II.

ANTIQUARIAN NOTES ON VARIOUS SITES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF EDINBURGH. By FRED. R. COLES, Assistant-Keeper of the Museum.

I. The Howlets' House, Loganlee.—In the very heart of the Pentland Hills, midway between the north and south ends of Loganlee reservoir, and on its west shore, a little moorland burn runs down between heathery braes. On its right bank, perched upon a conspicuous hillock, there remain the walls of a building whose curious name, "The Howlets' House," first attracted my notice. On examining the site, measuring and noting the stonework, and also ascertaining from local information that some strange stories were associated with it, it seemed desirable to record the results of my investigation, the more so because the conclusions to which it has led are much at variance with the popular beliefs regarding the place.

(*a*) *Traditions respecting the building.*—These may be dismissed in a very few lines. One is to the effect that it was erected by King James as a kennel for his hounds. Another is, that it was the dwelling of an old woman notorious for witchcraft, and became known throughout the district, then populated by a simple-minded peasantry, as Madgie's Castle. Neither of these accounts, however, offers an explanation of the name of "The Howlets' House," nor, in a little work dealing with the geology of the Pentlands, by Mr C. Maclaren (1866), is any reference made to this special stream, or to the ruined walls on its bank, though matters as far beyond the scope of the author's subject are occasionally referred to in footnotes.[1]

[1] Still another story is to the effect that this was the site known as Mause's dwelling in Ramsay's poem (Jackson's *Account of the Parish of Penicuik*, p. 347). For the description of St Clair's and the Bruce's deer hunt, see *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

(*b*) *Former descriptions.*—The only writers who seem to have noticed "The Howlets' House" are Mr J. J. Wilson, late of the Clydesdale Bank at Penicuik, and Mr Andrew Kerr, F.S.A. Scot., architect. Mr Wilson, in a small volume printed for private circulation in 1891, and entitled *The Annals of Penicuik*, has a brief reference to the site, and quotes the description given by Mr Kerr to the effect that the building had really been a small oratory or cell, the east window of which he then (1877) saw still *in situ*, along with the complete circular arched roof of the apartment, and a stone basin built into the wall.[1] This brief notice is eked out by a very small sketch plan; and it is much to be regretted that Mr Kerr did not supply a drawing of the east gable and window, and state, beyond doubt, whether it stood in the most easterly of the five transverse walls traceable here even now (E F on plan subjoined), or in the eastern wall of the oblong building, B.

(*c*) *Remains, as at present visible.*—In my ground plan (fig. 1) I have lettered the four contiguous buildings A B C D, the over-all measurement of which is 110 feet, A and B each 26′ × 24′, C 28′ × 26′, and D 30′ × 27′. These remains are in various stages of ruin. The ridges enclosing A are so smoothed down and grass-grown that no stones are entirely visible; the two western portions, C and D, show substantial alignments of wall-courses, here and there rising about 2 feet high, and with an almost regular breadth of 3 feet. While, in the central portion B, the two side walls north and south still stand (measured to the broken edge of the arch) fully 13 feet high, and are uniformly 3 feet 6 inches thick, the two end walls are very much thinner. At the N.E. angle about 9 feet of the return wall is standing from 2 to 5 feet high. The whole suite of buildings follows the natural contour of the hillock, which is in line with the bed of the burn below, and I do not think that the central block, B, was turned off the line of the others in order to be, as Mr Kerr puts it, "exactly due E. and W.," for, as a matter of fact, it stands E.N.E. by W.S.W.

[1] See *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xiii. p. 135.

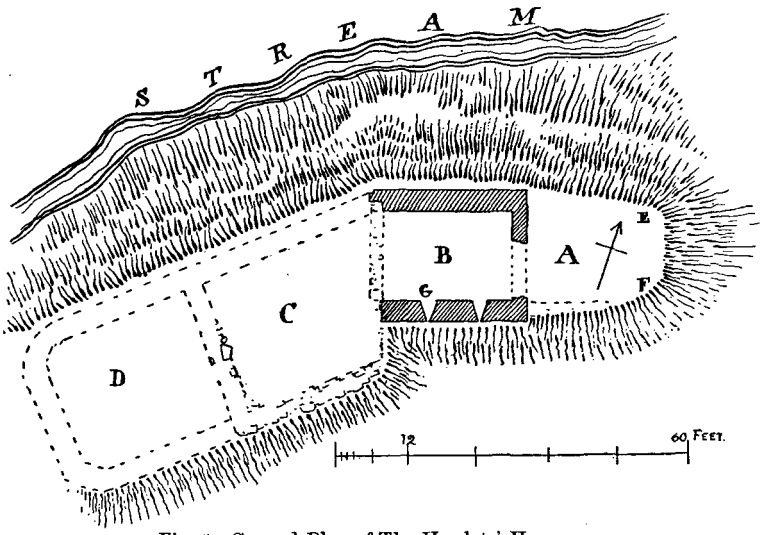

Fig. 1. Ground Plan of The Howlets' House.

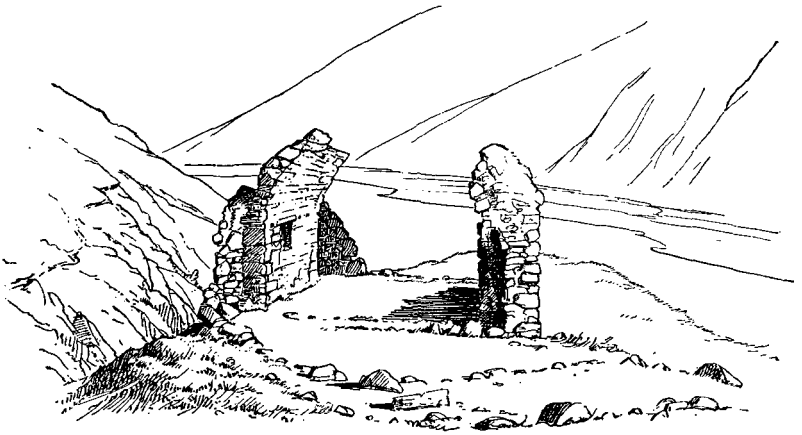

Fig. 2. View of The Howlets' House.

