

A highland longhouse – Lianach, Balquhiddier, Perthshire

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ABSTRACT

Describes the excavation of an 18th-century longhouse with an unusually wide range of associated artefacts.

INTRODUCTION

The parish of Balquhiddier lies in the highland area of western Perthshire. The historical centre is the Kirkton of Balquhiddier (NGR NN 535 208) at the east end of Loch Voil. The River Balvaig flows out of the loch below the Kirkton, into Strathyre and Loch Lubnaig, and is part of the Forth drainage system. Immediately east of its outfall from Loch Voil the Balvaig is joined by the Calair Burn from the south, which drains the tributary valley of Glenbuckie (NN 531 175). About 3 km south of the confluence of the Calair Burn and the Balvaig, the former divides into two headwaters, the smaller Immereon Burn flowing from the head of Glenbuckie itself to the south, and the larger Allt Gleann Dubh draining from the west.

The land embraced between these two streams is the old farming township of Lianach (NN 533 172). The remains extend from the 244 m contour down to the banks of the Immereon Burn at approximately 198 m. Lianach is now a deserted settlement and the lands form part of the existing farm of Immereon which is on the east side of Immereon Burn at the foot of Beinn an t-Sithein. This hill consists of mica schists, and is heath-covered, with scrub woodlands at its base. It encloses Glenbuckie on the east side and divides it from Strathyre. Its craggy summit is 570 m OD. The floor of Glenbuckie is extensively covered with glacial drifts. On the west the glen is enclosed by a limestone range, the principal hill being Ben Vane which rises to 818 m. The limestone slopes and the upper plateau are covered with hill grasses, and with hay pastures at the foot, contrasting with the heaths of the opposite side of the glen. The change in geological and vegetative character is marked by the course of the Immereon Burn, in a small rocky gorge, punctuated by waterfalls.

The name Lianach means a lawn or place of grass. The slopes of Lianach Hill and Ben Vane accommodate extensive shielings, the ruined huts of which remain. A field survey in poor weather produced a count of 82 structures. The main group is named Garrachra, or 'Garraute' in some documents, and lies at the foot of Ben Vane about 2 km south of Lianach (NN 537 153). The southern part of this shieling system is now within recent Forestry Commission intake in upper Glenbuckie. The glen is now a cul-de-sac, the metalled road from the Kirkton of Balquhiddier terminating at the farm of Baillemore on the north bank of Allt Gleann Dubh. A hill track continues westwards and southwards to the Trossachs through Gleann nam Meann and lower Glen Finglas, connecting with

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routes to Clydeside via the Lennox. There is also a track through Glenbuckie to the west side of Loch Lubnaig, connecting with Callander and Stirling, and a footpath from Immereon farmhouse across Beinn an t-Sithein to Strathyre. The isolation of Lianach is a modern phenomenon.

HISTORY

Documentary evidence shows that the township of Lianach was in existence in AD 1502 when it was listed in the *Rentalia Domini Regis*. Garrachra appears in the same list (*ER*, 12, 635, 678). The lands are listed as granted to William Stewart and Walter his son along with most of the lands in Balquhidder later to belong to the earldom of Atholl in the king's rentals for 1508–13 (*ER*, 13, 323, 637). A charter under the Great Seal of James IV dated at Edinburgh on 6 February 1509 grants the lands of 'Leonach of Balquhidder' to one Walter Buchquhannane in free tenement, and to Duncan his son, for the yearly sum of 12 pounds Scots (Atholl MSS, 3/VIII/(1)). In 1531 the lands of Lianach, Garrachra, and Coireachrombie on Loch Lubnaig (NN 584 4096) were granted by James V to George Hume of Lundris by a charter under the Great Seal dated at Stirling on the 22 March. The rental for Lianach was 12 pounds Scots, and eight pounds Scots for Garrachra. Lianach is given as a 'four pound land' and Garrachra as four merklands (Atholl MSS, 3/VIII/(5)). Balquhidder was part of the earldom of Strathearn which was forfeited to the Crown in the 15th and early 16th centuries, hence the direct crown rentals of Lianach. William Stewart and his son Walter were appointed royal baillies of Balquhidder c1490 (Ardvorlich Papers I) and were the progenitors of the Stewarts of Balquhidder, Annat, Glenbuckie, and Ardvorlich.

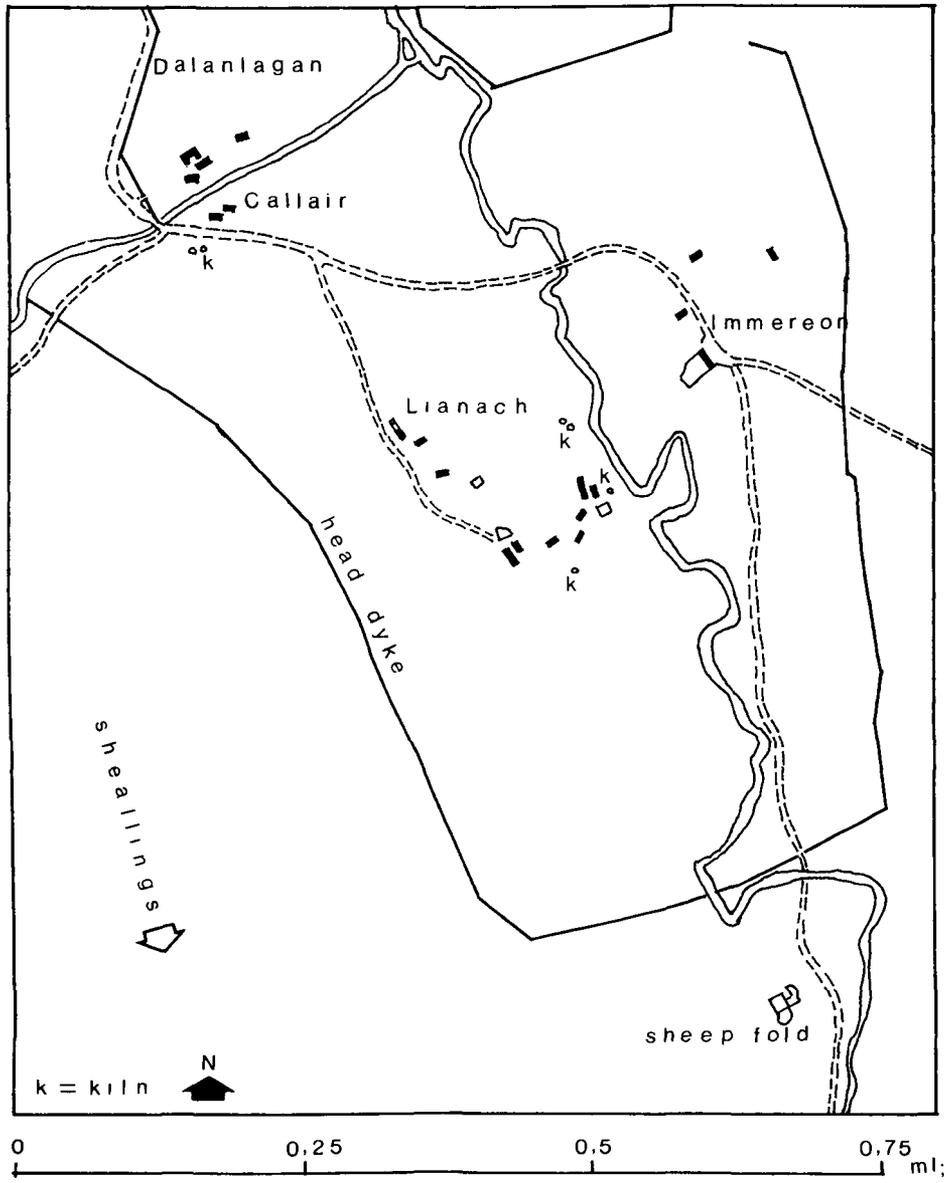
These early charters indicate that Lianach was one of the medieval townships of Balquhidder. The lands of Garrachra appear to have been let with Lianach as a joint holding continuously since 1502. It is not clear if they were always shieling lands or if they may have been classed as a farm township in the medieval period and hence given a separate rental value.

