

I.

THE MOTES, FORTS, AND DOONS OF THE STEWARTRY OF KIRK-
CUDBRIGHT. BY FREDERICK R. COLES. (PART I.)

During the spring of 1890 I was led, through a friend, to write to Sir Arthur Mitchell upon the structure and appearance of a *fort* a mile or so from my own house, to which I had paid several visits in a somewhat vague and romantic spirit. My letter Sir Arthur forwarded to Dr David Christison, who at once opened up to me the prospect of investigating these structures for myself, and so of gradually meeting him in his survey of the *Dumfriesshire Forts*, thus together gathering materials for an archæological map of the south-west of Scotland.

The work so grew upon my hands that by the end of October, when I met Dr Christison, I possessed sufficient notes of over sixty of our *Galloway Forts* and *Motes* to form the substance (with further additions) of the paper I have now the pleasure of reading before the Society.

Having known the Stewartry more or less intimately for some thirty years, during which period I have taken considerable interest in its Flora and Fauna, as well as its antiquities, it is all the more a matter of surprise that objects so conspicuous as large earthworks (*Motes* and *Fortes*) should, till quite recently, have escaped my special notice. My experience, however, herein differs little from that of others, who, whether natives of the district or not, seem never to have even seen the majority of these remarkable structures. Nor, in our district, is there much more perspicuity displayed by the compilers of the Ordnance Survey maps. I have proved during my investigation that fully thirty *Motes* and *Fortes*—many of them fairly complete and conspicuously situated—have been entirely omitted, and also that in some cases their figure on the map is demonstrably far from their actual form and proportions. This being true of the 6-inch scale, of which, for all later topographical details I made use, it is not surprising that the 1-inch map which I carried with me should be still less complete and helpful. In several

instances my experience, with regard to the country-folks' knowledge of these structures, differs from Dr Christison's in Lorne, where ignorance of their very existence seems to prevail; and in a few instances interesting and remarkable legends have been told in connection with them.

Owing to the unusually hilly and hillocky nature of the ground throughout the Stewartry, which constantly brings to mind Buchanan's excellent epithet, "contumet in modicos colles," observations are rendered difficult in the extreme, added to which we have a climate humid and warm to a remarkable degree, so that the natural growth of small shrubs, broom, whin, and brambles runs riot into such profusion that many a *fort site* is converted into a veritable jungle, through which only rabbits can pass with impunity. In many cases this tangle of shrubs has impeded measurements sadly. In other cases the inroads of cattle and sheep have done much to destroy the contours; but at the same time by this very destruction a glance into the structure of a *mote* has been gained which otherwise would have been left to mere conjecture.

So far as possible, the measurements have been made with a 66-foot tape; in some of the longer ones I have had to be content with pacing.

The majority of our *Motes*, &c., I have examined and measured alone; for all these, therefore, in matters of description I hold myself responsible. On several occasions the survey has been made with one or more of the following friends:—Mr John Watson, Mr Wellwood Maxwell of Kirkennan, F.S.A. Scot., Mr David Corson, Mr R. Watson. To a special few I have paid more than one visit.

The plan followed in describing our *Motes* and *Forts* in this paper has the one advantage of being simple. I am aware it is not so systematic or scientific as it might be. I trust, however, when my survey is complete, to re-cast the subject into a more scientific mould, keeping structure in view, together with a due regard for topography, thus giving a summary of the chief features and broad demarcations of the objects surveyed in a manner more useful to those who are less interested in detailed description.

In order to a right understanding of these features, general and particular, it is necessary, first of all, to literally know the "lay of the land." The county is divided into portions nearly of equal area by the water-line of the rivers Deugh, Ken, and Dee. The eastern half is again sub-divided by the river Urr into two long strips. For convenience, I denote these three areas as *East* (i.e. between Nith and Urr), *Mid* (i.e. between Urr and Dee), and *West Stewartry*, i.e. all the land lying west of the Dee up to the Cree, which forms the boundary with Wigtownshire. The distribution of *Motes* and *Fortes*, &c., within the limits of these several areas is, as will be afterwards seen, somewhat remarkable. It will be enough to note in the meantime that whereas *West Stewartry* contains only 60 structures, *Mid* and *East*, though together not more extensive, possess fully 130.¹

Explanation of the Plans, &c.

The *plans* are not all drawn to a uniform scale; but the majority being shown on the scale of 100 feet to the inch, it is to be understood that that is the scale used, unless otherwise stated. I do not claim absolute accuracy for the *sections* and *plans*, but the measurements in figures are correct.

Trenches and (in some cases) terraces are dotted; the thicker the dots the deeper the trench.

Arrows indicating steepness of slopes on Dr Christison's principle are made use of occasionally. All measurements, except where specially stated otherwise, are in feet. In as many instances as possible the oldest and most distinctive name is attached to the *Fort* or *Mote*; where this is impossible, the name of the farm on which it stands is given. In the *plans* the orientation is indicated in the customary manner; and the figures in brackets sometimes accompanying the compass show the height above sea-level, copied from the Ordnance Map. Where the height is not thus given, it is approximated in a perpendicular line from summit to base of the *section*.

¹ In the present notice only the works belonging to a part of *Mid Stewartry* are dealt with. Reference to others is made by placing the initial E. or W., followed by a number in brackets, where comparison is useful.

Abbreviations:—O.M., Ordnance Map, 6-inch scale; O.S.A., Old Statistical Account; N.S.A., New Statistical Account; M'K., *Lands and their Owners in Galloway* (M'Kerlie); H., *Rambles in Galloway* (M. M'L. Harper). M'Kenzie's *History of Galloway*, Nicholson's *Traditional Tales*, and M'Kerlie's *Galloway in Ancient and Modern Times* are also occasionally alluded to.

In the following study the attempt has been made to investigate the nature of our "Prehistoric Forts"—so called by earlier writers—by separating these very various structures into three great groups—*Forts*, *Motes*, and *Doons*, irrespective of contour, but dependent on certain broad lines of distinction as regards structure.

Leaving the details to the concluding summary, it may here be stated that the *Forts* are constructed either of earth, of earth *plus* stone, or of stone only; that the *Motes* are of earth, or of earth *plus* stone; and that the *Doons*, forming a characteristic group by themselves, are usually of earth *plus* stone.

I. MID STEWARTRY.

Beginning with the most southerly locality on the E. bank of the Dee, we find—

1. *Craig Raploch* (fig. 1), a true hill fort, about 320 feet above sea-level and half a mile from the shore, on a rocky spur of Wall Hill. It is an earth and stone work, irregular oblong, with curved ends, uneven nearly all over the western side, which juts down in shallow ledges, and falling off sharply on all sides but the N.E., where the main bulk of hill comes in. On the E. of the dyke, the rampart, nowhere above 2 feet high, becomes extremely vague; possibly the curve was extended S.E., and completed the contour of the fort more symmetrically. The ramparts are of stone and earth. The noticeable feature in this fort is the small rhomboidal enclosure at the N. corner, which measures 18, 15, 21, and 21 feet on the N. S. E. and W. sides respectively. There are also other hollows more suggestive of quarried holes than of purposeful work. There is no well, nor any stream or spring near this fort. Some 50 feet below the W. side the rock becomes precipitous.

2. *Glenap Fort* (fig. 2) is about three-quarters of a mile nearly due N. of the fort just described, and though not so loftily situated, by its fine position commands a greater extent of country, and serves to connect the coast forts with the nearest inland groups. The actual cutting and shaping of the shaley rock-hillock on which it stands takes in an area of about 350 feet N. and S.

by 250 feet E. and W., the N. and S. diameter almost exactly bisecting it into halves along the line of its summit-ridge. The form is a broad oval, 216 by 183 feet, bearing a stone and earth rampart, the remains of which, chiefly on the N. curve, show that it must have been strong and compact. From the rampart the slope on the W. is at an angle of rather more than 45° . On the E. the plough, which has been carried frequently over the whole *fort*, has destroyed all vestige of rampart and terrace trench, and left an unbroken incline of some fifty yards. Only at the S.W. and the N.W. curves are there substantial relics of the outer rampart, each about 60 feet long and each having a long and abrupt outer slope.

It is worth noting that throughout its entire length no portion of the trench

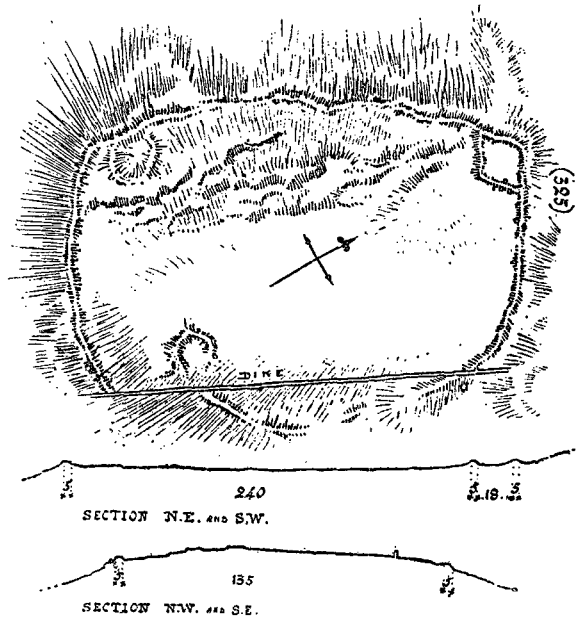


Fig. 1. Craig Raploch.

is rounded or hollow, but perfectly flat and definitely measurable. How much of this character may be owing to scores upon scores of years of ploughing, it is hard to say; but the fact is nevertheless existent, and seems to be peculiar to this and a few other *forts*. The approach on the S. is, in my opinion, an original integral part of the construction; of that on the N. I am at least

doubtful; but it is only by actual observation that one can judge of such points. The Netherlaw Burn flows past on the N. within a hundred yards, while

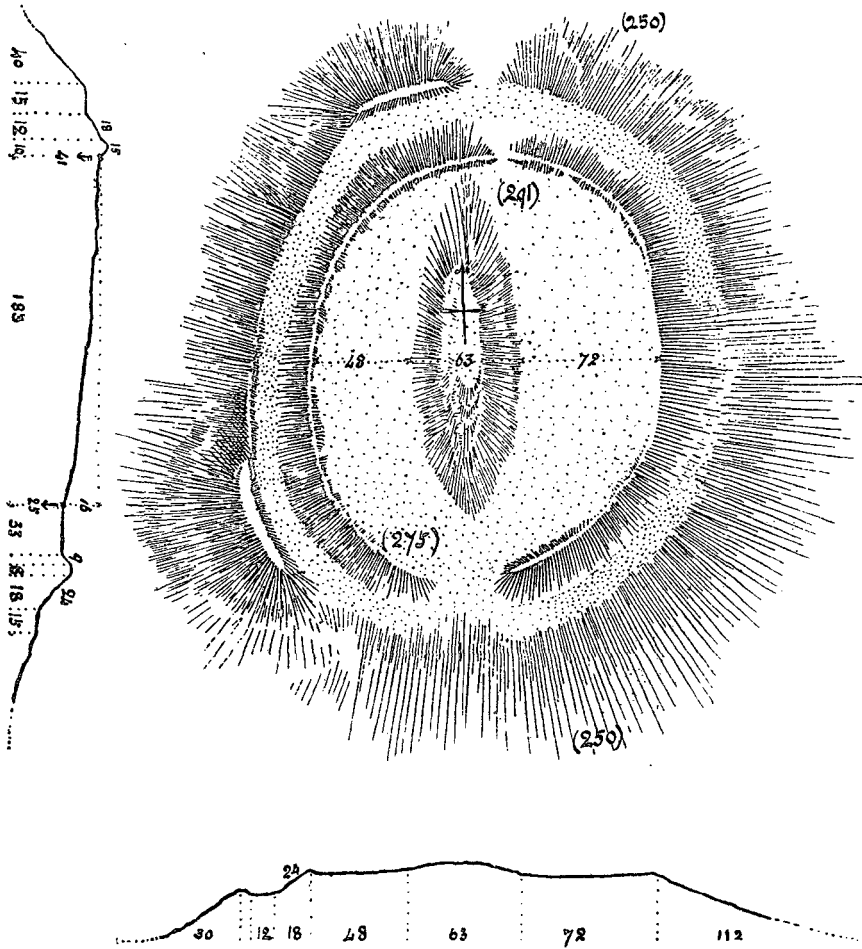


Fig. 2. Glenap Fort.

on the S., adjoining what is now Craig Raploch Farmhouse, a large marshy pool lies conveniently near.

3. *Raeberry Castle* (fig. 3)—two miles S.W. of the last fort—is the name given to the mediæval strength, once the abode of the famous Galloway family (MacLellan). Of this nothing remains but an edging of stones and lime along the eastern side of the precipitous neck of rock that projects from the base of the towering height of Raeberry Head. On this long oval promontory, which is 90 feet almost sheer height above the sea, are faint remnants of ramparts,

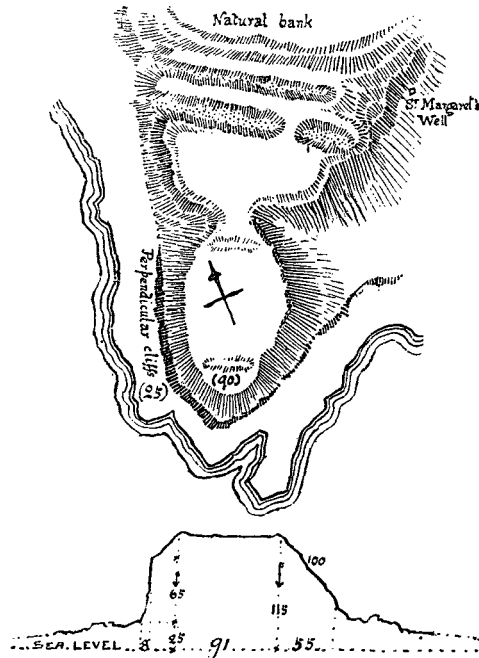


Fig. 3. Raeberry Castle.

one at either end ; but inland some hundred feet is a bold, straight piece of intrenchment, carried right across the only flattish space available for an assault ; this is backed up by a second, 25 feet further inshore ; and beyond this the natural steepness of the rocky bank is sufficient. On every side assault is impossible or at least dangerous in the extreme ; and headland, cliff, sea, and solitude combine to render this site wellnigh unique.

