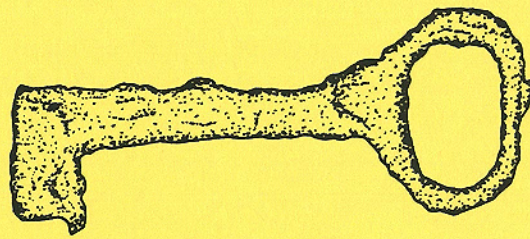


Excavations at the
Deserted Settlement
of
Easter Raitts, Badenoch

1998 Interim Report:
Structures 6, 21, 26 and 15



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The cover illustration shows the iron key found in the wall beside the entrance to longhouse 24 in 1997, at a scale of 1:1.

1.0 Introduction

A fourth season of excavation at the deserted township of Easter Raitts in Badenoch (NGR: NH 7774 0228), in July and August 1998, investigated the largest building (6) in the township as well as two small, apparently scooped features (26 and 15) lying outside the two longhouses (21 and 24) excavated in 1997; excavation of the interior of longhouse 21 also continued. The four-week excavation, directed by the author, provided training for students on the Certificate in Field Archaeology course run jointly by Highland Council and the University of Aberdeen, who made up the field team along with several external students. The results of the excavation will also form the basis for reconstruction of some of the buildings at the Highland Folk Museum in Newtonmore.

The structures investigated in this season proved to have had a surprising variety of forms and purposes, and the results have added significantly to what is known about the history of settlement at Easter Raitts, as well as other settlements of this kind and period. The large excavated structure (6) proved to be a multi-phase building comprising five separate rooms, added over at least three different phases and using a variety of construction methods; all had their own entrances and had been used as byres, except for area 6C, which may have had some industrial purpose as well.

Of the two small, scooped features, investigated on the basis that they might be middens, one (15) proved to be a scoop to deliberately expose a natural clay deposit; its sides were revetted and banked, presumably to retain water for the purpose of puddling the clay. The other was a small outbuilding, also somewhat scooped, with a paved floor and evidence of a slight wall around it. It had stood outside the entrance to longhouse 21; further excavation in the interior of this house found a sequence of six earth floors, three of them running beneath the paving adjoining the hearth. A large scoop with evidence of two episodes of *in-situ* burning was also found just inside the entrance, sealed by later paving and floors. Finally, post-holes found outside the entrance may have supported a porch.

The settlement of Easter Raitts, which was largely cleared for sheep in 1803, was identified in 1995 by John Wood, Senior Archaeologist at Highland Council, and Ross Noble of the Highland Folk Museum as potentially suitable for excavations with several objectives: to research through archaeological remains the development of a MoLRS site with good evidence for medieval origins; to provide training as part of the Certificate in Field Archaeology course, and to find evidence on which to base reconstruction of the settlement at the Highland Folk Museum in Newtonmore. Preliminary survey and excavation confirmed its suitability, and three seasons of excavation have followed; the results of investigations from 1995 to 1997 are summarised in section 3.1.

The results of the 1998 season of excavation, detailed in section 6.0, contribute to a steadily growing understanding of the material conditions of life in a post-medieval township like Easter Raitts and the variety of building forms making it up. In particular, they have broadened our understanding of how the structures were built, the character of the longhouse (21) interior and the level of effort and investment made to accommodate animals.

2.0 Site Location, Topography and Geology

The settlement of Easter Raitts lies on the north side of the broad strath through which the river Spey winds. The late eighteenth-century planned village of Kingussie lies c 2 km to the south-west, and the early eighteenth-century Ruthven Barracks (on the site of an earlier castle) are within view of the settlement, c 3 km to the SSW.

Easter Raitts sits high on a fluvio-glacial terrace that runs along the north side of the strath; a corresponding terrace follows the other side. Most known settlement remains from the medieval and post-medieval periods occupy this high position; the floor of the strath was too wet for settlement before modern drainage, and still often floods in winter. The township lies at 282 m above OD, at the top of a long, gradual slope in improved pasture, currently grazed by cattle.

The underlying drift geology is fluvio-glacially deposited sands and gravels, while the solid geology consists of undifferentiated schists and gneisses (BGS 1:63,360 series, Sheet 74). Several rocky outcrops and glacial eskers punctuate the terrace to the east, west and south.

Immediately north of it is an area of marshy ground with some standing water, which appears as marshy on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1872). To the north of the marsh, the ground rises steeply to the crags and moorland of the foothills of the Monadhliath Mountains.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Previous archaeological work

A topographic survey of the township was carried out in 1995 by Magnar Dalland and Andrea Smith of AOC (Scotland) Ltd (Dalland and Smith 1995). The survey recorded over 18 structures, along with platforms, banks and other features (see Figure 3). It highlighted the various possible phases of construction visible in some of the structures, the many building forms present and the relative degrees of preservation evident in different structures.

An archaeological evaluation was conducted the same year by the Centre for Field Archaeology, directed by Kirsty Cameron (Cameron 1995). Trial trenches in structures 6 and 11 revealed drains and

earthen floors, and a small slot trench through the junction between structure 6 and platform 5 established that the structure post-dated the platform. Finally, a trench across the track that enters the settlement from the west near platform 5 proved that it was metalled, and apparently coeval with the settlement's occupation, as it was respected by the adjacent boundary wall.

A pilot season of training excavations was directed in 1996 by Jonathan Wordsworth. This investigated two of the more substantial structures in the township, 9 and 10. Although neither was fully excavated, the evidence suggested that structure 9 was a house while structure 10 may have been a byre or barn, with a drain leading out to the marshy ground to the north.

More extensive excavations were directed in 1997 by the author (Lelong 1997). Excavation of structure 21 over both seasons showed it to be a longhouse, with a main living area and a small byre annexe at one end. The longhouse was the subject of further excavation in the 1998 season, and the results from both seasons are described in section 6.3. Another longhouse, 24A, proved to have been re-used after its human occupants had left, probably for sheep. Its hearth survived, but its entrance had been sealed and its interior scoured. A cobbled apron led out from the former entrance to another small, scooped structure (15), excavated in the 1998 season (see section 6.2). Structure 24B, investigated in 1997, was found to be a small, very substantial structure with thick stone walls and a paved entrance leading out to a hollow, cobbled yard (feature 14). The structure had been built over the end of longhouse 24. It was interpreted as animal accommodation, most likely -- given its very sturdy walls -- for pigs.

3.2 Documentary evidence

Easter Raitts is best documented in the post-medieval period, around the time of its main episode of clearance in 1803 and its final abandonment c 1840. However, there is strong evidence in the documentary and archaeological records of its existence from the medieval period.

The settlement lies in Badenoch, a region defined by its topography and a political entity from the medieval period, if not earlier. It stretches from the west end of Loch Laggan along the strath to Aviemore, and up the sides of the Spey's strath to the watersheds on either side (Scarlett 1988; see Figure 1). As such, it has a topographic coherence which may have made it a discrete political unit from the early medieval period, as was Atholl, its neighbour to the south.

The earliest reference to the place-name Raitts mentions a thirteenth-century chapel there (Barrow 1989, 6), dedicated to the Celtic saint Molúog. This was one of a series of such chapels strung along the strath during this period. The chapel at Kingussie, dedicated to St. Columba, had several subordinate chapels, including that at Raitts as well as others at Banchor, Dunachton, Invertromie and Nuide -- in all at least seven chapels -- four along a seven-mile stretch north

of the river and three to the south. Barrow has suggested that Kingussie may have been the old secular capital of Badenoch, perhaps the seat of a royal thanage, although Ruthven became its secular capital in the high medieval period (ibid, 9). The Raitts chapel dedication to a Celtic saint further suggests early medieval (pre-Norman) ecclesiastical loyalties and some form of settlement here.

The locations of many of these chapels correspond to davochs, or medieval (and perhaps earlier) land divisions. The chapels at Dunachton (to St. Drostán) and Kinrara (to St. Eata), for example, were attached to davochs, while that at Insh (to St. Adamnan) served several davochs, perhaps indicating the relative sparsity of population on the southern side of the strath (ibid, 8). In 1371, at the beginning of Robert II's reign, Badenoch was recorded as containing 60 davochs; by 1603, the rentals record a total of 52.5 davochs, but the number of distinct township place-names (when split settlements such as Easter, Wester and Mid Raitts are counted as one) is 59, or 60 if Shevin at the head of Strathdearn is included. This may be evidence that the medieval system of land division continued in some form, influencing the development of township sites into the medieval and post-medieval periods. According to Barrow, 'It would hardly be surprising if this continuity could be, as it were, pushed back in time so that the pre-feudal land assessment of Badenoch might well belong to a period much earlier than the twelfth century' (1988, 9).

The davoch designated a piece of land with fixed boundaries, of a size to produce enough tribute to fill a cubic measure (a large vat, or *dabhach* in Gaelic). The term appears in the twelfth century *Notitiae*, notes in Gaelic on grants of land to the monastery of Deer, which were written in the margins of the *Book of Deer*. It also appears in grants in both Scotland and Ireland, and seems likely to have originated in early medieval Pictland (Grant & Cheape 1987, 15-16). Several names containing 'pit' (meaning land or estate) in Badenoch also suggest enduring early, perhaps Pictish land divisions.

Most of the davochs in Badenoch would appear to have been secular lordship sites, as local ecclesiastical houses such as those in Urquhart, Kinloss, Beaully and Pluscarden were not known to hold land in Badenoch or Strathspey (Barrow 1989, 1). However, the chapels at Raitts and Dunachton were held by the Bishop of Moray. In 1380, the bishop's presence was required at the standing stones of the 'Rathe of Kingussie' to show his titles to church lands in the Lordship of Badenoch, including 'lands of the chapels of Rate and Nachton' (MacPherson 1893, 119). The bishop claimed that he held these directly from the king, rather than from Alexander Stuart, the so-called Wolf of Badenoch (Scarlett 1988, 39). Such church lands, including Raitts, would have been tenanted like secular lordship sites, and farmed to produce a surplus to support the chapel incumbent as well as the church.

Like other chapels along the strath, Raitts may have been linked to a davoch, in this case held by the church. Barrow (1989, 1) argues that the twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw a transition from rural

shrines, chapels, holy wells and other sacred sites, each with its dedication or protective saint, to territorial parishes presided over by incumbent priests who were maintained by annual offerings of corn, hay, animals and their products. It may be significant that the land on which Raitts lies is now called Chapelpark Farm, although the origins of this name have not yet been traced. It does appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1872), although the surveyors simply recorded its name, not any contemporary chapel associations (OS Name Book, 24). One modern author (Scarlett 1988, 36) describes the site of the chapel as now separated from Chapelpark Farm by the A9, so there may be local traditions about its location which have yet to be tracked down.

Although the decline of Pictish influence in the early medieval period is little understood, from the thirteenth century onward the secular and religious powers controlling Badenoch are relatively well documented. Anglo-Norman families were among the most prominent of these; many were given feudal fiefdoms by David I and his successors (Roberts 1997, 38).

The Comyns were one such family. They were given the earldom of Buchan on the Moray Firth in the mid-twelfth century. In 1230 Walter Comyn, a son of William Comyn of this line, received the lordship of Badenoch from Alexander II, founding the line of the Red Comyns of Badenoch (from their heraldic colours) (ibid, 83). The family wielded their extensive power from their seat at Ruthven Castle, built on a large natural motte on the floor of the strath, later occupied by Ruthven Barracks. The first record of Ruthven Castle is in a 1289 charter of John II Comyn; however, it may have been built by John I, who died in 1278. He built the first castle at Blair in Atholl, apparently to guard the south exit from Drumochter Pass as well as several passes through the Mounth and Glen Tilt, and it seems likely he would have built another castle to guard the north exit from Drumochter (Barrow 1988, 9). The Comyn family held the lordship of Badenoch until 1306, when John Comyn the younger of Badenoch was murdered by Robert the Bruce in Dumfries after withdrawing his support from the aspiring king (Roberts 1997, 52). The lands were then incorporated into the newly created earldom of Moray, bestowed on Robert's nephew Thomas Randolph in 1314.

Alexander Stuart, the fourth son of Robert II, began exercising power over Badenoch in the mid-fourteenth century; the lordship had come to his father through his second marriage, to the widow of Sir John Randolph, Earl of Moray, after 1346. Alexander, also known as *Alasdair Mor Mac an Righ*, or Big Alexander, Son of the King, had drawn up an agreement with the Bishop of Moray in 1370, promising to protect the bishop's lands and men; his lands included Raitts (see above). After his accession to the throne in 1371, Robert II formally granted Alexander the Lordship of Badenoch, with full powers of regality. Through his marriage to Euphemia Leslie, then Countess of Ross, he consolidated his power, acquiring the earldom of Ross, the lordship of Skye, the barony and sheriffdom of Nairn, the thanage and

castle of Dingwall and the barony of Kingedward in Aberdeenshire (Roberts 1997, 157-58). He became known as the Wolf of Badenoch for his fierce dealings with, among others, Alexander Bur, the Bishop of Moray.

The only real challenge to his virtual hegemony came from this bishop; he sought to regain the independence of his position, arguing that any secular powers of jurisdiction over the bishopric had lapsed with the extinction of the male Randolph line in 1346. This prompted the confrontation in 1380 at Kingussie described above, when the bishop claimed he held his chapels at 'Rate and Nachton' directly from the king rather than from the Lord of Badenoch. Alexander eventually relinquished his claim on the lands, but forced the bishop to give up lands in Rothiemurchus and Abriachan (ibid, 158; MacPherson 1893, 119).

The two clashed again 10 years later, when the bishop committed two offences against Alexander Stuart's pride: he persuaded him to return to his lawful wife Euphemia Leslie, whom he had abandoned for a mistress, and he retained Thomas Dunbar, Sheriff of Inverness, to protect his lands and men -- the same agreement he had made with Alexander 20 years earlier at Ruthven. The latter agreement may have been an attempt to protect himself against Alexander, who had promised revenge for the bishop's humiliations. In any case, Alexander took the threatened revenge in 1390, destroying Forres and Elgin, including the cathedral church of Elgin. He was excommunicated for this act of sacrilege, but received absolution after agreeing to compensate the Church. Soon afterward his wife divorced him on the grounds that their marriage had been the cause of wars, murders and other desecrations and that more were likely if it were to continue; his lands and power much diminished after this, the Wolf led a more subdued existence until his death in 1405 (Roberts 1997, 160).

By 1452 much of Badenoch, including Raitts, had been given to the first Earl of Huntly, of the Gordon family, in return for his services to James II at Brechin. From the late fifteenth century, Raitts was held in feu from the Gordons by the Mackintoshes of Borlum (Grant and Cheape 1987, 38). They continued to hold it until the late eighteenth century. Evidence of settlement at Raitts from the fifteenth century onward survives in the form of rentals, held among the Gordon and Mackintosh family papers at the Scottish Record Office.

One of the major north/south drove routes passes along the foothills to the north of the settlement. The township would have been served more locally by the road which runs along the 259-m contour, c 350 m south of the settlement. Visible as a terraced strip along the slope, the road pre-dates and runs parallel to the line of General Wade's military road, built after 1715. The road also runs just beneath an enormous souterrain, and local tradition links banditry on the road to use of the souterrain in the medieval period.

The original source for this story, 'Old Biallid', places the events in the fourteenth century. It recounts how a family of MacNivens lived

in a cottage above the souterrain or 'cave'. Fleeing from their local rivals, the Macphersons, from whom they had stolen cattle, some MacNivens hid in the souterrain for some time, occasionally leaving and entering by removing flags from the roof. One of the Macphersons, Alistair Caint, disguised himself as a beggar and went asking for food and shelter at the cottage; observing newly-baked oatcakes disappear from a cupboard, he surmised where the robbers' hiding place was, returned with other men, flushed out the MacNivens and killed them (MacDonald 1835, 88; MacPherson 1893, 408; Scarlett 1988, 33-34).

Whatever the truth of the story's details, it does suggest that the souterrain was known to and used by local people in the medieval and post-medieval period, and that travellers on the road were vulnerable to bandits. Another source indicates that blackmailers also controlled local traffic. After General Wade's military road was built alongside the earlier one, one Brigadier Mackintosh (of the Mackintoshes of Borlum) wrote 'A Short Scheme whereby it is proposed by the help of the Military Road made by Lieut. Gen. Wade . . . effectually to stop Depredations and Theft so frequently committed and so destructive to the Northern Counties of Scotland' (Scarlett 1988, 35). His own grandson, however, turned highwayman and 'disgraced his clan and descent by highway robbery, committed not in the old legitimate piratical way of levying blackmail, but by attacking travellers' (Dr. Carruthers, quoted in MacPherson 1893, 258).

This same Brigadier Mackintosh lived in 1698 in what was described as a 'typical Highland longhouse' which stood on the site of the later mansion of Belleville or Balavil (see below), c 1.4 km north-east of the Raitts township. The Brigadier served the Jacobite cause during the 1715 uprising. He escaped imprisonment in Newgate on the eve of his trial and fought again in the abortive 1719 rebellion, but was eventually re-captured and imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, where he died 15 years later. The Brigadier's father, fortunately for the family, had left Raitts to his son's wife Mary Reade, and so the estate was not forfeit to the Crown (Scarlett 1988, 33-34).

Raitts passed to Lachlan, the eldest son, who moved to Rhode Island, married and had two daughters; he drowned on a return voyage to Scotland. The younger son, Shaw, visited his nieces in Boston in 1736 and attempted to abduct them, presumably for nefarious purposes connected to the line of succession. He was thwarted and nearly lynched in Boston as a result (*ibid*). His son, Edward, proved also a rascal, becoming the highwayman deplored by Dr. Carruthers (see above) (Ramsay 1996).

Edward fled the country in the face of a later murder charge and his wife, now in possession of Raitts, moved to Kingussie. By 1788 she had sold Raitts to James MacPherson, the controversial translator of Gaelic (so-called Ossianic) poetry; he acquired other properties in the area around the same time. Brought up in Ruthven, he was known locally as *Seamus Ban* (Scarlett 1988, 36-37). He built an elegant mansion, named Belleville, on the site of the Brigadier's old longhouse and facing onto Wade's military road.

His eldest son James inherited Raitts, but did not live there; like other Improving landlords of the period, he cleared people from many of his Badenoch properties to make way for sheep; among them was Raitts, which was cleared in 1803. The people were apparently not moved far; those at Raitts may have been moved to the newly created village of Lynchat, c 1 km away below the military road (see Figure 2). Estate records show that the last inhabitant, perhaps a shepherd, left the by now mostly deserted township in 1839.

3.3 *Cartographic evidence*

The earliest cartographic evidence of Raitts is Timothy Pont's map, compiled in the 1590s and published in Blaeu's atlas of 1654. It shows three settlements, named West Rait, Mid Rait and Rait, in positions which appear to correspond to the three clusters of building remains on the strath shoulder. It is not clear whether the cluster currently under investigation corresponds to Mid Rait or Rait; it may have been the former, as a cluster almost immediately adjacent to the south-east may have been Rait, the easternmost depicted.

General Roy's map, compiled in the 1750s, shows Raitts as an ordered farmstead with several large enclosures around it; their position corresponds to the extant buildings of the Mains of Balavil farm, c 1.5 km ESE of the township. From the position of the buildings Roy names as Raitts and their character as depicted, which differs markedly from the amorphous cluster of long ovals usually employed to depict Highland townships, it is clear that for some reason Roy's surveyors did not include the township clusters in their survey of Raitts.

A plan of Gordon lands in Badenoch, held at the Scottish Record Office (West Register House) (CR8/195), was compiled as part of a survey of the estates in 1771, preceding the Gordons' extensive Improvements on their lands, which included clearance of many townships. As at this point Raitts was still held in feu from the Gordons by the Mackintoshes of Borlum, the plan and survey records do not give much specific information about it. However, the plan does show the boundaries of Raitts lands. They stretch in a broad strip from the River Spey, up on to the shoulder where the township remains lie and beyond to the higher ground. The complex of buildings and enclosures shown on Roy's map is depicted, again in the position of the Mains of Balavil farm, and a group of large enclosures is depicted just south-west of this, on the other side of what is now the B762 road. Although the original has yet to be checked, the copy available for study at the time of writing did not appear to show any building remains on or around the site of the township.

This plan is extremely informative in the pattern of land division it shows, not only for Raitts but also for all of the Gordon lands along the strath. Like Raitts, each estate comprised a strip stretching from the river, onto the fluvio-glacial terrace and north to the foothills. It would seem from this that each included haughlands along the river,

land for settlement on the higher, drier shoulder of the strath and, beyond, high grazing for the summer shielings. This pre-Improvement pattern of land division is so consistent and well-established that it may well have persisted at least as long as the Gordons had owned these lands, from the 1450s, and the shape of the estate the Mackintoshes held in feu from the Gordons may not have altered since they took control of it in the late 1400s. This cannot yet be proven, but it does seem probable.

3.4 *Ethno-historical and archaeological evidence*

Information about how people lived in the post-medieval Highlands, including Badenoch, comes from the Statistical Accounts, written in the late eighteenth and mid nineteenth centuries, as well as from descriptions by contemporary travellers (Burt 1756; Grant 1794), ethnographic collections (Grant 1961), archaeological excavations (e.g., Fairhurst 1968) and experimental work (Noble 1983; Walker & MacGregor 1996). In particular, these sources provide important details about how people built and lived in their houses.

Edmund Burt, an Army officer serving under Wade, was a particularly descriptive if frequently snide observer. In letters to friends he described a usual Highland settlement as 'composed of a few huts for dwellings, with barns and stables, and both the latter are of a more diminutive size than the former, all irregularly placed, some one way, some another, and at any distance look like so many heaps of dirt' (Burt 1756, 99).

The basic architectural form for Highland longhouses consisted of one or two courses of stone footings, laid below or around a frame of timber crucks or couples. Experiments have shown that it would have been more convenient to erect the couples first and then lay the footings around and against them, as the couples would often be of irregular length and therefore not exactly fit a pre-determined plan (R Noble and S Whyman, pers comm). In some cases, however, crucks or couples would have been seated in or on the footings, and must have been erected after the footings were laid. The ends of the couples would have rested on stone pads against or on the footings. They were braced with collars and bound or pegged together at the top, where they were joined to the 'roof-tree' or ridge-pole, which formed the apex of the roof. The roof itself was of reed or heather thatch, usually laid over a turf skin supported on purlins which rested on the crucks.

Although in some areas of the Highlands, such as Sutherland and Caithness, building stone is readily available and would have been used to carry the footings up as walls to the eaves, in Badenoch the documentary and archaeological evidence shows that walls were more commonly formed of cut turves, or sometimes of alternating layers of stone and turf (see Burt 1756 and section 6 below). In some cases the turf walls might have been built against an inner skin of wattling, creating a 'creel' house, and the archaeological evidence suggests they were built with a thick batter for stability, which slumped periodically and had to be augmented. The stone footings would have acted as a

damp course, and also kept the crucks from moving outward under pressure from the roof.

The turves of the wall would have continued to grow for the first year or two after they were cut, so that the houses would have been covered with grass, weeds and wild flowers. After this they would have become root-bound, the roots growing together and acting like a mortar to create thick, stable, insulating walls.

Burt corroborates this archaeological and experimental evidence. He describes the houses as usually standing about four feet high and lined with panels of wattling (Burt 1756, 99). He also describes the floors as uneven and damp, usually formed of earth. Mrs. Elizabeth Grant, a local lady, echoes this. In 1790 she wrote, upon seeing James Macpherson's mansion at Belleville for the first time: 'Only think how this must dazzle people accustomed to look on glass windows as a luxury, and on floors as convenient but by no means necessary appendages to a building' (quoted in MacPherson 1893, 260).

The longhouses are usually described as having been divided into living space for animals and humans, with one entrance serving both. The humans occupied one end and in winter the animals occupied the other, both benefiting from the other's warmth. Some excavated longhouses (in Lairg and Rosal; see Fairhurst 1968, McCullagh 1995) have been found to contain linear drains in their byre ends. The two excavated longhouses at Easter Raitts (21 and 24) have not had evidence for this arrangement, although there may be evidence here that the animals were over-wintered collectively in another structure (see section 6).

The house was warmed by a peat fire which lay in the centre of the floor, usually on a stone hearth, at the living end of the house. The smoke escaped partly through a hole in the roof and partly through its fabric; experiments have shown that the addition of a loft space, with a gap in the loft above the hearth, would have encouraged the smoke to concentrate near the roof where it might have been used for smoking meat. The smoke would also have discouraged wood-boring insects from residing in the crucks (S Whyman, pers comm). Burt compared the appearance of a smoking longhouse to 'a fuming dunghill removed and fresh piled up again, and pretty near the same in colour, shape and size.' He added, 'By the way, the Highlanders say they love the smoke; it keeps them warm', but opined that it gave them sore eyes and even caused blindness (88-102).

