

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD



1 SITE CODE	H	N	D	3	6	N	E	0	0	5	A
2 NGR	N	D	3	7	6	1	6	7	6	1	3 QUAL
											CE
6 SITE NAME	F	R	E	S	W	I	C	K	S	A	N
											D
											S

4 DISTRICT	CAITHNESS	5 PARISH	CANISBAY
7 AREA STATUS		8 SITE STATUS	
9 REGIONAL STATUS		10 GENERIC TYPE	BROCH
11 CONCORDANCE OS ND36NE 5	12 FORM STANDING STRUCTURE	13 DIMENSIONS c. 9.9m INT DIAMETER	14 PERIOD/DATE IA
NMR			15 DATING METHOD TYP
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS	17 CONDITION INCOMPLETE	18 SHAPE CIRCULAR	19 THREAT AND DATE

20 LAND USE ENCLOSED LAND=ROUGH PASTURE	21 GEOLOGY
22 SOILS	23 VEGETATION
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE	25 RELIEF SANDY BEACH+DUNES
	26 ASPECT E=ESE=SSE
	27 ALTITUDE 2=20m OD

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)
SIR FRANCIS TRESS BARRY: 1890-1900: UNSCIENTIFIC

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

1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1975: 1/10,000 MAP
2. ANDERSON, J: 1901: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT.: VOL. 35: pp143-4
3. RCAHMS: 1911: CAITHNESS INVENTORY: HMSO: p189: No. 34,76 (PLAN)
4. YOUNG, A: 1964: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT.: VOL. 95: p183, No. 12
5. BALDWIN, JR: 1982: CAITHNESS A CULTURAL CROSSROADS: EDINA PRESS: P 45-61 + ILLUSTR: (SEE ARTICLE FOR FURTHER BIBLIOGRAPHY)

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 CUP-MARKED STONE	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 SM: 2.6.1986	51 CHECK: DATE MWC: 10.5.1986
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52 TEXT
"See continuation cards for text."

(ND 3761 6761) Broch (NR) (remains of)

(1)

The remains of a 2nd - 3rd century broch founded on pure sand among the sandhills of Freswick Bay and now practically obscured by sand and debris.

Excavated by Sir Francis Tress Barry between 1890 and 1900, it measures 32 ft 8 ins in diameter within a wall, 11 ft 6 ins thick, which has a scarcement and two mural cells. The wall is generally 7 ft high 'but is partly broken down on the side towards the land, where the original entrance probably was. Facing to NE is an entrance passage by the foot of the stair, of which fourteen steps still remain. It goes up to the left from the middle of the entrance passage. . . Two curved walls of secondary construction divide the interior area of the broch into segments.' Finds include a cup-marked stone, which was in front of John Nicolson's house at Nybster (ND 3663) in 1910.

(2)

The R C A H M include a plan, presumably based on Sir Francis Tress Barry's excavation plan, but apparently inverted as compared with Anderson's description, so that the entrance with the stair is in the SW instead of the NE. This plan also shows outbuildings attached to the W side of the broch.

(3)

The broch is now obscured by sand, debris and a later building attached to its N side, but survives in the form of several short stretches of internal and external walling, 0.3 m high on the N, E and S sides. Along the E side of the outer wall, two short sections of walling which may belong to an outbuilding may be traced. Resurveyed at 1:2500.

(OSFI:RD:9.9.1965)

The cup-marked stone is now part of an exhibition in the old schoolhouse at Nybster (ND 3682 6368).

(HND 36 SE 009)

The very obscure remains of the broch are generally as described by the previous authorities. The 'later building' noted by the previous field investigator is the outbuilding illustrated by the R C A H M, whose plan is approximately 60° W of N incorrect in orientation.

(OSFI:JB:12.7.1982)

Recent back-filled excavation by Batey (b) has taken place here.

(b.C.BATEY,DURHAM UNIVERSITY)

Published survey (1:2500) correct.

