

S but the slope to the N is barely perceptible. No trace of a burial cist or burial deposit was found in the central area. The small stone set upright, off centre, may possibly be all that was left of a small cist. The other stones perhaps stood higher and so may have obstructed the plough. The difference between the material on either side of this stone, cairn material on one side, darker soil, small flat stones above the shingle on the other and the small quartz stones found near it might serve as pointers to this idea.

The site was back-filled and cultivated after the excavation in May 1979.

As well as six known sites of cist burials there are several cairns on Bute assigned to the Bronze Age. Rullecheddan has been completely removed. At the two small low cairns on the Kerrytonlia foreshore no kerbs were found when Professor Bryce investigated them in 1903. He also examined the cairns on the Kerrytusach moor, at Scalpsie Bay and Watch Hill, Ardrosdale but while he found a cist in the one at Scalpsie he did not report finding a kerb at any of these sites. In 1979 a small flint arrowhead, Neolithic in character, was picked up from a rabbit scrape at the Watch Hill cairn. No kerb was found at the very much ruined cairn at Glen Callum Bay (Marshall 1969). The large round cairn at the N end of Inchmarnock has not been excavated.

While Little Kilmory seems to be the only example of a possible cairn-with-a-kerb on Bute a variety of types of kerbs round cairns have been recognised in Argyll and are discussed in Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot. 1974-5. Little Kilmory seems to have no close parallel among them.

I would like to thank Mrs S. Gell, Cambridge, who prepared the Little Kilmory plan for publication and drew the finds from Inchmarnock.

References

- Bryce T. (1903) Cairns and Tumuli of the Island of Bute. Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot. 193-4 Vol XXXVIII 52-79.
 Lynch F. and Ritchie J. G. N. 1974-5. Small Cairns in Argyll. Some recent work. Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot. Vol 106 1974-5 30-33.
 Marshall D. N. 1969. Glen Callum Bay Bronze Age Cairn. Trans B.N.H.S. Vol XVII 1969.

AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE IN BUTE 1977

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The summer of 1977 was remarkable, in climatic terms, for the prolonged drought which affected the whole of western Scotland. In early May, however, conditions had seemed far from promising, with most soils at saturation point and only the south-eastern parts of the country showing signs of drying out. Yet, by the beginning of June the weather pattern had reversed, and, while Soil Moisture Deficit figures on the east coast were struggling to rise above the 50 mm level, readings on the Outer Isles had soared above 90 mm. Eventually the east began to catch up, but S.M.D. figures throughout the west remained around 100 mm until the end of August. Not surprisingly, flying conditions during this period were equally good, and the clear skies allied with a stable weather pattern invited the aerial photographer to conduct a wider-ranging survey than has normally been practicable in recent Scottish summers.

