

A NOSAS SURVEY OF THE LANDS OF URCHANY

A MULTI-PERIOD SETTLEMENT ON THE BRAES WEST OF BEAULY

6th-10th April 2015



INDEX



History of Urchany p4

Social History of Urchany p10

Introduction to the NOSAS Field Survey p14

The Green Area p16

The Yellow Area p45

The Blue Area p55

The Purple Area p67

Conclusions p116

Appendix/Index p117



"I took with me a guide, Dan Ross, Muir of Lettoch, when I explored the more westerly district of Farley, as Dan knows this area better than most folk. It is the land of his forefathers, but their croft is no longer in existence. Such is the sad story of Farley and Urchany, both once thickly populated, and now more or less a scene of ruins and memories. In Farley still live three families, but Urchany, once famous for its butter, is completely void of habitation, the last native having left about eighty years ago"¹.

Kenneth Macrae 1950

"Breakachy is bounded on the North by a stream which has been known from time immemorial as Urchany Burn. Rising among the hills, at the back of Urchany Farm, and flowing down through the beautiful flats below, it deepens, widens and gathers volume, until it reaches the river below Teanassie Bridge, thus forming a natural boundary on the north and also on the east. It is one of the best small fishing streams for miles around; although the trout are not large, they are usually plentiful and constitute a rare delicacy. A gaff is not needed; while the stream is deep in parts, it is narrow, and the trout are easily landed with the rod."²

Rev William MacDonald, 1928

Almost all the land surveyed for this report is part of the Farley Estate, bought at the break-up of most of the Lovat Estate in 1996 by Hatfield Farms Ltd, owned by the Walduck family, London hoteliers. The author is grateful to the estate, and in particular the local gamekeeper Charlie Thomson, for their cooperation and permission to walk over the ground.

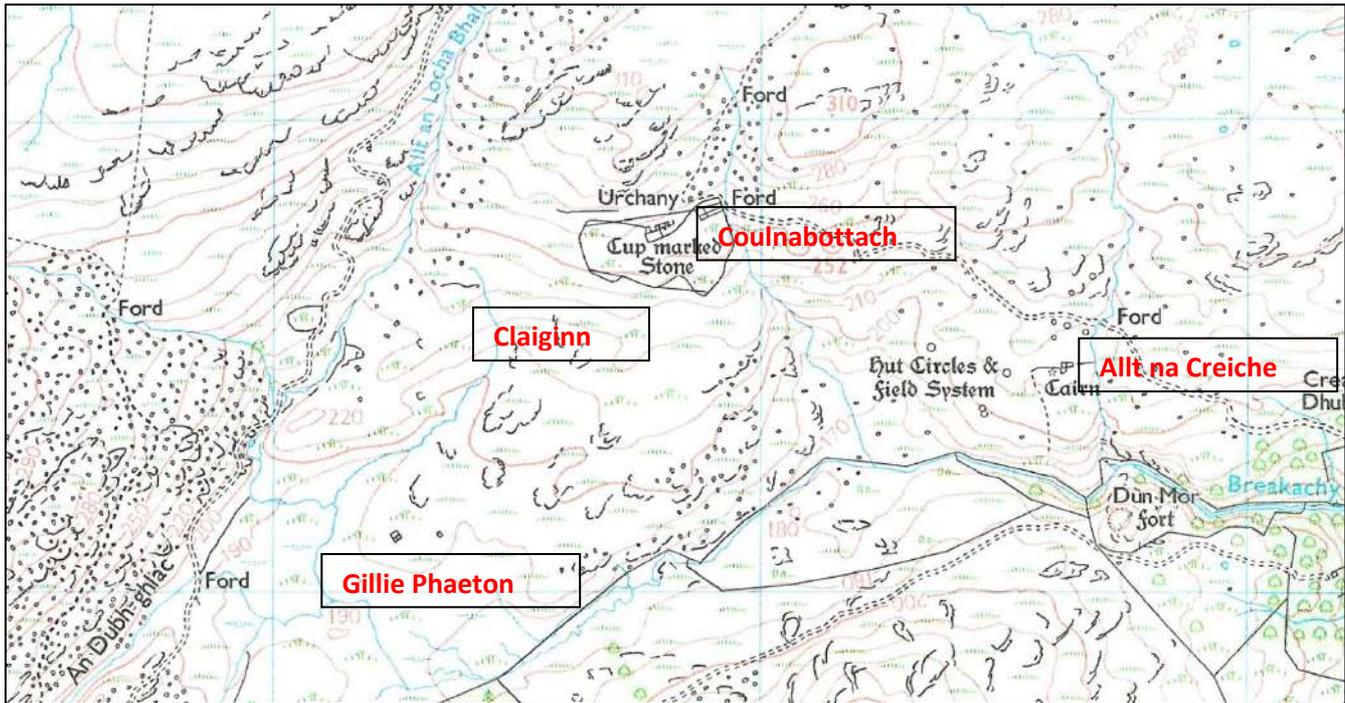
This report represents the passion of an individual who fell for the charms of Urchany in 2002 and who has been going back regularly since.

It also reflects the industry of a small group of members of the North of Scotland Archaeological Society who undertook a formal survey of the "lands of Urchany" over five days in April 2015.

¹ Harry Harrison, *Urchany and Farley, Leanassie and Breakachy, Parish of Kilmorack (Kilmorack: Kilmorack Heritage Association, 1998)*, 5

² William MacDonald, *The Breakachian* (Wordpress, 2011 revised edition of 1928 original) <https://issuu.com/dougal-quixote/docs/breakachian> [Accessed 4th February 2019]

The History of Urchany



There is evidence of settlement in Urchany from the late Neolithic to the 1860's, and evidence of farming until today. Settlement remains are found in the four main areas identified in red on the map above – Gillie Phaeton (Belloan), Claiginn, Coul nabottach (Coul na Bodach) and Allt na Creiche (the boundary burn). These names for the parts of Urchany are often referred to in estate maps and records.

Prior to this survey by the author and other NOSAS members, the previously available historical evidence for Urchany described on the Highland Council Historic Environment Record included five records. These are listed in approximate chronological sequence:

Neolithic: A large cup-marked stone has been known at Coul nabottach in Urchany from antiquarian days^{3,4}. It contained "upwards of 40 cups".

Bronze Age (approx 2000-700BC) A survey by the Ordnance Survey in March 1970⁵ identified ten hut circles on the ground to the west of the Allt na Creiche (Boundary Burn), both north and south of the main Urchany access track. This was associated with a pre-historic field system, which has been modified by a mid-19th century farmstead⁶ to the west of the burn.

The western enclosure wall of this settlement abuts a "kerbed cairn", also described by the OS in 1970⁷. None of the Urchany hut circles have been excavated, so it is difficult to ascribe a time period to them. Many of them could date to the Iron Age.

Iron Age (approx 700BC-400AD) A crescent of five, possibly iron-age, duns are located on the braes north west of Beauly. The most westerly of these, Dun Mor⁸, about 500m away, is just across the gorge of the Breackachy Burn from Allt na Creiche. It stands steeply above what is almost a gorge separating it from the Allt na Creiche hut circles to the north.

³ William Jolly "On Cup-Marked Stones in the Neighbourhood of Inverness," *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 15. (1880-81): 239-301

⁴ <https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG2650>

⁵ <https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG2666>

⁶ <https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG23303>

⁷ <https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG2665>

⁸ <https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG2651>

Pictish: There are no known Pictish remains from this period, although it is hard to imagine that people were not living here in the early medieval period.

Historic Period: A township comprising one roofed and nine unroofed buildings is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1876-81, sheet ix)⁹. On the 2nd edition OS map (1902), these have been reduced to three.

The next historic source of evidence is from maps:

1654 Johannes Blaeu's map of Scotland was published in 1654 although based on maps produced by Timothy Pont during 1583-1596 and Robert Gordon in the 1620's.

Note that Urchany is placed just west of Kilmorack along the Beauly river.



Figure 1: Blaeu's Map of the Kilmorack area © National Library of Scotland

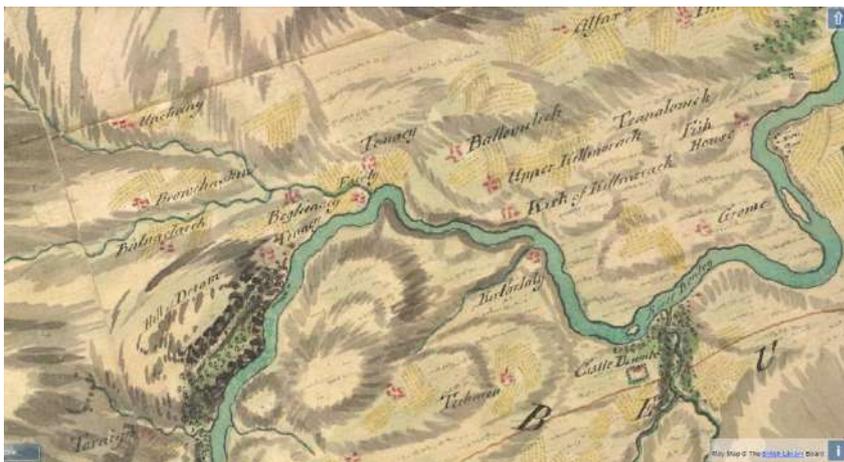
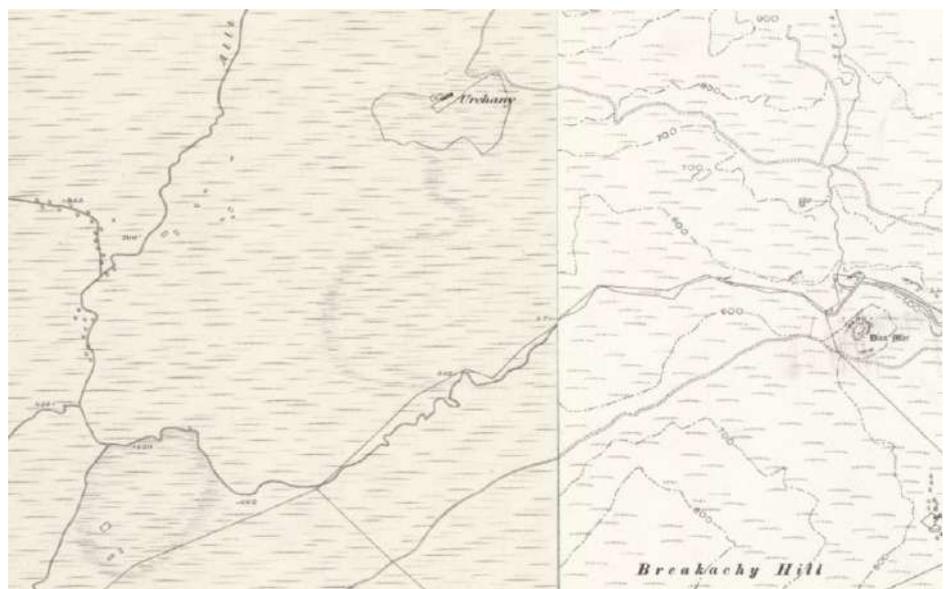


Figure 2: William Roy's Map, 1747-55 © British Library Board

1747-52 Roy's military map shows Urchany, spelt Upchany, in the correct position. It is associated with some fields and lies along an un-named river.

Figure 3 : 1st edition OS map of the Lands of Urchany. Surveyed 1873. © OS

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey maps of this area was published in 1876 after an 1873 survey.



⁹<https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG23302>

The Historical Period

Urchany was Fraser land, part of the extensive estate belonging to Lord Lovat, chief of the Frasers, who occupied a castle just south of Beauly. The present castle, called Beaufort, dates to the 1870's, although it is said to be the thirteenth castle built on this site. The earliest castle was called Castle Dounie, belonging to the Bisset family who were originally Norman. The Frasers have been in possession since 1333.

A significant battle of the Covenanting Wars (The War of the Three Kingdoms, 1639-51) took place at Auldearn in May 1645, with the victorious Royalists, under Montrose, retreating westwards. They set fire to the outskirts of Inverness and pillaged and burnt the Fraser lands to the west of that. It was said "*that twixt Inverness and Guisachan (near Cannich) there was not left in my countrie a sheep to bleet, a cock to crow day, nor a house unruffled*"¹⁰. The Royalist army came to camp at Farley, just east of Urchany, for a while and then continued to move westwards, almost certainly along the line of the Breakachy Burn and Urchany.

The 11th Lord Lovat¹¹, Simon Fraser, "came out" in the '45 and, despite being 84 at the time, was executed on Tower Hill for his treason in 1747. The Fraser lands were pillaged by the victorious Royalist army after Culloden, with Beaufort Castle burnt. The estate was then annexed by the government and only returned to the Frasers in 1774. The 12th Lord Lovat, Major General Simon Fraser, distinguished himself militarily in Canada and was subsequently pardoned in 1750 (although had to wait another 24 years to get his lands back!).

Much of the historical and social information that follows is taken with permission from: ***Urchany and Farley, Leanassie and Breakachy : Parish of Kilmorack : a monograph of the topology, history and demography of three formercrofting townships on the Lovat Estates and one on the Chisholm Estates, 1700-1998***. This is one of the books in the Kilmorack Heritage Society's series of books on the history of the area around Beauly and The Aird. The books, including the Urchany one, are for sale commercially, and can be viewed in the Highland Archive, Inverness.

1728 – 1800

Kilmorack parish, which includes Urchany, was said at one time to be the largest parish in Scotland, stretching from west coast to east. The Kilmorack parish records were searched by Harry Harrison and Susan Thomson in their compilation of the Kilmorack Heritage books during the 1990's and early 2000's. The first mention of Urchany (in the Parish records) was in 1728 with the marriage of John McWilliam of Urchanie to Margaret Mitchell of Cannich.

It is uncertain how far the Lovats "cleared" their land. There are reports of Fraser land (Strathfarrar and Farley) being used to house those evicted from Chisholm land at the beginning of the 19th century. The Chisholm clearances were just to the south of the Breakachy burn, and in Glen Affric and Strathglass. However, despite evidence of many families living in Urchany in the C18th, by the early years of the C19th it was mainly a sheep farm. It's not clear what happened to the residents, whether they were in fact cleared, or whether their numbers declined by other means. An unsubstantiated local story is that the men were killed during the Napoleonic wars.

The social records of the occupants are recorded in the following Social History section. Scrutinising the parish records, there is a decline in births and marriages during the mid to late seventeenth century. From then on there is evidence of families and individuals living in the various parts of Urchany until the 1871 census when no-one is recorded living there. The cumulative evidence comes from

- Parish registers
- The papers of the forfeited estate taken to Edinburgh following the 1745-6 rebellion
- Rental rolls and Commissioner reports, as the Government managed the estate from 1749 until 1774, when it was returned to the 12th Lord Lovat, Simon Fraser.
- Estate maps (courtesy of the Lovat Estate office)
- Census returns

¹⁰ James Fraser, *Chronicles of the Frasers 916-1674* (Edinburgh: University Press for the Scottish History Society 1905), 315, <https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn23/9512/95123977.23.pdf> [Accessed 3rd February 2019]

¹¹ "Simon Fraser, 11th Lord Lovat", Wikipedia, accessed 3rd February 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Fraser,_11th_Lord_Lovat

1757 Map

This is the first of several maps in the Lovat Estate office, and now online: maps.nls.uk/estates/rec/6287. It was surveyed and drawn by Peter May¹² land surveyor, for the Commissioners of the Forfeited Annexed Estates in order to identify the nature of the land being farmed, the rent that would be due, and the improvements that could be made. It is a beautifully drawn, detailed map of the whole estate, paper backed with linen, approx 1metre square. It shows houses at Coul nabottach, Urchany (ie Claiginn) and Belloan (ie Gillie Phaeton). It shows for each field the acreage as ARF: acres, roods, falls.

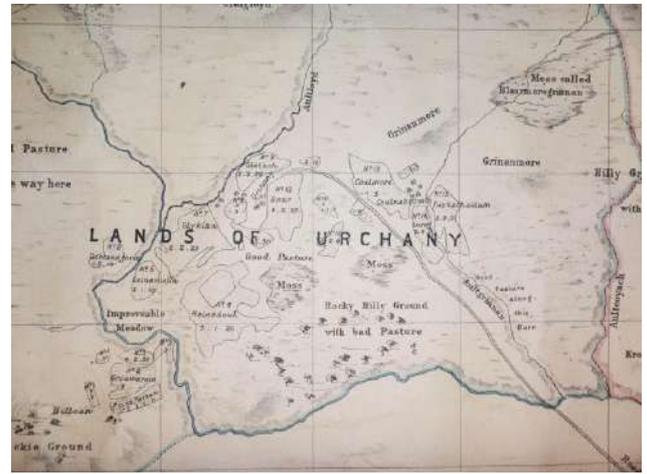


Figure 4: Peter May map of Kilmorack Parish, 1757



Figure 5: George Brown map of Urchany, 1798-1800

1797 Map

This book of maps of the Lovat Estate land around the inner end of the Beauly Firth followed a survey in 1798-99 & 1800 by George Brown. Frustratingly, on each page north points in a different direction, often to the bottom of the page, so interpretation of these pages takes time! Again, there are houses and fields drawn, some with people's names attached, and including acreage.

A snip from one of the pages shows Gillie Phaeton, to the left.

1800 – present day

Those who lived in Urchany include shepherds by the beginning of the 19th century. Coul nabottach seems to be farmed – *ploughed or just grazed?* – by the McKinnon family, who are identified as living there on the 1797 map and continue until the 1841 census (but not the 1851 one).

The settlement at Allt na Criche does not exist on the 1757 & 1797 maps, and yet has a household living there in 1841, but not in 1851. Was this farm built for shepherds in the early 19th century, and then deserted by mid-century?

The Inverness Advertiser has an advertisement (right) for a sale of sheep from Urchany in 1821 and an invitation to take up the letting of a sheep farm in 1822.

IMG313201511473SAM

VALUABLE FARMS TO LET,
OF THE
ESTATE OF LOVAT.

The following Farms will be Let from Whitsonday 1821. At such rates of year as may be agreed upon—

1. **DELI and GLENDOE**, in the District of Stratherrick—This Farm is well known to produce Sheep of the best quality, and from its great extent, with its local advantages, lying along the south side of Lochness, is an object of interest to a man of capital. The Dwelling House is fit to accommodate a respectable Family, and a great part of the Arable Land is well enclosed.
2. **INGLAFSON**, in the Parish of Kilmorack, about three miles from Inverness, occupying about 11/2 Acres of Arable Land, and upwards of an Acre of Woodland Pasture. There is an excellent Dwelling House and Garden upon this Farm, with suitable Office Houses.
3. **URCHANY**, in the Parish of Kilmorack, a superior Grazing or Sheep or Black Cattle, and extremely suitable as an Arable Farm.

