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ON SOME OBSCURE REMAINS IN THE PARISH OF DAILLY, AYRSHIRE.
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The surface of Scotland has for so long a period been under minute observation by surveyors, farmers, sportsmen, shepherds, botanists, and tourists, not to mention archæologists, that it would seem vain to expect

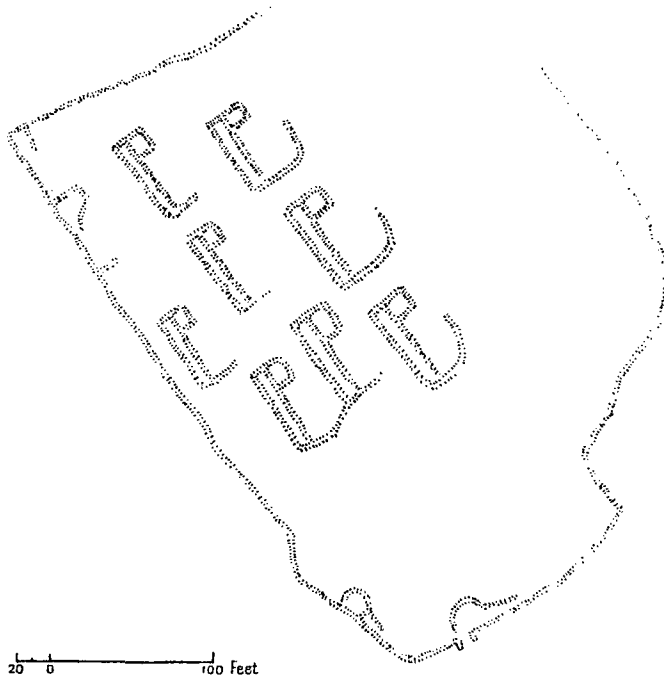


Fig. 1. Remains on Gulloch Hill, Dailly.

the discovery of any new and conspicuous antiquarian object upon it. Nevertheless, to quote my own experience solely, one of the most perfect remaining cairns in the country, quite unknown to fame, was pointed out to me two years ago, on the shores of Loch Awe; and I now bring

to your notice remains hitherto undescribed, which, if less conspicuous, are far more extensive, in the parish of Dailly, Ayrshire. For my knowledge of their existence I am indebted to the Rev. George Turnbull, the parish clergyman, but their discovery is due to Mr William Stewart, tenant of the farm of Blair, on which the remains are situated. I had the advantage of the company of both these gentlemen in visiting and making a rough survey of the objects last summer.

No greater contrast could well be imagined than between the quiet cheerful beauty of the Girvan valley at Dailly, one of the most charming spots in Ayrshire, and the dreary waste of pastoral and boggy uplands, stretching away eastwards for many miles to the higher ranges at the border of the county. Commanding an extensive view of this character, the remains in question lie about four miles E. by S. of the village, on a gentle slope towards the south-east, at the foot of a slight eminence marked *Knockinculloch* on the Ordnance map, but simply called *Gulloch* by Mr Stewart. This height rises 1160 feet above the sea, and the remains (fig 1.) may be about 200 feet lower. They consist of an enclosure, measuring about 400 feet from N.W. to S.E., and 300 from S.W. to N.E., containing nine structures of almost identical form, aggregated towards the N.W. corner, leaving fully one-half of the enclosed space vacant towards the E. and S. The N.W. and S.W. sides of the enclosure are tolerably straight, but the other two sides are curved, and an intake in the S.E., or lower side, gives the enclosure somewhat of an irregular six-sided figure. In its present state the enclosing mound, like those of the contained structures, is of trifling dimensions, nowhere exceeding three or four feet in width and about one in height, but they can all be traced in wonderful distinctness and continuity, except at the N.E. angle of the enclosure, where a considerable part of the mound has disappeared. The only existing entrance is at the lower S.E. end. Entering between two short mounds at right angles to the boundary, the visitor finds himself in a little semi-circular enclosure, of which the boundary mound is the base, and the exit to the enclosure is by a short and gradually contracting passage to the right, one side of which is formed by the boundary wall. There is a similar structure at the south end of the N.W. boundary, but without an opening to the exterior.

The contained structures are nine in number, and are almost identical in form, although differing slightly in size. Eight of them stand free in the enclosure, the ninth rests on the N.W. boundary mound. Although not arranged in strictly symmetrical order, their orientation is the same, their length running from N.W. to S.E., and they stand in three parallel columns, somewhat *en echelon*. In form they may be compared to the letter P drawn in straight lines, with a tail springing from the foot and curving upwards to the right, so as to extend further out than the head of the letter, but not reaching so high as it. This tail, as well as the head of the letter, are composed of single mounds; but the long limb is double, thus forming a narrow passage four or five feet wide, and varying in the different structures from 55 to nearly 70 feet in length. At the foot this passage is closed by the origin of the tail, and from the top the head of the letter projects in all cases to the N.E. as a rectangular chamber, varying from eight to ten or twelve feet in breadth and length, and with no indication of an entrance either from the passage or from the outside. As to the original structure of these mounds, I can only conjecture that they were walls of turf, which in the course of time have disintegrated and sunk down to their present insignificant dimensions. There is no stone lying about the enclosure, and none could be detected in the mounds by probing with a stick.

The object of the remains one would naturally associate with the pastoral pursuits of the country, but no tradition survives of a use of this or any other kind; and Mr Stewart could not imagine of what service they could be in any modern system of managing sheep. The contraction of the entrance to the main enclosure—such as only to admit one or two animals at a time—the closure of both ends of the passages in the interior structures, and the absence of entrances to their chambers, are difficult to explain on any theory; and it seems scarcely possible that such entrances could have been obliterated in the gradual subsidence of the walls. But, be they what they may, these remains are unique, so far as I am aware, and seem worthy of record in the *Proceedings* of our Society.