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welcomes contributions for the next *Transactions* (VOL. XXVII)

Front cover illustration: John Hamilton, 2nd Lord Belhaven, by John Medina. The year 2008 marks the tri-centenary of the death of this East Lothian landowner and fervent anti-unionist. (National Galleries of Scotland)

Back cover illustration: Beil House, East Lothian, the residence of John Hamilton, 2nd Lord Belhaven; Photograph by George Washington Wilson. (Private Collection)

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Figure 1: This large and complex system of enclosures at West Mains, near Tranent, represent the ploughed-down remains of an Iron-Age fort, almost certainly with multiple phases of construction. The road cutting across the fort and the overlying buildings give an impression of the scale of the site, which is known only because it has been recorded as cropmarking on aerial photographs. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, SC1004890, 1994)

CROPMARKED:
AERIAL SURVEY AND THE
PLOUGH-LEVELLED ARCHAEOLOGY
OF EAST LOTHIAN

by D. C. COWLEY

ABSTRACT

Scotland's lowland landscapes have seen centuries of agriculture that have levelled sites and monuments of earlier date. The potential to discover ploughed-down archaeological sites revealed by differential crop growth – or cropmarking – has been a major driver of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) aerial survey programme since it was set up in 1976. From that time, and building on intermittent earlier work, thousands of such sites have been discovered and placed on record, revolutionising our understanding of these areas. Nowhere is this more true than in East Lothian, where dense distributions of otherwise invisible archaeological sites have emerged from three decades of cropmark survey. The following paper presents a brief review of this material, highlighting the contribution this survey has made, and will continue to make, to the study of later prehistoric settlement patterns in East Lothian.

INTRODUCTION

Aerial reconnaissance across lowland arable areas during summer months is an established technique for recording plough-levelled monuments. They are revealed during dry years as differential crop development, known as cropmarking. This approach affords a means of recording monuments that archaeologists have no other efficient means of discovering.

East Lothian has now benefited from over three decades of intensive aerial prospection, during which many hundreds of plough-levelled monuments have been placed on record (see fig 1). Cropmarks, generally revealing the buried ditches of ploughed-down monuments, require well-drained soils, (usually) an arable crop and a dry summer to form effectively. East Lothian has the benefit of lying on the drier east coast of Scotland, with a good selection of well-drained soils that have generally been set to arable crops. Paradoxically, it is these very qualities that dispose an area to producing good cropmarks that also make good arable agricultural areas in which successive phases of farming have progressively destroyed or levelled monuments of earlier date. Indeed, apart from on the rough

pasture and moorland extending up into the Lammermuirs to the south, there are only a few upstanding monuments remaining, such as the Iron-Age hillfort known as the Chesters, near Drem, and of course Traprain Law, and these have only survived the onslaught of centuries of ploughing courtesy of their topographic setting.
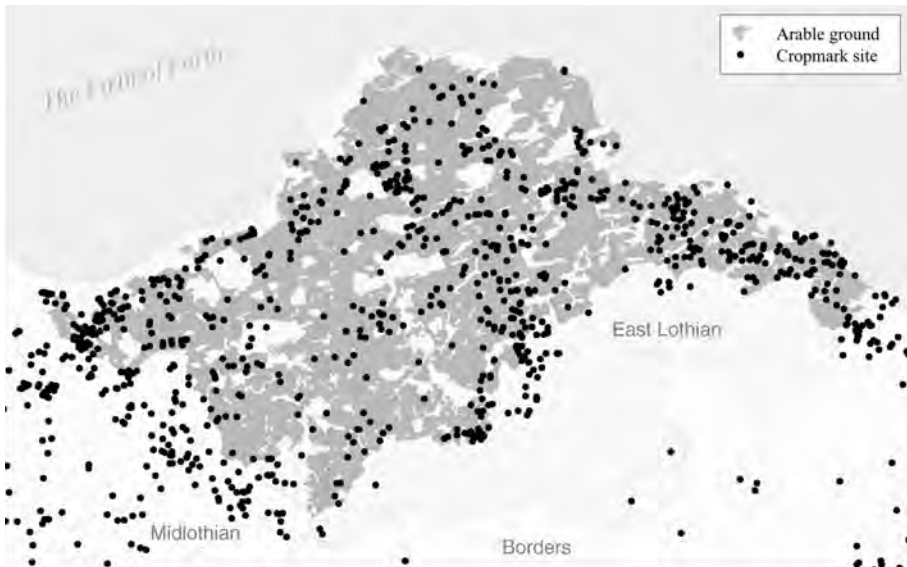

Figure 2: The distribution of plough-levelled sites recorded as cropmarks, shown against the generalised extent of arable ground in East Lothian. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS; arable ground derived from MLURI mapping based on 1988 aerial photography)

The impact of aerial survey on the distribution of known archaeological monuments in the county is immediately apparent on the map of the plough-levelled monuments recorded to date (fig 2). This extensive distribution of sites is a testament to patient survey year on year, gradually collecting the pieces of a complex and incomplete jigsaw.

The archaeological promise of East Lothian was flagged up as early as the 1920s, and from the mid-1940s until the 1970s the county was surveyed regularly by Cambridge University, supplemented by local fliers such as Dennis Harding and Colin Martin from the 1970s to the early 1990s. However, it was the establishment of the RCAHMS aerial survey programme in 1976 that put the survey of the lowland areas of Scotland on a consistent footing (e.g., Maxwell 1983), and East Lothian has been surveyed from the air every summer since. In fact, the first RCAHMS flight, on 16 July 1976, included East Lothian. In addition to the aerial

reconnaissance and photography described above, RCAHMS holds over 1.5 million vertical aerial photographs, and amongst these are images taken during excellent conditions, such as the dry summer of 1977, that also inform the process of mapping the archaeology of the county.

Very few of these cropmark sites could have been recorded by any other means and the archaeological record of East Lothian's past would be an impoverished one without them. In addition to the long-standing and ongoing programme of aerial reconnaissance, Kevin Macleod of RCAHMS has recently completed a concerted programme of mapping these cropmarked sites, transcribing the cropmark information recorded on the oblique aerial photographs onto a digital map. For the first time the results of every year's survey have been placed on the same footing with a detailed interpretation. This interpreted digital map can support more detailed analysis and presentation, as well as providing accurate locations and extents of sites for planning and conservation purposes. A full analysis of these results is well beyond the scope of this paper, which will, instead, provide a flavour of the character of the archaeological record that has been created.

AN EMERGING LANDSCAPE

The distribution of sites recorded (see fig 2) has been built up incrementally year on year, though the broad pattern of sites had been established by the 1980s. Most years, even those that have not been very promising because of poor weather, have produced new discoveries or enhancements of previously recorded sites that have helped to pull the overall picture into sharper focus. The incremental nature of the record can be illustrated at a very localised scale at Mungoswells, where a settlement enclosure (fig 3, A), crossed by a boundary between differing cropping regimes, may only ever be recorded partially in any given year because of the varying responsiveness of the crops. This illustrates, in microcosm, the essentially serendipitous nature of visibility, discovery and recording of monuments that appear due to a complex interplay of factors, in a pattern that can be multiplied up across the landscape. In this case, the choice of cropping regime by the farmer directly impacts on the likelihood that a site will produce a cropmark, even before the variables such as weather patterns and the dryness of the summer are taken into account. Nonetheless, over 1000 sites have been recorded, ranging from what would have been substantial forts dominating their locality (see fig 1), to individual farmsteads and houses dispersed across the countryside.

The character of the cropmark record places some limitations on the level of interpretation. Firstly, though computer-aided mapping provides accurate locations and renderings of the features visible as cropmarking on the aerial photography,
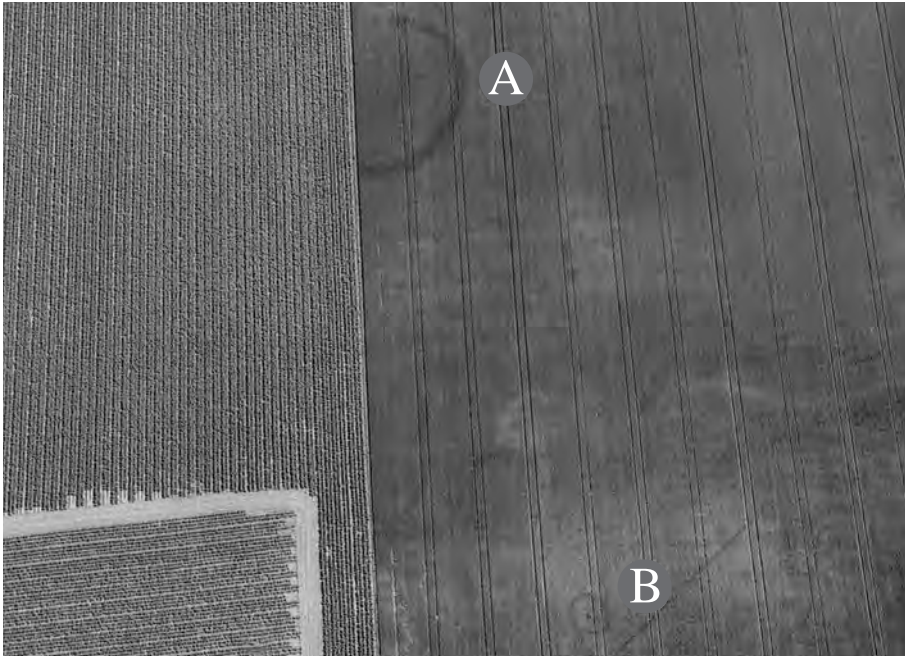
*Figure 3: Mungoswells, near Drem. The visibility of the later prehistoric settlement enclosure (A)
on this image is directly related to the cropping regimes, with responsive cereals to the right and less
responsive potatoes to the left. The small ring ditch (B) is probably the remains of a round ditched
barrow, with a central burial pit. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, SC622566, 1992)*

it is clear from excavated sites that the cropmarks are generally a fairly coarsely
filtered view of what lies beneath the topsoil (fig 4). Secondly, the marshalling
of these sites is heavily dependent on grouping material by broad morphology,
which can be developed by analogy with excavated sites to provide a general
regional framework. This is certainly the case for later prehistoric settlement,
where excavations over the last 30 or so years provide a suite of analogous sites
with dating evidence (e.g., Alexander & Watkins 1998; Dunwell 2007; Haselgrove
& McCullagh 2000, 186-9; Haselgrove forthcoming; Hill 1982). There are,
however, still areas of ambiguity in the interpretation of many sites, whose date
and function can only be guessed at.

The aerial survey data has had its most profound impact on the study of
later prehistoric settlement, a period when enclosures of various types appear
to dominate the record. These have the advantage of being easily recognised
during aerial survey, in contrast to discrete, small remains (e.g., unenclosed later
prehistoric houses), which are therefore likely to be under-represented in the record.

Figure 4: Aerial view of the excavated remains at Dryburn Bridge, East Lothian. The fine detail revealed during excavation, for example of the late prehistoric palisaded enclosures, houses and pits visible here, is always coarsely filtered when revealed by cropmarking. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, EL/4175, 1979)

However, aerial survey has also made some contribution to our understanding of earlier prehistoric monuments of Neolithic and Bronze-Age date, and has also hinted at the potential for early medieval settlement, a period that to date has proved fairly elusive across much of Scotland.

By comparison with some areas, such as Dumfries and Galloway (e.g., Cowley & Brophy 2001), East Lothian is notable for the paucity of recognisable earlier prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments. The Neolithic cursus monument at Drylaw Hill, beside East Linton, is the single example of this class of site in the county (Barclay 1998), and other types of monuments, such as the ploughed-down long barrows recorded to the north of the Forth, are not represented at all. Bronze-Age barrows are almost certainly present amongst the plethora of ring-ditches in the cropmark record, but in the absence of a clear central grave pit it is difficult to make this interpretation definitive (but see fig 3, B for an example). Sites of potentially early medieval date are rare, but include possible sunken-floored buildings, while the rectangular buildings recorded at Whitekirk (fig 5) may be a medieval farmstead.

The exploration of aspects of the cropmark archaeology of East Lothian will be structured through a case study of a generally representative area near Gifford, following a brief discussion of sites at Congalton.

*Figure 5: The bedding trench for what may be a rectangular building (A) of medieval date has been
recorded as cropmarks at Whitekirk. Fragmentary remains of a further building lie at right-angles
and a conjoined series of enclosures or plots extends to the top left. The overlap of
building (A) and the enclosures indicates that they cannot have co-existed.
(Crown copyright: RCAHMS, DP 020077, 2006)*

SETTLEMENT DYNAMICS IN THE LANDSCAPE: CONGALTON

The sites at Congalton (figs 6 & 7), lying just to the north of East Fortune,
are an excellent illustration of the potential for cropmarks to reveal fine detail. Two
settlement enclosures, one rectilinear (A), the other oval (B), can be seen (fig 7).
An alignment of pits (C) crosses the square settlement and extends across the
centre of the image, also crossing a cluster of conjoined circular and oval 'blobs'
(D) that probably mark the remains of a settlement of unenclosed round-houses.
The differing dark and light tones on the image reflect variations in the depth of
soil, with darker tones over deeper soils. Thus the various settlement remains have
been recorded against shallower soils that probably lie on slightly higher ground
than, for example, the broad band of deeper soils that extends from bottom left
to top right and is probably a shallow in-filled gully. In the settlement remains
themselves, the darker cropmarks all define negative features, such a ditches,
scoops and trenches, dug into what is probably sand and gravel subsoil.

Figure 6: The location of East Lothian and the two case studies referred to in the text.
(Crown copyright: RCAHMS)

Broadly speaking, the sites on fig 7 date to the first millennium BC and early centuries AD; the oval settlement (B) to the first half of the first millennium BC, the pit-alignment (C) perhaps a boundary belonging to the mid-first millennium BC, and the square and unenclosed settlement (A and D) to the later centuries BC and/or early centuries AD. These sites may illustrate the dynamism of some aspects of settlement in the landscape, with a marked general tendency for settlement to shift locations, rather than necessarily reoccupying the same locations continuously (e.g., Alexander & Watkins 1998, 251; Halliday 2007). Evidence for sequences of settlement enclosures is relatively rare, though the rectilinear settlement (A) does exhibit two distinct phases of enclosure that cannot have co-existed. The pencil-thin cropmark marks the line of a palisade trench. This runs parallel to the inner lip of the broader ditch on the north side of the enclosure, crossing the broad ditch and, on the west, running down the outside of the broad ditch, so creating two distinct, but overlapping footprints. The relationship of the pit-alignment (C) to the settlement it crosses is ambiguous, but they cannot have co-existed.

In the case of the two distinct lines of enclosure visible at the oval settlement (B), their strict concentricity suggests that they may be a single conception. The pencil-thin cropmark is the line of an internal timber palisade, presumably flanked
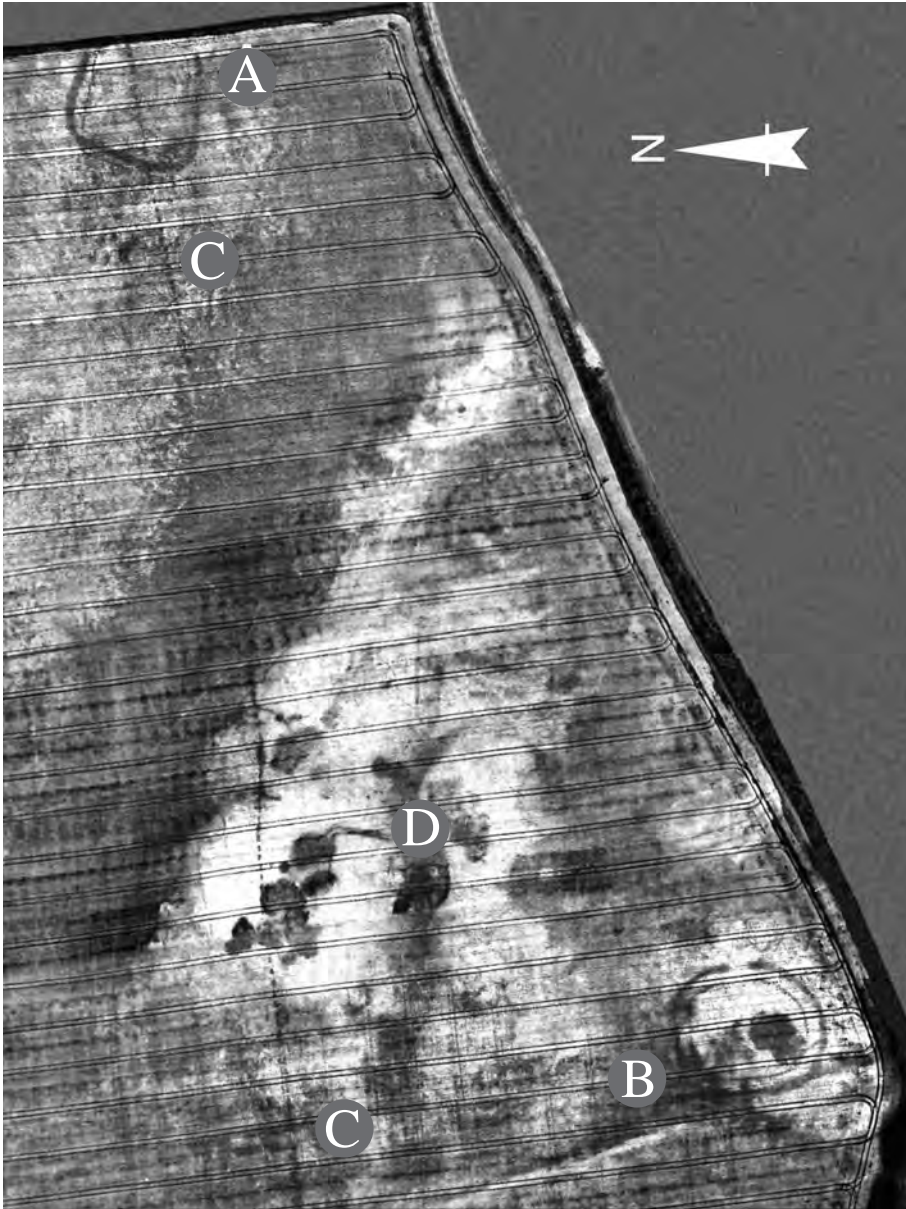
Figure 7: This image records a complex of settlement and landuse remains at Congalton, East Fortune. The image is a composite of two aerial photographs that have been corrected from the oblique view of the photographs to a true plan view. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, C52618 & C52622, 1995)

by an external bank (for which there is no aerial photographic evidence), with a broad ditch beyond. The 'blob' in the interior is less easy to interpret, but it may be the dished floors of two overlapping round-houses, one of which intersects the line of the palisade. This interpretation can be extended to the cluster of 'blobs' to the north (D), where the strictly circular features are likely to be the inter-cutting scooped floors of successions of round-houses. The example to the top right of the complex is a good case in point. Round-houses with scooped floors have become an increasingly common feature at excavated sites, such as Broxmouth (Hill 1982, 173-5), Knowes (Haselgrove forthcoming) and Phantassie (Lelong & MacGregor 2007), which inform the interpretation of what are otherwise rather amorphous cropmarks as unenclosed settlements of later prehistoric date.

SITES IN THE LANDSCAPE: THE GIFFORD WATER

The Gifford Water (fig 6) is one of a series of small rivers that drain the northern flanks of the Lammermuir Hills. It is a tributary of the River Tyne, which it joins just south of Haddington, and this case study area lies on the southern fringe of the coastal plain at the point where the ground begins to rise towards the hills. As such it is a little more fragmented by deeply incised watercourses, patches of unimproved ground and tree-planting than some parts of the plain. However, in general terms, it is dominated by arable and is broadly representative of many parts of East Lothian, illustrating the main themes of the cropmark material well.

Surviving earthworks are limited to those on the fringes of the unimproved ground to the south, and those that survive in landscape features such as shelter belts (for example, an earthwork at Cross Hill to the east of Gifford). Aerial reconnaissance and subsequent mapping of plough-levelled monuments recorded as cropmarks has produced a general spread of sites across the study area. The distribution of known sites is not even and, for example, the north-west corner of the illustrated area (fig 8) is blank despite many years of survey. This coincides with local deposits of imperfectly drained soils that do not tend to produce cropmarks, mirroring regional patterns of dense site distributions interspersed by stubbornly blank areas (see fig 2). The character of the area and the disposition of sites in it are illustrated in an aerial photograph taken from above the later prehistoric fort at Park Burn (fig 9, A; fig 8). The fort survives as an earthwork just beyond the edge of the improved and arable ground, beyond which centuries of agriculture have levelled sites of earlier date. The locations of the monuments recorded as cropmarks over the decades of reconnaissance are identified on the image, amply illustrating how this technique has populated our past landscapes with otherwise invisible sites.

Figure 8: The distribution of later prehistoric settlement and landuse near Gifford. With the exception of three earthworks, all sites have been levelled by the plough and recorded as cropmarks on aerial photography. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS; arable ground derived from MLURI mapping based on 1988 aerial photography)

CROPMARKED: AERIAL SURVEY AND THE PLOUGH-LEVELLED ARCHAEOLOGY OF EAST LOTHIAN

In common with the rest of East Lothian, the majority of the sites appear to form part of a suite of monuments that can be broadly dated to the period between about 1000 BC and the early centuries AD. A selection of these is illustrated and discussed below.

Figure 9: This view looking roughly north across the Newlands and Danskine Burns, both minor tributaries of the Gifford Water, illustrates the character of this area. There are few earthworks (A and B) and these lie on the fringes of the arable and improved grassland. The locations of plough-levelled sites that have been discovered during aerial survey are indicated by black squares superimposed on the image, illustrating how impoverished the archaeological record would be without them. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, J Dewar, EL/4802, 1971)

Figure 10: What must have been a substantial defended fort (A) at Yester Castle was defended by up to four ramparts, the ditches of which are visible as darker cropmarks (1-4), describing an arc against the steeply sloping, tree-covered valley side. The remains of the medieval castle (B) lie just across the valley. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, B24745, 1989)

YESTER CASTLE

Deeply incised watercourses are a feature of southern East Lothian, and it is not surprising that many sites, which may have been built with defensive considerations in mind, have been placed to take advantage of steeply sloping valley sides. The fort (fig 10, A; fig 8) beside Yester Castle (B), which is probably of Iron-Age date, lies on a low rise against the edge of an incised watercourse, across which are the tree-shrouded remains of the medieval castle. The visible remains of the fort have been reduced to the cropmarks formed over ditches, which describe an arc backing onto the west side of the gully. The adjacent stump of the medieval castle, the trees and the tractor tracks through the crop all demonstrate the size of the site. The internal area is about 80m across, and is set within three, and probably four, ditches, each of which would presumably have been flanked by a bank. The broadest of the ditches is some 6m across – all in all a substantial defensive scheme that points to the likely importance of this site in the Iron Age as a seat of power which may be echoed in the adjacent medieval castle. Indeed, the Iron-Age fort may have seen occupation in the early medieval period as well.
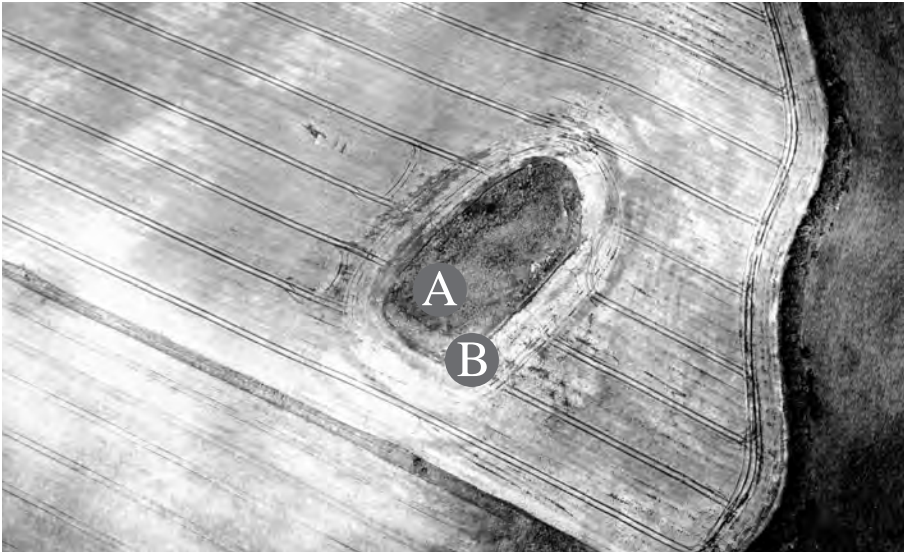
Figure 11: The fort at Pens Roundall sits on a low knoll that has protected the inner rampart (A) from the plough, while the outer two ramparts (B) have been levelled by agriculture and their ditches have been recorded as cropmarks. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, E36830, 2003)

PENS ROUNDALL

A second example of a fort, at Pens Roundall (fig 11; fig 8), occupies a low knoll to the north of the Dumbadam Burn, and in this case ditches describe the complete circuit of a roughly oval plan. Its location on a knoll, which is presumably only covered in a thin soil and is an impediment to ploughing, has served to preserve the line of the inner rampart as a low bank (A) in a patch of unimproved ground (darker on the photograph). The bank is flanked by a ditch, seen most clearly to the bottom left of the image at the edge of the cereal crop, and the presence of two further ramparts can be seen in the cropmarks beyond (B). This is a good illustration of the vulnerability of even the most substantial monuments to the depredations of the plough, which has removed all but the most resilient component of this site, and that probably only because the underlying solid geology comes close to the surface.

PISHWANTON WOOD

Less substantial enclosures are very well represented in the cropmark record and are more likely to be the regular settlements or farmsteads of their day. Two very different examples lie on a broad terrace to the south of Pishwanton Wood (fig 12; fig 8). One is roughly square on plan (A), measuring about 40 m across within a substantial ditch some 5m across, which was presumably supplemented by a bank

on its inner lip. It is typical of a group of rectilinear settlements that are common in southern Scotland and northern England, with their origins in the middle centuries of the first millennium BC, and probably a floruit in the last two centuries BC – first two centuries AD (e.g., Cowley 2000, 172-3; RCAHMS 1997, 154-5). These settlement enclosures often contain at least one round-house, lying at the back of a scooped yard inside the entrance, and the dark 'blobs' visible in the interior of this example may relate to these features.

The second settlement on this image (B on fig 12; fig 8) lies a short distance to the east and is roughly circular on plan. Measuring about 35m in diameter, its perimeter is markedly narrow by comparison with the rectilinear settlement, and the tractor lines in the crop show that the boundary is less than 1m across. As such, the cropmark probably marks the line of a bedding trench for a timber palisade, which enclosed this settlement. This type of palisaded settlement probably has its origins
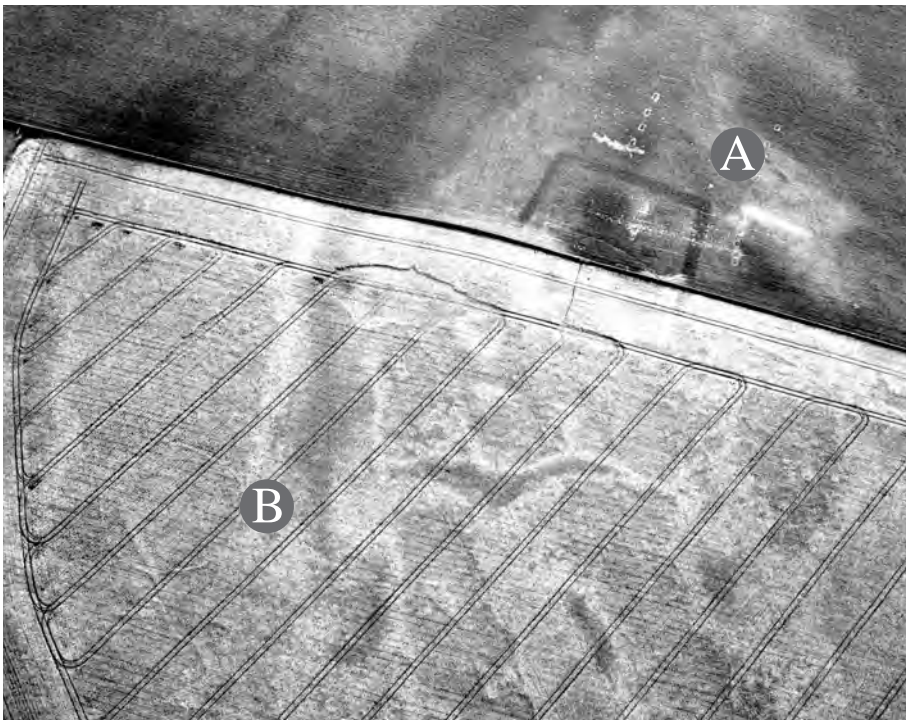

Figure 12: Two adjacent sites of different date at Pishwanton Wood have been recorded on this image: one (A) predominately as differential lushness in grass (i.e. darker is greener) and the other (B) in a cereal crop. The small light rectangular features around the square enclosure (A) are the former locations of modern stock-feed containers. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, B24753, 1989)

in the early and middle centuries of the first millennium BC, and like the rectilinear settlements is a recurrent feature of southern Scotland and northern England. However, it is worth noting a subtle faceting in the line of the palisade trench, suggesting that it is made up of a series of straight sections, rather than being a true circle. This is a feature that can be paralleled at the excavated early medieval timber hall at Doon Hill, south of Dunbar (Hope-Taylor 1980), and further afield, at Upper Gothens in Perthshire (Barclay 2001). On the current state of knowledge, the construction of palisades in straight sections may occur over a broad chronological spectrum, but it is an issue that would repay further assessment of the cropmark record and subsequent excavation.

Figure 13: Two roughly parallel pit-alignments (A and B) cut across the short axis of a ridge between two incised watercourses, which are minor tributaries of the Gifford Water. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS, EL/3545, 1977)
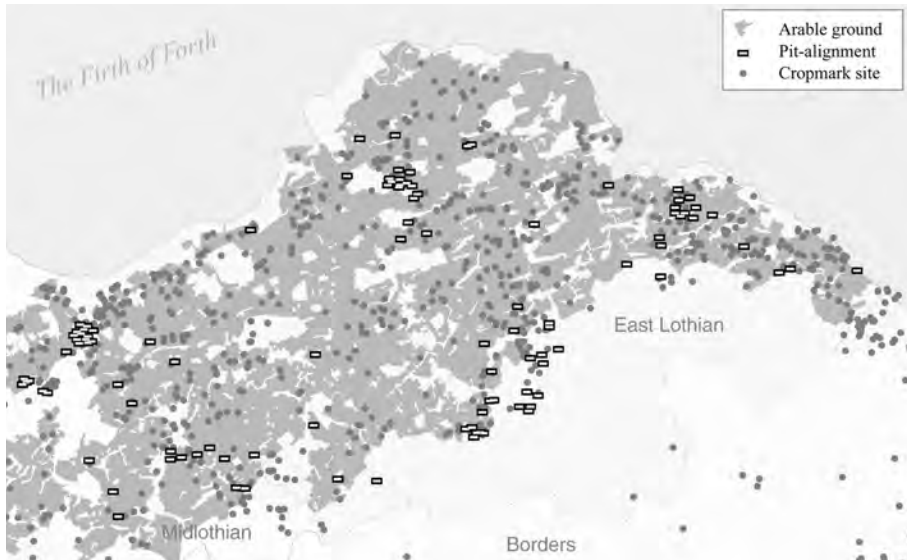
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Figure 14: The distribution of pit-defined boundaries in East Lothian shown against the generalised extent of arable ground and all sites recorded as cropmarks. (Crown copyright: RCAHMS; arable ground derived from MLURI mapping based on 1988 aerial photography)

PIT-ALIGNMENTS

In addition to abundant settlements, eastern and southern Scotland has widespread evidence for later prehistoric boundaries or land division (Halliday 1982). These are most often referred to as 'pit-alignments' because of their appearance in the cropmark record as lines of pits, arranged as a string of beads (fig 13, A & B; fig 8). In fig 13, two pit-alignments extend across a low ridge between the Hopes Water and the Newlands Burn, in a common, but by no means ubiquitous, disposition relative to the deeply incised valleys of the area. Typically, these boundaries take a 'wandering' line across the landscape, and examples that have survived as earthworks suggest that the pits are likely to have been supplemented by an upcast bank, perhaps the ideal base for a hedge line.

While there are isolated examples, the majority lie in local clusters in the wider landscape (fig 14). The contrast of the clustered pit-alignment distribution with the general spread of other cropmark sites demonstrates that their disposition is not a random one, reflecting survey bias, but rather a real reflection of a patterning in the locations of these monuments in the past. Furthermore, many of these clusters concentrate around major hillforts, and in a few cases form relatively coherent systems of enclosure. There is an excellent example of such a system

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of enclosure beside a fort at Kaeheughs, Barney Mains (fig 15), on the Garleton Hills, north of Haddington and so outside the Gifford Water case study area. It appears that the distribution of this monument type probably reflects patterns in later prehistoric economic and political structures (Cowley & Dickson 2007, 49-50), with the emergence of distinct areas of enclosed or otherwise delineated landscape, perhaps associated with a centre of power and potentially specialised forms of landuse, mixing stock and arable. The dating of the pit-alignments and the sites with which they may have been associated suggests that this pattern may have emerged by the mid-first millennium BC (Halliday 2002).

