

V.

NOTES ON ANCIENT REMAINS IN THE BEAULY VALLEY,
INVERNESS-SHIRE. BY THOMAS WALLACE, F.S.A. Scot.

The whole of the "Aird" is exceedingly rich in archæological remains, including forts, tumuli, hut-circles, stone circles, burial-mounds, sculptured stones, and cup-marked stones.

FORTS.

Of the forts a goodly number consists partly of vitrified walls, conforming in shape to the character of the site which they occupy; others consist simply of circular walls of uncemented masonry.

Tom-a-Chastle at Kirkton, parish of Kirkhill, is a small circular hill between two streams, which unite at its base, not far from the farmstead of Kirkton. It is much overgrown with whins and broom. The top of the hill measures 24 yards from east to west, and 19 yards from north to south. On the south side there is a trench 18 feet wide and about 15 feet deep. On the north side there is a trench 6 feet wide and 3 feet deep, with an entrance path across it about 3 feet wide. Between this trench and the brow of the hill there is a ridge about 3 feet wide, which disappears into the hill on the east and west. The streams on the east and west have formed very deep cuttings, which present almost perpendicular walls of 25 or 30 feet, more than three quarters round the hill.

Fort at Kirkton of Kirkhill.—About half a mile to the west of Kirkton stands an isolated hill, on the summit of which are the remains of an old "hill fort." There are no signs of vitrification, but portions of the wall still remain. The inclosure measures 32 yards from east to west, and 21 yards from north to south. The breadth of the wall, where it can be distinctly seen, measures 10 feet. The entrance looks to the west, and measures 13 feet wide. The wall can be distinctly traced more than halfway round on both sides from the entrance. There is an accumulation of stones at the east end of the fort; but no distinct

trace of walls. Judging from the quantities of stones lying all round the sides and base of the hill, the walls would have been of very considerable height. The fort is in full view of Craighadrick and the Ord Hill of Kessoek on the east, and of Castle Spynie, Dun More, and Dun Fionn on the west.

Castle Spynie.—This fort is situated on the top of a bare rock, 800 feet above the sea-level, to the west of Moniack, in the parish of Kirkhill. The wall of the building, which is completely circular, is built of undressed stones without any kind of mortar. Measured from the outside of the walls, it is 63 feet in diameter. The wall is 14 feet thick, which leaves an inner space of 36 feet in diameter. The entrance faces the south-west, and measures a little more than 4 feet wide. Judging from the quantity of material, the building when complete must have formed a very prominent object in the landscape. Although, from the condition of the ruins, none of the interior structure can be detected, it is so unlike any other fort in the neighbourhood, that I am inclined to classify it with the brochs.

Fort in the Wood at Beauly Bridge.—Like others, this fort has adapted itself to the natural shape of the hill. There is now no trace of any building. It is simply an earthen mound surrounded by two trenches. A section from north to south shows an inclosure measuring 188 feet in diameter, surrounded by two ditches, the inner one measuring 32 feet across, and the outer one 18 feet. The ditches are separated by ridges 5 feet wide and about 6 feet high from the bottom of the ditch. From east to west the inclosure measures 240 feet. The drive to Beaufort through the wood has cut through the trenches on the north side. The height of the fort on the south side is about 25 feet.

Dun More, above Beauly, is an ordinary "hill fort," without any trace of vitrification or stone wall left. It has been circular in shape, and on the west side there are traces of two surrounding ditches, the outer one 24 feet and the inner one 8 feet wide. On the north-east and south sides there is only one surrounding ditch. The diameter of the inner circle, or fort proper, is 30 feet. The height of the surrounding ridge is 4 feet, and 7 feet across at the top. The outer ridge is 5 feet high

on the inner side and 8 feet high on the outer, and 18 feet across the top. Within the inner ridge there are a few stones, one of which bears three cup marks, the largest being 3 inches in diameter and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch deep. The stone itself measures 2 feet 9 inches by 2 feet 11 inches.

Dun-a-Clibhan is in the south-west corner of Farley Wood, and measures 22 yards by 13 yards. It is surrounded on all sides except the north by a wall of stones 6 feet 6 inches thick, having an opening measuring 6 feet wide to the south-east. The north side is defended by a wall of natural rock 15 feet high. The west end has been defended by a ditch 5 feet in breadth, and gradually widening towards the south-east.

