

## I.

## A SURVEY OF THE CATRAIL. By FRANCIS LYNN, F.S.A. Scot.

The Catrail—what is it, who made it, and what was its purpose? To find an answer, I propose to examine the work itself, follow its track (fig. 1), note any connection it has with human dwellings, compare it with other works of the same character, and find what light can thus be got.

The line of earthwork known as the Catrail was formerly held to have its northern termination at Mossilee, but, through the investigation of William Kemp, is now usually held as beginning at Torwoodlee Hill, some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles northwards from Galashiels. It is found circling round more than two sides of a British fort there, which is also remarkable as containing the remains of a broch. But beyond this there are remains of a line of Catrail running up the bank of the river. This can be traced to a steep wooded bank above Jeddart Haugh;<sup>1</sup> and on the opposite side of Gala Water, below New Buckholm farm, there is also a double line of Catrail formation (fig. 2), which, coming from the river, runs upwards, crossing the eastern approach to Torwoodlee House, and also the Edinburgh road, and running up the bank of the small burn to the east of the farm-house. There it enters on land under cultivation, and has not been traced further. But the northern termination of the Catrail cannot be said to be fixed.

In considering the curious way the Catrail circles round the fort on the hill, turning almost completely round it, as if to return down the valley of the Gala, I came to surmise that there had been another line by the river-bank, and that that surrounding the fort was a sort of loop from a main line below. This surmise became something stronger when Captain Pringle of Torwoodlee drew my attention to the remains of a large fort close to the garden and on the river-bank, which was little, if at all, inferior to that on the hill.

<sup>1</sup> Some years since there was here a very perfect remnant, which, by the action of the river, had been slid downwards out of its original line, but three years ago this was carried away.

I here remark that the approach of the Catrail from the south to the fort on the hill, as given on the Ordnance maps, is not correctly marked. It shows it as leaving the fort in a zigzag line, and then passing down near the side of the field to the east of the strip of plantation. In reality, the Catrail can yet be seen inside the plantation. The zigzag form at the top and the line taken raise a suspicion that the track by which stones were removed from the fort (and it is known that it formed a quarry for generations) was put down as the Catrail. No doubt there would be a connection with the fort, but nothing now remains to indicate its position or character. On the north of the fort, the mound of the Catrail is on the far side of the trench; but on the west, where the ridge connecting the site of the fort to Crosslee Hill is crossed, the mound is on the side next the fort, and is higher than usual, so as to strengthen the position of those holding the fort on the side where it was naturally most assailable.

Coming down towards Galashiels, the Catrail can be traced to the edge of the wood, but in the field between this and the strip of wood below, where we have already remarked on its presence, I have not seen any vestige. But the one must have curved into the other. The line in this lower wood is much flattened, and has clearly been long subjected to the plough before the trees were planted; but it is quite traceable downwards, till just after crossing the disused Edinburgh road, and nearing the approach to Torwoodlee House, it shows somewhat plainer. Then, for some distance between the approach and the public road near the Red Burn, it is only traceable. At the Red Burn only a faint indication remains. The formation of the railway has completed its obliteration here. About this point must have been the separation between the line we have traced from the upper fort and that which must have gone round on the river-bank. The line, after crossing the Red Burn, runs aslant that of the public road from Galashiels to Peebles, but opposite the gate entering to the Birks mansion-house it again reappears between the road and the river-bank. Here it used to be well preserved, but has, unfortunately, been found to be a convenient depot for rubbish, and so is now nearly obliterated. Just opposite the Blynlee quarry there are appearances of a branch

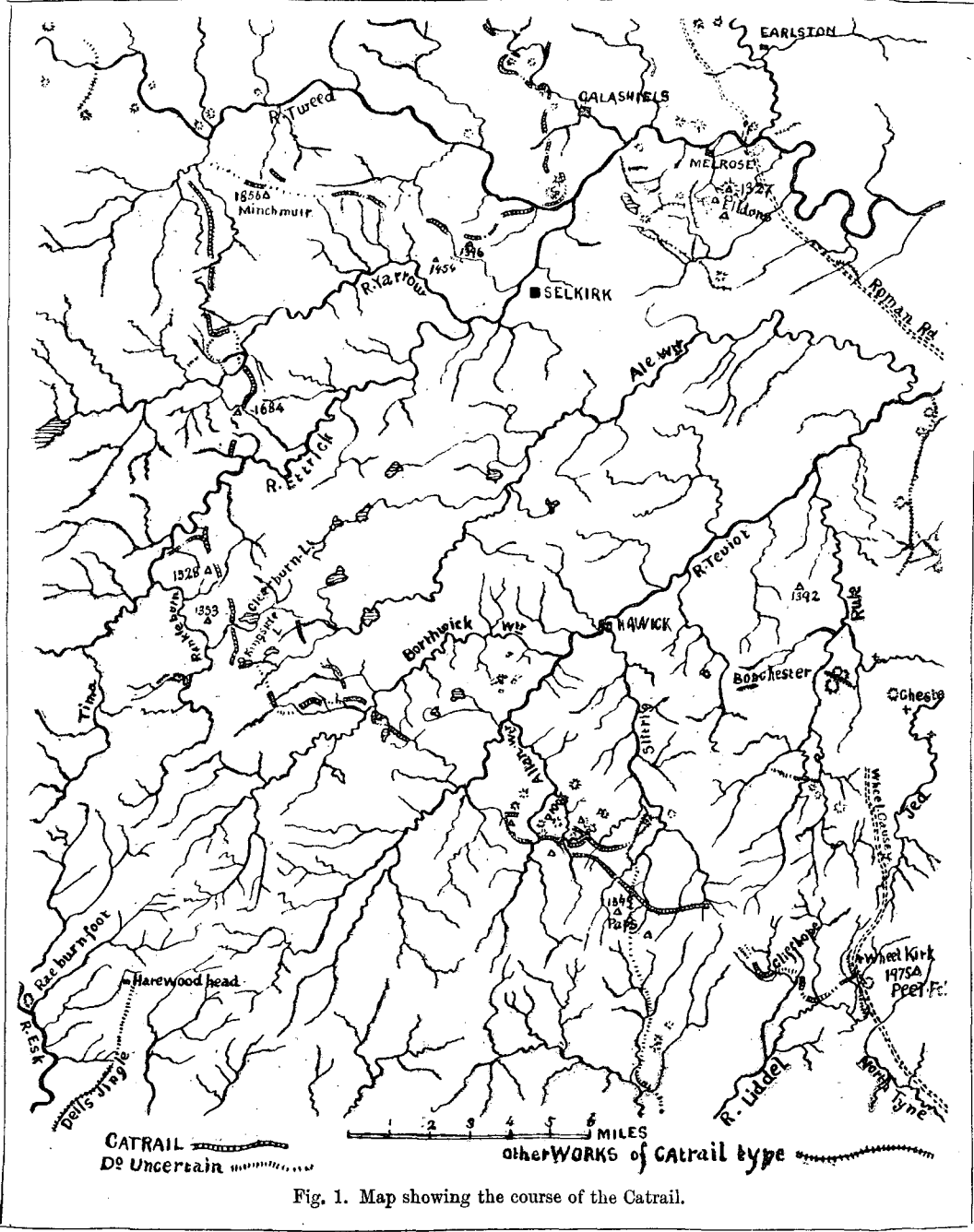


Fig. 1. Map showing the course of the Catrail.

having left the main line, which points as if to run on the line of the old Peebles road.

From this point, for some distance southwards, the line of Catrail has been carried away by the action of the river, but opposite the gate to Blynlee House it reappears strongly.<sup>1</sup> Below this, the line of Catrail has been for some distance removed by the railway cuttings, but it is known to have followed round the top of the river-bank, and is shown on the Ordnance maps as in the field between the railway and the water, and running down to Kilknowe farm-steading. Where the steading is, there has been a considerable fort or camp, of which remains are visible; and there are indications between the fort and the river, and in the line on which the Catrail runs in leaving Kilknowe, as its line is faintly marked inside the wood before it reaches the Windyknowe road, which raise a presumption that it was in immediate contact with the fort, and passed round in its outer ditch. This will be referred to later, when other instances have been found.

