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VIII.

TYPES OF THE RING-FORTS AND SIMILAR STRUCTURES
REMAINING IN EASTERN CLARE (THE NEWMARKET GROUP).

By THOMAS JOHNSON WESTROPP, M.A.

PLATES IX., X.

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THE better preservation and great number of the forts, chiefly of stone, in the north-western parts of county Clare have led to much attention being given to them, and more constant efforts being made to publish the resultant plans, views, and notes. It is impossible to overrate the value of these structures for comparative archæology. Their frequent completeness, the variety of features occurring in them, and the evident continuance of their erection from early to comparatively late periods, give them a value which at least the antiquaries of France have appreciated, and those of Scotland and Wales were not slow to recognize. While engaged on this task we were not neglectful of collecting notes on the similar remains in the other sections of the county, especially in its eastern baronies, and hope now to bring before the Academy the result of investigations carried on since 1893, and sufficient to show the character of the prevailing types, and to describe at greater length some of the more interesting examples—one of a very peculiar description.

In order to secure a really typical series, we may take the forts lying in a broad band from Newmarket-on-Fergus to the south of Quin, past Tulla to Tomgraney: this brings us through a country varied in physical character and tribal history, and gives us the utmost variety in the character of the forts.

We include a very full account of Moghane caher, the largest stone fort in Ireland, the notes previously published¹ being scanty, and the fort of great interest and importance. Owing to the clearing away of the brushwood, we are able to study better the strangely rebuilt caher of Langough. The

¹ Royal Society of Antiquaries (Ireland) Journal, vol. xxiii., p. 281. Proc. R. I. Acad., ser. iii., vol. vi., p. 440. Trans. R. I. Acad., vol. xxxi., p. 112.

remarkable fort of Cahernacalla supports the view that the types did not, as has been suggested, arise purely from the nature of the ground. The occurrence of square forts, both of earth and stone, both in the Norman and purely Irish territory, again bears against the narrower views relating to this type. Lastly, the very curious caher of Ballydonohan stands alone to our present knowledge, and supplies several interesting questions which we hope the publication of these notes may help to get answered.

NEWMARKET GROUP, BUNRATTY LOWER.

The ancient Tradraige or Tradree is well marked territory, meared by the confluence of the rivers Shannon and Fergus, and the little streams of the Rine, or Gissagh, at Lattoo, and the Owennagarney at Sixmilebridge. Of the tribe that gave the district its name legends varied; one derived it from an early druid Trad; at one time the tribe regarded itself and the neighbouring Ui Cormaic as Eoghanachts, and a local abbot appealed on these grounds to Felimy, King of Cashel (who died about 845), asking his aid from the oppression of the Corcavaskin, then a most powerful race, whose territory covered all south-western Clare beyond the Fergus. The Ui Neill Buidhe,¹ of the Tradraighe, on the other hand, claimed descent from Aedh Caemh, a Dalcassian King of Cashel (*circa* 570), and ancestor of the O'Briens. These contradictions suggest to our minds attempts to secure allies by asserting affiliation with different races powerful enough to support their alleged kinsmen. The Tradraighe must have suffered severely during Brian's wars with the Norsemen, as he made their country the area of his guerilla warfare. The Ui Neill subsisted to Norman times; but this latter race got possession of the land, first under Robert de Musegros in about 1240, when the castles of Clare and Bunratty were built, and then in 1275 by Thomas de Clare and his sons down to 1318; it seems to have formed the mensal land of the O'Brien chiefs, who eventually, as earls of Thomond, made Bunratty Castle their chief residence till 1642.

MOGHANE (42). It is strange that down to 1893 this enormous fort remained undescribed, and any allusions to it are grossly inaccurate. It is shown even in one Elizabethan map as Cahermoghna. The Ordnance Survey made a fine and most intelligent plan in 1839; this figured conspicuously in all their maps, even in the half-inch "key map." A large scale copy was in the hands of O'Donovan and O'Curry, but they never described the place. Later antiquaries called it an earth-work, as did Drs. Graves and Todd when

¹ See "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish," vol. iii., p. 262.

describing the gold ornaments found near it in 1854; so did Mr. R. O'Brien in his notes on Dyneley's tour; while some, with disregard for the plain facts of the case, identified it with the earth-works with which the Danes, and later on Sir Thomas de Clare, fenced Tradree "from the river to the sea" (Fergus Estuary). Mr. W. Wakeman in 1900 described it as "two large raths," in a Guide of the Royal Society of Antiquaries. The only antiquaries who condescended to examine it were John Windele and his friend Mr. W. Hackett about 1856; but Windele's notes in the Library of this Academy are as yet hardly known. They traversed a section of the outer wall, being at times unable to establish its artificial character (a strange confession), though its piled heaps and ditch are unmistakably artificial all round their circuit. Windele notes that "Moghane" means "place of smothering," and suggests that this was from brutalities practised by its ancient occupants. Of course it is the name of the townland,¹ not of the fort, and refers to the marshy lowlands. The peasantry did not recognize the great lines as being a fort,² but said the castle was built out of the ruins; they knew that the small ring-walls were forts: these had been recently repaired for sheep-pens by an O'Brien, but were newly planted at the date of Windele's account, though, apparently, the trees were few, small, and sickly. He adds: "It may be hoped that it [the plantation] may not thrive until a delving may be made by the souterrains." Hackett noted the wall 6 feet high, but found no facings; the ditch is given as 8 to 12 feet wide; and there are only two out of the three main rings mentioned. Elks' horns and antlers were found near it; but Windele's inquiries as to the gold-find were evidently frustrated by the jealous suspicions of the natives of Newmarket. Strange to say, this feeling had not quite died out in our time, and I had no little difficulty in establishing the actual scene of the "find." Windele then visited William Halpin, who had (so Windele thought) sold some ornaments to Dr. Todd and Dr. Neligan; but he was told little, and deliberately misled as to the site—"at the foot of the hill where it is precipitous" (i.e. to the north-west, far from the railway).³ No doubt, fear lest the O'Briens of Dromoland should renew their claims for more than the one or two bracelets that came into their possession was long an obsession on all the discoverers of the gold, and led not only to silence, but to misleading statements.

In fact, this discovery—one of the most sensational in Irish archæology—took place in making a cutting for the railway then in course of construction.

¹ I noticed in Waterford, near Cappagh, that a heap or sheet of stones on a mountain side was called "Meihan," which is the phonetic of the local name of the Clare hill.

² As in Windele's time so in 1887, "the great heaps of stones" were not recognized as a fort.