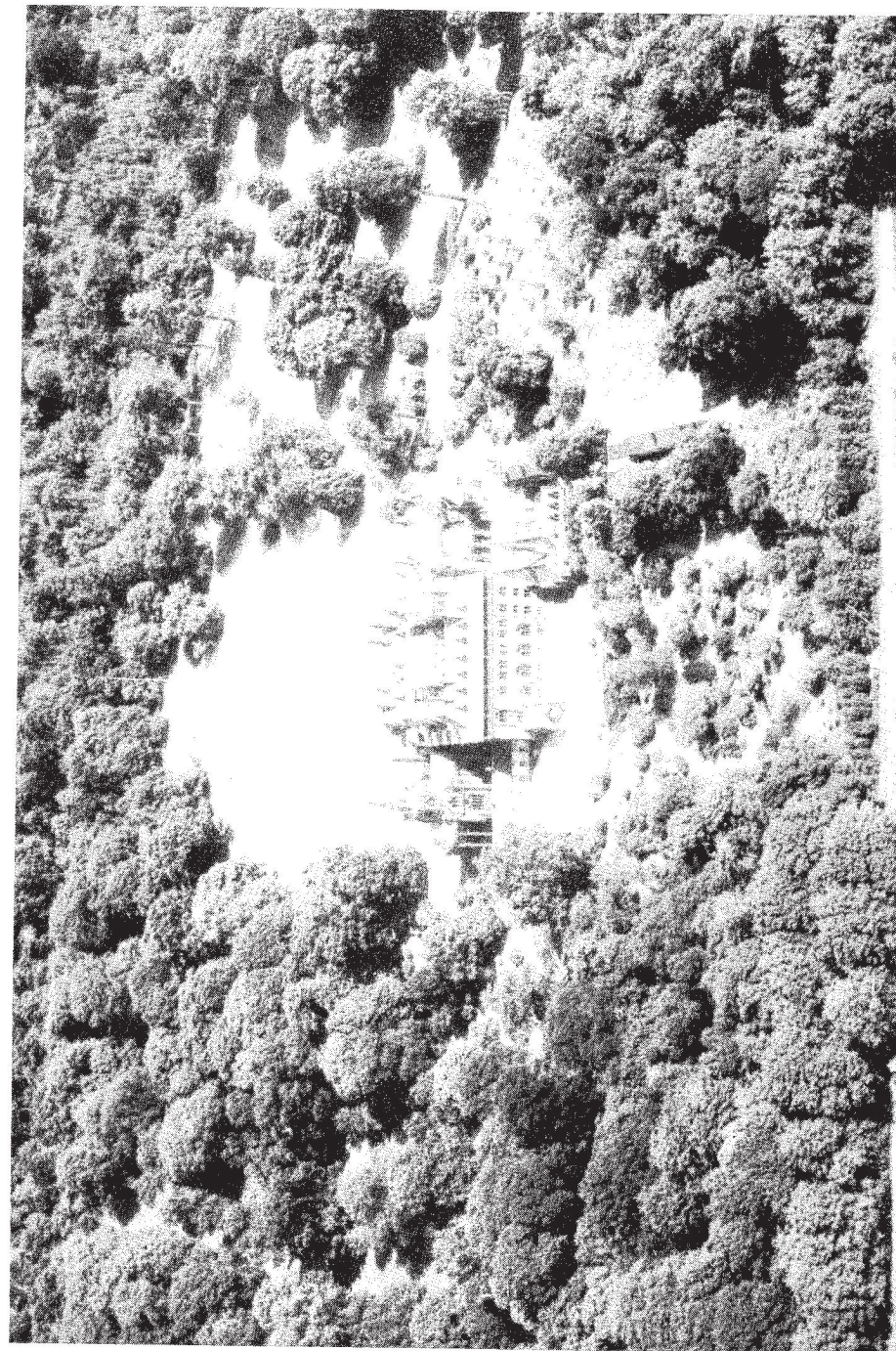
The need to obtain aerial photographs of certain monuments in Islay and Jura for the relevant volume of the Royal Commission's *Inventory of Argyll* luckily coincided with this promising spell. Accordingly, on July 7 a Cessna 182 took off from Edinburgh Airport on a reconnaissance sortie which was designed to follow a roughly triangular course taking in the Kilmartin area of Mid Argyll and the Kintyre peninsula, as well as the islands of Islay and Jura. Conditions were almost perfect, with no more than $\frac{1}{8}$ cumulus cloud at 7,000 ft, unlimited visibility and wind speed at ground level less than 5 kts. The crew comprised Allan Brember, pilot, and, for the Commission, John Keggie, who took the photographs, together with Geoffrey Stell and the author, acting as observers.

When the survey of monuments in Islay and Jura was complete, the aircraft flew on to Campbeltown, but despite the extremely dry conditions no significant cropmarks could be seen. At this point, with four hours' flying elapsed, the decision was taken to follow the east coast of the peninsula northwards, rather than return home by the direct route. At

Skipness, however, nothing of interest having been recorded in Kintyre, it seemed best to discontinue the search and make for Edinburgh. Our course took us past the Cock of Arran crossing the coastline of Bute a little north of Ardscaipsie Point, where we took the opportunity of photographing the ruins of the dun of Clach Camie; other upstanding structures recorded included St. Blane's Church and Mount Stuart. (Plate 1).

