

II.

REPORT ON STONE CIRCLES SURVEYED IN PERTHSHIRE (SOUTH-EAST DISTRICT), WITH MEASURED PLANS AND DRAWINGS; OBTAINED UNDER THE GUNNING FELLOWSHIP. BY FRED. R. COLES, ASSISTANT KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM.

The sites examined during last September lie, for the most part, in scattered groups on both sides of the river Ericht, and in Alyth between that river and the river Isla, and also on the west between Blairgowrie and Dunkeld. A few others are considerably farther to the south, in the vicinity of Perth.¹ Considering the more northern portion of this district as that defined by the Ericht and the Lornty Burn, there is one feature noticeable on the Ordnance map; and this is the occurrence of the word "Circle," printed in old English lettering, but unaccompanied by any qualifying epithet. This word occurs frequently in groups close beside groups of cairns. The name being so vague, we were in duty bound to visit these sites; and, as the sequel proves, we found that it is admissible to state that in this peculiar variety of "Circle" Perthshire possesses a structural form of sepulchral site different from any hitherto recorded as such. The so-called "Camp" at Montgoldrum, Forfarshire,² bears a close external resemblance to these Perthshire "circles," and there are probably many others hitherto unclassified and perhaps unnoticed. Although these "circles" are not composed of conspicuous Standing Stones, they are, in a modified sense, circles of stones, and therefore claim a brief notice in the current report.

¹ The resultant irregularity of treatment and paucity in the number of sites noticed in this report were unavoidable, owing to the extremely disconcerting weather conditions. After the 14th September, one perpetual burden of mist hovered over this part of Perthshire, absolutely unbroken by the sun's rays even at noon, until 1st October. On many days, therefore, the identification of sites in a new district was, even with a compass, a sheer impossibility.

² Described and figured in the *Proceedings*, vol. xxxvii. p. 193.

The form and features of this new variety of "circle" are well exhibited in the site first to be described, the site farthest north on the east bank of the river Ericht.

A. THE NORTH ERICHT GROUP.

No. 1. "*Circle*" at *Hillhead, near Milton of Drimmie*.—In this locality, about two miles south of the Forest of Alyth, a large extent of open moorland still remains at about 950 feet above sea-level, and near its centre, half a mile south-east of the farm named Gabert of Clayquhat and a quarter of a mile west of the Burn of Drimmie, this inconspicuous circular ridge may be seen (fig. 1). As it rises above the heather barely two feet, and the surface of the moor is itself uneven, such a slight piece of artificial work might easily be passed over. The annexed ground-plan will show the following facts: that this bank encloses a flattish hollow measuring 43 feet N. and S. by 46 feet E. and W., irregularly circular; that its height above the centre of the hollow is about 3 feet; that it is distinctly broken on the south arc by an opening about 8 feet wide, and that a few stones lie about on its crest and slopes. I may add that the whole ridge feels stony to the tread and the probing of a stick.

It has been conjectured that this variety of structure, composed of a stony earthen bank, was a hut circle. This theory is, I think, untenable for the following reasons: because the diameter, between 40 and 50 feet, is much too great; because the inner face of the ridge is nowhere so sharply defined, nor so vertical, as in the hut-circle type of structure. Moreover, as will presently be pointed out, one such "circle" has already been proved to be a burial-place; and lastly, although these circular ridges occur in groups in at least this district of Perthshire, they do not occur in great numbers and closely adjacent, as hut-circles generally do.

No. 2. "*Circles*" *West of Parlneuk*.—These are situated close to the south edge of the moorland road running eastwards to Mains of Creuchies, and are distant from that farm one mile and a half to the

west. They are two in number, placed only a few yards apart, on the moor at a height of about 700 feet above sea-level. The measurements and description above given of the Hillhead "Circle" apply so closely

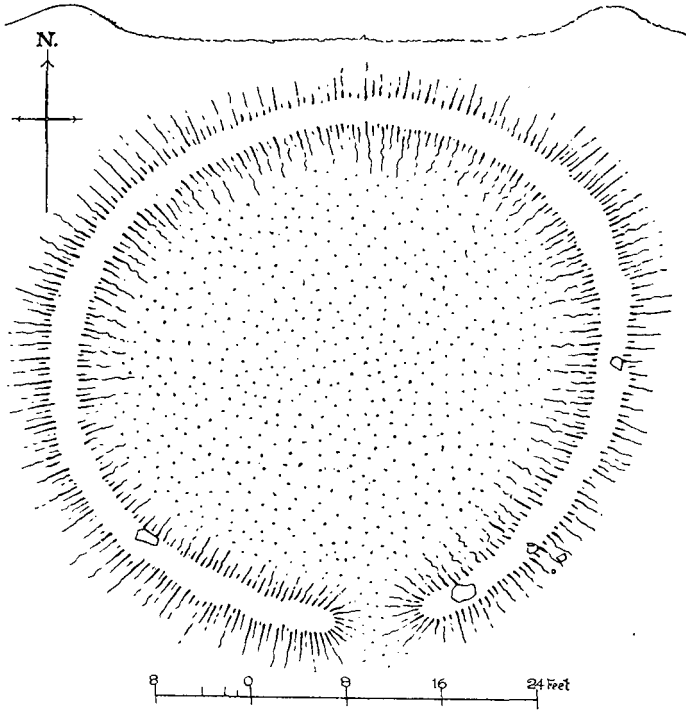


Fig. 1. Circle near Hillhead, Hill of Drimmie ; Plan and Section.

to the features of these two that it is unnecessary to show ground-plans of them.

No. 3. Stone Circle near Parkneuk, Tullymurdoch.—This site, in an old strip of woodland now full of tree-stumps, is about 840 feet above sea-level, half-way between Olies Burn and the same road just mentioned

about one mile west of Creuchies. In this wood there are two distinct and separate groups of Standing Stones. The smaller but much more interesting of the two stands at the northern end of the wood.

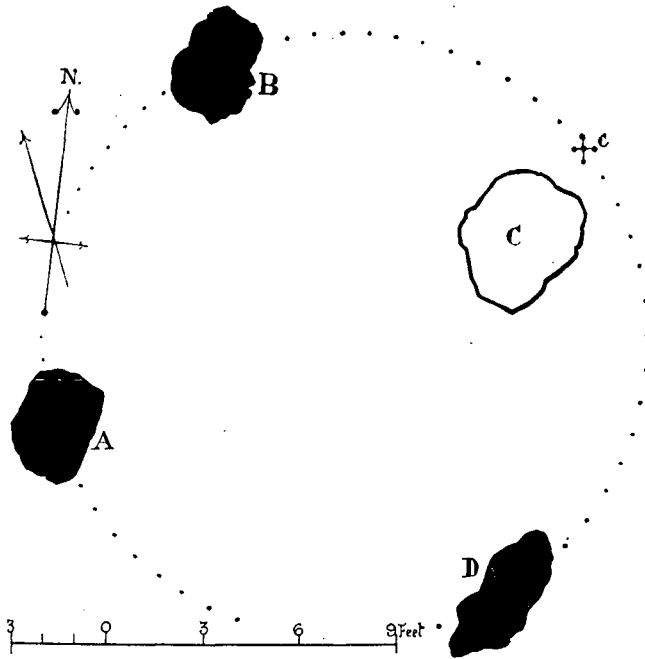


Fig. 2. Stone Circle near Parkneuk, Tullymurdoch ; Ground-plan.

The ground-plan (fig. 2) shows the bases of three Stones, A, B, D, still erect, and the contour of a fourth, C, which has fallen inwards.

Probably its original position was at the cross marked C, which would complete a truly circular group having a diameter of 19 feet. The ground enclosed is quite smooth and flat; and from its partial isolation, the ridge on which these and the other Stones were placed commands a somewhat extensive view in all directions.

The dimensions and characteristics of these four Stones are as follows :—Stone A, 4 feet in height, and in basal girth 10 feet, of grey granite ; B, 3 feet 4 inches in height, 10 feet 6 inches in girth, a very square block of whinstone ; C, the fallen Stone, of grey granite, is about one foot thick above ground, and 4 feet 6 inches by 4 feet in length and

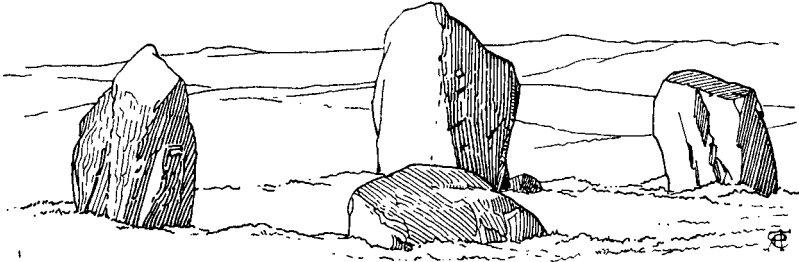


Fig. 3. Stone Circle near Parkneuk, Tullymurdoch ; View from the East.