³ See Windele's Topographical Manuscript, Appendix, vol. i., p. 73, &c.

In March, 1854, the gang of labourers digging near an old hawthorn bush, a short distance to the south of the railway bridge, in Moghaun north, on the west side of the line, and opposite the lough,¹ undermined a sort of cist. A stone fell disclosing a sort of box made of rough stones, and a mass of gold ornaments: armlets with dilated or cup-ends, thin gold "gorgets," and many fibulæ; a few ingots of gold were also found. The men, after a general scramble for the prize, though not sure of its value—for some thought the objects were of brass—proceeded to dispose of the "fairy gold" for what it might fetch. The find proved to be a mass of beautiful fibulæ, bracelets, and lesser ornaments. Two bracelets passed to the O'Briens, most of the rest came into the hands of a local shopkeeper, some, it is said, for oatmeal and other supplies; some fell into the hands of goldsmiths in Limerick; many were cut up and melted. Dr. Todd and Lord Talbot de Malahide exhibited a very large and interesting number of specimens at the meeting of the Archæological Institute, in Cambridge, that same year in August;² while Dr. Todd reported to this Academy on June 26th, 1854,³ that at least £3000 worth of ornaments were found in a small mound, over a little stone chamber a quarter of a mile from one of the largest earthen forts in Ireland. Windele records it as "torques, fibulæ, armlets, ring-money of various sizes and patterns, some of which has been melted down by barbaric silversmiths, more passed into private hands."

Present-day tradition at Newmarket only remembers "nuggets,"⁴ and says that no one throve who took the fairy gold, "though one man was the better of it for some time."

Members of this Academy are well acquainted with the objects and models of fibulæ, acquired for our collection, and still to be seen in the Museum, an expert description of which is greatly to be desired.

¹ The evidence of the local people, and some of the older inhabitants in Quin and elsewhere, was corroborated unknowingly by my late sister, Mrs. Stacpoole, showing me where Mr. John Hill, formerly county surveyor, had shown her the place of the find. It exactly tallied with my other information.

² Journal of same, 1854, No. 41, p. 181. Dr. Todd's communication to the Institute is there abstracted.

³ See "Catalogue of Gold Antiquities," pp. 31-33. The Journal of the Kilkenny Society (Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland), vol. ii., p. 287, has a short note telling (wrongly) how the find was made on Mr. Blood's property of Ballykilty; and tells how a man grasped up ornaments, "the full of his hat," and ran to Newmarket, where he sold them for £30; they were afterwards valued in Limerick for £400. In vol. iii., p. 181, Rev. James Graves describes the event more accurately: in tidying the new railway bank a stone fell out displaying a rude cist covered by a slab, and a number of beautiful ornaments and some ingots of gold were found. Mr. Graves saw some sold for £500. Mr. F. Barnes, c.e., contractor of the Limerick and Ennis Railway, was his informant, and locates it in Mooghaun, near the lake, but at a spot never covered by the water. The cist measured 15 inches to 24 inches square.

⁴ Query *ingots*; see last note.

MOGHANE FORT.—Save the name “Cahermoghna” on a map of about 1590, no name is discoverable for this great fortress or “walled town.” One may suspect it to be the “Caherkine,” as being apparently included in that townland at the time of Petty’s Surveys in 1655. Cathyrnachyne is mentioned with de Clare’s other lands in the neighbourhood at his death in 1287, while Moghane does not appear. The name “Cahermucna” occurs in documents down to at least 1720. Caherkine is now confined to the adjoining townland: none of its forts monopolize its name; another townland with a caher and sonterrain (we shall see) is named Caherscooby.

The difficulties which prevented Hackett and Windele from making satisfactory notes on the ruin, had greatly increased even at the time of my earlier visits in 1887 and 1892, and still more by the present date. Parts of the wall can only be examined by creeping through thickets of sloe and other bushes; and the luxuriant bracken, if a less painful, is still an even more concealing, obstacle to our labours. A complete examination and measurement of each ring occupied several hours on each of six days, so I hope the resultant notes may be found as complete as they can be made without excavations.



MOGHANE CAHER (DIAGRAM FROM S-W.)

1, cairn; 2, inner wall; 3, middle wall; 3*, collapsed wall; 4, south caher; 5, west caher; 6, rock-cut gate; 7, outer wall; 8, castle.

(The view is taken from the west, trees being omitted to show reach of wall at “6.”)

The fort girds, with three walls, a long, low ridge, with a beautiful outlook to the Shannon, the Fergus, and across the chain of lakes, and the plains of central Clare, to the hills of Aughty, Burren, Callan, and Slieve Bernagh. The hill has steep slopes to the east and west, with low crags in some places; the walls do not follow the contours of the ridge, as some have fancied; but the outer one dips in bold curves down each side, and the middle two are approximately regular and equidistant from each other. These main walls on our first visits seemed to be shapeless heaps of stone, and so were supposed by myself and others to be mere piled mounds, such as are found in ancient British and foreign defences; but systematic examination has yielded, in many points in the outer, and a few in the inner and second

lines, full evidence that the ramparts had regularly built faces with slab-filling of various sizes, usually large. The most curious phenomenon is the systematic overthrow, unlike even half-levelled ring-forts elsewhere, where we simply find materials removed, not overturned and left in heaps for their full length. The enormous masses, poured like avalanches from the second and outer walls down the steeper slopes, are very striking, especially to the west and east of the second wall, and to the south-west and north-east of the outer. Only towards the east and behind the gate-lodge has the material of the outer wall been removed to any considerable extent; but the ditch, foundation, and slight outer mound are traceable, save down the bare crag near the small ring-wall, and where buried in its own fallen masses. When this elaborate destruction took place we have of course no means of knowing, save that it evidently occurred before the building of the two small ring-walls in the outer and middle lines. It is extremely unlikely that this great enclosure can date after the Dalcassian conquest, *circa* A.D. 380-400, or be the work of the feeble Tradraighe. If the ornaments found at the railway were plunder of this fort or "town," experts date it in the later bronze age; but this would far outstate our evidence, and we have never heard of any find within the walls, or seen any object in the spots upturned by rabbits or fallen trees, save two shapeless pieces of iron, of any possible age or use, in the outer garth. What was the height of the wall we have no means of discovering; but where it has been spread out to at least three times its proper breadth, it is 6 feet high or even more. Walls of 12 feet to 16 feet, and even 18 feet high, are found in more perfect cahers, and here the walls may have been quite as lofty. Nowhere have traces of more than one section of the walls or foundations of steps been disclosed. Of the foundations of gateways more remains to be said.

