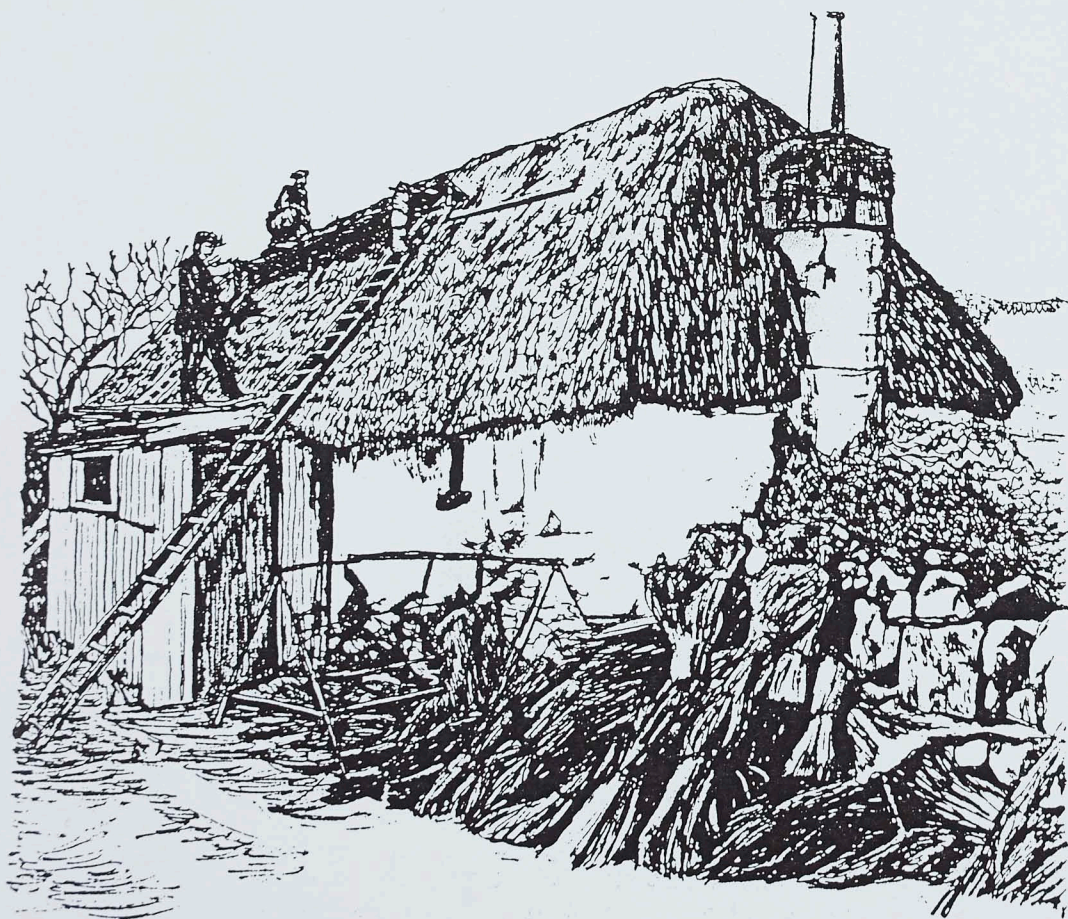


# VERNACULAR BUILDING 10

Scottish Vernacular Buildings  
Working Group

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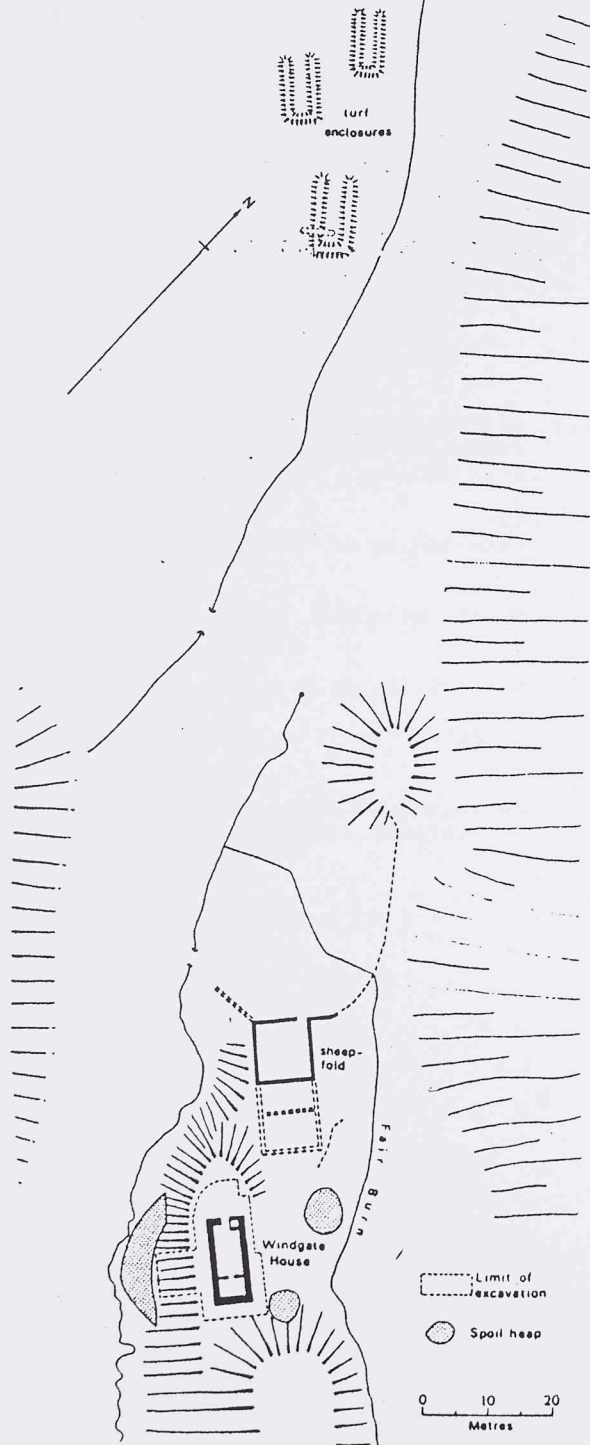
Edinburgh 1987

COVER : Rethatching at 12 Lower Ardelve,  
Lochalsh; drawing by Elizabeth Whitfield

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Fig.1: Site Plan





T. Ward, R.J. Gillanders, F. Christison

REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT WINDGATE HOUSE, NEAR COULTER, LANARK DISTRICT 1981-85

INTRODUCTION

The remains of the building known as Windgate House, with its associated structures, are situated approximately 1/4 mile SW of Cowgill Reservoir in Lanark District of Strathclyde Region, N.G.R. NT 016273. The disposition of the site can best be understood by reference to Fig. 1. The site lies at an elevation of 1225 feet OD and the ruin itself is situated on the N end of a narrow medial ridge at the head of Cowgill Glen just below the pass of Kyegill and flanked by the steep sides of Windgill Bank and Heatherstane Law. A small stream, the Fair Burn, flows north on the NE side of the site and an unnamed tributary flows on the SW side. The ground falls away steeply to the N and W but on the NE the Fair Burn has built up an alluvial fan of debris which causes the ground to slope away only gradually from the site. To the SE the ground rises immediately from the wall of the ruin towards the pass of Kyegill. To the N of the ruin are the drystone footings of a rectangular structure, part of which has been built up into a later sheepfold. Further to the NW are the remains of three rectangular earth bank structures, each having only three sides, the northern ends being open, (see Fig. 1).

Speculation over the years as to the history and architectural style of this enigmatic building, together with the fact that neither the written evidence nor the surface remains could adequately explain the nature of the site, made this an ideal starting point for a project formulated by volunteer members of the Biggar Museum Trust and Lanark and District Archaeological Society. The scheme involves the investigation and consolidation of remains, dating chiefly of the medieval and later periods, which had hitherto been regarded as of little importance and consequently left to neglect and in some cases even demolition. The project also includes the landscaping of the surrounding area and the provision of a limited form of interpretation for visitors at each site.

At the time of writing it has not been possible to trace any surviving documents of the Lamington Estate relating to Windgate House. Local people often referred to it as 'the old vaults', and the general feeling was that it was a burial place. It appears that the original name for the building was Kyegill, and is so named on Timothy Pont's map of Clydesdale dated 1596 and published in Blaeu's Atlas in 1642. During the 16th and 17th centuries the lands of Cowgill or Kyegill were owned by the Baillies of Lamington. The occupants of the house were therefore either tenants of, or perhaps members of the Baillie family. The New Statistical Account<sup>1</sup> relates a story of acrimony between the laird of Lamington and the laird of Symington. The latter, whose tower of Fatlips on the side of Tinto Hill overlooks that at Lamington, had apparently sent a taunting message to the effect that the lady of Lamington could not venture out of doors without her movements being observed by him. This was too much for her husband and the consequence

was a house built within twelve months, whereby everything that could be observed from it would be the property of Baillie. What truth we can take from this amusing tradition is debatable, however, as the outlook from the site is extremely limited. According to Irving, it was not occupied by the laird of Lamington but one of his principal tenants or retainers. If it was intended as a second residence of the Baillies, Irving asserts, the reason for its erection was a wish to possess "a strength less accessible and conspicuous than that at Lamington, situated as the latter was within sight of what was then the great road from the north of England and Dumfriesshire to the Scottish capital".<sup>2</sup>

From the Lives of the Baillies<sup>3</sup>, we learn that in 1621 Sir William Maxwell alias Baillie granted in conjunct fee a charter of the lands of Caygill to Robert Baillie and his wife Marion Purves. As this Robert Baillie was a merchant in Edinburgh it is uncertain if he or his wife ever actually resided at Windgate House.