In fig. 2 I have shown the remains of this building as seen from the west end of the ridge, and in figs. 3 and 4 two drawings of the window (G), the only one of the three in sufficient preservation to show its very wide splay, its narrow aperture, and its nicely-chamfered outside edges. At 5 feet from the present line of the ground both walls show four square holes, as if for the fitting in of joists to carry an upper room. Now, allowing that in course of time a depth of even 3 feet of debris and earth has formed within these walls, the resultant height

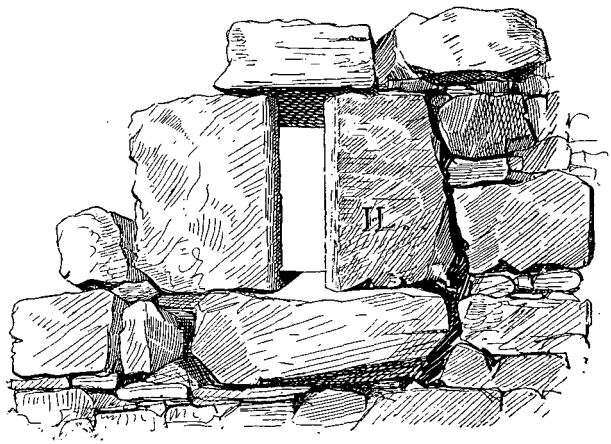

Fig. 3. Window G, Exterior.

of 8 feet from floor to spring of arch seems much too slight for the wall of even a small chapel. It is more than likely, therefore, that the east window seen by Mr Kerr was situated in the wall still further east, on a line which now looks curved, though, according to Mr Kerr's plan, evidently at right angles, and square with the north and south walls, at the time of his observations. Granting that this building, A, was really the oratory or chapel, then B naturally falls into the plan as the dwelling of the priest, and the lowness of its walls, as well as the utility

of an upper chamber, carried on joists, becomes reasonable. It is perhaps noteworthy in this connection that Walcot (*Ancient Church of Scotland*, p. 136) mentions, under the Archdeaconry of Lothian and Deanery of Linlidcu, "Pentland, Rosslyn College."

The conclusion that the site now called The Howlets' House was in all probability a chapel, and the abode of a priest, is further strengthened by a consideration of certain points—not at the outset of this enquiry

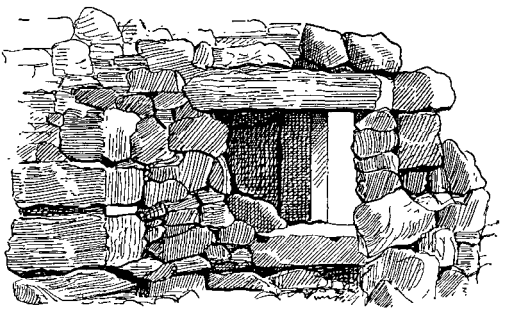

Fig. 4. Window G, Interior.

even dreamed of—connected with the relic next to be described; and that is—

II. The Font Stone on the Monks' Rig, near Carlops.—The locality near which this somewhat remarkable stone lies bears abundant evidence of its former ecclesiastical environment in its place-names. Quite close to Habbie's Howe there are the Monks' Haugh and St Robert's Croft. In a north-westerly direction, on the slopes above Carlops, are the farms of Friarton and Spittal; and from this last, keeping beside the Monks' Burn, up the long commanding hill called Monks' Rig, runs the Monks' Road, rising straight and steep to the Cap Law Hill, between Spittal Hill and Braid Law, a little beyond which it joins the old drove road down to Loganlee, past the base of the

West Kip. The Font Stone is shown and named on the Ordnance map (6-inch scale) a few feet east of the Monks' Road, close upon the 1500-foot contour-line. The track here is becoming very indistinct, and without map and compass, finding the stone would not be easy, owing to the numbers of boulders and blocks scattered about on the slope. It is a massive block of the Silurian grit here so common, and measures 3 feet by 2 feet 8 inches. It lies due north and south, and is about 10 to 15 inches above ground (see drawing, fig. 5). Its eastern edge is consider-

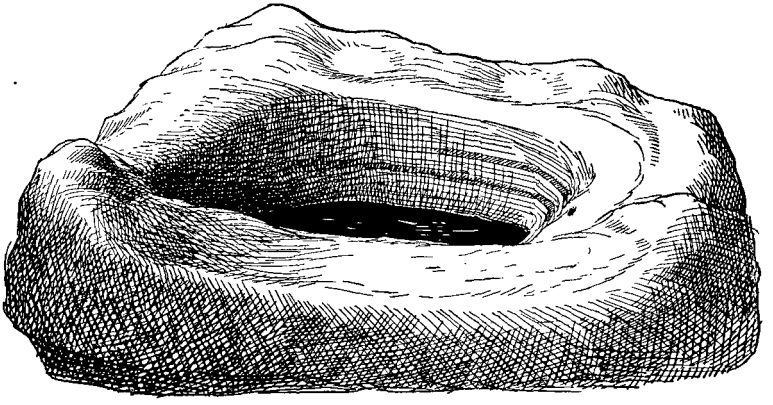

Fig. 5. "Font Stone" on Monks' Rig, Carlops.

ably wider than the opposite one; and on it are two quite distinct shallow hollows, nearly circular, some 5 inches wide, assuredly not cup-marks, but with the appearance of having been worn away either by water or the oft-repeated attrition of some hard substance.

