

Shootinglee Trench 8 2022

Data Structure report

Peeblesshire Archaeological Report 2024

Piers Dixon



Frontispiece: view of the trench from the showing the trench across the platform being extended

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 2
Stratigraphy	Page 2
Finds	Page3
Interpretation	Page 5
Acknowledgements	Page 6
Appendices	Page 6

1. Introduction

A 1m wide trench was opened in April 2022 to determine if there was a building in the platform to the N of the peel house and if possible to date it. The trench was aligned from E to W at right angles to the platform and measured initially 8m in length by 1m in breadth, but due to packed stone at the W end it was extended a further metre W. The NW corner of the trench was located 9m N of the SW corner of the sheepfold shown on the overall site plan and 12m E of the drystone wall (the hypotenuse measuring 15m). A plan and section at 1:20 were drawn on site (Figure 1).

2. Stratigraphy

The topsoil of dark grey brown silt with medium and large stones, some of which appear to be tumble at the W end of the trench, overlay more closely packed stone at the W end and the footing of a wall C3 at the E end, partly covered by the roots of a conifer. Beyond this, the topsoil was loose and full of cavities, being made up of scree from the hill. Under the topsoil, a layer of pinkish-grey brown silty-clay (C2) filled the 3.8m wide space between the wall C3 and the closely packed stone at the W end. Excavation of this layer revealed the bedrock of fractured stone which underlay wall C3 and at the W appeared to be cut (C5) to a depth of c.0.1-0.15m to make a terrace. A large flat stone on the bedrock surface might be a relic of occupation, but the uneven surface does not suggest domestic occupation. The packed stone seemed too irregular on excavation to be built wall. However, the section revealed a base of placed stone on a horizontal plane in a matrix of red-brown silty-clay (C4), suggesting the packed stone may be backfill after robbing of good facing stones. Finds of post-medieval date were located in the topsoil and in the infill layer of grey silty-clay that was spread between the walls and overlying the W wall C4. Those in the topsoil are likely to post-date occupation and those in the grey layer may include artefacts at the end of the occupation of the structure. The latter include green bottle glass and pottery.

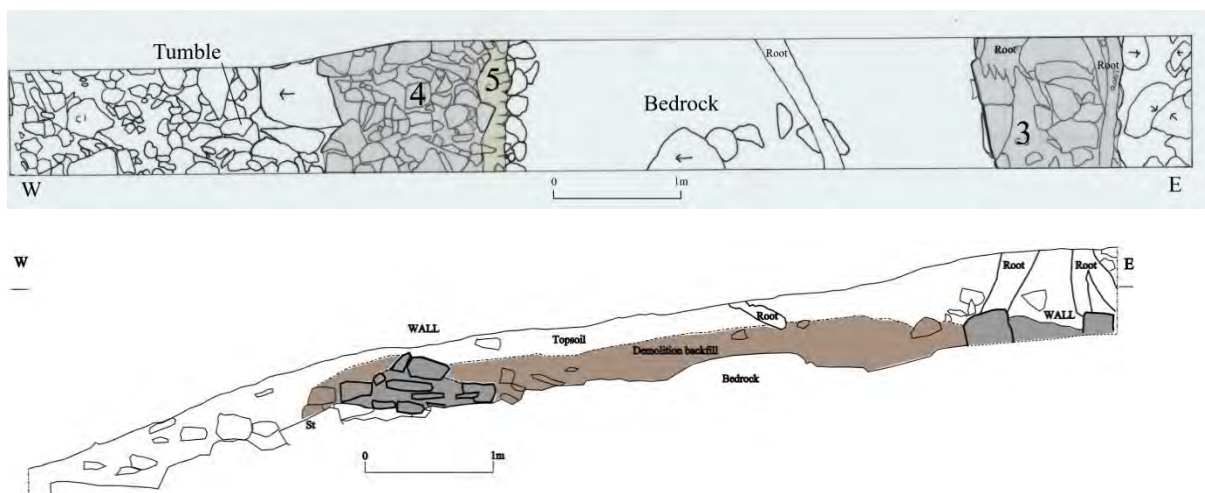


Figure 1 Plan and N baulk section

3. Finds

Most of the finds came from the topsoil and included finds of the 17th to 19th centuries; pottery, bottle glass and clay pipe. The grey silty layer produced 10 shards of bottle glass, 4 sherds of medieval/post-medieval pottery and a piece of haematite, suggesting a late 17th or early 18th century date for the destruction and levelling of the building.



Figure 2 Wall C3 showing the interior face angled due to the intrusion of tree roots.



Figure 3 Wall C4 is visible immediately right of the large boulder in the N baulk section overlain by grey-silty demolition layer C2 to its right.



