The Druidical Judgement Seat: Archaeological Investigation of an Iron Age Enclosure on Brackenber Moor, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria

MARTIN RAILTON

This paper presents the results of two seasons of archaeological investigation undertaken by Appleby Archaeology Group at The Druidical Judgement Seat, a probable Iron Age farmstead on Brackenber Moor, near Appleby-in-Westmorland. The work has revealed valuable information about the history of the site, including the original form of the enclosure, and evidence for Bronze Age activity in the form of an assemblage of flint tools. Radio-carbon dates have been obtained from charred grain recovered from the enclosure ditch, which suggest the enclosure was occupied during the Iron Age. This work has the potential to contribute to the study of a series of morphologically similar sites in Cumbria, for which dating evidence is lacking.

N July 2008 and July 2009 Appleby Archaeology Group, with the help of North Pennines Archaeology Ltd, undertook two phases of archaeological evaluation on land at Brackenber Moor, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria, as part of a community archaeology project. The project was funded by a grant from the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society, and was timed to coincide with National Archaeology Week 2008 and the Festival of British Archaeology 2009, which were organised by the Council for British Archaeology. The work comprised the excavation of a series of four trial trenches (Trenches 1-4), targeting a possible prehistoric earthwork known as The Druidical Judgement Seat (NGR NY 719 189), a Scheduled Ancient Monument (County Monument 427). The work formed part of the Brackenber Moor Research Project, which will include landscape survey and geophysical survey at other possible archaeological sites on Brackenber Moor.

Brackenber Moor is situated *c*.3km to the east of Appleby-in-Westmorland, between Hilton and Coupland Beck. It comprises 11ha of unenclosed moorland, bounded by Hilton Beck to the north, enclosed fields to the east and west, and the A66 road to the south (Figure 1). Brackenber Moor is an open common, with a number of local farmers exercising grazing rights. Parts of the moor are used as a golf course, and are managed by Appleby Golf Club. Brackenber Moor has been occupied since at least the Bronze Age, and a number of monuments survive from this period, including an Early Bronze Age embanked cremation cemetery,¹ and a series of other possible Bronze Age burial cairns.

Dating evidence for Iron Age settlements in Cumbria

Cumbria has been described as a 'black hole' in terms of Iron Age archaeology as it lacks even a basic Iron Age chronology.² In his recent publication on prehistoric Cumbria, Barraclough admits that evidence for Iron Age activity in Cumbria is thin,



FIG. 1. Site location plan showing the positions of the evaluation trenches at The Druidical Judgement Seat.

largely due to the lack of archaeological excavation and the difficulty of identifying Iron Age sites. Much of what is known about the archaeology of the period comes from the burial record rather than from settlement sites.³

There are, however, large numbers of known settlement sites in Cumbria which could potentially date to the Iron Age or Romano-British periods. These survive as earthworks in the marginal uplands, and as crop-marks in the more intensively cultivated lowlands. The majority of known sites consist of single banked or ditched enclosures which exhibit wide morphological variation, including circular, curvilinear, rectilinear and square forms. However, the dating of settlements in the county is problematic as this relies on a very limited number of radiocarbon dates, the presence (or absence) of Romano-British pottery and comparisons with morphologically similar sites in other areas on the assumption that these are contemporary. As a consequence the later prehistoric period in Cumbria is understood only in very broad terms.

Iron Age sites in particular are poorly understood, due to the apparent absence of Iron Age material culture and scarcity of alternative dating evidence. It is likely that enclosure sites have a greater time-depth than is suggested by the artefactual evidence alone. For example, a double-ditched curvilinear enclosure at Ewanrigg (Risehow) near Maryport was dated by pottery evidence to the fourth century AD. However, carbonised grain from a pit within the enclosure produced a radiocarbon date of 1410-1000 BC, suggesting that the site had origins in the Bronze Age.⁴ Recent archaeological work at a curvilinear enclosure in Glencoyne Park, Ullswater has also demonstrated the value of scientific dating, with evidence of occupation ranging from c.1000 BC to AD 200.⁵

Unenclosed settlement sites are also present in Cumbria, but are less well known than enclosed forms, due to poor archaeological visibility. Haselgrove has suggested that enclosed sites were predominantly a feature of the Roman landscape in the lowlands of Cumbria, and that unenclosed settlements may have been the norm in the Iron Age.⁶ In support of this argument, recent excavations of an unenclosed settlement at Baldhowend, Matterdale, have provided a late Iron Age date of 365 BC-AD 65 for two hut circles and an associated field and bank.⁷