A cup-marked stone with six or seven cups on it at Summerbank House (ND 3684 6361) is possibly that found at the broch.

(HND 36 SE 009)

"Freswick sands, Parish of Canisbay, Caithness ND 376676. A kin to Wester this broch is built on the sandhills at Freswick Bay. The inner diameter is 32ft8"(9.9m). There is a wall Gallery, stairs and a 12ft(3.67m) long wall-chamber."

(4)

34. *Broch, Freswick Links*.—Situated among the sand-hills about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. N. of Freswick House, is a broch (fig. 6) the foundations of which

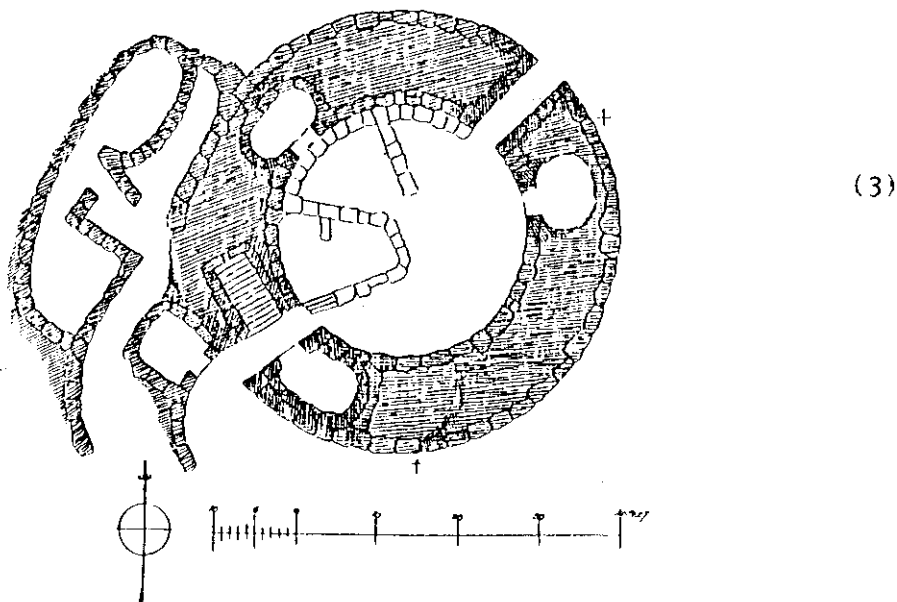


FIG. 6.—Broch, Freswick Links (No. 34); Ground-plan.

rest on the pure sand. It was excavated by the late Sir Francis Tress Barry, and described by Dr Joseph Anderson, but it is now in a very ruinous condition and its features largely obscured by sand and debris. On excavation the broch wall was found to be 11' 6" thick, with a scarcement 12" to 18" wide on the inside: it enclosed an interior area 32' 8" in diameter. The wall was for the greater part of its extent about 7' high, but was partly broken down on the W. side where the original entrance probably had been. Facing NE. is still visible the entrance passage by the foot of the stair, 2' 9" wide, beside which there was a chamber. Fourteen steps of the stair remained, passing up to the left from the entrance passage as entered from the exterior, the steps growing narrower from 3' 10" in width at the bottom step to 2' 6" at the highest. At a distance of 17' round to the left from the inner end of the entrance passage was the opening to a chamber in the thickness of the wall, now ruinous. This entrance was 2' 3" in width, and 4' in height, and gave access to an oblong chamber 12' in length, 4' in width, and nearly 7' in height. Directly opposite the entrance in the interior is also the entrance, 2' 9" wide, to a chamber not now measurable. Two curved walls of secondary construction roughly divided the interior area into segments.

There were found in this broch the cup-marked stone now at Nybster (No. 576 (1)), an oval vessel of sandstone with a rudely hollowed cavity measuring 6" by 4", and several quern stones.

See *Antiquaries*, xxxv. p. 143.