All recent authorities agree that the present Windyknowe road has been formed on the line of the Catrail from where it emerges from the small plantation behind Leebræ House, to where the road turns off for the public water reservoir. Then leaving this latter road, it runs along a field fence towards Mossilee. But between Leebræ and Mossilee no mark can now be seen to prove its presence. The Ordnance Survey maps show the line as passing above Mossilee farm-house. This is now almost obliterated, but the line has here divided into two lines, as there is another which comes out of the lower side of the garden enclosure, and runs along under the farm-house, where it is well marked till it crosses the burn.

It is said that formerly a blind man could follow the Catrail from Mossilee to Rink, but now, after crossing Mossilee Burn in the ploughed land, the line is only noticeable by the colour of the crop or the strength

<sup>1</sup> On the higher side of the work there are some fragments of trench, which are marked on the Ordnance maps as the remains of a fort. I have not been able to identify this as the site of a fort. I rather think they were formed as a catch-water, towards filling a pond at the neighbouring farm of Kilknowe, which existed before the formation of the railway.

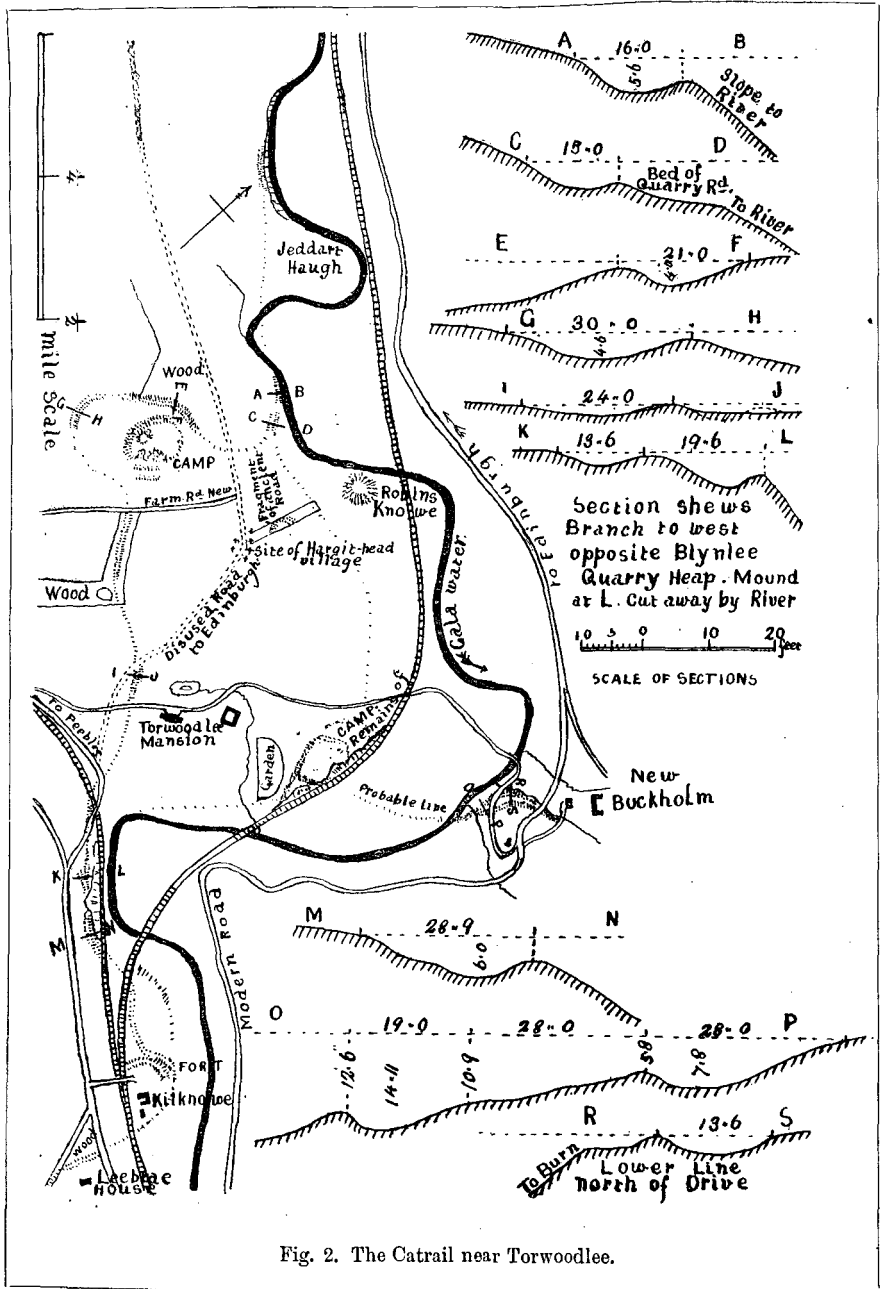


Fig. 2. The Catrail near Torwoodlee.

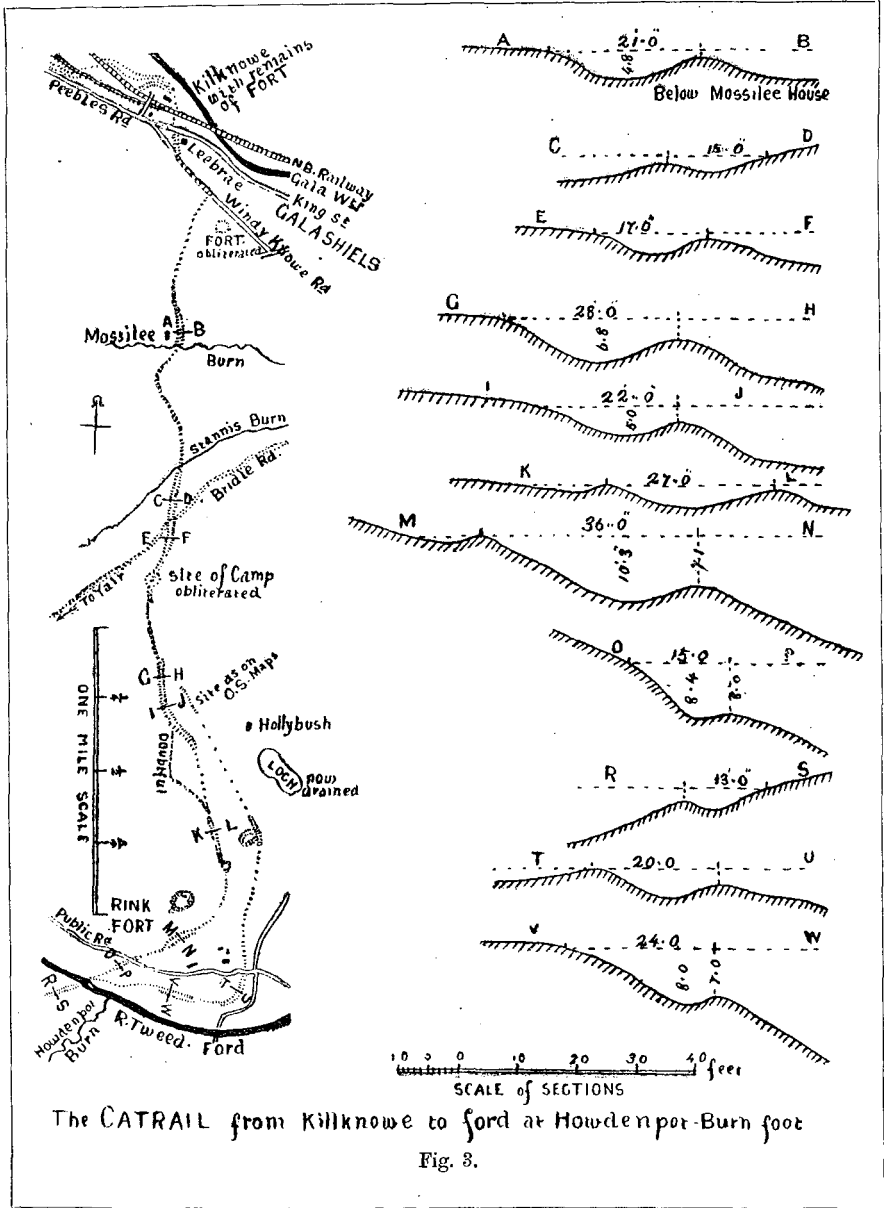
of the stubble. After crossing Stannis Burn its line is slightly marked in the grass park, but in the wood rising to Park House Hill (now commonly known as Watt's Hill) it is distinctly seen. I here ask attention to the plan (fig. 3) and sections, to show a characteristic which obtains all along the Catrail.

