

I.

A SHORT CIST CONTAINING A BEAKER AT NEWLANDS, OYNE,
ABERDEENSHIRE, AND SUNDRY ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES.
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In the beginning of August last (1932) the cover-stone of a short cist was discovered while excavating for sand to repair the road leading up to the farm of Newlands, Oyne, Aberdeenshire. On raising this stone a short cist was uncovered, on the floor of which lay the remains of a human skeleton and an urn. Mr George Murray, the farmer, removed the urn to his house, left the bones undisturbed, and replaced the cover so that the burial might be examined by one familiar with such deposits. Having been informed of the discovery, I visited the site accompanied by Miss Clark of the Anatomy Department of the University of Aberdeen, and, assisted by Mr Murray and his son, was able to obtain the following record:—

The site of the interment was on the top of a sandy knowe, lying about 230 yards east-north-east of the farmhouse and about 20 yards south of the road leading to the steading, at an elevation of about 400 feet above Ordnance Datum. Although it lies near the bottom of the valley of the Gaudie Burn, the site commands a clear prospect of the Garioch as far as the Hill of Foudland on its northern boundary; behind to the south rises the mass of Benachie.

This grave was a typical short cist of the early Bronze Age, and was formed by four slabs set on edge, one at each side and one at each end, the mouth being covered by another, which projecting beyond both sides and ends had prevented any soil from percolating into the grave. All the stones were of the local, rough-grained, red Benachie granite which weathers in such a way that there is no difficulty in splitting it off in slabs. The stone on the south side overlapped both ends, while that on the north overlapped the east slab and just met that on the opposite end. A small prismatic stone was inserted at the south-west corner to fill a vacancy, and at the north-west and north-east corners the walls had been heightened by small stones laid on the flat. The side slabs converged slightly at the top. On the floor there were no signs of paving or causeying. Internally at this level the cist measured 4 feet 2 inches along both sides, and 2 feet 6 inches and 2 feet 9 inches across the east and west ends. The depth of the cist at the east end was 1 foot 6 inches,

and at the west end 1 foot 8 inches. The side and end slabs measured about 5 inches in thickness, but the cover, which was of irregular polygonal shape, measuring 6 feet 1 inch in greatest length and 3 feet 9 inches in greatest breadth, was 6 inches in thickness. The longer axis of the grave lay north-east and south-west.

The skeleton was much decayed, as only the right half of the skull survived and none of the long bones were complete, the process of decay, no doubt, having been facilitated by the open nature of the sandy deposit in which the grave was placed. The body, which was that of a robust young man about twenty-five years of age, had been placed in a crouching position on its left side facing the south-east, with the head in the north-east corner, the back along the north side, and the leg bones drawn up obliquely near the west end. In the north-east corner, opposite the face, lay the urn.

Fortunately the vessel, which belongs to the beaker class (fig. 1), was found intact but for two cracks on opposite sides of the lip. It is formed of good hard, reddish-brown, micaceous clay, and in parts the surface is quite glossy. It measures from 8 inches to $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height, the upright rim, $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in height, contracting in a slightly convex curve to the neck before swelling out again to form the body. Externally it measures $6\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter at the mouth, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the neck, $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches at the widest part, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the base. At the lip the wall is $\frac{3}{16}$ inch thick.

On the top of the rim, which is flat, is a series of crossed lines forming a lattice pattern, and on the wall are three zones of ornamentation, one round the rim, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches broad, another round the shoulder, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch broad, and the third round the lower part, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches broad. The plain bands between the ornamental ones are $\frac{7}{8}$ inch wide, and under the lower band is a plain space, $\frac{5}{8}$ inch wide. The highest band of ornamentation consists of twelve horizontal parallel lines formed with a



Fig. 1. Beaker from Newlands, Oyne, Aberdeenshire.

blunt, square-ended instrument like a wooden match, with a rouletted marginal line below. The central zone consists of a narrow lattice pattern, a vertical zigzag of three parts, and a narrow band of vertical lines, separated from each other by three horizontal lines and bordered above and below by three and two similar lines. The lower zone shows a series of hanging triangles filled with lines parallel to the sides, with two marginal lines above and below, and under all a narrow lattice pattern. All the designs, except the upper zone, have been rouletted,

