

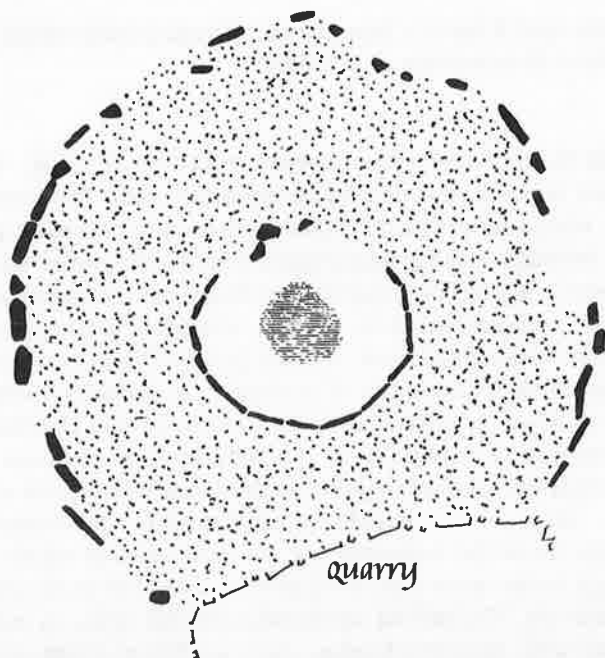
RING-CAIRNS AND RELATED MONUMENTS IN SCOTLAND

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Scottish ring-cairns do not form a homogeneous series of sites, like chambered cairns or brochs, but should be considered as the remains of a tradition of burial, which involved the construction of a circular ring or bank, inside which various rituals associated with burial were undertaken. Because such ring-cairns are the tangible evidence of a widespread practice, both in geographical and chronological terms, it would be wrong to suggest that all the sites under discussion are related in any linear progression. Nor should one assume that there are of necessity connections with manifestations of similar ritual in other areas of Britain or the Continent. Common to other aspects of archaeology the terminology of these sites is bedevilled by the small number of words available to label quite distinct types of monument. 'Ring-cairn' should be employed for monuments with a genuine bank of cairn material surrounding an open area in which burials are deposited (though some may also be inserted into this bank) and the plans of such sites as Culdoich, Cairnwell and Sundayswells (Fig. 1) may serve as examples. Cairns with massive kerbs, such as Strontoiller and Monzie (Fig. 4), may be termed 'kerb-cairns' because of the large stones employed in their construction and these sites appear to be related to the ring-cairn tradition. 'Enclosed cremation cemeteries', such as Weird Law and Whitestanes (Fig. 3), are a further allied type of burial monument, characterised by a low circular bank within which cremated burials were deposited. Although there is little positive dating evidence for these three groups of site, they seem to fall into two broad groups, the earlier belonging to the first half of the second millennium, associated with Beaker pottery and artefacts, and the later, mainly represented by enclosed cremation cemeteries, dating to the middle and later second millennium BC. The study of Scottish ring-cairns has not benefited from such extensive field-work as have several other classes of monument, and it is not yet possible to provide a comprehensive distribution map.

Ring-Cairns. The most extensively studied group are the ring-cairns centred on the Clava area of Inverness-shire (Piggott, 1956; Henshall, 1963). Balnuaran of Clava, Centre (INV 8) is one of the most elaborate examples of this group; it stands between two passage-graves with a further small ring-cairn to the W. In the centre of the cairn a kerb of flat upright slabs encloses an open area 6.4 m by 5.5 m; this had been disturbed prior to the

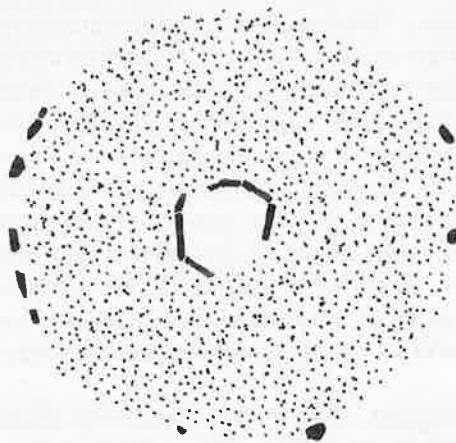
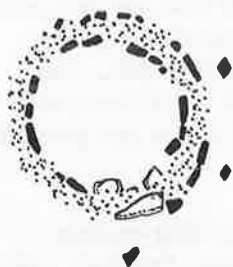
Culdoich 1NV 21



Sundayswells ABN 9



Cairnwell RNC 1



☼ cremation

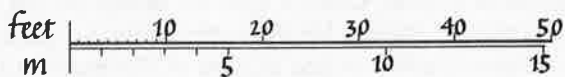
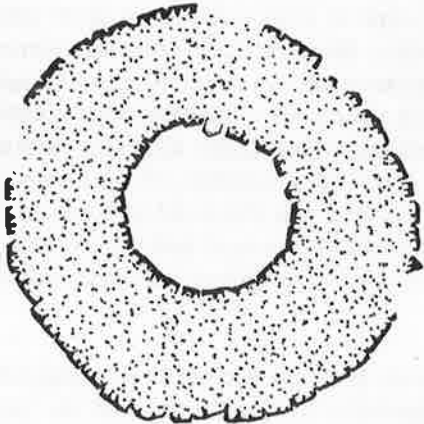
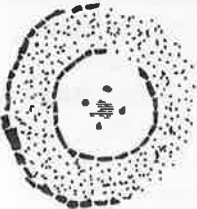


Figure 1.

