

EXCAVATIONS AT LOUR, STOBO, 1959-60

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I. INTRODUCTION

THE remains of the township of Lour are situated in the parish of Drumelzier, Peeblesshire, rather more than a mile S. of the church and village of Stobo.¹ The site stands at an elevation of 800 ft. o.d. and about 250 ft. above the River Tweed where this runs past Dawyck Mill half a mile to the NW. The remains themselves stand upon a slight eminence, and although the approach from the SW. is level, the ground falls away gently to NW. and SE., while immediately to the NE. there is a steep descent of some 70 ft. to a small haugh which borders the left bank of the Lour Burn. A detailed description of the existing surface remains will be found in the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments' forthcoming *Inventory of Peeblesshire*, but their general character can readily be grasped by a study of the site plan, fig. 1. This shows that the settlement is D-shaped on plan, being enclosed by two concentric ramparts 30 ft. apart, which form an arc based on the line of the steep descent NE. towards the Lour Burn. There are entrances to the SE., to the SW., and to the NW., while within the ramparts and in some cases overlying them there are the remains of a number of subrectangular buildings and of enclosures. To the S. and SW. of the township there may be seen extensive traces of ridge-and-furrow cultivation.

Lour has formed part of the estate of Dawyck from the time that it first comes on record in 1534 until the present day; the names of some of the seventeenth-century tenants have been preserved² and the property is noted on Blaeu's map of Tweeddale published in 1654. Pennecuik, writing in 1715, mentions 'a tenant's house, called Lour',³ while sixty years later Armstrong mentions 'the ruins of a Peel-house . . . near to which, a stone ax was lately found, supposed to have been a druidical instrument of sacrifice',⁴ and marks the site on his map of Peeblesshire. Although the tower itself was ruinous in Armstrong's time some of the other buildings may still have been occupied, but an estate plan of 1797⁵ indicates that the site had been abandoned by that year.

When the site was surveyed by Mr R. W. Feachem in 1958, in the course of preparation of the Commission's *Inventory of Peeblesshire*, it became apparent that neither the study of the surface indications nor the evidence of written record could adequately explain the nature of the existing remains. The fact that some of the buildings and enclosures overlay the ramparts, and the association of a presumed tower-house site with extensive earthworks apparently of a defensive nature, sug-

¹ Nat. Grid. Ref. NT 179357.

² Buchan, J. W., *History of Peeblesshire*, III, 435.

³ Pennecuik, A., *Works* (1815 ed.), 270.

⁴ Armstrong, M. J., *Companion to the Map of Tweeddale*, 34.

⁵ In the possession of Mr A. N. Ballfour of Dawyck.