Suggested derivation of name : Norse *raudr*, berg = "the red headland" (M.K.) ; very applicable.

Following the shore, the next structure, (4) *King William's Battery*, so called

locally and named on the maps, shows nothing but a mere fragment of very obliterated rampart, cutting off a broadly oblong seaward-sloping height—the lowest grassy land of Torrs Point. So far as measurement was possible, I made the contour of this place to be—rampart 105 feet, running N.E. and S.W. ; S.W. side 117 feet, N.W. side 42 feet, and N.N.E. 105 feet.

5. *Drummore Fort*.—The same farm of Torrs has the honour of possessing this most important, interesting, and famous structure. It is conspicuously situated on a height 300 feet above sea-level, and commands a wonderfully extensive expanse of country, being the culmination of the rocky land that forms

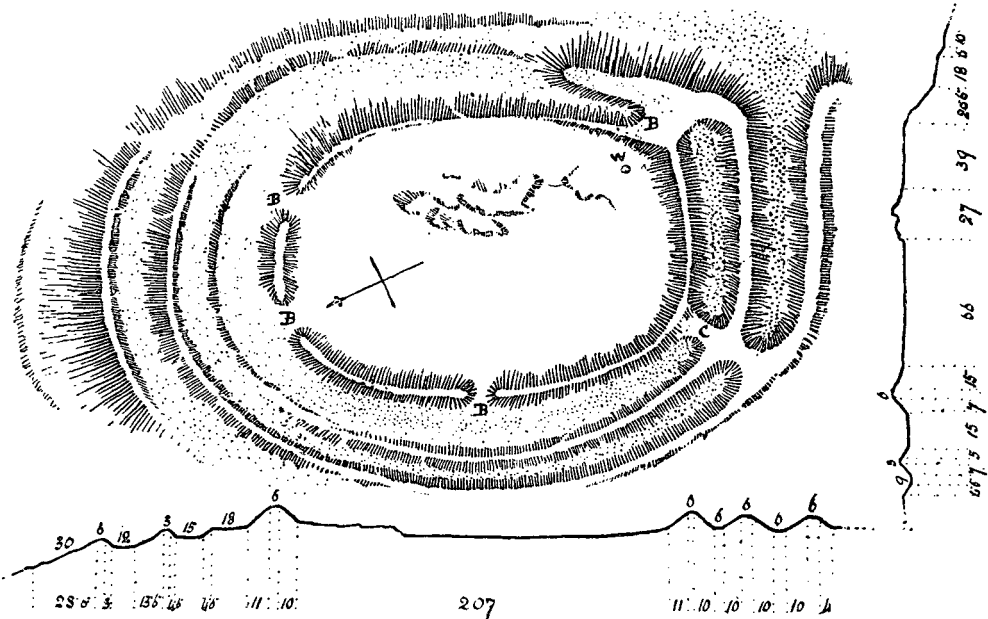


Fig. 4. Drummore Fort.

the E. bank of Kirkcudbright Bay, and the southernmost portion of the parish of Kirkcudbright. It is precisely one mile N.E. of the cliffs at *King William's Battery*, and includes within the radius of rather more than a mile *Raeberry*, *Dunrod "Roman" Camp* and its ancient village, *Milton Fort*, a circular fort of gravel (now destroyed) called *The Battery*, and at least two *stone circles*, and several localities famous for the mysterious symbols known as *Cup-and-Ring* marks. Added to which it boasts, according to Stuart and others, of being the site of the Roman *Caer-bantorigum*.

Its ramparts and trenches, unlike those of many of the smaller Galloway structures, are imposing and strong, and force one to the conclusion that these at any rate were made for purposes of defence and safety, to which conclusion the existence of two well-hollows—one within the ramparts—lends additional weight. *Drummore Fort* (fig. 4) occupies over all a space of 430 feet by 250 feet, the longer axis being N.E. and S.W. Its central plateau is an uneven, broadish oval, measuring 207 by 174 feet from base to base of its rampart, which, at the S.E. corner, becomes sharply rectangular, and is broken at four points (B), and all but broken at a fifth (C). The trenches, varying from 6 to 18 feet in width, deepen to fully 8 feet on the S. end, but are comparatively shallow on the N. end, where the outermost rampart becomes lost, and merges into irregularities of ground on either side. At the S.E. corner, some 10 or 12 feet within the rampart, is the small round hollow (7 × 7) (W), which I suppose to have been a well. The other well—still moist and full of rank herbage—is cut out of the solid rock below the furthest edge of the W. rampart.

The general construction is of earth and splintered rock, upon a rocky foundation; in some parts, as *e.g.* on the S. ramparts, rounded stones also have been used. The interior has not been altered or smoothed to any degree, the late Earl of Selkirk having ever, with laudable good feeling, given strict orders for the careful preservation of any antiquities on his estates.

Name: Gaelic *Druim mor* = "the great hill."

6. "*Roman*." *Camp, Dunrod* (fig. 5), three-quarters of a mile N.E. of *Drummore*, rectilinear, and in a low flat site—reasons apparently sufficient for the older observers, or theorists, to at once conclude that *Dunrod* is a Roman Camp. Assuredly if such points as mere contour and site, and apparently convenient proximity to huge works like *Drummore*, be pressed as evidence of Roman construction, then *Dunrod* has more to say for itself than any other *fort site* as yet known to me in Galloway.

When, however, we come to dimensions and real structural proportions, and compare our rectilinear "camps" with those proved to be Roman in Dumfriesshire, the difference is at once apparent.

Dunrod measures but 120 feet by 108, its diagonal is N. and S., and though called "square," it is by no means regularly laid down; and the very obvious curve on the N.E. looks as if it were made curved, not become so through weathering or other mishap. The slope down to the fosse is 9 feet, at a regular and even angle of only 32°, the fosse is 18 feet wide, and the slope upward from its outer edge again 9 feet, its top—somewhat vague and broken, about 4 feet—merging into the ground at many points with great irregularity. Rocky ridges considerably higher than itself close in the "camp" on the E. and S. Along the S. edge is a small, rudely-circular, low enclosure, and very fragmentary remnants of the same undefined character may be traced from this enclosure into the middle of the plateau.

The position of this strangely made *Fort* is such as to be easily flooded from the one stream that flows down from the *Drummore* heights, and which used to flow openly across the field. *Drummore* is visible from it.

8. *Fort at Milton Cottage*.—This is a fair type of a rough-hewn structure, such as are perhaps more frequent than any other in the district. The sketch (fig. 6) shows it as seen from the N., beyond the small loch above which its rocky sides rise. It is a rudely circular mound, with summit rampart and deepish fosse, cut through the solid rock for the most part: in circumference 255 feet, in diameter 81 and 72 feet, the curve on N.E. being precipitous for 10 to 15 feet, below which the debris slopes steeply down and obliterates the trench (fig. 7). Fairly level on the actual summit. The sides swell up

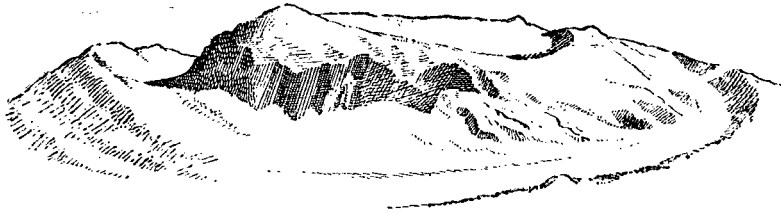


Fig. 6. Fort, Milton Cottage.

E. and W., so as to bring the extreme S. end up to the general level of the surrounding land trending in ridges southwards still.

It appears to be constructed mainly of earth or rock, with a layer of flattish whinstone slabs on the top of the ramparts, which are substantial and broad.

In position, it is one mile nearly N. of *Dunrod*, and about the same distance W. of the (9) *Balig Forts*, one of which is so demolished as to be barely measurable, the other a much better-preserved and noticeable structure.

I may state that to come upon two *forts*, or a *mote* and a *fort*, in close juxtaposition, is a rather frequent occurrence throughout the Stewartry. Of this more will be said later. It is enough to note, meanwhile, that in this instance the proximity lacks the visible communication usually assumed to be the *raison d'être*. The one *fort*—that nearly vanished—is quite lowly situated and shut off from the other by crags and rising ground. This *fort*, the W. one, has probably been a *terraced mote* in reality, judging by the one section which it is possible to make—the easily split laminated rock being shelved away at two different levels on the W. side of a somewhat prominent mound which is not central. All round this W. curve I searched in vain for indication of stonework; but on the E., where a strip of earth has been laid bare, it is clear that a portion at least was once built of a compactly-bedded mass of thin

“blue stones” placed on the natural rock in much the same way as the flattish stones appear at *Milton Cottage fort*.

About 100 feet higher and a furlong E. (10) the second *Balig Fort* crowns a gently-sloping eminence on Doon-hill, an almost circular work of earth and stone, a good deal spoiled by the inroads of agriculture.

Its E. and W. section is the longer, and shows the form more completely than any other. The summit rises slightly towards the E., and measures 174 by 168 feet; the trench, backed by rampart having a slope of 12 feet, in its present condition varies extremely, being on the W., where it is least ploughed, only 9 feet wide, while at other points it broadens to 18 and even

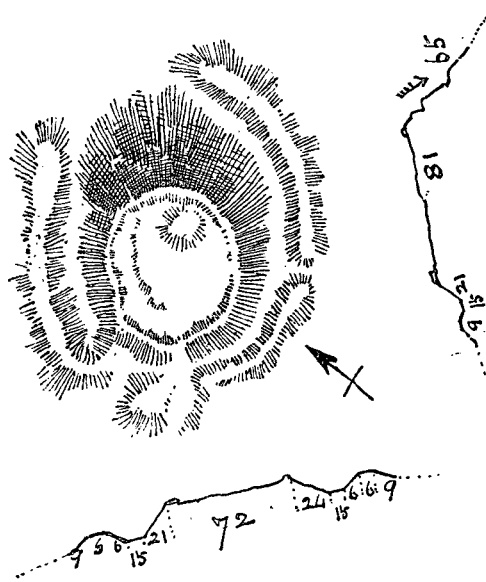


Fig. 7. Fort at Milton Cottage.

24 feet. The rampart top at all measurable points keeps a uniform width of 6 feet. Here, again, there is no sign extant of water-supply in any form whatever.

11. *North Milton Forts* comprise two, related to each other in a manner not unlike the two just described, one being comparatively low placed, the other somewhat remarkably high. Only one, moreover, is marked on the O.M., spoken of in any of my books of reference, or generally known; and it, though in no sense different from the usual irregularly-contoured “British Forts,” is

dubbed "Roman Encampment" by residents, while the other *fort* happens to be nearly a perfectly laid down oblong. This latter, which for convenience' sake I shall call the *High Fort of N. Milton*, is remarkable for being the only rectilinear fort in the S. of the Stewartry so high as 400 feet above sea-level. It occupies nearly the highest point of a hill N.W. of the *Cairn site*, above the farm-steadings, and though grievously ploughed down enough remains to show that it consisted of an oblong summit 159 by 72 feet (the shorter axis being nearly due N. and S.), a trench from 15 to 20 feet wide, and outer rampart 3 feet high with a fall outwards of 15 feet. But for a slightly higher point close by on the N.E., there is no eminence to obstruct the landscape till you touch *Galtway Hill* (475 feet) with its crowning *cairn* in the one direction, and the oft-mentioned *Drummore*, seawards, in the opposite.

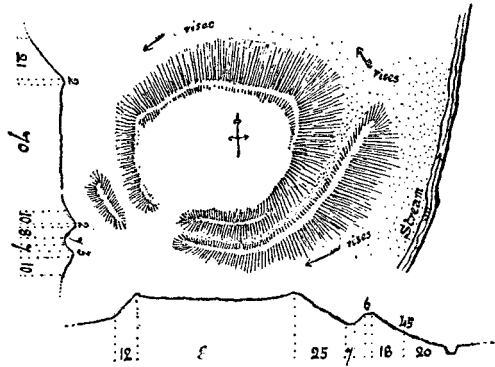


Fig. 8. Fort at North Milton.

Galtway (pron. *Gatta*) *Hill* is conspicuous as the central height for a large area around, commanding no fewer than 22 *Forts*, *Motes*, and *Cairns*, besides petroglyphs innumerable.