Culburnie
1NV 19



Sands of Forvie ABN 8



Garrol Wood

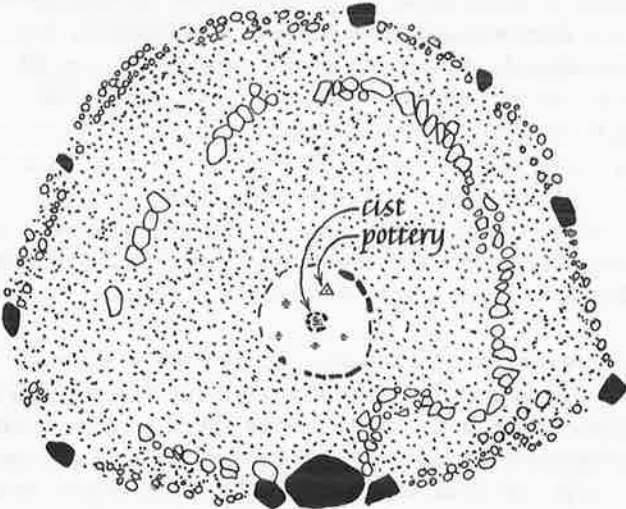


Figure 2.

excavation in 1953 but it was found to be blackened by charcoal and there was a slight scatter of cremated bone (Piggott, 1956, 188-90). The excavation at Culdoich (INV 21), a less well-preserved site than that at Clava, showed that the overall diameter of the cairn had been about 18.3 m containing within it a central open ring some 6 m in diameter (Fig. 1). The kerb-stones of the central area are impressive split slabs up to 1.5 m in height. The excavation demonstrated that the central area had been filled up with earth and stones; on the original ground surface in the centre there was a circular patch which was 'heavily impregnated with charcoal and scattered human bones. Other more sparsely scattered cremated bones, unaccompanied by charcoal extended out to the enclosing stones. The impression given was that the charcoal and cremations had been scattered on the surface, from which the turf had apparently been removed, and then allowed to percolate and impregnate the clay under wet conditions' (Piggott, 1956, 190-2).

Two ring-cairns have been excavated in Aberdeenshire, Sands of Forvie (ABN 8) and Sundayswells Hill (ABN 9), and the ruined site at Cairnwell (KNC 1) has also been examined. The two major sites at Raedykes have been surrounded by circles of standing stones, but, like Clune Hill (KNC 2), there is little to record about this group. The conspicuous stones of the kerb of Raedykes NW might allow this site to be classed as a 'complex-ring-cairn'. At Cairnwell, Kingcausie (KNC 1), the central area measures 4.5 m within a bank 6.7 m in overall diameter (Fig. 1) and the bank is thus much thinner in proportion to the size of the monument than at Sundayswells. Three stones of a surrounding circle survive. The excavation of the site was undertaken in the 1860's and is described on p. 23. Sundayswells (Fig. 1) has an overall diameter of 14.6 m with a central area, 2.7 m in diameter, which is kerbed by substantial boulders. A virtually complete AOC Beaker was found with a number of bones in the central area. (The other sherds kept with the Beaker may be those found in a cist discovered to the NW of the cairn; Coles, 1906, 312-13; the wall sherds are of two different vessels. 'Formerly preserved inside the beaker and perhaps from this site', Henshall, 1963, 399; Burl, 1971, 45 and see p. 42).

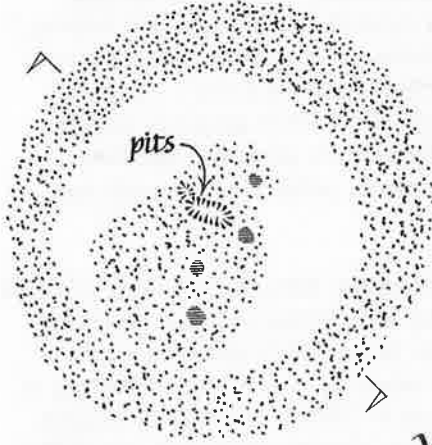
The central area of the site discovered in the sand dunes at Forvie is considerably smaller within a cairn some 6.4 m in overall diameter (Fig. 2). In the middle of the central area there was an unusual setting of four upright waterworn stones forming a square 0.9 m along each side. These were set in a layer of sand stained with charcoal; 'above was the main layer of black earth with charcoal, with a number of white quartz pebbles at the base of the layer and large quantities of burnt bone fragments within the central

square. Over this layer was sand, with a thin carbon layer above containing charcoal, fragments of burnt bones and an increasing number of stones, some of which were arranged as enclosures against the inner stone setting.' From the main layer of charcoal were discovered several sherds including base sherds of what has been described as 'flat-rimmed ware'. From the stratigraphy the excavator inferred that there had been a primary burial accompanied by pottery, which was sealed by a layer of sand, and then covered by further layers of sand (including more pottery and bones) and finally a layer of stones (Kirk, 1953).