First, as to the general dimensions, we must amend our former "round numbers," though, owing to the spreading of the stones and the practical impossibility of getting any cross-measurements between the existing faces, more than general accuracy is unattainable. The whole enclosure measures north and south 1512 feet, the second 705 feet (657 feet between the walls: this internal measurement has been given by mistake for the over-all dimension as 650 feet in our former description); the inmost is 363 feet over all north and south. The dimensions east and west are—the whole (across the middle) 1118 feet, the second 664 feet, and the inmost 386 feet.

The inner wall is 20 feet thick to the north, and 22 feet in several other places where facing blocks remain. There are gaps to the west and E.N.E., the former with set slabs; the garth is 312 feet across, north and south, and 342 feet east and west. Traverses run from the highest point (where is an

ordnance survey cairn of some size, and 5 feet high) down to the gaps. A heap of small sandstone pebbles lies near the eastern gap, and outside it we find a thin walled "half moon" enclosure to the north of the gap, very probably a cattle pen, whatever be its age, as the pebble layer may be a cooking-place.

The second or middle wall is built of good blocks (3 feet and 4 feet square, and 18 inches to 2 feet thick), especially to the south-east and east; it is 17 feet 6 inches thick at two measurable points. There are gaps to the north and E.N.E.; the former, like the western gap of the inner ring, has traces of lining slabs, leaving a passage 8 feet wide between them: these two named gaps, and the western gate, partly rock-cut in the outer wall, are the only certain gateways of the fort; the gaps without slabs may (or may not) represent others. There is no limit of number for gates in such forts: the hill fort of Turlough Hill has eight slab-lined gates, and the cashel of Inismurray had at least four, if not five opes. Probabilities favour one of the gaps in the northern face of the outer wall as another gate: it is impossible to locate any to the south; indeed the unbroken line of the fosse precludes any, save on the crags. The opes of the gateway may have had built piers, and must have been several feet more narrow than the passage, but no foundation is discoverable, and no lintel blocks remain in the debris. At the north-east gaps the space between the two inner rings is 124 feet: a traverse crossed this space at 45 feet to the north of the gaps. The second ring is greatly defaced to the south, where it lies 132 feet from the inner line: it was probably removed to rebuild the little ring-wall built over its lines at this point. As rebuilt, this structure shows little of the old base, and that only about 4 feet high,¹ and the new wall lies 5 feet inside the foundation blocks, where they run through the main second line. The western segment of the main rampart has fallen or been thrown down a steep slope which it entirely covers for over 60 feet, making an impressive scene of ruin, the most prominent feature in the fort, visible even from the Edenvale ridge $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles away; smaller "slides," but hidden by the trees, took place at the north-eastern curve of the outer wall, and the eastern edge of the middle line. I may here correct a mistake formerly made, that the outer wall has made the great slip of debris to the east. A modern wall built upon its ruins at this point ran along the brow to the second wall at the north-east gap, and along its foundations above the slip. Following its course, one is easily misled as to which wall crowned the slope at this mass of ruin.

The great outer rampart is some 4400 feet in circuit; so overgrown, and

¹ There is a view of a portion in *Journal Roy. Soc. Antiquaries (Ireland)*, vol. xxiii., p. 283.

plunging down such rough and dangerous slopes, it is little wonder that hardly anyone had followed its course; only the accident of unbounded leisure, while staying near the fort, encouraged me to do this. Commencing at the north-eastern gap¹ we go eastward down the steep slope; the masonry is widely spread, covering entirely the outer ditch. After its bold plunge down the slope it runs southward (always on a level, and near the contour line of 200 feet above the sea), along the face of the hill. Most of the stones have been removed, probably for the demesne wall. Here we find another "half-moon" annexe outside the wall. The removal of the material gives us measurable foundations of the wall, and leaves the fosse outside it clear for most of this segment, and it is remarkable that we find the fosse cut even in the crag, save at one precipitous slope, and on the southern brow near the path. The wall varies from 15 feet to 17 feet along the east, usually the last, which dimension recurs at other points, save in the deep hollow, where the facing-stones are only 12 feet apart; the fosse is 15 feet to 18 feet wide, 3 feet or 4 feet deep, and usually retains its outer mound. The outer face of three or four courses of rough masonry remains at several points in the thickets along the south-western curve. At this point (240 feet to 300 feet from the path up the crag from the stile) there has been another fall of the wall, burying the fosse. The wall runs down another steep slope (from 360 feet to 406 feet) into a natural amphitheatre looking westward. Above this point lies the great collapse of the second wall. The outer has unusually large facing blocks (3 feet 6 inches square and 18 inches thick, some 4 feet long, others 2 feet thick), unlike the flat slabs and neat small blocks in other parts. At about 780 feet from the path are apparent traces of a gateway; a well-marked hollow path leads to an ope between a rock-scarp and a built pier, with two ascending "ramps" inside; the northern 3 feet wide, and partly cut into the crag. Beyond this, up to the outer ring-wall, the main line has vanished from the naked crag. Round the north from the ring-wall to the north-east gap, the heaped wall, fosse, and outer mound are usually well preserved. At the northern gap, the mound and fosse are each 12 feet wide. A traverse runs southward to the middle wall at 30 feet from the gap; farther eastward is a small hut enclosure, and up the slope near the middle line and the traverse we find two rings of thin wall, 50 to 52 feet across, evidently cattle bawns, and some hut rings.

Westward from these is the little outer ring-wall, or caher, 100 feet in diameter; the lower part is ancient, 3 feet or 4 feet high, 7 feet 4 inches thick, with a batter of 1 in 7 of good, slightly-coursed masonry, with slab filling.

¹ The two north gaps have gangways. I have long questioned the age of these features, but the gangways left in the rock-cut fosses of Doon Fort, near Kilfenora, and Lisduff near Kilkee, show that in at least some instances they are contemporaneous with the forts themselves.

Moghane Fort stands much apart from its congeners in more ways than its great size. Its shallow fosse, outside the strong rampart, recalls those of Staigue Fort and other cahers in Cork and Kerry; the slab facings recall the great and probably early ring on the top of Torlough Hill, and the caher of Ballydonohane. Such slab-lining occurs in other forts, notably at Ballyganner and Carran in Burren, and has also been recorded in certain dry-stone enclosures among the Berbers in North Africa. We hope the elaborateness of our description will be forgiven as an attempt to put before students this riddle of the past, whose origin, purpose, and builders seem lost in the night of the centuries.