However, the most interesting monuments were those revealed by cropmarkings. In stark contrast to Kintyre, the fields and pastures of the southern half of Bute bore manifest testimony to the stress induced in the vegetation by the extreme drought; no fewer than eleven sites were thus revealed. They include the handsome bivallate fort at Kerrytonlia (Plate 2B) and the single-ditched enclosures, significantly close to modern farmsteads, at Birgidale Knock and Little Kilchattan (Plate 2A). A ring-ditch some 13 m in diameter at Cranslagvourity (Plate 3B) probably indicates the site of a cairn or barrow, and the single ditch defined by parching on the promontory above Loch Quien (Plate 4A) clearly suggests defensive use. But what are we to make of the univallate sub-rectangular enclosure immediately to the west of North Garrochty (Plate 3A)? Is it in fact of relatively recent origin, or does its regular appearance betoken an Early Historic or Medieval date, possibly in association with the near-by Church of St. Blane?

Perhaps the most remarkable is the site recorded at Blackpark Plantation, unfortunately appearing so faintly in the photograph as to be impossible to reproduce in half-tone form. What attracted the eye during the flight was a series of linear cropmarks, one of which was interrupted by a semicircular marking; their purpose and date is uncertain, possibly the traces of a relatively recent land-use. Inspection of the air photographs in the study revealed, however, the presence of what appears to be a circular timber house. The house measures about 11 m in diameter across the ring-groove that presumably marks its external wall of split timbers. Four massive pits situated centrally in the interior probably indicate the positions of uprights that supported the roof, but two smaller 'post-holes' defining a gap on the north-east arc of the ring-groove must surely belong to the original entrance.