Offers will be received by the Proprietor, T. A. Fraser, Esq. of Lovat; and by John McPherson, his Factor, at Bessly, who will afford any further information, and give directions for viewing the Lands.

Bessly, 11th January, 1821.

Printed by Inverness Reference Library 201

An 1831 advert (left) again offers the land for grazing, either sheep or black cattle.

IMG3132015114338AM

A SUPERIOR STOCK OF BLACK-FACED SHEEP.

TO be Sold by Private Bargain, at Urchany, in the Parish of Kilmorack, and County of Inverness, the well-known Stock of SHEEP on that Farm, consisting of 200 Ewes with their Lambs, 150 ewes and two-year-old Wethers, 300 Ewes and Wether Hags, with 20 Rams. Also two Bulls, for nine years, from Whitsonday 1822, the Whole LANDS OF BREA KACHY, in the Parish, with the Hill Ground attached thereto—For particulars, apply, in both cases, to William Fraser, Esq. at Insherry.

(One Concern.)

24th May, 1821.

Printed by Inverness Reference Library 2015

And an 1861 advert (right) again offers the land for grazing “of cattle”. Not sheep, the sheep have moved on!

IMG313201515514PM

HILL GRAZING TO LET.
WITH ENTRY AT WHITSONDAY 1861.

URCHANY, in the Parish of Kilmorack, contains 200 Acres of HILL GROUND and 200 Acres of OLD ARABLE and PASTURE GROUND, to be Let only as a Grazing for Cattle.

Offers will be received at the Factor's Office on Saturday, the 23rd inst. at Twelve noon.

Factor's Office.
Bessly, 12th November 1861.

Printed by Inverness Reference Lib

¹² Ian Adams (ed.), *Papers on Peter May, Land Surveyor, 1749-1793*, (Edinburgh: T&J Constable for Scottish History Society, 1979)

1836 Map (right, and online: maps.nls.uk/estates/rec/6287)

This sketch of the Urchany lands looks as though it might have been made in preparation for development of the site, development that never happened. At the Coulnabottach site there are the words: “The offices and house should be here”!

It does however give a good representation of the field structures still in place at this time - remarkably, as by now sheep were grazing much of this land.

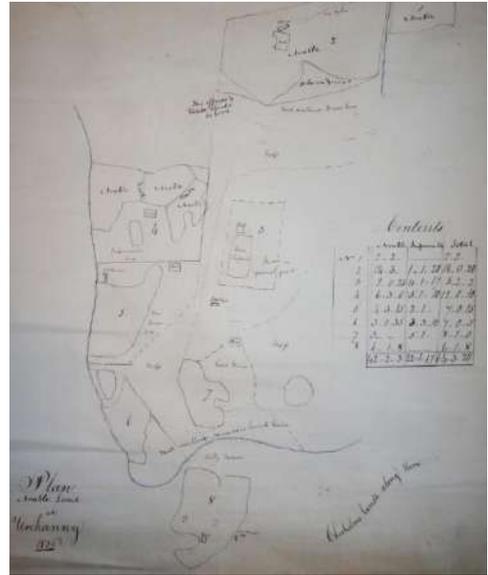


Figure 6: 1836 Map showing intended development

1852 Map (below, and online: <https://maps.nls.uk/estates/6555.html>)

This is a large, 1x2metre, map rolled round a carved wooden pole. It was surveyed and drawn by David Gordon. The houses and fields of Urchany are artistically drawn, rather than in detail. The main purpose of the map seems to be to identify areas that could be let separately. This becomes relevant when considering the next map.



Figure 7: 1852 map of the Lands of Urchany by David Gordon

The 1870 Map

(<https://maps.nls.uk/estates/rec/6570>)

This has a similarity to the 1852 map, but lacks much of its beauty and detail. No author or surveyor is given.

The text on it suggests that it preceded the letting of a large part of the western ground of Urchany west of the Breakachy Burn – that shaded in blue - to the occupant of Erchless Castle who was at that time John Henry Grenville Smyth.



Figure 8: 1870 map of the Lands of Urchany

OS Maps

- The first edition 25" map 1855-1882 misses Urchany but does include three enclosures and no obvious buildings at Allt na Criche, see right.
- The 2nd edition 25" map 1890-1960 shows much the same at Allt na Criche.



Figure 10: 1st Edition 6" OS map, showing Coul na Bottach



Figure 9: 1st Edition 25" OS map, showing the settlement at Allt na Criche

The 1st Edition 6" map 1843-1887 shows a roofed building at Coul nabottach and nine unroofed structures at Claiginn. From the size of those structures not all of them seem to be houses.

Lastly, at Gillie Phaeton there are five unroofed structures on the 1st Edition 6" map, in two groups. These are completely unrecorded on the Historic Environment Record.

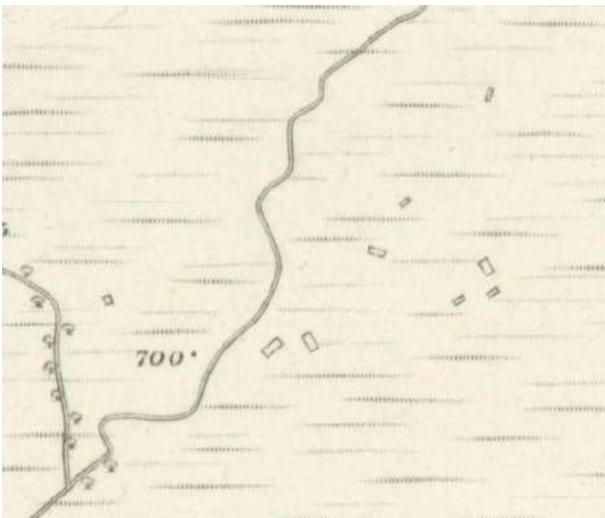


Figure 12: 1st Edition 6" OS map showing nine unroofed structures at Claiginn

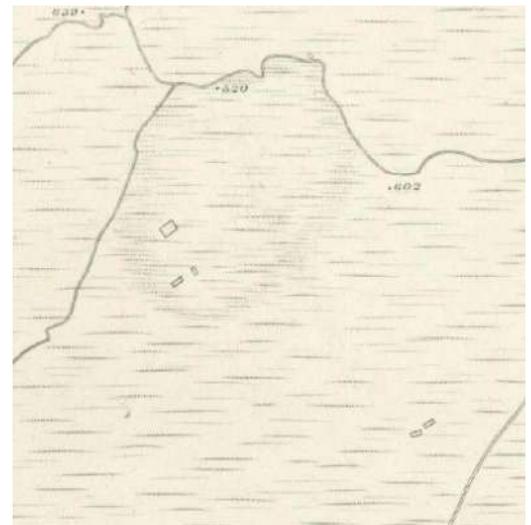


Figure 11: 1st Edition 6" OS map showing five unroofed structures at Gillie Phaeton

By the time of the 2nd edition 6" maps, surveyed 1901, there is still one roofed building in Counabottach, and the same number of unroofed structures at Claiginn and Gillie Phaeton.

Remarkably, on the 1:25k OS map, from 1937, the building at Coul nabottach is still shown roofed. Two of the structures at Gillie Phaeton have disappeared.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY of URCHANY

Occupants of Urchany (between 1728 & 1861)

Much of what follows has been gleaned from the work of Harry Harrison and Sue Thomson, authors of the Kilmorack Heritage Guide, see earlier.

PARISH REGISTER mentioning URCHANY RESIDENTS

- **Between 1728 & 1740**, 2 marriages, 6 baptisms, involving 7 families
 - Surnames included ffraser, fforbes, MacDonald
 - **Baptisms**
 - 22 April 1729 – John McWm in Urchany. John
 - 15 October 1730 – John McAndrew in Urchanie. Anna
 - 3 March 1733 – John Mcoldonich in Urchanie. Janet
 - (Children born on Sundays were often called Donich (the servant of the Almighty))
 - 27 December 1735 – Alexr fforbes in Urchanie had a daughter called Anna
 - 8 October 1738 – John Mchustain in Urchanie a child Alexr
 - 27 June 1740 – Alexr McRory Koie in Urchanie. John
 - **Marriages**
 - 4 March 1728 booked John McWilliam of Urchanie & Margaret Mitchell of ? Cannich
 - 25 June 1737 – Kenneth ffraser of Erchless & Katherine McDonald of Urchanie
- **Between 1741 & 1750** – 3 marriages, 5 baptisms
 - **Baptisms**
 - 23 Jan 1744 – Alexr Bain in Urchanie. Robert
 - 22 May 1745 – John More Mcoldonich in Urchanie. Mary
 - 22 April 1749 Alex Mc en Mc Conihu (?) in Urchanie. Thomas
 - 10 December 1749 – William Miller in Urchanie. Anna
 - **Marriages**
 - 5 May 1747 – John McOldonich in Urchanie & Margaret McTosh in Breakack
 - 22 May 1747 – William Mc Wm Miller in Urchanie & Katherine min Lomas Mc ol ve Lomais
- **Between 1751 & 1760** – 1 marriage, 7 baptisms involving 6 families
 - **Marriages** - 24 June 1759 – Angus McBean of Daviot & Gredach fforbes of Urchanie
- **Between 1761 & 1770** – 1 marriage, 6 baptisms, involving 5 families
 - **Marriages** – 13 June 1762 Collin ffraser of Breakach & Anna Cameron of Urchany
- **Between 1771 & 1780** – no marriages, 3 baptisms, involving 2 families
- **After this**, Church baptism records peter out
- **Names of men** having children to be baptised **between 1751 & 1780**:
 - Wm McKomais (?) Erreck (?)
 - Andrew Kile
 - John McOldonich
 - Andrew McLean
 - Angus McBean
 - Colin Fraser
 - Donald McKenzie
 - Alexander Cameron

- **Names of Occupants on the 1797 estate map:**
 - Mr Nicol – Gillie Phaeton
 - Widow Fraser – Gillie Phaeton & Craggain
 - Mr McKinnon – Coulnabottach

- **Between 1801 & 1810** – no marriages, 3 baptisms
 - John Mackenzie & Isabel McKinnon – a daughter, Margaret, 22 November 1806
 - John Mackenzie & Janet Fraser – a daughter, Annable, 28 May 1809
 - Note same name of father, different mothers. Two different men? Or, same man, two different wives?
 - Angus McKinnon & Katharine Douglas – a son, Angus, 29 March 1809

- **Between 1811 & 1820** – 1 marriage, 9 baptisms, involving 4 families. Names mentioned:
 - Angus Cameron, shepherd
 - William McKenzie, shepherd
 - Donald McKinnon, farmer Coulnabottach (*was he the father of John McKinnon in the 1841 census?*)
 - Angus McKinnon, married Katharine Douglas, four children - ? date.
 - Angus McKinnon, married Jean McGregor (Second wife?) 12 February 1818, son John baptised 14 September 1818.
 - Angus McKinnon, Urchany, & Anne McKenzie produced bastard son, Angus, baptised 28 September 1818
 - Three separate men all of the same name? Or one man with two wives, sequentially, and a child out of wedlock with Anne McKenzie?

- **Between 1821 & 1830** – 1 marriage
 - **Marriage:** James Cameron of Urchany & Mary McKay of Broallan, 2 December 1825
 - **Baptism:** Hugh Calder, shepherd Urchany & Isabel McKenzie – a son, William, 22 July 1830

Births, Marriages and Families by Decade

Decade	Baptisms	Marriages	No. Families Involved
1728-1740	6	2	7
1741-1750	5	3	
1751-1760	7	1	6
1761-1770	6	1	5
1771-1780	3	0	2
1797 Map	?	?	3
1801-1810	3	0	
1811-1820	9	1	4
1821-1830	1	1	
1841 Census			2
1851 Census			1
1861 Census			1
1871 Census			0

CENSUS and OTHER RECORDS

1841 Census

- Two households, nine individuals
- **Urchany**, single households in
 - Urchany (presumably Coulnabottach) –
 - John McKinnon farmer, 30
 - Margaret McKinnon, 15
 - Hugh Chisholm agricultural labourer, 15
 - Alexaner MacDonald male servant, 15
 - Helen Leitch female servant, 15
 - Janet Chisholm a visitor, 20 (*one wonders what role she played.....??*)
- **Allt na Criche**, spelt Aultnacrich, 1 Inhabited house
 - Donald MacKay, 55, Agricultural Labourer, Not born in County
 - Mary MacKay, 50, Not born in county
 - Finlay Macckay, 14, Not born in County

1851 Census

- One household, presumably Coul na Bottach, two residents
- **Urchany**,
 - Alexander McLennon shepherd, 35
 - Hannah McMillan, servant, 27 (*one wonders what role she played.....??*)

1861 Census

- One household, three residents
- **Urchany**:
 - Donald McKinnon, farmer of 8 acres, 35
 - Ann McKinnon, 22 (Gravestone in Kilmorack Burial Ground: *Ann McLennan wife of Donald McKinnon of Urchany, died 27 September 1924, age 84 years*)
 - John McKinnon, 6 months (Gravestone in Kilmorack Burial Ground: *Died 15 December 1924, aged 64 years*)

Further Annexed Estate Rental Records				
	1755 (SRO E 769.69)		1768 (SRO E 769.70 & 769.71)	
	Living at.....	Rent Paid	Living at.....	Rent Paid
Hugh Fraser	?			
Lilias Calder	Cleggain	£7 s13 d10	?	
Alexander fforbes	Claigh	£0 s18 d6	"Farms, Urchany"	£1 s5 d5
Thomas MacJames	Claigh	£2 s15 d8	"Farms, Urchany"	£1 s5 d5
William Miller + Anne min hutcheon og	?			
John McVildonich	?			
Alex MacCoilvarn	?			
Hugh fforbes	?			
James Fraser of Altyre	Claigh	£0 s18 d6	?	
Thomas Chisholm minr	Belloan	£2 s15 d8	"Farms, Urchany"	£1 s5 d5
William Fraser	Coulnabottch	£1 s17 10	? passed on to Alexr	
Alexr Fraser			"Farms, Urchany"	£3 s11 d3
Mary Chisolm	Coulnabottch	£1 s17 10	"Farms, Urchany"	£3 s11 d3
Alexr Cameron			"Farms, Urchany"	£3 s11 d3

Judicial Review carried out by Hugh Munro of Tenainich 1749

Court of Baron Baillie, 3 September 1750

	1749 Judicial Review	1749 Annual Rent	Arrears	Notes	Rent
Hugh Fraser	Pedicle of the land of Urchanie, called Balloan.	45 Merks ¹³ , 1 wedder ¹⁴ , 1 lamb, 6 hens, proportion of fishing cruives	1748 receipt for payment of £5 for 1745 & 1746. Rents for 1747 & 1748 still outstanding	Listed as resident	£30 Scots ¹⁵ , 1 wedder, 6 hens
Lilias Calder	Urchany	45 Merks, 1 wedder, 1 lamb, 6 hens, proportion of fishing cruives	20.1.1747 receipt for 30 pund scots for 1745 rent. 11.2.1749 for 30 pund Scots for 1746. Rent for 1747 & 1748 outstanding	Listed as resident	£30 Scots, 1 wedder, 1 lamb, 6 hens
Alexander Forbes	Urchany (Balloan) for a considerable number of years	15 pounds Scots, ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens, proportion of fishing cruives	March 1747 for rent 1745 & 1746. 13 May 1748 for 1747. Rent for 1748 outstanding.	Too sick to appear before Court. Neighbour John Chisholm represents him. Rent Arrears - Has paid rent 1745 & 1746, but nothing for 1747, 1748, 1749, 1750.	£15 Scots, ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens
Thomas MacJames	Urchany, for several years	15 pounds Scots, ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens, proportion of fishing cruives	March 1747 for rent 1745 & 1746, except the hens. Rent for 1747 & 1748 outstanding.	Listed as resident	£15 Scots, ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens
William Miller + Anne min hutcheon og (the daughter of young Hugh Fraser)	Urchany, for 3 or 4 years	William 15 merks Anne 2 pounds Scots ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens,	William - March 1747 for rent 1745 & 1746, except the hens. Rent for 1747 & 1748 outstanding. Anne – due rent for 1745-48	Listed separately. Are they married.....?? William took over Anne's land from Whitsunday 1749	William £10 Scots, 1 fourth wedder, 1 fourth lamb, 1½ hens Anne £5 Scots, 1 fourth wedder, 1 fourth lamb, 1½ hens
John McVildonich	Urchany, for several years past	15 pounds Scots, ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens	March 1747 for rent 1745 & 1746, except the hens. Rent for 1747 & 1748 outstanding.	Listed as resident (as John MacIldonick)	£15 Scots, ½ wedder, ½ lamb, 3 hens
Alex MacCoilvarn	Cylenaikie, a pedicle of said lands of Urchany (?Coile na Cleithe)	Pund Scots 17 6s 4p, 1 wedder, 1 lamb, 6 hens,	Has paid rent 1745 & 1746, except the hens. Rent for 1747 & 1748 outstanding.	No longer listed	
Hugh fforbes	Very little detail			No longer listed	

¹³ 1 Merk = 2/3 Pound Scots

¹⁴ Wedder/Wether - Sheep

¹⁵ In 1707, the Pound Scots was replaced by the pound sterling at a rate of 12 to 1, although the pound Scots continued to be used in Scotland as a unit of account for most of the 18th century.

The NOSAS Survey of Urchany

6th-10th April 2015

After numerous single and group visits to Urchany since 2009, it was decided to undertake a formal systematic survey of the archaeological remains of this area of approximately four square kilometres. On older maps this area is called the “Lands of Urchany” which includes the settlement names of:

- Gillie Phaeton (variously Belloan)
- Claiginn (at times, Urchany)
- Coulnabottach (Coulnabodach)
- Allt na Creiche

The participants during the five days of the survey were:

- Tim Blackie (Green Area)
- Beth Blackburn (Blue Area)
- Anne Cockroft (Red Area)
- Bob Jones (Red Area)
- Rosemary Jones (Purple Area)
- Linda Lamb (Purple Area)
- Anne Macinnes (Green Area)
- James McComas (Yellow Area)
- Marion Ruscoe (Purple Area)
- Roland Spencer-Jones
- Alan Thompson (Blue Area)
- Sue Walker (Purple Area)
- John Wombell (Yellow Area)
- Trina Wombell (Yellow Area)

They together contributed 49 person days of survey activity.

Two remarkable facts about the survey:

1. The sun shone much of the time
2. Without knowing that NOSAS was surveying, local pilot and archaeologist Jim Bone flew over the site taking photographs on the third day.

