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The Archaeological Journal.

MARCH, 1854.

THE MAIDEN WAY.

SURVEY OF THE MAIDEN WAY FROM BIRDOSWALD, THE STATION AMBOGLANNA, ON THE ROMAN WALL, NORTHWARD INTO SCOTLAND; WITH A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF SOME REMARKABLE OBJECTS IN THE DISTRICT.

BY THE REV. JOHN MAUGHAN, B.A., Rector of Bewcastle, Cumberland.

SECTION I.—*Survey of the Maiden Way through the Parish of Lanercost.*

THERE is a natural craving in the human mind to pry into and to master the secrets of the remote past; to deal with records of a period prior to written annals, and to supply the want of ancient historical details by inferences drawn from its reliques, such as votive tablets, sacrificial altars, sepulchral memorials and other vestiges, and thus to be made acquainted with a state of society, and a class of enterprises which the world once saw, but which it will never see again. To gratify such a feeling of inquisitiveness this investigation of the Maiden Way was undertaken.

Mr. Bainbridge, in his account of the Maiden Way on the south side of the Roman wall, says that it came from Kirkby Thore, in Westmoreland, to the Carvorran Station.¹ I think it, however, very possible that there may have been a branch from it direct to the Birdoswald Station. I have examined the ground very closely, and although I could not find any remains of an unquestionable character, I found some traces on the south side of the river Irthing. These pass on the east side of the Bushnook and Shawfield farmhouses, and on

¹ *Archæologia Æliana*, vol. iv. p. 36. He states that it is called in old Boundary Rolls "Mayden Gate—Via Puellarum."

the west side of the Reagarth, and are in the same straight line as the Maiden Way on the north side of the wall. After passing the Reagarth about a quarter of a mile, they then turn a little more to the east across the Reagarth ground, and enter upon Hartleyburn Fell, nearly direct south of an old building called the "Colonel's Lodge." Here the trace becomes entirely obliterated, in consequence of the soft spongy nature of the ground and the thick herbage, but it is aiming direct for Ulpham, (query, from the Welsh, *Gwylfa*, a Watch-tower?) The trace which I found may be about two miles in length, and another mile would enable it to form a junction with the main line leading to the north east, or to Carvorran. This branch, if it ever existed, would reduce the distance to Birdoswald about seven miles, which would be of great importance to troops passing from England into Scotland.

There has hitherto been a doubt as to the point where the Maiden Way started from the Roman Wall, and also as to the line of its progress to the north. Mr. Hutchinson, in his History of Cumberland, Vol. i. p. 63, says that "it passes through Carvorran, and extends along the northern parts of this county, over the heights, to the east of Bewcastle, in a direction almost duly north, and enters Scotland near Lamyford, where it crosses the river Kirsop." It is very possible, however, that Mr. Hutchinson's statement may have been made without due examination, as I cannot hear of any place bearing the name of the "Maiden Way" on the north side of Carvorran, or in the direction of Lamyford. There is no place bearing the name of Lamyford known on the Kershope river at the present day. I find it mentioned, however, in Denton's MS. as one of the boundaries of Cumberland; "Christianbury-Crag unto Lamyford where Cumberland makes a narrow point northwards. There the river Liddal, on the north-west side, runs down between Scotland and Cumberland." So that the Lamyford must have been somewhere near the junction of the rivers Liddal and Kershope. I find two roads branching from the Maiden Way to the north-west; the one from the station at Bewcastle, and the other from the Crew. I have traced each of these roads for some distance, and if they continued their courses onwards they would unite, and enter into Scotland somewhere near this ancient Lamyford. The

Maiden Way, however, crosses the Kershope a few miles farther to the east. The branch road from the Crew was formerly called "the Wheel-Causeway," and hence, probably, arose Mr. Hutchinson's error.

There is a part of an old road on the Side Fell, about two miles south of Bewcastle, to which tradition has always assigned the name of the Maiden Way, and this remnant of the road is graced with a remarkable specimen of the ruins of a Roman watch-tower. In the spring of 1852 the Rev. J. Collingwood Bruce, the author of "The Roman Wall," accompanied by a friend, was on a visit of inspection of the remains of the Roman Station at Bewcastle, and I conducted them to this relic on the Side Fell. While seated on the greensward which now covers the Roman fortlet, a question arose whether the road proceeded northwards from Carvorran, according to the generally received opinion as to its route, or whether it did not proceed from Birdoswald, as the road on the Side Fell seemed to be aiming direct to the latter station. Having heard the same question discussed but not decided on former occasions, my curiosity was excited, and I was induced to pursue the track of this road, and thus in some measure to test the accuracy of Mr. Hutchinson's statement. I experienced very little difficulty in tracing it to Birdoswald, but could not discover any point where it showed the least tendency to diverge towards Carvorran. I experienced considerable difficulty, however, in tracing it northwards from Bewcastle. The trace was not so distinct and well defined, and I had consequently to examine in several places a large tract of land on each side of it, before I could feel satisfied that I was not off the line. This caused a vast amount of labour, and often required the greatest perseverance, but I have no doubt that my efforts have been successful in recovering a road which was all but lost.

