

XIII.

THE DEIL'S DYKE IN GALLOWAY. BY A. GRAHAM, M.A., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.

I. INTRODUCTORY.

The conception of a great linear work, extending across south-western Scotland from Loch Ryan to the Solway coast near Annan, seems to have originated with the Galloway antiquary Joseph Train. Chalmers, in publishing what appears to be the earliest mention of the Deil's Dyke, in 1824,¹ acknowledges his indebtedness for "a particular account of the remains" of the work to Train and others "who traced it, and examined the people, who have long resided, in the country, through which it passes"; while the fullest description of it, which was published in 1841,² is given in the form of a report by Train himself.³ The silence of *The Statistical*

¹ *Caledonia*, vol. iii. (1824), p. 237, note 1.

² Mackenzie, *The History of Galloway*, vol. i., Appendix, Note B.

³ He states here that his "attention was for several years occasionally occupied in tracing the vast rampart called 'The Deil's Dyke' through Galloway and Nithsdale."

Account of Scotland (1791-9) ¹ suggests that no idea of a work extending from sea to sea had been broached in the eighteenth century, and the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (1845) ² again falls back on Train, reproducing his statement as it stands in Mackenzie's Appendix. The Ordnance Survey records numerous lengths of the Dyke, and whether its surveyors, who were in the field between 1846 and 1850, were at all influenced by Train's theory, or by local informants who had themselves been influenced by it, cannot now be said—the fact that they made their survey within a few years of the appearance of Mackenzie's *History* and of the *New Statistical Account* suggests that this may well have happened. The Ancient Monuments Commissioners, in their *Inventories* of Wigtownshire (1912), Kirkcudbrightshire (1914) and Dumfriesshire (1920, field-survey 1912-5), assumed the existence of the Dyke, treated its reputed remains more or less in isolation, as individual monuments, and abstained from a critical discussion of the whole. The joint work of Mr R. C. Reid and the late Dr Semple, ³as well as that of the late Mr W. G. Collingwood, ⁴ was likewise done within the framework of Train's hypothesis. However, in the course of their survey of the ancient monuments of Roxburghshire, the Commissioners have recently had occasion to study the Catrail, also an extensive linear work, and for this purpose comparison was necessary with its potential counterpart in Galloway. I accordingly undertook a re-examination of the latter with some help from Professor Piggott, and as the results of this detailed study are of some general interest I have been authorised by the Commissioners to publish them in the Society's *Proceedings*.

In the account that follows, the several lengths of the Deil's Dyke that are marked on the Ordnance Survey maps in Wigtownshire and Kirkcudbrightshire are dealt with in succession, from west to east. The general line of the work, as described by Train or as implied by his description, is shown in fig. 1, those portions of it which are actually marked, with and without interruptions, on the O.S. maps being differentiated from those for which no evidence exists apart from Train's statements. Where space permits, the serial numbers of the sections of the present paper (*infra*) have been placed beside the line in fig. 1 to locate the portions of the Dyke to which they refer. In the text are also given the numbers of the 6-inch O.S. sheets, together with National Grid

¹ The "vestiges of a wall or stone dike" that are described as running from south to north through Kells parish (*Statistical Account*, vol. ix. p. 639) evidently represent some totally distinct work.

² *New Statistical Account*, vol. iv. (Wigton), pp. 232-4.

³ *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 3rd series, vol. xvii. pp. 59 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 72 ff.; *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, New Series, vol. xxvi. p. 535.

references (all to large square 25 unless otherwise stated), as shown on sheets 84, 87 and 90 of the 1-inch O.S. map of Scotland, "Popular" Edition.