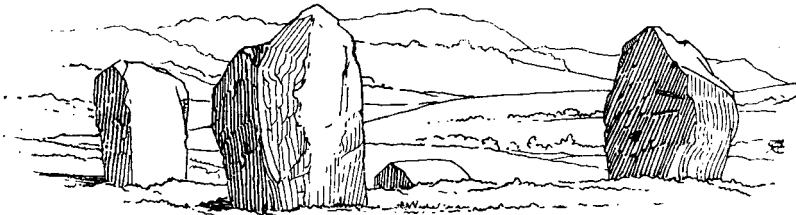


Fig. 4. Stone Circle near Parkneuk, Tullymurdoch ; View from the West.

breadth ; D, 3 feet 10 inches in height, and girth 10 feet 6 inches. It is probably of whinstone.

Two views are appended (figs. 3, 4).

No. 4. Remains of Stone Circle, Tullymurdoch.—If you pace from Stone A (fig. 2) in a south-westerly direction for ninety yards, you reach Stone D (fig. 5) in the ground-plan of the second group of now mostly fallen Stones near Parkneuk. On the actual site, these massive blocks lie about in a manner scarcely suggestive of a circular group ; but this is

partly accounted for by the comparatively great distance between the three prostrate Stones A, B, C, and the only erect one, F, on the east, and partly by the eye being arrested from the numerous tree-stumps, which, grey and hoary with lichen, almost resemble the Stones themselves. When worked out from measurements, the ground-plan shows that, in

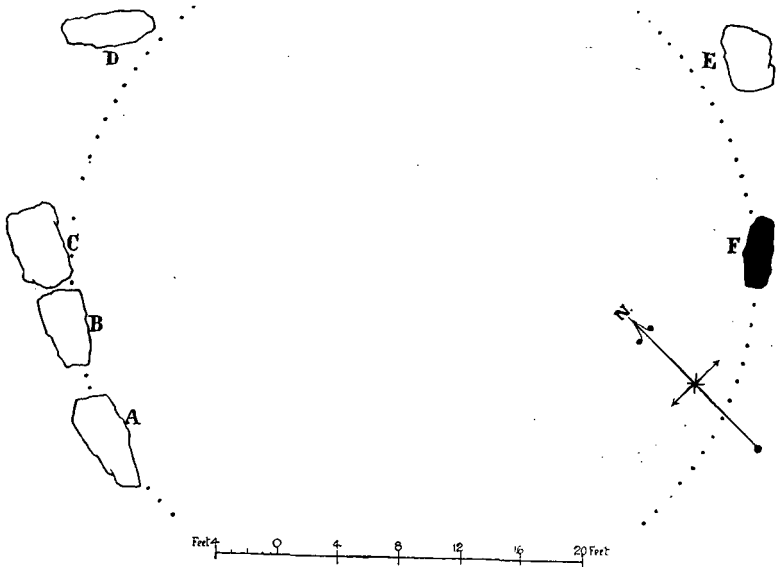


Fig. 5. Remains of Stone Circle at Parkneuk, Tullymurdoch ; Ground-plan.

spite of much disturbance, and also probably of some destruction, the six Stones now here may be the component parts of a Circle with a diameter of 45 feet. Taking the space between the centres of F (the still erect Stone) and E, the nearest fallen block, we find that a distance of about 13 feet may have been the mean interspace. Therefore if equidistantly placed, eleven stones may have been the original number. How, or when, the three great blocks on the west arc became so misplaced it is now impossible to determine.

Stone A measures 7 ft. by 3 ft., and is 2 ft. 6 ins. thick.

„ B „ 6 „ „ 3 „ „ 2 „ thick.

„ C „ 6 „ „ 3 „ 4 ins. and is 2 ft. thick.

„ D „ 6 „ 3 ins. by 2 ft. 3 ins. and is 1 ft. 8 ins. thick.

„ E „ 4 „ 9 „ „ 3 „ 4 „ „ 1 „ 8 „ „

The erect Stone F stands 2 feet 4 inches in height, and its basal girth is 11 feet 6 inches.

For the reasons above stated referable to the obstructed nature of the site, no illustration of the appearance of these Stones was practicable.

No. 5. Site of Circle, Hill of Drimmie.—Coming southward from Parkneuk, a wild moorland track, now rarely used, was formerly the means of communication between that place and Glenballoch, three miles down the river-side. At about three-quarters of a mile from Parkneuk, at the 800-foot contour line, there is marked on the O.M. the site of a Circle. Of this nothing now remains; and as from no one in the neighbourhood was there any tradition obtainable as to Standing Stones, the inference seems justifiable that this also was an earthen ridge-site similar to the three already noticed.

No. 6. Stone Circle, near Woodside, Hill of Drimmie.—Half a mile still southwards, and within a few yards of the fine fir-wood here skirting both road and moor, we found our next site. The height of the hillock to the north, just above the flat ground occupied by the Stones, is given on the O.M. as 818 feet above sea-level. Yet, though comparatively lofty, little or no prospect is obtained from this spot. A wire fence, K K on the plan (fig. 6), has been carried through the enclosed area in such a way as to cut off the largest Stone (B on plan), which now lies prostrate on the west.

It is, however, extremely difficult to be certain whether the four principal Stones, A, B, D, and E, were once erect, or were placed as they now are. It is evident that a true Circle, represented on the plan by a dotted line, almost precisely bisects A, B, and D. But it does not bisect E, the deeper portion of this Stone running into the ground as shown. If we suppose them all to have been set up originally vertically

(on what are now their outermost ends), we should have a Circle of 22 feet in diameter. As they lie, the Circle is only 15 feet 9 inches in diameter. Rather unusually, these four Stones are set almost exactly to the four main points of the compass. Their dimensions are:—

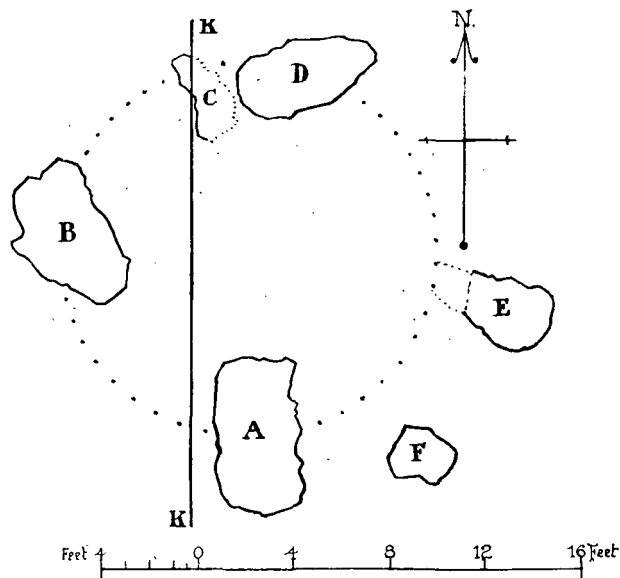


Fig. 6. Stone Circle on Hill of Drimmie; Ground-plan.

- Stone A. 6 ft. 9 ins. by 3 ft. 6 ins. by 1 ft. 2 ins., quartzose schist.
 „ B. 6 „ 4 „ „ 3 „ 9 „ „ 1 „ 10 „
 „ C. 3 „ 6 „ (runs in towards D).
 „ D. 6 „ by 3 ft. by 1 ft. 4 ins.; grey granite, very rough and irregular.
 „ E. 3 ft. 9 ins. by 2 ft. 10 ins. by 1 ft. 2 ins., schistose.
 „ F. 2 „ 10 „ squarish, and low.

A view of the group as seen from the south-east is here given (fig. 7).

No. 7. Site of Standing Stone, Woodside, Hill of Drimmie.—It is recorded on the O.M. that a Standing Stone stood in a field here, a quarter of a mile S.W. of the gamekeeper's cottage at Woodside, and half a mile in the same direction from the Circle last noticed. There now remains nothing to indicate the site.

No. 8. Site of Stone Circle, Woodside.—This site is not marked on the O.M. It was, however, an important one, though not a vestige now remains of the monoliths composing it. I was led to the identification

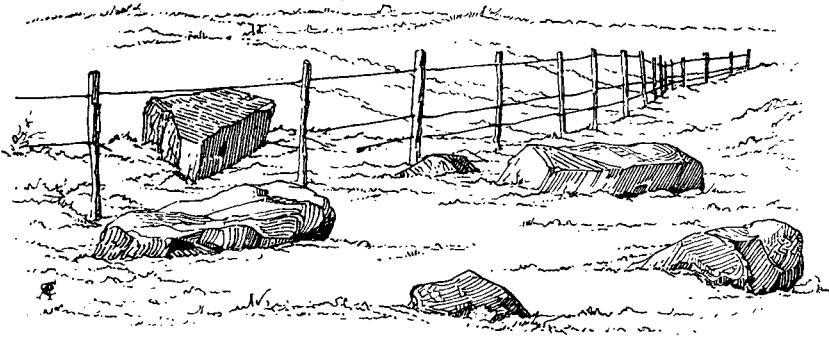


Fig. 7. Stone Circle on Hill of Drimmie ; View from the South-east.

of the site in the following way. At Glenballoch, near by, there is a great Standing Stone (presently to be described). It was figured by Mr J. Romilly Allen,¹ and in the course of his account it is recorded that he brought away to the museum the fragments of a remarkably fine cinerary urn, which had been presented by Mr George Harris, then tenant of Glenballoch. Mr Allen was assured at the time by Mr Harris that the urn had been taken out of a Stone Circle somewhere in the near vicinity. It is described as being "found full of bones, and protected by stones built round it in a bee-hive form." The urn is figured in the Museum Catalogue as EA2, and is a notable example. Being

¹ *Proceedings*, vol. xv. p. 89.

resolved to ascertain, if possible, the exact site of the Stone Circle whence the urn came, I wrote to Mr Harris (the son of the George Harris of 1881), and in reply obtained sufficient particulars to allocate the Circle, which, however, Mr Harris added, had long ago been destroyed, presumably prior to the date of the first Ordnance Survey, *circa* 1870. The site was not many score of yards to the west of the Standing Stone site above noticed (No. 7), farther down the hill, and therefore rather nearer the river Ericht.

