

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE H N C 9 6 N E 0 0 6 A									
2 NGR H N C 9 9 6 9 6 7 7 2		3 QUAL CE							
6 SITE NAME C N O C N A H U I S E I G									
10 GENERIC TYPE BURIAL CAIRN, CHAMBERED (OCH)+ BURIAL, CISTED (I HULATION)									
14 PERIOD/DATE NE + BA					15 DATING METHOD TYP				
18 SHAPE									
19 THREAT AND DATE									

4 DISTRICT CAITHNESS		5 PARISH REAY	
7 AREA STATUS	8 SITE STATUS SCHEDULED	9 REGIONAL STATUS	
11 CONCORDANCE OS NC 96 NE 6	12 FORM STANDING STRUCTURE	13 DIMENSIONS 22.0m x 17.5m	
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS NE BURIAL CAIRN WITH SECONDARY BA CISTED BURIAL.		17 CONDITION INCOMPLETE	
20 LAND USE ENCLOSED PASTURE		21 GEOLOGY	
22 SOILS		23 VEGETATION	
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		25 RELIEF GENTLE HILLSLOPE	26 ASPECT NW
		27 ALTITUDE 30 = 38 MOD.	

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)
Edwards, J.H.: 1928: Superficial: Unscientific.

29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)

1. Ordnance Survey: 1876: 6" map.
2. Ordnance Survey: 1907: 6" map.
3. Henshall, A.S.: 1963: Chambered Tombs of Scotland: EUP: Vol. 1.: pp 280-1, No 38+PLAN
4. RCAHMS: 1911: Caithness Inventory: HESO: p 103, No. 374.
5. Edwards, J.H.: 1929 : Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.: Vol. 63: pp 140-150+plan + illust.
6. Ordnance Survey: 1967: 6" map.
7. SDD(AL): 1983: List of Scheduled Monuments. (OVER)

30 GROUND PLAN NO.	31 GROUND PHOTO NO.
32 SLIDES NO.	33 HR. AP. NO.
34 NMR. AP. NO.	35 OTHER AP. NO.: SOURCE
36 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION	
37 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY	38 SAMPLES
39 PALYNOLOGY	40 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.
41 SMALL FINDS	42 MUSEUM/LOCATION
43 OTHER	

44 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER	45 ATTITUDE OF OWNER
46 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT	47 ATTITUDE OF TENANT
48 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS	

49 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE	50 RECORDER: DATE GS: 16. 7. 1985.	51 CHECK: DATE DY 30. 7. 1985
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52 TEXT
"See attached photocopies for text + illustrations."
"NC 996 677 CNOC-NA-T UISEIG CHAMBERED CAIRN (7)"

(OVER)

(NC 9969 6772) Cnoc na h-Uiseig (NAT)
Pict's House (NR) (Remains of) (1)

Cnoc na h-Wiseig (Cairn) (NR) (2)

'Lower Dounreay' or 'Cnoc na Huseig' 'The Fairies Mound', 'The Lairacks Hillock' or 'Cnoc na h-Uiseig' is an Orkney-Cromarty short horned cairn, excavated in 1928 by Edwards. Across the centre between the horns it measured about 58 ft and along the horns 70 ft. In 1910 part of a surrounding wall-face of thin horizontal slabs could be seen on the E side of the NE horn in 1958 a small section could be seen along the NE side. The entrance was between the horns on the SE side. The irregularly-shaped chamber with a rounded end was carefully built of courses of small slabs, divided and strengthened by eight upright projecting slabs set into the walls.

Amongst the debris of flat slabs which filled the chamber a secondary long cist had been constructed, 3 ft below the surface of the cairn and lying NNE-SSW obliquely across the innermost compartment.

(Scheduled as 'Cnoc na h-Uiseig': Chambered Cairn.) (3)(4)(5)

This chambered cairn, a grassy mound, has been mutilated large-scale construction work and is now slightly rectangular in shape, measuring 22.0 m E-W and 17.5 m transversely, by about 2.5 m high. The horns are barely distinguishable on the E side. The spoil-tip to the S formerly overlay the S segment, but the cairn has been 'cleaned-up' and a high mesh-fence now encloses it. Resurveyed at 1:2500.

(OSFI:WEB:20
11.64)

(NC 9969 6772) Cnoc na h-Uiseig (NAT)
Chambered Cairn (NR)

Description. The cairn is situated about a quarter of a mile from the coast in comparatively level agricultural land at 100ft. OD. At the time of excavation the cairn appeared as a green hillock 8ft. high. Across the centre between the horns it measured about 58ft. and along the horns 70ft. At the time of Curle's visit in 1910 a portion of a surrounding wall-face of thin horizontal slabs could be seen on the E side of the NE horn; today a small section can be seen along the NE side.