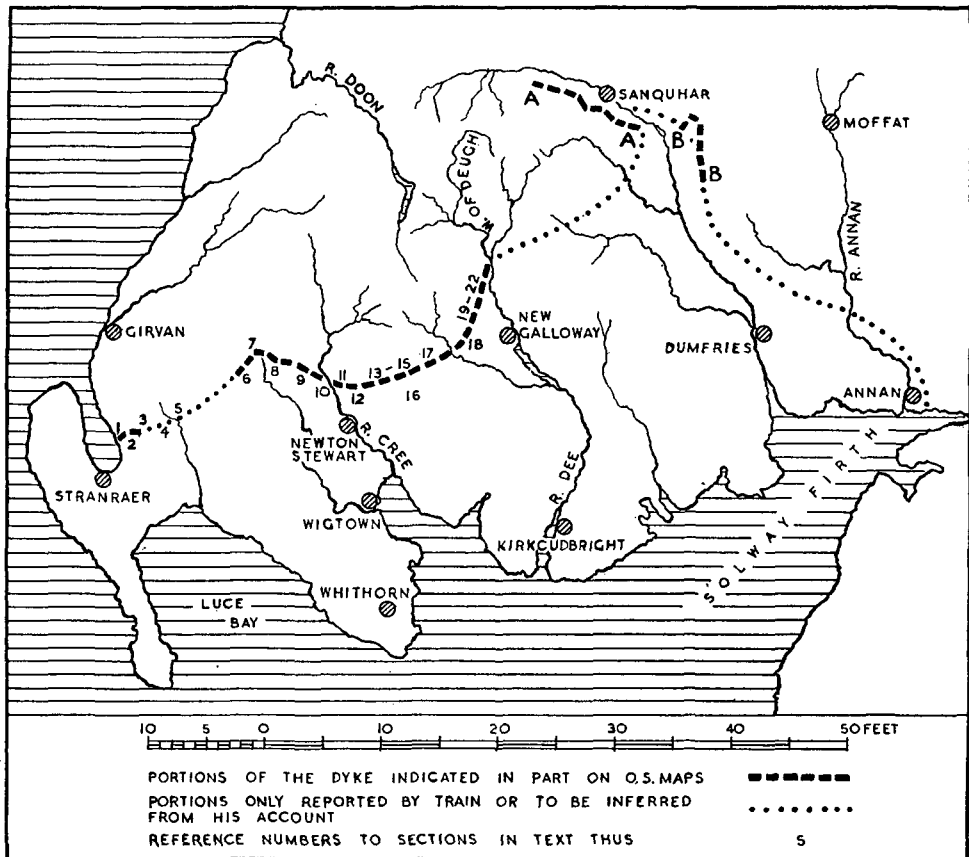


Fig. 1. The Deil's Dyke as described by Joseph Train.

II. WIGTOWNSHIRE.

1. **Beoch, lower ground** (xi. N.E.; 078653; *Inventory*, No. 51). There is some divergence here between the testimony of the original and of the new (1896) edition of the 6-inch map, the former attaching the name "Deil's Dike" to the lowermost section of a length of field dyke extending about 650 yards inland from the shore of Loch Ryan, and the latter placing the words "site of Deil's Dike" on a higher section of the work which extends, in all, for more than a mile up-country. It is probably the earlier map that illustrates what Train had in mind, as the lowermost section—the "Deil's Dike" proper of the original survey—is, in fact, constructed

in a manner distinctly unusual in Scotland and consequently apt to attract the attention of an observer. In contrast with the ordinary dry-stone dykes of the district, this work is a bank about 4 feet 6 inches high by 8 feet thick at the base and 2 feet 6 inches at the top; it seems to be made largely of earth and turf, with numerous large stones appearing in its sides. Further examination, however, reveals that this stretch of 650 yards is not an isolated example of this type of construction, but that the whole of this farm was evidently once enclosed, and partially subdivided as well, by banks of this kind, though they have now been superseded and to some extent replaced by ordinary dry-stone walls. It is, in fact, no more than a piece of enclosure-dyke; and in view of the resemblance of such banks to those commonly built between fields in Ireland, it is possible that the whole farm was originally enclosed by immigrant Irish workmen.

2. **Beoch, upper ground** (xi. N.E. and xii. N.W.; 0966; *Inventory*, No. 51). The line shown here on the O.S. map appears to be that of an old track, faintly marked as a hollow.

3. **Braid** (xii. N.W.). This is a military area and could not be visited. Nothing is shown on the O.S. map. Train's "Auchenvane" was not identified.

4. **Cairnerzean** (xii. N.E.; 1467). Nothing is shown on the O.S. map and inquiry on the spot produced no information. See § 5.

5. **Kilfedder** (vi. S.E.; 1568). Mr Dalrymple, Barlure, whose family had been in Kilfedder for three hundred years and who knew the ground of that farm and of the adjoining Cairnerzean (§ 4) intimately, had never discovered any trace of the Deil's Dyke though he has always been interested in the question. Numerous old field-divisions exist hereabouts on the left bank of the Water of Luce, but none of them seems to be part of a running earthwork.

