

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---|--|------|------------------|-----|--|--------|--|
| 1 SITE CODE | | | | | | | | | |
| H | | N | | H | | 19 | | SW006A | |
| 2 NGR | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | H | | 1493 | | 900 | | 8CE | |
| 6 SITE NAME | | | | | | | | | |
| DUN/A N/R UIGH RUADH | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 GENERIC TYPE | | | | | | | | | |
| DUN, GALLERIED | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 PERIOD/DATE | | | | | 15 DATING METHOD | | | | |
| IA | | | | | TYP | | | | |
| 18 SHAPE | | | | | | | | | |
| SUB-CIRCULAR | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 THREAT AND DATE | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| 4 DISTRICT | | 5 PARISH | |
| ROSS & CROMARTY | | LOCHBROOM | |
| 7 AREA STATUS | | 9 REGIONAL STATUS | |
| | | | |
| 8 SITE STATUS | | 13 DIMENSIONS | |
| SCHEDULED | | c. 11.7m INT. DIAMETER | |
| 11 CONCORDANCE | | 12 FORM | |
| OSNH 19 SW 6 | | STANDING STRUCTURE | |
| 16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS | | 17 CONDITION | |
| | | INCOMPLETE | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| 20 LAND USE | | 21 GEOLOGY | |
| ROUGH PASTURE | | | |
| 22 SOILS | | 23 VEGETATION | |
| | | | |
| 24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE | | 25 RELIEF | |
| | | HANGING VALLEY=STEEP HILLSLOPE | |
| | | 26 ASPECT | |
| | | NE | |
| | | 27 ALTITUDE | |
| | | 84=91m OD | |

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)

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

1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1968: 6 MAP
2. MACKIE, EW: 1969: CURRENT ARCHAEOLOGY: VOL. 12: pp12-13
3. FEACHERN, RW: 1963: PREHISTORIC SCOTLAND: : pp169-70
4. MACKIE, EW: 1968: DISCOVERY & EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND: CBA(SCOTLAND): p42
5. CALDER, CST+STEER, KA: 1951: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT.: VOL. 83: p72-4
6. HBM(SDD): 1985: LIST OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS
7. OMAND, DONALD: 1984: THE ROSS & CROMARTY BOOK: THE NORTHERN TIMES LTD: pp113-4 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 | | 51 CHECK: DATE | |
| | | FJ:16.7.1986 | | FJ:10.2.1987 | |

52 TEXT

"NH 1493 9008. Dun an Ruigh Ruadh. Broch (remains of)."(1) "Dun an Ruigh Ruadh: The remains of a galleried dun according to MacKie, but a broch according to the other authorities, of which roughly a third of the NE arc has fallen over the rocky bluff on which it stands, but the remainder still stands to a max. height of 9'6"(2.9m) over accumulated debris of about 4'(1.2m). It measures c.38'(c.11.7m) in diameter internally with walls c.14'(c.4.4m) thick."(2)(3)(4)

"NH 1493 9008 Dun an Ruigh Ruadh Broch (remains of)."(8)

"Dun an Ruigh Ruadh, a galleried broch described by MacKie."(OSFI:NTD:25.9.1970)

"Surveyed at 1/25000 and 1/10,560."(OSFI:NKB:1.5.1968)

"See continuation card (i) for (4)(5)(7)(9), plan and photograph (5)."

29. 8. ORDNANCE SURVEY:1968:1/10,000 MAP
9. MACKIE,E.25:1975:SCOTLAND:AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL GUIDE:FABER AND FABER:p213-4
10. CLOSE-BROOKS,J:1986:EXPLORING SCOTLAND'S HERITAGE, THE HIGHLANDS:HMSO:p149
11. MACKIE,E.W. : 1969 : DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND :CBA(SCOT) : pp 44-45

52. "NH 149 900 Dun an Ruigh Ruadh, Broch, Loch Broom."(6)