The entrance was between the horns on the SE side. The outer end of the passage was 6ft. within the apparent edge of the cairn, and was only 1ft. wide. The passage walls expanded and increased in height up to the pair of transverse slabs set 5ft. further W. A lintel stone 5ft. 6in. long was found slipped forwards from these transverse slabs. The walls continued to diverge to form an irregularly shaped chamber with a rounded end, about 15ft. long with a maximum width of 6ft. 6in. It was carefully built of courses of small thin slabs, divided and strengthened by eight upright projecting slabs set into the walls. The two outermost slabs are almost opposite each other, but inside the chamber the slabs are staggered and set radially, three on the SW side, one projecting from the end wall and two on the NE side. These slabs had been sunk into the subsoil and pinned in position by a smaller slab wedged at the foot on either side. The slabs were 4 to 5½ in. thick, the outer pair 3ft. 3in. and 3ft. 7in. in height, the others varying from 4ft. 3in. to 4ft. 9in. The upper interior corners of the stones had been roughly chipped away to give a slanting upper surface. The walls rose higher than the slabs, the greatest height surviving, at the inner end, being 5ft. 10in., and originally the walls must have been considerably higher. 'At floor-level the base of the wall was nearly in line with the bottom of the upright slabs, but as it rose the wall gradually sloped outwards until it reached the top of the uprights. Here it became more perpendicular and at two points [at the inner end] showed some sign of convergence.' The stones choking the chamber were observed to have up to 1in. of clay on their upper surfaces while the lower surfaces were clean; the excavator suggested the clay had been used to lute the oversailing courses of the roof.

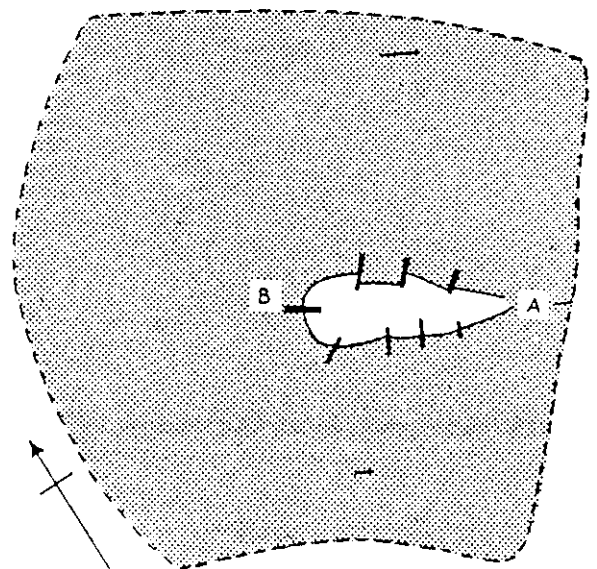
The floor at the entrance as far as the second upright slabs on each side was of clay, between the second and third uprights the floor was partly paved and beyond this point the inner end of the chamber was completely paved except for a small pocket near the SE angle of this area which seemed to contain a small quantity of ashes. On top of the paving was a layer of clay 2 to 3in. thick in which were embedded the skeletal remains and other finds. 'A few fragments of charcoal were also found but so few as to be almost negligible.'

Amongst the debris of flat slabs which filled the chamber a long cist had been constructed. It was 16ft. from the entrance and 3ft. below the surface of the cairn, lying NNE-SSW obliquely across the innermost compartment. The interior was filled with beach shingle.

'About 60 or 70ft. in front of the cairn, is a hollow or ditch-like depression in the ground, a peculiar phenomenon in a field which is otherwise comparatively level, and I can only suggest as a reason for its existence, that it was from this spot that builders of the cairn may have obtained the material, or a part of it at least, for the construction of the monument.'

The cairn itself was not touched at the time of excavation. The chamber

Lower Dounreay



(3)

5. EDWARDS. PSAS 1928.

CHAMBERED CAIRN AT LOWER DOUNREAY.

This cairn (fig. 2), which is of the round horned variety, is situated in the pasture land about 1 mile north-east of the farm of Lower Dounreay and 1 mile from the seashore, and like many others of its kind, has long been known in the local folk-lore as "The Fairies Mound." It is also sometimes called "The Lairacks Hillock" or Cnoc na h-Uiseig. From a distance it has the appearance of a green hillock, but on closer approach there could be seen protruding above the grass-grown surface a number of slabs, the position of some of which indicated that the cairn had at some time or other been interfered with. On the southern side, and about 60 or 70 feet in front of the cairn, is a hollow or ditch-like depression in the ground, a peculiar phenomenon in a field which is otherwise comparatively level, and I can only suggest as a reason for its existence, that it was from this spot the builders of the cairn may have obtained the material, or part of it at least, for the construction of the monument.

