



FIG. 1.—Site F, before excavation.



FIG. 3.—Site F, excavated; the horizontal ranging poles lying across the centres of the huts. Note the clay floors.



FIG. 5.—Site B; note lines in the filling of the burial pit, behind the upright scale.



FIG. 7.—Site B, fully excavated.



FIG. 9.—Site A, stone I.

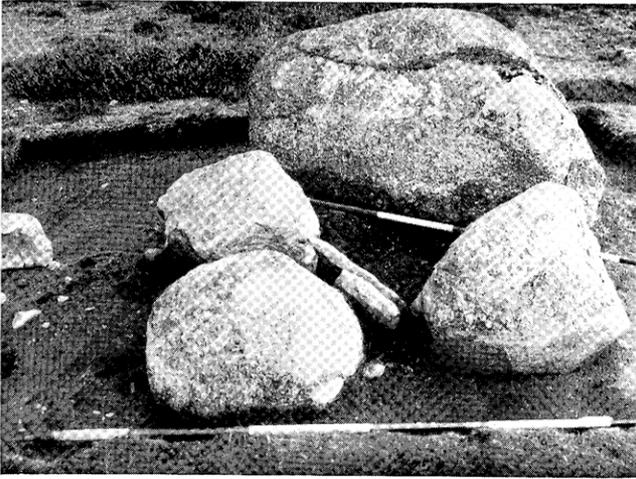


FIG. 10.—Site A: stones against large stone III.

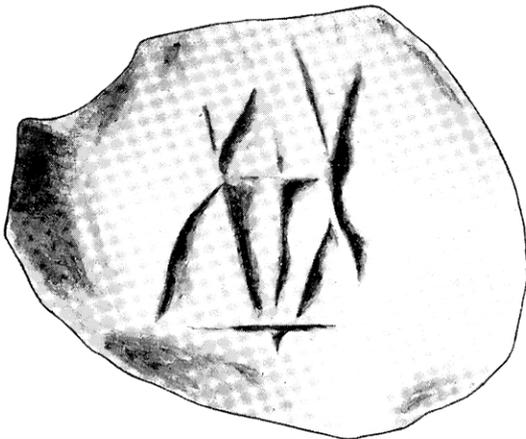


FIG. 12.—Carved stone from Site B ($\frac{1}{2}$).

ART. I. — *Further excavations at Broomrigg, near Ainstable.* By Miss K. S. HODGSON, F.S.A.

Read at Carlisle, May 3rd, 1952.

A GENERAL description of the prehistoric sites at Broomrigg, together with a distribution map, was given in the report on the excavations of 1948-49 in a previous volume of these *Transactions* (CW2 1 30-42), to which the reader is referred for the allocation of letters to sites.

The third season's work was heavily handicapped by bad weather in the latter part of 1950; the volunteers from the Carlisle Regional Group were only able to attend on Saturdays, and the work was therefore prolonged beyond our expectation: but in spite of difficulties the results, if less remarkable than those on site C in the two previous seasons, were really valuable.

The site chosen to open the work of 1950 was that marked F (fig. 1), in Broomrigg plantation, which Professor Richmond, when visiting our excavations in 1949, had pointed out as being probably a habitation site. It was inconspicuous, being merely two rings of stones, which are smallish — about 1 ft. in height — and with considerable intervals between them (fig. 2); both circles are about 12 ft. in diameter. The Broomrigg complex was an excellent training-ground, as the varied nature of the sites called into play a series of different excavation techniques; for the site under discussion, the "grid" method was the obvious choice and was accordingly used, except that it was not worth while to remove the baulks (fig. 3).

We found that there was no real wall (as in typical hut-circles¹): the small stones heaped between and against

¹ E.g. at Woodhead, CW2 x1 162.