Figure 15: The fort at Kaeheughs, Barney Mains (A) survives as earthworks, while the complex remains of an enclosure system (B) and a palisaded enclosure (C) have been recorded as cropmarks in the field below. Most elements of the enclosure system are made up of closely spaced pits, arranged as a string of beads and are likely to have been supplemented by an upcast bank. The enclosures may relate to stock control at a site that may have been locally pre-eminent. (Copyright: D Harding, EL/4122, 1979)

CONCLUSIONS

All the sites presented above, and many thousands more across lowland Scotland, would not have been on record without ongoing programmes of aerial reconnaissance targeting cropmarks in lowland areas during the summer months. This has provided extensive evidence of the distribution of past settlement, and in many areas forms the greater proportion of our evidence. The mapping of this material is providing accurate locations and drawn characterisations to inform management and analysis of trends in settlement and landuse in space and through time.

Systematic mapping and interpretation forms the basis for analysis of factors such as potential bias introduced by survey methodology, soil types and landuse (e.g., Cowley 2002; Cowley & Dickson 2007). The consolidation of knowledge also informs the ongoing process of survey, where gaps in distributions and other questions can be addressed as reconnaissance continues. There are, of course, frustrations in dealing with the cropmark evidence, where despite the visible detail, sites can only be broadly dated by analogy. Relative sequences between sites are rare, and where they exist they can be difficult to tease out with any certainty. Where this survey data is so important is that it is the only basis on which to look at broad patterns in the landscape and through time. It is important to stress that patterns like those in the distributions of pit-alignments, and groupings like those of rectilinear settlements, are solidly established though the combination of survey material and excavated evidence, where the broad view from survey can be complemented by the detailed view from excavation.

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ANCIENT ELDBOTLE UNEARTHED: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR A LONG-LOST EARLY MEDIEVAL EAST LOTHIAN VILLAGE

## by JENNI MORRISON, RICHARD ORAM & FAY OLIVER

ABSTRACT

Archaeological investigations near Dirleton, East Lothian, have led to the discovery of the long-lost village of Eldbotle. The former existence of this settlement was well-known in historical documents, primarily as an example of the small group of early English place names in SE Scotland, but its actual location was uncertain. Recent survey and excavation work has located the site, and demonstrated that it retains deep and well-stratified archaeological deposits, including the remains of timber and stone structures. Radiocarbon dates and dateable artefacts demonstrate that these deposits span at least a millennium, from AD 400 to 1400, and therefore encompass the whole of the early medieval period, from before the earliest Anglian settlement in the Lothians through the development of the medieval Scottish kingdom. The archaeological potential of this site is unparalleled in SE Scotland and it is hoped that this paper will stimulate interest in the future.

INTRODUCTION

The former existence of a village named Eldbotle, near Dirleton (NT 4999 8515), is well-known from historic maps. It is first recorded as 'Old Battell' on the 1630 Hondius engraving of Pont's late 16th-century mapping of the Lothians (Pont, 1630). Eldbotle has primarily received attention from place-name researchers, as it is an interesting example of the small group of early English place names that extend from Northumberland into SE Scotland (Nicolaisen, 1976). The name is in the Northumbrian dialect of Old English, Eldbôtl, which means 'old dwelling-place'. The name is open to more than one interpretation. In relation to what, for example, is it the 'old' dwelling? Almost certainly not Neubôtl (Newbattle), in Midlothian (Nicolaisen, 1976, 77), as has been suggested on occasion. Is it 'old' in the sense that there was already a settlement there – or even the remains of one - when the Northumbrians arrived in the 7th century?

ANCIENT ELDBOTLE UNEARTHED: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR A LONG-LOST EARLY MEDIEVAL EAST LOTHIAN VILLAGE
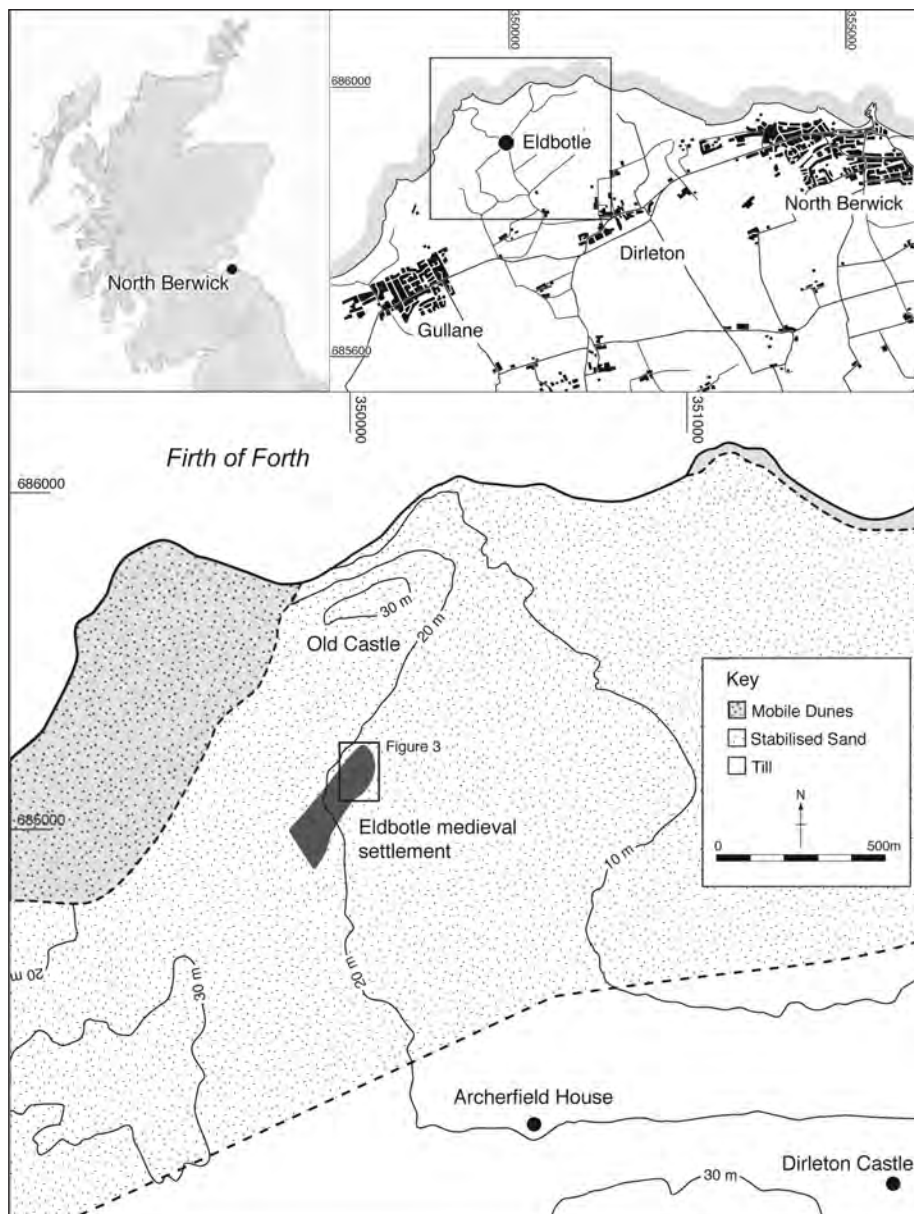
Figure 1: Eldbotle. Site location and landscape setting.
Scale 1:20,000. Drawn by Craig Williams.

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Whatever the precise meaning of the name, it implies the existence of a settlement in the early medieval period; and as Eldbotle no longer exists as an inhabited village so the site is accessible for archaeological investigation. This rare combination of factors creates a site with considerable potential to explore the development of medieval rural settlement in SE Scotland. The precise location of the settlement was identified as recently as 1999, during an archaeological evaluation of the surrounding land. In 2003, a small-scale excavation provided information on the nature of the archaeological deposits and structures, their date and condition (fig 1). The purpose of this paper is to present a summary of the findings of the 2003 excavation and discuss the potential of the site for medieval studies in the historical context of SE Scotland from the end of the Iron Age into the late-medieval period.

DISCOVERY OF THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

Figure 2: Midlothian and East Lothian. Location of sites mentioned in the text. Scale 1:50,000. Drawn by Craig Williams.

The general location of the village of Eldbotle is recorded on maps of seventeenth and eighteenth century date (fig 2), and the place name survives on recent Ordnance Survey mapping as Eldbotle Wood and Eldbotle Braes. However, the precise location of the medieval settlement has only recently been discovered. Since at least the 1960s there have been reports of surface finds of medieval

pottery from this general area (see National Monuments Record of Scotland sites NT58NW 11, NT48NE 2 and 4). Proposals by Caledonian Heritable Ltd. for a new golf course and related development in the Archerfield Estate triggered an archaeological evaluation and small-scale excavation of the land around Eldbotle by Headland Archaeology in 1999 (Moloney & Baker 2001).

The discovery of the medieval settlement in 1999 led to changes in the golf course development proposals, and the sensitive area was set aside as a golf practice area, thereby allowing almost all of the medieval deposits to be preserved *in situ*. In 2002 this part of the site was designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument in recognition of its national importance. Further golf development proposals on the land to the SW led to another archaeological evaluation and excavation in 2006. This work revealed further deposits and structures on the same alignment, suggesting the settlement covered an area of at least 4 ha. (The detailed results of this work by the AOC Archaeology Group were not available at the time of writing, but it is intended that they will form the basis of a second paper on Eldbotle, also to be published in these *Transactions* (Hindmarch 2006).

RESULTS OF THE 2003 EXCAVATION

STRATIGRAPHY AND DATING

During the excavation (fig 3), it was clear from the build-up of deposits on the site that there were several phases of activity represented; the artefacts indicated a date in the early centuries of the second millennium AD for all or most of them. However, a subsequent programme of radiocarbon dating (table 1) demonstrated that this interpretation was incorrect, and that the deposits actually spanned the period from AD 400 to 1400. Using a combination of stratigraphy, artefacts and radiocarbon dates, three distinct phases of activity have been identified.

PHASE 1: AD 400 - 670

The earliest phase was only identified after radiocarbon dating. Four dates were obtained on bone and charcoal from a stratigraphically isolated group of cut features at the S end of the excavation. Three dates span the period 400-670 (GU-12733, 12736 and 13054), whilst a fourth is calibrated to 1030-1230 (GU-12732). The only artefacts recovered were a few sherds of medieval pottery (23 in total from all phase 1 features), dateable to the twelfth - fourteenth century, and an undiagnostic iron staple. It is assumed that the pottery at least is intrusive, the result of animals burrowing in the sandy soils; the presence of rabbit bones in phase 1 features supports this interpretation. The single later radiocarbon date is also considered to reflect intrusive material.
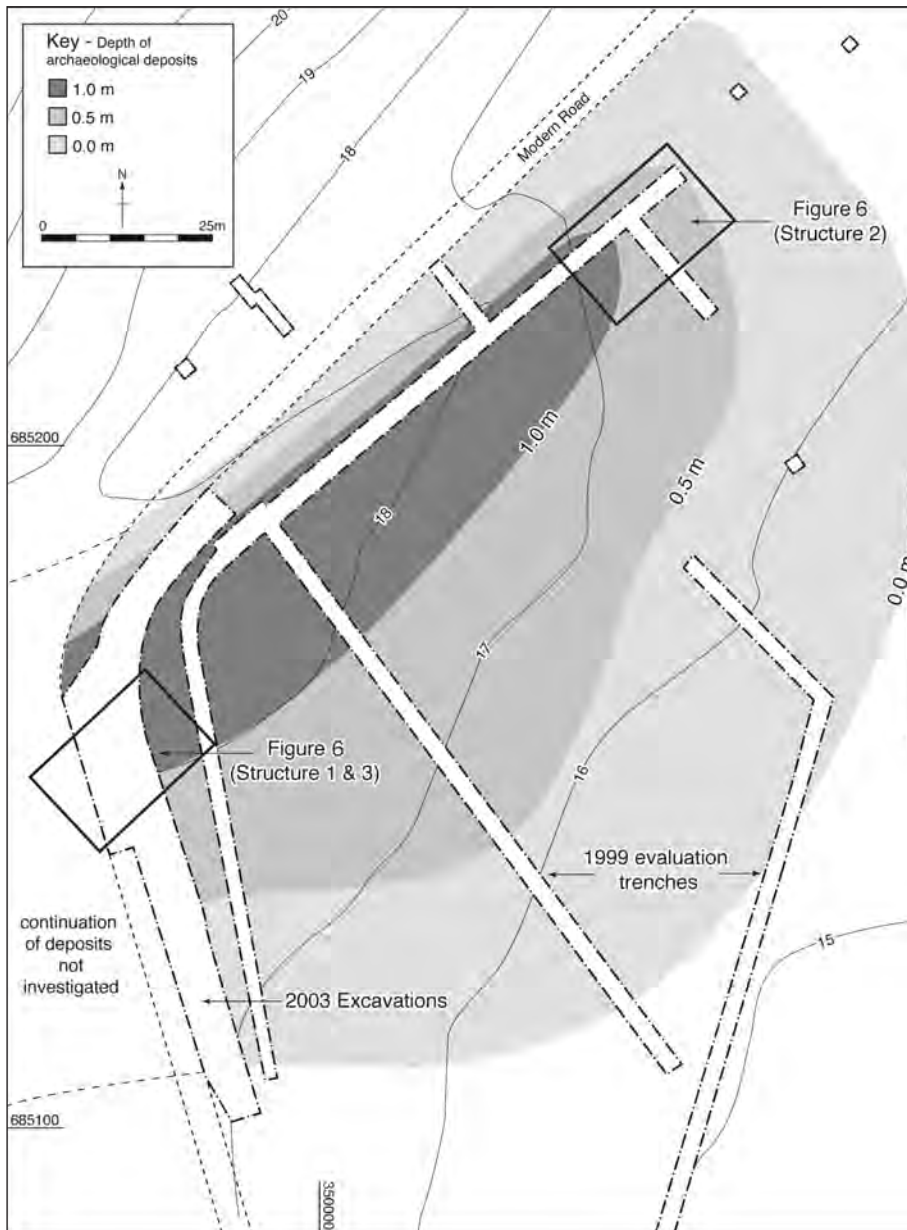
Figure 3: Eldbotle. Extent of archaeological deposits at NE end of the settlement with areas investigated in 1999 and 2003. Scale 1:1000. Drawn by Craig Williams.

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Lab Code	Sample material	Context	Lab age bp	_C13	Calibrated dates	
					1-sigma	2-sigma
GU-12731	Bone	153	1535 ± 35	-21.1 %	AD 430-600	AD 420-610
GU-12732	Bone	15	890 ± 35	-21.1 %	AD 1040-1220	AD 1030-1230
GU-12733	Charcoal: *Betula*	24	1580 ± 35	-25.3 %	AD 430-540	AD 400-570
GU-12734	Grain: *Hordeum*	153	695 ± 35	-24.0%	AD 1270-1310	AD 1260-1330
GU-12735	Grain: *Hordeum*	176	720 ± 35	-23.8%	AD 1264-1299	AD 1220-1310
GU-12736	Bone: *Bos*	24	1425 ± 35	-21.8 %	AD 600-660	AD 550-670
GU-12738	Charcoal: *Betula*	65	645 ± 35	-26.5 %	AD 1295-1390	AD 1280-1400
GU-12739	Charcoal: *Betula*	90	1065 ± 35	-25.1 %	AD 900-1020	AD 890-1030
GU-13053	Bone: *Sus*	58	1115 ± 40	-21.1 %	AD 890-980	AD 810-1020
GU-13054	Bone: *Bos*	36	1550 ± 40	-21.6 %	AD 430-560	AD 420-600

Table 1. Eldbotle. Radiocarbon dates

A single cut feature further N in the excavation has also been assigned to phase 1 solely on the grounds that it underlies phase 2 features, separated only by an accumulation of sand. The presence of residual material of phase 1 date in this area of the excavation is confirmed by a date of 420-610 (GU-12731) from bone in a feature that can be shown to be part of a building of later medieval date (see phase 3).

PHASE 2: AD 810-1030

Phase 2 comprises more cut features, interspersed with sand layers containing marine shell and animal bone. Most features stratigraphically underlie the stone structures of phase 3 but have no direct relationship with phase 1 features. An inter-cutting group of narrow slots or gullies at the N end of the site is dated by the presence of a complete bone comb (12, fig 5), dating from the tenth to eleventh centuries. This was from a deposit directly underlying a carbon-rich layer dated to 890-1030 (GU-12739). A second radiocarbon date in this time-span was obtained from an articulated pig skeleton in the fill of a gully further to the S; this was dated to 810-1020 (GU-13053). Other similar features adjacent to it have also been assigned to phase 2.

A small pottery assemblage was recovered from phase 2 deposits (30 sherds) but, as for phase 1, these are of twelfth - fourteenth century date and are considered to be intrusive.

PHASE 3: AD 1220-1400

This phase comprises a number of stone-built features (walls and drains), as well as pits and other cut features at the N end of the excavation. These features stratigraphically overlie the cut features of phase 2. Phase 3 is dated by three radiocarbon determinations spanning the period 1220-1400 (GU-12734, 12735 and 12738), by a substantial assemblage of pottery of similar age range, and by a number of metal artefacts, including fourteenth-century buckles. The phase 3 pottery assemblage comprises 978 out of a total of 1031 stratified sherds from the excavation (i.e. 95 % of the total) and is assumed to be the source of the small intrusive assemblages in underlying phase 1 and 2 deposits. A stone building and drain identified during the evaluation of the settlement site in 1999 (and built on the same alignment as the buildings recorded in 2003) have also been assigned to Phase 3 (Moloney & Baker 2001).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

PHASE 1: AD 400-670 (FIG 4)

It is difficult to make any meaningful interpretation of the features assigned to phase 1. No complete features were revealed in the narrow excavation area so the full extent of the various curving gullies is not known. No artefacts were recovered other than a simple iron staple (accepting that the pottery is intrusive). However, it is worth noting that late Iron-Age sites in SE Scotland have generally proved to be artefact-poor (see, for example, Harding 1982 and Haselgrove & McCullagh 2004).

PHASE 2: AD 810-1030 (FIG 4)

The phase 2 features at the N end of the site comprise several inter-cutting slots or gullies. These are shallow, steep-sided features that survive no more than 0.26 m deep. Their profile and the presence of abundant stones in some of their fills suggest that they are truncated remains of construction trenches for palisades or post-in-trench timber buildings. At least one rounded-rectangular structure may be represented. The two linear features further S appear to have been small ditches and, judging by the presence of articulated animal bone, were latterly used for the disposal of carcasses or unwanted body parts.

The two ditches are parallel and are also close to the alignment of the possible timber building at the N end of the excavation. This SW-NE alignment persists into phase 3 and suggests some degree of planning or regularity in the settlement that persisted from phase 2 into phase 3.
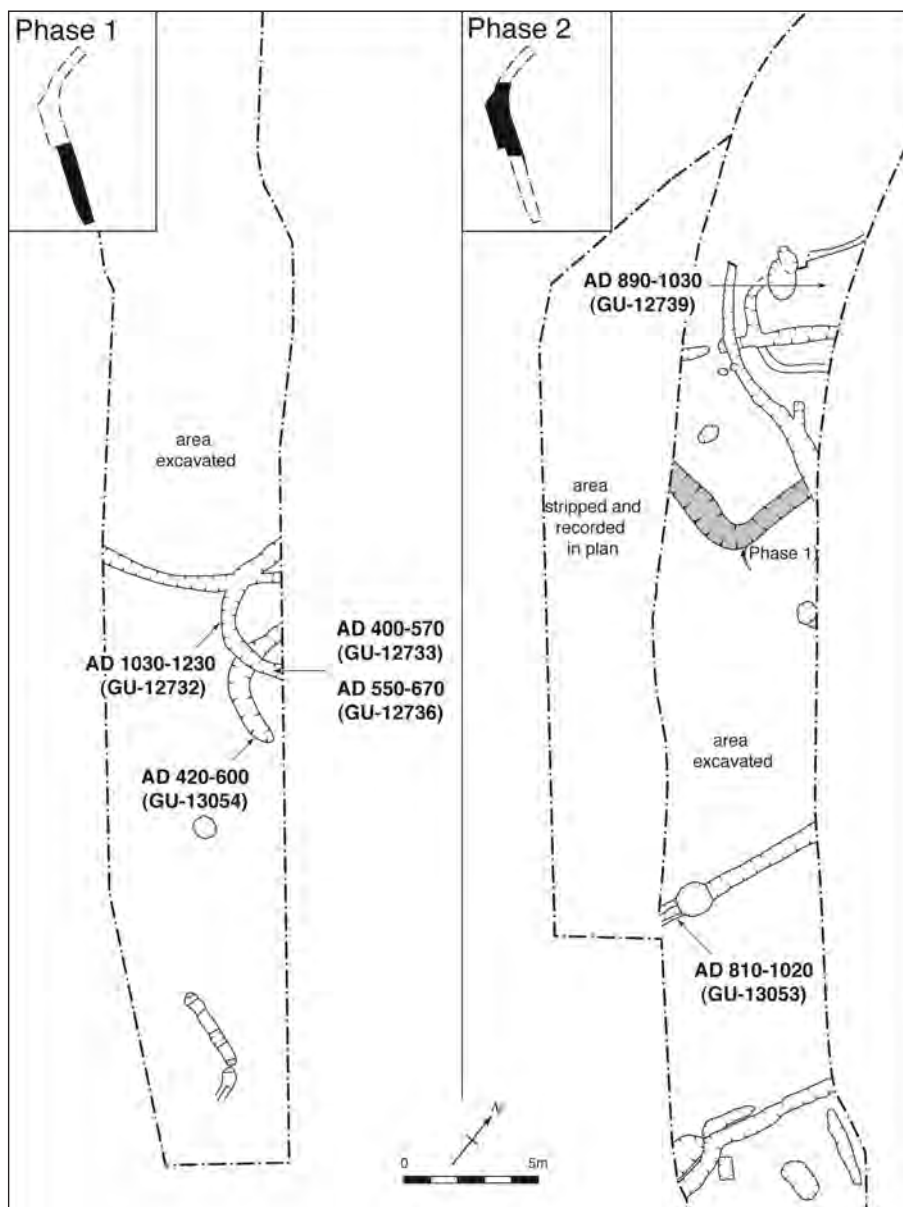
Figure 4: Eldbotle excavation 2003. Features assigned to Phase 1 and 2. Scale 1:250.
Drawn by Craig Williams.

Only five artefacts were recovered from phase 2 deposits (pottery excluded): a bone point, a bone comb and three small iron objects. The bone point, made from a cattle-sized long bone, can be identified as a pin beater, a tool used in weaving to push up the weft and untangle knots (11, fig 5). It can be closely paralleled amongst the Type 2 pin beaters from medieval excavations in York (MacGregor 1999, 1967, fig 923). Single-ended pin beaters of this type were used in conjunction with the two-beam vertical loom, which came into widespread use in the tenth century, and was used in domestic cloth weaving, and in tapestry weaving until manufacturing techniques changed in the fourteenth century.

The bone comb is of a distinctive Anglo-Scandinavian type – a relatively short single-sided comb with iron rivets, decorative end plates, and panels of incised decoration on the side plates (12, fig 5). A large assemblage of similar combs has been recovered from late tenth- and early eleventh-century contexts at 16-22 Coppergate, in York (MacGregor 1999, Figs 885 & 887). This date range is consistent with a radiocarbon date from the overlying layer of 890-1030 (GU-12739).

The three iron objects are an undiagnostic ferrule, a bolt and a small disc-headed pin (10, fig 5). Small iron pins of a similar size and shape were recovered from Anglo-Scandinavian Coppergate, and other sites in York. Ottaway & Rogers (2002, 2915) note that 'Copper alloy, and less commonly, iron dress pins, typically with large diameter shanks and heads, are almost invariably pre-Conquest in date.' By 'large diameter shanks' they mean up to 3-4 mm, being substantially greater in
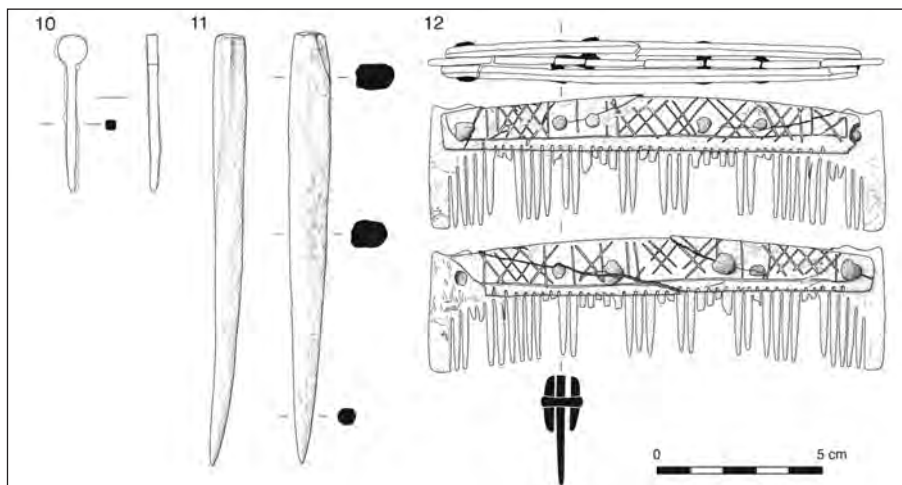
Figure 5: Artefacts from Phase 2 deposits: Bone pin beater (11) Antler comb (12)
Iron disc-headed pin (10) Scale 1:2. Drawn by Tom Small and Craig Williams.

diameter than drawn-wire pins used in the later medieval period. All the small iron pins from medieval contexts in York are considered to be residual from Anglian or Anglo-Scandinavian occupation.

PHASE 3: AD 1220-1400 (FIG 6)
STONE STRUCTURES

Phase 3 is characterised by stone structures, not present in the preceding phases, and a large artefact assemblage that contrasts with the very few objects found in phases 1 and 2. At least two buildings were encountered (structures 1 and 2) with a poorly preserved possible third example (structure 3). Little was seen of structure 2 except a partial wall plan, but it seems to have been a structure of similar width and construction to structure 1. Structure 3 comprised two concentrations of rubble, lying at right angles, which could represent the side and end of a rectangular building. A cluster of flagstones in the line of the longer 'wall' may be the remains of a paved doorway. The presence of at least two stone drains associated with structure 1 suggests that an apparently isolated stone drain exposed in a narrow evaluation trench may relate to a fourth building.

All three structures and the associated drains conform to the SW-NE alignment noted in the phase 2 features. However, as with phase 2, it is difficult to understand the overall layout of the settlement at this time. The parallel ditches in phase 2 suggest a regular set of plots with a long axis aligned SW-NE. No boundaries have been identified in the phase 3 deposits, but if it is assumed that the phase 2 boundaries had been maintained, all three phase 3 structures have their long-axis along the line of the plots. There is no evidence for a principal street or frontages for these plots; indeed, if the SW-NE plot orientation is correct, buildings appear to have been constructed at varying distances along different plots.

Structure 1 was the most substantial stone structure investigated. A complete wall plan was revealed but only half of the building was excavated (fig 7). This simple, single-roomed rectangular structure measured 8.6 x 3.3 m internally with an average wall thickness of 1 m. The drystone rubble walls appear to have survived in places to their original height of c.1 m. A distinctive reddish sandy sediment over and beside the walls is interpreted as the weathered remains of a turf superstructure, with the stone walls therefore forming only a foundation for what would have been a turf and timber building. There was no clear evidence in the form of post holes, pads or cruck slots for the position of any load-bearing timbers.

Structure 1 had two opposed entrances, in the N and S walls, both slightly to the E of centre. It is assumed, but cannot be proved, that both are original features, but it is certain that the N door was blocked up during the life of the building. Both

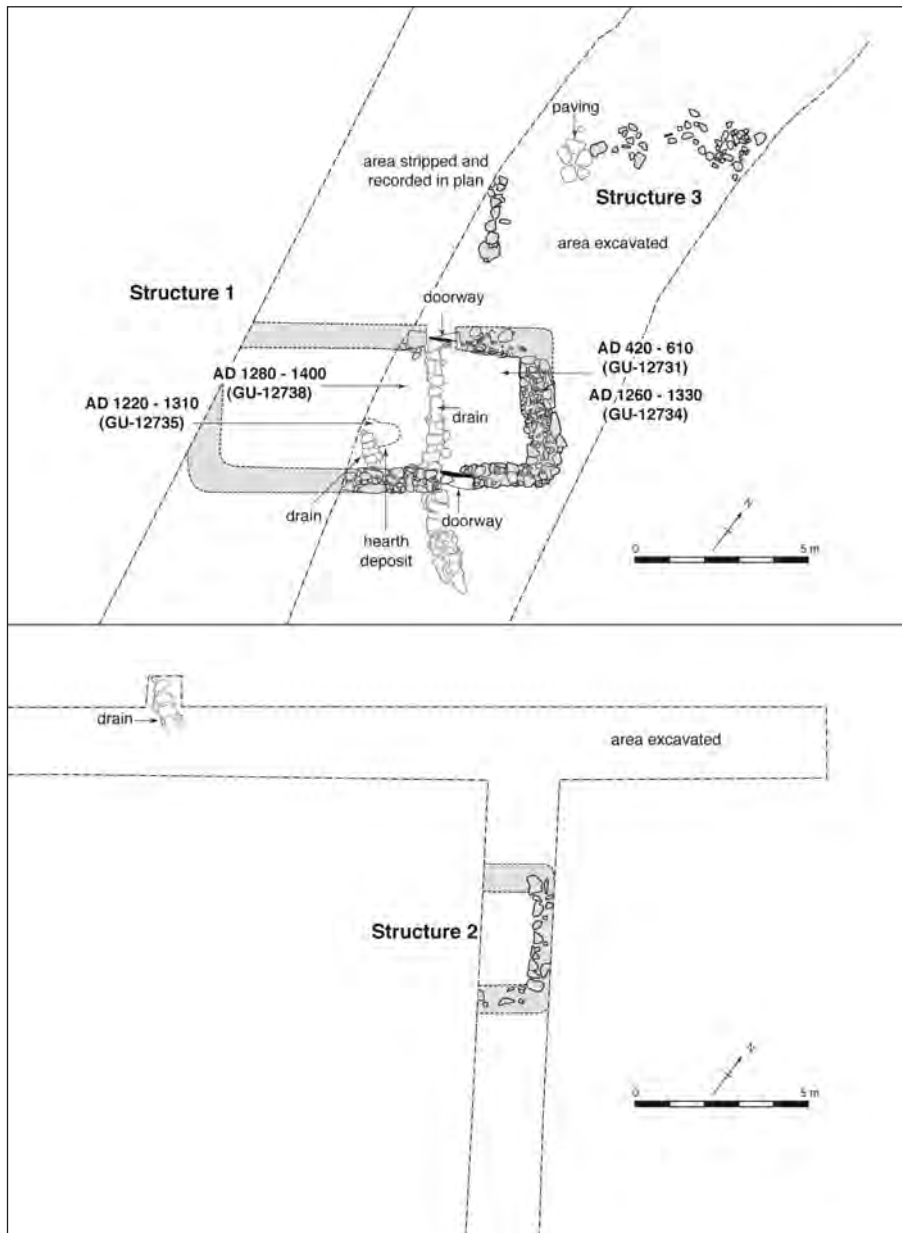*Figure 6: Eldbotle excavation 2003. Phase 3 structures (see figure 3 for location). Scale 1:200.*
Drawn by Craig Williams.

doorways had a large edge-set stone forming a raised threshold with a pivot stone on its inner side for an inwards-opening door. Two stone drains with flagstone covers were associated with the building. Both appear to have been original features as they ran under the S wall with no evidence for rebuilding. The longer E drain started at the N doorway and cut across the width of the building, extending beneath the S wall for a further 3 m. The short W drain stopped under the S wall and was not functional in its surviving condition.

There was no built hearth-setting within the excavated portion of structure 1; however, a spread of compact burnt material was present at the W limit of the excavated area. It consisted of several layers of compacted sand interleaved with charcoal-rich burnt lenses and may be material raked out of a hearth located in the unexcavated area. A radiocarbon date on barley grains from this deposit dates the use of the building to 1220-1310 (GU-12735). This agrees with a date of 1260-1330 (GU-12734), also from barley grains in a pit in the NE corner of the building. Charcoal in deposits overlying the floor of the building was dated between 1280 - 1400 (GU-12738). These dates suggest that the building was in use in the later thirteenth century but had been abandoned by the end of the fourteenth century. A scale-tang knife (21, fig 10), found in a pit just predating this building, is unlikely to be earlier than the fourteenth century (Cowgill et al 1987, 25), so the radiocarbon dates may reflect residual material (albeit from earlier in the same phase). After the building went out of use, it was progressively filled with wind-blown sand and domestic waste dumped in the ruin. These deposits contained numerous artefacts, including the latest dated object from the site - an early fifteenth-century belt buckle (4, fig 9).

POTTERY (TABLE 2, FIG 7)

Fabric	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Un-phased	Total
White Gritty	21	27	718	532	1298 (80%)
Reduced Gritty	1	2	252	53	308 (19%)
Redwares			4	9	13 (1%)
Yorkshire	1			5	6
Low Countries Greyware			1		1
French		1	2	1	4
Rhenish Stoneware			1		1
Other Imports				1	1
Total	**23**	**30**	**978**	**601**	**1632**

Table 2. Pottery. Number of sherds by phase and fabric.

Figure 7: Structure 1 during excavation. Photo by Richard Conolly.