The large oblong cavity measures 20 inches by 12, and is 9 inches deep. Its sides have been shaped out by tools in such a way that the north, the south, and the east are perpendicular, but the west is at an angle of about 45° or 50°. The inner edges of the hollow are not now sharply rectangular, but they are only so smoothed and weather-rounded

as to justify the opinion that their angles were originally quite sharp. I am thus particular in noting these details, because the conclusion to which these features lead me (taken in conjunction with the site, the direction of the Monks' Road, and the place-names adjacent) is that the stone is not a font, but may prove to have been the socket of a wayside cross, left actually *in situ* when the cross itself was removed.

To this point the evidence from the subject itself had led me, when, through the courtesy of Mr R. Cameron, a two-volume work on *The Gentle Shepherd*[1] came into my hands. In one passage, replete, as the whole seems to be, with careful personal investigation into the details of the scenery described by Ramsay, the author says: "The Monks' Rig, northward, with the font stone on its brow (and the top of the cross, formerly erected on its edge, now lying at the bottom of the hill, which likewise served as a landmark at the side of the Monks' Road), is in view, commanding all the country to the south, and still ascertaining the track which the friars followed in passing to and from Edinburgh or Queensferry" (vol. ii. p. 405). Further on (p. 472) he says, regarding this font stone: "On the one side are two excavations for a person's knees, and on the opposite rim of the trough is a socket, formerly occupied by a cross, the ornamented top of which is still lying at the bottom of the rig."

With regard to the other buildings here, formerly existing, we find in the name "St Robert's Croft" the name of a saint whose life began in France, in Champagne, in 1018, who, inducing others of like mind to adopt a life of devotion and prayer, "lived in the forest of Molesme, where they built themselves little cells made of boughs of trees, and a small oratory in honour of the Holy Trinity, in 1075, and afterwards settled in a place called Cistercium or Citeaux, an

[1] The complete title is as follows: "*The Gentle Shepherd. A Pastoral Comedy, with Illustrations of the Scenery, an Appendix, containing Memoirs of David Allan, the Scots Hogarth, besides Original and other Poems connected with the Illustrations,*" etc. Edinburgh: Printed by Abernethy & Walker, 1808. There is no author's name.

uninhabited forest, covered with woods and brambles, and watered by a little river, at five leagues distance from Dijon, in the diocese of Challons . . . . They settled there on Saint Bennet's Day, 21st March in 1098. From this Epoch is dated the origin of the Cistercian Order . . . . Upon proof of many miracles wrought at his tomb, Pope Honorius III. enrolled his name among the Saints."[1]

The Cistercian habit, according to the author above quoted, "is a white robe in the nature of a cassock, with a black scapulary and hood, and is girt with a woollen girdle." At what period the Hospital near Carlops was founded is not at present ascertainable from any records accessible to me; but the map accompanying the second of these two volumes shows that there were two distinct buildings, partly in preservation, at any rate, in the year 1770, the date of the survey from which this map of 1808 was compiled. These houses were known as the Fore and Back 'Spital.[2] "Besides being a receptacle for the sick and aged under the Monastery, the 'Spital was a Hospitium or Inn, and the Monks' Road, with its crosses,[3] accommodations, and guides for friars and other travellers in journeying from one cloister to another, still points out," etc. etc. And, again to quote: "The weary and benighted traveller is still [1808] considered as having a right to shelter at the 'Spital House, and one of the outbuildings, with some straw, is generally allotted for that purpose. . . . The Hospitium was reduced and modernised about 60 years ago [say about 1750]; but one of its offices is still covered with an arched stone roof, and has all the marks of great antiquity."

[1] Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 516.

[2] 'Foir Spittel' occurs on Pont's map of Lothian and Linlithgow, close to a stream flowing into the Esk on its west.

[3] "On the east side of Scald Law, in a dry green hollow between and the Black Hill, called the Cross Sward, is still left a large square stone with a hole in it, in which a cross was formerly fixed as a religious landmark for passengers" (vol. i. p. 227). This and other bits of description attest the accuracy with which the author of this book has studied the locality of Ramsay's poem.

III. Stone Cross-Socket, Crossall Hill, Dalmeny.—Remains under this title are marked on the O.M. at a point within a wood on the south of the road to Queensferry, about 130 yards east of the Leuchold Gate. What now is extant is the Socket Stone only, consisting of a solid block 3 feet 5 inches square and about 1 foot thick. The corners are bevelled, and in the centre is the socket, $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches square and 9 inches deep. The stone lies N.W. and S.E., and is fixed firmly into a bed of stone made of four slabs of equal length, cross-clamped at the angles (see

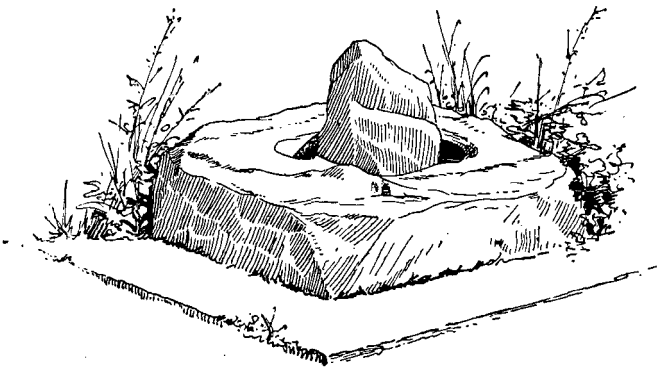

Fig. 6. Socket Stone of wayside Cross, Dalmeny.

fig. 6). In this socket there at present stands, loosely, but too heavy to lift, a small rudely-squared block of stone, but it does not seem to belong to the socket. At any rate, it could not have been part of the cross-base, as it is much too narrow.

IV. Also on the Dalmeny estate, I found, having permission to roam where I listed, the large Cairn known as Earl or Harlaw Cairn, situated in a clump of fine beech-wood, near the shore, and about a half mile N.E. of the Leuchold. The cairn is composed mostly of small stones, shows no appearance of having ever been seriously disturbed, and has the following dimensions, which were obtained with approximate accu-

racy. Level diameter N. and S. 110 feet, height on the N. side 20 feet, height on the S. side 14 or 15 feet, circumference 330 feet, if not more.

