

INGLEBOROUGH

WHAT IS ON THE SUMMIT?



**Arthur Batty and Noel Crack
2009**

Edited by Anita Batty

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All the colour plates were taken by Arthur Batty. The plates showing the extra stone circles have been enlarged in Adobe Photoshop.

All the figures (unless otherwise credited) were drawn by Arthur Batty.

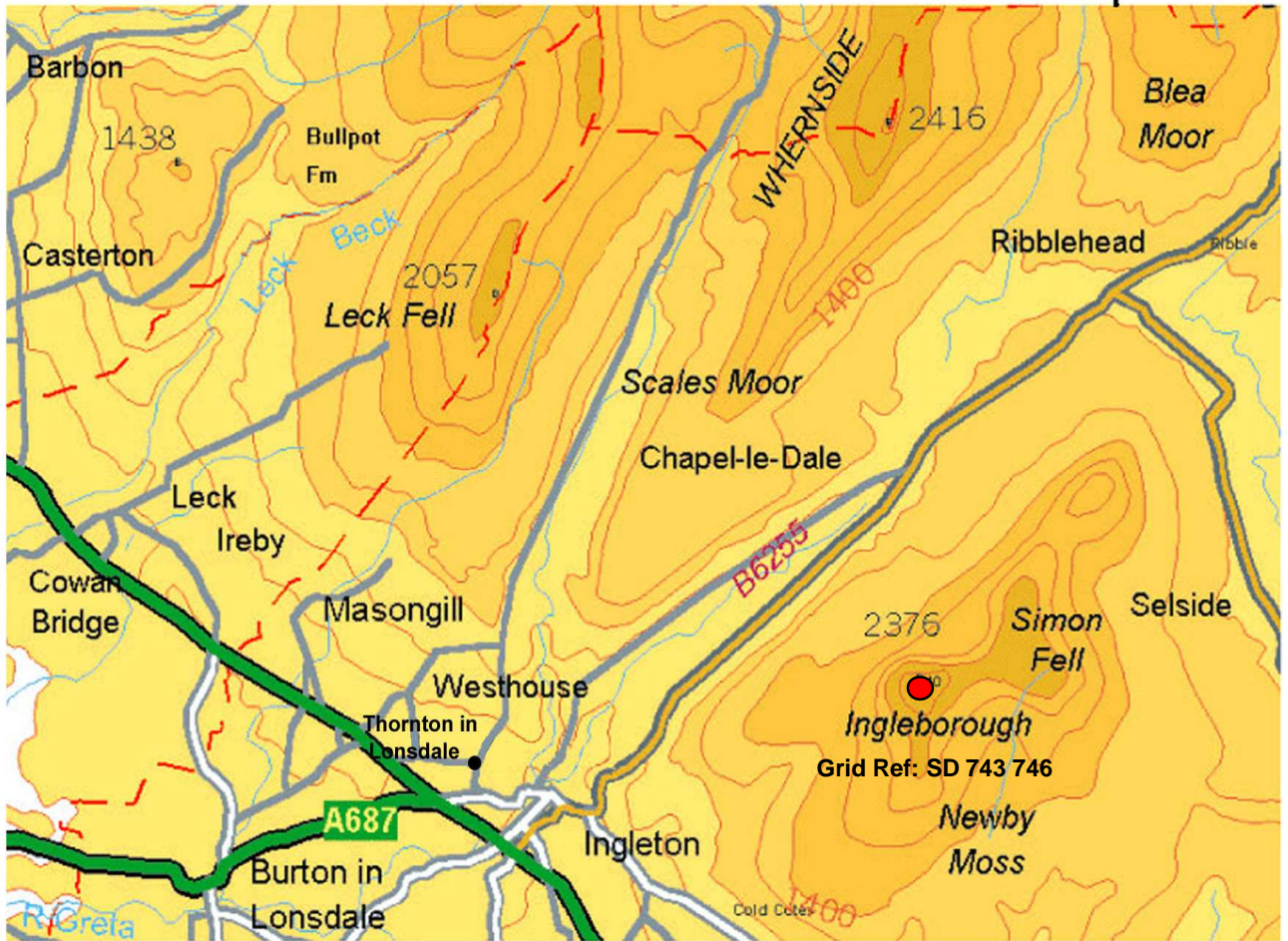
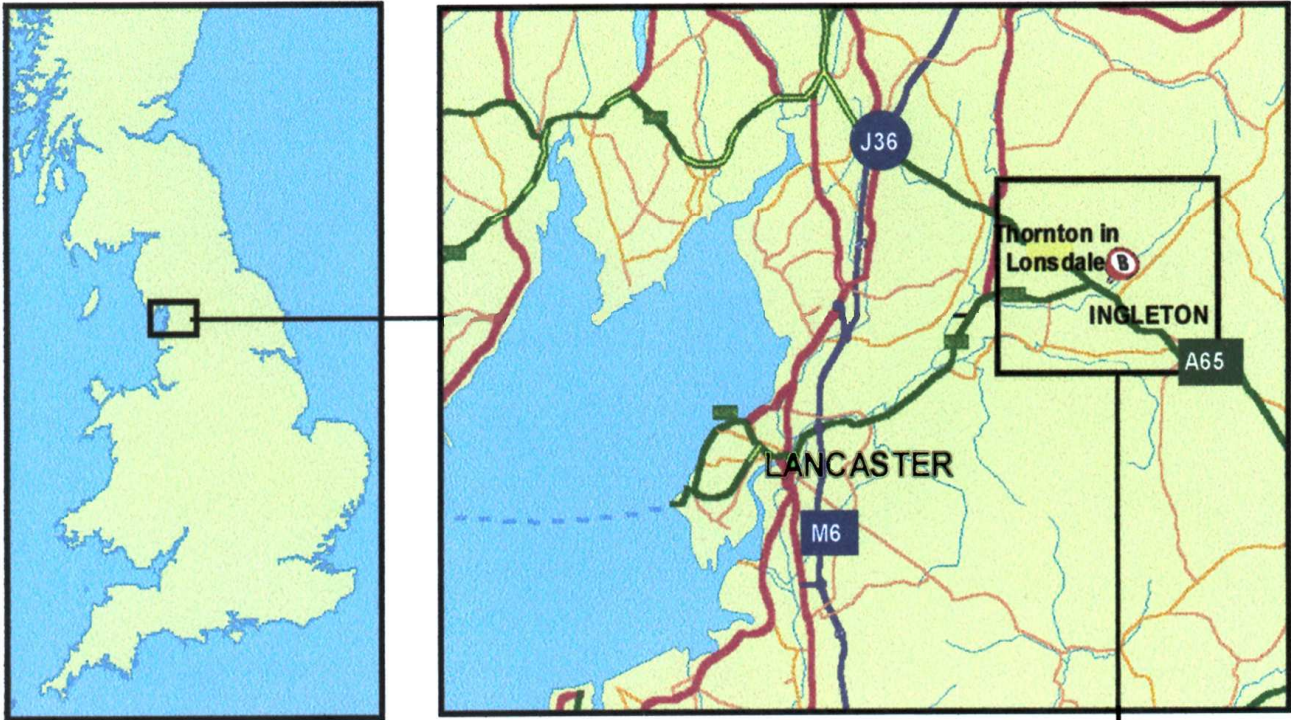


Fig 1: Location of Ingleborough Hill with National Grid Reference.

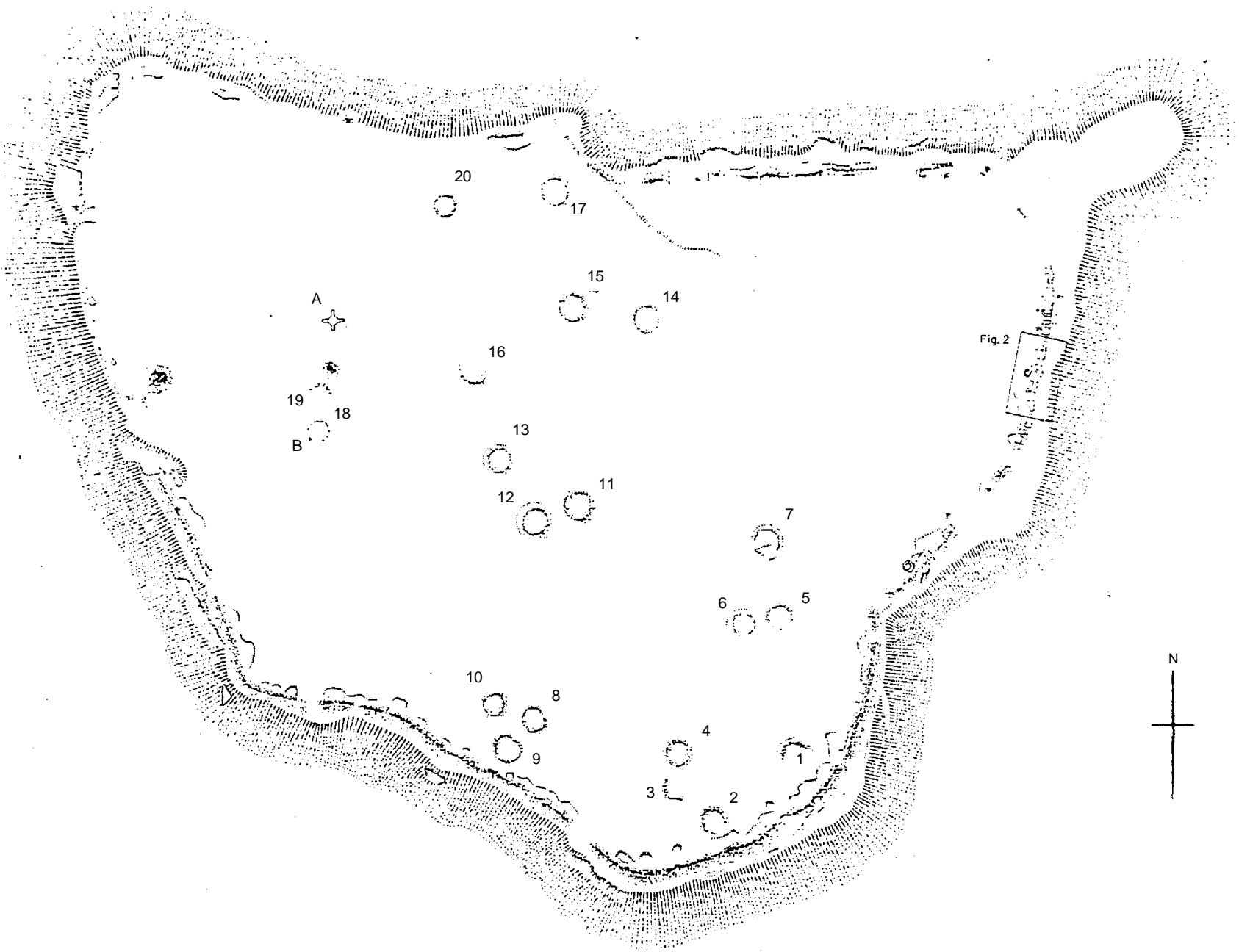


Fig. 2

Fig 2: The RCHME survey drawing of Ingleborough summit.