Of the other *fort* (fig. 8) at N. Milton I give a plan and two sections. It is interesting as a fine simple example of a rock-cut *fort*, very little altered in contour, as the irregularity of its five unequal sides shows. Their total circumference on summit is 264 feet, the longest diameter N.E. and S.W. being 90 feet, and the shortest due N. and S. 70 feet. The perpendicular height of this *fort summit* is about 33 or 40 feet, measured from the lowest ground on the S.E., whence the ground rises rapidly all round, till, at the S.W. approach, the natural level of the surrounding land is that of the summit within ramparts. It is plain, therefore, that in this case the approach is not at the least, but at the most, accessible point, which fact differentiates it from many of the *forts* described by Dr Christison in the counties of Lanark, &c.

This fort may be called almost exclusively a rock-cut fort, stones being used only on the strong outer rampart on the S. and S.E. curve. A small rivulet runs below on the N. and N.E.

13, 14. *Castle Creavie Forts*.—These two closely situated *forts* form the last group of two in this portion of our district. They are within sight of each other, both fairly high, both shaped out of rock, and both a good deal injured, probably more through wintry storms than by man's interference, as they are exposed to every wind that blows throughout the year.

The *South Fort* (13) has the higher and the more rocky site, about a quarter

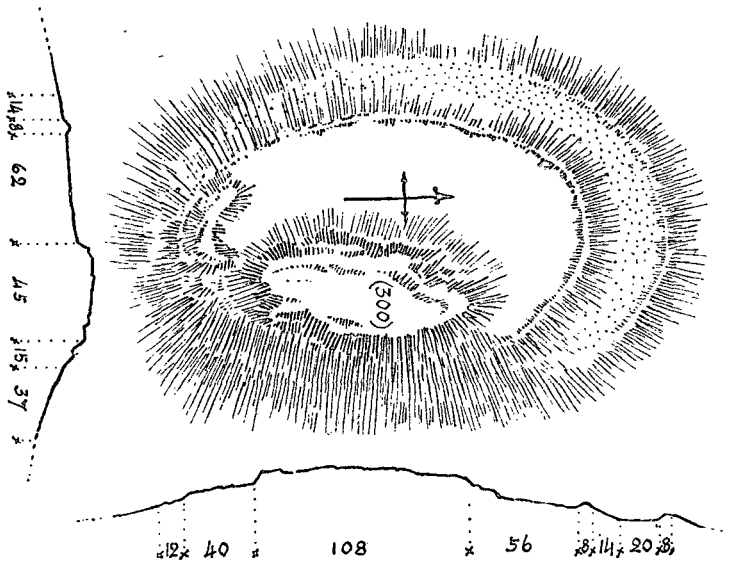


Fig. 9. North Fort, Castle Creavie.

of a mile distant from its neighbour. It is a semi-trenched rock-hillock, showing but slight evidence now of artificial shaping, rocky all over its extremely rugged summit, which is an uneven oval of 135 by 90 feet, the longer axis being N. and S. The circumference of the base is roughly 690 feet.

Of the *North Fort* (14) we can speak more definitely, although its extreme ruggedness renders even tentative examination very conjectural. I submit, however, the following notes and accompanying plan and section as the result arrived at by an investigation made with the help of Mr Robert Watson of Kirkcudbright Academy (fig. 9). The main axis runs along a strong ridge of

rock 300 feet above sea-level, and measures N. and S. 204 feet, of which fully 108 are pure rock. The contrary axis measures 122 feet across the rock to a point where the curve of the ends would run if continued along the precipitous eastern side. Distinct remains of the summit rampart are evident nearly two-thirds round, while the downward slope to a terrace-trench of 15 to 20 feet is also clear to a great extent; but below this the second rampart can only be really traced on the N. curve.

At the extreme S. end is a mound or hillock, whether of merely the disintegrated shaley rock or of once packed but disturbed stones we could not determine. There being no structural evidence, such as in *Milton Cottage Fort* e.g., of the use of flattish stones anywhere in this fort, I am inclined to discard this hillock as a natural excrescence.

Name from *Caiseal Craebhe* = "Castle of the Tree" (Maxwell).

Eastwards about two miles from the two forts just described is a remarkable cluster of motes and forts, which I have ranked under the title of *The Kirk-carsel Group*.¹

No less than five structures are here comprised within a roughly triangular area, each side of which measures rather over half a mile. The annexed map (fig. 10), drawn to the scale of 2 inches to the mile, shows the relative positions of the motes and forts. Three of them, Nos. 15, 18, and 19, are given on the O.M. *Barend Mote* (16), though so close to the little square one on *Kirkcarsel Burn* (15), is not marked, nor is it at all generally known. That marked "site of fort" (17) on *Auchnabony* has almost totally disappeared through farming operations. We cannot even sur-

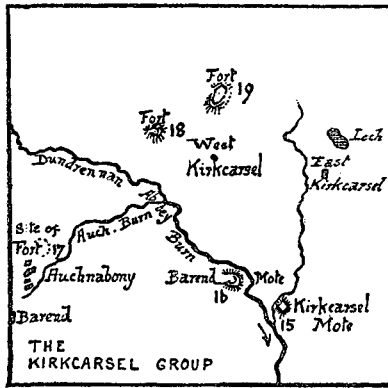


Fig. 10. (Scale 1 mile to 2 inches.)

mise its contour or extent. But judging by the contour lines on the map, it is probable that this "Camp" commanded the two below near the Abbey Burn, and very likely was also in visible communication with the two forts (18, 19).

Of the whole group, No. 15 (fig. 11) presents special points of interest. It has evidently been laid out with the intention of making it square. Mr D.

¹ In "Barnbarroch," spelt *Kyr-carsel*, *Kyr-castell*. Pont spells it *Kirkcar fell*, with a chapel near it. There are now, however, no remains or tradition of a kirk near; nor is there any stream which could be called a river, or ground specially like a "fell."

Corson and I measured it carefully by tape, and proved the actual dimensions to be these :—N. side, 53 feet long ; each of the others, 48 feet ; the N.E. diagonal being 72 feet, the other only 63 feet. Irregularities in the line and depth of the slope from summit to fosse are also discernible, the W. side measuring 30 feet, the S. 27, and the E. only 21.

The trench, 12 ft. 6 in. to 9 ft. can be clearly traced almost all round the three sides. On the N. a small rivulet running in a deep channel forms a natural trench, from which the *mote-slope* rises 42 feet at an angle rather steeper than 45°. In the bed of this rivulet, close to the N.W. angle of the *mote-base*, is a large rock, or block of whinstone, jutting out from the *mote*, and from the appearance of other blocks nearly meeting it, and thus confining

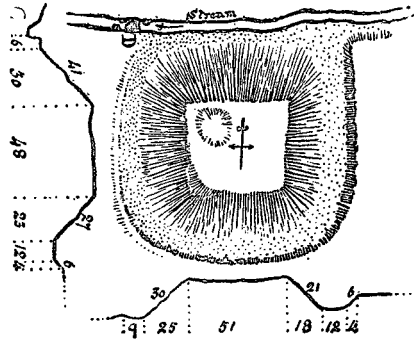


Fig. 11. E. Kirkcarseil Mote.

the stream, it would be reasonable to suppose that this had been used as a dam for the purpose of flooding the trench.

The sides of the *mote*, though irregular, are firm and compact, being composed of earth and stone, the earth preponderating. There is a distinct basin-shaped hollow on the summit near the N. side. The general fall of the ground is from E. to W., and at its lowest it flattens out into a broad, level, squarish space strongly suggestive of the foundation of a house. We afterwards ascertained that this was the site of the old mansionhouse of the Broughtons of Cally, inhabited during the period when the neighbouring Abbey of Dundrennan flourished.

16. *Barend Mote* is so called, and correctly, by the natives. It presents no very special points of structure, except that it is a very slightly modified and stone-strengthened hillock, finely situated midway between two lofty and steep banks, along the N.E. one of which flows the Abbey Burn.

At the N.W. angle a curiously zigzag rampart, 75 feet long, of stones and

earth runs up into the main body of the *mote*, but other than this there is no trace of a true rampart or fosse. The side washed by the Abbey Burn is the steepest and deepest, measuring on the slope about 90 feet, the main bulk of this being banked up with embedded stones. To the N. the ground is nearly level with and merges into the mote summit, but at fifty yards or so off it rises so as to help to enclose the whole site of this peculiarly sequestered *mote* in a little domain of its own. Round the curving S. face are faint traces of what may have been a terrace, 15 to 18 feet broad, slightly levelled in the middle, but on either side merging into the natural slopes and declivities. It is just possible, too, that were the whole hillock thoroughly cleared of brushwood, features of structure at present concealed might be brought to light.

18. *Fortlet, Kirkcarsel* (fig. 12).—Another and perhaps the smallest example of a rough and ready rock-cut *fort*. It is an irregular broad oval, sharply de-

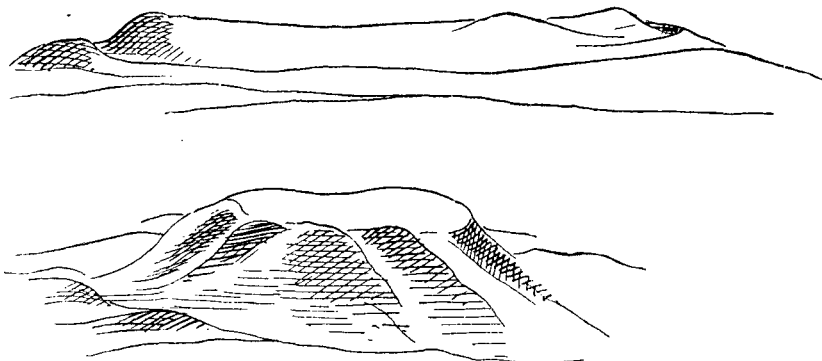


Fig. 12. Kirkcarsel Fort and Fortlet.

fined in all its proportions, most so in the ramparts, which for a summit measuring only 48 feet by 30 are unusually high and strong. The downward slope of the sides varies greatly, being 15 feet to the trench on the W. and as much as 33 feet on the N.E., where a stream forms the boundary. On the W. curve the summit rampart is strongest and of built stones; at the opposite point a bare cutting through the rock has sufficed. The trench varies, as we should expect in a rudely-made piece of work, from 6 to 9 feet in width, and its protecting rampart is fairly in evidence for about half the circumference.

19. *Fort, Kirkcarsel* (fig. 12).—This large work, in addition to being greatly a judiciously used natural strength, is interesting for approaching closely to a type of *fort* which Dr Christison has well named “the reniform,” two nearly adjoining hillocks being artificially united by earth and stone side-works; thus

forming a long narrow plateau, 234 by 96 feet, depressed in the middle on one side, the longer axis trending N.E. and S.W. On the E., the slope, mainly

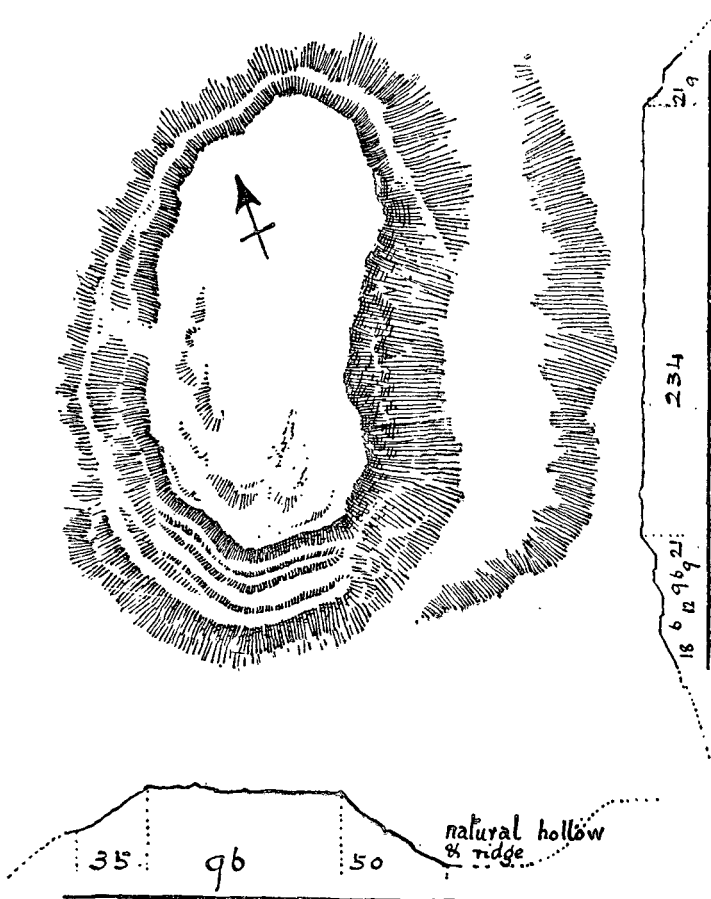


Fig. 13. Fort, Kirkcarsel.

natural, is steep and smooth, and at its base there extends a long and broad natural hollow which is overlooked by a lofty natural ridge as high as the fort summit itself. Three-quarters of the *enceinte* is terraced, indistinctly however, at about 20 feet from the summit, and on the S.W. end the rampart

and trench are doubled. At the middle of the long N.W. side there is an approach, but too vague to be measured. About a mile N.W. of this fort is the high

20. *Doon Hill of Barclay* (500), but after careful examination we left this wind-blown height, not feeling certain that there had ever existed any tangible proof of human occupation on it. Like other *Doons* and *Doonhills*, it may once have possessed certain structures crowning its summit, which, like many *Doonhills*, is easy of access, but now nought remains but a name, suggestive, but unsatisfactory.

