



Camp Shiel Burn Traquair

Report on
Survey and Excavations
2007-2010

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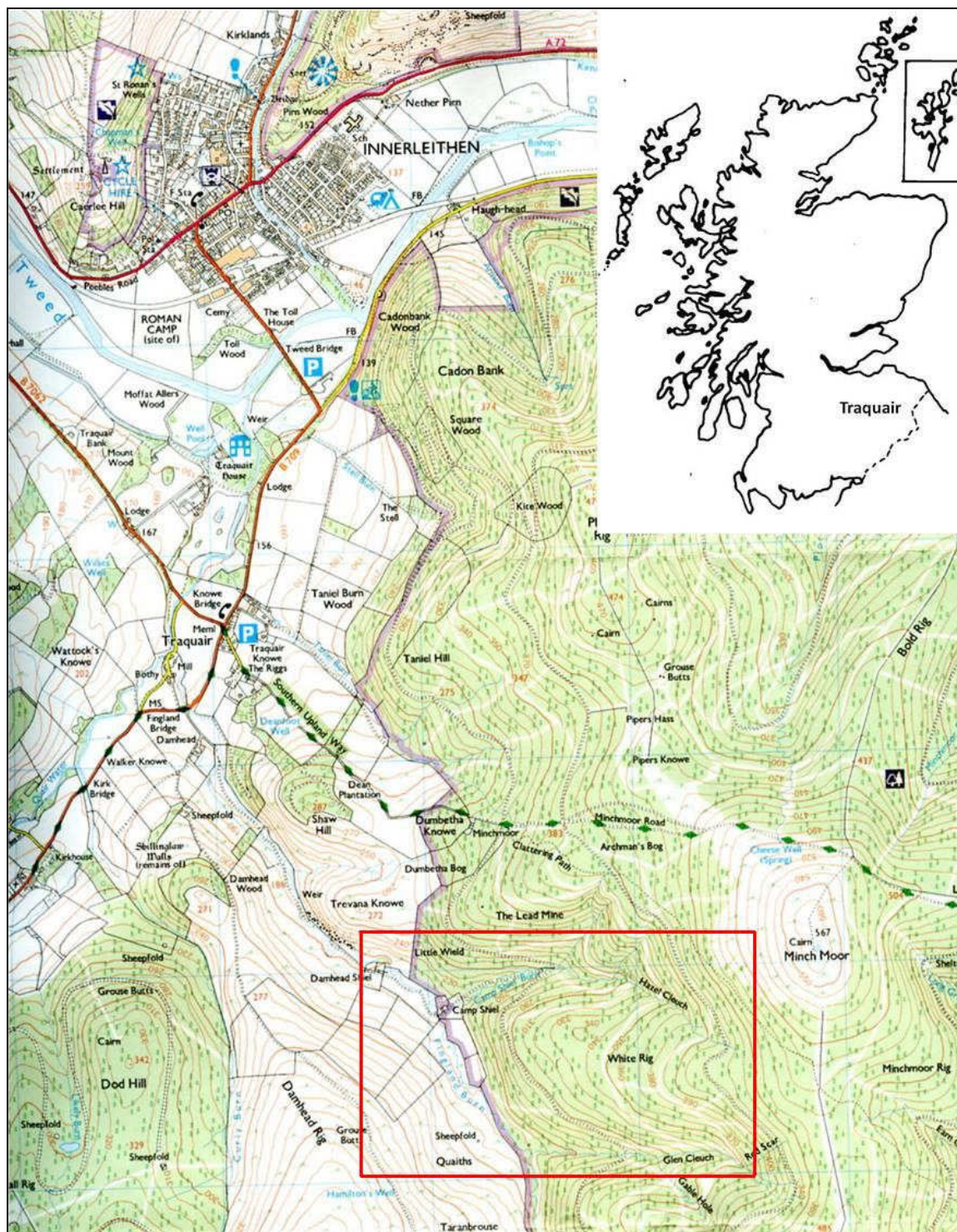
Summary

In 2007 a story of ‘smugglers’ on Minchmoor near Traquair in the Scottish Borders was brought to the attention of members of the Peeblesshire Archaeological Society (PAS). The story originally from an old chapbook tells of illicit whisky being made somewhere on the southern slopes of Minchmoor (see Appendix 1). There is local knowledge today which says that there are the remains of a still on Camp Shiel Burn not far from Traquair. The project was conceived to try to connect the feature on the ground with the story in the chapbook by field work and archival research. During the course of the field survey so many other previously unknown sites were discovered that the project far exceeded our expectations both in interest and time. These sites included a second still, two shieling huts and two, possibly three, flax retting ponds.

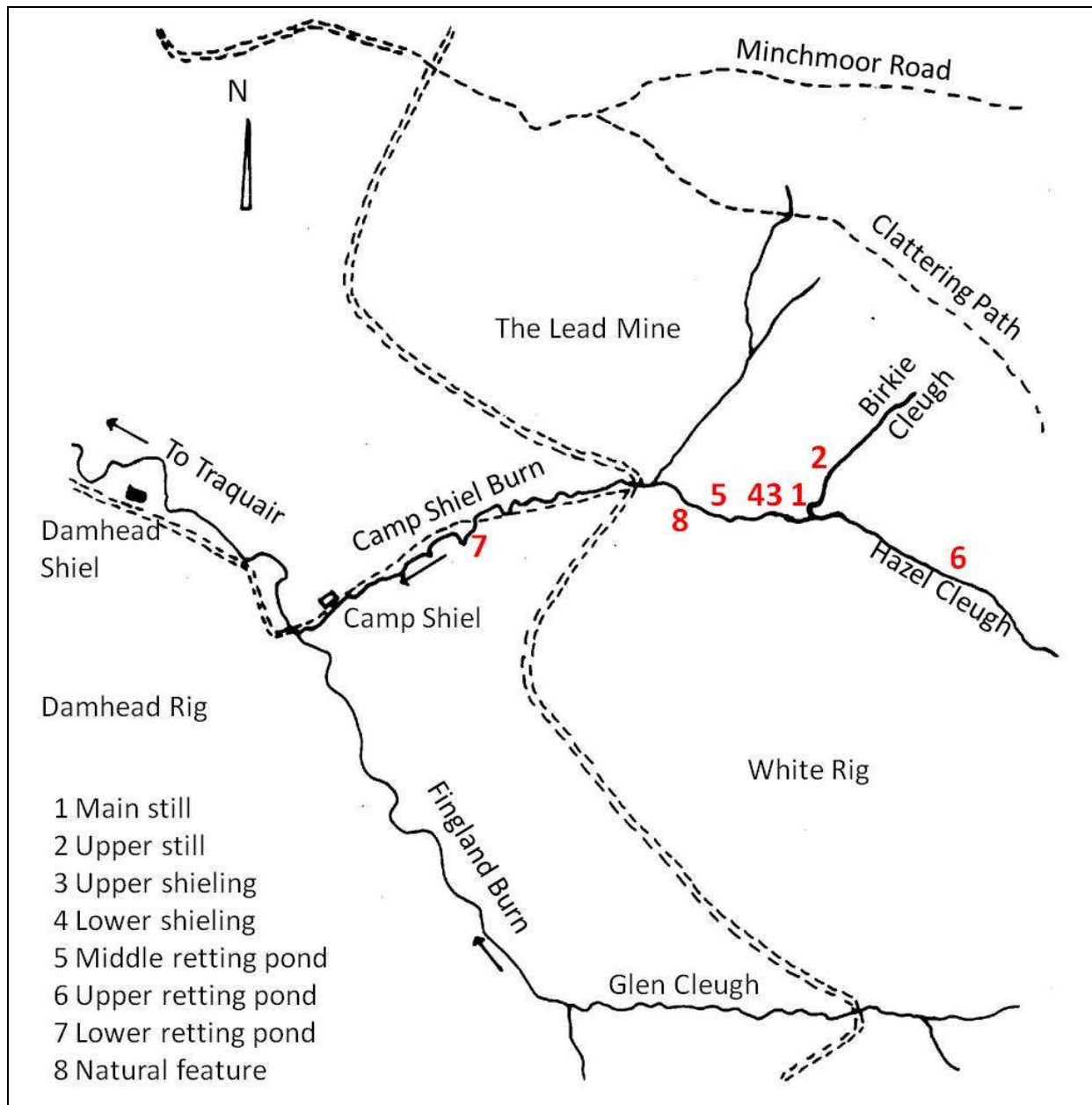
Acknowledgements

On behalf of project team-members Jack Boughey, Gillian Brown and Bob Knox I should like to thank everyone who has generously given help and advice during the course of the Camp Shiel Burn project. Especially, thanks are due to Hugh McKay District Forester and Matt Ritchie Archaeologist of the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) for permission to work on FCS land, for the use of the forest road and for tree felling. We are particularly indebted to Dr Chris Bowles of the Archaeology Department Scottish Borders Council and Rosemary Hanney of Tweeddale Museum Peebles for financial assistance towards the cost of the radiocarbon dating, and to Dr Piers Dixon RCAHMS for invaluable assistance in the excavation of the shieling. Finally, I should like to express my gratitude to Trevor Cowie NMS and Piers Dixon for their help in rounding the rough edges of this report.

