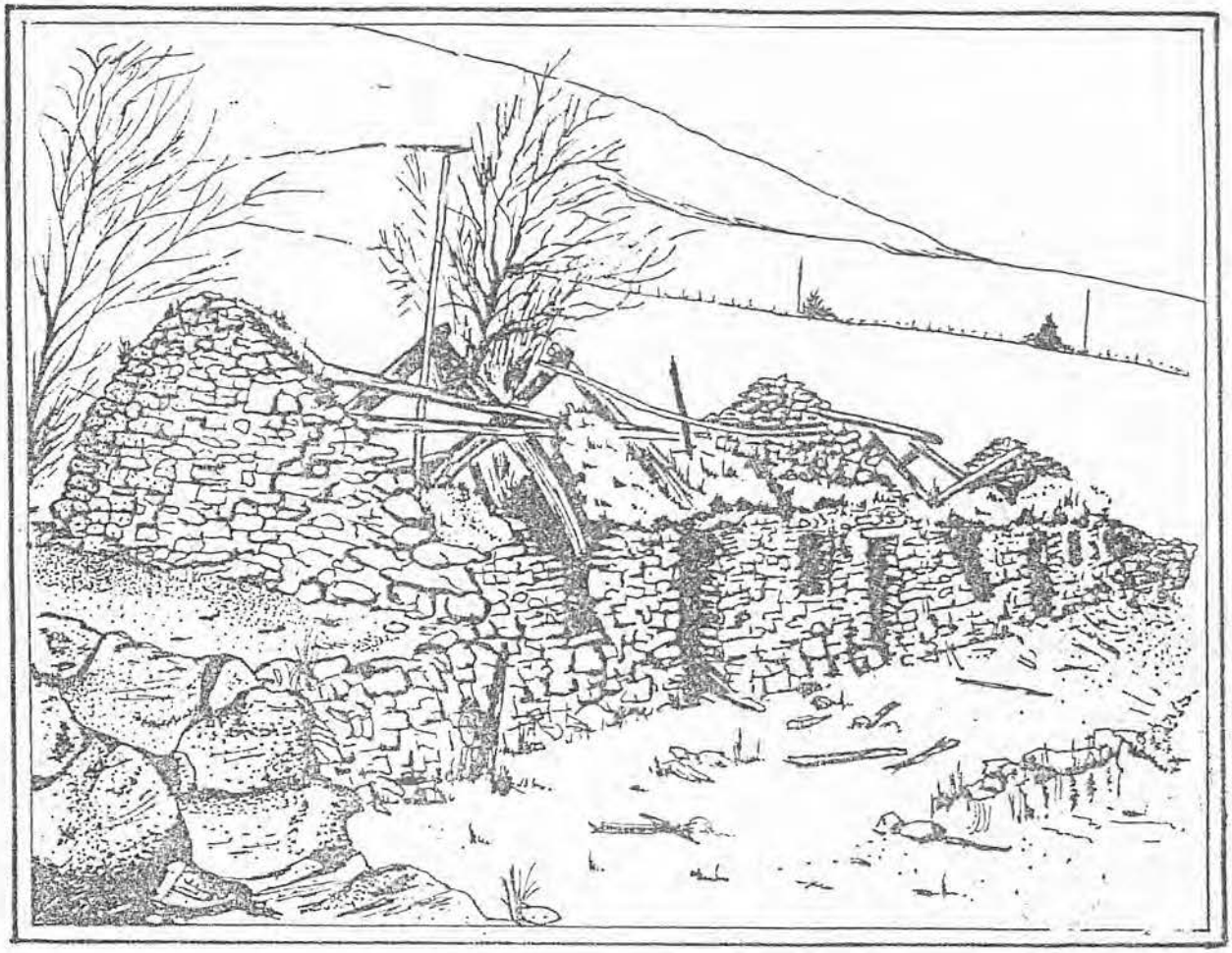
RURAL SETTLEMENT STUDIES

SOME RECENT WORK



Report of a Conference organised by the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Glasgow

Edited by

Alex. Morrison

RURAL SETTLEMENT STUDIES - SOME RECENT WORK

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EDITORIAL

The papers included here are summaries or versions of contributions to a conference, Scottish Rural Settlement, organised by the University of Glasgow's Department of Adult and Continuing Education in November, 1979. There were more than 80 participants, a large proportion of whom were actively engaged or interested in rural settlement studies. Among the comments and discussion during and after the conference were a number of enquiries as to the possible publication of the papers given and many requests for a bibliography or reading list appropriate to the themes discussed. It was felt that it would be a pity to let this interest die again, perhaps only to be renewed by some later conference, and in particular where there is a possibility of positive contributions to the general field of settlement studies. Apart from the full-time researcher, there are many engaged in the investigation of former settlements as a spare-time activity, either as individuals or as members of local archaeological, historical or natural history societies. The contributions of these are important to the general progress of research, and the results of their work need to be recorded or published. Where publication is not possible, the recorded information should certainly be forwarded to the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh. Many field workers may be unaware of the value of their discoveries, and it was suggested at the conference that some help might be offered in the form of a 'clearing house' for information - notes, sketch maps or plans - already collected or in process of being collected, but unknown to the main body of settlement researchers. The material could be checked as to the possibility of publication (even a brief note in the C.B.A. Scottish Group's Discovery and Excavation Scotland will be seen by a wide range of interested co-workers), or for forwarding to the National Monuments Record. Most important of all, the material can be noted, with details of the location and person involved, in a central record of ongoing research, so that pooling of information, checking of similar findings and discussion of common problems should be possible. To this end, and for a trial period, anyone with information, whether in the form of maps, plans or text, resulting from field work or documentary research or both, should forward it for checking and recording and advice (where necessary) on possible sources for publication, to: Rural Settlement, Department/

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Despite the title, Scottish Rural Settlement, the conference had contributions on English, Welsh and Irish settlement topics, and we are pleased to be able to present some of them here. The intention of the conference was to bring together workers from various parts of Britain and Ireland in the hope that experience gained both inside and outside Scotland could possibly be brought to bear on the problems facing settlement researchers - historians, archaeologists, historical or settlement geographers - working in the Highlands and Lowlands. Not all of the papers presented here were given at the conference, but it was felt that we could not consider 'recent work' without for example including some of the results of Roger Mercer's field survey in Northern Scotland.

A recurring theme in most papers was the importance of documentary evidence, to the archaeologist and geographer as much as to the historian. Law books, parish records, muniments, estate plans, exchequer rolls and old maps are among the documents essential to the researcher attempting to reconstruct past cultural landscapes, and for many regions of Scotland these sources are still virtually untapped. A vast store of such material is available in the Scottish Record Office and in the National Library of Scotland, but there are many smaller local archives such as Factors' and Estate Offices. Consultation of these sources is an indispensable complement to field work. With the techniques discussed in the various papers and the obvious enthusiasm of so many of the participants to widen their knowledge of the subject, it is to be hoped that the conference will have contributed in some way to the future co-ordination of rural settlement studies in Scotland.

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COVER: Drawing of ruined byre-dwelling at Cuiltrannich, Lawers, Lochtayside, by Myraid Dodds.

EARLY HISTORIC SETTLEMENT PROBLEMS IN SCOTLAND

L.Alcock

Introduction

This paper looks at rural settlement archaeology in the Highlands and Islands, from the specific viewpoint of a researcher working in the Ist millennium AD, in the hope that this might provide a provocative introduction to the Conference. Five topics are examined.

1. Shielings, sheilings, sheelins.

Parallel-sided structures, usually open at one end, are common on Canna and Sanday, and have been interpreted as Viking boat-graves (or possibly kelp-kilns).[1] A more plausible interpretation as sheelin huts has been inhibited by Pennant's illustration of 'beehive' huts on Jura.[2] Such huts, though present on Lewis, must always have been rare. Lacking systematic and comprehensive surveys, the actual variety of sheelin huts - circular, figure-of-eight, sub-rectangular, long rectangular - has not been recognised. No corpus of hut-plans or of hut-group surveys exists, despite the acknowledged economic and social significance of the practice of shieling.[3] The solitary excavation, by MacSween and Gailey in 1958, demonstrated that superimposed huts may create a mound up to 4 ft (1·2m) high.[4] The sheelin-huts of the Highlands differ in both size and form from those of northern England,[5] and probably represent a different social and economic organization.

2. Standing remains of clearance-period settlements, clachans.[6]

Dry-stone buildings, often standing to roof-level, mark settlements deserted at the Clearances. They have attracted intermittent research, both in the documents and the field, for some three decades (see below, contributions by Fairhurst and Morrison). The remains are plentiful, historical documentation is often rich,[7] and it is not unreasonable to see here material for a Scottish Store Valby.[8]

Partly as a result of the Lix excavations, it is usually held that none of these stone buildings can be earlier than the/

the agricultural improvements, beginning about 1750. It is not denied here that improvements, including dramatic architectural developments, were occurring at all levels of Highland society from c.1720.[9] The Lix dating itself may, however, be queried on the basis of differing interpretations of Roy's map. Elsewhere, moreover, study on the ground and through successive maps may reveal (eg Burg, Kilninian, Mull)[10] a palimpsest which it seems difficult to compress into the century prior to the Clearances.

3. Blackhouses

A special problem is posed by island blackhouses, now mostly ruined or massively altered.[11] Since Roussell argued that they were directly descended from Norse houses,[12] it has become increasingly clear that they are widely separated in time from the Norse houses of Shetland, the Faeroes, Iceland, Greenland and Vinland. Nevertheless, parallels in plan and function become more, not less compelling as research proceeds.[13] Garenin, Lewis,[14] only recently abandoned, reveals the possibilities of decent living within a simple structure - a point inferred by Samuel Johnson. It also demonstrates the processes of decay and collapse once the roof is removed - processes which deserve to be monitored as an aid to excavation interpretation.

4. Vanished settlements

Settlement-names of Norse origin bear witness to settlements of the 10-12 centuries which have totally disappeared; but even 18th century joint-tenancy farms vanished as a result of improvement and clearance. Kirkapoll, Tiree has a typical Norse name, farmstead-by-church. An Argyll estate map of 1768-69 shows a dozen buildings, occupied by 3 tenants and 5 cottars.[15] Today, apart from 2 roofless chapels, it is an empty field.

Elsewhere, Norse-derived names may indicate deserted settlements which have not only dry-stone ruins, but low turf-walled structures, or even empty house platforms. These are beneath the notice of the student of vernacular architecture, and have been ignored.[16] Apart from such hints, the millennium and a half between the broch-wheel-house culture and the Improvements yields little evidence: only the Little Dunagoil houses,[17] dated by pottery c.1300; and a few round-ended buildings within or beside/

beside simple Highland strongholds.

5. Bridging the gap

To fill the gap, it is necessary first to believe that permanent buildings, recoverable by archaeology, had existed. Outside the Norse-settled areas, this implies rejecting the myth of the 'foot-loose Celtic cowboy'. Then, place-names and other documentary sources must be used to predict the whereabouts of lost settlements.[18] With such guidance, field-work should then pay particular attention to the earliest-seeming elements of the structural palimpsest. Here systematic surveys, at the level of intensity normal for prehistoric sites, would be invaluable. Documentary research could date some phases of the palimpsest, some architectural developments.

Many named settlements, like Kirkapoll, would still elude discovery. At this stage, the techniques of vernacular architecture fail, and those of prehistoric archaeology must be utilized. At Kirkapoll, the 18th century settlement can be located fairly precisely from the estate map. It would not be impracticable to search the area for phosphate concentrations[19] or geophysical anomalies, potentially indicative of human settlement. These in turn would guide the location of an open-area excavation. Until this programme has been carried out at Kirkapoll, and at numerous other Norse-named sites, our ignorance of the missing millennium and a half will remain literally abysmal.

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RURAL SETTLEMENT STUDIES IN IRELAND

T.B. Barry

Settlement studies are co-ordinated in Ireland by the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement which was set up in 1969 by Dr. R.E. Glasscock who was then in the Department of Geography of Queen's University, Belfast. Since then the Group has held a conference each year in a different area of Ireland and with specific themes ranging from post-medieval urban settlement to the Early Christian settlement of Glendalough monastery in Co.Wicklow. An annual Bulletin was also planned originally but, because of several difficulties, only five have been produced over the last ten years. Each Bulletin now includes summaries of the papers given at the previous Annual Meeting, short articles, and bibliographical essays on Irish settlement studies.

When Glasscock set up the Group initially, he acted as an information centre with people from all over the country writing to him about the destruction of archaeological monuments. Also the Group had the idea of organising a more formal liaison with the many local archaeological and historical societies in Ireland but several attempts to call a National Conference on this failed to elicit an enthusiastic enough response from the local groups.

There is also a smaller organisation of academics who founded the Dublin Historic Settlement Group in 1975, based mainly at University College, Dublin. This inter-disciplinary group of scholars meets regularly to exchange ideas about research in progress on settlement. Over the past few years they have concentrated on a project on the historic settlement of Co. Meath but their more recent papers have been on other topics of mutual interest to settlement researchers.

Apart from these two voluntary groups which are interested in historic settlement there are also the two State bodies, the National Monuments Division of the Office of Public Works and the National Museum, which are concerned with protecting the archaeological heritage of the Republic of Ireland. However, their establishments are much too small to prevent the increasing level of destruction of/

of archaeological monuments, especially of earthworks, and they are both operating under National Monuments legislation which originally dates back to 1930 and is in urgent need of up-dating.

Not only are the sites themselves being destroyed, but any researcher into medieval settlement in Ireland is very soon conscious of the great lack of contemporary documentary sources. This is in large part due to the destruction of half the Public Record Office in Dublin in 1922 by an artillery shell during the Civil War. The full extent of the destruction of medieval documents is not known because there were no lists or calendars for many of the classes of documents which were burnt in 1922. No medieval equivalent to the Domesday Survey was ever undertaken in Ireland but a later source, The Civil Survey, which was compiled between 1654 and 1656, contains much detailed information on post-medieval settlement for the whole island, except for counties Clare, Galway, Mayo, Sligo and Roscommon. Several scholars, notably Graham in his study of Co.Meath, have used it fairly successfully to give a broad outline of the pattern of late medieval settlement.

In recent years much research has been concentrated on trying to sort out the complexities of the indigenous rural settlement forms and patterns of the millennium before the coming of the Anglo-Normans in 1169. The major surviving components of this settlement pattern is the ring-fort or rath, a circular or oval earthwork delineated by a bank and fosse, which functioned as dispersed farms or metal-working centres in the first millennium A In the western half of Ireland, where there are many more rock outcrops, these settlement forms are constructed of dry stone and are known as cashels. It has been estimated that there are over 30,000 of this type of dispersed settlement in Ireland. And, until the 1930's it was thought that the total population of Early Christian Ireland lived in these ring-forts but research by Watson in Co. Antrim as well as a closer study of the Irish Law Tracts of the seventh to ninth centuries AD have all indicated that although the free element of Irish society probably lived in ring-forts the servile classes must have lived in a different settlement form. Thus, Estyn Evans, using parallels from the Highlands of Scotland and examples from Western Donegal, suggested that the unfree population were living in clachans, nucleated settlement clusters

clusters of generally 10 - 20 farm-houses. Unlike villages, clachans do not possess any services such as a church, village green or castle.

The relict distribution pattern of these clachans in Ireland shows that they are mainly to be found in the northern and western margins of the country in places which have escaped later agricultural improvements. To prove that this type of nucleated settlement feature goes back to the period prior to 1169 has turned out to be a very difficult task because of the almost complete lack of documentary or cartographic sources. The only excavation of a deserted clachan, that undertaken by Buchanan at Murphystown in the Lecale Penninsula of Co.Down, produced some evidence of Early Christian occupation but it was not of identifiable clachan form.

For the Anglo-Norman period much research has been carried out on the form and distribution of mottes in Ireland. The remarkable fact to emerge from this study was not only the lateness of the use of this type of castle construction in Ireland, but that the Normans often built mottes on top of the indigenous ring-forts in many areas. A recently published study on the distribution of surviving mottes throughout Ireland by Glasscock and McNeill has revealed a surprisingly low density of sites in the Province of Munster. This lack of mottes is particularly startling in East Cork and East Limerick as both areas were known to have been occupied by the Anglo-Normans in the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries. It is gaps such as these that have led archaeologists to look for other types of earthwork castles of this period such as the ring-work castle where the major defensive element was not the mound or the motte but the annular fosse, bank and palisade as well as the strong entrance gate tower.

The contemporary literature of the Anglo-Norman invasion also hints at the construction of ring-work castles as well as mottes, In the description by Giraldus Cambrensis in his Expugnatio Hibernica of the building of the castle at Ferrycarrig, Co. Wexford, by Robert FitzStephen, he writes about the "fortress" constructed there and does not mention the existence of a motte. His description of the cutting of a fosse on this inland promontory overlooking the River Slaney strongly suggests that a ring-work castle was built here rather than a motte.

My own research has concentrated on the medieval moated sites or the defended farmsteads of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland which has broadly the same function as the earlier ring-forts, but which are usually square or rectangular in plan. Often their interiors are slightly raised above the level of the surrounding land and in many cases, too, rivers or streams have been deliberately diverted to keep the moats of these sites filled with water.