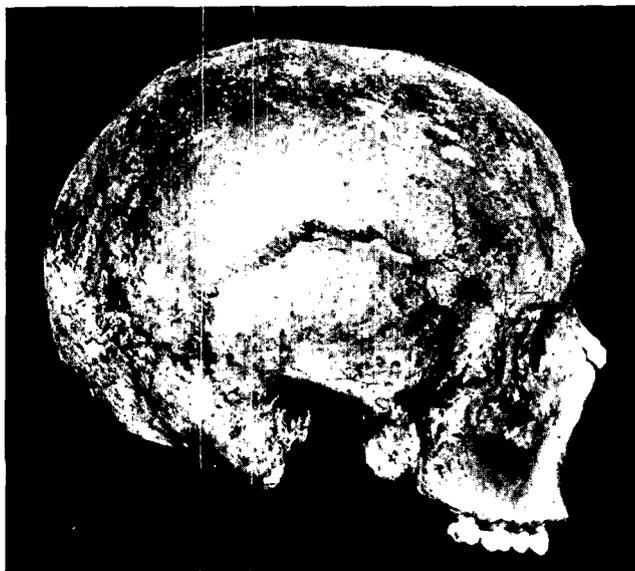


Fig. 2. Profile view of Skull from Cist at Newlands, Oyne, Aberdeenshire.

the wheel used having been a specially fine one, as most of the lines formed by it are narrow and delicate.

The thanks of the Society are due to Mr Murray for preserving the grave until it could be inspected, and presenting it to the National Museum. If all discoverers of such deposits were to follow his example much information about the prehistoric inhabitants of Scotland would be obtained instead of being destroyed.

Professor Alex. Low, M.D., F.S.A.Scot., of Aberdeen University, having examined the skeletal remains, reports as follows:—

The bones from the short cist at Newlands, Oyne, are in a fragmentary condition, but are those of a robust young man about twenty-five years of age and of medium height.

The skeleton is represented by half of the skull (fig. 2), with half the

less, until, possibly, the wheel of a cart or some agricultural implement had crushed in the cist.

Mr George A. Gibb secured the remaining fragments of the urn, and very kindly presented them to our National Museum, where it was possible to restore the upper part of the vessel. Formed of dark brown clay, the urn, which is of the cordoned type, is encircled by a raised moulding $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches below the brim. The upper part curves in slightly from the moulding to the rounded lip, and is decorated by two horizontal rows of reversed and hatched triangles, formed by the impressions of a twisted cord. The urn measures from $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches to

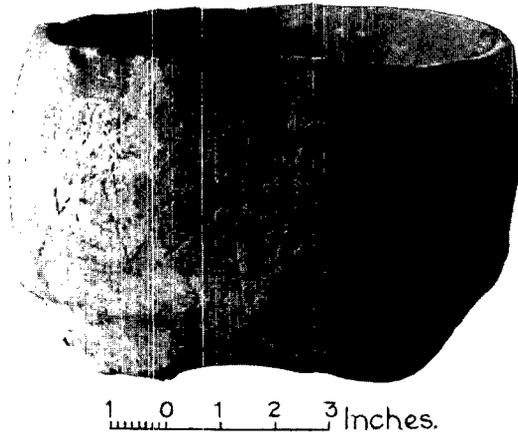


Fig. 3. Fragment of Cinerary Urn from Lundin Links.

$9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in external diameter at the mouth, and 10 inches at the cordon, the widest part. Its height and width at the base are unascertainable, as at its best preserved part only a height of $6\frac{1}{8}$ inches survives.

BRONZE AGE URNS FOUND NEAR INVERNESS.

During last summer Mr A. E. Peters, Curator of the Inverness Public Library and Museum, sent to the National Museum, for inspection, a number of shards of Bronze Age pottery, which had been displayed for years in the Museum at Inverness. Unfortunately the record attached to them was unsatisfactory. The fragments represented five different vessels: three beakers, a food-vessel, and a cinerary urn, the pieces of the last two being very small. Attached to the shards from the largest urn was a label stating that it was found in 1877 in a cist at Auchindoune, Cawdor, Nairnshire.

On communicating further with Mr Peters he was able to discover in the *Transactions of the Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club*, vol. i. pp. 187 and 188, a paper read on 10th December 1878 which recorded the discovery of urns at Auchindoune. "The graves were situated on the eastern and lower slope of the hill well known as the Doune, and almost on the ridge . . . close to the farm steading of Auchindoune." Four graves, probably short cists, were discovered. Owing to the thinness of their covering of soil three of these had been disturbed during the working of the land and "were filled with sand and gravel, mixed with human bones, some pieces of pottery, and some black charred substance. There were no implements or ornaments of any kind. The fourth grave was at a greater depth, and had never been disturbed. The covering was formed of two large flat stones, and inside was a skeleton almost entire, lying on its left side, facing the south-west, with the knees bent up to the chest. Beside it was a pottery urn quite entire, but containing no ashes or remains of food. This vessel is about 9 inches in height, 5 inches in diameter at the top, and 3 inches at the bottom. It bulges out at the centre, and has a projecting (recurving?) lip. The outside is ornamented by markings made in the clay by a sharp instrument." No other relics were found except a white pebble "which could hardly have fallen in, and seemed to have been placed there. The bones were re-interred and the covering replaced."