Location Map 1



Location Map 2



Scale: 6 inches to mile

1.0 Introduction

The Camp Shiel Burn project was carried out principally by four members of PAS: - Jack Boughey, Joyce Durham, Bob Knox (holders of the Glasgow University Certificate in Field Archaeology 2004) and Gillian Brown. In the later stages Dr. Piers Dixon gave much appreciated help and advice. It took from August 2007 to October 2010 to complete the field work due mainly to the fact that we only worked at weekends and in fine weather.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the project were:

- to learn what we could about the sites on Camp Shiel Burn and the surrounding landscape by field survey and selective excavation;
- to undertake archival research in the hope of corroborating the ‘smugglers’ story;
- to produce a record of our findings and contribute to the overall knowledge of illicit stills;
- to gain experience in a range of archaeological techniques from survey to publication.

3.0 Location

Camp Shiel Burn is situated on the SW facing slopes of Minch Moor about 2.5km SE of the village of Traquair in Peeblesshire (OS Landranger Map 73). The land originally belonged to the historic Maxwell-Stewart family of Traquair and was part of the tenanted Traquair Knowe Farm. A 1940s aerial photograph shows the ground cover as rough moorland. In the 1960s the land was sold to the Forestry Commission and planted with pine trees. In the 1990s some of the trees by the burn were felled; the upper S bank was left to regenerate naturally and the lower N bank was planted with broad leaf trees (Fig 1). Situated at the foot of Camp Shiel Burn, at its junction with Fingland Burn, is Camp Shiel Cottage (built 1831), and nearby, the footings of a building marked as a ruin on the 1st edition OS map (1856-9).



Fig1 View of Camp Shiel Burn on the left in the photograph and White Rig from the W.

4.0 Field Work

The overall site code of the project is CSB07: the various individual sites have a further numeral added, e.g. CSB071 is the still site marked with number 1 on Location Map 2.

4.1 Camp Shiel Burn Still (CSB071)

4.1.1 Location

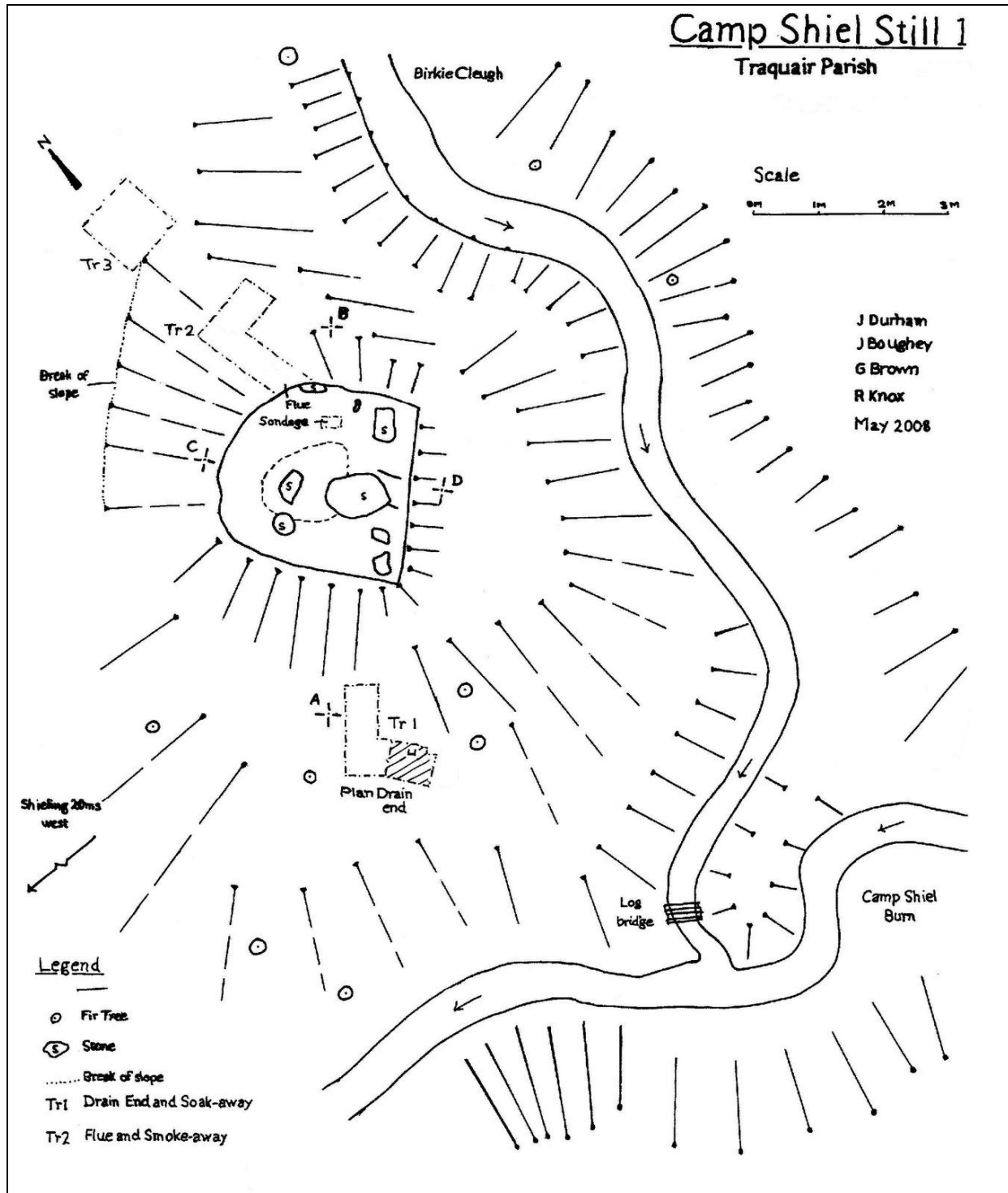
The supposed still is situated on the N bank of the Camp Shiel Burn at its junction with a side burn, called Birkie Cleuch on the 1st edition OS map (NT 34882 32951), at an altitude of around 300m. The vegetation is thick moss with grass and ferns underlying mature pine trees planted by the Forestry Commission in the 1960s. There are many wind-blown trees lying around in the immediate vicinity.

4.1.2 Description

The structure is best described as a drystone-lined pit set into the hillside. It is roughly D-shaped and measures 2.9m NE-SW x 2.8m NW-SE and 1.5m in depth. (See Fig 2 and plan Page 9). There is an alcove or flue built into the N wall nearest the hillside and a covered drain runs round the edge of the floor to the south and east. Excavation subsequently revealed the origin of the drain to be under the middle of the N wall: in other words the wall was built over the drain very effectively draining away rainwater washing down the hillside, thus keeping the interior dry. The drain exits the structure at the lowest corner opposite the flue. Access is from a step at the E corner down a drop of about 0.75 m. One large flattish boulder and several other smaller ones lie on the floor of the structure.



Fig2 The interior of still cleared of vegetation, from the NE.



Plan of Camp Shiel Burn still.

4.1.3 Excavation

A decision was taken at the outset that our excavation would be directed towards finding out all we could about how the structure was built and how it worked, whilst preserving its integrity. We began by removing the moss, grass and ferns from the walls and floor within the building. This revealed that the internal area had been cleared previously and the walls substantially rebuilt at some time. The evidence for this was the lack of debris from natural decay and the fact that the walls showed signs of having been built in two phases – the upper courses being more roughly worked than the lower.

There was a fan-shaped mound of sandy/clay material at the foot of the flue which had fallen from above possibly when one of two lintel stones had fallen (Fig 4). This had built up since the building had been cleared.



Fig3 The flue before excavation.

On the floor surface beneath this debris there was a quantity of ash but very little charcoal and no sign of heat-affected stone. Neither was there evidence of burnt stone within the flue itself, indicating that it had seen little use as a hearth, if that had been its original intended purpose. A flat boulder propped at the back of the flue was most probably a collapsed lintel stone. The back of the lintel stone still in situ could be seen to be packed with fist-sized stones when viewed from below (No.2 Additional photographs).

Excavation of the floor area revealed a large central deposit of coal dust/ash measuring 1.4m x 1.1m across and 0.1m thick under which was found a pine cone. Surrounding this deposit was a humus-rich layer about 60mm thick and immediately under them both was an extremely compacted, possibly baked, layer of clayey material flecked with coal (Fig 4 and plan Page29). Apart from a small sondage (see below) the floor layer was left unexcavated.



Fig4 The floor of still showing the coal dust/ash deposit.

Excavation of the drain showed that it was well built with flat stones lining the base and as covers (Fig 5). A short distance from the point at which the drain came out from under the flue there was a widening, forming a basin, containing sandy silt. When the stream was



Fig5 The excavated drain showing the basin.

either dammed or in spite water flowed out from under the wall into the basin then on down the drain.

A 0.3m x 0.3m sondage was dug into the floor to try to establish the relationship of the building with its original surroundings. There was an initial layer of extremely compacted yellow/grey clayey material about 50mm thick which became less compacted and stony lower down. At a depth of 0.3m the material became water-logged and gravelly with larger stones, indicating that the structure had possibly been built over the original stream bed in order to provide a constant, easily accessible supply of water.

