



## **ARO38: 'A little earth above the stone': Archaeological Investigations 2006–2012 for consolidation work at Moy Castle, Mull, Argyll and Bute**

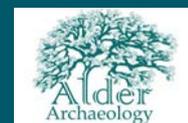
**By Ray Cachart with an historical account by David R Perry and additional contributions by Tamlin Barton, David Bowler, George Haggarty, Derek Hall, Robin Murdoch, Catherine Smith and Joan A Walsh**

**Illustrations are by Christopher Fyles, Laura Fyles and Dave Munro**



HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT  
SCOTLAND

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ALBA



**ARO38: 'A little earth above the stone': Archaeological Investigations 2006–2012 for consolidation work at Moy Castle, Mull, Argyll and Bute**

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Figure 1: Location of Moy Castle, Mull. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100049514



*'Your country consists of two things, stone and water. There is, indeed, a little earth above the stone in some places, but a very little'*

*Dr Samuel Johnson to Sir Allan McLaine of Lochbuie, on visiting Mull in 1773*

## Summary

Moy Castle is a fifteenth-century tower-house at the head of Lochbuie, on the south side of Mull, with alterations and additions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Abandoned as a domestic residence in 1752, the tower was nonetheless kept roofed and watertight. Conservation works were archaeologically monitored between 2006 and 2012, revealing the addition of turrets, caphouses<sup>1</sup> and a garderobe, with relocation of the garret entrance and conversion of the second floor chamber to a kitchen.

The roof slates form an important early assemblage and were shown to originate from the Slate Islands (Easdale).

## Introduction

Moy Castle is a Scheduled Monument (SM 5139), a category A listed building and a building that was of importance in the history of the Isles. It is located on its north shore, on a low rock platform at the head of Loch Buie, an inlet on the south side of the Isle of Mull (NGR: NM 6168 2474) (Figure 1).

The castle is a modest-sized tower house built of local stone, with three main storeys, originally with a garret, the remains of an irregular barmkin to the SE, a rock cut ditch to the NW and the site of a later boathouse. Much of its surviving fabric can be ascribed to the first half of the fifteenth century and includes large blocks of slate used to pave the original parapet walk. Some alterations and additions, confined mainly to the upper works of the tower, were carried out about the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Corner turrets were added on the landward side, and a two-storey and a one-storey caphouse were built over the seaward wall. A large kitchen fireplace

<sup>1</sup> A caphouse or cap-house is the enclosed part of the upper part of a stair which gives access to a walk behind a parapet or an upper gallery. In Scotland it is defined as a square top to a circular stair-tower.

and chimney were inserted in the seaward wall of the second storey and a new doorway and fireplace were inserted into the north garret wall. Many of these modifications will have involved changes to the original slate roof.

The castle was finally abandoned as a domestic residence in 1752 when the family moved into the nearby newly built accommodation of what is now Old Lochbuie House. Surprisingly, the tower was kept roofed and watertight, as it was being used as a storehouse well into the second half of the nineteenth century (RCAHMS 1980). A sketch in MacGibbon and Ross (1889, 128, fig 77) still shows the garret, caphouses and turrets all roofed.

Latterly, and especially after the removal of the roofing in the late nineteenth century, the tower became derelict, but the thick walls survived virtually complete to the height of the parapet and gables.

Conservation began in 2006, funded by the HLF and others, carried out by Duncan Strachan, Stone Mason and Masonry Conservation Specialist. Historic Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland) required various archaeological works as conservation proceeded, and these were carried out by SUAT Ltd and latterly by Alder Archaeology Ltd, until July 2012. Archaeological works comprised excavation, the removal of collapsed and accumulated material within the building, and recording the fabric and structure revealed. The footings for exterior scaffolding within the scheduled area were also excavated.

## The History of Moy Castle and the Maclaines of Lochbuie

By David R Perry

Maclean tradition is that the Macleans acquired land in Mull about 1360 from John, 1st Lord of the Isles, who granted Duart and Lochbuie to the brothers Lachlan and Hector Maclean. However, the Macleans are not recorded in Lochbuie until 11 February 1443/4, when John Murdochson McGilleon, lord of 'Canlochbouye' (3rd of Lochbuie) witnessed a charter of Alexander, 3rd Lord of the Isles (*ALI*, 34-5). He had previously witnessed without designation a charter of Alexander in 1427 (*ALI*, 64). Moy Castle itself is first mentioned in a charter of James IV dated 22



March 1493/4 confirming to John 'Makgilleoun of Lochboye', (5th of Lochbuie) lands in Mull and Morvern including 'the pennyland of Moy with castle', all of which John had previously held in heritage of John, Lord of the Isles. At the same time John Maclean was confirmed in lands in Lochaber and Perthshire with the office of bailie of south Tiree, and in further lands in 'Moray' (Morvern) with the office of bailie, all of which had likewise been held of the Lord of the Isles (*RMS*, ii, nos 2200-2202). These charters by the king followed the forfeiture of John, 4th Lord of the Isles in 1493 and indicate that Lochbuie was among the first Highland chiefs to submit to the crown after the forfeiture, probably during James IV's expedition to Dunstaffnage in August 1493 (Maclean-Bristol 1995, 73-4). Construction of the castle itself seems to have been begun in the first half of the fifteenth century, either by Hector, 1st of Lochbuie or his son Murdoch, 2nd of Lochbuie and was largely completed by the mid-fifteenth century, under John, 3rd of Lochbuie (RCAHMS 1980, 217, 226). The castle appears as 'Castle Loch buy' in Blaeu's map of Mull (1654), which is credited to a now lost map by Timothy Pont in the late sixteenth century.

The Macleans of Lochbuie had been members of the council of the Lords of the Isles and were high in their favour. John Maclean, 3rd of Lochbuie, received a grant of lands in Lochaber from John, Earl of Ross and 4th Lord of the Isles in 1461 (*ALI*, 107-9). His son, Hector, 4th of Lochbuie, accompanied John, Lord of the Isles to Edinburgh in 1478 where he witnessed a charter by the latter (*ALI*, 179-82). Hector's son, John, 5th of Lochbuie, witnessed a charter of Angus, Master of the Isles in 1485 when he lent Angus his seal; and he received the office of bailie of the southern part of Tiree from John, Lord of the Isles in 1492 (*ALI*, 188, 195-6).

Despite the crown charters in his favour, John Maclean, 5th of Lochbuie's submission to the king was not to be taken for granted. He was soon involved in a feud in 1500 with Cameron of Lochiel over the lands in Lochaber as well as with his cousin, Maclean of Duart. He also supported Donald Dubh's claim to the lordship of the Isles in 1503 and was still causing trouble in 1505 (*RSS*, i, nos 486, 1162). In his submission to James IV's commissioners at Dunadd, along with Duart and Maclan of Arnamurchan, on 10 June

1506 he undertook not to harm Lachlan Maclean of Duart, his kin, friends, servants, families and dependants in their persons, lands, rents, goods and possessions before 1 May next under penalty of 3,000 merks to the king, 1,000 merks to the kirk of the Isles and 1,000 merks to the injured party; all three parties were to appear before the king and Privy Council on 15 October next with their charters and other documents for their disputes to be settled according to law (*ERS*, xii, 709-10). After this submission he received payments from James IV of 30, 20 and 10 French crowns (£21, £14 and £7) between December 1506 and March 1508 (*TA*, iii, 355, 363; iv, 105). Nevertheless he supported Donald MacDonald of Lochalsh, a claimant to the lordship of the Isles in 1515, for which he was granted a remission in 1517 (*RSS*, i, no 2881).

By 1531 he had fallen out with his sons or some of them, and was involved in further feuding with his cousin, Maclean of Duart, who was assisted by Alexander John Cannochson (MacDonald). The latter's submission to James V on 2 May 1531 included a provision that he was not to assist Maclean of Lochbuie's sons in besieging their father's house or harrying his lands (*ADCP*, 358). It was during these disturbances that Lochbuie's son, John, was killed by Alan Maclean, a younger son of Duart, for which Alan received a respite in March 1533 for treasonable raising of fire and burning of houses in the Isle of Mull, and the slaughters of 'John McGillane, sone to Johnne McGillane of Lochboy', and others (*RSS*, ii, no 1527). It must have been for this killing of his 'barnis' (bairns) that a Maclean, presumably Lochbuie, was given alms of £10 by James V in August 1531 (*TA*, v, 430). A claim (Cameron 1998, 236) that during these troubles Moy Castle received £3,000 worth of damage by Duart seems to be erroneous. Rather it was Duart who claimed in a court case in March 1533 that Lochbuie and his accomplices from his 'castle of Lochmoy' had despoiled Duart's cattle to the value of £3,000 and slain diverse persons and thereby broken an agreement not to trouble Duart under penalty of £1,000 and despite Duart's departure for Ireland 'to avoid trouble'; Lochbuie was absolved of the charge (*NRS*, CS6/2, f115; *Acta Sessionis* (Stair), 84-5). The feud was still going on in 1538 when John claimed that his lands in Morvern to the value of £10-3s-3d had been occupied by Duart (*NRS*, CS6/11, f181). John, 5th of Lochbuie, is



said to have been killed in battle in 1538 with his son Ewen, who was also killed (Maclean-Bristol 1995, 185 n37) but as his then illegitimate son, Murdoch, later 6th of Lochbuie had been given the reversion of the Lochbuie estate in 1534 by his father, it is likely that Ewen was already dead in or by 1534. Murdoch's right of succession was confirmed by James V in January 1538, although he was not legitimated by the king till September that year (*RMS*, iii, nos 1745, 1837). That Murdoch's confirmation as heir was not to prejudice any legitimate heirs suggests that the king was uncertain on the survival of John's lawful sons.

In 1542 Murdoch had a precept under the privy seal for a charter under the great seal of his lands including the pennyland of Moy with castle thereof, all to be held of the king in fee and heritage and in free barony (*RSS*, ii, no 4732). This seems to be earliest reference to a barony of Moy, which is rarely mentioned before the eighteenth century. There are no early charters among the MacLaine of Lochbuie papers (NRS, GD174 and GD1/1003); presumably they were lost or disappeared during any of the occasions when the Campbells occupied Moy Castle in the 1640s, 1680s or 1690s, or during any of the family quarrels between father and heir, for which see below. (In 1887 J P MacLean [1889, 234] noted the survival of few early charters before 1750 at Lochbuie House.) The only other reference to a barony is in 1615 when Hector Maclean, 9th of Lochbuie was retoured heir to his great-grandfather, Murdoch, 6th of Lochbuie in his lands in Argyll and Inverness-shire united in the barony of Moy (*Retours*, Argyll, no 15; Inverness, no 27). Despite this royal favour, Murdoch was soon causing trouble when he supported Donald Dubh's return with English support to claim the lordship of the Isles in 1545; for this he and others were granted a respite in 1546 for assisting 'our auld enemies of England' in burning Bute and Arran (*RSS*, iii, no 1534). Murdoch himself was to have trouble from his heir, John. In 1576 he complained to the Privy Council that, being 'ane aigit decrepit man of four scoir yeris', he and his other sons had been ill-treated and oppressed by John who had taken control of his father's lands and rents, for which John was outlawed (*RPC*, ii, 483-5). Murdoch's estate was valued at £20,000 (*RPC*, ii, 520). John in turn complained to the Privy Council in September 1578 that he

had been imprisoned by his father 'in prissoun in the irnis in the hous of Lochbowie' since two days after 14 May 1577 (*RPC*, iii, 37). John succeeded soon after to the estate as 7th of Lochbuie and in March 1588 John Roy Maclean complained to the Privy Council that he had been kept 'in prisone in the irnis' at Lochbuie since April 1586 by his chief, John Maclean of Lochbuie (*RPC*, iv, 263).

Hector (Lachlan) Maclean, 8th of Lochbuie was among the nine chieftains of the Isles who assented to the Statutes of Iona in 1609, an attempt by Andrew Knox, Bishop of the Isles, James VI's commissioner in the Isles, to maintain order there. He renewed his submission in Edinburgh in August 1614 (*Highland Papers*, iii, 145). Lochbuie was required to observe the peace; to appear yearly on 10 July before the Privy Council; to exhibit required persons; to keep no more than three gentlemen in his household as prescribed to him (under the Statutes of Iona); to purge his bounds of 'sornaris and idill men'; he was not to bear or wear hagbuts or 'pistollettis'; and he was to reside at Moy. His tenants were not to wear armour (*RPC*, xiv, 583-4; see also *RPC*, 2nd Ser, vii, 125, 199).

In 1612 Hector's son and heir apparent, also Hector, later 9th of Lochbuie, was granted the estate which had belonged to his ancestors beyond memory of men, held of the king by service of ward but which had fallen to the crown because his grandfather John, 7th of Lochbuie, had alienated some of the lands without the consent of the king, or because his grandfather and father and others had failed to appear before the Exchequer between 19 December 1597 and 15 May 1598 (*RMS*, vii, no 663). In 1625 the younger Hector's son and heir, Murdoch, later 10th of Lochbuie, was granted the reversion of his father's lands with a single sasine to be taken at the castle of Moy to stand for all the lands (*RMS*, viii, no 815).

Murdoch joined the royalist Marquess of Montrose near Perth in June 1645 and remained with his army until the Battle of Kilsyth in August. Thereafter he was associated with Alexander MacDonald or Colkitto in harrying the Earl of Argyll's lands in 1645-6. In July 1648 he besieged for five months his own castle of Moy which was held by a Covenanter garrison under the keeping of the Marquess of Argyll, forcing it to



surrender. For all this he was forfeited for treason on 22 May 1649, the forfeiture being ratified by Parliament on 7 August 1649 (*RPS*, 1649/5/409; *RPS*, 1649/1/29). The forfeiture was annulled at the Restoration (*RPS*, 1661/1/215).

In 1674, Archibald, 9th Earl of Argyll, a creditor of the Duart estate, secured a commission of fire and sword from the Privy Council to enable him to invade Mull and seize Duart Castle. The agreement for the surrender of Duart Castle and the submission of the Macleans to Argyll was signed at Moy on 18 September 1674, although neither Lachlan Maclean, 11th of Lochbuie nor his heir, Hector, were signatories; Argyll himself was a signatory (*Highland Papers*, i, 275-7). Instead they joined the Macleans' rebellion the following year against Argyll, Hector being involved in the seizure of Cairnburgh (Cairnbulg) Castle in April 1675 (*Highland Papers*, i, 304-5). (Lachlan and Hector had in 1669 signed a bond of assurance with Argyll (NRS, GD174/41)). By the end of 1678, Argyll had managed to ensure the submission of much of Mull, including old and young Lochbuie and was expecting to have a garrison in the 'house of Moy' (GD112/39/124/32). But Argyll was being overoptimistic and a month later old Lochbuie was still at large, having taken refuge in his castle (NRS, GD112/39/125/8, /9). However, he had surrendered 43 swords and 32 guns less than a month later (*Highland Papers*, i, 317).

