Communities in Southwest Scotland c.200BC-AD200 Social Space, Material Culture and Identity

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Abstract

This thesis explores the archaeology of Southwest Scotland from c.200BC to 200AD. The major concern is to subject a late prehistoric data set to an explicitly social and theoretical analysis.

The first section of the work discusses the history and range of approaches to interpreting Iron Age archaeology in Britain, Scotland and Southwest Scotland, from the "provincial" model of cultural regionalism to traditional Romanist conceptions of ethnicity of the "native", and offers a critique of some of the assumptions that lie behind these interpretive frameworks. It then surveys recent developments in the social theory of landscape and proposes that intimate scales of analysis of archaeological material are exceptionally suitable in applying theories of identity, material culture and social space.

The second section of the thesis explores our current conceptions of monument form and classification with a view to determining the effect of these on current interpretations. Specific monument types from Southern Scotland, and western Wigtownshire in particular, are introduced and their complexity and subtle variations are recognised as undermining typological reductionism. An archaeology which privileges analysis of the individuality of monuments and which pays attention to the 3-dimensional nature of live spaces is advocated.

The third section considers the small case study area of West Wigtownshire in bringing out some of the localised contingencies and subtleties of an intimate archaeological landscape. The archaeology of west Wigtownshire is considered in relation to practice theories of inhabitation or dwelling perspectives. Evidence from excavations as well as

the authors own field visits and critical use of aerial evidence are used to analyse the potential of apparently familiar monumental types, together with less well known archaeological forms in allowing us to break down some of the assumptions behind traditional Iron Age interpretive schema including the functional categories of our monuments themselves, the rigid constraints of periodization and the nature and our definitions of "landscape".

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Introduction

200BC-AD200: The brief times of Thirteen generations

The time-period of this thesis is circa 200BC to AD200 and represents a fairly short date bracket in archaeological terms. This is especially evident when it is compared with the broad trend in prehistoric studies where the temporal concern of many archaeologists is more often measurable in many hundreds if not thousands of years. The narrow time lapse of this study is intended to focus attention on a range of material places in the landscape which can often be shown to date from around this time. C-14 dates from a number of excavated sites within the research area and immediately out side it show that many of the monuments discussed, and some which appear to be very similar, were founded at this time. It has been suggested that there was a growing social cohesion among Scottish Iron Age societies at this time (Armit 1997, 86) and there may have been an intensification of monumental construction. Although there is this plethora of "sites" to work on, it is difficult to pin down site forms to a specific point in the late first millennium BC/early AD without C-14 dates. Examples of all the indigenous Iron Age sites, for example those that we define as brochs, timber roundhouses or enclosures, which are investigated in this thesis, can be demonstrated to have been constructed before and after this narrow time slice. There is therefore no single monument form, which is exclusively diagnostic or characterises the period c.200BC-AD200 with which I am concerned here. The monuments are more generally assignable to the later prehistory. Some material covered in the case studies in chapter 3 has been chronometrically dated to 200BC-AD200 and these dated deposits will generate some interesting questions about the

nature of deposition and practices at these monuments. However, where some of the monuments covered are more ambiguous in their chronology such as the unexcavated hillfort of Cairn Pat (which could be late Bronze Age/early Iron Age in date and may have gone out of use by the later period) I feel that we are justified in including them in this study of a region in the later Iron Age since many older monuments in the landscape will have contributed to subsequent cosmologies, oral histories and perceptions of the land.

This period is a short one. However, in human terms, in generations, four hundred years is actually a very long time. It is thirteen generations in length in modern genealogical accounting. The consecutive or accumulative maturation of the populations of social agents must represent considerable scope for the reproduction and reinterpretation of the social worlds of Iron Age communities. As each new generation within any given community comes of age and begins to assert its dominance over social practices it will be responsible for reinstating, reinvesting and reinterpreting the dominant discourse, as well as peripheral discourses and the more subversive contradictions that exist in all human groups. Tradition and social custom are usually very strong among the kinds of farming communities apparent in the archaeology of Scotland during the BC/AD cusp. This is borne out in the evidence of strong general continuities of material forms throughout the first millennium BC and early centuries AD. However, it is likely that dominant communities and dominant members of communities will nevertheless have shaped the directions that interpretation of the dwelt-in world would have taken and these interpretations or beliefs may have been more varied over time and geographically than we might guess from a cursory inspection of the material evidence. That diversity may be reflected in

the "little differences" in built form or in artefactual and depositional practices (Gosden and Lock 1999). Therefore, gross material or physical similarities over wide spaces may belie quite radically divergent social lives from place to place, region to region.

At present our understanding of the subtleties of the "settlement record" for the Iron Age in South West Scotland is nothing like as fine grained as to permit comparative investigation of small changes in spatial patterning of individual buildings or groups of buildings over time. If it were; this might provide insights into changes in form or depositional practice as indicative of deliberate human choices made about how to live in the world; how to build and how to inhabit those built places and spaces. These choices might be made at a range of social scales and at corporate or individual levels or more properly they may reflect the balance between the two. Until such a satisfactorily fine resolution can be observed in Iron Age spatial studies in South West Scotland (and that will depend on rather more than merely the excavation of many more sites) we must identify appropriate questions to ask of the evidence that is available.

This is especially true of an M.Phil research thesis whose scope, scale and time are necessarily limited. The intention within this thesis then, is to examine the potentials for investigating the kind of small scale, non-literate, face-to-face relations between individuals and communities that are relevant within small-scale landscapes. Where possible it will bring out issues of the local conception of the temporal depth of the lived landscape. That is to say, are there any hints that later prehistoric communities were conscious of the time depth present within their own living spaces? How did they react to material manifestations of this past? How are we to understand communities' sense of time and of the past and of their own histories? We must,

however, avoid taking our own archaeological periodisation cut-off points as representative of conceptions of the past in the past. There need not necessarily be a recognition by Iron Age communities that some aspects of their surroundings were culturally alien and temporally distinct from themselves- a product of others and somehow not relevant to their present conceptions of their own environment. In fact, I would wish to examine the possible range of ways for small-scale communities to view the observable presence in their landscapes of the physical outcomes of people acting within them in the remote past. The compartmentalisation of 200BC-AD200 in this thesis should not preclude discussion of a range of aspects of landscapes which were the products of the work of earlier communities since these features where nevertheless present realities, and constitutive of the physical conditions and visual worlds of the later prehistoric period. By the period under discussion in this thesis communities had been farming in the research area for several thousand years. Many of the physical qualities of the landscape of the later Iron Age were strongly rooted in those millennia of change, the result of a multitude of productions and transformations radically altering the landscape. Consideration of these inherited elements will therefore figure in the analysis of the material, especially at the site of Fox Plantation in chapter 3. While I am primarily interested in the social lives of the people of 200BC-AD200 there will have been a body of knowledge or tradition dealing with the materials and monuments around them whose origins they will not have claimed responsibility for. The customs and procedures for accounting for this range of material, whether it was considered to emanate from the ancestors or from supernatural or deific agencies will have involved practices incorporating these elements within current cosmologies and beliefs. I will argue that we can see

archaeological evidence for the material outcome of these practices of re-incorporation in chapter 3.

Another major constitutive force in many of the landscapes of the period occurs towards its end. The historical and archaeological reality of the arrival of the Roman army has been contributory to the constitution of many material landscapes of later Iron Age Scotland, but is also possibly more abrupt in nature; temporally and culturally jarring of local continuity. The two historically attested Roman military "interludes" in southern Scotland in our period are in the later first century AD and the mid second century AD. Archaeology renders more detail of these episodes and may to some extent challenge any orthodox historical view of the intermittency of these involvements. However, given the current level of archaeological knowledge of West Wigtownshire analysis of the relationships between local communities and the juxtapositions of elements of the Roman military landscape; roads, camps, burial monuments and local communities' interpretations of material culture originating from the Roman province are very difficult to address. Therefore, I do not want to deal in any detail with the substance of the Roman archaeology in the study area however, I do want to examine the ways in which the concerns of Romanist archaeologists to come to grips with their material, and which has brought them necessarily into studying the "local native background" (Hanson and Maxwell 1983), have themselves influenced the study of later prehistory in the area.

