Analysis of a Wheelhouse and Other Structures in Grimsay, Western Isles.

Alasdair John M^{c}Kenzie

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.Phil.in the Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, University of Glasgow, October 2005.

UNIVERSITY
of
GLASGOW

Abstract

This thesis explores the archaeological remains and artefacts recovered from a moorland Iron Age wheelhouse at Bagh nam Feadag on the island of Grimsay which is located between North Uist and Benbecula in the Western Isles of Scotland. The first section of the work discusses the background to the site and places it within its environmental and archaeological context. The second section explores the structural remains found during a previous excavation by an amateur archaeologist and is accompanied with detailed structural drawings by the author along with an overview of the archaeological remains within the surrounding area. The third section details the artefacts recovered by excavation followed by a synthesis based on the evidence obtained. The artefacts recovered consist of a range of items typically associated with this type of settlement, including a substantial mixed ceramic collection from multiple phases of occupation ranging from the middle Iron Age to the post-medieval period. Evidence derived from this artefactual assemblage as well as the author's own field visits and survey of the standing remains, are used to analyse the nature of settlement in this part of the moorland. The site under examination is one of only three moorland wheelhouses to have been excavated in the Western Isles, in contrast to the numerous similar sites that have been studied on the coastal machair. Although structurally many wheelhouses are very similar, the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse stands out from many of the others because of its moorland location and substantial remains. The relationship between wheelhouses in the two environments is introduced in the light of recent debate on their nature. The structures at Bagh nam Feadag also represent a long and complex settlement that has been well preserved compared with other examples which have suffered through removal of material for other use, disrupted by township clearances or damaged by natural forces. The mound containing the various structures had remained relatively undisturbed since the 18th century, with the land used only for rough grazing and restricted cultivation, until an amateur excavation carried out between 1993 and 1997.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Ewan Campbell, for all his help and guidance during both this and my previous work on the wheelhouses of the Western Isles. I am also grateful to all the staff and fellow postgraduates at Glasgow for their assistance over the past five or so years and for making studying in Glasgow a memorable and enjoyable time.

I first encountered the site at Bagh nam Feadag during research while studying as an undergraduate at the University of Glasgow in 2003. I am grateful to Dr Mary MacLeod for her suggestion and encouragement to investigate this site further and also for the cooperation and support of the landowners, Dorothy and Iain MacVicar. Thanks also go to the survey team; Mary Paterson, Phillipa Rewaj, Billy and Colin M^{c}Kenzie – we may have had rain running off our noses but at least the dreaded Hebridean midges did not come and pay us a visit!

The survey was part funded by the Glasgow Archaeological Society and the Faculty of Arts, University of Glasgow. Lionacleit Guesthouse provided generous hospitality in such beautiful surrounding both during the survey and throughout much of 2004. Many aspects of this project would not have been possible without this support.

I wish to thank the Stornoway Sites and Monuments Record for making the assemblage available for study, as well as Dana MacPhee and Sheena Stewart at Museum Nan Eilean, Sgoil Lionacleit, for all their assistance in facilitating this. I am grateful to Niall Sharples, Jacqui Mulvile, Ewan Campbell and John Raven for their comments on the assemblage.

I would like to thank the following people for the provision of forthcoming material and/or useful discussions on various sites in the Western Isles; John Raven, Melanie Johnson, Helen Bradley, Kate Seddon, Mike Parker Pearson, Alan Hall, Andrew Reynolds, Mike Hamilton, Robert Tye, Nyree Finlay and J.S. Wood. Special thanks to Sue Hothersall for making her photographic archive available and for sharing her insights and background knowledge regarding Bagh nam Feadag.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge and thank the encouragement expressed by every member of my family and Phillipa during my graduate year (and a bit).

While thanks are due to the above, responsibility for the final form and content of the thesis lies with the author.

All photographs and illustrations are by the writer unless specified in the text. Finds from the excavation are held at the Museum Nan Eilean, Sgoil Lionacleit, Benbecula. All artefacts from this excavation are contained alongside the other finds collected by Roy Ashworth while living in the Uists (Ashworth Collection SMR 5004).

Contents

List of Figures

Chapter One

Chapter Two

Chapter Four

Chapter Five

Appendix One

Appendix Two

List of Plates

Chapter One

Chapter Two

Chapter Three

Chapter Four

Chapter Five

Appendix Two

Postscript

List of Tables

Appendix Two

Chapter One

1.0 Introduction

The archaeological site at Bagh nam Feadag is an important addition to the archaeology of the Western Isles. This thesis will describe the archaeological remains found at Bagh nam Feadag, a location on the northern coastline of the island of Grimsay. The structural remains range from the early to late Iron Age through to the medieval and post-medieval periods. The structures, including a wheelhouse which had been modified in antiquity, were uncovered in the 1990s by amateur excavation and are clearly indicative of this area of Grimsay being of significant archaeological importance. The intention for this thesis is to extract and record information from the remains, both structural and artefactual, and instigate academic debate on what is a significant site. Although not excavated in a modern scientific manner, enough detail was recorded to enable an outline of the development of the site to be put forward. The site is important as it is the only one of two wheelhouses to have been excavated in the eastern, peat covered environment of the Western Isles. Many other wheelhouses are sited on the western, machair environment of wind blown shell sand.

The area of study relevant to this thesis lies within the archipelago stretching from the tip of Lewis in the north to the smaller islands off the south of Barra, collectively known as the Outer Hebrides or the Western Isles. Although named as a group of islands, each is now linked by either road bridge, causeway or short sea ferry crossing, forming a coherent and relatively unified unit which in Gaelic is known as 'The Long Island' (Figure 1).

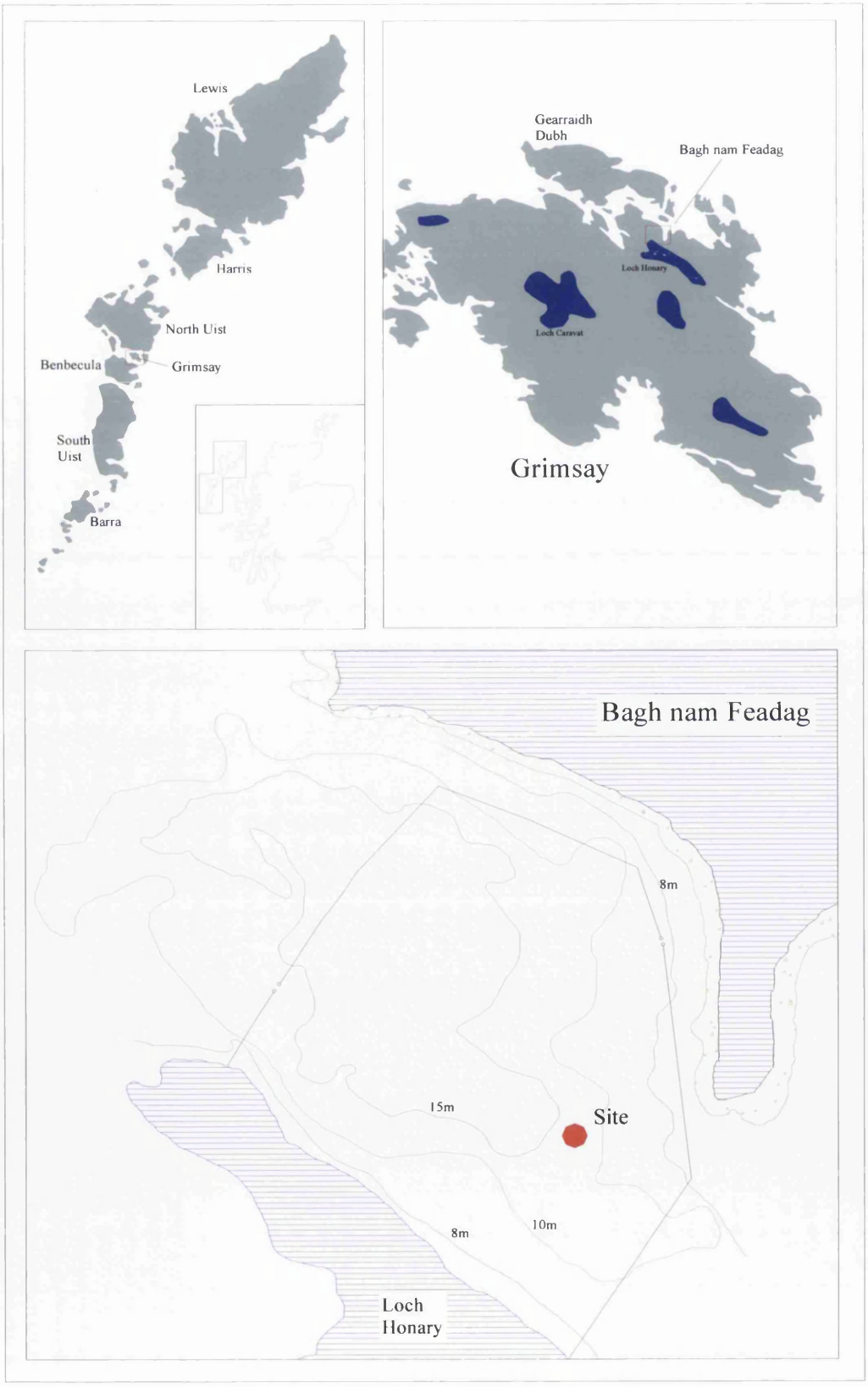

Figure 1: Location of the study area.

The island of Grimsay, where the structures under examination are located, is situated between North Uist and Benbecula, adjacent to the 'North Ford', which today is crossed by road causeway (Figure 2).

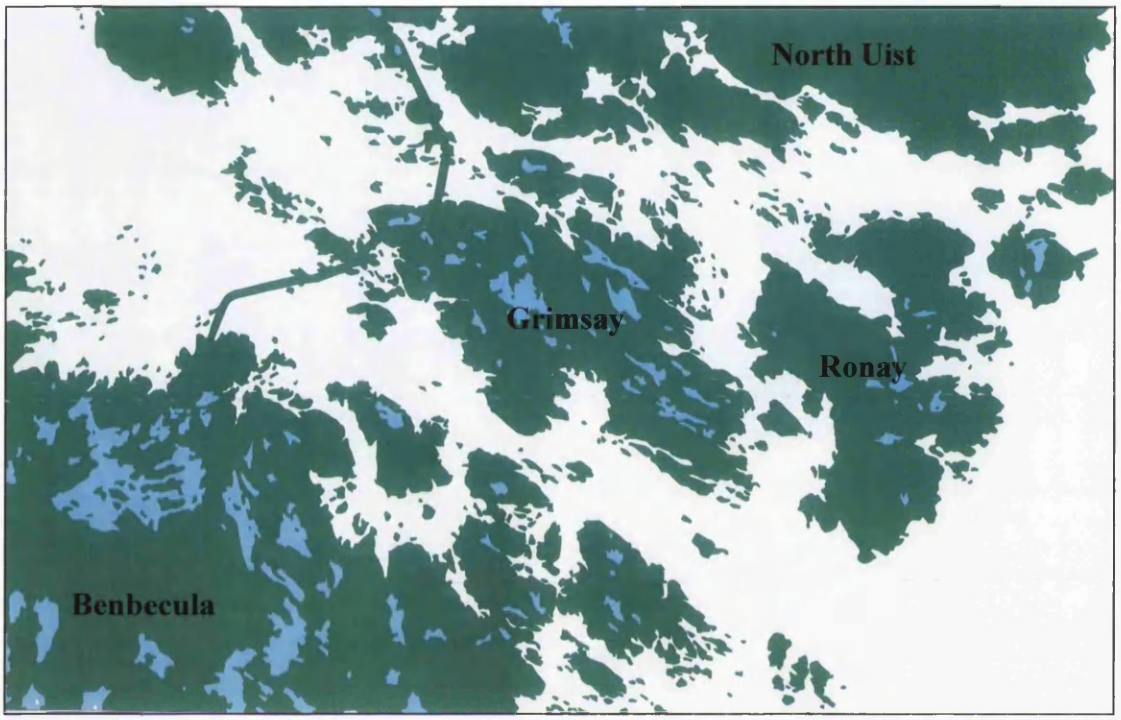

Figure 2: The landmass of Grimsay (centre), joined by causeway to North Uist and Benbecula.

Grimsay is a small island even by Hebridean standards, being only 5km long by 3km wide, the typically tortuous coastline gives way to undulating moorland with the highest points being only approximately 25 metres above sea level. The island currently has a thriving community which can be traced back through recorded croft histories to the early 1800s with archaeology providing evidence for habitation prior to this. The area of Grimsay focused upon is Bagh nam Feadag, meaning 'Bay of the Plover', taking its name from the Golden or Ringed Plover which is common in moorland and coastal regions of the Hebrides (Angus 2001, 235).

1.1 Background to Excavation

The excavation of the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse and other structures (Plate 1) on the island of Grimsay was conducted from 1993 to 1997 by a retired engineer, Roy Ashworth. The information presented in this thesis is based upon the data generated by that excavation and supplemented with a survey of the standing remains by this author.

Plate 1: The structures revealed by excavation, with excavators wall and hut in foreground.

Following the departure of Roy Ashworth from Grimsay in 1997 the artefacts recovered from his work were submitted to the local museum and a survey was completed by the Association of Certified Field Archaeologists (Glasgow) in October 1998. The purpose of that survey was to 'record the excavated wheelhouse and place it in its environment before deterioration set in, as no record drawing existed and no conservation measures had yet been agreed' (Wood 1998, 3). The wheelhouse and surrounding area was mapped by theodolite and detailed drawings were produced using the taped offset method.

Although excavated relatively recently and with good intentions on Roy Ashworth's part, the site has suffered through the lack of scientific excavation and recording the recovered artefacts by context. Given the importance of moorland

wheelhouses and their relatively rare existence, when compared with their machair counterparts, it is unfortunate that certain research questions, specifically relating to ceramic sequencing, cannot now be developed to any great extent. However, the wealth of material recovered and its state of preservation, along with the standing remains of the wheelhouse structure itself, does enable other aspects of wheelhouse construction and function to be addressed. In addition, the multiple phases of occupation at the site, from structures underlying the primary wheelhouse to those constructed above and around, marks the locality as a definable and sustainable prehistoric/historic landholding.

Little information is available regarding the condition of the site before it was excavated. Another possible wheelhouse site to the north (Plate 2) lies beneath a grass and fern covered mound with some indications of walling. The walling visible at the top of the mound (NS1, figure 10) is clearly relatively recent compared to whatever lies below it. Given that Roy Ashworth was intrigued by hillocks that stood out in the landscape, it would seem logical that the site excavated would have been in a similar condition.

Plate 2: View of possible wheelhouse at North Site One looking east over to yet another fern covered structure (NS2).

A rough sketch plan by the excavator made in the early stages, and the profile of the existing parts of the mound, would suggest that some internal walling was visible before any soil was removed, perhaps being the reason that this site was chosen over the other (see Figure 3 below).

The excavator, Roy Ashworth, worked on his own at the site, removing a large amount of stone from the central area of the wheelhouse which may have included fallen rubble from corbelled cells. The location of the excavator's spoil heaps can be seen in the aerial photographs taken towards the end of the works (Plate 3a & 3b).

Plate 3a: Aerial photographs of Bagh nam Feadag structure taken towards the end of the excavation (©Hothersall).

Plate 3b: Aerial photographs of Bagh nam Feadag structure taken towards the end of the excavation (©Hothersall).

Middens associated with any period of occupation at the site were not excavated and have yet to be located. The curving dry stone wall with incorporated site hut surrounding the western flank of the site was constructed from the rubble from within the site (Hothersall pers. comm.). The excavator also established a grid over the site by using letters and number to identify one metre squares (Figure 3).

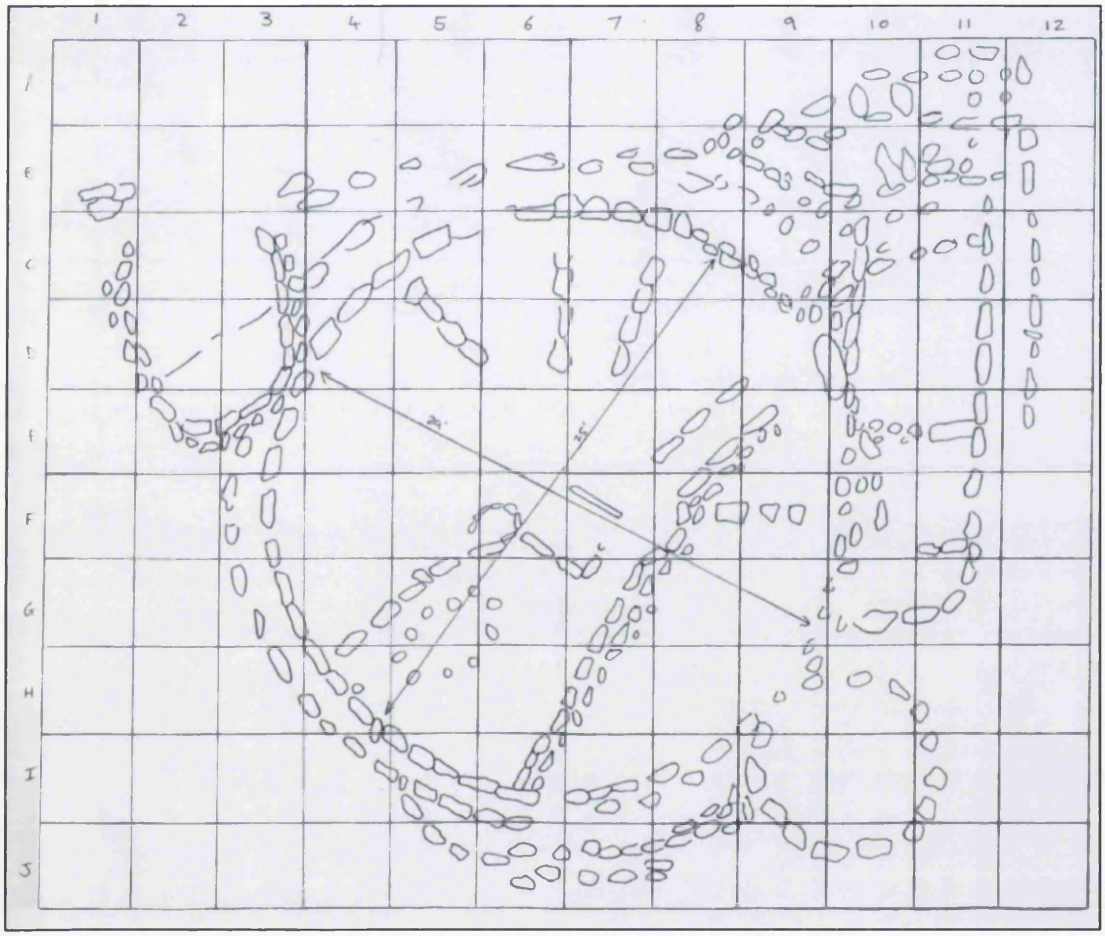

Figure 3: A transcription of the plan made by the excavator.

When finds were recovered a note of which square they came from was often made, although, there was either no documentation of their stratigraphical relationship, or the reporting was too simplistic to enable detailed interpretation. A section was left intact in one of the wheelhouse bays which once stood to a height of approximately 70cm, however this has since eroded to less than half that height. The top of this balk was thought by the excavator to represent the highest floor level (Plate 4).

Plate 4: The baulk representing the only record of stratigraphy during the excavation (©Hothersall).

The site was effectively cleared of what the excavator determined as rubble, leaving the main structures in situ. A revision of the extent to which the remains are in fact in situ, as opposed to re-built, is presented below. No sampling took place and plans of the work as it developed were not made. No recording of contexts, stratigraphic descriptions or site notes were made.

Although Roy Ashworth was visited by local people, museum authorities and archaeologists working in the region, as far as is known he carried out all works by himself over a four year period, representing a considerable amount of hard labour in an exposed and often inhospitable environment. Roy Ashworth's departure from the island of Grimsay in 1997, it is said, was related to a lack of support and acknowledgement for the effort he had made to present the wheelhouse to the public.

From the condition of the remains it is likely that the excavator began excavating directly on top of the mound, clearing the central area and then following the walls of the structures as they appeared. Given the large quantity of stone still present in situ and around the location it would appear that the site has not been robbed to any great extent. The only robbing that could be considered evident is the re-use of wheelhouse stone to construct the later structures immediately adjacent to the south and north of the wheelhouse (Figure 4) – it would seem that stone from the site has not been removed in recent years in a similar fashion to that of other sites in the Uists e.g. Borve Castle in Benbecula, which was systematically robbed for modern housing and farm boundaries until the 1960s.

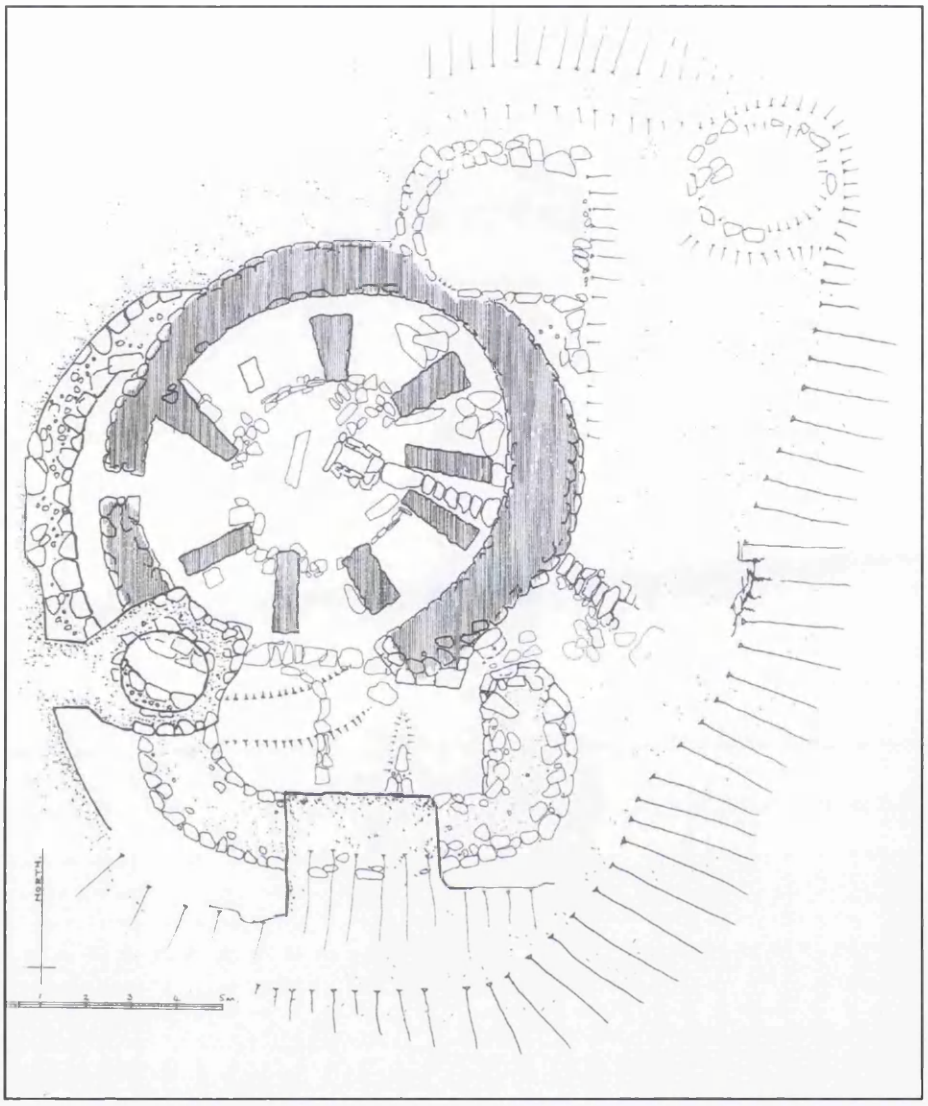

Figure 4: Plan of the structures exposed by excavation at Bagh nam Feadag (after Wood 1998, 8).

The remoteness of Bagh nam Feadag and the site's inconspicuous location may have aided its preservation. Given that the moorland regions of the Outer Hebrides are not explored, either regularly or by large numbers of people, it is not surprising that more settlement mounds have not come to the attention of archaeologists. The cutting of peats, although often carried out away from the modern road, tends to be restricted to small areas that are continually worked, and the more modern practice of hunting deer is restricted to specific areas. Thus, any recent human presence in the moorland has been limited, and not focused on archaeology.

1.2 Circumstances of Survey

This author's fieldwork programme began in October 2003 with preliminary exploration of the site and surrounding land area. Most of the features within the present field boundaries were recorded by the Association of Certified Field Archaeologists in 1999 with the exception of feature 18 (see Plate 15 in chapter three) which has not been identified previously. This site visit was conducted to evaluate the structural development and plan a survey programme which was to be arranged for 2004. The survey was undertaken by a team of five led by this author over a period of two weeks during May 2004.

1.2.1 Objectives of the Survey

The survey programme had two main objectives:

- To provide a detailed record of the exposed structures and evaluate the site phasing before substantial degradation of the site by natural processes complicated the phasing further. At the time of writing the site was not scheduled and was regarded as 'stable' by the Western Isles Sites and Monuments Record. No conservation work had been carried out although it is anticipated that some measures will be taken to conserve the site and present it to the public.
- To assist in the understanding of the architectural development of the site as a whole and of the wheelhouse in particular. The original constructions, re-modification and recent re-modelling by excavation would be presented in their context.

1.2.2 Fieldwork Strategy and Methodology

The fieldwork strategy focused on recording the internal elevations of the wheelhouse and the other adjoining structures. The upstanding elevations would be drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 and transformed into digital format. Drawings of all elevations would be made on drafting film, accompanied by descriptions and levels.

All illustrations would be accompanied by a large archive of photographs and notes which when viewed together will provide a comprehensive record of the condition of the site in 2004. Some of the photographs in the archive were provided by Sue Hothersall from the Association of Certified Field Archaeologists and date from around 1998, shortly after the excavation ceased. Only two photographs exist showing the site during excavation, in the form of oblique aerial photographic prints (Plate 3).

1.2.3 Photographic Survey

Within the wheelhouse bays, where space was restricted, photographic recording concentrated on internal elevations using an SLR camera with a 19mm lens. A 35mm SLR and digital camera was used for other detail. Photographs were taken using black and white negative film (with yellow filter), colour negative film, colour transparency film and digital. Where possible photographs were taken using a tri/mono pod and cable release to capture greater depth of field. No artificial lighting was used on site.

1.3 Terminology

The Iron Age period in the Western Isles dates broadly from the end of the Bronze Age not later than ca. 600 BC to the beginning of the Viking Age ca. AD 800. Within the Iron Age, three main phases have been outlined consisting of Early Iron Age (ca. 700 - 100 BC), the Middle Iron Age (ca. 200 BC - AD 400) and the pre-Norse Late Iron Age (ca. AD 300 - 900) (after Parker Pearson & Sharples 1999).

Previous studies of structures from the Iron Age in the Western Isles have generated a complex and often disputed classification scheme for wheelhouses and similar associated buildings (e.g. Young 1961, MacKie 1965, Armit 1990 and 1996, Parker Pearson & Sharples 1999). For the sake of simplicity, however, the definition in this thesis will incorporate all the normal subdivisions currently employed i.e. structures known as earth houses or aisled roundhouses, whether with bonded or unbonded piers, shall all be referred to as wheelhouses.

Considering Iron Age structures collectively, Armit has proposed a simplified typology (1992, 22), stating that all sites previously described as brochs, galleried duns, island duns and forts were essentially all of one set, introducing the term Atlantic Roundhouse. Such a generic classification was brought about by the recognition that all the aforementioned structures share various characteristics, regardless of their individual architectural details, such as function, location, spatial arrangement and associated crafts and industry. What is surprising however, is that wheelhouses are not included within the Atlantic Roundhouse category whilst sharing several features when viewed both structurally (provincially, dimensionally, spatially) and in the way they may have functioned. Due to wheelhouse's having this separate status, both before and after the introduction of this new generic term, the mentality persists that wheelhouses served a specific function or were inhabited or otherwise by a specific group of people, contrasting with other, presumably contemporary structures (Atlantic Roundhouses). Ian Crawford has compounded this separate status recently by suggesting that the wheelhouse form was driven by religion and not habitation (2002, 127-128; see also Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 101), something that contrasts with all previous interpretations of wheelhouses including the one presented here.

1.4 Archaeological Background

Given that settlement at Bagh nam Feadag spans a vast timescale, the subsections below offers an outline of some of the major events in the development of the Western Isles and those that relate to the site presented here. This is by no means an exhaustive account of such a complex story which archaeologically speaking, with some sixty years of investigation, is very much in its infancy.

1.4.1 Wheelhouses

A wheelhouse can be described as a building with a distinctive ground plan, having a circular outer wall that encloses a variable number of regularly spaced cells that open onto a central space. The term wheelhouse derives from the similarities of the structure in plan to a wheel with radial spokes. Although wheelhouses are

generally referred to as a standard building form no identical examples are known when the structural features are examined in detail. For example, the overall diameters, internal space and number of bays, along with additional features such as entrance passages and additional bays, vary from one site to another (Crawford 2002, 230 table 3 pp; M^{c}Kenzie 2003, 8, 24-41). Wheelhouses are found in two types of location; machair and moorland. Given that only five out of the currently identified thirty-one Western Isles wheelhouses are located on moorland, archaeologists have argued that this indicates the machair as the preferred location (e.g. Armit 1996, 84). Although this may be the case, the lack of survey on the moorland in recent years and deliberate concentration on the machair strip by archaeologists, notably the Sheffield Environmental and Archaeological Research Campaign, has compounded the distinction that this author would argue is not as significant as currently thought. The number of mounds visible on the moors, like those seen at Grimsay and particularly amongst the hills of South Uist, suggest that the ratio between each type of location needs to be revised. This would of course impact upon the way that we currently view moorland wheelhouses - i.e. as something unusual, unique or specialised.

Another main distinction concerning wheelhouses is that some structures have piers connecting with the outer wall, and others have free standing piers which create an aisle between the wall and pier, giving rise to the name aisled roundhouse. Armit (1990, 61) would claim that this latter distinction is an unnecessary typological division, however it remains possible that such a division may be indicative of the internal organisation of space and may be helpful in addressing problems concerning the development of the structural phases once sufficient reliable dating evidence is accumulated.

Previously, wheelhouses have been dated by the analysis of pottery, which has since been shown to be a particularly unreliable method; from the presence of imported items such as glass beads and more recently by radiocarbon dating. Ian Armit has suggested a period of before the first century BC based on the evidence from Hornish Point (1992, 68-9), whereas Ewan Campbell on the basis of radiocarbon dates and Roman items at Sollas B, suggests a much later second century AD date (1991, 139). Whether the construction of wheelhouses can be pinpointed to a specific date or general time period remains to be shown as much of the data is contradictory or hindered by sub-standard excavations in the early 20th century.

1.4.2 Prehistoric and Early Medieval Settlement

Our understanding of prehistoric settlement on the machair is somewhat fragmentary as intensive surveys have failed to identify middle Bronze Age settlements (Parker Pearson *et al* forthcoming). The suggestion has been made that middle Bronze Age settlements could be found directly under later Bronze Age settlements, however, only the wheelhouse at Cill Donnain (Zvelebil 1991) has supported this claim to an extent (Parker Pearson *et al* forthcoming). Further, the problems in locating late Bronze Age and early Iron Age settlements prior to recent surveys caused great difficulties in understanding the development of broch and wheelhouse architecture, lending weight to migration theories (Scott 1948; MacKie 1965). In part, the problem was that brochs and wheelhouses appeared to have made a sudden arrival, and any continuity from earlier periods could not be investigated fully as these earlier sites had not been discovered or studied adequately.

Currently, this question of origins regarding the internal or external development of new building traditions is benefiting from examination against a more complete archaeological record, although problems persist with both invasion and continuity theses.

The Pictish period did not begin in the Western Isles until the seventh century AD, one to two centuries later than eastern and northern Scotland. This apparent later date has been given as no examples of Pictish material culture have been found in the Western Isles before a seventh century AD date (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 106). Therefore, in the Western Isles the fourth-sixth centuries AD are referred to as the Late Iron Age I with the seventh–eighth centuries called the Late Iron Age II or Pictish period. The pre-Pictish Late Iron Age I in the Western Isles is unlikely to be an indication of the archaeological visibility of any Pictish material, especially when acknowledging the extensive excavation and survey that has occurred in this region of Scotland, but more a reflection of the political and social relationships between the Western Isles and their neighbours during this period.

Re-use of earlier settlements during the Late Iron Age I and later has been shown through excavation at Dun Vulan (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 106). The re-use of earlier buildings during this period can also be detected at other sites such as Dun Bharabhat, Clettraval and Bagh nam Feadag. This trend is something that is now

recognised and examined in depth, in contrast to many of the wheelhouse sites in the Western Isles where the recognition of such later occupation has not previously been made: 'The inhabitants did not disappear; rather, they reused the villages and houses of their predecessors, and are therefore difficult for us to identify' (*ibid* 109). With a number of wheelhouses showing evidence for later occupation it should be considered that the majority of middle Iron Age buildings were re-used, including those yet to be excavated, such as remote island duns and currently uninhabited areas such as Usinish and Ronay.

1.4.3 Norse and Medieval Settlement

Norse settlement in the Western Isles is currently less understood than many other periods, primarily because so few examples from this period have been found or studied. What is clear from those sites that are known is that they occur either immediately adjacent to or on top of earlier settlements, with only a couple of exceptions (e.g. Cille Pheadair) being located in apparent isolation. Such relationships have led archaeologists to view these relationships as strong evidence for continuity from the Pictish period (see Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 130). With continuity taking place at many earlier sites in the Norse period, another development has been discovered with the excavation of substantial mounds on the Bornais machair. The Norse settlement here has developed on top of a Pictish settlement which is dated to the seventh and eighth centuries (*ibid* 133). The buildings here began with a longhouse-like building utilising large timber posts, a building technique not used since the Bronze Age in the Western Isles (*ibid* 133) and very different from that which had gone immediately before – often subterranean, revetted and dry-stone in nature. Excavation at Bornais has shown how the Norse period settlement had expanded to the point where it became potentially the largest settlement in the region that retained its importance some time into the period of Scottish rule, operating in some form until the fifteenth century (Sharples & Parker Pearson 1999, 41-62).

The medieval settlement landscape of the Outer Hebrides differs vastly to that which had gone before. At some point around the fourteenth century the machair was abandoned and the focus of settlements turned to the transitional zone between the machair and moorland and further inland to the east (Parker Pearson *et al*

forthcoming). Supporting evidence can be seen at Bornais and Cille Pheadair for this abandonment as occupation appears to cease sometime in the thirteenth or fourteenth century AD (Parker Pearson & Sharples 1999; Sharples 1999, 30). Another indication of machair abandonment is the lack of finer vessels with stabbed decoration, a common type found dating to after the Norse period (Parker Pearson *et al* forthcoming). Of the sites on the machair that have produced Norse ceramics, only the settlement at Udal has so far produced this type of vessel (Crawford 1986) and would appear to be an exception (Parker Pearson *et al* forthcoming).

In 1266 the Western Isles were subjugated by the Scottish Crown through the Treaty of Perth. This treaty specified that those within the territory at this time were free to leave or if they remained would become subject to Scottish rule. It is not known to a great extent how people reacted to this development and settlement changes specifically associated with this transfer of power have not been forthcoming (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 145-7). For example, excavations at Bornais, a settlement spanning the periods before and after the Treaty of Perth, do not show any decisive changes around 1266. Three houses were built on the mounds at Bornais in the thirteenth century while new settlement began 600m away to the east (*ibid* 161). By the time Pont and Blau's maps were made (1590s and 1664) settlements appear to be situated east of the machair zone in South Uist.

Two possible explanations for this shift in settlement patterns have been offered by Parker Pearson and Sharples, the first being that 'the dislocation was caused by the climatic deterioration known to occur during this period' (Parker Pearson & Sharples 2003). The suggestion argues that the succession of wet summers in this period led to a reduction in cereal production which prompted the cultivation of larger areas, something that is thought to cause instability and expose the machair to catastrophic sand movements. Storms, from later periods (1690s) are known to have moved large quantities of sand, engulfing settlements (Armit 1996, 229). Thus, settlement moved to the transitional zone where settlements could be constructed directly on the underlying bedrock and avoid the susceptibility of the changing machair landscape.

Developments, such as catastrophic sand blows, should be visible in the archaeological record at sites such as Bornais had they occurred, however, this is not the case. To complicate matters further, Armit has argued that the opposite occurred in North Uist – with settlement moving from the moorland to the machair around this

ime. What is clear is that further research into the circumstances of these settlement novements is desirable. A regional approach to this problem should also be onsidered as such sudden events as sand blows would presumably have been more nan local in their influence and impact (Armit 1996, 229). However, we should bear n mind that the response of human settlement to environmental conditions can not be versimplified as, clearly in some cases such as the exposed wheelhouse at Clettraval, ther factors were more important.

The second explanation for such a transition could be attributed to the hanging political circumstances of the period. Over four centuries, the ownership of he Uists passed from the kings of Norway to the kings of Man, the Clan Ruairi, the lord of the Isles and finally to the Clan Ranald. It is unclear the extent to which these olitical movements affected settlement during these turbulent centuries. As stated by Parker Pearson amongst others, 'as archaeologists, we still know more about prehistoric life on Uist than we do about medieval houses and villages, a situation that an only begin to be rectified by large scale excavation of a medieval settlement' (2004, 148).

In South Uist archaeologists have noted that settlement in the moorland tends t be smaller than their predecessors on the machair when the shift occurred (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 12). A change to beef farming that began during the Norse period could be viewed as a catalyst for this development, with the machair-moorland junction enabling access to both rough grazing and arable land. It should be noted that these settlements along the machair-moorland boundary can only exist where the geography permits, as in the case of Grimsay and the settlement at Bagh nam Feadag in particular, no machair exits (to any great extent) yet settlement spanned in some form from the Iron Age to the post medieval period. What we may be seeing in the Western Isles is a mixture of long established settlements with little dispersion alongside a more organised system of *bailtean* creation.

The splitting and reorganisation of existing townships can be seen on Grimsay and elsewhere in the Western Isles, with placenames often containing a generic place name element of *Gearraidh* meaning home pasture or shieling (e.g. Gearraidh Dubh). Gearraidh Dubh, which is close to Bagh nam Feadag is similar to the Gearraidh townships in South Uist in that it contains no machair or any settlement before the medieval period, yet has earlier settlement nearby.

Chapter Two: Environment and Local Context

2.0 Introduction

This chapter places the site studied within its geographical and local context with an account of the environmental conditions in the Western Isles, the recent history of the study area and a description of the archaeological features in the surrounding area.

2.1 Environment

Any research involving wheelhouses must consider their location (on either machair or moorland) and their environmental surroundings, as these aspects would have been highly relevant in the selection of a wheelhouse site location. The majority of all wheelhouse sites are semi-subterranean, dug into the machair sand, but an increasing number are now being identified on moorland where the structures were freestanding above ground. Bagh nam Feadag is one such site. We must also study the styles that preceded the wheelhouse architectural form and the environmental conditions in which they were contemporary in order to fully appreciate their location, construction, practicalities and meanings. The following summary gives a précis of the unique environment in which wheelhouses existed.

> A dreary sky, a dreary fall of rain. Long low flats covered with their own damp breath, through which the miserable cattle loomed like shadows. Everywhere lakes and pools, as thickly shown amid the land as islands amid the Pacific waters. Huts wretched and chilly, scarcely distinguishable from the rock-strewn marshes surrounding them. To the east the Minch, rolling dismal waters towards the far-off heads of Skye; to the west the Ocean foaming at the lips, and stretching barren and desolate into the rain-charged clouds (Burnett 1986, 11).

The extract above, from Ray Burnett's 'Benbecula', of a visitor's impression following a visit to the Western Isles in the 1880s, paints a miserable and depressing picture. This observation of the Western Isles - a barren landscape, wet, and windswept and at the mercy of the elements, is widely held. The perception is

erhaps borne out of the fact that the region is greatly different from mainland cotland. It is said that soldiers from mainland Britain, posted to the area during the econd World War, wondered what country they were in, given the 'foreign' nguage, and 'foreign' landscape.

However, in the few thousand years that settlers have inhabited the Western sles, the environmental conditions have changed dramatically. The sea level has sen, climate has fluctuated and the land has been invaded by peat bogs, and marsh. hese changes can be seen through the study of flora and fauna as well as the rchaeological record (e.g. Whittington & Ritchie 1988; Angus 2001). The avironmental changes that have occurred over the last few thousand years were brne out of the glacial retreat from Scotland which occurred about ten thousand ears ago. Trees, which are scarce in our time, were widespread in prehistory. Tree umps found in peat bogs are indicative of this. Particularly, work by Wilkins (1984) a sub peat arboreal remains from Lewis and Harris, has demonstrated that birch, illow and pine forests existed in areas now barren and used primarily for peat atting. The presence of trees consequently promotes the suspected theory that onditions were perhaps more favourable in prehistory, at least in terms of wind. By ound 3500 BC the Western Isles were significantly warmer than the present day (rmit 1996, 23). The warmer weather, induced by the interglacial prime sbsequently developed to become the cooler and wetter climate we are familiar with tday. What can be seen from archaeological evidence is that at the time when flora, una and humans colonized the Western Isles, the environment was at a turning pint, declining from then onwards (*ibid* 23).

Although today the temperature and rainfall in the Western Isles does not ffer drastically from that of the mainland, the strong and consistent wind is seen as a pminent feature of both winters and summers. The weather is known to change damatically in a very short period of time, like that of mountainous regions. The changes are made all the more dramatic as the topography provides little shelter from gles driving in from the Atlantic Ocean. However, the Gulf Stream, although mking summers wet and cool, protects the Western Isles from the severe winters eperienced by other regions on a similar latitude. Snow has been known to fall and frst to form, but only infrequently.

Rainfall is very much dependant upon relief and altitude and is therefore vriable throughout the Western Isles; the low lying areas such as the Uists and Barra

receive a typical annual rainfall of 1200mm, whereas in Lewis and Harris the hills of that area cause averages of 1600mm to 2400mm (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Rainfall in Skye and the Western Isles, measured in mm (from Armit 1996, 20).

The northern proximity of the region dictates short hours of daylight in the winter and short hours of darkness in the summer, making the distinctions between the seasons emphasised and very noticeable to its inhabitants.

Environmental conditions, as seen through ethnographical studies, have a profound impact on human societies, not in so much as they suffer them, but rather they develop systems to accommodate, and in many cases, exploit them. The environments in which we live may limit the opportunities we have, but do not dictate the decisions we make. It is important to remember that humans are not merely victims of the weather, often people would select where they lived to facilitate their lifestyle. Also, when studying a region such as the Western Isles it is of great consequence that we do not project our own society values onto the archaeological record, but instead look at and try to understand why and in what ways society operated in their ecological niche.

2.1.1 Geology and Topography

Lewisian gneiss, a particularly old rock type, formed around 3000 million years ago, dominates the Western Isles geological makeup (Figure 6).

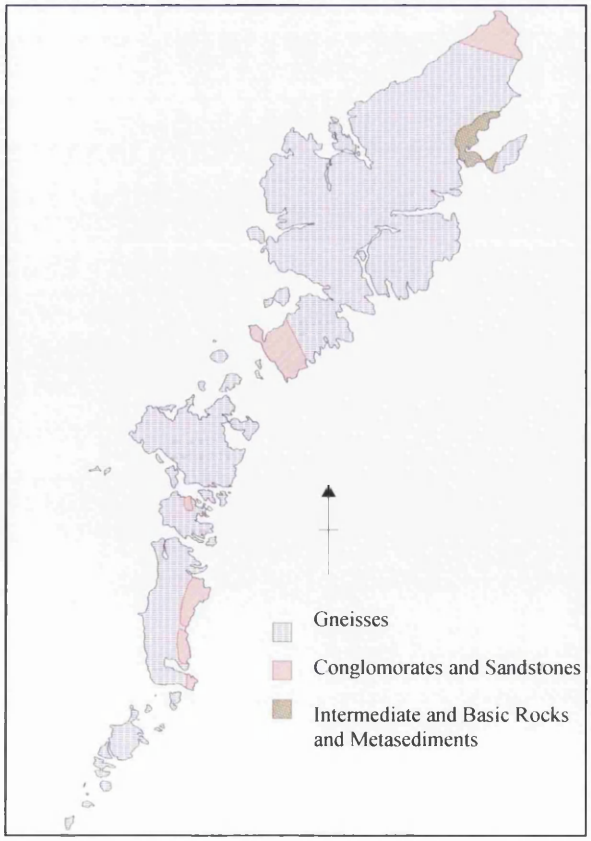

Figure 6: Geology of the Western Isles (after Armit 1996, 21).

The Western Isles which were once a mountain chain (in geological time), have been eroded to their present condition, compounded by the geologically recent event of the retreating ice sheets from the Quaternary period; an abundance of sea and fresh water lochs with few hills surviving to any great stature – the highest in the region being Clisham in Harris that peaks at 800m. The fragmentation of the islands, that can be best appreciated from the air, is as a result of millions of years of weathering. Surprisingly, even though the land area of the Western Isles makes up only 1.3% of Great Britain, it contains 15.8% of its standing waters (Angus 1993). Additionally there is often a great difference between the east and west coasts of the Hebrides, especially on South Uist, where there is no machair on the eastern side of that island.

The inhabitants of the Western Isles, as a result of its geological makeup, inherited a land containing poor building stone and farming land. Soils are formed from mixtures of minerals derived from rocks, and by microbial action on organic material in the presence of air and water. The soil type is therefore dictated by the properties of these components, particularly the type of minerals present. Hebridean soils do not generally lend themselves to cultivation, often too wet, occasionally too dry, susceptible to the wind and very acidic. Additionally the soils have formed in thin layers, with protruding rock, making large-scale cultivation difficult. However, this unique makeup still provided a range of habitats for plants and animals, foundations for houses and domestic fuel. What can be seen today and in the archaeological record is that exploitation of the land for subsistence focused on the shore and the machair.

2.1.2 The Machair

Machair can be defined as (after Boyd & Boyd 1996):

1. A base of blown sand which has a significant percentage of shell-derived materials.
2. Lime-rich soils with pH1 values normally greater than 7.0.
3. A level or low-angle smooth surface at a mature stage of geomorphological evolution.
4. A sandy grassland type vegetation with long dune grasses.
5. Biotic interference such as is caused by heavy grazing, sporadic cultivation, trampling and sometimes artificial drainage should be a detectable influence within the recent historical period.
6. An oceanic location with a moist, cool climatic region.

The Hebridean machair has no equivalent anywhere else (Boyd 1996). The high calcium carbonate content, about 80%, is produced as a result of the ground down remains of marine invertebrates and algae and supports a rich habitat for flora and fauna. The machair environment is formed when dry shell sand is blown by wind travelling at about 16 kph or more, causing an accumulation (Figure 7).

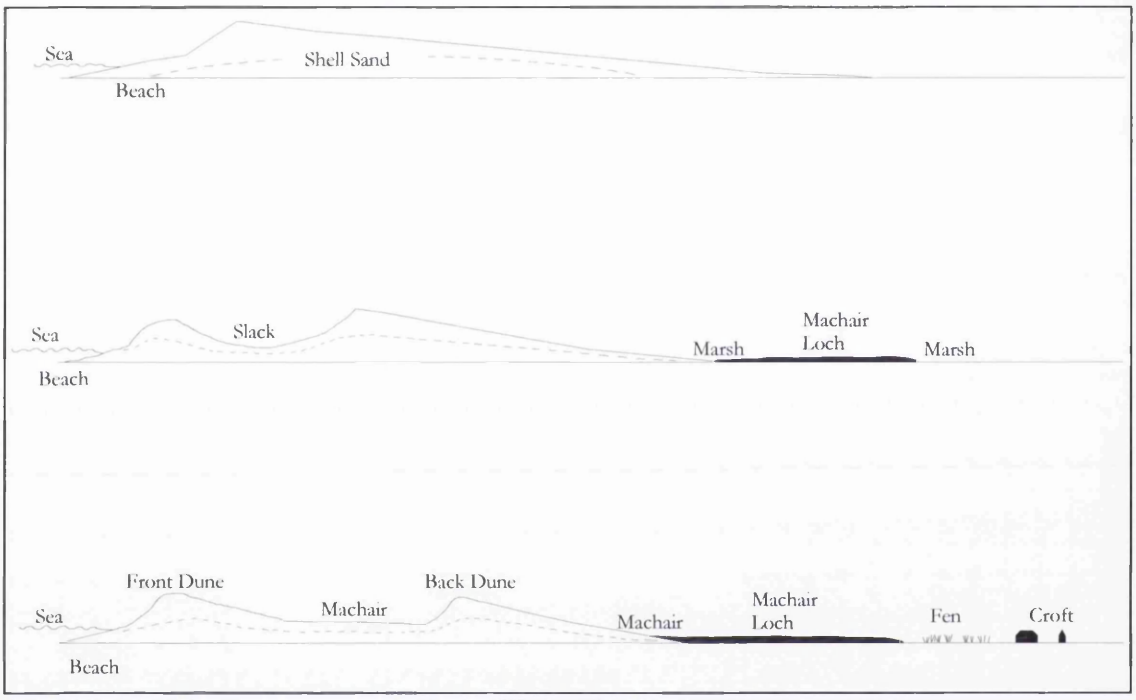

Figure 7:
Three stages in the development of the dune machair system showing the accretion of sand and the shape of the present day landform (simplified from Ritchie, 1979, after Boyd & Boyd, 1996).

The accumulation is then reworked by the wind into an undulating stable platform of sterile sand. The dunes of the machair are free draining, occasionally subject to drought, but flooded seasonally by the rising water table or by loch margins (Boyd & Boyd 1996, 97). It is here in prehistory that much activity focused. The machair is continually changing, and the emergence of many Iron Age sites along the shoreline, eroding out of sand dunes, indicates that in prehistory the sea was further away on the west coast.

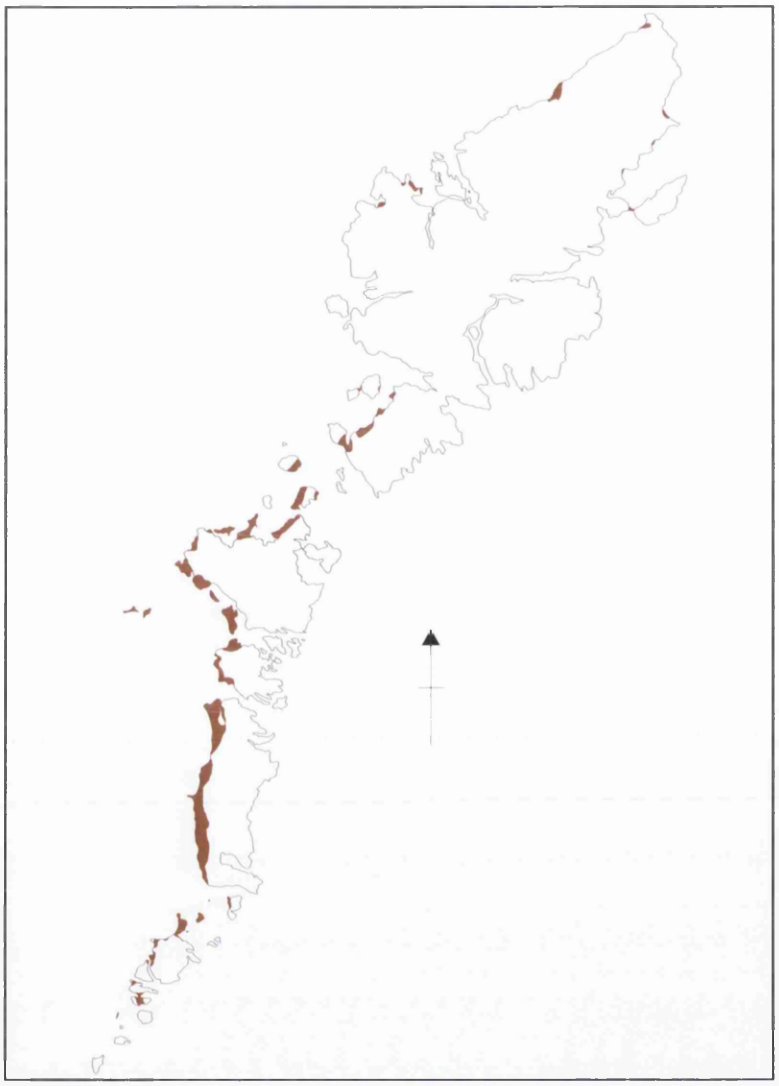

Figure 8: Machair distribution in the Western Isles (after Angus 2001, 196-197).

As the machair stretches inland the ground changes into moorland. The boundary between the machair and the moor, also known as the 'blacklands', which is a reference to the contrast in soil colours between the two areas, is sometimes less than 100m (Figure 8). It has been shown that the crofts or farms in South Uist and Benbecula transect the island from west to east, with each farm possessing a strip of machair for cultivation and an area of blackland for settlement, grazing and fuel. Although the distribution of settlements in the Iron Age is heavily biased towards the machair strip, exceptions on moorland do exist and the peat resource of the blacklands would have undoubtedly been one reason for locating there given the scarcity of timber for fuel.

2.1.3 Woodland and Peat Growth

In the Western Isles, as the ice sheets retreated, soil began to form and trees were given the opportunity to grow. Forest cover became established, with hazel and birch scrubs being replaced by dense woodland (Armit 1996, 23). As conditions became more favourable to life, species spread and humans colonised.

However, as stated previously the climate cooled, became wetter and the tree capacity declined. The native Hebridean woods of today are characterised by their dwarf like form, struggling to withstand the elements. Natural woodland is restricted to sheltered, isolated pockets, where some protection from the ruthless wind is obtained, and the grazing of sheep and deer evaded. Modern forestry practices distort the natural tree capacity of the area by the use of powerful machinery, intensive planting and fence protection, such as that found around the hill of Beinn Risearaidh, near Vallay, North Uist. It is important here to point out that the decline of the forest cover was not simply, or only, a natural event. It is thought that humans in the Iron Age played a part by burning and clearing woodland for farming and utilization in timber-hungry broch towers. Once cleared, the grazing of sheep and wild deer would have also restricted woodland regeneration. However, little evidence of woodland clearing has been found archaeologically in the Western Isles, and is mainly presumed, given the activities elsewhere in Britain at the time.

Peat formation depends on rainfall, temperature, topography and underlying geology. The Hebridean environment was and is conducive to this, resulting in large areas of infertile soil, with little economical use other than as a fuel source. The presence of peat has also inhibited natural regeneration of any woodland that once existed.

Plate 5: Satellite image of the Outer Hebrides illustrating the large quantity of lochs as well as the clear division between the machair and the moorland.

The landscape of the Outer Hebrides can be divided into three distinctive land types which have had a profound impact on where settlements were located. The west coast of the islands containing the machair has been the most intensively studied

in the past by archaeologists as well as environmentalists, geographers and biologists. Settlements located in the machair benefit from high preservation as they are cocooned in sand, while the stone structures themselves help to consolidate and sabilise the mound that builds up around them.

The second land type to be encountered as one travels east is a transitional aea of moorland with freshwater lochs and rocky outcrops. On South Uist this tansitional zone loosely follows the line of the modern road running north to south. Moving further east from this transitional zone, particularly in South Uist, extensive moorland and mountains are reached. The eastern coastline varies from rocky crags to sheltered bays, with freshwater lochs as well as deep and extensive sea lochs running inland.

Today, less and less of the land is being used for agriculture and even less is worked by employing the traditional techniques such as collecting sea-weed from the slores to fertilise the machair and moving sheep and cattle to upland grazing over the summer months. The availability of modern fuel sources such as oil, gas, and electricity have had a considerable impact on many households and their living practices, an ever reducing proportion of the community extract peats, which is essentially a free fuel, although laborious to produce. The traditional manual methods enployed for peat extraction and preparation have been shown by recent studies to be identical to those in antiquity (Branigan & Foster 2002, 44).

The archaeology of these islands has been well documented, assisted by a combination of antiquarian investigation and recent excavation and survey. Due to a combination of environmental conditions and conservative, sympathetic land resource management systems, archaeological sites have been well preserved and have not suffered greatly from the intensive farming techniques and over-development of the laid that is more prevalent on mainland Britain. With most settlement periods represented in relative abundance, whether unintentionally or targeted, the Outer Hebrides have been subject to regular interdisciplinary and progressively higher quality examination.

The nature of the extremely alkaline wind blown soils on the machair and the high acidic content and formation of peat in the blacklands results in a bias in the preservation of archaeological remains. For this reason, approaches towards surveying these respective localities require separate systems. The machair survey by the Sheffield Environmental and Archaeological Research Campaign, for example,

utilised the topography of the machair plain, with its distinctive consolidated mounds, along with the pottery produced at rabbit burrows to identify both the location of sites and possible dates of use. Also, coastal erosion and storms have exposed machair sites which were not previously known resulting in unplanned excavations conducted on an emergency basis.

Settlements on the blacklands however are notoriously difficult to find due to the blanket covering of peat that has consumed the area since the Iron Age. Contrary to the machair coastal sites, moorland sites are not exposed by nature, except by the more subtle changes in the flora caused by differing conditions underground. Those moorland sites that have been identified are generally substantial enough to protrude through the peat covering, and thus tend to be either conspicuous chambered tombs (Henshall 1972), post-medieval settlements (Moreland 1990) or sheilings.

As a result of the difficulties in detection only a handful of prehistoric settlements are known from moorland areas in the Outer Hebrides. Of those that are known, wheelhouses are the most numerous. A discovery during the excavation of a chambered tomb north of Lochboisdale has indicated the presence of a Bronze Age enclosure (Cummings & Sharples 1999), confirming this authors belief that the apparent lack of moorland settlements is more a question of discovery than of presence.

2.2 Grimsay – historical context

Grimsay, for most of its recent history, was part of the tack of Boirearaigh, tenanted by the MacLeans. The lease of 1612 was one of the first to specify the lands included in the lease, which included Sollas, Lingay, Meikle and Little Grimsayes (see Lawson 2000, 50). The first detailed map of Grimsay by Reid in 1799 depicts three areas of habitation and agriculture, at Gearrudy, Kallin and Aird nan Sruban (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Reid's map of Grimsay, 1799 (from Lawson 2000, 50).

An indication of the number of crofters on Grimsay cannot be ascertained until 1814 as the 1799 Estate records do not differentiate between those households situated on Boirearaigh and Grimsay (Lawson 2000, 51). It is thought Grimsay was first crofted in 1814, with sixteen distinct land units in 1820, and a further eleven added a few years later (*ibid* 51). Lawson suggests the initial sixteen crofts were established in Aird nan Sruban and Gearrudy, with those added later at Sgoitbhein and Rubha Dubh at the later date (2000, 51). This sequence of crofting development outlined above may therefore include the location of the structures examined in this thesis, suggesting a date of after 1814 for the creation of the large area of lazy beds (or runrigs) still visible at Bagh nam Feadag (see Figure 10).

2.2.1 Site Setting

The Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse structures are not visible from any of the modern road routes but can be accessed from the south by skirting around Loch Hornary and from the north over the sand flats of the sea inlet at low tide. At present, the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse lies exposed above ground in the lee of a hummock

adjacent to a prehistoric quarry, having a clear outlook to the north, and restricted outlooks to the south and east. The hummock restricts all visibility to the west. The primary wheelhouse (structure II), which is the subject of this thesis and the other associated structures are all built from the same rock type (Lewisian gneiss, pronounced 'nice'). With the wheelhouse and other structures being constructed from local stone it would seem likely that they are sited in the remains of this stone extraction area, exploiting the protection it offered from the prevailing southwest winds.

The location of the settlement satisfies all the basic necessities for habitation (see Figure 10). The small land area commanded by the wheelhouse includes relatively fertile soil by Hebridean standards, a sheltered bay permits access to the Atlantic c.100m to the northeast and a fresh water loch (Hornary) c. 100m to the southwest gives easy access to fresh water. The nearest source for clay can be found just to the south of the site at Loch Hornary. This clay contains the same mineralogical inclusions found in most of the pottery recovered by excavation.

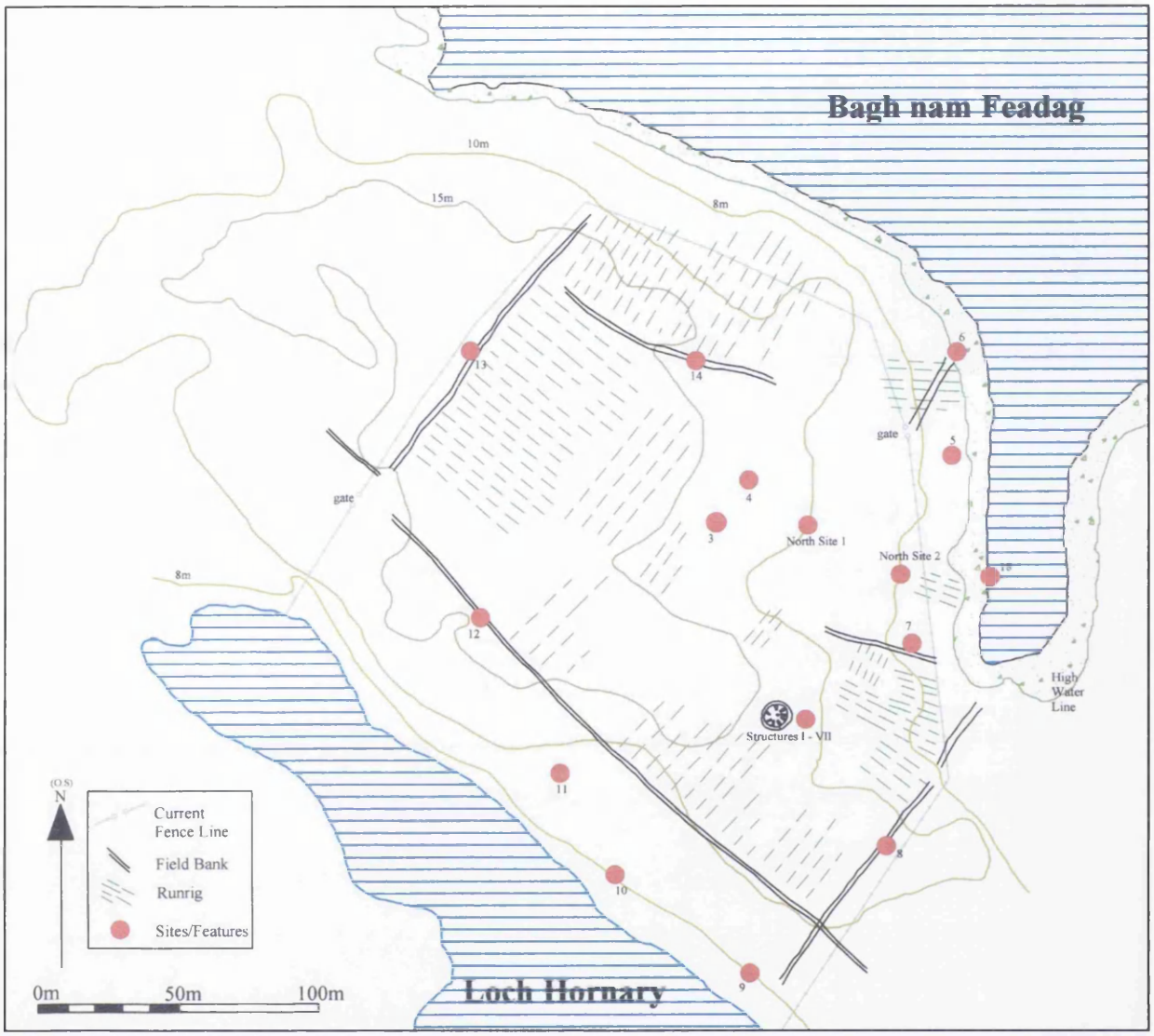

Figure 10: Plan of Bagh nam Feadag with features referred to in the text indicated (after Wood 1998, 6).

The excavated site is not the only known structure on this part of the moorland. Dun Ban (NF85NE 7), a promontory fort located approximately 1km south east of structure II, with evidence for an Atlantic Roundhouse and later cellular buildings, is the only other recorded site in the immediate vicinity, situated to the south in the eastern end of Loch Hornary (Plate 6, located in figure 16). A further two possible sites exist a short distance to the north at the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse site (see NS1 & NS2 in chapter 2.3).

Plate 6: Photograph of Dun Ban in 2004 looking north westwards, with the entrance at the front right.

The island of Grimsay generally is not known to be rich in Iron Age settlements, with the only recorded sites at present being four island duns most of which were examined to some extent in the early 20th century (e.g. Beveridge 1911). Recent surveys of the machair have shown that large numbers of unrecorded settlement sites exist along the west coast, (Parker Pearson *et al* forthcoming) however, the same intensive survey methods have only been applied sparingly to moorland areas and the island of Grimsay was not included. Although there are few examples of moorland wheelhouses, those that are known are not found immediately upon the machair/moorland division, but some distance into the moors, and in the case of Usinish in South Uist almost as far away from the machair as is geographically possible (McKenzie 2003, 6 figure 1.6; 24 figure 3.1). This, to my mind, suggests that proximity to both the machair *and* the moorland was not integral to their function, otherwise they would be found closer to the transitional zone where the machair and moorland converge.