The cairn measured about 8 feet in height above the level of the field. Across the centre, between the horns, the diameter was about 58 feet, and along the horns 70 feet. In the centre of the concavity, on the south-east side, and seen in fig. 2 as a white mark, was a large slab which measured 5 feet 6 inches in length, 2 feet 9 inches in greatest breadth, and 11 inches in thickness. With some difficulty this stone was moved downwards a few feet, and on digging below where it had lain the entrance to the chamber was found. The slab, which had probably slipped from its original position, was, I think, the lintel stone of the portal, the two jambs being the upright slabs Nos. 1 and 8, which were subsequently uncovered in the course of the excavations. The whole of the chamber from the entrance to the back wall was completely filled with flat slabs which had formed the superstructure of the chamber. Amongst this mass, and at a distance of 16 feet from the entrance and 3 feet from the surface level, a secondary burial had been made, the cairn stones of the fallen roof having been utilised as material for the preparation of the long cist in which to place the body. The cist, which lay north north-east and south-south-west, measured 6 feet in

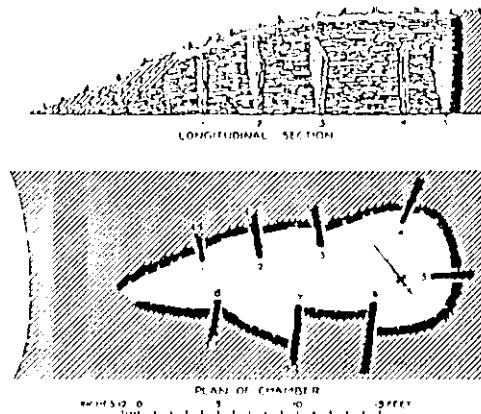


Fig. 3. Plan and Section of Chamber in Cairn at Dounreay.

(iii)

of well defined compartments. The spaces between them, however, served the same purpose, the slabs themselves being used for dividing one interment from another, as I shall show later. One other point in connection with the slabs, for which I can assign no particular reason, is the rough chipping away of the upper interior corner of each one, some more and some less. This is shown on the section, but can be

(5 cont.)



Fig. 5. End of Chamber in Cairn at Lower Doureay.

most clearly seen in fig. 4, showing the south side of the chamber, and fig. 5, a view of the back of the chamber.

In clearing the floor of the chamber, the space between uprights Nos. 3, 4, 5, and 6 was found to be completely paved, except for a small patch near the inner angle of No. 6, where there was a pocket which seemed to contain a small quantity of ashes. Between uprights Nos. 2, 3, 6, and 7 the floor was partly paved and partly covered with clay, and from this point to the entrance the floor covering consisted of clay only. On the top of the paved area was a layer of clay some 2 to 3 inches in thickness, and embedded in this were human skeletal remains, animal bones, pottery, etc. A few fragments of charcoal were also found, but so few as to be almost negligible.

The skeletal remains were fragmentary, as the weight of the fallen stones had driven the bones into the clay, breaking and crushing them, and this, together with the effect of moisture which had seeped through the stones of the cairn, had reduced many of them to such a state of disintegration as to make it impossible to remove them. From the position of the fragments which remained it was possible, however, to determine, so far, the position in which some of the bodies had been placed.

The skeletal remains were

The first skeleton was found between uprights Nos. 3 and 4. It had been laid in a contracted position on its left side close to the wall, with the head in the angle made by the wall and No. 3 upright. The knees had been drawn up, one arm placed under and the other over the thigh bones. Between uprights Nos. 5 and 6 other skeletal fragments were found. Pieces of a skull were lying in the angle of upright No. 5, while close to the base of the wall, and nearly centred between the two uprights, were a number of long bones. From the position of the bones it would appear as if a body had been laid down in a contracted position. In the central space between uprights Nos. 2, 3, 6, and 7 the human skeletal remains were rather mixed, the skull of one skeleton being found in the exterior angle of upright No. 6, while another skull and a number of long bones were found midway between the upstanding slabs.

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE															
H	N	C	9	6	N	E	0	0	6	B					
2 NGR															
N	C	9	9	6	9	6	7	7	2	3 QUAL					
6 SITE NAME															
C	N	O	C		N	A		H	-	U	I	S	E	I	G

4 DISTRICT	5 PARISH
CAITHNESS	REAY

8 CONCORDANCE	9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S)	10 ACCESSION NO.
OS NC 96 NE 6	RMS(QUEEN STREET)	EO 356-361
NMR		

7 GENERIC TYPE
BEAKERS, SHERDS, RIM+AXEHEAD, STONE +BONE OBJECT, PERFORATED

13 FIND CIRCUMSTANCES	14 CONDITION
EXCAVATION(IN CHAMBERED CAIRN+ BURIAL CIST)	

11 PERIOD/DATE	12 DATING METHOD
NE+BA	TYPE

15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE

16 EXCAVATION RECORD NO.

17 LAND USE	18 GEOLOGY
ENCLOSED PASTURE	

19 SOILS	20 VEGETATION

21 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE	22 RELIEF	23 ASPECT	24 ALTITUDE
	GENTLE HILLSLOPE	NW	30=38m OD

25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION/DIMENSIONS
TWO BEAKER URNS, AN AXE OF MICACEOUS SANDSTONE, NUMEROUS HUMAN REMAINS AND THE PHALANGE OF AN OX WITH TRANSVERSE PERFORATION. MEASUREMENTS MAINDY FOR THERPOTTERY APPROX. 1.0cm THICK, WITH RIM DIAMETERS UP TO 6.0cms. HUMAN REMAINS AND POTTERY FRAGMENTS TO VAGUE FOR ACCURATE ESTIMATION.

