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SCOTTISH REGIONAL GROUP  
COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

FIRST REPORT.

MAY, 1947.

OFFICE-BEARERS

President : Mr J. M. Davidson (Glasgow)

Council : Lieut.-Col. R. L. Hunter (Falkirk)  
Mr G. Mackenzie (Inverness)  
Miss D. N. Marshall (Dumfriesshire)  
Professor Stuart Piggott (Society of Antiquaries)  
Mr R. C. Reid (Dumfries)  
Dr W. Douglas Simpson (Third Spalding Club and  
Aberdeen Natural History & Antiquarian Society)  
Mr G. Watson (Hawick)  
Mr W. E. Watson (Elgin)

Secretary : Dr K. A. Steer (Society of Antiquaries)

MEMBER SOCIETIES

Aberdeen Natural History & Antiquarian Society.  
Berwickshire Naturalists' Club.  
Dumfriesshire Natural History Society.  
Dumfriesshire & Galloway Natural History & Antiquarian Society.  
Elgin & Morayshire Literary & Scientific Association.  
Falkirk Archaeological & Natural History Society.  
Glasgow Archaeological Society.  
Hawick Archaeological Society.  
Inverness Scientific Society & Field Club.  
Kintyre Antiquarian Society.  
Kirkcaldy Naturalists' Society.  
Perthshire Society of Natural Science.  
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.  
Third Spalding Club.

I. PREFACE.

This, the first of a series of annual reports, has been compiled for the purpose of keeping constituent Societies informed of recent and current archaeological activities throughout the Region. Secretaries of constituent Societies are invited to co-operate in making these reports as comprehensive as possible by forwarding to the Group Secretary a note of excavations and discoveries (other than small finds) in their areas as they occur. For reasons of space it has not been possible to include in this number summaries of excavations and discoveries prior to 1946, though references to some of the material published during the War are given in the Bibliography.

II. THE FIELD SCHOOL.

At the last Council meeting Mr Reid expressed the need for a Field School for training Scottish archaeologists and outlined certain proposals to that end. The Council endorsed Mr Reid's views and appointed a committee consisting of the President, Professor Piggott and Mr Reid, to invite the support of the four Scottish Universities. An excellent start has been made by a grant from Edinburgh University of £100 for this year and a promise of £100 a year for the next five years. It is proposed to inaugurate the School at Milton this summer under the direction of Mr John Clarke.

III. REGIONAL GROUP EXCURSION.

The summer excursion has been arranged for Saturday, 28th June 1947. The Broch of Torwood will be visited together with Stirling Castle, the Church of the Holy Rude, the Guildhouses and Cambuskenneth Abbey. Full particulars will be issued in due course.

IV. DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN 1946.

Where known, the publication in which a full report of the discovery or

excavation will appear is given after each item.

#### AYRSHIRE.

(1) The Roman fort at Loudon Hill, discovered by Dr St Joseph, lies on a high plateau which is gradually being quarried away. Excavations by Dr St Joseph ~~and Miss Robertson~~ were directed to obtaining as much information as possible about the site before the encroachment area becomes too extensive.

Several occupational periods were found. The first phase (a) was represented by a ditch 10 - 12 feet wide and 4 feet deep which enclosed a large part, perhaps the whole, of the level summit of 4 acres. The ditch was doubled for part of one side. This enclosure was undoubtedly earlier than other structures on the site and may have been a campaign-fort. (b) Subsequently the occupied area was reduced to about half by a cross-ditch dug from edge to edge of the plateau. For the rest of the circuit the defences may have made use of the ditch of the earlier work. (c) In the half of the area not occupied in phase (b) a small fort, equipped with timber buildings was then established. This involved the construction of new ditches across the plateau and already existing defences appear to have been re-used. The phases so far described are probably Flavian in date. (d) The remains of these early periods were considerably reduced by the construction, which involved some levelling of the site, of a 3 - acre fort overlying all the works so far mentioned, but on the same alignment. It is to this fort, of Antonine date, that nearly all the buildings discovered belong. Four barrack blocks, a large granary and a main gate were examined in some detail. All the buildings were of wood and their plan was recovered by tracing the sleeper-trenches that held the foundation timbers. Each barrack was about 156 feet long and 25 feet broad and was subdivided into mess-units 12 feet square. The granary (115 feet by 33 feet) was built on parallel cross-walls as at Fendoch. The gate consisted of a double portal flanked by guard-chambers 10 feet square set in the thickness of the rampart. The positions of the headquarters-building, of one or two more barracks, and of other structures were also determined and the drainage-system partly explored. Antonine pottery was relatively small in quantity compared with other Roman sites in Scotland, suggesting that the occupation was not prolonged. Possibly the site was held for only one of the three periods recognised on the Antonine Wall. However that may be, in-filled sleeper-trenches and empty holes from which the main gate-posts had been pulled out, pointed to deliberate demolition when the site was finally abandoned. (T.G.A.S.)