Lachlan soon fell out with his son, who attached himself to Argyll and the Campbells in Duart Castle. On 4 August 1680 Lachlan Maclean of Lochbuie complained to the Privy Council that his eldest son, Hector, with others in June 1679 'came to the Castle of Moy, all armed with swords, pistols, dirks, hagbutts, etc., and lay in ambush most of the night expecting the complainer to come abroad, and, when in the morning he went out to attend to his affairs, they set upon him and robbed him of his arms, money, papers and everything else he had with him, and carried him by force to the Castle of Dowart, where they kept him prisoner for five or six months in a miserable and starving condition; and entering into his house, they also stole his whole furniture, charter chest and papers, and barbarously thrust his wife downstairs and out at the gates, with the whole family, and discharged her to stay within any part of his lands or that country. They also took away 500 cows and other cattle, six score horses and mares, 1200 sheep and goats and other

goods belonging to him and his tenants . . . and having thus dispossessed the complainer, they masterfully maintain possession, and to prevent him from sheltering there they put the said Hector, his eldest son, in possession of the said castle and lands' (*RPC*, 3rd Ser, vi, 519). Hector and the others were outlawed on 19 August. Lachlan had still not regained possession of Moy Castle by 11 Jan 1683 when the Privy Council received his supplication craving that a party of the king's forces in Mull or Tiree may be sent to recover his house of Moy, which was illegally held by his son Hector (*RPC*, 3rd Ser, vii, 21). Hector was a supporter of Argyll who had been forfeited at the end of 1681 for failing to take the Test, an oath acknowledging the supremacy of the king.

By 1689 Lachlan had recovered Moy Castle but, as he and his son opposed the Revolution Settlement of that year (Hector led his clansmen to join 'Bonnie Dundee'), in 1690 he was forced to surrender the castle to the 10th Earl of Argyll and accept a Campbell garrison. It was returned to him in 1697.

Moy Castle ceased to be the principal residence of the Maclaines of Lochbuie (the spelling adopted in the early eighteenth century) in 1750-2 when a new house was built at Lochbuie by John Stevenson, mason in Oban for John Maclaine, seventeenth of Lochbuie, who had succeeded to the estate the year before (Plate 1). Although the contract for the new house was dated 22 May 1750, work does not seem to have begun until 6 May 1751 and the 'stonework of the house' was to be completed by 15 December 1751. The new house was to be 40 feet long, 28 feet wide within the walls and 18 feet high in the side walls, 'Sufficiently built with Stone and Lyme near Castele Moy, with Hewen Doors, windos, Chimney pieces and Corners'. Lochbuie was to pay 'for each Rood of Mason work The sume of Eighteen pounds Scots, five shilling for each foot of plain hewen stone, seven pence for each foot mouldings, and six pounds Scots for Each [chimney] vent to be carried up with Twelve pounds Scots for making up the scaffolds and other utencills for the work' (NRS, GD174/722/1).

It was in the new house of Lochbuie that Dr Johnson and Boswell were entertained by John Maclaine, seventeenth of Lochbuie on 21 and 22 October 1773 (Johnson and Boswell 1974, 139-41, 390-1). On the second day, they visited



*Plate 1: General view of Moy Castle and Lochbuie House*

Moy Castle, both noting the dungeon. Boswell recorded that some years previously Lochbuie had imprisoned some persons in it, for which he had been fined; Boswell's father, Lord Auchinleck, had been a judge in the case. This is presumably a reference to an incident in 1758 when Hector McLean, son of John McLean of Killean, and Allan McLean of Kilmory brought a suit against Lochbuie for wrongful imprisonment (NRS, GD174/124 and GD1/1003/4). A few months before Johnson and Boswell's visit, Archibald Maclaine, younger of Lochbuie had apprehended two other persons on 16 January, and asked his father to detain them in the Castle of Moy until he arrived and to provide them with meat, a blanket and some straw; his father was to 'trust none about [him] with the key of the Castle' except John M'Ourich (?) (NRS, GD174/1287). Unfortunately the letter is water-stained and faded and the details are not clear. The consequences of this detention are not recorded.

Although the castle was deserted by the family it remained roofed and in use (even if only as a prison). That the detainees in 1773 had to be provided with straw and a blanket suggests that the castle was devoid of furnishings. The castle seems still to have been roofed at the time of the Second Statistical Account, when it was in 'more perfect state of preservation [than Duart Castle] owing to the attention that had been bestowed in keeping the roof always entire' (NSA, vii, 287). It was still recorded as roofed in the Ordnance

Survey Name Books in 1868-78 (OS1/2/47/67) and is shown roofed on the OS 'First Edition'. By the Second Edition the castle is still shown with a roof but the battlements are also shown, suggesting the castle may not have been fully roofed then. J P Maclean (1889) in his history mentions that when he was at Lochbuie in 1887, the castle's roof had been kept entire until the 'last few years', suggesting it was only partially roofed at that time. It was unroofed in the early twentieth century.

In 1944-45 the castle featured in the romantic film *I Know Where I'm Going!*, written, produced and directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger and starring Wendy Hiller as Joan Webster and Roger Livesay as Torquil MacNeil, laird of Kiloran. In the film there is a curse on any laird of Kiloran who enters the castle. Torquil's ancestor had stormed the castle to capture and kill his unfaithful wife and her lover, who were bound together and cast into a water-filled dungeon with only a small stone to stand upon. When their strength gave out, they dragged each other into the water, but not before she placed a curse on the lairds of Kiloran: any who dared to step over the threshold of the castle would be chained to a woman to the end of his days. At the end of the film, Torquil enters the castle and climbs to the top of the battlements, where he sees Joan approaching the castle; they embrace (and live happily ever after?).



## Archaeological investigations

The tower is roughly rectangular and aligned NE/SW. For convenience, the NE (landward) end is here treated as north, and the SW (seaward) end as south. The archaeological investigations comprised twelve areas in the upper works of the tower, and the excavation of scaffold bases around the west, east and south walls.

### Area 1 Stair-head

Area 1 was located in the SE corner of the tower (Figure 2), surrounding the head of the turnpike stair which was the only access to the parapet walkways. The west, north and east parapet walkways were surfaced with large slate slabs, but the south walkway had been surfaced with

sandstone slabs. For safety reasons, the stair (1.20 m diameter) had been boarded off, leaving only the top two treads exposed.

The area included the doorway into the single-storey caphouse from the stair, and a small area of intramural space to the west of the stair-head where a N/S oriented wall blocked the original walkway passage between the garret south gable end and the south parapet wall.

The area around the stair was cleared of vegetation, silt, rubble and mortar down to the wall-head core. The upper treads had been removed from the stair, and were probably reused to form the stair to the upper floor of the SW caphouse (Area 6, below). The surrounding wall-head had been reduced to produce a

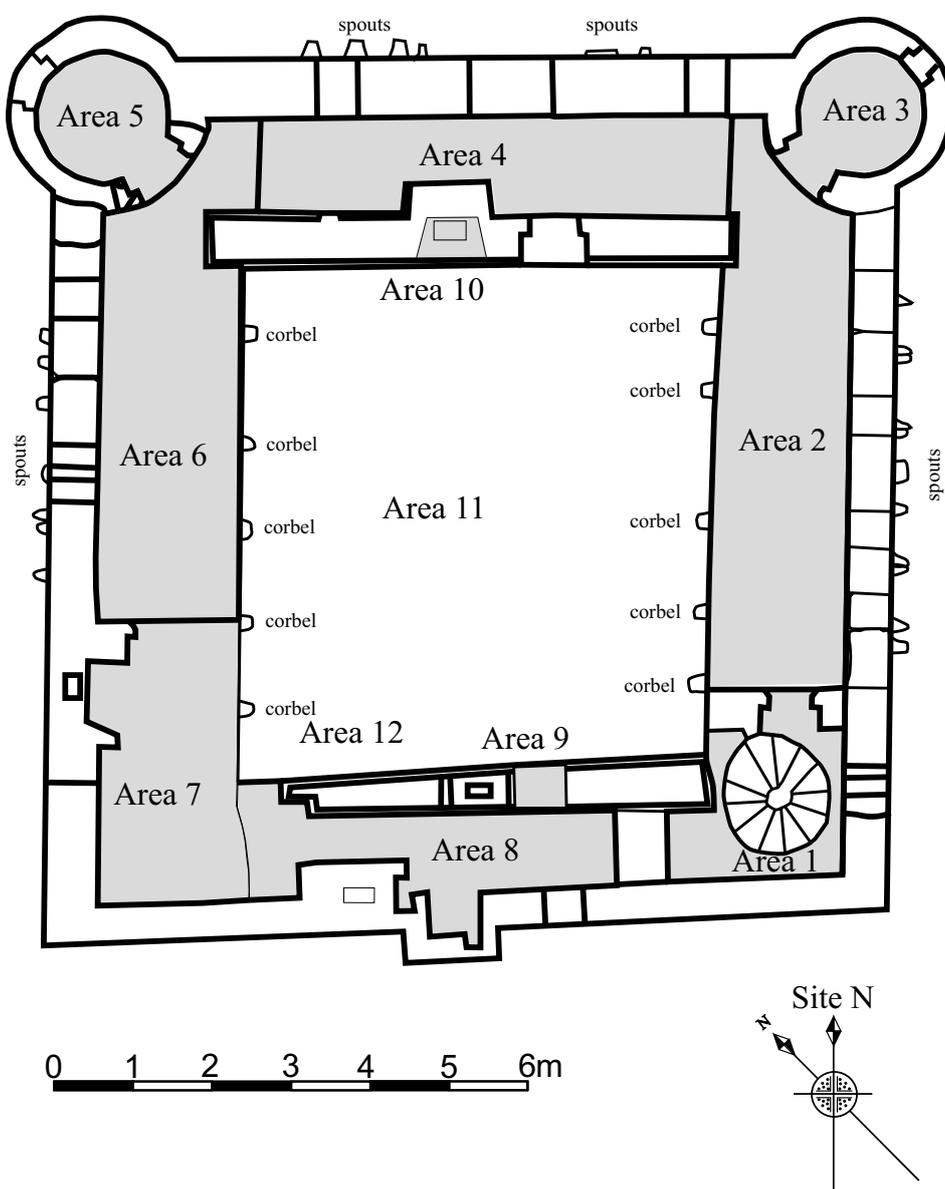


Figure 2: Areas investigated at Moy Castle. Plan after Martin Hadlington, Architect



concave surface, finished with roughly coursed rubble towards the south and east parapet walls, but sloping in towards the stair.

To the west of the stair, two original sandstone paving slabs (1004) survived in situ (Plate 2). The upper slab is cracked and the lower has a slight bevel on the front edge and a definite channel or runnel cut in the middle, originally to guide rainwater out through the parapet wall. Both slabs have partly broken east edges at their north ends, which seem to reflect the circular stairwell and were probably made to accommodate the remodelling of the area around the stair-head when the caphouse was constructed.



Plate 2: Area 1, sandstone walkway slabs (1004), view W

The edges of the slabs formed a pair of steps out of the stairwell and into the passage (Area 8) between the garret gable end and the south parapet wall, but this passage had been blocked off by a stone cross-wall built over the paving slabs (Plate 2).

On the north side of the stair were the carved jambs of a doorway onto the east walkway. The west door jamb had fallen inside the tower and onto the floor below (the later kitchen floor). The

in situ door sill was a flat stone, fragmented and worn. The south side had been shaped to fit the curve of the stair-head, and appeared to be part of the original edging around the stair-head.

The lower part of the SE corner caphouse covered the stair-head and must have formed a small enclosed chamber with a blocking wall on the west side of the stair and a doorway onto the east parapet walkway. No finds were recovered from Area 1.

### Area 2 East walkway

Area 2 was the east parapet walk, from the stair-head (Area 1) to the NE corner turret (Area 3) (Figure 2). Vegetation and silt were cleared to expose a pavement of overlapping slate slabs, arranged so that the gaps between the upper slabs formed drainage channels or runnels. The slabs were 0.30-0.50 m wide, 0.50-1 m long, degraded and friable (Plate 3).



Plate 3: Area 2, pre-excitation: view S

At the south end of Area 2, the runnel in front of the stair-head doorway (Area 1) was blocked with a deposit (2005) of silt and stone fragments, including a roof slate fragment with a large peg hole.



At the north end of Area 3, beneath the vegetation and silt was a 1.30 m long dump (2003) of brown organic silt filled with roof slates, angular stone ridge pieces, and sandstone fragments. This was evidently discarded when the garret roof was dismantled. Beneath the dump (2003) was a layer of black silt, over the walkway slabs and runnels.

Between the west edge of the slabs and the inside face of the tower wall, the mortared masonry of the wall head was exposed under turf and silt, in a strip 0.40 m wide. Set into the wall head were slots, roughly 0.20 m deep, 0.12 m wide and 0.30 m long, to receive the ends of the garret floor joists, on to which would have been nailed the rafters. Many of the slots still contained iron nails or spikes in silt, left upright in situ as the beams rotted away (Plate 4). This may signify that the beams and rafters were cut off and taken away, leaving only stumps to rot in the wall head. On the inside face of the garret north gable, the outline of the end rafters could be seen, set at a pitch of 50° (measurements from drawing by Martin Hadlington, Architect, Figure 2).



Plate 4: Area 2, angled nails which attached rafter to joist, view E

Beneath the east and west wall heads were two rows of five corbels, in opposed pairs, which would have carried longitudinal beams to support the joists from beneath. These did not align with the slots in the wall heads.

Finds from Area 2 comprised numerous nails and fragments from the garret structure, slates from the garret roof, a knife handle and one pottery sherd in Flow Blue.

### Area 3 NE turret

Area 3 was the floor of the NE corner turret. It contained a surface deposit (3001) of vegetation growing in black silt, over discarded roof slates

and a moderate amount of stone fragments. One loose modern hand-made brick was recovered. There was no clear order to the deposited material, which must have represented some of the debris from dismantling the conical roof of the turret.