Some four hundred yards S.E. of the cairn is Castle Craig. If this, as common report has it, be the site of the "Auld Roman Camp" which Scott makes the landlord of the Queensferry Inn reproach Monkbarns with carrying off his visitors to see, one can but marvel at the power of imagination which could find anything artificial, Roman or Celtic, on this rocky summit.

V. My next field of exploration was opened up by a hint from Mr Thos. Ross, F.S.A. Scot., who several years ago had seen, on the mainland of Fife, a little west of Aberdour, a building which has up to the present date remained undescribed. The exact locality is on a low promontory called Charles' Hill, which forms the southern extremity of Barnhill Bay, about half a mile south of St Colme House, and separated from Inchcolm by the strait known as Mortimer's Deep. So far as I have been yet able to ascertain, it is only once mentioned, and that most briefly, in a paper by Mr Thomas Arnold on Inchcolm. A suggestion, however, conveyed in a passage in Dr Ross's *History of Aberdour*, supplies a clue to the probable use of a portion at least of the buildings here situated; and by collating the evidence from records with that obtained from a careful survey of the site, it may be possible to reach a conclusion fitting in not inaptly with what we already know of the Priory and Abbey of Inchcolm. The principal piece of masonry still extant goes, curiously enough, by the name of "The Monks' Cave," and the allusion to it in Arnold's "Account of St Columba's Abbey, Inchcolm" (published in 1860 in *Arch. Scot.*, vol. v.) is in the following words: "In fine weather, the visitor to Inchcolm may easily row himself across the two miles from Aberdour harbour, but if the sea is rough, the easiest way is to pull along the shore to 'the cave' about a mile to the west, from which the island is little over a mile distant. This 'cave' is a well built, vaulted chamber, erected on the extreme edge of a rocky promontory. An

examination of the ruins shows that this is only the lower storey of what may have been a tower of some height, and the round-headed door and small windows facing the sea are so well formed of ashlar work, as to

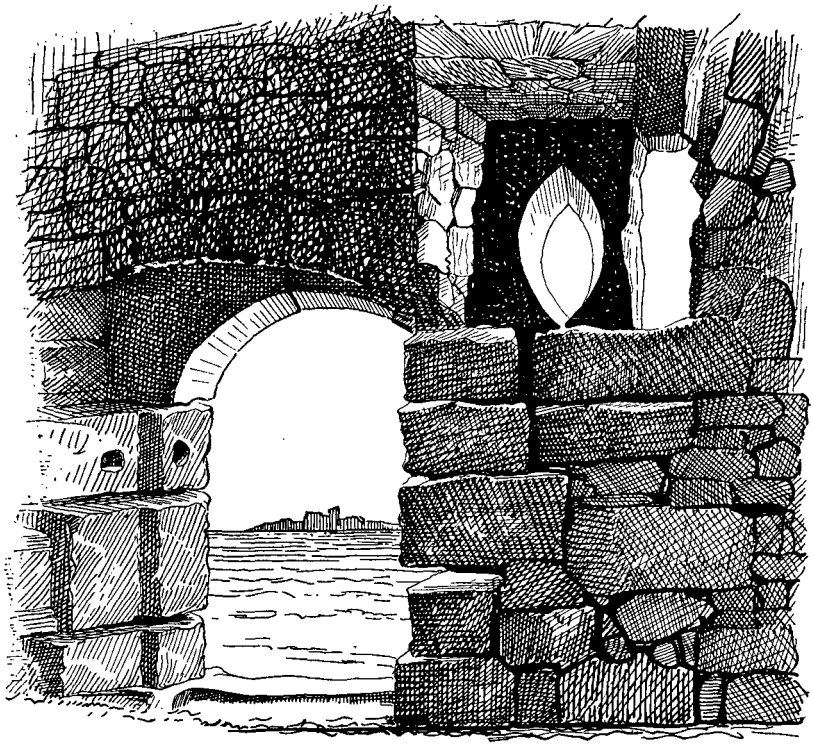

Fig. 7. Doorway and Window of the Monks' Cave.

suggest that it has been the work of the builders who were engaged on the Abbey. In all probability it was built as a ferry-house for the use of the monks in their journeys between the island and mainland."

At present only one window remains, but enough stonework on the

roof to show that a very considerable building once stood here. The plan of the interior, shown in fig. 9, measures 27 feet by 15. The floor is of earth, rising one foot higher at the back, where the masonry of walls and roof joins the solid rock, the stones composing them placed longitudinally throughout. The cavity marked F in the west wall is merely a modern makeshift for a fireplace, having no chimney or smoke-vent in connection with it. Viewed from within, the doorway and the one window, which is an oval, clean hewn out of one block, appear as seen in fig. 7.

The seaward frontage (fig. 8) is about 11 feet high, and from the doorstep a grassy ledge, only 6 feet wide, forms the margin above the rocks,

Fig. 8. Seaward Frontage, the Monks' Cave.

which fall in a succession of slight precipices, with narrow ledges intervening, for about 40 feet to the sea-level. The fine ashlar work of the doorway is conspicuous

So far, we are dealing with remains that are obvious; but further quest inland resulted in the discovery of long lines of ruined walls, which are, probably, altogether unnoticed and unknown. What these amount to I have shown in a ground plan (fig. 10), drawn necessarily to a small scale, as these wall foundations are extensive. The south-east corner, measured roughly from the north-west angle of the plan in

fig. 9, is distant from it about 33 yards, and the entire group lies much lower than 'the cave.' And the conclusion one is fairly led to concerning these relics is, that they are all that now remains of a brewery men-