The Highland longhouse had disadvantages: heavy rain would eventually make its way through the smoke-permeated thatch, dripping blackly on the inhabitants and lasting much longer than the rain outside. Such indoor rain had its own name in Gaelic -- *snighe* (Grant 1961, 151). In dry weather, worms were known to drop from the ceiling from want of moisture (Burt 1756, 99).

However, this form of renewable architecture suited the available materials and rhythm of life over most of the Highlands. The houses

were warm. While only the stone footings and crucks endured, the turf walls and heather or reed thatched roofs were easily replaceable. As the walls slumped, the gap between the wall-head and eave could be filled in with more turves or the walls replaced altogether; heather thatch lasted up to 50 years, while reed thatch had to be replaced every four or five (S Whyman, pers comm).

The houses also represented a form of recycling: turf stripped from the fields cleared them for cultivation, and the smoke-permeated, nutrient-rich fabric of replaced walls and roofs was spread over the fields as fertiliser. The practice of over-wintering the animals inside also created an annual harvest of fertiliser in the form of manure, although cattle typically suffered extreme deprivation from hunger and want of movement over the winter. As township populations grew, however, the practice of stripping turf to build houses put greater pressure on the land, causing the loss of good pasture as exposed topsoil eroded. Improvers in the Highlands complained particularly about this practice.

That Improvers focused their zeal on vernacular Highland life in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is one reason that that life is relatively well documented. Sources such as the Statistical Accounts were compiled in the spirit of Improvement, for the purpose of understanding the conditions of people's lives and thereby engineering change for the better, making them more compatible with a rapidly changing modern world. The Statistical Accounts, therefore, offer some of the best evidence of the practical details of this way of life.

The First Statistical Accounts for the parishes of Alvie and Kingussie, written in 1792 and 1790 respectively, describe a relatively difficult and insecure existence for minor tenants. People at this social level would have made up most of the population of a township like Easter Raitts. The land was divided into small units of up to 20 acres. A tacksman would sometimes occupy a township, sub-letting parts of it to sub-tenants and collecting rents on behalf of the landowner; in late medieval times this would usually have been a kinsman, but by the post-medieval period it was more commonly a largely commercial arrangement. In some townships several tenants farmed the land and employed sub-tenants, while in others one main tenant sub-let parcels of land.

The inhabitants would sow oats, rye, barley and (from the late eighteenth century onward) potatoes, as well as keep a few sheep and goats. Black cattle, however, were the main object of farming and source of cash. They determined the rhythms of the working and social year to a large extent, as each summer they were brought up into the hills to shielings to graze and grow fat for the market. Latterly the cash cattle brought was used to pay rent, as well as buy consumables which could not be grown on the farm. The people of Easter Raitts, living close to the line of a major drove road along the foothills to the north, would have sold their cattle annually to passing drovers.

Ministers for both parishes bemoaned the tenants' general lack of ambition, saying they preferred their subsistence farming to learning a trade or to working as day labourers for the estates (Anderson 1790, 202; Gordon 1792, 5). The tenants seem to have held fiercely to their independence. The ministers also both condemned the small holdings and short leases commonly granted to tenants, which effectively put them at the mercy of their landlords in a system one minister described as worse than feudal (Anderson 1790, 199). They blamed this system for the people's unwillingness to adopt better agricultural practices or build more substantial houses: with no security of tenure, they apparently had little motivation to improve the land they farmed or build houses which would last longer.

The military's intensive occupation of this part of Badenoch from 1715 to c 1750 must have had significant effects on everyday life. The First and Second Statistical Accounts for Kingussie and Alvie parishes provide some of the best evidence for the attitudes of the established authorities -- the military and clergy -- toward the people of the townships, and *vice versa* to a lesser extent. Easter Raitts lies within Alvie parish, but very close to its border with Kingussie parish.

The ministers writing the First Statistical Accounts typically described their parishioners as brave, hospitable and polite, but inclined to drink and quarrel; few could read, and the ministers tended to despair of their moral education. The military, in league with the clergy, imposed rules on local life. The parish records, extant only from the 1720s, suggest a certain disregard among the inhabitants for these rules; they list offences such as fist fights, fiddling and fishing on the Sabbath, as well as misdemeanours by prostitutes who found business among the soldiers stationed at Ruthven Barracks (Macpherson 1893, 30-38).

Comments by both ministers illuminate different attitudes to the military presence in the two parishes. The inhabitants of Alvie parish were 'extremely averse to the military' (Gordon 1792, 5), while those in Kingussie were 'inclined to martial enterprise' (Anderson 1790, 201). These differing attitudes almost certainly lingered from the Hanoverian occupation of Ruthven Barracks, which had ended only 40 years earlier. Those living in Kingussie parish, in which the barracks lay, may have known soldiers personally, benefited economically from their presence and been influenced to join their ranks. Those living slightly farther away, in Alvie parish, may have felt only the military's intrusive presence and stern discipline, and none of the personal contacts and benefits which could have sweetened that experience. Those living in Easter Raitts, in Alvie parish, would have been in constant sight of the barracks and within easy striking distance of the military road, although separated from the former by the river and the marshy floor of the strath. Given this position, they may have shared the latter views.

The military presence is also likely to have influenced the flow of goods to this area from the south, as traders followed in the soldiers' wake, no doubt encouraged by the greater levels of security they enforced. The excavation of one of the longhouses (21), probably

occupied until its abandonment in 1803, shows an abrupt change in the material culture being used by the inhabitants: three earlier sequential earthen floors in the house were entirely free of mass-produced pottery, while sherds of this pottery were commonly found trampled into the three later floors above (see section 6.3 below).

The Second Statistical Accounts, compiled in the mid-1830s, show changes taking place in local life. Small tenants continued to farm in the same way, in rigs held communally, using both infield and outfield. They continued to build their 'wretched hovels' in a similar manner, with 'a few wooden couples, joined together with cross spars, and covered with a turf roof, that requires to be renewed almost every second year' (MacDonald 1835, 91). Leases were still short and harvests still uncertain. However, much formerly barren land had been improved and brought under cultivation, and in general tenants were more inclined to partake in the spirit of Improvement. The minister for Kingussie noted that large areas had been converted from smallholdings to sheepwalks, and expressed a wish that this could be reversed in order to slow the pace of emigration from the parish (Shepherd 1835, 80).

Education in the 1830s was much more widely available, with a private school established at Raitts (exactly where is unknown) and even older people being taught to read. Gaelic was by then losing ground to English, especially among the young. The minister for Alvie observed two illuminating and contrasting currents. He wrote (on the subject of prevailing winds): 'The ignorant country people, particularly the old, who are strongly wedded to the absurd superstitions of their venerated ancestors, consider the whirlwind as indicative of a procession of the imaginary beings called fairies'; he added with satisfaction that such superstitions were quickly eroding (MacDonald 1835, 82). Only paragraphs later, however, he records that the cairn and standing stones at Delfour, a mile west of Alvie church, were still held in such veneration that, although they stood inconveniently in the middle of a ploughed field, farmers always carefully avoided disturbing them (ibid, 87).

These two observations capture the enormous cultural changes taking place here in the first half of the nineteenth century. Highland people, including those who lived at Easter Raitts, were being brought perforce into a modern, capitalist, rational society and, through the engines of Improvement and education, being made to conform to it. Within only a few generations the resulting changes in people's world views and lifeways had been pervasive.

The archaeological remains at Easter Raitts are a kind of record of its occupation, formed certainly over the last several decades of the township's life and very likely over a much longer time span. In contrast to records written by outside observers, however, they were created incidentally, by the people themselves. These were people who could not or did not write their own stories, belonging as they did to a culture which valued oral tradition, but who nevertheless left material traces as a record of their daily lives: the houses and byres they built,

the floors they laid, the hearths they used and the rubbish they threw away or trampled into the ground. This archaeology is the best record we have of those lives, and of how they changed in the decades and perhaps centuries before 1803.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the excavations, in the long term, are three-fold:

- to contribute to an understanding of the nature of Highland township life in the pre-Improvement period, and to understand how that had changed and developed over the preceding centuries;
- to provide training and experience in excavation techniques to students on the Certificate of Field Archaeology course as well as to external students, and
- to find evidence for the construction, layout and use of the buildings to be used in their reconstruction at the Highland Folk Museum in Newtonmore.

The specific objectives of this season of excavation were:

- to understand the development and function (or functions) of the various components of Structure 6, as well as the manner of their construction;
- to establish the nature and function of Structures 15 and 26, as well as their relationships to the adjacent longhouses (24 and 21), and
- to complete the excavation of floor deposits and other uninvestigated features inside Structure 21, in order to fully understand its history.

5.0 Methodology

Four structures were investigated in 1998: structure 6, the largest in the township; structure 21, partly investigated in 1998; structure 26, a small, scooped area to the south of 21, and structure 15, another scooped feature outside longhouse 24 (investigated in 1997; see Fig 3). Structure 6 had been partly investigated in an archaeological evaluation carried out in 1995 by the Centre for Field Archaeology (hereafter CFA) (Cameron 1995). The trial trenches were re-opened and expanded in 1998.

A single trench, measuring 27.8 m east/west and c 6 m wide (narrowing slightly at either end as the structure did) was initially opened over structure 6. This was extended to the south at the beginning of the second week with a trench 4.7 by 4.4 m, positioned over the remains of area 6E. Four baulks 0.4 m wide, running north/south, were initially left across the main part of the trench in areas 6B and 6C; these were joined by a baulk running the length of the structure, except over area 6A and the western part of 6B, which had already been opened across the centre in 1995. All but one of

these baulks were removed in the second week, after the relatively shallow depth of the internal deposits was established and it became clear they were obscuring important features; only the baulk running north/south across the middle of area 6B was left in place.

A trench measuring 6.5 m east/west by 5.5 m was opened over the scooped feature 15. A north/south baulk 0.8 m wide was left in place across the centre of the trench.

The 1997 trench over longhouse 21 was re-opened, with the exception of the extensions over its north and south walls. Another trench, measuring c 6 m square was opened over structure 26; an L-shaped baulk 0.7 m wide was left along the south edge of trench 21 outside the building's entrance and turned north to run to its south wall, following the existing 21 trench edge.

The turf was removed with spades and the surfaces were cleaned by trowel. Post-abandonment layers, including tumble, were planned and photographed and then removed in plan. All features and layers identified were planned, photographed in colour slide, colour print and in some cases monochrome film, described on *pro forma* sheets and excavated in plan or section, as appropriate. All finds except those from the topsoil were recorded in three dimensions. Written daybooks were kept by the director and supervisors, and a video daybook was also kept on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Environmental and dating samples were taken from potentially informative contexts, and samples for phosphate analysis were taken on an 0.10 m grid from contexts thought to be manure-rich deposits. Finally, a column sample was taken from the exposed clay in structure 15. A selection of the samples taken were processed for analysis by wet-sieving in a water flotation machine and collecting carbonised and other material as retents and flots, which were subsequently dried and sorted.

6.0 Results

The description of the results begins with structure 6 (section 6.1), treating each of its separate components in turn from west to east. It then discusses the evidence from structure 15 (6.2), the results from this year's investigation of longhouse 21 (6.3), combined with those from 1997, and finally the evidence from structure 26 (6.4). The results from each structure are summarised in the discussion section (7.0).

6.1 Structure 6 (Figure 4)

This structure, the largest in the township, measured c 24 m long and on average 4.5 m wide, although its width narrowed in the eastern part of area C and in area D. It clearly had been built in different phases, illustrated by a marked kink in alignment and drop in level between areas B and C. Excavation confirmed its staggered

construction, and showed each part of the structure had been used for animal accommodation with the possible exception of area C, which appears to have had some industrial purpose as well as or instead of housing animals. The five parts each had their own entrance (or, in the case of 6B and 6C, two entrances), and none communicated with the others by means of doorways through their common walls.

6.1.1 Area 6A (Figure 5)

After removal of the turf and initial cleaning, area A appeared to be defined by a drystone wall composed of two skins of larger boulders, with a core of sub-angular, smaller stones in a matrix of light brown sandy silt (6006). The north wall (6001) and its core were the most easily visible at this stage because of the similarity in ground level between the interior and exterior of the building. The west (6002) and south (6003) walls had evidently been cut into the higher ground on those sides of the building, so that the outer skins sat higher than the inner. The inner skins, because of their lower base, were composed of two courses of boulders, while the outer skins consisted of one course. The east wall (6004), shared with Area 6B, appeared to have been disturbed, with a ragged western skin and a better preserved eastern skin. The very large footings at the corners of this partition wall suggested that Area 6A had been built after Area 6B, as the south and north walls of the former appeared to abut the corner footings. A thatching stone (SF 711) and a fragment of carved baking stone (SF 1195) was found among the tumble along the north wall.

Excavation of sections through the west and south walls of Area 6A showed a relatively simple sequence of construction. On the west side, a level surface for the room's interior had been created by cutting steeply (6040) c 0.43 m into the old ground surface, represented by a buried topsoil (6043) above a compact mid brown silt (6038) which in turn sat above the gravely subsoil. The inner skin of stone footings had been set against the base of the cut and the outer skin set on top. The core had been filled with grey-brown silty sand and small stones (6041), and hillwash (6005) had subsequently accumulated above this. The south wall showed a similar sequence. Here, a shallow (0.03 m deep), circular feature (6048) was observed cut into the natural subsoil south of the wall's cut (6034); the two cuts did not intersect and so no relationship between them could be established. The circular cut was filled with light brown silty sand (6030). While it might have been an archaeological feature such as the truncated post-hole of an earlier building, the hillwash (6005) above was heavily burrowed, and the feature might have been the base of an old burrow distorted by later solifluction and burrowing.

The 1995 evaluation by the CFA had cut a slot trench (6012) through the south-west corner of Area 6A, into the adjacent platform (5) to the west. It had shown the cut for the wall clipping the edge of that platform's revetment (Cameron 1995). The 1995 trench was emptied and its south-west facing section cut back to freshly expose and record the sequence. A curvilinear cut (6014) was observed in the west baulk, c 0.5 m deep, following the curve of the platform and cut into the black-

brown silty matrix (6013) of the drystone platform; this was correlated with CFA context 2006.

Lying against the inner wall faces and on both sides of the north wall (6001) was some tumble (6016), consisting of fist-sized stones and larger boulders in a matrix of light brown sandy silt; there was, however, much less tumble here than in other areas of Structure 6, and few of the rich organic deposits identified elsewhere as slumped turf from the walls or roof. The entrance led in from the north (from the metalled track which winds through the settlement) and appeared worn into the gritty red natural subsoil, visible at the edges of the hollowed doorway. Filling the hollow was a compact, yellow-brown sandy silt, with frequent small stones and charcoal flecks (6028), apparently much trampled.

The entrance led onto a linear stone feature (6008) dominating the interior, with areas of cobbling on either side. It was defined on the east and west by brick-shaped stones set end-to-end on edge to form a raised margin to the flagged floor. The flags themselves were closely set and well worn at their edges. Grooves, apparently pecked out, ran across two flagstones, one running east/west across the threshold stone and the other running north/south across the adjacent flag to the south (see Figure 5). The former was interpreted either as having been worn by a door, habitually closed to the edge of the groove, or (given the apparent pecking) having been scuffed out by hooves as cattle passed in and out of the doorway. The latter groove was less explicable; it might have been deliberately pecked out to aid drainage toward the doorway, although it did not lead directly to a sump or outlet of any kind. It is possible that one or both stones were re-used here from an earlier floor elsewhere, and that the grooves had other origins.

The western part of the interior was covered with rough cobbling (6018), composed of irregularly-spaced, rounded stones lying in sporadic patches, the surface sloping down toward the central paving. They lay in a trampled, mid brown sandy silt (6019) with darker brown patches suggesting organic enrichment. In these deposits, associated with the cobbles, were found a few sherds of post-medieval pottery and an iron nail. The cobbles had been set into a gritty, red-brown sand and gravel deposit provisionally interpreted as the natural subsoil, although not excavated; the CFA evaluation had concluded this material was the subsoil (Cameron 1995). Deposits of mottled, light to dark brown sandy silt (6015) and compact, greasy dark brown silt (6017) lay along the east and west sides of the cobbled area, respectively, above the cobbling. These were both interpreted as remnants of occupation deposits, probably manure. The sandy silt (6015) might have been laid over the cobbles and later disturbed and mostly removed by mucking out, except for remnants trapped against the edge of the linear stones; the greasy dark brown silt (6017) may have been remnants of manure not completely removed along the west side, where it would have been more difficult to clear away from the inner wall face.

The very disturbed and patchy state of the cobbles along with the shallow depth of the deposits suggested this area had seen relatively short but intense use by animals. Over time, with regular disturbance from cattle hooves and mucking out, cobbles would gradually be dislodged from even an originally well-cobbled surface (B Powell, pers comm). However, in a byre used over a long period of time cobbles might be regularly replaced as they were disturbed, with organic deposits sealed beneath and among them; no such sequence was found here.

The flagged floor was interpreted as a drain. Although its surface was almost completely level, with only a slight rise at its south end, the cobbled surface to the west sloped down toward it. This suggests a slope was needed to aid mucking out, and a gap at the south end of the western raised margin might have been the route the shovel took. The flagged surface, although level, would still have caught and retained manure and liquids and facilitated mucking out.

In the south-east corner of Area 6A was a roughly square area of cobbling, 1.6 m across and also defined by the linear stone margin of the flagged floor, forming a kind of stand. Upon it, a sandy deposit (6021) lay in a wedge against the south wall and partly sealed a compact, greasy brown silt with charcoal flecks (6022) which lay above and around a layer of cobbles (6009), concentrated along the western half of the square. A piece of bottle glass was found among them. The cobbles had been set into a compact, grey-brown sandy silt with diffuse dark patches (6031), possibly trampled around the cobbles. This in turn overlay a red-brown silty sand with sparse, sub-rounded stones (6032), apparently an earlier surface.

The square stand was interpreted as an area deliberately set apart from the cobbled byre to the west -- either to keep food dry and well away from the cattle, or as separate hard-standing for a calf, kid or lamb being weaned from its mother, who might have been tethered in the west part of the byre. Its superimposed cobbled surfaces, interspersed and finally sealed with deposits of mixed sand and organic material, might lend more weight to the latter interpretation; sand dumped on the cobbles to improve a young animal's footing would have become gradually mixed with manure.

In the north-east corner of Area 6A, the flagged floor gave way to cobbling, overlain by at least two phases of greasy, organic-rich silt (6023 and 6024), both of which lay in wedges against the east wall (6004) as if they had been swept or shovelled off the flagstones. Beneath these, on the cobbles, lay a three-pronged, wrought-iron digging fork, with one prong broken off and missing (SF 1085). The fork is similar to one at Kingussie Museum, and probably is nineteenth century in date (B Powell, pers comm).

The fork lay above what proved to be a cut feature, visible at first as a clearly curving edge in the cobbles, filled with a grey-brown silt (6039) with some rounded stones capping it, but much less densely than the surrounding cobbles. The cut (6044), investigated by

removing part of the wall between areas A and B, was interpreted as a post-hole contemporary with the use of area A; its relationship to layers which had accumulated against the west wall of area B again suggested that A had been added on to B (see 6.1.2 below).

6.1.2 Area 6B (Figure 6)

This deals first with the western part of the building and then with the eastern part, as the two seem to have had different purposes and histories and each had its own entrance. Both ends had been investigated in 1995 by the CFA (Cameron 1995). The edge of the western 1995 trench is shown on Figure 6, as it is relevant to the 1998 excavation results.

Over the western part of the interior, tumbled stone (6105) lay along and against the walls (6004, 6102, 6103 and 6104), and was particularly concentrated in the west end. The tumble consisted of relatively small, angular stones, between 0.08 and 0.2 m across; it contrasted markedly with the generally rounded stone tumble in areas 6C and 6D to the east. For the most part this lay directly upon the uppermost floor layers, suggesting that any turf element in the walls had been removed rather than allowed to collapse over the building.

However, in the south-west interior and along the western part of the south wall's exterior, a thick deposit of rich, black humic loam (6122) lay beneath the stone tumble, above the interior floor (6135) and exterior old land surface (6142). This may have survived from a turf superstructure which had been allowed to collapse. An iron sickle blade (SF 957) was found leaning against the outer stone footings of the south wall, sealed beneath this turf slump and probably left there shortly before the turf wall's collapse.

It was suggested during the excavation that the angular stones had tumbled from a drystone superstructure; forming the core of a double-skinned boulder wall, these would have made a very stable structure, while rounded stones would have bound better with alternating layers of turf than with each other (R Noble & S Whyman, pers comm). However, here as elsewhere, the amount of angular stone tumble was not enough (nor were there enough larger boulders) to suggest that the full height of the walls had been achieved with a drystone superstructure. This, coupled with the black loam around the south-west corner, indicates that another course or two of drystone construction sat atop the surviving footings, with a turf-built superstructure on top of that. The turf may have been removed for use as fertiliser everywhere but in the south-west corner, where it collapsed into the building, followed and sealed by any upper courses of stonework.

The western part of 6B had been investigated in 1995 by the CFA by means of a trench which extended over the western entrance, took in part of the interior and cut through the southern wall. This had uncovered part of the patchy upper (6106) and lower (6129) clay floors, discussed below, and also removed part of the southern wall. A turf

element to the wall had been visible at the west edge of the western entrance, defining the wall there (Cameron 1995); this is shown on Figure 6. In the 1998 season, this trench was re-opened and extended to encompass all of the interior and walls. Where part of the south wall had been removed in 1995, a mottled brown/black clay-rich silt (6109) was exposed; this was interpreted as an old ground surface sealed by the wall. The 1995 report concludes a slight break in the wall here had been created by a sheep run; however, the plan from that season shows a narrow but clear break in the inner and outer faces, with tumbled stones in the gap. It is possible that this was a narrow entrance opposing the main one, to allow ventilation through what might have been a barn (see section 7.1).

The western edge of the CFA trench was initially left as a baulk; when this was removed, and the interior to the west of it was cleaned, a deposit of stiff, dark grey-brown sandy silt (6135) containing a few large cobbles was exposed. This could be identified in the western CFA trench edge, and appeared originally to have extended to the east of it, although it was not recorded in 1995. It was interpreted as a trampled occupation deposit, the latest surface visible archaeologically before the building's abandonment. It covered the interior west of the western entrance, but its original extent to the east of the 1995 trench edge is not known. In it were found a few fragments of clay pipe, a sherd of mass-produced pottery, an iron nail, a piece of glass and a copper alloy button.

Visible in this layer were what appeared to be two cruck settings, opposite each other against the north and south walls. The northern one (6139) consisted of a sub-circular setting of three closely-set stones up to 0.2 m across, sloping toward each other; its centre was packed with small angular stones. This sat within the latest floor, the trampled silt 6135, directly upon the natural subsoil. A cruck might have rested upon the pad of stones and been braced against the adjacent stone footings of the wall. That the setting rested on the natural might suggest that the cruck pad had originated with the building, and that the various floor layers had built up around it, with most of them wearing away patchily and only the latest (6135) surviving around the setting's edges. A large cut feature (6150; see below) immediately east of this, cut through an upper floor but sealed by the latest trampled silt (6135), suggests that the position of this cruck shifted over time.

Directly opposite, along the south wall, a boulder lay within the trampled silt (6135) and sat partly upon a hollowed patch of subsoil exposed within the floor layer. The area of exposed natural, measuring 0.4 m in diameter, was interpreted as the site of another cruck (6153), around which the floor had accumulated. The boulder may have been used to brace the cruck from behind, having slipped to cover the place formerly occupied by the cruck when it was removed. That there were no traces of either of these crucks, in the form of staining or decayed wood, suggests they were deliberately removed when the building was abandoned.

The underlying floor layers in the western interior were investigated through excavation of the northern part, with a running, north-facing section maintained across it. At the west end, the trampled silt (6135) covered a band of fine, compact, dark brown silty sand flecked with charcoal, clay and humic material, and containing many small stones. This silt lay in a band c 0.5 m wide along the west wall, and a section across it proved it filled a steep-sided hollow there. A piece of clay pipe was found in it. It was abutted on the east by a layer of cobbles; these extended across the interior in a swathe c 0.6 m wide. They were set or trampled into the natural subsoil.

East of these cobbles, the upper trampled silt (6135) lay above a floor of compact, beige clay, mottled white, grey and black and flecked with charcoal (6106). It lay patchily across the western interior, as if it had been laid to repair the floor below rather than as a complete layer; a few sherds of post-medieval pottery were found in it. Samples taken of the clay were found to contain small quantities of charcoal, identified as birch (*Betula*) and Scot's pine type (*Pinus sylvestris*); the sparsity of the charcoal probably indicates it was brought in by trampling (Ramsay 1999); no remains of cultivated seeds were found to support the idea that this part of 6B was a threshing barn (see section 7.1). The only seed found was the common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), which might have been a modern contaminant and in any case shows only that the nearby soil is nitrogen rich, as would be expected in an agricultural settlement (ibid).