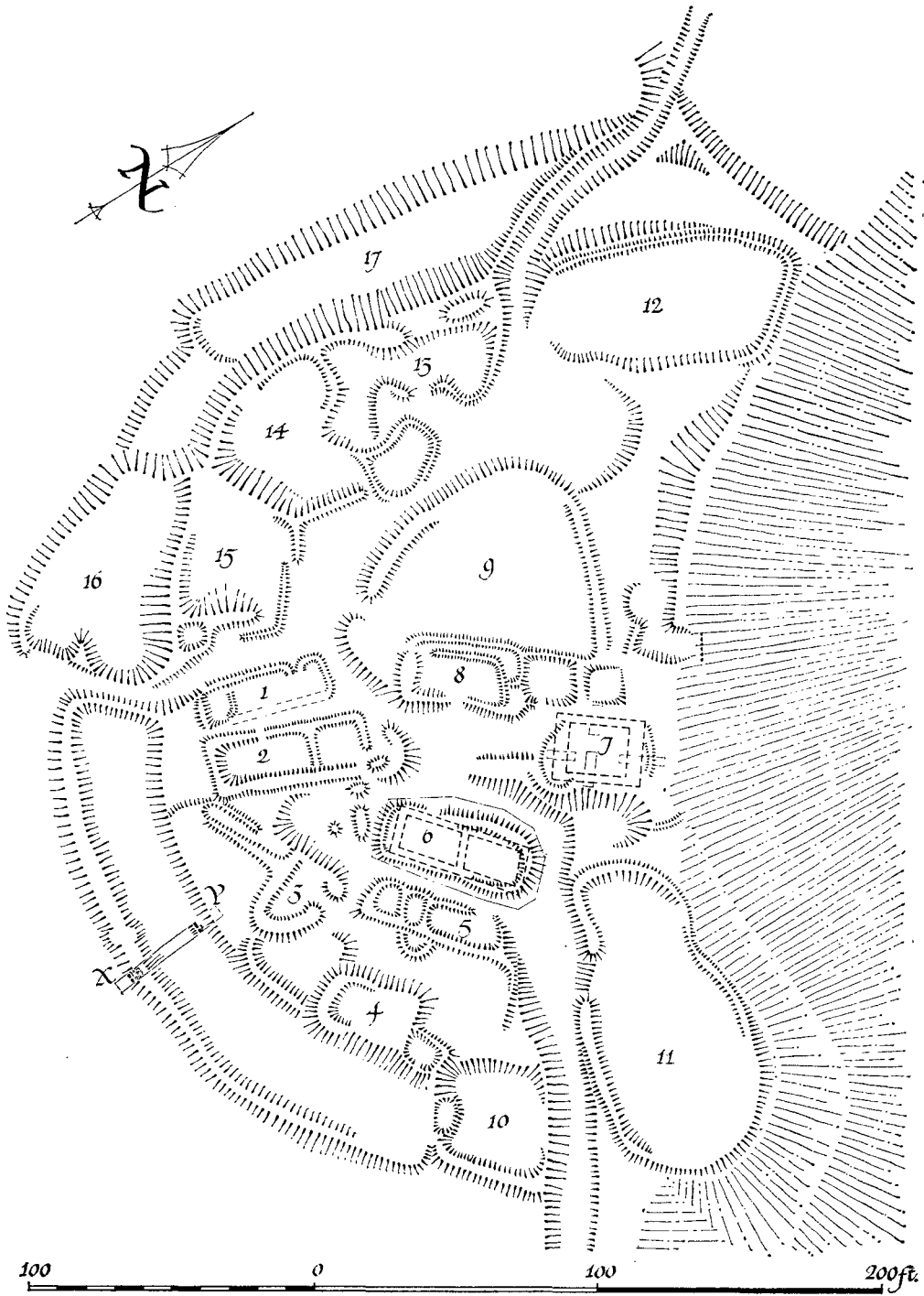


FIG. 1. Site plan. Excavated areas indicated in unbroken line

gested the possibility that there had been two distinct periods of occupation, the first in the Early Iron Age and the second in the Middle Ages.¹ In order to put this hypothesis to the test, small-scale excavations were authorised by the Commissioners and were carried out in 1959 and 1960 by Messrs G. D. Hay, J. G. Dunbar and A. MacLaren with assistance from other members of the Commission's staff, from Messrs J. C. Wallace and A. Bruford, and from a small labour-force led by Mr J. Foster, Broughton. Permission to excavate was readily given by the proprietor, Mr A. N. Balfour of Dawyck, who donated all the finds to the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh, and full co-operation was given by the tenant, Mr Hunter. In the preparation of the reports on the finds assistance has been received from Messrs S. Maxwell and A. Fenton (iron objects), Mr G. C. Dunning (pottery), Mr R. Oddy and Miss P. Telford (glass and china), Mr G. Young (clay pipes) and Mr R. W. Elliot (stones). The report on soil samples has been contributed by Mr Allard Johnson. The drawings are by Messrs A. C. S. Dixon and I. G. Scott and the photographs are the work of Mr G. Quick. Tools were provided by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

II. THE EXCAVATION

Summary of results. (i) The site of the tower (fig. 1, 7) was identified by trial trenching and its overall dimensions were ascertained; these suggest that the tower was erected towards the end of the sixteenth century or early in the seventeenth century. (ii) One of the subrectangular buildings lying within the settlement (fig. 1, 6) was excavated and was found to comprise two apartments, each with its own entrance doorway, but without internal communication; one room contained a hearth. Certain details of the plan suggest that the structure served a dual purpose, containing at one end a single-roomed dwelling and at the other a storage chamber associated with the adjacent tower. The finds indicate that the building was erected about the middle of the seventeenth century and abandoned at about the end of the eighteenth century. (iii) A section was cut through the S. side of the surrounding earthwork and revealed traces of two stone-revetted banks with a shallow ditch between them; this ditch appeared to have been filled up and levelled at a period subsequent to the construction of the earthwork. The section produced no definite dating evidence, but in view of the general character of the earthwork, of the nature of the site as a whole, and of the chance discovery of part of a glass armlet of late first or early second-century date within the settlement, the surrounding ramparts are considered to belong to the Early Iron Age.

(i) *The Tower.* In view of Armstrong's statement that the ruins of a 'peel-house' were visible at Lour in his day (*supra*) it was decided to investigate what appeared to be the remains of a rectangular building standing upon a slight eminence on the NE. side of the township and at its highest point (fig. 1, 7). Here, but in no other part of the site, fragments of lime mortar were lying in the turf, suggesting that the building had been of a more substantial nature than other structures in the settlement. Trial trenches revealed the footings of a rectangular building measuring

¹ This theory was earlier put forward by W. Chambers in his *History of Peeblesshire*, 433 (1864).

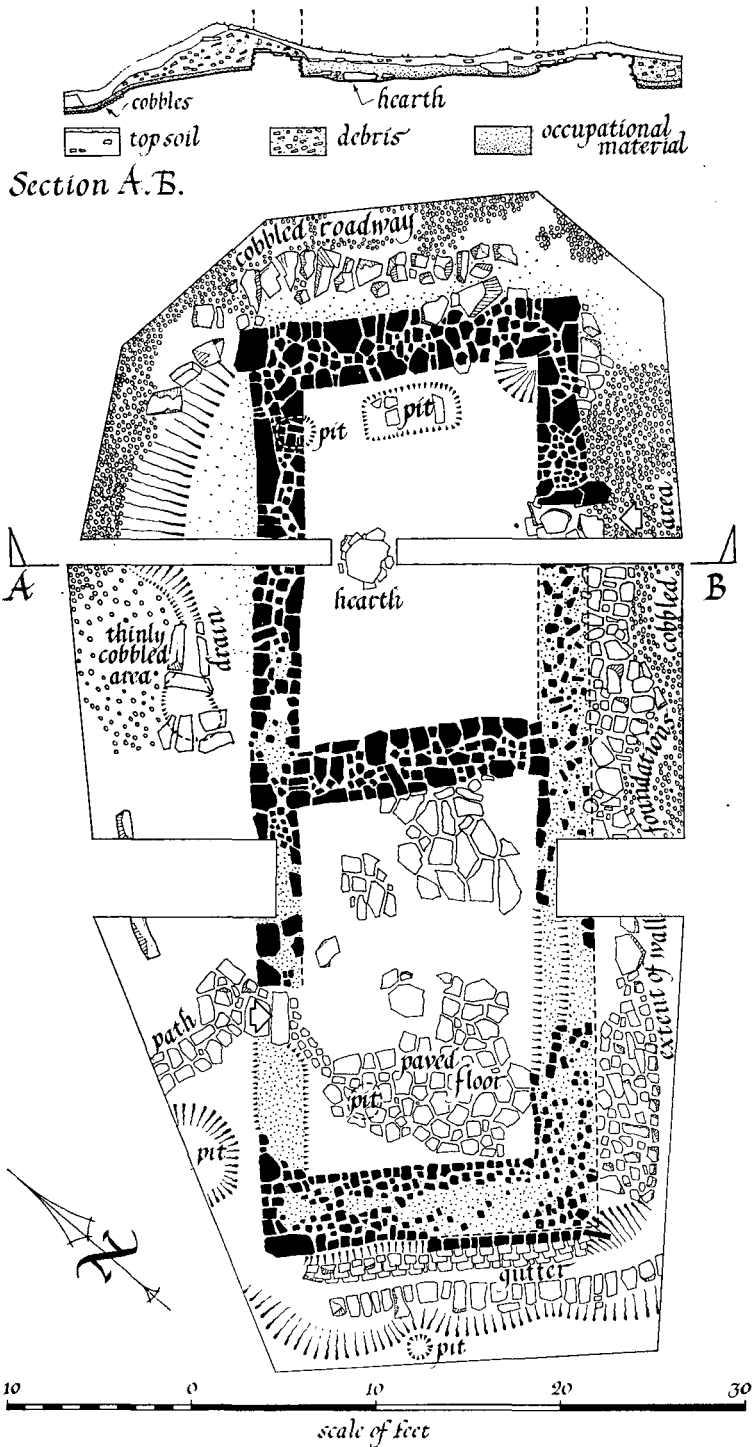


FIG. 2. Building 6: Plan and Section

29 ft. 3 in. from NE. to SW. and 21 ft. from NW. to SE., the NW. and SE. walls having a thickness of about 3 ft. and the NE. and SW. walls of about 5 ft. The masonry was of rubble laid in lime mortar, but had been extensively robbed, many of the facing stones having been removed, even from the lowest portions of the walls. These remains are evidently those of a small tower of about the second half of the sixteenth century, comparable in dimensions with those at Chapelhill¹ (31 ft. 10 in. by 22 ft. 2 in.) and Flemington² (24 ft. 5 in. by 21 ft. 4 in.).

