

II.

NOTES ON CERTAIN STRUCTURES OF ARCHAIC TYPE IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS—BEEHIVE HOUSES, DUNS, AND STONE CIRCLES. BY W. M. MACKENZIE, M.A., F.S.A. SCOT.

Beehive Houses.—Eastwards from the northern shore of Loch Resort on the west coast of Lewis, and between the high lands of Uig and the Forest of Harris, runs a long irregular valley streaked with lochans and watercourses, and occupied towards its eastern extremity by the upper end of the fresh-water Loch Langabhat. On the south side the hills rise in a steep escarpment, while to the north the valley retires in a gentle slope passing into low uplands traversed by shallow glens.

It was from this valley that Captain Thomas in 1858¹ made known to the antiquarian world the existence of certain structures of a primitive type, popularly known, from their resemblance in form to the old straw hives, as "Beehive Houses," in Gaelic styled *bothain* (sing. *both* or *bothan*), a word cognate with the English "booth" and "bothie." He found his examples in the western end. Those with which I am about to deal lie farther east where the valley opens out into a scene of pastoral richness, quiet, and beauty, over which the shy deer boldly move among what were once the habitations of men.

It is clearly in large measure due to this remoteness that so many of these structures have been preserved. Yet even here evidence of destruction is plentiful. On the western spurs of the Cuailean Hills, part of the uplands above mentioned, and within a mile or so of the high road to Uig, are the traces of several *bothain*. Tom-na-Bharabhas, for example, is a knoll deriving its name, according to tradition, from a

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. iii. p. 127.

successful pursuit of the Macaulays of Uig by the Morrisons of Barvas, who overtook the plunderers of their cattle resting at this spot, probably in the two *bothain* whose ruins crown its summit. Of the larger sufficient remains to show clearly the characteristic construction and the circular shape, with a diameter of 7 feet between the narrow entrances which look N. and E.S.E. Its companion measures about a foot less. Farther east other ruins occur, and one of these was in summer occupation less than half a century ago, until supplanted by a larger modern dwelling to the construction of which the older buildings paid tribute.

A somewhat similar fate has overtaken the group on the eastern extremity of Bein-a-Chuillein, which were utilised as shielings by the crofters of Bernera up to little more than thirty years ago. Their final ruin was brought about, I am informed, by their being used for harbourage by poachers after the grazings had been incorporated in the deer-forest. There are the foundations of several on the hillside above Glen Marstaig, and one, in a rather better state of preservation, shows traces of adaptation to the more modern type in that its top has been adjusted to permit of rafters and a roof of heather or turf (fig. 1). The weakness of all these structures appears to lie in the upper portion where the curve becomes pronounced towards the apex. With care and attention to the outer covering of turf, which, though a superimposed weight, yet seems to add to the stability of the building, they may last indefinitely; once that is removed, disintegration and collapse is only a matter of time.

This is clearly seen in the relative condition of the members of another group across the valley. One is in a nearly perfect state. To this the peculiarity of its site must have largely contributed. It stands in a shallow gully whose sides converge towards the west, and which forms part of a shallow depression on the lower slope of Calltraseal Mhor, overlooking Loch a Sguir. Covered with compact turf from base to summit, it looks almost a part of its surroundings, save that its conical shape is too regular, and that here and there the destructive work of rabbits has laid bare the grey stones of its framework (fig. 2). A door, low and narrow, but sufficient for the admission of a full-grown



Fig. 1. Both at Glen Marstaig, with roof adapted to admit of rafters and thatch.

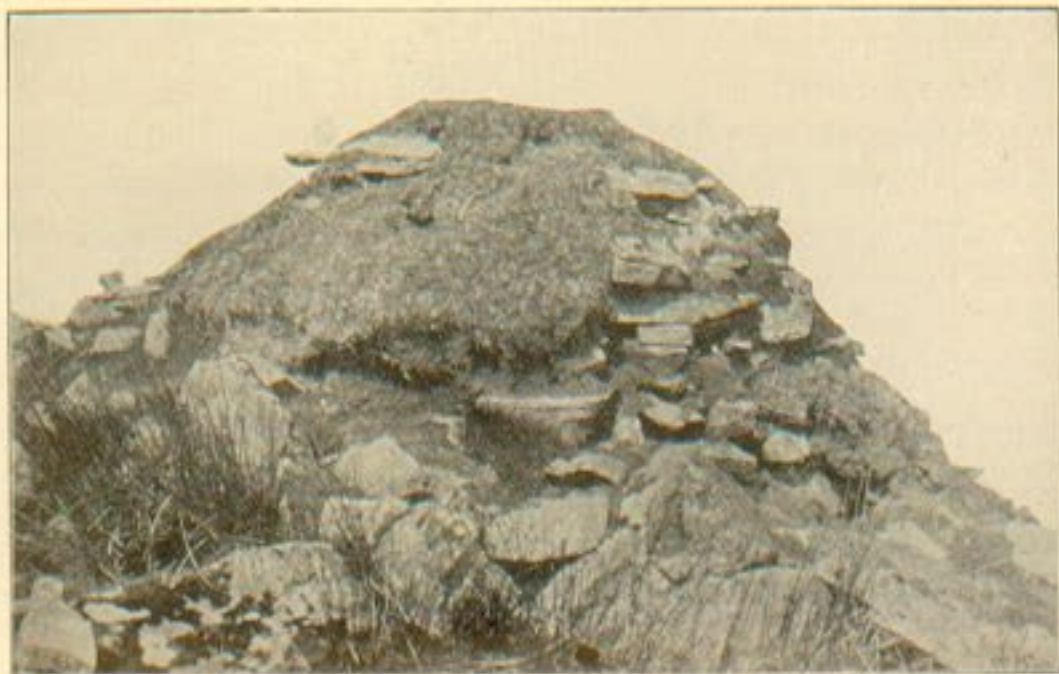


Fig. 2. Both at Loch a' Sguir.

man on his knees, faces south-east, and was apparently sheltered by a detached wall of its own height. Apart from this the only light to the interior is afforded by an opening in the centre of the roof of about 9 inches by 6, which might be easily stopped by a stone or more probably a turf. Opposite the door three small chambers or ambries rise in the thickness of the lower wall, one above another, each separated from that below by a single flat stone. This particular arrangement was not found in any other example. Two additional ambries open on either side on the level of the earthen floor, and a third directly opposite to the left of the doorway looking out. Between the last and the doorway a light brown ash gave evidence of the *cagailt* or hearth of the peat-fire. The diameter of the floor is 8 feet 4 inches between opposite ambries, and 7 feet 7 inches from the entrance to the opposite wall. The greatest height to the inside face of the top stones is 8 feet $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

On the more open ground near by are three other examples all more exposed in situation and so in various stages of imperfection. Of one about 80 yards to the south-west quite a quarter has collapsed. The greatest height of wall is on the north-east side, and measures 5 feet 4 inches perpendicularly from the ground. It presents a good section, showing the character of the building (fig. 3). The principal stones are long and flat, and each course projects over that below, until the round converges sufficiently at the top to be closed in the manner indicated above. The weight of the heavier stones alone binds the structure, which in this respect is Cyclopean in character. Gaps and interstices are filled in with smaller rubble. The material is supplied from the schistose gneiss of the district, which in many places weathers, or is easily quarried, in suitable slabs. In the present case the outer covering of turf has, of course, disappeared, save in patches round the base. It has six ambries on the floor level, and one higher up. The floor diameter is 7 feet 6 inches N. and S., and 7 feet 1 inch E. and W.