The pottery assemblage from phase 3 deposits comprises 978 sherds, of which all but eight sherds are locally produced white and reduced gritty wares (see Brooks 1978-80, 365-367 for description of fabric and glazes). Forms represented are mainly jugs and jars. Jars are generally sooted from use as cooking pots, though other examples may have been used as storage jars. Rims are the usual, simple squared and everted types, sometimes with an internal bevel, possibly to hold a lid. There are at least two examples of handled cooking pots, with strap handles joined directly to the rim (fig 8, e). Jugs are the most common form, particularly for reduced sherds, almost all of which are from jugs (fig 8, f). Typically, they have grooved strap handles. Other decoration includes iron-coloured applied decoration - scales, vertical stripes and a 'raspberry' motif. There is also an impressed wheel motif, ring and dot motifs, and comb-impressed dots (fig 8, g). Several sherds are decorated with incised horizontal grooves, deliberately applied at more or less regular intervals while the vessel was on the wheel.

More unusual forms include a bowl and a possible dripping dish. The most unusual piece is a white gritty base sherd. It is glazed on both sides in a glossy olive green and the inside has been heavily decorated with comb incising (fig 8, c). It is presumably from a shallow open form, such as a dish or bowl. Bowls and dripping dishes are known from this period, but the high quality of the glaze and unusual decoration imply this was meant as tableware, possibly a serving dish of some kind.
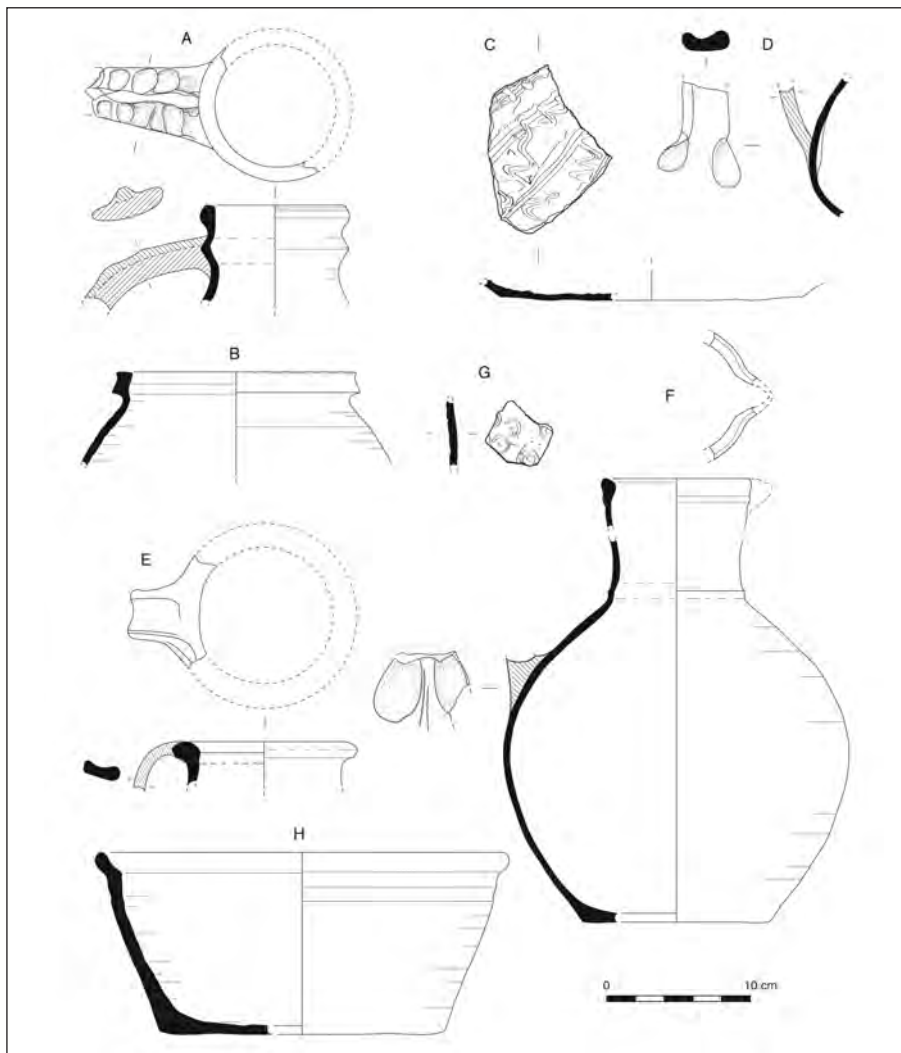
FIGURE 8: Pottery

a.White gritty jug rim and with thumbed strip applied down centre of handle and decorative thumbing along edges. F038, Phase 3. b. White gritty cooking pot rim. F193, Phase 3. c. White gritty bowl/dish base. Comb incised interior; accidental depression in base? F217, Phase 3. d. White gritty jug handle and body with incised horizontal lines. F085, Phase 3. e. White gritty cooking pot handled rim. Assessment Trench D17, Unstrat, Find 054. f. Reduced gritty jug. Handful of sherds making up near complete profile, rim could not be joined but certainly from same vessel. F198, Phase 3. g. Reduced gritty jug sherd, decorated with impressed ring and dot motifs. F061, Phase 2. h. Reduced gritty bowl. F098, Phase 3. Scale 1:4. Drawn by Tom Small.

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The phase 3 pottery represents the remains of a generally plain and utilitarian assemblage. Imported sherds make up less than 1% of the assemblage. (Imported vessels were probably not being regularly traded, but were occasionally filtering through the nearby ports of North Berwick, Aberlady and Dunbar.) Excavations on the contemporary rural settlement site at Springwood Park, near Kelso (Brown 1998), yielded a pottery assemblage where imported wares made up an even smaller percentage than at Eldbottle, but the types present are familiar. Yorkshire wares are the most common, but also sherds from Northern France, including Rouen-type ware and some possible Low Countries greyware (Brown 1998). Brown noted, from his study of medieval pottery in Southampton, that though imported French wares were numerous in the town, very few reached the hinterland. Imported pottery, he concluded, was not necessarily desirable in itself, and low profit margins probably deterred merchants from dealing in it on a large scale, but where it was easily available, in the ports, it filled some of the increasing demand for glazed jugs (Brown 2002,127-130). Certainly, the few sherds found at Eldbottle, principally from copper-green glazed jugs, are not superficially that different from the top end of the local market.

At Eldbotle, the local market may have been served by several production centres, all producing similar wares. However, the only known kiln site in the vicinity is at Colstoun, about 12 km S of Eldbottle, typologically dated to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Brooks 1978-80). All the fabrics, forms and decoration represented at Eldbottle are found at Colstoun, and the contemporary dating means that at least some of the Eldbottle assemblage may derive from there. Compared to the Colstoun wares, there is a notable lack at Eldbottle of Yorkshire-style anthropomorphic decoration. In fact, but for a handful of sherds decorated with applied scales and strips, there is very little Yorkshire influence at all. This is unlikely to be a factor of dating, as decorated forms are both widespread and long-lived. It is more likely an indication of the relative poverty of the Eldbottle assemblage, with an emphasis on the plain and functional. Evidence for the reuse of vessels for different purposes also points towards impoverished ceramic resources, and the need to recycle those they had. Many jugs, including the French example, are sooted around the base, in the same pattern as is seen on cooking pots. They may have been used as cooking wares after the handle or neck had been broken.

METAL AND STONE ARTEFACTS
The abundance of pottery in phase 3 deposits relative to the earlier phases is matched by examples of metal and stone artefacts. Metal objects include 15 copper alloy, 23 iron and one lead artefact, and there are eight stone artefacts.
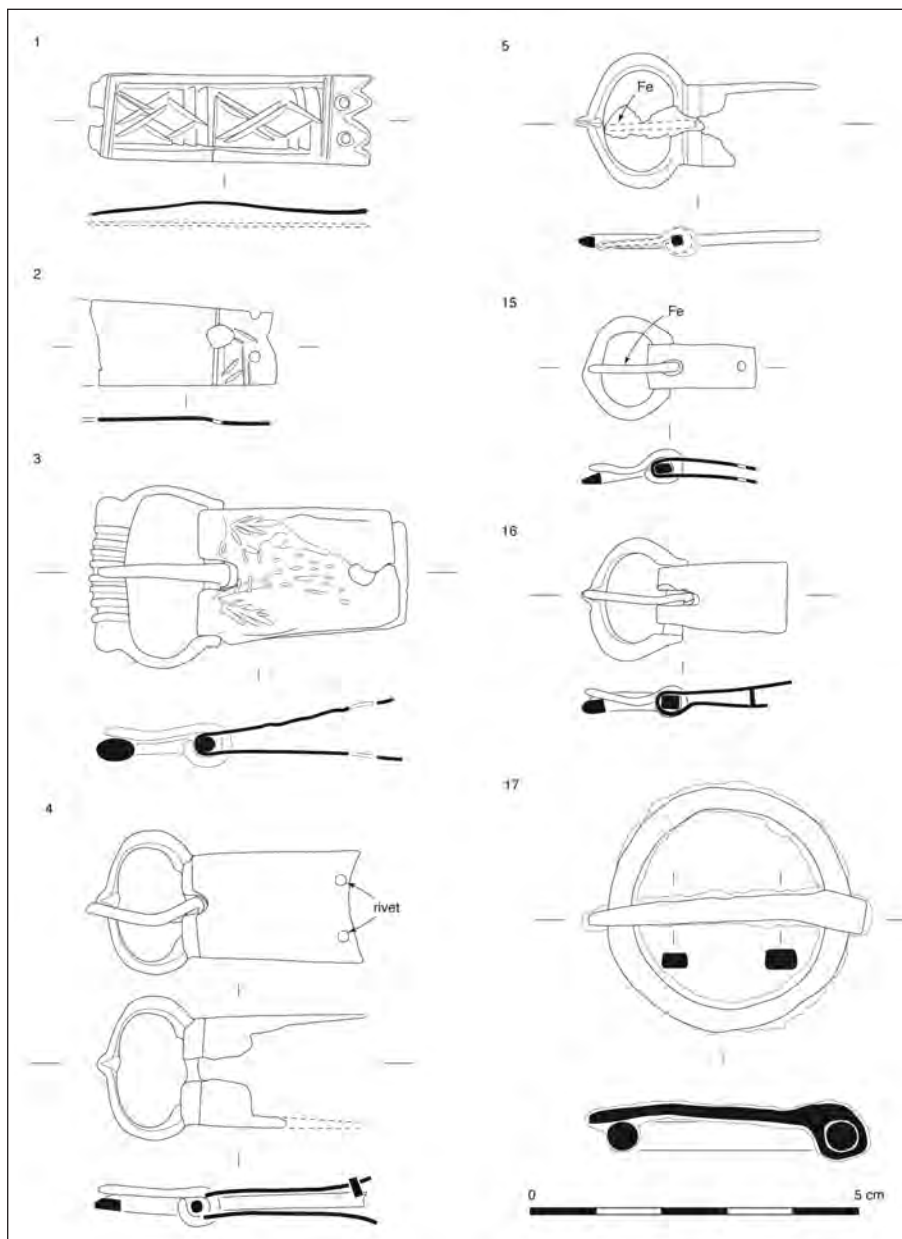
Figure 9: Phase 3 buckles: All copper alloy except (17) which is iron.
Scale 1:1. Drawn by Tom Small.
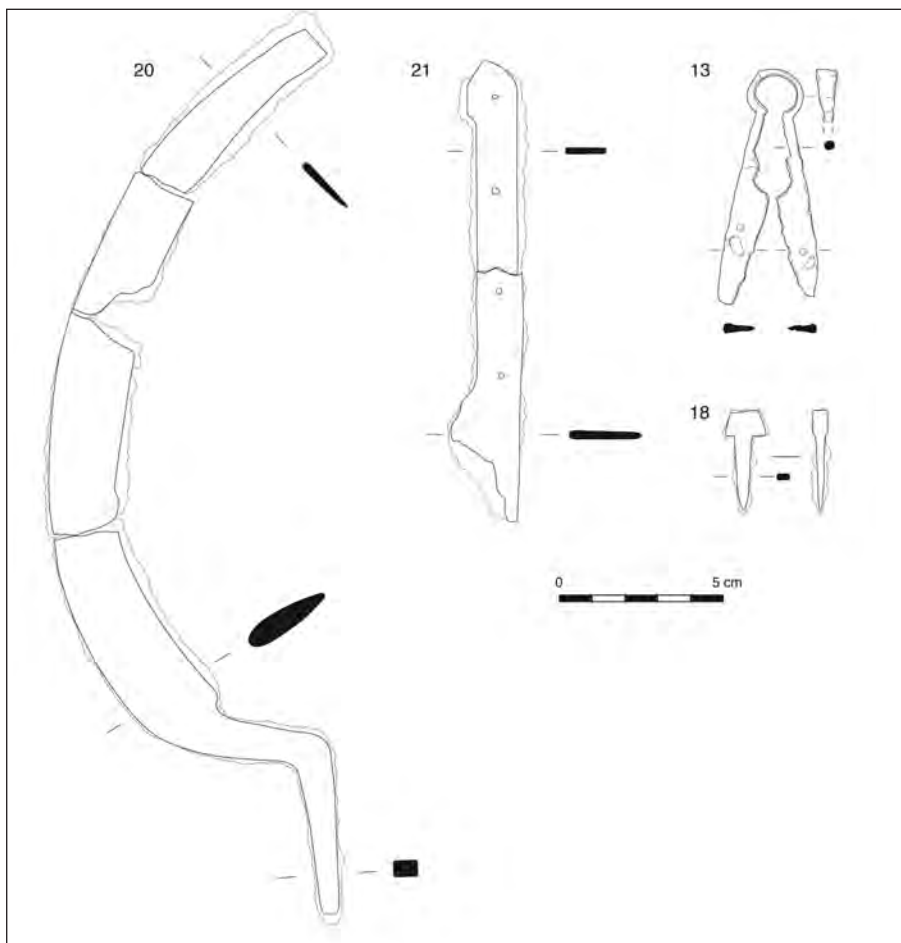
Figure 10: Phase 3 iron artefacts: Shears (13) Horseshoe nail (18) Sickle (20)
Scale-tang knife (21). Scale 1:2. Drawn by Tom Small and Craig Williams.

Phase 3 produced a range of metal dress accessories, including seven belt buckles or buckle parts, a mount and a pin, all made from copper alloy (fig 9). The buckles would have been used to secure belts or girdles on both men's and women's dress. Two decorated copper alloy buckle plates (1 and 2) are typical of the fourteenth century. A copper-alloy buckle with an ornate frame and decorated plate (3) is similar to examples from London dating from the late twelfth - late fourteenth century, a long-lasting fashion (Egan & Pritchard 1991). There were three copper alloy buckles with oval frames and composite rigid plates (4, 5 and
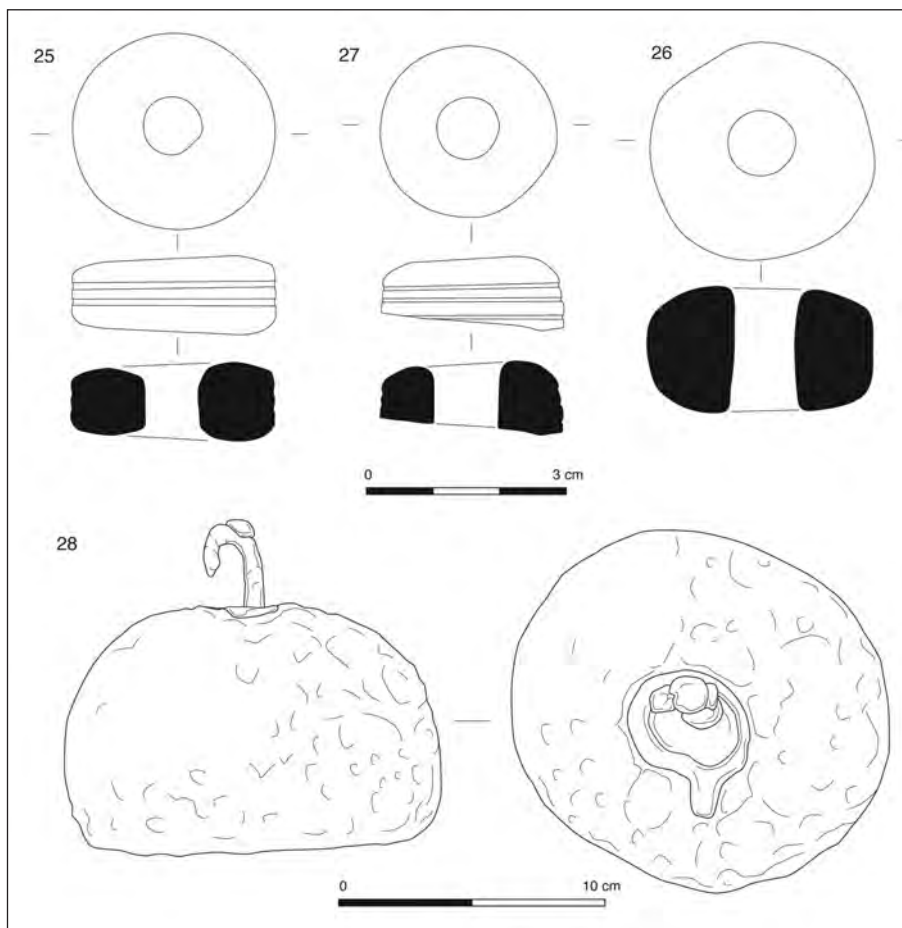
FIGURE 11: Phase 3 stone artefacts: Spindle whorls (25, 26, 27) scale 1:1. stone weight with hook (28).
Scale 1:4. Drawn by Tom Small and Craig Williams.

6). This type of buckle was common from the mid fourteenth to the early fifteenth century, supplanting those with folded sheet plates (Egan & Pritchard 1991). (4) has the plates present and probably dates to the fifteenth century rather than the late fourteenth century, as it has no grooved aperture at the other end of the plate from the frame. Copper alloy mount (8) was probably attached to a belt. This simple circular domed form was popular throughout the medieval period.

Two small buckles from spur straps (15, 52), an iron horse strap buckle (17) and a stray horseshoe nail (18) suggest that at least some inhabitants of Eldbotle

were wealthy enough to own and ride horses with horseshoes and spurs. Also, the possible chain mail (14) and personal grooming items such as the small iron shears (13) support the idea of wealthier individuals. An iron bolt with a decorative head (34) could have been used in a wooden door, suggesting a building of some substance within the settlement. There are also items of a domestic and agricultural nature. Phase 3 deposits produced three stone spindle whorls (25, 26 and 27, fig 11), a hone stone (29), four pieces from a broken iron sickle (20, fig 10), a bone handled scale-tang knife (21, fig 10) and a stone weight with an iron suspension hook set in lead (28, fig 11).

ELDBOTLE IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

AD 400-800   BRITONS AND ANGLES IN LOTHIAN

Through the fifth and sixth centuries, Lothian fell within the territory of the Gododdin, the successor to the tribe known to the Romans as the Votadini. Traditionally, the early centre of Gododdin power lay at Traprain Law, some 11 km SE of Eldbotle, but by the later sixth century another major seat of royal power appears to have been Din Eidyn, which is identified as Edinburgh Castle rock (Driscoll & Yeoman 1997). Interpretation of the historical, literary and archaeological evidence for this period is notoriously fraught with difficulties, but the most favoured current view is that the Gododdin was in terminal decline in the later sixth century, and that Angles from Northumbria had already begun to penetrate and settle the eastern districts of Lothian and intermarry with the native elites (Driscoll & Yeoman 1997, 227; Koch 1993, 86-7; Koch 1994, 297, 299).

The spread of Northumbrian settlement and the influences of Northumbrian culture can be seen in East Lothian at excavated sites such as Doon Hill and Dunbar (Hope-Taylor 1981, 18-19; Holdsworth 1991, 315-7; Perry 2000; Moloney 2001, 283-317). At the former, a seventh-century Northumbrian timber hall was constructed on the site of a sixth-century British one, while at the latter a British settlement within a promontory fort, dated between the second and sixth century, was replaced in the early seventh century – with 'no obvious evidence for a decisive break between the native British and Northumbrian presence on site' – by an Anglian settlement (Holdsworth 1991, 315). At both sites, important British settlements appear to have been taken over by Northumbrian incomers and continued as key centres of lordship and economy in the new political environment of the seventh century. Dunbar, for example, became an *urbs regis*, or royal manor, of the Northumbrian kings and it is possible that a similar situation occurred at Eldbotle.

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The four early radiocarbon dates from Eldbotle span the period 400 to 670 and therefore probably predate documented Anglian control of the area. The excavated phase 1 features may be interpreted as elements of a British settlement during the period of initial Northumbrian penetration into East Lothian.

This issue of Northumbrian appropriation of former British settlements raises again the question of the place-name 'Eldbotle'. As a place-name generic, *bôtl* apparently ceases to be used in new name-forming before the end of the ninth century and probably significantly earlier. We have then a chronological range for the coining of the name spanning the period c. 600 - c. 900 at the latest. It was also 'old' in relative terms at the time of its coining, but in relation to what? This aspect of the place-name specific could imply either that it represents one of the earliest of the Northumbrian settlements in the district, or that it was applied in respect of an older native British site (Eldbotle phase 1 perhaps?). What we could expect to find is a seventh-century Northumbrian occupation at the core of the site similar to that identified at Doon Hill, or a complex such as that at Sprouston, in lower Tweeddale (Smith 1991).

Place-name evidence reveals that Northumbrian settlement of East Lothian intensified, and it is possible to identify the development of a series of large propertied estates. By the middle of the seventh century, following the conversion of the Northumbrians to Christianity, monastic estates also developed in the region. The most important local instance is that of the major monastery at Tyninghame, which evidently possessed lands scattered through East Lothian. Eldbotle, then, by the later seventh century, should be seen as a component in a pattern of secular and ecclesiastical estates running from Dunbar westwards towards Edinburgh (Aliaga-Kelly 1986).

AD 800-1200 THE CREATION OF MEDIEVAL SCOTLAND

By the middle of the ninth century, Scottish pressure on Anglian Lothian was mounting, and in the early 900s Edinburgh was occupied by the Scots. East Lothian was also subject to Viking attack in the first half of the tenth century, with Tyninghame monastery and the surrounding district ravaged in 941 by the Norse ruler Óláfr Guthfrithsson, king of York (Forte, Oram & Pedersen 2005, 111). Eldbotle appears to have continued to function as a settlement of unknown status throughout this period of upheaval, occupation being confirmed by two radiocarbon dates spanning the period 810-1030 and a contemporary bone comb.

Scottish control of the country down to what became the Tweed frontier was established firmly by the early 1000s and was followed by the establishment of a

series of Scottish royal estates focussed on Haddington, which emerged as a royal burgh in the reign of David I. It is in this context of the growing interest of the Scottish kings in East Lothian in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the development of Eldbotle as a significant landed estate should be seen. A single radiocarbon date of 1030-1230 (GU-12732) from bone, albeit intrusive in a phase 1 feature, provides archaeological evidence for continuity of occupation at Eldbotle in this early Scots period.

No information survives on ownership of the Eldbotle estate before the 1120s, although it can be assumed on the basis of its probable possession by the kings of Scots between c.1124 and c.1160 that it was a royal property from at least the later eleventh century. Eldbotle first appears in the historical record in the reign of David I (1124 -1153), who visited on at last one occasion. There is no indication as to why he was there, or of the status of the place at the time; it is named simply as 'Eldbotle' in the two charters he issued there (Barrow 1999, nos. 140 and 141). The concentration of royal estates in this eastern part of Lothian formed one of the dower lands of David's daughter-in-law, Ada de Warenne, and it is possible that David was simply visiting one of the manorial centres on his property. Beyond this fleeting appearance, however, there is no further surviving record of Eldbotle until the early 1160s, when David's grandson and successor, Malcolm IV, issued two charters whilst there (Barrow 1960, no. 194; Barrow 1980, Appendix A, no. 1).

The presence of successive kings, with members of their household and some important nobles, at Eldbotle implies that there was a functioning estate centre there in the first half of the twelfth century, but it does not appear to have been of any great significance in the portfolio of royal properties in the district. Presumably, it was the direct successor of the old Northumbrian *bôtl* on the site.

AD1200-1400 A FEUDAL ESTATE IN THE HIGH MEDIEVAL PERIOD

At some unknown date in the later twelfth century, the lands of Eldbotle were given into the possession of the de Vaux family, who were the lords of Dirleton and Gullane throughout the thirteenth and earlier fourteenth centuries. Probably by c.1170, the estate had been granted by the king to John de Vaux, younger brother of a prominent Cumberland knight. It is not until the early 1200s that the de Vauxes are named specifically as holders of the land (Barrow 1980, Appendix A, no. 1). John and his descendants granted portions of Eldbotle to the Premonstratensian canons of Dryburgh Abbey, in Berwickshire, and to the Knights Templar, but retained possession of the majority of the property until the extinction of the male de Vaux line on the death of William II de Vaux in the early 1340s. He left an unnamed daughter as heiress. Through her, the lands passed to

the Haliburtons and remained with them until the extinction of the male line of that family in 1515.

At some time around 1200, William de Vaux founded a chapel dedicated to St. Andrew at Dirleton, to the SE of Eldbotle (*Dryburgh Liber*, no. 29). This chapel may have been within their castle at Dirleton, but may also have been the precursor of the current parish church of Dirleton, which is located a short distance to the NW (NSA, ii, 217-8).

What these charters and the concentration of activity around Dirleton underscore is the central position held by Dirleton itself in the de Vaux family's interests c.1200 at the latest. What is unclear, however, is whether the castle at Dirleton was always the caput of the de Vauxes' lordship or had there been an earlier seat replaced by the thirteenth-century stone structure, which still dominates the village. Where the question mark over the location of the original de Vaux caput arises is from the reference to a *vetus castellum*, or 'old castle', at Eldbotle in a charter of William de Vaux granting the canons of Dryburgh a substantial block of property in the NE corner of the parish, centred on Eldbotle itself (*Dryburgh Liber*, no. 104). Dryburgh's land was described as lying in the NE of the toun-lands of Eldbotle beside the remains of an 'old castle' (*vetus castellum*). 'Oldcastle' subsequently emerges as a component of the toun of Eldbotle, still appearing as a distinct entity in the 1660s (Thomson *and others* 1984, vol. 1660-8, no. 556). On William Forrest's 1799 map of Haddingtonshire, 'Old Castle' is shown lying to the NE of Eldbotle, in the wooded area now known as Eldbotle Wood, which would confirm the general description of the location of the Dryburgh property given in William I de Vaux's original grant. Given the name of the property - Eldbotle - it is quite likely that this abandoned site was the centre of the old Northumbrian lordship established somewhere between the early seventh and later tenth centuries, and presumably the same place visited by David I and Malcolm IV earlier in the twelfth century. Whatever its status in the later twelfth century, by the time Dryburgh received its gift of property there, Eldbotle was a well-established multiple tenancy ferm-toun with clearly-defined territorial limits, communal rights and seigniorial burdens.

At the end of the thirteenth century, in addition to the ecclesiastical lands and any demesne lands of Sir John de Vaux, there appear to have been two substantial secular tenants of the lord of Dirleton holding portions of the Eldbotle estate. On 28 August 1296, amongst the Scottish freeholders recorded as making their submission at Berwick-upon-Tweed to Edward I of England in the document known as Ragman Roll, there appears Ivo de Elebotle and Hugh fitz Geoffrey

de Elbotle 'of the county of Edinburgh' (Bain 1884, 201). These men were not knights or noblemen, but substantial free tenants who would have occupied some of the larger holdings within the property. Beyond their simple identification as 'of Eldbotle', there is no more specific indication as to either their comparative social status or the location and extent of their personal holdings. Their presence, however, serves to highlight the complexity of the land-holding and tenancy structures within Eldbotle.

AD 1400-1600 THE STATUS OF ELDBOTLE IN THE LATER MEDIEVAL PERIOD

One of the striking elements of the 2003 archaeological excavation is the complete lack of material dating to the later medieval and post-medieval period. The latest radiocarbon date and the pottery point to abandonment by the early fifteenth century. The complete lack of material or dating evidence implies that the settlement as a whole went out of use at this time. If occupation had continued elsewhere in the settlement one would expect some indication of this, at least in the form of stray sherds of later pottery. It is possible that the wind-blown sand layers recorded on the site represent a major inundation of sand resulting in the abandonment of the village and its arable fields. Over-exploitation of the grasses covering the dunes could have left them vulnerable to storms and high winds. Such occurrences are known along this coastline, and by the time detailed maps were first prepared at the end of the eighteenth century Eldbotle and the land surrounding it were part of a large area of unenclosed rough grazing land known as Dirleton Common.

Unfortunately, there is nothing within the later documentary sources which indicates that the settlement at Eldbotle was abandoned. Instead, the records continue to show the lands of Eldbotle changing hands down to 1663 when Sir John Nisbet purchased the property and began the construction of Archerfield House, to the S of the site of Eldbotle.

CONCLUSIONS

The investigations reported here have demonstrated that Eldbotle is an archaeological site currently without parallel in SE Scotland. Three aspects of the site stand out: (1) chronological range; (2) stratigraphic complexity; (3) quality of environmental and artefact assemblages. Deposits span at least the millennium between 400 and 1400 and therefore relate to two major cultural events - the British/Anglian transition in the sixth - seventh century, and the evolution of the medieval Scottish state in the tenth - twelfth century. The earlier event is essentially prehistoric and the later is little better served by historical records, so archaeology has a major contribution to make in the study of the cultural and economic impacts associated with them.

ANCIENT ELDBOTLE UNEARTHED:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR A LONG-LOST EARLY MEDIEVAL EAST LOTHIAN VILLAGE

The periodic accumulation of wind-blown sand on the site has ensured that deep and stratigraphically complex deposits have formed, with well-preserved structural evidence for both stone and timber buildings. Whilst recognising the evidence for assemblage mixing through burrowing in the sandy sediments, the site as a whole can therefore yield well-stratified, and closely-dated artefactual and environmental assemblages of a quality not normally associated with rural medieval settlement in SE Scotland. The accumulating shell-sand has also ensured that the various material types present have survived in good condition. The presence of well-preserved bone and shell assemblages is particularly noteworthy in a Scottish context.

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MEDIEVAL NORTH BERWICK REVEALED: EXCAVATIONS IN FORTH STREET

by STUART MITCHELL

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY S ANDERSON, R CERÓN-CARRASCO, M CRESSEY, M HASTIE, S LANCASTER, L MCKINNEY, C SMITH.

SUMMARY

The archaeological excavations in Forth Street have added to our knowledge of medieval and post-medieval North Berwick. Human occupation on the site possibly dates from the twelfth century. Burgage plot boundaries are shown to have remained fairly constant throughout the centuries and a sophisticated drainage system, probably servicing more than one building, was revealed.

A key attribute of the site is the deeply-stratified nature of the midden soils and wind-borne sand deposits, which further demonstrate that sand ingress was a frequent and significant factor for those living in North Berwick in medieval times.

INTRODUCTION

An excavation by CFA Archaeology Ltd at 33 Forth Street, North Berwick (fig 1), 2003-4 identified deeply stratified historic deposits and the remains of buildings and structures dating to the medieval period. The excavation was carried out in advance of construction of seven new flats by Hart Builders Ltd. The site was occupied by a derelict joiners' shop and front garden, dating from the 1920s or '30s. The garden surface was c.1.5m higher than the current level of Forth Street, and was retained behind a brick revetment wall along the N edge of the site. The E edge was defined by a harled garden wall bounding the backs of houses in Market Place, and the W edge by a late nineteenth-century stone wall.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The date of the earliest settlement at North Berwick is unknown, although its position on the northern tip of the East Lothian coast ensured its development from the eighth century as a ferry port for pilgrims heading for St Andrews (then called Kilrimont) via Earlsferry on the Fife coast. It became a baronial burgh in the fourteenth century and was made a royal burgh in the fifteenth century.
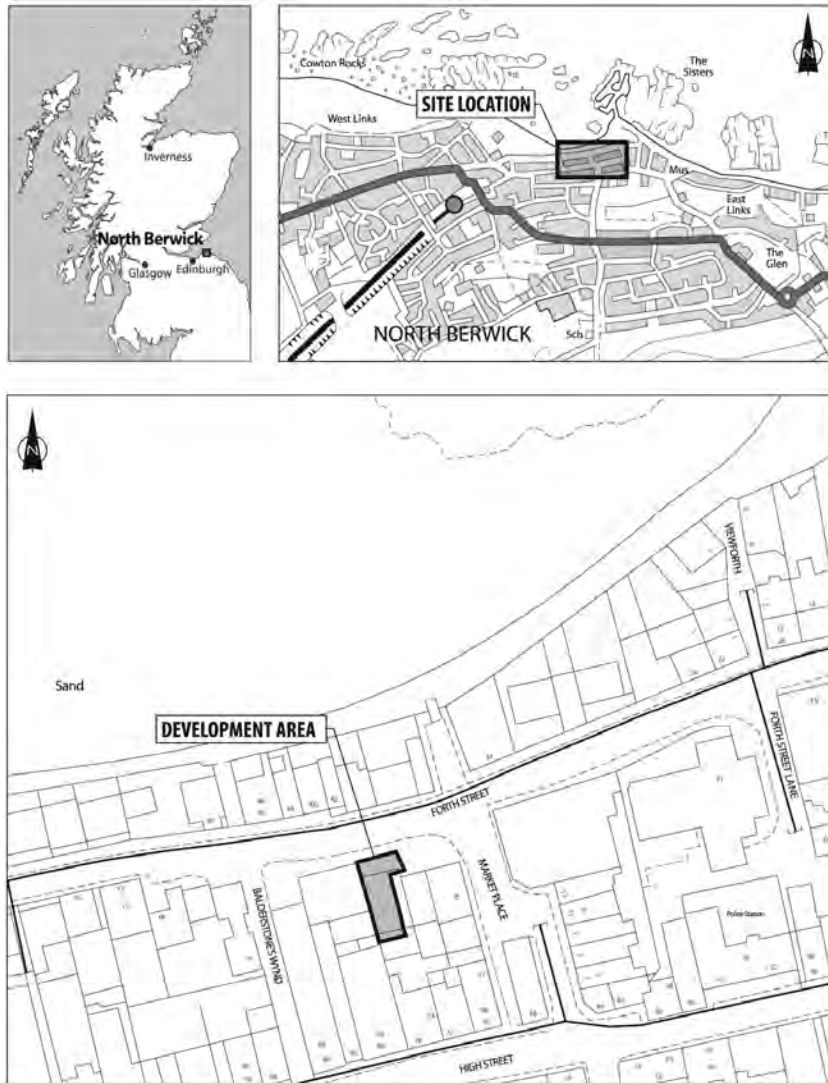
Figure 1: Location Maps

The town had two principal streets: High Street and Crossgate (now Quality Street), with Forth Street acting as a back lane to High Street. Forth Street is first named in 1785; prior to this it had been a track called North Road or Back Street, and was used as a dumping ground for dung. The excavation site thus lay within the core of the medieval town.

