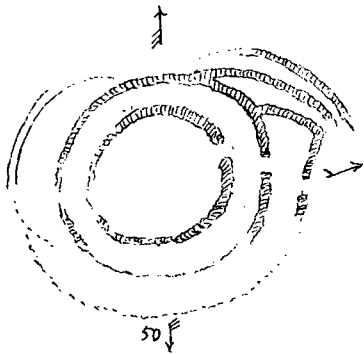
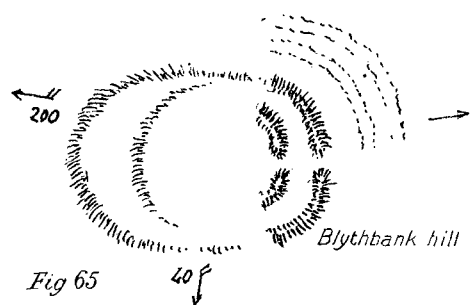


Fig 64



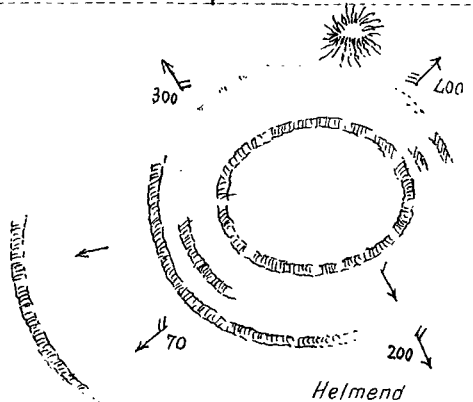
Knowe Kniffing

Fig 63



Blythbank hill

Fig 65



Helmend

Fig 66

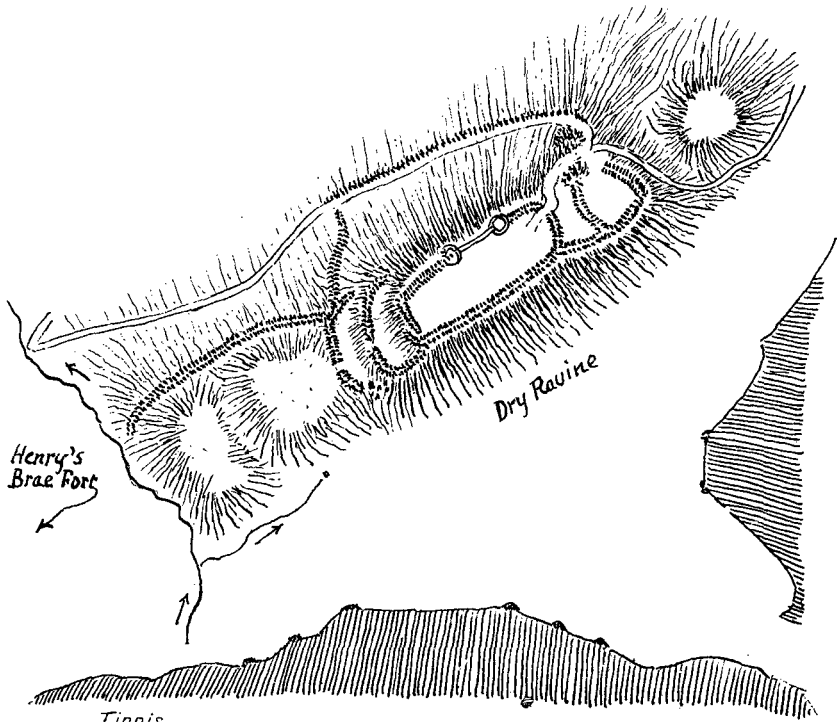


Fig 67 Tinnis

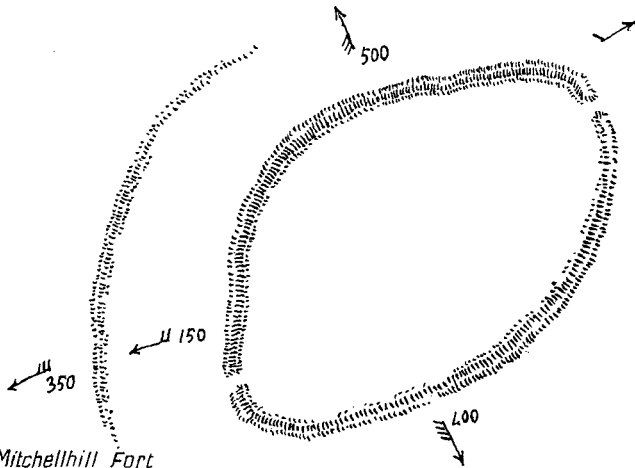


Fig 68 Mitchellhill Fort

and at a considerably lower level, a mound at the edge of the steep descent, traceable for 90 yards, which probably only enclosed an offshoot of the fort in that direction. The rings are everywhere, although low, about 6 yards wide, and feel stony under foot.

5. *Chesters*, or *Chester Rigs, Glen* (Plate IV. fig. 58), 1223 feet above the sea, has an unusually remote situation, a mile above Glen House, on a narrow ridge between the Quair on the east and the Kill Burn on the west, with steep slopes of 400 feet to the former and 200 to the latter, but easily approached from the north-east and south-west along the ridge. As far as I could make out from the rough, broken, and quarried surface, and an investigation made in a storm of wind and snow, the remains consist of an inner oval ring about 65 by 55 yards; an outer oval ring traceable about two-thirds of the way round, 30 yards distant from the inner one at the north end and 60 at the south; and two curved mounds at the north end, one of which connects the two rings, and where it touches the inner one flanks the entrance. The total demolition of this fort is much to be regretted, as it presents some peculiar features. The whole interior is rough with stony mounds and walls; the remains of the ramparts are also of stone, partially covered with turf or moss, and large stones still remain. Digging, I believe, might show that some are still *in situ*.

6. *Blythbank Hill* (Plate V. fig. 65), 1013 feet above the sea, occupies a summit of the ridge described under *Blythhill*. It seems to have been strongly fortified, as four ramparts are visible on the north-east side, the outer two, however, almost levelled by the plough. The western half is so demolished that the dimensions of the fort cannot be fixed, but they must have been at least 130 by 90 yards over all. The ramparts are turf-covered, but many good-sized stones lie about, and the interior is rough with shapeless mounds.