The building was certainly in ruins in 1813 as it is marked as such on Forrest's map of Lanarkshire, and Ross's map of 1773 makes no mention of it. Part of the vault was still intact in the mid 19th century as Irving<sup>4</sup>, writing in 1864, states "all that now remains is a rudely constructed vault", and a small coloured painting executed around 1860 shows part of the vault standing above the overgrown rubble-strewn site.

#### THE BUILDING

Prior to the excavation the remains indicated an elongated rectangular building, completely turf-covered and the interior entirely choked with debris. The only wall-faces visible were parts of the inside of the ruin, clearly demonstrating the springing of a vault. These were seen to be of lime-mortared stone, and suggested the vestiges of a tower house of unusually elongated plan.

The construction of the building throughout is of lime-mortared greywacke, known locally as whinstone, and built on the random rubble principle. This stone is very difficult to work, but does tend to cleave naturally into blocks ideal for wall-faces. The stone would have been gathered and quarried in the immediate vicinity of the site as it abounds there.

The external walls measure 1m in thickness and are extant up to 2m in height. The springing of the vault starts at a height of 1m above the floor level. Remains of a dividing cross-wall, having a doorway in its centre, partitions off about a quarter of the S end of the building. It is 0.6m thick and the doorway is 0.9m wide. This small room measures 2.6m by 4.0m.

At the opposite end of the remaining area is the 1m wide entrance into the house. The facing stone from around the doorway had been removed and was presumably dressed sandstone. Traces of a draw-bar slot are evident on the E side of the doorway and a large piece of greywacke was used as a doorstep, which is smoothed by usage.

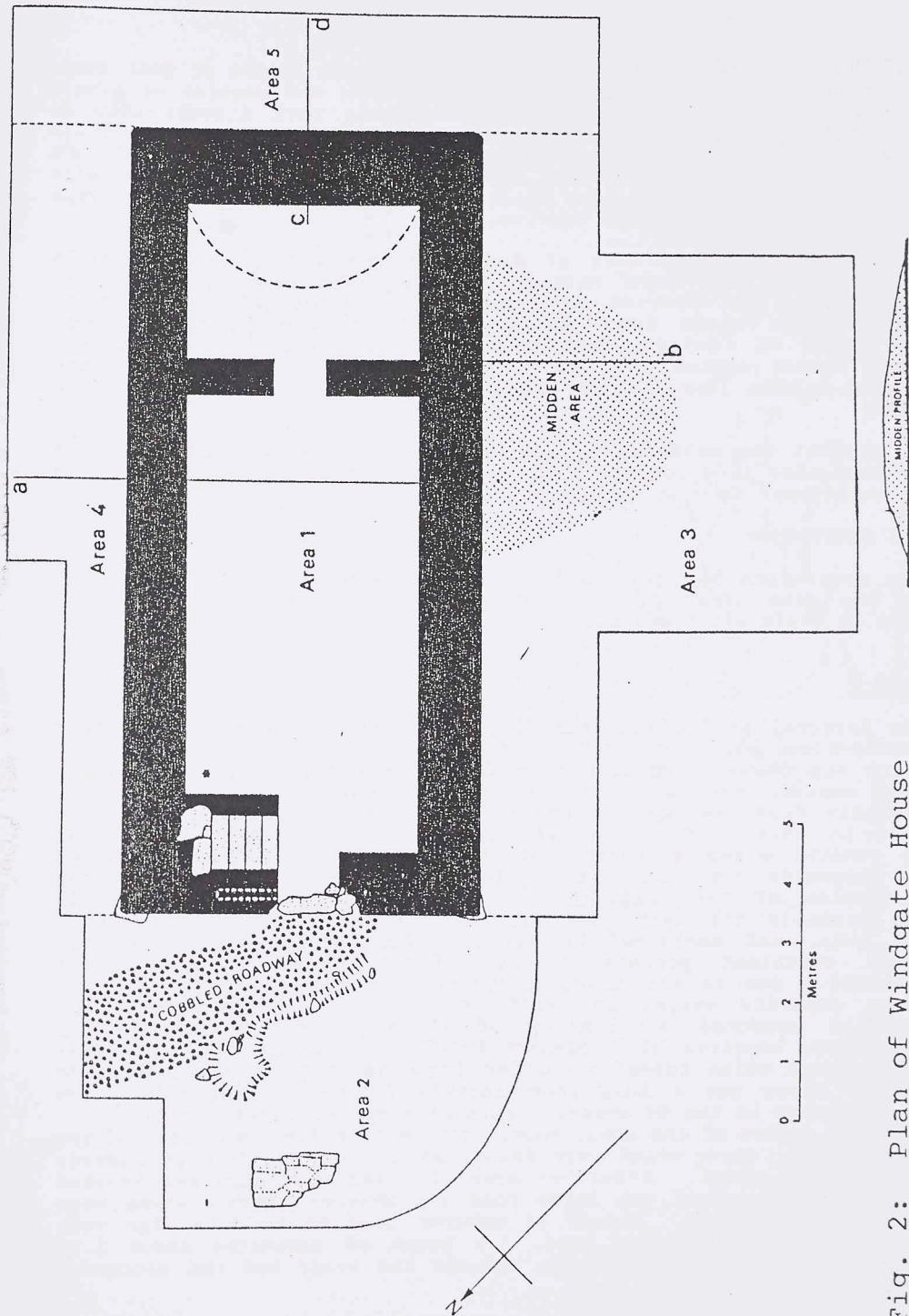


Fig. 2: Plan of Windgate House



In the NE corner of the large room a straight flight of four steps is preserved. These steps are of greywacke and consist of single stones shaped as best as this intractable rock allows; they do not show as much wear as the entrance step. Each measures 0.85m wide by 0.22m high. It is supposed that the stair would have turned at right angles to reach the upper floor. At this point the walls may have been slightly less thick and the continuation of the steps not as wide as those that survive.

The window openings were of dressed sandstone as parts of sills and lintels were found having holes cut into them to accommodate iron bars, two inserted vertically and approximately 0.15m apart. Measurements taken from the assembled pieces of a sill suggest the width of a window opening to be 0.6m. The roof was covered with slates typical of the Southern Upland variety, each slate having a hole 10mm in diameter for fixing to the roof with wooden pegs.

In general the walls had a projecting plinth on the outside formed by irregular large stones. The surviving corner stones are battered in an attempt to round them off.

#### THE EXCAVATION

The excavation has been divided into five areas which are marked on the site plan, Fig. 2. For convenience each of these areas will be dealt with separately.

##### Area 1

The internal area of the building was cleared to reveal a complete ground-floor plan. During the course of removing the upper material which was found to consist of stones of all sizes mixed with loose lime mortar, soil and turf, a James VI hardhead coin was found, probably from the upper floor of the house. No other finds were made in this higher material with the exception of the remains of several sheep carcasses and the skeleton of a dog, deposited by shepherds over the years. In the centre of the larger room a section of the collapsed vaulting was clearly evident, which was probably the last part standing as viewed in a painting of the ruin, and mentioned by Irving. The floor surfaces of both rooms contained pockets of dark brown clay-like occupational material. Due to the irregularity of the elevation of the floor these deposits varied in depth up to 0.15m. These patches of material produced a quantity of finds, discussed below. The substratum consists of a compact brown ferruginous clayey material with stones which formed a cobbled floor surface. The only feature on the floor was a hole approximately 0.1m in diameter by 0.15m deep located in the NE corner. Several areas of burning were noted. Near the centre of the small room, remains of a fire had been covered with slates, above which were found two tiny green glaze pot sherds and a slate whorl. A further area of intense burning was located in the NE corner of the large room and charred heather stems were found on the stair. Pieces of unburnt coal up to 0.1m size were noted near the dividing wall. A block of greywacke about 1.5m long was lodged in the debris between the stair and the entrance, probably a lintel stone.

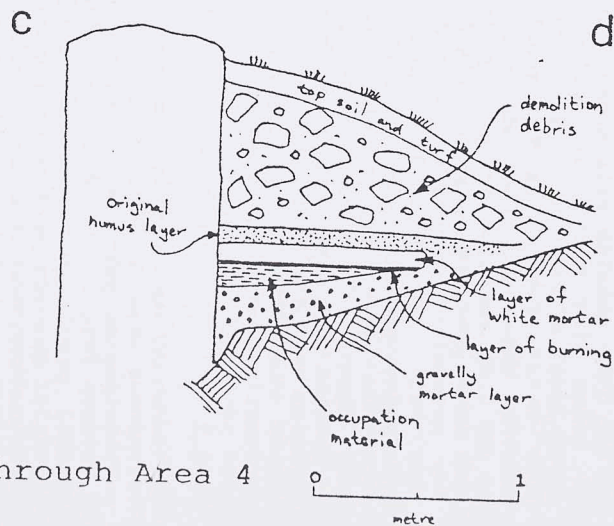
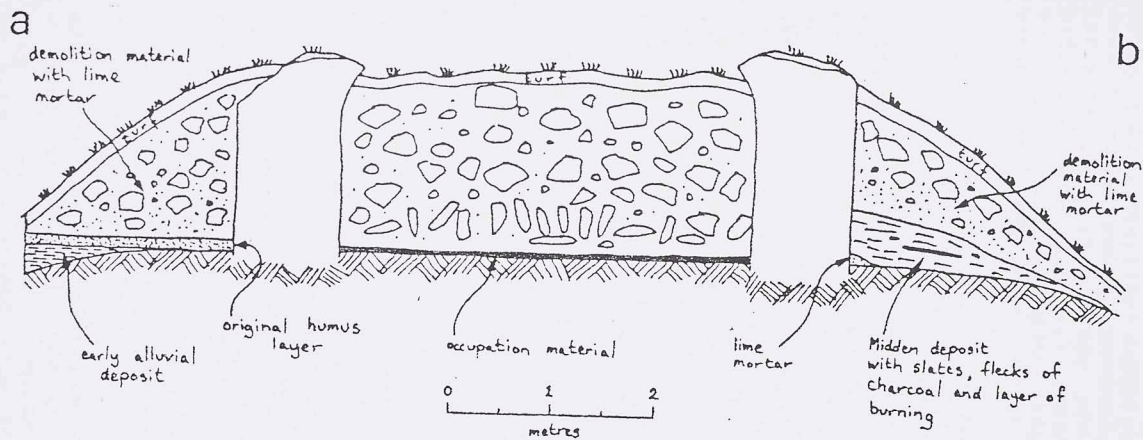


Fig. 3: Section through Area 4



## Area 2

Area 2 revealed a rough cobbled pathway leading away from the entrance towards more level ground, alongside which was a shallow gutter terminating in a shallow sump containing dark grey occupational material with charcoal fragments. Nearby lay a mass of collapsed masonry fallen from the gable wall, the original thickness of which could not be determined. The finds from this section suggest that they were probably sweepings from inside the house as many of the pot sherds found are from the same vessels as those from the interior.