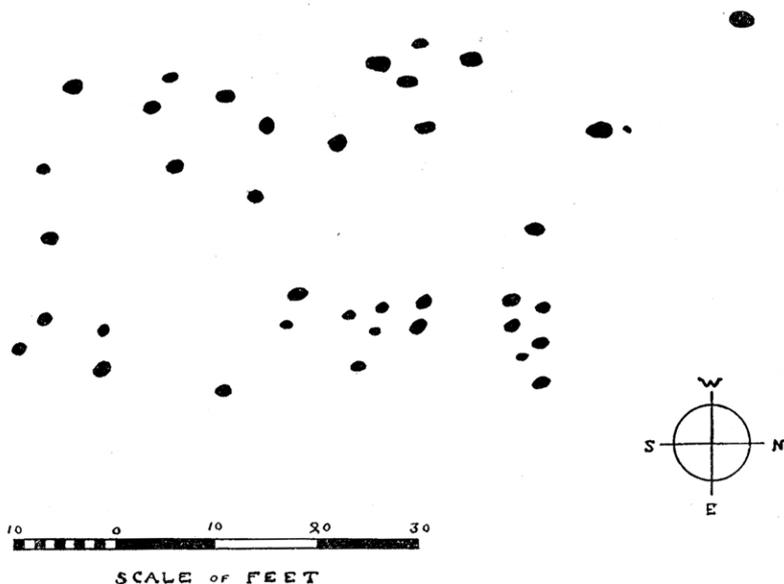


FIG. 2.—Habitation site (F).

the larger ones, in a few places, were not enough for that. Nor was there a proper floor, though the ground was slightly harder within the rings than outside them; this was more noticeable after heavy rain, when the water stood in those trenches some time after the outer portion had dried. This hardening may have been merely the result of treading by the inhabitants, and not a true floor at all. Evidence of human occupation, and Bronze Age date, was given by two small flakes of flint (fig. 11), very like those found at Woodhead,² and a quantity of "rudd" (iron oxide); the latter might be thought to have occurred naturally, had not some of the pieces shown unmistakable signs of having been used by rubbing. A small quantity of charcoal was also found, but there was no hearth or fire-spot.

These circles are quite different from the usual Bronze

² CW2 x1 164.

Age hut-circle. The most probable suggestion is that the dwellings were some kind of tent or wigwam, and that the purpose of the rings of stone was to spread out and hold down the skirts of such a tent. Such dwellings would probably be for temporary or seasonal use, and it is tempting to speculate on the possibility that the use might be connected with the erection of the stone circles, or with ceremonies held there.

The next site to be tackled was site B, the smallest circle in diameter—only 11 ft., though of large stones. Only four stones are visible above ground, standing in the remains of a cairn. Of these, no. 2 had been broken up (many fragments of it were found) and no. 4, which appeared to be very small, proved to be a large slab which had fallen backwards. The stones which remained standing were set well into the soil though not deeply (only about 4 in.), and where soil and vegetation had protected them from the weather they could be seen, and even more certainly felt, to be hammer-dressed. We were able to distinguish the sockets of three other stones, and this puts it beyond question that this site really is a circle (figs. 4 and 7). There was a small amount of charcoal behind socket no. 2.

In the centre of the cairn there was a conical pit, averaging 5 ft. 3 in. across and 1 ft. 9 in. deep, lined with stones carefully fitted together. It had evidently been opened and robbed, for it was filled with washed-in black soil (figs. 5 and 6); it gave the impression of having been constructed to hold a cinerary urn, and a flat stone which was lying near may probably have been used as a cover-slab. The only find in this pit was a small flint (fig. 11 no. 3).

The other find from this site is one which, if it be indeed a Bronze Age object, is most remarkable: it is a block of sandstone, rounded, with a design of straight lines carved on one face (fig. 12). Owing to the unfortunate fact that the site has been tampered with, at some unknown time,