On a knoll about 50 yards N.W. of the last is a specimen also bereft of its covering, but otherwise, with the exception of the final course, complete (fig. 4). The basement wall, from whose inner edge springs

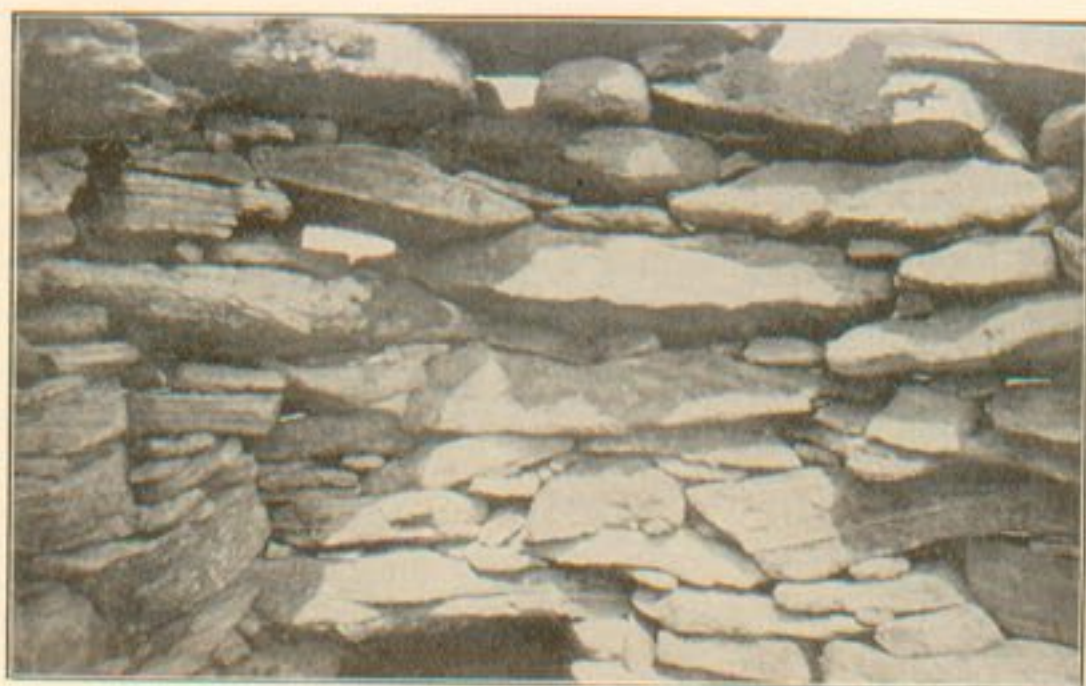


Fig. 3. Interior of Both at Loch a' Sguir, to show style of building.

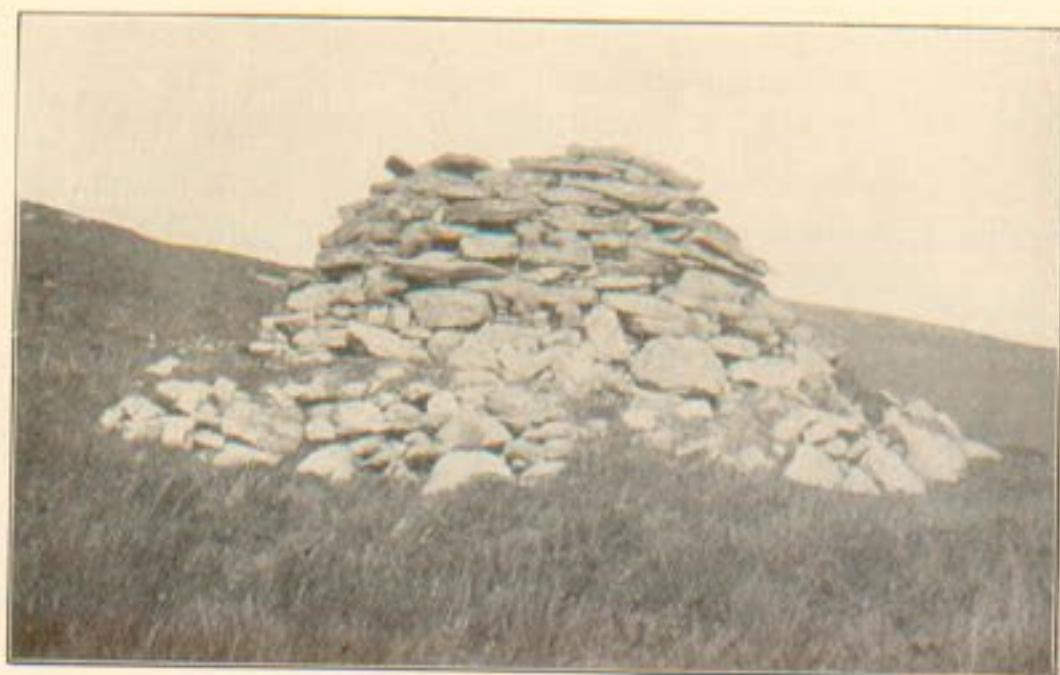


Fig. 4. Both at Loch a' Sguir, uncovered.

the domed roof, and upon which it rests, is 3 feet in thickness and about the same in height. It is in this more massive part of the structure that the ambries or cupboards already mentioned are usually constructed. In this example four are so placed, but three others, 3 feet from the floor, now open to the outside. The floor space is rather larger than is common. It measures 7 feet 9 inches E. and W., and 8 feet 9 inches N. and S. The greatest internal height of what remains is 6 feet 8 inches, and the height when complete must have been little short of 9 feet. The doorway faces S.E. The structure as it stands lays bare for us, as it were, the typical skeleton of the *both*.

One other to the south of these completes the group at Garry-na-Sguir. It is the most ruinous, only about 4 feet 6 inches of wall remaining. Its greatest diameter is about 8 feet, and besides ambries it had apparently two entrances, facing N.E. and S.W. respectively. Two entrances, indeed, are not uncommon, and they are in all cases opposite to each other.

About half a mile farther south we reach the ample margin of Loch Choirigerod. Where the gently sloping meadow terminates abruptly at the foot of a rocky ridge to the west stands a compact group well suiting in their appearance the comparison to a Kaffir kraal, and strangely impressive in their suggestion of former residence and present abandonment. There are seven in all, of which two are in a state of fairly good preservation. The entrances generally look towards the south-east. Their proportions and main features, though varying, are on the whole similar to those detailed above. Three still wear a partial covering of turf; one is marred only by a hole in the back wall (fig. 5).

It will be observed that all the examples described stand well apart from each other, though associated in groups, and are built on the same simple plan, varying slightly only in dimensions and in the number of ambries and doorways. The interconnected and more complex groups described by Captain Thomas lie farther west and nearer the seashore.¹ It is not unlikely that this fact differentiates the more permanent from the temporary habitations of the original builders.

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. iii. p. 127; vol. vii. p. 153.

I pass now to more isolated outlying examples. One at Garry-na-hine close to the Uig road, formerly a shieling, was occupied at Captain Thomas's visit (1866) as a residence, but is now abandoned (fig. 6). It presents some special features. There is a chimney, as Captain Thomas¹ noted, but it is clearly, in my opinion, a modern modification. In the main, however, it is a structure exactly resembling those already described, but more carefully preserved. Its longest floor diameter is 7 feet



Fig. 5. Both at Loch Choirigerod.

