

## II.

THE PREHISTORIC FORTS, &c., OF AYRSHIRE. By D. CHRISTISON,  
M.D., SECRETARY. (PLATES V., VI.)

In the summer of 1891, I began a general investigation of the prehistoric forts of Ayrshire. A severe illness, however, cut short my labours before they were half accomplished, and has prevented me from presenting the results in the exhaustive manner which I desired. In order to give as complete a view of the subject as is possible under the circumstances, I have added to my own descriptions and plans brief references to the forts which I failed to see, founded on the Ordnance Survey plans on the 6 and 25 inch scales. These plans, however, are not always reliable, and at the best, as they are only ground-plans, they give merely the general size of the works, and the number of defensive lines, but not their relief, or the nature of the ground on which they stand; unfortunately, also, it is often difficult to determine whether ramparts or trenches are represented, and it is almost always impossible to say whether the ramparts are of earth or stone. Still, the information is better than none; and these references will at least serve to point out the number and position of forts which still require investigation.

In my plans, which are mere rude approximations to the truth, made by pacing and by partial reliance on the Ordnance plans, I have followed the systems used and explained in previous papers. Suffice it to recapitulate here, that they are all placed as if the north were at the head of the page; that those which are in the text are on the scale of 120 feet to an inch, sectional details being sometimes on double that scale; that those in the plates are on half scale, or 240 feet to an inch; that all measurements are in feet.

As to the classification adopted, nothing is more difficult than to classify objects the nature of which is very imperfectly ascertained, but description would be utterly chaotic without some kind of order in the details, and I have accordingly subdivided the various fortifications, sometimes with misgivings as to whether they are in their proper place,

under the heads of (1) Motes, and structures analogous to them; (2) Forts and "Camps"; (3) Works of a doubtful character.

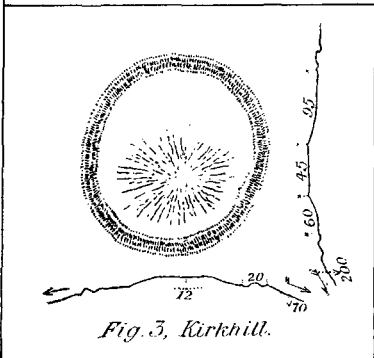
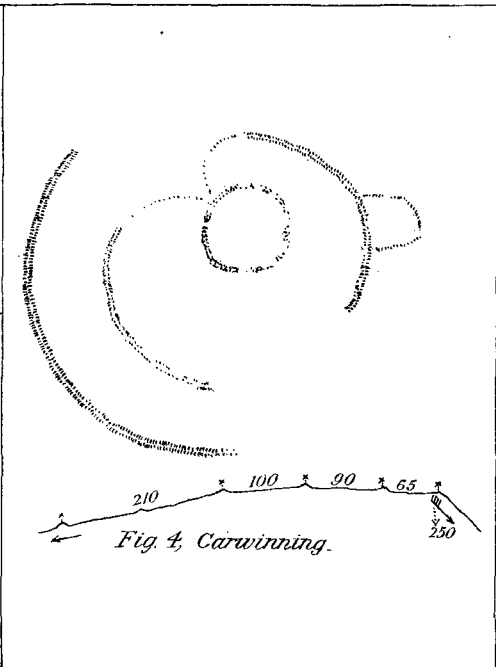
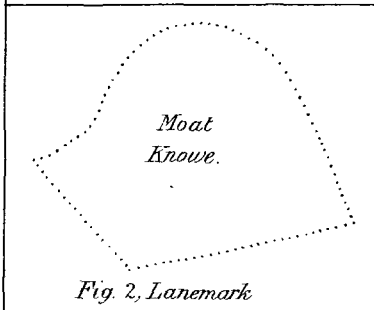
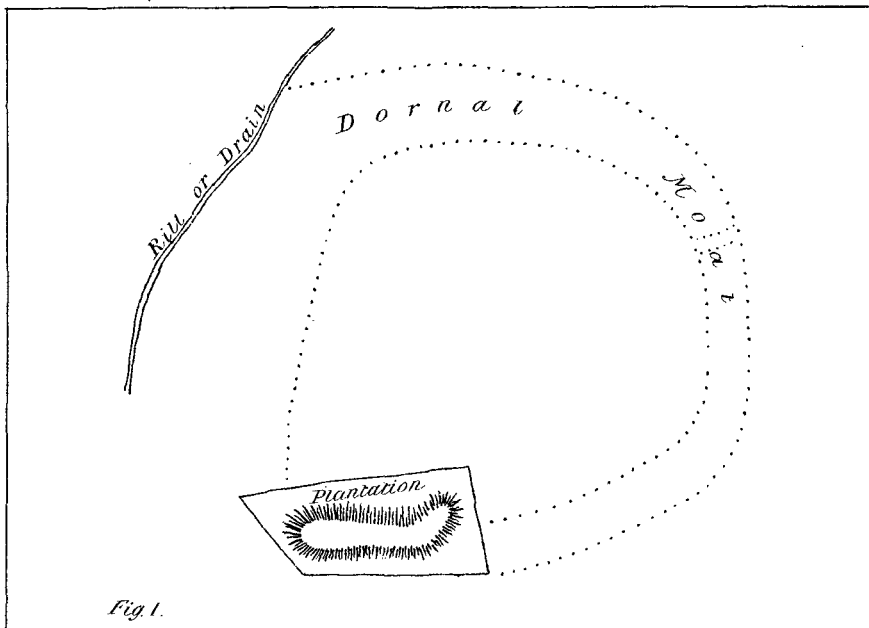
#### I. MOTES, MOUNTS.

Referring my readers to a general account of Scottish motes in my paper on Dumfriesshire Forts (*Proc.*, 1891, p. 208), I merely state here that comparatively few of the structures so-called in Scotland resemble the English motes, which are so characteristically composed of artificial mounds of earth, with a trench at the foot, a rampart outside the trench, and frequently a base court besides. In Scotland, not only did the shallowness of the soil in most localities forbid such erections, but the conformation of the ground, presenting innumerable little defensible eminences, was a direct temptation to the construction of fortresses by the carving and adaptation of such natural fortresses. Thus in Kirkcudbrightshire, where "motes" are far more numerous than in any other Scottish county, Mr F. R. Coles' observations show that the great mass of them depart far indeed from the English model, although the celebrated Mote of Urr is the best example of that model in Scotland.

In Ayrshire, although the number of "motes" is comparatively small, the majority, so far as I have observed, conform to the true type by their elevated mound-like character, with flattened top and regular circular or oval form. The name *mote* occurs sixteen times on the O.M. of the county, in two or three instances apparently without any remains existing; while in one or two others it is perhaps only a name bestowed on natural mounds from a resemblance to the motes. A few *mounts* have been added, as there is reason to believe that *mount* is a name for some motes in Dumfriesshire. Mount is a rather common name in Ayrshire for little round eminences, often planted, but the majority are evidently modern, as when several occur together in a park, with modern names. I have only taken a few which I have judged from personal observation or from their appearance on the O.M. to bear some resemblance to the motes.