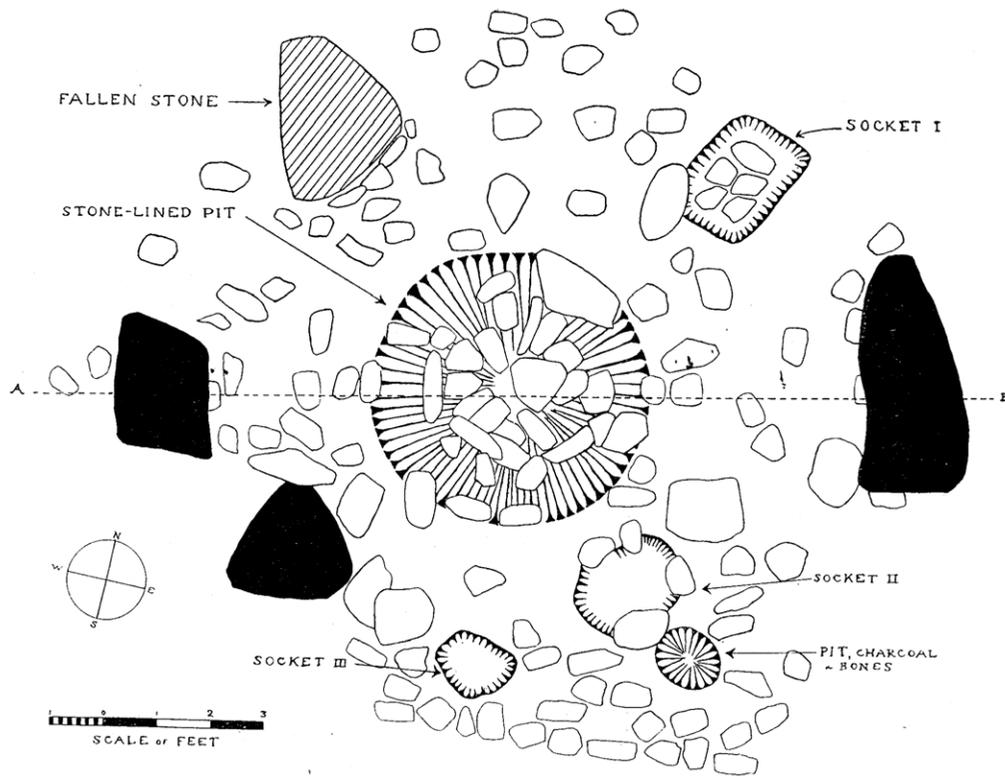


FIG. 4.—The smaller circle (B).

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there cannot be complete certainty about the origin of this stone, but the carving seems perhaps too careful for the work of a shepherd or an idle lad whiling away the time, and if it be part of a decorated lintel or other ornamental masonry, it is difficult to see how it came to be among the stones of a cairn. The flattened X appears on the chalk cylinders from Yorkshire, and perhaps a slight resemblance can be traced to the Scottish carved stone balls, or to the decorated or faceted stone hammers—one at least of which, from Quarnford, Staffordshire, seems (judging by the illustration of it) to have only a patch of decoration, like our stone.³

About 25 ft. from circle B there was a tiny circle, B 2, of small stones, 4 to 5 ft. in diameter and surrounding a conical pit 1 ft. 10 in. across, a miniature of that in circle B; the pit was partly cobble-lined, packed with and filled with the same black washed soil.

Our last objective was to test the megalithic circle, site A. Doubts had been cast on it, and it was highly satisfactory to be able to establish its genuineness. One suggestion had been that it was only the foundation of a dry-stone dyke, but one member of the Group, Mr Dotchin, who has had much experience of dry-walling, told me that he had never seen such a dyke built in that fashion. Moreover, while searching for the sockets of more stones of the circle, we came upon the foundation of an undoubted dry-wall, and were able to follow it up sufficiently to show that it was in a different line. We re-surveyed this site with special care (fig. 8).

The most striking evidence which it yielded was that of the sockets, carefully made and packed with small stones (fig. 9). The stones of the circle were set 8 or 9 in. into the ground; one of the largest of them had smaller stones against its outer side, which looked almost as if they had been meant to hold an urn, though there was no trace of one and the appearance may have been

³ Cf. PSAScot. xliii, 1909, 383f. and fig. 4.

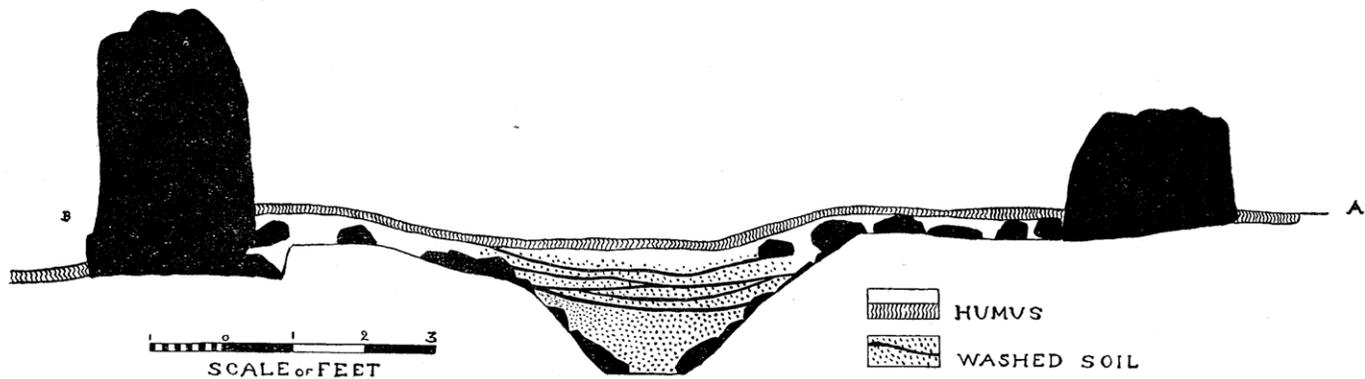


FIG. 6.—The smaller circle (B) : Section along line A-B.