Despite this recent work, the nature of Iron Age settlement in Cumbria is far from clear, and it is recognised that further excavation at enclosed and unenclosed sites, and the accumulation of more radiocarbon dates, is required in order to facilitate a greater understanding of later prehistoric settlement patters. This sentiment has recently been reiterated in the Archaeological Research Framework for North West England.⁸

The Druidical Judgement Seat

The Druidical Judgement Seat, on the south-west side of Brackenber Moor, is a D-shaped enclosure, comprising an outer bank and inner ditch, with a single entrance on the north-west side. A topographic survey of a morphologically similar enclosure near Whitley Crag at Asby was recently reported in the *Transactions*.⁹ Univallete hilltop sites of this type have traditionally been referred to as 'hillforts', but given their scale

and context they are probably more accurately described as defended farmsteads. The Druidical Judgement Seat earthwork occupies a natural headland, with steep banks on the north, east and south sides (Fig. 2). There are no visible features within the enclosure, and no known archaeological evidence was available to date the site. One of the primary objectives of the archaeological evaluation was therefore to establish the date and function of the earthwork, whilst recognising that the work had the potential to make a contribution to the wider understanding of Iron Age and Romano-British rural settlement in Cumbria, and meet research objectives as outlined in both regional and national research agendas.

In 2007 Appleby Archaeology Group conducted a geophysical survey at The Druidical Judgement Seat using both earth resistance and geomagnetic survey techniques. A number of features were detected which could be associated with the former use of the earthwork by the Appleby Golf Club, as indicated on a modern air photograph of the site. The earth resistance survey proved to be the most effective technique for detecting archaeological features, although the presence of earth hummocks (formed by frost action) over the interior of the earthwork may have masked insubstantial archaeological remains. Both geophysical survey techniques detected the earth-filled enclosure ditch, and parts of the earthwork banks. In addition, the earth resistance survey detected deposits within the ditch terminals, which suggested that the entrance has been widened in the past.¹⁰

The Phase I trial trench evaluation saw the excavation of three trenches (Trenches 2-4) targeting the outer earthwork and part of the interior (Fig. 1). It was evident from the evaluation that the earthwork enclosure originally comprised an inner bank and outer ditch created to enhance a natural headland, with an outer bank on the north-west side to further isolate the headland from the ridge of land to the west. The banks were constructed with material excavated from the enclosure ditch, and the inner bank was originally reinforced with cobbles from the nearby stream. These may have also served to support a palisade or fence, evidence for which consisted of a single posthole in one of the trenches. The banks appear to have been truncated by later ploughing, which had undoubtedly also disturbed features within the enclosure.¹¹

An assemblage of flint tools and flakes were recovered, which were typologically dated to the late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. The majority of the flint finds were residual, and were likely relate to earlier activity at the site, possibly associated with the nearby Bronze Age burial monuments. The only feature revealed by the evaluation within the enclosure comprised a possible stone-lined pit, although interpretation of this feature was difficult given the small size of the trench. An Early Bronze Age button/thumbnail scraper, a blade, and a flint flake were recovered from its fill.

A single irregularly-shaped body sherd of handmade pottery was recovered from a layer of ploughsoil, to the west of the stone-lined pit. The dating of the pottery was problematic due to the lack of comparable assemblages, the general scarcity of pottery from later prehistoric sites in Cumbria, and the absence of a chronological framework for handmade fabrics of this type. Consultation with a number of pottery specialists indicated that the pottery could date from anywhere between the late Bronze Age and



FIG. 2. The Druidical Judgement Seat enclosure from the air. (Copyright: Simon Ledingham 2006)

early post-Roman period, although a mid-Iron Age date is not unlikely. It is considered that the potsherd is likely to relate to the occupation of the enclosure, and remains the only tentative artefactual evidence for Iron Age occupation of the site.

