

Craco Dub tumulus

This structure (SMR 14316), lies close to Craco Dub (ford) over the Powbrand sike and south of the A66 at Cooper house. A solid mass of stones is robbed from a roadway it cuts into (SMR 3454) and links two roman period roadways. It consequently has the appearance of a hastily constructed mound of post roman date. It is now overgrown in coarse grasses, roughly oval, about seven feet high and 50 around.

A few years ago I noticed a similarity with a description in Leland's Itinerary which has caused some confusion. This is a passage where he recounts (what he has been told of) Maiden castle roman fort. He was lodging in Barnard Castle at the time and getting information from travellers who he questioned.-

[from Queens college Oxford Library], Thomas Hearne's edition vol. V, page 101, fol.116 –

There is a Place an viii Mile plaine West from Bowis, (Bowis is viii Miles almost ful West from Richemont Toun) a Thorough-fare in Richemotshire cawllid Maiden Castel, where is a greate rounde Hepe a 60. Foote in Cumpace of rud Stones, sum smaul, sum bygge, and be set in formam pyramidis; and yn the Toppe of them al ys set one Stone in conum, being a Yard and a half in length. So that the hole may be counted an xviii Foote hy, and ys set on a hille in the very Egge of Stanemoore. And this is a limes betwixt Richemontshire and Westmerlande.

A Quarter of a Mile North from Maiden Castel is a Bek that goith into Tese.

The hill that overlooks Craco Dub tumulus to the south is 'Limes head', but the last sentence above quoted is approximately also true, though the description has nothing to do with the actual Maiden castle, but is close to the tumulus in question and roughly in the shape of a pyramid. Nearby lies a large shaped stone, pointed at one end and possibly curved at the other ('in conum?') broken on a hillside. It is about 12 feet long and over 3 wide and could have been buried in the top of the tumulus with about a yard and a half showing.

The tumulus is close to a large agger from Low street to the east (SMR 14309) heading towards Battle hill where 10th century weapons have been found (SMR 3959).