Figure 4 Bedrock brash of angular stones forms the base of the interior of the building and one large flat stone, possibly a paving stone. Note the cut for the base of the W wall at right angle to trench.

4. Interpretation

The trench was successful in confirming that there had been a building on this platform with a construction not unlike that of the other two buildings on the site that have been excavated comprising rubble walls faced with large stones and packed with red-brown silty-clay and smaller stones. The walls are thinner than the peel house, but thicker than Building 1 in size. The poor quality of the internal floor points to an outbuilding such as a store, but no floor deposit was found. The wall at the E end was not excavated as it was overlain by the large roots of a tree and the wall at the W end had been largely robbed in the trench, only appearing in undisturbed form in the N baulk. It could be late-medieval or post-medieval in date and was demolished in the late 17th or 18th century on the basis of the bottle glass found in the pink-grey silty clay layer that overlies the interior of the building and the demolished W wall. It is interpreted as the result of robbing the stone leaving the unwanted wall core behind. One sherd of Standard White Ware also found in this deposit would suggest an early 19th century demolition.

5. Acknowledgements

I should like to thank the landowner Thistlelane Ltd for permission to excavate and Charlotte Cavey-Wilcox, the manager of Scottish Woodlands in the Borders for her patience and support over the years. I should also thank the many volunteers who have made the excavation possible: Bob Knox, Jack Boughey, David Drury, Jeff Carter, Peter Jack, Bill Glass, Andy Jepson, Gillian Brown, Maureen Erasmusson, Neil Crawford, David Paterson, Stephen Scott, Brenda Dreghorn, Sue Cotterill, Kevin Cotterill, Brian Tate, James Garry, Geoff Parkhouse and particularly Joyce Durham, co-director on the project.

6. Appendices

List of Contexts

C'text No.	Trench	Context type	Position	Description	Comments
1	8	Topsoil layer		Dark grey brown silt and tumble, especially W of C4	
2	8	Layer	Under C1, over C3 & 4	Pinkish-grey silty-clay (5YR 7/2), a few charcoal flecks and small/medium stones	Demolition debris
3	8	Wall	Under C2	Large facings with core of red-brown silty-clay (5YR 5/6) and large packing stones	E edge under root
4	8	Wall	Under C2	Large facings and core of large stones in red-brown silty-clay matrix (5YR 5/4)	
5	8	Cut	Under C4	Cut edge in bedrock 0.2m E of wall, 0.1-0.15m deep on N-S axis	

List of Finds

Find	C'text	Area	No f'ds	Material	Description	Date	Inl	Photo	Note
1.1	1	8	6	Glass	Green bottle	23.04.22	BG/DP		
1.2	1	8	1	Bone	Animal rib	23.04.22	BG/DP		
2.1	1	8	4	Glass	Green bottle	29.04.22	DD/DP		
2.2	1	8	2	Pottery		29.04.22	DD/DP		
3.1	1	8	4	Glass	Green bottle	06.05.22	BT/DP		
3.2	1	8	1	Clay	Bowl	06.05.22	BT		
4.1	2	8	1	Pottery		14.05.22	DP/DD		
4.2	2	8	3	Glass	Green bottle base	14.05.22	DP/DD		
5.1	2	8	7	Glass	Green bottle	04.06.22	DD/DP		
5.2	2	8	3	Pottery	Late med, 2 joining pieces	04.06.22	DD/DP		
5.3	2	8	1	Stone	Haematite	04.06.22	DD/DP		
6.1	1	8	6	Pottery		18.06.22	DD		
6.2	1	8	3	Glass		18.06.22	DD		
7	1	8	1	Metal		16.07.22	DP		
8.1	Backfill	8	2	Pottery		30.07.22			
8.2	Backfill	8	1	Glass		30.07.22			
9	Backfill	8	1	Pottery		27.08.22			

List of drawings

Number	Description	Scale	Initials	Date	Note
SH 22 36	Plan of trench	1:20	BD	06.08.2022	
SH22 37	Section drawing of N baulk	1:20	JD, PD	20.08.2022	

List of photographs

Number	Description	Date
1	View of building wall at E end of trench	07.05.22
2	View of subsoil inside building	04.06.22
3	View from W after topsoil/grey clay removed	02.08.22
4	View from E after topsoil/grey clay removed	07.08.22
5	Vertical of rocky subsoil with cut for W wall	07.08.22
6	Vertical of root distorted E wall	07.08.22
7	W wall and subsoil cut	27.08.22
8	E wall vertical	27.08.22
9	Section N baulk W	27.08.22
10	Section N baulk middle	27.08.22
11	Section N baulk middle	27.08.22
12	Section N baulk E	27.08.22