(ii) *Building 6* (cf. fig. 1). This appeared to be the best preserved of the eight subrectangular buildings lying within the township and was accordingly selected for detailed examination. The surface indications, comprising turf-grown mounds, suggested that the remains were those of a building of two compartments measuring 45 ft. by 12 ft. internally. The angles of the building appeared to be rounded and the walls, in places, to be double, the turf mound comprising twin crests separated by a slight depression (cf. fig. 2, Section). Excavation proved, however, that although surface remains gave a good indication of the dimensions of the building, they were misleading in so far as they concerned the construction of the walls, and in particular of the angles.

Very nearly the whole area of the building was exposed, together with such portions of the ground outside the walls as are indicated on fig. 2. It was found that the building stood on a SW. to NE. axis and measured 51 ft. by 18 ft. 6 in. overall; it comprised two apartments, separated by an original partition wall. The NW. and SE. walls were preserved to a maximum height of 1 ft. 6 in. and had an average thickness of 2 ft. 7 in.; the gable walls were preserved to a maximum height of 1 ft. 9 in., the SW. one having an average thickness of 3 ft. 10 in. and the NE. one a thickness of 3 ft. The partition wall was preserved to a maximum height of 1 ft. 3 in. and had an average thickness of 3 ft.

The site is not entirely flat, and some effort had been made before construction began both to provide a secure footing for the walls, and to level up the internal area of the building. Thus although the NW. wall rested for the most part directly upon the underlying gravel (Pl. XIII: 2), the SE. wall and the NE. gable rested in places upon a broad foundation of rubble masonry contained at its outer edge by a kerb of large stones. This kerb was especially pronounced on the NE. side where it was evidently intended to prevent the wall subsiding into the cobbled roadway that was found to skirt this end of the building (Pl. XIII: 2).³ The greatest care, however, had been reserved for the SW. gable, where the supporting masonry was bonded into the wall face forming a battered revetment along the base of the wall (Pl. XIII: 1). This evidently gave protection against erosion which might otherwise have been caused by a gutter which ran parallel to and immediately outside the gable wall. Within the building the gravel appeared to have been roughly levelled, but a ridge extending up to 6 in. in height had been left as a footing for the partition wall. A depression in the E. corner of the NE. room had been filled up before construction began as had also a pit under the NW. wall of this room. The filling of the depression

¹ Described in the forthcoming *Inventory of Peeblesshire*.

² *ibid.*

³ Most of the rubble had been removed to expose the kerb before this photograph was taken.

comprised earth and small stones, but the pit, which had a diameter of 2 ft. and a depth of 1 ft. 10 in., contained blackish occupation material (cf. Appendix) among which there was found part of a clay pipe, apparently of early or mid-seventeenth-century date (cf. p. 208, No. 41). What purpose this pit served and at what period it was dug is uncertain.

The lower portions of the walls, which alone survived, were of rubble masonry laid in mud mortar, and in view of the large quantities of stones removed during the excavation it would appear that the upper portions of the walls were of the same construction. Traces of turf were found among the debris that had fallen from the walls, suggesting that the wall heads were capped with turf. The original height of the walls could not be ascertained. No evidence was found of cruck construction and it is assumed that the building had a simple couple-roof. Several fragments of slates, some containing nail holes, were found in the upper part of the occupation layer within the building and it seems certain that latterly at least the roof was of slate.

The SW. compartment (Pl. XIII: 1), which measured 20 ft. by 12 ft. 6 in., was entered from a doorway placed more or less centrally in the NW. wall. In the gravel floor there was a circular pit, floored with slate slabs and having a diameter of 2 ft. 6 in. and a depth of 2 ft. This pit could have been used for storage purposes, the slate bottom having perhaps supported a wooden container such as a tub. Whatever its purpose the pit evidently went out of use during the occupation of the building for it was found to be filled up and overlaid by about 1 in. of blackish occupation material which extended over the whole of the ground area. Resting upon this lower occupation layer there were portions of a paved floor, visible in Pl. XIII: 1, and above there was a further occupation layer having a thickness of up to 5 in.

Outside the threshold a roughly paved path led downwards in a westerly direction. Immediately to the S. of this path part of a pit was exposed, having a depth of 1 ft. 10 in. The pit contained loosely packed stones, the interstices in the lowest portion being filled with washed gravel; this may have been a sump. 15 ft. to the NE. of the threshold there was found a drain comprising a number of large stones placed to form a rectangular trough from which a gutter ran down in a northerly direction towards the roadway.

The NE. compartment (Pls. XIII: 2 and 3) measured about 19 ft. by 13 ft. and was entered from a doorway placed centrally in the SE. wall. In line with the doorway and 3 ft. from the NW. wall lay a hearth comprising a single stone slab measuring 2 ft. 8 in. by 2 ft. 4 in. overall. This slab was set into a shallow depression cut out of the gravel and was surrounded by a rough kerb of small pinning stones; traces of burnt material and of clay were found in its immediate vicinity. Centrally placed at the NE. end of the room there was a pit (Pl. XIII: 3) measuring 5 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in. and having a depth of 2 ft. Two or three large flat stones had been laid at the bottom of the pit and above them there was found a layer of wet gravel some 6 in. in thickness; the upper 18 in. of the filling comprised black occupation material among which there was found part of a clay pipe which may be ascribed to about

the third quarter of the seventeenth century (cf. p. 208, No. 37). The top of the pit was sealed by a number of old roofing slates which had evidently been put down as a cap when the pit went out of use. What purpose this pit served is uncertain, but soil sample analysis suggests that it may have been an indoor midden, into which refuse was put to ferment before being transferred to an outside midden¹ (Appendix). Alternatively it may have been a domestic charcoal-pit, like those that are known to have been used in the Highlands for the manufacture of wood or peat charcoal up to the beginning of the nineteenth century,² but this seems unlikely in view of the analysis of the pit filling (cf. p. 209). Over the whole area of the room there was found a blackish occupation layer, which varied in thickness from 5 in. to 10 in. There was no evidence of a laid floor either of stone or clay, the bottom of the occupation layer resting directly upon the natural gravel. Neither in this nor in the adjacent compartment was there anything to suggest that the building had not been in continuous occupation.

Outside the threshold there was a cobbled area which extended almost the full length of the building; this cobbling was evidently put down at or before the time at which the building was erected, for it was found partially to extend beneath the SE. wall.