## Area 3

Clearance of this area produced evidence of deliberate demolition as demonstrated in the section Fig. 3 which proved fairly typical of the four outside wall areas. Under the turf lay a varying depth of loose lime mortar intermixed with stones of all sizes. The lower level of this material generally contained little or no stones. This is interpreted as the result of the process of demolition. Beneath the mortar lay an occupational level, varying in depth up to 0.3m and consisting of a dark soil containing bone, pottery and some complete examples of slate (some of which lay beneath the occupation deposit). A midden deposit was located against this wall (see Fig. 3). This consisted of the typical dark occupation material 0.45m at its deepest point against the wall and containing layers of slate. A layer of burning was noted and also divots of carbonised peat. The midden material contained a greater concentration of artefacts, especially bone, and this deposit extended down the slope from the wall. Immediately on top of the midden material lay several pieces of dressed sandstone, apparently from a window above.

## Area 4

The material was similar to that in Area 3, though not quite so voluminous due to the lower height of the extant walls. The substratum in parts was overlain with an alluvial deposit up to 0.3m deep (Fig.3). Within this alluvium and on top of the substratum several pieces of worked chert of a local bluegrey variety and pieces of pre-historic pottery were found. Some blocks of sandstone were stacked near the corner of the building which do not appear to have been used in the construction. Pieces of dressed sandstone from a window opening were also found.

## Area 5

Again the typical demolition process was noted in section. The ground rises steeply away from the wall and had been cut into in order to lay the outside foundation course. However, it was also noted that there was a difference of 0.4m between the bases of the inside and outside foundation stones and that the inside foundation was laid on sloping ground.

Beneath the demolition material two layers of mortar were found separated by a layer of dark soil. The upper layer was set mortar while that below was loose and crumbly.

## CONSOLIDATION OF THE BUILDING

A limited amount of consolidation work was carried out on the ruin to arrest further deterioration. This consisted of capping off all the wallheads and where necessary raising the wallhead heights to achieve this. The internal dividing walls and the inside of the S gable were extensively rebuilt. The missing dressed sandstone from the entrance has been replaced with greywacke to maintain the appearance of the doorway. Included in this work was the part restoration of the draw-bar slot. On the other side of the entrance a hypothetical reconstruction to accommodate the draw-bar has been built. All the dressed sandstone from the site has been built round the NE corner of the building together with some of the slates and an interpretation plaque. The repair work was carried out using Portland cement and the original mortar aggregate gleaned from the excavation.

## CONCLUSIONS

The reader's attention is drawn to the definitive work by R.C.H.M. England, Shielings and Bastles, 1970.<sup>5</sup> This is the most comprehensive study on the subject dealing exclusively with English bastle houses.

Briefly defined, a bastle house is a defensive farmhouse, rectangular in plan, consisting of a basement, usually barrel-vaulted, and having an area separated off. Above this was a single storey. In general two entrances existed, one on the ground floor to admit provisions and livestock and another above, reached by an external stair or ladder for access to the living area. In some instances the stair was located inside or a trap door connected the two levels. The entrance had a draw-bar slot which reinforced the door against attack and the windows generally were fitted with iron bars.

The remains of Windgate House are now interpreted as being those of a bastle house of the 16th-17th centuries. The complete ground-floor plan survives, providing features and dimensions which, if compared with examples from Shielings and Bastles, shows conclusively that it is indeed of the bastle tradition of building. The case is reinforced by the finds from the site which date it to this period of occupation. Windgate House has many of the main characteristics of bastles as described in Shielings and Bastles such as the elongated plan, the barrel vault, draw-bar slot, partitioned basement and barred windows. However, in the instance of Windgate House, the stair is located inside the building and is relatively wide.

From the finds list we note that the windows are typical in size and had two iron bars built into them. The fact that fragments of lintels and sills were found on the E and W sides indicates the situation of at least two of them. The position of one may have been immediately above the deepest part of the midden, 5m from the S gable. As no window glass was found we may conclude that the windows were not glazed but simply shuttered. The basement may have been lit and ventilated by a couple of slit windows with internal splay through the vault. However no evidence was found to support this theory, although such an arrangement was evident on most of the English examples and also on Glendorch in the parish of Crawfordjohn which is also interpreted as a bastle house.



It is reasoned that the original roof surface was slate from the fact that complete and broken slates were found below the occupation deposits on the outside of the ruin. The nails as described in the finds list would have been used for wood work only, the slates having been fixed by wooden pegs.

During the course of clearing the external areas of the ruin, it became clear that at some stage the house had been deliberately and systematically demolished. This process, as seen in section (Fig. 3), is interpreted as follows: the masonry was removed from the house during the course of which the mortar accumulated below, all the stone at this stage being removed from site. The lower courses of stonework having been buried up to 2m in depth with this demolition material, the site was abandoned and the remaining wall-heads left to be eroded by the elements. Finally, the whole pile was covered by a growth of turf. From the fact that the doorway was robbed of its facing stone completely to ground level and that the broken fragments of dressed window stone were found immediately on top of the occupation levels, but below the demolition material, suggests that the dressed stonework was removed prior to the rest of the demolition.

The finds from the dig also help in dating the occupation of the house. A quantity of assorted potsherds were found typical of those in common use during the 16th-17th centuries. The James VI hardhead, Hans Schultes jetton, and Charles II bawbee, c. 1588, 1600, and 17th century respectively, are again excellent pointers to the period of occupation.

The domesticity of the scene is recognised by the spinning whorls, pins and needles, fragments of cooking pot and knives. The copper ferrules are suggested as being from the end of laces. The meat diet of the occupants seems to have been chiefly mutton, as sheep bones were abundant on the site especially from the midden. One half of a crotal bell was found which were sometimes tied to grazing animals and acted as a warning if the livestock was disturbed. Perhaps the most interesting find was pieces of haematite, faceted by being ground on stones. Three of these stones were also found. This substance is recorded as keel being used for animal marking and the fortunate discovery of a piece of this material in a section cut through one of the three earthworks nearby (Fig. 1) suggests that these may have been animal enclosures or pens. Therefore it appears that there has been a certain amount of activity involving sheep.

The evidence for horses comes from the horse shoe, spur and a canine tooth. The crotal bell also may have come from a horse harness.

Finally the owners of all this must have been something worth locking up as a complete barrel padlock key was found.

The three earth bank structures and the dry stone footings (Fig. 1) are considered to be enclosures contemporary with the house. No apparent cultivation traces are evident in the immediate vicinity of the house, although on the NW bank of the Cowgill Reservoir is a distinct rig-and-furrow field system of uncertain date.

