

## V.

NOTICE OF A PAIR OF QUERN STONES FOUND AT HIGHLAND DYKES,  
NEAR FALKIRK, IN 1911. BY MUNGO BUCHANAN, CORR. MEM.  
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At Bonnywood Farm on the grounds of Highland Dykes, belonging to John R. Ure, Esq., a pair of quern stones in splendid condition were found together in the roots of an oak tree which had been blown down during a recent gale. A branch of the root had grown down through the centre holes of the stones, which, by the fall of the tree, exposed them.

The proprietor, on information reaching him, had them removed to a place of safety for preservation.

The quern stones (fig. 1) are made of puddingstone, a pebbly, coarse sandstone of a ferruginous character. The upper one is  $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and the under one  $17\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter, each having a thickness of 3 inches on their outer margins.

The surface of the under stone is perfectly plain and slightly convex, having a rise of 1 inch from outer margin to the centre, where a hole is pierced through it,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter at top, tapering to 1 inch diameter at bottom, evidently intended to hold a centre pin capable of being adjusted or renewed.

The upper stone also is plain on the bottom, and hollowed out suitably to fit the top of the under stone. On its upper surface a large cup is formed in the centre, with a bold ridge-beading all round the edge, the cup being  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and 3 inches deep, with straightly tapering sides and having a  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch hole through the bottom.

A peculiarity noticeable in this stone is the absence from it of any of the usual adaptations for the turning handle. Instead—and perhaps intended for the same purpose—there are two angled ridges similar to and branching from the cup ridge, which radiate from the centre of the stone at an angle of  $22\frac{1}{2}$  degrees. Where they abut upon the cup ridge, they are about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch apart, widening out to  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches at the margin, and terminate thereon with rounded ends. The inner sides of these ridges are squared, or made vertical, being noticeable in contrast with the flowing lines of the outer sides.

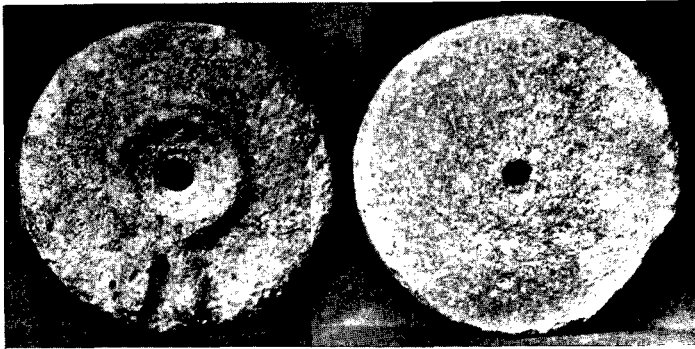


Fig. 1. Quern Stones found at Highland Dykes. ( $\frac{1}{17}$ .)

On visiting the site, to get particulars at first hand, I found the Farm of Bonnywood situated on a rounded projecting knoll, part of the old margin of the Bonny Water which now flows about 50 feet lower and 100 yards south of the farm. The knoll was originally a few feet higher than the 100-foot contour line of the O.S., but the surface was levelled and reduced a little when building the farm steading in 1888.

During this operation it was noticed that on top of the knoll there was a large hollow, showing a circular formation about 50 to 60 feet in diameter, the surrounding margin being at least 9 inches higher

than the interior, and, following the edge of the declivity, the soil of the interior showed distinctly a darker colour than did that of the margin. It is possible the site had been previously occupied, but I could gather no reliable information *re* the finding of any relics.

On the east of the knoll a small burn runs down the steep braeside, through a wood distant about 100 feet from the farm. The querns were found a little down the stream, having apparently lain at the bottom of an undercut in the bank, about 9 inches above the bottom of the channel as now formed, and been washed by its waters, particularly, as erosion is now most active along the east side, in which they were found.

The roots of the tree in falling carried with them a large part of the bank, exposing a depth of 3 feet between bed of channel and the surface. This occurred alongside of a large boulder of whinstone, 4 feet long and 3 feet high, which projects into the stream and which is noticeable as being the only stone of its size in the vicinity. It is apparent that the quern stones had long occupied a position close to the boulder mentioned. Taking this in connection with the fact that when disinterred they were lying together with the lower stone undermost as when in use, it suggests the probability that they had been intentionally placed where found and afterwards forgotten.