There has been a long history of the involvement of archaeologists in both Roman and Iron Age archaeology. Many of the practitioners have regularly crossed over the period divide and the interpretive formulations of Romanist analyses of Iron Age material require to be critiqued to facilitate the analysis of the motives and intellectual

priorities which lay behind these. I am primarily interested here in the conceptions of the "native" in Romanist discourse (e.g. Hingley 2000) and in how the values attached to this concept adhered to many of the writings on the Iron Age of Southern Scotland. I would suggest that one of the outcomes of this connection is particularly clear in its effects on the regional scales within which Iron Age material has been studied. Traditionally, archaeologists seeking to address questions of the Roman military involvement in Scotland have been concerned with fairly large scales and long-range movements of soldiers within the framework of narratives of imperial strategy and tactics deemed appropriate to an archaeology of massive frontier monuments, long distance roads, networks of garrison forts and huge marching camps. Although recent studies are attending to different aspects on the human scales of social and bodily aspects of this same material culture (e.g. James 2001) we may consider the impact that the traditional archaeological concerns had on the scales within which native studies composed it's narratives of indigenous action and reaction.

For example, in Piggott's provincial scheme for Scotland (1966) he cited the exponential growth in recognised sites from aerial archaeology in the post-war period as partly providing the impetus for his model (op. cit. 3). The practice of aerial archaeology was itself largely pioneered by Romanists who found it highly appropriate to their concerns to scrutinise big patterns. Piggott also drew on Romanist narratives of southern British "Belgic" migrants fleeing from the encroaching Roman province to under-pin ideas about the changes in Scottish material culture that were held to occur in the first Century BC-AD (Piggott op. cit, 12). The walls between the Iron Age and Roman period specialisms were never impermeable then, and I am concerned to investigate what effects the leakages had, and may continue to have, on later prehistoric studies. I want to demonstrate how

some of the effects of these values, particularly on scale and on periodisation, can be rejected in favour of more intimate social scales and less rigid chronological units of analysis.

I hope that examination of these aspects of the period 200BC-AD200 coupled with the small scale nature of the contexts scrutinised in the case study area will bring out some of the localised contingencies and subtleties of an intimate archaeological landscape within a fairly short time scale. Further, it is hoped that this will allow analysis of the potential of apparently familiar monument types, together with less well known archaeological forms to allow us to break down some of the assumptions behind such traditional archaeological mainstays as "settlement", "domestic" and "landscape" itself.

Chapter 1

Approaches to the archaeology of the later 1st millennium BC-Early 1st millennium AD

Late Prehistory

In recent years several key works in the late prehistoric archaeology of Western Europe and particularly of the British Isles have highlighted a concern to revise old paradigms and to examine them critically in light of contemporary social theory. These revisionist works perhaps best exemplified by a number of anthologies for example those edited by Gwilt and Haselgrove (1997), Hill and Cumberpatch (1995) and Bevan (1999) have followed many of the criticisms and suggestions levelled at Iron Age Studies in the analysis made by J.D. Hill in 1989. Hill explicitly pointed out many of the uncritical assumptions which he felt underlay our entire picture of the Iron Age; "historicism" and "Celticism" and appealed for a radical shift in the way that later prehistoric studies were developing. Archaeologists of the Iron Age must more fully embrace the *prehistoricism* of their peers in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age fields and thus establish "a reflexive, self-critical archaeology" (Hill 1989, 16) for the Iron Age. The consequences of the conservatism which had dominated Iron Age studies had meant a lengthy period of academic stagnation while researchers in earlier periods of prehistory had moved on to new and fertile ground. The first section of this chapter will examine the intellectual and professional atmosphere within which this crisis in confidence of late prehistoric studies was able to creep up on archaeologists. It will examine the roots of the traditional picture built up in the twentieth century of the "Iron Age" that was at such variance with the trajectories

taken by the rest of prehistoric studies.

In the recent past (most of the latter half of the twentieth century) the study of Iron Age society, as in all other archaeological periods, has followed a very particular set of principles of order and classification that were deemed appropriate by practitioners. These categories consisted of functional concepts of material objects such as utility and ritual. The reason for this can readily be found within the history of the study of the Iron Age itself. Research often revolved around the study of the very high profile, physically obvious monuments in the landscape, for example Wheeler's work at Maiden Castle (1943), Alcock's excavations at South Cadbury in the 1960's (1972), and in the North C.M. Pigott at Hownam (1950) or the work at Gurness in the 1930's described later by Hedges (1985). This meant that attention was principally paid to hillfort sites in England and southern Scotland or to the impressively preserved dry-stone sites- the brochs and duns of the Scottish highlands and Islands. Massively entrenched earthworks or substantial blank faced walls could be clearly explained as defensive. The Iron Age presented a package of material culture whose essentially functional and pragmatic meaning could be readily re-constructed. This contrasted with the arcane and hopelessly obscure nature of the monuments of earlier prehistory where high ritual content was assumed in their architectural strangeness. Under this view, the Iron Age was to some extent seen as familiar and coherent, readily explicable in functional terms. Settlement composed the major part of the archaeology while ritual sites were fewer and apparently clearly different in morphological terms from the settlement record.

In the 1970's this confidence in the rational nature of Iron Age material landscapes was reflected in the battery of interrogative and predictive models which were applied to the archaeology. Such "middle range theory" as Chrysallers' central place theory

and Thiessens' polygons sought to elucidate logical catchment areas and local regional territoriality. This *new archaeology* or *processualism* while positive in its optimism and genuinely beneficial in recovering many aspects of past societies, put the emphasis upon scientific endeavour, positivist philosophies and the empirical assessment of data. This was held to represent the objective truth based as it was upon scientific logic untainted by the bias of historicism. However, it has not taken the majority of archaeologists long to realise the folly of this stance. Science does not always represent the objective reality; in fact historically its practitioners have employed a good deal of intuitive thought in developing "scientific" formulations (Dutton and Krausz 1981). Taken to extremes, as sometimes occurred with the new archaeology, it could expound supposedly universal laws of human behaviour so general as to be fairly meaningless. The scientistic approach could be as loaded with the biases of its practitioners as could any historical approach. At least the historical data often referred to the biases of individuals among contemporary populations and to that extent was an index of the attitudes of at least a section of ancient societies.

The neat compartmentalisation of function as opposed to ritual was, however, largely bogus. The categories which were deemed important in this form of understanding late prehistory more accurately reflected current western aesthetics and sensibilities than represent a reconstruction of the ancient perception of material assemblages and their active role within those societies.

As scores of ethnographic examples have shown; places of residence are almost always imbued with sets of meanings which are more than just utilitarian arrangements of functional space (Douglas 1972, Bourdieu 1977, Parker Pearson and Richards 1994). In fact there is no reason to accept that the domestic environment is

any less complexly constructed as a social phenomenon than any other kind of human spatial sphere. For those who live within it, the house and its surrounding area are frequently places of intensely creative patterns of categorisation with complex belief systems imposing any number and nature of ideational schemes on the space involved. These schemes might be every bit as complex as, for example, the megalithic monuments of Europe were deemed to be by an earlier generation of archaeologists (Thom 1967).

What I want to point out is that under the traditional project of Iron Age studies, ritual was theoretically and materially divorced from settlement studies- ritual was relegated to the realms of the strange, the unintelligible, the non-pragmatic and to the margins of material society itself. For example, evidence for the often bizarre, and to our sensibilities, sometimes grotesque treatment of humans and the arrangement of human remains as deposited in a variety of contexts could be seen as a ritual adjunct to essentially practical farming lives. It is as if the people of later prehistory set aside one day a week to rest from working to attend to their ritual lives and sacrifice their fellow human beings in some out of the way surroundings distant from the ordinary every day setting of life and work.

More seriously, ritual itself became a by-word for the socially contingent aspects of Iron Age practices. It seems that when most archaeologists referred, in reports or syntheses, to ritual in an Iron Age context they actually meant those aspects of belief that were crucially important in framing the material world of later prehistory but which were hard to get at.

Actually, it is arguable that belief and work; and life of the ordinary, every day kind and of the special moments are interwoven and embedded in a way that is resistant to

a satisfactory dissected academic scrutiny. What I want to do in my research, then, is to think about reintegrating the socially defined world, the culturally contingent significances and associations with the world of the every day, of the working, living and dwelling to think about the experience of inhabiting places and the practices that allow individuals to know places. In effect to balk at 19th and 20th Century categorisations and instead read material landscapes as a continuum. But true escape from one's historical and cultural influences is difficult, perhaps impossible. We must accept the fact that we are influenced by theoretical approaches which are a product of our time even if we are also self-critical of the social and intellectual environment of the late 20th and early 21st Centuries of the Western World.

Major works of synthesis of the later Iron Age period in northern Britain have been carried out by both Childe (1946) and Piggott (1965, 1966). Childe's work rapidly became superseded by a flood of post war evidence. Piggott's ideas, though, have continued to be influential up until recently and indeed his framework is still often applied in later Iron Age studies. Essentially Piggott borrowed the framework established by Christopher Hawkes for southern Britain. This envisaged different regional settlement patterns and differences in material culture, especially in ceramics, as representing important social differences in Iron Age groups. Piggott was able to apply this model to Scotland using similar settlement morphology and spatial patterning criteria as well as the presence of exotic imports (1966). The Scottish Iron Age, then, was divided into four provinces, Atlantic, North-eastern, Tyne-Forth and Solway-Clyde.

