

## Three Bronze Age burials from Angus

John R Sherriff\*

### SUMMARY

Since October 1980 the author has dealt with three Early/Middle Bronze Age burials whilst employed on Manpower Services Projects sponsored by Angus District Council. The discovery of a short cist at Mains of Melgund, near Aberlemno, by farmworkers who searched the grave in April 1980 produced a jet necklace, a flint scraper and the remains of an inhumation. The author re-excavated the cist in October 1980. In February 1982 the author visited the site of a cairn on Baldardo Farm, Forfar, and found that recent ploughing had dislodged the capstone of a short cist. Subsequent excavation produced the cremated remains of a young adult and a flint knife. Probable Beaker sherds and a quantity of burnt bone lay on the N side of the grave and perhaps hint at a re-use of the cist. In June 1982 a small round cairn was excavated by the author on Easter Marcus Farm near Finavon. The site had been disturbed by the ploughing of previous pasture and excavation showed that the cairn covered a spread of dark soil, sherds of cinerary urn, burnt bone and charcoal.

### A SHORT CIST AT MAINS OF MELGUND FARM, ABERLEMNO

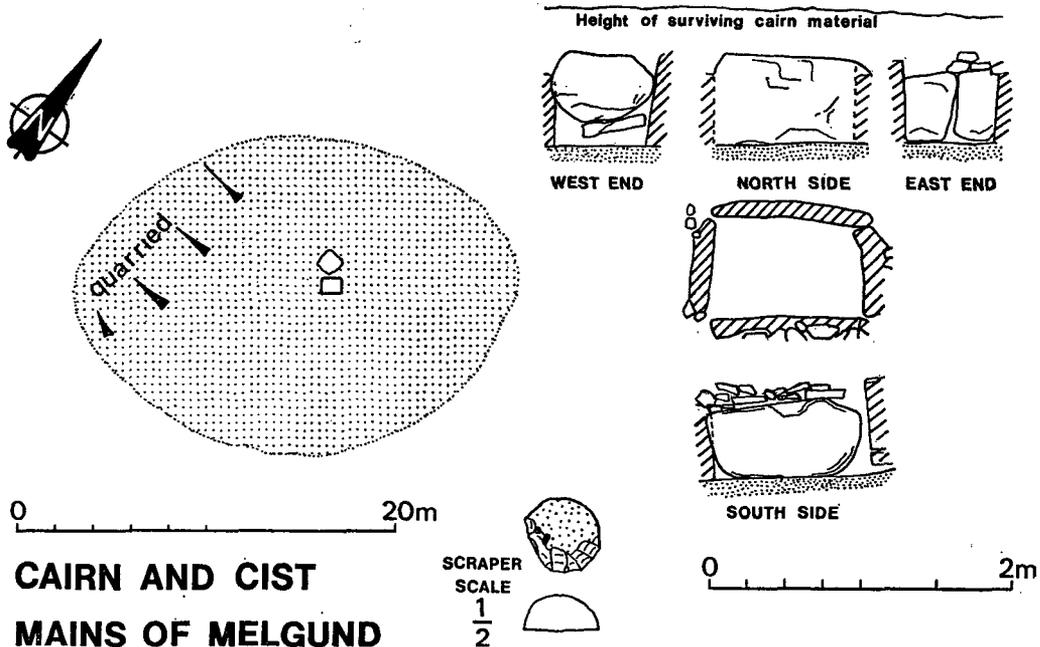
On 23 April 1980 Mr Robert Keith and his son, also Mr Robert Keith, were extracting loose rock from a mound on Mains of Melgund Farm when a large sandstone slab was unearthed. On removing this slab a short cist was revealed and subsequently searched by the finders. Only 150–200 mm of soil lay in the grave and the search uncovered a near-complete jet necklace, a flint thumbnail scraper, two small pieces of bone and five human teeth. The teeth have been examined by Dr D Lunt and her report forms the appendix.

### THE SITE

The cist was found in the centre of a mound 200 m SW of the farmhouse at Mains of Melgund (NGR NO 5428 5632). The mound measured 23.5 m NE–SW by 16.5 m transversely and consisted of a mass of small sandstone fragments overlying boulder clay and bedrock. Such accumulations of stone do not occur naturally in the area. The cairn is situated on gently undulating arable land in an area which has a tradition of producing short cist burials. At least two previous cists are known from the mound which produced the 1980 burial. Warden noted that by 1881 a cist containing an inhumation and two pot-sherds had been found (Warden 1881, 292) and in 1953 another cist, also containing an inhumation and two pot-sherds, was found (Ordnance Survey Archaeology Record Card No NO 55 NW 22).