(iii) *The Outer Works*. A section X-Y (figs. 1 and 3) was cut across the two grass-covered outer banks on the S. side of the site where they appeared to be best pre-

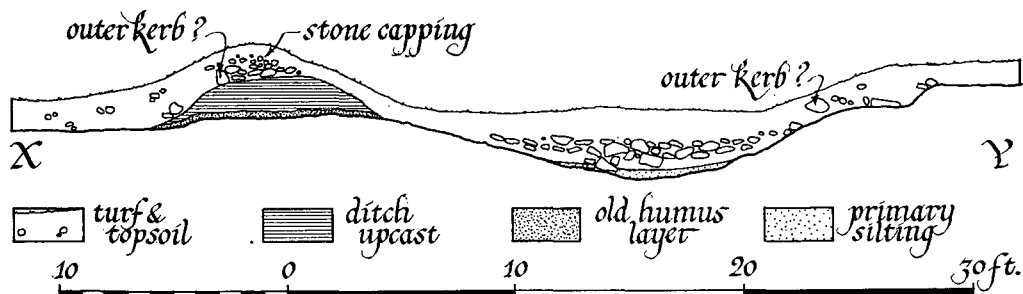


FIG. 3. Section through outer works

served. Before excavation the crest of the outer bank stood, at this point, to a height of 3 ft. above the exterior and 3 ft. 6 in. above the interior, while the inner bank was reduced to a mere outward-facing scarp 2 ft. high. The intervening space between them, which was 16 ft. wide, was almost level.

The section, which measured 44 ft. in length and 4 ft. in width, revealed the remains of two ramparts with a broad shallow quarry-ditch between them. The inner rampart was in a very wasted condition and all trace of its inner edge had been obliterated. The position of its outer edge, however, was indicated by a level step cut back for a distance of 5 ft. into the natural sand and gravel subsoil to a maximum depth of 1 ft. 6 in. at its inner extremity. Two flat slabs found on the surface of this

¹ Indoor middens known as 'leepies' were common in Shetland houses up to the middle of the nineteenth century. The periodic transfer of the refuse to the outside midden was carried out by means of a mat placed in the bottom of the leepie before it was filled. (I owe this reference to Mr A. Fenton, National Museum of Antiquities).

² *P.S.A.S.*, XXI (1886-7), 94.

step evidently represented the remains of the foundation-course of an outer revetment. A rounded boulder measuring 1 ft. 3 in. by 1 ft. 6 in. by 10 in. lying immediately under the turf and near the forward lip of the step may have been part of the kerb of the original revetment. A thin layer of loosely-packed earth and small stones lying immediately on top of the natural was all that remained of the original core-material. The outer rampart was found to have a core composed of hard-packed sand and gravel thrown up from the ditch and bound together with a wash of clay. This core-material was 9 ft. wide at the base and stood to a maximum height of 2 ft., resting directly on the old ground surface.

The ditch proved to have a shallow profile. The bottom was filled with about 6 in. of primary silting above which there was a heavy layer of stones, up to 1 ft. 3 in. in depth extending right across the ditch. The upper limit of this layer was almost horizontal. Above the stones a thick band of rich dark soil extended upwards as far as the present-day turf-level. The depth of soil filling the upper level of the ditch indicated that at some time after the ditch was no longer required, the space which it occupied was used for cultivation. The layer of stones immediately below the plough-soil may have been partly caused by the natural disintegration of the rampart revetments, but the fact that practically the whole of the inner rampart had been obliterated, including the outer revetment and any inner revetment that may have existed, and also the fact that no trace survived of any revetments to the outer rampart, suggest that most of the large stones incorporated in both ramparts, as they originally existed, had been deliberately removed to fill up the bottom of the ditch and provide drainage for subsequent cultivation. The loose accumulation of small stones that lay on top of the core of the outer rampart did not appear to have any structural significance.

The cutting was extended for a distance of 7 ft. outside the outer rampart to test whether there had originally been a second outer ditch, but of this no evidence was found. No finds were recovered.

Conclusions

Surface indications had already suggested that there were two distinct periods of occupation at Lour (*supra*), the surrounding earthworks being of earlier date than the buildings and enclosures that lay within them. These conclusions were confirmed by the excavations, which also established that the second period of occupation lay within the late medieval and post-medieval periods.

Although no finds were recovered from the section cut through the outer works, such structures are characteristic of Early Iron Age sites in Tweeddale¹ and to this period the earthworks at Lour may be assigned with some confidence. This conclusion is strengthened by the discovery within the settlement of part of a late first- or early second-century glass armlet (No. 16), and of a quern which may be of Early Iron Age date (No. 46). The dismantling of the outer ramparts and the levelling of the ditch for cultivation, presumably took place during the second period of occupation.

¹ cf. R.G.A.M., *Inventory of Peeblesshire*, forthcoming.

The existing surface remains at Lour appear for the most part, however, to be of late medieval and post-medieval date, the settlement having comprised a small tower-house with associated buildings and enclosures. Similar settlements of about the same period have been noted both in Peeblesshire,¹ as for example at Thornielee, Glentress and Plora, and also in neighbouring counties as for example at Tushielaw, Selkirkshire² and Slacks Tower, Roxburghshire.³ The tower-house was erected towards the end of the sixteenth century or early in the seventeenth century, and none of the associated buildings seem likely to be of earlier date, while some may in fact be a good deal later. The tower itself was occupied until about the middle of the eighteenth century and the township as a whole was abandoned by the end of that century.

The status and function of the buildings in the settlement, other than the tower, is somewhat uncertain. A late sixteenth-century description of what may have been a rather similar complex of buildings at Reidhall, Dumfriesshire, speaks of the 'toun and landis of Reidhall — with ane peill house, with byre, hall and berne'.⁴ It seems probable therefore that some of the structures at Lour may have been out-buildings and offices of the tower; others may have been the dwelling houses of cottars and farm servants. The plan of the building that was selected for excavation is a puzzling one and may not be typical of the township as a whole. The building comprised two separate and apparently self-contained compartments, of which the one to the NE., with its central hearth and indoor midden was evidently a dwelling room. There was no evidence that the SW. apartment was used as a dwelling room however, and nothing to suggest that it was a byre. It seems most likely therefore to have been some sort of storage chamber, and the placing of the doorway in the NW. wall, and not, as in the adjacent apartment, in the SE. wall, may have been intended to facilitate access to and from the tower, which stood only 15 yds. away. These features can perhaps best be explained by supposing that the structure was an outbuilding of the tower, the NE. room accommodating a family of household servants or dependents, and the SW. room being utilised for storage purposes.