The Phase II evaluation saw the excavation of a single larger trench (Trench 1) across part of the enclosure entrance and the eastern ditch terminus, where the earthworks were noticeably more pronounced than in the Phase I trenches (Fig. 3). The earthwork banks near the entrance were also found to be truncated by ploughing, and a spread of stone was revealed within the entrance, which is believed to be a result of this activity.¹² A significant deposit of stone was also revealed within the ditch terminus, which corresponded to the location of a high-resistance anomaly detected on a previous geophysical survey of the site. This deposit appears to relate to the deliberate back-filling of the ditch terminus, and may also be associated with post-medieval activity at the site.

Trench 1 revealed the eastern ditch terminus of the enclosure, a section of the entrance, and parts of the flattened inner and outer banks. The ditch cut into the natural sand and had concave sides, being 4.2m wide at the top, and 1.2m deep, with a steeper south (inner) side (Fig. 4). The bottom of the ditch was filled by a 0.4m-deep layer of re-deposited sand and a 0.1m-deep, 0.8m-wide dumped deposit of clay and cobbles,

which may be associated with the construction of the enclosure. Neither of these layers contained datable finds. A 0.1m-deep layer of natural silting was identified above these, which is believed to relate to the occupation of the enclosure. A later, deliberate backfill deposit of sandy subsoil was also identified, which contained significant quantities of burnt stones, interpreted as 'pot boilers'. The displaced remains of the inner and outer banks of the enclosure overlay the top of the ditch, probably as a result of later ploughing. The ditch profile, combined with the depth of the ditch and the original height of the inner bank, would have provided a substantial barrier (at least 2m in height), especially if a palisade were present on the inner bank (as indicated by a post hole in one of the trenches).



FIG.3. Excavation of a trench across the enclosure entrance. (Copyright: Martin Railton 2009)

There was a paucity of finds within the enclosure ditch, as very little was recovered despite the sieving of all excavated material on site. The majority of the finds recovered were from within the enclosure entrance, and from the material forming the outer bank. The majority of the finds from the Phase II evaluation were also dated to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age period, including a very small residual fragment of Neolithic pottery.

The well-drained sandy soils at the site have led to the poor preservation of organic plant remains. However, a small amount of charred grain was recovered from the silty layer which is believed to relate to the occupation of the enclosure. The charred grains of oat and 6-row barley were submitted to carbon (C14) dating in the hope that these would produce dating evidence for the occupation of the enclosure.



FIG.4. Plan of Trench 1 showing the profile of the enclosure ditch.

Ceramics

Neolithic pottery

A single sherd of pottery was recovered during the Phase II evaluation and assessed by Dr Carol Allen. This was retrieved from Trench 1, from the plough-disturbed material forming the top of the outer bank of the enclosure. The very small sherd weighed 1g, and measured 15 x 10mm. The wall thickness was uncertain as only the outer surface remained. It was dark brown throughout and was tempered with a moderate amount of angular white quartz, measuring up to 4mm in diameter. The tempering was visible on the outer surface.

It was very difficult to be certain about the identification of such a small sherd, without any form or decoration. However, the colour and fabric strongly suggested that this was Neolithic. It is comparable with other Neolithic pottery known in the region, for example from New Cowper Farm, Aspatria.¹³ How it became incorporated into the bank is unknown, but it cannot have travelled very far or it would have disintegrated.

Iron Age pottery

A single sherd of pottery was recovered during the Phase I evaluation and was examined by Blaise Vyner. This was retrieved from Trench 3, from a possible ploughsoil layer, close to the location of the stone-lined pit. The pottery is an irregularly shaped body sherd weighing 18 grams. The colour varies from a dark brown to a lighter orangebrown across the surface, and there are traces of a black, probably burnt, deposit internally. The sherd is undecorated and the thickness varies from approximately 5.7mm to approximately 7.7mm.

The irregular thickness of the sherd, and the absence of characteristic throwing marks, suggest that the vessel was handmade without the aid of a wheel or even a turntable, and the surface shows no sign of burnishing or any other technique of decoration or modification. The hyphenated colours indicate the variation in colour expected from poorly controlled firing conditions. The fabric of the sherd contains abundant fine temper which gives it a surface texture similar to fine sandpaper. Given the rarity of prehistoric pottery from the area, the normal method of breaking off a corner of the sherd to examine the fabric in cross-section was deemed to be unwise, and the following description is based on the surface of the pottery and the worn broken edges. This is not standard practice but was adopted due to the particular circumstances of the case.

