

Whiteadder



Historic Heart of the Lammermuirs

Morham Castle, East Lothian Community Evaluation Report

By Jessica Lowther

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Abstract

AOC Archaeology carried out a community evaluation at the suspected site of Morham Castle as marked on the OS 1854 Map as part of the Whiteadder: Historic Heart of The Lammermuirs Project. The project is a cross border landscape archaeology project with both East Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils.

The lands at Morham, including the site of the castle, have over the years been home to several influential Lothian families and individuals. The first mention of a castle on the site is not until the middle of the 15th century, but charters mention landowners hailing from as far back as the late 12th century. A Geophysical Survey undertaken by the Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society in 2012/13 uncovered a series of anomalies which could pertain to the remains of the castle.

This current evaluation of the site revealed the remains of a substantial stone-built wall foundation as well as several sherds of medieval and post-medieval ceramics and a medieval coin. A radiocarbon date obtained from the wall gives an earliest construction date of 1285-1400. A series of linear features also containing medieval/post-medieval ceramics were also encountered.

It is likely that these features represent the dismantled and highly truncated remains of Morham Castle.

Introduction

A programme of archaeological evaluation was undertaken as part of the Whiteadder: Historic Heart of the Lammermuirs Project at the suspected site of Morham Castle. The site is located in an arable field, bounded by Morham Burn on its north and east, and bordered by the road to Morham Church on its west (Figure 1). Although there are no visible remains in the field today, the location is marked on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map as the site of Morham Castle. Morham Kirk lies to the north of the castle site, along the burn. The kirk has roots back to the early medieval owing to a 9th century carved cross slab which was later incorporated into the church wall when it was rebuilt in the 18th century.

A geophysical survey was carried out by Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society on behalf of East Lothian Council at the proposal of the local community in Morham in 2012/13. This survey revealed several potential features for investigation, which formed the targets for the current phase of excavation.

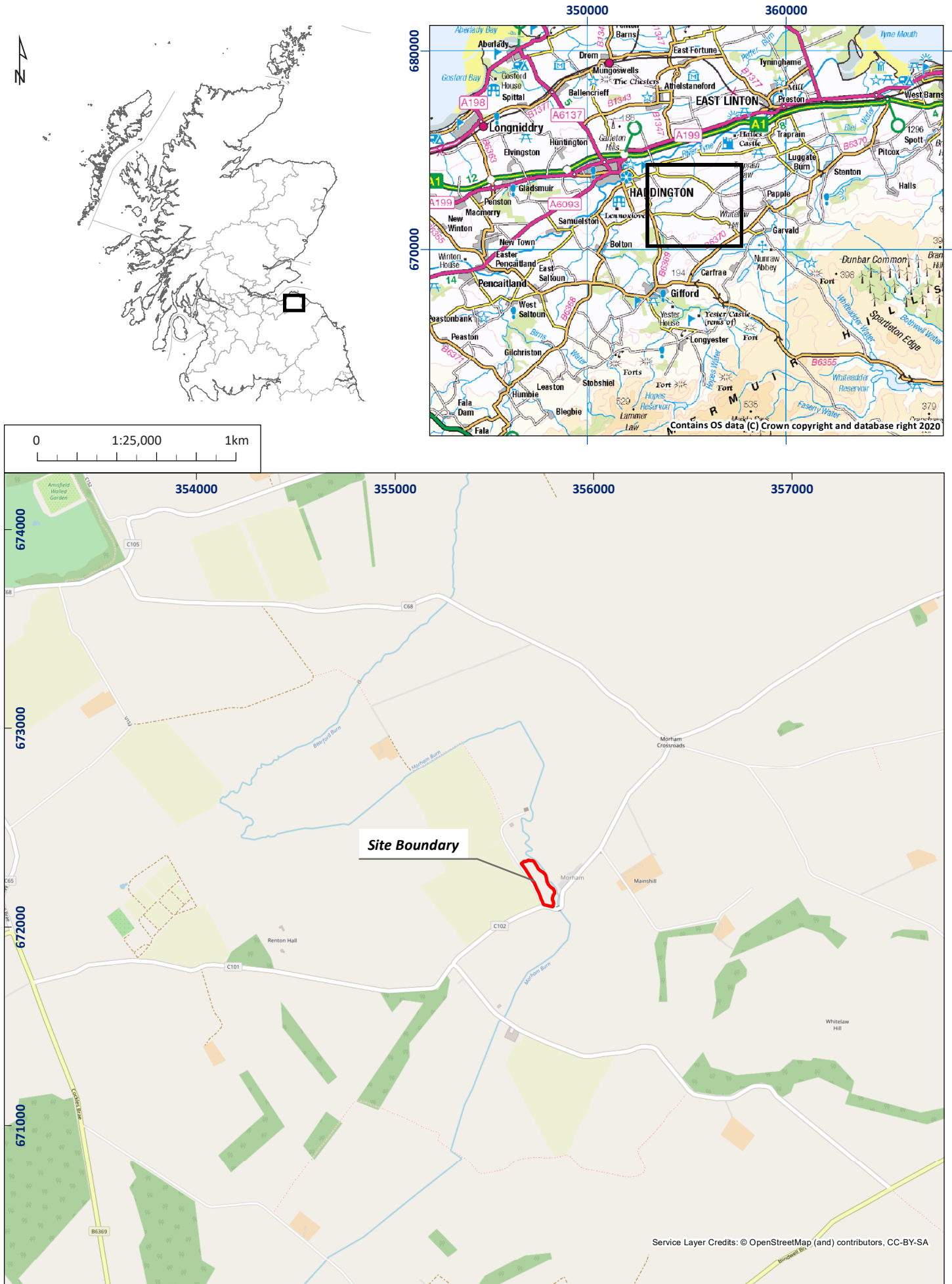


Figure 1: Site location plan

Historical Background: The Lands and Castle of Morham

Contemporary documentary sources indicate that the castle was once a large and extensive structure (OSA 1792); the residence of the Lord of the Manor, of which all traces have now disappeared (OS Name Book 1853; 44/4). The New Statistical Account gives a short rendition of the ownership of the lands of Morham from the Malherbe family in the 12th century, up to its sale in 1830, mentioning prominent names such as the Giffords, Hays, and the Earls of Bothwell (NSA 1845; 263).

