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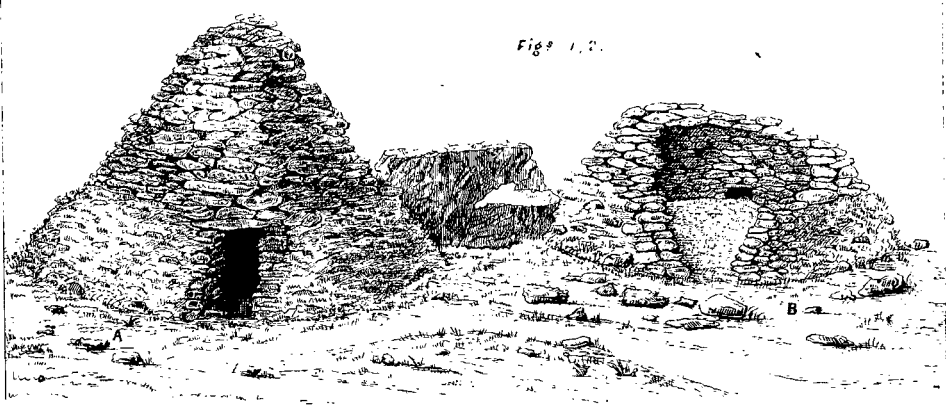
NOTICE OF BEEHIVE HOUSES IN HARRIS AND LEWIS; WITH TRADITIONS OF THE "EACH-UISGE," OR WATER-HORSE, CONNECTED THEREWITH. BY COMMANDER F. W. L. THOMAS, R.N. (PART I.)

The student of Irish antiquities is aware, that under the name of beehive houses, cloghauns, oratories, &c., the ancient habitations of the Irish people exist in considerable numbers and in good preservation; I do not learn that this class of dwellings is now inhabited in any part of Ireland, but in Lewis and Harris we have buildings identical in form and size, where they are the summer abodes of the people at the present day, so that we witness in the Long Island the expiring modes and habits of the Celtic race as they have been practised for two thousand years.

I was stationed last summer on the borders of the Forest of Harris,—a mountainous region bare of trees, but with abundance of excellent pasture, which is now wholly abandoned to sheep and deer. Along all the shores, the ruins of the cottages and the deep furrows of the "feannag"—most inappropriately called "lazy-beds," as the inventor of that term would find, if he had to carry the seaware that serves for manure on his back from the shore up the steep and rugged brae—are seen, and the green sward still springs where the cattle have pastured and the foot of man has trod: a rude and tortuous dike, following the coast at the distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile, enclosed what was the farm from the moor or hill. Loch Meabhag is a narrow creek running five-sixths of a mile into the land; it is still green upon both shores from the labours of a former peasantry, but a solitary gamekeeper's lodge is now the only sign of human life. I was informed that on the moor, about half a mile from the head of this loch, there was a circular house, roofed entirely with stone and without a bit of wood in its construction.

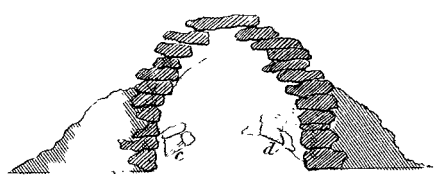
On visiting the place indicated, I found two beehive-houses; one of them (Plate X., fig. 1) is quite complete and entire, but the walls of the other (fig. 2) alone remain; they are but a few yards apart, and are situated most romantically under the shelter of a land-cliff, and, as is always the case, in the neighbourhood of good pasture. The ground is here as rugged as usual, the (so-called) boulder clay is scraped up into a thousand little hills, and huge transported blocks of gneiss are scattered far and near. These "bothan," as they are called in Lewis, are from a short distance hardly to be distinguished from the granite blocks around, and in fact I was unsuccessful in finding them on my first search. I lay before the Society plans and drawings of these interesting objects: No. 1 is entire—it is 18 feet in diameter on the outside, and 9 feet in height; the ground-plan (fig. 3) is an irregular circle; the walls at the base are 5 or 6 feet thick, the thickness being filled in with a jumble of stones and turf. Above the height of 3 feet the stones are in a single course, and approximate in a conical or beehive form to the apex, where the top is covered by a single stone (fig. 4). The doorway is rudely square, 3 feet high and 2 broad: an amorphous slab of gneiss, such as a man could easily lift, served for a door. The interior chamber is sub-circular in plan, 8 feet in the longest, and 7 feet in the shortest diameters. In section the chamber is sub-conical, rising almost perpendicularly for 3 feet, then quickly closing into the centre, where it is 6 feet in height. The whole is built of rough untrimmed blocks of gneiss, the debris of the glacial period. A very little above the floor are four recesses or rude cupboards, from a foot to a foot and a half square.

No. 2 is about four yards from No. 1, and the roof has fallen in, but the walls are still 5 feet in height (fig. 5). It differs from No. 1, first, that the walls of the chamber begin to close in from the base-line; and secondly, in having a prolongation (fig. 6), probably a sleeping-place, on one side. The chamber of No. 2 is circular in plan (fig. 6), and 6 feet in diameter. On the west side is a cell $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 feet broad, and 2 feet 4 inches in height: an elevation of this cell is shown on the drawing marked *b*. The sides of the cell are formed by placed stones, and the roof by single stones laid across. The end or head of the cell is the rough face of a large (naturally placed) transported block of gneiss. It might be doubted whether anything so

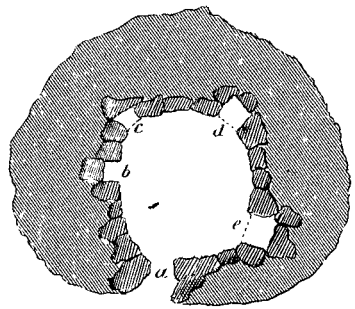
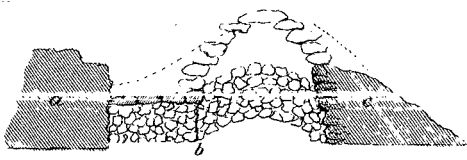


Fig^s 1, 2.

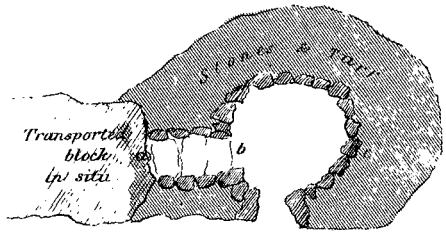
BEEHIVE HOUSES (BOTHAN) MEANBAG, FOREST OF HARRIS



Fig^s 3, 4, 5, 8



Plan and Elevation of A



Transported blocks in situ

Plan and Elevation of B

Scale of Feet
 0 1 2 3 4 5 10 15 20

rude could be a bed-place, yet the man is supposed to be still alive who first saw the light in one or other of these bothan,¹ his mother being the wife of the tenant of Meabbag. Besides, the following information, which I had from an eye-witness, throws considerable light on the domestic arrangements and dormitorial requirements of the last race of modern Highlanders, and, as I believe, of the ancient Picts and Scots. The district of Barvas in Lewis is, by the Lewis people themselves, considered to be inhabited by a race distinct from those in the rest of the island—that is, they are dark, short, square, ugly, large-bellied, and with much cunning under a foolish exterior; they are said to be more backward than the rest, so that the “Taobh s’iar” (Taobh n’iar), “west side,” which does not include Uig, is proverbially connected with dirt and slovenliness. In this part of Lewis alone remains the custom of leaving a hole in the thickness of the wall for a dormitory: it is flagged of course, about 3 feet broad, and a foot and a half high, and long or deep enough for a man to lie in. Into this strange hole, the person who would sleep gets in “feet foremost,” sometimes by the help of a rope from above, his head lying at the mouth of the hole; the hole or dormitory may be 4 or 5 feet from the floor. I presume this custom must have a very remote origin, and it enables us to form an idea of one of the domestic arrangements that took place in the most ancient stone dwellings in our island.