Below (3001) were large and very large stone slabs, 0.20 m to 0.50 m in size, forming the turret floor surface that appeared to be haphazardly positioned in an earth matrix (Figure 3). The original walkway paving slabs would however, have been removed to insert the corbelled turrets. There were also two areas of rough mortar mixed with small stones. The floor was flat except in the NW where it sloped toward an almost blocked drain extending through the wall. This would also have served as a pistol loop defending the castle entrance.

### Area 4 North walkway

Area 4 was the north wall walk between two turrets and between the garret north gable end and the north parapet wall (Figure 2). The wall walk had been substantially narrowed in the middle by the chimney breast of a fireplace (Area 10) inserted in the north gable wall of the garret. On the east side of the chimney was a later doorway into the garret chamber. Over the wall walk was a deposit (4001) of black silt and weeds in the runnels, and with some loose slates and stone fragments (Plate 5).



Plate 5: Area 4, pre-excitation: ridging stones (4003) with silt and weeds (4001), view E



At the west end of the walkway, over silt (4001), was a pile of discarded building material (4003) in black silt, 1.07 m long E/W and 0.45 m deep, from the dismantling of the garret roof. A similar pile at the area's east end was 1.25 m long. Deposit (4003) mainly comprised lengths of ridge stone with some skew stones. The slate slabs of the walkway were arranged as in Area 2, with runnels sloping down to roughly formed slate spouts projecting below the north parapet wall.

### Area 5 NW turret

Area 5 was the floor of the NW corner turret (Plate 6). The floor was overgrown with weeds and covered in loose roof slates, medium sized stone fragments, mortar and several coping stones, in a matrix of root disturbed silt (5001), about 0.20 m deep. A late nineteenth-century body sherd from a standard white earthenware plate was recovered from (5001). Silt was

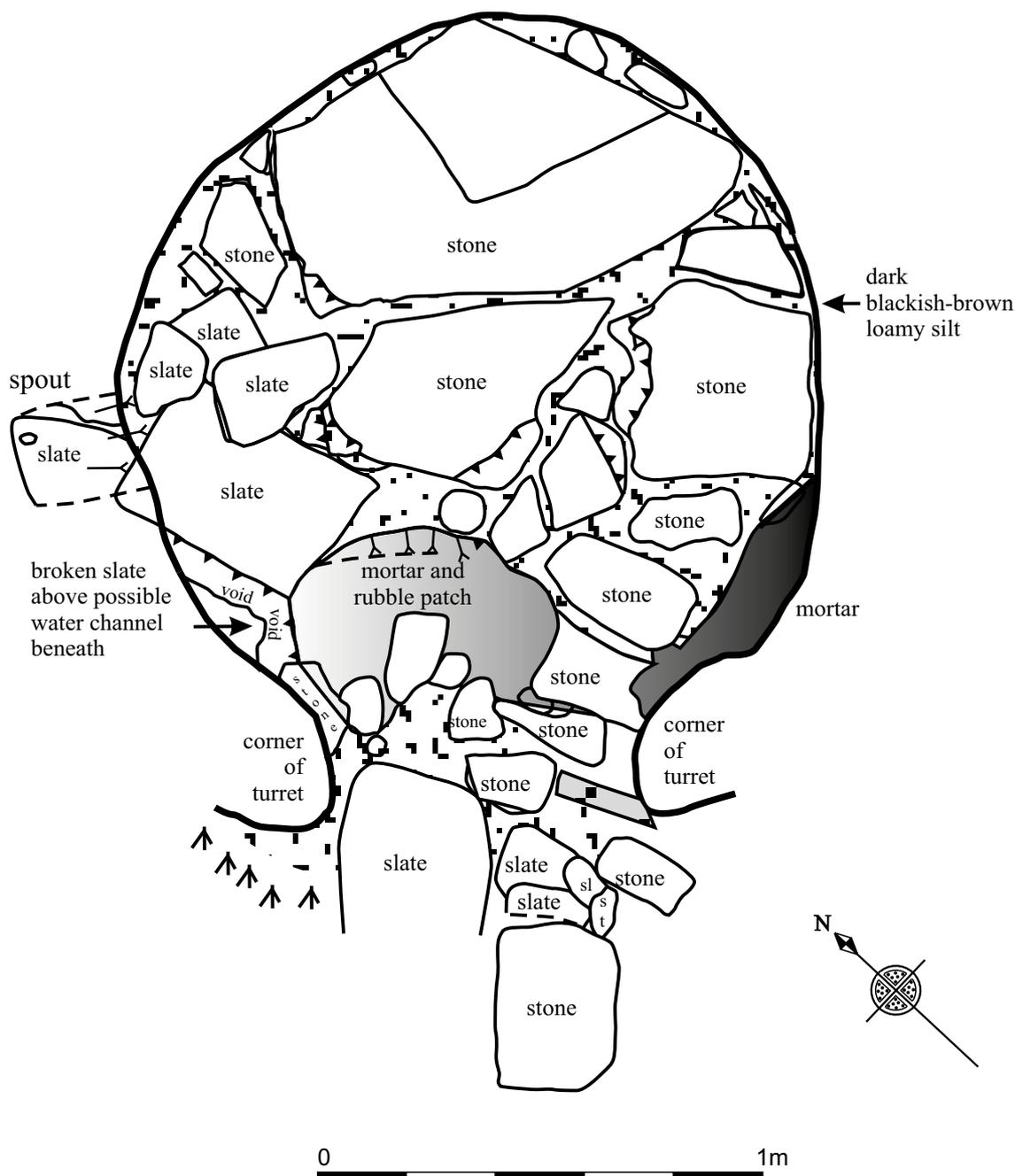


Figure 3: Excavation of east turret, Area 3



Plate 6: Area 5, north-west turret

removed from a gunloop close to floor level on the east side of the turret; it was positioned to protect the tower entrance. Below (5001) was a floor of flat stone and slate fragments with a large slate threshold (part of an original in situ wall walk slab) measuring 0.4 m by 0.47 m. The floor was uneven, and stepped down approximately 0.20 m below the wall walk surface.

#### Area 6 West walkway (Figures 4-6, Plates 7-9)

Area 6 was the west walkway, from the NW corner turret to the door jambs of the west caphouse, a distance of 5 m (Figure 2). The uncleaned surface comprised thick grass in silt with displaced roofing slates showing through down the centre of the walkway and occasional slates and slate fragments on the surface. Cleaning revealed a thick deposit (6002) of roof slates in silt, which appeared to be deliberately but randomly laid so as to give a level surface or to add extra height to the walkway (Figure 4 and Plate 7).

At the south end of the area, against the parapet wall, a mound (6004) comprised three loose stair treads within and below a mixed silt and mortar matrix (6004), which overlay the roof slate layer (6002) (Plate 8). Under the mound was a further deposit of slates (6005) that continued the slate deposit (6002) southwards.



Plate 7: Area 6, slates (6002) on walkway, view S



Plate 8: Area 6, corbels for longitudinal beam, view NW





Within the mound was an accumulation of silt, stone, mortar and slate fragments over and against the lowest stone tread (6006), and some stone fragments had dropped into this deposit from the void in the adjacent parapet wall. The void or indentation in the wall face was caused by the removal of the stair treads which had been keyed into the wall to provide exterior access to the second storey of the SW corner caphouse. These had been later removed, perhaps when the caphouse roof and upper floor were dismantled. The treads probably came originally from the top of the turnpike stair (Area 1, above).

Lying on the slates (6005) was a stone lintel (Figure 4), apparently fallen from the doorway into the caphouse (Area 7), evidently after the garret roof slates had been stripped.

The lower slates of 6002 and slates (6008) were in the runnels of the walkway (6011), and several sherds of nineteenth-century pottery were recovered from these deposits. After the slates had been removed, the walkway and the east edge of the area were cleaned and recorded (Figures 5 and 6). As in Area 2, this exposed a strip of wall head 0.40 m wide (6013) with the slots that held the rafters and floor joists of the garret. Over the wall head was a deposit (6010) of loose grey black silt with occasional mortar, small slate and stone fragments, which had formed within the voids and slots, after dismantling of the garret roof and floor. This deposit (6010) also contained two nineteenth-century Flow Blue pottery sherds (Plate 9). As in Area 2, iron spikes or large nails were found in some of the slots where the wood had rotted (Plate 10).



Plate 9: Area 6, pottery sherds, view S



Plate 10: Area 6, angled nails which attached rafter to joist, view N. Silt deposit (6010)

A small feature of roughly mortared stone fragments abutted the west door jamb of the caphouse and lay against the parapet wall. A large fragment of slate and a large L-shaped stone (6012) appeared to represent the setting for a post or flag pole, as shown at this location in the sketch in MacGibbon and Ross (1889) (Figure 4). At present the flagpole is located on the west battlement wall on the south side of the NW corner turret.

### Area 7 Caphouse floor

Area 7 was the surface of the lower chamber of the two-storied caphouse at the south end of Area 6 in the SW angle of the tower (Figure 2, Plate 11). In the NW corner of the chamber was a fireplace. The entrance to the caphouse had a slate threshold 0.20 m wide formed from the original walkway slabs. The floor was covered with an accumulation (7001) of stone, mortar and silt, with vegetation (Plate 12). Under this was a debris layer (7002) of slates, mortar and silt with some larger stone fragments (Figure 7). The slates had larger holes than those found in Area 6, indicating that they were fixed with wooden pegs.

Covering the fireplace floor and heaped up against the back of the fireplace was a grey-brown deposit of small mortar fragments and silt that was mainly debris from the internal erosion of the chimney. Below this were irregular flat stone slabs bedded in loose lime mortar forming the fireplace floor (7005). The base and back stones were partly discoloured by fire. In front of the fireplace were two rectangular flat flagstones, 0.30 m by 0.50 m and 0.20 m by 0.30 m. These seem to be the only surviving remains of the original caphouse floor.

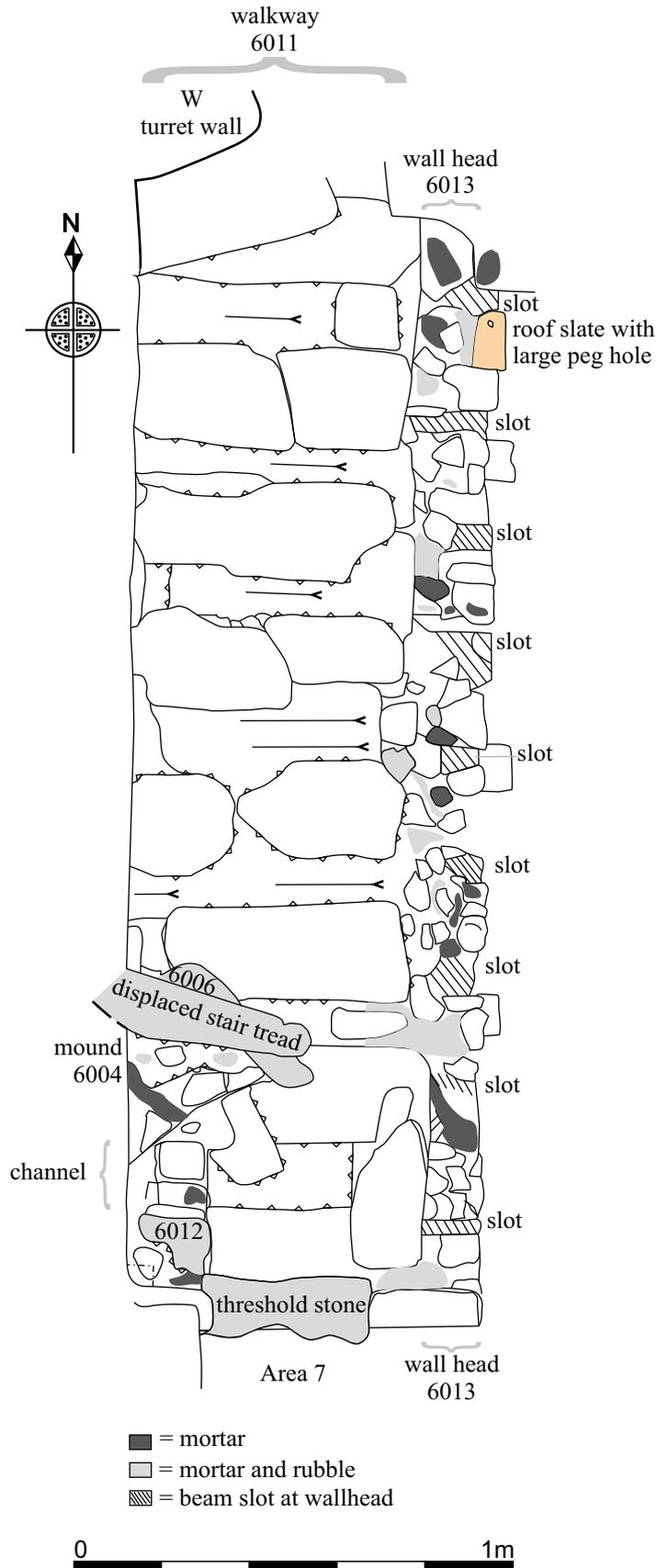


Figure 5: Area 6, west walkway slabs after removal of slates and deposit (6009) showing slots for transverse floor beams

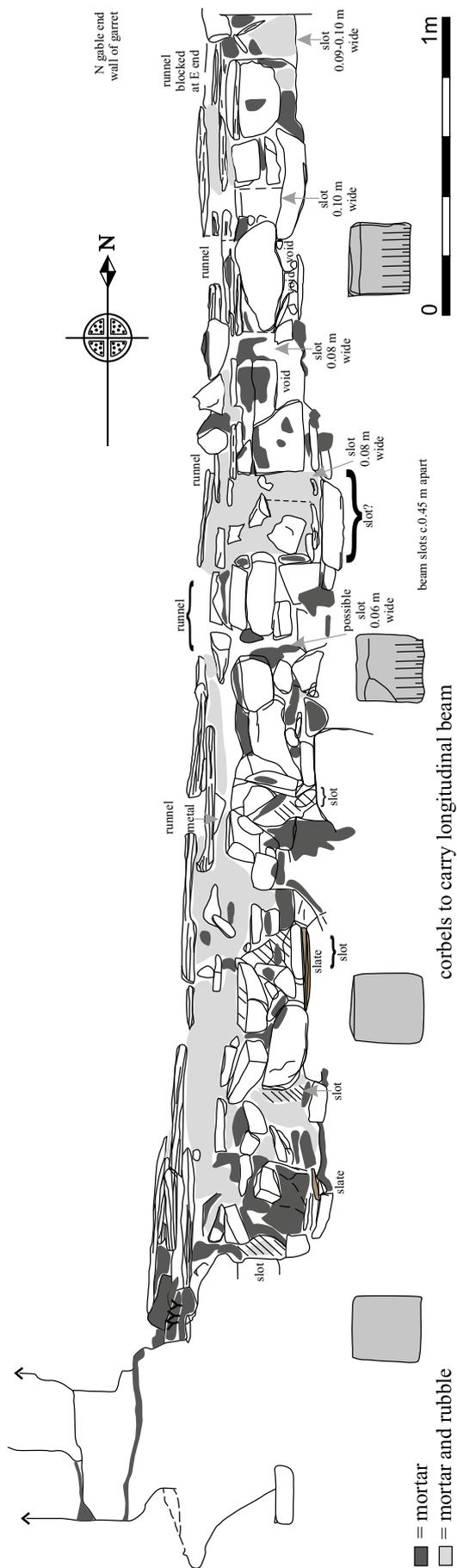


Figure 6: Area 6 east-facing section



Plate 11: Area 7, pre-excitation doorway, view S



Plate 12: Area 7, pre-excitation floor (7001), view S

At the north end of the area, on the south side of the caphouse threshold, slates and irregular stone blocks (7010) had been consolidated with lime mortar to provide support for the caphouse floor and fireplace over the wall core (7009). No original in-situ slate or sandstone walkway slabs were found on the floor and must have been removed when the caphouse was built. The only evidence of a formal caphouse floor was the two flagstones in front of the fireplace. It seems likely that the remainder of the floor was surfaced in this manner but subsequently removed (Figure 7).

