

I.

ACCOUNT OF THE EXCAVATION OF A BROCH NEAR CRAIGCAFFIE, INCH PARISH, WIGTOWNSHIRE, KNOWN AS THE TEROY FORT. BY ALEXANDER O. CURLE, *Secretary*.

To the N. of Loch Inch the level ground which stretches inland from the Bay of Luce rises rapidly by the Braes of Balker to a high



Fig. 1. View of the site of the Broch.

table-land reaching northward into Ayrshire. A deep glen, down which flows the Kirkclachie Burn, cuts far back into the Braes on the W., necessitating a considerable detour by the road from Craiggaffie to reach the higher ground beyond. Here, on the brow of the hill, at the edge of the Braes overlooking the deepest part of the ravine, is a round rocky prominence (fig. 1) rising to a height of some 9 to 10 feet, and with its longest axis ENE. and WSW., measuring about 120 feet in length by 70 feet in breadth. On the N. and highest extremity of this rock are the foundations of a broch hitherto known as the

Teroy fort—possibly a corruption of *tigh ruadh* = the red house. The position is singularly commanding, holding in view a great extent of country from the Bay of Luce on the E. to the distant Rhinns of Galloway on the W., with nearer at hand the head of Loch Ryan. At the ENE. end the rock is protected at its base by a deep trench, measuring some 26 feet in breadth from crest to crest, 9 to 10 feet across the bottom, 10 feet in depth from the top of the scarp, and 3 to 4 feet below the counterscarp. Along the W. flank the trench gives place to a terrace extending for from 12 to 15 feet out from the base of the rock, while the sides of the eminence are steeply scarped all round with an average height of from 6 to 8 feet. Access has been gained to the top from the WSW. and lower extremity.

The broch, of which a plan is shown in fig. 2, reduced to a height at best of 2 feet 6 inches and in great part almost obliterated, was entered from the ENE. or higher end of the hillock, 16 feet back from the top of the scarp of the ditch, by a narrow passage 2 feet 4 inches wide at the entrance, oblique in direction for the first 2 feet so as to allow for an angle of rock which projected out from the face of the wall for 8 inches on the left, and thereafter proceeding straight to the interior. At 4 feet 6 inches inwards on the right was the entrance to a guard-chamber which had passed through the wall for a distance of about 3 feet, but the portion of wall on the left of this entrance, which separated the chamber from the main passage, had been removed down to the foundation. The chamber (fig. 3) extended inwards, following the curve of the broch wall, for a distance of 10 feet. At 5 feet from its entrance a large block of stone, with building at the back of it, projected outwards from the WSW. wall for a distance of 3 feet 6 inches, thus dividing the chamber into two compartments, the outer one measuring 5 feet in breadth and the inner one 3 feet. At the entrance to the guard-chamber the main passage had a width of 2 feet, and where it opened on the courtyard 2 feet 3 inches, the extreme length being 12 feet 6 inches. There were no traces of door checks, but at the inner