#### (A.) *Motes.*

1. *Dalmellington Mote* (figs. 1 and 2) towers over the east end of the



PLANS OF AYRSHIRE MOTES & FORTS  
(Scale 240 Feet to an Inch.)

village in a striking manner, at the west end of a plateau, called the

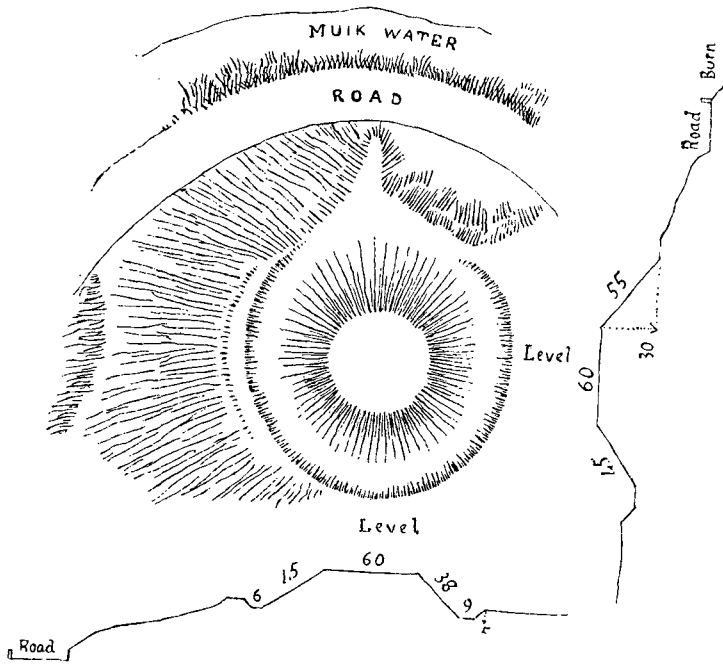


Fig. 1. Dalmellington Mote.

Castle Crofts, which is considerably higher than the village. The road

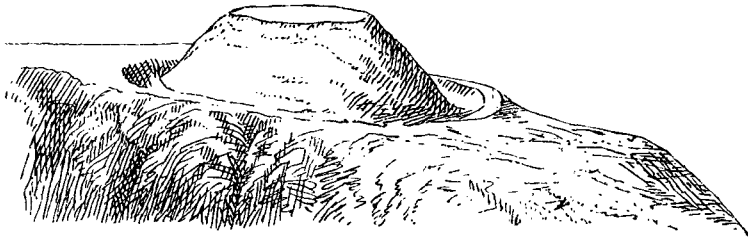


Fig. 2. Dalmellington Mote.

to Carsphairn, and the Muik Water are in a narrow pass at the foot of the mote on its north side. The mound is nearly circular, 60 feet in diameter on the level top, and slopes steeply to a trench, which cuts it off from the Castle Crofts plateau on the east and south, and from the slope to the village westward. Northward, perhaps from erosion, there is no room for a trench, but a narrow terrace, overlooking the descent to the burn, completes the circuit. The trench slopes towards the north, so that the greatest height of the mound, about 30 feet, is towards this terrace, and the top of the mote may be 60 to 70 feet above the village and burn. The trench is 6 to 9 feet wide at the bottom, and has an outer flat-topped low rampart on the west side. About forty years ago the mote was "restored," but I find on inquiry that nothing more was done than a necessary filling up of gaps formed by the rain.

2. *Mote Knowe, Kilkerran* (figs. 3 and 4), about 600 feet above the

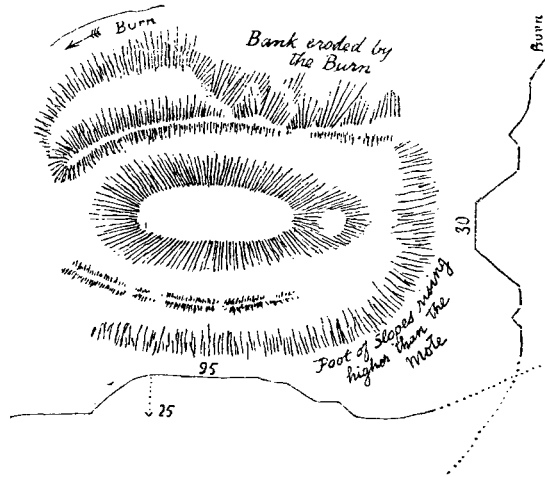


Fig. 3. Mote Knowe, Kilkerran.

sea, in the angle of junction of two little rills which unite a little below the mote to form Dobbington Burn, near the ruins of Kilkerran Castle. The mote is oval, and stands out conspicuously by reason of its isolation, although closely overlooked from higher ground to the east and

south. It appears to be partly natural, and stands from 15 to 25 feet in height, with steep sides, except towards the east. The top measures about  $90 \times 30$  feet. The base is surrounded by a strip of marshy ground, with remains of a rampart on the north and south sides. On



Fig. 4. Mote Knowe, Kilkerran.

the south this rampart protects the trench-like marsh from the high ground outside. On the north there is a descent to a terrace, which probably covered the whole north face originally, but the western half has apparently been carried away by the burn. At the foot of the west

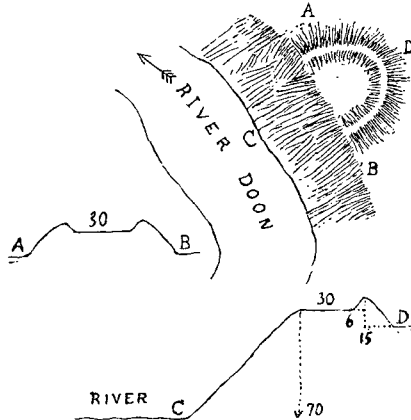


Fig. 5. Alloway Mote.

end there are some signs of fortification or enclosure of the small piece of ground between the mote and the junction of the burns.

3. *Alloway Mote* (fig. 5), nearly half a mile E. of Brig o' Doon, at the

entrance to Doonholm grounds, on the edge of a steep descent, 70 feet high, to the river Doon. The work is semi-oval, with the unfortified base resting on the edge of the descent. The interior is only 30 feet each way, and is raised 8 or 10 feet above the level ground around it. The single massive rampart is 5 to 6 feet high inside and 10 to 15 outside, and is apparently of earth, but the whole work is choked with trees, shrubs, and briars.