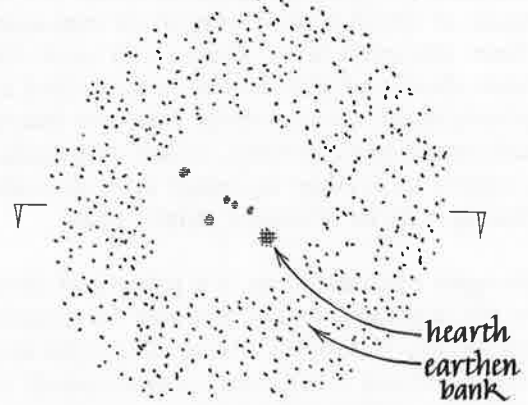
An open circular area is a feature of several of the recumbent-stone circles of NE Scotland, and it may now be masked by a covering cairn at a number of others. Within the circle of upright stones in Garrol Wood (Kincardineshire), Coles found (and reconstructed) the remains of a circular setting of uprights, which delimited an open area 3.5 m in diameter (Fig. 2) (Coles, 1905). The bottom of this central area had been slightly hollowed out of the natural subsoil. At its centre was a funnel-shaped cist, which was filled with charcoal and cremation, and round about were four pits or scoops with cremation deposits and several fragments of undiagnostic pottery associated with charcoal. At Garrol Wood there is some evidence that the central ring might have stood as an independent feature within the recumbent-stone circle before the addition of the covering cairn. The uprights of the ring-cairn have been carefully supported from behind by a second ring of large boulders with smaller stones between the two rings. If it is accepted that we see many of these sites after several centuries of structural alterations and adaptations, it is likely that the covering cairns will be the final stage. The large standing stones and an independent ring-cairn, rather in the manner of one of the Cullerlie cairns, might be considered as the earlier phase of the site, with the covering cairn possibly added in two stages in the second phase.

The sites at Muirkirk (Ayrshire) should perhaps be considered along with these north-east examples; the AOC Beaker from Sundayswells clearly indicates that the site was used by the makers of such ware (even if it is possible that it was actually built earlier), and the sites at Muirkirk also contained Beaker pottery. These were originally interpreted as 'hut-circles', but it has been suggested that they should be regarded as a ring-cairn (No. 1) and two enclosed cremation cemeteries (Nos. 2 and 3) (Ritchie, J.N.G., 1970, 140-1, nos. 8-12). Circular banks of stone were features of all three sites; at the first the central area was filled with stones and earth, and sherds of a single Beaker vessel were discovered. At the second, the basal layer consisted of 'clay and gravel firmly compacted and strewn with

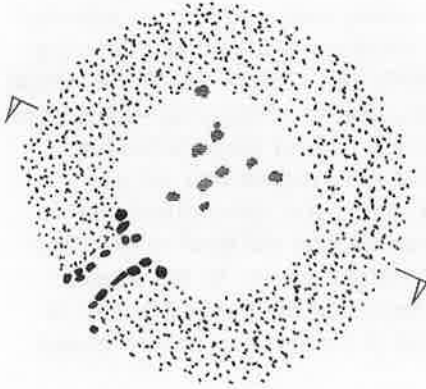
Weird Law



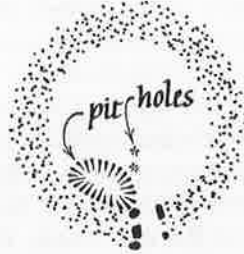
Brown Edge



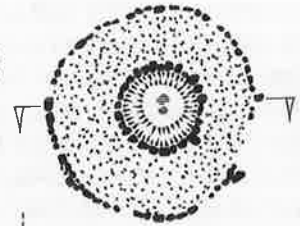
Whitestanes



Woodhead



Linburn



Linburn



Weird Law



Brown Edge



Whitestanes



● cremation

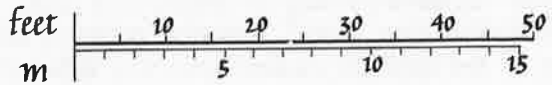


Figure 3.

charcoal' and containing sherds of at least fourteen vessels, none of them complete. At least one pit containing a cremation was found, and in the centre there was a deep pit with a Beaker deposit. A similar clay floor was found at the third site, and three pits, one containing cremated bone and charcoal, were recorded. A finger-tip decorated pot and a Food Vessel were found on the clay layer as well as a single flint flake.

A mound at Linburn Plantation, Muirkirk (Ayrshire) covered two rings of boulders, the inner of which was situated at the edge of a circular trench (Fig. 3). This trench was filled with charcoal and contained one patch of cremated bone and two flint flakes. Within the area demarcated by the trench were found two large stone slabs covering a clay layer which sealed a thick deposit of charcoal and cremated bone. The surface around the trench had been thoroughly reddened by fire and it seems likely that the cremation took place on the spot (Fairbairn, 1922, 126-30).