The old bridle-road from Yair comes down the angle between the valleys formed by Stannis Burn and that of the valley coming from Hollybush, and a glance at the sections will show that when the Catrail passes this point, the mound which was on the west shifts to the east, and continues so till Tweed is crossed, proving that the position of the mound, in relation to the trench, is governed by the natural fall of the ground. After leaving the wood, the Catrail mounts a little higher on the ridge, and then runs along towards the Rink. Here, where the highest part is reached, the Ordnance maps place a camp, which the Catrail seems to run right through. This camp cannot now be traced. But if it was as the maps show, it was unique on the line of the Catrail. I know of only one other case where a similar work runs through a camp.<sup>1</sup>

The Catrail here forms only a slight depression, but with care can be followed till the wood is reached on the ridge to the west of Hollybush farm, where the work is very well preserved. The Ordnance maps show as if the Catrail descended from this ridge in three lines, but only the centre one of the three can now be seen as a hollow, about 18 feet wide by 10 inches deep, which dies away before the middle of the field is reached. Probably the first two of the traces on the map are correctly given, as under Rink Fort there are unmistakably two lines of Catrail, and this is probably where the separation took place. In the vicinity of Rink Fort there are evidences that the dimensions of the Catrail were greater than we have yet found them. Most of it is under plough, however, and is rapidly disappearing. At one point the trench has been made a depot for land-gathered stones, and there the remains show a large hollow, with a mound on both sides.

Up to this point we have only found a mound on one, the lower, side of the work; but we find now and onward that when a fort is being

<sup>1</sup> In Cheviot Burn, head of Bowmont Water.



passed, there is usually a smaller mound on the higher side also. This would provide the holders of the fort with a breastwork, which they could use in commanding the Catrail, and preventing its being used against themselves. A direct connection with the great fort at Rink cannot now be traced. Jeffrey, in his plan, shows the upper line of Catrail as turning upwards, and entering the gate of the fort. Probably there was a branch thus connecting, but it cannot now be traced. The line itself certainly ran forward, and is again well preserved in the plantation behind the cottages at Rink. I saw its line clearly in the vegetation in August 1896. Between the great fort of Rink and Hollybush Loch there is a smaller fort, and the lower line of Catrail already referred to without doubt ran along the outer trench of this fort, and continued forward. The Ordnance Survey maps, and Jeffrey following them, take this line into the well-preserved part behind the cottages, but examination has satisfied me that it ran downwards into a line still strongly marked in the wood below Rink farm, and which has been overlooked by the Ordnance Survey.

Some writers who have noticed this lower line have said that it seemed to ford the Tweed and run to Sunderland Hall, but it plainly follows the curve of the river-bank upwards, and is very distinct just before it leaves the wood at its upper end. It then curves through the cultivated ground till it reaches the line of the branch which came under the higher fort, and together they ford the river Tweed just above the small island at Howden Pot Burn-foot. In the field before the ford is reached, the track of the lower line is very plainly seen in the vegetation; while that of the higher cannot be seen at all, indicating that it was the more used of the two, and probably continued in use until a later period. The higher line of Catrail, after passing behind the cottages at Rink, can still be traced where it crosses the modern road, both on the upper and lower sides.

After crossing the Tweed, the track of the Catrail runs in almost a straight line up the angle between the valley of Tweed and that of Howden Pot Burn. After crossing the road from Yair to Selkirk, which it does near the lodge gate to Sunderland Hall, it has been taken for some distance as the boundary between the wood and the cultivated



land, and is being rapidly filled up by being used as a depot for land-gathered stones. Just here, the site of a large fort is passed, now almost effaced. Before it enters on the moorland at Yair Cribs, the line runs through a projecting part of the wood. Here the hollow and mound are fairly distinct, and I show a section (fig. 4):—

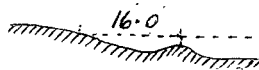


Fig. 4. Before entering on moor at Yair Cribs.

A few yards after it leaves the wood and enters the moorland, both trench and mound disappear, and cannot be certainly seen until fully half way up the ridge connecting the Cribs with Peat Law, where it shows this section (fig. 5), and can be traced upwards till it curves on

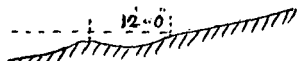


Fig. 5. On ridge connecting Cribs Hill with Peat Law.

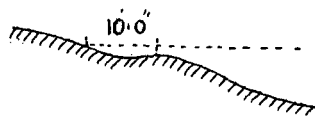


Fig. 6. On Peat Law.

to the Peat Law (fig. 6), along which it can be followed as far as the Red Score Nick, a bridle-road in the hollow between Peat Law and Three Brethren Cairn. Several of the tracks on the east of the Peat Law and in the sides of Sunderlandhope, shown on the Ordnance maps as Catrail, do not seem to me to be of that type, but are bridle-roads and peat-tracks, made at a more recent date.

The fragment of Catrail on the south face of Linglie Hill cannot be made out as part of any continuous line. It is cut in the rock, and so is very well preserved. At one end it runs into the centre of a morass, which was formerly a small loch (the Deilie's Loch). The other end dies out suddenly, and cannot be held to have been formed further. Probably it had a purely local purpose. On Peat Law there are evidences of another ancient track, which was used in the middle ages as a road. It runs straight southwards towards Lindean. Queen Mary is said to have gone this way on her journey to Jedburgh, and probably by this

road also came the followers of the Knight of Liddesdale, with the body of their slaughtered lord.

Between the Red Score Nick and the head of Philipburn there is no trace of the Catrail. The ground is peaty and covered with rank vegetation. But at the head of Philipburn there are distinct remains for about 200 yards. It crosses from the west side of the burn, as if it had come up that side, and runs out to the burn-head, where it again disappears.<sup>1</sup> The ground along the back of Broomie Law to Williamhope Rig is marshy, and no certain trace of the Catrail is seen till we are descending to Permanscore (fig. 7), where it is plainly marked.

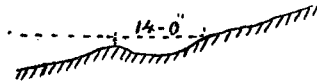


Fig. 7. Descending from Williamhope Rig to Permanscore.

Also, after crossing the hollow of Permanscore, it is plainly seen ascending the other side, but grows fainter, and curves round between the top of Brown Rig and the South Grain, in the head of Williamhope Burn. It can be followed till almost opposite the line of Wallace Trench, where the ground grows very marshy and full of springs, which make considerable heaps by their discharges. Here the track is lost.

My impression is that from this place forward the Catrail runs mostly in the line of the old Minchmoor road. I have not succeeded in finding any trace on the south slopes of Minchmoor, along which it has been stated to run; but, about 150 yards beyond the Cheesewell, on the north side, I found a trench and mound of decidedly Catrail type, turning as if to run along the northern slope of Minchmoor. But, after a little, it curved round, and ran back into the line of the drove-road descending to Traquair. On the under side of the drove-road over Minchmoor, I also found a line of Catrail, about 12 feet wide, curving down the side of the Middle Rig into the hollow of Plora Burn, which goes down into Tweed valley almost opposite Purves Hill, the undermost of the large cluster of forts in this section of Peeblesshire.

<sup>1</sup> I am certain that another line besides that from Yair Cribs came up from Selkirk direction. There are traces between Peatlaw and Fowlshiels, lower down.