MEDIEVAL NORTH BERWICK REVEALED
EXCAVATIONS IN FORTH STREET

Previous archaeological projects close to 33 Forth Street had revealed extensive remains dating back to the medieval period. A hoard of fourteenth-century coins was discovered in the 1800s on a site in High Street now occupied by the police station (Simpson and Stevenson 1981). In 1987 two circular clay tanks and associated medieval pottery were discovered c.1m beneath current ground level, close to the frontage of 83-87 High Street (Bowler 1987), and midden deposits containing shells and medieval soil horizons were recorded during a watching brief along the length of High Street and Forth Street (Chris Lowe, pers comm).

Further work at 18-24 High Street encountered unexpectedly deep archaeological deposits sealed by windblown sand, a discovery which was key to understanding the nature and potential of archaeological remains in North Berwick. Structural remains revealed on the High Street frontage lay up to 2.5m beneath the current ground level. Archaeological deposits at the Forth Street end of the site were located up to 1.4m beneath current ground level. Excavations at Forth Street Lane (Hall 1993; Hall & Bowler 1997), c.50-100m to the E of 33 Forth Street, revealed extensive, well stratified deposits and features, including a stone-lined well, medieval clay wall and post-medieval boundary walls, 1.3m beneath ground level.

Work at nearby St Andrew Blackadder Church revealed medieval and post-medieval features including a stone-lined well, a medieval clay wall and post-medieval boundary walls up to 0.3m beneath current ground level. Garden soil deposits containing medieval pottery were discovered 0.3m beneath the surface, both within the grounds of St Andrew Blackadder Church (Hall 2000), and in the adjoining garden of 7-9 St Andrews Street (Cressey and Mitchell 2003).

EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

An evaluation was carried out in October 2003. Four trial trenches with a total area of 24m^2 were excavated, revealing four phases of soil deposition, a stone drain or culvert, and a foundation cut for a wall. The results suggested that further deeply stratified deposits and structures survived within the site which would be put at risk by the proposed construction work, and a programme of full excavation was undertaken during February 2004.

The excavation was initially undertaken in the W half of the site, to record any surviving wall footings that may have survived within the foundation ditch, and to achieve a section running longitudinally down the centre of the site (section A-B, fig 2). Overburden and garden topsoil was removed by a mechanical mini-digger, thereafter deposits were removed by hand. Burgage plot walls running N-S
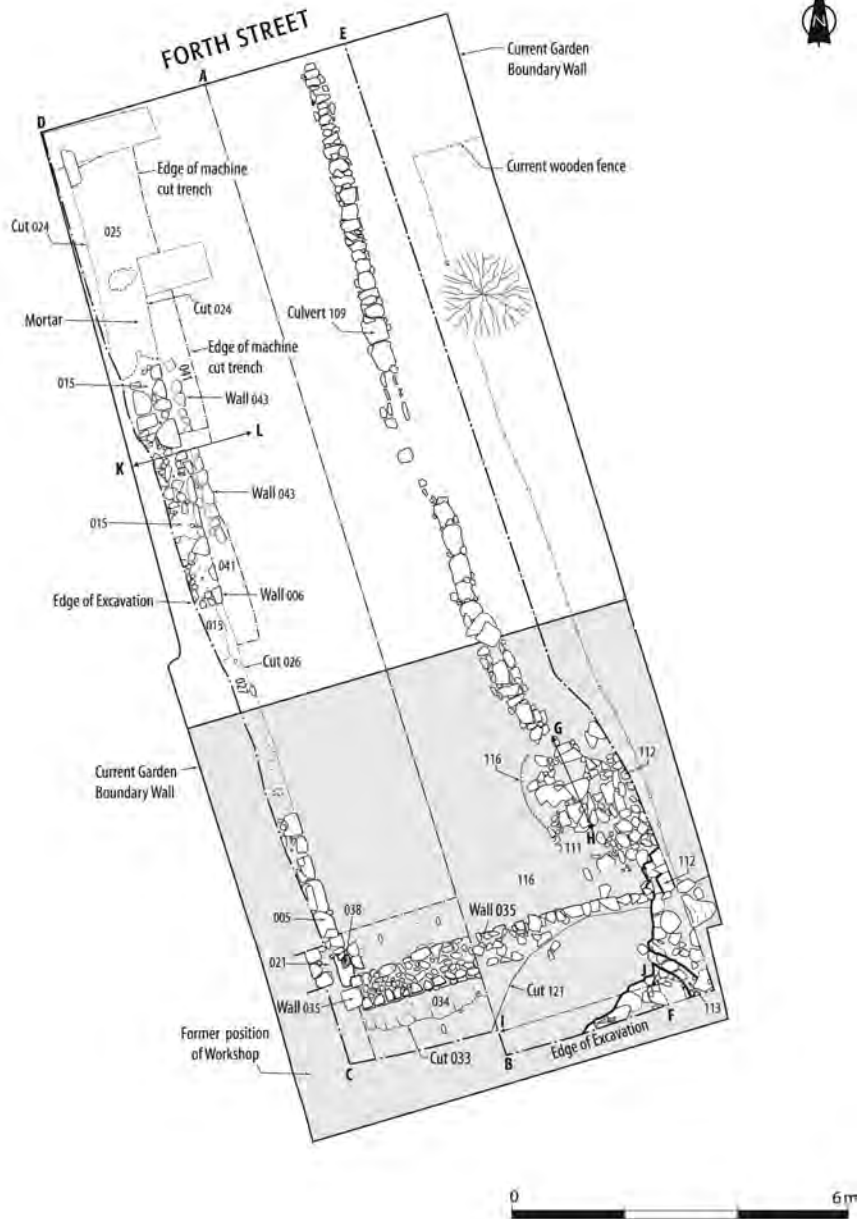
Figure 2: Site Plan, showing positions of sections in Figures 3-8.

along the W edge of the site and a well-preserved wall footing running E-W across the rear of the site were discovered. After consultation with East Lothian Council's Heritage Officer, it was decided fully to excavate the E half of the site as well, in order to record the wall footing and expose the stone drain/culvert revealed during the evaluation. Several additional features were discovered in the E half, including the corner of a post-medieval building and drain, a stone-built beehive-shaped sump, and demolition remains of a nineteenth-century building.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

Natural subsoil was coarse, clean marine-deposited sand which sloped gently towards the sea. It lay at a depth of up to 3m below the modern ground level of the site and 2.5m below the current street level of Forth Street, and was exposed only in two slot trenches and at the extreme S of the site due to safety considerations.

In the following description of the features by phase, suggested dates have been included after each heading. These are provided as a rough guide only, as the dates from the artefacts are not close enough to provide a tighter dating structure.

PHASE 1: MIDDEN DEPOSIT - MID TO LATE 12TH CENTURY?
A midden-rich soil deposit (063) overlying the subsoil represents the earliest anthropogenic remains (fig 3). It was revealed in two slot trenches towards the N end of the site and measured up to 0.4m thick, thinning out to the S. It contained frequent shell fragments, medieval white gritty ware and unprovenanced glazed pottery sherds.

This was sealed by several interleaving deposits of wind-borne sand (062, 070, 074, 078, 082) which were extant over the entire site (figs 3-4). These layers contained sherds of white gritty ware and other medieval pottery. Several depositional events are represented here which may have occurred over several months or years, suggesting the site may have lain unused during this time.

PHASE 2: BUILDING FOUNDATION WALL - 13TH CENTURY
The earliest phase of building was represented by a wall footing (035) running E-W across the S end of the site, parallel to Forth Street and High Street (fig 2). The wall, 0.7m wide, was double-faced with a rubble core, its faces built from roughly dressed sandstone blocks surviving two courses high. It was located as close to the backs of the High Street buildings as it was to Forth Street, so it may have been part of a High Street building, possibly an outhouse. The construction was similar to the footings of the twelfth-century St Andrew's Church near North
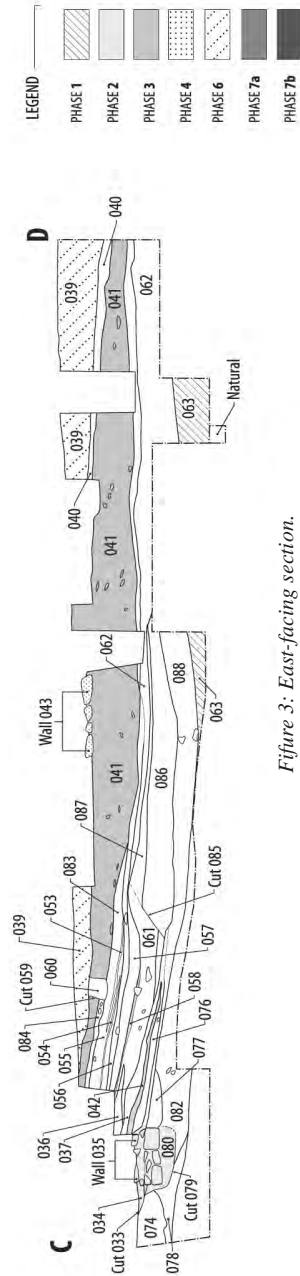
Fifure 3: East-facing section.

Figure 4: West-facing section.
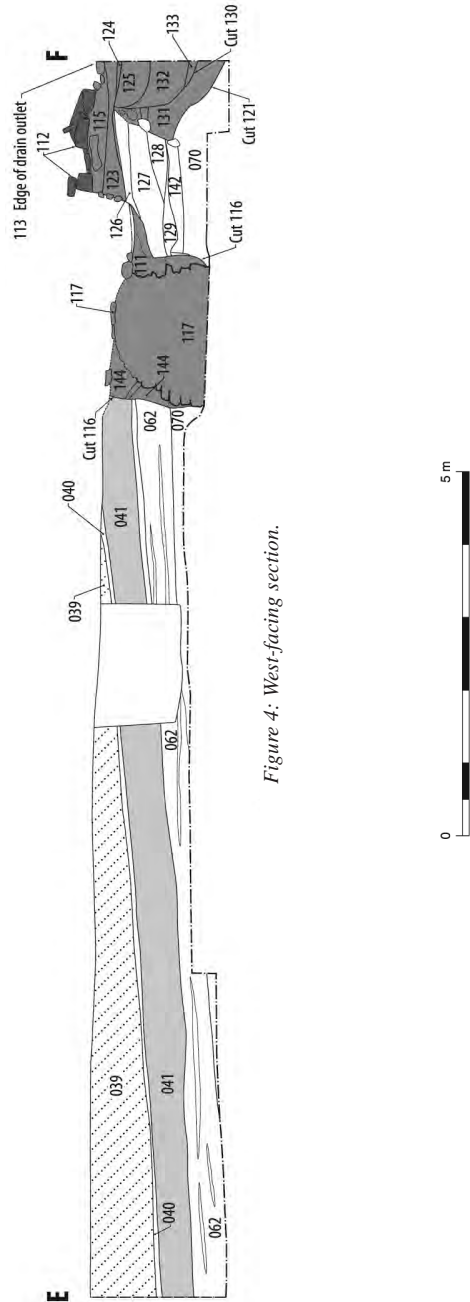
Berwick harbour. The wall was set in a steep-sided foundation trench (079), well defined along its S edge but indistinct on the N (fig 3). It cut a wind-blown sand layer (082) filled with firm dark red sand (080).

Several deposits abutted the wall on its N side, mainly concentrated at its W end. A discontinuous midden deposit (077), measuring c.0.2m thick, overlay sand layer 082 and respected the edge of the wall. It underlay several interleaved thin layers of sand (076, 088). A sub-rectangular patch of dense black burnt plant material (038, 042) (see page 67), 0.3m wide and up to 0.15m thick, overlay the sand. It also respected the wall and extended 2m to the N before thinning out. This also underlay a 0.2m thick deposit of interleaved sand layers (037).

A secondary cut (034), filled with firm red sand (034) and visible along the S edge of the foundation trench (079), contained sherds of medieval pottery of thirteenth-century or later date. It cut sand layer 074 and the S edge of foundation trench 079 and possibly represented a robber trench, as its base coincided with the upper extent of the wall remains (035).

A midden layer (061), up to 0.2m thick, overlay sand layer 037. It extended c.3m to the N where it formed the fill of an irregular slanting feature (085) cut into two deep sand deposits (062, 088). It thinned out at the point where it would have abutted the wall (035), and contained pottery of mid twelfth- to mid fourteenth-century date. A thick layer of dense rust-coloured clay (036) overlay this midden layer, which in turn underlay a thin lens of mussel shells (058). Medieval pottery was recovered from both layers. Above this were further layers of sand (054-057), a further midden layer (083) and a sandy clay layer (084). Finds from the sand layers included sherds of medieval pottery.

PHASE 3: MIDDEN-RICH GARDEN SOIL - LATE 13TH CENTURY +

An extensive midden-rich garden soil (041) sealed the phase 2 wall (035) and its associated deposits (figs 3-5). It lay up to 1m thick at the N end of the site and was absent along the S edge. It contained shell fragments, several animal bones and pottery sherds dating to between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. A series of furrows (092-095) was cut into the surface of the soil close to the N end of the site. They measured 0.2m wide and deep, and were filled with a sandy midden-rich soil (096-099). The furrows probably represent gardening activity.

PHASE 4: BURGAGE PLOT WALL - 14TH CENTURY?

The remains of a stone wall (043) were set into the phase 3 garden soil (041). Aligned N-S, the wall ran close to the W edge of the site (fig 2). It was built from large angular stone blocks, although most of the stones had been robbed out,

possibly for use in building the parallel phase 5 wall (see below). Although the midden-rich soil (041) continued beneath the wall, there was no visible foundation cut so it seems that the midden soil began accumulating prior to the construction of the wall, then continued to accumulate, gaining height up the side of the wall (fig 5).

This phase was sealed by a layer of wind-deposited sand (040) abutting wall 043. The sand, 0.15m thick, was pale and clean, with few inclusions or shells, and lay across most of the site.
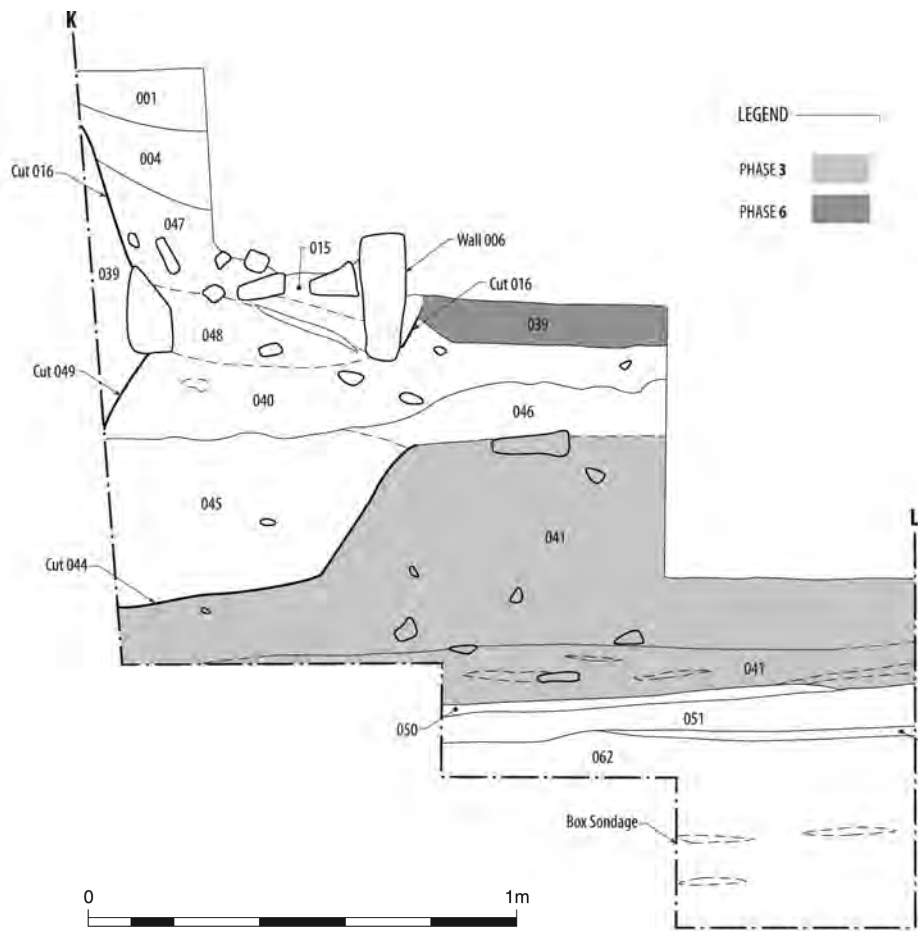

Figure 5: Section K-L

PHASE 5: BURGAGE PLOT WALL - 15TH CENTURY

The remains of a second linear stone wall (005/006) were set into the surface of the sand (040). The wall ran c.0.5m W of, and parallel to, the phase 4 wall (043), and formed another burgage plot boundary. Built from large sandstone blocks with occasional orthostats, it was probably partially built using the robbed out stones of the earlier wall. A sherd of fifteenth/sixteenth-century pottery was found in the wall core (015). This wall itself was subsequently partially robbed, leaving a visible robber trench (024) filled with midden-rich soil (025).

PHASE 6: MIDDEN - 15TH/16TH CENTURY?

A second deep midden-rich soil layer (039) extended across most of the site with the exception of the S edge (figs 3-5) where it both thinned out and had been extensively disturbed by later building activities. It overlay the wind-blown sand (040) and sealed the phase 4 wall. It lay up to 0.9m thick at the N end of the site, gradually thinning out towards the S, and abutted the phase 5 wall (005/006), where it appears to have accumulated at its base. Although some of the soil may have been deliberately shovelled against the base of the wall to give support, there was no visible evidence of this due to the homogenous nature of the deposit. It comprised midden-rich loam, shell and animal bone. The pottery recovered dated between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.

In the N half of the site, the earlier levels were sealed by a layer of clean pale wind-borne sand up to 0.2m thick. The sand layer was partially extant in the S half of the site but most of this had been disturbed by the foundations of the joiners' shop.

PHASE 7A: SUMP AND DRAIN - 16TH/17TH CENTURY

A stone built sump (117) in a vertical cut (116) was found close to the SE corner of the site. Beehive in form and measuring 1.3m in diameter and 1.8m deep (figs 6-8), it was built from rough hewn flat sandstones with the gaps plugged by small sharp stones and flakes. The top of the sump was corbelled to an access hole measuring c.0.7m in diameter and capped with a single large sandstone slab. The sump interior formed a void with a c.0.3m thick accumulation of very finely sorted dark silt (119) in the base. This material was sampled but contained no carbonised remains. A sloping inlet channel (118), polished smooth internally, was built into the side of the sump (figs 2, 6 and 8). The inlet was aligned with the drainage channel (113) between two collapsed walls (112/114, see below phase 7B). The sump was located c.3m from the drainage channel (113) and the sump inlet channel (118) was c.0.5m lower than the drainage channel outlet (113). No drainage structure, or evidence for one, was revealed between the drainage channel and the sump, although it seems probable that the two structures were connected.
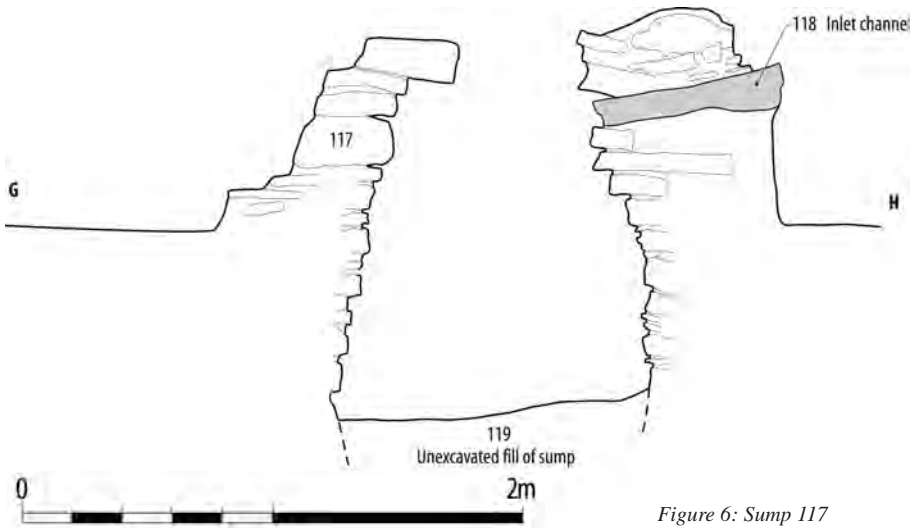
Figure 6: Sump 117

Figure 7: Sump 117

Figure 8: Sump 117
and inlet channel 118

A stone drain (109) ran the full length of the site (fig 2). It was aligned
N-S and extended from the edge of the sump (117) to beneath the pavement at
the N end of the site. The drain channel was built from flat sandstone slabs set in
a steep V-form within a cut into the surface of the phase 6 midden (039). It was
capped with flat stones, and included two reused sandstone roofing tiles. It seems
plausible that the drain originally continued to an outlet close to the shore or the
old sea wall, although a watching brief carried out during the digging of a service
trench in Forth Street did not locate it (K Dingwall, pers comm).

Part of what appears to be a large pit (121) was revealed in the N-facing
section of the site (fig 2 and 9). The pit, 3.2m wide in section and 1.7m deep, was
filled with layers of sand. A possible re-cut (130) was filled with layers of dark
midden-rich soil and sand. The pit had cut the alignment of wall 035 and removed
a substantial portion of the S edge of the wall and its foundation trench (079). Pit
121 lay beneath layer 123 under wall 114, indicating that it was filled and covered
with midden material before this structure was built. It contained no finds and its
relationship with the sump was uncertain, but it cut and removed part of wall 035.
It may, however, belong earlier in the sequence than suggested here.

Figure 9: Section I-J

PHASE 7B: BUILDING WALLS - 17TH CENTURY

The remains of two building walls (112 & 114), possibly representing two separate buildings, were located in the SE corner (figs 2, 4 and 9). One wall footing (112), aligned N-S and extending c.3.5m from the SE corner of the site along the E edge, was built from large rough-hewn sandstone blocks and in poor condition. The voids between the stones were filled with compact midden-ri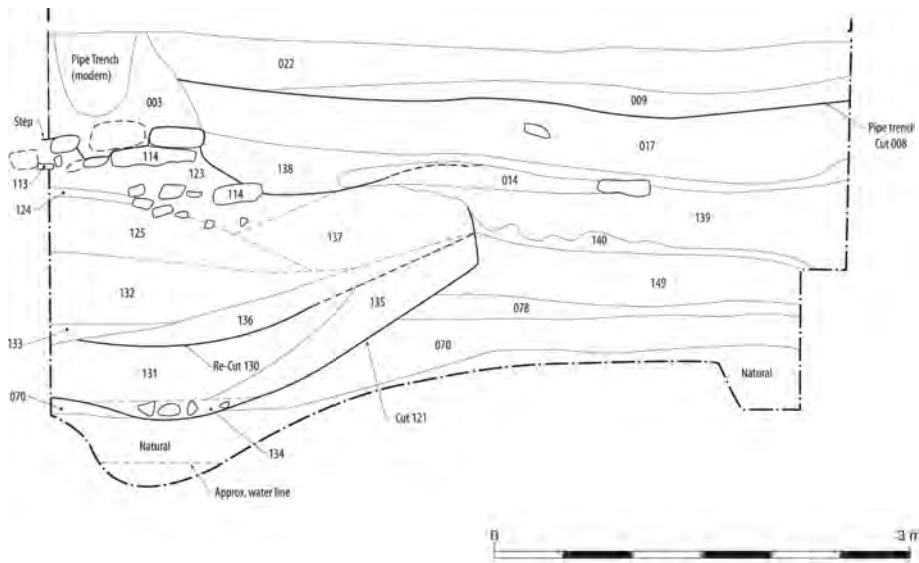ch soil (115). The wall footing was set into the surface of a firm dark midden-rich sand layer (123), spread and interleaved with mixed dark sand and soil. The remains of collapsed wall 114, also set into the surface of layer 123, was aligned E-W. It extended c.2m from the SE corner of the site and was also built of large rough-hewn red sandstone blocks. Layer 123 contained a sherd of North Holland slipware of sixteenth/seventeenth-century date.

A stone drainage channel (113), aligned SE-NW, was built into the junction of the two walls (112/114) in the SE corner of the site (fig 2). Square in section and measuring 0.15m wide and deep, it was set into the surface of the sand layer 123.

While it is clear that the sump and stone drain predate walls 112 & 114, it may only be by a single phase of building, as the spatial relationship between the drainage channel (113) and the sump suggest these were contemporary.

LATER SITE USE

Overlying phase 7 was a layer of pale sand (004) c.0.2m thick, which was present over the entire garden area in the N of the site. The sand underlay 0.2m thick topsoil overburden which formed the garden surface. The deposits below the old joiners' shop comprised heavily disturbed and discontinuous layers of dark midden, sand and nineteenth/twentieth-century rubble (002/003). Two square post holes (028/030) were revealed beneath the shop cut into the midden and rubble layer (002/003). Measuring c.0.3m by 0.3m and 0.2m deep, they were filled with dark silt with mortar flecks (029/030). A square pit (011), containing the partially decomposed remains of a dog (012), was also found. The entire S edge of the site had been heavily disturbed to a depth of 0.6m by a drainpipe trench.

THE ARTEFACTS

METALWORK
Sue Anderson

A copper alloy rim from a large vessel, with a diameter greater than 250mm, came from midden layer 050/051. It consisted of sheet metal folded over to form the outer rim (2mm thick); the inner edge was broken and ragged. Two rivet holes

in the surviving length, one with a large, dome-headed rivet *in situ*, may indicate that the fragment was part of the lining for a wooden vessel, rather than a metal cauldron. The object was either medieval or post-medieval.

Five nails and two iron studs, all hand made, were collected from midden layers, topsoil and a culvert. An iron strap, 119mm long, 28mm wide at each end, narrowing to 19mm in the centre and 7mm thick, was recovered from the phase 3 midden layer 041. There were three rivets at c.45mm intervals, one at each end and one in the centre. This type of strap, generally used for reinforcing or attaching hinges to wooden chests, doors or other objects, is probably medieval.

POTTERY
Sue Anderson

A total of 259 sherds, weighing 5704g, was recovered. The majority of pottery from stratified contexts came from midden layers, although 44 sherds were from the phase 2 foundation trench fill 034. Table 1 shows the quantification by fabric, and a full quantification by context is available in archive.

Description	Fabric	No	Wt/g	Eve
White gritty ware: coarse	WGW1	69	936	0.24
White gritty ware: medium	WGW2	52	625	0.48
White gritty ware: smooth, abundant mica	WGW3	36	813	0.15
White gritty ware: medium-fine, dark grey	WGW4	26	308	0.20
East Coast redwares	ECR	4	50	
Scarborough Ware	SCAR	4	45	
Unprovenanced glazed	UPG	43	474	0.24
Dutch-type Redwares	DUTR	4	27	0.15
Total high to late medieval		238	3278	1.46
Scottish post-medieval oxidised	SPMO	1	25	
Dutch-type slipwares	DUTS	1	18	
Refined White Earthenwares	REFW	4	47	0.07
British stonewares	BRSW	13	2200	3.29
Brown manganese glazed whitewares	BGWW	1	122	
Late slipped redware	LSRW	1	14	
Total post-medieval and modern		21	2426	3.36

Table 1. Pottery quantification by fabric

MEDIEVAL NORTH BERWICK REVEALED
EXCAVATIONS IN FORTH STREET

MEDIEVAL POTTERY

The majority of the assemblage, 91% by sherd count, is of medieval date. Of the 238 sherds, 187 (78.6%) are probably or certainly of Scottish manufacture. White gritty wares form the largest proportion of the assemblage, and are present in a variety of fabrics from very coarse to very fine. The known kiln site at Colstoun, near Haddington, seems to have produced a wide range of fabrics (Brooks 1980) and it is likely that some of the sherds in this assemblage were produced there. The much grittier fabrics, which seem to have been manufactured in Fife, are probably also represented in this group, and there are likely to be vessels from other sources too. The picture is further complicated by the production of gritty whitewares over much of Northern Britain, and some of the sherds could be English products.

The whitewares were divided into fabric groups based largely on coarseness, simply to see if any differences occurred in their distribution through this well stratified site. This showed that the finer wares (WGW3) occurred almost exclusively in phase 4 and later. The coarse and medium-tempered wares were largely found in phases 1 and 2. The occurrence of a fine micaceous whiteware (WGW3) largely in phase 6 is of interest. The fabric bears a similarity to the early post-medieval oxidised and reduced wares and may reflect changing requirements for finer wares towards the end of the medieval period. However, the numbers are small, and a much larger assemblage would be needed to make any meaningful interpretation.

The quantities of whiteware fabrics with and without glaze were also compared. This showed that, in total, slightly more sherds were glazed (99) than unglazed (84), but that these were spread differently amongst the fabric groups. WGW1 produced the most unglazed sherds – 48 compared with 21 glazed. WGW2 was fairly evenly spread (23 unglazed/29 glazed), whilst WGW3 and WGW4 were almost entirely glazed (27 glazed/9 unglazed for the former, 22 glazed/4 unglazed for the latter). The coarser vessels would be better suited to the thermal shock which cooking pots were required to withstand, so this may be one reason why fewer coarse sherds were glazed. Many of these sherds showed evidence of sooting or burning, although some glazed sherds were also sooted. Of those WGW sherds which could be identified to vessel type, six were jars, one was a handled jar and six others were jugs.

The other main Scottish type in this assemblage, East Coast redware, thought to date no earlier than the thirteenth century, was poorly represented. This is normal for the area as the fabric is more common in NE Scotland. Three sherds of
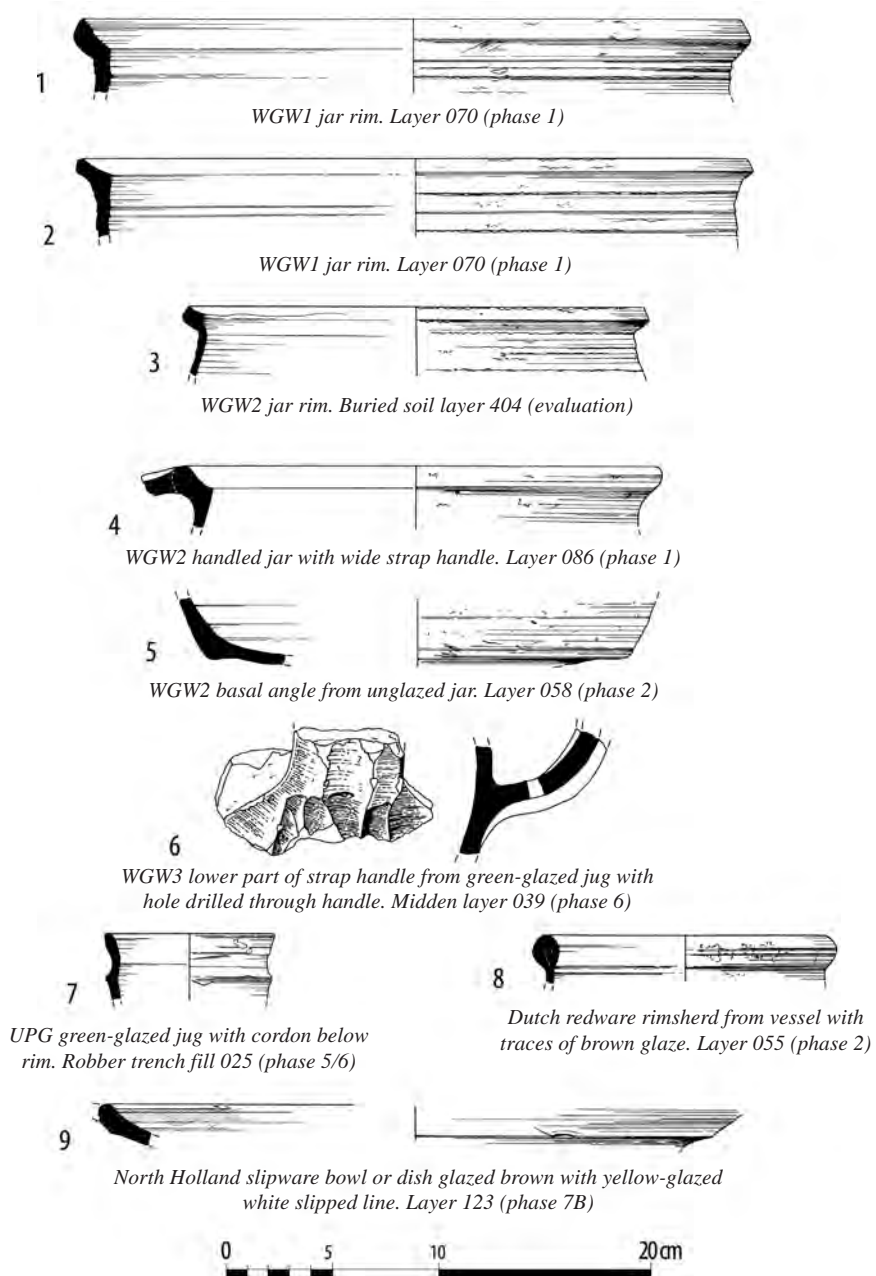
WGW1 jar rim. Layer 070 (phase 1)

WGW1 jar rim. Layer 070 (phase 1)

WGW2 jar rim. Buried soil layer 404 (evaluation)

WGW2 handled jar with wide strap handle. Layer 086 (phase 1)

WGW2 basal angle from unglazed jar. Layer 058 (phase 2)

*WGW3 lower part of strap handle from green-glazed jug with
hole drilled through handle. Midden layer 039 (phase 6)*

*UPG green-glazed jug with cordon below
rim. Robber trench fill 025 (phase 5/6)*

*Dutch redware rimsherd from vessel with
traces of brown glaze. Layer 055 (phase 2)*

*North Holland slipware bowl or dish glazed brown with yellow-glazed
white slipped line. Layer 123 (phase 7B)*

0   5   10   20 cm

Figure 10: Pottery

a single vessel from context 034 contained fragments of shell in the glaze, probably accidentally incorporated before or during firing. Most other sherds could not be attributed to a particular source. One Scarborough Ware jug handle was present in phase 2 layer 088, suggesting a late twelfth-/mid thirteenth-century date. Three sherds of another possible Scarborough vessel, with incised horizontal lines on the upper body, were found in the phase 2 midden layer 061. Unprovenanced glazed wares included sherds which may be from Aberdeen, Yorkshire, Newcastle, southern England and northern Europe. The four sherds of Dutch-type redware included a bead rim from a skillet or cauldron, a small piece of a handle, and two glazed body sherds. The fabric is medium sandy, rather than the typical fine orange fabric of the later Dutch redwares, and it is possible that these sherds are from SE England.