Gibbon, speaking of the union and internal prosperity of the Roman Empire in the age of the Antonines, says, "All these cities were connected with each other, and with the capital, by the public highways, which, issuing from the Forum of Rome, traversed Italy, pervaded the provinces, and were terminated only by the frontiers of the Empire. If we carefully trace the distance from the Wall of Antoninus to Rome, and thence to Jerusalem, it will be found that the great chain of communication from the north-west to the

south-east point of the empire, was drawn out to the length of 4080 Roman miles. The public roads were accurately divided by milestones, and ran in a direct line from one city to another, and with very little respect for the obstacles either of nature or private property. Mountains were perforated, and bold arches thrown over the broadest and most rapid streams. The middle part of the road was raised into a terrace, which commanded the adjacent country, consisted of several strata of sand, gravel and cement, and was paved with large stones, or, in some places, near the capital, with granite. Such was the solid construction of the Roman highways, whose firmness has not entirely yielded to the effort of fifteen centuries." We have no reason, however, to suppose that the Maiden Way was constructed on so extended or so expensive a scale, although we must look upon it as forming part of that great chain or network of roads which extended from the Wall of Antoninus, between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, to Jerusalem.

The surface of the country through which the line passes northwards from Birdoswald is, in general, exceedingly irregular, and yet finely diversified. A large portion of it is mountainous, and much of the land barren, or at least only covered with heather, and yet it exhibits many scenes that are beautiful and romantic. In some places the hills rise in wild confusion, begirt with vast ranges of huge rocks towering up in rude and fantastical shapes, in the midst of which are torrents thundering down deep and narrow glens, and forming beautiful cascades as they are precipitated over the impending rocks. In other places, the prospect is enlivened with the cheering diversity of gently rising hills and winding vales, which are termed in the dialect of the district fells and gills (or ghylls), presenting a most delightful landscape of verdant plains and rural beauty. The ridge of hills by which the country is traversed is of considerable elevation, being sometimes styled the British Alps, or Apennines, and forming the backbone of England. These hills are mostly composed of white freestone, interspersed with numerous thick beds of limestone and ironstone, and small seams of coal. There are several veins of lead, some of which are lying almost close to the surface. The district also abounds with sulphureous, chalybeate, and petrifying springs.

SURVEY OF THE MAIDEN WAY.

I.—FROM BIRDOSWALD STATION ON THE ROMAN WALL TO THE RIVER KING.

Scale, 800 yards to an inch.

The Maiden Way passes in a perfectly straight line to the north-west from Birdoswald to the Little Beacon Tower, which from Birdoswald appears on a favourable day like a small nipple on the summit of the ridge of hills running to the east from the Beacon, and which may be readily discovered by taking a sight along the stone fence which forms the western boundary of the Waterhead Fell, and the east side of the farm-buildings at Spade Adam. It leaves Birdoswald at the Prætorian or Northern Gate of the Station, near a tree which stands at the head of the East meadow. It almost immediately enters into the adjoining croft, and aims towards a gate on the north side of the bog. It is traceable by means of several large detached stones remaining in a narrow slip of meadow ground, which runs along the foot of the brow in the croft. The following survey was taken merely by stepping; the measurement of buildings, &c., by a walking stick three feet long.

At 260 yards it crosses a ditch and enters the bog. It shows some stones and gravel at the point of crossing, but it is probably covered by the peat moss through the bog, which is generally about four or five feet deep. Some may feel inclined to doubt whether the ground can really have grown so much in the time, but this is not a solitary instance. In many places the drainers have proved its subterranean existence where there was not the least trace on the surface. In the account of Naworth Castle, in Hutchinson's *Cumberland*, is the following note.—“On improving some peat moss, about a mile south-east of the castle, found a road (Roman Maiden Way) about twelve feet broad, laid with large stones, nearly five feet under the surface; the direction nearly north and south.”

(190 yards.)² At 450 yards it leaves the bog at the gate on the north side, and enters into a large square field belonging to the Kilhill Farm. The road seems to remain undisturbed at this gate. In passing through this field it crosses a piece of meadow which has been drained. Some of the drains cut through the buried road, leaving little doubt as to its line. There is a heap of stones lying at present which have been gathered from the drains. Detached

² In order to facilitate the examination of the line by any antiquary, who may visit the localities here noticed, it has been

thought desirable to state the distances between the successive stations described in this survey.

stones still appear on the surface of the ground. On the north side of this field it passes on the east side of a small mound, which has been partly carted away, and which may have been the site of a small watch-tower.