A site comparable perhaps to those at Muirkirk is that at Woodhead, near Bewcastle (Cumberland); this ring, however, is unusual as its interior has been cut back into the hillside (Fig. 3). The entrance is on the S side and was flanked by slabs, but the bank does not appear to have been supported by upright stones or by a formal kerb. In the interior was found 'an irregular layer of clay with flattish stones'. Two holes were discovered, both containing stones and ashes and there was also a shallow depression between the holes and the bank, filled with dark earth, charcoal and a worked flint. Near the centre of the site were found a V-perforated jet-button and jet pulley-ring, both types normally associated with Beakers. It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions about this interesting site. Like the Muirkirk cairns it was initially published as a settlement site (Hodgson, 1940), and Simpson has recently included it as a doubtful house (1971, 136, fig. 24 D). Clough (1968, 7-9) and Simpson were both aware of the similarity of the site to the ring-cairn/enclosed cremation cemetery group, and it may be that the pits have a ritual rather than a practical purpose and that the shallow pit may have contained an inhumation burial. Simpson's suggested link between houses of the dead and those of the living (1971, 136) may also be relevant to the interpretation of the site at Levens Park (Westmorland) recently excavated by Sturdy (1972; see p. 52). The tentative sequence outlined here is that of a primary Beaker farmstead with a circular boulder-built bank surrounding a house, set off-centre; subsequently a grave-pit, containing three Beakers and two flints, was dug in the centre of the house, and a cairn piled over it, with later burials inserted into and adjacent to the resultant mound.

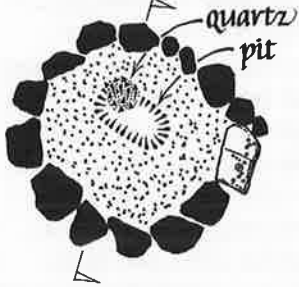
The problems of interpretation posed by such ring-works as Muirkirk, Woodhead and Levens are comparable in many ways to those of the ring-ditch sites of Oxfordshire. Case has suggested that some of these Oxfordshire sites may be the remains of settlements occupied only seasonally, mainly during the summer months. He interpreted one site at Stanton Harcourt as a fold, another as a shrine and another as a settlement enclosure, which was finally converted to a burial monument (Case, 1963, 48-52).

Kerb-Cairns. The excavation of two cairns in the Lorn area of Argyll, at Strontoiller and Culcharron, has increased interest in a group of sites which occur in the Clava region, Aberdeenshire, Perthshire and Argyll. The most northerly is the small cairn at Balnuaran of Clava, published by Piggott in 1956; it comprises a circle of kerb-stones, one of which was decorated with cup-and-ring and cup-markings (Fig. 4). At the centre of the cairn was a shallow grave-pit which had probably contained an inhumation burial, and at one end of the pit was a scatter of white quartz pebbles. Finally the area within the kerb was filled to a depth of 0.3 m with earth and stones.

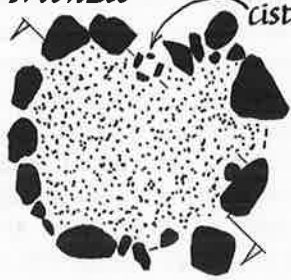
No kerb-cairn of this type has so far been excavated in NE Scotland, but it is likely that Raxton, Logie Newton and possibly Raich belong to this group (Coles, 1902, 526-7; 1903, 97-101, 125-7). The low cairns at Logie Newton are remarkable for the use of blocks of white quartz among their kerb-stones. It is too soon to offer a complete catalogue of this type of cairn in Perthshire, although the sites at Machuinn, Lawers and Strath-head, Tullybeagles Lodge might be included (Coles, 1910, 126-30; 1911, 102-3); but two examples have been excavated, namely Monzie and Fowlis Wester. Monzie (Fig. 4) comprised a ring of boulders at the bases of which were found numbers of quartz pebbles. Within the kerb was discovered a black layer containing 'many fragments of burnt bone and charcoal'; it 'was defined by a thin red crust above and below and was apparently due to extensive fire'. A small stone cist, packed with burnt bone and quartz and containing the cremated remains of an adult and child, was discovered within the kerb and there were two deposits of quartz pebbles, one with large charcoal lumps, outside the kerb on the W. The area within the kerb had finally been filled with earth, sand and gravel. Two characterless rim-sherds were the only small finds (Young and Mitchell, 1939).