Dunávir, in the middle of Farley Wood, measures 45 yards by 36 yards. The surrounding wall is 10 feet thick, with the doorway to the north-east. This fort is surrounded by old Scotch fir trees, and at its base by an extensive peat moss.¹ The materials for its construction must have been brought from a distance.

Dun-a-Garbhlaich, west of Farley Wood, occupied an isolated knoll in the midst of a moss, and commanded a good view of the surrounding country. This fort, like all the others of the same character, has adapted itself to the nature of the site. On the north side there is a steep rock from 20 to 30 feet high above the surrounding bog. On this part there is very little building now to be seen, and no material at the base of the cliff which would indicate much of a wall. On the west side, where there is a natural depression in the rock, there are remains of a strong wall, from 7 to 8 feet of which still stand, and measures $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick. On the eastern end of the south side, where the rock rises, there is little remains of building; whereas the east end is fortified by a substantial wall. The north half of the top is high bare rock, and the south half is flat, measuring 14 yards wide, and 15 feet lower than the north side. There is a pit 4 feet deep at the north-west corner, and an irregularly-shaped chamber at the east end, surrounded

¹ To the north-west of this fort, and on the outside of the wood, there is a small loch called Loch-nam-Bonnach. A little to the west of this loch, Mr William Ross, gamekeeper at Farley, who conducted me to these forts, said when he was a boy, an iron axe with the handle was dug out of the moss, and a portion of a gold (?) sickle. The axe and handle crumbled away in the light and air, and the sickle was lost.

by a well-built wall. The entrance, 4 feet wide, is to the south side, and opens on to a platform of rock, which is defended by a wall or outwork which joins it to the eastern end of the wall. This fort measures 33 yards by 24 yards.

Dun More is at Tighnaleac, in Breakachy, to the west of Farley. Judging from the quantity of material, as well as the situation and plan of defence, this fort must have been almost impregnable. It is built on the summit of a bare isolated rock over 100 feet high, and nearly perpendicular on the north side, with a stream flowing round the base. The inner diameter is 60 feet, and the surrounding wall is 18 feet thick, and seems to have some resemblance to a broch in structure. There are two outworks on the south side. The inner one measures 39 feet from the base of the wall of the fort, and 69 feet wide at its greatest breadth. It gradually approaches the top of the rock, and in two places fills up the intervening spaces between projecting rocks. The outermost inclosure measures 66 feet by 20 feet, and is similar in shape to the inner one. The walls of the two outworks measure 13 feet thick. Of the outmost wall there is nothing left but the foundation stones. The inner wall stands in some places about 3 feet high, while the wall of the dun itself in some places stands in its present ruinous condition from 3 to 5 feet high.

Craig Dhu, to the north of Aigas Ferry, is surmounted by a fort, which commands a very extensive view on all sides except to the north. As is the case in all the other forts, here, the only part strongly defended is the part most easily assailable, which in this instance is to the west, where the hill slopes gently up to the top. On the north side of the hill there is a natural wall of rock from 25 to 30 feet high. On the east and south sides the wall of rock varies from 50 to 100 feet high. The diameter of the fort is 54 feet; the surrounding wall is 10 or 12 feet thick, with enough of material left to build a wall 10 feet thick and 6 feet high. The wall in its present ruinous condition stands 3 feet high.

"*The Tor*," or Little Struy, is situated on an isolated rock a few yards from the schoolhouse. The rock is perpendicular on the east side; and rises from the road about 60 or 70 feet. It is separated from the hill on the west side by a hollow about a third of that depth,

and which has been taken advantage of for defensive works. The inner diameter of the fort is 11 yards, and the wall as it now stands is composed of earth on a stone foundation, and measures 9 feet thick, and on the west side there is between 4 and 5 feet still standing. After descending 15 feet on the west side there is a platform measuring 24 yards due west, and gradually narrowing until it reaches the rock on the sides of the fort. Next, after descending 12 feet, another platform measuring 15 feet runs nearly round the base of the hill, terminating at the edge of the rock on the east. A hollow 5 or 6 feet deep separates the whole from the adjoining hill. There is no appearance of a door or entrance to the inclosure at the top.

Circular Fort west of Struy.—A little to the north of the "Tor" is another fort, which occupies a much higher position, and, as far as can be deduced from the present state of the ruins, has been of a different character. Here, as at Castle Spynie, there are no earthworks. The fort, or the main part of it, is circular, with an opening to the west measuring 6 feet wide by 20 feet long, and flanked by two oblong recesses 5 feet wide by 10 feet long. The inner diameter of the circular part of the fort is 27 feet, and a great quantity of loose materials lies all round the outside of the walls.