— Stone bank
 [] Modern structure

Metres
 0 10 50 100 150

INGLEBOROUGH

Several articles have been written describing the archaeological remains on the summit of Ingleborough, and this publication is going to focus on the **interpretation** of the wall and stone circle remains, making only brief mention of other, more recent, features. For those requiring broader information and knowledge about the archaeology, on and around Ingleborough, a list of further reading is recommended at the end of this article. It is not our intention to repeat all the old writings, but to use only extracts and references that will take research and knowledge forward.

The Royal Commission for Historic Monuments England (RCHME) scheduled the site as an ancient monument under the Provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 (Monument No 24479). Damage to the archaeological remains by walkers ignorant of the heritage they are destroying prompted us to write to English Heritage in 1996 concerning this matter. Over the last thirteen years no action has been taken to remedy this situation, and any attempt by well meaning historians and archaeologists to obtain information from the remains has been resisted. It is obviously better to let it all be destroyed than to have archaeologists try to retrieve information about the structures with considerably less destruction! The only concern and interest shown in this monument was in 1985, when Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) commissioned RCHME to carry out a survey and publish a report (*Bowden et al, 1985*).

The usual description of the remains on the summit of Ingleborough is a “univallate hillfort with 20 hut circles”. Is any part of this description correct? Discussing first the perimeter structure which we will call wall remains “= WR”, and using RCHME survey drawing (*Fig 2*) to show the position and orientation of features described. The use of the description WR is to show that we start with an unbiased view, which would not be the case if we used the terms ‘fort wall’, ‘defensive structure’ etc. The evidence will guide us to our final terminology.

The Wall Remains

A considerable amount of stone was required to construct the perimeter wall; the question is where did it come from? Three possible areas of quarrying have been identified, the first of these being Swine Tail. There is a considerable difference in ground level between the inner

and outer sides of the WR as it crosses Swine tail, the outer side being lower by approximately 1m (*Plate 1*) thus enhancing the height of the wall and making it more impressive. We suggest that an area covering the whole of the top of Swine Tail has been quarried. A second area is represented by a curving feature on the Northern side, (*Fig 1*) where there is a considerable change in ground level (*Plate 2*), which we think is a quarry face. By projecting a line from the upper edge of this feature out to the edge of the summit a considerable amount of quarried stone would be represented. The third area is the scooped-edge, false platform (*Plate 3*) that runs around the perimeter of the summit, on the internal side of the WR. The false platform starts where the path from Newby and Clapham crosses the WR and travels, initially, in a southwest direction, then turns towards the northwest corner (following the WR) past where the Crina bottom path reaches the summit and, finally, turns east along the northern side to the circular stone remains No 17 at which point it ends. It is no coincidence that the second quarrying area described above is situated at this point, as there is no false platform from the curving feature all the way back to the Clapham entrance. Why is the third quarry area on the line of the WR? It should be considered that, where the false platform is present, the original ground surface of the summit slopes considerably to the edge and required levelling, making this stone immediately available for use in building the wall (*Fig 3 on page 7 opposite*), unlike the rest of the summit where it is flat to the edge. Therefore, no false platform means that an alternative quarry is required.

The next question is what type of structure do the WR indicate. A drawing (*Fig 4*) by Mr A

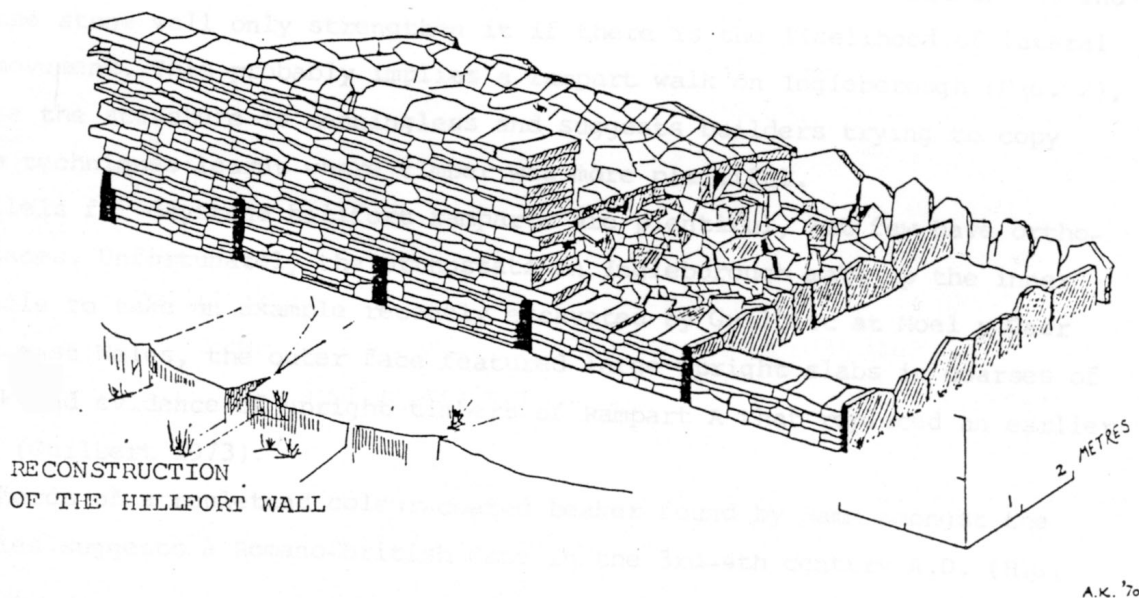
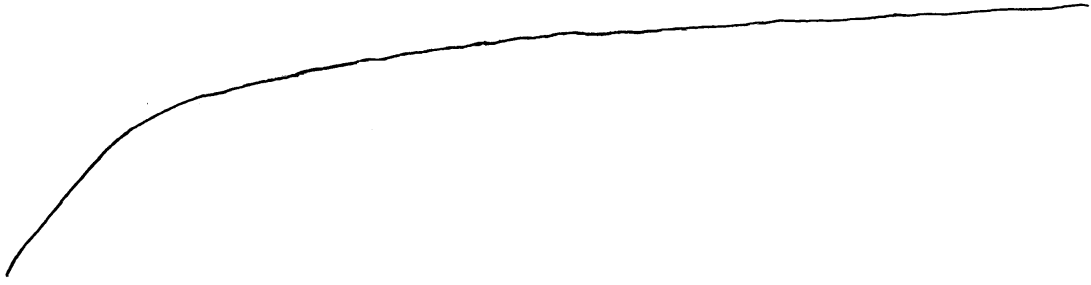
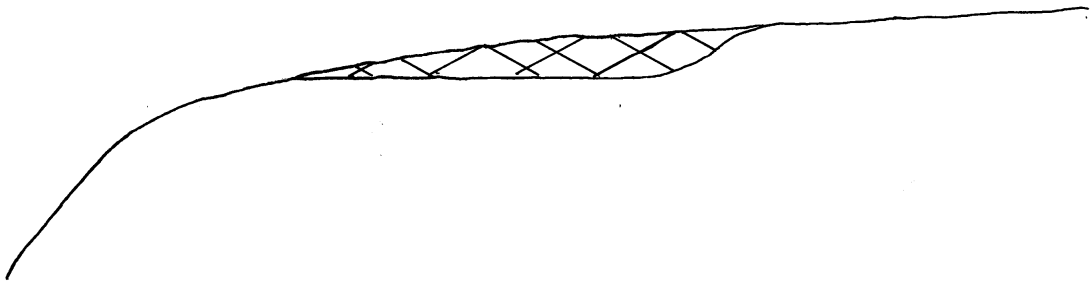


Fig 4: Proposed econstruction of the Hillfort wall by Mr.A King

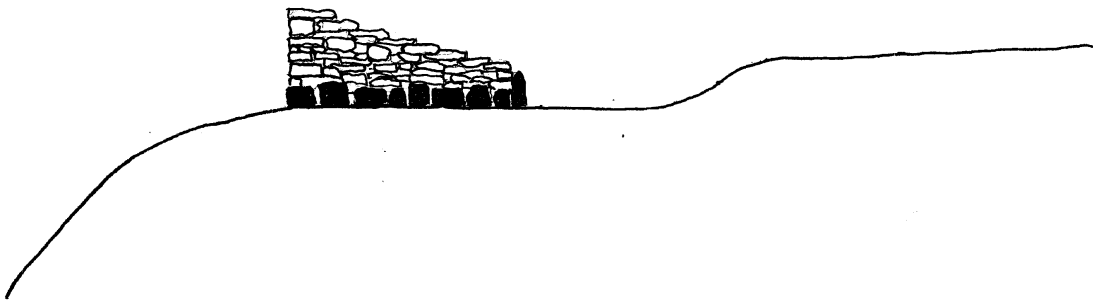
Fig 3: Phases of wall construction where ditch is present.