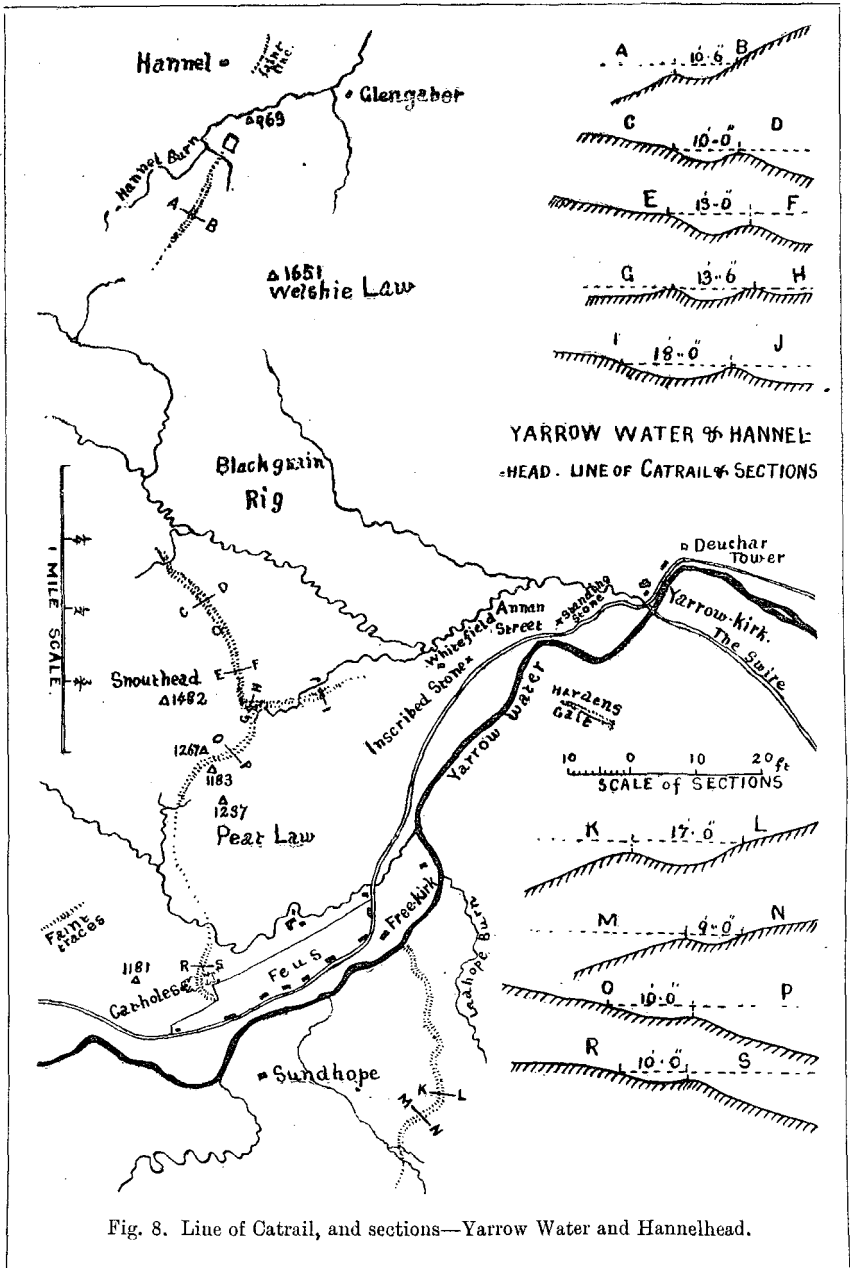


Fig. 8. Line of Catrail, and sections—Yarrow Water and Hannelhead.

Having failed in connecting the line of Catrail we have been following with that which we know to exist above Yarrow kirk, we shall now begin there, and follow it in a backward direction. The Catrail appears in a hollow some distance behind and above the shepherd's house of Whitefield. At first there are only fragments, the track having been cut up by winter torrents. Two short pieces show a section about 18 feet wide, with a strong mound on the lower side. Getting on to marshy ground the line is faint, but it again reappears with a low but well-formed mound on each side, running straight upwards (fig. 8). It then turns with a sharp curve, and runs northwards along the face of Snout Head: about 50 yards below this turn in the line, there is a branch thrown out which runs plainly through the hollow between Snout Head and Peat Law, and downwards into Catslack Burn, and curving southward, crosses the ridge behind Catslack Knowe at the curious ravine known as the Cat Holes, and then, turning westward, is lost in the cultivated patches behind Yarrow Feus.<sup>1</sup> Returning to the main line of the face of Snout Head—the Swine Hill Brae of the old writers—the Catrail runs along very distinctly for two-thirds of a mile.<sup>2</sup>

It then runs down-hill, and after crossing a small syke, becomes lost in rank spongy bottom land. It is again found on the summit of the ridge westwards from Welshie Law, and runs straight forward and down towards the Hannel, here forming a conspicuous line on the hill-side. For a short space in the bottom its course is lost, but its line runs straight across the burn and up to the ridge opposite, where it is again found behind the new shepherd's house, and runs along the ridge between Curley and Fingland Burns, and is traceable almost to its termination at Quair Water, though I have not succeeded in fixing the line of descent from the ridge. Here, too, we fail to find the connec-

<sup>1</sup> There are also near the top of the Feus Hill indications of a branch running towards Mount Benger Burn-foot. This looks at present more like a bridle-road than a Catrail, but is in line with the branch Catrail crossing between Snout Head and Peat Law. If Annan Street referred to a road to Annan, this might be it.

<sup>2</sup> About half way along there is on the upper side a small circle in ruins, about 20 feet in diameter, which may have been a hut circle or guard tower.

tion with the line coming along the other side of Minchmoor. Obviously both are running towards the great cluster of forts in the valley of Tweed, between Peebles and Innerleithen. Returning to Yarrow, a break occurs between where we found the Catrail above Whitfield shepherd's house, and the point where Yarrow is forded at the Free church. This part has been long under cultivation; and as here the track must have been close under the steep face of a hill, material sliding down would speedily cover up both trench and mound. The smaller branch we traced circling round from Catslack Burn could not be meant as a continuation of the line coming from Quair Water. The peculiarity of the way it branches off shows that it has been meant for use by men coming up from the Yarrow direction; and although no forts remain, there are signs of a considerable population having existed in that district in the prehistoric period. Many cairn-like tumuli have been removed, and cist burials have been frequently discovered. Probably, therefore, this branch had only a local purpose and use.<sup>1</sup>

From Yarrow the Catrail mounts up the angle between the Yarrow vale and that of Ladhope, after this rising well up till the track from Sundhope to Singlee is crossed. It then turns along the ridge and curves round towards the summit of Sundhope Law. It here shows a section rather below the average width (see sections K-L and M-N, fig. 8).

The line is faint across some marshy ground, but just where the highest ridge is crossed it runs through a natural hollow. When the ground begins to slope down towards Ettrick all trace is lost, and is so till the foot of the steep descent is reached near the side of Gilmanscleuch Burn, about a mile above Inch. Here it is distinct for about a third of a mile. Below Gilmanscleuch farm I could see no trace. Probably the line crossed Ettrick Water near where Deloraine Burn falls in. At least it is again found crossing a burn between Cope Law and Stanhope Law, and running upwards. Here it is joined by a branch line shown on the Ordnance maps, as in small pieces under Stanhope Law. This branch can also be traced above Stanhope Foot

<sup>1</sup> This site was formerly known as Annan Street, changed by some writers into Annan Treat. My impression is that the former name indicated a traditional feeling that here passed the line of an ancient street, the work which we are now following.

to a point where it runs aslant Ettrick Water, pointing in the direction of the valley behind Crosslee, through which access could be had to Yarrow, both above and below the Loch of St Mary's.<sup>1</sup>

This line under Stanhope Law (fig. 9) is very much smaller than the ordinary Catrail.