9 inches, and that at right angles 6 feet 4 inches. There are two doorways facing roughly E. and W. (fig. 7), and three ambries on the level, all these being integral parts of the original structure. The doorways are 3 feet 3 inches high and 1 foot 9 inches wide. The ambries are about 3 feet deep and 18 inches wide. Mr Carmichael, in a paper on the Agrestic Customs of the Outer Hebrides, forming an appendix to the Report of the Crofter Commission, describes the "*both cloiche*" stone bothy or beehive, "still," he says, "the shealings of the Lewis people."

¹ *Pro. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. iii, p. 135.



Fig. 6. Both at Garry-na-hine, from west.

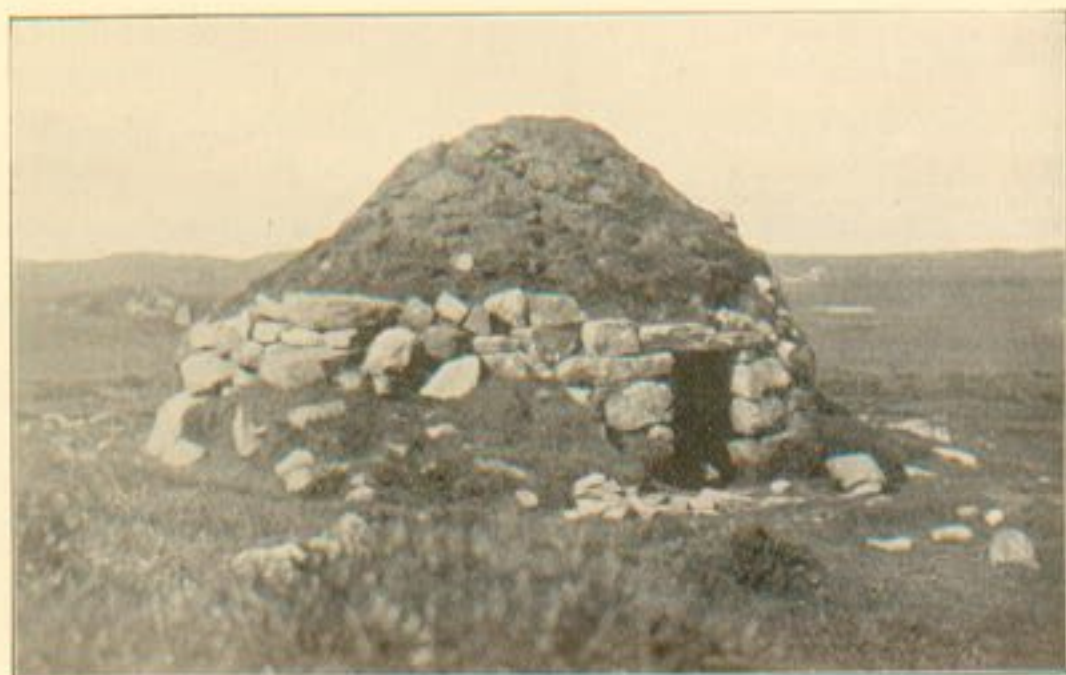


Fig. 7. Both at Garry-na-hine, from east.

He refers to their internal arrangements as follows: "In the walls of the hut, two, three, or four feet from the floor, are recesses—Gaelic, *buthaillt*, Scots, *bole*—for the various utensils in use by the people, while in the bosom of the thick wall low down near the ground are the dormitories wherein the people sleep. The entrance to these dormitories, slightly raised above the floor, is a small hole, barely capable of admitting a person to creep through." I have found nothing in those examined to

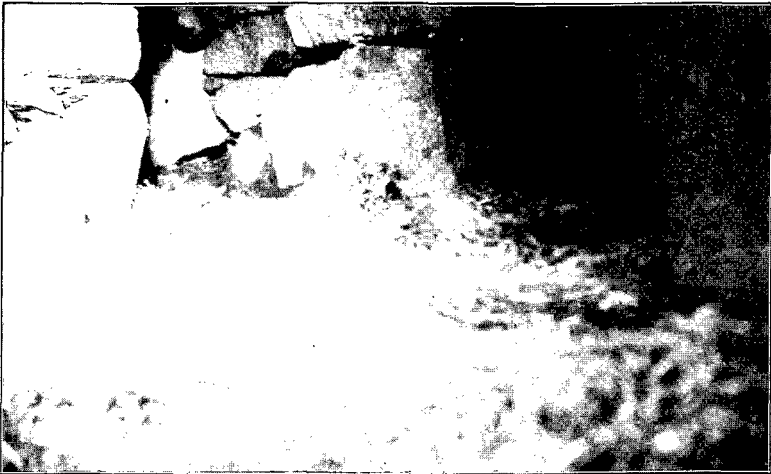


Fig. 8. Interior of Both at Garry-na-hine, showing ambries or boles, and bed.

answer to the latter description: indeed, in the Garry-na-hine example the straw and heather bed, banked up by a line of stones, lies against the wall opposite the fireplace (fig. 8).

The slabs of the present building are unusually long. About 4 feet up six complete the circle, and one of these is 4 feet 3 inches in length. The course above these projects considerably: one stone is 2 feet 8 inches wide. The roof, contrary to custom, is closed on the top by three stone slabs; the longest, in the centre, have a span of 2 feet 8 inches and a width of 11 inches.

This is the *both* described in a more summary manner by Captain Thomas as Both, Cnoc Dubh, Ceann Thulabhig,¹ and judged from its peculiar features and from personal information to be of comparatively recent construction. The representation of the chimney, however, in the section figured by Captain Thomas is rather misleading. He shows a carefully constructed vent opening on the roof of the building, whereas it appeared to me a roughly formed aperture in the solid base completed



Fig. 9. Both on Eilean Fear Chroithir.

in an unskilful, patched fashion from the outside (indicated by a slight projection on the one side in figs: 6, 7). The matter of the date of building I shall refer to presently. The foundations of a companion structure are clearly traceable a few feet farther east.

My last example occupies a lonely position on the east side of a small island outside the Little Bernera at the mouth of Loch Roag. It was complete, minus the turf covering, a few years ago, but has since collapsed (fig. 9). It has a floor diameter of 6 feet, converging to 4 feet

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. vii. p. 161.

8 inches at the top of the standing portion, which is about 4 feet high. The entrance faces east. The *both* is, on the whole, a good deal smaller than is ordinary. The island is locally known as *Eilean Fear Chroithir*, "the island of the men of Croir"—a farm at the northern extremity of the Great Bernera formerly occupied by crofters. They came here, I was informed, to collect shell-fish, and no doubt also to utilise the patch of pasture.