The finding of a fragment of clay pipe (No. 41) sealed beneath the NW. wall suggests that the building was erected at or about the middle of the seventeenth century, while other finds indicate that there was continuous occupation from this period until the end of the eighteenth century. The indoor midden, if such it was, went out of use towards the end of the seventeenth century (cf. No. 37); the pit in the SW. room was also filled up and a paved floor laid down some time during the occupation of the building.

The excavations threw no more light on the enclosures and courts that lie within the settlement. Surface remains alone, however, are sufficient to indicate that they belong to the medieval and post-medieval rather than to the Early Iron Age occupation of the site. No doubt they served a variety of purposes including those relating to domestic cultivation and to the rearing of livestock.

¹ These settlements are described in the forthcoming *Inventory of Peeblesshire*.

² *Inventory of Selkirkshire*, No. 33.

³ *Inventory of Roxburghshire*, No. 934.

⁴ *Register of the Privy Council*, iv (1585-92), 106.

THE FINDS

All the finds are associated with Building 6 and, unless otherwise stated, were discovered either just below the turf and among the dense covering of stones and mud that represented the debris of the walls, or in the upper part of the main occupation layer within the building (cf. fig. 2). For the most part, therefore, they presumably represent objects which were in use towards the end of the building's history, but there are in addition one or two later intrusions. Objects found in the lower part of the main occupation layer were not necessarily in use at a very much

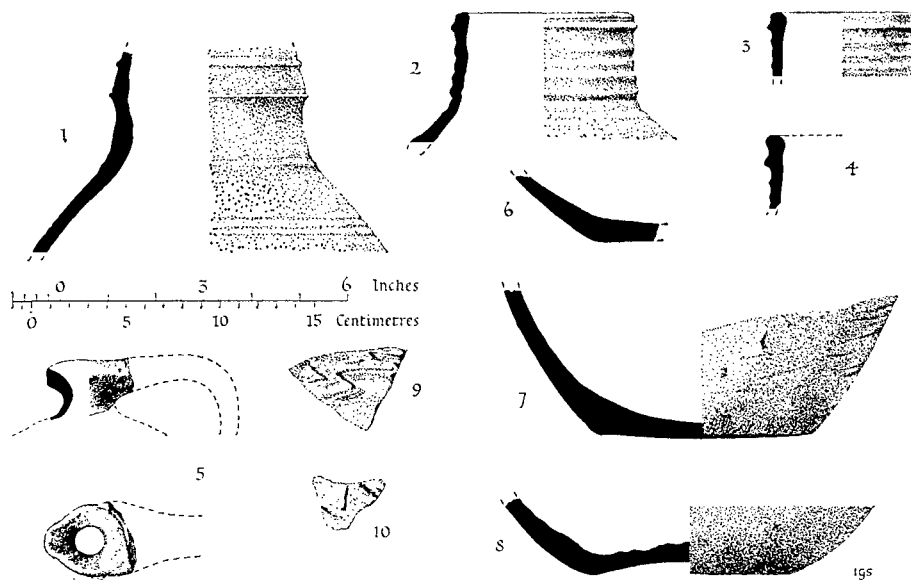


FIG. 4. Pottery (1/4)

earlier date than those found in the upper part, for some attempt was probably made to keep the interior of the building clean when in use. Finds coming from the SW. apartment did not appear to differ significantly in kind from those coming from the NE. apartment although rather more than half the glass and pottery came from the SW. apartment, while rather more than half the iron objects came from the NE. apartment. Very little material deriving from the excavation of comparable sites in Scotland has as yet been published, but the objects found at John Brown's House, Priesthill, Ayrshire¹ provide certain broad parallels to the Lour finds.

Pottery (fig. 4)

The lack of comparative material makes it impossible to date these fragments closely, but all the pottery appears to be of late medieval and post-medieval date.

1. Part of the neck and shoulder of jug. Soft grey paste with small air-pockets, darker grey internally and retaining traces of a brown external glaze.

¹ *P.S.A.S.*, LXI (1926-7), 287 ff.

2. Part of the neck and rim of jug bearing multiple grooves. Close-textured hard grey paste, dark grey internally and having a light green glaze, mottled with brown, on external surfaces. The fabric fractures readily, breaking off in layers.

3. Rim fragment of jug showing evidence of multiple grooving at top of neck. Hard grey paste, lighter towards outer surface and having traces of greenish-brown external glaze.

4. Rim fragment of jug showing evidence of multiple grooving at top of neck. Orange-buff paste containing black specks and small air-pockets with traces of brownish-green external glaze.

5. Neck and rim of narrow-necked flagon of which the handle has extended directly from the rim, rising slightly above the top of the vessel. Hard buff paste containing some quite large grits; the surface has been considerably eroded and there is no trace of glaze. Three unglazed flagons of similar size and shape are preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh,¹ and other examples are known elsewhere in Scotland, as well as at Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Keep Museum) and Cocksley Court, Plymouth. Mr G. C. Dunning reports that these vessels are of French origin, and suggests that the Lour sherd, which was found in the filling of the pit in the NE. apartment, may be ascribed to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.²

6. Fragment of base, Grey paste fired pink in parts containing occasional red grits. Greenish-brown glaze both externally and internally.

7. Base. Grey paste, fired to orange-buff on much of the exposed surfaces and containing grits and air-pockets. External surface is very rough, bearing scored lines and traces of greenish-brown glaze. Found on top of paved floor in SW. apartment.

8. Concave base. Fairly hard grey paste, fired to pinkish-buff on some of external surfaces. Well-defined rotatory grooves on internal surface and light green external glaze except on the under surface, which has evidently been masked by the rim of another vessel when stacked in the kiln. Found on top of paved floor in SW. apartment.

9. Small sherd. Hard grey paste fired pinkish on outer surfaces and containing a lot of grits, many of them reddish. Greenish-brown glaze on both surfaces with V-shaped incised lines on external surface.

10. Small sherd. Grey paste fired pinkish on outer surfaces. Brownish-green glaze on both surfaces with wavy incised line on external surface. Found on top of paved floor in SW. apartment.

11 (not illustrated). Three small fragments of soft close-textured orange-buff paste fired to brown on exposed surfaces. Traces of thin almost colourless glaze on both surfaces. Found on top of paved floor in SW. apartment.

12 (not illustrated). About two dozen other sherds, not worthy of detailed description, but similar in character to those described above.

13 (not illustrated). Some small fragments of eighteenth-century delft ware, some plain white and some blue and white. Two pieces were found at the level of the paved floor in the SW. apartment.

14 (not illustrated). A very small fragment of blue and white Chinese porcelain, probably of eighteenth-century date. Found in the lower part of the occupation layer in the NE. apartment.