2.3 Field Survey

The following section identifies and describes some of the features currently recognised within the immediate vicinity of the structures which are the subject of this thesis. The majority of the features detailed are based upon the work carried out by the Association of Certified Field Archaeologists in 1998. The features identified in 1998 were examined again in 2004 and are presented and interpreted below. The area under examination broadly follows the existing field boundaries but is extended to include the sea inlet and loch Hornary (see Figure 10 above).

2.3.1 North Site One (NF 86646 57414)

Plate 7: North Site One looking eastwards.

A short distance to the north west of the structures excavated by Ashworth a substantial mound can be seen (Plate 7), some 20m in diameter with later buildings or temporary shelters inserted on top and into the side (NS1). The structures contained within this mound appear to have made use of an outcrop of rock on its north eastern corner. A sherd of pottery collected from a rabbit burrow towards the bottom of the

mound on its southern side is similar to the sherds recovered by Ashworth, probably dating to the Iron Age. The size of this mound alongside the presence of such pottery would suggest that the mound contains some form of Iron Age roundhouse. No internal features of the earliest building can be seen, with the only surface remains being three small oval structures (Plate 8; Figure 11) comparable to structure VI at the main site.

Plate 8: The structure inserted on to the top of the North Site One mound.

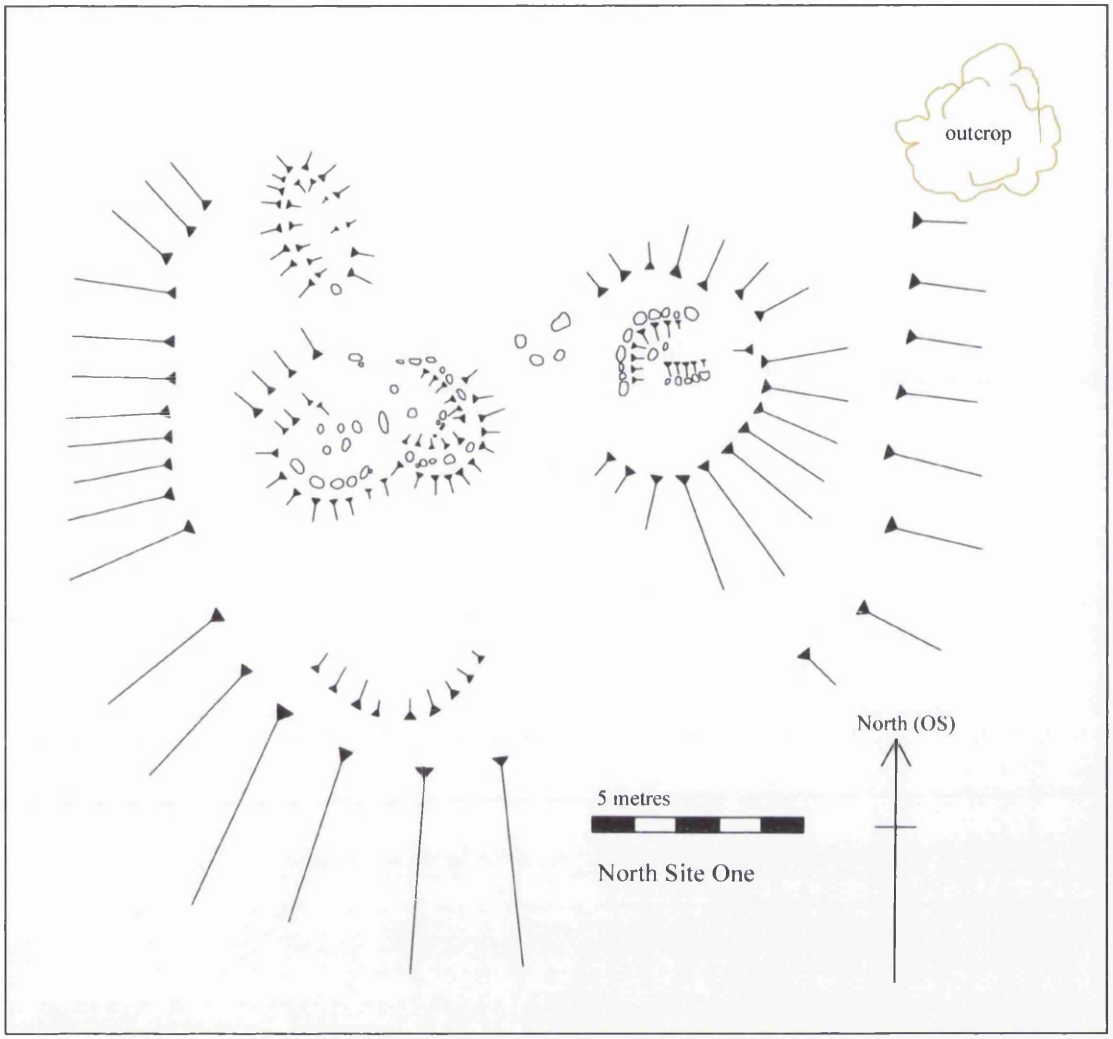

Figure 11: Plan of the features visible on and around the mound at NS1 (after Wood 1998, 15).

2.3.2 North Site Two (NF 86692 57412)

Another less substantial mound is located near the fence line beside the sea inlet (NS2). This sub circular mound, measuring 10m in diameter is possibly too small to contain a wheelhouse or similar building, however, recycling of stone for other buildings in the vicinity should be considered. The edge of the mound is defined by stones with some indications of walling in the centre (Plate 9; Figure 12). This structure may be a temporary shelter with its proximity to the sea inlet perhaps being indicative of its function.

Plate 9: North Site Two looking east towards the sea inlet.

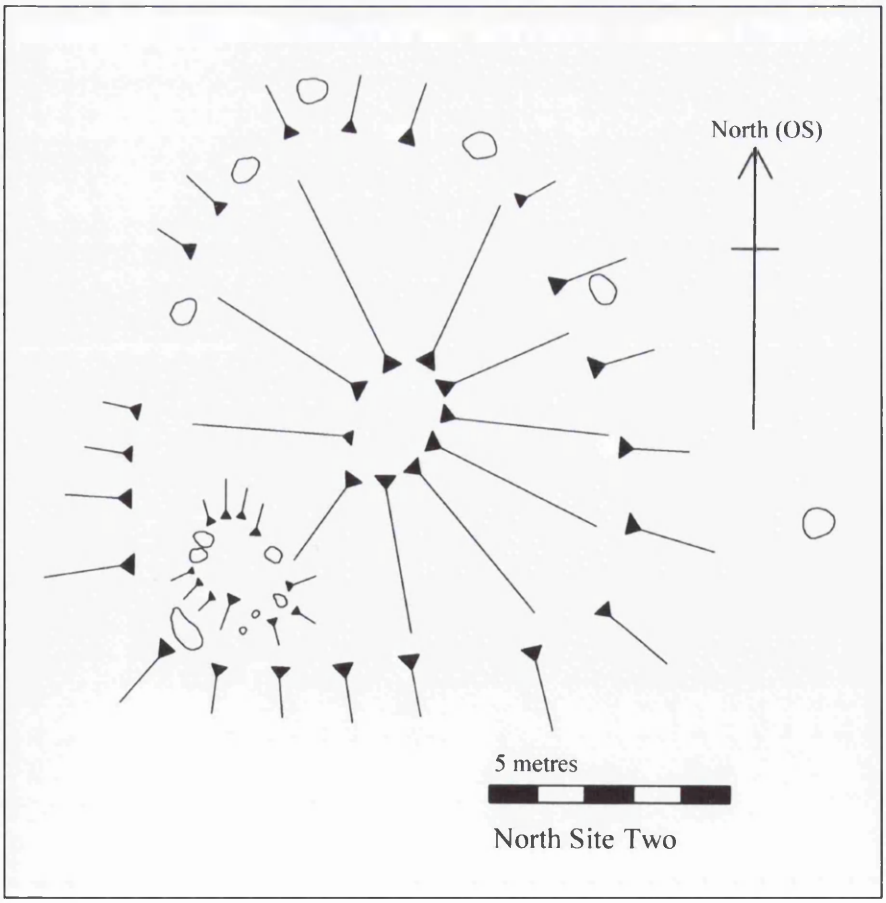

Figure 12: Plan of North Site Two mound (after Wood 1998, 16).

2.3.3 Dun Ban (NF85NE 7)

The closest structure to Bagh nam Feadag which may be contemporary with the Bagh nam Feadag settlement during its various phases can be found on an islet in Loch Hornary, 100 metres to the south east (see Plate 6 above). Dun Ban is situated on the summit of a steep-sided, natural outcrop in the south eastern portion of the loch, surrounded by hills and hidden from the current road around Grimsay (figure 13). Although a causeway existed linking the dun to the shore, it is impassable today and could indicate an increase in water levels of approximately one metre since its primary use. The entrance for the structure faces the causeway (south), contrasting with various other Atlantic roundhouses (e.g. Dun Bharabhat and Loch na Berie) which occupy islands, and locate the entrance on the opposite wall from where the causeway meets the islet, necessitating a walkway around one side (Armit 1992, 34). Such a feature is often viewed as defensive, it is curious that this step was not taken at Dun Ban, although maybe unsurprising considering the location of the site in the landscape, as it has limited defensive qualities. The remains of the structure indicate that it was built with massive walls, however simply interpreting this as being a defensive measure as opposed to inferring a social or political message may be short-sighted (Plate 10).

Plate 10: View of Dun Ban showing submerged causeway.

Dun Ban was the first Atlantic roundhouse to be excavated in the Western Isles, although the term 'excavation' is used in the loosest sense. It is recorded that in 1890 when the winds were too strong for sailing, Captain Thomas and his crew of the Royal Navy, who were mapping in the area, explored the island in Loch Hornary and conducted a spontaneous excavation (Armit 1992, 34). No actual digging took place, rather a removal of stones from the central space, revealing two cells (d and e), with a further two built into the wall core (h and f) (Figure 13).

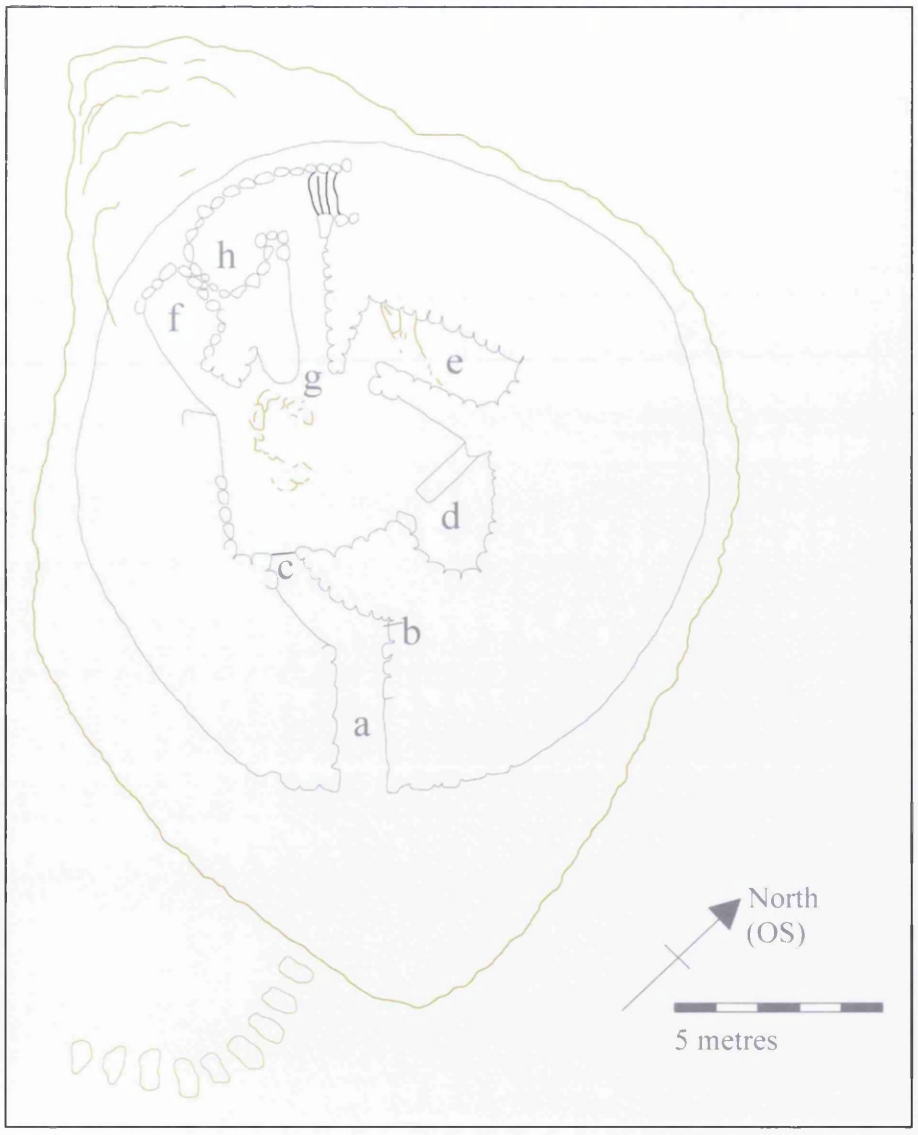

Figure 13: Plan of Dun Ban located in the Eastern end of Loch Hornary, Grimsay (after Armit 1992, 35).

As the excavation by Thomas and his crew did not remove cells d and e it would appear that these were not recognised as later insertions (Armit 1992, 34). Armit has suggested that cells f and h:

> ...represent, from their size and position relative to the enclosing walls, the butt ends of two ground level intra-mural galleries... Chamber h contains the first three steps of stairs which would have led to the next floor (Armit 1992, 34).

An outcrop of rock in the south-western corner of the island intrudes through the floor of the structure, a feature that can also be seen at Dun Carloway and Dun Cuier (Armit 1992, 34). It would appear that this rock has been incorporated into the function of the structure with Armit suggesting that it formed a natural step, effectively dividing the internal space (*ibid* 34).

These features, in conjunction with the overall size of the structure, which is some 15 metres in external diameter with a wall thickness between 3.5 and 4 metres, would suggest that the structure was probably a broch or at least a complex Atlantic roundhouse using Armits's terminology (1992). Although some coarse undecorated pottery was recovered in 1890, there is no knowledge of the material culture or chronology of the site (Armit 1992, 34). It is significant that a possible broch may be located here and further enhances the richness of the archaeology in this small area.

2.3.4 Feature Three

Approximately 20 metres west of North Site One a small enclosure formed of turf banks and some substantial stones with a possible entrance on the south eastern corner (Figure 14).

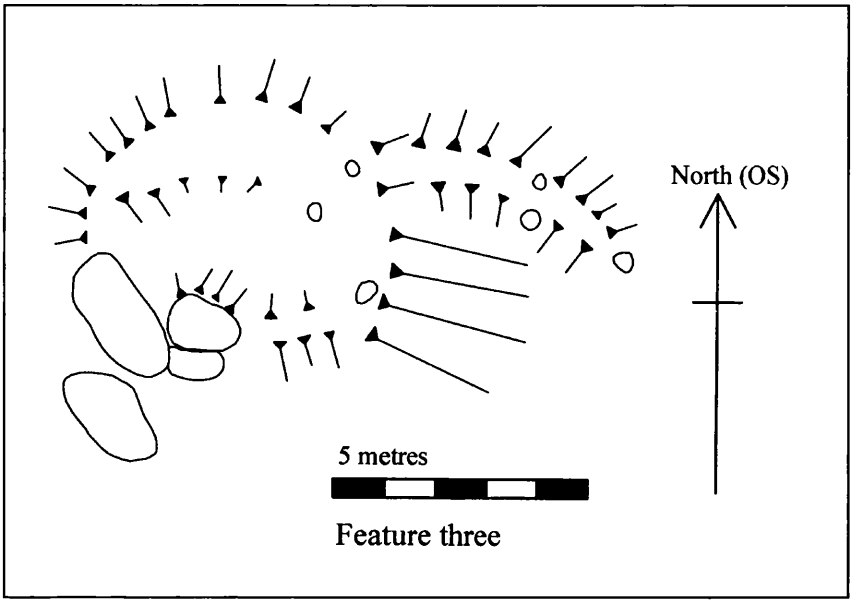

Figure 14: Feature three (after Wood 1998, 15)

23.5 Feature Four

Small rock enclosure measuring 4 metres long and 1.5 metres wide, obscured by thick vegetation (Figure 15).

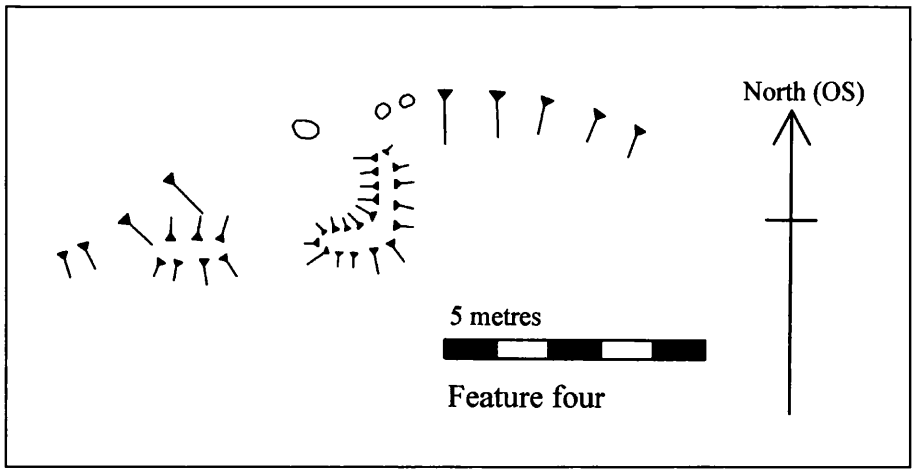

Figure 15: Feature four (after Wood 1998, 15).

2.3.6 Feature Five

Located on a small narrow piece of land between the sea inlet and modern fence line a small rectangular structure with a south facing entrance and low turf and stone walls. The feature measures 2.5 by 2.5 metres internally making this a very small temporary shelter. As can be seen in plate 11, it is situated only a short distance from the high water line.

Plate 11: Views of feature five looking east with inlet in background (left) and north showing entrance (right).

2.3.7 Feature Six

Plate 12: The track leading from the field down to the sea inlet (©Hothersall).

Feature six consists of a small pier like structure found at the end of a small track (Plate 12) enabling access to the sea inlet from the pastureland above. This track is well worn and has been used recently. The function of this may be associated with the collection of shellfish, found in abundance here, or the removal of seaweed. A post card dating to around 1950 depicts this area being used for the collection of seaweed (Plate 13).

Plate 13: (Left) The area immediately above feature six and (right) the same area depicted on a post card circa. 1950 showing seaweed collection named 'loading seaweed, North Ford, North Uist'.

During the course of the 2004 survey, the sea channels were always too deep during the hours worked to enable crossing here but this may not always have been the case and this position may have served as an efficient crossing point to the eastern corner of the adjacent island called Ghearaidh Dhuibh.

2.3.8 Feature Seven, Eight, Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen

These features are low lying turf banks of varying heights and thicknesses which enclose the area and are mirrored by the modern fence lines. These turf banks are not depicted on a 1799 map but do appear on the ordnance survey first edition map of 1880 (Figure 12 below). Feature twelve roughly follows the ten metre contour line and effectively separates the farmed land from the slope down to Loch Hornary. Note that the cultivation method of rigging generally terminates upon meeting these turf banks.

2.3.9 Features Nine, Ten and Eleven

These features stand out in the landscape and are covered by thick vegetation in contrast to the surrounding hummocks. Closer inspection suggests that these are natural although this could be easily tested by excavation (Plate 14).

Plate 14: Feature nine which sits on the 8m contour. The larger of the two islands in the loch behind contains some walling but has yet to be investigated.

2.3.10 Feature 18 - The Jetty

Situated at the south-eastern corner of the small inlet close to the site is a stone built wall or jetty projecting from bedrock at the high-water line out towards the middle of the channel (Plate 15). This structure was not recognised during the 1998 survey although this area of the field was examined. It may have been that the tide was in or that it was not detected against the naturally deposited rock.

Currently there is a drop of two metres from the turf covered surface of the shore down on to the top of the structure. The dry-stone construction covered by the sea for part of the day, has been set into the sandy sea bed, with possible traces extending further out into the bay.

Plate 15a: Views of feature 18.

Plate 15b: Views of feature 18.

The function of feature 18 is not known and is referred to here as some type of jetty or pier. Written accounts often describe the sea off Grimsay, like the majority of the Uists, as being rich in fish and shellfish. Before the construction of a pier at Kallin on the south eastern corner of Grimsay 'fishermen... had no proper landing area so they had to load and unload their catch along rocky shores, which proved very inefficient' (Lawson 2000, 48). The only designated area mentioned for such a practice is at Baymore situated a short distance above the 1960s pier built at Kallin. Given the size and nature of feature 18 this author has interpreted it as a means of mooring boats and unloading creels/catch.

It is recorded that prior to 1984, when modern provisions were made, the people of Grimsay experienced difficulties keeping their lobster catches alive and it is

possible that feature 18 could have formed part of a lobster pond similar to those found in Lewis. However, the field evidence to support this interpretation is unconvincing.

The only record of submerged features on Grimsay are a series of field boundaries or embankments which were breached in 1868 when 'a hurricane, accompanied by a high tide occurred which came in contact with the embankments. The sea broke in, and our corn was under water' (Lawson 2000, 53). The event was recorded because the land lost was fertile by Uist standards and the tenant was required to continue paying the feu on the land for some time after it was lost. The exact location of these embankments is not known nor is the nature of their construction other than they required 'great energy' (*ibid,* 53) to build.

2.4 Discussion

Outwith the castles, monastic sites and burghs, traces of, and often reference to, rural medieval settlement in Scotland is rare, although recently, progress has been made to this end. In the Western Isles, although the picture is incomplete, a good deal of evidence has been collected relating to the 18th century and later settlement, as it has elsewhere in Scotland. One rewarding avenue of investigation may be to work forward from prehistoric period settlements. A long sequence of occupation is known for many sites in Scotland and is clearly the case with Bagh nam Feadag. The wealth and diversity of the archaeology in this small area indicates that this was once a foci for much activity in contrast to today's use of the moor as rough grazing land. Although a long sequence of habitation exists at Bagh nam Feadag, the occupation appears to be intermittent and continuity will always be difficult to prove – a problem faced by many other sites. This is arguably intensified in the Western Isles where a great deal of evidence demonstrates movement between areas of the landscape in response to the unique environmental conditions. These environmental processes, therefore, contribute towards a complex settlement system alongside other factors such as economic stress, the social landscape and political developments common to all regions in each period of human settlement.

Given the nature of previous archaeological investigation in the Western Isles, we will always be presented with a fragmented and period-specific view of the past.

Hopefully, the study of sites such as Bornish in South Uist and the Udal in North Uist can serve to fill some of these gaps in continuity and present a fuller account.

One of the main problems facing archaeologists is the lack of prehistoric sites in Scotland with evidence for even intermittent continuity of occupation into historical times although there may be indications of re-use in the medieval period, albeit for varying lengths of time. At Bagh nam Feadag, the only features appearing on the first edition Ordnance Survey map are the field boundaries (Figure 16). Today, these field boundaries are mirrored by the present fence lines and presumably do not date to earlier than the eighteenth century.

Figure 16: First edition 1880 map of Bagh nam Feadag and surrounding area with survey area in red (OS).

There is no record of any buildings in the Bagh nam Feadag area other than some recent concrete sheep folds at the western end of Loch Hornary.

Undoubtedly further structures remain to be discovered in Grimsay. Middens associated with the structures at Bagh nam Feadag are such a feature yet to be discovered which is surprising given that sites of a similar size and period have conspicuous deeply stratified middens immediately adjacent to the buildings. It has been commented elsewhere that an accumulation of midden material beside a settlement was symbolic of the stability and fertility of the farmed land (Sharples

1999, 57). In the case of Bornais in South Uist, a machair settlement, the accumulation of midden material created very distinctive tell-like mounds, possibly functioning as a stabiliser for the developing machair environment. Midden material would have been a crucial element for the enrichment of poor soils in both machair and moorland regions as they were prone to catastrophic collapse if mismanaged. At Bagh nam Feadag, due to its moorland environment, midden material would be not be required to stabilise insecure foundations and may have been spread directly over the fields. The only re-use of midden material that has been noted is in the packing material within the wheelhouse walls and piers, but is absent from all later structures.

Chapter Three: Structures and Stratigraphy

3.0 Introduction

This chapter details the types of structures present at the site and explores their development in antiquity, supplemented with the findings of a standing building survey conducted by this author in Spring 2004. The information here is primarily concerned with the fabric of the buildings, particularly the main wheelhouse, using the remains as they stand to define the structural developments which are discussed further in the following chapter on site phasing.

A visitor to Bagh nam Feadag today would instantly realise that there is far more to the site than a solitary wheelhouse built in the lee of a hill. The excavator in the course of his work exposed the majority of the remains, revealing at least five separate phases of construction. As commented earlier, the state of preservation is excellent, as, although stone has been reused from earlier structures within the mound in subsequent phases, very little stone, if any, has been completely removed from the area, resulting in remains to at least foundation level for all the building phases and most with standing walls.

It is true that in recent years the debates regarding wheelhouses, and to a greater extent brochs, have been focused upon tight morphological schemes, classifying these structures in minute detail (e.g. MacKie 1987; Crawford 2001). It is also too easy to be critical of such an approach when anomalies to the morphological norm are highlighted. This author would suggest that some common ground should be found whereby such minute details do not degrade a structure to a 'semi-broch' (MacKie 1987) as opposed to a 'true broch' or a 'true wheelhouse' to an 'aisled roundhouse'. The multiple and fragmented classification schemes, thrashed out for brochs and wheelhouses by Mackie (1965, 1987), Armit (1990, 1992), and Crawford (2001), can be viewed as contributing to a situation where discourse on the people who built these constructions is being hindered (e.g. Carruthers 2002, 78-79).

It is intended here to advance both approaches as it is this author's view that structural details exposed during a morphological analysis can invoke questions such as 'Why is this wheelhouse larger than many others? What is significant about the arrangement of the space within this structure and why was this location selected for

construction?' In the modern world such decisions are made on a regular basis, with self-built or customised homes being created and developed to meet specific requirements or conform to a budget. Architectural trends can not only tell us about a society as a whole but can also expose individual choices, both of which are of interest to the archaeologist. In view of the above, the structural details from Bagh nam Feadag will be presented with the usual aspects of architectural deviation highlighted. It is then desirable to discuss the implications for such deviations in the light of comparable evidence.

3.1 The Structures

Throughout this thesis the structures at Bagh Nam Feadag shall be referred to as listed overleaf, corresponding with the plan below (Figure 17).

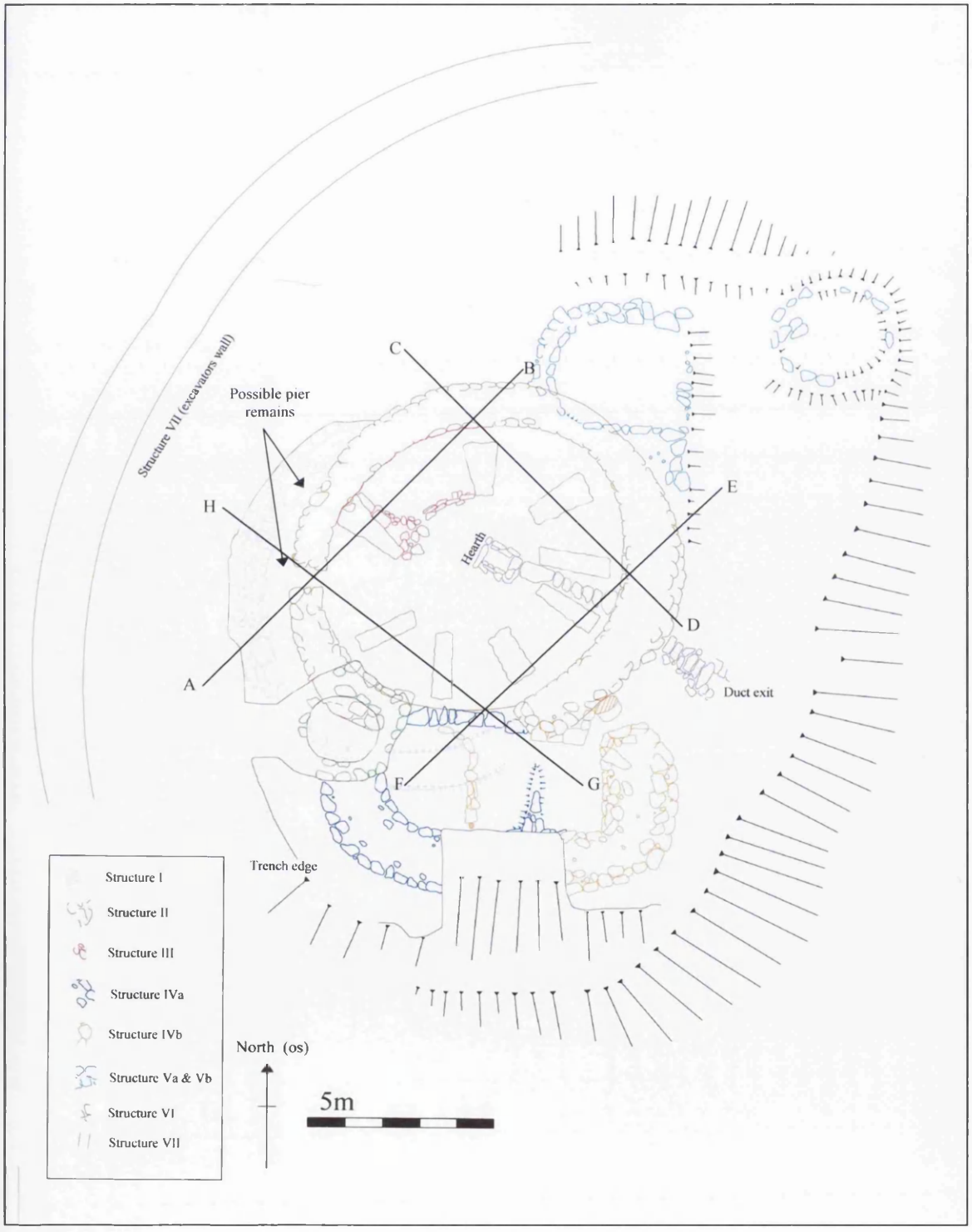

Figure 17: Plan of the structures excavated at Bagh nam Feadag (after Wood 1998, 8).

Structure I

The curving stone wall that underlies structure II.

Structure II (NF 86660 57352)

The main wheelhouse.

Structure III

The building inserted into the western portion of the main wheelhouse, modifying some internal features.

Structure IVa (NF 86659 57348)

The western half of the rectilinear structure found cutting through structure II on its southern arc.

Structure IVb (NF 86659 57348)

The eastern half of the rectilinear structure found cutting though structure II on its southern arc.

Structure V(a)

The pennanular structure revetted into the northern arc of structure II.

Structure V(b)

The circle of stones a few metes east of structure Va.

Structure VI: The Shieling (NF 86655 57350)

The circular structure overlying structures I,II and IVa.

Structure VII

The dry stone wall to the west of the wheelhouse site.

The structures referred to on the field plan (Figure 10 above) as North Site One will be named NS1. The structure referred to as North Site Two will be named NS2. Illustrations of all wheelhouse internal elevations and piers not included in the text can be found in appendix 1.

3.1.1 Structure I

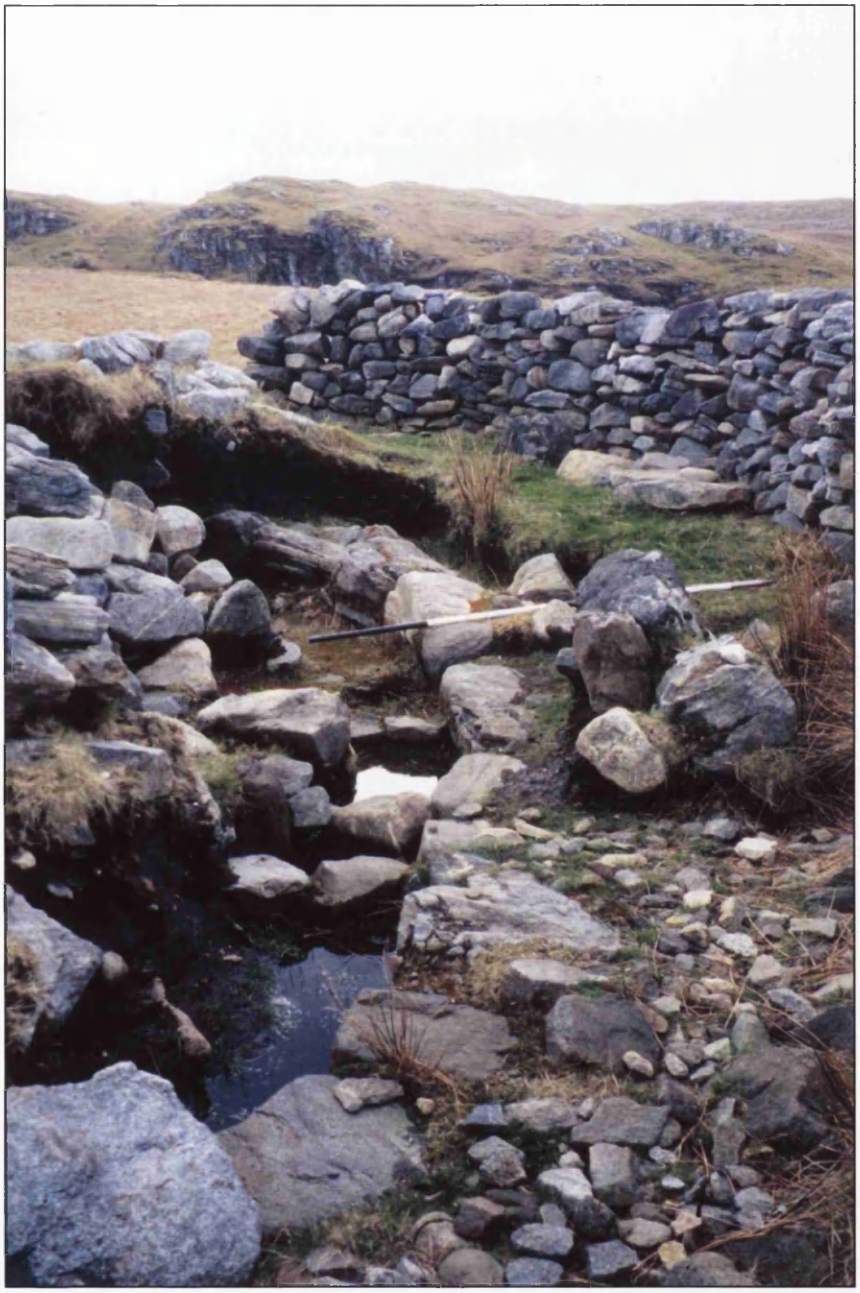

Plate 16: The line of structure I walling underlying the wheelhouse (©Hothersall).

Structure I (Plate 16) has only been revealed along its western portion where it appears from under the wheelhouse which had been constructed above it (Structure II). The excavator has exposed the inner edge of the walling until it continues under the structure II wall on the north and underneath structures IVa and VI on the south west. The survey carried out in October 1998 (Wood 1999, 13) noted that a slight

mound could be seen continuing into structure IVa but is now no longer visible (Plate 17).

Plate 17: Photograph from 1998 showing a raised mound where structure I runs underneath structure IVa (©Hothersall).

The construction of structures IVa and IVb appear to have removed all traces at this level but structure I presumably continues on under the wheelhouse (II). The wheelhouse (II) appears to have superseded this earlier structure, but the possibility remains that traces of structure I could be found under the current ground level and beneath the wheelhouse.

The survey in 1999 referred to structure I as a 'proto' wheelhouse, a definition not supported by this author given the nature of the remains. The term proto wheelhouse in the context of wheelhouse research implies a link between traditional Atlantic roundhouses and the apparent sudden appearance of radially partitioned roundhouses (wheelhouses or aisled houses). Currently, there is no evidence that structure I is anything other than a roundhouse, although the hint of two projecting piers in the form of two clusters of stones which can be seen along the inner face of structure I would require testing by excavation before they could be interpreted as piers (Plate 16 above).

The 1999 survey also suggested that only the inner wall of structure I had been revealed, however, the two large stones directly opposite the entrance of structure II could make up an outer face making the wall similar in thickness to structure II. Again, this would require testing by excavation as the excavation that took place did not progress any further westwards, perhaps due to the constrains of the dry stone wall that had been erected in this area (Plate 18).

Plate 18: View looking east with the excavators wall in the foreground.

What can be said with some certainty about structure I is that it would have been a similar size to structure II with an estimated diameter of 8.3m (internal). Structure I is sited approximately one metre west of the wheelhouse with no indication of an entrance on the exposed arc, the entrance would then presumably face either, north, south or east (Figure 18). This aspect alone would be an argument against structure I being a wheelhouse as those sited on moorland exclusively face westwards. It is notable also that west facing moorland wheelhouses contrast with wheelhouses located on the machair which generally, but not exclusively, face eastwards (M^{c}Kenzie 2003, 34-35: fig3.8).

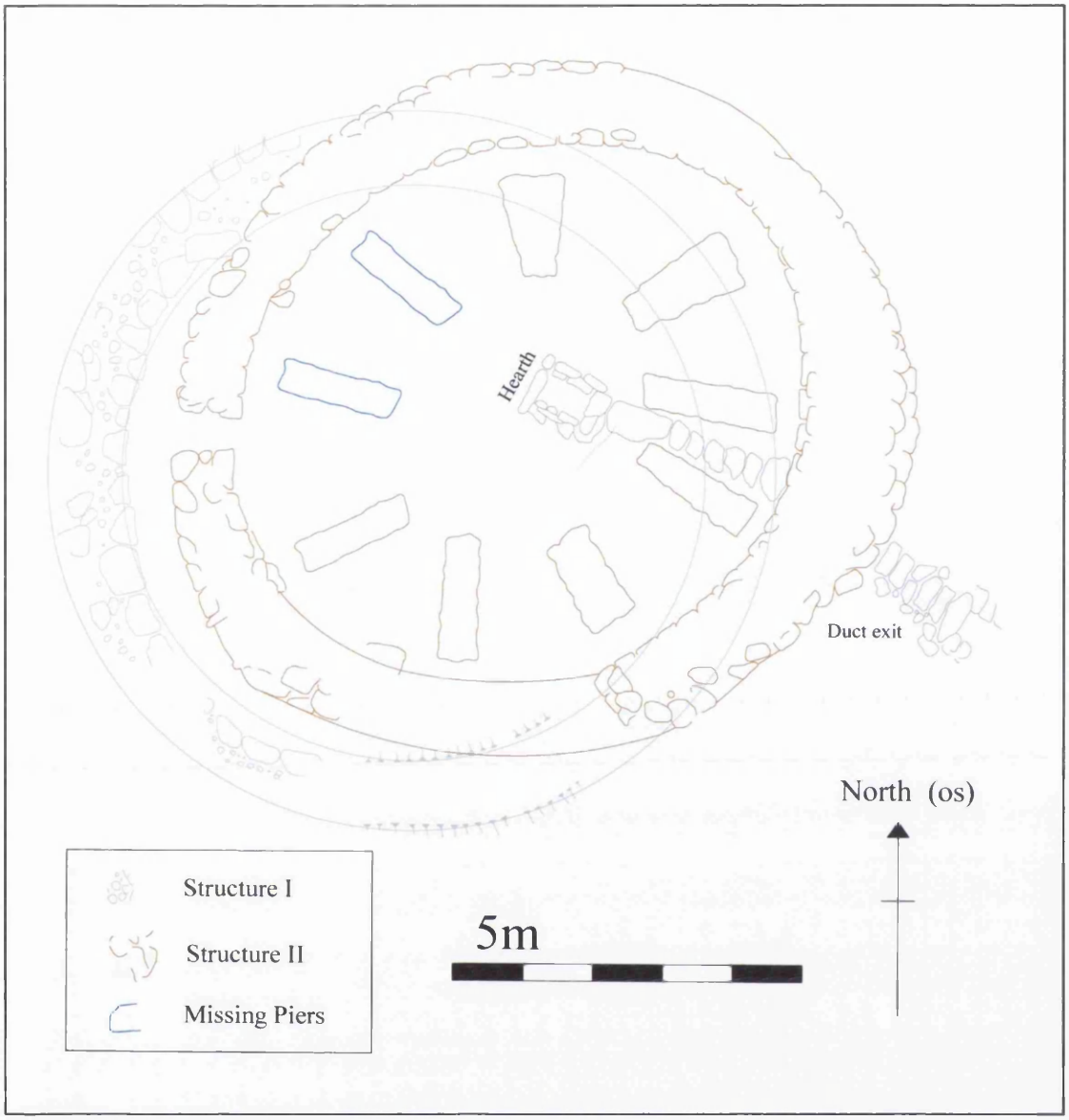

Figure 18: The relationship between structures I and II (after Wood 1998, 8).

Should this structure (I) have faced westwards, by projecting its curve into the later wheelhouse (II), it is possible that bay five containing the duct formed part of the entrance. The only other known wheelhouses that contain ducts of a similar style are at Allasdale, Clettraval and Buaile Risary, all of which passed from the central area out under the entrance. As discussed further below, the retention of this duct feature may have been part of the reason for the movement of the focus of occupation a short distance to the east, with the desire to incorporate features of the previous structure into the new. However, without testing by excavation this interpretation shall remain speculative.

Also, the occurrence of a wheelhouse directly underneath a later wheelhouse is unusual as often wheelhouses are found either side by side (e.g. Foshigarry, the Udal) or replaced by subsequent constructions nearby (e.g. Sollas A/B, Cnip). The erection of a wheelhouse, or any habitable building on top of an existing habitation would inevitably mean that the inhabitants would have to reside elsewhere during the destruction of one and the construction of the replacement. It is for this reason that this author looks towards the unexcavated North Sites (NS1 and NS2) as possible locations for additional settlement, intensifying further the phases of occupation at Bagh nam Feadag.

3.1.2 Structure II

This section covering the most significant construction at the site includes descriptions of each bay and each pier as well as a general description of the phase. The wheelhouse (II) appears to have been constructed by clearing out and remodelling an already abandoned and reduced stone building (I). Alternatively, this earlier building may never have been finished, with excavation required to test such hypotheses. The remains of structure I can be found at an elevation slightly lower than the excavator penetrated within the wheelhouse, suggesting that structure I was not removed completely, leaving behind at least one course of walling.

Structure II is entered today from the west after passing through the gap left in the excavators wall (structure VII) (see Plate 20 below). No entrance passage can be seen here which, although is a common feature amongst wheelhouses, is not present in every example. The presence of an entrance passage and particularly the later addition or the extension of one, has been explained elsewhere as a desire to define a boundary more effectively by the creation of a transitional zone, whereby a visitor travels from one space to another (Armit 1996, 144). Although some wheelhouses, such as Sollas B (Campbell 1991, 134,138), Udal (Hothersall & Tye 2000, 21) and A'Cheardach Bheag (Fairhurst 1971, 77,105) exhibit multi-phase, substantial entrance systems involving 'guard cells', (small cells immediately outside the entrance), it is clear that this is not an original feature and nor was it deemed necessary at each wheelhouse site. Clettraval, in a similar manner to that of Grimsay, is simply entered through a gap in the outer wall into the first bay. It should also be noted that the

location of Grimsay, in the lee of a hummock, would have hindered a long entrance structure also the enclosing nature of the hummock and the wheelhouse mound itself would have produced a natural entrance system, or small vale, giving a sense of spatial change to a visitor approaching from the south or the north.

The structure II outer walls flanking the wheelhouse entrance are conspicuous in comparison with the rest of the outer walling, giving the impression that they may have been re-built. Although the survey revealed that a varying amount of the upper courses throughout the site had been consolidated by the excavator, the entrance area looks to have had the greatest modification. Very little packing material can be seen between the stones and the general impression is that the upper stone work is not in situ (Plate 20 & Figure 19).

Plate 20: Interior of wheelhouse entrance with substantial stones at the bottom and possible re-building on upper levels.

During the recording of the internal elevations of the wheelhouse the extent to which rebuilding had taken place was examined. The upper course of stones around the interior of the wheelhouse often contain no packing material at all and is taken as evidence that these stones may not have been in situ. However, it should be noted that by the time of this elevation survey the remains had been exposed to the elements

for up to ten years and the action of wind and rain may have caused removal of this packing material over that time.

The use of packing material between stone courses has also been noted at both wheelhouse 1 and 2 at Cnip, Lewis (Armit 1990, 84-5). Here Armit noted that the use of packing material was more evident at the upper courses of stonework. This feature was presumably to provide a degree of insulation and water proofing where the subterranean structure protruded above the ground surface. Although the extent to which the piers and walls continue below the current ground level at Bagh nam Feadag is unknown, it would appear that packing material has been used at all levels. The use of midden material in this manner not only highlights the problems encountered in sealing an above ground moorland wheelhouse from the wind and rain, but also may be informative of the relationship between the construction of a new settlement and the incorporation of midden material, as packing presumably derived from an earlier settlement. The suggestion that midden material was used as opposed to natural soil because of its close proximity the settlement is valid, however, evidence from some other broadly contemporary settlements (e.g. Dun Vulan) would suggest that this practice is common and in some cases having used midden material brought from some distance away (see Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 108).

The extent to which packing material remains and was visible is detailed in all elevation drawings. Given the slight change in building styles above the line of packing material it is this authors view that anything above is not in situ and should be viewed as rebuild by the excavator with the presumed intention to make the site visually more impressive.

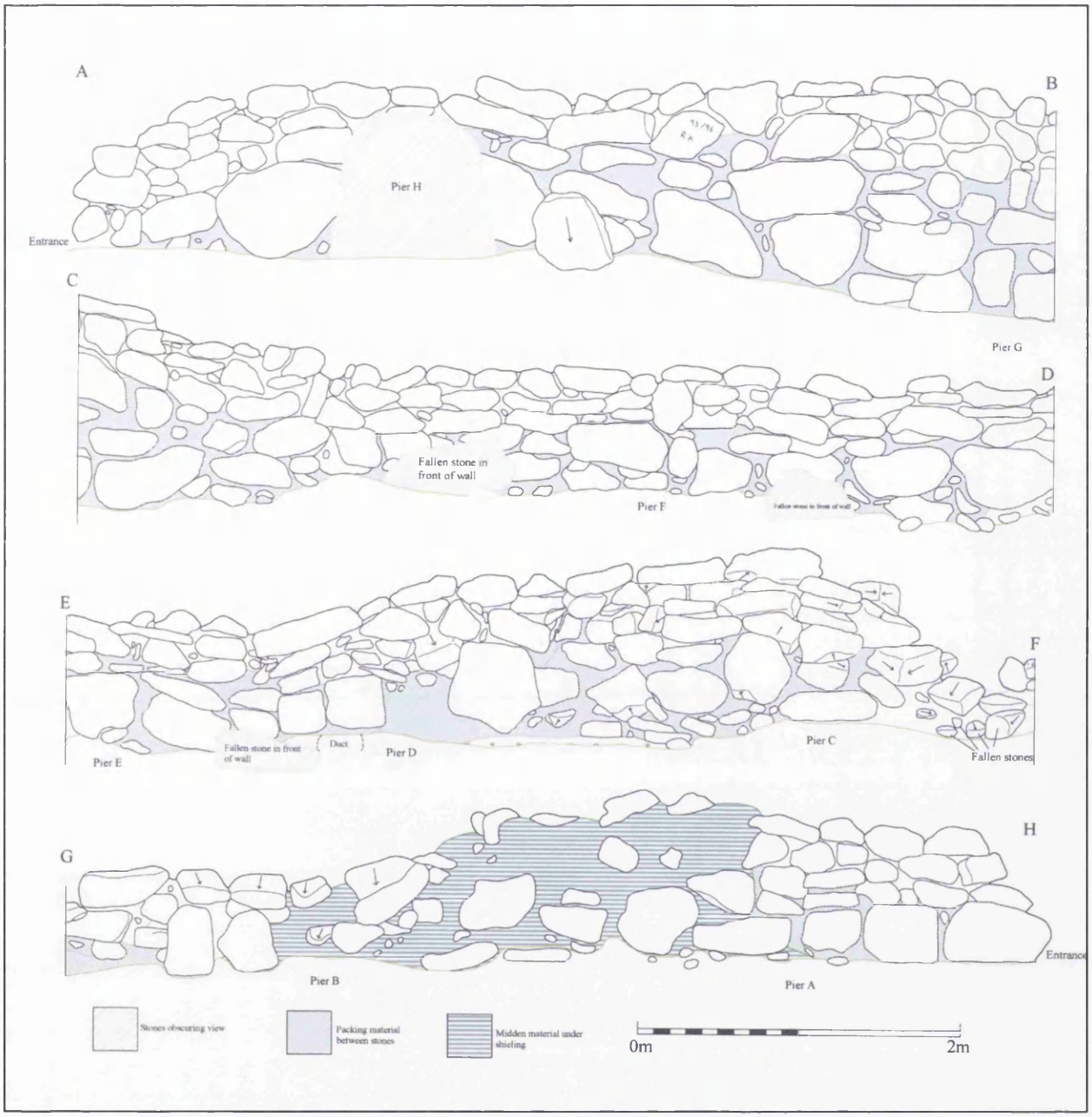

Figure 19: Elevations of wheelhouse inner wall divided into four sections (located in figure 17).

The Entrance

It is unlikely that the entrance has been created by the excavator and may be an indication of how the wheelhouse entrance was modified in later phases of occupation. Phase three at Bagh nam Feadag saw bays one and two reworked into a smaller shelter and it could be that the existing wheelhouse entrance was exploited, causing that stonework to stand out against the remainder. A similar situation

occurred at Clettraval (Scott 1948, 48 - 50) where the first bay of the wheelhouse was incorporated with the adjacent northern bay and part of the central area to create Scott's secondary structure. The entrance at Clettraval was subsequently blocked (*ibid* 48). Therefore, this author would suggest that alterations may have been made to the entrance of structure II and was likely to have been used in association with phase three.

Bay One

Bay one contains the wheelhouse entrance which faces almost due west (265°). The entrance is 0.56m wide at ground level where there is a flat stone acting as a threshold, although this is unlikely to be the original wheelhouse threshold and probably relates to an internal feature from structure I. There is no indication of door jambs, as can be seen at numerous other wheelhouse sites. The current floor level of bay one is higher than the original wheelhouse floor, indicated by the presence of small stones and rubble still covering the surface, particularly in the area below pier H on its southern side.

The 1998 survey states that there is a 0.30m gap between pier H and the outer wheelhouse wall (Wood 1998, 9). As can be seen in Plate 21 this is an error as pier H butts with the outer wall, although is not bonded into it.

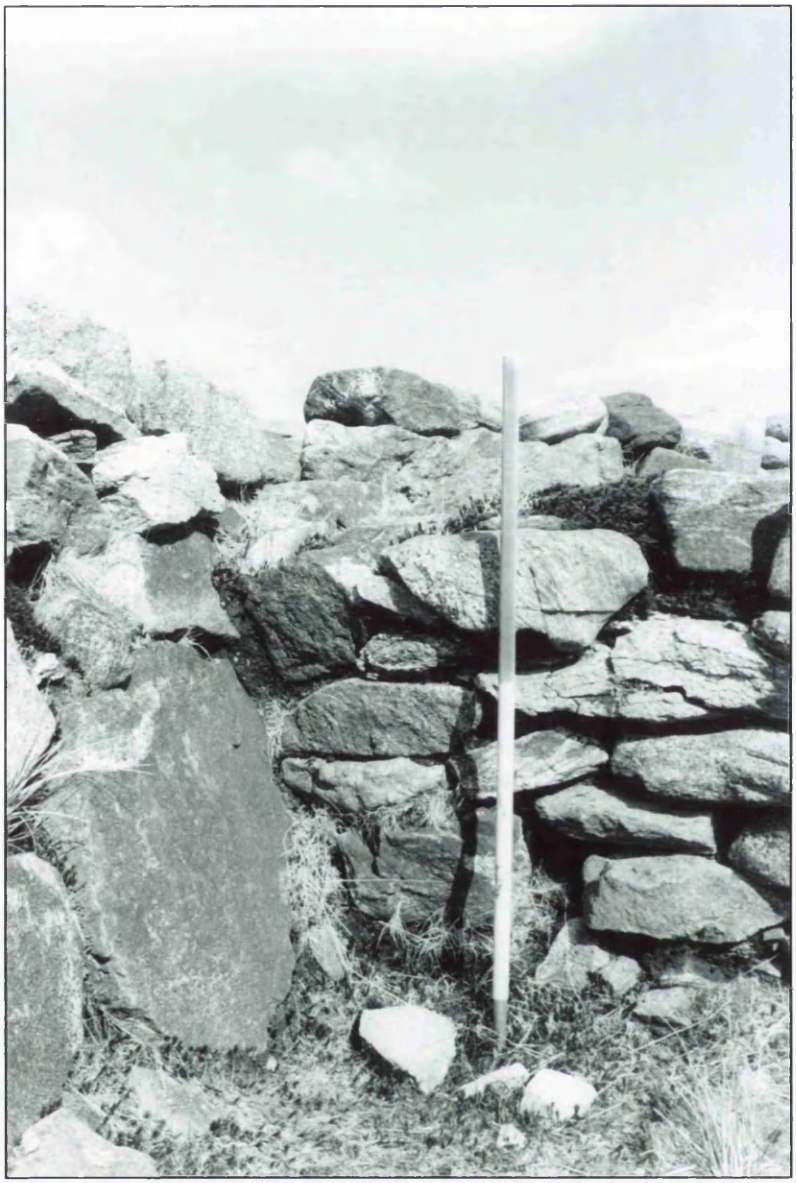

Plate 21: The point where pier H abuts the outer wheelhouse wall.

Pier H is also interpreted by the ACFA survey as 'original, with peaty soil fill between stones' (Wood 1998, 9). It is supported here that this wall is original and in situ; however, it is also argued here that it does not relate to the wheelhouse, (structure II), but instead relates to a habitation inserted into bay two after the wheelhouse had passed out of its primary period of occupation. Pier H stands out from all the others in the wheelhouse, being in a better condition and made up of a different selection of stones. When viewed from above it is also shown that the pier changes from a two stone thickness to one as it travels inwards, creating a triangular shape (Plate 32 below).

Bay Two

As bay two and pier H possibly relate to the modification detailed above it shall be discussed below and named structure III. It is evident that there are few remains of structure III left to examine as the new construction that was built within bay two has been cleared away in pursuit of the structure II wheelhouse.

Bay Three

Bay three, flanked by pier G on the west and pier F on the east, contains a stack of substantial stones near the outer wall in its north east corner (see Wood 1998, 8). The 1998 survey pondered whether this substantial feature was another pier, commenting that in such a small space it would seem unlikely. Examination of the stones at a lower level would suggest that they were installed there deliberately and are cushioned with packing material in a similar way to most of the other stonework. It is possible that this was not a pier as such, but rather another type of support, perhaps a later addition. At Clettraval it was shown by Scott that bay VIII contained an 'intermediate orthostatic pillar' (Scott 1948, 52) which functioned in the same manner as a pier and necessary as the corbel required additional support over such a large span. It may be that the stack of stones in bay three at Bagh nam Feadag serves a similar function, perhaps supporting a weak point. However, without adequate excavation of this feature it shall always remain likely that this is in fact tumble from upper courses of the piers or corbelling which had fallen or been dislodged after the wheelhouse had passed its primary use. The collection of midden material around these stones could be attributed to phase three or later.

The question of rebuilding is a recurrent theme throughout all the structures at Bagh nam Feadag and it can be seen in the aerial photograph that stones had been removed (and are now replaced) where the excavator used the outer wall behind bay three as a route back and forth to the spoil heaps (Figure 20).

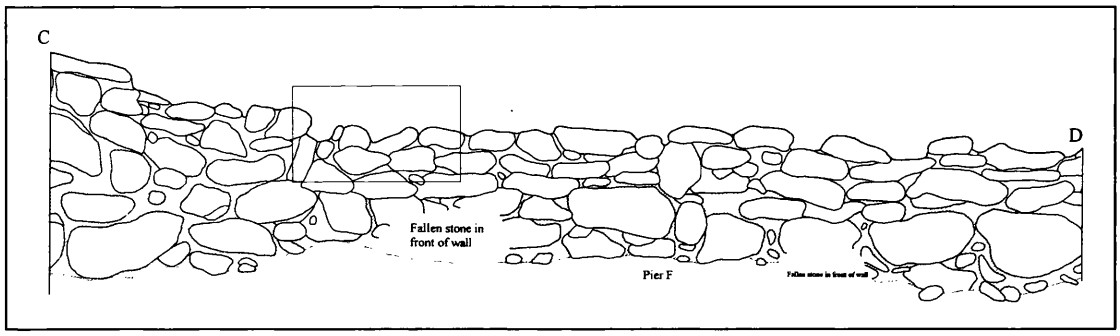

Figure 20: Elevation of walling between piers G and F with area of modification indicated in red.

The piers flanking this bay both have aisles between them and the outer wall, with G having 0.4m and F, a 0.45m gap. There is a collection of loose stones at the entrance to the bay which may form part of a kerb. The wheelhouse wall behind this bay has been altered by the revetment of the pennanular structure (Va). The walling of structure Va cuts 0.3m into the wheelhouse wall core.

Pier G is well preserved and appears to be original, standing to a height of 1.2m. This pier does however appear more triangular when compared to piers A, B, D and E which tend to be more rectangular. Piers F and C share the characteristic of pier G being slightly wider than the others.

Bay Four

This bay, flanked by piers F and E also contains large stones on the ground. The outer wall in this area consists of substantial base stones with smaller stones above, but there is an indication of rebuild by the excavator at the uppermost course. Pier F stands to 0.9m and is made up of fairly large angular blocks.

Bay Five

The fifth bay of the wheelhouse is situated roughly opposite the wheelhouse entrance. As can be seen from the plan view, the piers flanking this bay have been placed to accommodate the lintel covered duct. This is the smallest bay in the wheelhouse, comprising no more than half the area of the adjacent bays four and six. No kerbing is found at the entrance of this bay as a large stone covering the duct

protrudes, preventing the setting of smaller stones into the floor. The outer wall behind this bay stands to a height of 1m with evidence of re-building of the upper courses. There is also evidence that this section of walling has partially collapsed, bulging both inwards and outwards. Pier E stands to 1.1m at the outer edge, the upper course blocks from the inner end are not in position and so is lower. Pier D is made up of large, fairly flat blocks, graded on the inner face to increase in width, little packing material can be seen between the courses, although some thin stones have been lodged to assist its stability.

The inner face of this wall contains some substantial stones, one of which has fallen into the bay and is resting on top of the lintel covered duct (Plate 22).

Plate 22: View into bay five which contains the stone lined and covered duct leading from the hearth.

Access into this bay via the aisle is restricted, with evidence of the piers being partly bonded into the outer wall. Also, behind pier D, a large stone forming part of the outer wall protrudes 0.4m (Plate 23 & Figure 16). When the line of structure I is projected it is possible that features in this area have been modified and incorporated into the wheelhouse II build, however, there is no clear evidence of a blocked entrance. The possibility that the presence of the duct and arrangement of piers in this area were part of an earlier structure would be significant if further examination were to prove that structure I contained piers flanking its entrance.

Plate 23: View from bay six of the aisle behind pier D with bonded and protruding stonework.

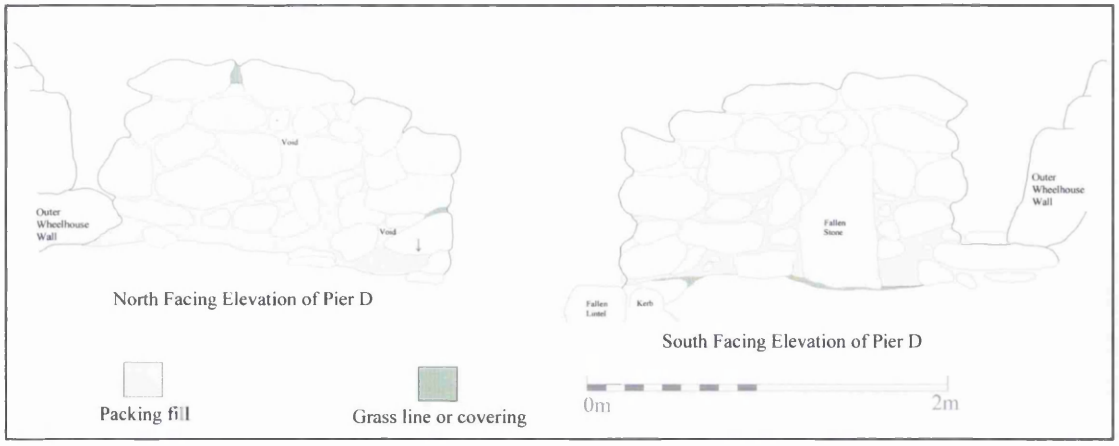

Figure 21: Elevations of Pier D.

As can be seen in the photograph and drawings (Plate 23 & Figure 21), this large wall stone rests upon a flat stone which underlies pier D and extends significantly into the aisle. A similar feature can be seen between pier E and the outer wall. The blocking of aisles in this way is unprecedented, although there are examples elsewhere for various ways of blocking aisles. Other location variations include the deliberate bonding of piers to the outer wall, later insertion of stones to fill the gap or in the case of Alt Chriasal (Plate 24), evidence remained showing a build up of midden material, effectively blocking the passage (Branigan & Foster 2002, 82).

Plate 24: Blocked aisle at Alt Chrisal where stones have been inserted on top of accumulated midden deposits (from Branigan & Foster 2002, 82).

As piers D and E have not been built into the outer wall it would seem logical that at the time of the initial construction it was desirable to have an aisle. However, this is contradicted by an attempt to block the aisle at a lower level. It is possible that blocking continued vertically with loose stones which have been removed during the excavation, interpreted as tumble from the corbelled bays. Although, regardless of how this area was excavated, it is intriguing as to why such a feature appears to exist here.

Bay Six

The sixth bay in structure II is the largest other than bays one and two which this author considers are as a result of a later building phase. The floor of bay six has been cleared of any fallen stones and is slightly lower than the floor of the central space. The aerial photograph shows that the excavator went down somewhat lower in this bay than the others, perhaps due to the pursuit and recovery of a concentration of artefacts. Pier C, which stands to 1m high, forming the south western flank of this bay, exhibits the best example of splaying stonework, tapering from 0.35m wide at the bottom to 0.5m over a height of 0.95m. It can be seen here that multiple stones were used to increase the width (Figure 22) whereas at other sites such as Sollas B and A' Cheardach Bheag and Cnip single stones sufficed (Plate 25). When pier C is compared with adjacent pier D, the differing use of single and double stones to achieve the increasing taper is a striking contrast suggesting that visual uniformity throughout the building was not necessarily important. This variation can also be attributed in some way to the availability and quality of the local stone.

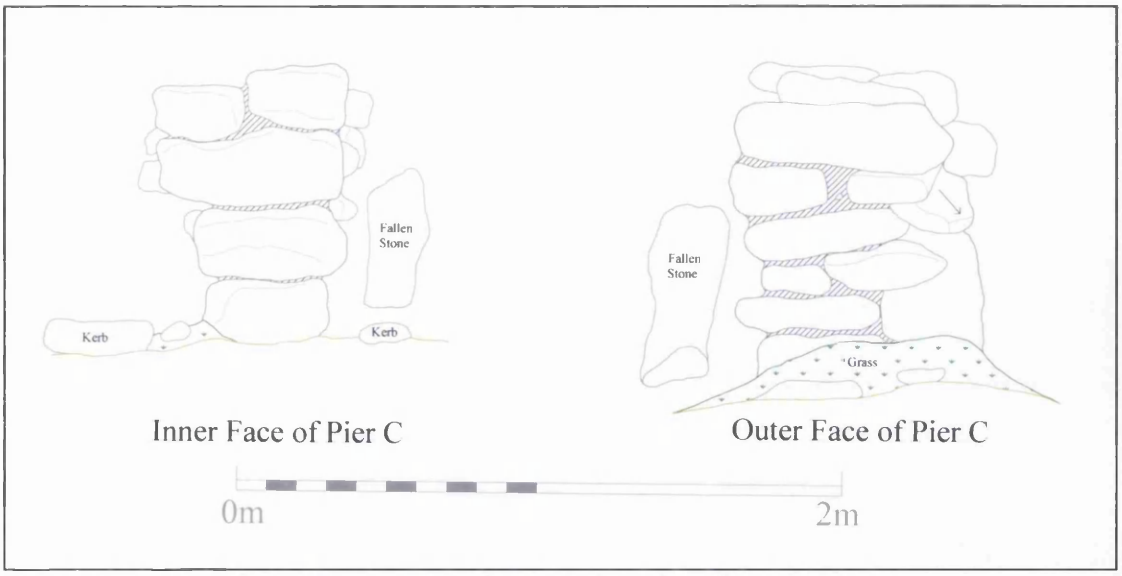

Figure 22: West and east facing elevation of pier C.

