

II.

REPORT ON THE STONE CIRCLES OF THE NORTH-EAST OF SCOTLAND, INVERURIE DISTRICT, OBTAINED UNDER THE GUNNING FELLOWSHIP, WITH MEASURED PLANS AND DRAWINGS. BY FRED. R. COLES, ASSISTANT KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM.

Before submitting my Report on the continued survey of Stone Circles carried out last September, it is necessary to fulfil the promise made to complete the record for the previous season, by describing the two Circles of Echt and Binghill respectively, Nos. 20 and 21 of my former report.¹

The plans are shown on the same scale as before, with one exception, which will be noted at the proper place; and the true Polar North is given in addition to the magnetic. The stones are numbered, as before, from left to right, beginning with the one that stands west of the south point.

No. 20. *Standing Stones of Echt*.—This circle is in an open pasture-field, a few score yards to the north of the farm-steadings. Its distance from Seanhinny is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The site is low and inconspicuous, in the Leuchar Moss, nearly 300 feet above sea-level. The eight Standing-Stones occupy their original positions, forming a circle which measures 36 feet by 34; the interspaces are very regular, and the area thus enclosed is characterised by a number of stone-settings more or less circular, which can be studied by means of the annexed plan and sections (fig. 1). Despite the provision made in the lease of the farm towards the preservation of this circle, some injury has been done, as the contiguous arcs of the central and the eastern stone-settings are far from complete. On the S.E. arc, in front of the seventh stone, there remains only a confusion of smallish stones, none of them earth-fast; the inference therefore is that, on the assumption of an original setting

¹ See p. 187 of the *Proceedings*, 1899-1900, vol. xxxiv.

here, some serious displacement has taken place. With regard to the heaps of small stones on the south, and near Stone F, it is impossible to state whether or not they are the stones laid aside during a rough exa-

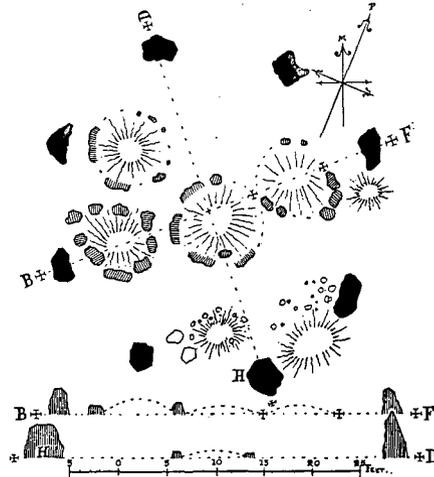


Fig. 1. Standing Stones of Echt. Ground Plan.

mination of these portions of the area; they do not present the appearance of integral parts of the circle. The circlet close to the third stone, near the north arc, is entirely grown over with grass; but its

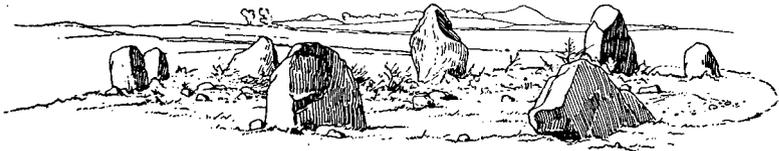


Fig. 2. Echt. View from the South.

diameters are definitely ascertainable. Of the pillar-stones, all of grey granite, the two on the north are the tallest, and they are both more pointed than the others. When standing outside the circle at a point

midway betwixt the two south stones, you see the distant peak of Bennachie between the two north stones. (See the view, fig. 2.)

The heights of the stones are as follows :—

Stone I.,	3 feet	0 inches		Stone V.,	4 feet	7 inches
„ II.,	2 „	9 „		„ VI.,	2 „	8 „
„ III.,	3 „	0 „		„ VII.,	2 „	3 „
„ IV.,	4 „	10 „		„ VIII.,	3 „	6 „

The distances between the stones, from centre to centre, are :—

From Stone	I.	to	II.,	.	.	12 feet 4 inches
„	II.	„	III.,	.	.	12 „ 8 „
„	III.	„	IV.,	.	.	14 „ 2 „
„	IV.	„	V.,	.	.	13 „ 6 „
„	V.	„	VI.,	.	.	12 „ 0 „
„	VI.	„	VII.,	.	.	15 „ 7 „
„	VII.	„	VIII.,	.	.	12 „ 2 „
„	VIII.	„	I.,	.	.	12 „ 6 „
						Total circumference,
						104 feet 11 inches.

A plan of this circle under the name of Leuchar, in Skene, is given by James Logan,¹ where six small circles (within the Standing Stones) are shown, surrounding a seventh considerably larger and central, the side-stones of all of which are carefully drawn. The view, given on the same plate, gives an exaggerated impression of the heights of the stones.

No. 21. Binghill, near Murtle.—This circle, situated in a secluded woodland within the policies of Binghill, I was courteously invited to examine by the proprietor, M. L. Hadden, Esq., who was interested to find that the circle contained a good deal more ‘structure’ than had hitherto been supposed. It also presents difficulties of condition, which do not disappear even after a critical study of the ground plan (fig. 3). A Recumbent Stone of unusually small and neat proportions is vertically set on the south arc, and three other stones remain

¹ See *Archæologia*, vol. xxii. pl. xxxiv. p. 410.

upright *in situ*. The two pillars can be identified; and Stone F, on the east, though prostrate, is probably not far out of position. But from what point the other prostrate stone, now lying south of F, has been moved, is extremely problematical; the three large stones, set edgewise at B, occupy the position one would by analogy assign to a pillar-stone, were the circle truly 'circular'; and to the east of the Recumbent Stone is an oblong space (dotted in the plan) which must have been the site of the now prostrate block, Q, near it. A concentric inner

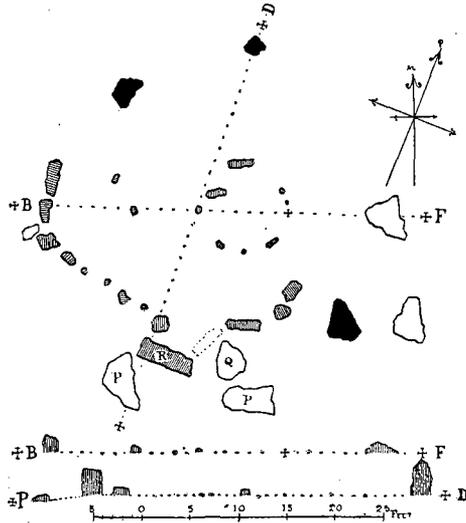


Fig. 3. Binghill, near Murtle.

stone-setting is well marked out, its circumference 11 feet inwards from the Recumbent Stone; and, though the positions of the two larger stones on its northern arc seem meaningless, we shall, later on, find analogous arrangements in better preservation on other sites. Between this central setting and the large stones at B, are two small ones set on edge in such a manner as to suggest a small circular setting of 4 feet in diameter.

Owing to the dampness of this shady spot, mosses and lichens have so completely covered these stones that it is scarcely possible to ascertain the character of the rock composing them.

Measured from the centre of the Recumbent Stone to that of Stone D, the diameter is 34 feet, the east and west diameter being 35 feet. The interspaces, if equal, would be 14 feet each; thus, on the assumption that there were seven stones on the circumference (in addition to the Recumbent Stone and pillars) we have an approximate circumference of 107 feet.

The heights of the three Standing Stones are:—D, 3 feet 7 inches; the stone to the west of D, 4 feet 2 inches; the stone on the S.E., 4 feet 2 inches. The Recumbent Stone stands 3 feet 6 inches above ground outside, and varies from 3 feet to 2 feet 8 inches inside.¹ It is remarkably square-sided, flat, and smooth. The heavy foliage prevented my making a drawing of these stones as a group.

Regarding the name, Binghill is misleading. The local pronunciation is Bing'l, which is considerably nearer to a phonetic rendering of the name Byngal as it stands in an old chart, referred to by Mr Hadden in a communication to me on the subject.

STONE CIRCLES IN THE INVERURIE DISTRICT.

The district, which I have thus named, because Inverurie formed an excellent head-quarters whence to make the survey, measures in round numbers 18 miles by 10, and begins at Kinaldie, three miles N.W. of Dyce Standing Stones.² Trending westwards, it ends at Greystone, a mile beyond Alford.

Its southern boundary is the high moorland of Leochel-Cushnie, Corrennie Forest, and the lower parts of Cluny and Kinellar; while, on the north, the Gadie Burn from Clatt to Ardoyne, and thence, in a south-easterly direction, the rivers Ury and Don, close it in. The greater portion of this district, richly varied as it is with woodland

¹ Its weight must be over a couple of tons.

² See the accompanying map (fig. 4).

and stream, lies to the north of the Don; and the whole is so replete with remains of interest to Archæology, that a thorough investigation would occupy a much longer time than the four weeks at my disposal.¹ And this for the simple reason that, though it is possible to overtake most of the sites accounted for on the Ordnance Maps, one is never sure of not missing a site not there marked, and known, as our experience in one instance proved, to but the proprietor or the tenant. For quite another reason, I have for the present omitted several Standing Stones in Kinellar and the east of Cluny. I possess no record of any of these being held to be remains of circles.

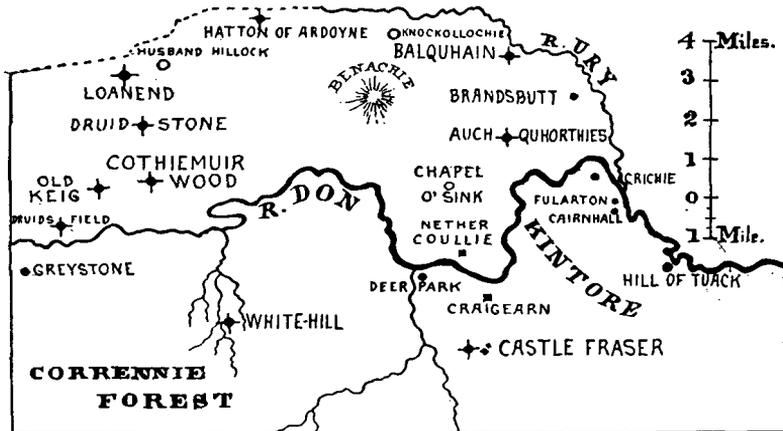


Fig. 4. Map showing sites of circles surveyed in the Inverurie District.

The first site, therefore, south of the Don, to be described is that near the western base of

1. *The Hill of Tuack, Kintore*, 200 feet above sea-level, half a mile south of that village, and the same distance west of the Don, here meandering in its most sinuous curves. To an untrained eye no artificial arrangement of stones is even faintly discernible here, at first,

¹ Davidson, in his *History of Inverurie and the Garioch*, records having seen remains of no fewer than forty stone circles.

so dense is the growth of bracken. But, after getting a few points from two large stones as a probable centre, we begin to pick out a slight ridge surrounding these at a radius of about 20 feet. The ridge is stony and now very uneven, and the only large stones left within are those shown on my plan (fig. 5). The smaller prostrate one at the centre is probably part of the cist-cover noticed by Mr C. E. Dalrymple.¹

Only one earth-fast stone remains, to the east of the centre; it is broad, regular, and straight on the north face, but much the reverse else-

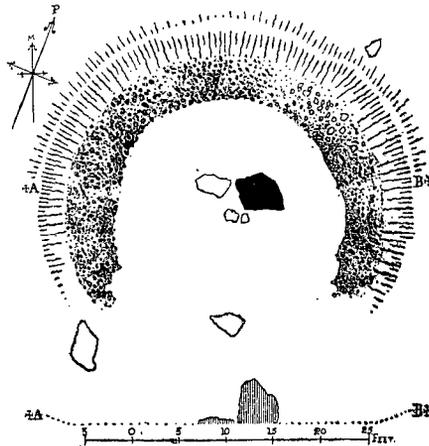


Fig. 5. Hill of Tuack, Kintore. Ground Plan.

where. It is 4 feet 10 inches in height. The long prostrate stone on the S.W., almost outside of the line of the ridge, is large and massy enough to have formed one of the group of six originally in the circle; but the other block, at the south, is not earth-fast. Much of the hill just above having been quarried, many of the smaller blocks lying about, half hidden by the bracken, are most likely débris from blastings.

¹ Stuart's *Sculptured Stones*, vol. i., Appendix to Preface, p. xxii. ; and *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, vol. xviii. p. 323.

When examined by Mr Dalrymple, a copy of whose plan I show, there were here six stones (fig. 6) set up on a circle 24 feet wide, surrounded by an unbroken trench 12 feet wide. On the inside of the two stones on the north deposits were found. In front of the one to the east there was a deposit of burnt bones in a small round pit 2 feet below the surface. A little in front of this, again, at a depth of 2 feet

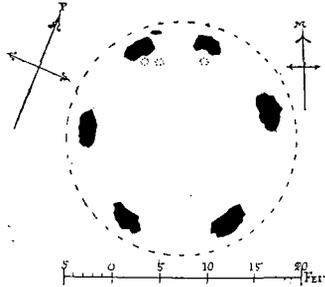


Fig. 6. Hill of Tuack. (After C. E. Dalrymple.)

4 inches, was an urn,¹ mouth downwards, over a deposit of burnt bones among which was a small fragment of bronze about an inch square.¹

In front of the stone, to the west of north, lay a stone covering an inverted urn with bones and very small brittle bronze fragments. This urn (fig. 7A) measured 13 inches in height, 11 across the mouth, 13 at the bulge, and 9 at the base. It went to pieces.² Near this deposit was

¹ These relics, with the exception of the fragment of bronze, are in the Museum. See Catalogue EP., 5 and 6.