This floor lay above a thin, compact layer composed of reddish brown sandy silt (6129), containing many small pieces of charcoal, small stones and flecks of clay, along with two sherds of post-medieval pottery and a fragment of clay pipe. This in turn sealed a layer of compact, stiff clay varying from white to light brown (6128/6164) with an uneven surface; two sherds of post-medieval pottery were found in it. It lay rather patchily upon what appeared to be the natural subsoil (6130), although this was not excavated. It extended to the west to abut the cobbles (6152) set into the subsoil.

These deposits showed a sequence of floor deposits inside the western part of 6B: the lower clay floor (6128) had been laid on the natural subsoil (itself presumably stripped or worn away to this level before that event, so that the lower clay floor may have replaced earlier ones). The clay had been worn and trampled to a patchy, uneven state and its surface had become trampled and dirty (6129). Finally, the upper clay floor (6106) had been laid, perhaps only in spots where it was required, although its patchy nature may have been due either to wear or to having been exposed and cleaned twice (in 1995 and 1998), or both. These three subsequent floors all appeared to have been coeval with the cobbles (6152) and band of silt (6151) to the west. Finally, all of these surfaces had been covered with a final occupation deposit (6135), which had been trampled over much of the western interior.

The south part of the western interior was excavated to the level of the reddish brown sandy silt (6129) between the two clay floors. Along the south wall, immediately east of the 1995 trench edge, lay a

deposit of yellow-brown, slightly greasy sandy silt containing a few charcoal flecks and small stones (6147). This abutted the reddish brown sandy silt (6129) and lay above the lower clay floor (6128). It may have been material dumped to make up the floor at an intermediate period.

Against the north wall, immediately east of the possible cruck pad 6139, was a sub-rectangular cut (6150), 0.8 m long and 0.2 m deep. Filled with a dark grey-brown sandy silt, it had been cut through the upper clay floor (6106) and sealed by the latest occupation deposit (6135). The position of the cut suggested it might have been a precedent for the nearby cruck pad, slim evidence for a shifting pattern of cruck positions throughout the structure's history. That it was cut through the upper clay floor does suggest, however, that it dates to relatively late in the sequence of floors. This in fact might have been the site of a later cruck, and the nearby stone setting an earlier one which was simply left in place after its disuse.

The sequence of floors described above was absent in the entranceway and just inside the entrance. Here, a dark brown greasy silt (6114) with frequent small stones and charcoal flecks lay in the entranceway and extended inside to partly seal the lower clay floor (6128). A metal buckle and a piece of possible window glass were found in it. Below it in the entranceway was a layer of dispersed cobbles, firmly set in a matrix of dark brown, humic, gritty sand with traces of clay (6165). They lay directly above the red brown gritty sandy subsoil (6130), into which the cobbles had been pressed. This was interpreted as the original cobbled floor of the entranceway, with the layers of humic material representing two phases of occupation material trampled in, the earlier (6165) coeval with the lower clay floor (6128) and the later (6114) coeval with the later phases of occupation represented by the upper floor layers.

Just outside the entrance, to either side of the upper entrance deposit (6114), was a layer of compact, mottled, grey-white clay (6111). To the east of the entrance this lay around a flagged area (6108) abutting the wall, while to the west it appeared to have extended beneath the turf deposit forming the northern wall here, recorded in 1995, and beyond it to the trench edge. To the west it abutted an old ground surface sparsely metalled with small pebbles (6144). This ran along the north wall as far west as the entrance to area 6A. It also extended east as far as the eastern entrance to 6B.

In the centre of 6B's interior, east of the north/south baulk left in place throughout the excavation, a deposit of relatively clean, light yellow-brown fine sand (6124) covered much of the northern part, lying in hollows in the red-brown sandy subsoil. This appeared to have been laid to level up the surface of the subsoil; that the latter was exposed and uneven suggests it had been worn down through the use of the building, and that the sand had perhaps replaced earlier floor deposits which had worn away. The sand extended eastward to the edge of a cobbled surface and southward from the north wall, stopping at the edge of stone setting 6140 and in line with the stone-lined drain (6118)

to the east (see below). Here in the centre of the interior, the natural subsoil was exposed.

Near the south wall lay two discrete deposits of trampled, charcoal-flecked brown silt (6126) and trampled, greasy, heavily charcoal-stained dark brown silt (6127); the relationship between the two could not be established, but both appeared to stop short of the south wall and a shallow hollow (6136) which ran along it. Although its full length was not traced, it was approximately 0.3 m wide and 0.05 m deep. It appeared to have been worn, or perhaps deliberately cut; if beasts had been tethered here, as suggested below, the hollow might have been worn by some sort of feeding apparatus resting against the wall. A sample taken of the charcoal-stained silt (6127) did, however, prove to contain a high quantity of birch (*Betula*) and Scot's pine type (*Pinus sylvestris*) charcoal, indicating it was perhaps close to a hearth or other charcoal source (Ramsay 1999).

In the centre of the structure, a possible post setting lay at the west end of the stone-lined drain (6118). It may have supported a partition between the two parts of 6B, with their very different flooring.

This drain (6118) dominated the eastern part of 6B's interior. On either side of it, beneath tumble in a scanty, root-penetrated matrix (6105), were cobbles (6154 and 6155). They were tightly packed against the edges of the linear setting, but more dispersed toward the walls. A mid brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks (6141) lay around and partly above the cobbles. When this was removed in a slot trench, more cobbles were revealed beneath it, although these were also fairly sparse and appeared disturbed toward the wall; they had been set into the natural subsoil (6130). A dark-brown greasy silt lay around the cobbles (6154) to the north of the drain.

That the area to the south of the drain was deeper, and that its cobbles appeared to have been replaced sporadically over time and were more disturbed toward the wall, suggested that animals had been tethered here -- probably horses or cattle, given the depth of the area (1.83 m from wall to drain), although see the discussion below (section 7.1). Their hindquarters must have been over the linear stone feature interpreted as a drain, which in its original state would have made mucking out easy.

The drain first appeared as two lines of long, thin stones set end-to-end, forming a flat structure 3 m long and 0.4 m wide running along the eastern interior but slightly askew to its axis and set closer to the north wall than to the south. It was filled with large slabs and cobbles (6161) which formed a relatively flat surface level with the top of the edging stones. Near the east end of the drain, where it turned a right angle north to lead to a paved entranceway, these cobbles appeared to sit higher than those immediately to the north and just inside the entranceway, which seemed to slope down beneath the higher cobbles. Removal of these higher stones showed they belonged to a late phase of the building's use, when the drain had been filled in. The stones filling the eastern part of the drain sat in a matrix of dark brown, root-

penetrated silty sand (6166), while those near the western end were in a matrix of red gritty sand (6167); the former may have been an occupation deposit which had either filtered among the stones or been dumped in with them, while the latter appeared to be redeposited subsoil. In the eastern matrix (6166) were found several fragments of iron, glass and mass-produced pottery. A large, flat stone at the drain's west end sloped down slightly toward the stony fill.

Beneath these, the drain was floored with large, squarish slabs (6162) which had clearly been chosen to fit snugly between the edging stones. Gaps between them had been chocked with cobbles and small, angular stones, with a matrix of dark brown silt (6177) between them. After removal to this level, the edging stones appeared to be retaining the cobbled surfaces on either side, so the drain appeared to have been cut slightly into the subsoil.

Outside the well-worn threshold stone, more cobbles (6119) led out through the entranceway and formed a cobbled approach to the entrance; one sherd of post-medieval pottery was found among them. Notably, several of the stone footings of the wall (6104) at the west edge of the entrance stood out visually because of the large amounts of white quartz in them. These might have been chosen especially for this position, to highlight the entranceway if the interior were poorly lit.

Evidence for a door post was found in the form of a setting made of angular stones set on edge around a roughly square gap, 0.15 m across and floored with tightly packed stones (6145); it had been built into the wall footings along the east side of the entrance. Another post-hole lay just inside and to the west of the entrance. Framed by angular, upright stones set on edge, this proved to be a very shallow cut filled with dark brown silt (6157) and floored with a compact, red-brown silty, stony sand (6156) which appeared to be the dirty, exposed surface of the subsoil. Given its similar position (against the wall) to the cruck pads found in the western part of 6B, it may have been a cruck setting, with the cruck founded on a stony base and supported by stones wedged around its edges.

Along the north exterior the sparsely metallated surface (6144) was removed in a slot trench to the wall, and found to seal an old ground surface which ran beneath the north wall. Sealed beneath this was a small post-hole (6116), which appeared to pre-date the building.

The relationship of area 6B to the rooms on either side, 6A to the west and 6C to the east, was illuminated by removal of parts of its end walls. At the west end, the relationship was investigated in conjunction with excavation of a pit or post-hole which lay at the centre of the concentric cobbling in area 6A (see section 6.1.1 above). A cut (6040) for the partition wall between 6A and 6B was identified, cutting through the old ground surface (6038). The cut had been filled with a grey-brown silty sand (6041), which formed part of the wall matrix, and the external wall face had been set on the old ground surface (6038). A deposit of banded, yellow/brown/black sandy silt (6042) had

accumulated gradually against the external wall face; this had been cut by the pit or post-hole (6044) set into the cobbles in 6A.

6.1.3 Area 6C (Figures 7 and 8)

After removal of the turf and initial cleaning, this area was visible as a sub-rectangular structure with a tapering east end, defined by stone footings. The north and south walls (6202 and 6204) were composed of two skins of large boulders up to two courses (0.8 m) high, with a core of small, rounded stones. The east wall and tapering eastern part of the south wall were much more irregular, as if they had been rebuilt at some point or had never been very substantial.

Excavation showed that the north and south walls sat upon banks of mid brown silty loam (6221); similar soil had also been heaped against the outside of the north wall. The western wall (6103) abutted Area 6B, at a point where the ground level dropped c 1 m from the level of 6B to that of 6C. This wall comprised a double-skinned upper course of large boulders; the boulders of the skin facing 6B rested upon the ground, but those in the skin on the 6C side rested upon a layer of uncoursed, smaller stones up to 0.3 m across, together forming a wall c 1 m high. Part of the wall was removed in an attempt to establish the relationship between the two structures. A steep cut (6246) into the natural subsoil was observed at the south-west corner of 6C where the ground dropped away beneath the wall, indicating that the interior of 6C had been levelled into the slope. It seems most likely, given the evidence, that 6C was built onto 6B, and when its interior was levelled the eastern wall face of 6B was dropped, with stones tucked in an uncoursed fashion beneath the large upper boulders.

The eastern wall of 6C (6203) was less substantial than the others; although similarly composed of a double skin of boulders, in general these were smaller and less closely set than in the other walls, and along with apparently uncoursed smaller, rounded stones, they lay on and within a bank of mid brown silty loam (6301). The especially large stone footing forming the north-eastern corner did, however, suggest that Area 6D, to the east, had been added on to this structure at a later date. The relatively insubstantial nature of the east wall and eastern part of the south wall, seemed to indicate that these wall sections had been rebuilt, perhaps at the time 6D was added.

Across the walls and much of the interior lay stone tumble (6205) in a matrix of root-penetrated, dark brown silty loam, particularly dark and organic where it underlay the tumble. This tumble was notably different from that observed in Area 6B, comprising generally rounded (rather than angular) stones between 0.1 and 0.3 m across; it also included some larger boulders, which may have indicated an additional course above the surviving ones. The sub-rounded character of most of the tumble, in contrast to the much more angular tumble in 6B, led to speculation about its purpose. One possible explanation is that the rounded stones tumbled from a wall constructed of alternating stone and turf; rounded stones would have made a less stable drystone structure, and in any case the stones were not

abundant enough to indicate a wall fabric entirely of stones. The darker, relatively stone-free soil beneath most of the tumble may have come from upper turf courses, if not turf covering the roof beneath reed or heather thatch.

As excavation progressed, two phases of use and alteration of the structure became apparent. The following description of the results treats the evidence of the later phase (see Figure 7) and then the earlier (see Figure 8), moving from the outside of the structure to the inside.

Outside to the north, two built features were apparent before the tumble was removed. One was a cobbled path (6207) or apron c 1.1 m wide and 1.2 m long as exposed in the trench, abutting the north wall (6204) at an angle. It comprised well-packed cobbles, and was clearly defined at the edges. A few sherds of glass and post-medieval pottery were found on the cobbles, and several fragments of iron, pottery and glass in their matrix (6229). The cobbles ran into the north baulk, but a sharp dip visible beneath the turf c 0.4 m beyond the baulk indicated the extent of the apron. The wall continued across at its south end, with no obvious break to indicate an entrance to which the cobbled apron had led; however, a very large boulder in the wall just south-east of the cobbles did suggest a former entrance at this spot.

Also north of the structure, abutting it near its west end, was a platform with a compact stony surface, revetted on the east by larger boulders forming a curving edge (6206). When first exposed the platform was covered with a heap of sub-rounded stones in a matrix of dark brown silty loam (6247); the stones were of similar size and character to those in the tumble elsewhere in the structure. These stones, however, were neatly contained and well-packed on the platform, and may have represented its deliberate sealing rather than random tumble. Beneath, the surface of the platform appeared as rounded and sub-rounded stones closely set together; several long, rectangular-shaped stones were set in something resembling a herringbone pattern. Like the cobbled apron, the platform ran into the north baulk and appeared to continue beyond it for c 0.7 m. At its south end the platform appeared to run beneath the stone footings of the north wall.

The area between the platform and the cobbled apron was covered with a compact, dark brown silty loam (6230), an old turf line; on it sat several large stones, which appeared to be tumble from the walls. East of the cobbled apron, removal of the loose earth bank (6221) against the wall revealed a compact black-brown greasy silt (6225), also interpreted as an old surface.

In the north wall between the platform and the cobbled apron, a large, sub-rectangular, flat stone (6226) was visible from the inside, with several smaller stones up to 0.25 m long lying on it. Two of these sat at right angles to the axis of the wall at either end of the stone. It appeared at this stage that the flat stone might have served as a cruck pad, with the cruck framed and braced by the surrounding stones.

The eastern interior of 6C was dominated by a setting of large boulders (6223), consisting of eight stones up to 0.7 m across, arranged in a arcing line. They seemed to sit high in the interior, with the three north-western stones of the arc arranged parallel to the north wall and c 0.5 m south of it. A layer of fairly loose, angular rubble (6220) in a matrix of dark brown silt lay between the boulders and the north wall, while an irregular spread of large cobbles lay in a slight hollow, in a matrix of light brown sandy silt (6248).

Along the rough inner face of the south wall, mottled dark brown/orange sandy silt (6219) lay in a band and sloped down toward the centre; a possible nail and another large piece of iron were found in it. It partly overlay the light brown sandy silt around the large cobbles and abutted the deposit covering the central interior, a compact brown silt (6213) which lay around sparsely distributed cobbles. A closely-set arrangement of larger cobbles (6249) sat within the silt, and were provisionally interpreted as a post-setting. Along the western part of the north wall, a deposit of compact, dark brown greasy clay loam with frequent small stones (6211) overlay the silt and the cobbled surface. A setting of several small stones on edge forming a rough circle (6217) lay within this, immediately south-east of the large, flat stone (6226) observed in the north wall; these were also provisionally interpreted as a post-setting.

In the western part of 6C, a feature (6209) defined by two parallel rows of long, thin stones, set end-to-end c 0.6 m apart, ran roughly north/south at an angle across the interior. It was provisionally interpreted as a drain. Between the stone edges was a matrix of dark brown silty clay loam (6210), with several large stones and a piece of glass on its surface, and what appeared to be tumble covering the south end of the feature. In the north-west corner of the interior, the area exposed in CFA trench F was revealed as excavated in 1995, an area of rough cobbling set into the natural gritty orange sand subsoil. In the south-west corner, beneath tumble from the walls, was a deep deposit of sticky, dark brown loam (6214); large boulders, up to 0.8 m high, were set in a short curving arc against the eastern edge of this deposit, as if revetting it.

The purpose and nature of these internal features and surfaces, including the two curving boulder settings and the linear stone feature, were not immediately clear; nor was how people or animals had entered the building, as there were no obvious gaps in any of the walls. Further excavation answered some of these questions, and revealed an earlier phase of the structure's use (see Figure 8).

The north wall (6204) was removed in two places, at the points where it seemed to be sealing features of interest. Its footings were removed at the point where the cobbled apron (6207) abutted the wall, revealing a neatly cobbled surface (6240) adjoining the apron; the cobbles were tightly packed into a fine sandy silt (6243). Sitting on the cobbles and sealed beneath the blocking (6239) were several pieces of pottery, including sherds from a nineteenth-century pot glazed to resemble sterling silver. The cobbles sealed beneath the wall were of

similar character to those in the apron, but a slightly raised northern edge to those under wall suggested they were of different phases, with the apron added later to the entranceway.

The footings of the north wall were also removed to the west, above the large, flat, sub-rectangular stone visible beneath them. This proved to be a threshold stone, with a cobbled surface abutting it on the north and extending through the thickness of the wall. These cobbles (6226) were of different character from those to the east, composed of slightly more angular stones and forming a less even surface. The footings of the north wall were also removed immediately west of this entrance, to explore whether the revetted platform ran beneath it. This showed the cobbled surface of the platform running beneath one footing, but abutting the next footing to the west; when the western entrance was blocked, therefore, the north wall was also extended across the platform next to the entrance.

Between the two entrances, removal of the dark brown loam revealed a rough surface of sparse cobbles (6231) set in a matrix of gritty, silty sand (6232), interpreted as an earlier ground surface; two sherds of a milk pan were found on it. To the east of the eastern entrance the black-brown greasy silt (6225) was removed to reveal a similar roughly cobbled surface (6236).

Inside the structure, the circular setting of small stones set on end (6217) immediately south-west of the threshold stone proved upon excavation to be a small post-hole with stone packing, presumably to hold a door post. The cut lay within, and appeared coeval with, the dark brown greasy clay loam (6211) which lay along the north wall; in light of this layer's position just inside a newly-revealed entrance, it was interpreted as an occupation deposit which had accumulated over (and perhaps been consolidated with) small cobbles, packed down by traffic through the doorway.

In the south-west corner of the interior, the large boulders revetting the deposit of sticky, dark brown loam (6214) were removed, revealing a layer of compact, grey-black loam with patches of yellow sand (6241); rough cobbles were set into it in a curving line. This seemed to be an earlier surface, probably contemporary with that exposed in the CFA trench to the north. The arrangement of a curving line of cobbles set into the ground with a much more substantial, collapsed drystone structure on the same alignment above it recalls a smaller-scale but similar arrangement found in Structure 21B, the small byre annexe to the longhouse excavated in the previous season (Lelong 1997; see Figure 12 and section 6.3 below). Its purpose was not immediately clear in either structure.

Removal of part of the west wall to establish the relationship between areas 6B and 6C (see above) revealed a possible functional link between them. A diagonal arrangement of stones (6244) 0.8 m long ran beneath the footings, north-west/south-east, from the east end of the drain in Area 6B toward the interior of 6C. The stones were generally oval-shaped and rather flat, varying from 0.1 to 0.5 m long, and sat in a

matrix of dark brown humic silt (6250) above the natural subsoil. This was tentatively interpreted as a means by which waste was allowed to run down into 6C from the drain in 6B. If gravity were needed to aid its flow, the levelling of 6C's interior into the slope below 6B would have helped the process. The proximity of the linear stone-lined drain (6209) in 6C meant waste would not have to travel far before being collected and contained (although there was no obvious direct route into the 6C drain from the wall face).

In the linear drain (6209) running north/south across the western interior, a section was dug through the dark brown silty clay loam (6210) filling it, with the fill removed and sampled in spits. It proved to lie 0.17 m deep, above a base of tightly packed cobbles (6224). The stones forming the sides proved to be large slabs, set on edge. One similar slab, lying at an angle beyond its north end, was interpreted as having formerly defined the feature's terminal; beneath it, a cut (6245) into the natural subsoil was observed, sloping down southward from the foot of the wall to the basal cobbles. The feature was interpreted as a drain or soakaway, contemporary with the roughly cobbled surfaces on either side of it. The deep, organic fill probably dates to relatively late in its use, when it was allowed to fill with manure or other material (although the northern terminal slab might have been disturbed during a late clearing out). The fill contained a possible stone scraper and a worn stone point (SF 1162, 1163).

If the feature were a drain or soakaway, however, the destination of its contents was initially unclear; it did not run eastward, downslope, as might be expected. Investigation of its southern end resolved this problem. That end was at first obscured by the south wall of 6C and its tumble. Careful removal of this revealed a linear arrangement of four stones (6238), two courses deep, within the wall's matrix, on the same alignment as the drain (6209). They lay in a matrix of dark brown loam (6238), and above and against the vertical sides of a cut (6245) in the subsoil beneath the wall, c 0.3 m deep. A stepped arrangement of stones (6237) in the base of the drain near the wall face may have led waste down into the linear stones and beneath the wall.

Material which had passed through the drain was identified during excavation in Area 6E, where a thick spread of black-brown clay silt (6406) was observed in its north-west corner, centred on the point at which the drain led through the common wall. As discussed below, Area 6E was apparently built onto 6C; this spread was very likely deposited there by the drain while 6E was standing, given its position in the building's admittedly shallow stratigraphy. This interpretation would not be at odds with the conclusions drawn about the purpose of 6E (see below, Section 6.1.5).

Samples taken of the fill (6210) were analysed for possible macrofossils which might shed light on its use. However, very little plant material was identified. Uncarbonised seeds of sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) and yellow sedge (*Carex viridula* s.l.) were found, along with megaspores of lesser clubmoss (*Selaginella*). These all favour damp grassland habitats and, while it is possible that they are

the remains of plants eaten by animals housed nearby, it is also possible, given the good preservation of the seeds, that they are modern contaminants which blew into the context during excavation (Ramsay 1999).

A T-shaped slot, 1 m wide, was dug across the centre of the interior to investigate the roughly cobbled surface (6213) and its relationship to the boulder setting and hollow near the eastern end. Removal of the compact dark brown silt which lay around the cobbles revealed they were set into orange-brown, gritty silty sand (6234) which sloped down to the east; the sand was very compact, and appeared to be the surface of the subsoil. A small area of closely set cobbling was revealed along the east edge of the drain (6209), but elsewhere the cobbling was irregular and intermittent.

The slot also revealed a shallow, stone-packed gully (6252) running roughly north-east/south-west across the interior. It was aligned diagonally to the axis of the building; it may have held a partition wall of wattle or timber, dividing space between the two entrances (although there was no evidence to prove or disprove that they had been open at the same time). The gully was only excavated within the slot, not to either wall face, so its full extent and character were not established. However, the closely set cobbles (6249) resembling a post setting and another similar arrangement (6253) both lay immediately east of the gully, and these pieces of evidence together seem consistent with a partition, albeit one with an odd alignment to the two entrances. The mottled dark brown/orange sandy silt (6219) which lay in a band along the south wall also respected the gully, and it may have accumulated against a standing partition.

The T-shaped slot also extended north/south across the interior, to investigate the curving boulder setting and the rubble layer against the north wall face. The boulders were removed to reveal another arc of smaller stones curving along roughly the same line within their arc; these lay around the edge of a shallow scoop, cut into relatively compact and fine orange-brown sand (6234); rounded stones, up to 0.3 m across, were set into this sand. Although the sand was not fully excavated, when some of these rounded stones were removed they were found to be very firmly set into it and stained orange, in a way consistent with glacially-deposited sands and gravels. The sand was supposed, therefore, on this basis to be natural. The rubble layer abutting the north wall proved to be loose and full of voids, as if deposited for some other purpose than to provide hard standing.

Its position, together with that of the boulder setting, was anomalous in relation to the eastern doorway; the doorway would have led directly onto the rough rubble layer and thence on to the boulders, which sat in a line directly in front of the doorway and slightly proud of the level of the entrance, where they would have presented an obstacle. The boulders and rubble were interpreted, therefore, as belonging to the later phase of the building's use, after the eastern entrance was blocked. Alternatively, however, the rubble may have been a base for a section of timber flooring, extending from the doorway to the boulder

setting; this would mean that a raised platform or internal step was necessary for some reason related to the use of the interior -- presumably connected to the drain, the scoop and the roughly cobbled surface.

The T-shaped slot also revealed that the north and south walls were sitting on banks of mid brown silty loam, similar to that banked up against the footings on the north exterior. It was relatively loose, not banded or compacted as might be expected if the banks represented the slumped turf walls of an earlier structure; it seems more likely that they were integral to the stone-footing structure, perhaps (given that they existed only below the eastern sections of walling) an attempt to make the walls level throughout the building. However, the banks were not fully excavated in this season; complete excavation of a trench through the banks and examination of the section would clarify their nature and purpose.