6. **Loch Derry** (ii. S.E.; 255738; *Inventory*, No. 113). This area was not visited, as the negative results obtained farther east (see especially § 9 below) ruled it out as a link in a continuous line. On Train's own showing there would appear to have been a gap of over seven miles as the crow flies between here and Kilfedder, and it is impossible to take literally, in a case like this, his statement that, where "any breach" occurred in the work ("this vast ruin"), he "was fortunate enough, in almost every instance, to find old people who remembered the stones having been carried away from that part of the dyke, to make enclosures in the neighbourhood."

7. **North end of Loch Maberry**¹ (ii. S.E.; 284759). Nothing is marked here on the O.S. map, and Mrs Caig, Arnsheen, stated that her husband had often looked for the Deil's Dyke in this neighbourhood but had never found it. A few large boulders were seen, in rough alignment, and it is

¹ This spot is actually just in Ayrshire.

conceivable that they may once have formed part of a dry-stone dyke now robbed to form a small enclosure nearby. The enclosure itself looks fairly primitive, though one of its component blocks has been drilled with a jumper for blasting.

8. **Kirkcalla** (iii. S.W.; 309754; *Inventory*, No. 410). Nothing was seen on the line marked on the O.S. map, and the *Inventory* records a blank in 1911. Again, if the Deil's Dyke actually appeared on this line it could hardly have been said to "pass" the old churchyard (302744), as Train records, as a reasonably direct line from north of Loch Maberry would have run nearly a mile to the north of the latter point.

9. **From east of Loch Ochiltree to Glenvernoch** (iii. S.W. and iii. S.E.; 325739-332737; *Inventory*, No. 397). The western part of this section of the Deil's Dyke, which begins—as marked on the O.S. map—on the crest overlooking Loch Ochiltree, corresponds with a stretch of robbed stone dyke, not showing any conspicuous signs of antiquity and only about 5 feet thick at ground-level. It might well have marked a boundary—as if between Glenruther and Ochiltree. Further east, however, just south of the summit of Glenvernoch Fell, it is clearly seen to be the head-dyke of enclosed ground which extended rather farther up the hillside than the modern fields of Glenruther, the change of direction noted in the *Inventory* being made simply to form one side of a wide passage leading out to the moorland. East of this passage the straight work that is marked on the map resolves itself into a series of slightly curving sections, which mark the upper ends of contiguous enclosed strips; and it is ultimately lost in a tangle of old steadings and enclosures—mostly small in size and irregular in shape—in the valley falling east-north-east out of square 3373. No distinctive work suggesting the supposed Deil's Dyke could be seen running, as Train states, towards Glenvernoch farm.

10. **Knockvill** (viii. N.E.; 362724). This area was omitted in view of the negative results obtained on Glenvernoch (*supra*). Nothing is marked here on the O.S. map.

III. KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE.

11. **Camer Wood to Cordorcan Burn** (xxxii. N.W.; 366726-399721; not in *Inventory*). The Deil's Dyke is marked here on the O.S. map, but the area could not be visited. The omission does not, however, affect the results of the inquiry as a whole. See § 12.

12. **Moor of Dranandow**, including Train's "Terregan" and "Hill of Blair" (xxxii. N.W.; 399721-415716; *Inventory*, No. 368). A line of wall-foundations emerges in a westerly direction from the steep, craggy slope known as "The Nappers," having a thickness of about 6 feet. Among the crags it degenerates into a mere rickle of blocks; it was not