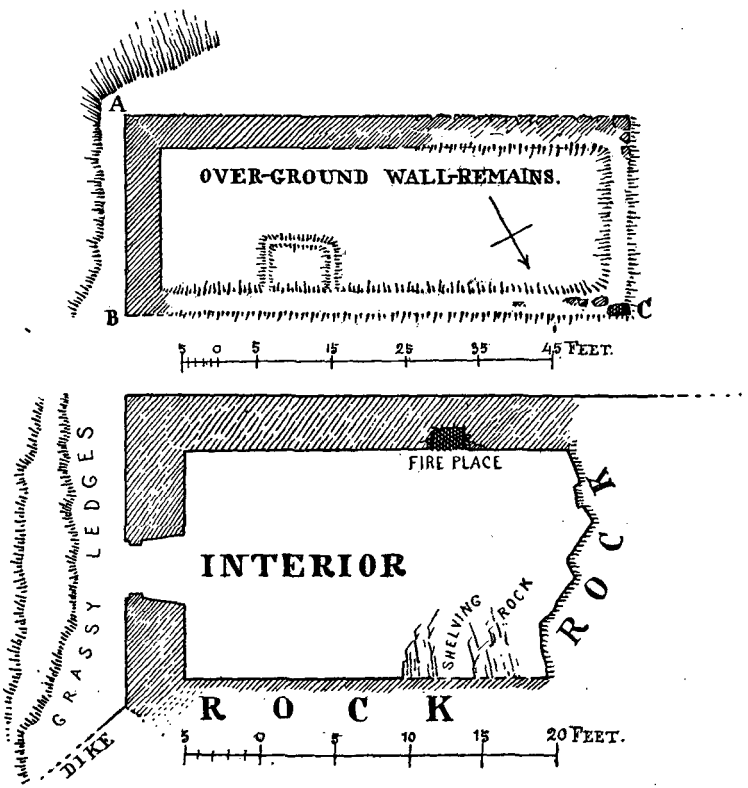

Fig. 9. Ground Plan of the Monks' Cave.

tioned in the following excerpt from the *Scotichronicon*. The passage is in chapter xxxviii. of book xv. p. 467 of the second volume of *Fordun*, ed. 1759, Edinburgh. A translation may be found in Sir J. Y. Simpson's account of the Oratory in the Island of Inchcolm (*Proc. Soc. Antiq.*

Scot., vol. ii. p. 491), and it is to this effect: "towards the winter of 1421 a boat was sent on a Sunday to bring off to the Monastery from the mainland some house provisions and barrels of beer brewed at Bernhill (in barellis cerevisiam apud Bernhill brasiatam)," etc.

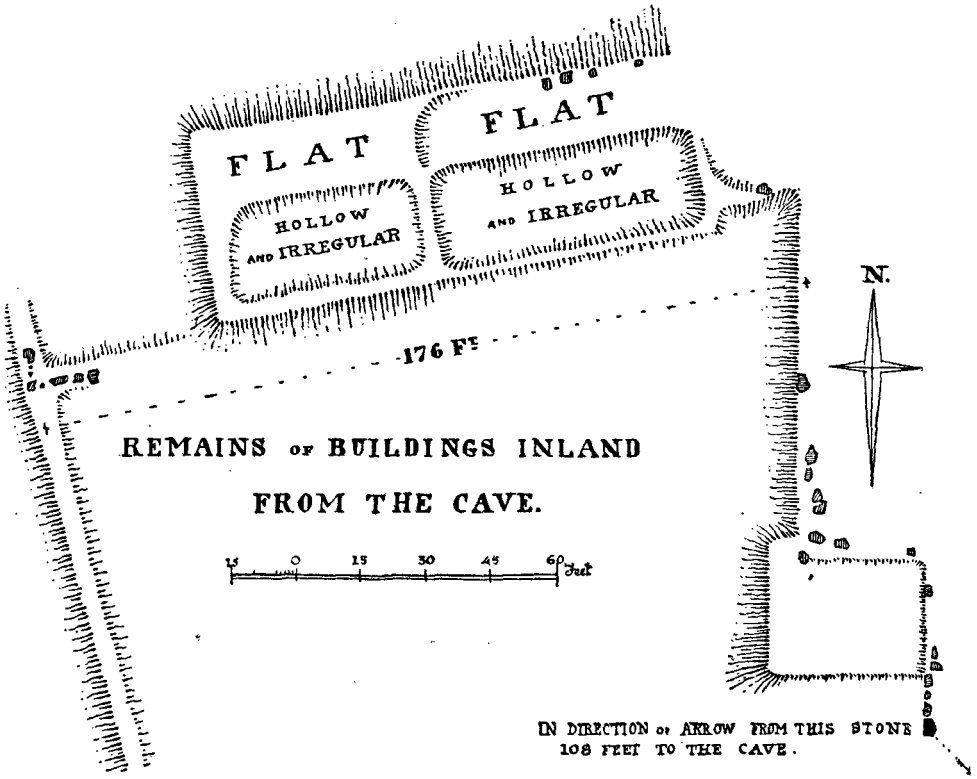

Fig. 10.

As already pointed out, the locality marked by these ruins is known as Barnhill Bay even at the present time; and both the site and the character of the masonry justify the conclusion that the Bernhill of 1421 and the Barnhill of to-day are one and the same.

On the same day I walked westwards to the picturesque old ruined Church of Dalgety. The church has been figured and fully described in the late Mr J. Russell Walker's *Pre-Reformation Churches of Fife and the Lothians.* Close to the west wall, and outside the churchyard, is a small stone shed or outhouse. It is said to have been built as a shelter for

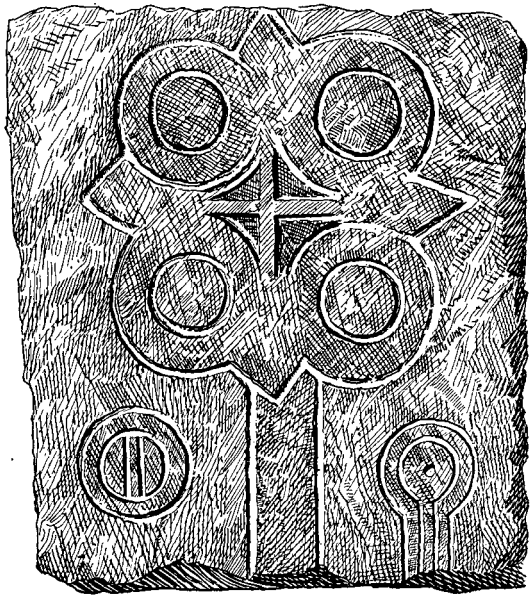

Fig. 11. Incised Slab at Dalgety Church.