Below debris (7001), a deposit of loose mortar with areas of silt and some small loose fragments of slate and stone lay over the wall core of the tower (7009), representing makeup for a floor surface. In the SW corner of the room, under the loose mortar and over the tower wall core, was a midden deposit (7006) of dark grey humic silt, containing occasional small animal bones (domestic fowl, rabbit).

Deposit (7007) was a structural deposit 0.30 m thick comprising pea gravel and mortar with beach cobbles, forming a coarse mortared surface, laid down over the corbelling of the kitchen fireplace on the floor below, to stabilize the caphouse floor above it. Below (7007), sandstone slabs and blocks were bonded with lime mortar (7008), and formed part of the structure of the kitchen fireplace/chimney which rises past the caphouse floor at this location.

### Area 8 Passageway

Area 8 was the passageway between the garret south gable and the south parapet wall on the east side of Area 7 (Figures 2 and 8). Originally, before construction of the caphouses, this was the open south walkway, paved with sandstone slabs. At the east end of this area, a N/S wall had been inserted across the walkway, blocking access to the turnpike stair, Area 1. At the west end of Area 8 was the large chimney breast for the kitchen fireplace on the floor below which restricted the passageway at this location to a width of only 0.40 m. On the east side of the chimney in the south parapet wall were the unstable remains of an open garderobe.

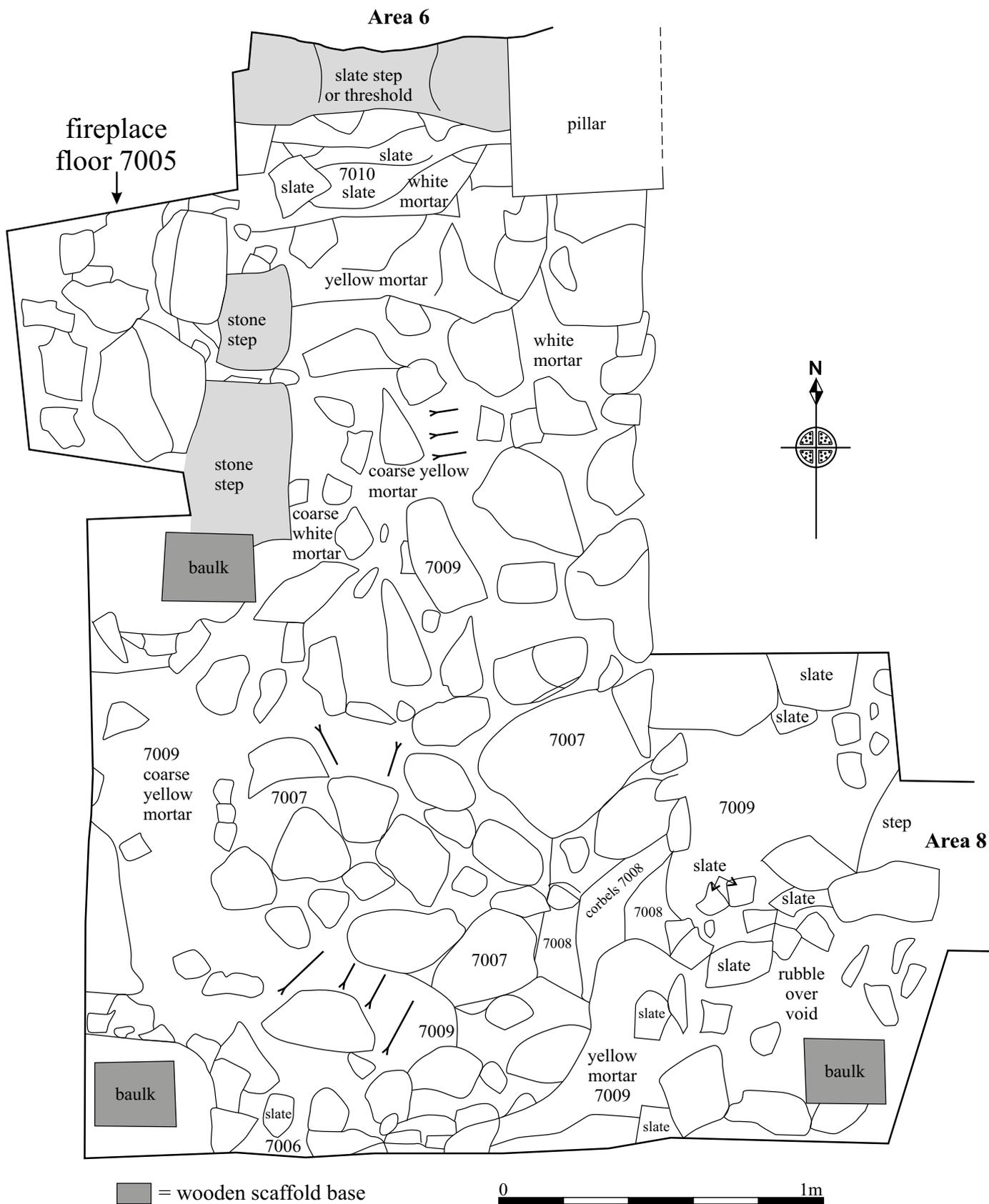


Figure 7: SW [caphouse] Area 7, SW caphouse floor, with cobbles (7007), corbelling (7008) of kitchen fireplace on floor below and wall core (7009)

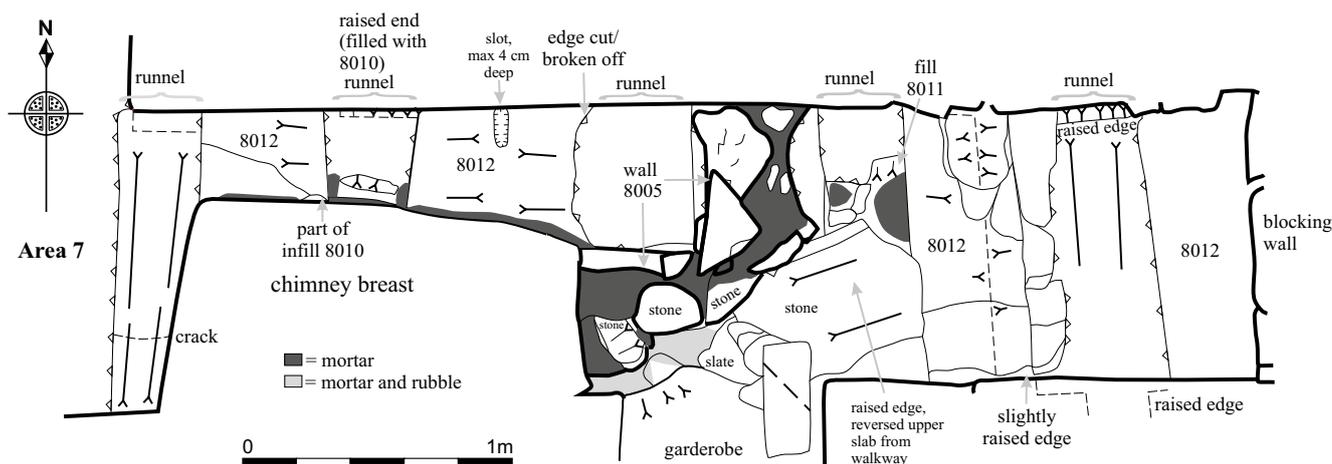


Figure 8: Area 8 floor slabs (8012) and wall (8005)

A dump of loose rubble (8001) filled the area between the chimney breast and blocking wall, to a maximum depth of 1 m. It comprised masonry, crushed and powdery mortar, some timber, some slates and many roofing slate fragments, probably resulting from an episode of general clearance sometime in the twentieth century.

Below the rubble (8001) was a loose deposit of roof slates, powdery mortar and silt (8003), approximately 1.64 m E/W and 1 m N/S. This formed a trampled surface 0.20-0.28 m thick over the original sandstone wallwalk slabs (8012). The slates in this deposit had large peg holes and appear to represent demolition of the roof over this space prior to the dumping of modern rubble.

The original open south walkway was formed of large sandstone slabs that had been laid so as to form runnels between them in the same way as the slate slabs on the other walkways (Figure 8). The slabs forming runnels have a shallow channel cut in the centre and slope to the south down to the parapet wall. The upper slabs have a slight ridge in the centre to aid runoff but no water spouts are now visible on this side of the castle.

Below rubble (8001), midway along Area 8, just east of the chimney breast and opposite the garderope, was an L-shaped base of mortared stone fragments (8005) forming a very low base or wall constructed over a walkway upper slab and runnel. This feature measured 0.48 m E/W and 0.54 m N/S, and was 0.17 m in height with a maximum wall thickness of 0.30 m. The outside SE corner had been cut back as though to give access to the garderope from the east. The

L-shaped feature contained a fill or deposit within its interior at its west side, of silt and mortar with some stone and slate fragments (8006). This had the appearance of a socket for a square post which would have virtually blocked the passageway of Area 8 during its use, but the precise function of this feature was unknown. To the west of (8005), the original sandstone walkway slabs continued in the very narrow passageway between the kitchen chimney breast and the garret south gable end. This area measured 1.50 m E/W with a width of only 0.30-0.40 m. A small slot with rounded ends 0.12 m long, 0.10 m wide and 0.04 m deep had been cut 0.22 m to the west of (8005) in the middle of the surface and at the extreme north end of the original walkway slab. The slot may have originally functioned with the garderope, perhaps as a socket securing a wooden framework for a door or a blocking partition.

The garderope, in the centre of the passageway on the east side of the chimney breast, projected out from the tower south wall face for a distance of 0.40 m at its base. Within this projection loose stone (8008) had accumulated, partly derived from the garderope walls and some of the dumped stone of (8001). On removal of some of this loose stone a nest of dry grass containing abundant small rabbit bones was found, which may indicate that a bird of prey had made use of this feature overlooking the sea. Below (8008) was a lower fill of stone and silt (8009). The large stone in this lowest deposit originated from the partial collapse of the outer structure of the garderope (Plate 13). Deposit (8009) was left in-situ for later consolidation.



Plate 13: Area 8, exterior remains of garderobe, fill (8009) view NE

### Area 9 Blocked doorway



Plate 14: Area 9, blocked doorway, fills (9001) and (9002)

Area 9 was the blocked original arched doorway of the garret in the south gable, 0.80 m wide and 1.30 m high (Figure 2 and Plate 14). Access to this doorway was originally from the turnpike stair in Area 1. The blocking was most likely carried out at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the caphouses were added. The blocking comprised an upper fill (9001) and a lower fill (9002). The upper fill (9001) contained mortar-bonded medium and smaller rounded cobbles and fragmented stone randomly laid. The lower fill (9002) comprised mainly tabular flat stone fragments laid at random. Below (9002) was an undressed stone sill, 0.60 m long

and up to 0.10 m thick. This does not extend below the jambs on either side and so appears to be part of the infilling (9002). The jambs are built of fine-grained yellow sandstone, some blocks being better dressed than others. The arrises are chamfered slightly on the east jamb but much are more pronounced on the west. The jambs carry a segmented arch with a slightly offset keystone. A split sheep's skull was found in the loose material within the south face of the blocking, possibly carried in by a raptor nesting in the ruined garderobe of the adjacent Area 8. The infilling deposits in the doorway were stabilized and left in situ.

### Area 10 Garret north gable fireplace



Plate 15: Area 10, north gable fireplace, fills (10001-3)

Area 10 was a small and plain fireplace inserted into the garret north gable wall along with the adjacent doorway (Figure 2, Plate 15) during the improvements at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The face of the fireplace was 0.89 m across and 0.60 m high, with a depth to the flue back of 0.60 m. Heaped deposits were removed from inside the fireplace. The uppermost deposit (10001) comprised grass and weeds growing in orange/brown silt, over (10002) a similar deposit of orange/brown silt with some small to medium stones, slate fragments and



lumps of mortar. Abutting (10002) on its east side was a deposit (10003) of silt with stone fragments from minor collapses within the chimney breast. The total depth of deposits (10001-3) was 0.17 m over a built step at the back of the hearth and 0.10 m thick at the front. The rear of the hearth contained two built steps each 60-70 mm high and 100-110 mm broad. The hearth floor comprised rough mortar with impressions, from removed slab fragments, and angular stone fragments of the original wall build. At the rear of the fireplace the stonework is delaminating.

### Area 11 Kitchen floor

Area 11 was the exposed second floor of the tower, originally covered by the garret floor and roof (Figures 2 and 9). The second floor was transformed into a kitchen at the turn of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries when a large fireplace and chimney were inserted into the south wall. It is believed the two window embrasures in the east and west walls were also made at this time.

