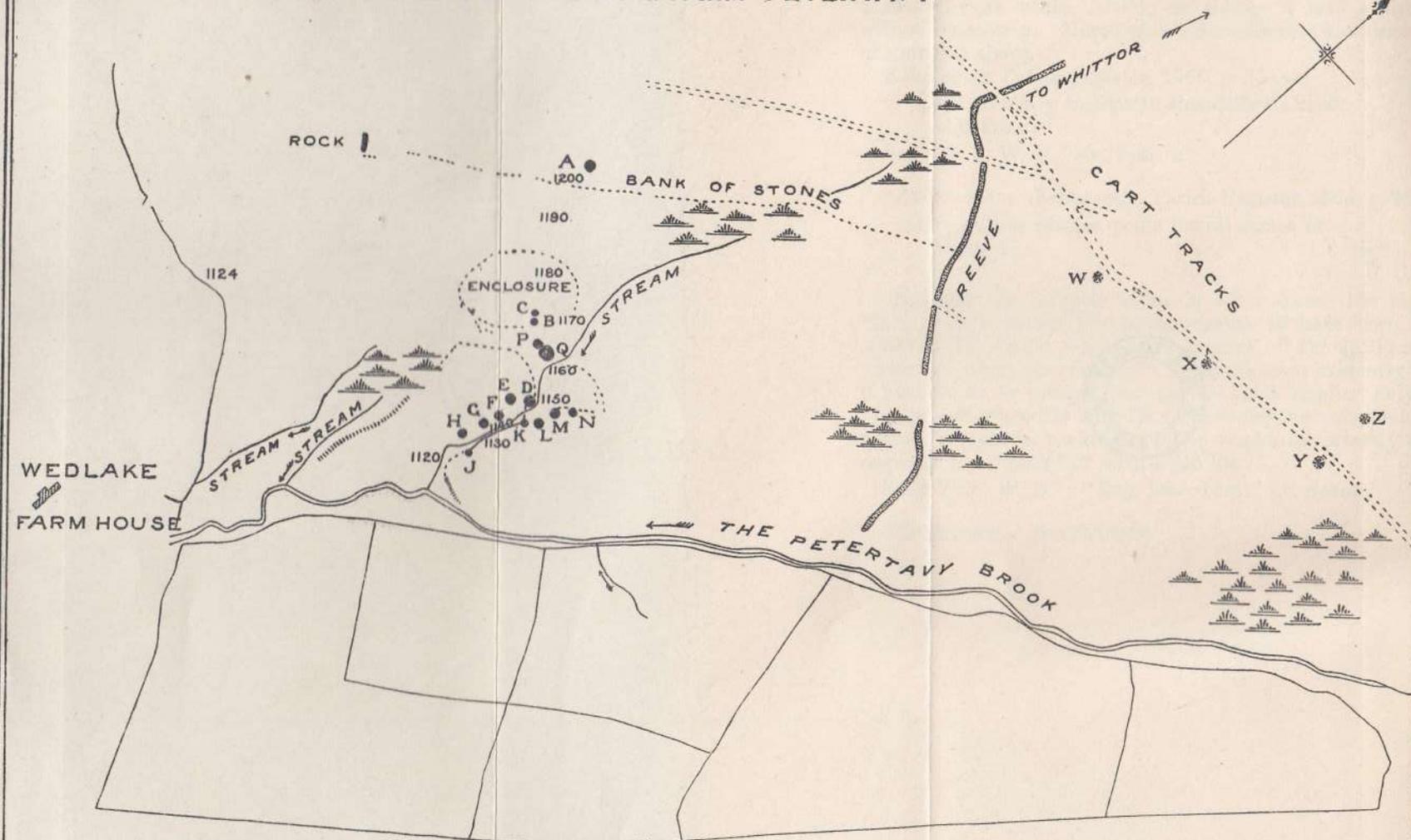


HUT CIRCLE SETTLEMENT near WEDLAKE FARM PETERTAVY



NOTE.—The scale of this plan is approximately $\frac{1}{2500}$, and not $\frac{1}{2250}$ as stated in letterpress.

TENTH REPORT OF THE DARTMOOR
EXPLORATION COMMITTEE.