7. *Mill Rings, Trebetha Hill* (Plate V. fig. 64), 1000 feet above the sea, stands on the edge of a moderately steep descent of 200 feet to a tributary of Kilbucho Burn, but is easy of access on two sides. The defences consist of two rings, about 10 yards apart, cut off by a trench from the gentle descent upon the fort from the west. The inner rampart on the south-east, attaining a width of 10 yards, has that double character already so often noticed, and comes close to the outer one, which here is converted into a platform with a 6-foot slope in front. The inner rampart on the south-west is perfectly straight, a very rare occurrence in the Peebles forts. Here is the only entrance. Part of the outer ring on the east has been destroyed by a quarry.

8. *Knowe Kniffling* (Plate V. fig. 63), 1330 feet above the sea, occupies a singularly bold site, half a mile from the last and 330 feet above it, on a subsidiary peaked eminence of Common Law (1544 feet). The position is strong by nature on all sides, but particularly to the west, where the descent of 400 feet to the burn is almost precipitous. The defences are so destroyed

that the plan can only be made out with some uncertainty. They appear to consist of an inner oval ring, 55 by 50 yards, which touches the rocky peak of the height on the west; a second lower down the hill, about 250 yards in girth, which comes to the very edge of the steep descent to the west; a third, still lower down, which has apparently been carried round the steep face by means of a terrace, but which cannot be traced so as to make out its connection with two additional defences on the north-east and weakest side. As not unfrequently happens, parts of the defensive lines, which can hardly be made out on the spot, are distinctly visible on the hillside when seen from a distance of even a mile or more.

9. *Cardiehill* (Plate II. fig. 49), 1146 feet above the sea and 600 above the Tweed, crowns an eminence projecting eastward from a southerly spur of Dunslair heights. The remaining defences consist of part of an inner ring; a second circular one 10 yards further out, traceable all round; and the fragment of another mound on the south-east. The rings seem to be of stone, overgrown with moss and turf, and many stones, large and small, are exposed on the surface. The interior is full of rough shapeless mounds.

10. *Kitlegairy* (Plate II. fig. 48), about two-thirds of a mile from the last, stands on a western spur of the Dunslair heights, 350 feet above the Soonhope Burn and 1152 above the sea. Steep slopes defend it on three sides, but from the east the spur of Dunslair descends gently upon it. On this side, therefore, the fort has been strengthened by a trench. It is difficult to make out with confidence the plan of the fort, which seems somewhat complex and unusual, straight lines being found in several parts as shown in the plan. The entrance is oblique from the south-east, and seems to have been strengthened by a traverse between the two rings and a circular structure at the opening in the inner ring. A good many large stones still remain, some of them set up in two rows on the east face of the inner rampart.

11 and 12.—In the same neighbourhood, on the ridge on which stands Janet's Brae Fort, are the traces of two others. One of these, and the most central of the group, occupies a very strong position, encircling the summit of the ridge, 1178 feet above the sea, less than half a mile north of Janet's Brae Fort, and nearly 200 feet above it. This fort is oval, measuring 94 by 84 yards over all, the interior being 48 by 46 yards. Three nearly-levelled concentric rings can still be traced all round. The other fort is about 100 feet below Janet's Brae Fort, and only 200 yards to the west of it, occupying a little eminence which forms a break in the slope of the hill. Two outer mounds can be traced the greater part of the way round. An inner one, lying back from the others to the west, but approximating to them eastward, can be only partially traced. The measurement over all is about 120 by 100 yards; a hollow, which looks as if it may have been a wet ditch, cuts off the fort from the ascending ridge eastward.

13. *Upper Drochil* (Plate III. fig. 56), 1100 feet above the sea, and 450

above the Lyne, stands on a north-east spur of Drochil Hill (1234 feet), and is well defended by slopes on three sides, while from the south-west the approach is level. A quarry cuts deeply into it from the north, and digging or quarrying has almost destroyed the south-east face. The general plan cannot be satisfactorily made out, and I shall merely notice the accumulation of defences at the north-east entrance, the apparent remains of a circular structure at both entrances, other structural remains in the interior, faint indications of a trench at the weak south-west end, and the scarped slope, 7 feet high, which defends it on the west.

14. *Camplaw* (Plate III. fig. 55), 1000 feet above the sea, and 500 above the Tweed, is close to the old drove road, two miles south-east from Peebles. On three sides the ground slopes from it pretty steeply, and to the south it is cut off from the ascending ridge by a natural trench 20 to 30 feet deep, which completely crosses the connecting neck of land. The fort is nearly circular, and consists of an inner ring 200 yards in girth, the remains of which, opposite the natural trench, are 18 feet wide, and have the double character so often noticed; a *terre-pleine* 12 yards wide; and three outer rings, of which fragments only remain on the south-west and north-east. It will be observed in the plan that the inner ring comes to the edge of the steep slope to the natural trench. This slope is far too steep to have held ramparts, yet the three outer ones come to its edge without any sign of converging towards the inner enceinte. The interior is rough with concealed debris, big stones lie about, and the ramparts feel stony under foot, although grass-covered.

15. *Torwood* (Plate III. fig. 54), 885 feet above the sea, is under half a mile north-east from the last, on a height 400 feet above the Tweed, only a quarter of a mile distant. The plough has almost obliterated the south half of the fort, but the circular inner ring, 180 yards in girth, can be made out; also on the east side two outer rings converging towards each other and the inner ring northwards in a singular manner, which, however, probably results from the nature of the ground. The interior contains the foundations of a circular structure about 40 feet in diameter inside, which, like the rings, feel stony under foot. Two entrances remain in the inner ring. The steep slope to the north has possibly been terraced. With a favourable light and a slight coating of snow on the ground, fifteen terraces could be counted quite plainly, yet on examining the ground it was only possible to make out a few of them.

16, 17. *Candyburn Forts*.—Candyburn "Castle," of which but little trace remains, is on an eminence 989 feet above the sea, and 200 above the burn. It has enclosed a space of about 75 by 60 yards. Close below it, on a ridge running parallel with the burn, is a small circular fort of a single ring, about 40 yards in diameter, and on the opposite side of the glen, in Lanarkshire, about half a-mile from Candyburn "Castle," are the remains of a large fort on a commanding height. The little glen was therefore most effectually blocked.