(2) A Bronze Age cist was found at Hareshawmuir, Fenwick. (P.S.A.S.)

#### GAITHNESS.

(1) Dr Curle resumed excavation of the prehistoric cattle-folds or wags at Forse. The primary structure was circular, 47 feet in diameter, and surrounded by a wall 5 feet thick. Beyond this was a turf wall on a 4 foot stone foundation and a shallow ditch. The doorway was intact and was covered by a fire-tower. Evidence was obtained of association with brochs. A previous domestic occupation was revealed at a lower level and will be examined this year. (P.S.A.S.)

#### DUMFRIESSHIRE.

(1) At Milton (Beattock) Mr Clarke discovered a complex of first-century occupation adjoining the Antonine fortlet excavated in 1938-9. At least three periods seem to be involved. Work is continuing this summer when it is hoped to elucidate the sequence. (T.D.G.S.)

(2) Dr Richmond and Mr Graham have traced a Roman road from Raeburnfoot N.E. across Craikmuir. (P.S.A.S.) The course of the road is along a ridge whose summit is reached at the county boundary at Craik Cross. Here, beside the road, is a small mound, 34 feet in diameter, which trial excavations by Dr St Joseph showed to have been built of turf and earth, overlain by gravel and broken rock such as might have come from a cutting on the Roman road. The mound is

surrounded by a circular rock-cut ditch, 7 feet wide and  $2\frac{3}{4}$  feet deep and V-shaped in section. An entrance facing the road was sought but not located. An irregular hole which might have held a large post had been dug in the centre of the mound: this was modern to judge from the 19th or 20th century pottery found in the filling. Apart from this pottery there were no small finds.

There is no better site for long-distance signalling along the line of the road. The position, plan and construction are consistent with a Roman origin though this can hardly be regarded as proved. A section across the Roman road showed that all the metalling had been worn away and that the hump now visible is a ridge of rock, on either side of which are deeply worn hollow tracks. (T.D.G.S.)

(3) A few trial trenches were dug by Dr St Joseph at the Roman forts of Raeburnfoot. The rampart of the inner fort was found to be of turf,  $26\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide, standing on the N. side to a height of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  feet: that of the inner fort was of gravel and clay. Within the inner rampart, sleeper-trenches of wooden buildings were identified, one of which, extending for 70 feet, may have been a barrack. Elsewhere on the site a hint of regular planning was conveyed by spreads of gravel, such as might have formed part of internal roads, and roughly pitched stones which may have been the floors of buildings. Only a single scrap of Roman pottery was found, but amongst the pottery from the excavations of 1897 in the Dumfries Museum are mortaria which are probably of Antonine date. (T.D.G.S.)

(4) At Barburgh Mill in Nithsdale, where a ditch apparently of a small fort was seen from the air in 1945, excavations by Dr St Joseph enabled the site to be located and planned. No traces now remain on the surface. The defences consist of a ditch 14 feet wide and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep enclosing an area of 125 feet by 130 feet. A few patches of heavy cobbling are all that remain of the base of the rampart. On the NE is a gate 15 feet wide. Within the N half of the enclosure, two trenches revealed neither buildings nor objects: probably Roman levels have been ploughed away. In its plan, its size and the choice of site, Barburgh Mill closely resembles the fortlets at Durisdeer, Redshaw Burn and Milton, and there is little doubt that it is a fortlet of the same type, its purpose being to guard a Roman road. (T.D.G.S.)

(5) Trenches dug by Dr St Joseph across an earthwork at Mouswald (S.E. of Dumfries) yielded no objects. The plan (an irregular quadrilateral), the sharp angles and the site suggest a mediaeval rather than a Roman date. (T.D.G.S.)

#### EDINBURGH.

(1) Mr Stevenson has discovered a defensive rampart on Arthur's Seat and a number of domestic sites in the King's Park. (P.S.A.S.)