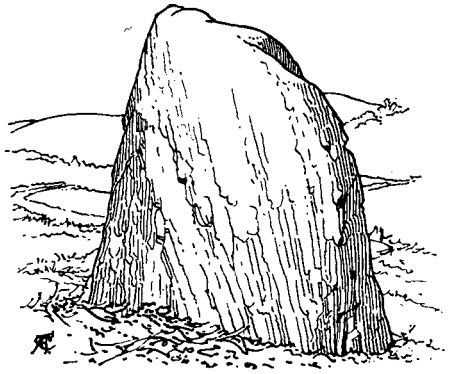


Fig. 8. Standing Stone of Glenballoch ; View from the West.

Nö. 9. Standing Stone, Glenballoch.—This conspicuous monolith is a huge, rather pyramidal block of whinstone, set up in a field sloping steeply southwards, at a height of about 700 feet above sea-level. Its longer axis is N.E. and S.W. The top is flat, and 3 feet 9 inches wide from east to west, but wedge-shaped in the contrary view. The sides are fairly smooth and vertical, most so on the broad south face, on which occur the curious cup-marks and grooves drawn by Mr Romilly Allen.¹ The girth at 1 foot below the top is 11 feet 3 inches, at 4 feet 7 inches above ground it is 17 feet, and at the base 19 feet

¹ See *Proceedings*, vol. xv. p. 88. On the occasion of my visit, the total absence of sunshine precluded my being able to completely identify these sculpturings, and I therefore made no drawing of them.

2 inches. The computed weight of the Stone may be about fourteen tons. It stands clear above the ground to a height of 9 feet 3 inches.

I append a view of the Stone (fig. 8) from the west, which may serve to supplement that already referred to showing the cup-marks.

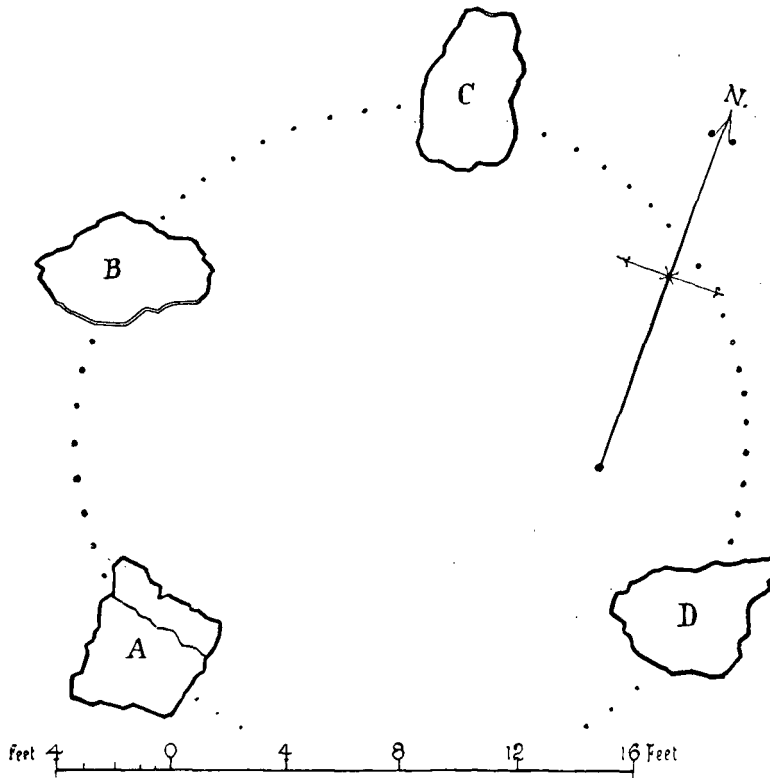


Fig. 9. Stone Circle at Craighall Mill ; Ground-plan.

This striking monolith stands a few yards to the south of the road near Glenballoch, and within a quarter of a mile of that farmhouse.

*No. 10. Stone Circle at Craighall Mill.*¹—This site, just opposite the mill-dam, less than a quarter of a mile S.S.W. of the last stone described, is likewise conspicuous to any one passing leisurely along the road; but it is in a hollow of the land. It is about 600 feet above sea-level, at the western extremity of a long flattish ridge here filling up the middle of the little valley formed by Craighall Burn. It is closed in on all sides, with an especially high and partly wooded height on the east and south.

The Stones, four in number, rest upon flat ground, and a circumference through their centres encloses an area 23 feet 6 inches in diameter (see the plan, fig. 9). Towards the north, the natural fall of the ground is steep. In the ground-plan the Stones are drawn in outline; this, to record my doubt (as already expressed in the case of Hill of Drimmie Circle) as to whether these Stones were originally vertical and therefore taller, or whether they are now in their original positions. I incline to the latter inference, because their centres as they lie are bisected by a true circle; and if this be a correct inference, then we have here further confirmation of the results obtained during last year's surveys, namely, that in Perthshire there are numerous small more or less circular groups of four or six Stones all rude in shape and low in height. The Stone marked A, *e.g.*, is only 2 feet 2 inches above ground, but measures 6 feet across. It has been split right down to the ground. Stone B is 2 feet 4 inches in height, 6 feet 3 inches long, and 4 feet broad, very angular and rough; C is 2 feet 9 inches in height, 6 feet long, and 3 feet 6 inches broad, ridged and narrow; D, 3 feet 6 inches high, 6 feet 3 inches long, and 4 feet 6 inches broad. It resembles B in angularity and unshapeliness. All four are blocks of whinstone. It is to be observed that A and C are set almost precisely south and north, and D and B east and west.

Two views of this Circle follow (figs. 10 and 11). In the latter, there is an appearance of blankness, from the absence of the "wooded height" described as filling in the distance to the south and east of the

¹ Also noticed and planned by Mr J. Romilly Allen, *Proceedings*, vol. xv. p. 89.

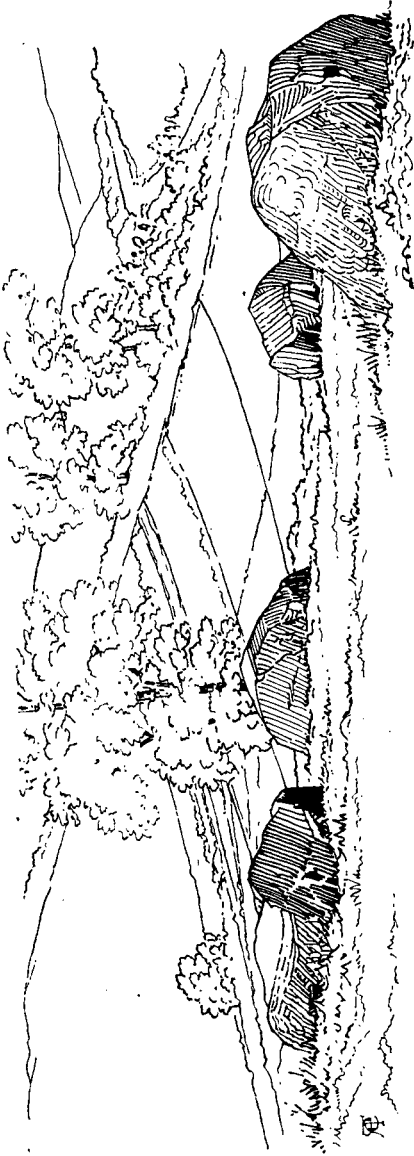


Fig. 10. Craighall Mill Circle ; from the South.



Fig. 11. Craighall Mill Circle ; View from the North.

site. The reason for this is that when the Circle was drawn the mists hung so thickly that no landscape contour was visible, and I preferred not to "invent" one. That the "wooded height" is there was subsequently proved by our being on it and looking down at Craighall Mill.

