



**WAR MEMORIAL,**  
ERECTED 2<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 1917.

DESIGNED BY

BRIMMOND MOUNTAIN INDICATOR.

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MOUNTAIN INDICATOR ON BRIMMOND.

BY JAMES CRUICKSHANK.

A BRASS index chart, showing the mountains, hills, and places of interest within the range of view has just been erected on the summit of Brimmond Hill. It is well known that there is a remarkably extensive view from Brimmond, which is only five miles from Aberdeen, and is readily accessible from either Bucksburn or Bankhead railway station, or by walking along the Skene road to Kingswells and thence past Fairley. As the late Mr. Alexander Copland put it, in an article in the *C.C.J.* (Vol. 1, pp. 219 235)—“This low, heathy mountain, having a summit of 870 feet above sea level, with no overtopping hill for miles around, affords a standpoint, on a clear day, for an extensive and varied view.” The article referred to gave a detailed account of the hill-tops and other landscape features observable, and it was supplemented by an exceedingly useful pictorial outline or chart. This chart has proved serviceable to many who have since visited the hill; but now the visitor will find in the brass index chart or Indicator which has just been erected a most efficient, albeit a silent, guide to the view spread out before him in all directions.

Mountain indicators are not a novelty farther south, but we believe that, with the exception of one at



Grantown-on-Spey, this is the first set up in the north-east of Scotland. Its erection is due to the Stoneywood Literary Guild, which in 1910 published a small local history, "Brimmond and its Shadow," the brochure including a map of the district and a reproduction of Mr. Copland's chart. Various reasons contributed to the adoption of the proposal to erect the Indicator. The Guild desired to mark the completion of its ten years' existence; it wished to do something to make known the unrivalled view from Brimmond (a place with which it has had numerous associations); and it also deemed it fitting for a Literary Society to take steps for the erection of a memorial to the men of the parish and district who have fallen in the Great War. The memorial will thus render the summit of Brimmond a place of peculiar interest to many in the Newhills district, and the form which has been given to it will make it an object of utility to all who visit the hill. Being quite unobtrusive, both from a distance and near at hand, the memorial will have none of the objections so often urged against hill monuments.

The chart is engraved on a tablet of heavy surface-polished gun-metal, 2 feet square by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, and this tablet is fixed to an iron support of equal dimensions and then joined to a pedestal  $2\frac{1}{4}$  feet high. The pedestal is fixed with bolts and concrete to the foundation, which is of solid rock, shaped into a level table. A wooden cover, which the visitor is requested to replace, protects the chart from the weather.

The design of the chart (a reproduction of which is furnished with this article) is as follows:—In the middle of the plate, measuring from north to south, and at about one-third of its width from the east side, there is a pin-hole, from which as a centre five circles are drawn at varying radii, these circles representing the distance of 10 up to 50 miles from Brimmond; and there are three intermediate scales at convenient positions on the plate graduated to single miles, so that the distance of any hill can be readily as-



certained, the farthest away one to be seen being Beinn a' Bhuird at 48 miles off. A special characteristic of these circles is that the distances are foreshortened, or in perspective, with the object of the features represented being more compactly laid down; the space occupied by the first circle, representing 10 miles from the centre, measures  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches, while the outer ten miles space measures only  $1\frac{3}{4}$ . From the centre pin-hole straight lines are cut in the plate radiating outward exactly in the direction of the nearer hills; but for far-off hills these lines do not come into the centre but stop short at the 10 miles circle, thus preventing the overcrowding of so many lines (64 in all) which would otherwise have joined at the central point. At the extreme end of each indicating direction line there is a pin-hole sunk in the plate, with the name of the hill indicated (in bold letters for the sky-line hills, and in smaller letters for the hills which do not appear on the horizon line); and the heights in feet of the more prominent hills are given, including that of Brimmond itself, 870 feet above sea-level, as already stated. By placing an ordinary pin or match in the centre hole and another in the hole at the extreme end of the direction line of any particular hill, and then looking in the line of the two pins, one can be in no dubiety as to the exact location of the hill in question. Then there is a line cut right across the plate indicating true North; and the magnetic North, which meantime is about 17 deg. south-west of true North, is also shown, but it varies slightly every year in long cycles. The coast line is shown, and the sea horizon is given as at 36 statute miles distant. The geographical position of Brimmond is also marked, viz. :—2 deg. 14 mins. West; 57 deg. 10 mins. North.

On the lower right-hand corner of the plate are inscribed the crest of the Stoneywood Literary Guild, with its motto "Major Opima Ferat" ("Let the worthiest carry off the prize"—the motto of the Moirs of Stoneywood) and the title "War Memorial Erected 2nd June, 1917," while on the outer rim there is lettered



“Designed by G. G. J.” and “George Robb, Engraver, Adelphi, Aberdeen—W. L. K.” On the south side of the pedestal is a brass plate with the inscription:—

TO THE  
MEMORY OF THE MEN  
OF  
NEWHILLS PARISH  
AND DISTRICT  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES  
IN THE GREAT WAR.  
1914—1918

A circular stone wall,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, concreted on the top, surrounds the Indicator, and forms a seat from which to study the view, the floor of the space thus enclosed being neatly laid with concreted pebbles. The outer side of the wall is joined to the level of the hill by a sloping bank of stones and earth laid with green turf, forming a belt 5 yards broad; and a short approach,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide, facing due south, cuts through this bank, the sides of the approach being built of stone and lime. The Indicator has been erected on a point about 100 yards north of the main summit of the hill, to avoid removing the Ordnance Survey Cairn, but the view is not thereby impaired, but rather enhanced since it brings the Don Valley better within range. A number of turf paths have been formed to save inconvenience when the ground is marshy, and these paths all lead to the approach. The main path is from the Ordnance Survey Cairn, and on the cairn a fine new flagstaff has been erected. Any disturbance to the hill caused by the various operations will soon disappear as the natural conditions assert themselves.