The first mention of the lands of Morham being owned by the Malherbe family occurs in the Newbattle Abbey Charters, possibly as early as the late 12th Century, but certainly Thomas Malherbe and his son John Malherbe are named as owners prior to 1214 (Webb 2004: 211; PoMS 3/386/1). The Malherbe family transform into the 'Morham' family by using a toponymic surname, a practice whereby the family begin to use the name of the land which they own or are from. Thus Thomas Malherbe appears by the toponym Thomas de Morham; or, Thomas of Morham, in two of the Newbattle Abbey charters (Webb 2004: 185). The Morham family ownership of the lands continues into the 13th century.

In the charters pertaining to the ownership of the lands of Morham from the late 12th and early 13th century there is no mention of a castle. Although there may have been a residence on the site at the time, it is unlikely that it would have resembled the 'large and extensive structure' remembered in the 18th century accounts. Although impressive curtain-wall castles such as Bothwell Castle in Lanarkshire and Caerlaverlock in Dumfries were constructed in the 13th century and certainly other well known castles had been constructed prior to this time, such as Edinburgh, Stirling and Roxburgh (Morris 2012, 186; Cornell 2008, 236); very few early residences survive, or even have written descriptions.

Certainly one of the nearby estates of Yester had a residence by this time that was referred to as a castle. A charter in the Yester Writs in 1267 records Adam of Morham (son of Thomas I of Morham) granting part of his wood alongside Yester Castle to Sir Hugh Giffard of Yester, for the creation of a park (Harvey 1916, 73). Certainly the subterranean vault known as the Goblin Hall that forms the lowest and earliest part of the castle has been reputed to date from this period. The name presumably comes from a description of the castle at Yester as 'wrought by witchcraft' by the 15th century chronicler Abbot Walter Bower which was further embellished by Sir Walter Scott in his epic poem 'Marmion'; earning Sir Hugh the folklore title of 'the wizard of Yester'.

Adam of Morham passes the lands of Morham on to his son, Thomas of Morham, who later becomes Sir Thomas Morham, a Scottish knight who along with his two sons, Thomas and Herbert, are active participants in the events of the Scottish Wars of Independence. Both sons, Thomas and Herbert are listed as receiving wages as squires in the service of Edward I in 1294-5 (Ingamells 1992, 45). However, the outbreak of war between the English and the Scots after the English capture of Berwick in 1296 appears to have split allegiances.

Herbert, still listed as ‘esquire’, is captured in May 1296 following the Battle of Dunbar and sent with other prisoners to Rockingham Castle (CDS ii, iii, 911). He remains captive until July of 1297 when he is listed among many of the Scottish rebels who are recruited by Edward I to fight for him overseas on ‘pain of forfeiture’ (CDS ii, iii, 940).

Meanwhile, his brother, Thomas Morham the younger¹ (POMS 20821), is listed as a signatory on the Ragman Roll of 1296, swearing fealty to Edward I along with many other of the Scottish noblemen. It is unclear whether Thomas the younger was in fact fighting for the Scottish cause during this time, or was still loyal to the English king. However, it is interesting to note that he is not ‘of Morham’ on this document, and in fact lists his county as ‘Striuelyn’ (Stirling).

Their father, referred to during this time as Sir Thomas of Morham is curiously absent from both the list of prisoners, and the names on the Ragman Roll following the Battle of Dunbar. However, it appears that he was among the Scottish fighters who were able to escape following the event and was later captured by Sir Hugh St John, along with 11 others. This reference appears in the diary of the King’s (Edward I) movements of Scotland and hints that Sir Thomas of Morham may have played a significant role among the Scottish rebels in 1296 as he is brought before the King in Aberdeen and referred to as ‘the king’s enemy’ (Stevenson 1870, 29). Presumably after this he is imprisoned, as on 12 October the following year he is committed to the Tower of London under mandate by the Prince of Wales (CDS ii, iii, 957). There, it seems, he would remain for some time.

Thomas the younger appears once more in the records fighting for Edward, after his return from France, at the Battle of Falkirk in 1298. He is now listed as a Knight in the ranks, and is compensated 24 marks for the loss of his black horse, killed in the battle (CDS ii, iii 1298).

Herbert, however, on his return from fighting for Edward abroad has joined the Scottish cause once more. In 1299 and listed as Sir Herbert Morham, he is among the Scots laying siege to Stirling Castle, and may have even been a commander of the force as it is he who is named as the arranger of a truce between the Scots and the garrison at Stirling² (Watson 1991, 92; CDS ii, v, 1949). Although there is no date for this truce it is likely to have occurred prior to, or around, April 1299, as it is in this month that Sir Herbert Morham is arrested under charges of kidnapping. He is held in the Castle at Edinburgh while the King commands an inquiry into charges raised by Johanna de Clare, the Countess of Fife, widow to Duncan the fifth Earl who declares that:

‘while she and her retinue under the King’s safe conduct were on their way to England, he [Sir Herbert Morham of Scotland] laid wait for them between Stirling and Edinburgh, and took her by force to his brother Thomas’s house of Gertranky, where he imprisoned her because she would not consent to a marriage with him, under her oath to the King not to marry without his licence, and seized her jewels, horses, robes, and goods to the value of 2000/. To her great loss and scandal and in contempt of the King..’ (CDS ii, iii, 1066).

¹ Thomas Morham is the only name to appear on the Ragman Roll with the note ‘pufne’ or ‘pusnee’ after his name. This roughly translates to ‘younger’.

² It has been suggested that ‘Gertranky’ actually refers to Castle Rankine, west of Denny in Stirlingshire. Here, excavations in 1938-9 revealed the remains of a curtain wall along with an assemblage of 14th – 18th century ceramics.