Piggott never explicitly expressed the analytical significance of these provinces, that is whether he saw them as major social divisions, political affiliations or ethnic

boundaries. He was nevertheless following a culture historical methodology in which major cultural groupings were constructed from the material evidence to form the agents of historical processes. This concept was coupled with that of diffusionism- the mechanism by which these culture groups were held to have originated and developed via migration or invasion. The presence of exotic metalwork seemed to give particularly clear insight into these origins (Stevenson 1966) and even some of the settlement forms were argued to be amenable to such exogenous interpretations (Scott 1947, 1948).

In addition to the archaeological evidence, the works of classical literature were also called upon to elucidate the picture of the societies of Iron Age north Britain. Using analogy, the corpus of Roman references to continental barbarian peoples could be used to demonstrate affinities with those of Britain and in some cases to then go further and assume a community of traditions without close archaeological correlation. In addition, the constructs of 19th century European nationalism were still current lending ethnicity to archaeology in general, and making the Northwest European Iron Age synonymous with a "Celtic" identity in particular. Indeed it was this concept of Celticity; of a shared ethnic, linguistic and material identity that allowed such sweeping analogy to be drawn between the archaeological "cultures" of temperate Europe and those of southern Britain and ultimately with those of northern Britain. The picture that was built up of the societies in northern Britain was of groups who were hierarchical, tribal and familial, prone to warfare, and by analogy with another purportedly Celtic stratum, the early Medieval Irish texts (Hamilton 1966), involved in cattle-raiding and head hunting. This image of the northern Iron Age peoples reached its clearest definition with the works of Feachem (1965, 1977) and Piggott (1968) in which the northern Britons are warrior pastoralists, *Iron Age*

Gauchos and *Celtic cowboys*.

Such notions of identity are problematic. Firstly, problems exist in Piggott's provinces themselves. Hingley has recently questioned their appropriateness (Hingley 1992) for a pattern of Iron Age organisation that would seem to be more complicated than these four blocks have indicated. Much of the subtlety and individuality of the archaeology that has now been observed is being obscured by the dominance of the provincial model. Indeed the basic circularity of this model is evident. Monuments which appear outside their supposed home region have to be explained as exotic. However, it is the ingrained perceptions of the provincial organisation itself, which provides us with such anomalous categories of sites to deal with in the first place. Recent studies looking at such anomalies, for example Macinnes on the Scottish Lowland Brochs (1984), have first had to point out the real level of complexity of settlement and the intellectual restriction of rigid regional characterisations.

Having said this, however, there do remain genuine archaeological differences along geographical lines. The differential density of hillforts between the Solway/Clyde and the Tyne/Forth areas is marked and there are also apparent settlement differences north and south of the Forth/Clyde line. However, these latter variations need not be seen as major cultural differences between Britons and "proto-Picts" (Breeze 1979 3). Differences in social behaviour or practice, though, are likely to lie behind these settlement variations. It is possible that close attention to the context of sites within their immediate landscape may prove fruitful in elucidating what kinds of social practice were possible in those physical and cultural environments. It is this approach that I want to attempt to use in more detail in the chapters below.

There are further problems pertaining to the provincial paradigm with regard to its treatment of material culture. Both settlement and portable materials such as the prestige metalwork, are seen as a means of building up chronologies and explaining long term social change in the archaeological record. More generally, that development over time was seen within a framework of continuous and consistent linear progression out of the stone epoch through copper, bronze, iron and finally the industrial steel of the modern age. The philosophical paradigm behind this of an almost preordained technological progression continued to inform students until comparatively recently as they grappled with the significance of the appearance of new technologies in the archaeological record and attempted to assess the positive effects this had on ancient economies and societies.

A second group of problems are those inherent in the broad cultural schemes and analogies which were made especially in the construction of a "Celtic" identity and the appeal to "Celtic" origins. The arguments are well rehearsed and continue to be shown to be superficial or of only little use at best (Collis 1994) or thoroughly misleading, wrong-headed and even dangerous at worst (Jones 1997, James 1999). In addition these simple characterisations of identity do not help us represent a society which is hierarchical but rather they portray the upper echelons of that hierarchy. The aristocratic practices mentioned in classical and early medieval literatures and, apparently genuinely evinced in the archaeology such as prestige craft-work and complex high status settlement are most redolent of the upper echelons of society. The range of economic, social and ritual practice must have been broader, contingent on age, gender, status and personal experiences. The above views therefore miss out on the archaeology of the larger population and the social and economic practices of

every day life. Additionally, the economic assumptions made in these schemes have been shown to have been incompletely formulated. Evidence of pastoralism remains strong but arable cultivation is being consistently shown to be in attendance at Southwest Scottish sites.

The "Celtic" *hierarchical, tribal and familial* view of the Iron Age, then, may rather be hierophantic, trivial and familiar. It is hierophantic in that it paid almost exclusive attention to the activities of perceived upper echelons of societies by examining purportedly high status sites. It trivialised social structure in simplistic notions of tribal or chiefdom based dynamics. It also indulged in a "cosy, uncontroversial, functional" (Hill 1989) familiarity.

In the late 1960s and 1970s synthetic works took a different turn. The work of Cunliffe in importing such theoretical approaches as the centre and periphery model for Iron Age Britain (Cunliffe 1988 154-57, 1991) was used in establishing a broad picture of the kinds of socio-economic behaviour under which, arguably, all regions of Britain were integrated in a system of interaction and competition. While there is an important place for such general works, there are apparently some unfortunate losers in Cunliffe's systems model. The picture which Cunliffe paints of northern Britain is, perhaps, a less than dynamic one in which it is relegated to some utter hinterland remote from the active core of Iron Age Britain; beyond, even, the periphery zone.

Similarly, Cunliffe's characterisation of the economic situation of Scotland is equally uninspiring (1991 403). His "sufficer" economy, which stretches over Cumbria, Northumbria and the whole of Scotland, describes a situation where the full range of the economic strategies are seen as being carried out at individual settlements. Such a

model, in which each settlement, apparently socially and economically isolated, fully satisfies its own requirements, is likely to be rather over simplistic. The likelihood is that socio-economic practices were considerably varied, the growing evidence for a mixed farming regime has already been alluded to above and the social and economic ties linking different settlement sites may have been at once inextricable, embedded and significant. It is likely that the larger sites such as certain hillforts which were probably permanently occupied such as Eildon Hill North or Traprain Law (and we may suspect more, including some in south west Scotland) were parts of an extensive integrated social and economic landscape. Similarly, people in those regions where smaller sites appear to be the norm are just as likely to have been interacting with their neighbours in systems of reciprocal exchange, perhaps most notably that of marriage partners, but also a whole range of other materials and products.

The use of theory, then, concerning Britain as an entity has not been entirely fruitful in investigating the complexity of the various regions. This is particularly clear for the north. The tacking on of the region to broader schemes has tended to simplify the situation to a degree where what we learn about northern Iron Age societies or economies becomes so generalised as to be relatively meaningless or trivial. While there is a good deal of similarity in the material assemblages over the area of Britain, including the north, there are significant regional differences that must be addressed and accounted for. These might lie along the lines of diverse environment areas, varied social practice and custom or the effects of disparate political strategies or a mixture of all these.

In recent years there has been more emphasis on the particular historical and social conditions in which objects were actually situated. A realisation has dawned that narratives of technological development and descriptions of regional and local

"industries" are culture-bound and historically contingent concepts of the later twentieth century. Indeed, it is arguable that these are relatively meaningless categories when applied to prehistoric, pre-capitalist, probably socio-economically embedded societies. It has been a running joke that the archaeologists' inadequacy moves him, or her, to ascribe ritual connotations to anything s/he does not understand. However, there can be a good degree of certainty that in later prehistoric society the boundaries between categories such as secular and religious, practical and non-functional and art and technology would have been blurred or that those categories would have made no sense at all. The categories which did exist would probably have lain on different plains to our own perceptions effected as they are by the advent of the enlightenment, 19th century scientific rationalism, and modernism with concomitant urges to dissect concepts into observable sections. For the communities living in northern Britain in the few Centuries BC/AD there may have been no such dichotomy between the functional, pragmatic significance and the socially engendered meaning of architecture.