4. *Mote Knowe, Monkwood* (fig. 6), a mile and a quarter W.S.W. of Dalrymple church, on the left bank of the Doon, on a somewhat de-

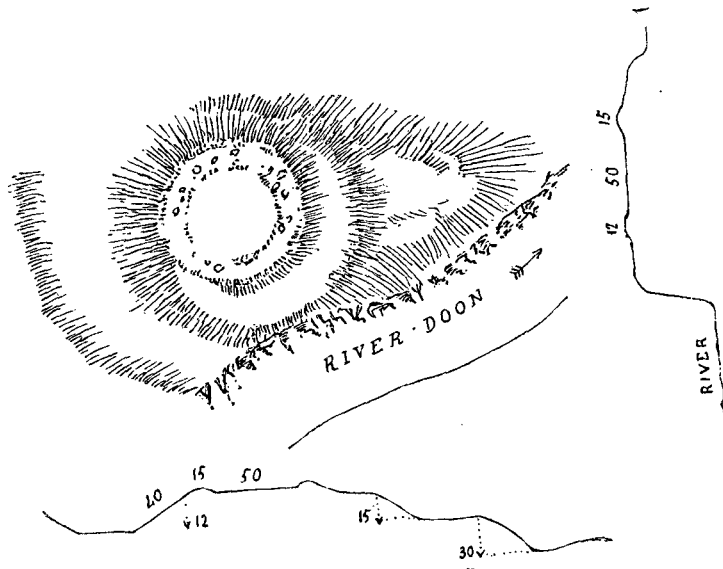


Fig. 6. Mote Knowe, Monkwood.

tached mound, about 60 feet above the river, from which it rises in a sheer precipice on the south. The level circular interior, 50 feet in diameter, is girdled by the grass-grown remains apparently of a stone wall, 2 or 3 feet high and 15 wide, where best preserved, a good many large stones being visible. To the west the ground falls about 12 feet to a trench-like hollow, which cuts off the mound from the neighbouring

field. A narrow sloping terrace fills the space between the wall and the precipice to the south, and, contracting to the east, is edged by an abrupt descent of 15 feet to a little flat, from which another steep descent falls 30 feet nearly to the level of the stream.

5. *Trowier Mote*.—A nearly circular flat-topped mound, which projects into the plain by a narrow neck from the foot of the ridge that faces Girvan on the east, is so named. It rises about 30 feet above the plain, and has a regular artificial aspect, but there is no trace of fortification, and the diameter of the top, 330 feet by the O.M., seems much too great for a Scottish mote.

6. *Girvan Mote*.—Nothing remains on the site, which is  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile east of the town, save a gentle but conspicuous little eminence, rising above a level field. On the O.M. it is represented by a dotted circle, 150 feet in diameter.

These are all the motes that I have seen in the county. I add a brief notice of the others which are marked on the O.M.

7. *Mote Hill, Cumnock*.— $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile N.E. of Old Cumnock. Apparently a narrow mound, 600 feet long, by from 50 to 100 in breadth, on a peninsula of 900 by from 300 to 400 feet, formed by a sharp bend of Lugar Water.

8. *Dornal Mote*.— $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles N. by E. of New Cumnock. It is represented as in fig. 1, Plate V. A unique plan, unintelligible without explanation.

9. *Carleton Mote*.— $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.W. of Colmonell. A simple, flat-topped, low, circular mound, 90 feet in diameter on the top.

10. *Bennane Mote*.— $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile E. of Bennan Head. A simple mound, apparently higher than the last, and 50 feet in diameter on the top.

11. *Mote Knowe, Lanemark*.—On the east side of Lane Burn, 2 miles W. by S. of New Cumnock. Represented as in fig. 2, Plate V.

12. *Mote of the Doonans*.— $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.E. of Straiton. A name on S. side of Kildoach Burn, on a height opposite to and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile N.E. of "the Doonans" on Doonans Hill, both about 900 feet above the sea.

13. *Mote Wood*.—A name only, at Old Dailly.



14. *Mote Knowe*.—A name only. On the north bank of the Nith,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  m. above New Cumnock, about 600 feet above the sea.

15. *Mote Knowe*.—A rocky site in the uninhabited region E. of Loch Doon.

16. *Mote Knowe*.—A name only, at Laggan, a mile from mouth of Stinchar Burn.

(B.) *Mounts*.

1. *The Glen Mount*.—A mile N. by E. of Kilbride, 250 feet above the sea, on the edge of the little ravine of Bush Glen, on its south side. An evidently artificial circular mound, with a flat top about 60 feet in diameter, partly raised a few feet above a field, partly projected into the ravine. No trace of fortification.

2. *Bush Glen Mount*.—300 yards E.S.E. of the Glen Mount, rising a few feet above a field all round, and 2 or 3 feet more in the middle. A slight mound circumscribes it, such as often surrounds little circular plantations, and it is planted. A doubtful fort.

3. *Knock Rivock Mount*.—2 miles N.N.E. of Ardrossan, 464 feet above the sea, in a field. A simple, conspicuous, and, I should think, certainly artificial mound (but I was not close to it),  $60 \times 40$  feet on the oval summit on the O.M.

4. *Baillie Hill Mount*.—70 yards west of Carmel Water, near Busbie Castle,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles W.N.W. of Kilmarnock. Apparently a high mound,  $180 \times 120$  feet on the flat oval summit (O.M.).

5. *Shell Knowe, Almont*.—In the bend of the Stinchar River,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Pinwherry Station. Apparently a regular high mound, with a flat top,  $60 \times 45$  feet (O.M.).

It is possible that some of these mounts may have been moot-hills rather than Motes; may have been used for the administration of justice rather than as places of defence. Accordingly, I give below two examples of *mounts* actually bearing the name of *Law*; and along with them, as being probably of the same class, the Court hills in the county.

(C.) *Court and Law Hills, Mounts, and Knowes* (O.M.).

1. *Law Mount*, on Annick Water, a mile S.W. of Stewarton, at Chapelton, apparently a small mound.
2. *Law Mount*, close to Skeldon House, above Barbieston Castle ruins, river Don, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of Dalrymple.
3. *Court Hill*, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile E. of Beith. [In old English letter]—no mound represented.
4. *Court Knowe*, at Old Hall of Auchincross, 2 miles W. of New Cumnock.
5. *Court Knowe*, a rocky hill  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of E. end of Loch Doon.
6. *Court Hill*, a rocky site, W. of Loch Doon.
7. *Court Knowe*, a considerable hill at Balmannoch (457), 1 mile from mouth of Ballochdoan Burn, and the sea. S. end of the county.