Altogether around 750 examples of moated sites in Ireland were located in the 1840's by the Ordnance Survey. Most of the sites are concentrated in the southern and eastern areas of the country which were intensively settled by the Anglo-Normans. Although Irish moated sites are broadly of the same date as the British examples there are several morphological and functional differences between them. For instance, very few Irish sites possess more than one enclosure and very few are located close to known medieval village sites. Often moated sites in Ireland are found concentrated on the frontier of the Anglo-Norman lordship where the Anglo-Norman rural community would have been exposed both to attacks by the Irish and to depredations on their stock by wild animals. Thus Irish moated sites were constructed with a greater defensive aspect than was true for English examples.

Only two moated sites have up to now been excavated in Ireland, Kilmagoura and Rigsdale both in Co.Cork. Both sites have produced broadly similar evidence of limited occupation in the late thirteenth century before they were deserted in the period of disorder which followed the Bruce Invasion of 1315-18 as Gaelic pressure built up along the Anglo-Norman frontier.

As a direct result of my research into moated sites, I have become interested in exactly when and why they went out of fashion and what replaced them as the farms and dwellings of the lesser nobility. Probably they were replaced by tower houses,fortified stone towers, which are a very common sight to this day in the Irish landscape. However, very little research has been done on the origins of these tower houses so it is still not possible to be sure whether some of these tower houses are earlier in date than the 1429 statute which gave a £10 grant to every liege-man who constructed such a tower. It would also be interesting to explore the links, if any, between Irish tower houses and the pele towers of Northumberland and Scotland.

Research has also been continuing on the nucleated settlements of Anglo-Norman Ireland ever since Glasscock's seminal article and map of 1970 in which he located many rural boroughs and deserted medieval villages. Graham has since carried out a study of the complete Anglo-Norman settlement pattern in Co.Meath. He has since expanded his research to cover the whole island in an attempt to locate the medieval boroughs which possessed charters and the other nucleated settlements which had grants for weekly markets and annual fairs.

This review of settlement studies in Ireland has, I hope, been of some use in a Scottish context because there are several interesting parallel problems of settlement continuity and change common to both Ireland and Scotland. In the future it will be necessary to define more exactly what we mean by the terms "continuity" and "discontinuity" in settlement studies. All too often in the past research into Irish settlement has concentrated on the changes wrought on the indigenous settlement pattern by such invaders as the Celts and later the Anglo-Normans. I would suggest that future research will reveal a greater level of settlement continuity in the historic period in Ireland than has hitherto been realised.

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MEDIEVAL RURAL SETTLEMENT IN WALES

L.A.S. Butler

The Norman conquest and colonisation of Wales was a prolonged enterprise extending over two centuries (1070-1284). Some territories conquered before 1110 never reverted to Welsh control. Others were held fleetingly and much of north-west Wales escaped all alien occupation until the Edwardian conquest. These differences in intensity are reflected in the degree of nucleation in settlement and also in the location of castle, church and manor house relative to the peasant settlement. A further distinction is that between the coastal lowland belt and the mountainous heartland; in the latter Norman influence is restricted to the valley floors and the commotal centres even though territorial ownership may be nominally extensive. The three zones to be examined are (i) the fully Normanised coastland of south Wales and the Marcher lordships, (ii) an intermittently Normanised Ceredigion, upper Towy, middle Severn and Radnor, and (iii) the pura Wallia of Gwynedd and inner Powys.

If the troubled relations between Celt and Saxon along the Wye in the early 11th century can be seen as a sign of pressures within the social structure, then the evidence should point to an imbalance between population size and land resources. This could result in a greater incentive to farmers to produce extra to meet the taxes their rulers and clergy levied and in a greater pressure by rulers to organise their followers into nucleated townships. These appear in the border districts of Erging and Tegeingl and the manorial organisation (maenor and bond vill) may predate the Norman conquest. It would certainly ease the emergence of personal manorial vills in both Norman and Fleming hands (eg Bonvilston, Reynoldston, Wizton, Alexanderston). A few manorial vills were accompanied by an earthwork castle or hall (eg Llantrithyd, Penmaen) but the majority received a church newly dedicated to a Latin saint. It is difficult to recognise any conscious village planning as has been argued by Roberts for 12th-century rural settlement in county Durham. The major lords built stone castles at the commotal centres and these generally became the focus for a town serving that commote and lordship, sometimes taking its name from the commote (Cydweli, Nedd, Nevern, Penfro). Still insufficient archaeological work has been undertaken in discovering/

discovering village plans by field survey (Davies 1958; Spurgeon & Thomas 1978; Webster, 1974) and excavation has shown only a few individual house plans (Thomas & Davies 1972). The general pattern in moated homesteads is that they represent sub-divided manors at the village centre (Craster and Lewis 1963; Spurgeon 1979) rather than colonisation of the waste as at Newhouse, Pembs. and Worleton, Glamorgan. The troubled conditions of the fifteenth century produced some small-scale fortification at village level (church towers: Newton Nottage; tower houses: Angle), but nothing on the scale of the peles on the Scottish border. Equally it is difficult to find examples of the retreat of rural settlement unless caused by deliberate actions of monastic landlords or of secular emparkers or in consequence of coastal sand-dune movement.

In the area of intermittent Normanisation the pattern of rural settlement is close to that depicted in the Welsh Laws based on the fifty vills of the commote. The pattern of Norman exploitation with a castle established at the commotal centre is arrested and many castle-towns are feebly endowed (Cefnllys, Painscastle) or still-born (Newton in Llandeilo). The process towards nucleation is difficult to trace outside the 'pale' of Cardigan (eg Verwig = berewick) and eastern Radnor (Whitton). No village excavation has taken place though there has been work on isolated farms and granges (Beili Bedw in St. Harmon, Carno). Considerable survey on houses has shown the extent of English influences on structural details and plans especially in the middle Severn. These surveys (Brooksby 1968-73; Smith and Jones 1963-9; Smith 1975) emphasised the need to place the surviving structures in their social context as well as their geographical setting.

In the heartland of Wales, Gwynedd, Rhos and Rhufoniog, the commotal pattern was untouched unless the chief officers of Llywelyn Fawr such as Ednyfed Fychan exerted the same centralising pressure as had been seen in south Wales two centuries earlier. The monastic charters and the post-Conquest extents and surveys show a pattern of services rendered on traditional lines. Towns were few and offered limited outlets for commerce. It is only the impact of the English urban settlers and the Anglo-Welsh gentry that brings about change as in Castell, Penrhyn or Vaynol. Dispersed settlements approximate to the townships of the Laws and nucleation is rare (eg Nant Gwrtheryn in Pistyll). The contrast of settlement foci between the winter/

winter homestead (hendref) and the summer dairy huts (hafodau) has been examined (Butler 1962; Jones-Pierce 1962). Excavated gentry houses (eg Cefn-y-fan: Hogg 1954) may prove to be untypical and instead it is the patient work on the creation of new estates in the late middle ages which may yield more promising clues (Gresham 1973; Thomas 1970). The identification of squatter settlement and colonisation of uplands by freeholders (priodorion) who build 'platform houses' has yet to be tested by archaeological methods and even then it may prove difficult to obtain precise dating. Until these various factors have been evaluated the jigsaw of rural settlement patterns in Wales will be incomplete.

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CLEARANCE SETTLEMENTS IN THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

H, Fairhurst

The clusters of ruinous buildings to be seen along so many Highland glens are indicative of the severe depopulation which has occurred since the beginning of last century. In most cases the clusters are the remains of the old group-tenancy farms worked in run-rig (1) These were either reorganised to make modern viable farms or cleared over wide areas to allow extensive grazing for great flocks of sheep. The latter aspect was most common in the north and west where the clearances were sudden and complete, and the old settlements remain clearly traceable in what became open moorland. In more southerly areas especially on the better land, evictions were less catastrophic on the whole, and occupation may have lingered on into more recent times. At Auchindrain (2) for instance, now a museum of the countryside in mid-Argyll, one of the houses was inhabited until the post-War period. Even in the south, however, examples of the settlements seem sufficiently numerous for detailed regional study.

Field investigations organised by the writer from the departments of Archaeology and Geography in the University of Glasgow, were primarily concerned with two contrasting sites, one at Lix near the western end of Loch Tay and one at Rosal in Strath Naver, Sutherland (3). Since these investigations in the early sixties, whenever opportunity has offered, inspections have been made of other sites, particularly in the central and western Highlands. The objectives were two-fold; in the first place it was hoped to provide information on the lay-out of the old group-farms, to give a more detailed and more vivid picture than was possible from the documentary evidence alone. Secondly, many of the settlements had clearly been occupied from at least medieval times and perhaps earlier (documentary evidence is very scarce before the seventeenth century), and it was hoped to extend knowledge backward on sites where excavation was possible on open ground. In the latter case, one's results were disappointing, but the possibilities seem to be there for other investigators.

In this latter respect, two or three suggestions may be offered from experience. Estate plans were often made by improving landlords before clearance. Sometimes these show the settlements in very sketchy/

sketchy form, as for Rosal (4), but others can be surprisingly detailed and most valuable, as for instance, for Auchindrain (5). Again, choice of site for closer investigation should always be made with special regard to the documentary evidence which is available, absent in some cases, invaluable in others. It might be suggested too, when particular concern lies with the archaeological past, settlements should be selected with this end specifically in view; useful sealed deposits may be absent and site migration may have occurred on a considerable scale.

In our limited experience, the ruins which survive seem rarely to be of any great age. Walling was of a flimsy nature, of dry-stone, with a turf superstructure, of clay and branches, of sod with layers of stone (6). The couples holding the thatched roof were slotted into the walls (7), suggestive of the medieval cruck tradition in England which seems to have been abandoned in the sixteenth century. Such buildings would need either drastic repair or renewal after a generation or so. A rather different tradition was followed in the islands of the north west, from Lewis to Tiree, where the couples rested on the inner edge of a very thick wall with an earthen core. Field studies could well establish other variations in construction.

On the ground, it is almost impossible to classify by direct observation every building on a site. An elongated byre-dwelling was obviously widespread, the family quarters being around an open hearth at one end, with the byre at the other, the two being separated, if at all, by a flimsy partition and with no cross-passage. Here again, field studies suggest considerable regional variation. Barns can sometimes be identified by two opposing doorways to allow a through draught for winnowing. Enclosures for stackyards or kale gardens are normally present and a corn-drying kiln can be recognised. Stables may occur but some of the inhabitants were of a lowly status and occupied very small cottages which are difficult to distinguish as such; on the other hand, whole settlements of these "cottars" sometimes occur, though little seems to be known of them from the documentary evidence. The plough rigs in the old arable land often survive clearly enough, with clearance cairns distributed amongst them. Settlements dating to the decades immediately before eviction, as at Lix, may have an obvious rectalinear lay-out. Bounding the arable lands was a well marked head-dyke, often with a ditch on the upper side: the dyke may have been duplicated to take in new land.

Shieling huts are to be found on the old common grazings in the form of very small enclosures, much ruined; they were occupied by part of the community during the summer months in a type of transhumance. At Rosal in the very extensive common grazing land, there was evidence of a transition when a shieling site began to be used as a small plot of arable, was later occupied perhaps by a squatter, and eventually became a small settlement on its own. Traces of old shieling huts within or very close to a settlement have been noted elsewhere, for example in Upper Glen Sannox in Arran, and suggest that townships may commonly have originated in this way; shieling place names seem to confirm the deduction.

In conclusion, a plea must be entered for the preservation of samples of these clearance settlements on a regional basis. The danger comes largely from forestry plantation when massive ploughs tear up the evidence for all time. It is surely rare in Europe for sites with such remarkable potentialities to survive in this way. Cattle trample down the flimsy walling too easily, and sheep run has been the means of preservation in the past. Too obviously however, grazing for a flock of sheep must be extensive enough to be economic and objections can only be avoided by wise selection of sites for preservation.

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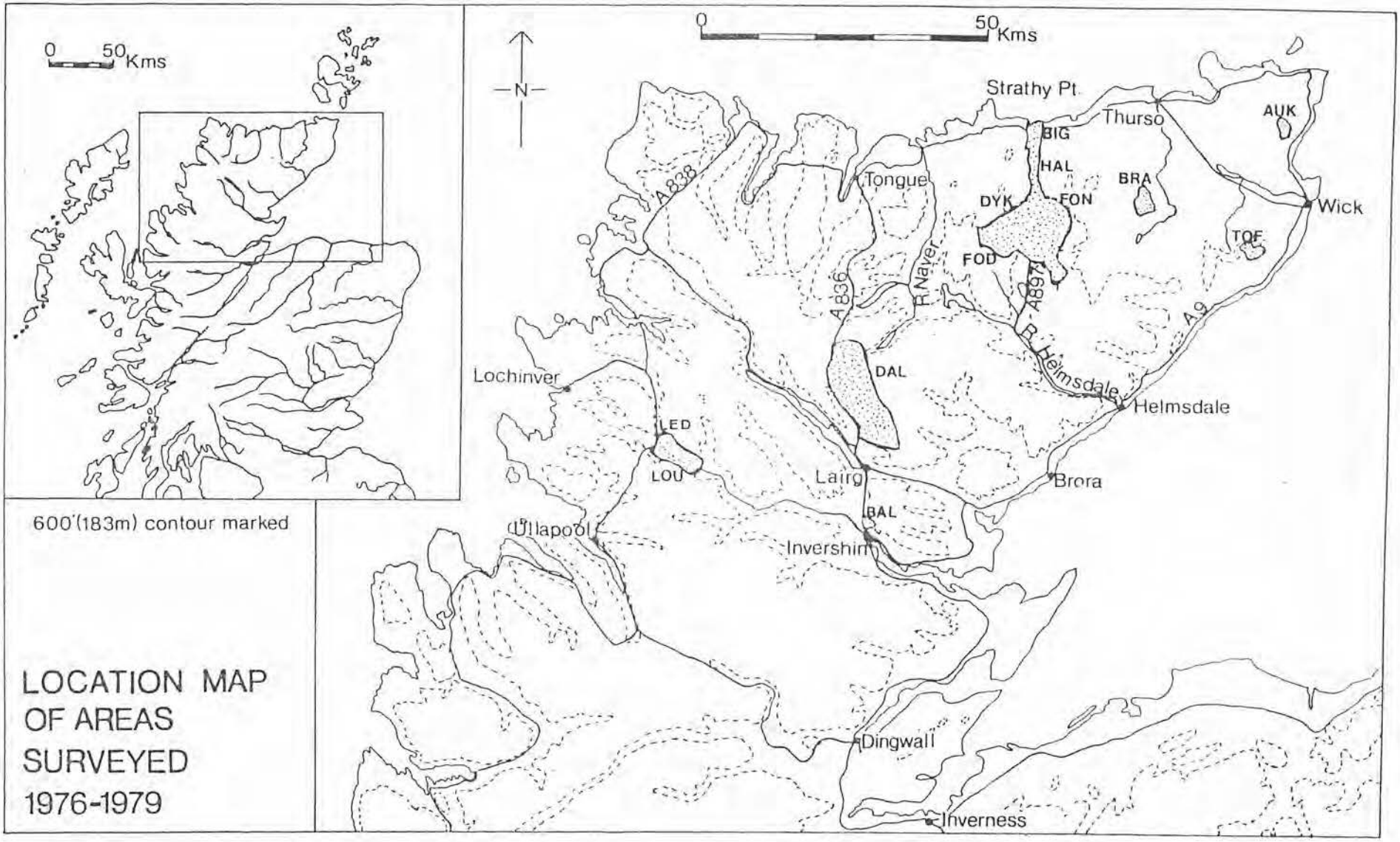
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A9
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DAL
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LED
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Brora
BAL
Ullapool
Invershin
Dingwall
Inverness
600'(183m) contour marked
LOCATION MAP
OF AREAS
SURVEYED
1976-1979

Fig. 0

FIELD SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT LOCATION IN NORTHERN SCOTLAND

R.J. Mercer

Between the years 1976 and 1979 some 26,000 hectares of land in Caithness and Sutherland were surveyed in advance of forestry plantation. This is not the place to describe in detail the methods used to complete this work (these are set out in Mercer and Howell, 1980, 2-8) nor for any consideration of the problems of forestry vis à vis the heritage of our highland landscape (again the reader can be directed to the relevant section in Jackson 1978). All that will be attempted here is a summary of the findings at these seasons of survey - a full catalogue and detailed consideration is available in Mercer and Howell, 1980.

In all, eleven areas were surveyed over four seasons (see fig.0). In 1977 the Aukhorn area near Keiss (AUK), the Toftgun area close by the Gray Cairns of Camster (TOF), and the Braehour area (BRA) near Westerdale, all set on the Caithness plateau, were examined and form one group. A series of areas, Forsinain (FON), Dyke (DYK) - both surveyed in 1977 - and Forsinard (FOD), Bighouse (BIG) and Halladale (HAL) surveyed in 1979, comprise the entirety of the Halladale drainage complex providing a study of one of the N-S valleys of Sutherland which debouch onto the northern coast. To the south the massive area of Dalchork (DAL) set to the north of Lairg, presents an excellent view of the situation in southern Sutherland (surveyed in 1978) together with the much smaller area of Balblair (BAL) located just to the north of Invershin. To the west two more areas, Loubcroy (LOU) surveyed in 1976 and Ledmore (LED) (1978) situated to the east of the Ledmore Junction of the A838 and A894, presented a relatively small area for study in the west of the county of Sutherland. Regional differences between the Caithness plateau, the Halladale valley, the southern area around Lairg and the western area around Ledmore are pronounced and form one of the leitmotifs of this paper. The other overall salient feature is the appearance of a fundamental reality of settlement location and development in the Highland area. Within this rugged and difficult milieu certain niches critically balanced between various factors of micro-climate, exposure to the sun's radiation, soil chemistry, water supply and communication have always dictated and in some cases dictate still locations for occupation.