6.1.4 Area 6D (Figure 9)

This small, sub-rectangular structure abutted Area 6C at its east end. Its walls (6301) curved and tapered toward the east, forming a bowed shape. They consisted for the most part of a double skin of boulders -- larger ones to the outside and smaller stones to the inside. Along the east part of the south wall, however, no large boulders were apparent; here the wall seemed to consist of a bank of earth and rounded stones between 0.1 and 0.4 m long. Elsewhere, even where a double boulder skin was evident, a significant part of the wall's matrix seemed to consist of an earthen bank (6306) which sloped away on the exterior. Excavation of this material outside the north wall showed it to be a relatively unconsolidated and homogeneous wedge of brown silty loam, with occasional stones. It had been banked up against the larger footings, but where smaller stones made up the wall the layer continued among and beneath them. The east wall differed from the others in its character, although it seemed of the same phase. It consisted of a single skin of massive boulders, up to 0.7 m by 0.4 m. They rested on a dark brown greasy (6308) silt, a buried turf line.

A considerable amount of tumble (6302) lay around and above the walls. It generally consisted of small, rounded stones less than 0.3 m across. It was very similar to the tumble found in Area 6C, and both seemed perhaps to indicate that these structures had had walls of alternating stone and turf. Area 6D did seem to have been built after 6C, however. It abutted the tapered east end of 6C, with its large north-eastern corner footing, and was of slighter build. Many sherds of nineteenth-century pottery, some from the same pots, along with pieces of glass and iron nails were found concentrated among the tumble along the inner face of the south wall in what appeared to be a post-abandonment dump. Other finds from the tumble included a piece of slag and a spade foot.

The interior of 6D was thickly floored with cobbles, with two main divisions and three subdivisions apparent. Along the inner face of the north wall, a cobble-floored linear depression (6304) 0.8 m wide ran

downslope from west to east and led to a gap in the east wall. Interpreted as a drain, it was defined on the south by large, sub-rounded stones set end-to-end to form a kerb. At its upper, west end, a thick deposit of black-brown silty loam (6307) lay above the cobbled floor.

The area south of the kerb was also floored with cobbles (6303), comprising sub-rounded stones tightly packed together; several sherds of post-medieval pottery and small pieces of iron were found lying on them. Two distinct linear gaps (6305, 6311), c 0.2 m wide, were visible in the cobbles, running roughly north/south from the south wall to the kerb. A section through the eastern one (6305) showed it was filled with a dark brown fine sandy loam (6309), 0.18 m deep, the same matrix into which the cobbles were set. Below the cobbles and this layer was an 0.2-m deep deposit of orange-brown fine sandy silt (6310), with a concentration of rounded stones at the interface with the subsoil at its base; a piece of slag was found in it. This was interpreted as an old ploughsoil pre-dating the construction of Area 6D.

The linear gaps in the cobbles were interpreted as having held timber partitions between animal stalls. If so, each stall would have been c 1.2 m long and 0.6 m wide. At the west end, a collection of much larger stones with cobbling to the north might have had a separate purpose, such as a feed stand.

6.1.5 Area 6E (Figure 10)

This structure abutted the main axis of Structure 6 to the south; it also lay south of the dyke which joins Structure 6 and defines the southern boundary of the township proper. Its position coincides with a drop in ground level from west to east -- the same slope which was exaggerated to create a level surface for the interior of 6C by cutting steeply into the slope. 6E lies slightly farther east than the west end of 6C, but it too had been cut into the slope on the west.

Excavation showed its two most substantial walls were those to the west and south (6401). These consisted of a double skin of very large boulders, packed with a core of small, sub-rounded stones. The footings lay one course deep along the south wall. Along the west, as in Area 6A, the inner skin of boulders lay two and in places three courses deep and revetted a cut into the natural slope, while the outer skin lay one course deep upon the top of the cut.

The east side was largely taken up by a broad entrance, 1.4 m wide, near the south-east corner; the east wall north of this consisted of a rather amorphous bank of earth with only a few large boulders at its base, which rose to a platform or bank abutting Area 6C on the south. This bank was not fully exposed or excavated, although part of its surface was exposed and recorded as a cobbled area (6212) outside 6C. The north wall of Area 6E consisted of the south wall of 6C; it was continuous along the interior of 6E, with no evidence of a means of communication at any time between the two buildings.

The footings of their common wall appeared to rest on the natural subsoil, which may have been cut to level the interior of 6E, making the wall a kind of revetment for the higher level of 6C's interior; this suggests the two were built at the same time. The wall stood two courses high on the south side and only one course high, sitting on a loose earthen bank, on the north (see 6.1.3 above). However, while they may have stood at the same time and been built as part of the same construction project, removal of the tumble masking the junction between the two at the north-west corner of 6E showed their respective walls had no stones in common: 6E abutted 6C.

A layer of tumble (6402), consisting of sub-rounded boulders and some smaller stones, lay over and along the walls, both inside and outside area 6E but particularly concentrated along the inner face of the west wall. The tumble suggested that at least one additional course of substantial boulders with smaller packing had originally rested on the surviving courses.

Along the west wall, some of the lower stones of this tumble appeared to be embedded in the occupation layers (6405 and 6406) covering the interior. Two concentrations of these clustered around central gaps, and led to the suggestion that they were settings to support posts, possibly tethering posts for animals. A third, more convincing setting lay in the north-west corner. This consisted of three triangular stones (6403) tipping toward a central, roughly square area c 0.2 m across and filled with a compact, dark brown silty loam (6404). The stones of the setting rested in the layer below (6406).

This black-brown, greasy layer (6406) was interpreted as material which had passed through the drain (6209) in the western part of 6C and had soaked away through the section of drain under the south wall of 6C. This relationship provides the strongest evidence that 6C and 6E were in use at the same time: the drain material flowed out onto a surface only created when 6E was built by cutting into the gradual slope to the west.

The drain material (6406) covered the northern part of the interior, particularly the north-west corner. It petered out toward the east and south, giving way to a layer of compact, mid brown silty loam (6405 to the south and 6407 to the east). Sparse cobbles littered the surface, along with several much larger boulders which may have been initial tumble. Excavation of a north/south slot through these interior deposits showed that the occupation layers were up to 0.15 m thick and lay directly on the gritty orange sandy subsoil (6409).

Excavation of a slot across the entrance revealed the mid brown silty loam (6405) lying above the subsoil; the latter seemed to dive away to the south rather than rise up beneath the south wall, as it would have if hollowed through traffic. The south wall rested on a buried ploughsoil (6411).

This structure, with its organic-rich occupation deposit above the rough surface of the natural, its wide entrance and its position

outside the township proper, was interpreted as a byre or stable. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery and a fragment of iron were found in the occupation deposit 6405, but otherwise the only artefacts came from the tumble. Given the absence of drains or hard-standing, it may simply have been a feeding station, used to store feed for sheep or cattle or to provide easily accessible shelter for them in inclement weather. The occupation deposits recorded represented the latest phase in its use, as earlier manure-rich layers might have been mucked out for fertiliser and subsequent layers would have accumulated on a surface worn away by hooves and repeated episodes of clearing out.

6.2 Structure 15 (Figure 11)

Before excavation, this feature appeared as a turf-clad, sub-rectangular hollow area measuring c 6 m by 3.5 m, defined on the north by a steep break of slope and on its other sides by a slight but distinct bank, 0.5 m wide, interrupted on the south-west. In the centre of the hollow grew particularly lush grass. The hollow lay directly south of and below the cobbled apron (24023) leading to the former entrance of longhouse 24, investigated in 1997 (Lelong 1997). On the basis of its position outside the door of the longhouse and its small size, it was tentatively interpreted as a midden site; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ethnographic accounts frequently describe Highland townships as having middens in this position (e.g., Burt 1756). The rectangular trench opened encompassed the banks and slope of the feature, with a short extension joining and re-opening part of the 1997 trench over the cobbled apron.

After removal of the turf and initial cleaning, the hollow was distinctly visible as an oval depression with sharply dipping edges, and the bank along its south edge as a low ridge. The topsoil (15001) was particularly deep (up to 0.23 m), rich and heavily burrowed in the base of the hollow.

At the top of the slope, immediately south of longhouse 24, a layer of pebbles (15005) sat directly above a spread of large, well-packed cobbles (15006) in a very sparse matrix of red-brown silt. The cobbles had a clear southern edge along the lip of the slope in the eastern part of the trench. Several pieces of glass were found among them. Immediately south of the cobbled apron, a very stony, compact, dark brown sandy silt extended along the upper west half of the trench as 15014, continuing downslope along the hollow's western edge as 15016 and 15020. This was interpreted as a trampled surface, probably consolidated over time with dumps of pebbles and cobbles as a kind of metalling; fragments of iron, glass and charred wood were found in it.

Excavation of slot trenches through both the eastern and western parts of the trench revealed redeposited subsoil mixed with occupation material (15025) above a stony dump (15024) above more redeposited natural (15028), all making up the top and side of the slope. This material had been deliberately laid to make up a platform

along the southern edge of longhouse 24; it may have been quarried when the interior of the longhouse was levelled (see Lelong 1997) by terracing into the slope to its north. The platform had the effect of exaggerating an originally more gentle slope to the south of the longhouse.

A slot trench through the western part of the trench found a layer of silty trample (15026) below the consolidated stony surface, with sherds of post-medieval pottery and glass in it, and another cobbled layer (15030) below that, suggesting the longhouse had been approached along this route for some time.

At the same level as the upper trampled surfaces to the west and metallated platform to the east, another band of large cobbles (15008 and 15015) extended along the slope south of and below the lip. These lay in a compact red-brown sandy silt (15010), interpreted as the old ground surface into which the stones had been set, and they overlay some of the platform fabric described above (15025, 15024 and 15028). Like those at the top of the slope, the cobbles had a well-defined southern edge which more or less respected the interior of the hollow.

The bank defining the south side of the hollow proved to comprise compact, humic, red-brown sandy loam containing some small stones (15009), with a core of larger stones (15022, up to 0.2 m) above a densely pebbly layer (15023). The bank lay on the natural subsoil. It was undoubtedly built or dumped, but appears never to have been substantial, or to have stood much higher than c 0.25 m. To the south it gave way to an old ground surface (15004) similar to that inside the hollow (15003). Along its north edge, inside the western part of the hollow, a line of stones (15017) had been set against the bank, revetting it; they sat in a dark brown humic clay (15018) in which several sherds of post-medieval pottery were found.

In the base of the eastern part of the hollow, below the topsoil, a roughly linear arrangement of mainly thin, flat stones (15011) lay on a red-brown silty clay loam (15003) interpreted as an old ground surface. A fragmentary, thin-walled metal vessel (SF 782), possibly of painted tin, lay among the stones on this surface, along with a sherd of post-medieval pottery. Removal of the stone layer revealed another linear deposit (15029) of more tightly-packed, cobble-like stones beneath, set into the subsoil (15012). A sherd of post-medieval pottery was found among the stones of 15029.

Below the topsoil in the western part of the hollow was a very distinct deposit. Its surface appeared as a dirty yellow-grey clay (15021), somewhat mixed with humic material. An iron sickle blade (SF 816) and another iron object, possibly part of a chain (SF 1143), lay on the surface of the clay, along with a metal button (SF 1164) and a sherd of post-medieval pottery. As first exposed it extended c 1.7 m west from the central baulk and c 1 m north/south, between the stony revetments on either side. Its surface was deeply etched with water-worn channels from water that had run down the slope into the hollow.

Below the interface with the topsoil, the clay was extremely compact and clean, clearly a natural deposit.

Excavation of the slot trench onto the clay, through the banks to the north and south, showed the width of the clay deposit to be c 2 m; it had originally been exposed by digging into the natural slope to the north and presumably through an old topsoil above the clay. The slope to the north had been roughly revetted, but the stones had slipped among hillwash onto the clay deposit's northern edge. The earth-and-stone bank (15009/15022/15023) had been built along the south edge of the clay deposit -- perhaps with the topsoil dug out above it.

No evidence of the clay was found in the eastern part of the trench. To establish its extent, part of the central baulk was removed. Below it the clay was found to dive suddenly and steeply away.

Feature 15 proved to be a deliberate scoop, to expose and perhaps quarry this natural clay deposit. The original diggers went to some lengths to expose it, scarping the natural slope to the north and revetting it with stone perhaps dug out from the terrace for longhouse 24, and they also built an insubstantial bank along the south. This suggests that they needed to retain something low-lying in the base of the hollow. To soften the clay -- clearly the object of their efforts -- and make it workable, they would have needed to soak or puddle it; the bank would have retained a shallow pool of water for this purpose. The continuation of the scoop to the east, beyond the clay's extent, and the superimposed linear dumps of stone in its base there suggest that this was also a working area, and that the stones consolidated a soft, wet surface (damp because of the retained water) and made access to the clay easier.

Analysis of a sample taken of the surface of the clay (15021) found no macrofossil remains apart from modern roots. The absence of plant remains suggests that the clay surface was kept free of encroaching vegetation during its use and that when it was no longer needed it was deliberately covered over, stopping a natural succession of vegetation from filling it and keeping the clay deposit free of plant material (Ramsay 1999).

6.3 *Structure 21* (Figures 12 and 13)

The partial excavation of the remains of this longhouse in 1997 established its main internal features and manner of construction (Lelong 1997). Excavation continued in 1998 to explore the sequence of floor deposits and other features in its west end and entrance.

The longhouse measured c 13.3 m long (east/west) by 3.4 m wide internally. It was divided into two parts: a main living area to the west, 8.9 m long internally, and a small annexe at its east end, 3.6 m long, with a separate entrance. All of the internal deposits were sealed by a layer rich in rubbish (21039), including many pieces of broken pottery, discarded iron implements, some fragments of what may have

been window glass and a gun flint; this post-abandonment deposit was in turn sealed by a thick layer of turf slump and stones from the walls (21005/007), which suggested that the surviving single course of stone footings had been surmounted by a superstructure predominantly of turf. Wedge-shaped deposits of banded decayed turf were found abutting the outer wall skins, evidence for several episodes of turf walls' slumping.

In its use, the main part of the house was apparently divided into two zones, while the annexe had apparently been used as a small byre. The results of the 1997 excavation are summarised below, illustrated in Figure 12, and followed by the results of the 1998 investigations in certain areas (Figure 13).

In the eastern byre annexe, 21B, two phases of flooring were identified in 1997. The upper one consisted of a compact, greasy, grey-brown silt (21085) which covered the centre of the interior and lay around an area of cobbling (21091) and paving (21090) to the north and against a large, flat stone step (21067) to the west, just inside the entrance. This floor sealed an earlier one of gritty yellow clay sand (21086) in the central interior. In the south-west corner, above the stone step, the floor had been worn away to the gravely subsoil below the base of the wall footings, which had then been propped up with small stones (21092). A post-hole (21081) was found in the south-west corner, and another (21088) at the west edge of the hollowed entranceway, cut into the earlier, yellow clay floor.

In the north-west corner were the remains of a curving, drystone structure, formed of sub-rounded boulders (21087), which had collapsed inward upon a deposit of light brown sandy loam (21088) with lenses of charcoal. Below the loam was a sloping surface of orange-yellow clay-rich sand (21153). Set into this was a curving band of cobbles which lay directly below the outermost boulders of the collapsed structure. Large pieces of post-medieval pottery, including fragments of a teapot, were found among the tumbled stones -- a post-abandonment dump.

In 1998, further excavation was carried out to clarify the nature of these deposits and the function of the curving structure. The half-section through the curving structure, excavated to the surface of the orange-yellow sand in 1997, was continued in a narrow slot through the sand. It proved to be the disturbed surface of a natural deposit of very hard, light yellow clay-rich sand (21153) which sloped down toward the south-east.

Excavation of a slot trench across the central interior, between the paving (21090) and the stone step (21067) and extending east along the cobbles' (21091) edge, found that the lower, yellow clay sand floor (21086) was part of the same natural deposit. The clay sand had clearly been deliberately exposed, presumably so it could serve as a floor. On its surface it had become disturbed and mixed with trampled humic material, but below the deposit was extremely hard and became much sandier.

Removal of the cobbles showed they lay on gritty red sand with rougher cobbles (21150), apparently natural subsoil redeposited over the clay to form a base for the cobbles; a dark brown humic silt (21149) between and partly below the cobbles may have filtered in between them. The gap between the paving and the stone step, which had been thought might contain a drain of some sort leading out of the curving stone structure, proved not to contain a cut of any kind. A possible post pad was observed among the cobbles against the north baulk; it comprised a small, rectangular slab resting on a deposit of mid brown loamy silt (21152). Some cobbles were found on it, suggesting that the post had been removed while the building was in use and more cobbles had been added to the surface.

It appears that in this structure, as in structure 15, a natural, firm, clay-rich deposit was deliberately exposed, but in this case to serve as a floor. The interpretation of the structure as a small byre stands: the large stone step and single post-hole in the south-west corner seem to form a milking stand, where a goat or small cow might have been tethered to the post and the stone step could have been knelt upon and used as a firm base for a milk pail. The cobbling and paving to the north might have served as hard-standing for an animal. The curving structure in the corner, while still not fully understood, must have contributed in some way to the animals' accommodation. It might have been a lambing pen.

This interpretation, particularly that of the milking stand, has relevance to the features in the eastern part of the main structure (21A). Exposed and recorded in 1997, these comprised two platforms (21115 and 21116), built of a rough stone capping over dumps of sandy soil, which lay to the north and south of a linear stone feature (21050). The linear feature consisted of large cobbles packed into a shallow, linear cut (21134) on a bed of yellow sand (21204), with another layer of cobbles set into the cut's base, as if to form a walkway or possibly a drain. It had been cut into the natural subsoil. The edges of the platforms clearly respected the linear feature, which ran slightly askew to the axis of the building. Pieces of post-medieval pottery and iron nails were found on the cobbles and among the stones of the platform.

In 1997, this complex of features was provisionally interpreted as sleeping platforms with a walkway between them; the platforms, it was thought, might have supported mattresses of straw or heather. The possibility that they represented a byre was considered, but discounted on the basis that there was no break in the north or south walls east of the hearth, so cattle would have had to be led through the entrance and past the hearth, a very unlikely situation.

In 1998, a section was cut through the platforms and the linear feature to record them in full. During the excavation, several large sherds of a broad, very shallow, internally-glazed bowl were discovered beneath the edge of one of the northern platform's stones. This kind of bowl, a milk pan, was commonly used to procure cream; the cream would rise to the surface and could easily be skimmed off. This

evidence led to the platforms' reinterpretation as elements of a dairy, which would fit logically with the small adjacent byre with its milking stand. How such a dairy might have worked with the rest of the internal space in structure 21 is discussed further below (see section 7.3). At the west end of the platforms, near the north wall, was a shallow, circular, stone-packed scoop (21049); a few crumbs of low-fired pottery were recovered from its fill, the only non-mass-produced pottery yet found at Easter Raitts.

The central part of 21A, between the dairy and the hearth, was featureless except for a broad, shallow hollow (21138) which curved from the south wall to the edge of the paving around the hearth. It was filled with the second-latest earth floor (21120) which lay across the interior to the west, and in its base was a compact, brown-black greasy silt (21137) which lay around cobbles roughly set into the orange-red gravely subsoil at the base of the hollow. The origins and purpose of the hollow have not been determined; it may have been a soakaway of some sort. The rest of the centre was covered in rough cobbling (21034). The stones lay in an orange-brown gritty silt (21034), and appeared to be a hardcore base for laid floors. Traces of these appeared in patches of baked (21130) and unbaked (21019) clay which lay among the cobbles; these were evidence of a laid floor which had been worn away and burnt, and a second floor which had also worn away and not been replaced. Both of these were sealed by the latest floor in the house (21006).

There was no evidence of an internal partition, either along the hearth or along the possible dairy. However, a thin hurdling or wattle-and-daub partition might have been set among the cobbles rather than firmly seated in stakeholes, and may not have been visible archaeologically.

The featureless centre, with its paucity of floors, might be explained by the former presence there of box-beds. They would have created an internal partition between the living area, with its hearth, and the dairy. If so, the nearby stone-packed shallow scoop (21049) may be explicable as a latrine.

To the west, just east of the paving around the hearth, a large, charred plank (21004) lay on the latest floor. It seems to have burnt *in situ*, as its downward side was uncharred. Its burning may be related to the house's abandonment, as it was sealed by the post-abandonment layer and showed no signs of having been trampled or disturbed.

In the western end of 21A, the post-abandonment layer sealed the latest floor in the house, a dark brown greasy silt (21006) which lay above several earlier floors. Pressed into the floor were many sherds of glazed, mass-produced pottery and remains of some glass vessels, as well as pieces of clay pipe, beads, a copper alloy button, a thimble and fragments of iron.

This part of the house was dominated by the large central hearth (21041), formed of a fire-cracked, hollowed-out slab. A crescent-shaped

area of well-worn paving slabs (21024) formed a floor to the east and south of the hearth, with a large post-pit (21122) nestling between the paving and the hearth's east side, probably for a post which supported a iron cooking pot (a fragment of one was found among the post-abandonment material).

A series of earth floors was found in this part of the house, particularly to the west and south of the hearth. Lying against the slabs, beneath the latest floor (21006), was an earlier earthen floor (21120/111/118/110) of trampled silt varying from black-brown to dark red to grey-brown.

Immediately west of the hearth, this floor lay around a compact, artefact-free, sub-rectangular deposit of brown loam (21042) overlying a concentration of cobbles (21025); this was interpreted as a turf seat or platform, evidence for which exists in some nineteenth century accounts of Highland longhouses. Fragments of clay pipe found near the north-east corner of the putative turf seat suggest that a smoker usually sat there, warming him or herself at the hearth.

To the north of the hearth, the latest floor (21006) lay directly above a rough layer of cobbles (21034), with pieces of pottery set or trampled into the surface of the gravelly subsoil around them. This scoured surface contrasted with the area to the south of the hearth, where six superimposed layers of earth floor were preserved, both abutting and (as was discovered in 1998) running beneath the paving. From this it can be deduced that upon entering the house people habitually circled clockwise around the north side of the hearth, skirting the putative turf seat (21042); the bevelled, well-polished south edge of the hearth slab and the character of the floors there also points to the existence of a bench or seat along the south, from which people might have rested their feet on the hearth slab.

To the south of the hearth and paving, the latest floor (21006) sealed another one of brown-black, silty clay (21120) with charcoal concentrated on its surface; this in turn sealed a floor of black, greasy silt (21124). These three floor layers abutted the paving, but beneath them was a compact, light brown sandy silt (21123) which appeared to run beneath the paving slabs (21024). Lying on and pressed into these three floors (except for 21123 where it ran beneath the paving) were found sherds of mass-produced, post-medieval pottery and pieces of clay pipes.

Two of the slabs south of the hearth were removed. They proved to be sitting on a layer of fine, light yellow-brown sand (21125), the upper part of which had become mixed with humic material (21210). This sand had been visible, before the slabs were removed, sloping out beneath their edges over the floor (21123) beneath, and clearly it had been laid as bedding for the slabs. Between the slabs was charcoal-flecked brown sandy silt (21212) which, along with several sherds of white glazed pottery, had filtered or been swept down after they were laid. Small, angular stones had been tucked between the slabs and the hearth to fill gaps left by irregularities in the stones' edges.

Below the sand lay the compact, light brown sandy silt floor of 21123, with charcoal lenses staining its surface. It lay between 0.03 and 0.06 m thick above the uneven surface of the floor below, beneath the paving slabs, but was worn very thin to the south of the slabs, indicating it had continued as the exposed floor for some time after the slabs had been laid.

A cut (21244) visible in and filled by this floor lay c 0.35 m south of the hearth. It had two vertical faces on the WNW and NNE at right angles to each other, forming two sides of a square, each measuring 0.2 m long and up to 0.06 m high. It had been cut through the two floors below.

The floor beneath comprised very compact, coarse, light yellow clay sand (21219), mottled with patches of black-brown clay silt and charcoal. It extended south from the hearth for c 0.5 m, to the edge of where the paving had lain above. To the east it petered out near the central post pit (21122), and it stopped abruptly at the west edge of the hearth, giving way to a gravelly red-brown sand (21209).

Along the edge of the hearth ran a strip 0.04 m wide of looser, mid brown clay silt with flecks of charcoal (21230), with reddish, heat-affected clay (21231) against the hearth slab. These proved to lie above the gritty yellow floor (21219) in a shallow cut which sloped down toward the base of the hearth. The cut may have been a scoop for the hearth-slab, so that it would sit firmly within the floor.

The yellow clay sand (21219) peeled away to another, very compact surface of dark grey-brown sandy silt (21226) with charcoal flecks and pieces concentrated on its surface. This lay patchily, apparently trampled and worn away, above a deposit of loose, coarse orange sand (21227) which extended over the entire area south of the hearth. The trampled dark grey-brown sandy silt (21226) also lay in patches and hollows in the sand below the light brown sandy silt floor, 21123, between the edge of the paving slabs and the wall. This seemed to indicate that whereas this lowest floor (21226) had been laid to the wall and worn away there as elsewhere, the yellow floor above (21219) had been laid only to the edge of some already existing obstacle -- perhaps a piece of furniture; the succeeding floor (21123) had, however, been laid to the wall.