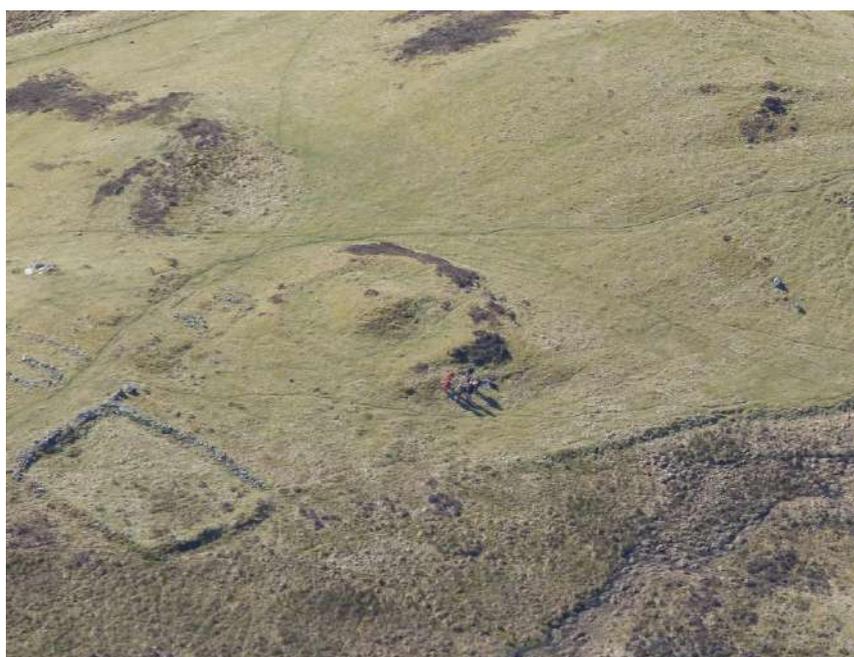
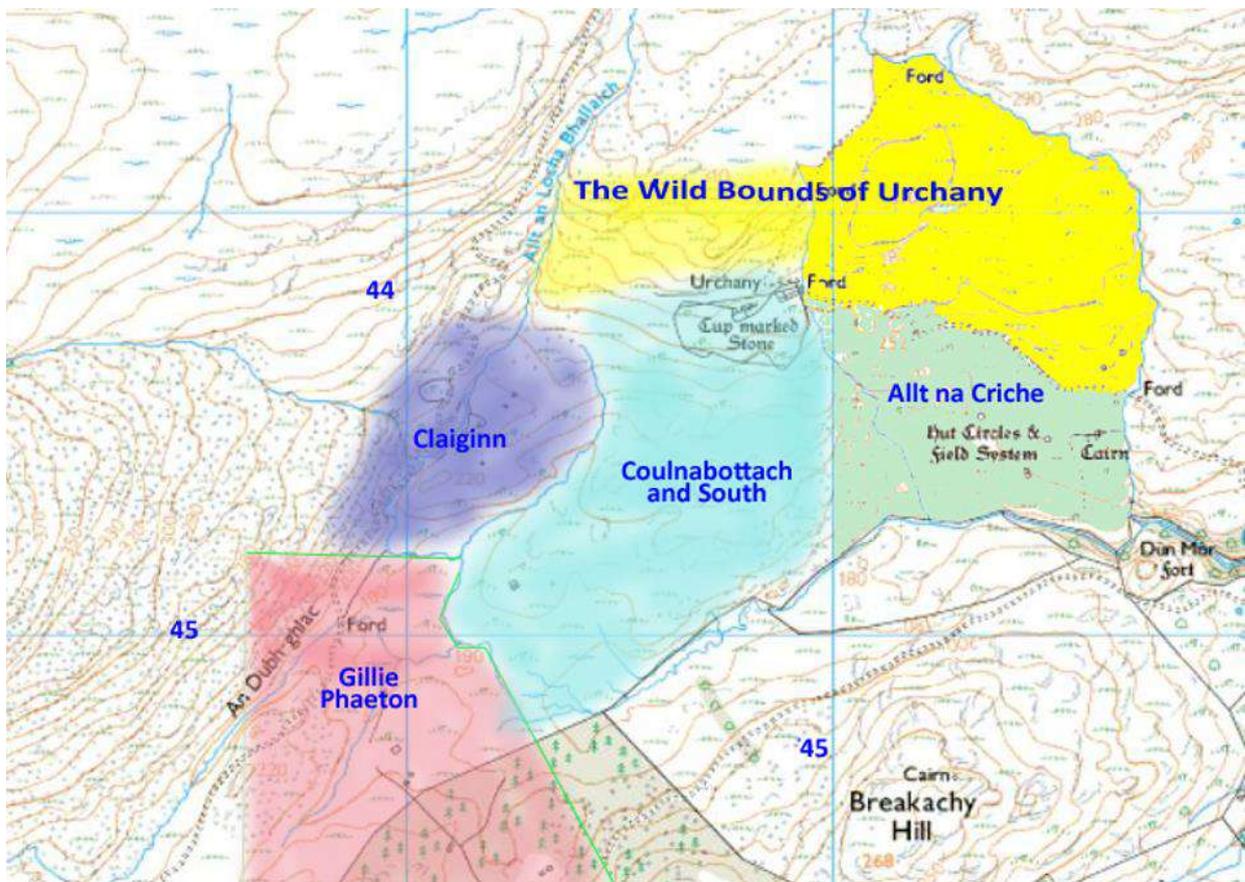


Figure 13: Aerial Photograph of NOSAS Surveyors at Claiginn, 8th April 2015

The components of the survey were:

- An initial walk-over survey to identify all the artificial structures and disturbances on the land
- On standardised data sheets, recording a specified set of data for each:
 - Type of structure
 - Grid reference, to 10 figures
 - Approximate dimensions
 - Photograph(s)
- For some of the more complex structures, a dimensioned drawing.
- Compiling a unique set of data and photos for each structure.

In view of the extent of the survey area, the ground to be covered was divided into five areas, roughly demarcated by the burns and valleys of the undulating, south-sloping land, and named according to colours. From the west the coloured areas are: Red, Purple, Blue, Yellow, Green. The results of the survey are described area by area, as indicated above.



A guide to the allocation of numbers to the archaeological features:

- Each number had a prefix letter:
 - B = building
 - C = cairn
 - E = enclosure
 - H = hut circle
 - K = kiln
 - V = various, applied to features that were none of the above.
- Each coloured area was pre-allocated up to 50 numbers each of which had a prefix letter:
 - Yellow Area: 0-50
 - Green Area: 51-100
 - Blue Area: 101-150
 - Purple Area: 151-200
 - Red Area: 201-250

URCHANY GREEN AREA

This area was found to contain hut circles, clearance cairns, a kerbed cairn, a cist burial and pre-historic field structures. These are characteristically indicative of activity within the Bronze Age.

The area also contains a settlement that the 1841 census suggests was occupied by Donald MacLeay, agricultural labourer age 55, his wife Mary age 55, and son Findlay age 15. There is no record of a modern historic settlement at this site before 1841, and there was no record of anyone living there in subsequent censuses. So, a short-lived settlement.

The maps in Fig 14 show that there were no structures identified in this area at the end of the 18th century.

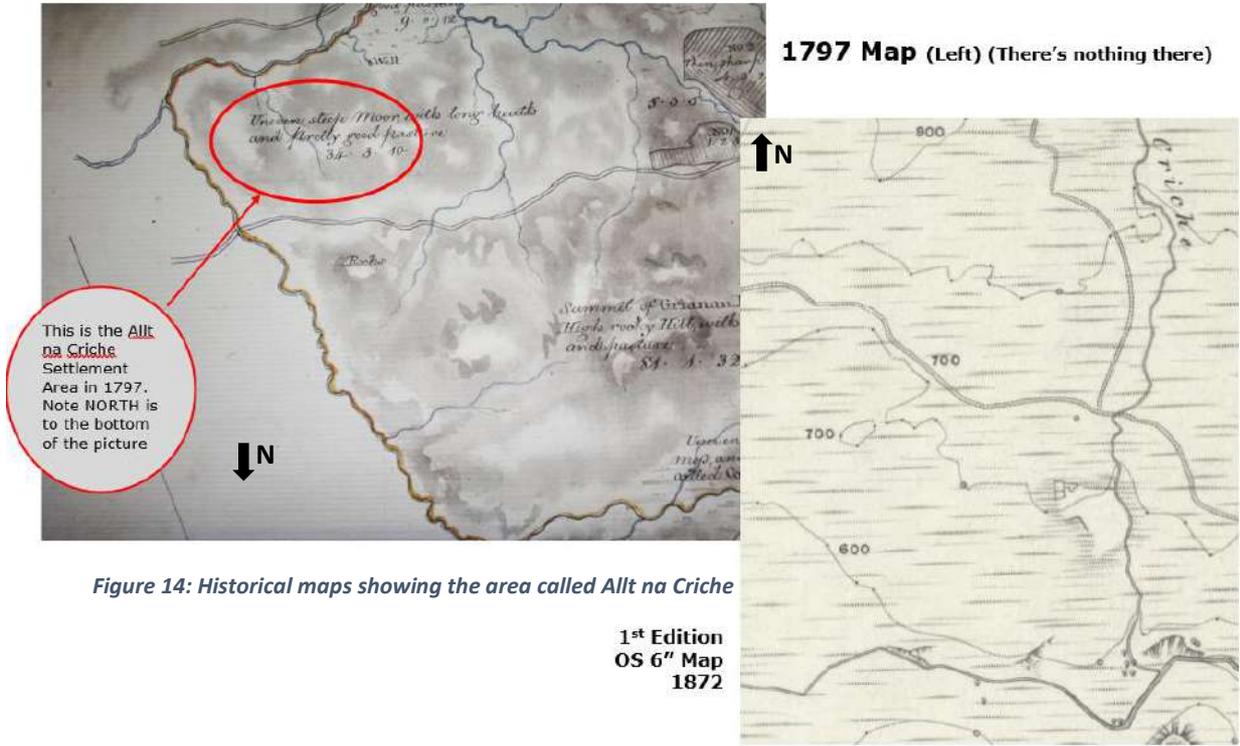


Figure 14: Historical maps showing the area called Allt na Criche



Figure 15: The archaeological finds identified in the Green Area, which was bounded: to the S by the Breakachy Burn, to the E by the Allt na Creiche, to the N by the track to Urchany, and to the W by a small unnamed burn. The full list of structures is tabulated in Appendix 1

BUILDINGS:

B51 NH 45648 45550

This roughly constructed building, 4m x 3m, is situated circa 12m south of the main Urchany track, and 45m west of the Allt na Criche. It lies on gently sloping ground to the south. The double skinned walls are 0.5m wide with a maximum height of 1.0m, and constructed of boulders. A doorway is evident in S.

The appearances are those of a relatively modern building, perhaps 19th century, perhaps related to sheep.



Figure 16: B51 from SW



Figure 17: Looking down into B51 from NE

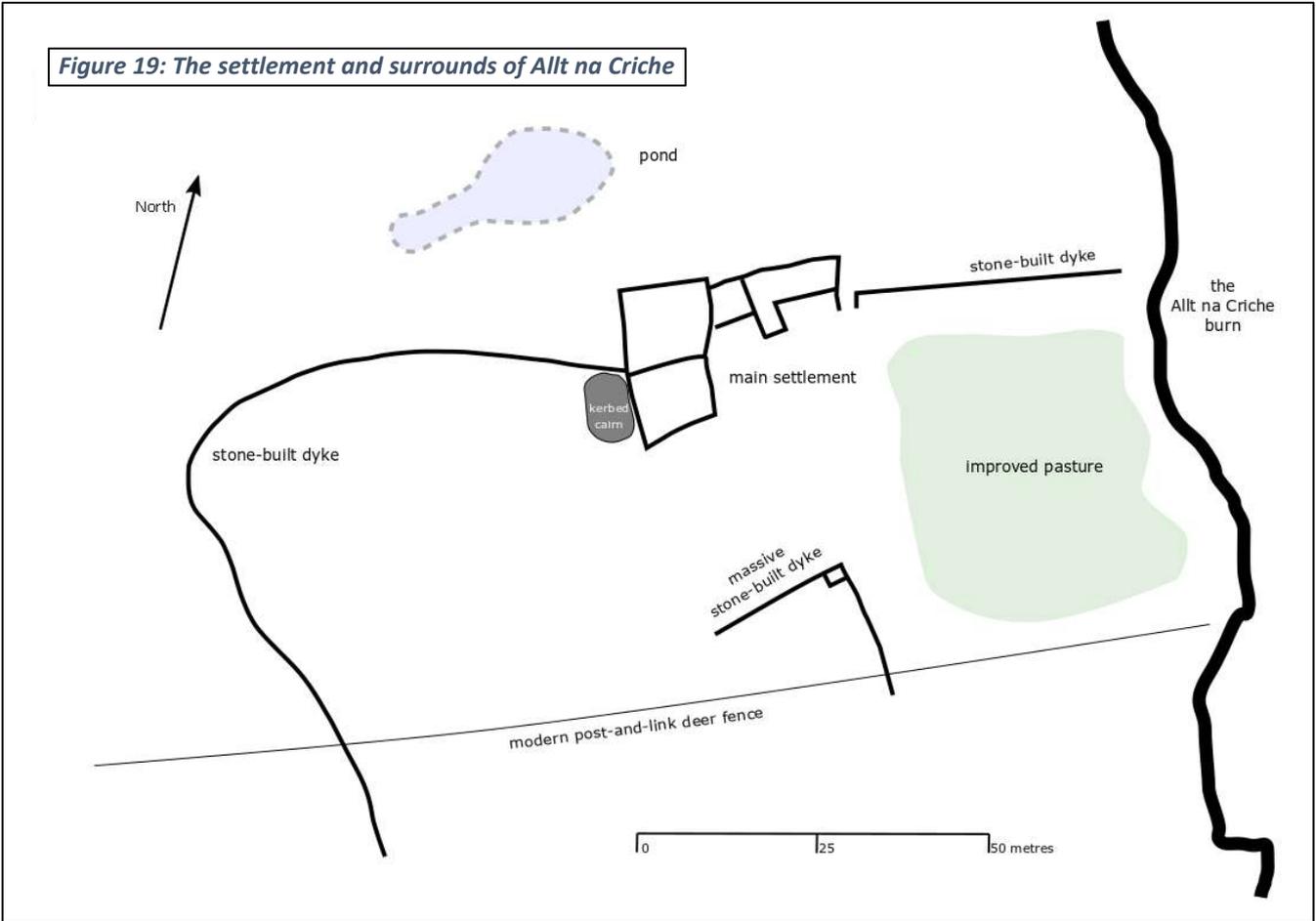
V60 NH 45644 45467 Allt na Criche settlement

The C19th settlement west of the Allt na Criche consists of extensive enclosure walls, a building, and a sunken area, perhaps a pond. On the estate maps covering this area there is no settlement shown until 1838, see Fig 19 below. In the 1841 census there are three people living at "Aultnacrich": Donald Mackay, agricultural labourer, Mary Mackay, and a 14 year old boy Finlay, presumably their son. We know from newspaper adverts that Urchany was used for sheep farming at this time.



Figure 18: The ruined settlement of Allt na Criche from the E

Figure 19: The settlement and surrounds of Allt na Criche



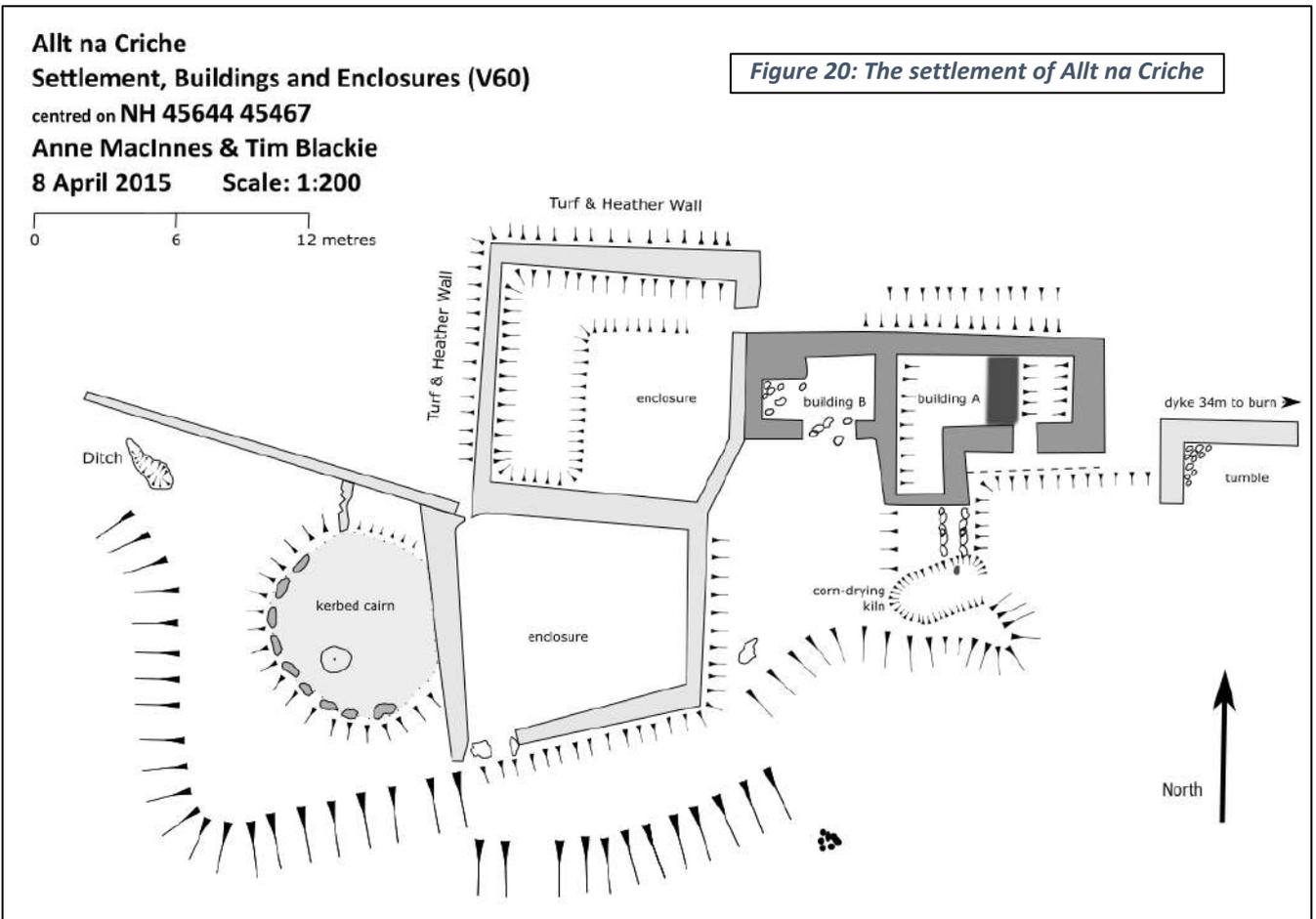
**Allt na Criche
Settlement, Buildings and Enclosures (V60)**