(400 yards.) At 850 yards it crosses the public road to Gilsland. Here it enters the Slack-house ground, where a gateway has been left in the stone fence. It passes along the east side of a small plantation, where it is now used for the cart-road. It appears to have been undisturbed. It then enters the corner of another field belonging to the Slack-house Farm, where it has been raised considerably above the adjoining ground, leaving unquestionable traces of its progress.

(400 yards.) At 1250 yards it enters Lordsgate meadow, and passes through the north-east corner, which was drained about three years since. Several of the drains intersected the Way, and produced a large quantity of stones. These drains, showing such manifest traces of the Way, are decisive against Mr. Hutchinson's statement as to its passing to the north from Carvorran, unless we admit that there have been two lines of Roman road each called the Maiden Way.

(180 yards.) At 1430 yards it enters the Waterhead Fell, at the south-west corner, and runs for several hundred yards on the east side of the stone wall, which forms the western boundary of the Fell. The Way here is considerably raised above the adjoining ground, and in some places shows a ditch on the east side. It passes over the summit of a barren and mossy ridge about the middle of this Fell. I have thought it necessary to be thus explicit at starting, to show the nature of the evidence on which I maintain that it has proceeded to the north from Birdoswald. The general aspect of this Fell is singularly bleak and wild, with little to arrest the attention, except now and then the whirring of a startled brood of grouse, the melancholy whistle of the plover, or the solitary scream of the curlew.

From the south-west corner of this Fell, a ditch, or syke, proceeds up the hill on the east side of the Maiden Way, and aims to the north-east. This ditch appears to accompany the Maiden Way as far as the Scottish border. It often crosses it, being sometimes on the east side, and at other times on the west of it. It generally has a low rampart, probably formed by the earth cast out of the ditch, on the

one side of it, and in some places it appears to have had a rampart on each side. Near the place where this ditch crosses the river Kirkbeck I lately found an ancient stone weapon, resembling a large chisel, about a foot long. This ditch may possibly have been a line of defence at some early period, and the Romans may have followed it as a guide ; or it may have formed an ancient boundary line between the counties of Cumberland and Northumberland. As it occurs so often in this survey, I shall call it, by way of distinction, the "Ancient Ditch."

(900 yards.) At 2330 yards it enters the Snowdon Close out-pasture at the point where the stone wall terminates, and where the rail fence commences. In this field it is also raised, and has had a ditch on the west side of it. Here we escape from the bleakness of the Fell range, and look down upon the green meadows and woodland glades of the vale of the river King.

(860 yards.) Pursuing its way through some small enclosures, at 3190 yards, it arrives at the rapid river King, rattling along down its rocky ravine, and crosses it a short way above the Slittery ford. The north bank of the river is very steep at the point of crossing, and would afford ample scope for the engineering powers of the Romans. There is an immense quantity of stones lying on the north bank, but it is difficult to say whether they have formed part of a bridge or not, as a large bed of freestone rock crosses the river at the same place. I could find no traces of Roman masonry, and yet the general appearance of the place would lead one to suppose that there must have been a bridge. Here the Maiden Way enters into the Ash low-pasture, and the cart-road joins it immediately on the bank and passes along it. The northern bank of the river is covered with small bushes, and winds around the Slittery Ford field.

(550 yards.) At 3740 yards it enters the Ash Fell. The way is very distinct just within the gate on the north side, and shows a row of edging-stones on each side. The row on the west side is about 16 yards long. The road here has been 15 feet wide. The stones have been placed so as to form an incline from the crown to the side, many of them being raised at the end nearest the centre, and resting upon the ends of those that are nearer the crown of the road. These would undoubtedly be the foundation stones of the

SURVEY OF THE MAIDEN WAY.

II.—FROM THE RIVER KING NORTHWARD TOWARDS BEWCASTLE.

Scale, 800 yards to an inch.

road, and would be covered with gravel or broken stones. Here the road has been decidedly only 15 feet wide. From Hutchinson, it appears that in the parish of Melmerby it is "uniformly 21 feet wide, and the road is laid with large stones so as to be difficult for horses to pass it." And in the parish of Kirkland it is said to be "in many places of the breadth of 8 yards." Can it have been wider on the south side of the Roman wall than on the north? There are several good traces in the Ash ground. It has been intersected in different places by the drains which have been lately made.

In pursuing its course over Spade Adam High Fell it also leaves some good traces in crossing the drains on the north side. The track of the way across this Fell may be distinctly seen from the Little Beacon Tower, being about 2000 yards from it. In Spade Adam Meadow also the drainers cut through it in several places, finding the bed of stones thickest where the peat moss was deepest and softest. It crosses a deep ditch, or beck, in this meadow, near a drain mouth, and shows a section of the road, on the edge of the ditch.

