

This monument is in terribly ruined condition, as not only is it the focus of a present day garden and farmyard, but its southern flanks have been heavily damaged by the construction, in the nineteenth century, of Shurrery Church. It is clearly, however, a monument of great interest. The cairn even in its ruined condition is 35m in width by 50m in length. Such a cairn is large even in its truncated condition by Caithness standards. Six slabs were noted during the 1982 survey exposed by robbing on the E side of the cairn and these would appear as both Curle (1911) and Henshall (1963) have said to relate to a stalled cairn at least 13m in length - such a chamber would also be unique in Caithness. The monument is situated in relatively low lying and fertile land c.1 km SE of the deserted village of Broubster.

291. Chambered cairn. 'Shurrery Church'. Dimensions: 40m x 24m. Height: 4m. Subrectangular grass-covered mound. Orientation: N-S. The cairn is cut by two walls. On the E side of the cairn six parallel upright stones are visible, with three more with a similar alignment running down the centre of the cairn. These are presumably the remains of stalls. The drystone construction at the N end of the cairn has been exposed, and much damage has occurred around its perimeter. Elevation: 300' OD. ND 049587. O.S. Card ND 05 NW 4. Henshall, A.S. (1963) The Chambered Tombs of Scotland, vol. 1, 71, 73, 288, No. 49. RCAHMS (1911) Caithness, 99, No. 362. (Fig. 3)

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

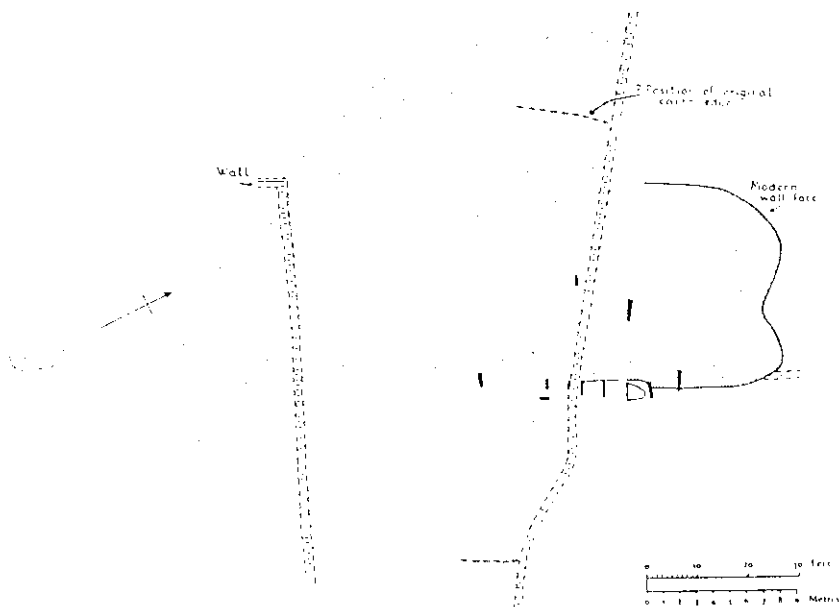
4 DISTRICT CAITHNESS		5 PARISH REAY		1 SITE CODE H N D O 5 N W O O 4		2 NGR N D O 4 8 8 5 8 7 4 C E		3 QUAL	
7 AREA STATUS		8 SITE STATUS SCHEDULED		9 REGIONAL STATUS		6 SITE NAME SHURRERY CHURCH		10 GENERIC TYPE BURIAL CAIRN, CHAMBERED (OCH)	
11 CONCORDANCE OSND 05 NW 4 NMR		12 FORM STANDING STRUCTURE		13 DIMENSIONS 35.0m DIAM.		14 PERIOD/DATE NE		15 DATING METHOD TYP	
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS		17 CONDITION (MUTILATED)		18 SHAPE ROUND		19 THREAT AND DATE			
20 LAND USE ENCLOSED PASTURE				21 GEOLOGY		22 SOILS		23 VEGETATION	
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		25 RELIEF KNOLL ON GENTLE HILLSLOPE		26 ASPECT SW=N=SE		27 ALTITUDE 84=91m OD			
28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)									
29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)									
1. ORDNANCE SURVEY:1907:6" MAP. 2. HENSHALL A.S.:1963:CHAMBERED TOMBS OF SCOTLAND:EUP:VOLI:pp71.73.288+ PLAN. 3. ORDNANCE SURVEY:1963:6" MAP. 4. HMB(S.D.D.):1985:LIST OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS. 5. MERCER R.:1985:FIELD SURVEY IN N. SCOTLAND:EUP:VOL 3:No FOR 291.									
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: 29.7.1985.		51 CHECK: DATE Am: 8.8.1985	
52 TEXT									