POST-MEDIEVAL AND MODERN POTTERY

Only one sherd of the typical Scottish post-medieval redware was recovered (from phase 5 wall core 015). It is probably of fifteenth/sixteenth century date. A sherd from a North Holland slipware dish was found in phase 7B (123); dishes of this type were imported in the sixteenth/seventeenth century.

All other pottery was nineteenth century or later. The majority were British stonewares, including a cream jar from the Wigtownshire Creamery Co., of Stranraer, a brown milk jug made by H Kennedy of Glasgow, and at least two storage jars made by Doulton of Lambeth. A fragment of a large redware bowl with internal white slip was heavily abraded and covered in white lime mortar or plaster. Refined whitewares included plain creamware and pearlware bases, a small bowl rim and a possible mug or cup rim. The pottery was mostly unstratified, or recovered from upper layers, except an abraded sherd of white stoneware from pit 308.

THE ECOFACTS

ANIMAL BONE
Catherine Smith

SPECIES PRESENT

Bones of domestic mammals and birds dominated the small but well-preserved faunal assemblage. Cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse, cat and domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) were all present, as well as a single wild bird species, the gannet (*Sula bassana*). Cattle bones (35 in total) were more frequent than those of sheep/goat (21). However, as the sample numbers were small it is unsafe to assume that more cattle than sheep/goats were present. Pig (4) and horse (2) bones were scarce.

AGE OF ANIMALS AT DEATH

In general, there was scant evidence of the ages at which animals were killed or died. However, mandibular evidence showed that both young lambs and mature sheep/goats were killed. Evidence for both cattle and sheep/goats, derived from the state of fusion of long bone epiphyses, indicated that both juvenile and adult animals were present. A single cattle horn core may have come from an immature beast. Long bones of domestic fowl were all from adults.

SIZE OF ANIMALS

Anatomical measurements of individual bones fell within the ranges of the large medieval assemblage recovered from the Perth High Street site (Hodgson *et al* forthcoming*)*. However, in almost all cases, the measurements for cattle and sheep bones from Forth Street were greater than the Perth means. They would, therefore, have been in the upper range for medieval animals. Other evidence for outward appearance of the animals came from a cattle horn core from an immature animal (phase 2, layer 076), indicating that at least some of the cattle had horns, a characteristic of Scottish medieval beasts.

BUTCHERY AND OTHER MODIFICATION OF BONES

Evidence of tool marks on bones was an indicator of butchery. In all phases, carcasses were butchered using axes or cleavers. An unstratified cattle tibia shaft, sawn across twice, was probably modern since saws were not commonly used in medieval butchery.

Separation of individual joints of meat occurred after carcass division. This was done with varying degrees of skill, or patience. Some bones were neatly butchered by chopping cleanly across, while others - for example, a cattle calcaneum (a tarsal from the hock joint in the rear leg, from phase 6, midden layer 039) - were severely hacked on both the anterior and posterior aspects, as if the butcher had experienced difficulty in releasing the joint. Coincidentally, the bone exhibited slight new bone growth (exostoses) of the body of the tarsal; there may have been associated pathology of the surrounding tissue leading to difficulty in butchery.

Occasionally, when meat was removed from the bone, knife cuts were left behind. These occur where muscle tissue was stripped away close enough to the surface of the bone to allow the knife blade to penetrate the protective periosteal membrane. Knife cuts were preserved on many of the cattle and sheep/goat bones, as well as on one fragment from an indeterminate bird species (phase 6 midden layer 039).

DISCUSSION

The animal bones provide evidence not only of the size and appearance of the beasts themselves, but also of human interactions with them. The cattle, sheep and pigs provided meat for human consumption, as shown by the butchery marks on the bones. Birds too provided meat, in particular domestic fowl and gannets. A phase 2 deposit (sand layer 076) contained the heads and beaks of three gannets.

The famous gannet colony on the Bass Rock, lying a short distance offshore from North Berwick, gives the bird its generic name, *Sula bassana*. Gannets were harvested on the Bass from at least the sixteenth until the late nineteenth centuries (Nelson 1989, 22; *APS*, iii, 614) although the custom is probably far older. Gannets may also have nested on the Isle of May. Baxter and Rintoul (1953, 466) quote evidence that young birds were taken from nests on the May some time before 1850. Archaeological excavations on the Isle of May have recovered a substantial medieval and post-medieval assemblage of seabirds, including gannets (Smith forthcoming).

The method of hunting young gannets in Scotland is demonstrated by a custom which survives to the present day in the Outer Hebrides. The men of Lewis mount an annual harvest on the rocky outlying island of Sula Sgeir. Here, the young gannets, known by their Gaelic name of *gugas*, are captured using long poles with a noose at the end, plucked, singed to remove any stubborn feather quills, and salted to preserve the meat (Beatty 1992). Hunters visiting the Bass Rock by boat may have used similar methods in the breeding season in order to obtain *gugas* as well as older gannets and their eggs.

Gannets from the Bass were a fairly important commodity in terms of the local economy of the Firth of Forth. Their bones have been recovered from excavations in St Andrews (Smith 1997, 109) and Dunbar (Smith 2000, 237), and their presence in medieval North Berwick is an indicator of exploitation of a readily available marine resource.

FISH AND MARINE-SHELL
Ruby Cerón-Carrasco

The fish and marine shell remains derived from the phase 1 midden (063). A bulk sample from this was sieved through a 1mm mesh and fish bone and marine shell remains were recovered. The remains were then examined and identified, where possible, to species level or to family group, using a modern fish bone reference collection and standard guides for molluscs (Campbell and Nicholls 1989). Fish skeletal nomenclature follows Wheeler and Jones (1989, 122-23). Further methodology and catalogue are provided in the site archive.

THE FISH REMAINS

Six fish taxa were identified, four to species and two to family level. Of these the most common remains belonged to cod (*Gadus morhua*), whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*), flounder (*Platichthys flesus*) and herring (*Clupea harengus*). Bones assigned to unidentified cod-family group Gadidae and the Elasmobranchii group (skates, sharks and rays) were also present.

Fishing has long been a natural industry for Scots, and by the medieval period was already flourishing, with cured cod and herring being exported to the Continent (Coull 1996; Lockhart 1997). As the industry developed, fisher-towns and villages sprang up, and fishing became more specialised. Religious houses greatly encouraged the industry, granting exclusive fishing rights and demanding part of their teinds (tithes) in fish.

Along the E coast, fishing for small specimens, such as immature cod and whiting, was done in inshore waters. This activity was carried on for most of the year but particularly in autumn and winter. The other species present would also have been caught in this manner. East coast fishermen also engaged, over much of the year but particularly in spring, in fishing for mature cod (and haddock), taken offshore from boats using hooked lines (Gray 1978).

The small fish bone assemblage represents the remains of domestic consumption, and reflects the sort of species that would have been available locally.

THE MARINE SHELL

The main species of shellfish recovered were limpet (*Patella vulgata*), periwinkle (*Littorina littorea*) and mussel (*Mytilus edule*), plus a small quantity of rough periwinkle (*Littorina saxatilis*) and flat periwinkle (*Littorina littoralis*).

Limpet, periwinkle and mussel are edible species and have long been a source of nourishment. Early accounts demonstrate that these have also been widely used as fish bait. Since most of the shells recovered were small juvenile specimens, it is assumed that they had been used mainly as bait for fishing lines. The mussel remains consisted mainly of broken fragments. Unlike limpets and periwinkles, which are gastropods and have sturdy shells that survive well in buried deposits, mussels are bivalve with a fragile lamillar structure that gradually disintegrates once buried.

The non-edible species recovered, rough and flat periwinkles, may have been accidentally collected with the other shellfish, or with seaweed, as they are

found amongst seaweed forests or on seaweed folds such as those of Laminaria (wracks) which abound all round the Scottish coast; seaweed has long been used in the area as animal fodder and as a soil fertiliser.

SOIL SAMPLES
Stephen Lancaster

Well-sorted sands dominate the vast bulk of the sediments that accumulated at Forth Street. Their source is readily apparent: the sandy beach adjacent. The sand is composed of more-or-less pure quartz sand with some marine shell fragments. The sands were predominantly eroded from disturbed areas by wind action and deposited in sheltered areas near walls. The sands had subsequently started to form soils due to rooting and invertebrate activity, which also incorporated domestic refuse in the form of bone, charcoal, ash and phosphatic concretions.

Fragments of sandy silt and silty clay, with internal root channels and iron hypocoatings consistent with an origin as turf forming in wet grassland on alluvium, were identified in a number of contexts. The texture of these fragments points clearly to the importation of turf to Forth Street. The location of contexts containing turf strongly suggests that the turf was brought onto the site as building material.

Phase 2 context 042 is a remarkable deposit, being composed almost entirely of charred and ashed plant remains. These are identified as the remains of grasses (or similar plants). To generate the thickness of ash deposit recorded would require a very large mass of plant material: it must have resulted from the combustion of a large pile of grasses. The interleaving of sand with the upper layers of this deposit suggests that it was formed by ashes being blown against a wall and covered with sand. (See page 67 for further detail.)

The evidence from the thin sections is dominated by natural processes for sediment accumulation and natural sources for these sediments. There is some evidence that the sandy soils were manured and cultivated during periods. The major human impact on the sediments studied came from the construction of phase 2 wall 035. As noted above, the construction of this E-W aligned wall had a significant effect on the natural accumulation of sand, and this may have been its primary purpose: to protect the S end of the property from repeated sand encroachment.

CHARCOAL
Mike Cressey

Only three contexts, out of nine studied, provided evidence of preserved charcoal (contexts 002, 038 and 040); the other six contained either coal or cinder

66

derived from coal burning. This material represents domestic fuel residues which have been dumped within the garden area. The presence of *Calluna vulgaris* (heather) in phase 2 burnt layer 038 appears to represent the use of heather as a starter fuel. The charcoal quantity is very low, surprising given the amount of wood that must have been burnt during the centuries North Berwick was settled.

CARBONISED CEREAL GRAINS
Leonard McKinney and Mhairi Hastie

Carbonised plant remains were recovered from eight of the 11 soil samples taken. The results are summarised in Table 2. The majority of samples contained only small quantities of wood charcoal, cereal grain and occasional weed seeds.

Two samples - burnt layers 038 and 042 from phase 2 - were noticeably different due to the high quantity of well preserved cereal fragments present. These abutted wall 035, and contained large quantities of carbonised bread/club wheat, smaller quantities of hulled barley and oat, awn fragments, rachis and culm nodes. The weeds present, including curled dock and vetch/pea, were probably growing along with the wheat and harvested with the cereals. Much of the grain still had fragments of chaff attached, suggesting that the wheat grains were still in spikelet form when burnt.

Soil analysis (see above page 66) suggests that this material was formed by light ash and other plant remains being blown from a large fire, and then quickly covered by wind-blown sands. This would explain the extremely good preservation of the fragile rachis fragments and dock perianth remains. Possible sources for the plant materials include: hay, crop-processing debris, fodder, thatch, or a corn stack.

Bread/club wheat was an important food commodity in medieval Scotland and is unlikely to have been used as animal fodder. The presence of large quantities of grain would also argue against them being the remnants of thatch, hay or crop-processing debris, all of which would have been predominantly of straw and rachis material. The majority of grain remaining in straw to be used for thatching would have been removed to try and discourage rodents and it was normal for hay to be collected from fields after the grain was harvested (Fenton 1999). Similarly, crop processing from threshing and winnowing would have produced chaff and straw, with the bulk of the grain having been extracted.

Some of the grain still had fragments of rachis attached indicating that grains were probably still in the spikelets when burnt. This is akin to corn that had been stored in a stack, and together with the high proportion of grain present

along with the chaff/straw fragments would imply that the charred remains were remnants of a corn stack, indicating that grain was likely being stored to the rear of the property.

Phase	Context	Context description	Sample vol. (litres)	Cereal grain	Weed seeds	Culm node	Rachis	Wood charcoal	Preservation	Comments
1	063	midden deposit	30	++	+	+			poor / abraded	barley ++ oat ++ wheat ++
2	038	burnt deposit	5	++++	++	+++	++	++	extremely good	bread/ club wheat +++ oat + hulled barley +
2	042	burnt deposit	30	++++	++	++	+++		extremely good	bread/ club wheat +++ oat + hulled barley +
3	041	midden deposit	20	+				+	poor / abraded	oat + barley + wheat +
7B	110	culvert fill	10					+	poor / abraded	
Mod	029	posthole fill	2	+	+			+	poor / abraded	barley + bread/ club wheat +
Mod	031	posthole fill	2	++				+	poor / abraded	barley/ wheat ++
Mod	101	posthole fill	5	+	+				poor / abraded	oat +

Table 2. Summary of carbonised plant remains
Notes: : + = rare, ++ = occasional, +++ = common and ++++ = abundant

Low concentrations of cereal, chaff and weeds were recovered from other deposits across the site, mostly in the fills of post holes associated with buildings at the S end of the site, and midden/cultivation deposits. Given their very abraded condition, these were probably introduced through manuring of cultivation soils with domestic refuse.

CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological investigations at 33 Forth Street, North Berwick, have revealed deeply stratified deposits and structures of twelfth-century and later date. Interleaved deposits of wind-blown sand and midden soil reflect the pattern identified by Hall (1993), and re-emphasise that archaeological remains may well survive in North Berwick at greater depth than might be expected. The sand deposits represent significant single depositional events, reflecting the exposed location of Forth Street to the sea.

The earliest structure was the footing of a wall (035) aligned parallel to the street. It may have formed a back to a building on High Street, or possibly acted as a screen against sand ingress. The presence of imported turves (036) may suggest that the wall was partially turf built. A significantly large deposit of burnt plant remains (042) associated with wall (035) probably indicates the presence of a corn stack. The structure probably predates the thirteenth century.

Two stone wall footings (043 & 005-007) running perpendicular to Forth Street were burgage plot boundary walls, probably of late medieval date, and closely approximate to the present W boundary of the property. The walls show a slight sequential westward shift of the boundary, possibly with each successive rebuilding increasing the size of the property.

The collapsed stone walls (112 & 114) located in the SE of the site represent a later, probably sixteenth-/seventeenth-century, building phase. An *in-situ* channel (113) in the angle between the two walls may have been a drain serving more than one property, and if so suggests that the E burgage plot boundary has not significantly shifted position. The drainage slot fed into a system incorporating a beehive sump (117) and outflow drain (109) which ran the full length of the site and probably exited on the beach.

Throughout the structural phases there was a continual build-up of garden and midden soils, separated by wind-borne sand deposits.

The small assemblage of pottery recovered was dominated by Scottish medieval wares. However, a significant proportion seems to have been brought from production centres up and down the E coast of Britain and from across the North Sea, consistent with North Berwick's role as a port.

MEDIEVAL NORTH BERWICK REVEALED
EXCAVATIONS IN FORTH STREET

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Figure 1: Ballencreiff from the SE c. 1920. The arrow indicates the location of the hall where the ceiling was found. (© Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland)

PHOENIX FROM THE FLAMES:
A RARE JACOBEAN CEILING FROM BALLENCRIEFF

by CHRIS TABRAHAM & PETER LAING GILLIES

INTRODUCTION

A startling discovery was made in 1992 during the restoration of ruined Ballencrieff Castle as a private house (fig 1). Substantial remains of an ornamental plaster ceiling were found 'face up' on the floor of the old hall, the principal reception room of the late sixteenth/early seventeenth-century castle. Precious fragments of plaster ceilings from adjacent rooms were also retrieved. Their style and heraldry prove conclusively that they date from the early seventeenth century, making them among the first to be installed in a Scottish residence. This article describes the ceiling and assorted fragments, and places them in their historic context.

BALLENCRIEFF CASTLE: A BRIEF HISTORY

The name Ballencrieff may derive from two Gaelic words, *baile*, 'village', and *craobh*, 'tree' - whence 'village of trees'. The placename probably dates from the early twelfth century as a result of close contact with the N side of the Firth of Forth, owing to the fact that the earls of Fife held land in East Lothian and also operated the ferry between North Berwick and Earlsferry (Nicolaisen 1976, 134). The first documented reference to Ballencrieff is found in the English records for the year 1296, by which date the lordship was being held by Sir Robert de Pinkeny, an English-born knight and sometime claimant to the throne of Scotland (Tabraham 2006,15-24). However, nothing now standing at Ballencrieff Castle dates from before the later sixteenth century, by which date the land was in the ownership of the Murrays.

The Murrays of Darnhall (now Blackbarony), in Peeblesshire, were in possession of Ballencrieff by 1511, when James IV confirmed John Murray and Isabel Hoppar, his spouse, in possession (*RGS* 1984, vol. ii, no. 3643, 87-8). John Murray fell alongside his king at Flodden six years later. The couple's only son, Andrew, inherited Ballencrieff. He served as sheriff of Edinburgh in the 1530s, where he had two other residences (for fuller details of the Murrays of Blackbarony, see Doubleday *et al* 1926, 46-50).

When Andrew Murray died in 1572, John, his eldest son by his second marriage, to Grizel Bethune of Creich, in Fife, a niece of the notorious Cardinal

PHOENIX FROM THE FLAMES:
A RARE JACOBEAN CEILING FROM BALLENCRIEFF

Beaton, inherited Ballencrieff. In 1586 John married Margaret, daughter of Sir Alexander Hamilton of Innerwick, and this happy event may have been the spur to his building a new residence at Ballencrieff. A carved stone recorded built into the adjacent house in 1924, but subsequently removed, bore the initials I M (for John Murray) and a defaced date, deciphered as reading 1586 (RCAHMS 1924, 5). The architectural details - particularly the fine fireplace in the hall and the pistol holes through the ground-floor walls - are classic features from around this time. The Murrays' new residence comprised a three-storey building housing a kitchen and storage cellars on the ground floor with the public and residential rooms above.

Sir John Murray was succeeded around 1607 by Archibald, his eldest son. Sir Archibald remained laird of Ballencrieff until 1617, at which date he sold the estate to his 57-year-old uncle, Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank, his father's younger brother (*RGS* 1984, vol.vii, no. 1661, 602). Sir Gideon, an intriguing figure, is the gentleman we most probably have to thank for the remarkable Jacobean ceiling found among the debris in Ballencrieff.

Gideon Murray was born in 1560 (for fuller details of his life and career, see Stephen & Lee 1993, 1261-3). In 1581 he graduated in theology from Glasgow University and became minister of Auchterless, in Aberdeenshire. However, in 1585 he was found guilty of accidentally killing a man named Aitcheson and imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle; he was released one year later. Turning his back on the church, he took as his wife Margaret, daughter of Dionis Pentland (or Paintland), of Carrington, Midlothian, and accepted the post of chamberlain to his cousin, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, on whose behalf it is claimed he led 500 horsemen to the battle of Dryfe Sands in 1593, the last pitched battle on the Angle-Scottish Border. In 1594 he acquired the estate of Elibank, with its castle, in Selkirkshire, from John Liddel of Halkerstone (RCAHMS 1957, 35-6).

Thereafter, Sir Gideon's career continued its comeback. In 1605 he was knighted, and appointed one of 10 commissioners charged by James VI & I with ensuring peace on the Border. In 1610 he became a privy councillor, and in 1612, following the death of Sir John Arnot, he was appointed treasurer-depute of Scotland at a yearly salary of £1500. In 1613 he became a lord of session.

We shall return to Sir Gideon's role as treasurer-depute later (page 78), because of its bearing on the ceiling at Ballencrieff, the property he purchased from his nephew, Sir Archibald Murray of Darnhall, in 1617. Later that year he complained to the Privy Council that four 'locals' - James Bell, Patrick Smith, James Aitken and Thomas Carrington - had broken the dyke at Ballencrieff and

stolen 'the best fruit of all kind', a crime for which they were declared rebels (*RPCS* 1894, vol.xi, 254 & 265).

However, in 1621 it was Sir Gideon's turn to be summonsed, to answer to charges that he had abused his position as treasurer-depute for personal gain. He was placed under house-arrest in Edinburgh, but on 28 June he died, apparently after refusing all food. Nevertheless, by the king's command he was buried with full honours in Holyrood Abbey, and in 1623 given a full and public approbation in recognition of his outstanding service to the crown (*RPSC* 1894, vol.xiii, 148-9).

Sir Gideon's eldest son, Patrick, inherited his father's estate (Dewar 2001, 1079-82). He and his second wife, Elizabeth Dundas, whom he had married in 1617, moved into Ballencrieff from their previous home at Langshaw Tower, near Galashiels. Works were clearly carried out on their new home because Elizabeth Dundas's monogram D E D (for Dame Elizabeth Dundas) and the date 1625 were carved onto a dormer-window pediment (RCAHMS 1924, 4-5); the pediment, together with the fine Venetian window pictured in figure 1, were taken to Elibank House, Peeblesshire, after 1912, where they remain to this day (RCAHMS 1957, 67). During the restoration of Ballencrieff, it became evident that the late sixteenth-century building had been extended eastward during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, whether by Sir Gideon or his son is not clear.

Like his father, Patrick ingratiated himself with his sovereign. In 1628 he paid Charles I for the privilege of becoming a baronet of Nova Scotia (though there is no record that he ever set foot on Canadian soil), and in 1643 he lent the king most of the family plate and silver inherited from his father; for this generosity Patrick was created Lord Elibank (sometime 'of Ettrick Forest') in the same year. It was added that this was in consideration of his 'worth, prudence and sufficiency, and of the many worthy services done to His Majesty, our late deceased father, in his council session and exchequer, by the late Sir Gideon Murray.' When Patrick, 1st Lord Elibank, died in 1649, he was laid to rest in the N aisle (the Ballencrieff Aisle) in Aberlady church.

All subsequent Lords Elibank were born and raised at Ballencrieff, until the death of George, 6th Lord Elibank, in 1785. The residence was substantially enlarged around 1730 when Patrick, 5th Lord Elibank, incorporated the existing building into an even more impressive Georgian mansion. Little else of note seems to have occurred at Ballencrieff during all that time, though the residence produced some eminent men. Alexander the 4th Lord Elibank's wife, Elizabeth Stirling (better known to history as 'Bare Betty' for reasons we shall not go into here), had

15 children, all born at Ballencrieff; 11 survived (Murray 1936). Of the five sons, Patrick, the eldest, became the 5th Lord Elibank, George, the second son, served as admiral in the Royal Navy before becoming the 6th Lord Elibank, Gideon, the third son, became chaplain-general to the army, Alexander, the fourth son, was noted for his support of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, even after the '45 Rising, whilst James, the fifth son, commanded the left wing of General Wolfe's army at the capture of Quebec, and subsequently became the first British Governor of Canada.

The only other event of note that occured at Ballencrieff was the visit of Dr Johnson and James Boswell in 1773; they stayed for two nights. Apparently the larger-than-life lexicographer took exception to the food prepared by the 5th Lord Elibank's French chef, declaring: 'I'd throw such a rascal into the river!'

When George, 6th Lord Elibank, died at Ballencrieff, without male heir, on 11 November 1785, it was as if someone turned the house lights out. His widow, Lady Isabel, daughter of the Earl of Cromartie, relocated to New Tarbet, Easter Ross, after inheriting her brother's estate in 1796; she died there in 1801. Alexander Murrary, her late husband's nephew, became the 7th Lord Elibank in 1785 but rarely resided at Ballencrieff. He died at Portobello in 1820. Alexander, the 8th Lord, died at Brussels in 1830. His son and heir, also Alexander, made an attempt to sell off Ballencrieff in the 1830s, but without success. The house was effectively uninhabited from about 1845. Then the seemingly inevitable happened - on 18 April 1868 the house went up in flames. The *Haddingtonshire Courier* reported that the housekeeper, residing in the W wing, had allowed a chimney to catch fire. Sparks from the flames got into the roof space of the main building, and with the help of a brisk westerly gale the whole house was destroyed overnight. Even the hallowed ancient beech tree near the house was engulfed in the inferno. The final sentence of the newspaper report read: 'His Lordship suffered no great loss as he was well insured"! Noble life in this pretty corner of East Lothian was no more.

In 1870 the ruin and its walled garden were sold to Jock McLaren, the head gardener at the Murrays' residence at Darnhall. In 1989 Jock's great-grandson, Peter McLaren, sold the ruin to Peter Laing Gillies and Lyn Dalgleish, who thereafter restored the oldest part of the structure, where the ceilings were discovered.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE CEILINGS
In 1992, during clearance work prior to restoring roofless Ballencrieff Castle back into a private residence, the substantial remains of one plaster ceiling, together with assorted fragments from at least two others, were found in the oldest

part of the ruin - the late sixteenth-century block at the SW corner of the Georgian mansion. Initially, only fragments were recovered, including lengths of cornices and decorative ribs but, more importantly, ornamental casts. These bore heraldic devices and monograms, so making it possible to identify the owner(s) responsible - and, crucially, the date the ceilings were installed.

Then, quite unexpectedly, a substantial section of intact plaster ceiling was found - 'face-up' on the floor of the hall (fig 2). How such a delicate feature as a plaster ceiling should end up thus - and survive to the extent it did - is a mystery. The most likely explanation is that, as the Georgian mansion fell into decay, the ceiling became partly detached from its timber lath framework and hung down. When it finally parted company from the framework, it flipped over, landing 'face-up' on the floor. When slates began falling down from the roof high overhead, some fell flat onto the fallen plaster ceiling, thereby providing a sacrificial cover against heavier stones which subsequently began to crash down from the wall tops.

Figure 2: The portion of plaster ceiling 'face-up' on the floor of the hall. (© Historic Scotland)

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The intact section of ceiling measured overall 2.40 by 2.20 m, meaning that it formed approximately one seventh of the original ceiling (the hall measured 10 m by 5.5 m). The surviving section consisted of a lattice of raised ribs forming differently-shaped panels. One panel, square in shape, was complete; the other partial panels formed lozenges. Because such ceilings were symmetrically designed, the portion remaining on the floor was sufficient to enable a reconstruction of the general layout of the entire ceiling to be made (fig 3). Comparison with other Scottish plaster ceilings showed that it was of the early seventeenth century. Confirmation that this was in fact the date for the Ballencrieff ceiling came from the ceiling itself, for cast into the centre of the square panel lay the entwined monogram SGM - for Sir Gideon Murray.

SIR GIDEON MURRAY AND HIS CEILING

Apart from the SGM monogram on the section of fallen ceiling, there is no other record that Sir Gideon Murray was installing ceilings at Ballencrieff. However, there is some fascinating circumstantial evidence, which not only supports that probability but also gives another insight into the intriguing matter of his subsequent summons relating to charges that he abused his position as treasurer-depute for personal gain.

Sir Gideon Murray, as treasurer-depute, was the crown official chiefly responsible for paying the bills relating to works carried out 'at his majesties warkis and buildingis within Scotland' (Paton 1957; Imrie & Dunbar 1982). He was never busier perhaps than during the years 1615-17, when the nation was preparing to welcome home James VI, his majesty's first (and only) visit since moving his court to London in 1603. The 'hamecoming' of 1617 was a celebration to mark Jamie Saxt's golden jubilee as king of Scots. During the preparations, Sir Gideon travelled around the country, mostly in the company of the king's master of work, James Murray of Kilbaberton (no relation), inspecting work in progress, or recently completed. Journeys to Dumbarton, Dunfermline, Falkland, Linlithgow and Stirling are recorded in the audited compts (accounts).

Sir Gideon's main task was arranging payment for the wholesale rebuilding of the royal palace in Edinburgh Castle. The late fifteenth-century palace wherein Prince James was born in June 1566 had been severely damaged during the 'Lang Siege' of 1571-3 and left unrepaired until 1615, when its reconstruction was put in hand. The work clearly involved plaster ceilings, for not only does a precious fragment of elaborate plaster cornice survive (Gibbons *et al* 2004, 5), but also the compts contain several references to 'plaisterers' and 'plaister mouldis'. One reference in particular, dated 9 June 1617, records payment to James Murray,
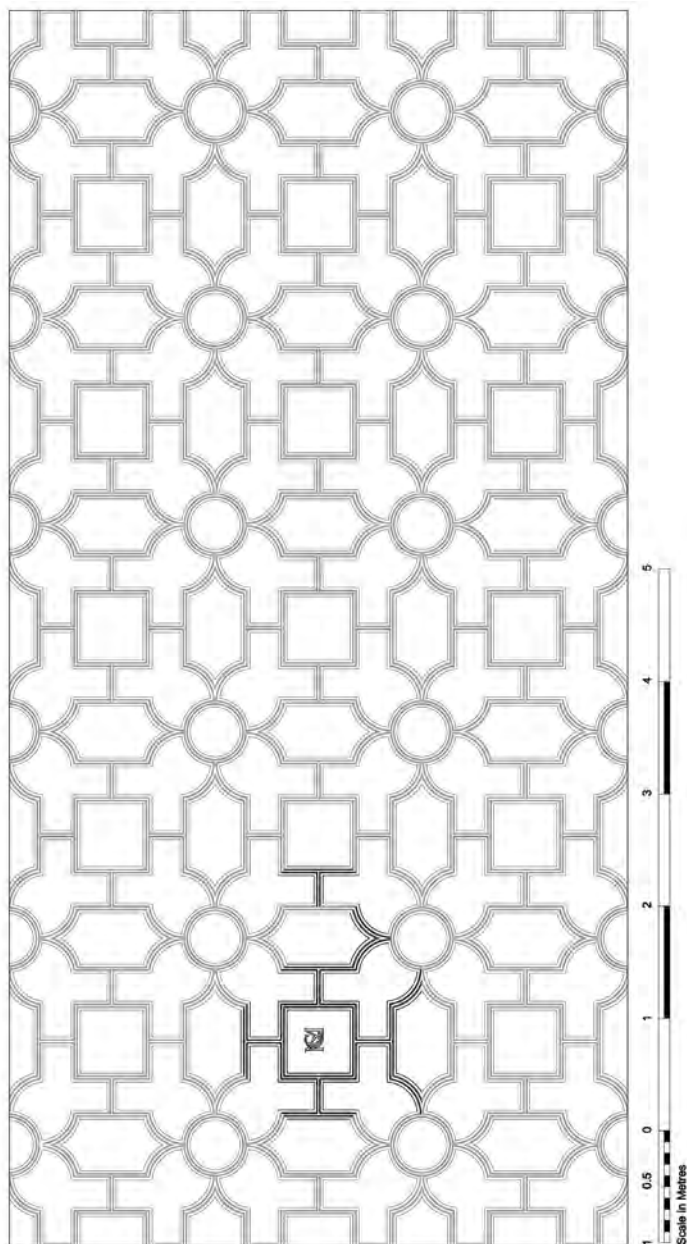
*Figure 3: The hall ceiling reconstructed. The heavy lines represent the actual parts found,
the light lines the conjectural remainder. (© Historic Scotland.)*

master of work, 'for careing [carrying] muldis to the plaisterers from Kellie' (Imrie & Dunbar 1982, 79).

The ceiling still *in situ* in the library (formerly a bedchamber) at Kellie Castle, Fife (RCAHMS 1933, 44-7, fig 122), is remarkably similar to the section of ceiling found at Ballencrieff. What happened, we wonder, to the moulds brought from Kellie to be used to make a ceiling in Edinburgh Castle? Could they perhaps thereafter have been taken to Ballencrieff, at the instruction of Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank, treasurer-depute, to make a ceiling there? And if so, was it official, or was Sir Gideon abusing his position for personal gain?