² The pieces were joined, and now form enough of the urn to allow of my drawing it. As may be seen from the illustration (fig. 7A), the urn has no true 'shoulder,' but two very distinct ridges, respectively 4 inches and nearly 7 inches below the rim. The upper portion is notable for showing decorative lines effected in two different ways: first, a series of diagonals 'dabbed' down with a pointed tool, very faintly marked; and next, large, strong, swiftly-drawn scorings crossing each other in the usual style. It is almost as if the weak dabbed-in lines were the work of a novice, and the ornamentation had been rapidly and boldly finished by an adept. I know of no other urn in the Museum showing thus definitely two methods of producing the lines of decoration.

another inverted urn (fig. 7), protected above, below, and around by stones. It covered burnt bones. The height of this urn was $14\frac{3}{4}$ inches, 11

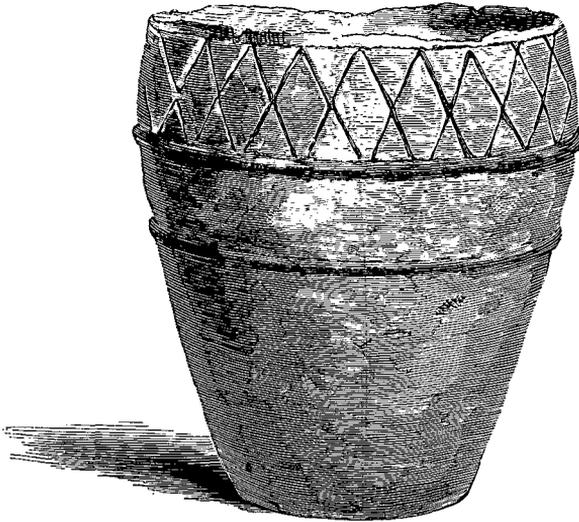


Fig. 7. Urn from Hill of Tuack.

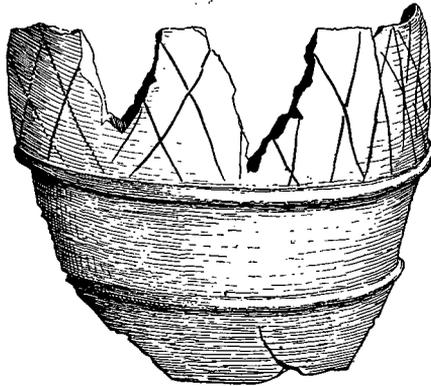


Fig. 7A. Portion of Cinerary Urn found at Hill of Tuack, Kintore.

across the mouth, 14 at bulge, and 5 at the base. All the urns were embedded in small round pits sunk in the subsoil, and the stones which covered them were about 18 inches beneath the surface. Disposed around the central flat stone were four pits of small size, from 18 to 24 inches in depth, three of which contained burnt bones.

By means of this one careful investigation, we are presented, therefore, with the important result that in so small an area as that comprised within the six Standing Stones of this circle there were found no fewer than eight cinerary deposits.

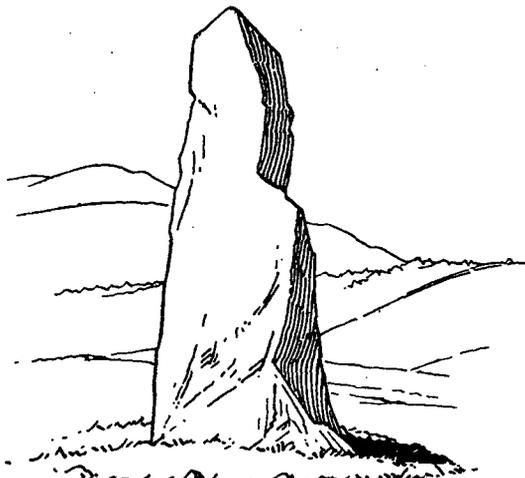


Fig. 8. The Lang Stane of Craigearn.

2. *The Lang Stane o' Craigearn*, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of the last site, stands in an old pasture field, 300 feet above sea-level, just north of a plantation on Kaim Hill, which is half a mile north of Craigearn. Kemnay station is the nearest access to it. The little plateau on which this very tall stone stands (see fig. 8) is said to have been the site of a circle of which this stone is the only surviving member. The Lang Stane is composed of close-grained light grey granite with veins of

white quartz, and measures 11 feet 6 inches in height. Its basal girth is upwards of 10 feet.

3. *Standing Stones, Castle Fraser.*—In a field S.S.W. of the Lang Stane, and close to the road on the west of the Castle, 400 feet above sea-level, the nearest farm-house being West Mains, are two Standing

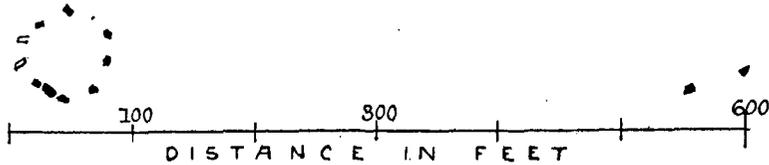


Fig. 9. Plan of Stone Circle and the two Standing Stones at Castle Fraser.

Stones whose distance from and relation to the circle next to be described will be understood by referring to the general plan of these two sites (fig. 9), while the view (fig. 10) shows the two isolated monoliths as seen from the west. The stones stand nearly 7 feet above ground, and their girths at the base are 12 feet 9 inches and 8 feet 9 inches respectively,

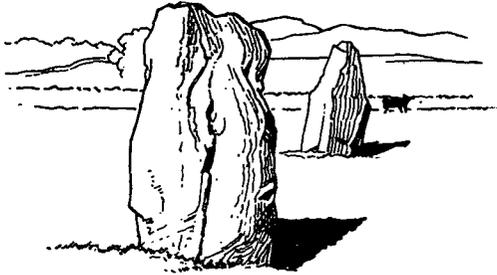


Fig. 10. Standing Stones, Castle Fraser.

the space between their nearest angles measuring 43 feet 7 inches. Both stones are of grey granite.

4. *Castle Fraser Circle, or Balgorkar.*—This fine group, on ground never till last year disturbed by the plough, stood, on the day of our

visit, more than half hidden in waving corn, which, from the surveyor's point of view, was a somewhat serious hindrance. Having gained permission, however, to go where we listed, the most important measures

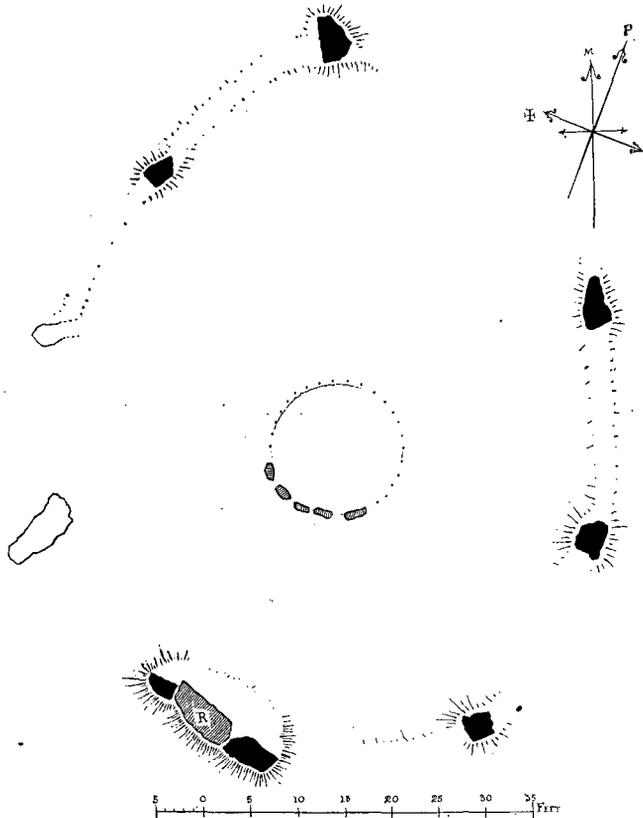


Fig. 11. Balgorkar, Castle Fraser.

were made. Originally, there were here eleven stones, of which seven now remain upright, inclusive of the group at the Recumbent Stone (see fig. 11).

Distances between the stones, centre to centre.

From Stone	I. to II.,	.	.	21 feet 0 inches
"	"	II. "	III.,	21 " 0 "
"	"	III. "	IV.,	22 " 8 "
"	"	IV. "	VI.,	39 " 6 "
"	"	VI. "	VII.,	23 " 6 "
"	"	VII. "	VII.,	22 " 9 "
"	"	VII. to East Pillar	.	22 " 9 "
"	"	The Group	.	14 " 10 "
"	"	West Pillar to I.	.	19 " 0 "

This shows that No. V. is lost, and gives a total circumference of 206 feet 9 inches.

In his notice of this site, Mr Dalrymple states that there was a small circle in the centre 13 feet in diameter. It consisted of smallish stones set close to each other, sunk down to the subsoil and showing above ground a few inches only. Their flat sides faced the centre of the circle. The whole area of the great circle was paved with boulders at a depth of 6 inches below the surface. The inner circle contained, beneath this pavement, black mould and charcoal mixed with incinerated bones. No bones were found outside of the inner circle, the soil there being sandy loam mixed with charcoal everywhere down to the subsoil. A heap of earth $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high lay against the inner side of the Recumbent Stone and its pillars. Beneath this was a rude pavement of small boulders, enclosed and intersected by lines of larger ones; and at a point near the centre of the face of the Recumbent Stone, there was a deposit of black mould covered by a small flat stone placed horizontally. Below the pavement, charcoal mingled with a black mould down to the subsoil. This black mould and charcoal were found under several of the stones composing the circle, and within it, towards the S.E. side, were found two deposits of black mould mixed with fragments of urns of thick and coarse paste.

Heights of the stones:—

- Stone I. (fallen), 8 feet 3 inches long ; grey granite.
 „ II. „ complete length unascertained, as one end runs
 into the ground.
 „ III. 5 feet, pointed ; grey granite.
 „ IV. (fallen), 5 feet long ; „
 „ V. (removed).
 „ VI. 5 feet 0 inches ; reddish granite.
 „ VII. 4 „ 9 „ slopes inwards ; of a dark red granite
 „ VIII. 6 „ 6 „ pointed ; grey granite.

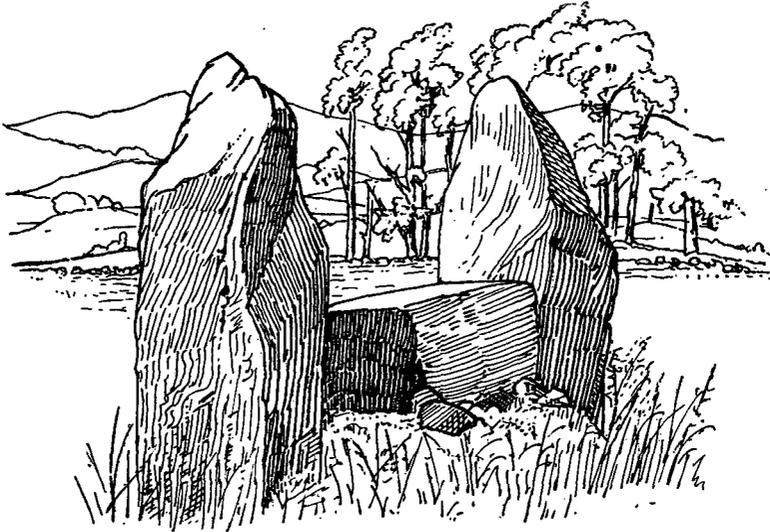


Fig. 11A. Balgorkar, Recumbent Stone and Pillars.

The two pillars and the Recumbent Stone (fig. 11A) are all of very fine-grained granite veined with white quartz.

The East Pillar is on the inside 6 feet 6 inches, on the outside 8 feet 4 inches ; and the West Pillar 6 feet 5 inches and 8 feet at the same points.

The Recumbent Stone, which is very square, smooth-sided, and flat-topped, and quite vertically set, measures 4 feet on its outer face, but only 2 feet 2 inches on its inner side, down, that is to say, to the heap of boulders, many of which have been quite recently placed there. Weight, 6 tons 5 cwts.

The diameters of this circle are 76 feet by 63 feet.

The old name of the farm on which this circle stands was Balgorkar ; and under that name the circle is described by Logan¹ and shown in a good ground plan and view. For a considerable time I was in doubt as to the locality of Balgorkar. On applying to Mr Frank Dey, of the Gordon Arms, Inverurie, I was most kindly informed, through his personal enquiries, that the name Balgorkar was thirty years ago changed to that of West Mains. Logan notes also, but does not show on his



Fig. 12. Balgorkar, or Castle Fraser, Circle. View from the North.

plan, the two tall Standing Stones to the east of the circle. His plan shows, further, the small central circular mound and a semi-circular one in front of the Recumbent Stone, as described by Mr Dalrymple.

From subsequent information received through Mr A. W. Simpson, of Monymusk, who furnished a sketch (see fig. 12) of this circle, we learn that, at a distance of 24 feet inwards from the Recumbent Stone, there are still *in situ* five of the low-set stones of the inner circle, and that the whole area is a mound enclosed by a ridge.

5. *Deerpark, Monymusk*, a quarter of a mile north of Monymusk Church, between the main road and the River Don, and on the north bank of the Parsonage Burn, at the 300-foot contour-line. The figure of this circle on the O.M. is a fair example of the inaccuracy with which too

¹ *Archæologia*, vol. xxii. p. 201.

many of these structures are there laid down. It is drawn as a true circle of four stones. Now, whatever number of stones there may have been on the circumference, the main feature of this circle is the position near the centre of a prominent monolith, squarish, massive, and over 4 feet in height. In its present condition (see fig. 13) only two other stones remain upright, while a third on the east lies flush with the ground. The central stone is of roughly granulated reddish granite; the two others are, in the quarrymen's vernacular, "heathens."

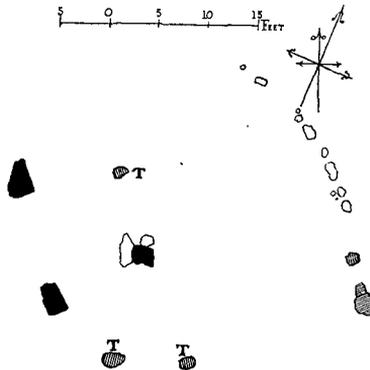


Fig. 13. Circle in the Deer Park, Monymusk. Ground Plan.