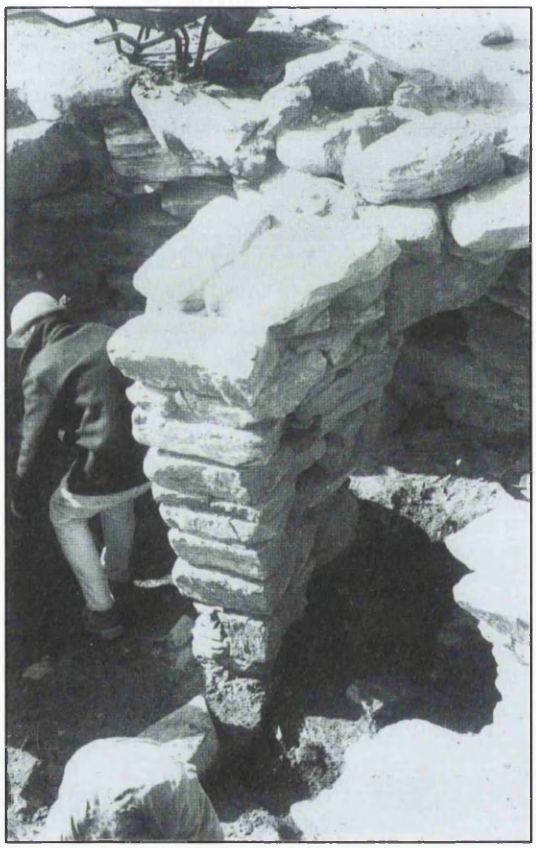

Plate 25: Remains of a pier at Cnip built from gradually wider stone blocks (from Armit 2003, 139).

The aisle behind pier C contains a small area of paving. Initially it was anticipated that this was fallen rubble, with the primary floor underneath. However, examination during the survey suggests that this has been installed deliberately, and

given the slope of the ground towards the east, it is possible that the bays in the eastern curve of the wheelhouse were excavated to their primary floors. The strip of paving is 1.9m in length (Plate 26).

Plate 26: Strip of paving found behind pier C (©Hothersall).

Bay Seven

The entrance to bay seven contains a collection of packed stones (Plate 27). The floor surface is slightly higher than that of the central space indicating that the primary floor has not been reached. The surface of this bay is largely clear except for three large stones leaning against the adjacent piers. The wheelhouse wall at the rear of this bay had been removed with the construction of structure IVa. It is noted in the 1998 survey that the aisle face of pier B almost touches the outer wheelhouse wall (Wood 1998, 11). This author would argue that this is not the case and that this confusion is a result of projecting the line of the later structure IVa and not the curve of the wheelhouse II wall.

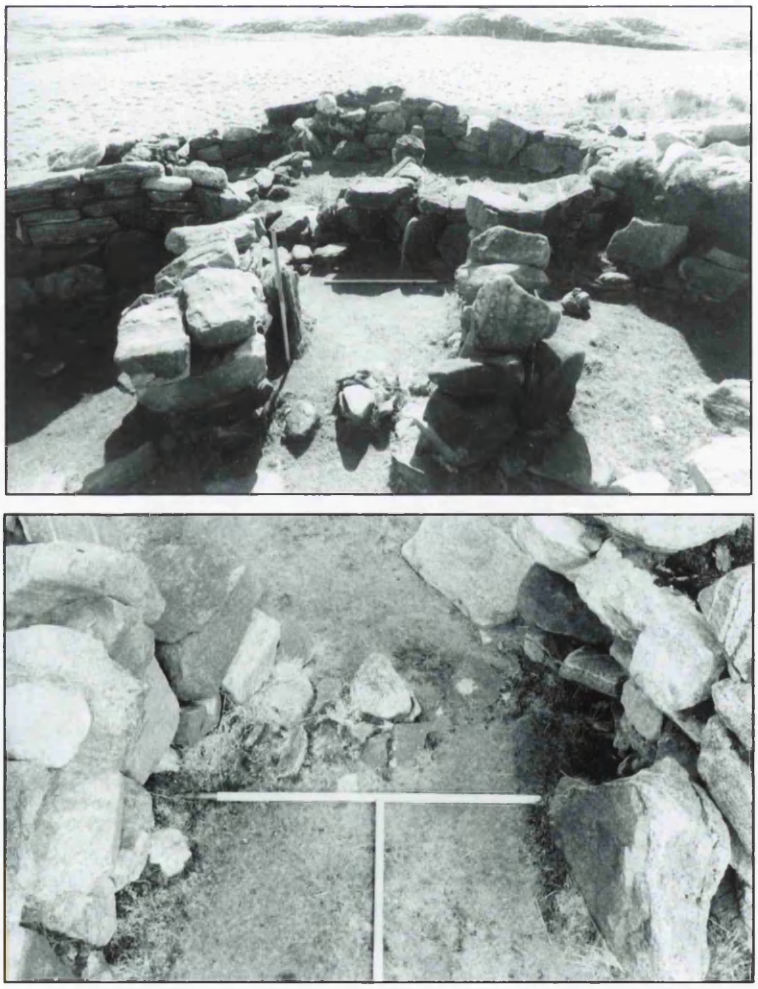

Plate 27: Collection of stones found at the entrance of bay seven.

As can be seen in the plan of the structure (Figure 23) if the natural curve of the structure II wall is projected, the aisle gap would have been approximately 0.4m.

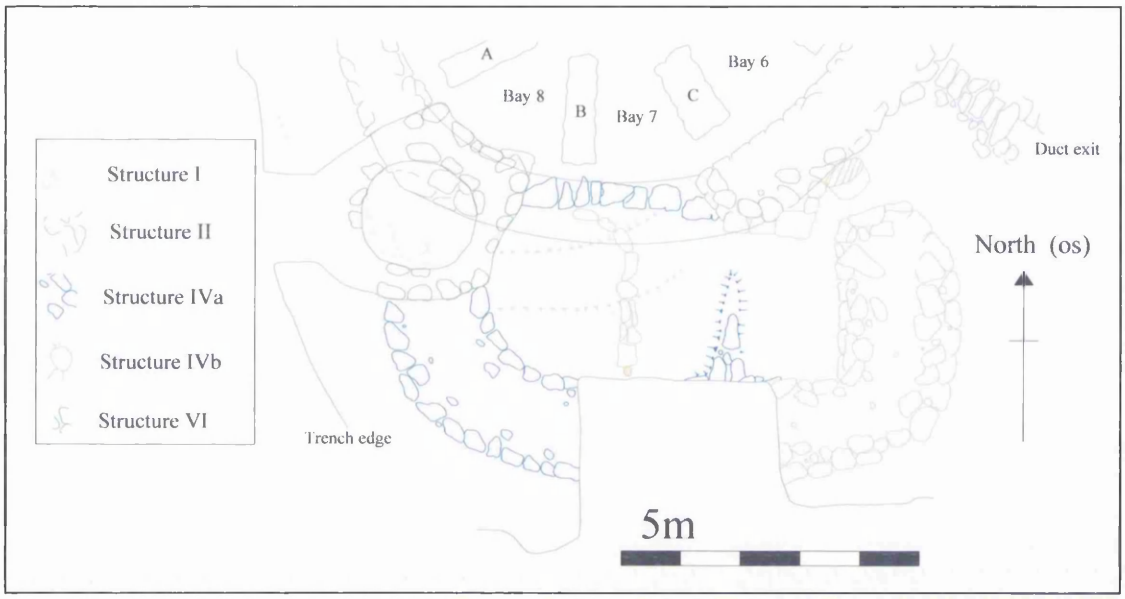

Figure 23: Detail plan of where the aisle behind pier B has been cut by structures IVa and IVb (after Wood 1998, 8).

Pier B is only in situ at its lowest course of stones as the upper courses are not cushioned with packing material and do not sit comfortably on top. These upper stones have possibly been repositioned from the adjacent bays. Two large stone blocks remain in the vicinity, presumably too large to be moved by the excavator.

Bay Eight

The current floor level of bay eight is 0.3m above that of the central space, with kerbing at the threshold. The excavator here has only penetrated to the top level of the kerb on the interior and thus the primary floor remains some depth below. The floor is clear other than a large stone resting against pier B and another beside pier A. Again, the wheelhouse wall behind this bay has been removed, on this occasion by the shieling that had been inserted onto the mound (Plate 28).

Pier A only remains as one course of stones with fairly small stones embedded in dark soil. The stones above this lower course are not in situ and have been placed on top. The 1998 survey commented that there is possible remains of a kerb between pier A and H. This is unlikely as wheelhouses tend to not have any kerb at the

entrance and the original floor level is lower. This author considers rubble from the collapse may have been mistaken for a kerb.

Plate 28: Bay eight with wheelhouse wall behind removed and shieling inserted on top.

Due to the amount of stone that has been removed relating to the shieling (structure VI) in this area it is difficult to say whether any adaptations were made at an earlier point in time in conjunction with the construction of structures IVa and IVb.

Piers

With the exclusion of pier H which is significantly different to all the others two styles of pier building can be seen. Although in each case the uppermost course has possibly been repositioned by the excavator, generally they are either thin and rectangular (A, B, D and E) or thick and triangular (C, F and G). There is no correlation or trend between the spacing of the piers although there is a trend in the way the piers are set out. Circularity, although possibly difficult to execute when building a wheelhouse, is desirable to maintain the integrity of the corbelled roofing over the bays and there is a sense of attempted circularity with the original

construction of wheelhouse II. However, there is very much a sense, when standing at the centre of the wheelhouse, that cell space has not been divided up equally. Even with the exclusion of bay two and the later development of structure III, every other bay varies in size from the narrowest in bay five to the larger bays one and six. Of course there is the possibility that the allotment of space within this wheelhouse has some embedded meaning for its function with the bays being built to serve a specific purpose. On the other hand it may simply be a case of poorer workmanship and/or the unimportance of how the space was divided, or appears.

The Central Space

The central wheelhouse space is elliptical, measuring 4.5 metres at its widest by 3.6 metres giving an approximate area of 13 m^2. The bays surrounding the central space are flanked by a form of kerb on all occasions with the exception of bay one which contains the entrance as detailed above. The area of the central space is very similar to Clettraval where the bays consume a significant portion of the inner space, resulting in a smaller central area. A variation of this allocation of space can be seen at Sollas B (see illus 5 in Campbell 1991, 121) where although the bays are by no means small, the central space is very large. Such arrangements of space may be indicative of the status of the inhabitants and the function of the structure and is discussed further in chapter five with reference to other examples.

Beside the hearth sits a large flat stone referred to in two publications as a bench seat (Wood 1998, 11; Hothersall & Tye 2000, 22). This may be the case or it could be a fallen lintel from one of the corbelled bays which has been moved for another function. During the 2004 survey many of the hammer stones detailed in chapter four were found on top of this large stone, either placed there by the excavator or visitors to the site.

The most striking feature within the central space of the wheelhouse (II) is the rectangular hearth with a stone lined duct running from it out under the outer wall (see Figure 19 & Plate 29a). The hearth, which shows signs of heat cracking to the some of the stones, produced an abundance of orange peat ash during excavation (MacVicar pers. comm.). It is clear that the hearth has been modified on at least one occasion, transforming it from a small rectangle measuring c. 72cm by 33cm to a larger rectangle of c. 72 by 68cm (Figure 24). The widening of the hearth at this later date

may have also raised it above the functional level of the duct, if encouraging air circulation was its purpose.

Stratigraphically, during the earlier phase (see Figure 24) the duct would have functioned with this smaller rectangular box. However, after the expansion of the hearth and resulting build up of material the duct would have been blocked unless it was routinely cleared out, and although this evidence does not exist, those who witnessed the site being excavated testified that the hearth was full of ash to the limits of the later configuration therefore at some point at least in the site's use the hearth was allowed to expand.

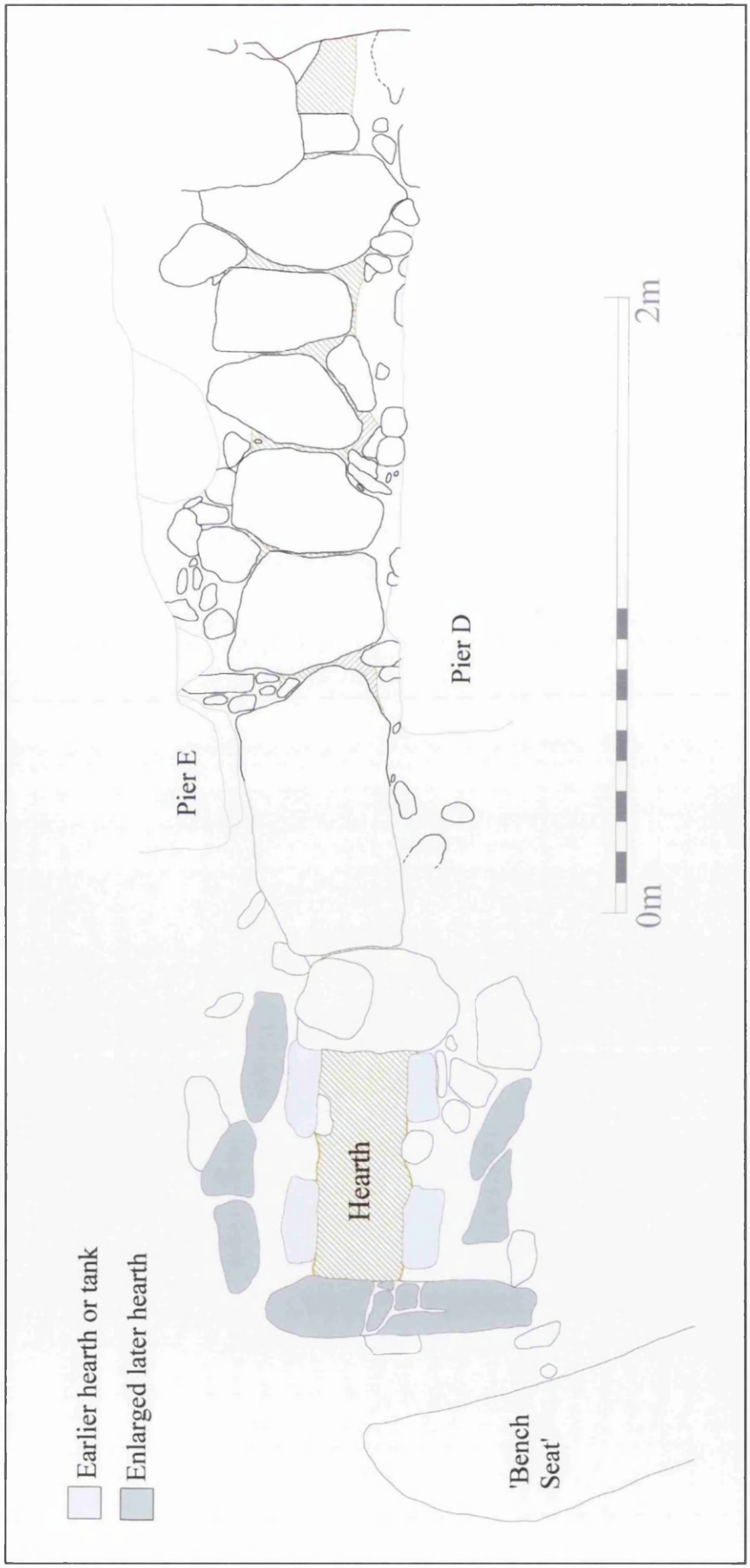

Figure 24: Plan of the hearth and duct in the centre of the wheelhouse (II).

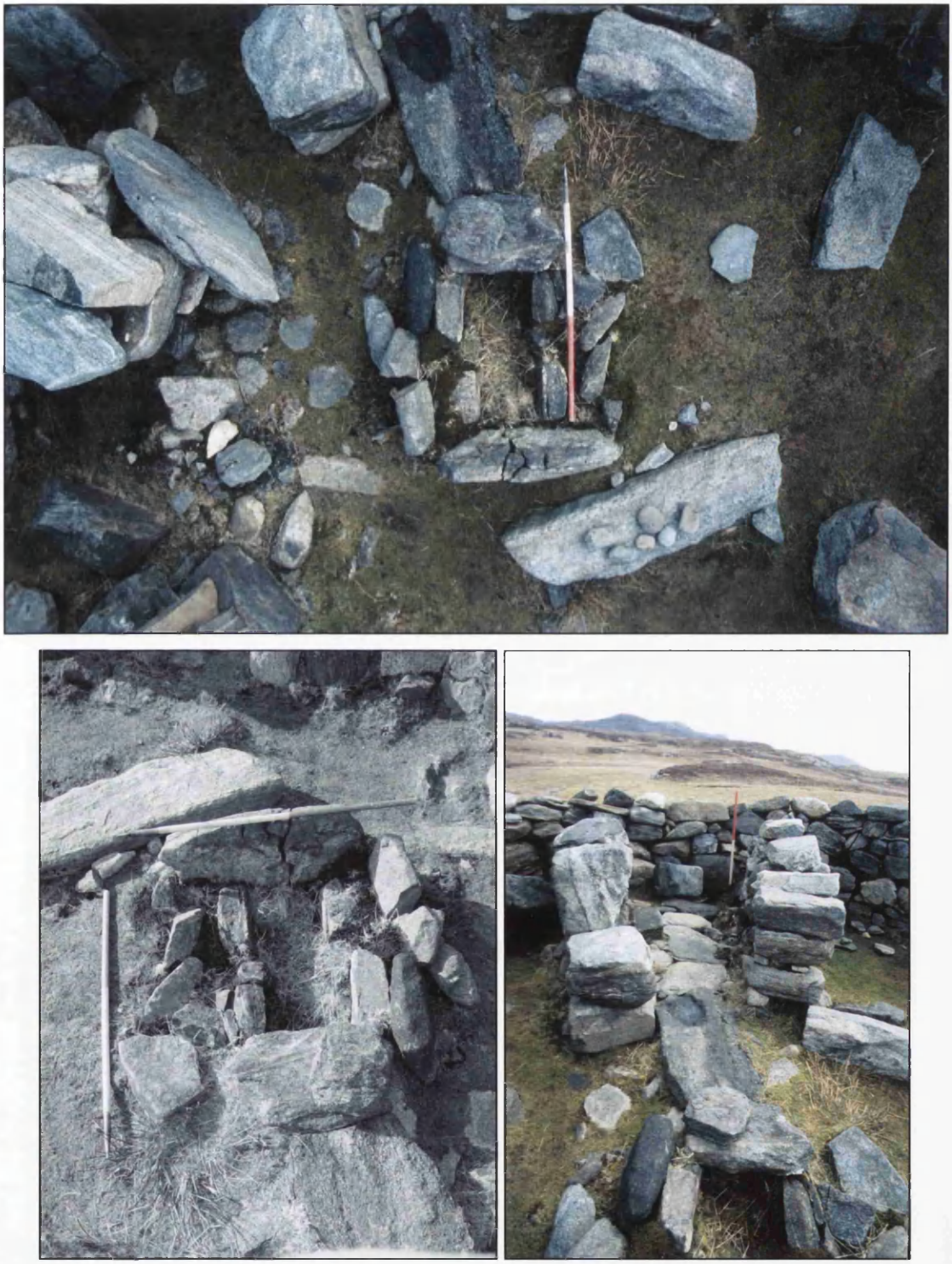

Plate 29: Views of the hearth in the central space and duct running through bay five and under the outer wall.

I have doubts as to whether either of these hearths were original to the primary wheelhouse occupation, however, the presence of the duct running under the wheelhouse (II) wall and arrangement of piers D and E which flank it might imply

that the duct is original. Typically, wheelhouse hearths, as with those found in many other forms of roundhouse, are curvilinear. No other wheelhouses in the Western Isles exhibit a rectangular hearth during its primary phase, although it is also the case that only 17 out of 30 excavated wheelhouses appear to contain a hearth at all (Crawford 2002, 120; M^{c}Kenzie 2003, 36). However, on this occasion it would seem likely that the excavator did not reach the primary floor levels of the wheelhouse (II) and it remains possible that another hearth exists below.

Plate 30: Plan view of the central space.

The hearth is not located in the middle of the central space, however, this is not unusual and its location towards piers D and E means that access through the wheelhouse entrance was not hindered by it. The hearth and duct leading from it is the most striking feature within the wheelhouse interior and the presentation of the site during the excavation is such that it seems to be part of the original wheelhouse layout. However, it is more likely that the feature was initially a stone tank or drain associated with an earlier settlement (structure I) or a similar feature in the wheelhouse (II), given that piers D and E are positioned specifically to accommodate the stone lined duct.

Two crucibles and a piece of vitreous slag were recovered from the wheelhouse entrance and structure III respectively, although the stratigraphical relationship with these structures is unknown. The hearth produced a large quantity of peat ash (landowners pers. comm.) and three shallow layers can be seen in the floor section that was left intact within structure III (see Plate 36 & Figure 27 below). At the Alt Chrisal wheelhouse, excavation has shown that the hearth had gradually increased in size until it consumed much of the central floor space inevitably making movement around the interior difficult (Branigan & Foster 2002, 79-82). Such an enlargement at Bagh nam Feadag may simply relate to a greater requirement for heating or could be associated with the use of the space as a workshop in a later phase, with the presence of metalworking debris, such as moulds, crucibles and slag indicative of such a practice.

Had the duct been a secondary component to the wheelhouse, there would be indications that the wheelhouse wall had been modified to permit this under floor passage. This is not the case, and so it remains possible that this duct was originally intended as a drain comparable to that found at Clettraval and Bac Mhic Connain, both of which emerged from the wheelhouse via the entrance. It is therefore the writer's opinion that the duct existed before the wheelhouse II was built and was incorporated into the structure (II). Therefore it is suggested here that an earlier structure which contained a drain into its entrance existed before structure II was built, where it was then integrated.

At Bagh nam Feadag, drainage is a problem, particularly in front of the wheelhouse (II) entrance where there is a small plateau. If the purpose of the duct was to remove water, then it is in an ideal position to divert fluids downwards from the eastern side of the structure where the slope drops significantly. A parallel to this can be seen at Clettraval in that the drain exits on the western side of the wheelhouse where the land drops away significantly, as opposed to the other side which is relatively flat (Figure 25).

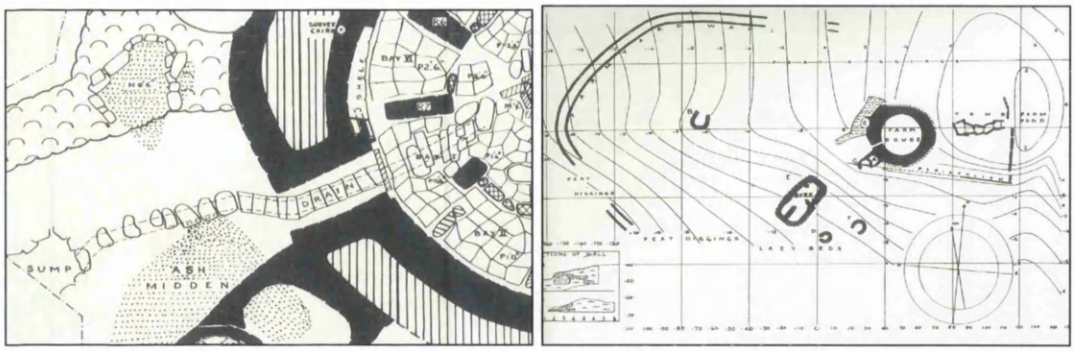

Figure 25: The drain exiting the Clettraval wheelhouse (left) and the topography of the site location (right) (from Scot 1948, 47 & opp. 56).

Although the field evidence is no longer visible, an account by Beveridge of the Buaile Risary wheelhouse hearth (1911, 210), located a short distance from the Clettraval wheelhouse, bears some resemblance to that seen at Bagh nam Feadag:

> Near the middle of this chamber was found an oblong hearth measuring 25 by 21 inches, edged at its back and sides by small stones 2 or 3 inches above the floor level and containing reddish ashes to the depth of nearly a foot. Within a yard from the east side (or front) of this hearth may still be seen in inlet of a built drain (filled with small rubble and capped by thin slabs) which, for half of its course to the south-west, runs below the passage floor, afterwards penetrating several cross walls and finally emerging at the exterior a yard to the west of the main doorway (*ibid* 210).

The covering stones over the duct in structure II are in a precarious situation now that they are exposed to livestock and visitors. Through the gaps and under those stones that are loose, numerous sherds of pottery can be seen, consistent with that seen in the assemblage recovered from the site. Small amounts of animal bone are also present. It would seem logical that this material has been washed down from the hearth or trampled through from the bay above. The duct was not excavated other than to expose the capping slabs. Stones lining its edges are visible although it is unclear if the bottom is also stone lined as it is obscured by sediment and vegetation.

3.1.3 Structure III

Structure III has had a considerable effect on structure II with the remodelling of at least three of the original piers. All previous citations of the Bagh nam Feadag

wheelhouse (Wood 1998, Hothersall & Tye 2000, Crawford 2002) have interpreted all the piers as of original build. Ian Crawford, for example, has cited pier H in structure II as evidence for a bonded entrance pier, a feature that he uses in conjunction with others to infer structural deviations within the wheelhouse building tradition (Crawford 2002, 118-119, 230). Although considerations of re-building by the excavator have been advanced by two citations other than this in thesis, little consideration has been given to modification of the building fabric in antiquity, particularly with regard to the interior of the wheelhouse. It is argued here that the interior of the wheelhouse has seen at least one phase of alteration (Phase III), and it would seem likely that others would have occurred given the trend elsewhere in the Western Isles for such practices.

As can be seen in plates 31 and 32, pier H is not only built in a different style to the others, but projects from the outer wheelhouse wall at an angle that would upset the internal ring of stone which helped form a corbelled roof over the bays.

Plate 31: Plan view of the wheelhouse interior, with bay two at bottom centre and pier H at the bottom right.

Plate 32: View of pier H from the outer wheelhouse wall where it meets the pier inner face.

Having a pier at the entrance which meets with the outer wall, whether abutted or bonded, is not uncommon in wheelhouses, which makes it unsurprising that pier H has not been questioned before.

Another anomaly with bay two which is flanked by piers H and G is the large gap between these terminals (2.4 metres). This is too great a distance to span with a lintel and there are no other examples of wheelhouses with bays of this size (Plate 33). Therefore, it is argued here that pier H is a later insertion into structure II.

Plate 33: View from central wheelhouse space of bay two with piers H (left) and G (right) some 3.6metres apart.

It is suggested that the existing wheelhouse (II) entrance was exploited, with possibly some modification to provide a passage into a sub-rectangular structure manufactured from the existing outer wheelhouse wall along with the adaptation, and/or removal, of piers in this area. In order for structure II to have had a more even distribution of piers, two or three would have been required in place of pier H, thus increasing the total number of piers in the wheelhouse from eight to nine or ten. It should be noted that wheelhouses of a similar internal diameter to structure II commonly exhibit nine to eleven piers (e.g. Kilpheder – 11 piers, Usinish – 10). Clettraval, which is a similar size to structure II, contained eight piers, although a additional pier-like post was required to support the corbelled roof, effectively making up a ninth pier (Scott 1948, 52-54, plate IV opp. 56).

Pier G does not appear out of place alongside the other piers and is built in a similar style. The inner face of pier G meets with the orthostatic stones in front of bay two, suggesting that the kerb stones were designed to abut pier G. The clearing of bays one and two to the limit of pier G would be required for the insertion of the

rectangular building (structure III). Also when viewed in plan, pier G appears in the expected position with two being missing from where structure III has been inserted (See Figure 18 above).

A further indication of a secondary building inserted into this area is given by the excavators records on the artefacts recovered from this part of the site. Ashworth often referred to this as a 'square hut', suggesting that it was clear to him that some separate structure existed here. Also, the artefacts recovered from this area themselves, particularly the pottery, tend to be later than that from elsewhere within structure II (see Chapter 4)

Pier H incorporates a stone bench, or platform at a low level on its northern face (Plate 34 & Figure 26).

Plate 34: Pier H viewed from within bay two showing protruding 'bench' stones.

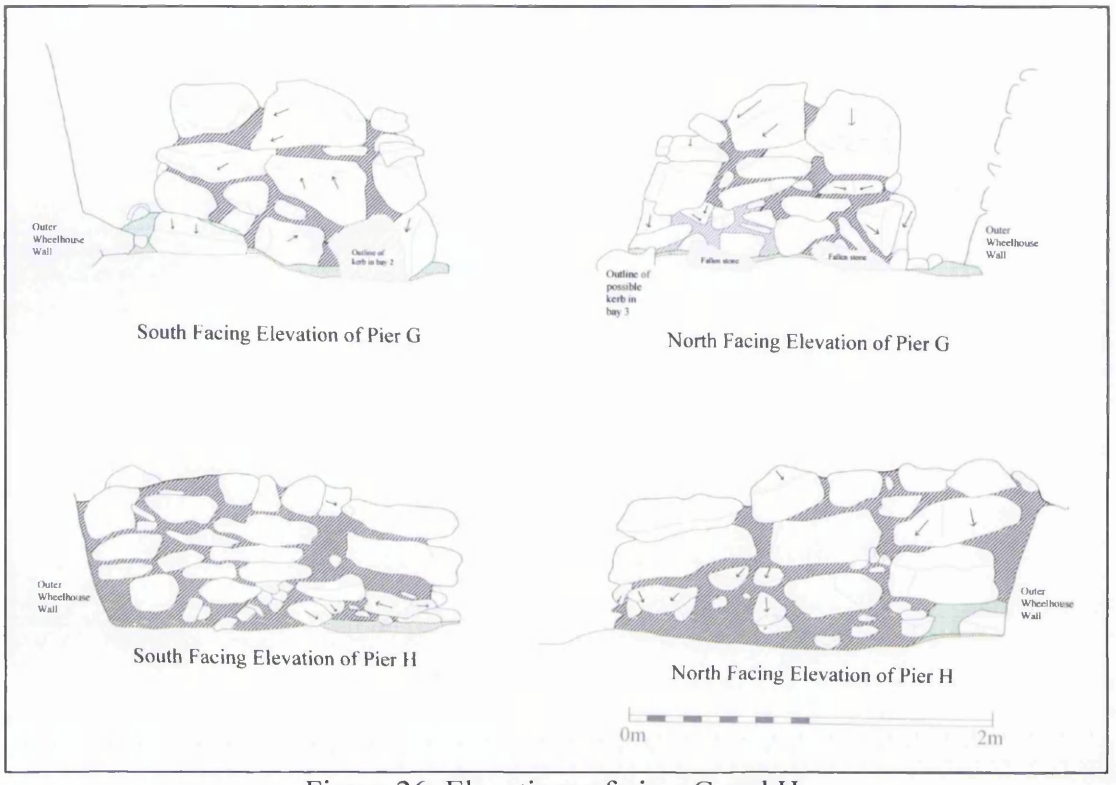

Figure 26: Elevations of piers G and H.

This has occurred by the lower stones being at a different angle to the upper courses, resulting in a ledge, 0.8m long and 0.3m deep. It is possible that this ledge is a remnant of an earlier internal feature which has been exploited during the construction of pier H in phase III.

The interior of bay two gives some subtle indications of internal features. These indications take the form of a trace of small stones (Plate 35 & Figure 27), arcing along the side of pier H and running around to the entrance of the bay, before breaking and then meeting with the orthostatic stones continuing along to pier G.

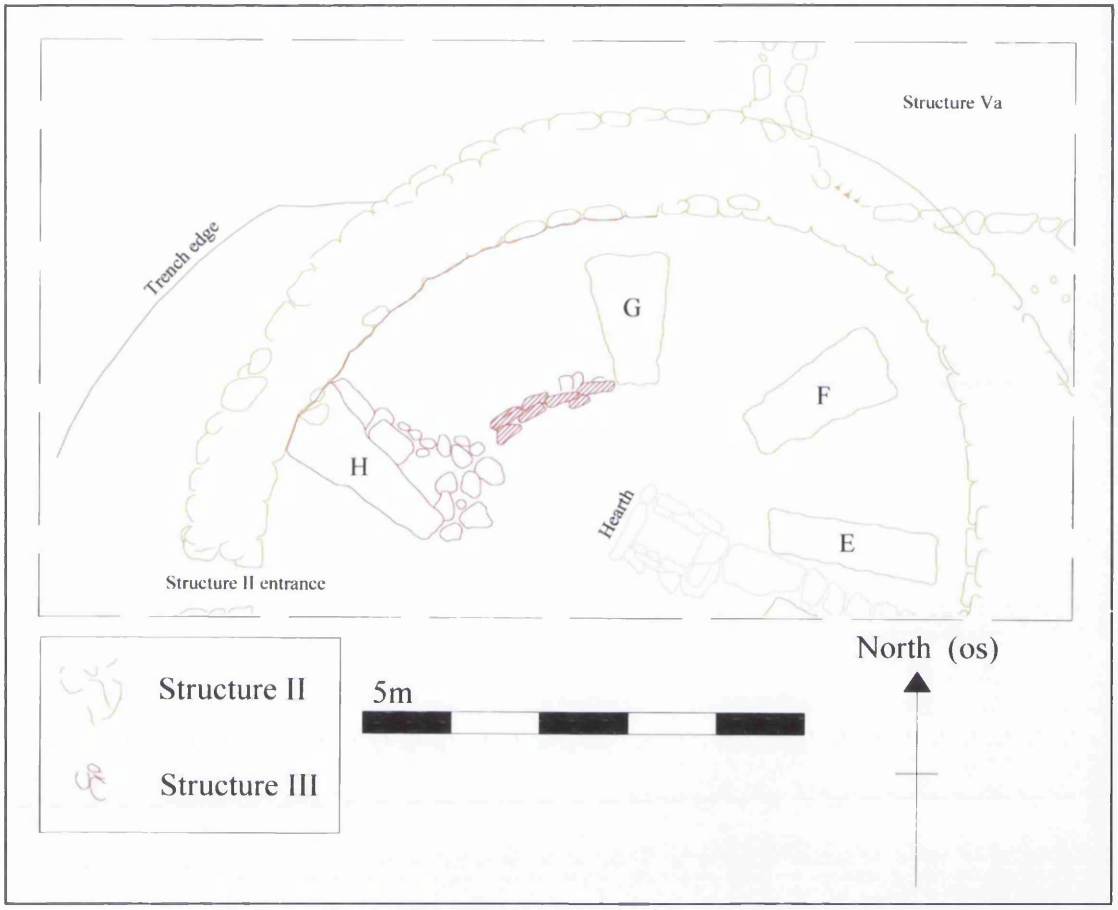

Figure 27: Plan of structure III (after Wood 1998, 8).

Plate 35: Small stones set into the floor of bay two, curving from the 'benching' around to the orthostatic kerb, leaving a small void.

The 1998 survey interpreted the fallen stones around the base of pier H as part of the orthostatic division that had collapsed (Wood 1998, 9), however, it is suggested here that this break relates to the entrance of structure III. Further excavation would establish whether this is the case or not.

In the centre of bay two, a baulk was left intact by the excavator, which has since slumped to less than half its original height which was approximately 70cm. (Plate 36 & Figure 28).

Plate 36: View of structure III in 1998 with baulk (centre) intact (© Hothersall).

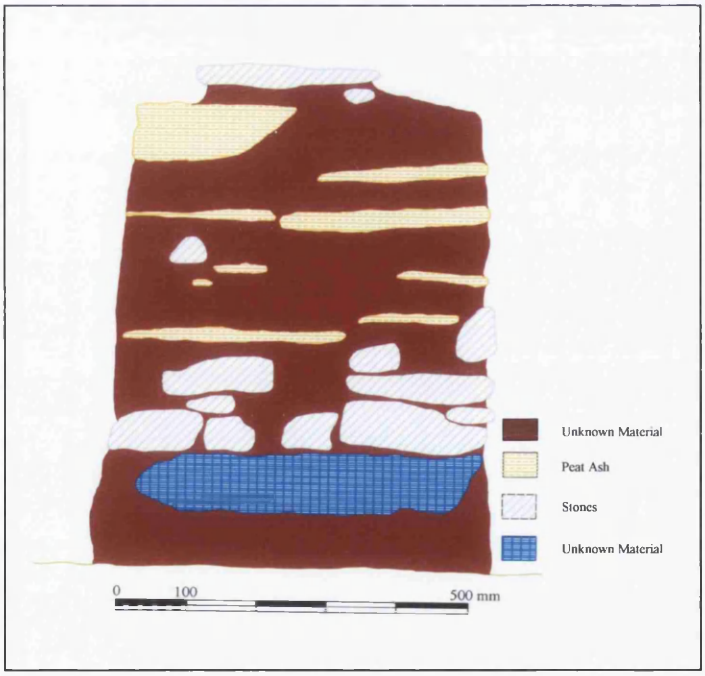

Figure 28: Transcribed drawing of section made in 1998 by Hothersall.

The top of this feature was interpreted by the excavator as the uppermost occupation floor. The soil contains fragments of pottery and peat ash deposits along with a black midden material. The unidentified material at the lowest part of the section is not visible on any earlier photographs and the key to the original drawing is not known.

A small cluster of stones appear above this material and is then followed by intermittent layers of peat ash indicating a considerable duration of occupation and use of this area.

The orthostatic stones at the front of bay two have been thrust into the ground and then supported by packing smaller stones around the base. The stones almost form a double skin with a deposit of midden material in the core. It is unclear as to how this small wall functioned and there is some hint in the aerial photograph that this stood to a greater height with additional stones on top.

Later occupation within wheelhouses is often visible in the archaeological record of excavated sites and Bagh nam Feadag would appear to follow this trend. With an abundance of building stone nearby, such a small structure could have been easily inserted into the derelict wheelhouse, with a timber and thatch roof spanning between piers H, G and the outer wheelhouse wall.

3.1.4 Structure IVa and IVb

The results of the 1998 Association of Certified Field Archaeologists survey interpreted structures IVa and IVb as a single structure (termed their structure II) and described it as follows:

> This is a substantial sub-rectangular building with rounded external corners. The south, east and west walls are massively built double faced walls with an earth fill, but the north wall, constructed across a gap where the wheelhouse has fallen or been demolished, is single skinned. A curving cross wall, one stone thick and standing to 0.5m, runs across the west end of the building, leaving a o.45m gap at the south end. Another slight cross wall runs from the south wall, surviving as an earth bank with some stones imbedded in it, towards the north wall, with a gap 0.80m. There are a number of large fallen stones in the east compartment of the structure. The only entrance appears to be in the northeast corner, a narrow squeeze between walls standing to 0.70m. This passage turns right as it emerges from structure II and passes down slope, with a stony platform built over and round the flue [duct] exit defining it on the north east (Wood 1998, 13).

It is the opinion of the writer that this structure can be separated into at least two separate phases of occupation. As can be seen from a plan view of the site (Figure 29) the eastern wall has well defined right angle corners whereas the western wall is sub-rectangular.

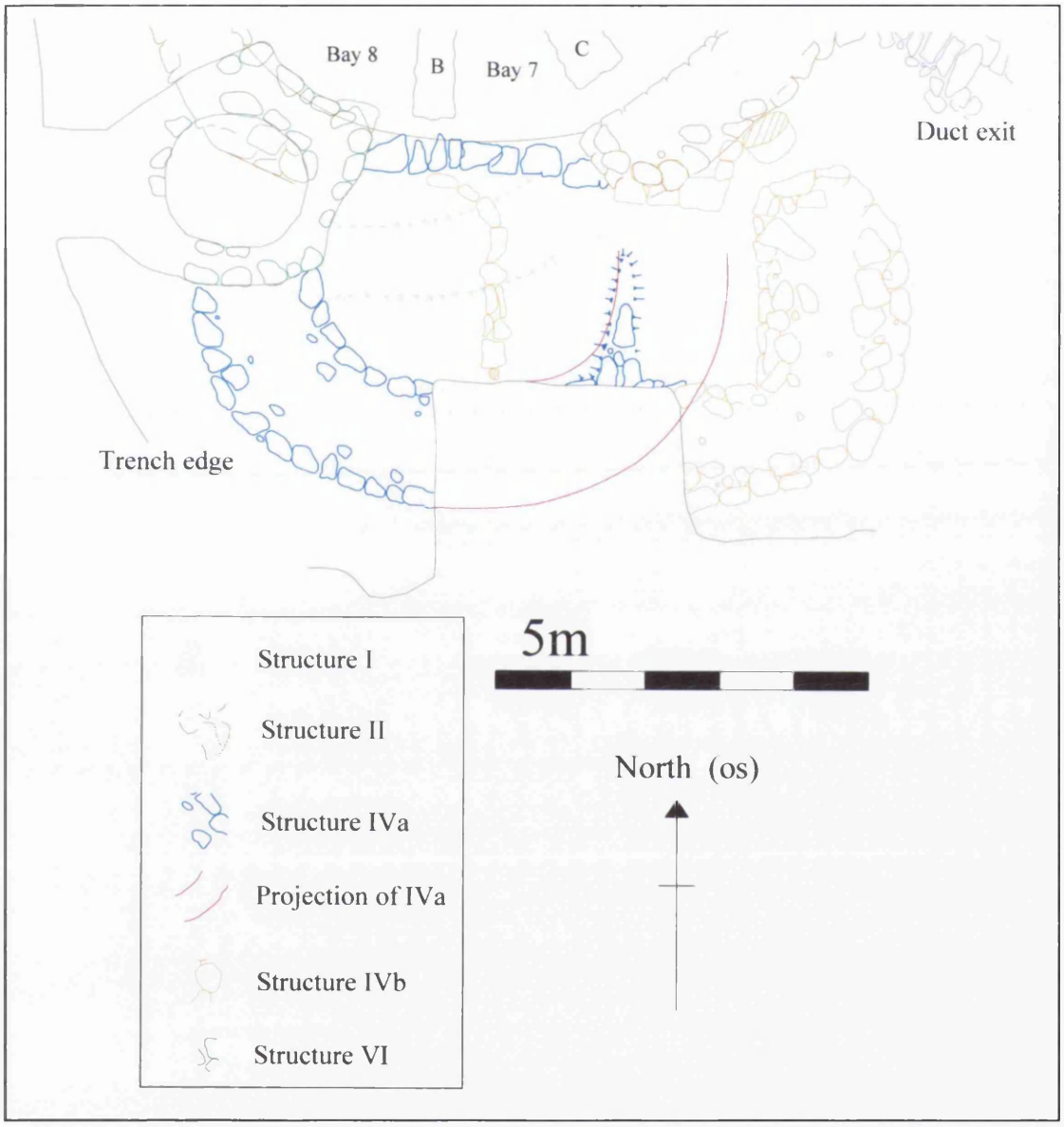

Figure 29: Plan created by the Association of Certified Field Archaeologists in 1998 with projected IVa wall (in red) (after Wood 1998, 8).

Although all internal features except for two low piers have been removed from the interior, a small trace of curving stonework can be seen low down at the south eastern

corner of structure IVb. It is suggested here that this trace of walling forms the outer wall of structure IVa. As can be seen in figure 28, by projecting the lines of the sub-rectangular walling where the western division can be seen, the feature meets this trace of walling. Plate 37 illustrates the point at which the walling has been altered.

Plate 37: Detail of the junction between structure IVa and IVb.

From examination of the style of construction it is clear that structure IVa is made up of larger stones, with IVb made up of smaller stones and a poorer finish (Plate 38).

Plate 38: View of structures IVa and IVb looking westwards.

This thickness of the walling for structure IVa is consistent all round with the exception of the northern section which abutted the wheelhouse (II) and the eastern portion which has been removed. The walls appear to be double faced, with a turf core on all sides apart from the northern side. The northern wall is significantly thinner and of a different style. It would seem plausible that this northern wall was revetted against the mound containing the wheelhouse which by his stage, presumably, was already established (Plate 39).

Plate 39: The northern wall of structures IVa and IVb as it cuts through the arc of the wheelhouse (structure II) wall.

The entrance to structure IVb can be found on the north eastern corner, built against the outer wheelhouse wall which contributes, along with the outer wall of structure IVb, to form a short passage (Plate 40). A platform has been created immediately in front of this entrance with small flat stones and continues over the exit of the duct which extends from inside the wheelhouse. It is unclear to what extent the duct was covered with these stones when first built or whether they were adapted to accommodate the entrance to structure IVb.

Plate 40: The entrance to structure IVb.

Upon entering structure IVb, the walling immediately to the right has been abutted against the outer wheelhouse wall (II). The interior is broken up by two small pier-like divisions, although these are far less substantial than the piers found inside the wheelhouse (II). The eastern of these two divisions may relate to structure IVa, whereas the western division appears to be contemporary with structure IVb given its relationship with the northern wall. A photograph taken shortly after the excavation in 1998, depicts a raised earthwork curving through structure IVa before continuing on under the wheelhouse (II). During the survey in 2004 this feature was not visible due to vegetation cover; however it would appear that this was clear to the excavator who penetrated the floors of structures IVa and IVb in its pursuit.

During the 2004 survey a small sherd of Scottish White Gritty Ware was recovered from within these structures, at the base of the eastern stone division,

amongst the packing soil. This type of pottery can be dated to the late thirteenth to early fourteenth century (Will pers comm.). It is unfortunate that this sherd did not come from a secure context and can not be attributed to any specific phase of construction. However, given the proximity of the sherd low down in this area of the site, after the excavator had removed much of the internal contents in search of the earliest structure in that area, we could preliminarily assign a date in this region for the construction of these sub-rectangular buildings against the wheelhouse mound. The other material recovered from this area of the site is presented and discussed in chapters four and five.

3.1.5 Structure V(a)

Plate 41: Two photographs depicting structure V(a) in 1998 (top ©Hothersall) and in 2004 (bottom).

Structure V(a) (Plate 41) has been revetted into the side of the wheelhouse (II) and has no surviving wall on the east side. The original floor of this structure V(a) was probably not reached during the excavation. The walling that is visible is quite substantial with possible double facing and an earthen core. The walls stand to a maximum height of 0.7m sloping down to 0.25m on the eastern edges. A slight trace of stones can be seen along the eastern flank.

On the south west corner it can be clearly seen that structure V(a) has been built into the wheelhouse wall, partly removing an outer skin of stones. A similar structure to this can be found at Druim nan Dearcag, North Uist. Structure A was constructed on an artificial flat platform, revetted against a stone outcrop. Armit assigned a date of 16th-17th centuries, describing the structure as a storage area (1997, 916).

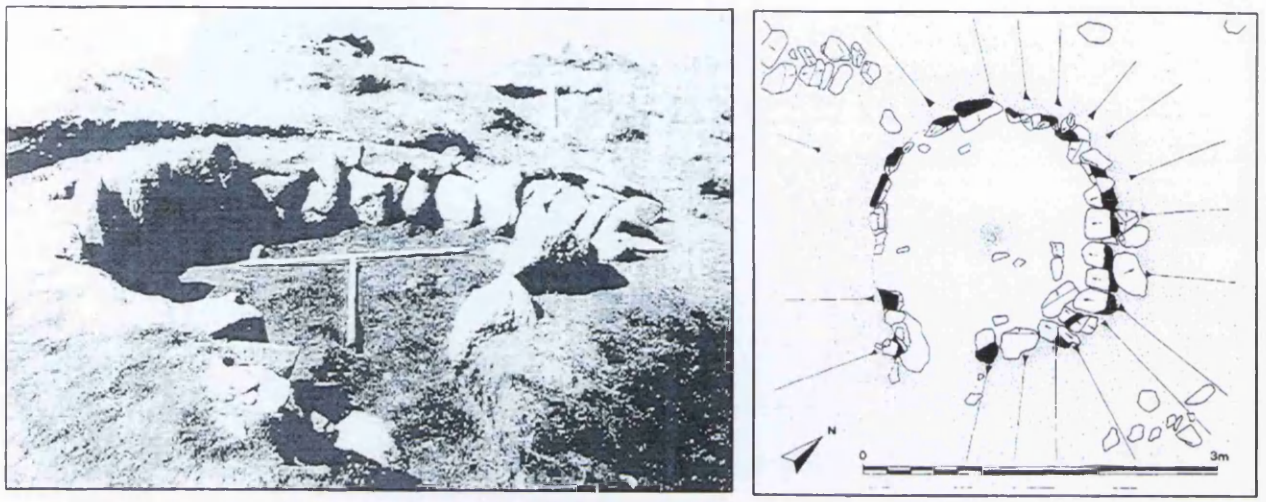

Plate 42: Structure A at Druim nan Dearcag, North Uist (from Armit 1997, 903).

There is no indication of a hearth in this structure and the earliest photographs do not show any signs of burnt material. It is expected that any possible hearth would be found at a greater depth than was reached during the excavation.

To the south of this structure, built up against the outer wheelhouse wall a stony platform can be found with a finished face on the eastern side. This feature appears to be associated with the construction of structure V(a) but is of unknown purpose. One explanation could be of a store area or working platform related to the occupation of structure V(a).

3.1.6 Structure V(b)

Structure V(b) can be described as a small oval stone ring with only the inner face visible, the outer currently unexcavated. The walls stand to 0.35m at its highest point and is 0.8m wide at the northeast corner (Wood 1998, 13).

Structure V(b) has been classed as a different construction to Structure V(a) as there is currently no evidence for them being conjoined. However, it is possible that walling continues at a lower level than was excavated suggesting a figure-of-eight or jelly-baby shaped building. An alternative explanation for such a low lying arc of stones could be the pens used to mark where hay was stacked after cutting and drying. This was a practice which continued in the Uists up until the last century.

3.1.7 Structure VI: The Shieling

The shieling found overlying structures I, II and IIIa is what initially intrigued the excavator about the site (Hothersall & Tye 2000, 22). The excavator, who had an interest in archaeology, was curious about this mound at Bagh nam Feadag that had a shieling located on top of it. An almost identical scenario is present at North Structure One, where a series of shielings and later constructions have been revetted into a fern covered mound, which clearly contains earlier structures. Although we cannot be certain about what existed at Bagh nam Feadag before excavation commenced, given the nature of the vegetation growth around the shieling, it appears that the shieling was exposed like those on the North Sites and possibly where Roy Ashworth began excavating.

Although the shieling has been fully excavated, its outline still survives, and it would appear that the excavator was primarily intent on revealing the structures and not removing them completely to find what lay at the bottom of the mound. Plate 43 shows the round shieling which has a diameter of 1.95m. The stones were bedded on a dark brown loam which does not contain the same midden addition common elsewhere and utilised in the earlier structures. Floor surfaces associated with this shieling have been removed in the pursuit of structure I, the line of which can be seen running under and into structure IVa.

Plate 43: The shieling (structure VI) that had been inserted on top of the mound.

The type of shieling found here is typical of many others throughout the Western Isles. Furthermore, it is interesting that these shielings are often found on top of much older sites and may be useful in studying seasonal occupation in the Western Isles and identifying the location of possible pre-historic settlements.

3.1.8 Structure VII: The Excavators Wall

As can be seen on the two aerial photographs (Plate 3 above) taken shortly after the end of the excavation and (Plate 44) an arc of dry stone walling has been built on the western side of the site in the space between the structures and the quarry face.

Plate 44: The surrounding dry stone wall built by the excavator.

This dry stone wall also incorporates a temporary structure which can be described as the 'dig hut', utilised by the excavator for protection from the wind and rain. This wall was built using the tumbled stones removed from the mound during the excavation and demonstrates the vast quantity of stones that had been quarried nearby or brought to the site. Although the quarry adjacent to the site has been cited as the main source of stone (Wood 1998, 7) it is also possible that a significant portion could have been sourced from the bay to the north east where loose stones are still evident (Plate 45).

Plate 45: View of the sea inlet at low tide with loose stone along the shoreline.

At Bagh nam Feadag, unlike the Clettraval wheelhouse in North Uist, the stones that were removed during the excavation are at least still visible on the site, albeit in the form of a recent wall and shelter (Plate 44 above). Although no detailed quantification of the building material at the site was carried out, it appears likely that most of the stones remain and have simply been moved around the site by the various phases of occupation. Given the remoteness of Bagh nam Feadag in relation to the modern road and settlement on Grimsay, it seems logical that the mound was not realised as a source for pre-quarried building material in recent years.

The volume of stone required to execute the construction of a wheelhouse can only be theorised as the only experimental work in rebuilding a wheelhouse was conducted in Shetland using the vastly different flagstones prevalent both there and in the Orkney Isles (Plate 46).

Plate 46: Experimental construction of a freestanding wheelhouse at Scatness, Orkney.

At Clettraval, the excavator made a novel attempt to reconstruct the corbelled bays on paper, based on the location of fallen stone around the piers (Scott 1948, 48-50). Given that preservation to lintel height is not seen anywhere in structure II at Bagh nam Feadag and the lintels were not re-positioned by the excavator, a practice that may have been likely given his approach to the excavation, it is anticipated by this author that the excavator either could not discern the remains, other than the more substantial and secure pier bases, or the modifications of the structures in antiquity exploited these more specifically shaped and scarce stones in the construction of later buildings. Such a practice would not be unusual and is suspected for other wheelhouses such as Eilean Maleit (Armit 1998, 267).

Its has been proposed by Tye (pers comm.) that the presence of corbelling as a rule in all wheelhouses may be presumptuous, arguing that the amount of building stones at sites too remote to have been robbed were inadequate for such a substantial building. This argument was cited primarily in reference to the wheelhouse at Usinish, and was also applied to Bagh nam Feadag. This author would dispute that argument, as a comprehensive survey of the Usinish area would undoubtedly expose a complex and long standing sequence of occupation from prehistory to more recent times and the total amount of stone in the area used for building is unknown. The large quantity of stone at the Bagh nam Feadag site, particularly when assimilated with the amount presumably retained under the mounds at NS1 and NS2, should be, until proven otherwise, considered adequate for such a stone demanding building as a wheelhouse.

The dry stone wall (VII) built by the excavator is situated very close to structure I and would have prevented the excavator from extending his trench

westwards. This may or may not be the explanation for the outer face of structure I not being fully explored. As well as functioning as a depository for the displaced stones during excavation, the dry stone wall (VII) was also built with a view to presenting the site to the public with the addition of a small shelter being a desirable extra for the excavator.

3.2 Summary of Structures

The main sequence of development for which clear evidence remains can be outlined as follows (figure 30):

- Phase 1

The construction of a possible wheelhouse (structure I) in the Early Iron Age

- Phase 2

The construction of a wheelhouse with either eight, nine or ten piers and positioned half a metre to the east of the earlier structure. The earlier structure (phase 1) had either been out of use and re-modified after a period of abandonment or had been dismantled shortly before the new wheelhouse (structure II) was erected. Additional excavation would be required to explore the sequence of construction further.

- Phase 3

There is evidence that the interior of the wheelhouse (structure II) has been remodelled on at least one occasion, primarily on the western side within bay two and the two piers flanking it, H and G. The hearth demonstrates further evidence of alterations to the interior as the hearth has been expanded from a smaller rectangular box to a larger rectangle. This may be associated with the occupation in Phase three or may be associated with metalworking activities, supported by the presence of iron artefacts, slag, crucibles and moulds (see chapter 5). As the excavation of the site did not reach the primary structure II floors and the lower structure I occupation levels, it is anticipated that neither of these hearths are original to the wheelhouse (structure II).

- Phase 4

This phase saw the construction of a sub-rectangular building (structure IVa) revetted against the southern side of the settlement mound. The nature of the northern wall of this structure in comparison with the remainder of the structure would suggest that a considerable mound remained where the wheelhouse (II) was, and building (IVa) utilised this as a pre-made boundary.

- Phase 5

Phase five saw the modification of structure IVa to produce IVb, the remains of which can be seen currently at the site. This modification extended the existing sub-rectangular building eastwards by approximately three metres, terminating with a rectangular inner face. An entrance was established on the north-eastern corner, flanked by the mound of the wheelhouse (II) wall. Two internal features remain, consisting of thin walled divisions separating the space into three zones. One piece of Scottish White Gritty Ware recovered from the floor of this structure (IVb) dates from the late thirteenth to early fourteenth century.

- Phase 6

A pennanular structure (Va) was revetted against the north-eastern wheelhouse wall which, although cannot be dated to any specific period, it is likely to be related to some time after the wheelhouse had gone out of use. Very few artefacts were recovered from within this structure and excavation to a considerable depth did not reveal a hearth. Therefore, this structure may have functioned as a storage area in conjunction with later use of the site. Between the southern wall of this structure and the wheelhouse wall a small stone platform has been incorporated before the ground level drops off to the east.

A small oval structure to the north-east of the pennanular structure is visible although obscured by turf and vegetation. There is no indication that this conjoins with the adjacent structure Va.

- Phase 7

The penultimate phase of construction saw the placement of a circular shieling (VI) on the south-western area of the mound where the wheelhouse and structures IVa and

IVb meet. This structure measures 2.8 metres by 2.2 metres and the floor and much of the interior has been removed during the excavation.

- Phase 8

The final phase of construction at Bagh nam Feadag was conducted by the excavator utilising the rubble removed from within the mound. This comprises a dry-stone wall with a small square shelter and surrounds the western flank of the mound.

Figure 30: Phase plans of the structures at Bagh nam Feadag (after Wood 1998, 8).

Chapter Four: Artefacts

4.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the nature and detail of the material culture generated by the excavation. The first section presents an overview of the artefacts detailed in the subsequent sections.

The durable artefactual evidence, collected during the excavation contains the typical range of finds expected from such a collection of prehistoric buildings in the Western Isles. The stone, ceramic and some metal artefacts are in as good a condition as could be expected. Although bone and organic material such as skins, wood, leather and other materials did not survive, other artefacts indicate or suggest their presence.

The study of artefacts recovered from Hebridean sites in the past has been hindered by their antiquarian methods of extraction, however it is argued (e.g. MacSween 2002, 145) that this should not result in their alienation in preference to recently recovered material supported by a structural record. It should be the case that archaeologists examine all material culture regardless of its recovery process to prevent a bias in our subsequent interpretations of past cultures. The re-analysis of the Dun Bheag material (MacSween 2002) may have provided limited new information but nonetheless has highlighted that a more critical review, particularly of the ceramic record, is fundamental to advancing research and that modern excavation priorities should be aware and considerate of this philosophy.

4.1 The Small Finds

The small finds recovered from Bagh nam Feadag were collected with reference to the grid plan established by the excavator (Figure 31). The system of assigning a grid square to a single item or collection of items was not always followed therefore some artefacts in the assemblage do not have any contextual information at all. Additionally, when items were collected from adjoining squares they were often bagged together and there is no way of knowing which items in the bag were from

which square. Within the catalogue, the excavator's notes, when provided, are transcribed directly and presented in italics with an interpretation offered by this author based on the excavation grid. The reference in square brackets where shown relates to the excavators grid plan.

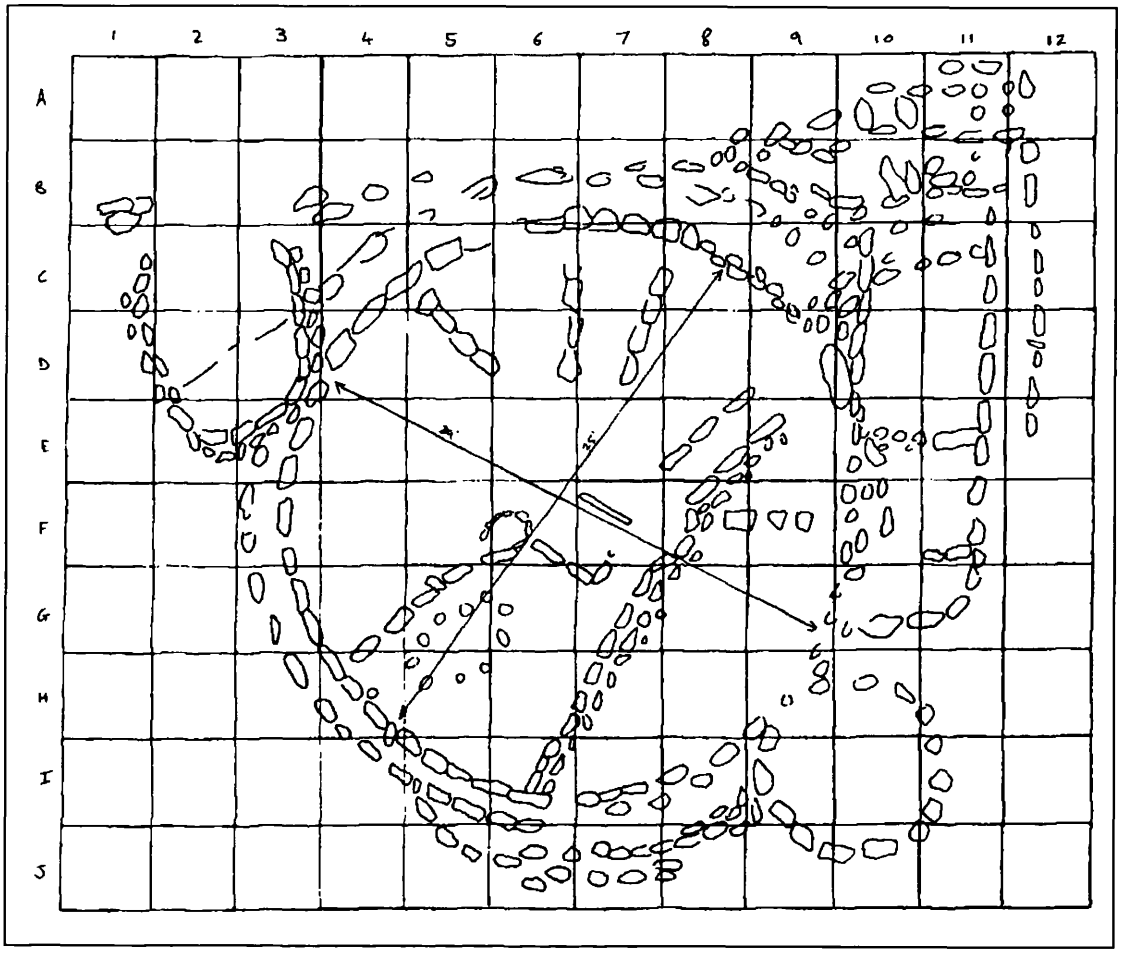

Figure 31: A transcription of the plan made by the excavator.

Throughout this work objects within the finds collection are discussed, with identifiable general finds, by their material type. Small finds are referred to in the text by a sf. number, with the exception of the flint which is entered as a group. Unless otherwise stated, the artefactual reports are by the author.

4.1.1 Stone Artefacts

Numerous stone artefacts were discovered which show evidence for use as hammer-stones, whetstones and spindle whorls. In the case of the hammer stones, each example had been collected and placed on a large stone in the centre of the wheelhouse (structure II) and therefore it is not known where they originated from in the excavation.

Hammer-stones

The ten hammer stones are distinguished by varying bands of faceting on one or both ends of the stones. All of the examples have discrete facets with either end being worked with the exception of two (Plate 47, s.f.2 and s.f.10) which also have percussion damage to the flat surface on one side. Eight of the examples are small enough to have been used single handed, whereas s.f.1 and s.f.2 (Plate 47) are slightly larger and significantly heavier. All stones are hard wearing and three have a very smooth lustrous finish (Plate 47). All examples have wear on both ends, having been used as hammers, with s.f 4 exhibiting some wear on one side suggesting use as a platform.