LANGOUGH CAHER¹ (42).—When we examined this remarkable fort in 1892, it was greatly overgrown, and surrounded by thorn-bushes and hazels. The outer part to the west, and a portion of the annexe, have since been cleared; this, and the perhaps less happy removal of a mass of stone, have revealed the foundations of a gateway, and some portions of the facing of the inner caher. The long enclosure walls to the south have, however, entirely vanished. There were abundant traces in heaps of stones when I first saw them to justify the plan of 1839. They enclosed a long, hollow field, perhaps the green or “faitche” of the fort.

As it has been described in these pages and elsewhere,² we will merely take the opportunity of adding the results of more favoured examinations. The central wall has the unusual slope or batter of 1 in $2\frac{1}{2}$ to the west, where it has been very carefully built into the masonry-like layers of natural crags at the low cliff. It is 6 feet 7 inches to 7 feet 3 inches thick, with small filling and very good facing, showing signs of hammer-work, to let wedge-like angles fit into the layers above them—an unusual feature, though traces of hammer-work are visible in the great cahers along the southern edge of Burren, in this county. The wall is much broken down to the south, but some of its fine masonry can be sketched even there. The inner face is nearly destroyed, and there are no remains of hut enclosures or traverses. To the west the wall is from $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet to 8 feet thick, of beautifully fitted blocks, and strongly sloped batter, about 1 in $2\frac{1}{2}$. What purpose this served in a wall of large, good masonry is hard to see. It is comprehensible at Cahermurphy in south-western Clare, where the stones are small, thin shale blocks, and a considerable slope is absolutely necessary for stability. The gateway now

¹ Locally pronounced Lõngã or Loongã.

² For Moghane and Langough, *Journal Roy. Soc. of Antiq. (Ireland)*, vol. xxiii., pp. 281 and 284; *Proc. R. I. Acad.*, Ser. III., vol. vi., p. 440; *Trans. R. I. Acad.*, vol. xxxi., p. 648; all give plans; the first gives views of masonry.

disclosed faces the S.S.E. The west pier is of four stones, the east of three, the passage being 4 feet 7 inches wide, and the wall at this point far thicker than elsewhere, being 10 feet through. The wall of the annexe is C-shaped in plan, looping against the central ring at the cliff; all is so defaced and rebuilt as to be indescribable. The foundations crossed by it are now removed, but were clearly traceable in 1898, showing that it was a late curtailment of the fort, built over the lines of the large annexe, which girt the whole summit of the knoll. This latter is now well shown since the field was cleared; long heaps of debris of fairly large stones remain. The new plan of Langough, in the Survey Maps of 1900, is lamentably inferior to that in 1839; evidently the former was by some one who understood the remains thoroughly, as in the case of Moghane Fort.

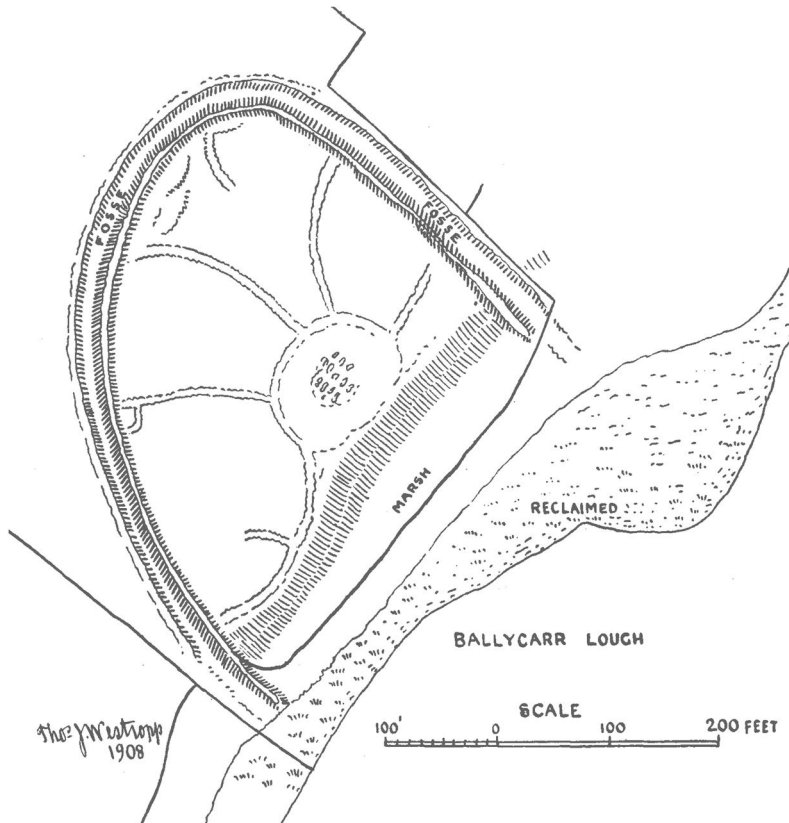
To the east of Langough is a small ring-wall 65 feet to 70 feet across the garth, which is now of level sward, though in tillage in 1893. The foundation blocks show that the wall was 7 feet thick and had two faces: some of the inner face remains imbedded in a fence; the rest is a mere ring of filling. Southward, on the edge of the marshes, is a green mound surrounded by a shallow fosse 6 feet wide, with a slight outer ring round the downward slope. This mound is about 5 feet high and oval, 50 feet to 63 feet across the top and 90 feet within the fosse. It is reputed to contain cellars and to be dangerously infested by the "dawnshee folk." The fairies are generally believed to select earthworks in preference to ring-walls in this district, judging by the many raths and few cahers reputedly haunted. So far back as the middle of the fourteenth century Macgrath makes a "banshee" declare, in 1318, that she lived "in the green fairy mounds," but had her "dwelling in hell."¹

CAHERSCOOPY (42).—None of the forts in this townland seem to have exclusive right to its name. The chief one is on the actual bounds, projecting into Caherkine townland. It is a prominent object as seen from Moghane fort, showing as a grey ring on its knoll, a low, rounded hill about 200 feet above the sea, and rising boldly above the surrounding country save Moghane—commanding a beautiful view like the former out to Knocknaminna and Mount Callan, the Burren and Cratloe Hills, with Ballycarr Lake, and the Shannon, and the fairy hill of Knockfierna in the middle of County Limerick.