The tools with which to dismantle much of the former categories of the Iron Age have come from several distinct strands. Firstly, an increasing corpus of excavated sites have fore-grounded the immense diversity and complexity of individual sites, belying the keystones of traditional typologies. For example, the actual categories of site morphology are seen to be in danger in such work as that undertaken by Chris Gosden and Gary Lock on the hillforts along the Ridgeway in Oxfordshire (1998) which have illustrated the highly diverse nature of past activities evidenced at supposedly morphologically similar sites. This study has shown how many of our archaeological categories applied from "above" do not always sit comfortably with the arrangements

of excavated material culture from contexts on sites. The patterns of material, which must be our clearest window on past social lives, are rarely seen to be similar across several ostensibly similar sites.

What should be important in an assessment of the significance of late Iron Age settlement, then, is the kinds of strategies used by the builders of settlements to communicate the establishment and/or maintenance of their roles within their own specific social surroundings. This social affirmation can come via the actual meanings given to things in the material world and is communicated through the kinds of contexts (physical and mental) in which those things are created, used, displayed and disposed of. This largely follows the postprocessual or interpretative conviction in material culture as being meaningfully constituted. This kind of research has paid closer attention to the specific archaeological, material and social contexts in pursuing an investigation of the role and meanings of things, e.g. settlement, as a valid aim in its own right and not merely as an indicator of the level of technological and economic development of societies along some preconceived graded range of progress.

This theme has been pursued in recent studies of the Iron Age period in Britain with several discussions of the morphology of different categories of sites such as hillforts and enclosures, (Bowden and McOmish 1987, Hingley 1990a), and brochs and timber houses (Macinnes 1984, Hingley 1990b, Armit 1997c, Parker Pearson and Sharples 1997). Some common elements are demonstrated in these accounts. By looking at specific examples of sites these papers question some of the traditionally held assumptions about the nature of boundaries as purely defensive in character and they

accentuate the socially relevant nature of the forms of the various monuments by looking at specific archaeological contexts combined with the cautious use of ethnographic examples and archaeological theory. The implications of some of these studies will be discussed in more detail in chapters 2 and 3 in assessing their possible applicability to the monuments of the study region.

Histories of the "native"

As noted in the previous section much of the knowledge about the archaeology of the period of the late 1st millennium BC to the early 1st millennium AD has traditionally been hung on an historical framework that was constructed from the classical sources. This meant that the excavated material was either levered into the direct narrative of classical sources or indirectly inferred from analogies, for example in the understanding of Iron Age social structure, across large geographical areas held to represent a broad cultural milieu. This approach constructed the period as proto-historical rather than fully prehistoric. The period was deemed to be one in which the Iron Age societies in question were on the brink of recorded history; that in writing about them Roman authors were indeed allowing us a glance at the quasi-historical reality of these peoples. Hill has railed against this stance (1989), (described above), and recently a non-textually based attitude has tended to dominate most papers concerning this period.

Nevertheless, a critical study of the literature will facilitate a broader background to the nature of previous work on the period. Even if we tend to adopt the kind of stance

favoured by Hill and others of the inappropriateness of the historical literature, we still have to analyse the effects of that literature in order to disentangle the threads of meaning and significance which have effected the endeavour of an archaeology of the later prehistoric period.

It may, therefore, be interesting to look critically at an area of study which has heavily influenced the conceptual terrain of later Iron Age studies- the nature and implications of Roman historiographical work on Iron Age societies in northern Britain.

In a recent paper provocatively entitled: *"Was there ever a Roman conquest?"* one author has written that

> *"in no area has archaeology been more subordinate to the written record than in the study of the Roman empire"* (Hamilton *1995, 37)*

Our knowledge of the direct Roman involvement in Scotland hinges on several sources of information. The literary evidence from the period of the Roman involvement with Britain is relatively scarce as a whole in comparison to other provinces of the Empire and references to "native" Britons are uncommon. Material bearing on northern Britain is even scarcer. While there are British references in Roman poetry (usually using Britain as a metaphor for the ends of the earth or in allusion to Julius Caesar's or Claudius' greatness in attacking such a remote region) and in geography, e.g. Ptolemys' *Geographia*, or in official documents such as the Ravenna cosmography or the Antonine Itinerary, the largest body of information comes from the historical sources. There are historical sources that document episodes in Scotland in the late first century (Tacitus' Agricola), the mid second century (principally the relevant parts of the Scriptores Historiae Augustae (S.H.A.) and Dio 75, 5) and parts of the third and fourth centuries (Dio 76, 11-77, 1 Herodian 3, 7-15 Ammianus Marcellinus 20, 1; 26, 4; 27, 8). These are relatively scant

references, the Agricola representing the most substantial work with northern Britain as its subject, and they must be treated with the caution due to any historical source.

While there exists this variety of evidence for the analysis of the Roman period there has been a traditional bias towards the historical sources and the fitting of the archaeology into the historical framework that has been built up. This historicist work reached its peak under Collingwood and Frere with major works of synthesis (Collingwood 1941, Frere 1967, 1978, 1987).

For these archaeologists and many others one Roman historian who stood out as particularly worthy of study was Tacitus. He has gained special reverence from classicists as the pre-eminent Roman historian for his quality of writing and his care with historical accuracy. Tacitus has been lauded then for approaching historical writing almost as we ourselves might and he has gained particular appreciation among British scholars for "the Agricola" with its emphasis on some crucial moments in the Roman occupation and descriptions of native conditions.

Nevertheless, we have many reasons for being cautious in our use of Tacitus and the other sources. Hanson has outlined some points that should make us wary of accepting any of the primary sources uncritically (Hanson 1987,15). Firstly, where were the author's facts obtained from? Was there access to reliable source information? What kind of personal biases may have coloured the author's view? (Hanson 1991, 1747) In answering some of these points for the character of Tacitus and his writings Hanson shows that we must be cautious of even the greatest Roman historian and that Tacitus had his biases and his moments of inaccuracy like any other. Indeed Tacitus goes as far as to admit in "The Annals" that his over-arching concern in writing his histories is to illustrate the deeds of morally good men (their *virtutes*) in contrast with the corruption of those around them. Tacitus then, is

foremost a moralist identifying the ethical issues involved in historical events.

In this respect we can sometimes find him identifying or sympathising with non-Roman individuals or causes. The speech which he puts into Calgacus' mouth before the battle of Mons Graupius is one such case (Agricola 30-32). The concept of the noble savage is clearly embedded in this passage and allusions *to the last free men of Britain* portray a heroic and almost romantic image of the native opposition which could have had very little correspondence with their actual experiences. Interestingly, we can witness here parallel intellectual priorities and concerns to those that would again feature so prominently among historians and antiquarians in the 18th and 19th centuries during the heyday of European colonial power and which, arguably, formed the basis upon which modern Classical studies and Romanist archaeology are founded.

The classical sources, as with any historical source, are not objective and neutral. These documents are not free of bias but are products of authors immersed in the logic and beliefs of their own world and time. The most useful way to view the literary evidence is to do so within the context it was intended or as near as we can possibly manage. We should ask; for whom was the source intended? We will never fully comprehend the actual experience of being a literate, upper class male at the hub of the Roman Empire in the first few centuries AD. However, it is viewed from this perspective that they prove most appropriate, and relevant. They may speak volumes on the male literate class Roman and very little on the inhabitants of northern Britain.

Further inadequacies of the historicist approach have been recognised (Hingley 2000, 149, Webster 1999, Webster and Cooper 1996) in the normative qualities that they bestowed on the conduct of archaeological interpretation. Just as it is unsatisfactory to see Roman military sites as units of a standard predictable blueprint unaffected by

local conditions and contingencies, as open area excavation reveals their idiosyncratic and highly individual nature (e.g. Hanson 1988), so it is inappropriate to see native populations as mere passive reactors to the presence and actions of the Roman army. Hingley has recently addressed these issues and posits a "progressive" approach amongst Victorian and Edwardian historians and archaeologists (2000, 143-149) within which the arrival of the Roman Empire at Britain's shores was viewed as administering a foot up the ladder of social evolution for the backward native. Under these kinds of narratives later prehistoric social life was inert and static in the long period prior to Roman colonisation as it was during colonial contact. This attitude has prevailed, perhaps subconsciously, in more recent accounts in which uncritical acceptance of the scant Classical references to native dispositions and ethnicity have been used to describe Roman military actions set against a background of native reaction (Breeze 1985, Hind 1983, Mann and Breeze 1987 Hanson and Maxwell 1983). These accounts use the cultural labels left to us by the Roman authors to assess the relationship between Roman and "others" without examining the potential archaeological and sociological validity of these labels in the first instance.