- 26 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR:DATE:TITLE:JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER:VOLUME:DETAIL)
- HENSHALL, AS: 1963: CHAMBERED TOMBS OF SCOTLAND: VOL. 1: pp280-81
 - RCAHMS: 1911: CAITHNESS INVENTORY: HMSO: p103, No. 374
 - EDWARDS, JH: 1929 : PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT. : VOL. 63: pp140-150+PLAN+ILLUSTRATION
 - ACCESSIONS: 1930 : PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT. : VOL. 64: p12, No. 15
 - CRICHTON-MITCHELL: 1933-34: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT. : VOL. 68: p181, Nos. 146-48
 - CLARKE, DL: 1970: BEAKER POTTERY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND: VOL. 2: p516, Nos. 1611-1612.1

27 GROUND PLAN NO.	28 GROUND PHOTO NO.

29 SLIDES NO.	30 HR. AP. NO.

31 NMR. AP. NO.	32 OTHER AP. NO. : SOURCE

33 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION

34 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY	35 SAMPLES

36 PALYNOLOGY	37 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.

38 OTHER

39 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER	40 ATTITUDE OF OWNER

41 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT	42 ATTITUDE OF TENANT

43 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS

44 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE	45 RECORDER: DATE	46 CHECK: DATE
	HAR: 14.5.1986	

47 TEXT

"See attached photocopies for text and illustration." "Stone axe, much weathered, measuring c. 7.5cms by 5.0cms, apparently only partly made, as it shows no grinding. It has been picked into shape, not flaked or ground. Fragments of a beaker of reddish clay, several pieces being ornamented by transverse and oblique impressions of a twisted cord; two small fragments of hard grey pottery(neolithic), the exterior being black and highly burnished; perforated bone, the first phalanx of a small ox, found with human remains on the floor of th chamber; several fragments of two beakers of dirty brown one having been ornamented with impressed transverse lines made by a toothed stamp and with short oblique incised lines. Found in a ruined chambered cairn at Lower Dounreay, Caithness, at various levels, from near the surface of the floor of the cairn."

(i)

The bottom was paved, and the skeleton, which was lying on its back with its head at the north end of the cist, was entirely covered with beach shingle. At the south-east end of the cist, among the shingle, two fragments of a beaker urn were found. On the top of the paved area was a layer of clay some 2 to 3 inches in thickness, and embedded in this were human skeletal remains, animal bones, pottery, etc. A few fragments of charcoal were also found, but so few as to be almost negligible.

(3)



The skeletal remains were fragmentary, as the weight of the fallen stones had driven the bones into the clay, breaking and crushing them, and this, together with the effect of moisture which had seeped through the stones of the cairn, had reduced many of them to such a state of disintegration as to make it impossible to remove them. From the position of the fragments which remained it was possible, however, to determine, so far, the position in which some of the bodies had been placed.

The first skeleton was found between uprights Nos. 3 and 4. It had been laid in a contracted position on its left side close to the wall, with the head in the angle made by the wall and No. 3 upright. The knees had been drawn up, one arm placed under and the other over the thigh bones. Between uprights Nos. 5 and 6 other skeletal fragments were found. Pieces of a skull were lying in the angle of upright No. 5, while close to the base of the wall, and nearly centred between the two uprights, were a number of long bones. From the position of the bones it would appear as if a body had been laid down in a contracted position. In the central space between uprights Nos. 2, 3, 6, and 7 the human skeletal remains were rather mixed, the skull of one skeleton being found in the exterior angle of upright No. 6, while another skull and a number of long bones were found midway between the upstanding slabs.

In the clay in which the bones of the first-mentioned skeleton were imbedded, and which had been removed and placed aside for examination, two fragments of neolithic pottery were found, a stone axe, fragments of two beaker urns, and a number of animal bones. Among the latter was the first phalanx of a small ox which had been pierced

near its distal end, from front to back, by a hole about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in diameter (fig. 6). A similar bone also pierced in this way, from a Stone Age kitchen-midden at Oram, in Denmark, is figured in *Affaldsdynger Fra Stenalderen i Danmark*, p. 142, fig. 4.