"See continuation card for text + illustration."

SHURRERY CHURCH
 [MONADH NAN
 CARN]
 (O.-C., ? stalled, ? round)
 In the parish of
 REAY
 Location 7 m. SW of
 THURSO
 Map reference
 ND 048587
 Sheet XVI; ND 05 NW
 Inventory number 362
 Reference R. C. A. M. Inv. 99
 Plan by A. S. H. and M. J. S.
 (fig. 49)
 Visited 15.8.56

Description. Between the church at Shurrery and the croft to the NE, at 300ft. OD, lie the remains of a curious and much mutilated site. It appears to have been a large cairn built on a knoll; it is now mainly grass-grown and stands to a maximum height of about 6ft. The present length NNE-SSW is about 115ft., but the cairn may have been curtailed at the S end; the width is about 120ft. but the edge is difficult to define and merges into the slope of the knoll. The cairn is crossed by two walls. The S end is now within the enclosure round the church, and is reduced to a barely perceptible rise and the edge is vague. The area between the walls is covered with rough turf and the tops of various stones protrude. A small square building has been built against the E side. The N end of the cairn lies partly in a croft garden and partly in a field. Here it has been greatly reduced round the edges and faced with a retaining wall, while field stones have been added to the top, the resulting construction having almost vertical sides 4 to 5ft. high and a flat top.

Shurrery Church



A row of parallel slabs, set on end and aligned on the NNE-SSW axis but set transversely to it, can be seen a little to the E of the apparent centre of the cairn. The northernmost stone is 19ft. from the present N end, and the eight stones (one of them fallen) are spaced over a distance of 40ft. The two southernmost of these stones are in the less disturbed part of the cairn between the walls with their tops only just visible, over 14ft. apart. Another stone lies under the wall. The stones to the N are spaced 4 to 5ft. apart and are joined by built walling 4 to 5ft. high. This, certainly older than the croft garden wall, may possibly be partly original; a modern retaining wall continuing northwards hides all but the tip of the northernmost stone and continues to the N built with a marked batter inwards against the cairn. The ground slopes down from the upright stones to the E. The stones are exposed for their full height, 5ft., 4ft. 6in., 4ft. and 4ft. respectively from N-S.

Eleven feet to the W of the fallen stone in the row just described, and parallel to it, there projects the top of another stone. To the SW is a second stone also parallel, just showing through the turf.

Although the site is extremely disturbed the remains do seem to indicate a cairn with a long stalled chamber, as first suggested by Curle.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 300ft = 91m | 40ft = 12.31m |
| 6ft = 1.83m | 14ft = 4.38m |
| 115ft = 35.24m | 4ft 6ins = 1.36m |
| 120ft = 36.77m | |
| (2) | |
| 4ft = 1.21m | |
| 5ft = 1.52m | |
| 19ft = 5.91m | |

(ND 0488 5874) Cairn (NR) (1)

The mutilated remains of this round cairn measure about 35.0 m in diameter by 2.1 m high. To the S of each of the walls which cross it, the cairn survives as a grass-covered mound. N of the northern wall, more details can be seen. The main body of the cairn is within a retaining wall, and in the E five slabs are set on edge forming four stalls. The original perimeter of the cairn cannot be traced.

Resurveyed at 1:2500. (OSFI: RD: 17.11.1964.)

(ND 0488 5874) Chambered Cairn (NR) (3)

The chambered cairn is as described and planned by the previous authorities. A very low spread of rubble E of the chamber appears to be cairn material. (OSFI: JB: 21.7.1981.)