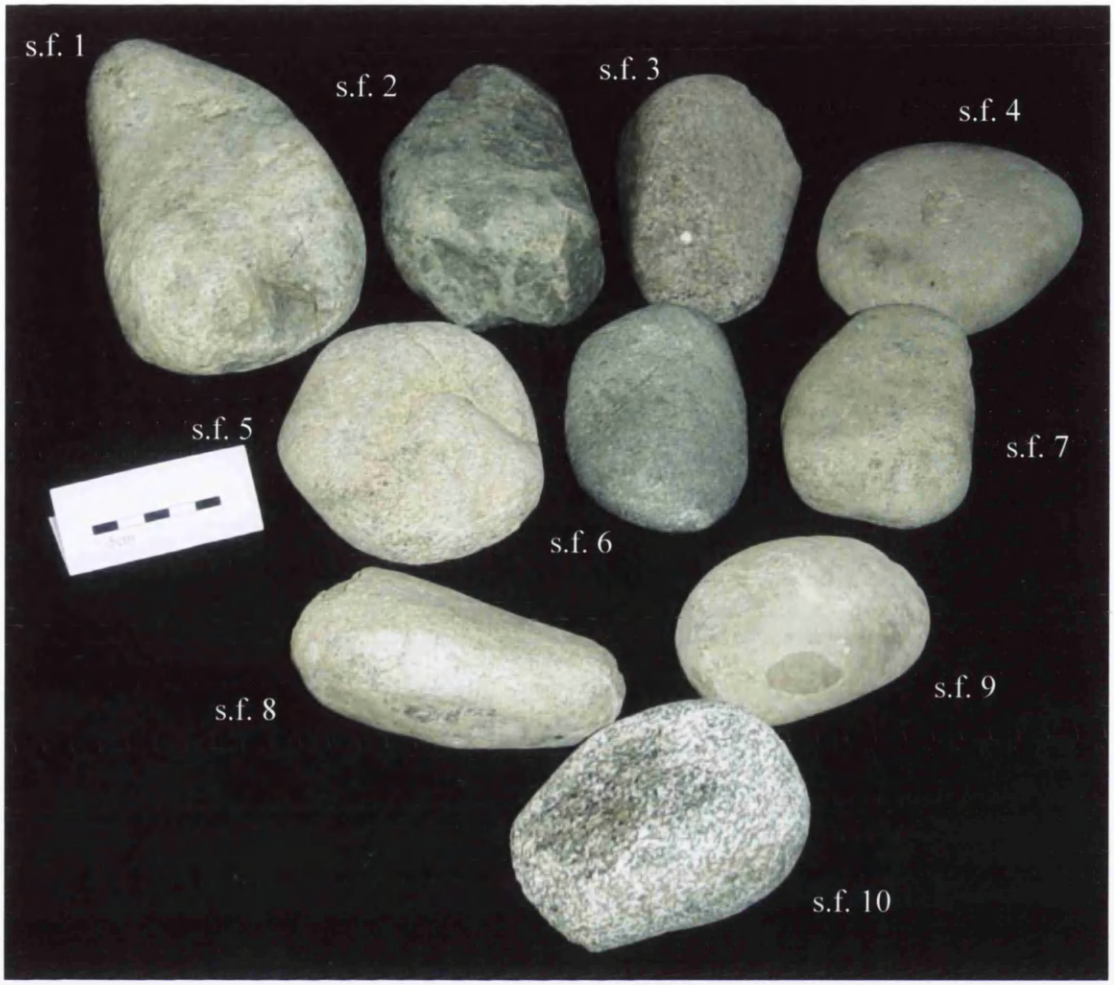

Plate 47: Hammer stones.

Other Stone Tools

Stone with pecked/drilled impressions (Plate 48, s.f.11)

This artefact is formed from an oval pebble and has an indentation on opposing sides. These indentations are steep sided with one travelling further into the stone than the other, perhaps pecked initially then drilled. Alternatively, the function of the tool has caused the interior of the impressions to become polished. The purpose of this artefact is not known and so the following interpretations are offered; unfinished hammer stone, unfinished stone weight, strike-a-light, mortar or palm protector.

Oval, 88mm by 62-65mm, maximum thickness 51mm. Diameter of pecked impressions 25mm and 29mm.

Plate 48: Stone with pecked/drilled impressions.

Whetstone (Plate 49, s.f.12)

Two thirds dark grey, one third light grey. Shaped to current condition, dipping in the middle and rounded at each end. Both sides have been worked and are highly polished.

72mm long, 16mm wide and 9mm thick.

Whetstones played an important role in the final stages of blade manufacturing and the continued maintenance of a sharp edge. This is the only example of a whetstone to be recovered from the site and is comparable to those recovered from Anglo-Scandinavian York with its distinctive splaying at either end (see Mainman & Rogers 2000, 2486; 9318, fig. 1205)

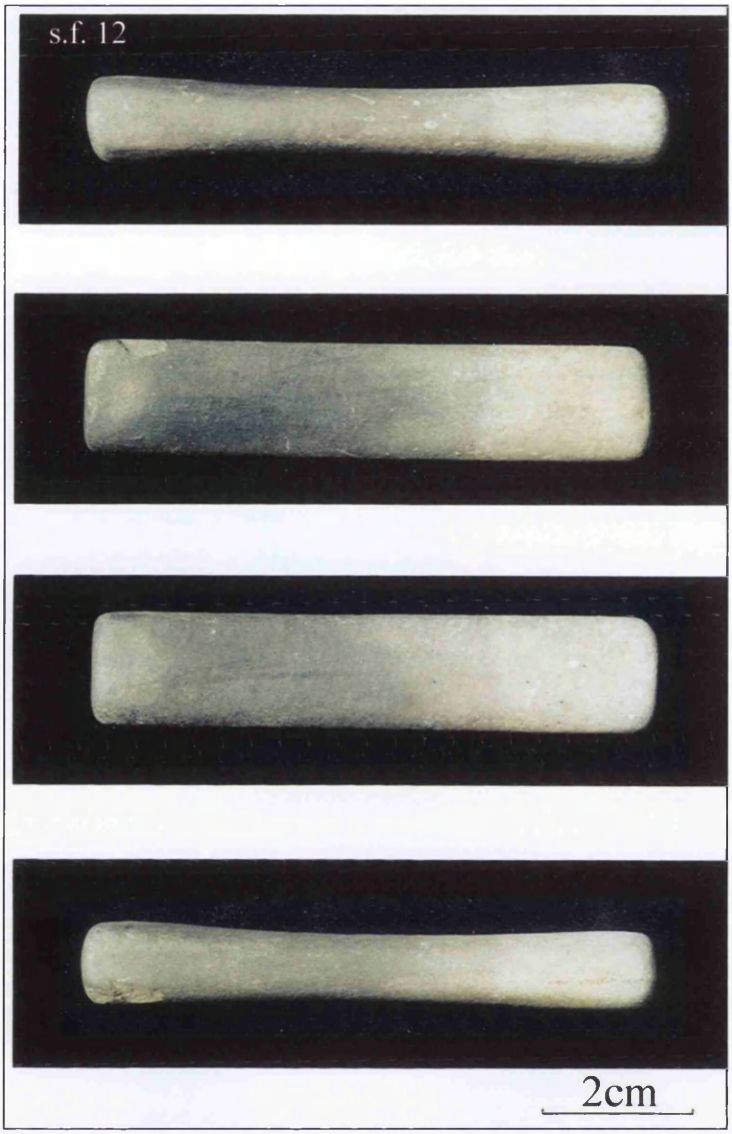

Plate 49: Views of four sides of the whetstone.

Pebble (not illustrated, s.f.13)

Smooth, rounded pebble, cream/light brown in colour. Similar pebbles can be found on the shores of nearby Loch Hornary.

[B10] Context: Entrance of structure IVb.

Serpentine Stone (Plate 50, s.f.14)

Light to dark green with blackened areas. It is smooth on all surfaces with rounded edges. Some white and yellow weathering marks. The two flat sides show scratch marks which are probably recent, possibly as a test for hardness (see Plate 50). Tapering from 18mm to 31mm in width.

[G6] *High up in infill of later room* Context: From within structure III.

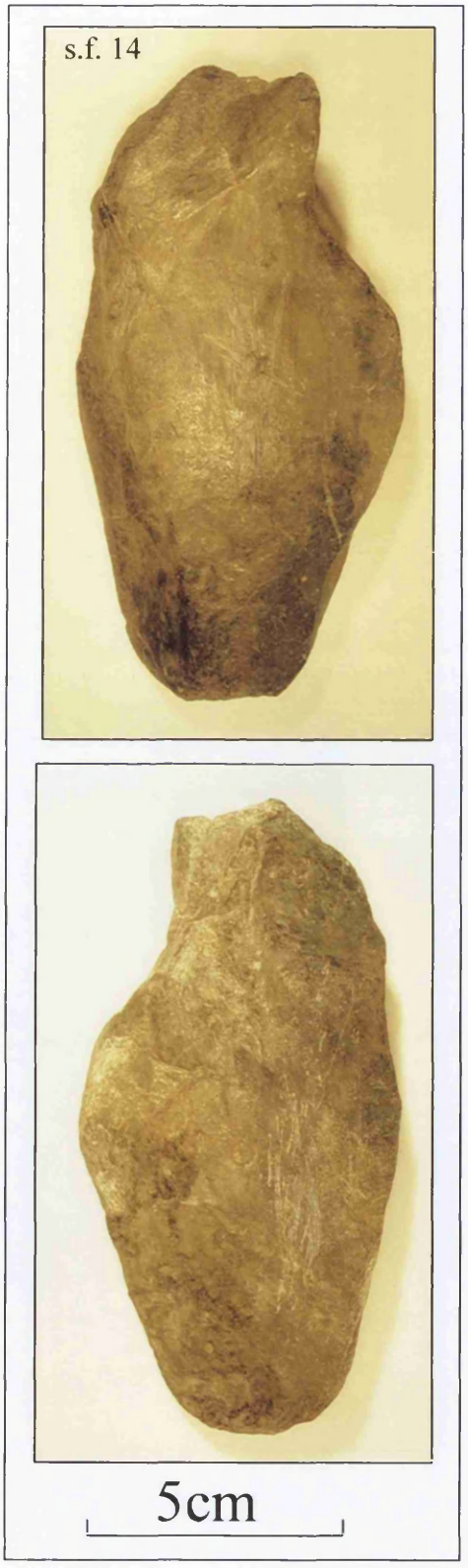

Plate 50: Serpentine stone.

Stone Flake (not illustrated, s.f.15)

Mainly black with brown and white marks. The upper surface is highly polished and curved as if detached from a rounded pebble. Lower surface is coarse but smooth. Possible scraper with signs of wear on underside of one edge.

[H4] *Inside wall* Context: From within structure III.

Stone (not illustrated, s.f.16)

Light brown/sandy colours, sedimentary, with some horizontal striations on each side, probably as a result of cleaning and not from use as a whet stone as labelled by the excavator.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area.

Spindle Whorls

In total, ten spindle whorls were recovered at Bagh nam Feadag. Five of these were made from steatite, four from pottery and one from stone.

Stone spindle whorl (Plate 51, s.f.17)

Stone (metamorphic) whorl with rounded edges. One side is smoothed whereas the other is coarse caused by the fracturing of the face. Hole is central, circular and neatly drilled.

Outer diameter of 35mm and 9mm thick. Hole diameter 5mm.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area.

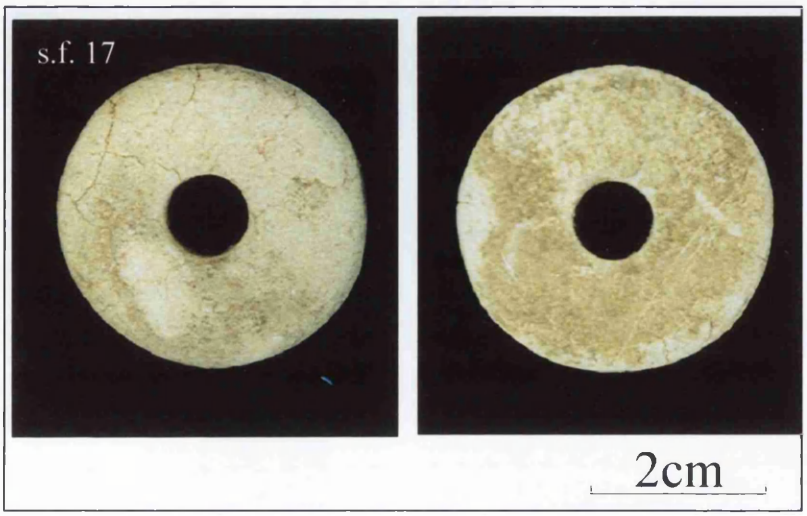

Plate 51: Stone spindle whorl.

Ceramic Spindle Whorl 1 (Plate 52, s.f.18)

Whorl manufactured from a pottery sherd, indicated by curving profile and cordon decoration. Fabric is similar to that found within main ceramic assemblage. The whorl is broken, with two sherds glued together and a portion missing.

Outer diameter 40mm and 11-13mm thick. Hole diameter 6mm.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area.

Ceramic Disc, Possible unfinished whorl 2 (Plate 52, s.f.19)

This sherd of pottery has been shaped into a small disc and a perforation has been made on one side as if intended to puncture. Fabric is consistent with remainder of the assemblage.

Outer diameter 36-39mm and 13mm thick.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area.

Ceramic Spindle Whorl 3 (Plate 52, s.f.20)

Broken whorl, with three parts glued together. Formed from part of a curving vessel, possibly a rim piece as part of the edge is particularly smooth.

10-13mm thick. Fabric is buff/light grey with fine grits.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area.

Ceramic Spindle Whorl 4 (Plate 52, s.f.21)

Large, thin spindle whorl manufactured from pottery sherd. Fabric is less common within main assemblage but not unique. Light grey in colour with fine quartz and shell inclusions, fragile and powdery surface. Hole has shallow sides, possibly gouged out.

Outer diameter 58mm and 8mm thick. Hole diameter 5-7mm.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area.

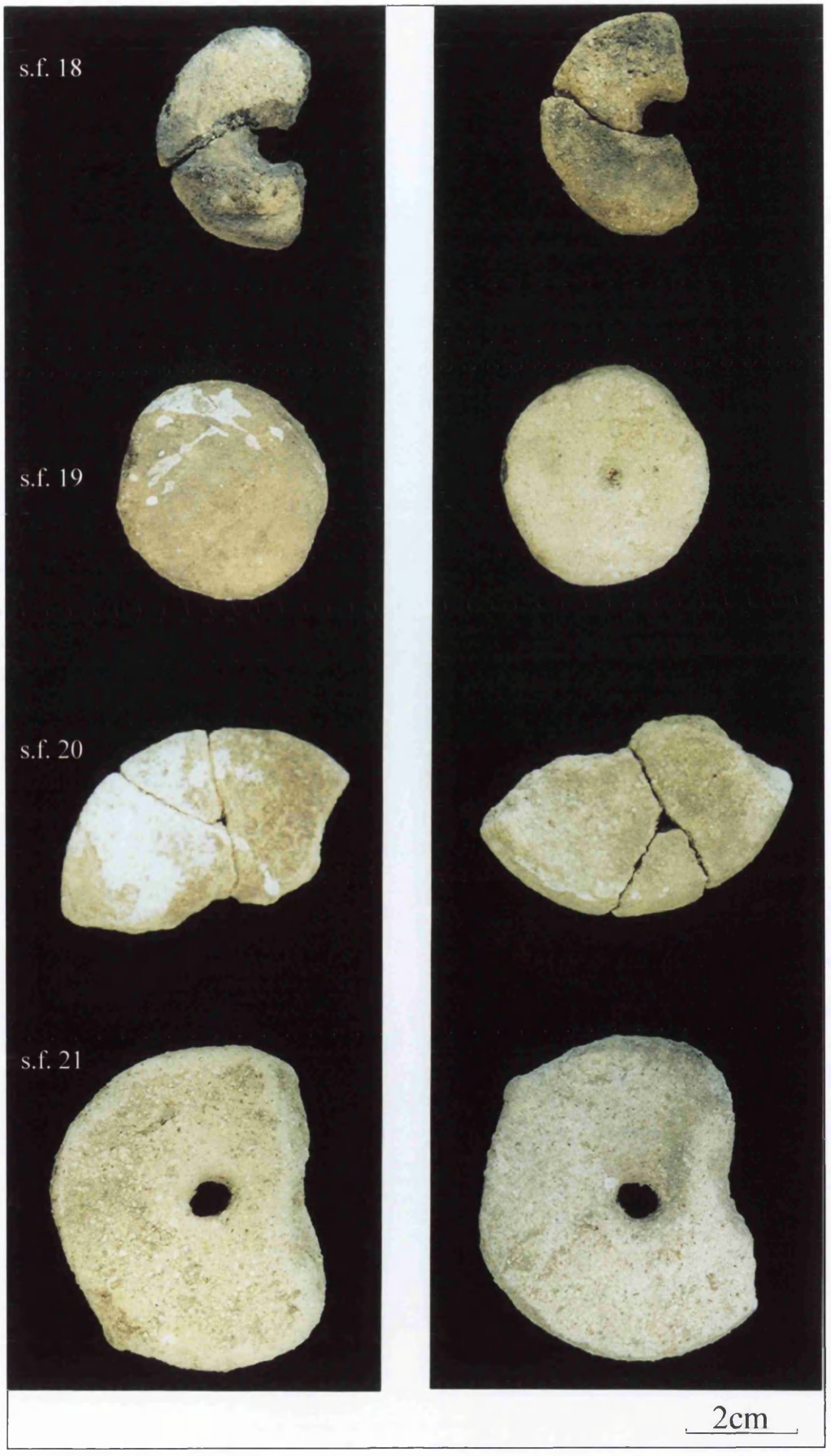

Plate 52: Ceramic whorls and disc.

Steatite whorls (Plate 53, s.f.22-26)

Five steatite artefacts were recovered during excavation, five of a dark grey colour and the other a lighter grey and a different appearance.

Steatite Whorl 1 (Plate 53, s.f.22)

Light grey colour, with a pitted surface and fracture running horizontally through the centre. The central hole is unusually large, and neatly drilled with a consistent diameter.

Outer diameter 32mm and 12mm thick. Hole diameter 14.5mm.

Steatite Whorl 2 (Plate 53, s.f.23)

Dark grey with a smooth surface. This example has an angular shape and has been crudely formed.

Outer diameter 26-28mm and 6-8mm thick. Hole diameter 8mm.

Steatite Whorl 3 (Plate 53, s.f.24)

Dark grey with a neat hole drilled through the centre. Edges are angular and not completely rounded.

Outer diameter 17-19mm and 9mm thick. Hole diameter 5-6mm.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area

Steatite Whorl 4 (Plate 53, s.f.25)

Light grey with a drilled hole through the centre. Edges are angular and crudely rounded.

Outer diameter 19-21mm and 7-9mm thick. Hole diameter 6-7mm.

[G8] *Floor level in roundhouse* Context: From bay eight/pier A area

Steatite Whorl 5 (Plate 53, s.f.26)

Light grey with a consistently circular hole in the centre. Edges have been rounded more successfully than examples two, three and four.

Outer diameter 29mm and 10mm thick. Hole diameter 8mm.

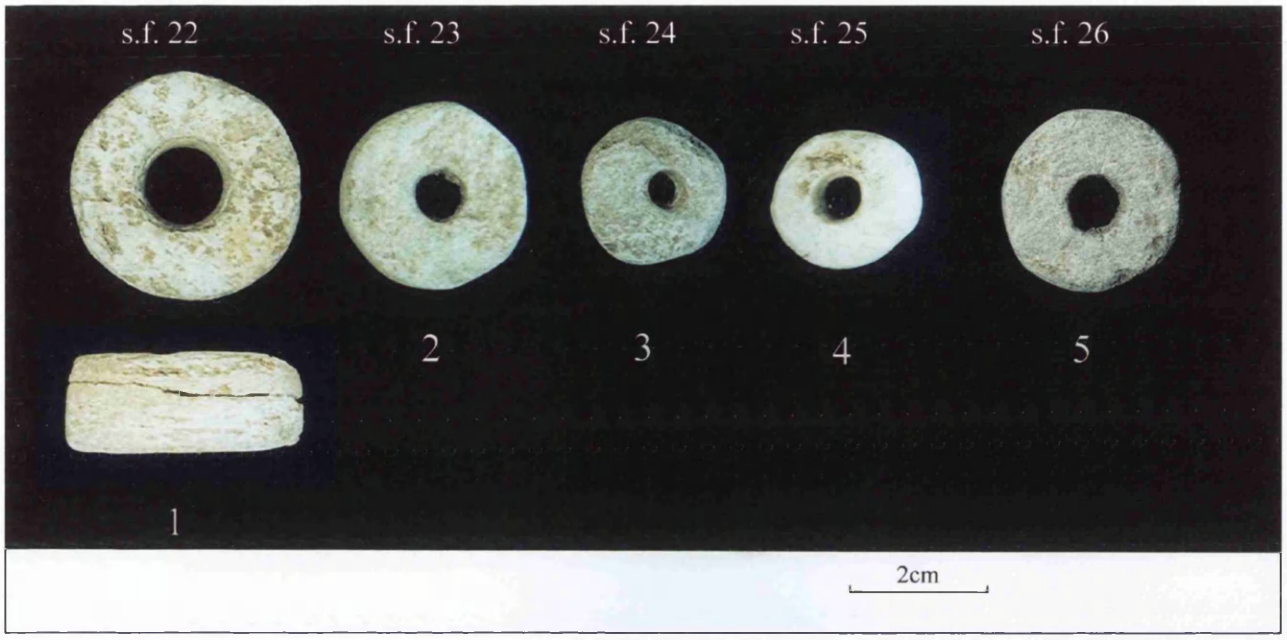

Plate 53: The steatite spindle whorls.

Steatite whorls 2, 3, 4 and 5 are similar to those recovered at the Cnoc A' Comhdhalach wheelhouse in North Uist (Beveridge 1911, opp 209). Whorl 1 (s.f.22) on the other hand is much larger and exhibits an unusually wide central perforation. None of the steatite whorls exhibit the curving profile associated with the re-use of material from a vessel, although this is common elsewhere (e.g. Emery, 1996, 78-80) and remains possible in this case. The heaviness of whorl s.f.22 is surprising given a much lighter example would be sufficient, perhaps indication that this has been re-worked from a thick walled steatite vessel.

The interest in the steatite whorls found at Bagh nam Feadag lies in the fact that the nearest outcrops of the rock which were exploited are in Shetland, and beyond that, Norway (Ritchie 1984, 65-73). Where steatite has been recovered from sites in the Western Isles, such as Drimore Machair, South Uist (MacLaren 1974, 15) and Bornish, South Uist (Sharples pers. comm.), they have been from Norse contexts. The steatite whorls are of ubiquitous form and those found in the Western Isles have parallels elsewhere. It is not possible in this instance to date the production of these whorls or any re-use of vessel sherds since the finished products are common to several centuries. However, the style of the whorls, excluding perhaps no.1, could be considered Viking. Examples of similar whorls have been found in late 10th to mid-11th-century contexts at 16-22 Coppergate, York and St Kilda (Emery 1996, 102 and 179). It is widely accepted that all the Northern and Western Isles were used as bases

for raiding and land seizure from the 9th century and by the middle of the 10th century, Norse colonies were becoming established (Crawford 1987, 62). It therefore remains possible that the steatite whorls recovered at Bagh nam Feadag are associated with a Viking or Norse presence.

4.1.2 Bone Artefacts

Shell and bone from Bagh nam Feadag is represented by one small fragment of shell, one very small animal bone, a bone point and two pieces of whalebone. The small fragments of shell and bone are not illustrated here. Some caution must be maintained regarding the bone point, as this is in unusually good condition for a moorland site. The point may have been included in the assemblage as a mistake as the excavator is known to have collected finds from other sites that he visited, some of which were in the machair environment where bone is exceptionally well preserved.

Bone point (Figure 32 & Plate 54, s.f.27)

The point (s.f.27) has been made from a sheep metapodial with the epiphysis retained on the butt end. The epiphysis was possibly retained to help provide a better grip (Sharples 1998, 150). The shaft has been tapered to a fine point by chamfering on one side which has also exposed the central canal. The shaft is highly polished, with wear marks where it has been held. This can be can be paralleled at other wheelhouse sites such as Foshigarry, North Uist (Beveridge and Callander 1931, fig 18), A' Cheardach Mhor, South Uist (Young and Richardson 1960, fig 13 nos 34-5) and the broch complex at Scalloway, Shetland (Sharples 1998, fig 97 no 16).
Length 89-94mm.

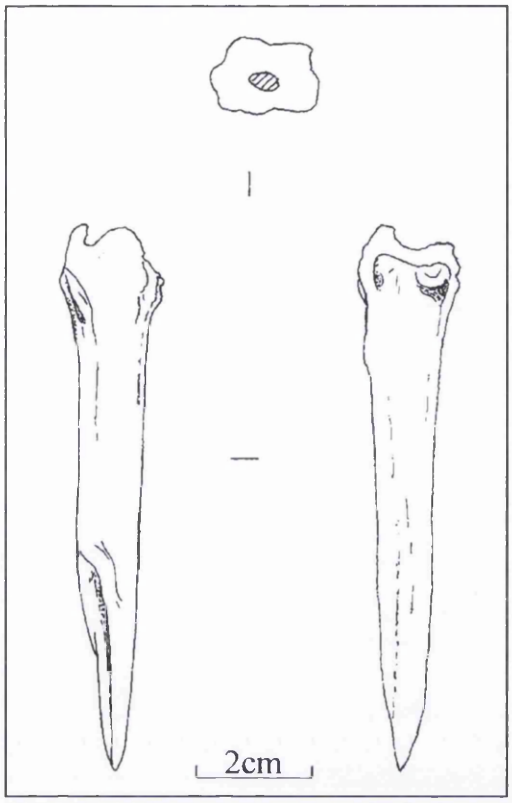

Figure 32: Bone point

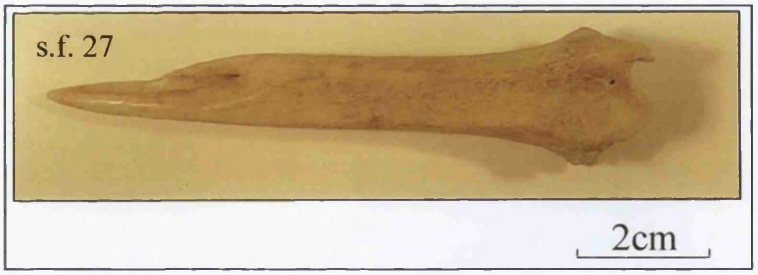

Plate 54: Bone point.

Bone (Plate 55)

A single, small piece of bone, the only fragment other than the point above and whalebone below that was recovered.

Plate 55: Bone.

Whalebone (Plate 56a & 56b, s.f.29-31)

Three pieces of whalebone were recovered from Bagh nam Feadag, the largest of which is an unfused cetacean vertebral epiphyses (s.f.29), deriving from the lower vertebra, below the cervical vertebrae. The specific location of discovery within the site is not known. The largest platter (s.f.30) has indentation and cut markings (Plate 56b) on the smoother side, along with rectangular puncture marks suggesting it has been used as a hammering board. The other piece (s.f.31) has possibly been used as a mortar or mixing pot as the depression is polished.

Cetacean bone was widely utilised in Atlantic Scotland to produce a variety of tools, but due to its physical composition is not always visible in the archaeological record. This is particularly true of sites located on acidic soil such as Bagh nam Feadag. For this reason, few bone artefacts were recovered, although other wheelhouse sites in the Western Isles, notably those on the machair which enables good bone preservation, have produced a wide range of whalebone finds. A recent re-assessment of the use of bone at Fosigarry and Bac Mhic Connain (Hallen 1994), both Iron Age wheelhouse settlements, suggested that antler and cetacean bone was selected for the production of objects requiring more resilient material (*ibid* 227), such as long-headed combs, socketed handles and composite combs. We know from evidence elsewhere that deer bone was commonly exploited for the production of tools, along with bone from those animals kept for meat and other animal products. The cetaceans are more likely to have been stranded on the beach than hunted (Hallen 1994, 227).

At Gurness, cetacean vertebral epiphyses have been interpreted as lids for vessels made from the bodies of cetacean vertebrae (Hedges 1987, 207). In the case of Bagh nam Feadag it would seem likely that the largest piece was used as a chopping board, given the shallow criss-cross cut marks on the flat surface. A parallel for this can be seen in Hallen's examination of bone from Fosigarry (1994, 222, illus 13, no. 2).

Plate 56a: Whalebone.

Plate 56b: Whalebone detail (of Plate 56a, top left).

4.1.3 Metal artefacts

Iron Rivets (Figure 33, s.f.32-34)

Three rivets were recovered, although it is possible that others are amongst a mass of heavily corroded objects recovered from the vicinity of structure V(a) [D4]. Rivet s.f.33 has a piece of rock attached to the body section. Each rivet has a square head on the top although this has become detached on example s.f.33.

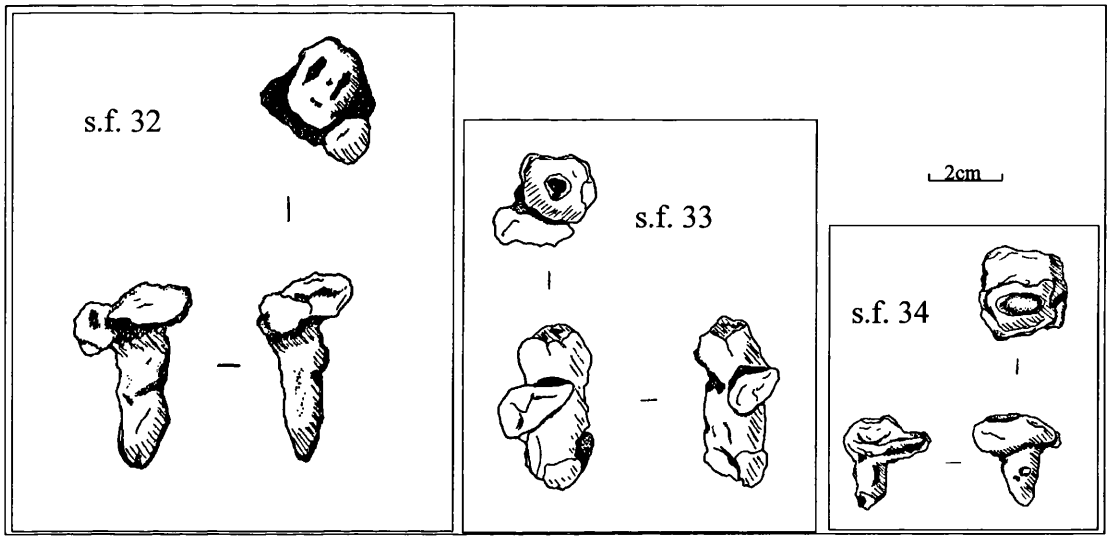

Figure 33: Iron rivets.

Axe Head (Plate 57, s.f.35)

The axe head is accompanied with no contextual information at all. The axe head was in fairly good preservation upon discovery, but has since deteriorated somewhat. The metal has fractured in the centre where it is at its thinnest and weakest. The flat back would suggest it was intended for woodworking and not as a weapon. It is likely that the axe was formed from a single bar of iron which has been folded over and shaped. Dimensions given here are only approximate as handling the item would have damaged it further.

Length (from blade to haft) 115mm. Haft hole, oval 37mm by 26mm. Height of blade, 56mm.

Plate 57: Iron axe head.

Iron Cauldron (Figure 34, Plate 58, s.f.36)

An iron bowl was recovered which appears to be the most recent find in the assemblage. The bowl is badly corroded and only approximately 30% survives. The thickness is fairly constant at 4mm thick with three raised bands on the outer surface. The radius is 105mm. Possible date of pre-Clearance 1860s and used as a cauldron over a fire.

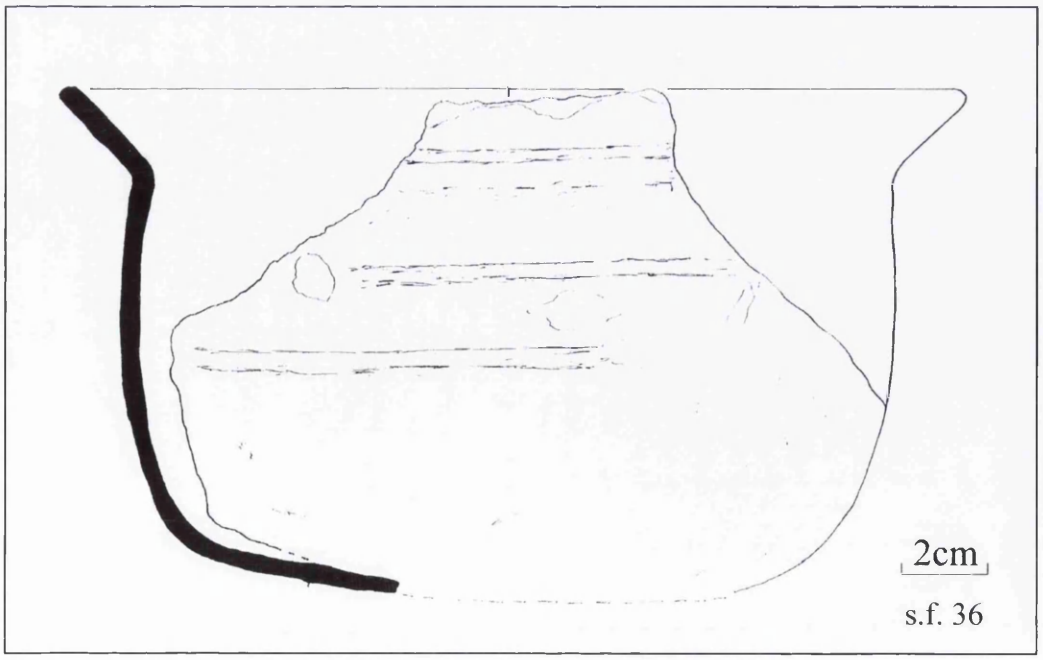

Figure 34: Iron Cauldron.

Plate 58: Iron Cauldron.

Other Iron Objects (Plate 59, s.f.37-50)

A quantity of badly corroded iron material had been recovered, representing at least fourteen tools. Most were in a very bad condition and the type of object could not be determined. A selection of those that had retained some shape are presented in plate 59 below. All the iron material in plate 59 came from structure V(a) or near the wheelhouse entrance.

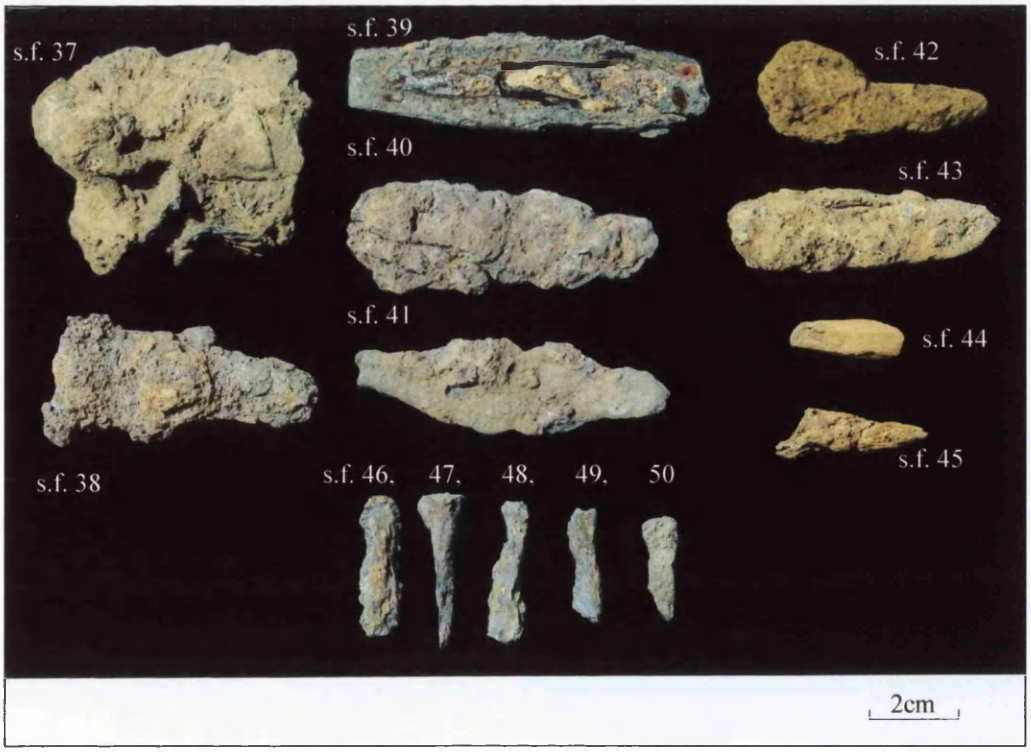

Plate 59: Other iron objects.

4.1.4 Crucibles

Three crucibles were recovered from Bagh nam Feadag in varying degrees of completeness. The most complete was not accompanied by any context information. The other two crucibles were recovered '*From floor level in roundhouse* [G8]'. This area is around pier A and the entrance of the wheelhouse. All three crucibles are triangular shaped, with s.f.52 having a steeper profile and s.f.51 a more refined and smoother finish. All three have been used, although the lack of deposits may suggest the working of glass which leaves little trace from its semi-molten state. The fabric of s.f.52 and s.f.53 is very similar and less refined that that of s.f.51. Due to this similarity it is possible that s.f.52 and s.f.53 were in use during the same phase of metalworking.

Parallels to the construction style of these crucibles can be seen at other sites nearby such as Sollas B (Campbell 1991, illus 22), A' Cheardach Mhor, Dun Mor Vaul and Loch Olabhat (Armit 1986, fig 4h). These similar crucibles all date to the Roman or Post-Roman period (Campbell 1991, 164). Previously, these triangular crucibles have been used to argue for an invasion of English migrants (see Lane 1987, 47-66). The immigrant theory put forward by MacKie is disputed primarily on the basis of construction style and use, with the English examples being much shallower in relation to their width and having vitrification on the upper portion, suggesting heating from above (*ibid* 57). Crucible s.f.51 in the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage would support the argument advanced by Lane in 1987, having vitrification mainly on the bottom, however crucible s.f.53 shows some vitrification along the top edge.

1 Triangular Crucible (Plate 60, s.f.51)

Fabric: Dark grey, lighter on the inside, perhaps staining from contents. Hint of a purple deposit under macro analysis but requires further examination. Body is well fired and hard, with some bubbling/vitrification on the bottom. One corner has a small pouring lip. Very similar to triangular crucible from Sollas wheelhouse (Campbell 1991, 163 illus 22:497).

Maximum height 38mm. Wall thickness consistent at 4mm. Of the three sides, two are intact. The broken side is 44mm long, with the other two being 45mm long, effectively producing an equilateral triangle in plan view.

2 Triangular Crucible (Plate 60, s.f.52)

From a bag containing two crucibles from five sherds. Almost all parts represented. Fabric: This crucible consists of two fragments, with the smaller of the two containing a small pouring spout. Fabric: Dark greys with browns, coarser than s.f.51 with the outer surface containing more fine grits. Interior is a sandy/yellow colour with some igneous rock and quartz inclusions visible. Clay appears to have had less refinement than s.f.51. A crack on the body possibly contains some unidentified leaked material. No deposits on interior visible by macro examination. Wall thickness increases from 5mm at top to 9mm at base.

3 Triangular Crucible (Plate 60, s.f.53)

From a bag containing two crucibles from five sherds. Almost all parts represented. Fabric: This crucible consists of three fragments. No pouring spout present although only one corner is intact. Greyish brown on outer faces, with a sandy/buff colour on inside. Some bubbling along the intact top edge. Inclusions of igneous rock and quartz. Coarser than s.f.51, similar to s.f.52. No deposits visible under macro examination. Maximum height is 36mm although it would have been greater when intact.

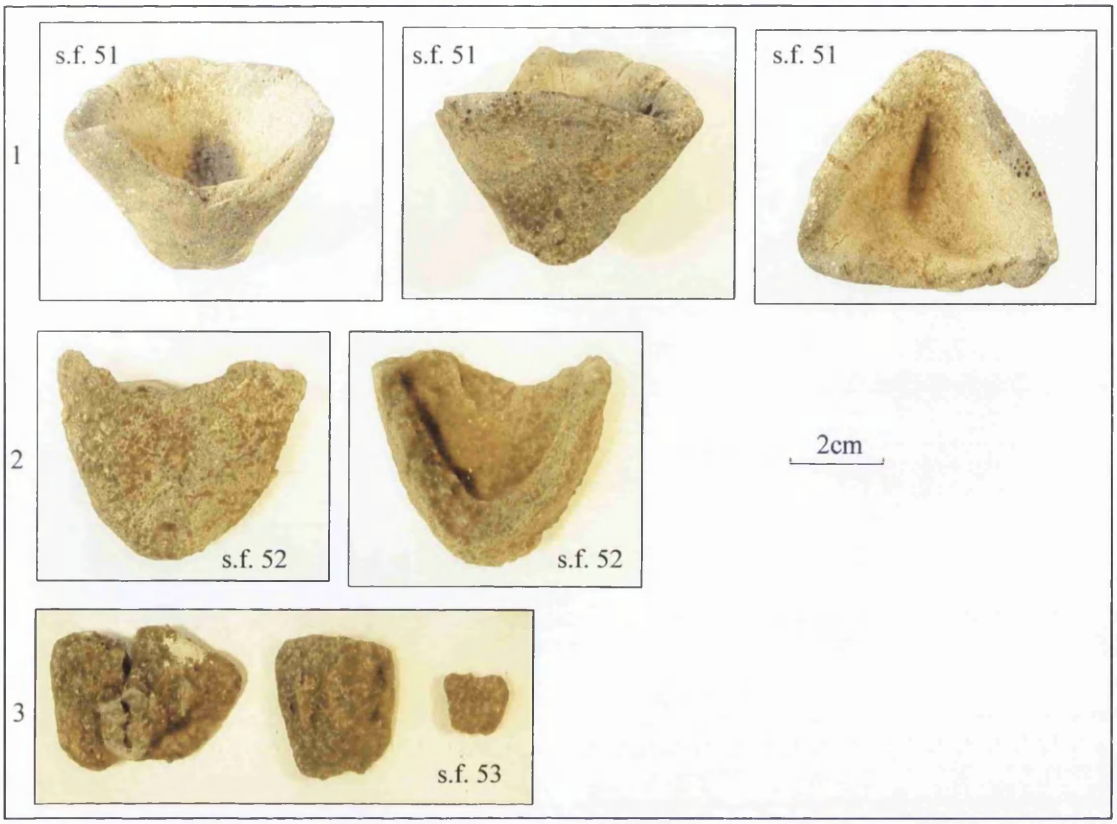

Plate 60: Crucibles.

4.1.5 Moulds

Two moulds were recovered, for which no context or associated material is known. For example, they may or may not relate to the crucibles also discovered, detailed above.

Mould **1** (Plates 61 & 62, s.f.54)

This mould has a flat headed pin or rivet indentation. The bottom surface and edges have been smoothed, with the upper surface fairly rough. The fabric is a reddish orange turning grey towards the core. Some fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. The mould has a cracking running though its centre. This mould would have formed the lower half with another section placed on top before the molten metal was poured in.

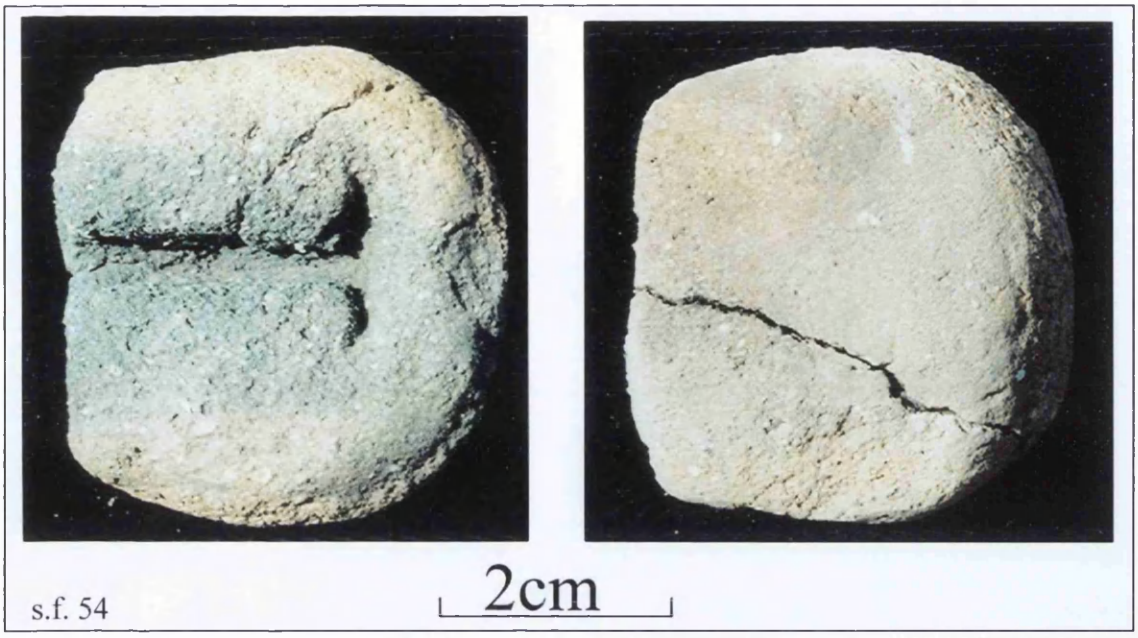

Plate 61: Mould 1 – plan.

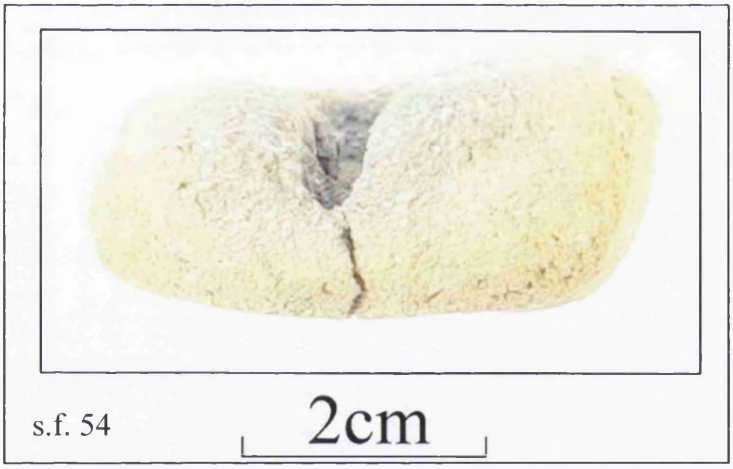

Plate 62: Mould 1 – section.

Mould **2** (Plates 63 & 64, s.f.55)

Mould s.f.55 is not from the same mould as example s.f.54 above. This is an upper half that would have been placed on top of a mould similar to s.f.54, with the edged sealed before a molten metal was poured in. The fabric is an orange/grey with inclusions of igneous rock, shell and quartz. The inner surface with the linear hollow is slightly darker grey with some medium sized inclusions of quartz and igneous rock.

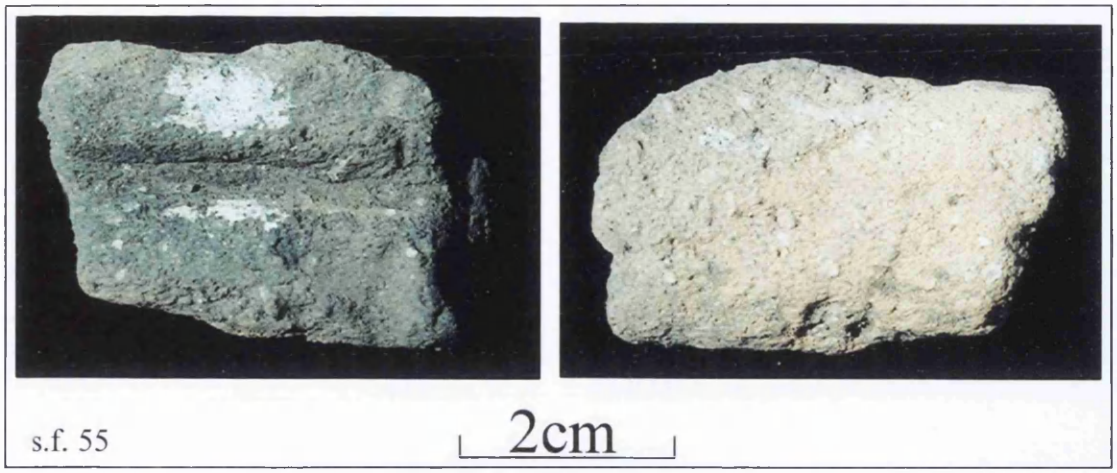

Plate 63: Mould 2 – plan.

Plate 64: Mould 2 – section.

4.1.6 Miscellaneous Finds

Other finds recovered from Bagh nam Feadag included a small amount of red ochre, a bag of flint flakes, a clay ball, a vitreous lump of slag from within structure III, two pieces of pumice and two lead items, one of which may be a line sinker for fishing, the other a possible spindle whorl.

Flint

The flint is grey with some beige pieces with battered beach cortex and more chalky varieties represented. It is typical in character of beach pebble resources from the west coast of Scotland. The technology represented is hard hammer and bipolar with remnants of amorphous/multi-platform reduction. The condition and character of the collection is mixed and several pieces are burnt. There is probable retouched

thick awl and several other edge damaged/retouched pieces present. Further edge damage and the remnants of bipolar reduction is evident so caution must be applied in the attribution of possible retouched pieces. While chronologically undiagnostic, the technological character of this material is mixed, although it is typical of later prehistoric collections and it is evident that a number of different events and pebbles are represented (from Finlay 2004). The flint assemblage consisted of a radial stone (s.f.56) and 83 mixed flakes, three of which showed evidence for reworking. The collection of 83 flakes have been entered as a single item (s.f.57)

Radial Stone (Plate 65, s.f.56)

[F6] (bag318)

Burnt bipolar core (flake/non-specific removals) with evidence of previous multi-directional removals, probable platform core in earlier stages.

Length 48mm, width 34mm, thickness 19mm (at maximum).

Plate 65: Radial Stone.

82 Flint flakes (bag 520). *All over East wall and around square hut* (Plate 66, s.f.57).

4 chunks/core fragments

1 burnt chunk/bipolar core fragment

26 chunks (2 burnt)

4 regular secondary flakes

9 irregular secondary flakes

2 tertiary regular flakes

25 tertiary irregular flakes

1 primary flakes

1 vein quartz chunk

1 retouched thick awl/point on a flake

4 edge damaged/steeply retouched flakes

Plate 66: 82 Flint Flakes.

3 Flint Flakes (Plate 67, s.f.57)

(bag 520). *All over East wall and around square hut.*

1 blade fragment, prox absent

1 blade with discontinuous steep retouch/edge damage left lateral and inverse right lateral; lipped platform.

1 steeply backed blade, discontinuous retouch curved right later with additional removals left, some fresh converging at distal end; platform absent.

These pieces are indicative of blade technology, while the backed piece has additional edge damage and should perhaps be considered with caution. These pieces would not be out of character in an Early Mesolithic context. While not conclusive these are potentially suggestive of an earlier phase of activity (from Finlay 2004).

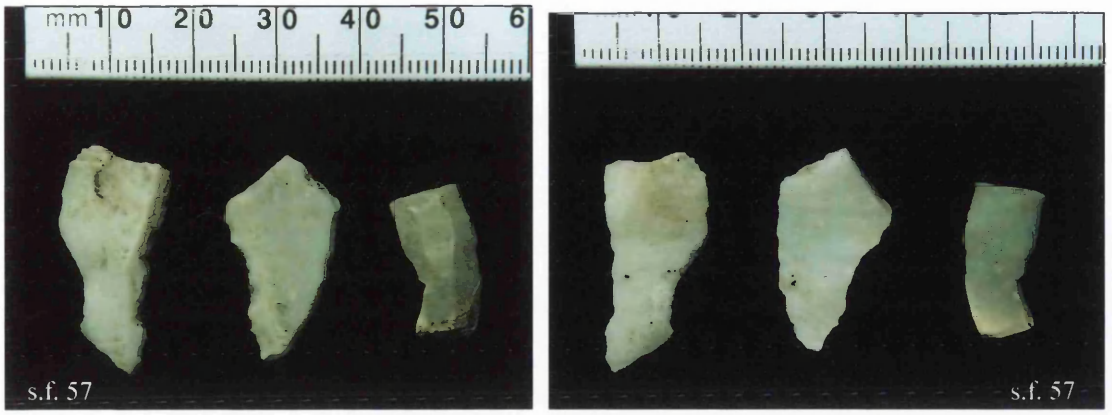

Plate 67: 3 Flint Flakes.

Lead

One of the lead items (Plate 68, s.f.58) could be described as a line sinker as the hole through the centre is very small (2mm by 1mm), making it suitable for line fishing. It is V shaped, light brown in colour and has a glazed feel to it. The other lead find (Plate 69, right) is covered in a white deposit and is of a different shape to the other. Also, the hole through the centre is larger and more expertly produced (9-10mm). The item tapers from a diameter of 19mm at the top to 10mm at the bottom.

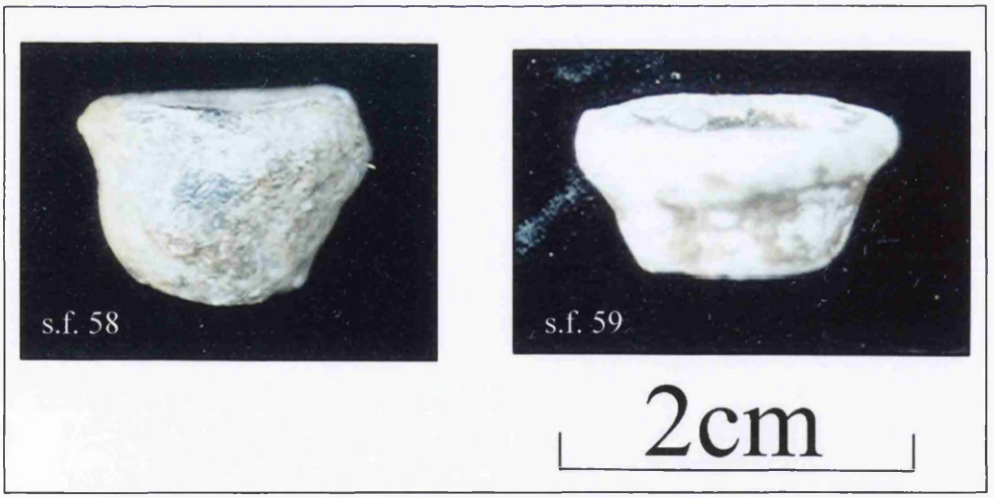

Plate 68: Lead line sinker and possible whorl.

Clay

The clay ball (Plate 69, s.f.60) is an intriguing find as it is made from an unusual fabric. Also, it is likely that the ball has never been fired as it remains

pliable. The fabric is a light grey/white colour, with dark streaks running through it. There are no vessels manufactured from this fabric within the ceramic assemblage. It does not appear to contain the same inclusions under macro examination as the Scottish East Coast Gritty Ware sherd although it is a similar colour.

Plate 69: Clay ball.

Slag

One lump of slag (s.f.61) was recovered from an unknown context, measuring 420mm by 680mm and 330mm thick at its widest points. The slag has not been scientifically examined, but would suggest that smelting occurred in the locality. In conjunction with the mounds, the slag goes some way to confirm that metalworking was actively taking place on site as opposed to the refining of prefabricated metal objects.

Pumice

The two pieces of pumice recovered are of differing types, one being didactic, the other a finer grained material. The larger didactic example (Plate 70, s.f.62) does not have any wear marks on its surface and appears not to have been used. It is fairly coarse and perhaps too rough for use as an abrasive.

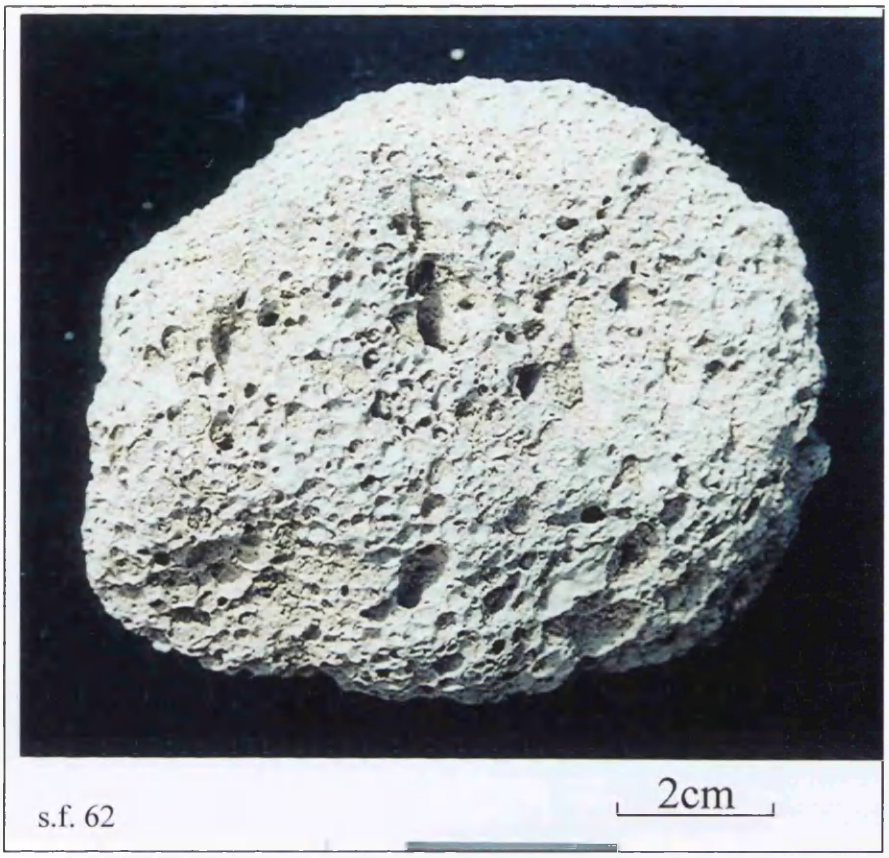

Plate 70: Didactic pumice.

The smaller piece of pumice with a much finer porosity (Plate 71, s.f.63) has been used for some purpose, resulting in the chamfering of one edge. The other edges have been rounded and smoothed. The flat edge is at a slight angle and is well worn. Pumice is a common find on archaeological sites of this period and that recovered at Cnoc A' Comhdhalach has been shaped and used in the same way as this example with one rounded edge rounded and the other worn flat (Beveridge 1911, opp 210).

Plate 71: Pumice.

4.2 Pottery

The Iron Age of the Western Isles, in contrast to much of mainland Scotland, boasts a very rich ceramic record. The study of this pottery in the Western Isles, a significant portion of which was produced from early inadequate excavations, has not been subject to the vigorous debate that the structural sequence has seen in recent years (see for example Armit 1997, MacKie 1997, Parker Pearson *et al* 1996, 1999, Gilmour 2000). This trend is particularly evident in a recent publication of the excavations at Balesare and Hornish Point (Barber 2004), where pottery is considered, whether intentionally or not, as peripheral to the structural record. In addressing why this may have occurred, two main reasons are offered here. Firstly, Iron Age structural remains in the Western Isles are very impressive and remain conspicuous in the landscape. It would not be optimistic to propose that every significant islet or patch of arable land could contain some remnants of prehistoric intervention. The other contributing factor to an alienation of pottery studies in the Western Isles has been the pessimism generated by previous pottery studies all of which, from Beveridge in 1911 through to the present, stress that the uniformity in fabrics from prehistoric to the recent ceramic record hinders any detailed examination of production centres and exchange. Although criticisms can be made of Topping's methodologies (see Lane 1990) when seeking to resolve the question of ceramic development in the Western Isles, the conclusions of his work have become the recent starting point for current research:

> ...without the uniformity of commercial or specialist production the relevance of classification may be limited, with patterns within the data being too ephemeral or too variable for secure archaeological identification (Topping 1985, 82-83).

Such pessimistic results from Topping's study were arguably the result of a failure to classify the assemblage with a macro examination of the inclusions before proceeding with the neutron activation analysis (Lane 1990, 116). Lane gives examples of how the neutron activation analysis is flawed, arguing that if approached correctly (e.g. Lane 1983) patterns are visible in the pottery data (Lane 1990). Other recent approaches are seeking to further the cause of pottery studies, with Johnson for example, examining such questions as:

> Why should pottery change at all? If it forms its function adequately, then why change it? It is inescapable that pottery has a social role as well as a utilitarian role, and so establishing why pottery changes involves looking at the changing roles of pottery in a symbolic or social domain as well as its functional one (Johnson 2004, 2).

Currently we are facing a situation whereby it is desirable for more rigorous treatment of primary archaeological data utilising modern techniques in conjunction with some fundamental reassessment of how we view the role of pottery within prehistoric societies.

Recently, attempts have been made to assess pottery sequences independently of the structural sequence (see Barber 2004, 126). The intention of this approach is to see if changes or patterns in the assemblage relate to changes in the nature of the settlement and can be linked to a broader change in society, or whether ceramic developments occurred independently, or at a different pace, to settlement adaptation.

The author's intention for the pottery recovered from Bagh nam Feadag was to examine variations in the fabric, however, it soon became apparent that little difference could be identified within the collection as the majority derived from mineral rich Lewisian gneiss clays and cannot be accurately sourced (see Topping 1987). Problems in differentiating between Iron Age and post medieval fabrics have been stressed in virtually all studies of pottery from the Western Isles, and the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage is no exception. The changes that can be seen in the ceramic fabrics from Bagh nam Feadag possibly say more about changes in firing technology rather than a change in clay source or importation from elsewhere. It is proposed here that the production technique utilising reducing atmospheres in the later examples have helped to produce a uniformly harder and grey or brown coloured pottery as opposed to the softer buff and orange fabrics caused by firing in an open fire. A consistent variation within the assemblage was the surface finish which ranged from rough, unfinished, very coarse wiping or combing of the surface, to smoothed outer and inner faces, although not always occurring together. A fuller examination of the fabrics and surface treatments is detailed in appendix 2.

4.2.1 The Bagh nam Feadag Ceramics

A total of 2309 sherds were recovered from the excavations carried out by Roy Ashworth representing a minimum of 130 vessels. The collection weighted 36.76Kg and the diagnostic sherds consisted of 107 rims sherds, 72 bases and 54 decorated sherds. At Sollas A/B some 3000 sherds were recovered, representing a minimum of 205 vessels (Campbell 1991, 148), and at Clettraval, Scott recovered in excess of 3000 sherds (Scott 1948, 56). The volume recovered at Bagh nam Feadag is comparable with the quantities recovered from other similar wheelhouse sites although the methods of excavation and limits of scope, particularly with reference to primary floor deposits, would account for the lower end of the expected amount recovered. Also, arguably, the multiple phases of occupation at Bagh nam Feadag would suggest that a significant amount still resides at the site or was discarded during the excavation. The latter would seem unlikely as the contents of the assemblage would suggest that whatever was found was collected and retained. The only real question of how much was discarded would focus upon the techniques used to excavate and the ability to recognise material culture.

As voiced in chapter one, the artefacts were recovered without any systematic recovery procedures in place and where context was assigned to a single item or bag of items it did not enable a detailed examination of the stratigraphic relationships. However, any context information that was provided by the excavator has been included in the following catalogue and an interpretation of each is offered by the writer.

The pottery descriptions are listed below, followed by the corresponding illustrations. The numbers that appear at the first part of each entry form the sherd number in bold, field number of the object concerned in {} and the bag from which it was retained in ( ). The reference in square brackets [x] (where shown) relates to the excavators grid plan. Additional information, when provided by the excavator, is an exact transcription and is presented in italics. Supplementary context is provided by the writer. Description of the pottery in section is always from the outside to the inside unless otherwise stated.

4.2.2 Fabric

All the Bagh nam Feadag pottery with the exception of the East Coast Gritty Ware was produced from variable, coarse, local fabrics, with the mineral components deriving from the local rock type. The only media variation is possibly the medieval sherds of a pinkish colour, which tended to only have quartz inclusions (**554** {151(38)} Figure 56 & Plate 74), however, these sherds may also have been made from a local clay. The bulk of the pottery assemblage consisted of undiagnostic body sherds. There were relatively fewer decorated rim or base sherds, although some were fairly substantial. With the outline given above, classification of the fabrics poses considerable problems; the main difficulty being separation of the types into distinct fabric groups, and relating these groups to form and decoration, which is the standard procedure for most ceramic studies. The slight variations that can be seen in the fabrics may not be as a result of any dramatic change in origins. The one consistent variation is the hardness of the pottery, ranging from very hard to soft, powdery or malleable. Of course, different processing styles, where clay is more refined in some examples when compared with other contemporary vessels, may well be indicative of origin or it may simply be as a result of a local event such as the availability of a purer clay, an ability to spend more time on refining the clay or the urgency with which the finished product was required. A general trend that is visible in the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage, and at other Hebridean sites type, is that the later plain style pottery tends to be slightly better fired and thus a more robust fabric (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 116).

Although no grass tempering was noted or the deliberate addition of minerals, some vessels had discrete areas of inclusions, normally concentrated in the base or basal area (**494** {163(45)} Figure 66). Further examination of this feature would be required, as well as the study of more intact specimens, to establish to what extent this was a deliberate practice or simply the result of not smoothing an area which would have been camouflaged by the effect of the fire during use. One other variation in the fabric was one sherd recovered from structure I which had a relatively grit free, uniform fabric but with large quartz inclusions, presumably to help absorb thermal shock during firing (Plate 72).