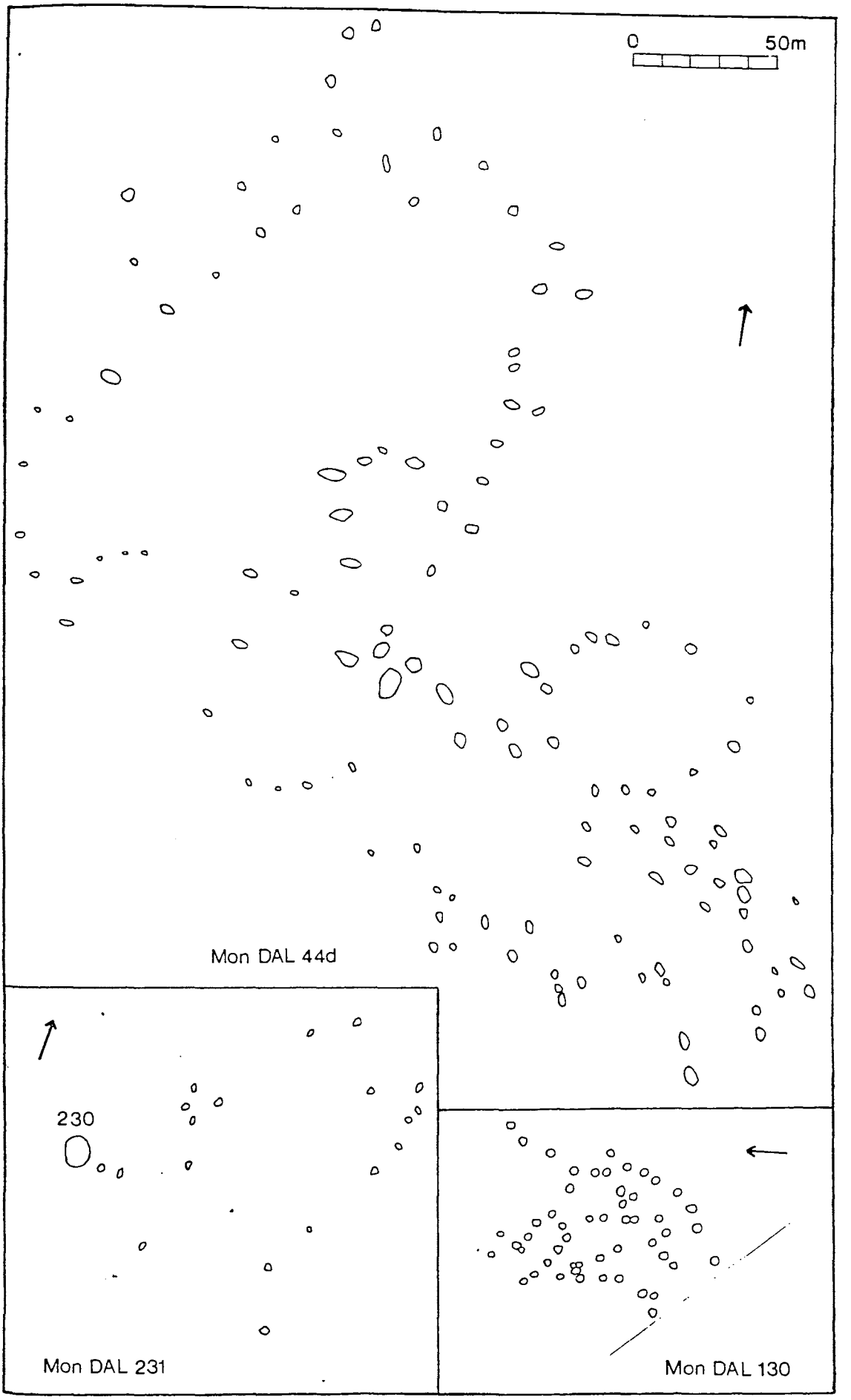


Fig. 1

The critical nature of these balances and the limited number of economic responses which can be made in these marginal locations has meant that relatively slight alterations to circumstances, environment or economy will result in 'catastrophic' contractions in the settlement pattern. Reassertion of the balance will in time lead to reoccupation and reuse very generally within the same locational framework - in the same niches where the scale of resouces is tipped just enough to allow this to occur. The inevitable consequence of these processes is the tendency towards the superimposition of settlement at one period upon settlement of another leading to the recurrent destruction of earlier sites. For this reason the writer feels that the distribution pattern of particularly the earlier sites cannot be held to be in any way indicative either spatially or numerically.

The other clear and fundamental area where some preliminary discussion is necessary revolves around the question "What is the objective of archaeological field survey?". It has already been made clear that, in the highland zone particularly, the results of this type of data recording will be heavily influenced by the continuing succession of events which will always tend to eradicate the earlier evidence of activity. The earlier material will tend to survive only in those locations (or niches) which were always so marginal that later activity happens to have avoided them and their consequent destruction has not taken place. As a consequence it is essential that the area surveyed should be examined <u>totally</u> as the most marginal niches will not necessarily occur in areas that are easily accessible, or present the focus of surviving ancient monuments today. The method of survey employed here does guarantee that total examination does take place although of course, it cannot guarantee that total recognition will occur. It can indeed be assumed for all field survey that total recognition will never occur and that therefore the reworking of any area will always be rewarding not only in the light of a "different viewpoint" but because with the passage of time it is to be hoped that the generation of different problems will provoke the reassessment of recognised sites and the recognition of new ones.

It is indeed in the area of problem generation that field survey has its major contribution to make. From his observed data the/

the field surveyor may suggest, associational, juxtapositional and distributional constants with reference to the monuments which he may classify on solely morphological grounds. In doing so he will necessarily bear in mind the constraints of selective destruction, whether natural or anthropogenic, which inhibit his ability to recognise and appreciate his data. By placing his material alongside other environmental constants (elevation, aspect, water supplies, etc.) it will be possible for him to suggest possible chronological sequences and spatial groupings of monument types which will provoke enquiry. The field surveyor's data can never be afforded the same value or consideration as that retrieved by the excavator or by the historian. But his use of his data to construct models which may form the basis of historical or archaeological research programmes is an invaluable exercise. For this reason it would appear to the writer that the construction of projects where field survey, excavation and documentary research are combined to provide mutual stimuli is the way in which the most cost-effective advance into an investigation of our rural past can be attained.

The reader must therefore regard the comments which follow as the deliberate construction of a framework which can only be clad by the substance of excavated and documented data. If the cladding is found not to fit the framework then the framework can be instantly discarded. To have stimulated the retrieval of excavated and documented data must remain the field worker's lowly reward.

In summary, the earliest phase of activity recognisable to field survey in the areas examined is expressed by the presence of funerary monuments of neolithic date. The distribution of these stone built monuments is severely restricted and within the areas surveyed only occurs within one relatively restricted area of upper Strath Oykel - set above a fertile valley bottom in an area likely enough to be hospitable to early farmers. By interesting contrast, however, the whole of Strath Halladale, apparently an area as hospitable and fertile as Strath Oykel, has not revealed a single monument of clearly neolithic date. This selectivity is thrown further into relief when one includes in this consideration the major concentrations of neolithic funerary activity on the Caithness plateau (around Loch Watten and further south around the Gray cairns of Camster) and the large numbers of monuments of this date in Strathnaver, a valley running parallel to Strath Halladale 15 miles to the/

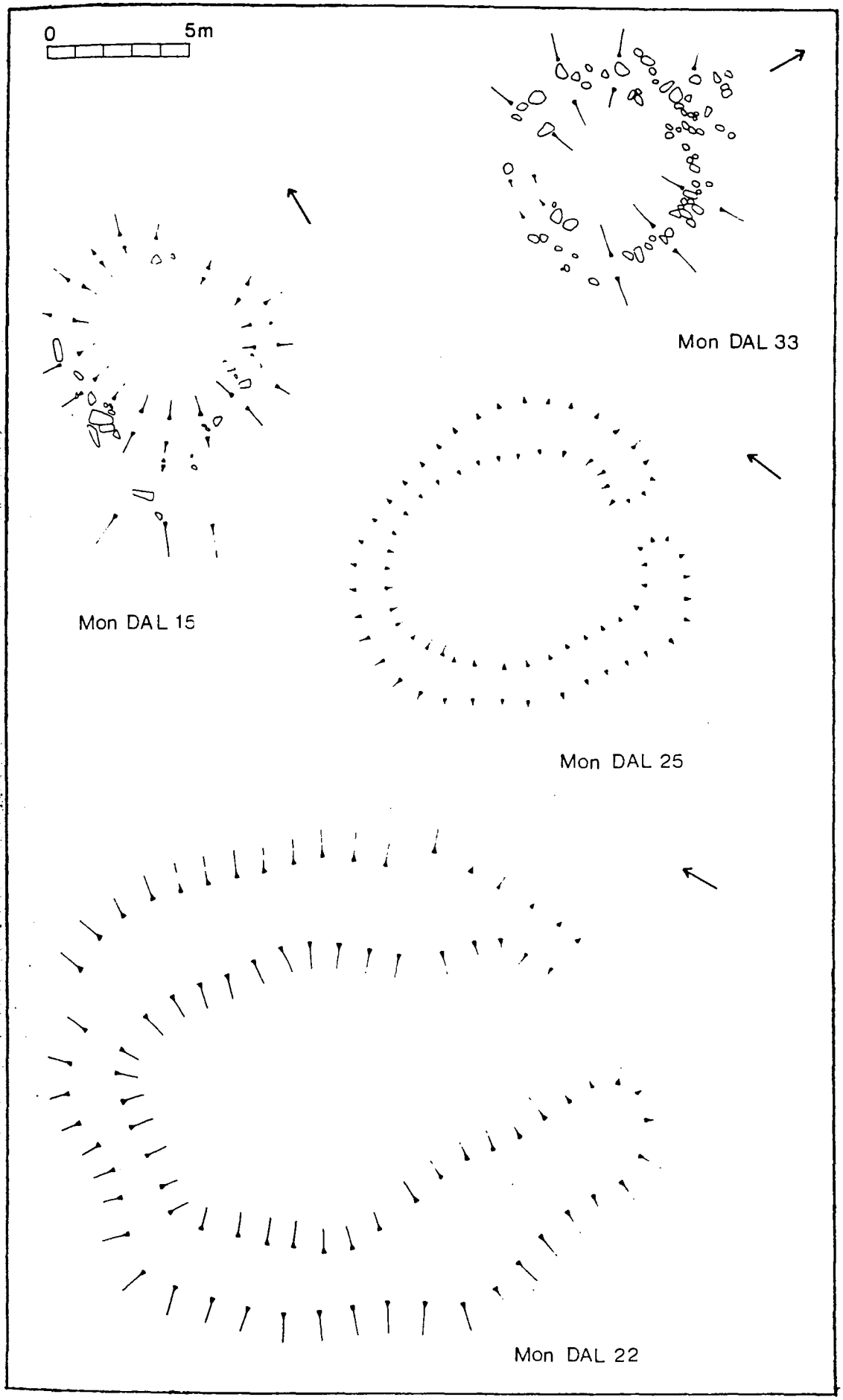


Fig. 2

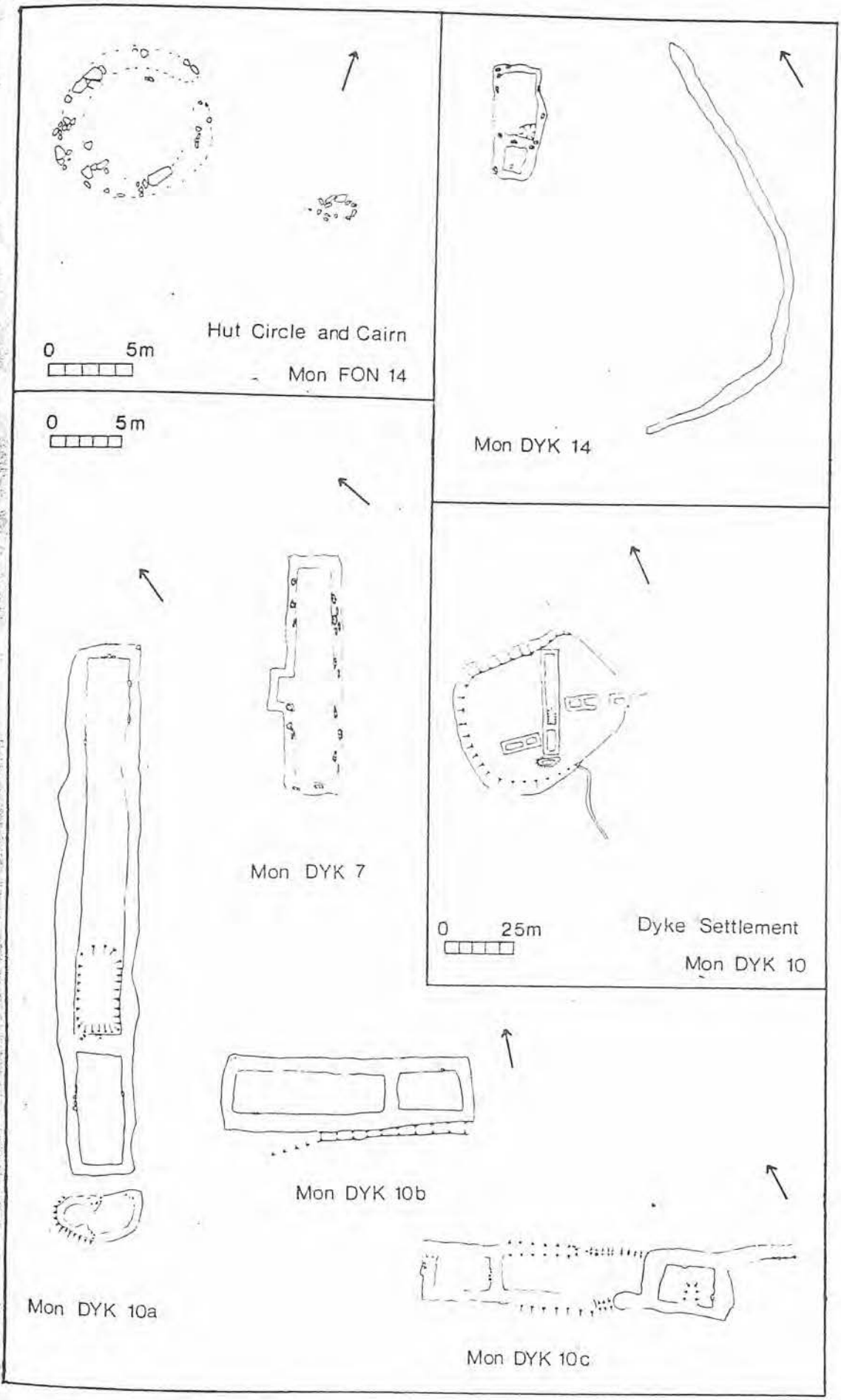
the west. The evidence would appear to indicate the existence of nuclear areas of new stone age activity set within some but not all of the less elevated and more fertile areas of northern Scotland. To found any appreciation of occupation patterns upon the distribution of apparently funerary monuments must of course carry with it considerable hazards but in the absence, at present, of other evidence this might be seen as an indication of only partial exploitation of available land in northern Scotland at this time. The Loubcroy survey has clearly demonstrated the urgent necessity for intensive field survey in any area under threat where chambered cairns have been recognised. In these areas peat column sampling with columns for comparison from areas like Halladale might be able to establish differing land use histories at this period hinted at by the cairn distribution.

The cairns in the upper Strath Oykel area (Henshall 1963, 52) have been termed by Howell (Mercer and Howell, 1980, 73) a cemetery - a term seemingly justified by consideration of their very close morphological relationship. Close inspection of the cairns together with the discipline of large scale planning seems to indicate that the majority of the group are of heel-shaped plan linking them perhaps with a group with a centre of distribution in Shetland (Henshall, 1963, 135) and other outliers in the vicinity of the Dornoch Firth. There would seem little doubt that these latter are related to the Strath Oykel groups and one is brought to wonder whether closer inspection might prompt reappraisal of other "round" cairns in the Orkney-Cromarty-Hebridean area. Such evidence as there is (Henshall 1963) might indicate a date which is not unduly early in the development of chambered cairns in northern Britain - possibly in the latter half of the third millennium BC. The single possible trapezoidal long cairn, itself closely spatially associated with a heel-shaped cairn, seems to represent a northern outlier on a flimsy distribution in north-east Scotland. Again it must be emphasized that only intensive ground survey will disclose the presence of monuments of this calibre and the present recognised distribution may be very partial. Whatever the case the penetration of these monument types into West Sutherland would appear to be by way of the relatively easy overland route from the east coast via the Dornoch Firth and the Kyle of Sutherland.