The cist was aligned 53° E of magnetic N and consisted of four sandstone slabs, the internal measurements being 1.1 by 0.65 m by 0.65 m deep. The NW, SE and NE sides were all constructed of single slabs though the one at the NE end had a central vertical split. The SW end of the cist was formed by

\* 2 Spoutswells Drive, Scone, Perthshire



**CAIRN AND CIST  
MAINS OF MELGUND**

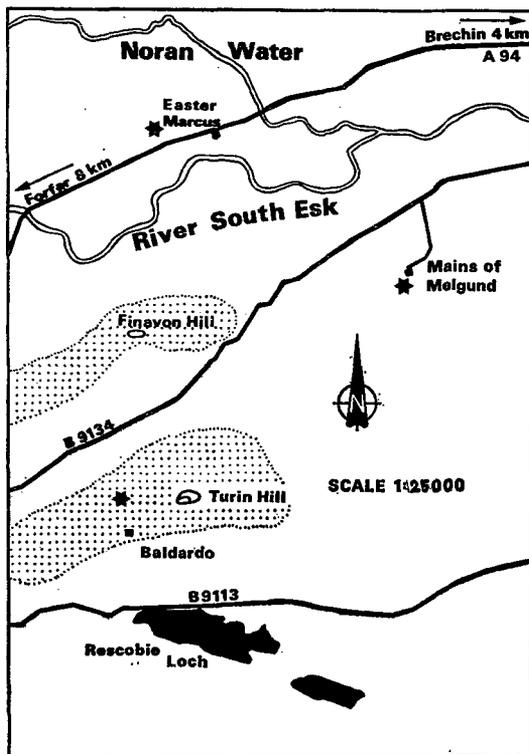


FIG 1 Details of cairn and cist at Mains of Melgund and locations of the three Bronze Age sites

one slab which had been propped-up on a lower horizontal stone in order to raise the top of the slab to about the same level as the other slabs. The floor of the cist was the dry natural boulder clay whilst the top of the grave was surrounded by a mass of loose angular sandstone fragments. The large sandstone slab which covered the grave measured 1.24 by 1.22 m by 0.36 m thick and could never have rested directly on the slabs of the cist. This was because small angular boulders up to 300 mm long had been laid along the top of the sides of the cist in a form of dry-walling. The boulders were *in situ* on the W, E, and S sides and clearly the capstone was intended to lie at least 150 mm above the slabs of the cist. Subsequent pressure from the capstone had angled many of the boulders downwards and inwards but an estimated height for the original walling is 150–200 mm.

#### THE FINDS

##### *Jet necklace*

The necklace consisted of 42 fusiform beads, one terminal plate, four spacer plates and a triangular toggle found at the eastern end of the cist in a layer of black, greasy soil c 200 mm deep. One bead was found between the W end slab and the N side slab when the author re-examined the site but it was almost certainly dropped there by the farm-workers who emptied the cist. The missing terminal was also looked for but without success. However, depositions of jet necklaces with one of the terminals missing are not unknown and a nearby example is that of a necklace from Pitreuchie, S of Forfar. Here a normal-sized necklace was found with a smaller one (NMAEQ 294) which had a terminal plate missing (*Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 41 (1906–7), 65–6, No 3).

Examination of the necklace by Miss Linda Knox, Antiquities' Conservator for the Council for Museums and Galleries in Scotland, showed that the material used comprised both jet and jet substitutes. This may suggest that the components of the necklace came from different necklaces or that the makers had more than one source of supply. The necklace was completely undecorated though signs of probable reworking were evident on some of the spacer plates. The necklace is at present on display in Montrose Museum along with the other finds from the cist.

##### *Flint scraper*

A flint thumbnail scraper measuring 21 by 20 by 9.5 mm was found at the eastern end of the cist amongst the beads of the jet necklace and the human remains. It is a struck flake of mottled, honey-coloured flint partially corticated and lightly patinated on its outer hemispherical surface. The flake displays both a point and bulb of percussion and the resulting surface has been utilized as a striking or flaking platform for secondary working around half the edge of the flake. This reworking has removed small flakes to produce a classic thumbnail scraper.

##### *Human remains*

Two very small pieces of bone were found at the eastern end of the cist and were not examined. The five human teeth are dealt with below.

#### DISCUSSION

The discovery in 1980 of the cist at Mains of Melgund adds to the evidence which suggests that the area between Mains of Melgund Farm and Aberlemno village saw intensive activity during the Early Bronze Age. As well as the three cists now known to have come from the mound at NO 5428 5632 other cists are known from NO 5436 5629 and a single cist was found at NO 5415 5627. Other cists are rather less well recorded:

'the farmer at Melgund admits that, in levelling down a great many hillocks on his farm he buried the bones in the places where he found it convenient, and used the coffin slabs for covers to his drains' (Stuart 1856, 25).

Jervise, writing at the same time, noted that 'in the hollow between Flemington (NO 525 557) and the Den of Melgund (NO 546 564), cists were so numerous till within the last few years, that on opening the smallest hillock, specimens could be procured at convenience' (1857, 192). The cists in the area are described as being about 4½ ft (1.37 m) long and were evidently either

part of one large cemetery or sections of a number of small cemeteries. There are no accounts describing whether the knolls in which the cists were found were natural, partly natural or wholly man-made but the 1980 discovery might argue for some of the knolls referred to being at least partly artificial.

Large round burial mounds are known at the Mote of Melgund NO 5397 5685 and at Woodrae NO 5184 5623 with two or three cists and urns having been found at the former and one cist at the latter (Jervise 1854, 194). A third large mound was discovered by the author at the end of 1980 at Melgund Cottage, NO 531 564 (*Discovery Excav Scot 1980*, 37). This cairn measures 30 m in diameter, stands 2 m high and consists of a mass of waterworn and angular boulders.