Under the microscope the temper consists of a number of distinct types of grit. Quartz appears to be the commonest and it is the fine, sub-angular grains of this mineral which give the sherd its characteristic surface texture. The quartz grains are generally less than 1mm in size (measurements refer to the longest axis visible) with a small number approaching 1.5mm, and the majority are around 0.5mm. Larger inclusions are also present and these are of a non-crystalline nature and can be easily scratched with a stainless steel scalpel blade. They are suggested to be fragments of grog (fired clay or potsherds crushed, ground and added to the clay body before forming and finishing). Also present, although in small quantities, were soft white non-crystalline inclusions of an unknown type. It is highly probable that other rock and mineral grains are also present, but the identification of these would require the use of a destructive analytical technique such as petrography.

The manufacturing style suggests a pre-Roman Iron Age or Romano-British date, although a late Bronze Age or early post-Roman date is also a possibility. That would provide a broad continuum extending from around 800 BC to AD 800, although the balance of probability would place it in the period 400 BC to AD 100 on the basis that in northern England the vessel wall thickness and fabric is more consistent with

a mid-Iron Age rather than earlier horizon, while after the end of the first century AD some accompanying element of Roman pottery might be expected.

Quartz tempered, sandy textured pottery is one of the fabric groups which is characteristic of the later prehistoric period in northern England, and forms part of Rigby's Erratic Tempered ware (ETW) group.¹⁴ Similar fabrics also appear in alternative classificatory schemes, notably that used by Didsbury, where it forms part of the H2 group.¹⁵ Work to date has tended to focus on areas with larger quantities of later prehistoric pottery, notably east and north-east Yorkshire, while areas to the west appear to have continued to produce only small assemblages or isolated sherds. Even with the increase in the intensity of development work undertaken by amateur and voluntary groups, the quantities of later prehistoric pottery remain small (although they are increasing), suggesting that much of central northern and north-west England remained to some degree aceramic, or at least characterised by a very low level of pottery use in the later prehistoric period.^{16,17}

Discussions of later prehistoric pottery in northern England inevitably focus on eastern Yorkshire, where pottery is relatively abundant. The situation in Cumbria and neighbouring areas, where pottery is much scarcer, is far more difficult to understand. The results of the excavation are therefore of considerable interest in that they show that sites of later prehistoric date do produce pottery, but they tend to confirm that the quantities are small. Further work on similar sites is essential if we are to move beyond the current situation. The recovery of pottery associated with material suitable for radiocarbon dating, or with artefacts with established chronological correlates would be an ideal outcome of future work but until this happens, individual sherds such as this one will continue to 'float' in a chronological wasteland.

Lithic analysis

During the evaluation, a total of 27 struck flints were recovered, including pieces from both topsoil and ploughsoil (Table 1). Of the 27 pieces within the assemblage, only six were retrieved from undisturbed contexts, although the lack of patina present within the assemblage indicates a similar depositional time frame. The lithic assemblage comprised four modified pieces with the remaining pieces being classified as *débitage* (Fig. 5).

Category	Number
Flakes	9
Blades	2
Fragments	7
Chips	5
Scrapers	2
Serrated blade	1
Retouched flake	1

TABLE 1: Summary of the lithic assemblage.



 $\ensuremath{\text{Fig.5.Flint}}$ tools recovered during the evaluation.

Modified flakes/blades comprised 14.8 per cent of the whole assemblage. Two of the modified pieces were classified as scrapers. One was further sub-categorised as an end-scraper as it retained direct abrupt/semi-abrupt retouch along the entire distal end (No. 1). The tool had been produced on a small, un-standardised thick flake of mottled grey flint and was possibly utilised because it retained a large dorsal scar and a thick butt making it very comfortable to hold. The second scraper identified (No. 3) was sub-categorised as a button or thumbnail scraper based on its diminutive size (*c*.22mm in diameter) and its overall shape. The example was sub-oval in plan, triangular in cross-section and was thicker at the distal end, giving a rough plano-convex appearance in profile. The scraper retained a small 3.83mm section of direct semi-abrupt retouch along the right lateral margin and further sporadic retouch at the proximal end.

Also present within the assemblage was the distal portion of a serrated blade (No. 4) which retained direct abrupt retouch along its entire left lateral margin forming the serrated edge. The serration was produced on a blade of mottled grey flint, which measured 44.32mm in length, 18.32mm in width and 5.67mm in thickness. The final example within the assemblage retaining retouch (No. 2) could not be placed within any particular category of tool type, as both the proximal end and left lateral margin were missing, probably as a result of post-depositional trampling. The example was produced on a thin flake of mottled grey flint which retained sporadic retouch along its distal margin and possibly represented an expedient tool.