The topographical evidence would seem to support the hypothesis that Garrachra would always have been very marginal land, probably useful only in the summer season. Most of the structures discovered in the field are of a scale and form compatible with shielings. The connection with Coireachrombie appears only in the 1531 charter cited above, and must have been peculiar to the tenancy of Hume and Lundris.

With most of the early Balquhidder settlements, Lianach became part of the estate of Sir John Murray of Tullibardine by charter of King James VI dated at Falkland on 30 July 1587 (Atholl MSS, 3/VIII/(25)). In 1629 John Murray, Master of Tullibardine, received the former Stewart earldom of Atholl, through his mother Lady Dorothea Stewart, heiress of the fifth earl, and the Atholl and Tullibardine estates were joined (*Scots Peerage*, 1, 472). The history of Lianach and Glenbuckie may therefore be reconstructed from sources in estate documents (Atholl MSS, estate rentals, various). What emerges is evidence of continuous occupation of the site from the Middle Ages until the end of the 19th century. On 3 November 1656 an agreement signed at Dunkeld between John, Earl of Atholl and certain of his friends and tenants granted wadsetts of the six merklands of Lianach and the six merklands of Dalanlagan (ie modern Baillemore) to James Stewart (Atholl MSS, 29/1/(1)/175).

The three townships of Dalanlagan, Lianach and Immereon formed the core of the Glenbuckie Estates, and in the Duke of Atholl's hunting roll (Atholl MSS, 29/(12)/1) of 2 September 1667 the principal tenant or tacksman is listed not by name but by title, as 'Glenbuckie', as possessing the whole 18 merklands of the three farms let to subtenants. From analysis of Atholl rentals for Balquhidder between 1663 and 1665, the tacksman's money rentals per merkland were for Immereon 13.33 pounds Scots, for Lianach 22.16 pounds Scots, and for Dalanlagan 24.83 pounds Scots (Atholl MSS, 71/II/B4 (Box 73)).

Analysis of casualties charged shows that Lianach was prominent in the parish for butter, cheese, and cloth, but low in winter cattle and sheep. Eighteenth-century sources (SRO RH 428) indicate that Balquhiddier was productive of linen, and by 1773 there was a small mill at the Kirkton for that purpose. References in the Atholl manuscripts also show that wool was produced as a grey cloth (Atholl MSS, Chartulary of Atholl, pp 220–30; Act of Regality Court 1721). One hypothesis attaching to the place-name Lianach could be that the township may have had a bleaching lawn, but such would place the linen industry in the medieval period in Balquhiddier. To date there is no proof



ILLUS 1 Sites at Lianach (compiled from: Stobie 1787; MacEwan 1808; OS Perthshire 6", CIV, 1863; field survey)

for such a theory. The significance of the analysis is that Lianach emerges as one of the better townships of Balquhiddier in the 17th century.

The rentals of 1663 also indicate one tacksman and two subtenants in Lianach, one tacksman alone in Immereon, and two tacksmen and four subtenants in Dalanlagan. In 1706 a contract of feu between John, Duke of Atholl and John Stewart, tacksman of the 16 merklands of Glenbuckie, reveals some evidence for the form of the holdings (Atholl MSS, XII/72). The component townships are given as Easter and Wester Dalanlagan, Easter and Wester Lianach, and all of Immereon. These are possessed by John Stewart himself and his own subtenants, and by Walter and Donald Stewart and their subtenants, and by cottars of each. Not only do these sources indicate that the townships were in the form of typical highland group farms with a superior tacksman and a second class of principal tenants each with sub-tenants and 'cottars', but they also seem to indicate sub-division of the two major holdings in the early 18th century. This would appear to support a hypothesis for population expansion and extension of settlement which is in keeping with other indicators for a peaking of population in the middle of the 18th century in Balquhiddier (Webster 1755). Analysis of rentals also indicates kinship between tacksmen but not necessarily between the tenants whose family names vary (Atholl MSS XII/72; 43/IIIA/26), although this evidence is difficult to interpret because patronymics only were recorded.

This form of township persisted into the first half of the 19th century. Stobie's map of 1787 (SRO RHP 177) shows three groups of buildings on the 244 m contour at Lianach which correlate with remains on the ground (illus 1). He also shows two buildings on the bank of Allt Gleann Dubh which he names Callair, the ruins of which remain, but these are not named in any documents and may be of late 18th-century origin. Gilbert MacEwen in an estate survey of Glenbuckie dated 1808 (SRO RHP 3369) shows the three township groups also, but adds the great ring dyke enclosing the infield areas of Lianach and Immereon. The first Ordnance Survey of 1863 (Sheet CIV) shows only the single farmhouse of Lianach which now stands as a shell and is used for sheep working and an indication of a few ruins scattered about the old infield areas, some of which do not appear at all on the earlier surveys. The census of Scotland in 1841 registers one family at Lianach and single family occupation continues until the last decade of the 19th century when the farm appears to have been deserted (Census, 1841; 1891). Between 1808 and 1841 Lianach seems to have ceased to exist as a highland group-farm township and to have changed to a single tenancy farm with a new farm house.

A wider study of the Glenbuckie estates (Stewart 1985) indicates that the owners in the late 18th century and the first half of the 19th century were engaged in modernization and improvement and that the estate expanded to take in adjoining farms along the south side of Loch Voil. The last Stewart of Glenbuckie sold the whole estate in 1848. Gilbert MacEwen shows large sheep folds immediately outside the head dyke to the south in 1808 and there is field evidence of drainage work in the wet lands of the valley floor. The evidence points to conversion to extensive sheep farming from the last quarter of the 18th century, commencing with necessary improvements and enclosure of land and followed by improvements in buildings, change to single tenancy, and ultimately according to the census the use of the farm house to accommodate a farm worker.