The Melgund cist should probably be considered in the context of a landscape in which both natural and man-made mounds were used for burial sites probably accompanying uncovered groups of cists. A large variety of burial types is known from the area between Forfar and Brechin and it can be no coincidence that this area also boasts a concentration of finds of jet. There is no doubt that from at least as early as the Early Bronze Age the area was very attractive to those wanting to bury their dead, a population whose wealth is at least partly reflected in the amount of jet necklace burials (Morrison 1979).

The Melgund cist adds to the considerable amount of knowledge already available for the mid-Angus area. Details of cist and mound construction complement information gathered from the human remains and the finds. The finds from the Melgund cist are unusual in two respects. Most obvious was the lack of a food vessel which could be reasonably expected with a jet-necklace burial; of the nine previous discoveries of jet necklaces in short cists in Angus and Dundee Districts no less than eight were accompanied by a food vessel. If food vessels are characteristic of these types of burial then judging from the available evidence it is also fair to say that finds of flint are uncharacteristic for this part of the country. Flint with jet is more common in Argyll and Bute than anywhere else in the country and of the 10 burials containing jet necklaces in Angus and Dundee Districts only three have contained flint artefacts. A third point to note is that the necklace is undecorated unlike the majority of necklaces found in the area. A nearby parallel can be found, however, from Easter Essendy I, Perthshire, where an undecorated necklace was found with a food vessel and two cremations (Thoms 1980).

#### APPENDIX: REPORT ON DENTITION

Dr Dorothy Lunt, Dept of Oral Biology, University of Glasgow

There are present the maxillary left permanent canine, first premolar and second molar, the maxillary right third molar and the mandibular right third molar. In each case, the dentine and cementum of the tooth have been completely destroyed by post-mortem soil action, leaving only the shell of enamel covering the crown. The canine, first premolar and second molar all show early but definite signs of attrition and these teeth had clearly been in function. The third molars, on the other hand, show no evidence of wear, even when examined at fairly high magnification using a stereo-microscope, and this suggests that they had not yet erupted into functional positions. The eruption of the third molars is very variable but is usually considered to occur between 16 and 20. It is therefore possible that the individual was less than 20. The crowns of both teeth appear to be fully formed and completely mineralized, and this stage of development is usually reached at about 14–16. Unfortunately it is impossible to tell how much of the root had formed: had the roots survived it would have been possible to give a rather closer estimate of age. The individual most probably died between the ages of 15 and 20, and perhaps at 16–18 years. A further possibility must also be borne in mind, and this is that the third molars are unworn because they were embedded in abnormal positions in the jaws, and would never have erupted. In view of the early stage of wear in the other teeth, this seems very unlikely. Again, had the roots survived it would have been possible to verify this point.

It is not possible to assess the sex of the individual from these tooth fragments.

## A CAIRN AND A CIST ON BALDARDO FARM, FORFAR

In October 1981 the author found a cairn on the northern boundary of Baldardo Farm at NGR NO 505 535 (*Discovery Excav Scot 1981*, 44). The cairn is bisected E-W by a fenceline and though the southern half has been ploughed and is featureless the northern half on Howmuir Farm is well preserved. The extant remains are of a cairn 9-10 m in diameter which is surrounded by a 3-4 m wide bank 15 m in diameter. This bank is 0.3 m high and the cairn itself is c 0.5 m high though a central disturbance has meant the loss of some cairn material. Subsequent examination of the southern half of the site after ploughing revealed that both the central cairn and the outer bank were constructed of both waterworn and angular stones and boulders. The bedrock beneath the site is a mixture of Old Red Sandstone conglomerates and sandstones, therefore a purely local origin for the cairn material is likely.

The discovery of this site is of particular interest simply because of the scarcity of cairns with banks in Angus District. One is known at Three Laws, NW of Montrose (*Stat Acc*, ix (1793), 51-2), and others are recorded in neighbouring Perthshire and Kincardine but no others are known in Angus.

The author revisited the site in February 1982 after ploughing and discovered that the capstone of a short cist had been disturbed. The site was photographed, and a tractor was used to pull the capstone out of the cist. It had already been ascertained that the capstone had not disturbed the contents of the cist which were partly masked by loose modern plough-soil and stones. The cist was subsequently excavated and a cremation deposit and a flint knife were found. A small amount of burnt bone and pottery was found on the northern lip of the cist and this led to an examination of the area beyond the limits of the immediate cist structure.