In the 1998 season, a section of the three upper floor layers (21006, 21120 and 21124) left in place south-west of the hearth was removed to expose the full extent of the floor below, 21123. Lying within the black, greasy silt (21124) and on the surface of the light brown sandy silt (21123) was the foot of an iron digging spade (SF 815), lying face down. It had been mended with riveted strips of iron in several places -- along one edge on its back and along a crack on its face. There were fragments of its charred wooden handle still in place in the handle socket. Beneath and around the spade was a deposit of friable, charcoal-rich, fine silty sand (21223); its friable state indicated

the beginnings of vitrification, suggesting the material had burnt *in situ* or at least been still very hot when it was deposited.

The spade foot lay at an oblique angle to the wall, almost as if it had been leaning against it and had fallen, but the charred handle remains and the burnt deposit below it suggested it had been in a fire, and that it had been removed with still-hot material and dumped here. The spade must have been clearly visible, lying on the charcoal-stained surface of floor 21123, when the next floor, 21124, was laid above and around it. Although the spade had been mended more than once, it was still intact and usable (had the handle been replaced) when it was buried, and iron implements must have been relatively expensive and rarely discarded (as the repairs suggest). There are elements of both deliberation deposition and casual carelessness about this find's context of discovery.

Iron objects were frequently incorporated into the walls of longhouses, in the post-medieval period if not earlier, to ensure luck. This was common practice until the early twentieth century in the Western Isles (B Walker, pers comm), and iron had a similar resonance throughout the Highlands. The angle of the spade and the charred handle do seem to indicate that it simply fell or was tossed and left here, hidden by the succeeding floor layer. However, given what is known about the deliberate deposition of iron objects, it seems far too simplistic to dismiss its placing here as a random act. The fact that the spade was well-used and -repaired might suggest it had a long history, with associations that it brought to the house when it was put beneath the floor. The burnt deposit might also be significant in this respect.

This rather complicated series of deposits suggests the following sequence of activity: the hearth slab was laid in a shallow scoop, possibly cut into the gravelly subsoil, although this has not yet been established. Assuming the coarse orange sand (21227) is the surface of the natural, the interior of the house must first have been stripped of turf and perhaps topsoil, although it is equally likely that the topsoil was left in place and trampled to provide the first floor, and subsequently was worn away. Other floor layers may well have preceded the dark grey-brown sandy silt and been worn away so thoroughly that they have left no trace.

The dark grey-brown sandy silt (21226), the first floor in evidence, was trampled and stained with charcoal, probably from the adjacent hearth. The next floor, of light yellow gritty clay sand (21219), was laid above it. Lenses of charcoal from the hearth may have become incorporated into it when it was laid, and more charcoal was trampled onto its surface. The fact that it extended only 0.5 m south of the hearth might indicate that a piece of furniture stood at this time against the south wall and the floor was only laid to its edges. Next, the light brown sandy silt floor (21123) was laid to the wall face. That it was thick beneath the paving slabs but thin beyond them shows it saw some use before the paving was laid -- charcoal was trampled into its surface -- but before it had time to wear away significantly, the paving

stones were laid above it, and then the floor was left exposed and used south of the paving for some time.

For the paving slabs, a bed of yellow sand (21125) was first laid, and the upper part of this became mixed with humic material over time, perhaps from insect action. Pieces of mass-produced, post-medieval pottery were trampled into the surface of the first floor (21123) used after the paving was laid; interestingly, none were found in or on the floor beneath the paving slabs, nor in the earlier floor layers beneath.

A well-worn iron digging spade was apparently burnt and its foot was fetched from the fire, along with some hot, burnt material, and left on the floor. Then (immediately afterward, as the burnt material associated with the spade did not have time to scatter far), another floor was laid. This black greasy silt (21124) contained much charcoal, perhaps rake-out from the fire, along with sherds of post-medieval pottery. This was later sealed by another floor of dark brown greasy silt (21120), again with charcoal and pottery. While this had been happening, flecks of charcoal from the fire and other occupation debris had worked their way down between some of the paving slabs, along with pieces of pottery. Finally, the last earth floor (21006) was laid, and at some time after this the building was abandoned.

Analysis of plant remains in samples taken of these floor deposits and the hearth contents shows the kinds of fuel being burnt in the house (Ramsay 1999). The contents of the hearth (21037) were found to contain carbonised birch (*Betula*) and Scot's pine type (*Pinus sylvestris*) wood, indicating these were used for fuel. The earliest floor (21226) contained the same charcoal assemblage, along with a small amount of willow (*Salix*) charcoal and a few carbonised seeds of blinks (*Montia fontana*), sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) and dock (*Rumex* sp.); these might have come from turf, either accidentally or purposefully burned. The yellow clay sand floor (21219) contained small amounts of Scot's pine type, presumably trampled in from the hearth. The light brown sandy silt floor above it (21123) also contained birch and pine charcoal, along with a burnt peat-like material and a very small quantity of juniper (*Juniperus*). Finally, the charcoal-rich sandy deposit (21223) found beneath the digging spade (SF 815) contained only birch.

What appeared to be the building's main entrance lay along the south wall near its west end; it was partly floored with flat, sub-rounded slabs (21144) which seemed to tip into a slight hollow beneath them. A large post-hole (21109) just inside the entrance, south of the slabs, might have supported a door post or, given its position, a cruck. It sat in a broader scoop, discussed below, with a stone setting (21127) to support the post; the post-hole cut was filled with a post-pipe of black-brown loam (21132) and a large fragment of wood. Below it was a circular, very compact pad of grey silt (21133), interpreted as the result of compaction from the weight of the post above. Another post-hole (21228), with vertical sides, a rounded base

and stone packing around a loose, humic fill, lay c 0.9 m to the north. These two post-holes described a line along the east edge of the entrance. Both also lay at the east edge of a broad scoop (21243) sealed beneath the paving.

The paving stones (21144) appeared to respect the post-holes and they overlay the scoop. The stones were abutted by the adjacent clay silt floors, 2111/118, the equivalent of the charcoal-rich 21120 south of the hearth and, like it, the second-latest floor in the house, beneath 21006. A section excavated across the linear paving stones showed that they had been set on a thick bed of fine, pale yellow silty sand (21224) which filled the top of the scoop; smaller angular stones and cobbles had also been set beneath the stones and along the edges of the scoop, presumably to give the paving a more stable base.

This latest surface, the paving with its foundation layer, sealed a series of burnt deposits which filled the scoop. Directly below the yellow sand lay a very compact layer of black sandy silt (21225), with abundant charcoal flecks and pieces within it. This extended across the scoop and respected the northern post-hole (21228). A concentrated deposit of charred material (21235) lay at one edge. Below were two coeval layers, abutting each other and together mirroring the extent of the charcoal deposit above. A very compact, mottled light brown/pink sandy silt (21233) lay to the eastern side of the scoop, while another very compact layer of orange-pink silty sand (21234) lay to the west as well as along the east edge; the latter also respected the northern post-hole (21228). From their colour and texture, the layers appeared to be heat-affected, and indicated probable burning *in situ*. Below was a layer of very compact, friable black sand (21241) which in places had begun to vitrify, again indicating burning *in situ*. It lined the base and sides of the scoop and overlapped part of the northern post-hole (21228). All of these layers of burnt material respected the southern post-hole (21109).

The scoop itself had been cut into an orange to dark red-brown gravely sand, possibly the subsoil. Fully excavated, it measured 0.76 m east/west by 0.7 m, and was c 0.3 m deep at its centre, with a bowl-shaped profile. Its western edge sloped gently and curved around, but the eastern edge rose more abruptly and finished in a north/south line (that described by the east side of the post-holes) and abutted a band of cobbles (21209). It appeared to cut another, narrow scoop to the north (21247); cobbles and one large stone were set into the gravely orange sand of its sides and base, and it ran north on the same alignment as the linear concentration of cobbles (21026) exposed in 1997 below the putative turf platform. A linear hollow (21246) running through the entrance, south of the burnt scoop and capped with the same paving slabs (21144), was also on this alignment.

The purpose of the burnt scoop was not fully understood. It, and the two episodes of burning, appeared to be coeval with the post-holes. These together might have supported a screen or partition which protected the hearth from draughts from the doorway. However, if the posts had been affected by fires in the scoop, as might be expected,

they must have been replaced, as no charred post-pipes were found. The position of the scoop directly inside the entrance is perhaps most puzzling. It is possible that the scoop was in fact a deep hollow, worn into the ground by traffic through the doorway; if so, it would suggest that the post-holes and partition were added after the hollow had been worn, as they lay at the same level as the base of the scoop. By the same token, the burning episodes would have post-dated the wear and the post-holes. The episodes of burning must have happened in quick succession, as no occupation or other debris had built up between them.

The absence of mass-produced, post-medieval pottery in the burnt layers and the base of the scoop is striking, and in marked contrast to its presence in the floors (2111/118) sealing it. The floor layers sealed beneath the paving south of the hearth were similarly devoid of modern finds.

At present, the best sequence which can be suggested for this set of features is the following: the scoop was either cut or worn through traffic just inside the longhouse's entrance, perhaps along the line of a linear hollow which already ran along this axis and extended well into the interior. If it was cut, the post-holes were dug at the same time; if it was worn, the post-holes were dug after the wear had taken place, probably over some period of time. However, it seemed much too steep and sharply-defined not to have been cut. In either case, the posts standing in the holes probably did support a screen to keep draughts from the hearth and longhouse interior.

At least two episodes of burning took place in the scoop. These appear to have been contained within it, as areas around it were not affected by heat, and no other signs of a house-wide fire have been found. The burning episodes appear therefore to have been a deliberate act. Magnetic susceptibility analysis at the post-excavation stage should confirm whether they were indeed burnt *in situ*.

Analysis of samples taken from the scoop's contents illuminate their formation to some extent, making it clear that at least two episodes of burning are represented. The lowest layer of burnt material (21241) contained alder (*Alnus*), birch (*Betula*), hazel (*Corylus*) and willow (*Salix*) charcoal. The constituents of this assemblage differ from those analysed from other contexts, and in particular the absence of Scot's pine suggests this material was not debris from a hearth. It might, however, indicate that a screen did burn down, as all the wood types identified can be used to make woven screens, either as uprights (birch and alder) or weavers (hazel and willow). The lowest burnt layer also contained the only evidence found among the analysed samples for cereal grains, in the form of six row hulled barley. These were probably accidentally incorporated in the scoop when it was open (as there were not enough to indicate processing of cereals in it). Other carbonised seeds in the layer, including sedge (*Carex*), blinks (*Montia fontana*), yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus* sp.) and sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) might have fallen in from nearby turf walls and been burnt at the same

time. The burnt layer above this one (21233) and the black layer above that (21225) contained only birch and Scot's pine charcoal, and are more likely to have been the remains of hearth debris.

Paving slabs were later laid over the scoop to form a walkway into the house, with fine yellow sand and small stones providing a firm base for the paving. These slabs also extended out through the entrance, covering the linear hollow which led through it. It is possible that the linear hollow was a flue, providing air to the hearth; full excavation of the hollow, only investigated in sections so far, would reveal its destination and perhaps its purpose.

Deposits in the entranceway itself, between the footings of the south wall, were left in place for this season, but the area immediately south of it was explored. Slabs which seemed to form part of the same linear paving as those (21144) sealing the burnt scoop to the north extended through the entranceway, ending in an edge c 1 m south of the wall footings. They lay upon a surface of mottled black brown silty loam (21200) which extended across the trench opened over the entranceway and sloped slightly southward; it petered out, however, toward the western edge, giving way to cobbles set in dark orange gravely sand (21207). All of these deposits had been sealed by a series of turf slumps, visible in the east baulk beside the entrance as bands of silty loam varying from black to brown with lenses of beige clay and brown micaceous silt (21030).

South of the linear paving, small stones lay in the silty loam but did not appear to represent deliberate metalling. The large stone footing (21248) at the east edge of the entrance, at a right angle to the south wall (21002) and forming a kind of facade to the entranceway, lay upon a patch of pink-brown sandy silt (21203) which lay upon the loam; these both appeared to be of the same phase as the paving slabs and the old surface represented by the silty loam (21200). A few sherds of mass-produced pottery and a piece of slag were found on this surface.

Removal of the silty loam revealed a layer of cobbling (21201) which curved out from the east baulk, toward the south wall, with a neat edge. The cobbles lay on a mottled, black-brown silty loam (21215) with charcoal trampled into it; two small fragments of iron were found associated with the cobbles. The surface extended west for c 1.1 m to the east side of the entrance. At this point it gave way to the dark orange gravely sand (21207), which proved to slope south-eastward across the entranceway, except in the south-west corner of the trench, occupied by clean, coarse orange sand (21206). Both the gravely sand and the clean coarse sand appeared to be the natural subsoil.

Cut into the subsoil were two post-holes. The western one (21218) was steep-sided, cut into the coarse orange sand (21206), against the north edge of a large, flat slab just protruding from the south baulk and forming the post-hole's southern side. Two angular stones, collapsed packing, occupied most of the post-hole's relatively

flat base; above and around them was a fill of banded pale yellow/dark brown sandy loam (21217) 0.08 m deep, and the upper part of the post-hole was filled with fine, light yellow-brown sand (21216). The eastern post-hole (21220) was steep-sided to the east but sloped gently up to the west, as if the post had been pulled out, forming a ramp. It was deeper (0.18 m) and filled with mid-brown, humic sandy silt (21221).

The post-holes' positions, outside of and to either side of the entranceway, suggested that together they supported a porch protecting the entrance (although their positions were slightly staggered rather than at equal distances from the south wall). Their fills and the profile of the eastern one (21220) suggests that the posts were removed rather than being allowed to decay *in situ*, and that the holes had filled naturally. The fact that neither post-hole was visible in the old surface above, the silty loam (21200) contemporary with the paving slabs in the entranceway, indicates that they belonged to an earlier phase of the building's entrance, predating the paving as well as the short facade (21248).

The old ground surface (21215) on which the curve-edged cobbles (21201) lay extended westward as far as, and respecting, the eastern post-hole (21220). To the west of this, however, were the orange subsoil deposits (21206/207) into which the western post-hole (21218) was cut. These had been sealed by the later ground surface (21200). Apparently any surface which had existed before or during the life of the western post had been scoured or eroded away. This meant that no direct stratigraphic relationship could be established between the two post-holes, and their contemporaneity cannot be proven.

Removal of the paving slabs (21144) in the entranceway revealed another, rougher layer of stones which also extended south in a linear arrangement, and lay in a shallow, narrow cut (21246); dark brown humic silty soil lay around and beneath them. Their similar extent and alignment indicated they had been laid at the same time, and as a base for, the paving slabs. The cut was not investigated in this season. It may relate to the burnt scoop (21243) and the narrower scoop (21247) north of it which lay inside the entrance (see above).

Removal of the ground surface (21215) associated with the curve-edged cobbles (21201) and the eastern post-hole (and presumably also once the western one) revealed another layer (21222) below it of very organic, black, soft silty loam with charcoal concentrated on its surface. A patch of orange-red clay (21232) lay within it, possibly rake-out from the hearth in longhouse 21, carried out (and some of it dropped) to make up the peat-ash deposit found near structure 26 (see below).

A small slot trench was excavated through the charcoal-rich surface (21222). It proved to lie c 0.05 m thick above a layer of compact, coarse beige sand (21237); this sealed another layer of black, organic-rich silty loam (21238), very similar to 21222. This, finally, sealed another layer of rougher, more sparsely laid cobbles (21239) lying c 0.12 m below the level of the upper, curve-edged cobbles and

separated from them by these four layers of soil. The lower cobbles sat in a layer of pale brown silty sand (21240). A small lump of peat was recovered from the surface of this layer, between the cobbles.

The relationship of these cobbles and the layers above them to the south wall of longhouse 21 and the deposits outside structure 26 have yet to be explored, but the cobbles appear to run beneath the wall of 21; certainly they lay well below the level of the footings.

6.4 *Structure 26*

An area measuring c 6 m square was opened along the south side of longhouse 21 to investigate what appeared to be a slightly scooped, revetted feature. Like feature 15 outside longhouse 24, it was considered a possible midden, given its position outside the house's entrance.

After initial cleaning, the feature appeared best defined on the north, by a row of five very large boulders (26003), running parallel to the south wall of the longhouse and apparently revetting the ground to the north. On the other sides, the ground sloped down to a central, flat, stony area, with some boulders sitting high upon lower stones which were mostly covered with a charcoal-flecked, dark brown sandy loam (26015/016). The higher, large stones (26004) appeared to be tumble from a wall; most of them lay to the north, below the large stone footings (26003), suggesting that a more substantial wall, at least two courses high, had stood on that side. The dark brown sandy loam (26015/016) covering the central area appeared to be a post-abandonment deposit. Near the south wall of the longhouse, several layers of black to light brown fine sandy silt (26005) sloped down from the wall toward structure 26 along the west baulk, the same stratified turf slumps (21030) observed on the other side of the baulk, sealing cobbles and old ground surfaces near the longhouse entrance. Black, charcoal-rich, greasy sandy silt (26002) also lay over the banks around the central area, and was of similar character to the turf slumps. However, many fragments of mass-produced pottery, glass, clay pipe and iron were found in what was provisionally interpreted as turf slump (26002) over the central area, perhaps indicating this was a post-abandonment or even a last occupation deposit instead.

Removal of these post-abandonment deposits and tumble revealed the character of the feature: it consisted of a sub-rectangular area of paving, comprising mainly flat, sub-rounded stones (26012). Lying on the stones were some fragments of iron, sherds of mass-produced pottery and a piece of what appeared to be melted glass (SF 1142).

To the east, south and west, the ground rose from the paving to a more level surface. It was covered with rough, sparsely-set cobbling and gravel (26008), set into a red-orange gritty, gravely sand. In the south-west corner of the trench, a compact layer of small cobbles (26010) lay in and above these larger ones; these comprised part of the

metalled surface of the track which winds through the settlement, just clipped by the corner of the trench.

Around the paving, the gravel banks sloped down and ended in an abrupt edge, defined in some places by a row of cobbles. There was a distinct gap, up to 0.10 m wide, between the base of the banks and the edge of the paving. The sharp dip at the base of the banks, the cobble edges and this gap (26022) all hinted at the former existence of some kind of wall around the paving. The paving had several, regularly spaced gaps among the stones at its well-defined edges. Investigation of one of these gaps confirmed the former existence of a wall.

The gap proved to be a post-hole (26019), respected by the paving stones. A half-section showed it had a steep south-west edge and a sloping north-east one, perhaps suggesting the post had fallen or been pulled out on the latter side. The top and edges of the cut were packed with small stones, and it was filled with a loose, mid brown, humic silty sand (26020), with no evidence of a post-pipe.

A section of the paving (26012) was also removed around the post-hole. This showed that the stones lay one deep, closely set, upon a loose, brown-black humic loamy silt (26014). The matrix, which also lay between the stones, was slightly greasy and contained frequent charcoal flecks and small pieces. The paving stones abutted the large stone footings (26003) to the north, and this dark loamy silt appeared to run beneath them as well. No artefacts were found in the portion of dark loamy silt excavated. Analysis of a sample from it found it contained a mixture of charcoal types, including birch, hazel, Scot's pine, willow and juniper as well as carbonised seeds of sun spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*) and yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*).

The paving stones and dark loamy silt sat upon a layer of coarse orange-brown sand (26021), set with rough cobbling. Toward the south of the section investigated there were few stones, and patches of brown humic material appeared in it; these may have constituted a different deposit, although this has not yet been established. The post-hole was cut into this orange sand, at the junction between the stony area and the stone-free, loamy sand.

The way the stone footings (26003) appeared torevet the ground to the north of them indicated that the structure they and the paving and post-hole represented must have been levelled or scooped into the ground; this has yet to be proved by excavation, however. On this higher ground, the cobbles (21201) observed against the south wall of the longhouse, curving south-eastward with a neatly defined western edge and disappearing beneath the east baulk, emerged from the other side of the baulk, as 26011. They appeared to continue running south-east, with a neatly defined eastern edge, and to abut the stone footings. They also appeared to the south of the baulk, abutting the footings; the baulk, however, obscured their full extent.

As exposed so far, they seem similar to cobbled approaches or aprons found outside the entrances to longhouse 24 (Lelong 1997) and

to structure 6, area C (see section 6.1.3 above) -- except that they did not lead directly to an entrance. The possibility remains that a former entrance to longhouse 21 was sealed up and the entrance re-located to the west, although this is not apparent in the limited fabric of the wall presently visible. Removal of the baulk and, if necessary, part of the wall in a future season should resolve the question, as well as allow correlation of the ground surfaces and cobbling associated with structure 26 with those outside the longhouse.

Finally, in the eastern part of the trench, a discrete deposit (26007) appeared to be a dump of peat ash. On the surface it was a very compact spread of black, greasy silt which extended for c 3 m down the slope, along the east edge of structure 26. Excavation in plan revealed a smaller, more clearly defined deposit beneath it, c 1 m in extent, which contained concentrations of pink and pale orange silt. It appeared to have been dumped at the top of the slope and had spread downward and become compacted and trampled. A few sherds of mass-produced pottery and an iron object were found in the deposit. Analysis of a sample taken from it found little carbonised botanical material, only small amounts of birch (*Betula*) charcoal and two seeds of agrimony (*Agrimonia*); while the deposit may have been hearth waste, that could not be confirmed through botanical analysis.

The reason for this deposit's position here, as well as the purpose of structure 26, are not yet clear. The ash dump and the dark loamy silt (26014) between and below the paving stones might support the idea that this was the longhouse's midden: organic material deposited on the paving might have filtered down between the stones (although perhaps not made its way beneath them), and the proximity of the ash dump, perhaps material collected from the longhouse's hearth, suggests this was an area designated for rubbish and/or potential fertiliser. If organic rubbish dumped had been left here to compost, the paving slabs would have helped retain heat as the material decayed, encouraging the composting process. However, the absence of any artefacts in the possible midden material removed from between and beneath the stones seems inconsistent with this interpretation.

7.0 Discussion

7.1 Structure 6

The basic sequence of development of this large, complex building was established during the excavation: area 6B was most likely built first; at some later point, area 6C was added to its east end, and area 6E was built onto the south side of 6C -- if not at the same time that 6C was built, then certainly while its drain was still functioning. Area 6A was also built onto 6B, although its chronological relationship to other parts of the structure cannot be established. Finally, area 6D was built onto 6C.

Area 6A proved to be a small byre, with an area of hard standing to the west and a small, square, cobbled stand in the south-east corner. A well-flagged floor filled the centre, apparently cut into the surrounding ground and lying lower than the hard standing, suggesting drainage was an object. In the north-east corner the flags gave way to cobbling set around a large post-hole or pit. A nineteenth-century digging fork was found on the surface of this feature. Evidence for how the building had been constructed was sparse, but the amount of tumble could suggest further drystone courses on footings already given height, to the west and south sides of the building, by a cut into the adjacent platform (5) to create a level floor.

The sequence of deposits against the wall between areas A and B indicate a certain amount of time had passed between the construction of the latter and the addition of the former, enough to allow ground surfaces to accumulate against the end wall of B. That area A's west wall had been cut or terraced into the adjacent platform (5) again suggested it was a late addition.

The amount of space between the linear stone edging and the inner face of the western wall supports the area's interpretation as a byre. Measuring 1.9 m, this is 0.23 m deeper than a reconstructed byre at the Highland Folk Museum at Newtonmore, which is based upon a byre dating from between 1870 and 1880 (B Powell, pers comm). The area 6A byre would have had the right amount of space for cattle, or indeed pack ponies, as both were similarly small in the post-medieval period (C Smith, pers comm).

The broken, abandoned digging fork suggests this part of the building, at least, was abandoned some time in the nineteenth century, perhaps at the time of the township's final abandonment in 1839.

The evidence from area 6B showed that it had been built, like other parts of structure 6, by laying large boulder footings directly on the ground surface. On the south they lay in two courses, but on the north in one course. The tumble lying around the walls was notably angular, in comparison to the rounded stones making up tumble in areas 6C and 6D. The consistent use of angular or rounded stones in one structure or another must have been a deliberate choice, although the reasons for it are as yet unclear. However, that much of 6B's superstructure had consisted of turf was illustrated by the thick, black loam deposit in the south-west corner; elsewhere the turf walls must have been removed, probably for recycling as fertiliser elsewhere.

The building contained two clear zones, corresponding to its two entrances. The eastern one, with the drain down its centre and cobbling to either side, had been used to stable animals. The amount of space to the south of the drain, 1.83 m, is similar to the depth of the hard standing in 6A and might have housed either cattle or pack ponies. A post setting at the drain's west end might have supported a partition between this and the adjacent area, the ends of which could have been seated in the north and south walls.

The western part had at least three phases of flooring, the lowest of clay with a dirty, trampled surface, the second also of clay, and the third of trampled silt. The two earlier floors had clear boundaries on the west where they abutted cobbles set into the natural, suggesting perhaps another internal partition. Evidence for shifting cruck positions or other internal supports in the form of a cut feature and a stone setting also corresponded to the edge of the clay floors; the ends of an internal partition might well have been pegged or tied to standing crucks.