followed further here, but nothing was seen south-east of the crags where the line is shown on the O.S. map as coming to an end. Westwards the foundations narrow to 4 feet and end on the edge of a damp hollow; but on the other side of this hollow the remains of a rather stouter wall appear, 7 feet 6 inches thick and with a well-made butt-end. This shows as a rickle of small boulders, up to 8 feet wide, for about 100 yards, and then fades away to a slight scar along the surface of the ground with occasional boulders appearing. About 200 yards north-east of "The Thieves" a slighter but more recent wall, also reduced to a rickle, comes in from the south-east, and from that point down into the valley of the Cordorcan Burn the two works run parallel and about 6 feet apart—the older one being represented, however, only by a slight hollow, or step, in the surface, which itself fades away on the lower part of the slope. A quarter of a mile south-east of the Cordorcan Burn the newer wall ends on a transverse wall of the same character, evidently the head-dyke of farmlands in the valley-bottom; but that the older wall once ran down right into the flats is proved by the intermittent appearance of boulders prolonging its line well below the head-dyke. This work thus appears to have been a boundary-dyke, dating from before the improvement of this ground for agriculture on modern lines and extending from The Nappers to the Cordorcan Burn at least, a distance of just under a mile. Its original extension to the Cree at Camer Wood (see § 11) is, however, not at all impossible, and this would have given it a total length of about three miles.

13. **Glenshalloch** (xxxii. N.W. and xxxii. N.E.; 428712-433712; *Inventory*, No. 368). Train slips very lightly over this part of his line, and the O.S. map marks nothing between the valley south-east of The Nappers—where nothing was found (*supra*)—and Glenshalloch Burn. This is a typical area in which Train's proviso about the destruction of an originally continuous Deil's Dyke cannot be taken literally, as extensive robbery would be most unlikely in such a desolate region and no vestiges of even a robbed dyke were seen. A dyke does resume on the O.S. line, however, on the east bank of the Black Burn—not of the Glenshalloch Burn itself, 130 yards farther west, as is shown on the O.S. map—and this was followed through some low ground, where there are traces of huts and small enclosures, and then up the eastern side of the valley, among gullies, broken outcrops and crags, until it disappeared on reaching some flattish moorland at about the 750-foot contour. It is thus about 500 yards in length, and is fairly continuous although it seems to have been heavily robbed, and—especially among the tumbled rocks—can sometimes only be identified by odd blocks occurring here and there in alignment. Where best preserved its foundations are up to 5 feet thick and are made of massive split blocks laid longitudinally, none being set transversely, as is often seen in this district in the enclosures associated with hut-circles and

abandoned crofts. Above the foundations some coursing can still be seen here and there. The work thus seems to be a boundary-dyke, drawn across a strip of land which possessed some value for grazing at least, if not for cultivation too on a very small scale and in selected spots; and it seems to have stopped short at the edge of the moorland above, which is a peaty barren shoulder—this, again, being a place where the total disappearance through robbery of every trace of the work hardly seems to be credible, notwithstanding the O.S. map, which shows it as running through. The remains show no feature suggesting any great antiquity.

14. **Benera**, presumably corresponding with Train's "south face of the Hill of Garlick" (xxxii. N.E.; 435714-450720; *Inventory*, No. 368). The O.S. map marks the Deil's Dyke as running all across the lower slopes of Benera, in continuation of the portion discussed in § 13 above, and ending on the Penkiln Burn three-quarters of a mile north of Auchinleck. No part of this work could, however, be identified, and it must be supposed either (a) that every vestige has been removed to build the modern head-dyke that runs along a very similar line, or (b) that Train and, following him, the Ordnance surveyors were misled by the numerous remains of old field- and enclosure-walls that are to be seen below the head-dyke, as well, perhaps, as by fortuitous alignments of split and quarried blocks which occur—admittedly in a manner which often simulates arrangement—among the crags and outcrops above it. In any case, if a wall ever did stand on this line, there is no reason to suppose that it was other than an earlier version of the head-dyke that has just been mentioned.

15. **Auchinleck and Drigmorn** (xxxii. N.E.; 4672; not in *Inventory*). Train mentions these farms as being on the course of the Dyke; but as the O.S. map marks nothing, and negative results were obtained farther north-east, no visit was made to the area.

16. **Left bank of Palnure Burn** (xxxii. N.E. and xxxiii. N.W.; 4769-4971; not in *Inventory*). Train states that the Deil's Dyke crosses the Palnure Burn and "goes up Craignelder, in the farm of Corwar." This is, of course, completely inconsistent with his theory—though he fails to notice the fact—as it would mean that the Deil's Dyke here turned at right angles from its supposed course and lost itself on Cairnsmore of Fleet. No visit was made to this area, where the O.S. map marks nothing.