18, 19. *Lochurd Forts*.—The lower one, about 850 feet above the sea, is on

the edge of a little steep ravine containing one of the head waters of the Tarth. In other directions it has no natural strength. A single oval rampart 200 yards in girth can still be traced, although almost levelled by the plough. The upper fort, 200 feet higher than the last, stands upon a low terminal northward spur of the lofty Broughton Heights, and is itself on the edge of a steep descent of 200 feet to Lochurd Farm. An inner oval mound, 85 by 50 yards, is traceable, and part of another 12 yards further out.

20. *Stirkfield, Broughton* (Plate II. fig. 50).—The remains here are peculiar in their situation, which is in the very bottom of a valley, although 845 feet above the sea, and destitute of natural strength. They are also peculiar in their character, as they consist of two fragments differing in style, and it is difficult to see how they could ever have been connected with each other. As the plan shows, the northern part consists of a curved double mound ending in a peculiar expansion crossed at the neck by a traverse. The southern part consists of slight but quite characteristic remains of three concentric rings, each comprising a double mound. On approaching the northern fragment the two inner rings turn away at an acute angle, as if purposely to avoid it, A difference of colour in the grass shows where the mere fragment of the middle ring now remaining had been prolonged in front of the inner ring. In the Ordnance Map the southern portion is not given, and the northern fragment is figured as part of a circular fort, completed by a dotted line, crossing the road and including a part of the hill which rises immediately on the other side, but I could find no trace of remains there.

21. *Highland Shiel, Kailzie* (Plate IV. fig. 60), 1200 feet above the sea, stands on a little plateau which breaks the very steep descent of 450 feet on the west side of the Kirkburn Glen. It is defended on the north by a shallow little dry ravine, and on the west by the steep descent of 350 feet to the burn. On the south it is easily approached by a prolongation of the plateau; while from the east the descent of the hill not only completely commands it, but finally leaps into the fort by a little precipice 12 to 15 feet high. This complete command throws some doubt on the military character of the work; on the other hand, the breadth and height of a part of a transverse mound, which divides the interior, favours the supposition of its having been a fort. The single circumvallation now consists of a low mound of stony debris, mostly turf-covered, which climbs above the precipice, lying close to its edge. In the interior there is a straight mound facing the east, with three short ones at right angles to it towards the precipice.

22. *Kirnie Law*.—What from Chambers' description I take to be the relics of this fort are situated at the east end of the Purvis terraces and close to the site of Purvis tower, 600 feet above the sea and 150 above the Tweed, but the remains are scanty and obscure. The inner ring seems to have been only 40 yards in diameter. Lower down the hill are what appear to be the remains of two outer rings.

23. *Chester Knowes, Polmood*, 800 feet above the sea, on a gentle slope to the Tweed, only 120 yards off and 50 feet below it, has no natural strength. It is smothered under a dense young plantation, but appears to be circular, about 50 yards in diameter, with a single broad rampart, 3 or 4 feet high in places, stony, covered with turf, but with many large stones exposed. Some traces of an outer mound on the river side.

24. *Broomylaw, Kirkurd*.—Armstrong in 1775 could find no trace of two forts here, noticed by Gordon. One, however, undoubtedly exists a third of a mile south-east from the top of the hill, 1000 feet above the sea, on the north end of a low ridge, from the continuation of which southwards it is cut off by a trench. It consists of a single ring of earth and stones, badly preserved, but still 27 feet wide and 5 high at the trench. Below the 20 feet high, rocky, western face the remains of another rampart are distinct. Others may have been destroyed by the plough. The fort appears to have measured 65 × 40 yards.

25. *Castle Hill, Horsburgh*, on the top of an isolated hill, which forms the extremity of the western ridge of Horsburgh Hope, 1050 feet above the sea, and 550 above the Tweed, is much decayed, but seems to have measured 100 × 80 yards. At the north-east end three concentric ramparts, two or three feet high, still remain.

26. *Torhill, Haprew*, 700 yards west of Torbank Farm, about 1000 feet above the sea and 300 above the Haprew Burn, is strongly placed on an isolated narrow spur of Torbank Hill (1495 feet). Its form is remarkable. The inner enceinte consists of two oval works, which would slightly intersect lengthways, were it not that the northern one is cut off about 8 yards short of the other by a straight mound. These two works are only brought into connection by outer ramparts, of which three can be traced in front of the south fort, and two in front of the north fort, on their western face. Each oval measures about 55 × 40 yards, and, including an outwork at each end, the total length is 150 yards. The ramparts, mainly of small stones, are much decayed, generally only a foot or two high, but where helped by the ground, are in one place 8 to 10 feet above the outside. The northern oval is at a slightly lower level than the southern, and is probably subsequent to it.

CLASS E.—FORTS OF WHICH LITTLE OR NO TRACE REMAINS.

1. *Venlaw*.—No fort marked either on the Ordnance Map or on Chambers's Map, but I think there are unmistakable remains of one on this very likely spot, 600 feet above the Tweed and 1066 above the sea.

2. *Chester Hill, Grieston*.—1018 feet above the sea, 500 above the Quair. A fragment visible where there is a cut in the ground.

3. *Coomlees*, site of, now occupied by Coomlees farm steading (Ordnance Map), 700 feet above the sea, about 50 above the Tweed. About 250 yards

south-west from it I found in a little plantation a curved double mound, which I think must have been part of a fort, of which the rest has been destroyed by the plough and the formation of the public road through it.

4. *South Langlaw*, 1050 feet above the sea and 350 above the Biggar water, in the Ordnance Map and Chambers, but I could find no trace, unless some mounds on the steep descent southwards may have been outer rings.

5. *Penria*, or *Pendreich*, site of, on Ordnance Map, above and close to the Romanno terraces, 850 feet above the sea and 150 above the Lyne. No remains.

6. *Cudemuir Farm*.—No vestige remains, but in the *New Statistical Account* the Rev. James Cruickshank describes very fully a fort of five rings, of which the western end alone remained, but in good preservation, in his day.