watchers during the period when churchyards had to be so protected. Built into the left-hand wall of the doorway is a square block of grey sandstone, similar to a good deal of the masonry in the church itself, which bears the well-cut design shown in the annexed drawing (fig. 11). It is doubtless the upper portion of a mediæval grave-slab. In the *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*,[1] Messrs M'Gibbon and Ross

[1] Vol. ii. p. 536, fig. 930.

figure a portion of a carved slab extremely like it, described as "a tombstone containing a shield with the original three stars of the Douglas arms." This stone is in the east end of the Collegiate Church of St Bride's, at Bothwell, Lanarkshire. But the Dalgety Church stone contains a small circular carving, crossed by a straight transverse bar, which seems to be an uncommon device.

VI. Embankment Cross near Peebles.—The remarkable group of structures passing under the designation of Earthwork or Embankment

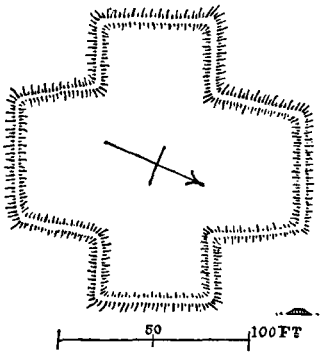

Fig. 12. Embankment Cross on White Meldon Hill.

Crosses appears to be very little known, though the example in Peeblesshire, now first brought before the notice of the Society, came under the observation of Dr Gunn and others in that district many years ago, and Dr Anderson also was aware of its existence. It was first mentioned to me by Mr Wm. Forrest, schoolmaster at Lyne; and one fine winter's day in 1897 I went to Peebles and found the cross, which I carefully measured and planned (see fig. 12). Situated on the northern slope of the White Meldon Hill, above Cringletie farm, and some miles distant from Peebles station, the cross is an earthwork of about 150 feet in length and breadth, and is a conspicuous object on the hill for a great distance. On the occasion of my visit, its 'arms' were more clearly visible than ordinarily; for

the interior space being thickly heather-grown, like the general mass of the hill, these four lines of thinly-grassed ridges bore the slight fall of snow of the previous night, and therefore stood out as a white cross on a dark ground. The earth being also frozen very hard, some difficulty was experienced in probing it, in order to ascertain the composition of the ridges; but, so far as was practicable, any part thus tapped appeared to be purely of soil. The ridges are nowhere very high—certainly at the most not over 2 feet 3 inches on the inner side; their tops are more or less rounded, except at one point where a few feet have been better preserved, and yield a quite flat summit 4 feet wide, and an outward slope of 8 feet. The average over-all width of all the other ridges is 9 feet, but parts are very irregular. This almost square-armed cross is raised on the slope of the hill, here falling at an angle of 17°; and its bearing is, unlike most of the other crosses presently to be mentioned, N.E. and S.W. by N.W. and S.E. It is about 1100 feet above sea-level, and no great distance from the summit of White Meldon, upon which are the remains of a stone fort. It is strange that the 6-inch Ordnance map does not mark the cross in any way, though the name 'Site of Fort' is printed at its proper position. The space included within the arms of the cross, more especially towards the middle is so rough and purely natural as to preclude the possibility of even seeing diagonally across it; my plan, therefore, lacks the value of such check-lines.

Following up the enquiry into the question whether in other parts of the country more crosses of this type were to be found, chance led me to a description, accompanied by a measured drawing, of one having many features in common with the Meldon Hill Cross, in the volume of the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October 1853, p. 387. This Cross (shown in fig. 13) is represented as four-armed, with one arm longer than the others, 204 feet long over all by 126 feet wide, and with ridges 4 feet high and 15 feet wide at the base; its composition entirely of earth, and the terminals of three arms barred by a short mound at right angles. The site is in St Mar-

garet's Park, Herefordshire.[1] Some weeks later, in the October issue of *Pearson's Magazine* for 1897, I lighted on an illustrated article on "Turf Monuments," the bulk of which was devoted to an account of the various white horses, stags, etc. carved in outline on hillsides in Great Britain; but one photograph showed, apparently at a great

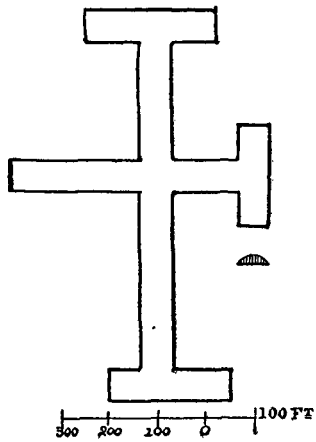

Fig. 13. St Margaret's Park, Herefordshire.

distance above a wooded riverside, an equal-armed cross, described by the writer as "made of ditch and dike, 15 yards wide each way from the centre." The locality is Plumpton, near Wilmington, in the South Downs. From farther information sent me by the writer, I learn that this cross is carved out of a steep hill-slope in a V-shaped ditch, having

[1] In the *Archæological Journal*, vol. xi. p. 55, it is stated, with regard to this cross, that "with permission of the proprietor, excavations had been made in that singular embankment at three different places, but without making any discovery. . . . Not far distant may be noticed several basins or cavities of considerable size (supposed to have been possibly the sites of ancient habitations), and in one of these hollows some ancient pottery had been found, which, it is hoped, may be obtained for examination, as this might supply a clue to the probable date of these marks." In the twenty-third volume of the same *Journal* [1866], on p. 268, is a diagram of the St Margaret's Park Cross.

no real mound or ridge, that its arms point practically to the cardinal points, that the depth of the ditches varies much, the south one, which is the deepest, being 2′ 6″ deep, that there is not a trace of stonework in them, and that there are no vestiges of sites of occupation, forts or camps, nearer than some Roman encampments two miles distant. My correspondent adds:—"Undoubtedly, it was on the plain just above the situation of this cross that the Battle of Lewes was fought, and the story with which I am most familiar is that the cross was cut to indicate the burial-place of some of the slain, and it is rather a notable fact that it looks directly upon the parish church below, the site of which was occupied, if I remember rightly, by some ecclesiastical building in the days when the Doomsday Book was prepared."