In December 2006 two evaluation trenches were excavated across the kitchen floor, to establish any need for further work to make the castle weather proof. The evaluation found that the original stone slab flooring had been robbed out and the silt deposits covering the vaulting stones had been heavily penetrated by bushes and grass roots. After recording, the two excavated trenches were lined with breathable material and backfilled with sandbags. A further and last phase of archaeological work on this floor was carried out in July 2012 when raised areas of accumulated debris were removed and the floors of the two window embrasures were excavated (Plate 16). A deposit (118) from the west window embrasure, probably formed through weathering of wall and ceiling plaster and rubble from the window sill, contained fragments of glass, iron nails, animal bone and one sherd of Pearlware pottery.

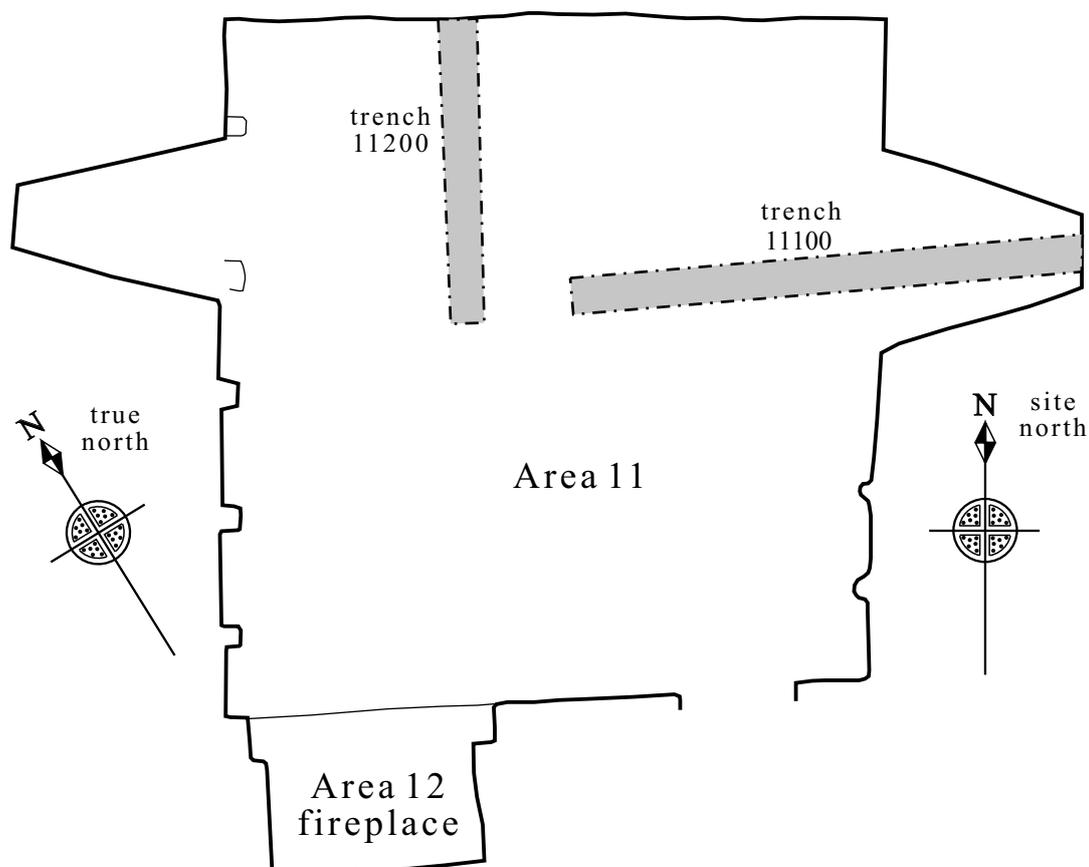


Figure 9: Areas 11 and 12, plan



Plate 16: Area 11, west window embrasure, during excavation of Context 118

### Evaluation Trench 11100

Trench 11100 was 4.70 m long and 0.50 m wide, aligned E/W. It extended from the east window embrasure, crossing the vault of the upper entresol, to the crown of the first floor hall vault. Horizontal measurements were taken from the east end of the trench. Surface vegetation and silt (11101) extended to a maximum depth of 0.20 m, and were deepest at the west end.

In the east side of the trench there were surfaces of white mortar (11108), and small cracked and broken flat stones (11105) on mortar, perhaps the original kitchen floor. Farther west was a partly robbed out surface (11106) of small broken flat slabs, laid on a bedding layer of fine grey-brown sand (11104) 0.05 m thick. Under this was a silt layer (11107), 0.17 m thick.

From 3.20 m west to the trench end, the apex of the barrel vault over the first floor below appeared, formed of stones set on end in lime mortar, aligned roughly N/S. Between 3.20 m and 3.70 m there was a small area of hard packed white lime mortar with a flat surface, which appeared to represent infilling and consolidation between the entresol and the main chamber vaults. The flat

upper surface probably indicates the removal of a large packing stone. In the north facing section was a thin layer of orange mortar, 50 mm thick and 0.55 m in length deposited over silt (11107).

The differences in the exposed surfaces reflect the different underlying structures. The entresol chamber lies partly in the thickness of the tower's east wall, aligned N/S, 1.50 m wide, with its barrel-vault ceiling level with the main first floor vault. The trench began in the east window embrasure, also in the thickness of the east tower wall, spanned the entresol vault, the infill between the two vaults, and half of the main first floor vault. The hard mortar (11108) consolidates the tower east wall core, the stone and mortar (11105) lies over the entresol vault, the flat mortar surface overlies the infilling between the two vaults and the upright stones form the apex of the main vault.

The use of silt (11107) in the infill between the vaults and over the main vault seems to be intentional, and not the accidental result of a period of abandonment, as it is directly sealed by bedding sand (11104). This is curious, as sand is readily available on the beach nearby.



### Evaluation trench 11200

Trench 11200 was 3.20 m long, 0.50 m wide and aligned N/S. It was located at the north end of the kitchen abutting the north wall, 1.90 m east of the west wall. Horizontal measurements were recorded from the trench's north end and the south end of the trench was 0.60 m to the west of trench 11100.

The main surface deposit was silt (11203) but at the trench's north end was a very recent thin spread of lime mortar (11201) with a maximum thickness of 50 mm over (11203) and a similar silt layer (11209). Within silt (11203) was a clay pipe bowl, nineteenth or early twentieth century in date, embossed with a hunting horn and tassel and two crossed guns, suggesting a hunting theme. The loose scatter of fallen masonry (11202) over the trench surface was partly embedded in the silt (11203), which contained abundant rootlets indicating a recent covering of vegetation, and had a maximum depth of 0.22 m.

At the north end of the trench below the recent deposit of mortar was a mixed deposit of wall plaster/lime rendering and silt (11204) extending 1 m to the south and having a maximum depth

of 0.30 m. This deposit appeared to be contained within a cut (11210) 0.20 m deep (Figure 10). The plaster deposit is most likely the result of the accumulation of dropping or eroding plaster from the north wall onto silt below, rather than a deliberate dump of plaster fragments. An iron chain link (uncatalogued) was recovered as well as some bottle glass and animal bone from deposit (11204).

Below silt (11203) was a lower silt or sandy silt layer (11207), with a maximum depth of 0.20 m that surrounded and overlay the projecting mortared stonework of the roof vaulting (11208) of the main chamber.

At a distance of 1.65 m from the trench's north end, within silt (11207) was a deposit of marine shells and occasional animal bone (11205) mixed with silt, seemingly within a cut (11206) over the mortared stonework of the vault (11208) (Figure 11). The shelly midden deposit (11205) had a maximum depth of 0.16 m and width of 0.45 m. The shells probably represent kitchen waste, but the date of deposition is uncertain. The midden may have been formed during construction of the vault or after the flooring slabs had been removed.

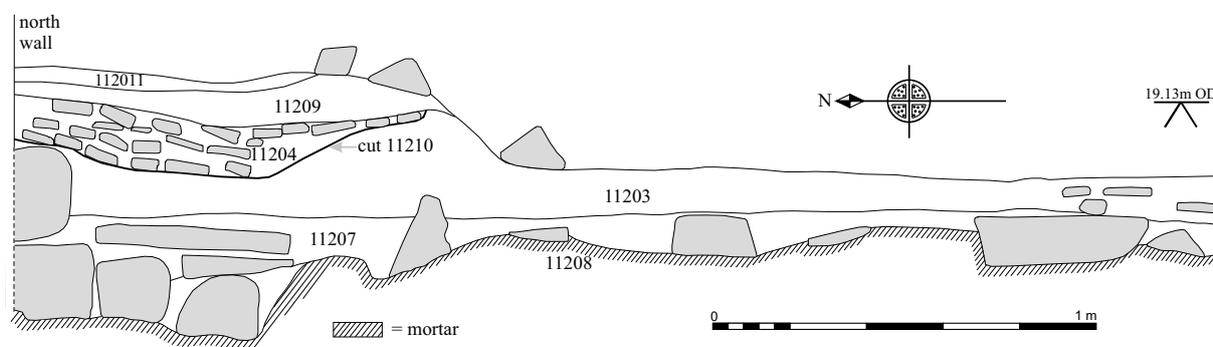


Figure 10: Area 11, west-facing section

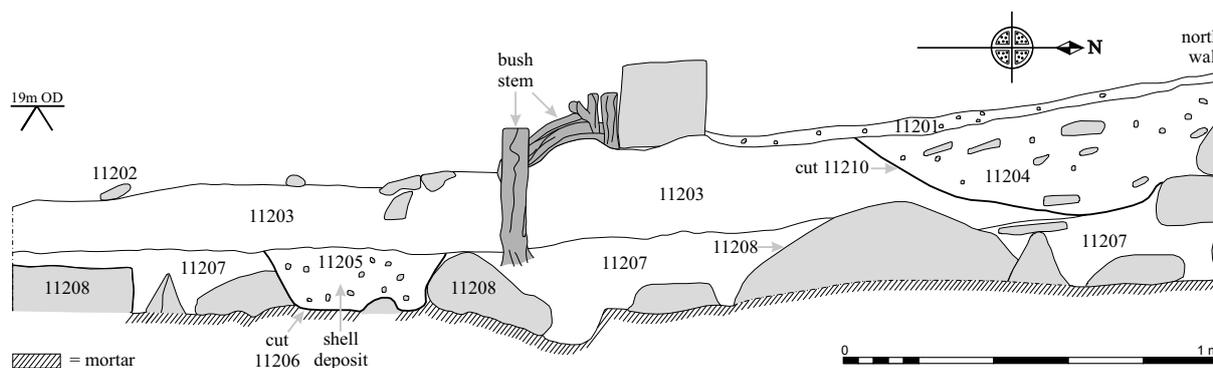


Figure 11: Area 11, east-facing section



### Area 11 Second floor evaluation conclusions

The two evaluation trenches showed that a few fragments of floor survived over the entresol vault, but otherwise the floor slabs were missing. The initial infill over and between the vaults consisted of silt and sandy silt. Some undatable marine shells were found in trench 11200. All other finds appear to be nineteenth- or twentieth-century in date.

### Area 11 Further work 2016

Further work was carried out in July 2016 on Area 11, to remove raised areas of accumulated deposits (1113-1117) around the edge of the chamber walls. Finds included bottle glass, window glass, nails, animal bone and slate fragments. The deposits seem to be the result of relatively recent works and disturbances undertaken from time to time, including shifting of some of the silt deposits which had accumulated over the chamber floor after the removal of the garret floor and roof. Further deposits may have accumulated when scaffolding was erected for consolidation work in 2006. Reduction of certain areas revealed the original slab flooring, especially in the SE corner of the chamber, where several in-situ original slabs were found.

Within the two large window embrasures of this chamber, original floor slabs were revealed below a thin layer of accumulated deposits which contained finds of glass, nails and some small animal bones. The arrangement of the slabs was such that only the central area of each embrasure floor was covered (Plate 17) and the flooring was not neatly finished off by cutting slabs to fit around the edges against the walls.



Plate 17: Area 11, kitchen floor, sand (11104), stone (11105), broken slabs (11106)

The surface deposit of the west embrasure produced a small ceramic rim sherd which is almost certainly from a decorated mug produced in Staffordshire between 1790 and 1810. These mugs have rarely been found in Scotland.

Of particular interest was a lead seal found on surface deposits of the east embrasure. The obverse depicts the crowned shield bearing the lion rampant of the royal arms of Holland (Figure 12). To the right of the shield can be seen what appears to be the number '19', which may be the customs control number. To the left of the shield some markings can be seen but not deciphered. These marks are most likely to represent 'R & A' (Regten en Accynsen = Customs and Excise). The reverse is worn or blank. The seal is a Dutch customs seal, probably from a bale of flax, dating from the nineteenth or twentieth centuries.

In the east window embrasure the excavation of a drainage trench into the underlying stonework enabled the recording of the floor slabs and the bedding of fine sand and infill deposits of silt, gravel and mortar. The trench also revealed the mortar-bonded stone of the tower's east wall, where it had been knocked through to form the window embrasure, probably when the kitchen was being formed.

### Area 12 Kitchen fireplace (Figure 9)

Area 12 was the large kitchen fireplace in the tower's south wall and below the wallwalk, which was thought to have been inserted during the renovations at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The fireplace had a basal measurement of 2.20 m E/W by 1.40 m N/S. The flue had been inserted through the masonry of the south wall and the chimney constructed against the south parapet wall, rising above the garret roofline. The mound of debris that had accumulated on the floor of the fireplace was excavated. Four separate but similar deposits were identified; the lowest deposit was not removed.

The upper deposit of abundant mortar with stone fragments originated from the limited collapse of the flue and recent stabilization works. Below this, deposit (12002) comprised abundant small to medium stone fragments representing collapse from the back of the fireplace and the flue. There were also some larger stone fragments, occasional



field stone, crushed mortar and silt, 0.10-0.20 m thick. Deposit (12003) comprised abundant small to medium stone fragments and some rounded field/beach stone with abundant crushed sandy mortar, occasional small fragments of slate from the fabric of the fireplace - representing an earlier phase of collapse similar to the previous (12002) but with possibly more silt. Deposit (12004) contained stone fragments in a mortar and silt matrix with some fragments of roofing slate, and was left in situ.