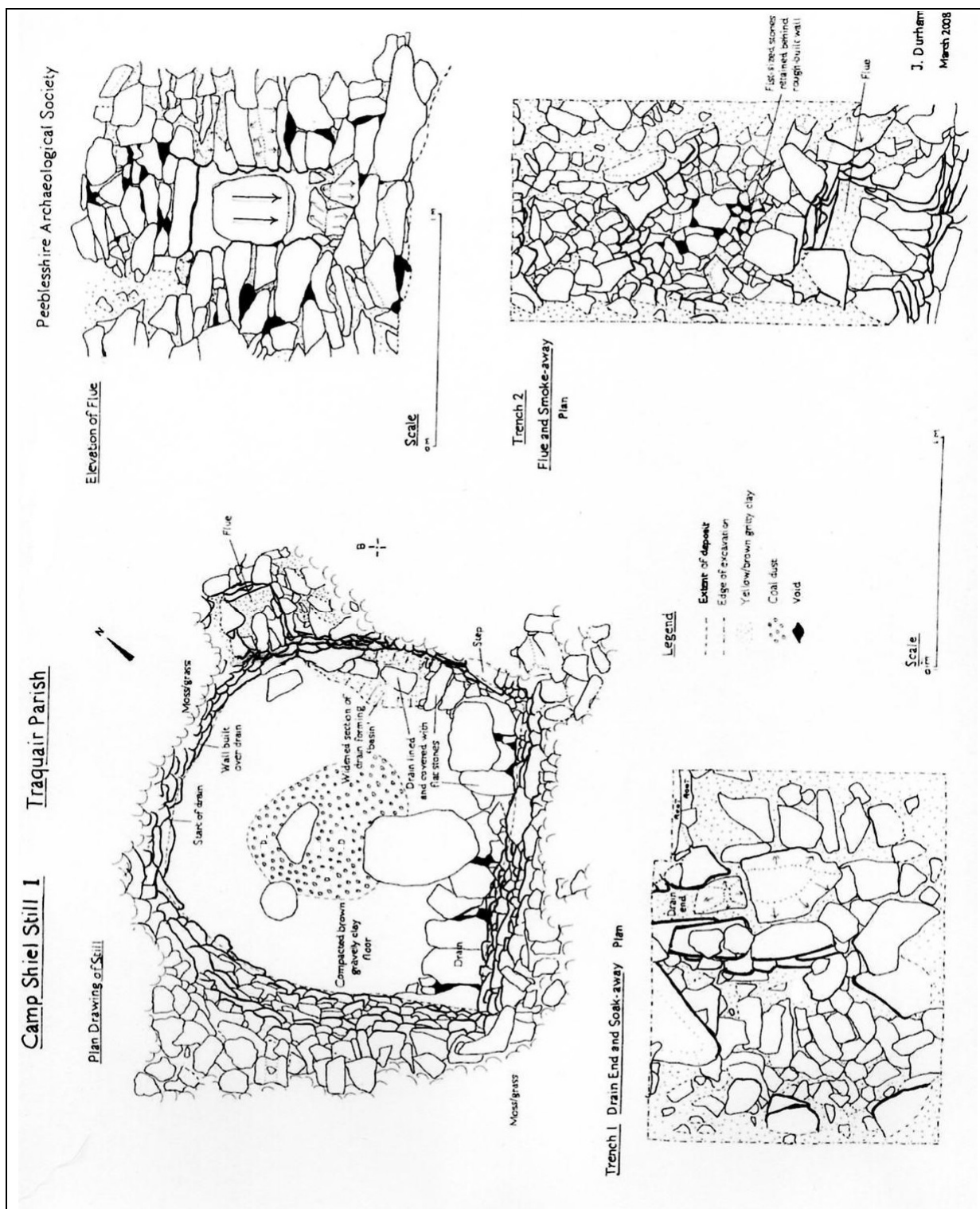
At this point the only finds were two pieces of green glass from the humus-rich layer and one of rusted metal from the central coal deposit. Subsequently a musket ball was found by metal detecting in the centre of the clayey floor about 30mm below the excavated surface.

Trench 1 Bank, Drain end and Soak-away

In order to clarify the make up of the exterior of the structure and to trace the end of the drain, a 0.5m wide by 1.5m long trench was opened on the built-up bank of the lower S end of the building. On the surface of the bank was a spread of shaley coal. The first 0.3m of ground was made up of a loose mix of stone and clayey soil, which deeper down became more consolidated. Excavation at the lower end of Trench 1 showed that the boulders had been placed in such a way as to make a firm base for the bank, preventing slippage. Undisturbed natural was not reached. An eastward extension of the trench was made and the end of the drain with cover stones located (Fig 6). The trench extension was enlarged and a well-made soak-away uncovered. The stones at the end of the drain had been placed in such a way as to disperse the flow of water. The fill from between the stones of the soak-away was gritty sand.



Fig6 The end of the drain with capping stones and soak-away viewed from above



Plan drawings of still features.

Trench 2 Flue and smoke-away

Excavation of the area above the flue revealed a rough retaining wall built on top of the lintel stone still in situ (Fig 7). Packed behind were fist-sized stones covered with soot and overlaying these were flat stones placed to prevent soil filtering down between the stones. The trench was extended up the slope revealing the same arrangement of stones about 0.3m below the ground surface. About 0.5m from the flue there was no longer evidence of soot on the stones perhaps indicating that the smoke-away had not seen much use or had not functioned very well.



Fig7 The flue with retaining wall and stones of smoke-away viewed from above.

Trench 3 Top of smoke-away

A 1m square trench was dug at the top of the slope above the smoke-away to demonstrate where it exited (see plan Page 8). Its full surface area was not verified but it is believed that it would have had a large surface area in order to create sufficient draught to draw up the smoke.

4.1.4 Results

As the excavation developed any doubts we had had at the outset, that the structure described above was an illicit still, were dispelled. The measures the builders had taken to hide the intended activities from detection were many and thorough. The site was built virtually underground and with a turf roof would have been well camouflaged; the water supply taken in and out of the building ensured there would have been little cause for movement outside, and the elaborately built smoke-away meant their activities would not be detected by telltale signs of smoke. The situation they had chosen was concealed from view behind a hillside and

there was access to a variety of routes over the hills by which to distribute the product without detection.

Excavation of the smoke-away, drain and soak-away revealed just how well and with how much ingenuity they had been built. The lower courses of the inside walls were built to the same high standard whilst the upper ones were poor, showing that there had been two building phases. At some time in the history of the still it had either fallen down naturally or it had been pulled down, and if it is the one written about in the ‘smugglers’ story, it would have been destroyed when the distillers were caught.

There is no certainty as to when and who cleared out and rebuilt the building, but there is a strong possibility that it was the forestry workers using it as a bothy in the 1960s. The pine cone found under the coal deposit indicates that it was used again for the same purpose when mature trees were felled in the 1990s.

4.2 Birkie Cleugh Still (CSB072)

About 100m up Birkie Cleugh from its junction with Camp Shiel Burn the remains of a second still measuring 2.3m x 1.7m were found (NT 34884 32955). This one was much more basic and less well-preserved than the first but was similar in that it was dug into the hillside, had a retaining wall at its lower end and had water running through (Fig 8).



Fig8 The remains of the Birkie Cleugh still from the W.

4.3 Upper Shieling (CSB073)

4.3.1 Location

During the course of surveying the area a feature which did not appear to be natural was found on a gently sloping terrace parallel to the stream on the same side of the burn as the main still and about 20m SW and downstream from it (NT 34860 32988) .

4.3.2 Description

The feature consisted of a grass covered dome-shaped mound set within a rectangular depression which had cut edges on the upper N and E sides (Fig 9). The immediate surrounding ground was more or less level, forming a platform, with a stony slope on the downstream side. There were several protruding stones round the rim of the depression as well as pine trees, some wind-blown. The feature was parallel to the stream, about 5m away from and 2m above it.



Fig9 The feature before excavation viewed front the NE.

4.3.3 Excavation

In the hope that it would assist in interpreting the site, a 0.5m evaluation trench was dug along the top of the mound and then another at right-angles to it (Fig 10). These showed that the mound fill was dark grey loose unlayered silt with a few stones of varying sizes and small fragments of charcoal. The mound was 0.5m deep at its highest point and there was a compacted surface at its base.



Fig10 Evaluation trenches in the mound from the N.

As the initial trenches did not clarify the nature of the site, it was decided to extend the excavation. The mound was deturfed and the earth removed revealing that there was a built wall on the N side and tumbled stones on the S and W sides. The excavation was then extended through the upper E cut of the original depression to a tree (which the District Forester very kindly had cut down) and beyond. The material removed was light brown humus-rich soil with many stones interpreted as tumble. At this point enough had been uncovered to show that the structure was a stone and turf building (Fig11).



Fig11 The building viewed from the E.