7. *Woodhouse, Manor*, "site of," on Ordnance Map, 300 yards west from the farm of that name, 400 feet above it, and 1000 above the sea.

8. *Hogsknowe, Manor*, "site of," on Ordnance Map, a third of a mile south-west from the last and 100 feet higher.

9. *Caverhill, Manor*, mentioned in *Armstrong's Companion*, &c.

10. *Wormiston Rings*, "site of," on Ordnance Map, 250 yards south of farm of that name, about 800 feet above the sea and 200 above Eddleston Burn.

11. *Darnhall*, "now defaced" (Chambers).

12. *Hutchinfeld*, above Swintonbank (Armstrong).

13. *Broomylaw*, mentioned by Gordon (see No. 24, p. 67).

14. *Gallowslaw, Skirling*.—"Remains of a round British fort" (Armstrong).

15. *Linton*.—"On a rising ground above the Temple lands, below Linton, vestiges of a circular camp" (Armstrong).

16. *Cairn Fort*, "a small camp called the Cairn" (Armstrong). "Had apparently been only a small detached outpost" (Chambers).

17. "One of those rings, consisting of a ditch and earthen rampart, on the other side of the Tarth opposite to Drochil Castle, on the hill above the *Scrogwood*" (Brown of Newhall, in his *Notes* (1815) to *Pennycuick's Description of Tweeddale*, 1715). I could not find any trace of this.

Skirling.—The churchyard here, situated on the top of a slightly rising ground, is girdled by a circular earthen mound, 2 or 3 feet high towards the slightly concave interior, and as much as 8 to 10 feet above the exterior at one side. Where low, the outer half of the mound has apparently been entirely replaced by a wall, but where high, the wall is inserted about a third of the way up the mound. It seems not improbable that the mound was originally the rampart of a circular fort, and that the wall was subsequently introduced to prevent cattle from straying into the enclosure.

Hayston Craig and *Ewe-hill-rig*, in Peebles parish, are mentioned as fort sites by Armstrong, but I cannot identify their localities, and possibly they may be synonyms for fort localities already noticed.

Macbeth's Castle, Broughton, is described in the *Old Statistical Account* as

one of ten towers with iron gates, in the parish, but in the New Edition is called "the most remarkable of nine circular enclosures called camps" "surrounded by two walls and ditches." No Macbeth's Castle is known in the parish now.

On *Leadlaw*, "formerly a great collection of stones, now diffused to build houses in Linton" (Armstrong). This may have been a fort.

Carlops.—Brown of Newhall, in 1815, describes most extensive remains of fortifications in this neighbourhood, but they are not mentioned by Armstrong or Chambers, and there is no sign of them in the Ordnance Maps. I have not visited the locality.

CLASS F.—PROBABLE PREHISTORIC FORTS, ON SITES SUBSEQUENTLY OCCUPIED BY FEUDAL CASTLES.

1. *Lour* (fig. 69, and Plate V. 62) stands on the edge of a little ravine about 50 feet deep, near the "Dead Wife" hill road to Manor, 800 feet above the sea and 200 above the Tweed, which is half a mile distant. Chambers says the site is that of a feudal tower, but "the spot to all appearance was occupied by a British fort" previously. The interior shows a few scattered stones on



Fig. 69. Lour.

its grassy surface, and contains many low mounds, but nothing suggestive of the foundations of a feudal tower. The enclosing curvilinear defences have much of the prehistoric character, and are alone given in the plan. The sketch (fig. 69), taken from the hill above, shows the ravine with the stream winding through it; a kind of covered way from the stream to the south-east entrance; a small outwork on the right; and the double circumvallation on

the left. An exit to the north winds down the hill under cover of a high, probably artificially scarped, bank, which, turning round by west to the south, is gradually lost, but may originally have connected a large space to the north and west with the fort. The command of water supply is unusually good.

2. *Tinnis* (fig. 70, and Plate VI. 67).—The feudal castle of Tinnis was blown up by order of King James VI., and the huge fragments, strongly compacted by mortar, still lie about; but there are other remains which in all probability are prehistoric. The site of Tinnis is so remarkable as to deserve a detailed description. The massive Scawd Law (1658 feet) suddenly descends towards Drummelzier Haugh by a precipitous face several hundred feet high, covered with loose stones, through which protrudes the natural rock. Close to this face, and forming with it a very narrow ravine, rise two hillocks, whose green and smooth though steep slopes contrast strongly with the rough stony face of

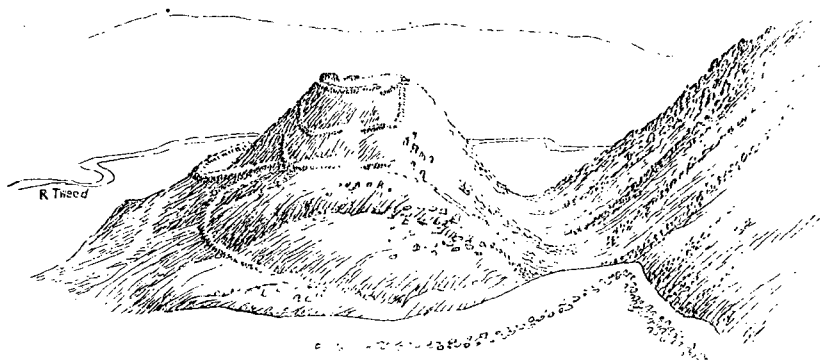


Fig. 70. South-West End of Tinnis, from Henry's Brae.

Scawd Law. A brisk little rill, evidently from a strong spring, enters the ravine from the south, and opposite the hollow between the hillocks divides, one branch disappearing under the eastern hillock to reappear on the north-east of it, and the other running between the two hillocks to the Haugh. The west hillock, which is the longer and higher of the two, known as Henry's Brae, is covered by the remains of a stone fort already described (p. 18). The east one (fig. 70) rises about 200 feet above the Haugh, and is very steep on all sides. The level summit is a parallelogram of about 75 by 25 yards, half covered with ruins of the castle; but the low mound which girdles the summit is, like the other mounds, very probably prehistoric. No other defence was required or even possible on the steep side towards the ravine. On the side towards the Haugh the roadway, which slants along the hill face, has apparently been fortified on the outside so as to form a lower line of defence.

