

I.

NOTES ON DUN AN IARDHARD, A BROCH NEAR DUNVEGAN
EXCAVATED BY COUNTESS VINCENT BAILLET DE LATOUR,
UIGINISH LODGE, SKYE. BY FRED. T. MACLEOD, F.S.A. Scot.

In presenting these Notes of Countess Latour's work in connection with Dun an Iardhard, an interesting broch in the Island of Skye, I desire to say that my connection with the matter began only after the excavation work had been completed, and that my function accordingly is merely that of recorder. Some idea of the extent of the work can be formed from the fact that over one hundred full working days were occupied, involving the conveyance of men and necessary implements a distance of two miles across Loch Dunvegan. While the entire excavation was carried out and personally superintended by Countess Latour, she desires to place on record her appreciation of the work done on her behalf by her manager, Donald Ferguson, and his nephews, Angus and Neil Ferguson. She also desires to express her thanks to MacLeod of MacLeod, upon whose estate the broch is situated, for permission to work it out, and to Mr John Mackenzie, F.S.A. Scot., MacLeod's factor, who kindly surveyed the building and prepared the accompanying plan and sketch of the entrance.

Iardhard, upon which the "Dun" is situated, while, strictly speaking, a peninsula, is practically an island about two miles to the north-west of Dunvegan Castle. The English equivalent of the word "Iardhard" is an exposed or windy headland. Differing from many of the "Duns" in Skye, which are placed on eminences a considerable height above sea-level, this dun is built on a slight rise not more than 20 feet above the lowest level of the adjacent ground. This undoubted weakness of position is counteracted by the existence of several natural mounds which formed a protection from sudden invasion. In addition, there are distinct evidences of artificial outworks which are not uncommon features of the Broch type of structure.

The removal of the fallen masonry with which the whole interior was filled, owing to the great size and weight of individual stones, was a slow and dangerous piece of work.

Fig. 1 is the ground plan, with (2) a sketch of the entrance. The scale of the plan is $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch to a foot.

The main entrance, which enters from the west, is flanked on both sides by projecting masonry of the nature of a bastion, extending downwards to a point about 4 feet below the level of the main entrance.