The *débitage* component comprised 85.2 per cent of the assemblage and included flakes, blades, chips and fragments. Unfortunately, 78.2 per cent of the *débitage* was comprised of chips or flake/blade fragments and as such, unsuitable for metrical analysis. The *débitage* was noted to include two blade fragments. These included a distal portion produced on mottled green/brown beach flint, which measured 14.51mm in width and 4.92mm in thickness (No. 5), and a proximal portion produced on mottled grey flint, which measured 18.76mm in width and 4.19mm in thickness (No. 6).

A total of seven pieces (25.9 per cent) within the assemblage retained surface cortex. No primary removals were present. The majority of the assemblage (some 62.9 per cent) was comprised of grey flint, with a lesser number of white, black and brown flints. A small amount of chert and possible beach flint was also present. The distinction between fresh (chalk) flint and derived (beach pebble/gravel) flint is difficult to determine accurately without the presence of surface cortex. However, lithic assemblages produced from derived flint generally retain a greater percentage of this cortex, which is virtually absent from the Brackenber assemblage. This indicates that the assemblage is largely comprised of flint from a fresh chalk outcrop, although derived flint of a similar appearance can also occur within surrounding till deposits. The remaining cherts and beach flints were probably procured from small pockets which occur locally.

Tool production and procurement

The lithic assemblage retrieved during both Phase I and Phase II of the evaluation has provided some tentative results regarding stone-tool production and raw material procurement at the site. Although most of the assemblage is undiagnostic, the presence of the button/thumbnail scraper (No. 3) indicates a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date. Furthermore, the scraper was one of only six pieces within the assemblage retrieved from a relatively secure context. However, the occurrence of blade technology could potentially be seen as problematic as Butler has noted that blade production becomes an insignificant component of lithic technology after the Early Neolithic.¹⁸ This could indicate that the lithic assemblage retrieved from Brackenber was deposited sporadically over a relatively long time period. However, it has also been noted by Cherry and Cherry that tools produced on blades of this type are common within the uplands of Cumbria throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods.¹⁹ This could be taken to suggest that the reduction in the use of blade technology may be biased towards areas with abundant sources of raw material, in which a more expedient technology was sufficient after the earlier Neolithic. Furthermore, this continuation of lithic technologies within Cumbria, which have largely become redundant in other parts of the country, has also been noted to occur throughout the Neolithic period with the continuation of microlithic technology.^{20,21,22} Evans, however, has highlighted several chronological and interpretative problems regarding many Cumbrian lithic assemblages and suggests that the continuation of particular technologies within Cumbria may not be as clearly defined as some other researchers propose.²³

The analysis also highlighted the predominance of grey flint within the Brackenber assemblage. Whilst outcrops of flint-bearing chalks and tills occurs to the east in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire,²⁴ and flint-bearing chalk to the west in County Antrim,²⁵ raw material sources within the vicinity of Brackenber Moor are relatively scarce; the only known sources of workable stone in the area being small pockets of local cherts, with unpredictable amounts of beach flint occurring on the West Cumbrian coast and other workable stone within the Cumbrian area, including volcanic tufts in the Central Lake District. The large representation of grey flint within the assemblage suggests that raw material was principally sourced from either chalk outcrops or surrounding till deposits along the Yorkshire coast. This supports previous findings in which sites, like Brackenber, within the Cumbrian Uplands probably had strong trading links with East Yorkshire during the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods.^{26,27,28} The predominance of 'non-local' flint also raises questions as to whether the raw material was brought to the site as complete nodules, or whether part of the reduction sequence had taken place elsewhere. Whilst the primary reduction sequence was not represented within the assemblage from Brackenber, and only 30.4 per cent of the débitage could be positively identified as secondary removals, the data-set was too small to provide meaningful results regarding this aspect of the quantitative analysis.

Environmental analysis

From the four trenches excavated, a total of eight soil samples were taken (Samples 1-8), details of which appear in Table 2 below. The methodology employed required that the whole-earth samples be broken down and split into their various different components. The samples were manually floated and sieved through a 'Siraf' style flotation tank. (See Table 4 below for context and sample information.) The residue was retained, described and scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flot was dried slowly and scanned at x40 magnification for charred and uncharred botanical

remains. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at North Pennines Archaeology.