There can be little doubt that some of the pottery, if not all the beaker ware, in the Inverness Museum came from some of these graves, especially as the above description of the vessel is strongly suggestive of that of a beaker. Whether we can say that any of the shards belong to the complete urn is difficult to determine, because it is stated that the ornamentation was made by a pointed implement. Still, it is evident that the author of the paper describing the graves did not know much about Bronze Age pottery, and he might have failed to detect the difference between designs made with a toothed stamp, like those on all the shards, and those made by a pointed instrument.

Of the three beakers, the best preserved one only showed a section from the bottom of the neck to the base and part of the latter, the neck and everted brim being wanting (fig. 4). The base measured $3\frac{5}{16}$ inches in diameter, and the remaining part of the wall $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height. The ornamentation on the urn, so far as it survived, consisted of three horizontal lines with a row of vertical chevrons immediately below. After a plain band were a transverse row of short oblique lines slanting from right to left, three rows of straight lines and a row of vertical chevrons similar to those above. Midway between



Fig. 4. Part of Beaker found near Inverness.

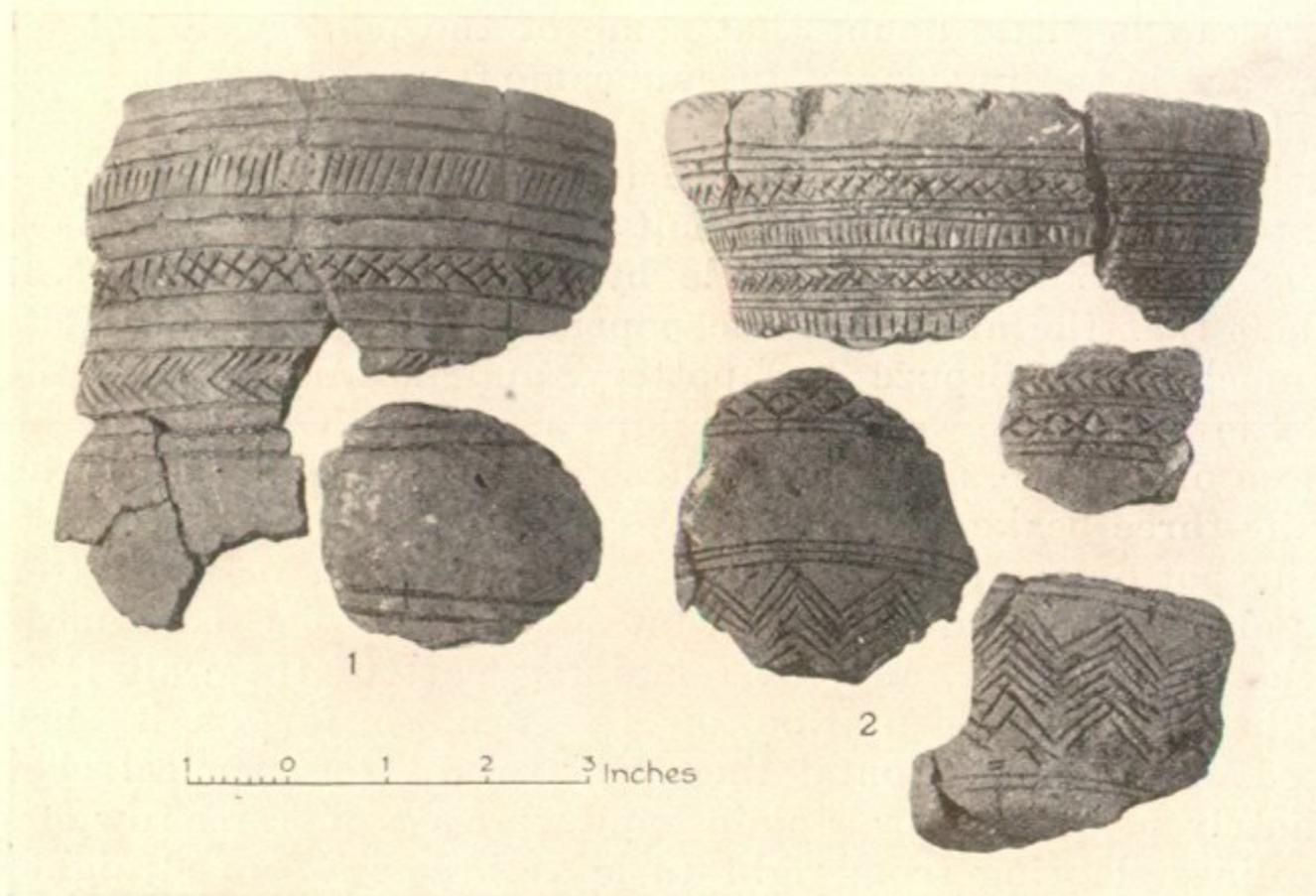


Fig. 5. Parts of two Beakers found near Inverness.

the last and the base was another band of ornament of a very unusual kind, consisting of vertical herring-bone patterns, alternately inverted, and short oblique lines springing from a vertical stem. These were bordered above and below with a varying number of transverse lines, and above all were vertical chevrons. All these designs were carelessly impressed with a toothed stamp, a similar kind of instrument being used in decorating the other two vessels.