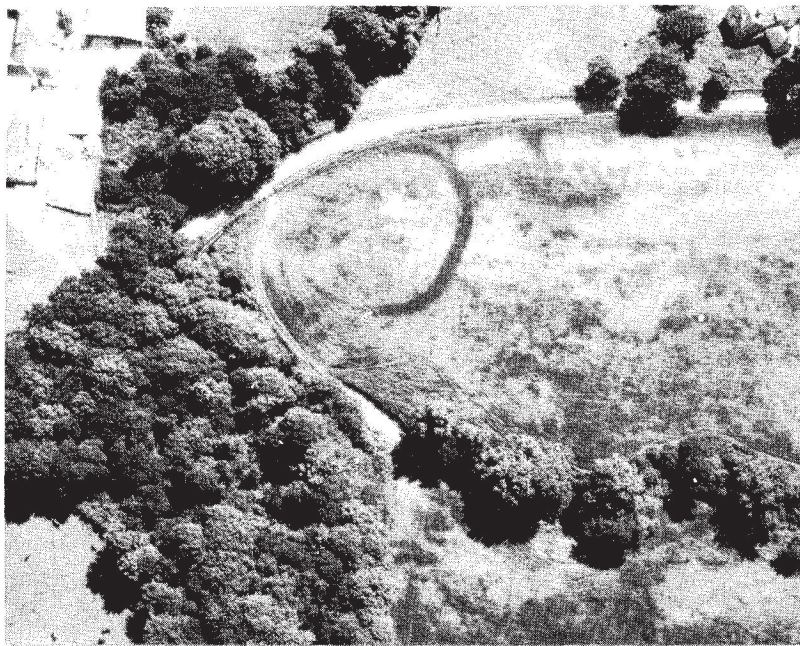


PLATE 2A *Enclosure between Little Kilchattan and the Old Kingarth Manse.*

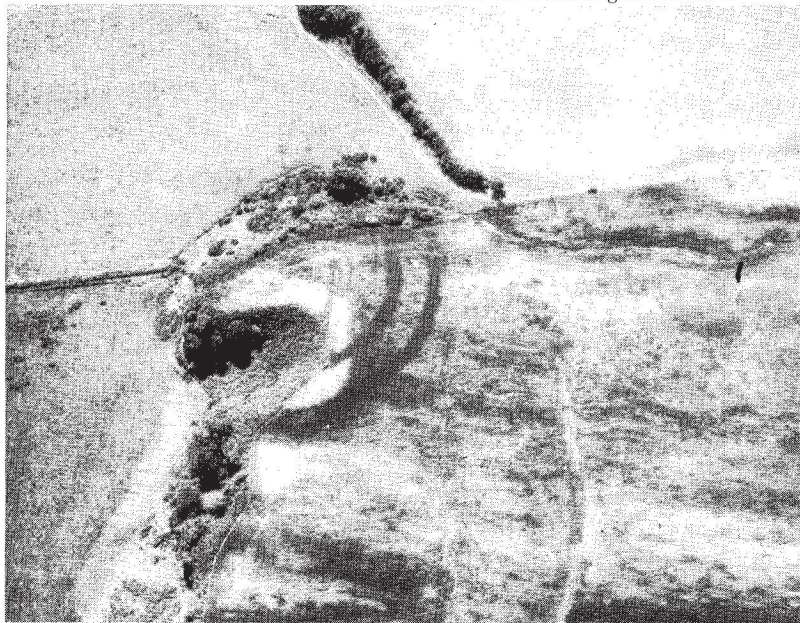


PLATE 2B *Enclosure Kerrytonlia.*

Photographs by permission of The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