FIELD EVIDENCE

The holding of Lianach was studied in the field in 1976 along with surveys of other townships in Balquhiddier. Problems of interpretation immediately arose which cannot yet be solved as neither Stobie nor MacEwen agreed completely in their surveys with the field evidence. Both showed, however, three groups of buildings on the upper western side of the site which could be approximately identified with remains on the ground with regard to location. In detail the actual arrangement within each group differed from the early surveys. The northermost group had largely been destroyed by the building of the 19th

century Lianach farmhouse. The Ordnance Survey in 1866 had recorded ruins which were still substantial, and these were easily located in the field, but it did not record the ruins marked only by low house bases and there were remains in the field which appeared on none of the maps.

The remains of 12 buildings, plus the site of one other which had been cleared for a farm roadway, and the additional 19th-century house, yielded a count of 14 known structures. The northermost ruins at Callair lay 500 m from the southernmost on the banks of the Immereon Burn south-east of Lianach farmhouse, across very broken land. Several of the ruins were substantial. In addition the site yielded six kilns and three garden plots.

Apart from the isolated pair of houses at Callair on the northern boundary, which were inspected but not surveyed in detail, the main ruins were surveyed sufficiently to enable measured outline plans to be drawn. Resources did not permit a comprehensive site survey. A general distribution of the ruins of Lianach, combining the field survey with map evidence, could therefore be made (illus 1). There are two main groups of buildings, an upper or western group lying along the 244 m contour which must have been arranged in three sub-groups approximating to Stobie's map; and a lower or eastern group at the foot of the hill beside the Immereon burn, of which only the garden plot is shown on the Ordnance Survey map. There is one building on the slope half way between these main groupings, but which tends to lie more closely to the eastern group. This building is shown on the 1866 Ordnance Survey. Out of the 12 ruined structures the 1866 Ordnance Survey map shows only five 'houses' and one garden plot. None of the kilns is mapped.

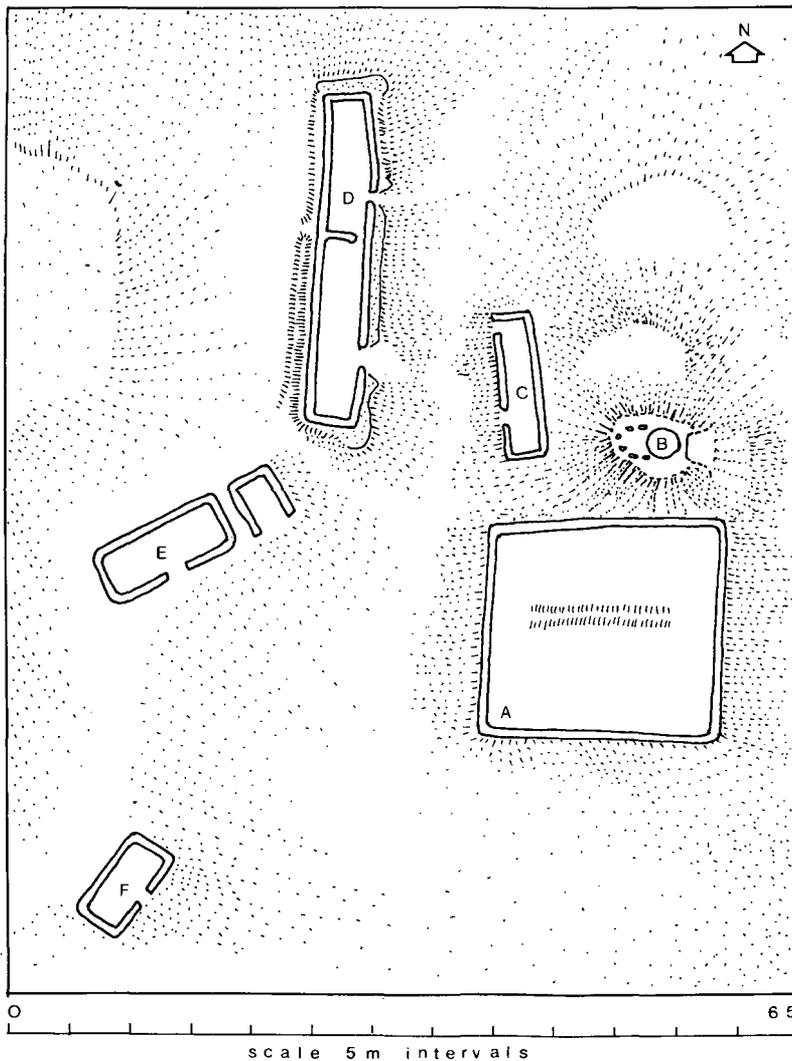
More extensive field walking, assisted by information from Mr I MacVicar, a recent owner of Immereon Farm, confirmed the site of Garrachra and other shielings in the general locality, and also the site of the late 18th-century sheep folds, which would seem to have been further extended in later years. Study of MacEwen's survey and the 1866 Ordnance Survey, combined with field walking, led to the conclusion that the eastern line of the great ring dyke was probably reconstructed about 1860 to 1870, as older foundations alongside the present dyke relate more closely to the 1866 alignment. The western and southern boundary appears to have been completed by 1808.

The emerging hypothesis for extensive change and improvement from 1770 to 1850 is strongly supported by parallel conclusions from the documentary evidence. The remains of this extensive township group were largely undisturbed, being remote from public access, and lying within a farm which had remained within the pastoral economy. Permission was therefore requested to concentrate upon aspects of the settlement. In 1977 a brief site visit by officers of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland confirmed the desirability of investigating one of the ruins in detail, and the principal building of the eastern group was selected for clearing by excavation.

INVESTIGATION OF THE LONGHOUSE

The building is one of a group consisting of four rectangular structures, a large stone-lined kiln, and a garden plot enclosed by a stone wall (illus 2). The garden (A) contained green turf with a small furrow near the centre. The kiln (B) is the largest yet found in Balquhiddel. It is dug into a high moraine with the flue facing east. The kiln bowl is lined with masonry, and the flue access is bridged with a stone lintel. The form resembles that of a lime kiln rather than a corn kiln, but it has not been investigated in detail. There is a level platform about the kiln on the west side with a small kerb of stones. Immediately west of and below the kiln is a building (C) with two doorways facing west on to a hollow way, across which is a large building 27 m in length (D) with two entrances facing east on to the hollow way (illus 3). South-west of (D) and at an angle of 45° to it is another building consisting of a rectangular, single-cell structure with central entrance on the south-east side and an open-fronted square structure adjacent to it separated by a small passage (E). A short distance south from (E) is the foundation of a small rectangular hut with an entrance in the south-east side (F), the low wall bases being largely overgrown with grass. Buildings C, D and E had been of stone construction as evidenced by standing remains of walls and abundance of fallen rubble. Building F may have been constructed of less durable material on a low foundation.