Of the second beaker, which was made of light brown clay, part of the wall from the rim to the bulge and another small piece remained (fig. 5, No. 1). This vessel had evidently measured $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter at the mouth. A broad band of ornamentation encircled the whole of the space from the lip to the upper part of the bulge. This consisted of a row of oblique lines slanting from right to left, a narrow band of lattice pattern, and a similar band of upright chevrons, all being bordered above and below, and separated from each other by three horizontal lines. Below the bulge two horizontal lines, forming the upper border of a lower zone of decoration, survived.

A small part of the rim and of the base, along with two pieces of the wall, were all that remained of the third beaker (fig. 5, No. 2). It was made of light brown clay, and from the surviving part of the lip must have measured about $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter at the mouth externally. On the top of the lip it was decorated by a row of chevrons, and for a space of 2 inches downwards from the brim it was ornamented with two narrow bands of a lattice design and two filled with vertical lines alternately, bordered and separated from each other by three horizontal lines. A small fragment from the widest part showed a series of upright chevrons and a lattice pattern, with two horizontal lines above, below, and between. The basal part of the wall bore a band of eight closely set horizontal zigzag lines, with three similar straight lines above and two below.

Only two small rim fragments of the food-vessel and a few small wall pieces of the cinerary urn remained.

NEOLITHIC POTTERY FROM GLENLUCE SANDS, WIGTOWNSHIRE.

Amongst the miscellaneous objects in the John Smith collection of antiquities in the National Museum are a number of fragments of neolithic pottery, found by him on the Glenluce Sands. Certain of the shards have rims resembling some of those described four years ago in my paper on "Scottish Neolithic Pottery" (*Proc. S.A. Scot.*, vol. lxiii. pp. 29-98), but there are others exhibiting different forms. At least twenty-one vessels are represented, but it is to be regretted that most of the fragments are very small.

The pottery consists of:—

1. Several rim and wall fragments of a large, thick-walled vessel of dull red pottery, with a heavy projecting rim, flat on the top and rounded on the edge (fig. 6, No. 1, and fig. 7, No. 1). The largest piece