(a) Showing the original ground surface



(b) Showing area cut away to form false platform



(c) Showing finished construction



(d) Showing remains as they appear today

King (*King, 1987*) shows a raised walkway with a double-faced wall rising above it on the outer edge. This interpretation is problematical in that there is no evidence for an inner face of a wall going down to ground level (*Plate 4*) and, without an inner face, it would be very unstable. Our drawing, (*Fig 5*) shows a structurally sound wall based on the evidence. This

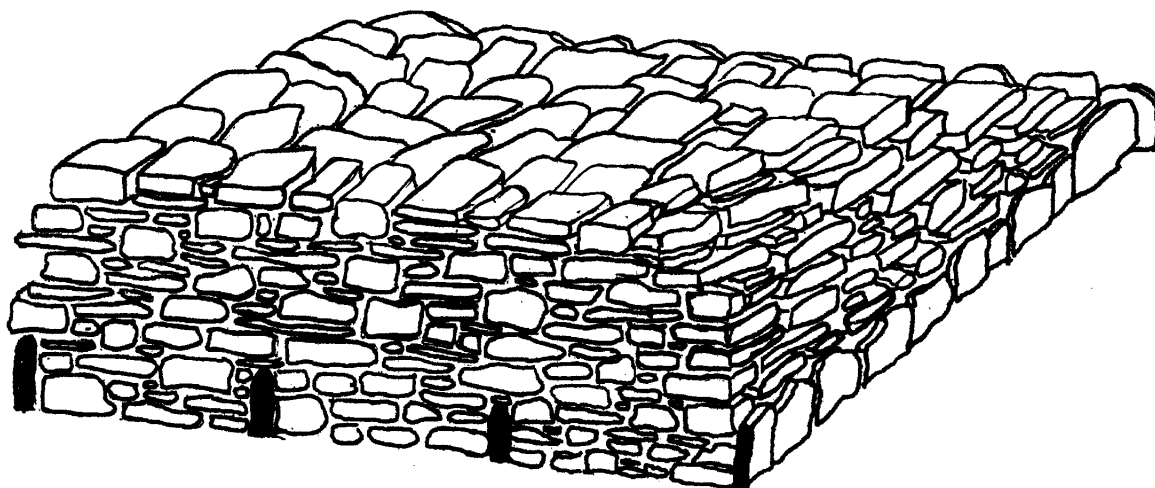


Fig 5: Our proposed construction of the wall.

structure would be very impressive from the outside and it can be traversed on foot, if this was a requirement. The width of the wall where it can be measured with any degree of accuracy is approximately 4m. This does not mean that it was this width all the way round. The height of the structure can only be guessed at - our estimate is approximately 2m/3m on the outer face. Two other structural features of the wall are of importance. One is the vertical orthostats forming the inner edge of the structure; it is interesting that this method has been used rather than building a low wall. Could this indicate that the wall was being used as a walkway? If people were stepping up on to the wall, an edge of ground fast orthostats would certainly be a more substantial edge than a walled one, with stones slipping off when you stepped up. Running across the wall from the outside face to the inner face is another row of orthostats, (*Plate 5*) these are positioned approximately every 2m across the wall creating a box type structure. The reasons for these can only be speculated on:

- To form an edge to retain an internal filling as construction was taking place.
- To give visual information of daily progress, which may be relevant if several gangs were working on construction.
- They may be just a design feature with no practical purpose.

From a practical point of view, we consider the first option to be the most likely.

There are other questions about the structure e.g.

- How old is the structure?
- Was it completed?
- How many entrances were there and where were they positioned?

The first question is probably the most asked one about archaeological remains - sometimes the answer is easy and sometimes more difficult. Unfortunately, Ingleborough falls into the latter category. Construction of hilltop sites appears to have begun in the late Bronze Age (Fig 6) and there is no reason to believe Ingleborough does not fit into this period (BC 1100-BC 1000). We will discuss this later combined with the stone circle evidence.

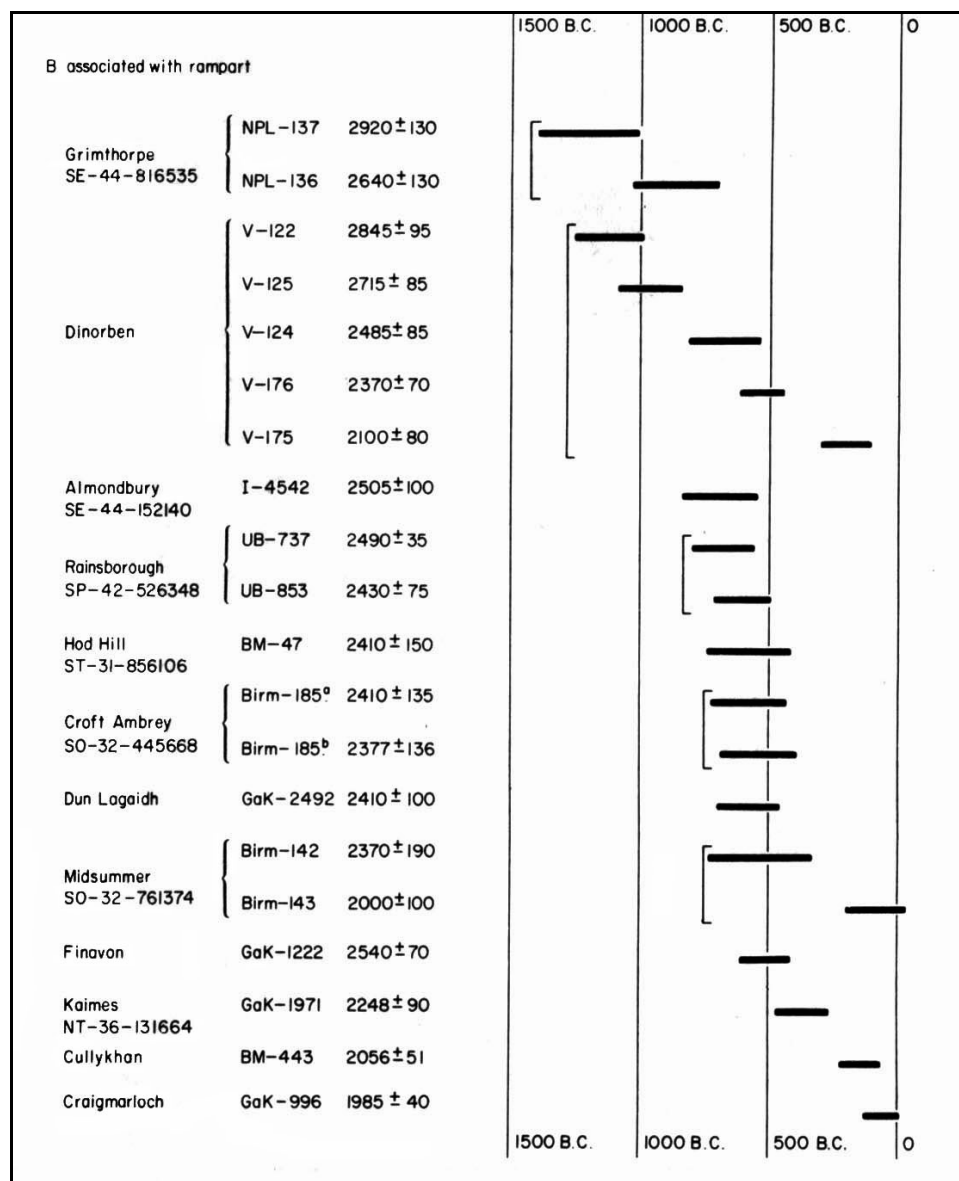


Fig 6: Radiocarbon counts for hillforts (as at September 1973), calibrated after Damon, Long and Wallick (1972). Data given are site, grid reference, laboratory number, radiocarbon years before present (conventional 5568 half-life) and diagram showing likely range of each calibrated date (from plus one standard deviation to minus one standard deviation). Chart taken from *Late Prehistoric Earthworks in Britain and Ireland* by D.W. H. Harding see Bibliography for reference.

The evidence indicates that the wall around the whole of the summit was started, if only at foundation level. Infilling of the quarried false platform behind the orthostats has occurred, with stone tumble from the wall and deposits washed in by surface water, this has caused ponding leading to shallow peat formation. Where wall remains are absent, on the western end of the northern edge, (Plate 6) the profile of the summit edge has been modified, indicating that a wall foundation has been constructed (see Fig 3d). The RCHME report adds weight to the argument by stating

“Along much of the north side of the fort the rampart is entirely absent though large amounts of scree on the slopes below may indicate its original existence” (Ibid, pp268).

Whether or not the wall was completed in its vertical aspect is still a question open to debate

A 1.5m wide gap between the wall foundation stones on the SE side is convincing evidence for an entrance, due to the presence of foundation stones on either side of the gap, running at right angles to the WR (Plate 7). There is a 20m long section on the SW side where no quarrying has taken place on the wall line (Plate 8) this could possibly be an entrance. However, there are other gaps in the WR but these have no convincing evidence of being entrances as there are no remaining foundation stones to be seen running at right angles to the main wall.

Stone Circle Remains

What is the remaining evidence for the 20 stone circles and what can it tell us? There are many circular stone features described as archaeological remains e.g. orthostatic stone circles, ring cairns, hut circles, kilns, excarnation sites etc. It is not actually correct to state that there are 20 circles on the summit of Ingleborough - some only have remains that are crescent- shaped but could have been full circles at some time in the past as the following quote may suggest. This account by Frederic Riley in *Gleanings from a Yorkshire Valley* (Riley,?) was written by Mr John Kilburn, supplied to Riley by a (?) relative of John's (Mr J. D.Kilburn), and concerns John's presence at the construction of the Hospice.

“ There was plenty of stone on the site but to the antiquarians great loss they requisitioned part of the old surrounding Roman Wall and the stones that formed the beehive huts two or three feet high” (Riley, F)



Plate 1: Swine Tail - showing the change in ground level representing the edge of the quarried area. Looking towards the summit see Fig 8.