These formed the eastern township group on the Lianach site and apart from the garden plot none was recorded on any maps. The actual interior plans and construction were not ascertainable from superficial inspection. The period of occupation was unknown in relation to the rest of the Lianach township groups which from early maps were almost certainly occupied in the last quarter of the 18th century. Also, no such group of buildings in Balquhiddel had ever been investigated and, as the study of Lianach was part of an extensive settlement research programme in the parish, it appeared desirable to obtain a complete interior plan, and if possible some indication of dates of occupation. The largest



ILLUS 2 Lianach; east township group

structure (D) was also in a state where the interior could safely be cleared by excavation without risk of the collapse of the remaining walls. Excavation of this building was undertaken during the summers of 1977 to 1981.

The spectacular state of the Lianach townships, their completeness and general interest, led to a decision to conserve the standing walls, clearing the interior down to the original floor level and then carefully backfilling to support the masonry. It was therefore important not to leave the building exposed during the severe winter months. Excavation therefore proceeded in four stages, a complete panel of the interior being cleared and back-filled after measuring, each summer season. The building was divided into two-metre grid squares, and markers left so that the geometry could be reconstructed each year. Each section was planned and levelled, resulting in sets of interior plans which were then put together in the drawing office to produce complete plans and sections.

The nearest settlement to have been investigated in west Perthshire was that of Lix in Glen Dochart, by Horace Fairhurst, in 1968–9 (Fairhurst 1969). Study of the report of that investigation indicated the difficulty of finding any artefactual evidence in such settlements, but also demonstrated the desirability of



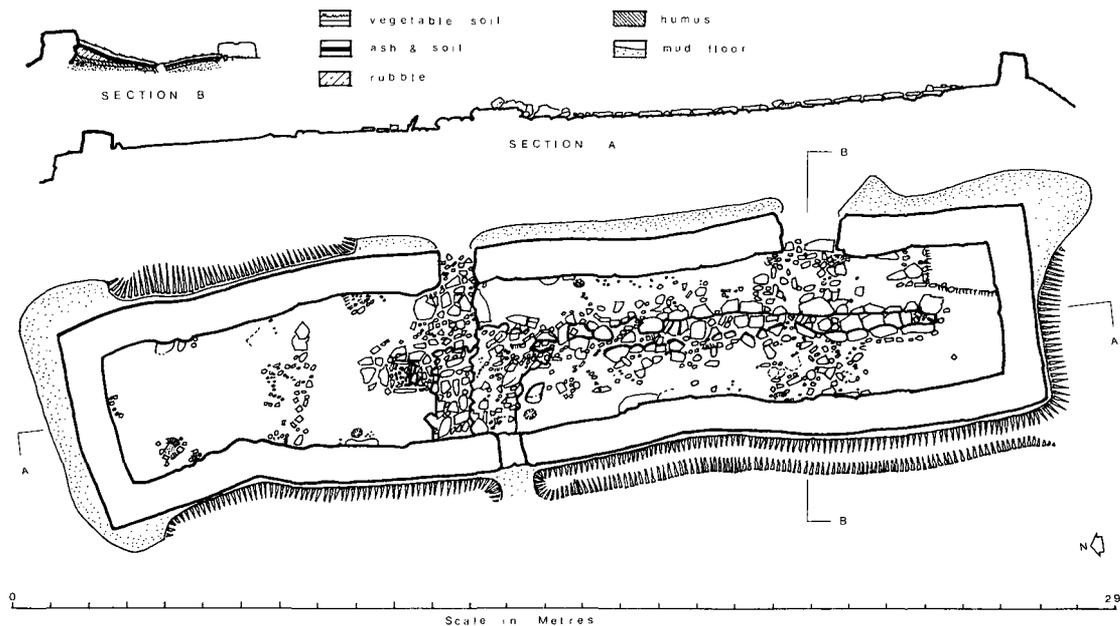
ILLUS 3 Lianach; view eastwards across east township with houses in foreground, the kiln beyond, and Immereon farmhouse in the distance

finding some material. The excavation and clearing of the longhouse at Lianach were therefore approached with great care, trowels being used throughout, and all rubble removed by hand. Spoil was taken out in buckets and carefully stacked separate from rubble, and returned after each survey. The inaccessibility of the site and the undisturbed state of the ruins seemed to indicate that the building had not been disturbed since its collapse. This method of working, while protracting the study over four years with the excavators, James and Mary Stewart, working alone, led to the recovery of a number of artefacts.

RESULTS OF THE EXCAVATION

The longhouse was constructed on a foundation platform built of large, roughly squared stones on the crown of a gravel moraine which formed a spur of land jutting into the lower area surrounding it (illus 2). The platform measures 27 m in length along its north-south axis (illus 4). The western side, facing up hill, is protected by a small ditch. Upon this platform rubble masonry, 1 m thick at the base and tapering upwards, was constructed in two leaves of stonework with a rubble core. Some of the stones had been split or roughed-out to a square face on the wall faces, but most were random in form. The courses which had remained protected by fallen masonry were set in a thick sticky clay bedding and the amount of washed-out clay suggested that this construction had been used for the full height of the walling. The building, outside the walls, measures 25.5 m on the long axis, and varies from 5 to 6 m in width. The original setting out had been very roughly done, and the outline took in some large boulders which may have been on the site. A very irregular plan results (illus 4), narrower at the ends than at the centre, with the north end canted to the west. In section the floor level falls approximately 1.5 m from the south to the north end.

A series of postholes of varying depth along the inside bases of the walls, which contained decayed wood and considerable fragments of charcoal, suggests that the roof was constructed inside the walls upon earth-set crucks. These post-bases are aligned opposite each other and a structure of eight bays was



ILLUS 4 Lianach; plan of longhouse

suggested with the purlin ends resting upon the gables. Careful note was taken of the lie of the fallen walling as the house was cleared and the volume and disposition suggested that the ends had collapsed inwards in a way indicating proper triangular gables. The long west wall had also collapsed inwards, filling the interior deep with rubble on that side. The east wall had partly collapsed inwards but a substantial volume of its rubble lay outside the building. Such a pattern seems to suggest a fairly sudden collapse of the structure rather than gradual decay through weathering. The postholes each yielded charred wood and in clearing the interior the rubble was overlain with a uniform layer of dusty loose material of a sooty or ash-like consistency, which underlay the later vegetable cover. Small crystals of charcoal were widely spread on the floor. The hypothesis is of destruction by fire, the roof system collapsing and taking the wall heads and gable with it. No remains of timbers existed and several stones on the floor were red and split with heat.

Internally the building was divided into two main compartments by the base of a stone wall set again in clay. The south end was a byre with a long central drain and a separate entrance on the east side leading to a ramp down to the hollow way in front of the house. The west kerb of the drain was severely disturbed, having clearly been pushed out of line by falling masonry which was lodged in it. The east kerb was more or less complete but the paving in the base of the drain had been shattered and displaced in places by fallen stones from the wall. The remains of a threshold stone, and rough paving inside the doorway, reinforced the heavily trodden areas but the rest of the floor was of beaten earth. A small square of floor was trowelled through showing that about 55 mm of hard earth floor overlay the natural gravel of the moraine beneath. The earth floor was in two laminates. There was a small slightly raised and level area in the south-east corner, beside a large flat round paver which was about the size to hold a pail. The north end of the byre was separated from the house by a large natural boulder on to which a partition wall had been built. Access to the dwelling area which occupied the north end of the building was through a doorway, down a single step with a stone tread.