NH 149900. This structure was originally thought to be a broch, but its identification as a semibroch — a fortlet with the broch hollow wall but not free-standing — has recently seemed more likely. The latter view proved to be correct; the structure is a flattened circle in plan whose straighter side runs along the edge of a cliff. Here the wall is thinner than elsewhere, less well-built and lacks a gallery. Elsewhere it has an upper gallery but this is mostly on top of a solid base. The entrance is near the cliff on the eastern side and is equipped with two stone checks and a stone-lined pivot socket for an outer door and with a second door, entirely of wood, just inside the inner end. The finds were few and consisted of several rotary querns, a stone pot-lid, a jet counter, hammerstones and a silver finger ring. The stratigraphy was clear however. In its primary phase the semibroch had a raised wooden floor resting on the scarcement ledge and on a ring of posts whose stone-lined sockets were found in the subsoil. This was pulled down when the fort was turned into a permanent dwelling.

(4)

The Ross and Cromarty Book

Nearby, at Dun an Ruigh Ruaidh, a further site was excavated by Dr MacKie which contained architectural features that led him to classify it as a 'semibroch', a type of monument which he sees as lying midway along a developing tradition between the stone-walled duns of the west coast and the brochs proper. Excavation revealed that the curve of the otherwise circular wall nearest to the cliff above which it stands had been flattened or straightened, and the wall built thinner and less substantially, presumably as strong defences were less needed on this side. No intramural gallery existed in the reduced part of the wall, suggesting that it had never been a free-standing tower. In a second phase, the defensive nature of the site appears to have become less important, and was converted into a dwelling after removal of the raised floor which had rested on a ring of posts in the interior and a ledge, or 'scarcement' around the inside of the wall. Elsewhere in the District, broch remains are rather obscured by collapse and the ravages of time.

(7)

BROCH, DUN AN RUIGH RUADH, RHIROY

This broch is situated a quarter of a mile from the western shore of Loch Broom, on the lower slopes of Carnan Ban and behind the crofts at Rhiroy (6-inch O.S. map, XXII; National Grid Ref. 28/149901). It stands on the edge of a precipitous rocky bluff, some 30 feet high, and commands an extensive view along the margin of the loch to N.N.E. and S.S.W., and eastwards across the narrow strip of arable land that falls gently from the foot of the bluff to the water's edge. A constant supply of fresh water is provided by a hill burn, Allt na Criche, 80 yards to the north-west.

Roughly one-third of the broch wall on the north-east arc has fallen over the edge of the bluff (fig. 3), but the remaining two-thirds still stand to a maximum height of 7 feet 9 inches externally and 9 feet 6 inches internally: the depth of masonry beneath the present surface may be as much as 4 feet. It is unlikely that the vertical cliff on the north-east has been affected to any extent by erosion since the broch was built, so that the tower will have been slightly oval on plan, measuring 65 feet over the walls from north-west to south-east by 56 feet at the most from north-east to south-west. The missing segment of walling must have been somewhat flatter than the rest. The wall varies from 12 feet to 14 feet thick at the present ground-level, and is reduced in thickness by an internal scarcement (Pl. XVI, 1) at a height of 3 feet 8 inches above the debris which chokes the interior. This scarcement projects 2-5 inches from the under face, and is 1 foot 4 inches wide on the top. Above it the wall converges inwards in beehive fashion, developing an overhang of 1 foot 5 inches in a height of 5 feet 9 inches. At this point there may have been a second scarcement, as at Mousa,¹ although no parallels have been found for the convergence of the inner face immediately above the first scarcement. The outer face is vertical (Pl. XVI, 2).

Within the wall, round the west arc, a gallery, 2 feet 3 inches wide, can be traced for a length of 45 feet on a level approximating to that of the lower scarcement. This gallery, which still retains its lintels for a distance of 8 feet, is choked with tumbled stones, so that without excavation it is impossible to determine its height, or to ascertain whether a lower gallery or cells exist beneath it. In the south arc, however, a lower gallery, also 2 feet 3 inches wide, survives for a length of at least 12 feet. The upper courses of masonry are visible and show a closed end on the east. Near the other, broken end, one lintel remains on a level with the lower scarcement, while a second lies dislodged in the ruins of what may have been an opening leading from the interior of the broch to the gallery. An opening at this point would be suitably placed to give access to a stair in an extension west of the gallery.