Mounting upwards, the Catrail can be traced between Cope Law and Stanhope Law, almost to the summit of the ridge between them. But between this ridge and that behind Standknowe I could not find it till, just on the crest, about 200 paces eastwards from the summit of Standknowe, the Catrail is distinct for a short distance.<sup>2</sup> Beyond this there is a district the surface of which has at some time been largely cut away



Fig. 9. Branch line under Stanhope Law.

for peats, and so no trace of Catrail remains. But when Holm Law is reached, the Catrail is again seen running plainly along, with a trench from 12 to 14 feet wide. It is easily traced to where it crossed the burn from Clear-burn Loch, just below the roadman's house on the Hawick and Tushielaw road, and near the ancient site of Buccleuch Mill. A short way beyond the burn the Catrail reappears, running up to the summit of the Blackrigg. Here it measures at one point 20 feet wide by 4 feet deep, and again 16 feet by 2 feet; sometimes with a mound on one side, sometimes on both, and again without any mound at all. Crossing the Blackrigg, it runs forward, curving away slightly westwards into the marshy ground above Kingside Loch. There

<sup>1</sup> A line of very ancient track comes from Manor Water to Yarrow, by way of Dryhope Rig, and continues into Ettrick. This was the line of a very large droving traffic for generations, but in parts the track, where preserved, shows a Catrail type.

<sup>2</sup> The summit of Standknowe forms a fine platform, with a considerable ridge of upstanding rock, forming a natural shelter against the north. What were natural deficiencies in this rocky screen or wall have been built up artificially. The luxuriant greenness of the platform and the whole surroundings indicate that it has been occupied by men at some time, probably as summer quarters.

it disappears, and I have not yet been able to find the continuation of this line in the direction in which it has been running since it crossed the Ettrick. In the foot of Phenzhope-haugh Burn, or Lake, as it is called—a tributary of Rankle Burn—there is a very remarkable British fort, and just above it there is part of a line of Catrail, traceable for about half a mile. At two points this measures 18 feet wide by 5 feet deep. Then, in the other direction, about half a mile eastward from Henwoodie, a distinct track of Catrail, about 12 feet wide, crosses from the Ale Water, and runs down to Hoscot Burn (fig. 10). On the further side of Hoscot Burn it cannot be traced, but the whole surface there has been carted off, as the shepherd informed me, to supply peats to Hawick and other towns. Probably this line has branched off that from Ettrick, somewhere about the summit of the Blackrigg, and come, by the east end of Kingside Loch. On the other side this line probably connected with the fine remain appearing lower down Hoscot Burn, which is shown on the Ordnance maps. This can be seen as having crossed the burn from the ridge we have referred to as being stripped for peats; and leaving the burn, it runs straight up the slope westwards.<sup>1</sup> Here the trench and mound are partly cut in the rock, and are well preserved. The trench measures about 12 feet wide by 3 feet deep. After running up the hill for some distance, it curves somewhat and runs down towards Girnwood, and passes into the arable ground there, where its track is lost, until it reappears at the south-east angle of the enclosed fields. But before reaching that point, we see plainly coming down towards us from behind Hoscot Shiel a line, which is that spoken of by most of the older writers as that of the Catrail. It is distinctly traceable from this point northwards to the ridge behind Hoscot Shiel, but there becomes obliterated. It is said to pass near Bellendean, and

<sup>1</sup> There is another line lower down, almost parallel to that described in the text, which runs straight down to Hoscot Burn at a place where the banks are rocky and precipitous. This Professor Veitch uses as proof that the Catrail was not a road (page 197, vol. 1., *History and Poetry Scot. Borders*, edition 1893); but I am of opinion that this line crossed by turning downwards in the bed of the burn, and mounting the opposite bank lower down. It is not unusual to cross burns in this way; it is sometimes done when there is no apparent necessity, as there is here.

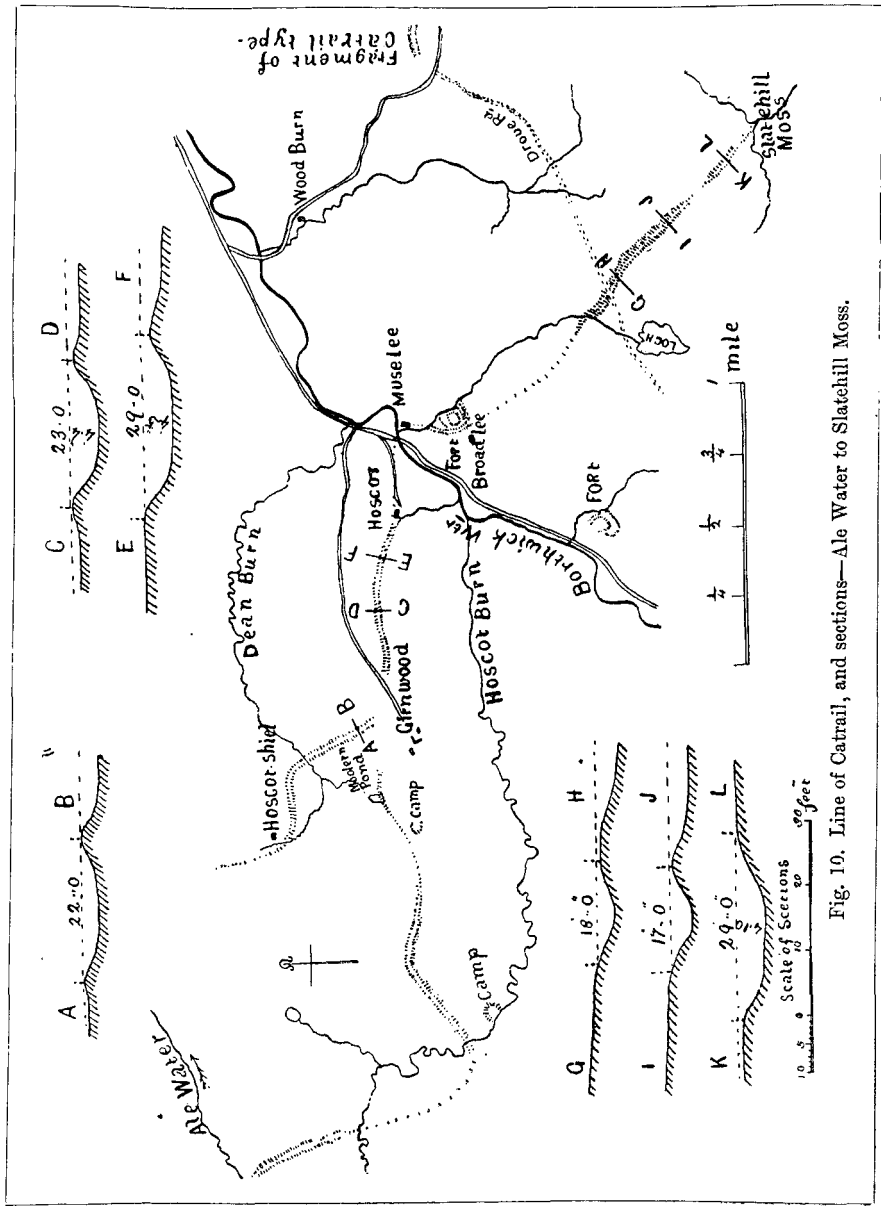


Fig. 10. Line of Catrail, and sections—Ale Water to Slatchill Moss.



passes over the ridge from a little below Redford Green, where it crosses the Hawick Road, and can be distinctly seen. Most authorities say that it comes there from the head of Deloraine Burn by Thorniecleuch. I looked carefully over that district, and made inquiry at the shepherd, who had been fourteen years on the ground, but had never seen anything like it. I satisfied myself that he knew the general character of the work I was inquiring about, as he told me at once of the line along the foot of the Holm Law, which, of course, I had seen. I have also examined the district between Hindhope in Ettrick and Redford Green, thinking the connection might be lower down, but have not seen a trace. The starting-point or connection of this line is, therefore, another point yet unsolved.

Returning to the point where the Catrail reappear on the south-east of the Girnwood enclosures, it here runs along plainly at its best. But when close to the mansion-house of Hoscot, the water collecting in the trench has formed quite a ravine, and the Catrail itself cannot be further traced till the Borthwick is crossed, where a short distance upwards, on Broadlee Burn, it reappears, coming out on the right, and curves round the south-west side of the fine fort there. Here it measures about 30 feet wide by 3 deep.