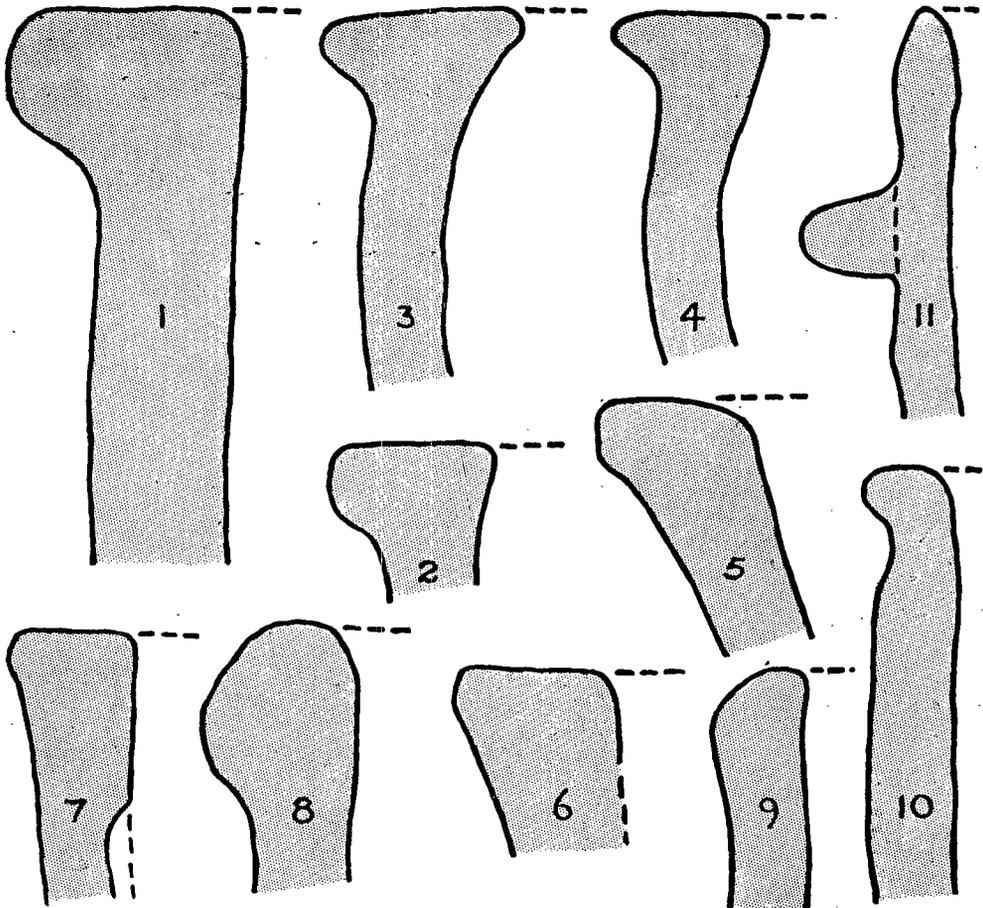


Fig. 6. Sections of Neolithic Pottery from Glenluce Sands. (1.)

shows a depth of $4\frac{5}{8}$ inches of the wall, which is entirely covered with three rows of impressed maggot designs slanting from left to right. There is a row of similar markings on the top of the rim and on its edge, but these slant in the opposite direction. Another piece which seems to belong to the same pot bears a row of similar impressions with a plain space below. The remaining part of the wall is almost vertical, and if we may judge from the surviving part of the next specimen, it curved

in to a rounded base. The wall measures $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in thickness, and the rim, which is $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch broad, projects from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch from the wall. The external and internal diameters of the mouth have been about $12\frac{1}{4}$ and $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches respectively.

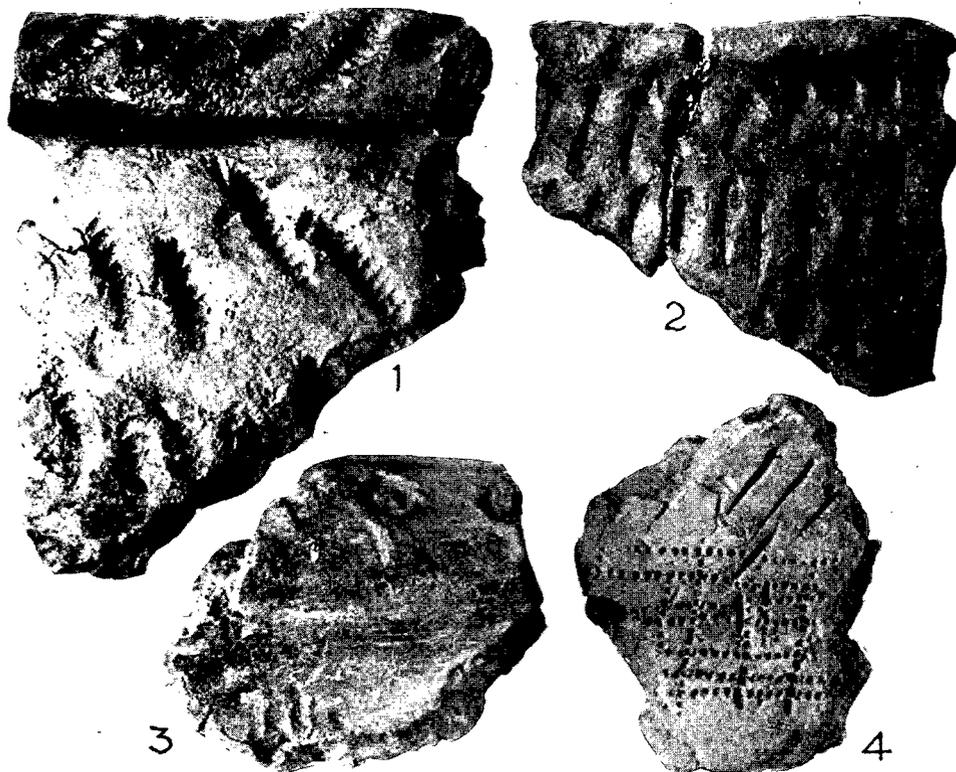


Fig. 7. Neolithic Pottery from Glenluce Sands. (†.)

2. Part of the base (more than half) and of the lower half of the wall of a heavy vessel of coarse red clay. The surviving fragment of the wall curves in gently to a rounded base, while the upper portion probably resembled that of No. 1, which is almost vertical. The whole exterior is covered with maggot designs, not so long nor so deeply impressed as those on the first vessel but arranged similarly. The remaining part of the wall is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and $\frac{5}{8}$ inch thick at the highest part, and the base is 1 inch thick.

3 and 4. Small wall fragments of two, if not three, vessels of pottery,

coloured red and buff on the outside and inside and black at the core (fig. 8, Nos. 5 and 7). One piece curves in such a way as to suggest that the base was round. They are covered with maggot impressions slanting from right to left on one piece and at varying angles on the others. They vary from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in thickness.