The monogram SGM (Sir Gideon Murray) (fig 4, top left): The monogram DMP (Dame Margaret Pentland) (fig 5, top right): Fetterlock (fig 6, bottom left): Chevron (fig 7, bottom right). (© Historic Scotland)

In addition to the section of complete ceiling, isolated plaster fragments were recovered from elsewhere in the hall. They included a second SGM monogram (fig 4), and two more monograms bearing the initals DMP (fig 5). These most probably acknowledge Sir Gideon's wife, Dame Margaret Pentland. Although other permutations of the initials are possible (eg, DPM for Lord Patrick Murray, Sir Gideon's son), the arrangement of the two monograms - with the S and the D as the central letter, and the letter for the christian name appearing slightly to the left - would support the identification of DMP as being Dame Margaret Pentland.

The other plastered heraldric arms found in the hall can all be linked to Sir Gideon's ancestral roots. The mullet and the fetterlock (fig 6) indicate his descent from the Murrays of Blackbarony, who incorporated a fetterlock due to a Lockhart marriage. The chevron with what appears to be an otter's head on it (fig 7) probably denotes Grizel Bethune, Sir Gideon's mother; the arms of Bethune of Creich were, quarterly, the 1st and 4th quarters a fess between three mascles (for Bethune), and the 2nd and 4th quarters a chevron charged with an otter's head (for Balfour).

SIR PATRICK MURRAY AND HIS CEILING

Fragments from at least one other ornamental plaster ceiling were recovered from the floor of the smaller room immediately to the E of the hall. This was probably the withdrawing room in the original (ie, late sixteenth-century) castle, with the room above serving as the main bedchamber. The withdrawing room, however, was radically altered during the first part of the seventeenth century, as a result of extending the property eastward. In effect, the withdrawing room became a 'through' room between the original hall and the new family rooms in the extension. This extension horizontally may well have been part of a more comprehensive replanning of the original accommodation, which included heightening the walls to create additional rooms. This heightening is dated to 1625 by the dormer window previously referred to (see page 75), when Sir Patrick Murray, Sir Gideon's son, and his second wife, Elizabeth Dundas, were in residence.

A lion rampant with crescent (fig 8, left) and a hunting horn (fig 9, right)
from the ceiling in the withdrawing room: (© Historic Scotland)

Plaster fragments recovered from this smaller room showed that the ceiling was installed not by Sir Gideon but by his son, Patrick, for the two intertwined monograms were SPM (for Sir Patrick Murray) and DED (Dame Elizabeth Dundas). Among the other plaster fragments bearing heraldic arms was a lion rampant with a crescent (fig 8). Although it is just possible that this may allude to Sir Gideon's grandfather, Charles Murray, who married a Mowbray (whose arms bore a lion rampant), it seems more likely that this lion rampant represents the arms of Dundas of Arniston, the family of Sir Patrick's second wife. The crescent is indicative of a second son, and although there is no extant example of the crescent on Dundas of Arniston's arms, that does not mean that it never existed. The other heraldic device found in the smaller room was the hunting horn (fig 9), and although a number of different families adopted the hunting horn, its use here must denote the Murrays of Falahill, from whom the Blackbarony line descended.

THE CEILINGS IN CONTEXT

The plaster ceiling and associated plaster fragments discovered at Ballencrieff join a select group of Scottish decorative plasterwork dating from the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Prior to 1600, lime plasterwork in Scotland had been restricted to plain wall surfaces. These surfaces were then either draped with cloth hangings and tapestries, or attractively painted. Ceilings were normally of timber, similarly painted (Apted 1966).

The move from painted timber ceilings to decorative plaster ones in Scotland was prompted by the relocation of the Stuart court from Edinburgh to London following the Union of the Crowns in 1603 (Gibbons et al 2004, 31-39). James VI & I himself inspired the fashion, when he had fine plaster ceilings installed in his new residence at Bromley-by-Bow, completed in 1610. Although the building was demolished over a century ago, one of its fine plaster ceilings was rescued and is now on display in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (Victoria & Albert Museum 1922; ref no: 248-1894).

The oldest plaster ceilings surviving in Scotland date to within three years of Bromley-by-Bow's completion. They grace rooms in Pinkie House, Musselburgh, the residence of Alexander Seton, whom James VI belted earl of Dunfermline and made chancellor of Scotland in 1605, a position he held until his death in 1622. The initials AS.ED (for Alexander Seton, earl of Dunfermline) and AS.MH (for Alexander Seton and Margaret Hay, whom he married in 1607) occur frequently on the four ceilings ascribed to c.1613 - the one in the Green room on the first floor, and the three on the second floor - described by the Royal

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Commission as 'probably the finest seventeenth-century plaster ceilings in Scotland' (RCAHMS 1929, 81-6).

Pinkie House seems to be an isolated 'first'. The next generation of plaster ceilings is directly linked to James VI's 'hamecoming' in 1617. It comprises a select group of residences, including Edinburgh Castle, the Palace of Holyroodhouse, Lennoxlove (formerly Lethington), whose owner, Sir John Maitland, was created Viscount Lauderdale in 1616, and Kellie Castle, Fife, whose owner, Sir Thomas Erskine, Viscount Fentoun, was belted earl of Kellie in 1618. Nothing survives today of the Jacobean ceilings installed at Holyroodhouse, and only the precious fragment of plaster cornice from Edinburgh Castle. Lennoxlove (RCAHMS 1924, 43-6) and Kellie alone have intact ceilings securely dated to this time.

King James's 'hamecoming' resulted in Scots taking a growing fancy for elaborate plaster ceilings. Thereafter, an increasing number of country seats and town houses were graced with them (for a full list of extant seventeenth-century Scottish plaster ceilings, see Gibbons *et al* 2004). In East Lothian, plaster ceilings, or fragments of them, dating from the 1620s are recorded at Preston Tower, home of Sir John and Dame Katherine Hamilton of Preston, Winton House, built for George Seton, 3rd earl of Winton, and Whittingehame Tower, a residence of one of the ubiquitous Douglases. The presence of an early seventeenth-century plaster ceiling at Pilmuir House, near Bolton, built in 1624 for a William Cairns, and the former existence of another in a house in Haddington's High Street (no. 30) demonstrate that such quality ceilings were not exclusive to the aristocracy.

To this list can now be added the precious section of upturned ceiling and assorted fragments found at Ballencrieff. They have proved to be very important pieces in the jigsaw.

*Figure 10: Nigel Tranter (left) visiting Ballencrieff at the time the plaster ceiling was discovered.
(© Peter Laing Gillies.)*

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Figure 1: John Hamilton, 2nd Lord Belhaven, by John Medina. (National Galleries of Scotland)

TRI-CENTENARY OF AN ANTI-UNIONIST:
THE SECOND LORD BELHAVEN
AND THE TREATY OF UNION

by STEPHEN BUNYAN

ABSTRACT

The year 2008 marks the tri-centenary of the death of John Hamilton, second Lord Belhaven (fig 1). A fervent anti-Unionist, Lord Belhaven fought 'tooth-and-nail' against the Union with England. In 1708, a year after the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Belhaven was arrested and taken to London on suspicion of supporting the second Jacobite Rising, the '08. The experience so devastated him that he died whilst on bail. He was aged just 41. This paper examines his legacy.

INTRODUCTION

The most significant and important event for Great Britain in 1707 must be the Act of Union which united England and Scotland as one nation. The first article of the Treaty of Union declared in positive terms: 'That the two kingdoms of England and Scotland shall . . . for ever after be united into one kingdom by the name of Great Britain'. The Treaty was implemented on 1 May 1707. This conclusion was by no means easily arrived at; nor, despite the firmness of this article, was it then firmly achieved. Many hurdles had to be overcome before popular acceptance was attained. It was seen by those in favour of it as the culmination of a long series of attempts to make Britain into one country.

In the early fourteenth century, Edward I of England had carried out a vigorous series of campaigns to secure union by conquest. His attempt seemed finally frustrated when his son, Edward II, was defeated at Bannockburn in 1314, which was followed by the Scottish Declaration of Arbroath in 1320, although Edward III continued to campaign in Scotland thereafter. Henry VIII tried to achieve union by marriage between his son, the future Edward VI, and Mary Queen of Scots. His bullying tactics earned the nickname 'the War of the Rough Wooing'. His plan was frustrated when the Scots sent their queen to France, where she married the dauphin, later François II.

Union came much nearer in 1603, when James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth as sovereign of England. James was anxious to make the union stronger.

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He saw Great Britain as a coherent geographical entity, but was unable to achieve this aim. Union of a sort did come about as a result of the invasion by Oliver Cromwell in 1650. Charles I had been executed in London in January 1649 but the Scots refused to follow England's lead and recognised Charles II as king on 5 February. This proclamation was provocative because, though Charles I had been both king of Scots and king of England, his son Charles II was proclaimed in Edinburgh not as King of Scots but as King of Great Britain, France and Ireland. The title was not only inaccurate, it was provocative, and could be interpreted as a declaration of war on the English. But Cromwell's invasion, when it came, was certainly an act of war against the Scots and Scotland, over which the English parliament had no conceivable jurisdiction.

The union imposed on Scotland by Cromwell was not popular in Scotland. The perceived danger of a personal union was that the two kingdoms could come apart if there was a succession problem. However, this seemed unlikely in the early seventeenth century, when the royal family had no lack of heirs. It did become a matter of concern later in the century because the English Parliament as well as many Scots were prepared to challenge the position of the king, and the succession of his son if he was a Catholic. The birth of a son, James Francis Edward, to James VII & II, on 10 June 1688, created such a position. It led to the arrival on the south coast of England of the Protestant William of Orange, who wished to secure the support of English troops for his war against Louis XIV of France. He was accompanied by his wife Mary, James VII & II's daughter by his second marriage. James VII & II had no option other than to flee to France and permanent exile.

The territorial ambitions of Louis XIV were to play a significant part in bringing about the Union. Opposition to Louis was the driving force in William of Orange's policy. He opposed him on religious grounds and also because Louis threatened the Netherlands. As early as 1667 the Dutch recognised that they were under threat when Louis XIV began the War of Devolution. In 1672 the 22-year-old William, with his country facing annihilation by the French, was appointed by the States General to be Captain General for one year. It was the need to secure the support of the English that made him determined to replace King James on the English throne. In this endeavour the Dutch supported him to ensure the support of the English against Louis.

Queen Mary died in 1694, and King William in 1702. Mary's sister, Anne, succeeded to the throne. The exiled James VII & II had passed away in the previous year 1701, at which point Louis XIV had recognised Prince James Francis Edward as king of Great Britain. This was anathema to Queen Anne, who was also to be

involved in a major war against him. It was considered intolerable that the son of the exiled king, a Catholic and the protégé of the king of France, might succeed. She decided to secure the Protestant succession by the English Act of Settlement of 1701. This ensured that the succession would pass to Sophia of Hanover, grand daughter of James VI; failing that it would pass to her son, Prince George. This decision by-passed several nearer relatives, excluded because they were Roman Catholics. The possibility that the Scots might not agree to this, but instead choose a Jacobite successor, was a principal reason for the Act of Union.

Many important Scots played various parts in the event, not all of them to their own credit. Perhaps Robert Burns overstated the case when he wrote: 'We're bought and sold for English gold . . . Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!' Two gentlemen who fought vehemently against the Union were East Lothian lairds. The more well-known was Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun (1653-1716), known to history as 'the Patriot'. He has recently won a new reputation for the boldness, lucidity and originality of his political thought, though there is evidence that some of those who lavish praise on him are not totally familiar with his views. The second gentleman is the subject of this paper.

JOHN HAMILTON, 2ND LORD BELHAVEN (1656-1708)

John Hamilton, 2nd Lord Belhaven, was born on 5 July 1656. His position as an East Lothian landowner and the holder of a title with an East Lothian designation is the result of a curious chain of events. In 1627 James Livingstone, keeper of the King's Privy Purse, received a charter for the estate of Biel, including Stenton and Deuchrie. In 1641 he exchanged it for that of Skirling with Sir James Hamilton, sheriff of Lanark. In 1644 Biel was in the possession of his son, John Hamilton of Broomhill, whom Charles I created Lord Belhaven and Stenton in 1647 for loyalty to his cause.

The 1st Lord Belhaven married Margaret, the natural daughter of James, 2nd Marquis of Hamilton, the father of the first and second dukes of Hamilton. She bore him two daughters. The second daughter, Anne, married Sir Robert Hamilton of Silverton Hall, and their daughter, Margaret, married John Hamilton, the eldest son of Lord Pressmennan and the elder brother of James Hamilton of Pencaitland. In 1675 Lord Belhaven obtained a new patent to the title from Charles II to allow his grand daughter Margaret's husband to inherit the title and succeed as the 2nd Lord Belhaven. Quite why is a mystery; a number of Scottish peerages before the Union allowed for female succession and one wonders why the 1st Lord did not go down that route.

*Figures 2 and 3: Biel House, East Lothian, photographed by George Washington Wilson, c.1890.
(Private collection.)
Much of what is pictured was built long after Lord Belhaven's death in 1708, and subsequently
demolished in 1952. The top photograph shows (centre left) the cedar of Lebanon, which Lord Belhaven
brought from London in a pot.*

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John Hamilton succeeded to the title in 1679 and, by the law at the time, presumably also to his wife's property. Biel at that time was a much simpler structure than it later became (figs 2 & 3). It was described in old documents as the 'fortalice of Biel'. The site was probably just wide enough for such a building and the substantial later extensions were built to east and west, thereby making a very long building. Much of the old building is embedded in the present structure. The building is on high ground overlooking the Biel Burn. The lower part of the main tower contains the original walls of the fifteenth-century structure, and the tower is adorned with the arms of the 1st Lord Belhaven.

The 2nd Lord Belhaven inherited Biel when Scotland was beginning to emerge from the troubled times of the seventeenth century, and when Lowland lairds were turning their minds to agricultural improvement. Belhaven was one of these, and published a handbook entitled *The Countryman's rudiments* in 1699. Reprinted in 1713 and 1723, it gave 'advice to farmers in East Lothian to labour and improve their ground.' It closed with a poem by the author 'in praise of country life and the pleasures thereof.' The 2nd lord carried on his predecessor's interest in gardening and estate improvement and planted the arboretum which included a fine cedar of Lebanon which he brought from London in a pot (fig 2). It ultimately had a spread of 33m (107 ft) and a trunk circumference of 6.7m (21 ft $10^1/_2$ ins) 1.5m (5 ft) from the ground. It was wrecked during a gale on 5 November 1926 before the eyes of the then laird of Biel, Lt. Col. J N Hamilton-Grant.

It is, however, the 2nd Lord Belhaven's political stance which is of most interest, and in particular his reactions around the time of the Union.

BELHAVEN AND THE UNION

The 1st Lord had been a committed royalist, but the 2nd Lord adhered to Covenanting principles and was resolutely opposed to Charles II's religious policy of strengthening episcopacy. He was particularly outspoken in the Scottish parliament of 1681 when the act to impose a religious test was brought in. He declared that he 'saw a very good act for securing our religion from one another among the subjects themselves but . . . not . . . for securing our religion against a popish or fanatical successor to the crown'. This was particularly rash because the overtly Catholic James, Duke of York, Charles II's brother and the future James VII, was then presiding as royal commissioner over the Scottish parliament. Charles II had sent James north to ease the situation in England. He was surprisingly well received in Scotland, and an act prohibiting landowners from allowing conventicles, or open-air worship, on their land was passed. For his outspoken words, Belhaven was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, and the Lord

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Advocate declared that there was matter for an accusation of treason. However, after a few days his liberty was restored. His fellow prisoner, Archibald Campbell, 9th Earl of Argyll, was not so fortunate and was condemned to death, though he managed to escape.

After the so-called 'Glorious Revolution' in 1688, Belhaven attended a meeting of the Scottish nobility in London in January 1689, and concurred in the address to the Prince of Orange inviting him to assume the government of Scotland. He was present at the subsequent Convention of the Estates in Edinburgh and helped secure the settling of the Crown on William and Mary. This was preceded by a wide-ranging proclamation against Papists in March 1689. The offer of the Crown, made in April, carefully emphasised that he was already king of England. The process culminated in a proclamation on 13 April.

Belhaven was chosen as one of the new monarchs' Scottish privy councillors, and appointed a commissioner for executing the office of the Lord Register. He became one of the commissioners to raise funds for four months' supply for the government in East Lothian. The Convention of the Estates adjourned in May to form a government. Belhaven was present at the Battle of Killiecrankie on 27 July, where he commanded a troop of horse raised in East Lothian which he had taken over from Fletcher of Saltoun.

Two issues made King William unpopular in Scotland. One was the infamous Glencoe Massacre of 1692, and the other was what came to be called the Darien Scheme. In 1695 William Paterson, a Scot who had founded the Bank of England in the previous year, proposed that the Scottish parliament should set up a company to be called 'The Company of Scotland trading to Africa and the Indies'. The story of Darien could be a paper on its own, but suffice to say that the scheme, embraced with great enthusiasm by Scots, was doomed to failure. English investors quickly invested £300,000 but, faced with the hostility of the East India Company and the English Parliament, just as quickly withdrew their money. The Scots totally failed to understand the problem facing their king. England and Holland were fighting for their lives against Louis XIV's France. It was essential for their success that they should have Spain on their side. If William supported the Scots in their attempt to establish a colony on the isthmus of Darien, which was then Spanish territory, Spain would undoubtedly support the French against the English and Dutch.

Belhaven supported the Darien Scheme; in fact he was one of the few who subscribed £1000. By July 1699 many colonists had died or been killed, and the

remainder abandoned the settlement. Many Scots were ruined. Belhaven made a speech in the Scottish Parliament on 10 January 1701 on the affair of 'The Indian and African company and its colony of Caledonia'. The speech was impassioned, and full of rhetoric. In his address, he urged that they should lay aside all heated animosities and pique and consider the issue. He posed the question why Scotland became involved. He claimed that the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697 had not met Scottish needs. The resultant Scottish act to permit trade with Africa and the Indies had raised great hopes but had caused dismay in England, resulting in the situation outlined above and the failure of the venture. In his peroration Belhaven declared: 'old Caledonian blood is too hot in my veins, my pulse beats too quick for my tongue, my heart is too large for my breath, my choler for my reason. Let any Scotsman eat this book in my hand [that is, the printed papers of the company] and he shall find it bitter as gall'. Belhaven concluded that the proceedings in England by the English Parliament, as well an address from the House of Lords against the Scottish company, were undue meddling in the affairs of Scotland and an 'invasion upon the sovereignty and independence of our king and parliament'.

King William realised that this kind of situation was the result of the two Parliaments working in isolation. He tried to initiate proposals for union. The English Commons would have nothing to do with it. He tried again on his death-bed in 1702 but again with no success. (William's death was not caused by lingering illness but was the result of him being thrown off his horse when it stumbled over a mole hill. The Jacobites, supporters of the exiled James Stuart, drank toasts to 'the little gentleman in the black velvet coat'.)

Belhaven continued as a privy councillor on Queen Anne's accession. Anne's appeal for union, made in the first year of her reign, was more successful and during that year representatives met at Whitehall to consider the matter. The Scottish representatives insisted that they would only proceed if Scots were admitted to the trading privileges which the English enjoyed. It soon became apparent that there was no prospect of the English agreeing to give them up. In consequence the Scottish Parliament met in an ugly mood in 1703. In it Belhaven made a speech on 'limitations'. His was a convoluted argument. He started by saying that he had always looked on the prerogative of the Crown as sacred, that a limited monarch had a party to manage, and that though the unlimited may adversely affect a few, it was better. He argued that they should raise the power of the prince, otherwise faction would prevail 'which has been the decay and misery of this nation since our king left us'. He wanted to oppose the limitations imposed by the English on the monarchs they had already dared to dethrone. The best way to serve the monarchy would be to put a check on the exorbitant power

of the English Parliament. However, he said that the Scots could not make a direct impression, that even if the Scots granted the monarch full power, the monarch would still be confined by the English Parliament. It would not add a single feather to the monarch's cap; it would only strengthen the English Parliament. He therefore argued that if the monarch had to consult the Scottish Parliament, the monarch would in fact be strengthened because with the support of the Scottish nobility the monarch might be able to cure their pride. In short, the limitation Belhaven proposed would advantage his fellow subjects:

> . . . *every man from the prince to the meanest representative of the burghs, every man in his own sphere would inherit the fruits of such an act. It would principally benefit our nobility who are contemmed [condemned] in England; but with such limitations in place they would be regarded as highly as the states deputies in Holland. Our gentry would be respected, the burghs would not be oppressed in trade, and the haughty English would have to grant respect in the face of war.*

Belhaven realised that his proposal was a challenge to the royal prerogative, which he felt should be maintained, but he felt it would be an advantage to the monarch to surrender it to her friends in Scotland rather than being dominated in England. He appreciated the objections that could be made, but it would be to her majesty's benefit to take the advice of her Scottish Parliament. One might well argue that Belhaven saw his fellow Scots through distinctly rose-tinted spectacles! Belhaven made another speech in 1703 on the need for security in Scotland in the event of the queen's death.

In 1704 Belhaven was nominated as one of the commissioners of the Treasury, an office he held for only one year. Belhaven returned to the question of limitations in a speech on 17 July 1705, in which he was even more critical of the English. He went back to Alexander III's death in 1286, and the role Edward I of England had played in the succession problem. He said England never let go any opportunity, neither before nor since the Union of the Crowns, to bring Scotland under its power. He referred to the bondage under Cromwell, who had succeeded because of Scottish division. He said the Whigs and Tories, though at enmity with each other, united with one another to see which of them should have the power to give Scots the sharpest and severest blow. However, he considered that the English were 'like fishes in a large strong net', and though they had room to swim, to toss and tumble, they could not break through, and if the fisherman [that is, the Scots] kept hold, they would have all their desires granted, and a good understanding between the two nations would be promoted not for that time only but for ever. Therefore, he was for the resolve and for limitations.

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As discussion of a possible union continued, Belhaven carried on a campaign of opposition. There was some justification for Belhaven's attitude but perhaps not much for his optimism about the ability of the Scots to control events. Relations between England and Scotland deteriorated after the failure of the Darien Scheme. In 1701 the English Parliament passed the Act of Settlement. This provided that in the event of Queen Anne dying without children the Crown of England would pass to Sophia of Hanover and her heirs. The Scottish Parliament countered with an act stating that if they did not get the desired trading agreement privileges with England the Scots would choose a sovereign of their own. When Queen Anne refused to accept this, the Scottish Parliament refused to vote supplies, forcing the queen to give consent. The English retaliated by passing the Alien Act, which prohibited the import of cattle, linen and coals, the main exports from Scotland. They furthermore declared that if the Scots, by the end of the year (1704), did not come into line on the question of the succession, or alternatively agree to treat for union, then all Scots would be rated as 'aliens'.

Meanwhile, the Scots continued to attempt to trade overseas, and the English interfered with these attempts. These hostilities led to the hanging of Captain Green and two others from the *Worcester*, which had sought shelter in the Forth. The English were furious, but their government did not want war with the Scots. They sent the Duke of Argyll north as a commissioner to persuade the reluctant Scottish parliament to open negotiations for a treaty of union. After a month of fierce discussion it was agreed to do so. Thirty-one Scottish commissioners were to be appointed by the queen to meet with an equal number from England. Relations improved with the repeal of the Alien Act at the end of 1705, and in April 1706 the representatives of the two countries met at Whitehall.

The Scots preferred the idea of a federal union. The English on the contrary considered this too small a price for them to pay for the huge trading benefits the Scots wanted, and so they demanded an incorporating union. It was ultimately agreed that there should be one parliament for a United Kingdom, that it should sit in London, and that the Scots would send 16 peers and 45 members to sit in it.

At the beginning of October 1706 the Scottish parliament met to consider whether it should accept or reject the proposed treaty. Rejection seemed the more likely option, but the opposition was disunited. It was during this debate that Belhaven made his great, and sonorous, speech (see Appendix I). In it he referred to: 'our ancient mother Caledonia, like Caesar - sitting in the midst of our Senate ruefully looking round about her . . . Attending the fatal Blow, and breathing out her last with an *Et tu quoque mi fili*'. However, he had less effect than Lord Marchmont

who followed him and declared: 'Behold he dreamed, but lo when he awoke he found it was a dream.' When the first article, on the proposed union, was put to the vote, the 'Squadrone Volante', a group who allied with neither the court nor country party, went over to the pro-union side and it was carried.

The anti-unionists did not accept defeat and mounted vigorous opposition to all 25 articles. Belhaven spoke on the second article, dealing with the succession to no avail. To no avail. An Act of Security confirmed the position of the Kirk and removed the fears of the Presbyterians, and so, on 16 January 1707, the High Commissioner touched the bill with his sceptre, in token of royal approval. The Act of Union, with the Act of Security embedded in it, was taken to London. There it met with no opposition. and on 6 March it received the royal assent. On 25 March the Scottish Parliament met for the last time. On this occasion there was no stirring oratory, no moving farewells. The Earl of Seafield memorably said: 'Now there's an end of ane old sang.'

In 1708 James Stuart, known as 'the Pretender' after Queen Anne spoke of 'he who pretends to [that is, claims] my throne', made an abortive bid for the throne, assisted by Louis XIV. Belhaven was apprehended on suspicion of favouring the invasion and imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle. He was then taken to London, where he was examined by the Privy Council. He was shaken by his experience. He was released on bail but died a few days later, on 21 June, from inflammation of the brain. His body was returned to Biel, and laid to rest in the family's burial aisle at Stenton Kirk.

It is difficult to assess Belhaven's contribution. He played a vigorous role in defending Scottish interests against the influence of the Crown, and the influence of the English Parliament and trading interests. He was fervently opposed to the Union and joins with Fletcher of Saltoun as its best-known opponent. For three centuries now, the Union has generally been accepted as probably having been a good thing. Now the tide of history has changed somewhat and this view is being increasingly challenged. This gives Belhaven something of a contemporary interest.

POSTSCRIPT

The 2nd Lord Belhaven was succeeded by his son John, 3rd Lord Belhaven, who was drowned near the Lizard Point, Cornwall, on 17 November 1721. His son, also John, succeeded as the 4th Lord Behaven, and died unmarried in Newcastle, Northumberland, on 28 August 1764. His only surviving brother, James, became the 5th Lord Belhaven, and died unmarried at Biel on 25 January 1777, aged 72. The Belhaven and Stenton title then became dormant.

The estates passed to Mary Hamilton of Pencaitland. Mary inherited them because of an entail on the estates made by the 2nd Lord Belhaven in 1701, and confirmed by the 5th Lord in 1765, by which they were settled, failing male issue of the 2nd Lord's father, Sir Robert Hamilton, Lord Pressmennan, on heirs female. And so they passed to Mary Hamilton Nisbet, wife of William Nisbet of Dirleton and grand-daughter of James Hamilton, Lord Pencaitland, younger brother of the 2nd Lord Belhaven. The estate, together with that of Pencaitland (which she inherited in 1758) and Winton (which she purchased in 1779), passed to her descendants. (Admiral Brooke sold Biel in 1958 and Constance C N H Ogilvy left Winton and Pencaitland to Gilbert Ogilvy in 1920.) Mary was descended from the the second son of John Hamilton of Udston. The title passed to Robert Hamilton, as *de jure* 6th Lord, and his son William, as 7th Lord, who were descended from William of Wishaw, the third son of John Hamilton of Udston. The title continues to be held by descendants in this line to the present day.

The coffin containing the corpse of John Hamilton, 2nd Lord Belhaven, now lies in the Biel Vault in the old graveyard at Stenton. Beside him are those holding the 3rd, 4th and 5th Lords Belhaven, William Hamilton Nisbet (d.1822) and Mrs Mary Hamilton Nisbet (d.1834). The vault as we see it today was built c.1829, at the same time as the present kirk was erected.

APPENDIX 1

Full transcript of Lord Belhaven's famous speech against the adoption of the Treaty of Union, given to Parliament on 2 November 1706.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

When I consider the Affair of an Union betwixt the two Nations, as it is expressed in the several Articles thereof, and now the Subject of our Deliberation at this Time, I find my Mind crouded with Variety of melancholy Thoughts, and I think it my Duty to disburden myself of some of them, by laying them before, and exposing them to the serious Consideration of, this honourable House.

I think I see a free and independent Kingdom delivering up that which all the World hath been fighting for since the Days of Nimrod; yea, that for which most of all the Empires, Kingdoms, States, Principalities, and Dukedoms of Europe, are at this time engaged in the most bloody and cruel Wars that ever were, to wit, a Power to manage their own Affairs by themselves, without the Assistance and Counsel of any other.

I think I see a national Church founded upon a Rock, secured by a Claim of Right, hedged and fenced about, by the strictest and most pointed, legal Sanction that Sovereignty could contrive, voluntarily descending into a Plain, upon an equal Level with Jews, Papists, Socinians, Arminians, Anabaptists, and other Sectaries, &c.

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I think I see the noble and honourable Peerage of Scotland, whose valiant Predecessors led Armies against their Enemies, upon their own proper Charges and Expenses, now divested of their Followers and Vassalages, and put upon such an equal Foot with their Vassals, that I think I see a petty English Exciseman receive more Homage and Respect than what was paid formerly to their quondam Mackallamores.

I think I see the present Peers of Scotland, whose noble Ancestors conquered Provinces, over-ran Countries, reduced and subjected Towns and fortified Places, exacted Tribute through the greatest Part of England, now walking in the Court of Requests like so many English Attorneys, laying aside their Walking Swords when in Company with the English Peers, lest their Self-defence should be found Murder.

I think I see the honourable Estate of Barons, the bold Assertors of the Nation's Rights and Liberties in the worst of Times, now setting a Watch upon their Lips, and a Guard upon their Tongues, lest they be found guilty of *Scandalum Magnatum*.

I think I see the Royal State of Burghs walking their desolate Streets, hanging down their Heads under Disappointment, wormed out of all the Branches of their old Trade, uncertain what Hand to turn to, necessitate to become 'Prentices to their unkind Neighbours; and yet after all, finding their Trade so fortified by Companies, and secured by Prescriptions, that they despair of any Success therein.

I think I see our learned Judges laying aside their Practiques and Decisions, studying the Common Law of England, gravelled with Certioraries, Nisi Prius's, Writs of Error, Verdicts Indovar, Ejectione Firmae, Injunctions, Demurs, &c. and frighted with Appeals and Avocations, because of the new Regulations and Rectifications they may meet with.

I think I see the valiant and gallant Soldiery either sent to learn the Plantation-Trade abroad; or at home petitioning for a small Subsistance, as a Reward of their hounorable Exploits; while their old Corps are broken, the common Soldiers left to beg, and the youngest English Corps kept standing.

I think I see the honest industrious Tradesman loaded with new Taxes and Impositions, disappointed of the Equivalents, drinking Water in place of Ale, eating his saltless Pottage, petitioning for Encouragement to his Manufactures, and answered by Counter-Petitions.

In short, I think I see the laborious Ploughman, with his Corn spoiling upon his Hands, for want of Sale, cursing the Day of his Birth, dreading the Expence of his Burial, and uncertain whether to marry or do worse.

I think I see the incurable Difficulties of the Landed Men, fettered under the golden Chain of Equivalents, their pretty Daughters petitioning for want of Husbands, and their Sons for want of Employment.

I think I see our Mariners delivering up their Ships to their Dutch Partners; and that through Presses and Necessity, earning their Bread as Underlings in the royal English Navy.

But above all, my Lord, I think I see our ancient Mother Caledonia, like Ceasar, sitting in the midst of our Senate, ruefully looking round about her, covering herself with her royal Garment, attending the fatal Blow, and breathing out her last with an *Et tu quoque mi fili*.

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Are not these, my Lord, very afflicting Thoughts? And yet they are but the least Part suggested to me by these dishonourable Articles. Should not the Consideration of these Things vivify these dry Bones of ours? Should not the Memory of our noble Predecessors' Valour and Constancy rouze up our drooping Spirits? Are our noble Predecessors Souls got so far into the English Cabbage-stock and Colliflowers, that we should shew the least Inclination that way? Are our Eyes so blinded? Are our Ears so deafened? Are our Hearts so hardened? Are our Tongues so faltered? Are our Hands so fettered, that in this our Day, I say, my Lord, that in this our Day, we should not mind the Things that concern the very Being and Well-being of our ancient Kingdom, before the Day be hid from our Eyes?

No, my Lord, God forbid! Man's Extremity is God's Opportunity: He is a present Help in time of need, and a Deliverer, and that right early. Some unforeseen Providence will fall out, that may cast the Balance; some Joseph or other will say, Why do ye strive together, since you are Brethren? None can destroy Scotland, save Scotland itself; hold your Hands from the Pen, you are secure. Some Judah or other will say, Let not our Hands be upon the Lad, he is our Brother. There will be a Jehovah Jireh, and some Ram will be caught in the Thicket, when the bloody Knife is at our Mother's Throat. Let us up then, my Lord, and let our noble Patriots behave themselves like Men, and we know not how soon a Blessing may come.

'My Lord, I wish from my Heart, that this my Vision prove not as true as my Reasons for it are probable: I design not at this Time to enter into the Merits of any one particular Article; I intend this Discourse, as an Introduction to what I may afterwards say upon the whole Debate, as it falls in before this honourable House; and therefore, in the farther Prosecution of what I have to say, I shall insist upon few Particulars, very necessary to be understood, before we enter unto the Detail of so important a Matter.