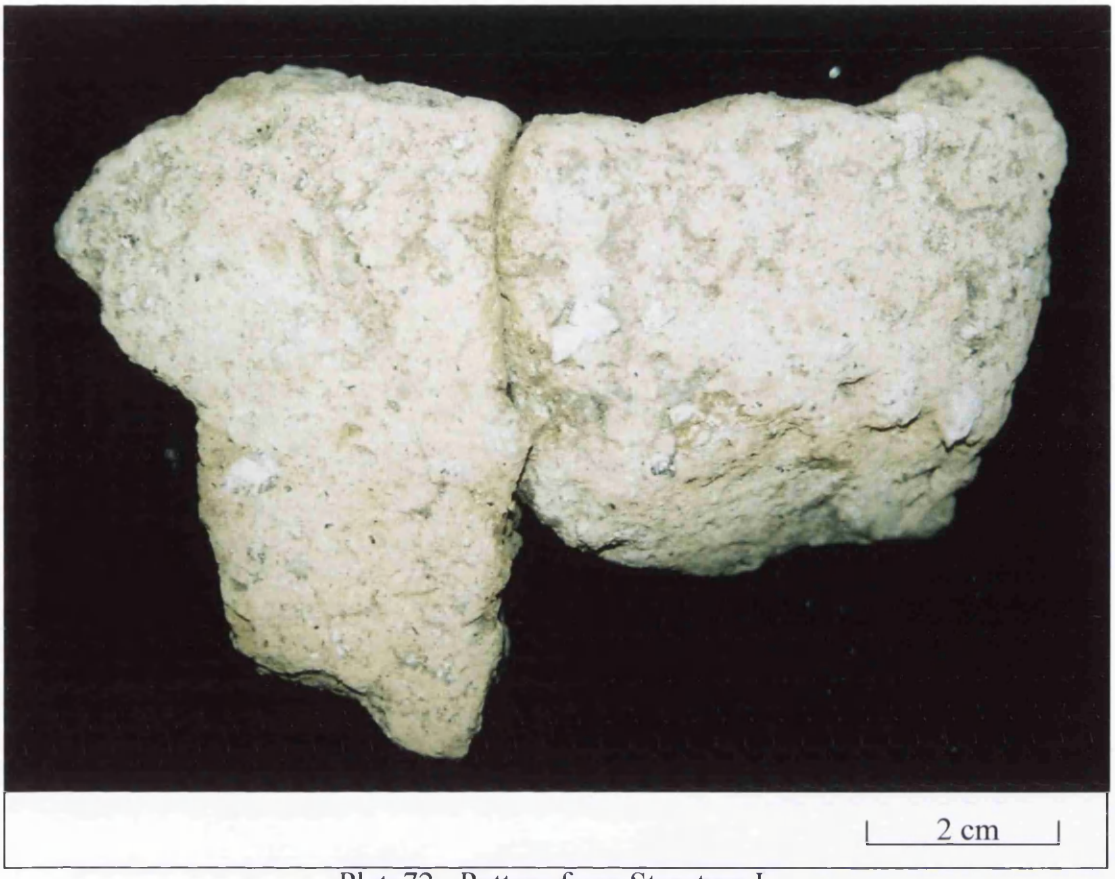

Plate72: Pottery from Structure I.

This is the only example of this fabric to be recovered and was found between the western wall of structure II and the inner wall of structure I.

4.2.3 Form and Function

Only a small number of profiles could be reconstructed from the assemblage, giving a restricted view of the various forms present and thus making it difficult to generalise about the ceramic development. The following forms were identified;

- Everted rim vessels,
- Hole mouth or incurving rim jars,
- Flat footed bases
- Shallow bowls/curving bases,
- Upright, bucket type vessels with flat or angled rims,
- Medieval upright jars, some with flaring rims, often decorated.

One main form that could have been expected from the assemblage, but is completely absent, is the large flaring rim type vessels found at many other wheelhouse sites. The small number of everted rim vessels recovered is not surprising as these forms are often found at the lowest wheelhouse floor levels (Campbell 1991, fiche 2D11) and this author believes that the earliest floor levels associated with the wheelhouse occupation remain intact at Bagh nam Feadag. It should be noted that although a large amount of Iron Age pottery was recovered at Bagh nam Feadag, given the amount of subsequent occupation at the site, the conservative excavation of the site and similarity in fabric, much of the pottery recovered could have been deposited some time after the wheelhouse had passed out of its primary phase.

Not all the vessels fall into the categories above and due to small sherd sizes it is difficult to assign specific sherds to individual forms. Indications of the functions of the vessels recovered generally relies on the presence, or absence, of sooting and wear marks on the fabric. For instance, sooting patterns vary, from heavy carbonaceous deposits within the basal angles of the vessel (**414** {134(29)} Figure 57) to sharp lines where sooting expires, possibly as a result of the base being set down into embers and thus protected (**453** {1038(59)} Figure 63) or, the cordon and curve of the body deflecting the deposit away from the upper portion (**460** {214(61)} Figure 63), or the protection offered by a stone or ceramic lid (**419** {1021(30)} Figure 58). No stone lids were recovered from Bagh nam Feadag. Vessels from the Sollas wheelhouse assemblage (Campbell 1991) noted soot markings only above the cordon with the explanation that these vessels were placed in a cauldron or pot of water, with the flames reaching only the upper portion of the vessel (Campbell 1991, fiche 2:C9). It is not possible to say whether a similar feature is present within the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage, although some sherds do have soot lines at the cordon but the orientation of these sherds cannot be definitively established.

Not all vessels exhibited soot marking (**442** {1047(65)} Figure 61) suggesting that a range of finer wares or storage vessels may have been in use, although no correlation between specific forms and function in this sense was noted. The only exception to this is the small cup-like vessels (Figure 74, **552** & **553**) which exhibited no sooting or blackening and due to their small size are unlikely to have been placed in a hearth. It is also noted that many of the decorated vessels had been subjected to flames and exhibit sooting, suggesting that those vessels displaying symbol were also used in a functional manner for the preparation of food.

Given the nature of recovery it cannot be ascertained if sherd cleaning took place after extraction from the ground. However, the general appearance of much of the assemblage would suggest that any cleaning was minimal with some examples having heavy carbonaceous deposits, particularly at the basal angle (**414** {134(29)} Figure 57). Some examples also had soil/peat attached. Other internal residues consisted of white staining (**554** Figure 74, Plate 77). White and yellow staining was noted from the Sollas assemblage, attributed to lime-scale formations from boiling water (Campbell 1991, fiche 2:C10).

When addressing the form and function of vessels it is important to consider the question whereby if something serves its function, why change it? Given that the correlations between form and function are not as clear as one would like at Bagh nam Feadag, it would seem logical that change could have been driven by some other factors currently not identified, such as cultural or social developments. For example, retaining the same form and manufacturing techniques but changing the decoration of a vessel would imply that the vessel's function continues, but the new symbolic decoration conveys a different or new message. It could also be argued that changes in the size and form of a vessel may be indicative of a change in the way food is prepared, served, eaten or stored. Such developments, where form persists but decoration changes and vice versa, can be seen at Bagh nam Feadag. The later, particularly plain style vessels dominated by tongue and groove construction, often exhibit no decoration at all. This could be explained by a different forum having developed for displaying such symbolic information during this later period. Parallels with this philosophy can be seen in the debate surrounding settlement development, where the conspicuous display of wealth and status, with brochs and wheelhouses making way for more personal, moveable and symbolic possessions, such as pins and brooches (Armit 1996, 184-185). What is intriguing and currently understudied, is why and at what point in time did the objects or structures considered appropriate for symbolic expression diversify.

4.2.4 Construction

All of the pottery in the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage has been manufactured by hand with no evidence for the use of a pottery wheel, although some of the everted

rims are very regular and well smoothed (**400** {1013(16)} Figure 55) in the rim zone as if turned on a wheel of some sort. The method of construction is not always clear, partly due to the fragmented nature of the majority of the sherds and the tendency to have broken along construction joins. Where visible, two types have been noted;

- Flat coil construction - where clay was rolled before being flattened into strips. Each strip would then be added in a series of rings to a flat base by pressing the first coil down into the base, or attaching to a base which already had an edge folded upwards. Each strip overlaps and the joint is smoothed over by pulling the clay upwards. In some examples in the assemblage this was only done completely on the outer face, with the interior retaining a raised portion (**435** {1045(64)} Figure 60).
- Tongue and groove - where instead of overlapping flat strips a groove is made into which the rounded edge of the next strip is inserted and smoothed over with more clay (Figure 35). Clearly this is not a very stable method of construction and a large amount of these vessels recovered were broken at this junction. The tongue section had often broken away from the groove so cleanly that it could be mistaken for a rim, especially when only a small portion had survived.

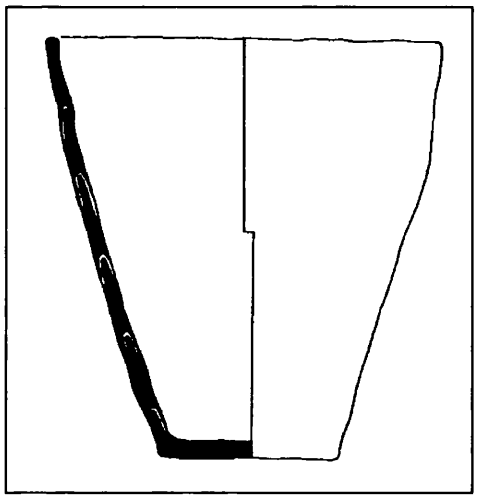

Figure 35: Pot illustrating tongue and groove construction (from Lane 1990, 118).

Cumberpatch would argue that the tongue and groove technique is 'simply a secondary effect contingent upon the method of constructing the body of the vessel'

(1990, 4). It is suggested in the examination of the Cill Donnain wheelhouse pottery that all vessels were made from slabs, or broad ribbons of clay butted together and sealed by smoothing clay from one section over the next (*ibid* 4). This writer would dispute this, in relation to the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage, as the Bagh nam Feadag tongue and groove pottery vessels are clearly different from the coil built vessels, and there is an obvious correlation between the tongue and groove vessels and lack of decoration. The tongue and groove examples also tend to be harder and exhibit a more consistent colour when viewed in section, suggesting a more successful firing process.

The rim types vary and are formed in different ways. Some are crudely rounded and smoothed by a finger, whereas others are flattened or angled either inward or outward (**436** {1030(51)} Figure 60). Others are completely flat, sometimes with a slight projecting ledge on either face where the clay has been forced over (**408** {1032(57)} Figure 57), being a product of the manufacturing technique and probably not a desired feature. There are some examples where the rim has been flattened yet undulates upwards and downwards (**412** {1005(8)} Figure 57). Rims that are shortly everted (**412** Figure 57) have simply been outurned whereas the larger (**405** Figure 55) examples would have required greater effort to produce.

The surface treatment of the vessels varies greatly from those which had been self-slipped to those that had protruding grits and an uneven finish. No tooling marks were noted, however, it would be likely that some type of spatula was used to manipulate the clay surface, particularly on the coil built examples. Wipe marks were often visible on one or both faces in the form of faint horizontal or criss-cross striations, possibly from a fabric or grass pad. A general trend of three types of finishing was noted. One - no effort had been made other than coarse forming, two - some smoothing with wipe marks on one or both surfaces and three - well finished, or self-slipped examples, where the grits, if present, were smoothed into the fabric preventing the rough feel otherwise generated. The only exception to these finishes was the Craggan Ware like vessel which included random thumb impressions around the shoulder and rim area (**551** {1022.5(39)} Figure 74).

The most overt surface treatment is the addition or omission of decoration in the form of variable symbols. These markings typically consist of incised lines and stabbed dots or stab and drag, applied strips and applied wavy cordons. Some more unusual decorative techniques were noted in the Bagh nam Feadag assemblage such

as an applied boss, a grooved channel and thumb/finger marking. Some typical wheelhouse decorative forms were completely absent such as the triangular arcade incisions seen at Sollas (Campbell 1991, 152 illus 232) and asymmetric or arched waves, MacKie's 'Clettraval ware' (1974, 81). However, much of the decorated pottery from the assemblage presented here is very similar to some of the styles seen at Clettraval, something that may be relevant, given that other than the Allasdale wheelhouse in Barra, Bagh nam Feadag is the only moorland wheelhouse that has been excavated. The decoration is examined in more detail below.

4.2.5 Decoration

The decoration of the vessels within the assemblage tends to occur at the waist, shoulder or rim zones. No impressed bases were recovered. The decorations found consist of; incisions, wavy cordons, applied strips, stab/stab and drag marks and an applied boss. When referring to incised decoration the writer refers to that present within this assemblage, which was not executed with a sharp, narrow point, but with rounded tooling and a blunt point. These decorative motifs are fairly typical except for the applied boss, which along with other applied decoration in the Western Isles is quite rare. Previous studies of Hebridean pottery have noted that incised decoration usually occurs along side a cordon (e.g. Campbell 1991, fiche 2:C14). Incised decoration at Bagh nam Feadag is almost always independent of a cordon (except **543** Figure 72). However, it should also be noted that the incised sherds are very small and it is entirely possible that they were associated with a cordon.

The most common decoration of the rim zone are a series of stab marks in circular (**439** {224(66)} Figure 60), lozenge (**438** {225(66)} Figure 60) or rectangular shapes (**441** {222(66)} Figure 60). These often occur on flat rims or those that are slightly outurned (**441** {222(66)} Figure 60). Occasionally the tip of the rim is outurned to create a slight projecting ledge which would appear deliberate, as opposed to the subtle projections on either face caused by smoothing. One interesting feature of the vessels with stabbed rim decoration is that rarely is any other part of the vessel decorated (except **436** Figure 60). Further examination of more complete profiles with this stabbed rim decoration would be desirable.

Two sherds show comb decoration ({**498, 499 & 501,** Figure 68) where it looks like a point has been inserted, dragged downwards slightly, removed and then followed by a series of dots. It is not clear if each vertical line was executed individually or all as a group, hence the comb description.

The cordon decoration consists of wavy bands, chain-like raised holes and plain strips. Some wavy cordon examples are clearer than others (**519**, Figure 70), with the majority not surviving very well and exhibited on small sherds. Some of the examples appear to have the cordon situated at the waist of the vessel as opposed to the shoulder area (**543**, Figure 72). No double cordon vessels were recovered although they have been recovered from other Hebridean sites (Campbell 1991, fiche 2:D2). The plain applied strip (**548, 549 & 550,** Figure 73) is quite unusual as whenever a cordon is present on a vessel it tends to have some markings on it, whether it be wavy lines, pinched out symmetrical lumps (**547**, Figure 73) or fingernail marks. One unusual decorated sherd is a grooved cordon (**546**, Figure 73) where the coil join has been emphasised creating a smooth recess.

The applied boss (**545**, Figure 73) is small and insignificant looking, particularly if it were from a large vessel. It has been formed by attaching a small round disc which has then been impressed by a thumb to produce a shallow dimple. At a glance it is difficult to recognise and it is possible that a series of these bosses formed a larger motif. A similar boss was recovered at Dun Vulan (Parker Pearson 1999, 118 fig 5.21;2), although it is slightly larger.

4.2.6 Ceramic Distribution

The material detailed in the pottery catalogue is often supplemented by the excavator's notes on where the sherds were recovered. This information, based on a grid plan over the site, is interesting in itself as a testimony of how the excavator viewed the site and approached its excavation. However, interpretation of this information has proven fairly difficult, particularly since the spatial descriptions do not take into account stratigraphic relationships. Furthermore, it would appear from the excavation notes that the majority of all pottery extracted came from one main area and three other discrete locations. Given the inconsistency in recording location information (many bags were not labelled at all) we are presented with a biased view

of the artefactual record. Another crucial problem is that when sherds were recovered from different areas they were often retained in the same bag and so it is not possible to establish which sherd relates to which square.

With the above in mind, some trends have been noted, which relate more to the foci of activity at the site in various phases rather than distinct periods of ceramic usage. The main points to note are as follow:

- Structure III/Bay two within the wheelhouse produced the majority of the pottery recovered, of mixed form, fabric and decoration, confirming this area as being occupied in at least one post-wheelhouse phase.
- The tongue and groove constructed vessels mainly came from within structure III
- Structures IVa and IVb produced a variety of medieval vessels with distinctive stabbed rims.
- The Craggan Ware type vessels came from the shieling inserted on top of the wheelhouse mound.
- The East Coast White Gritty Ware came from within structure IVa and IVb.

A picture is emerging of the wheelhouse (II) being adapted after its primary phase while still upstanding to a large extent, and the associated material being disturbed by a squatter or perhaps more permanent post-Roman/pre-Norse settlement. At the Udal, tongue and groove style pottery is attributed to a post-Roman period where it was recovered in large quantities (40,000 sherds). The building associated with this pottery suddenly went out of use and a rectangular settlement (structure III) was established on top: arguably a Viking settlement. There are hints of a Viking presence at Bagh nam Feadag with the presence of five steatite whorls, a Scandinavian style whetstone, and some shallow bowl/globular vessels. However, the ceramic record for Viking settlement is not strong and there is no clear associated structure. Structure IVa and IVb to the south cannot be confirmed as Viking at this time and may be of a later high medieval period.

What is clear from the type and distribution of Iron Age pottery at Bagh nam Feadag is that a great deal remains to be excavated at lower levels. The nature of the

amateur excavation would have inevitably resulted in the excavator penetrating to inconsistent levels throughout the site – his main objective being to reveal the main structures. The plan below indicates where the main areas of deposits are and gives some impression of where each form and decoration came from (Figure 36).

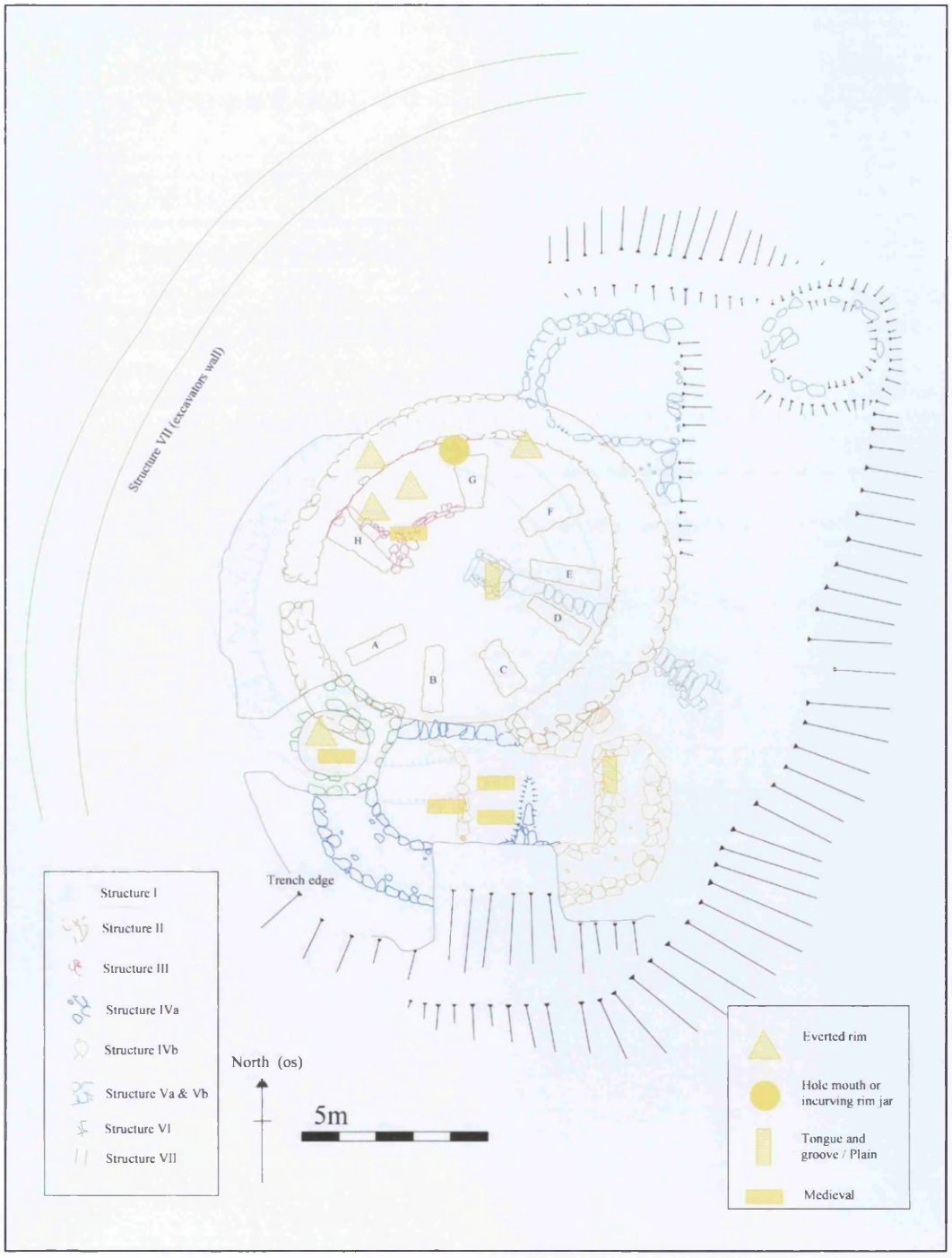

Figure 36: Distribution of various ceramic forms (approximate).

4.2.7 Summary and Discussion

As detailed above, the assemblage, due to various factors, is not in a position to advance the study of ceramic development in the Hebrides. Currently the information obtained only enables comparison with other contemporary sites. From these comparisons it is clear that there is a development from simple rims, cordons, incised decoration, and everted rims to bucket shaped plain wares and shallow bowls. The later extent of this period will perhaps become more meaningful when publication of the Udal excavation becomes available.

The general development in the types of pottery recovered from Bagh nam Feadag compares well with other wheelhouse assemblages such as A' Cheardach Mhor (Young 1966), Cnip (Armit 1988), the Udal (see Lane 1990), Clettraval (Scott 1948) and A' Cheardach Bheag (Fairhurst 1971). Given that Clettraval is arguably the most similar site to Bagh nam Feadag it is of particular interest, that some direct comparisons can be drawn, where very similar vessels/decoration are present, although also significantly, some are not. However, it should be made clear that all the sites mentioned in comparison have been excavated by more modern methods, whereas, although Bagh nam Feadag had been excavated the most recently, it employed antiquarian methods and the excavation was not fully developed to reveal the complete pottery record.

A notable feature of the pottery assemblage from Bagh nam Feadag is the apparent lack of the distinctive flaring rims found in late Iron Age contexts, given that the wheelhouse dates to the middle to late Iron Age period. Reasons for this gap in the pottery may be a product of the recovery techniques at the site and the failure to reach primary floor horizons. Flaring rims also tend to break at the neck junction and so some of the smaller fragments represented could have originated from this type of vessel. It also remains possible that a lack of flared rim vessels is indicative of a break in occupation during the Late Iron Age. Further examination through excavation would go some way to clarify this situation.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Bagh nam Feadag site is that the pottery assemblage is a mixed group and so, rather than giving a snapshot of wheelhouse occupation or cellular occupation, it indicates a long sequence of habitation. Similarly, the small finds recovered clearly indicate multiple periods of

use at the site for various activities including metalworking. The extent to which this habitation was continuous or fragmented remains to be established.

Chapter Five: Synthesis: Artefacts and Structures

5.0 Introduction

The first section of this chapter describes some of the main elements of the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse and this settlement form in general. This is followed by a comparison of the structures and artefacts from Bagh nam Feadag with other known and excavated wheelhouse sites in the Western Isles (Table 9, Appendix Two). This will not be a comprehensive evaluation considering each example excavated, as the repetition of features would be overwhelming. Therefore the comparisons made are with those sites that exhibit some of the more unusual aspects of the wheelhouse excavated at Bagh nam Feadag. The final section provides a discussion on the moorland location of Bagh nam Feadag and other wheelhouse settlements.

At Bagh nam Feadag, the first structure to be built was either an Atlantic Roundhouse or a wheelhouse, the doubt in identification being the limited depth of excavation. It would seem likely that this structure contained a drain or duct, and had a different orientation to the wheelhouse subsequently built on top. The wheelhouse, based on artefactual dating evidence and comparisons with other sites, dates from the middle to late Iron Age. During its construction, the central space was moved approximately 1m to the east, causing an overlap with the earlier structure below. It is possible that the duct, alongside other internal features were retained and incorporated into this phase of building. Once the wheelhouse had gone out of its primary phase of occupation, a smaller building was built in its eastern portion, followed by subsequent settlement to the south, north and on top of the mound.

5.1 Aisles

The Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse (II) exhibits an aisle between seven of the piers and the outer wall. The only exception to this is pier H, which as stated previously, is not original to the wheelhouse construction. Therefore, it is possible that all piers were freestanding, in a similar way to those at Clettraval. Movement around the structure via the aisle would have been difficult (see Appendix 1 for

dimensions), but not impossible. A comparison with this restriction in space to manoeuvre can be seen at well preserved broch sites, where movement around galleries could not be undertaken easily because of the limited room (Sharples 1998, 207). Sharples draws attention to the Dun Troddan and Dun Telve brochs (*ibid* 207) where upper galleries were deliberately made almost inaccessible by the back of the wall stones projecting into the gallery space. A similar feature can be seen at Bagh nam Feadag in the aisle between pier D and the outer wheelhouse wall (Figure 21 & Plate 23 above).

Piers D and E at Bagh nam Feadag flank the bay containing the duct and block the aisles, suggesting that access to this bay via the aisle was unnecessary or not desirable. However, it would seem likely that the aisles served some practical or symbolic role, as bonding the pier into the wall or simply abutting with it, would have encouraged greater stability throughout the structure. Also, the argument offered elsewhere that the outer wall had to be constructed quickly and not delayed by the production of substantial pier blocks, before the sand-pit collapsed, (e.g. Armit 1996, 138-139; Campbell 1991, 136), is not applicable to Bagh nam Feadag – or Clettraval, which are both freestanding wheelhouses.

5.2 Material Culture

Much of the artefactual evidence recovered from Bagh nam Feadag inevitably relates to occupation after the primary wheelhouse phases. Items such as the crucibles and moulds and other evidence for metal working including slag and iron items could have derived from a mixture of periods. One of the crucibles, however, is very similar to an example found at Sollas which was a closed group assemblage (Campbell 1991, fiche; 2D12). Items such as the medieval iron cauldron are clearly from quite late in the sequence of settlement, although the rivets and other iron tools could be earlier.

5.2.1 Domestic Crafts and Specialisation

The significance of the moorland location for some wheelhouses has previously been explained by craft specialisation theories (e.g. Armit 1992 Chapter

11). One specialisation suggested was metalworking, with the proximity to the peat fuel resource being a factor in this theory. The problem encountered however, is the lack of material culture associated with such activities. Even where present, such as at Bagh nam Feadag, the idea of this being a specialised settlement for metalworking is contradicted by evidence produced from other wheelhouse sites situated on the machair. For example, A' Cheardach Bheag and A' Cheardach Mhor (whose names translate as big and little smithies) have produced crucibles, moulds and furnaces (e.g. Fairhurst 1971, 88). Questions relating to where such activities were taking place at these wheelhouse sites may be asked, particularly with which phase of occupation were these artefacts are associated. At Bagh nam Feadag the slag would suggest that metalworking was taking place, however all associated artefacts such as the crucibles and moulds are out of context. The iron artefacts, such as the rivets and corroded masses, have mainly come from structure V(a) which is built into the north side of the wheelhouse, perhaps indicating that this area was used as a work area.

All the spindle whorls recovered were found in bay eight, situated to the right as a visitor enters the wheelhouse (II). The sunwise theory (see Pearson *et al* 1999, 22; fig1.10), often mentioned when examining the day-to-day activities of Iron Age life, is supported at Bagh nam Feadag. The extension of the theory for west facing structures dictates that activities such as spinning and pottery manufacture are practiced at the opposite side from east facing structures (Parker Pearson 1999, 23-23). Such sunwise theories are cited by some (e.g. Parker Pearson 2004, 70) as confirmation that the orientation of buildings (generally east or west) is dictated by some daily or diurnal cycle, with considerable evidence from various roundhouse settlements supporting this view, for example, Cladh Hallan, South Uist (see Pearson *et al* 2004, 69-82 for summary). Although five of the Bagh nam Feadag whorls were made from steatite and were possibly imports, one ceramic example was made from a re-used vessel sherd which had an applied cordon attached to it. This however, could have been re-use of Iron Age sherds from a midden and not necessarily modified after its initial breakage.

Contacts and trade with other people are alluded to by some of the artefacts, such as the Scottish medieval east coast gritty ware sherd. East coast gritty ware is found in various places, primarily in southern Scotland, but some examples have turned up in Caithness and Orkney (Will pers. comm.). However, no exotic artefacts have been recovered like those found at other wheelhouse sites (e.g. Egyptian blue at

Sollas; Samian pottery at Kilpheder). Difficulties in locating pottery manufacturing centres have been discussed elsewhere and it would appear that, unless proven otherwise, most pottery was manufactured from locally sourced clays.

Previous studies of wheelhouses have focused upon those situated in machair areas with only two moorland examples receiving any detailed attention – Clettraval, North Uist and Allasdale, Barra. There has consistently been a difficulty in establishing any meaningful differences between those situated on the machair and moorland (see subdivision discussion Armit 1992, chapter 6). Archaeologists have a well documented desire to classify things, whether it be structural or otherwise, and the wheelhouses of the Western Isles, and elsewhere, are a victim to this unconsciousness. The mentality of, 'they are in such a different landscape that they must be different', has prevailed, regardless of the evidence available, and in part due to neglected research of moorland wheelhouses. The examination of the structure and artefacts recovered from the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse has yet to produce any evidence that the site served a specific function, different to their machair counterparts. It may be that the location of wheelhouses on the moorland does not relate to something that they do or are, but more to a political or social landscape that is more difficult to understand from the existing remains.

5.3 Orientation

Following work elsewhere in Britain (Oswald 1997, Fitzpatrick 1994), the orientation of Iron Age houses has come under scrutiny. It has been said (Pearson et al 1999) that the majority of wheelhouses face east, confirming that the Fitzpatrick sunwise hypothesis could be applicable to these structures. The sunwise theory is based on Iron Age houses that face east possessed a left/right distinction, where daily activities such as preparing food, eating and manufacturing tools/pottery were conducted to the left whereas the right was reserved for sleeping. Parker Pearson has argued that the roundhouse form acted as a microcosm of the universe, with the passing of time measured around the walls of the house (Pearson and Richards, 1994, 119). The piers seen in wheelhouses may have been useful in this respect.

> The entrance to the east might be related to the sunrise and the daily rebirth of the cycle of light and darkness which revealed around the house (Pearson and Richards 1994, 119).

This sunwise theory (Figure 37) is dependant upon two main factors; that the house faces east so that light is at its maximum for the living activities and darkness prevails as it reaches the sleeping zone; and that the distribution of artefacts from the floor levels reflects this in practice. This theory initially voiced by Fitzpatrick in 1991, was extended in 1994 following the excavation of an Iron Age settlement at Dunston Park, Wessex.

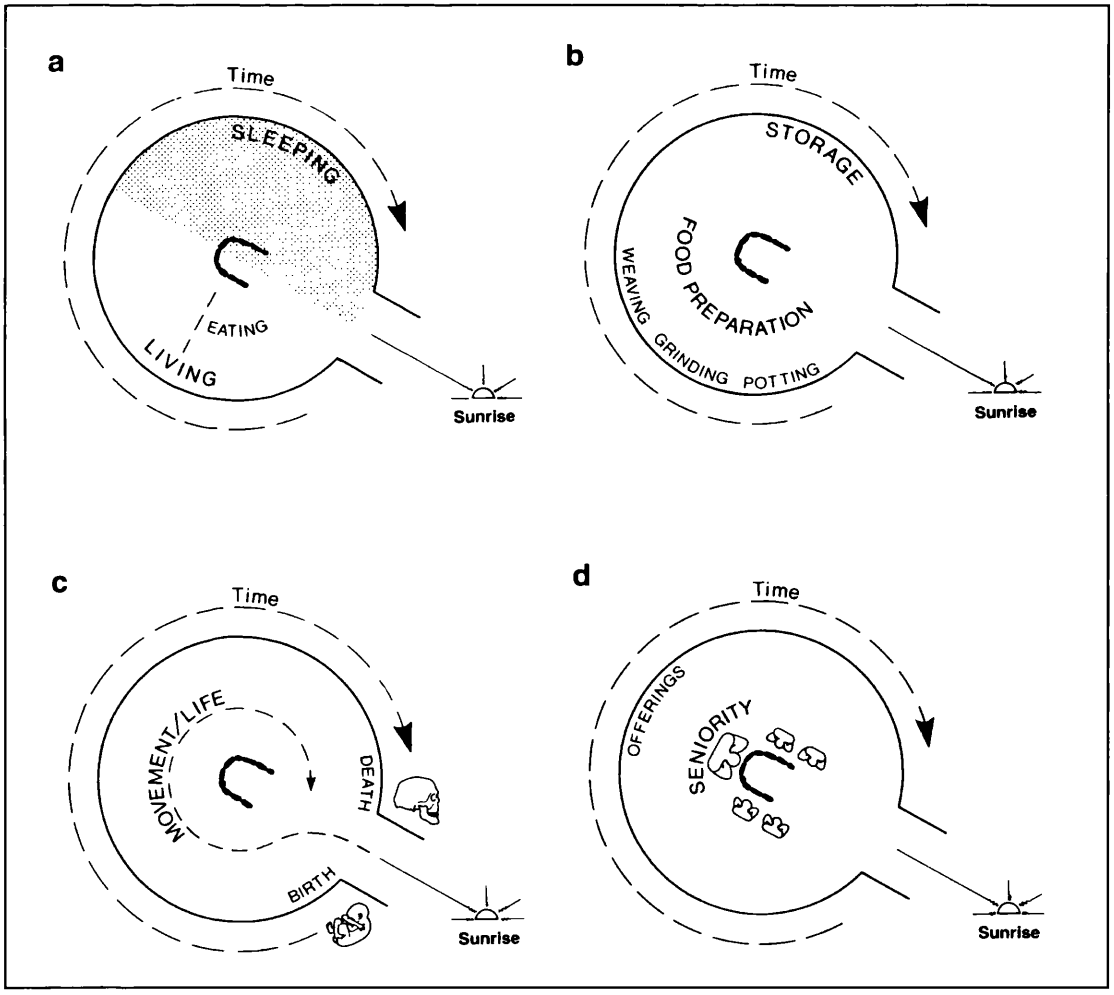

Figure 37: The use of space in a roundhouse (a) Fitzpatrick's sunwise scheme; (b) an extension of Fitzpatrick's scheme in the light of the wheelhouse layout; (c) the sunwise pattern of movement within the house, including the metaphor of the human life cycle round the house; (d) the organisation around the central hearth (From Pearson & Sharples, 1999).

Inevitably this hypothesis does not sit comfortably with wheelhouses. Only 11 indeed face east, the others facing various other directions. Additionally, little is known from floor levels other than that of Sollas B (Campbell 1991). It has previously been argued that facing an entrance eastwards was a measure to avoid the prevailing winds and maximise light for domestic activities (Hingley and Miles 1985, 63). Conversely it has been suggested that some Iron Age shrines face west in order to benefit from this sacred direction. For the record, the wheelhouse at Bagh nam Feadag follows the other moorland wheelhouses at Clettraval and Allasdale by facing westwards. Although statistically the machair wheelhouses are the most numerous, and the majority face east, three are orientated in a westwards direction (Cnip 9/1, Cnip 9/2, Eilean Maleit). Of the moorland wheelhouses that are known, entrance orientation cannot be determined in each, however, none so far face eastwards.

At both Clettraval and Bagh nam Feadag, facing the entrance westwards may seem surprising given their general location within the landscape. At Clettraval, the entrance is in the most exposed position possible, making no use of the protection offered by the nearby hill summit or the structure itself. Again, at Bagh nam Feadag, the forecourt area is restricted by the hillock to the west and visibility is greatly hindered (see plate 3a, chapter 1). It would seem that, in the case of Bagh nam Feadag, being inconspicuous in the landscape was important and by extension, the subterranean nature of wheelhouses in the machair would suggest that prominence in the landscape was not desirable in contrast to earlier or contemporary broch towers which are often and most likely deliberately conspicuous.

5.4 Bagh nam Feadag comparisons

The following section presents comparable features at the other wheelhouses in the Western Isles in the light of the Bagh nam Feadag data presented above. The comparisons offered here include features from both machair and moorland wheelhouses. In chapter two, the geographical makeup of the Western Isles was introduced with respect to wheelhouse location. Before going on to discuss the site comparisons and moorland location of wheelhouses in general, it is necessary to reiterate the distinction between locations. The traditional distinction between the two is that those located on the machair were semi-subterranean and revetted against the

machair sand, whereas those located on the moorland were freestanding, above ground, utilising double walling as a substitute for the insulation provided by an underground revetment. However, it is important to note that the distinction described above is slightly blurred and has perhaps been over used in the past, possibly due to its convenience and apparent simplicity. Table 9 lists the known wheelhouse settlements in the Western Isles (with some omissions due to uncertain classification) with respect to their traditional classification and accurate classification. For instance, the wheelhouses at Eilean Maleit, Cnoc a Comhdhalach and Garry Iochdrach are all located within a machair area, and commonly catalogued as 'machair sites' (e.g. Armit 1992, 164) yet they are freestanding structures and not revetted like those seen at Kilpheder and Sollas. The wheelhouse at Clettraval, which is freestanding, has been termed a 'solitary farmstead', situated some distance from the machair (Armit 1992, 70; 1996, 144-5). However, Eilean Maleit, Cnoc a Comhdhalach and Garry Iochdrach are all located in very close proximity to the fertile machair, yet are built in a similar above ground style to Clettraval. The features detailed below are intended to highlight the similarities between Bagh nam Feadag and other wheelhouses in the Western Isles and introduce the final discussion on the moorland location in section 5.5.1, where models for this blurring of the machair and moorland distinction are suggested.

5.4.1 Clettraval

The wheelhouse site at Clettraval has a series of striking similarities with the wheelhouse at Bagh nam Feadag (II). Not only do they have in common a moorland location, currently viewed as a restricted area for wheelhouse settlement, although this is perhaps not the case, but details of their structural development, particularly their original layout and subsequent re-occupation, are directly comparable. The sequence at Clettraval can be outlines as follows;

- Phase 1: Wheelhouse built
- Phase 2: Roof reconstructed
  - Smaller roof span
  - Hearth moved to new centre and is five inches higher
  - Subsidiary pillars in two bays to support roof

- Phase 3: Roof collapsed and architrave fell from bays VIII and IX into central space
  - Mass of rubble removed
  - New wall of poor construction close to the west at entrance creating a hut, or smaller house (Scott 1948, 48-53; fig 3)
  - Entrance passage used but partly collapsed
- Phase 4: Entrance passage filled to a depth of 2 feet 3 inches and a small hut built over it and within the thickness of the outer wheelhouse wall.

Following phase four, the site remained substantially undisturbed.

Plate 76: Wheelhouse bays at Clettraval showing pillar added during phase two between piers R5 and R4 (from Scott 1948, 50).

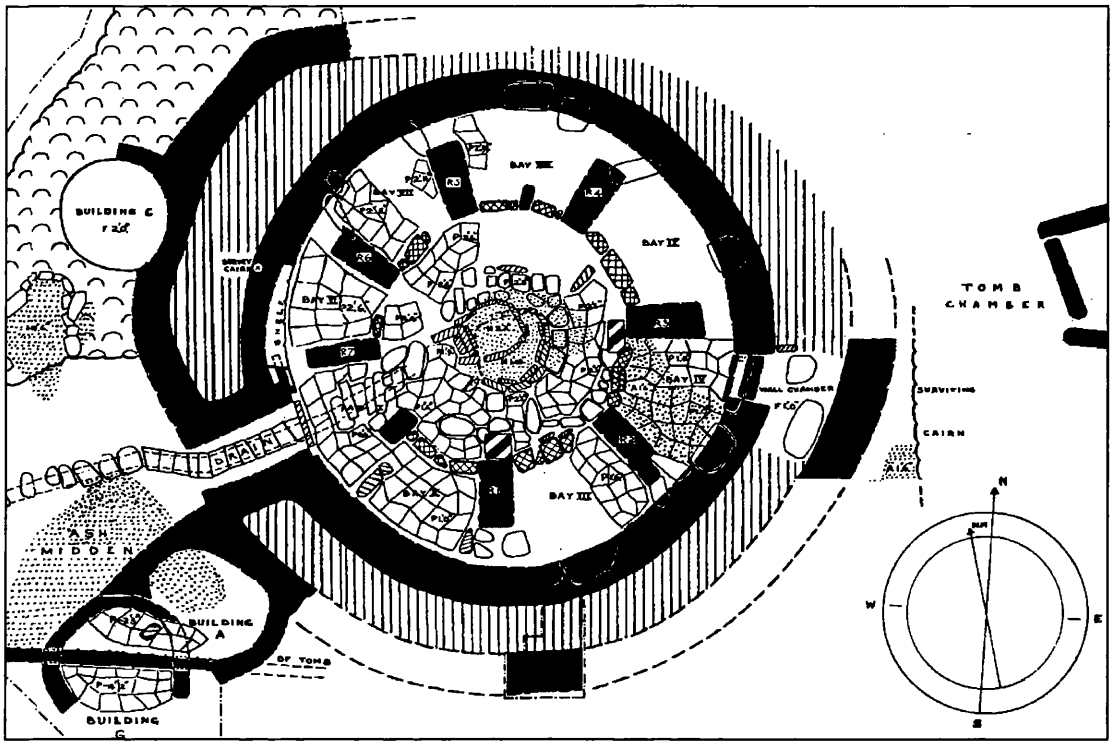

Figure 38: Plan of the Clettraval wheelhouse (from Scott 1948, 53).

From the detail of Scott's report on the Clettraval wheelhouse it is clear that it too was subject to later occupation, presumably shortly after the primary wheelhouse phase, as the entrance passage and some internal structures were re-used and modified. At Bagh nam Feadag at least one such development occurred within the wheelhouse – the insertion of structure III.

Other structural comparisons between Clettraval and the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse include the virtually identical entrance orientation, which is particularly unusual at Clettraval as, from its position on the side of the hill with the same name, it is completely exposed to winds from the Atlantic, as opposed to Grimsay where the entrance is protected, in the lee of a hummock. Both wheelhouses appear to have a duct incorporated into their original build, in the case of Clettraval the duct is described as a drain and exits via the entrance with the aid of the natural slope (detailed above). The Bagh nam Feadag duct also uses the natural slope of the land but in this case results in the duct exiting opposite the entrance.

The overall size of the wheelhouse and proportioning of the central space and bays is very similar. For instance, note the fairly large bays and presence of the aisles. Similar too are the number of piers, although the number of in situ piers at Bagh nam Feadag is debatable and a pillar has been utilised at Clettraval, however the

overall diameters and number of piers are directly proportional. One feature emphasised in Scott's report is the provision of paving slabs over much of the internal space. Some paving was discovered at Bagh nam Feadag behind pier D where excavation reached a greater depth, however primary floors have generally not been reached. Finally, the wall thickness and construction style is very similar (based on Scott's plan, as the remains are no longer standing). Clettraval is the structure responsible for the confirmed stereotype that moorland wheelhouses are thicker walled as their non-subterranean location requires more protection. It is therefore intriguing in the case of Clettraval why such an exposed location was selected as more sheltered areas can be found in the immediate vicinity. The proximity to the chambered tomb to the east and commanding views to the south and west may be a significant factor at Clettraval, whereas visibility of the ford to north and east, presumably a seafaring thoroughfare in prehistory, could be the reason for the orientation and location at Bagh nam Feadag.

5.4.2 Eilean Maleit

The re-survey of the Eilean Maleit wheelhouse in 1995 (Armit 1998, 260) showed that the site plan made by Beveridge (Beveridge 1911, opposite 213) was somewhat schematic and idealised. The interior of the wheelhouse was shown to be D-shaped in contrast to Beveridge's perfect circle, suggesting that Eilean Maleit was less impressive than the skilfully built Sollas B wheelhouse nearby. This lack of uniformity in layout can also be seen at Bagh nam Feadag, where the wheelhouse is oval measuring 8.5m by 7.5m at its widest and narrowest diameters. Although this may partly be due to the re-modification of the internal features, the piers that are in situ are situated at uneven intervals and at inconsistent angles. The end result, at both Bagh nam Feadag and Eilean Maleit is that the suitability of corbelled construction can be brought into question. The corbelling of the wheelhouse bays discussed earlier relies on a complex transference of weight and force, demanding that some fundamental rules on circularity must be adhered to.

In his report Armit suggests that this unusual and problematic layout can be explained by the constraints of an underlying structure (*ibid,* 260). This too may be the explanation at Bagh nam Feadag as it is clear that an earlier structure pre-dates the

wheelhouse on the same site (structure I). However, without excavation, there is little indication at Bagh nam Feadag that this earlier structure constrained the location to any great extent unless there are currently unidentified internal structures that were deliberately retained. The style of building and its layout in this situation produces various interesting questions regarding the motivations of the builders. For example, why was the site chosen to be re-modified as opposed to moving a short distance away? It could be suggested that this practice eludes to some territorial claim or ancestry customs. Additionally, can a division in status be seen within a single class of structure, with the monumental size and detail of the Sollas B wheelhouse contrasting with the poorer build quality of other wheelhouses? What is difficult to comprehend is that the effort involved in erecting a wheelhouse would surely mitigate against a construction of poor quality. Essentially, we must ask how much more difficult it would have been to make all known wheelhouses as uniform as Sollas B. The answer to such questions may rely upon a context of social status and economic capacity, and also the purposes and functions of such dwellings.

5.4.3 Usinish

Little has been reported of the Usinish wheelhouse, primarily because of its remote location. The wheelhouse itself, however, alongside various other Iron Age structures in the Usinish area, have been known of since the late 19th century, initially reported by Captain Thomas while mapping the coastline of South Uist. During this author's field visit to this region in spring 2004, it was clear that a large amount of structures ranging from the Iron Age to the 19th century are to be found there. The wheelhouse at Usinish (Figure 39) is similar to Bagh nam Feadag in both size and location.

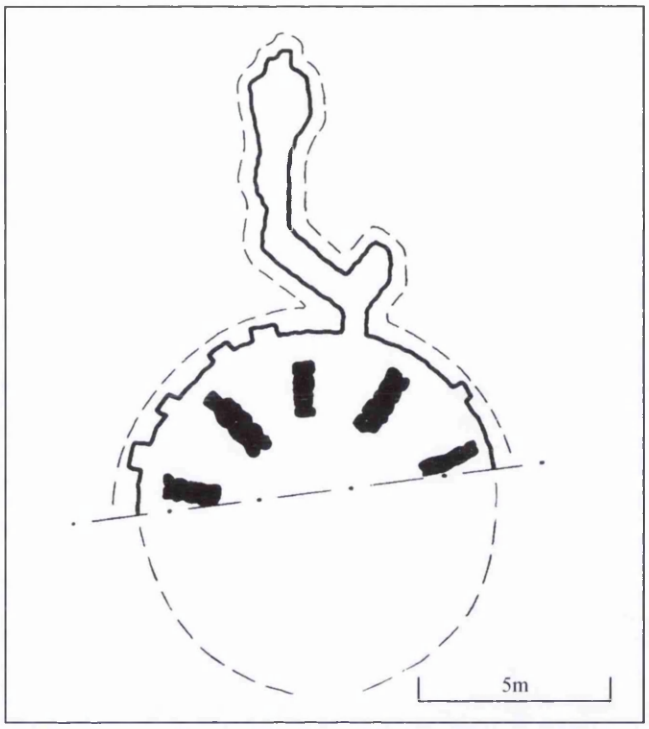

Figure 39: Plan of Usinish wheelhouse (from Thomas 1870, 166).

The southern portion of the structure has eroded and so the number of piers is not known, however given those that can be seen, and the overall diameter (8.2m internal), ten would be a reasonable estimate. This size and number of piers would make this wheelhouse the largest of all moorland examples, and certainly by no means the smallest of all wheelhouses known in the Western Isles. Such comparable proportions to the machair wheelhouses with those at Usinish and Bagh nam Feadag would argue against these moorland settlements being temporary or seasonal settlements. It is important to emphasise that wheelhouses are not simply thick walled roundhouses. Suggestions have been made that a wheelhouse utilised about three times as much stone as thick-walled roundhouses (Branigan & Foster 2002, 92). Furthermore, care was taken by wheelhouse builders when selecting stones, installing better, more regular stones and appearing to put greater effort into the architecture. Although within wheelhouses themselves the standard of construction varies greatly from the surprisingly circular and grand scale seen at Sollas B (Campbell 1991) to the small, relatively unimpressive wheelhouse at Cill Donnain (Zvelebil 1991). Ultimately, the Usinish wheelhouse has had as much effort and resources invested in it as those wheelhouses located in the machair, and does not fit the stereotypical view of a temporary upland shieling common in later periods of human settlement.

5.4.4 Buaile Risary

The site at Buaile Risary has not generally been recognised as a wheelhouse as the remains are no longer visible and the only account is that made by Beveridge (1911, 210). The detail of this account however, whether it was a wheelhouse or not, mentions various details that are consistent with the site at Bagh nam Feadag. Details such as the rectangular hearth, with a duct leading from it to the exterior, the later occupation within the roundhouse boundary, and some of the material culture such as the steatite spindle whorls and metalworking debris. The location of the Buaile Risary site, as well as Clettraval, Usinish, and all other moorland wheelhouses is similar in that they are all on the moorland and on the slopes or lee of a hill.

5.5 The Moorland Location

As has been noted elsewhere and in this thesis, the siting of a wheelhouse on the moorland is a contentious issue. This contention is not helped by the bias in archaeological research into primarily machair based sites, and the apparent lack of moorland counterparts. Also, the Vallay area greatly explored by Erskine Beveridge in the early 20th century resulted in the identification of several wheelhouses in this machair area, identifying that type of environment as the preferred location (Plate 73).

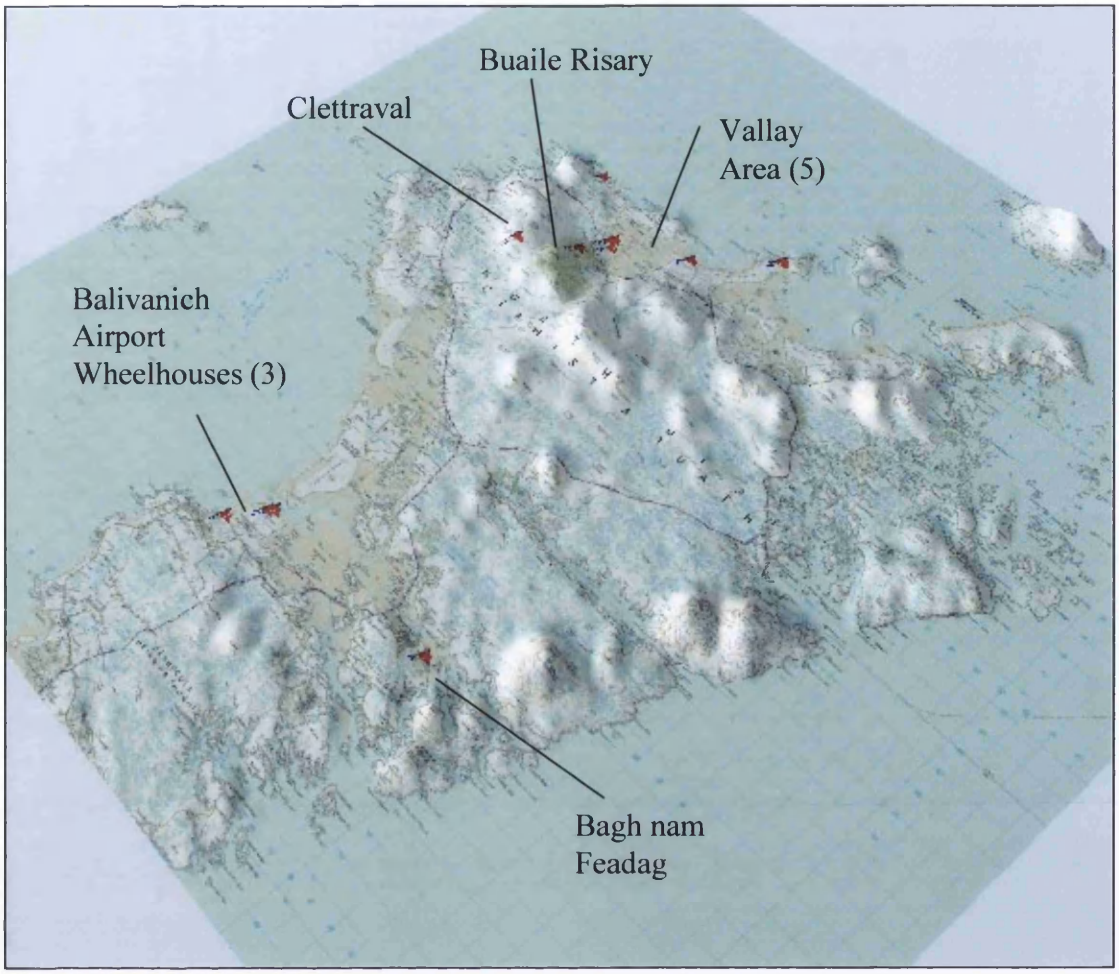

Plate 73: North Uist and Benbecula wheelhouse distribution
(Wheelhouses flagged in red).

The concentration of wheelhouses in such a small area at Vallay is mirrored in Balivanich (NF785557), Benbecula, where two wheelhouses (Scott 1956), were found during the construction of the airport runway and a third exposed in 2002 and largely removed by a violent storm in January 2005 (Plate 74). Plate 74 depicts the middens and area of erosion (left) and where the lintel bonds with the outer wall (right), the latter having been largely removed. The exposed middens contain pottery typical of wheelhouse assemblages including sherds with hatched triangle and wavy cordon motifs. The other two wheelhouses are situated 1.5km to the north east.

Plate 74: An Ceothan wheelhouse, near Balivanich, Benbecula, in 2004 before the storm.

Clearly a number of wheelhouses have already been lost in this manner and as can be seen above, continue to do so.

Although wheelhouses may have been lost along the western coastline and others remain to be discovered, it is also my opinion that further wheelhouses remain to be discovered in the moorland (contra Parker Pearson 2004, 102), with Bagh nam Feadag being one such example. Furthermore, evidence from sites such as Dun Bharabhat and Eilean Olabhat suggest that radial partitioning of roundhouses may be a common development within complex Atlantic roundhouses. The repercussions of this factor could be that a reassessment of what constitutes a wheelhouse is required. Loosening the restrictions of site typology in this manner may facilitate a better understanding of sites with complex multi-phase settlement and may lead to a recognition that structurally different buildings could serve similar functions. Essentially, the function of moorland wheelhouses need not be vastly different to those on the machair. The question of whether occupation was permanent or seasonal at Bagh nam Feadag is debateable and need not be viewed as a black or white decision. The Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse is more intriguing in this respect, than those in the remote Usinish region, in that the wheelhouse is not upland, nor is it a

great distance from the machair. Fluctuations in climatic conditions over a short period could, for instance, have caused regular intermittent settlement which would be difficult to detect archaeologically.

The quality of soils in those areas containing a moorland wheelhouse have similarities in that, with some improvement (manure or seaweed for example), correctly managed and not over worked they can sustain crops. Although Iron Age soil conditions may have differed somewhat to those existing today, the current classification of the capability for farming shows that the three wheelhouse sites; Clettraval, Bagh nam Feadag and Usinish all are relatively fertile when compared with the other moorland areas (Figure 40).

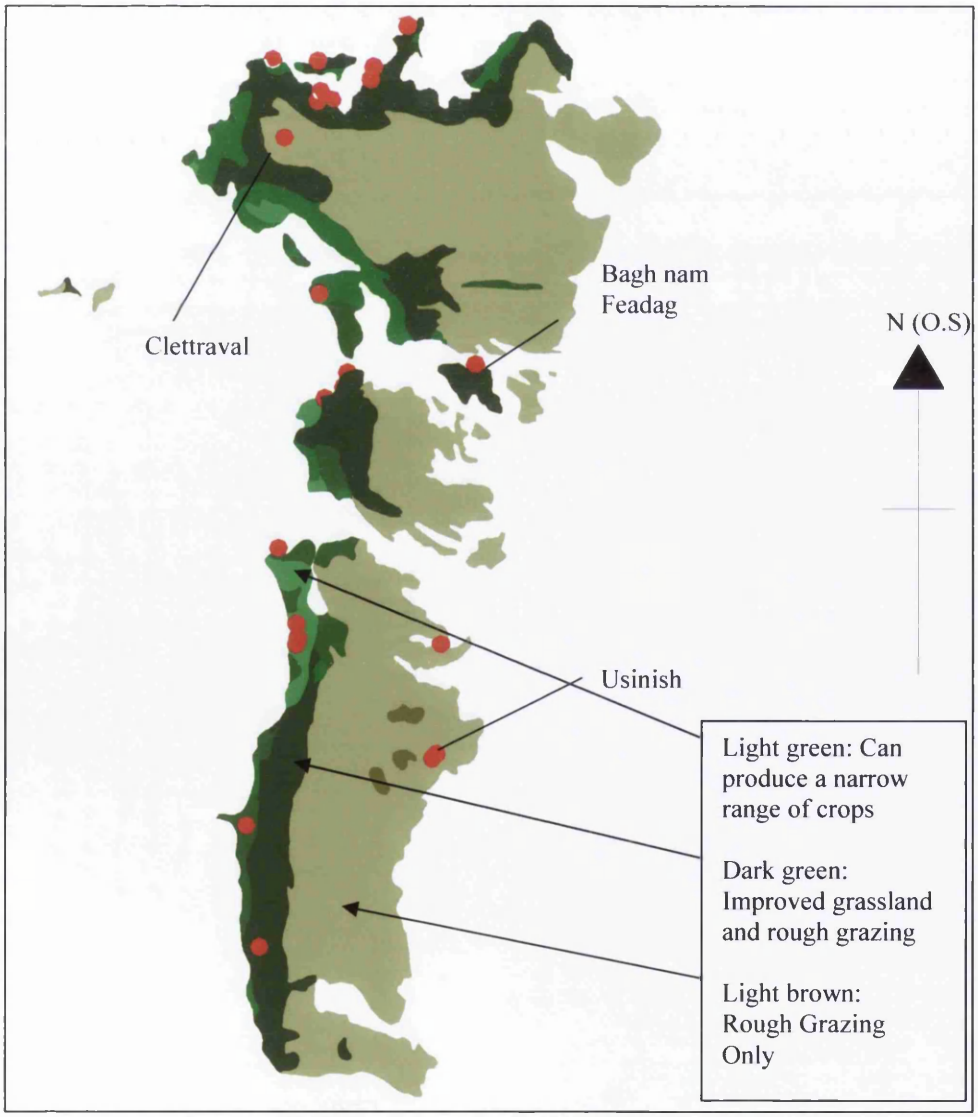

Figure 40: Land capability for agriculture with wheelhouse sites in red (Macaulay Institute for Soil Research).

Although lighter green areas are not shown at Usinish, this is because no farming takes place in this region and the water has not been drained effectively for some time. However, rigging cultivation marks dominate the landscape indicating that crops were grown in the past. Fundamentally, the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse is not sufficiently distant from the machair to merit the categorisation of a site exclusively set aside for pastoral transhumance.

The monumentality of a wheelhouse would be another major factor in arguing against these moorland examples being glorified shielings. Usinish may be remote in terms of modern settlement, however if walking from the machair the wheelhouse is no more than half a days journey via Glen Corrodale, or from the North via Loch Skiport (Plate 75).

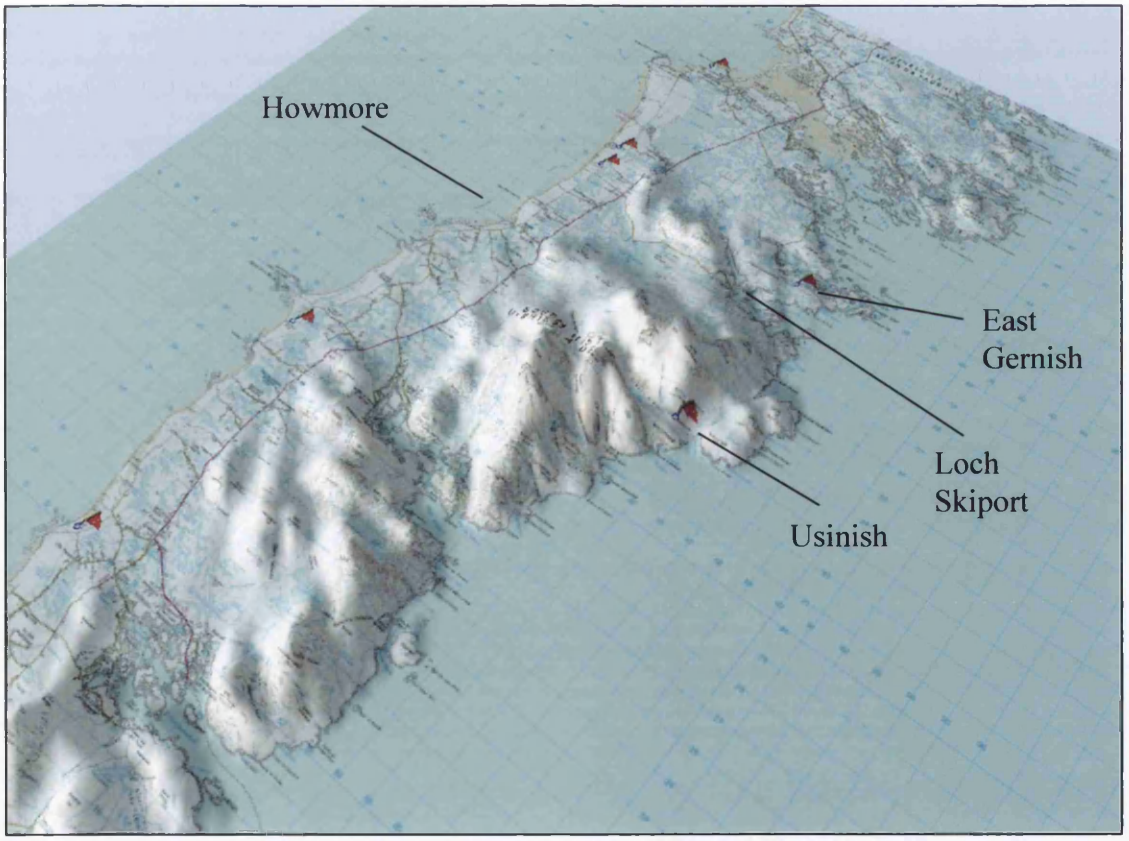

Plate 75: Proximity of Usinish wheelhouse to the West coast on South Uist (Wheelhouses flagged in red).

It has been proposed recently that moorland wheelhouses were 'inhabited by religious specialists whose job it was to monitor the nightly movements of the heavens' (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 101). An interpretation of this nature is not

based on any structural or artefactual evidence and demonstrates the extreme extent to which archaeologists have theorised to find a solution for this question. This writer would suggest that we are perhaps asking the wrong question, or looking for evidence that does not exist. Perhaps a more profitable avenue to explore would be to ask what situations arose to require a building in this location. If the inhabitants of wheelhouses were monitoring the heavens or participating in some sort of 'night-time revelry' (*ibid* 101) then why was a moorland location required, when presumably this could be done from any location. The suggestion that proximity of the Clettraval wheelhouse to a Neolithic long cairn is of ancestral or religious significance is valid however, although it is curious that it was demolished in order to build the settlement. The picture that is emerging, based on the Bagh nam Feadag evidence, is that the wheelhouse served as a typical farmstead, not too dissimilar to machair examples, specifically located in an area where crops could be grown. The slightly smaller size and irregularity of the structure is perhaps indicative of a lower class of inhabitant and may also explain why they occupy a moorland zone. Currently, the evidence recovered during the excavation at Bagh nam Feadag does not include anything indicative of specialised function, as was also the case with the Clettraval wheelhouse. Proximity to fertile farmland in both examples could be an instrumental factor in the positioning of these sites. What is perhaps more intriguing is the location of a wheelhouse in Usinish, South Uist. Currently this settlement is viewed as a possible seasonal settlement (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 101), invoking questions regarding the monumentality of seasonal settlement sites. The building of a wheelhouse indisputably requires the support of many individuals and the economic standing to enable the construction of what is a complex and often very large building. Additionally, the skill required even to build what we may class as inferior wheelhouses, (of which Bagh nam Feadag is a contender with its irregularly spaced piers and warped circularity), should not be underestimated. The corbelling of the bays is a process that would have to be executed fairly quickly and with a great deal of precision to give the building longevity. Therefore, to build a wheelhouse at Usinish, which is by no means at the smaller end of the wheelhouse size scale, for a short occupation period seems inconceivable. The writer would cite this monumentality and the potential arable land in the Usinish area as evidence for this being a permanent farmstead, comparable with Bagh nam Feadag. However, it must be conceded that if the Usinish wheelhouse was permanently settled then questions

regarding the interaction of its inhabitants with contemporary settlements on the machair on a day-today basis would have to be addressed. One significant factor of wheelhouse settlement on the machair is that sites are in very close proximity to one another and in some cases within eyesight (Parker Pearson *et al* 2004, 102-103). Travelling from the machair of South Uist over the hills to Usinish is a difficult journey and, if on foot, would consume the best part of a day. A similar problem does not exist with Bagh nam Feadag as although on the moorland, the machair is only a short distance away, with the nearest currently identified wheelhouse being 8km away at Balivanich, Benbecula. Clearly, excavation of the Usinish wheelhouse would be desirable in order to establish whether the standard farmstead thesis is confirmed or if a seasonal occupation can be detected archaeologically.