Further excavation of the walls showed the thickness and manner of their construction; at the W end of the N wall there were 4 courses of stone with turf between (Fig 12), several flat stones were built on end into the base of the S wall (Fig 13) and the W wall was out of alignment with the rest of the structure (see plan Page19).

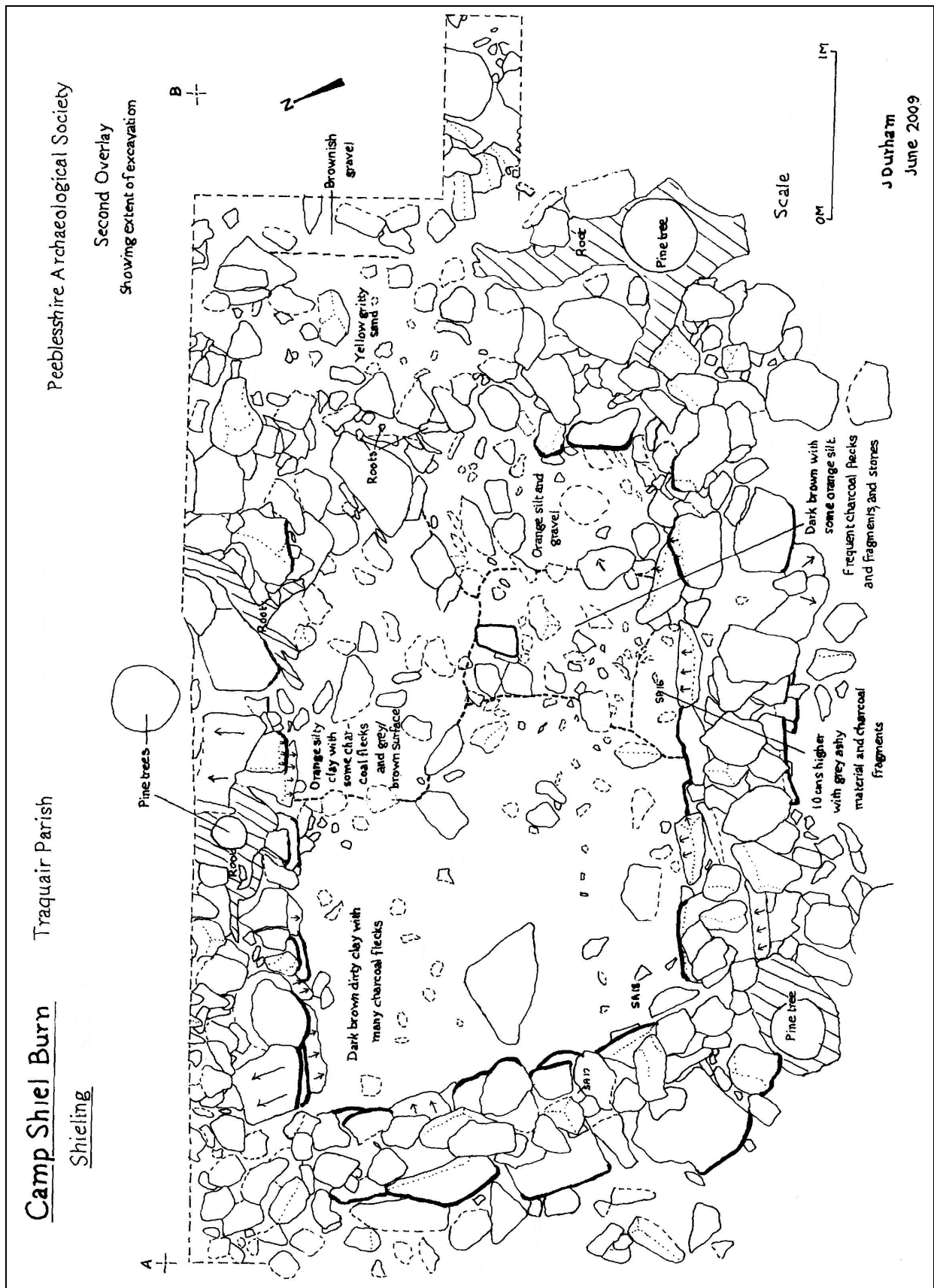


Fig12 The W end of N wall showing the stone/turf construction.

Since there was no evidence of an entrance in the other walls it was assumed it had been in the E wall. This, the upstream wall, appeared to have been largely washed away by flood water: there being plenty of tumbled stones but little evidence of positioned stones which could be interpreted as foundations or entrance paving. A difference in the colour and texture of the soil indicated the division between wall and hill-wash outside the wall; the inner material being yellowish gritty sand and the outer darker brown and gravelly. The only finds from the structure were two pieces of corroded metal found within the walls.

Inside the building a prominent feature near the centre of the floor space was a flat-topped squarish boulder embedded upright in the natural ground surface and secured in place by packing- stones. Between this and the S wall was an area of dark brown /orange silt and many smallish stones. It was thought that this could have been the base of a partition and the upright boulder a plinth to support the timber of the partition (Fig13).

In the corner that the partition would have formed with the S wall there was a 100-150mm thick layer of charcoal-rich grey ashy material on top of a bed of packed medium-sized stones. This feature was interpreted as a hearth though there were no heat-affected stones.



Plan drawing showing extent of excavation.



Fig13 The floor of the building showing the upright boulder and the ashy hearth deposit to the left and the dark brown clay layer of collapsed roof material, viewed from the NE.

The area E of the possible partition was very stony with orange sandy gravel: there was no evidence of an occupation layer at any point in this area. To the W end of the floor area there was a charcoal-rich grey/brown clayey deposit between 150-250mm thick, which was thought possibly to be timber and turf from a burnt roof. This deposit was compacted in the centre, perhaps caused by the weight of the mound above it, but less so round the edges where there were substantial amounts of charcoal. Beneath this deposit was a compacted stony pale-grey clayey material with some charcoal fragments.



Fig14 The break through the S end of the W wall, centre left.

Breaks were made through the E end of the S wall and at the N end of the W wall which established that at these points the building was built on the old ground surface. Another break was made through the S end of the W wall (Fig 14). The material below the wall here was the same as that within the building, i.e. packed stones with a matrix of pale grey clay and flecks of charcoal. The charcoal deposit under the wall indicates that it was there during construction of the building.

4.3.4 Results

The size of this building (approximately 4m x 2m internally) indicates that it can be interpreted as a shieling intended for seasonal use only: it is too small for habitation on a permanent basis. The place name Camp Shiel is indicative of it being a shieling, as well as its location beside a burn high in the hills. There is also at least one other small stone building (No. 4 on plan Page 6) that may be another shieling near by.

From what we uncovered during excavation of the shieling only a few events can be interpreted with any certainty. We know that a quantity of material was dumped into a rectangular cut depression and we know that the Camp Shiel Burn still just 20m away was cleared out probably by forestry workers in the 1960s: it would not be unreasonable to assume that the dumped material came from the still. We do not know who made the depression or when it was made, but before this event, time and flood water had wrought a great deal of damage to the structure and had obliterated much of it.

We were fortunate, however, to find plenty good quality charcoal during the excavation and analysis of three samples added a great deal to our understanding of the site. Charcoal from the hearth (SA16) has been identified as birch (*betula*); that from below the W wall (SA17) and the floor deposit at the W end of the shieling (SA18) have been identified as alder (*alnus*) (Dr Jennifer Miller, University of Glasgow, unpublished report). The birch sample from the hearth was dated to 620 +/-30 years BP (SUERC-32284); the alder from under the W wall was 550 +/- 30 BP (SUERC-32285) and that from the floor was 565 +/- 30 BP (SUERC-32286) (Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility): all firmly set in the 14th and early 15th centuries (see Appendix 4).

4.4 Lower Shieling (CSB074)

There are the very slight remains of another shieling 7m downstream from the Upper Shieling (NT 34828 32942) (Fig15).



Fig15 The lower shieling from the NE. The stones on the surface mark two sides of the building.

4.5 Middle Retting Pond (possible) (CSB075)

A further 150m downstream from the shielings was found a site interpreted possibly as a retting pond (NT34780 32945). It consists of what may have been the original water course about 25m long with a narrow channel running along its length. This ends abruptly in a drop of about 1m over a dry-stone built wall which is badly disrupted by a large fallen tree (Fig 16).



Fig16 The possible middle retting pond from the S.

4.6 Upper Retting Pond (CSB076)

Approximately 300m upstream from the still, on the N bank, is an oval pit roughly 5m x2m and 1m in depth, with an earth/stone outer bank (NT 34988 32912). The upper part of the pit is deeper than the lower possibly caused by water running down a channel from the stream above and gouging it out. There is an exit channel half way along the length of the outer earth and stone bank (Fig 17 and plan Page 29). Interpretation of this structure is that it is retting pond. A small sondage dug into the base of the lower half of the pit showed that there was a stoney silt deposit about 1.2m in depth.



Fig17 The upper retting pond from the SE. The grass covered bank around the lower side and the channel cut in it are visible in the centre of the photograph.