Plate 2: Showing the curving edge of the quarried area on the northern side of the summit (Fig 8).



Plate 3: The scooped-edged false platform on south-eastern side showing build up of peat at the rear of the wall (Fig 8).



Plate 4: The photograph, taken on the eastern side of the summit, shows that there is no internal face to wall, but the infill can clearly be seen abutting the outside face.



Plate 5: Orthostats forming the box sectioning of part of the wall on the north-east side of the summit.

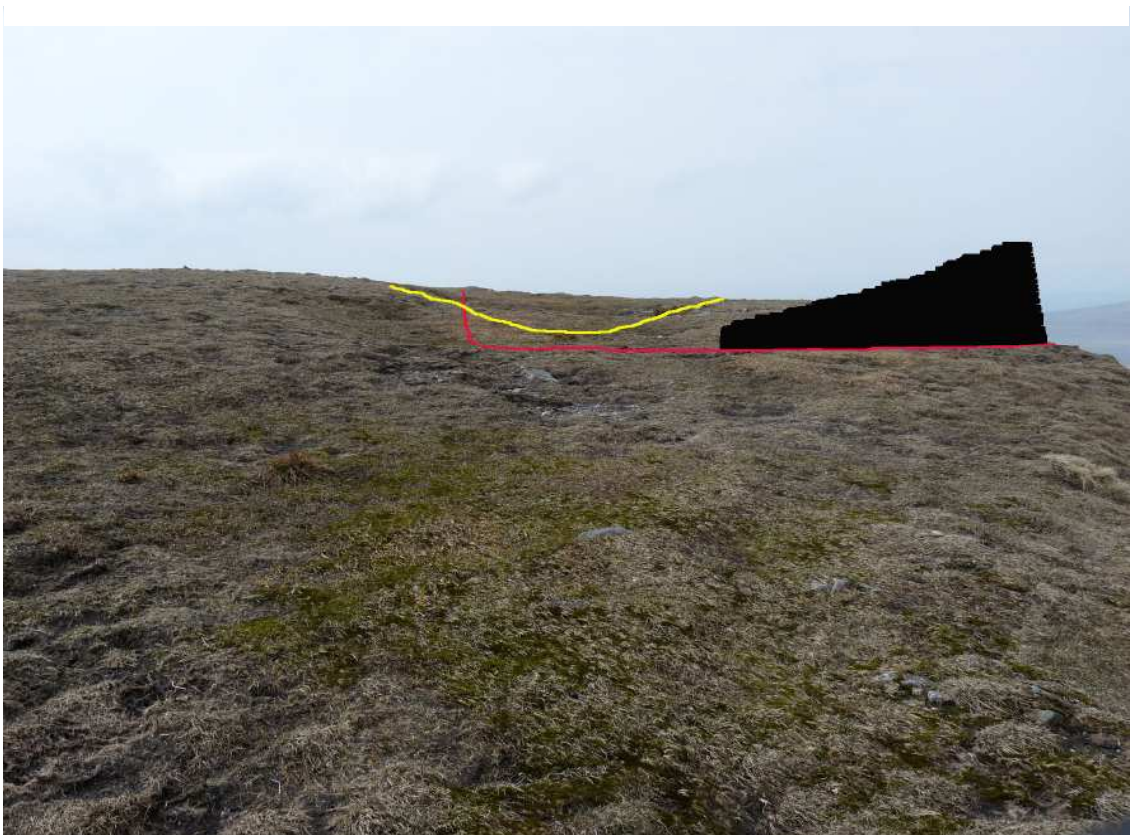


Plate 6: The red line represents creation of false platform; the yellow line show the present profile of the ground surface on the northern side of the summit. This is the area where some writers suggest there has been no wall.



Plate 7: Showing foundation stones on either side of the entrance on south-east side of summit.



Plate 8: On the south-west side where no false platform has been created. The stones in the foreground shows the edge of the quarrying.

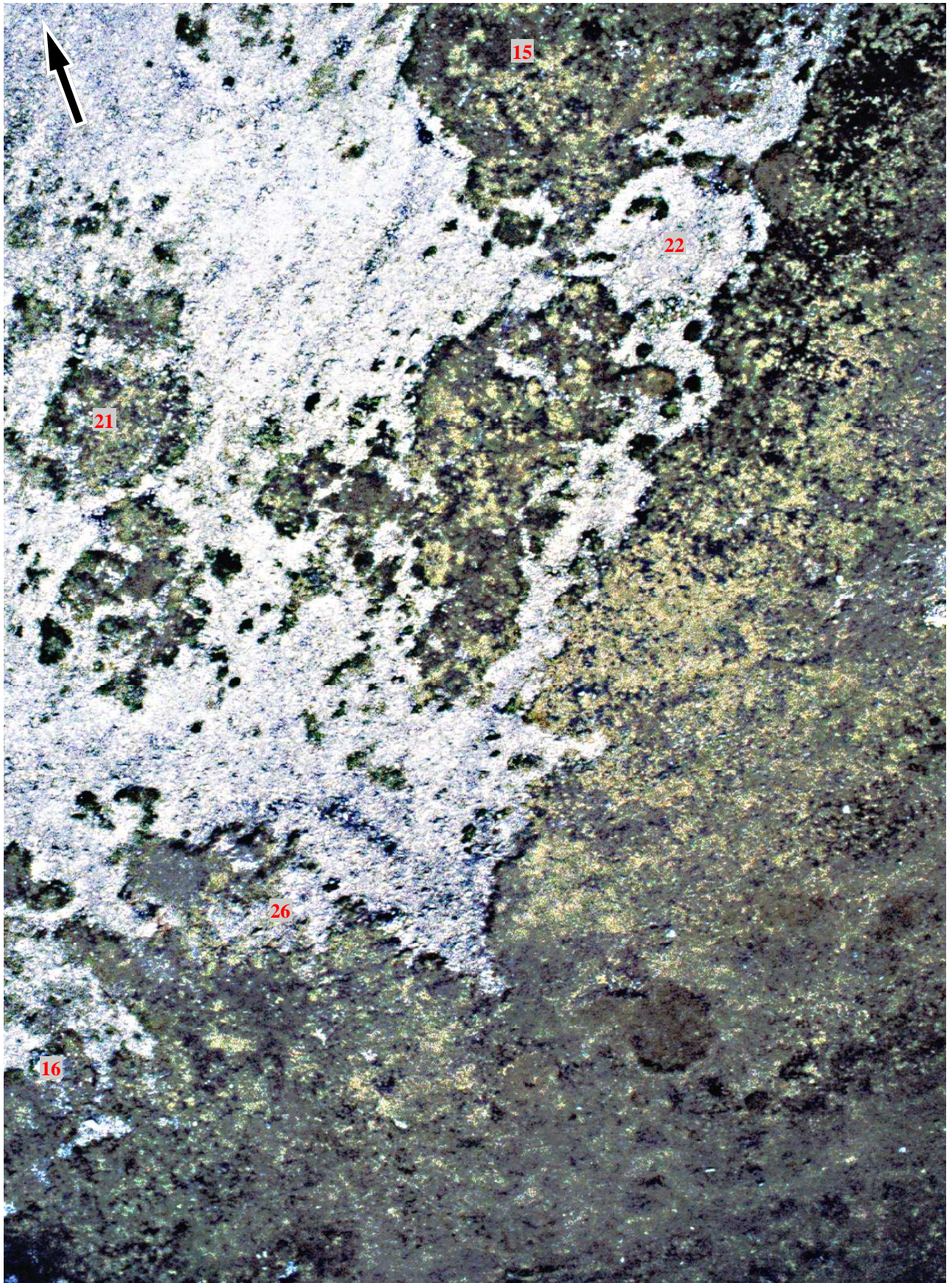


Plate 9: Low level aerial photograph showing position of stone circles 15; 16; 21; 22 and 26

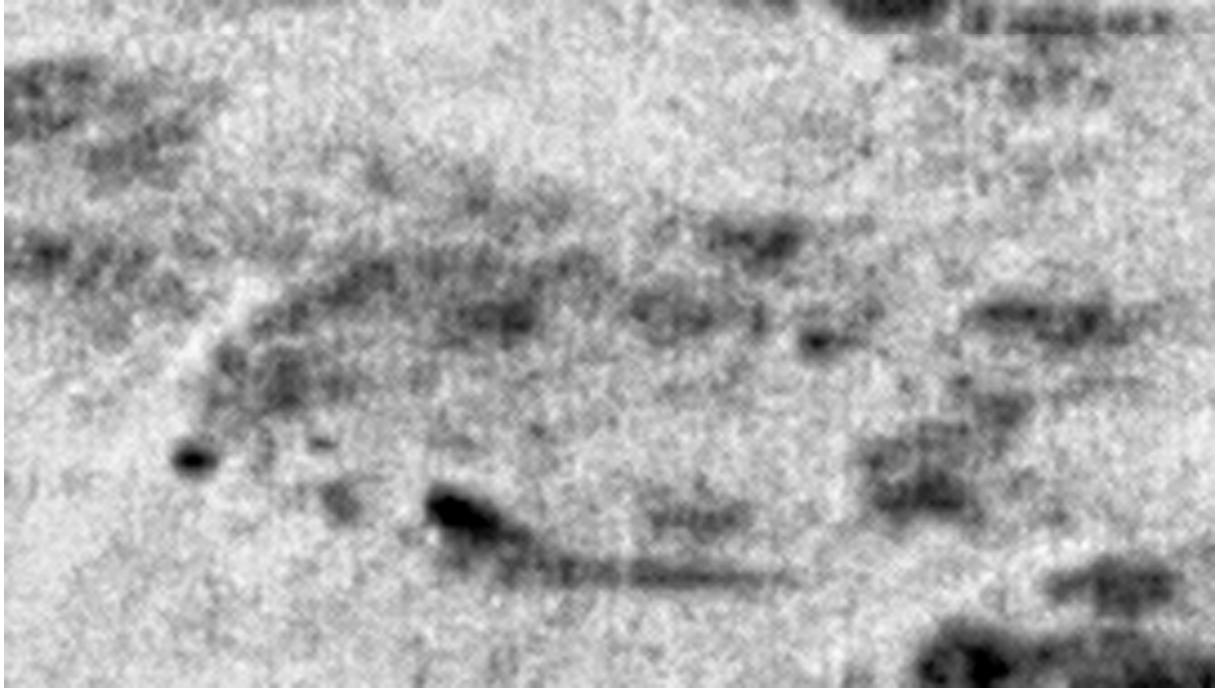


Plate 10: Aerial photograph of stone circle 16 showing EBE. No north arrows have been included in this photograph and in Plates 11; 13; 14; 15; 17 and 18. These are oblique photographs and difficult to show directions