In the south-west corner of the byre was a large standing stone, surrounded by sherds of dairy pottery. Against the east wall near the doorway into the house was a heap of decayed manure in which the tines of a byre graip were found. Part of a green glass bottle was found at the foot of the east wall opposite the external entrance to the byre. Shattered fragments of a round iron cooking pot were found in the north end of the byre drain, together with many small stones and some bloomery slag. This material may have been dumped in the building after its desertion, as a heap of small stones overlay the base of the division wall, in line with a small break in the outside wall of the house and an in-filled part of the eastern ditch,

leading one to suspect field-clearance dumping. All other artefacts were found at floor level beneath infill.

The north end of the building contained a dwelling, entered through a narrow doorway immediately adjacent to the interior door to the byre. In the south-east corner was a raised paved stone platform against the division wall, about the correct size for a bed. A little in front of this was an open hearth, cobbled with small stones set within kerbs, with a backstone on the south side (illus 5). Two flat-topped stones set at the front corners appeared to be hobs. The area around the hearth and entrance was paved. The remainder of the house had the same rammed earth floor as the byre. Dividing the floor area into two was a roughly arranged line of small stones marking a change of level of about 100 mm.



ILLUS 5 Lianach; the longhouse hearth with hob stones at the front corners and broken backstones behind

At the north side two worn flagstones were set in the floor like threshold stones. Against this dividing feature on its north side was a massive area of burnt earth and charred wood which may suggest a timber partition or some kind of furniture. Fragments of clothing were found in this area and sherds of pottery. Against the east wall, 4.5 m from the north gable, were found fragments of thin sheet glass and the shadow of a rectangular wooden object in the floor which could have been part of a small frame. These could have been part of a mirror or a small window. The latter suggestion was supported by two long stones which could have fitted the frame as jambs, sills, or lintels. There is documentary evidence of glass windows in Balquhiddier in the second half of the 18th century (SRO RH 428). Glass beads, glassware, and pottery sherds were found. The remains of a lock and other metal objects were also found in the house. Near the hearth, against the east wall, the head and part of the shaft of a turf spade and blades of two sickles were found with a collection of hones. Parts of several green bottles were found along the walls.

INDICATIONS OF THE USE OF THE BUILDING

The byre is substantial and would have accommodated a good number of beasts. Stake-holes along the walls indicated the possibility of mangers and tethering points or trevisies. The discovery of dairy crockery sherds at the house end of the byre indicates the probability of milk- and cream-production which

correlates with the analysis of the casualty payments in the Lianach rentals. The generous separate byre entrance may also indicate a good supply of beasts coming and going. The somewhat sophisticated division of the byre from the house, with a communicating doorway, may indicate the status of the family, in addition to the size of the accommodation. It has to be noted that in the pastoral economy numbers of cattle were important to status, and that the scale of provision for animals may reflect this.

The dwelling is smaller than the byre, and appears to have been subdivided into the usual butt and ben. The nature of the finds suggests that the inner area was used by the females, while the outer area was used as a general cooking and eating space, and also a space for keeping and servicing the simple agricultural tools. The ash found in the hearth was from peat burning. This seems to have been the male domain as well as the general family and public space. Postholes by the doorways indicated doors hung on the inner face of the walls, and the house face of the division wall into the byre. There were also postholes for door posts at the external entrance to the byre. The door seems to have been located alongside cruck frames, possibly using these as one of the door posts.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

From the analysis of the finds (see below) the longhouse appears to have been occupied throughout the 18th century. The contract of feu of 1706 cited above indicates two parts of Lianach by that date, and although nomination of subdivisions of highland settlements by reference to compass points is not always accurate, the group to which the longhouse belongs is correctly situated in relation to other groups to support the probability that it is part of East Lianach. Such an hypothesis would support the likely date of occupation deduced from the artefactual evidence.

The house is the largest of the Lianach site and the most sophisticated in provision of entrances and divisions. It is possible that it was the home of a principal tenant or tacksman as the contract shows John Stewart of Glenbuckie as holding the whole estate of Lianach, Dalanlagan and Immereon, with two other tacksmen, Walter Stewart and Donald Stewart, sharing under him. The Christian names are all traditional to the Balquhiddier Stewart families, and there is a strong probability that the three were kin. Without further excavation it is impossible to be certain about the structure of the group as a whole (illus 2), but the buildings could possibly be a principal tackman's house (D), two sub-tenants' houses (C and E), and one 'cottar's' hut (F).

The use of lime for agriculture commenced in Balquhiddier parish before 1755 (SRO RH 428), and if the construction of the great kiln tends to indicate lime burning, then it would suggest a date in the second half of the 18th century. All the other kilns on Lianach are of the traditional small corn-kiln type with long, curved flues. The western groups of Lianach are closely related to a line of perpetual springs rising out of the slope above, the stream from one of these flowing towards the eastern group which also has access to Immereon Burn.

The hypothesis which may be drawn is that the longhouse and its adjoining buildings represent an expansion of the settlement at the beginning of the 18th century, which would accord with the documentary evidence. The upper or western groups are also much further decayed and overgrown but it is probable that they were robbed of stone to construct the 19th-century farmhouse.

One enigma remains to complicate the problem of phasing occupation. That is that the western or upper groups remain on Stobie and MacEwen's maps of 1787 and 1808, whereas the eastern group does not. The question remaining is were these lower buildings deserted before 1787? The old *Statistical Account* for Balquhiddier in 1791 records a reduction in the parish population to 1300 from 1592 people in Webster's *Census* of c 1755. It also registers southern Blackface sheep as forming the main flocks in the parish. In the *History* of the Carnegie Earls of Southesk (Fraser 1867) it is stated that the first major depopulation of Balquhiddier took place after 1745, and that houses were burnt. It is possible that the group investigated, being the most difficult of access was formed to accommodate expansion around 1700, and then deserted by the end of the century.

The research and field work exemplify the problem of analysing the development of highland settlements such as Lianach without much more extensive archaeological investigation. It also shows how documentary and field evidence may combine to build up a reasonable hypothesis for a pattern of evolution and decline. Studies in England now summarized (Taylor 1983) point to the instability of settlements and the constant rebuildings and removals within a larger, relatively stable, territory, as being the norm. Work at Lianach shows that the same problem applies in the Scottish Highlands where, within a holding which can be shown to have been demarcated as a township by the end of the high medieval period, the actual settlement now visible on the ground scattered as it may be over a wide area (illus 1), may not only differ from the original, but may in itself represent periods of expansion and decline. It is usual to find that only parts of such settlements have escaped the forces of modern farming and forestry and in Glenbuckie there still survive some relatively complete examples where detailed study is possible in the field. To begin to solve the enigmas still remaining, samples of buildings from the other groups would need to be investigated archaeologically. The work has shown, however, the manner and extent of the changes which occurred, where primitive medieval standards of living persisted through the main period of agricultural improvement, to be quite suddenly replaced by the standards exemplified in a multi-apartment farm house with four fireplaces, stone chimneys and separate outbuildings.