When we seek local information as to the construction of these *bothain* we meet with nothing but professions of absolute ignorance. "Wherever placed," writes Captain Thomas, "all the natives agree that no one knows who built them, and that they were not made by the fathers nor grandfathers of persons now living." This general statement, however, he qualifies by reporting an assertion "that one was built by a person who is still alive" (1858), and, later, gives as his conclusion "from various circumstances" that the *both* at Cnoc Dubh "was made about ninety years back" (1867).¹ Struck with these two unique exceptions, I made careful inquiry of an informant in every way excellently qualified to speak on the subject, with the result that he refuses to admit the exceptions, and reiterates the entire local ignorance of the origin of these buildings. "My grandfather," he writes, "whom I well remember, lived here and among the 'beehives' 105 years: my father lived 87 years, and I am 50 years—perhaps the longest pedigree that can be found in Lewis or Harris." The whole district which I traversed in his company is thoroughly familiar to him, and he himself lived in his youth in the "beehives" of Glen Marstaig. "I have to say," he continues, "that the 'beehives' were as ancient and mysterious to my grandfather as they were to my father and me. There is not the slightest recollection of even the tradition of who built them, any more than of those who built the old Duns or the Druidical Stones." On the particular point at issue he is emphatic in declaring that he cannot accept the statement recorded by Captain Thomas—which, I may note, has passed into general

¹ Built by a man Smith from Callernish, says a local informant, practically corroborating Captain Thomas's statement.

and unqualified acceptance;¹ adding that all it may mean is that the man may have helped "to renovate and bring an ancient 'beehive' to a modern summer shieling, as many now living here have seen done. Captain Thomas's story must have originated from such tampering." The Glen Marstaig 'beehives' with which he was personally familiar were, he informs me, "reduced to summer shielings in 1832, and remained in use for that purpose until 1872, when the people were deprived of the grazing in order that the ground might be converted into a deer-forest." From a recent Bluebook we find further that the Scalisco deer-forest, to which, in part, this addition was then made, was formed in 1850, it having been previously, under the Seaforth ownership, a sheep-farm. The groups above Loch-an-Sguir and Loch Choirigerod are included in the Morsgail deer-forest, constituted out of a sheep-farm also about the same time. But these *bothain*, my informant tells me, "were never occupied within the memory of living man."

The records of early travellers in the Highlands afford us scarcely any light on our subject. Wherever we meet with any description of a typical Highland dwelling, we invariably have it in a form still familiar to us (fig. 10). The modern shieling or *airidh*, when it is not a mere turf hovel, is simply such a dwelling in miniature (fig. 11). We hear of the men at the opening of the shieling season early in June setting out with wood, heather ropes, etc., for the repair of the temporary dwellings. This is a contingency that could scarcely arise in the use of stone-roofed *bothain*. For the crofter, indeed, the roof is the most valuable part of his house. When he is shifted from one site to another he carries his roof with him,² a natural economy in a country where growing timber is unknown. One witness from Harris stated to the Crofter Commission that when the people of his district in his youth went to the shielings, the huts they had on the-hills were "like ordinary houses built of stone and turf."³

A reference to beehive structures is almost certainly intended in the

¹ Cf. *Prehistoric Scotland*, Munro, p. 338.

² *Evidence Crofter Commission* (1884), vol. ii. pp. 903, 905, 930, 943.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 853.



Fig. 10. Modern crofter's house at Coulgrein, Stornoway.



Fig. 11. Airidh or modern shieling.

words of Martin (*c.* 1695) speaking of Skye, where none, however, is said now to exist. After describing some "earth-houses," he writes: "There are several little stone houses built above ground capable only of one person, and round in form. . . . They are called *Tey-nin-druinich*, *i.e.*, Druids' House."

A similar attribution, significant, like the Greek "Cyclopean," only of helpless ignorance, occurs in Pennant, who, in his description of the Broch at Glenbeg, Inverness-shire, writes: "Almost contiguous to this entrance, or portico, was a small circle formed of rude stones, which was called the foundation of the Druids' houses. . . . I was told there were many others of the kind scattered over the valley." The "grotesque groupe" of shielings which he describes in Jura were constructed of "branches of trees covered with sods."¹

Pennant indeed gives a description with illustrative drawings of what he calls a Pictish building in Caithness, as supplied to him by Mr Pope of Reay. The appearance is that of a "beehive," the dimensions—a wall 14 feet thick enclosing an area of 22 feet, and measuring to the spring of the arch 12 feet—with the ground plan, showing eight lodging rooms of an oval form in the heart of the wall, suggest rather a Broch.

I need not enter into any discussion of the *type* of these *bothain*, as that has been thoroughly dealt with elsewhere.² This primitive approximation to the "arched roof" extends from Greece to Greenland: abundant examples are found in Ireland, where its pre-Christian character has been fairly established. O'Flaherty, writing of those in Connaught in 1684, speaks of them in terms identical with those derived from other sources: "nobody knows how long ago any of them was made."

We may note also the examples from Holyhead Island in Wales,³ and that at Chysauster, Gulval, Cornwall,⁴ which have been placed in the same category. All these are circular and dry-stone built, but have

¹ Creel Houses. See Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, 30th August.

² See *Proc. Soc. Ant.*, vols. iii., vii.; Sir A. Mitchell's *Past in the Present*; Munro's *Prehistoric Scotland*.

³ *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxiv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. xviii.

about five times the amount of floor space of those in the Hebrides, with the walls, to which they are all practically reduced, three to four times as thick. As no roof has survived, the question whether in any case it was formed in the familiar "beehive" fashion of *encorbellation* is admittedly doubtful; while the extent of floor space to be spanned, varying from 15 to 34 feet, increases the improbability, especially when we note the polygonal character of the stones used.

No doubt, however, attaches to the method of construction of similar dwellings in the islands of the Mediterranean basin, where, says Mr Arthur Evans, there exists "a continuous zone of the Cyclopean tradition of domed chambers." From the mainland, too, we have precise testimony. M. Prosper Castanier, in his *Histoire de Provence dans l'Antiquité*,¹ writes:—

"On trouve, encore, en maintes régions du Bas-Languedoc et de Provence, des cabanes rustiques, placées généralement aux angles des champs, et qui ont gardé la forme antique: elles s'élèvent sur un plan circulaire jusqu'à une hauteur de deux mètres; à ce point naît la calotte de four qui les recouvre et que forment des moellons bruts, plats, posés en encorbellement et par assises horizontales. Le plus souvent une large pierre plate sert de clef à la voûte. Ces constructions n'ont ni ciment, ni poutre, ni tuiles, ni chevrons; elles composent souvent une pièce unique et possèdent une seule ouverture, étroite et basse. Elles servent aujourd'hui d'abris aux cultivateurs par le mauvais temps; parfois ceux-ci s'y cachent pour attendre le gibier."

He states, further, that the same methods of construction are to be found in the fortified positions at La Malle, La Tourre, L'Andido and other places, and concludes that all these go back to one time, and are the work of one people. They are alternatively called "Celtic" or "Ligurian." And, just as in the Hebrides, we find the traditional workmanship persisting among the Italian and French shepherds of the Alpes Maritimes, who still build circular stone huts after the beehive fashion, about 8 feet high and as many wide, contracting towards the roof, which is also of stone. Through the kindness of the Rev. J. E. Somerville, Mentone, to whom I am indebted for most of what I have said in this

¹ Vol. i., pp. 178, 179.

connection, I am able to give an illustration of such a hut, one of several said to be ancient, which has been repaired and roofed by the shepherds, who further provided it with the side openings from which they might shoot foxes who came to prey on the lambs (fig. 11A).