5.5.1 Moorland Discussion

At the outset of this presentation of the moorland data, it was suggested that a distinction between wheelhouses located in the machair or moorland is not clear cut. If we abandon the traditional classification of wheelhouse location and compare these structures with respect to earlier and later occupation and the style in which they are built, another type of distinction can be detected. As highlighted in table 9, some traditionally machair wheelhouses were freestanding and one moorland wheelhouse was partly revetted (Usinish). When the Cnip or Sollas wheelhouses were built a pit was dug and the structure was embedded within the void (Armit 1996, 136-143). The act of extracting an area before building a new settlement on the machair is replicated at the moorland sites of Clettraval and Bagh nam Feadag, where an earlier structure is cleared to some extent and the new settlement inserted within the space. This act can also be seen at the machair located sites such as Eilean Maleit, Garry Iochdrach and Cnoc a Comhdhalach, where instead of excavating a pit within the machair sand, an earlier structure was partially cleared and remodelled to create a new settlement. Similarly, at Usinish, the wheelhouse is partially revetted into the hillside. Thus a link can be made with all, classically non-revetted wheelhouses, whereby they are revetted within an earlier structure to some extent.

Armit commented upon the settlement movements of the inhabitants of Atlantic Roundhouses in moorland areas of North Uist, arguing that it would have

been a slow process, with the coastal machair region absorbing the influx until the land could not sustain more incomers (1992, 125). The result of this process has been described as a 'tidemark effect' where new settlements were established on the desirable machair plains while other settlements remained in remote areas (*ibid* 125). It is possible that there was a similar social dislocation during this period between wheelhouse sites in the machair areas and those which were established in moorland locations. There is little evidence to suggest that moorland wheelhouses are earlier than those found elsewhere and some indication those on the machair were indeed earlier. Although the move from unbonded to abutted and then bonded piers can be viewed as a natural development sequence, the length of time involved is difficult to quantify. It is therefore also plausible that the moorland wheelhouses were forced onto the moorland, perhaps due to overpopulation of the machair and/or any events of imposed land distribution, where they replicated the techniques of revetted wheelhouses by embedding themselves within an already proven fertile portion of land, which would have been likely to involve encroaching upon an earlier settlement.

Table 9 (see appendix two) indicates those wheelhouse sites which have seen earlier and later cellular occupation, suggesting that those on the moorland have seen activity both before and after a wheelhouse phase, whereas many of those on the machair were founded as completely new settlements and often abandoned afterwards. It is necessary to point out however, that the presence of cellular structures in earlier excavations may not have been recognised. Such a short period of settlement on the machair, when compared with sites in more inland areas could be explained by an instability within the volatile machair environment itself, or over dependence of what could have been an artificially effective agricultural regime. It is well accounted that the machair is prone to catastrophic failure caused by excessive sea encroachments and limited resources in relation to a growing population (e.g. 1697 massive sand blow, 19th century population explosion). Essentially, although structure II at Bagh nam Feadag has been termed a moorland wheelhouse, its situation in close proximity to the quarry face and insertion within an earlier structure gives a sense of containment and protection, something that was often obtained by a different technique on the machair.

The points raised above are intended to develop ideas about why wheelhouses were located in contrasting locations given that the available evidence regarding material culture and internal structural detail do not implicate any craft or religious

specialisation that can be objectively shown. It is therefore the view of the writer that Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse is likely to have been a permanent farmstead, with the locality exploited for its fertile land, rough grazing and proximity to the coastline for transportation around the isles via boat. Although no fish or shellfish material was discovered (perhaps in part due to the acidic soils and methods of excavation), the food source would have been readily available if desired (Ceron-Carrasco 2002, 167). The questions posed above regarding a connection between the approach of building a wheelhouse in a certain location or reasons as to why such a situation came about, require further research with the aid of more data obtained by modern archaeological practices.

The questions posed above regarding a connection between the approach of building a wheelhouse in a certain location or reasons as to why such a situation came about, require further research with the aid of more data obtained by modern archaeological practices.

Chapter Six: Conclusions

The preceding chapters have outlined the main sequences of occupation visible at Bagh nam Feadag and its associated material culture. Where relevant, parallels and comparisons have been offered with other similar settlements, in an attempt to help position this wheelhouse within the existing vast dataset of the recorded sites. The phases outlined in chapter three, given the nature of site formation processes in both antiquity and the recent past, are inevitably somewhat contrived, and therefore appropriate statements have been deliberately left open to interpretation by the reader, aided by the provision of documentation of all the available material by the writer. Arguably wheelhouses are one of the best understood structures in the Western Isles, with many examples having been excavated. Nevertheless, some fundamental questions of their function and position within the social and political landscape persist.

One of the most significant features of the wheelhouse at Bagh nam Feadag is its situation directly on top of an earlier structure. This practice, although also found at Eilean Maleit, is generally unparalleled. The question of whether this earlier settlement functioned or was never completed, is unknown, and remains to be tested by excavation. On the face of the evidence presented in this thesis regarding Bagh nam Feadag, the wheelhouse conforms to the typical data generated at most other wheelhouse sites with nothing setting it apart. The recognition of atypical features formed a part of this study of both the structures and artefacts by the writer, and although activities such as metalworking, details such as covered drains, blocked aisles and westward entrance orientation are all notable, each of these features can be seen on a number of wheelhouse sites in the Western Isles, both machair and moorland.

We might expect density of human settlement to be regularly correlated with agricultural potential and more specifically, if the interest of the inhabitants of wheelhouses lay in the exploitation of the machair for crops, as has been suggested previously, with settlement concentrating in this area. We might also expect growth within a specific area related to an intensification of farming strategies as seen at Broch complexes such as Gurness in Orkney with nucleated settlement. No such intensification can be seen in the Western Isles during the Iron Age and it would

appear that although some wheelhouses settlements formed small clusters, many of the inhabitants operated independently, exploiting a set amount of land to produce a surplus which was exchanged with neighbouring settlements.

The conclusion offered in this thesis, therefore, is that the Bagh nam Feadag wheelhouse served a similar function to all others known in the region and the location of the site in a moorland environment is most likely a product of land apportionment, possibly imposed in relation to their status within the social group. Settlement in the moorland zone should not necessarily be viewed as being inferior to that in the machair zone. The sustainability of farming in the Western Isles has been tested during documented periods, most notably following the dissolution of the kelp industry and overpopulation in the 19th century. Rigging can be seen in areas of moorland that have long been devoid of recorded settlement which demonstrates both that the potential was there for growing certain crops and that expansion into these areas was possible.

Archaeologists have often stressed the importance of agricultural potential as a factor in influencing the location of settlement and in some cases have even used such presumptions to predict where settlements is likely to have occurred. The writer would agree that there may be a preference for the machair over the moorland zone, however, clarifying the connection between these preferences, specific site location and corresponding agricultural potential require further investigation. What can be said is that the Bagh nam Feadag settlement has seen occupation from at least the middle Iron Age with the construction of a wheelhouse on top of an earlier structure, followed by a long and complex sequence of habitation, the development of which has successively remodelled the site. This remodelling has resulted in a mixture of the artefacts and convolution of the structural record. What was already a complicated site in terms of multiple phase activity, was complicated further with the employment of improvised and non-professional excavation techniques. Nevertheless, this thesis has demonstrated that the site at Bagh nam Feadag is important for wheelhouse studies and that the artefacts and architectural features uncovered are a welcome addition to the dataset. The information compiled and presented in this thesis can be, and should be, viewed as a starting point for Bagh nam Feadag as a site and enables the archaeological data that has survived to become incorporated into academic debate on the nature of wheelhouse settlement during the Atlantic Iron Age.

Bibliography

Angus, S. 1993 'Statistics relating to the Western Isles', *Hebridean Naturalist*, 11: 36-40.

Angus, S. 2001 *Moor and machair.* Cambridge: White Horse Press.

Armit, I. 1988 *Excavations at Cnip, West Lewis, 1988: interim report.* Department of Archaeology, University of Edinburgh.

Armit, I. (ed.) 1990 *Beyond the Brochs: Changing Perspectives on the Later Iron Age in Atlantic Scotland.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Armit, I. 1992 *The Later Prehistory of the Western Isles of Scotland.* Oxford: British Archaeological Reports [British Series] 221.

Armit, I. 1996 *The Archaeology of Skye and the Western Isles.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Armit, I. 1997 'Excavation of a post-medieval settlement at Druim nan Dearcag, and related sites around Loch Olabhat, North Uist', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 127: 899-919.

Armit, I. 1998 'Re-excavation of an Iron Age wheelhouse and earlier structure at Eilean Maleit, North Uist', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 128: 255-271.

Barber, J. 2004 *Bronze Age farms and Iron Age farm mounds of the Outer Hebrides.* Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports. http:/www.sair/sair4/

Beveridge, E. 1911 *North Uist: its archaeology and topography, with notes upon the early history of the Outer Hebrides.* Edinburgh: Birlinn Ltd.

Boyd, J.M. and I.L. Boyd. 1996 A *Natural Tapestry: The Hebrides.* Birlinn Ltd.

Branigan, K. and P. Foster. 2002 *Barra and The Bishop's Isles: Living on the Margin.* Stroud: Tempus

Burnett, R. 1986 *Benbecula.* Mingulay Press, Torlum, Western Isles.

Campbell, E. 1991 'Excavation of a wheelhouse and other Iron Age structures at Sollas, North Uist, by R.J.C. Atkinson in 1957', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 121: 117 – 73.

Carruthers, M. 2002 *Communities in southwest Scotland c.200BC-AD200: social space, material culture and identity.* Unpublished M.Phil thesis, Department of Archaeology, University of Glasgow.

Ceron-Carrasco, R.N. 2002 *Of fish and men: Aspects of the utilization of marine resources from selected Hebridean archaeological sites.* Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Archaeology, University of Edinburgh.

Crawford, B.A. 1987 *Scandinavian Scotland* (Leicester).

Crawford, I A. 1986 *The West Highlands and Islands: A view of 50 centuries: The Udal (North Uist) Evidence.* Cambridge.

Crawford, I.A. 2001 *An t-Udal 1991*, 29th interim report. Cambridge, 1991.

Crawford, I.A. 2002 'The wheelhouse', in Ballin Smith, B. and I. Banks. (eds.) 2002 *In the Shadow of the Brochs: The Iron Age in Scotland* 111-128. Tempus.

Cumberpatch, C. 1990 The Pottery from Cill Donnain, South Uist. Unpublished report, University of Sheffield.

Cummings, V. and N.M Sharples. 1999 *The excavation of a chambered cairn at Leaval, South Uist.* Cardiff Studies in Archaeology Specialist Report no. 17.

Curle, C.L. 1982 Pictish and Norse Finds from the Brough of Birsay 1934-74. *Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Monograph Series 1.*

Emery, N. 1996 The Archaeology and Ethnology of St. Kilda No.1, *Archaeological Excavations on Hirta 1986-90.* Edinburgh: HMSO.

Fairhurst, H. 1971 'The wheelhouse site at A' Cheardach Bheag on Drimore Machair, South Uist', *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 2, 1971, 72-106.

Finlay, N. 2004 'Preliminary Observations on a collection of flint lithic artefacts from Grimsay, Ashworth Collection SMR 5004'. Unpublished typescript, University of Glasgow.

Fitzpatrick, A. 1994 'Outside in: The structure of an Early Iron Age house at Dunston Park, Thatchan, Berkshire', in A. Fitzpatrick and E. Morris (eds.) 1994 *The Iron Age in Wessex: Recent work* (Salisbury: Trust for Wessex Archaeology and AFEAF): 68-72.

Gilmour, S.M.D. 2000 'First Millennia settlement development in the Atlantic West', in J. Henderson (ed.) 2000 *The Prehistory and Early History of Atlantic Europe.* British Archaeological Reports [British Series] 861.

Hallen, Y. 1994 'The use of bone and antler at Foshigarry and Bac Mhic Connain, two Iron Age sites on North Uist, Western Isles', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 124: 189-231.

Harding, D.W. and S.M.D Gilmour 2000 *The Iron Age settlement at Beirgh, Riof, Isle of Lewis: excavations, 1985-95. Vol. 1, The structures and stratigraphy.*

Hedges, J.W. 1987 *Bu, Gurness and the Brochs of Orkney.* Oxford. BAR British Series, 164.

Henshall, A.S. 1972 *The chambered tombs of Scotland, Volume 2.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hothersall, S. and R. **Tye.** 2000 *The Lost Wheelhouses of Uist.* Robert Tye, Isle of South Uist.

Johnson, M. 2004 'An Approach to Ceramic Change: Iron Age Pottery from the Outer Hebrides'. Unpublished typescript, University of Edinburgh.

Lane, A. 1983 *Dark Age and Viking Age Pottery in the Hebrides, with special reference to the Udal, North Uist.* Unpublished PhD thesis, University College, London.

Lane, A. 1987 'English migrants in the Hebrides: 'Atlantic Second B' revisited' in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 117: 47-66.

Lane, A. 1990 'Hebridean Pottery: Problems of Definition, Chronology, Presence and Absence', in I. Armit (ed.) 1990 *Beyond the Brochs: Changing Perspectives on the Later Iron Age in Atlantic Scotland* 108-130. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Lawson, B. 2000 Croft history: Isle of North Uist Vol. 3, Griomasaigh, Ronaigh. Northton, Isle of Harris: Bill Lawson Publications.

MacKie, E.W. 1965 'The origin and development of the Broch and Wheelhouse Building Cultures of the Scottish Iron Age'. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society,* 31, 93-146.

MacKie, E.W. 1974 *Dun Mor Vaul: An Iron Age Broch on Tiree.* Glasgow: Glasgow University.

MacKie, E.W. 1987 'Review of H. Fairhurst, Excavations at Crosskirk broch, Caithness'. *Antiquaries Journal* 65 no. 2, 500-501.

MacKie, E.W. 1997 'Dun Mor Vaul Revisited: Fact and Theory in the Reappraisal of the Scottish Atlantic Iron Age', in G. Ritchie (ed.) 1997 *The Archaeology of Argyll,* 141-180. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

MacLaren, A. 1974 A Norse house on Drimore Machair, South Uist. *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 3: 9-18.

MacSween, A. 2002 Dun Bheag and the role of pottery in interpretations of the Hebridean Iron Age, in Ballin Smith, B. and I. Banks. (eds.) 2002 *In the Shadow of the Brochs: The Iron Age in Scotland* 145-152. Tempus.

Mainman, A.J. and N.S.H Rogers. 2000 *Craft, Industry and Everyday Life: Finds from Anglo-Scandinavian York.* York: Council for British Archaeology.

M^{c}Kenzie, A. 2003 Analysis of Wheelhouses Architecture in the Western Isles. Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Glasgow.

Moreland, J. 1990 'Loch Aineort' SEARCH interim report. Unpublished report, University of Sheffield.

Oswald, D. 1997 'A doorway on the past: practical and mystic concerns in the orientation of roundhouse doorways', in A. Gwilt and C. Haselgrove (eds.) 1997 *Reconstructing Iron Age Societies: new approaches to the British Iron Age* 87-95. Oxford: Oxbow.

Parker Pearson, M. and C. Richards (eds.) 1994 *Architecture and order: approaches to social space.* London: Routledge.

Parker Pearson, M., N.M. Sharples and J. Mulville 1996 'Brochs and Iron Age Society: A reappraisal', *Antiquity* 70: 57-67.

Parker Pearson, M. 2004 *South Uist: archaeology and history of a Hebridean island.* Tempus.

Parker Pearson, M. et al forthcoming in Housley, R.A. and G. Coles (eds.) *Atlantic connections and adaptations: economic, environment and subsistence inlands bordering the North Atlantic.* Symposia of Association of Environmental Archaeology 21. Oxford: Oxbow.

Parker Pearson, M. and N.M, Sharples. with Mulvile, J and Smith, H 1999. *Between Land and Sea: Excavations at Dun Vulan, South Uist.* SEARCH volume 4. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Reid 1799 'Griomasaigh', in B. Lawson. 2000 Croft history: Isle of North Uist Vol. 3, Griomasaigh, Ronaigh, 50. Northton, Isle of Harris: Bill Lawson Publications.

Ritchie, P.R 1984 Soapstone quarrying in Viking lands, in Fenton, A. and Palsson, H (eds.) *The Northern and Western Isles in the Viking World*, 59-84. Edinburgh.

Scott, J.G. 1956 'South Uist Excavations'. *Discovery and Excavation, Scotland* 1956, 32.

Scott, W.L. 1948 'Gallo-British Colonies, the aisled round house culture in the North'. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 14, 46-125.

Sharples, N.M. 1998 *Scalloway: A Broch, Late Iron Age Settlement and Medieval Cemetery in Shetland.* Oxbow Monograph 82. Exeter: The Short Run Press.

Sharples, N.M. 1999 *The Iron Age and Norse settlement at Bornish, South Uist.* An interim report on the 1999 excavations. Cardiff Studies in Archaeology Specialist Report no. 16.

Thomas, F.W.L. 1870 'On the primitive dwellings and hypogea of the Outer Hebrides'. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 7, 165-7*

Topping, P.G. 1985 The pottery of the later prehistoric period in the Western Isles of Scotland. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh

Topping, P.G. 1987 'Typology and chronology in the later prehistoric pottery assemblages of the Western Isles'. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 117, 67-84.

Whittington, G. and W. Ritchie. 1988 *Flandarin Environmental Evolution on North-East Benbecula and Southern Grimsay, Outer Hebrides, Scotland.* O'Dell Memorial Monograph no. 21. Department of Geography, University of Aberdeen.

Wilkins, D A. 1984 'The Flandrian woods of Lewis', *Journal of Ecology* 72: 251-58

Wood, J.S. (ed.) 1999 *An Archaeological Field Survey of A Wheelhouse and Surrounding Area at Bagh nam Feadag, Grimsay, North Uist.* Association of Certified Field Archaeologists (Glasgow University) Occasional Paper No. 44.

Young, A. 1961 'Brochs and Duns', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 95: 171-98.

Young, A. 1966 'The sequence of Hebridean pottery', 45-58, in Rivet, A.L.F (ed.) 1966 *The Iron Age in Northern Britain.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Zvelebil, M. 1991 Cill Donnain: SEARCH interim report. Unpublished report, University of Sheffield.

Appendix One

Internal Elevations

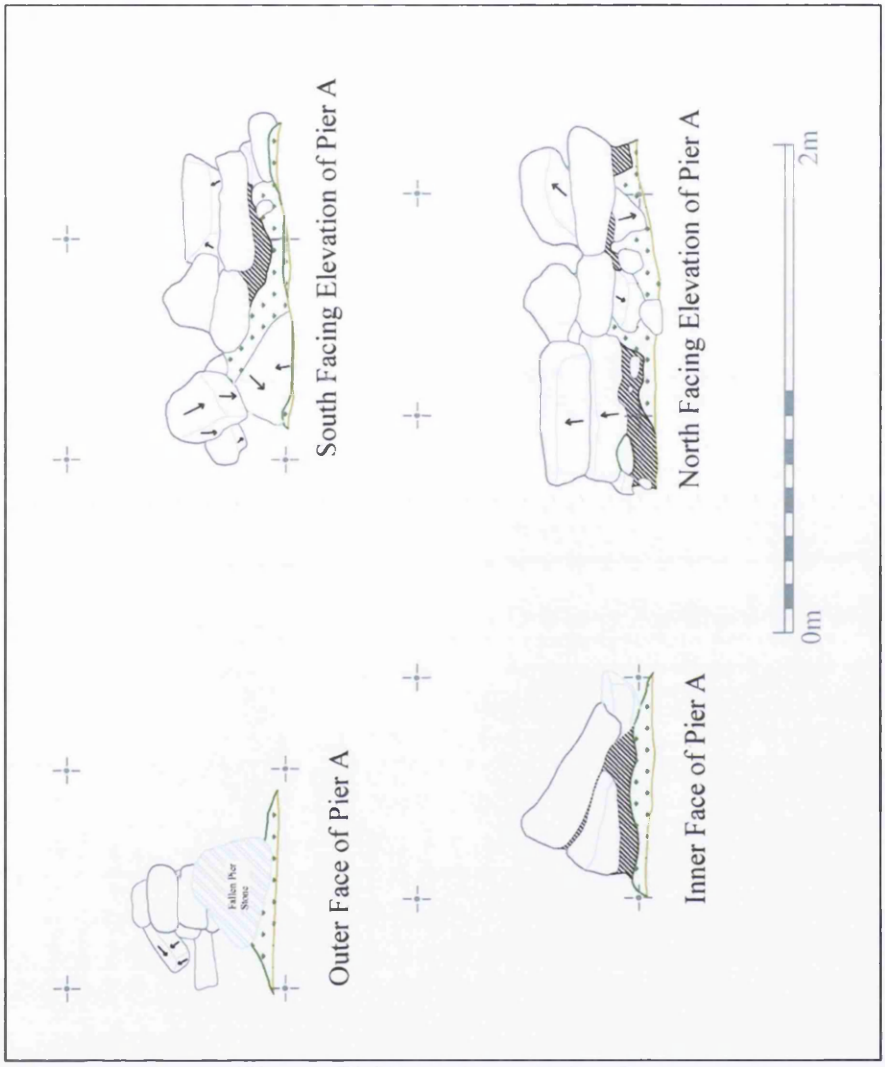

Figure 42: Elevations of pier A.

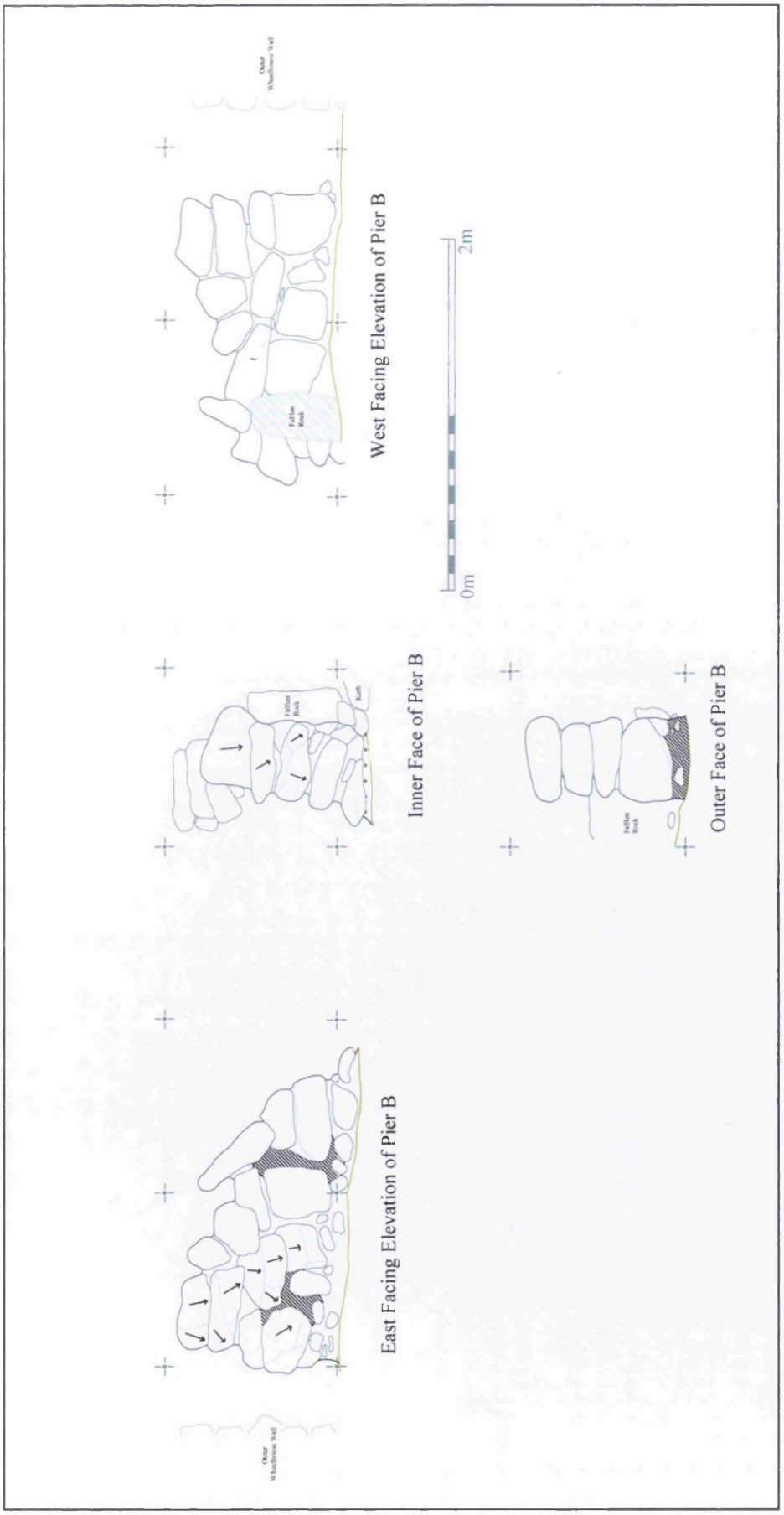

Figure 43: Elevations of pier B.

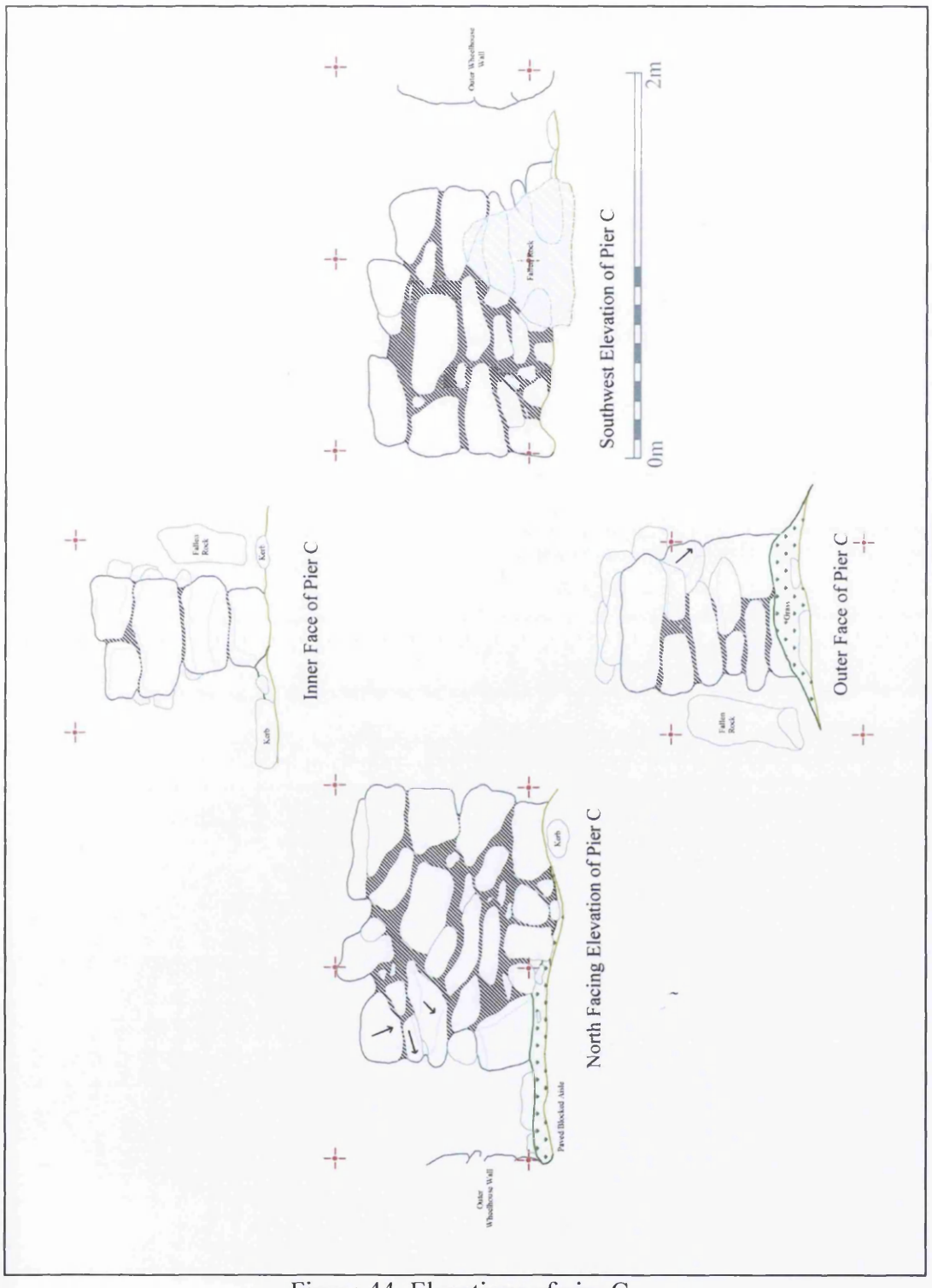

Figure 44: Elevations of pier C.

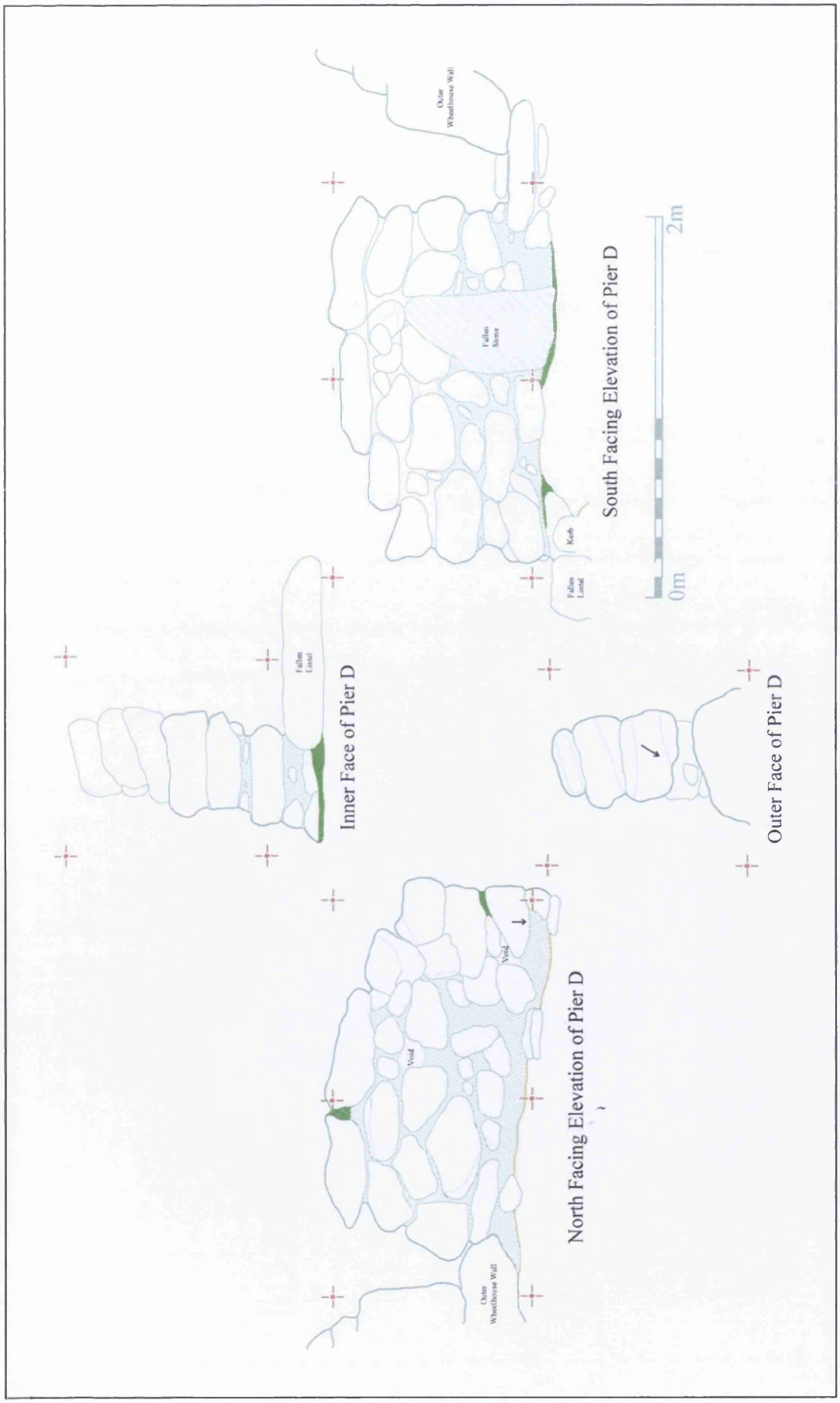

Figure 45: Elevations of pier D.

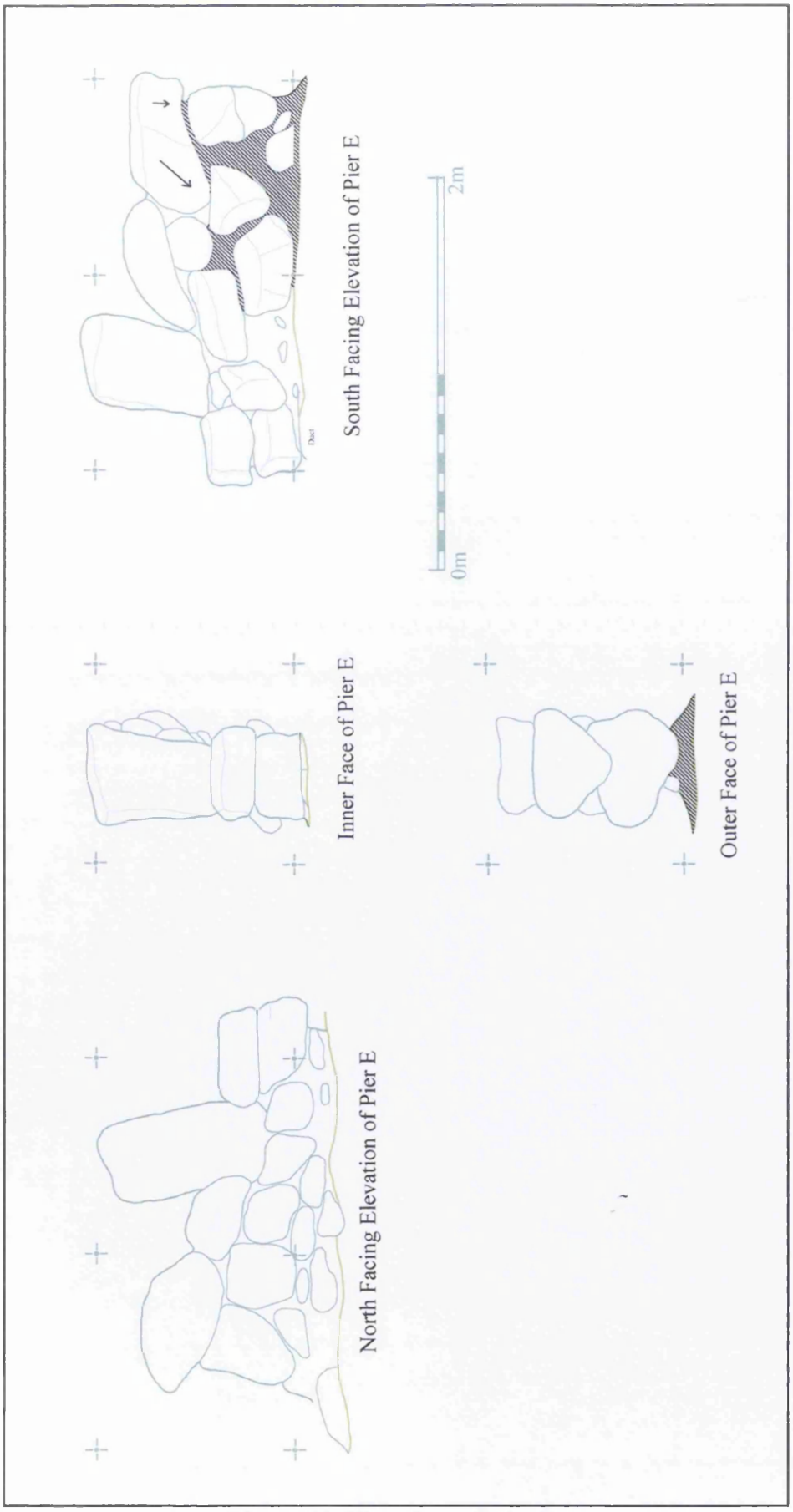

Figure 46: Elevations of pier E.

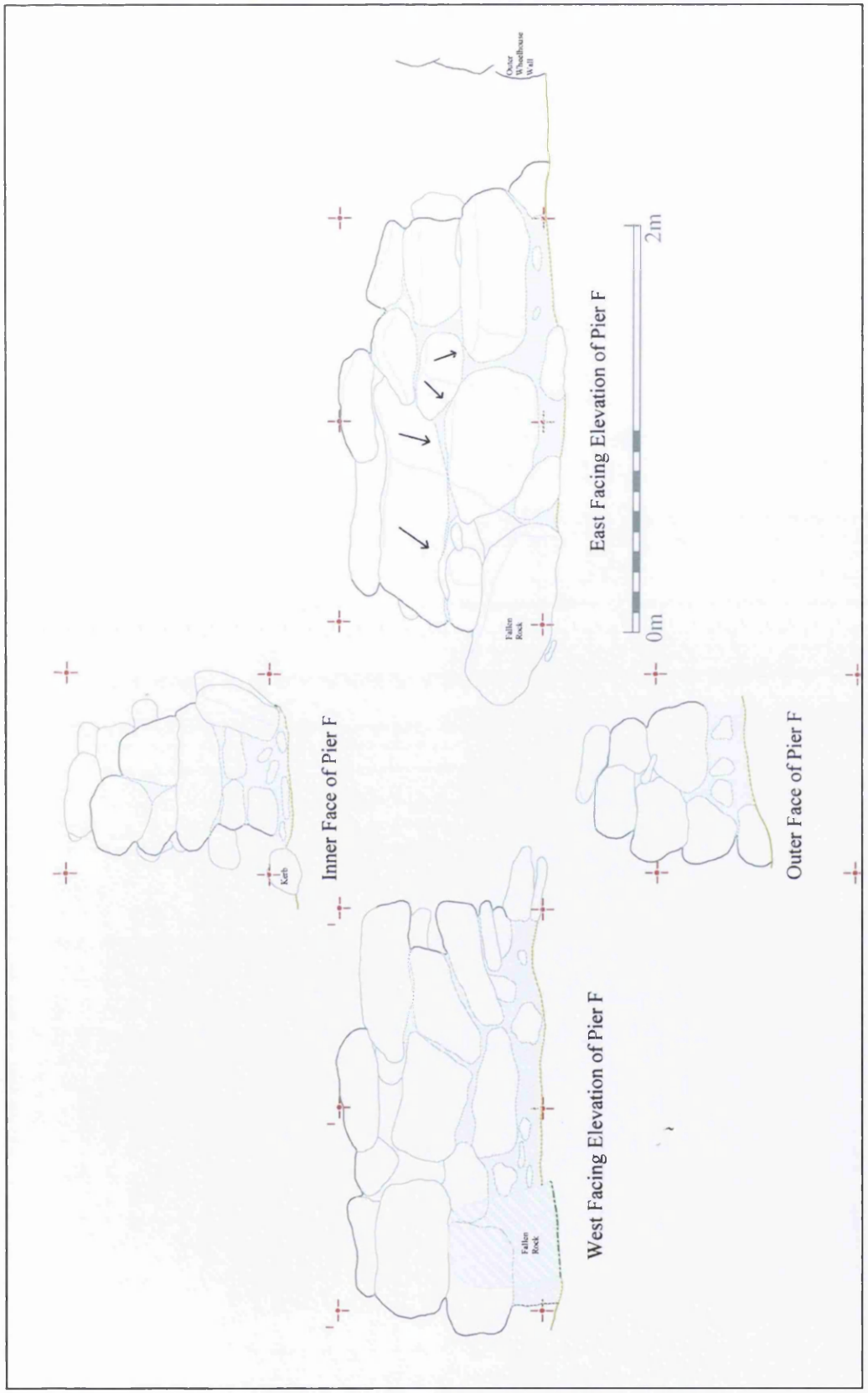

Figure 47: Elevations of pier F.

Figure 48: Elevations of pier G.

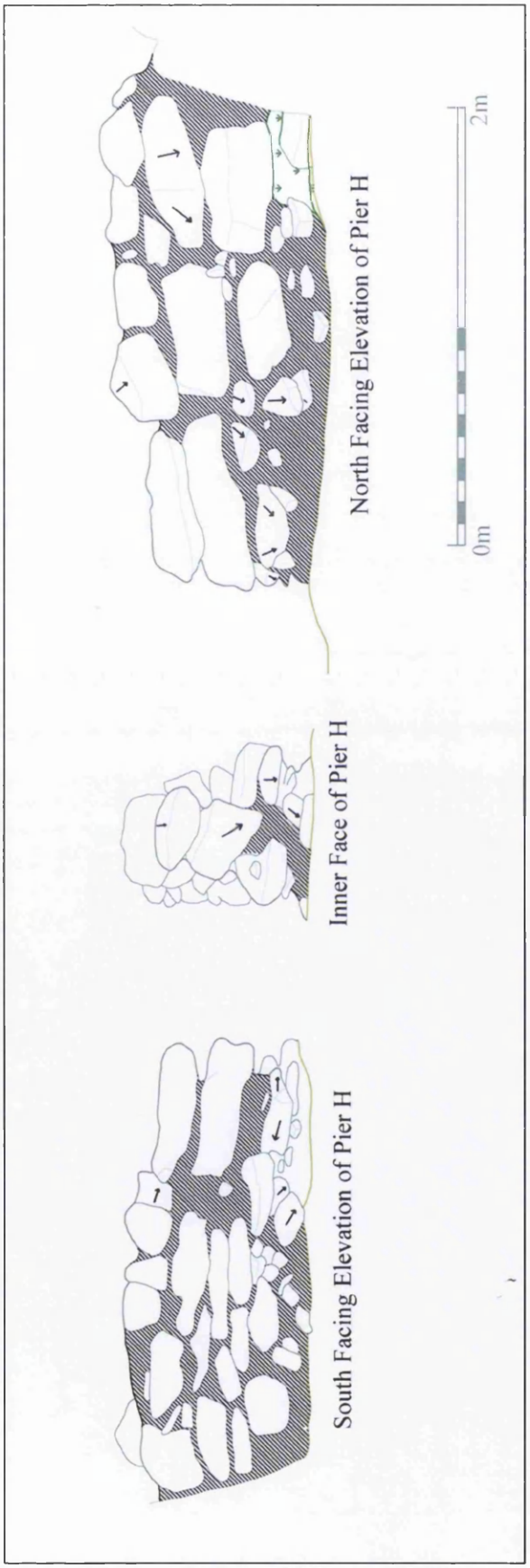

Figure 49: Elevations of pier H.

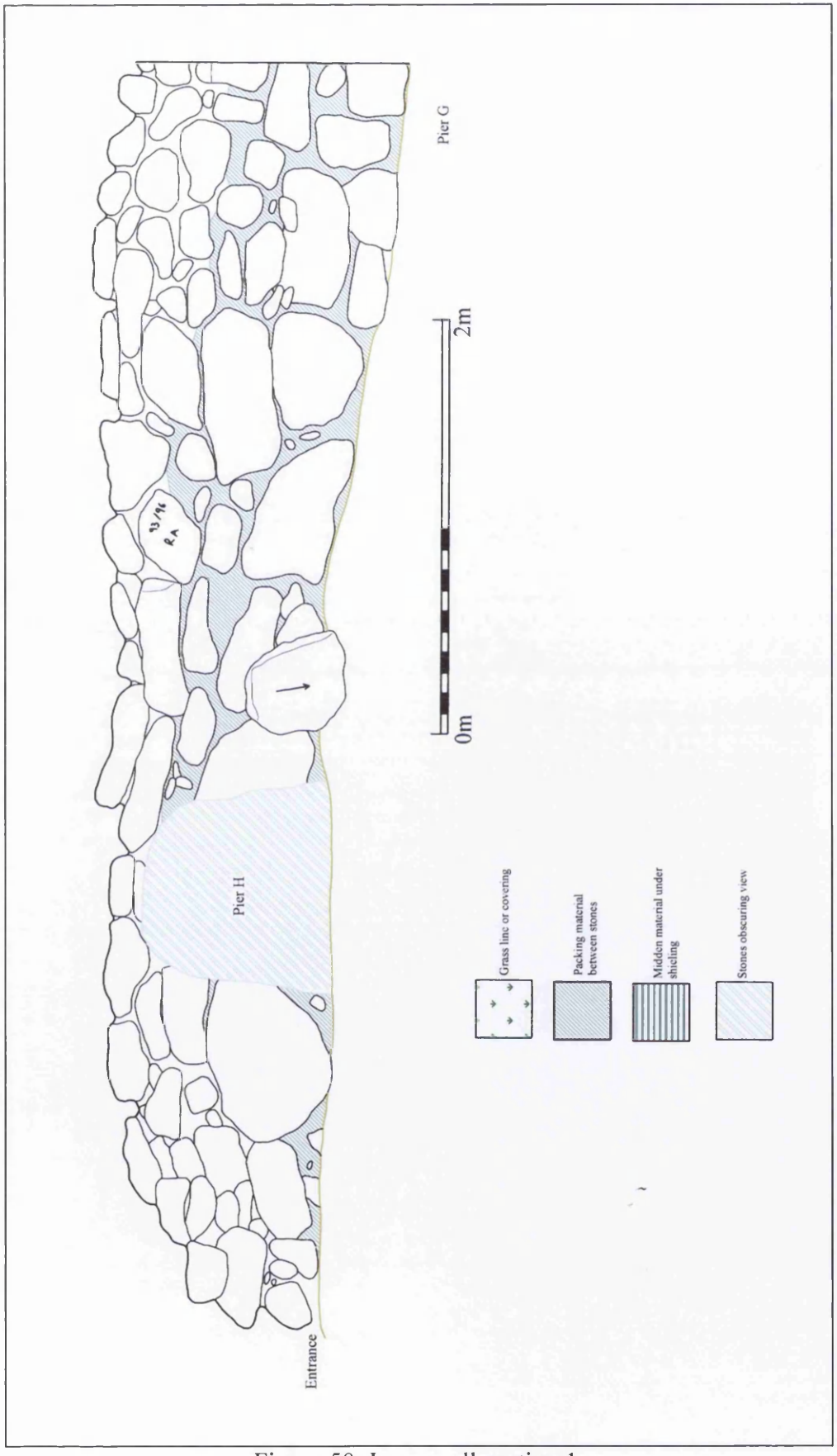

Figure 50: Inner wall section 1.

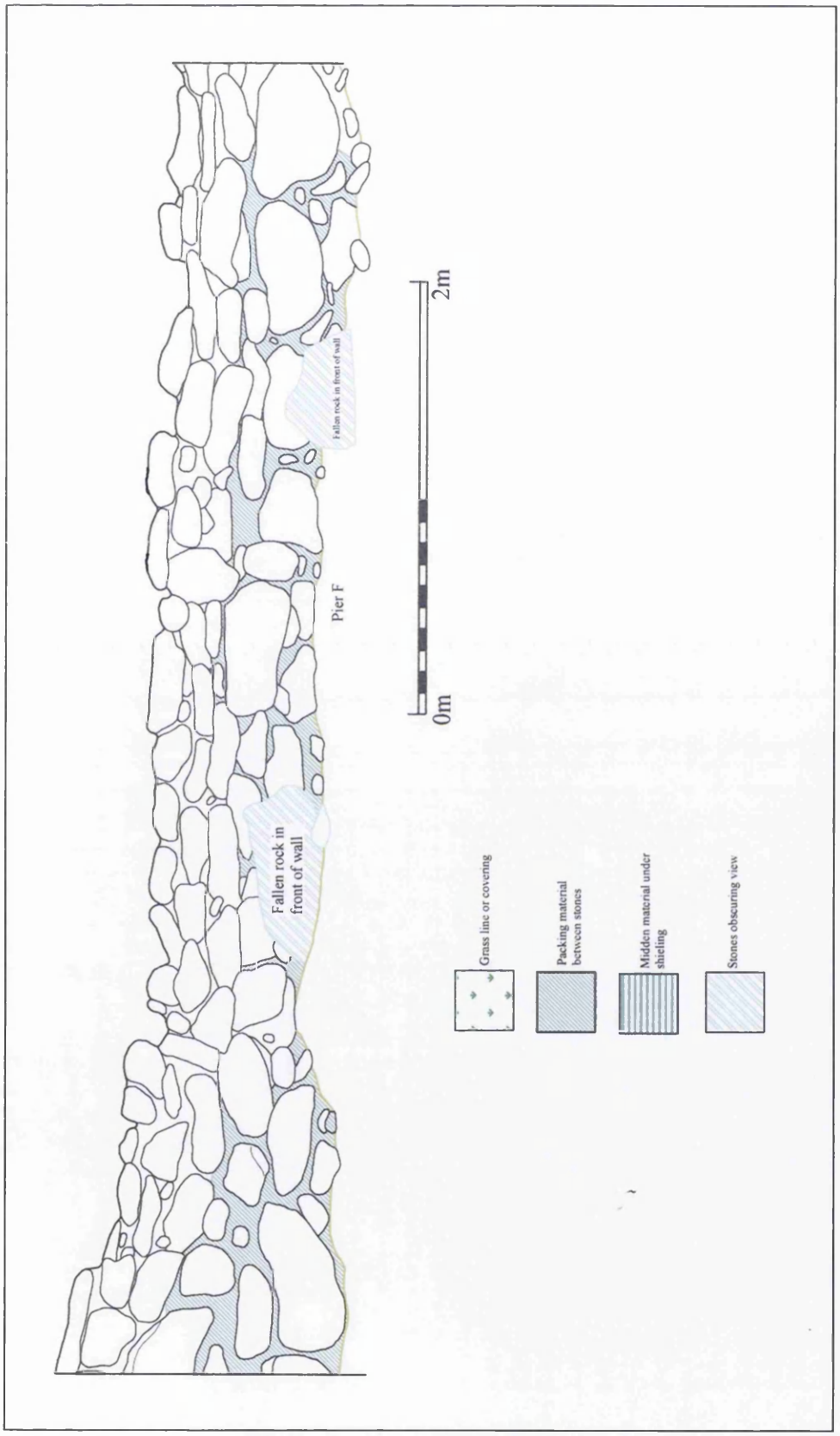

Figure 51: Inner wall section 2.

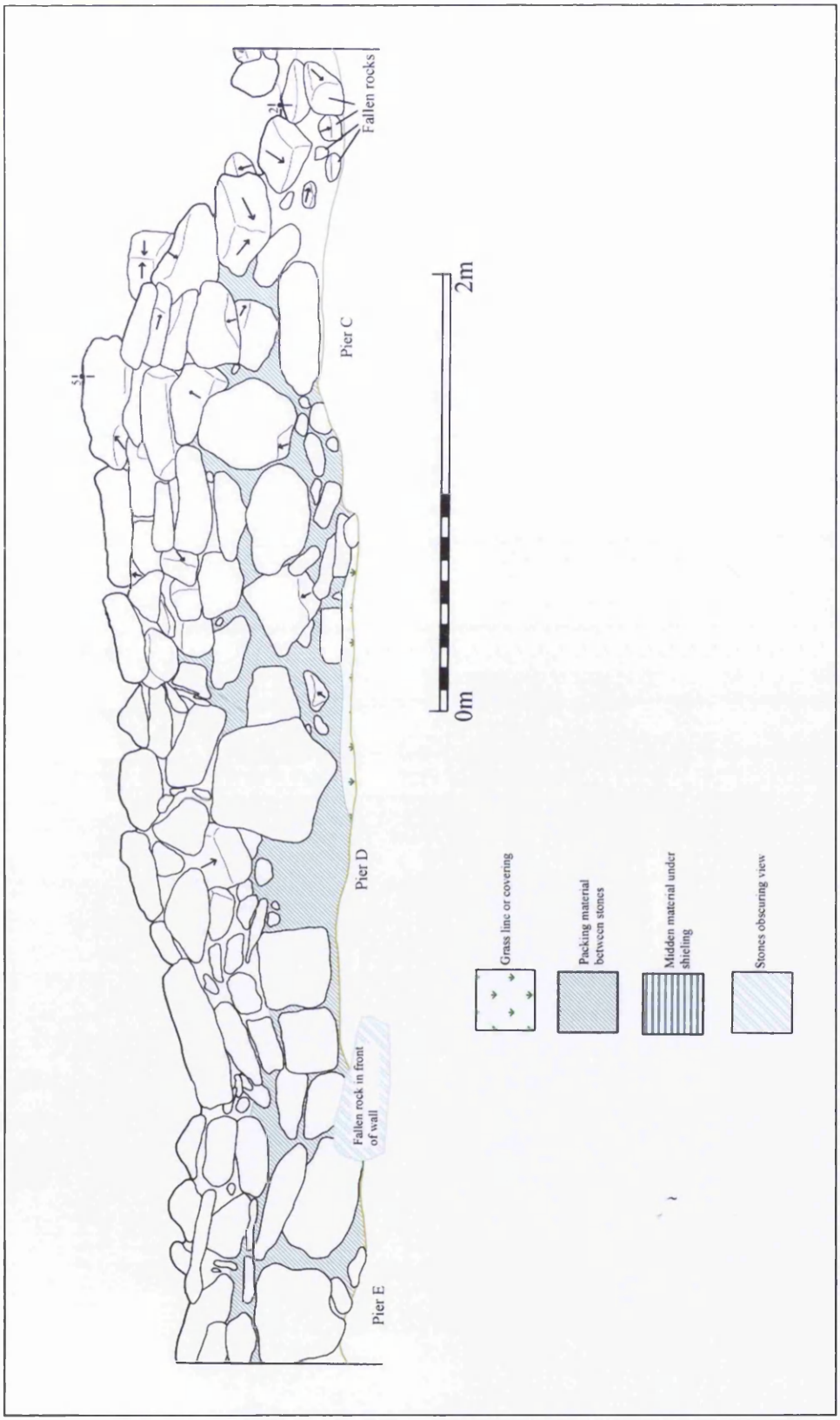

Figure 52: Inner wall section 3.

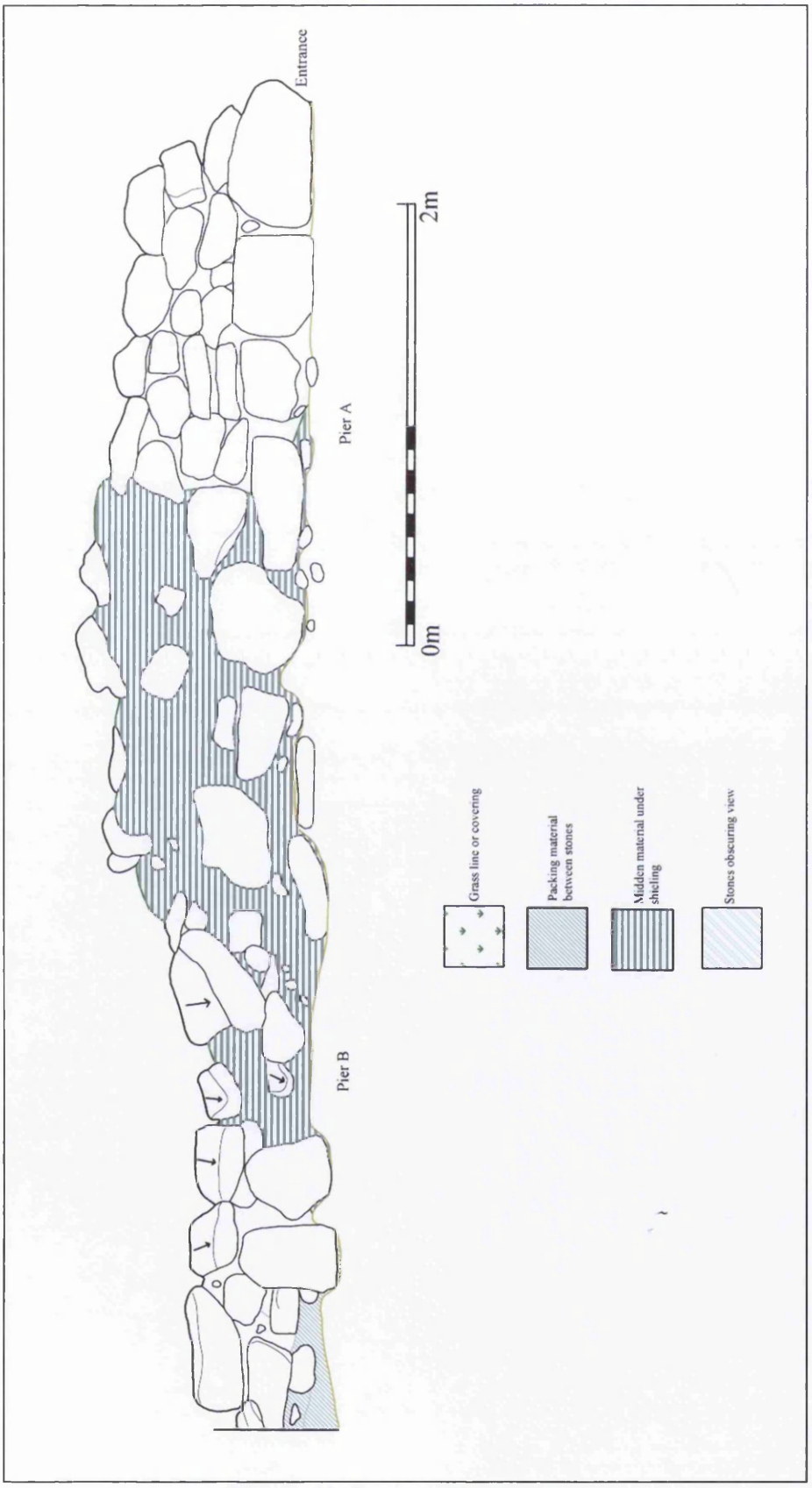

Figure 53: Inner wall section 4

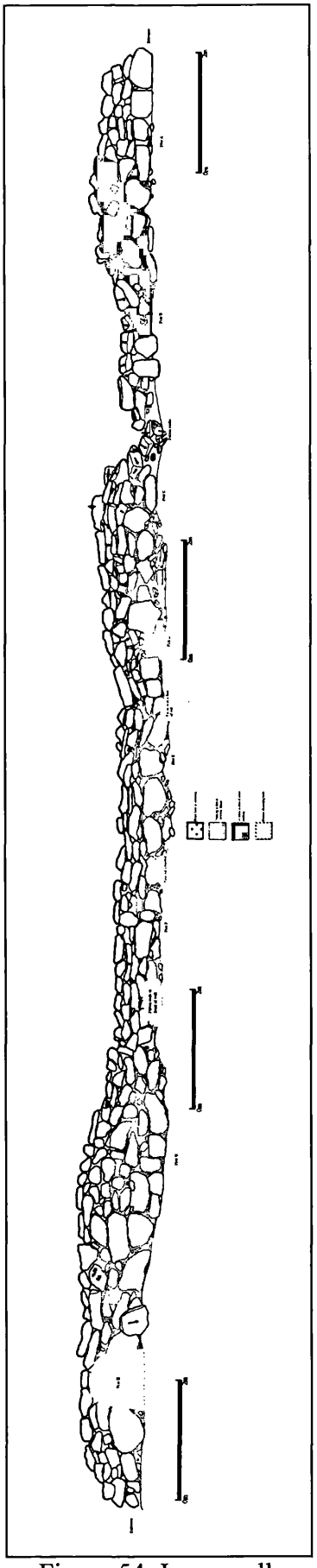

Figure 54: Inner wall.

Appendix Two

The Bagh nam Feadag Ceramics

A total of 2309 sherds were recovered from the excavations carried out by Roy Ashworth representing a minimum of 130 vessels. The collection weighted 36.76Kg and the diagnostic sherds consisted of 107 rims sherds, 72 bases and 54 decorated sherds. At Sollas A/B some 3000 sherds were recovered, representing a minimum of 205 vessels (Campbell 1991, 148), and at Clettraval, Scott recovered in excess of 3000 sherds (Scott 1948, 56). The volume recovered at Bagh nam Feadag is comparable with the quantities recovered from other similar wheelhouse sites although the methods of excavation and limits of scope, particularly with reference to primary floor deposits, would account for the lower end of the expected amount recovered. Also, arguably, the multiple phases of occupation at Bagh nam Feadag would suggest that a significant amount still resides at the site or was discarded during the excavation. The latter would seem unlikely as the contents of the assemblage would suggest that whatever was found was collected and retained. The only real question of how much was discarded would focus upon the techniques used to excavate and the ability to recognise material culture.

As voiced in chapter one, the artefacts were recovered without any systematic recovery procedures in place and where context was assigned to a single item or bag of items it did not enable a detailed examination of the stratigraphic relationships. However, any context information that was provided by the excavator has been included in the following catalogue and an interpretation of each is offered by the writer.

The pottery descriptions are listed below, followed by the corresponding illustrations. The numbers that appear at the first part of each entry form the sherd number in bold, field number of the object concerned in {} and the bag from which it was retained in ( ). The reference in square brackets [x] (where shown) relates to the excavators grid plan. Additional information, when provided by the excavator, is an exact transcription and is presented in italics. Supplementary context is provided by the writer. Description of the pottery in section is always from the outside to the inside unless otherwise stated.

Pottery Catalogue

Everted Rim Jars (Figure: 55)

400 {1013(16)} Figure 55

Outer face: Lumpy brown surface, undulating at rim zone. Inner face: Medium smooth brown interior, not as lumpy as outer face. Section: Hard brown/grey with groove at the bottom where broken. Comments: At least three other vessels including a possible lid, from a bag of eighty sherds. Rim is well formed. Paralleled at Dun Bharabhat, Cnip (Harding and Dixon 2000, 37 fig 18 no 3). Radius: 128mm.
[H4] *Inside wall.* Context: Within structure III against wall and pier G junction.

401 {1008(10)} Figure 55

Outer face: Smooth brown surface with mica and some blackening at shoulder and above the break. Inner face: Brown at top becoming lighter toward bottom where it is a pinkish/brown. Some grits along the join where rim has been attached. Undulating surface with thumb impressions as a result of the tongue and groove smoothing. Section: Light brown with some grits. Break along the bottom is an inverted V-shape, and groove is smooth. Radius 114mm.
[H6] *Square room.* Context: Within structure III.

402 {1022(38)} Figure 55

Outer face: Brown with some blackening and sooting on underside of rim. Some very fine grits with mica. Fairly smooth – treated. Inner face: Brown with some larger grits including stone and quartz, as well as mica. Coarser appearance than other surface with less treatment. Indications of two grooves on inner face of everting rim. Possibly turned. Section: Hard with some fine grits. Brown, slightly darker on outer edge. Comment: Named 'Med' on bag. From the same bag as pink/orange V-shaped rim (12^{th} to 14^{th} century, illus 151). Radius: 107mm.

403 {1033(57)} Figure 55

Outer face: Brick red/ pink, very smooth with few fine grits. Horizontal striations. Inner face: Same colour, no striations. Section: Pinkish/red with a black/brown core. Very thin walled. Comment: Unusual colour, only example of this fabric in collection. Radius: 90mm.

[I9+10] *On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling.* Context: Where structure I undercuts the shieling (VI). Could be associated with shieling use as opposed to the roundhouse.

404 {1040(62)} Figure 55

Outer Face: Brown with some blackening and sooting on underside of rim. Fairly smooth. Inner Face: Brown with some fine grits including stone and quartz, as well as mica. Radius 70mm.

[E3 D4] Context: Where structure Va cuts against wheelhouse wall (II), possibly from wall core.

405 {1004(7)} Figure 55

Outer face: Buff/reddish on rim and top of shoulder, darkening to grey/black on lower parts. Flakes of sooting on lower portion (below the break). Glue overspill along break. Surface above break changes from to glossy from matt. Horizontal wipe marks on lip of rim. Inner Face: Orange, fairly smooth where not covered in soot flakes. Undulating surface below the break, more consistent above. Glue visible along break. Section: Grey with some orange patches. Coil visible at bottom where body is 5mm thick. Radius not measurable.

[H5+6] Context: From within structure III.