Dun More.—About $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Inverness, in the parish of Kirkhill, there is a district called the Cabrach, which is overlooked by a series of rocky peaks commanding a magnificent view of the surrounding country. On the most northerly of these there is a very fine specimen of a vitrified fort,—Dun More,—which, as far as I am aware, has not been previously described. The hill is composed of gneiss, and perfectly isolated. The sides are perpendicular on the north and south, and nearly so on the west; but on the east, where there is a talus of sand and gravel under the surface, it is approached by a gradual slope. The longest axis of the hill lies east and west. The top of the hill, which seems to have been almost entirely taken up with the fortifications, consists of a succession of terraces or platforms, all of which have been carefully defended by vitrified walls or otherwise. The fortified part measures 205 feet long, with an average breadth of 90 feet. The higher or western part of the hill has been surrounded by a vitrified wall of a

semicircular shape, of which 61 feet are still distinguishable. At a distance from that wall varying from 30 to 85 feet, and on the edge of a lower platform, there can be traced another wall which begins close to the first-mentioned one, and runs along the south edge of the hill for a distance of 100 feet, and then crosses to the north side, where it joins the natural rock. The entire length of this wall is 317 feet. From this second wall a third is traceable along the south edge of the hill. At the base of the rock on the west there is a wall of stones from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet high and about 51 feet long, running from the rock in a circular form to join a projecting rock on the side of a natural path which leads to the top. Across the path, which measures 26 feet, a wall has been built and carried along the edge of the rock to meet the base of the hill. Here the passage narrows to 11 feet 6 inches, and then gradually widens to the top of the hill, where a very strong defence has been constructed in the shape of a wall of stones measuring 33 feet in length. From the condition of the ruins it would be unwise to say anything about the probable height or breadth of the walls. About the middle of the hill top there is a small hollow in which water collects, but whether this depression is entirely natural no one could definitely say. At the east end there is a slight indication of a wall running across the hill. The vitrified material is composed entirely of the neighbouring metamorphic rock, the iron in which has been magnetised in the process of fusion, and, when applied to the magnetic needle, shows both an attracting and repelling pole.¹

Vitrified Work at Moniack.—A very curious example of vitrified work is to be seen at Moniack. It measures 8 or 9 feet from east to west and 10 feet from north to south, and about 3 feet thick. It is on the top of a long ridge about 15 feet high above the surrounding fields. With the permission of the proprietor, I made excavations all round this mass, and found it surrounded with pieces of stone broken small from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ and 2 inches in diameter. The ridge is of curious serpentine form, and measures in all 530 feet long. It is flat on the top, and

¹ I am indebted to Mr Horne of H. M. Geological Survey for calling my attention to this interesting fact. Mr Horne, I believe, first observed it in connection with the vitrified forts of the Tap o' Noath, in Aberdeenshire.

measures from 6 to 8 feet broad at the narrowest part on the top, and from 18 to 32 feet broad at the widest parts, which are at the turns of the ridge. The general direction of the ridge is from north-west to south-east, and at the north end there are two mounds, one measuring 9 feet and the other 12 feet high, with a hollow of 25 feet between them. Between these mounds and the ridge under consideration there is a hollow measuring from 12 feet to 33 feet. At the south end of the ridge, and separated from it by a hollow about 40 feet wide, there is a conical mound called the "Fairy Hillock." The vitrification in every way resembles that of the forts, and is composed of the metamorphic rocks of the district, and chiefly limestone. One bit came evidently from Wester Clunes or Rebeg, having lime crystals and specimens of "abriachanite" undisturbed by fire. Whatever was the object of this piece of vitrification, it was certainly not fortification. The mound has every appearance of being artificial, as was evident from the excavations made.

Dun Fionn, at Eilean Aigas, is a vitrified fort overlooking the Beaully river. About sixty years ago the late Lord Lovat had it explored by cutting two sections through it, which has very much destroyed its original appearance. One of the trenches was cut from east to west for a distance of 30 yards, and 2 yards wide. On the north side there is a wall from 1 to 5 feet high. A cross section 1 yard wide and from 1 to 5 feet deep was cut at right angles to this one. The slope, measuring 40 yards wide, between the top of the fort and the river has every appearance of having been cultivated. The whole ground surrounding the fort is covered with brackens from 4 to 5 feet high. Among these there are four circles covered with beautiful green grass, with rich black earth underneath. Two of these circles measure 4 yards in diameter, one 5 yards, and another 2 yards. There is also an oblong or oval space of the same character as the circles.