## II. FORTS AND "CAMPS."

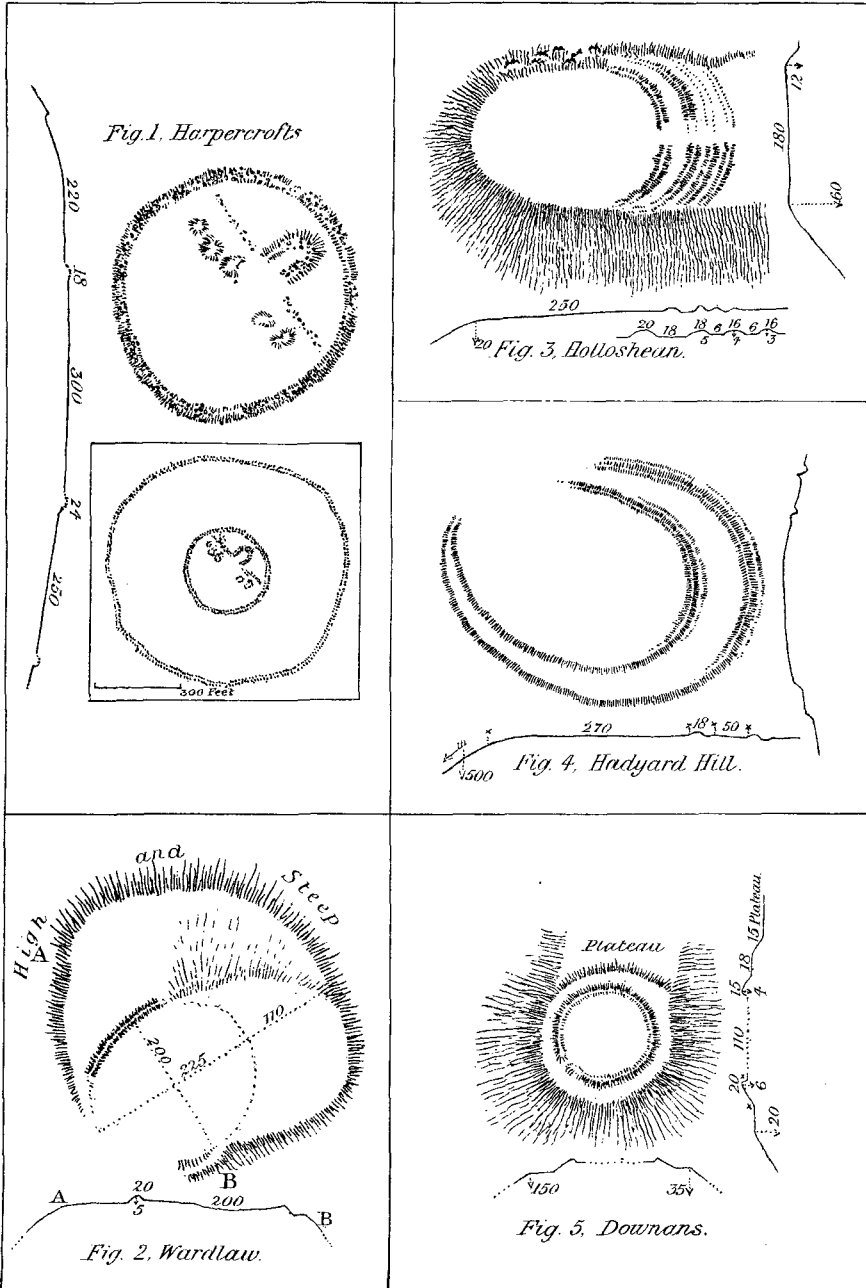
In arranging this branch of the subject, I have taken first those structures which can still be most certainly identified as being forts, keeping together such as show some resemblance in type, and then those in which the evidence of fortification is slight, doubtful, or has quite disappeared. Those that I have not seen, and the references to which are from the Ordnance map, are distinguished by (O.M.).

1. *Carwinning*—(Plate V. fig. 4)—2 miles north by west of Dalry, 658 feet above the sea, on a conspicuous height, projecting into the Pitcon valley from the high ridge between it and the Caaf valley. The site is easily accessible only from this ridge to the west. Round the flanks the descent increases rapidly in height and steepness to an almost inaccessible declivity on the east to the valley 250 feet below. On this strong position are the poor remains of a large and powerful stone fort. The central enclosure of 105 by 90 feet is encompassed by a stony mound of earth, a foot or two in height, distinctly traceable only about half way round. A second wall, not concentric with the last, being 130 feet off on the west and south, but nearer on the east, and curving in apparently to join the inner wall on the north from both sides, shows little remains, but a slight mound about a fourth of the way round, and

scattered stones elsewhere. A third wall, 80 feet further down the gentle decline from the summit, is still substantial, 2 or 3 feet high and 12 to 15 feet wide, grass grown, but evidently of stone. It is quite lost on the steep north and east descents, so that the connection with the inner lines cannot be determined. The entrance appears to have been from the west.

2. *Harpercrofts, Dundonald*—(Plate VI, fig. 1)—about the middle of the Dundonald ridge, on one of its tops, 450 feet above the sea and 100 above Harpercrofts farm-house to the north. The level summit is enclosed by a stony grass-grown mound, 18 to 24 feet wide, half a foot above the interior, and in parts 5 above the exterior. The ground falls gently from it on three sides, but to the north-west there is a plateau 50 yards wide. The enclosure, roughly circular, is 300 feet in diameter from crest to crest. At its north-east end is an oblong enclosure, rounded at its north-east end, with straight sides and open to the S.W., where are remains of a transverse wall, running from its ends across the interior at each side. Beyond this wall are other obscure mounds. At a distance of from 60 to 100 yards from the inner rampart, another, scarcely less massive, circles round it, which can be traced all the way almost without a break. The inner rampart resembles those of many Argyleshire forts in being constructed with its inner face at the edge of the slope and its outer face on the slope, so as to be several feet higher outside than in. In size and plan this fort much resembles Carwinning.

3. *Kemp Law, Dundonald*—(fig. 7)— $\frac{3}{4}$  mile S.W. of Dundonald Castle, close to Hallyards farm, at the N.E. end of a little wooded ridge, which lies in the trough of a little ravine which cuts through the Dundonald range of hills, and about 350 feet above the sea. The ridge is about 30 feet high, is tolerably level on the top, and narrows to a point at the east end. Here stands the unique fort, buried in a dense scrub of thorny bushes. It consists of a central cairn-like mass of stones 8 or 9 feet high and 50 to 60 across, somewhat semi-circular in shape, the base resting to the north on a straight wall or rampart, which stands on the very edge of the ravine, and running on to the point, turns there and circles round the free part of the central mass,



PLANS OF AYRSHIRE FORTS

(Scale 240 Feet to an Inch.)

with a level space 6 to 10 feet wide between ; the irregular top of the central mass is about 20 feet in diameter. The enclosing wall is 3 to 4 feet high and 20 across, but has been partially removed on the side towards the plateau. It runs close to the edge on the N. and S., but there is a projecting nose, 15 feet long, to the east, entirely covered with a mass of tumbled stones, from which there is an abrupt descent 10 feet high, also covered with stones, beyond which the slope to the ravine is gentle. The straight walls on the N. and S. appear to be prolonged about 80 yards along the edge of the plateau, gradually

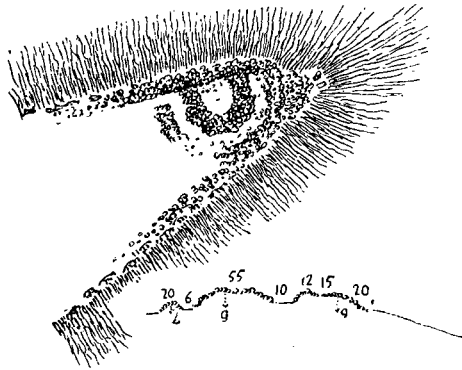


Fig. 7. Kemp Law, Dundonald.

diverging as it widens westwards, but there is no distinct evidence of the work, being closed there by a transverse wall. This outer wall in its whole course stands on a little rocky face, a few feet high, which from below looks like Cyclopean masonry, but is really, for the most part at least, natural rock. At the foot of the tumbled stones at the east point there is something like the remains of a built entrance, a block measuring  $6 \times 4$  feet, another  $4 \times 4$ , and others nearly 7 feet long, lying close together. There is also an apparent entrance to the west, close to the straight north wall. This fort is marked "Vitrified" on the O.M. But after careful search, I could only find two small pieces on the top of the central mass and two more in the trench at its foot. This unique fort well deserves a thorough investigation by excavation.