(2260 yards.) It passes along on the east side of Spade Adam (Speir Adam or Speir Edom) farm-house, and at 6000 yards enters a field called "The Nursery." A notion that the name may preserve the tradition of its use for rearing trees by the Romans is wholly conjectural. Cæsar, in his description of Britain, says that there is timber of every kind which is found in Gaul except beech and fir, and there are some aged beeches now standing in it. It is situated on gently rising ground with the slope facing to the south, or the full power of the mid-day sun. We have every reason to believe that the Roman soldier was not only employed in constructing military works, but was also engaged in various useful occupations, so that he became the instructor as well as the conqueror of the Britons. Nuts, acorns, and crabs, were almost all the variety of vegetable food indigenous to our island. It is said that cherries were introduced into Britain by the Romans, A.D. 55. Gibbon says, "that it would be almost impossible to enumerate all the articles, either of the animal or vegetable reign, which were successively imported into Europe from the East, and that almost all the flowers, the herbs, and the fruits that grow in our

European gardens are of foreign extraction." He mentions the apple, the apricot, and the peach. He speaks also of the naturalisation of the vine, the flax, and the artificial grasses, and of the gradual introduction of them into the western countries of Europe, and the encouragement given to the natives of the provinces to improve them.

(190 yards.) At 6190 yards it enters the pasture called "the Gilalees Beacon,"³ near an old quarry, and is traced in many of the drains as it passes up the side of the hill.

(500 yards.) At 6690 yards it approaches some ground-works, being its first introduction to what may be considered as classic ground. They are now almost level with the surrounding surface, but remarkably distinguished from it by the fresh green tint of the herbage. On the east side of the road are the foundations of a rectangular building 21 yards long, and 16 yards broad. It appears to have been protected on the east side by the "Ancient Ditch" which crosses the Maiden Way here, and by a slack or small ravine on the north and west sides. On the west side of the road there is a small enclosure with ramparts of earth and stone, which is divided into two parts. Here probably a body of Roman soldiers would be placed to supply a succession of sentinels to man the watch-towers in this district. It is rather remarkable that there seems to be a line of what may be called Mile Castles on the Maiden Way, such as we find on the Roman wall, and this is the first which I have been able to trace distinctly, although others may have been passed, whose foundations from various causes may have entirely disappeared. The foot road across the wastes from Gilsland passes along the Maiden Way here.

The road has been traversing rising ground since it crossed the river King, and has now attained a considerable elevation. The surface of the country consequently begins to be more open, and the views to the south and west are more enlarged. The vales disclose their interesting beauties, and every object exhibits a lively and pleasing aspect. Even here, dreary and weather-worn as are these heathy uplands, some herbs of grace are found to breathe of loveliness,

³ Gilalees may be derived from the Celtic, *gill*, water, which often denotes a brook in a narrow valley, or sometimes

the valley itself, and *leagh*, a field, dale, or lee. This derivation accords well with the appearance of the country.

whilst they overlay the cold bare scalp with flowers. Here we have the lowly *Tormentilla reptans* shedding the light of its yellow stars, with its delicately pencilled petals peeping out, no taller than the turf on which it grows. And here we have the wild thyme also breathing its aromatic odour through the fresh breezes which sweep around the hills, and make each respiration rich with new draughts of life. Here is an inexhaustible field for the botanist, but especially among the mosses, of which there is a great variety of the most beautiful specimens.

In the south-west corner of this pasture are two large conical tumuli, very much resembling the "Twin Barrow" described by Sir R. C. Hoare in his account of his Antiquarian researches among the Barrows in Wiltshire. They are about thirty-five yards distant from each other. The one is larger than the other, and there are traces of a fosse surrounding them, although it has been nearly filled up by the moss. The larger or western one is about thirty-five yards in the slope on the south side, which is the steepest and best defined, and about 150 yards around the base, being apparently full of stones, some of which appear to be of large dimensions. The eastern or smaller tumulus is about twenty-four yards in the slope, on the south-west side, and about 130 yards round the base. No stones are visible in it. The soil of which they are formed is of a peaty nature, and covered with stunted heather.