The small cairn at Fowlis Wester was surrounded by a circle of standing stones, although only four of these survived in situ (Fig. 4); it is thus perhaps related to such ring-cairns as Balnuaran of Clava SW and Culburnie (Fig. 2). Within the kerb of the cairn, which was packed with flakes of

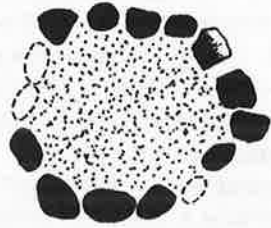
Balnuaran of Clava



Monzie



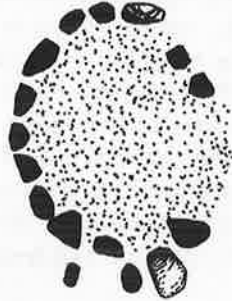
Strontoiller



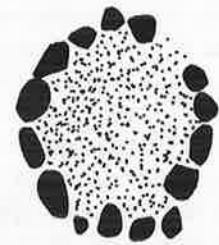
Cairnpapple



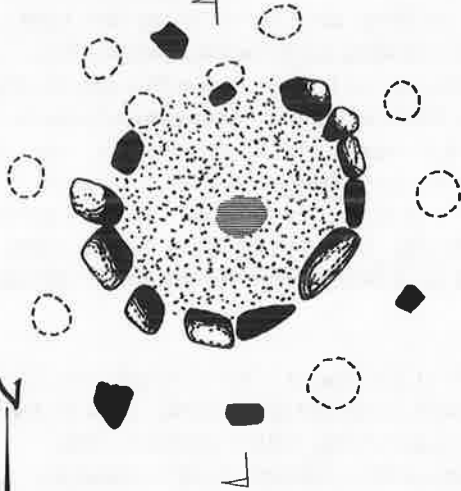
Clachadow



Achacha



Fowlis Wester



Balnuaran of Clava



Monzie



Fowlis Wester

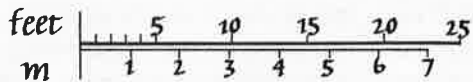


Figure 4.

quartz, there was a layer of clay covered by a low earthy filling. Lumps of charcoal were found in the levelled floor and were probably trodden in. There was some reddening of the clay in the inner ring and burnt bone fragments and charcoal were found mainly in two scoops in the clay (Young, 1943, 175-6). One of the stones was decorated on the inner face with three cup-marks. The outlying cup-marked stone at Monzie may be compared to the standing stones at Fowlis Wester, and outlying stones also occur at Strontoiller and Achacha. Twelve of the kerb-stones of the cairn at Strontoiller, Lorn (Argyll) still survived (Fig. 4) and round their bases there was a distinct scatter of quartz chips. The central area had been disturbed but a small quantity of cremated bone was recovered from beneath the undisturbed fill (Ritchie, J.N.G., 1971). There are at least two unexcavated cairns in Lorn which appear to belong to this group, namely Achacha and Clachadow (Fig. 4), and the sites at Larach Ban and Culcharron may be larger and perhaps more complex examples. It is possible that a small 'false-portal' setting of stones exists at Clachadow with taller stones flanking it, but as one of the 'flankers' has fallen forward, this section of the kerb is difficult to interpret in the absence of excavation. The small cairn at Kintraw (Mid Argyll) is similar in size and appearance to this group; it measures 3.4 m in diameter and 0.5 m in height and its kerb-stones are large in proportion to its size and height (Simpson, 1967, 58, fig. 1).

The North Grave at Cairnpapple (West Lothian) may be allied to this type of ritual setting, for here a grave-pit containing an extended inhumation, was surrounded by an oval setting of stones, including a standing stone (Fig. 4), which are assumed to have been the kerb of a small independent cairn, later covered by the Food Vessel mound (Piggott, 1948, 88-90, pls. xix, 2 and xxi). The discovery of two Beakers in the grave would not be out of keeping with the suggested date for some of these sites; both Beakers belong to Clarke's N2(L) style (1970, nos. 1791-2). Perhaps another small cairn of this type is that excavated by Ashbee on Kildale Moor (Yorkshire) (Ashbee, 1957).

Davidson discovered a small ring-cairn at Knappers (Dunbartonshire); grave no. 17, which is described as 'a well-built circular structure, open in the centre', consisted of thirty stones 'symmetrically built together'. The cairn was 1.7 m by 1.5 m in overall size with a central area measuring about 0.7 m in diameter. A small piece of pottery, small fragments of bone and charcoal were discovered. Apparently within the ring of the cairn, and utilising the upright stones of the ring, a 'well-proportioned stone cist', containing a single fragment of pottery was discovered (Davidson, 1935,

It is clear that some circles of free-standing stones surround sacred areas in exactly the same way as ring-cairns. The site at Cullerlie, Echt (Aberdeenshire), comprises eight standing stones with eight small cairns, six of them containing deposits of cremated bone. The standing stones had been set up to delimit a sacred area, which, subsequent to their erection, had been 'purified' or 'consecrated' by the lighting of a series of fires. It is not clear whether the kerbs of all of the cairns were in position at this time or not (the cairn fillings certainly are subsequent to the 'purification'), but Kilbride-Jones stressed that 'many of the stones of the small rings, like the monoliths, showed signs of having been subjected to considerable heat' (1935, 218). The best-preserved cairn (No. 2) comprises a kerb of eleven stones, in the centre of which a capstone covered a pit dug into the natural gravel. 'The sides of the pit were much reddened, and there was charcoal at the bottom to a depth of 10 inches. Some of the charcoal was as large as a closed fist, and amongst it were fragments of calcined human bone. The pit had obviously contained a fire'. The pit was then filled with sand and earth. 'It thus seems that the remains were burnt and buried as they lay' (Kilbride-Jones, 1935, 219). The burning recorded on the kerb-stones of this cairn indicates that they were certainly in position by this stage in the ritual. The presence of burning within a prepared ring of stones may be compared to the ritual discovered at Monzie (Perthshire). Lynch has drawn attention to Welsh sites where there may have been standing stones marking graves, including Porth Dafarch I (Anglesey) which contained a crouched inhumation and two Beakers; a heap of white quartz pebbles had been placed on the capstone (1970, 94).