The samples were taken for the retrieval of plant macrofossil assemblages, as well as other artefacts and ecofacts. Features sampled included the fills of the enclosure ditch, deposits, and a posthole fill. However, the well-drained sandy soils do not seem to have preserved plant remains in any great quantities, considering the large volumes processed (up to 40 litres for each sample). All the samples contained small amounts of charred remains, however the majority of the remains were thought to have been introduced through modern landscape management, including the burning of heather, and probably do not relate to the archaeological contexts.

Only one of the contexts, a silty layer near the base of the enclosure ditch terminal Sample 3 (411), produced charred cereal remains, present as an emmer-like glume base, a grain of charred barley, and one of an oat variety. The charred barley grain had the appearance of a hulled variety and was quite narrow. It was probably 6-row barley from the occupation period of the site, but the grain was not defined enough for a firm identification and the ventral groove was abraded. There was a slight twist towards the top of the grain though that can indicate a 6-row variety. A charred oat grain was also present as was a seed of charred *Chenopodium album* (goose-grass), a plant common as a weed of arable land.

Although neither the charred barley nor the glume base can be firmly identified due to their abrasions, albeit to different degrees, they both indicate a period before the Medieval. The type of oat is not specific to period and without the chaff cannot be firmly identified. It is also possible that this is a wild oat variety and thus may be an inclusion similar to the weed *Chenopodium*.

These charred remains support the proposed age of the site as being either prehistoric or Romano-British, as 2-row barley had been adopted for general use by the Medieval period. Emmer wheat is also one of the ancient varieties of wheat that had ceased to be used in the more modern period and now is only grown in the UK by specialists for research, or in Italy where it is still grown in upland areas.

Sample	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Context	404	408	411	105	108	303	308	202
Volume processed (litres)	40	40	40	20	10	40	20	20
Volume of retent(ml)	4300	8200	7500	1300	1000	5000	4000	3000
Volume of flot (ml)	200	80	30	600	300	1000	30	250
Samples suitable for radiocarbon dating	-	-	\checkmark	-	-	-	-	-

TABLE 2: Summary of the environmental samples taken.

Radiocarbon dating

Two samples were submitted to the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) AMS Facility for radiocarbon dating. These comprised the charred oat and a charred barley grain. Both were recovered from a silty layer near the base of the enclosure ditch terminal, and were retrieved by wet-sieving of a bulk soil sample taken from this deposit. The radiocarbon ages are quoted in conventional years BP (before AD 1950). The calibrated age ranges were determined from the University of Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration programme (OxCal3) and are expressed in years BC.

The charred 6-row barley grain produced a calibrated date range of between 800 and 530 BC strongly indicating a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date. The calibration curve indicated a date after 700 BC was most likely for this sample. The charred oat produced a calibrated date range of between 380 and 180 BC which places the sample firmly within the Iron Age. Overall this provides a broad date range of 800-180 BC for the soil layer from which these samples were recovered, but a likely Iron Age date is indicated.

Conclusions

One of the primary objectives of the archaeological work was to establish the date and function of The Druidical Judgement Seat. The earthwork occupies a prominent position in the landscape on a natural headland, defended by steep banks on the north, east and south sides. It originally comprised an inner bank and outer ditch, with an outer bank on the north-west side to further isolate the headland from the ridge of land to the west. This evidence, combined with the position of the site on a headland strongly suggests that the site was designed to be defended. Despite the lack of identified internal features, the site has the characteristics of a defended farmstead. The lithic analysis has suggested that the assemblage from The Druidical Judgement Seat, or part of it, was deposited some time during the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. The majority of the lithic finds from the evaluation were interpreted as residual. These finds, and a possible stone-lined pit, may relate to an early phase of activity on the headland associated with the nearby Bronze Age funerary cairns. This activity may predate the construction of the enclosure ditch and banks.

The analysis has also added some supporting evidence to previous suggestions regarding raw material procurement within the Cumbrian Uplands during the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. However, there are inherent difficulties in attempting to firmly interpret such a small lithic assemblage, especially when much of the material has come from disturbed contexts and may not be related. It is only with the addition of a much larger data-set and the employment of complete qualitative and quantitative analyses that the nature of any lithic assemblage will be better understood.