I shall therefore, in the first Place, endeavour to encourage a free and full Deliberation, without Animosities and Heats: In the next Place, I shall endeavour to make an Enquiry into the Nature and Source of the unnatural and dangerous Divisions that are now on foot within this Isle, with some Motives shewing, that it is our Interest to lay them aside at this Time: Then I shall enquire into the Reasons, which have induced the two Nations to enter into a Treaty of Union at this Time, with some Considerations and Meditations, with relation to the Behaviour of the Lords Commissioners of the two Kingdoms, in the Management of this great Concern. And lastly, I shall propose a Method, by which we shall most distinctly, and without Confusion, go through the several Articles of this Treaty, without unnecessary Repetitions or loss of Time. And all this with all Deference, and under the Correction of this honourable House.

My Lord Chancellor, the greatest Honour that was done unto a Roman, was to allow him the Glory of a Triumph; the greatest and most dishonourable Punishment, was that of Parricide: He that was guilty of Parricide, was beaten with Rods upon his naked Body, till the Blood gushed out of all the Veins of his Body; then he was sewed up in a leathern Sack, called a Culeus, with a Cock, a Viper, and an Ape, and thrown headlong into the Sea.

My Lord, Patricide is a greater Crime than Parricide, all the World over.

In a Triumph, my Lord, when the Conqueror was riding in his triumphal Chariot, crowned with Laurels, adorned with Trophies, and applauded with Huzza's, there was a Monitor appointed to stand behind him, to warn him, not to be high-minded, not puffed up with over-weening Thoughts of himself; and to his Chariot were tied a Whip and a Bell, to mind him, that for all his Glory and Grandeur, he was accountable to the People for his Administration, and would be punished as other Men, if found guilty.

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The greatest Honour amongst us, my Lord, is to represent the Sovereign's sacred Person in Parliament; and in one Particular it appears to be greater than that of a Triumph; because the whole legislative Power seems to be wholly entrusted with him: If he give the royal Assent to an Act of the Estates, it becomes a Law obligatory upon the Subject, tho' contrary or without any Instructions from the Sovereign: If he refuse the royal Assent to a Vote in Parliament, it cannot be a Law, tho' he has the Sovereign's particular and positive Instructions for it.

His Grace the Duke of Queensbary, who now represents her Majesty in this Session of Parliament, hath had the Honour of that great Trust, as often, if not more than any Scotchman ever had: He hath been the Favourite of two successive Sovereigne; and I cannot but commend his Constancy and Perseverance, that, notwithstanding his former Difficulties and unsuccessful Attempts, and maugre some other Specialities not yet determined, that his Grace has yet had the Resolution to undertake the most unpopular Measures last. If his Grace succeed in this Affair of an Union, and that it prove for the Happiness and Welfare of the Nation, then he justly merits to have a Statue of Gold erected for himself; but if it shall tend to the entire Destruction and Abolition of our Nation; and that we the Nation's Trustees Wall go into it; then I must say, that a Whip and a Bell, a Cock and a Viper, and an Ape, are but too small Punishments for any such bold unnatural Undertaking and Complaisance.

That I may pave a Way, my Lord, to a full, calm, and free reasoning upon this Affair, which is of the last Consequence unto this Nation; I shall mind this honourable House, that we are the Successors of our noble Predecessors, who founded our Monarchy, framed our Laws, amended, altered, and corrected them from time to time, as the Affairs and Circumstances of the Nation did require, without the Assistance or Advice of any foreign Power or Potentate, and who, during the Time of 2000 Years, have handed them down to us a free independent Nation, with the Hazard of their Lives and Fortunes: Shall not we then argue for that which our Progenitors have purchased for us at so dear a Rate, and with so much immortal Honour and Glory? God forbid. Shall the Hazard of a Father unbind the Ligaments of a dumb Son's Tongue; and shall we hold our Peace, when our Patria is in danger? I speak this, my Lord, that I may encourage every individual Member of this House, to speak their Mind freely. There are many wise and prudent Men amongst us, who think it not worth their while to open their Mouths; there are others, who can speak very well, and to good Purpose, who shelter themselves under the shameful Cloak of Silence, from a Fear of the Frowns of great Men and Parties. I have observed, my Lord, by my Experience, the greatest Number of Speakers in the most trivial Affairs; and it will always prove so, while we come not to the right understanding of the Oath de fideli, whereby we are bound not only to give our Vote, but our faithful Advice in Parliament, as we should answer to God; and in our ancient Laws, the Representatives of the honourable Barons, and the royal Burghs are termed Spokesmen. It lies upon your Lordships therefore particularly to take notice of such, whose Modesty makes them bashful to speak. Therefore I shall leave it upon you, and conclude this Point with a very memorable Saying of an honest private Gentleman to a great Queen, upon occasion of a State-Project, contrived by an able Statesman, and the Favourite to a great King, against a peaceful, obedient People, because of the Diversity of their Laws and Constitutions. If at this time thou hold thy peace, Salvation shall come to the People from another Place, but thou and thy House shall perish. I leave the Application to each particular Member of this House.

My Lord, I come now to consider our Divisions. We are under the happy Reign (blessed be God) of the best of Queens, who has no evil Design against the meanest of her Subjects, who loves all her People, and is equally beloved by them again; and yet that under the happy Influence of our most excellent Queen there should be such Divisions and Factions, more dangerous and threate ning to her Dominions, than if we were under an arbitrary Government, is most strange and unaccountable.

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Under an arbitrary Prince, all are willing to serve because all are under a Necessity to obey, whether they will or not. He chooses therefore whom he will, without respect to either Parties or Factions; and if he think fit to take the Advices of his Councils or Parliaments, every Man speaks his Mind freely, and the Prince receives the faithful Advice of his People without the Mixture of Self-Designs: If he prove a good Prince, the Government is easy; if bad, either Death or a Revolution brings a Deliverance: Whereas here, my Lord, there appears no end of our Misery, if not prevented in time; Factions are now become independent, and have got footing in Councils, in Parliaments, in Treaties, in Armies, in Incorporations, in Families, among Kindred, yea, Man and Wife are not free from their political Jars.

It remains therefore, my Lord, that I enquire into the Nature of these Things, and since the Names give us not the right idea of the thing, I am afraid I shall have difficulty to make my self well understood.

The Names generally used to denote the Factions, are Whig, and Tory, as obscure as that of Guelfs and Gibelins: Yea, my Lord, they have different Significations, as they are applied to Factions in each Kingdom; a Whig in England is a heterogeneous Creature, in Scotland he is all of a piece; a Tory in England is all of a piece, and a Statesman; in Scotland, he is quite otherwise, an Anti-courtier and Antistatesman.

A Whig in England appears to be somewhat like Nebuchadnezzar's image, of different Metals, different Classes, different principles, and different Designs like, yet take them altogether, they are like a piece of fine mixed Drugget of different threads, some finer, some coarser, which after all make a comely Appearance, and an agreeable Suit. Tory is like a Piece of loyal, Home-made English Cloth, the true Staple of the Nation, all of a Thread; yet if we look narrowly into it, we shall perceive diversity of Colours, which, according to the various Situations and Positions, make various Appearances: sometimes Tory is like the Moon in its full, as appeared in the Affair of the Bill of Occasional Conformity; upon other occasions it appears to be under a Cloud, and as if it were eclipsed by a greater Body, as it did in the Design of calling over the illustrious Princess Sophia. However, by this we may see their Designs are to outshoot Whig in his own Bow.

Whig in Scotland is a true-blue Presbyterian, who, without considering Time or Power, will venture their All for the Kirk: but something less for the State. The greatest difficulty is, how to describe a Scots Tory: Of old, when I knew them first, Tory was an honest hearted comradish Fellow, who provided he was maintained and protected in his Benefices, Titles and Dignities by the State, he was the less anxious who had the Government and Management of the Church: But now what he is since jure Divino came in fashion; and that Christianity, and, by consequence, Salvation comes to depend upon Episcopal Ordination, I profess I know not what to make of him; only this I must say for him, that he endeavours to do by Opposition, that which his Brother in England endeavours by a more prudent and less scrupulous Method.

Now, my Lord, from these Divisions, there has got up a kind of Aristocracy, something like the famous Triumvirate at Rome; they are a kind of Undertakers and Pragmatic Statesmen, who, finding their Power and Strength great, and answerable to their Designs, will make Bargains with our gracious Sovereign; they will serve her faithfully, but upon their own Terms; they must have their own Instruments, their own Measures; this Man must be turned out, and that Man put in, and then they will make her the most glorious Queen in Europe.

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Where will this end, my Lord? Is not her Majesty in Danger by such a Method? Is not the Monarchy in Danger? Is not the Nation's Peace and Tranquillity in Danger? Will a Change of Parties make the Nation more happy? No, my Lord, the Seed is sown, that is like to afford us a perpetual Increase; it's not an annual Herb, it takes deep root, it seeds and breeds; and if not timely prevented by her Majesty's Royal Endeavours, will split the whole Island in two.

My Lord, I think, considering our present Circumstances at this Time, the Almighty God has reserved this great Work for us. We may bruise this Hydra of Division, and crush this Cockatrice's Egg. Our Neighbours in England, are not yet fitted for any such Thing; they are not under the afflicting Hand of Providence, as we are; their Circumstances are great and glorious, their Treaties are prudently managed, both at Home and Abroad, their Generals brave and valorous, their Armies successful and victorious, their Trophies and Laurels memorable and surprising; their Enemies subdued and routed, their strong Holds besieged and taken, Sieges relieved, Marshals killed and taken Prisoners, Provinces and Kingdoms are the Results of their Victories; their Royal Navy is the Terror of Europe, their Trade and Commerce extended through the Universe, encircling the whole habitable World, and rendering their own capital City the Emporium for the whole Inhabitants of the earth: And which is yet more than all these Things; the Subjects freely bestowing their Treasure upon their Sovereign; and above all, these vast Riches, the Sinews of War, and without which all the glorious Success had proved abortive, these Treasures are managed with such Faithfulness and Nicety, that they answer seasonably all their Demands, tho' at never so great a Distance. Upon these Considerations, my Lord, how hard and difficult a Thing will it prove, to persuade our Neighbours to a Self-denying Bill.

Tis quite otherwise with us, my Lord, we are an obscure, poor People, tho' formerly of better Account, removed to a remote Corner of the World, without Name, and without Alliances, our Posts mean and precarious; so that I profess I don't think any one Post in the Kingdom worth the briguing after, save that of being Commissioner to a long Session of a factious Scots Parliament, with an antedated Commission, and that yet renders the rest of the Ministers more miserable. What hinders us then, my Lord, to lay aside our Divisions, to unite cordially and heartily together in our present Circumstances, when our All is at Stake? Hannibal, my Lord, is at our Gates, Hannibal is come within our Gates, Hannibal is come the length of this Table, he is at the Foot of this Throne, he will demolish this Throne; if we take not notice, he'll seize upon these Regalia, he'll take them as our *spolia optima*, and whip us out of this House, never to return again.

For the Love of God then, my Lord, for the Safety and Welfare of our ancient Kingdom, whose sad Circumstances, I hope, we shall yet convert into Prosperity and Happiness! We want no Means, if we unite; God blessed the Peace-makers; we want neither Men, nor sufficiency of all manner of things necessary; to make a Nation happy; all depends upon Management; *Concordia res parvæ crescunt*. I fear not these Articles, tho' they were ten times worse than they are; if we once cordially forgive one another, and that, according to our Proverb, Bygones be Bygones, and Fairplay for Time to come. For my Part, in the Sight of God, and in the Presence of this honourable House, I heartily forgive every Man, and beg, that they may do the same to me; and I do most humbly propose, that his Grace my Lord Commissioner may appoint an Agape, may order a Love-feast for this honourable House, that we may lay aside all Self-designs, and, after our Fasts and Humiliations, may have a Day of Rejoicing and Thankfulness, may eat our Meat with Gladness, and our Bread with a merry Heart; then shall we sit each Man under his own Fig-tree, and the Voice of the Turtle [dove] shall be heard in our Land, a Bird famous for Constancy and Fidelity.

My Lord, I shall make a Pause here, and stop going on farther in my Discourse, till I see further, if his Grace, my Lord Commissioner, receive any humble Proposals for removing Misunderstandings

among us, and putting an end to our fatal Divisions: upon Honour, I have no other Design, and I am content to beg the Favour upon my bended Knees.

[No answer]

My Lord Chancellor, I am sorry that I must pursue the Thread of my sad and melancholy Story: What remains, I am afraid may prove as afflicting as what I have said; I shall therefore consider the Motives which have engaged the two Nations to enter upon a Treaty of Union at this Time. In general, my Lord, I think both of them had in their View to better themselves by the Treaty; but, before I enter upon the particular Motives of each Nation, I must inform this honourable House, that, since I can remember, the two Nations have altered their sentiments upon that Affair, even almost to down-right Contradiction, they have changed Head-bands, as we say; for England, till of late, never thought it worth their Pains of treating with us; the good Bargain they made at the Beginning they resolve to keep, and that which we call an incorporating Union, was not so much as in their Thoughts. The first Notice they seemed to take of us, was in our Affair of Caledonia, when they had most effectually broke off that Design, in a Manner very well known to the World, and unnecessary to be repeated here; they kept themselves quiet during the Time of our Complaints upon that head. In which Time our Sovereign, to satisfy the Nation, and allay their Hearts, did condescend to give us some good Laws, and amongst others that of personal Liberties; but England having declared their Succession, and extended their Entail, without ever taking Notice of us, our gracious Sovereign Queen Anne, was graciously pleased to give the Royal Assent to our Act of Security, to that of Peace and War after the Decease of her Majesty, and the Heirs of her Body, and to give us a Hedge to all our sacred and civil Interests, by declaring it High Treason to endeavour the Alteration of them, as they were then established. Thereupon did follow the threatening and minatory Laws against us by the Parliament of England, and the unjust and unequal Character of what her Majesty had so graciously condescended to in our Favours. Now, my Lord, whether the Desire they had to have us engaged in the same Succession with them; or whether they found us, like a free and independent People, breathing after more Liberty than what formerly was looked after; or whether they were afraid of our Act of Security, in case of her Majesty's Decease; Which of all these Motives has induced them to a Treaty, I leave it to themselves. This I must say only, they have made a good Bargain this Time also.

For the particular Motives that induced us, I think they are obvious to be known; we found, by sad Experience, that every Man hath advanced in Power and Riches, as they have done in Trade; and at the same time considering, that no where through the World, Slaves are found to be rich, tho' they should be adorned with Chains of Gold; we thereupon changed our Notion of an incorporating Union, to that of a federal one; and, being resolved to take this Opportunity to make Demands upon them, before we enter into the Succession, we were content to empower her Majesty to authorize and appoint Commissioners to treat with the Commissioners of England, with as ample Powers as the Lords Commissioners from England had from their Constituents, that we might not appear to have less Confidence in her Majesty, nor more Narrow-heartedness in our Act, than our Neighbours of England: And thereupon last Parliament, after her Majesty's gracious Letter was read, desiring us to declare the Succession in the first Place, and afterwards to appoint Commissioners to treat, we found it necessary to renew our former Resolve, which I shall read to this honourable House:

> *'That this Parliament will not proceed to the Nomination of a Successor, till we have had a previous Treaty with England, in relation to our Commerce, and other Concerns with that Nation. And further it is Resolved, that this Parliament will proceed to make such Limitations and Conditions of Government, for the Rectification of our Constitution, as may secure*

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the Liberty, Religion, and Independency of this Kingdom, before they proceed to the said Nomination.'

Now, my Lord, the last Session of Parliament having, before they would enter into any Treaty with England, by a Vote of the House passed both an Act for Limitations, and an Act for Rectification of our Constitution, what mortal Man has Reason to doubt the Design of this Treaty was only federal?

My Lord Chancellor, It remains now, that we consider the Behaviour of the Lords Commissioners at the opening of this Treaty: And, before I enter upon that, allow me to make this Meditation; that, if our Posterity, after we are all dead and gone, shall find themselves under an ill-made Bargain, and shall have Recourse unto our Records, and see who have been the Managers of that Treaty, by which they have suffered so much: When they read the Names, they will certainly conclude, and say, Ah! our Nation has been reduced to the last Extremity, at the Time of this Treaty; all our great Chieftains, all our great Peers and considerable Men, who used formerly to defend the Rights and Liberties of the Nation, have been all killed and dead in the Bed of Honour, before ever the Nation was necessitate to condescend to such mean and contemptible Terms: Where are the Names of the chief Men, of the noble Families of Stuarts, Hamiltons, Grahams, Campbells, Gordons, Johnstons, Humes, Murrays, Kers, &c? Where are the two great Officers of the Crown, the Constables and Marshals of Scotland? They have certainly all been extinguished, and now we are Slaves for ever.

Whereas the English Records will make their Posterity reverence the Memory of the honourable Names, who have brought under their fierce, warlike and troublesome Neighbours, who had struggled so long for Independency, shed the best Blood of their Nation, and reduced a considerable part of their Country, to become waste and desolate.

I am informed, my Lord, that our Commissioners did indeed frankly tell the Lords-Commissioners for England, that the Inclinations of the People of Scotland were much altered of late, in relation to an incorporating Union; and that therefore, since the Entail was to end with her Majesty's Life (whom GOD long preserve) it was proper to begin the Treaty upon the Foot of the Treaty of 1604 Year of GOD; the time when we came first under one Sovereign: But this the English Commissioners would not agree to; and our Commissioners, that they might not seem obstinate, were willing to treat and conclude in the Terms laid before this honourable House, and subjected to their Determination.

If the Lords-Commissioners for England had been as civil and complaisant, they should certainly have finished a federal Treaty likewise, that both Nations might have the choice, which of them to have gone into, as they thought fit; but they would hear of nothing but an entire and compleat Union, a Name which comprehends an Union, either by Incorporation, Surrender, or Conquest; whereas our Commissioners thought of nothing but a fair, equal, incorporating Union. Whether this be so, or no, I leave it to every Man's Judgment; but as for myself, I must beg liberty to think it no such thing: for I take an incorporating Union to be, where there is a Change both in the material and formal Points of Government, as if two Pieces of Metal were melted down into one Mass, it can neither be said to retain its former Form or Substance as it did before the Mixture. But now, when I consider this Treaty, as it hath been explained and spoke to, before us this three Weeks by past, I see the English Constitution remaining firm, the same two Houses of Parliament, the same Taxes, the same Customs, the same Excises, the same trading Companies, the same municipal Laws and Courts of Judicature; and all ours either subject to Regulations or Annihilations, only we have the Honour to pay their old Debts, and to have some few Persons present, for Witnesses to the Validity of the Deed, when they are pleased to contract more.

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Good God! What, is this an entire Surrender!

My Lord, I find my Heart so full of Grief and Indignation, that I must beg Pardon not to finish the last Part of my Discourse, that I may drop a Tear, as the Prelude to so sad a Story.

[After having sat down, and some Discourses by other Members intervening, he continued his Discourse thus:]

My Lord Chancellor, What I am now to say, relates to the Method of Proceeding in this weighty Affair: I hear it proposed by a noble Member of the other Side, that we should proceed in the same Order as the Lords-Commissioners Treaters did. In my humble Opinion, my Lord, it is neither the natural Method, nor can it be done without great Confusion and Repetition. To say, you'll agree to the Union of the two Kingdoms, before you agree in the Terms upon which they are to be united, seems like driving the Plough before the Oxen. The Articles, which narrate the Condition seem to be the Premisses upon which the Conclusion is inferred; and, according as they are found good or bad, the Success will follow. When a Man is married to a Fortune in England, as they call it, I suppose he is satisfy'd with the Thing before he determines himself to marry; and the Proposal I have heard of agreeing to the first Article, with a Proviso, That if the rest of the Articles shall be found satisfactory, and no otherwise, is of a Piece with the rest, and looks like beating the Air, and no ways consistent with fair and square Dealings. Besides, my Lord, if we were to go upon the first Article; are not all the rest of the Articles, besides many others not contained in the Articles, valid Arguments either Pro or Con, against concluding or not concluding the first Article? And no Vote in this House can hinder a Man from making use of what Arguments he thinks fit. Moreover, the searching the Records, and the revising the Statute-Books, comparing the Book of Rates, Customs, Excise, Taxes, of both Nations one with another, must all be previously considered ere we determine our selves in one single Article; add to this, that the prohibitory Clause with Relation to the Trade of both Nations, must be adjusted, left like sop's dog, lest we lose the old, in grasping at the new; the State of the English Companies must also be exposed, how far we shall have Liberty into them, and what Advantage we may propose to ourselves, by trading to these Places where they are secured; and above all, my Lord, the Security of our national Church, and all that's dear unto us, must be previously established to us, if practicable, before we conclude the first Article.

Therefore, my Lord, though my particular Opinion be, though we had a Cart-blanch from England; yet the delivering up of our Sovereignty, gives back with one Hand, what we receive with the other, and that there can be no Security without the Guarantee of a distinct Independency betwixt the Parties treating: Yet, my Lord, for further Satisfaction to this honourable House, that every Member may fully satisfy himself, I humbly propose, that, passing by the first three Articles, which appear to be much of a Piece, we begin the fourth Article of the Treaty; and if I be seconded in this, I desire it may be put to the Question.

[Retrieved from "http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Speech against the Union"]

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ADVOCATE AND AGRICULTURALIST
SIR GEORGE BUCHAN-HEPBURN OF SMEATON:

by DAVID K. AFFLECK

Among the first who led our patriot band,
To spread their rural studies o'er the land,
Was learned Hepburn, with law honours crowned,
Colleague of Sinclair: These associates found
Leisure to form the plan, extend the code
That led the farmer on improvement's road.

(from a poem by James Miller, *Verses to Sir T Buchan Hepburn of Smeaton,* 1837*)*

Figure 1: Sir George Buchan-Hepburn.
(In a private collection)

Sir George Buchan-Hepburn of Smeaton (fig 1) was born in 1739 (Stephen & Lee 1993, vol. ix, 596-7). His father, John Buchan, of Letham near Haddington, had married a cousin, Elizabeth, fifth child of Patrick Hepburn of Smeaton, scion of the Hepburns of Hailes, one of the great dynasties in south-east Scotland. Following the deaths of Elizabeth's elder brothers, Patrick and then George, both without heirs, her son George succeeded to the barony of Smeaton in 1764 and assumed the name and arms of his maternal uncle.

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George Buchan-Hepburn attended Edinburgh University and in 1763 was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates. In 1767 he was appointed solicitor to the Lords of Session, a position he held until he became a judge of the High Court of Admiralty in Scotland in 1790. In 1791 he was made a baron of the Exchequer. He retired in 1814, was created baronet on 6 May 1815, and died in 1819.

The question arises as to when agriculture at Smeaton became significant to Sir George, as distinct from his professional life in Edinburgh (although a number of lawyers, such as Lord Kames and the earlier Lord Milton (1692-1766), were also noted 'improvers'). The earliest estate records for Smeaton date from 1764, but other archives for the family show that Sir George was leasing his land at his original estate at Letham as well as farming the 700 acres at Smeaton. The kirk session minutes for the parish of Prestonkirk (in which Smeaton lies) record that he was ordained as an elder on 15 January 1764. In contrast, there is a record showing that he was admitted to the Burgess and Guild Brethren of Edinburgh 'gratis by Act of Council' on 21 January 1762, when he is described as one of the city's ordinary assessors. In a directory of residents in Edinburgh for 1752, a George Buchan, writer, is listed as a resident in Dickson's Close (Gilhooley 1752). In one of three personal letters to William Forbes, of Callendar House, Falkirk, in 1786-7, written from Edinburgh, Sir George refers to 'Mrs B. Hepburn' being ill in East Lothian and that he will be going there 'to try what I can do there for her'. This suggests a country residence at Smeaton and a town house in Edinburgh for his professional duties. It is interesting to note in his letter to William Forbes, dated 6 December 1787, in which he congratulates Forbes on his recent marriage, that he recommends the latter should 'give the world only 8 out of every 24 hours and not the 16 as formerly', adding that '*Domus*, she and Social Society now much come in for the balance'. Whether he applied this advice to his own circumstances is not known.

The words of Miller's poem have until now been one of the main commentaries on the life of Sir George as an 'improver' in the field of agriculture, but there were earlier 'improvers' in East Lothian. Agricultural improvements, such as 'building dykes and hedges, clearing stones, laying drains, levelling rigs and so on' (Adams 1998, 83-90) had first become a feature of the East Lothian countryside in the early 1700s. Smout (1969, 292-3) refers to Sir John Cockburn setting about this task at Ormiston in 1714, whilst Bishop Pococke, on his tour of Scotland in 1760, saw at first hand in Tyninghame, adjacent to Sir George's estate at Smeaton, 'the finest clipped holly hedges as a fence to the fields.' The contributor to the *Statistical Account* for the parish of Prestonkirk reveals that fallowing the land had been practised since the start of the century (McQueen 1794, 559-64), whilst the neighbouring estates of Gilmerton, Newbyth and Tyninghame already had

substantial plantation of trees. Whittington (1998, 79-82) suggests that the process of agricultural improvement was more one 'of varied pace'.

James Miller, born in Dunbar in 1792, wrote a number of poems about East Lothian; they included *Verses to Sir T Buchan Hepburn of Smeaton*, published in 1837. Thomas Buchan Hepburn was Sir George's grandson. The copy of another book of Miller's poetry, *St Baldred of the Bass*, in the National Library of Scotland is annotated with criticisms suggesting exaggeration and inaccuracy, and while Miller is said to have had a keen interest in local history, his claim that Sir George was 'among the first' is perhaps one such exaggeration, given that the pioneering moves to improve agricultural practice had been made a generation or so before Sir George became laird of Smeaton. However, he was certainly an influential figure in the second phase of 'improvement', as the following evidence demonstrates:

1. A letter, dated 1782, from Robert Dundas tells us that Sir George was invited to become a member of a dining club formed to discuss agricultural and related improvements.
2. Two of Sir George's neighbours were eminent agriculturalists - George Rennie, of Phantassie (1748-1828), and Robert Brown, of Markle (1756-1831) (see ELLHS 1999, 60-1). Were these three prominent figures in the parish of Prestonkirk perhaps the 'patriot band' referred to in James Miller's poem?
3. In an article on the Hepburns of Smeaton, published in the 19 October 1883 issue of the *Haddingtonshire Courier*, Sir George is said to have written some of the ablest articles in the hugely influential *Farmer's Magazine*, which Robert Brown edited. However, identifying his articles is difficult as many were written under pen-names.

As for Sir George being a 'colleague of Sinclair', a search of the index to the substantial number of letters in the archives of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster (1754-1835), and an examination of the correspondence Sinclair had during the compilation of the *Statistical Account* (Sinclair 1798, lix-lxix), have not located any letters between the two men. That does not preclude a close relationship between them, however, as both were also members of the Faculty of Advocates, and had residences in Edinburgh. Rosalind Mitchison, in her biography of Sir John (1962, 92), comments that she had hoped to find correspondence as evidence of his special circle of Scottish friends involved in his activities, but concluded that the opportunity for social contact within Edinburgh at that time eliminated the need for correspondence.

Although Sir George cannot be ranked amongst the first 'improvers', we are able to assess his subsequent personal contribution from two sources.

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Firstly, his Smeaton estate was visited by Alexander Wight, a farmer from Ormiston, as part of his review of the husbandry of Scotland, published in 1778. He writes: 'Mr Buchan-Hepburn, an advocate by profession, has turned his thoughts to agriculture and has exerted great skill in the management of his farm. There is a great skill exerted in cropping his fields according to the nature of each. In general he is attentive to crop them lightly by which they wear a face equal to the best.' Wight goes on to describe how the farm was enclosed with well-tended hedges and ditches, and that Sir George had made the land perfectly dry 'by hollow drains conducted with art and industry.'

Secondly, in his own 1794 report, entitled *General View of Agriculture and Rural Economy of East Lothian*, Sir George describes his repeated experiments, albeit small-scale, of using 'foul marine salt' as a manure, or the similar use of 'Paris Plaster' and 'Whale Blubber' to improve fertility of the soil. These descriptions do not fit with the views expressed by George Robertson, in his *Rural Recollections*, published in 1829, who opined that Lothian landowners preferred 'a life of greater ease or a more brilliant reputation' than dedicating their whole talents and time to agriculture.' On the contrary, Sir George stressed in his own report that 'the industrious husbandman could only give a small portion of his time to social intercourse' because of the need 'to be on the watch and seize and improve on every change in the weather.'

We get a hint of Sir George's legal mind in his 1794 report when, on the subject of the influence of large farms on the population, he questions what constitutes the term 'large farm'. However, he also expresses a number of radical views. On farm rents, for example, he argues that a landlord mistakes his true interest if he endeavours to rachet up a rent as high as possible. He also recommends 'that landed proprietors should plant a few of the best bearing apples and pears in the gardens of their cottagers instead of barren trees', adding that 'if cottagers were allowed the profit resulting from this additional wealth, it would prove a comfortable aid to that class of people.'

Recent research on the early records of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society (affectionately known as the 'Caley'), founded in November 1809, now indicates that Sir George could also have been 'among the first' in the development of knowledge about horticultural experiments and skills promoted by that society. One of the first joint secretaries and a founding member, Patrick Neill, wrote a report for the Board of Agriculture, entitled *On Scottish Gardens and Orchards*, which describes the design of the walled garden at Smeaton, which Sir George had laid out in 1782 (fig 2). Neill's report, published in 1812, is selective about

the orchards and gardens from East Lothian, omitting mention of Tyninghame and Luffness but including descriptive and knowledgeable detail on the walled garden at Smeaton, as well as commenting on the planting of apple trees at Phantassie. By 5 December 1809, within weeks of the meeting to form the 'Caley', James Kirk, the gardener at Smeaton, was listed as one of the first corresponding members. He was followed by James Gibb, gardener at Phantassie, who became a member on 4 October 1810, along with a Mr Ford of the neighbouring estate at Tyninghame. On 27 February 1810, before the second meeting of the 'Caley' to agree its meeting and exhibition structure, James Gibb had submitted a letter on caterpillars that infest gooseberry bushes and it is likely that James Kirk's letter on protecting the blossom of greengage plums was also written at this time. Something triggered these submissions so early in the life of the 'Caley' and that 'something', or rather 'someone', may well have been Sir George. Sir George and Patrick Neill knew each other (Patrick's grandfather was a Haddington man), both had written reports for the Board of Agriculture, and it was Sir George, rather than the other local lairds, who gave a paper himself to the 'Caley' on the pruning of fruit trees in June 1812, having been voted an honorary member in the previous year.

Figure 2: Smeaton House (13) and walled garden (14), from a plan by William Dickenson, dated 1820.

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There is one other interesting potential East Linton import to the 'Caley' culture at this time. The early activities of the 'Caley' involved both the giving of papers along with the awarding of medals and the development of a competition culture. The pursuit of learning versus competition was to become an area of continuing tension, reflecting the different aspirations of the early membership. Connie Byrom (2001, 24) suggests that the 'Caley' Society may have been partly inspired by the formation of the London Horticultural Society five years earlier. But she notes one significant difference: for the first few years, the London Society deliberately avoided any competition and did not present any medals until 1811; its early meetings were based on written papers. The speed with which the East Linton network took up the writing of papers from the first few weeks of the life of the 'Caley' had not been identified by Byrom, but that local culture, along with Patrick Neill's pursuit of knowledge, is fully compatible with what we know about the role of Sir George in the earlier promotion of agricultural knowledge.

What this appears to suggest is that George Buchan-Hepburn's role as an 'improver' was not as a landowner reshaping the land but more as a landowner eager to disseminate knowledge and understanding, to promote the importance of improvements to agricultural and horticultural practice, and the need to test and evaluate new methods.

George Buchan-Hepburn is listed as an extraordinary director of the Royal Bank of Scotland for 1803-06, 1808-12 and 1815-18, the year before he died. Yet, despite his status as a judge, and as a baron of the Exchequer, commanding an annual salary of £1200, there is no evidence that he played a role in the wider political world of the time, although he did publish a speech he delivered in Haddington in 1814 strongly recommending that the Corn Laws required revision. It seems that his circle of influence was confined to Edinburgh, and that in his later life he operated more as a 'hands-on' laird and farmer, using his wider network to promote his views and ideas to advance the state of agriculture within Scotland as a whole.

Sir George was a keen correspondent, and his letters contain insights into his personal views. In a letter to Lord Melville in 1803, recommending a James Walker as a gardener for Lady Melville, he suggests wages at £50 per year but food should also be supplied 'as the best thing for both his master and himself'. This, he says, 'will keep him and his wife from market where acquaintances meet and are apt to birl a bawbee and gradually meet and acquire bad habits', adding that 'it tends to keep a man honest, giving him openly by covenant what he has the means of taking clandestinely, and it also prevents suspicion'. A further letter seven days later shows

that he had been acting as the negotiator for this gardener to get the job with Lady Melville and then adds: 'Lady Elcho gives much higher wages and further he (her gardener) eats and sleeps in the house which I think is a very bad practice'.

Figure 3: Smeaton House.

In the 1790s Sir George had a 36-roomed mansion built at Smeaton (fig 3), to stand alongside his new walled garden. In 1818 he presided over the rebuilding of the family mausoleum, the old 'Hepburn Aisle', at the east end of the parish church at Prestonkirk (fig 4). In the following year he was laid to rest therein. His head gardener, James Kirk (died 1850), and his fellow agriculturalists, George Rennie of Phantassie (died 1828) and Robert Brown of Markle (died 1831), were subsequently buried in the graveyard round about him.