There is no recorded resolution of this matter, unfortunately; however further mentions of both Sir Herbert and the countess do hint at what may have taken place. Johanna de Clare is later mentioned as having no money to pay one of her debtors owing to Sir Herbert of Morham stealing her belongings; possibly indicating that the outcome of the trial did not include the restoration of her possessions (CDS ii, iii, 1108). Furthermore, less than 12 months later Sir Herbert is once again listed as being in the King's service. On the 28th of February 1300 both Sir Thomas (the younger) and Sir Herbert of Morham appear in a list of the King's men at arms in Edinburgh Castle and list their respective squires, charges, hackneys and grooms (CDS ii, iii, 1132). It would appear that Sir Herbert's punishment may have been to once again be recruited to Edward I's service on pain of forfeiture.

However, Sir Herbert's service to the King would once again be shortlived. It appears that while in service for the King at Edinburgh he made links with another Scottish noble, Sir Simon Fraser, as by 1301 he had joined with the rebels once more and is mentioned as commanding some of the Scottish forces. In September 1301 the keeper of Lochmaben Castle sent a letter to Edward I asking for reinforcements to deal with the Scottish rebels. In this letter he gives up their location: John de Soules and the earl of Buchan with their power, lying wait at Loudon and Sir Simon Fraser, Sir Alexander de Haberithyn and Sir Herbert Morham at Stanhouses. Although the keeper states that he would 'discomfit them' if the King were to send him 100 horsemen by tomorrow, it is unclear what comes of the struggle (CDS, v, 258).

During the few years following this there are no mentions of the Morham knights until two letters from the King dated March 1304; after the Scots (all bar Sir Simon Fraser, William Wallace and John de Soulis) had surrendered to the English in the February. These two letters state that all prisoners are to be released and all prisoners are to be delivered on either side (English and Scots), – except Sir Herbert Morham and his father (CDS ii, iv, 1469 and 1473). This is the first mention of Sir Thomas of Morham the elder since his imprisonment in the Tower in 1297, which would seem to suggest he has been languishing there since then, after being declared the King's enemy. It would also seem that Sir Herbert has once again been captured, but this time the King has not released him into his own service. It is interesting to note however, that these are the only two characters not to be released during the truce, indicating their influence and the severity with which they are viewed as Scottish rebels.

In the same month as Herbert and his father are languishing in prison, Sir Thomas the younger is commanding a force at Stirling in the service of King Edward I. A draft writ from King Edward to the sheriff of Stirling calls all his forces to come without delay before Sir Thomas Morham and Alwyn de Kalentir, "to whom they are to be obedient" (CDS v, 353).

Unfortunately for Sir Herbert, his comradeship with Sir Simon Fraser would do him a great disservice come September 1306, when Sir Herbert of Morham is beheaded in front of the Tower of London. A political song of the time about the 'traitors of Scotland' has immortalised the tale of Sir Simon Fraser and Sir Herbert Morham. An excerpt appears below:

*Sir Herbert of Morham, a fair and bold knight
For the love of Fraser his life was sold.
A wager he made, as it was told,
To have his head cut off if they captured Fraser,
Whatever betide.
Sorry was he then
When we might see him
Ride through the town*

*His Squire spoke a word immediately,
 "Sir we're dead; theres no creature to help us!"
 (Thomas de Bois was the squires name.)
 "Now I know that our wager brings us to harm,
 So my courage ends!"
 I give you to know
 Their heads were cut off
 Before the Tower Gate. (Fein, S 2014)*

The song goes on to detail the execution of Sir Simon Fraser, who was hung, beheaded and disembowelled soon thereafter.

With Herbert beheaded and Sir Thomas the elder still imprisoned, Sir Thomas the younger continues to serve the English Kings, retaining his position as a Knight after the coronation of King Edward II. In a document dated March 1309 King Edward II refers to Thomas as his 'familiar knight' when asking his friends and commands to aid Thomas on a journey 'to visit the threshold of St Peter' (CDS ii, 1307-1313, 75). Thomas the younger is rewarded by Edward II in October 1314 with a grant of the Manor of Boulton in Cumberland (read: Cumberland; Boulton lies south-west of Carlisle); 'for life, for his good service' to the English crown (CDS iii, 1313 to 1321, 394). It is unclear what happens to Thomas of Morham, the younger, after this date.

Sir Thomas Morham, the elder; after losing one son to the English and one son to the axe, is finally released from his imprisonment the following month (November 1314) in exchange for another Scottish prisoner (DCS iii, 1313-1321, 322). Following his release, he returns to Scotland and although he is not mentioned in the text of the Declaration of Arbroath, his seal can be found affixed to it (National Records of Scotland, 2017). He however is also rewarded for his service come May 1322 when Robert Bruce, King of Scots, grants him liferent of the lands of Dunipace in Stirlingshire and Duncanlaw and Morham in East Lothian, which the Morhams had held prior to the War of Independence. This charter also states that after Thomas's death the lands are to pass to Euphemia (Morham) and her husband John Giffard and their legitimate heirs (PoMS 1/53/239).

John Gifford was the grandson of Sir Hugh Gifford, the aforementioned Wizard of Yester. By 1418 there were no male heirs of the line sired by Euphemia and John Gifford, and the extensive estates were divided between four daughters (OS Name book, 1853-4,). Their eldest daughter, Johanna married Sir Thomas Hay of Locherworth (d. 1397) and from here on Yester becomes the seat of the Hays (NSA 263). The Hay family appear to own the lands of Morham from either this marriage, or the early 15th century Sir David Hay of Locherworth, knight, is listed as the baron of the barony of Morham.

The first mention of a Castle at Morham comes in a document of indenture in January 1474 whereby Sir William the Hay agrees to deliver the 'house and castle of Morham, with three acres of land pertaining thereto' to John the Hay of Olivercastell (Harvey 1916, 73-4).