No. 11. Standing Stones, Broad Moss.—This wild piece of moorland extends from a point very close to and on the east of the long ridge

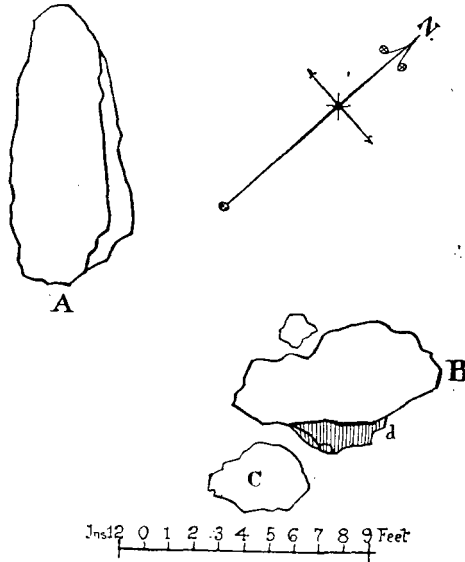


Fig. 12. Standing Stones, Broad Moss ; Ground-plan.

containing Craighall Mill Circle, to a point about one mile and a half eastwards at Hill of Fink. Near the middle of its length, but close to its southern edge, there are marked on the Ordnance map the sites of Standing Stones and of Stone Circles. The position of the first group is better defined by stating that it is half a mile N.N.W. of Blackhills on the road up from Old Rattray, and at a height of about 800 feet above sea-level. These great blocks now lie as shown in the ground-plan (fig. 12), nearly at right angles to each other, the lower one

evidently broken up into three pieces. What were their original positions it is of course impossible to conjecture, or whether they were at the date of the Ordnance Survey known to be the remnants of a Circle. On the ground there are no fragments indicative of other Stones. Stone A measures 11 feet 2 inches in length, is nearly 5 feet broad and 2 feet 4 inches in present thickness; B is 8 feet 9 inches long, 4 feet 8 inches broad, and 2 feet thick. The shaded under portion (*d*) is a lower projecting part of its present base, to which the large fragment C has once partially belonged. These Stones, even when upright and uninjured, must have been singularly rough and amorphous in character. In the view (fig. 13) they are shown as seen from the east.

No. 12. Stone Circle, Broad Moss.—Scattered somewhat thickly over this part of the moor, amidst the entanglement of whin-bushes and heather, are several great blocks and boulders of whinstone, at nearly the same level as the two fallen Stones just described. From them at about 146 yards in a south-westerly direction, the O.M. shows two Stone Circles. After a thorough examination of the difficult ground, however, only one of these (fig. 14) was discoverable. It is now composed of nine small blocks of whinstone in the irregularly circular form shown in the ground-plan (fig. 15). Three only of these are now erect, namely, B, F, H; and by measurement it is proved that they rest on the circumference of a true circle 21 feet 9 inches in diameter. Three others lie in close proximity to this circumference, whilst three more, C, G, and J, have been thrown and pushed far out of position.

There may have originally been ten Stones in all, as there is space for that number. The dimensions of the Stones are:—

Stone A,	3 feet	by	2 feet 2 inches	by	8 inches.							
„ B,	3	„	3 inches	by	1 foot 6 inches by 2 feet 0 inches high.							
„ C,	2	„	9	„	1	„	8	„	„	3 inches.		
„ D,	2	„	2	„	1	„	3	„	„	10	„	
„ E,	1	„	9	„	1	„	0	„	„	0	„	flat.
„ F,	3	„	0	„	1	„	6	„	„	1 foot 8 inches high.		



Fig. 13. Standing Stones, Broad Moss; View from the East.

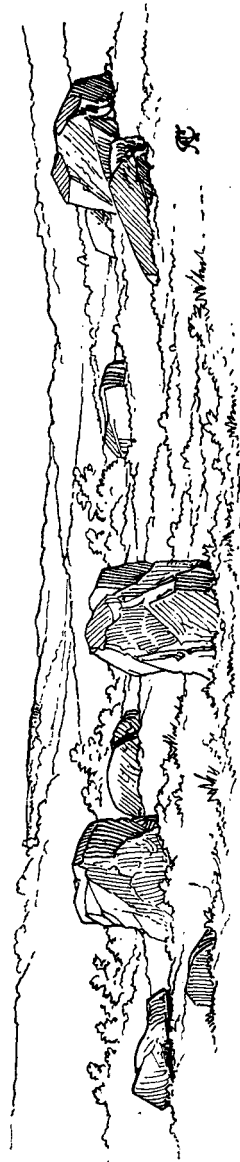


Fig. 14. Stone Circle on Broad Moss; View from the East.

Stone G, 4 feet 2 inches by 2 feet 0 inches flat.

„ H, 2 „ 9 „ „ 2 „ 2 „ by 2 feet 0 inches high.

„ J, 2 „ 6 „ „ 1 „ 6 „ „ 0 „ 6 „

A view from the east is given in fig. 14. One of the massive

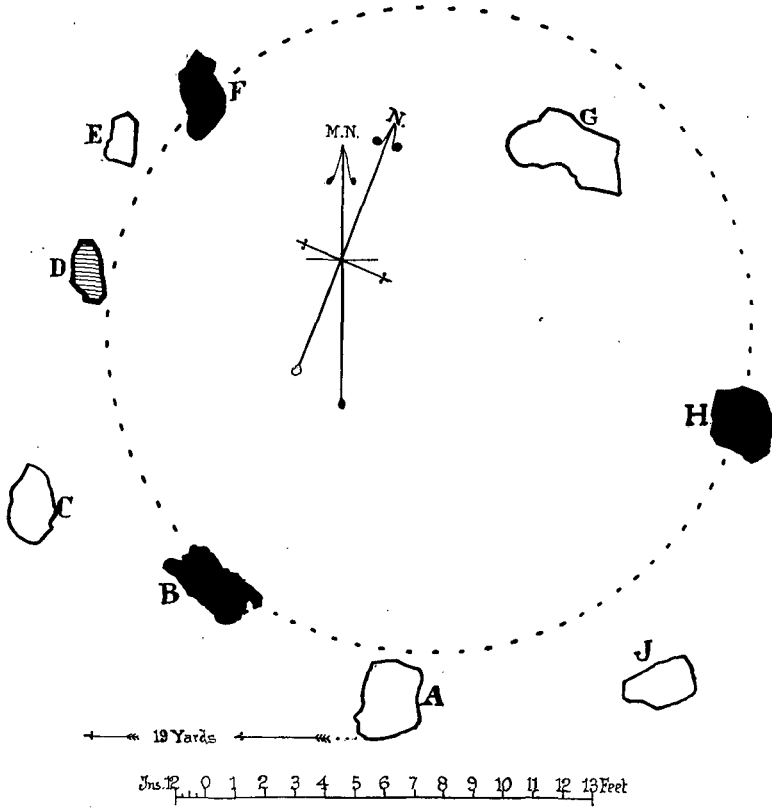


Fig. 15. Stone Circle on Broad Moss, Alyth ; Ground-plan.

boulders above referred to rests at a point 19 yards S.W. of Stone A, and at about 17 yards still S.W., there are four great half-buried blocks ; but

none of these seemed to me to belong to an artificial group. Possibly at the date of the Ordinance Survey there were others smaller and more circular in arrangement, and when the growth of herbage and bushes was less than now, contours undoubtedly would have been more easily picked out.

In recording the characteristics of the above-noticed twelve sites a few outstanding features of some importance claim attention. The locality which comprises these sites contains a tumulus (to the north of the Parkneuk Circles on Tullymurdoch), and in addition two more of the "Circles" of the new variety to the north of the Broad Moss¹—in all, therefore, fifteen prehistoric sites within a portion of land barely seven square miles in extent. Another feature is that all these sites are on distinctly high ground judged as a group, that is, between 600 and 950 feet above sea-level. The majority, also, are situated on open lands still uncultivated; and all the fifteen sites are situated on the hills between the Burn of Alyth on the east and the river Ericht on the west.

B. THE ALYTH GROUP.

No. 13. Site of Standing Stone, Shanzie, Alyth.—The O.M. here records near the 200-foot contour-line the site of a monolith, in the middle of the second field on the east of the farm-steading of Shanzie, and scarcely a quarter mile north of the river Isla, where it divides the parish of Alyth from that of Ruthven in Forfarshire. The farm is $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles E.S.E. from the Broad Moss Circle. There is nothing on the site now to indicate the former position of any Stone, nor does Mr Murison, the tenant, well up in years though he be, remember having seen any Standing Stone in this field.

No. 14. Standing Stone, Drumderrach Wood.—This wood, about 480 feet above sea-level, is to the north of Shanzie; and just outside of it, on the south, on flattish ground with a sudden and steep incline southwards, there stands the monolith of which two views are shown in figs. 16 and 17. It is a ridgy block of rough red sandstone, considerably

¹ These were searched for, but eluded discovery, owing to excessive heather-growth and other obstacles.

