

FYVIE CASTLE, AB53 8JS
Watching brief on garden wall repair
FYC13/1



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21 March 2014

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Illustrations

Cover The main section of repaired wall (top) facing west; (bottom) section facing NW

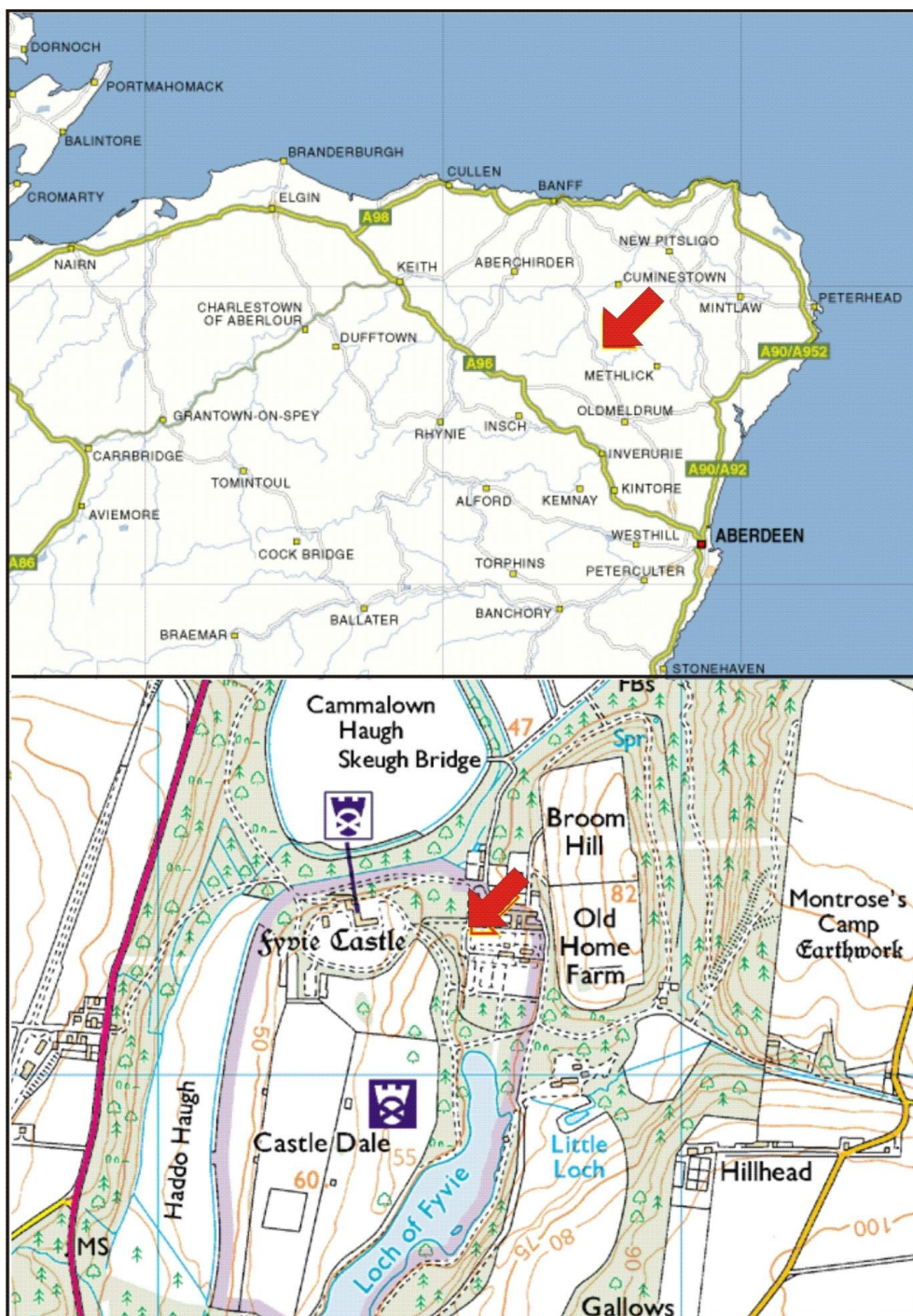
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Summary

From 27th September - 28 October 2013 an archaeological watching brief was maintained during the repair of a garden wall. The wall was recorded and characterised but no reused stonework was identified and the wall was then repaired and restored. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during this work.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Fyvie Castle lies immediately north of the village of Fyvie, Aberdeenshire (NJ 7636 3928), on lands forming a Royal seat in the 13th century and retained by the Crown until the late 14th century. A castle at Fyvie is first mentioned in a Royal Charter of 1211/14. In its original form the Castle sat within an enclosure delineated by a massive curtain wall; traces of the east range of the wall (demolished in the late 18th century) and a range of buildings built against it were revealed during archaeological excavations in 1985 (Shepherd 1985). The present building incorporates medieval fabric, some possibly as early as the 13th century; late 16th/early 17th-century work, late 18th-century additions and modifications, and late 19th-century fabric (Fraser 2010).