With the relatively well defined chronological horizon of these chambered cairns behind us the situation becomes a great deal less clear. Set above the Kyle of Sutherland in the Balblair proposed forestry area at Invershin four circular enclosures of very substantial proportion - all over 10m. in internal diameter - look out over the splendid vista that the Kyle provides. On ground of size alone these enclosures do not resemble the generally much smaller 'hut circles' which occur in the vicinity nor is their location typical of this latter class. The occurrence of a smaller inner ring within one of the enclosures and the apparent lack of entrance arrangement in two examples prompt the suggestion that these monuments may be related to the ring cairn/enclosed cremation cemetery tradition (see Ritchie . 1972) suggesting in turn a date within the second millennium BC. Little is known of any comparable structures in the northern counties. The location of these enclosures in the Kyle of Sutherland is of some interest if the suggested chronological horizon for these sites has any validity. The Dornoch Firth and the Kyle do form the focus of metalwork distribution in the northern counties during the Bronze Age (Coles 1966). Indeed little penetration inland on the grounds of metalwork distribution, would appear to have occurred at this time.

Parallels in Orkney and Shetland might indicate, however, that the single 'burnt mound', if this attribution is correct, located during the Loubcroy survey might also relate to a date late in the second or early in the first millennium BC (J.Hedges. 1977).

The later prehistoric occupation of the area is again patchily represented. It comprises a number of cairnfields and small enclosures ('hut circles') which would appear to be domestic in function. The cairnfields divided themselves into two categories which are quite clearly defined. The first group (Group A) comprise relatively small concentrations of closely grouped cairns of neat circular outline and relatively steep profile (eg DAL 130 (see fig.1). The second (Group B) comprises generally much larger groups of more irregularly and openly spaced cairns of far less regular outline and form with a tendency to roughly defined 'void areas' within the cairnfield.(eg DAL 44d. and DAL 231 see fig.1). Prima facie it would appear that some functional division is to be perceived in this dichotomy. DAL 130 is not associated with any other structural type (although more recent disturbance nearby has rendered this observation open to question)


Hut Circle and Cairn
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Mon DYK 10c

Fig. 3

while DAL 231 is associated apparently with one small, circular 'hut circle'...(DAL 230) and DAL 44d with a number of circular and sub-circular enclosures (DAL 15, DAL 22 and DAL 25 see fig.2). Monuments of Group A tend to be isolated from traces of 'contemporary' settlement. Monuments of Group B on the other hand tend to be frequently associated with circular and sub-circular banked enclosures of apparently domestic form.

Obviously the situation here is complex and field survey can only indicate the problems. Selective excavation sampling a number of different groups will be necessary both to confirm or reject the distinction drawn here and to add specific detail to the functional dichotomy suggested

As regards the enclosures often associated with the cairnfields the distinction has already implicitly been drawn between strictly circular 'hut circles' (FON 14 see fig.3: DAL 33 see fig. 2) and sub-circular enclosures - usually of somewhat larger proportion (DAL 22 and 25, see fig.2 and BIG 9-13, 15 and 23, see figs 4 and 5). Again only excavation can qualify the functional or chronological distinction possibly implicit in this division.

The Royal Commission Inventory of Sutherland (RCAHMS, 1911, xxiv) distinguished at this early date two hut circle types in the county. The first type comprised simple circular enclosures often terraced into the hillside and associated with cairnfields of dispersed (Group B) type. The second type were clearly sub-circular with the entrance pulled out to create a short 'passage'. The inventory records that this type is usually associated with field boundary systems of stone banks rather than clearance cairns. Fairhurst (Fairhurst, 1971) during excavations conducted at Kilphedir, Sutherland, retrieved a date antequem for peat formation over a circular hut circle of the first type of 420 $\pm$ 40 bc, (GU-299). A hut circle of the second type was also present on the site and a sequence was demonstrated by the fact that this latter structure had been built from material taken from a pre-existing house of the first type. This sequential arrangement appears to be continued by five dates from the later structure:

L-1061	150 $\pm$ 80 bc.
GU-11	114 $\pm$ 55 bc.
GU-67	28 $\pm$ 60 ad.
GU-10	42 $\pm$ 60 ad.
SRR-3	150 $\pm$ 50 bc.

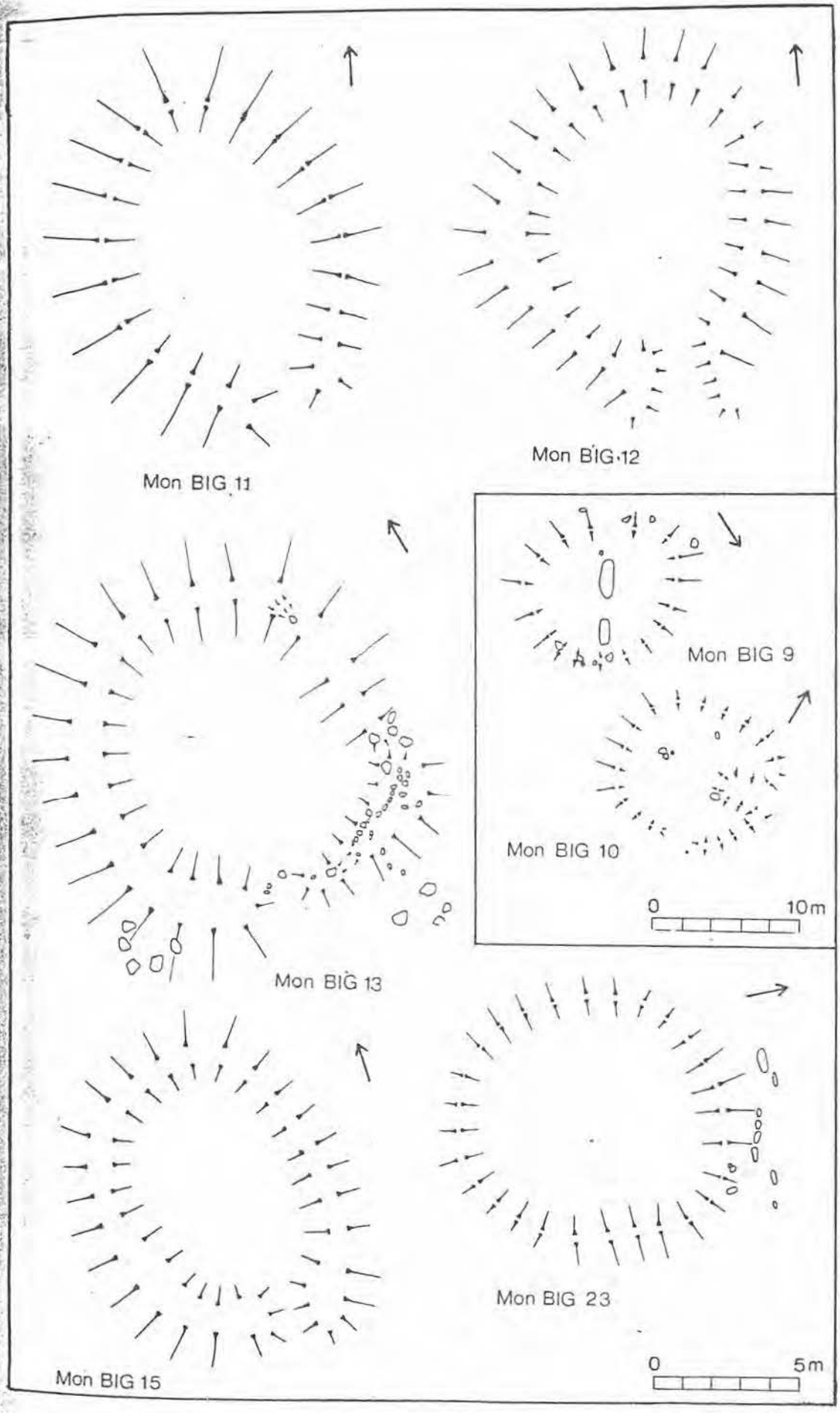
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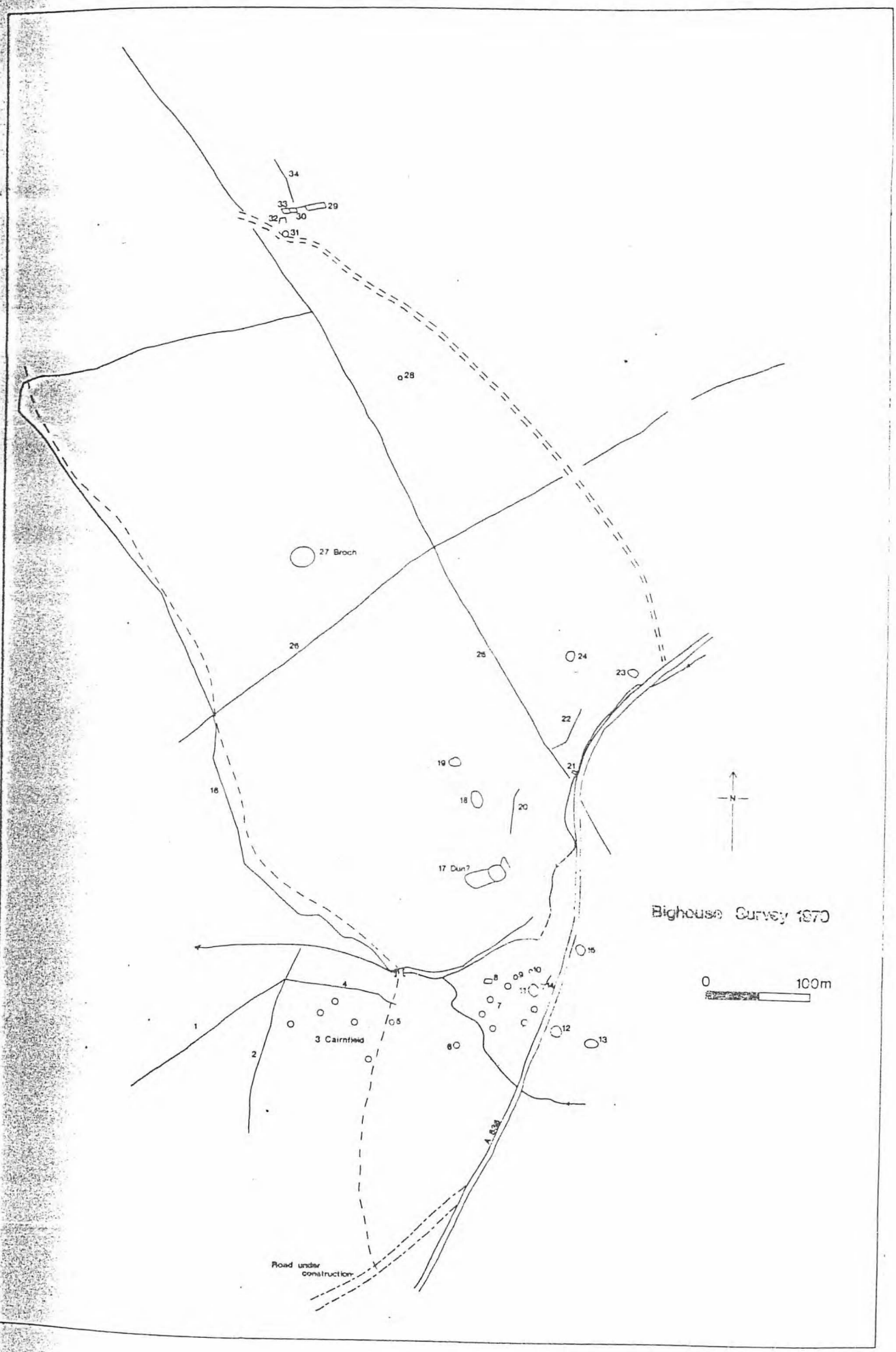
Fig. 4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Road under construction

Fig. 5

It will, of course, require further excavation before this fairly clear sequence - circular hut-circle/sub-circular entranced structure can be extended to the area as a whole. Furthermore the lack of homogeneity of the second type of structure may well suggest a complex internal development of a long chronological span. Fairhurst records the view of Romans that peat development began during the period of the occupation of Hut Circle 5 (the second type) and both sites were blanketed after its desertion.

This glimpse of a sequence. which may or may not be typical. perhaps helps very generally to fix these late prehistoric monuments for us chronologically. Any such simplistic view must, however, pay regard to the work of Barber in the island of Arran, where a 'hut circle' has been shown to have five separate constructional phases reaching back in time as far as the Early Bronze Age (Barber. pers comm.).

The developmental sequence or functional relationship between this second class of enclosure and 'duns' hinted at by Fairhurst (1971) is perhaps to some extent confirmed by the apparent association of enclosures of this type and a 'dun' in the Bighouse area surveyed in 1979.

In this latter case it is not possible to indicate clearly any firm association between the settlement comprising the 'dun' and smaller enclosures at Bighouse. and the great rectilinear field system which surrounds it (see fig.5). These great fields over 4-5000 square metres in area stretch. if one can accept modern field boundaries running on the same grid. for over 2 kms. along the apron-land of the estuary of the Halladale river and for over 1 km. inland. The walls are sealed beneath peat and the system does respect the burn which forms the focus of the settlement area - which, however, might be expected anyway. Set within the fields and apparently oblivious to the system lies a massively constructed circular structure on a natural knoll (BIG 7. see fig.5) which it is suggested may be a broch.

Brochs in the Halladale valley as recorded by the 1977 and 1979 surveys have a clearly differential distribution to that of the cairnfields and their associated enclosures. They are placed on level terraces above the river at intervals of about 2 kms. in/

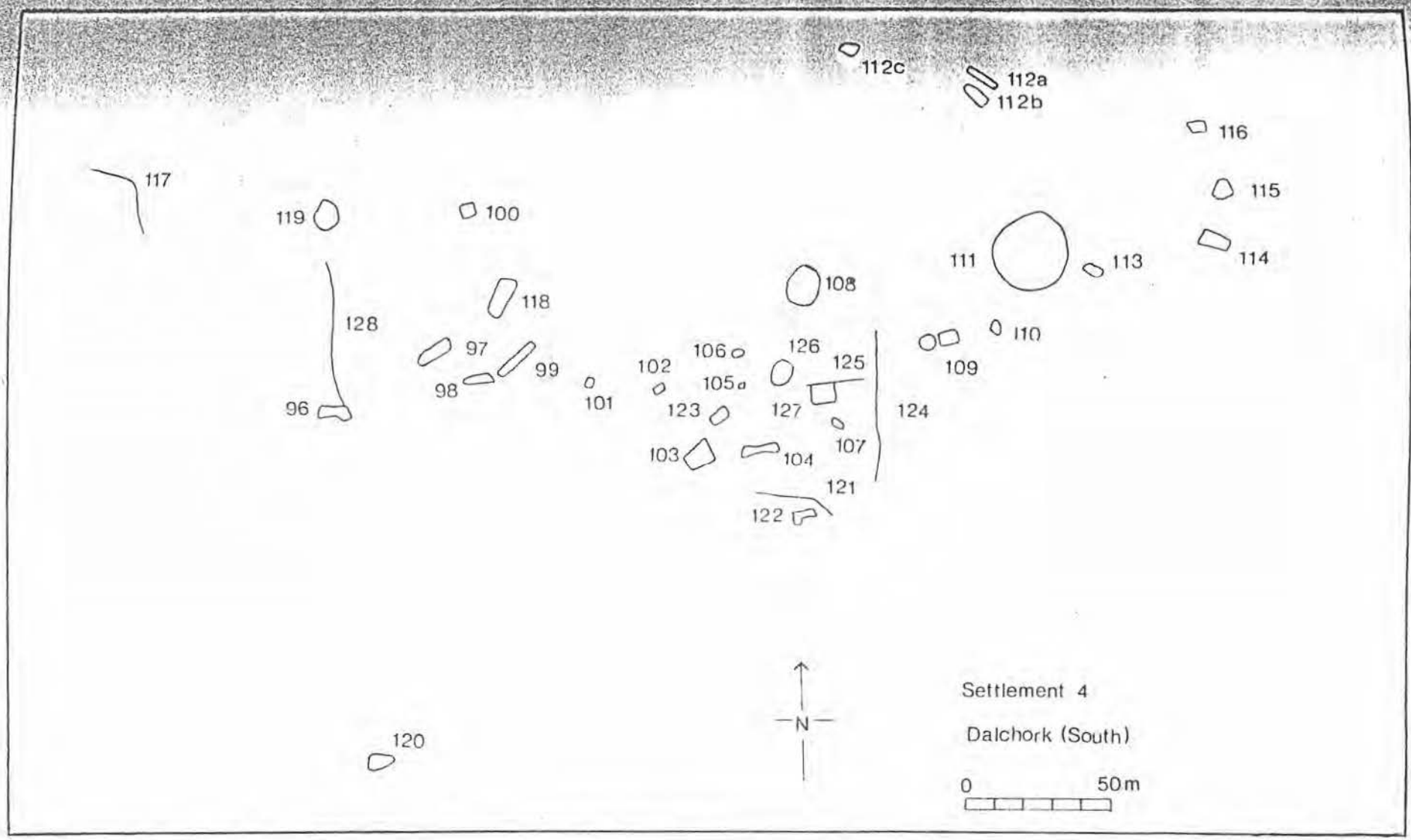
in the upper half of the valley - below the Borg broch which is the southernmost. It is possible that "gaps" in this distribution in the lower part of the valley are due to more recent destruction. In the area above the Borg broch where destruction in recent times has not been great no brochs occur whereas cairnfields and accompanying enclosures occur as far south as Forsinard. Uniformly throughout the area the brochs (as is so graphically demonstrated at the 'Borg') occur at a lower O.D. height than the cairnfields and in view of Fairhurst (1971) and Romans' observations at Kilphedir this could possibly be a reaction to deteriorating environmental conditions. Interestingly the only broch suggested outwith the Halladale valley on the basis of these surveys is that at Ledmore where again on a level terrace above the river Ledbeg the structure in question sits upon a slight knoll. Current chronological thought regarding brochs in the Western Isles (Mackie 1974, 92) would see the construction of these monuments taking place from 50 bc - 200 ad (C14 for the primary phase at the Dun Mor Vaul broch 60 $\pm$ 90 ad).