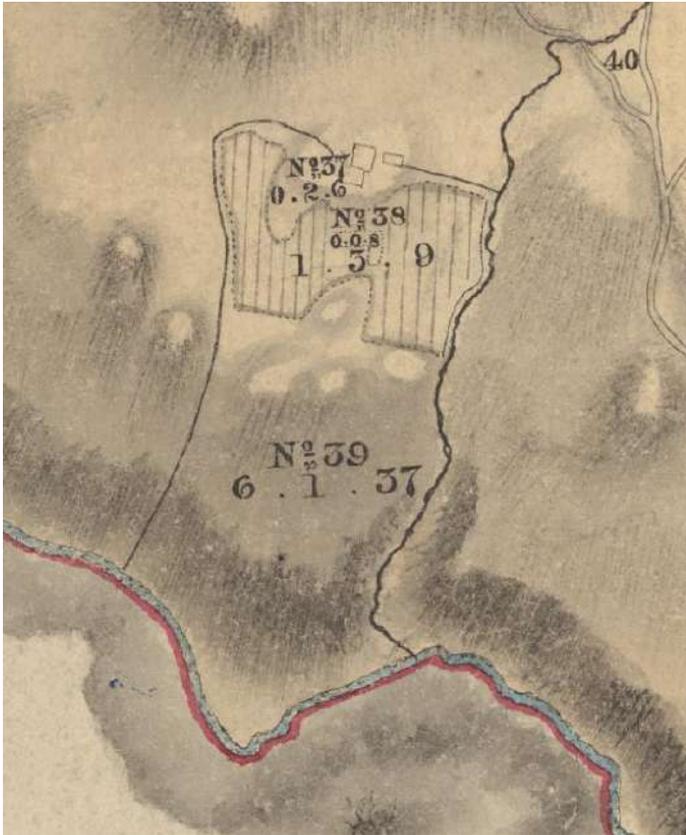
centred on NH 45644 45467

Anne MacInnes & Tim Blackie

8 April 2015 Scale: 1:200

Figure 20: The settlement of Allt na Criche





As can be seen on both the survey plan and the 1838 map to the left, the settlement of two, possibly three, buildings lies at the northern upper end of a large enclosure bordered to the west by a stone dyke, to the south by the Breakachy Burn, to the east by the Allt na Criche and to the north by a massive stone dyke. There are smaller enclosures close to the house, and definite evidence of improved grazing represented by the linear shading on the 1838 map. Although much of this is now covered by heather, components of the improved land are evident on the west bank of the Allt na Criche.

A kiln, presumably corn-drying, lies just to the south of building A, with evidence of raised ground and walls between the two, suggesting that the kiln may have been part of a barn contiguous with the other buildings.

Building A itself has an entrance in the eastern part of the structure, the remains of an internal stone division, and ditched floors suggesting that this building housed animals.

Building B is smaller, with much tumble now within its interior space.

Figure 21: The Allt na Criche settlement on an 1838 estate map



Figure 22: Allt na Criche Building A, from NE



Figure 23: The Allt na Criche Building A, from E



Figure 24: Allt na Criche Building B, from W



Figure 25: Allt na Criche Building A, detail of S



Figure 26: Allt na Criche kiln, from E



Figure 27: Allt na Criche kiln, looking from above & W



Figure 28: Allt na Criche pond from the S

Of note is that the western wall of the more southerly enclosure overlays the eastern part of a kerbed burial cairn, presumably Bronze Age.

C84 NH 45609 45464 Kerbed Burial Cairn (on the HER: <https://her.highland.gov.uk/monument/MHG2665>)

On the western edge of the Allt na Criche settlement, and partially overlain by one of its enclosure walls, is an oval bowl-shaped mound, 8m x 6m x max 1.5m high, aligned NS. On the W and SW aspects of this mound are 9 large stones acting as a kerbed revetment of the mound. At the top, just to S of mid-point, is a pit approximately 1m diameter, and approx. 0.6m deep representing an intrusive excavation at some time in the past. It is of interest that, despite the need for building stone for the adjacent buildings, the kerb stones were left untouched. This has the appearance of a kerbed burial cairn, possibly Bronze Age. It is marked as "cairn" on modern ordnance survey maps (but not identified on the 1st or 2nd edition OS maps).



Figure 29: V62 Cairn from W, showing kerb of stones



Figure 30: V62 Cairn from the S

Hut Circles

The Ordnance Survey identified ten hut circles from a survey in 1970, labelled A-K, commenting: “Centred at NH 455 455 is a settlement of ten stone-walled huts and a field system”, with that one grid reference covering all 10 features. Unfortunately, any accompanying map is not shown on both national and Highland databases, although the hut circles are shown on the current OS 1:25000 map. However, from the information provided it has been possible to reconcile the circles on the map with the letters in the report, as shown in Fig 29.

The OS Hut Circles J & K lie outwith the Green Area, in the Yellow Area, and will be dealt with later, in that part of the report. A further five hut circles were identified in the Green Area as part of this survey.

All ten hut circles identified by the OS were identified in the survey. However, hut circles J & K had the appearance of recessed platforms, and will be described later as such. An additional six hut circles were identified, making 14 hut circles (plus two platforms).

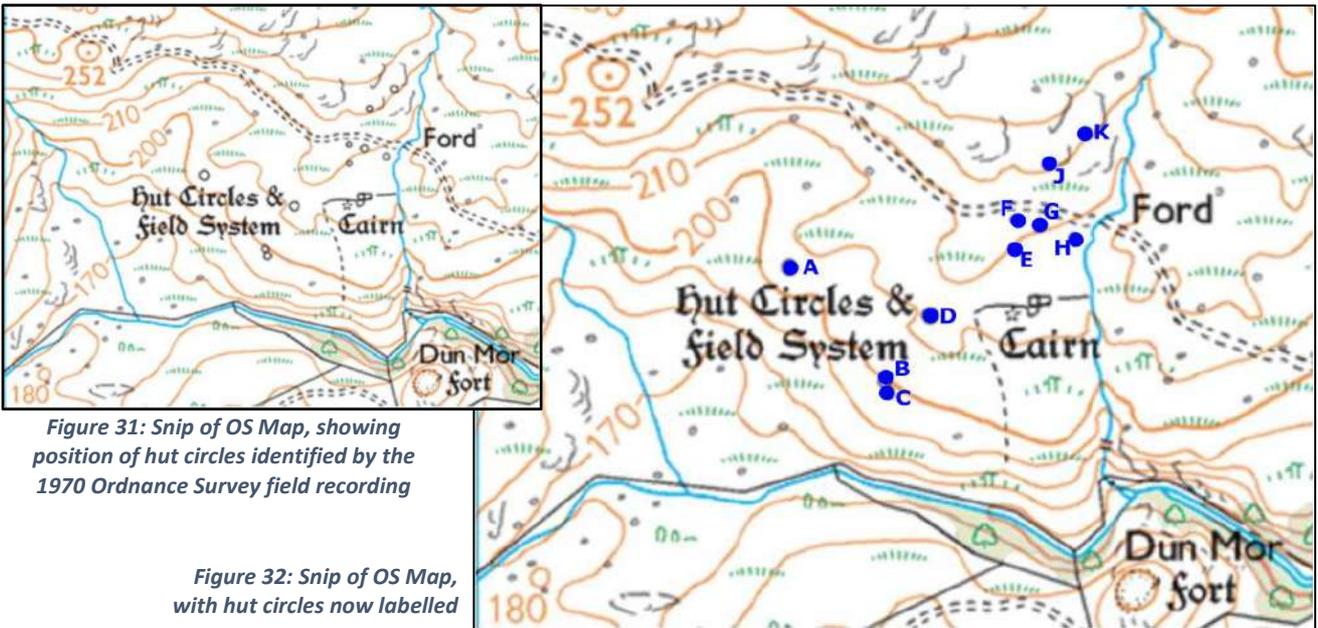


Figure 31: Snip of OS Map, showing position of hut circles identified by the 1970 Ordnance Survey field recording

Figure 32: Snip of OS Map, with hut circles now labelled

H57 NH 45374 45507 (OS Hut Circle A)

This is the most westerly of the hut circles identified by the OS in 1970. It had just had its' heather cover burnt off revealing a quite degenerate double-skinned structure comprising medium-sized stones, 10.7m diameter. This occupies a large platform, built into and out from the W-facing slope. There is no obvious entrance.



Figure 33: Hut Circle H57 from N



Figure 34: Hut Circle H57 from N, showing the line of the Breakachy Valley

H63 NH 45453 45379 (OS Hut Circle B)

This is one of a pair of hut circles on a west facing slope high above, and looking down on, the Breakachy Burn. It is in an area of deep heather recently planted with new forestry, and therefore separated from the rest of the Urchany site by a new deer fence. Because of the heather, it is difficult to see clearly.

The oval structure, aligned NNW-SSSE, 12.7m x 10.9m, consists of a raised bank of heather. The walls are now only partially identifiable, best preserved in the SW quadrant, where they are spread to 2.3m, standing 0.2 m high. There is a possible entrance in the SE quadrant. It abuts H64 on its southern edge.



Figure 35: Hut Circle H63 from E. The flags describe its circumference

H64 NH 45459 45367 (OS Hut Circle C)

This is the second of a pair of adjoining hut circles on a west facing slope high above, and looking westwards down on, the Breakachy Burn. It is in an area of deep heather recently planted with new forestry, and therefore separated from the rest of the Urchany site by a new deer fence. Because of the heather, it is difficult to see clearly.

The oval structure, aligned N-S, 14.2m x 12.5m, consists of a raised bank of heather. The walls are now only partially identifiable, best preserved in the SW quadrant, where they are spread to 2.3m, standing 0.2 m high. There is a probable entrance in the S. It abuts H63 on its northern edge.



Figure 36: Hut Circle H64 from E

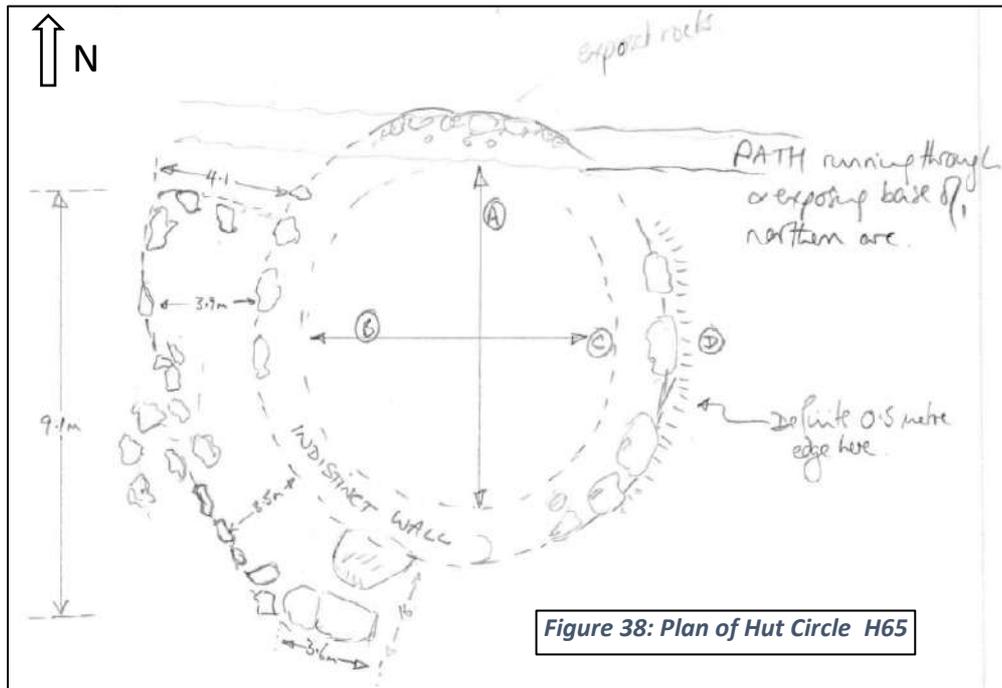
H65 NH 45494 45469 (OS Hut Circle D)

On a gentle west facing slope, at the base of a hillock to the north, lies this hut circle, with an additional stone wall to the west, ie down-slope. In the original 1970 OS survey this is described as a souterrain, confirmed by a further OS visit in 1981. What remains of this "souterrain" is an ellipse of stones, approx. 3.5-4m in length, 1m outwith the western side of the original hut circle. The southern end of this possible souterrain is represented by two large orthostats, see Fig 32. This structure doesn't now look like a souterrain, although its function is unclear.

The hut circle is circular, 10.6m x 10.2m, with walls best seen in the E, where they are 0.5m high, spread to 1.5m. There is a possible entrance in SSE. All the walls are densely covered in deep heather. There is an animal track that runs through the northern part of the circle, exposing a base of stones.



Figure 37: Hut Circle H65 from N.
Note blue flags mark external dimensions, yellow the internal.



H59 NH 45598 45527 (OS Hut Circle E)

On a gentle east facing slope, this small hut circle occupies a slight knoll, with a built extension to S. Recent heather-burning (for grouse) has exposed a degenerate circle of stones that would otherwise easily have been missed. The structure is circular, 7.5m diameter, with walls best seen to W, where they are 1.4m thick, standing up to 0.3m high. There is a possible entrance in the S.

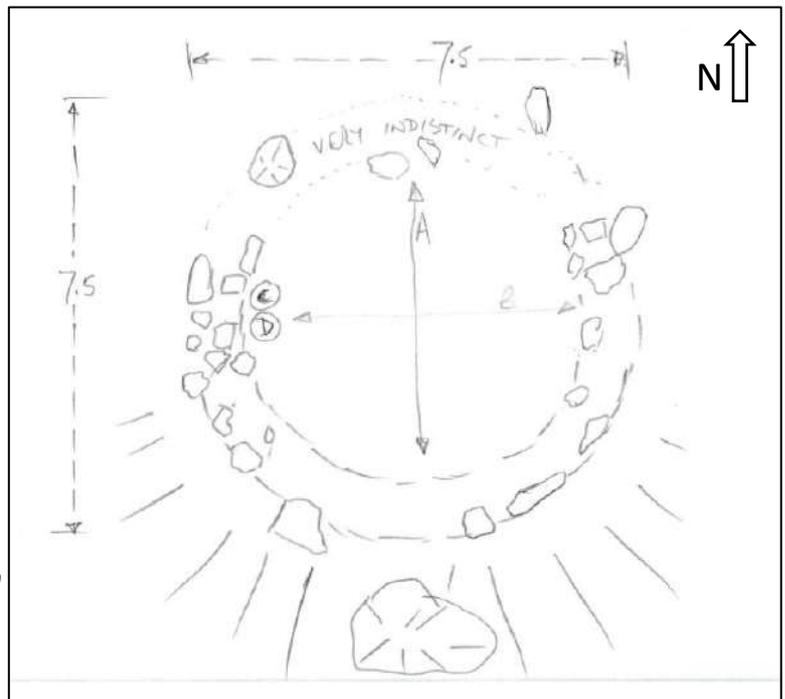


Figure 39: Plan of Hut Circle H59



Figure 40: Hut Circle H59. From W



Figure 41: Hut Circle H59, from SW

H58 NH 45596 45559 (OS Hut Circle F)

Recent heather-burning (for grouse) has exposed a degenerate circle of stones that could otherwise have been missed. On a gentle south facing slope, 5m south of the main track to Urchany, this oval hut circle has a definite entrance in the S, associated with an entrance passageway. Two lines of rough large stones define this walled entrance passage-way, 1.3m long, 1.5m wide, with stones standing to 0.8m high, as shown on Fig 42.

The hut circle is 9.98m x 11.05m with indistinct walls of stone and heather. The stones are best shown in the W and SE quadrants.

Figure 42: Plan of Hut Circle H58.

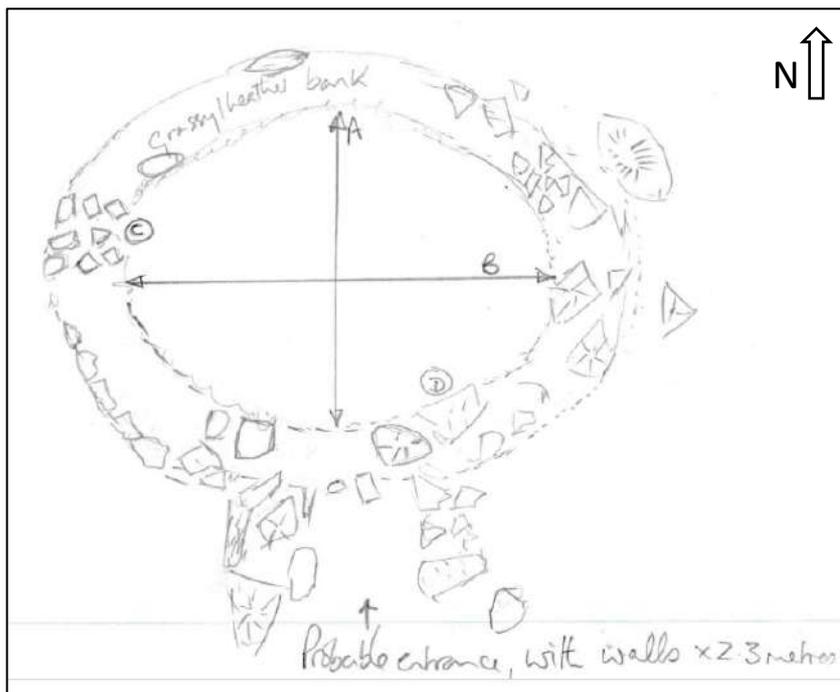


Figure 43: Hut Circle H58, from S, showing entrance



Figure 44: Hut Circle H58, above and from E



Figure 45: Hut Circle H58, showing detail of southern entrance, from SE

H60 NH 45626 45554 (OS Hut Circle G)

On a gentle south facing slope, 30m to the E of H58, with the stones of its northern edge abutting the main Urchany track, this circular hut circle, 13.2m x 12.8m, stands on a slight platform built out from the slope to the S.

There is an elliptical extension, or "annexe", on the NW arc. Recent heather-burning (for grouse) has exposed a degenerate circle of stones that would otherwise have been missed.