What we call Rome and Roman has recently been re-defined through work utilising theories of identity as the interactions of a collection of various identities and authorities held together by a multi-faceted, socially and culturally contingent notion of Rome (e.g. Barrett 1991 47, Laurence and Berry 1998,). These kinds of approach are advocating a definition of "Roman" and "Romaness" which is based on local and "native" specific contexts and contingencies as much as it is on far-reaching concepts of belonging to a geographically wider Roman world, and which is seen as operating within persons actions and their social values as expressed through social practices.

Recent critical accounts of the literature have sought to over-haul the values inherited

from earlier Romanist and colonialist discourse (many papers in TRAC Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference e.g. Kurchin 1995, Meadows 1994, Poulton and Scott 1993, Willis 1994) and re-think the way we view the Roman/native dichotomy (Barrett 1989 235, Barrett and Foster 1991 46, Hanson 1991 72). Indeed we may be critical of our assumptions in conveniently compartmentalising such assemblages into Roman and Native from the outset. This has serious implications for the question of identity. This is an implicitly important question but one that seems incredibly difficult to pin down. Who do we mean by the Romans? Who were the natives?

This thesis is overwhelmingly concerned with the latter, however, the articulation of many traditional interpretations of Iron Age societies have implicitly operated through the values inherent in the binary dichotomy of the Romanist/Classical mode even where those studies have not been concerned with Roman archaeology. This has been the case from Piggott's day (1966) through to Mackie (1982, 1995) and Cunliffe (1991, 193). These studies have frequently operated under this colonialist discourse in which the Iron Age provides the native "other" to the familiar Roman observer who appear to be almost like us in values. It seems that the very prevalence of the words *Roman* and *native* necessitates the grouping of all material culture found in northern Britain from the late first to the fourth centuries AD into certain categories. These categories carry certain associations of either, indigenous, local, small-scale, or conversely, exogenous, alien, large-scale, long distance and a high level of central organisation.

When we place material into these dichotomous classifications we imbue them with the connotations that the labels carry with them, but would these connotations be recognised by those who made, distributed, deployed and deposited these artefacts? Recent studies would emphasise that items of material culture, however distantly

distributed are leant socially specific meanings by practices on a human, local scale and the possibilities for re-interpretation and re-deployment are endless. The lesson to learn is that the nature of associations and meanings attached to materials, places and the events and practices performed at and through them in prehistory are to be sought out at the smaller, local, intimate venues of "face-to-face 'co-presence'" (Barret and Foster 1991 47).

What this amounts to, then, is that I believe we should be considering late prehistoric societies as much more complex phenomena in geographical and historical terms than the Roman historical sources would suggest. The sources remain of use within certain specific forms of analysis but we must resist the temptation to lever the archaeology into a narrow Roman view that was far from objective and probably not in line with native late Iron Age people's views about themselves. Study of the classical literature, while important, must not be the only or the most significant way to gauge the attitudes of individuals and social groups to others. Indeed, such a source-based approach misses out on a significant element in the problem: the complete lack of testimony of the indigenous prehistoric, non-literate societies. In effect the Roman historians and geographers were themselves practising a form of culture history which was blind to social systems that did not equate to *tribes, kingdoms, peoples* and other fairly rigidly bounded *ethnos* and which were related specifically to particular spatial locations. This was directly as a result of their own development and their perceptions of their own ancient historical development, social structure and the political electoral system based as it was on tribal power blocks, intimately connected with specific territorial and ethnic claims. If we follow the Roman authors down this comparative line we will be guilty of being reductive of the

actual complexity of late Iron Age social life in Scotland. Late prehistoric populations should not be seen as a static, normative background to an archaeology of the Roman period as they have often been in colonialist driven archaeological discourses.

As we saw in the review of Iron Age studies at the beginning of this chapter the archaeology which is being excavated (and the way in which material is being interpreted) increasingly contradicts traditional frameworks. It should not surprise us when the rather prosaic nature of most archaeological material tallies badly with the grand themes of historical narrative. Historical sources are invariably written from the single, uncluttered view-point of a culturally specific individual who may make large leaps of space and time to draw together diverse experiences, and accounts of events (as documented or remembered) and impose order and causality on them in a linear narrative. Archaeology, on the other hand can be anarchic, multi-causal, self-contradictory and non-linear, and perhaps most importantly, multi-vocal. Archaeology spreads out from various foci of activities, but often, because of the vagaries of different preservational rates this occurs in a random and amorphous fashion. This spread can exist as many layers (both literally; stratigraphically and in terms of meaning(s) placed upon it) and operates across many trajectories focused upon by people with diverse interest areas from soils to structures with everything in between from pollen to politics. Clearly, the process of historical or literary criticism is not the same as that of archaeological interpretation even if both are fundamentally interpretative processes conducted within socially contingent discourses.

This thesis primarily concerns archaeological contexts composing monuments and landscapes that will be the subject of chapters 2 and 3. The material culture in question is overwhelmingly that of structures and building features composed of

small-scale contexts and deposits. These smaller contexts of archaeological and social action do not relate clearly to the long sweep or large scales of the historicist accounts under review. It is argued here that the historicist approaches have tended to ignore or trivialise the more intimate contexts of social action. In the following section on landscape the significance of these smaller contexts is analysed.

Landscape and the landscapes of this thesis: defining social space, material culture and identity

This discussion on landscape foregrounds some of the recent theoretical and critical treatment of landscape as an issue in archaeological studies and introduces the key ideas about landscape, monuments and people which inform this thesis.

This thesis is primarily about the relationship of people to landscapes and chapters 2 and 3 deal with the specifics of late prehistoric material culture (especially buildings, settlement) within the particular landscapes of West Wigtownshire. It is therefore appropriate at this juncture to discuss some of the ideas and theoretical material which have guided the approaches taken to landscapes and material cultures in the subsequent chapters.

The advent of post-processual approaches has seen studies of contextually situated material culture come into its own in archaeology in recent decades. The work of Hodder (1986, 1989), Miller and Tilley (1984), Shanks and Tilley (1987), Evans

(1985), Barrett (1988, 1989, 1994), Bradley (1993), Thomas (1991, 1996) and Edmonds (1999) in foregrounding theoretical geographies in archaeological landscape studies has been revolutionary. Tilley's *A Phenomenology of the Landscape* (1994) has been extremely influential.

In recent decades the old archaeological sense of "landscape" as an ever-present reality, a background to the material culture, which was usually dealt with as an implicit self-evident presence rather than a valid subject of study in its own right has been challenged and overhauled. This has come about through a growing awareness of theoretical work from the 1970's and 80's in sociology (Berger 1972, Foucault 1977), anthropology (Munn 1977, Smith 1985), history (Cosgrove 1984) and postmodern social geography (Relph 1985, Soja 1985).

Sauer was one of the first authors to use the term cultural landscapes (1963) to discuss a range of ideas about human relations with their surroundings which were held to be subjective and beyond the formal, quantifiable analysis of the environmental determinism of most accounts of landscape at the time. Largely based on readings of the early phenomenologist philosopher Edmund Husserl, Tuan took up Sauer's challenge to write these subjective histories of landscape (1971) in emphasising the need to move away from the positivist preoccupations of the "New geography" in favour of subjective landscapes of human striving. Subsequent phenomenological approaches in geography (e.g. Gregory 1994, Hillier and Hanson 1984, Relph 1985) all emphasised a concern to explore "place" in explorations of human behaviour during rather than after investigations as a means of addressing the objective/subjective debate which academic study found itself locked in.

Human life consists of "situated social action" (Thrift 1983) and this activity creates spaces which are both the product of social actions and reproductive of further

practices and action. This socially mediated space forms structure; that is called place. Thus space provides a framework of location for places and places lend meanings to those spaces (Relph 1976). Perceptions of places vary according to the relationship between the specifics of personal and social identities and experiences and the awareness of the affiliations and histories of particular places. There is therefore a reflexive relationship between the location of an individual and their identity as perceived by themselves and others (Buttimer 1980). That relationship is negotiated through practices, performance and remembrance. Places in the landscape can be locations of everyday life as well as reservoirs of memory, history and myth (Barrett 2000, Schama 1995). Decisions and expectations for the future are also highlighted at these places and the social reproduction and transformation of communities pulsate to temporal rhythms (Barrett 1994, Ingold ([1993], 2000 189-208).

Therefore human perception of landscape is complex and cannot be reduced merely to the visual characteristics. Nor is it simply a social construct since that assertion would return us to the culture and nature opposition, rather it is the interplay of environment, creatures, material culture and time in an inherent continuum in which these features all possess agency as active as that of humans (Ingold 1996, 2000).