5. Small rim fragment of reddish ware, the projecting rim being flat on the top and having an angular edge (fig. 6, No. 2). The wall slants in slightly on both the inside and outside. The top of the rim, which measures $\frac{15}{16}$ inch in width, bears impressed maggot designs sloping from right to left. The wall is $\frac{9}{16}$ inch thick.

6 and 7. Rim fragments of two dull red pottery vessels, the rims flat on the top with a rounded edge projecting slightly inwardly as well as outwardly (fig. 6, Nos. 3 and 4). There is no decoration on either of the pieces. The rims measure $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch and $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in breadth, and the walls $\frac{3}{8}$ inch and $\frac{5}{16}$ inch in thickness. Rim fragments showing much the same form have been recorded from Kenny's Cairn, Caithness (*op. cit.*, fig. 39, No. 2), and, formerly, from Glenluce Sands (*op. cit.*, fig. 44, No. 4).

8. Small rim fragment of a vessel of red ware with a slightly projecting rim (fig. 6, No. 5). The top is decorated with maggot designs set radially, and the wall with similar impressions placed horizontally; a row of small punctulations made with an irregularly pointed instrument appear on the edge of the lip. It measures $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in breadth. Two shards of this shape, but rather more angular at the edge, were found at Hedderwick, East Lothian (*op. cit.*, fig. 46, Nos. 7 and 8), and another at Eilean an Tighe, North Uist (*op. cit.*, fig. 48, No. 3).

9. Small rim fragment of a clay pot with slightly projecting flat-topped rim, the ware being black in the centre and reddish brown on the outside and inside (fig. 6, No. 6). The rim measures $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in breadth, and its top is decorated with incised straight lines slanting from right to left. A piece of pottery from Hedderwick is of the same form (*op. cit.*, fig. 46, No. 16).

10. Small rim fragment of dark coloured ware, the wall thickening outwards towards a flat lip (fig. 6, No. 7). The rim is $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in thickness and bears straight cord impressions sloping from right to left. This rim might be likened to one from Hedderwick (*op. cit.*, fig. 47, No. 2).

11. Small rim fragment of red pottery with a rounded brim and a raised moulding immediately below (fig. 6, No. 8). On the outer curve of the rim are impressions, possibly made with a hollow reed (fig. 7, No. 3). At the moulding the wall is $\frac{13}{16}$ inch thick. This piece bears a striking resemblance in form to one from Rothesay (*op. cit.*, fig. 39, No. 11).

12. Small rim fragment of yellow-coloured ware, with the top of the rim curving down externally and having a hollow below (fig. 6, No. 9).