The hut circle walls are delineated by periodic large stones, with indistinct raised turf and stone walls in between, best seen in W, spread 1.8m, up to 0.5m high. There is a possible entrance in SSE.



Figure 46: Hut Circle H60, above and from N

H61 NH 45663 45542 (OS Hut Circle H)

30m to the E of H60 are the indistinct walls of this hut circle, that could easily have been missed in the heather prior to the recent muir burn. There are few stones left, apart from one large boulder in SSW, with an indeterminate wall spread up to 2m thickness. The circular structure 9m external diameter, with a possible entrance in the S.



Figure 48: H61, View from S, above

Figure 47: Plan of Hut Circle H61.

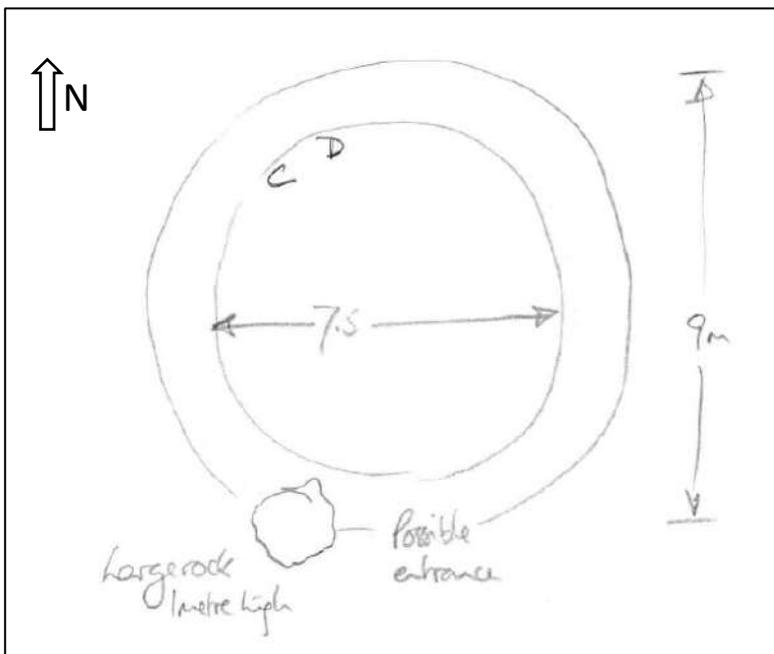


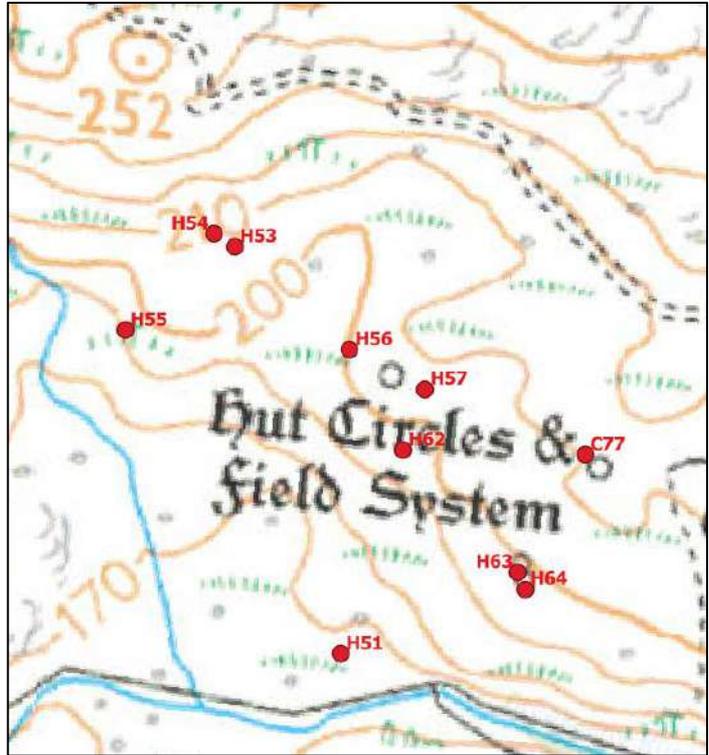
Figure 49: Prominent large rock at SSE aspect, from NE, below



Other Hut Circles

The survey conducted by the Ordnance Survey in 1970 identified 10 hut circles. An additional six hut circles were identified in the NOSAS survey. These are described below and shown in the Figure 44.

Figure 50: Snip from 1:25000 OS map overlaid by the western group of hut circles.



H51 Hut Circle NH 45330 45308

45m to the N of the Breakachy Burn, and at the SW aspect of the Green Area, lies a 6m diameter circular structure consisting of earth walls covered in heather. These contain at its centre a stone-lined pit whose function is uncertain. It is likely to be for storage, although not large enough to be called a souterrain.



Figure 51: Hut Circle H51. Yellow flags delimit the heather topped turf walls



Figure 52: Hut Circle H51. Interior of stone-lined central pit, with pole

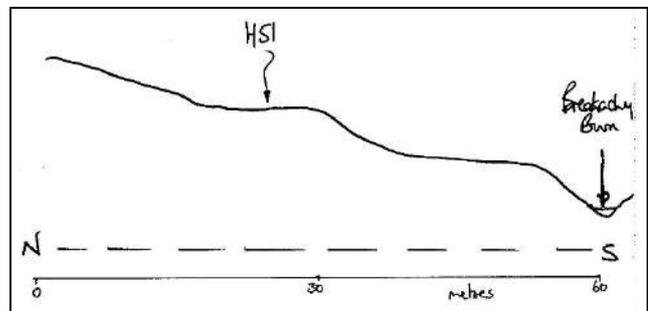
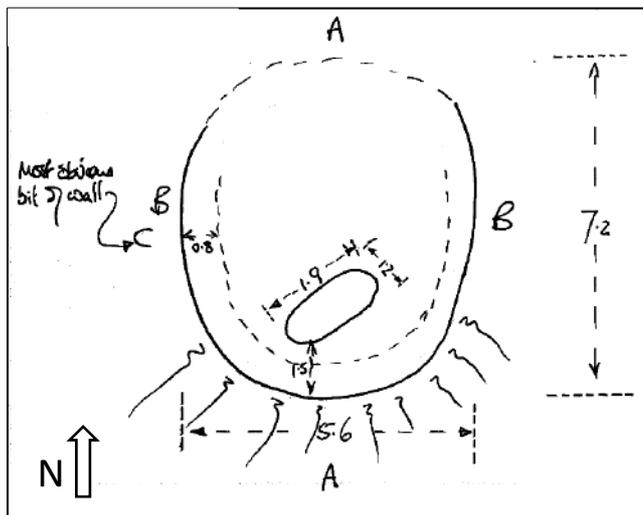


Figure 53: Showing position of H51 on approximated section of slope

Figure 54: Hut Circle H51. Plan of structure showing possible souterrain.

H53 Hut Circle NH 45227 45599

Towards the western end of the Green Area, there are two hut circles at the northern end of a south-facing platform, close to a steep cliff to their north. The Breakachy Burn is 300m to the S, and 40m altitude, below. The immediate area shows evidence of field boundaries and clearance cairns.

H53 is the more easterly of the two circles, 3m to the E of H54. It consists of a partial wall, 9.5m diameter with rubble spread to 1.5m wide and up to 0.5m high. There is a small circular depression on the southern edge with diameter of 1.5m.

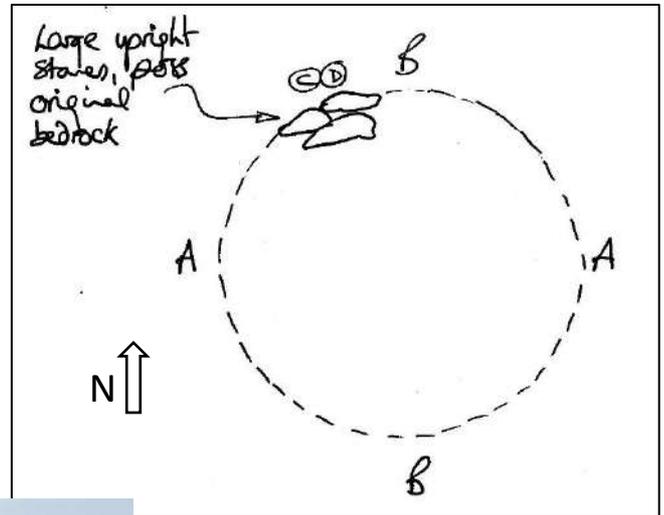


Figure 55: Hut Circle H53 Sketch plan.



Figure 56: Hut Circle H53. Looking down from the NE



Figure 57: Hut Circle H53 from the W

Figure 58: Hut Circle H53 with yellow flags delimiting the depression in the southern part.



H54 Hut Circle NH 45211 45607

This is the western of the two hut circles in this location lying on a platform south of a cliff wall, prominent above the Breakachy valley to the S. A circular structure, 9.7m external diameter, it contains some massive stones, particularly in the SW aspect, where they stand up to 0.8m high. The walls are about 1.5m wide, clearly seen in all parts of the circle. There is a definite 1.8m wide entrance in the SE.

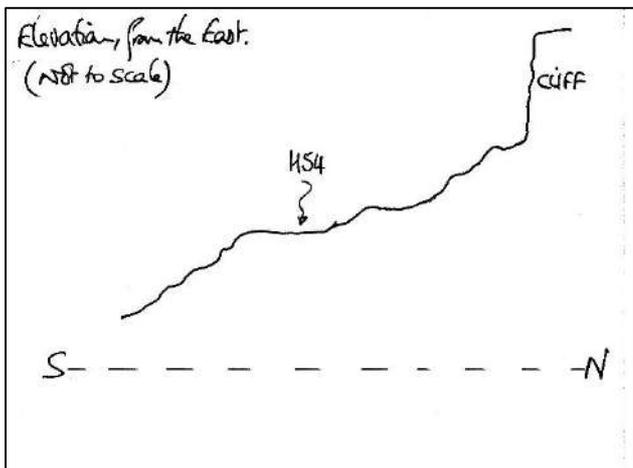


Figure 59: Diagram of position of H54 on a platform below the cliff face to the N, as seen from the E.

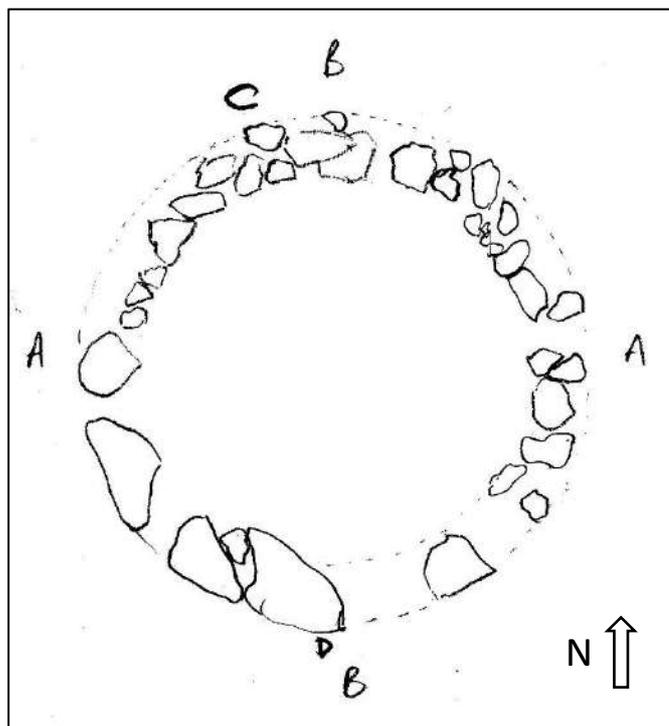


Figure 60: Hut Circle H54 Sketch plan.



Figure 61: Hut Circle H54, from N



Figure 63: Hut Circle H54, Looking NW through the SE entrance



Figure 62: Hut Circle H54, from NW

H55 Hut Circle NH 45153 45531

On a SW facing slope this 7.5m diameter hut circle has poor definition of walls, which are spread to up to 0.9m, with a maximum height of 0.2m. In the NW corner the walls are completely deficient.

Without the recent burning of the heather, this ephemeral hut circle would not have been identified.

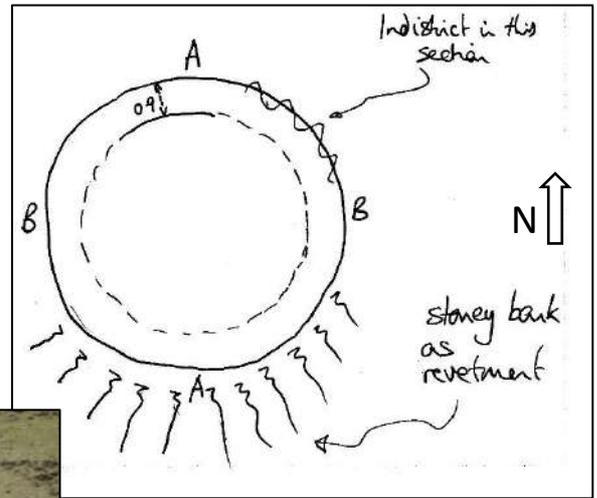


Figure 64: Hut Circle H55 from E



Figure 65: Hut Circle H55 Sketch plan.



Figure 66: Hut Circle H55 from NE

H56 Hut Circle NH 45317 45531

On a west-facing slope is another ephemeral hut circle, built into the slope, that again would not have been visible but for the recent muir burn. The 8m diameter structure has walls constructed with large boulders and appears single-skinned.



Figure 67: Hut Circle H56 from S
Note the yellow flags describe the walls



Figure 68: Hut Circle H55 from NE
Note the yellow flags describe the walls

H62 Hut Circle NH 45362 45461

This 7m diameter circular structure lies on a flat platform above the W facing slope of the Breakachy Burn. It is built into that slope on its N side.

The constituent stones of the low walls are generally ephemeral and are missing on the W aspect. A 1.5m entrance is apparent in the E, adjacent to burial cairn C64.

*Figure 69: Hut Circle 62 from W
Note the yellow flags describe the walls*



Cairns

In the “Green” and “Yellow” areas particularly, there are numerous cairns scattered across the ground. These were allocated to one of four approximate groups:

- **Probable Clearance Cairns**
Many of these are amorphous unstructured mounds of stones on the edge of what was previously ploughed south-facing land. These were classified as clearance cairns. We counted 44 of these in the two areas.

- **Probable Burial Cairns**
Three of the larger ones (C10, C15 and C84) had more structure, with ordered or graded stones, with central robbed-out cavities, and with a distinct “kerb” of stones at the periphery. They were usually oval structures, varying in size from 4m x 2 m to 8m x 6m, aligned NS. These were classified as “kerbed” burial cairns.

- **Possible Burial Cairns**
Some of these were amorphous mounds of stones but in an oval or elliptical form and usually orientated NS. They varied in size from 3m x 2m to 10m x 4m. These were classified as possible burial cairns, with the recognition that without excavation it is difficult to classify these clearly as distinct from clearance cairns. There were 14 of these.
- **Cist Burial:** Lastly, in an area of numerous “possible” burial cairns were the robbed out remains of a cist burial, V64.



Figure 70: Typical clearance cairn as seen at Urchany

All the “Green Area” and some of the “Yellow Area” cairns are described below, as they form a continuum across the landscape. A few of the Yellow Area cairns (C22-25) were further north, above the settlements of Urchany, away from the main concentration of cairns, and will be dealt with in the Yellow Area section of this report.

The images on this page are a random sample from the 44 clearance cairns identified at Urchany



Figure 73: C51



Figure 74: C52



Figure 75: C54



Figure 76: C58



Figure 77: C29



Figure 78: C27



Figure 79: C60



Figure 80: C70

A list of the Clearance Cairns in the Green & Yellow Areas		
Survey No.	BNG	Notes
C02	NH 45669 45661	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c 3.5m x 2.5m Ext, <0.5m high
C03	NH 45663 45669	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c3.0m x 2.5m Ext, <0.5m high
C04	NH 45670 45670	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c4m x 3m Ext, <0.5m high
C05	NH 45646 45667	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c3m x 2m Ext, <0.5m high
C06	NH 45658 45659	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Circular c4m external diameter
C08	NH 45674 45633	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c8m x 6m external diameter, <0.5m high
C09	NH 45655 45613	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c 6m x 4m external diameter, <0.5m high
C11	NH 45675 45570	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Circular c3.5m external diameter, <0.5m high
C12	NH 45636 45676	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c 4m x 2m external diameter, >0.5m high
C13	NH 45616 45687	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c4m x 3m external diameter, <0.5m high
C14	NH 45235 45852	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Circular c4m external diameter 0.6m high
C16	NH 45232 45806	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c3m x 2.5m diameter, <0.5m high. Heavily vegetated
C17	NH 45248 45806	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c3.5m x 3m diameter, <0.5m high
C18	NH 45215 45807	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c8m x 4m diameter, <0.5m high
C19	NH 45215 45812	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Oval c5m x 3m diameter, <0.5m high
C20	NH 45159 45839	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Circular c4m diameter, 0.5m high
C21	NH 45143 45840	Pile of stones. Clearance cairn. Circular c3m external <0.5m high
C27	NH 45667 45604	An amorphous mound of stones, possibly a PH clearance cairn later interfered with by treasure hunters. Circular c 2.5m diameter
C29	NH 45679 45727	In rank heather a circle of stones with sunken centre. Robbed PH clearance cairn or shieling hut with later dumping of stone within. Circular c1.75 m diameter, internal <0.5m high
C30	NH 45680 45718	In rank heather a circle of stones with sunken centre. Robbed PH clearance cairn or shieling hut with later dumping of stone within. Oval, c2.75m E-W x 1.25m internal, <0.5m high
C31	NH 45690 45720	In rank heather an oval of stones with 2 sunken centres. Robbed out PH clearance cairn or two compartment shieling hut. Oval c3.5m N-S x 1.75m internal, <0.5m high
C52	NH 45404 45359	Stones in a pile! Circular. In association with C51 and D52. 3x3 m
C53	NH 45392 45358	Stones in a pile! 3x2 m. Very overgrown.
C54	NH 45439 45367	Stones in a pile! 3x2 m. In association with C53
C56	NH 45492 45383	Very overgrown possible cairn. In area of other cairns. In area of other cairns. 4x3 m.
C57	NH 45515 45393	Very overgrown possible cairn 5x3 m
C58	NH 45649 45418	Very overgrown possible cairn. 3x2 m
C59	NH 45509 45414	Very overgrown possible cairn. 3x2 m
C60	NH 45448 45435	Very overgrown possible cairn. Adjacent wall. 3x2 m
C61	NH 45439 45448	Very overgrown possible cairn, 3x2m
C62	NH 45381 45403	Very overgrown possible cairn. 2x2m
C63	NH 45391 45418	Possible cairn built into hillside. In association with the other cairns in are. 4x5m
C65	NH 45006 45767	Pile of stones next to cleared area. 2 piles. 3x2m
C66	NH 45017 45766	Pile of stones next to cleared area. 2x2m
C67	NH 45256 45576	Clearance cairn, 5x5m
C68	NH 45280 45567	Clearance cairn. 3x2m
C69	NH 45221 45579	Clearance cairn. 6x3m
C70	NH 45171 45511	Pile of stones. Small cairn down slope, 10x5m
C71	NH 45213 45504	Pile of stones thrown downslope. Several in area. 10x6m
C72	NH 45241 45528	Pile of stones thrown downslope. Several in area
C76	NH 45468 45483	Cairn of stones with kerb. There are cairns everywhere in this area at least 5 more. 3x2m
C80	NH 45494 45561	Cairn of stones. 2.5m diameter
C82	NH 45606 45531	Cairn of stones built into bank. 7x4m
C83	NH 45578 45515	3 clearance cairns by H59

The Definite and Possible Burial Cairns of Urchany



Figure 81: The probable burial cairns in the Green & Yellow Areas. Base map is Bing aerial photo

There has been reference above, on page 30 of the difficulties of identifying cairns as *burial* cairns in the absence of human remains, which would require excavation. However, considering the probable burial cairns in this area, three show definite evidence of a setting of stones around the base of the mound (C84) or pile of stones (C10, C15). Another cairn (C64) is an extensive spread of stones with two contiguous pits in the centre, representing a probable robbed burial cairn. Another “cairn” (V64) is a cist burial, with the capstone evident to one side. Two “cairns” (C85, C86) are smaller and consist of a ring of stones, with the interior possibly robbed out.