The evidences which we possess of the national character and habits, and of the various degrees of civilisation of the aborigines of Great Britain, are derived from their ancient dwellings and sepulchres; from cromlechs, barrows, cairns, and tumuli; from their weapons, ornaments and pottery; and from the remains of their agricultural implements; all of which afford abundant indications of the barbarism as well as the civilisation which surrounded the homes of our forefathers. The raising of mounds of earth or stone over the remains of the dead is a practice which may be traced in all countries to the remotest times. The simplest idea that can be suggested to account for its origin is, that as the little heap of earth displaced by the interment of the body would become the earliest monument by which the survivors were reminded of departed friends; so the increase of this by artificial means into the form of the gigantic barrow would naturally suggest

itself as the first mark of distinction to the honoured dead. To this simplest construction the term barrow should be exclusively reserved, while the tumulus is distinguished by its circular form. Sir R. C. Hoare has distinguished fourteen different kinds of barrows in his "Ancient Wiltshire."⁴

If these two mounds were examined they would probably be found to consist internally chiefly of an artificial structure of stone—a cairn, in fact, covered over with earth. On reaching the centre a cromlech or a kistvaen, *i. e.* a coffin formed of separate slabs of stone, might be found with its usual sepulchral contents, and most probably accompanied with relics of importance corresponding with the magnitude of the superincumbent earth-pyramid.

The earliest tumuli, *i. e.*, the tumuli of the "stone period," generally contain hammers of stone, hatchets, chisels, knives, fish-hooks, horses' teeth, and bones of dogs, stags, elks, and wild boars; spear and arrow heads of flint or bone; personal ornaments made of amber, pierced shells, stones, beads made of horn or bone, such as are now found among the Tahitians, the New Zealanders, the Red Indians of America, and the modern Esquimaux. The long barrow, formed like a gigantic grave, appears from its most common contents to be the sepulchral memorial belonging to this era. It is destitute of weapons belonging to the bronze period.

The tumuli of the "bronze period," besides the above contents, often contain a sort of semicircular knife, resembling a sickle; double-edged swords, daggers, shields; diadems, hair-pins, combs, armlets, brooches; small vases of gold, silver goblets; small figures of birds; scissors, in their form like those of the present day; rings or circlets of various dimensions and designs, some having evidently served to encircle the waist or the head, others the neck, the arm and the finger; and various other articles exhibiting considerable skill in the manufacture, and a peculiar taste in ornamental designs, serving to distinguish them from those of a succeeding age.

Whenever a sepulchral urn is found, it must be regarded as in itself a proof of some degree of progress. The earliest of these however are of the rudest possible description. They are fashioned with the hand, of coarse clay, by workmen

⁴ Introduction to vol. i. page 20.

ignorant of the turning-lathe or wheel of the potter. They are generally extremely unsymmetrical, merely dried in the sun, without any attempt at design, and devoid of ornament. But at a later period, the urn is found neatly fashioned into various and graceful forms, and ornamented with different patterns of lines, traced by some instrument on the soft clay, after which the vessel has been baked with fire.

The sepulchral monuments of the earliest periods, with their accompanying weapons and implements, are not peculiar to Britain ; nor indeed are they at all so common in England as on many parts of the continent of Europe. They are of frequent occurrence on the coasts of the Baltic, and along the shores of the German Ocean. They are found in Holland, Brittany, and Portugal, and on the islands and coasts of the mainland bordering on the Mediterranean. They are, in fact, the monuments of a rude and thinly scattered people, who subsisted by hunting and fishing, and whose imperfect implements totally incapacitated them from penetrating into the interior of those countries, encumbered as they were then by vast forests, which bade defiance to their imperfect implements and simple arts ; and they are scarcely ever discovered far inland, unless in the vicinity of some large river or lake. Those, however, in this district have this distinguishing feature, that they are situated nearly midway between the east and west seas, and occupy a position almost on the very backbone of this part of Britain.

About a mile westward from these tumuli are three large cairns, in Askerton Park, near the eastern end of the Mollen Wood. They are situated near each other, and are constructed of large stones. The cairn is only another and more artificial form of tumulus, and is frequently found in combination with the latter. The tumulus may be considered a mound of earth, while the cairn is a mound of stones. Pennant, in his voyage to the Hebrides, speaking of cairns, says, "These piles may be justly supposed to have been proportioned in size to the rank of the person, or to his popularity ; the people of a whole district assembled to show their respect to the deceased, and by an active honouring of his memory, soon accumulated heaps equal to those that astonish us at this time. But these honours were not merely those of the day ; as long as the memory of the deceased existed, not a passenger went by

without adding a stone to the heap ; they supposed it would be an honour to the dead, and acceptable to his *manes*. To this moment there is a proverbial expression among the Highlanders allusive to the old practice ; a suppliant will tell his patron, *curri mi cloch er do charne* (I will add a stone to your cairn), meaning, when you are no more I will do all possible honour to your memory." The tops of cairns were also possibly used as high places of sacrifice. Monuments like these cannot fail to arrest the attention and impress the mind no less by their intrinsic interest as the creations of human genius, than by the remote antiquity with which they are associated, and as their long-buried mysteries present themselves so frequently in the course of this survey, I trust this digression may be readily pardoned.