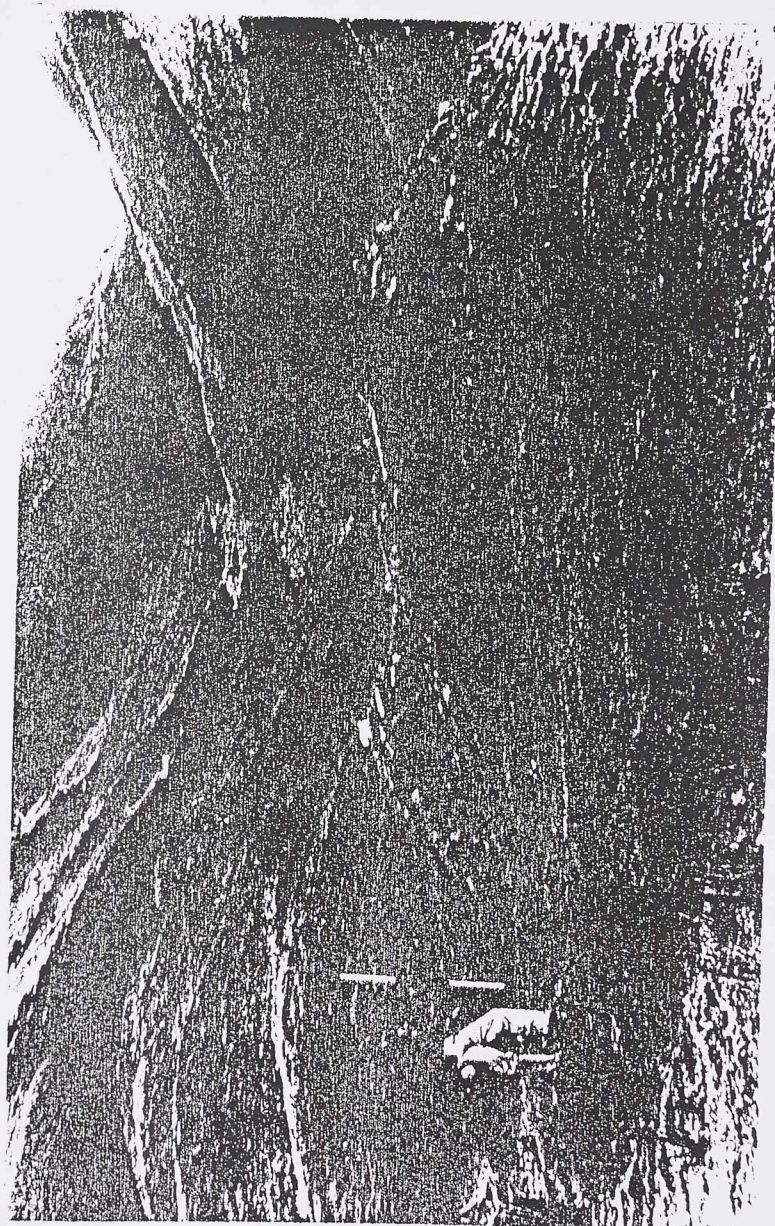
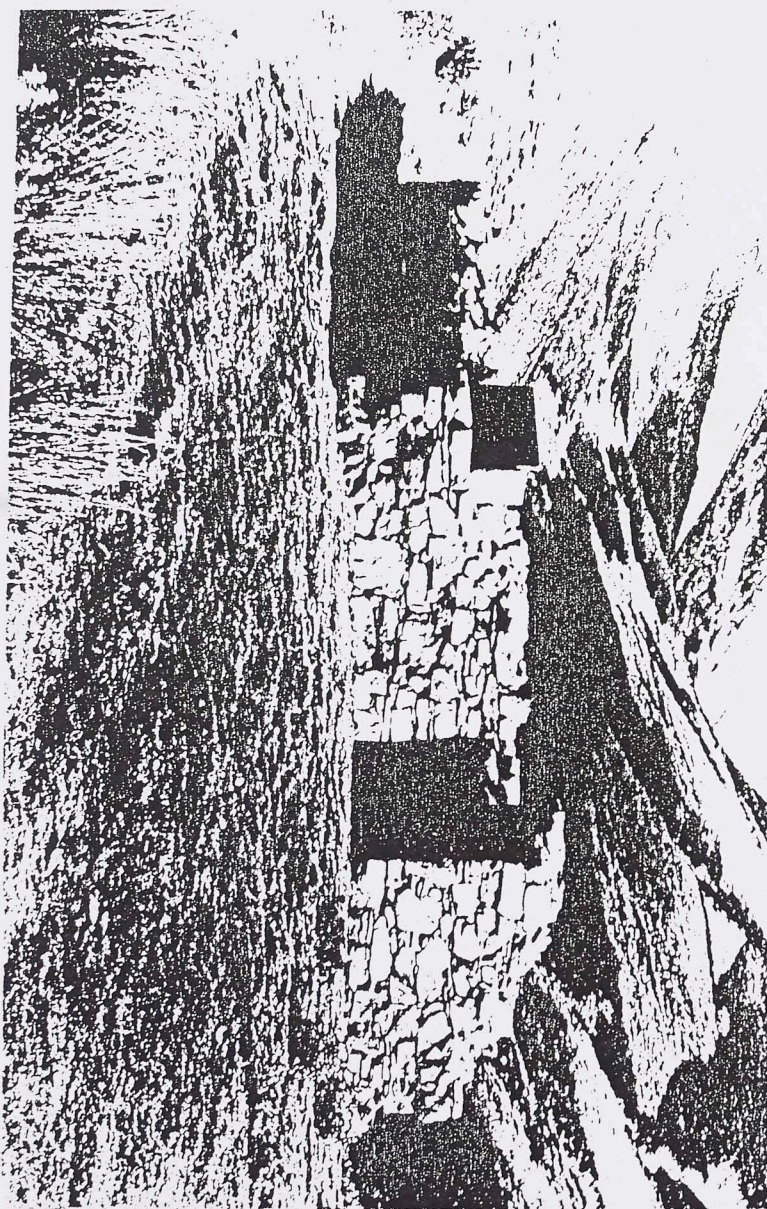


Fig. 4: Windgate House before excavation



Fig. 5: Windgate House after consolidation





What were the reasons for the location of the house? While the traditions of the story of the feud between the two lairds may be true, it is the building's agricultural role as a defensive farmhouse within an extensive sheep and cattle-stocking area that may be a more probable explanation. However, it is certain that the secluded situation was an advantage as a defence against the Border raiding activities so prevalent during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The fact that prehistoric material was located on the site points to earlier activity here. This has not been explored further.

The full record of the excavation, including a set of photographs and colour slides, together with a video film, are available for reference. These together with the finds, are lodged with the Biggar Museum Trust and may be consulted by appointment. The authors are continuing their research on the finds from the excavation and also carrying out the survey and excavation of further bastle house sites in the upper reaches of the Clyde.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The excavation and consolidation was carried out by members of the Biggar Museum Trust and Lanark & District Archaeological Society. Permission to excavate was granted by the owner of the site Mr A.K. McCosh of Coulterallers. Mr A.K. McCosh, who generously donated all the finds from this dig to the Biggar Museum Trust, bore the cost of the consolidation work and kindly assisted in transporting materials and tools to and from the site. This was done by Sandy Campbell, gamekeeper, to whom we are also indebted. The assistance of the Strathclyde Water Board in permitting vehicular access through their property is acknowledged. Staff of The National Museum of Antiquities advised on some of the finds, the Royal Scottish Museum identified the horse's tooth and the British Geological Survey carried out X-ray analysis of the haematite. The Lanark & District Archaeological Society funded the production of the report. Finally, we are grateful to all those who helped with the excavation, consolidation of the building and the preparation of the report.

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1. New Statistical Account of Scotland, VI Lanarkshire (1845), 819.
2. G.V. Irving, A. Murray, The Upper Ward of Lanarkshire described and delineated (1864) I, 245.
3. J.W. Baillie, Lives of the Baillies (1872), 36.
4. Irving, loc. cit.
5. H.G. Ramm, R.W. McDowall, E. Mercer, Shielings and Bastles (RCHM (England), 1970), 60-95.

## EXCAVATIONS AT WINDGATE HOUSE

### LIST OF FINDS

#### AREAS 1 & 2

##### Pottery

- WH81/H1: Handle of a jug or pitcher, internal green glaze. 3 pieces  
WH81/H2: Handle of a jug or pitcher, internal green glaze. 4 pieces  
WH81/R1 Rim fragment. 2 pieces  
WH81/R2 Rim fragment  
WH81/R3 Rim fragment  
WH81/R4: Rim fragment. Shallow dish or plate, green glaze. 3 pieces  
WH81 : Assorted small potsherds. 75 pieces  
WH81/V1: Two parts of green glaze vessel with zig zag  
or wave decoration. Part 1:12 pieces. Part 2:6 pieces.  
WH81/V2: Two parts of a vessel. Part 1:11 pieces. Part 2:6 pieces.

##### Haematite

Pieces showing signs of having been ground on stones, (also found) to obtain a powder. Probably for use as keel for animal marking. 35 pieces

##### Stones

- (i) Greywacke, with smooth surfaces caused by grinding the haematite. 3 pieces.  
(ii) Rounded river washed pebble, 8.5x7 cm. Possibly for a corn pounder ? although showing no sign of wear.  
(iii) Several pieces of dressed sandstone of different varieties all of carboniferous age, (unfortunately carried off by estate workers during the excation).

##### Slate

Complete and broken, having holes, approximately 10mm for wooden pegs. Some broken examples have two holes. Note: A total of 25 whole slates were found from all areas.

Largest slate measured 480mmx 290mm. Smallest slate measured 12mm x 9mm.

All of local Southern Upland siltstone

##### Glass

- (i) Green bottle. Found on perimeter of excavation area, and probably post dates the occupation period. 2 small pieces.  
(ii) Slag, from the mortar. 2 small pieces.

Clay pipe stems : 3 pieces.

### Whorls

- (i) Unfinished, made from cannal coal.
- (ii) Incised lines on one side, made from slate.
- (iii) Broken with zig zag and line and dot decoration, stone.

### Ivory or bone

Piece of a small handle decorated with ring and dots (similar item found in midden area).

### Bone

Assorted small bones and teeth including a horse's canine tooth.

### Wood

Small piece, 'mushy' state, indeterminate.

### Iron

Quantities of nails, varying in length, up to 100mm, two types

- (i) Round heads, square shafts.
- (ii) Rectangular heads, rectangular shafts.

Buckles. 2 items

Knife blade

Knife blade, piece of.

Barrel padlock key, straight shanked with a bifurcated end; the other end looped. Length 115mm.

Loops. 2 items

Needle (eyelet corroded)

Small ferrule.

### Lead

- (i) Lump used for fixing door hinge pin to stonework.
- (ii) 'Plug' having the matrix of a hole bored into a piece of wood.
- (iii) Indeterminate small piece.

### Copper

- (i) Several ferrules, possible boot lace ends.
- (ii) Small ring (broken), (not a finger ring).
- (iii) Small fragments of sheet copper.
- (iv) Needle, 182mm long.
- (v) Pins, having 'wired on' heads and tin plated 32mm x 40mm. 2 items.

### Coins

- (i) James VI hardhead, worn.
- (ii) Charles II bawbee, worn.
- (iii) Hans Shultes jetton.