Loch Bruiaich, which lies between 5 and 6 miles from Tomnacross, is the largest of a series of eight or nine lochs lying between it and Strathglass. It measures $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles long by $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile wide, and is surrounded by low-lying Old Red Sandstone hills on the south and east, and the ordinary metamorphic rocks on the north and west. In a bay on the

north-east shore of this loch there is a small island which possesses special interest to the archæologist. The island appears to be entirely artificial, raised upon piles and cross-beams, about 50 yards from the shore, and measures 189 feet long, with an average breadth of 112 feet. The water immediately surrounding it is deep, and the margin of the island rises perpendicularly from the deep water, which is about 7 or 8 feet deep on the north and east sides, and 10 to 12 feet on the south and west. The piles and cross-beams on which it has been raised lie like a pavement all round it inclining to the centre. The beams are of oak, pine, and birch. Those of pine and oak are the largest. Between the beams, and all over the island numerous pieces of charcoal and one flint flake were picked up. The island rises in the centre, and, after clearing away part of the nettles and long grass, portions of a walled structure were disclosed. No trace of lime-cement could be detected, but the stones were large and well placed together. The ruins of this building raise the island to the height of 7 feet above the present water-mark.

Anderson, in his *History of the Frasers*, quoting from MSS. in the Advocates' Library, states that the Earl of Arran was reduced to such straits as to be obliged, about 1596, "to come north and live concealed in the small isle of Bruiach, situated in the lake of the same name, some miles from Beaufort Castle." It is also stated that at one time a chief of the Chisholms, stole a daughter of Lovat's and hid her in this island. This led to a clan fight, and tradition still points to the tumuli on the neighbouring hill-sides as the graves of the slain. Before visiting the island it was hard to reconcile these stories to the size and character of the island; but an examination of it has clearly shown the possibility of finding a comfortable retreat on the island of Loch Bruiach. The peculiar interest which this crannog possesses for us at present is the occurrence of vitrified materials on its surface. I visited the island in July 1885, and scarcely had I set my foot on shore when I found a small piece of true vitrified rock; and great was my astonishment when I discovered that the whole island was covered with fragments of different sizes of the same materials. It was found among the piles and cross-beams in great quantities. Several larger masses—one measuring

4 feet by 3—were found on the western margin of the island and deeply embedded among the stones, and above the piles and cross-beams, close to the water's edge. Several questions were immediately suggested by such an unexpected find. After careful examination the vitrified material was found to differ in no way from that forming our vitrified forts. Between the crannog and the shore there is a smaller island of large stones which is only visible when the loch is exceptionally low, as it was this season. This island, which measures 90 feet by 60 feet, appears to be entirely built of stones. The sides, like those of the larger island, are perpendicular. One piece of vitrified rock was found here. The distance between the islands is about 60 feet, and between the smaller one and the shore about 20 feet.

CAIRNS AND TUMULI.

The "Aird" possesses some of the most remarkable groups of tumuli to be seen almost anywhere. The cairns in the Beaully Firth, which lie within high-water mark and some of them within low-water mark, have been conjectured to be sepulchral. After close examination into their structure, and from the reports of other and earlier observers, I am inclined to adopt this view of their sepulchral nature. Their situation within low-water mark is the only thing that distinguishes them from the ordinary tumuli. There are three large cairns: Cairn Arc (the Cairn of the Sea) at the mouth of the Ness; Cairn Dhu (Black Cairn), about the middle of the Firth, and nearly opposite Bunchrew.¹ There are several smaller cairns in the same group, some clustered round the last mentioned and others near Phopachy.

The Lentrán group of cairns, varying in size from 6 to 18 feet in diameter, is situated on the hill lately cleared of wood, about half a mile to the south of Lentrán House, and close to the Alt-na-Ceardaich stream, that enters the Firth at Lentrán Railway Station.