I did not find any more bothan in the vicinity of Loch Meabbag, but three miles to the westward, near a lake from whence runs Avon Suidh, is the ruin of a both, remarkable for a combination of the circular or beehive house with the oblong square or ordinary form.

The square part of the dwelling contained a chamber $9\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ feet with small cupboards on three sides; it was roofed with timber; the walls are from 5 to 8 feet in thickness and very rudely built. To one side of this square a circular and stone-roofed building has been attached, and it contains a sleeping-place like that described in No. 2. A doorway but 12 inches wide allows communication with the square chamber. It is difficult to conceive a ruder dwelling, yet it must have been inhabited to a late period, for the remains of the thatch and rafters are still there.

¹ Both, *pl.* Bothan.

I learn from my assistant, Mr Morrison, himself a native of Lewis, that in summer the people, usually women, leave their permanent cottages by the shore, and come with their cattle to grassy spots, called in Gaelic *gearraidhean*,¹ in Norse *setters*. These are usually beside a burn at the bottom of some glen or valley, and here they remain making butter and cheese from July till August, during which time they dwell in these circular stone-roofed houses, called *boths*, *bothan*, or in timber-roofed ones, called *airidh*, *aridhean*. The *boths* are considered so much superior to the *airidhs*, that to this day the tenants (in Bernera) cast lots for them. The *boths* are seldom larger than ten feet in diameter, and are covered entirely on the outside with green turf, except at the top, where a stone is placed or removed at pleasure. A row of stones covered with turf is placed across the middle of the booth, for a bench or seat, and on one side is the fire, on the other the sleeping-place. There are commonly two doors at opposite sides, by which a better draught is caused for the smoke; for when the door on the windward side is closed, the draught enters from the leeward one, and passes up through the hole in the roof.² Two women usually occupy one of these *boths*, and their time is employed in looking after the cattle, and in making butter and cheese; for which purpose, besides the hut that serves for a dwelling, there is most generally another in which the milk utensils, milk, butter, &c., is kept; there is also some small place for sheltering the calves and lambs. By removing the cattle to the hills in summer, the grass around the farm is saved for winter use.

Many romantic stories are connected with the custom of living in these summer shielings: On one occasion a handsome young man came to a young woman who was dwelling in one of these *bothans*, and, complaining of being very tired, asked and obtained permission to lay his head in the lassie's lap, pillows not being abundant in these summer quarters. But the girl began to observe that the hair of her guest was different to what she had been used to, and on seeing sand and gravel among his hair, she became convinced that he was an *Each-uisge* or water-horse, and in great alarm she cut out the piece of her dress on which his head was

¹ *Gearraidh*, pronounced "Garry."

² A man, on standing upright, can often put his head out of the hole (*farlos*) and look around.

resting, and gently laid him on the floor. She then started home as fast as possible, where the hole in her gown attested the truth of her story.

At another time a lassie was boiling water for the purpose of cleaning her milk-pails, when a proper young man made his appearance, and requested to be allowed to remain for the night, as he was very tired. This might be considered an extravagant request in the south, but customs differ, so he stayed. But the girl began to suspect him to be an Each-uisge, if I understand correctly, from the peculiarity of the hair on his breast. In the meantime the young man no doubt tried to be agreeable, and asked the lassie's name, but she gave a feigned name, and called herself "Mi fein," equivalent in English to "myself." Becoming more suspicious that her lover was uncanny, she watched her opportunity, and threw the kettle of scalding water over him; on which he rushed howling from the both towards the neighbouring lake, from whence a large and fierce water-horse came out and inquired of her son what was the matter, and who had hurt him. But the young Each-uisge could only answer "Mi fein," "Mi fein," that is, "myself," "myself," which led the mother to suppose it was himself that had done it, and thus the girl escaped the wrath and vengeance of the great Each-uisge.

Not always, however, are the lone dwellers of the heath as fortunate; for the Each-uisge came to two girls, and as usual to stay the night, in the likeness of an old woman, and the girls jeered and made fun of the old crone, but in the night one of the girls awoke, and saw the Each-uisge in the act of killing her partner; the survivor ran for her life, and although the Each-uisge had again transformed himself into a water-horse, and gave chase, the girl succeeded in reaching her home alive.

From these stories we learn that the Each-uisge is of an amatory disposition, and, though vindictive, is not regularly malicious; and that his human sweethearts are by no means inclined to favour his pretensions when aware of his real character, but, on the contrary, they desert on the first occasion. I have as yet only succeeded in recovering the chorus of a Gaelic song, which seems to be pathetic enough. It would appear from the song that an Each-uisge had taken to wife one of the daughters of men, but she, as usual out of suspicion of his not being what he pretended, had not only gone home, but left him to look after the baby. In these melancholy circumstances, the poor Each-uisge is represented as trying

to still the child, and promising it all manner of good things—a salmon¹ among other things—if it will only be quiet; and at the end of each verse he exclaims,

Eisd a bhobain! eisd a bhobain!
A Mhor! a Mhor! till ri d' machan;

which means

Hush, baby! hush, baby!
O Marian, Marian, return to thy son.

Another verse is

A Mhor! a Mhor! till ri d' machan,
'S e gun teine, gun tuar, ri bruaich lochain;

that is,

O Marian, Marian, return to thy young son,
And he without fire, without nurture, by the bank of a small lake.

Twenty-four years ago I wrote down a song of the same character, from the dictation of an old Shetland lady. In this case, however, the young mother is lamenting that she knows neither the name nor nation of the father of her bairn. A gruesome person then appears and proclaims himself that individual. It is the song that is printed at p. 89 of the Proceedings of the Society for 1851; I need not refer to it farther.

The venerable Archdeacon of Moray, John Bellenden, appears to have had an intimate knowledge of the Each-uisge, and under the name of *Thow* he describes him with the accuracy of an eye-witness. "He was covered all over with seaweed, and had the likeness of a young horse in every respect."²

From a collation of these stories, I am inclined to believe that the walrus is typified by the Each-uisge, and that the unfrequent appearance of this animal upon our shores is the origin of these romantic traditions.

¹ The salmon is promised to the lady, and not to the babe, in the following words:—

"A Mhor! a Mhor! till ri d' machan
S' gheibh thu goidean bric o' n' lochan
O' Loch Nidir, s' o' Loch Naidir
S' o' chean Loch Eit nam bradan:

i. e., Marian, return to thy son, and thou shalt get a string (or withe) of trouts from the lakes; from Loch Nidir, and from Loch Naidir, and from Loch Eit of the Salmon.