The clay floors would not have survived the pressure of animals' feet (indeed, one night during the excavation, cattle accidentally let into the field containing the township damaged the upper clay floor by crossing it only once). It seems possible, that this part of 6B was used for another purpose -- perhaps for threshing grain. If so, then opposing entrances might be expected to admit the wind and aid the threshing process. The slight break in the south wall noted in 1995 might represent such an entrance; it would only have needed to be wide enough to admit a breeze. Indeed, there need have been no break at ground level at all. One factor working against the theory that this part of 6B was a threshing barn is that the building does not lie perpendicular to the direction of the prevailing wind, but at an oblique angle to it. At the same time, the proximity of a stack yard to the south of 6B, visible as at least two circular stony platforms (see Figure 3), might support it.

Fatally undermining the threshing theory, however, is the fact that botanical analysis of a sample of the upper clay floor (6101) found no cultivated seeds or other evidence that threshing had taken place on it.

There was some evidence that the west wall of 6B had been rebuilt when 6A was added on. That wall was in fact more slight than might have been expected for an original gable wall facing into the wind, and so it makes sense that it had been rebuilt; however, the presence of the large stone footings at what would have been 6B's western corners indicates that the wall had not been moved either east or west when 6A was added.

At some point, area 6C was added to the east end of 6B, terraced into the slope below and built on a different alignment, and the eastern wall face of 6B was dropped to the floor of 6C. The plan (Figure 7) of the stonework shows that the southern part of the now-mutual wall was also rebuilt at this time. There was slight evidence that the drain in 6B had communicated with the west end of 6C, passing through the section of rebuilt wall; the need to create a passage for waste through the wall, from one drain to another, may explain why part of the wall was rebuilt when 6C was added.

In area 6C, at least two phases of use were evident. In the earlier, the building had had two entrances, the eastern neatly cobbled and the western more roughly cobbled and partly paved with a threshold stone; a post-hole just inside the western entrance would

have supported a door. The two entrances need not have been contemporary; no evidence was found either for or against their having existed at the same time. A neatly paved and revetted platform abutted the north wall and extended across its line, next to the western entrance. The plan of this phase (Figure 8) shows that the platform would have led directly to one end of a deep, cobbled drain running diagonally across the structure to the junction with 6E's north-west corner, surely a deliberate arrangement. Whatever process was taking place here, materials may have been stored on the platform and perhaps shovelled from there into the drain; waste was then fed out through the south wall of 6C.

At some point while the eastern entrance was open, a cobbled apron was added to it to form an approach. The entrance may have led inside onto a timber platform, supported on a rubble base and resting on a boulder alignment inside the doorway. The irregular scoop which the boulder alignment defined must have been related to the use of this part of 6C, but its purpose could not be determined.

That 6C had two separate parts, at least in its earlier phase, is supported by the stone-packed gully, with at least two associated post settings, which ran diagonally across the interior. This may have held a partition dividing the area with the drain from that containing the scoop, although again the purpose of both is unclear.

In its later phase both entrances were blocked; this may have happened at the same time, but if so it would have left no obvious way into the building. The eastern entrance, certainly, was blocked sometime in the nineteenth century, from the pottery sealed beneath the blocking. When the western entrance was blocked, the part of the platform running through the north wall was also sealed and the platform covered with stones.

Given the date of the blocking (at least of the eastern entrance), it seems likely that this occurred late in the life of the township -- after its 1803 clearance and perhaps before its final abandonment in 1839. It may even have been later than this, if a tenant farmer or shepherd needed an unroofed enclosure of some kind.

Area 6D, clearly built onto 6C, was interpreted as a small byre for two or three animals, with a cobbled drain to carry waste down and out of the east end of the building, through the gap at the end of the drain. Slots for stall partitions were visible among the cobbles. The depth of the stalls could only have been c 1.2 m, 40 per cent shorter than the byre areas in 6A and 6B (1.9 m). Smaller animals, such as goats or sheep, must have been kept here; pigs are unlikely to have been resident, as much stronger walls would have been needed to contain them. The walls were built partly of earth and partly of stone, with earth banked up around and beneath stone footings and small boulders; only the east, end wall consisted of a single row of substantial footings.

Area 6E was also built onto 6C, but it was in existence when the drain in 6C was used. That this drain runs directly (diagonally across the interior) to the north-west corner of 6E suggests that 6E was built at the same time as the drain, if not as 6C as a whole. Its western wall was cut into the slope and revetted with stone, and its northern wall (which it shared with 6C) also served to revet 6C's interior, standing two courses high on the south but only one course high on the north. Along the south the stone footings had been laid one course high on the old ground surface.

At the junction between the two structures, at the north-west corner of 6E, removal of the wall showed they had no stones in common, with 6E built onto the existing south wall of 6C. A stone setting (possibly for a cruck or tethering post) rested in the corner in the black-brown, greasy layer which covered the north-western interior and had apparently seeped through the drain built beneath the wall from 6C.

The structure's broad entrance and the lack of any firm internal surfaces suggests it was used sporadically for animals, perhaps as a feeding station or to give them temporary shelter. It might alternatively have been used to store tools or seed for cultivation in the adjacent field.

7.2 *Structure 15*

This sub-rectangular hollow, defined by a steep slope to the north and a slight bank to the south, proved to be a deliberate scoop to expose a natural clay deposit. The natural slope to the north had been cut to steepen it and expose the clay, and then revetted; the bank along the south, built of earth and some stone, had always been very low. It was apparently meant to retain something in the base of the hollow. Artefacts and the deep water-etched channels on the surface of the clay and the absence of plant remains in it show that it had been exposed for some time but kept clear of vegetation before topsoil formed over it.

The hollow, with its revetted slope and bank, has been interpreted as a scoop to obtain clay and then soak it with standing water, retained by the bank. This would have softened the naturally hard, somewhat gritty clay, making it pliable and allowing it to be sieved or evaporated to remove impurities and large particles (Rice 1987, 118; Rye 1981, 17). It could then have used to make floors (like those found in structure 6B), as a mortar in drystone structures or, theoretically, to make pottery vessels, although no evidence of either the second or third uses has been found so far at Easter Raitts. The linear stone surface in the eastern part of the hollow might have been a working surface, allowing access to the clay for sieving and sorting.

The hollow's position, directly outside the longhouse's entrance, and the relationship of its revetted northern side to the trampled surfaces associated with the longhouse all indicate that the clay was exposed and being worked during the longhouse's occupation by

humans (rather than animals, its latter occupants). The iron artefacts found on the surface appear early nineteenth century in date, although they are very corroded. They may have been dumped there after the longhouse had been abandoned by humans.

7.3 *Structure 21*

Continued excavation of parts of this longhouse have clarified something of its history and development. The byre annexe at its east end proved to have had an earlier floor, the surface of a natural clay deposit (similar to that in structure 15) which had been deliberately exposed to serve as such. Its internal features included evidence for a door-post just inside the entrance, a milking stand with a tethering post in the south-west corner, cobbling and paving to the north and a collapsed, curving, drystone structure in the north-west corner. While the purpose of some of the elements is not yet fully understood, the byre's essential purpose -- to house and milk one or two small animals, such as goats or sheep -- has been established.

In the main part of the longhouse, the eastern end's complex of stony platforms respecting a central cobbled linear feature has been interpreted as a dairy, on the basis of the sherds of milk pan found associated with the northern platform. The central area only contained patches of two earlier surviving floors. Box beds may have stood here, forming an internal partition between the western living area, with its hearth, and the dairy at the eastern end; there would have been no need to lay floors here in that case; the nearby stone-packed pit might have served as a latrine.

The west end, the main focus of investigation in this season, contained evidence that people entering the house had habitually walked clockwise around the large central hearth: all but the latest floor had been scoured away north of the hearth, while six phases of floor survived to the south of it. The first three floors abutted the hearth slab, which had apparently been set in a shallow scoop.

The third floor in evidence had been exposed along the hearth for some time, as its surface was trampled and charcoal-stained, but then large slabs had been lain above it to form a flagged surface around the hearth; the floor had continued in use to the south of these and had worn very thin between the flags and the wall. Sometime after the flags were laid, while this floor was still in use, glazed, mass-produced pottery began to be broken in the house and trampled into the floor. As the last event in the life of the floor, an iron digging spade foot, apparently fetched from a fire in which its handle had burnt, had been laid face down with some hot, burnt material from the fire. Then the next floor was laid above and around the spade. This was followed by two more earth floors, all stained with rake-out from the hearth.

These floors provide a sequence, theoretically datable through radiocarbon assay, of the house's occupation. It may not give a complete sequence, as even earlier floors are likely to have been worn

away before the earliest surviving one was laid; however, it may give a time span to indicate when that floor was laid, and when mass-produced pottery became available to the inhabitants, or at least began to be broken in the house.

Another possibly earlier feature, the scoop inside the entranceway with evidence of at least two episodes of burning in it, contained dating evidence. This scoop was associated with post-holes which might have supported a screen of willow, birch, alder and hazel (from analysis of the lowest burnt layer), protecting the hearth from draughts from the doorway; it was also empty of mass-produced pottery or other finds. The burnt layers in it were sealed by the second-latest floor in the house, along with small paving slabs leading out through the entrance. The scoop may be linked to a linear hollow continuing north, but this has yet to be fully investigated.

Evidence for a porch sheltering the entrance, in the form of two post-holes, was found outside the house; these may have been associated with an oval-shaped area of cobbling between the south wall and the small outbuilding to the south (26). The posts were pulled out at some point and the entranceway later altered with a short stone facade along the east, associated with a later ground surface. Subsequent turf slumps from the wall sealed this.

7.4 *Structure 26*

The remains of this small structure, lying outside the entrance to longhouse 21, consisted of a sub-rectangular paved area, defined on the north by a row of substantial stone footings which appeared torevet the adjacent ground outside the structure; tumble from the footings indicated another drystone course above them, and what may have been decayed turf from walls also lay around and above the paving. On its other sides, however, the paving was defined by a gravel bank which sloped down to an abrupt dip, leaving a slight gap around the paving. Several possible post-holes and one definite post-hole lay around the edges of the paving, respected by the slabs, at regular intervals.

The building or enclosure evoked by this evidence is unlike any other yet investigated at Easter Raitts. It must have had a relatively substantial drystone wall along the north side, perhaps with a turf element as well. Along the other sides, the wall is likely to have been a much thinner structure, perhaps of wattling supported on posts with an outer skin of turf. No obvious entrance to the structure has yet been identified.

The dark, loamy silt lying between and below the paving stones and the possible ash dumped just north-east of the structure might suggest this was an enclosed midden. The paving stones would have encouraged the composting process, helping organic material retain heat and compost faster. However, the absence of artefacts in the dark, loamy silt excavated seems incongruent with this interpretation; certainly some fragments of cultural material would have been dumped

in a midden along with organic waste, and a few would have been trampled or kicked between the paving stones. Even on the stones, few artefacts were found relative to the large numbers found in the topsoil above. The structure might simply have been an outdoor working area or lean-to; full excavation of the structure and further analysis of the finds and samples may resolve the issue.

8.0 Conclusions

This season's excavations have produced both revelations and further puzzles. The clay puddling feature (15) and paved outbuilding (26), associated with longhouses (24 and 21) respectively, are unique so far among excavated structures in townships like Easter Raitts. They show the variety of uses for which buildings were constructed, and throw light on the use of space outside the houses.

The further excavation of longhouse 21 has shown how space was organised inside it: a main living area with a hearth at the west end, space perhaps for box beds in the middle and a dairy at the east end, and a small byre annexe used for milking. The burnt scoop inside the entrance is presently difficult to explain, but it might have supported a screen which had protected the hearth from draughts and later burnt down. There was evidence for habitual movement through the doorway and clockwise around the hearth. The sequence of six floors south of the hearth -- three of them laid before mass-produced pottery was available to or at least broken by the inhabitants -- reveals the abrupt change in the material culture used in the house. Analysis and close dating, if possible, of the stratigraphically earliest sherds of pottery may show when that change took place.

Structure 6 proved to be an immensely complex building which had developed over several phases of construction and use. The amount of accommodation for animals it contained was most surprising, given that most eighteenth-century accounts of Highland townships describe cattle as spending winters inside longhouses, and most longhouses excavated so far (at Rosal, Lairg and Lix, for example) have been byre-dwellings. It does, however, complement the evidence of the two longhouses excavated so far (21 and 24), neither of which has been a byre dwelling in the traditional sense, if at all.

It may be that at Easter Raitts, families over-wintered their cattle together in a single building; the gradual expansion of structure 6 might therefore reflect the growing number of animals in the township - and therefore its growing prosperity or size through time. The evidence for some kind of industrial process in area 6C may be linked to the animals' presence, such as tanning leather using urine from the byres.

A final possibility for structure 6 is that some of its rooms, particularly 6A and 6B (east), were used to stable ponies. The proximity of a major north/south drove road along the foothills to the

north means that people with pack ponies must frequently have been passing the township, even when drovers were not. The inhabitants of Easter Raitts might have offered them and their beasts overnight shelter.

The results of this year's work, building on the results of previous years, have broadened what is known about the lives of people as well as animals in the township. Further excavation, here and elsewhere, may resolve some of the questions raised, and further documentary research may answer others. The future excavation of some of the more ephemeral structural remains in the township might yield more information about its earlier history, and the investigation of other possible outdoor working areas would also provide insight into how people spent their time outside their houses.

The physical traces of those lives, created through careful building, careless discarding or simply the dust and trample of everyday existence, are our best and closest contact with what it was like to live in post-medieval Easter Raitts. That existence was shortly to change enormously with the Improvements -- a change which preserved those traces while it altered forever the lives that had left them. Their material environment was part and expression of a social and conceptual system with a long, sinuous history and a fierce integrity. The ongoing work at Easter Raitts can show us not only what that Highland society was like when the township was cleared, but also how it came to be that way.

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11.0 Concordances

Lists of finds and photographs will be deposited as part of the site archive with the National Monuments Record of Scotland, after full publication of the excavation results.

9.1 Summary List of Contexts

Area 6A

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
6000	topsoil/turf
6001	stone footings of N wall
6002	stone footings of W wall
6003	stone footings of S wall
6004	stone footings of E wall/partition with 6B
6005	mottled loam outside N, W, S; turf slump
6006	mid brown loam within 001, 002, 003
6007	cut and backfill of CFA trench B
6008	paving and edging stones; drain
6009	cobbled square structure, SE corner; stand
6010	silt with charcoal above cobbles
6011	tumble and matrix
6012	cut and backfill of CFA trench D
6013	gritty silt and pebbles shoring up platform revetment
6014	cut for W wall 6002
6015	occupation deposit W of drain 6008
6016	sandy deposit against inside of W wall
6017	cancelled
6018	cobbled surface W of drain 6008
6019	matrix around cobbles 6018
6020	sandy slump against inside of S wall
6021	sandy silt, SE corner
6022	brown silt and charcoal, SE corner
6023	red-brown sandy silt, charcoal flecks
6024	brown silt with charcoal flecks
6025	stone footings of extension to N wall 6001
6026	sandy silt N of 6025
6027	black-brown greasy silt E of entrance
6028	yellow-brown silt in entrance
6029	brown silt below tumble N of 6001
6030	oval cut outside S wall
6031	brown sandy silt below/within cobbles 6009
6032	red-brown silty sand below 6031
6033	fine sand N of N wall 6001
6034	cut along S wall 6003
6035	?natural compact orange sand/cobbles outside S wall
6036	loose silt in S wall 6003 = 6006
6037	cancelled
6038	humic reddish grit above natural outside W wall
6039	fill of cut 6044
6040	cut into 6038 for W wall 6002
6041	fill of wall = 6006

6042 banded beige sand abutting 6004 on W
 6043 old ground surface beneath 6005, above 6038
 6044 cut of ?pit into 6042, filled with 6039
 6045 cut into natural
 6046 matrix of wall 6004
 6047 cut for wall 6004
 6048 cut for fill 6030

Area 6B

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
6100	turf/topsoil
6101	charcoal-rich turf collapse in S interior
6102	stone footings of S wall
6103	stone footings of E wall
6104	stone footings of N wall
6105	tumble and matrix
6106	upper beige clay floor
6107	cut and backfill of CFA trench E
6108	flagstones outside W entrance
6109	possible ogs below S wall (in CFA slot)
6110	post-abandonment silt in E end
6111	poss clay floor outside 6B at W end = ?6106
6112	fill of black circular feature; cut = 6163
6113	turf slump in/outside N wall
6114	brown silt/small stones in W entrance
6115	ogs under N wall
6116	poss circular feature outside N wall = 6169
6117	turf slump inside E entrance, against W of 6103
6118	linear stone feature; drain
6119	threshold and cobbles of E entrance
6120	dark brown occupation deposit within 6118, E end
6121	dark linear feature in 6106
6122	black loam, SW corner
6123	stone footings of W wall = 6004
6124	sandy floor in N interior (E)
6125	black turfy loam outside S wall, W end
6126	brown silt along S wall interior (E)
6127	charcoal-rich lense near 6126
6128	lower beige clay floor
6129	dirty humic surface of 6128 = 6114
6130	natural
6131	brown clay silt exposed in 6128 (CFA slot)
6132	hard sand under 6115
6133	?redeposited natural bank along N wall exterior
6134	?redeposited sand/clay, N of 6133
6135	dark brown silty surface, W interior
6136	linear depression along S wall interior
6137	metalled surface outside N wall
6138	lower cobbles in 6118
6139	poss cruckpad in B, N side
6140	poss stone setting for post, W end of drain 6118
6141	occupation surface below 6110
6142	compact sandy silt below 6125
6143	turf deposit N of N wall 6104
6144	poss cobbling/metalling N of N wall

6145 poss post setting at E entrance
 6146 clay floor above 6114, exterior = ?6106
 6147 silt deposit, SE corner of centre = 6126, 6127
 6148 cancelled
 6149 poss cut in clay floor = 6159
 6150 dark fill of 6149 = 6160
 6151 trampled earth floor under 6135
 6152 cobbling under 6135
 6153 poss cruck bad (boulder)
 6154 cobbling N/NW of drain 6118
 6155 cobbles S of drain 6118, under 6110
 6156 hard red-brown silty sand
 6157 fill of post-hole 6158
 6158 cut of post-hole inside E entrance
 6159 = 6149
 6160 = 6150
 6161 stones above flags in drain 6118
 6162 flagstone floor of drain 6118
 6163 cut for post-hole near N wall; fill = 6112
 6164 yellow clay deposit = 6128
 6165 cobbling trampled into natural in W entrance
 6166 dark brown humic E fill of drain 6118
 6167 dark red sandy W fill of drain 6118
 6168 cut feature under 6004
 6169 cut for 6116
 6170 cut of post-hole
 6171 fill of post-hole
 6172 lower fill of 6116
 6173 secondary fill of 6116
 6174 upper fill of 6116
 6175 cut for 6131 into 6128
 6176 dark brown greasy silt around cobbles 6154
 6177 matrix around 6162

Area 6C

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
6200	turf/topsoil
6201	stone footings of W wall
6202	stone footings of S wall
6203	stone footings of E wall
6204	stone footings of N wall
6205	tumble and matrix
6206	curving platform against N wall
6207	cobbled path
6208	poss doorway (W)
6209	linear stone feature; drain
6210	dark brown humic silt; fill of 6209
6211	black-brown silt along N interior
6212	cancelled
6213	small stones/cobbles across central interior
6214	compact surface, SW corner, among boulders
6215	cobbled surface W of drain 6209
6216	cancelled
6217	post-hole W of W doorway
6218	cancelled

6219 dark brown sandy silt along S wall
 6220 rough rubbly layer along S face of N wall
 6221 turf bank against N face of N wall
 6222 cobbling from beneath S wall to exterior
 6223 boulder setting in E part of interior
 6224 natural, NW corner
 6225 dark brown-black greasy silt under 6221
 6226 threshold stone in N wall
 6227 fill of 6217
 6228 blocking of W doorway 6226
 6229 matrix for cobbles 6207
 6230 dark brown loam between 6207 and 6206
 6231 rough cobbly surface below 6230
 6232 silty sandy/gritty matrix around 6231 = 6236
 6233 cobbles to N of 6226
 6234 orange sand, poss natural/redep, below 6248/223
 6235 brown humic silt between doorways under N wall 6204
 6236 rough cobbles below 6225, N of N wall
 6237 poss circular setting in drain S end
 6238 linear arrangement of stones in wall, S end of drain
 6239 blocking of E doorway 6240
 6240 cobbled doorway (E)
 6241 brown sandy silt, SW corner, under 6214
 6242 loose mid brown sandy silt under 6226
 6243 matrix for cobbles 6240
 6244 sloping stones under W wall, poss drain
 6245 cut for 6238
 6246 cut for W wall
 6247 stones sealing platform 6206
 6248 light brown sandy silt around stones in top of hollow
 6249 NE stone setting
 6250 matrix of stones 6244
 6251 matrix for 6238
 6252 stone-packed gully
 6253 stone setting

Area 6D

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
6300	turf/topsoil
6301	stone footings of walls
6302	tumble and matrix
6303	cobbled surface, interior
6304	linear stone feature; drain
6305	linear N/S cut through cobbles; slot
6306	turf bank forming N wall
6307	black deposit in drain 6304, W end
6308	black-brown silty layer under 6306
6309	matrix for cobbles
6310	light brown sandy silt under 6309
6311	linear N/S feature; slot

Area 6E

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
6400	turf/topsoil
6401	stone footings of walls
6402	tumble and matrix
6403	stone ?post setting, NW corner
6404	dark brown humic silt; fill of 6403
6405	mid brown loam below 6402, S side and centre
6406	black greasy silt below 6402, N side
6407	brown silt among cobbles 6408
6408	rough cobbles forming ?surface, NE corner
6409	compact orange sand and pebbles; natural
6410	dark orange-red gravely sand in entrance
6411	buried ploughsoil, S side of entrance

Area 15

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
15001	turf/topsoil
15002	red gritty gravely deposit; deliberate dump
15003	red-brown silty sand; ogs N of bank
15004	red-brown silty sand; ogs S of bank
15005	cobbled surface, top of bank
15006	cobbles forming entrance to longhouse 24
15007	decayed turf overlying 15006
15008	cobbles/gravel bank
15009	red pebbly layer forming top of low bank
15010	decayed turf underlying cobbles
15011	linear arrangement of stones in 15003
15012	orange gritty sand; natural
15013	small patch of cobbles
15014	dark loamy matrix around 24023 = 15016,020
15015	cobbles = 15008
15016	= 15014
15017	large stones in base of hollow
15018	red-brown silty sand; matrix of 15017
15019	stony surface, top of bank
15020	= 15014
15021	compact yellow-grey clay; trampled interface
15022	layer cobbles forming bank under 15009
15023	pebbly layer in bank
15024	cobbles under 15028
15025	black/orange ?occupation layer
15026	roughly made stony surface under 15014
15027	red-brown loam under 15013
15028	orange gritty layer under 15025
15029	angular stones in base of hollow
15030	cobbles forming base of platform
15031	stony surface under 15026
15032	wet sand
15033	undisturbed yellow-grey clay

Area 21

(Numbers 2100-21050 and 21100 on refer to 21A; 21051-21099 refer to 21B.)