The lands of Morham then become part of the vast holdings of the Hepburns, Lords of Hailes, as Patrick Hepburn becomes the first Earl of Bothwell in 1488 and is granted half the baronies of Yester, Duncanlaw and Morham (Macpherson 1998, 45). However, it is unclear which half of Morham the Hepburns have been granted, as it is not until 1511 with the accession of Patrick's son Adam to the Earldom that the lands were consolidated. A trade with the Hays of Yester saw the Hepburns' halves of Yester and Duncanlaw exchanged

for the baronies of Morham, Plewlands and the patronage of Morham Church (Macpherson 1998, 57), presumably now ratifying to the Hepburns the whole of the lands of Morham. These lands were evidently handed on in the same year to his uncle, Adam Hepburn of Craggis, who managed the affairs of the earldom for his young nephew. Both were killed at the Battle of Flodden in 1513.

The lands of Morham continued in Hepburn hands, passing to the young inheritor Patrick, third Earl of Bothwell, when only a few months old after the death of both his father and his uncle at Flodden (Macpherson 1998 59). The lands are mentioned again when the Earl divorces his wife, Agnes Sinclair in 1543 and settles on her the barony of Morham in life-rent (Macpherson 1998 73), after which she was styled “Lady of Morham” as Morham was her usual place of residence, until her death in 1572 (Schiern 1880, 386; Macpherson 112). Patrick and Agnes had two children before their divorce: James and Jean Hepburn. James would later be known as James, the Fourth Earl of Hepburn, infamous third husband of Mary Queen of Scots.

Jean Hepburn married three times, firstly to John Stewart with whom she had a son, Francis Stewart (reputedly born in Morham Castle around 1562), who would later become the 5th Earl of Bothwell. Her third husband was the infamous Archibald Douglas; who, along with her brother James, was implicated in the murder of Mary Queen of Scots’ second husband, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, in 1567. James was acquitted of the murder, but Archibald remained at least partly in suspect until orders were sent for his arrest in 1578 and he subsequently fled south to England. Jean had received tack of the lands of Morham in 1573, following her mother’s death (Macpherson 1998 112, 484) and in 1581 petitioned the King in a secret council at Holyroodhouse to keep her lands which were rightfully hers by birth and which she wished to pass on to her son Francis (Mann 2008, NAS, PAS/13,ff.98v-99v), despite the crimes of her husband Archibald Douglas.

Francis Stewart, on his appointment as fifth Earl of Bothwell in 1581 by James IV of Scotland (his cousin) was given:

“all and whole the lands and barony of Morham, with tower, fortalice, mills, tenants, tenantries, towns, parts, dependants, annexes, connexes, pendicles, outsets and their pertinents, together with the kirk thereof, lying within the sheriffdom of Edinburgh and constabulary of Haddington” (Mann 2008, NAS, PAS/13,ff.59r-60r).

However, the scandals for the Earls of Bothwell were not yet over. He was a trusted favourite of his cousin King James VI of Scotland who famously travelled to Denmark to rescue his bride after the ship meant to carry her to her marriage was thwarted by storms. On the King’s return to Scotland, Francis Stewart was arrested and brought on charges of treason and conspiracies against the King by necromancy and witchcraft in 1591. After his escape from Edinburgh Castle where he was imprisoned on these charges he was declared forfeited of all his lands, which included those at Morham (Mann 2008, NAS, PA2/14, ff.7v-8r.).

The lands of Morham, which included by this time the aforementioned tower and fortalice, were once again possessions of the Crown and were granted on to the Duke of Lennox following Francis’ forfeiture in 1591 (Macpherson 1998 484). A few years later in 1594 they would pass into the holdings of Walter Scott of Branxholm and Buccleuch (Macpherson 1998 484). The New Statistical Account of Scotland: Linlithgow, Haddington and Berwick records the lands being held by the Dalrymples in the reign of Queen Anne (1665 – 1704) and remaining as such, albeit with portions being sold off from time to time, until 1830 when the remainder was sold to the Earl Wemyss (NSA 1853 264).

Results

Excavation Results

The excavations at the site of Morham Castle were undertaken from the 26th to the 31st of August 2019. The objectives of the excavation were to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried remains present onsite; and to give the community of Morham the opportunity to discover the history of their village and get actively involved in their heritage and develop skills through training.

The excavations took the form of seven evaluation trenches (Figure 2) which were removed of topsoil by aid of a rubber tracked mechanical excavator. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand by archaeologists and a cumulative total of 30 volunteers of the general public over the week long dig.

The evaluation trenches were aimed at targeting anomalies present on the geophysical survey report which was carried out by the Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society on behalf of East Lothian Council in 2012 and 2013.

Trenches numbered 1 and 4 on the figure 2 plan from the written scheme of evaluation were not excavated as they were directly underneath overhead power lines. All trenches revealed a well-sorted sandy silt top-soil (0.25m – 0.4m in depth). This overlay a natural subsoil consisting of bands of natural gravel and glacial clays. The results will be detailed below in reference to their trenches.

Trench 2

Trench 2 contained a single linear feature measuring 2.6m wide and 0.2m deep ran across the width of trench 2 aligned roughly East to West. In section, the linear had gradually sloping sides and a flat base. Sherds of likely medieval pottery were recovered from the fill which consisted of dark blackish grey gravelly silt with frequent round stones. It is possible that this linear represents an agricultural feature dating from the medieval period or later. Nineteen sherds of Scottish white gritty ware ceramic which join to form a complete profile of a substantial, well-thrown cooking pot with a square rim were recovered from the fill of the linear (Haggarty 2019 in Appendices).

Trench 3

The features present on the geophysical survey were not encountered in Trench 3. Instead, a pair of field drains was identified running northwest to southeast. Machine excavation was halted at this level to maintain the integrity of the field drains.

