

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

FIELD MONUMENTS



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE		H N H 7 9 N E 0 0 8		3 QUAL	
2 NGR		N H 7 6 9 0 9 9 0 8		CE	
4 DISTRICT		5 PARISH		6 SITE NAME	
SUTHERLAND		GOLSPIE		THE MOUND	
7 AREA STATUS		8 SITE STATUS		9 REGIONAL STATUS	
SSSI		SCHEDULED			
11 CONCORDANCE		12 FORM		13 DIMENSIONS	
OS NH 79 NE 8		STANDING STRUCTURE			
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS		17 CONDITION		18 SHAPE	
		INCOMPLETE		CIRCULAR	
				19 THREAT AND DATE	
				14 PERIOD/DATE	
				BA	
				15 DATING METHOD	
				TYP	
20 LAND USE		21 GEOLOGY		27 ALTITUDE	
ENCLOSED LAND				15m OD	
22 SOILS		23 VEGETATION		26 ASPECT	
				SW	
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		25 RELIEF		27 ALTITUDE	
		BASE OF MODERATE HILLSLOPE		15m OD	
28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)					
EXCAVATED BY L. TAIT, 7th MAY 1867. QUALITY AND EXTENT OF EXCAVATION UNSCIENTIFIC.					
29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)					
1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1960: 6" MAP					
2. RCAHMS: 1911: SUTHERLAND INVENTORY: HMSO: p99, No. 291					
3. TAIT, L: 1872 PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT: VOL. 7: pp473-75 (PLAN)					
4. THOM & BURL: 1980: BAR: VOL. 81: p326 (ILLUS)					
5. HBM (SDD): 1985: LIST OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS					
30 GROUND PLAN NO.			31 GROUND PHOTO NO.		
			H. A. ROBINSON		
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	
				HAR: 4.6.1985	
				51 CHECK: DATE	
				Am: 10.6.1985	

52 TEXT

"See over card for text."

" Also see continuation card for text & photograph."

"NH: Golspie -Lairg road, STONE CIRCLE 920m NW of Mound junction"(\$)

BOX 52. "Tait 'opened' a stone circle on a platform at the foot of Craigmore in Strathfleet, Sutherland. He cut a trench, directed E. - W. on 7th May 1867. Five stones were identified and Tait thinks the sixth was used in the building of a depopulated settlement nearby. Flint flakes were found 'in abundance' at the site. Some of these, Tait thinks, were fragments of weapons.

In the centre of the circle, some 51.0cm. below the surface, was a cremated human burial. There was no urn and weapon pieces could not be located. Small and friable humerus and radius bone terminations were uncovered, mixed with charcoal debris. This occupies a space 38.0cm. square by c. 8.0cm. deep. Immediately under the burial-c. 10.0cm. below it-was an irregular slab of conglomerate facing E. to W. This was the principal cover of the chamber cist, but on investigation the slab was not large enough, suggesting disturbance and robbery. An oval cist chamber was uncovered, measuring 1.0m. by 0.7m. by 0.5m. deep. Its long axis was due E. - W. Nothing was contained therein except 1.3cm of water." (3).



At the mouth of Strathfleet, the glen running north from Little Ferry, and on the east side, stands a very picturesque hill of the Sutherland conglomerate, known as Craigmere. On a little platform at the foot of this hill, twenty feet above high-water mark, stands a megalithic circle through which I cut a trench, running east and west, on the 7th of May 1867. The stones were five in number, and of various, though all of large sizes. A sixth stone is wanting to complete the circle, which has probably been removed by some of the former occupants of the ruins left by the Highland clearances close to the circle. The relative situations and sizes of the stones are given in the plan, the accuracy of which is vouched for by the fact that my friend Mr Fowler, architect to the Duke of Sutherland, aided me in the measurements.

All over the surface of this platform flint-flakes are to be found in abundance, covered in every instance with the patina of age; and I have found one or two which may be fragments of weapons.