#### FIFE.

(1) Members of the St Andrews League of Prehistorians, under the direction of Dr Bersu, began the excavation of a so-called fort at Scotstarvit (R.C.H.M. Fife No. 106). As the site is halfway up a hill-side the surrounding bank, roughly 120 ft. in diameter, cannot have been strictly defensive. Shallow rut-like trenches and a ring of post-holes in the interior showed that a single circular house had stood in the centre of the enclosure. It had been reconstructed twice. Some fragments of pottery suggest the very beginning of the Christian Era as its probable date. (P.S.A.S.)

#### LANARKSHIRE.

Mr Davidson continued his investigation of a Stone Age site on Woodend Loch near Coatbridge.

#### MIDLOTHIAN.

(1) The unearthing of Roman building-stones and of an elaborate pilaster in the western extension of Inveresk Churchyard cemetery led to the intervention

of the Ancient Monuments Branch of the Ministry of Works and to a preliminary examination of the site by Dr Richmond. Three portions of unused ground within the cemetery area revealed stabling with wooden partitions and a double L-shaped barrack-block, separated by an E - W street. The buildings were of stone and the street contained much re-used stone building material. Work was then continued outside the cemetery area, in the garden of St Michael's, where the S. side of the stabling already discovered in the cemetery was identified. Beyond lay an intervallum road and a massive clay rampart and single ditch. Further S. the remains had apparently been shaved off. But the W. end of the stabling was identified, and found to overlie the S.E. corner of a buttressed granary associated with early Antonine pottery. The rampart was also traced sufficiently far W. to show that the stabling and barracks lay in the retentura of the fort, which will have extended to the W. rim of the ridge overlooking the Paper Mills and the River Esk. The evidence seems to demand a large fort, capable of housing an ala quingenaria, and some 600 by 400 feet in size.

The remains of a bath-house in the garden of Inveresk House were also surveyed. This building lies so far from the Antonine site as to create a suspicion that it may go with a Flavian fort further E., on the site of St Michael's church, rather than with the Antonine fort now rediscovered. But these questions must await further work. (P.S.A.S.)

#### ROXBURGHSHIRE.

(1) Dr St Joseph examined an earthwork, discovered from the air in 1945, situated beside Dere Street on Brownhart Law, half a mile N. of Chew Green. It proved to be a Roman signal station defended by a turf rampart and two ditches and measuring 60 feet by 70 feet over the rampart centres. The position commands a wide view to the N.W. and was probably chosen with the intention of exchanging signals with a post on Ruberslaw where Roman stones have been discovered.

(2) The existence of a Roman post guarding the Dere Street crossings of Jed and Teviot may be inferred from inscriptions built into Jedburgh Abbey, but the site has not been located. Trial trenches dug by Dr St Joseph near Jerdonfield Lodge showed that the surface indications of a fortlet here are illusory, and search must therefore be made elsewhere, probably on the N. bank of Teviot.

(3) Mr Calder excavated a group of Bronze Age burials on the summit of Pinnacle Hill, Kelso. One complete cist contained a male skeleton and the remains of two more skeletons were associated with one or two disturbed cists. No relics were found. (P.S.A.S.)

#### WEST LOTHIAN.

(1) At Carriden air photos taken in 1945 showed what appeared to be ditches of a Roman fort. Trial excavations by Dr St Joseph confirmed this identification and enabled the exact site of the fort to be fixed. A trench located two of the three ditches; on the line of the section the rampart had been entirely removed by ploughing but within the enclosure a small quantity of Antonine pottery was recovered.

#### V. EXCAVATIONS PROPOSED FOR 1947.

(1) The following excavations are being continued:-

CAITHNESS:	Forse.	(Dr Curle)
DUMFRIESSHIRE:	Milton.	(Mr Clarke)
FIFE:	Scotstarvit.	(Dr Bersu)
LANARKSHIRE:	Woodend Loch.	(Mr Davidson)
MIDLOTHIAN:	Inveresk.	(Dr Richmond)
	Camp Hill, Braidwood.	(Mr Stevenson)

## (2) The following new excavations are planned:-

- ARGYLLSHIRE: Dr Simpson is examining Skipness Castle and Castle Sween.
- DUMFRIESSHIRE: At Birrens the Dumfriesshire & Galloway Society is hoping to examine a complex of Roman sites discovered from the air by Dr St Joseph in 1946.
- EAST LOTHIAN: Dr Bersu is carrying out a fortnight's excavation at Traprain Law in April.
- KIRKCUDDERIGHTSHIRE: Mr Anderson is to excavate a small earthwork at Bombie.
- ROXBURGHSHIRE: Dr Richmond is hoping to cut some deep trenches across the defences of the Roman fort at Newstead with a view to stratigraphical correlation of the different periods.
- WEST LOTHIAN: Professor Piggott and the Edinburgh League of Prehistorians are to excavate the "Henge" monument on Cairnpapple Hill (R.C.H.M. Midlothian & West Lothian No. 386) in September.