The area between the stones is about 10 inches higher than the level of the field; but this runs out to but a very few inches of difference on the north and eastern margin, where a vague circumference can be made out. The small set stones T, from 6 to 9 inches above the surface, may be remnants of a setting similar to the type found in so many of the circles. The larger stone, or slab, at the extreme east is level with the ground. A steep and deepish glen, formed by the stream now called the Parsonage Burn, cuts off the ground on the south. The circle could not have extended in that direction. But I could obtain no local tradition as to its former state. And, in its present condition, the carefullest scrutiny fails to adjust its parts into any of the varieties of stone circle met with in the district.

A view of these three stones is given in my drawing (fig. 14).

5A. *Nether Coullie*.—After referring to the circle on Whitehill, Rev. W. M. MacPherson¹ states that “another stood on what is now the farm of Nether Coullie, on the north side of the river—one upright stone yet remaining, others having been removed.”

On further information received, I learned that, up to about the date of 1860, there stood here a circle of nine stones surrounding a tenth, which is now the sole remnant. The diameter is vaguely stated as between 60 and 90 feet. The height of the remaining stone is about 8 feet 9 inches, and its precise position is in the second field N.W. of the farm-house, about 140 yards N. of the farm-road, here running east and west.

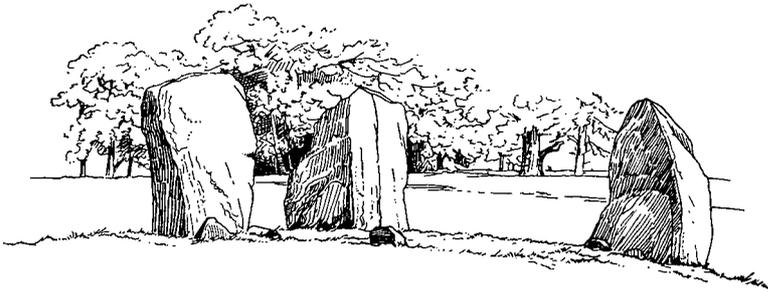


Fig. 14. Remains of Circle in the Deer Park, Monymusk.

6. *Whitehill, Monymusk*.—This fine specimen, scarcely known even to local residents, merits particular notice, mainly on account of the interesting details of interior structure which the seclusion of its site (in a dense fir wood remote from ordinary roads) has doubtless tended to preserve. The site is 900 feet above sea-level, between Green Hill and Tillyfourie Hill; and it is distant in a south-westerly direction 3 miles from the small circle last described. On the O.M. it is incorrectly shown as a circle of six stones.

The first and most novel feature that arrests the eye is that a

¹ *The Church and Priory of Monymusk*, pp. 10, 11.

veritable 'rampart' is carried completely round at some distance within the line of the few remaining upright stones (fig. 15), and that it is, in parts at any rate, almost on the same level as the top of the Recumbent Stone.¹ This comes well out in the section.

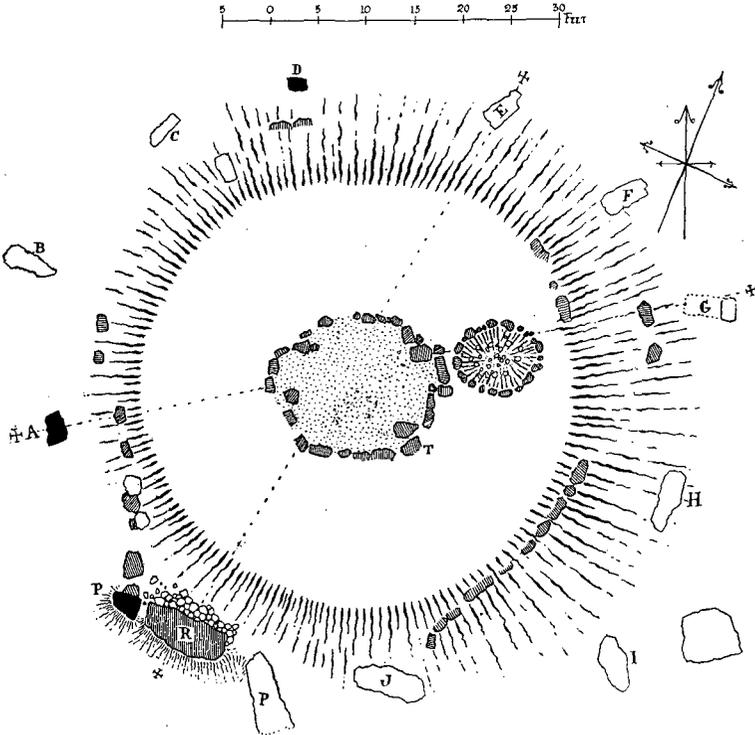


Fig. 15. Whitehill, Monymusk. Ground Plan.

The next piece of structure, well-marked, is the circular line of earthen blocks supporting the greater bulk of this stony 'rampart.' Lastly, when investigation becomes narrowed towards the interior of the circle,

¹ The examples at Garrol Wood and Raes o' Clune in Durris suggested this. See *Proc.*, vol. xxxiv. pp. 154, 158.

there is displayed a quite unusual amount of stone-setting of a most varied and interesting nature. Having paid two visits to this site and gone into its details with special carefulness, the resultant ground plan (fig. 15) will, I apprehend, be a just record of a somewhat complicated and possibly a novel variety of the type. The very fact, however, of there being so much central setting visible argues much interference (on the part, probably, of inexperienced excavators) with this site; and this is borne out by noticing that nine of the standing stones out of the original thirteen are now prostrate, most of them having evidently long been in this position—one, indeed, being split in two.

Taking the stones in the usual order, from the south, the heights and lengths are:—

Stone	I.	.	.	5 feet 2 inches.
„	II. (fallen)	.	.	5 „ 10 „ long.
„	III. („ and broken).			
„	IV.	.	.	4 „ 5 „
„	V. (fallen and broken).			
„	VI.	„	.	4 „ 8 „ long.
„	VII. (partly fallen)			5 „ 4 „
„	VIII.	„		5 „ 6 „
„	IX.	„		6 „ 1 „
„	X.	„		7 „ 10 „

The West Pillar stands 6 feet inside and 7 feet 3 inches outside. The East Pillar is fallen. It measures 8 feet 6 inches in length.

The Recumbent Stone is 2 feet 6 inches high inside, and 3 feet 10 inches outside. The weight of this stone is over 7 tons. It is a dark grey 'heathen' stone veined with white quartz. Its base is broad, but its top remarkably narrow, rough, and undulating. On the inside, its base rests upon a rough pavement of boulders which extend in irregular slopes upwards into the body of the 'rampart.' A few feet's space in front of the Recumbent Stone a number of these boulders have been removed, but though the searcher after mysteries dug to a depth of three

feet or more, he did not apparently reveal any interesting structure, for the boulders continue downwards. The same observation applies to the small circular pit of boulders to the east of the central setting.

All the standing and fallen pillar-stones of the main circumference are of the reddish porphyritic rock. They are all set well outside the base of the stony ridge, and at about 10 feet from the outer edge of its crest. The ridge, or 'rampart' (fig. 16), has a mean breadth of 12 feet, nearly flat and very compact. On its inward edge are set the thinner, but still heavy, slabs forming the central setting. Of these, the large one on the S.E. arc (marked T on ground plan) is the highest, measuring 2 feet above the general level of the interior. Next, the one to the south in the group of three nearly equal-sized stones on the west arc is the

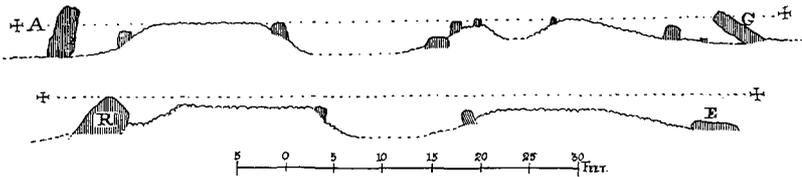


Fig. 16. Whitehill. Sectional Views.

tallest: it measures 1 foot 8 inches above ground. The next in point of height is that on the south arc, and the smaller of the two contiguous slabs on the east—both 1 foot 6 inches. The rest of the stones vary from 10 inches to 14 above the ground, into which they are all set with great solidity and firmness. Several on the west and north-west lean over inwards. The large stone, T, and the five nearest it in line are conspicuously vertical. The diameters of this central setting taken within the stones are 16 feet by 13 feet 6 inches, and the distance from its south stone to the Recumbent Stone is 21 feet. In the view of it (fig. 17) with its one pillar there also may be seen the one upright stone of the west side and four of the bounding stones of the 'rampart.'

The distances between the stones are :—

Stone	A	to	B	.	.	.	18 feet 3 inches.
"	B	"	C	.	.	.	20 " 0 "
"	C	"	D	.	.	.	14 " 0 "
"	D	"	E	.	.	.	22 " 6 "
"	E	"	F	.	.	.	15 " 6 "
"	F	"	G	.	.	.	14 " 3 "
"	G	"	H	.	.	.	20 " 6 "
"	H	"	I	.	.	.	18 " 0 "
"	I	"	J	.	.	.	23 " 9 "
From J	to the fallen East Pillar						13 " 0 "
"	the East Pillar to West Pillar						17 " 0 "



Fig. 17. Whitehill, Monymusk. Recumbent Stone, etc.

and from the West Pillar to centre of Stone A 20 feet ; giving a circumference of 216 feet 9 inches.

This circle is recorded by John Stuart,¹ from whose brief account we gain the one additional and important fact that the central portion, the space of 15 feet diameter in my plan, was in 1853 a low "rampart" of stones, "guarded by large flat stones set endwise, and enclosing an

¹ *Proceedings*, vol. i. p. 141.

open space 9 feet in diameter, forming the centre of the circle, which is hollowed out and free from stones of any kind." He also notes that at the above date "most of the stones are thrown down on the ground."

In a note-book of 1862, Sir Arthur Mitchell has measurements and a sketch of some of the features of this circle, as well as of about a dozen others possessing a Recumbent Stone, this important feature having been, at that comparatively early date, definitely recognised by him as typical of many Aberdeenshire circles.

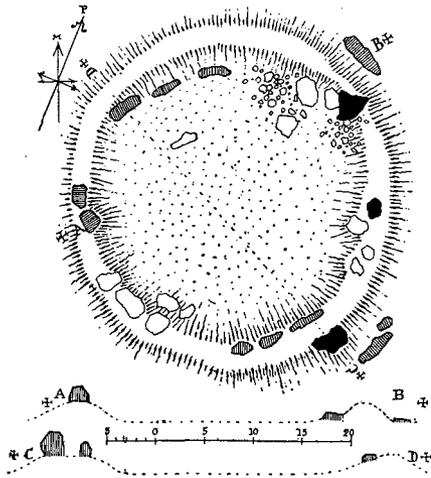


Fig. 18. Greystone, near Alford.

We pass over several miles before reaching the next site, which is near Ardgathen Smithy, at

7. *Greystone*, called The Auld Kirk, a bare mile west of Alford. Here, again, we stand amid the ruins only of what once was a compactly arranged group of stones. The confusion caused by man's intermeddling with the stones is not lessened by the presence of some very bulky trees, which render measurement difficult and the taking of a view impossible.

The circle is a small one, only 33 feet in diameter. Its interior is now quite flat and enclosed by a rounded ridge, which, on the outside, has been shaped at some points into a dike. (See plan and sections, fig. 18.) So far as it is feasible, I interpret these remains as those of a triple-concentric circle, containing, first, an inner circle of long and rather narrow blocks set on edge, averaging about 1 foot 7 inches in height, at a radius of 14 feet—eight of these are *in situ*; next, broad and massive stones, from 2 feet 6 inches to nearly 3 feet high (shown black on the plan), three of which remain; and, lastly, an outermost ring of long and rather narrow stones set on what originally was the true base of the ridge. Only two of these now remain.¹ The five stones on the south (left on the plan in outline) appeared to me to be not earth-fast. Three others near the north and a few more smaller pieces must be placed in the same category. There are no indications of a cist in this circle; nor could I, upon enquiry at the farm, obtain any clue to the date of its disturbance, or indeed any information whatever concerning it. It is curious to note that on the O.M. this circle is shown as one of five large stones each surrounded by a ring of small stones. The site is about 500 feet above the level of the sea.

8. *Druidsfield*.—Going to the little hamlet of Mountgarrie,² north of Alford, as you approach the bridge over the Don, a quarter of a mile up the slope to the right, on the north bank of the river, stand two great stones, striking at once by their size and their solitariness. These are now the sole remnants of a fine circle well known, not so many years ago, to the local residents. The site is the gentle slope of a hill wooded on the summit and 500 feet above sea-level. From my view (fig. 19) it will be understood how natural the suggestion seemed that these two conspicuous grey granite pillars had once flanked a Recumbent Stone of suitable proportions; and, on afterwards communicating with Mr Adam Moir, the tenant of Druidsfield, it was pleasant

¹ Structurally, it may be compared with the Cairnwell Circle, No. 3 in the Report for 1899.

² Spelt Mongarry in the *New Stat. Acct.*

to find the conjecture certified. Mr Moir wrote:—"There was a stone which lay between the two Standing Stones. I am certain of that. I do not remember ever hearing how many stones more were in the circle. It is quite true that the stone which lay on its side between the two Standing Stones was removed and put into the bank of the Don; and it remains there yet; it was never replaced."

This last affirmation was elicited in reply to my having quoted a story to the effect that, at the time of the removal of the Recumbent Stone in 1830, the Laird ordered its replacement in the circle. The further



Fig. 19. Remains of Circle at Druidsfield.

off stone in the view is to the east of the other: it girths at the base 5 feet 9 inches and stands 6 feet high. A low-set, squarish stone lies on its south side. The Western Pillar is 6 feet 5 inches in height, and its four sides at the ground are all nearly equal in breadth, giving a girth of 10 feet 3 inches. The distance between their two nearest angles is 14 feet 8 inches.

8A. *Crookmore, Tullynessle*.—This is partially described by Stuart, and referred to by Wilson¹ in his account of certain stone cups, at that date pedantically called by antiquarian writers “Druidical Pateræ.”

The diameter of the circle is not given,² nor is the number of its standing stones; but they stood on a circular mound, and from this, in a S.E. direction,³ a paved road, about 12 feet in breadth, was discovered extending about 500 yards. The stone cups, illustrations of which accompany the paper, were found under a pavement to the west of the circle. There is no trace of the circle now, nor was there even at the time of the Ordnance Survey.

