

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE
H N D 3 4 S W O O 1 B

2 NGR
N D 3 0 8 3 4 3 4 9 C E

3 QUAL
L O C H O F Y A R R O W S

4 DISTRICT
CAITHNESS

5 PARISH
WICK

8 CONCORDANCE
osND 34 SW 1
NMR

9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S)
RMS (QUEENS ST.)
EDINBURGH.

10 ACCESSION NO.

7 GENERIC TYPE
STONE OBJECTS + BRONZE OBJECTS

+ IRON OBJECTS + POTTERY.

13 FIND CIRCUMSTANCES
EXCAVATION

14 CONDITION

11 PERIOD/DATE

12 DATING METHOD

15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE

16 EXCAVATION RECORD NO.

17 LAND USE
HEATH

18 GEOLOGY

19 SOILS

20 VEGETATION

21 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE

22 RELIEF
PROMONTORY ON LOCHSIDE

23 ASPECT
360°

24 ALTITUDE
90=110m OD

25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION/DIMENSIONS

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

1. RCAHMS:1911:CAITHNESS INVENTORY:HMSO:pp 149-51, No 509.
2. ANDERSON, J:1983:SCOTLAND IN PAGAN TIMES:Vol.2:THE IRON AGE:

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
HAR: 10.10.1985

46 CHECK: DATE
CS: 29.10.1985

47 TEXT

"See over card for text of (1)."
"See continuation card for text of (2)."

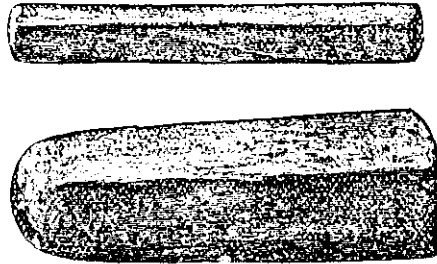
509. *Broch, Yarrows, Loch of Yarrows.* Situated at the S. end of the Loch of Yarrows is the broch of Yarrows (or Yarhouse), which was excavated by Dr Joseph Anderson in 1866-67, and from whose description the following particulars are derived:—

The appearance before excavation was that of a conical grass-covered mound 18' to 20' in height, standing on a low, flat triangular projection of the shore of the loch cut off from the land by a ditch varying from 25' to 30' wide. Remains of five human skeletons were found embedded in the earth and stones of the mound, but not deep enough to have any determinable relation with the structure of the broch below, and near one of these was recovered a flat circular brooch of brass inscribed with a talismanic inscription common to the brooches of the 13th and 14th centuries.

The relics recovered consisted of grain rubbers and stones hollowed like mortars, stone pestles, pounders or hammer stones, whetstones, circular discs of slaty sandstone, stone balls, a small rounded pebble of quartz with a hole through it, and a number of spindle whorls, a ring and armlet of bronze, and a few fragments of iron knives, besides pottery. The animal remains included those of the reindeer and the red deer.

The relics are preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh.

The relics obtained in the course of the excavation were few in number compared with the size and apparent importance of the structure. No querns were found, but about a dozen grain rubbers and stones hollowed like mortars, large numbers of stone pestles, pounders, or hammer-stones, abraded at the ends by use; several whetstones (Figs. 198, 199), a large



Figs. 198, 199.—Whetstones from Broch of Yarhouse (3 inches in length).

number of thin circular discs of slaty sandstone, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches up to 14 or 15 inches in diameter, many stone balls $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 inches diameter, a small rounded pebble of quartz, with a hole through it, a number of spindle-whorls of stone, and one of burnt clay. The objects in metal were a ring of bronze, half an inch in diameter, an armlet of bronze (Fig. 200), made of a wire $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch in diameter, square for half its length, and twisted so that the corners form a spiral pattern, the other half being the plain round wire. A few fragments of iron knives, and some indeterminate objects of small size, greatly corroded, were all the remains of iron implements that were found. The pottery was very abundant, but the fragments were in general small. Some were coarse and thick, others thin and fine; all unglazed, and entirely without ornament, except that some pieces showed a slightly everted lip. The animal remains included those of the reindeer (Figs. 201, 202) and red-deer, the horse, the ox, the sheep, the pig, the dog, and some undetermined birds and fish. Although the site is a long way from the sea, there was a

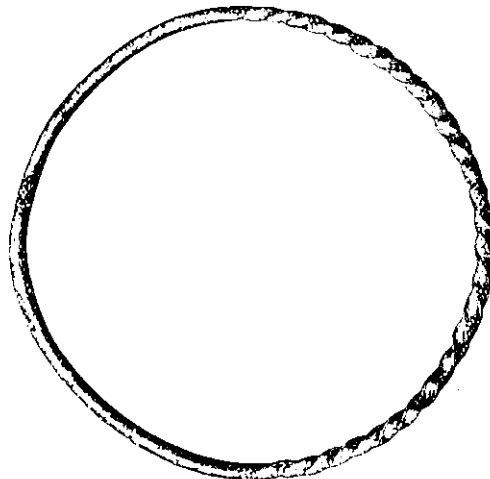
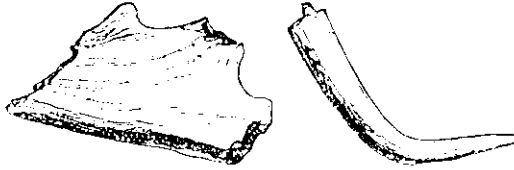


Fig. 200.—Bronze Armlet from the Broch of Yarhouse ($2\frac{1}{4}$ inches diameter).

(2)

considerable accumulation of the common shore shells, chiefly periwinkles and limpets.

The occurrence of the remains of the reindeer among the refuse of the food of the occupants of the Brochs of the North of Scotland is a fact of much interest in



Figs. 201, 202. —Portions of Horns of Reindeer found in the Broch of Yarhouse, Caithness.

various ways. It establishes the correctness of the statement made incidentally in the *Orkneyinga Saga*,¹ when, in recording the movements of Harald and Rognvald, Earls of Orkney, in the year 1158, the writer says that "every summer the Earls were wont to go over to Caithness, and up into the forests to hunt the red deer or the reindeer." It also shows that in Scotland at least the association of reindeer remains with those of prehistoric man does not of itself or necessarily indicate extreme antiquity.

In the upper part of the mound were found two skeletons, not deep enough to have any determinable relation with the structure of the broch below.

Near one of those first found was a flat circular brooch of brass (Fig. 195), of about 2½ inches diameter.



Fig. 195.—Circular Brooch of Brass, found with a burial in the mound covering the ruins of the Broch (2½ inches diameter).

It was rudely inscribed with letters which appear to be a blundering attempt at the formula *ISVS NAZAR [ENVS]*, a common and popular talismanic inscription on the brooches of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

¹ The *Orkneyinga Saga* (Edinburgh, 1873), p. 182. See also Dr. J. A. Smith's Notice of "Remains of the Reindeer in Scotland," in the *Proceedings of the Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, vol. viii. p. 186.