As with the period of the later second millennium bc and earlier first millennium bc so the record of field survey for the greater part of the first millennium ad in the areas examined in 1976-79 is entirely blank. There would seem, in so far as the visible field record can inform us, to be a complete desertion of the upland areas during the period.

Indeed the next clear indication we have of occupation of a widespread and consistent nature within these upland areas are the farmsteads of the pre-clearance phase. As Fairhurst would put it (Fairhurst 1968) these represent "a problem unique in Britain...the ruins of the numerous settlements deserted during the depopulation of the last one hundred and fifty years. They are not 'antiquities' in the normal sense but clearly are a characteristic feature of the Highlands which should be recorded..." All the areas surveyed between 1976 and 1979 have produced substantial inventories of structural remains of pre-clearance (and indeed post-clearance) farmsteads. For the consideration of this material it would seem a valuable approach to divide the areas surveyed into two regions which would appear to be quite individual both on the grounds of the material recorded during field survey and in historical terms. These two areas are South Sutherland and Caithness.

In the South Sutherland area three distinct types of pre-clearance settlement occur. At the least substantial level are a relatively few shieling type groups of small sub-rectangular or sub-circular structures usually set within mounds which are clearly revealed to the eye by a differential vegetational growth of well cropped grass. The mounds are presumably the product of the collapsed turf elements of these structures but seem dis-proportionately large to be the product of one single phase of construction and here as elsewhere with this type the field worker is left with the impression of complex sequences of structures rebuilt over and over again on the same site. The use of these structures as shelters for herdsmen and women during the summer months when cattle were put to graze on upland pastures with consequent desertion in the winter would necessitate regular reconstruction even perhaps on a season by season basis. On purely field archaeological grounds the relative scarcity of such structures in the areas surveyed in South Sutherland might indicate a relatively unimportant role for this transhumance activity. Where they do occur the structural types appear to fall within the morphological groups proposed below for the shieling groups recorded in Caithness. The relationship between these and other structural types in the area cannot be firmly established nor can any clear indication be given of the period (possibly a very long one) over which this type of structure remained in use. So insubstantial are many of the structures of this type that it is highly likely that large numbers have either left no superficial trace or that these traces are not now well enough defined to be recorded at this level of field survey, so that the sample recovered may not be representative either in morphology or quantitative terms.

The second type of settlement to occur in the Dalchork area, and solely here, is a number of large concentrations of small rectilinear and sub-rectilinear houses associated with a number of large enclosures apparently for the containment of animals. The finest examples of these occur on the northern (south facing) slope of Feidh Osdail, a valley running east-west through the Dalchork to Loch Tirry (eg Mons. DAL 96-128, see figs 6. and for structures from a similar site, fig.7). The structures within these large settlements are altogether more substantial than the shieling structures and the whole settlement area is marked by the vegetational change to well cropped grass already familiar. It would appear that these/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Settlement 4
Dalchork (South)
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Fig. 6

these concentrations mark the positions of 'cottar towns' known on documentary grounds to have existed in the area, settlements which again probably have a long history as the living quarters of the lower orders of rural society up to the time of the Clearances. This type of settlement is restricted within the area surveyed in 1976-79 to the Dalchork area, nothing similar occurring in Caithness to the north or to the west in the Ledmore/Loubcroy areas.

The third type of settlement is the individual farmstead of substantial buildings. These farmsteads are characterised by long houses closely similar to types familiar in Caithness although in the examples recorded in the 1976-79 surveys they did not exhibit the complex internal development of the Caithness examples. The houses occur in association with smaller rectangular buildings which again parallel the house/barn construction familiar in Caithness. One major distinction to be drawn between these farmsteads and those of Caithness, however, is their location which in the Dalchork examples is distinctly upland. In Strath Halladale farmsteads of this type do not occur at elevations in excess of 100m. O.D. whereas settlements in the Dalchork area are situated between 175m. (575ft.) O.D. and 160m. (550ft.) O.D. The impression is that farmsteads of this degree of development were able to subsist in more marginal locations in Sutherland than in Caithness, and possibly were pushed there by the existence of pre-existing systems in the more hospitable areas. In all cases the desertion of these farms and the decay of the buildings is followed by the erection of sheep-pens on the sites - monuments to the process of the Clearances.

In Caithness the nature of settlement in pre-clearance times is, on the archaeological grounds of the surveys conducted, quite different. The shieling system appears, on the evidence particularly of the Braehour area in the centre of the plain of Caithness, to have been of considerably greater importance, and the very large number of shielings recorded here, always set close to the rather sluggish burns of the area, has enabled the construction of a purely morphological sequence (see fig.8) which, however, as at present cannot be assigned a chronological or functional significance. Once again the impression gained by the fieldworker is of the longevity of these sites, many set in quite massive mounds of debris relating apparently to earlier phases of construction. The plateau-land at elevations of/

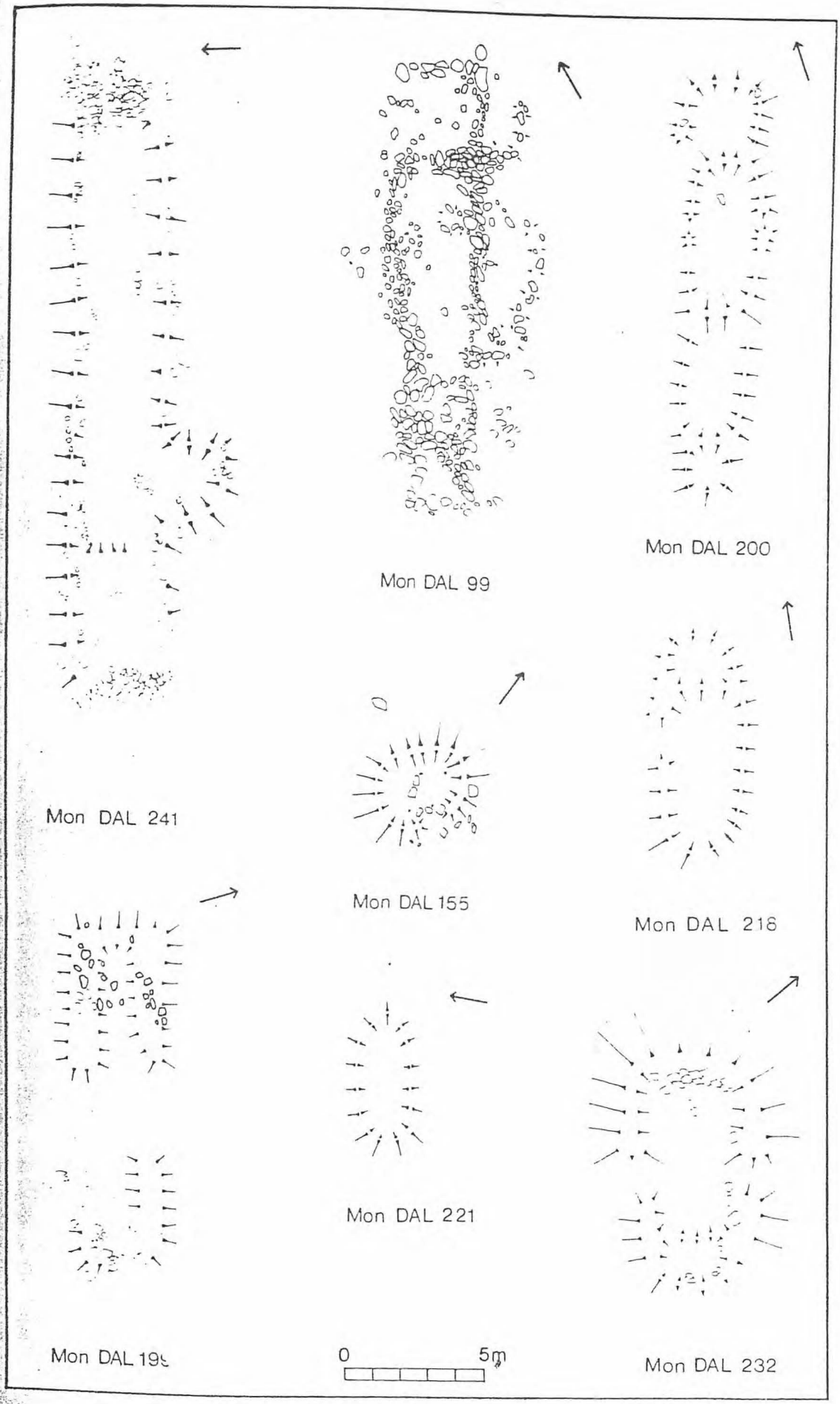
Mon DAL 241
Mon DAL 99
Mon DAL 200
Mon DAL 155
Mon DAL 218
Mon DAL 221
Mon DAL 195
Mon DAL 232
0
5m

Fig. 7

of 91-123m. (300-400ft.) O.D. must have always provided quite rich summer grazing for cattle and it is in this setting that we should see these large groups of shielings functioning probably over a very long period of time indeed.

In Strath Halladale shieling-type structures do occur up on the plateau which the valley bisects, usually set in the declivities formed by burns commencing their descent to the Halladale river. However, the elevation of the plateaux on either side of the Strath (between 150-200m., 492-656ft, O.D.) may well have restricted the grazing value of such land and certainly the field survey conducted revealed very few in these areas - those which do exist hugging the lips of the valley itself.

Set at similar altitudes within the valleys of the tributary rivers of the Halladale and in the headwaters of the Halladale itself, are a series of small farmsteads frequently associated with patches of 'lazy bedding' in the valley bottoms denoting small scale cultivation. The buildings are small and rectilinear (eg Mon DYK 14, see fig.3), and are clearly distinct from the shieling-type structures and the large farmsteads in the main valley below. The very small apparently cultivated areas associated with the structures presumably argue for the economy of these marginal settlements being based on animal husbandry. Very little more, on the basis of field survey, can be indicated as to the chronology of these settlements.

In the main valley of the Halladale a series of settlements occur which clearly form a third group. They never occur at elevations above 100m (328ft.) O.D. and are very much more substantial than the farmstead types which have been briefly discussed above. They comprise long houses often of massive proportions with clear indications of sequences of internal development and alteration. The long houses, which often apparently replace one another, are arranged around an enclosed farmyard with subsidiary buildings of smaller proportions including normally a small square or rectangular 'barn' building set in amongst a complex. The whole complex is characteristically set upon a natural raised terrace just above the flood plain of the river and overlooks large areas of the floodplain yielding traces of cultivation (eg DYK 10, see fig.3, FOD 80 & 78, see figs 9 and 10). That such farmsteads in some instances were terminated by the clearances of the early 1800s is well-known but the chronological depth of the tradition which they represent is ill/

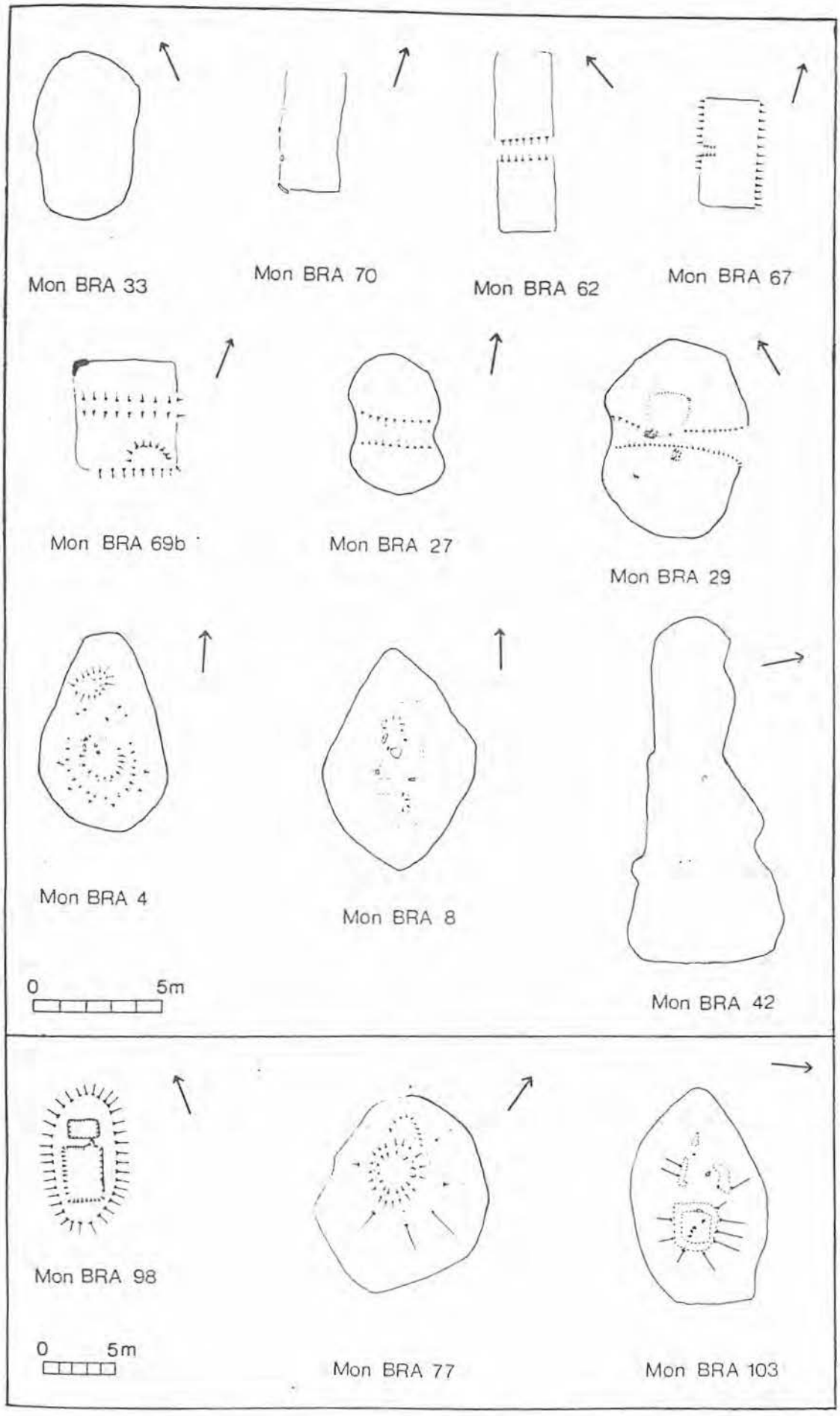
Mon BRA 33
Mon BRA 70
Mon BRA 62
Mon BRA 67
Mon BRA 69b
Mon BRA 27
Mon BRA 29
Mon BRA 4
Mon BRA 8
Mon BRA 42
0 5m
Mon BRA 98
Mon BRA 77
Mon BRA 103
0 5m

Fig. 8

ill understood. Of some assistance here is the work of Fairhurst at the township of Rosal, Strathnaver, Sutherland. which compares very closely with the concentration of such farmsteads seen at Forsinard both in structure, situation and elevation. It too is associated as are all the Halladale examples with a massive 'head dyke' wall separating the cultivated and in-field area from the moorland pasture, although at Rosal the head dyke forms a total enclosure and not, as is the consistent pattern in Halladale, a broad loop enclosing a stretch of river bank and valley side.

At Rosal the existence of hut circles, a possible cairn and a souterrain within the farmstead point to a long history of settlement on the site reaching far back into the prehistoric era. Their presence serves to point up the fundamental realities of settlement (and consequently field survey) in environments like those considered in the 1976-79 exercises. In landscapes of this kind the ranges of possibility in so far as subsistence activity is concerned are so limited that those areas where the possibility does exist will inevitably attract attention over and over again. Such re-utilisation will render most sites complex ones and will encourage the progressive destruction of the earlier phases of activity by later ones as time proceeds.

The place name Rosal, like Forsinard, is of Norse extraction. The buildings like those of Forsinard were of turf on a drystone footing and it is only this latter which survives. The re-use of stone in later building phases and the ploughing up of old house sites could lead to a totally false impression of the time-depth of occupation on these sites. The site of Rosal, Fairhurst points out, on documentary grounds, has been in use since at least 1269.