Returning now to the *bothain* of the Lews, we may conclude that in all the cases which I have described we are dealing with the early shielings of a people semi-pastoral in their mode of life. They are all

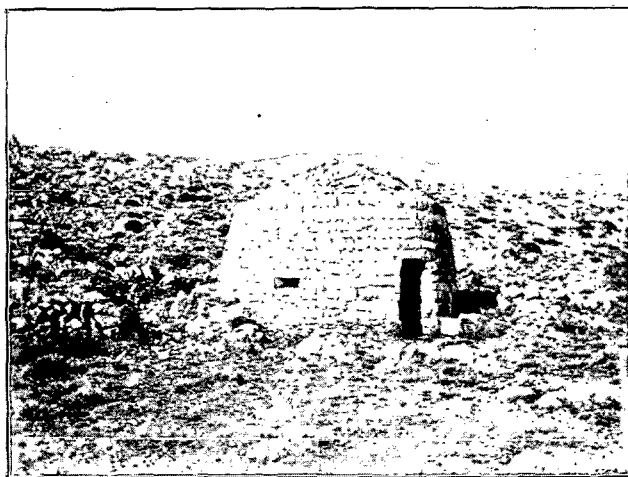


Fig. 11A. Shepherd's Hut in the Maritime Alps.

on garrys, or grassy knolls, which in their freedom from the damp moss afforded a resting-place for man and beast. The neighbouring lochs teem with fish. Probably they were occupied for a longer time than is the case now where the custom of pasturage survives. The people depended mainly on their cattle for subsistence, and their winter store of butter and cheese was made in the shielings. It is not necessary to suppose that every example, wherever found, is a shieling. The elaborate and interconnected structures of identical type,¹ described

¹ Probably "communal dwellings."

by Captain Thomas and others, probably indicate, as I have already suggested, the more permanent habitations in the neighbourhood of the tilled ground and near the fruitful sea. While the latter might in course of time be abandoned, the former, as still satisfactorily serving a need, would continue, as they have done, in use to the present day.

STONE CIRCLES.

In the matter of the stone circles of the Lews, that at Callernish, which is rather a circle of small diameter with a central cairn and con-



Fig. 12. Concentric Circles near Callernish.

verging lines and avenues of standing stones, has, by its magnitude and imposing appearance, cast all others into unmerited shade. Yet even the significance and picturesqueness of this majestic monument may be enhanced by consideration of the fact that two slighter but in themselves striking and interesting groups stand about a mile to the east, on a low ridge striking southwards from the highroad to the shore of upper Loch Roag; while about a couple of miles farther east, flanking the Uig road, are one shapely circle and some minor fragments, still erect, of another. Westwards, again, on the low cliff of the Great Bernera, stand three

conspicuous stones overlooking the Narrows of Earshadir. The mere enumeration of these facts seems to me suggestive.

Moreover, these minor circles are not all of the same type. That nearer the Callernish road is made up of two concentric rings (fig. 12). The outer consists of eight stones, and there are four lying. The greatest breadth of one triangular stone is 3 feet 10 inches. This outer ring has a rather scattered appearance. The inner ring (fig. 13) is marked by four stones, of which three on the east side stand close together; the

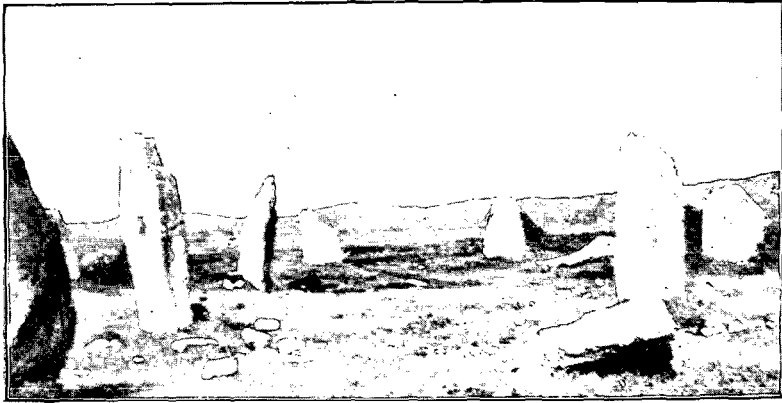


Fig. 13. Inner Ring of Concentric Circles near Callernish.

fourth is opposite, rather to the north. Two of the former group are 5 and 6 feet respectively above ground; the solitary stone is 8 feet. There is no central mound or cairn or other enclosed feature.

About a quarter of a mile due west, where the ridge, after sinking to the moor, rises slightly again, is the companion circle, a single ring of much taller stones (fig. 14). Five still stand; three are on the ground. Of the latter, what looks the most massive measures 6 feet 2 inches by 8 feet as uncovered, and is 7 inches thick at what would have been, when erect, the top. From this to a square stone opposite the diameter measures 60 feet. The largest erect stone, of triangular shape, is 10

feet 2 inches above ground. The most interesting feature, however, is a large stone-built cairn occupying about half the internal space (fig. 15), and having a small chamber or pit in its centre shaped like a large round-bodied bottle with a short neck, in this respect resembling the pit in the Callernish cairn, which is, however, rectangular. The highest surface of the cairn is about flush with the surrounding peat, which has been cleared away from both circles to a depth varying from



Fig. 14. Circle near Callernish, showing four of the five stones.

1 foot to 18 inches. In the central space of this circle round the cairn were found, when it was laid bare, four square holes containing charcoal.²

The circle beyond Garry-na-hine overlooking the Uig road is also conspicuously placed.¹ It is formed by five stones (fig. 16) all about a size, that at the southern extremity, where there is a gap in the regularity of their positions, being 8 feet 9 inches high by 3 feet 2 inches broad, and varying in thickness from 6 inches at bottom to about 8½ inches near the top. The diameter of the closely circular enclosed space is

¹ *Tursachan Ceann Thulabhig.*

² *Proc. Soc. Ant.*, vol. iii.

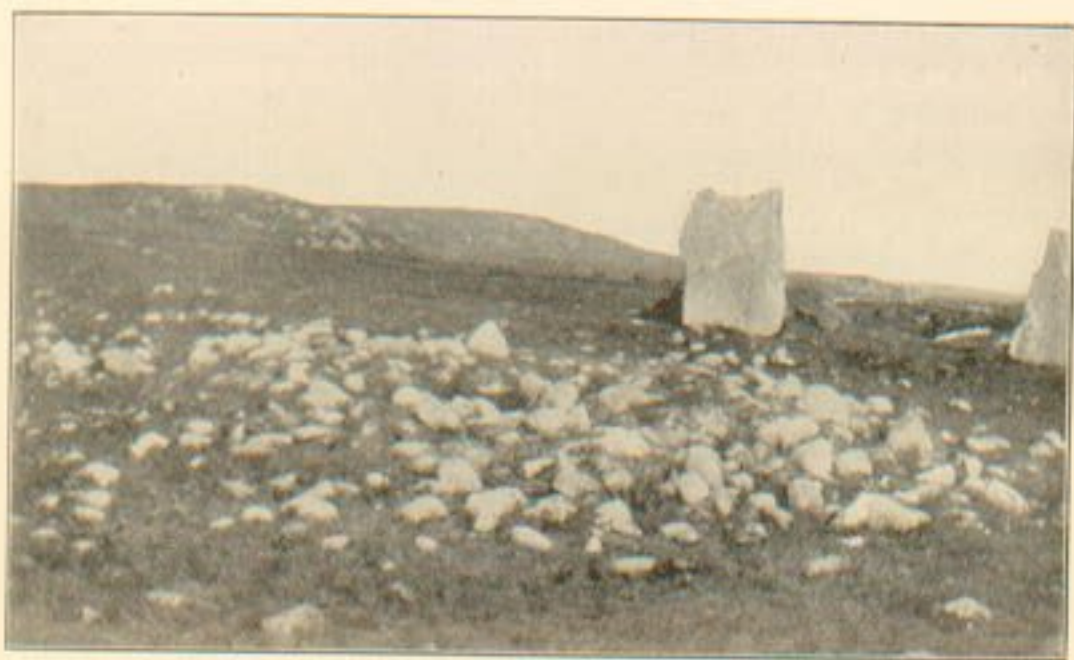


Fig. 15. Circle near Callernish, showing central cairn.