### AREA 3 including the midden

#### Pottery

WH84/M/B: Base of a vessel, 'blotchy' green glaze. 12 pieces.  
WH84/M/B2: Base of a vessel, internal green glaze. 2 pieces.  
WH84/M/R: Rim with a shaped shoulder green glaze. 2 pieces.  
WH84/M/l: Part of the above vessel. 1 piece.  
WH84/M/S: Shoulder of a vessel, green glaze. 2 pieces.  
WH84/M/H1: Handle of a vessel, green glaze. 2 pieces.  
WH84/M/H2: Handle of a vessel, possibly part of above. 1 piece.  
WH84/M: Assorted small sherds. 21 pieces.

#### Whorl

Made from siltstone, found in two halves, now repaired.

Haematite: One small piece.

#### Stone

Pieces of a window sill and lintel, dressed carboniferous sandstone, having two holes in each to accommodate iron bars. Width of actual window opening 0.60m.

#### Slate

Quantities of complete and broken slates, also some without holes.

#### Ivory or bone

Piece of a handle, decorated with ring and dots.

#### Copper

Ferrules, small. 4 items.  
Part of a small crotal bell.

#### Iron

Quantities of assorted nails, in various states of preservation. Approx. 120 items.  
Knife. Complete with a tiny brass maltese cross adhering to the blade, possibly the remains of an inlay decoration. Pieces of miscellaneous iron, including two items which may be tools, parts of harness trappings, and parts of a horse shoe.

#### Bone

Quantities of assorted bone and teeth.

#### Peat

Carbonised small divots.

#### AREA 4

##### Pottery

Tiny piece of green glaze. 4 pieces.  
Sherds of a pre-historic vessel. 2 pieces.

##### Haematite

##### Stone

Dressed sandstone, shaped for parts of windows? 3 pieces.  
Dressed sandstone, shaped into blocks. 5 pieces.  
Dressed sandstone, shaped but broken. 9 pieces.

##### Chert

Local blue/grey variety, having been knaped, one piece clearly shaped.  
9 pieces.

##### Slate

Complete and broken examples.

##### Iron

Nails, various sizes and conditions.  
Spur, 5 pointed rowel type, one terminal missing. Length 120mm;  
width at terminals 65mm approx.

##### Copper

Ferrule, 43mm long x 3mm wide.

Pipe stem: parts of.

Bone: 3 small pieces

#### AREA 5

Haematite: 1 piece

##### Slate

Complete and broken examples.

Iron: nails

##### Bone

Fragments, jawbones and teeth

A greywacke whetstone was found in the nearby sheepfold, age indeterminate.



RE-THATCHING AT 12 LOWER ARDELVE, LOCHALSH

## DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

This house is the last remaining intact example of the type that was universal in this part of the Western Highlands (perhaps from Torridon south to Ardnamurchan) one hundred years ago. It is at Lower Ardelve, Lochalsh, Ross-shire (N.G.R., NG 873267). The rough, mortared stone walls stand fairly vertical, rounded at the corners, and are topped with a high, hipped, thatched roof, overhanging at the eaves. Two small windows are symmetrically placed on either side of the front door, while at the back a tiny central window is the only opening. In this house, a small corrugated iron porch has been added. At the eastern end of the house, a stone chimney stack rises flush with the wall but at the western end there is only a thatched wooden "box" chimney, jutting out at the angle of the hipped roof.

The interior roof structure has not been examined in detail but seems to be sound, helped no doubt by the preservative effect of the smoke and soot which tends to escape into the loft from the wooden flue (see below). There are four sets of main timbers or trusses (Gaelic - ceangail). These are crucks or Highland couples, being sunk well down into the wall. Oak was the favoured wood for the crucks. On top of the crucks are fixed a series of side timbers or purlins (cleithearn/taobhain) and on top of these are thin, closely spaced poles (cabair) most likely of birch. On top of the timbers, a covering of heathery turfs (sgrathan) is fixed in a manner similar to tiles as a bed for the thatch (tughadh).

The interior layout is of the style common in older Highland cottages - on leaving the porch over the threshold (stairseach), one enters a small lobby; at the western end is the parlour or living room (cidsin) with a special feature in its "hanging lum" (similear crochaidh) with its suspended chain and pot-hook (slabhraidh); at the eastern end is the bedroom (rum), while in the middle rear section is another small room or closet (closaid) entered in this case from the parlour and used as a store/bedroom. Further descriptions of the interior and several excellent photographs are included in Scottish Victorian Interiors by Mowbray House Press (1986).

The house is owned by Mr Donald Mackenzie, now aged 82, and has been occupied by his family since it was built. Mr MacKenzie has evidence that it was built by his grand-uncles (great-grand-uncles?), Colin and Kenneth, for a sum of twelve pounds and ten shillings. Its age cannot be given precisely, but from the clues available it would seem to date from about the 1840s or 1850s. The stone chimney at least was almost certainly a later addition and Mr MacKenzie believes that the house may initially have had one central chimney or vent. The porch was added around 1910.

Donald MacKenzie and his elder brother, Christopher, had maintained the house and its thatched roof throughout their lives but in recent years old age rendered the big task of thatching increasingly difficult, until eventually arthritis prevented them from carrying out even patching. The roof began to deteriorate and large hollows or "tracks" (claisean) began to form in the thatch. Astonishingly, the interior has remained in good, dry condition, thanks partly to thick polythene sheeting fixed down in 1984 over the central two-thirds of the roof, but by 1986 the situation was becoming critical and it is almost certain that another winter without a new thatch would have meant irreversible roof damage and water penetration. So, with considerable difficulty, the thatching was organised and, despite almost every possible obstacle, carried out.



"Hanging lum"



Cutting rushes  
for thatch

Fig. 6:  
12, Lower Ardelve



## THATCHING MATERIAL

The material used was the Common Rush (Latin - Juncus effusus; Gaelic - lauchair). Rushes used for thatch should be as thickly growing and as long as possible (3-4 ft)<sup>1</sup>, qualities which are rarer than the ubiquitous nature of the rush would suggest. The rushes are cut low with a scythe, lifted in handfuls, shaken then combed of grass, moss etc. with the fingers, laid in sheaves, tied and carried from the field. One scytheman should easily keep three or more gatherers occupied in thick rushes. One man working alone - cutting, gathering, tying and carrying - might average five sheaves per hour.

On this job, the quantity of rushes cannot be stated accurately but it was extremely large, probably at least 1200 sheaves (squaban), which is about 300 double armfuls or bundles (badagan).

The quantities needed were so large that various sources were necessary. Unfortunately, the best of these were not found until after poorer sources had been worked. They were:

- a) by River Elchaig, near Camas Luinie (plentiful, but poor) NG 950290;
- b) behind 12 Lower Ardelve (good quality, but limited quantity and very grassy). NG 873268;
- c) behind the Free Church - Conchra Farm (plentiful and very good quality - the main supply) NG 875274;
- d) A87/Ardelve Road junction (limited quantity of good quality). NG 872273;
- e) "Horse Park", E of Balmacara (apparently huge quantities of excellent quality, surveyed but not used) NG 818272.

Cutting of rushes and thatching may best commence in August. The clear advantage of an early start is long daylight and (normally) reasonable weather, the main disadvantage being midges. With the Common Rush it seems that cutting may continue through into the New Year, but the quality will decline steadily after a certain stage, especially after frosts. The sooner the cut rushes are applied to the roof the better. Storage is possible, but the rushes are liable to be of little use if kept out in the wet for more than four weeks, or rather longer under cover. As the season cools, longer storage may be feasible but not desirable. On the job in question, the rushes used were cut between the end of September and mid-December. Mild weather meant that quality was maintained.

Other thatching materials favoured in the past in the Kintail/Lochalsh district were heather (fraoch) and bracken (raineach). Heather is considered the best and most durable thatch, claimed to last up to 90 years. Unfortunately, a huge amount of labour is required to gather it and considerable skill in thatching with it. It was pulled by hand on the hill in winter or spring and tied tightly in large bundles (cual) for transporting. Bracken could be pulled by the roots, or cut with the scythe. Although it was very time-consuming, bracken pulled to expose the black "root" or stem base (bun dubh) was by far the more durable, lasting perhaps some decades, as the thatching sought to expose only the tough "root" to the weather. Bracken scythed for thatch would initially have a reddish appearance (bun dearg) as thatch. Whether pulled or cut, the bracken was usually stripped or trimmed of the thin fronds before thatching, and would be gathered when it was just turning colour (about late September through October).

There was evidence found during the thatching that heather, and perhaps also bun dubh was used on this roof in the past, although not in Mr Mackenzie's experience except at the eaves, where heather is clearly visible under the rushes and acts as a strengthener.

Information is available about the thatching techniques used with heather and bracken, and Duncan Matheson the thatcher seems to be particularly skilled with heather, but it is inappropriate to detail this here.

#### OTHER MATERIALS

Up till fairly recent times, thatched roofs in this area might be secured entirely by thin laths (lathuisean) laid horizontally round the roof at vertical intervals of perhaps 1½ feet and secured by pegs (dromanaich). Even now, on this house, the ridge and eaves are still secured by laths and pegs, and these were renewed along with the thatch. The pegs, sometimes with short laths, were also useful for securing courses of thatch in difficult sections (e.g. where filling-in hollows) and a great number were used for that purpose in this job.

Hazel rods are best for laths and pegs, and should be cut when sappy, between about July and December, although a warm spring or autumn frosts would shorten this season. Thickness of the rods will vary somewhat depending on their exact purpose but, generally, the pegs should be about two-thirds to one inch thick and the laths an inch or so but thinner when they have to bend round the corners of the roof. The length of the pegs will vary depending on the depth of thatch on the roof, but for this job they were mostly made about 1½ feet long (i.e. a yard of hazel rod).

The pegs should be made quickly after the rods are cut, and certainly no later than a week after, so that the rods remain sappy. The rod is heated at its centre over a narrow fire (or gas burner) till it becomes black and slightly burnt on one side. It is twisted firmly with the hands (the heating enables this), bent double and secured in this position for a while (e.g. by tying or sticking in the ground). It will thus achieve the desired "springiness" which holds it firmly in the thatch. The ends of the peg can be sharpened before or after making. Hazel pegs should last for many years.