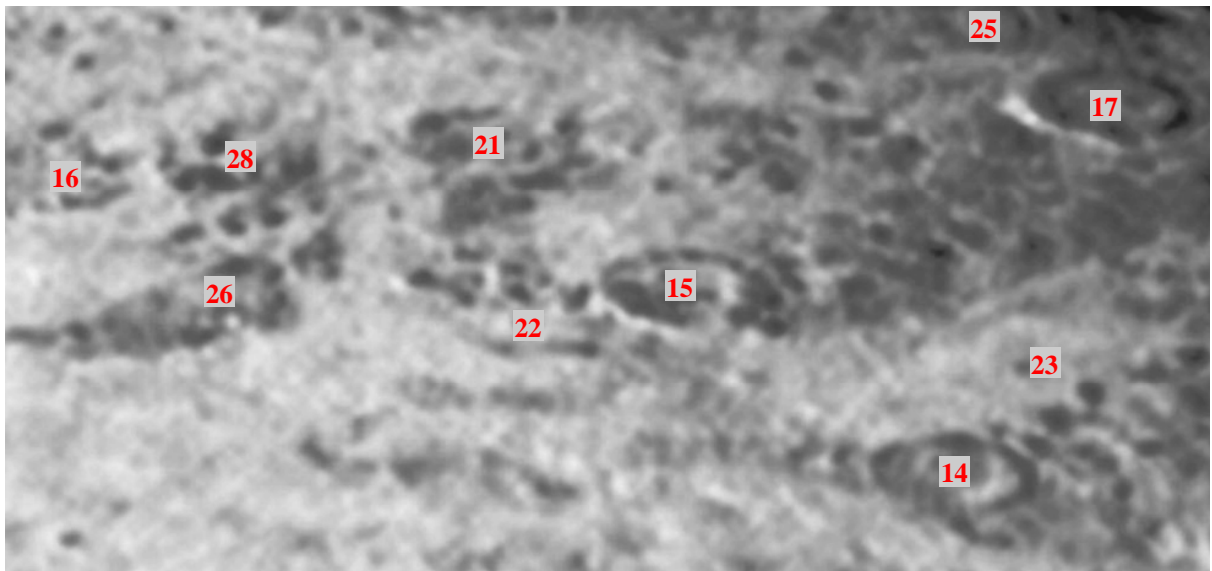


Plate 11: Aerial photograph of stone circles 14; 15; 16; 17; 21; 22; 23; 25; 26; 28.

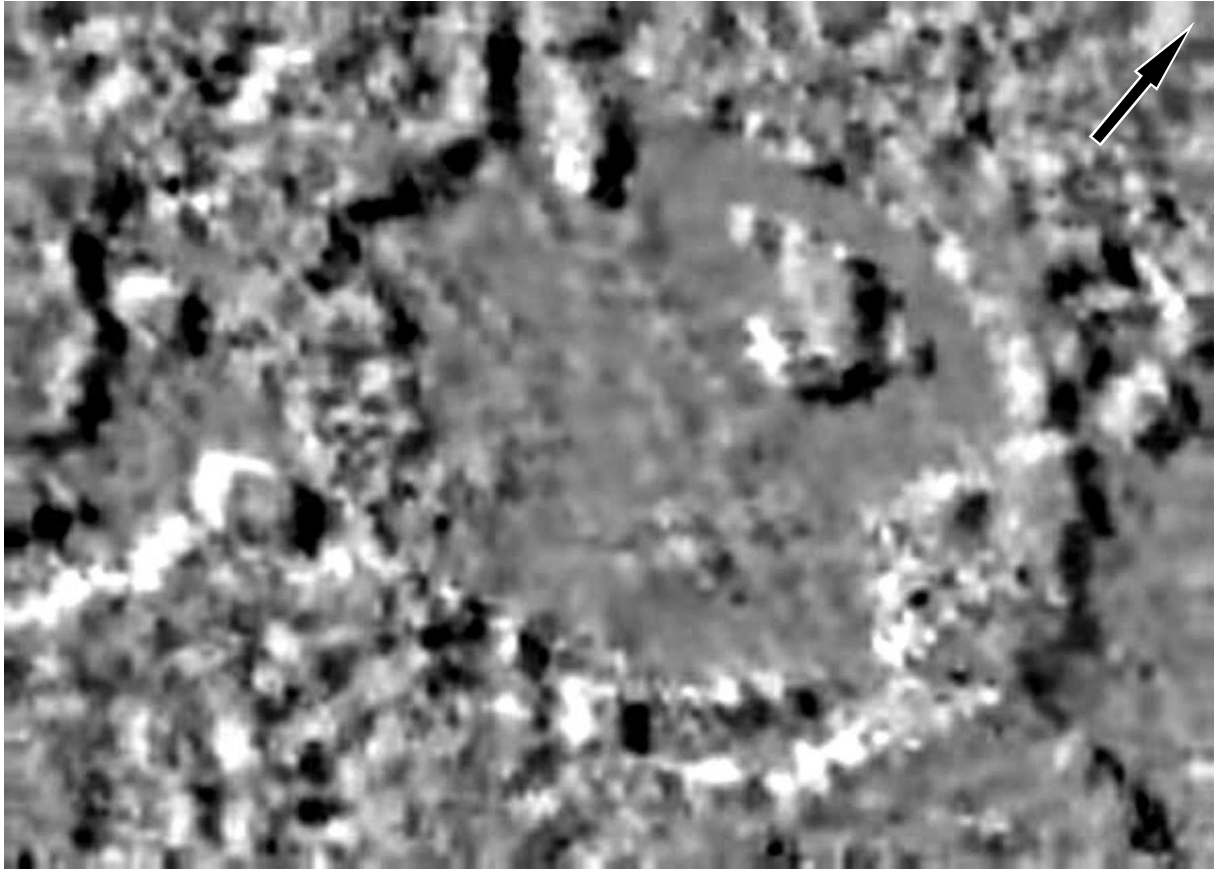


Plate 12: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 22.