The Blar-nam-Feinne group consists of several cairns, measuring from 12 to 21 feet in diameter and from 3 to 5 feet high. They are situated in the young wood to the east of Alt-na-Ceardaich, and about three-

¹ *Stat. Acc.*, vol. xvii. p. 350.

quarters of a mile from the Lentrán group ; not far from the road leading from Alt-na-Ceardaich to Kirkton Muir.¹

The Cul-ma-Skiach group is situated partly on a bare moor, and partly in the young wood which is a continuation of the moor, in a north-east direction. The moor is 900 feet above sea-level, and commands a wide prospect. The cairns are more numerous here than in any other group I have ever seen. Mr John Ross estimates that on this moor there must be nearly a hundred cairns.

The Alt-Keppoch group consists of about five or six cairns, rather larger than ordinary, and built of larger stones than usual. They are situated at the back of a small knoll on the right bank of the Bruiach Burn, about half a mile from the loch of the same name, or between the loch and Alt Keppoch Burn.

The Blairmoor group, on the hill bearing this name, lies to the south-east of Glen Convinth, and consists of three successive heights rising from the west, where the Glen Urquhart road leaves Glen Convinth. Each of these heights is literally covered with tumuli. On the middle part of the hill, which is 100 feet above sea-level, there is a "hut-circle," 33 feet in diameter, with the doorway facing the south-east. Close to the doorway I found the half of a "rubbing-stone," and for a little was puzzled to account for its presence there; but on an examination of the ground it was clearly seen that the whole hill-top had been at one time under cultivation. Ascending next to the highest point, which is 1000 feet above the sea, the cairns were still as plentiful, and another "hut-circle" occupied the highest point.

The Caiplich group lies on the heights to the north of Caiplich, and is best seen on that part of the hill lately planted, and close by the roadside leading from Caiplich to Foxhole. The cairns here are also very numerous.

The Glios-Garbh group lies west of Cruive in Kiltarlity, between Loch Bruiach and the "Alt Garbh," which flows into the Beauly river at Eskadale. The cairns on this slope are very numerous. Associated with them are two circles with stone foundations, one measuring 13 yards in diameter and the other 9 yards.

¹ Tradition points out this as the scene of the battle fought by Donald Balloch.

There is a group of three mounds at Alt-na-Cardich in Kirkhill. The easterly one measures 18 yards in diameter and 7 feet in height, with an inner circle of 6 yards in diameter. There are only a very few stones in their original positions. There is one 9 yards distant from the outer circle, measuring 7 feet 7 inches by 6 feet 6 inches; but it would be rash to state that it formed part of a third circle. The next mound, which is 8 yards to the south-west of the first, does not exceed 4 feet in height. It contains the remains of a circular cist in the centre. The inner circle of this mound is 13 yards in diameter, and the outer one 21 or 22 yards in diameter. In the outer circle there are at least eight stones in position. The third mound, which lies 28 yards north-west from the second, is about 6 feet in height, and very much overgrown with furze, but three circles are traceable on it. The inner circle is 14 yards in diameter, the second 20 yards, and the outer 30 yards. On the east side of this mound lies a boulder measuring 7 feet by 4 feet.

On the north side of the mossy flat to the north of "Blar-nam-Feinne" there are three mounds, which I believe to be of the same character as the last. One of them has been entirely hollowed out, and has now the appearance of a circular pit, measuring 17 feet in diameter, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep. Thirty-eight yards to the south-east of this one, there is a mound 10 feet in diameter.

Again, about 50 yards to the south-west-by-west of the first-mentioned one, there is the most interesting one of the three. Here there is the remains of a cist, with four and perhaps five stones still in position. This cist is on the outer side of a mound measuring 6 or 7 yards in diameter.

There is a solitary mound at Balpeck, measuring 94 feet in diameter and 15 feet high from the surrounding ground. "Balpeck" was the name of a croft now included in the farm of Easter Craggag, Kirkhill. The mound lies in the corner of the wood, and has been carefully preserved by building a dyke right round it.

CIRCLES.

On Inchberry Hill, in Kirkhill, there are two circular buildings, the smaller one to the west measures 24 feet in diameter, and is connected

with a larger one measuring 48 feet in diameter, by an irregular wall of stones. There is very little of the smaller one left; but the larger one shows a wall 6 feet thick, and in two places in the wall itself there are remains of circular cists.

There is a circular mound called "The Fairy Hillock," in a field a little from the entrance to the House of Moniack. It is planted with Scotch fir, and without any trace of a stone circle.