The fort is much levelled, but was of excellent masonry, with large facing. There are several hut-sites and a souterrain in its garth; the "cave" lies north and south, and is 32 feet long by 3 feet 7 inches wide, covered

¹ Cathreim Thoirdhealbhaigh.

with long lintels of crag limestone. A small bullaun, or basin, has been picked and then partly ground into a sandstone boulder near it. A second caher, most completely levelled, is near the farm-house to the south-west; there we noticed a perfect and neat sandstone quern, with a raised ring on the upper stone.¹ I find no mention of Caherscooby before 1641; it is called *Le carowskobe* in 1655, and *Leahcarroo-ne-Scuoby* in the Survey of "1675."²



CAHERNACALLA FORT, BALLYCARR.

CAHERNACALLA (42).—This is the "Carrownakilly" of the Surveys of 1655 and 1839. Locally, however, it is now reputed to take its name from the fort on the west shore of Ballycarr Lake, and is called Cahernacallow, Cahernacalla, and Cahernakilly, divergently. The caher may be described as "a cliff-fort without a cliff," being of that characteristic plan—two rings,

¹ Miss Gwendoline C. Staurope first examined these forts, and found the bullaun stone.

² "Book of Distribution," p. 153; Edenvale Survey, p. 6. This seems to show that it may not be a "caher" name.

one entire, the other more or less crescent-shaped—which we find in Dun Aenghus, Cahercommaun, and many forts in the British Isles, France, Central Europe, and even Russia on the Ural Mountains in Perm.¹ At Cahernacalla, however, instead of abutting on a precipice or steep slope, it runs down into the marshy edge of a shallow lake: the ends of the fosse at one time ran out into the shallows; the usual water-level is now, however, lower.

The structure had a central circular enclosure, now levelled to the ground with evident traces of burial; it stands on the brow of the bank. From it radiate (if the word can be used of irregular curved banks) a series of earthworks, five in number. The whole is included in an irregular curved rampart, 13 feet 6 inches wide, faced with large stones, and filled with earth and small blocks; outside this is a fosse of the same width and traces of an outer mound. The caher is 366 feet across at the lake between the horns of the rampart, and about as much at its greatest depth: it is best shown by the plan. The garth between the rings measures 147 feet to the south, 280 feet to the west, and 105 feet to the north; the outer rampart is over 700 feet long round its inner face.

RATHFOLAND (42).—This fort is locally called Rathfōlan, or Rafōland; it is called Rathfollane on the maps. The townland has three small raths and its strangely overturned castle,² the lower vaulted room of which has literally turned over on its side. The largest rath bears the townland name; it is cut through by the road from Kilnasoola church to Moghane, and is on a gently rising ground. It has a slightly raised garth, with a ring and fosse, and an outer ring. Measuring along the road-cutting, the fort is 141 feet through the garth, and 186 feet over all; the outer ring is 15 feet wide, and 4 feet to 5 feet high, the fosse 9 feet wide. The portion to the north-west of the road is levelled.

The little rath down the slope, to the east of the Rectory, is, like the last, reputed to be haunted by fairies, and is therefore avoided by belated travellers. It has a ring 6 feet wide, with large blocks of stone, and a garth 81 feet across. A few paces up the slope, to the north-east, is a low, thin-banked ring, or bawn, hardly a foot high. The neighbouring Lough Gash, a hollow usually dry for half the year, has a hamlet of the same name, which, in 1905, as its horrified occupants firmly believed, was visited by a banshee on several successive nights. Nothing untoward,

¹ *Journal Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, vol. xxxviii., p. 31.

² It is shown in a sketch of Ballycarr Castle, by Thomas Dyneley, in 1680, reproduced in Frost's "History of Clare."

however, followed the omen, and they "could not see the crier of the cry," so opinion is now rather sceptical as to the "keener" being a real "badbh."

BALLYNACRAGGA (51).—A large fort stood on the rising ground to the west of Kilnasoola church. It was an irregularly oval stone ring-wall, 180 feet to 200 feet across, and entirely defaced. There is a loop (or house-enclosure) in the garth to the north-east; the field-bank sweeps round concentrically, and may represent an outer ring.

To the north is a much-levelled caher; its large foundation blocks and small filling show a wall 8 feet thick, enclosing a garth 138 feet to 141 feet across, with several house-enclosures and a hollow, reputed to be a souterrain. It is on a bold knoll overlooking the marshes, near the Fergus. Not far below, on the edge of the marsh, is a small tumulus 9 feet to 10 feet high, with a small low "annexe" to the north-east—large slabs and traces of digging to the south imply an attempt, by treasure-seekers, to despoil this tomb. It was first noted by Mr. Hugh Massy Westropp, and is not shown on the maps.

In Ballysallagh West, near the cross-road, some large blocks of coarse sandstone, suggesting a fallen dolmen, lie in a tilled field. The upper slab is 11 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 3 feet thick, and rests on two others. In this townland a fort was named Chaghremonghan, and remained in 1655.¹

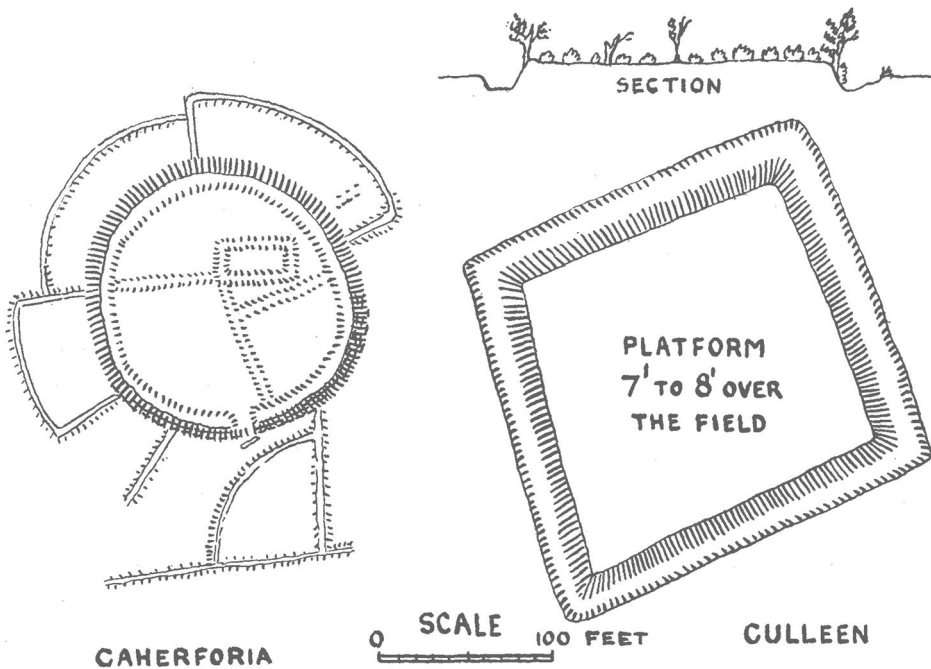
NEWMARKET (42).—In the field behind the picturesque old house and garden of Newmarket we find the remains of a typical caher. It has been planted, and a side enclosure with a pointed arched gateway to the south built on it. The northern segment on a crag overhanging a marsh is fairly preserved. A good piece of work with well-fitted blocks about 2 ft. 6 in. long and very small filling, the batter (like that of Langough) being 1 in 4: the wall was 13 ft. to 18 ft. thick; the gateway of large blocks faced the north; another less certain gate may have been at a gap to the south. The garth is 99 ft. across, and the whole diameter 117 ft.: the wall in places is over 6 ft. high. When I first examined the ruin, I noticed a scribed block with a deep line and several cross-cuts on its surface. It disappeared, and, despite careful search, has not been since forthcoming.