The wall is dry-built of fairly heavy stones, mostly Moine schist, and pinnings are inserted where necessary to level irregularities in the jointing. The local tradition that the building stones are of a different material from that found in the vicinity of the broch, and that they were transported from the east side of Loch Broom "by men stationed at regular intervals upon rafts,"¹ is unfortunately untenable, since outcrops of Moine schist are common on both sides of the loch.

The entrance to the broch must have been situated practically on the edge of the cliff in either the north or east arc. There is no trace of any external defences. Although sheep fanks have been built from the debris against the outer face on the south-west, there does not appear to be any immediate risk of further deteriorations.

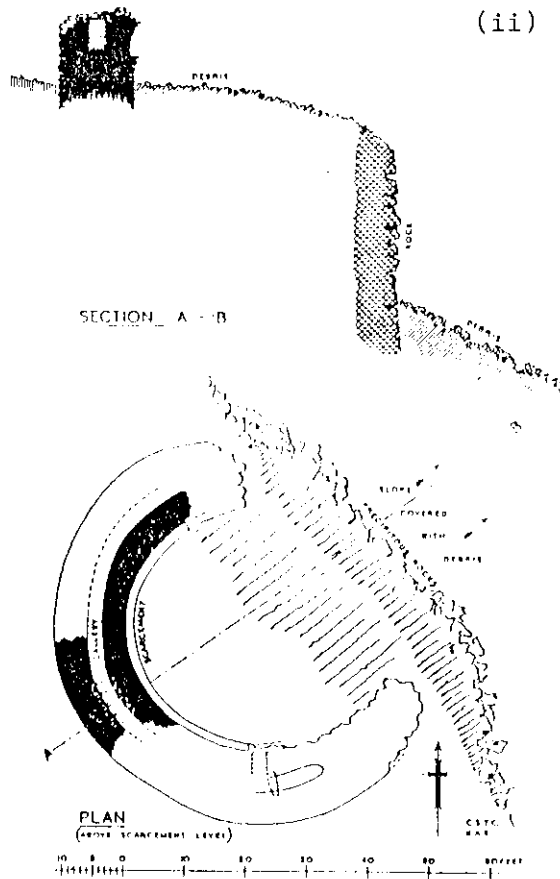
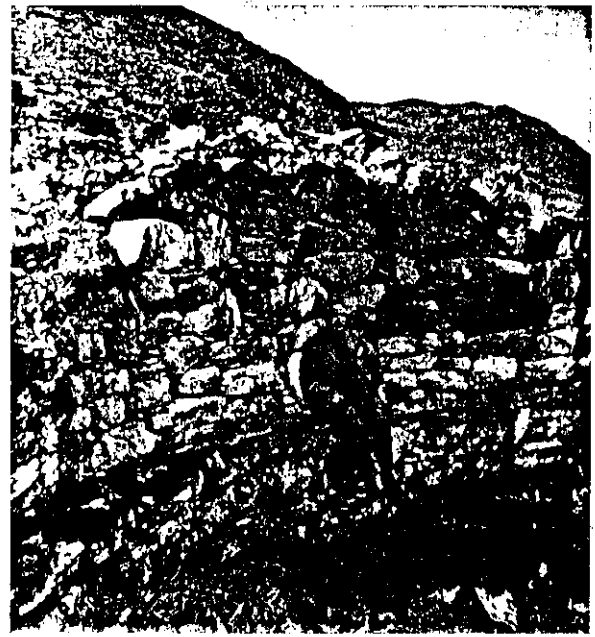


Fig. 3. Broch, Dun an Ruigh Ruidh, Rhiroy.



