

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE		H N C 9 1 N E 0 2 3 A	
2 NGR		N C 9 7 6 1 1 8 9 0 C E	
3 QUAL			
4 DISTRICT		5 PARISH	
SUTHERLAND		KILDONAN	
7 AREA STATUS		8 SITE STATUS	
9 REGIONAL STATUS		10 GENERIC TYPE	
		BURIAL CAIRN, CISTED.	
11 CONCORDANCE		12 FORM	
OS NC 91 NE 23		STANDING STRUCTURES	
NMR		13 DIMENSIONS	
		c 5.5m DIAM.	
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS		17 CONDITION	
		INCOMPLETE	
20 LAND USE		21 GEOLOGY	
ROUGH PASTURE			
22 SOILS		23 VEGETATION	
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		25 RELIEF	
		STEEP HILLSLOPE	
28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)		26 ASPECT	
		SW	
		27 ALTITUDE	
		99m OD	
29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)			
1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1964: 6" MAP.			
2. RCAHMS: 1911: SUTHERLAND INVENTORY: HMSO: : p117 No 334.			
3. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1908: 6" MAP.			
4. HENSHALL A.S.: 1966: T.S. CATALOGUE OF DUNROBIN MUSEUM.: : :			
5. FOASS J.M.: 1871: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT.: 8: p410			
6. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1964: 1/10 000 MAP			
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			
43 OTHER		42 MUSEUM/LOCATION	
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	
		MC: 26.6.1985	
		51 CHECK: DATE	
		GS: 17.7.1985.	
52 TEXT			
" See attached photo copy for text."			

(NC 97601893) Cairn (NR) (1).
 (NC 97641909) Short Cist found AD 1868 (NAT) (6).

On the slope of the hill immediately above Torrish, and to the E of the Coulan Burn, is a large group of mounds. (2).
 Some have been excavated, without result, but in one in 1868 was found a short cist containing a leaf-shaped flint arrowhead, with the point broken off, and a shale necklace. (3).

These finds are in Dunrobin Museum. (4).

A cairn with cist was found during field investigation. (OSFI:WDJ:18.5.1960).

The cairn with cist, at corrected plan position NC97611890 is in an area of hut circle associated stone clearance heaps HNC 91 NE 058 some of which have been opened. The cairn, partially heather-overgrown, is some 5.5m in diameter and 1.0m high; the periphery is well delineated in the S by an arc of contiguous slabs on edge. The cist is exposed in the body of the cairn, slightly towards the S quarter; it is orientated NNW-SSE and is 1.0m by 0.5m by 0.45m deep, and has the cover stone lying displaced across it. The cist appears to be at natural ground level. The cairn, in its general appearance, is no more remarkable than a dozen or so stone clearance heaps nearby.

The siting symbol for a short cist found 1868 at NC 9764 1909, has been continued from an earlier OS publication; at this point and its vicinity are some mounds of stone clearance but none showing signs of disturbance. There is little reason to doubt a cartographic error and that the mound with short cist is the one with the cairn with cist at NC 97611890. (osfi;JM:18.5.1976).

Re-surveyed at 1:10 560.

The finds in Dunrobin Museum comprise the jet necklace, consisting of five spacers, one triangular plate, fifty-five fusi-form beads, and part of another plate (Acc No: 1870.7); a triangular point of brown-grey chert (Acc No: 1870.8); and a broken flake of buff flint (Acc No: 1870.9) (4).
 (See card HNC 91 NE 023B).

Accordingly Captain Houstoun and myself, accompanied by his keeper (a capital practical antiquary), with digging tools and a *riddle*, made an early start for the ground, which we reached after a two hours' drive, and found *the cist cleared out*. This we now learned had been done on its discovery. After taking dimensions and bearing of the cist, which were found to be, length 3 feet, breadth and depth 20 inches, direction north and south, there seemed as if nothing more could be done; but, on handling the out-turned earth, a bead was found. The riddle was brought to the front, every handful of earth sifted, and thirty small beads discovered, and the remaining half of *b*, but no trace of *f*. During the riddling a chert arrow-head was found, when a shepherd, who was present at the first search, said that he had then found in the cist a flint tool twice as long as the arrow, but had broken and thrown it away. Part of this was afterwards recovered, and identified by him as the point of what, when found, was an inch wide at the other end. It seemed a javelin-head made of yellow flint. Several small pieces of charcoal were found, but no trace of bones or pottery.