The chief device for securing the thatch nowadays is wire-netting, small-meshed being best, which is stretched tightly in rolls vertically across the roof and weighed down below the eaves with stones or other weights to supplement the laths and pegs. Quantities of rope and twine are required for various purposes in the thatching process.

#### THATCHING

The cutting and thatching was carried out by Duncan Matheson ("The Stalker") of Camas Luinie, assisted to varying degrees by his sons Duncan and John, and by James Souness. The work was done particularly meticulously and skillfully, to a standard of thatching probably not executed by any Scotsman for many years. The ingenuity displayed was particularly fortunate as it soon became clear that this was far from an ordinary thatching job, but rather a last minute rescue operation!





Lath and pegs securing course of thatch



Thatching

Fig. 7 :  
12, Lower Ardelve



Obviously, the basic aim in thatching is to run off the rain as efficiently as possible and, secondly, to have the thatch last as long as possible, though this latter aim must be balanced against the constraints of materials, time and cost.

In thatching with rushes, they are applied at all stages the "right way up" with the tougher base of the stem exposed to the weather. The idea is to have only very short lengths exposed, thus giving rain the least chance to penetrate, and to achieve a relatively smooth surface to the new thatch, which should be as steep as local climate and building techniques allow. To achieve this the basic method of thatching is by "tucking". A small handful of rushes (thumb and forefinger should fit round it) is taken from the sheaf the thatcher has with him on the roof. It is feathered, twisted round at the top end and shoved or tucked into the old thatch (the twist has a sort of spring effect which helps to hold it in position). The thatcher will generally work from a long ladder and thatch the roof in vertical strips which will be as wide as he can comfortably stretch from the ladder. At some stages of this particular job, a platform was erected between two ladders to allow a wider strip of roof to be thatched at one time. Starting, obviously, at the eaves he will insert handfuls of thatch perhaps about three inches apart in a horizontal course across the strip, then repeat the operation in another course a few inches higher, with the handfuls in the upper course inserted approximately above the "spaces" in the lower course, and so on up the roof. The overlap is very considerable to achieve the minimum length exposure mentioned above and the individual horizontal courses should not be visible after the job is done, neither should the edges of the individual vertical strips, which requires some care and practice.

More often than not in the "tucking" method, a handful of the old thatch would be lifted with one hand, and the handful of new thatch shoved under with the other hand, but Mr Matheson employed a dibble and a thatching "stick" of his own making. This "stick" was made from a thin iron bar about two feet long, bent over at one end in a hook to enable it to be hung on a ladder rung when not in use. The "business end" is split in two for about one inch and the two halves pulled apart slightly to form a small "Y". With the dibble he would make a hole in the old thatch, then hook the twisted end of the handful of new thatch onto the "Y" of the stick and push it into the hole. These tools make the thatch more secure; they enable it to be inserted easily to varying depths so as to ensure an even finish; they prevent the old thatch from bulging out too much above each new handful.

The foregoing describes the basic thatching method. There are also special techniques for particular parts of the roof and for problems and some of these are described below.

- (a) Eaves: especially good quality, long rushes should be used here and applied very neatly with outer ends level (not feathered) and in larger handfuls than normal. The insertion of heather underneath helps to stiffen the eaves (as on the Ardelve house).

- (b) Ridge (cirean) : as the thatcher comes close to the rounded roof ridge, he tries to insert shorter handfuls of thatch which enable him to overlap the thatch up to a point closer to the ridge than would be possible with longer thatch. The cirean itself is made (once both sides of the roof have been thatched) by laying large feathered handfuls of rushes side by side in alternating directions (Gaelic - casmu-sheach; Scots - heads and throws) along the length of the ridge. A further layer of shorter rushes may be laid on top of the first. The ridge is then secured by a row or two of lath and pegs on each side. If it is wished to form a sharper peak to the ridge this can be done by laying and merging sheaves in alternating directions lengthwise along the ridge, before tucking and laying thatch over them much as described already. It is important that the ridge is done carefully, and it may require more frequent re-thatching than the rest of the roof.
- (c) Chimney (similear) : the wooden box chimney at the roof hip above the "hanging lum" must be thatched up its sides. Before each row is applied, a fairly tight string (or, better, an elastic rope) must be tied round the box chimney so that the thatch can be tucked in and held before being securely tied in place. The waterproofing at an ordinary masonry chimney is helped by a flashing above thatch level, but in any case the thatch should be applied most carefully and tightly at the sides of the chimney.
- (d) Hollows : where hollows have formed in the old thatch, these can be overcome by applying larger amounts of thatch, obviously, but also by inserting the handfuls of thatch at a lesser angle and more closely together. Where more serious vertical "tracks" have eroded in the old thatch (as was the case in this job) it will be necessary to pad out these major hollows with bracken (cut in autumn) or, more satisfactorily if problematically, by effectively thatching the area twice and securing with hidden laths and pegs. Where small dips are noticed in a newly completed thatch, these can be ironed out by pushing in small short handfuls of rushes from which the upper parts have been cut.

Rush thatch as described in the foregoing might be expected to last anything between about two to ten years, according to informed sources, depending on the skill and care of the thatcher, the quality and quantity of the rushes used, the state of the underlying old thatch, etc. It is claimed that the current job should last nearer the ten year end of the range, although it should be expected that minor repairs will be required from time to time.

#### NOTES

1. Imperial measurements are used throughout this article.





Thatching completed



Thatching from  
platform

Fig. 8:  
12, Lower Ardelve

WESTER ACREDYKE, BALMORE, STIRLINGSHIRE

SITE

The property known as Wester Acredyke lies in the parish of Baldernock  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W of Balmore and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles N of Glasgow (N.G.R. NS 598736); it faces S by W from a narrow site sloping to the E, on the N side of the A807, overlooking the Balmore Haughs and with the rising ground of a drumlin directly behind it.

HISTORY

The site is named 'Agardyke' in Roy's map<sup>1</sup> but a corresponding building is not evident. Richardson's map of 1795<sup>2</sup> shows a farm called Acredyke but located somewhat E of the site in question (a farm called East Acredyke occupied a similar position in the 19th century and the symbol on the map might represent both properties) and the first unequivocal showing of a building of similar size, shape, and orientation to the present one is in Grassom's map of 1817<sup>3</sup>.

The tenants were two generations of the Dougall family at least from 1841 to the end of the century and in 1851 33 acres of land were attached<sup>4</sup>. In 1904 the property was sold to an adjacent farm and, probably a few years later, the eastern outbuilding and byre were converted to cottages<sup>5</sup>. The farmhouse has been used variously as a servant's, and labourers' cottage, village shop and manse; it is at present the author's dwelling.

DESCRIPTION

The building measures 130 ft (39.6m) by 19 ft (5.8m) and comprised a house of three bays, two of them of  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -storeys, flanked by two one-bay outbuildings and with a sixth bay forming a byre at the E (downhill) end (Fig.9). The house and byre have gabled ends rising to 22 ft (6.7m) and  $16\frac{1}{2}$  ft (5m) respectively; the S wall rises to  $7\frac{1}{4}$  ft (2.2m) in the centre of the range and to  $13\frac{1}{4}$  ft (4.1m) for the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -storeyed part of the house.

The walls are 2 ft (0.6m) thick and built of lime mortared whinstone and freestone rubble on boulder footings, with corners and openings of roughly dressed freestone. Other materials such as slate, brick and undressed cabers have also been built into the walls. The walls of the house are harled but the facade of the whole range was cement rendered in the 1960s; those surfaces of the outbuildings not covered with modern renderings are limewashed.

The roof is of slate over sarking on A-framed couples whose ends are embedded in the wallhead, except in the byre where they rest on wallplates. The pitches of the roofs of the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -storeyed part and the rest of the range to the E are 40° and 43° respectively and the verges are protected by plain bargeboards resting on roughly dressed corbels; the roof of the western outbuilding (A) is hipped. The main roof of the house was previously penetrated by three chimneyheads, most probably of freestone, along the ridge, but all were removed in the 1960s and the central one replaced by one of rendered brick. Two gable-ended dormer windows are placed symmetrically in this roof; they are constructed of timber, the sides are slate-hung, and the sills lie below the eaves level.



