

SKETCH MAP OF THE

MOORLAND PLYM

Scale one Inch to a Mile

THE MOORLAND PLYM.

BY MR. R. HANSFORD WORTH, C.E.

(Read 19th December, 1889.)

INTRODUCTION.

DARTMOOR is to-day a survival from the past, and bears upon its surface undisturbed the relics of an early civilization long since superseded.

Although at present a practically uninhabited waste, its population in Keltic and pre-Keltic times must have been considerable; perhaps, even, its hill slopes were preferred to the more sheltered but less open lower lands.

As agriculture advanced, the slopes of Dartmoor suffered in competition with more fertile valleys, and thus the greater part of its surface has remained undisturbed since an early period.

Although destitute of agricultural advantages, the valleys of Dartmoor were rich in tin; and the presence of this metal continued, within the last few centuries, to draw and retain a considerable population on the Moor.

Fortunately, however, tin-streaming from its nature is not a work which destroys all traces of previous occupation; and thus the remains now to be found extend from a very early to a comparatively recent date.

Though never seriously threatened by cultivation, Dartmoor has suffered much at the hands of unauthorized prophets. It is strange that so many poets who have undertaken descriptions of the Moor seem to have considered that cultivation would be a great improvement on the present state of affairs; and in several cases the wish has been the father of thoughts such as are expressed in the following lines:

“Yes, let the waste lift up the exulting voice!
 Let the far-reaching solitude rejoice!
 And thou, lone Moor! where no blithe reaper’s song
 E’er lightly sped the summer hours along,

Bid thy wild rivers, from each mountain source,
 Rushing in joy, make music on their course !
 Thou, whose sole records of existence mark
 The scene of barbarous rites, in ages dark,
 And of some nameless combat ; hope's bright eye
 Beams o'er thee in the light of prophecy !
 Yet shalt thou smile, by busy culture drest,
 And the rich harvest wave upon thy breast !
 Yet shall thy cottage smoke, at dewy morn,
 Rise, in blue wreaths, above the flowering thorn ;
 And, midst thy hamlet shades, the embosomed spire
 Catch from deep-kindling heavens their earliest fire."

These lines, written by Mrs. Hemans, obtained a prize, not from an agricultural association, but from a society formed with the ostensible purpose of cultivating literature and art.

This evening, however, we are more interested with the past and present of the Moor than with predictions as to its future.

BOUNDARIES AND AREA.

The Moorland Plym, as I would define it, commences at the junction of the Plym and the Meavy at Shaugh Bridge, and ends at Plym Head. Its valley, including those of all tributary streams which join this length of river, is bounded by a line starting at Shaugh Bridge, and running thence up the ridge to Shaugh Beacon ; thence in a fairly straight line, but with a slight curve near Hawks Tor, to Blackaton Cross, and, passing through the big pond above Leemoor, to Shell Top.

At this point the boundary turns to pass over the high and swampy land midway between Erine Head and Shavercombe Head. From thence to Broad Rock the boundary of the Plym valley is identical with that of Shaugh parish, which it leaves at Broad Rock to sweep round Plym Head to Caters Beam. Returning on the north side of the river, through Eylesbarrow and past the disused tin mine, near the old blowing-house, through Whittenknowle Rocks, to the south of Gutter Tor, taking in with a sweep a large portion of Ringmoor, to Brisworthy Plantation, across Wigford Down to the top of Dewerstone Hill, and down the slope of this hill to Shaugh Bridge once more.

The boundary-line thus indicated is about fifteen and a half miles in length, and encloses an area of thirteen and a quarter square miles.

The actual length of the main river above Shaugh Bridge is seven and five-eighths miles, and the various tributary streams add as follows. On the south side :

Dunstone Brook	a quarter of a mile.
Blackabrook	seven-eighths of a mile.
Spanish Lake	three-quarters.
Hentor or Wallabrook	one and an eighth.
Shavercombe	one and three-sixteenths.
Langcombe Brook	one and a quarter.
Calveslake	one-eighth.

On the north side, starting as before from Shaugh Bridge :

Brisworthy Brook	three-eighths of a mile.
Legis Lake	three-quarters.
Meavy Pool	one-eighth.
Drizzlecombe	one mile.
Evilcombe	one-eighth.

And another a little above Evilcombe also one-eighth, making the total length of main tributary streams eight and one-sixteenth miles; while the river and tributaries taken together amount to about fifteen and three-quarter miles.

In the foregoing list most streams worthy of the name have been included; but in rough weather or flood-time the length would be considerably increased.

It will be seen that the southern tributaries not only outnumber, but are individually much larger than, the northern.

With the exception of a small portion of its course, near Ditsworthy, the river runs for almost its entire length through granitic formations; but at Ditsworthy a patch of altered slate overlies the granite, and stretches across the valley.

SHAVERCOMBE.

Shavercombe brook, which joins the Plym near this point, runs for a considerable distance over a slate bed.

As a result the Shavercombe valley presents a singular contrast to the surrounding scenery. The stream has hollowed for itself a deep gorge with fairly precipitous sides, and terminating at its higher end in a cliff of slate rock about twenty feet high, over which in wet weather the brawling little torrent hurls itself impetuously, only to be received in the deep pool below; here, after

tossing round with all the fury of unreasoning haste, it finally swirls about an old tree trunk, and tumbling over itself in anxiety to escape and impatience of delay, clatters under, over, and between the boulders down to the river.

But the streamlet enjoys as a monopoly the right to disturb the quiet of the little valley, and in this sheltered spot the strongest wind, blow it from what quarter it may, is only felt or heard in gentle sighs.

And hence some certain trees have planted themselves, and flourish exceedingly—a few oaks, a sycamore, a mountain ash—adventurous colonists, separated from their nearest fellows by some four or five miles or more. Yet no tree among them dare call his top branches his own; for no sooner may he push a few tentative shoots above the level of the enclosing gorge, than the wind straightway planes them off.

After this rude check of higher and more ambitious aspirations comes contentment perforce, and lively gratitude to the sheltering valley, which, not unmixed with an enlightened self-interest, stimulates to increased exertion in safer regions.

The sides of the valley are covered with fern and sedge, which here replace the heather and bracken, and even the rock is everywhere hidden by a rich layer of dark green moss, which shines in places with a bright and almost iridescent radiance, making still darker the velvet depth of its shadows.

Through the entrance to the valley, and in strong contrast to the immediate surroundings, one may catch a distant glimpse of brown and purple hillside. Altogether it is a spot such as the wildest imagination would never picture as existing among these bare and desert hills.

In referring to it I have been led to digress from the order which I had intended to follow, because its peculiarities seemed so intimately associated with the geology of the district.

SHAUGH BRIDGE AND DEWERSTONE VALLEY.

I now purpose taking you back to Shaugh Bridge, and working my way up stream, noting the points of interest on either side of the valley in the order of their geographical position. I have chosen this method in preference to any classification because I think it more natural, and better calculated to convey an accurate impression of the whole subject.

Shaugh Bridge is a comparatively modern structure, and some fifty or sixty years ago was considered to lack in picturesqueness, while the loss of the old bridge was much lamented. As a lesson to those who now grieve over the substitution of modern erections for ancient and picturesque structures, I would point to the present appearance of this bridge, and add that much comes to those who have the patience to wait fifty or sixty years for it.