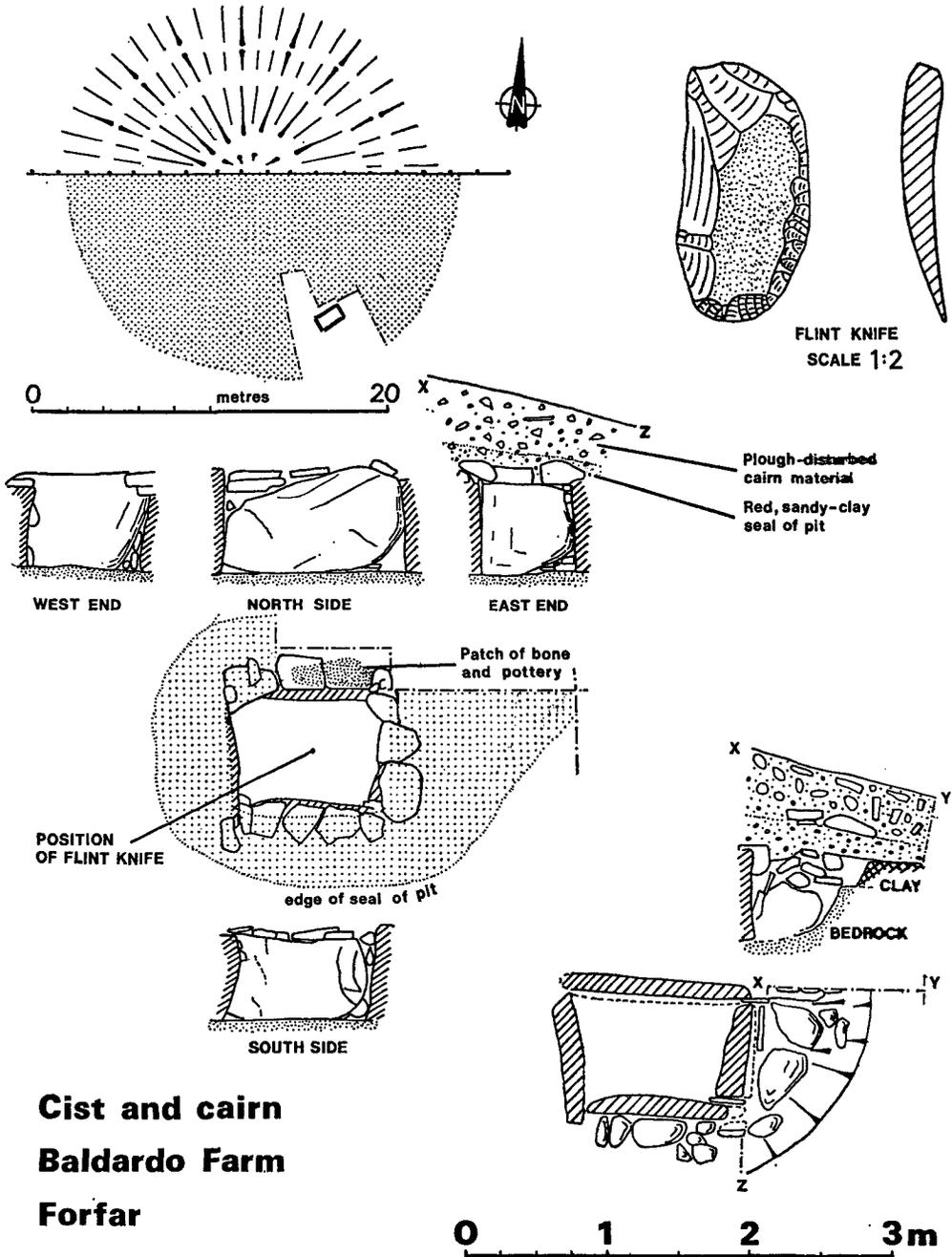
## THE CIST

The cist was constructed of four sandstone blocks and had internal measurements of 1.25 by 0.72 by 0.70 m deep. The cist was aligned NE-SW and the N and S side slabs were both stones which, due to their shape, had to be added to to bring the levels of the sides of the cist up to the required height. This required level was the height of the top of the western end slab whose opposite number at the eastern end was topped by two thick slabs. The S side slab was topped by a neatly laid row of thin sandstone slabs but the western end of the N side stone was so low that a double layer of slabs was needed to raise the side to the correct height. All four sides of the cist displayed rubble packing either at the corners of the cist or where a slab was not flush with the bottom of the cist. For this purpose a mixture of sandstone slabs and rounded boulders were used. The side slabs were all of local origin as was the capstone which measured 1.32 by 1.32 m by 0.15 m.

The floor of the cist was solid rock upon which was a layer of bright orange soil 200 mm thick. This deposit had a uniform thickness across the whole floor of the cist and scattered throughout the layer were 190 g of cremated bone. Recognizable amongst the remains was a piece of mandible which was examined by Dr Lunt; her report forms the appendix. Slight traces of carbon were visible within the fill but were so slight that none was collected. The orange deposit had the consistency of humus rather than subsoil, and appeared to represent burnt topsoil which, with the cremated bone, had been placed within the grave. On the bottom of the cist and exactly in the centre was a flint knife (fig 2) which is described below. The knife showed no sign of having been burnt and was presumably placed on the floor of the cist before the cremation deposit was interred.

A scattered deposit of burnt bone (40 g in total) and sherds of pottery (described below) lay in cairn material above the top of the backfill of the N side of the cist pit and below the level of the capstone, although it extended beyond the northern edge of the capstone.

Cairn material was found to overlie the edges of the cist on the N and E sides but the plough-disturbance and the nature of the cairn material made it impossible to tell whether the cist pit had been cut through cairn material or whether the cairn had been built over the cist. The edge of the cist pit was traced round three-quarters of its circumference and it measured 2.5 m E-W by c 2.3 m N-S, being roughly oval in plan. A section at the E end showed the profile of the pit to be basically bowl-shaped with a flat



**Cist and cairn  
Baldardo Farm  
Forfar**

FIG 2 Plan of cairn and plans and sections of cist at Baldardo Farm

bottom formed of solid rock. The sides of the pit were cut through hard, dry boulder clay which overlies the bedrock to a depth of some 0.20 m. The backfill of the pit was firstly a collection of large angular and rounded boulders upon which was placed a deposit of smaller stones, slabs and soil. At the top of the backfill the edges of the cist were carefully levelled-off using small sandstone slabs and then the pit was

sealed with a layer of clay. This clay seal not only covered the general backfill but had been spread to cover the top of the western end slab of the cist and also the laid slabs at the top of the N and S sides.