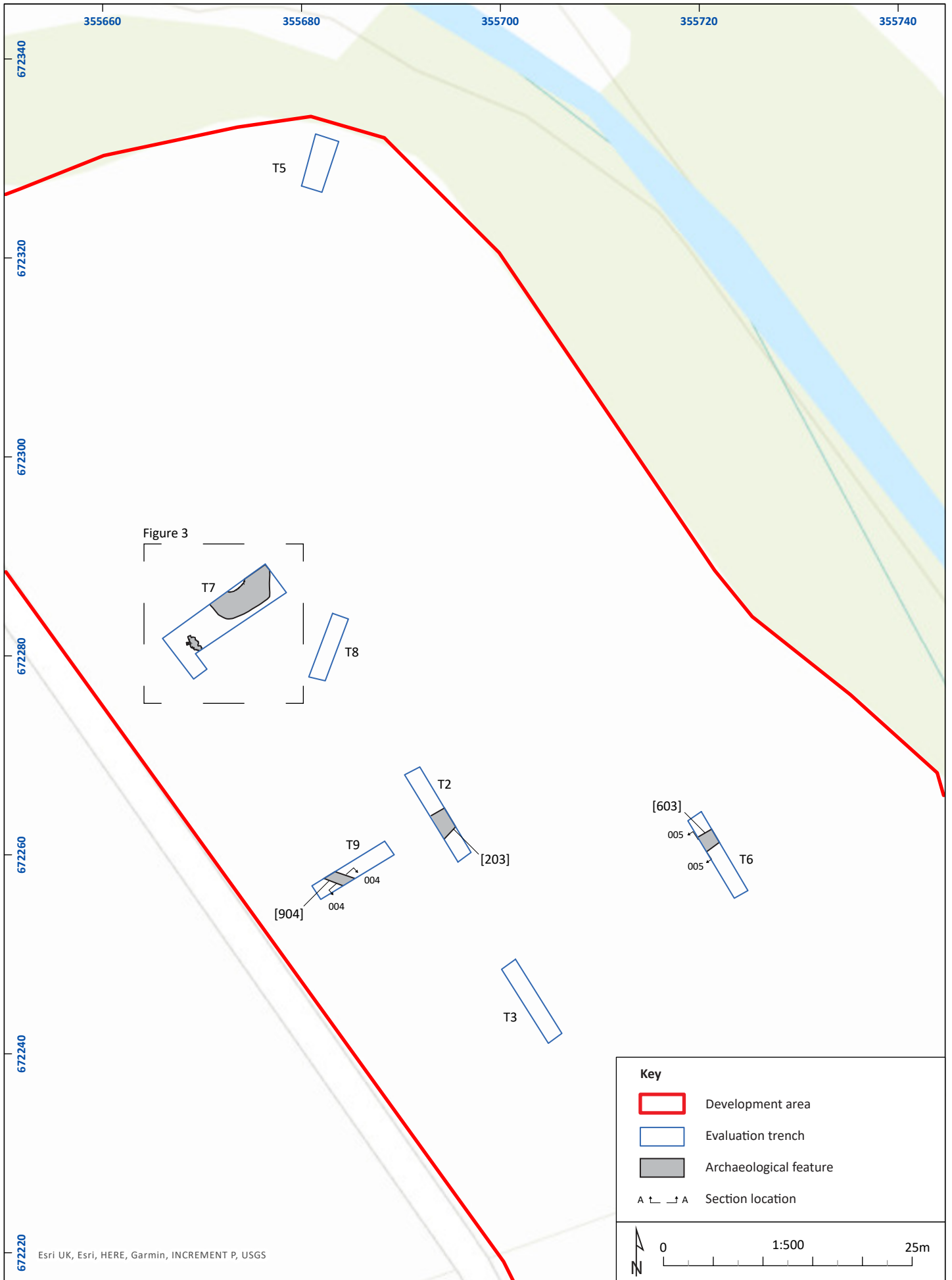


Figure 2: Trench location plan

Trench 5

Trench 5 was opened by hand and revealed a deep stratigraphy of soil, rubble and post-medieval materials. A modern waterpipe was also encountered in the southern end of the trench. The deep stratigraphy encountered in this trench is likely the result of agricultural activity, and landscaping in the post-medieval and modern periods to extend and flatten the field for maximum yield.

Trench 6

The high resistance anomaly in the eastern side of the field visible on the geophysical survey that trench 6 was targeting was revealed to be a dense clay natural subsoil. Cutting through this clay subsoil was a linear running SE – NW, visible on the geophysical survey as a low resistance anomaly. The linear measured 0.5m deep by 1.75m wide (Plate 1). The fill of the linear consisted of a dark orange brown firm silty clay. One sherd of ceramic was recovered from the fill and possibly dates to the 13th century (Haggarty 2019 in Appendices).



Plate 1: Northeast facing section of linear [603]

Trench 7

On opening trench 7, a layer of rubble and mortar was revealed underlying the topsoil at the north eastern end of the trench. At the south western extent of the trench a deep soil layer of soil was revealed surrounding a stone feature. Trench 7 was subsequently widened to allow for the safe excavation of deposits within the trench.

The deep soil layer was revealed to be a moderately compact dark red brown sandy silt with inclusions of occasional sub-angular stones and frequent charcoal flecks. This was interpreted as a buried soil surface

possibly relating to medieval/post-medieval occupation. The stone feature constituted several sub squared and rounded stones measuring on a whole 2m long by 1.33m wide. The function of the stone feature is unclear, but might relate to post-medieval agriculture on the site.

The layer of rubble and mortar in trench 7 covered approximately two thirds of the north western end of the trench. The rubble layer contained several fragments of medieval ceramics, some of which, in addition to the presence of a fragment of glazed floor tile, indicate the presence of a building of some status (Haggarty 2019, below).

Below this rubble layer, which was up to 0.2m deep in places, was a large curving wall foundation consisting of several large sub-rounded and sub-squared stones containing a tightly packed fill of rubble and light red sandy gravel (Figure 3). A light yellow/cream sandy lime mortar was evident on the southern side of the curving stone foundation. A radiocarbon date sought for charcoal contained within the mortar returned the earliest date range for construction of the wall as 1295 – 1400 calAD (SUERC-93261).