### Small scale excavation for scaffold bases around the castle

The 2007 restoration work at Moy required additional exterior scaffolding for work on the west, south and east walls as the north wall already had scaffolding. Limited excavation work was required in connection with the new scaffolding to ensure that a safe flat surface was provided for the wooden bases beneath the upright scaffold standards. Work was carried out over three days from 6-8 March 2007.

The excavations involved only the removal of turf or topsoil and no archaeological deposits were uncovered. Very little soil had built up over the rock slab on the seaward side of the castle and consequently the bulk of the work simply required removing turf from the bedrock (Figure 3). The only finds recovered were three shards of modern bottle glass.

## The finds

### The industrial pottery

By Derek Hall and George Haggarty

#### Introduction

The small assemblage of pottery from Moy Castle totals 48 sherds and derives from contexts 118, 2001, 5001, 6002, 6003, 6005, 6008 and 6010. Aside from one sherd (context 118), all the ceramic material dates from the nineteenth century. Forty-six of the sherds are from at least two vessels decorated with cobalt Flow Blue. There is one Standard White Earthenware sherd and a single rimsherd of incised decorated Pearlware.

#### Pottery identification

##### Pearlware

Context 118, in the west window embrasure produced one small rim sherd which is almost certainly from a mug decorated with what is termed 'debased scratch blue', along with fine lathe cut bands (Plate 18). Mugs of this type also often had extra decoration in the form of a stylized impressed roundel and it was almost certainly produced in Staffordshire between 1790 and 1810. Archaeologically, this is a fairly rare type, and even more so in a Scottish context, that has not been often found on excavations. Two excellent examples of these mugs are illustrated in Skerry and Findhorn Hood (2009, 222).

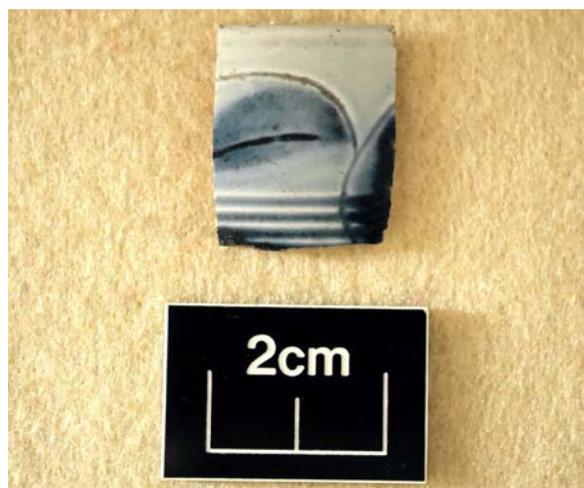


Plate 18: Incised Pearlware rim from Context 118



## Flow Blue

Contexts 2001 (Area 2), 5001 (Area 5), 6002, 6003, 6005, 6008 and 6010 (Area 6) produced 46 sherds of a standard white earthenware decorated with cobalt Flow Blue. Several sherds from Area 6 (6002, 6002/6005, 6008) were conjoining and probably came from two different plates (Plates 19 and 20). Flow Blue is a type of transfer pottery produced both in England and Scotland that generally went into production around 1820. It was produced mainly for the US market, where even today it is highly collected. Flow Blue was similar to traditional blue-and-white transfer and hand painted pottery, except that the blue colour was deliberately blurred, an effect achieved by adding a cup of lime or ammonia to the kiln during glazing. The introduction of transferware by the British china industry created a product which was less expensive than imported, hand-painted Chinese and later European ceramics. By the nineteenth century the quality declined making it an affordable product that was very attractive to the surging Victorian working class.

At first, in the late eighteenth century, transferware transfer-printing mainly incorporated Oriental designs and motifs, including temples, pagodas, and Asian scenery. Later Victorian romantic sensibility created a market for floral and pastoral patterns that highlighted English culture.

English manufacturers of antique flow blue included Wedgwood, Johnson Brothers, Minton, Royal Doulton, Swansea and many other potteries. Good examples of Scottish Flow Blue products have been excavated from the site of the Verreville pottery in Glasgow (Haggarty 2011, 14, 15).

## Standard White Earthenware

A standard white earthenware sherd from context 6002 (Area 6) has part of a manufacturer's impressed mark visible on one side of its base.

## Discussion and conclusions

The numerous transfer-printed patterns used to decorate nineteenth-century pottery vessels, ranged from 'Blue Danube' and 'Idris' to the classic and extremely common, 'Asiatic Pheasant' and

'Standard Willow'. As for the objects themselves, the range included toilet wares, tea and dinner ware, serving dishes, vases, garden seats and even dog bowls. One interesting subset of flow blue is the blue-marble effect. All-over patterns such as 'Lazuli' lent itself to this look. When given the flow-blue treatment, the pattern would blur so that from afar the object resembled a piece of carved, blue-veined marble.

None of the pottery from the archaeological works at Moy Castle is any earlier than the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, and must date to a period following the castle's abandonment in 1752. What activity it may relate to is unclear; however the absence of fragments of tea cups and saucers might suggest that it does not relate to picnicking or hunting parties.



Plate 19: Selection of sherds of Flow Blue from Contexts 6002/6005

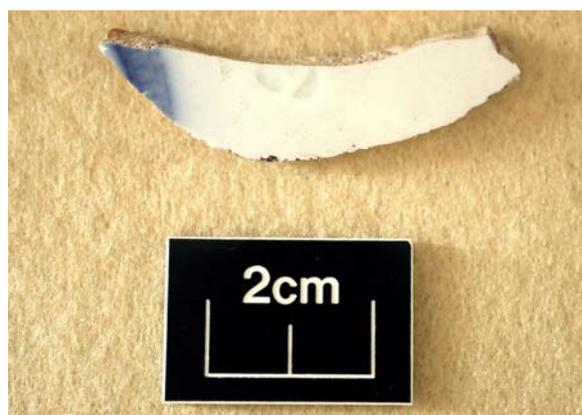


Plate 20: Sherd of Flow Blue from Context 6002 with part of manufacturer's mark visible



## The metal, clay pipe, wood and bone artefacts

By Catherine Smith and Tamlin Barton

### Copper alloy (Cu)

Cat 1 is a scale from a pocket knife in copper alloy. There are five small neatly drilled rivet holes and the scale is recessed in order to hold a plate, most likely in antler, bone or wood. The design appears typical of a folding knife of the nineteenth/twentieth century.

#### 1: Copper alloy knife scale

Thin, slightly curved plate with five rivet holes and a lip at the narrower end forming a recessed bed for a scale handle.

Length 86.2 mm; breadth 11.8 mm (narrower end) to 15.4 mm (wider end); thickness 0.8 mm; depth of recess 3.9 mm

Context 2001, SF 16, not illustrated

### Lead (Pb)

A lead bale seal (Cat 2) was recovered from Context 114, which also contained finds of nineteenth/twentieth century date. Lead seals of similar appearance have been found throughout the British Isles, mainly recovered through increasing use of metal detectors, and have been extensively studied by the PeaceHavens Project (published online at <http://www.peacehavens.co.uk/>).

The seal found at Moy Castle originates from the Dutch Customs House and since it bears the Lesser Arms of the Netherlands, post-dates

1815. Based on the form of the inscription, which probably reads 'R & A' for 'Regten en Accynsen' (Customs and Excise), it most likely dates between 1848 and the early twentieth century. Such seals arrived attached to imported goods, most likely bales of flax used in linen cloth manufacture. The numbering on the obverse of the seal (?19) probably represents a customs control reference.

#### 2: Lead bale seal

Worn sub-circular lead seal bearing lion rampant with crown above, lettering on left (unreadable) and numbering '19 - ' on right. Reverse is worn flat.

Diameter 22.5 mm; thickness 4.6 mm. Context 114 (Figure 12)

### Iron (Fe)

The majority of the handmade ironwork objects were wrought nails in various widths and lengths and with rectangular-sectioned shafts. All of the nails and clench bolts were thought to be structural in function. The few nails with circular-sectioned shafts were thought to be nineteenth/twentieth century in date, as were several looped eyelets and bolts of industrial manufacture.

Since their excavation, much of the adhering corrosion appears to have spalled off most of the nails while in storage allowing a better impression of their original shape and all, including those which had been examined for the interim report (Barton 2012), have therefore been re-measured. Measurements of length, breadth of shaft, width of shaft and diameter of head are available in the archive.

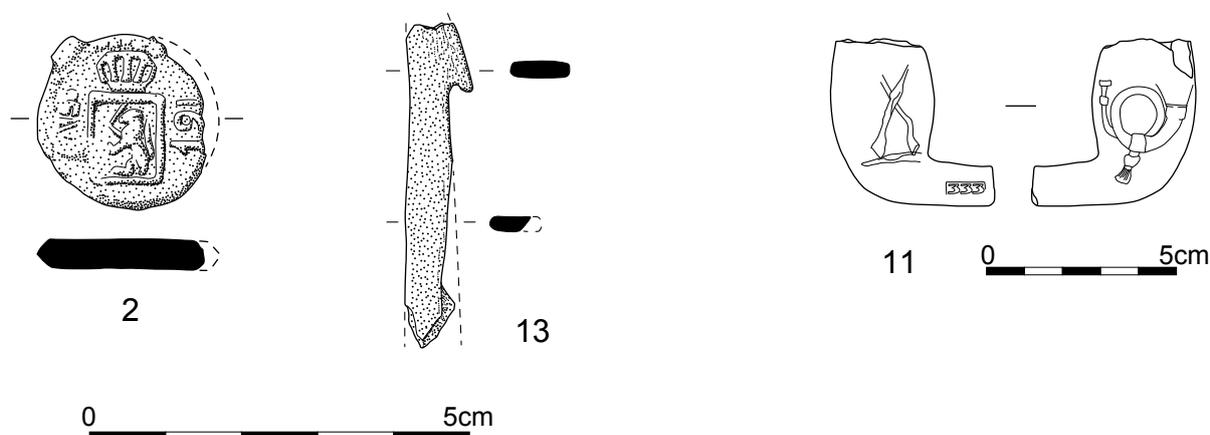


Figure 12: Lead bale seal, Cat 2; clay pipe bowl, Cat 11; bone fish hook, Cat 13



The smallest rectangular-sectioned nails are most likely to have been used in fixing roof slates. Corresponding squared perforations were found in some of the slates and in several cases, corrosion products within and adhering to several slates indicated the nails' positions (e.g. Context 118; Cat 3). Some of these slate nails had pinched tips to their shafts presumably to avoid splitting the roof timbers (Context 1111, SF 04, Cat 4).

A further rectangular-sectioned nail type had a flat asymmetric head and a shaft broader than wide, interpreted as brads used in nailing down flooring. These nails were longer than those presumed to be slate nails and measured roughly between 40 mm and 55 mm in length.

The longest of the nails had rectangular cross-sectioned shafts and hammered heads, resulting in three to four facets, which probably served a decorative purpose. A variant type had an asymmetric hammered head with a greater slope on one side than its opposite (e.g. Context 8000; Cat 5). A minority had pyramidal or domed heads, again probably intended to be decorative (e.g. Context 6010, SF04; Cat 6). Wood adhering to these long nails showed that the nails had been driven into the timbers at right-angles to the wood grain: where the point of the nail was preserved it was either tapering or pinched flat as in Context 11203, Cat 7. The maximum length of these long nails, thought to be intended for joining rafters or joists, was approximately 165 mm.

One nail terminated in a shaft, which was triangular in cross-section (e.g. Context 6005).

One square-headed clench bolt with a square/rectangular rove plate attached was present in Context 1111, (SF 03, Cat 9). Also present was a separate rove plate (Cat 10). Other nails which were either deliberately clenched (or bent accidentally) were noted (e.g. Context 2007, SF 13 was a large hammer-headed long timber nail, the shaft bent back at right-angles to the direction of the shaft).

### 3: Iron slate nail associated with roof slate (see also slate report)

Small rectangular-sectioned nail with irregular flat (corroded) head, found in association with roof slate. Associated hole in slate measures 4.5

mm by 6.4 mm but it may have widened during its life as roofing material. The slate is 7.9 mm thick at the hole.

Length 29.0 mm, breadth 4.7 mm, thickness 4.2 mm

Context 1114 (Plate 21)



Plate 21: Sample Context 1114 is a fairly regular slate with a small nail hole suitable for a metal nail

### 4: Iron slate nail

Shaft of nail with pinched tip.

Length 36.6+ mm, breadth 4.5 mm, thickness 4.0 mm

Context 1111, SF 04, not illustrated.

### 5: Long iron nail

Large rectangular-sectioned nail. Asymmetric hammered head with a greater slope on one side than its opposite. Small patches of mortar/other encrustation adhering near the nail head.



Length 140.3 mm; breadth 11.8 mm; width 7.9 mm; diameter of head 18.2 mm by 13.0 mm

Context 8000, SF 22, (Figure 13)

### 6: Long iron nail

Large rectangular-sectioned nail with domed irregular head. Some wood adhering.

Length 154.0 mm; breadth 10.3 mm; thickness 7.9 mm; diameter of head 20.0 mm by 15.3 mm.

Context 6010, SF 04 (Figure 13)

### 7: Iron nail with pinched tip

Square-sectioned shaft; head of nail protrudes from wood fragments; shaft of nail has a pinched tip.

Length 114.4 mm, breadth 11.4 mm, thickness 12.1 mm

Context 11203, not illustrated

### 8: Iron clenched nail with hammered head

Square-sectioned shaft, clenched or bent for about a third of the shaft length. Triangular or domed head with hammered facets.

Length 95.2 mm, length of 'hook' 48.1 mm, breadth 9.6 mm, thickness 7.8 mm, diameter of head 22.7 mm

Context 2007, SF 13 (Figure 13)

### 9: Clench bolt with rove plate

Shaft is rectangular in section; rove is in situ at the head of the bolt. The shaft tip is not clenched.