Sources indicate that Gaelic was the common language until the end of the 19th century (Census 1891), and that Highland dress was worn (Atholl MSS, 45.II.56a). Recent research (Withers 1983) has shown that Balquhiddel lay consistently within the Gaelic linguistic boundary. The wider research into settlements in Balquhiddel, of which this study forms a part, points to the fundamental local settlement pattern being one of typical Highland form, in a society which, while retaining Highland language and custom, had been part of a feudal community since the end of the 15th century, with no evidence of the clan system but strong kinship ties within local groups and across the parish. Lianach must therefore have been part of this transitional pattern, and from superficial surveys the longhouse may represent a typical dwelling type of its period. The rich distribution of ruins shown in illus 1 is similar to other survival sites in the remoter parts of the parish, many of which have been affected by new forestry work since the survey here reported was begun.

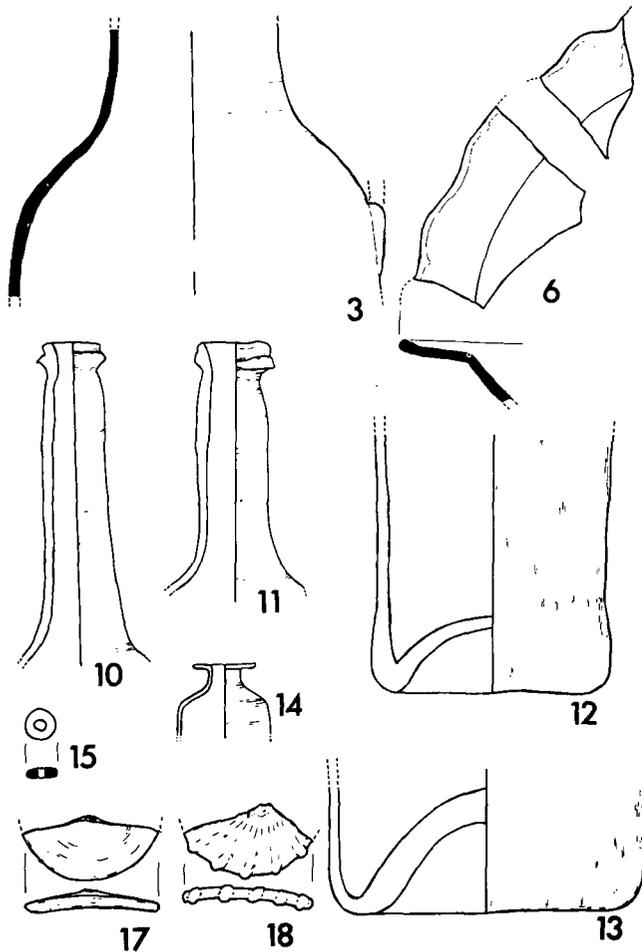
THE ARTEFACTS

David H Caldwell and Susan Wingrove

The finds from the longhouse have been gifted to the National Museums of Scotland. At the time of writing their conservation is incomplete and the drawings of the ironwork in particular had to be made with the aid of radiographs. Much of the pottery and glass is too fragmentary for meaningful drawings to be made of it; and some of the lesser pieces, and some smaller pieces of corroded iron, are not included in the following list. Items not drawn are marked with an asterisk.

POTTERY (illus 6)

- *1 Post-medieval, 'Throsk type', earthenware; several body sherds, reduced grey fabric, green lead glaze; probably mostly from large jugs; 17th century.
- *2 Post-medieval, 'Throsk type', earthenware; body sherd, buff colour with remains of brown/green glaze on interior surface; probably from a bowl or skillet; 17th century.
- 3 Coarse red earthenware jug, brown lead glaze with green speckles; part of neck and shoulder only.
- *4 Red earthenware sherd, brown lead glaze; part of handled bowl, jug or teapot.
- *5 Red earthenware sherds, brown lead glaze; including parts of a bowl; rim diameter 130 mm.
- 6 Creamware plate, 'royal pattern' design; substantial fragments; late 18th century.
- *7 Creamware bowl sherd; approximate rim diameter 100 mm.
- *8 Pearlware plate sherd; tiny fragment of rim with blue 'grass' border.



ILLUS 6 Lianach; pottery and glass (scale 1:3)

- *9 Brownware bowl sherds, brown lead-glazed exterior, the interior cream with brown mottling (milk dish).

GLASS (illus 6)

- 10 Wine bottle neck, green glass.
 11 Wine bottle neck, green glass. There are another two necks of similar proportions.
 12 Wine bottle base, green glass. There is another of similar size.
 13 Wine bottle base, green glass.
 14 Medicine bottle, fragments of neck and shoulders, clear glass.
 15 Glass bead, translucent yellow.
 *16 Two tubular glass beads, opaque red; 2 mm×2 mm.
 17 Wine glass, fragment of foot, clear white glass.
 18 Wine glass (?), fragment of scalloped foot, translucent white glass.

IRON (illus 7-10)

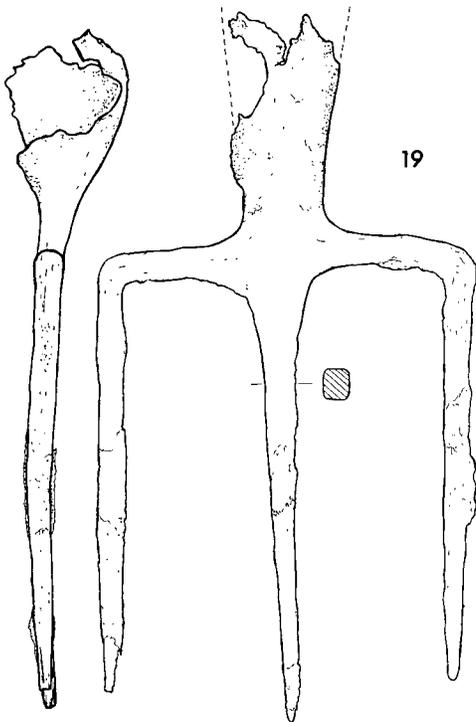
- 19 Fork (byre graip).
- 20 Spade, with narrow pointed blade and remains of wooden shaft in socket.
- 21 Carding comb.
- 22 Lock.
- 23-24 Nails.
- 25-28 Pieces of ironwork.
- 29 Unidentified piece of iron.
- 30 Sickle, probably originally toothed.
- 31 Sickle. Remains of teeth show up on X-ray.
- 32-34 Knife blades.
- 35 Iron strap.
- 36 Mattock head.
- 37-38 Buckles.
- *39 Cast iron, 3-legged cooking pot; fragments only.