The axe, which is made of a micaceous sandstone, measures $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches in width across the cutting face, and $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch across the butt. It is roughly oval in section and measures $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch near the centre, where it is greatest in thickness. The surface generally, except in one or two places where an attempt has been made at polishing or smoothing, is pitted, showing that it has been prepared by pecking or bruising with a hammer-stone.¹ The neolithic pottery is made of an extremely hard paste. The outer surface is black and glossy, with the appearance of having been rubbed or burnished with a smooth instrument. The inner surface resembles a piece of stone, so large is the



Fig. 6. Pierced Ox Bone from Chamber of Cairn at Lower Donureay. (4.)

cont.

For various reasons it was not found possible to examine the structure of the cairn outwith the chamber. Internally there is little deviation from the plan of excavated cairns of a similar type, although there are structural differences in detail. In the plans of the horned round cairns of Ormiegill and Gett,¹ excavated by Dr Joseph Anderson over half a century ago, the upright slabs are shown in pairs, each one exactly opposite the other, thus dividing the chamber into three compartments in the first mentioned and two in the second. Also, the upright slab in the back wall of the innermost compartment of both these cairns was placed face outwards and flush with the drystone building, instead of protruding for some distance edge outwards, as in the cairn at Lower Dounreay. Further, in the Dounreay cairn the passage is short, the distance from the outer extremity of the walls—where they are only a few inches in height—to the upright slabs Nos. 1 and 8 being only 5 feet. In the cairns of Ormiegill and Gett, and imbedded in a floor of ashes, were burnt bones, human and animal, evidence of a period during which cremation was practised. Above this accumulation were unburnt bones, splintered and broken, both human and animal, of later burials and a different method of sepulture. The relics found consisted of flint chips and worked flints, and in the cairn of Ormiegill a finely polished hammer of grey granite was found, which measured 4 inches in length and was pierced with a hole for a handle. Quantities of pottery were also found, but these are not now available for examination.

In the cairn at Lower Dounreay there was only one method of burial—by inhumation, and in two cases at least in the contracted position. No flints, worked or unworked, were found. Two of the fragments of pottery were neolithic, and the remainder fragments of beakers of the Bronze Age. The decoration of the beaker (fig. 7), with its toothed-stamp impressions and false finger-nail technique, points to an early period of that time.² The corded beaker found in association with the stone axe and neolithic pottery is an interesting record, although we must infer from the fragments found that the whole of the globular body of the beaker was decorated with the cord impressions, instead of the neck only and perhaps part of the shoulder, as in its continental prototypes of the Late Neolithic period. The stone axe is the second recorded from a chambered cairn in Scotland.³ A polished axe of greenstone was discovered by Professor T. H. Bryce in Clachaig (Limekiln) cairn, Arran. In the two chambers of this cairn were the remains of fourteen individuals, men, women, and children, the bones all unburnt. It was noted that the skulls were invariably placed in the corners and the long bones against the walls, practically the same conditions as prevailed at Lower Dounreay.

From the evidence afforded, therefore, by the multiple inhumed burials, the stone axe, fragments of neolithic pottery, shards of early beaker pottery, and a total absence of bronze, we must presume that the interments in the Lower Dounreay cairn had been made in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. The relics from the cairn have been presented to the Museum by the Trustees of the late Donald Innes of Reay, to whom the thanks of the Society are due. I must also express my indebtedness to Mr Patrick Innes for his assistance, and to Mr B. G. Harris for his help in preparing the plans.

REPORT ON THE HUMAN BONES. By Professor ALEX. LOW,
M.D., F.S.A. SCOT.

FROM THE CHAMBER OF THE CAIRN.

The bones are so fragmentary that apart from identifying the various pieces it is not possible to arrive at any definite conclusion as to the type of individuals represented.

Between upright slabs Nos. 2, 3, 6, and 7 were found pieces of the cranial bones of two individuals—an imperfect skull-cap, and part of the lower jaw of a young individual with a somewhat long skull and narrow forehead; a frontal bone and pieces of upper and lower jaws of an adult with narrow forehead and prominent brow-ridges.

Between slabs 5 and 6 were small fragments of two skulls and some very fragmentary and splintered pieces of limb bones—pieces of humerus, ulna, femur, and tibia.

Between slabs 3 and 4 were found pieces of upper and lower limb bones of a young man. Part of the upper extremity of the right femur shows very marked antero-posterior flattening, and the upper three-fourths of the right tibia shows lateral flattening of the shaft and retroversion of the head.