² Barry's History of Orkney.

To return to beehive-houses—I cannot learn that any of these are now built, and the general opinion is that they are very ancient. Martin, in his account of Skye, mentions them as “Tigh nan Druineach,” or Druids’ houses: As he was a native of Skye, it is to be supposed, if they had been in use by the people at that time, that he would have known it.

I consider the relation between the *boths* and the Picts’ houses of the Orkneys (and elsewhere) to be evident,—the same method of forming the arch, the low and narrow doors and passages, the enormous thickness of the walls, when compared with the interior accommodation, exist in both. When a *both* is covered by green turf it becomes a chambered tumulus, and when buried by drifting sand it is a subterranean Picts’ house. A comparison of the drawings in vol. xxxiv. of the *Archæologia* with those now before the Society will render this evident. But the Picts’ houses of the Orkneys were made a thousand years ago; and at that early period the aristocracy, whose wealth was in cattle, would shift to summer quarters and have dwellings in proportion to their power. Hence I regard the comparatively large Picts’ houses of the Orkneys as the pastoral residence of the Pictish lord or “*ti’ arna*,” fitted to contain his numerous family and dependents. Such an one exists on the Holm of Papa Westray, which, according to the Highland method of stowage, would certainly contain a whole clan. When writing the description of it, I had not made acquaintance with a people who would close the door to keep in the smoke, or that nested in holes in a wall like sand-martins. I have therefore only stated the idea of its being the temporary habitation of a nomade people as a reasonable supposition; but I have no longer any doubt, and, on the contrary, regard the Picts’ house on the Holm of Papa as a princely dwelling.

But the *both* of the Long Island is only the lodging of the common man or “*Tuathanach*,” and is consequently of small dimensions and not remarkable for comfort. If the modern Highland proprietor or large farmer should ever be induced to lead a pastoral life, and adopt a Pictish architecture in his residence, we might again see a tumulus of twenty feet in height, with its long low passage leading into a large hall with beehive cells on both sides; but at present those who form the chivalry of the country have a preference for “stone and lime.”

In conclusion, I have only to remark how a fading custom or a fairy

legend, aided by an inductive reason, may become a torch to brighten up the regions of the misty past: a dreadful story of the "Odhar-chu,"¹ may tell us of a time when the now forgotten wolf lurked in his murky den; or the tale of an amatory "Each-uighe" may conjure back the heavy whale-horse basking on his surf-beaten rock; or the nomade custom of a Hebridean peasant may help to throw a flickering halo on the manners of our forefathers, where the steady light afforded by written documents is altogether wanting.

DESCRIPTION OF BEEHIVE HOUSES IN UIG, LEWIS, AND OF A PICT'S HOUSE AND CROMLECH, &c., HARRIS. BY COMMANDER F. W. L. THOMAS, R.N. (PART II.)

[The following communication, being a continuation of the author's preceding paper, was read at a subsequent meeting of the Society, but it was thought advisable, for the sake of connection, to deviate from the usual practice of arrangement, and introduce it in this place.]

In a paper read before this Society in the spring of last year, it was mentioned that stone-roofed or beehive houses had been found in the Forest of Harris. They were in a ruinous condition, and had been deserted for many years; but I had been informed that in some parts of Lewis these singular structures were still used for dwellings in summer, and I then stated, that if any additional information was acquired in the course of the ensuing season, it should be communicated to the Society. In fulfilment of this promise, I lay before the Society plans and drawings of a great variety of these dwellings; and having visited about forty different examples, I proceed to describe their usual position and normal form, and then the variations that occur in their plan, until at last we shall find a great resemblance to the Picts' houses of the Orkneys, in which country it must be remembered the Gaelic element of population has never been introduced.

I wish I had been able to have given the topographical area of these

¹Dun Dog.

beehive houses in Scotland, but my inquiries have only led to negative results. I have been informed that they do not exist in Ross-shire, in Skye, nor in Mull; from which I do not infer that they have never existed there, but that the people do not now use such dwellings, and the ruins of them have been overlooked. I entertain no doubt that some perfect specimens existed in Skye a century and a half ago, but they had already become archaic, and a love of the marvellous had converted them into abodes of Druids.¹ The stone-roofed houses are naturally not to be met with where enough timber was standing to form the roof of a house, and we may safely predict that not a branch of sufficient size to support a turf roof grew at or near those places where the stone-roofed dwellings are found. From all I can learn, then, these dwellings only now exist in St Kilda, Borrera, the Flannan Isles, the parish of Uig in Lewis, and a few in Harris.² A copy of a drawing of the one in St Kilda, by Mr Macdonald, the minister of Harris, is upon the table, and our zealous and active antiquary, Mr Mure, can tell us all about this "House of the Heroine" (or female warrior). The house on Borrera is well described in Macaulay's History of St Kilda, and I have named the Flannan Isles on the authority of Mr Mure.

But it is in Uig alone that the beehive houses are the present dwellings (in summer) of the people; even here I do not believe that there are twenty now inhabited, and in a very few years they will have ceased to be used altogether. But the ruins exist in great numbers, commonly by the side of some stream where the grass grows luxuriantly in summer,³ often at the foot of a land-cliff where the huge fallen blocks have been adopted to form one side of the house, and occasionally at the mouth of a glen by the sea-shore. Wherever placed, all the natives agree that no one knows who built them, and that they were not made by the fathers nor grandfathers of persons now living.⁴

¹ Martin, West Isles, p. 154.

² The communication by Sir H. Dryden (page 124) shows that these bee-hive houses had also existed in South Uist.—ED.

³ A garry (Gearraidh, Gael.)

⁴ This remark must be qualified, for it is asserted that one was built by a person who is still alive, and there is another at Garry na hine that has a chimney in it, which must at any rate be comparatively modern; but the general (almost universal) answer is, that no one knows who built them.

The normal, and, I presume, the most modern form of a beehive house, of which the plan drawn on Plate XI., fig. 4, may be considered the type, is an irregular circle, six or seven feet in diameter, the walls rising perpendicularly for three feet; each successive course of stone then overlaps or projects beyond the one below it, and thus the roof gradually closes in and takes a beehive form. It is evident that in this style of architecture the size of the rooms is limited by the nature of the stone; and although a tolerably safe roof may be made in this manner with rough moor-stones to cover an area of six feet, it would have a most uncomfortable and suspicious appearance if extended over twice those dimensions. Even in the Orkneys, where there is abundance of flagstone, although there are chambers there 45 feet long, the breadth was only 5 feet. A hole, called the Farlos,¹ is left in the apex of the roof for the escape of the smoke, and is closed with a turf or flat stone as requisite. There are two doors (*a, a,*) 2½ feet high, and 2 feet broad, and they are placed so that a line joining them cuts off on one side about two-thirds of the enclosed area. The two doors are a decided improvement, for that one upon the side on which the wind blows—that is, the weather door—is closed with a stone or turf, while the lee one is left open, and a gentle draught carries the smoke serenely above the head of the inhabitant and through the Farlos. From door to door a row of flat stones, a few inches in height, forms the “Being,”² bench or seat, and behind this the area is filled up with hay or rushes for a bed. I had a native estimate of its capacity, and found it calculated to hold three people. In front of the bench, and midway between the two doors, is the fire—of peat of course, and not much needed except for cooking. Above the fire, a longish stone draws in and out of the wall for the purpose of hanging a pot on, and in nearly every ruin did we find this primitive instrument in its place, shoved back into the wall. There are usually two or four square holes in the wall to serve for cupboards or presses.³ The furniture will vary with the wealth of the occupant—a blanket, an iron pot, a basin, a spoon, and a bag of meal, would imply a well-to-do establishment, with one or two jars, tins or kegs, to hold milk and carry it to the farm. In the good old times no other article of furniture or domestic economy might have been found than

¹ Farleus, a skylight. (Gael.)