TENTH REPORT *of the Committee—consisting of Rev. I. K. Anderson, Mr. R. Burnard, Rev. S. Baring-Gould, Mr. J. D. Pode, Mr. J. Brooking-Rowe, Mr. Basil H. Thomson, and Mr. R. Hansford Worth—for the purpose of exploring Dartmoor.*

Edited by the Rev. S. BARING-GOULD, Secretary.

(Read at Princetown, 19 July, 1905.)

REPORT OF THE EXPLORATION OF HUT CIRCLES, ETC., NEAR
WEDLAKE FARM, PETERTAVY.

A VERY small but interesting collection of hut circles, fifteen in number, connected with the summit of Whittor by a reeve running southward from the latter to Petertavy Brook. These hut circles were conspicuously absent from all the Ordnance maps, but are now to be incorporated at the next issue. They lie N.N.E. by E. of Wedlake Farm, 200 yards distant, and about 150 yards from Petertavy Brook on its right-hand bank. At about 300 yards from this brook, and parallel to it, lies an unfinished reeve (joining the reeve to Whittor), about 500 yards of which is distinctly visible, terminating at a mass of rock (see plan $\frac{1}{2500}$). For the greater part of its length it is but a row of stones; nearer the great reeve it is banked with earth. A small, but probably ancient, stream (originating at a spring) passes through the settlement.

Hut circles C and B are surrounded by an enclosure of stones, 300 feet long from N.W. to S.E. The remaining hut circles are more or less enclosed by rows of stones, and a distinct bank remains on the east side of another small stream running into Petertavy Brook, nearer Wedlake. This bank (if ancient) seems to have had an intended connexion with the last-named enclosure. The whole of the settlement is in a marshy condition, though fairly drained by these two small streams (see large plan, $\frac{1}{2500}$).

HUT CIRCLE A.

A very fine hut circle, 32 feet in diameter externally and 21 feet internally. The entrance was probably to the north of west.

Charcoal, in large coarse pieces, was found somewhat abundantly; also a piece of spar with fine facet point, and some flint flakes.

HUT CIRCLE B.

External diameter, 24 feet; internal diameter, 15 feet.

There seemed a possible entrance on west side.

A raised circular platform, about 2 feet high, we pulled to pieces and examined, but with no result. Some charcoal was found at X X.

HUT CIRCLE C.

External diameter, 15 feet; internal diameter, 8 feet. Probable entrance at the south.

Found a red-stained spar crystal and a piece of iron (?) ore.

HUT CIRCLE D.

A fine, noble-looking circle, with large stones. Probable entrance on south side towards the stream. A wall to the stream joins there a wall from hut circle K; they probably formed a dam to the stream for some purpose.

A black, burnt-looking, clay-like material 3 feet below surface formed a thick floor all over this circle, regarding which Professor Worthington wrote:—

My colleague, Dr. A. Ogg, has kindly analysed this deposit, and reports that "it proves to be very rich oxide of iron. I think it would be worth while to search near the huts, preferably in hollows, to see if the same deposit is general at about the same depth. What its archæological significance may be, if it should be found only in the huts, I do not know. There is no tin in it, or the merest trace."

HUT CIRCLE E.

A good circle. External diameter, 25 feet; internal diameter, 17 feet. Doorway on south side paved with stones.

Found some pieces of pottery, some of which were lipped.

The floor was covered with the before-mentioned burnt-clay-looking stuff. A small horseshoe of iron was found on the "calm," 30 inches below the surface.

A striking feature of most of the hut circles in this settlement was, that though the first sight of the tops of the encircling stones on the surface, before excavation, was not

particularly emphatic, on digging, the stones were all contiguous underground, and at their bases formed a continuous *wall* of well-laid stones. The unusual depth of the huts, coupled with the last remark, may be due to the watery character of the situation. In nearly every case the digging was about 3 feet below the original surface, before we felt that the excavation was satisfactory.

HUT CIRCLE F.

External diameter, 28 feet; internal diameter, 18 feet.

There was no sign of an entrance. A heap of stones in the centre probably represented a paved floor. Here we found some pieces of pottery, some charcoal, and some of the burnt-clay-looking stuff.

HUT CIRCLE G.

External diameter, 32 feet; internal diameter, 18 feet. Floor paved in parts. There was no sign of an entrance. The floor was covered with about 9 inches of the burnt-clay-looking stuff.