17. **The Old Edinburgh Road** (xxv. S.E. and xxv. S.W.; 502732-540752; *Inventory*, No. 368). Next after Drigmorn (§ 15) Train mentions "the foot of Tonderghie," then makes his digression across the Palnure Burn (§ 16), and then says that the Dyke "passes Craignecallie"—a farm west of the north-west end of Clatteringshaws Reservoir (502780). Between the Palnure Burn and Craignelder he inserts "the south side of Talnotrie," as if Talnotry were on the eastern, not the western bank of the Palnure Burn. The O.S. map, ignoring this confusion, marks the Dyke along the

line of the "Old Edinburgh Road" from the Well Burn, just north-east of the ruins of Tonderghie, to the Dee at the old bridge-site, now submerged in Clatteringshaws Reservoir, a distance of over three miles. A dilapidated stone dyke does exist here, a work up to 3 feet thick at the base and up to 4 feet high where undamaged, and it was presumably to this that the Ordnance surveyors applied their legend "Deil's Dyke"; though some observers have been puzzled by the hollow tracks of the old road, which have suggested to them that this part of the Dyke was represented by a trench. The late Mr W. G. Collingwood, again, has described the Dyke as consisting, at a certain point, of a dry-stone wall with a narrow fosse in front of it and a berm between;¹ but in fact there is nothing here except the old road, terraced along the steep slopes overlooking Lilie's Loch but consisting of two or more hollowed or terraced tracks on the flatter moorland, with the stone dyke following its general line. That the linear hollows are road-tracks, and not filled-up trenches, is made certain by comparison with other old roads of this class, which are quite common in southern Scotland; and further evidence of their true character emerges from Mr R. C. Reid's unpublished report,² which he was so kind as to show me, on an excavation which he carried out in 1926. Moreover, the fact that the wall is of later construction than the road—which was presumably in use until the modern road to Newton Stewart was built—is shown by the way in which it stands on the lip of the road-terrace where they cross a steep hill-face; while it is also clear that their joint course is in places determined (*e.g.* south-west of Lilie's Loch) by considerations of grade and drainage, and these are considerations which apply to the construction of a road but not to that of a wall. It can even be inferred that the dyke was built at some time after the road had gone out of use, as at several points the dyke reduces the breadth of the road from its normal 12 feet to 8 feet, or once to as little as 6 feet. These facts agree with the general appearance of the wall in suggesting that it is not of any great antiquity.

18. **Bennan** (xvii. S.E. and xxv. N.E.; 549781–561794–558801; *Inventory*, No. 368). The south-western end of this work is now submerged in Clatteringshaws Reservoir, but it was described by Mr R. C. Reid and the late Dr Semple³ along with the remainder as marked on the O.S. map. The same observers recorded that very little trace remained of the northern portion, which is marked on the map as descending from

¹ *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 3rd series, vol. xvii. p. 72. The features described by Mr Collingwood can be identified at 525749, the position indicated in his paper, but nowhere else. They actually represent the main track of the road, now resembling a filled-up trench, swinging out to the north of the wall and then rejoining it some fifty yards on, thus forming a shallow arc with the wall as its chord.

² Now preserved in the archives of the Dumf. and Galloway Nat. History and Antiquarian Society.

³ *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 3rd series, vol. xvii. pp. 59 f.

the 1100-foot contour on the shoulder of Bennan to the right bank of the Lochspraig Burn; and in 1949 the upper part, at least, of this was quite invisible, though time did not permit of a search for its lower or northern end. Of the surviving portion, however, it is perfectly safe to say that it is simply a boundary-wall which shows no evidence of antiquity; and it is, in fact, exactly similar in size and in character of building to the head-dyke that runs north-west from the north corner of the enclosures behind Low Craigenbay steading. The "trench" noted by Reid and Semple appears to be a filled-up drainage-ditch, and in places the cutting of a flat stance for the wall has produced a ditch-like hollow immediately beside the footings.

It is to be noted that Train omits any reference to this section of the supposed work, although he says that it is "very clear" on the farm of Garrary, which—according to the existing nomenclature—lies more than a mile to the west. It is also difficult to account for his further statement that it passes Craigencallie, which is on the right bank of the Dee and entirely out of the line. This appears to be another case, like that noted in § 16, in which Train's argument becomes inconsistent with itself.