Fig. 16. Single Circle near Garry-na-hine.

about 30 feet 6 inches. In the centre is a rather dilapidated cairn about 6 feet across, with a stone on end 2 feet high (fig. 17). Quite two feet of turf have been removed from inside the ring of stones.

Less than a quarter of a mile into the moor on the other side of the road are three small stones standing about 3 feet above the moss, the remains of a circle of which all other portions have disappeared¹ (fig. 18).

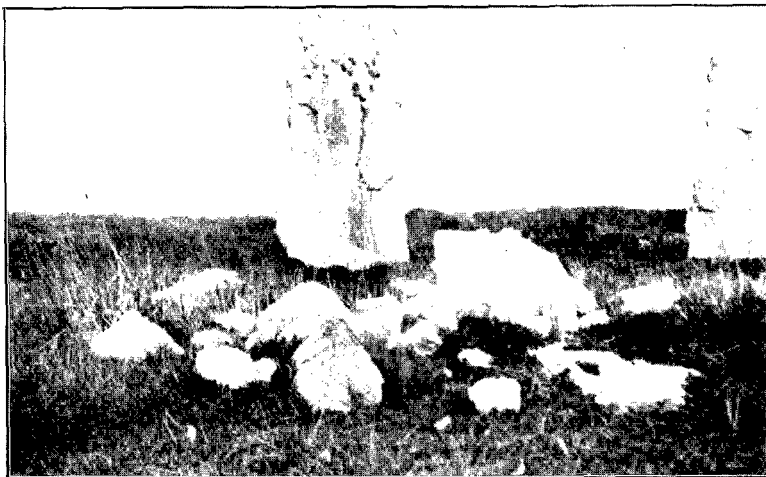


Fig. 17. Cairn in centre of Circle beyond Garry-na-hine.

All the stones making up these groups are formed of the schistose gneiss of the locality, but do not appear to have been quarried in the immediate neighbourhood.

DUNS.

The word '*Dun*,' as cognate with O.E. '*tun*,' modern '*town*,' is applicable to any form of fortified position, the original '*town*' also having had a similar significance. An exhaustive list of all such sites

¹ *Tursachan Airidh nam Bidearan.*

in Lewis has been compiled,¹ and to this I purpose making but one addition, with elucidatory notes on certain others.

As in the case of the circles, one example dominates the whole—the well-known Dun at Carloway, which is of the type of structure known as a broch. One side still rises to near the original height, and well shows the peculiar contour of the external wall (fig. 19). Its inner face displays the characteristic openings to the inter-mural galleries (fig. 20). The door side is, however, reduced to the level of the lintel (fig. 21).

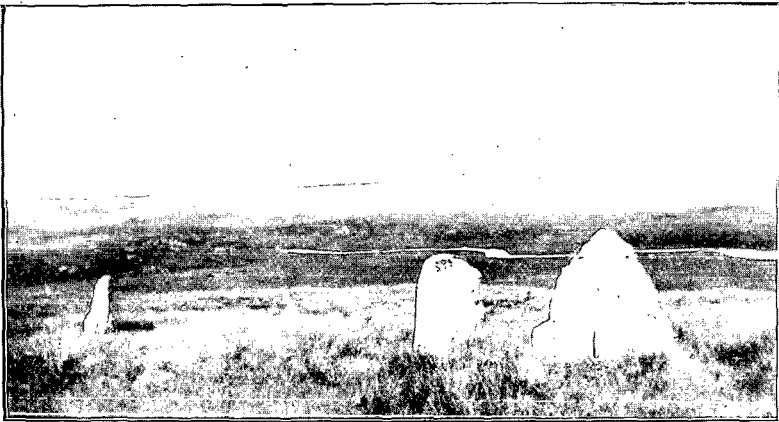


Fig. 18. Portions of a Circle near Garry-na-hine.

The solid wall here is 10 feet thick. Inside the passage rises to the central court, though the slope is no doubt largely due to accumulated debris. The diameter across the court is about 24 feet. The section exposed on the right contains the ruin of the stair. The lowest gallery, with those above, extends all round the standing portion, and the walls are most carefully constructed of easily handled stones pretty much of a size. It is 5 feet 6 inches in height. Captain Thomas in his elaborate description² speaks of a set of beehive cells in the basement, lower still. The section on the left shows the twin walls (fig. 22). The outer is

¹ *Archæologia Scotica*, vol. v. p. 365.

² *Ibid.*

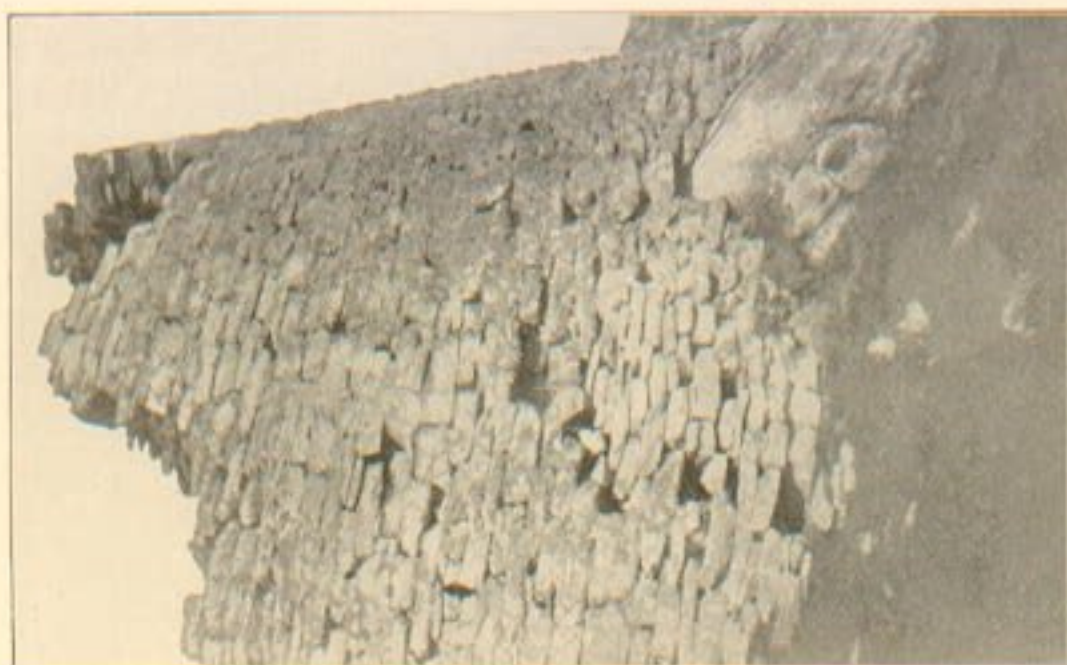


Fig. 19. Dun Carloway, east wall.

