

# Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings or Crannogs: A Journey Through Time

Nestled amidst the tranquil waters of Scotland's numerous lochs, lie the remains of a fascinating and enigmatic chapter in human history: ancient lake dwellings known as crannogs. These remarkable structures, dating back thousands of years, offer a glimpse into the lives of our ancestors who ingeniously adapted to the challenges of living on water.



## Ancient Scottish Lake-Dwellings - Or Crannogs With A Supplementary Chapter On Remains Of Lake-Dwellings In England

by Robert Munro

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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## What are Crannogs?

Crannogs were constructed platforms built on artificial islands or natural islets in lochs. They were primarily inhabited during the Iron Age and early medieval periods, with some evidence suggesting their use as early as the

Bronze Age. The word "crannog" is derived from the Gaelic word "crannóg," meaning "wooden house."

## **Architectural Ingenuity**

Crannogs were constructed using a variety of techniques, but the most common involved creating a circular or oval framework of oak or pine logs, which were then filled with layers of brushwood, stones, and earth. This ingenious method created a stable and habitable platform that could withstand the fluctuating water levels and harsh weather conditions of the lochs.

## **Life on the Crannog**

The inhabitants of crannogs were primarily farmers and fishers who relied on the resources of the loch and surrounding land. They kept livestock, grew crops, and utilized the abundant fish stocks in the water.

Archaeological evidence has revealed the presence of houses, workshops, storage pits, and other structures, indicating a well-organized and self-sufficient way of life.

## **Defensive Structures**

Crannogs also served as defensive structures, offering protection against enemy raids and attacks. The waterlogged environment created a natural moat around the dwellings, making them difficult to access by land.

Additionally, many crannogs were equipped with stockades, ramparts, and watchtowers, further enhancing their defensive capabilities.

## **Rediscovery and Exploration**

The existence of crannogs was largely forgotten until the 19th century, when antiquarians began to explore the remains of these structures. Underwater archaeology has played a crucial role in uncovering the secrets of crannogs, providing valuable insights into their construction, use, and abandonment.

## **Notable Crannogs**

Numerous crannogs have been discovered throughout Scotland, each with its unique characteristics and significance. Some of the most well-known include:

1. **Loch Tay Crannog:** Located in Loch Tay, Perthshire, this crannog has been extensively excavated, revealing a wealth of artifacts and structures, including a roundhouse, a smithy, and a boat slipway.
2. **Loch Don Crannog:** Situated in Loch Don, Dumfries and Galloway, this crannog is one of the largest and best-preserved examples in Scotland. It features a complex layout with multiple buildings, a courtyard, and a defensive rampart.
3. **Oakbank Crannog:** Found in Loch Tay, Perthshire, this crannog is renowned for its remarkable preservation. Excavations have yielded an exceptional collection of wooden artifacts, including furniture, tools, and weapons.

Ancient Scottish lake dwellings or crannogs stand as a testament to the ingenuity and resilience of our ancestors. Their construction demonstrates their mastery of woodworking and engineering, while their use as both habitation and defensive structures highlights the adaptability and resourcefulness of these early communities. Through ongoing archaeological research and exploration, we continue to unravel the

secrets of these fascinating structures, gaining invaluable insights into the lives and times of our ancient Scottish forebears.



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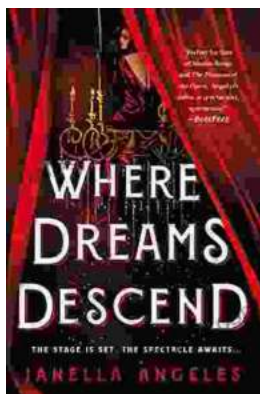
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