The north-east end is defended by three ramparts, one above the other, with ample space for the defenders behind them. The fortified roadway enters by the north angle here, winding round and under two rocky knolls. Another roadway from the north-east end of the ravine, passing under the outer rampart, also enters here. The south-west end of the hillock is also defended by three ramparts (fig. 70), one on the top, the others in succession pretty low down, with narrow levelled platforms in rear of them. The lowest sends a branch to the fortified road, and another westwards by the base of two low rock-covered mounds so as to form a covered way to the rivulet. There is an entrance at this end also, which pierces the middle of the two lower ramparts, but enters the upper one at its south angle, a traverse being thrown out in front of it from the east to make it more secure.

II. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Nature of the Sites.*—The elevated ridges and tablelands of Peeblesshire, constituting the mass of its area, and rising from 1500 to 2500 feet above the sea, have no forts upon them. It is on their terminal spurs, or on isolated hills, or in a few cases at the bottom of the valleys, that they are found.

Many of the spurs of the high ranges are very short, and not unfrequently tend to rise a little before their final plunge to the valley, thus forming little eminences, sometimes of a dome shape, admirably suited for primitive defence, although completely overlooked from the hill above. East Cademuir, Horsburgh, and Pirn are good examples. This kind of site may be modified by the approach from the main hill being by a level neck, as at Harehope Rings and Chester Rig, Glenholm; or by a gentle descent, as at Janet's Brae and Chargelaw. A further modification is where the fort occupies a mere level shelf on the slope of the hill, as at Mitchellhill Rings and Highland Shiell; or is actually on the hill-slope, as in the remarkable instance at Hoghill, Haprew.

Sometimes the dome-shaped eminences of which I have spoken are so detached as to be practically isolated, as at Kersknowe and Muirburn; and thus we are led to the sites on the summit of truly isolated ridges or hills, of which there are two each on the Cademuir, Langlaw, and Blyth ridges, and one on Rachan, Meldon, and the Woodhill of Manor.

Finally, there are a certain number of forts on gentle slopes or in low situations, deriving little or no advantage from nature, Harehope fort being perhaps a solitary example of the first, and Holmswater, Stirkfield, and Coomlees of the second. Their occurrence in such situations raises the question whether *hill forts* is an appropriate generic designation for prehistoric forts. Because, if a few still survive so far below the upper limit of agriculture, it seems fair to conclude that many more must long ago have succumbed to the plough, and that *British forts* were by no means so universally *hill forts* as is generally supposed. It may also be noticed that the sites, as a rule, are not retired as if to escape observation, but prominently command the valleys and cultivable land; that all the known terraces, fashioned on the hill-sides as if for cultivation, have been commanded by forts; and that intelligence could be signalled from fort to fort almost instantaneously all over the county, as most of them are in sight of from six to twelve or fifteen others.

2. *Height above the Sea.*—Of seventy-six ascertained fort sites thirty-eight lie between 1000 and 1200 feet, and twelve are above this elevation, the highest touching 1400 feet. (See the List, p. 82.)

3. *Water Supply.*—A little rill runs through the site of Stirkfield, but with this exception there is not a single instance of a water supply within the circumvallations of the Peeblesshire forts. Neither could I detect any signs of springs or wells having existed in them formerly, except at Janet's Brae, where there is a slight hollow with rushes growing in it. Moreover, in not more than half a dozen cases is water so near as to have been covered by the forts in days of primitive warfare; and in not a few, unless the distribution of springs and rills was very different from what it is now, or there was some means of storing water of which no sign remains, the garrisons must have had to carry their daily water supply from a distance of several hundred yards, up steep slopes from 200 to 500 feet high. Want of water is a common defect of British camps in Wales also (Hugh Pritchard). Nineteen out of twenty in Pembrokeshire have no water (Ed. Laws). Mr Pritchard, however, mentions a solitary example of a reservoir cut in live rock, supplied by rain, at Braich y Ddinas.

4. *General Form.*—When uncontrolled by the exigencies of site, the

forts tend to the circular or oval form, and although slight divergences are made to take advantage of the ground, great irregularity in the general plan does not occur. The circumvallations are almost invariably curvilinear, unless when the nature of the site leads to the partial use of straight lines. Very few instances indeed are met with of an apparent deliberate choice of a straight rampart, the most evident being at Mill Rings (Plate V. fig. 64), where the inner "ring" becomes straight on the weakest side of the fort. The curves are generally irregular, and are sometimes composed of several nearly straight facets, varying much in length. In one curve at Janet's Brae Fort there are eleven facets. In these respects all the forts differ markedly from the "Roman camp" at Lyne, which is rectilinear, and looks as if it had been laid down by rule and measure.

5. *Construction.*—The chief facts to be noticed are as follows:—

Some of the forts appear to have been constructed entirely of stone. In general there is no evidence to show whether the stones were originally built in solid walls or merely piled on each other; but at Dreva (fig. 8) a fragment of apparently original dry masonry still exists, and in many of the forts, of which little is left but the foundations, the remains suggest that there had been either two closely concentric walls, or outer and inner casings filled in with rubble. I am inclined to believe that at least two-thirds of the Peeblesshire forts were constructed mainly or entirely of stone.

Stone *chevaux-de-frise* are met with in two instances (Cademuir, figs. 3, 4; Dreva, figs. 6, 7).

Other forts are constructed of earth, as Harehope Rings and Harehope Fort (pp. 30–33), the earth being taken either from the trenches which form part of the defences, or, where there are no trenches, being probably obtained in the process of levelling and adapting the site (Ladyurd, p. 53). In some of these earthworks stone seems to have been purposely mixed with the earth (Milkiston, p. 47).

Some forts have been constructed mainly by scarping and terracing the slopes round the top of the eminences which they occupy (Hallmanor, fig. 41; Muirburn, fig. 42). The terraces either form wide platforms, probably defended at the edge by walls or earthen parapets,

or, when very narrow, unless they were defended by palisades, the whole width may have been occupied by walls (Pirn, fig. 10).

Different kinds of circumvallation appear to have been used in combination in not a few instances (Langlaw, p. 59; Henderland, p. 34; Caerlee, p. 51).