21. "*Roman*" *Camp at Bombie*.—In examining this rectilinear camp I was assisted by Mr Robert Watson. So worn down by ploughing are its lines and form that though under favourable *chiaroscuro* the full oblong can be seen well defined, on treading its actual area, seeing and measuring are both very much matters of conjecture. Its longest side facing the N. we made to be 126 feet, the shorter 108 feet,—that is, of the inner mound, now hardly a mound. Approximately, from the edge of this, across the extremely vague trench to the most reliable point opposite on the rampart, the measurement is 51 feet; this was taken at the N.W. angle, where the form is clearest.

It is worth notice—especially by those who maintain the Roman origin of this camp—that on the W. side, exactly where the dip of the ground is deepest and most efficient as a natural barrier, the rampart is most substantial, a fact that scarcely reflects credit on the skill of the (supposed) Roman engineer!

What, if not a Roman camp, this much-mutilated work may have been, it is not now possible to determine, except at the cost of an excavation, which, after all, might be fruitless.

22. *Mutehill*.—In the N.S.A. is a brief mention of this as "one in the country called Moothill," under the heading *Moats*. The compiler leaves one in ignorance as to whether, at the time of writing, there was any *moat* or vestige of a *moat*, at this place, which is close on the shore, 2 miles S. of Kirkcudbright. I have never been able to find any trace of artificial work on the spot, nor have I heard from residents any account of such. But the name itself is so definite that one is led to assume the existence of some *fort* or *mote* as its origin.

23. *Castle Dikes, Kirkcudbright*, is the appropriate name given to this large, well-preserved, and interesting accumulation of mounds, trenches, and ramparts, of which at present I must give only a brief and verbal account, in the hope of returning to it at some future date, and, in conjunction with other structures, which seem to link Scottish moats with mediæval castles, treating of it with the accuracy and completeness it merits.

Leaving for the present all details related, or supposed to be related, to the mediæval castle once here, we find the main features of *The Castle Dikes* to be

those of a massive *British Fort*, strongly built of large stones and earth, evidently very old, as all lines and contours are smoothed and rounded off to a degree that renders accurate measurement very dubious and difficult. The central mound (oblong with rounded ends) measures 196 feet by 80; it is uneven in many parts. The sides, down to the deep and hollow trench, average 30 feet everywhere but near the E. corner, where it is only 20; the upward inner slope of the rampart also varies from about 16 to 25 feet, and the outer rampart slope is more eccentric still, being 12 feet at some points and only 4 at others.

By some observers it is held that this mound and intrenchment are only the central boss, as it were, of a very much larger intrenched area, which, extending nearly level on every side but the S., comprises an irregular squarish space of about 450 feet long and the same in breadth. Some force is lent to this view by the existence of ditches running down each of the four sides of said square, and by the presence at certain points of mounds exceedingly like the vestiges of ramparts or earthen outposts. And if so, there is on the banks of the Urr an analogous juxtaposition of an oval moat with a rectilinear intrenchment, [See under Nos. 59 and 60. *The Old Buittle Place Motes.*]

24. *Kirkland Fort* is close to the Buckland Bridge Road, on the farm of Kirkland, about a mile out of Kirkcudbright. There is no mention of it on the O.M. or in any book I have had access to. Its existence was first indicated to me by William Bell, Esq., F.S.A. Scot., of Gribdale. Its omission on the maps is not to be wondered at, since the fort is the merest and most primitive cutting into and slight modification of a long rock-hillock (fig. 14). It is therefore yet another example of our simplest type of fort, possibly the simplest of all.

The hillock measures over all about 210 feet N. and S. and 160 feet E. and W., and round the base 786 feet; the flattest portion of its summit, 90 feet by 85, having been cut off at either end by deepish trenches, that on the N. rising in the middle to within 3 feet of the rampart crest, and sloping off steeply both E. and W. The S. trench has only been carried 75 feet through, leaving a high "neck" 18 feet wide, on the W. side of which the trench has been partially continued. There is a shallow roundish hollow near the N.E. corner.

The facets of the summit contour measure respectively N. 85 feet, S. 60 (along dotted line), E. 90, and W. 90. Perpendicular height, 30 feet. There is a curiously hasty, not to say unfinished, air about this strangely primitive work, and its site is singular in the extreme. Far from occupying a conspicuous vantage-ground, it is overlooked on all sides by hillocks, which offer, one would think, as good facilities for trench-cutting as this one, and which themselves are externally fully as like forts, and might pardonably be mistaken for the handiwork of man.

25. *Sypland Moat*.—So named on the O.M. and spoken of generally. If,

however, mere usage and custom are ever to yield to scientific method and precision, it must be in cases such as this ; for both in point of character and position this is a true *hill fort* of a marked and distinctive type (fig. 15).

The site is nearly mid-way between the Bombe "Roman Camp" and another also so called on the N.E., and has the advantage of 400 feet above sea level ; but is only 100 feet higher actually than the two "camps" mentioned. Situated on a lofty and broad mass of whinstone rock, 100 feet above the near-

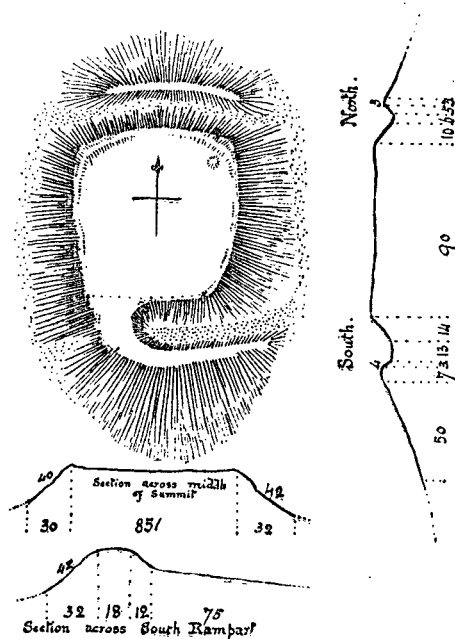


Fig. 14. Kirkland Fort.

est level ground on the E. and S., and protected by a curiously artificial-looking yet natural line of rampart-like hillocks which half encircle its base, *Sypland Fort* must have been an important stronghold.

Its structure is somewhat peculiar, though carried out on contour lines of the ordinary description. To its summit, the edge of which has been ridged up with a low earth rampart, there are no less than three approaches ; the broadest on the N.W., and the other two converging from points E. and W. of the main diameter.

The trench has an average width of 9 feet, and it, as well as the outer ram-

part, and fort slope, is especially well defined on the N.W. curve. Towards the N., and thence E. and S.E., the trench is lost in the rapid declivities of the hill,

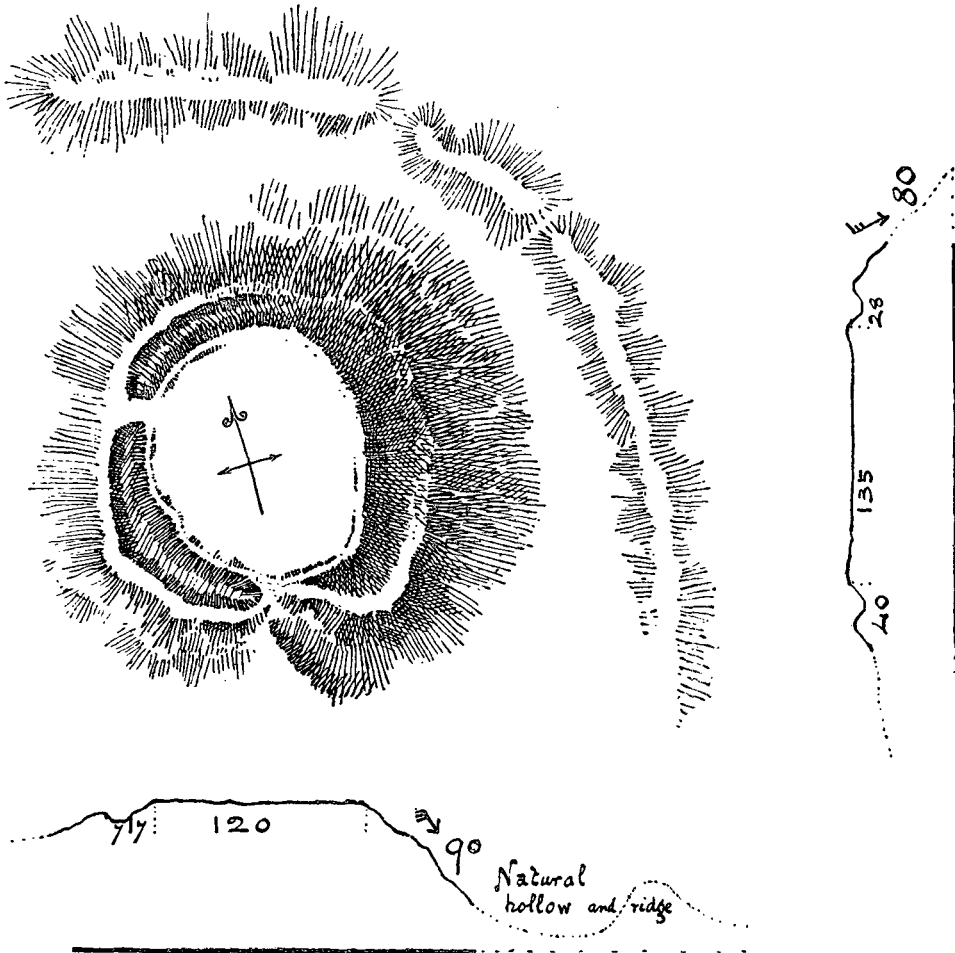


Fig. 15. Sypland Moat.

which slope down steeply for 80 or 90 feet to what I should call the "natural trench," defended by the line of hillocks above mentioned. The land on the

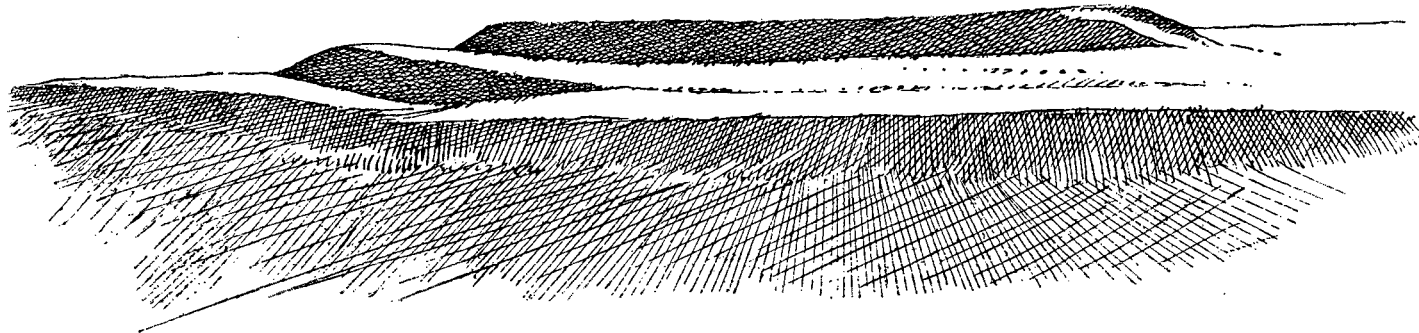


Fig. 16. Carse Mote, from the North.

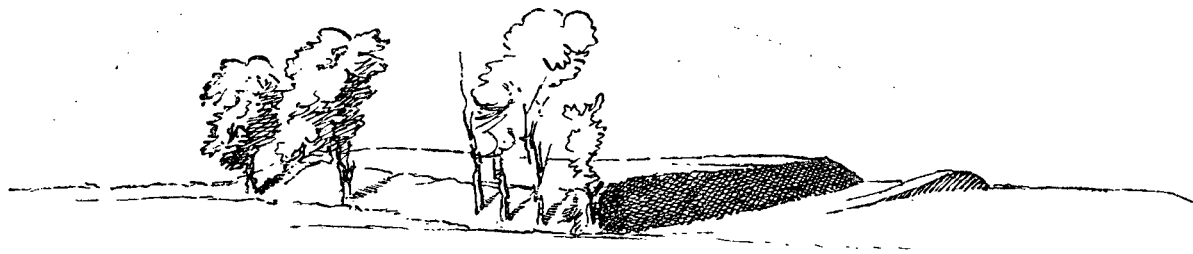


Fig. 17. Carse Mote, from the East.

S.W. is nearly level with the base of the rampart, and rocky for some distance.

The *fort* is highest towards the centre, showing but little alteration or leveling of natural excrescences. Its height from trench to summit is about 14 feet and its two diameters 135 by 120 feet. A tiny rill takes its rise on the S.W. of the hill flowing into the Buckland Burn; but there is no well or other water source close to or within the precincts of the *fort*.

Name from Gaelic *Sipe* or *Sype* = "slight spring of water" (Jamieson), or "wet sappy land" (Maxwell). Pont spells it *Syipland*.

26. "*Roman*" *Camp*, *Whinnyligat*.—A poor remnant of a pretty nearly square "camp," traceable distinctly for two sides and a half, parallel with the public road near Whinnyligat Smithy. Only the central mound remains, and an almost conjectural fragment of slope suggestive of the E. rampart. It is the largest of the three rectilinear works in this district, being 180 feet N. and S. and 136 E. and W.; quite flat, with a side slope of 12 feet at a uniform angle of 37°. It appears to be composed mainly of the shaley brittle rock here occurring, and very sparsely of stones along the E. side.

27. *Carse Mote*.—Commonly called "the camp on the moat-field." On the O.M. it is incorrectly drawn as nearly square and named "supposed Roman Camp."