² Being (Gael.), pronounced “Baink.”

³ Cuil (Gael.), a nook, a niche; *pl.* Cuiltean.

some pans and jars made from his native clay by the extremely independent individual who fattened upon sweet and sour milk, with an occasional relish of limpets and buckies.

On the outside of these houses, the chinks of the stones are stuffed with grass and moss, and over all is a thick layer of turf, which grows into one mass, and, besides being perfectly wind and water tight, gives great stability to the roof.

I lay before the Society a very careful drawing (Plate XII.), done by my assistant Mr Sbarbau, of one of the few inhabited groups of these beehive houses. At first sight it may be taken for a picture of a *Hot-tentot* village, rather than a hamlet in the British Isles. It was a dark and cheerless day in August, when the wet was splashing from the moor at every step, that we made an expedition to this place. On the road we had been resting in one of these archaic homes; seated upon the bench before the little fire, and out of the cold wind, I can answer that I found it very comfortable. To a tired man, or to a very stout one, the size of the door is no doubt an inconvenience. Passing on to the Bushy Lake, we strolled up the burn of Fidigidh, the excellent Ordnance map being our guide, till we came to the object of our search. About twenty of these dwellings were scattered along the banks of the burn in about half a mile; groups of cows, with their attendants, were spread around; remnants of baskets, of what we should disdainfully call weeds, were frequent, while the baskets that contained them were carefully placed on the roofs of the huts, to prevent them being eaten by the cattle; for, be it known, a cow of the Outer Hebrides is by no means the long-enduring animal that the well-fed brute of more southern lands has become. Although so small in body, they are supposed by their possessors to have an indomitable spirit, and they are constantly hobbled before the process of milking commences; and even then, vain are the efforts of the dairymaid, unless her vaccine friend is kept in good humour and amused. Accordingly, although at this season there is an abundance of excellent grass upon the hills, the maid must bring from the farm, often eight weary miles away, creels of grass and weeds pulled from the growing corn and potatoes. Without this, or a still greater treat, the backbones of fish that are split for salting, the cow refuses to yield her milk. We selected a good position for sketching, and very soon a boy—probably the only one

in the settlement who could speak English—was sent to us with the offer of milk. His stock of English was not large, as he could only speak of the group of huts as the *city*. Shortly a damsel, full of health and intelligence, having what in the vernacular is called “made herself tidy,” brought us a bowl of milk, and seemed to think we should partake of it as freely as a youthful quadruped. The two sat down beside us, and with the politeness that is born with the Celtic race, did not look over the drawing till desired, when the note of admiration, “Gu siorruidh,” “Gu siorruidh,” and some good-natured pats on the back, were the reward of my companion.

I have now described what is the normal style and arrangements in these Bothan, as they are called in Lewis (in contradistinction to the Aridhean, which are timber-roofed and oblong in plan); I have now to notice the principal variations in their figure and dimensions.

In Bothan Aird—of which there is a plan and perspective drawing (Plate XIII., figs. 1, 2, and 3),—one side is formed by native rock; the plan is square, with doors at alternate sides; and before one of them, a short passage at right angles breaks off the force of the wind.

In the rest of the plans there is but one door, and I am inclined to think that the second is comparatively a modern and degenerate invention for the purpose of getting rid of the smoke; where there is but one door, the fire is very close to it.

In Plates XI., XII., and XIII., we have the simplest forms, that of a common beehive; in fig. 7, Plate XIII., the prolongation of one of the side walls in a horse-shoe form makes a “fogsarlan”¹ or porch, and shelters the inner door.

In Plate XIV., figs. 2, 3, and 5, the porch is entered by two doors, and is almost as large as the main dwelling, thus presenting the appearance of a double house.

In Plate XIV., figs. 1 and 2, representing the plan of a ruin at Gearraidh na h-Airde Moire,² there is a single arrangement, which, when perfect, would have presented the appearance of four domes in line.

In Plate XIII., figs. 4, 5, and 6, the differentiation (as the naturalists term it) is carried still further: we have, first, a main chamber; secondly,

¹ This word is pure Norse, and should be written *For-skali*.

² Garry of the Great Headland.

an inner chamber; and thirdly, by ascending two steps, we come into what might have been the nursery.

In Plate XIV., fig. 3, we have the highest state of luxury that we have yet seen,—there is the *foggarlan*, the dwelling, a room for the churn and other treasures, and a dairy, all attached.

But by far the most singular of all these structures, and probably unique in the Long Island, is at Gearraidh na h-Airde Moire, on the shore of Loch Resort (Plates XV. and XVI.) I cannot describe it better than by bidding you suppose twelve individual beehive huts all built touching each other, with doors and passages from one to the other. The diameter of this gigantic booth is 46 feet, and is nearly circular in plan. The height of the doors and passages about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet; and under the smokehole (*farlos*), in two of the chambers, the height was $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet. There are three distinct suites of chambers, perhaps the dwellings, originally, of three separate families.

The chambers are scarcely larger than any of the other *bothan*,¹ the size of the stones employed limiting the area they will safely cover. Two of the chambers were still roofed, but in a very ruinous condition, and both fell in just after my people, who had been digging into the floor of the chambers, had left. We found no other relics than the red ash which marks where a fire has been, and a great many shells of the edible mollusca are almost constantly scattered about these dwellings. A very accurate plan and section of this complex building accompanies this paper, and a restoration of the south side shows what was its appearance when it was complete and roofed with turf.

I am informed that, so late as 1823, this both was inhabited by four families, and that the now tenant of Aird-Bheag, an old man, lived in it when a boy for eight successive summers. This both and garry belonged to the tenants of the townland of Carnish.

A beehive house is in Lewis called *Both* (pronounced *bo*, pl. *bothan*),² an Irish and Gaelic word of which the meaning is very well expressed by the English “bothy,” *i. e.* a temporary dwelling. The name is frequent in Ireland, and “Both-chonais, *i. e.* Conas booth, tent, or hut,” is mentioned as early as A.D. 850, in the Annals of the Four Masters. In Icelandic, the same idea is expressed by *bud*.

¹ As the plans are all drawn to scale, I have not thought it necessary to give the measurements in the text.

² Welch, *Böd*, a dwelling.

From O'Flaherty's description of West Connaught, written in 1684, it appears that this style of dwelling had already become archaic; for he says, "They have cloghans, a kind of building of stones laid one upon another, which are brought to a roof without any manner of mortar to cement them,—some of which cabins will hold forty men on their floor,—so ancient that nobody knows how long ago any of them was made. Scarcity of wood and store of fit stones without peradventure found out the first invention" (p. 68).