The remaining 11 cairns in the “possible” cairn category are included here because:

- they appear to have shape, often an ellipse or oval
- have an appearance of stones around their base, at least in part
- are found away from obvious cultivation
- are aligned with other similar burial cairns
- However, there can be no certainty about this classification!

V64 NH 45516 45539 Cist Burial

On a gentle south-sloping area, about 40m SW of a bend in the Urchany track, are the remains of a cist burial mounted on a raised platform. Recent muir burning has allowed the constituent stones to be seen easily.

The steep sided cavity of the cist is 4m EW by 3m NS, with settings of small slab stones lining the side still remaining on the E side.

The cist was empty, the base filled with accretions which were carefully cleaned out. Fig. 80 shows the base of the cist after cleaning.



Figure 82: V64 Cist Burial, from W

A large flat stone, 1.5m x 1.0m, lies on the NW edge of the cist cavity. It is irregular in shape and is presumably the capstone which has been moved aside to allow robbing of the cist.

There is a raised platform, 12m EW x 10m NS, as shown in Fig. 77, 2-4m outside the cist cavity, which may represent the margins of a cairn erected over the cist. This platform edge still has a ring of stones describing its limits, this margin or kerb best seen in the south, and in Fig. 78.

One can only speculate as to how many of the other cairns identified here as "burial cairns" have similar cists un-discovered at the base of them!

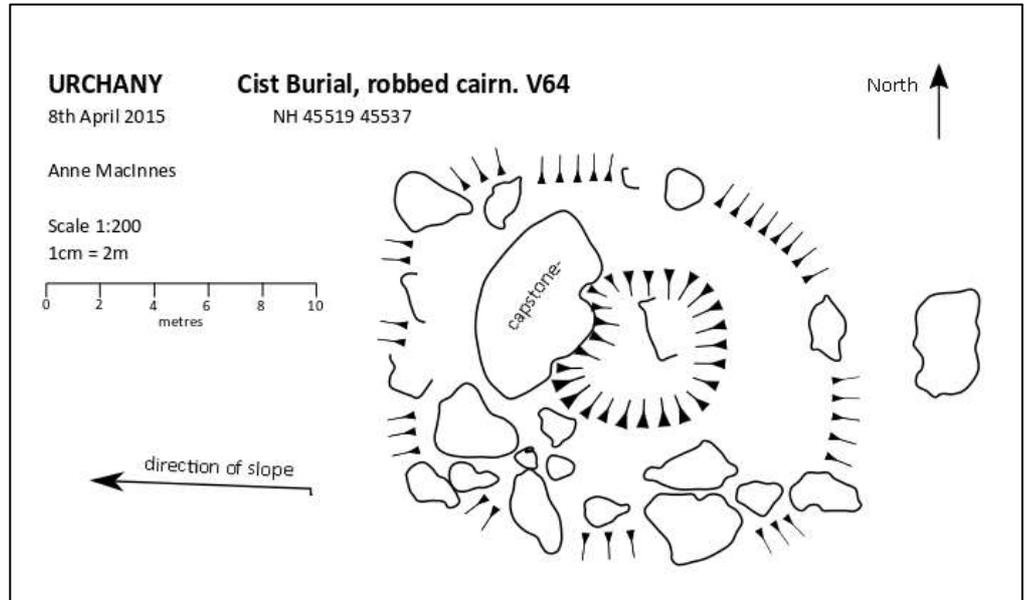


Figure 83: Plan of V64 Cist Burial

Figure 84: V64 Cist Burial from ESE, showing kerb on southern margin



Figure 85: V64 Cist Burial from SE, showing the cist, its capstone, and the platform.



Figure 86: V64 Cist Burial from N, showing the cleaned base of the cist



C84 NH 45609 45464
Kerbed Burial Cairn

This has been described earlier as part of the settlement of Allt na Criche on page 20.

*Figure 87: C84 Kerbed Burial Cairn
from W*



C10 NH 45675 45570
Kerbed Burial Cairn

On a flat area of ground 30m west of the Allt na Criche, and 3m north of the track to Urchany, a domed heathery mound of stones was identified in the April 2015 survey as a clearance cairn.

However, a subsequent muir burn revealed at the base of this mound a set of large stones forming a kerb, with other stones set in the sides. The inference is that it is a kerbed burial cairn. It is oval in form, 6m NS x 4.5m EW, and approx. 0.5m high.

Figure 88: C10 Kerbed Burial Cairn



C73 NH 45421 45525
Kerbed Burial Cairn

On a level fold in the ground between steeper ground to E & W, lies a series of elliptical cairns. C73 is one of these.

It consists of a pile of stones up to 0.6m high, 3m NS x 2m EW, the stones being rich in mica and feldspar. The central area is concave, suggesting an episode of previous robbing.

Around the base is a setting of stones forming the kerb.

Figure 89: C73 Kerbed Burial Cairn, from SW



C74 NH 45432 45532 Kerbed Burial Cairn

10m NE of C73 is this round cairn, 7m x 7m, consisting of an amorphous mass of stones but with a definite kerbed edge, best seen on the upper N edge.



Figure 90: C74 Kerbed Burial Cairn, from NW



Figure 91: C74 Kerbed Burial Cairn, from E

C75 NH 45434 45506 Kerbed Burial Cairn

This stone mound, covered with heather, is close to C73 & 30m due S of C74. It is elliptical, 10m NS x 5m EW, standing up to 2m high. There are no other distinguishing features. It has not been robbed.

Figure 92: C75 Kerbed Burial Cairn, from N



C15 NH 45234 45808 Possible Burial Cairn

Leading NE from the main Urchany track, just before it bends tightly to ascend to Coul nabottach, is a shallow valley leading between hilly bluffs to the high peaty plateau above Urchany. There are a number of cairns grouped together as the valley levels off. Some of these look like clearance cairns, some are more shaped and aligned and could be burial cairns. This is one of the latter.

This circular cairn stands <0.5m high, with c3m external diameter. There is a setting of stones around the periphery, and a central depression, probably representing robbing.

C26 NH 45238 45829 Possible Burial Cairn

This cairn is 20m N of presumed burial cairn, C15. It consists of an overgrown mound of stones, with surrounding kerb. It is 4m NS x 3m EW, standing up to 0.6m high.

C81 NH 45506 45531 Probable Burial Cairn

This cairn consists of a pile of stones with set stones on the NW aspect probably representing the remains of a kerb.

To the W is a small constructed well, now fringed with heather, described further as V58, page 43. The proximity of the adjacent well might be important in the placing of this cairn.

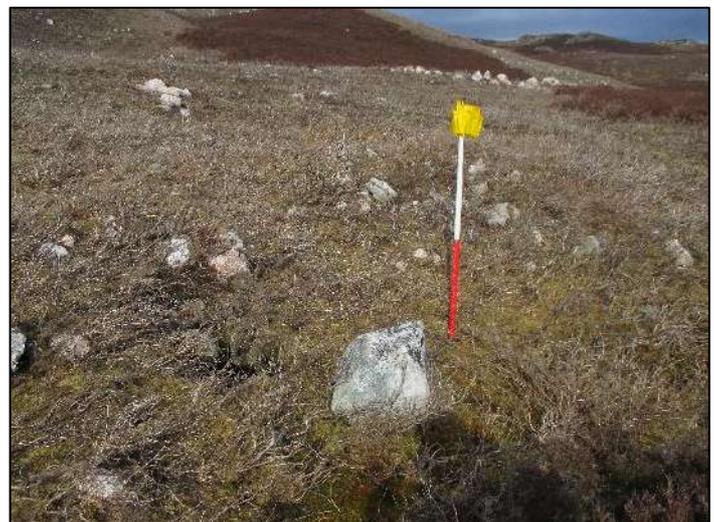


Figure 93: C81 Possible Burial Cairn, from SE

C28 NH 45549 45578 Possible Burial Cairn

Revealed by a further muir burning, subsequent to the 2015 survey, this mound of stones, 4m NS x 2m EW, became more prominent, just N of the main Urchany track. There is a rough, stony, 0.3m deep depression in the centre. This probably represents removal of stones, ie robbing, at some stage in the past, suggesting this is a robbed burial cairn.

Figure 94: C28 Possible Burial Cairn, from N



C32 NH 45818 45628 Probable Burial Cairn

To date, this is the only known archaeology near the main Allt na Criche collection of hut circles, cairns and burial mounds.

On a south-facing slope is an amorphous mound of stones up to 0.4m high scattered over a 3m diameter area. In the W there is a perception of laid stones forming a kerb. This, together with the absence of cultivation evidence in the area, suggests that this may be a burial cairn.

Figure 95: C32 Possible Burial Cairn, from E



C51 NH 45492 45313 Probable Burial Cairn

This mound of placed stones is sited on a steep south-facing slope, 200m SW of the Allt na Criche settlement and 40m north of the Breakachy Burn, just before it enters a small gorge. As such it is some distance from the next nearest cairn. It is oval in shape, 7m SW/NE x 3m NW/SE.



Figure 96: C51 Probable Burial Cairn, looking up the downslope, from S

Figure 97: C51 Probable Burial Cairn, from S, showing details of the kerb at the E edge

C64 NH 45379 45465 Probable Burial Cairn

On a gentle west-facing slope, on the eastern side of a broad shallow valley leading down to the Breakachy Burn, is a large scattered area of bleached and lichenified stones, that is clearly visible when viewed from afar or on aerial photographs.

On closer inspection, the scattered and moss-covered tumble of stones, roughly 9m in diameter, has at its centre a circular depression or chamber, 2m diameter, up to 1m deep. The steep sides of the chamber are lined with rough boulders, the bottom is stony, there are no set stones or orthostats. The scattered stones around this chamber are raised in a slight bank, best seen on the S & E. On the E edge of the cairn the stones form a 6m circumferential ridge, up to 0.3m high. There are two smaller peripheral holes – one to the NE of centre is steeply sided, 0.5m EW x 0.7m NS, and 0.6m deep. The other to the SW is shallower.

This structure appears to be a robbed-out burial cairn. From the spread of stones, it would appear to have stood quite prominently in the landscape.

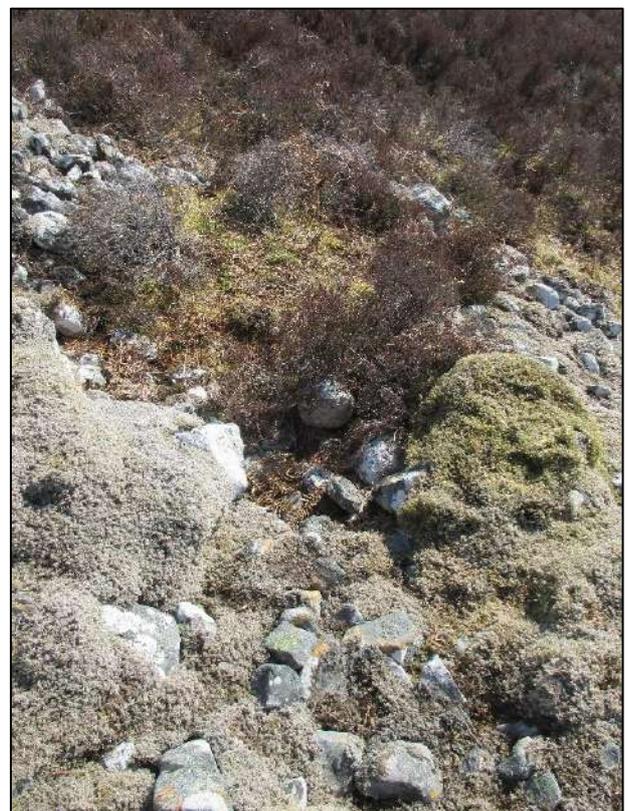
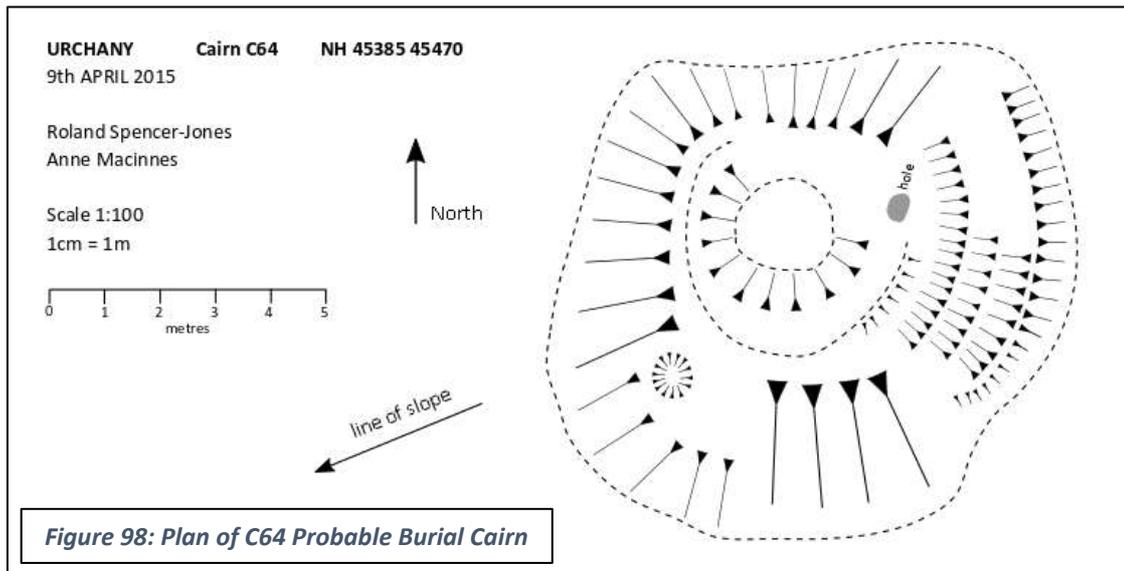




Figure 101: C64 Burial Cairn, from ES, photo taken from adjacent hillside



Figure 102: C64 Burial Cairn, from SW, looking uphill



Figure 103: C64, from W, looking into central chamber



Figure 104: C64, from W, looking up at cairn

C79 NH 45479 45536 Possible Burial Cairn

Robbed out cairn. In line with C75. 10m diameter



Figure 106: C79, from E, detail of central "robbed out" section



Figure 105: C79, from SW

C85 NH 45464 45559 Possible Burial Cairn

On relatively level ground, before a broad valley leads southwards to the Breakachy Burn, lie two similar structures, C85 & C86, four metres apart.

C85 is a circle of laid stones, 2m diameter, 0.2m high. The centre of the circle is flat, heather-covered ground. It is unclear what this structure represents, although a robbed burial cairn is the most likely explanation.



Figure 107: C85, from W

C86 NH 45468 45559 Possible Burial Cairn

On relatively level ground, before a broad valley leads southwards to the Breakachy Burn, lie two similar structures, C85 & C86, four metres apart.

C86 is an oval structure of laid stones, 2m diameter, 0.2m high. In the centre is flat, heather-covered ground. It is unclear what this structure represents, although a robbed burial cairn is the most likely explanation.



Figure 108: C86, from S

Other Green Area Structures

V52 NH 45143 45704 A Pit

Towards the higher part of the "Green Area", on a gentle S-facing slope, is a circular pit, 6m diameter. There is a definite "lip" on the downward side. Several scattered rocks lie just below this lip down the slope. This could be a quarry or borrow-pit.



Figure 109: V52, looking down into pit from SW



Figure 110: V52, looking W across the "lip" of the pit

NH 45346 45505 Recessed Platform

On the gentle SW slope of a small hillock, a recessed platform has been created into the slope. The lower SW edge of this 15m diameter platform is retained by a massive revetment wall, 1.5m high, and 1.5m thick.

There is an entrance in the SE, although no other obvious distinguishing features within the platform area.

The function of this platform is uncertain. It could have been an enclosure or, as there are many other hut circles nearby, it could have supported a now vanished hut circle.