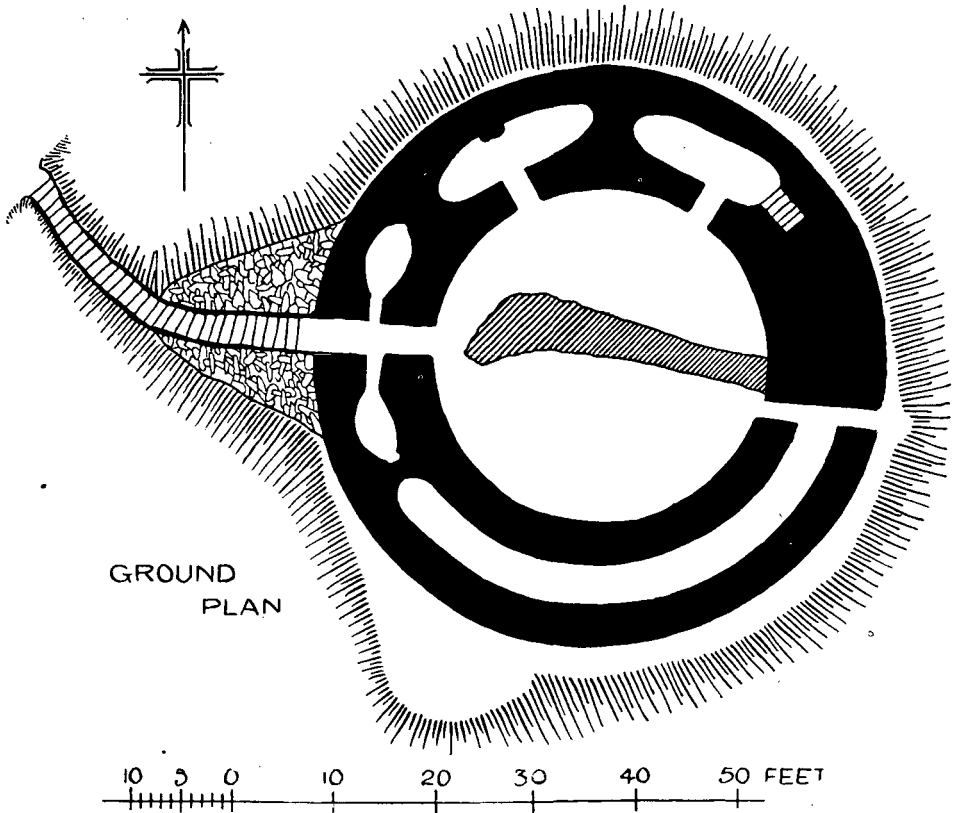
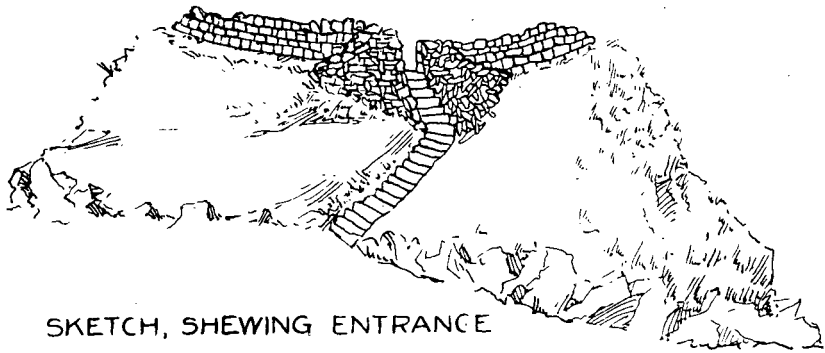


Fig. 1. Ground Plan, and (2) Sketch showing Entrance of Dun Iardhard, a Broch near Dunvegan.

Measured horizontally, this structure is 16 feet from east to west, and 22 feet 6 inches at its widest part, tapering to a width of 3 feet 3 inches. A series of roughly formed steps leads from the main entrance, which is 24·83 feet above the level of the ground to the south, passing downwards through the bastion-like structure, which ends at a level of 20·88 feet, and thence to their termination at a point 10·80 feet above the said level.

The outer circumference of the wall is about 174 feet; the inner circumference, 99 feet; the diameter of the outer circumference, 55 feet; and the diameter of the inner circumference, 31 feet. The highest part of the building, which is the top of the north wall, is 28·63 feet from the level of the ground on the exterior and to the south; from the lowest of the series of steps to the top of the north wall, 17·83 feet; from the entrance to the bastion to the same point, 7·75 feet; and from the level of the main entrance to the same point, 3·80 feet. The average thickness of the wall is about 12 feet.

In describing the architecture and general features of the building, I propose to start from the main entrance on the west and then to deal in their order with the north-west, north, north-east, east, south-east, south, and south-west sections respectively. In so proceeding, it must not be taken that I am following the order of the actual working. The general principle upon which Countess Latour proceeded was first to locate an exposed section of the inner face of the wall. Having obtained that, the work proceeded as far as possible in a particular direction along that face, unless and until some difficulty arose necessitating an alteration of direction. All debris was carefully removed until the full height of the wall was revealed. All entrances leading to chambers in the wall, and the chambers themselves, were dealt with as they were encountered. Roughly, a full day's work consisted in the clearing out of a section 2 or 3 yards long by about 1 yard wide, and examining that section for objects of interest before proceeding with further excavation. The result was tidy work from start to finish. The primary purpose was to disclose, and as far as possible preserve, what still remained *in situ* of the original construction; the second, to recover anything of archæological interest associated with the building and its occupants. So rigidly was this order of precedence adhered to, that if a stone individually of interest formed a necessary support to the masonry of the wall it was left in position.