So far this paper has been a simple description of facts, and I will now succinctly state the conclusions I have arrived at from their consideration. I conceive, then, these beehive-houses to be the Scottic or Irish type of the earliest domestic artificial dwelling, and to have been introduced into the Outer Hebrides after the conquest of these islands by the Northmen, at the end of the eighth century. It is probable that, as in the Orkneys, the Pictish inhabitants and Scottic priests were completely extirpated; in proof of this is the fact that scarcely an island or a farm of any importance in the Hebrides bears a Scottic name. A very few places have retained their Pictish names, but the great majority are Norse. In all Harris, two places alone indicate (by their names) the presence of a race anterior to the Northmen,—Luskentyre, Lis-ceann-tir, and Rath.

But, from the cession of these islands to Scotland in 1098, the Norse language would rapidly decline, and the people, by communication and intermarriage, become mixed up with, and at last not to be distinguished from, the Scots. How much of the old language is retained in the Gaelic vernacular I do not know, but I observe that a large proportion of topographical terms in present use—such as *skerry*, *bo'*, *ness*, &c.—are Norse.

I have stated that I consider the beehive-houses to be a Scottic introduction, but in the Outer Hebrides are those remains which in the Orkneys are called Picts' houses, and which I believe to be anterior to the invasion of the Northmen. I have information of some in the south-west of Harris, but have had no opportunity of yet visiting them, But we discovered one at Nisibost in Harris, in the usual situation, and with the usual characteristics. The ruin was buried in sand except on one side, where, on being shown the stones that made the doorway, I

immediately surmised it to be a Pict's house. My people turned with a will to excavate it, a work of great labour to any but a professed navigator; for from the floor of the ruin to the surface of the sandhill was in some places twelve feet deep. By reference to the plan, Plate XVII., fig. 2, it will be seen that a low doorway, apparently with a porch in front, opens into an irregular pear-shaped chamber, having on one side a beehive chamber. A short passage leads to another low doorway, and another beehive chamber. The walls were in some places still six feet high, and at the spot marked with a cross was found the upper stone of a quern of a hornblendic slaty rock, and so rotten as not to bear lifting without falling to pieces. We also found pieces of three different craggans, or pans of native pottery, and the bones of the ox, sheep, deer, seal, and dog.¹

A comparison of the plan of this ruin with those in the Orkneys, figured in the 34th vol. of the *Archæologia*, will show that both belong to the same era and people. I have little to add to what has been stated in that volume: there do not seem to be any traditions of the Picts in the Long Island; the name, as well as that of Cruithne, appears unknown. The Island of the Pigmies may indeed point towards them, for the Earl of Orkney's chaplain, writing about 1460, says, that the "Pepi" (Peti) were only a little exceeding pigmies in stature, and worked wonderfully in the construction of their cities, evening and morning, but in mid-day, being quite destitute of strength, they hid themselves through fear *in little houses under ground*.

This notion of the small stature of the Picts would have had more weight, did we not meet, at the same time, with their goodly castles, their gigantic monoliths, and monumental circles. Even the small size of their (temporary) dwellings will not seem to be so very inconvenient when it is known how many bipeds, quadrupeds, and multipeds, are still stowed away in a single black hut.

On the same point of land as the Pict's house I have been describing, stands a simple massive pillar, 11 feet high, sacred to the memory of some unknown saint or warrior. It never enters the minds of the

¹ These bones have undergone a critical investigation by my friend Dr M'Bain, with the result that no osteological difference appears to have taken place in the domestic animals of the Outer Hebrides for the last thousand years.

degenerate islanders that ordinary heads and hands could carry and upraise such stupendous blocks; so we hear that this stone is the Ord Barnach or Limpet Hammer, which a witch who was going to the shore for bait threw at some person with whom she was enraged.

Another Pictish monument is also near to the Pict's house at "Hauga-bost," a Norse compound, proving the existence of the haug or tomb when the stad was occupied for a farm. But this monument is a veritable cromlech: seven stones of about 4 feet in height stand on the circumference of a circle whose diameter is 8 feet: upon these upright stones originally rested a large cap-stone or flag, rudely covering the entire circle. The plan and drawing of my accomplished assistant, Mr Sharbau, who has prepared most of the plans¹ at present upon the table, will describe sufficiently its present appearance. In scraping away the sand for the purpose of measuring the height of the stones, we found the entire bones of a human skeleton all lying together in a heap. I carefully removed the skull, and it is now in the Antiquarian Museum. I account for finding the bones in this position, by supposing that some former excavator, after finishing his explorations, had with pious care covered up the exhumed human remains.² One thing is certain, that they were dry bones before their last interment, and that they were orderly placed.³

The imaginative temperament exists largely among the Hebrideans,

¹ These plans and drawings were much admired for the minute accuracy of their details, as well as for the artistic style of their execution.—Ed:

² "Captain Thomas seems to infer a previous excavator having been there from the arranged state of the bones. This, I believe, is not necessary. In some of the Derbyshire barrows the bones appear clearly to have been cleaned and arranged *primarily*; at all events that is Mr Bateman's conclusion. At times the skeleton alone is found, at times the skull in a separate spot."—(*Letter to Mr Stuart from Mr J. Barnard Davis.*)

³ The cromlech has been again explored this summer, and the lower jaw, which was the object of our search, was found with the other bones. Beneath the cap-stone, and at the centre of the circle, two sides of the original grave (kistvaen) were standing; I have little doubt that the other two sides were removed by former excavators (as they would not be able to lift away the capstone), when digging sideways towards the grave. The grave is at, or close to, the surface of the ground, and would be left quite exposed; for which reason the excavators have placed the bones in a hole at the side of the circle.

and there are still many bards among them: unfortunately their audience is but few, not only from the nature of the case, but from an insane pharisaism that pervades the whole country. If Ossian the Blind, of whom so much is said and so little known, were to make his appearance, harp in hand, he would now meet with a cold reception. However, the diligent inquirer may yet hear of the exploits and adventures of the Fingalians, &c., with far more point and interest than are displayed in Macpherson's inventions. Of the cromlech, for instance, that I have just been describing, it is said the Fingalians placed the stones in a circle to boil their kettle on. And a native bard, hearing the skull had been taken from the cromlech, composed a poem in which, impersonating the Pictish chief, he grieved that his long rest had been disturbed, and that had he been alive he would have made us show him more respect; and even as it was, he would like to meet those who had thus robbed him alone in a dark night, when he thought he would still be able to do himself justice—I suppose by taking the head from his opponent.

Description of Plates.

Plate X.—Figs. 1 and 2. Beehive houses (bothan), Meabhag, Forest of Harris. Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6, plans and elevations of ditto.

Plate XI.—Figs. 1 and 2. Perspective drawing and ground-plan of a both on the south side of Loch an Ath Ruaidh, Aird Mhor, Uig, Lewis. This bo' is entire, but ruinous; and the outer casing of turf having nearly weathered away, the structure of the interior wall is visible.

Fig. 3. Airdh, near Loch Shnaithebbhall, Uig, Lewis; approaching the rectangular form, and perhaps partly roofed with wood.