From these situated perspectives on the relations of landscape with practices, experiences and memory it can be seen that one crucial element which touches on all of these aspects is the human body. Under phenomenological perspectives the body is the mediator between thought and the world and is the point from which the world is appreciated (Tilley 1994: 13). The human body forms our basis for orientation and observation in space Relph (1976), and it's postures and movements are productive of practices and relationships which construct identities (Thomas 1996). Embodiment is

therefore the phenomenon of the sensuous, intelligent, knowledgeable action of being in the world.

In small-scale societies of the kind presumed to have formed the material landscapes of this thesis, relations of identity and power would be conducted in a face-to-face manner (Barrett and Foster 1991, Barrett 1994). They would be given their meaning, there social currency within those intimate scales. This highlights the importance of the body's postures and contextualisation in space and places as essentially productive of the discourse of relations. In the material studies which follow (particularly in chapter 3) these intimate contexts are dealt with explicitly because they are deemed to be the focus of these identities and relations.

In some Iron Age narratives the scales of analysis have been large, for example Cunliffe's centre and periphery model for the whole of Britain (1988, 1991). But it is this preoccupation with the long term, the *longue duree* of the Annalistes school of history which may ignore, or at least obscure, the finer detail of past social lives; the actual meanings given to material culture within the short term contexts of individual's lives. Those meanings and significances may reside within a discrete cannon of social knowledge for only a human generation or two before changing tack and being reinterpreted themselves.

In this manner the material world constantly changes and so do the meanings given to it. That is why the approaches in the chapters which will follow all focus on a fairly narrow time scale (the lifetimes of individual sites or parts of those sites) and a fairly close up scrutiny of the archaeology both in terms of the actual case studies of monuments and landscapes, which are examples on fairly small spatial scales, and the social theory used, which is based upon social relations of a small scale. We will also observe how different scales of analysis between, for example, the knowledge

produced from excavated material and that of aerial photographically informed material are problematic in the narratives we seek to produce.

The subtitle of this section *defining Social Space, material culture and Identity* lists three categories of meaning that I believe are extremely important in archaeological studies of landscape. These are social space, material culture and identity; they might be simplified as the "where", "what" and "who" of life. In reality the three categories must be considered as false definitions since they are complexly interrelated and inextricably interwoven, incapable of a satisfactorily complete definition. The reasons that we find it necessary to label and study these categories stem from the historical development of thought and academia in "the Western World". These priorities and trajectories were born out of the advent of the enlightenment, 19th century scientific rationalism, and modernism with their urges to dissect concepts into observable sections. The three terms are used in this thesis as working terms. It is worth pointing out though that they form parts of a hermeneutic relationship with a larger perception of the world in which these categories can be seen to be dynamically related to each other. Together they would constitute a more rounded, fuller significance to any archaeological enquiry but it is almost impossible to truly consider them in a fully integrated continuum, to break free of the classificatory divisions of our contemporary world. For this reason I will provide definitions for the purposes of this thesis.

Space, or social space, has been discussed already as the framework by which "places" are referenced by communities. Social space can be seen to be involved in the construction of communities' geographies of themselves. We must, however,

resist seeing space as simply the background to monuments since it is loaded with meanings and associations itself. The construction of monuments and their subsequent use specifically related to the analysis of human action and movement in and around what we call monuments and landscapes is an example of the dynamic of social space. This is of course crucially linked to notions of identity for it is identity, of the individual and the group, and its constant reinterpretation, which will continue to fuel social reproduction and the motivations of communities to continue to build and to live in and around monuments according to custom and enacted through specific social strategies. Social space then, is socially/historically contingent (Relph 1976, Thrift 1983). Identity itself, and concepts of ethnicity, have recently come to the fore in archaeology after a long period of post-war neglect which is probably directly attributable to academic guilt over the explicit treatment with which National Socialist history, anthropology and archaeology gave to ethnic identity and the moral and political values ascribed to groups. However, without exploration of identity we can never investigate how societies in the past viewed their material worlds. Recent work by Jones (1997) has dealt explicitly with identity and has highlighted the importance of its consideration in any analysis of archaeological spatial data. Her work informs the conceptions of identity favoured in this thesis. Identity is a dynamic and fluid concept of the self and of the group, or rather various group identities, which persons associate themselves with.

Social or cultural specifics frame the world through the legitimacy or authority that they lend to practices. The linkage between social space, material culture and identity must therefore come from the involvement of the human body in these practices. Identities are crucially constitutive of any meaning that may lie behind the detritus of ruins, deposits and artefacts that we find in the physical world of archaeology. The

categories of meaning ascribed to places will always be directly related to the kinds of action occurring there; social practice lends meaning to the material world. In other words, what occurs at a location makes it what it is.

From the above discussion on social space, identity and material culture it can be seen how difficult it is to describe any of the individual categories significance in isolation from the others. Actually, it is arguable that belief and work and life, of the ordinary every day kind and, of the special moments are interwoven and embedded in a way that is resistant to a satisfactory dissected definition. There can be a good degree of certainty that in later prehistoric society the boundaries between categories such as secular and religious, practical and non-functional and art and technology would have been blurred or that those categories would have made no sense at all. For communities living in northern Britain in the few Centuries BC/AD there may have been no such dichotomy between the functional, pragmatic significance and the socially engendered meaning of architecture.

The Preservational and Depositional Landscape

Before we can move on to a discussion of the archaeology to be found within the research region of West Wigtownshire it is important to recognise some important factors involved in how we appreciate archaeological material landscapes. We have already reviewed some of the recent theoretical movements in landscape archaeology we may now move on to consider how these social landscapes relate to the physicality of the material landscapes which we explore in excavation and other practices.

Recently, Gosden has highlighted three types of landscape appreciation which feed into the formation of archaeological landscapes that confront us "in the field" today (Gosden, 1997). Gosden's three-fold heuristic landscape division consists of-

1. The social landscape- *"our ultimate object?"* (Gosden, 1997 304). This corresponds to those aspects of the landscape which were discussed in chapter two; it is the culturally relevant and contingent aspect relating to past societies. Moreover it is the ideological, philosophical or cosmological aspects of the groups social worlds and the articulation of these with the physical or material world.

2. The depositional landscape-

"both the items of material culture originally deposited on the landscape and the sediments which compose the landscape itself." (ibid, 304).

Here Gosden envisages the total activities of any given past community in its impact across the spaces and places it inhabited. This kind of activity is increasingly recognised as extending beyond "settlement" foci (what we usually define as sites) in British Iron Age studies. As several recent studies have shown, the patterns of structured deposition seen on settlements extended across the landscape (e.g. Fitzpatrick 1984, Bradley 1990, Hunter 1997). The placing of artefacts in rivers and bogs; and ritual deposits of pottery, bone and stone tools in walls or ditches were all important aspects of Iron Age behaviour. It is also clear that there are more Iron Age burials outside settlements than has been thought likely in the past. Other work has emphasised the importance of earlier monuments as ritual foci and for the laying out of agricultural landscapes (e.g. Hingley 1996; Gillings and Pollard 1999). Greater recognition and more careful study of all these 'off site' activities in their immediate and wider landscape contexts is of vital importance, as is the integration of this evidence with environmental data in order to understand fully how specific settlements operated within their social landscapes.

Gosden's third category is 3. The distributional landscape which; since it is-

"made up of differential distributions of objects and sediments- result[s] both from the complex reasons that people had for discarding different materials at different times and places and from the complex operations of the taphonomic shredder, itself responding to the history of human land use in an area." (ibid 305)

This is essentially the entire data set of landscape archaeology as it confronts us in the present. It is what we come into contact with when we open a trench or look at an aerial photograph. It comes about as a result of the mediation between the material effects of social lives of communities in the past (the social landscape) and the agency of subsequent land histories.

This three-fold definition of landscape is interesting because while it attends to the social or cultural content it also makes explicit the operation of physical processes on the land to obscure and transform the world constructed by prehistoric people. The importance of this is not simply as a salutary warning against uncritical attempts to simply read the social landscape of past communities but offers us a manner of proceeding to uncover the relevant landscape information by paying attending to the detailed vagaries of land histories and the subtle interplay between the social and material realities of the past and those of subsequent land-use.

The depositional landscape was created by the repeated actions of people operating in social landscapes and is a combination of sedimentary processes operating under human influence, and the streams of people and objects through and into that landscape. The depositional landscape is a complex transformation of the social landscape, but not a random one: the patterns of action in the social landscape will create a series of effects in the depositional landscape. We need to attempt to move back through the series of transformations to arrive at some glimpse of the operations of various Iron Age landscapes. (Gosden 1997, 307)

We cannot appreciate what in the current landscape of our study area is relevant to our period 200BC-AD200 without stripping off the obscuring layers of land development. Until we can unpack the various elements that we witness in West

Wigtownshire landscapes today; we stand no chance of appreciating what the scope for Iron Age communities own sense of place(s) may have been. We might ask are there differently scaled analytical landscape units depending on whether we look at the past social landscapes, or depositional landscapes as defined above?