9. *Old Keig*.—As long ago as 1692, Rev. Dr James Garden, in concluding a letter to Mr John Aubrey,⁴ in which he describes several Aberdeenshire stone circles, wrote thus:—“I have only one thing more to add, which was written to me a few days since from the country; viz., that some persons who are yet alive declare that, many years since, they did see ashes of some burnt matter digged out of the bottom of a little circle, set about with stones standing close together, in the center of one of these monuments which is yet standing near the Church of Keig, in the shire of Aberdeen.”

As the remains of “the monument” on the farm of Old Keig are the nearest to Keig Church, I presume these to be all that is now left of what, judging by certain features presently to be described, must have been a peculiarly striking example of stone circle.⁵ The site is about 600 feet above sea-level. The object first to arrest the eye is the Recumbent Stone itself, both on account of its enormous proportions and the extreme squareness of its sides, the top and the outside in particular. (See the plan, fig. 20, and the view, fig. 21.) Close to it on the interior

¹ *Proceedings*, vol. i. p. 116.

² In the *New Stat. Account* it is given as “about 50 feet,” and it is there stated that the upright stones, which were mostly gone, stood on this circular mound.

³ The O.M. shows it running north-east.

⁴ See *Archæologia*, i. 342.

⁵ This is one of about a score of circles with Recumbent Stone noted and sketched in 1862 by Dr (now Sir) Arthur Mitchell.

lie two great fragments, split off probably by frost, as there were no "jumper holes" visible. When the stone was unbroken, its dimensions must have been:—extreme length, 18 feet, breadth from 4 feet 2 inches to 4 feet 6 inches, height on the inside 4 feet 4 inches, on the outside 6 feet, and the breadth of the portion now touching the ground at the level of the interior nearly 6 feet. By computing these dimensions, we ascertain the probable weight of this huge block of diorite to be at least 30 tons, by far the heaviest Recumbent Stone yet measured. It is set vertically upon a bedding of boulders which extends

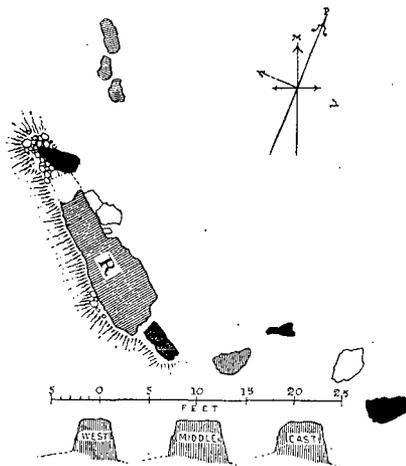


Fig. 20. Old Keig. Ground Plan.

somewhat further than usual on the outside, and gives support also to the base of the two very massive porphyritic pillars.

The main axis of this stone is also somewhat unusual, being N.W. 10 degs., precisely the direction of the Recumbent Stone at Hatton of Ardoyne, presently to be described.

Of the interior of the circle (fig. 22) little need be said. It is entirely and very thickly overgrown with fine grasses, so that no stonework or even small stones are traceable. No vestige of the "hollow or trench

round the circle" now remains, which was observed by the writer of the *Statistical Account*, and quoted to me by Sir Arthur Mitchell as



Fig. 21. Old Keig. Recumbent Stone and Pillars, from outside.

if extant at the date of his visit, and shown along with a small central cairn in the plan drawn by Logan¹ before the year 1827, when his paper

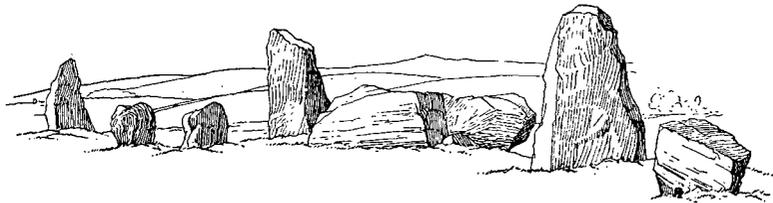


Fig. 22. Old Keig. Remains of the Circle as seen from interior.

¹ *Archæologia*, xxii., pl. xxiii., p. 200.

on Scottish Stone Circles was communicated to Lord Aberdeen, then President of the Society of Antiquaries of London.¹

10. *Cothiemuir Wood*, on the farm of Auchnagathel, at about

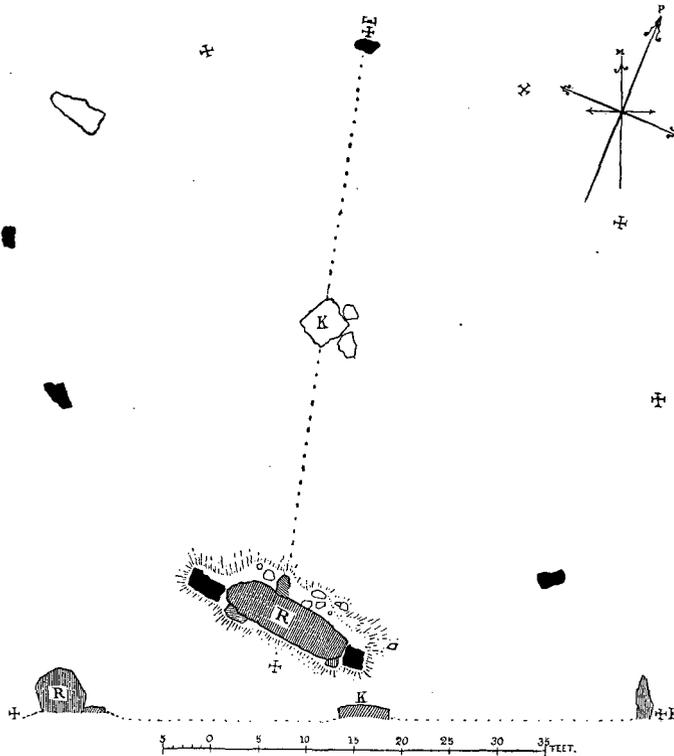


Fig. 23. Cothiemuir Wood. Ground Plan.

500 feet above sea-level, and half a mile N.W. of Castle Forbes. Unlike many of the circles, this one, for some reason at present unknown to me, enjoys an extended reputation and is the centre of attraction to

¹ In Miss Maclagan's *Hill-Forts, etc.*, this circle is shown on pl. xxvii. as one of three large concentric rings of stones, leaving a very wide empty space within.

large numbers of the residents in the locality on a certain day or days in autumn. At various and somewhat distant places, when making enquiries regarding the site we were then directly in search of, we were questioned as to whether we had seen Cothiemuir Circle or the Cothiemuir Stanes; and the speakers evidently meant us to be impressed with the idea that, if Cothiemuir Circle were passed over, a slur would be cast upon that portion of the county of Aberdeen.

In common with several of the woodland sites, Cothiemuir is assuredly a pleasant, secluded spot; but, with the exception of one feature, its merits as an archæological relic do not rank high in proportion to its popularity. That one feature (fig. 23) is the existence of a central cist-cover, not now, however, resting on its original supports. The elegance and height of its two pillars taken in contrast with the unwieldy rounded bulk of the Recumbent Stone are also very striking. The main diameters are 70 feet 6 inches nearly east and west by 62 feet in a line at right angles to the centre of the Recumbent Stone. There are seven stones still *in situ*, erect; one on the north has fallen, thus leaving spaces for four others, which would have completed a circle of twelve stones including the Recumbent Stone group.

The heights of the stones are:—

Stone	I.	.	.	.	6 feet 9 inches; red granite.
„	II.	.	.	.	4 „ 4 „
„	III.	.	.	.	5 „ 8 „ in length (fallen).
„	IV.	.	.	.	(Awaiting.)
„	V.	.	.	.	4 feet 5 inches; grey granite.
„	VI., VII., and VIII.	.	.	.	(Awaiting.)
„	IX.	.	.	.	5 feet 7 inches

The East Pillar stands 9 feet 2 inches in height, the West 9 feet; the former square at the summit, the latter sharply pointed.

Both are of the rough reddish granite. The massive Recumbent Stone is 13 feet 6 inches long, 4 feet wide, and has a mean height of 4 feet

6 inches (fig. 24). This stone seemed to be of a very hard, close-grained, darkish "whinstone," doubtless of great compactness and weight. Its contour is so rounded and, as it were, unshapely, that it is difficult to assert whether the outward lean of the external slope is due to shifting or merely to its shape. However that may be, there is a detail regarding its setting which is of some interest. Near its western end is a good-sized block of granite of about 2 feet square (so far as visible),



Fig. 24. Cothiemuir Wood. Recumbent Stone and Pillars from the East.

upon which a good portion of the end of the Recumbent Stone is resting. Further on in the survey other cases of this will be noticed.

The weight of the Recumbent Stone is about 20 tons. The spaces between the stones, centre to centre, are 25 feet, 18 feet, 15 feet 4 inches, 15 feet 4 inches, 17 feet, 17 feet 4 inches, 19 feet, 22 feet, 22 feet, and 18 feet; these being taken through the probable sites of stones now awaiting. The circumference thus obtained is 189 feet.

In the notes appended to a ground plan, signed James Rait and

dated 1868, it is stated that "the whole area enclosed by the circle is elevated, apparently about 12 to 18 inches, above the open ground, the ring in which the stones are erected being the most elevated part."

11. *Chapel o' Sink*.—Under this strange name, and at a point 4 miles W.S.W. of Inverurie, on the farm of Westerton, there is shown on the six-inch O.M. a circle of several stones. After long and diligent searching, however, through the Western Wood, I regret to have to report that no circular stone-setting of any description now exists here. In its stead, we found a long oblong enclosure formed by a very low and ruined wall, moss-grown and fern-hidden, measuring some 70 feet by 30 feet. As the tenant on Westerton, resident there for over twenty-five years, positively averred that he had never seen a stone circle in the wood, its disappearance must be accounted for

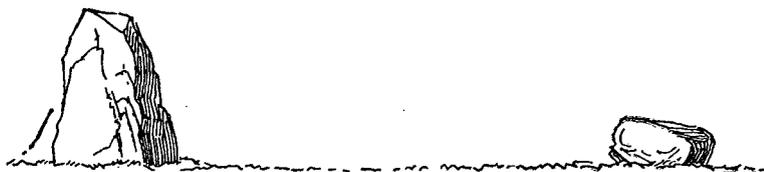


Fig. 25. Remains of Circle at Cairnhall, Kintore.

prior to 1875 and later than 1860, when the map was constructed. The origin of the name *Chapel o' Sink* is said to be that in early days an attempt was made to build a chapel within the stone circle, but that each night the walls sunk out of sight, and the building begun anew every morning, till eventually the unlucky work was abandoned in despair.

12. *Cairnhall, Kintore*.—The remains here are close to the house on its south, and on the west of the road to Inverurie. Two stones only remain, the taller one 4 feet 10 inches in height, almost due west of and 48 feet distant from the other, which is prostrate, 20 inches or so thick, and 5 feet in length. The west stone girths about 7 feet at its thickest and is of syenitic rock (see fig. 25). This site, at over

200 feet above sea-level, is distant from Kintore 1 mile, and from Inverurie $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

13. *Fularton*.—Distant from the last only three-quarters of a mile, and at about the same level, this site, once explored with interesting results, consists now of but a low central mound (see fig. 26), a vaguely-defined ditch, and an equally vague enclosing ridge, upon which, on the S.W., stands one solitary stone, rather over 6 feet in height measured to the ground exterior to the circle. Even at the date of Mr Dalrymple's examination, there were only three stones standing; but it is stated¹ that from the positions of these it was computed that seven was the original number in the circle. In the centre was a circular space immediately under the surface, 9 feet in diameter, marked by fire; and

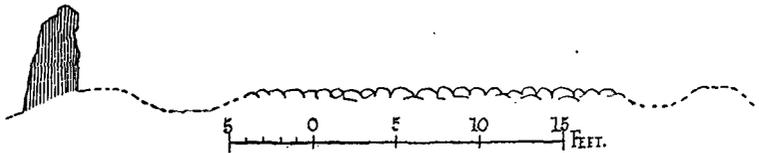


Fig. 26. Remains of Circle at Fularton, Kintore.

in the centre of this was a grave, 5 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 2 feet 3 inches deep (1 foot being into the subsoil). In this grave lay the skull and other bones of an unburnt skeleton. The grave lay east and west, and at the east end were fragments of an urn and incinerated bones.

Around this central grave, in seven places, there were found deposits, some of which were protected by small stones built round them like circular cists, as at Crichtie, and with flat stones above and below. In some of these were fragments of urns, and in small cists there were also fragments of urns found. In all the seven deposits, however, incinerated bones were found.

Several fragments of these urns and some of the bones are preserved

¹ *Scotland in Pagan Times: Bronze Age*, p. 108.

in the Museum. Of the pottery, it is only possible to say that it is of the usual well-known type belonging to the Bronze Age.

14. *Broomend o' Crichie, Kintore*.—This circle, which externally presents features well-nigh unique among the circles of the county, also afforded to the investigators, associated with Mr Dalrymple, archæological results perhaps the most remarkable put on record in connection with

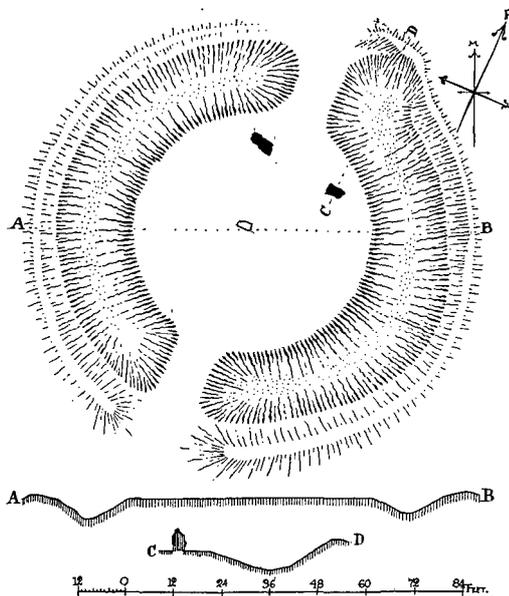


Fig. 27. Broomend of Crichie, Kintore. Ground Plan.

such remains. The site is on a broad sandy level a quarter of a mile west of the River Don, and three-quarters of a mile south of Inverurie Bridge, and at about the level of 200 feet above the sea.