The results of the radiocarbon dating place the occupation of the enclosure within the Iron Age, although a Late Bronze Age origin remains a possibility. A single sherd of possible Iron Age pottery provides tentative supporting evidence for the occupation of the enclosure during this period. The lack of any Roman material at the site suggests that the site was abandoned by this time. Further radiocarbon dates would provide a more secure chronology for the site.

It is believed that The Druidical Judgement Seat was subject to ploughing during the Napoleonic period, when large parts of Brackenber Moor were planted with arable crops. This activity is believed to be responsible for the paucity of archaeological features within the enclosure. Following this episode, the site was apparently abandoned, and the characteristic earth hummocks which cover the site were formed by frost action on the former plough soil.

Given that only a small percentage (approximately one per cent) of the interior of the enclosure was sampled during the evaluation, it is possible that an open area excavation at the site could reveal further archaeological evidence, both for the occupation of the enclosure, and for earlier activity at the site. It is hoped that further research planned by Appleby Archaeology Group on Brackenber Moor will also help to place the site in context within the wider landscape.

Martin Railton, Appleby Archaeology Group, CA10 1RL

Acknowledgements

Appleby Archaeology Group would like to thank North Pennines Archaeology Ltd for their help and assistance with the project and Appleby Golf Club for granting permission for the fieldwork. Thanks are due to Andrew Davison of English Heritage and Mark Brennand of Cumbria County Council for their advice and support. Thanks also to Margaret and Tom Brass at Espland Farm for their help during the fieldwork. Appleby Archaeology Group would also like to extend their thanks to Carol Allen and Blaise Vyner for their expertise in the field of prehistoric pottery, Antony Dickson for his expertise in lithic material, and to Simon Ledingham for permitting the use of his air photograph of The Druidical Judgement Seat. The project was funded by a grant from Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society. Appleby Archaeology Group would also like to thank Cumbria County Council Community Foundation for financial assistance with the costs of the post-excavation work.

The fieldwork was conducted by Margaret Albon, Christine Britton, Jennifer Callis, Marjorie Campion, Stanley Darke, Carol Dougherty, Heather Edwards, Jo Emsley, Pete Emsley, Dilys Evans, David Greenwood, Tony Greenwood, Eric Jones, Jenny McWilliam, Peter McWilliam, Carol Mitchell, Maureen Moore, Phyllis Rouston, Richard Stevens, Tony Turner, Ian Walker, Ann Wardle, Derrick Watson and Mick Yates under the direction of Martin Railton, with the assistance of Angus Clark, David Jackson, Kevin Mounsey and Patricia Shaw of North Pennines Archaeology. The flint tools were analysed by David Jackson and illustrated by Tony Liddell, North Pennines Archaeology. The environmental samples were assessed by Don O'Meara, North Pennines Archaeological Consultant and Blaise Vyner, Archaeological Consultant, assessed the possible Iron Age pottery. Radiocarbon dating was undertaken by Professor Gordon Cook at SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory.

Notes and references

- M. Railton, Archaeological evaluation of a Bronze Age Cremation Cemetery on Brackenber Moor, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria (North Pennines Archaeology Report, 2011)
- ^{2.} C. Haselgrove, Understanding the British Iron Age: An Agenda for Action (English Heritage, 2001), 25