The main entrance through the wall is 12 feet in length, 3 feet 1 inch in width at its outer or western end, and 2 feet 9 inches in width at its inner or eastern end. Although the plan does not show it, there

are the usual rebates on either side between the exterior and the two guard chambers. Halfway through this entrance on both sides there are two passage-ways leading to these guard chambers. The passage leading to the north guard chamber measures 3 feet by 1 foot 4 inches, the dimensions of the chamber itself being 7 feet by 4 feet 3 inches. The corresponding measurements applicable to the south guard chamber and its entrance are: length, 3 feet 9 inches, and width, 1 foot 6 inches, and 6 feet by 4 feet 3 inches. The north chamber is the better preserved of the two, the lintel above the entrance being still *in situ*. Portions also of the roof are still in position, showing the usual system of overlapping stones. There is, however, one feature present in the south chamber which is absent in the other, viz., a recess at the extreme south point, 2½ feet high, 1 foot 6 inches wide, and 1½ feet deep (southwards).

To the left or north of the main entrance, measuring along the inner face of the wall, at a distance of 13 feet 9 inches, is the entrance to another chamber much greater in area than either of the two just mentioned. The entrance, which is roofed by a large slab, is about 3 feet high, 3 feet 9 inches long, and 2 feet wide. The chamber itself measures 17 feet 3 inches by 4 feet 6 inches. On the side opposite the entrance, and immediately facing it, the wall is buttressed, or projected, inwards, 2 feet 3 inches by 9 inches. There is also a recess 1 foot square by 2½ feet deep in the wall at the north-west corner of the chamber. This recess, at the time when the plan was prepared, was concealed from view. Fig. 3 shows the entrance to this chamber.

Returning to the inner face of the wall, at a distance of 14 feet 6 inches from the last-mentioned entrance, the wall is again pierced by a passage-way, unroofed, 3 feet 6 inches in length and 2 feet 6 inches in breadth. This passage leads to another chamber, 14 feet 3 inches by 4 feet. This chamber gives access to the staircase leading to the first gallery. Six steps of the stair remain in position. Fig. 4 shows the entrance to the chamber, and fig. 5 shows what remains of the staircase.

When working round this eastern section of the wall an unexpected halt was caused by the obtrusion, practically at right angles, of another wall totally different in character from the main wall. So ragged was its formation that it was at first believed to be an immense mass of fallen stones, but after investigation it proved to be a wall varying from 3 to 5 feet in thickness and of varying heights, extending practically across the court to within a foot or two of the main entrance. The ill-formed character of this secondary wall, and its relation to the main wall, are shown in fig. 6.

On returning once more to the inner face of the main wall, further



Fig. 4. Entrance to the Chamber leading to the Stair.