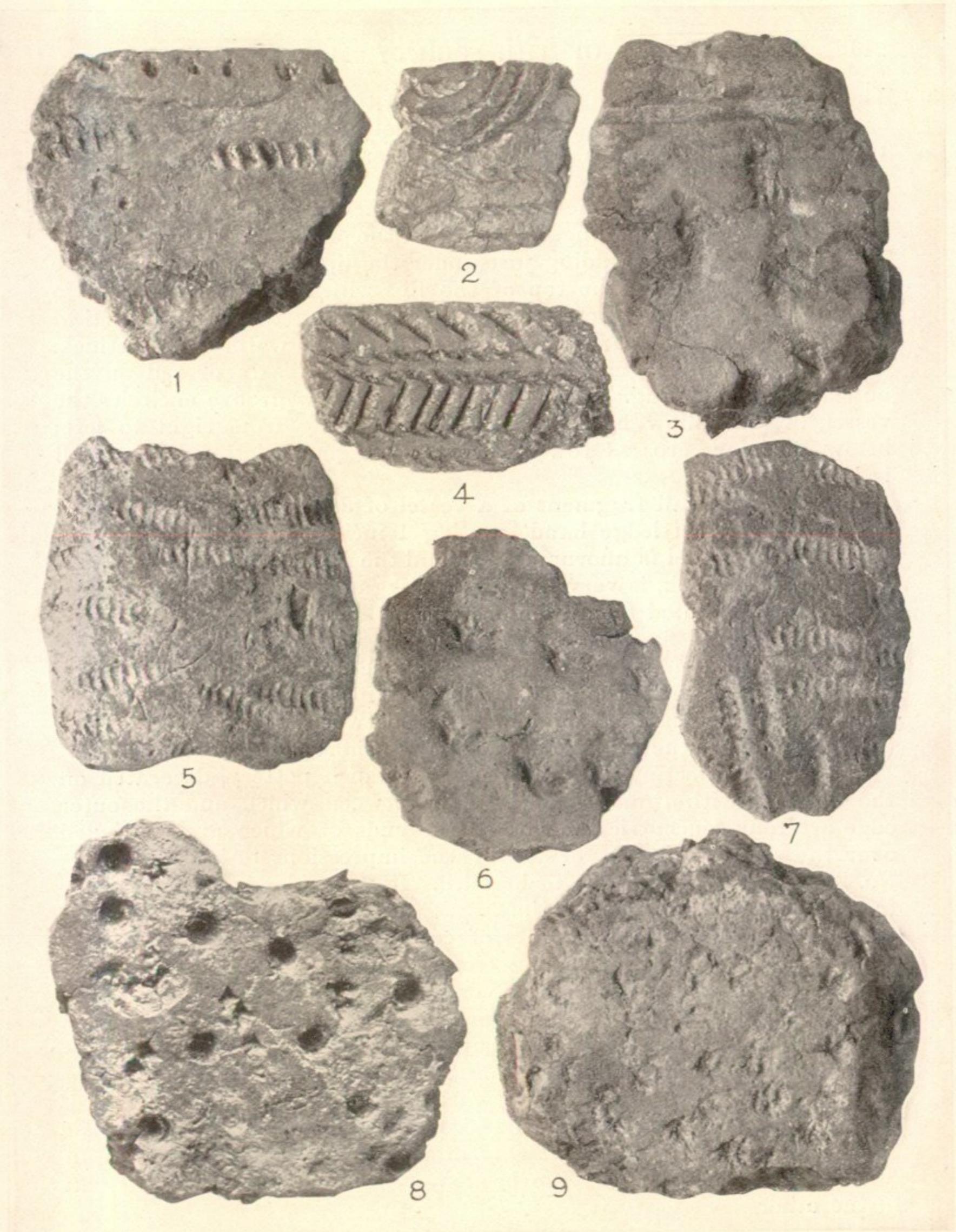


Fig. 8. Neolithic Pottery from Glenluce Sands. (1.)

The top of the rim, measuring $\frac{3}{16}$ inch in thickness, is decorated with cord impressions sloping from right to left, and in the hollow under the brim are impressions made by an indeterminate kind of implement. The wall is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick.

13. Rim and wall fragment of a pot of dark ware (fig. 6, No. 10, and fig. 7, No. 2). The remaining upper part of the pot is vertical, and as there is a narrow hollow moulding just under the lip it makes the rim take an everted form. On the top of the lip, which is rounded, are two rows of small punctulations, and on the neck and wall nearly vertical impressions made by some fibrous substance. The wall is $\frac{7}{16}$ inch thick.

14. Small wall fragment of dark ware with a skin of red on the outside and inside (fig. 7, No. 4). A broad shallow groove encircles the vessel, in the hollow being incised lines slanting from right to left; below these are crossed rows of very small punctulations. The wall is $\frac{11}{16}$ inch thick.

15. Rim and wall fragment of a vessel of dark brown ware, with a rounded lip and a ledge handle or lug 1 inch below the brim (fig. 6, No. 11). The vessel is unornamented, and the surface of the wall, which is only $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick, is very irregular. Fragments of vessels with such lugs have been noted from Glenluce, Arran, Kintyre, and Aberdeenshire (*op. cit.*, p. 79 and fig. 50).

16. Small fragment of the top of a projecting rim of dark coloured ware decorated with two pairs of cord impressions, with finger-nail markings on the outside and oblique lines between the cord impressions (fig. 8, No. 4). On the exterior of the rim are short, incised oblique lines.

17. Small projecting rim fragment of reddish pottery, decorated on the flat top with three parallel lines, between which and the outer edge are four concentric semicircles, the ends of which are continued over the edge, all being formed by the impressions of a cord (fig. 8, No. 2). The rim is $1\frac{3}{16}$ inch in breadth. It resembles in form another from Glenluce (*op. cit.*, fig. 44, No. 2).

18 to 21. Four wall fragments of coarse ware of dark brown, red, and buff colours, and measuring from $\frac{9}{16}$ inch to 1 inch in thickness. One piece is decorated with a transverse incised line with a few maggot impressions below (fig. 8, No. 3), and the other three with impressions of instruments of indeterminate character (fig. 8, Nos. 6, 8, and 9).

The pottery generally is thick and heavy. With the exception of No. 12, which is rather soft, the ware is well baked and fairly hard. Broken stones, varying from the size of rough sand to the size of split peas, are mixed with the clay in all the vessels except No. 3. In Nos. 1 and 2 and 17 to 21 the broken stones are of larger size than in the others.

A FLAT AXE AND A SOCKETED SPEAR-HEAD OF BRONZE
FROM CAITHNESS.

Few bronze implements or weapons have been recorded from Caithness, and it is pleasing to be able to add two more examples to the number reported from that county. I am indebted to our Fellow, Mrs Duff-Dunbar of Ackergill, for bringing them to my notice, and for so kindly sending photographs of them.