If the way that the landscape appears to us today is a product of successive landscape histories subsequent to the period we wish to get at then we may proceed to briefly examine this *land history.* The most significant land use changes to recently effect West Wigtownshire are the package of social and agricultural factors known as "the improvements". This period of landscape development witnessed the *rationalisation* and a formalisation of farming practices and had a radical effect on the land. Estates and boundaries were key features of this movement as increased enclosure of the land went hand in hand with new tenurial control based on commerce and capital from the late17th Century onwards. Today the visual landscape of Western Galloway is thus largely a creation of the last 300 years. These features include estate and farm parcels regular and irregular fields divided by dry-stone dykes, woodland plantations and shelterbelts, roads and tracks that link settlements together. Much of this alteration of the landscape was directly as a result of Galloways status as the first Scottish region to be affected by the rise of large scale commercial farming. This movement was largely motivated by the wish to participate in English markets across the Solway.

If we move back further in time we can see that this advanced state was not always what contemporary authors wished to note of Galloway. In the late Medieval period western Galloway was seen by travellers as an undeveloped and backward region within Scotland.

"Famines were common, as crops were often partial or complete failures. The economy was primarily a primitive, largely self-sufficient, agrarian and static one,

with rents paid in kind, often cattle. Internal commerce was conducted principally at fairs and Markets.... And towns were miserable places with little trade or commerce. Travellers such as Thomas Tucker in 1655, describe a landscape consisting mainly of moorland or bog, undrained, with no dykes or fences, and with extensive areas of surface water, loch and marsh. There was very little woodland apart from a few patches of old forest..." (Donnachie and Macleod 1974, 20)

"Symson writing in 1684 describes...agricultural land as divided into in-field and out-field, the former worked as arable in "run-rigg" strips, the latter largely devoted to pasture and grazing. Beyond the out-field was common grazing or moor ground, often entirely unimproved and little attended, ..." "a four fold rotation system, was apparently common to much of Galloway,"

Writing of the Rhins of Wigtownshire John Macky comments in the late 1600's-

"I cannot help saying it is the coursest part of all the Kingdom hardly excepting lochaber and Ross" (quoted in Donnachie and Macleod 1974, 19)

The purpose of noting this material is not to extrapolate that this pre-mechanised, pre-improvements and pre-rationalised state was similar in any way to the Iron Age. For one thing we can have serious doubts about some of these criticisms of the backwardness of the region. They are parts of historical documents and as such are not neutral objective accounts but are redolent of their author's cultural attitudes and their agenda. Secondly, there is no reason to believe that Iron Age socio-economics might operate along the same lines as the pre-improvement one simply because they shared the same topographical area.

The virtue of this historicist view of landscape change then, is in its power to allow us to explore the vast differences that can occur over a single space over time. These transformations are not restricted by environment and economics because these aspects are themselves produced by the way communities interact with the land. The economy is a construct of social interactions. The vast differences in a single landscape that occur over time are therefore largely culturally dictated.

If we try to go back further in time in exploring landscape change in West Wigtownshire we are hampered by a lack of historical information on this specific

issue. Landscape history before the middle 1600's is therefore almost entirely an archaeological sphere of enquiry. There are some historical documents pertaining to Medieval land ownership. However, these do not inform us what exactly in the current landscape is a product of this period. Realistically, it is here that our attempt to strip off the layers of landscape accretion must conclude. We cannot reach satisfactorily back to the Iron Age because not enough archaeological work has been conducted in Wigtownshire with the aim of looking at landscape development.

If this historicist avenue can get us no further, how might we fare with an investigation of modern land use in West Wigtownshire? How can the way that the landscapes of West Wigtownshire are currently seen help us analyse the later prehistoric evidence? An interesting project would have been to investigate modern landuse at the immediate "work-a-day" scale; how farmers "work the land" today and what cycles and seasonal practices they adhere to in causing the landscape to look as it does. Unfortunately, an M.phil research project is necessarily limited in time and scale. In compensation we may look at modern perceptions of West Wigtownshire in the published accounts of academics interested in landuse "potentials".

As discussed above the most recent comprehensive characterisation of the agriculture of Wigtownshire is that by Bown and Heslop. If we look at their modern land type classification of West Wigtownshire (see Figure1.1) we can gain some impression of the relative fertility and the agricultural suitability of the area. This is, we presume, important both in considering the relative distributions of Iron Age settlement. The area is again seen to be diverse but in general there is a considerable amount of good agricultural land particularly around the Stranraer Lowlands. Poorer quality land is present on the upland fringes. While this gives us some important information on the

basic potentials of the land we must be aware that we cannot make a direct correlation between modern standards of land use character and quality and those of the later Iron Age. On a purely practical level the sweeping land use classificatory schemes of modern economic atlases are highly generalised pictures. They do not allow for the existence of smaller pockets of localised soils which vary from the broad trend such as are caused by drift soil formations, micro-climatic zones or the presence or absence of shelter. In addition there may have been relatively considerable climatic shift since the Roman Iron Age and within the period of the Iron Age. According to recent estimates (Lamb 1981, Bell 1996) there was a 2°C fall in the mean temperature of the British isles in the first third of the first millennium BC, this gave way to an improved period around 400 BC and then a return to lower temperatures c.200 BC. In addition the climate appears to have become wetter towards the end of the second millennium BC and this resulted in podsolisation and the rapid growth of blanket peat bog in many parts of the country (Turner 1981). These fluctuations in the climate could have had considerable effects on the agricultural practices of Iron Age societies. That very human action on the landscape could also effect the suitability of land for farming as soils could be improved or exhausted over generations of farming practice. This human agency on the relative fecundity of the soil will often be obscured by subsequent agriculture.

Additionally, there are theoretical problems with the application of modern land use values as analogies with ancient arrangements. The definition of good land is to some extent a cultural one and may vary from one society to another or, indeed, within societies. The criteria for the suitability of landscapes for settlement may not follow the strictly economic considerations of modern farming. Ethnographic studies invariably show that cultural considerations, such as belief systems and taboo

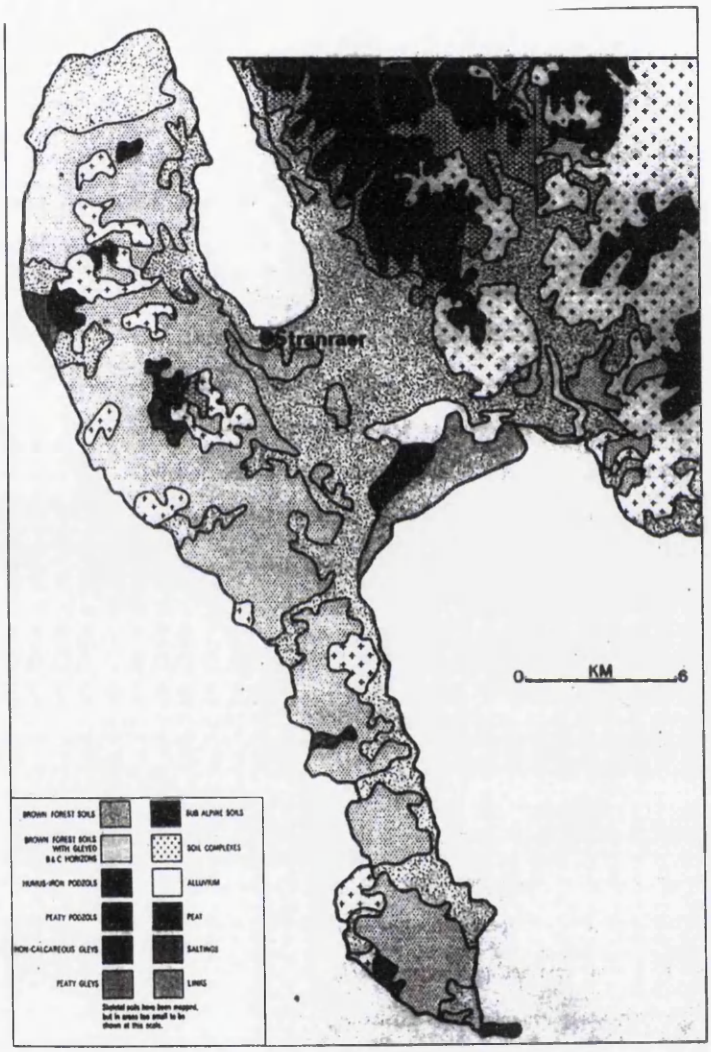


Figure 1.1. Land classification in Wigtownshire after Bown and Heslop 1979. (Bown and Heslops figure 13)

regulations, auspicious and inauspicious places and directions, are often the decisive factors in the location of settlement and farm layouts in non western, traditional societies (e.g.- Douglas 1966, Weiner 1988, 101). Indeed, while modern soil quality/landuse distributions may be compared with general distributions of Iron Age sites, the conclusions drawn from such comparison will be similarly general in nature. If we are reduced to making statements like- substantial houses such as duns, are to be found in more marginal upland or coastal areas then we are simply being descriptive. If this statement is extended to form a functional explanation for duns such as that the broken, infertile hills suited small units of people who were poorly integrated with each other socially, then this is still not a particularly penetrating insight into the social ordering of the landscape or the meaning of such settlement types within their own social context. We are still left wondering why the particular morphology of the dun could be equated with marginal upland areas or with dis-integrated communities, if indeed, Iron Age societies ever made such an association.