Length 69.3 mm, breadth 7.2 mm, thickness 3.9 mm, rove 21.4 mm by 21.9 mm

Context 1111, SF 03 (Figure 13)

### 10: Rove plate

Fragment of pierced rove plate with remnants of central bolt-hole

Length 22 mm, breadth 13.3 mm, thickness 3.0 mm

Context 1111, SF 03. Not illustrated

### Clay pipe

A clay pipe bowl and a broken stem were the only pieces of clay pipe recovered. The bowl was embossed with a hunting horn with tassel on one side and a poorly embossed motif of two crossed

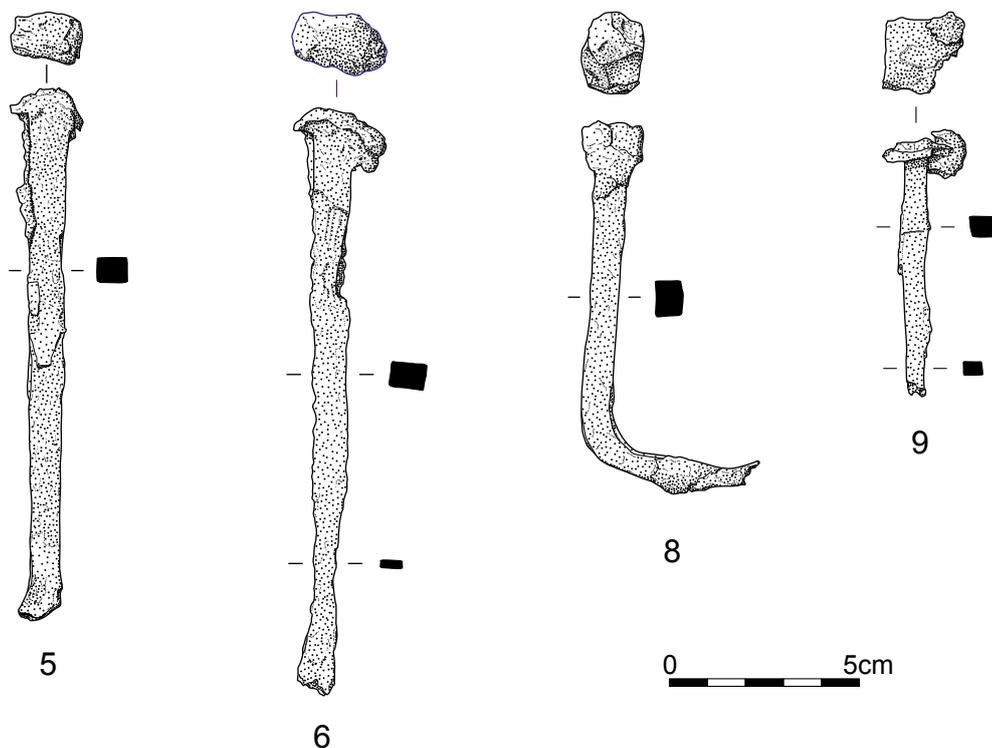


Figure 13: Iron nail, Cat 5; Iron nail, Cat 6; Iron clenched nail, Cat 8; Iron clench bolt with rove plate; Cat 9



guns on the other. The theme of hunting seems appropriate: the brass cap of a shotgun cartridge and a piece of clay pigeon (skeet) were other finds from the site.

### 11: Clay pipe bowl

Embossed design of hunting horn with tassel on one side of the bowl and on the opposite side two crossed gun stocks and part of gun barrels, poorly executed. Remaining stem is poorly stamped with number ?333.

Bore diameter 2.0 mm

Context 11203 (Figure 12)

### Wood

A small tapering wood plug, perhaps associated with roof slates, might be interpreted as a peg for holding slates in place on the roof, although as tooling marks were not in evidence the piece might be only a natural 'knot' (Context 6002). Large holes were found in some of the slates which were thought to accommodate wooden pegs.

### 12: Wood plug

Tapering wooden plug, found associated with nail fragments. Possibly a slate peg.

Length 67.8 mm, maximum diameter 15.4 mm

Context 6002, not illustrated

### Bone

A sliver of mammalian long bone with a slightly hooked end was probably a fish hook.

### 13: Bone fish hook

Derived from a sliver of mammalian long bone, probably cattle. One edge exhibits probable use-wear and terminates in a small hook.

Length 42.6 mm; breadth 8.3 mm, thickness 2.5 mm

Context 118 (Figure 12)

## The glass

By Robin Murdoch

### Introduction

A small assemblage of glass from Moy Castle comprised 80 shards of which 49 were window glass and the remainder utilitarian glass.

The history of Moy castle indicates that the structure was abandoned as a residence in 1752 and the roof of the excavated area demolished in the later nineteenth century. The bottle and vessel glass finds from these excavations derive mainly from the nineteenth century, therefore it may be that the area was in use as a chaumer or bothy or simply utilised by squatters after 1752. Almost 80% of the non-window glass finds date to the late eighteenth and more predominantly, the nineteenth centuries. Only one bottle shard from Context 118 (B) and three shards from B22 (Box 1) can be positively identified as dating to before 1752 (Tables 1 and 2).

Context	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E	Type F
114	6	1				
118			1			1
1111	19	15				
1117				1		
8003					5	

Table 1: Distribution of window glass shards by type

### Window glass

It seems not unreasonable to assume that most of the window glass was installed in the castle before 1752. The window glass recovered from the excavation was divided visually into six different types and a sample of each was selected for analysis. The samples were identified as A to F but these refer only to this site and there is no connection with samples from any other site.

Preliminary analysis was originally carried out using a Bruker pXRF, the use of which was facilitated by Historic Environment Scotland. However this equipment was unfortunately damaged in the course of this analysis and the shards were subsequently re-evaluated using a replacement pXRF. Results agreed tolerably with those achieved previously.



Samples B, C, E and F are kelp-fluxed glass which was made between c.1700 and c.1835. Sample D is a first generation (SS1) synthetic soda glass typically containing a small amount of arsenic, added for purging gas bubbles during production.

This would have been made between c.1835 and 1870. Sample A is not quite so straightforward. It has all the main characteristics of SS1 synthetic soda fluxed glass c.1835-c.1870, but it also contains some strontium. This may mean that

Context	Shard thickness (mm)	Glass type	Details
114	2 mm	window	6 shards WG type A
114	1.2 mm	window	1 shard WG type B
116		bottle	Part neck and lip WB, mid dull green, moderate to heavy corrosion. Neck quite short and parallel, flat section SR, second half eighteenth century - possibly early nineteenth although corrosion might indicate earlier, possible import
116		bottle	Body shard bottle, dull green, some 'orange peel', probably mid to late nineteenth century
116		bottle	Smaller shard possibly from same bottle in 116
116		bottle	Bottle shard, more brownish green, also with some 'orange peel'
118 A	1.3 mm	window	Small shard WG type F, pale green, moderate corrosion
118 B		bottle	Shard WB, moderate corrosion, possibly from cylindrical bottle
118 B	1.3 mm	window	Small shard WG type C, pale green tinge, light corrosion
118 D		bottle	Shard probable cylindrical WB, moderate stable corrosion, probable second half eighteenth century
118 D		bottle	Small shard WB, pale dull green with blotchy intrusive corrosion, first half eighteenth century, possibly late seventeenth century
1111		?bottle	Small shard possible WB, dull green, moderate internal corrosion. Probably eighteenth century
1111	2 mm - 2.6 mm	window	19 shards WG type A, mainly clear, some patchy light corrosion, thickness varies from 2 mm to 2.6 mm
1111	0.9 mm - 1.2 mm	window	15 shards WG type B, pale aqua tinge, variable corrosion. Thickness varies from 0.9 mm to 1.2 mm
1117		bottle	Shard amber bottle, late nineteenth/early twentieth century
1117 mound		bottle	Body shard from cylindrical bottle in pale aqua, patchy corrosion. Mid to late nineteenth century
1117 mound		bottle	Small neck shard, very pale aqua, light corrosion. Late nineteenth century
1117 mound	1.4 mm	window	Shard WG type D, clear, mainly firebright, 1.4 mm thick
B2 (Box 1)		bottle	Part base WB, very dark green, part FB, part corroded, original diameter c 130 mm, 30 mm kick
B2 (Box 1)		bottle	Shard kick, similar colour and condition as above. 1st half eighteenth century
B2 (Box 1)		bottle	Shard base ring from WB, paler green, abraded, trace of glassgall. First half eighteenth century
B2 (Box 1)			Small shatter shard
B22 (Box 1)		bottle	Curving bottle neck shard in dark brownish green, late nineteenth century
B31 (Box 1)		bottle	Shard bottle, mid brownish green, FB, slight 'orange peel', late nineteenth century
B31 (Box 1)		vessel/jar	Shard clear vessel/jar, FB, late nineteenth/twentieth century
8003 (Box 2)		window	5 shards thin WG type E, pale dull green, patchy corrosion, 0.9 mm thick
11101 (Box 3)		bottle	Shard WB neck, FB, pale dull olive green, twist striations, flat section SR, parallel sided neck 75 mm high, late nineteenth century
11101 (Box 3)			Second shard from above
11101 (Box 3)		bottle	Neck shard from FB amber bottle, late nineteenth century
11203 (Box 3)		bottle	3 shards pale dull green from 3-piece moulded bottle, light dulling. Probably nineteenth century and certainly later than c 1830
11203 (Box 3)		bottle	Shard bottle, pale aqua, nineteenth century
11203 (Box 3)		bottle	Rounded lip in rich green, FB, early to mid nineteenth century
11203 (Box 3)		bottle	Short neck, pale dull green, probably from 3-piece bottle mentioned above, one shard conjoins. Neck height c 70 mm (parallel sided), flat section SR. nineteenth century

Table 2: Glass catalogue



some old kelp-fluxed glass has been added to the mix, but the usual plant ash components are very low and in addition there are significant quantities of barium and lead. It would appear therefore that some glazing update took place at Moy castle in the nineteenth century (see Table 1).

## The roofing slates

By Joan A Walsh

### Introduction

Scottish slate has been a distinctive element of Scottish architecture over the centuries. Due to the complexity of the geology, Scottish slate is not capable of being split into the smooth regular finish of slates sourced from elsewhere. This has resulted in irregular slates of variable sizes and thicknesses being produced and laid in diminishing courses on the roof.

Most of the historical information on slate is from the nineteenth century, and very little is known about Scottish slate prior to the seventeenth century. The identification and analysis of slate from Moy Castle is the first step in filling this gap. The history of the Castle is known, and it is therefore possible to draw conclusions about the development of the industry.

### Possible sources of Scottish slates

In seeking to identify the slates, it is worth looking at possible sources of Scottish slate at the time the castle was built and also at the time of the alterations. Although the origins of the Scottish slate industry are not well established, it is known that it began on one of the group of west coast islands known collectively as the Slate Islands, probably Easdale, just south of Oban on the mainland. Reliable records for this source began in 1745 when the Marble and Slate Co of Netherlorn was established. However, it is known that slates from this source were being used prior to that on prestigious buildings in St Andrews and Glasgow. At a time when the principal mode of transport was by sea, slates could have been readily transported from one these Islands across the Firth of Lorn to Loch Buie on the Island of Mull.

Although the industry started on the Slate Islands, the main centre of the Scottish slate industry later

became Ballachulish on Loch Leven. According to Bremmer (1869) production of Ballachulish slate started at the end of the seventeenth century and by the end of the eighteenth century had overtaken the Slate Islands as the main producer of Scottish slate. Ballachulish slates would not have been available at either the time the original castle was built in the fifteenth century or the major alterations at the end of the sixteenth century. The presence of Ballachulish slates would indicate a date after the end of the seventeenth century.

### Description of slates from Easdale and the other Slate Islands

These slates are blue-grey to almost black in colour, depending on the amount of graphite present. The mineral pyrite is usually present as individual cubes which may vary in size from 1 mm to 7 mm. The presence of crenulation cleavage is common, giving the cleaved surface of the slate a crinkly texture. Differences in the size of the pyrite crystals and the thickness and regularity of the cleaved surface are described for the individual samples below. Ballachulish slate is very similar to that from the Islands and can only be distinguished by chemical analysis. Other types of Scottish slate can usually be recognised by their visual characteristics.

### Moy Castle slate samples

The samples were grouped together in three boxes ( 1, 2 and 3), and in the case of Box 3, subdivided into bags, which have been labelled 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. Individual samples were already assigned a context number. To distinguish between samples with the same context number, the postscript A, B or C has been added where necessary.

*Box 1:* This box consists of one bag with three samples:

*Context 1114:* This is a complete slate, 110 mm in length and 140 mm wide at the bottom, decreasing to 70 mm at the head. It is between 5 mm and 6 mm thick. Pyrite is present as crystalline cubes 3-5 mm in size; voids show where many have fallen out. In spite of this, the slate is in good condition with a good ring tone. There is a single nail-hole, 5 mm in diameter, with a hand cut metal nail *in situ*. This is a fairly regular shaped slate, possibly tapered to fit the roof. There is a small notch on one of the edges, the



purpose of which is unknown. From the regularity of the slate and the metal nail, it is assumed that this slate postdates the alterations to the tower at the end of the sixteenth century. This sample was analysed and the provenance was identified as the Slate Islands (Plate 21).

Two fragments of slate from the same box measured approximately 130 mm and 80 mm in diameter respectively. Their thickness varies from 10 mm to 14 mm. The pyrite mineral in these samples consists of small cubes less than 1 mm in size. Both of these fragments have a large hole, 15 mm wide, where a wooden plug was used for attachment to the roof. Traces of mortar on these samples would suggest that they had been reused in some way.

The thickness, irregularity and the use of large nail holes would suggest that these fragments are older than Sample 1114 from the same box. It is possible that they were fragments of the original slates but were removed and possibly reused at the time of the alterations.

*Box 2:* This consists of two slates and a few fragments.

*Context 6009:* This is a fragment 150 mm by 130 mm in size and 13 mm thick. The crystals of pyrite are approximately 5 mm in size and are widely scattered throughout, some having weathered out to leave a hole. There are also some smaller pyrite crystals less than 1 mm in size. There is a hole for a wooden plug 17 mm in diameter. This sample was analysed and the provenance was identified as the Slate Islands.

*Context 8001:* This is a complete slate, 280 mm by 180 mm in size and 14-17 mm thick. Pyrite crystals, all about 3 mm in size, are scattered throughout. The original plug hole was probably 20 mm wide but has been elongated to 30 mm in one direction, either by friction or by the slate having been reused (Plate 22).

*Box 3:* This box consists of three bags with two to six samples in each bag.

*Box 3.1:* This bag consists of six samples.

*Context 11203A:* This sample is incomplete as the head of the slate has been lost. It is 230 mm long and 130 mm wide at the bottom, narrowing to

70 mm at the top. Pyrite cubes are bimodal; the larger cubes are approximately 7 mm in size. Small specks of pyrite are also present approximately 1 mm in diameter. The slate is approximately 10 mm thick with a regular cleaved surface.