4.7 Lower Retting Pond (CSB077)

On the N bank of the same burn about 300m above Camp Shiel Cottage there is a roughly circular stone-lined pit 3m in diameter and 0.5m in depth (NT 34302 32934) (Fig18). The structure has a gap in its upper E quadrant allowing ingress of water from a channel which comes from an old stream bed. A few metres along this channel there is an overflow which would have allowed regulation of the water flow. On the N quadrant of the pit there is a second gap and channel which allowed water to drain back into the stream (see plan Page 30). A small 0.6m deep sondage dug in the centre revealed an orange silty deposit with darker layers particularly low down near the extremely compacted base.



Fig18 The lower retting pond from the E, showing the inlet in the foreground and outlet on the right.

Discussion

It would be reasonable to assume in the absence of actual proof, that the extensive fairly level expanse of White Rig (see Fig 1) was where the flax was grown. Where it was rotted, or retted, the second part of the production process, was in a nearby pond. There appears to be a sequence of development in the design of the ponds on Camp Shiel Burn. If site CSB075 described as ‘possible’ is in fact a retting pond, then it is probable that it was the first one to be made and used, and that it silted up too easily. Operations were then moved to another more efficient pond higher up the burn and finally to the more sophisticated lower one. After retting the flax was dried, ‘scutched’, ‘heckled’ and spun before being woven into linen. The preparation of flax and the making of linen were practised widely in rural communities since early days and was an important component of the rural economy until the 19th century when cheaper cotton took its place.

4.8 Indeterminate remains (possible) (CSB078)

On the S bank of the stream in a bend about 50m above the forest road (see Location map2) there are what was thought to be the possible remains of another structure (NT34668 32987). This consists of a depression set within two rubble banks each approximately 3m in length and at right angles to each other. An evaluation trench dug across the bank parallel to the stream revealed the feature to be natural.

5.0 Research

5.1 The Still

Exhaustive archival research failed to find evidence to substantiate the story described in the Borders Magazine (Vol. XXXV11 No 447 March 1933) and reportedly in the old chapbook. The archives searched where:-

- Customs and Excise Minute Books (CE2/29-32 SRO) – though there were many similar incidents in these volumes the events recorded in our story were not among them.
- Traquair Parish Records (CH2/470/13/33) revealed that the tenant farmer of Traquair Knowe was a William Laidlaw. Under the law he should have been prosecuted for allowing illegal distillation of whisky to be carried out on his land, as in other cases (Court of Exchequer E503/105), but no evidence was found to say he was. He was however being sued for non-payment of rent (Peebles Sheriff Court SC42/31/1) and other debts (SC42/1/16 and 17)!
- The death/murder of the smuggler Armstrong should have been recorded by the Crown Office (AD14/15-18). However in these records the only the perpetrator was named not the victim and a search again produced a negative result.
- The Old Parochial Registers of the early 19th century are very sketchy: - between 1815 and 1818 there was no death recorded of anyone named Armstrong.
- An internet search of the National Library of Scotland Chapbook Catalogue and catalogues held in other libraries produced nothing, though it has to be said that only a small proportion of chapbooks survive in library collections.
- There was nothing in the Militia Records (GD293/3/2 and 4).

It was as if it never happened.

5.2 The Retting Ponds

The 18th to early 19th centuries, but possibly earlier, is the most likely time when the retting ponds of Camp Shiel Burn were in use. This was a time when linen production was actively being encouraged (John Shaw, 'Water Power in Scotland 1550-1870') and, according to the Old Statistical Account of 1791-99, there were six weavers living in Traquair Parish, but by the time of the First Census in 1841 there were none. Nothing remains of a row of weavers' cottages which reputedly used to be at Deanfoot behind Traquair Village, but the traces of an old track connecting Camp Shiel to the Minch Moor Road E of Traquair, can be seen both on the ground (No.16 Additional photographs) and an aerial photograph (SB000839 – 5155, RCAHMS).

6.0 Conclusions

The Camp Shiel Burn project was conceived to investigate the possible connection between the ‘smugglers’ story from a chapbook and a structure thought to have been an illicit still on the slopes of Minch Moor near Traquair. We have not achieved this aim but we have uncovered evidence of other activity along the burn which stretches back long before the whisky distilling activity of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The dating of the shieling to the 14th and early 15th centuries was particularly rewarding since evidence of small rural settlement from that time rarely survives on the ground. The concentration of the activities of transhumance, flax processing and whisky distilling in such a small area is quite extraordinary and a very different picture is painted of the past compared to the present. The remaining aims and objectives stated at the outset of the project have been more than fulfilled and we have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

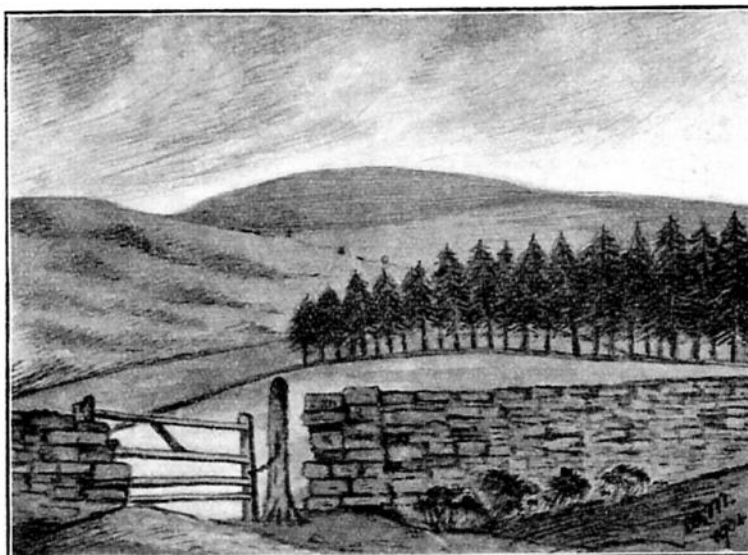
The Smugglers.

A TRAGEDY OF THE MINCH.

ON the southern side of Minchmoor there is a steep, narrow gully, down which a little burn bickers in haste to join the Quhair. Should you by any chance be in its neighbourhood and foregather with a shepherd, he will point out to you the "Smugglers' Still."

It is very difficult of approach, as the

Curiously enough, however, some years later, when burrowing in an old chest (once the property of my parents) containing a heterogeneous collection of old papers and books, I came across a small bundle of "chap books" tied together with a piece of age-yellowed tape. For the benefit of those who have



Minchmoor.

sides of the glen are precipitous and the bottom strewn with boulders which have been washed out of the hillside by the rains of centuries. There is not much to see, just a sort of cave; and when it was pointed out to me, about thirty years ago, I did not put much faith in the story. It was, of course, an ideal spot for such traffic; difficult of access even in daylight, it was absolutely unapproachable by night. But there are so many legends associated with this Borderland of ours that one has to take some of them with a grain of salt.

not heard of chap books, I may explain that about one hundred years ago a large number of packmen or chapmen travelled the country with their wares. Newspapers did not circulate, in the country at least, and these nomads were always welcomed for the news they brought from the outside world. Most of them sold little pamphlets, which in time got to be called chap books; on them would be printed any outstanding occurrence, such as a pit disaster, etc. More often than not they were in ballad form, but quite a lot were stories of the supernatural, and these were the "best sellers" in times when people were uneducated and superstitious.

Judge of my surprise when I came across one entitled "The Smugglers: A Tragedy of the Minch." This gave some credence to the story. The exact location of the "still" was not given, but from what I could gather there is little doubt they were one and the same. The story was set in 1816, when two soldiers, named respectively Armstrong and Buglass, returned from the Napoleonic Wars to their native parish of Traquair. The former was a man of dissolute, drunken habits; the latter seemed to have gained the respect of the community. Manual labour was repugnant to them after their long sojourn abroad, and they conceived the idea of making a living by illicit distilling. First, of course, they would have a look around, and where could they find a more secluded spot than this fissure in the face of the Minch. Water was there, cool and abundant, and excepting the shepherd not a soul would ever be near it. Of course, his passive co-operation had to be enlisted, but the sympathies of the people at that time were all with the smugglers.

For a time all went well. Their limited output was carried to the nearest point to which a pony could approach, and conveyed on horseback to the vintners of the surrounding burghs. Never did they take the same road twice in succession, and it seemed as if their venture could go on indefinitely without the Preventive officers being anything the wiser. But "the best laid schemes gang aft agley," and all the more readily if there is a woman in the case. Armstrong had taken up lodgings with a widow whose husband had fallen at Quatre Bras, and had carried on an intrigue with her. She pleaded with him to marry her and make her an honest woman, but he only laughed, and boasted when in his cups of his numerous amours. How truly Congreve says: "Heaven hath no rage like love to hatred turned,

Nor hell a fury like a woman scorned."

Armstrong had let it out that a cargo was to be taken to Selkirk on a certain night, and mad with jealousy she got in touch with the Revenue officers and

offered to guide them to where they could intercept the smugglers on their way to Yarrow. Dressed as a man to avoid recognition, she led them up the old drove road to the Yarrow side of Minchmoor, where they halted.