A wedge-shaped trench was started towards the centre of the cairn from the cist but was terminated when it was clear how much of the cairn survived. Stripping of the plough-disturbed soil and cairn material merely confirmed that the cairn was built of locally derived slabs and boulders.

#### THE FINDS

##### *Flint knife (fig 2)*

Formed from a flake struck off a previously struck core. The knife measures 71 mm long by 37 mm by 10 mm thick and is made of a mottled grey-black flint which has the remains of dull cortex on its outer surface. A pronounced bulb of percussion and ripple marks are present and are accompanied by slight damage at the point of percussion. The flake has been retouched to form a cutting edge which extends from the top of one side at the proximal end, down that side and around the curved distal end. The condition of the knife, especially the cutting edge, is extremely good with irregularities probably being incurred during manufacture.

##### *Pottery (not illustrated)*

Nine sherds of undecorated pottery were found on the N lip of the cist with three joining to form one sherd. Most of the pieces are sherds of the base of a flat-bottomed vessel with a dished interior and a sharp angle between the outer face and base. The thickness of the one wall-sherd is 8 mm whilst the thickness of the base varies from 8 to 10 mm. The inner and outer surfaces are dull orange in colour with occasional protruding angular grits up to 7 mm across. The inner fabric is dark grey and the average grit size is 3–4 mm. These few sherds suggest that the vessel represented was almost certainly a beaker.

##### *Small finds found in disturbed cairn material east of cist (not illustrated)*

Piece of chert measuring 41 by 28 by 11 mm, probably natural.

Waste flake of honey-coloured flint from a previously struck core. A bulb of percussion and ripple marks are visible but the flake has no secondary working.

Small core of honey-coloured flint with area of cortex on outer surface. There is no secondary working on this probably natural pebble which measures 17 by 16 by 10 mm.

##### *Bone*

Forty grams of burnt bone were found scattered on the northern lip of the cist and were not examined.

Within the cist 190 g of burnt bone were found in association with the flint knife. A piece of jaw bone was sent to Dr Lunt whose report forms the appendix. The rest of the bone was not examined.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The amount of excavation carried out was unsatisfactory in so far that the relationship of the cist within the cairn structure could not be definitely established. The cist seems to lie under the line of the outer bank which may indicate the presence of further cists. The cist is basically unremarkable though the use of clay to seal the backfill of the pit shows the same attention to detail reflected in the careful selection of stones used to make the top edges of the cist level. Obviously the builders required a good seal to the grave and this phenomenon is a common one in graves of this type, eg Mains of Melgund, above.

It was first thought that the scatter of bones and pottery on the N side of the cist was the result of careless deposition of the cremation excavated within the cist. It seems unlikely, however, that if the nine sherds were part of the main burial, that at least one sherd did not end up in the cist. It seems more probable that an earlier burial, possibly from within the cist, had been disturbed by the interment of the cremation and flint knife. The stratification of the pottery and bone in cairn material above the top of the backfill of the cist pit and below the level of the capstone is meaningless in so far that it provides only a terminal point for the deposition, ie it could not have been deposited after the positioning of the capstone.

The S side of the cairn seems to have a secure future with a mainly pastoral use intended in the near future. Mr Robertson the owner of the farm has stated, however, that he would not plough the southern half of the site if the field were converted back to arable. The northern, well-preserved half of the cairn is threatened by land improvement which will convert the pasture into arable. Negotiation with the landowner will possibly result in the cairn being indicated with markers and consequently missed by the plough.

#### APPENDIX: EXAMINATION OF THE JAW FRAGMENT FROM THE CREMATION WITHIN THE CIST

Dr Dorothy Lunt

The specimen consists of a small portion of the right ascending ramus of a human mandible, and includes most of the coronoid process and the posterior part of the alveolar process with part of a molar socket. The tooth has been lost, but can only have been the most posteriorly placed permanent molar in the quadrant. Depending on whether or not the third molar was congenitally absent, the tooth may have been either the second or the third permanent molar. The morphology of the socket suggests that it is rather more likely to have been the third molar.

The molar appears to have erupted into its functional position. This means that the individual is likely to have been over 18 if this is a third molar, or over 12 if it is a second molar. The apical parts of the socket have been lost post-mortem, so it is not possible to say whether the roots of the tooth had formed completely. From the appearance of the specimen it seems quite probable that the roots of the molar were fully formed. If that were so, then if this is a third molar the individual would probably be over 20; if it is a second molar the individual would be over 15.

It seems most unlikely that this individual could have been less than 12 years old, and it is much more probable that the age was over 20.

#### EXCAVATION OF A CAIRN ON EASTER MARCUS FARM

Examination of an area of ploughed pasture on Easter Marcus Farm in the spring of 1982 led the author to the discovery of two, possibly four, small round cairns of c 5–6 m diameter. The area of pasture had formerly been woodland though traces of ridge and furrow cultivation were present. The area has previously been noted for the presence of a large round cairn, known as the Haer Cairn at NO 5009 5843. The Haer Cairn was examined about 1833 when cists and ‘urn’ were found, but it is now an amorphous mass of rubble (*Ordnance Survey Name Book* 1861, no 82, 109). One of the cairns found in 1982 lay only 80 m from the Haer Cairn at NO 5109 5846 and since the plough had effectively removed most of the turf from the site the author decided to test the nature of the mound.