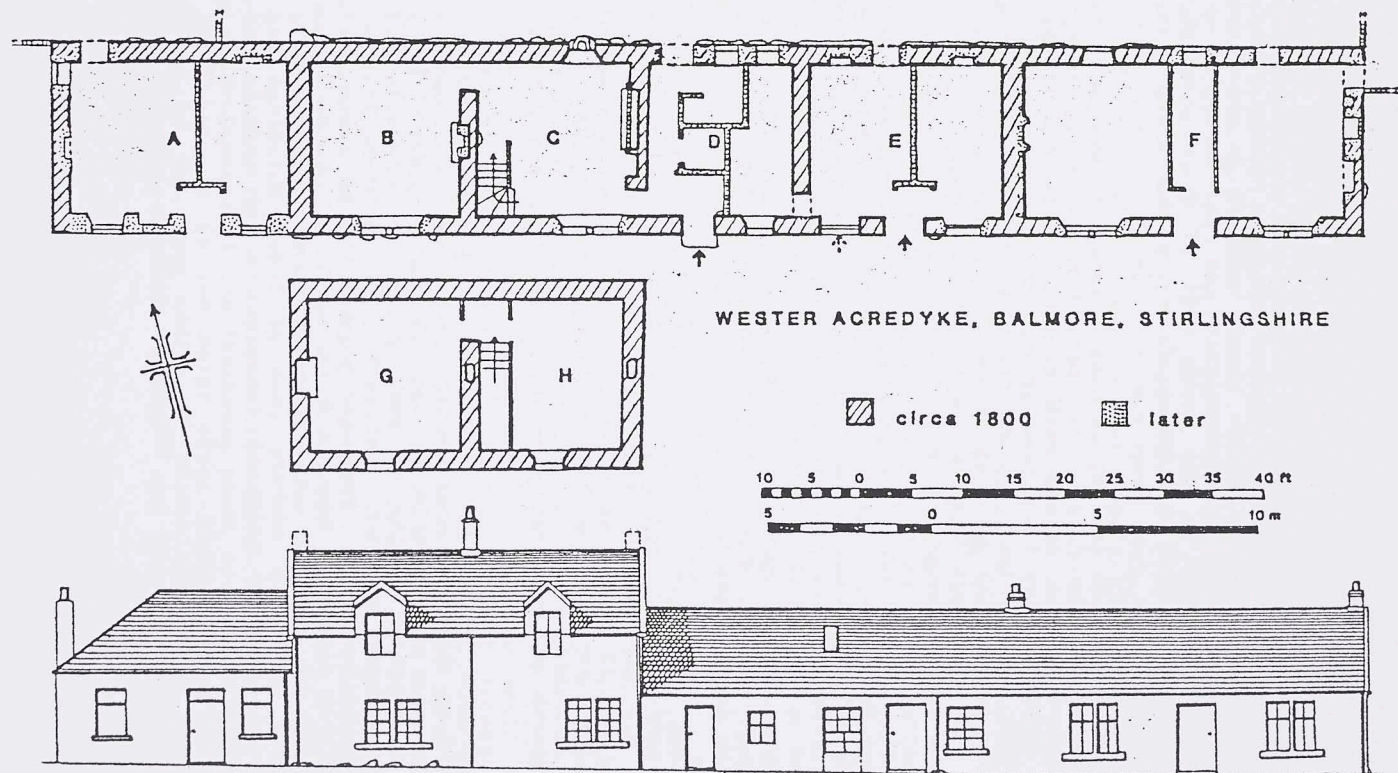


Fig. 9.



The windows of the house have 7-8 inch (18-20cm) ingoes and splayed reveals. Ground-floor fenestration of the north wall of C is unaltered (and retains the outer half of a stone trough or sink embedded in the sill) and that in the south wall is asymmetrical but no evidence of a paracentral doorway can be found. Access to the house has probably always been via the lower end (D); the doorway has a well worn step and is formed with a stone lintel to the outside. The window apertures in the south walls of chambers B and C have been altered and all openings in the north wall of D are later insertions (contemporary with the conversion of the outbuildings to cottages) but the window in the north wall of C is unaltered and that in the south wall of D appears, from its height and size, to be original.

Chamber D, including its loft gables, is plastered and it was probably a service room, perhaps the dairy; it opens (previously by a step up, but the floor has been raised with concrete) into the kitchen (C) by a gable entry and so the house is of the hearth-entry type. This doorway, that from C into B, the press in the east wall and the window in the north wall of C are formed with lintels of reused roof timbers; these cabers are roughly dressed, some retaining their bark, and some are trenched or morticed and contain trenails.

The E wall of the kitchen contains a large stone-cheeked fireplace which was cloured back and blocked in the 1960s; the S cheek forms part of the side of the press. The kitchen was not ceiled but the walls were plastered and are now largely covered with matchboarding which was fitted early in the 20th century. A doorway in the NW corner of C opens into B, the parlour, which has plastered walls, a lath-and-plaster ceiling, and is heated by a fireplace which is sited, atypically, in the central transverse wall.

Stairs against the west wall of C lead to the first floor. Rooms G and H have plastered walls and are coomceiled with, and have thin partition walls of, lath-and-plaster. Room G has a hearth in the west gable wall; it is formed with brick cheeks and a stone lintel with a roughly hewn throat (the hearth of B appears to have been similar but is concealed by an unsympathetic surround at present). Room H has no hearth and presumably received heat from the unceiled kitchen below.

The original functions of the outbuildings A and E are unknown but the former is said to have been open-fronted in the late 19th century in order to house the proprietor's carriage (a painting dated 1899, however, shows a cottage similar to that shown in Fig. 9.), and the latter to have been used for stabling<sup>6</sup>. The brick-built rear outshot of A existed by 1860<sup>7</sup>. The west window in the south wall of E was probably a doorway. Chamber E is heavily limewashed and A shows only traces of limewash; these observations are consistent with the suggested late 19th century uses of these buildings and give some clues as to their original functions - for animals and storage respectively.

Chamber F, the largest of the range, was a byre. It lies downhill from the rest of the building and has a blocked window in the E wall which from its size and position may be identified as an adapted mucking-out hole. North of this aperture and lower in the wall is a small 14 x 11 inch, (36 x 28cm) recess, now blocked and so of unknown depth, with a dressed stone lintel and a sill that has been cloured back. The present doorway in the S wall is an original one and the 1899 painting shows, to the W of it, a sliding door with a dormered dovecot above. There is one original window, and traces of another, in the N wall. The walls of the byre are heavily limewashed and the W gable has a row of 7 joist holes (an eighth no doubt destroyed by the insertion of a flue) 7 ft (2.1m) above the present floor level; it may have been associated with a hay-loft and indicates that the present roof's tie-beams, only a little higher, are not original.

## DISCUSSION

Cartographic evidence<sup>8</sup> suggests that Wester Acredyke was built between 1795 and 1817 and descriptions of tenants' farms in the Statistical Account and New Statistical Account<sup>9</sup> and the Board of Agriculture Reports of the late 18th and early 19th centuries<sup>10</sup> largely confirm this. However, in 1812 Graham stated that for the small farms, seldom exceeding 30 acres, in Stirlingshire the proprietors could not afford costly buildings and the tenants built low, small and uncomfortable houses few of which were slated and still fewer of more than one storey<sup>11</sup>.

The 1½-storeyed house of lime mortared rubble with A-framed couples supporting a slated roof, plastered walls and ceilings, boarded floors and with three of the five rooms heated by hearths with gable flues is clearly a post-improvement building<sup>12</sup>. Agricultural improvement incurred late and slowly in Stirlingshire<sup>13</sup> but lime was quarried extensively in Baldernock and coal was the usual fuel by 1794, its abundance in the parish making it less costly than peat<sup>14</sup>, so that building with lime mortar, early adoption of gable flues, and the use of brick, which was locally available<sup>15</sup>, were encouraged.

Early in the improvement period the buildings of small dairy farms in the western part of Central Scotland were of linear form, like their predecessors the longhouses, but the larger, and later, farms had courtyard arrangements<sup>16</sup>. In Baldernock, of 37 farms established before 1817<sup>17</sup> and shown in the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition maps, surveyed in 1860, 24 had buildings arranged to form a courtyard, 6 were of irregular arrangement, and 7, of which Wester Acredyke alone remains, were of linear form; these last had holdings averaging 27 acres (range 5 to 51 acres) which was less than half the average size of the others (69 acres, range 12 to 160 acres)<sup>18</sup>.

Houses with hearth-entry plan form, which is generally considered to be a development of the longhouse plan, are common in the Southern half of Wales and in two belts (East Devon to the Cotswolds, and Cumberland to the West Riding of Yorkshire) across England<sup>19</sup>, but extremely rare in Northern Ireland<sup>20</sup> and rare in the rest of Ireland and in Scotland<sup>21</sup>.



In Scotland the pre-improvement farmhouses which were often longhouses<sup>22</sup>, commonly had open, central, peat-burning hearths; these were replaced by gable hearths in improved farmhouses<sup>23</sup> which, whatever their sizes and relationships to the steadings, tended to have symmetrical plans with central doorways<sup>24</sup>. Two early 18th century longhouses in the locality, Leys<sup>25</sup> and Over Croy<sup>26</sup>, each of four units, one a byre, and with a cross-passage opening into the kitchen by a hearth-gable-entry, seem to represent a transitional form.

The cross-passage, a common feature of longhouses, was not universal in Scotland<sup>27</sup> and in Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire<sup>28</sup>, and North Yorkshire by the 19th century<sup>29</sup>, the back door was sometimes dispensed with when the lower end was no longer a byre and had become a service room. In some Welsh examples this room was combined with the cross-passage<sup>30</sup>.

Hearth-entry plan forms are unusual in improved farmhouses in Scotland and chimneys in the centre of the roof ridge are very rare; these features, taken with the small numbers of farm buildings of linear arrangement remaining in the area, make Wester Acredyke of particular interest.

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BYRE FITTINGS: A NOTE ON OPEN-FRAMED STALLS

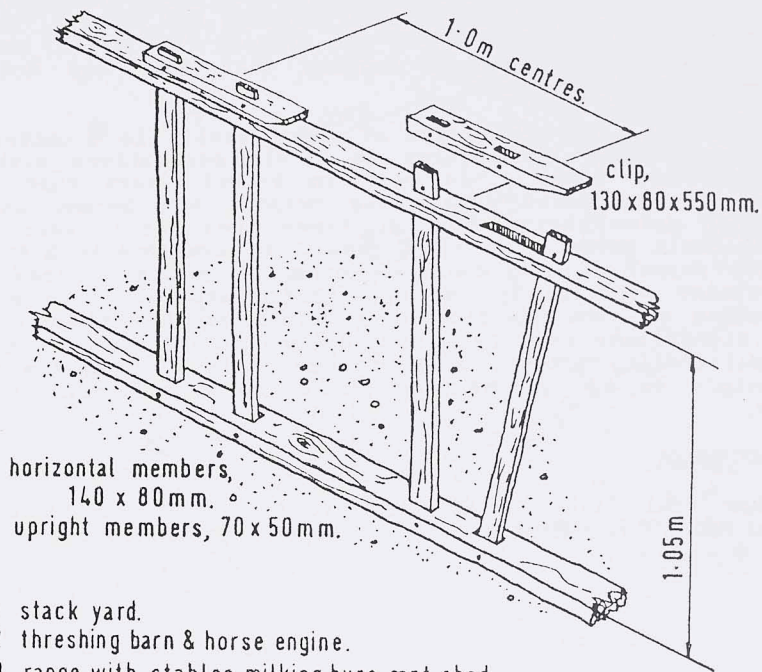
In byres it is usual to see a chain used to keep a beast in its stall, but two examples have recently been noted at random of wooden frames used for this purpose. It is not known to the writer how common or rare this practice was, and the aim of this note is simply to place these details on record to provoke further comment.