It was a beautiful night with more than half a moon that plunged behind the fast-flying clouds and sent them scurrying across the moorland, when the two smugglers led their pony, on which was strapped a couple of kegs of spirits, down the hill-track that leads from Minchmoor by Lewinshope to Yarrow. As they descended into a little hollow a number of men rose out of the heather and called on them to surrender in the King's name. They immediately quitted the pony and bolted down the hill, but shots rang out and Armstrong fell wounded. Buglass halted beside him, but he ordered him to go. "No use in you being taken also," he said, "run on. I will stop one of them at least; I am done for anyway."

When she saw Armstrong fall, the woman screamed, "My God, what have I done," and ran towards him. Armstrong, on his knees, probably thought she was one of the gaugers, and raising an old pistol they had loaded with slugs he shot her dead. Immediately other two shots came from the officers, who had reloaded, and Armstrong collapsed in a heap. Whether or not he recognised the woman will never be known.

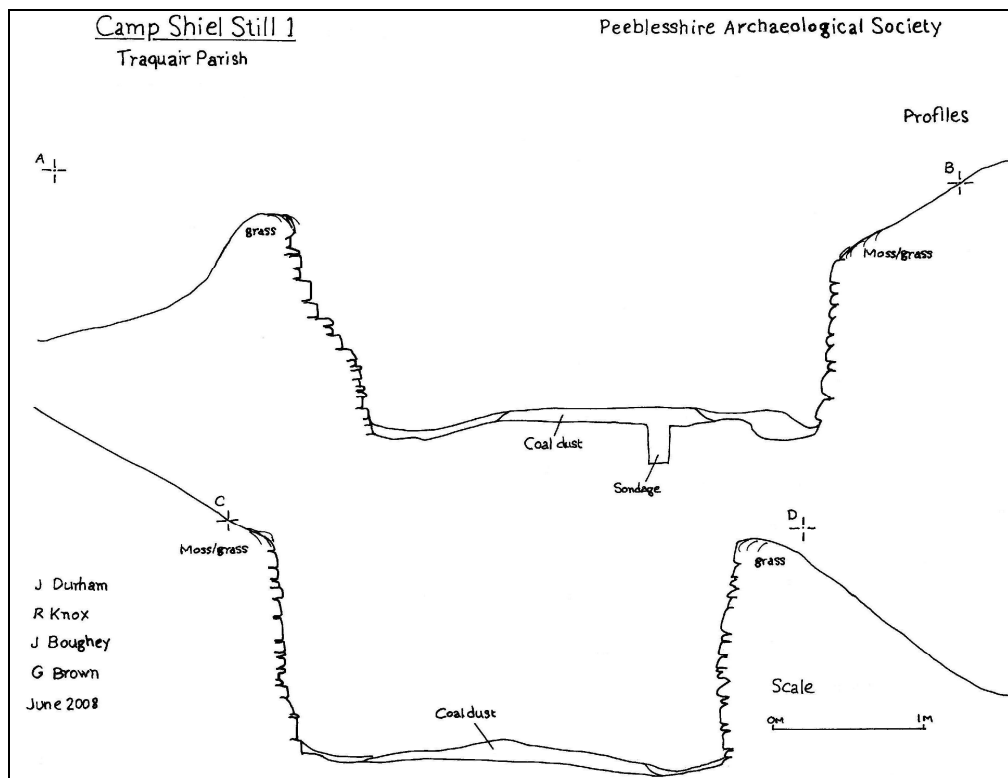
So ended the tragedy of the Minch. The villainy of the man and the treachery of the woman brought swift retribution. It almost seemed as if fate had taken a hand in its administration, as Buglass fled the country and was never taken.

NOVICE.

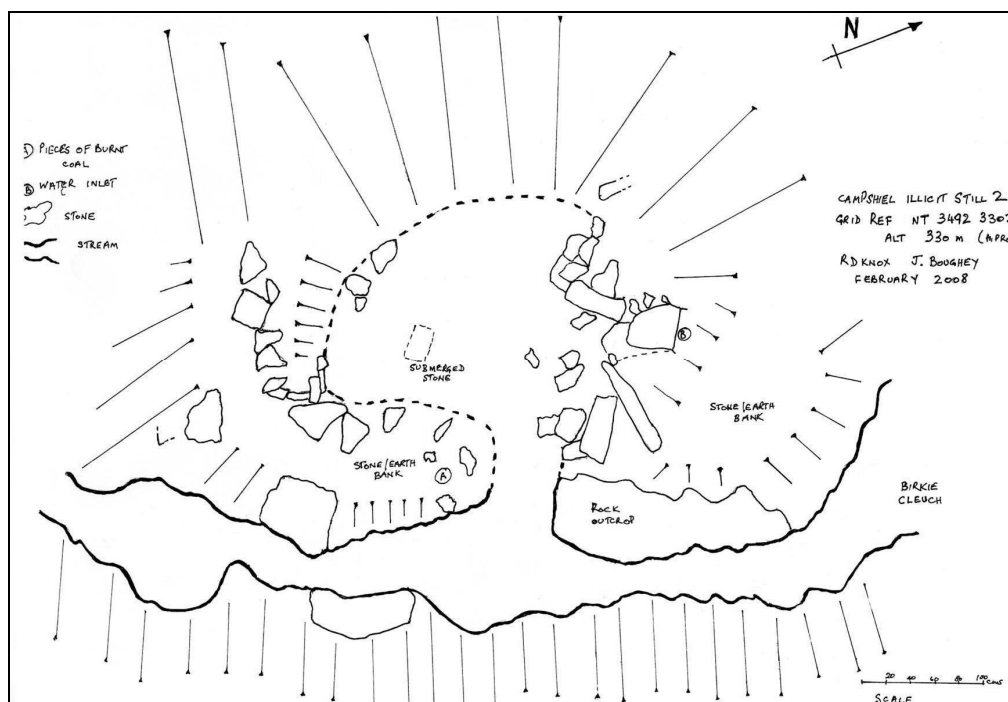
Two centenaries of interest to Borderers fall to be commemorated this year. Lord Binning, who died in 1733, fought with his father, the Earl of Haddington, at Sheriffmuir against the Jacobites, and is noted for his song, "Ungrateful Nanny." He became Knight Marischal of Scotland. It is also two hundred years since the death of Robert Crawford, who wrote "The Bush Aboon Traquair." He is said to have been drowned while returning from a visit to the Continent.