(400 yards.) Returning to the Maiden Way we find that at 7090 yards it arrives at the Little Beacon Tower, leaving an excellent track over all this hilly ground. There can be no doubt that this tower was the work of the Romans. It has evidently been a mountain post for a body of Roman sentinels. It is placed on the western side of the road. It has been 18 feet square on the outside, and the walls have been 3 feet thick. The entrance has been on the north side. The lower part of the walls (about 6 feet high) is still standing, but it is surrounded by the stones which have fallen down from the higher part of the tower. The Roman ashlar are numerous. The situation of this tower has probably been a forest at some former period, as appears from the many large trunks of trees which are dug out of the adjacent peaty ground. Gibbon says, "the spirit of improvement had passed the Alps, and been felt even in the woods of Britain, which were gradually cleared away to open a free space for convenient and elegant habitations." It is now an almost barren moor, of a very forbidding aspect, and seemingly protected by its natural barriers from the encroachment of hostile armies. The prospect from this tower is very extensive. It might exchange signals with most of the stations on the western part of the Roman Wall, and with many points on the Maiden Way to the south of Birdoswald, and also with nearly all the detached Roman stations and encampments in Cumberland.

About a quarter of a mile on the west side of this tower, at the extreme point of this high ridge of land, are some

traces of foundations, which are generally called "The Beacon." When the office of Lord Warden of the Marches was appointed, A.D. 1296, beacons were ordered to be raised in different parts of the country. This was then called "Spade Adam Top." These foundations are very irregular, as may be seen by the annexed plan, the measurements being in yards. (Scale 30 yards to an inch.) They are full of stones which are covered with turf. On the north wall is a small mound of stones about 4 yards in diameter, which appears to have been the foundation of a tower. From this summit, one of the grandest and most extensive prospects comes under the eye, including a large part of both kingdoms, and signals might be exchanged to a vast distance. All the lower parts of Cumberland appear like a vast table beneath, stretched out over several hundred square miles. Innumerable rivulets roll their streams through the fertile vales, while the rich profusion of hill and dale, and swelling eminences, add beauty to this charming prospect.

About a quarter of a mile to the north-west of "The Beacon" are the foundations of a tower, from which this part of the hill is called "The Tower Brow." It has been a building with very thick walls, and was taken down a few years since to build the adjoining fences. It was 15 yards long and 8 yards broad, and situated within the south side of an enclosure or stone rampart of the shape of a rhomboid 35 yards on each side. (See plan, scale 30 yards to an inch.) It appears to have had a *pistrina*, i. e. a kiln for drying corn, on the north side. A stone with some rude tracings or mouldings upon it, and which may possibly have been part of a door or window, was taken from this tower, and placed in the stone wall on the side of the road near the Wintershields, where it may still be seen.

The "Ancient Ditch" passed the groundworks, or Mile

Castle, on the side of the Beacon pasture below the Little Beacon Tower ; it then turned down the hill towards the tumuli, being in some places several yards wide ; it passed round the tumuli on the south side, then ascended the hill to the Beacon, thence to the tower on the Tower Brow ; and proceeded past the cairn on the north side of the Tower Brow.

About a quarter of a mile westward from the last-mentioned tower, is a small conical green mound like a tumulus. It is situated on the north side of the syke, nearly opposite the Wintershields. This mound, however insignificant it may appear, may nevertheless contain the relics of some Tower Brow chieftain whose bones are now crumbled into dust.

About two miles to the north-west from the Tower Brow, near a place called "the Birkbush," are some small mounds full of black slag, where the smelting of iron has been carried on at some former period. Whether these mounds are of Roman construction is certainly doubtful, but at all events they point to a period after the discovery of the art of smelting ores, and the consequent substitution of metallic implements and weapons for those of stone. The ore has been smelted with charcoal, and the slag is therefore very heavy, a great part of the iron being left in it. If it was necessary to use charcoal now, so great is the demand for iron, that nearly half the surface of our island must be devoted to the growth of wood for our iron manufacture alone. In the beginning of the seventeenth century an attempt was made to smelt iron with coal, which succeeded, and the iron trade, which had been almost extinguished for want of fuel, revived, and progressed with the most astonishing rapidity.