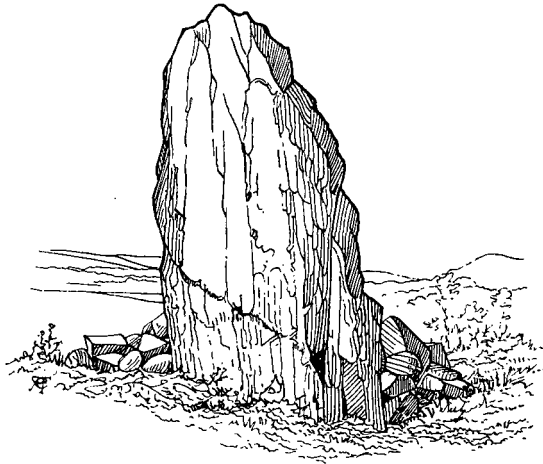


Fig. 16. Standing Stone, Drumderrach Wood, Shanzie ;
View from the East.

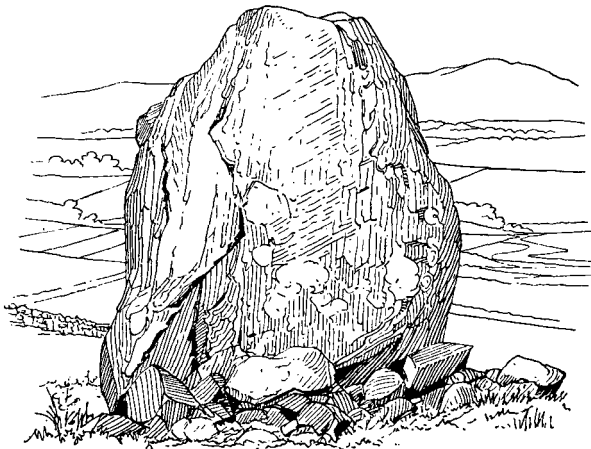


Fig. 17. Standing Stone, Drumderrach Wood, Shanzie ;
View from the North.

fissured, and now so overgrown with saxi-colous lichens in large and thick patches as to render it difficult to see the nature of the stone itself. In height it stands 4 feet 10 inches above ground, and in basal girth measures 10 feet 2 inches. Its longer axis points S. 18° W. and N. 18° E., and its broad faces measure 4 feet 6 inches.

No. 15. *Standing Stone, Burnside, Alyth.*—The site marked here on the O.M. is nearly half a mile north-east of Alyth railway station, in

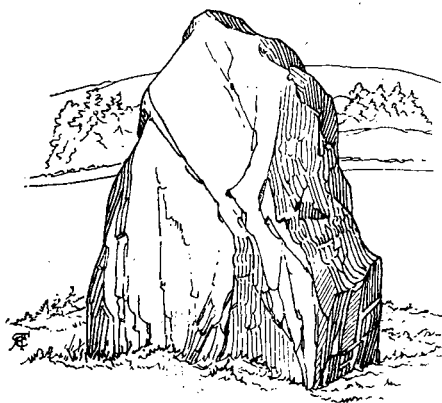


Fig. 18. Standing Stone near Burnside, Alyth ;
View from the South-east.

a field about 300 feet above sea-level, and to the west of a cart-road going from the ford at Burnside to Loyal. The field has a very gentle downward slope towards the Burn of Alyth. The monolith—a rugged block of whinstone—is 6 feet 7 inches in height, and girths at the base 17 feet 9 inches. Its southern face is less rough than the others, and more vertical ; the longer axis is set a few points off east and west. In the illustration fig. 18 a view is given.

No. 16. *Standing Stone on the Farm of Standing Stone, Old Rattray.*—About three miles and a half westward from the last, another monolith attracts our notice, in a field on the north of the main road, one mile

and a quarter east of the middle of Old Rattray village. The height above sea-level is 270 feet. This monolith (fig. 19) closely resembles the one last described, except that its mineralogical composition seems more analogous to the quartziferous schists so frequently found in the vicinity. The top is smooth, with an inclination towards the south-east, and the whole mass is squarish and pillar-like. It is set up with the longer axis N.E. 50° and S.W. 50°. The highest point is 5 feet 1 inch above



Fig. 19. Standing Stone, one mile East of Old Rattray ;
View from South-east.

ground, the basal girth 8 feet, but rather more than mid-way up it increases to 10 feet 4 inches.

In this lower-lying district, comprising an area of about 35 square miles, the megalithic remains are extremely sparse. Agricultural operations, doubtless, have swept away some monoliths, and possibly also whole circles of stones ; but at any rate it is somewhat significant that only four Standing Stones are now left, and that there is no record on the maps of any other variety of sepulchral structure.

C. THE STORMONT GROUP.

Stormont is the old name applied to the beautiful district on the north of river Tay extending from the Forest of Clunie near Dowally in the north-west, down to Rosemount, about two miles south-east of Blairgowrie—the whole of this being, of course, on the western side of the river Ericht, which stream, with its extraordinarily deep and rocky channel, forms such a well-defined line of demarcation, and was probably in prehistoric times a boundary of considerable importance. Within this district of something like 27 square miles there are comparatively few megalithic remains; and, as previously noted, the strange new variety of "Circle" is again frequent as a map name. It is a matter of regret that so few of these inconspicuous earthen ridges are now discoverable owing to large areas of the ground being planted, and, in other cases, owing to the dense growth of wild shrubs. These points are all too well exemplified in the next site to be noticed.

No. 17. Circles on Lornty Burn.—This stream, taking its rise in Loch Ben-achally, and largely increased by the Baden Burn on the north-east, becomes a good-sized stream amid picturesquely wild surroundings at the Muir of Gormack, which is its southern bank, Cochrage Muir forming the northern. Just here, about four miles up from Blairgowrie, the O.M. prints several names in the old English lettering indicative of antiquities. One of these, on the northern bank of Lornty, is Caledonian Camp, another Buzzard Dikes; and, in addition, there are drawn numerous circles and cairns. At the date of the map the moor was clear of wood, and doubtless much of the ramparts of the camp and the dikes and many of the circles and cairns were visible. Not being concerned with the so-called Caledonian Camp, we searched the ground as near as possible to the sites named Circles, only to discover that the greater part of it was now planted with a dense growth of fir-trees. Further, as the name "Circle" by this time had become familiar as the epithet for these low circular ridges alone, it was not deemed either desirable or necessary to continue an investigation of this locality.

The whole of this upper part of the Stormont is singularly destitute of Standing Stones; but the same circular ridge type of structure appears to abound and in several spots not noticed on the Ordnance Map. Such, at least, was the information obtained from Rev. A. Young, minister of Clunie, who described these "rings" as to be found in considerable numbers on the south-eastern slopes of Ben-achally and elsewhere. On Gormack Muir there are also vast numbers of Haer Cairns, the small, low, rather flat-topped cairns frequently observed over a wide area of Scotland.

No. 18. *Standing Stone, Chapel Hill, Clunie Loch.*—I have once more to record a disappointment. The Stone noted here on the O.M. is a modern and small slab, thin and rectangular, having on one edge a date cut, which, owing to weathering, looks like the numerals 1110, probably 1710. What purpose the Stone originally served, or what the numerals were intended to commemorate, no one can conjecture. It now stands several yards away from what is believed, by persons in the locality, to have been its original site. That site on the O.M. is given as being close to the southern extremity of a long low mound called Chapel Hill, near which, close to the loch, there is yet flowing a spring called the Chapel Well. To the west of Chapel Hill is a large circular space called The Ward, and to the south rise the lofty ramparts of the deeply-trenched Castle Hill, concerning which there are some interesting traditions. I mention these features because they possess an interest of their own; but there is no relic among them all which can justly claim a prehistoric importance.

No. 19. *Stone Circle, Leys, Marlee.*—This fine group of megaliths presents many features of interest. Its site, its name, its condition, are all exceptionally noteworthy, the more so because of the paucity of megalithic remains in this part of south-east Perthshire. Taking, *e.g.*, a comprehensive view of the district, we ascertain that the nearest true Circle of Standing Stones is that at Craighall Mill, three miles to the north-east, but with the deep-flowing Erich intervening; the next nearest is the Circle in the grounds of the Murthly Asylum surveyed

last year,¹ five miles distant on the south-west; and the next is the remains of the Circle at East Cults, also surveyed last year, distant in a nearly west-south-westerly direction exactly six miles. All the rest of the country due south and east contains no representative groups of megaliths within a radius of about six to ten miles. It has already been pointed out that in the Alyth district, to the east, only separate and widely distant monoliths are found.

Regarding, next, the name of the ground upon which these Stones are set up, *Leys* is held by competent Gaelic scholars to be an Anglicised or Scotticised form of the old Gaelic word *Lia*, meaning a stone. It is frequently associated with the megalithic monuments, as at *Leys* in Inverness-shire, and in Banffshire in the parish of Fordyce,² and at Fearnan.³ Lastly, the site is of somewhat special interest, because the Stones stand, three on one side, three on the other side, of a well-made

¹ See *Proceedings*, vol. xlii. p. 160 and p. 150.

² See my Report on Stone Circles in the *Proceedings*, vol. xl. p. 187.