FIG. 8.—The megalithic Circle (A).

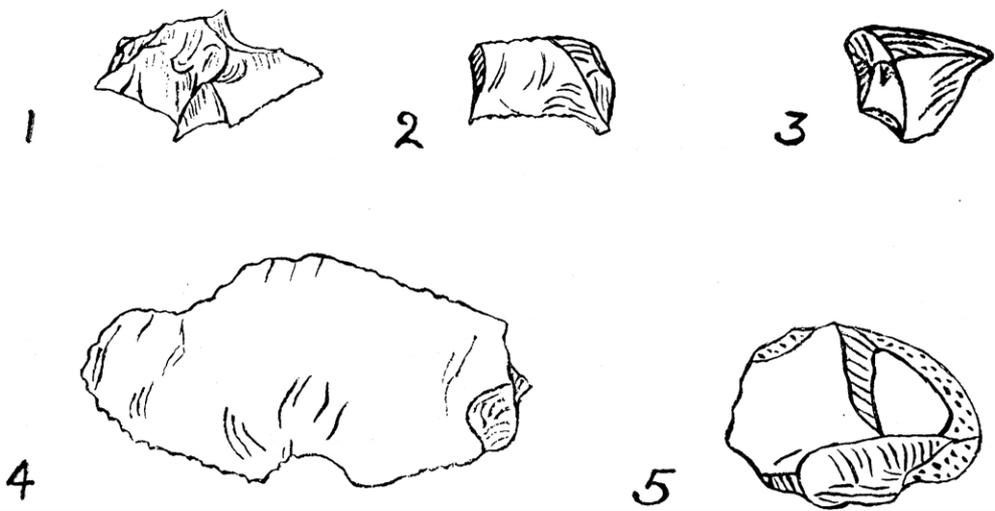


FIG. 11.—Flints: 1 and 2 from F, 3 from B, 4 and 5 Surface finds (1).

accidental (fig. 10). Where unweathered, these stones also were undoubtedly hammer-dressed.

It is now time to take stock of our results—though until that important member of the complex, circle D (in Wallmoor), can be excavated in the same manner and its place in the sequence ascertained, our results must remain incomplete and to some extent inconclusive. The argument is necessarily largely typological. The megalithic circle may be presumed to be the earliest structure, both from analogy with circles elsewhere and from the deep setting of the stones. The beaker cist (site J) should be more or less contemporary; so would be the first phase of circle C,⁴ if it was "Beaker": but if, as I am inclined to think, it was "Food-Vessel", it would come next in order of date, belonging to the Early Bronze Age. Site B would follow: its sockets, though evident, are shallower than those of circle A, its pit is a very degenerate form of cist, while the interment was probably in a cinerary urn. Finally, the later or enlarged phase of site C is definitely of Middle Bronze Age date, since it yielded a cinerary and a pygmy urn, while the absence of sockets and hammer-dressing places it at the end of the series typologically, and to that extent agrees with the dating obtained from the grave-goods.

Thanks are again due to Mr A. D. Parkin, for permission to continue the investigation of this important complex of sites. Members of the Carlisle Regional Group (Mrs Anderson, Mr Childe, Mr Elliott, Mr Gorrie, Miss Lamb, Mr and Mrs Percy and Mrs Shaw) and of the newly formed Penrith Group (Mrs Diggle and Dr and Mrs Thomson) undertook all the labour; without them, under present-day conditions, it would have been quite impossible to carry out the excavation.

Note: By an oversight, the dimensions of the large cist in circle C were omitted from the earlier report. It measured 3 ft. 10 in. by 2 ft. 1 in., and was 1 ft. 9 in. to 2 ft. 5 in. deep.

⁴ CWz 1 3rf.



PL. I, 1.—Drumburgh: cracked flag footing of stone wall derived from solid internal foundation. Looking E.