The flat axe is of the form most commonly found in Scotland. It measures $4\frac{9}{16}$ inches in length, $2\frac{5}{16}$ inches across the cutting end, and $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch across the butt. The cutting edge shows no recurved horns, and it broadens from the butt in a flat curve turning outwards a little more sharply to the broad end. It was found at Stemster, Bower, Caithness.

The spear-head is a fine example, with the wings of the blade widest near the base and narrowing very gradually till near the point, where the convergence is more pronounced (fig. 9). Half-way along the socket are two small protected loops. The wings of the blade spring from a stout tapering mid-rib formed by the continuation of the socket, with a distinct moulding running along its medial line from near the base of the wings almost to the point. The total length of the spear-head is $5\frac{7}{8}$ inches; the blade measures $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch across the widest part, and the socket is $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in diameter at the mouth. This weapon was found at a depth of 2 feet 6 inches in a peat moss at Canisbay, Caithness.



Fig. 9. Bronze
Spear-head
from Canisbay,
Caithness. ($\frac{1}{2}$.)

CROSS-SHAFT FROM MORHAM, EAST LOTHIAN.

This cross-shaft of red sandstone until a few years ago was built into the outside of the south wall of the parish kirk of Morham, one side being visible, but after being taken out of the wall it was placed in the National Museum for safety. The shaft is broken at the top and the bottom, and now measures 3 feet 4 inches in length, $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches in breadth, and $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness at the top, and $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches and 8 inches at the bottom. What remains is in a fine state of preservation (fig. 10).

At the corners is a cable moulding, with a rounded moulding inside it, forming the borders of the long panels which occupy the four sides. On the front is a running scroll vine pattern, with tendrils and fruit,

amongst which a bird and a beast can be distinguished; on the back are two very beautiful interlaced patterns of knot-work, the bands consisting of two strands, and on the sides a simple scroll vine pattern, with leaves, tendrils, and small clusters of fruit, only three grapes in each.

These vine patterns, both with birds and beasts incorporated, and

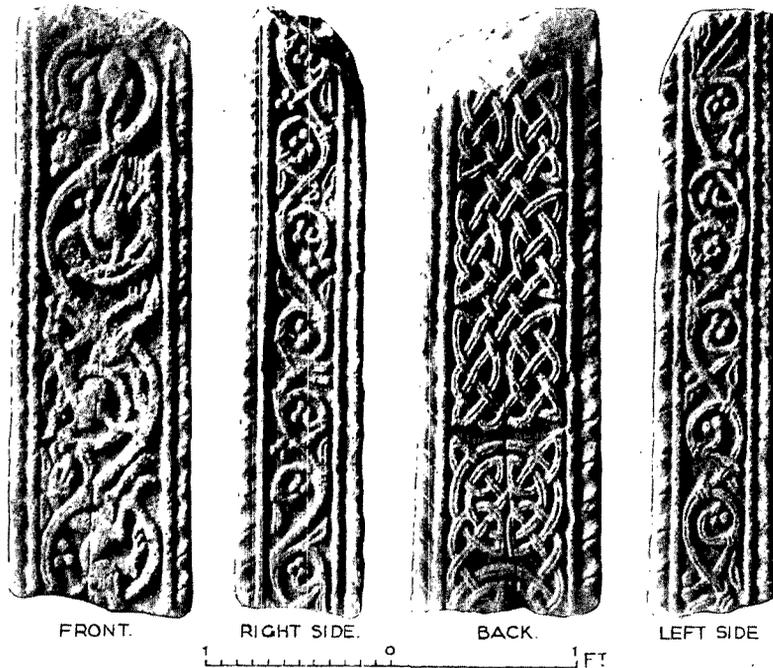


Fig. 10. Cross-shaft from Morham, East Lothian.

in their simpler form with leaves, tendrils, and fruit, occur on many crosses in the north of England,¹ but they appear much more rarely on Scottish monuments. Eight Scottish examples of scroll foliage associated with beasts, birds, and other zoomorphic forms on crosses or cross-slabs have been recorded.² Two occur in Ross-shire, one in Fife, one in Roxburghshire, and four in Dumfriesshire.

Twelve records of simple scroll foliage on crosses are noted in the *Early Christian Monuments*, but of these only four have a single central stem like the Morham stone.³ Two of these also belong to the Lothians.

¹ W. G. Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age*.

² *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, part ii. p. 404.

³ *Ibid.*, part iii. p. 418, fig. 435D.

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That at Abercorn, West Lothian,¹ has on one side a simple scroll with very small bunches of fruit such as those on the Morham cross, but the one originally at Aberlady, East Lothian,² and now at Carlowrie Castle, West Lothian, has larger bunches resembling those on so many of the north of England monuments.