A loss which cannot be remedied by time has of late years been caused by the destruction of many of the stepping-stones just above the bridge. This was done by the men working at the Ferroceramic mine, with a view to enabling them to exact toll from all persons wishing to cross the river, by forcing them to use the mine bridge. At least, that is the only reason that can be given for this wanton act of mischief.

From Shaugh Bridge to near Cadover the river bed is thickly strewn with boulders of large size, as are the precipitous hillsides enclosing it.

The Dewerstone hill in especial is mainly surfaced with granite blocks, piled in places one above the other in bare grey masses of confusion, in others deeper set in soil, and permitting the coppice of sturdy oak to obtain scant but sufficient holding ground.

From the midst of this thicket rises the perpendicular face of the Dewerstone, towering high above the river. Majestic rather from its form than from its actual height, which has been much exaggerated, one is still inclined to doubt the truth of tradition in asserting that on the night of the 27th January, 1823, the flooded Plym, indignant at this check to its triumphant course, flung the snow water in spray above the topmost crag. The idea is poetical truly, and inasmuch as the event occurred at night, it is hardly fair perhaps to be too severe in criticising the chroniclers. At least this much is certain, that the united forces of the Plym and Meavy filled old Shaugh Bridge to the keystone, and overflowed the road.

Beside the largest rock, this portion of the valley also includes the deepest and most important pool upon the upper Plym. It is situate in the north wood, and is of more interest to the fishermen than the general public. At its upper end the river runs into it over a wall of rock some twelve feet high, the main stream coming down in a body with only one slight ledge to break its fall halfway. Considering the difficulty of surmounting such

an obstacle, it is no wonder that the salmon and peel should pause for a time in the quiet depths of the great pool before hazarding an attempt.

The first stage of the ascent is sufficiently easy. Rising perpendicularly through a depth of twelve or thirteen feet, the athletic fish springs some four or five feet in the air, and descends on the first ledge. Exposed here to the full force of the falling water, the usual result is, that before recovery is possible the adventurous voyager is roughly hurled back into the depths below.

Nothing dismayed, attempt follows attempt, until at last some mysterious finhold is obtained upon the rock or water, and, half swimming, half leaping, with swift strokes of its powerful tail, the undaunted salmo literally scales the waterfall, and attains the pool above.

In flood-time lesser streamlets trickle over the surface of the rock, and by these peel, even as small as three-quarters of a pound in weight, contrive to ascend. There is no living creature that for pluck and perseverance can excel a salmon.

On the hills above the river are scattered some few remains of early habitation. On the plateau which extends to the north of Shaugh Beacon are a few hut-circles, which present no unusual features.

The summit of the Dewerstone hill has been fortified, as the foundations of many walls attest. Across the neck of land between this and Wigford Down a pair of walls some twelve feet apart are still traceable, and behind these the remains of another, which apparently once completely surrounded the summit of the hill.

On Wigford Down are a number of small cairns of stones, of which the origin and use cannot now be decided; possibly they may be sepulchral, possibly the result of some attempt to rid the land of rocks prior to cultivation. If the latter, then singularly unsuccessful; for in this land if you move one stone you merely disclose another. Excavation might settle the nature of these relics. Near the angle of Cadworthy Farm is a kistvaen, the cover-stone of which measures four feet by four feet, and still rests on one of the sides. A circle of about twenty feet diameter of large stones surrounds it, and near by, to the north, stand two more circles, in one of which are what may be the remains of another kistvaen, while the other is an undoubted hut-circle.

On the height of Wigford Down, which overlooks Cadover, are a group of remains. These consist of a kistvaen, the cover-stone of which has been removed, and now lies to one side, while the tomb itself has collapsed; around the kist is a circle twenty-four feet in diameter, the stones composing which are exceptionally large, the dimensions of one being nine feet by four feet by three feet.

About 150 yards to the north of this kistvaen, and on the highest point of the hill, is a confused mass of stones about seventy-two feet in diameter. This heap is now in too disturbed a state for any trace of its original arrangement to be discovered. Whether therefore it is merely the base of a cairn which has been robbed of the greater number of its stones, or of some chambered erection, it is impossible to say; but personally I incline to the latter theory.

To the west is an elliptical enclosure, 90 feet on the longer axis and 57 feet on the shorter. There are other less important remains in the immediate vicinity.

Walking toward Cadover Bridge we shall find two tumuli of small size, and near them an old cross set in a small artificial mound, with a trench dug round it. This cross had lain on the ground for many years, but was placed erect as we now find it by the soldiers, during the autumn manœuvres some years ago. (See figure 1.)

On the other side of the river, at the corner of Shaden Brake, where the field-path from Shaugh rejoins the Cadover road, is another old cross, which, less fortunate than the last, has fallen, not to be re-erected, but to be converted into one of the stepping-stones of a stile. It seems a pity to let it lie as it now is, especially as some years ago I found its socket on the slope of Hawks Tor, in the angle between the Cadover and Plympton roads. It would be a very small matter to carry this old cross back to its socket, and re-erect it.

CADOVER BRIDGE TO BLACKABROOK.

From Cadover Bridge to the Blackabrook the river runs in a wide, flat valley, very different to that portion of the course which we have just surveyed. The stream itself consists of alternate long, deep pools and sharp stickles, and not only the bed of the river, but the whole of the valley on this length, is almost entirely free from boulders.

The only antiquities of note are on the southern bank, and the first to which I shall refer lies, strictly speaking, just outside the Plym valley.

On the summit of Hawks Tor is a curious arrangement of rocks, claimed by some as natural, by others as artificial. The square jointing of the granite has left in the solid rock which crowns the tor a rectangular area, enclosed on three sides by granite walls formed in the living rock. So far, I believe, all agree in assigning this object a natural origin.

Over the area thus left in the rock extends a large, thin, flat slab, which is a separate block, and is not a part of the solid pile. This block forms, in fact, a roof to the chamber left by the jointing, and is the debatable point, it being argued on one side that it fell where it now lies without the assistance of man; while others hold that its position points to an artificial origin. The latter is, I think, the correct interpretation of the facts.

First as to the theory that it fell where it now lies. Being at the highest point of the rocks it had nowhere to fall from, except possibly the skies.

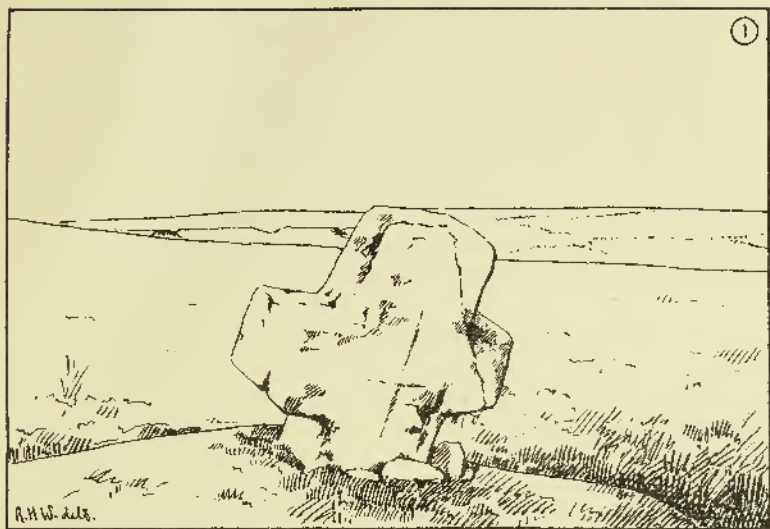
Admitting, however, its possible aerial origin, and that is admitting a great deal, there still remains what to my mind is absolute proof of man's assistance.