Figure 111: V54, recessed platform delineated by yellow flags, from NE



Figure 112: V54, looking up at the SW revetment, from SW



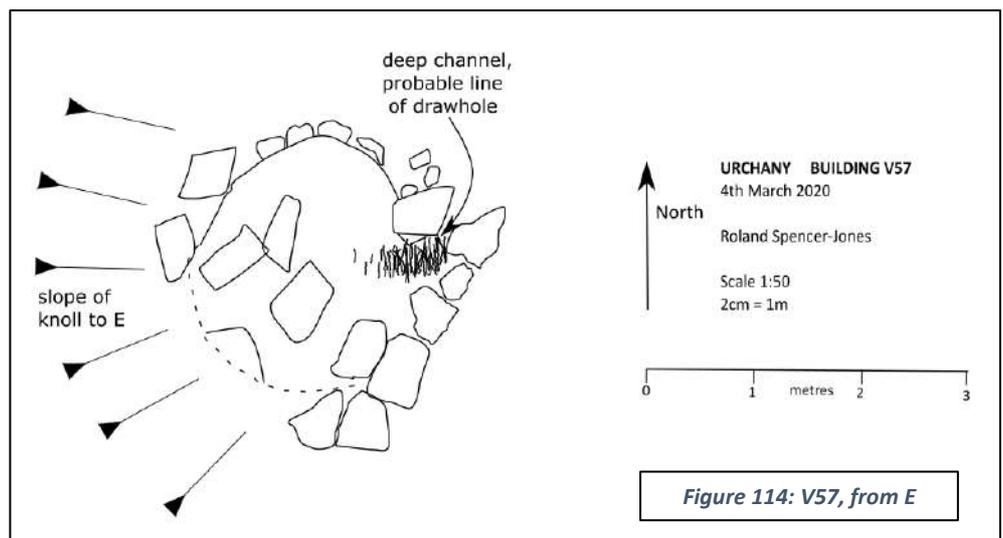
Figure 113: V54, looking up at the NW revetment, from W

V59 NH 45590 45507 Recessed Platform This 7m x 3m recessed platform is adjacent to hut circle H59.

**V57 NH 45554 45543
Kiln, probable lime kiln**

On the east side of a prominent knoll or cnoc, 35m south of the main Urchany track, is a tumble of stones inside a prominent dark hole. The structure seems to be a kiln, with infilled tumble of large angular stones. With some heather clearing, the sides of the kiln bowl become apparent, particularly on the N.

The bowl's dimensions are N-S: external 3.1m, internal 2.6m and E-W: external 2.5m, internal 2.0m. The bowl appears slightly oval. It's depth cannot be ascertained because of the tumble. At the front of the bowl, and 0.5m external, ie E, to it is a line of laid stones forming the base of the front of the kiln. At the eastern part of the bowl is a deeper gully that might represent the line of the original draw hole.



In view of it's position on the side of a knoll this is likely to be a lime kiln.



Figure 115: V57, from E



Figure 116: V57, showing the prominent kerb of laid stones in front, ie to the E, of the structure. From E



Figure 117: looking down into V57, looking E



Figure 118: V57, details of inner N part of bowl, looking NW

V58 NH 45591 45544 A Well

In an area of many hut circles and burial cairns is a hole in the ground, a well, now partially hidden by heather: 0.5m E-W, 0.4m N-S and 0.18m deep. It drains clear water to the S. The walls of the well are constructed of medium-sized stones, up to 0.35m high. The well is immediately adjacent to a mound of stones (C81 page 37) with a probable kerb on the NW part, which could represent a robbed burial cairn.



Figure 119: V58, looking down into well, looking NW



Figure 120: V58, detail of stones in N wall of well, looking W

V63 NH 45472 45389 Limekiln

A deer fence runs from E to W, south of the V60 Allt na Criche settlement, before it turns S to meet the Breakachy Burn. New trees have been planted within this fenced area.

5m south of the fence-line, at the crest of a slope to the SW, is a large pit in the ground. The outline is sub-rectangular, 3.5m NW-SE x 2.5m NE-SW. The near-vertical pit is lined with stones, some of which, particularly on the NW side, are up to 0.3m in diameter. However, much of the walls is covered in deep heather, and in the E aspect the wall is tumbled.

The base of the pit is relatively flat, 0.7–1.0m deep, and covered in accretions and vegetation. With careful clearing of the heather, detail of culverts emerged in the base of the structure at the SW and E aspects.

This structure has all the appearances of a limekiln. It is built on the side of a slope of the hills, thus ensuring access from the NE for carts to fill it. There is at least one opening from the base to allow emptying.



Figure 121: V63, showing the deep pit in the ground, from NE



Figure 122: V63, looking into the pit, from S



Figure 123: V63, looking into the pit, from NW



Figure 124: V63, detail of the stonework in W wall, from E



Figure 125: V63, internal opening of culvert in S wall, from NW

URCHANY YELLOW AREA

The “Yellow Area” is bounded in the W by a small burn (to the east of the Coul na Bottach settelement), in the S by the main track to Urchany, in the E by the Allt na Criche in the south, and then a natural gully that continues due north, and to the N by the increasing slope of the hill as it rises to high ground. This high ground flattens off to become a soggy peat moor, containing the peat workings that must have supplied the communities of “The Lands of Urchany”.

This area contains a number of features as can be seen from the two maps below. The SE corner, to the W of the Allt na Criche, contains a variety of “Bronze Age” structures – burial cairns, hut circles, recessed platforms – that are seen just to the south of the track. There is a separate group of these structures further west, in a natural declivity in the high ground north of the track. Two recognised burial cairns and some shelters are seen further north, above the curve of the Allt na Criche. Finally, that burn hosts four illicit still bothies dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

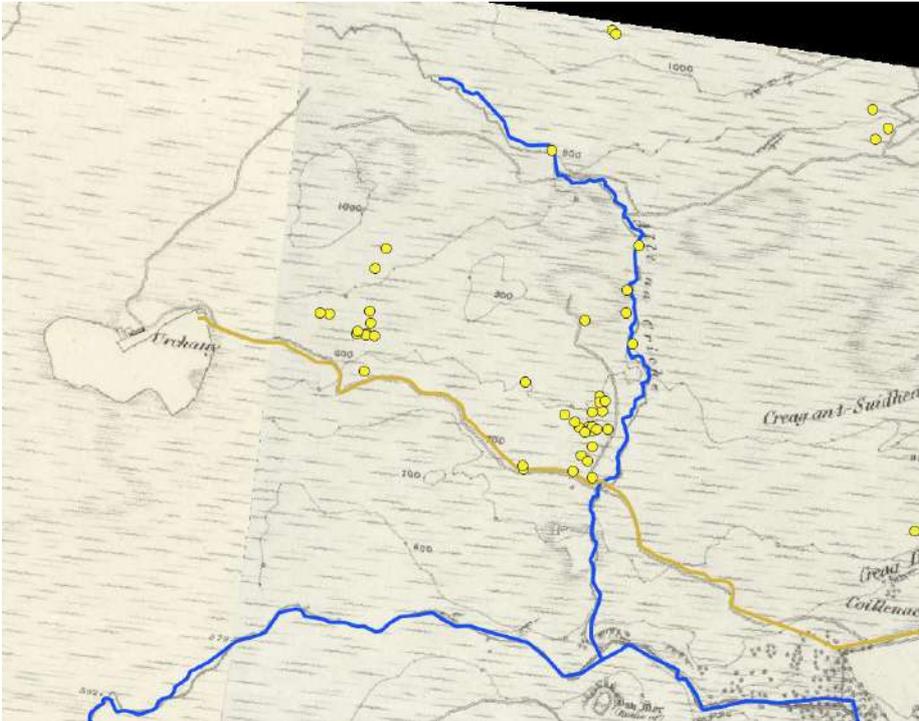
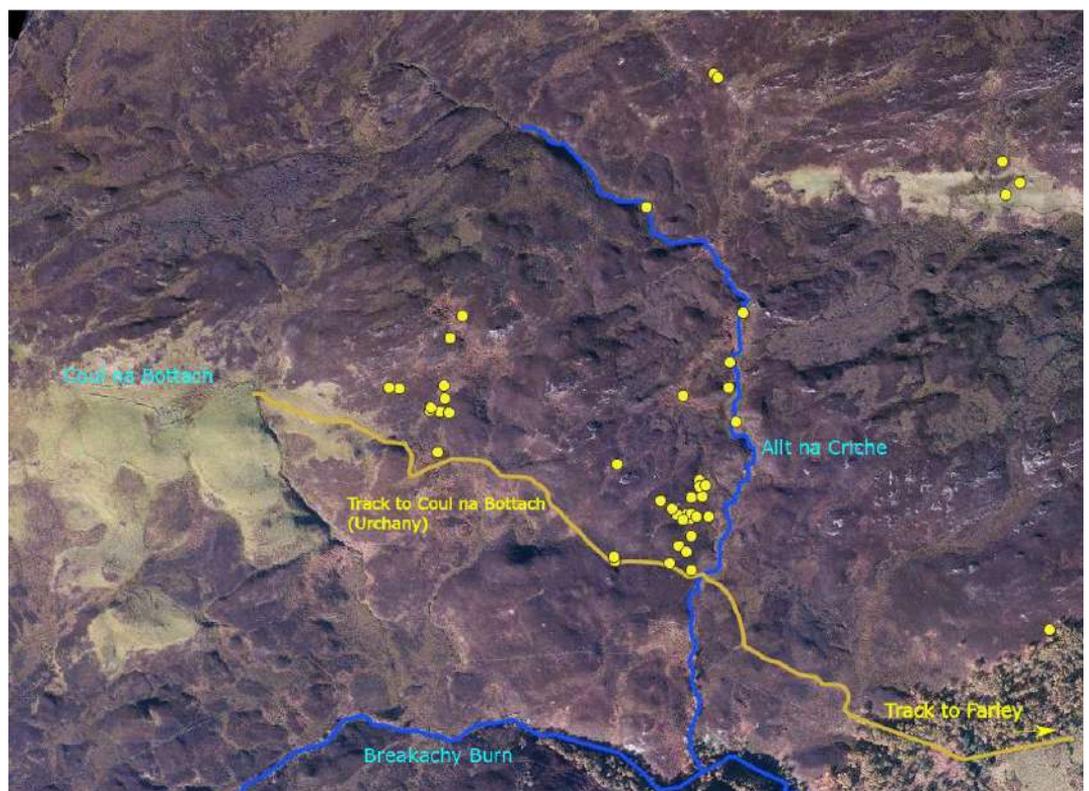


Figure 126: 1st Edition OS map, showing the archaeological features identified in the “Yellow Area”.

Figure 127: Aerial photo showing the archaeological features identified in the “Yellow Area”



Structures on the High Ground, north of the Allt na Criche

Ascending the Allt na Criche steeply north from the main Urchany track, the ground levels out to a large flat moor, approx 1km EW by 300m NS, high above the Urchany settlements. To the west this becomes wet and is worked for peat. To the east this becomes improved pasture, shown as a green strip at top R on Fig 118. Associated with this platform are at least four cairns, a circle of stones and a small but definite area of rig. The cairns are probably clearance cairns although it's possible they may be burial cairns. The circle of stones is probably an animal enclosure or a temporary human shelter.

Cairns

The field surveyors identified four cairns in this higher ground. They suggested they might all be prehistoric burial cairns, due to their position above the improved grazing ground. However, this can only be conjectural. The improved pasture may well have been ploughed at some stage, producing clearance cairns not burial cairns

C22 NH 45643 46421

This oval pile of large stones and boulders, 4m x 3m, stands up to 0.5m high.

C23 NH 45650 46414

This oval pile of large stones and boulders, 6m x 2m, stands up to 0.5m high.

C24 NH 46152 46257

This circular pile of large stones and boulders, 4m diameter, stands up to 0.5m high.

C25 NH 46175 46280

This oval pile of large stones and boulders, 8m x 3.5m, stands up to 1.0m high.



Figure 128: Cairn, possible burial cairn, looking S

B08 NH 46142 46314 An Enclosure or simple Shelter

The tumbled remains of an approximately square building are set at the foot of a steep slope with cliffs immediately above, to the N. Below and to the S is a strip of south-facing improved grazing. The walls are roughly built with large stones & boulders, remaining to 1m high. A large boulder at NE forms part of the structure. The 1m wide entrance is in the S. The stones of the walls are covered with moss whereas the sunken interior is covered with fine grass and bracken. This could be an animal enclosure, or a simple shelter.

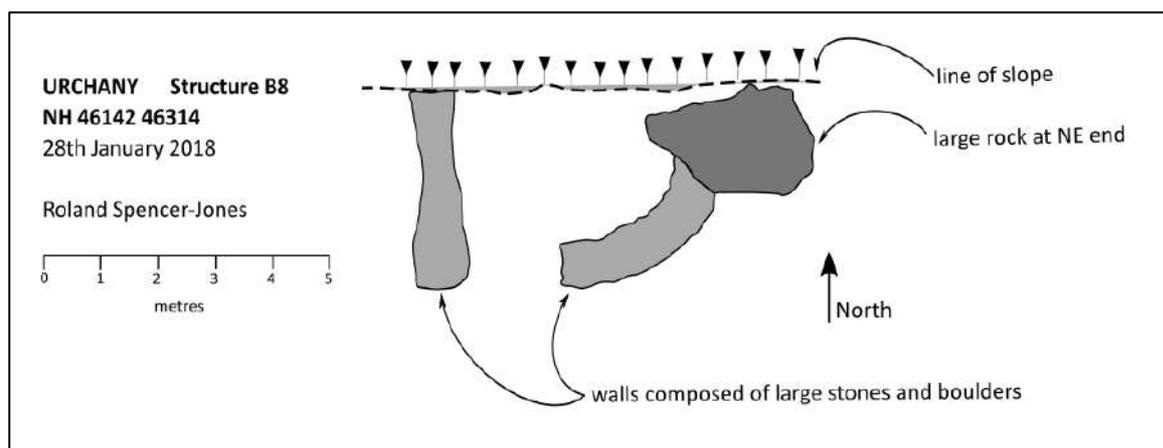


Figure 129: Sketch Plan of Structure B08



Figure 130: The interior of structure B08, looking NW



Figure 131: Looking SW through the entrance of structure B08

THE SE PART OF THE "YELLOW AREA": CAIRNS, BURIAL MOUNDS, HUT CIRCLES & RECESSED PLATFORMS

The angle between the Allt na Criche and the main track to Urchany has many features suggesting settlement, houses, agriculture, and respect for the dead. The contiguous "Green" area just south of the track contains exactly the same sort of structures. In that sense the track seems like a later intrusion into a putative Bronze Age homogeneity.

Many of the cairns and burial mounds in this area have been described in pages 30-33, in consideration of these same structures in the Green Area. There are three additional probable hut circles on the E-facing slope to the W of the Allt na Criche, and a number of probable still bothies along the Allt itself.

H01 NH 45699 45668 Probable hut circle on recessed platform

On the E-facing hill slope facing the Allt na Criche is a platform which is revetted on the upslope and buttressed on the downslope. On the platform are the low stone walls of a circular structure, about 3.5m internal diameter. A possible entrance is in the SW.

There is considerable post-abandonment stone-dumping within. It is closely associated with hut circle H02 (hut 'K'). This is presumably a prehistoric hut circle on a recessed platform.

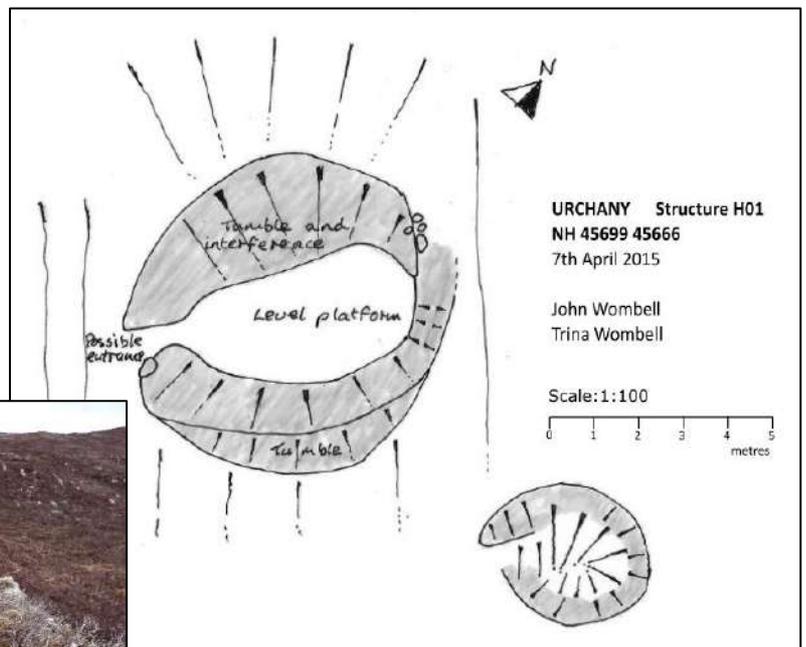


Figure 132: A plan of hut circle H01



Figure 133: Hut circle H01 from the SSE

H02 NH 45679 45666 Probable hut circle on recessed platform (OS Hut Circle K)

Close to platform H01, this oval platform is recessed into the gentle sloping hillside to the W, above the Allt na Criche to the E. 11m NE/SW x 6.5m. The E front of the platform is buttressed with stone, part of which has spread downslope. The recessed W side of the platform is partially obscured with post-abandonment boulders and colluvium. This back part of the platform had not been burnt by the 2013 muir burn, thus being further obscured by rank heather.

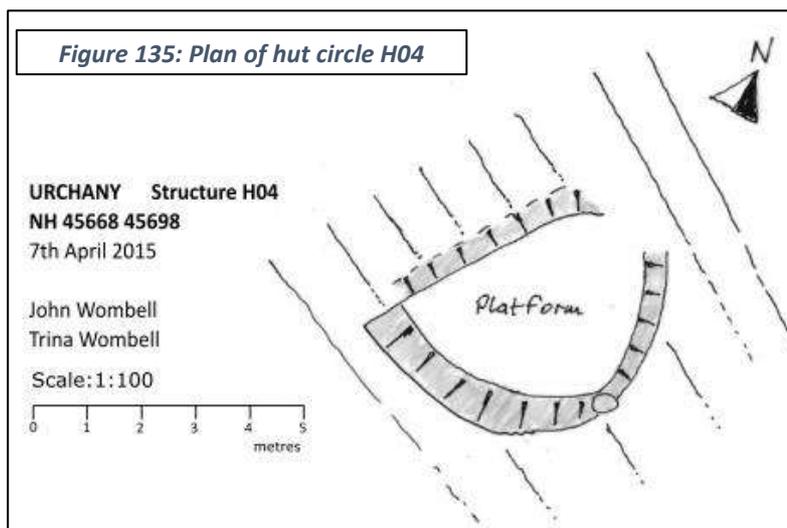
Too little evidence remains to call this site a hut circle and more likely it is a recessed platform that may or may not have had a timber structure on it originally.



Figure 134: Hut circle H02 from the SW

**H04 NH 45668 45698
A Recessed Platform**

This 'D'-shaped platform, c9.3m N-S x 6.7m E-W, is recessed into the E-facing slope on its W side, with stone buttressing at the E front. It lies in an area of muir burn dating to 2013. A considerable amount of colluvium appears to have spread down onto the back of the platform. There is now no evidence of a structure on the surface.



V07 NH 45547 45585 A possible burial cairn

Just north of the main Urchany track, 20m N of a cist burial, is a definite placing of stone. This 1m diameter circular setting of large stones is deficient in the E, with a western stone dislodged outwith the circle. The interior is flat.