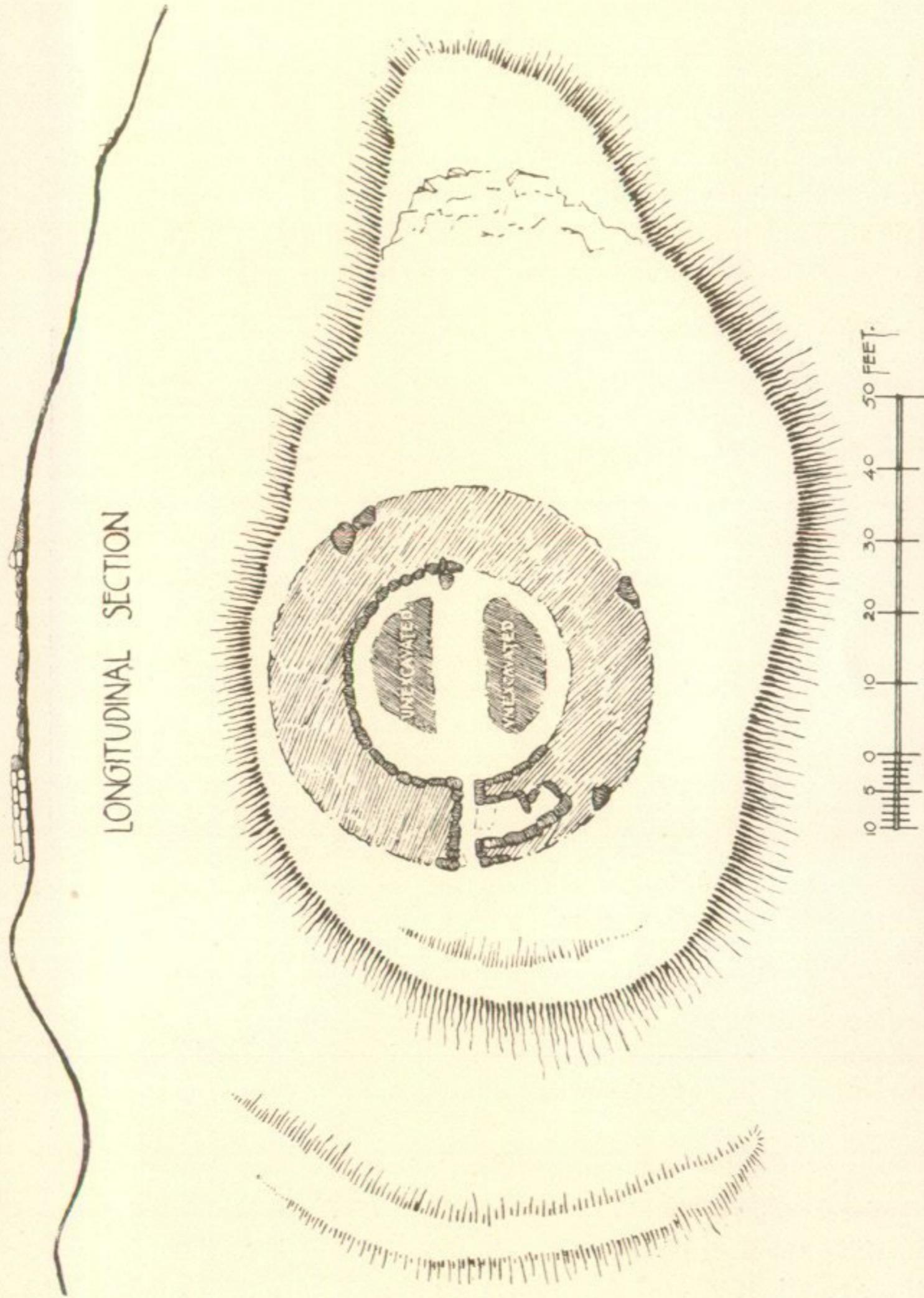


Fig. 2. Ground Plan and Section of the Broch of Teroy, Craiggaffie, Wigtownshire.

extremity a sill, some 6 inches broad, projected slightly above the floor level. The interior court measured 29 feet in diameter. The natural surface was very uneven with outcropping rock, but there were indications of levelling up, and of a floor of flags having been laid over the top. The greatest height of wall visible in the interior was 2 feet 4 inches, and for one-third of the periphery the wall had



Fig. 3. Interior of Guard-chamber, Teroy Broch.

been almost entirely removed; the position of the stair was consequently unobtainable. The building was very good, the spaces between the larger stones being very neatly filled with small flat fragments. The base of the wall within the guard-chamber was formed of large flat slabs set on edge so as to form a smooth face to the interior.

The excavation did not reveal evidence of long occupation. In the larger compartment of the guard-chamber the discoloured stratum marking the floor level was not deep, and in the inner compartment it was entirely absent. The debris was cleared off for a width of

about 5 feet right across the interior, also around the inner wall face for a couple of feet or so, while one or two additional clearances were made at spots where any evidence of occupation was observed. Adjacent to the flagstone indicated on the plan at the WSW. side a considerable amount of dark soil immixed with charcoal and a few fragments of burnt bone lay in the crevices of a rock, and from



Fig. 4. End of passage from the interior, Teroy Broch.

this soil were recovered two very small pieces of dark red pottery, while from near at hand came a lump of iron weighing 1 lb. 12 oz. The upper stone of a rotary quern also came to light. In the main passage was found half of a disc of very coarse pottery 4 inches in diameter and $\frac{1\frac{3}{8}}{8}$ of an inch in thickness, with a perforation in the centre, an object believed to have been used to protect the end of the twyer when brought into contact with the furnace in primitive iron smelting.¹ Several water-worn pebbles brought to the spot by the

¹ A number of these objects found on the site of a bloomery on Glenluce sands were exhibited in the recent Exhibition in Glasgow.

hand of man were unearthed, but none of them showed any signs of use. Besides some small particles of burnt bone, a fragment of a cockle shell, and a small bone of an ox, no other food refuse was seen. On the rock on the floor of the outer compartment of the guard-chamber there lay some particles of iron entirely corroded.

This is the first broch to be noticed in the county of Wigtown, and it is to be regretted that the relics recovered from it were so few and unimportant. The appearance of the interior at the floor level, in general absolutely free from any discoloration, suggested that the occupation of it could never have been of long duration, but the possibility of the floor having been greatly disturbed by the removal of such flags as may have been laid on it must be considered in accounting for this condition. The division of the guard-chamber into two compartments is a peculiar feature, also the facing of its walls with slabs.

Other two ruins in the county, one on Ardwell Point, and the other on a promontory to the south of Stair Haven, are also believed to be brochs. All three have been erected in exceedingly strong positions.