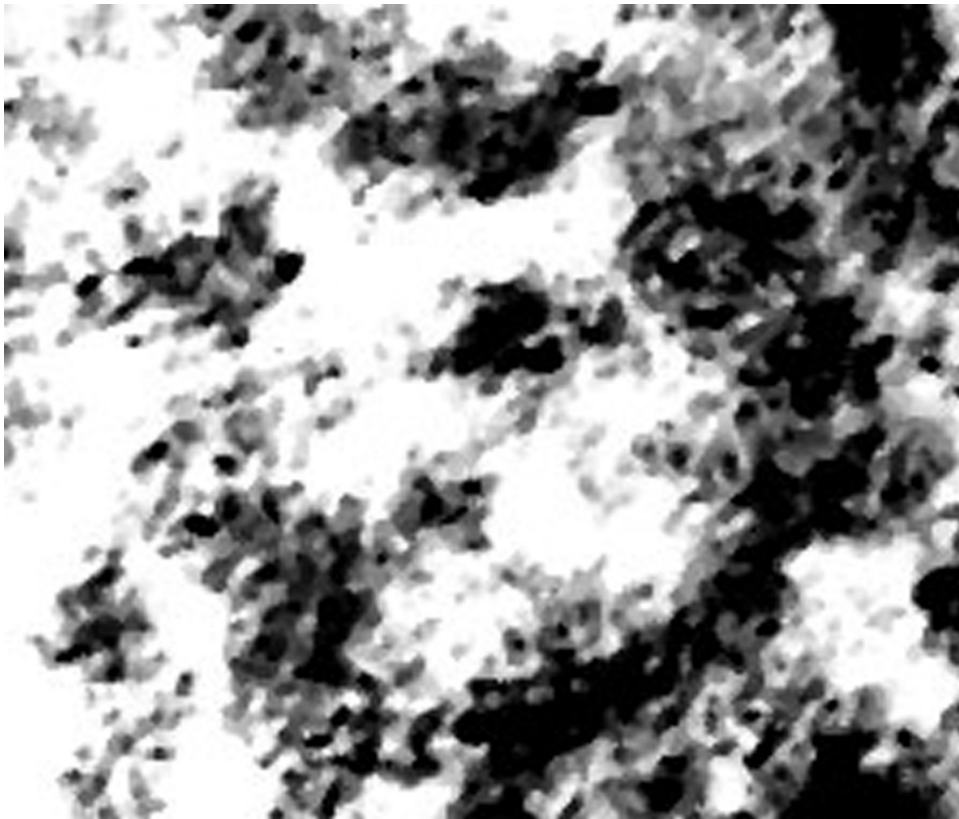


Plate 13: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 23

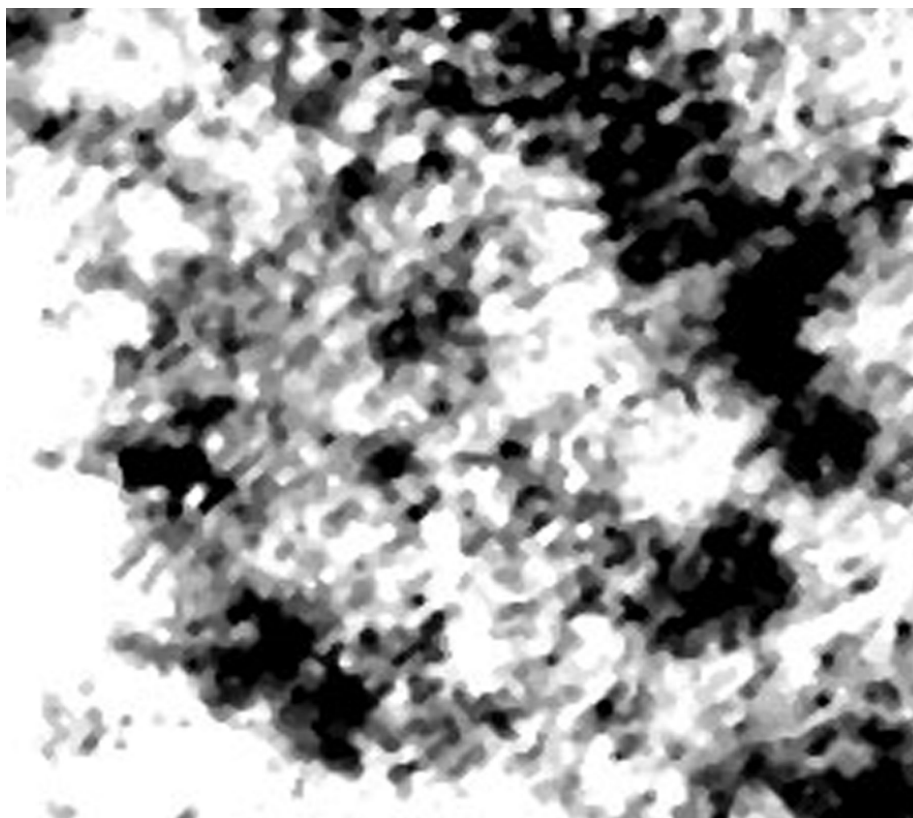


Plate 14: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 24



Plate 15: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 25

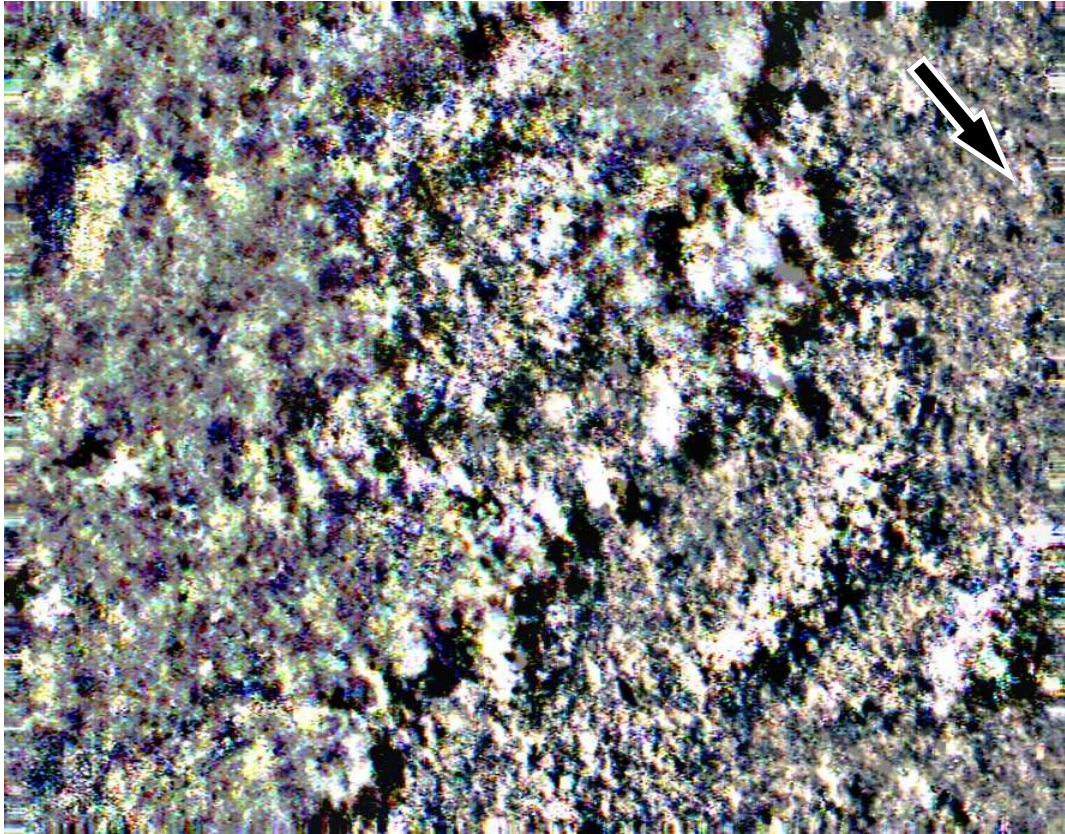


Plate 16: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 26.



Plate 17: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 27. The curving lighter feature in the centre shows the proposed drip channel.

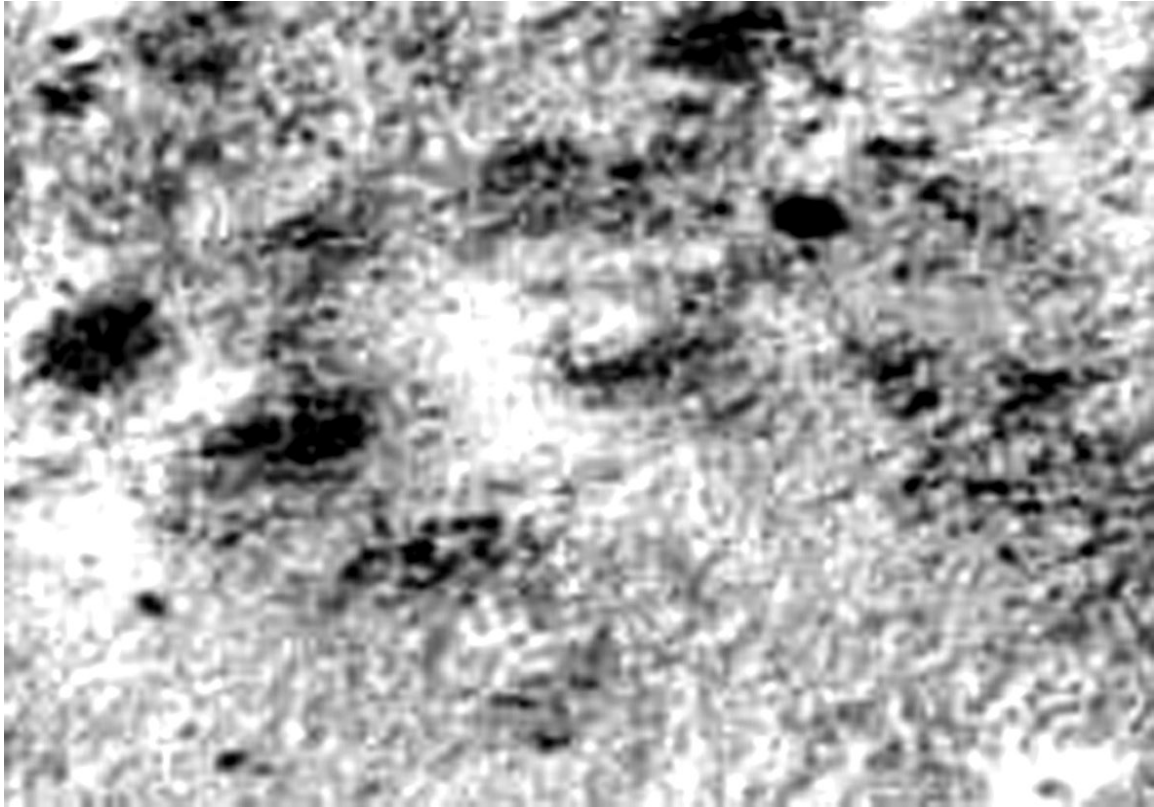


Plate 18: Aerial photograph showing stone circle 28.



Plate 19: The spring on the north-west summit corner.



Plate 20: Stone quarry for building the 'Hospice' on the north-west corner.



Plate 21: Quarry on Swine Tail



Plate 22: Showing the proposed St Anthony's Well.



Plate 23: Showing the wall going from the summit to Falls Foot and also the wall going off to the right to the Arks.



Plate 24: The red line indicates the bank feature going from below Falls Foot to the south-west of Green Edge. In the middle distance, the red line shows the continuation of the feature.



Plate 25: Remains of wall midway across northern side.



Plate 26: The wall on the northern side of the summit where it enters the Arks.

This quote clearly states that there was considerable robbing of the stone from the structures, but the writer may have been assuming the walls of the huts would be two or three feet high. Two circles, (6 and 7), were excavated by Mr J Farrer and he sketched a rough plan (*Phillips, 1853*) of the perimeter wall and circular remains but no further details are known. A geophysical survey (*Batty and Crack, 2000*) of Circle 4 and Crescent shape 3 added little to the information and there was no remaining evidence for hearths. Cooking may have been done on a communal hearth somewhere outside the huts. Having done several surveys in the local area on what could be defined as hut circles, there is no evidence for hearths in any of them; the circles on Ingleborough appear to have an inner and outer face of foundation stones. Several have a gap in the stonework facing SE, and a channel around the outside, features found on many circles defined as huts. Could it be that the generally accepted construction technique of a roof on a low supporting structure of stone, wood, or wattle and daub usually described and illustrated as being around 1m high may not be correct in this instance? Exposure to high winds on the summit may have required an alteration to this design (*Fig 7*). showing the roof timbers down to the ground and probably anchored with short posts driven into the ground, the stone circles representing a very low wall, infilling the angle between the ground and the roof, giving a much lower overall height.