In 1852 a curt notice appeared in the third volume (1852) of the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, p 223, of yet another earthwork cross: "On a mountain near Fort Talbot there is a raised earthwork of considerable size (each arm being seventy feet) in the form of a cross.—Matthew Moggridge." This Welsh mountain, we learn from the late Mr W. H. Tregellas' communication to the *Arch. Journal* in 1866 on "Cæsar's Camp, Wimbeldon," is at Margam. And the same writer notices and gives drawings of a Cruciform Barrow at Banwell, Somerset, one representation being from Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*, the other from Seyer's *Memoirs of Bristol.*

The next step in the investigation was an important one; my being referred by Dr Anderson to a paper in the *Proceedings* of the Society of Antiquaries of London, by Mr J. R. Mortimer, dated January 1897. In this article Mr Mortimer brings together, under the heading of "Embankment Crosses," two groups of what I should prefer to call "Earthwork Crosses"; because in the one group the cross is formed merely by a ditch or trench, while in the other it is formed of a definite and measurable earthen ridge, whether accompanied by a trench or not. Therefore, the one should be called Trench Crosses, and the other Embankment or Ridge Crosses. Of this first group, Mr Mortimer describes seven, most of them found on examination to be, more or less, full of

soil, rock, sherds, bones of animals, and corroded bits of iron. Those which he examined were on heights called Moot Hill, Gallow Hill, Hanging Hill, in the neighbourhood of Fimber and Sledmere. To this group falls to be added the Trench Cross above described at Wilmington on the South Downs.

Of Embankment Crosses, Mr Mortimer has seen, drawn, and measured nine, all within a 15-mile radius of Driffield, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and all planned according to the cardinal points. They vary in size from that on the Old Bield, 300 feet N. and S. by 270 feet E. and W., the ridges being about 30 feet wide, to one situated S.E. of Driffield Church, which measures only 48 feet either way, with ridges about 6 feet wide and 1 foot high. Mr Mortimer noticed "traces of old settlements on small plots of dry ground which stand 2 to 4 feet high above the swampy ground in Killeythorpe Hogwalk," *i.e.*, near to two of the crosses he describes. Some of these earthworks have "low, ring-shaped banks" as a part of the structure. Near another is a field called "Steenhowe"; this Mr Mortimer takes as an indication that a mound [of stones] once existed there. In Yorkshire, he notes that the country people locally call them "bields," and they are held to be cattle-shelters. Canon Atkinson suggests that they were boundary-marks before the parishes were enclosed. But to whatever view we may incline, we must note one essential point of difference between any one or all of these crosses south of the Tweed and the Embankment Cross on White Meldon. The former consist, to use Mr Mortimer's own words, "of two ridges of earth and stones crossing each other at right angles, generally near their centres" (see fig. 14). But the White Meldon Cross is one continuous ridge, forming the outline of a broad and nearly equal-armed cross.

While working at this subject, my attention was directed by Dr Anderson to a passage in Black's novel of *Kilmeny*, where the following words occur: "I joyously went, until I issued upon the summit of the hill upon the steep side of which is cut the great White Cross that can be seen all the way from Oxford." Though this cross is not of the exact type of the others at present noticed, a few brief notes on it may

not come amiss. In Murray's Guide (Berks, Bucks, and Oxfordshire), p. 112, I find it stated that "the most remarkable early memorial [in Bucks] is the White Leaf Cross cut in the hill above Princes Risborough, of which the perpendicular part is 100 feet high, the transverse 70 feet long, supported on a triangle. There is a similar but smaller cross at Bledlow." Examining next the 6-inch Ordnance maps, I find, in the Mid or Aylesbury Division of the county (sheet xxxvii.), that White Leaf is

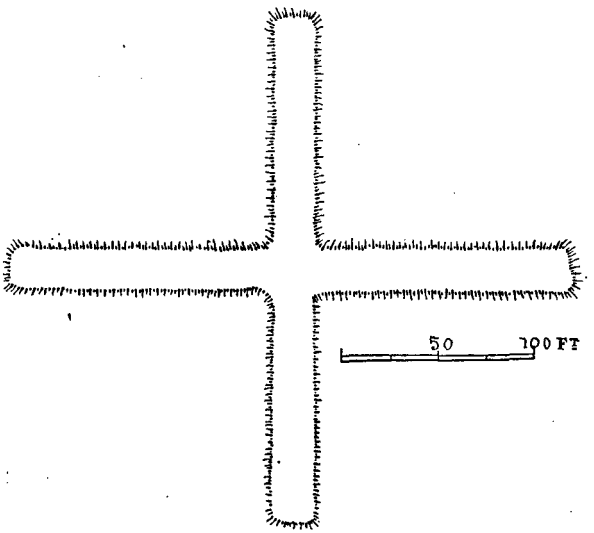

Fig. 14. Type of Yorkshire Earthwork Crosses.

the name of an estate, and that Whiteleaf Hill, about 700 feet above sea-level, is distant from Monks Risborough school half a mile, and that there are two barrows on it, one quite close to the cross, a little S.E. of it. The cross is drawn as if equal-armed and 100 feet wide, set due N. and S. No triangular base is shown. Remains of St Dunstan's Monastery may be seen at Monks Risborough. The Bledlow Cross, about three miles S.W. of White Leaf Cross, is on the summit of Wain Hill,

also 700 feet above sea-level, and very nearly one mile distant from the post-office at Bledlow. It is not set quite N. and S., but inclining to N.N.W. There are barrows on this hill also.