Although the cairns just described fall superficially into the same group, the excavations of Balnuaran of Clava, Cairnpapple, Monzie, Fowlis Wester, Strontoiller and Culcharron have shown that the ritual represented is not always the same. At the first two the burial was by inhumation, at Monzie, Fowlis Wester and Strontoiller by cremation. It seems likely (though not proveable) that in most cases the kerb has played an important and independent part in defining the ritual area. The use of quartz was clearly important in the construction, and the pecking of cup-marks occurs at several sites, but apart from the Beakers in the grave at Cairnpapple, there have been no diagnostic finds from any other cairn.

Kerb-cairns like Monzie may be regarded as a parallel development to the four-poster stone circles recently discussed by Burl (1971). The ultimate origin of these stone settings is sought in the Clava cairns with the

recumbent-stone-circles of Aberdeenshire as their immediate successors; from here the tradition went south, into Perthshire particularly, and beyond. There is rather more evidence for the date of the Perthshire four-posters than there is for the cairns; Glenballoch and Carse Farm I contained a Cordoned Urn and a Collared Urn respectively. Stewart's excavation at Lundin Farm shows that even such apparently simple sites might have a complex structural history (Stewart, 1966). The quantities of white quartz pebbles in the four-poster and small cairn at Clach na Tiompan (Perthshire) is a further link between the two groups of sites (Henshall and Stewart, 1956, 122-4).

A feature that may link the Aberdeenshire recumbent-stone-circles with a small number of sites in Argyll is the use of an upright slab with flanking stones. At Kintraw in Mid Argyll Simpson found that one of the kerb-stones of the cairn was flanked by two slabs projecting at right angles to the kerb, thus forming a 'false-portal' in front of which there was a large prone slab. Quartz was again important, with a marked scatter round the perimeter of the cairn (Simpson, 1967, 56-9). The use of quartz would by itself link the large cairn at Kintraw to Strontoiller where it is possible to envisage the most massive stone of the kerb (no. 2) as being flanked by the tallest stones (nos. 1 and 3) (Ritchie, J.N.G., 1971); a 'false-portal' arrangement may also be present at Clachadow. At Culcharron (see p. 50) there was a ring of granite erratics, with an inner filling of cairn material and an outer band of stones to increase the average diameter of the site; considerable quantities of quartz were found throughout the cairn material. A 'false-portal' was discovered, formed by a large flat slab of schist flanked by two granite erratics set at right angles to the kerb. Whether these sites are examples of an isolated group, or whether more extensive excavation in the areas between the North-east and Argyll will produce intermediate examples is a matter of speculation.

With such scanty dating evidence at our disposal it is clearly impossible to come to any firm conclusions about the date or affinities of the ring-cairns under discussion. The Clava examples and those in NE Scotland appear to form a distinct group, and as examples elsewhere seldom contain the complete range of characteristic features, it may be suggested that the origin of the Scottish ring-cairns should be sought in this area. The Clava passage-graves, with which the ring-cairns are associated, have always appeared to be an isolated phenomenon, far from other monuments with which they may be associated and with no intermediate examples. In view of the current disenchantment with diffusionist ideas, it is perhaps less important to seek far-ranging parallels for these tombs, and it is no longer necessary to look

to Iberia for a possible origin; one might theoretically even envisage the passage-graves as derivative from the ring-cairns. There are several approaches to the problem of the origin of the ring-cairns: one is to envisage them as a derivative of the Clava passage-grave and to retreat to a general pan-European passage-grave tradition or to the Iberian tombs for their source; the second is to see the ring-cairns as the assertion of a Late Neolithic tradition of enclosing burial and ritual areas with banks or ditches (like some of the Dorchester sites and Class I henges); the third is to envisage the ring-cairns as part of an intrusive burial ritual (thus invoking a diffusionist hypothesis again) and to look to a Beaker ancestry for the sites. It is difficult to assess which of these suggestions either singly or together gives the truest picture.

There are for example few henge monuments N of the Grampians, where so many of the distinctive features of ring-cairns are found in one area; the henge at Broomend of Crichton (Aberdeenshire) shows, however, that such monuments do exist and indeed this site became a focus for burials over a long period of time. A Beaker origin is not as improbable as might at first appear. Beaker burials both on the continent and in Southern Britain may be surrounded by a ring-ditch and the translation of this idea into that of a surrounding bank can be seen at West Overton 6b (Wiltshire), Burnt Common and White Cross Ring (Devon) (Smith and Simpson, 1966; Pollard, 1967; 1971). Such rings both as ditches and as banks often surround graves dug into the natural and it is perhaps permissible to envisage the small Balnuaran of Clava cairn and that at Cairnpapple as examples of this. The majority of excavated ring-cairns, however, appear to show a mixture of traditions, with the idea of depositing sherds rather than complete pottery vessels (at Muirkirk and Sands of Forvie for example) perhaps a Neolithic rather than a Beaker characteristic (GR).