^{3.} D. Barrowclough, Prehistoric Cumbria (The History Press, 2010), 192

- ^{4.} R. H. Bewley, Excavations on Two Crop-Mark Sites in the Solway Plain, Cumbria: Ewanrigg Settlement and Swarthy Hill 1986-1988', CW2, lxxxxii, 23-47
- ^{5.} A. Hoaen and H.L.Loney, 'Excavations of Iron Age and Roman Iron Age levels at a settlement in Glencoyne Park, Ullswater, Cumbria', *CW3*, x, 93-102
- ⁶ C. Haselgrove, 'The later Bronze Age and Iron Age in the Lowlands', in C. Brooks, R. Davies and A. Harding (eds), *Past, Present and Future* (Architectural and Archaeological Society Durham, 2002), 49-69
- ^{7.} H. L. Loney and A. Hoaen, 'Excavations at Baldhowend, Matterdale, 1998: An Interim Report', CW3, i, 89-103
- ^{8.} M. Brennand, 'Research and Archaeology in North West England: An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England', Volume 2 Research Agenda and Strategy, *Archaeology North West*, 9, 51
- ^{9.} D. Fell, 'Analytical Earthwork Survey of a Hillfort near Whitley Crag, Asby, Cumbria', *CW3*, ix, 5-20
- ^{10.} M. Railton, Geophysical Surveys of The Druidical Judgement Seat, Brackenber Moor, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria, (North Pennines Archaeology Report, 2007)
- ^{11.} M. Railton, Phase I Archaeological Evaluation of The Druidical Judgement Seat, Brackenber Moor, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria (North Pennines Archaeology Report, 2008)
- ^{12.} M. Railton, Phase II Archaeological Evaluation of The Druidical Judgement Seat, Brackenber Moor, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria (North Pennines Archaeology Report, 2009)
- ^{13.} M. Railton, Assessment Report on an Archaeological Excavation at New Cowper Quarry Northern Extension (Phase 1), Aspatria, Cumbria (North Pennines Archaeology Report, 2007)
- ^{14.} V. Rigby, 'Pots in Pits: The British Museum Yorkshire Settlements Project 1988-92', West Riding Archaeologist 11, (2004), 25
- ^{15.} C. G. Cumberpatch, Hand-made Pottery of later prehistoric and Roman date from Excavations on the A165 Reighton by-pass, North Yorkshire (Archaeological Services WYAS Report, 2006)
- ^{16.} B. Bevan, Northern Exposure: Interpretative Devolution and the Iron Ages of Britain', *Leicester Archaeology Monographs* 4, (1999)
- ^{17.} M. Nevell, N. Redhead, *Mellor: Living on the Edge*, Manchester Archaeological Monographs 1, (2005)
- ^{18.} C. Butler, Prehistoric Flintwork (Stroud, 2005)
- ^{19.} P. J. Cherry and J. Cherry, 'Coastline and Upland in Cumbrian Prehistory A Retrospective', CW3, ii
- ^{20.} J. Cherry and P. J. Cherry, 'Coastline and Upland in the Cumbrian Neolithic' in P.Frodsham (ed), 'Neolithic Studies in No-Mans Land', Northern Archaeology, 13/14, (1996), 63-66
- ^{21.} Cherry and Cherry, 'Coastline and Upland'
- 22. H. Evans, 'Where is the Cumbrian Neolithic?' in V. Cummings and C. Fowler (eds), Neolithic Traditions of the Irish Sea, (Oxford, 2004)
- ^{23.} H. Evans, 'The Neolithic and Bronze Age Landscapes of Cumbria', British Archaeological Reports, British Series 463, (Oxford, 2008)
- ^{24.} D. Henson, 'The Flint Resources of Yorkshire and the East Midlands', Lithics, 6, (1985), 2-9
- ^{25.} J. Hodgson and M. Brennand (eds), 'Prehistoric Period Resource Assessment', in M.Brennand (eds), 'The Archaeology of North West England: An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England: Volume 1 Resource Assessment', Archaeology North West, 8, (2006), 23-58
- ^{26.} J. Cherry and P. J. Cherry, Prehistoric Habitation Sites on the Limestone Uplands of Eastern Cumbria: A Survey of the Area Between Shap and Kirkby Stephen', *CW Research Series*, II (1987)
- ^{27.} Cherry and Cherry 'Coastline and Upland'
- ^{28.} J.Clarke, A.Watson, A. Dickson, and A. Hamilton-Gibney, *Fieldwalking in the Vale of Eden: Interim Report 1*, (Penrith Museum, 2008)

Glossary

CORTEX	the outer rind on a nodule of raw material
DEBITAGE	any form of waste material produced during the knapping process; includes flakes,
	blades and chips
DISTAL END	the end of the flake/blade opposite to the point of percussion
EMMER	an early form of wheat, and one of the first crops to be domesticated
GLUME	the basal, membranous, outer sterile husk of a grain
LITHIC	relates to the stone used in tool manufacture
MICROLITH	characteristic tool-type produced during the Mesolithic period; usually produced from
	bladelets and significantly smaller than other tool type
PROXIMAL END	the struck end of the flake/blade; usually retains striking platform and percussion
	features
RETOUCH	the modification or alteration of any flake or blade to make a tool