4. *Dowhill*—(fig. 8)— $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile S.E. of Girvan, on a bold rocky height overlooking the Girvan plain, and 518 feet above the sea. The summit is about 500 feet long, and from 50 to 100 wide. The citadel has been at the highest and narrowest part, nearer the west than the east end. The interior is about 50 feet in diameter, unfortified on the north and south sides, which are precipitous and inaccessible, but protected to the east and west by a curved wall, of which the grass-grown remains are very scanty, forming a mound scarcely a foot high, but about 30 feet wide, with sockets of large stones

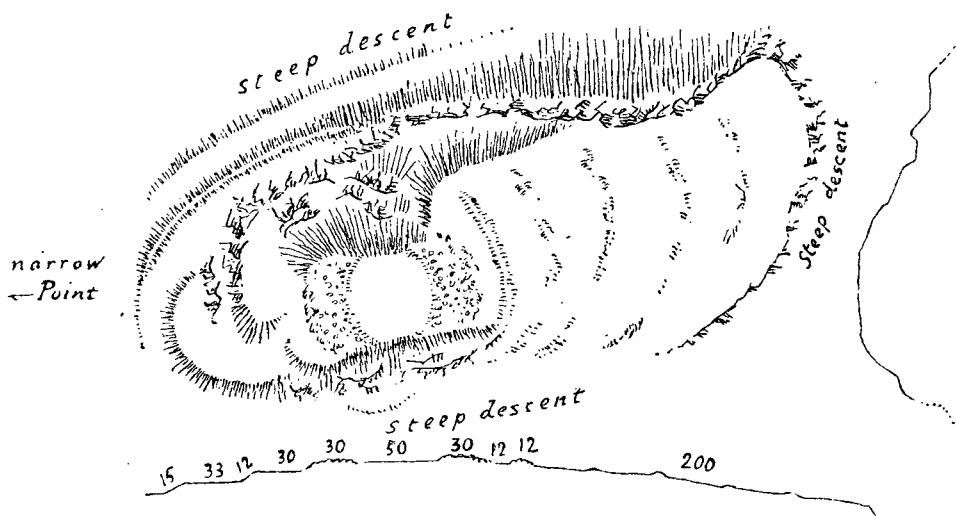


Fig. 8. Dowhill, Girvan.

remaining in one place. Eastward, the ridge slopes gently for 200 feet to the rocky edge and steep descent at the east end. At first sight five concentric ramparts seem to have been drawn across this space, but on closer examination only the one nearest the citadel is undoubtedly artificial, the others seeming to be outcrops of rock. Westward, the citadel is covered by three terraces—one close to it, and on the same level the others a few feet lower. Beyond this is a narrow plateau or point, not fortified. The third terrace curves round to the north for

about 150 feet, and is protected by a rampart; below it, a narrow terrace or roadway slopes down the north face, and was probably the old approach to the fort from the plain.

5. *Wardlaw, Dundonald*—(Plate VI. fig. 2).—This fort, if it be one, is only 160 yards from Harpercrofts Fort, from which it is separated by a slight descent, and an abrupt rise of 30 or 40 feet to this the highest summit of the Dundonald range (477 feet). All that exists is a remarkably regular, curved, grassy and stony rampart, 160 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 5 high outside, which cuts off the tolerably level interior from a plateau on the N.W. The level summit measures 230 by 200 feet, but, including a slight slope to the edge of the steep descent north-eastward, the space is 340 by 200 feet.

6. *Downans, Dunree*—(Plate VI. fig. 5)— $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.E. of Cassilis House, on a conspicuous green eminence, with a perfectly level top, 442 feet above the sea, and 250 above the Doon, 700 yards to the north-west. A grassy mound, 3 to 6 feet high outside, and 15 to 20 across, showing many stones, girdles the summit, enclosing a space of 120 by 110 feet, with an entrance to the W.S.W. Outside, a slightly sloping terrace, 12 to 20 feet wide, extends to the edge of the steep descent, and there are remains of a wall at the rim. The elevation of the site varies from 30 to 150 feet, except to the north, where a plateau, only 8 or 10 feet below the summit, forms an unfortified space, twice as large as that contained within the rampart. There are some shapeless little mounds on the southern half of the interior, and a large artificial-looking mound lies at the foot of the site to the east.

7. *Portincross*.—A conspicuous ridge, which overhangs Portincross Haven and Castle, after running about 300 yards northwards by a broad top, suddenly narrows to a neck, and turns westwards into a head which is the site of the fort. The position is well marked for defence, from its lofty isolation and steep rocky sides, but the slight signs of fortification are almost confined to the shallow, saucer-like, actual summit, which measures only 45 by 26 feet. The gentle slope to the neck, 90 feet long, and the somewhat lower part of the summit to the west, 180 by 60 feet in extent, must have been included, however, almost necessarily, in the fort.

8. *Near Montfode Castle*, on the burn which passes it, 300 yards from its mouth, and a mile N.W. of Ardrossan. The site is on the north side of the burn, on a nearly isolated point at the end of a field, raised some 20 or 30 feet above the plain towards the sea. It is cut off from the field by a slight dip in the ground, not 6 feet deep, but the height rises gradually all round to 25 feet at the burn. The small circular interior shows only doubtful signs of fortification, but is stony, and contains obscure mounds.

9. *Dinvin*—(figs. 9, 10, and 11)— $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles E.S.E. of Girvan, 591 feet above the sea, at the south end of a green ridge, rising to 883 feet, which

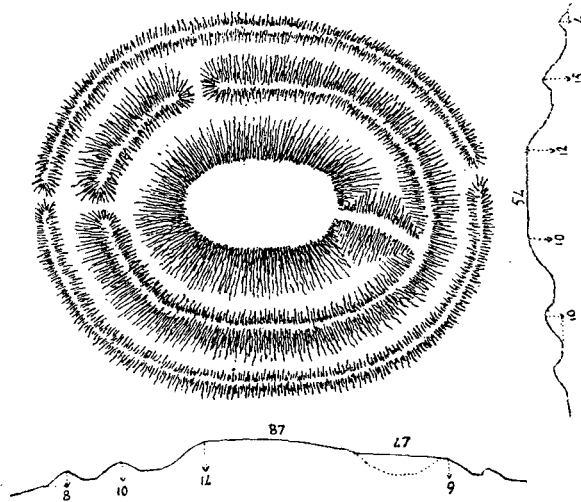


Fig. 9. Dinvin.

from opposite Girvan runs southward about 3 miles. The site is the summit of a slight rise in the gentle southern descent of the ridge. The fort is one of the best preserved earthworks in Scotland. The oval summit measures 87 by 54 feet, of which the nearly circular western part appears to have been surrounded by a stone wall touching the rim on three sides. Eastward a gentle slope leads to a ramp constructed across the inner trench. The sides of the mound are steeply scarped, and the



outer defences consist of two ramparts, with intervening trenches. The top is from 10 to 14 feet above the inner trench; the inner rampart varies from 10 to 15 feet above the trench beyond, and the outer one is from 3 to 8 feet above the ground outside. The trenches are from 6 to



Fig. 10. Dinvin—general view.