URLAN AND BALLYNOOSKNY (51).—There are three small raths in Urlanmore, four in Urlanbeg, two at the boundary on Knoeknagon Hill, and four in Lemaneigh, one of large size with a fosse and outer ring; they vary in diameter from 60 ft. to 100 ft. There are several forts of more interest in the next townland of Ballynooskny. Two near the smithy and cross-road

¹ Book of Distribution, p. 159.

are not marked on the maps, being nearly levelled; a third, westward, and at the further end of the same field, near Caherbane, is cut by the road; an old lane ran through its fosse. Two other small cahers; one, 69 ft. across the garth and 81 ft. over all, has the stone posts of a gateway 4 ft. 6 in. wide and facing the east; the wall is 6 ft. thick and 4 ft. high.

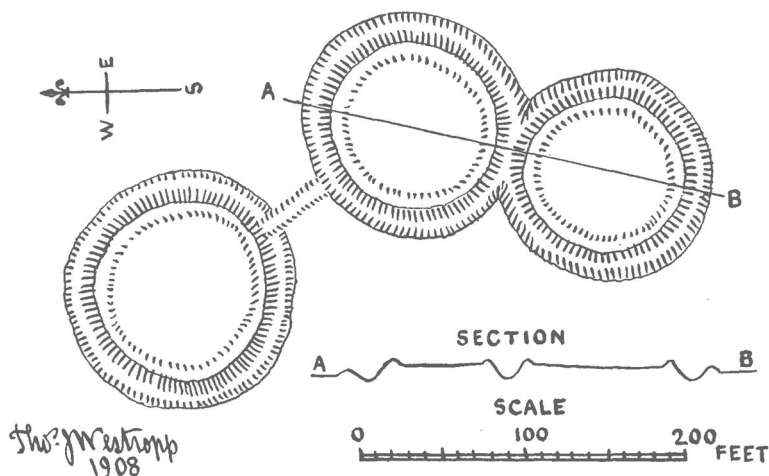
Caherforia lies farther southward in the same field. It is a fairly large stone fort, 162 ft. over all, the wall from 12 ft. to 15 ft. thick, and 7 ft. to 8 ft. high; the facing is destroyed. The gateway faced the south, its main lintel remains being 6 ft. 10 in. \times 22 in. \times 8 in. There are foundations of late houses in the



FORTS NEAR NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS.

garth, and a series of irregular "bauns" round the wall. The foundations of an old-looking hut lie outside to the east, and the whole field is full of levelled enclosures and house-foundations. The place was called Caheravory in a grant of 1667. Other caher names, which I cannot definitely locate, are Caheroney in Orlenmoyle, 1655, called Caherowny *alias* Cahereeny in 1727; Caher-marine in Orlenbeg, 1655, called "Cahermaryne, near Urlan Castle," in the grant of 1667, Chaghremonghan in Ballysallagh West, 1655, and Caherribane, in a fiant of 1602, called Caherribane near Urlanmore in the Inquisition of 1621, and Cahirrobane in the Survey of 1675, it was probable in Carrowbane,

still named Caherbane. Caherteige,¹ 1655, was in Clonloghan, Caherfroge, 1617, possibly at Firgrove in Dromline and Caherhowhogan, in Deerpark, Bunratty, in 1728. In Cleenagh townland were twelve raths: only one is worthy of notice, a large "doon" girding Knockadoon Hill, between Cleenagh Castle and the Fergus. It is an oval enclosure with a shallow fosse and low mound measuring 220 ft. (or 300 ft. over all) north and south and 220 ft. east and west; a very small ring lies near it on the south. There were several small forts at Kilmaelery church, one barely traceable in the field towards Cleenagh. Some miles farther south, near Kilconry church, on Thady's Hill, is a fine double-ringed rath, the inner garth about 100 feet across and 300 over all. All the names of these forts are forgotten.



KILLULLA FORTS, CO. CLARE.

KILLULLA (51).—This is a rather conventional name for a group of forts, lying eastward from the Urlan district; it extends from the Killulla cross-roads to Ralahine. The raths on Killulla Hill are of interest, being three conjoined earthworks, lying irregularly north and south. The northern is 81 feet in diameter, with a fosse and outer ring. Following a connecting earthwork, we reach the second fort, about 60 feet to the south-east. The rath is 93 feet in diameter, with a fosse, 12 feet wide, and an outer ring; the garth is raised 5 or 6 feet above the field. Cutting into the outer ring is the third rath, 99 feet in diameter, also with a fosse, 12 feet wide, and a ring. These two forts were probably constructed at the same time, and recall, on a much smaller scale, the Forradh and its companion at Tara. The

¹ Fiants, in 1602; Edenvale Survey, 1675, p. 6; Book of Distribution and Survey, 1655, pp. 159, 164-171; Dublin Registry of Deeds, Books xxvi., p. 516, lvi., p. 467, and lxxxii.

fosses are usually shallow, from 2 feet to 4 feet deep, and running into one between the raths, so that the forts have their platforms barely 10 feet apart. The trace of an old sunken road, marked by blocks at some points, passes over the hill near these forts and to the west. The hill commands a wide view towards the Fergus.