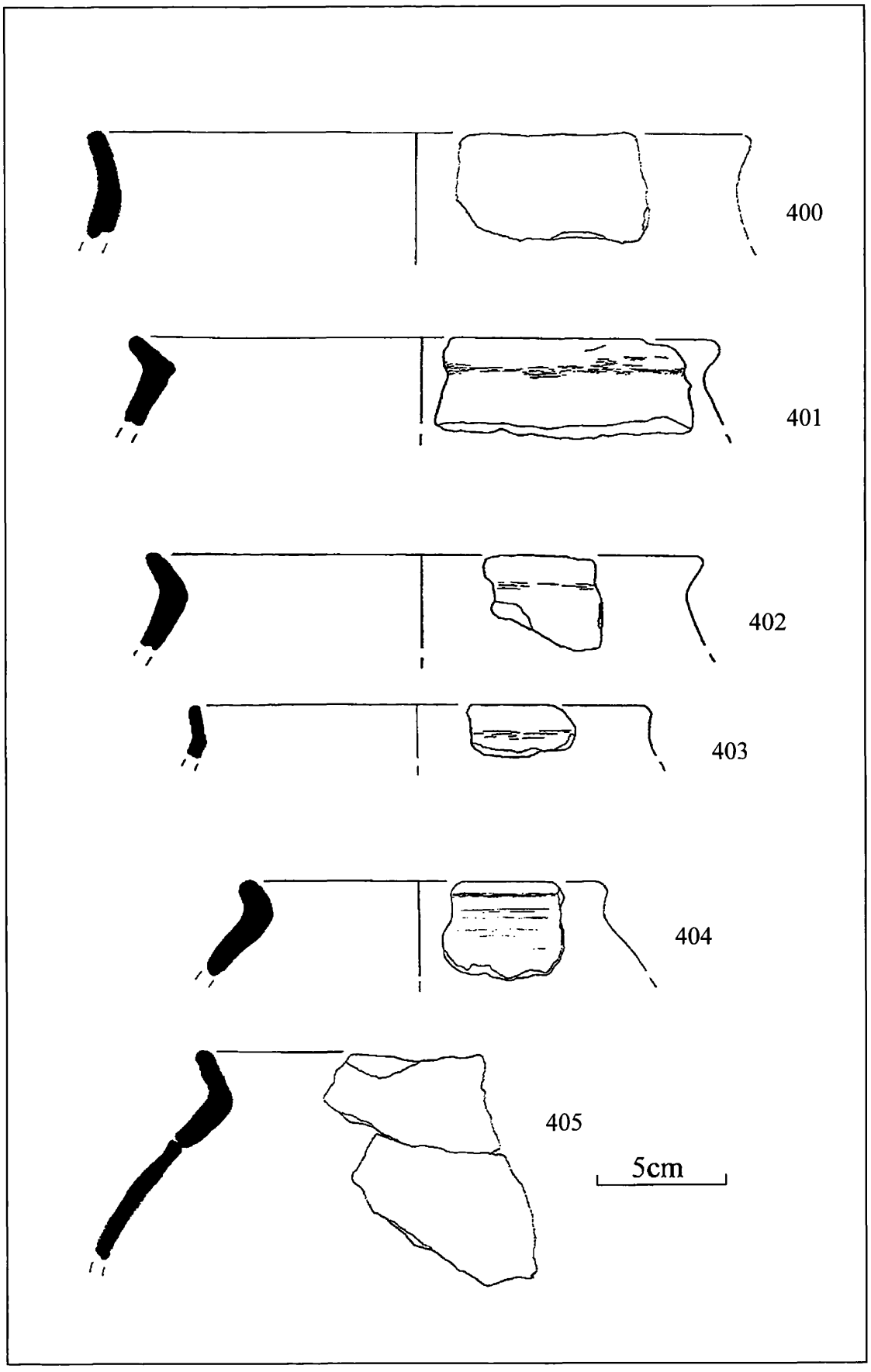

Figure 55: Everted rim jars.

Hole Mouth or Incurving Rim Jars (Figure: 56)

406 {1012(14)} Figure 56

Outer Face: Medium smooth, light orange with browner areas. Some fine grits. Inner Face: Rough and coarse with large grits. Colour changes from light grey at top to light orange at bottom. Section: Soft orange core with some fine grits. Probably a broken flat coil. Comments: The crudeness and 'low' context would suggest that this sherd is the earliest pottery recovered by the excavation. Radius 90mm.

[6,8,9] *Low.*

407 {1003(6)} Figure 56

Outer Face: Dark brown with black staining and sooting. Fairly smooth but with small grits and voids. Lozenge shaped void is possibly from an inclusion and not decoration, although decoration at this position on the vessel is common. Inner Face: Greyish brown with many fine grits. Has not been as well smoothed as outer face. Section: Greyish brown as inner face with small grits. One void at top of section smaller than that on outer face, but similar in appearance. Radius 80mm.

[G4] *Inside wall.* Context: Between structure III and bay three.

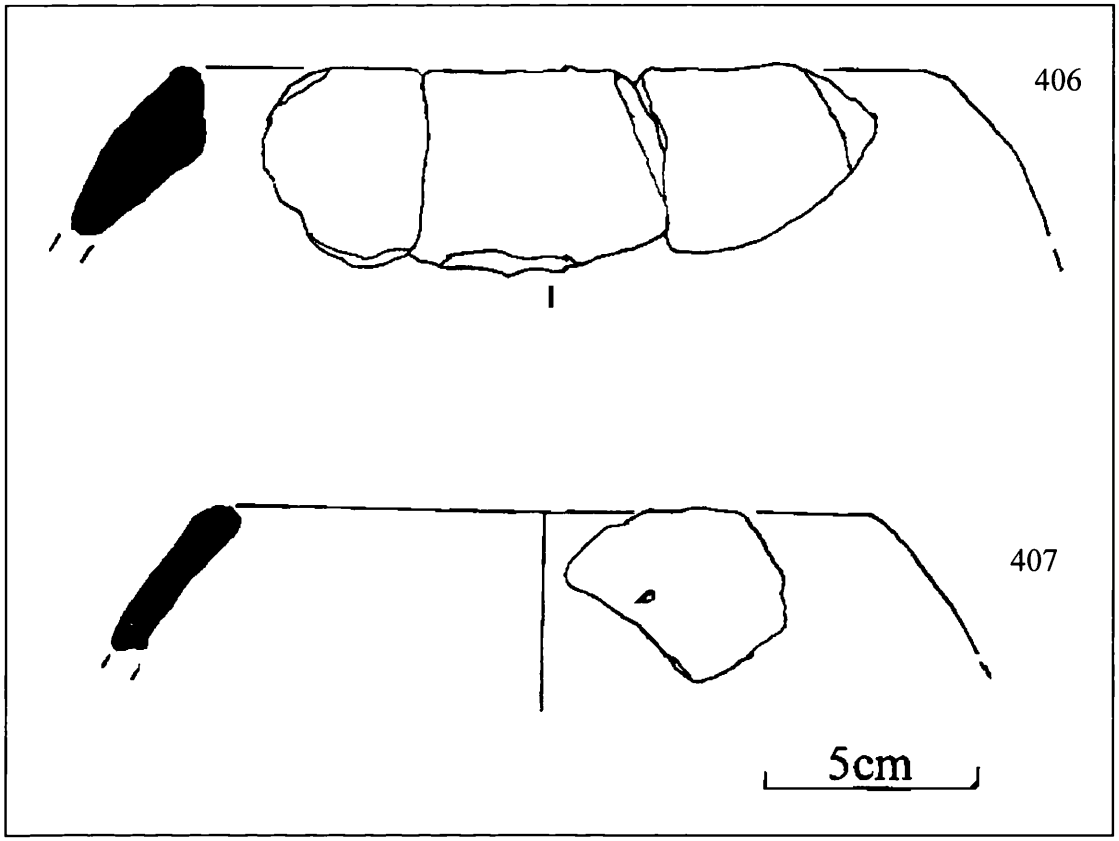

Figure 56: Hole mouth or incurving rim jars.

Upright Rims / Plain Vessels (Figures 57, 58 & 59)

408 {1032(57)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, smooth with an undulating surface – similar to Craggan Ware. Few fine grits and projecting ledge at rim. Inner Face: Same colour, less undulating. Section: Light brown/dark brown mix. Radius 140mm.

[I9+10] *On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling.* Context: In shieling (VI) where floor has been completely removed. However, probably associated with shieling and not from structure I floor.

409 {1023(39)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Orange/buff with some blackening. Smooth finish with some grass marks. Inner Face: Same colour. Rim well formed and flat along outurned edge. Section: Orange/buff at extremes with grey/brown in centre. Radius 85mm.

[I8+F10] *Some pottery from inside outer roundhouse on south hut.* Context: At location where structure I cuts underneath structure IVa [F10].

410 {1007(10)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Dark brown with sooting, fairly smooth surface. Rim has been outurned slightly. Top of rim has been wiped smooth and flattened. Inner Face: Dark brown with flakes of carbon and stained black areas. Slightly curving horizontal striations from wiping. Section: Lighter brown/buff with some small grits of shell. Radius 60mm.

[H6] *Square room.* Context: Within structure III.

411 {1001(2)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Reddish brown with darker areas, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Similar to outer face but a little rougher. Section: Reddish brown with fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Comments: Rim looks upright but could be part of an everted vessel. Slight out turn visible at lip of rim. Radius 45mm.

[G6] *Square hut.* Context: From structure III kerb area.

412 {1005(8)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Brown/buff mix, pitted but fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Light grey/brown with some fine grits of quartz. Slight lip on the inner edge of rim. Section: Light grey/buff with few grits. Comments: Top of the rim is undulating. Radius 70mm.

[H5+6] Context: From within structure III.

413 {178(50)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Dark brown and fairly smooth with few fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Inner Face: Same as outer face but slightly rougher. Section: Light brown with some fine grits. Radius not measurable.

[I7] Context: Near wheelhouse entrance and pier H.

414 {134(29)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Black/dark grey with flattened rim. Inner Face: Dark grey/black with heavy sooting and carbonaceous deposits. Section: Black with some softer sandy brown patches. Radius not measurable.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular south hut.* Context: Northern wall of structure Iva.

415 {136(29)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Dark brown with heavy sooting. Rim has been flattened. Inner Face: Brown, fairly smooth, with some fine grits of shell and quartz. Section: Sandy brown changing to a darker brown on interior. Radius not measurable.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular south hut.* Context: Northern wall of structure Iva.

416 {217(62)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Dark brown with a clean and smooth finish. Rim is flat and has a T-shape ledge. Inner Face: Same but slightly lighter brown. Section: Dark brown. Comments: Tongue and groove construction. Radius not measurable.

417 {177(50)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Dark brown and fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same as outer face. Section: Light brown with grits visible. Radius not measurable.

[I7] Context: Near wheelhouse entrance and pier H.

418 {202(56)} Figure 57

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, some fine grits. Inner Face: Buff/light brown, fairly smooth. Section: Buff with some black flecks. Radius not measurable.

[F3 G3] *Outside wall.* Context: Over outer wheelhouse wall at north west.

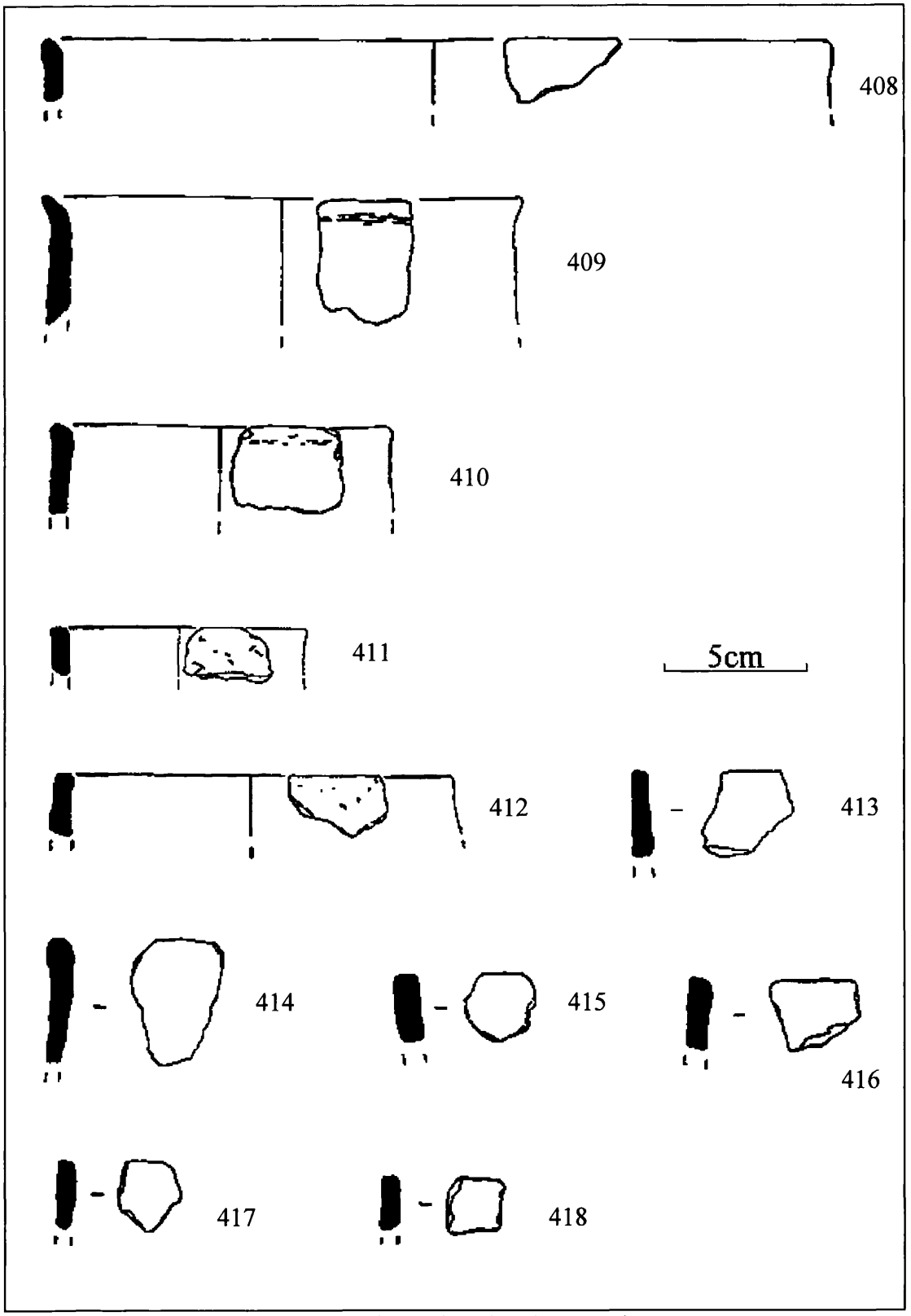

Figure 57: Upright Rims / Plain Vessels – 1.

419 {1021(30)} Figure 58

Outer Face: Dark brown to black, medium smooth. Flakes of soot over half of surface, terminating just below rim. Undulating rim, though constant in thickness.

Inner Face: Same colour as outer, no flakes of soot but some blackening. Similar smoothness. Section: Hard fired, brown/black, consistent colour throughout core. Radius 130mm.

[F7] *Low*. Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

420 {1015(16)} Figure 58

Outer Face: Lumpy brown/buff with some orange patches. Inner Face: Dark brown with some fine grits and two indentations (organic temper?). Small area of sooting. Section: From brown/buff to dark brown. Comments: Tongue and groove construction. Radius 100mm.

[H4] *Inside wall*. Context: Outer wheelhouse (II) and structure III wall.

421 {1006(8)} Figure 58

Outer Face: Brown/buff mix with orange patches, some blackening. Few grits, criss-cross wipe marks. Slight ridge along rim 3mm from top edge. Inner Face: Same colour, few grits, possibly wiped smooth – faint horizontal striations. Section: Dark brown, some fine grits, thin walled. Comments: Rim slightly flattened. Radius 75mm.

[H5+6] Context: From within structure III.

422 {1024(40)} Figure 58

Outer Face: Dark brown with buff patches where worn. Lumpy and undulating although fairly smooth. Diagonal wipe marks. Rim is undulating. Inner Face: Same colour as outer face. Some fine grits. Projecting lip along inner terminal of rim. Section: Buff/brown at edges with black core. Comments: Possible Craggan ware. Radius 130mm.

[B10] *Clearance of 'deposite' low by old wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure Ivb.

423 {1017(21)} Figure 58

Outer Face: Dark brown but much of surface obscured by heavy carbonaceous deposit. Hint of a ridge where the tongue and groove meet in upper section. Sooting continues over rim and into top 20mm of inner face. Inner Face: Light grey to buff/brown with some fine grits. Projecting surface 24mm down from rim where

tongue and groove pushes clay out. Section: Dark brown to light grey. Clear tongue and groove construction visible. Radius 110mm.

[E7] Context: In front of bay five near duct.

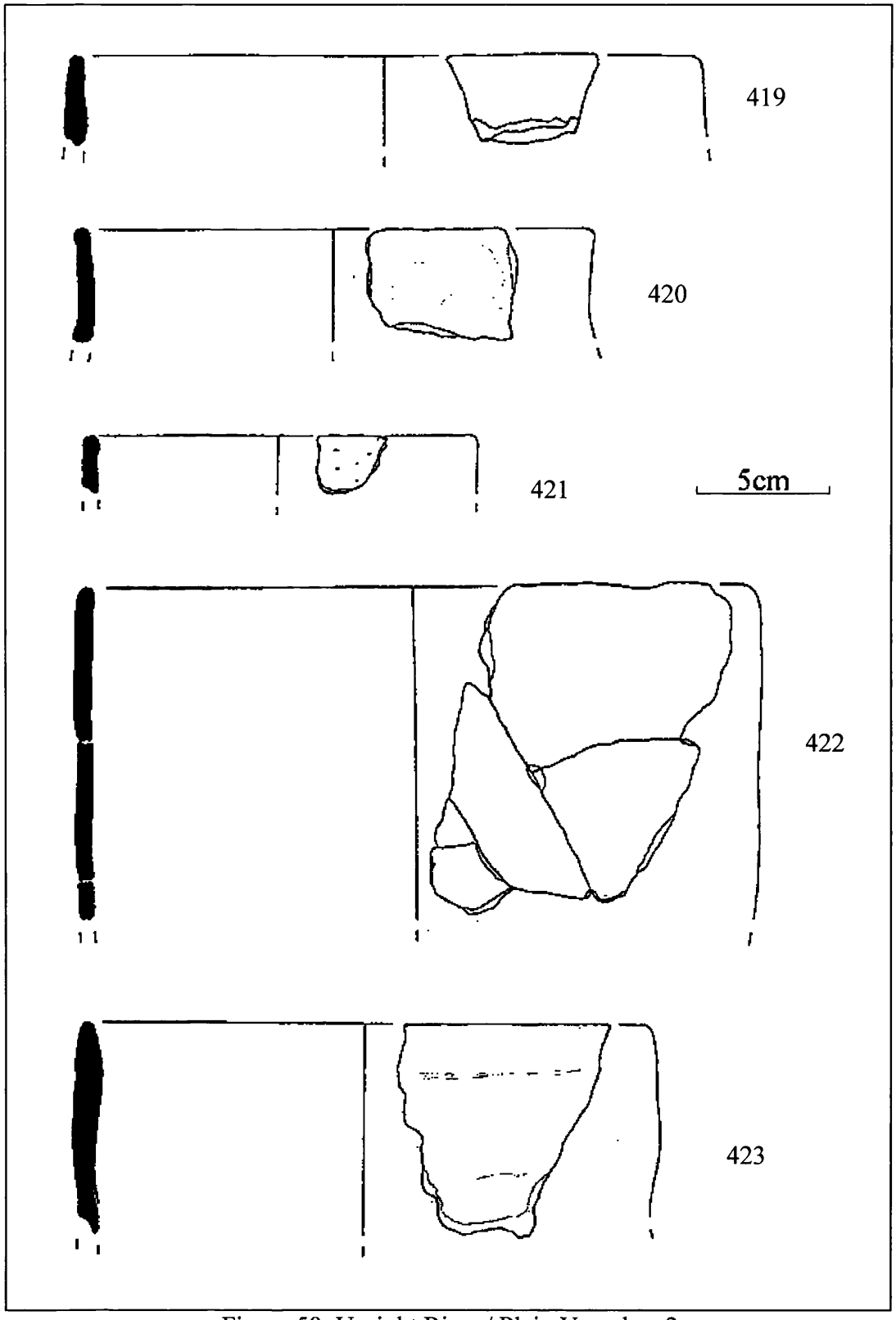

Figure 58: Upright Rims / Plain Vessels – 2.

424 {121(19)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Buff/light brown mix with some orange at the bottom. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Smooth rim with projecting ledge to the inside. Some horizontal striations. Inner Face: Similar colour but with some dark brown patches. Slightly larger grits on inner face of igneous rock and quartz. Section: Dark greys and browns. Comments: Tongue and groove construction. Radius not measurable.
Over wall SE end. Context: unknown.

425 {130(24)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Dark brown with heavy sooting. Well formed rim with T-shape projecting ledge. Inner face: Light brown with pinkish/grey patches. Fine grits of igneous rock. Section: Brown and grey mix. Radius not measurable.

426 {221(66)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Dark brown with pitted surface, raised grits consisting of igneous rock and quartz. Some sooting. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher and more undulating than outer surface. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

427 {114(16)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Orange/brown with light brown patches, quite lumpy, with grits of igneous rock and quartz. Inner Face: Dark brown at top becoming lighter towards bottom. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Section: Orange/light brown mix turning dark brown/grey on interior. Comments: Possibly tongue and groove construction. Radius not measurable.

428 {152(41)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Orange/brown, rounded rim, few fine grits of igneous rock. Inner Face: Same colour and smoothness. Section: Dark brown with orange patches. Radius not measurable.
[F4+5] *Very low base layer ash with bedding layer.* Context: Around bay three of the wheelhouse (II).

429 {176(50)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Dark brown and fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Light brown, fairly smooth with few fine grits including quartz. Section: Light brown with some grits. Thin walled. Radius not measurable.

[I7] Context: Near wheelhouse entrance and pier H.

430 {120(18) Figure 59

Outer Face: Dark brown, fairly smooth. Rim has been flattened by finger. Inner Face: Slightly lighter brown, same smoothness. Section: Light grey with orange patches. More grits visible in section than on faces. Radius not measurable.

[F11] *Lowest level adjacent to primary roundhouse foundation.* Context: South east of structure Iva.

431 {170(49)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Light brown and fairly smooth. Inner Face: Same as outer face. Section: Light brown with some fine grits. Radius not measurable.

[I5,6,7] Context: Over outer wall of structure II and III.

432 {135(29)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Black/dark grey with some fine grits including quartz. Inner Face: Dark grey/black mix with heavy sooting. Section: Black with sandy/brown areas. Radius not measurable.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular south hut.* Context: Northern wall of structure Iva.

433 {129(24)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Dark brown with some sooting and carbonaceous flakes. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour and smoothness but wipe marks visible on inner face only. Section: Brown with a black core. Radius not measurable.

434 {185(51)} Figure 59

Outer Face: Dark brown, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same as outer face but slightly rougher. Radius not measurable.

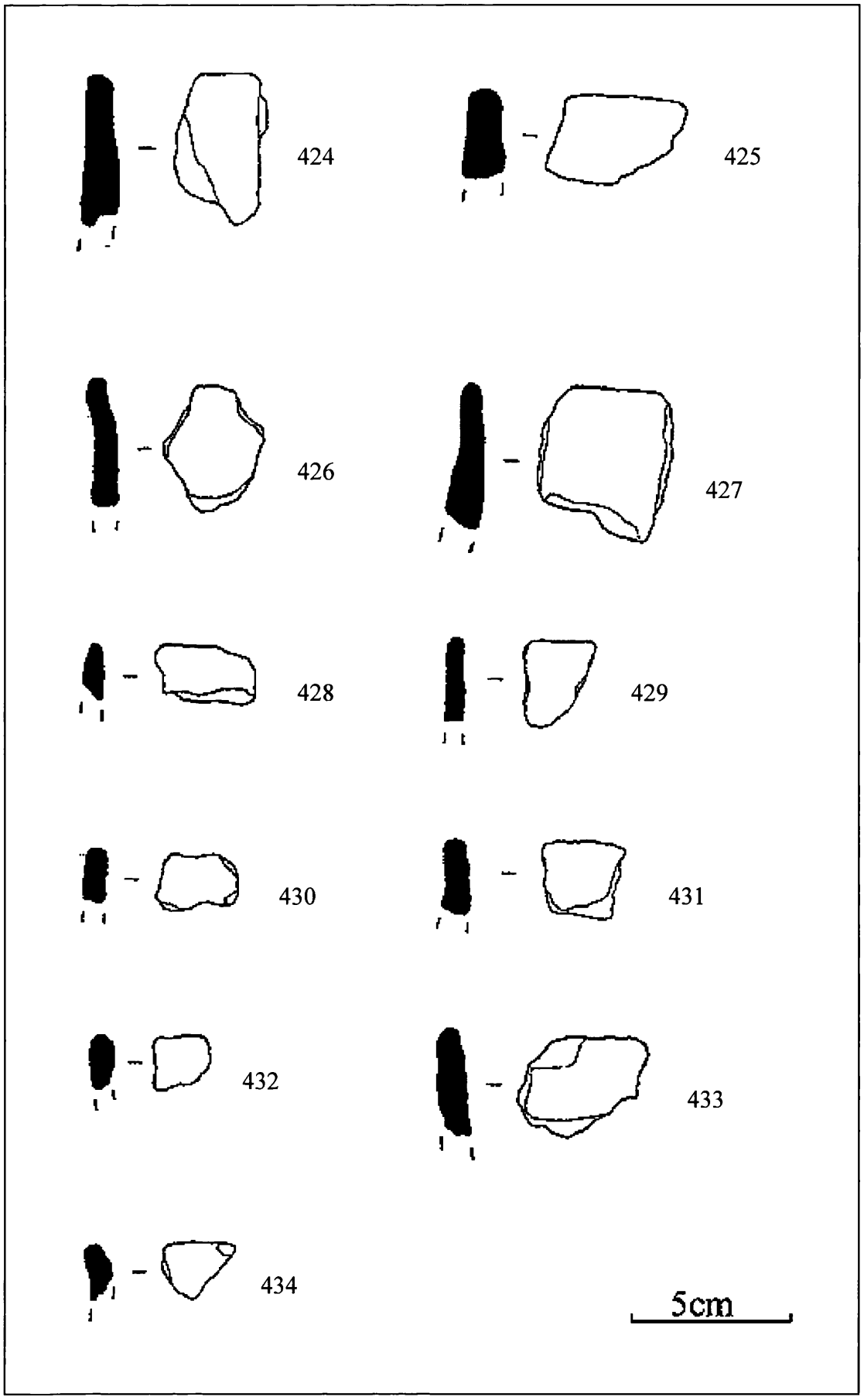

Figure 59: Upright Rims / Plain Vessels – 3.

Medieval Upright or Flaring Rims (Figures 60 & 61)

435 {1045(64)} Figure 60

Outer Face: Dark brown with carbonaceous deposits. Surface is fairly smooth although undulating where coil smoothing has pushed the clay outwards. Inner Face: Same colour but with no carbon deposits. Coil join has been poorly smoothed, leaving a protruding lip. Some horizontal striations on upper half of surface. Glue along join. Radius 145mm

436 {1030(51)} Figure 60

Outer Face: Brown/pinkish above neck, pinky/buff on shoulder, turning darker along decorated markings. Three sherds joined, glue on cracks. Smooth with few fine grits. Projecting ledge along rim. Decoration comprises teardrop shape impressions. Inner Face: Same colour but with some grey. Decoration on rim comprises horizontal lozenge-shape impressions. Rim is angled outwards to show markings. Section: Clear division between pinky/buff and dark grey on inner half. Radius 84mm.
Various places low in south hut. Context: South hut normally refers to structures Iva and Ivb.

437 {1046(65)} Figure 60

Outer Face: Reddish brown/buff, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Two rims joined with glue along break. Diagonal striations from wiping. Stabbed rim – round holes c.1mm deep, regularly spaced. Rim is angled slightly outwards. Inner Face: Same colour, but with more fine grits making a slightly rougher surface on the lower half in particular. Section: Ginger/buff with some darker areas in the centre. Comments: No signs of sooting. Radius 70mm
[E/D 10/11] Context: Inside structures Iva and Ivb.

438 {225(66)} Figure 60

Outer Face: Dark brown with pitted surface and raised fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher and more undulating then outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

439 {224(66)} Figure 60

Same fabric as **438**{225(66)}. Radius not measurable.

440 {220(65)} Figure 60

Outer Face: Dark brown with carbonaceous deposits. Surface is fairly smooth. Inner Face: Same colour but with no carbon deposits. Similar smoothness to outer face. Comments: Five stab marks on rim. Radius not measurable.

441 {222(66)} Figure 60

Same fabric as **438**{225(66)}. Radius not measurable.

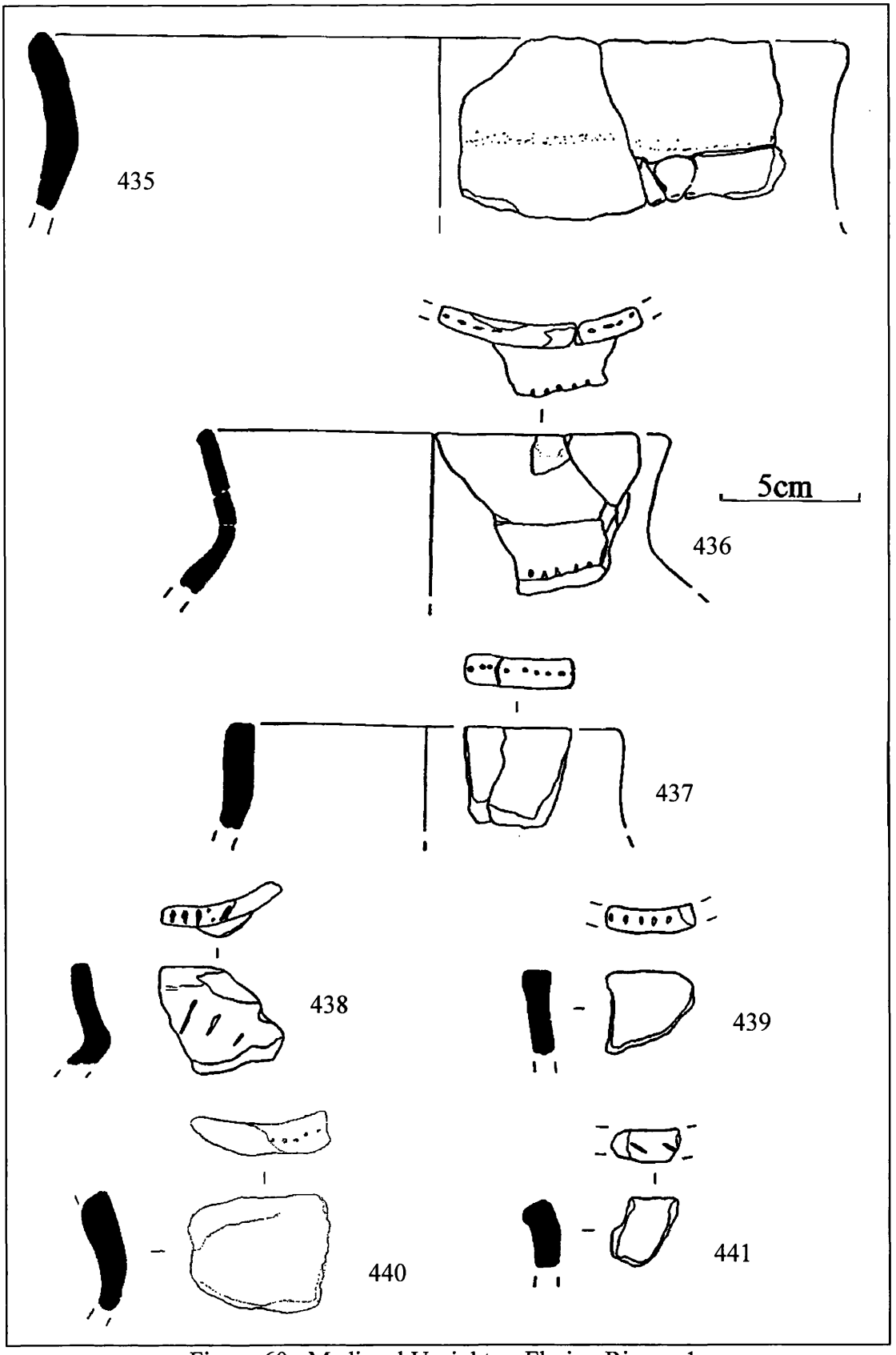

Figure 60: Medieval Upright or Flaring Rims – 1.

442 {1047(65)} Figure 61

Outer Face: Reddish brown/buff, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Some horizontal striations. Stabbed rim – decoration appears to break at left edge where rim is still intact. Inner Face: Same colour, some fine grits of igneous rock, quartz and shell. Grits are absent from upper 10mm of rim. Section: Reddish brown/buff with some darker areas. Comments: No sooting. Rim stab marks look to have been executed in three straight rows of four. Radius 80mm.

[E/D 10/11] Context: Inside structures Iva and Ivb.

443 {212(57)} Figure 61

Outer Face: Dark brown with black staining, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Buff with cracks where the rim has been folded over. Slightly undulating surface and not as smooth as outer face. Section: Dark brown with some black patches. Radius not measurable.

[I9 + 10] On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling. Context: From the shieling (VI) inserted on to the top of the mound.

444 {205(56)} Figure 61

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, some fine grits. Inner Face: Buff/light brown. Section: Buff with some black patches. Radius not measurable.

[F3 G3] *Outside wall.* Context: From side of outer wheelhouse wall.

445 {206(56)} Figure 61

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, fairly smooth with some fine grits. Inner Face: Buff/light brown, same smoothness as outer face. Section: Buff with some black patches. Radius not measurable.

[F3 G3] *Outside wall.* Context: From side of outer wheelhouse wall.

446 {155(42)} Figure 61

Outer Face: Pinkish/buff colour, with a nicely smoothed rim. Some fine grits of quartz. Inner Face: Same colour, very few fine quartz grits. Section: Buff/orange with some quartz inclusions. Comments: One of only two examples of this fabric in assemblage (also 151). Radius not measurable.

[E/D 10/11] Context: Inside structures Iva and Ivb.

447 {115(16)} Figure 61

Outer Face: Dark brown with some carbonaceous deposits. Fairly smooth with few fine grits of quartz with mica. Inner Face: Same colour except at rim where it is lighter and worn, also fairly smooth. Section: Same colour except at top where it is slightly lighter. Radius not measurable.

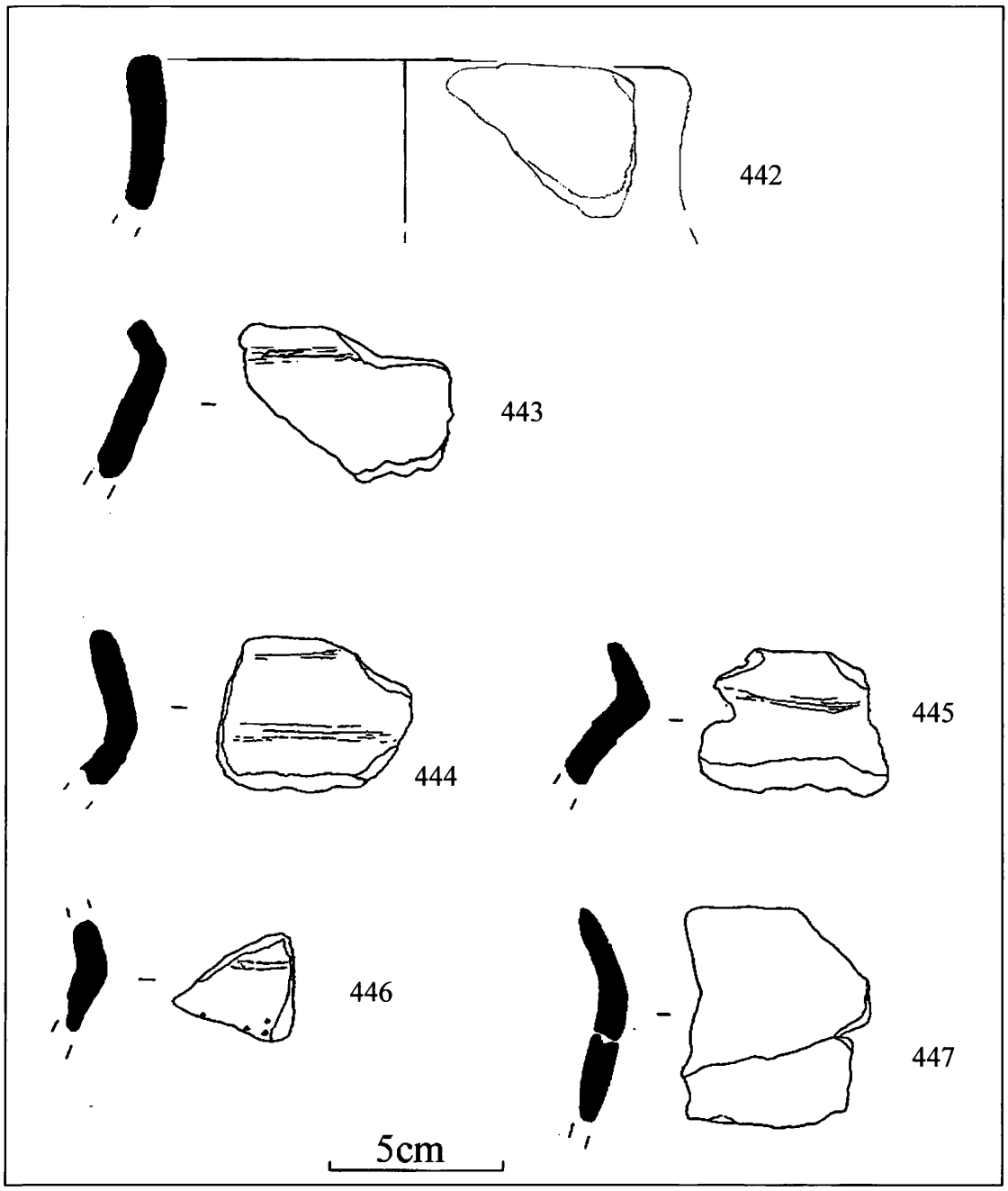

Figure 61: Medieval Upright or Flaring Rims – 2.

Stabbed Rims (Figure 62)

448 {186(51)} Figure 62
Outer Face: Dark brown, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same as outer face but slightly rougher. Section: Dark brown with black flecks. Radius not measurable.

449 {187(51)} Figure 62
Same fabric as **448** {186(51)}. Radius not measurable.

450 {188(51)} Figure 62
Same fabric as **448** {186(51)}. Radius not measurable.

451 {189(51)} Figure 62
Same fabric as **448** {186(51)}. Radius not measurable.

452 {190(51)} Figure 62
Same fabric as **448** {186(51)}. Radius not measurable.

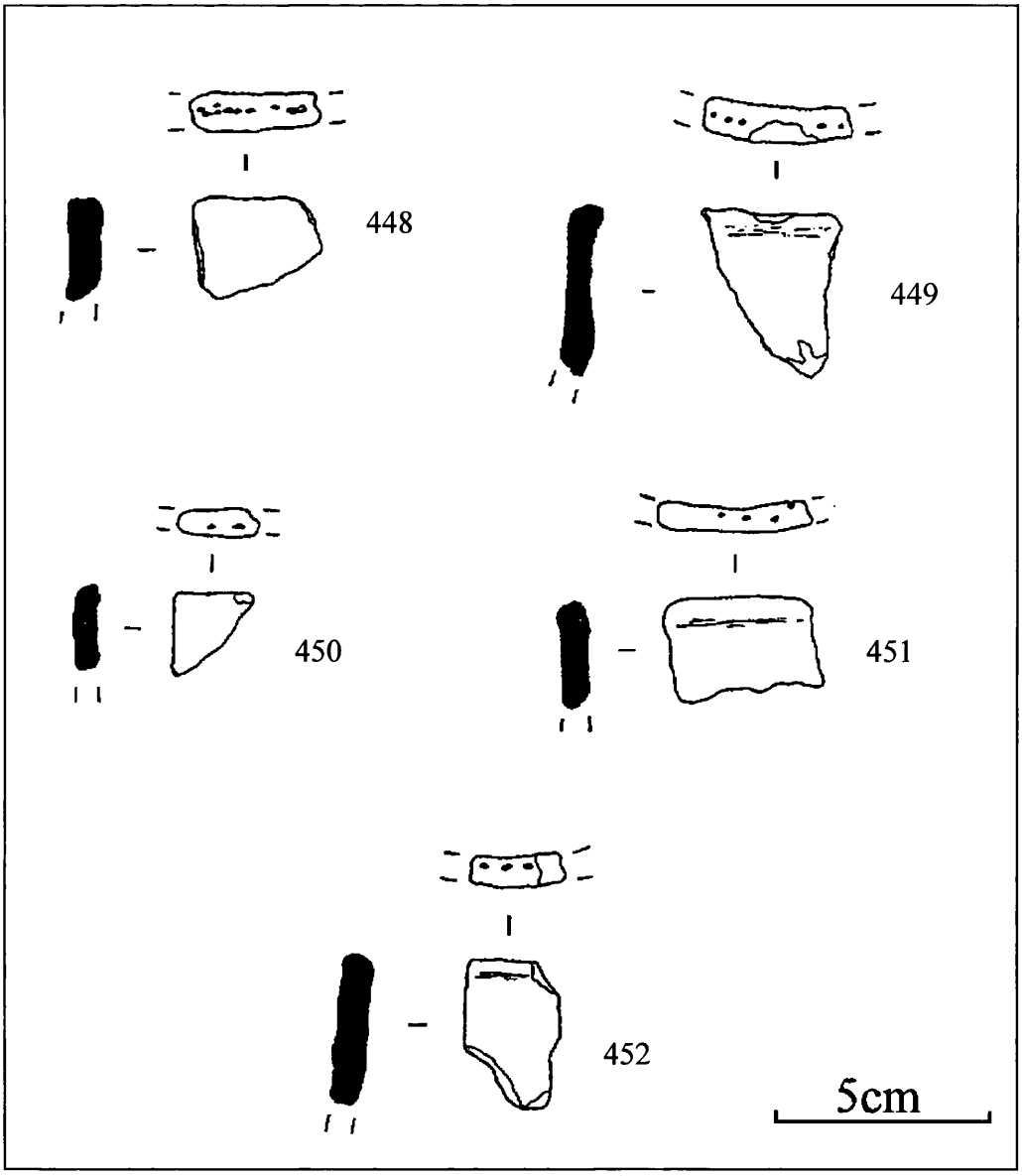

Figure 62: Stabbed rims.

Bases – Various forms (Figures 63, 64, 65, 66 & 67)

453 {1038(59)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Carbonaceous deposit over surface obscures fabric. Sooting line runs along upper edge of projecting basal ledge. Surface is fairly smooth and well formed under carbon deposit. Inner Face: Light brown/buff with some fine grits on body portion, ceasing at basal join. Grits of igneous rock, shell and quartz. Section: Buff on upper body section changing to dark grey/brown mix below. Radius 115mm.

[I8 + F10] *Same pottery from inside outer roundhouse on south hut.* Context: From behind pier A and north wall of structure Iva.

454 {1019(27)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Light brown on lower 5-10mm with blackening towards the top. Fairly smooth with criss-cross marks on base, possibly grass marking. Inner Face: Light brown/buff, similar smoothness to outer face. Section: Brown/buff with some fine grits. Radius 130mm.

455 {1002(5)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Heavy black sooting over entire surface with some white staining. Inner Face: Pitted sandy yellow with some fine quartz grits. Section: Sandy yellow blackening 1mm from outer face. Basal lip is blackened and contains two large quartz grits. Radius 75mm.

[H6] *Square room.* Context: Within structure III.

456 {191(57)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Black, thick rounded base with heavy sooting. Inner Face: Same as outer face. Section: Black, hard fired. Radius not measurable.

457 {1036(59)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Dark brown/buff, fairly smooth with some blackening. Few fine grits including quartz. Some horizontal striations. The base has a pitted uneven surface and possible grass marking. Slight projecting ledge along basal join. Inner Face: Lighter brown/buff with some sub-angular quartz inclusions. Coarser surface than outer face. Section: Buff on upper portion darkening on the base portion to a light brown. Radius 95mm.

[I8 + F10] *Same pottery from inside outer roundhouse on south hut.* Context: From behind pier A and north wall of structure Iva.

458 {216(61)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Dark Brown with a lumpy and pitted base and some fine grits of igneous rock. Inner Face: Light brown with some grey areas and similar gritting to outer face. Section: Dark brown becoming lighter towards interior. Radius not measurable.

[F11] Lowest level adjacent to primary roundhouse foundation. Context: Within structure Iva where structure I runs underneath it.

459 {1026(45)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Brown/black, lumpy and undulating. Fairly smooth on left, coarse on right where broken. Some horizontal striations. Base surface is coarser than outer face. Inner Face: Brown with many fine grits giving a fairly coarse surface. Grits of igneous rock and shell with mica. Section: Grey/black with some brown at basal edge (<2mm from edge). Radius 55mm.

[A9] *Outside/against east wall of rectangular wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure Ivb.

460 {214(61)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, sooting on bottom terminating with a line at the middle and carbonaceous flakes around basal area. Inner Face: Same colour but with no sooting and grits slightly more prominent. Section: Dark brown with lighter patches. Radius not measurable.

[F11] Lowest level adjacent to primary roundhouse foundation. Context: Within structure Iva where structure I runs underneath it.

461 {117(12)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Flat footed base, orange/buff with light browns. Some fine grits of igneous rock, projecting ledge where base meets body. Inner Face: Heavy carbonaceous deposits. Section: Outer 2mm buff/light brown, turning black towards interior. Radius not measurable.

[G.7] *Square hut.* Context: Kerbing in front of structure III.

462 {203(56)} Figure 63

Outer Face: Buff/light brown mix with some fine grits. Inner Face: Buff/light brown. Section: Buff with some black patches. Radius not measurable.

[F3 G3] *Outside wall.* Context: From side of outer wheelhouse wall.

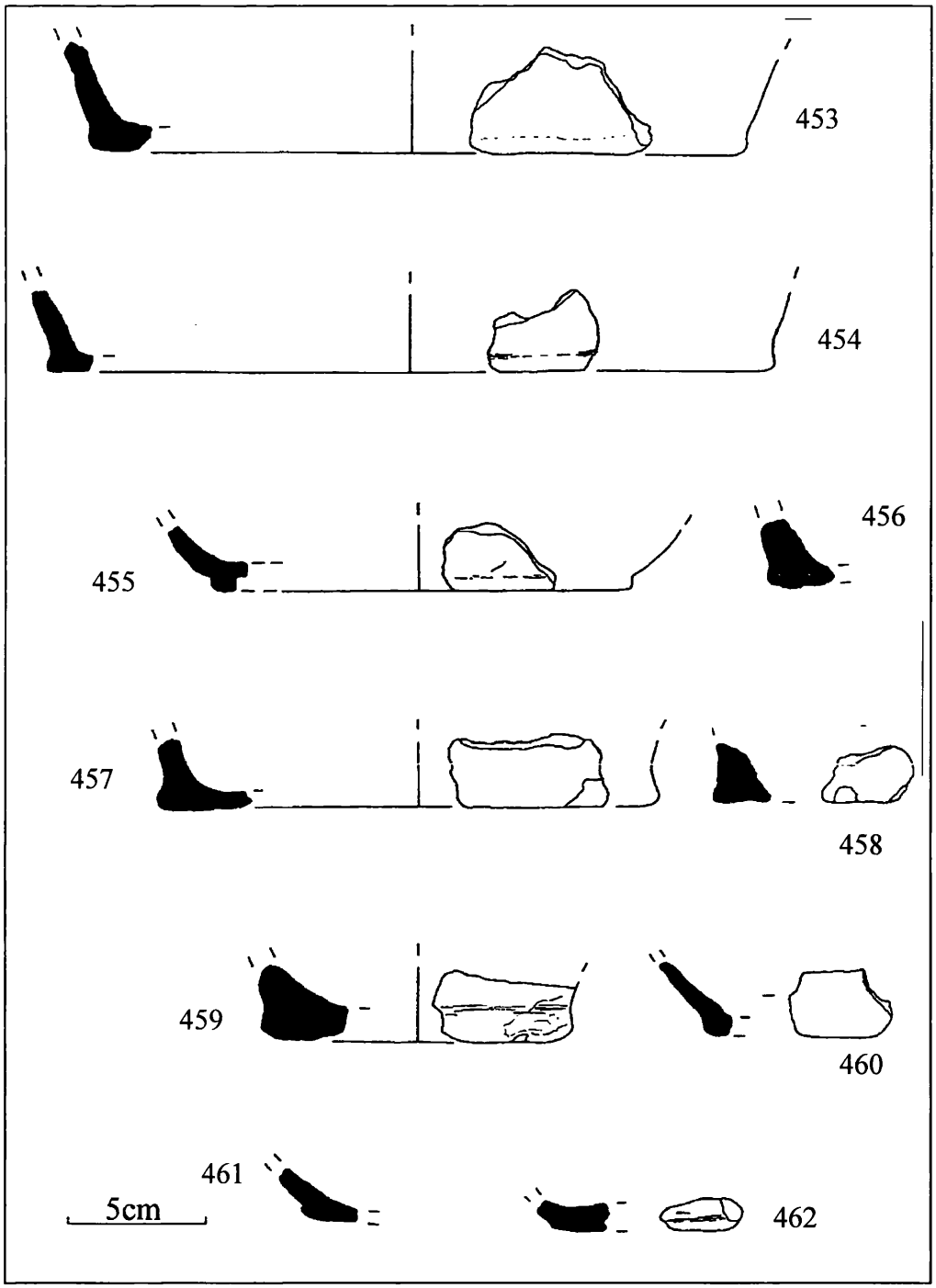

Figure 63: Bases – Various Forms -1.

463 {1025(45)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Black with some sooting. Medium smooth with coil junction with base visible on underside. Inner Face: Same colour and smoothness with some carbonaceous flakes. Section: Grey/black and hard fired. Radius 85mm.

[A9] *Outside/against east wall of rectangular wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure Ivb.

464 {1028(46)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Grey/black with brown at basal edge. Fairly smooth. Inner face: Black, lumpy and with some fine grits. Section: Grey/black with some brown. Radius 65mm.

[I8 H8] Context: Around bay eight below the shieling (VI).

465 {1029(47)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Black at top with carbonaceous flakes. Black/reddish brown at basal curve, becoming reddish brown/buff on base. Sooting line visible. Body surface is fairly smooth, base surface is rough with grits ranging from 1-3mm. Inner Face: Buff with 3 voids (<3mm), many fine grits of quartz, igneous rock and shell. Rougher than outer face. Section: Reddish brown/buff on outer edge turning grey/buff on inner. Some fine grits including shell. Comments: Prehistoric, not associated with shieling. Radius 70mm.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular southern hut.* Context: North west corner of structure Iva where wall cuts through wheelhouse (II).

466 {166(47)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Black, rounded base with heavy sooting. Inner Face: Buff/light brown, some medium sized grits of quartz and shell making a rough surface. Section: Black and dark greys. Radius not measurable.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular southern hut.* Context: North west corner of structure Iva where wall cuts through wheelhouse (II).

467 {167(47)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Black with heavy sooting. Flat footed, grass marks on base, some fine grits of igneous rock. Inner Face: Black, grits more obvious but less sooting covering the surface than outer face. Radius not measurable.

468 {161(43)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Light brown with blackened areas, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Orange with some brown, slightly rougher than outer with some quartz grits. Section: Black with dark grey, some fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Radius not measurable.

[F9] *Downside of possible pier*. Context: Around pier B/bay seven.

469 {1037(59)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Dark brown/buff, fairly smooth with some blackening. Few fine grits including quartz. Some horizontal striations. The base has a pitted uneven surface and possible grass marking. Slight projecting ledge along basal join. Inner Face: Lighter brown/buff with some sub-angular quartz inclusions. Coarser surface than outer face. Section: Buff on upper portion darkening on the base portion to a light brown. Radius 65mm.

I8 + F10 *Same pottery from inside outer roundhouse on south hut*. Context: From behind pier A and north wall of structure Iva.

470 {1039(62)} Figure 64

Outer Face: Buff/light brown. Very fine grits/inclusions. Solid fabric with only mica Visible. Fairly smooth and no sooting or blackening. Inner Face: Same colour as outer face, but slightly darker. Smoother finish, possibly self-slipped. Radius 65mm.

[E3 D4] Context: Where structure Va cuts against outer wheelhouse wall (II).

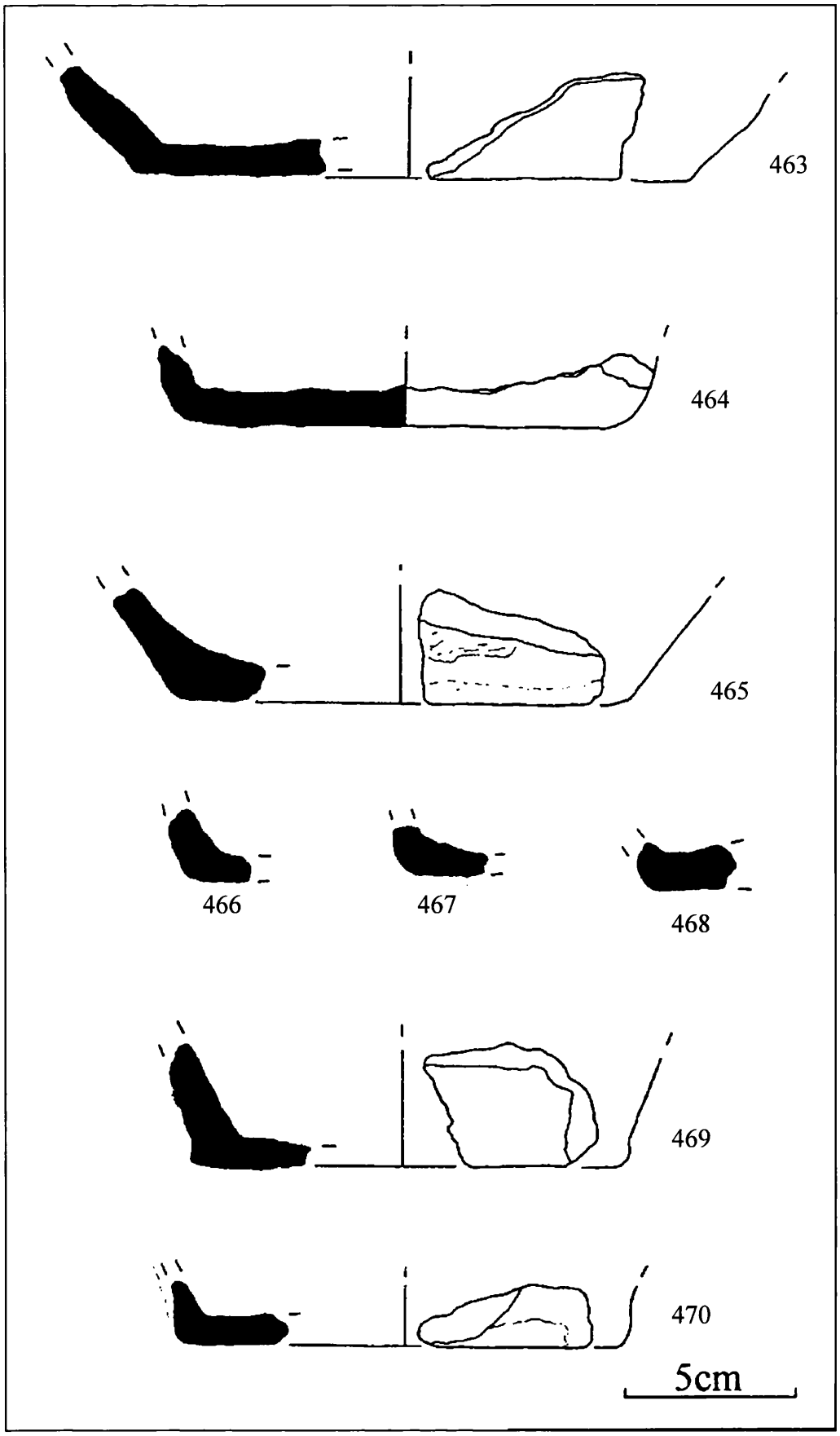

Figure 64: Bases- Various Forms – 2.

471 {1000(1)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Grey/brown with black staining on lower 10mm. Footed, fairly smooth but undulating. Inner Face: Similar colour, slightly greyer with some fine grits. Not as smooth as outer face. Bottom edge of flat coil visible where it attaches to the base. Section: Dark grey with some fine grits of igneous rock. Coil construction visible. Radius 65mm.

[G4] *Inside wall.* Context: Between structure III and bay three.

472 {1018(26)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Light brown/buff, fairly smooth with flat of base slightly lumpier. Inner Face: Similar to outer face but with more fine grits. Section: Light brown/buff, darkening slightly in centre with few fine grits. Radius 40mm.

[F7] *Higher.* Context: From the centre of the wheelhouse (II).

473 {195(52)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Dark brown with lighter patches, smooth with no grits. Inner Face: Light brown/buff with some fine igneous rock and quartz grits. Section: Buff/light brown mix. Radius not measurable.

[F4} *On base layer in ash on bedding.* Context: From within bay three.

474 {193(51)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Dark brown with orange patches and fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange with brown areas. Fairly smooth with some fine grits and mica. Section: Dark brown with some black areas. Radius not measurable.

[A9] *East end of south hut at A9 against outer wall.* Context: Close to entrance of Ivb.

475 {196(53)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Buff with blackened areas, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner face: Buff/light brown, fairly smooth, slightly rougher then outer face. Section: Buff/light brown mix. Radius not measurable.

[F4] *On base layer in ash on bedding.* Context: From within bay three.

476 {194(52)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Dark brown, with light patches, smooth with no grits, slight ridge around the base. Inner Face: Light brown/buff with some fine igneous rock and quartz grits. Section: Dark brown with some fine grits. Radius not measurable.

[E6] *Centre in and around pauine (paving) inside kerb joining piers.* Context: Possibly near kerb between piers F and G.

477 {215(61)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Dark brown, fairly smooth but lumpy around basal area. Inner Face: Light brown, fairly smooth. Section: Brown at outer 2mm turning a lighter brown with some orange. Radius not measurable.

[F11] Lowest level adjacent to primary roundhouse foundation. Context: Within structure Iva where structure I runs underneath it.

478 {149(51)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Dark brown with orange patches and fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange with brown areas. Fairly smooth with some fine grits and mica. Section: Dark brown with some black areas. Radius not measurable.

[A9] *East end of south hut at A9 against outer wall.* Context: Close to entrance of Ivb.

479 {144(33)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Brown, fairly smooth with some fine grits. Some sooting on basal area. Inner Face: Orange/brown, few fine grits with mica visible. Section: Changes across section from dark brown to light orange at inner surface. Radius not measurable.

480 {171(49)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Black with heavy sooting. Inner Face: Same colour with some fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Section: Black, hard fired. Radius not measurable.

[I5,6,7] Context: outer wheelhouse wall/structure III west wall.

481 {142(31)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Buff/light brown with some sooting. Inner face: Same colour, undulating and has few fine grits. Section: Brown, thin walled. Radius not measurable.

Over vall SE end. Context: Possibly eastern wall of structure Ivb.

482 {162(44)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Dark brown, thin walled, some horizontal striations and fine grits of quartz with mica. Inner Face: Dark brown, some horizontal striations. Section: Dark brown. Comments: Disintegrating and very fragile. Radius not measurable.

[E9] *Under + demolished later room.* Context: Where north wall of structures Iva and Ivb cut thought the south wheelhouse (II) wall.

483 {204(56)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Buff/light brown mix with some fine grits. Inner Face: Buff/light brown. Section: Buff with some black patches. Radius not measurable.

[F3 G3] *Outside wall.* Context: From side of outer wheelhouse wall.

484 {213(60)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Orange with buff areas and some soot marks, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange/ginger. Section: Outer third brown becoming orange towards interior. Radius not measurable.

[F7] Context: From the centre of the wheelhouse (II).

485 {199(54)} Figure 65

Outer Face: Orange/ginger, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange/ginger with some fine grits of igneous rock. Section: Orange with black flecks. Radius not measurable.

[E6] *Centre in + around paving inside kerb joining pier.* Context: Possibly near kerb between piers F and G.

486 {200(54)} Figure 65

Same fabric as **485**{199(54)} Figure 47. Radius not measurable.

[E6] *Centre in + around paving inside kerb joining pier.* Context: Possibly near kerb between piers F and G.

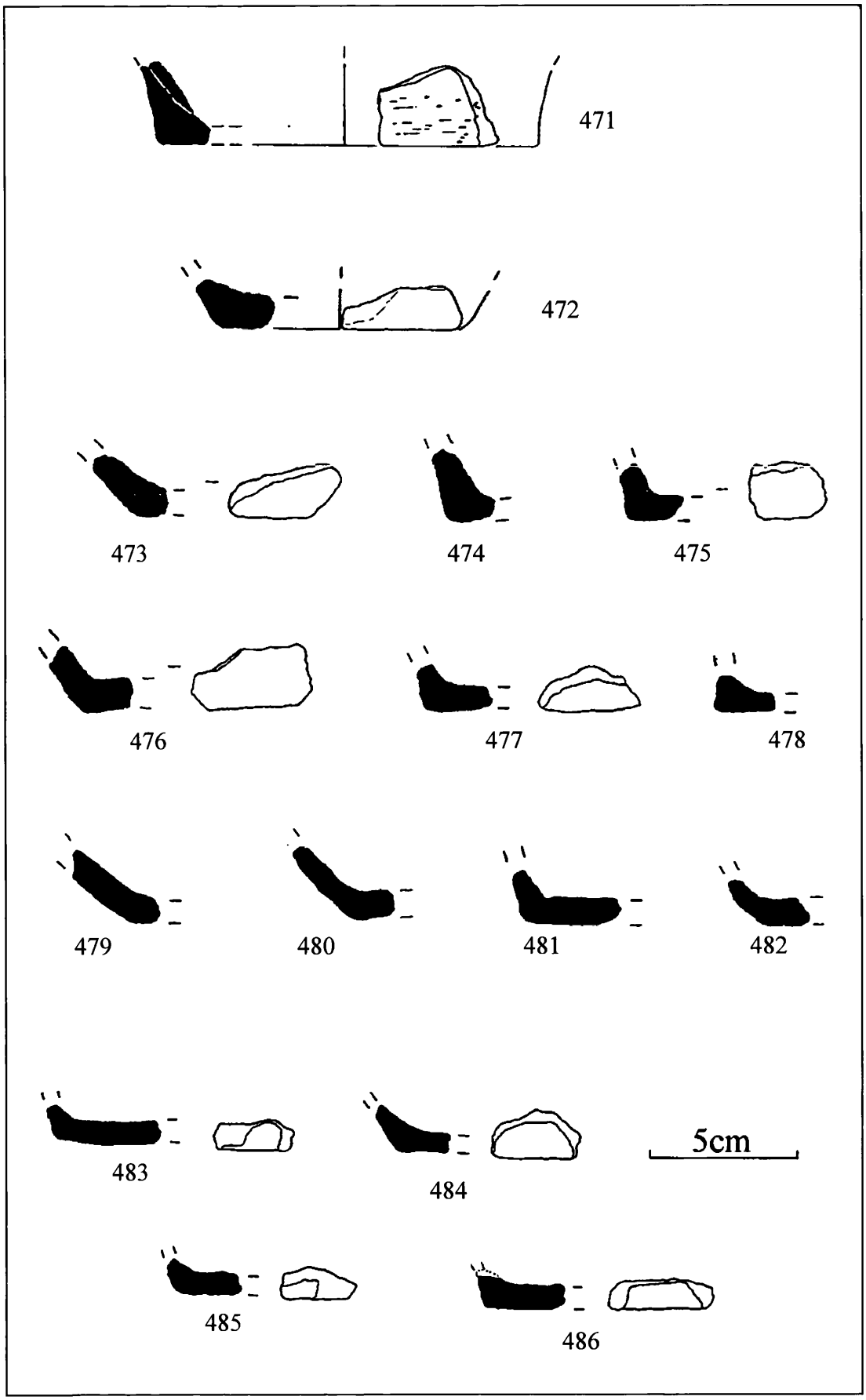

Figure 65: Bases – Various Forms – 3.

487 {1027(46)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Grey/black with brown at basal edge. Sooting 2mm above base and on some of the basal surface. Fairly smooth but undulating around base – two finger impressions visible where smoothed. Some fine grits. Possible grass markings on base. Inner Face: Black, with lumpy surface with few fine grits. Finish is fairly smooth. Thumb impressions around base but not decorative. Section: Grey/black with some brown flecks. The wall of the vessel at the join is very thin. Comments: Could be a lid. Radius 70mm.

[I8 H8] Context: Around bay eight below the shieling (VI).

488 {1014(16)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Only a small portion of outer face survives – lower section. Fairly smooth brown/buff with few fine grits. Inner Face: Grey/black with sooting and some fine grits. Section: From brown/buff developing to grey/black from centre to interior. Radius 70mm.

[H4] *Inside wall.* Context: Within structure III against outer wall.

489 {4000(444)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Black, heavy sooting. Inner face: Black, medium smooth, some fine grits. Section: Black, hard fired. Comments: Shallow bowl, curved base, possibly Viking.