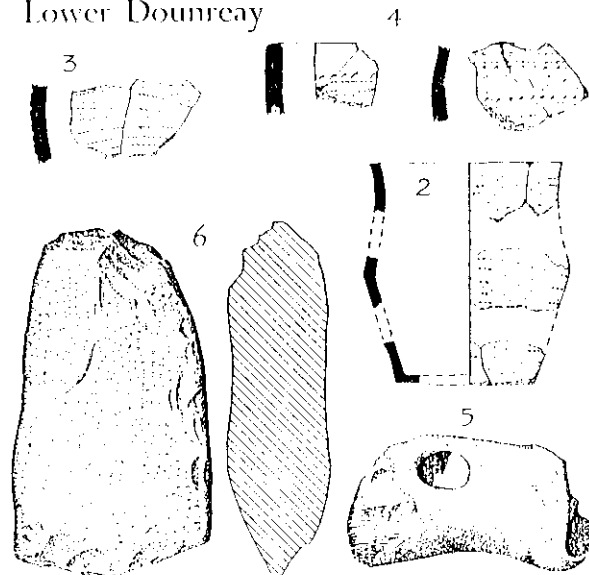
(iii)

(3, cont.)

cont.

Lower Dounreay

(V)



(1)

*Finds**Artifacts.* In N.M.A. (ill. p. 254).

1. Two small neolithic wall sherds, undecorated, one seemingly from the angle of a very slight carination; very hard, dark ware, the black outer surface burnished, 0.2-0.4 in. thick (EO 358).
2. Rim and wall sherds including the basal angle of a small vessel; all-over decoration with a stamp giving three tiny circular impressions, arranged in widely spaced vertical rows; rim diam. 3.75 in., base diam. 3 in., 0.2-0.28 in. thick, hard reddish-brown ware (EO 361).
3. Wall sherds of a beaker; horizontal cord impressions; fairly hard reddish-brown ware, 0.28 in. thick (EO 357).
4. Rim and wall sherds of a beaker; comb impressed decoration, including zones of horizontal herring-bone edged by horizontal lines and slanting nicks; coarse more friable brown-black ware, 0.4 in. thick (EO 360).
5. Ox phalange with transverse perforation, broken (EO 359).
6. Axe of micaceous sandstone, the surface pecked except for one small area on one side which is smooth, possibly having been used as a whetstone; no ground cutting-edge remains (EO 356).

1-3, 5, 6 found with the skeleton between the third and fourth uprights on the SW side; 4 on 'the floor of the cairn' [chamber], under the turf on the top of the cairn, and in the secondary cist. 1 not illustrated.

Skeletal. Lost. All unburnt. Remains representing five bodies including an adult, a young man and a 'young individual'. Parts of a skeleton were found close to the wall between the third and fourth uprights on the SW side, laid contracted on its left side with the head to the SE. Another was found between the third upright on the NE side and the end slab, also contracted with the head in the angle of the end stone and the wall, together with fragments of a third skull in the same place. Remains of at least two more skeletons were found in the partly paved area between the second and third pairs of upright slabs. The skeletal material was in very poor condition when excavated. In the long cist was an inhumation, male, twenty to twenty-five years of age.

Animal remains. Lost. There were sixty pieces of animal bones, all very fragmentary, the majority belonging to ox, the other species being young deer, squirrel, water-vole, otter, gannet and grebe. There were teeth of ox, sheep and dog, also two pieces of oyster shell. Found in the clay layer on the chamber floor.

6* "Otherwise known as: 'Cnoc na Wiseig', 'Lower Dounreay', 'Cnoc na Huseig',
'The Fairies' Mound' and the 'Lairacks Hillock.' (2) (3) (5)

29. 8. Mercer, R.J.:1981:Field Survey in Northern Scotland:BJP:Vol. 2:No. 317.

9. HBM (SOD) ; 1985 ; LIST OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

317. Cairn. Diameter: 20m. Height: 3m. Circular grass-covered cairn. All that remains of "Cnoc na L'Uiseig" or "Lower Dounreay" short horned cairn. The entrance was between the horns on the SE side, and led to an irregularly shaped chamber with a rounded end, constructed of small slabs, divided and strengthened by upright slabs set into the walls. A secondary long cist was constructed of flat slabs among the debris, 1m below the cairn surface. The chamber contained Neolithic and Beaker pottery, and the bones of 5 unburnt bodies. The cist contained a male skeleton and fragments of Beaker pottery. The cairn was mutilated during construction work and has since been "cleaned up". No structural features are now visible. Elevation: 100' OD.
NC 997677.
O.S. Card NC 96 NE 6 (8)

length, 2 feet in breadth, and 1 foot 4 inches in depth. Both side and end slabs had been set on edge. To protect the cist further two slabs, each of which measured about 3 feet in length and 2 feet 9 inches in breadth respectively, had been placed on edge on either side of the cist at its head. Laid across these from side to side were three flat stones which formed a cover. The bottom was paved, and the skeleton, which was lying on its back with its head at the north end of the cist, was entirely covered with beach shingle. At the south-east end of the cist, among the shingle, two fragments of a beaker urn were found.



Fig. 4. South side of Chamber in Cairn at Lower Douvreay.