Illus 1 Location plan showing Fyvie Castle plan (NTS OS licence 100023880)

2 BACKGROUND

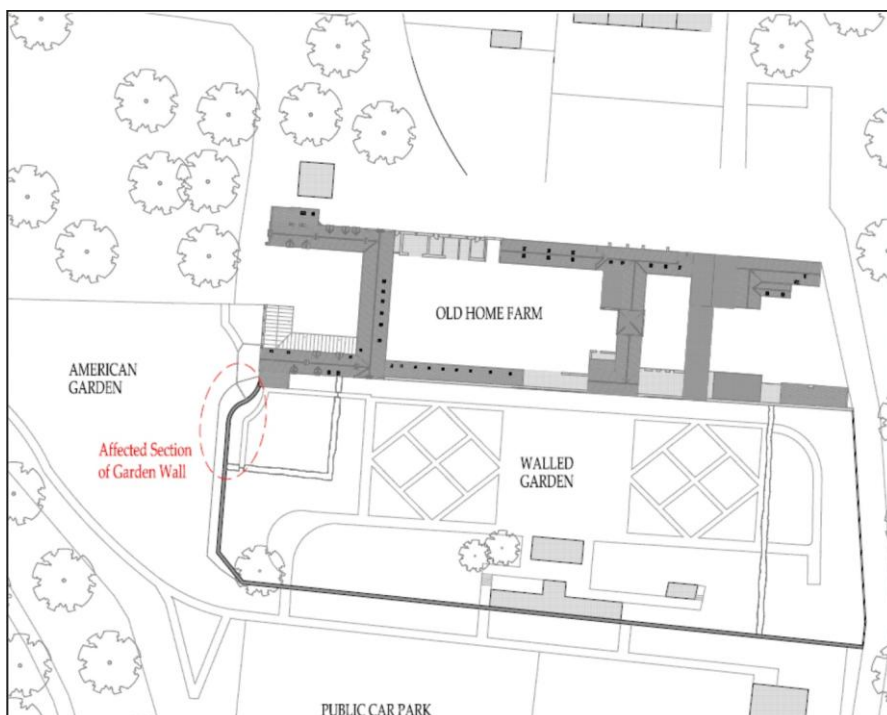
- 2.1 Three previous intrusive archaeological interventions are known at the castle. In 1985 a trench 12m north of the Preston Tower revealed the footings of a wall 2.9m thick, probably the east side of an early curtain wall (Shepherd 1985, 17). In 1988 an archaeological observation took place during cabling work (Shepherd 1988, 13).
- 2.2 Excavations in 2010- 2012 by the current author revealed well-preserved remains of a possible chapel on the south side of the Preston Tower, formal gardens on the south and south-west of the castle probably dating from the late 16th century and possible bowling green surface west of the Leith Tower. Earlier remains were uncovered including earlier surfaces, a clamp kiln and large post-holes probably the remains of 13th-century defences (Cameron 2010, 21; Cameron 2011, 19, Cameron 2012). The red sandstone from the garden and building walls during the redevelopment of the garden may have been used in the Home Farm buildings and this watching brief took place to determine the construction of this wall.