Sir George

Figure 4: The Smeaton Vault at Prestonkirk parish church, East Linton.

married twice: firstly to Jean Leith, of Glenkindle, by whom he had a son, John, born in June 1776; and then in 1781, to a widow, Margaretta Henrietta, daughter of John Beck of Saxe-Gotha. In 2001, two Derby dining-room porcelain chamber pots by William Billingsley (fig 5), a wedding gift from his second marriage, were sold at auction in London; the auction catalogue described them as 'his and her' chamber pots specially commissioned by Marietta on the occasion of her wedding to Sir George. The catalogue added that 'not a lot is known of either the bride or the groom.' The chamber pots add to the interesting dichotomy of Sir George, sometimes provocative in his written views, sometimes anonymous, always genuine. Perhaps that is how Sir George would have wished it. His lasting memorial is there for all to see - in the East Lothian landscape he helped to shape.

*Figure 5: The two Derby dining room chamber pots
presented to Sir George Buchan-Hepburn by his second wife in 1781.
(Courtesy of Bonhams)*

ADVOCATE AND AGRICULTURALIST:
SIR GEORGE BUCHAN-HEPBURN OF SMEATON

Alastair Buchan-Hepburn, who allowed access to family archives.

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A WARTIME LEGACY:
DIRLETON RADAR STATION

by TIMOTHY G HOLDEN & IAN BROWN

INTRODUCTION

The radar station sits between the village of Dirleton and the Forth Estuary, a strategic location for the air defence of the naval base at Rosyth and the dockyards of the Forth and Clyde (fig 1). Unremarkable at first sight, the structures comprising the radar station played an important part in the defence of Scotland in the Second World War. The larger buildings have now been converted into private accommodation but a detailed survey of the site and its immediate area was undertaken in 2001 prior to redevelopment.

The site was first used for detection in 1941 when the radar equipment was mounted on vehicles with the aerials on 'caravans' behind. These defences were for Ground Control of Interception (GCI). The mobile units were replaced, firstly by wooden buildings in 1942, and later by the present brick-built operations block that was opened in October 1943. It worked closely with the night-fighter units from Drem and Charterhall, near Greenlaw in Berwickshire, directing them for interception of hostile aircraft encroaching after the hours of darkness.

Further enhancements were made to the station during 1945. However, by the time the main building was completed the war was largely over and the station was turned over to training. Although the GCI closed down in 1946 the site was still used for training purposes until 1954 (Tully-Jackson & Brown 1996).

THE SURVEY

When the site was surveyed most of the brick-built structures were still standing, having been abandoned or in use as agricultural buildings. The majority of the iron work had been stripped from the buildings and all the radar antennae had long been removed for scrap. None of the original equipment survived but fortunately the interior of the main buildings had been photographed before the removal of any wooden doors. The photographs identified the number and function of the rooms, making it possible to ascribe functions to most of them. The main structures are located on fig 1.

A WARTIME LEGACY:
DIRLETON RADAR STATION

They are:

1) Operations block
2) Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) cubicles
3) Plan Position Indicator (PPI) plinth (Type 14)
4) Height-finding radar plinth (Type 13)
5) Subterranean radar control room (Type 7)
6) Administration block
7) Generator house
8) Filtration plant and pump-house
9) 'Stanton' air-raid shelter
10) Guard dog enclosure
11) Guardhouse
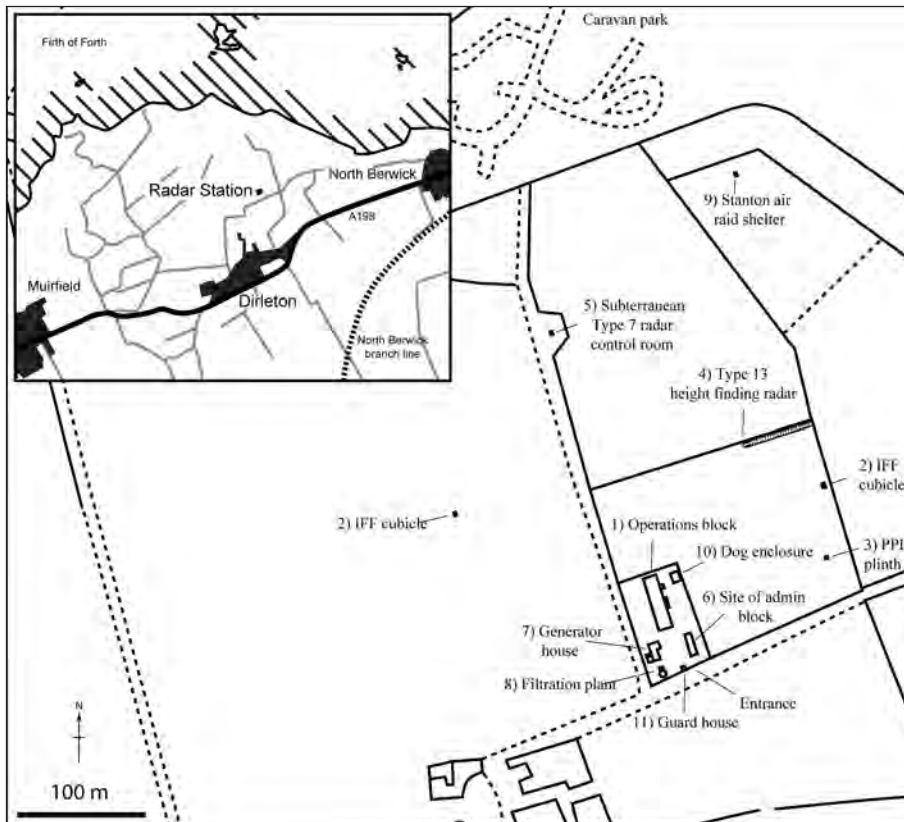
Figure 1: Location of the site and the main features.

Figure 2: The main operations block from the NW.
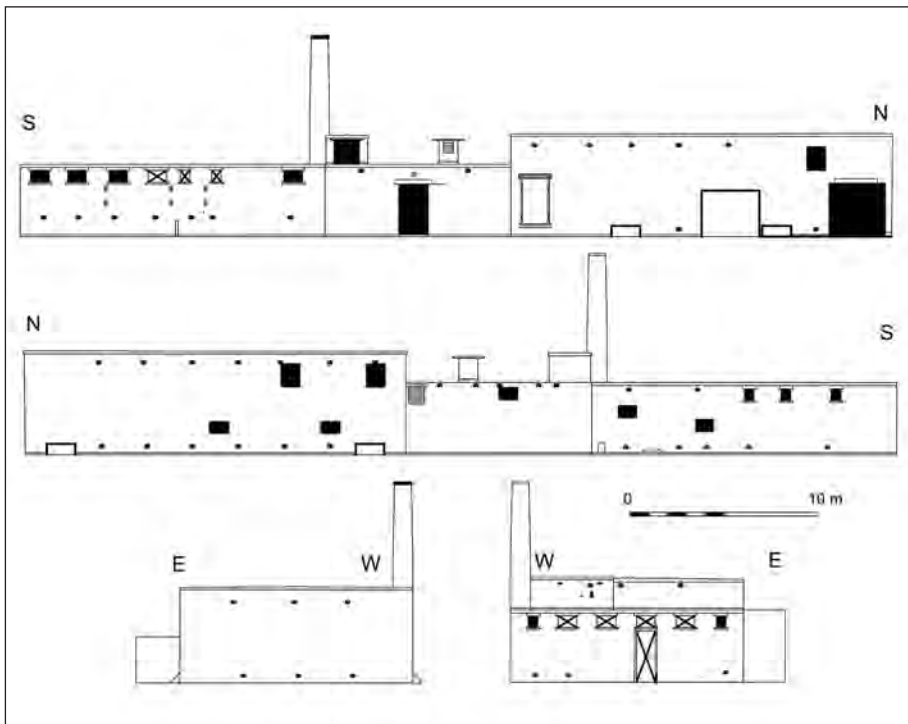
Figure 3: Elevations of the main operations block.
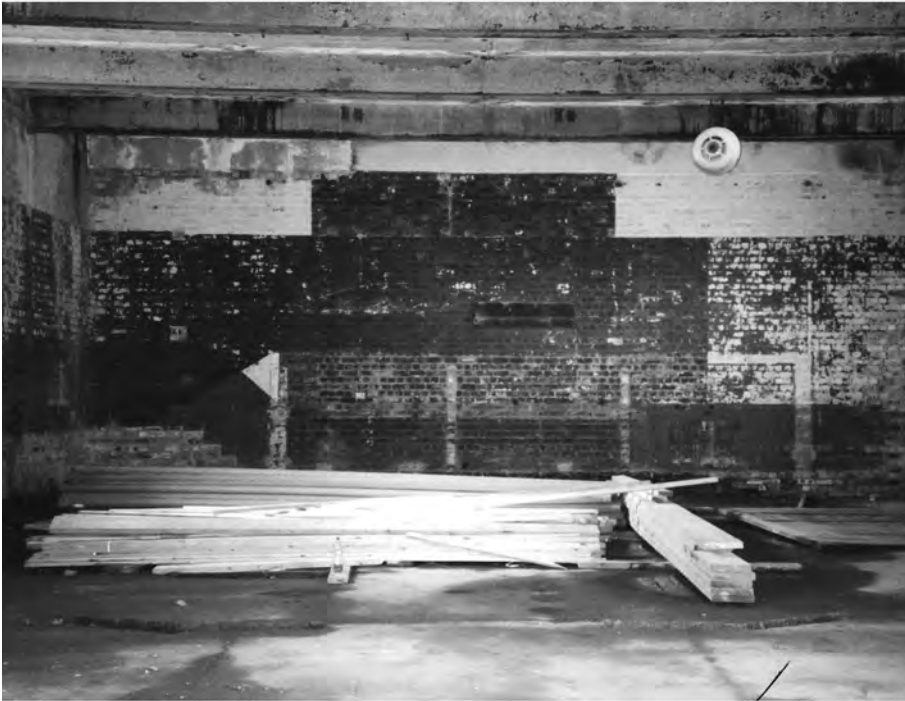
Figure 4: The main operations room facing N.

THE MAIN OPERATIONS BLOCK

The main operations block is a large brick-built structure with a flat roof and distinctive tall chimney. It was originally constructed in 1943 in association with a new Type 7 Radar and is one of a number of surviving examples of GCI blocks commonly referred to as 'Happidromes' (Brown *et al.* 1996).

At the time of survey the N half of the building comprised a large operations room with various ancillary and administration rooms to the S (figs 2 & 3). The partition walls, stages and walkways had long since been removed from the operations room (figs 4 & 5) but the patterns of joist sockets in the walls, scars on the floor and paint lines on the walls provided a good idea of the original layout (fig 6). This conformed to a standard Air Ministry plan (Bullers 1991; fig 7). The S part of the space had what appeared to be workshop or tool rooms at ground-floor level with the interceptor, control and monitor rooms above. This was where the equipment for the display and interpretation of the radar signals was housed (fig 8). The controller's office was situated directly between the technical rooms and the reporting room.

Figure 5: The main operations room facing S.

No.17 Rest room   No.26 Operations office
No.22 Technical officer   No.28 Apparatus room
No.24 Armoury   No.34 Canteen
No.25 Battery room
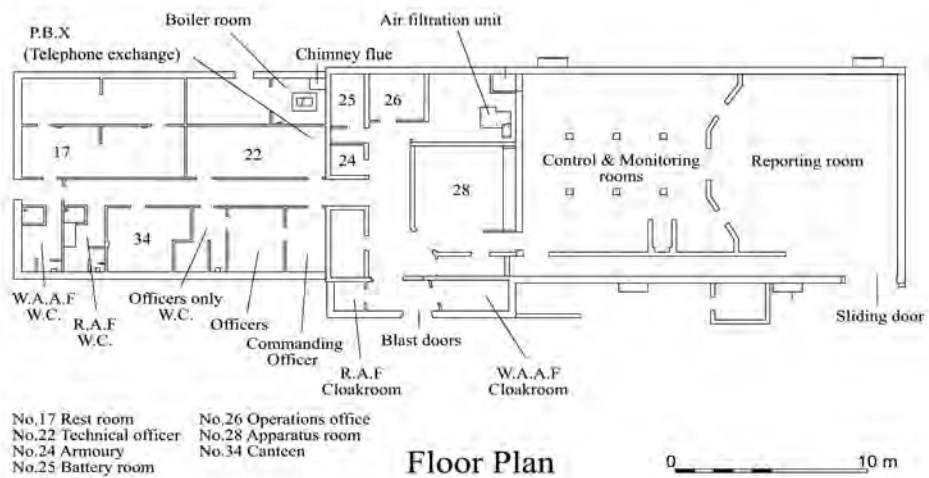
Figure 6: Surveyed plan of the operations block.

a. Polar diagrams
b. A/C INF.
c. MET. INF
d. HT. tube.
e. P.P.I
f. Plotting map
g. Conversion chart
h. Height finder

i. Teller
j. Interception controller
k. R/T box
l. Navigator
m. Recorder
n. Master receiver
o. Recording map
p. Tele keys

q. I.F.F
r. Chief controller
t. Aircraft movement board
u. Aerial speed indicator
v. R.O.C liaison
w. Teller to sector
x. General situation map
z. Local situation map

aa. Local situation plotter
bb. Apparatus table
cc. Interception plotter
dd. Fighter plotter
ee. General situation plotter
ff. G.C.I tote orderly
gg. Sector tote orderly

Figure 7: A standard GCI layout (after Bullers 1991).

Figure 8: An interception room in the 1940s. (Copyright: RADRM)

Figure 9: A reporting room in use in the 1940s. (Copyright: RADRM)

In the N part of the building was the large open-plan reporting room where there was still clear evidence for the gantries running along the full length of the W and E walls. Together with the stage at the S end, these enclosed the area where the W.A.A.Fs would have plotted the changing positions of friendly and enemy planes (fig 9). The location of the operations blackboard could still be seen in the N wall.

The ancillary rooms to the S included a canteen, offices, an armoury, telephone exchange, WCs and showers. Between these and the operations area was also a room to accommodate the machinery that controlled the ventilation of the electrical machinery and working spaces.
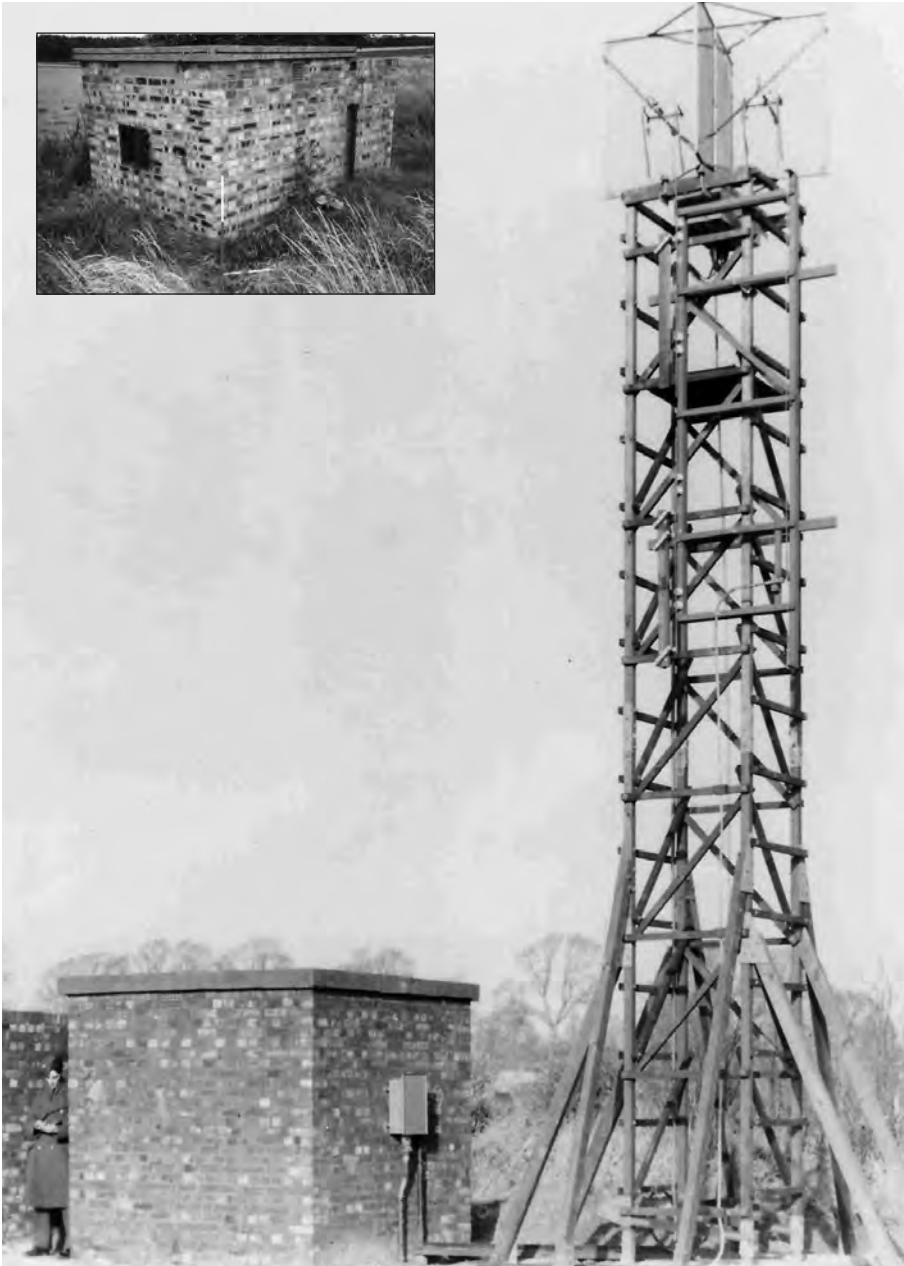
Figure 10: An IFF cubicle in the 1940s (copyright: RADRM), and (inset) one of the IFF cubicles today.

IDENTIFICATION FRIEND OR FOE (IFF) CUBICLE

Two IFF cubicles survive in the open ground to the E and W of the operations block. These comprise small, single-room brick buildings with a flat concrete roof and a blast wall protecting the door. Each of this pair of cubicles was originally associated with a nearby IFF aerial (fig 10). These receivers were designed to pick up coded transmissions from incoming friendly aircraft so that the operations controller could identify their bearings and direct them towards the enemy.

PLAN POSITION INDICATOR (PPI) – TYPE 14 RADAR PLINTH

This structure comprised a small, square, concrete building close to the E perimeter of the site (fig 11). On top of the structure were four concrete and iron attachment points for the fixing of the aerial base, with a central shaft to accommodate the radar column leading to the interior. Inside were a series of ceramic ducts which would have acted as trunking for cables to the operations building. This is the plinth of an S band Type 14 PPI radar. This type of radar would have rotated up to eight revolutions per minute, and the building itself would have housed the motor, gearing and equipment to facilitate this.

Figure 11: The Type 14 Plan Position Indicator (PPI) radar plinth.

HEIGHT-FINDING RADAR - TYPE 13 BASE

The Type 13 radar was a short-wave radar comprising so-called 'cheese' antennae mounted together vertically on two short, parallel brick and concrete walls. The remains of these walls and an associated bank can still be seen in the field to the NE of the operations block (fig 12). This type of radar was developed to improve height information at GCI stations.
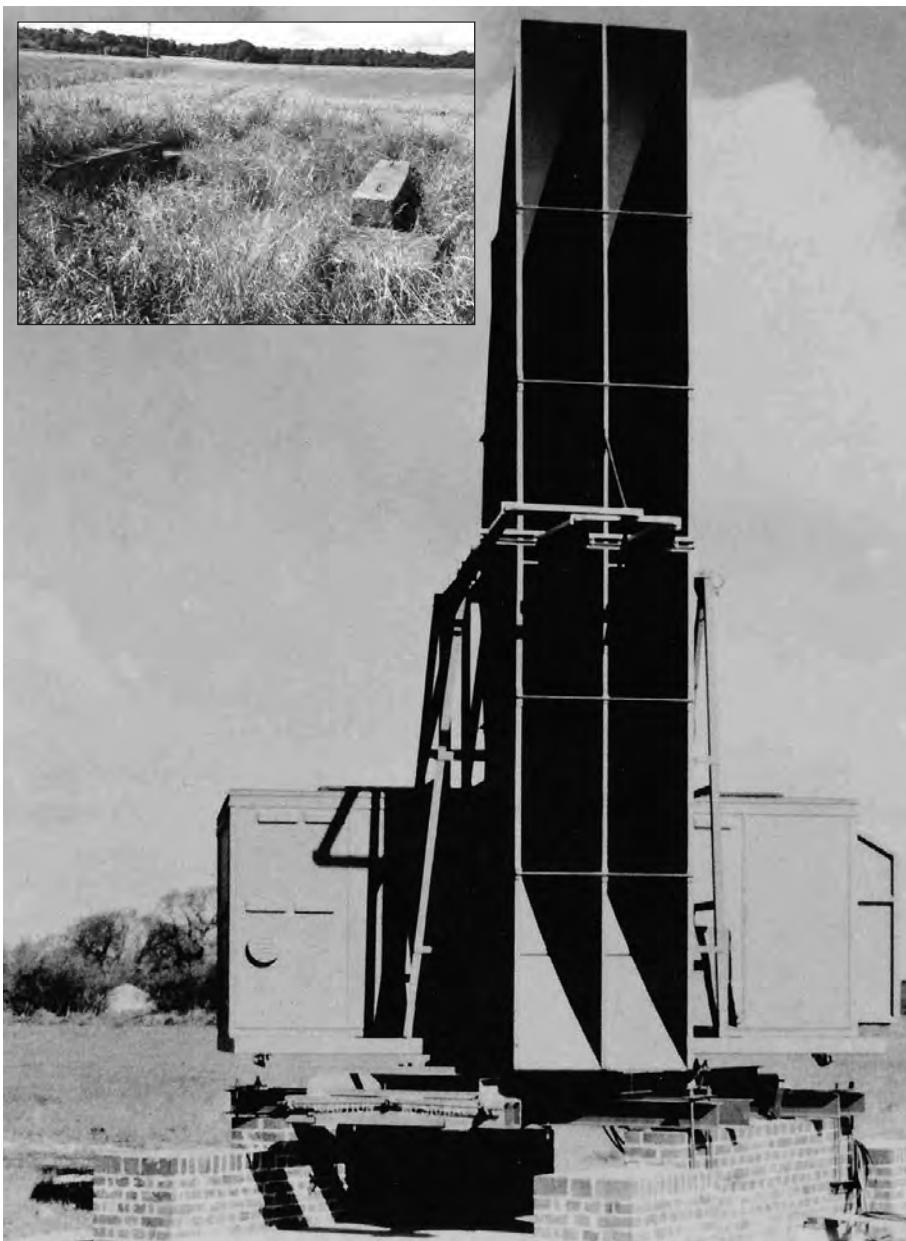
Figure 12: A Type 13 height-finding radar in use (copyright: RADRM), and (inset) the remains of Dirleton's Type 13 height-finding radar today.

TYPE 7 RADAR CONTROL ROOM

The Type 7 radar comprised a subterranean control room (well) that supported a rotating aerial array. As with all the other above-ground aerials on the site, the Type 7 superstructure was removed for scrap soon after it went out of use. However, the concrete subterranean control room housing the transmitter and receiver still survives 200m to the N of the operations block (fig 13).

The Type 7 radar was a significant development in radar, for its rotating aerial enabled the continuous tracking of targets. This was essential to the interception procedure and the provision of gap-free cover. The aerial could be rotated in either direction at a constant speed between 0.5 rpm and 8 rpm and could detect aircraft flying at 20,000 ft from over 90 miles distance (Barrett 2000-2006).

Figure 13: The sub-ground control room for a Type 7 aerial.

'STANTON' AIR-RAID SHELTER

One of the outlying features on the site is a 'Stanton' air-raid shelter. It lies 300 m to the NE of the operations block, close to the current caravan park (figs 14 & 16). This type of shelter was constructed of numerous precast concrete sections bolted together so that they could be made of various lengths (Brown *et al*. 1996). Unusually, this example has not been buried, making the emergency hatch on its top look like a chimney rather than an exit. This feature sits a long way from the main complex and it is possible that it may have been associated with the earliest part of the station when the main equipment was mounted on vehicles.

Figure 14: The 'Stanton' air-aid shelter.

FOUNDATIONS OF ADMINISTRATION BLOCK

A concrete slab for a now-demolished building at the SE corner of the main compound was surveyed. This is all that remains of the administration block. It appears to have been standing at the time of the survey for the 1968 OS map.

GENERATOR HOUSE

The generator house comprised a large single-storey room with an annexe and walled courtyard. No features relating to the function of the building survived but photographs taken in 2000, the year before the survey, identified the original position of the generator. Under most circumstances the radar station would have been run from the national grid, but the generator was available on 'stand by' in case the grid was cut off or disabled.

FILTRATION PLANT AND PUMP-HOUSE

Although this was one of the most distinctive buildings on the site at the time of survey, it fulfilled a lowly function as a filter bed and pump house (fig 15). As with the generator house, it was designed to provide a fully self-sufficient base in this rural location.

GUARD DOG ENCLOSURE AND GUARDHOUSE

It is probable that the whole perimeter was fenced and, at least in the later stages, guarded by security dog patrols. The guard dog compound and guardhouse survived until recently.

Figure 15: The filtration plant and pump-house.

DISCUSSION

The radar station at Dirleton is one of a handful of Ground Control of Interception (GCI) complexes that have survived from the Second World War. Its origins lie in the use of mobile control and aerial trailers in the early 1940s. However, with the continued incursion of night raiders, more sophisticated equipment was required to direct friendly fighter aircraft to the enemy. The existing Chain Home radar network was designed to detect the incoming waves of enemy aircraft during daylight, and direct the fighters to the point where they could make visual contact with the enemy (ie., within a mile or so). The GCI stations, however, had to direct the fighters to within hundreds of metres in order to engage the enemy in the hours of darkness. The sophisticated Type 7, Type 13 and Type 14 radar were instrumental in this.

The operations block was the hub of the complex. It was from here that underground cables ran to the various transmitters and receivers in the surrounding areas. These included height-finding equipment, plan and position indicators, and aerials for the identification of friend or foe signals sent by incoming aircraft. The information obtained was collated in the reporting room and relayed by radio directly to the intercepting aircraft from Drem and the training unit at Charterhall, near Greenlaw in Berwickshire.

A WARTIME LEGACY:
DIRLETON RADAR STATION

Although the staff were not billeted at the station, it was largely self-sufficient. It had its own water supply, sewage treatment plant, generator house and telephone exchange. Welfare facilities included canteens, showers and rest rooms. It is clear that in times of emergency the site could have carried on independently of the national grid and, with the blast doors closed and the air-filtration unit functioning, it could have survived all but the most direct of hits from enemy planes.

In its later life the station passed over many of its main functions to other centres elsewhere. However, it continued as a training venue until the 1950s and many of the noted modifications must have occurred during this time.

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Figure 16: The radar station as it is today, seen from the air-raid shelter. (Photo Chris Tabraham)

ANNUAL REPORT 2006

The eighty-first annual meeting of the society was held in Dunbar Day centre on Saturday 21 May 2005. Members were welcomed by the president. The minutes of the previous year's meeting were approved, as was the treasurer's report for the year. The annual report was also accepted. The president reported that the annual dinner had been held, and that Mr Alan Dean had given a talk on the Amisfield Trust. The treasurer, Mr Mayo, presented the accounts. The president thanked the treasurer for his work on behalf of the society. He also thanked Mr Chalke *in absentia* for scrutinising the accounts, and asked Mr Mayo to convey to him the thanks of the society. The accounts were approved.

The office-bearers were re-elected as proposed. Mrs J Edwards and Miss K Fairweather retired from council. Mrs Edwards did not wish to be re-elected as she was moving away from East Lothian. The president thanked her for the contribution she had made to the work of the society and wished her well. Miss Fairweather was re-elected, and Mrs I Gristwood was elected as a member of council. Council appointed Mr Chalk to be the independent financial adviser.

Before the meeting members had visited the John Muir Birthplace. Tea was taken in the Day Centre.

ANNUAL PROGRAMME

VISITS
- On Saturday 18 June, members led by Mr John Hunt visited Fidra Island.
- On Thursday 23 June, Mr Fraser Hunt gave a talk on the situation on Traprain Law and led a visit there on Saturday 25 June.
- On Saturday 13 August, the society visited Markle Mains and were received by Mr & Mrs Tom Middlemass.
- On Saturday 14 September, members visited Northfield House, Prestonpans, by invitation of Mr Findlie Lockie. They also looked at Preston Tower and the mercat cross.
- On Saturday 8 October, the society visited the Scottish parliament, led by Mr Scott Moffat.
- On 22 April, a spring outing was made to Newbyth House, led by Mr David Ritchie.
- On 29 April, a visit was arranged to Spott House, by invitation of Mr & Mrs Lars Fogsgaard.

ANNUAL REPORT 2006

Mrs Nancy Mitchell gave an illustrated talk on Scottish painted ceilings on Thursday 10 November. On 9 February the president gave a talk entitled 'The Bairds and Newbyth'.

The society is grateful to all those ladies and gentlemen who by their generosity of hospitality, time and expertise make the annual programme so enjoyable.

OTHER MATTERS

Volume XXVI of the *Transactions* has been published and has been well received. The president represents the society as a trustee of the Lamp of Lothian. The President represents the society on the Traprain Law advisory group, which he chairs, and on the John Muir Park advisory group. The secretary represents the society on the East Lothian Heritage Forum. Mr J Hunt represents the society on the Aberlady Bay advisory group.

The society continues to support the work of the Scottish Local History Forum, the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland, the Scottish Churches Architectural Trust, the Council for Scottish Archaeology, and the Scottish Industrial Heritage Society. The Fourth Statistical Account for East Lothian project is now well underway and volume IV was published on 1 March 2006.

The Society is vigilant in the face of threats to our heritage of buildings and landscape, and has taken a particular interest in Archerfield House, Dirleton, which has now been restored.

Membership of the society is steady. The *Transactions* are held in high regard. They are lodged in the copyright libraries and are purchased by academic and other libraries. They are issued to secondary schools in East Lothian and to Loretto and Belhaven Hill School. Information about the society has been put on the web and in a number of international directories. Enquiries about the society and about maters connected with East Lothian continue to be received. Council hopes to issue further editions of the newsletter.

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

The eighty-second annual meeting of the society was held in the Granary building, Poldrate Mill, Haddington on Saturday 20 May 2006. Members were welcomed by the president. The minutes of the previous year's meeting were approved, as was the treasurer's report for the year. The president thanked Mr Mayo for his work on behalf of the society, and also Mr Len Chalke for examining the accounts. The accounts were approved. The annual report was also accepted. The president reported that the annual dinner had been held in the Maitlandfield Hotel, and that the Countess of Wemyss had given a most interesting talk on Gosford to an appreciative audience.

The office-bearers were re-elected with the exception of Miss V M C Fletcher, who retired from the post of press secretary but was elected as a member of council. Miss Fletcher was thanked for her work with the press. Mrs I Gristwood was elected as press officer. It was agreed that a successor was needed for Mr Chalke, who was seriously ill, and it was agreed that council should make such an appointment. Miss Hilary Dickson spoke about the work of the Lamp of Lothian Collegiate Trust and led a tour of the buildings. Tea was taken in St Mary's Church.

ANNUAL PROGRAMME

VISITS
- On Saturday 10 June, it was intended to visit the Isle of May, Fife. However, it proved impossible to land and a visit was made instead to Scotland's Secret Bunker and to Pittenweem, led by David Affleck, which members enjoyed.
- On Saturday 22 July, members were received at Skateraw by Richard Demarco.
- On Saturday 25 August, a most enjoyable visit was made to Auchindinny, near Penicuik, as the guests of Mr and Mrs J McCulloch. The house had been built for Mr McCulloch's ancestor, John Inglis, by William Bruce in 1707.
- On Saturday 16 September, members visited the restored Stoneypath Tower by invitation of Stephen Cole esq. The transformation of this East Lothian building from ruin to comfortable dwelling is amazing.
- On Saturday 21 October, John Hunt led a most enjoyable visit to Aberlady Bay Nature Reserve.
- On Saturday 14 April, members visited the restored Stevenson House and garden by kind invitation of Mr & Mrs Raymond Green.

LECTURES
Two lectures were given in the course of the season. Dr Alison Sheridan gave a lecture on 'The Stone and Bronze Age in East Lothian', and Mr C Tabraham

gave a talk entitled 'Captured in Time – Prisoners of War in Edinburgh Castle'. Both lectures were illustrated and much appreciated.

ANNUAL DINNER

The annual dinner was held in the Maitlandfield Hotel, Haddington, on Friday 20 April, when Mr Herbert Coutts, who had recently retired as Director of Culture and Leisure in the City of Edinburgh, gave an illustrated talk, 'Reflections on a cultural career in the City of Edinburgh.'

The society is grateful to all those ladies and gentlemen who by their generosity of hospitality, time and expertise make the annual programme so enjoyable.

OTHER MATTERS

The president represents the society as a trustee of the Lamp of Lothian. The President represents the society on the Traprain Law advisory group and on the John Muir Park advisory group, both of which he chairs. Mr J Hunt represents the society on the Aberlady Bay advisory group. The Secretary represents the society on the East Lothian Heritage Forum.

The Society continues to support the work of the Scottish Local History Forum and the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland. Volume V of the Fourth Statistical Account of East Lothian will be published in June. The Society is vigilant in the face of threats to our heritage of buildings and landscape.

Membership of the society is steady. An encouraging number of new members have joined in the course of the year. Volume XXVII of the *Transactions* is in preparation and will be published in the spring of 2008. The *Transactions* are held in high regard. They are lodged in the copyright libraries and are purchased by academic and other libraries. They are issued to secondary schools in East Lothian and to Loretto and Belhaven Hill School. Information about the society has been put on the web and in a number of international directories. Enquiries about the society and about East Lothian continue to be received.

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