The outstanding feature, at once arresting observation, is the wide and deep moat surrounding the platform (see fig. 27).¹ This moat is

¹ This circle is here shown on the scale of 48 feet to 1 inch.

bisected by a roadway on the same level as the platform running northwards, and being about 11 feet broad. Outside the moat, which varies in depth below the platform from 3 feet 6 inches to over 5 feet, the remains of a rampart are still traceable all round the circumference. At the north arc this rampart assumes conspicuous proportions; and even at the present date its crest at one point rises to a height of almost 8 feet above the bottom of the moat. On the platform there now stand three massive stones; but only the two shown black on the ground plan (fig. 27) belong to the circle. The setting of these two stones is somewhat peculiar; their broader sides do not fully and squarely face the centre of the circle. In all the other circles, especially the larger examples, the stones are carefully set with their broad faces looking towards the centre. The third (shown in outline) is a sculptured stone. It is figured by Stuart,¹ and its original site was a short distance eastward from the circle. "It was removed and set up in the area of the circle shortly after the operations described [*i.e.*, the excavation conducted by Mr Dalrymple] for its better preservation."²

There is now standing, 30 or 40 yards to the south of the circle, a tall and massive monolith; this, in his description of Crichton, Mr Dalrymple states to be one of the few remaining stones of a former "double row or avenue of monoliths, almost all, unfortunately, now removed." His description, from which I now proceed to quote, was published in 1884; but the excavation of the circle had been carried out *circa* 1857-1860.

"The circle consisted of six stones round the outer circumference with a seventh in the centre.³ All but two had been taken away before our digging took place, but I had the benefit of the experience of a friend, who remembered them *in situ*, and the marks of where they had stood were still plain (see fig. 28). The stone, which is marked No. 1 in the ground plan, is one of these still *in situ*, and is a singularly rude block,

¹ *Sculptured Stones*, vol. i. pl. x.

² *Proceedings*, vol. xviii. p. 323.

³ For two circles in the stowarty of Kirkcudbright with central monoliths, see *Proceedings*, vol. xxix. p. 316.

broad and squat in its shapelessness, and not above 5 feet in height. On digging at its base, south-west side, 18 inches from it, was found,

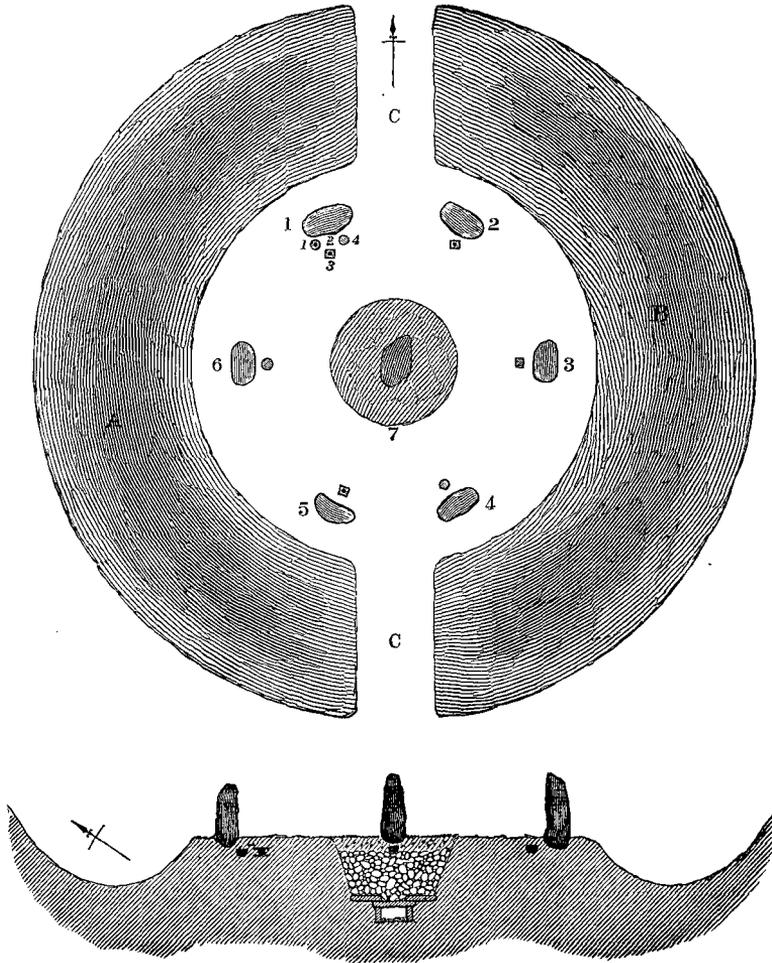


Fig. 28. Ground Plan and Section of Circle at Broomend of Crichtie.

embedded in clay, (1) a small circular cist (so to call it), 1 foot deep and 9 inches across, formed of slips of stones, evidently broken for the purpose,

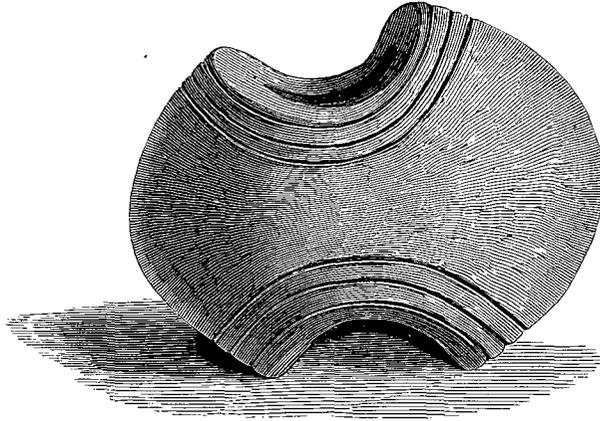


Fig. 29. Stone Hammer found in the Circle at Broomend.

and arranged so as to taper to the bottom, and filled with calcined bones. Close to this was (2) a stone hammer (fig. 29), perforated for the handle

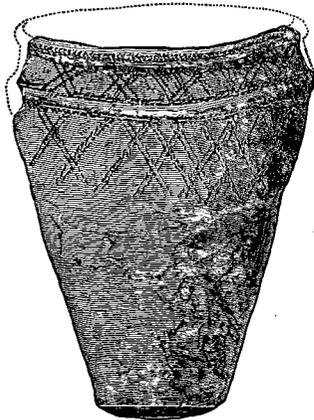


Fig. 30. Urn found at Broomend.

and ornamented with three incised lines round the hollowed parts of the edge, now in this Museum. A little outward from this, farther south, was (3) an urn (fig. 30) full of calcined bones, placed mouth downwards on a small flat stone, a similar stone being placed above it. South-east of the stone, still only 18 inches from it, was (4) a deposit of calcined bones unenclosed in either urn or stones.

“At the south side of stone No. 2 was found an inverted urn (fig. 31) full of calcined bones, a flat stone above and below. At No. 3, south-west side,

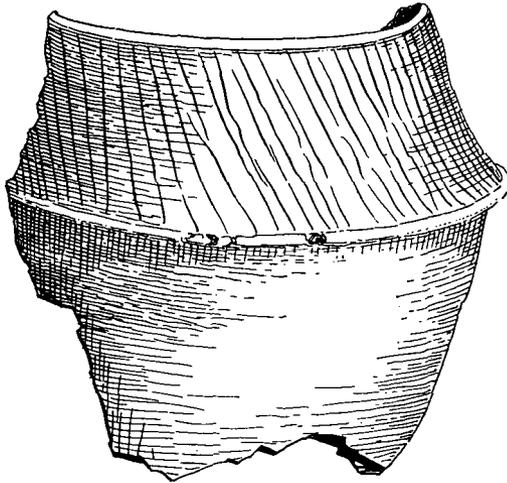


Fig. 31. Portion of Cinerary Urn found at Broomend of Crichtie, Kintore.

was a small square cist, 11 inches by 9 and 16 inches deep, filled with bones of the same character, a flat stone above and below. At No. 4, N.W. of the stone, was a deposit of burnt matter and bone dust in a small round pit, without urn or cist. At No. 5, N.E. side of stone, an urn placed like the others, mouth downwards, and built round with slips of stone to protect it, filled with the same sort of bones, and with the usual flat stones above and below. At No. 6, east side of stone, a deposit of burnt matter, enclosed.

“At No. 7, under where the central monolith had stood, was, first, a deposit of burnt matter, about 18 inches below the surface, resting on the centre of the top of what may be called an underground cairn of small boulder stones extending $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in depth, filling a hole 15 feet in diameter at top narrowing to 10 feet below, where it rested on a pavement of heavy slabs, laid with considerable care. Two of these overlapped the ends of another, which was found to cover a cist containing the remains of a human skeleton, of which the skull and leg-bones were tolerably entire, and along with which, about the centre of the cist, lay a quantity of incinerated human bones, but no urn or implement of any kind.”

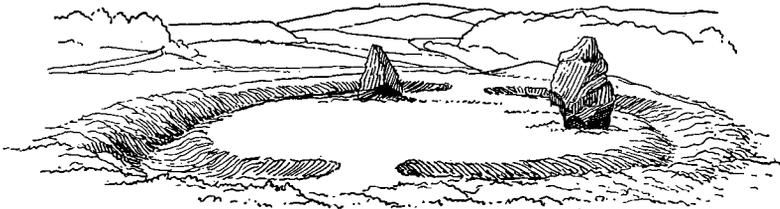


Fig. 32. Broomend of Crichie, Kintore. View from the South.

Mr Dalrymple adds that the “calcined bones were mixed, both human and animal, many of them small, possibly of birds. In the urn first found was a lower jaw, small and delicate, apparently that of a woman or young person.”¹

A view of the remains of this circle is shown in fig. 32.

Before quitting the immediate vicinity of Crichie, it is right to mention that the O.M. prints the name “Stone Circle, Remains of,” at three sites near Ardtannies and Corsman Hill. But I cannot include these, even as sites, in my survey, because from the account given of them by Davidson² it seems fairer to conclude that these struc-

¹ For an important commentary upon the facts disclosed by the investigation of these interments, see *Scotland in Pagan Times: The Age of Bronze*, p. 97, being Dr J. Anderson's second Rhind Lecture for 1886.

² *Inverurie and the Garioch*, p. 3.

tures were, in his day, the mound-remnants of cairns rather than the vestiges of true stone circles.

15. *Auchquorthies, Manar*.—Were all the stone circles of even one district in the same excellent state of preservation as this noble specimen, the work of the investigator would gain both in facility and interest, and the result to archæology would be of supreme importance. Here we have no doubts as to the former positions of the stately blocks; for all are upright and stand steadfast upon a low ridge of small boulders; here there is no timber to tantalise, no shrubs to intervene, for the whole enclosure is open to the sun, and to the rain-clouds as they sweep down from Bennachie. And here no damage from cattle is possible, for a strong dyke surrounds the circle, while a thick fir-wood, a score of yards away, breaks the force of the western blast. In addition to such an environment which Auchquorthies shares partly in common with other sites, this circle possesses special features, which, at this stage of our survey at any rate, are novel. The most salient is shown, slightly, in the general view (fig. 34), but on a large scale in the two views of the Recumbent Stone, in which (figs. 33, 36) there are seen two inward-projecting stones of conspicuous proportions.¹ Between these is a third much lower, but extending completely back to the Recumbent Stone. The exact distance of the projection of these stones, and their relative heights may be examined in the ground plan (fig. 35) and its accompanying small section. These three stones *in situ* form a feature new to our investigation, although at Dyce² there were indications of some such arrangement having probably existed.

Leaving this group at present undescribed, I append first the distances, centre to centre, between the stones, of which there are twelve in all.

¹ In a sketch by Mr C. E. Dalrymple, an almost similar arrangement is shown to exist in the circle at Ardlair, in Kennethmont parish. Dr Anderson figures this in *Scotland in Pagan Times: The Age of Bronze*, p. 110.

² No. 22 in the former Survey.



Fig. 33. Auchquorthies. Front View of Recumbent Stone Group.

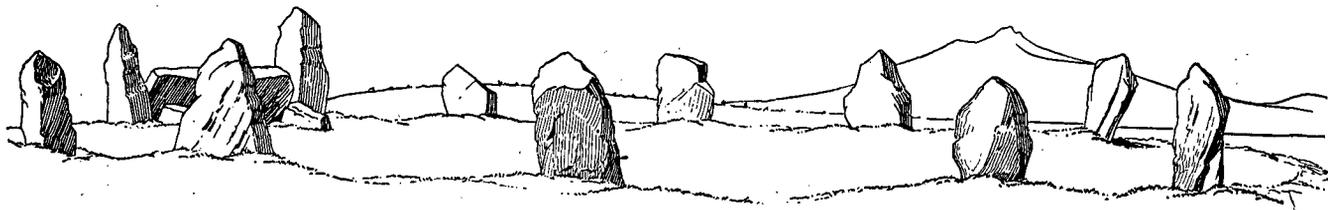


Fig. 34. Auchquorthies Circle, Manár. -- View from the North-East.

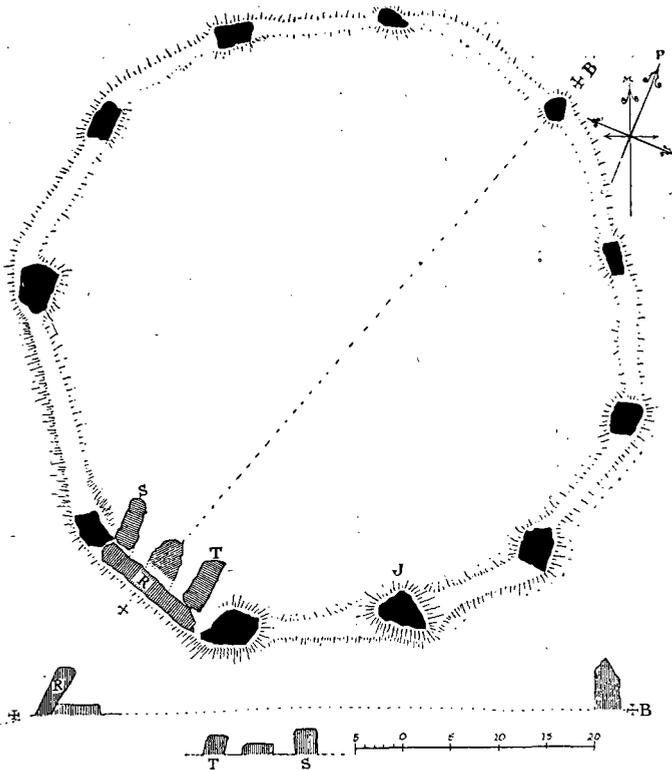


Fig 35. Auchquorthies, Manár. Ground Plan.