15 (not illustrated). Fragment of blue and white printed ware. Victorian.

Glass

16. Fragment of armlet of blue translucent glass of D section, having at the apex a blue-and-white cord moulding. Kilbride-Jones Type 2, late first or early second century (fig. 5) cf. *P.S.A.S.*, LXXII (1937-8), 372 ff and LXXXVIII (1954-6), 208 ff.

17. Fragments of at least half a dozen green and dark green wine bottles. The single example of which a complete profile has been reconstructed has sloping shoulders and straight sides, which expand slightly towards the base (Pl. XIV: 1); it appears to be of mid-eighteenth-century date. Cf. *Proc. Glasgow Arch. Soc.*, New Series, VI, 116 ff and fig. 7. Height 6½ in., diameter at base 4 in. A few fragments were found in the lower part of the occupation layer.

¹ ME 50, ME 430, L. 1959. 15.

² *P.S.A.S.*, LXXXIX (1955-6), 69 ff, and Nos. 29 and 77. Mr J. G. Hurst kindly drew my attention to the Cocksley Court material, which is as yet unpublished.

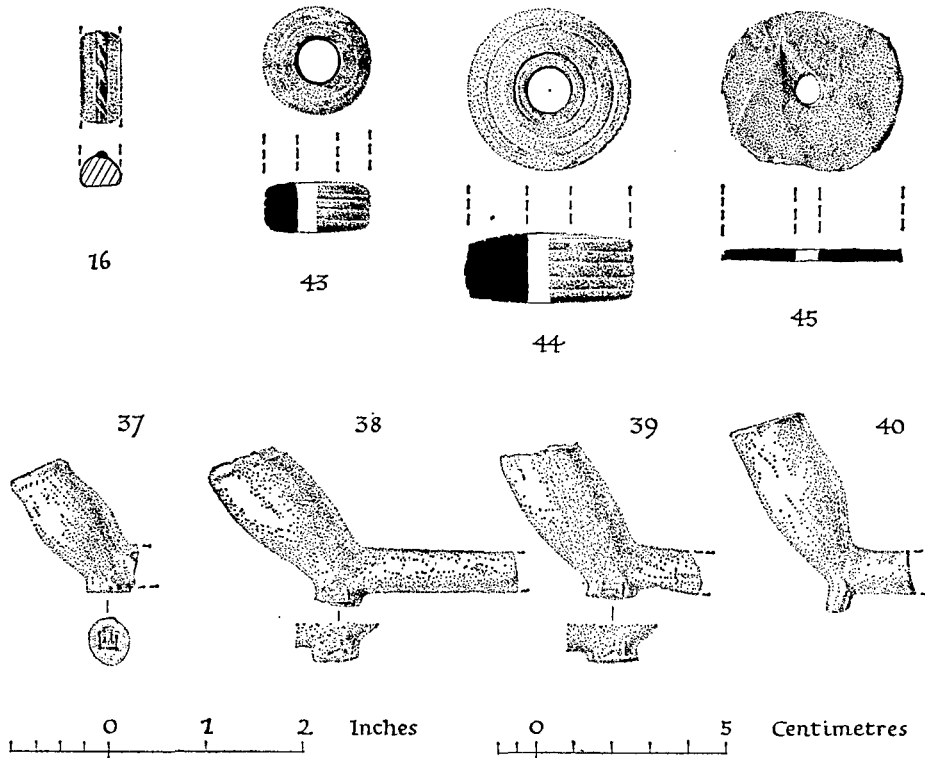


FIG. 5 (1/2)

18. A small phial of bluish-green glass, broken at the neck (Pl. XIV: 1). Height $2\frac{1}{4}$ in., diameter at base 1 inch.

19. An object of uncoloured glass, incomplete, but somewhat resembling the baluster-stem of a wine glass (Pl. XIV: 1).

20 (not illustrated). Part of the folded foot of a wine glass. Uncoloured.

21 (not illustrated). A few fragments of thin greenish or bluish-green glass perhaps from phials. Cf. No. 18.

Iron Objects

22. The head of a wool comb, 5 in. in width and having teeth 3 in. in length (Pl. XIV: 2).

23. A key $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length (Pl. XIV: 2).

24. A small key, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length (Pl. XIV: 2). Found in the filling of the pit in the NE. apartment.

25 (not illustrated). A strap hinge, $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length.

26 (not illustrated). A horse shoe, with parts of a second shoe.

27 (not illustrated). Parts of what appear to be scythe blades, some from the filling of the pit in the NE. apartment.

28 (not illustrated). Part of a nail-studded iron plate, perhaps from a door fitting.

29. A pair of scissors, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length (Pl. XIV: 2).

30 (not illustrated). The leg of a three-legged cooking pot, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length.

31 (not illustrated). A spur.

32. The head of a hay fork with prongs 4 in. in length (Pl. XIV: 2).

33 (not illustrated). A folding knife having a bone handle.

34 (not illustrated). A door hinge of eighteenth-century type.

Objects 29 to 34 were found in the lower part of the occupation layer in the NE. apartment.

35 (not illustrated). Two or three dozen nails, some incomplete, some with heads about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter and shanks $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, others with heads up to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. in diameter the length of the shanks being uncertain.

36 (not illustrated). A few miscellaneous and unidentified iron objects.

Clay Pipes (fig. 5): Cf. *Arch. News Letter*, Vol. 5, No. 12 (1955).

37. Bowl similar to Oswald's Type 5 (c. 1640-70). Incuse mark, apparently a triple-towered castle, on base; this is probably an Edinburgh mark. A pipe bearing a similar stamp is preserved in the Huntly House Museum, Edinburgh. Found in pit filling in NE. apartment.

38, 39. Two bowls similar to Oswald's Type 8 (c. 1680-1720) with parts of two others (not illustrated). Three of the bowls bear the initials IA, in relief, on either side of the base. A similar pipe, bearing the same initials, found at Bells Mills, Edinburgh, is preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities (NQ 99).

40. Bowl similar to Oswald's Type 12 (c. 1820-70).

41 (not illustrated). Fragment comprising the base of a bowl with the upper part of the stem. Not complete enough to date closely, but probably belonging to Oswald's Types 4 or 5 (c. 1620-70). Found in pit filling beneath NW. wall of NE. apartment.

42 (not illustrated). Numerous small fragments of bowls and stems including one found beneath the paved floor in the SW. apartment.

Stone Objects

(a) *Spindle Whorls* (fig. 5)

43. Diameter $1\frac{1}{8}$ in., incised marginal lines. Found in lower part of occupation layer in SW. apartment.

44. Diameter $1\frac{3}{4}$ in., incised lines on both faces and on margin. Slate. Found in pit filling in NE. apartment.