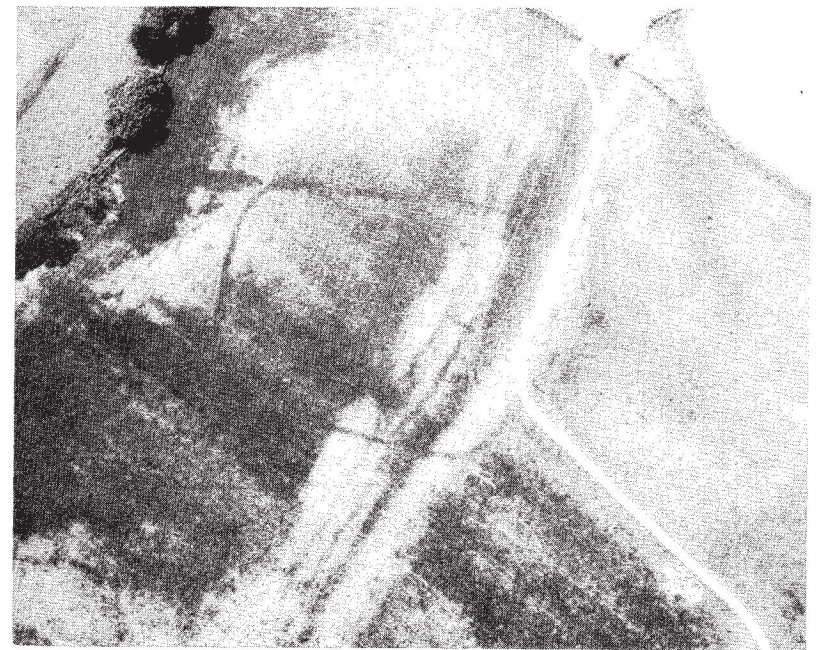


PLATE 3A *Foundations to S. of Farm Road to plan at North Garrochty.*

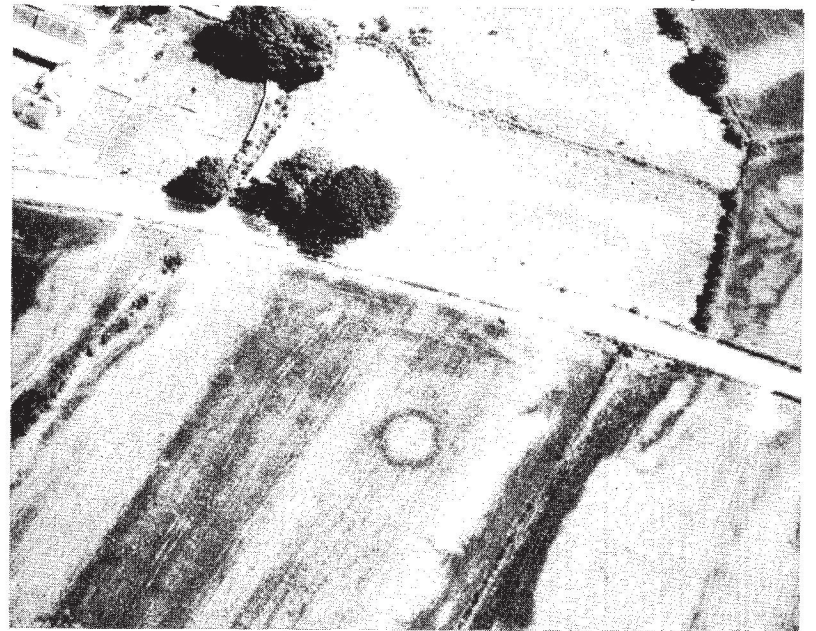


PLATE 3B *Possible ring cairn at Cranslagourity.*

Photographs by permission of The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

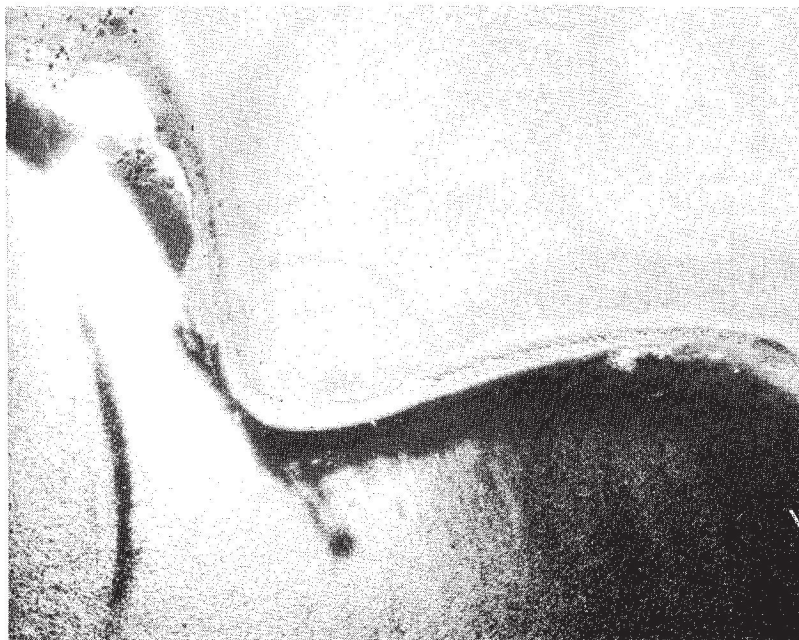


PLATE 4A

Enclosure Quien Loch.



PLATE 4B

Enclosure Birgidale Knock.

Photographs by permission of The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

The discovery underlines both the importance of detailed inspection of air photographs and the sensitivity of ripening cereal crops to the existence of buried features! One wonders how many more sites await recording in future droughts.

Site	Catalogue Name	N.G.R.	NMR Neg. No.
Enclosure	Birgidale Knock	NS 075599	BU/201-4
"	Langalbuinloch 1	085569	BU/209-11
"	Langalbuinloch 2	081569	BU/205-8
"	Little Kilchattan	100566	BU/194, 216-17, 240
"	Loch Quien	062590	BU/226-9
"	North Garrochty	094530	BU/222-5
"	Upper Scoulag	099600	BU/198-200
Fort	Kerrytonlia	115568	BU/218-21
Ring-ditch	Creslagvourity	045657	BU/230-1
Ring-groove House and Cropmarks	Blackpark Plantation	092554	BU/214-15
Cropmarks	Blackpark Plantation	090555	BU/212-13

After Mr Maxwell showed these photographs at the Museum some members of the Society visited the sites but no trace of the hut circles or enclosures could be seen on the ground.—D. N. M.