The wall measured up to 2.10m thick at its widest point and approximately 6m of the curve of the wall was visible in the trench. A thin but steep cut surrounded the southern side was interpreted as a foundation cut for the wall. A section through this (Figure 4 Section 11) revealed it to be filled with a friable mid brown sandy silty clay, containing a few fragments of medieval ceramic and animal bone.



Plate 2: Stone feature [703] in trench 7

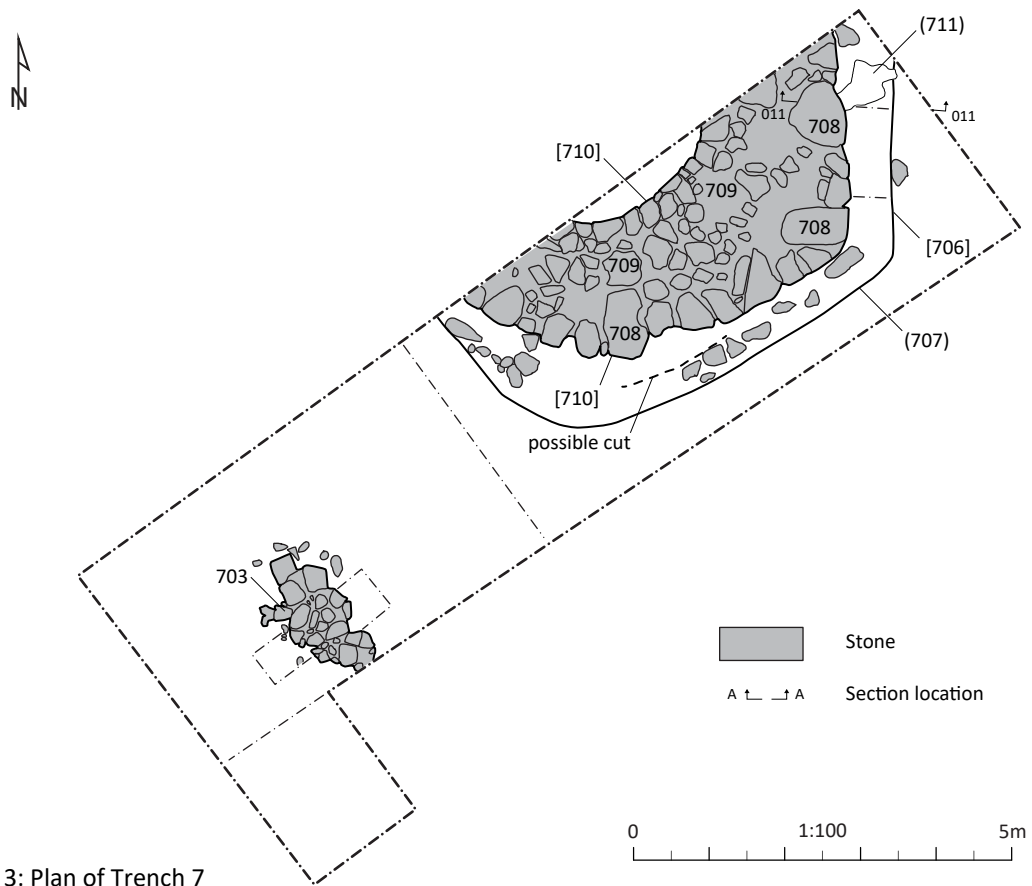


Figure 3: Plan of Trench 7

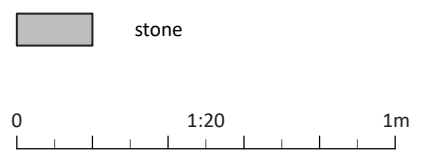
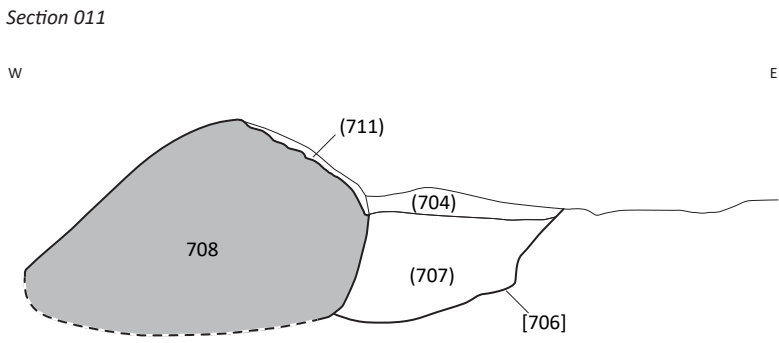
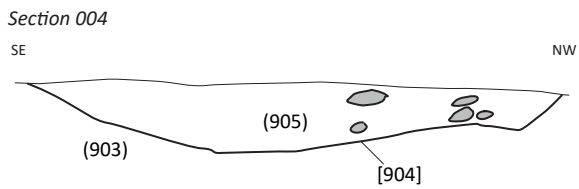


Figure 4: Sections



Plate 3: Wall foundations [710] from the northeast



Plate 4: Northwest facing section of linear [904]

Trench 8

Trench 8 revealed a thin layer of the same medieval/post-medieval soil that surrounded the features in trench 7, however, on removal, no features were underneath. A few sherds of ceramic were recovered from the topsoil, most of which date to the 12th or 13th centuries (Haggarty 2019 in Appendices)

Trench 9

A field drain running roughly NW-SE was encountered in the eastern end of trench 9. In the western end of trench 9 a linear running WNW-ESE was uncovered. Measuring 1.4m wide and up to 0.2m deep, it was filled with a loose mid greyish brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal inclusions (Figure 4). A sherd of black fabric ceramic and a square nail were recovered from the fill.