On the western side the granite wall enclosing the chamber is lower than on the eastern; and accordingly the slab, if rested directly on these, would be on an incline. To obviate this the western wall has been raised to a level with the eastern by the addition of a rounded granite boulder; and by resting on this, the surface of the slab is brought to a level. No more thoroughly artificial arrangement could be desired. It is a difficult matter to classify this antiquity—perhaps it might be called a cromlech. (See figure 2.)

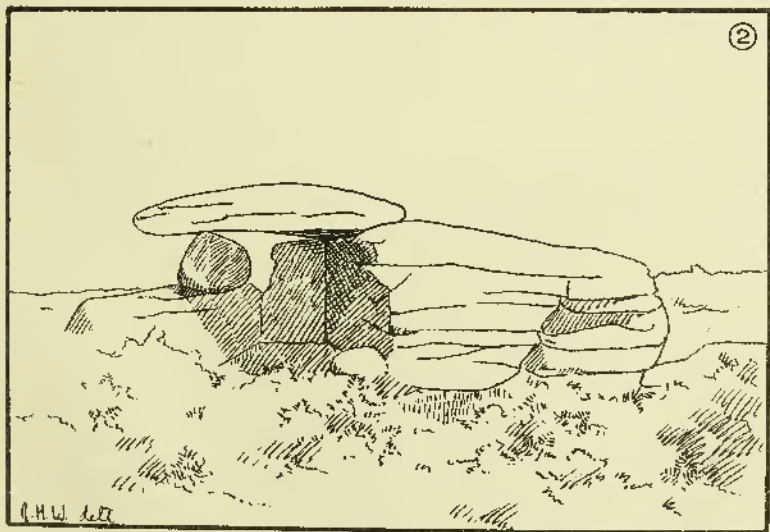
In the angle between the Shaugh and Leemoor roads at Cadover Bridge are the remains of two or three walled buildings, but their nature and use are now undiscoverable.

Just above the lower reservoir belonging to the Shaugh clay works are the remains of an old enclosure and several hut circles.

The enclosure is not strictly circular, but measures 232 feet on its north and south diameter, and thirty feet less, or 202 feet, from east to west. Within it are four hut-circles and the remains of an oval erection of similar nature.



CADOVER BRIDGE.



HAWK S TOR.

The circles are all in the northern half of the enclosure, which touches the circumferences of three of them. These three are thirteen feet, thirteen feet, and fourteen feet in diameter respectively and are spaced exactly forty-six feet apart centre to centre. The fourth circle is twenty-six feet in diameter, and, unlike the others, does not touch the wall of the enclosure, but is seven feet off it.

The oval is twenty-four feet on its greater axis. The whole forms a good specimen of the ordinary enclosed villages, of which there are many in this valley. There is another smaller enclosure near.

We cross the Blackabrook by a clapper bridge of single span; and while walking up the eastern bank of this little brook we shall be able to observe evidences of the streaming industry, which are presented by artificial piles of stone, and the deep-cut gullies to be seen on either bank.

Resolutely keeping our eyes closed to all other objects of interest, we at length reach the head waters of the Blackabrook near the big pond at Leemoor.

By going back a little in our course we may inspect two objects which appeared against the sky line when we were in the valley below. These are Blackaton, or Roman Cross, and Emmett's Post, both close by the Leemoor road. The cross is at present about six feet in height; but prior to its restoration by Earl Morley was, I believe, much shorter. It has been suggested by several that it was once dedicated to St. Rumon, hence its name. (See figure 3.)

Emmett's Post at present seems decidedly modern; but that may possibly be due to some Vandal having split the stone, and carted off one half as a gate-post. It stands on a fair-sized tumulus, which at least looks ancient.

TROWLESWORTHY.

From this point can be seen the whole western side of Trowlesworthy Tor, which presents, possibly, more relics of past times to the antiquary than any other equal area on the Moor.

Between this hillside and Emmett's Post lies a fairly flat stretch of country, apparently destitute of trees, shrubs, or bushes of any sort; but in reality having many a willow hidden away in the deep pits left by the old miners.

The southernmost of the remains on Trowlesworthy is a stone avenue.

This avenue is 426 feet long, and consists at present of 114 stones, arranged for the most part in pairs; though in some places, where stones have been removed, standing singly. On an average there seem to have been, when the avenue was perfect, a pair of stones to each six feet in length; and the width, from out to out, is also six feet.

To the north this avenue terminates in a circle of twenty-three feet diameter, consisting of eight stones all standing, and averaging about three feet high.

The stone in this circle which stands nearest the avenue is very curiously shapen. It is broad and flat, and near the base a V shaped piece has been chipped from either side, so as to give it a constricted appearance.

Its total height is 4ft. 9in.; its greatest width 1ft. 11in.; and its greatest thickness 7 inches. The girth at ground level is 5ft. 1in., and at the centre of its height it girths 4ft. 9in.; but at one foot from the ground, where it has been cut as I have described, it only girths 2ft. 10in. At what date or for what purpose this stone was thus cut it is impossible to determine. (See figure 4.)

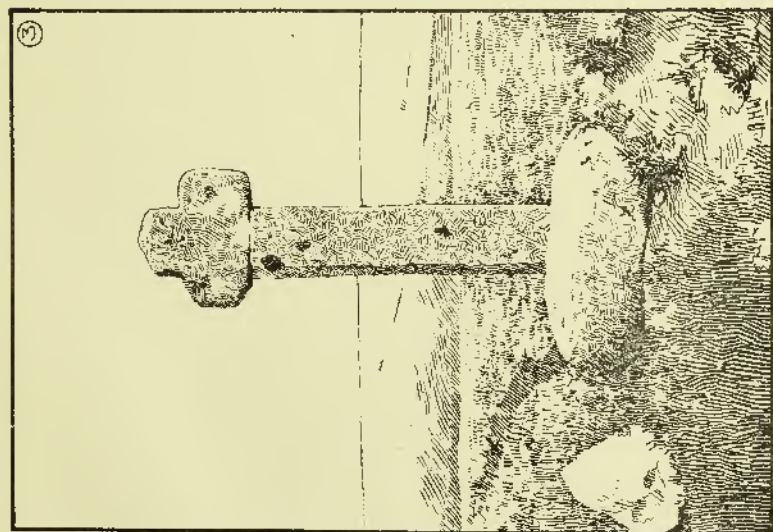
A single pillar stands 112 feet from the south end of this avenue, and a little out of alignment with it. This has had a very narrow escape from being converted into a gate-post, as someone had already cut holes to lead in the lewis bolts, and then for an unknown reason failed to take the stone away.

The avenue runs nearly north and south, but with a slight tendency to the north-east and south-west. It is not, strictly speaking, straight, but curves at the middle of its course slightly to the east.