On the Tower Brow, and other hills over which the Maiden Way passes, may be seen a great number of small circular holes or pits. They are generally in groups, and range in a continuous line. Can they have been the dwellings of some ancient inhabitants of this district ? Sir R. C. Hoare, in his valuable work on "Ancient Wiltshire," describes these earlier habitations as pits or slight excavations in the ground, covered and protected from the inclemency of the weather by boughs of trees and sods of turf ; and he says that occasionally flint arrow-heads are found, mixed with

bones and other refuse, indicating their connection with the earliest races whose weapons are known to us.⁵

On leaving the Little Beacon Tower, the Maiden Way continues in the same straight line forwards to the north-west across the moor, the footpath from Gilsland passing along it, and at the distance of about 150 yards it crosses a road to the peat moss, which is thickly covered with stones at the point of crossing, but on no other part of it. About 90 yards farther onwards it crosses the ditch which divides the Gilalees Beacon pasture from the undivided common called "the Side Fell." This ditch appears to have been crossed by a small arch, or a large conduit, as there is a great number of large stones, both flagstones and ashlers, and on the south side there is an appearance of a wall. On the north side of this ditch the way is very distinctly marked for about fifty yards, being raised about two feet, and being about twelve feet wide. The edging stones seem to have been removed. On clearing away the rubbish in several places, I could find no edging stones, except in one place on the east side, where I found three large stones like edging stones, one of them being about three feet long.

(390 yards.) At 7480 yards it passes two rows of stones lying on the west side of the Way, one row adjoining the end of the other. Each is six feet long and two feet broad. They appear as if they might have been the graves of two common soldiers, and the rows of stones laid to show the spot where the corpse was deposited. To some readers these minute observations may appear undeserving of notice. In tracing the vestiges of ancient occupation, however, the smallest facts may supply evidence, and claim attention.

The ground about this place is very soft, mossy, and broken, and the large stones of the Maiden Way answer very well for stepping-stones for foot-passengers. The most western source of the river King is about this place.

(440 yards.) At 7920 yards it arrives at the corner of the stone wall which divides the Side Fell from the High-house farm. From this point, which is the summit of the ridge, it begins to descend into the vale of Bewcastle. About eighty yards on the east side of the corner of the stone wall

⁵ See the account of Pen Pits, *Ancient Wilts*, vol. i. p. 35. Pits supposed to have been British habitations occur in

Berkshire, *Archæologia*, vol. vii. p. 236. See also Young's *Hist. of Whitby*, vol. ii. p. 666.

is a small green knowe, easily distinguished by its fresh greensward from the adjoining heath, with the ruins of a small circular watch-tower, three yards in diameter. By being thus placed it commands a view of the Little Beacon Tower and the Braes Tower, but it could not exchange signals with the Station at Bewcastle.

Another Way branches off here, taking a course a little more to the east, and aiming for the Braes Tower, which stands on the rising ground on the opposite side of the valley. It passes a ruin at a place called "the Side;" a *pistrina* in Robert Calvert's meadow; the Cold Well at the foot of the Breckony-brow; on the east side of the High Oakstock; on the east side of the Bush Farm buildings; and joins the Maiden Way again at the Dollerline.

(130 yards.) At 8050 yards the Maiden Way enters the corner of the High-house Meadow, the boundary wall being built upon it for the last 130 yards. Here it makes a bend a little more to the west, and makes a direct aim towards the cairn on the north side of the Tower Brow. The wall, which is the boundary of the Side Fell, here makes a sharp turn to the east.

(160 yards.) At 8210 yards it enters the High-house pasture, crossing the fence about fifty yards from the Side ground. Here the footpath across the wastes from Gilsland leaves the Maiden Way. At the point where the Way crosses the fence, there appears to be a section of the road still left in the middle of the hedge, which is visible on the northern side. There is a watercourse running along it, eight inches square, and paved at the bottom. The stones are thickly coated with grey and brown crust; and it has the appearance of having been the work of the Romans.

(200 yards.) At 8410 yards it reaches the summit of a Brown knowe, a little to the south-west of the High-house Farm buildings. This knowe is covered with short stunted heather, very uneven, and abounds with large grey stones. From this knowe the Maiden Way makes a turn to the north-east, aiming direct for the Braes Tower, and through the Bush buildings, between the Barn and the Byers. There is also an appearance of the Way being continued straight forwards from this knowe to the cairn on the top of the Tower Brow, which is distant about 300 yards.

This cairn is a circular heap of stones about twenty yards

SURVEY OF THE MAIDEN WAY.

in diameter. The greater part of the stones has been carted away to build the adjoining fences. The prospect from this cairn is very extensive, being bounded by the silvery Solway on the west, and on the north by the bonnie blue hills which form a barrier between England and Scotland about fifty miles long. A sentinel placed near this cairn would command a view of the enemy's movements to a very great distance northwards. Immediately underneath, on the north, lies the parish of Bewcastle, abounding in pastoral and romantic scenery, and famed for many brave heroes who in the days of yore signalised themselves in defence of their country. A short way down the steep declivity on the north side of this cairn is a fine spring of water called "Hespie's Well." Can this Hespie or Hespéc have been some ancient chieftain in this district? There is a cairn of great magnitude called "Hespéc-raise," on the summit of Castle Carrock Fell, about fifteen miles from this place.