Metal Detecting Results

By Andrew Morrison

A number of finds were recovered from a metal detecting workshop undertaken as part of the community training during the fieldwork. The metal finds assemblage is dominated by building fixtures and fittings, including 37 nails, and also includes coins, dress accessories, knives, and horse equipment. This assemblage represents the remains of agricultural and daily household activities. The majority of the finds are long-lived types and cannot be closely dated, as well as post-medieval and modern finds recovered from topsoil or agricultural plough soil deposits. The only dateable finds within the assemblage are the copper alloy coin of James IV (SF29) that dates from 1488-1513, and the iron horseshoe nails (SF4.10, SF28, and SF44), which are also consistent with a 15th to 16th century date.



Plate 5: James IV Billion Penny from trench 7

Ceramic Results

By George Haggarty

Morham sits within the area covered by the Scottish White Gritty Ware (SWGW) pottery industry. SWGW is a broad term that covers a wide range of visually similar pottery fabrics recovered from excavation throughout large areas of Scotland, from at least the mid-twelfth through to the late fifteenth centuries. The fabrics are normally hard with a matrix generally incorporating a range of rock fragments and inclusions which makes them gritty to the touch. In colour the vessels range, when oxidised, from white or cream to the less common, if iron is present, buff or pink. When fired under reduction shards are generally a light to medium grey but can on occasions be almost black. The main vessel types are cooking pots and jugs, although a limited range of other vessel types have been recorded. In Fife, Lothian, and Borders, White gritty wares are the dominant fabric groups, often representing over ninety percent of the medieval pottery recovered. Presently, the full extent of this industry and the distribution of its wares, is little understood.

Limited evidence of body style might suggest three distinct production areas, Tweeddale/Borders, Lothians, and Fife, especially in the 12th and 13th centuries (Haggarty 1984), but this is far from proven. It has also been suggested that this industry owes its origins to the introduction of monasticism into lowland Scotland (Haggarty 1984). The very distinctive, straight sided, 12th century cooking pots recovered from excavations at Kelso Abbey, Edinburgh, Haddington, and other east coast Scottish sites, and from Trondheim and Bergen in Norway, have not yet been recovered in Fife. The Historic Scotland funded ICP-OES project suggests that there are a great many undiscovered production centres awaiting discovery and presently only three have been identified with confidence and only one, Colstoun is in East Lothian (Brooks 1980; Hall 2007).



Plate 6: Ceramic cooking pot SF031

O. McElhinck
Pg 1
Jan 2020

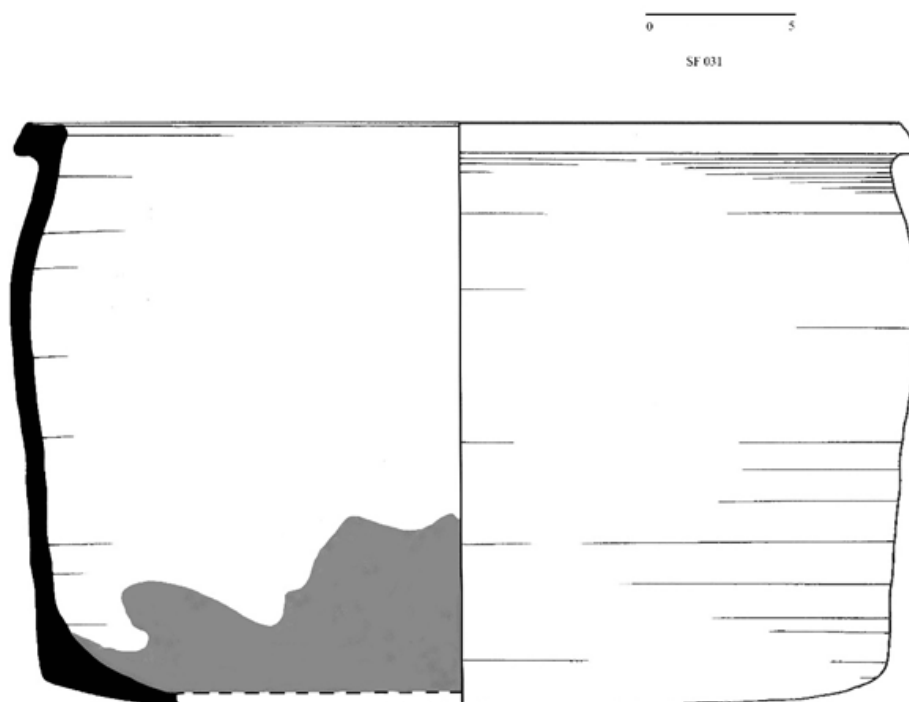


Figure 5: Illustration of ceramic cooking pot SF031

A Scottish white gritty ware, ICP sampling project funded by Historic Scotland analysed five hundred and sixty-six samples (Jones et al 2003), in addition to 50 previously used in the pilot study. These were collected from forty Scottish rural and urban sites. Elgin was the most northerly, and Buittle Bailey castle; Dumfries and Galloway, the most southerly, but the main concentration of sites was from the Borders, Lothian, and Fife. Samples were selected from either complete vessels or sherds for which vessel profiles were available, where a good range of vessel forms were present. Subsequently data has been added to the data base from more recent work carried out on SWGW by (Jones 2008; 2011; Haggarty & Hughes 2013, 54-71; Jones 2018). There is no doubt that these programs been incredibly successful although it must be said that the Scottish redware results have been the more positive, mainly due I feel to the addition by the potters, of quartz sand, in the form of tempering, to the white firing clays.

It is worth noting that the east coast white ware industry was also present in the North East of England and jugs, especially ones decorated with a copper rich lead suspension glaze, were exported north from Yorkshire in some quantity. In particularly to the burgh of Aberdeen, although shards can be found in most Scottish east coast c. 1250 – c. 1350, ceramic assemblages. In particular, Brandsby type and York glazed are the two wares which seem to dominate this trade, and which we can identify. For an overview of these industries, see (Jennings 1992, 18-25).