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
21001	topsoil
21002	stone footings of S wall
21003	tumble and dark brown loam matrix outside S wall
21004	charred plank
21005	tumble and dark brown loam matrix inside S wall
21006	brown-black compact loam; latest floor in W end
21007	tumble and dark brown loam matrix inside N wall
21008	orange-brown gritty sand; lower fill of post-hole 21103
21009	stone footings of N wall
21010	grey-brown loam; uppermost turf slump outside N wall
21011	light brown loam; second to last turf slump outside N wall
21012	cobbles in hollow 21045, outside N wall
21013	light brown silt around cobbles 21012
21014	light brown loam (= 21011)
21015	grey-brown loam (= 21010)
21016	tumble from 21044
21017	greasy black loam inside S wall (= 21006)
21018	cut of hollow outside N wall
21019	patchy clay floor in centre
21020	orange-brown gritty sand; hardcore in central interior
21021	orange-red gritty sand subsoil outside S wall
21022	cobbles outside S wall
21023	cancelled
21024	flagstones around hearth
21025	cobble spread, W end
21026	linear edge of cobble spread 21025
21027	light yellow loam; discrete turf outside S wall (W)
21028	spread of stones outside S wall (W)
21029	light grey-brown loam; old ground surface outside S wall
21030	dark brown loam; slumped turf outside S wall (W)
21031	patch of beige baked clay W of hearth
21032	grey-brown humic silt; upper fill of post-hole 21103
21033	yellow sand below flags 21024 (= 21125)
21034	orange brown sandy silt and cobbles; interior hardcore (= 21020)
21035	dark brown loam; slumped turf outside S wall (E)
21036	cancelled
21037	orange and pink sand and charcoal; fill of hearth
21038	orange silty sand and cobbles (= 21020, 21034)
21039	dark brown loam; post-abandonment layer inside building
21040	dark brown silt; upper fill of central post 21122
21041	central hearth
21042	mid-brown compact loam; ?turf platform above cobbles 21025
21043	band of grey-brown loam; turf slump from 21044?
21044	stone footings of enclosure wall
21045	orange gritty subsoil outside N wall
21046	light grey loam; earliest turf slump outside N wall
21047	cancelled
21048	cancelled
21049	cut of stone-packed scoop, E end
21050	linear band of cobbles; ?drain, E end
21051	topsoil (21B)
21052	stone footings of W wall of 21B

21053 tumble and dark brown loam matrix, W of 21052
 21054 tumble and dark brown loam matrix, E of 21052
 21055 tumble and dark brown loam matrix, outside S wall of 21B
 21056 grey-brown loam matrix among stones of 21053
 21057 stone footings of S wall
 21058 grey-brown loam matrix among stones of S wall 21057
 21059 dark brown loam; turf slump outside S wall
 21060 greasy grey-brown humic loam; abandonment layer in interior
 21061 stone footings of E wall of 21B
 21062 grey-brown loam matrix among stones of 21061
 21063 tumble and dark brown loam matrix outside 21061
 21064 tumble and dark brown loam matrix inside 21061
 21065 patch of gravel outside S wall
 21066 dark brown loam lens; discrete decayed turf in 21063
 21067 flagstones forming ?partition inside structure (S)
 21068 dark brown loam wedge inside S wall; turf slump
 21069 orange gritty sand below 21053
 21070 orange silt below 21070; old ground surface
 21071 dark grey-brown loam around entrance; post-abandonment layer
 21072 light brown loam outside S wall; old ground surface
 21073 packing stones in post-hole 21081
 21074 small cobbles, W interior
 21075 cancelled
 21076 cancelled
 21077 stones in entrance
 21078 compact greasy dark brown silt; latest floor
 21079 red brown sandy silt along edges of entrance; hollowed ?natural
 21080 dark brown silty loam; ?postpipe in post-hole 21081
 21081 cut of post-hole, SW corner
 21082 cut of post-hole in entrance
 21083 dark brown silt and packing stones in post-hole 21082
 21084 orange brown gritty sand (= 21079)
 21085 greasy dark brown silt (= 21078)
 21086 yellow gravely clay below 21078/21085
 21087 boulders and cobbles forming curving structure, N-W corner
 21088 yellow-orange clay sand; redeposited natural below 21089
 21089 light brown loam and charcoal lenses below 21087
 21090 rectangular patch of paving, N edge of interior
 21091 cobbles, NE corner of interior
 21092 small stones tucked beneath large stone footing of S wall
 21093- unassigned
 100
 21101 black residue under iron pot fragment
 21102 orange-brown gritty sand; lower fill of post-hole 21103
 21103 cut of post-hole outside N wall
 21104 linear spread of stones in ?entrance (SW corner)
 21105 dark red trample W of 21104 (= 21111)
 21106 unassigned
 21107 rectangular patch of light yellow loam (= 21027)
 21108 grooved slab near hearth
 21109 dark brown charcoal-rich layer; upper fill of post-hole 21126
 21110 grey-brown trampled silt, SW interior
 21111 dark red trample, SW corner of interior
 21112 orange gritty silt, SE corner of interior (= 21069)
 21113 dark brown humic silt, SE corner of interior
 21114 cancelled
 21115 stones and orange-brown silt; S platform, E end
 21116 stones and orange-brown silt; N platform, E end

21117 large slabs above E end, 21050
 21118 light grey-brown trampled silt, W end of interior
 21119 patch of cream clay outside S wall
 21120 dark brown greasy loam; late floor, below 21006
 21121 orange-red gritty sand and stones; lower fill of post-hole 21122
 21122 cut of central post-hole
 21123 light brown silty clay; lowest floor S of flagstones
 21124 black greasy silt below 21120, S of flagstones
 21125 light yellow sand under flagstones, over 21123
 21126 cut of post-hole, SW corner
 21127 packing stones in post-hole 21126
 21128 black humic silt in hollow 21049
 21129 stones packed in hollow 21049
 21130 patches of baked clay, central interior
 21131 loose dark brown humic silt above stones 21139
 21132 pieces of wood in 21109
 21133 patch of light grey compact silt in base of post-hole 21126
 21134 linear cut of drain 21050
 21135 red-brown gritty sand and cobbles below 21115
 21136 ?cut for baked clay 21119
 21137 lower fill of central scoop 21138, below 21120
 21138 cut of shallow, amorphous central scoop
 21139 stones packed in drain at E end, below 21050
 21140 yellow-pink trample at W end, abutting 21111
 21141 compact red silt below 21111, cut by 21126
 21142 red-brown gritty sand and cobbles below 21115 (= 21135)
 21143 orange-brown gritty sand and cobbles below 21116
 21144 flat stones tipping into N end of cut 21126
 21145 orange-red gritty sand subsoil outside N wall
 21146 red gritty soil under cobbles 21025
 21147-99 unassigned
 21200 mottled brown/black deposit on entrance cobbles 21201
 21201 cobbles to SE of entrance
 21202 unassigned
 21203 pink-brown sandy silt outside entrance
 21204 yellow sand in 21134
 21205 ogs under 21200
 21206 yellow-orange sand in entrance
 21207 orange gravelly sand in entrance
 21208 pale grey silt
 21209 cobbles in interior below 21118
 21210 brown loam under 21024
 21211 poss post-hole in scoop
 21212 loam between slabs 21024
 21213 interface between 21210 and 21125
 21214 charcoal under 21024
 21215 mottled charcoal and decayed turf under cobbles 21201
 21216 light yellow-brown fine sand in post-hole 21218
 21217 brown sandy loam in 21218
 21218 cut of W post-hole outside entrance
 21219 yellow gritty clay sand under 21123
 21220 cut of E post-hole outside entrance
 21221 fill of post-hole 21220
 21222 charcoal layer in entrance
 21223 charcoal deposit under spade
 21224 fine yellow sand in 21242
 21225 compact charcoal-rich deposit under 21224
 21226 grey-black trample under 21219

21227 coarse orange sand under 21126
 21228 post-hole in cut 21242
 21229 grey-brown silty sand around post-pit, under 21123
 21230 bank of red-brown silt along hearth
 21231 red-brown clay abutting hearth
 21232 red-orange clay in entrance
 21233 pink to light brown burnt silt in 21242
 21234 orange-pink sand abutting 21233
 21235 poss stakehole in 21242
 21236 cancelled
 21237 compact coarse light brown sandy under 21222
 21238 black, soft organic layer under 21237
 21239 cobbles under 21238
 21240 light brown silty sand between cobbles 21239
 21241 compact black layer in base of scoop 21242
 21242 cut of scoop
 21243 orange-yellow sand in base of scoop
 21244 angular cut in 21219
 21245 unassigned
 21246 linear hollow running through entrance
 21247 narrow scoop to N of 21242

Area 26

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
26001	turf/topsoil
26002	black greasy sandy silt; ?turf slump
26003	large stone footings along N
26004	tumble in interior
26005	compact black to brown sandy silt
26006	tumble from 21002
26007	orange-pink fine silt; ?peat ash dump
26008	gravel/small cobbles on bank
26009	red-orange gritty sand of bank
26010	small cobbles; surface of track
26011	curve-edged cobbled surface abutting stone footings
26012	paving under 26015
26013	orange sand beside/under paving; = 26018, 26021
26014	loose dark humic silt, cbm, under paving
26015	dark brown sandy loam over paving = 26016
26016	= 26015
26017	= 26008 in NW
26018	= 26013, 26021
26019	post-hole cut on E edge of paving 26012
26020	loose humic silty sand; fill of post-hole 26019
26021	= 26013, 26018

11.2 Summary List of Samples

(The sequence of sample numbers follows on from the 1997 season.)

<i>Sample No</i>	<i>Context No</i>	<i>Description</i>
54	21118	floor deposits, SW corner
55	21210	BS, directly under paving slabs

56	21212	BS of deposit between paving slabs
57	21216	50% sample of post-hole fill
58	21217	50% sample of post-hole fill
59	212100	BS of slab bedding
60	21210	wood fragments
61	21125	BS of sand lens
62	21123	BS of charcoal associated with spade
63	21223	" "
64	---	unused
65	6205	BS of black soil in tumble
66	6113	BS of tumble matrix
67	6101	BS of tumble matrix
68	6121	BS of deposit
69	6106	BS of clay floor
70	6101	BS of turf/charcoal slump
71	15001	BS of upper fill of hollow
72	6127	BS of charcoaly silt
73	21123	BS of early floor
74	21124	BS of greasy black floor
75	6113	BS of turf slump outside N wall
76	6117	BS of sandy soil
77	15004	BS of ogs
78	15010	BS of decayed turf layer under cobbles
79	15023	BS of decayed turf layer in bank
80	6010	BS of poss occupation deposit
81	6022	" "
82	6110	BS of dark brown charcoal-rich deposit
83	15025	BS of deposit
84	6125	charcoal fragments
85	6142	matrix beneath iron object
86	26007	BS of ?peat ash
87	15027	BS of ogs
88	15028	BS of lowest layer of platform
89	15018	clay matrix
90	6146	BS of clay layer
91	6143	BS of turf slump
92	6024	BS of charcoal-rich deposit
93	6023	sandy occupation deposit
94	6027	greasy silt
95	6114	occupation deposit in entrance
96	6036	fill in base of E wall 6003
97	6210	BS of drain fill, spit 1
98	6210	BS of drain fill, spit 2
99	6210	BS of drain fill, spit 3 (on cobbles at base)
100	6307	fill between drain cobbles
101	21126	post-hole fill
102	21225	charcoal deposit
103	21232	re-orange clay
104	621	dark peaty material
105	6151	earth floor
106	6106	clay floor
107	6150	infill at N wall
108	15001 etc	column sample through base of hollow
109	15021	clay sample
110	15032	wet orange sand
111	6156	post-hole fill
112	6160	post-hole fill
113	6157	post-hole fill

114	6024	turf slump
115	6167	W fill of drain
116	6167	" "
117	6166	E fill of drain
118	6166	" "
119	6112	50% sample of 6163
120	15001 etc	column sample
121	15029	matrix of linear stones, base of hollow
122	6130	B horizon (background sample)
123	6164	clay floor
124	6227	post-hole fill
125	15007	decayed turf
126	15009	surface of bank
127	6235	silt under threshold slab
128	15016	stony surface
129	15014	stony surface
130	15019	bank fabric
131	15026	stony surface
132	15025	black/orange sandy layer
133	6126	phosphate samples
134	6147	phosphate samples
135	6135	phosphate samples
136	6406	phosphate samples
137	6141	phosphate samples
138	15025	black/orange sandy layer
139	6309	cobble matrix
140	6135	phosphate samples
141	15021	yellow-grey clay
142	26014	paving matrix
143	26020	post-hole fill
144	6131	bulk sample
145	21222	charcoal in entrance
146	21241	lowest burnt fill in scoop
147	21233	burnt silt in scoop
148	21111	silty floor
149	21234	burnt sand
150	21241	lowest burnt fill in scoop
151	21219	yellow clay sand floor; lower spit
152	21219	" "
153	21230	red-brown silt along hearth
154	21219	yellow clay sand floor; upper spit
155	6171	post-hole fill
156	21226	grey-black sandy floor
157	21226	preserved wood within 21226

11.3 Summary List of Drawings

<i>Sheet</i>	<i>Dwg</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Scale</i>
1	1	21B	south-facing section through floor	1:10
2	2	21A	W-facing section through platforms	1:10
3	3	6C	pre-excavation plan	1:20
4	4	6D	pre-excavation plan	1:20
5	5	21A	post-ex plan of SW quadrant	1:20
6	6	6A	pre-excavation plan	1:20
7	7	6B	pre-excavation plan	1:20

5	8	21B	post-ex plan of floor	1:20
1	9	21A	plan of entranceway	1:20
8	10	6E	pre-excavation plan	1:20
2	11	21B	NE-facing section through cobbles	1:10
2	12	21A	SW-facing section through paving and floors	1:10
9	13	6B	pre-excavation plan	1:20
10	14	6B	section through N wall	1:10
11	15	26	pre-excavation plan (W part)	1:20
12	16	26	pre-excavation plan (E part)	1:20
13	17	21A	N-facing section through floors	1:10
14	19	21A	overlay of Dwg 5	1:20
15	20	6A	plan of occupation deposits	1:20
16	21	6D	overlay of Dwg 4	1:20
17	22	6C	overlay of Dwg 3	1:20
1	23	6D	E-facing section across drain	1:10
19	26	6A	overlay plan	1:20
20	27	6A	overlay showing cut feature	1:20
21	28	15	pre-excavation plan (SE part)	1:20
22	29	15	pre-excavation plan (NE part)	1:20
22	30	15	pre-excavation plan (W part)	1:20
23	31	15	plan of slot trench	1:20
23	32	15	W-facing section of slot trench	1:10
24	33	6B	overlay of Dwg 19	1:20
25	34	6A	overlay plan	1:20
26	35	21A	SE-facing section through post-hole 21220	1:10
26	36	21A	E-facing section through post-hole 21218	1:10
27	37	6C	N-facing section through drain	1:10
27	38	6E	E-facing section of slot	1:10
27	39	6D	profile across drain	1:10
13	40	21A	overlay plan of floor 21219	1:20
28	41	6B	overlay plan of lower floor	1:20
28	42	6A	E-facing section through S wall	1:10
29	43	6C	overlay plan	1:20
30	44	6E	plan of slot trench	1:20
31	45	6A	plan of slot trench through W wall	1:20
32	46	15	S-facing section of slot trench	1:10
27	47	6E	E-facing section of slot through entrance	1:10
28	48	21A	overlay plan of box section to cobbles 21222	1:20
29	49	6A	N-facing section of slot through W wall	1:10
33	50	6B	overlay plan of floor deposits in slot trench	1:10
35	51	6B	plan of floor area to lowest level	1:20
34	52	6B	overlay plan	1:20
36	53	6C	plan of post-hole, drain and wall	1:20
37	54	6A	section through 6039, 6004, etc	1:10
37	54	6B	post-ex plan of drain and cobbles	1:20
38	55	6B	plan of W side of baulk	1:20
39	56	6D	N-facing section through cobbles	1:10
34	57	6B	S-facing section through post-hole	1:10
34	58	6B	N-facing section through post-hole	1:10
35	59	6C	overlay plan of T-slot	1:20
36	60	6D	overlay plan for Dwg 21	1:10
9	61	6B	N-facing section through floors (middle)	1:10
9	62	6B	N-facing section through floors (west)	1:10
9	63	6A	section through pit	1:10
14	64	6B	plan of ?post-hole	1:20
14	65	6B	plan of post-hole	1:20
40	66	26	post-ex plan	1:20
41	67	21A	sections of quadrant of 21012 and post-hole	1:20

42	68	21A	overlay 3 of SW quadrant	1:20
43	69	21A	overlay 4 of SW quadrant	1:20
44	70	21A	overlay 2 of SW quadrant	1:20
44	71	21A	overlay of lowest floor	1:20
45	72	21A	post-ex plan of platforms	1:20
46	73	15	overlay plan of extension through baulk	1:20

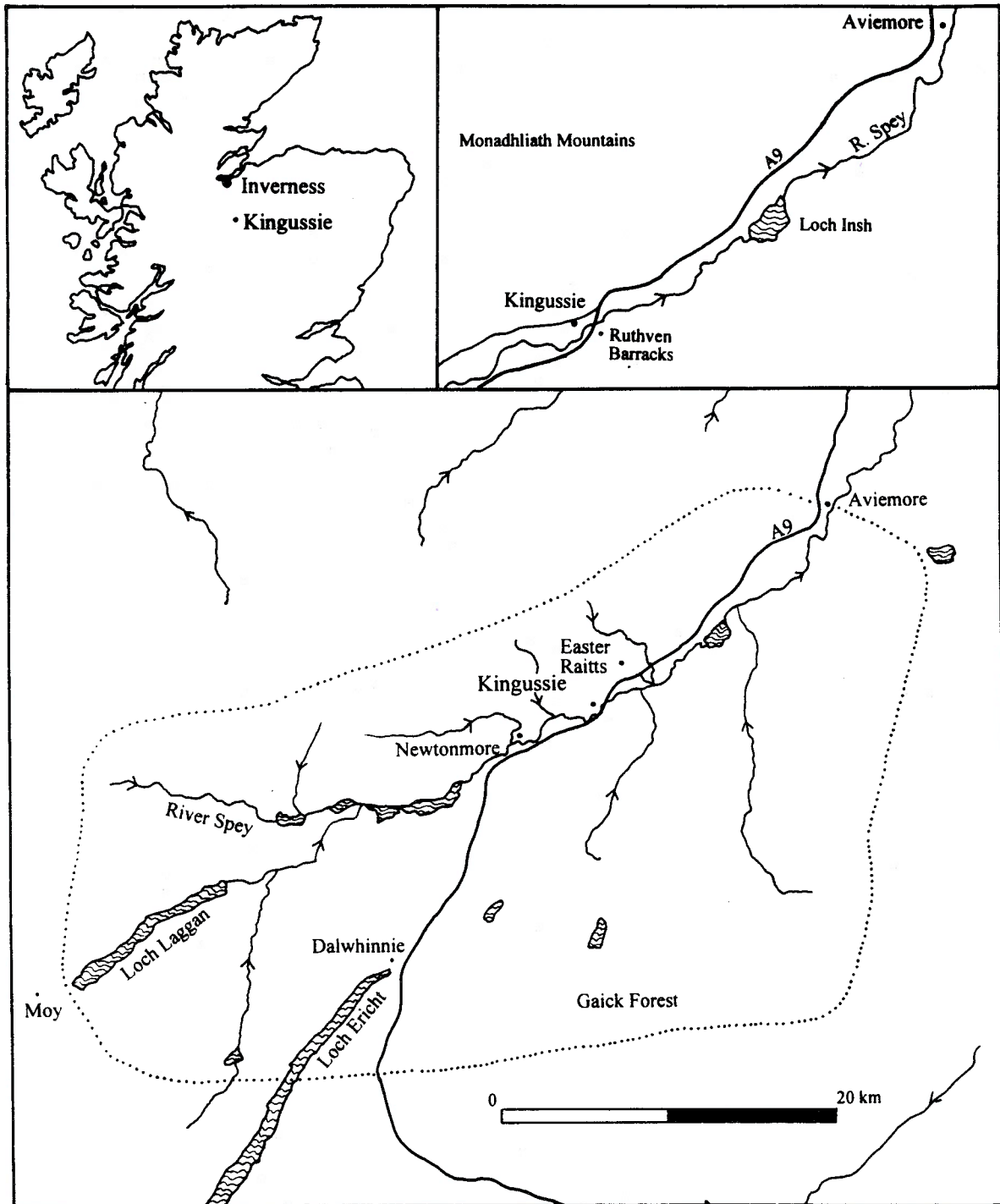


Figure 1 Location of the site in Badenoch (after Scarlett 1988).

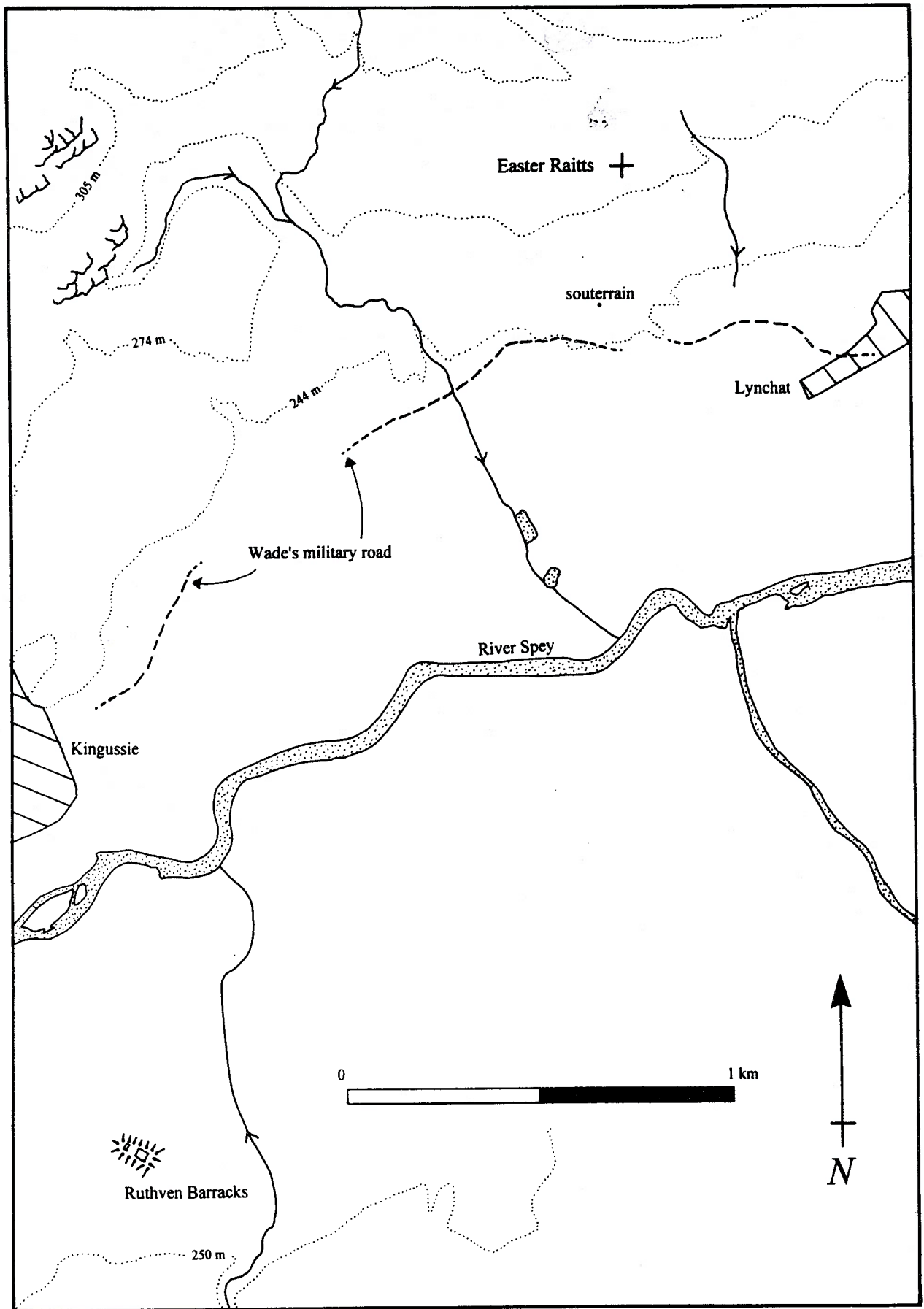


Figure 2 Easter Raitts and its environs.