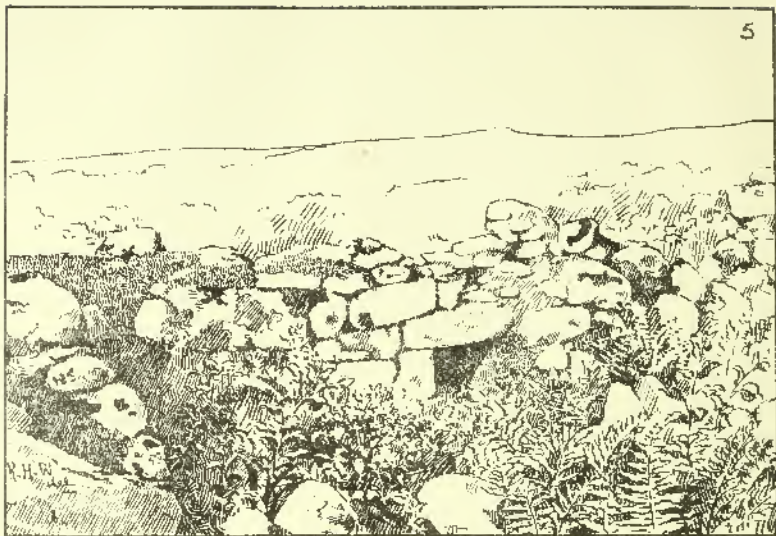
There is another avenue recorded by most observers, and marked on the Ordnance map. But this has always within my recollection been a single and not a double row of stones; and so far as can at present be ascertained it always has been single. No subsequent spoliation will account for the loss of the second row; for it is common experience that the best stones in both rows are usually removed, and not all on one side, as would have been the case in this instance. But the mistake of counting extraneous rocks on either side as fallen members of the avenue may easily have been made.



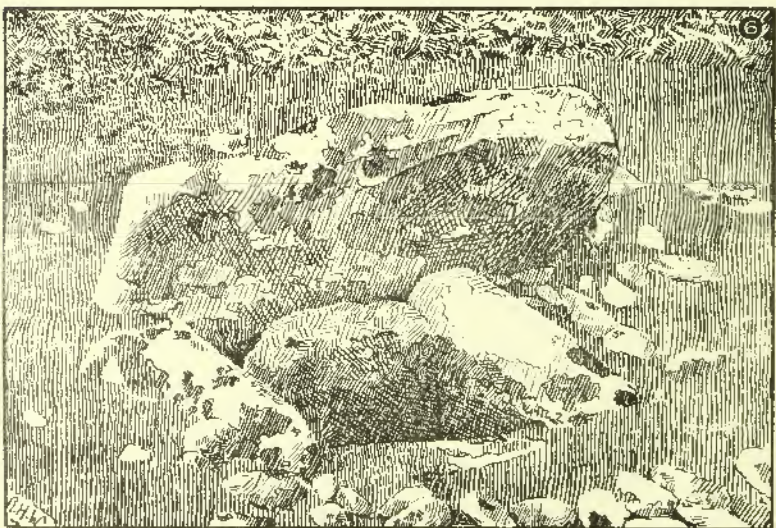
TROWLESWORTHY.



ROMAN CROSS.



HENTOR HOUSE.



DRIZZLECOMBE.

This single row is 254 feet long, and at present consists of thirty-eight stones. At its western end it terminates in a small *mênhir*, which stands four feet in height, and has a girth of eight feet at the base. For 160 feet from this point the row is fairly continuous, with only occasional short intervals where blocks have either been removed, or have fallen and been buried.

In this length there are thirty-one stones; and originally these were apparently spaced about five feet apart, centre to centre.

After this fairly perfect portion comes a gap of fifty-eight feet, and then the row recommences, and contains six more stones of a small size, and ends in another pillar of 3ft. 7in. in height, and 5ft. 8in. girth at base. This is a broad flat stone, and the last left standing of these forming a circle of about twenty feet diameter.

The whole has a bearing fifteen degrees south of east, magnetic, and points very nearly to the circle at the end of the avenue previously mentioned. It is not perfectly straight, but is slightly convex to the northwards. The angle between the directions of the avenue and row is seventy-five degrees, or over the fifth of a circle.

About 440 yards to the north are the ruins of a square building. The main block is thirty-four feet long by eighteen feet wide, and is divided by a stone partition into two compartments. The walls are uniformly three feet in thickness, and built of untrimmed granite blocks. There is a projection on the south side measuring eighteen feet by fourteen feet, and forming a porch. On the south-west corner of the main building a small shelter has been raised, but this is evidently a later erection. (See plan.)

The date of this building cannot be fixed with certainty, but from the style of the masonry, and the thickness of the walls, it should be early. Probably it was in use at the same time as at least some of the many hut-circles in the neighbourhood. At other points in the valley we shall find that we can trace the transition from round to square buildings, and from rough cyclopean masonry to more finished work, in which the stones have been squared and regularly bedded.

Some old enclosures in the immediate vicinity have been modified, apparently to suit the convenience of the owner of this house.

Near this building, and a little to the north of it, is a fortified enclosure, first noted, I believe, by the late Mr. Spence Batc, and

stated by him and subsequent observers to be unique. I have, however, found another, close by the square building just described, the entrances to which are defended in a precisely similar manner, and have observed modifications of this method of fortification at other points in the valley. I will deal more fully with these later on.

The enclosure in question is somewhat irregular in shape; its longest diameter measures about 240 feet, and runs from north to south along the hillside; its shorter is about 200 feet, and runs up the hillside. Within the enclosure are six hut-circles, varying from twenty-two feet diameter, the smallest, to forty-three feet, the diameter of the largest. (See plan.)

At the north and south ends entrances have been formed in the rampart, and these are protected by a curious arrangement of walls, designed evidently to prevent the sudden ingress of enemies. At the north entrance a cross has been built, athwart the gap in the main rampart, and, as you will see, any intruders would have to come singly, and would stand a fair chance of being knocked on the head by gentlemen posted within the inner angle. Mr. Spence Bate, in his sketch of this, showed an entrance also through the centre of the cross, but after careful examination I do not think this ever existed; and in the case of the other fortified enclosure near by, the centre of the cross remains intact at both entrances.

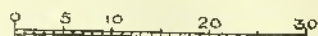
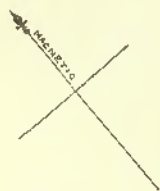
The southern entrance presents a somewhat more complicated arrangement. On the outside of the enclosure the walls are practically the same as those to the north, except that the presence of a large block, which offered a good foundation, has caused the eastern wing to be curved somewhat at its end.

But inside, in the place of the two arms of a cross, the circumference of a large hut-circle has been made do duty, and built out from the circle is a small square chamber very like a sentry-box, and probably used as such.

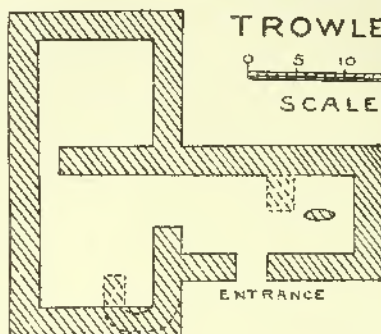
To the east the width of entrance left by this arrangement was still considerable, and accordingly a short wing, twenty feet long, was added to the main rampart, running parallel to the circumference of the hut-circle, and at a distance of 2ft. 6in. from it.