There are two circles at Creagan Dubh, west of Inchstaing, one 42 feet and the other 30 feet in diameter, with the doorway to the east. The circular ridge of earth is from 1 to 2 feet high. Associated with numerous cairns on Slios-Garbh (the Rough Slope), west of Cruive, there are two circles, with the openings to the west. The westerly one, which is the largest, measures 13 yards in diameter, and the surrounding wall is 6 feet thick. In the interior of the circle, and not far from the entrance, there is a smaller circle 9 feet in diameter. There is evidence also of a small circular structure in the inclosing wall. The smaller circle lies 21 yards north-east from the larger one, and measures 9 yards in diameter.

About a quarter of a mile to the north of Boblaine, there is the remains of a cairn surrounded by a circle of stones. The cairn measures 11 yards in diameter, and at a distance of 2 yards, there are the remains of a circle of stones about $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 feet high. At a distance of 20 yards north-west from the circle there is a boulder 4 feet by 3 feet, but whether it had ever formed a part of the structure it would be hard to say.

About half a mile north of Boblaine, there are the remains of another circle of stones, eight of which are still in position. The circle, when complete, would be about 13 yards in diameter. There are several others very indistinctly marked, in its immediate neighbourhood.

There is a very interesting group around "Loch-an-a-Cailleach," *i.e.*, the Loch of the Old Woman. No. 1 is to the east of the group, and measures as follows:—Inner diameter, 39 feet; wall, 6 feet wide, and from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. The entrance to this, as to all the others, is towards the east. No. 2 is a few yards to the west of No. 1, and measures in inner diameter 56 feet 4 inches, with surrounding wall 6 feet thick, and from

2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. Between No. 2 and No. 3 there is a cup-marked stone, with twelve cups on it. No. 3 is a few yards west of No. 2, and measures in inner diameter 51 feet, with surrounding wall 6 feet wide, and from 1 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet above ground. These are situated to the south of the loch, and from 400 to 500 feet above average sea-level. No. 4 lies on the west side of the loch, and resembles the others in character, measuring in inner diameter 39 feet. The wall is very indistinct, but appears to have been about 6 feet thick. No. 5 lies about half a mile to the north of the loch, and about the same level as the rest. Its inner diameter is 48 feet, with a wall 6 feet in thickness.

There is another group of circles on Blair More, in Glenconvinth. The hill called Blair More lies to the south of Convinth, and the circles are at 900 feet above the sea-level. The western one is 11 yards in diameter, and wall 3 feet thick, with the opening to the east. Lying at the door of this circle is the half of a "rubbing-stone." The fragment measures 2 feet 2 inches by 1 foot 6 inches.

The second circle lies 200 yards south-east of the first one, and measures 13 yards in diameter, and the surrounding wall 3 feet. At the 1000 feet contour line on this hill there is an open cist.

In Eskadale Wood, Kineras, near Hughtown Post-Office, there is a structure which consists of two concentric circles, partly of earth and partly of stones. The entrance faces the east. The outer wall has been partly destroyed by planting trees, and the inner one is still less distinguishable. The diameter of outer circle, over all, is 65 feet; the thickness of wall 9 feet 9 inches, and the entrance is 9 feet wide. The diameter of the inner circle is 34 feet 6 inches, and the thickness of wall 3 feet 6 inches. The height of the walls above the present ground is 1 foot 6 inches. The outer face is carefully built, as well as the entrance.

SCULPTURED STONES.

In addition to the stone at Moniack Castle, which will be found figured in the Society's *Proceedings* (vol. xvi. p. 341), there are some very interesting sculptured stones in the old churchyard of Glenconvinth. There is also a fragment of a very beautiful cross in the churchyard of Kirkhill.

CUP-MARKED STONES.

At Bruiach, in Kiltarlity, there are two concentric circles of upright stones. In the inner circle there are two stones with cups. Again, in the circular cairn at Culbirnie, there are four stones with cups on them. Stones with cups are to be seen at Moniack Castle, Kirkhill, and at Kirkton Farm. In Kineras, Kiltarlity, there are two very fine specimens of cup-marked stones. These, along with many others, will be found in the Society's *Proceedings*, vol. xvi. There remains one to be mentioned which has not been figured. It is found among the remarkable circles at Craig Dubh at Aigas, near Loch-nan-Caillach. It contains twelve distinct cups.

OLD BLOOMERIES.