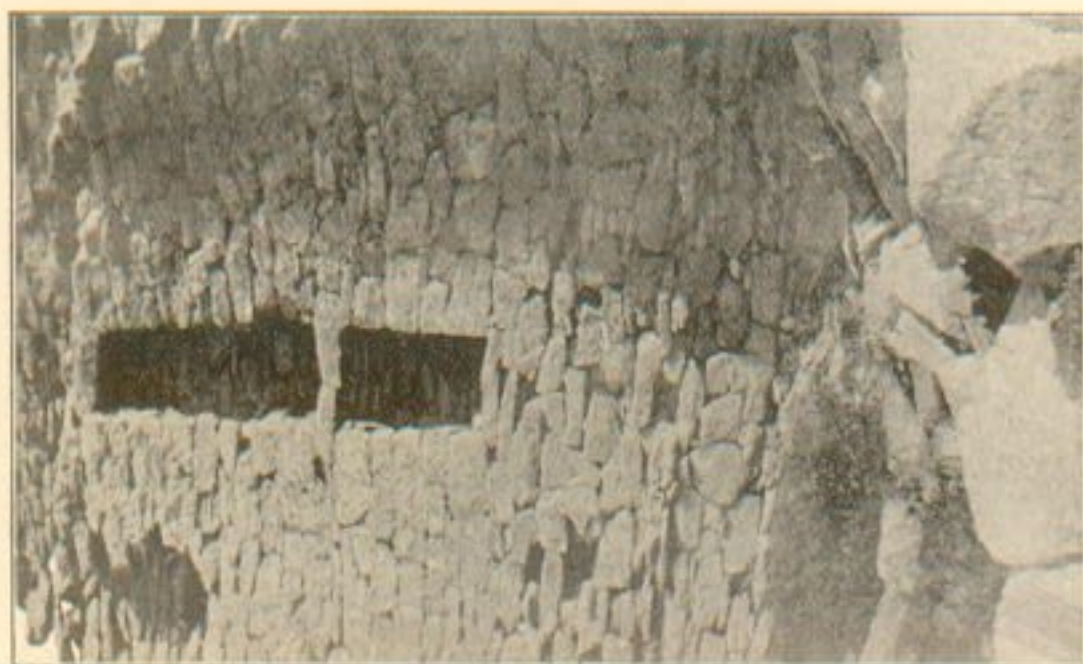


Fig. 20. Dun Carloway, showing openings to galleries, from the west.



Fig. 21. Dun Carloway, entrance.

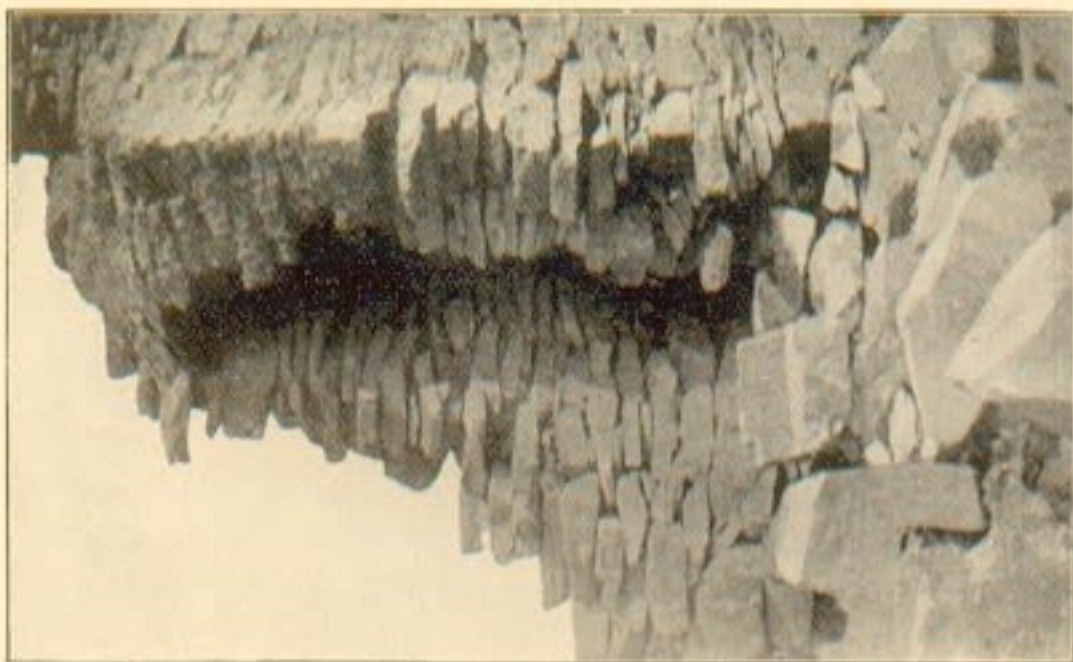


Fig. 22. Dun Carloway, section on left or north of east wall.

3 feet thick and the inner 2 feet 4 inches, while the interspace measures 2 feet—giving a total thickness of 7 feet 4 inches.

Dun Carloway belongs to the class of what may be called shore duns. A more striking example in site occupies the top of a small headland at the northern point of the Great Bernera, looking out on East Loch Roag and visible from Dun Carloway. It is known as Dun Stuidh, and has not so far, to my knowledge, been recorded. The site is



Fig. 23. Portion of building at Dun Stuidh, Great Bernera.

90 feet above sea level, and is approached from the land side over a narrow saddle-shaped isthmus, traversed by a deep chasm. The position thus resembles that of Dun Arnistean on the western shore of the main island, below Dell, which is even more difficult of access. A portion of wall on the inner face of what is practically an isolated stack is all that remains of the original defences of the latter. Of Dun Stuidh, however, the ruins are considerable though chaotic, and on the outside grass-grown. Concentric walls are clearly traceable, and to the right of the entrance which opens on the east side, looking

seawards, is a small chambered portion 2 feet 6 inches wide which has escaped being stopped up by the tumbled masonry. Opposite the land approach a patch of the outer building shows clear (fig. 23). The distance from the extreme outer to the extreme inner face of the concentric walls varies from 9 to 10 feet, and the apparent greatest diameter of the structure, including the walls, measures 39 feet, giving for the inner court a diameter of about 20 feet. The ground plan is roughly circular.



Fig. 24. Portion of building at Dun Nicisabhat, Kirkibost.

Reduced to little more than green ramparts one within the other, but showing at one place the masonry rising from the rocky site (fig. 24), is Dun Nicisabhat in Kirkibost, on the southern shore of the same island of Bernera. Captain Thomas gives an alternative name of Tidaborough. Its stones have been utilised in the construction of adjoining houses. It rises from the edge of a steep escarpment about a quarter of a mile from the shore. The entrance is on the north side. Its extreme diameter is between 50 and 60 feet over an irregular grass-grown enclosure, while the inner court measures about 30 feet inside the wall, which has an apparent thickness, at the base, to which it is reduced, of

nearly six feet. In its present condition, however, a superficial view of the material affords little that is definite.