The other enclosure close by, of which the rampart is in places imperfect, has even more perfectly preserved entrances, but both of the simple cross type.

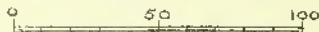
RUINED BUILDING
TROWLESWORTHY



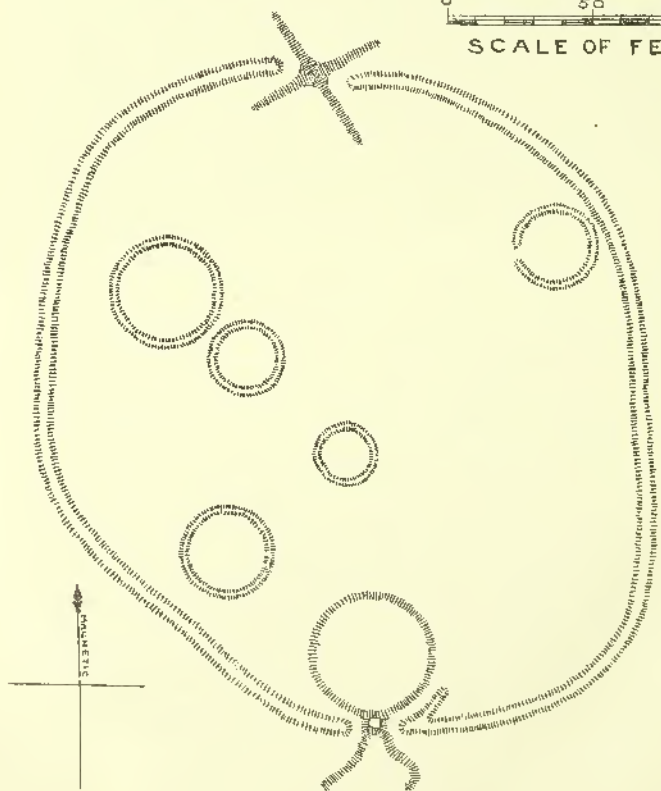
SCALE OF FEET.



FORTIFIED ENCLOSURE
TROWLESWORTHY



SCALE OF FEET.



A little higher on the hill than this last, is a very fine hut-circle, forty feet in diameter, and built apparently partially on an artificial mound, raised to bring the floor level.

There are many hut-circles, and one or two enclosures of the ordinary type, in addition to those already described; and a little to the south of the old smithy is a wall apparently erected for purposes of fortification. (See figure A.)

On one side, the northern, this wall is practically level with the ground, but on the southern it rises with a perpendicular face from an artificial dyke, and, curiously enough, this face is not toward the side from which attack might be expected; on the contrary it is toward the huts and enclosures it seems designed to protect. There is a fortified entrance through this wall, and this being on the high side, also points to the somewhat unusual arrangement of an agger preceding the vallum. This wall runs east and west. Near Trowlesworthy house itself, in addition to many old field enclosures now fallen to ruin, there are the remains of two circular pounds, the one of seventy-four yards in diameter, and with two hut-circles in the centre, and the adjoining one somewhat smaller, with only one hut-circle of about twenty-four feet diameter in the centre. These may possibly represent the old Troule's *Weorthig*. On the other bank of the river, beside the large mounds left by the tin streamers, there are no objects of special interest.

BLACKABROOK TO LANGCOMBE.

From the junction of the Blackabrook upward, the valley of the Plym assumes a bolder character, and for the next mile or so of its course it runs between high banks, and over a bed thickly strewn with boulders.

A little below the Wallabrook the banks recede on either side, the valley widens, and the river, though still having a rapid fall, comes down through a narrow plain, and over an even bed.

At Ditsworthy House the valley narrows again, only to expand once more immediately above the weir pool, and here the southern bank still keeps bold. Above Drizzlecombe and Shavercombe the river enters a gorge, which extends beyond Langcombe.

In this gorge there used to stand, a few years back, a thorn-tree, dwarfed, stunted, and distorted out of all resemblance to most of

its kind, but yet a patriarch holding the post, no sinecure, of highest tree on the Plym valley.

As there was no straight piece of wood longer than two inches in the whole, and even as firewood it did not seem a profitable investment, there were hopes that it might long continue in its honoured position. But last winter it disappeared, and on examination of the spot I found it had been cut down; by whom or for what possible reason I cannot ascertain. It seems a pity that some people will indulge in purposeless destruction.

RINGMOOR AND LEGIS TOR.

To return to the numerous antiquities we have passed in this hasty run up stream. The first to be noticed is a circle of stones on Ringmoor, which has been marked on the Ordnance map as a hut-circle, probably because it evidently is not one. It is seventy-five feet in diameter, and consisted of a number of upright stones, of which at present twenty-one can still be traced, spaced at some considerable distance apart, presenting, in fact, all the characteristics of the so-called "sacred circle." The stones average three feet high by two feet square.

At Trowlesworthy there yet remain to be noticed the fortifications which overlook Spanish Lake, and extend in a broken line from Shell Top to Great and Little Trowlesworthy Tors, and down to the river.

A wall extends from Little Trowlesworthy Tor in a northerly direction to the river, and has at several points openings which show in many cases signs of having once been fortified.

There is an outwork near the small stream known as Spanish Lake, and in a line between Hen Tor and Trowlesworthy, which presents some curious features. A clutter of rocks to a certain extent covers the best ford on this stream, where its high banks are merged in the flat tableland from which it rises. At this point a wall, of which I have placed a plan before you, has been built, so as to make use of and improve on the natural advantages of the place. (See figure B.) There is another outwork of similar character on Legis Tor, to which I shall refer later on.

The late Mr. Spence Bate mentions the ruins of a dismantled cromlech or kistvaen in this neighbourhood; but I do not remember ever having observed it, and have not had time to make a special

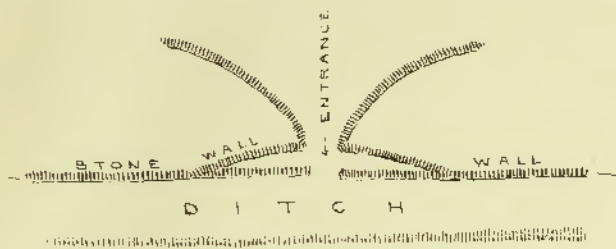


Fig. A.

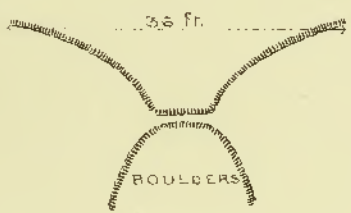


Fig. B.

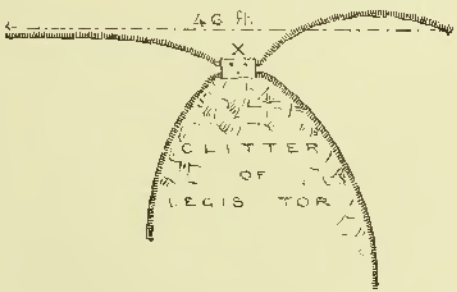
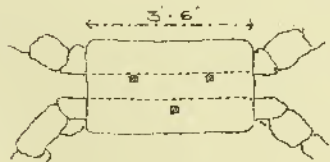


Fig. C.