COPPER ALLOY (illus 9)

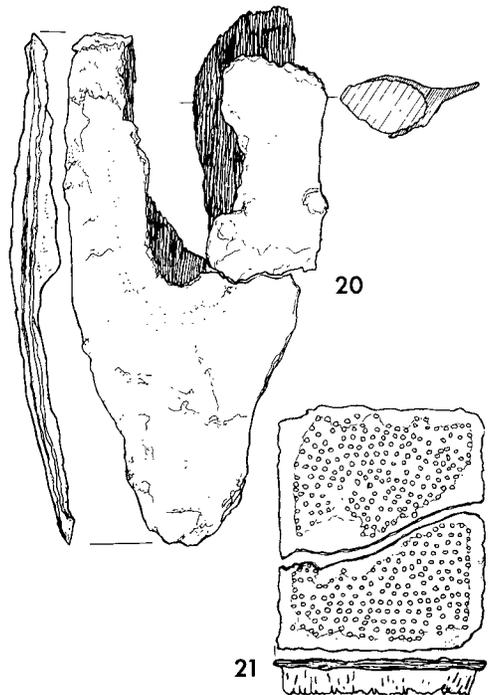
- 40-42 Buttons. No 42 has a slightly concave surface to hold a disc front. Three other fragments of similar buttons with cloth adhering are not illustrated.
- 43 Highland brooch fragment, engraved with a square within a circle design, on one side only.

PEWTER (illus 9)

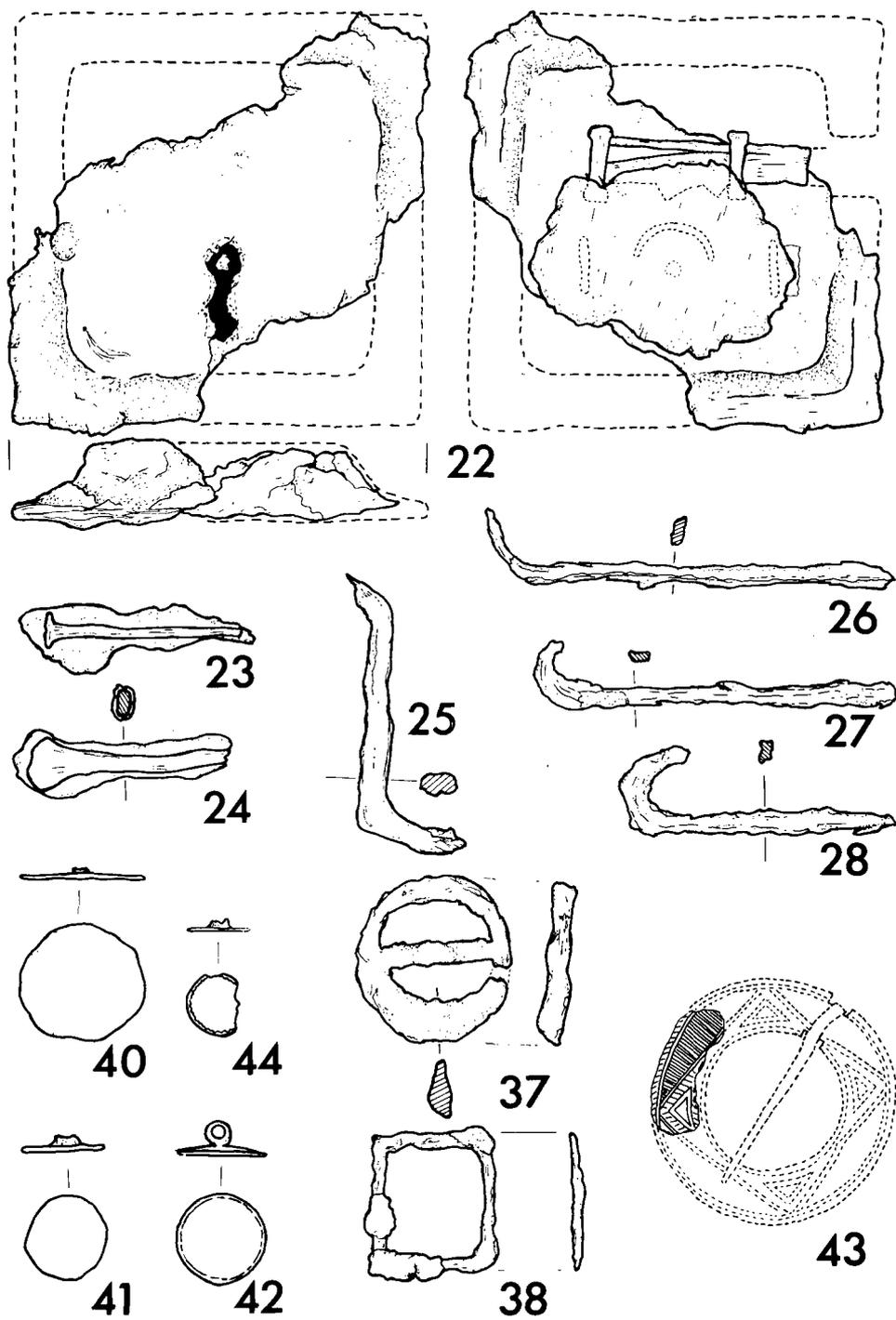
- 44 Button, with zig-zag engraved border.



ILLUS 7 Lianach; byre graip (scale 1:4)



ILLUS 8 Lianach; iron (scale 1:4)



ILLUS 9 Lianach; iron, pewter and copper alloy (scale 1:2)

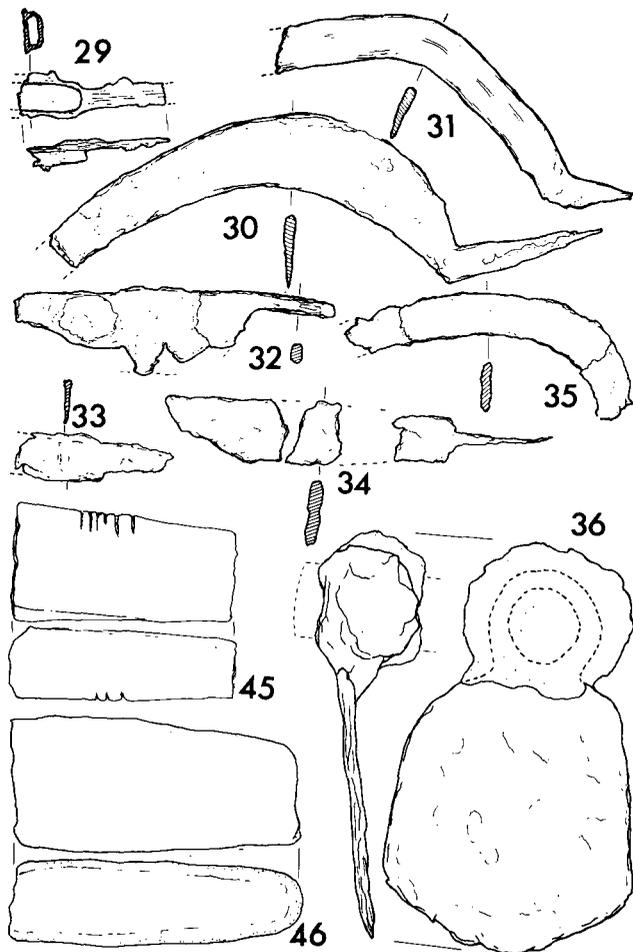
STONE (illus 10 & 11)

45–48 Scythe-stones, made from carboniferous sandstone, possibly from the Stirling area.