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

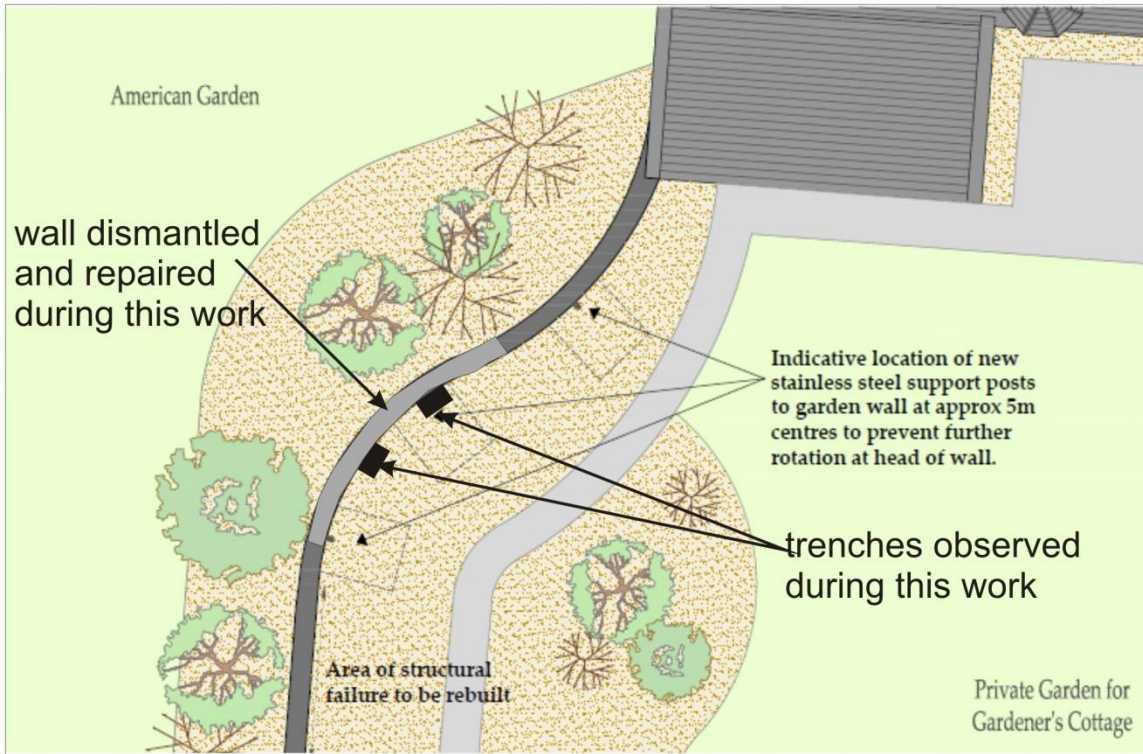
Cameron Archaeology maintained a watching brief in September and October 2013 during the preparation for, dismantling and repair of a garden wall between the Old Home Farm walled garden and the American Garden (Illus 2, 3).

The wall is 2m high and 0.45m wide and is constructed mainly from small and medium fragments of slaty stone which formed much of the facade of the wall and some of the core. Large and medium granite fieldstones were also used in the wall (Illus 4). As a result of the poor quality of the stone and its proportions there were areas which required to be dismantled and rebuilt. Several areas were dismantled and the stone were inspected but no red sandstone or other reused stone was identified.

Two trenches (1 x 0.5m and 0.4m deep) dug for new supports revealed a layer of loamy topsoil 0.2-0.3m deep on top of compact reddish brown stony natural subsoil. No archaeological features or finds were identified.



Illus 2 Plan showing location of the works (NTS OS licence 100023880)



Illus 3 Plan showing location of observed trenches and wall repairs (NTS OS licence 100023880).



Illus 4 The wall showing laminated slaty stone and large and medium granite fieldstone construction; facing west



Illus 5 Trench for wall support, facing NW

4 REFERENCES

- Cameron, A 2010 'Fyvie Castle: excavation' *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, New Series, Vol 11, 21.
- Cameron, A 2011 'Fyvie Castle' *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland for 2011*, New Series, Vol 12, 19.
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- Fraser, S 2010 'Fyvie Castle, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire, Castle Environs Project 2010 FYC/10/1'. Unpublished Project Outline document.
- Fraser, S, Cameron, A and Addyman, T forthcoming 'Fyvie Castle'. Report on the excavations, building recording and historical research.
- Shepherd, IAG 1985 'Fyvie Castle' *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, 17.
- Shepherd, IAG 1988 'Fyvie Castle' *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, 13.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Annie Robertson and Shannon Fraser, National Trust for Scotland; site staff from Laing Tradition Masonry.