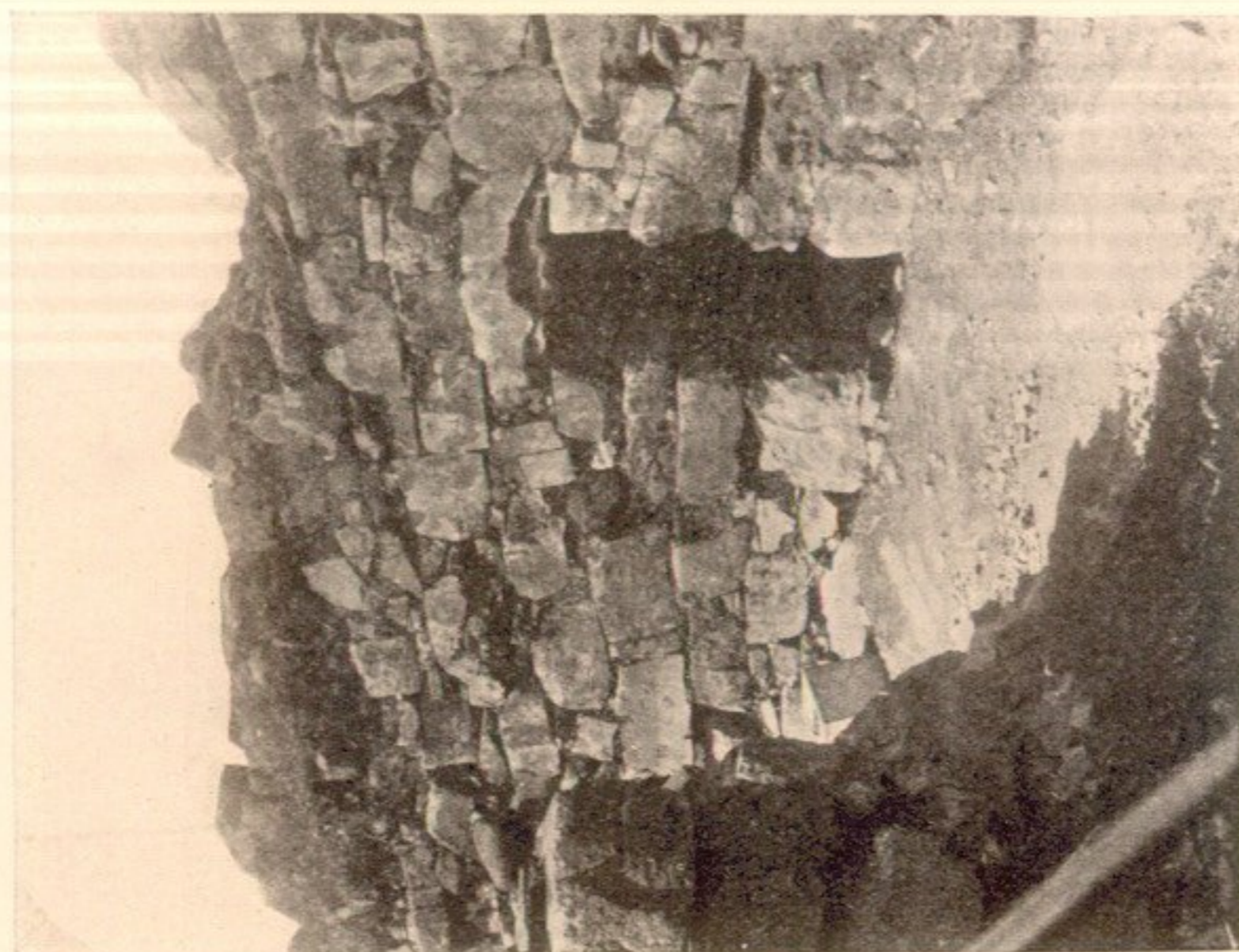


Fig. 3. Entrance to Chamber with Buttress.



Fig. 5. Remains of the Stair.



Fig. 6. View of Division Wall, with Main Wall beyond.

excavation disclosed yet another passage, 1 foot 6 inches wide. The course of this passage was followed, resulting in the discovery of a long chamber or gallery, 50 feet 9 inches long and about 4 feet 6 inches wide at the top. A few of the covering stones remain in position here and there, which proved sources of trouble and danger in clearing out the debris which filled the chamber or gallery.



Fig. 7. Second Entrance on the East Side of the Dun, seen from the Interior.

A second entrance to the broch from the outside was not expected, but further work in the entrance to this chamber or gallery resulted in the discovery of a continuation across the gallery right through the thickness of the wall. At the point of exit the width is 2 feet 6 inches. Fig. 7 shows this second entrance as seen from the interior, with the lintel in position. Fig. 8 shows the situation as viewed from outside the "Dun." I was at first inclined to regard the eastern section of this passage as foreign to the original scheme of construction, but an examination of the structure and the presence of the lintel at the

mouth of the exit, lead me to regard it as of the same period as the main entrance on the west. I understand that, while not usual, two entrances from the outside have been known to occur.