From Stone	I.	to Stone	II.	is	19 feet 0 inches
" "	II.	" "	III.	" "	17 " 0 "
" "	III.	" "	IV.	" "	15 " 8 "
" "	IV.	" "	V.	" "	19 " 8 "
" "	V.	" "	VI.	" "	17 " 4 "
" "	VI.	" "	VII.	" "	16 " 8 "
" "	VII.	" "	VIII.	" "	16 " 8 "
" "	VIII.	" "	IX.	" "	16 " 0 "
" "	IX.	to East Pillar	" "	" "	18 " 0 "

From East to West Pillar is 18 feet 0 inches
 ,, West Pillar to Stone I. ,, 26 ,, 0 ,,

A circumference, therefore, of 200 feet.

The stones are, taken as a group, unusually broad and massive, several being over four feet wide. The smallest and shortest is, as at Seanhinny, on the N. arc directly opposite the centre of the Recumbent Stone. They are all also more equal in height, as may be seen from the annexed table of heights:—

Stone	I.	stands	5 feet 4 inches,	but is broken.
„	II.	„	4 „ 9 „	and is quite flat topped.
„	III.	„	5 „ 1 „	is very pointed.
„	IV.	„	5 „ 10 „	square-topped.
„	V.	„	5 „ 4 „	very pointed.
„	VI.	„	3 „ 10 „	ridged on the top.
„	VII.	„	5 „ 5 „	slightly ridged and rough.
„	VIII.	„	5 „ 10 „	roughly pointed ; jasper.
„	XI.	„	5 „ 0 „	pointed.

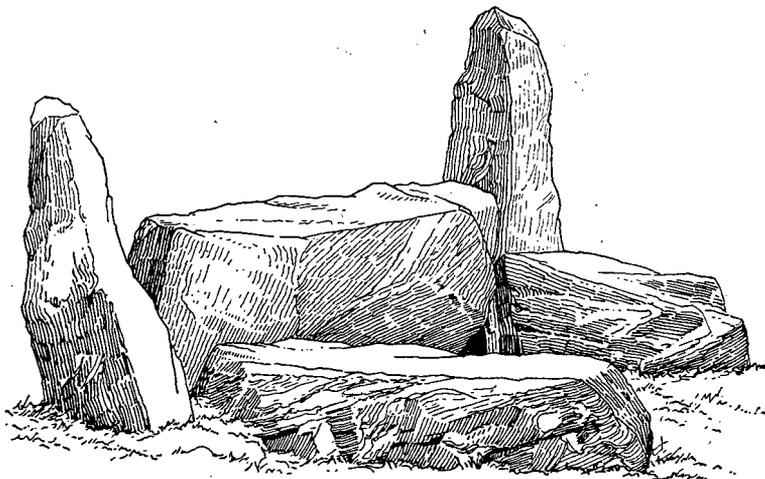


Fig. 36. Anchquorthies. View from the East of the Recumbent Stone Group.

All these stones are of the pinkish rough porphyry except the eighth, which is of a beautiful deep-red jasper, altering into lighter tint near the apex.

The two main diameters of this circle are 66 feet north and south, and 64 feet east and west.

The Recumbent Stone is set exactly on the south arc.

It leans considerably inwards, and measures 12 feet 6 inches in length, has a fairly regular breadth of 2 feet, and a vertical outside height of 5 feet; it weighs 8 tons 11 cwts. It is fairly smooth, mostly so on the top. It is of reddish granite, and the projecting stone T is of the same species. The other projecting stone S and the one lying between these are, I think, whinstone, or what the quarrymen call "blue heathens." The two pillars are light grey granite; the East Pillar stands 7 feet high on the inside and 5 feet 10 inches on the outer; the West Pillar 8 feet on the inside and 6 feet 10 inches on the outside. The two projecting stones just touch the face of the Recumbent Stone; the westerly one indeed barely does so now, as a large fragment has split off its end there.

The interior of the circle, grassy, and here and there uneven with small stones, has a very slight rise towards the centre, an incline so gradual and so equal from all arcs of the circle as to suggest the pleasing conjecture that the area has never been disturbed. However this may be, we could find no indications of any settings of stones, concentric or other, within it.

Auchquorthies Circle is situated near the summit of a gentle eminence 565 feet above sea-level; and, but for its protecting dyke, could be seen as a conspicuous group from great distances in almost every direction.

16. *Brandsbutt, Inverurie*.—About a mile on the main road leaving the town on the N.W. a sharp turn to the west leads to the steadings at Brandsbutt, close to which—in fact, when examined by us, almost hidden by the haystacks—there are three good-sized stones, which at some date unknown to me have been utilised as portions of two dykes as shown A B C in the ground plan (fig. 37). They are marked on the O.M. as the remains of a Stone Circle, or rather an oval contour, and the cir-

cumference must have been about 270 feet, as the diameter, 90 feet, can be computed from these three stones. I have on the same drawing given sectional views of the three stones. The largest of these stones, marked B in the plan, I am informed, is known as the "Douping Stone," and is used in making a burgess at the riding of the marches every seven years.

[Since the foregoing was in type, on revisiting the site on September 3rd, 1901, to see whether a "Sculptured Stone" marked on the O.M. as being in the dyke to the south of the angle was still there, my driver, Mr Frank Dey, detected marks upon a stone half buried in the dyke, about 40 feet south of the angle. On cleaning the surface I found it to be a sculptured stone of the early type with incised symbols, showing part

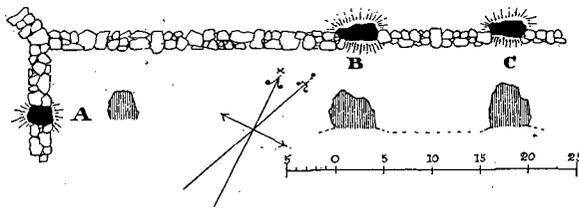


Fig. 37. Brandsbutt, Inverurie.

of a serpent with the angularly bent rod across its body, and what is still more interesting, a portion of an Ogham inscription. A notice of this stone, which seems to be still undescribed, will be given subsequently.]

17. *Balquhain, Chapel of Garioch.*—The remains now extant here stand on a nearly level field to the south of a gently-rising hill about mid-way between the old Castle of Balquhain and Inveramsay station on the Great North of Scotland Railway. The height above sea-level is 50 feet. The O.M. misses what, to an antiquary, is the most important feature—that is, the existence of a peculiarly striking monolith of quartz outside of the circumference of the circle, a feature in itself interesting, and, in this instance, intrinsically remarkable, and also a novelty in this survey. The seven large stones (fig. 38) which here represent the semi-circular

remnant of a circle probably 64 feet in diameter, are well and easily examined from being in a pasture-field; and there are no inequalities in the ground to render mensuration or sketching in the least difficult. Out-

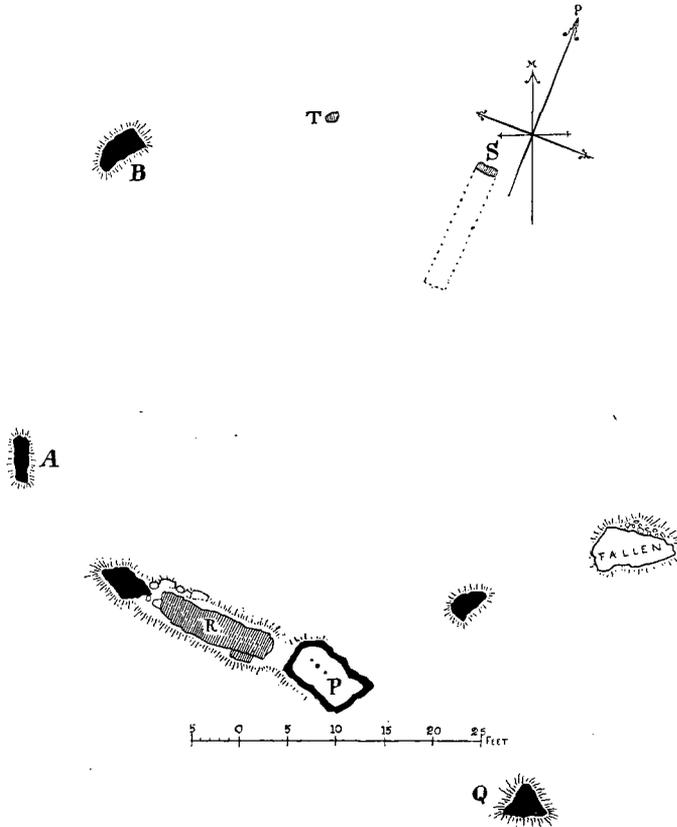


Fig. 38. Balquhain. Ground Plan.

side the semicircle, at a point 37 feet east of the centre of the Recumbent Stone, stands the magnificent obelisk-shaped pillar, Q, of white quartz.¹

¹ In this connection, it is interesting to note that near Malin Mor, Donegal, Ireland, Petrie noticed that the table-stone of a cromlech there was "of milk-white quartz." See Stokes' *Life of George Petrie*, p. 387.

Even at a great distance, in clear sunshine, especially if the clouds are shadowing the broad sweep of Bennachie as a background, this great pillar gleams out with a rare distinction and effect. And on close inspection it loses not a jot in respect of the brilliance of its crystalline ruggedness and grand proportions. The base is a triangle, each side measuring over 4 feet, and its apex is 10 feet 6 inches above the ground. It is set so that the inner side of its base lies north and south. North-west, at a distance of 18 feet from this north angle, stands the

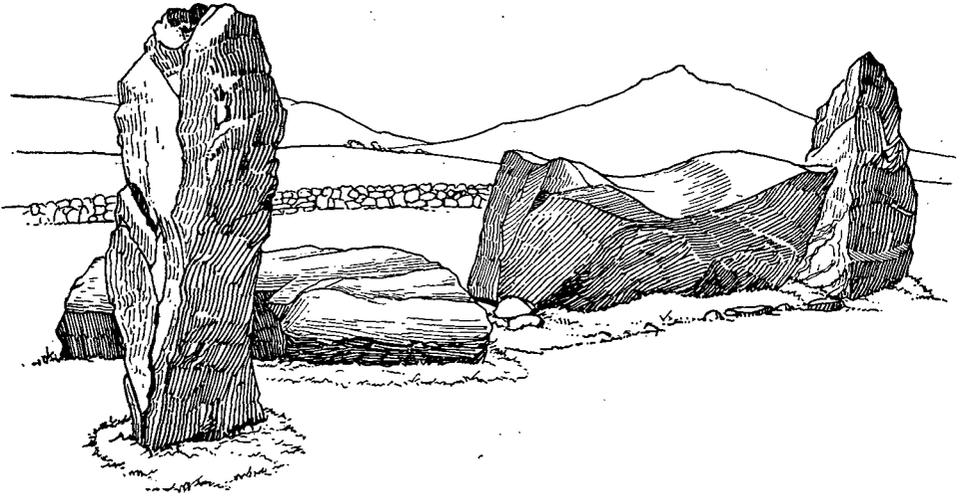


Fig. 39. Balquhain. Recumbent Stone, etc., as seen from the East.

only erect stone on this side of the circle, a top-heavy, unsymmetric block of rugged red granite, cloven and split in all directions—the stone nearest on the left in the view from the east (fig. 39). In the same view the prostrate East Pillar (P on the ground plan) is shown. This pillar is a huge block of very hard close-grained whinstone, quartz-veined. Its proportion to the other stones and its true distance from Q can be best seen in the view from the west (fig. 40). On its present upper

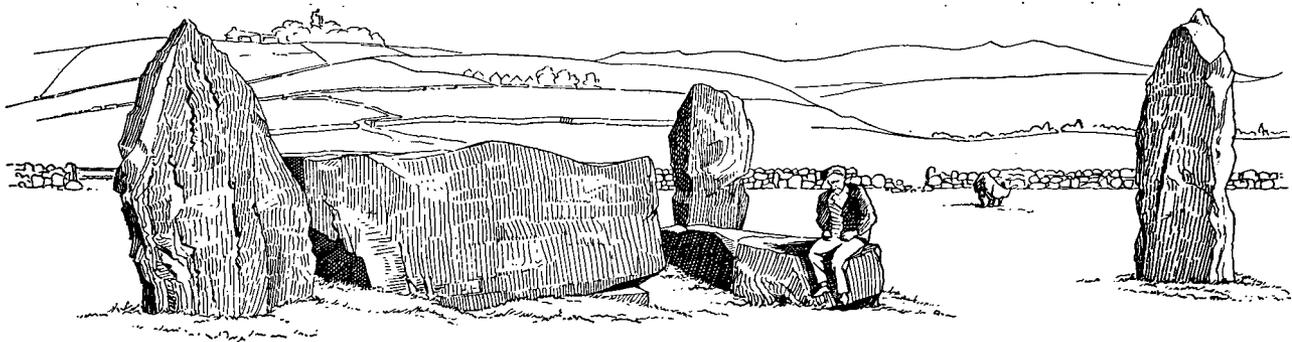


Fig. 40. Balquhain. View from outside, on the West.