19. **Clenrie**, Train's "Clanry" (xvii. N.E. and xvii. S.E.; 554808-549818; *Inventory*, No. 368). This work is marked on the O.S. map as running north-west from the eastern face of Craigrine, crossing the saddle that connects Shield Rig with Stroan Hill, and descending to the Garroch Burn at a point 470 yards upstream from Clenrie—a distance of about three-quarters of a mile in all. Reid and Semple found no extension south-eastwards towards the Lochspraig Burn (see § 18), and no further search was made in that direction in 1949. The structure consists, in some places, of the remains of a slight wall made of split blocks piled together, and elsewhere of a bank of stones and earth, but the portion extending downhill to the Garroch Burn only appears intermittently on the bank of a small watercourse. On the top of the shoulder it has either become engulfed in the soft peat, or else its place has been taken by a ditch now filled up—in either case its course is only marked by a strip of heavy grass and rushes traversing the moss. The method of construction being similar to that seen in the older field- and farm-boundaries in this district, though quite different from the stone walls described under §§ 17 and 18, it is natural to explain this work as a march-dyke defining the upper end of an area otherwise bounded by the Garroch Burn and the low ground that drains towards Drumbuie. Hut-circles and enclosures are to be seen on the south-east face of Stroan Hill at about 900 feet O.D.

20. **Shinmount** (xvii. N.E.; 554831-563840). This work generally resembles the last, but is somewhat stouter and better preserved. The proportions of stone and earth used in its construction vary from place to place, as in parts it appears as a rickle of large split blocks, and elsewhere

as a turf dyke more or less reinforced with stone. It is now spread to a maximum breadth of 7 feet, and stands up to 2 feet high, but may originally have been 4 feet to 5 feet thick at the base by 3 feet high or more. Traces of a borrow-ditch can be seen where the ground is suitable. The dyke runs north and north-east along a small unnamed watercourse from the left bank of the Black Burn, a tributary of the Garroch Burn, and then crosses the shoulder named Rough Hill and continues along the right bank of the Deil's Dyke Burn to its confluence with the Crummy Burn, a distance of just under a mile. It shows minor irregularities of alignment, and incorporates natural outcrops where these are suitably placed. Where it crosses the neck between the heads of the two small burns it has sunk out of sight in the moss. Its object is evidently to mark in a definite way a line corresponding with that of the two small burns, presumably the western boundary of a block of land between the Garroch and Crummy Burns.

21. **Largvey Burn**, probably corresponding with Train's "Largrave" and "Duckieston" (xii. S.E.; 570849-574857;; *Inventory*, No. 368). This length of dyke is quite clearly part of a system of farm-enclosures, and has no possible claim to be regarded as part of a large-scale linear work. This is shown by the facts that its southern end abuts on a head-dyke of exactly the same dimensions and build as itself, which runs for 1000 yards transversely across the hillside, and that field-divisions are associated with it lower down the slope to the Polharrow Burn. It shows features exactly similar to the other lengths of supposed Deil's Dyke that occur in this district (§§ 19, 20, 22), as it consists of a bank of earth and stones in varying proportions, and near its lower end, on the Largvey Burn, of a low wall of piled blocks; the earth appears to have been scraped up from both sides of the bank, and at one point these scrapes are enlarged to actual ditches. The transverse portion, or "head-dyke," crosses some areas of moss, and here sinks out of sight exactly as do parts of the other dykes described; Reid and Semple¹ noted the same fact in the case of the dyke, now submerged, on the moss below Craigenbay. These conclusions strongly reinforce the conclusion independently reached, that the lengths of the Deil's Dyke in this district are all to be explained as obsolete land-boundaries.

22. **Knockreoch** (xii. S.E. and xii. N.E.; 572865-578879). The southernmost 600 yards of this work, ending at about the 550-foot contour north of a small unnamed burn (575870), can be dismissed immediately as part of an obsolete system of land-divisions and enclosures of which there is ample additional evidence here. Its appearance, moreover, is exactly similar to that of the dyke just described (§ 21) and identified as a farm-division. Beyond the point stated, the O.S. map continues the same line with dots, and marks it "Deil's Dike (track of)"; but on the

¹ *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 3rd series, vol. xvii. p. 59.