A small metal pillar placed in a sunk stone enclosure at the north side of the enclosing wall, bearing the letters “K. C.” (King’s College), marks the southern boundary of the lands of Tulloch, owned by Aberdeen University. The further course of the boundary along the hill westward is marked by stone pillars with the same initials. On the east side of the hill behind Ashtown Farm is a





*Photo by*

BRIMMOND MOUNTAIN INDICATOR.

*George R. Ford.*



boundary stone with the letter "C," said to represent Commonty.

Mr. G. Gordon Jenkins, C.E., of Messrs. Jenkins & Marr, Aberdeen, kindly undertook the designing of the chart, and the result is a masterpiece of ingenuity and accuracy, involving much painstaking work, which only one doing it as a labour of love would care to bestow; the chart has been well described as "a very fine example of cartography and draughtmanship." The engraving of the chart was executed in the works of Mr. George Robb, Adelphi, Aberdeen, and reflects the utmost credit on his staff. Thanks are also due to Mr. Robb personally for his enthusiastic and generous co-operation in the work. Mr. James A. Parker, C.E., rendered valuable assistance in surveying the site; Mr. James Duguid (who originated the proposal to erect the Indicator) prepared most of the iron and brass work; and Mr. James Dunbar attended to the setting up. All the work of erection, including the making of the embankment and the footpaths, was carried out by members of the Guild, and in this respect the Indicator is a noteworthy example of what can be done by enthusiasm without the expenditure of money. A good deal of organisation was necessary in planning the transport up the hill of the plate and pedestal (over 6 cwts.) together with the tools and materials necessary for their erection, but this was successfully accomplished by making use of the "Jubilee" Road along the ridge of the hill, one of the members, Mr. A. W. Brown, having lent a horse and cart for the purpose.

The ownership of Brimmond is a thorny question, but the utmost care was taken to ascertain all possible claims, and in every instance where proprietorship was known or discovered permission to erect the Indicator was applied for and was readily granted.

In all probability the Brimmond Memorial will point the way to the erection of similar memorials in other districts possessing notable hill views. It is hoped that every respect will be paid to the preservation of the



Indicator, especially on account of the sacred associations to which it is meant to do honour.

It may be mentioned that the Stoneywood Literary Guild has enrolled 721 members during the past ten years, and has at present a roll of fully 300 members, while 108 of its former members are meanwhile serving in the Army.

At the opening ceremony on 2nd June last, tea was served at the top of the hill, and not a little transport difficulty had to be overcome in providing for the large company who attended. The unveiling of the Indicator was performed by Mr. G. G. Jenkins, who expressed the hope that the memorial would remain for generations unimpaired except by the gentle hand of time, and so continue to serve its dual purpose, which might be expressed in a couplet:—

When gazing here on heights afar,  
Think on our boys who fell in war.

Speeches were delivered by Mr. G. M. Fraser, Public Librarian, Aberdeen, and by Sheriff Laing, that of the former being descriptive of the chart, while the Sheriff dealt more particularly with the commemorative nature of the memorial; and votes of thanks to the speakers and to the workers were proposed by Major McLennan, Stoneywood Wireless Station, and Mr. W. Gunn, Stoneywood, respectively. A detachment of soldiers, under the command of Major McLennan, from the Wireless Station lent interest to the proceedings; and the unveiling ceremony was made impressive by appropriate music by a choir (Mr. J. F. Proctor, conductor), a hymn which was sung being previously read by Rev. Dr. James Brebner, late of Fòrgue.

About 150 members of the Guild were present; and in addition the following, among others, received invitations, most of whom were present: Mr. George Robb, Mr. A. S. R. Bruce, Mr. D. R. Thom, Professor Hendrick, Captain and Miss Brooke of Fairley, Mr. G. M. Angus, Major and Miss Campbell of Cloghill, Captain M. V. Hay of Seaton, Mrs. Aberdeen of Dyke-



side, Miss Smith, Newhills Manse; Mr. W. Campbell, Chairman of the Newhills Parish Council; Dr. Maver, Chairman of the Newhills School Board; Mr. D. J. Williamson, Mr. A. Marr, Dr. Maitland, Mr. W. Maxwell, Mr. V. H. Wildi and Mr. J. W. Davidson. The following members of the Cairngorm Club were also present: Messrs. Robert Anderson and John Clarke (Vice-Presidents), and Messrs. Henry Alexander, George Duncan, William Garden, W. M. McPherson, J. A. Parker, Theodore Watt, and R. M. Williamson.

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#### MOUNTAINS IN THE EVENING.

At summer eve, when Heaven's ethereal bow  
Spans with bright arch the glittering hills below,  
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,  
Whose sunlight summit mingles with the sky?  
Why do those cliffs of shadowy tint appear  
More sweet than all the landscape smiling near?—  
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,  
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.