In the Orkney Islands Wainwright (1962. 125) points to the evidence for "mass migration" during the Norse settlement of the islands from 800 AD onwards. "This conclusion...is based, and soundly based, on the evidence of language and place-names." If this evidence for "mass migration" can be seen to apply to the islands on the basis of place-name evidence the same must surely apply to Caithness. The house-plans themselves recall in detail the plan of the 'Viking' farmstead at Jarlshof (Hamilton 1956, 93-189) and the origins of the Caithness long-houses have long been understood to lie within these traditions. It would seem very likely therefore/

therefore that the scale of Norse influx into the area would demand the taking in of extensive land tracts and the selection of prime areas would be a natural sequitur of such direct and massive colonisation. The writer would suggest that the multiphase farmsteads of the Halladale valley and elsewhere in the far north east were probably to a considerable extent the reflection of the Norse settlement pattern in the area. More work will be needed to build a large enough inventory of house plans to enable us to see morphological distinctions emerge, and these once codified may in turn lead us to no doubt exceptional locations where early structures still survive and can be examined. The clear distinction visible between the 'boat-shaped' houses (FON 39a and FON 40b) present within Farmsteads A and B in the Forsinain area of the Halladale valley (see fig.11) and the more severely rectangular structures (DYK 10, FOD 80) may show us the way in this respect.

To quote Fairhurst (1971) again: "It is to be hoped that further detailed studies elsewhere will soon help to illuminate the darker corners, and perhaps even lead to the fresh evaluation of data... Equally valuable would be a series of comparative studies, on a regional basis, of the remains of the more recently abandoned settlements in the Highlands...so that Rosal and other sites which might be selected for detailed morhological examination could be seen in a broader setting".

The above brief statement is abstracted from the full publication of the surveys in question as the fourth in the Occasional Paper series of the Department of Archaeology, University of Edinburgh whence copies can be obtained. Full documentation of all sites is set out in this volume while all records relating to the surveys are now available in the National Monuments Record, 54, Melville Street, Edinburgh.

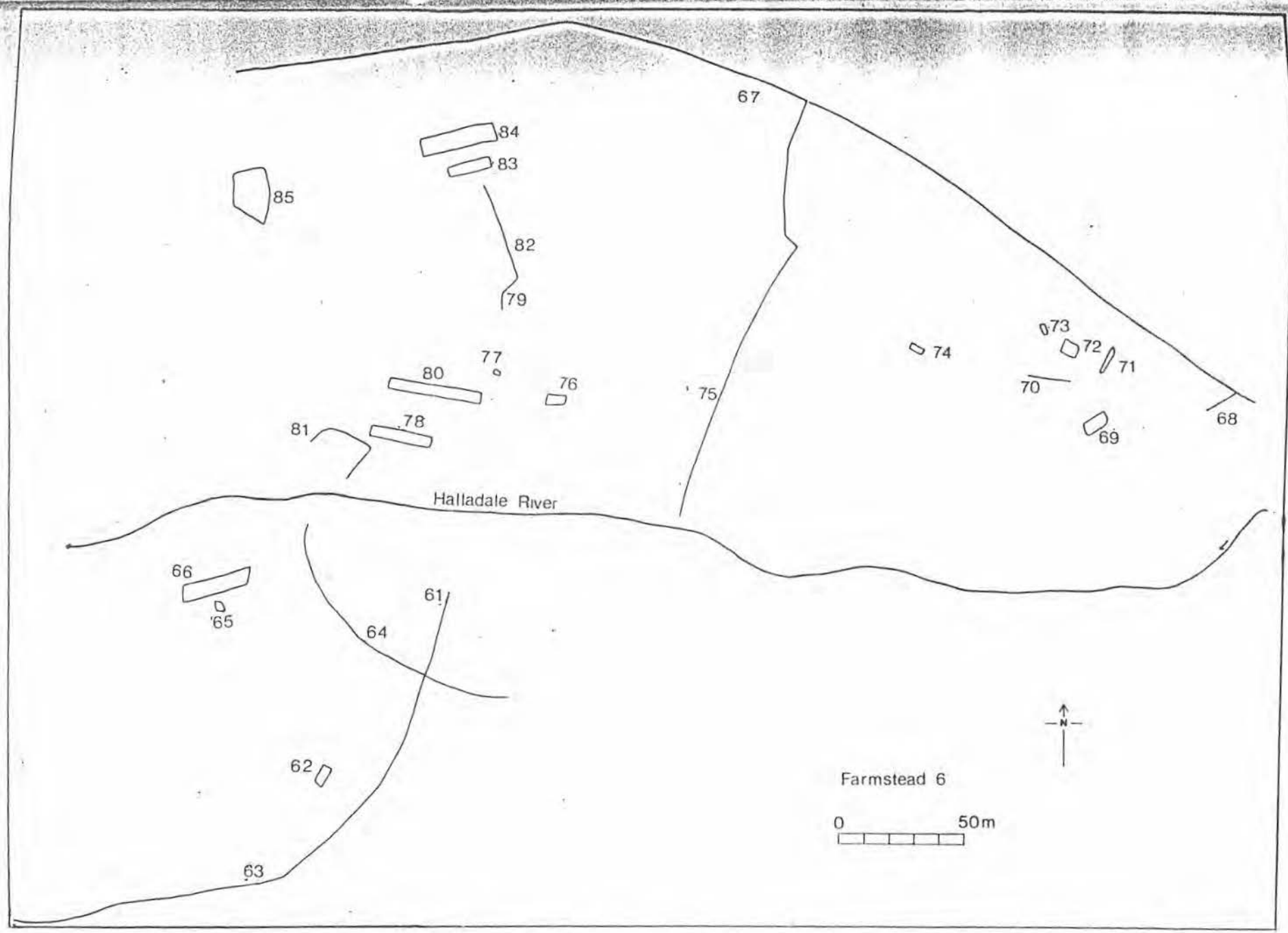
67
84
83
85
82
79
73
74
72
71
77
80
76
75
70
68
78
81
69
Halladale River
66
65
61
64
62
63
N
Farmstead 6
0
50m

Fig. 9

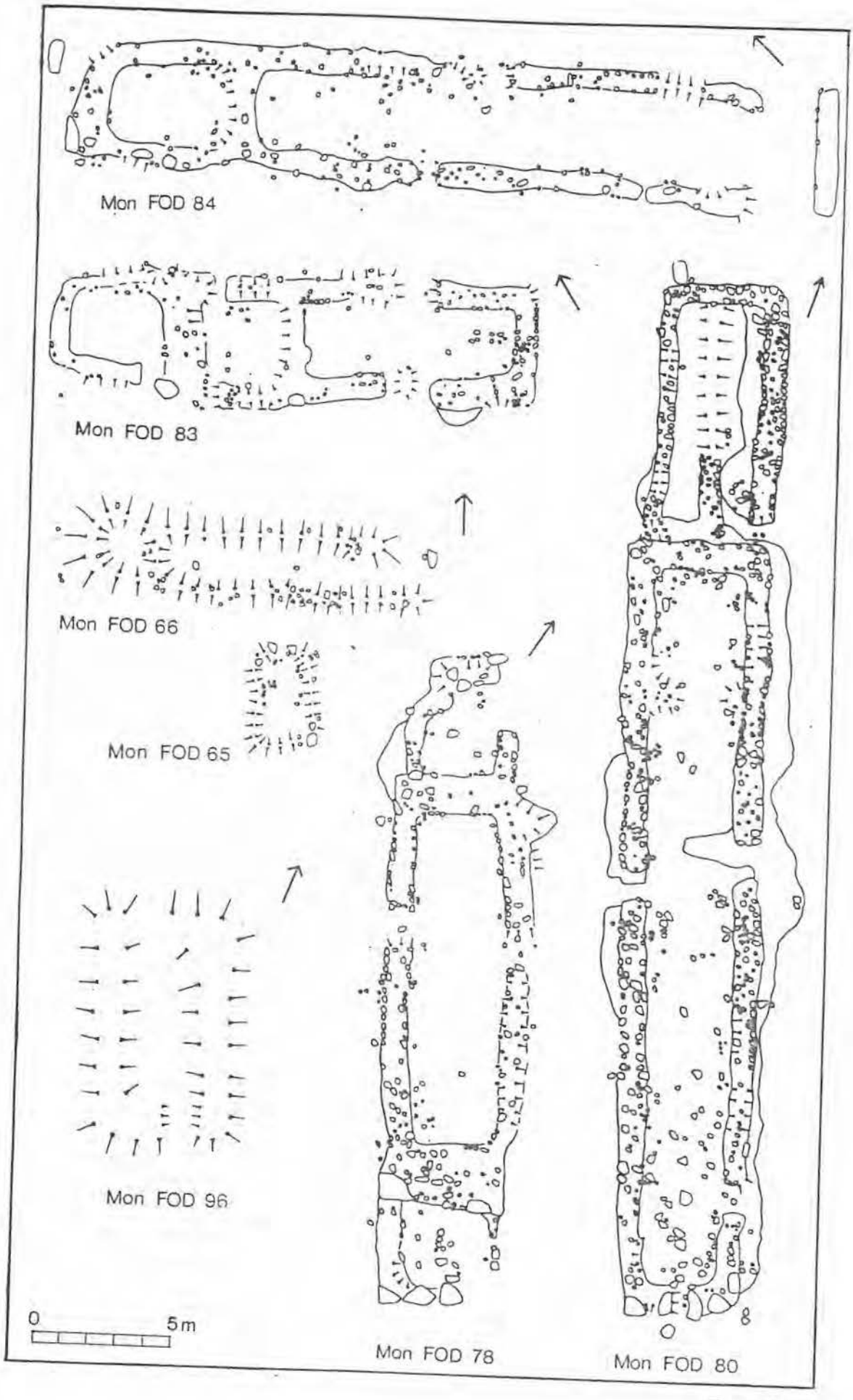
Mon FOD 84
Mon FOD 83
Mon FOD 66
Mon FOD 65
Mon FOD 96
Mon FOD 78
Mon FOD 80
0
5m

Fig. 10

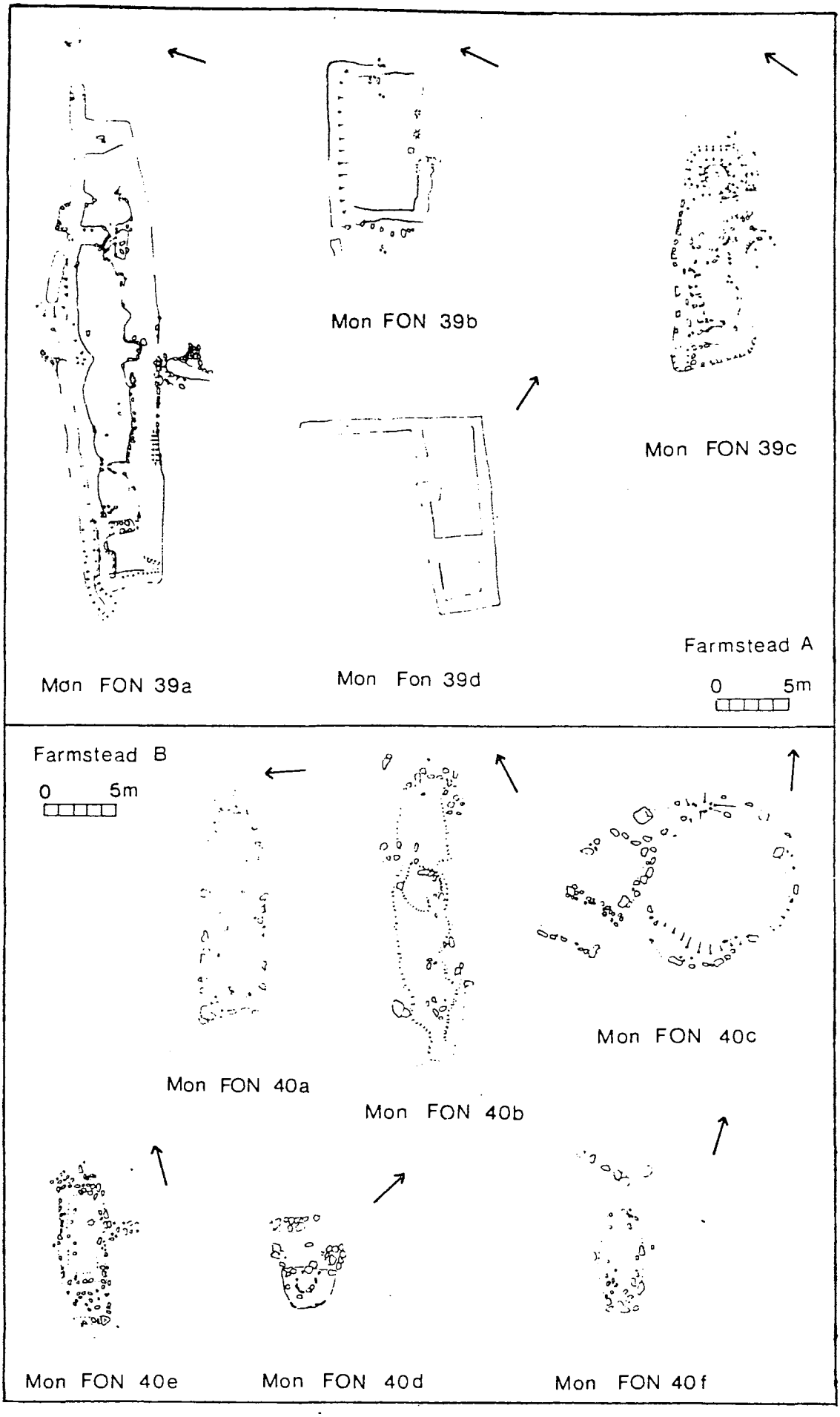
Mon FON 39b
Mon FON 39c
Mon FON 39a
Mon Fon 39d
Farmstead A
0 5m
Farmstead B
0 5m
Mon FON 40a
Mon FON 40b
Mon FON 40c
Mon FON 40e
Mon FON 40d
Mon FON 40f

Fig. 11

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SOME RECENT RESEARCH ON THE RURAL SETTLEMENT PATTERN OF LOCHTAYSIDE BEFORE 1800

A.Morrison

This work is part of a larger study of the rural settlement pattern of the Scottish Highlands in the 18th century and earlier. One region chosen for more detailed study was Lochtayside, because it was surveyed during the second half of the 18th century and a set of maps and plans are available for this period. The survey has already been the subject of historical research in The Survey of Lochtayside, 1769, edited by Margaret M. McArthur and published by the Scottish History Society in 1936. This study has been used as a guide to establish some of the elements of the cultural landscape as they existed in the later 18th century.

Documentary and cartographic research among the Breadalbane Estate papers has yielded much useful information. As well as maps and plans, there are Factor's Reports, account Books, Lists of Farms, Rentals, Factors' and Chamberlains' Letters, Tacks and other Documents of Tenure. So far, the work on Lochtayside has been mainly an attempt to equate the documentary evidence of the Breadalbane Estate papers with the visible surviving remains on the ground, including the location and planning of such remains.

The remains consist of the dry-stone ruins of the long houses or byre-dwellings, smaller cott-houses, byres, barns or outhouses for tools, etc., the kailyard or rickyard associated with the cluster of dwellings and outhouses, a lime-burning or corn-drying kiln associated with one or more settlement clusters, the corn-drying kiln occasionally built into the end of a farm building. Apart from buildings, traces survive of the rigs of the former infield/outfield system of cultivation, of farm boundaries and of the head dyke, separating arable, meadow and woodland from moor and mountain, the position of which has changed little in over two centuries. There are also vestiges of that more detached component of the settlement pattern, the distant grazings or hill pastures of the shieling system, with occasional remains of small round, oval or sub-rectangular huts constructed of dry stone or turf. The shielings of north Lochtayside were in the mountains above the head dyke or right over in Glen Lyon (Miller, 1967). Those on the south side were well up in the tributary/

tributary valleys or beyond the watershed in, eg Glen Quaich. Some of the farms on the southern side of the loch had, as well as a distant grazing, a shieling immediately above the farm.

Individual differences in size and shape of structures are due mainly to the function of the building. The basic unit of a settlement cluster is the long house, up to 36m. in length and from 3·5 to 6m. in width, usually dry-stone built but with some having later mortared 'extensions'. The long houses are normally sub-divided internally into a living section and a byre. The central drain running through the byre section can in many cases be traced without excavation. On the farm of Craig, on the south side of Loch Tay, a long house of about 20m. length has an average width of 3·5m. but this expands to about 5·3m. for a short distance from the southern end of the structure which is round-ended and contains a kiln, probably for drying corn. The fire aperture is on the outside end of the building. Other long houses are round or 'hip-ended' for structural reasons, where there is a cruck support at the end as well as along the sides of the building. The smaller structures, mainly rectangular, are barns, outhouses for tools and equipment, or the houses of crofters or cottars who were subordinate to the tenants. There are traces of two-storied buildings at Morenish and Lawers, on the north shore of the loch, where the estate plans of 1769 show the location of 'milns' or mills for grinding corn. On one farm, Cuiltrannich on Lawers, the complete roofing structure supported on cruck couples had survived in quite good condition until about twenty years ago, the house having been in use into the post-war period, but this has unfortunately now almost completely disintegrated. In some farms, it has been possible to equate the number of clusters with the number of tenants in 1769, but this is not everywhere consistent. On Blarliargan, on the north side of Loch Tay, ten tenants, the largest number recorded for one farm in all of the Loch Tayside lands, are listed. There are only six clusters on the old estate maps and no more can be detected on the ground on Blarliargan lands, so that, on this farm at least, there was more than one tenant to a settlement cluster.