My next example belongs to the class of lake duns such as Dun Barvas, Dun Shadir, and many others in the Lews. It stands on—covers, indeed—a little island on Loch Bharabhat at the southern end of the Great Bernera—about 80 feet from the shore, or, according to Captain Thomas,¹ 20 fathoms from the grass line. It is approached over a



Fig. 25. Dun Bharabhat, Great Bernera.

causeway, now appearing above the water as *starran* or stepping-stones (fig. 25). In the "Traditions of the Macaulays"² Captain Thomas notes that he has never seen such stepping-stones "placed in a straight line, but always in a curve," which he considers "an obvious advantage in defence." In the present case the causeway is certainly curved, more probably following a slight ridge in the lake bottom; but the width and solidity of the approach through the comparatively shallow water so near shore appears to me to negative any notion of defensive stratagem.

¹ *Archæologia Scot.*, vol. v. p. 391.

² *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xiv. p. 363.

On reaching the island we find, resting on the native rock and with but a narrow margin between it and the water, a thickly lichened wall rising to a height of at most 10 feet 8 inches and extending for about a quarter of the way round. Thereafter it is a low tumbled wall of irregular shape, as it follows the contour of the island, enclosing a mass of loose stones overgrown with honeysuckle and brier. The ground plan is thus difficult to get clear; but such as it is, it may be found in the paper of which I have spoken above.¹ The diameter of the area within



Fig. 26. Dun Bharabhat, interior.

the extreme walls varies from 25 to 36 feet. The central stones would seem also to indicate a structure of some sort, whose nature and purpose, however, cannot be discerned. Between it and the line of wall to the south is a crescent-shaped space, measuring at the most about 18 feet.

The erect portion of wall is on the north side, facing the stepping-stones, and shows two openings, the lower hidden by the vegetation. These have an average width of about 2 feet 4 inches, and together give an open space 6 feet high (fig. 26). From this westwards the wall is solid, but to the east runs a gallery flagged on the top—which forms

¹ *Archæologia Scot.*; vol. v. p. 391, and Plate 48.

the upper surface of the wall—in the usual broch fashion. It is choked with fallen material (fig. 27), but would seem, as Captain Thomas affirms¹—and he saw the ruin in rather better condition—to have been occupied

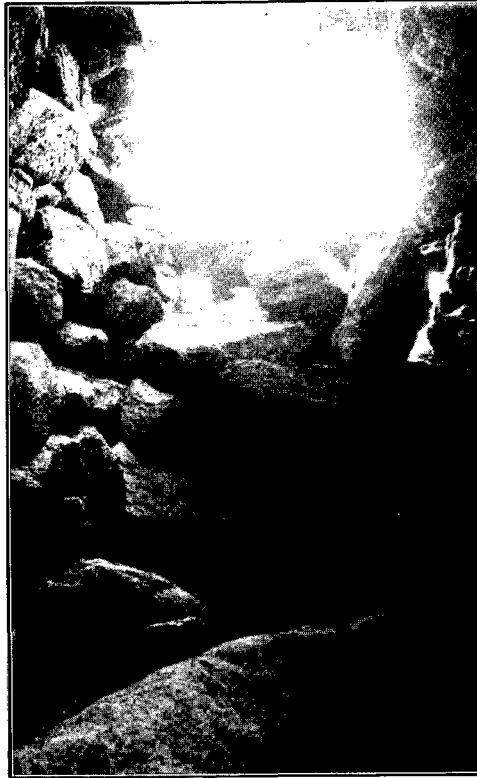


Fig. 27. Dun Bharabhat, interior of gallery.

by a stair. The solid wall on the other side would seem to have flanked the entrance (fig. 28). It is 8 feet thick about 6 feet from the base. In Dun Bharabhat we appear to be dealing with a broch which

¹ *Archæologia Scotica*, vol. v. p. 392.

either possessed certain peculiar features of its own, or was subjected to some later modifications of the original structure.

I have now to deal with two duns which plainly do not come under



Fig. 28. Dun Bharabhat, southern extremity of wall.

the category of brochs. On the main island, off the eastern corner of Bernera, is Dun Baraghloum. It occupies the crest of a small bluff 25 feet above sea level, with half a mile of narrow sea loch on its west side and a short bight on that opposite. A ditch or dry moat apparently

filled up with debris cuts across the level, and on either side are the foundations of a curvilinear building of stone connected across the hollow by a line of stone causeway. About a third of the length of each is cut off by a transverse wall, dividing it into a larger and a smaller compartment, the latter of which we may take to have been a sleeping chamber. Enclosing the whole is a broken line of circumvallation.

The structures are parallel to each other and point roughly east and west. The outer is rather pear-shaped, and while its western division

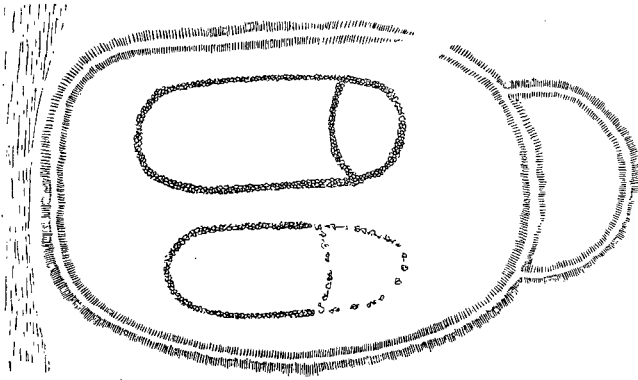


Fig. 29. Rough sketch-plan of Dun Mara. (Scale, 24 feet to an inch.)

measures 18 feet by 10 feet 5 inches, the other has mean measurements of 10 feet by 20 feet. The inner building is 20 feet long in the eastern compartment and 7 feet 2 inches in the other, while it has an average breadth of about 12 feet. The inner faces of the roughly built walls are mostly bare, but the outer are grass-grown. The thickness of the walls, reduced to their present condition, does not exceed a few feet. At the narrow bridge the ditch is 13 feet wide.

A similar arrangement of buildings within a grassy rampart is to be found on the summit of the headland known as Dun Mara (fig. 29) on the west coast of the island below Cross, Barvas, and a few miles from the

Butt. The circumvallation here is clearly defined at an average distance of about 6 feet from the remains of the stone buildings. To the right of the entrance to the works, up to which there is a gentle rise, are traces of a semicircular hornwork of earth. Of the interior structures, both of which are divided transversely in a precisely similar manner to those of the first case, one to the left is 24 feet for the one compartment and 8 feet for the other on the longer axis, east and west, with an average width of about 12 feet; while its companion is 19 feet by 10, with the smaller section in addition rather ill-defined and broken in outline.

In these twin structures surrounded by an earthen rampart we seem to have to do with a type of fortification hitherto undescribed so far as the Lews is concerned. Captain Thomas reports¹ that "one of the old people" informed him that Dun Mara had been "as round as a bottle," and that eighty years before that time it was "quite entire," in which information the Captain comments he was "certainly mistaken." So far as the stone portions are concerned, I have observed their like in the ground plan, though generally there associated in groups connected by low passages, in the island of Berisay, which Neil Macleod fortified and held for three years (1610-1613) against the Mackenzies of Kintail, who had at last obtained possession of the island. It is known from the indictment at his trial that Neil ran "divers forays" on the main island, and these constructions in the neighbourhood of fertile districts may have served as bases for this purpose.² In any case, it is not likely that they can be dated any time posterior to the last great internecine struggle which convulsed the Lews.

¹ *Archæologia Scotica*, vol. v. p. 372.

² There is no water supply in either case.