At the boundary-wall close above the fort the Catrail at once disappears, and across the meadow-land, a distance of about half a mile, it is lost, till it reappears faintly just before the opposite fence is reached. But outside that it is at once well marked, running to and crossing the burn. From this crossing the track is distinct and well preserved, being partly through rock: at first it has the mound on the right, but afterwards, when the slope of the surface changes, it is on the left. It is well preserved almost to the summit of the ridge between Borthwick and Teviot, where for a short space it is very faint. But after reaching the descent to Teviot, and approaching Slatehill Moss, the work is very strong, measuring about 30 ft. wide by 4 and 5 ft. deep. Here it is a trench only, and without a mound on either side. Elsewhere we have noted the absence of a mound for short spaces, but here it is wanting all down the slope till the moss is reached. What has become of the material taken out of the track—here very large? I

think we may conclude that the material was carried forward to form the line across the moss below.

I have not been able to identify the line of Catrail across Slatchill Moss, nor anywhere in the sides of the burn below; indeed, Old North-Houses is passed before we are again certain of its presence. I think, however, that everything has not been done here, and hope to have better success on some future day. But after North-Houses is passed the Catrail is again plain, and again there is not only one line, but several. The line usually described runs right up the ascent from the meadow-land. This track is well marked, and runs up and over the ridge till it is cut by the modern road to Priest-haugh. Beyond that road it disappears, but just before this road is reached a smaller trench and mound are thrown out, almost at right angles, and running along Doecleuch Hill about a quarter of a mile. There it suddenly stops, and does not appear to have extended further. Jeffrey shows this line in his plan, but I cannot think it so ancient as the line of Catrail it branches out of. Where it does so, I noticed that its mound is raised across the trench of the main line. Probably it is only a makeshift, formed for some purpose after the older line had been disused.

Then, there is running aslant the hill another line of trench and mound, which the shepherds say is an old peat-road. It may have been used for this purpose, but is obviously very ancient, from the way in which it weathers out and disappears in the summit of the ridge. And there are several camps over in this direction. There is still another line traceable from the meadow behind North-Houses, which rises along the west side of Doecleuch Hill, and passes through the hollow to Allan Water, winding down and crossing the water at the large fort on the Priest-haugh side.

Just above where it crosses the modern road this line of Catrail is strongly marked, and this is probably the spot Gordon refers to where it crosses under Skelfhill. Allan Water is crossed just beside the large fort. Unfortunately, the river has here broken into the fort, and carried away part of its enclosures; but the Catrail is seen to pass along outside the outer wall, and runs forward through a meadow which has been long under cultivation. But its line can still be seen

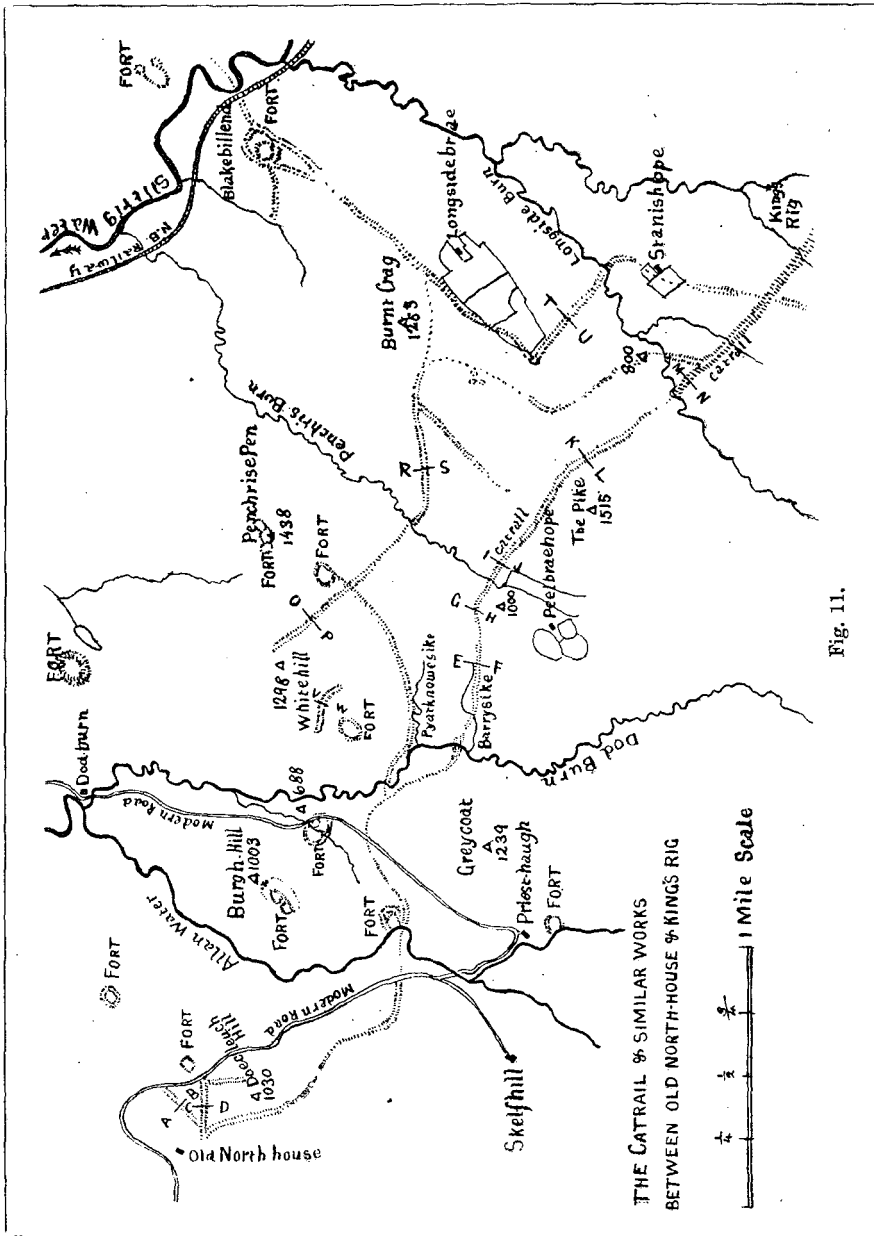
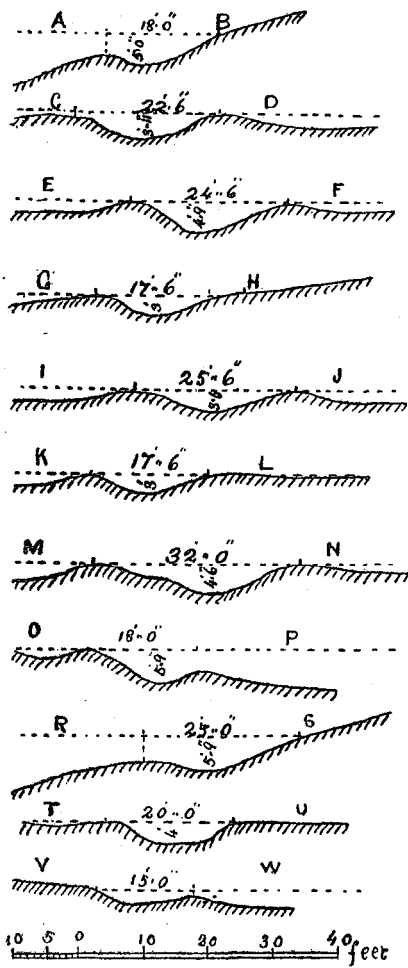
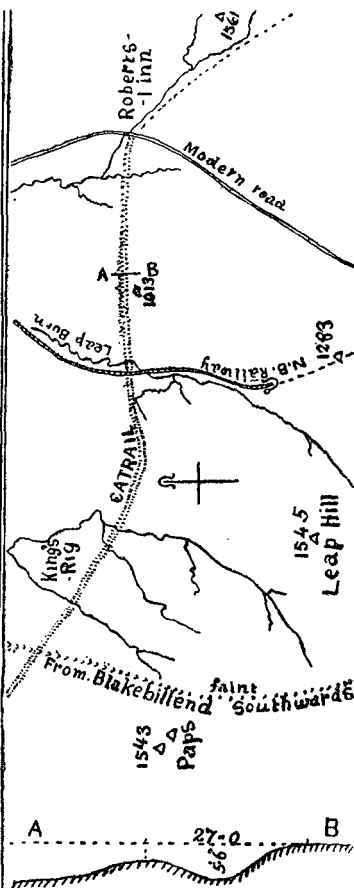


Fig. 11.