On reference to the section and plan (fig. 3), it can be seen that the original chamber is a pointed oval in shape, having eight upright divisional slabs (numbered 1-8 in the illustrations) of varying heights set radially with drystone building between each. It lay north-west and south-east, and measured 20 feet in length. Between the walls at the entrance it measured only 1 foot in width, but gradually expanded to about 6 feet 6 inches at the back. The original height of the chamber cannot now be ascertained, but as the drystone building is at every point built higher than the upright slabs, one can assume that it must have been

of the dome-shaped or corbelled variety, with perhaps one or more capstones. Between the upright slabs Nos. 6 and 7 and 7 and 8 two slabs of whinstone were found, which might have answered as covers. The larger of the two measured 4 feet in length by 3 feet 7 inches in breadth and 7 inches in thickness. The only part of the chamber which may have been lintelled is that portion between the walls at the entrance on the exterior side of slabs Nos. 1 and 8, and here a few fallen slabs were found, which by their size and shape may have served as lintels.

In the removal of the stones from the back of the chamber, it was observed that the upper faces of many of these had adhering to them a layer of clay sometimes nearly an inch in thickness, the lower faces being quite clean. The use of clay has already been noted in the superstructure of cairns elsewhere,¹ so that its presence here in such a quantity and position was in all likelihood not accidental, but for the purposes of making the roof as nearly watertight as possible, and helping to bind the structure together. In the actual construction of the chamber its shape had evidently been determined by the placing of the upright slabs (fig. 4), these having been fixed in position first of all. Each slab had been sunk to some depth in the subsoil, and pinned in its position by a smaller stone wedged in at the foot on either side. The drystone walling had then been built between and above the uprights (fig. 5). The measurements of the upright stones are as follows:

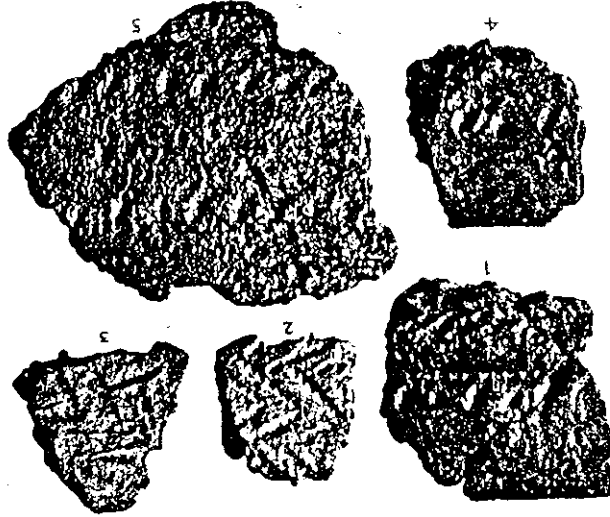
Number.	Height.	Thickness.	Breadth.
1	3 feet 3 inches	5 inches	Not ascertained.
2	4 .. 6 ..	5 ..	" ..
3	4 .. 6 ..	5½ ..	" ..
4	4 .. 6 ..	5 ..	3 feet 3 inches.
5	4 .. 7 ..	5 ..	2 .. 10 ..
6	4 .. 9 ..	5½ ..	4 .. 4 ..
7	4 .. 3 ..	4 ..	Not ascertained.
8	3 .. 7 ..	4 ..	" ..

Between Nos. 1 and 2 the height of the cairn wall as it stands now is 4 feet, between Nos. 2 and 3, 5 feet 4 inches, and between Nos. 5 and 6 its highest point 5 feet 10 inches. At floor-level the base of the wall was nearly in line with the bottom of the upright slabs, but as it rose the wall gradually sloped outwards until it reached the top of the uprights. Here it became more perpendicular, and at two points above the uprights Nos. 3 and 6 it showed some sign of convergence.

The position of the upright slabs must be considered. It will be noted that except for Nos. 1 and 8, which are nearly opposite each other but not quite, the remainder, except for No. 5, are so placed that one on either side faces the interval between two on the opposite side. Moreover, the position of No. 5 upright in the centre of the semicircular back wall, leaves us with four uprights on one side and three on the other. This arrangement of the upright slabs would seem to preclude the possibility of the chamber of this cairn into a series