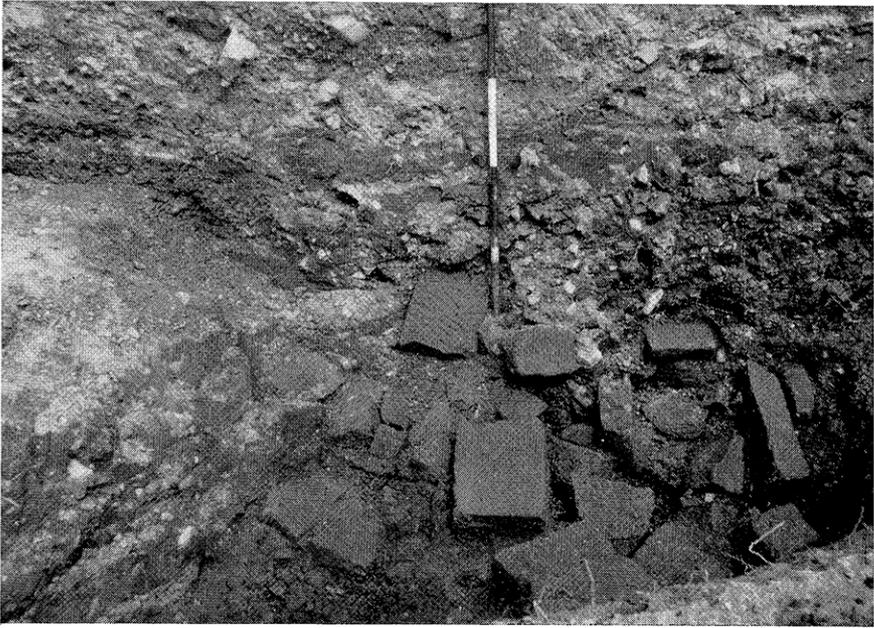
PL. I, 2.—Drumburgh: front toe of Turf Wall cut by Stone Wall to E. of Fort. Looking E.



PL. II, 1.—Milecastle 79: SE. corner of stone milecastle showing rounded external and angular internal treatment. Looking W. of S.



PL. II, 2.—Milecastle 79: pier foundations of E. side of S. gate. Looking N.



Pl. III, 1.—Milecastle 79: pit containing demolished masonry from pre-Severan N. gate of stone milecastle. Looking N.



Pl. III, 2.—Milecastle 79: early and later roads in section on top of turf packing of sea-balls. © 1993 by the British Museum, London



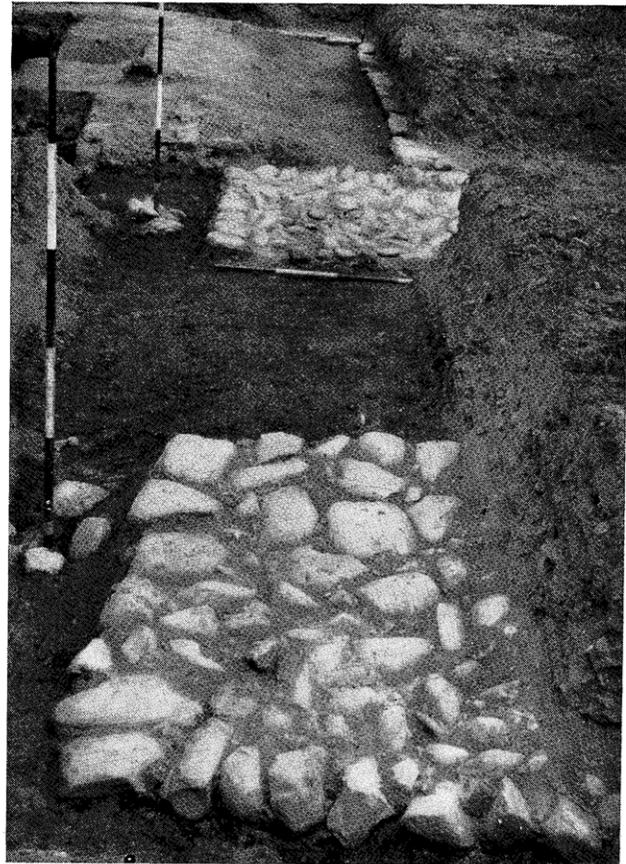
PL. IV, 1.—Milecastle 79: junction of W. wall of stone milecastle with great wall. Looking N.



PL. IV, 2.—Milecastle 79: stone wall E. of milecastle showing Severan rebuild of core in hard white mortar: earlier core in brown mortar below. Looking N.



PL. V, 1.—Milecastle 79: S. pier-foundation of E. side of N. gate. Looking E.



PL. V, 2.—Milecastle 79: S. gate and SE. internal angle of Stone milecastle, with N. post-holes of timber S. gate of Turf milecastle. Looking E.



PL. VI.—Milecastle 79: E. half of milecastle, looking S. showing stone holes of barrack of stone milecastle (on islands) and hearths: also turf staircase-base and S. wall of turf milecastle and serpentine filling of wet ground on sea-bank top.



PL. VII, 1.—Milecastle 79: hearths 4, 2 and 1, looking SE.



PL. VII, 2.—Milecastle 79: hearth 3, showing built fire-back. Looking N.
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