The site is the highest point of a field, 100 feet above the Draught Pool on the Dee, and there is no doubt that the remains, though in parts sufficiently distinct, present somewhat unusual difficulties in view of the classification of these works.

In the first place, its contour is so laid down that the N. and S. line bisects the summit diagonally. This may be partly due to the long suggestive bank extending parallel with the W. side, and ultimately bending round into the curve N.E. (fig. 18); but it would have been just as possible to obtain the same area in any other plane.

A second difficulty, when standing on the *mote*, is to make sure whether it has been originally rectangular and become rounded, or was once nearly oval-oblong, and has been ploughed straight-sided? The existence of the distinctly-curved N.E. rampart, 20 feet outside of the *mote*, seemingly suggested by the natural curve beyond, almost implies a well-rounded oval-oblong original. But this again is counteracted by the very straight long sides.

That the summit has once been of considerable height may be proved by examining the slopes at N.E. and S.W. corners, the former measuring 24 feet and the latter 21. What slight ridging appears on the edge of the summit is due to ploughing. The circumference there measures 543 feet. Near the centre the ground is strangely damp.

As the O.M. omits all outer rampart, and is accordingly untrustworthy, one is disinclined to put any faith at all in the mere contours there given,

which I have already stated to be incorrect. My impression, therefore, is that this, like many others, has been an oval-oblong *mote*—not a rectangular one. (See fig. 19 for N. rampart, &c.)

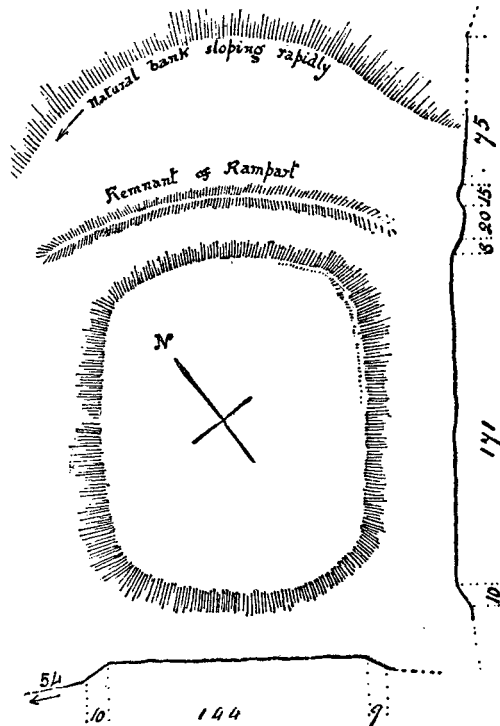


Fig. 18. Carse Mote.

Carse Mote is covered with trees, which are purposely omitted in my sketches.

23. *Culdoach Mote* (fig. 19a).—One of the oddest of the frequent omissions of the O.M. Neither is it mentioned in any of my authorities, nor, I suspect, much known or even heard of beyond the limits of the farmlands of Culdoach. The name is taken to mean "at the back of the doach," and fitly describes the position of this farm; as, in the old days, pilgrims from the west country would necessarily, on their way to the *Abbey of Dundrennan*, cross the river Dee at or near "the Doachs," *i.e.*, the wooden salmon-traps in the rocky

river bed, and so the first resting-place assured to them would be the house *Culdoach*, at the top of the hill E. of the river.

This *mote* (fig. 19a) is partly of earth, plus a little rock, and partly of stone work—one side, as so often is the case, being level with the nearest high

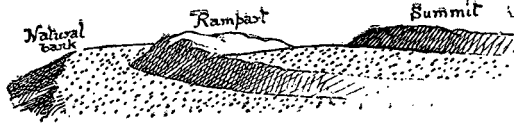


Fig. 19. Carse Mote, north end.

ground, the opposite being the sharply defined bank of a stream. In contour it is irregular, being made up of five facets, only one of which can be called quite straight—that flanked by the stream. It lies nearly N. and S., and has, besides a strong counterscarp across the N., running up into the N.W. curve, a faint trace of trench and rampart low down on the S. end, where

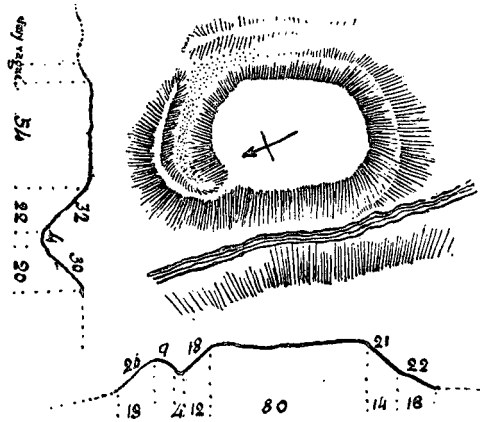


Fig. 19a. Culdoach Mote.

the ground is very soft and marshy. I think I am right in concluding that there are irregularities of ground on the E. enough to indicate that the rampart was once continued round there for a considerable distance. *Carse Mote*, though so near, is hidden by a depression in the ground; but the very prominent *Boreland of Borgue Mote*, four miles away S.W., is clearly visible;

and, were it not for woodland, the groups of *forts* presently to be described on Nether Third would no doubt be easily seen.

29. *Little Sypland Moat*.—All that I have been able to ascertain of this, of which even the site is not now visible, is that it was destroyed in 1877, much to the displeasure of the late Lord Selkirk.

From the vague accounts obtainable from the present tenant of the farm, it seems to have been a circular, not lofty, one-trenched structure, entirely of earth, except for about "a barrow-load of roundish white stones which was found in it, and an old half-penny." On the O.M. it is drawn as an oval, with a wide terrace on the N. merging into the summit level on both sides, the terrace being well raised above the natural level.

30. *The Moat Bræe, Kirkcudbright*.—Close to the quay, in the town, are the remains, now nearly all built over, of what was once a good-sized "Moat," whether trenched or ramparted, a simple mound or a lofty water-encircled one, it is not now possible to say.

31 and 32. *Mote and Fort, March Cleugh, Kelton*.—Consulting the O.M. one day I found the word *Fort* printed at a spot close to the brink of the river Dee, about a third of a mile north of the romantic and beautiful rocky ravine known as *Queen Mary's Bridge*.

On examining the site I indeed identified the *fort* with ease; but it being mid-winter, and the densely overgrown ground surrounding this locality being rather more penetrable than in summer, I began to detect signs of something more than the *fort*. Following up my investigations for two or three days, with free use of compass and tape, I at length gathered material enough to draw out the plan given opposite (fig. 20, scale 96 feet to the inch).

Having previously made as full enquiries as possible regarding the extensive ridges which appear to enclose and connect the *fort*, *mote*, and *cairn*, and being unable to find any tradition respecting them (they are not marked in any mode whatever on the O.M.), I was led to the only natural conclusion that they may really form an intrinsic part of this large and interesting intrenchment.

Of the existence of the *mote* there can be no doubt; about the small conical hill I have queried *Cairn*, it is safest not to assume much. A very little excavation would speedily settle this point. In the present absence of excavation, I proceed to describe these works externally—

Taking the *Fort* first: we find a nearly circular grouping and massing together of stones around points and projecting masses of rough, coarse-grained porphyry, which are made to do duty as the nucleus of the huge accumulation; the two diameters of this circular space from rock to rock being N.E. S.W. 72 feet and N.W. S.E. 98 feet. The ridges of rock widen inwards on E. and W. so as to form a natural opening on the S. arc. Apparently great quantities of stones have been removed, as usual, for dykes; but judging the remains

at their highest point, the perpendicular height of the *fort* measured to the stream on the E. must be about 14 feet.

The circumference of its base (GSJ) is 555 feet, that of the summit 318 feet.

At a point on the north of this rocky ring, H, the earth and stone ridge-way or rampart (MLJ) which starts at M is continued, and carried in two right angles to E, where it begins to form a sort of bastion on the precipitous bank

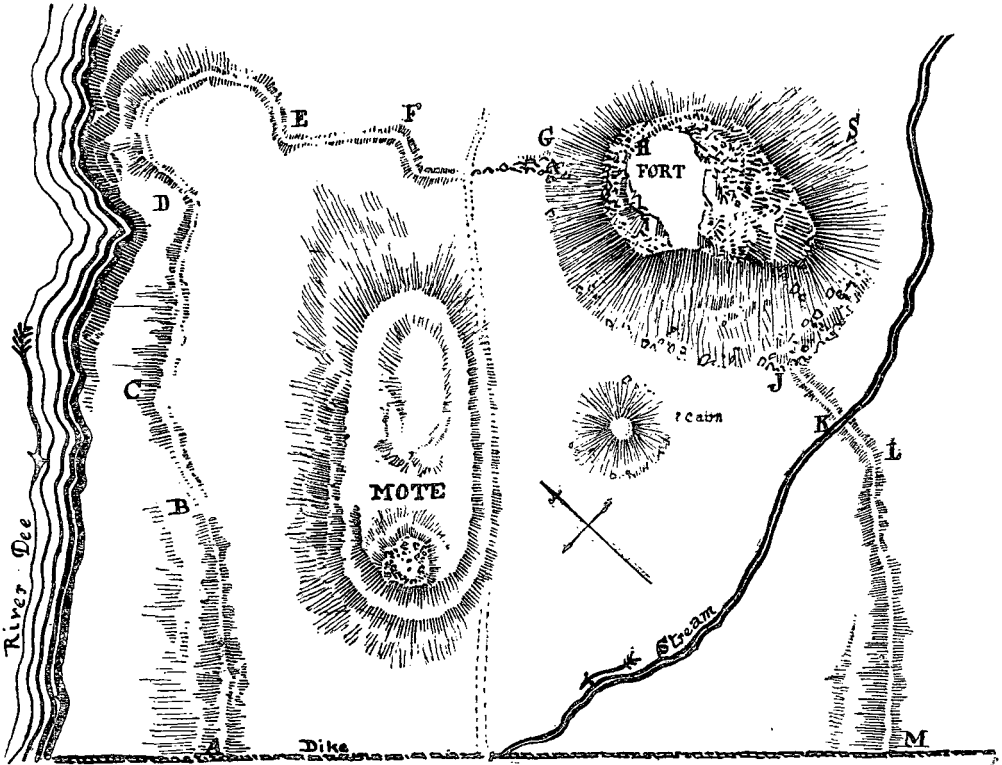


Fig. 20. March Cleuch Mote and Fort. (Scale, 96 feet to 1 inch.)

of the river; thence southwards to the dyke at A. The *mote* is situated well within the space enclosed by this long-continued ridge. Along its eastern base the stonework of a rampart is plainly discernible, with its flattened top, which merges into the curves of the sloping ground as it goes N., but keeps fairly distinct round the S. base. The summit, densely crowded with en-

tangled thorns, lends very little encouragement to the investigator. As my section shows (fig. 21, middle section), its lines are vague and unsatisfactory in the extreme; but every here and there are stones in quantities which confirm the impression that this has been a *mote* built of smallish stones, and recently robbed for the sake of its stones.

The conical mound in the centre of all is 12 feet high and 123 feet round the base, 24 feet distant from the *fort*, and 36 from the *mote*.

The situation of this group is particularly happy, just between a rivulet and the rocky, precipitous bank of the Dee; and at the point where the out-works (DE) abut on the river there is clear evidence of much loose stone building, about 40 feet above the water, out of the bed of which, no doubt, the stones were easily obtained.

33. *Netherthard Mote*.—In a wood, and fairly accurately drawn on the O.M.

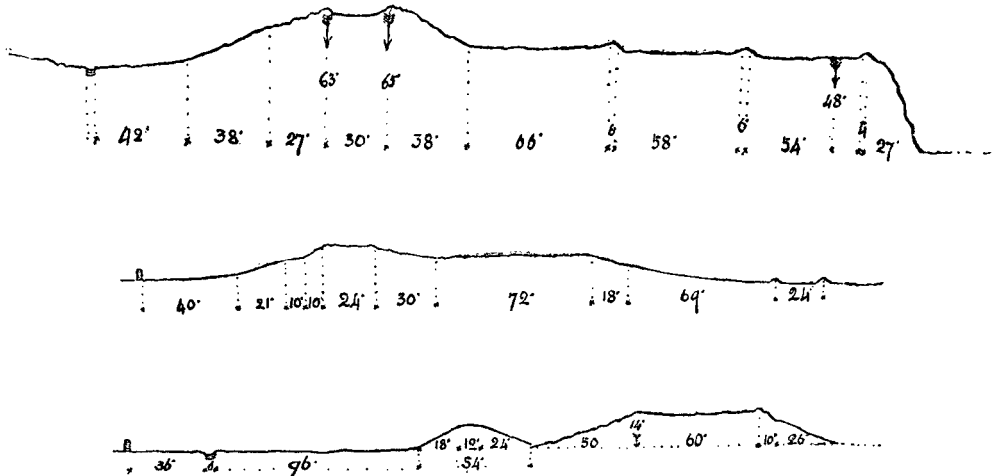


Fig. 21. March Cleuch. Sections.

This is given as a *Fort*. I have ventured to alter the name, as the work has more of the characters of a *mote* than many so-called *moats*, and to save confusion with what is really a *fort*, on a rock-cut hillock some third of a mile to the N. on the same farm. The wood which conceals this small *mote* grows on very steep banks, and on the somewhat level plateau on the summit of one of these banks I found the *mote* (fig. 22).