10 feet wide at the bottom. There are breaks through both ramparts to the west and through the inner one to the north, but probably the only original entrance is in connection with the ramp at the east end, which



Fig. 11. Dinvin, from the outer rampart.

turns obliquely away from the corresponding break through the outer rampart.

10. *Hadyard Hill*—(Plate VI. fig. 4)— $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.S.W. of Dailly, 1028 feet above the sea, and 900 above Girvan Water, on the edge of a steep descent of 500 feet towards the stream north-westward. Here the work is open, but elsewhere a double mound encloses a central space of 270 by 230 feet. As they leave the edge the two mounds are close together, but they gradually diverge till they are 50 feet apart at the opposite end. To the south, perhaps from subsidence in the marshy slope, they have little relief, and are more like scarps on the hill-face. Elsewhere

the mounds vary from 12 to 24 feet in width, and are never above 4 feet high to the outside. In the firmer ground to the north are some remains of a trench in front of them.

11. *Holloshean*—(Plate VI. fig. 3)—on the flat summit of a little ridge, about 600 feet above the sea, a mile S.E. of Kirkoswald. A steep descent, from 50 to 80 feet high, protects the south flank, but the north flank and west end are weak, particularly the latter, which descends by a gentle slope, not above 10 feet in height at one part, only to rise again to a prolongation of the ridge, which is higher than the fortified site. The east end is the weakest, however, as it is approached by a level neck, and here alone do any fortifications remain. Four concentric curved ramparts have been drawn across the neck, of which two are still complete. They occupy a width of 100 feet, and the length of their arc is about 180. The flat interspace between the inner rampart and the next is 18 feet wide, the others only 6 feet wide. The mounds are apparently of earth, and nowhere exceed 5 feet in height, but the ground has been cultivated. If trenches ever existed, they must have been filled up. The interior is about 250 by 180 feet.

12. *Kildown*—a similar fort to the last—occupies the conspicuous height, 568 feet above the sea, on which the monument to Sir C. Ferguson stands,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of Maybole. I did not examine it, but from the Ordnance plan the interior is 280 feet long by 180 at the west end and 90 at the east end, and its edge is well defined by a girdle of rocks or little precipices. A double rampart is drawn across the neck at the east end, occupying, with the wide space between them, a breadth of fully 60 feet.

13. *Gourock Burn*—(fig. 12)—2 miles E.S.E. of Kilbride, 200 yards E. from the sea and 100 feet above it, on the edge of the plateau which for several miles limits the narrow plain on the coast. Here the burn emerges from the plateau by a deep and steep cut, partially isolating the site. The fort consists of two flat-topped mounds, with steep and high descents on all sides except the north-west, where the most northerly mound is cut off from the plateau by a cut about 25 feet deep. A similar parallel cut about 12 feet deep separates the two mounds, of which the northerly one commands the other by about 6 or 7 feet. The

interior of the first measures 45 by 27 feet, and of the second about 40 by 40 feet. The first has remains of a rampart nearly all round; the second only on the north side. They are apparently pure earthworks.

14. *Seamill*—on a little tongue projecting from the end of the south bank of the ravine of Kilbride Burn, where it emerges on the strip of low ground 300 yards from the sea, above which the site stands about 75 feet. A massive rampart cuts off the interior, which measures 90 by 60 feet, from the narrow neck by which it is approached from the

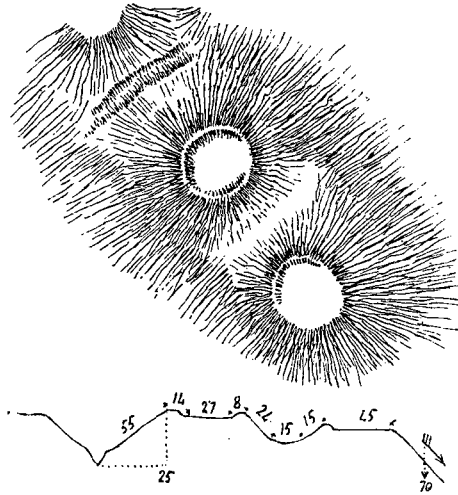


Fig. 12. Fort on Gourrock Burn.

high bank. There is no other fortification, and the rampart rises about 8 feet above the interior and 15 above the trench. The sides fall steeply from 10 to 30 feet.

15. *Knockjargon*—3 miles north of Ardrossan, 757 feet above the sea, on the first important summit of the rise from the sea; an oval, 350 by 200 feet over all. Interior 150 by 100, with a mound, 90 by 75, in the centre, crowned by a dotted circle, 20 in diameter. Three lines of defence on three sides; and six or seven on the north end, occupying 150 feet of breadth (O.M.).

16. *The Knock*— $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of the mouth of the Nod Burn, 712 feet above the sea. A conspicuous knob on the top of the high coast ridge. A flat-topped mound at the S.E. corner, 60 by 30 feet, forms the central work, standing in a space  $150 \times 65$ , surrounded by a rampart or defensive line of some kind; 210 by 120 over all (O.M.).

17. *Kirkhill*—(Plate V. fig. 3)—2 miles N.N.W. of Dailly, on the summit of the hill, 850 feet above the sea and 750 above the Girvan Water, nearly a mile and a half to the south-east. A mound 1 or 2 feet high and from 12 to 18 wide encloses a nearly circular space about 200 feet in diameter, within which at the south side there is a flat-topped mound, marked "Tumulus" on the O.M., about 13 feet high and from 40 to 50 feet in diameter on the ill-defined top, which is pitted with small squarish depressions. The ground is slightly trenched, both outside and inside the enclosing mound. I have included this in the doubtful class, as it seems to be of an unusual type, and possibly is not a fort at all.

18. *Lindston, Dalrymple*— $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles N.N.E. of Dalrymple church, on the nearly level summit of a broad ridge 400 feet above the sea. A circular wet ditch, 21 feet wide and 2 or 3 deep to the surface of the weedy water, encloses a space 130 feet in diameter, which scarcely rises above the surface of the surrounding field, and has no trace of a rampart. Simple as this is, it is almost, if not quite, unique in Scotland. Perhaps it is mediæval.

19. *Woodland, Dalrymple*—nearly a mile S.W. of Dalrymple church, close to Woodland farm, with no advantage of position. The plough has reduced it to a circular, much flattened dome, rising a few feet above a shallow trench 20 to 30 feet wide; about 170 feet in diameter over all. Possibly originally of the same character as the last, which is in the same district.

20. *Red Moss, Loch Humeston*—2 miles N.W. of Maybole, about 700 feet above the sea. A very regular circular mound, 150 feet in diameter, with a flat top 45 feet in diameter, and a terrace half way up. Possibly a mote (O.M.).