The previous function of these placed stones is unclear, but they could represent the kerbed remains of a burial cairn.

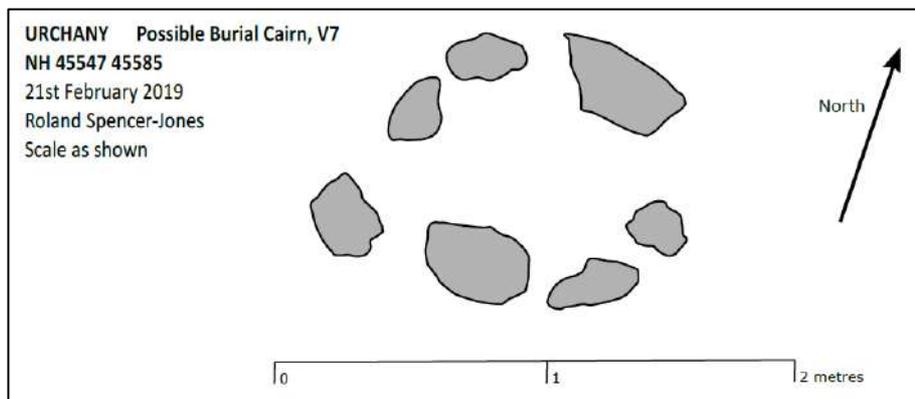


Figure 136: Plan of the remains of a possible burial cairn, V07



Figure 137: Possible burial cairn, V07, looking W



Figure 138: Possible burial cairn, V07, looking E

B01 NH 45537 45743

A small building, possible sheiling hut.

North of the main Urchany track the ground rises to the N, sometimes steeply, and is furrowed by small valleys or declivities. One of these valleys, about 100m from the track, contains the remains of a small square building, c3m x 3m, whose internal south facing wall is set against and under a natural crag. The double skinned walls, c0.75m wide, are built of large stones up to c 1m high. A small entrance is in the SW corner.

This seems too small for a permanent dwelling, so it may represent a day shieling hut.



Figure 139: B01, a building, perhaps a sheiling hut, looking NW

B02 NH 45238 45933

A small building, possible sheiling hut.

In another N-S valley, north of the main track, and 300m W of B01, are the mounded south-facing remains of a circular building. Set slightly into the slope it is situated in a grassy area of ground improved by grazing.

Its stone and turf walls are covered with grass and the hollow centre, c2.5m internal diameter, is vegetated with *Juncus* rushes. There is no obvious entrance. The walls are spread to approx. 3m wide at the front, standing up to 0.5m high.

This could represent a sheiling hut.



Figure 140: B02, a building, perhaps a sheiling hut, looking SSE

The Structures along the Allt na Criche

Northwards, upstream, from the point that the main track crosses the Allt na Criche, several structures were identified in the bank or just above the bank of the burn which appear to be still bothies. The paragraphs that follow provide some background to the origins and use of these bothies.



Whisky had become more popular across Highland society by the second half of the 18th century – industrialisation had led to wage increases and spirits were relatively cheap. To try and regulate the growing market, the government introduced Acts in the 1780s to encourage licensing of distilleries. Unlicensed private distillation in small stills, which had existed in Scotland for centuries, was effectively declared illegal.

The income Highland tenants generated from their unlicensed stills was essential to paying their rent. Many landlords and local judges were in receipt of their whisky and the illicit trade flourished in secluded parts of Highland glens. The north-east counties were particularly prominent in the trade due to the proximity of fertile grain-producing farmland. In these remote areas, crofters were more likely to evade the excisemen tasked to enforce the law.

To tackle the problem of illicit distillation, the 1823 Excise Act reduced duty by over 50%, effectively ending the advantage of illicit distillers over their licensed rivals. The 1845 Statistical Account of Scotland for Glenisla explains: 'The reduction of the duty of ardent spirits, whatever bad consequences may have resulted from it elsewhere, has been productive of the best effects here, both in respect of the morals and industry of the population. By putting an end to illicit distillation, it has been the means of directing the efforts of the people towards extensive agricultural improvements.'

National Trust for Scotland website: <https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/the-illicit-still-game>

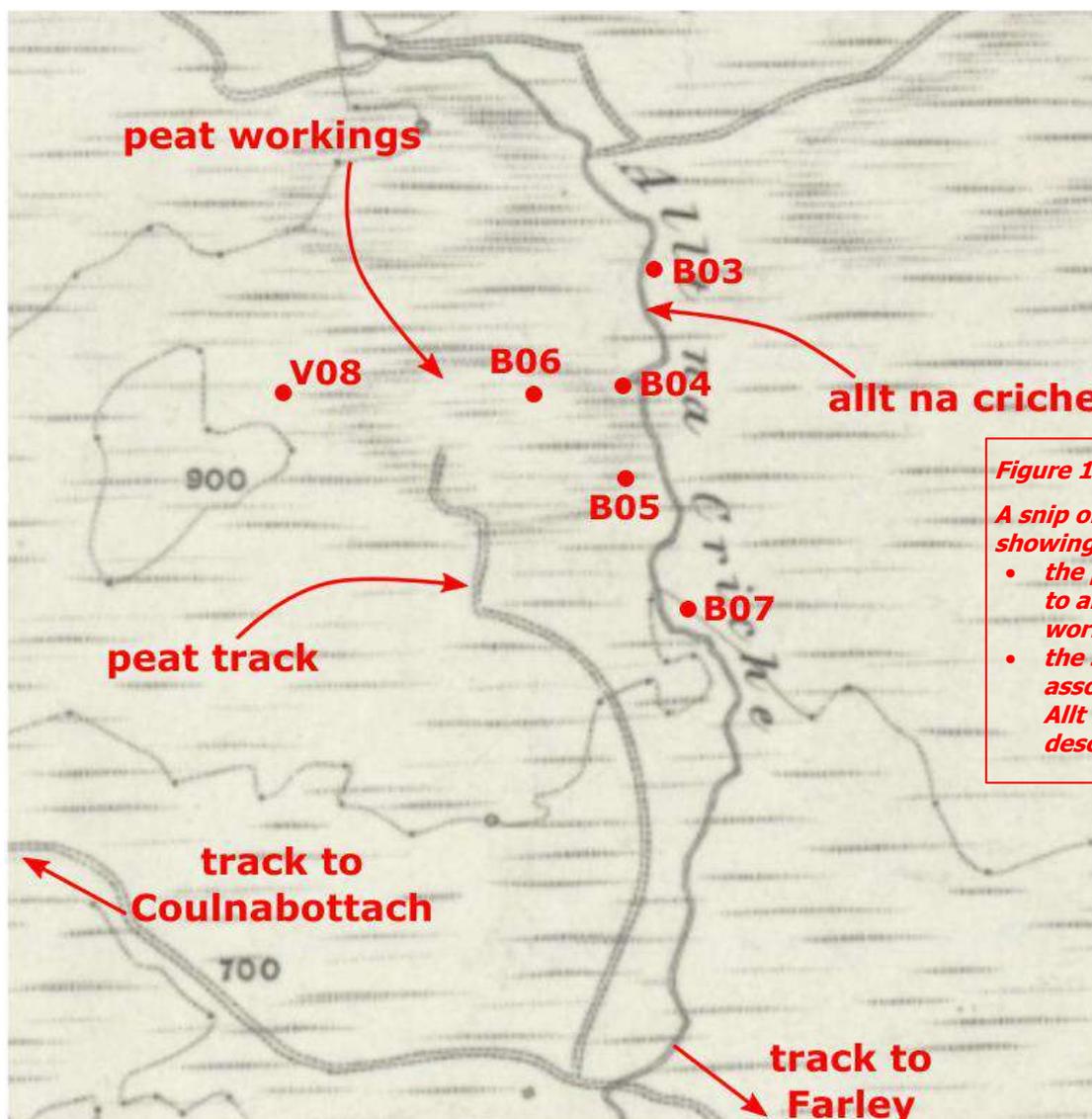


Figure 141:
A snip of OS 1st edition map showing the position of

- the peat track leading to an area of peat working**
- the structures associated with the Allt na Criche, described below**

B06 NH 45639 45870 A building, possibly associated with peat cutting

Ascending from the main Urchany track, up the W side of the Allt na Criche, is a track shown on the 1st edition OS map, see Fig 141. It is still possible to follow this track on the ground, although it is overgrown in places. It ends in a large area, c 0.5Ha, of peat workings.

On the E side of this peat working are the low grass and bracken covered remains of a stone and turf building. The sub-rectangular building lies to one side on an area of grass and bracken-covered ground, improved by grazing and surrounded by rank heather. The walls are spread to c1.5m, standing up to 0.5m high, and enclosing a space 4m N-S x 2m E-W. An entrance is in the SE corner of the S gable end.

This building is probably related to the adjoining peat workings, such as a day shelter or store. It could possibly be related to the nearby illicit stills, however, eg a worts-house.



Figure 142: B08 adjacent to peat working. Note muir burn in the background

B03 NH 45727 46018 A Still Bothy with associated Dam

Just south of a turn in the Allt na Criche, the truncated remains of a rectangular stone and turf building, 5.5m N-S x 2m E-W, were identified, cut into the steep east bank of the burn. The front wall has been washed away by the burn, but the two gable walls remain almost intact, being double-faced with stone, about 0.75m wide and standing about 0.6m high. The back wall against the cut is single faced and part tumbled onto the floor. There is a small circular stone setting at the N end of the building. The building is covered in rank heather, fine grass and moss in an area of rank heather, part burnt on the very day of the survey. Two metres upstream of the bothy is a dam and pond in a good state of preservation. The dam wall uses a large in situ boulder wedged into the bottom of a small gorge, then is constructed of large boulders and stones.

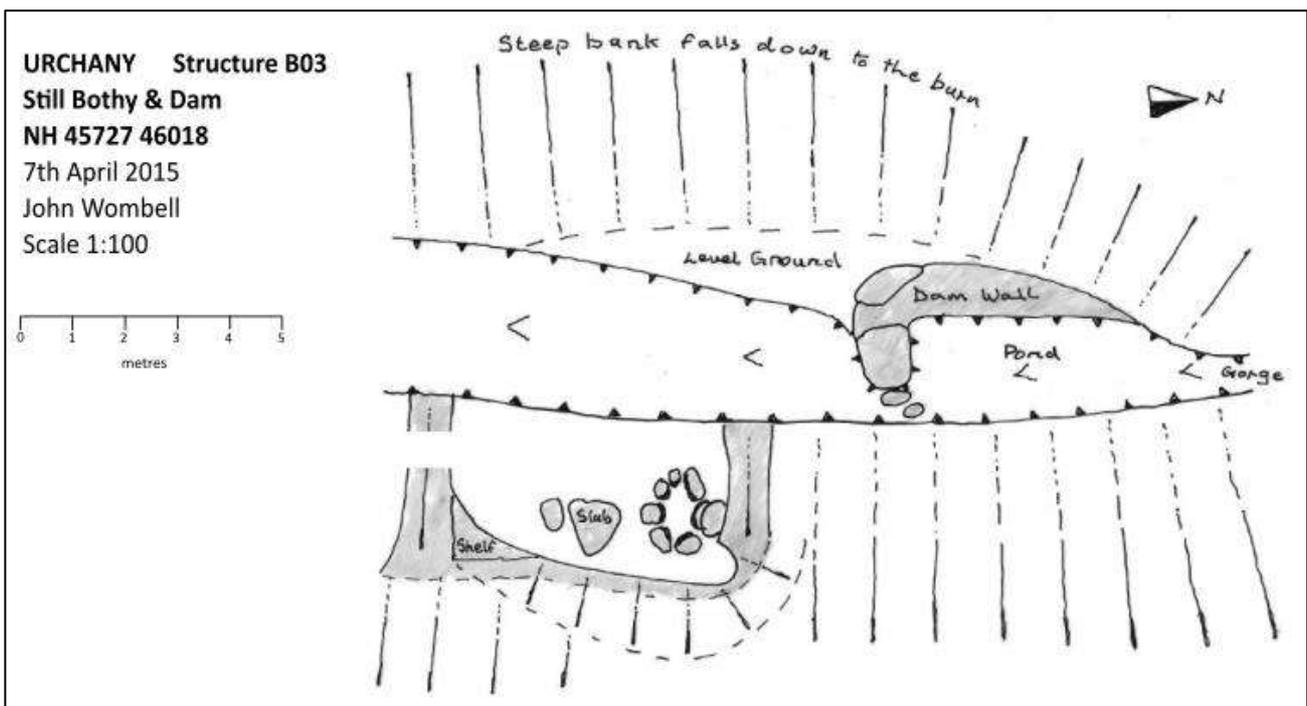


Figure 143: Plan of the remains of a still bothy & dam, B03



Figure 144: Dam associated with still bothy B03, looking W



Figure 145: Still bothy B03, on E bank of the allt, looking N



Figure 146: Looking E across the allt to still bothy B03



Figure 147: Looking down on still bothy B03, from the higher ground to the N, ie looking S

B04 NH 45713 45932 A still bothy

The truncated remains of this “D”-shaped stone-and-turf building are cut into the moraine west bank of the Allt na Criche, badly truncated at the NE corner by the burn. Substantial walls of stone and turf remain, with coursework visible on the internal face of the E wall. These enclose a structure, c4m SW-NE x 2m NW-SE maximum internal dimensions. The walls are 2m wide standing to 1m high. Just two walls form the building with the cut bank making the curved back wall presently covered in rank heather. This may have been faced with boulders. The E and S walls are covered with fine grasses and bracken as is the interior. A deep ditch lies adjacent and parallel to the S wall. An unknown length of the E wall has been carried away by the burn. The entrance is in the SE corner.

Figure 148: Plan of the remains of a probable still bothy, B04

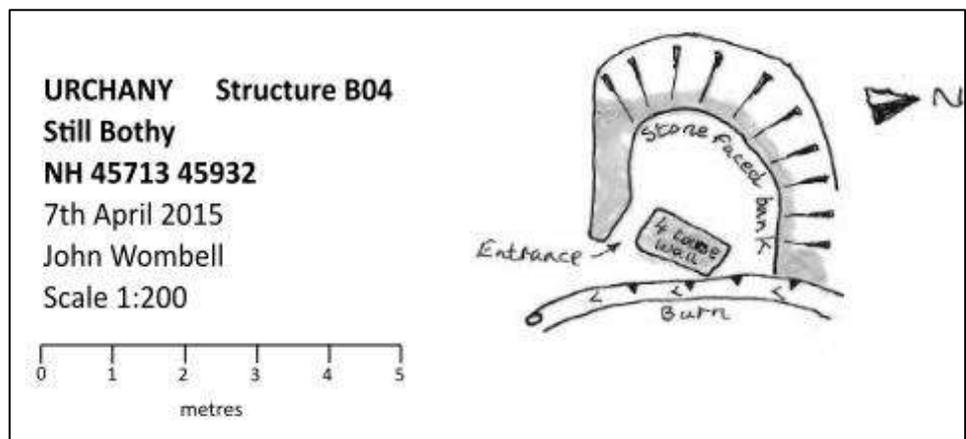




Figure 149: Still bothy B04, looking S



Figure 150: Still bothy B04, looking N

B05 NH 45715 45890

A Small Building related to whisky production.

The scant remains of a small building, set to the S side of a small grass-and-bracken covered haugh beside the Allt na Criche, is in association with B04, 40m to the N.

The roughly circular structure, with single-boulder width walls and c1.5m internal diameter, lies beside a turf and stone bank behind a ridge to the west. The entrance is in the N.

This seems too small and crude to have been a dwelling, so it is interpreted as a building for one of the whisky making processes such as worts production, in which case 'a worts house'.



Figure 151: Building B05, looking S

B07 NH 45732 45833 A Still Bothy

At the northern end of a small heather-and-bracken covered area of open flat ground are the well-preserved low remains of a turf covered stone and turf building. It lies 3m from the Allt na Criche on its east bank, cut slightly into the bank. All four walls survive. The back retaining wall is single faced, whereas the two gables and west wall are double faced, now well covered with rank heather, fine grasses, moss and bracken.

This low rectangular building, 7m NW-SE x 2.5m NE-SW internal dimensions, has an entrance in the SW corner of the west front wall. The walls are c.0.75m wide and up to 0.5m high. The front wall is a little lower than the two gable walls.

It is likely to be a still bothy, although the open aspect might also suggest a sheiling hut.

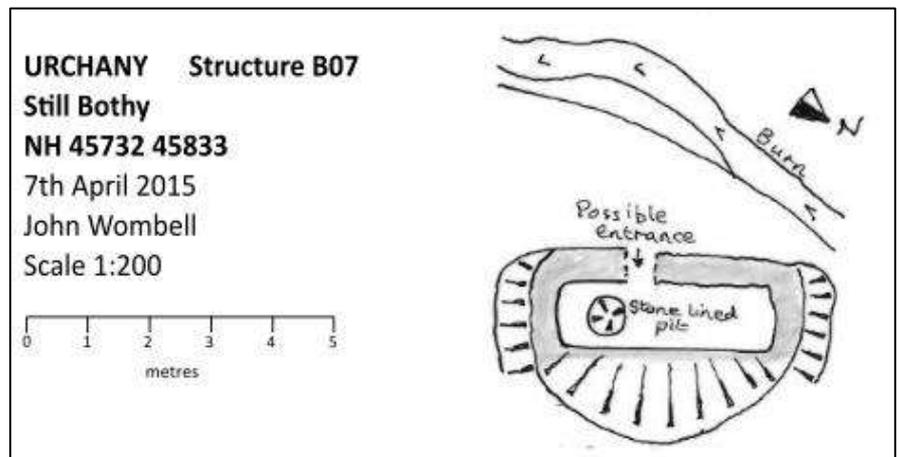


Figure 152: Plan of the remains of a low grassy building, B07



Figure 153: Building B07, looking E



Figure 154: Building B07, looking S

V08 NH 45564 45862 A possible hideout or bothy.

North of the peat working, at the end of the small track heading N to the W of the Allt na Criche, see Fig 141, p50, is a prominent EW ridge. Tucked into the N face of the western end of this is a hollowed-out space delimited by walls on three sides. The 5m (ext dimensions) E & W walls are heather covered banks. There is a clear entrance in the E part of the 4m N wall. The S wall is a near-vertical bank, scooped out of the ridge.

This looks secretive, perhaps related to the illicit stills by the burn, 50m away. The steep tall S “wall”, ie the face of the bank, could have supported a sloping roof.

Figure 155: Building B07, looking S, through the entrance into the interior of the building



Figure 156: Building B07, looking N from the top of the S wall of the building, down into the interior. Note: the entrance is just behind the ranging pole.