³ In discussing the probable origin of the word *leys*, Dr Bannerman believes that the *s* to form a plural is of no signification; perhaps it may have originated in the subdivision of a holding among portioners, or perhaps for no reason at all. Compare Whitehill, Whitehills, and Torphin, Torphins. Dr Bannerman also strengthens a conjecture of my own with regard to the name *Marlee*. "*Mar* is known to be the archaic form of *mor*=great (in Wales *mawr*); so that *Marlee* is, not improbably, *Mor-liae*=the great Stones." Now the people in the district pronounce the name *Marlec* with the stress on the first syllable; this would fit well with the above interpretation, as in the whole of the Stormont there is no group of Standing Stones greater than those of this Circle. Compare the name Loch Morlich (*Mor Leac*), Loch of the big Stone, on Cairngorm (*The Cairngorm Club Journal*, January 1909, p. 87). Mr W. J. Watson, however, of the Inverness Academy, holds it improbable that *leys* has anything to do with Stone Circles: "The Gaelic of our *Leys* is an *Leighear* or possibly *Leithear*, and if I had to suggest anything, it would be *Leith*, half, in the sense of hill-side." To this I offer the following objections: first, that it is an assumption that early people thought or spoke of a hillside being divided into "halves"; and next, that at *Leys* of *Mar-lee* there is no hillside to be divided. It seems to become clearer with every attempt made to elucidate place-names, that each name must be judged purely on its own merits, and with a strict examination, not only of maps, but of the physical features themselves of the environment of the place brought under discussion. I am indebted, through Mr C. G. Cash, in the first instance to Mr A. Gow for confirming my conjecture, that in the sites where Standing Stones exist the name *Leys* is probably derived from *Lia*.

modern road; so that the very dust of human interments of three thousand years ago is, in these days, almost commingled with the road

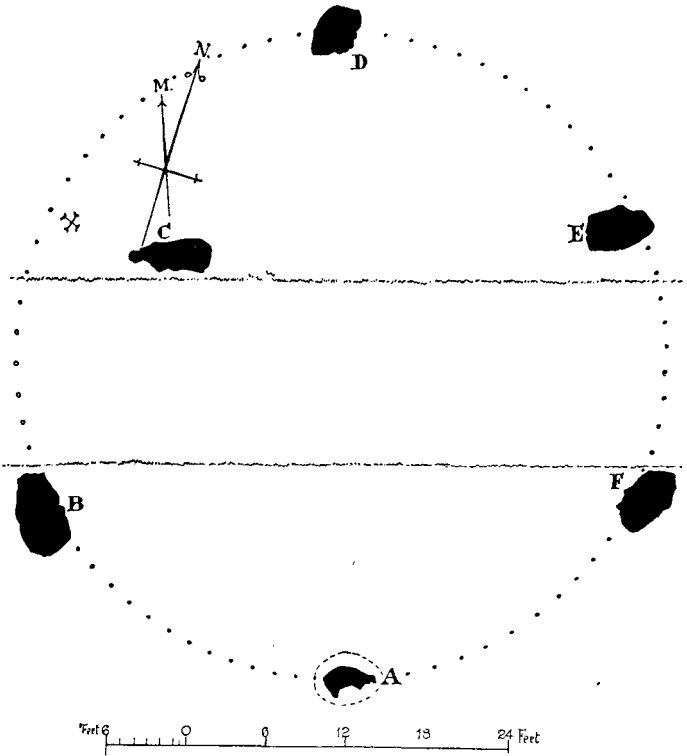


Fig. 20. Marlee Circle, Essendy Road ; Ground-plan.

metal dust raised by carts and motors and many other mechanical means of twentieth-century locomotion.

The Marlee Circle stands less than half a mile S.S.W. of Ardblair Castle, and is now divided by the road (see plan, fig. 20) which turns off westward from the Perth road out of Blairgowrie, and goes to Essendy and Lethendy. This is 500 yards almost S.S.E. from the farm called

Leys of Marlee. More than forty years ago there was here a rough moorland track, which passed through amongst the six great massive Stones of the Circle. At about the date of 1856 this track was widened into the road as one sees it now. In this road-making I was informed that no disturbance or removal of the Stones took place; two, which were prostrate, were raised to the vertical as nearly as possible on the very spot on which their bases rested. One other, which was afterwards broken, was clamped together with iron bands and set in a bed of concrete on its original site. We have therefore here on the evidence of an eyewitness¹ a good example of a small Circle of six Stones in its original condition, so far, at least, as the Stones themselves are concerned.

What discoveries, if any, were made in the ground enclosed by the Stones during the making of the road my informant could not remember. It is just possible that, as the present road was a widening of the ancient footpath, no deep trenching was made, and therefore there may still be discoveries to be made here.

Walking up from Marlee Loch on the west, we meet the Stones as shown in the view fig. 21. The smallish pointed block on the extreme right is the Stone that was broken, imperfectly mended with clamps of iron, and then set up again. The nearest one on the left of the road presents towards it a very smooth, and at the lower part a fractured appearance, suggestive of its possibly having been split vertically downwards in order to be kept clear of the road. The Stone farthest away on the left was lying prostrate when the road was made. In no other respect do the Stones seem to be otherwise out of position, except that our measurements prove that the nearest Stone on the left, marked C on the ground-plan fig. 20, may have been placed hardly far enough out, as it does not now stand strictly on the same circumference as the other five.

The ground-plan shows the bases of the six Stones set on a circle

¹ John Robertson in the village of Craigie, resident in the neighbourhood for over half a century.

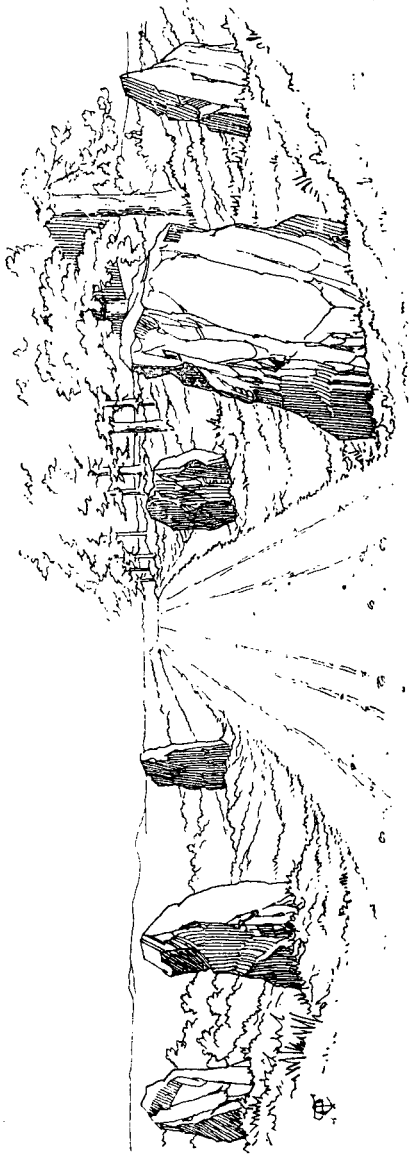


Fig. 21. Marlee Circle, Essendy Road ; View from the West.

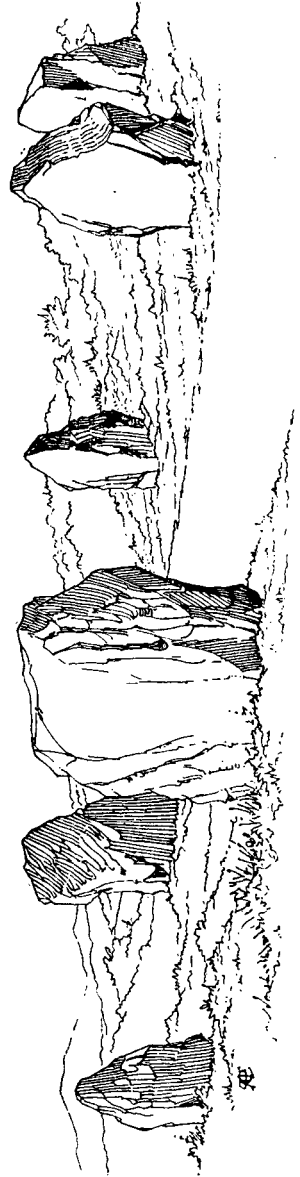


Fig. 22. Marlee Circle, Essendy Road ; View from the East.

49 feet in diameter. I append their characteristics and dimensions in the following table:—

Stone A.	4 ft. 10 ins.	high,	4 ft.	wide ;	whinstone ;	the dotted ring	represents the contour of its bed of concrete.
„ B.	5 ft. 11 ins.	high,	16 ins.	in basal girth ;	quartzose schist.		
„ C.	5 „	5 „	„	16 „	„	„	very rugged and angular.
„ D.	5 „	2 „	high,	13 „	6 „	in basal girth ;	flattish with hollow on top ; of whinstone.
„ E.	5 „	11 „	high,	14 „	„	„	whinstone ; smooth and vertical.
„ F.	4 „	4 „	high,	13 „	8 „	„	quartzose schist, broad and flattish.

No two Stones are set either due north and south or due east and west. The surrounding land is somewhat flat, and only on the S.E., where the Sidlaw Hills fill the horizon, are there any conspicuous heights. As seen from the east, this Circle is shown in the illustration fig. 22, with Craigie Hill in the distance.