Freswick Sands Broch. -- This broch is situated among the sand hills on the margin of Freswick Bay a little to the north of Freswick House. Like the Wester Broch, its foundations rest upon pure sand. The broch wall, which is 11 feet 6 inches thick, and has a scarcement from 12 to 18 inches thick inside, incloses an interior area of 32 feet 8 inches in diameter. The wall remains for the greater part of its extent about 7 feet high, but is partly broken down on the side toward the land, where the original entrance probably was. Facing to N.E. is an entrance passage by the foot of the stair, 2 feet 9 inches in width. There are remains of a chamber at the foot of the stair, of which fourteen steps still remain. It goes up to the left from the middle of the entrance passage, the lowest step being 3 feet 10 inches in width, and the steps gradually narrowing as they ascend till the uppermost is only 2 feet 6 inches in width. At a distance of 17 feet round the interior wall to the left of the inner opening of the entrance passage is the opening to a chamber in the thickness of the wall on the floor level of the area. This entrance is 2 feet 3 inches in width and 4 feet high, and leads into an oblong chamber 12 feet in length, 4 feet in width, and nearly 7 feet in height, and coved at the further end. Two curved walls of secondary construction roughly divide the interior area of the broch into segments. (2)

The objects found in this broch were a boulder of sandstone with nine cup-marks on its surface; an oval vessel of sandstone with a rudely hollowed cavity 6"(152.0mm) by 4"(101.6mm), several broken stone vessels of similar character, and one or two quern stones.

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

4 DISTRICT CAITHNESS		5 PARISH CANISBAY		1 SITE CODE H N D 3 6 N E 0 0 5 B	
8 CONCORDANCE OS ND 36 NE 5 NMR		9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S) R.M.S. (QUEEN STREET)		2 NGR N D 3 7 6 1 6 7 6 1 3 QUAL CE	
13 FIND CIRCUMSTANCES EXCAVATION		10 ACCESSION NO.		7 GENERIC TYPE PINS (BONE, +IRON, +BRASS) + COMB. BONE+WHORL STONE	
14 CONDITION		11 PERIOD/DATE IA		12 DATING METHOD TYP	
15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE Sir Francis Tress Barry 1890		16 EXCAVATION RECORD NO.			
17 LAND USE		18 GEOLOGY			
19 SOILS		20 VEGETATION			
21 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		22 RELIEF		23 ASPECT	
				24 ALTITUDE	
25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION/DIMENSIONS					
26 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)					
1. DONATIONS : 1909 : PROC SOC ANT SCOT : Vol 43 : P 16					
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 SM: 24.6.86	
				46 CHECK: DATE	
47 TEXT					

"See continuation cards for text".

From Freswick Sands Broch.—Two humeri of the Great Auk (now extinct); narrow piece of bone, notched on both sides at each end; pin of bone, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, with globular head; pin of bone, $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches in length; needle of bone, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length, the eye imperfect; borer of bone, 4 inches in length; half of a whorl of bone; double-edged small-tooth comb of bone, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length by $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches in width, composed of sections held together by an ornamented slip of bone passing along the centre of the comb on each side and clamped together by rivets of bronze; double-edged comb, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width, ornamented with incised saltires; four portions of similar combs; two borers or pointed implements of bone, $6\frac{1}{2}$ and $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches in length; whorl of grey sandstone, $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, decorated by eight small circular sinkings round the periphery, and also on both faces by an incised circle with four arcs impinging on its inner circumference, each enclosing a central dot; whorl of rough grey sandstone, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter, having seven small circular sinkings on one face and six on the other; sinker of sandstone, $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, with shallow groove round the middle; bent piece of thin, flat bronze with three rivet holes.

(1).

Brass pin, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; iron pin, with ornamented head; brass button, ornamented with a cross pattern; ink-bottle of clay, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height by 1 inch by $\frac{7}{8}$ of an inch in breadth and width; two bronze needles, imperfect; bone needle, $5\frac{7}{8}$ inches in length, with flattened head; nine fragments of bronze and twenty-nine pins of brass from Freswick sands