It measures only 100 feet by 96—almost exactly the size of the citadel of the *mote of Urr*, has one opening nearly S. and a second N.E., and its scarp has

a fine slope of 24 feet at an angle of 45°. It has been slightly ridged on the summit edge ; this is especially evident on the N. and N.E. curves on either side of the wide approach, which runs out 18 feet across the limit of the trench into the mainland. Near the faint S. approach a gradual ascent forms an almost circular but low mound (M), which appears as if partially constructed, if not entirely so.

The long fall on the W., leaving only a foot or two of really level "trench," is of course natural, being the average descending slope of the whole bank ; while on the opposite side the same holds good, but the fall is much shorter.

The trench is about 12 feet in depth, the outer and inner slopes not show-

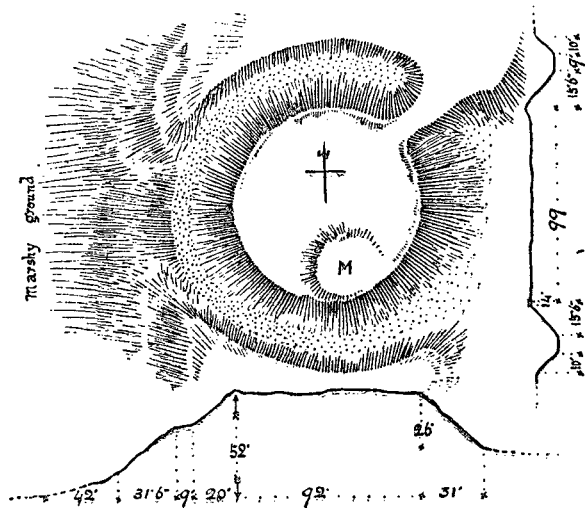


Fig. 22. Netherthird Mote.

ing much variation, and the ground at the top of the outer slope is the general level of that surrounding the *mote*.

The construction is of earth and stone. The whole site is an almost impassable wilderness of briars, growing about the trunks of tall elms.

34. *Gillfoot Fort, Netherthird*, is an open rock hillock, in a hillocky region, roughly circular, ridged on the summit edge, which measures across 60 feet by 51, and counterscarped nearly, if not originally all, round. From the S.W. curve there runs out a strong earthwork, founded on rock, almost in a line with the longer diameter of the *fort*, for about 73 feet (fig. 23).

On its E. curve a stream runs in a nearly straight line, about 12 feet off the base of the scarp, but this must, I think, be a diverted course, as the outer rampart, if ever complete, must have crossed the line of this water-course, the stream itself being far too trivial to form a natural "moat." Moreover, the

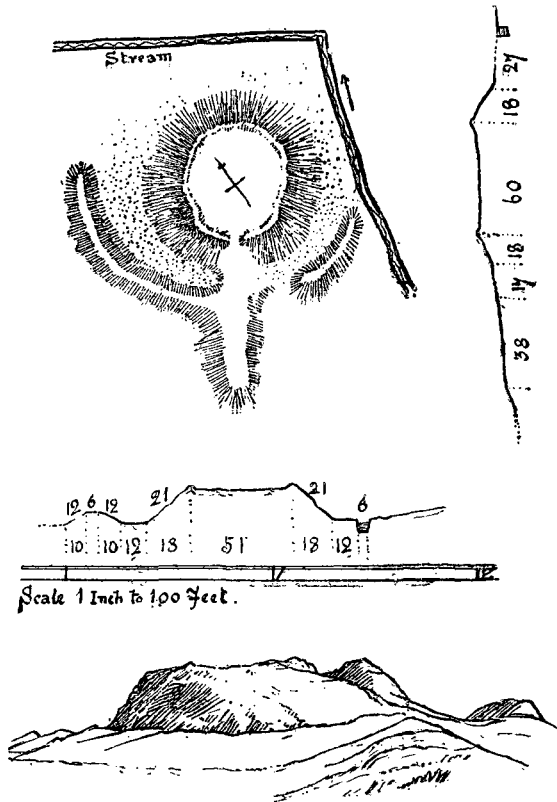


Fig. 23. Gillfoot Fort, Netherthird.

stream takes a turn to the left at right angles; and I incline to think that formerly the outer rampart of this fort was complete, and was carried almost up to the rocky ridges on the N.E., which would have afforded an additional defence.

The line of summit rampart is broken on the S. centre; but this is surely recent, as also is the large gap a little S.E., where the counterscarp is quite

broken away. On the W. it remains nearly intact in one long strip of 120 feet.

35. *Kirkcormack Mote*.—This very obvious *mote* (fig. 24) has been omitted from the O.M. The omission is the more extraordinary when it is borne in mind that the ground which encloses the ruins of *Kirkcormack* also comprises the *mote*, and that the ruined church and churchyard are mapped and entitled.¹ It has fared no better at the hands of historian or archæologist, for Harper, in his *Rambles*, makes no mention of it, and Muir, as quoted in the *Lighthouse*

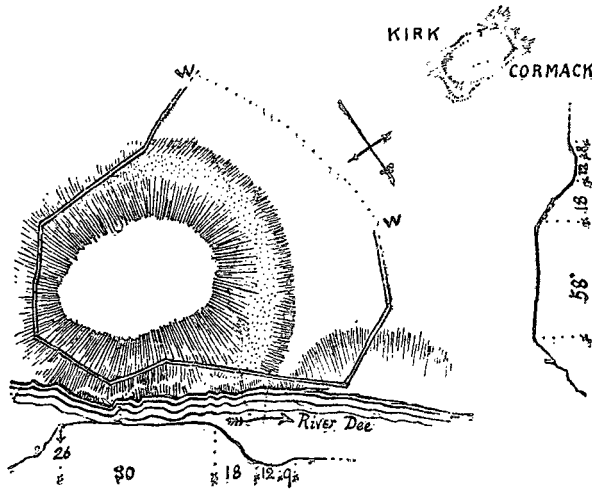


Fig. 24. Kirkcormack Mote.

by Harper, though he measures the Kirk, and describes *St Ringan's Well* hard by, passes over the *mote* in silence.

As may be seen by my two sketches (figs. 25 and 26), this *mote* is not a mere mole-hill to be passed over with contempt. Its summit rises quite 26 feet above the rocks in the river; it is 80 feet long by 58 wide, and its lines are rather more decided, well marked, and

¹ "This church," says Chalmers, "was no doubt dedicated to Cormac during the ninth century." There are, however, in the immediate vicinity a *cave* and a *well* known as *St Ringan's* (Ninian). Reflecting on this, Muir, in *Lighthouse*, p. 18, says:—"I was led to ponder whether it might not be just possible that a cell or sacellum of some sort had been here consecrated in honour of the Cumbrian apostle long before that now almost traceless one commemorative of the Irish Cormac was founded."



Fig. 25. Kirkeormack Mote, from the South.

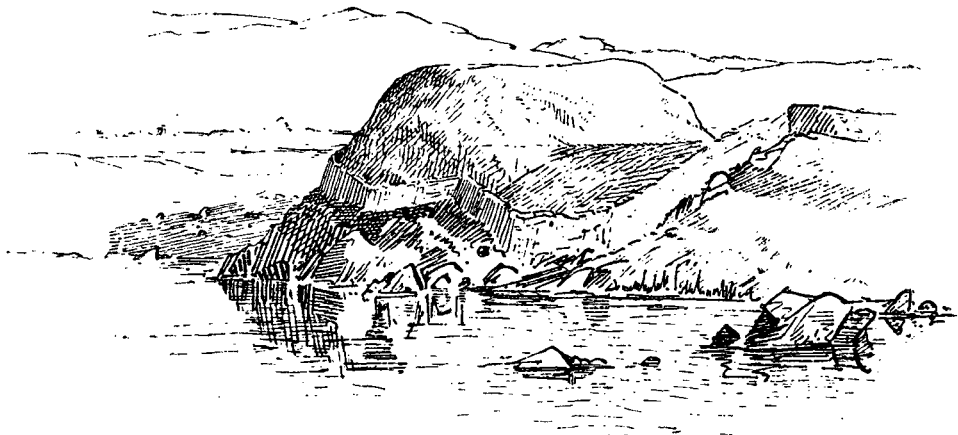


Fig. 26. Kirkeormack Mote, from the North.

steep than usual. It is founded on a rocky peninsula ; for that the Dee most probably ages ago washed part of the S. base is evident, first, from the natural lie of the ground, and secondly, because no trace of the trench and outer rampart-slope is visible on this side of the enclosing dyke.

The summit is made of seven facets, one of 9 feet, two of 30, two of 36, and two of 45. The existing trench, measured round the curve, is 126 feet, its outward slope being very vague and low-angled. The short, deep, curved bank at the N.E. corner is, I think, natural, but a line connecting the points W W, and about 108 feet long, appears as an artificial ridge, possibly only the old wall enclosing the Kirkyard proper. The older spelling being *Kil-Cormack*, the very small Kirk or Chapelry (now a mere tumbled fragment of mounds) may well have been the *cell* of *St Cormack*, or possibly, if taken in conjunction with the well of *St Ringan* (=Ninian) hard by, it may have a still earlier history. The whole of this little, interesting area, *Kirkyard* and *Mote*, is crowded with a plantation of trees ; these, of course, have been omitted from my sketches.

36. *Moatsthorn*.—About a mile N.E. of the fine bend in the river Dee at *Kirkcormack*, we reach this place with so propitious a name. But alas for the suggestiveness thereof !

Mr Corson and I, who examined this locality together, were sorely puzzled, on the one hand, to rid ourselves of all presumption founded on local hearsay as to the reality of any mounds and ditches ; and on the other, when once on the spot, to be reasonably certain that we did not dismiss what we did find as merely natural excrescences, &c. In short, the ground immediately surrounding the cottage of *Moatsthorn* is so completely a bewildering space of hillocks, ridges, mounds, narrow channels, seeming trenches, and the like, that a considerable time had slipped away before we, with continued exertions, had disentangled this heterogeneous material into a few broad facts, of which the following notes may stand as summary.

The accompanying diagram (fig. 27), though not to scale, will serve to indicate the main features. The first notable point about these two mounds is their close proximity—barely 20 feet between their bases. The second point is that neither of them has any true trench completely round—A, in fact, has no vestige of a trench or rampart at all ; and of that at the E. side of B there is at least room for doubting whether it be not entirely a natural hollow. Be this last, however, as it may, the point to be elucidated is whether the mound A can be a *mote* in the strictest, most literal sense, a mere “mound of earth.” To conclude that this is so from one such specimen, and in such a puzzling locality as this, would not however commend itself to my judgment, were it not that, in this same district of Kelton, and examined by us on the same day, Mr Corson and I came on other structures wanting the usual trench *plus* rampart entirely. *Ingleston Moat*, presently to be described, is the most notable example.

To return to *Moatsthorn*. The sharply cut edge of mound B, parallel with the public road, shows where this mound was destroyed in order to make the road, and exposes the usual shaley, thin rock. The dimensions of this summit are—LK 48 feet, KI 27, IH 27, HG 36, and the roadside edge about 85. Slopes 15 to 27 feet, and “trench” 9 feet.

The dimensions of the mound A are—CD 45 feet, DE 36, EF 33, FC 36. Diameters 60 and 42 feet. The off-slope to level ground on all sides is about 10 to 12 feet.

Between the two mounds is M, a modern ditch. So far as could be ascertained

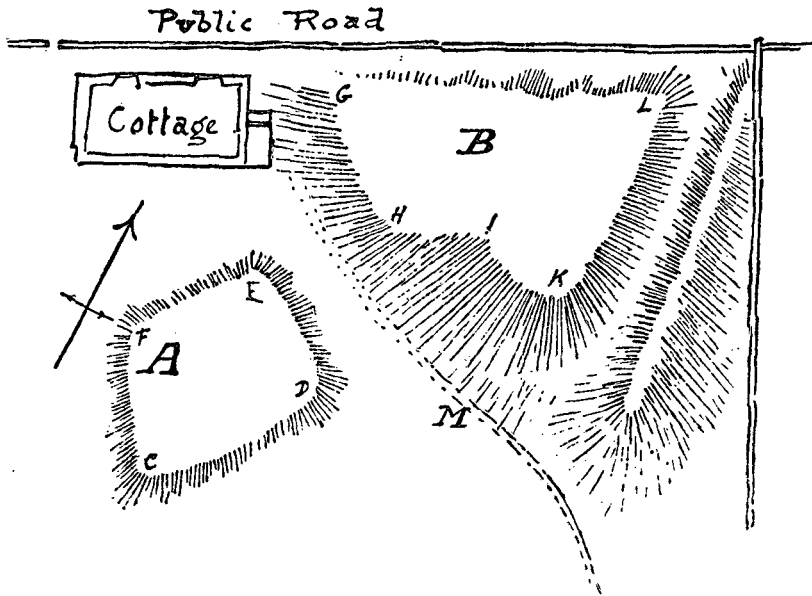


Fig. 27. Moatsthorn, Kelton.

for the too-usual impediments of briars and whin, there are no stones in or on either mound. Arkland Burn, a remarkably sinuous little stream, dashes along a few dozen yards to the S. of mound A, just beyond a wooded, rocky ridge, which with the other natural features lends a romantic and old-world charm to this secluded nook.

36a. *Diddawn*.—During the compilation of these facts for my survey, the absence of any fort which could rightly claim to be named as above caused me much concern; nor was it till October last that my steps were directed by

an observant workman on the estate, James Mowat, to a certain "ring of green" in a field adjoining the Dildawn avenue, and on its S. side. Here, pretty nearly ploughed out of existence, is the veritable site of a small *fort*, the trench showing as a faint depression, yet with low sunshine distinct enough, with its slightly swelling central mound and single "rampart," now nearly flat.