#### EXCAVATION

It was found that very little of the actual cairn structure had been damaged by the plough which had only succeeded in turning the 150 mm thick turf. The pieces of turf were removed revealing a spread of boulders and stones measuring c 7 m in diameter. The cleaning of the top of the cairn made several points apparent, the first being that the cairn was defined by a boulder kerb. Secondly, it was clear that the centre of the cairn had previously been disturbed and, thirdly, the spoil from that disturbance had been thrown to the SE arc of the cairn.

Though the disturbance at the centre was obvious from the general lack of stone and a slight hollow, a definite edge to this feature could not be established either in plan or section. Certainly the ‘explorer’ of the cairn did not reach subsoil and it may be that the examination was a half-hearted affair which simply disturbed the top of the cairn.

With the cairn clean the spoil from the early examination was removed to reveal the boulder kerb on the SE arc. The kerb was constructed of a mixture of angular and rounded boulders up to 0.42 m long and was more or less complete from the middle of the E side round the S side to the NW. Between the E and the NW points the kerb was completely missing except for two possibly disturbed stones. A reason for robbing the cairn, if indeed it was robbed, is difficult to find in view of the total lack of stone

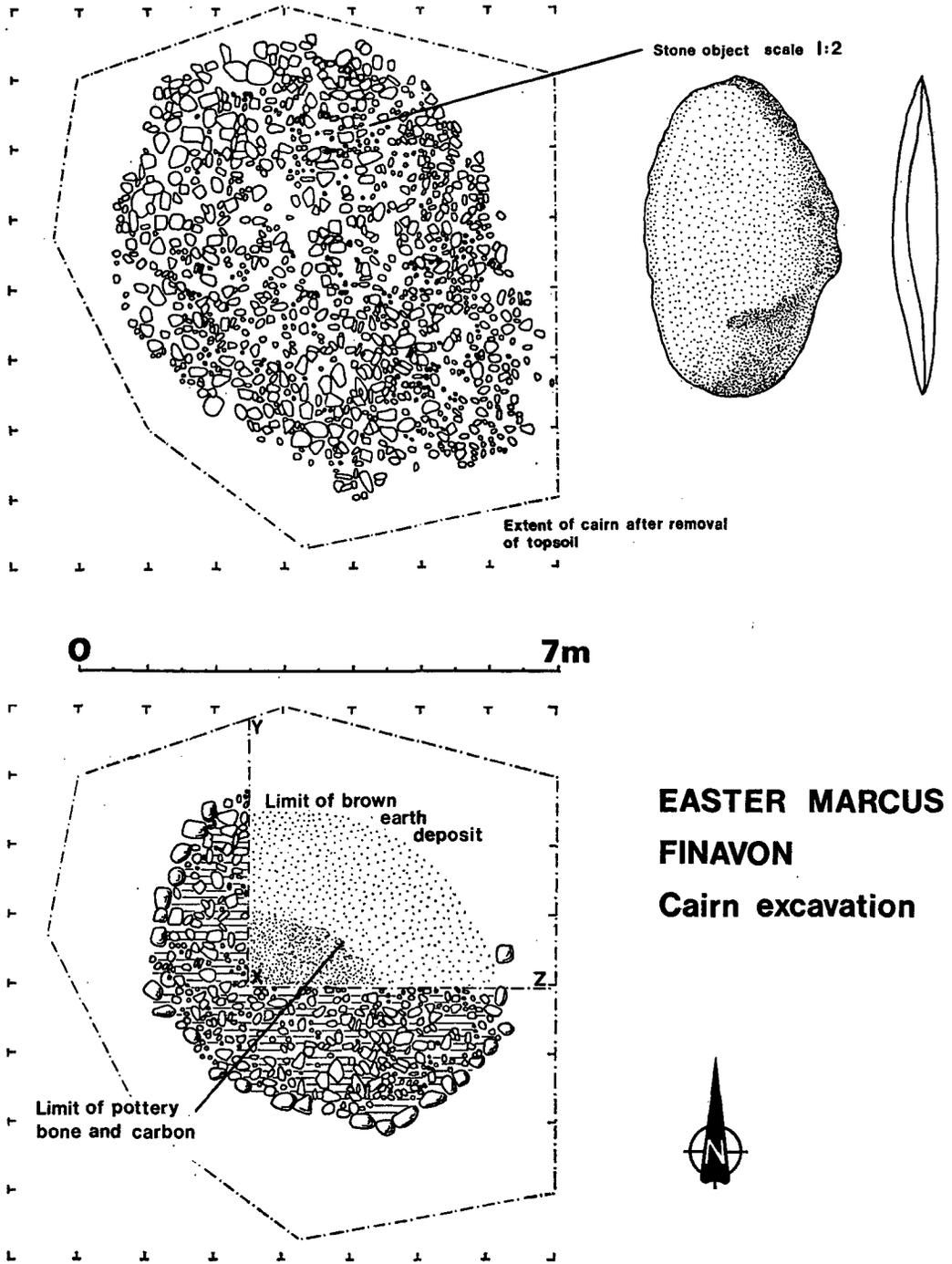


FIG 3 Stone object and plans of cairn at Easter Marcus

walls in the immediate area. Only two disturbed boulders were found to account for plough damage and no area of compacted soil was found by excavation.