Without ICP chemical analysis it is impossible by eye or even using low magnification to suggest that any of the medieval white gritty ware pottery from Morham was produced at the nearby Colstoun kilns. However, given the large variation of rims, vessel forms and fabrics, including some which are pinkish and iron rich, from the Colstoun excavations (Hall 2007), it's certainly possible. The only Morham cooking pot rim which I cannot parallel at Colstoun is No 27, which has decoration more associated with 12th century rims recovered from fieldwalking in Fife. Although Archaeomagnetic dating carried out on one of the Coulston Kilns suggest that the last firing was between AD 1320 and 1350, we have no idea when the kiln site either started or went out of use. Interestingly none of the Colstoun pottery looks similar to the 12th century material from an excavation carried out by Peter Addyman in Market Street Haddington. The Colstoun pottery also doesn't look 15th century, which suggest that it was in operation during the 13th and 14th and that out with this time frame Morham must have been receiving its pottery from other unknown sources.

The small probably medieval glazed floor tile shard, suggests somewhere in the vicinity a building of some status, as does the later imported French Loire type jug shards from trench 7. These smallish jugs are found in a variety of fabrics and come in different sizes, but I can find no correlation between this and the fabric types (Haggarty 2006, word file 32, 3). Frequently Loire type jugs, on their exteriors, have small spots of a yellow, amber or, rarely, green lead glaze apart from which they are undecorated. The source of these vessels has yet to be confirmed, and the assumption that they come from the Loire valley should be treated with caution. By far, the most reliable dates in Scotland are for shards recovered from a 1594 deposit at Stirling Castle, the c. 1630-40 deposit in Pittenweem and the shards in pre-Tron Kirk, Edinburgh demolition deposit of 1636-7. In addition, a shard was recovered from sixteenth century debris at Whithorn' while other shards from St John Street Ayr, Carrick Castle, Edinburgh, Perth, and several other sites all date from the sixteenth or more often, the early seventeenth century (Haggarty 2006, word file 32, 2).

What looks like pantile shards from context trench 5 suggest occupation on the site in the 18th century as Scottish pan tiled covered buildings were not common prior to that. It not known when the importation of Dutch pan tiles began, but in the 1680s there is a reference to Richard Drury, a skipper at Bo'ness, carrying a consignment of Dutch 'leaded tyll' for the roof of Kinneil house (HAL). There is also yet no good evidence to suggest that pan tiles were being produced in Scotland until the beginning of the 18th century. This date may be borne out by John Clark of Eldin, who in writing about his father in-law, the architect William Adam, claimed that it was he who 'introduced the making of Dutch Pantiles in Scotland' (Gifford 1989, 73). Adams had a redware pottery in Kirkcaldy.

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Discussion and Conclusions

Several archaeological features were encountered during the evaluation, with the most significant being the substantial remains of the foundations of a curving wall in trench seven which appear to represent the heavily dismantled and robbed remains of a curved wall. The wall itself was up to 2m thick at its widest point, which would seem rather thick for a domestic house. It is therefore possible that this curving wall foundation represents the remains of a curving tower or stair tower of a fortified structure such as a castle. As the site has long been suspected as the site of Morham Castle, as noted on the OS 1850s map and also mentioned in other historic accounts, it is likely that they are one and the same.

The radiocarbon date sought from the charcoal contained within the *in situ* mortar deposits on the foundation stones of the wall returned a date of 1295-1400 calAD (SUERC 93261), which is earlier than any mention of a castle in the lands of Morham. However, as mentioned above, nearby Yester Castle had been established as early as 1267 by Sir Hugh Gifford, a prominent landowner in the Lothians. As Morham had been inhabited by the Anglo-Norman Malherbes' from at least the late 12th century it is possible they had a residence at Morham and this occupation may be reflected in the findings during the excavation of several sherds of 12th and 13th century ceramics. Although some of these were recovered from topsoil deposits, a few sherds were recovered from linear features in the field to the south of the structural remains. Further sherds were recovered from the cut for the wall, which may have been backfilled with nearby midden material or other occupation debris. It is unclear what form the residence at Morham would have taken in this early time although the findings from the excavation hint that there could yet be further evidence for an early residence at this site.

The radiocarbon date for the earliest construction of the wall itself falling between 1295 and 1400 is particularly interesting. As explained above, during this time the lands belonged to the descendants of the Anglo-Norman Malherbes' under the toponym of 'Morham'. Sir Thomas of Morham owned the land in 1295 and owing to his subsequent capture and incarceration, and the involvement of his two sons in the struggles of the Scottish Wars of Independence, it is unlikely that a castle would have been constructed during this time. It is possible that Sir Thomas built the castle after he was granted back his lands in 1322 (see above) and prior to his death; however, after costly battles and a lengthy incarceration it does seem unlikely.

It is far more likely that this part of the castle may have been constructed after the close of the Second Scottish War of Independence at a time when the Scottish nobles could resume their castle building and the tower house begins to emerge. Although the 15th century account of Morham refers to it as a 'house and castle'; the 16th century account does mention the 'tower' and fortalice. The precipice of land that is indicated by the 19th Century OS Map as the site of the castle, where the substantial curving wall was found, is relatively small. However, the land may have encompassed some of the field to the west where the road and current house sit, as both are comparatively modern. Certainly the presence of several linear features containing medieval pottery to the south of the structural remains seem to indicate that the land surrounding the site was also used during this period. Excavation further north and west of where the current remains have been uncovered may yet yield an answer.

Construction in the latter half of the 14th century would name the castle builders as the descendants of Euphemia Morham and John Gifford before the lands pass through marriage to the Hays, which comes a century before the mention of the house and castle of Morham in the mid 15th century. A coin found near the foundation remains dates to the reign of King James IV (1488-1513) and coincides with the Hepburn acquisition of the land.

The artefact evidence from the excavations supports occupation at Morham from as early as the 12th century, but does cover the latter medieval periods as well. The assemblage represents the agricultural and daily life of a medieval household which appears to be of some status, which would be expected of an occupied medieval castle. Coupled with the excavation results and the historical accounts, it is likely that the remains of the substantial curving wall uncovered by the excavation represents part of the medieval castle at Morham.

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