Appendix 2

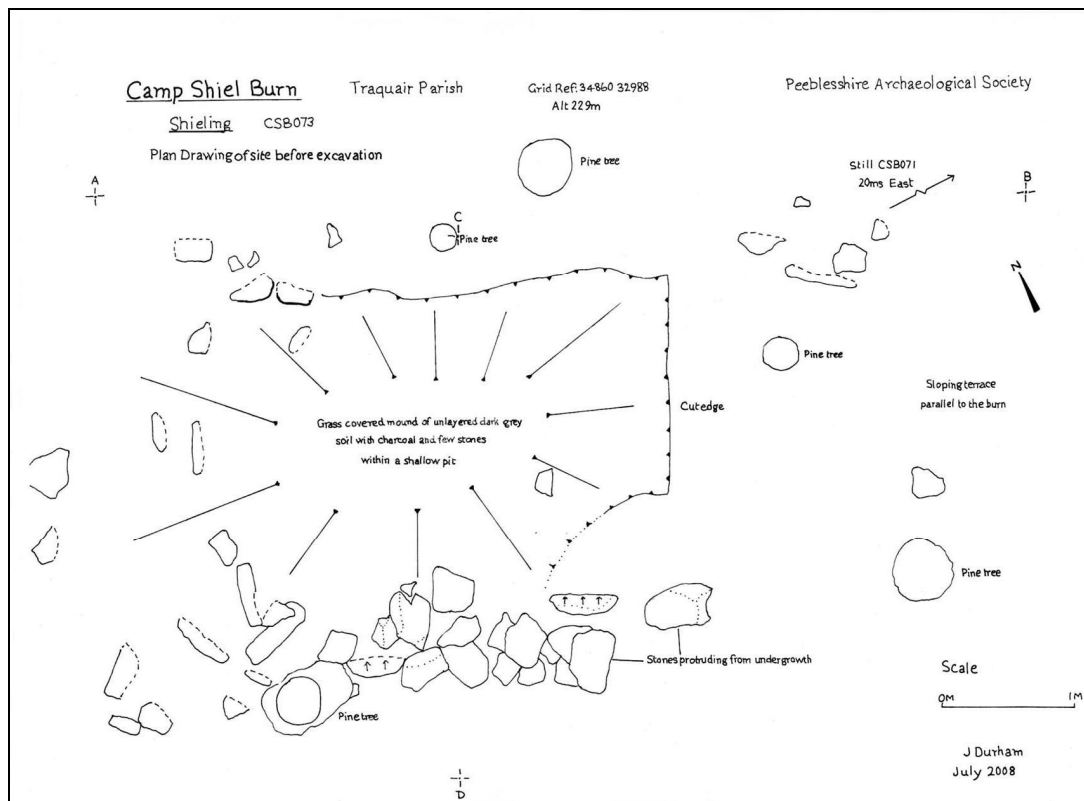
Additional Plans



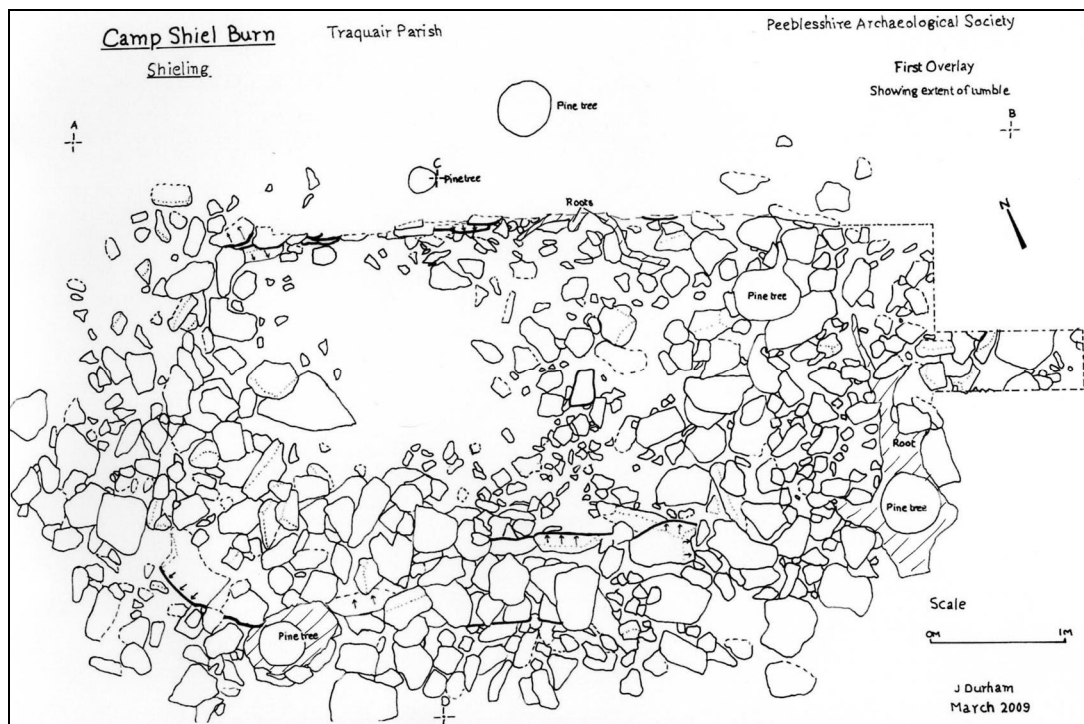
Plan profile of Camp Shiel Burn still



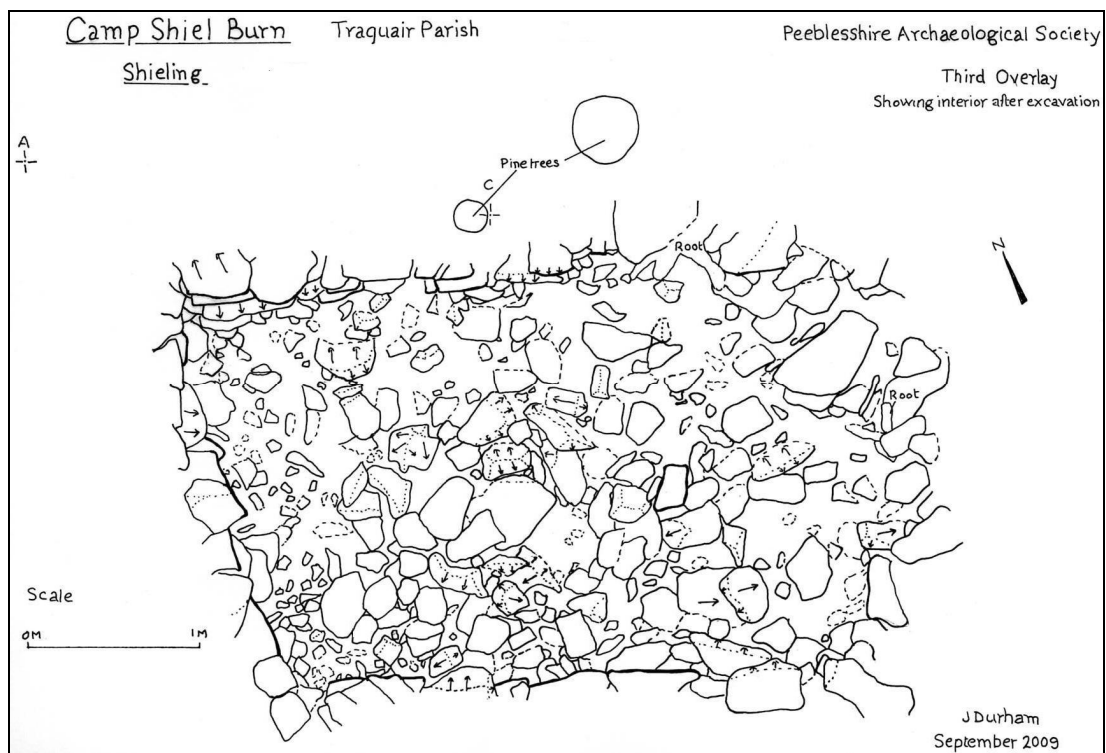
Plan of the Birkie Cleugh Still



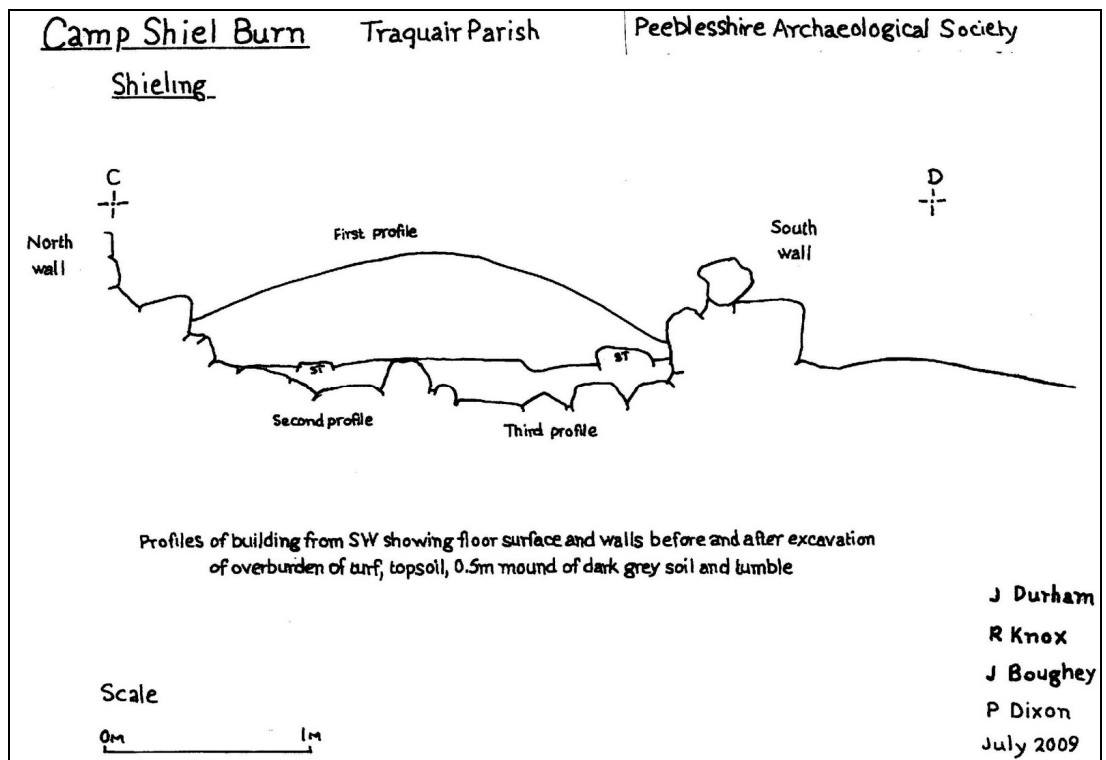
Plan drawing of the Upper Shieling before excavation