The building itself having been described, I next deal with the objects of interest that were recovered among the ashes and soil in the interior of the court, and in the various chambers and passages enumerated. The system followed in the search for relics was as follows. The soil and ashes were carefully lifted in a trowel, passed through the fingers, and



Fig. 8. The Outer View of the Second Entrance.

also examined by the eye. All objects, even the most doubtful in value, were laid aside for subsequent inspection, and the examined soil, etc., was passed into a box, which, when full, was emptied outside the "Dun."

The most interesting relic recovered is a necklace of fifty-nine amber beads (fig. 9). Forty-eight of these beads were found under a slab in the entrance to the chamber immediately to the east of the north guard chamber. The slab was hollowed out on its under side, thus preventing the weight of the stone from resting on the beads, a fact which, in addition to the number of the beads, leads, I think, clearly to the inference that this place was carefully selected as a safe hiding-place. The eleven additional beads which go to complete the necklace were found in clay overlying the subsoil beneath a small hearth in the

same chamber. Each of the beads is in form a section of a cylinder, varying in depth from 2 mm. to 6 mm. They have been carefully graduated to cause the necklace to taper to either end, the largest beads at the centre having a diameter of 1·2 cm., and those at the extremities of 7 mm. Further, to keep the beads in close contact on the curve, some of them have been fashioned with their opposite planes slightly converging. The extreme length of the necklace, following



Fig. 9. Necklace of Amber Beads.

the curve when strung, is $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Along with the amber beads were found one large translucent spheroid bead (fig. 10, No. 2) of green glass, and two opaque beads of a reddish-brown colour (fig. 10, Nos. 5 and 6), each in form a double truncated cone. Beads of the type of those forming the amber necklace have been found in Anglo-Saxon graves, and in similar graves beads of the type of the two opaque red beads are of frequent occurrence. Inside this chamber, in a corner, a fawn-coloured bead, with a spiral pattern (fig. 10, No. 1), was found.

In the centre of the court, among the ashes and clay, a flat, opaque yellow bead (fig. 10, No. 7) was unearthed; a similar bead was found at Traprain at the lowest level, from which the latest relics apparently

dated from the commencement of the second century of our era. At the base of the secondary wall a portion of yet another bead was

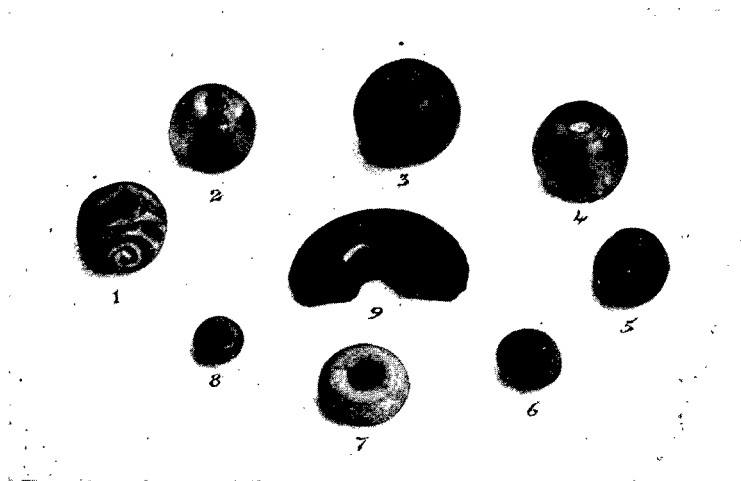


Fig. 10. Beads of various kinds from Dun an Iardhard.

discovered, of black glass, with streaks of blue and yellow which seem to have been twisted round it (fig. 10, No. 9). In addition, two more spheroid beads of green translucent glass were recovered (fig. 10,

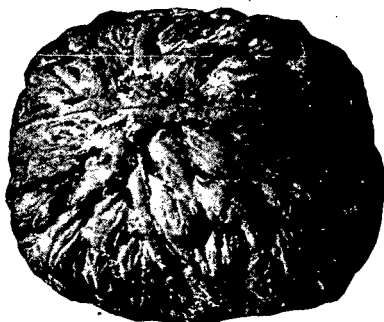


Fig. 11. Object from Dun an Iardhard.

