

the interpretation of the entrance features. A number of phases, represented by blocking, culminated in a flanked approach to the site. Disturbance in the past brought almost to the surface in this area pottery sherds seemingly of the broch period. A quern of possibly thirteenth century date was also found here together with the fragment of a bone comb and a bone 'producer'.

Further investigation is needed in the area of the entrance but as in other areas of the site a decision must be made concerning the future of the castle before more vulnerable stretches of walling are revealed.

BOOK REVIEWS

EYRBYGGJA SAGA translated by Hermann Palsson and Paul Edwards. The New Saga Library. Southside, Edinburgh. £1.95.

The latest offering from the fertile pens of Hermann Palsson and Paul Edwards, and the second volume in Robin Lorimer's courageous venture, The New Saga Library, marks something of a departure from the translators' recent interest in legendary sagas. While an instructive comparison between the latter genre and the content of Eyrbyggja can be made, the main protagonist of the story, Snorri

the Priest, was an historical personage who figures in a number of other sagas, and who played an important part in the early history of Iceland. The saga appears, warmly commended by none other than Sir Walter Scott, who no doubt distinguished certain similarities in outlook between the anonymous author and his own Jonathan Oldbuck. Certainly, a curious streak of antiquarianism pervades this saga which has not been generally available in this country in a modern translation. In spite of a lucid introduction, Eyrbyggja remains a rather difficult saga but one which amply repays close study. The translators are once again to be congratulated on the flow of their prose; one is never conscious in reading the story that this is a translation - we are at some remove from William Morris's 'Ere-dwellers'. It might be an idea for this society, armed with this translation to devote a meeting to an extended seminar on the saga, led by Messrs. Palsson and Edwards. In the later chapters of Eyrbyggja the living are much troubled by Thorodd and his companions who insist on attending their own funeral feast. Perhaps the shade of Walter Scott would attend our seminar!

Edward J. Cowan