21. *Doune Camp, on Doune Knoll*—at south end of Girvan, 225 by 225 feet over all. Apparently a mound with a terrace  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way

round, and a circular flat top 120 feet in diameter, very regular in form (O.M.). Appears to be quite destroyed. From a little distance I could see no trace of fortification on its smooth, ploughed surface.

22. *Dowhill*— $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Girvan, 128 feet above the sea, 300 yards from it, on the edge of a descent to the east side of the coast road. A central work, nearly circular, 65 feet in diameter over all, touches the edge of the descent. Two outer concentric lines of defence form a semi-oval; the free ends coming to the edge, which forms an unfortified base 210 feet long. The outer interspace is 50, the inner 30 feet wide (O.M.).

23. *The Camp, Knockmallock*— $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile N.N.E. of Kildonan House, fully 500 feet above the sea. Circular, 130 feet diameter over all; interior 70. Two ramparts? (O.M.)

24. *Finnart*—1 mile N. by E. of Finnart Bay and the mouth of Glen App. Single circular rampart, enclosing space 60 feet in diameter (O.M.).

25. *Guiltree Hill*—"Site of a Camp"—a dotted circle, 180 feet in diameter (O.M.). I could find no trace of it.

26. *Newark*—on Newark Hill,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.S.W. of Ayr;  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile south-west of the summit (639), and about 600 feet above the sea. A dotted circle, 150 feet in diameter (O.M.).

27. *Dalrymple*— $\frac{2}{3}$  of a mile S.W. of Dalrymple church, 200 feet above the sea, near Tile-works. A dotted circle, 150 feet in diameter (O.M.).

28. *Coylton*— $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles W. of Coylton.

29. *Downan Hill*— $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles S.S.E. of Turnberry Castle, 170 yards from the sea. A site marked by a dotted circle, 180 feet in diameter, on the edge of a bank E. side of coast road (O.M.).

30. *Campcastle, site of*— $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile north of Craigie church; a dotted circle, 55 feet diameter, on the top of a rocky site (O.M.).

31. *North and South Camphill*—farms on the Rye— $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.W. of Dalry. A camp must probably have existed between them, but no site indicated (O.M.).

#### RECTANGULAR "ROMAN" WORKS AND "RAMPARTS."

1. *Camp, Barnweill*— $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile W.S.W. of Symington. Half a

rectangle, the unfortified base resting on the edge of a steep straight bank. A double enceinte, 150 (at the base) by 90 feet over all. Interior 75 × 50. Apparently the only rectangular work in the county except the "Roman Camp."

2. "*Roman Camp*," *Loudoun*— $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile S.W. of Loudoun Hill, 350 yards south of the river Irvine, 713 feet above the sea. As far as can be judged from the plan on the 6-inch scale, an irregularly quadrilateral natural plateau, called *the Beg*, of 700 by from 300 to 350 feet, increased by a prolongation south-eastward at a lower level to 1000 by 300 to 550 feet, all of which is included in the "Roman Camp," as printed, occupies the S.E. end of a larger plateau, perhaps 1800 feet long in all, including the Camp. The part of the plateau outside the camp appears to fall considerably to the N.W. The Hoca Burn flows under its S.W. slope (O.M.).

3. *Roman Trenches*, *Tarbolton*— $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of the manse, in the grounds of Montgomerie, close to the bowling-green. Four trenches (?) irregularly parallel—two straight, two slightly curved—face north-east. The outer one is prolonged by a curved bend, afterwards taking a zigzag, so as to cover the N.W. flank of the other three. Space occupied, 300 by 200 feet (O.M.).

4. *Ramparts*, *Knockdolian Castle*—100 yards west of the Stinchar River, with the ruins of the castle between. A narrow space, 320 feet long by 40 to 50 wide, is included between a straight two-sided rampart and a trifling hollow with a rill in it. The narrow east end of the rampart (or raised terrace?) is 60 feet wide, the long north face 30 feet wide, the west end is open (O.M.).

#### NAMES ON THE O.M. POSSIBLY INDICATING FORTS.

##### CASTLE HILLS, RAITHS.

The number of "Castle Hills" in Ayrshire, on the O.M., with no sign of ruins in connection with them, is unusually large, amounting to twenty-seven. Some are the names of farm-houses, but most are attached to mounds with apparently no remains of any kind upon them, some of which may be mere sites, suitable for castles or forts, or resembling castles. "Castle," however, is a name not unfrequently given to

prehistoric forts in Scotland, and these Ayrshire Castle Hills must be investigated, each for itself, before an opinion can be hazarded as to their true nature.

1. *Castle Hill, Largs*—on a prominent hillock, projecting from the hill face, on the south side of the Gogo, 1500 yards from its mouth, 550 feet above the sea, very conspicuous from Largs. The summit, which measures  $190 \times 120$  feet, looks level from below, but rises a little towards the centre, and stands 10 or 12 feet above a trench-like hollow which curves across the neck towards the hill-face. To the west and south the descents are steep and rocky. To the east there is a gentle slope, varying from 10 to 40 feet in height. The base of a wall can be traced all round the summit, but it is very slight, except towards the neck, where the grassy mound which nearly conceals it is 8 or 9 feet thick, and a foot or two high.

2. *Castle Knowe, North Kilrusken*— $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of Kilbride. A trifling but evident enough mound in long-cultivated ground, rising about 10 feet above the field on one side, and only 2 or 3 on the others. No trace of fortification.

3. *Castle Hill, North Howrat*— $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. by W. of Dalry, on the height between Pitcox and Caaf Burns, 600 feet above the sea. A remarkable, rock-girt, isolated little eminence, about 100 by 50 feet on the nearly level top, and 25 feet high. A natural fortress, but with no trace of artificial defence.

4. *Castle Hill, Glen Burn*— $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the burn mouth at Porteath, Hunterston Sands. On the edge of a steep wooded ravine, a somewhat isolated circle, projecting into the ravine (O.M.).

5. *Castle Hill, Borland*—close to the site of Borland Castle, 2 miles N.N.W. of Cumnock. Looks like a fort with incomplete double enceinte, or a flat-topped squarish mound, 160 by 90 feet, on the top of another 210 by 180 feet (O.M.).

6. *Castle Hill, Noddsdale, Largs*.—A mound (O.M.).

7. *Laverock Castle* (900)— $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile E.N.E. of mouth of Nod. A mound (O.M.).

8. *Castle Hill, Newmilns*— $\frac{1}{3}$  mile E.N.E. of the village, at junction of Burflatt and Joles Burns. A mound (O.M.).