(5)

The cist seemed to have been formed upon the undisturbed gravel. Over this lay yellowish clay and sand, and next a stratum of peaty earth reaching to within six inches of the covering flag, which, with the sides and ends, were made of the undressed Granitoid rock of the district, and bore no artificial markings. The covering mound, about 8 feet in diameter and 3 feet high, consisted of peaty mould and stones—the larger of these appearing to have been arranged as a retaining circle around the base.

Upwards of sixty similar tumuli lay round about, all more or less marked by a circle of large stones below. Three of these tumuli, equal in size to that with the cist, were dug through and proved barren.

On the outskirts of this group were two hut-circles of the usual diameter of 33 feet. These occurred on a gentle slope facing southwards, and about 500 feet above the bottom of the valley.

At the same elevation, proceeding down the strath, we passed through groups of tumuli almost continuously, and counted five other hut-circles, till about a mile off we reached the Cùl-Pheadar burn, close to which, on the further bank, is the hut-circle with Eirde-house underneath, and, towering near, the most imposing Broch in all Sutherland, where there are so many. (See Proc. Soc. Ant., vol. v. p. 216.)

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE		H N C 9 1 N E 0 2 3 B									
2 NGR		N C 9 7 6 1 1 8 9 0 C E									
3 QUAL											
4 DISTRICT		SUTHERLAND									
5 PARISH		KILDONAN									
6 SITE NAME		T O R R I S H									
7 GENERIC TYPE		NECKLACE, JET+ARROW HEAD, FLINT									
8 CONCORDANCE		+ FLINT, WORKED.									
9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S)		DUNROBIN MUSEUM									
10 ACCESSION NO.		1870.7;1870.8;1870.9									
11 PERIOD/DATE		BA									
12 DATING METHOD		TYP									
13 FIND CIRCUMSTANCES		EXCAVATION FROM BURIAL CAIRN									
14 CONDITION											
15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE											
16 EXCAVATION RECORD NO.											
17 LAND USE		ROUGH PASTURE									
18 GEOLOGY											
19 SOILS											
20 VEGETATION											
21 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE											
22 RELIEF		STEEP HILLSLOPE									
23 ASPECT		SW									
24 ALTITUDE		99m OD									
25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION/DIMENSIONS											
26 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR:DATE:TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)		1. HENSHALL A.S.:1966:T.S.CATALOGUE OF DUNROBIN MUSEUM. 2. CALLANDER G.:1916:PROC SOC ANT SCOT:50:p210.(illus). 3. JOASS J.M.:1871:PROC SOC ANT SCOT:8:pp408-11 (illus). 4. ANDERSON J.:1886:SCOTLAND IN PAGAN TIMES:EUP:VOL I:pp55-6+ illust.									
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											
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46 CHECK: DATE											
47 TEXT											

"The finds in Dunrobin Museum comprise a Jet Necklace consisting of fine spacers, one triangular plate, fifty-five fusi-form beads, and part of another plate. (Acc. No. 1870.7.); A triangular point of brown-grey chert (Acc.No. 1870.8.); and a broken flake of buff flint (Acc.No. 1870.9.)" (1).
"A leaf-shaped flint arrow-head with the point broken off, 1½" long (26.0mm) and a shale necklace were found in a short cist in 1868 and are in Dunrobin Museum" (3).

A necklace of this character (Fig. 61), found in a (4)
 cist at Torish, near Helmsdale, in Sutherlandshire, exhibits
 the same arrangement of the beads and plates, with similar
 ornamentation, but differing in the pattern, which in this
 case consists of triangular instead of lozenge-shaped spaces,
 alternately plain and punctulated. No trace of bones and
 no fragments of an accompanying urn were found when the
 contents of the cist (which had been thrown out by some
 boys) were examined some days afterwards by Rev. Dr. Joass,
 but fragments of charcoal, an arrow-head of chert, and part
 of a spear-head of yellow flint, were found among the ejected
 materials.¹ This necklace is figured, as restored, from a
 drawing by Rev. J. Joass, LL.D., Golspie. The plates marked
a c and *c* were entire, portions of *b* and *d* only were found,
 and *f* is restored from its corresponding plate *a*.

