

II.

FRAGMENTS OF A JET NECKLACE FOUND AT GREENHOWE,
PLUSCARDEN, MORAYSHIRE. BY H. B. MACKINTOSH, M.B.E.,
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The District.—The neighbourhood of Greenhowe is that of one of the raised beaches so conspicuous around the Croy district of the valley of St Andrew, now known as the Glen of Pluscarden, but at one time as the "Kail" Glen, after the Order of the Val des Choux monks who founded here the Priory of Pluscarden in 1230.

The valley lies sheltered, having the Heldon Hill on its north, and the Buinach and Edinvale Hills on its south.

Ages earlier than the coming of the monks this corner of the glen had been inhabited, and evidences of this early civilisation turn up from time to time, especially upon this, the north slope of the Buinach Hill. At Tom Ruadh on this slope Survey Maps note that in 1868, two bronze spear-heads, an axe, and six rings were found. In whose possession these things are I fail to trace.

The whole of this moorland hillside is dotted with cairns, which are of considerable archæological interest.

From the Charters of the Priory we learn that about 1230-3 this district formed part of the old Forest of Hochtertyr, the Bishop of Moray at that period surrendering to the Priory the tithes of iron and all iron in minerals found in the said forest. Perhaps the most abundant evidences of the monks' operations in iron are to be found near the Midland Burn, which rises in the hill above Incharnock, a little to the east of Greenhowe. Some specimens of iron slag found hereabouts are in Elgin Museum, as also of glass slag, etc., found at Croy in 1858, one of the supposed sites of the monks "Glazen Kilns."

The Prehistoric Grave.—Most of the farm land of Greenhowe had been covered with whins, etc., and reclaimed some two generations ago. The present tenant, Mr William Chisholm, in the tilling of the ground, especially on the plateau west-north-west of his home, had been troubled with the remains of three cairns. Time and again as opportunity arose he removed stones which had interfered with agricultural operations. One such cairn has been completely removed, but the site is known. The surface stones of a second cairn have also been removed, and during the winter-time the site will be examined. On

7th May 1923, when removing stones from the third cairn, which had damaged his implements, a grave was discovered.

The cairn had been originally some 18 to 20 feet in diameter, and Mr Chisholm says he had carted some twenty loads of the stones to the roadside for metal, while some heavier boulders were hauled to a dip at the edge of the moor.

The grave was not in the centre of the cairn, but about 3 feet from the west side; its site being 146 feet east and 165 feet north of the roads on the plateau leading up to the farm. It lay east and west, and was lined with four large stone slabs. The stones on the east, south, and west sides were apparently in their original positions; that on the north side had caved in a little. As there was no covering slab and the grave was full of sand and soil, it is possible this caving in had resulted when the covering slab had been removed at some earlier period, to permit, no doubt, of the better cultivation of the land. The bottom of the grave was of pure sand, as is the whole plateau, the ground only having about 10 to 12 inches of top soil.

The south-east corner of the grave was interesting. The slabs at this corner failed to meet, and the corner in the inside was formed of three smaller stones which, on first inspection, were said to have had the appearance of having been cemented in, but of this, when I visited the grave a few days later, I found no traces, and my impression was that they had been wedged in very carefully.

The inside measurements were:—length, east-west, 3 feet 2 inches; breadth, 2 feet 3 inches; and depth, 2 feet 5 inches, or to the present surface level 3 feet 5 inches. The grave had most certainly been interfered with. Mr Chisholm, in digging out the stones, had no idea that this was a grave until his spade threw out a few fragments of bones and a jet bead. The bones, which are undoubtedly human, were a tiny handful and too fragmentary for identification. Greater care was thereafter taken, and some seventeen beads were found. On my first visit a week later the ground was too wet to be worked, but I found another bead. Mr Chisholm and his friends unearthed other six. The first dry day, a few days later, Mr W. E. Watson, O.B.E., Elgin, and I again visited the site, and with a fine riddle we closely examined every handful of soil in the immediate neighbourhood, but only found one other bead. In all, two triangular terminal plates and twenty-three beads were recovered, the plates being entirely devoid of ornamentation. Sixteen of the beads were barrel-shaped and seven cylindrical, varying from about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to 1 inch in length. The triangular plates have each five perforations at the broad end, pierced obliquely from the end to the back, and one

similar perforation at the apex, but in one of them this part is broken and a hole has been drilled directly through the object. Both plates are about 2 inches in length and 1 inch broad across the base.

The beads and plates found are very similar to those found at Burgie and elsewhere in Moray.

The boulders and stones comprising the cairn were a mixed lot, which apparently had been gathered from the hillside. They included ice-borne granites from Stratherrick, Ben Wyvis, and other places.