(260 yards.) The Maiden Way makes a turn to the north-east from the Brown knowe towards the Braes Tower, passes about eighty yards on the west-side of the High-house, and at 8670 yards enters the Side sheep pasture, about forty yards from the south-west corner, crossing a stone boundary wall, which appears to be made of quite a different sort of stones at the point of crossing, being probably made from the stones which had been used for the road. This is very evidently seen on the north side of the wall. From this point the Way descends rapidly among the varied beauties of the vale of Bewcastle, with its chalet-like farm-houses far up the slopes on both sides.

We may now diverge for a short distance from the line, in order to view an old ruin situated about 200 yards eastward from this point at a small hamlet called the Side. This ruin is about eighteen yards square, covered with turf, and in no part exceeding two feet in height. It is on the east-side of the branch Maiden Way, which passes close to it. It may have been a Mile castle. The old building was taken down about twenty years since, and the stones were used in the newly erected dwelling-house and barn. Many of these stones have an antique appearance. It had remarkably thick walls, and was two storied, the entrance being from the north. Some strong iron chains were found

by the masons, with links about two feet long. It is situated on the slope of a steep and high hill, and would be a good place for a watch-tower, as there is a defile on the south-east side which it would guard. It would command an extensive view to the north, being in full view of the station at Bewcastle, but not visible from the Little Beacon Tower.

About a hundred yards below the Side, on the edge of a small ravine, in Robert Calvert's meadow, are the ruins of an ancient *pistrina*. Here the attention of the antiquary must be arrested by one of the most beautiful phenomena of vegetable development—the evolution of the circinate fronds of the fern—a plant in every respect associated with elegance and beauty of form, and which grows very luxuriantly in this ravine.

Skirting past the south-east corner of the High-house wood, the Maiden Way crosses the Whitebeck rivulet, about forty yards below the gate leading out of the Herdhill; it leaves a plot of stones near the middle of the White Knowe, and a larger quantity may serve to mark the track in the sod fence, where it enters into the Wood-head closes.

(1400 yards.) At 10,070 yards it crosses a road leading to the wastes, at the distance of ninety yards from the north-east corner of the Oakstock ground. This road to the wastes is merely a cart-track, never having been covered with stones to the east; but to the west there is a branch Maiden Way from this point to the station at Bewcastle, and as far as the waste road follows the track of this branch (nearly 500 yards) it is thickly covered with stones of every shape and size, which have never been broken small.

(280 yards.) At 10,350 yards it arrives at a farm-house called "the Bush," which appears to bear the marks of great antiquity about it, but it is impossible to form any certain conclusion as to what it may have been, as the garden and farm-buildings have been placed on its site. There appears to have been a rampart on the south side of the garden, about fifty yards long, from east to west, with a small round tower at the west end. The stones have been removed, and the occupier stated that on digging the garden he finds a great quantity of bones. About two years since, he added a small piece of ground to his garden, and it was so full of stones, that he was obliged to remove many cart-loads before he could dig it properly. As the Romans were not in the

habit of burying their dead within their cities or stations, this may probably have been the cemetery for the station at Bewcastle, and the adjacent towers and fortlets. About 60 yards on the south-west side of the Bush are the remains of a *pistrina*, three feet in diameter and three feet six inches in the highest part, the stones showing strong traces of the fire. There is also a well of excellent water on the west side.

(300 yards.) At 10,650 yards it reaches another remarkable ruin, called "the Dollerline," which may possibly have been another Mile castle. The foundations show it to have been a place about twelve yards long and eleven yards broad. They are now covered with turf, and not more than four feet in the highest part. It seems to have been protected by an outer rampart on the east, west, and north sides, with a *pistrina* adjoining the outer rampart on the north side. The river Kirkbeck, a purely pastoral stream, flows close to the east and north sides, and must have been crossed here by the Maiden Way, but there are no traces of a bridge. This place has probably been a fortress to defend the passage of the river. The other way, which branched off on the summit of the Side Fell, joins here again; hence, possibly, the name—*de altera linea*—Dollerline. It is about 700 yards above the station at Bewcastle. On the east side of the way, between the Bush and the Dollerline, are three small mounds of stones, which may have been either the foundations of small towers, or burial-places.

The Bush and Dollerline are situated at the head of an extensive plain which would be well adapted for the different sorts of martial exercise of the Roman warriors, or a grand review. At the head of the plain is a pretty little waterfall, and farther up the river, in a rather secluded corner, is one of nature's softer scenes—the union of two lovely winding glens, through which the rivers Kirkbeck and Greensburn pursue their whimpering course—now straying round a rocky scaur, now hiding underneath the grassy brows, and now playing o'er the white freestone linns, till at last they unite their murmuring waters. The rugged and precipitate banks on each side are covered with the hazel and coppice, and when gladdened by the singing birds form a sweet and peaceful scene of rural beauty.

(To be continued.)