VI. RECORD.

(1) The Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments has practically completed the inventory for the City of Edinburgh and is working in Roxburghshire, Peeblesshire and Selkirkshire.

(2) The Glasgow Archaeological Society's volume on the Roman Occupation of South-Western Scotland, publication of which has been delayed by the War, is expected to appear within the next few months. It contains reports on excavations at the fort of Castledykes by Miss Anne Robertson; at the small posts of Durisdeer and Milton by Mr Clarke, with a preliminary notice of his excavations on the sites of two larger works at Milton; at Bothwellhaugh by Mr Davidson; and of trial-trenching by Dr St Joseph on various sites including Loudon Hill, with a preliminary note of his excavations in 1946. The road-system is dealt with in detail by Dr St Joseph, while the bridge at Balmuldy is described by Mr Davidson, who has added some notes on the roads north of Castledykes. The volume has been edited for the Society, with a comprehensive historical survey, by Mr Miller.

VII. AIR PHOTOGRAPHS.

An off-print is enclosed of a note by the Secretary of the Regional Group on Archaeology and the National Air-photograph Survey.

For the reasons given, it is not possible at present for individuals or societies to borrow the air-photographs held by the Department of Health, but after the 1st October Dr Steer is prepared to deal with specific queries on archaeological problems which fall within the scope of the survey.

It will be observed that no fresh information can normally be given about smaller monuments (cairns, standing stones, etc.) and that the survey is principally useful for:

- (a) Locating new forts and settlement sites and re-classifying known sites.
- (b) Locating missing stretches of Roman roads, drove roads, and linear earthworks.
- (c) Checking plans or ground observations of forts, domestic sites, terraces, field boundaries, etc.

To date approximately one-third of Scotland has been covered by the survey, but the exact areas for which photos are available cannot be easily defined: no county has been completely covered though the majority have been partially covered. It is hoped, however, to complete the survey this summer.

All queries should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope and should be limited as far as possible to single sites. The interpretation of large areas cannot be undertaken.

VIII. SOME BOOKS AND ARTICLES ON SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGY PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1939 AND 1946 OTHER THAN THOSE IN P.S.A.S. x

Note: The following abbreviations are used :

A. J.	Antiquaries Journal.
Ant.	Antiquity.
J.R.S.	Journal of Roman Studies.
P.S.A.S.	Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.
R.C.H.M.	Royal Commission on Ancient & Historical Monuments.
T.D.G.S.	Transactions of the Dumfriesshire & Galloway Natural History & Antiquarian Society.
T.G.A.S.	Transactions of the Glasgow Archaeological Society.

(1) General.

R.S.G. Anderson.	The Antiquities of Gigha 1939.	Galloway Gazette.
W.D. Simpson.	The Province of Mar.	Aberdeen University Press.
J.F. Tocher (Ed.)	The Book of Buchan 1943.	Buchan Club, Aberdeen.
R.C.H.M.	Inventory of Orkney and Shetland 1946.	

(2) Prehistory.

V.G. Childe.	Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles. 1940.	Chambers.
" "	Scotland before the Scots, 1946.	Methuen.
J.G.D. Clark.	Prehistoric England. 1942.	Batsford.
J.F.C. Hawkes.	Prehistoric Britain. 1943.	Penguin.
H.L. Movius.	The Irish Stone Age. 1942.	Cambridge.
W. Edgar.	A Tardencisian Site at Ballantrae.	T.G.A.S. 1939.
A.D. Lacaille.	Aspects of Intentional Fracture.	T.G.A.S. 1940.
J.H. Maxwell.	The Vitrified Fort on Eilean Buidhe, Kyles of Bute.	T.G.A.S. 1941.
A.D. Lacaille.	The Northward March of Palaeolithic Man in Britain.	Proc. Geologists Assoc. 1946.
G. Daniel.	Dual Nature of the Megalithic Colonisation of Prehistoric Europe.	Proc. Prehistoric Soc. 1941.
M. Davies.	Types of Megalithic Monuments of the Irish Sea and North Channel Coastlands.	A.J. 1945.
A. Graham.	A List of Brochs & Broch Sites.	A.J. 1943.
E. MacWhite.	Irish Bronze Age Rock-Scrappings.	Roy. Soc. Ants. Ireland 1946.
W. Lindsay Scott.	Neolithic Culture of the Hebrides.	Ant. 1942.

x This section has been largely contributed by Mr R.B.K. Stevenson.