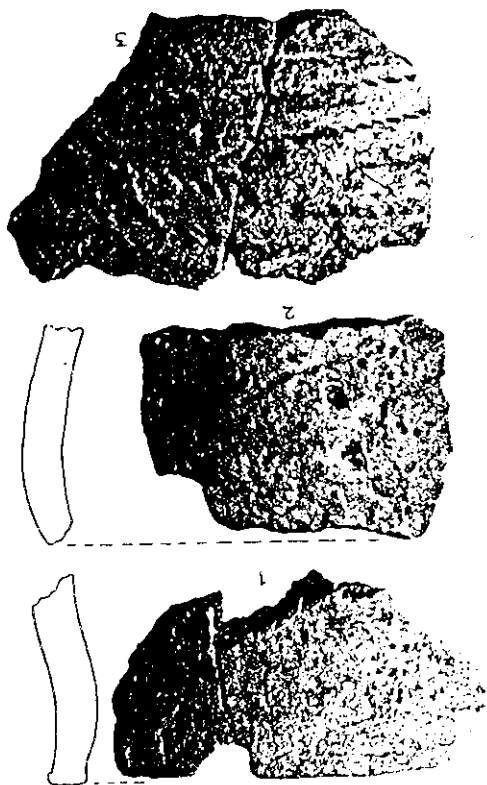
the cist. Nos. 2 and 3 came from the floor of the cist, and Nos. 4 and 5 from the cist which had contained the secondary burial. It is made of a coarse dark brown clay, intermixed with small stones and quartz crystals. The hip fragments Nos. 1 and 4 are decorated with a row of nearly vertical dashes made with a stick or other implement, and closely resembling the finger-nail technique. These are margined by a line impressed with a toothed implement producing a row of hyphens, and below is an irregular chevron pattern of which Nos. 2 and 3 may be portions. Fragment No. 5, part of the bulge of the urn, has two rows of the nearly vertical dashes placed $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart, each row of which is margined by a double line of the impressed hyphens.

Fig. 8. Fragments of a beaker from Cist in Chambered Cairn at Lower Donreay.



Fragment No. 1 was found immediately under the turf on the top of other beaker (fig. 8) were found in various parts of the cist. The hip of a vessel which had been made of a light brown clay, and decorated with horizontal impressions of a twisted cord. The fragments of the fragments of the beaker (fig. 7, No. 3) were portions of the body appear to be equidistant they have probably been made with a stamp. are shallow punctations in groups of three. As each one of the three base. The hip is slightly everted, and here and there over the surface in diameter across the mouth when complete, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the is made of a fine yellowish clay, has probably measured about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thickness. The beaker (fig. 7, Nos. 1 and 2), which

Fig. 7. Fragments of two Beakers from floor of Chamber in Cairn at Lower Donreay.



percentage of sand which has been added to the clay in the process of manufacture. The largest of the two fragments measures $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch by

52.
"Amidst the rather confusing reports on the burial artefacts existing, one can discern that most of them came from the earlier inhumations in the forfront of the cairn, and that the later burial merely contained fragments of beaker pottery of the Bronze Age."(SMR:GS:17.7.1985)
"1611 F Lower Dounreay NMA All over corded. 1612 F Eo357-61 Undecorated. 1612.1 F Indeterminate."
(6)

SECONDARY BURIAL IN LONG CIST.

The long cist contained the imperfect skeleton of a young man about twenty to twenty-five years of age.

The skull is too imperfect to permit of measurements being taken. The bones are thin, and sufficient of the skull-cap remains to show a long type of skull with a rather full and rounded frontal region and with high orbits. The ramus and part of the body of the left side of the lower jaw is preserved. All three molar teeth are in position, but do not show any wearing of the crowns.

There are a number of imperfect vertebræ and a few broken ribs. The hip bones are much broken, but the pieces that remain show sex characters indicating a male.

The lengths of the entire limb bones are as follows:—

Right humerus	323 mm
.. radius	236 ..
.. ulna	258 ..
.. femur	444 ..
Left tibia	352 ..
.. fibula	350 ..

The *platymeric index* of the femur is 65·7, and the *platycnemio index* of the tibia 61·7. Both tibiæ show flattening and retroversion of their heads, and the left one shows a "squatting" facet at its lower end; the lower end of the right tibia is broken. The right os calcis and both astragali are fairly complete, the latter showing "squatting" facets.

The bones are those of a young male, rather long-headed, of slender build, and of an estimated stature of 5 feet 6 inches.

REPORT ON THE ANIMAL BONES. By R. M. NEILL, M.C., M.A.,
Lecturer on Zoology, University of Aberdeen.

These number some 60 pieces, almost all very small and fragmentary. They are not of any great zoological interest. The variety of aquatic animals represented suggests that the site of the cairn has been exposed to flooding or was hard by a stream or pond, although actually there is no evidence of this at the present day.

The following is a summary of the remains:—

1. Nine pieces rib, vertebræ, scapula, and 22 pieces limb bones of a smallish ox. Of the latter the largest pieces by far are a part of the right radius and an os calcis. The stoutish build of the former seems to preclude Celtic shorthorn.
2. Right humerus and one other limb fragment of young deer.
3. Two leg bones of a squirrel.
4. Part of the skull of a water-vole.
5. Two pieces lower jaw and part of right frontal of an otter.
6. Part of sternum and several wing-bone pieces of a gannet.
7. Seven pieces wing bones of a grebe or grebe-like bird, and two fragments of mandible ditto.

In addition to the above there were found 3 ox teeth, 1 sheep tooth, 1 canine tooth of a dog, 2 pieces of oyster-shell, and a fragment of bird pelvis which has not been definitely identified.