Enclosed Cremation Cemeteries. The term 'enclosed cremation cemetery' has been introduced within the past decade as an attempt to isolate a particular type of 'flat' burial-site within the wider classification of 'ring-cairn'. The names 'ring-cairn', 'stone circle', etc. are mainly concerned with a classification according to characteristics of construction; the term 'enclosed cremation cemetery' is, by contrast, intended to emphasise the functional aspects of these sites rather than to give any indication of their structural peculiarities.

The chief characteristics of the enclosed cremation cemetery, as known at present, may be summarised as follows:

- (a) The presence of a low bank of earth, turf or stones (or a combination

of them), or of a ditch only, forming a normally circular enclosure, within which a number of cremation-burials have been deposited, often in pits.

(b) The bank may have an entrance-gap, and the overall diameter may vary considerably, ranging from a quite small size of about 5 m to as much as 15 m or more.

(c) The area enclosed is, by and large, flat, or may show a slight mound, not necessarily circular or centrally placed.

It will be at once evident that the visible remains of such a site are very liable to be unobtrusive and unspectacular and therefore often extremely difficult to recognise in the course of field-survey. Moreover, their slight proportions render them particularly susceptible to the normal agencies of destruction, and ultimately of course a positive identification can only be satisfactorily established by excavation. Bearing these limitations in mind, however, it seems appropriate to review briefly three excavations which have taken place within recent years, in order to amplify the general characteristics outlined above. The first site is Weird Law, near Tweedsmuir in Upper Tweeddale, Peeblesshire excavated in 1961 (MacLaren, 1967, 93-9). The simplified plan (Fig. 3) shows the low stony bank, a little over 2 m thick and 0.5 m in greatest height, enclosing a circular area measuring 10 m across (overall diameter 15.25 m). The bank did not have a formal kerb either externally or internally, and there was no indication of an entrance through it. Within the interior a low pear-shaped mound of stones, not more than 0.5 m high, covered an area measuring 7.6 m by 5.8 m and was not placed centrally in relation to the enclosing bank. The remainder of the interior was featureless. The stony mound rested on a burnt layer (up to 50 mm deep), in the surface of which four patches of discoloration and two knots of stones were visible. The knots of stones proved to be the upper part of a tight packing of stones filling two shallow pits, which had been dug before the burnt layer was formed, as the burning filled the interstices between the stones or overlay them. These two pits yielded no evidence of burial-remains. The patches of discoloration represented the mouths of four pits dug through the burnt layer; their upper filling consisted mainly of sand and gravel with varying quantities of cremated bone and ash occupying the bottom of the pits, and comprising the remains of one young adult and one sub-adult. There were no accompanying grave-goods. The most likely sequence seemed to be that the enclosing bank and the two stone-filled pits were the earliest features, the pits serving either an unknown ritual purpose or as a temporary grave while preparations for cremation were being made. The cremation then took place within the enclosure and the remains were distributed among the four cremation-pits. Finally all the pits were sealed by a protective covering of stones.

In 1962 a similar site was excavated on Whitestanes Moor, 11.3 km N of Dumfries (Scott-Elliot and Rae, 1965). Of much the same size (Fig. 3) as Weird Law, it measured about 9 m in diameter within a stony bank 3 m thick and 0.6 m high. In the SW quadrant there was an entrance-gap through the bank lined with large placed blocks, and subsequently sealed with three massive boulders. The level interior was covered by a thin layer of small stone chips and cobbles, beneath which there were ten pits, of which eight yielded cremated bone, the other two containing only black ash and burnt material. From one of the pits, situated up against the inner edge of the bank, came a pygmy vessel, undecorated except for two pairs of perforations halfway down the body. A considerable accumulation of black ash and carbonised wood particles spread over an area about 3 m in diameter in the centre of the interior, together with another concentration of burning round one of the peripheral pits, suggested that, as at Weird Law, the cremations had taken place within the enclosure.

In 1963 a comparable site was excavated on Brown Edge, Totley Moor, on the E side of the Derwent Valley SW of Sheffield (Radley, 1966). Here again (Fig. 3), the site consisted of a circular bank, a flat interior and a low central mound of stones. The bank in this case was composed of a turf and clay core kerbed on either side with stones, enclosing a circular area about 6.4 m in diameter. Centrally placed within the interior there was a low spread of stones, oval in shape measuring about 1.8 m long by 0.9 m broad and only 0.3 m high. The internal area contained five cremation-pits, three of them covered by the small central mound, and two outside it. Except in one instance, the cremations were either in or accompanied by a cinerary urn, and with one of the urns there was also a pygmy vessel. All five burials (four young male adults and one female) appeared to have been made at about the same time. The pottery was, in general, of Pennine Urn type and other grave-goods included flint scrapers or points and a limpet shell.