No. 20. "Circle," Woodend, Ballathie.—This site is almost exactly due west of Cargill Parish Church, but a mile to the west of the Tay, in the parish of Kinclaven. It is situated, at about 230 feet above sea-level, at the forking of the roads between Greenhead and Woodend. Being indefinitely named on the O.M., it was rather surprising to find that on it there were no Standing Stones, and that it partly consisted of a great earthwork ridge, circular in form, the most of it, however, having been demolished for the sand contained within the natural mound, above the surface of which the ridge rose to a height of about three feet.

On making inquiry at Woodend, I elicited two pieces of information ; first, that this Circle was in the district known as a Roman Camp, a not altogether surprising appellation in the vicinity of real Roman remains at Inchtuthil and Meikleour, and confirmative of that strange tendency towards claiming any prehistoric object, great or small, as Roman in

origin, which still sways the intellects of country people. The second fact is of paramount importance; it conveyed the information that several years ago, when the mound was being excavated for its sand, several stone cists were disclosed and human remains were found. These, so far as I have yet been able to ascertain, were not preserved; but some of the partly broken side and end-stones of the cists may yet be seen protruding from the inner face of this Circle. Externally, the structure corresponds closely with those already noticed in the present report; but of course no strict measurements are possible, owing to the demolition of the greater portion of the work.

Subsequently, I opened communication with Col. E. R. S. Richardson of Ballathie, and the substance of his reply to queries is that a good many similar burial-places have been from time to time discovered in the neighbourhood of Coupar-Angus; that the constructive feature in these Circles seemed to be that "the bodies were buried one at each point of the compass," and that "a burial was certainly found at the west end at Woodend Circle. It was a very rude sort, formed with flat stones, and about 3 feet long by 2 feet wide. It had fallen in apparently through time. Inside, we did find a very few pieces of bones."

No. 21. Remains of Stone Circle at Meikleour.—A quarter of a mile north of what used to be the ferry at Kinclaven (now a bridge) across the Tay, on the highest part of one of the fields surrounded by the beautiful timber for which the estate is far-famed, there lie, close to a lofty elm-tree, two large Stones supposed to be the remains of a Circle. Though I could obtain no definite information regarding the former conditions here, it is evident that these two Stones do not belong to the site in the sense geological; they are not perched boulders, and there are no outcrops of rock in the same field. It is also self-evident that they have been subjected to disturbance and have suffered damage in the process. A large fragment lies close to each (see the plan, fig. 23). Perhaps, therefore, the inference may be permitted that these blocks are the surviving members of a group, and that, after the others had

been removed or split up for some utilitarian purpose, the voice of authority interfered and orders were given that the work of demolition should go no further.

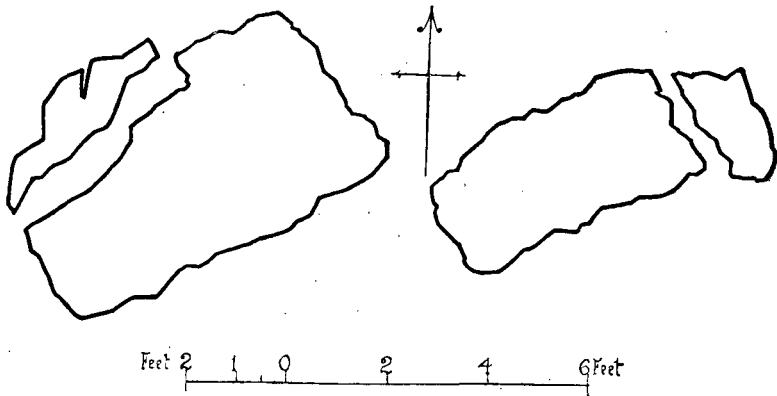


Fig. 23. Remains of "Standing Stones," Meikleour ; Ground-plan.

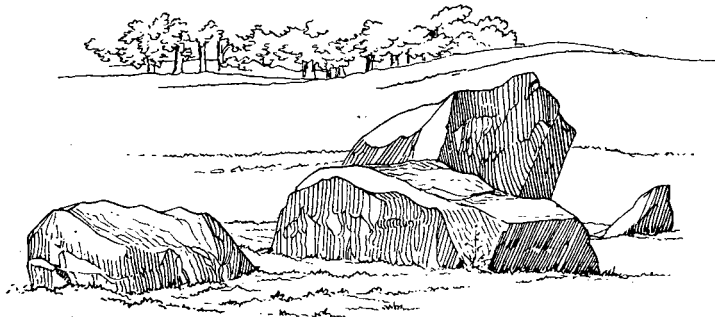


Fig. 24. Remains of "Standing Stones" in Meikleour grounds ;
View from N. N. E.

Both the Stones are massive pieces of whinstone, the larger one extremely rugged, and so unequal in the height of its component parts as to give the impression that there are two separate Stones (see fig. 24).

It measures over all 7 feet by 4 feet 2 inches, and is 2 feet 10 inches at the thickest; the smaller block to the east, before being broken, would have been 6 feet 5 inches long, and in breadth is now 2 feet 9 inches. Its thickest part is 1 foot 8 inches above ground. The field where these Stones are is about 130 feet above sea-level.

No. 22. *Standing Stone, Woodside, Cargill.*—The little parish of Cargill, as has been ably pointed out by the late Rev. George Baxter,¹ is rich in megalithic and other prehistoric remains. Most of these, however, belong to the middle and south parts of the parish. At present I am able to deal only with two sites at the north end of the parish.

Of this site there is little to tell. It is shown on the O.M. as south-west of the road from Cargill Parish Church to Newbigging, and near the centre of a small wood there, a quarter of a mile north of that farm-steading. The map also prints the words, "human remains found." In the light of such a statement it is obvious that some excavation must have been made at the Standing Stone. Of this there is now no information to be had; but the statement may help in part to make clear the disappointing result of our quest for this Stone. On the day of my visit the mist was so abnormally dense and confusing that it was with considerable difficulty the wood itself was identified; and as its interior is an utter wilderness of trees, shrubs, brambles, broom, wild roses and tall grass, besides being a pheasantry, it is just possible that the monolith searched for evaded my zeal. I think not, however, because, hearing a hedger at work on the Newbigging side of the wood, I made for him; and after plying him with various questions, could get no statement to the effect that he had, though living so near, ever seen any conspicuously tall Stone in the wood.

On retracing my steps, I searched a fresh portion of the wood, and noticed one bigish block of whinstone lying on the grass in a slight hollow of the ground. It was somewhat cubical, about 2 feet 6 inches

¹ *Proceedings*, vol. xxvi.

square, and fractured. This may be a portion of the former monolith, possibly; and with this dubious result I had to be content.¹

No. 23. Standing Stone at Newbigging.—On the land of Newbigging, but a quarter of a mile S.E. of Gladsfield, close to a strip of firwood, about 400 feet above sea-level, there now stands a monolith which, besides possessing intrinsic points of interest, has a somewhat peculiar history. Its chief feature of interest is that it bears a remarkable set of cup- and ring-marks, and its history is to the following effect. It was first observed as an object of archæological value many years ago by Mr Fergusson, who, in addition to fulfilling his duties as schoolmaster in Cargill for forty years, displayed indefatigable zeal in searching for and recording the various antiquities of the parish. At the date of the discovery (now, I regret, not accurately ascertainable) the Stone was prostrate.² Sir James Y. Simpson, when collecting materials for his important monograph on the Cup- and Ring-marks of Scotland, heard through Mr Fergusson of this Stone, and has placed on record a print from a sketch made of it. In or about the year 1894 Mr M'Gregor became tenant of Newbigging. He told me that it had been proposed to blast and remove the Stone. To this Mr M'Gregor strongly objected, and, in lieu of consenting to this act of barbarism, he had the Stone lifted and set up vertically as it now stands. Would there were more tenant-farmers of the like sense and spirit! During the erection of the Stone several inches of its heavier end were unavoidably buried in the soil; so that the groups of cup- and ring-marks now seen do not fully display the entire sculpturing. In the appended illustration (fig. 25), I have endeavoured to show the complete groups, to scale, by incorporating the cups and rings shown on Simpson's sketch with those that are now visible. My illustration is treated diagrammatically, as I hold that it is of far greater importance to show what are, indubitably,

¹ On the Gallows Hill, not three hundred yards N.E. of this site, there used to stand Sculptured Stones, if the map statement be correct. They are not noticed in *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*.

² See Simpson's *Archaic Sculpturings*, Appendix to vol. vi. of the *Proceedings* (1866), pp. 59, 60, and pl. v. fig. 4.

artificial sculpturings, measured and drawn to scale, than the mere picturesque roughness and pseudo-sculpturings which the weather-worn condition of many stones may have, in the course of time, helped to cause.