45. Diameter $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. Slate.

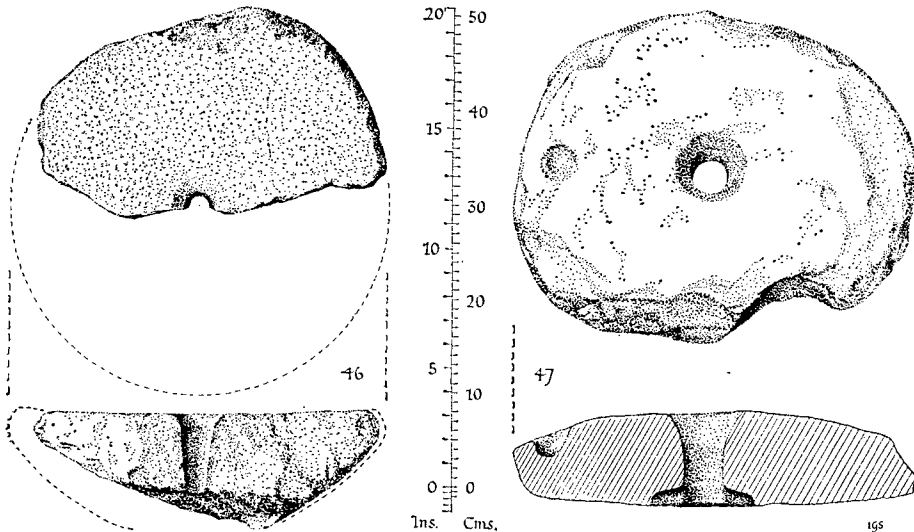


FIG. 6. Querns (1/8)

(b) Querns (fig. 6)

46. Part of a lower stone which has originally had a diameter of about 15 in.; it is uncertain whether or not the spindle socket completely perforated the stone. The rock is 'a quartz-hornblende-diorite with an appreciable proportion of micropegmatite' and probably derives from the Southern Uplands.¹

47. An upper stone having a maximum diameter of 17 in.; there is a handle socket on the upper surface and a socket for a rynd at the base of the aperture. The rock is a coarse pebbly sandstone.

(c) Roof Slates (not illustrated)

48. A number of roofing slates were found, some of them containing nail holes. One example which appeared to be complete, had a width of 10 in. and a maximum thickness of $\frac{1}{2}$ in. A likely source of this material is the Stobo slate quarry a mile and a half NW. of Lour.

(d) Miscellaneous (not illustrated)

49. A fragment of yellowish fine-grained sandstone measuring 7 in. by $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. Two if not three faces have been dressed.

50. A fragment of reddish sandstone measuring 11 in. by $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 3 in.; this fragment may have formed part of a grindstone.

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF SOIL SAMPLES

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General

The pit fillings were found to be rich in unburnt organic matter and were therefore the remains of middens rather than hearths.

Two samples were submitted for analysis, the first (Sample 1) deriving from the filling of the pit beneath the NW. wall of the NE. apartment of Building 6, and the second (Sample 2) from the filling of the pit that was centrally placed at the NE. end of the same apartment.

Sample 1 was a moist uniform black material with greasy feel, drying slowly to form hard lumps on exposure to air. Sample 2 was similar but rather more coarse and crumbly in texture, and contained a few fine roots.

Inclusions

When air-dried samples (*c.* 50 g.) were passed through a 2-mm. sieve, particles of the following types were retained.

Stone - Sample 1 had only two grains of sandstone, but 2 had 4 g. (9%) of fine gravel of hard rocks. *Charcoal* - One grain only, in sample 1. *Humified wood* - Each sample contained about 30 dark grains (0.3 g., 0.5 g.) suggestive of charcoal but found not to mark paper as charcoal does, and to be softened and partly dissolved by hot dilute alkali. Hence they are identified as humified material, remains of woody parts of plants.

Examination of fine earth (passing 2-mm. sieve)

	<i>Sample 1</i>	<i>Sample 2</i>
(a) Air-dry fine earth		
Colour, Munsell notation and name	10YR 2/1 black	5YR 2/2 very dark brown
pH (soil : H ₂ O = 1 : 2.5)	4.0	4.2
(b) Oven-dry fine earth		
Loss on ignition (900°)	42.6	40.7

¹ Information from Mr R. W. Elliot, Geological Survey of Great Britain.

Botanical Examination

In a microscopical examination of part of the original moist samples by Mr David Martin, no plant structures could be recognised.

Discussion

The pit fillings contain very little charcoal and do not owe their dark colour to burning *in situ* or to hearth sweepings. One notes also the absence of stones, burnt bone, etc. such as usually occur in hearth and kitchen refuse.

The fillings are rich in organic matter, the product of the incomplete decomposition under moist acid conditions of the original fillings which must have had a vegetable basis. Structural elements cannot be made out except for signs of wood, presumably fine twigs. Apart from its gravel content, sample 2 is so similar to the other as to suggest identical uses for the two pits. A filling of soiled litter would be consistent with the above findings. The material represented by sample 1 had no admixture of the local earth.

The Society is indebted to H.M. Treasury for meeting the cost of the illustrations for this paper.