Following the southern branch from the cross-road to Culleen townland, we find a good example of the straight-sided fort. It consists of a platform, 7 or 8 feet higher than the marshy field, and measuring 150 feet along the north-west and south-east faces and 168 feet along the other sides. The south-east corner is perfect, so square and steep as to suggest the recent survival of stone facing; a few old poplars grow along the bank, and the platform has no enclosures, and is dotted with hawthorn and sloe-bushes. The fosse is 20 feet wide, with a slight outer bank, and is full of water and masses of yellow iris to the south-west. A slight ring-fort, hardly 3 feet high, with a shallow fosse, lies to the south.

Returning by Killulla, we pass the large earthwork of Lislea. There is, south from the road and east from the cross-road from Ballycarr, the trace of a little fenced enclosure, where lies a sandstone block, 23 feet high and 3 feet square, in which is ground an oval basin, 11 feet deep \times 15 feet and 4 feet deep. There is no trace of a burial-ground there, or of any fort or ancient building.

Monafolia Rath lies a short distance up the Ballycarr road; the name is not given on the map, but is locally well established for the bog in the south of Ballycarr townland and the fort near it, close to the edge of Ralahine, opposite the bench-mark 126.2, shown on the road. The rath is of the usual type, a low mound, 100 feet across, with a fosse, 12 feet wide and 4 feet to 5 feet deep, with outer and inner rings of earth and stones, 14 feet to 15 feet wide; it has traces of being stone-faced.

Ralahine¹ takes its name from a rath, remarkable only for being the scene of an important event in the medieval history of Clare. It is a small circular earth fort, with a modern facing-wall. Here, on 'August 15th, 1317, in the absence of the Lord of the Manor, Sir Richard de Clare, and his rival, king Murchad O'Brien, who had gone to the Parliament of Dublin, Prince Dermot O'Brien gathered the clans "to well-fenced Rath-laithin." After hearing Mass, they consulted and agreed to invade the territory of the rival house of O'Brien. Then they "mustered with new standards and burnished arms," and marched "to that dim battle in the

¹ The map names are very unsatisfactory in this barony. If a pure Irish form is intended, why use "Rathlahine"? The phonetic spelling, "Ralahine," is better, and is the form of general usage from 1660 to 1840.

west," near Corcomroe Abbey, which sealed the fate of Clan Brian, the Irish allies of de Clare, and paved the way for the latter's death and the destruction of the English settlement in the "crowning mercy" of the battle of Dysert ODea in the next year.

All these places described in this paper formed parts of the Manor of Bunratty in 1287, under the De Clares. Gilbert Pippard held Carrigdir (Carrigerry); Walter Russell, Uryln; Walter Flemyng, Clevenagh (Cleenagh); W. de St. Alban, Angys (Ing), and Ballygirthirn (Ballygirreen); John de Hiwys, Carthirth (Ballycarr, Baile Carthach); Patrick de Layndperun, Rathmolan (Rathfolan), Lisduff and Carrigodran (Carrigoran); Nic. de Interby and Henry White, Ballysallach; Henry Fuke, Clonlochan and Le Craggigg (Ballynecraggagh); Richard de Affoun, Cathyrnachyne (Caherkine), and the heirs of Gerald FitzMaurice, Rathlathyn (Rahlahine).¹

Where the battle of Tradree took place, in which Thomas de Clare fell in 1287, no tradition or definite record preserves the name. The gravel-pit to the south of the road, near Ballycarr House and the Railway Station, yielded, in 1903, quantities of bones; and Mr. Gilligan, of Newmarket, then told me that there was an old legend that there "the English soldiers killed at Ballycarr" had been buried. No battle (save those during the siege of Bunratty, in 1642, many miles away) is recorded in Tradree in later times; so as a genuine legend, with some corroboration, I leave the record of this fact.

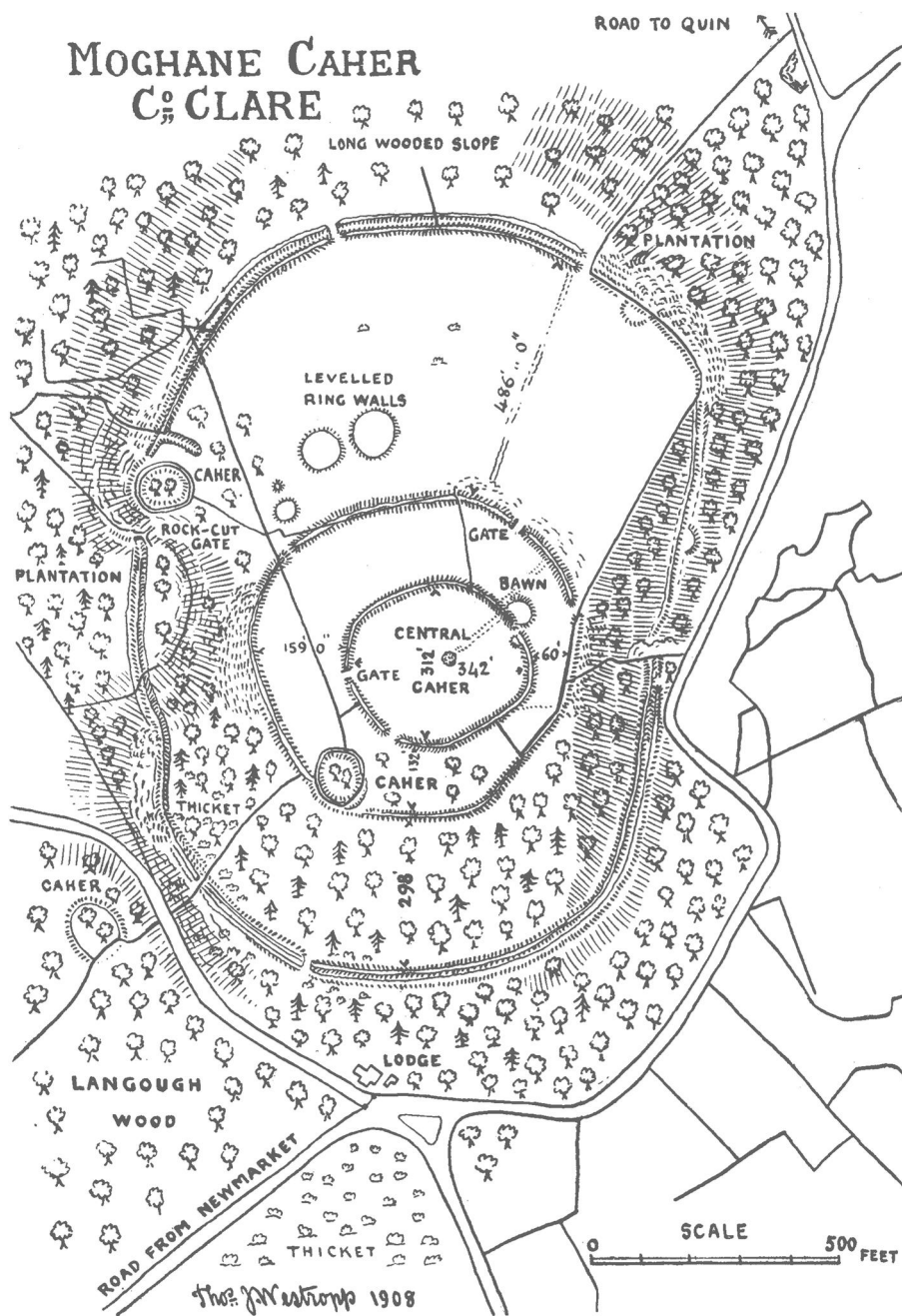
Another question might arise: the peel-towers date chiefly from the fifteenth century, and most of those in Tradree are recorded in the "Founders' List"; then what were the dwellings of the de Clares' Welsh and English tenants (not to speak of the Irish partisans, such as the O'Gradys, settled in Kilnasoola), and how were they defended? So far as we can judge, the earthworks of the Normans differed but little from those of the native Irish,² and the colonists dug fosses, with earth-mounds and palisadings, or adopted those deserted by the Irish, as seemed most convenient. We know that at least one "rath of beauteous circles" was dug in this county late in the thirteenth century, and that the cahers and lisses were inhabited in the fourteenth century. It is not improbable that the construction of these convenient enclosures continued even later, while existing structures could always be palisaded and new houses built in them out of the abundant forests of Clare.