6. *Arrangement and Details of the Defences.*—The variety in these is so great that, with the exception of a few of simple design, not one fort closely resembles another. The following are the chief varieties, with references to a few examples of each:—

a. Circumvallations concentric and close together (Harehope Rings, fig. 14; Northshield, fig. 23).

b. Circumvallations concentric, but with wide spaces between them, the lines being formed either of a single rampart (Kersknowe, Plate II. fig. 52; Blythbank Hill, Plate V. fig. 65) or of double ramparts (Milkiston, fig. 32; Stirkfield, Plate II. fig. 50).

c. Interspace cut off from the rest of the works so as to form a kind of ravelin (Milkiston, figs. 32, 33).

d. Rampart apparently intended to serve merely as a parapet, the defenders standing behind it in the levelled trench (Harehope Fort, p. 33).

e. Rampart widened and levelled on the top, so as to form *places d'armes* of very various shapes (Northshield, fig. 23; Blythhill, fig. 31). In many cases the rampart is too large and high to have been a parapet, yet is not flattened on the top to hold defenders, and, unless some kind of banquette has disappeared, it is not easy to see how it was defended.

f. The foregoing combined in various ways, and with or without trenches.

g. Ramparts thrown out to include defensible spaces, generally at a lower level than the main work (Lower Cademuir, fig. 3; Meldon, Plate I. fig. 47).

h. A detached outwork (Macbeth's Castle, Plate III. fig. 53).

i. Ramparts invariably most massive on the weak sides of forts, or additional defences placed there.

k. Ramparts invariably weaker on sides strong by nature, or even absent there (Blythhill, fig. 31).

l. Trenches do not seem to have been used in the stone forts, and

even in the earthen ones the hollows between the ramparts are often not true trenches,—that is to say, they are not below, in some cases they are even above, the original level of the ground (Ladyurd, fig. 39). Without excavating it is difficult to determine the original sectional form of the trenches, but not a few seem to have been flat-bottomed (Harehope Fort, fig. 15 ; Henderland, fig. 22).

m. Traverses, to prevent an enemy who had effected a lodgment from running round the trenches or circumvallations, do not seem to have been generally constructed of walls or earthen mounds, although there are traces of the former in some stone forts, and at Milkiston, and of the latter also at Milkiston, and possibly in the trench at Langlaw (fig. 43). Probably such necessary aids to defence were constructed of wood.

7. *Entrances.*—A good many of the forts have had only one entrance, others two, and several have had three ; but few of them are well



Fig. 71. Entrance to Harehope Fort.

preserved. The entrances are almost invariably placed where the access to the fort is most difficult, and the entrances themselves are fortified with extra care.

Thus, in the stone fort of Dreva (fig. 6 B), the roadway slants up the hill under close command from the ramparts, and enters the fort at a right angle, with a rock-face 5 feet high in front and another on the right, which force the road to take a sharp turn to the left. The north-west entrance to Macbeth's Castle (Plate III, fig. 53) is very curious. If an enemy succeeded in forcing it, he would find himself shut

into a little hollow 6 or 7 feet below the general level of the fort, with a defensive wall encircling the top. Other instances of stone-fort entrances are given in the account of the Cademuir Forts.

In some cases the entrance is straight (Harehope Fort, fig. 71), but in others it is oblique (Knowe Kniffling, Plate V. fig. 63) or sinuous (Pirn, fig. 10). In some forts with trenches slight parapets line the entrance (Harehope Fort, fig. 71); in others there is no parapet between the entrance and the trenches.

Among the devices used for strengthening entrances are flanking platforms on the top of the ramparts (Henderland, fig. 22); flanking works outside the main lines, as shown in the plan (fig. 42) and sketch

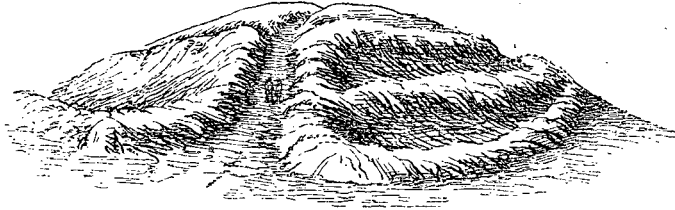


Fig. 72. Entrance to Muirburn Fort.

(fig. 72) of Muirburn, in which, however, the ramparts have come out much too distinctly; or in them (Kersknowe, Plate II. fig. 52); or



Fig. 73. Entrance to Chester Rig, Glenholm.

inside them, forming circular structures flanking the roadway (Chester Rig, fig. 46; Pirn, fig. 10; Goseland, fig. 34; Kittlegairy, Plate II. fig. 48).

Chester Rig (figs. 46, 73) is an example of a well-defended entrance.

There are remains of flanking works thrown out in front. The roadway, as it pierces the lines, has been cut off from them by a wall or parapet. Immediately on entering the interior it branches into two, and the bifurcation is flanked by a circular structure on each side, and fronted by another structure now a shapeless mass of turf-covered debris.

Some of even the best-preserved forts have apparently never had additional defences, unless of some perishable material, at the entrance, such as Harehope Rings (fig. 13) and Harehope Fort (fig. 14), where the entrances are so neatly rounded off as to be probably much in their original perfection.

I have never seen any sign of the straight traverses in front of entrances so commonly delineated by early observers in their plans of Roman camps and forts now demolished.

8. *Interior.*—In the majority of cases the interior has not been levelled, and is free from structural remains. The surface is often very irregular, with rock cropping through, and sometimes rises high above the lines of defence (Cademuir, Plate IV. fig. 57; Caerlee, fig. 38; Meldon, Plate I. fig. 47). In thirty instances the surface is wholly or partly covered with buried ruins, which are either shapeless or take the circular form already noticed. These circular structures occur in twelve of the forts, and vary in internal diameter from 20 to 45 feet. They are sometimes, but not always, connected apparently with the defence of entrances. The greatest number in any one fort is in Chargelaw, where there are five. It might be supposed that these structures were connected at some former time with the pastoral pursuits of the district, but I think the lofty, exposed, wind-swept situations where they occur, so different from the sheltered sites of sheepfolds in the present day, make it very unlikely, and it seems more probable that they are analogous to the circular “cloughans or cyttiau” of Irish and Welsh forts, which have been proved by excavation to be the walls of houses, although they differ from the greater number of the latter in being considerably larger.