If, as M'Kerlie suggests, *Dildawn* (or *Deldawn*, as it is pronounced by the cottagers) be a corruption of *Dal*, Norse for *Dale*, and *duin*, or *dun*,¹ the result being "*the fort in the Dale*," we could have no fitter blending of nomenclature with topography; for the river Dee, here widely flowing through a broad level tract, gives a rich, beautiful, and unusually dale-like character to the scenery. I quote this suggested derivation, however, with extreme diffidence.

The distance from *Moatsthorn* is rather over half a mile, and the site is about a furlong from the river, on a broad and tolerably even piece of land. Behind it to the S. is a smoothly-rising hill, beautifully green, from the summit of which a vast extent of country is visible. On it I could find no traces of works of any kind; but below it, in a hollow between the hill and the *fort site*, is a built well, nameless so far as I know, and close by some curiously suggestive "hillocks," which might repay excavation.

Dildawn now measures 102 feet in diameter each way, "trench" about 10 or 12, and central mound 60 feet. No heights are now measurable. Circumference along middle of trench 231 feet.

37. *Auchlane*.—Here are the ruins of the redoubtable *Castle of the MacLellans*, one of whom, Patrick, lies buried in the little *Kirk Cormack* lately noticed. Distinct traces of a stone-built, broadly oval *mote* are visible for 70 or 80 feet on the N.W., having an upward inner slope of 15 feet, a level space some 18 to 20 feet wide, and a low steep rampart (probably of mortared stone?) which brings one to the level of the Castle itself.

But it is all much too vague to allow of sections; and, being definitely connected with mediæval works, should be merely touched on in a notice such as the present.

Exactly 2 miles east of *Auchlane* is a remarkable cluster of antiquities more legitimately within my scope, the first of which is

38. *Ingleston Moat*.—At a first view this *mote* appears to belong to the type which in Galloway includes such a large number, that of the truncated cone *plus* basal fosse and rampart, of which type the *Kirk Mote* at *Parton* (79) is a fine example.

On revisiting it, however, with Mr Corson, to whose practised eye in stone-lore I am much indebted, I am greatly inclined to hold that "the basal fosse and rampart" never existed here; that what in my sketch (fig. 28) looks

¹ It was spelt *Dal-dawen* in Ing. ad Cap. (Maxwell).

remarkably like the rampart, is really only one of those curious curved ridges so frequent in Galloway as, no doubt, to have often suggested a site to the builders of motes. We saw a very strong instance of it just now at *Meikle Sypland* (25), and there are others.

Should this, on further investigation, prove to be a correct surmise, this *mote* may be classed along with the one or the two at *Moatsthorn*, and others in a group by themselves, which should be called "Simple Motes, Type No. 1."

For it is self-evident that there can be no form of *mote* more simple than a mound such as this rocky hillock, shaped and smoothed all round, levelled from extreme edge to edge on summit, and showing no signs even of stone

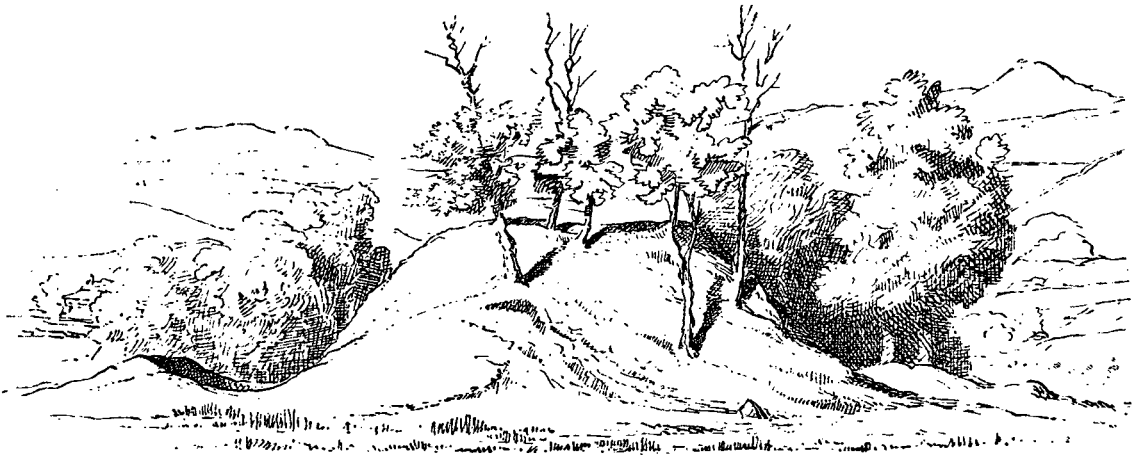


Fig. 28. Ingleston Mote, Kelton.

building, but merely of earth beaten and battered down on the shaley interstices of the rock.

The longer axis N.E. measures 75 feet, and the shorter 52 feet, the summit circumference being 183 feet. The trench, if trench it be, on the N., measures about 15 feet, and the "rampart" about 9 feet on the slope. The *mote* is situated on a low-lying meadow in a secluded spot shut in on nearly all sides.

39. *The Ditch* (see map, fig. 29).—This is the odd name given on the O.M. to what are now the merest dimples in the wet ground on *Boreland of Gelston*, consisting, as shown on my sketch-map, of two somewhat rectangular spaces almost in contact. (A dyke now divides these two "motes.") Of that on the N. (the smaller) no dimensions can be given; but we made an attempt to secure

approximately the length and breadth of the lower and larger one, and made them to be about 138 by 104 feet.

It is worth notice that this couple of contiguous "motes" lie in a hollow, quite out of sight, even from the near at hand *Dunguile*, unless, indeed, their central summit, if such existed, once rose 15 or 20 feet higher, in which case they might have been visible from *Dunguile*.

One is tempted to conjecture this may have been so, for *Dunguile* by its lofty position (675 feet) holds the key of the approach from the Solway up through Glen of Screel, and would have formed an admirable watch-tower from which warning could be instantly signalled to *The Ditch* below.

40. *Dunguile*.—This finely situated but very irregularly shaped fort, 675 feet above sea-level, commands a clear look-out to the Solway and the Cumberland hills. For inexplicable reasons it has come in for a greater share of literary notice than many others. The N.S.A., spelling it *Dungyle*, describes it as "having three ramparts of stone mixed with earth." M'Kerlie says, "We have seen it called Roman," and quotes the above statement from the N.S.A. without comment; while Harper speaks of it as "the remains of a Roman Fort."

Having visited the place twice—once alone, when I drew plans of the fort, and again with Mr Corson, when we examined it carefully—the only conclusion led up to is that if the Romans ever touched this hillock, there are now no traces visible of anything suggestive of Roman influence.

Further, that if ever there were three ramparts, one must have wholly disappeared, and the bulk of the others as well.

Nothing is clearer than that *Dunguile* (fig. 30) is a purely natural rock-hillock, of somewhat unusual extent, form, and height, banked up along the hollow parts of its edge with stones, and here and there, mostly at the N. curves, roughly ramparted.

At the hands of the Ordnance surveyor also this *Dunguile* has suffered. On the O.M. it is drawn as if horse-shoe shaped, with the horizontal base to the curve trending N.E. and S.W. The actual facts are these: There is no one side sufficiently straight and long to be a base to a deep curve, nor any curve sufficiently deep to approach the horse-shoe.

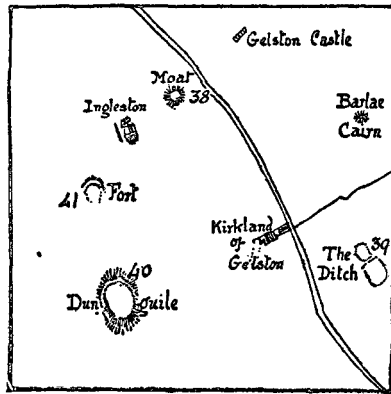


Fig. 29. Gelston Group.

The summit of *Dunguile* is oblong-oval, extremely irregular, having only one side, the E., partly straight, and a very rough and abrupt descent on all sides, the rest of the contour being unsymmetrically curved, and the whole

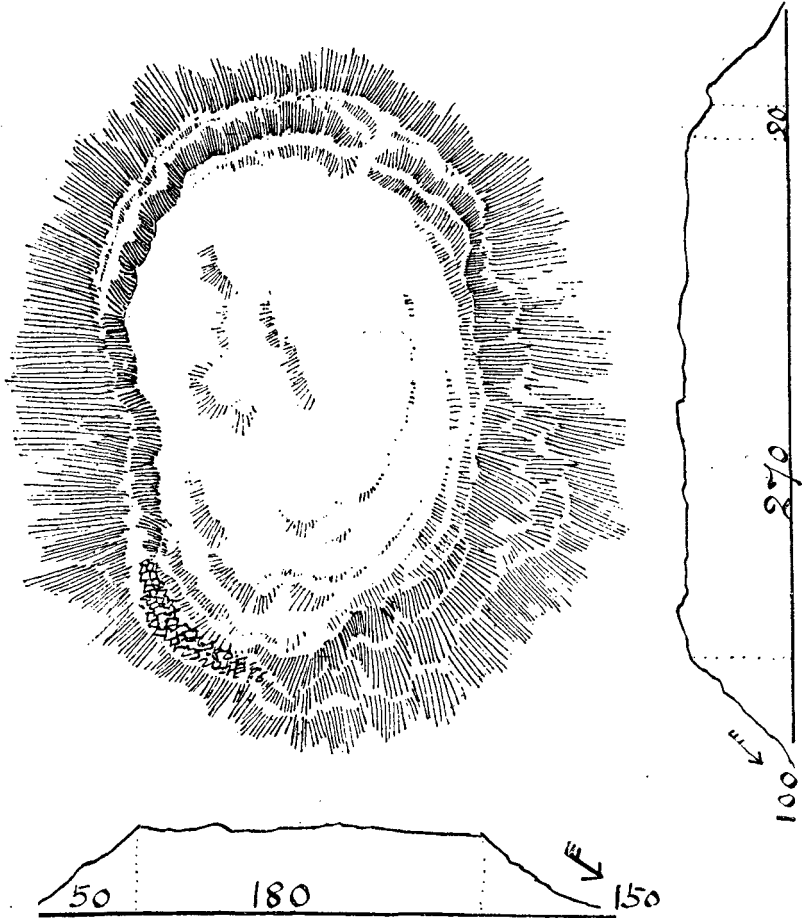


Fig. 30. *Dunguile*.

surface broken up with rock-ledges in every direction to such an extent that in no direction is it possible to pace it from side to side without serious obstacles.

The two diameters are, as near as I could get them, N.E. and S.W. 270 feet, and N.W. S.E. 180 feet. The descent to nearest level ground is perhaps from 50 to 80 or 90 feet.

One rampart, much destroyed, and part of a second, remain on the N., while round the S.W. "zig-zag curve," if I may coin the term, huge quantities of broken rock and stones lie, as if the ruins of a battlement or supporting wall, just under the crest.

So far from having anything extraordinary about its form or structure, *Dunquile* presents features so much identical with other *forts* that I have not thought desirable to encumber these pages with drawings of it. Like others already described and to be described, this nobly situated *fort* is interesting from having kept its undoubtedly Gaelic name—

Dun goill ("gen. of *gall*") = "Fort of the Stranger" (Maxwell).

41. *Fort below Dunquile*.—This in the N.S.A. is mentioned as being "68 paces in diameter," which fragmentary note of it is all I can give, for agricultural reasons. Its site is only just perceptible, its distance from *Dunquile* being much the same as that between several other couplets of *forts* presently to be noticed. It is considerably lower down; and, ere the woods about Ingleston were grown, the communication between the *mote* there and these two *hill forts* must have been readily made. We may not be far wrong in assuming that the *cairn* on the top of *Barlae*, the highest point of all this little circle of relics of the past, had a connection with the *forts* and *mote* and the twin-structure, whatever it was, at *The Ditch*.

42. *Nether Loch Dougan Moat*.—Two miles S.W. of the above group is one of the least conspicuous, and yet, when ascended, not the least interesting, of our fortified hills. It is quite possible, as proved by my own experience, to pass it on the road which skirts its base without suspecting it to be aught but a somewhat flat, long-ridged hill. It is the more surprising, therefore, to find it marked as a *Moat*, even on the small O.M.

On the summit of Corra Hill, 425 feet above sea-level, those who built this *mote* found two rather circular, slightly disconnected "crowns" of rocky ground. These they set to work to unite, as in the *Kirkcarsel Fort* (19), by banking up the hollows at the sides with earth, perhaps—assuredly with stones—the result being a long, rudely reniform type of summit (fig. 31).

Rock, of course, is the substructure, which is very apparent round the S. end of the *mote*, where it rises in distinct ledges, and culminates in the broken-up crest there, from which the other crown, though not nearly so rough yet equally high, is divided by the gentle hollow in the centre. The surface of this hollow slopes slightly from E. to W., both sides being steeply inclined, that on the E. to rocks and stones over 100 feet below, that on the W. to an extensive march, perhaps even lower.

Along the rather even E. side it is that one sees most evidence of the

shaping of this summit, though it is all simple enough. Stones are here used freely—for the most part, small ones—and without admixture of earth. This drystone packing does not form any rampart either on the summit or below it, but has evidently been made use of in order to support and strengthen the summit itself, as the incline from this edge is unbroken, and, I think, rather sharper than 45° ,—like the stone-work on 'Tap o' Noth.

Where this stone retaining-wall ends on the S., a strong sort of bastion of rock comes opportunely, about 48 feet in diameter; and on its summit there are many fragments of rock, some loose, others ponderous, and embedded in the ground.

