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Vent to the Nether House
Railroad & with sea
Beautiful banks of Linn
County man on Antelope, ground to
side to Dunse
Cockburn Law—

Outs in new ground
The Party
The man

The new
Vale of Mithladdie

ing forms a circle of about 55 feet internal and 92 feet external diameter—the walls varying in thickness from 15 to 20 feet. The external circumference is nearly a perfect circle, and the masonry, which is without lime or cement, is beautifully executed. The interior circumference is not perfectly regular in form, but diverges considerably from a true circle, and the masonry is not at all so good as the external face of the wall. As stated by Dr Stuart, the building has for many years had the appearance of a ruined cairn, and indeed the wall on the south-east side was so broken down and overgrown with turf that most of the debris from the interior was carted over it, without causing any injury to it. Now, however, that the excavation is completed, the perfect form of the building is exposed, the walls varying from two to six feet in height. The foundation is composed of large flat stones, which project from 6 inches to a foot beyond the face of the wall, so as to form a basement. The entrance is on the east side, and is 16½ feet long. The breadth of the entrance is 4 feet 9 inches, and three feet three inches in the inside. At the entrance lie two immense stones, weighing probably two or three tons each, which have apparently been lintels to cover the doorway. They are sufficiently broad to cover only one-half of the length of the entrance. No stones large enough were found to form lintels for the other half—thus suggesting the idea that it was probably covered by the gradual convergence of the walls on each side, as appears to have been the case with the chambers or cells. Outside of the building, and on the north side of the entrance, are walls enclosing a chamber 7 feet 3 inches by 4 feet 9 inches, with two entrances. One of these is close by the entrance of the principal building. It is raised by a high step about 2 feet from the ground, it is 2 feet 3 inches wide, and the wall through which it passes is 5 feet thick. The other entrance is on the level of the ground, on the north side of the chamber, 4 feet wide, and opens on the space outside the principal building, but enclosed by the surrounding ramparts. In this chamber was found a quantity of bones, teeth, remains of burned wood, and a stone whorl and hone, or sharpening stone. These bones are now in the Edinburgh Museum, and have been defined as belonging to the horse, the cow, and the pig. The only piece of bone said to be human was picked up last year, during the excavations, by Mr Williamson, of Dunse. The medical men present, however, seem to differ as to its true place. Being examined by Dr Campbell, Dunse, when first found, he thought it a human bone belonging to the pubic and part of ischial bone—right side.

It is in the interior of the principal building, close to the entrance on the south side, that the great fireplace seems to have been, for here the stones are very much calcined, as if the fire had been made against the wall, and had gradually crumbled it away. Opening from the entrance passages on both sides of it, and formed in the heart of the wall, there are two chambers. The one on the north side of the passage enters on a level with the ground, and is entirely paved with rough stones. The walls of it are about 6 feet thick, and at the north end incline inward towards the top. The chambers on the south side of the passage enter over a low wall or partition, by what may be called a very narrow step in the passage, and a rude stair of three steps in the chamber. This partition has originally been only about half the height, or one step up, and another step has afterwards been built into the doorway. This chamber is 7 feet 8 inches each way. All the other cells or chambers enter from the interior court of the building. That on the north side is now found to be divided into two chambers by a partition facing the entrance to it. This partition is the same thickness as the width of the doorway, 3 feet 4 inches. It projects 5 feet, and as the chamber itself is 7 feet wide, it leaves the entrance to the right and left into the separate apartments about 2 feet wide. The entrance to this chamber is on the level, and close beside it, in the central area, traces of a fire were found. The chamber on the west side of the building has two end partitions, thus dividing it into three apartments. The partition on the south of the entrance projects from the west wall, so as to leave a doorway into the chamber between it and the west wall of the cell, but the partition on the north side of the entrance projects from both sides, and the doorway into the cell is in the middle of it. Here a hearth and traces of fire were also found. The chamber on the south side of the building, to which no entrance was formerly visible, and which was so different in form from any of the others, is now ascertained to be a stair. In connection with it, an entrance has been discovered from the interior court of the building. It enters up a high step; on the right, in entering, is a passage, 11 feet long, leading to the stair, of which nine steps remain. This staircase is narrow, being 2 feet 11 inches at the lowest step, and 2 feet 2 inches at the highest. The steps themselves are only about 6 inches broad, and are each composed of a single stone. The edges of some of them appear to be slightly worn, and as the stone is a hard whin, this could only have been caused by a great deal of traffic on it. In the passage leading to the stair, and on the south side of it, is a low bench, 5 feet long by about 2 broad and a foot high; and like all the rest of the structure is composed of dry-stone building, longer and flatter stones being used for it. At the other end of this passage from the stair, and on the left of the entrance, is a cell or chamber, one step below the level of the passage, of an irregular shape, and 9 feet 8 inches in its longest diameter. On the north-west and south-east of the building there were supposed to be traces of other chambers, but it is now found that these appearances were caused by a mere accidental arrangement of stones, and that no other chambers exist than those now described. In none of the cells except that on the north of the entrance has any pavement been found, but patches of pavement exist in the centre area, and there is a good deal of pavement outside the entrance. No well or other means of procuring water have yet been discovered.