SECTIONS ON LINE OF CATRAIL  
 & SIMILAR WORKS · BETWEEN  
 OLD NORTHHOUSE & KINGS-RIG.



PLAN & SECTION LINE OF  
 CATRAIL. KINGS-RIG TO  
 ROBERTS-LINN

Fig. 12.

in the colour of the crop ; and the shepherd told me that, when cutting the hay, they find a rig running all along the lower side of the dark line. This runs towards Peelbrae-foot.

We are now where Gordon states that the Catrail passes by the Dod Burn, and is very visible ; and on the opposite side of the burn from the recently-built shepherd's house, there are the trench and mound of a very considerable line of Catrail, which, passing up Pyot Syke, runs straight to the entrance of a fort on the slope of Penchrise Pen. On the way, it intersects almost at right angles another line which comes over the ridge between Penchrise Pen and White Hill, and which, crossing Penchrise Burn to the Pike, and then bending, rises upwards in an easterly direction to the ridge between Pike Hill and Burnt Craigs, where it dies out. About two-thirds up the ascent it sends out a branch, which runs southwards towards the summit of Pike or Carriage Hill, as Gordon names it. But neither of these lines described since passing Peelburn-foot is the one described by Gordon and others, which comes straight over the Pike below Peelbrae Hope, and runs on to the moor there.

From that point, most writers carry it over Whitehill Brae, the work on which is very apparent from this spot below Peelbrae Hope, and has been a snare to investigators, leading them away in that direction. From the first I was dubious about the trench on Whitehill Brae being part of any continuous line ; and after several visits, found the true line continuing across the moss from Peelbrae Hope to Barry Syke. It is quite obliterated or grown up for about 200 yards, but then reappears running into the side of Barry Syke, here showing as good a section as occurs anywhere on the whole line. (Section E, F.)

The crossing of Dod Burn is at a spot which the Ordnance Surveyors have marked *ford*. The line is seen to divide into two at the ford. I ask attention to this as of interest, and giving a connecting link with other works in existence, to which reference will be made afterwards. On the side of Dod Burn, after crossing, the connection with the line we followed past the fort on the Allan is very faint, but is still traceable as a rushy line. The trench and mound crossing Whitehill Brae, immediately behind the fine fort on the brow of the hill, cannot fairly

be made out as being so long as it is shown on the Ordnance maps, but is only across the summit of the ridge. The two shallow trenches showing on the side towards the west have been formed by the water collecting in the trench above, and on the side towards Pyot Syke there is no trace whatever after the steep part of the descent is reached. It clearly, in my opinion, belongs to a class of work of which several examples occur, drawn across the ridge to command or prevent passage. There are similar works on Cocklaw and above Calroust Castles in Bowmount, and the Wallace Trench on Brownrig is also of the same class. From Peelbrae Hope, the line of Catrail mounts directly up the Pike Hill, showing here a mound on both sides, so long as the natural fall of the surface remains about equal. But over the summit the trench is considerably smaller, and the mound mostly on one side. The track is plain downwards, almost to the bottom of the slope, but in the meadow between the hill and Langside Burn it disappears. After the burn is crossed the Catrail reappears wide and strong, and a short way forward is joined by a branch crossing the burn a little lower down, the connection of which on the other side cannot be certainly traced.<sup>1</sup> The Catrail now runs straight along under the Paps, crossing several ridges, also crossing a line of work similar to itself, to which after-reference will be made. At the King's Rig it bends a little, and takes a more northerly direction, crossing the North British Railway line and the burn beyond, and running straight for Robert's Linn, in what would be a straight line between that ravine and the centre of the Paps Hill. It is here easy to follow, and for most part has the mound on the lower side stronger than is usual, but on the last ridge crossed we see an instance of the facility with which a hollow becomes filled up. Extra moisture has caused in places such a growth, that in place of a trench, there is a considerable mound or rig. At Robert's Linn the Catrail does not run into the ravine, but has gone up the south bank. After

<sup>1</sup> There are indications on the Pike of sites of dwellings on small platforms. Amongst these there are indications of a line of Catrail connected with that crossing between the Pike and Burnt Crag, which curves round to the side of the Pike next Langside Burn, and seems to turn downwards almost opposite the branch here referred to, but its track has become a watercourse, and so the Catrail characteristics are lost.

the Jedburgh and Liddesdale road is passed, however, no trace can be found. Extensive quarrying operations have at some time been carried on just above here. But higher up, a bleak and exposed region is crossed, where no trace of Catrail is to be seen. The next appearance I have seen is in the side of a small burn about a mile above Cliffhope. It is but a slight terrace, but is on the right line. But close to Cliffhope it again appears well formed, though of smaller size, winding down to the burn-side (fig. 13).

An interesting reference to this part above Cliffhope occurs in a charter, of date 1304. It is there referred to as the Fosse of the Gallowegians. From Cliffhope downwards, the line is lost. Probably it is obliterated by the line of cart-track down to Abbey. Here, where several heaps and cairns are passed, Gordon states that he saw the Catrail of its ordinary width—26 feet. I have not seen this. Probably it has been obliterated since his day. I have the idea that

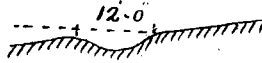


Fig. 13. Descending behind Cliffhope.

Gordon is always a faithful observer. But on the other side of the Jedburgh road, and opposite the line of the glen descending from Cliffhope, the Catrail reappears, climbing up to the ridge between Dawston and Caderon Burns. Here, though narrow as at Cliffhope, it is distinct. On the rounded top of the ridge, the ground is marshy and the growth rank. Any trace of Catrail is therefore faint and uncertain, till the Caderon Burn is passed. Here, on the south side of the railway, and close to the public road, the line shows wide, but shallow; but presently it bends, and recrossing the railway, runs towards Wormerscleuch. Where it crosses that cleuch a strong section is shown, but only for a few yards. On the opposite side the Catrail can be seen rising on to the Wheelrig, and running as if to join a line of similar work which here comes down the rig, nearly parallel with the ancient road known as the Wheel Causeway. Most writers state that the Catrail terminates on Peel Fell, which would take it across the Peel

Burn, higher up than Bagraw Ford, and I sought carefully the slope of Peel Fell on that side, but could see nothing of its line there. I do not think that it went further than to join into the line of similar work coming down the Wheelrig, crossing Peel Burn at Bagraw Ford, and running through the moorland towards Deadwater Heugh, the natural pass into the district south of the Cheviot range. I followed the line of what I believe to be a British tract for about a mile from Bagraw Ford, till it was lost amid cultivated enclosures. It is a work with a mound on both sides here. Curiously, Gordon came to the same conclusion as I did before having seen his work. He states: "Beyond this (Wormerscleuch) something like it appears visible, till it almost joins a wall formerly made by the family of Northumberland as a boundary between England and Scotland." Gordon here repeats what was in his day the common belief as to the Black Dyke, which, from the higher part of the county of Durham, comes right across Northumberland, passing the South Tyne at Bardon Mill and the Wall at Sewingshiels, and so on to Deadwater, as described by M'Lachlan in his survey, and by Professor Veitch in one of his essays, a trench with a mound on one side, and as we now find it here on the moor, a hollow about 18 feet wide, with a mound on each side about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 feet high. We have some reason to conclude that it is a work of the same general character as the Catrail itself; and the apparent junction here makes a strong case for reconsidering the theory of its formation formerly held.