Nos. 3 and 4), one at the floor level within the court, and the other at a high level in the main entrance passage.¹

I have considerable difficulty in discussing an object to which I cannot even give a name, but fig. 11, so far as form and design are

¹ The small bead (fig. 10, No. 8) was not found in Dun an Iardhard, but was accidentally included among the relics.

concerned, explains itself. It represents a hollow, buff-coloured piece of earthenware, about 2 inches long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, crossed longitudinally and again transversely at the centre by a narrow band which conceivably represents a cord fastening a bale. The top, ends, and sides are fashioned with a series of pointed ovate impressions grooved on their surface. The material from which the object has been formed is of fine texture: on the surface in the interstices there is a trace of what may have been a white pigment or lacquer. It is light in weight and fragile. In composition, workmanship, and elaborateness of ornamentation it differs from all the other fragments of earthenware found in the broch.

The objects in stone include a portion of an armlet (fig. 12) made of polished steatite, of the unusual breadth of $1\frac{3}{16}$ inches; a per-

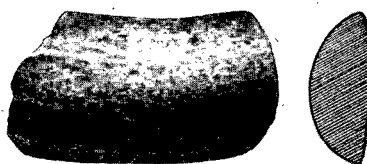


Fig. 12. Portion of an Armlet of Steatite.

forated quern stone; three rubbing stones; a whetstone; two oval-shaped pebbles of quartzite with smooth surfaces and longitudinal grooves on each side, one of which, also abraded at both ends, shows on one surface a number of particles of iron oxide, in streaks, following the directions of the longitudinal grooves; three small flint scrapers and another piece of worked flint; three complete and one incomplete perforated sandstone whorls, one of them decorated with radial lines on one surface and a concentric incised circle on the other; also an oval pebble of quartzite measuring superficially $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches by $3\frac{5}{8}$ inches, abraded at both ends, and which has been used as a hammer-stone.

A large quantity of iron refuse or "clinker" was found, and some fragments of bolts.

The pottery recovered from Dun an Iardhard (figs. 13 and 14) is of special interest. It is for the most part formed from carefully washed or refined clay, devoid of stones or foreign matter: much of it ornamented either with incised diaper or chevron devices, with raised wavy lines, or circular impressions produced on an applied fillet. The

