

## III.

## NOTE ON A GROUP OF SMALL BURIAL CAIRNS AT HINDSTONES, IN THE PARISH OF TYRIE, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY HARRY F. YOUNG.

On the farm of Hindstones, in the parish of Tyrie, on a piece of waste land, which I and my brother broke into cultivation, there was a group of little cairns of stone, fifteen in number. They were of an oblong shape, and contained about two cart loads each of ice-worn pebbles from one up to twenty pounds weight. Such stones are very thick on the surrounding surface. I learned from older men who broke up the surrounding land that there were many more of those little cairns, and that they were formerly covered over with a deposit of moss six feet deep, which had now been cut up and used for fuel. There was no regularity in the positions of the cairns, and the fifteen of which I write were on a piece of land measuring 80 yards broad by 100 yards long. My brother and I thought the cairns were of ancient origin—being so near where many “Picts’ houses” are. We were very particular when removing the stones to look for any human remains or flints. Arrow and lance points have been found in the district, a good collection of which I have got by me; but we found nothing in the cairns that I could identify as human remains or human workmanship. Below and around the stones that rested on the subsoil there was a very fine black deposit that we puzzled over for a long time and inspected several samples of from each cairn. The conclusion we arrived at was that it consisted of very fine particles of black moss washed down through the stones by water and deposited on the surface of the subsoil. Another thing I observed was that in the subsoil surrounding the cairns there was a very hard ferruginous pan very difficult to break up. But under the cairns the pan was gone; we dug this up to a depth of 18 inches, but it showed no signs of having been disturbed before. In breaking up another bit of moorland about three hundred yards distant from the cairns, the plough turned up a flint flake, which, after investigating a bit, I found

to be but one of a large collection. There had been a hole scooped out of the red subsoil over one foot deep, into which at least a peck of flint flakes had been put, varying in size from the breadth and thickness of your hand down to little bits half an inch broad. None of these flakes showed marks of being chipped further than being broken from larger pieces. I have this lot of flints by me still, and have sent a representative selection of the flakes for exhibition. These flints must have been carried thirty miles, that being the nearest native flint that I know of, namely, on the hill of Cruden. This lot of flints was found quite near where one Picts' circle is preserved by a dyke erected by the proprietor. Another circle is on an unreclaimed piece of moor. There is only a little bit left of what was the largest circle (fifty feet diameter) in the group or village. I can call it by no other name—there were so many circles quite near each other.