DETAIL AT X.

H. Mansford Worth det.

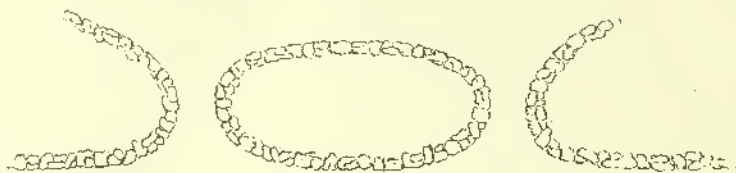
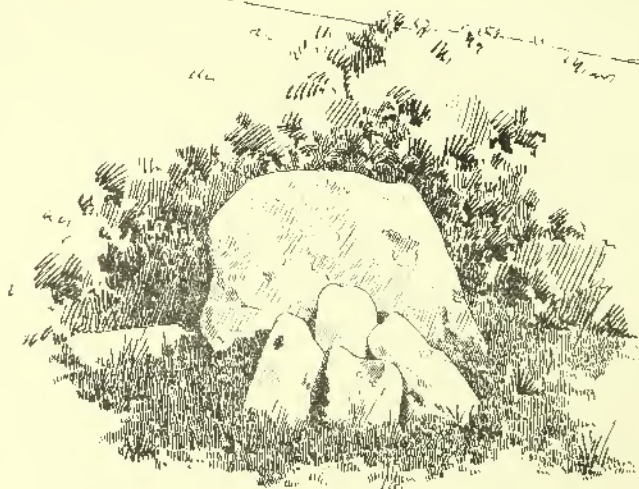


Fig. D.



DRIZZLECOMBE.

B. Mansfield Worthen del.

search. With this we leave Trowlesworthy, which must at one time have been a veritable stronghold, and even now presents more signs of careful and elaborate fortification than any other district in the southern quarter of the Moor. What the reason might have been for such precautions we cannot now know.

The slopes of Legis Tor, on the northern bank, are thickly covered with hut-circles and enclosures, and probably once the population was equal to that on Trowlesworthy. But with the exception of one wall opposite Spanish Lake, and the summit of the tor itself, no efforts at exceptional fortification have been made.

I have prepared a rough plan of the arrangement at the summit of the tor. It will be seen that two of the wing walls embrace a natural pile of rock, and the others, diverging more widely, present an outer rampart. So far all is plain. But in the centre, where the four walls meet, a short channel, six inches wide by ten high, has been formed between two rows of granite stones, and covered in by a square stone 3 ft. 6 in. long and 2 ft. broad. And in this three square holes, each $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$, by $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 inches deep, have been cut to form the points of a triangle, of which two sides are each 1 ft. and the third 1 ft. 7 in. in length. (See figure C.)

I confess I cannot imagine any possible use for all this, but have been led by a series of unfortunate circumstances to conclude that it is a taboo stone.

In the first place, when examining it, I am sorry to say I cut my hand; and secondly, when, having put my knife on the large block, after clearing out the holes with it, I turned my back for a moment, I never saw that knife again, and no amount of search would recover it. Finally, after taking a photograph of this unlucky spot, I discovered, when proceeding to develop it, that I had elaborately re-exposed an old negative. This series of disasters have left a lasting impression on my mind.

On this Tor there is an hitherto unrecorded kistvaen, the cover-stone of which measures 5 feet by 4 feet 1 inch. The sides have fallen in.

A wall which runs north and south from Spanish Lake presents an arrangement of demilunes and circles, evidently intended to protect the entrance. (See figure D.)

HEN TOR.

Crossing from this point to Hen Tor, we shall pass an enclosure with several hut-circles and one square chamber, the latter measuring fifteen feet by twenty-seven feet, and having walls three feet thick. There are no signs of a chimney or fire-place.

At Hen Tor itself there are traces of continuity of occupation from very early to comparatively recent times.

There are mingled hut-circles of varying construction, and the remains of two square buildings of differing types, one of which was last occupied about 120 years ago. Farm and field enclosures are involved with early pounds, and each succeeding generation has somewhat modified its predecessor's work to meet later necessities, this being more especially the case with the field enclosures.

Time will not permit a detailed description of all the remains on this hill.

From the quantity of stone used in their construction the huts would seem to have been of a domed form. In one there are signs of a recess or fire-place in the wall, and many have the door-jambs still standing.

Some four or five of the circles are in a row; and the clutter of the tor behind them has been roughly arranged to form a series of walls extending up-hill in rear of each circle.

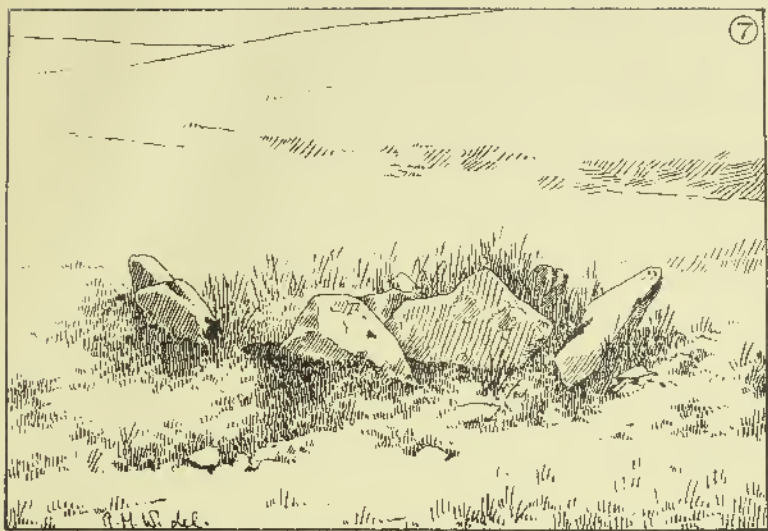
Of the earlier square building I will say no more than that its foundation plan is still complete.

The later building, which is known as Hentor House, has still some of its architectural features preserved.

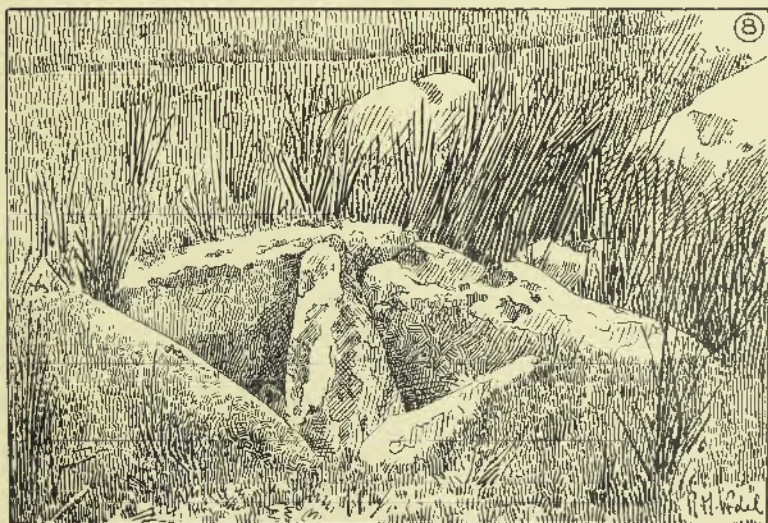
The masonry is of squared stone bedded in clay mortar, containing probably some lime. The earth used in making the mortar is not such as would be obtained in the immediate neighbourhood.