The condition of the surviving remains varies from place to place. In general only one or two courses of dry-stone walling show where a settlement cluster once existed, but in a few instances remains of/

of buildings up to gable height have survived. Many of these sites have been photographed, measured and plotted on the 1:10,560 ('Six Inch') or 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey maps, and the results compared with sites on the earliest maps or plans.

The later history of Lochtayside is largely connected with the growth in power of the Breadalbane family, starting as the Campbells of Glenorchy in the first half of the 15th century, and their gradual acquisition of the lands on either side of the loch. Unfortunately, there are no early maps with much evidence for settlement patterns. The earliest map of Loch Tay is by Timothy Pont, produced about 1600, with little more than the larger 'lairds houses' shown. There is then a considerable gap until the appearance of Roy's Military Survey, compiled between 1749 and 1751. On the Lochtayside sheet, a partial picture of the mid-18th century settlement pattern can be traced. Cultivated land is shown by 'rig-shading' and the sites of farms are also recorded. Enclosure of land and tree-planting is to be seen only around the larger houses or country seats - eg Achmore, Finlarig, Lawers and Taymouth. The symbols used for settlement clusters on the farms are purely arbitrary - three, four or five dots representing a cluster, but in no way representing the number of buildings or dwellings. The sites of settlements tally quite well with those shown on the 1769 Survey, although some are missing from Roy's Map and a few farm names seem to be out of place. The final stage of cartographic evidence comes with the appearance of the first O.S. maps in the 19th century.

Apart from the ruins of castles, churches and a few of the larger houses, there is little to be found on Lochtayside that can be described with any certainty as of pre-18th century origin. There are a number of late and post-medieval references to dwellings in the Scottish Highlands built of non-durable materials (Morrison, 1974, 1977). Such descriptions of flimsy and transitory structures, although sometimes biased and referring perhaps to the meanest and poorest forms of dwellings, do not offer much hope to the field worker seeking tangible evidence for peasant settlements in the Highlands.

There are three types of remains on Lochtayside. Firstly, the survivals of the 1769 Survey: the lower courses of dry-stone buildings on the same sites and often having the same orientation as on the 1769 plans. Secondly, clusters and individual structures which/

which were created subsequent to the Survey - these do not appear on the 1769 plans but they do appear, with the surviving 1769 structures, on the first edition of the O.S. 6" (1:10,560) maps in the mid-19th century. Thirdly, low turf-covered rectangular and sub-rectangular structures and straggling field dykes, none of which appear on the 1769 plans or any later O.S. maps. It is these latter remains which perhaps offer the best potential for evidence of pre-18th century settlement. Excavation techniques have helped to elucidate and augment our sometimes scanty knowledge of later 18th and early 19th century conditions (Fairhurst, 1968, 1969). The same techniques may yet retrieve something of the medieval settlement pattern.

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VILLAGE PLANS IN BRITAIN : A NOTE

Brian K. Roberts

The lecture from which this note is derived had a number of objectives, but primarily the aim was to demonstrate that village plans, in spite of undoubted problems, are worthy of systematic investigation. The discussion began with the difficulties of the consistent definition of such basic terms as 'nucleation' and 'dispersion', 'village', 'hamlet' or even 'single-farm' and the need for more consideration of these was emphasised. Before we can adequately discuss settlement features we must be able to identify them clearly. To study English village plans the author has devised a classificatory grid. This depends upon three criteria, basic shape (either a row or an agglomeration), the degree of regularity (irregular or regular) and the presence or absence of an integral green, which can be used to identify ten distinctive plan-type families, each possessing a characteristic arrangement of public and private space. In practice, of course, plan-types grade into each other across both axes of the grid and villages are found which comprise two or more plan types, composite or 'polyfocal' plans. It is admitted that classification involves subjective judgements, but the problems are arguably no greater than those in soil classification where initially subjective criteria have gradually experienced more rigorous parametric definition as experience accumulates.

The purpose of this classification must be firmly kept in view: it is designed to utilise the evidence of settlement morphology found in the landscape and in map sources. Function is necessarily seen as an entirely different dimension of reality, although it is appreciated that at early stages in the development of most British settlements form and function interlocked closely. The morphological criteria selected in classification draw upon both geographical and anthropological roots, but topologists will appreciate wider implications. The phrase 'utilise the evidence' contains an assumption that, in Conzen's words, 'settlement is the geographical record of/

of its own evolution' and that the appearance of varied plan-types does indeed have something to tell us about settlement, its character and development within space and time. This assumption appears to contain some truth, even if it emerges that the forms making up, for example, pattern A all result from developments within the last two hundred years, those of pattern B are all at least eight hundred years old and, more commonly perhaps, those of pattern C contain a complex mixture derived from many periods.

Classification leads towards two further stages of study: first, it allows the mapping of plan-types, and second, leads towards an analysis of the processes of change within both individual forms and the entire pattern. In the lecture, slides were used to demonstrate the relative uniformity of plans within County Durham, the similarity, but with some subtle and probably significant distinctions, of the plans found in Cumberland, the sharp contrasts between these northern villages and the plan-types found in Warwickshire and Somerset, and finally in a series of working drafts demonstrated that on the national scale there do indeed appear to be marked regional variations in plan-types, with England north and west of the Humber dominated by regular street layouts, often with greens, while further south a great belt of composite plans sweeps across the English lowlands in those areas once characterised by the Midlands field systems of H.L. Gray. Clearly village plan-types are distributed in a manner likely to be amenable to analysis.

The lecture touched upon processes of change in both farms and patterns by using individual case studies and including in distribution maps all known deserted settlements, but Figure 1 recently devised, attempts to bring together much of the argument. It is largely self-explanatory: space is shown along the horizontal axis, time on the vertical one, and several 'simple' processes, expansion (the result of population increase), aggregation (the result of the reorganisation of existing settlements and field systems) and contraction (the result of either aggregating settlements with essentially static populations, or a decline in population) are set to work on four antecedent types, a single-farm, a pair of farms, a three-farm row and a three farm agglomeration. It is assumed that all stages in these processes can survive in a landscape, and while the left and right hand sides of the map are designed to portray/

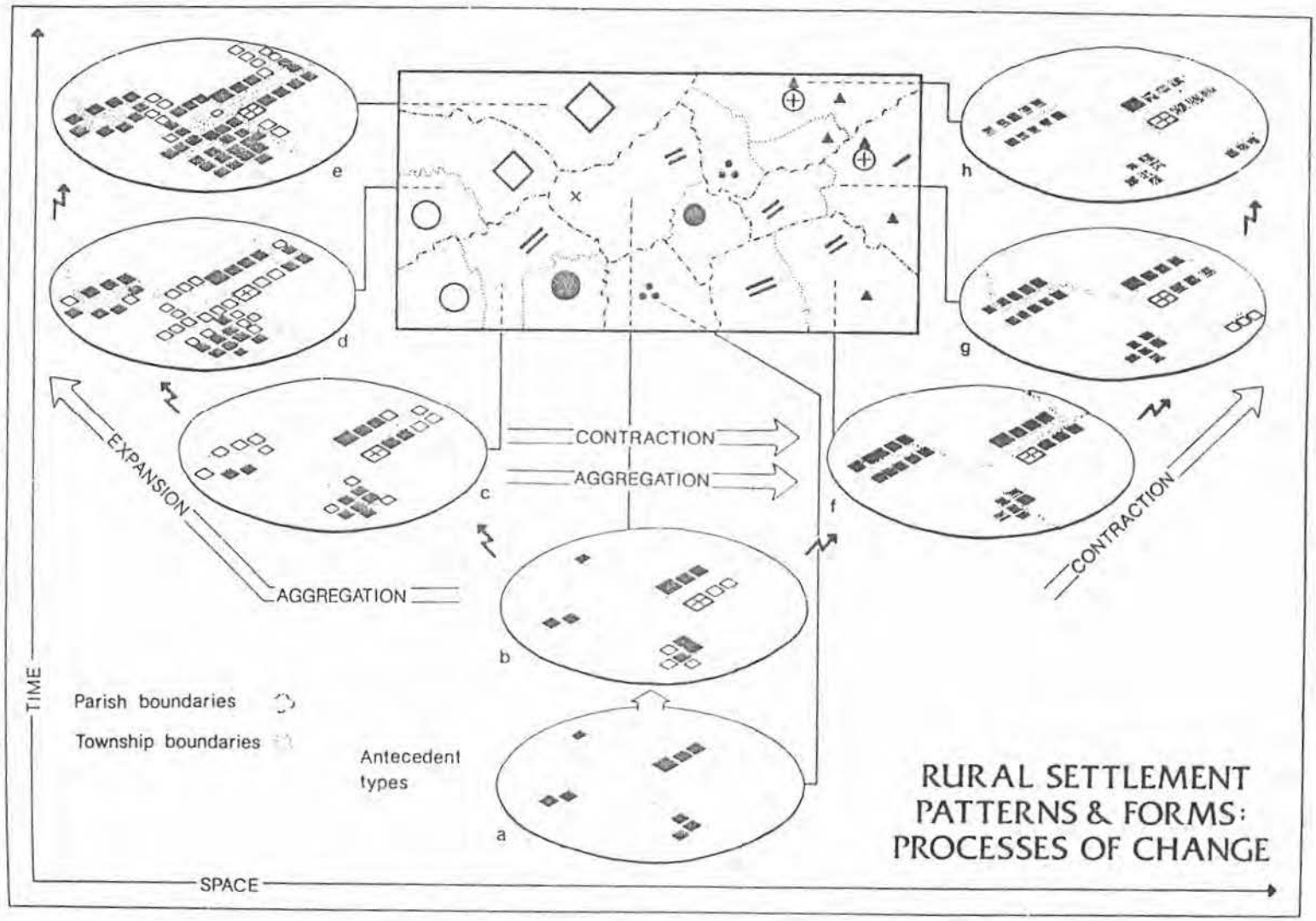
RURAL SETTLEMENT
PATTERNS & FORMS:
PROCESSES OF CHANGE
TIME
SPACE
Parish boundaries
Township boundaries
Antecedent
types
EXPANSION
AGGREGATION
CONTRACTION
AGGREGATION
CONTRACTION
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
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Fig. 1

portray respectively the situations found in Warwickshire and Durham, the model could be adapted to many local circumstances. One can only agree with the expected criticism that the antecedent types are too simple and too tidy, but if they are made more complex than the resulting pattern generated from them must inevitably be correspondingly intricate, an image, perhaps, of the reality we face? The time-span envisaged here is broadly late-Saxon to the mid-nineteenth century but to tie the model too firmly to a stated time-span is to underestimate its essential crudity and experimental character. Nevertheless, it has the undoubted merit of revealing that changing patterns are the product of changing forms and that changing forms may well reflect regional tendencies.

To what extent are these techniques applicable north of the border? In a general way the totality of this approach, accumulating in one map all the surviving nucleations and all deserted settlements, inevitably leads to questions concerning gaps in the distribution and possible interrelationships between successful and unsuccessful settlements. Are the gaps the result of unrecorded depopulations, mapping errors, the presence of difficult environments or, more interestingly, the presence of non-nucleated forms? It will be noted that on county distribution maps the author has consciously used the term 'rural cluster' as a way of avoiding thorny problems of definitions and thresholds. Furthermore, there are advantages in this approach in that while systematic studies of deserted settlements have borne tremendous fruit, as the work of Maurice Beresford and John Hurst and their co-workers attest, efforts must be made at a variety of scales, the local, the regional and the national, to view the entire system and the articulation of the varied parts within this whole. At the level of the individual estate expansion in one section may be balanced by contraction elsewhere.

Above all else this work warns us of the crudity of our present generalisations concerning settlement types, for the variety of plans revealed by these investigations is amazing, but not infinite, and the signs of meaningful regional variations and the possibility of generalising about processes offer exciting possibilities for further enquiry. The lecture concluded with what appears at first sight to be a perfect Durham green village: the site in question was in fact Midlem, Roxburghshire, and a field examination

not indicate that this was indisputably an eighteenth century creation. It leaves both the present author and hopefully his Scottish colleagues with a question, how far did the Northumbrian culture zone involve the same settlement types on each side of the border, and if the same types do indeed appear, and both originate from the middle ages, what causal factors must be invoked for those of southern Scotland? Any conclusions must have repercussions for the interpretation of English medieval settlement in the northern counties.

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MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE AND RURAL SOCIETY IN WEST LOTHIAN

Geoffrey Stell

The purpose of this current research exercise is to bring together and to analyse the documentary and physical evidence for medieval and sub-medieval settlement in the former county of West Lothian. The period under review extends from the recorded beginnings of feudalism in the first half of the 12th century to the onset of intensive agrarian and industrial change in the 18th century. The study is terminated for convenience at 1707, but period-divisions are otherwise avoided in order to observe more clearly the pattern of building activity throughout. Similarly, in order to examine the continuum of rural life through its two principal administrative units, the estate and the parish, the physical remains are here grouped, not according to conventional architectural typologies, but in terms of the social hierarchy and economic background. It is felt that this alternative form of categorisation is more likely to bring out the interdependence of the different elements in the medieval landscape; emphasising the intricate social, economic and religious links that bound together medieval society as a whole might thus occasionally produce circumstantial evidence on the phasing and incidence of rural settlement in general. A synthesising approach of this kind is particularly required in an area where the known and knowable medieval evidence for the most part lies within well-settled lands that have undergone a fair degree of transformation in modern times. West Lothian, the third smallest in area of all former Scottish counties, is of an overall size and physical character suited to this type of pilot study, but attention is focussed more sharply on those parishes in the N half of the county that make up the fertile littoral strip and the adjacent uplands to the S: Dalmeny, Abercorn, Carriden, Bo'ness (Kinneil), Linlithgow, Ecclesmachan, Uphall, Kirkliston, and part of Torphichen.

The documentary evidence points to a structure and pattern of rural settlement of an anglicised Northumbrian character prevailing generally within this region in the 12th and 13th centuries, and there is usually a correlation between the centres of lordship, manorial and parish organisation and village settlement (Barrow, 1962). The feudal geography of the county can be sketched out on the basis of the early charter evidence (e.g. Hunter-Marshall), and the subsequent descent of/

of the estates can be followed through the various categories of property records and family papers, two of the best available published series for this period relating to Dundas and Mannerston/The Binns (Dundas Papers; Binns Papers; for other published and MS collections of estate records see West Lothian Bibliography, 1974, and in general, Chalmers, 1889; RCAHMS, 1929, Introduction). The later records of the sizeable Hopetoun estate, the modern successor to the medieval lordship of Abercorn, have been profitably studied in relation to land-surveying, field-divisions and estate architecture (Adams, 1971; Maxwell, 1974), presenting a good picture of 'improved' rural settlement in one of the richer farming areas in the county (see also in general Trotter, 1794 and 1811). The various 'official' records relating to property and family affairs in the 17th century (eg Rentals, Testaments, Sasines) can be neatly rounded off by an early 18th-century topographical history of the county which, among other things, lists the residences of the nobility and gentry that were occupied at that date (Sibbald, 1710). In terms of rural settlement the 'shire centre' of Linlithgow occupied a special place as a royal manor served by an area of royal demesne, and occasional reference to the lands and buildings can be found in the usual historical sources covering royal finances and administration (Exch. Rolls; Treasurer Accts.; Works Accts.; and later categories of Treasury records; Ferguson, 1910). The Knights Hospitallers' Preceptory of Torpichen was the only major religious house in the county with local landed interests of any consequence (Torpichen Chrs.; McCall, 1894) but another important ecclesiastical lordship was the episcopal barony of Kirkliston belonging to the bishops of St. Andrews, who also held lands at Ecclesmachan.

Except for Ecclesmachan and Auldcathie, the churches of the medieval parishes of West Lothian had at the Reformation either been appropriated by religious houses from an early date, or served as mensal (Abercorn, Kirkliston) or prebendal churches (Uphall/Strathbrock) (Cowan, 1967). The total number of parishes increased from 11 to 14 as a result of the promotion to parochial status of the chapels of Binny, Auldcathie and Torpichen, previously pendicles of the large parish of Linlithgow, which also apparently included private chapels at Ochiltree and Tartraven (Ferguson, 1905). A very approximate measure of the relative value of the parishes might also be gauged from the early taxation rolls (Chalmers, 1889; Dunlop, 1939) and post/

post-Reformation valuations. After the Reformation parish organisation was readjusted: Binny was re-united with Linlithgow; Auldcathie was annexed to Dalmeny, out of which Queensferry was carved in 1636; Bo'ness, to which its medieval predecessor, Kinneil, was shortly afterwards joined, was erected into a separate parish in 1649; and, slightly outwith our period, Whitburn was detached from the large parish of Livingston in 1730, thus making an equal net balance in the number of parishes (Scott, 1915; for MS parish records housed in S.R.O. see also Recs. Ch. Scotland, 1967).