1. Broch, Dun an Ruigh Ruidh, Rhiroy: interior, showing scarcement.

(5)

*Dun an Ruigh Ruaidh** is one of the small class of broch-like structures which, while having the true hollow, galleried broch wall, are yet not totally enclosed round towers. They have been called semi-brochs and are almost certainly ancestral to the brochs. Rhiroy was excavated in 1968 by the author and proved to be a semibroch, even though its wall runs round as a flattened circle next to the low cliff. The wall near the cliff is narrower and lacks a gallery so that the true broch high wall is only found on the other sides where it stands up to 2.9 m. The entrance is on the south-east, equipped with the usual door-checks. At 8 o'clock is the door, now filled, to the mural cell and to the stair which leads to the upper gallery, well preserved and lintelled on the south-west arc: the base of the wall here is solid. A fine ledge scarcement runs round the inner wallface and the foundations of a doorway leading on to this can be seen to the right of the stair door.

Excavations showed that the semibroch originally had an internal ring of massive wooden posts which supported a raised floor on the scarcement. This was dismantled when the fort was turned into a dwelling and part of the upper wall pulled down: at this time the entrance passage was unlintelled. Occupation debris accumulated as a thick black layer in the interior but artefacts were few. Later the weakened structure underwent a sudden further collapse, shattering a complete quern on the floor, and occupation ceased except in the still accessible mural cell. The semibroch is likely to have been built in the 3rd or 2nd century B.C.

(9)

NH 149901. Five radiocarbon dates for various phases of the occupation of this Iron Age semibroch, excavated in 1968 (*Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, 1968, p. 42), have just been recovered from Gakushin University, Japan.

(11)

From the base of the black occupation layer in the enclosed court, under the water tank and next to the subsoil, came charcoal fragments which gave an age of 970 ± 110 B.C. (GaK 2497) : this is far too old for the Early Iron Age. From a similar position came another sample, dated to 10 ± 100 B.C. (GaK 2496) : this probably dates the start of the secondary occupation of the semibroch and seems quite satisfactory. A piece of carbonised wood from the fill of one of the massive, stone-lined primary post-holes gave an age of 580 ± 80 B.C. (GaK 2493) : this fragment was deposited at the start of the secondary occupation but might be part of an old tree used as a post. Charcoal fragments resting on a local area of paving resting on several inches of secondary occupation material gave an age of 1020 ± 90 B.C. (GaK 2495) : this is again far too old. Charcoal from a late occupation layer inside the mural gallery gave an age of A.D. 790 ± 80 (GaK 2494) : this seems quite reasonable in the absence of any artefacts for that layer.

Since the biological death (equivalent to the radiocarbon age) of none of the dated organic samples could be closely related to the strata in which they were found the two dates near 1000 B.C. can be dismissed as peat charcoal or relics of an undetected earlier occupation nearby. In any case GaK 2495 was stratified above GaK 2493 and 2496 which are much younger. From other considerations GaK 2496 can be selected as giving a reliable indication of the start of the secondary occupation of the semibroch (after demolition) but the 6th century B.C. seems too early for the building of the fortlet.

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| 4 DISTRICT ROSS & CROMARTY | | 5 PARISH LOCHBROOM | | 1 SITE CODE H N H 1 9 S W 0 0 6 B | | 2 NGR N H 1 4 9 8 9 0 0 8 | | 3 QUAL CE | | 6 SITE NAME D U N A N R U I G H * | |
| 8 CONCORDANCE osNH 19 SW 6 NMR | | 9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S) | | 10 ACCESSION NO. | | 7 GENERIC TYPE DOMESTIC ARTEFACTS + HAMMER-STONES + RING, SILVER | | | | | |
| 13 FIND CIRCUMSTANCES EXCAVATION | | 14 CONDITION | | 11 PERIOD/DATE IA | | 12 DATING METHOD TYP | | 15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE MACKIE, EW:1968 | | | |
| 17 LAND USE | | 18 GEOLOGY | | 19 SOILS | | 20 VEGETATION | | 23 ASPECT | | 24 ALTITUDE | |
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| 47 TEXT | | | | | | | | | | | |

"See continuation card (i) for text (1)."

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(1)