The main building measures 45ft. 4in. by 18ft. 6in., and is divided by a stone partition into two rooms. At one side is an outhouse, and on the northern end another outhouse has been added, the same width as the main building, and having a length of twenty-seven feet. In this latter is a shallow walled pit, apparently a well.

The walls are uniformly three feet thick; and in those of the house itself niches have been left to act as cupboards. Several of these are still perfect, and it was only last year that one was destroyed. (See figure 5.)



GRIMSGROVE.



GRIMSGROVE.

Mr. Ware, of Ditsworthy Warren, and his son were netting rabbits, when one took refuge in one of these niches under a pile of stones. Mr. Ware the younger canvassed the situation, and being a man of practical tendencies proceeded to demolish the wall. Whereupon ensued the following conversation :

“Why, Jack, what be about, a-knockin’ down Mother Nicholls’s book-place, man?”

But Jack the practical replied, “Dang Mother Nicholls’s book-place! I wants the rabbit.”

“And so,” says old Mr. Ware, “he knocked down the old place that had been standing ever since we came here, and that’s nine-and-fifty year ago.”

The last holder of this building and the farm attached was called Nicholls; and an old man named Northmore, still living at Meavy at the age of ninety-two, remembers hearing from his father that his grandfather recollected Nicholls living at the house.

It is said that it took a team of ten oxen to plough the fields of Hen Tor.

Proceeding towards Shavercombe waterfall, we shall pass over comparatively level ground, on which, about 400 feet to the west of the Shavercombe brook and 900 feet above the waterfall, are the remains of a kistvaen, of which the cover-stone has been thrown on one side, while the kist itself has fallen in. A circle of stones surrounds the whole.

In the immediate vicinity are several hut-circles and an enclosure, all built in small slate stone, although granite was obtainable near at hand.

Below the waterfall, on the western side of the valley, is another enclosure built in granite, and surrounding a few hut-circles.

Crossing to the north side of the Plym by Ditsworthy dam, we pass the swamp known as Meavy Pool, and up the valley in which it lies, merely pausing to observe the great heaps thrown up by the streamers, and the remains of a reservoir which they once constructed near the head of their cutting. As no natural stream flows down the valley in ordinary weather a leat was led round from the main river.

And here I would observe that it was my original intention to include these old leats in my survey, but their number, and the necessity for curtailing my remarks, have led to their omission.

DRIZZLECOMBE.

Above this valley to the east are the heights of Eastern Tor and Whittenknowle.

On Eastern Tor a portion of the summit has been enclosed, while among Whittenknowle Rocks are scattered thickly, and apparently without order, the intermingled ruins of round huts and square buildings. This settlement in fact seems to represent a transition period; possibly, however, the square buildings may be comparatively recent, though this does not seem probable. They are of the rudest possible type, and vary from twenty feet long by fifteen broad to thirty feet by twenty.

This settlement overlooks the most important antiquities that will come under our notice this evening.

On the eastern side of the valley known as Drizzlecombe, which joins the main valley of the Plym just opposite Shavercombe, stands a group of remains hitherto, as far as I can discover, undescribed.

They consist of three long rows of stones, each terminated at one extremity by a fallen *mênhir*, and at the other by a barrow; associated with these are two large tumuli, and a large enclosure surrounding two hut-circles.

At a short distance to the north there is a very fine kistvaen, from which the cover-stone has been removed, and there are remains apparently of a stone row leading from this to a small circle of stones, standing and fallen, and probably surrounding another as yet unopened kist. Several other enclosures, all containing hut-circles, are to be found on the slope of this hill.

That all this should have hitherto been either overlooked or regarded as unworthy of description, is the more remarkable, in that the remains cover in all a length of 1418 feet.

Finding that the Ordnance surveyors were blind to the merits of all or most antiquities other than tumuli (a term, by the way, which they use to cover a multitude of facts), I have in this, as in all other cases, taken measurements myself, and have prepared the plan which is now before you. (See plan.)

Starting at the down stream end, we have first a fallen *mênhir*, consisting of a granite block 12 ft. 6 in. long by 5 ft. wide at the larger, and 1 ft. 5 in. at the smaller end, having a uniform thickness of 1 ft. 6 in. or thereabouts.



CAIRN

STONE CIRCLE
[FALLEN]

KISTVAEN

BARROWS



MÊNHIR

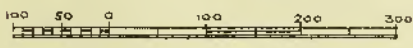
GIANT'S
BASIN



BARROW

MÊNHIR

PLAN OF REMAINS IN
DRIZZLECOMBE.



SCALE OF FEET

MÊNHIR

This *ménhir* forms the commencement of a line 488 feet in length, the stones constituting which are about 1 ft. 6 in. above ground on the average, and are in some places arranged singly, at others in pairs so as to form an incomplete parallellithon.

An examination shows that this has at no time been an avenue throughout its entire length, but that the work of doubling the row of stones was never completed. It is curious that the other two lines associated with this are single throughout their entire lengths.

This row is terminated by a small barrow of about eighteen feet diameter, which apparently covers a kistvaen. A stone, probably the cover of this kistvaen, lies a few feet away from the barrow to the south. If there was ever a kistvaen here it has fallen in, and the earth, stones, and heather have hidden it.

One hundred and nineteen feet to the south-east of this barrow is the large cairn known as Giant's Basin, probably on account of the concavity of its upper surface. This cairn is thirty-four feet in diameter at the top, and eighty-four at the base. Between it and the barrow is a group of stones, consisting of a large flat slab held in an inclined position by resting on smaller blocks.

To the north-west of the barrow, and 132 feet from it, lies another *ménhir*, 9 ft. 5 in. long by 2 ft. 9 in. wide. This forms the end of a row of stones, single throughout with the exception of the pair next the *ménhir*. This row is 491 feet long, and contains seventy-six stones; it terminates at the east in a barrow or tumulus twenty-nine feet wide at base, and surrounded by a stone circle of which nine members can still be traced. These, as are those around the other two barrows, are flat slabs inclined away from the mound, and supported in that position by smaller stones. (See figure 6a.)

About equidistant on either side of this last barrow are two others of similar size, the northern of which has no stone row attached, but is surrounded by a circle, of which thirteen members can still be traced.

The southern barrow, which is sixty-eight feet from the central, is surrounded by a circle, of which twelve stones still remain; and in addition to this a row, now incomplete, extends towards the barrow by Giant's Basin, and terminates, after continuing over 276 feet, in a fallen *ménhir* 17 ft. 10 in. long, 4 feet wide at its longer end, and 2 ft. 7 in. at its smaller, and about 1 ft. 2 in.

thick. The whole row contains, exclusive of the *mênhir*, eleven stones.

Further to the east, and in the alignment of this last row, is an enclosure containing two hut-circles, and last of all a large cairn, fifty-nine feet in diameter.

To the north of all is a *kistvaen* standing on an artificial mound, thirty-five feet in diameter at base. The cover-stone, which measures 6 feet by 4 ft. 3 in., has been raised, and now rests inclined against one of the edges of the kist, which itself measures 4 feet long by 2 ft. 3 in. wide and 3 ft. 6 in. deep. (See figure 6.) An exceedingly fragmentary row extends from this 250 feet to the eastward, where it terminates in a stone circle of twenty feet diameter.