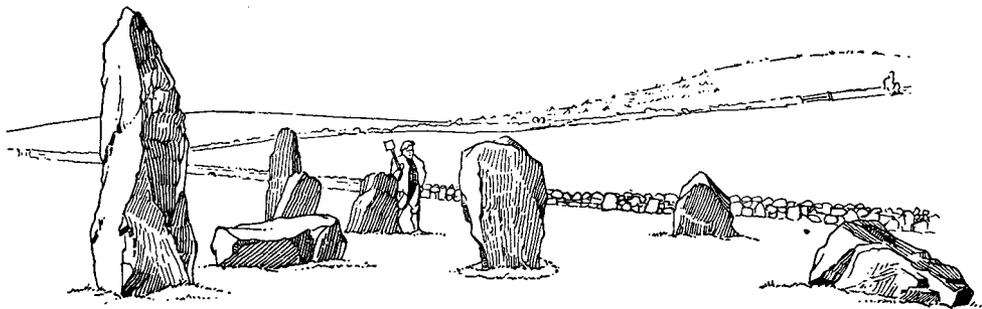


Fig. 41. Balquhain. General view from the East.

surface (originally the side upright against the end of the Recumbent Stone) are three cup-marks, one larger than the other two, and between them. The Recumbent Stone has several special points; as at Cothiemuir Wood Circle, this stone also has a large squarish block set well under it, near the east end; there are also semi-fast stones near it on the inner side. Its outer side is nearly one clear unbroken surface, broad and smooth almost as if tool dressed (see the view from the west; fig. 40). Its upper edge seen from the east (fig. 39) displays a deep basin-like curve, which, however, from the other end of the stone (see fig. 40) is not so conspicuous and artificial in appearance. Its greatest length

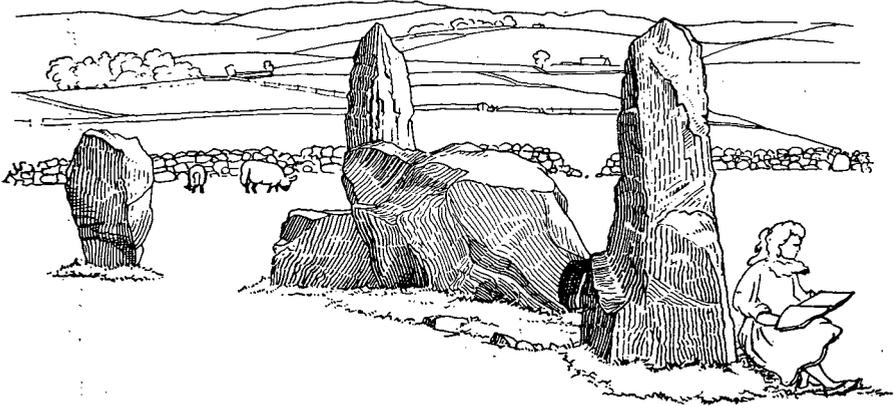


Fig. 42. Balquhain. View from Stone A.

is 12 feet 7 inches, breadth 3 feet 5 inches, and its height varies from 3 feet 9 inches to 5 feet 8 inches, being highest in the middle. It is of a very white-grained granite, and its weight is computed at 10 tons 6 cwts.

The West Pillar, still erect, stands 7 feet 5 inches above ground. Its base is rhomboidal, and the stone is a very rough reddish quartzite in which seams of white quartz also occur. On its inner surface is a curiously artificial-looking ledge (see view from Stone A, fig. 42), probably the portion left by the splitting off of a longitudinal slab.

Stone A stands 4 feet 9 inches high, and is of the same material as the large fallen stone on the east. Its outer face is vertical and somewhat smooth, and on it, about mid-way from the ground, are six small "cup-marks" in an irregular group. The next Stone, B, is of coarse grey granite. It stands 4 feet 6 inches high, and is rather pointed at top.

Accompanying his letter addressed to the Earl of Aberdeen in 1827, Mr J. Logan¹ gives a plate, showing this circle, both in a view and a ground plan, which are interesting from their showing the stones to have been then almost in exactly the positions we see them now. This careful observer notes also that the "Altar Stone" rests upon "another block level with the ground"; but the setting of his ground plan is in error as regards orientation.

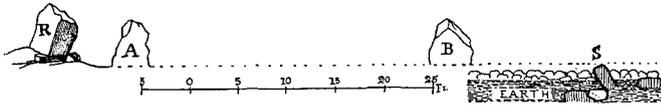


Fig. 43. Balquhain. Sectional view.

I show a general view of this circle as seen from the east in fig. 41.

The area thus partially enclosed by these seven stones is grassy and smooth in common with the rest of this portion of the field. There are no indications of recent ploughing on it. As I probed the ground at various points, in the hope of lighting upon vestiges at least of some inner stone-setting, my pains were at length rewarded by finding, at a point 53 feet 6 inches inwards from the face of the Recumbent Stone, the oblong top of an earth-fast stone 2 feet wide by about 1 foot thick, S on ground plan (fig. 38) and in the sectional view (fig. 43). The following day, having gained the co-operation of two or three friends, able and zealous to unearth the unknown treasures of a Stone Circle, we dug a slight trench from S, south-westwards for 13 feet, keeping a

¹ *Archæologia*, vol. xxii. p. 201.

width of about 3 feet. The result of this slight excavation is shown in the sectional view (fig. 43). First we turned out about 6 to 8 inches depth of soil, next a rough pavement of boulders, and below that, close to the stone S (which sloped backwards), large rough stones and squarish but natural-edged slabs of stone. On continuing the digging, on the north side of the sloping stone, the boulders were again found, and one large and thick slab a little way out from S. We then levered up this stone and ascertained that it was only a portion of a large slab, as its lower end presented a quite easily recognised fractured appearance. The space to the south of this stone we carefully measured, in radii of various lengths, taking S as centre, in the hope of getting the other smaller earth-fast stones of a possible inner circle, but without success. We noticed several stones, each, however, proving, when touched with the crowbar, to be quite easily moved. The only other firm and well-set stone was found at T on the ground plan. The disposition of these two stones, therefore, gave us no warrant for concluding that there had once existed an interior stone-setting, but it suggested that possibility; and, if so, the northern limit of the circle (when complete) would have been beyond the stone S. This, indeed, we find agrees well with the diameter obtained by measuring the space between B and the fallen block on the east arc, a diameter of 64 feet. The great stones which once helped to complete this northern arc may be seen in the angle formed by the two dykes which meet at a few yards' distance in that direction. In the sectional view (fig. 43) I show also the manner in which the east end of the Recumbent Stone rests upon the thick flat slab to which reference was made on a former page. On the summit of the Recumbent Stone, in the curved hollow part, there are a few 'cups' of the same vague character as those we have noticed on other stones of circles, difficult to accept as entirely due to natural causes, and equally hard to accept as artificial.

Granting equidistant spaces between the stones, the full number in this circle was, probably, twelve, that is, exclusive of the quartz monolith standing outside of the circumference.

Under the name of Chapel of Garioch, this circle is shown in Miss Maclagan's *Hill-Forts*, Pl. XXVII. ; but the positions of the stones do not correspond with their present places ; and the quartz monolith is treated as if it were the sole remnant of an outer ring of Standing Stones.

17A. *Knockollochie*.—Near this farm there is marked on the maps the site only of a circle. It is on the north side of the road between Chapel of Garioch and Oyne, about one mile N.W. of the former, and not far from the well-known Maiden Stone, which stands conspicuously on the south side of the road. We were unable to learn anything about the site.

18. *Druidstones, near Inch*.—This circle, which is north of Cothiemuir Wood, about two miles only, I have preferred to deal with as the most southerly of three sites near Auchleven in Inch, the others being Loanend and Husband Hillock.

On the O.M. 25-inch scale, this site occupies a considerable space as a circle of 80 feet in diameter, having attached to it on the west a smaller circle, and on the north a curvilinear "annexe," while, a short distance on the N.W., six separate rings are shown in dots, and boldly entitled "Site of Druidical Village." The farm-house hard by is named, by the way, Druids-town, not Druid-stone.

The three contiguous circles just mentioned are not, however, shown as circles of separate Standing Stones, which they might very well be on a map of so large a scale. They are merely dotted rings. Discounting altogether the six rings of the "Druidical Village," it was with undisguised astonishment that I saw here the eight large and massive stones shown on my ground plan (fig. 44). Only three stones are now erect, A and F on the circumference of a circle 55 feet in diameter, and K north of this 27 feet. This monolith, K, is a remarkably square block of darkish grey granite, standing 7 feet 6 inches high, on a base which girths 14 feet 6 inches.

Close to it lies a thick prostrate block 6 feet long, apparently earth-fast. Of the other stones, A and F are nearly of equal height, 3 feet 4 inches. The stone B has fallen half over its higher end towards the

outside. The two pillars (shown in thickened line) are also half fallen, the east being nearly 8 feet in length, the west considerably less. Between them, I was informed by the tenant, whose occupancy of

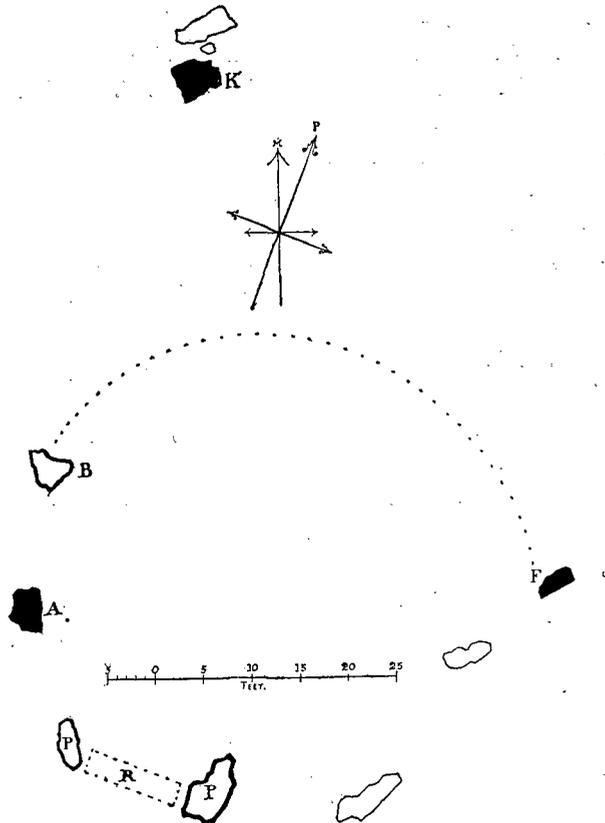


Fig. 44. Druidstone, near Inch.

Druidstones began in the year 1844, there lay a Recumbent Stone which was most unjustifiably split up and removed by a neighbouring farmer near Castle Forbes. The interior, by the provisions in the lease

of the farm, has always been protected from disturbance of any kind; and a dike and sparse plantation serve to shield the site from molestation.

My reasons for concluding that this circle was included within a circumference marked by the dotted curve between A and F are these: This space alone is stony throughout, and, although no settings can be traced by the eye, its general stony unevenness is well marked. Beyond this circumference on the north, this character ceases. Next, the isolation of the great square pillar K is so striking, by reason both of its height and bulk and unlikeness in form to any of the other stones, that the conclusion seems inevitable that in this circle, as at Balquhain, previously noticed, we have a great monolith set as an outlier. For what purpose this was done we need not at present enquire, but the feature is there.

Omitting this granite monolith, the probable total number of stones in this circle was eleven.

Pointing to a spot outside and west of the stones, the farmer told me that there, when ploughing, "quantities of burnt bones had been found, and now and then an urn." These urns, on further enquiry, I ascertained were of the large cinerary type. The height of this site above sea-level is 800 feet.

19. *Loanend, near Inch*, on the broad summit of a sandy hill 700 feet above the sea. The two stones here remaining, of a circle shown on the O.M. as one 60 feet in diameter, are on the summit of Hawk Hill, 230 yards nearly due north of the farm-house. In what manner the Ordnance surveyors obtained the above diameter is not apparent, unless several stones were *in situ* at the date of actual survey but were omitted in the engraving. Only two are shown, and both with the same contour and base; whereas the one being the Recumbent Stone (see fig. 45), long and narrow, and the other a broadish and smaller oblong block, one would expect the difference to be noted in the map. The diameter of this circle cannot now be computed, but a space of almost 50 feet separates the two stones. On either side of the Recumbent Stone (fig.

46) there were, not so very long ago, the usual tall pillars, but these sank down and lie buried in the deep sand below, which was being worked for building.¹ The Recumbent Stone is the most remarkable in respect of shape of all yet examined. Though nearly 14 feet long in the middle, it narrows so greatly as to rest on a base of very irregular contour only 10 feet by 3 feet 6 inches. Its uncommon height further

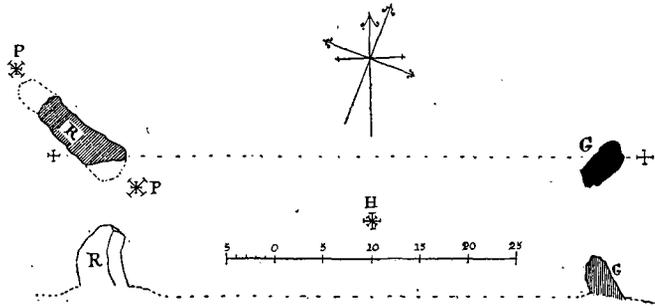


Fig. 45. Loanend, near Insch. Ground Plan, and view from South.

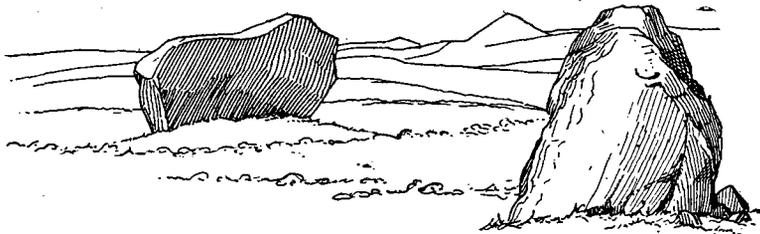


Fig. 46. Loanend, Insch. Recumbent Stone from the East.

adds to its striking appearance, at one portion fully 6 feet 4 inches above ground. Lastly, its transverse breadth and its shape, looked at from either end, both help to make up an object of such eccentric general form and massiveness as to at once dispose of any theory one might be likely to promulgate anent the shapely regularity of Recumbent Stones as a

¹ This occurred during the lifetime of the present tenant's father.

class. In fact, this huge specimen is but the half of a well-rounded boulder of the same species of light grey granite as that quarried at Dyce. As well as sides and ends, its summit is peculiar; at the east, the stone "runs out" into an almost acute point, widening suddenly to 2 feet, and to 2 feet 7 inches before the highest portion is reached, whence it again narrows rather sharply.