Balranald Farm on North Uist (Outer Hebrides, N.G.R., NF 718698, see Fig. 10) is a very large planned farm said to be noted for its Highland cattle. This may be a clue to the design of its stalls, although it is not certain that such cattle are brought inside during winter. Two of the buildings which form part of the farm square are used as byres, and in all have 80 open-framed stalls.

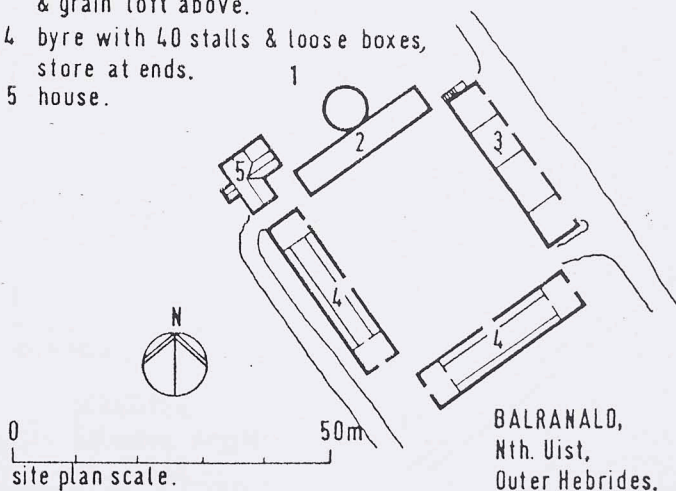
The principal horizontal members of these stalls are constructed parallel to the side walls and 0.5m from the inner wall-faces. The lower member is fixed to the cobbled floor, whilst the upper member sits directly above it, and is supported by framed uprights and braces secured to the wall. The gap between the wall and the framework serves as a feeding space. For each stall there are two vertical uprights; one is fixed, and the other is movable and pivoted in the lower horizontal member. The top end of the movable upright is in a slot 0.20m long. The top ends of both uprights project by 0.10m, and onto these ends a double slotted wooden clip is fitted. When the movable member is in a closed vertical position, 0.18m from the fixed member (thereby trapping the head of the beast), locking pins may be fitted through the clip and the uprights. All the wood used is red pine.

A second similar example has been noted at Scrutton on Colonsay, Argyll, Inner Hebrides (NR 375957, Fig. 11). This small steading contains a well fitted three-stall stable, a horse-powered threshing machine (driven by one horse), an implement shed, a loose byre, and a larger byre with eleven open-framed stalls. Five of the eleven stalls are arranged along one cross wall, and the remaining six along the other. Unlike the North Uist example, there are passages on either side of the byre providing direct access to the feeding space. In addition to the doorways to these passages, there is a central mucking-out passage with a door at each end. The OS 6-inch map of 1900 does not show the south projection or the horse-walk, so these probably represent later changes and additions.

The wooden framework for the stalls comprises principal horizontal members positioned 1.50m from the walls, the lower member being fixed to the floor, and the upper member being set at a height of 1.40m. There are two uprights for each stall, one fixed and the other movable. The latter pivots in its socket in the lower horizontal member, and its top end passes through a slot 0.35m long in the upper horizontal member. In the closed vertical position, the movable upright is 0.18m away from, and parallel to, the fixed upright. Its top end projects 0.08m and is secured by a rectangular wrought-iron clip which is made of 7mm square-bar, one end of which is fixed to the upper horizontal member by a heavyweight staple. The feeding passage between the walls and the stalls incorporates a secondary wooden frame (not shown in the drawing) which contains the feedstuff and supports the main frame.



- 1 stack yard.
- 2 threshing barn & horse engine.
- 3 range with stables, milking byre, cart shed,  
& grain loft above.
- 4 byre with 40 stalls & loose boxes,  
store at ends.
- 5 house.



BALRANALD,  
Nth. Uist,  
Outer Hebrides.  
NF718698.

Fig. 10

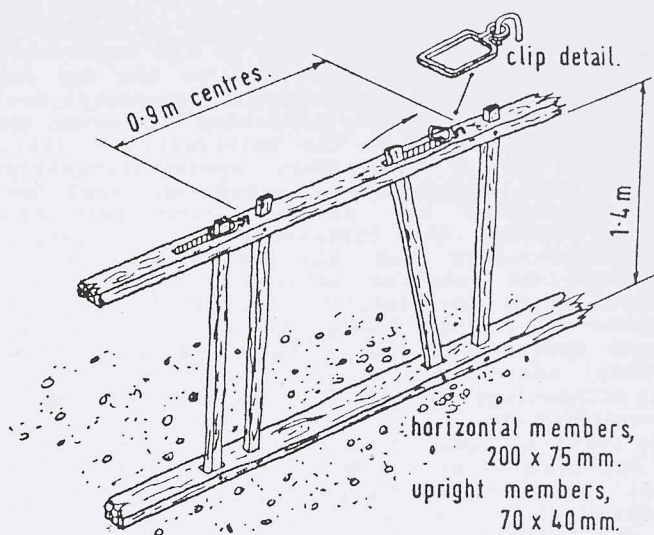
Farm plans drawn by D. MacDonald in 1910 (copies in National Monuments Record of Scotland) provide details of all the large farms on Colonsay and Oronsay. They show that, in addition to the farm at Scrutton, those at Balarumindubh (NR 386923), Balnahard (NR 414993), Machrins (NR 366937) and Oronsay (NR 348888) had open-framed stalls. The drawings suggest that they did not occur elsewhere on the two islands.

The reasoning behind the design of these stalls is uncertain, but it is possible that it relates to safety precautions within the byre. It seems that it is only in recent years that polling (removing of the horns from young beasts) has become universal practice in animal husbandry. In times when cattle were allowed to retain their horns, this would have been hazardous both to fellow beast and farmer in the confined space of a byre, necessitating the restraint provided by the open-framed stalls. Such a system also ensures an even distribution of feed to the animals. It is perhaps significant that many modern open-plan byres are equipped with 'self-locking yokes' (made of steel tubes) which are similar in principle to the open-framed stalls noted in North Uist and Colonsay.

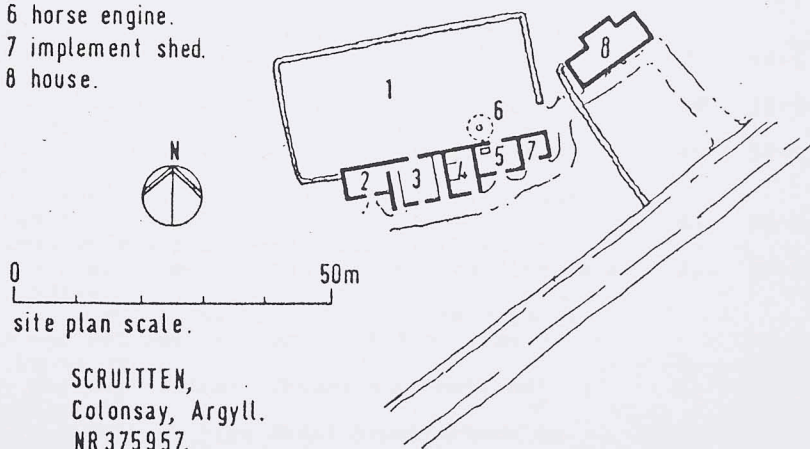
#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Geoffrey Stell and Miles Ogleshorpe in the compilation of this paper.





- 1 stack yard.
- 2 loose byre.
- 3 main byre with 11 stalls.
- 4 stable with 3 stalls.
- 5 threshing barn.
- 6 horse engine.
- 7 implement shed.
- 8 house.



SCRUITTEN,  
Colonsay, Argyll.  
NR 375957.

Fig. 11

## OBITUARY

HORACE FAIRHURST, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot

Dr. Horace Fairhurst, former Head of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Glasgow, died on the 2nd July, 1986 at the age of 78. A graduate of Liverpool University, he taught geography for many years in Glasgow University and when the Department of Archaeology was formed at the University in 1961, he became its first head. As a geographer, and particularly an historical geographer, his major interest was in rural settlement studies and in particular the evolution and morphology of Highland settlements before the Clearances or Improvements. During the years between 1960 and his retirement in 1973, his major contributions to Scottish settlement studies developed from the much-quoted paper on Scottish clachans in 1960 to the pioneering excavations at Lix in Perthshire and Rosal in Strathnaver. The scope and methods of these researches were demonstrated in his Presidential address to the Glasgow Archaeological Society in 1967 on the archaeology of rural settlement in Scotland. His other major contributions to Scottish archaeology were in the field of Iron Age fortifications and settlements, ranging from the excavations of the hut circles at Kilphedir in the Strath of Kildonan, to the broch at Crosskirk in Caithness. In 1981 he published a very successful book on the archaeology and history of the island of Arran. His enthusiasm for his subject was evident in his teaching, and he will be greatly missed by many former students, colleagues and friends.

Alex. Morrison

Anne Kahane  
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