The articles found during the excavation were—(1) a stone ring or whorl, 1½ inch diameter; (2) hone, or sharpening stone (these two articles were found in the chamber outside the main building); (3) piece of a ring, apparently of jet, 2¼ inch diameter; (4) bead, apparently of amber; (5) stone knife or implement, found in the chamber on north side of entrance (it may be doubted if this article is not simply a water-worn stone); (6) a quantity of bones, teeth, &c., most of which were found in the chamber outside of the main building; (7) an oyster shell of modern appearance; (8) a bronze brooch, octagonal, and 2 inch in diameter. These two last articles cannot of course belong to the earliest occupants of the stronghold. The brooch was found in cutting a trench through one of the eastern ramparts in order to wheel away some of the rubbish from the excavations. It has been examined by Mr Albert Way and Mr Franks, of the British Museum, who both pronounce, from the style of the workmanship, that it belongs to the fifteenth century—Mr Way placing it early in the century, and Mr Franks being of opinion that it belongs to the end of it. Though much that is interesting and instructive has thus been ascertained, a great deal more remains to be done, fully to discover the plan of the other parts of these singular remains and the condition and character of its occupants. The building which has already been explored stands in a space which is surrounded by great ramparts and deep ditches, which deserve to be properly cleared out. Two openings through the ramparts, apparently original, and at opposite ends of the enclosed space, seem to have been entrances, and roads lead from them. Buildings, too, or foundations, of various shapes and sizes, most of them circular, exist in the enclosed space. It would be valuable and interesting to have these explored, and the committee hopes that funds will be placed at their disposal for this purpose. When these explorations are completed, a fence to protect and preserve the whole remains should be erected, but the committee has a balance on hand for the erection of this fence. Dr Munro, of London, the proprietor of the estate of Cockburn, has reserved these remains from the lease of the farm in which they are situated, and has given permission for their being enclosed. The committee is also anxious to get a proper plan made out, not only of Edin Hall, with sections and views of the several parts, but also a map of the whole of Cockburn Law—showing the strong nature of the camp on the top of it, and the position and plan of other remains which exist in it, and which apparently are of an equally ancient date.

The hearty thanks of the club, on the motion of Mr Milne Home, were awarded to Mr Turnbull for his interesting description of the buildings and grounds; after which a conversational discussion took place, engaged in by Mr Milne Home, Sir Walter Elliot, Mr Tait, Alnwick, secretary to the club, Mr J. C. Langlands, of Berwick, and others, about the object for which the principal building seemed intended. Mr Tait, Alnwick, highly approved of what had been done. What had been brought to light was really most interesting. The edifice was a castle or fortress more ancient than any he knew in this part of the kingdom, partaking more of the character of those in Northumberland than those in the North of Scotland. He considered it an ancient British edifice. The discovery of the staircase showed that it might probably be of more storeys than one, though not of any great height compared with its diameter. From what he had seen he would expect the smaller circles to yield more articles, probably of domestic use. He was strongly of opinion that the excavations should go on, and also that this club would again contribute to so worthy an object. Mr Turnbull said that there was a tradition of a giant connected with Edins Hall. He inhabited, it is supposed, the place in which they were now assembled, and procured his subsistence by plundering the lower and more fertile districts of the county. On one occasion, returning from Blackerstin with a bull on his shoulders and a sheep under each arm, he crossed the river at the "Strait Loup," or "Giant's Leap," and on ascending the hill found a pebble in his boot. Taking it out he tossed it in the wayside, and it actually lies there to this day, affording evidence of the giant's existence and the truth of the tradition. It is what geologists now pretend to say is a boulder weighing between one and two tons. Mr Turnbull also said that he had been much disheartened at finding that some parties who had visited this relic had been destroying the walls and tearing up the pavement. Such a relic of the *long past* should be held sacred, and parties should refrain from displacing any part of it. It was also agreed to express in strong terms their indignation toward such wanton mischief. Mr Lainglands said he had great faith in the working classes, and if an intimation was posted up requesting visitors not to displace any part of it, he had every confidence it would be attended to. The members of the club afterwards visited the top of the Law, which is also encircled by fortifications, and from which one of the most extensive and magnificent landscapes is seen, extending over a surface of 2000 square miles.

Therries

Camp on Hill

Lancaster

Butter

Per Historic

Place of refuge

of some prominent tribe

Chivalry before

well chosen

well designed

No threat of military work

Back to some & others

Solar and
very strong
another

Then and now.

Shaw Hall