The evidence provided by the pottery from Whitestanes and Totley would place these sites at about the middle of the second millennium BC or later. Radiocarbon dates have been obtained for the three sites just described:

Brown Edge, Totley	1530 BC \pm 150 (BM 212)
	1250 BC \pm 150 (BM 211)
	1050 BC \pm 150 (BM 177)
Weird Law	1490 BC \pm 90 (NPL 57)
Whitestanes Moor	1360 BC \pm 90 (GaK 461)

These dates at least suggest a general time-span in the second half of the second millennium BC on the conventional interpretation of radiocarbon dates, and if bristlecone pine corrections are applied, (McKerrell, 1971,

79) the range of dates would fall between about 1750 BC and 1350 BC.

Enclosed cremation cemeteries of this general type are known in considerable numbers in the Peak District of Derbyshire (Radley, 1966), the Central Pennines, in the Halifax-Burnley region of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and further north on Rombald's Moor and also in the Cleveland district of the North Riding (Hayes, 1967, 18-22). Others are recorded sporadically in the northern counties of England, from Lancashire, Cumberland and Westmorland in the west (Bu'lock, 1963, 15-16, 18-20, 38-42) to Northumberland in the east (Jobey, 1968, 42-4). In Scotland they have been recognised in some quantity in Dumfriesshire and Kirkcudbright, often in close proximity to fields of small cairns and other structures (Scott-Elliot and Rae, 1965; Scott-Elliot, 1967 a and b); in this region some, if not all, of the sites previously recorded as 'hut-circles' may now be better regarded as being potential burial-sites of the type under discussion. A dozen or so are known in Peeblesshire, mostly from the Tweed Valley, including the excavated example at Weird Law (RCAMS, 1967, 64-6, nos. 109-14). In Ayrshire, a site at Marchhouse, near Muirkirk, which was partly excavated in 1924 (Fairbairn, 1924), was almost certainly an enclosed cremation cemetery and yielded a Collared Urn, a pygmy vessel, a bone pin, a bronze awl and a fragment of chert. Rather more than one km to the S are the well-known Muirkirk 'Beaker houses', some of which were probably enclosed cremation cemeteries and not domestic structures. From Stirlingshire the ditched enclosure at Kinneil Mill (Marriott, 1968) containing cremations in Cordoned and Collared Urns, is another variation. From northern Scotland Loanhead of Daviot (Kilbride-Jones, 1936), with its enclosed urn burials, provides another example; it is interesting to note that here, as at Weird Law and Whitestanes, some of the cremations took place within the enclosure. Again, from Ross and Cromarty there are two sites on the Black Isle, Croftcrunie (Beaton, 1882, 485-7) and Craigiehowe (Woodham, 1956, 85), and a third on the N side of the Cromarty Firth, Dalnavie (Maclean, 1886, 333), which should be included within this category.

From this brief summary it may be seen that the distribution of this type of burial enclosure is widespread in Scotland and the northern half of England, and similar sites have been excavated in Ireland (Waterman, 1968). A great deal of work, however, yet remains to be done, both in the way of locating potential candidates by systematic fieldwork and, more especially, by proving them by excavation. The time has not been reached where it is worth attempting to compile an exhaustive list of sites, but a significant number of them has already been established by excavation and there is a sufficient quantity of potential examples to indicate that the enclosed cremation

cemetery deserves its place as a separate category of burial monument of the second millennium BC (AM).

The illustrations are intended to be diagrammatic representations of the sites under discussion; they have been simplified or adapted from the following publications.

Fig. 1

Culdoich (INV 21)	Piggott, 1956, 191, fig. 10.
Cairnwell (KNC 1)	Henshall, 1963, 401, fig. 105.
Sundayswells Hill (ABN 9)	Henshall, 1963, 397, fig. 104.

Fig. 2

Culburnie (INV 19)	Henshall, 1963, 371, fig. 92.
Sands of Forvie (ABN 8)	Kirk, 1953, 159, fig. 3.
Garrol Wood, Kincardineshire	Coles, 1905, 193, fig. 1.

Fig. 3

Weird Law, Peeblesshire	MacLaren, 1967, 94, fig. 1.
Brown Edge, Derbyshire	Radley, 1966, 3, 5, figs. 2 and 3.
Whitestanes, Dumfriesshire	Scott-Elliott and Rae, 1965, opp. p. 60, fig. 2.
Woodhead, Cumberland	Hodgson, 1940, 163, fig. 7.
Linburn, Ayrshire	Fairbairn, 1922, 127, fig. 1.

Fig. 4

Balnuaran of Clava, Inverness-shire	Piggott, 1956, 193, fig. 11.
Monzie, Perthshire	Young and Mitchell, 1939, 67, fig. 4.
Strontoiller, Argyll	Ritchie, J.N.G., 1971, 3, fig. 1.
Cairmpapple, West Lothian	Piggott, 1956, 193, fig. 11.
Clachadow, Argyll	Original RCAMS survey.
Achacha, Argyll	Original RCAMS survey.
Fowlis Wester, Perthshire	Young, 1943, 176, fig. 2; 177, fig. 3.

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