III. USES AND ANTIQUITY OF THE FORTS.

Some doubt exists as to the precise objects of these remains, and the opinion has even been expressed that they were not forts at all but

mere cattle enclosures. This may have been the case as regards some of the simpler forms; yet even these seem intended quite as much to keep enemies out as to keep cattle in, as their sites are evidently chosen for defensive purposes, and the sides weakest from a military point of view are invariably made extra strong by art. At all events it seems impossible to deny the military purpose of the great majority of the Peeblesshire forts, with their double, treble, or quadruple circumvallations and variety of defensive details, and the only question is whether they were intended merely as temporary refuges or as permanent places of abode, capable of standing a prolonged siege. One objection that has been urged against the latter view is that many of the forts are so elevated as to be uninhabitable, but the ancient Welsh town of Tre'r Ceiri, which, from the strength of its fortifications and the number and solidity of its hut circles, was evidently permanently occupied, is at a greater elevation than any of them. The deficiency of water supply is a much more serious objection, and it is difficult to see how it can be got over, although on the other hand it must be owned that for mere temporary defence most of the Peebles forts are too elaborate and strong. As to their strength, before we can appreciate what it has been, we must in imagination rebuild the prostrate walls of the stone forts, and, in the case of the earthen ones, restore the original height of rampart, depth of trench, and steepness of slope, diminished by the tear and wear of ages, and add the palisades which in all probability crowned the ramparts.

An interesting question is whether the forts were designedly placed so as to oppose the invasion of a common foe. Unfortunately we do not know whether the forts were all in use at the same time, but independently of this, I do not think that the proof of a common object, upheld by Chambers, is clearly made out. If some of the passes are carefully guarded, others seem unaccountably neglected; but to discuss the question properly a much larger district would require to be taken in than forms the subject of this paper.¹

¹ In regard to the distribution of the forts within the county, Plate VII. shows that they are absent on the slopes of the Pentlands and in the valley between these

If we could form a reliable estimate of the number of men required to defend the forts, we should have an index to the population of the county in prehistoric times. We cannot tell whether the forts were occupied simultaneously, but granting that they were, we have about eighty, the inner enceinte of very few of them being less than 150 yards in girth, while not a few exceed 400, and one attains to 900 yards. An average of 70 men,—a small estimate for the efficient defence of such works,—gives a force of 5600 fighting men, representing a population much larger than the county now maintains, even with its manufacturing towns. This result indicates either that the forts were not in use simultaneously, or that they were mainly intended to defend small tribes, with their possessions, from trifling attacks, faith being placed rather in the strength of the works than in the number of their defenders.

The origin of the Peeblesshire forts, in common with that of the Scottish prehistoric forts in general, is involved in obscurity. The date of their construction, however, is not necessarily very remote, as the investigations of Petrie leave little room for doubt that the Tara raths, which resemble the Peebles earthen forts, were finally abandoned, and by a "Scotic race," only in the sixth century; and in Dr Joyce's *Irish Names of Places* we find it stated "that circular *duns* and *raths*, after the ancient pagan fashion, continued to be erected down to the twelfth or thirteenth century." Further, if a remote antiquity be assigned to all the Peebles forts, the question arises—Where are the remains of the fortifications which must have immediately preceded the feudal castles? Is it not very unlikely that ample remains of extremely remote and of comparatively recent fortified works should exist, while not a vestige survives of those of the intervening period?

The traditional belief of the people gives us no help. It is difficult indeed to know what that belief was, or is. Armstrong ridicules the people for ascribing the forts to the Romans; Chalmers asserts that popular tradition gives them to the Picts; and Chambers says that the country people impute them to the Danes or Romans, but never to the aborigines.

and the southern mass of hills, and in the valley of the Leithen; that there are very few in upper Tweeddale, in lower Tweeddale, and on the Quair; and that they abound near the modern capital and in the western and north-western valleys.

Some hint as to the builders might be looked for in the names either of the forts or of the sites on which they stand. With the exception however, of Candyburn and Macbeth "castles," the forts have no special names, but are simply known as "rings" or "camps," and the majority of the hillocks on which they stand have names of comparatively recent origin, having no reference to forts, such as Hog's Knowe, Janet's Brae, Woodhill, &c.

In six of the fort-sites the word *Chester* occurs, in the Ordnance Map, in the forms of *Chester Hill*, *Chester Rig*, *Chester Lees*, &c. But the forts upon them do not resemble each other or differ from the other forts in such a way as to mark them as a separate class. Indeed, *Chester* is a term that has been loosely used in connection with the Peebles forts. Thus in Armstrong's time it seems to have been very generally applied to them, and Gordon speaks of the two forts at Drochil as "Chesters," a name by which they are not now known; while with regard to the "places in the parish of Traquair, called Chesters" in the First Statistical Account, it is alleged in the Second that they are "no longer nor in the memory of the oldest inhabitant called Chesters."

Passing to sites the names of which contain Celtic roots, which may imply a connection with forts, *car* occurs in *Cardrona*, *Caerlee*, and *Cardie*. It is possible, however, that this prefix does not always imply such a connection. In the county map it occurs four times in *Cardon*, and in two of these is applied to lofty hills quite remote from the fort regions. We also know from Dr Joyce that *carr* is a root signifying rock or rocky land, used in composition in several parts of Ireland.

Tor occurs in *Torhill* and *Torwood*, on both of which sites there are forts. Nowhere else in the county, so far as I know, does this prefix occur, except close to Torhill in *Torbank farm* and *Torbankhill*, which are possibly derivatives from it.

Tinnis, which occurs once, is possibly, as Chambers has suggested, a corruption of the Welsh *Dinas*, and the Irish *rath* may possibly turn up in *Glenrath*, but there are no remains of a fort in that glen.

Dun does not occur at all on a fort site, unless in *Meldon*, although it is met with in *Dunslair* and *Dundreich*, two lofty hills beyond the fort-region, and perhaps in *Cardon*, mentioned above.