There are several enclosures in the neighbourhood, all of which contain hut-circles.

Before leaving this point I would draw attention to a trifling inaccuracy to be found in Page's work on Dartmoor. I say trifling, because I have reason to believe that more serious errors occur in the same book.

On page 194 I find the following statement concerning the Thornworthy *kistvaen*: "The one now before us is a remarkably fine specimen—as far as I am aware, the only one upon Dartmoor with the cover-stone intact. Instead of lying broken near at hand, the massive slab has been propped on a lump of granite, and rests on one of the sides of the tomb."

Now I know eight undoubted *kistvaens* in the Plym valley alone, and in the case of each of these eight the cover-stone is absolutely intact; a state of affairs hardly in accordance with the implied statement I have just read.

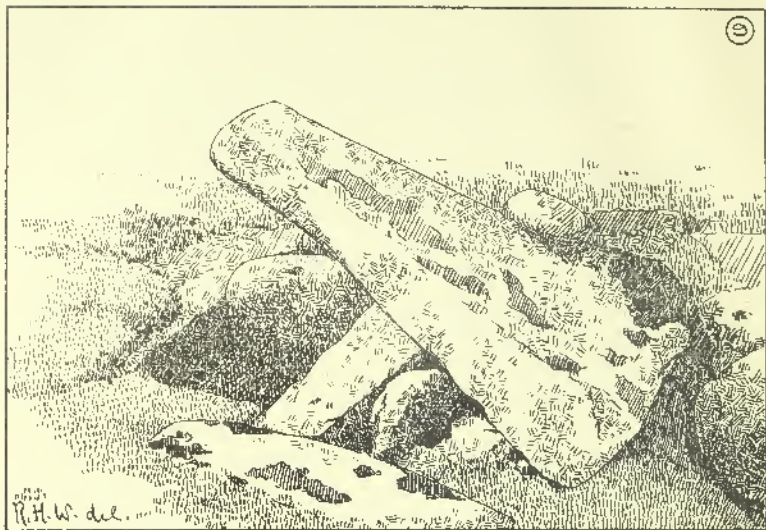
EYLESBARROW TO PLYM HEAD.

As time is getting short I must now pass somewhat hurriedly over the remainder of the valley. On the summit of Eylesbarrow hill are two tumuli, much disturbed, but which from present appearances seem at some time to have been chambered, although this may be due to recent interference.

On the slope of Lower Harter Tor, which faces Langecombe, is a large pound which encloses three hut-circles; while outside it, to the west, is a cairn which has been broken into.

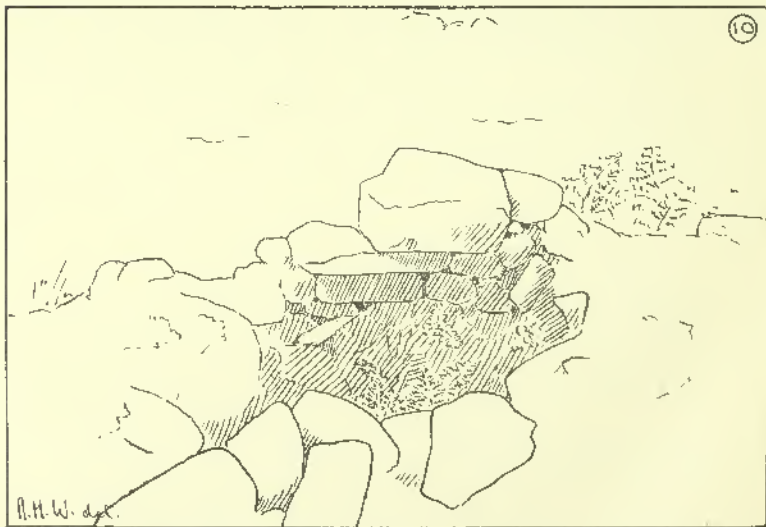
The lower portion of Langecombe bears evidence to considerable

9



CALVESLAKE.

10



EVILCOMBE.

activity on the part of the streamers. A leat which is taken out of the brook on the west side is carried for some distance along the steep slope of the hill in made ground, and to support this a retaining wall of considerable height has been erected. A little further up, and on the eastern side of the combe, is a ruin which may once have been a blowing-house ; but I hazard this statement with caution.

Near the head of Langecombe, on the eastern hill, is the kistvaen known as Grimsgrave, or Grave. The tomb is better built than is usual, and the cover-stone, which has now fallen in, was trimmed square to fit it. The measurements of the kist are 3ft. 3in. by 2ft. 9in., by 2ft. deep, and a circle of stones fourteen feet in diameter surrounds it. This circle contains nine stones, all of which are standing. (See figures 7 and 8.)

Near Calveslake Tor is a mound eighteen feet in diameter, supporting a kistvaen 1ft. 6in. wide, by 3ft. 7in. long, and 1ft. 7in. deep. (See figure 9.)

The cover-stone has been removed, and rests in a slanting position partly overhanging the tomb. It is irregularly shaped, and its longest diagonal is seven feet, its shorter being six feet.

In Evilcombe, opposite Calveslake, are the remains of a beehive hut, the wall of which still stands to a height of 4ft. 6in. The extreme inside diameter of the hut cannot be obtained, but is probably seven or eight feet, while at three feet from the floor the diameter is five feet. This is the only hut in the Plym valley in anything approaching a perfect condition. (See figure 10.)

From Evilcombe to the Abbot's Way the whole ground has been disturbed for tin. Nature left this stretch of country in an exceedingly rough and incomplete condition ; but subsequent efforts on the part of the miners in many ages have most certainly not improved it. As a rough bit of walking this portion of the valley cannot be excelled. Natural quagmires, artificial ponds of varying sizes and depths, rabbit burrows covered only by thin crusts of fragile soil, short galleries driven into the ground by tin-searchers, and mounds of spoil fetched forth from the galleries, all conspire to render broken limbs, if not premature decease, possible incidents for the adventurous traveller.

This district has been mined within recent years ; and in the valley above Evilcombe are the remains of a complete crushing plant for tin ore.

Of the Abbot's Way itself I need say little, except that near it I picked up a few months ago a flint flake, imperfect, but bearing every mark of the manufactured article. It is, in fact, the end of a flint knife.

The last building of which I have any knowledge in the Plym valley is a small square erection on the north bank at the end of the last gorge on the Plym. Above this point stretches the boggy table-land in which the river has its rise, and which but for that fact would be destitute of all interest, archæological or otherwise.

CONVERSAZIONE.

(2nd January, 1890.)

An account of this will be found among the Reports.

EDUCATIONAL THEORIES IN FRANCE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

SYLLABUS OF LECTURE BY MISS A. G. COOPER.

(Read 9th January, 1890.)

THE 18th century: its characteristics; in France, the reign of "ideas." The chief feature of educational work in the 17th century: practical effort in the direction of educational organization. The full expression of a philosophical doctrine of education to be sought in the 18th century. Rousseau, the foremost amongst French writers, on Pedagogy. "The Emile:" its theories. Education under the French Revolution. The work of Condorcet, Lakanal, and other leaders.