Through a correspondent, I next received the information that a paper upon the White Leaf Cross was communicated to the *Buckinghamshire Archæological Society's Records* (vol. viii., 1897) by Mr E. T. Payne, whose opinion is that the cross on White Leaf is comparatively of recent date, there being no historic mention of it prior to 1742. The conclusion Mr Payne comes to is, that it was "a military beacon used in the Civil War (1642–44), and that its purpose was to mark the *White Cliff Cross* route from the vale to the headquarters of the Bucks Lieutenants at Amersham. Probably it formed part of Hampden's general scheme of defence for the Chiltern Hills."

With these views it seems difficult to agree. The want of documentary evidence is not of great moment. Were it so, half the motes and forts, *e.g.* throughout Scotland, might at once be set down as quite recent; and if White Leaf or White Cliff Cross be designed for military purposes of the nature suggested, what was the use of cutting out another within so short a distance as Bledlow? The very name, White Cliff, if that be the correct one, suggests the possibility at least of the estate having been named from the cross.

A much more interesting relic, undoubtedly an Embankment Cross, though a small specimen, may be seen near Sanquhar, in Dumfriesshire.

Having first heard a rumour of its existence from Mr J. H. Cunningham, I was supplied through him with a sufficiently detailed description made by Dr J. H. Dunlop, who sent measurements from which the annexed drawing has been made (fig. 15). This cross measures over all 57 feet by 56, the longer axis lying N.W. and S.E. The arms do not intersect quite at their centres; in this feature, therefore, this cross is unlike the majority, and rather resembles the Herefordshire example. The breadth of its embankment is 11 feet throughout; and it appears to be made only of earth, a very few small stones occurring incidentally. It is nowhere more than 18 inches above the ground.

About 43 yards in a northerly direction are three or four "Tumuli," this term evidently being used by Dr Dunlop in its most literal sense of 'heaps,' since he goes on to say,—"which I cannot account for, unless perhaps it may be the remains of a building some feet below the surface." Again, S.W. of the cross, is a round "Stell" or sheep-shelter, built of more or less water-worn stones taken from the bed of the Beer or Bîr Burn, which flows close at hand below the eminence on which the cross is set. The fairly regular contours of the cross, taken in conjunction

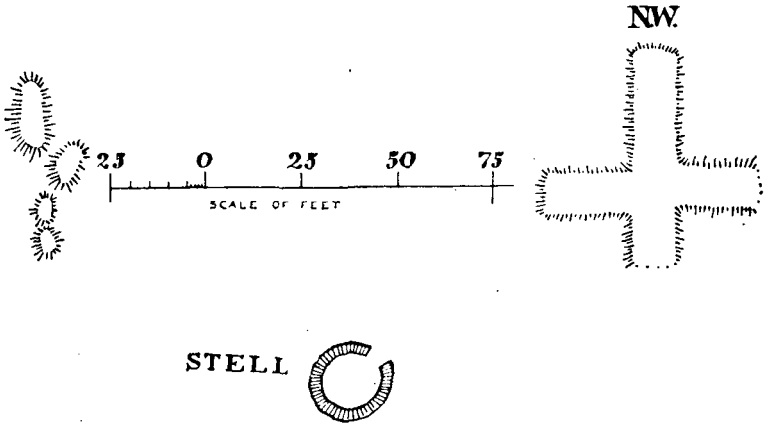

Fig. 15.

with this fact, lead to the conclusion that when the 'stell' was built, reverence for the earthwork cross saved its being quarried for any stones it may have possessed. The extremities of the two arms shown in dotted lines indicate points where there has been disturbance, so that it is quite likely we do not now see the original form and size of the structure.

That the site of this cross, whatever its actual significance may be, teems with ancient ecclesiastical associations, the following place-names, with which it is closely connected, are pretty strong evidence. The Mennock (*Manach* = Monk) flows past the southern base of the hill; the corner of the road, as Mr Dunlop points out, "which the traveller turns

ere he comes in sight of this table-ground, appears also to refer to a place of worship in the neighbourhood: the 'Starn Capel Nuick' may be read 'The Corner of the Chapel on the Height.'" Pangrains is the traditional name of one of the early churches in the district (still applied to the hill above the cross), of which Pan-Bride[1] was the other. The higher hill on the N.W. of the cross is named Auchentaggart or Priest's-field. Simpson, in his *History of Sanquhar*, gives a full description of the Cross Kirk of Mennock; and Brown,[2] in his much more modern work, also refers to the traditions respecting it. The actual site of this interesting relic is on a plateau near the base of Auchengruith Craig, 700 feet above sea-level, on the north bank of the Mennock, east of the Beer Burn, distant by road from Wanlock Head 3 miles.

As a warning not to be lightly discarded, I may here record the remarkable name of Binram's Cross, which is printed on one of the Ordnance map 6-inch sheets of Yarrow parish, close to a square equal-armed cross, highly suggestive of the type of antiquities under notice. It is "about 400 yards to the eastward of St Mary's Loch," and is "a small mound called Binram's Cross or Corse, with a few stones on the top, probably, as tradition represents, the burial-place of some necromantic priest, from decayed wood and ashes being found on its being opened." In the Gazetteer, the 'necromantic priest' is defined as Mess John, the prototype of the sorcerer whose strange deeds are sung by Hogg; and from the Ordnance Department I learned, that the suggestive equal-armed cross is nothing more than the surveyor's symbol for any object of antiquity, not otherwise distinctively drawn on the map.

[1] Chalmers, in his third volume of *Caledonia*, p. 173, states, that up to the sixteenth century this name was Kil-Bride, and that after changing into Pan-Bride in a charter of 1507, it was finally changed to Kirk-Bride.

[2] James Brown, *History of Sanquhar*, 1891, p. 35.