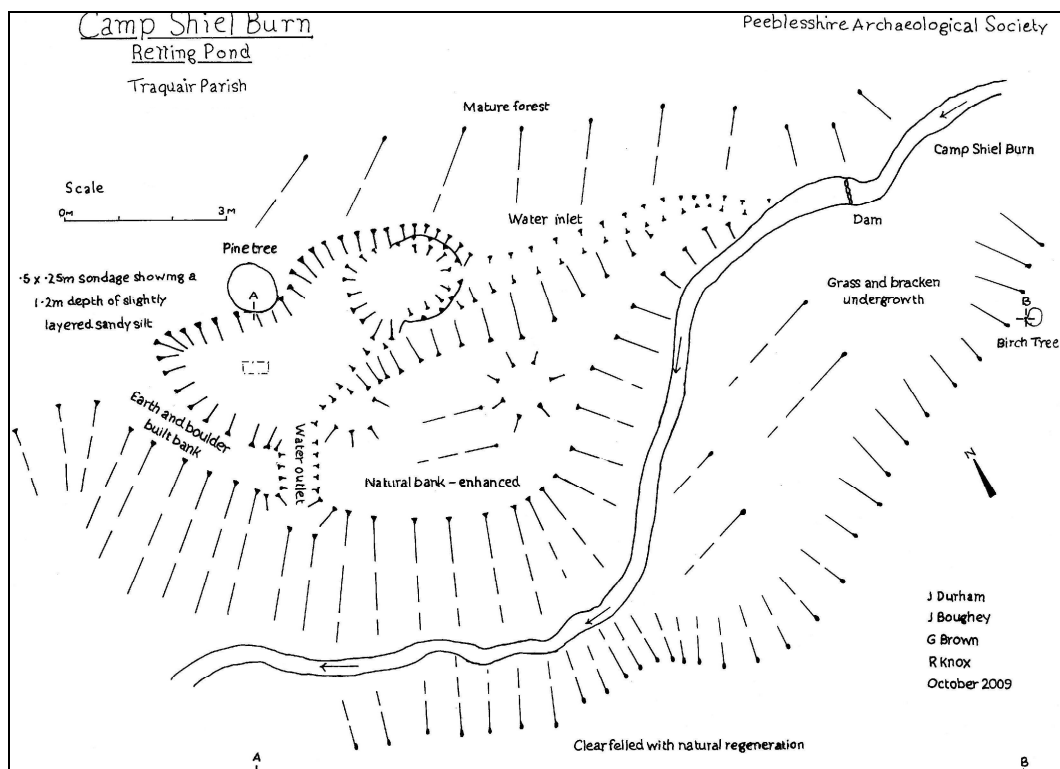
Plan drawing of the Upper Shieling 1st overlay



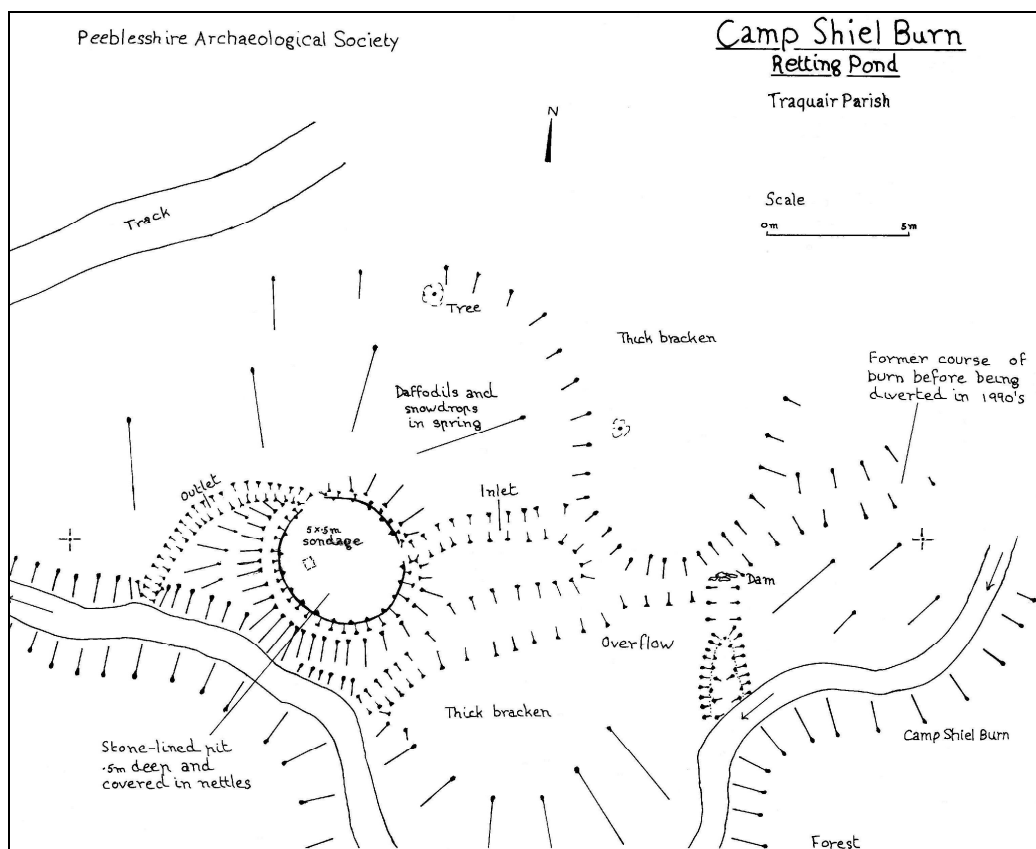
Plan drawing of the Upper Shieling 3rd overlay



Profile of the Upper Shieling



Plan of the Upper Retting Pond



Plan of the Lower Retting Pond

Appendix 3

Additional Photographs

The Still



1 Water running into the basin when the level of the burn was raised.



2 Fist-sized stones at the back of flue viewed from below.



3 The fallen lintel stone at the back of the flue.



4 The trench dug up the slope above the flue showing the stones of the smoke-away.



5 The origin of the drain under the wall is to the left of the flue.



6 The covered drain as it exits the still, from above.



7 The musket ball found by metal detecting below the excavated floor of the still.



8 The still after excavation.

The Upper Sheiling



9 The dark grey, loose, dry and unlayered fill of the mound.



10 The partially excavated shieling with the tree on the E wall still in situ.



11 The partially excavated hearth.



12 The shieling from the W with upright boulders centre and hearth on the R.



13 The double-skin construction of the W wall.



14 The shieling after excavation.

The Lower Retting Pond



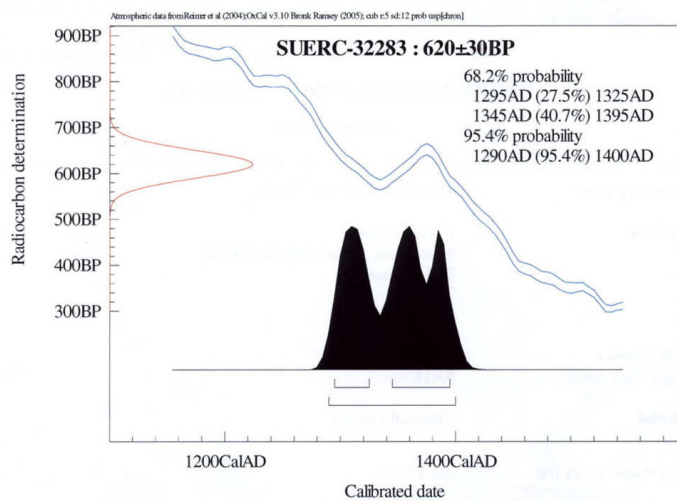
15 The sondage in the floor of the lower retting pond.



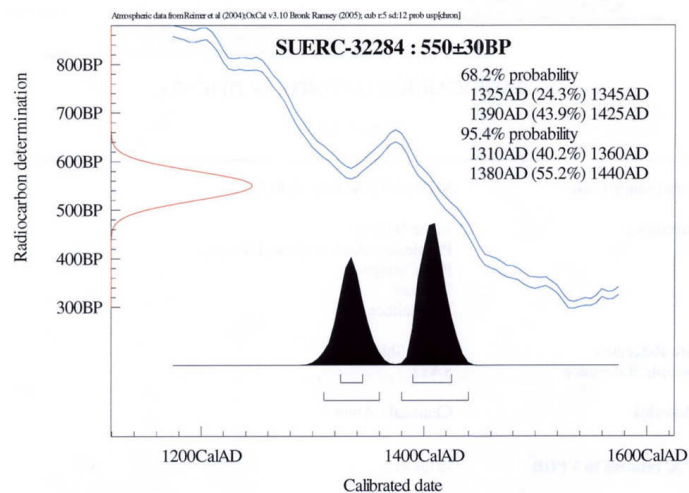
16 The track between Camp Shiel Burn and the Minch Moor Road.

Appendix 4

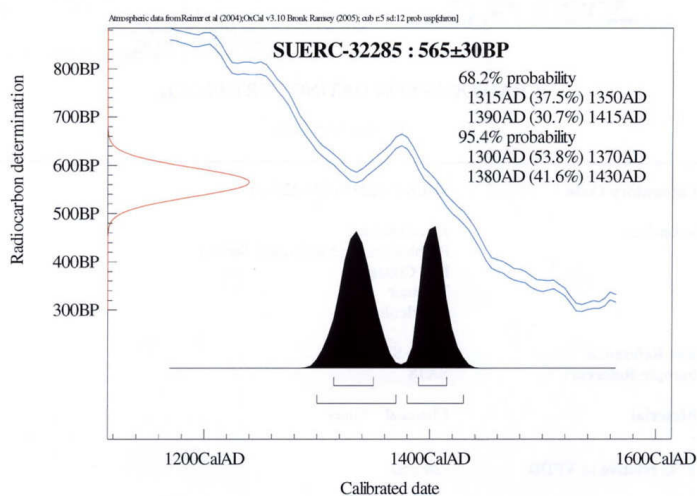
Carbon Dating results



Calibration Plot for SA16



Calibration Plot for SA17



Calibration Plot for SA18