Fig. 4. Both on west side of Loch an Ath Ruaidh, having two doors, a ruin; *e*, was the place of the fire; *c*, the bench or seat; *b*, when filled with hay, would be the bed.

Plate XII.—Fidigidh Iochdrach, Uig, Lewis. This view shows the appearance of the beehive-houses when inhabited and cased with turf.

Plate XIII.—Fig. 1. View of Both an Aird, northmost, near Loch na Cailleach, Aird Mhor, Uig, Lewis, entire but deserted. Figs. 2 and 3, elevation and plan of ditto. One side is formed by native rock; in another are four milk-presses; the firestead was between the two doors. The plan of this both is peculiar, the doors being at right angles to each other.

Figs. 4, 5, and 6. Plan and elevations of Both an Aird, southmost, near last. This bo' is still entire, and cased with turf. It stands at the steep

face of a small brae, and the back is formed by the side of the hill: there is first a main chamber, $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high under the farlos; next a smaller chamber, flat-roofed, $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high at the centre; next, a small irregular chamber, $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, entered by a step $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the level of the ground. In the main chamber, a gap between two naturally-placed rocks is filled in behind to form a cuiltean or cupboard; a spindle-shaped stone, drawing in and out of a chink in the wall, showed where had been the fire.

Fig. 7. Eastmost both, Ura, near Loch Thealasbhaidh, Uig, Lewis; a ruin, but the walls in some parts still 6 feet high; a porch, which was probably roofed, is formed by the extension of one of the side walls.

Plate XIV.—Figs. 1. and 2. Plan and elevation of a both, one of a group of three at the garry of Aird Mhor, close to the shore and near the mouth of Loch Resort, Uig, Lewis. This compound both has evidently been intended for two related families; at either end has been a roofed porch with two doors, leading into a main chamber, containing cupboards; but there is no interior communication between the dwellings.

Fig. 3. Both, near last. This both, which is now a ruin, has been one of the most complete yet noticed. A roofed porch was entered by two doors; this leads into a comparatively large main chamber, from whence is a small irregular store or churn-room, still entire; attached is another good sized both that served for a dairy.

Fig. 4. Both, near last.

Plate XV.—Ground-plan of a compound both, near last, on the shore of Loch Resort. This remarkable structure is the only specimen of its class that is known to exist.

Plate XVI.—Section of the above on the line AB—and restoration, ditto, on the line CD, showing its appearance when cased with turf.

Plate XVII.—Ground plan and elevation of both sides of a Pict's house at Nisibost Harris. This structure was buried in sand, but it is probable that originally the floor was not more than three or four feet below the surface.

Fig. 1.



BOTH, LOCH AN ATH RUADH.

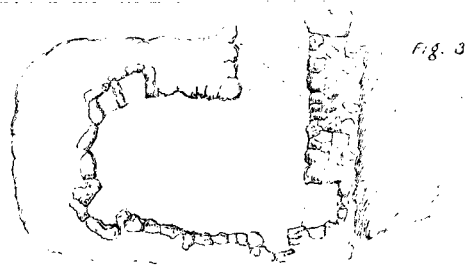
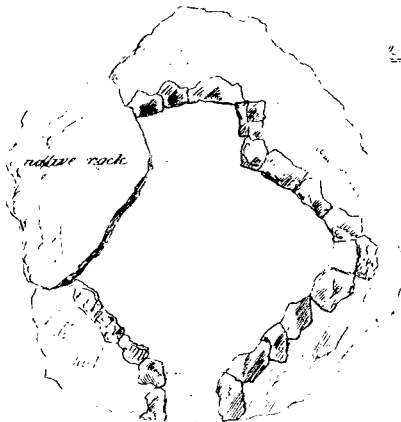


Fig. 3.



ARCH, NEAR LOCH SHRATH-EBHRO, VIC. LEWIS.

Fig. 2.

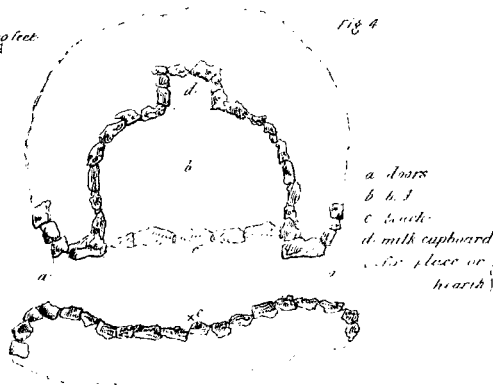


native rock.

Scale in Plans

10 feet

Fig. 4.



a. door

b. b. f.