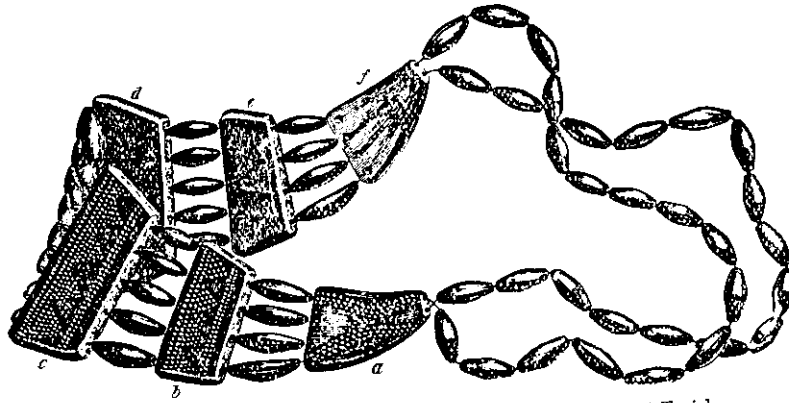


Fig. 61 — Necklace of Beads and Plates of Jet found in a Cist at Torish,
 Sutherlandshire.

(2)



V.

NOTES OF THE DISCOVERY OF A NECKLACE OF BEADS AND PLATES OF SHALE AND JET, ALONG WITH FLINT ARROW HEADS, FOUND IN A CIST UNDER A SMALL TUMULUS AT TORRISH, KILDONAN, SUTHERLANDSHIRE. By the Rev. J. M. JOASS, Golsie, Cor. Mem. S.A. Scot.

A few days ago, as some boys were digging after a rabbit in a tumulus at Torrish near Helmsdale, they came upon a cist. In clearing it out they found a number of black beads and some small plates. These were secured and sent to me by Captain Houstoun, Kintredwell. On examination I found that there were twenty-six small beads made from the shale associated with the Oolitic Lignite of this coast. There were also three whole plates and part of a fourth of the same material. These were ornamented on one side by a double line of punctures parallel to the sides, with triangles extending between, each alternate triangle being filled in with similar punctures, as in the accompanying sketch. There were, besides, a whole plate of jet of the same size as one of the above, but not ornamented, and fragments of another. Jet also is a product of our local Oolite, but rather rare.

On laying these out as suggested by the Assynt Necklace ("Wilson's Prehistoric Annals," p. 291, 1st edition), I found that the pieces marked *a*, *c*, and *e* (see the accompanying woodcut) were present, and half of *b*, all of shale. The whole jet piece was similar in size and style of string-holes to *a*, but for the opposite side, so that it might be substituted for *b*. The fragments of jet belonged to a plate like *d*, judging by size and style of boring. The upper and lower string holes in these plates were bored right through, the intermediate holes, entering like the others at the edge, came to the surface behind a short way inwards. This was the style of all the holes in the terminal plates. The twenty-six smaller beads being all required to match the perforations in the plates, none were left to complete the circuit of the necklace. It was, therefore, proposed to explore the cist on the presumption that this had not been thoroughly done.

With reference to the occurrence of the pieces of jet which seemed to have belonged to another necklace, it may perhaps be suspected that there was another, and that we missed it. This, however, can hardly be the case, as the riddle worked well, and was carefully watched. It is probable that the shale plate *d* being lost, a jet substitute was used, of which we have the fragments, and another for *b* which, though broken, was preserved and buried with the owner's ashes. The connection of the flint implements with the necklace is of peculiar interest, reminding us, as stated by Wilson, that "the modes of personal decoration which modern taste and refinement reserve for the fair sex are very differently apportioned in ruder states of society."—("Prehistoric Annals," p. 291.)

(3)