*Plate 22: Sample Context 8001 is a very irregular slate with large nail hole suitable for a wooden plug*

*Context 11101A:* This is a complete slate, 250 mm by 170 mm in size and 14-16 mm thick. The pyrite mineral is bimodal, the smaller cubes are less than 1 mm and the larger ones approximately 4 mm in size. There is a small nail-hole about 8 mm in diameter. This sample was analysed and the provenance was identified as the Slate Islands.

*Context 11101B:* This is also a complete slate, measuring 270 mm by 100 mm and 11-12 mm thick. The pyrite mineral is bimodal; most of the crystals are specks with the occasional cube 3-5 mm in size. There is a large hole suitable for a wooden plug. This sample was analysed and the provenance was also identified as the Slate Islands.

*Context 11101C:* This slate is 250 mm long and 150 mm at the bottom narrowing to 100 mm at the head. The thickness is very uneven from 9 mm at the bottom to 14 mm at the head. A small



nail hole remains of at the head. Most of the pyrite crystals are less than 1 mm in size with the occasional large 2-5 mm cubes. The unevenness of this slate suggests that it was original or dates from the time of the alterations at the end of the sixteenth century. However the presence of the small nail hole would suggest that it was reused at a later date.

*Context 11203B:* This is an irregular shaped slate, 280 mm at its longest point and 190 mm at the widest point. It is broken at the top and at the edge. It is approximately 14 mm thick. Most of the pyrite crystals are present as specks less than 1 mm in size with occasional larger cubes of 5-7 mm. Most of the larger crystals have weathered a rusty colour due to the breakdown of pyrite. There is some evidence of a small nail hole.

*Box 3.2:* This bag consists of two samples.

*Context 8003A:* This is a complete slate, 340 mm long and 190 mm at its widest point. The thickness varies from approximately 20 mm in the centre to 9 mm at the top. Pyrite crystals are 1 mm in size with an occasional larger cube 3-5 mm. There is a hole for a plug about 15 mm in diameter. This sample was analysed and the provenance was identified as the Slate Islands.

*Context 8003B:* This is a more regular slate than the previous sample. It is 230 mm by 130 mm in size and 14 mm thick. The pyrites are 2-3 mm in size with the occasional larger crystal. There is a large hole, 20 mm in diameter, suitable for a wooden plug.

*Box 3.3:* This bag consists of three samples.

*Context 8006A:* This is a regular slate 250 mm by 100 mm in size and 11-12 mm thick. The pyrite is present as cubes 2-4 mm in size. There is a large hole for a wooden plug, 15 mm in diameter.

*Context 8006B:* This is very similar to the previous sample. It is 250 mm by 120 mm in size and, apart from one area which is thicker, it is 14-15 mm thick. There is also a large hole for a wooden plug, 15 mm in diameter. This sample was analysed and the provenance was identified as the Slate Islands.

*Context 8006C:* This is a large slate 400 mm by 200 mm in size and 14-15 mm thick. There is also

a large hole for a wooden plug 15 mm in diameter (Plate 23).



*Plate 23: Sample Context 8006C is a large slate with a fairly regular cleavage surface. There is a large nail hole suitable for a wooden plug*

### Chemical Analysis

X-ray fluorescence analysis (XRF) is used to determine the concentrations of the different elements present in slate. The major components of slate, such as silicon, aluminium and oxygen are ubiquitous and are of little use in identifying the provenance. However the relative concentrations of the more unusual elements, such as zirconium or barium, do vary from one source to another and in each case there are a few elements which can be used to identify the provenance. The results are compared with over a hundred slates previously tested from different sources. In this report, the results were compared with those from two sources: (1) the Slate Islands and (2) Ballachulish.



The concentrations of the key elements are shown in Table 3. To distinguish between the Slate Islands and Ballachulish, the most important element is barium (Ba). The mean concentration of Ba (502 ppm) in Ballachulish slate is significantly less than the mean value for slates in general and the Slate Islands (838 ppm) in particular. The mean concentration of Ba in the Moy Castle samples is 956 ppm which is closer to that of the Slate Islands than Ballachulish. Similarly the concentration of the other key elements (Table 3) in the Moy Castle samples is closer to that of the Slate Islands than to Ballachulish. It can therefore be said with a high degree of certainty that the provenance of all of the samples tested is the Slate Islands.

## Discussion

Very little is known about the Scottish slate industry prior to the seventeenth century. The slates from Moy Castle provide a unique collection which can be related to the time the castle was built and to the date of the alterations at the end of the sixteenth century. However, the castle was occupied for another 150 years and the roof was maintained for even longer; some

slates could date from this period. The oldest slates, possibly dating from the fifteenth century, are very irregular and have large holes suitable for attachment with a wooden plug. These were classified as Type 1 (Plate 22). Slates assumed to be from the end of the sixteenth century are generally more regular; some are even tapered to fit the dimensions of a roof. Wooden plugs were however still used at that time. These slates were classified as Type 2. There are a few samples with metal nail holes, classified as Type 3, which are probably from a later date. Not all of the samples, however, fitted these descriptions and these were not assigned a category. These observations are summarised in Table 4.

## Conclusions

A collection of sixteen samples of slate from Moy Castle is described. The most irregular of the samples are assumed to date from the original construction of the castle in the fifteenth century. These samples were attached with wooden plugs. The second group of samples are more regular, although they also have holes suitable for wooden plugs. These are assumed to date from the time of alterations at the end of the sixteenth

Element	Sr	Nb	Y	Rb	Th	Cu	Ni	Ba
Moy Castle	204	14	25	130	13	35	40	956
Slate Islands	162	14	26	111	12	26	34	834
Ballachulish	86	18	38	54	16	15	26	502

Abbreviations and symbols used in Table 3

<i>ppm</i>	<i>parts per million</i>	<i>Nb</i>	<i>niobium</i>	<i>Rb</i>	<i>rubidium</i>	<i>Cu</i>	<i>copper</i>	<i>Ba</i>	<i>barium</i>
<i>Sr</i>	<i>strontium</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>yttrium</i>	<i>Th</i>	<i>thorium</i>	<i>Ni</i>	<i>nickel</i>		

Table 3: The mean concentration in ppm of key elements in Moy Castle slates compared to that of the Slate Islands and Ballachulish

	Context/sample number	Thickness (mm)	Nail hole	Type	Provenance
1	C1114	5-6	metal	3	
	Fragments	10-14	wood	1/2	
2	Context 6009	13	wood		Slate Islands
	Context 8001	14-17	wood	1	
3.1	Context 11203A	10	n/a	2 or 3	Slate Islands
	Context 11101A	14-16	metal	3	Slate Islands
	Context 11101B	11-12	wood	2	Slate Islands
	Context 11101C	9-14	metal	3	
	Context 11203B	14	metal?		
3.2	Context 8003A	9-20	wood	1	Slate Islands
	Context 8003B	14	wood	2	
3.3	Context 8006A	11-12	wood	2	
	Context 8006B	14-15	wood	2	Slate Islands
	Context 8006C	14-15	wood	2	

Table 4: Classification of slate samples



century. There are also a few thinner and more regular slates, which have small holes suitable for metal nails. These are assumed to post-date the major alterations at the end of the sixteenth century. The six samples tested were all identified as from Easdale or one of the other Slate Islands demonstrating the use of slate from this source earlier than previously thought.

## The animal bone and mollusc shell

By Catherine Smith

### Introduction

During the refurbishment and excavations at Moy Castle, a small assemblage of animal bone and marine mollusc shell, consisting of some 244 bone fragments and was recovered. Although the material was characterised by its small fragment size the condition of the bone was good, showing minimal weathering and abrasion. Butchery marks were preserved on some of the fragments.

Bones were recovered from the following contexts: 114, 118, 1111, 1113, 1114, 1116, 1117, 1118, 2003, 2006, 4003, 6002, 6010, 7002, 7006, 8003, 8006, 8008, 9006, 11203, 11204, 11205, 11207, 12002, 12003 and 12004.

Marine molluscs were recovered from fewer contexts than those in which animal bone was present: 1111, 2006, 6002, 8003, 11205 and 11207. Terrestrial mollusc was present only in 6002.

Numbers of bones and mollusc shells in each of these contexts are recorded in the accompanying tables, Tables 5 and 6 and the total weight of mollusc shell in Table 7.

### Species present

A limited range of mammalian species was noted, unsurprising given the small size of the assemblage. Domestic mammals identified were limited to cattle and sheep/goat, large ungulate and small ungulate, the latter two being the terms used to describe ribs and vertebrae likely to originate from cattle and sheep/goat respectively. Fragments described as indeterminate mammal probably also came from these two species.

The single wild mammal species recovered from Moy Castle was the rabbit. Present in context

1117 was one young individual and in context 8008, a minimum number of three individuals.

Bird species consisted of the domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) and several wild species of which the jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*) and rock dove or feral pigeon (*Columba livia*) could be considered commensal rather than economically exploited. More unusually, bones of a wild species related to the domestic fowl, probably the black grouse (*Tetrao tetrix*) were present in contexts 11207 and 12003.

Marine molluscs were mainly the wulk (*Littorina littorea*) and limpet (*Patella cf vulgata*) although a small quantity of mussel (*Mytilus edule*) was also present but not well preserved. Minor species were flat wulk (*Littorina obtusata*) and *Venerupis* sp. Two of the flat wulks contained what appeared to be mortar, thus they may have been imported with building sand rather than having been collected deliberately for food.

A broken fragment of mammalian bone with some polishing thought to be use-wear may be the remains of a fish hook (context 118) (Figure 12).

### Interpretation

There is little doubt that the bones of domestic mammals were present as a result of human activity since knife cuts were found on a number of them. The marine molluscs were presumably also collected by humans. Wulks, limpets and mussels are all edible and may therefore have been consumed as meals, although limpets and mussels are also well known for their use as bait in fishing. However, the presence of the rabbit bones is a conundrum. As none of these bones showed any evidence of butchery there is some doubt as to how they became incorporated into the garderobe deposit (8008). Although the excavator has suggested that a raptor nest may have been present in the garderobe where the rabbit bones were found, the bones were mainly intact and there was no evidence that any had been partly digested as would be expected if consumed by a bird of prey. There may therefore have been some other mechanism by which the rabbit bones entered the garderobe, possibly having been dumped there by people using the castle during a period of semi-abandonment. It is possible that the empty castle continued to



Context	cattle	sheep/ goat	rabbit	LU	SU	IM	domestic fowl	cf black grouse	rock dove	jackdaw	indet bird	fish	
114						1							
118		1		1		4						3	
1111		2		2	2	10				1		4	
1113	2												
1114												2	
1116		1											
1117			20									1	
1118												18	
2003			4										
2006						1							
4003			1										
6002			1										
6010											1		
7002											1		
7006	1				2	1	2						
8003				1	5	2							
8006		1		1		1	1						
8008			85	2									
9006		1											
11203							1						
11204	2	2		2		1	1		1				
11205				1		3							
11207	2	5		1	16	6	1	1					
12002			1										
12003					2	1		1					
12004										2			
u/s		1											
total	7	14	112	11	27	31	6	2	1	3	2	28	244

Table 5: Numbers of animal bones by context and species

	wulk	wulk	flat wulk	flat wulk	limpet	limpet	mussel	mussel	Venerupis	Venerupis	garden snail	garden snail
Context	n	weight	n	weight	n	weight	n	weight	n	weight	n	weight
1111	1	2										
2006	1	2										
6002			6	3	1	3			1	3	2	3
8003					2	3						
11205	339	1033	4	3	87	278	16	36				
11207	16	50	1	1	12	33						
total	357	1087	11	7	102	317	16	36	1	3	2	3

Table 6: Numbers and weights of mollusc shells, by context

Species		total no	total weight (g)
wulk	Littorina littorea	357	1087
flat wulk	L. obtusata	11	7
limpet	Patella sp.	102	317
mussel (single valve)	Mytilus edule	16	36
cf pullet carpet shell	Venerupis sp.	1	3
		487	1450

Table 7: Total weight of marine mollusc shells, by species



be used casually and the presence of part of a clay pigeon (skeet), the brass cap from a shotgun cartridge taken together with the presence of rabbit and wild game bird hints at a sporting use.

An excavation of a garderobe chute at Dairsie Castle, Fife, recovered numerous bones from rock doves and cats and there was no suggestion that these animals had been eaten by humans although the cats appear to have been skinned for their fur (Smith 1996).

## General conclusions

The archaeological work required to inform the conservation of the upper parts of Moy Castle involved removal of collapsed and accumulated material and the recording of elements of the fabric that were revealed. It did not fundamentally change our understanding of the structural history of the castle, but revealed interesting details of the successive alterations. These included the addition of the turrets, caphouses and the garderobe, the insertion of a fireplace in the garret and the relocation of the entrance from south to north, and the conversion of the second floor chamber to a kitchen, with an inserted fireplace and windows.

The beam slots in the east and west wall heads (Areas 2 and 6) that supported the garret roof seem not have been noticed previously. They could have functioned with the corbels and longitudinal beams previously observed, or perhaps indicated a substantial rebuilding of the roof. The apparent use of silt as a packing fill over the first floor vaults (Area 11) is unexpected.

The large dumps of slates and carved stone ridging found on the east and north walkways confirm that the roof was intentionally dismantled, presumably to prevent it collapsing through the garret floor and into the kitchen below. It is curious that such large quantities of slates and ridging were abandoned rather than re-used elsewhere. Both caphouses (Areas 1 and 7) produced slates with large peg holes rather than smaller nail holes, confirming that their rooves belonged to a different phase from the garret roof.

The slate assemblage is one of the earlier examples of material from the Slate Islands

(Easdale etc.), as the castle dates from the first half of the fifteenth century, and has now been examined in some detail and will be preserved for reference.

Apart from the slate, only a few window glass shards indicate the early use of the castle. The majority of other finds, include glazed pottery, copper alloy, lead seals, iron nails, some bottle glass and the later window glass indicate a post-abandonment use of the building after 1752. This, perhaps temporary accommodation, may have included people fishing with a fish hook and bringing back marine molluscs to eat or use as bait. The occasional cattle and sheep bone suggest that occupation was varied and probably intermittent, and once finally abandoned it was only visited by the rare sightseer and sportsman.

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