c. bank

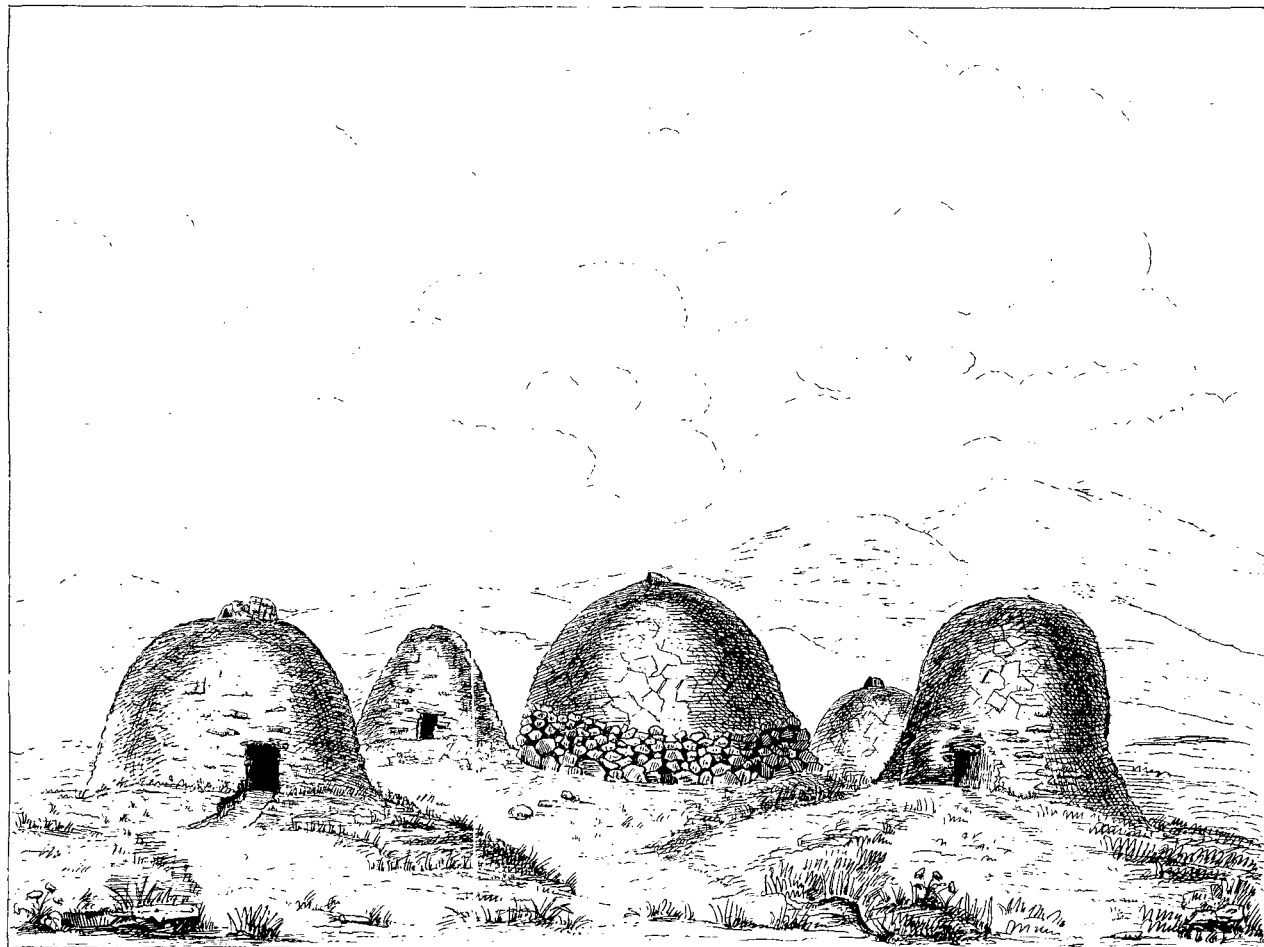
d. with cupboard

fire place or

hearth

BOTH, ON SOUTH SIDE OF LOCH AN ATH RUADH, VIC. LEWIS.

BOTH, ON WEST SIDE OF LOCH AN ATH RUADH.



FIDIGIDH IOCHDRACH
*(orig. Lewis, Hebrides
inhabited 1859)*

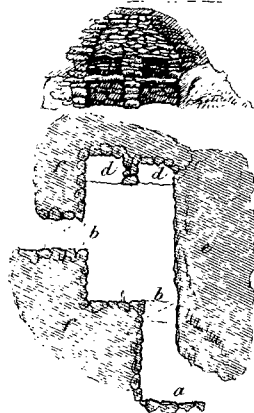
By G. K. Johnson. Engr. by J. H.

Fig. 1.



BOTH AN AIRD

Fig. 2.

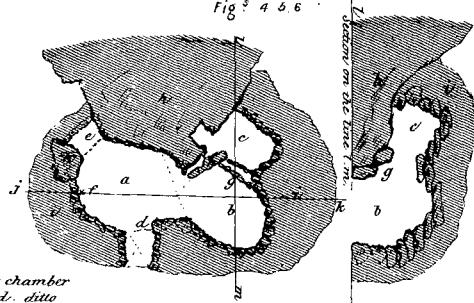


- a porch
- b door
- c fireplace
- d millstone
- e native rock
- f turf & stones

Plan & Elevation of
BOTH AN AIRD

northeast near Loch na Gallach, Aird Mhor Uig, Lewis

Fig. 3. 4 5 6



- a main chamber
- b second, ditto
- c sleeping place
- d door
- e milk cupboard
- f fire place
- g step
- h native rock
- i turf



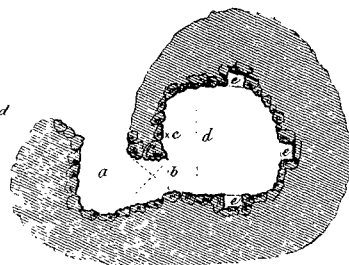
section on the line j, k.

BOTH AN AIRD

southmost near Loch na Gallach, Aird Mhor Uig, Lewis

- a porch
- b door
- c fireplace
- d bench
- e milk cupboard

Fig. 7.



Scale to Plans
0 5 10 15 feet

EASTMOST, BOTH URA
Fig. 7.

Fig 1

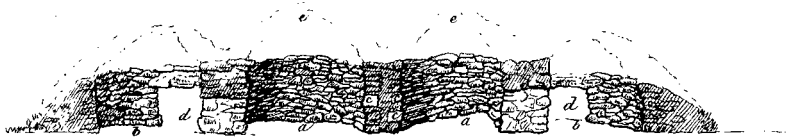
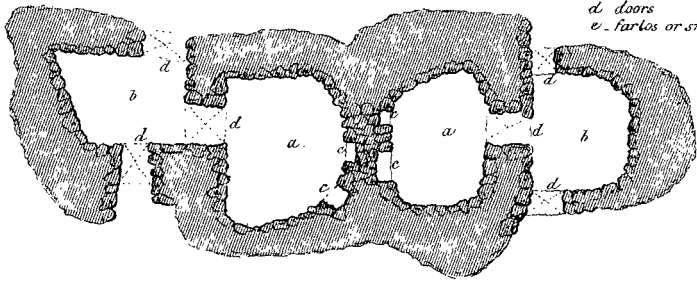


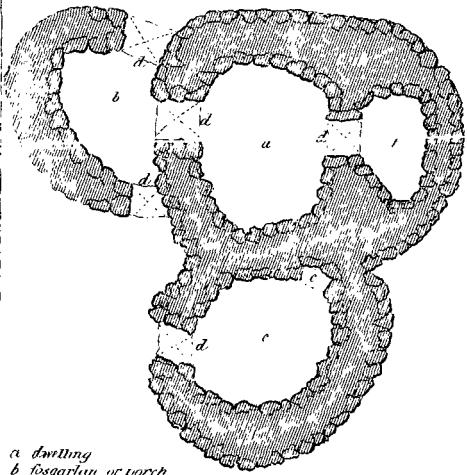
Fig. 2



- a dwellings
- b issgarlan or porch
- c cuillean or milk cupboards
- d doors
- e fartos or smoke hole

PLAN AND ELEVATION OF A BOTH
at Gearraidh, Aird Mhor, Uig, Lewis

Fig. 3.

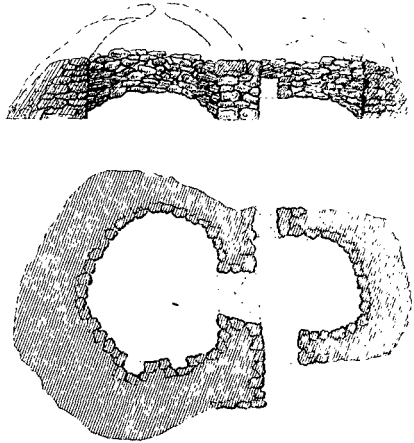


- a dwelling
- b issgarlan or porch
- c cuillean or milk press
- d doors
- e darg
- f churn room