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

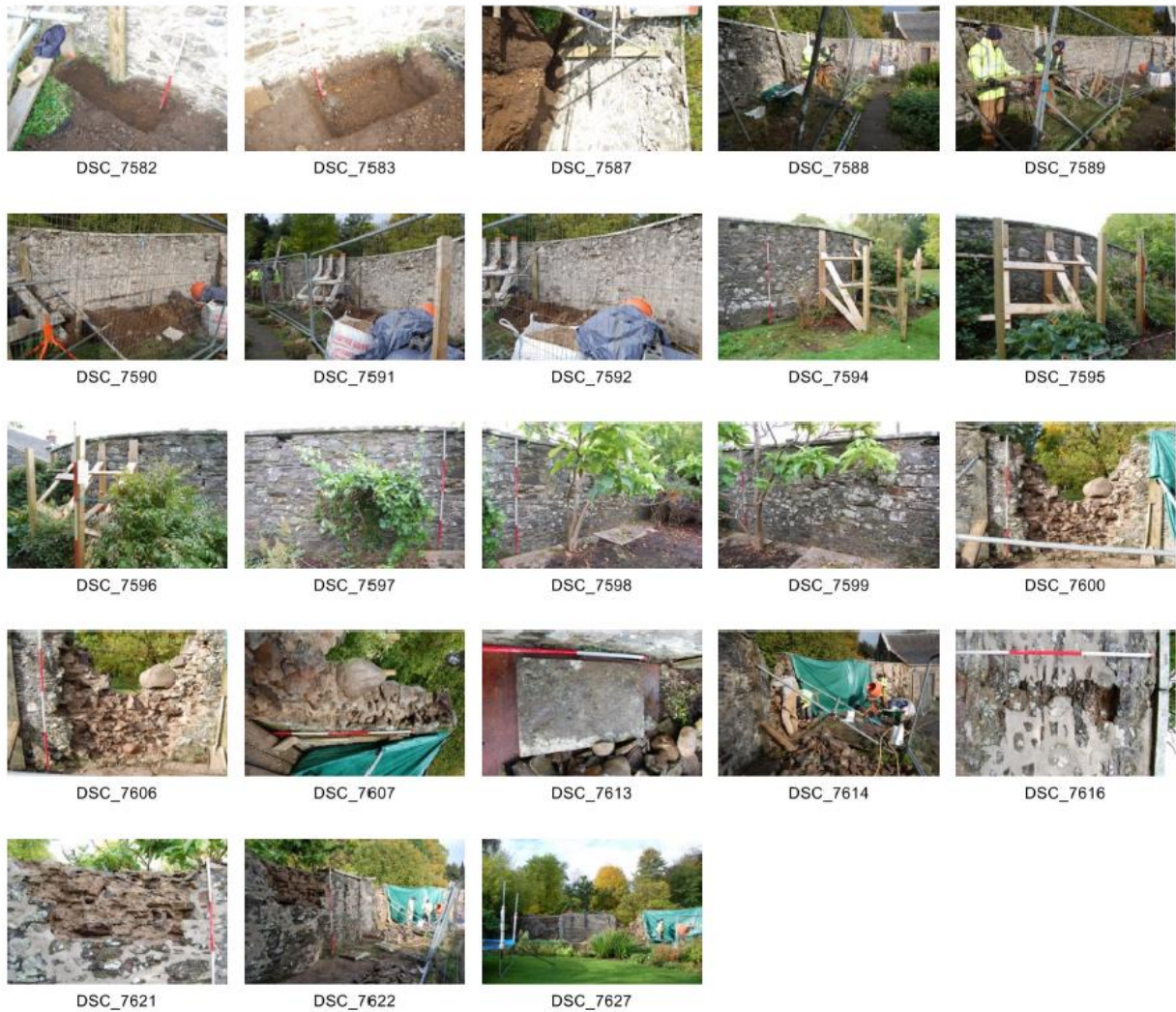


Photo no	Description	Facing
DSC7582	Trench for support posts	SW
DSC7583	Trench for support posts	NW
DSC7587	Trench for support posts	SW
DSC7588	east side of wall during rebuilding work	NW
DSC7589	east side of wall during rebuilding work	W
DSC7590	east side of wall during rebuilding work	NW
DSC7591	east side of wall during rebuilding work	SW
DSC7592	east side of wall during rebuilding work	SW
DSC7594	west side of wall during rebuilding work	SE
DSC7595	west side of wall during rebuilding work	SE
DSC7596	west side of wall during rebuilding work	NE
DSC7597	west side of wall during rebuilding work	E
DSC7598	west side of wall during rebuilding work	SE
DSC7599	west side of wall during rebuilding work	NE
DSC7600	east side of wall after downtaking	W
DSC7606	east side of wall after downtaking	W
DSC7607	east side of wall showing section through wall	NW
DSC7613	sandstone coping stone	

DSC7614	east side of wall after duntaking	NW
DSC7616	east side of wall after duntaking	W
DSC7621	east side of wall after duntaking	W
DSC7622	east side of wall after duntaking	NW
DSC7627	east side of wall after duntaking	W

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