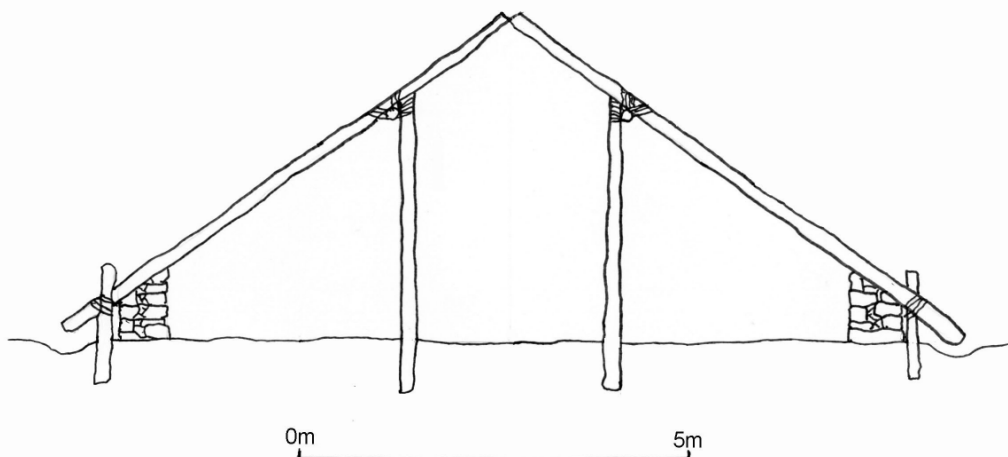


Fig 7: Drawing of proposed transient-use structure.

Research is currently being carried out by ourselves on ring cairns in the local area, four have been found so far, all have been geophysically and topographically surveyed; every one shows a large number of anomalies which appear to be areas of burning or, possibly ceramic burial urns. No evidence has been found in all the publications looked at for the

identification of a ring cairn on the summit of a mountain, and we are also dubious about some that have been recognised as such on the slopes. There is a considerable difference in the geophysics' results between our definitions of hut circles (showing no geophysical anomalies and ring cairns (a large number of geophysical anomalies). The possibility that some Ring Cairns may be exarnation sites is an idea we are pursuing. This is ongoing research and will be published in the near future. The size of the circular remains on the summit of Ingleborough (5m to 11m in diameter), and their location rules out kilns.

There has never been any certainty over how many circles actually existed. A large number of aerial photographs from YDNPA, English Heritage and Cambridge University have been examined. In 1998, the writers took several low level aerial photographs one of which is *Plate 9*. These were taken with a camera mounted below a kite, from a height of 50m to 70m. Examination of all the photographs shows evidence for another eight circles and considerable evidence for two of these viz. 21 and 25 below. These have been added to the RCHME survey to show their proposed location (*Fig 8*) and the numbering has been continued to 28. We will give evidence for each one in numerical order. Close examination of some of the known, and better-preserved, circles shows that the erosion process has created gaps in the circles leaving small, dark blobs on the aerial photographs representing the broken sections of wall remaining. A proven hut circle 16 (*Plate 10*) shows this effect very clearly. We will use the term 'erosion blob effect' (EBE) for this phenomenon. The further 8 circles added are described below.

No 21

In 1985 the RCHME published a report but we have in our possession a draft document making statements that do not appear in the published report. One statement refers to an aerial photograph taken in 1955 that identifies a 'hut circle' immediately to the west of circle 15. *Plates 9 and 11* clearly show the evidence for this circle and a drip channel around the outside. Although the unpublished document states this hut circle has been 'destroyed since 1955', faint evidence can still be seen on the ground.

No 22

Erosion has destroyed all trace of this one but *Plate 12* clearly shows a circular feature.

No 23

This circle is represented by the EBE and can be seen on *Plate 13*

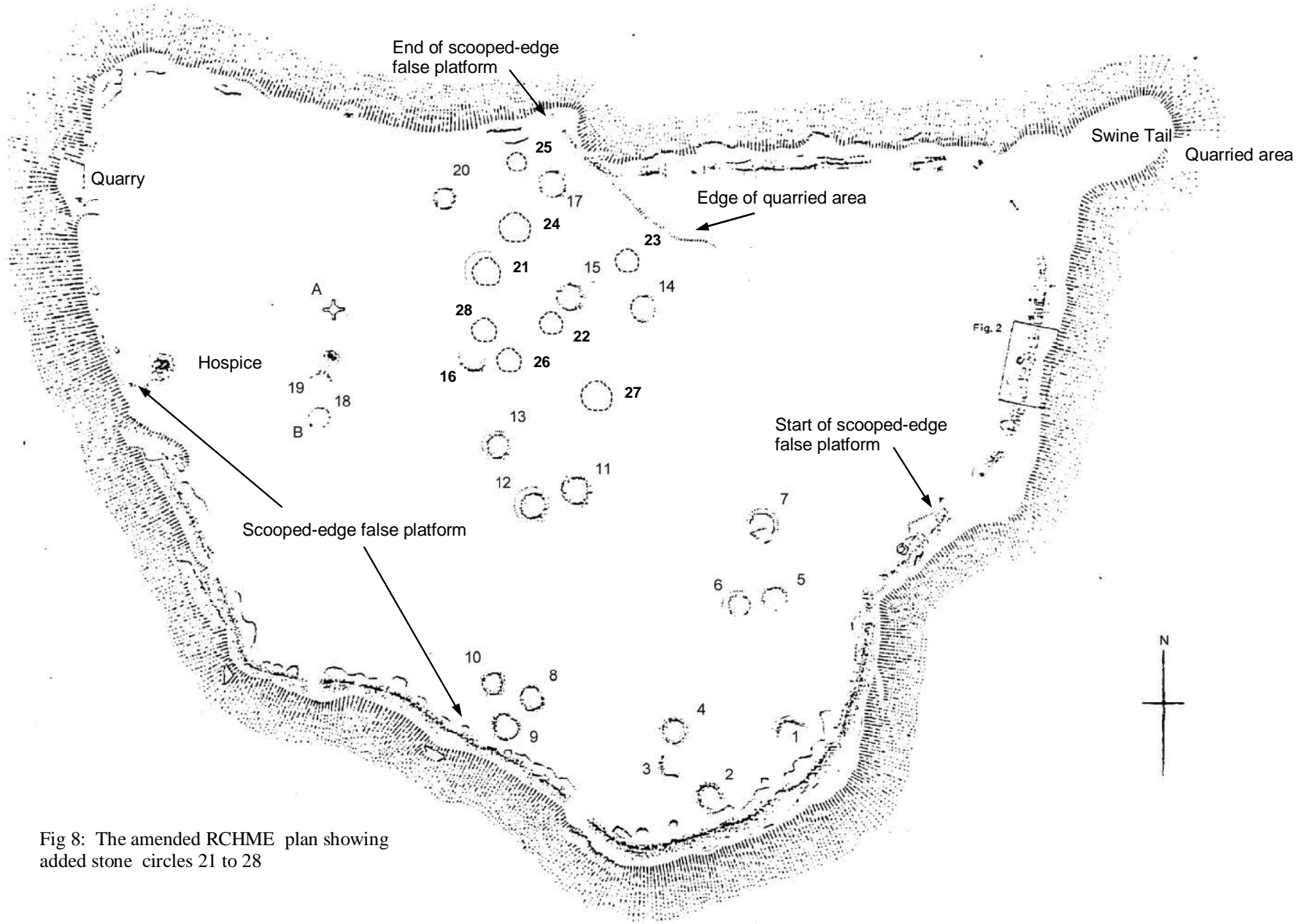


Fig 8: The amended RCHME plan showing added stone circles 21 to 28

— Stone bank
 [] Modern structure

Metres
 0 10 50 100 150

No 24

Erosion has also destroyed this one but the aerial photograph. *Plate 14* shows the EBE.

No 25

This circle can still be seen on the ground (*Plate 15*).

No 26

There is no evidence remaining on the ground, this is one of the most eroded areas on the summit, but *Plates 9 and 16* do show a possible circular feature.

No 27

This is shown by evidence for a drip channel (*Plate 17*).

No 28

This is shown by the EBE (*Plate 18*).

How were the dwellings constructed? The drawing (*Fig 7*) shows our interpretation of the construction based on the idea that they were not permanently inhabited. If the structures were semi portable, having a hide roof and removable roof spars, these could be removed at the end of summer occupation, leaving only ground fast poles and stone circles, returning in spring, the roof spars and hides could be replaced. This would be a better option than having to repair permanent structures that could be destroyed by the ravages of winter weather; and the hides and timber would be available for use elsewhere during this period. There are comparisons here to the Mongolian 'ger', the Russian 'yurt' and the North American 'tipi'. May the reason why there are so few anomalous readings on the geophysical survey be because of the transient purpose of the circles? Does this cast doubt on many more stone circles or circles defined as ring cairns at higher altitudes that could have been roofed in a similar way? Could these represent dwellings related to summer pasturing of livestock? Does this mean that these remains should have a different classification to hut circles? Should the answer to these questions be yes, then a new classification is required, we would suggest "transient use circles".

Since the latest of the aerial photographs were taken in 1998 a considerable amount of erosion has taken place, possibly more than in any 11 year period since construction. Evidence has been presented for eight more circles, two of which can still be seen on the

ground, so there can be no doubt about their existence, but evidence for the other six is based solely on aerial photographs. A close examination of the summit ground surface and aerial photographs did not reveal any circular remains in other locations.

The extra circles proposed here may be an indication there are two periods of stone circle construction. As the chart in Fig 6 shows many hilltop settlements were established from the late Bronze Age around BC1100-BC1000. Their construction, thought to be a reaction to deteriorating climatic conditions creating pressure on a rapidly expanding population and the need for more resources, led to the most powerful expressing their power. The research currently being carried out in Kingsdale is revealing considerable activity in the Bronze Age - this could also apply to the wider area, including the top of Ingleborough.

The clearly visible stone circles on Ingleborough may represent a second phase of construction, possibly around BC500-BC400, this being the zenith of hilltop settlement development. There may have been periods of abandonment with the wall and stone circles being repaired on re-occupation at any time within the period BC1100-800AD.