1. Building 6. South-west end.

Crown Copyright



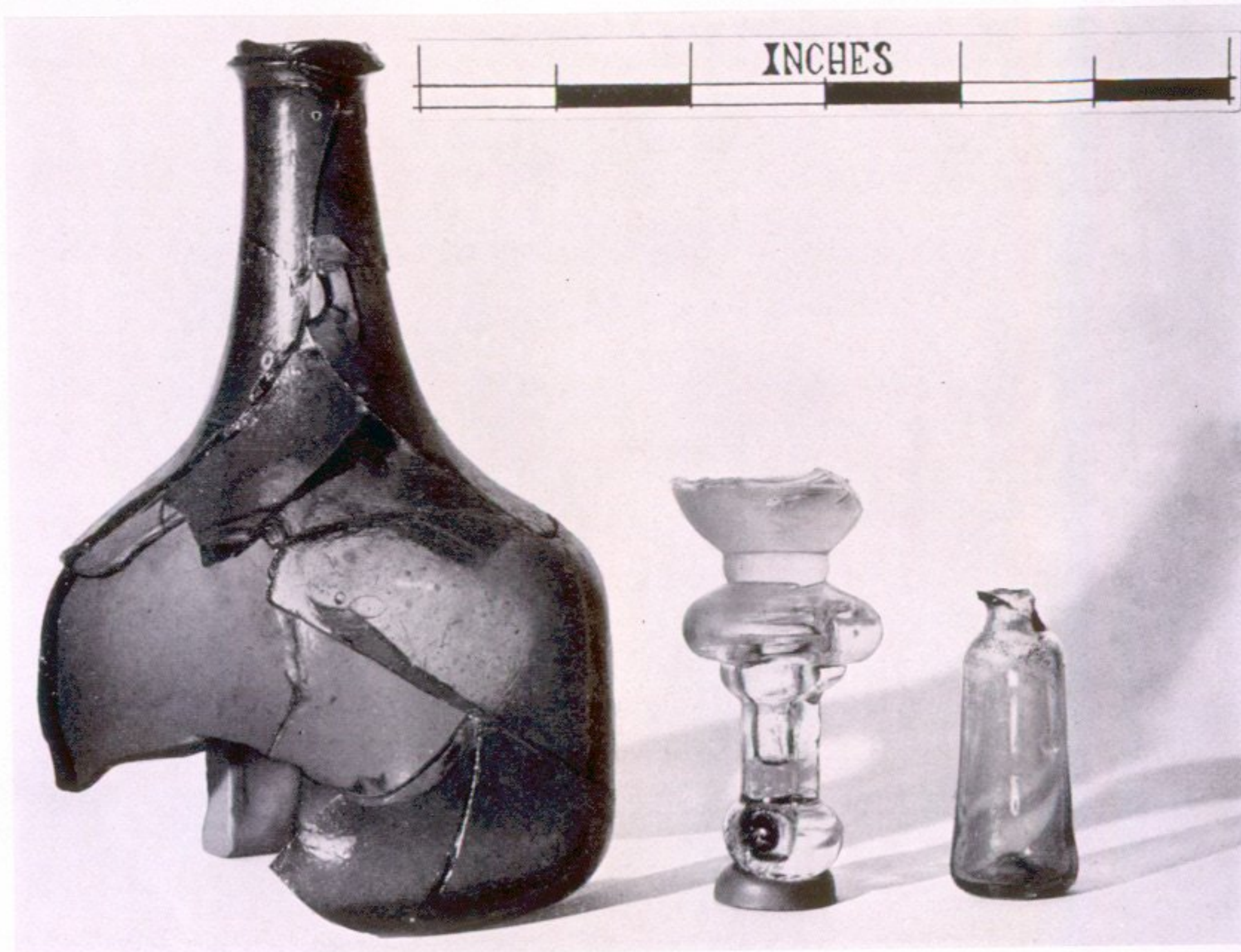
2. Building 6. North-east end; exterior.

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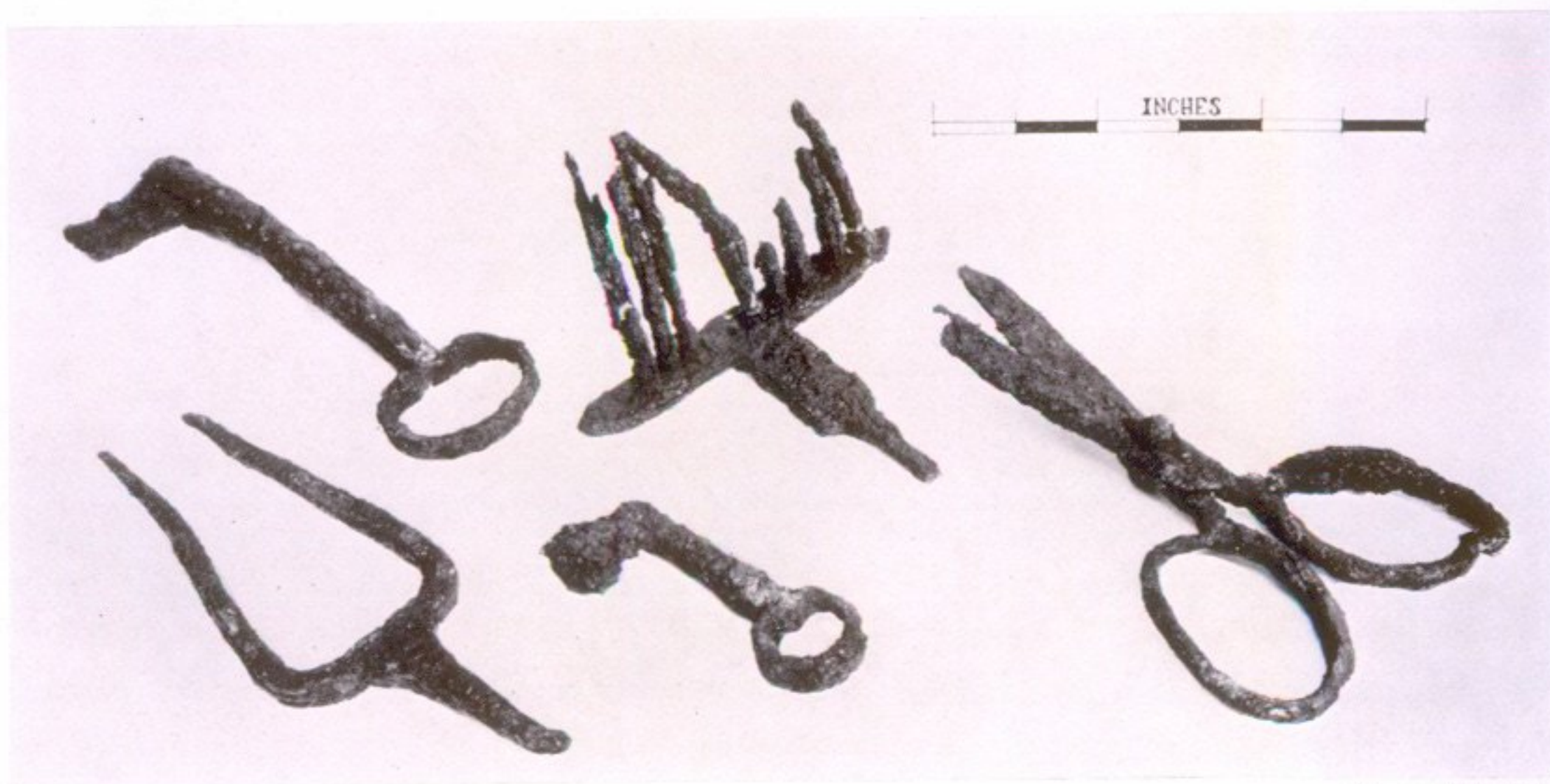
3. Building 6. North-east end; interior.

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1. Glass; Nos. 17, 19 and 18



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2. Iron; top row, Nos. 23 and 22; bottom row, Nos. 32, 24 and 29

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