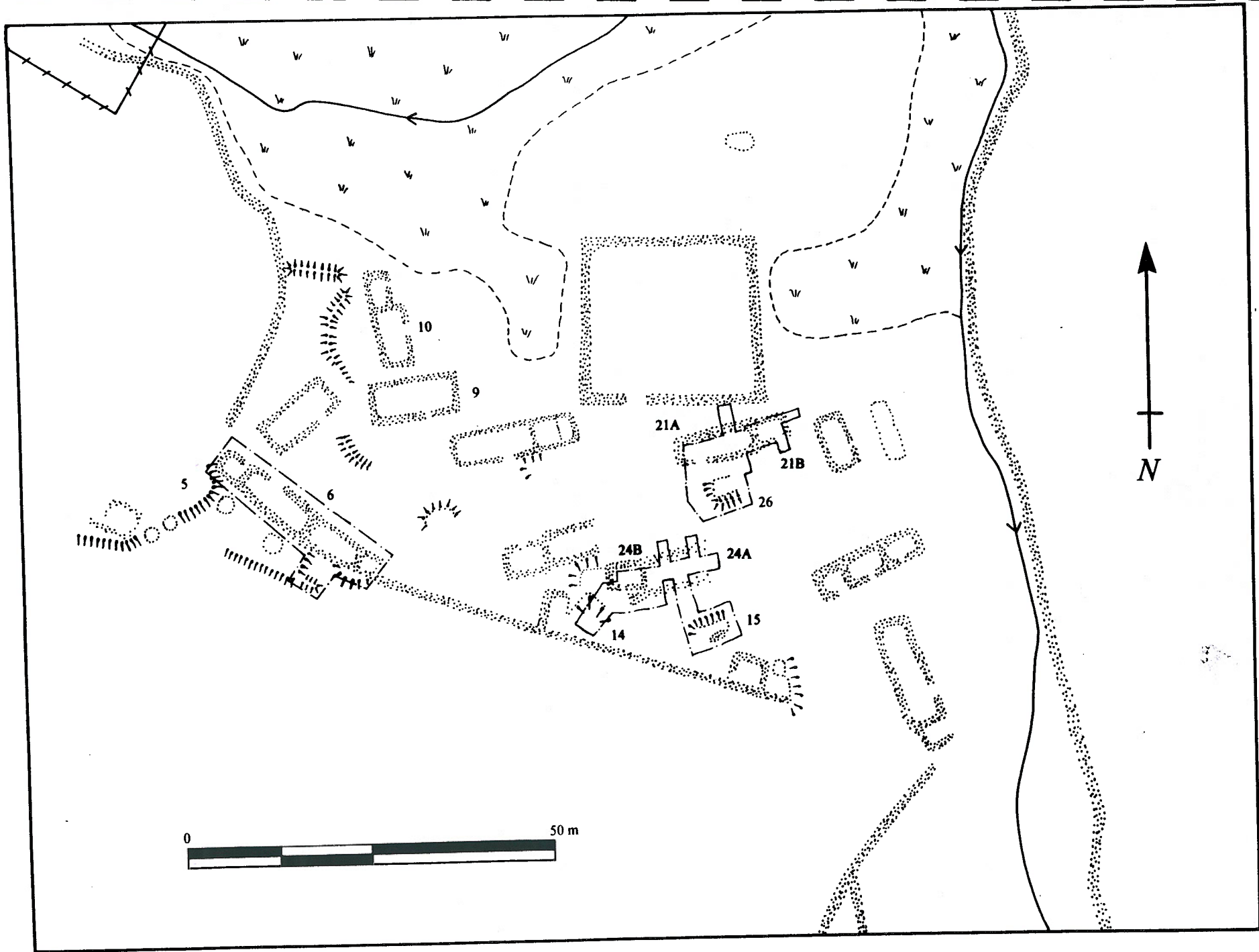


Figure 3 Survey plan of the township (after Dalland & Smith 1995).



Figure 4 Composite plan of structure 6.



Figure 5 Plan of area 6A.



Figure 6 Plan of area 6B.

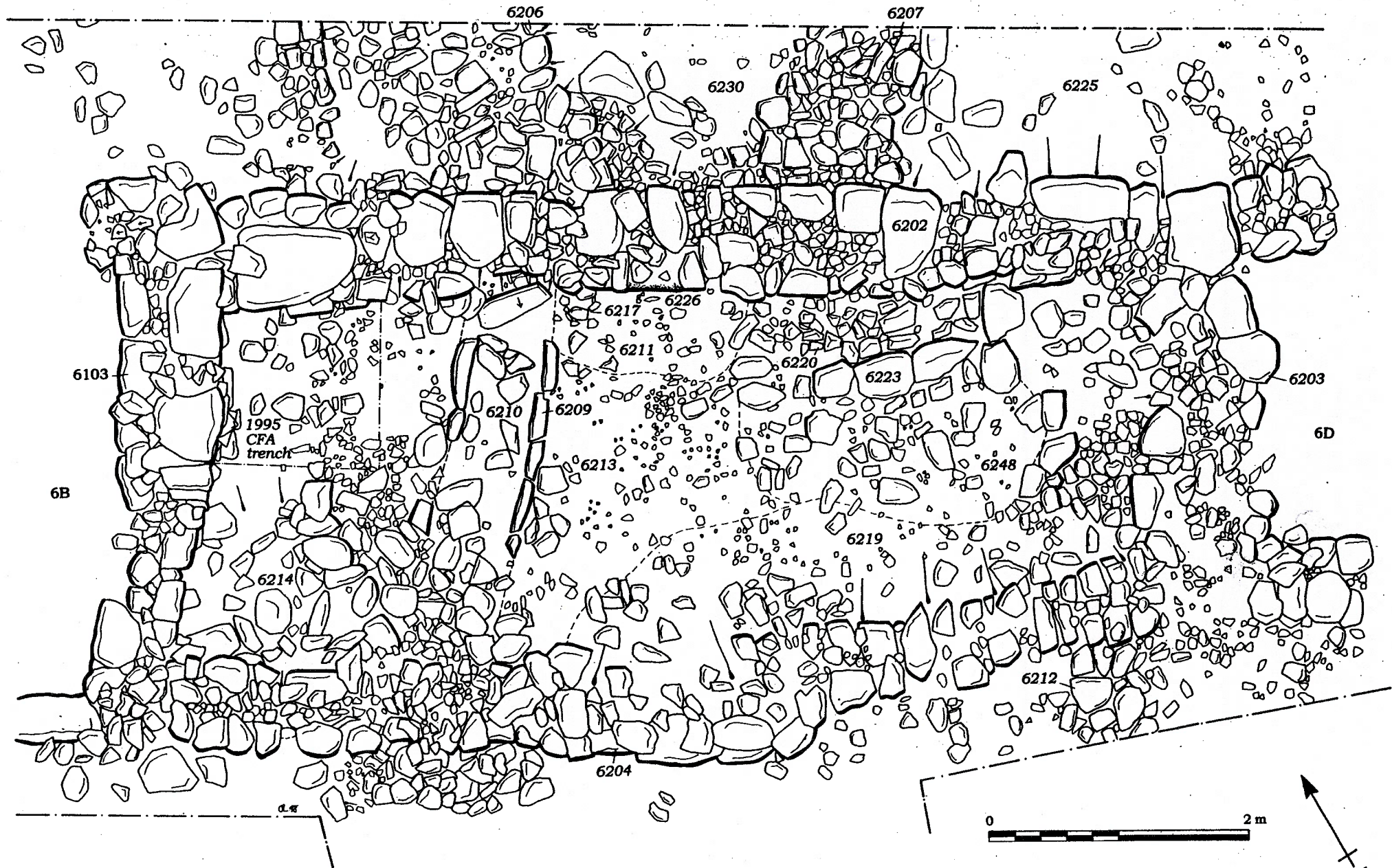


Figure 7 Plan of area 6C (later phase).

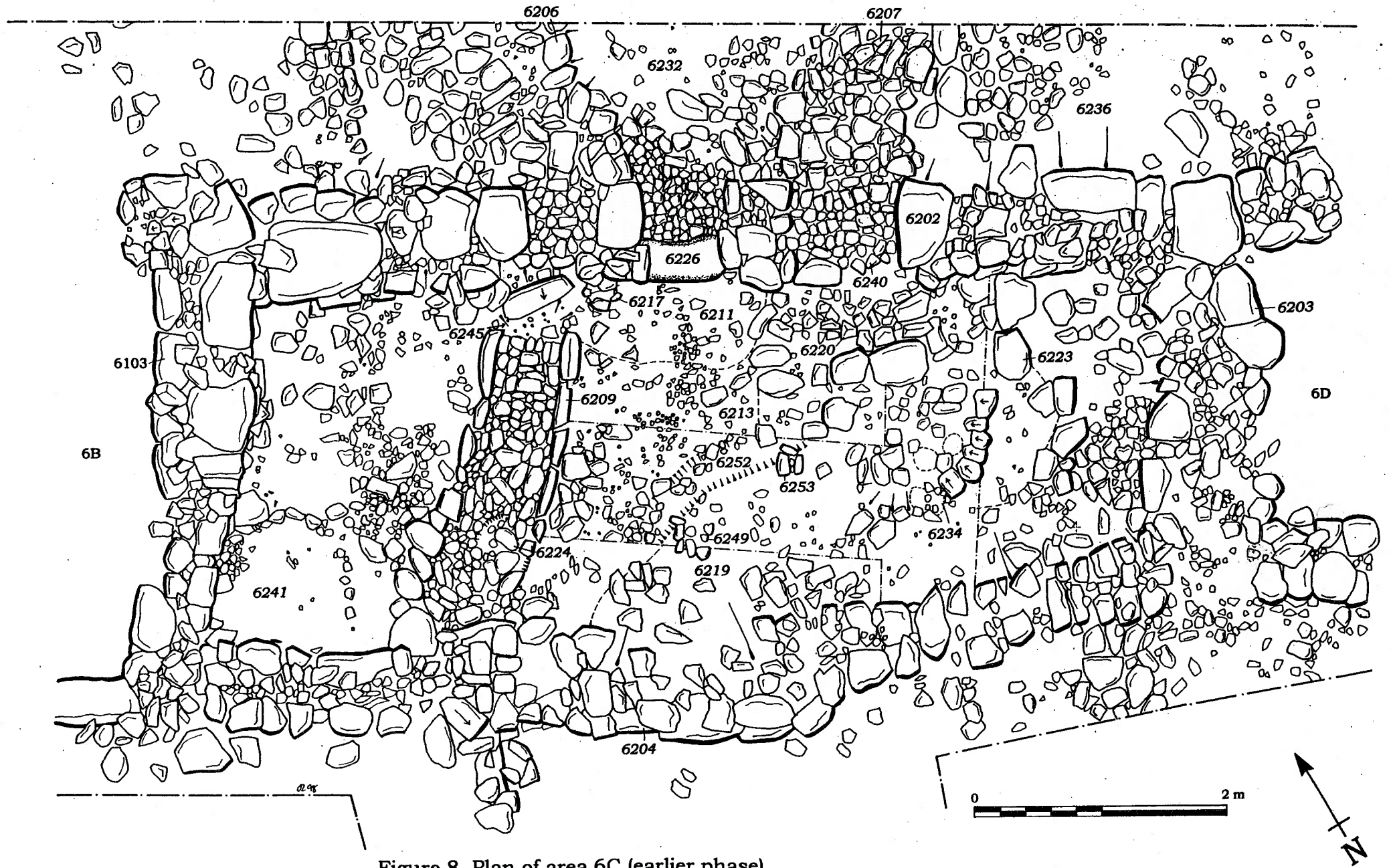


Figure 8 Plan of area 6C (earlier phase).

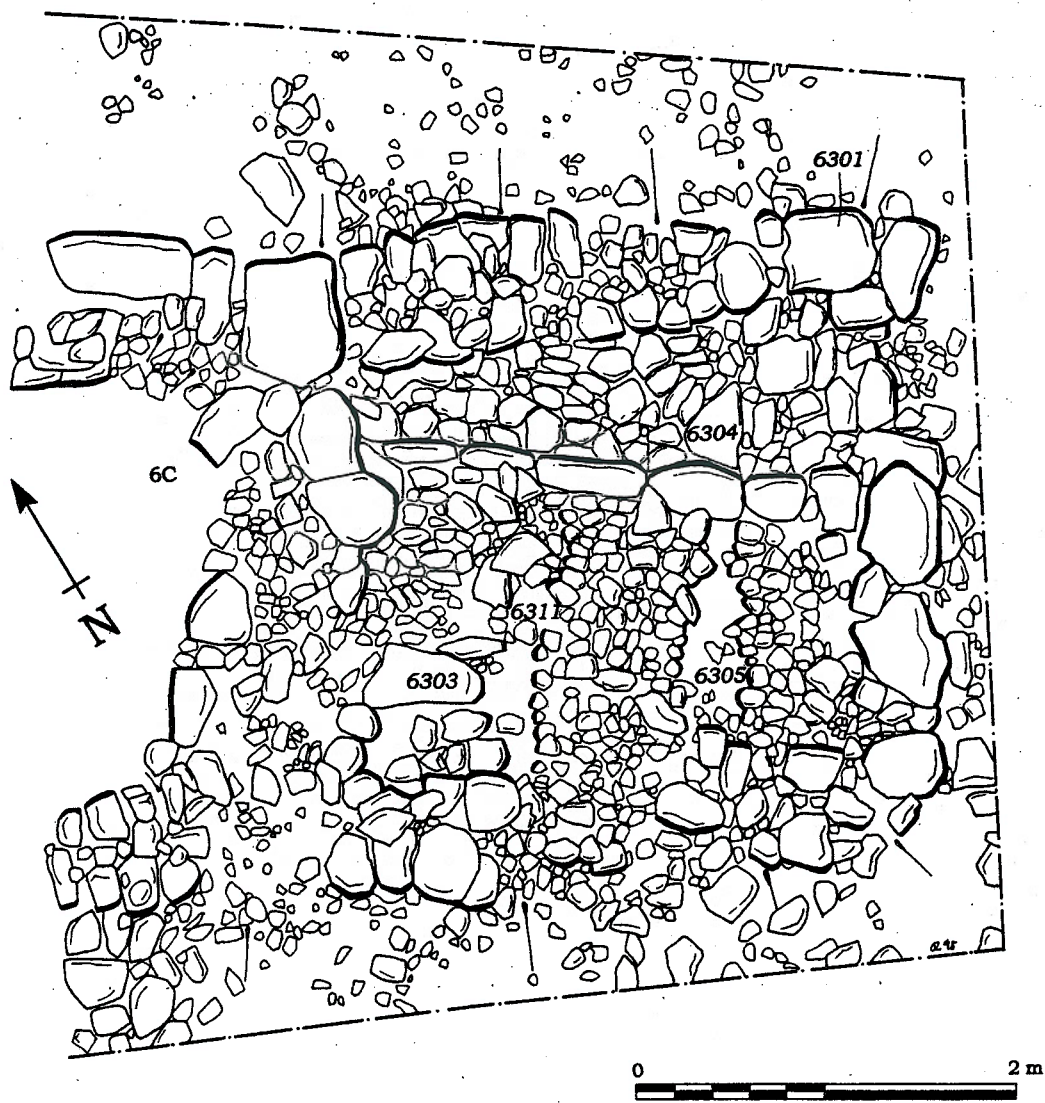


Figure 9 Plan of area 6D.

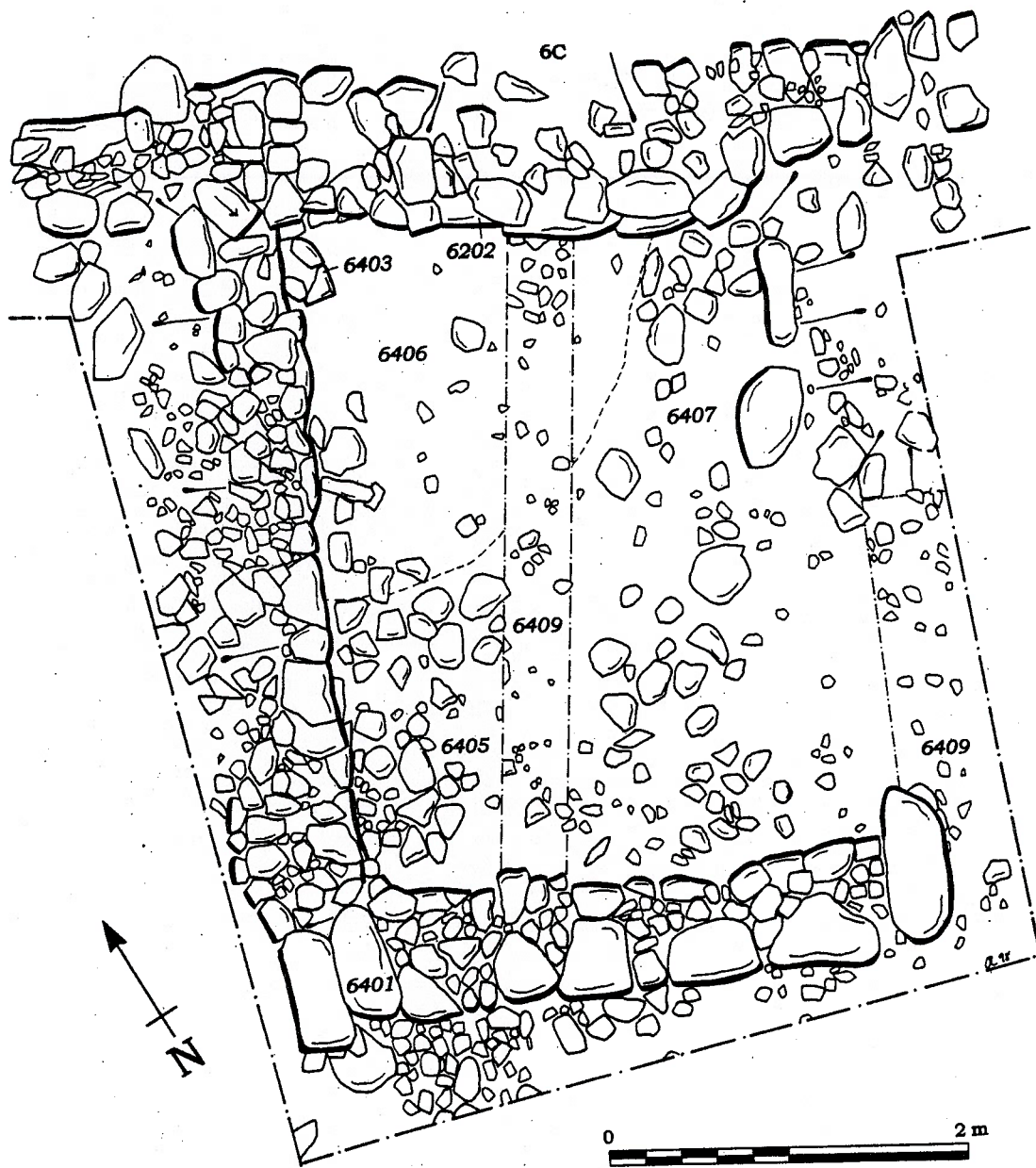


Figure 10 Plan of area 6E.

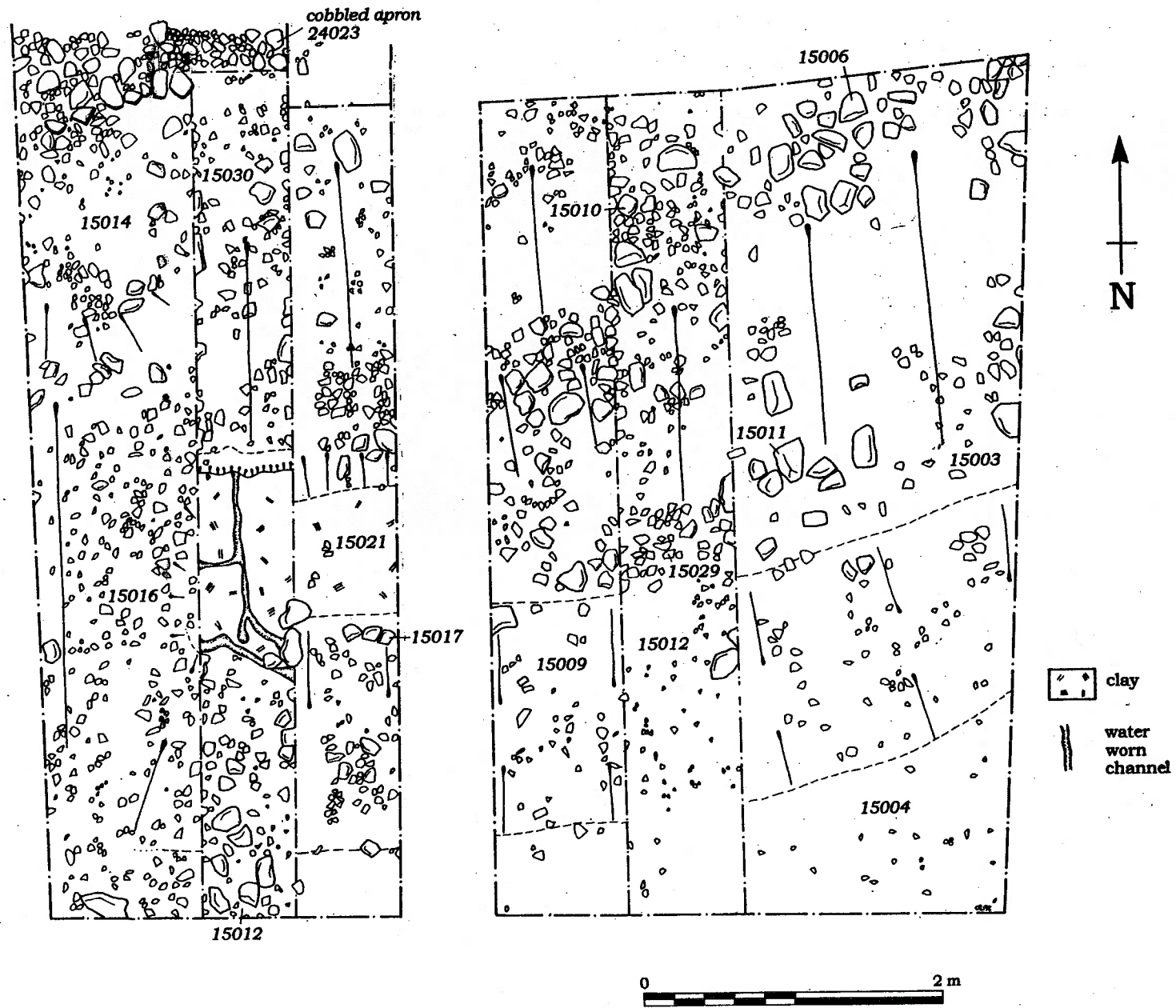


Figure 11 Plan of structure 15.



Figure 12 Plan of structure 21 (later phase).

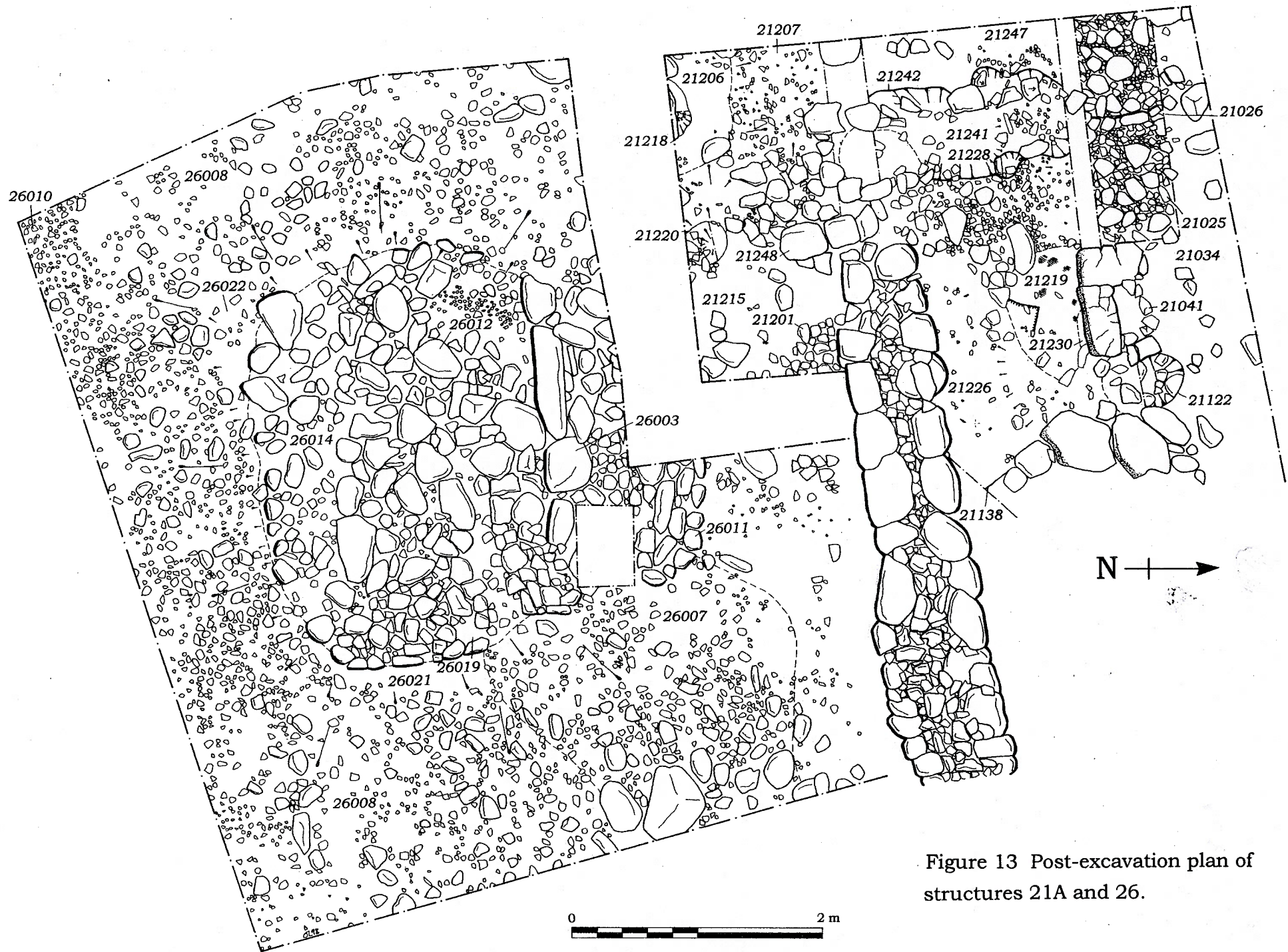


Figure 13 Post-excavation plan of structures 21A and 26.