Some charcoal and burnt stones and a flint were found in this circle.

HUT CIRCLE H.

This was not circular by any means. It had a raised-stone portion. There was no entrance observable. The greatest length, external, was from N.E. to S.W., 22 feet; internal, in the same direction, 14 feet.

From N. to S., external, 21 feet; internally, 10 feet.

Here we found some flints, one of which was worked, and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long; some small pieces of pottery, two cooking (or sling) stones, and some charcoal.

HUT CIRCLE J.

A small circle, connected on its north side with circle K by a stone and earth wall running more or less parallel with the stream.

External diameter, 18 feet; internal diameter, 10 feet.

A small portion of a circle on the south side. In each of these we found the ground covered with the burnt-clay-looking stuff.

HUT CIRCLE K.

External diameter, 24 feet; internal diameter, 14 feet. Connected to D by a wall across the stream N.E., and on the south side, to the W. of probable entrance, by a wall to J.

Here we found only a piece of flint.

HUT CIRCLE L.

A good hut circle, with a heap of stones in the middle. External diameter, 24 feet; internal diameter, 15 feet. Probable entrance at the south.

Here we found a large piece of unworked flint; also a lump which the workmen thought was copper ore.

HUT CIRCLE M.

A well-made hut circle. External diameter, 28 feet; internal diameter, 16 feet. The entrance was at the north, and two evident stone steps there led to the floor.

We found a little charcoal. The floor was a thick, hard mass of the black and burnt-clay-looking stuff.

HUT CIRCLE N.

Outside diameter, 30 feet. The inside was oval rather than circular; greater diameter, 20 feet; smaller diameter, 16 feet.

This hut circle was well paved all over, but under the paving was some of the black burnt-clay-looking stuff.

Here we found nothing but a stone, the shape of which seemed to point to its use as a hammer or pounder.

HUT CIRCLES P AND Q.

A fine small circle 12 feet in diameter. The entrance seemed well indicated on the north side. We found specks of charcoal and traces of fire. One stone seemed much burnt. A few stones on the east side we thought represented the remains of a wall, but the thick furze concealed its identity. We burned this furze down to the ground, and disclosed a perfect and large hut circle (Q), the external diameter of which was 45 feet, and its internal diameter 30 feet. The entrance was to the south-east.

Two well-paved portions jutted from each side of the entrance into the circle. In the centre of the hut we found some pieces of pottery and some charcoal. We also found three flints, three cooking stones, and one small (sling) stone.

About 700 yards N.E. of this settlement, and 50 yards from the cart-track which crosses Petertavy Brook, was a heap of stones about 20 feet in diameter (marked Z on large plan), which had the appearance of a cairn previously rifled. It stood about 4 feet high in the centre.

We removed every loose stone down to the "calm," and

found in the very centre a stone 30 inches square, which raised our hopes of a find, especially as about 5 feet from it we had found about a pint of wood charcoal.

The stone was about 1 foot in thickness, but we were disappointed on raising it.

Due south of this cairn was a small heap of stones (marked Y on large plan) surrounding a natural small piece of rock. We removed every stone, and then dug down 30 inches. We found only a flint.

Following the cart-track westward 400 feet was another irregular and larger heap of stones (marked X on large plan), close to the track. We proceeded as before, and found a flint and a small quantity of charcoal. Both X and Y were probably the remains of some primitive habitation, but could not be described as hut circles.

On commencing operations at the "Wedlake" settlement, the diggers called the hut circles "rings," but soon changed the term "rings" to "pits," as they had to dig so deep to get to the "calm." So, in spite of its limited area, it took four practised diggers eight days to complete. It was thoroughly explored. This settlement was evidently connected with the settlement and camp at Whittor, and also with the more extensive collection of hut circles on the other side of the Petertavy Brook, which figures on Sheet XCVIII, 14 Ordnance $\frac{1}{25000}$ Survey, and which apparently has never been thoroughly explored. It would probably repay our Committee, and would complete this portion of Dartmoor exploration, if this large settlement were exhaustively taken in hand.

HEXWORTHY CIRCLE.

Trial pits and trenches were sunk in this circle last summer, and charcoal was found strewn on the floor of "calm," thus confirming the results obtained in other stone circles on Dartmoor.

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