We now go back to the ridges under the Paps, where I noted the crossing of a work of similar character to the Catrail. It has come by a zigzag line from a large fort at Blakebillend. It does not begin there. One line is seen to come across Slitrig Water, and at one of the gates of the fort passes into the outer trench, which it passes along for some distance, and then running out, is presently joined by another line, which having approached the fort from the lower Slitrig valley, enters the outer trench, and, similarly to the other, came so far round, and then ran on to the point of junction. Besides these, this camp sends a smaller line of work of the same type down to a small burn near. Apparently this was the source of their water-supply. The line formed by the



junction of the two, passing the fort, runs as indicated on the map, and crossing the Catrail, runs straight up to and over the ridge between the Paps and Leap Steel. It then descends towards Hermitage Water, and turning just before that is reached, crosses very plainly the foot of the Nine-stone-rig just behind Millburn-holm. It then runs down to and crosses the Liddle, and mounts up the ridge on the east side of that river, and passes immediately below the British fort on Caerby Hill, where it is very plainly marked (fig. 14). Further than this I have not



Fig. 14. Line passing fort on Caerby,  
Liddesdale.

seen it, but I was informed by a farmer in Newcastleton that, along with the late Mr Robert Michie, of Hawick, he once traced it all the way from Bewcastle.

It is impossible, I think, to come to a just conclusion as to the purpose of the Catrail without considering works of a similar kind occurring in the same district. We saw the Catrail circling round the forts at Torwoodlee and the upper fort at Rink. I now draw your attention to a similar work circling round the fine series of forts at Chapel Hill (fig. 15), above the junction of the Borthwick

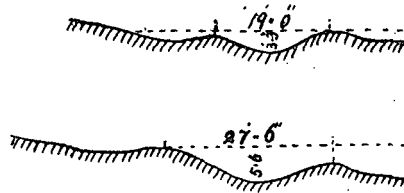


Fig. 15. At Chapel-Hill N.E. and N. of Fort.

and Teviot Waters, and also point out that there are indications that this line continued in the direction of the Catrail itself. We saw the Catrail running through the outer trench of a fort, as at the large fort on Allan Water, at Broadlee Fort, at the lower Rink Fort, and, I believe, also at the Kilknowe Fort. We have already seen

tracks of the Catrail type running into the outer trenches of the fort on Blakebillend. But there are instances of the same thing in other places. At Bonchester Hill, a line similar to the Catrail runs through the outer trench of the double fort on the lower platform. This is on the side next to the large fort on the summit of the hill, and it can be traced passing down the hill on both sides. There is in Eskdale a continuous line of trench and mound locally known as the Deil's Jingle (fig. 16). It crosses the White Esk at the King's Pool, above the junction with the Black Esk. The work mounts up to and runs along the summit of the Bank-head, where, opposite Castle O'er, there is a large British fort of a circular form, with one very strong wall and ditch. The Deil's Jingle enters this ditch, and running round about one-third of the circuit, passes out, and continues northward mile after mile. In company with Mr Bell of Castle O'er, a Fellow of this Society, I followed the line as far north as Coplaw Gair. And since that, Mr

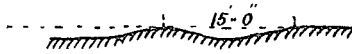
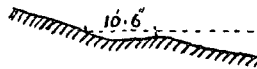


Fig. 16. Deil's Jingle on Shiel Hill



and Coplaw Gair.

Bell has ascertained its course as far as Harewood-head, where it is within measurable distance of the work we style the Catrail. I trust yet to see an actual junction proved. On the Hill of Castle O'er there is quite a network of works of similar type. Two lines go up to the gateways of the great fort there, and by crossing the Esk, two, if not three lines join into the Deil's Jingle on the other side. This connection with Castle O'er, as well as the evident connection with the fort on Bank-head, sufficiently indicates who were the makers of the Deil's Jingle. I also point out the similarity in character between the Catrail and the large series of works behind Abbotsford, and between it and the Eildons, and the important line which, by Holydean Moor, passes on into Ale Water. I know of nothing in the line of the Catrail so im-

portant as this latter. There is also the Deil's Dyke in Galloway, and Herriot's Dyke in Berwickshire. In that county there are also at least two Black Dykes, and other lines above Spottiswoode and Westruther, and on Bunclie Edge, to the latter of which the term Danish Camps is applied. Besides all these, there are in the heads of Bowmont and Kale miles of exactly similar works, circling round and sometimes



Fig. 17. Branch line, entering gate of fort at Harehope, near Akeld.

entering forts. At Harehope Fort, near Akeld (fig. 17), and at Greave's Ash, in Breamish Water (fig. 18), fine examples are seen to

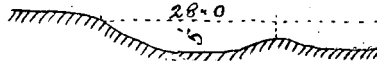


Fig. 18. Line from main gate, Greave's Ash, to ford on Linhope Burn.

enter the main gate of the forts. At the fort on Lanton Hill, near Jedburgh, and at Langcroft and the Harefaulds, in Lauderdale; this also occurs. Unmistakably, in these instances they were used as roadways. We see from all the surface sections that the form of the Catrail is a hollow with sides raised. Observation has shown that when entire, the bed of the hollow was flatter than it shows now on the surface. At two points, I satisfied myself that the trench had been roughly paved with land-gathered boulders, resting on each other sideways. I have also come to conclude that the sides were built like a wall, wherever material was available. On Park House Hill the foundations can still be seen of what has been a side wall. This occurs not on the side where the mound is, but on the other, where the ground surface is cut into, showing that the sides were upright, so as to leave the bottom as wide as possible. It has been the custom to speak of the Catrail as one line running from Torwoodlee to Peel Fell. I think investigation proves that this theory has been reached

by stringing together parts of several lines which ran between centres of population, or between populous districts and the summer grazings. It is obvious that in several districts there are more than one line, and that these run in various directions. We must also conclude that the Catrail was formed and used by the men who built the forts and strong enclosures which we term 'ancient British,' and I think we are shut up to conclude that they were lines of communication or roads—not purely military works made for warlike purposes, but the product of peaceful times, when intercourse was sought for rather than avoided.

It was the opinion of M'Lachlan, who made the survey of Hadrian's Wall, that the Black Dyke was an older formation than that Roman work. The presumption is strong that the Black Dyke and the Catrail were similar works. I am convinced that they were connected, if the one was not a continuation of the other. On the line of Roman road now generally known as Watling Street, about a mile to the south of St Boswell's Green, the Roman way cuts a line of track of the same type as the Catrail. Also, where the same road is approaching to the station at Newstead, in crossing the Bogle Burn, it cuts against a mysterious line of double trench and mound, for which no reason could be found, till observation and comparison convinced me that it was part of an older British road.

There are similar double-trench arrangements found at various places where burns are to be forded. These occur at two points in the Jedburgh district.<sup>1</sup> Once it occurs on a line in Bowmont Water, and we saw that at the crossing of Dod Burn the Catrail opened into two trenches. Also, in the beginning of this paper the same peculiarity was noted in the remains near New Buckholm and at Mossielee. Why these double trenches were made I do not know, but their occurrence at the Bogle Burn and their line being cut by that of the Roman road gives us a presumption that these trenches were in existence previous to the Roman occupation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Swinnie Moor and at Howden Burn, near Wildcatgate.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Walter Scott believed that the line of ancient road between his own estate and Kippielaw was Roman, because Roman vessels had been found in it; but that only proved that the road was in existence at the time of the occupation.

When first I began this investigation, I did it with an open mind. My greatest difficulty was in the trying to find the track as others had described it, and running on the exact line they indicated. I found that it cannot be made out to be a work drawn specially as a defence, for it faces in no particular direction. The theory of a war-fence must therefore be dropped. I trust that our findings are not disappointing, or that the Catrail is made to be a work of no interest, because it is found to be exactly like many other works throughout the country. I trust lines for future investigation have been laid down, and that the result will be greater interest in the story of the races who preceded us, and who had clearly attained to civilisation of a kind, for the maker of a road is not an utter barbarian; and who, if they have not left their history written in black letter, have left us a writing on the green hill-sides quite as plain, and, in the end, as sure. For, after all, the writer of early history turns out frequently to be mistaken.