For the reasons above stated, it is of course a matter of no consequence to note that the sculpturings occur on the side of the Stone at

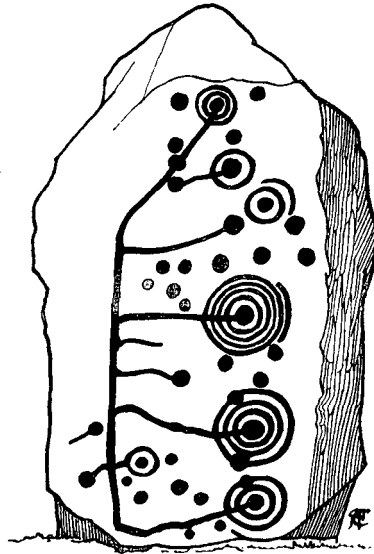


Fig. 25. Cup- and Ring-marked Standing Stone at Newbigging, Cargill.

present facing southwards. It seems unlikely, from the massive thickness and pillar-like form of the Stone, that it ever was a cist-cover, although its former prostrate position might render it possible to put that construction upon it. It seems, from its form and size, more likely that at some date long prior to its discovery by Mr Fergusson this was truly a Standing Stone.

As at present seen, the apex of this block of rounded whinstone is

4 feet 8 inches above the ground ; but the over-all length (or height) is in reality 5 feet 6 inches. The broad sculptured face measures about 3 feet 2 inches, and the greatest girth of the Stone, at about three-quarters of its height, is 7 feet 6 inches. In general form it is an oblong with rounded edges and smooth sides.

The sculpturing comprises 23 plain cups of about 2 inches diameter, unconnected with either rings or grooves ; 2 cups surrounded each by a single ring ; 5 cups surrounded by several rings, and 9 cups which are joined to grooves or rings, making 39 cups in all. In more than one of these last groups cups are bisected by some of the rings, a feature which occurs frequently in the Galloway specimens.¹ Another feature to be observed is that there are two groups each having the segment only of a circle cut outside its outermost ring ; this is a somewhat rare characteristic. The smallest ring is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and the largest $9\frac{1}{2}$. The longest groove is 4 feet 7 inches, measured from the uppermost ringed cup to the base of the Stone ; and the other grooves, counting down the Stone, measure respectively 7, 14, $15\frac{1}{2}$, 18, and 18 inches in length. Not one of the grooves is continued to the edge of the Stone.²

No. 24. Stone Circle in New Scone Wood.—This remarkable Circle is situated in the N.E. angle of a fine firwood, on the west of the Sandy Road coming out of New Scone, and due north half a mile from the parish church. The ground here, about 200 feet above sea-level, is thickly planted with firs, now very tall ; but as their straight and stately stems are quite devoid of low branches, there is no obstruction whatever to mensuration.

The nine Stones are all smallish, comparatively speaking ; seven of them appear to be *in situ*, and are erect ; two have fallen, A and D on

¹ See *Proceedings*, vol. xxix. pp. 72, 76, 78, 87.

² Another Stone with cup-marks, at Newbigging, is figured in the same plate, by Simpson, above referred to ; and to the east of the farm-steading a large surface of exposed rock, shown to me by Mr M'Gregor, contains a group of cup-marks. These, as well as some other discoveries near Gourdie Hill, I hope to put on record elsewhere.

plan (fig. 26); and the diameter of the Circle, when worked out from triangulation, proves to be 22 feet 9 inches. This circumference of 68 feet exactly bisects four of the Stones, C, F, G, and I, and passes

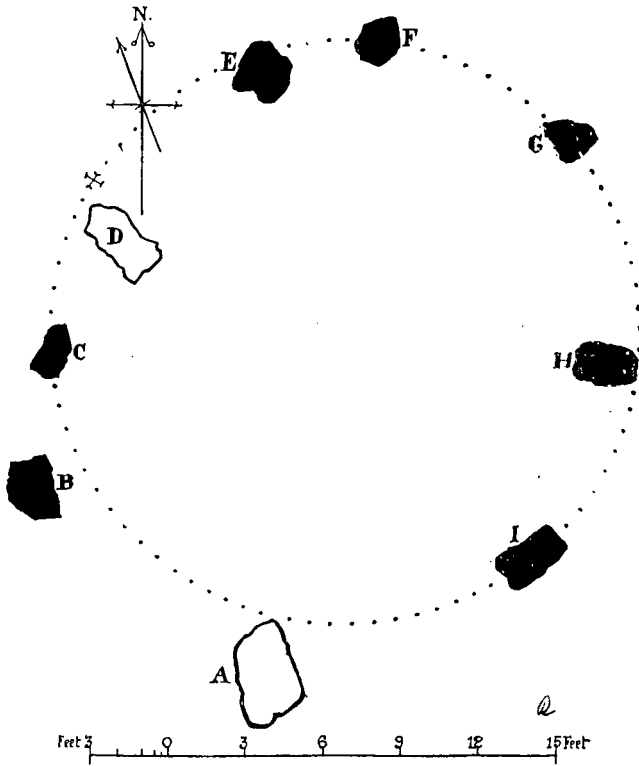


Fig. 26. Stone Circle in New Scone Wood ; Ground-plan.

very close to the bases of two others, E and H. I think all the nine Stones are of whinstone; they are all smoothish, and appear to be to some extent water-worn. Their dimensions and characters here follow:—

- Stone A, fallen ; 1 ft. 6 ins. thick ; 4 ft. 4 ins. by 2 ft. 6 ins.
 ,, B, 2 ft. 6 ins. high, erect, squarish with flat top, basal girth
 7 ft. 1 in.
 ,, C, 1 ft. 1 in. high, erect, oblong, pointed ; girth 6 ft. 3 ins.
 ,, D, fallen ; 1 ft. thick ; girth 8 ft. 6 ins.
 ,, E, 1 ft. high, erect, squarish ; girth 6 ft. 6 ins.
 ,, F, 1 ,, ,, rounded boulder ; ,, 5 ,, 9 ,,
 ,, G, 1 ,, 1 in. high, rounded boulder ; girth 6 ft. 6 ins.
 ,, H, 10 ins. ,, ,, ,, ,, 7 ,, 2 ,,
 ,, I, 2 ,, 5 ,, ,, erect, square-sided ; ,, 7 ,, 0 ,,

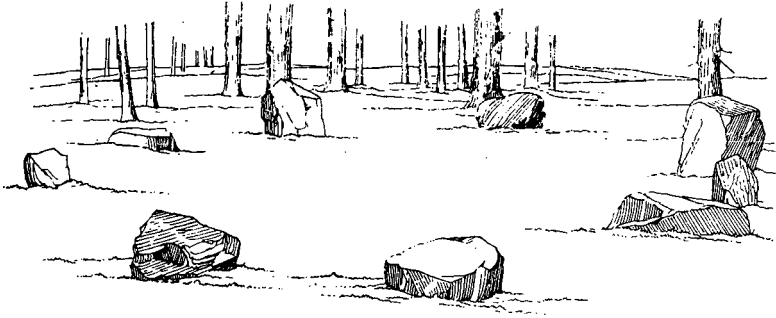


Fig. 27. Stone Circle in New Scone Wood ; View from the South.

It will be observed Stones E and A are precisely due north and south, and H and C east and west ; that B and C, and E and F, are almost equidistant, their centres being 5 feet apart, and that F G, G H, and H I are also nearly equidistant, their centres being 8 feet 9 inches apart. Another characteristic of this Circle is, that the two Stones B and I, respectively on the S.W. and the S.E. arcs, are the two tallest, and are of equal height. But as A, the now fallen south Stone, measures over 4 feet in length, it, when erect, would have been "in keeping" with these two ; and this arrangement of placing the tallest Stones on the south arc and placing at the north arc a Stone very much less in height,

brings this Circle, so far, into analogy with many surveyed in Aberdeenshire. The two illustrations which follow show the Circle, first, from the south (fig. 27), clear of most of the fir-stems, and the other from the east (fig. 28), this last being reproduced from a photograph taken by Mr William Small, of New Scone.¹



Fig. 28. Stone Circle in New Scone Wood ; View from the East.
(From a photograph by Mr William Small.)

In concluding the current report, there are one or two points upon which attention should be directed. Our survey bears evidence, again, of what diversity of form and size Stone Circles may be comprised in a district remote from those lying farther to the east and the north. The difference, *e.g.*, in mere diameters alone, in the employment of Stones much less in magnitude than those that give an added charm to the

¹ Mr Small is interesting himself in the skilful use of his camera in connection with the megalithic remains to be found in the districts adjacent to Perth.

sites formerly investigated in Kincardine and on Deeside, and the absence also of Recumbent Stones: these are all characteristics of which, in a comparative sense, very little was known until lately. Next, the extraordinary mixture of different varieties of Circle, in these Perthshire uplands, may come to be of importance when, after excavations properly conducted, sufficient evidence has been brought to light regarding the period of the funeral deposits; and lastly, we have been brought face to face this year with a new structural form of prehistoric burial-place, in the curious circular ridges above described and which may be more widespread than from mere map-records it is possible at present to estimate. On this head of new structural forms of burial-places there is something to report in the fact of an unique series of earthen mounds lying parallel to each other with trenches between, called in the district in Gourdie where they lie, *The Steeds' Stalls*. The evidence of their being purely sepulchral is by no means complete. I hope, however, to describe these mounds elsewhere, and to show some reasons why they may be held to be sepulchral.