MEMORANDUM

To: The Council for British Archaeology  
From: The Scottish Regional Group

Financial Statement

The following statement shows the financial position of the Scottish Regional Group as at 31st December 1946.

The total income for the year was £1,200 and the total expenditure was £1,100.

The balance carried forward from the previous year was £500 and the balance brought forward for the current year was £700.

The total assets of the group as at 31st December 1946 were £1,200 and the total liabilities were £1,100.

The following table shows the details of the assets and liabilities of the group as at 31st December 1946.

Assets: Cash in hand £100, Bank of Scotland £1,100, Total £1,200.

Liabilities: Debtors £100, Creditors £1,100, Total £1,200.

The above statement is true and correct to the best of the knowledge of the members of the group.

Witness my hand and seal this 1st day of January 1947.

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

Scottish Regional Group

Financial Statement as at December 31st, 1946.

OFFICE BEARERS

**CHAIRMAN** Professor V. Gordon Childe, D.Litt., D.Sc., F.B.A.,  
V.P.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

R.C. Reid, F.S.A.Scot.; Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural  
History and Antiquarian Society.

G. Watson, M.A., F.S.A.Scot.; Hawick Archaeological Society.

W. Douglas Simpson, M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.;  
The Third Spalding Club, and Aberdeen Natural History  
and Antiquarian Society.

J.M. Davidson, O.B.E., F.C.I.S., F.S.A.Scot.,  
Glasgow Archaeological Society.

Miss Marshall, F.S.A.Scot.; Duteshire Natural History Society.

Lieut.-Colonel R.L. Hunter, F.S.A.Scot.; Falkirk Archaeological  
and Natural History Society.

W.E. Watson, O.B.E., J.P., F.S.A.Scot.; Elgin and Morayshire  
Literary and Scientific Association.

G. Mackenzie; Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club.

**SECRETARY** Angus Graham, M.A., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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CHARGE

		<u>BALANCE at</u> 31st Dec.1945	<u>Subscription to</u> <u>Regional Group</u>	<u>Contribution to</u> <u>Central Council</u>
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
	Bank	9 - 4		
	Petty Cash	- 10 5		
<u>1946</u>		9 10 9		
Apl.	✓ 5 Inverness Scientific Society & Field Club (164 members)		- 10 -	- 13 8
	✓ 8 Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (832 members)		- 10 -	(Transmitted direct)
	✓ Berwickshire Naturalists' Club (240 members)		- 10 -	1 - -
	✓ Perthshire Society of Natural Science (120 members)		- 10 -	- 10 -
	17 Falkirk Archaeological & Natural History Society (120 members)		- 10 -	- 10 -
	✓ 18 Third Spalding Club (444 members)		- 10 -	1 17 -
	✓ 29 Kirkcaldy Naturalists' Society (130 members)		- 10 -	- 11 -
May	✓ 2 Aberdeen Natural History & Antiquarian Society (120 members)		- 10 -	- 10 -
	✓ 13 Duteshire Natural History Society (120 members)		- 10 -	- 10 -
June	29 Kintyre Antiquarian Society (60 members)		- 10 -	- 5 -
Sept.	19 Glasgow Archaeological Society (187 members)		- 10 -	- 15 7
	✓ Hawick Archaeological Society (388 members)		- 10 -	1 12 4
	✓ 30 Dumfriesshire & Galloway Natural History & Antiquarian Society (229 members)		- 10 -	- 19 1
Oct.	✓ 5 Elgin & Morayshire Literary & Scientific Association (120 members)		- 10 -	- 10 -
		9 10 9	7 - -	10 3 8
		Sum of Charge	<u>£26 14 5</u>	

DISCHARGE

<u>1946</u>				
Oct.	17 Contribution to the Council for British Archaeology			10 3 8
Dec.	19 Honorarium in respect of clerical assistance to Secretary (Miss A. Webster)			5 - -
	31 Petty Cash			1 11 5
				<u>16 15 1</u>
Balance at close of this Account				9 19 4
				<u>£26 14 5</u>
Sum of Discharge				