BOTH

Gearraidh, Aird Mhor, Uig, Lewis

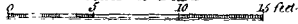
Fig. 4

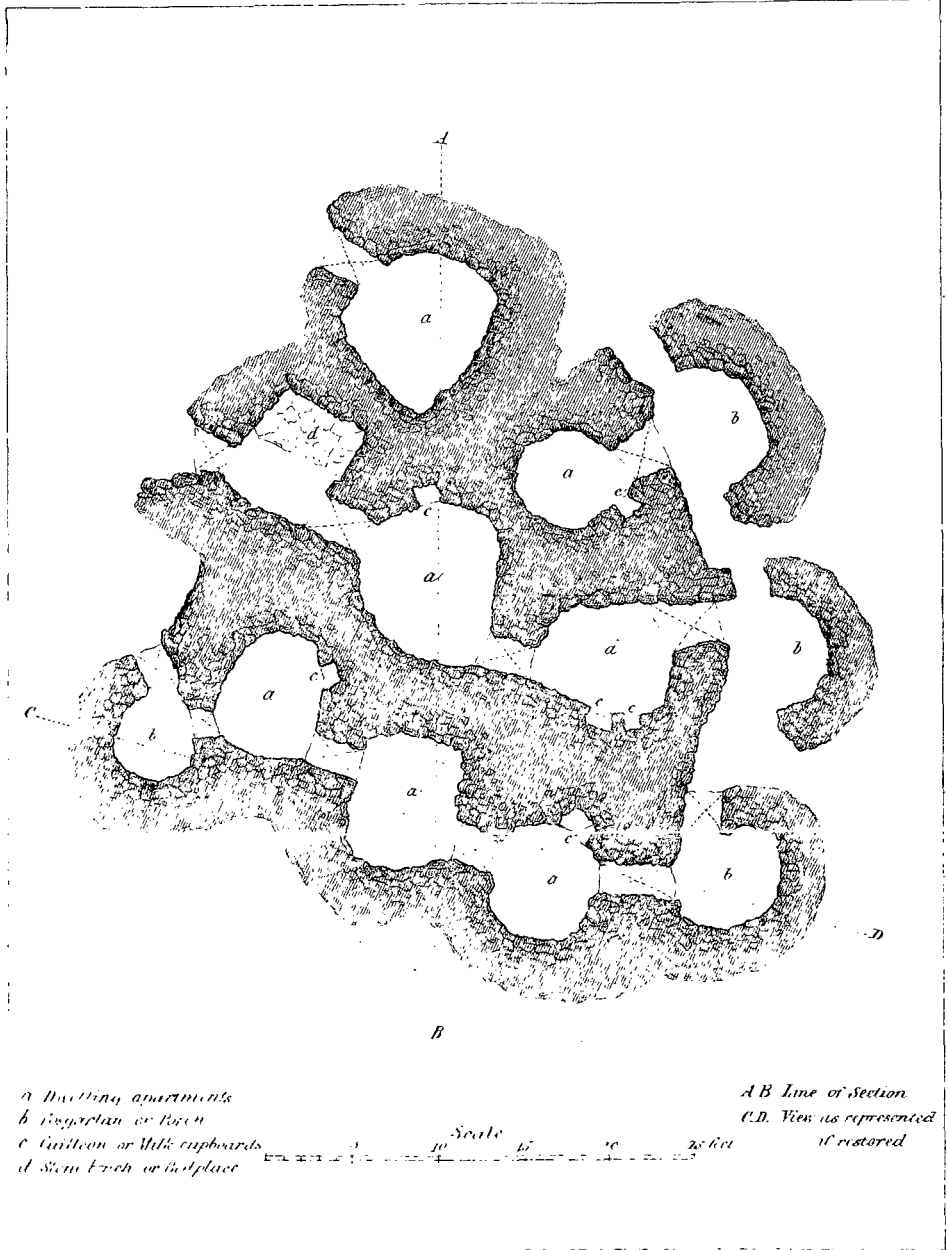


BOTH

Gearraidh, Aird Mhor, Uig, Lewis

Scale to Plans





a Dwelling apartments
b Pergolan or Porch
c Cistern or Milk cupboards
d Stair-arch or threshold

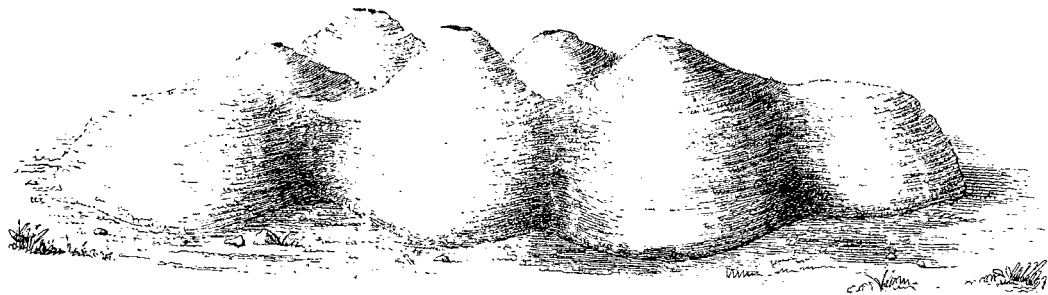
AB Line of Section
CD View as represented
 if restored

Groundplan of

TELLIN-GARBY, N. W. PART OF MUSEE
 17. Plan of the base of the Camp of Ard. *Phoenicia, Lewis, Habited*



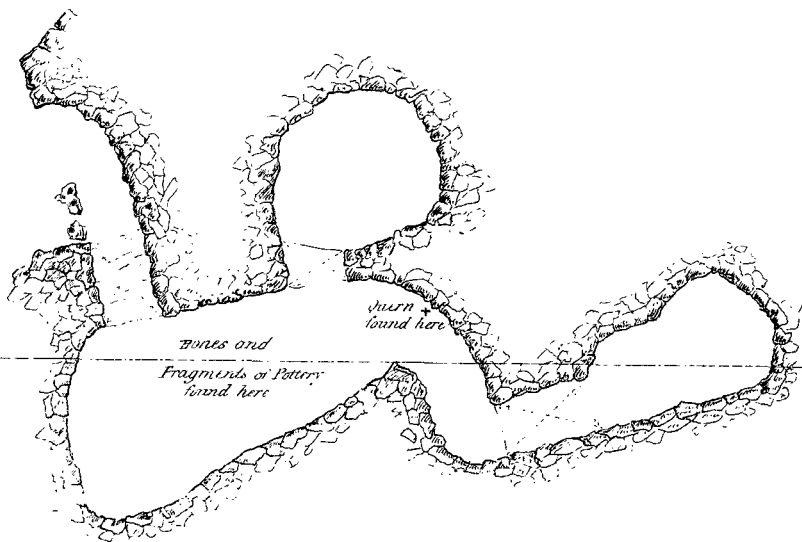
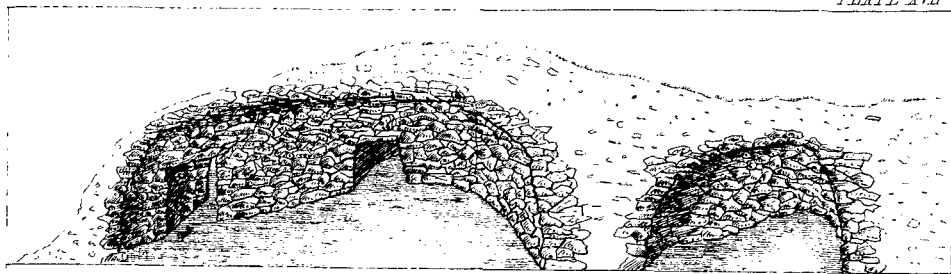
Section A.B.



View of Line C.D. if restored

THE BOOTH OR SHELTER OF THE GARRY OF AIRD MHOIF

Org. Linn. Hebrides



0 *Scale of Feet* 10 15