In concluding this paper, I am fully aware that in the plans errors and imperfections must exist, which more careful surveys may detect, and that my interpretations of remains, often in a state of profound decay, are liable to correction by subsequent observers. Every one who has taken a part in such investigations must often have had doubts whether he really sees what he thinks he sees, and must occasionally have dreaded the fate of the Antiquary when Edie Ochiltree's "Prætorian here, Prætorian there, I mind the biggin' o't?" sounded in his ears. My endeavour has been, avoiding theory, to see things as they are; but my general review of the subject, far from checking, is designed to encourage fresh and more detailed investigations, in order to attain the greatest possible accuracy. For it seems to me beyond question that the scientific study of the Prehistoric Forts in the three kingdoms is but in its infancy, and that this is especially the case in Scotland, where we are only beginning, somewhat late in the day, to lay the foundation of fact, upon which alone we can hope to build reliable theories.

In carrying out this study much information both as to the structure and origin of the forts might be obtained by judicious excavation, the principal objects being to ascertain the original form of ramparts, trenches, &c., the nature of ruined structures within the forts, and to search for buried weapons, or other remains of the races who may have occupied them. Nothing of this kind of any importance has been done in Scotland, but in England the British Association has set a good example by appointing a committee of experts in 1882, who, using the careful method of General Pitt Rivers, have carried out excavations with encouraging results at Loughton Camp, Epping Forest.

It is of the utmost consequence also that representations of the forts and their details should be preserved in our antiquarian journals. Remains of the kind are peculiarly liable to destruction. We must look forward to the time when our chief information about them will be treasured in books; and it must be owned that mere descriptions, without illustrative plans and drawings, would prove but a sorry record of objects, capable of representation, which have passed for ever from our sight.

LIST OF PEEBLESSHIRE FORTS, FOLLOWING THE COURSE OF THE STREAMS.

The numbers correspond with those on the map, Plate VII.

Forts of which no trace remains, but the sites of which are known, are numbered, but printed in italics.

Forts not now existing, and the sites of which cannot be precisely fixed, are printed in italics and not numbered.

Local heights are rough estimates of elevation above the valleys or neighbouring low ground.

No.	Forts.	Height.		No.	Forts.	Height.	
		Above Sea.	Local.			Above Sea.	Local.
		Feet.	Feet.			Feet.	Feet.
	<i>River Tweed.</i>			42	Muirburn,	1127	230
1	Chester Lees,	1300	600	43	Stirkfield,	845	none
2	Chester Knowes,	800	50	44	Upper Langlaw,	1208	400
3	<i>Coomlees,</i>	700	none	45	<i>Lower Langlaw,</i>	1050	350
4	Rachan,	1041	400		<i>Tarth Water.</i>		
5	Henry's Brae,	950	250	46	Upper Lochurd,	1050	200
6	Tinnis,	900	200	47	Lower Lochurd,	850	none
7	Dawick,	700	100	48	Shawhill,	900	200
8	Lour,	800	200	49	Blythbankhill,	1013	200
9	Kersknowe,	950	400	50	Blythhill,	1009	300
10	Upper Houndhill,	1137	540	51	Ladyurd,	930	300
11	Lower Houndhill,	1000	400		<i>Scrogwood,</i>	...	...
12	Venlaw,	1066	600		<i>River Lyne.</i>		
13	Kittlegairy,	1152	350		<i>Linton,</i>	...	...
14	Janet's Brae (1),	1178	400	52	Henderland,	1000	200
15	Janet's Brae (2),	1000	500	53	Boreland,	950	250
16	Janet's Brae (3),	900	400	54	<i>Penria,</i>	850	150
17	Cardiehill,	1146	600	55	Whiteside,	1204	500
18	Camplan,	1000	500	56	Upper Drochil,	1100	450
19	Torwood,	885	400	57	Lower Drochil,	1000	350
20	Highland Shiel,	1200	350	58	Hoghill,	850	200
21	Chargelaw,	1100	400	59	Torhill,	1000	300
22	Horsburgh,	1394	500	60	Hamildean,	1261	700
23	Castle Hill,	1050	550		<i>Meldon Burn.</i>		
24	Cardrona,	1073	600	61	Harehope Ring,	1295	300
25	<i>Chesterhill,</i>	1018	500	62	Harehope Fort,	1100	?
26	Caerlee,	848	350	63	Meldon,	1401	700
27	Pirn,	700	300		<i>Manor Water.</i>		
28	Kirnie Law,	600	150	64	Macbeth's Castle,	1100	300
	<i>Holms Water.</i>			65	Hallmanor,	850	100
29	Holms Water,	800	none	66	<i>Hogsknoce,</i>	1100	400
30	Chester Rigs,	1100	350	67	Woodhouse,	1000	400
	<i>Kilbacho Burn.</i>			68	<i>Caverhill,</i> . . . . .	...	...
31	Mitchell Hill Fort,	1307	400	68	Chester,	1000	300
32	Mitchell Hill Rings,	1100	250		<i>Cademuir Farm,</i>	...	...
33	Knowe Kniffling,	1330	400	69	West Cademuir,	1087	400
34	Mill Rings,	1000	200	70	High Cademuir,	1314	600
35	Goseland,	1000	300	71	East Cademuir,	1050	400
	<i>Biggar Water.</i>				<i>Eddleston Water.</i>		
36	Helmond,	1061	400	72	<i>Caurn,</i> . . . . .	...	...
37	Dreva,	898	250	73	Northshield,	1178	500
	<i>Candy Burn.</i>				<i>Darnhall,</i> . . . . .	...	...
	<i>Broughton Burn, &c.</i>			74	Wormiston,	800	260
38	Broomylaw (1),	1000	20	75	Milkiston,	1100	400
	<i>Broomylaw (2),</i> . . . . .	...	...		<i>Hutchinfeld,</i>	...	...
39	Candyburn (1),	989	200		<i>Quair Water.</i>		
40	Candyburn (2),	850	50	76	Chesters,	1223	400
41	<i>Gallowslaw,</i> . . . . .	...	...		



*SKETCH MAP
showing the position of the
Prehistoric Forts in Peeblesshire.*

*The Forts are numbered down the
Valleys, and the numbers are
placed directly over the sites.*