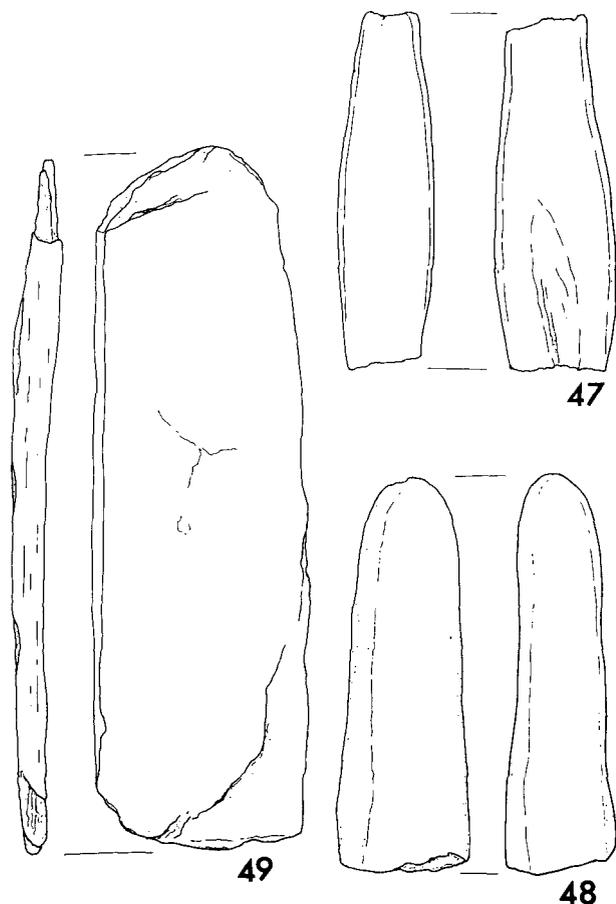
49 Whetstone, made of Dalradian phyllite, possibly from the Aberfoyle area.

These finds from the longhouse at Lianach give a fascinating insight into life in Balquhiddier in the 18th century. The range of items represented – clothes, pottery, glass and tools – is surprisingly complete and goes some way to suggesting the quality of life enjoyed by the occupants. This evidence is all the more important since it is difficult to match it with archaeological discoveries from similar sites elsewhere. The archaeological study of rural settlements of the medieval and post-medieval periods in Scotland has, as yet, hardly started.

The excavators of Lianach noted that most of the artefacts listed here came from the floor level of the house and byre and were therefore likely to date to the period of occupation of the house. Certainly none of the material, including the fragments of the iron cooking pot thought possibly to have been deposited once the building was deserted, need date any later than the early 19th century and most belongs quite happily in an 18th century context. Greater precision in dating is for the most part not possible.



ILLUS 10 Lianach; iron and stone (scale 1:3)



ILLUS 11 Lianach; stone (scale 1:3)

The sherds of post-medieval earthenware, however, may be residual material from an earlier phase of structure on or near the site, though it is possible that such pottery was being produced well into the 18th century and could of course have survived in use for a number of years. In appearance this pottery is very like that recovered in large quantities at Throsk a few miles to the east of Stirling where, on the basis of documentary research and field survey, it is known that it was extensively manufactured in the 17th century (Caldwell & Dean 1986). Similar pottery, mostly jugs, has been recovered from the River Forth, including a (?) boat load near Gargunnoch, the Lake of Menteith, the River Endrick by Loch Lomond, and the River Balvaig at Balquhider, about two miles from Lianach, suggesting a trade in this pottery, largely waterborne, to the surrounding areas. (All this pottery is in the collection of the National Museums of Scotland.)

Whether from Throsk or not this 'Throsk type' ware occurs ubiquitously throughout Scotland and may be the first wheel-turned and glazed pottery to make significant inroads into the highlands and islands, which before the 17th century appear to have been largely aceramic. Sherds of it have been recovered from Arnol in Lewis, from Lochleven in Invernessshire, from Loch Long, Breachacha Castle on Coll, Achanduin Castle on Lismore and the castle in Loch Dochart. (Pottery from Loch Long and Loch Dochart in National Museums; from Breachacha and Achanduin recovered in recent excavations by Denis Turner; sherd from Arnol in a private collection.) Why the

highlanders should, in the 17th century, have felt a need for pottery jugs brought in from the lowlands is difficult to imagine. There is, in fact, little evidence of penetration of the highlands and islands by lowland manufacturers before the 17th century with the notable exception of weapons, particularly sword blades which were imported from the continent, presumably via merchants in the Scottish burghs.

The rest of the pottery reflects the continuing penetration of Balquhider by manufactures from the lowlands and England. Owing to our lack of detailed knowledge of the 18th–19th-century ceramics industry in Scotland it is not clear how much of this is Scottish-produced. It is likely that the red earthenware jug and milk dish are. Some of the sherds are of good quality tableware, like the creamware plate and bowl, and much of this probably came from factories in the English Midlands.

There is no reason to think that the wine bottles got to Lianach other than as receptacles for wine. As most recently shown by Kay and MacLean (1983), the drinking of wine, particularly claret, went deep and wide in Scottish 18th-century society.

Much of the ironwork represents objects coming in from the lowlands. The lock is a traditional type, varying little from medieval antecedents, and would have been made by a locksmith in one of the burghs. The cooking pot is almost certainly a product of one of the lowland foundries like the Carron Company near Falkirk. Of the agricultural implements at least the fork may have come from a lowland forge.

The one item from the whole assemblage which is clearly of highland and probably of local manufacture is the brooch. Its simple geometric design of a square within a circle is known on other late highland brooches, like three in the National Museum, Edinburgh, all of which have late, simple loop-headed pins. These brooches were worn by women to fasten their plaids.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement is given to I MacVicar, Esq and W Hendry, Esq, for permission to carry out field work and excavations at Lianach; to Dr Margaret Stewart of Perth for advice in the early stages of the project, and to Messrs J Dunbar and G Stell of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland for guidance in selection of the building for excavation and survey.

Dr Caldwell and Ms Wingrove wish to thank many colleagues for helpful advice and comments on the finds, particularly Gavin Sprott, Graeme Cruickshank and Nigel Ruckley.

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