The area of the NE quadrant, including the central part of the cairn, was chosen for closer examination. The cairn material generally survived to a depth of 250–300 mm and consisted of closely packed rounded and angular boulders usually c 150–200 mm in diameter. The spaces between were filled with very fibrous brown earth and only a few small stones.

Below the cairn material was a brown earth layer up to 180 mm deep extending over most of the area beneath the excavated section. The layer was thickest at the centre of the cairn and gradually petered-out towards the edges (fig 3). On top of this layer were several sherds of cinerary urn, burnt bone and carbon all concentrated towards the centre of the mound. The pottery was found either directly on top of this layer or just below the surface whereas the bone and charcoal were found dispersed throughout the deposit. The deposit of brown earth containing the finds also contained numerous small stones but none of any great size. Several largish boulders protruded from the subsoil which was a dark orange gritty boulder clay but it would be fair to say that the brown earth deposit was largely boulder-free.

#### THE FINDS

##### *Pottery (fig 4)*

Two large and 20 small sherds of collared urn type were found in a concentrated area beneath the centre of the cairn. The only rimsherd is a piece measuring 81 mm across by 68 mm deep by 24 mm greatest thickness. The ware is poorly preserved, being impregnated with plant roots and much of the outer surface is missing. The pottery is buff brown in colour on the inner and outer surfaces whilst the central core is black. Angular grits up to 5 mm across are not prominent but occasionally break the uneven surfaces of the vessel.

The rim is roughly rounded and unevenly narrow at one point. The outer surface descends with an outward inclination towards the base of the overhang of the rim which is missing. The inner face falls towards the thickest point of the wall 60 mm below the top of the rim, a point which probably coincided with the bottom of the outer overhang.

Traces of impressed twisted-cord decoration are visible on the outer surface. Portions of both vertical and horizontal lines can be traced and it is possible that the two designs were alternatively set into panels similar to those on a collared urn from Over Migvie, Kirriemuir (Callander 1929) or those on the collared urn from Dairsie, Fife (Coutts 1971). The inner surface is decorated with an horizontal line of twisted cord 4–5 mm below the top of the rim. Below this line are traces of a group of four parallel sloping lines of twisted cord. Adjacent to this group is another group of twisted cord sloping in the opposite direction.

The only other large sherd is a body sherd 12–13 mm thick with a fabric similar to that of the rimsherd. Microscopic examination of the sherds showed numerous traces of feldspar, biotite, muscovite and quartz indicating that though the clay source could have been just about anywhere in Scotland, the ware is possibly local in origin.

##### *Stone (fig 3)*

The only find of stone was found in the cairn structure in the NE quadrant. It is a flake of a fine-grained metamorphosed sandstone which has broken-off a rounded boulder and measures 91 by 57 by 13 mm thick. The oval stone has no definite signs of retouch but the edge is sharp and a practical test proved its cutting ability.

##### *Other finds*

Thirty grams of burnt bone found dispersed in the brown layer under the centre of the cairn were not examined. Several pieces of charcoal from the same layer were also not examined.

#### SUMMARY

Partial remains of a collared urn and a scatter of burnt bone and charcoal were found in a localized concentration under the centre of a small round cairn. The circumstances of the deposition of the artefacts is not known but they were not originally part of a complete burial under the centre of the mound. No central grave pit nor any other feature was found under the excavated area of the mound. The larger pottery sherds were found on the surface of the brown