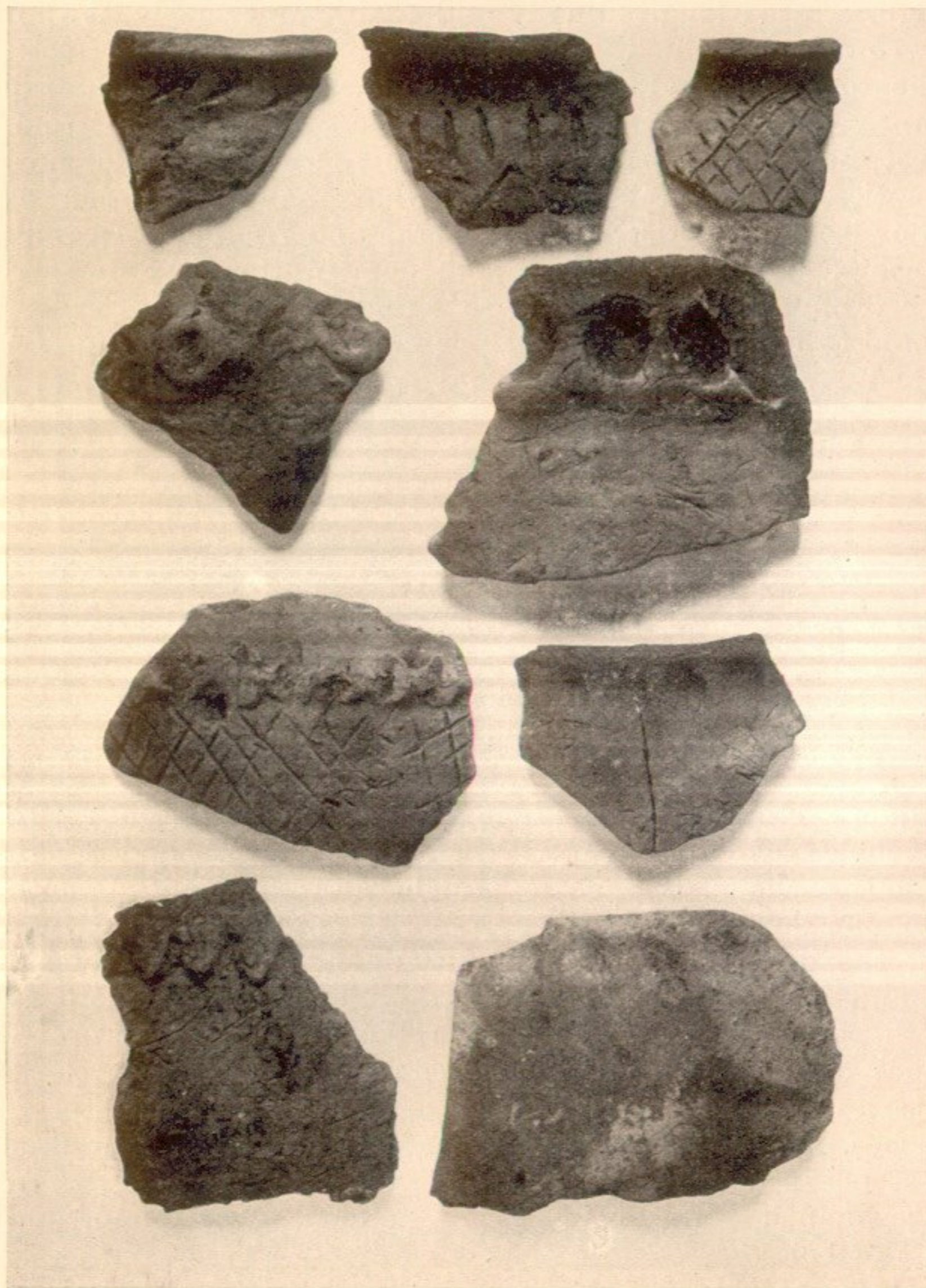


Fig. 13. Pottery from Dun an Iardhard.



Fig. 14. Pottery from Dun an Iardhard.

class of pottery resembles that found in the broch of Ayre, in Orkney, illustrated in the last volume of the *Proceedings*, also pottery found in kitchen middens, duns, and other sites in the Western Isles.¹

Many of the pieces were found at the foot of the staircase.

A collection of bones found has been kindly examined by Dr James Ritchie, D.Sc., whose Report is annexed.

The relics have been presented to the National Museum of Antiquities by the Countess Latour.

NOTES ON THE ANIMAL REMAINS. By JAMES RITCHIE, M.A., D.Sc.,
Royal Scottish Museum.

The very small collection of bones from this excavation represented only a few food animals. None of the bones examined showed direct traces of man's handiwork, though a few had suffered damage from fire. The animals, remains of which have been identified, were:—

1. OX. A single first incisor from a lower jaw.
2. GOAT, *Capra hircus*, Linnæus. The skull of a young specimen with horn cores, and upper jaws; and several limb bones.
3. TURBARY SHEEP, *Ovis aries*, var. *palustris*, Rüttimeyer. A few slender limb bones indicate this variety.
4. A Gadoid Fish, the LING, *Molva molva*, Linnæus. An earbone (otolith), fragment of dentary and one or two other skull bones.

¹ Cf. Beveridge's *Coll and Tiree*, p. 174 *et seq.*