Several other features on and around the summit are worthy of note. Three of these are on the NW corner. The first is a spring that only flows in periods of substantial rainfall (*Plate 19*) another is a small quarry (*Plate 20*) that cuts into the WR, where stone was obtained for constructing the Hospice Tower, this being the third feature. At the NE end of the summit there is a small quarry situated immediately in front of the WR where they turn to cross Swine Tail. Could this represent the start of further quarrying contemporary with that already described on Swine Tail? (*Plate 21*)

Another feature, on the left, as you approach the summit on the track from Crina Bottom, approximately 50m below the top, is a spring shown by a circle (1) on Farrer's Plan (*Fig 9*). There is another circle to the SE marked as St Anthony's well (2). Nothing is evident on the ground at this point to suggest there was **ever** a spring **in this location**. It would seem that St Anthony's Well (*Plate 22*) has been wrongly positioned on this plan and should be in location (1) . To the north of this there is a wall running down from the summit to the top of Falls Foot (*Plate 23*). There are no wall remains down Falls Foot, possibly due to the steep angle of descent, but below Falls Foot a bank feature (*Plate 24*) continues to a point SW of

CAMP AND HUTS ON INGLEBOROUGH.

Plate 5.

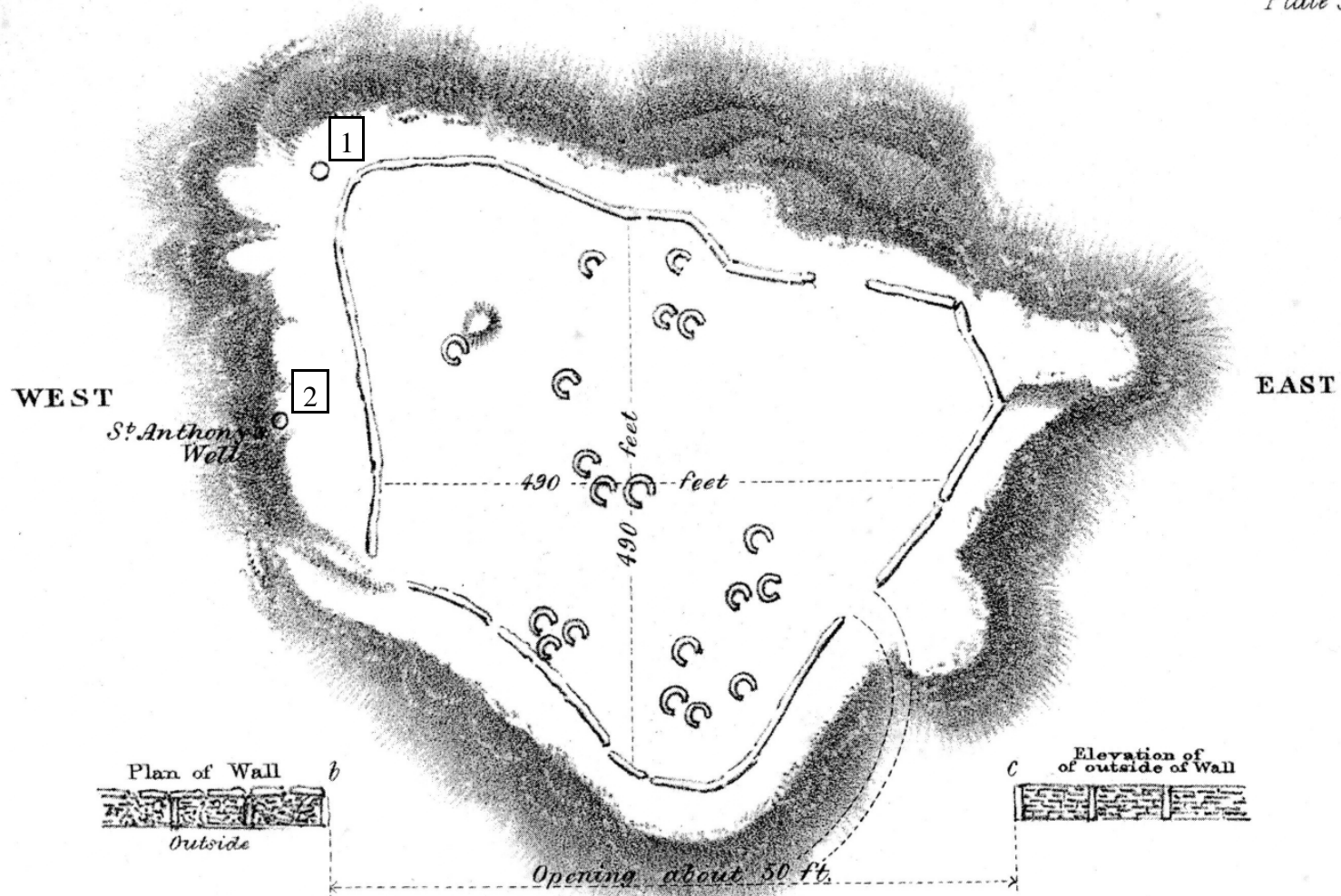


Fig 9: (1) on the plan indicates the place where the writer's think is the location of St Anthony's Well. (2) is where Farrer has marked this feature.

Green Edge. At this point the bank disappears. If you continue walking westward across Green Edge, wall remains are visible that terminate at the edge of the limestone escarpment above the old granite quarry in Chapel-le-Dale. Abutting this wall, and running at a right angle to it, approximately 50m below the summit (*Plate 23*) is a wall that goes around the NW corner and along the northern side (*Plate 25*) and terminates at the Arks (*Plate 26*). The purpose of these walls and whether or not they are contemporary with the summit remains unknown. The summit wall and the lower wall create an enclosure, because this is situated around the NW corner it provides shelter from many wind directions. If an area on the NW corner of the summit was fenced off and included with this enclosure, and an opening left in the summit wall, it would create a substantial enclosure in which to keep horses used for sledding stone during construction and other draft, or sheep and goats used for feeding construction workers or transient occupiers.

Conclusions

This publication started by asking if the description “univallate hillfort with 20 Hut Circles” was correct. The evidence presented here demonstrates that an alternative construction to that described by Mr King, fits the evidence of the wall remains more accurately. As the WR are not dated they cannot be allocated into any specific period, which could allow comparison with other contemporary sites but, as shown in the chart on page 9 the earliest occupation could be late Bronze Age. The zenith of the period for the construction of hill top settlements is thought to be around 500 BC with construction and occupation taking place up to around the 8th century, as shown by Dunnad in the Kilmartin valley. Ingleborough is described as the highest hillfort in England, making it an unsuitable place for permanent habitation. The idea of rushing to the top of Ingleborough in times of conflict, taking worldly possessions, and defending yourself over any length of time seems very unlikely.

Does the low number of stone circles suggest a use other than defence? There was certainly enough space to construct more stone circles, giving shelter to more workers and speeding up construction, if defence was a priority. If this was **not** the most pressing criteria however, it could be argued that the low number of circles indicates that time was not necessarily the most important factor. Therefore the answer to the initial question seems to indicate that the low number of hut circles points to evidence of ‘prestige’ building, rather than defence.

The '20 hut circles' in the original definition is not correct. As stated previously there are certainly two extra circles still evident on the ground, and another six suggested by aerial photographs. It is possible that some of the extra circles suggested here may be from the Bronze Age and this could be why identification is more difficult. Are they permanent as the term 'hut circle' suggests? There is no evidence to prove they are not the bases of dwellings, but the terminology 'hut circle' usually implies a permanent structure and, as argued previously, this is unlikely given the elevation and exposure of the summit. There is nothing to indicate they are Ring Cairns, in fact the evidence shows they are highly unlikely to be so. Water channels are present around the outside of a number of circles - these may have been dug out, created by dripping water or both but this also implies that they were roofed. There is also a distinct lack of evidence to show that ring cairns were built on the summits of mountains. Geophysics also indicate that ring cairns have a large number of anomalous readings, but hut circles lack this evidence.

The mountain itself is an impressive sight protruding from the Western edge of the Pennines, overlooking the lowlands out to the coast of Lancashire and Furness. Building a structure of this size would be an event that the inhabitants around, and possibly within sight of, Ingleborough would know about, and also be aware of the power base that organised its construction. Throughout the period BC1100- 800AD, Ingleborough may have been on several different tribal boundaries. Recent research of the boundaries on and around Ingleborough provides evidence for a region called 'Dunutinga' that could have been an ancient British tribal zone. There seems to be a debate concerning the derivation of the name with some supporting the translation to 'people of the hill' and others that it means the area of and around Dent (derived from the name of a minor king named 'Dunawt'). Different, interesting theories abound for the location of Dunutinga and it is not our intention here to mention them all but, for those interested, a list of further reading can be found at the end of this publication. Again ongoing research may provide further evidence to clarify this idea.

Our interpretation is that the perimeter wall is a statement of power built on the most prominent location in the area, situated either on a tribal boundary or within a tribal region. The term hillfort as applied to Ingleborough is, in our opinion, inappropriate as this implies a structure to repel attackers; our preferred term is "psychodynamic structure". By this, we

mean a compelling, awe-inspiring structure that subliminally implies power and cautiousness or security and familiarity depending on the experience and perspective in the minds of the observer, and maybe this term could also be applied to many other structures, even Stonehenge. Dating evidence is non-existent, but our suggestion is that the WR and some stone circle remains could represent the earliest occupation around BC1100-BC1000. From the evidence presented, “univallate hillfort with 20 hut circles” cannot be applied with complete accuracy to the archaeological remains on the summit of Ingleborough, that may more aptly be described as a “psychodynamic structure with transient-use circles”.

We hope this publication is thought provoking, for without thinking, problems will never be solved. It is for the readers to decide for themselves and reach their own conclusions. At this moment, these are our conclusions, but should information come forward to change our opinion we will do so, as the priority is to find the truth. In the words of John Maynard Keynes.-

“When I see that I am wrong I change my mind. What do you do” ?

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Web Resource

www.hefenfelth.wordpress.com - a really interesting site recommended by Jeff Price (Ingleborough Archaeology Group Webmaster). Look on the site for **Lost Kingdoms** it deals with ancient tribal areas.