These changes are partly accounted for by the growth of the seaport burghs of Queensferry and Bo'ness, two out of the seven burghal creations in this area in just over a century after the Reformation (Pryde, 1965). The medieval royal burgh of Linlithgow, which remained semi-rural in character throughout, witnessed a corresponding relative decline in the effectiveness of her status and the loss of the privileged monopoly of external trade through the port at Blackness (For medieval records relating to Linlithgow see eg Prot. Bk. Johnsoun; SRO, B48 and GD 215).

In addition to this 'hard core' material on the county's social and economic history some information on medieval settlement in general can be deduced from toponomy, and the county is fortunate in being the subject of a particularly good study of this kind (MacDonald,1941). The earliest large-scale maps provide a schematic geographical context for the 17th-century pattern of landownership (Pont, Blaeu and Adair), whilst tourist traffic on the important east-west highway through Linlithgow occasionally elicited an illuminating comment from a travelling diarist (Brown, 1891). More rarely, the rural hinterland might be included in the subjects of contemporary engravings (Slezer, 1693).

The physical landscape and economic geology of the county has been admirably placed in historical perspective (Cadell, 1926), and the activities surrounding extractive industries such as stone-quarrying, silver-mining (Atkinson, 1616) and lime-working (Skinner,1969) have an important presumptive bearing on medieval and early modern occasional settlement in the uplands of the Bathgate Hills. In first assessing the limitations and balance of the surviving archaeological evidence, however, a synoptic view of the above-ground remains demonstrates that, in common with other parts of Britain, the upstanding/

upstanding sub-medieval and medieval structures of West Lothian are in general restricted to the higher and wealthier or better-patronised ranks of society (Brunskill, 1970). Among the better-quality habitations in Lothian as a whole, gradual changes in the concepts of defence and domesticity can be seen to have effected slight shifts in their local siting, usually leaving the medieval building in isolation. But equally many castles and towers stand close to or are even encapsulated within later mansions and villas, which is in itself an interesting architectural commentary on the physical continuity of lordship and estate-centres. The particular reasons for the survival of any building or groups of buildings may likewise contain important implications for an appreciation of the overall pattern of settlement, but, so far as lesser rural buildings and agriculture is concerned, West Lothian simply does not possess the tracts of uplands and marginal lands that, like the moorlands on the S boundary of the Lothian plain, generally lend themselves so well to a study of abandoned settlements and cultivation (Parry, 1976).

Apart from specialist articles on some of the more important monuments (eg Dalmeny, Torpichen, Linlithgow), what is known about medieval and post-medieval sites and buildings in the county can be fairly readily assembled from the standard works of reference (RCAHMS, 1929; Ordnance Survey, Record Cards and Name Books; SAS Field Survey 1978). Unfortunately, only a small proportion of the upstanding structures have been the subject of detailed measured drawings and analysis, and AP coverage that has been aimed specifically at medieval and sub-medieval targets is negligible.

Given these useful, if somewhat selective raw materials on the medieval history and antiquities of the county, the main task is to assemble and integrate the evidence in ways that will effectively pin-point less self-evident features and will assist an assessment of the nature, density and changes in rural settlement.

Pride of place among royal works at the apex of the social hierarchy goes to the royal manor-house, Edwardian Peel and the magnificent late medieval palace of the Stewart kings at Linlithgow, the rebuilding of which was partly met by the customs revenue at Blackness. The fabric of the nearby burgh church of St. Michael's may also reflect a measure of royal patronage, whilst the castle at Blackness itself was recovered for the Crown after 1476 and this major coastal/

coastal fortification was remodelled and strengthened on more than one occasion. Bathgate Castle, on the other hand, the centre of the barony that had formed part of the dowry of Marjory Bruce on her marriage with Walter Stewart appears to have remained un-developed in the later Middle Ages, and it is questionable to what extent this proto-royal seat of the Stewart family was occupied after Walter's death here in 1327.

Below the Crown the larger and more important local estates belonging to the ranks of the nobility had come to be associated with substantial stone-built structures by the early 15th century at least. Thanks largely to the devastating military activity of James II, however, virtually nothing survives above ground of what was probably the largest private stronghold in this area, the Douglas castle at Abercorn (Chron. Auchinleck; DES, 1963; Med. Arch.,1964), although the vestigial stump of the Hamilton castle at Inveravon (succeeded in the 16th century by nearby Kinneil) deserves further investigation. The erection of tower houses at Dundas, Mannerston (no longer surviving, see Binns Papers) and Niddry, roughly in that order, also marked the emergence into the stone-building bracket of their respective baronial proprietors in the later Middle Ages. The environs of Niddry also contain traces of later settlement and land use.

This trend progressively spread to the possessors of smaller estates, and one of the striking features of West Lothian and the Lothians in general is the evidence of a considerable upsurge in the stone-building abilities and activities of the gentry and burgess classes from the later 16th century onwards. Although translated into a Scottish architectural idiom, the general pattern of building activity is reminiscent of the complex cyclic phenomenon in Tudor and Stuart England known as 'the Great Rebuilding' (Hoskins, 1953; Machin, 1977; see also di Folco, 1979). Especially in the vicinity of Edinburgh there is a ring of small country seats whose incumbents - incomers, nouveaux riches and old-established families alike - found themselves in a position to plough back profits from land, trade, law and public service into private house-building. The pattern is much the same everywhere, and a good proportion of these lesser lairds' houses of the 16th and 17th centuries are associated with near-contemporary ancillary buildings and steadings; representative/

representative of the very lowest ranks of the landholding classes these sub-medieval residences of the farming or bonnet lairds provide one of the missing links between standing rural buildings and their medieval predecessors.

But just where and in what types of building did their predecessors, the lesser baronage and gentry of medieval West Lothian, live? There is a comparative lack of surviving medieval earthworks of conventional kinds (Simpson and Webster, 1972), but earth-and-timber construction was certainly not unknown in this area. Much historical evidence is available for Edward I's timber-built Peel at Linlithgow, even though the archaeology and surviving earthworks are a little enigmatic (Colvin, 1963; Laing, 1966) and Sir Robert Sibbald has left a graphic early 18th-century description of a near-contemporary and kindred site, the Peel of Livingston, the centre of the barony of Livingston which was taken over and presumably reconstructed in similar fashion to house an English royal garrison in the early 14th century (Sibbald, 1710; Cal.Docs.Scot,iii, 411-2). Bathgate Castle, as we have seen appears to have remained as an earthwork whose development into a thorough-going stone-built phase was prematurely arrested; the indications are that it stood in marshy ground, and such random stones as have been recovered from the site have been more in the nature of causeway bottoming rather than wall-foundations. Another earthwork of probable medieval date is the five-sided ditched homestead which stands in a low-lying field called Castle Park at South Mains Farm in the Bathgate Hills (MacDonald, 1941, 151). The site arguably represents an early centre of the lordship of Tartraven and may not exclude the claims of an erstwhile building at Mid-Tartraven nearby which could conceivably have been its stone-built successor as Tartraven Castle. Tartraven like Ochiltree Place, which is now occupied by an early 17th-century tower, was evidently associated with a private chapel in the 13th century (Ferguson, 1905, and refs. cited).

For much of the Middle Ages, and especially for the period before about 1400, ecclesiastical buildings are virtually the only tangible architectural barometers that we possess. Notwithstanding the long-term effects of appropriation, their size and quality give some relative measure of the powers of endowment and the wealth of their local patrons at the time they were built. West Lothian has no less than six parish churches which date substantially from either the/

the 12th or the 13th centuries, and the finest of this early series coincide with the richest parishes that have the highest recorded valuations for taxation purposes. By the same token, the three medieval chapels in Linlithgow parish that were somewhat remarkably promoted to parochial status in the later Middle Ages might be an index to the changing fortunes of their patrons and the communities they served. The enhanced status of Torpichen where parochial worship was probably held in the nave of the preceptory-church might reflect the growth of a distinct and genuine village settlement, but Binny and Auldcathie are known to have been private chapels in origin and an intensification of local settlement is perhaps less likely. The surviving building at Auldcathie contains some late 14th-century detail which probably reflects the date of its erection into a parish church, and although it now stands isolated in an extensive tract of cultivated land, its position in relation to the old fermtoun of Easter Auldcathie is clearly shown in a series of 18th-century estate-plans (Adams, 1971, 15-20).

A deserted medieval parish church which is certainly known to have been abandoned as a result of a geographical shift in population during the course of the 17th century is that of Kinneil (Hunter,1967), a casualty of the dramatic growth of nearby Bo'ness and probably also of a change in proprietorial attitudes towards the propinquity of the settlement to the nearby ducal mansion. Surface pottery finds have been made in the fields close to the church(DES, 1974), but aerial photographs have not yet yielded any firm clues to the morphology of Kinneil village. There are some surviving funerary monuments at Kinneil, and here, as at other burial-grounds, they provide an independent if somewhat selective social commentary on family history, patronage and rates of mortality among the tombstone-affording classes in town and country (Mitchell, 1969).

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RECENT THOUGHTS ON MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT IN THE STEWARTRY OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

C.J. Tabraham

The writer found an opportunity, whilst conducting an archaeological excavation over a number of years in the area (Good and Tabraham, 1979; Tabraham, 1980), to take stock of the situation with regard to the question of medieval settlement in the Stewartry. The survey as a whole was of necessity brief and sketchy in the extreme. In only one aspect - that of the role of the castle in the early period of feudalism (Tabraham, 1980) - was the survey intensive; for the remainder, countless questions remain to be asked of the surviving field remains both through field survey and, consequently, archaeological excavation coupled with the careful use of documentary and other evidence.

The survey began with an examination of the existing published material, and the paucity of information served immediately to warn of the enormity of the task facing scholars in the future. Little has been published on the subject and much of that dates from the late Victorian era. The extensive survey work carried out by Coles in the 1880's on monuments of all periods was outstanding for its day (Coles, 1891, 1892, 1893), but there has been little advance since then. Excavation has been carried out intermittently throughout this century but, without exception, the work has been on too small a scale and without a proper framework(eg. Coles, 1892a; Curle, 1912; Davies, 1966; Hope-Taylor, 1951). As a consequence, the results from these labours are negligible at best, at worst dangerously misleading.

The intensive survey of early castle sites (definite and putative) was particularly rewarding. The association of surviving field remains with the pattern of early parochial organisation seemingly bears out Dr.Cowan's theory that the two are inextricably linked (Cowan,1961). As a bonus, at least two more baileys associated with mottes were located. Future archaeological study should now be able to proceed within the framework provided by the field survey. Now that sensible and sensitive questions have been raised, archaeologists can begin, hopefully, to answer a good proportion of them.

The need for a sensible framework for other relevant themes is long overdue. Topographical studies similar to that carried out on/

on early castle sites are required for other field remains (including crop marks) which occur in reasonable abundance. North of the Anglo-Scottish border the whole question of moated/ditched homesteads is an enigma. The Stewartry has its fair share of sites but it is not sufficient for them to be looked at in isolation; rather the relationship between them and other physical aspects of medieval rural society - the motte itself, the church, the village and mill, etc. - should be analysed first before the expensive resource of archaeological investigation is brought to bear.

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MEDIEVAL RURAL SETTLEMENT - CITY OF DUNDEE DISTRICT

L.M. Thoms

In response to the medieval rural settlement project, survey has begun in seven parishes ie. Auchterhouse, Fowlis Easter, Liff and Benvie, Lundie, Mains and Strathmartine, Murroes and Tealing. These parishes, formerly within the county of Angus, now form the largest part of the rural area of the City of Dundee District, the remainder being made up by the parishes of Longforgan and Monifieth where no survey work has been done as yet. The parishes so far studied form a compact area of c.100 square miles. The topography varies from the small amount of low lying land near the Tay in Liff and Benvie parish, rising gently northwards to the higher areas of the Sidlaws c.1000ft. above O.D. in Auchterhouse, Lundie and Tealing parishes.

During the short time since this survey was started, only basic sources have been utilised in plotting known sites on maps at the 1:10,560 scale. The sources used are, the Ordnance Survey Archaeological record cards, the Statistical Account of Scotland, local parish and church histories and old maps.

There is a strong Pictish element in some of the parishes represented by sculptured stones eg. at Benvie and Tealing and place-names eg. Pitalpin in Liff and Benvie parish. No Pictish settlement site is known however, but future research work might possibly redress this situation.

With known sites and monuments being plotted to begin with, a rather one-sided view of medieval settlement emerges as the castles and churches are the evidence for a very small proportion of the medieval rural population. In an attempt to rectify this, fieldwork must be undertaken around the existing villages to try and determine their size and extent in the medieval period. Settlement sites noted from Roy's map must be located on the present day landscape hopefully as a result of fieldwork. In many cases the place-names from Roy's maps exist today as farm names and the farm buildings give a good starting point to work from.

The information gathered for each parish, including a description of each site and monument is housed as a card index.

The ongoing work of this survey will be as follows:

1. Additional work on documentary sources including old maps
2. Extensive and continuing fieldwork
3. Aerial survey.

The bibliography given below is not comprehensive but reflects the sources utilised in the early stages of the work.

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ASPECTS OF THE EVOLUTION OF RURAL SETTLEMENT IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY-MODERN SCOTLAND

J.D. Whyte

Relatively little research has been undertaken into the nature and evolution of Scottish rural settlement in medieval and modern times compared with other European countries. The traditional model of the pre-improvement 'ferm toun' made up of between four and eight families of joint tenants working the land in co-operation is a generalized one and does not adequately distinguish other types of settlement which can be discerned in the Scottish landscape in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Among these are the large single-tenant farm worked by means of cottars and hired labour rather than the communal efforts of joint tenants, the cottar settlement and the community of small independent feu-ferme proprietors.

The existence of such varied types of settlement suggests that settlement patterns were more complex, regionally and locally, than the 'ferm toun' model implies. This is confirmed by a closer look at manuscript sources for South East Scotland from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The late seventeenth century hearth tax returns show that rural population densities varied considerably implying the existence of contrasts in the rural economy of various areas and in the distribution and nature of rural settlement. The returns for Berwickshire and part of East Lothian, which list households under specific locations within each parish, allow the settlement hierarchy of these areas to be reconstructed. There was considerable variation from substantial nucleated villages with 40-60 households down to numerous small isolated settlements with only one or two households. The traditional ferm toun with four to eight families did not dominate the settlement pattern.

The existence of differences in function and in the social characteristics of settlements of similar size should also be considered. The contrast in social structure between the traditional multiple-tenant farm on one hand and the single-tenant farm on the other was notable, although the populations of each might have been similar. The 1696 poll tax returns for Aberdeenshire show that there was a/

a marked difference in the regional distribution of the two types, single-tenant farms being common in the more progressive lowlands, and the more archaic multiple-tenant ones dominating mainly in the remoter interior valleys. Feuar touns might also differ in function from the purely agricultural role which has normally been assigned to the ferm toun. A study of such touns within the regality of Melrose during the later seventeenth century shows that they possessed artisan manufacturing and distributive roles which were more characteristic of a village community.

The existence of rural communities with a variety of sizes and functions suggests that settlement histories in many parts of Scotland may have been more complex than has sometimes been realised. Work by Dodgshon has shown that a process of township growth and splitting to create new settlements was active for at least three or four hundred years before the eighteenth century. Where estate papers are sufficiently detailed the processes of settlement evolution and change can be followed from medieval times through to the eve of agricultural 'improvement' with the original framework of townships becoming progressively modified but still recognisable.

We are still unclear about the origins of many settlement forms though; for example the nucleated villages of S.E. Scotland. A thirteenth century rental of the lands of Coldingham Priory shows that even at this early date settlements could display more than one phase of evolution, with accretions added to an original core which may in some cases have been regularly planned. The subsequent histories of individual settlements listed in this rental vary considerably, with elements of growth, decline and stability being evident, perhaps operating through more than one cycle. A gradual process of expansion at the margins of settlement can also be detected by an examination of place names. In Berwickshire, settlements with Anglian place name elements tend to be larger than those with later clearance elements suggesting reclamation from moorland and marsh. The resulting pattern of old established nucleated settlements with intercalated small dispersed communities is the one which can be mapped from the seventeenth century hearth tax returns.

At the level of individual communities little attempt has yet been made to examine settlement morphology. Although the documentary record is poorer than for England the task is not impossible. For example, the village of Dirleton in East Lothian, which today has a morphology/

morphology reminiscent of a Northern English green village, can be shown by the use of an early eighteenth-century survey to have had a similar form at this period. Using this document as a baseline, elements of this morphology, including the location of particular tofts, can be traced back without interruption to the early sixteenth century. Although it would be dangerous to suggest that the form of the village at this time was necessarily of ancient origin it can at least be shown to pre-date any possible seventeenth and eighteenth-century re-organisations.

It must not be assumed, however, that the morphology or even location of particular settlements has remained constant through the centuries. There is evidence that many of the nucleated settlements of S.E. Scotland may have been re-sited at some point during their histories. The devastation caused by fire or war, or the planned re-organisation of settlements within particular estates holds out the possibility of locating and studying deserted settlements, a theme which has not been pursued as far in Scotland as in England. What is needed, however, is an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to settlement studies utilizing all available material: documentary and cartographic sources, the landscape itself, and the remains beneath it, in order to build up as complete a picture as possible.

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