Westwards, and lower than this rocky bastion, is a long natural hollow, the

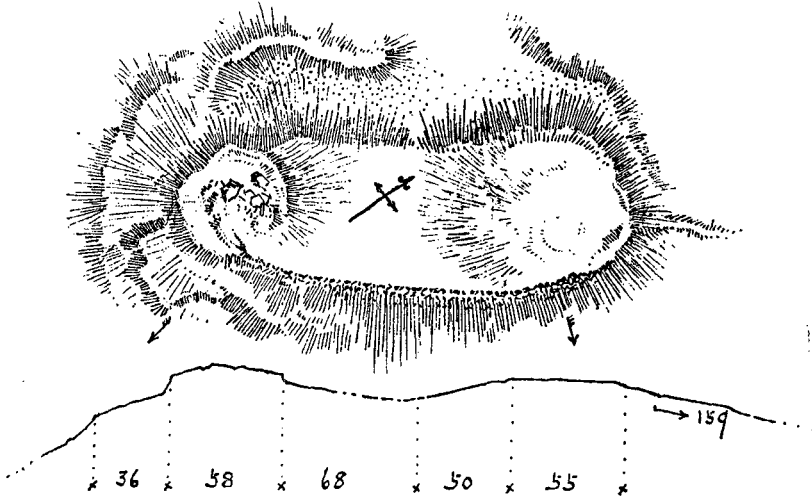


Fig. 31. Nether Loch Dougan Moat.

facsimile of a fosse and rampart, and, in conjunction with the low ledge of solid rock to the S., serving as such admirably.

There is no sign of any water on or near this *mote*, except in the marsh below. Some 300 yards W. are huge stones, lying in a group of four or five, and strongly suggestive of the site of a cairn. *Dungarry Camp* is well seen from this *mote*; probably also some of the *Castle Creavie* and *North Milton Forts* may have been within sight.

43. *Dungarry* (*Dungarriv* = "The Rough Hill or Fort").—On a lower shoulder of Ben Tuther, a spur of Ben Gairn, amid miles of rock and heather, and in a

gap in the hills five miles from where Solway waves smite the rocks at Balcary Point, stand the remains of this formidable *stone fort*, 760 feet above the sea-level. Ben Gairn, a little over a mile on the N.E., towers 400 feet higher ;

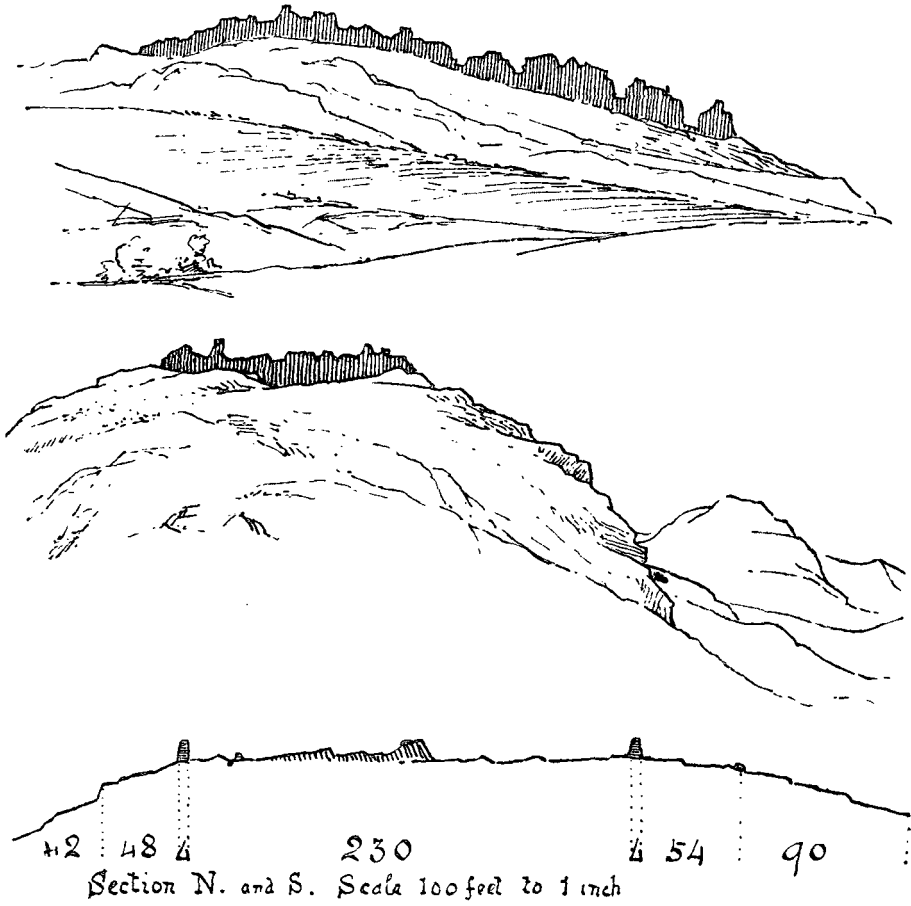


Fig. 32. Dungarry.

but the position of Ben Tuther, with its modest 800 feet above the sea, makes it the gateway of the country here, the fitting watch-tower of our Galloway Thermopylæ.

For at least six miles inland in a N.W. direction there are no heights to break the line of view; and due N., in the line of the river Dee, for more than double that distance, the prospect is unbroken and comparatively level. Seawards, Ben Tuther commands the intervening valleys near Auchencairn, the whole breadth of Solway, with a long strip of blue Cumberland hills in the extreme horizon.

As we approach the "camp" from the north moors below, on the Hass Road, it shapes itself as my drawing (fig. 32, top) shows. A steepish rocky and heathy slope of 200 feet now intervenes, on surmounting which we gain a long ridge of the whinstone, running nearly N. and S., which we find to be the backbone of the fort structure. It is 472 feet long, and at either end the masonry of the walls, or outpost, touches it, describing an irregular oval, which, at its greatest width E. and W., measures 452 feet. As the greater part of the area thus enclosed is strewn thickly with stones of all sizes and shapes, from huge 4-foot square blocks to boulders the size of one's head, it is clear that there was once a much more extensive building actually erected than the low walls now standing. From this backbone the rock curves off on either side like ribs, the curve becoming less and less apparent as it recedes, until, on the extreme E., it suddenly becomes quite precipitous, while on the W. the ridges are more graduated.

The actual remains may be described thus (fig. 33):—a central walled enclosure, oblong in form, 230 feet by 120, consisting of large stones laid pretty regularly so as to form a base of quite 4 feet, thinning upwards to 2 feet, at a height of 5 feet 6 inches from the ground. These walls are a good deal broken down, but at many points they reach nearly 6 feet. At the corners and near the centre of each wall, judging by the masses of debris, there have been strong flanking towers. Some of the heaviest blocks are found at these points. The "backbone" of rock rises 8 or 10 feet towards the middle of the enclosure, thus hiding considerable lengths of wall, from whatever point one tries to obtain a complete view.

Round this walled enclosure runs an outwork of the same kind of large loose stone building—much of it quite shapeless—and varying its distance from the central space according to the nature of the ground, *e.g.* on the N., where the rock ridge goes in small shelves or steps downwards (only to the hollow which connects the *fort* site with Ben Tuther proper) the stones are not so numerous, the width between the *fort* wall and this outer one being 54 feet, and from it there proceeds, still rather N., a small oval outwork springing from a base of 36 feet, and irregularly tapering to about 90 feet in length. After the same way, at the S. end, the outer wall has been at a distance of 48 feet, simply because there happens to be there a very convenient projecting rock, the base of which forms the foundation of this part of the surrounding wall. This wall is, I think, carried in a deeper curve round the E. side of the true *fort*; and the

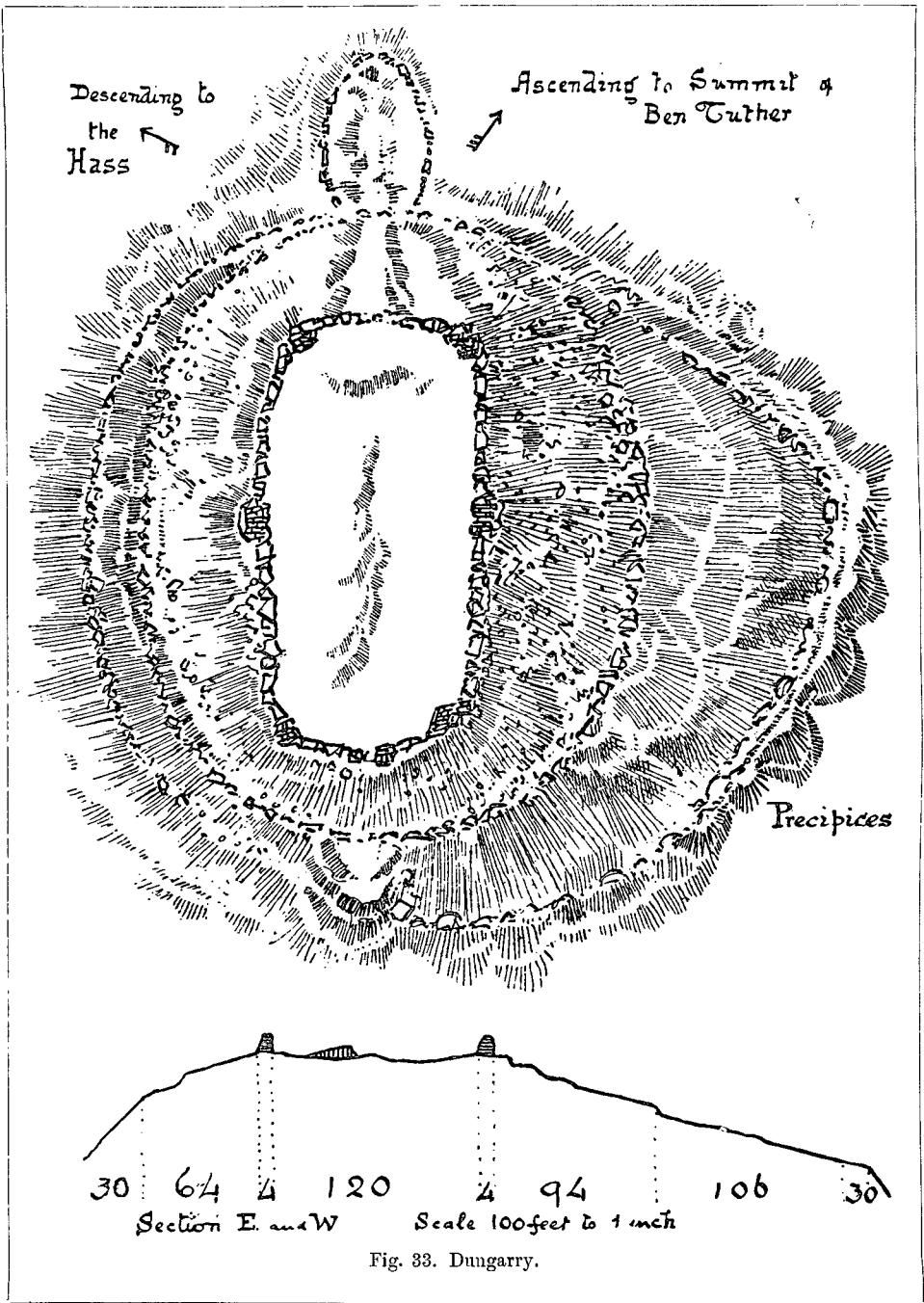


Fig. 33. Dungarry.

whole has been again surrounded by a second wall—certainly so on the E., where the great foundation stones can be traced at regular intervals all the way round from the N. to the S. end, forming a bristling brow to the precipices on that side. This deep curve of outermost wall measures 435 feet in length, and its extreme distance from the *fort* wall is 200 feet. So far as it is possible to judge, I should state the approximate thickness of the inner circular wall to be about 10 feet. It does not appear to have been built of nearly such large stones as those which remain as the foundation of the outer circular wall.

The character of the ground is rocky, with steep slopes of grass and heather, most marked on the south. The spur of the hill on which the *fort* stands has been formed into an apex by two streams,—the Collin Burn, and a smaller tributary.

Not many score yards distant from the confluence of these two streams, and about half a mile S. from *Dungarry*, are the very scanty remains of a *fort* and a *cairn*, both marked on the O.M., but otherwise scarcely known or heard of. The *cairn* must have been demolished, as no mound of stones is visible hereabouts.

44. *The fort, Ben Tuther*, however, can still be measured. I name it so, as it is on the farm so called.

A rough, rocky, long-extended hill-ridge forms the stern background on the E. of this *fort*; below it flows the small stream that joins the Collin Burn—an impressive scene taken in conjunction with the towering heights above, and the nearness of *Dungarry* on the heathy slopes of Ben Tuther.

Like its neighbour, this *fort* has been entirely of stones; but it is of the usual circular type, measuring 99 feet both ways, and having on its S. curve a semicircular bastion (touching the fort at one end only), also of dry stonework, heaped stones, which runs to about 90 feet round the rampart, and is 36 feet across the opening; the rampart slope of the *fort* measures about 18 feet, on the average. Nowhere on the stream side of the *fort* is there anything approaching steepness or decided declivity, and the ground directly N. rising considerably higher helps to close it in, so that it is only really open to the S. and W.

The name, Sir H. Maxwell suggests, may be from Gaelic *t'sudaire* (*too dery*) "a Tanner." An Inverness man tells me that it may mean "thatcher."