9. *Castle Hill*—junction of Wyndy Burn with Ayr River. A mound (O.M.).
10. *Castle Hill* (800)—5 miles N.E. of Dalmellington, on the Nith, at Waterhead, close to "Site of Castle." A mound (O.M.).
11. *Carnals Castle*—near junction of Muck Water with Glen Water, 2 miles N. of junction with river Irvine. A mound (O.M.).
12. *Castle Hill, Fleminghill*—on Polbeath Burn, 1 mile N. of junction with river Irvine. A small mound (O.M.).
13. *Castle Hill, Redding*—on Polbeath Burn, 2 miles N.E. of same junction. A little mound (O.M.).
14. *Castle Hill, Alton*— $1\frac{1}{4}$  mile N. of Galston. A little mound (O.M.).
15. *Castle Hill*— $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.W. of Riccarton. A regular oval mound, with flat top  $55 \times 30$  feet (O.M.).
16. *Jock's Castle* (1000)— $5\frac{1}{4}$  miles N.W. of Dalry, N. side of Rye Water. A name only.
17. *Jock's Castle*—S. side of Gogo Water, 2 miles from its mouth. A name only.
18. *Castle Hill*— $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile above junction of Greto Water and Gogo Water. A rocky spot.
19. *Castle Hill*— $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile north of Long Loch at High Walton. A name only.
20. *Castle Hill*—1 mile N.E. of Stevenson. A farm-house.
21. *Castle Hill*—junction of Greenock Water with river Ayr. A name only.
22. *Castle Hill Farm* (171)—a mile S.E. of Ayr.
23. *Castle Hill, Dailly*—on Quarrelhill Burn, near the Station.
24. *Castle Isle*—at the mouth of the Lane Burn, (Little) Loch Doon. Not an island.
25. *Castle Hill Farm and C. H. Wood*— $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles W.N.W. of Maybole, 600 yards from the coast.
26. *Castle-on-Oyne* (1558)—name of a hill?
27. *Castle Head* (548)—at Dochroyle,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles W.N.W. of Drumlamford House, in a very desolate region. Probably the name of a rocky knoll.



*Rath*—a well-known name for Irish forts—seems scarcely to survive in that form in Scotland, but as in Ireland it also takes the forms of *Raith*, *Ray*, and as the pronunciation of *Rath* in Ireland is *Raw*, I give all the possible representatives of these forms on the O.M. of Ayrshire. But they are mere names on the Map, apparently without remains of any kind at or near them :—

*Raithhill*—2 miles W.S.W. of Tarbolton. A mound (O.M.).

*Raithhill Farm*—1 mile S.W. of Coylton.

*Raws Farm* and *Rawsmuir*—3 miles E.N.E. of Kilmarnock.

*Raw Farm*—2 miles E.S.E. of Beith.

*Wraes Farm*—3½ miles E. of Kilmarnock.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

##### MOTES.

*Number.*—The name *mote* occurs sixteen times in various forms on the O.M. In four of these it appears merely to preserve the memory of motes of which no vestige remains. In one (No. 15) it is applied to a rocky height in a desert country, where we should hardly expect to find a defensive work. In the other eleven some kind of remains are indicated.

*Structure and Size.*—Only seven appear to have the typical round or oval, flat-topped, mound form, three of them being simple mounds with no remains of fortification. Their size on the top varies from 30 to 90 feet in diameter or greatest length. Of the remaining four which are more than mere names, Cumnock resembles on the O.M. a long, narrow, natural mound, 600 by from 50 to 200 feet; and Dornel is remarkable for its size on the map—a natural-looking mound, 180 by 30 feet on the top, appears to overlook a rudely circular space, nearly 500 feet in diameter, included by a dotted double circle, the interspace between the two circles varying in width from 60 to 180 feet. Within this interspace “Dornal Moat” is printed. Nos. 11 and 12 are represented merely by dotted enclosing lines. It is possible that some of the *Mounts* and *Castle Hills* may have been motes, but there is no proof of it.

*Distribution.*—It is remarkable that all the sixteen motes are in the

southern half of the county, south of the latitude of the town of Ayr. This appears to show some connection with Galloway, the great home in Scotland of the motes. They are pretty uniformly distributed in the coast, central, and landward districts.

#### CURVILINEAR FORTS.

*Number.*—The number of this class is small for so large and hilly a county. Not more than thirty-one can be proved to exist or to have existed, and of these six are mere sites, without remains.

*Form and Structure.*—In form they are of the usual oval and circular types, modified occasionally by the exigencies of the site. Of twenty-one whose plan can still be fairly well made out, twelve have more than one line of defence. The most complex seems to be Knockjargon (No. 15). Of fourteen that I have examined, five have undoubtedly been constructed mainly or entirely of stone, but, judging from the plan and site of the others, I believe that most of them have also been stone forts.

*Size.*—In making an estimate of size, I have taken the longest axis of habitable space within the enceinte. Thus, where two or three lines of defence are close together, the space they occupy is not included; but when they lie well apart, the interspace is included. Of twenty-four whose dimensions can be approximately made out, six are between 55 and 95 feet in their diameter if circular, or longest axis if oval; nine are between 100 and 200 feet; four are between 200 and 300 feet; and four are between 320 and 400 feet. *Carwinning* (No. 1) is the largest, with a diameter of 400 feet, but it is possible that the diameter of *Harperscroft* (No. 2) which I have taken as 300 might be extended to 700. In addition to these, six "Sites" are represented on the O.M. by dotted circles between 55 and 180 feet diameter, but I do not know if they are intended to give the sizes accurately.

*Elevation and Sites.*—None are at any great height: *Hadyard* (No. 10) is 1028 feet above the sea, but no other attains 1000 feet, and few come near it. The sites, as far as I have observed, are usually chosen for some defensible quality. But *Lindston* (No. 18) and *Woodland* (No. 19) are exceptions, being in nearly level fields.

*Names.*—Few of them have names, unless the vague one of *Camp*. *Dun*, however, survives in the Doune Camp and Knoll at Girvan (No. 21), Dounan near Turnberry (No. 29), Downans at Dunree (No. 6), and Dinvin (No. 9); and two (Nos. 4, 22) bear the name of Dowhill.

*Interior.*—Evidences of structure in the interior are rare; I have only observed them in Nos. 2, 6, 8, 17.

*Distribution.*—The distribution of the forts differs entirely from that of the motes. In place of being confined to the southern half of the county, they are almost entirely situated near the east coast. Including the "Castle Hill" near Largs, which I have ascertained to be a fort, the total number is thirty-one, and of these but one is far inland towards the eastern side of the county; the others are all within 7 miles of the west coast, twenty-six being within 5 miles, and nineteen within 3 miles of it.

#### RECTILINEAR WORKS.

The small half-rectangle, represented on the O.M. with an unfortified base, at the edge of a slope at Barnweill, Symington, is apparently the only rectilinear fort in the county, unless we accept the "Ramparts" at Knockdolian as another example. Both of these seem miraculously to have escaped being called Roman.

The only so-called Roman Camp is in the eastern part of the county, near Loudoun Hill; but it appears on the O.M. to be a natural, or perhaps artificially scarped, plateau, with no rampart or trench.

Another alleged Roman work is the "Trenches" at Tarbolton.

Unfortunately, I could not examine any of these; but I hope that the mention now made of them may lead to their being properly investigated, as they are no ordinary works.

#### CASTLE HILLS.

It is possible that some of the numerous Castle Hills in Ayrshire may prove to be motes, others forts. I have only seen two of them, No. 1 near Largs, which I think has been a fort; and No. 2, which must always have been very small, but is ploughed away beyond recognition.