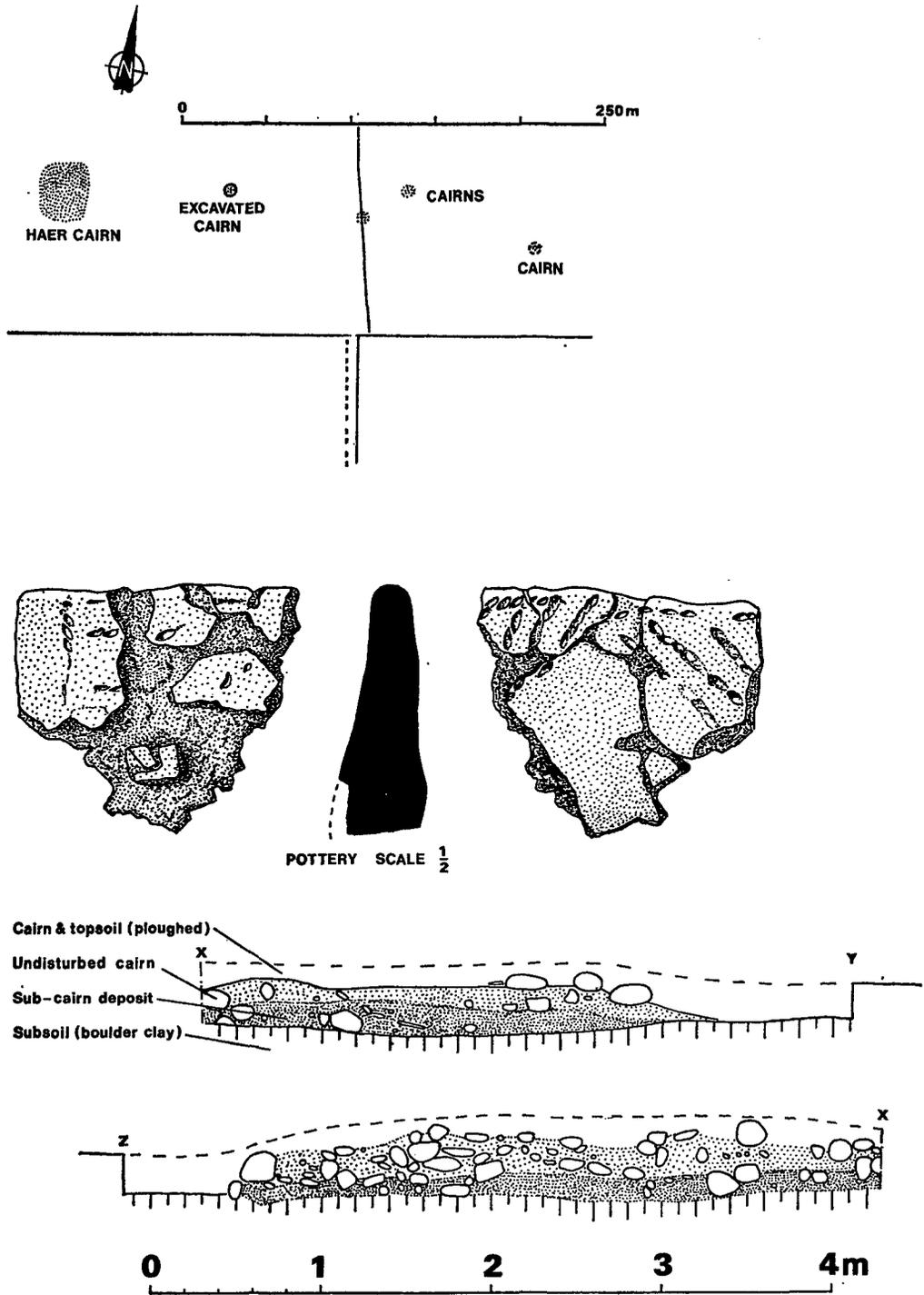


FIG 4 Easter Marcus: group of cairns, pottery and cairn sections

earth layer beneath the cairn which tends to suggest that they represent a token deposit from a burial spread on a small area of old land surface. The fact that the bone, charcoal and some of the smaller sherds of pottery were found within the layer can be put down to worm action.

The position of the cairn over the burial deposit would seem to rule out the coincidental building of a cairn over an earlier scatter, which suggests that the other mounds found on Easter Marcus in 1982 may also be of prehistoric origin. In that case they would represent the remains of a cemetery of both large and small round cairns similar, perhaps, to the recorded cemetery on Labothie Hill, NO 475 415 (Sturrock 1880), or the large cairn at Nether Handwick, NO 364 418, which is closely attended by small satellite cairns.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At Mains of Melgund Farm I am most grateful to Mr James Jackson for allowing me to examine both the site and its artefacts and for supplying valuable information regarding the initial discovery of the cist and its contents. Thanks are also due to both Robert Keiths of Mains of Melgund Farm for supplying information. At Baldardo Farm I would like to thank Mr D J Robertson and Mr A Robertson for permission to excavate the cist and for agreeing not to plough the southern half of the cairn in the future. At Howmuir Farm I thank Mr G Meikle for access to the cairn on his land. At Easter Marcus Farm I would like to thank Mr and Mrs James Falconer for allowing me to excavate the cairn and for showing great interest in the proceedings. Mr Falconer kindly provided a surrounding protective fence and agreed with the author's suggestion that the cairn should be re-built when the excavation was completed. I am indebted to Dr Lunt for her concise and speedy reports on the teeth from the cist at Melgund and on the fragment of jaw from Baldardo and to Miss Linda Knox for her comments on various aspects of the jet necklace. Finally thanks are due to members of staff of Montrose Museum who helped prepare this report, in particular geologists Mrs M King and Mr D Thomson.

### REFERENCES

- Callander, J G 1929 'A cinerary urn from Over Migvie, Kirriemuir, Angus', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 64 (1929-30), 28-33.
- Coutts, H 1971 *Tayside before history*. Dundee.
- Jervise, A 1853 *History and traditions of the land of the Lindsays*.
- Jervise, A 1857 'Notices descriptive of the localities of certain sculptured stone monuments in Forfarshire etc', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 2 (1854-7), 187-99.
- Morrison, A 1979 'A Bronze Age burial site near South Mound, Houston, Renfrewshire', *Glasgow Archaeol J*, 6 (1979), 20-45.
- Sturrock, J 1880 'Notice of a jet necklace and urn of the food-vessel type, found in a cist at Balcalk, Tealing, and of the opening of Hatton Cairn, parish of Inverarity, Forfarshire', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 14 (1879-80), 260-7.
- Thoms, L M 1980 *Some short cist burials from Tayside*. Dundee Museums and Art Gallery Occasional Papers in Archaeology, No 2.
- Warden, A J 1881 *Angus or Forfarshire, the land and the people*. Vol 2.