Exactly in the middle of the circle, and twenty inches from the surface of the soil, I came upon a cremated human burial, without urn or any weapon that I could find. The bones were very friable, in small pieces, and had much of the "*hubbement à la langue*;" they were mixed with charcoal debris. The heads of a humerus and radius were sufficiently entire to establish the fact that it was the burial of an adult human being; it occupied a space about 15 inches square by $3\frac{1}{2}$ deep. Four inches deeper, and immediately under the cremated burial, we exposed an irregular slab of conglomerate, with its long diameter due east and west. This proved to be the principal cover of the chamber-cist; but not being large enough to cover the cist entirely, it was supplemented by smaller stones in such a manner, in Mr Fowler's opinion, that it never could have been disturbed since the original construction of the cist. Having removed the covers, we found an oval cist-chamber, measuring 3 feet 6 inches, by 2 feet 7 inches, by 2 feet 2 inches deep. Its long axis was almost due east and west. It contained nothing except half an inch depth of water. The natural rock formed its bottom. From the ascertained conditions of this chamber I am certain that a human body deposited in it would entirely disappear in a very few years, from the constant passage through of the rain-water from the bare rock face above. We examined two of the standing stones to discover if there were any indications of burial in front of them, as there sometimes is, but we found none.

The cremated burial was exactly in the centre of the circle, and when all the different varieties observed; but of most of the varieties there are a great many repetitions, amounting in all perhaps to several hundreds.

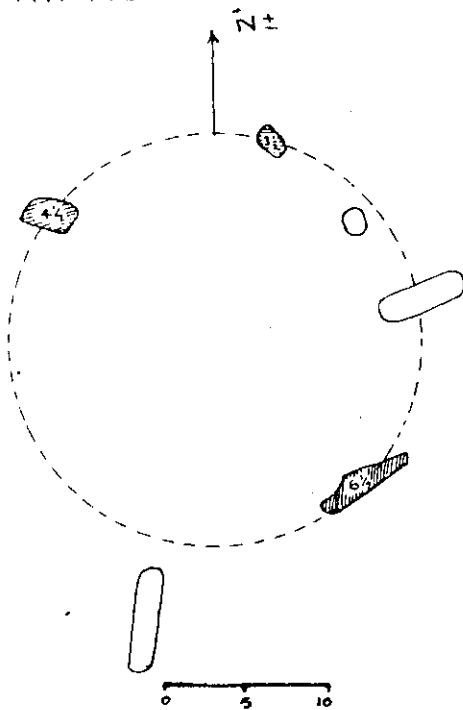
The first seven marks given in the plate are those that are on the freestone part of the cathedral, and it will be observed that, except in two cases, these are not repeated on the granite. Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 6 are from the walls of St John's Aisle, which Orem, a local historian who wrote about 1725, says was built by Bishop Leighton about 1430, but which Mr Gilbert Scott, with greater probability, attributes to the period of the Kininmunds, 1310 to 1380, judging by the "character and great beauty of the mouldings and foliated capitals of the columns which supported the great tower," and which forms a part of it, as compared with the like features of the nave, the undoubted work of Leighton, as his epitaph, still preserved in the cathedral, states that "he built the fabric of the church from the choir as high as the summit of the walls." Very little, only a few feet, of the walls of this aisle now remains. A good part of the materials of it was taken away by Cromwell for the purpose of building a fort at Aberdeen, and its destruction was completed by a tempest of wind in November 1719, and the debris have been used for building purposes. The same marks, however, occur on several loose stones of the same freestone lying about. No. 4 is one of these stones which has been built into the wall of the nave, in the inside near the east end, probably during the work of reparation in 1808 or 1823, when the north aisle was restored to its present unseemly state. No. 5 is on one of the great freestone pillars formerly mentioned; it is the only example of the mark observed. No. 7 is on the south wall of St Machar's aisle, at the east end, which was rebuilt with old materials in 1800.

All the other marks are on granite, and it may be remarked that they are in contrast to those on freestone, which were sharp and well defined, very indistinct, except where the wall has been protected from the weather and damp. For although the outside of the wall had evidently been covered with them, it now requires very careful observation to trace them, except on sheltered spots about doorways and buttresses.

THE MOUND

57° 57'8 4' 4'8

NH 770991



(4)

(NH 7690 9908) Stone Circle (NR)

(1)

The remains of a stone circle, three stones of which are standing, two are prostrate and one is wanting. The diameter of the circle has been about 22'. The stones are set with their broad faces in line of the circumference. The highest stone is about 6' high, 6'6" across base and 1' thick. A trench was cut through the circle in 1867. In the centre there was discovered a cremated interment, and beneath it a cist which contained no remains.

(2)

All over the platform on which the stone circle stands are flint flakes. Some of which are worked. (Scheduled.

(3)

Generally as described above.

(OSFI:RDL:11.4.1964)

No part of the cist in the centre is exposed, nor were any flint flakes (Authy 3) found in the area at time of investigation, the surface being covered by turf.

(OSFI:AA:1.8.1975)