¹ Cal. Documents relating to Ireland, vol. iii., No. 459.

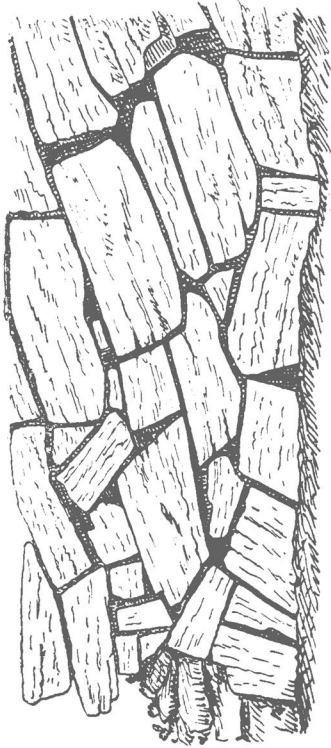
² The Bunratty earthwork is oblong, 8 feet to 10 feet high, and without a fosse, measuring 46 feet × 70 feet.

The problem of Moghane fort is of a different nature; and, as we have indicated, the facts seem to suggest an early date, and to preclude one after the fourth century. In a later paper we hope to examine more of these forts, and to point out their close similarity to the pre-Roman structures of Gaul. Meanwhile we lay before this Academy a systematic study of one large group of these interesting remains around the mysterious fortress of the ridge of Moghane and the ancient Corrasula.¹

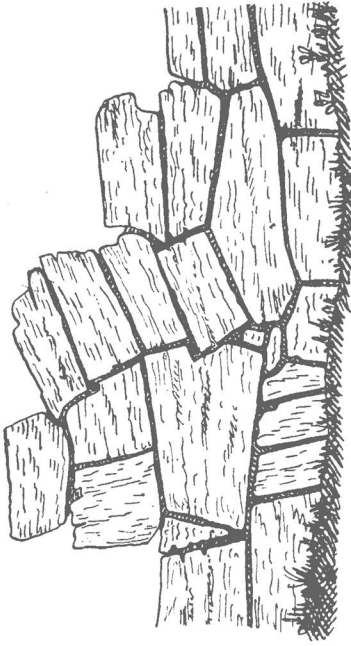
¹The local name among Irish-speakers for the village of Newmarket. I have to thank Mrs. Neville, of Newmarket, Miss Neville, and my nieces, Miss Gwendoline C. Staepole and Miss Louisa C. Westropp, for much help in collecting the folklore and names, and directing me to several of the remains.



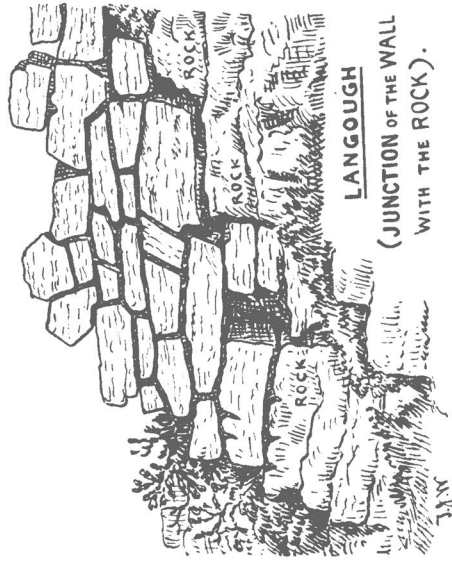
CAHER OF MOGHANE, CO. CLARE.



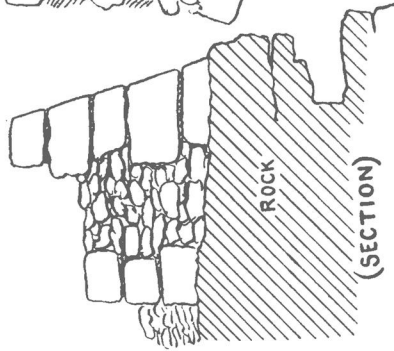
MOGHANE
(WESTERN RING)



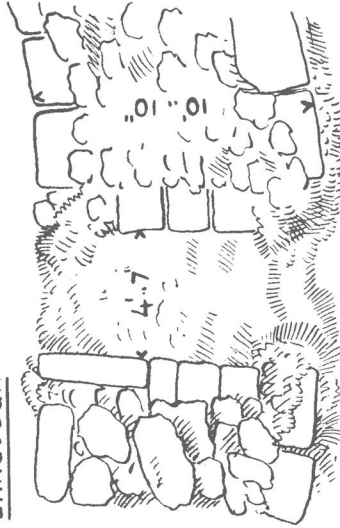
LANGOUGH



LANGOUGH
(JUNCTION OF THE WALL
WITH THE ROCK).



(SECTION)



(PLAN OF GATEWAY)



DETAILS OF THE CAHERS OF MOGHANE AND LANGOUGH.