To the west of Loch-an-a-Chailleach, above Aigas Ferry, on the old road leading to Urchany, there are the remains of an old iron working, with plenty of the slag and charcoal lying about. There are evidences of another in Farley, to the east of Mr William Ross, the gamekeeper's house. A third is at the east end of Loch-nan-Eun, at the back of Farley Wood.

CHARCOAL PITS.

There are two or three pits at the north end of Loch-nan-Bonnach, which were used for the purpose of converting peats into a kind of charcoal for the use of the smiddy. In former times, when any one went to the "smiddy" to get any work done, he had to carry fuel of this kind with him. There are people still living who remember the thing being done. The peats were placed above a fire in these pits; and the whole thing was then covered over with turf, and allowed to smoulder, until the peats were converted into a kind of charcoal.

OLD RUINS, STRATHERRICK.

I have now to notice a curious collection of ruins in Stratherrick.¹

¹ I am indebted to the kindness of Mr Fraser for the drawing on which the dimensions and relative positions of these are laid down. In justice to Mr Fraser, however, and in case any of the observations should turn out to be not strictly accurate, I must state that the drawing was prepared entirely from notes supplied by me.

They are situated about a mile from Whitebridge, exactly to the west of the Catholic chapel, and between the road and the river, on a slightly elevated piece of flat ground which appears at one time to have been surrounded by the river.

The platform is covered over with very old birch trees, which have been planted or self-sown subsequently to the present condition of the remains.

The whole space measures 200 yards by 54 yards, and from 5 to 8 feet above the level of the river and surrounding ground.

The remains, as will be seen from the drawing, are circular, oblong, and square, and the following are the dimensions of each :—

No. 1 is circular, and measures—outer diameter, 45 feet ; inner diameter, 33 feet ; width of ditch, 3 feet ; diameter of low mound of stones in centre, 10 feet ; width of passage, 4 feet ; direction of opening, north-east. The walls are simply low mounds or ridges of earth and stones, rising from 1 to 2 feet above the surrounding ground, and 3 feet from the bottom of the ditch or trench.

No. 2, is square, and measures—outer diameter, 36 feet ; inner diameter, 22 feet ; width of ditch, 3 feet ; width of wall, 3 feet. The interior of this one consists of stones and earth, and rises towards the centre to the height of 1 foot above the surrounding ground. It is quite contiguous to No. 1.

No. 3 resembles No. 2 but is smaller, and measures—inner diameter, 18 feet ; outer diameter, 30 feet ; width of ditch, 3 feet ; width of wall, 3 feet ; height of centre above ground, 3 feet. The entrances to No. 2 and 3 seem to have been at the corners, but are not well marked.

No. 4 is oblong, and measures 43 feet by 16 feet. In this case the wall is almost level with the ground, and the direction of the longest axis is east and west. There is no appearance of any entrance.

No. 5 is oblong, and measures 35 feet by 15 feet. The height of wall is 3 feet as seen at the west end, but nearly level with the ground on the east end. The remains of wall at west end, which is the only piece of true building about the whole, is bee-hive-shaped and surrounded by a mound of earth, rising from the very edge of the platform, on which they are all situated.

No. 6 resembles in shape No. 1, and measures—outer diameter, 36 feet; inner diameter, 24 feet; width of ditch, 3 feet; width of wall, 3 feet; height of inner mound of stones, 2 feet; entrance 3 feet wide, and faces west-south-west.

Nos. 7, 8, and 9 are simply mounds, but I have no doubt were originally of the same form and structure as No. 6. As they now stand No. 7 measures 19 feet in diameter, and stands 3 feet above the surrounding ground. No. 8 is 14 feet, and No. 9 16 feet in diameter.

No. 10 is oblong, and measures 38 feet by 28 feet; is surrounded by a wall and trench of similar dimensions to the others.

No. 11 can hardly be distinguished, and therefore I thought it better simply to mark its position. As far as could be determined, it measures 24 feet by 21 feet.

At a distance of 23 yards from No. 1, there is an interesting group of three (Nos. 12, 13, and 14), which are connected with each other as shown in the drawing.

No. 12 measures in outer diameter 36 feet; inner diameter, 18 feet; width of ditch, 4 feet; width of wall, 5 feet.

No. 14 measures 33 feet by 14 feet.

As far as can be ascertained, there exists no account of these structures among the people of Stratherrick, and I will not venture to conjecture what they may have been.