On the summit, near the middle, there is one very peculiar feature, unobserved elsewhere. A shallow, scooped-out hollow, 3 feet 6 inches long and 15 to 18 inches broad, contains in it two distinct cup-marks 15 inches apart, each about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide; and the whole of this space thus hollowed out, whether by Nature or Art, is absolutely free from the smallest morsel of the close-clinging grey saxicolous lichens which completely cover the rest of the stone. The pure white and dark grey particles of the component minerals in the granite are seen bare and clear.

The weight of this stone may be stated as between 11 and 12 tons.

20. *Husband Hillock, near Auchleven*.—The site of a stone circle is so named here in a field a little to the N.W. of the Point Inn, close to the farm of Wellside. Even at the date of the Government Survey, however, there seemed to be nothing to show as remains of the circle; but the note "Cists and urns found here" is appended. On passing the field on my return from Loanend, I satisfied myself that there was absolutely no remnant now extant. It may be worth noting that a farm close by is called Harestone.

21. *Hatton of Ardoyne*.—This, one of the most important circles in the district, is situated on the Candle Hill, pretty nearly on its summit, 600 feet high, in a N.W. direction from Pitmedden about a mile, and not very far from a tall monolith on the farm of Westerton. The present condition of the site, overgrown with broom and long grass, and intersected by a wire fence, which also surrounds it in part, offers serious impediments to the surveyor. I overcame these with what diligence was possible single-handed, and in weather conditions not favourable to field-work.

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The circle now consists of nine Standing Stones, one of which is prostrate (see ground plan, fig. 47), but on the usual assumption of equidistant spacing, there were probably four more. Thus, including the

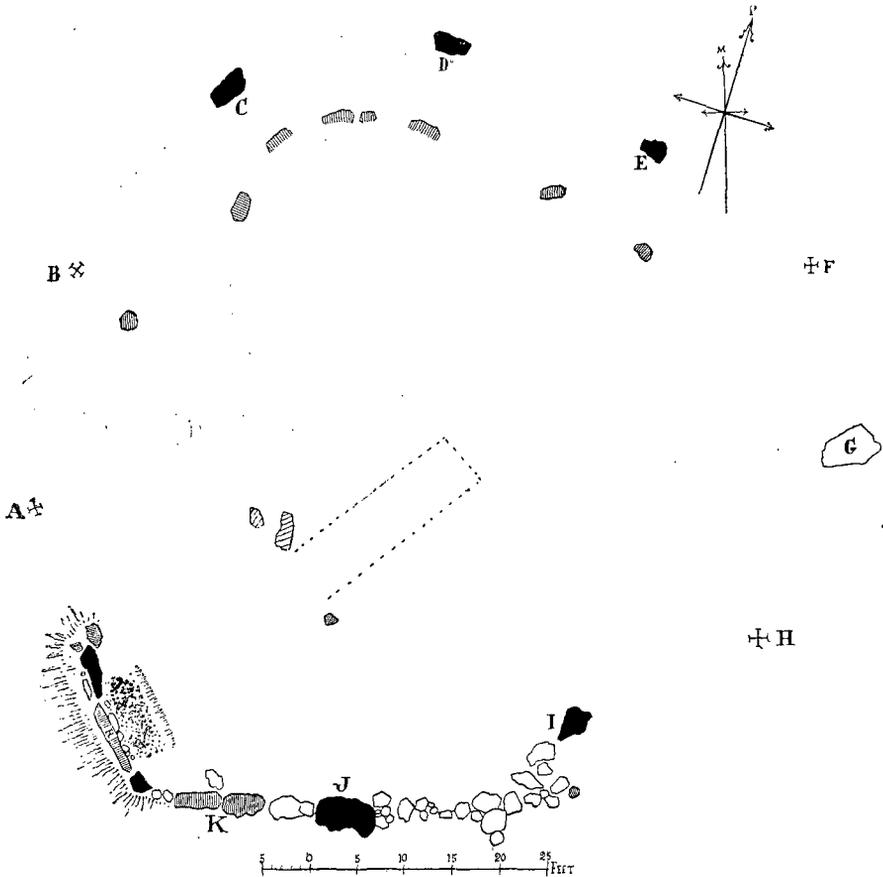


Fig. 47. Hatton of Ardoyne. Ground Plan.

Recumbent Stone, the circle may have once contained thirteen stones, arranged on a circumference whose main diameter is 80 feet. The mean distance between the stones is 21 feet.

The heights of the upright stones are:—

Stone C,	4 feet 5 inches,	broad,	flat-topped.
„ D,	4 „ 1 „		leans inward ; edged at top.
„ E,	4 „ 0 „		
„ G,	6 „ 0 „		long (fallen).
„ I,	5 „ 4 „		
„ J,	about 4 feet,		partly fallen on side.

The litter of biggish boulders between these last two stones is hardly reducible to a ground plan ; great havoc must have been wrought at this



Fig. 48. Hatton of Ardoyne. Recumbent Stone ; front view from within.

side of the circle ; but the two large and well-set stones at K (see also the view from outside, fig. 49) present somewhat of a novelty. Being “in line” with the Standing Stones, they cannot be held as part of an interior setting (as, *e.g.*, at Tomnagorn, No. 15 in the previous report), and they stand above ground 3 feet and 3 feet 4 inches respectively.

The orientation of the Recumbent Stone in this circle¹ is also somewhat unusual, the line of direction of the three stones here being N.W. We may speak of the two pillars, then, as the Lower and Upper

¹ Compare that in the circle at Old Keig.

Pillars. The former, of some species of granite difficult to determine on account of lichenous overgrowth, stands over 7 feet on the inside and 8 feet 5 inches on the outside. The Recumbent Stone (fig. 48), remarkably thin and high in comparison with its length, is one of the very light grey slabs which constitute the huge out-jutting masses of the Owsen Craig and the Mither Tap of Bennachie, in which



Fig. 49. Hatton of Ardoyne. Recumbent Stone from outside.

they lie piled up above one another like gigantic books.¹ It leans inwards considerably, being 18 inches out of plumb. At its base there is a space extending inwards for over 5 feet, rough with boulders. This ends abruptly in a sharp rise of about 10 inches; and this higher level is the general level of the whole interior of the circle, so that it would almost seem as if the normal arrangement were in this instance reversed.

¹ All the other standing stones "are of gneiss, of the kind common to the country, and were probably quarried out of a rocky summit about 50 yards from their present position." (Dalrymple.)

The dimensions of this Recumbent Stone are : length 8 feet, height 5 feet 4 inches, thickness on the average, 1 foot. Its weight is 2 tons 10 cwt. The Upper Pillar, of whinstone, has been destroyed. On the ground plan I show its base in black, because so much of it is definitely measurable. The four smaller pieces, shaded in the plan, are fragments of it ; and, indeed the whole space beyond this point and almost up to stone C is strewn with fragments, doubtless the remnants of stones A and B blasted and not even carried away for the nearest dike.

The eight stones shown shaded on the line of an inner circle about 8 feet in front of the Standing Stones are all earth-fast, and represent all that could be identified as earth-fast at the date of my investigation. Others, no doubt, would be revealed were the shrubs cleared away. At a point 25 feet directly in front of the Recumbent Stone there is also a small earth-fast block. The space between this and the larger oblong stone N.W. of it (which may be earth-fast) is depressed, and this depression can be distinctly traced inwards as shown by the dotted lines. Its sides, so far as could be judged by slight probing with the marking-pins, are of stones well covered and matted over with earth and mossy undergrowth. Nor do I think this oblong hollow can be the remains of an integral portion of the circle, and the reasons for this will become clear from the following paragraphs.

This circle on "The Currachs of Ardoyne" was examined to some extent by Mr C. E. Dalrymple, and the substance of his description is this:—"On being carefully examined it was found that this circle contained two concentric circles within it, raised one above the other like steps. The outer one was about a foot above the surface of the ground exterior to it, and the inmost circle was raised above it again but not quite so much, although from the lapse of time and the removal of many of the stones which marked these inner circumferences, the original level of the interior one was not so *distinctly* defined as the outer, the boundary stones of which were a good deal larger.

"The latter was found to be faced all round with stones having the

¹ Stuart's *Sculptured Stones*, vol. i., Appendix to Preface, p. xxii.

outer sides, in most cases, flat, and most of them rising several inches above the surface, some of them 18 inches or more, while they extended 2 feet under ground. The stones round the edge of the inner circle were much smaller, and not so deeply sunk in the ground. The diameter of the whole circle was 81 feet, of the first interior circle 69 feet, and of the inmost 64 feet. The only remains found were a grave in the centre, which measured $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, 1 foot 9 inches in breadth, and 4 feet in depth." [The oblong hollow shown on my plan is thus explained as the remains of the trench dug here in search of this grave.] "It was paved in the bottom with small boulders, on which lay a small quantity of incinerated bones. The earth, for about half the depth, was black loam, and underneath was the same sort of yellow light loam found in the grave at the Picardy Stone and in the circle at Ardlair, the subsoil being very close and hard. At each end of the grave were found small fragments of an urn, burnt very red; and the grave was filled in with earth, covered with another layer of small boulders, above which was the surface soil and vegetation. The grave lay N.E. and S.W.; and about 4 feet from the N.E. end were found small fragments of another urn, similar in character to those in the grave.

"Nothing was found near any of the stones except at the centre one on the north [D on my ground-plan], where a kind of grave, 6 feet long, 4 wide, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ deep, extended inwards from the foot of the Standing Stone to that of the smaller stones opposite, and in which was a considerable quantity of black burnt stuff and charcoal, mixed with yellow clayey earth, and containing some stones marked with fire."

Conclusion.—With the facts disclosed by the investigation above described before us, we are enabled to differentiate several new varieties of Stone Circles, besides noting that the variety having a Recumbent Stone stills remains the predominant one of the two districts hitherto surveyed.

The new varieties are :—(1) Circles having in the interior several non-concentric small circular stone settings, as, *e.g.*, the Standing Stones of

Echt. (2) Circles having outside of the Standing Stones a well-defined trench, as at Hill of Tuack and Crichtie, probably also at Old Keig and Cothiemuir Wood. (3) Circles having within their Standing Stones a massive rampart of boulders, and, concentric with this, a smaller rampart close to the centre. Of this, Whitehill is the outstanding example. (4) Circles having a solitary and conspicuously tall monolith set a considerable distance outside of the Standing Stone circumference. Balquhain and Druidstone illustrate this variety. (5) Circles having massive stones set nearly at right angles to and projecting inwards from the face of the Recumbent Stone, as, *e.g.*, at Auchquhorthies on the estate of Manar. (6) In addition, we observe at Crichtie and at the Deer Park, Monymusk, the feature, new to our researches in Aberdeenshire, of a central monolith, such an arrangement having also existed at Nether Coullie.

Further, a great variety, in respect of both size and form, is found to distinguish the several Recumbent Stones, from the neat and almost rectangular form of the examples at Binghill and Castle Fraser, to the rotund bulkiness of the huge boulders at Cothiemuir Wood and Loanend, and the comparatively slight discoid form of the example at Hatton of Ardoyne. The orientation, also, of the Recumbent Stone differs in detail; but in the Inverurie district we have no instance of its occurrence on the S.E. arc of the circle.

With regard to the question whether the Standing Stones in the circles rise in height as they approach the south arc, we can state that in the three examples of Castle Fraser, Whitehill, and Cothiemuir Wood, this rising is characteristic, and these circles all have a Recumbent Stone. At Echt, where there is no Recumbent Stone, the tallest stones are on the north. And in the Auchquhorthies Circle the stones are remarkably equal in height.

Lastly, we possess the invaluable evidence adduced by the excavations so frequently referred to, which proves that, in seven at any rate out of the sites here noticed, definite sepulchral remains were obtained.

TABULAR SUMMARY OF THE STONE CIRCLES ABOVE DESCRIBED.

Survey No.	Locality.	Parish.	Diameters.	Peculiar Features.	Relics Found.
1	Hill of Traack	Kintore	24' x 24'	External trench	Eight cinerary deposits.
4	Castle Fraser	Chuny	76' x 60'	Recumbent Stone (on S.)	Fragments of urns and incinerated bones.
5	Deer Park	Monymusk	70' x 64'	? Central monolith	No record.
6	Whitehill	"		Rumparts of boulders concentric and within the Standing Stones;	No record.
7	Greystone	Alford	33' x 33'	and Recumbent Stone (on south)	No record.
9	Old Keig	Keig	? 64' x 64'	Triple-concentric settings of stones	" Ashes of some burnt matter."
10	Cothiemuir Wood	"	70' 6" x 62'	Very massive Recumbent Stone (peculiarly set on S.S.W.)	No record.
13	Fularton	Kintore	46' x 46'	Cist in centre. Recumbent Stone (on S.)	Central grave with urn, and seven other deposits.
14	Broomend o' Cricchie	"	60' x 60'	Slight trench within Standing Stones	Several deposits, urns, and a stone hammer.
15	Auchquhorthies	Inverurie	66' x 64'	External trench and central monolith	No record.
16	Brandsbutt	"	? 90' x 90'	Recumbent Stone (on S.W.) and three projecting stones	No record.
17	Balquhain	Chapel o' Garioch	? 66' x 64'	Conspicuous monolith set outside of circle on the S.E. and Recumbent Stone (on S.)	No record.
18	Druitstone	Fremnay	56' x 50'	Conspicuous monolith set outside of circle on the N.W. Recumbent Stone (S.)	Interior undisturbed, but urns and burnt bones found close to it.
19	Loanend	"	? 60' x 60'	Triple - concentric. Recumbent Stone (peculiarly set on S.S.W.)	No record.
21	Hutton of Ardoyne	Oyne	80' x 80'		Central grave with burnt bones and fragments of urns.