[F7] *Downside + flat stone.* Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II).

490 {164(45)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Black, flat footed base, with slight lip, hard fired few grits and heavy sooting. Inner Face: Black with carbonaceous deposits. Section: Black, hard fired. Radius not measurable.

[A9] *Apportionment A9 outside/against east wall of rectangular wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure Ivb.

491 {218(62)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Dark brown with some sooting. Inner face: Lighter brown, fairly smooth. Section: Dark brown with some fine grits of igneous rock. Radius not measurable.

492 {116(12)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Orange/buff with some light browns, medium smooth. Inner Face: Completely covered with carbonaceous flakes. Section: Orange/buff for outer 1mm then turns black. Comments: Grass lines on base. Radius not measurable.

[G7] *Square hut.* Context: Kerbing in front of structure III.

493 {141(30)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Dark brown, fairly smooth, few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour and smoothness with some sooting. Section: Dark brown with some fine grits of igneous rock. Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Low*. Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

494 {163(45)} Figure 66

Outer Face: Black, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with black areas. Section: Black with some medium sized inclusions concentrated on basal area. Comments: Similar to 1025 and 102). Radius not measurable.

[A9] *Apportionment A9 outside/against east wall of rectangular wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure Ivb.

495 {140(30)} Figure 48

Outer Face: Light brown, undulating and coarse. Basal surface is blackened. Inner Face: Dark brown/black, some fine grits. Possible clay added to support base on inside at coil join. Section: Outer 2mm is black, turning brown. Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Low*. Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

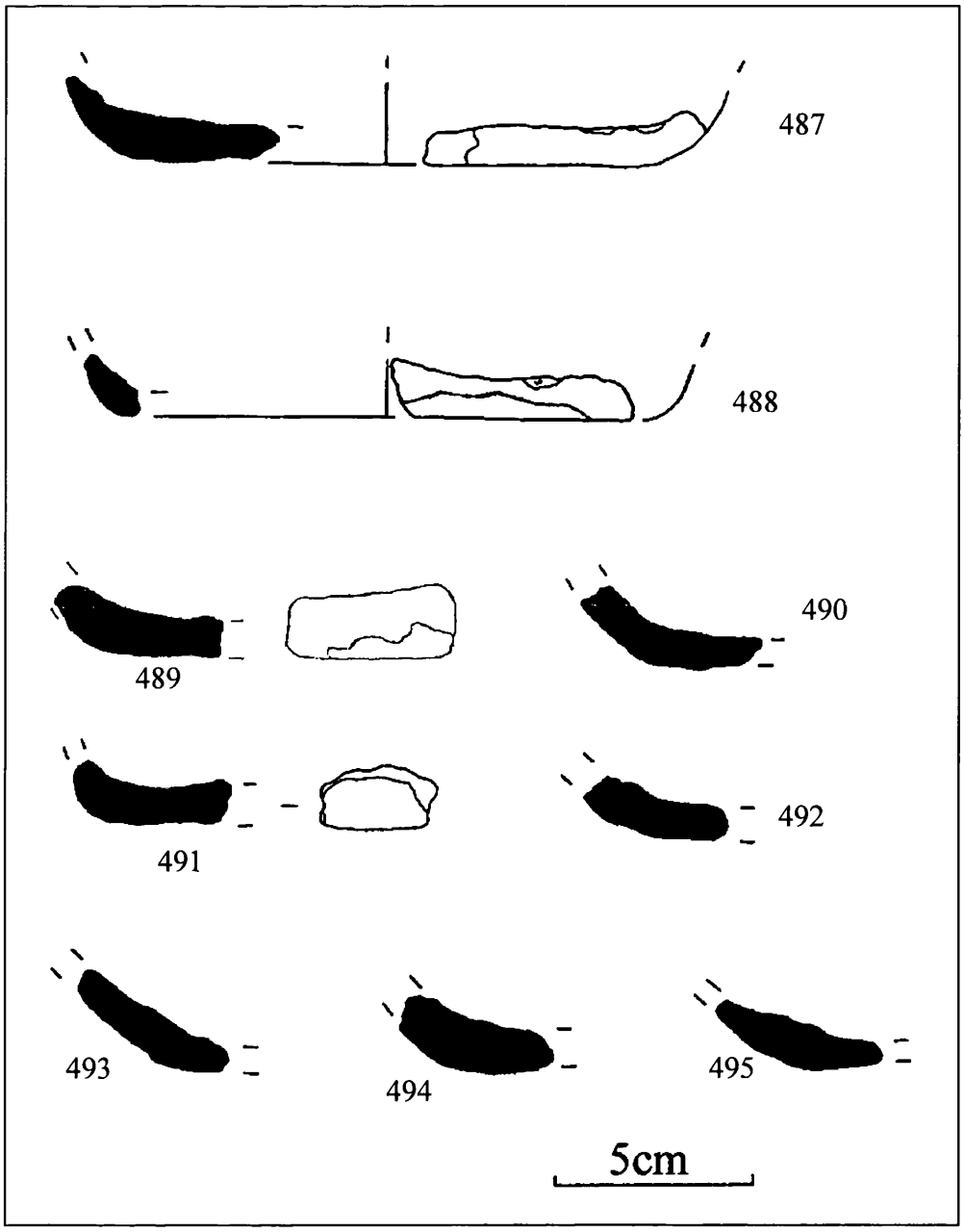

Figure 66: Bases – Various Forms – 4.

496 {1048} Figure 67

Outer Face: Fabric mainly obscured by heavy carbonaceous deposit. Sooting terminates 20mm from base showing dark brown/buff fabric. Fairly smooth with diagonal striations. Base has a lumpy, coarse appearance. Inner Face: Dark brown with fine grits producing a rougher surface than outer face. Some carbon/soot or residue on inner surface of base. Section: Dark brown/buff on outer third, inner portion grey/black. Radius 110mm.

497 {165(45)} Figure 67

Outer Face: Black with heavy sooting. Flat footed, grass marks on base, some fine grits of igneous rock. Inner Face: Black, grits more obvious but less sooting covering the surface than outer face. Radius not measurable.

[A9] *Apportionment A9 outside/against east wall of rectangular wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure IVb.

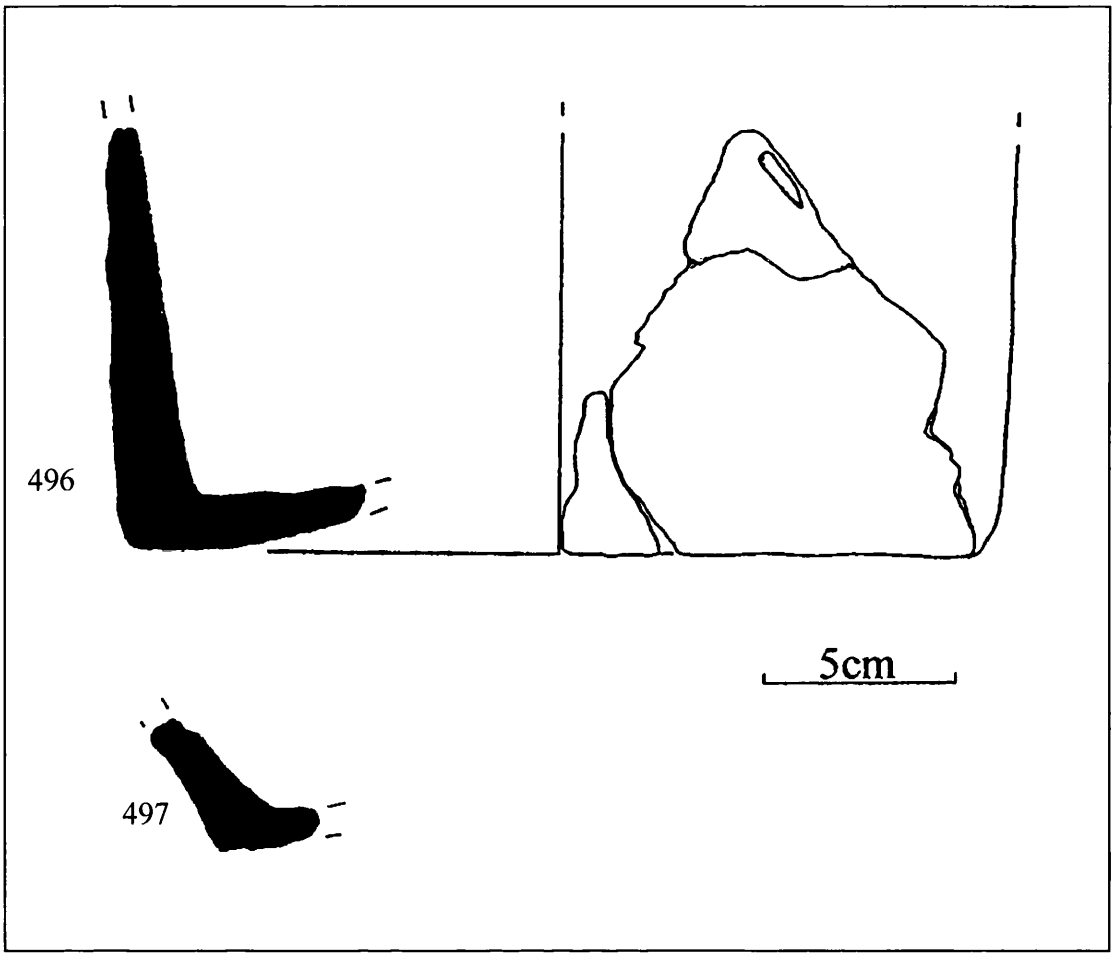

Figure 67: Bases – Various Forms – 5.

Decorated Pottery – Various Forms (Figures 68, 69, 70, 71, 72 & 73)

498 {157(42)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Light brown with blackened areas, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher than outer face. Section: Black with dark grey, some fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Radius not measurable.

[E/D 10/11] Context: From within structure IVa and IVb.

499 {156(42)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Pinkish/buff with a nicely smoothed rim. Some fine quartz inclusions. Inner Face: Same colour, very few fine quartz grits. Section: Buff/orange with some quartz inclusions. Radius not measurable.

[E//D 10/11] Context: From within structure IVa and IVb.

500 {106(4)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark grey/black with carbonaceous flakes/soot. Fairly smooth. Three stabbed holes with a hint of a fourth on the left. Slight dip in the surface 3mm below the decoration. Inner Face: Range from light to dark browns. Some small quartz grits. Section: Very hard, black with some dark brown patches. Radius not measurable.

[G4] *Inside wall.* Context: Around pier G area and structure III.

501 {184(51) Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark brown, few fine grits, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with few fine grits, fairly smooth but rougher than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

502 {179(51)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark brown, few fine grits, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with few fine grits, fairly smooth but rougher than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

503 {183(51)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark brown, few fine grits, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with few fine grits, fairly smooth but rougher than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

504 {181(51)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark brown, few fine grits, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with few fine grits, fairly smooth but rougher than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

505 {180(51)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark brown, few fine grits, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with few fine grits, fairly smooth but rougher than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

506 {182(51)} Figure 68

Outer Face: Dark brown, few fine grits, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Dark brown with few fine grits, fairly smooth but rougher than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

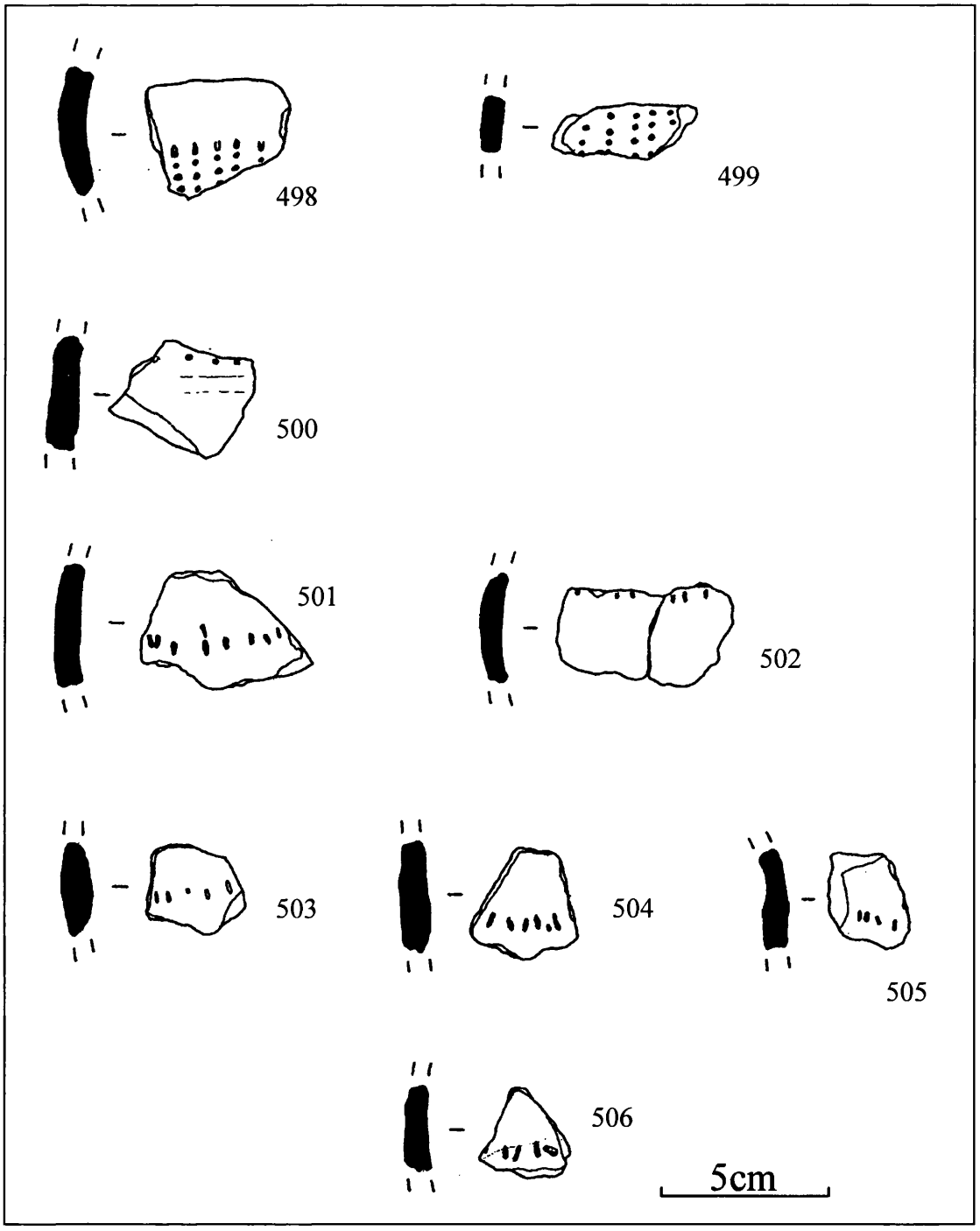

Figure 68: Decorated Pottery – Various Forms – 1.

507 {143(32)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Light brown and fairly smooth. Inner Face: Light brown, fairly smooth. Section: Light brown, some fine grits. Comments: Small sherd, orientation could differ. Radius not measurable.

508 {102(3)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Dark brown with some reddish brown staining and carbonaceous flakes. Fairly smooth. Vertical striations (although orientation could be different). The incisions are very shallow and taper from the top. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher with some fine grits of quartz shell and igneous rock. Section: Greyish brown, slightly blacker on outer edge (<1mm). Radius not measurable.

[H6] *Square room.* Context: From within structure III.

509 {108(9)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour and smoothness but more lumpy with an iron deposit. Section: Light brown on either edge with a darker core and some black flecks. Comments: Incisions are very shallow. Radius not measurable.

[H4+5] *On and in early roundhouse foundation.* Context: From within structure III.

510 {113(16)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Buff with light brown patches, fairly smooth with few fine grits of quartz, igneous rock and shell. Inner Face: Dark brown with carbonaceous deposits and same smoothness as outer. Section: Dark brown. Radius not measurable.

511 {118(17)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Dark brown with some orange at the top curve, fairly smooth, some fine grits of quartz with mica. Inner Face: Grey, darkening at the top, similar smoothness. Section: Dark brown for 2mm then light grey towards interior. Radius not measurable.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular south hut.* Context: Where structure Iva and Ivb cut against wheelhouse (II) wall.

512 {103(3)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Buff, no grits and fairly smooth (possibly self slipped). Two vertical incised lines, splaying slightly outwards. Other lines are possible grass markings. Inner Face: Same colour but with some fine grits including quartz, igneous rock and shell. Has a rougher appearance then outer face. Section: Buff/brown, hard with some fine grits. Radius not measurable.

[H6] *Square room.* Context: From within structure III.

513 {122(20)} Figure 69

Dark brown with orange speckles, lighter and smother on bottom portion, almost polished. Inner Face: Buff/light oranges and brown patches. Fairly lumpy and not as well finished as outer face. Section: Light brown with orange patches. Some fine quartz grits. Radius not measurable.

[E7] Context: From the centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

514 {131(25)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, smooth with very few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher with more fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. Section: Same colour. Comments: No sooting on either faces. Incision lines are sharply executed. Radius not measurable.

515 {109(9)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Buff with fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. Fairly smooth: Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher. Section: Same colour but with some black flecks. Radius not measurable.

[H4+5] *On and in early roundhouse foundation.* Context: From within structure III.

516 {110(9)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Buff with fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. Fairly smooth. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher. Section: Same colour but with some black flecks. Coil construction visible. Radius not measurable.

[H4+5] *On and in early roundhouse foundation.* Context: From within structure III.

517 {104(3)} Figure 69

Outer Face: Dark brown and very smooth, no grits, only mica visible. Slight traces of carbon/soot on lower half. Vertical incision is very shallow. Very small sherd, orientation could differ from illustrated. Inner Face: Pinkish/buff with some fine grits of quartz and igneous rock making a rough feeling surface – a stark contrast to the outer face. Section: Dark brown on outer half changing to pinkish/buff. Radius not measurable.

[H6] *Square room.* Context: From within structure III.

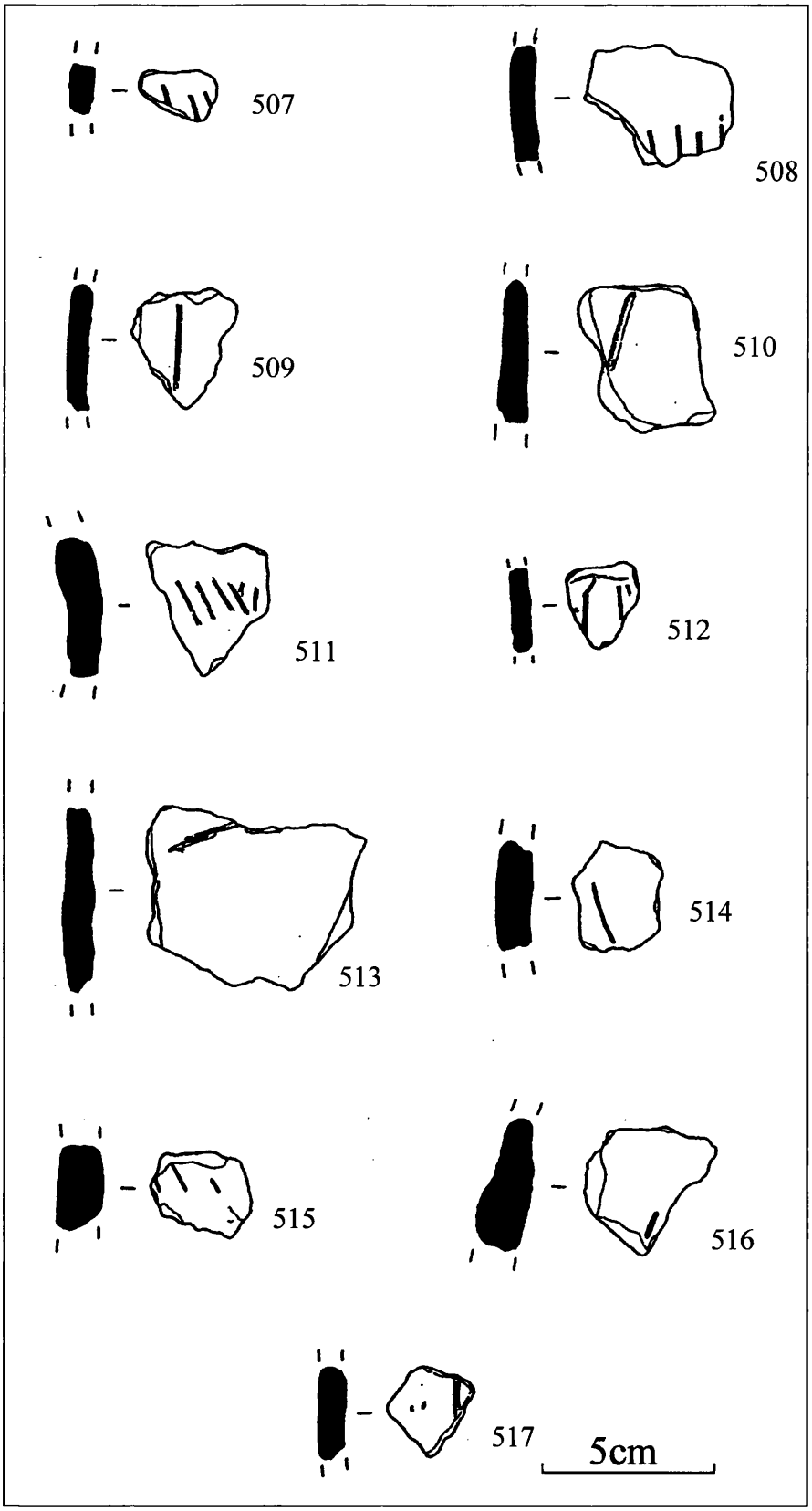

Figure 69: Decorated Pottery – Various Forms 2.

518 {158(43)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Light brown with blackened areas, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour but slightly rougher than outer face. Section: Black with dark grey, some fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Comments: Applied cordon. Radius not measurable.

[F9] *Downside of possible pier.* Context: Around pier B/bay seven.

519 {119(17)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Dark brown with some sooting around cordon with less above it (orientation could be different). Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Light brown/grey with fine grits of igneous rock and quartz with mica. Section: Light grey with some dark patches and fine grits. Comments: Decoration pinched out and not applied. Radius not measurable.

[G10 + F10] *Found on floor of rectangular south hut.* Context: Where structure Iva and Ivb cut against wheelhouse (II) wall.

520 {172(49)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Light brown and fairly smooth. Inner Face: Light brown, fairly smooth. Section: Light brown, some fine grits. Radius not measurable.

[I5,6,7] Context: Within structure III.

521 {126(21)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Dark brown/black with heavy sooting. Soot built up in cordon recess. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour and finish, no sooting and cracked undulating surface. Section: Dark to light brown mix. One large quartz inclusion near cordon. Radius not measurable.

[E7] Context: From the centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

522 {201(55)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Outer Face: Buff/light brown with some grey, no grits, very smooth. Inner Face: Same colour but slightly rougher with some fine grits. Section: Dark brown to light orange/buff. Radius not measurable.

523 {124(21)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Brown with blackened areas. Inner face: buff with orange patches. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Section: Dark brown for outer 1/2mm turning buff with orange flecks. Radius not measurable.

[E7] Context: From the centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

524 {127(22)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Orange/reddish brown with some buff patches. Blackened around the decoration. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Same colour but with some blackened areas. Similar smoothness to outer face. Section: Dark orange with large rock inclusion and some black flecks. Radius not measurable.

[F8] Context: From bay seven in wheelhouse.

525 {125(21)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Light brown with some blackening. Inner face: Dark brown with some sooting at bottom portion. Section: dark grey/dark brown. Radius not measurable.

[E7] Context: From the centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

526 {1442(34)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Brown powdery surface, fairly smooth, no grits. Inner Face: orange/brown mix, few grits with mica. Section: Dark brown to light orange on interior. Radius not measurable.

[I5] *In wall.* Context: Outer wheelhouse (II) wall/structure III wall.

527 {123(21)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Dark brown with carbonaceous flakes. Inner Face: Buff/light brown. Some fine grits of quartz, igneous rock and shell. Some striations. Section: Dark brown on outer 2mm turning orange/pink. Radius not measurable.

[E7] Context: From the centre of wheelhouse (II) area.

528 {159(43)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Dark brown on top half, orange below cordon and fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange with dark brown patches, some fine grits of igneous rock. Slightly rougher and more porous then outer face. Section: Orange on outer half, brown on inner, coil construction visible. Comments: Sooting only below cordon. Radius not measurable.

[F9] *Downside of possible pier.* Context: Around pier B/bay seven.

529 {160(43)} Figure 70

Outer Face: Dark brown and orange mix, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange with some brown, few fine grits of igneous rock and quartz. Section: Orange on outer half, brown on inner. Radius not measurable.

[F9] *Downside of possible pier.* Context: Around pier B/bay seven.

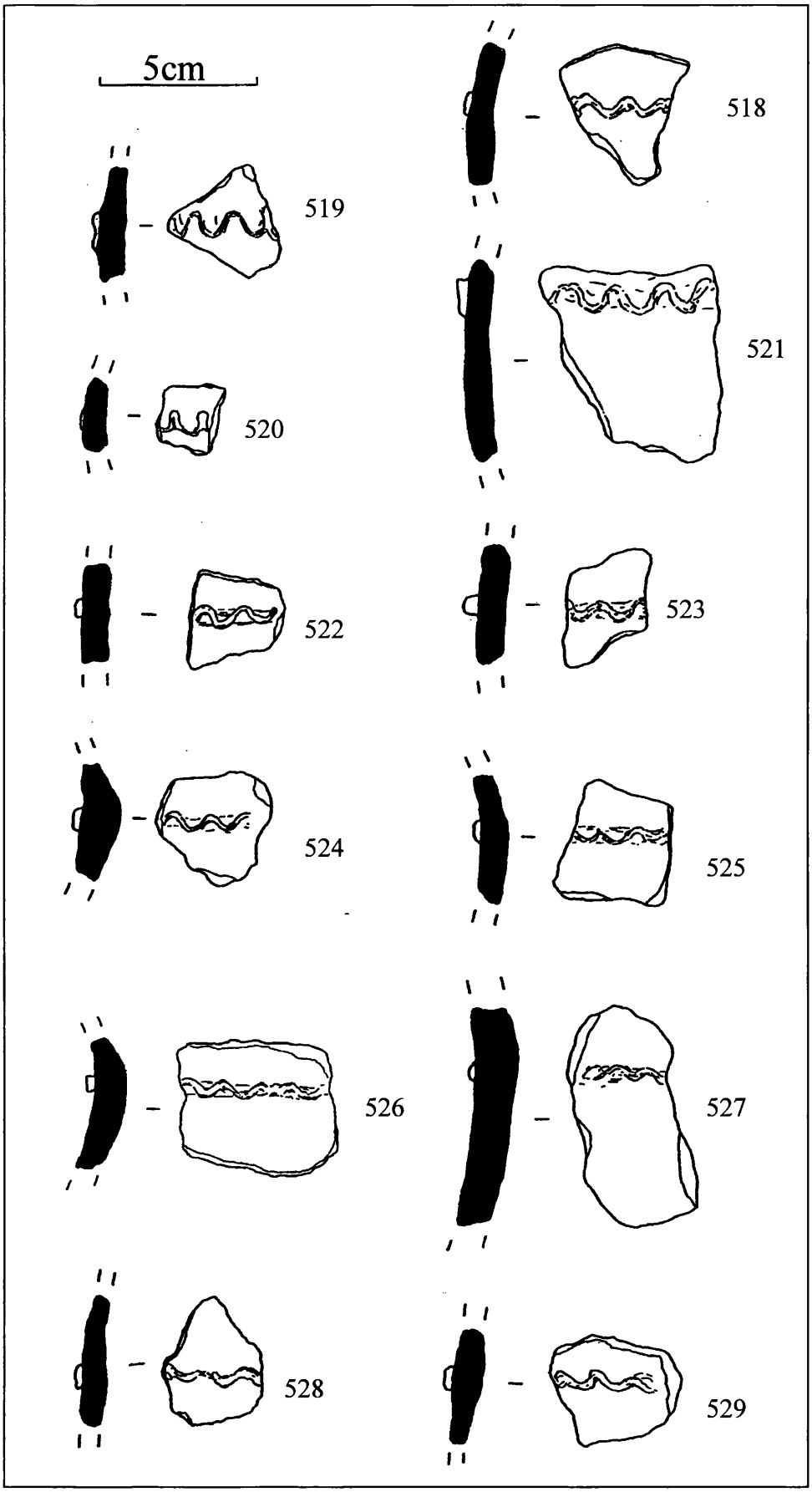

Figure 70: Decorated Pottery – Various Forms 3.

530 {150(37)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Buff/light brown, very smooth with criss-cross striations. Inner Face: Orange/brown mix, many fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. Section: Light brown on outer 2mm, black line, then orange to interior. Radius not measurable.

[A9] *East end of south hut at A9 against outer wall.* Context: Close to entrance of structure Ivb.

531 {139(30)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Dark brown/black mix with heavy sooting. Fairly smooth with horizontal striations. Inner Face: Light brown with coil join visible. Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Low.* Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II).

532 {138(30)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Dark brown and light orange, fairly smooth with no grits. Rim cold be out turning or have a cordon at the lip. Inner Face: Orange/reddish brown with some dark areas. Section: Dark brown changing to orange past the centre. Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Low.* Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II).

533 {133(36)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Dark brown with some sooting around cordon. Fairly smooth. Inner Face: Light grey/brown, slightly rougher and more undulating than outer face. Section: Dark brown, orange at centre and then black/light grey. Large inclusion of igneous rock (2mm). Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Higher.* Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II).

534 {173(49)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Light reddish brown, fairly smooth. Inner Face: Orange with some brown. Section: Medium size grits, orange/reddish brown, very soft. Radius not measurable.

[I5,6,7] Context: Within structure III.

535 {137(30)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Buff/light brown and fairly smooth. Inner face: Orange/buff, similar smoothness to outer face. Section: Grey and orange mix with some large igneous rock inclusions. Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Low*. Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II).

536 {128(23)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Light brown, smoothed with wipe marks. Some soil stains. Inner Face: Same colour but a rougher more undulating surface. Some fine grits of quartz. Section is same colour with fine quartz grits. Comment: Possible hole mouth jar with cordon around centre. Radius not measurable.

[I5+6] *In wall fill.* Context: Outer wheelhouse (II) and structure III wall.

537 {211(57)} Figure 71

Outer Face: Light brown/buff, some fine grits, fairly smooth, although undulating surface around the decoration. Inner Face: Same colour but with some black stains. Section: Grey with black band in centre. Radius not measurable.

[I9+10] *On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling.* Context: From the shieling (VI) inserted on to the top of the mound.

538 {198(53)} Figure 71

Similar to illus **550** 197(53) but different vessel. Radius not measurable.

[F4] *On base layer in ash on bedding.* Context: From within bay three.

539 {154(41)} Figure 71

Same vessel as **541** 153(41). Radius not measurable.

[F4+5] *Very low base layer ash with bedding layer.* Context: Around pier G and bay three.

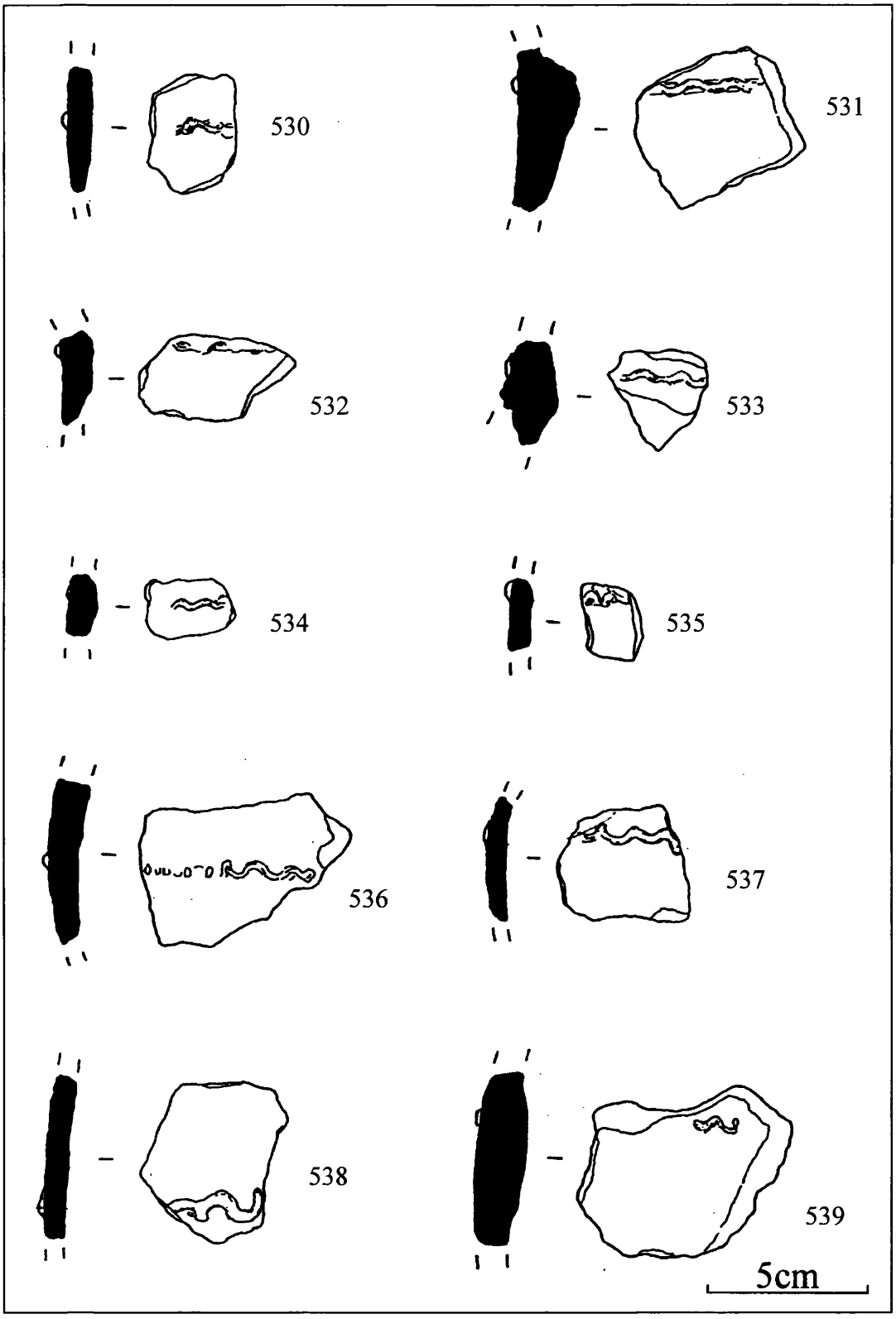

Figure 71: Decorated pottery – Various forms 4.

540 {111(15)} Figure 72

Outer Face: Dark brown with carbonaceous deposits. Fairly smooth with free fine grits. Inner Face: Upper two thirds is a buff/reddish brown, bottom portion a darker brown. Some fine quartz grits, igneous rock and shell. Slight bulge where coil has been smoothed. Section: Black at outer to orange/dark brown on inside. Comments: Heavy sooting around the cordon. Radius not measurable.

[G8,G9,F9] *Found amongst clearance.* Context: From around piers A and B.

541 {153(41)} Figure 72

Outer Face: Orange with lighter buff patches and fairly smooth. Some blackening in bottom left corner and some faint horizontal striations. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher than outer face with some quartz and igneous rock grits, particularly where coils have been smoothed. Section: Layered brown, orange, light brown. Comments: Decoration is badly damaged. Radius not measurable.

[F4+5] *Very low base layer ash with bedding layer.* Context: Around pier G and bay three.

542 {207(57)} Figure 72

Outer Face: Buff/light brown with some grey, no grits, very smooth. Inner Face: Same colour but slightly rougher with some fine grits. Section: Dark brown to light orange//buff. Comments: Cordon is chain-like, with raised holes. Radius not measurable.

[I9+10] *On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling.* Context: From the shieling (VI) inserted on to the top of the mound.

543 {208(57)} Figure 54

Outer Face: Light orange/buff, fairly smooth showing some fine grits of quartz with mica. Inner Face: Same colour, same finish as outer face. Section: Orange with some dark brown patches. Radius not measurable.

[I9+10] *On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling.* Context: From the shieling (VI) inserted on to the top of the mound.

544 {209(57)} Figure 72

Outer Face: Buff, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Buff, slightly rougher than outer face. Section: Buff and dark grey mix. Radius not measurable. [I9+10] *On paving in primary roundhouse under shieling.* Context: From the shieling (VI) inserted on to the top of the mound.

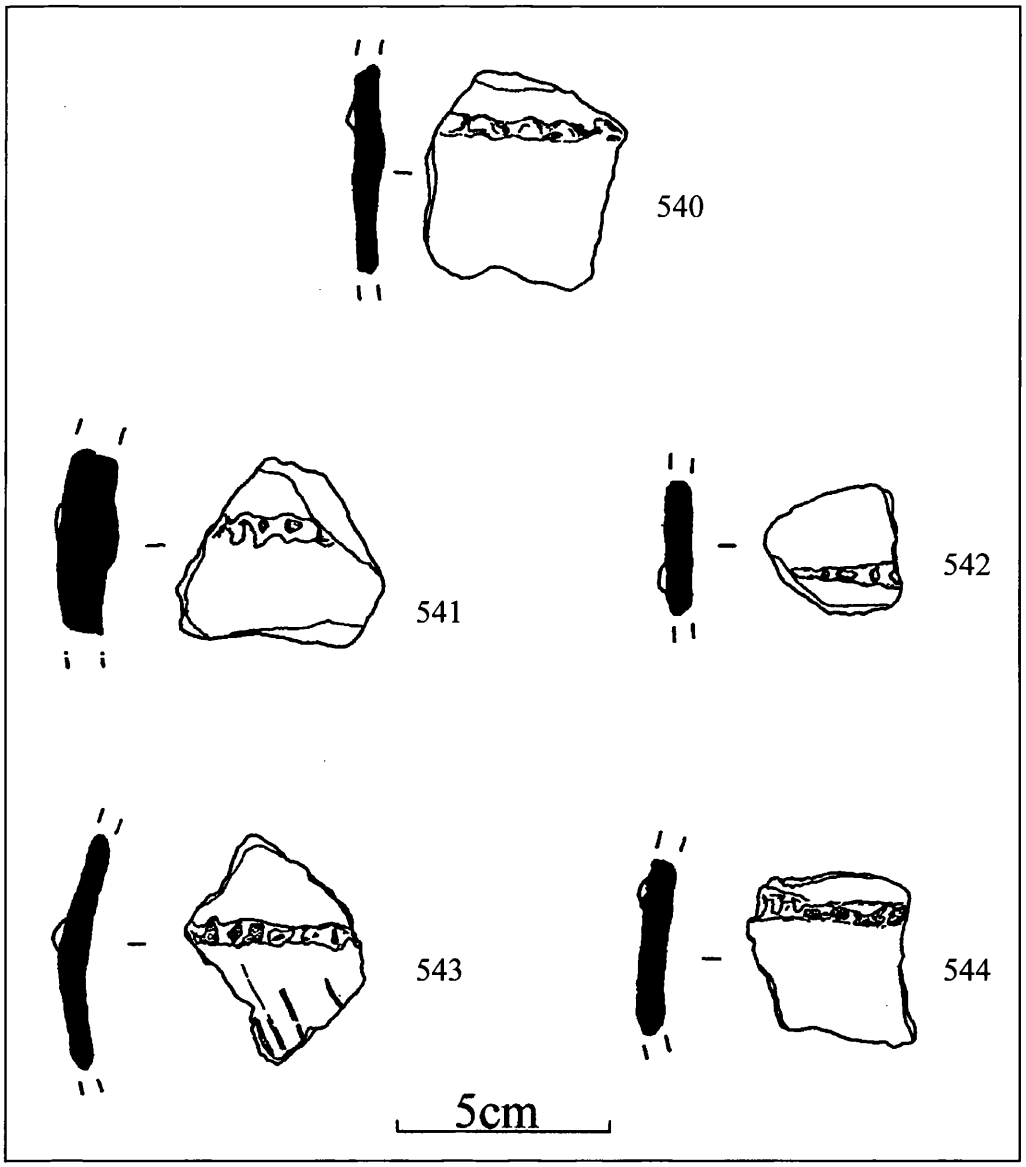

Figure 72: Decorated pottery – Various forms – 5.

545 {145(34)} Figure 73

Outer Face: Dark brown and orange patch at top left. Sooting around applied boss. Fairly smooth, no grits. Inner face: Orange/brown, with some medium sized grits of igneous rock. Coarser than outer face. Section: Dark brown. Comments: Applied

boss, possible finger impressed dimple, has been well smoothed into the body. Radius not measurable.

[I5] *In wall.* Context: Outer wheelhouse (II) wall/structure III wall.

546 {107(4)} Figure 73

Outer Face: Buff/brown with blackening and sooting on lower section and in groove. Two sherds glued together by excavator. Fairly smooth with some fine quartz grits. Inner Face: Dark browns with some sooting on upper 8mm. Fairly smooth but undulating surface. Section: Flat coil construction clear. Groove occurs where coils meet and the join may have been emphasised deliberately. Radius not measurable.

[G4] *Inside wall.* Context: Around pier G area and structure III.

547 {105(3)} Figure 73

Outer Face: Dark brown, blackened around applied wavy cordon. Fairly smooth. Inner Face: Light buff with some fine grits of igneous rock. Section: Dark brown/buff mix. Radius not measurable.

[H6] *Square room.* Context: From within structure III.

548 {148(36)} Figure 73

Outer Face: Light brown, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Applied strip is darker from sooting. Inner Face: Orange with brown patches, fairly smooth. Section: Brown on outer half, turning orange. Radius not measurable.

[I6] *Inside roundhouse on base layer.* Context: From pier H area.

549 {132(26)} Figure 73

Outer Face: Orange/buff mix with some dark brown patches/staining. Fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner Face: Dark brown, similar smoothness. Section: Orange/buff to dark brown. Comments: Strip not applied, pinched out from body. Radius not measurable.

[F7] *Higher.* Context: Centre of wheelhouse (II).

550 {197(53)} Figure 73

Outer Face: Buff with blackened areas, fairly smooth with few fine grits. Inner face: Buff/light brown, fairly smooth, slightly rougher then outer face. Section: Buff/light brown mix. Radius not measurable.

[F4] *On base layer in ash on bedding.* Context: From within bay three.

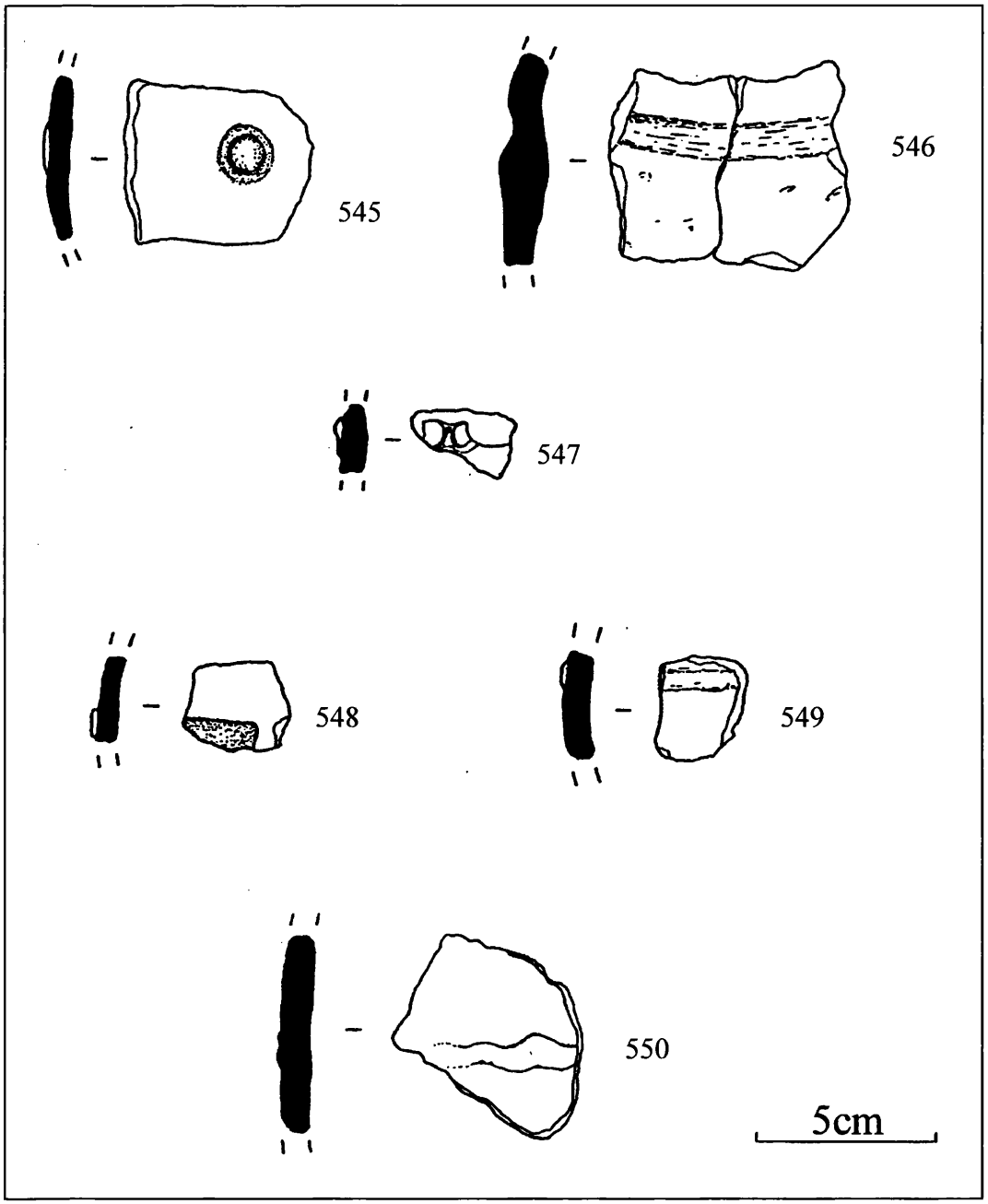

Figure 73: Decorated pottery – Various forms – 6.

Miscellaneous Pottery – Various Forms (Figure 74)

551 {1022.5(39)} Figure 74

Outer Face: Buff/brown with some sooting at rim edge. Glue along join. Some fine grits. Horizontal striations on fairly smooth body, although it is very undulating with thumb marks along the rim – possible Craggan Ware. Inner face: Same colours with glue along join. Small lip along rim edge. Diagonal wipe marks, some fine grits although smoother finish than outer face. Section: Buff/brown at edges, grey/black in centre (2mm). Some fine grits. Radius 100mm.

[I8+F10] *Some pottery from inside outer roundhouse on south hut.* Context: Possibly from within the shieling (VI) which has had its floor(s) removed in search of structure I.

552 {1009(11)} Figure 74

Outer Face: Coarse brown/buff surface. Lumpy finish. No sooting on base. Inner Face: Grey/brown with blackened edges. Gritty with larger grains of quartz concentrated on the flat of the base. Base rises slightly in the centre. Section: Black core changing to brown/buff at each edge. Radius 61mm.

[H6] Context: Within structure III.

553 {1010(12)} Figure 74

Outer Face: Coarse, lumpy greyish brown with some darker patches. Subtle projecting ledge where body meets base. Inner Face: Buff/light brown, fairly smooth with criss-cross wipe marks. Section: Grey/brown, coarse with some fine grits. Radius 40mm.

[G6.7] *Square hut.* Context: Around structure III kerbing.

554 {151(38)} Figure 74 & Plate 77

Outer Face: Pinkish/buff with a nicely smoothed outurned rim. Some fine quartz inclusions. Inner Face: Same colour, very few fine quartz grits. Section: Buff/orange with some quartz inclusions. Patch of white staining. Comments: Medieval. Radius not measurable.

555 {223(66)} Figure 74

Outer Face: Dark brown with pitted surface and raised fine grits of quartz and igneous rock. Inner Face: Same colour, slightly rougher and more undulating than outer surface. Section: Dark brown throughout. Comments: Unusual rim tapering to a point. Radius not measurable.

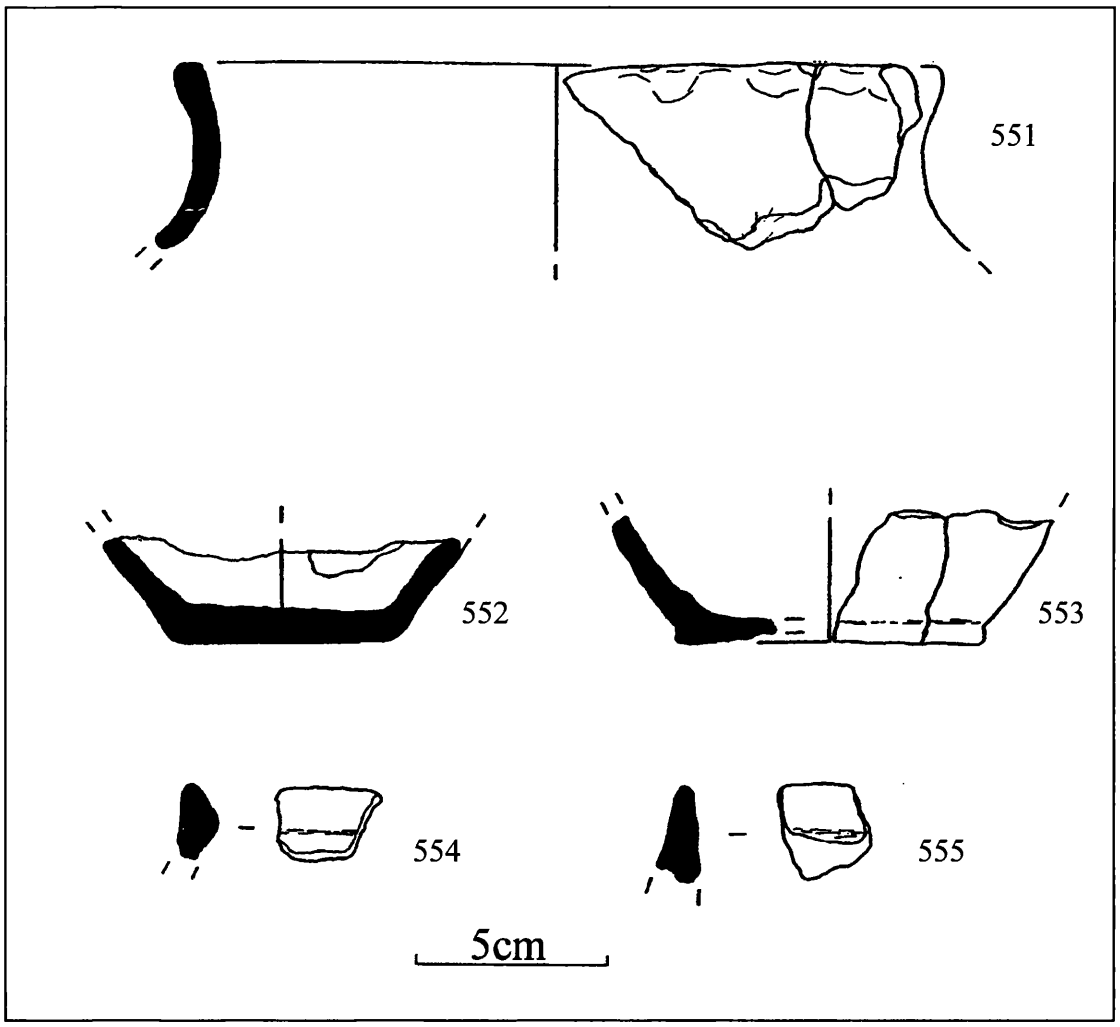

Figure 74: Miscellaneous pottery – Various Forms.

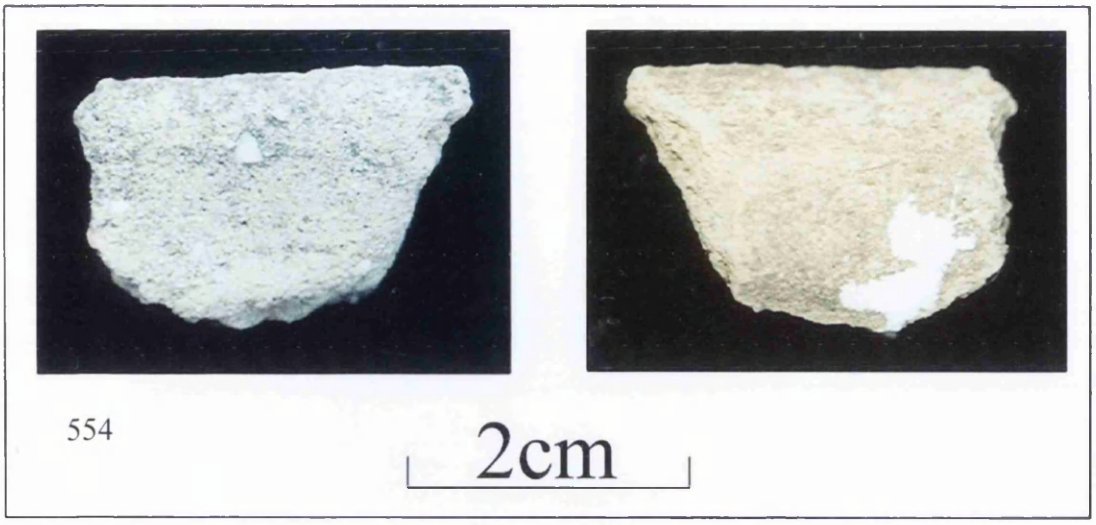

Plate 77: Fabric of V-shaped medieval rim (**554**).

556 {700} Figure 75 & Plate 78

Outer Face: Pinkish brown with grey streaks and some darker patches. Raised grits giving an uneven finish. Profile is ribbed, curving inwards then outwards. Inner Face: White with fine grits of quartz and other material of a buff and orange colour. White areas have a crackled finish. Section: Pinkish/buff at edges with a dark grey core. Comments: Medieval Scottish East Coast Gritty War (late 12th –early 13th century). Radius not measurable.

Context: Recovered during 2004 survey on current floor level in structure IVa ([E11] on excavators plan).

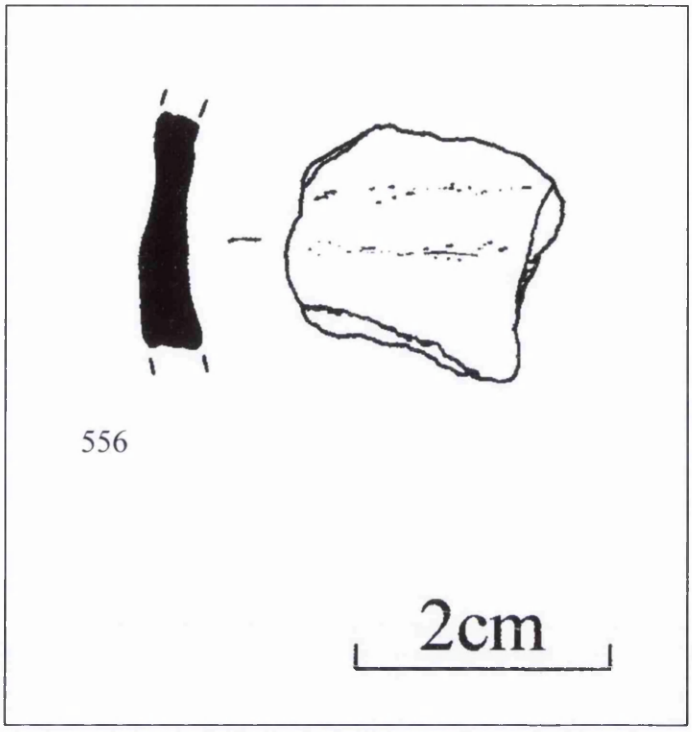

Figure 75: East coast Gritty Ware (**556**).

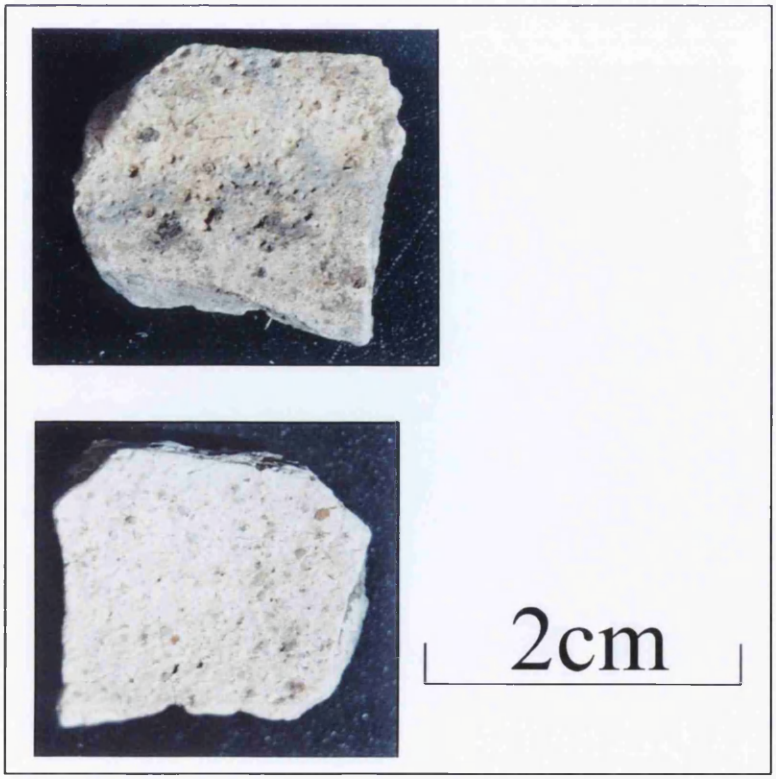

Plate 78: East coast gritty ware fabric (**556**).

The pottery has been grouped in the same categories as in the fabric analysis. The initial number in the {} brackets in the fabric description refers to the find number in the tables.

FN	=	Find number of catalogue entry			
No.	=	Number of sherds represented			
R	=	Rim type:	p – plain/upright;	I – inward sloping;	f – flaring;
			e – everted;	o – outward sloping	
BS	=	Base:	ps – plain, angled;	fa – footed, angled;	
			pr – plain, rounded		
D	=	Decoration:	co – cordon;	st – stab markings;	i – incised
			x - other		
MAN	=	Manufacture:	cl- coil;	tg – tongue and groove	
SOOT	=	* indicates that the exterior, interior or both surfaces of a sherd are sooted.			

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
1013	1	o				
1008	1	o			tg	
1022	1	e			tg?	*
1033	1	o				
1040	1	o				*
1004	1	e			cl	*

Table 1

Summary of Everted Rim Jars (Figure 55)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
1012	3	i				
1003	1	i				*

Table 2

Summary of Hole Mouth or Incurving Rim Jars (Figure 56)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
1032	1	p				
1023	1	p/o				*
1007	1	p				*
1001	1	p				
1005	1	p				
178	1	p				
134	1	p				*
136	1	p				*
217	1	p			tg	
177	1	p				
202	1	p				
1021	1	p				*
1015	1	p			tg	*
1006	1	p				*
1024	5	p				
1017	1	p			tg	*
121	1	p			tg	
130	1	p				*
221	1	p				*
114	1	p			tg?	
152	1	p				
176	1	p				
120	1	p				
170	1	p				
135	1	p				*
129	1	p				*
185	1	p				

Table 3

Summary of Upright Rims / Plain Vessels (Figures 57, 58 & 59)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
1045	5	f			cl	
1030	3	f		st		
1046	2	p		st		
225	2	f		st		
224	1	p		st		
220	1	f		st		*
222	1	p/o		st		
1047	1	p		st		
212	1	o				*
205	1	f				
206	1	f				
155	1	p?		st		
115	2	f				*

Table 4

Summary of Medieval Upright or Flaring Rims (Figures 60 & 61)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
186	1	p		st		
187	1	p		st		
188	1	p		st		
189	1	p		st		
190	1	p		st		

Table 5

Summary of Stabbed Rims (Figure 62)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
1038	1		pa			*
1019	1		pa			*
1002	1		fa			*
191	1		pr			*
1036	1		pa			*
216	1		pa			
1026	1		pr			
214	1		fa			*
117	1		fa			*
203	1		fa			
1025	1		pa		cl	*
1028	1		pa			
1029	1		pr			*
166	1		pr			*
167	1		pr			*
161	1		pr			*
1037	1		pa			*
1039	1		pa			
1000	1		pa		cl	*
1018	1		pr			
195	1		pr			
193	1		pr			
196	1		pa			*
194	1		pa			
215	1		pa			
149	1		pa			
144	1		pa			
171	1		pa			*
142	1		pa			
162	1		pa			
204	1		pa			
213	1		pa			*
199	1		pa			
200	1		pa			
1027	1		pr		cl	
1014	1		pr			*
4000	1		pr			*
164	1		pr			*
218	1		pr			*
116	1		pr			*
141	1		pr			*
163	1		pr			
140	1		pr		cl	*
1048	2		pa			*
165	1		pa			*

Table 6

Summary of Bases – Various Forms (Figures 63, 64, 65, 66 & 67)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
157	1			st		*
156	1			st		
106	1			st		*
184	1			st		
179	2			st		
183	1			st		
181	1			st		
180	1			st		
182	1			st		
143	1			i		
102	1			i		*
108	1			i		*
113	1			i		*
118	1			i		
103	1			i		
122	1			i		
131	1			i		
109	1			i		*
110	1			i	cl	
104	1			i		*
158	1					
119	1					
172	1					
126	1					
201	1					
124	1					
127	1					
125	1					
1442	1					
123	1					
159	1					
160	1					
150	1			co		
139	1			co		*
138	1	o?		co		
133	1			co		*
173	1			co		
137	1			co		
128	1			co		
211	1			co		*
198	1			co		
154	1			co		
111	1			co	cl	*
153	1			co		*
207	1			co		
208	1			co/i		
209	1			co		
145	1			x		*
107	2			x	cl	*
105	1			co		*
148	1			co		*
132	1			co		
197	1			co		*

Table 7

Summary of Decorated Pottery – Various Forms

(Figures 68, 69, 70, 71, 72 & 73)

FN	No.	R	BS	D	MAN	SOOT
1022.5	2	o				
1009	1		pa			
1010	2		pf			
151	1	p				
223	1	o				
700	1					

Table 8

Summary of Miscellaneous Pottery – Various Forms (Figure 74)

	common	*classification*						
Site Name	**Machair**	**Moorland**		**Subterranean**	**Freestanding**	**Partly freestanding**	**Built amongst earlier remains**	**Later cellular structures**
Scalavat (near Usinish)							?	?
Gernish (East)							?	?
Tigh Talamhanta (Allasdale)								
Bagh nam Feadag								
Clettraval								
Usinish							?	?
Cnoc a Comhdhalach								
Eilean Maleit								
Garry Iochdrach								
Cnip 1								
Cnip 2								
Udal								
Foshigarry								
Bac Mhic Connain								
Sollas								
Balelone								
Bruach Ban								
Bruthach A Tuath								
Hornish Point								
A Cheardach Mhor								
A Cheardach Bheag								
A Cheardach Mhor 2								
Sithean a Phiobaire								
Bruthach a Tigh Tallan								
Kilpheder								
North Borve								
Borve Point								
An Ceothan (Balivanich)							?	?

Table 9

List of Wheelhouses in the Western Isles, grouped by location and type

(? – No data available)

Postscript

Plate 79: Roy's House.

Although the circumstances that culminated in the excavation of Bagh nam Feadag and the implications of this fate accompli have not been addressed in the main text, they are perhaps a by-product of the way archaeology is viewed and practiced in this region. The site, referred to by many local people as 'Roy's House' was undoubtedly excavated with good intentions. However, without condoning the damage to the archaeology that has clearly occurred, academics should seriously consider the implications of what has happened at the site. The excavation in this manner at Bagh nam Feadag is fairly unique, as damage to our cultural heritage is normally associated with site-raiding metal detectorists and the trade in relics. The excavator in this case was solely motivated by curiosity and a desire to present the site to visitors. The artefacts were carefully collected and stored, albeit in an improvised manner. Contact between Roy Ashworth and the local authorities as well as archaeologists working in the area did exist, yet no action was taken or assistance given. The writer therefore suggests that measures are taken now to resolve such a situation should it arise again. Local people who express an interest in archaeology,

particularly in remote regions such as the Western Isles, should be regarded as an asset, with provisions made to incorporate them into a functioning trust.

The local perception, of visiting archaeologists who remove their heritage, is primarily a by-product of the lack of a permanent archaeological presence within the islands and the restriction of funds to provide presentation and interaction with the public. The view of the writer is that individuals should not excavate archaeological sites without the relevant support from professional archaeologists and local authorities, but by the same token, presentation of archaeological sites and public involvement in the Western Isles should be given a higher priority – after all, education for all, about our past, is the fundamental aspiration.