ground the work is interrupted here by a knoll, bearing traces of an enclosure and some small cairns, and what runs on north of the knoll may or may not be the same—at any rate it seems to contain more turf and less stone, though this may be due to the fact that it is now flanking a peat-moss. Where it crosses a small dry ridge, at about 577876, it appears as a turf bank 6 feet thick by 1 foot high with a slight borrow-ditch on the east, but elsewhere it is very much obscured by moss and herbage, and in places disappears altogether. It ends on the left bank of a small unnamed tributary of the Polmaddy Burn, round the head of which it has swung on to an easterly course, and its purpose appears to have been to divide the mosses here and to the west of Loch Goosie from the better-drained ground south of the Polmaddy Burn and on the eastern slopes of Green Dass. These areas show plentiful signs of past cultivation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS.

Only one conclusion can be drawn from the facts set forth above, and that is that the Deil's Dyke as described by Train does not, in fact, exist. All the supposed remains of it between Loch Ryan and the Water of Deugh can be explained in terms of some function in the local economy, they show no common constructional features, and several of them are clearly of no great age. The gaps, again, are far too large and too numerous for Train's explanation, stone-robbery, to account for their presence in full; and finally, contradictions are apparent in Train's own account, as was noted in §§ 16 and 18. On all these grounds the idea of an originally continuous work, traversing the whole breadth of Galloway, must now be given up for good, and with it will naturally disappear the concept of a Deil's Dyke extending from sea to sea. Nor is this conclusion upset by the fact that part of the so-called "Celtic or Deil's Dyke" in Nithsdale (AA in fig. 1), which has been regarded as part of Train's great cross-country dyke, does suggest a unitary work quite comparable with the Roxburghshire Catrail. The work in question, which runs upstream along the south-west side of the valley from near the farm of Burnmouth (26/839051),¹ would have marked a line round the north-eastern and northern foothills of the mountainous region enclosed by the upper Nith, the Doon, and the Deugh, and could thus have formed no part of such a work as Train envisaged.

The question remains as to how the idea of this dyke ever came to be conceived, and an answer to this can be put forward as the result of a fortunate accident. A shepherd's wife in Kirkcudbrightshire, when asked

¹ A preliminary examination suggests that further lengths of the "Celtic or Deil's Dyke," marked on the O.S. map as lying east of the Nith and farther downstream (BB in fig. 1), are probably separate works of different character and function from the one in the upper valley.

about a neighbouring portion of the Deil's Dyke, alluded to it in her reply as "the Deil-Dyke"—omitting the possessive "s", and placing the stress on "Deil" as if the words were hyphenated. The expression, thus sounded, immediately called to mind the old Scots word "deil" (spelt variously, and derived from O.E. *daél*), meaning "piece," "part" or "portion," and used in particular of land,¹ with a corresponding verb meaning "to divide into portions" and an allied word "deilisman" for one who divides or apportsions.² Another word, "dale" or "dail" (O.E. *dāl*), has the same meaning as "deil" when applied to land,³ and is understood to be pronounced "deil" in Galloway.⁴ I have further been informed by Mr and Mrs Smith of Pittodrie that "deil-dyke" is used to-day in the Garioch district of Aberdeenshire in the sense of a dyke marking a land-division or boundary; and by Mr C. R. Glen, Irvine, that "deil-ground" was in use a few years ago to describe a strip of ground dividing two properties near Portincross, Ayrshire. These facts suggest that "deil-dyke" was formerly used in Galloway with the meaning of "march-dyke"; that Train and his friends heard it so used of a large number of dykes in various parts of the district; that they misunderstood it and, consciously or unconsciously, added a possessive "s", perhaps on the analogy of the well-known "Devil's" or "Grim's" ditches and dykes in England; and that they then inferred that all the resulting "Deil's" Dykes were parts of a continuous whole. Such an inference would have been all the easier in view of the existence of a colourable "Deil's Dyke" in upper Nithsdale, as noted above on p. 184. And once this stage was reached, an antiquary of the early nineteenth century would soon have found evidence in plenty for so dramatic and exciting an idea.

¹ Craigie gives numerous examples (*A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, vol. viii. p. 57).

² Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1885), *s.v.*

³ Craigie, *loc. cit.*

⁴ I am indebted for this fact to Dr W. Douglas Simpson, who obtained it from Mr Murieson, editor of the *Scottish National Dictionary*; and also for other information on the uses of "deil," "dale," etc.