Similarly, the flaws in categorisations of ancient agricultural economies based on modern land quality maps are clear. For example, the former paradigm for much of northern Britain which held that the area utilised a largely pastoralist economy (Piggott 1962) can be shown to be over simplistic. Indeed, if we look at the relative tendencies of arable/pastoral farming in Britain at the beginning of this century (Fig.1.2) we can gain an insight into the much more mixed farming potential of south west Scotland. This is not to say that this is a better source for a direct analogy with late Iron Age societies, but it does represent a farming regime in that part of the world prior to the general onslaught of mechanised high yield orientated production. At the very least, but perhaps most importantly, it shows us how the pattern of land use is changeable over time and not merely constrained by environment but is variable with

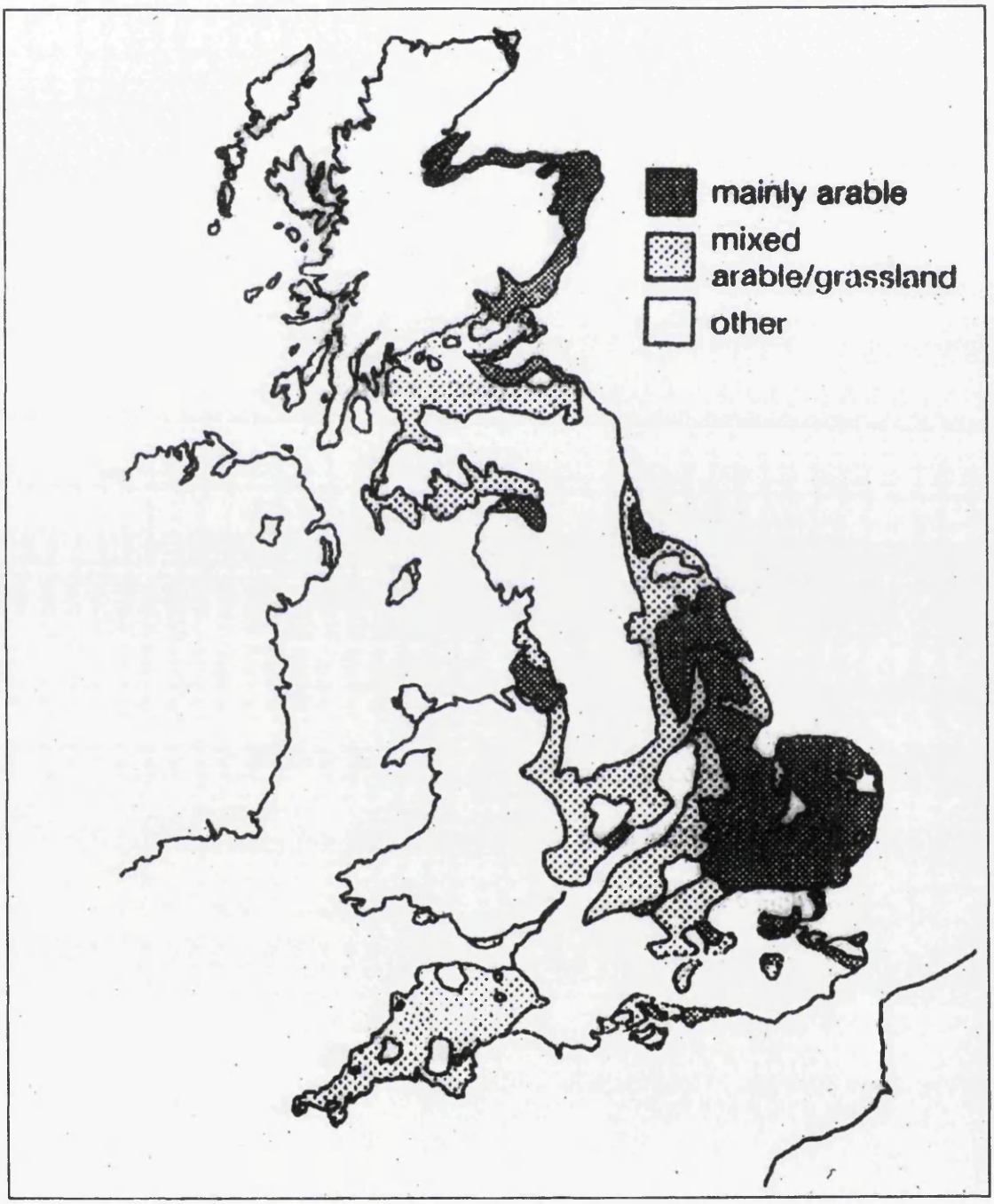


Figure 1.2. The relative tendencies of arable/pastoral farming in Britain at the beginning of the 20th Century (after Jones and Mattingly 1990).

the human agency that plays upon it.

We may critique the use of modern land-use patterns and soil potential plots for assessing later prehistoric landscapes in the following ways.

1. The work of Bown and Heslop is an ahistorical document which assumes that there are natural potentials, tendencies and traits behind modern land use but does not admit or recognise the historical formative processes which lie behind the way in which the land is used. We are presented with a geography of land use which is purportedly based upon the "natural" tendencies and potentials of an area of land and those areas of land are defined according to the relationship between topography, soil type and geology. But of course these tendencies and potentials are not natural. They are themselves by-products of human agency operating on the land over such a lengthy period of time that the geographers think they must be natural.
2. In modern land use categorisation a lot of the finer detail is glossed over in a more general analysis- so smaller units of "good land" are missed. Also, it does not take account of the social reasons why land may be considered "good" or "bad", appropriate or taboo etc.
3. There is a very close relationship between soil type, topography/land form and geology in Bowns' and Heslops' work. This correlation works along the lines that each criterion is used to support the judgement about the quality of the others. Therefore, for example, a soil type deemed to be of a fairly good quality but which is seen to occur in an upland area automatically looses points. The reasoning behind this is never explicitly discussed but we must assume it is because of its inaccessibility to modern mechanised farming. We may well

dismiss this in relation to later prehistoric farming practices.

4. This academic interpretative analysis of land use/agricultural suitability fits modern, actual, land practice because this analysis is actually a layer of description classifying what is actually the observable case in the fields of the region. Much of what they claim to be natural is based on what they observe to be taking place because they assume an utter rationality in the relationship between the farmer and the worked landscape. Current well farmed, productive land must be the product of underlying potentials and the good sense of the farmers in recognising it. Again, this takes no account of the generations of human beings working on that landscape intensifying its qualities. The product of Bown and Heslop, then, is a product of its own cultural and temporal setting.

Some important questions arise from this recognition of the relative nature of modern land-use classification. Not the least of which is the fact that if modern suitability for settlement and farming can be seen to have little bearing on ancient suitability then those landforms or parts of landforms which are currently little utilised in mechanised farming may have been very much more busy landscapes in the past. This has important knock-on effects for the analysis of vagaries of preservation and deposition. Those areas which are currently farmed intensively such as the Stranraer Lowlands appear to be heavily loaded with archaeology, conversely the Rhins Upland appears less full.

The further effect of this realisation of the highly variable nature of land use over time is in the consideration of the effects of differential preservation and differential landscapes of preservation on the typologies we construct in our "distributional landscapes". Several examples of upstanding earthwork monuments in West

Wigtownshire such as Cairn Pat, Tor of Craigoch or Core Hill (discussed in more detail in chapter three) are classified by the RCAHMS as "forts". These can be compared with several crop mark multi-vallate enclosures in the Stranraer lowlands (illustrated in Figure 3.11 below) which can be of comparable size and complexity but which are frequently classed simply as enclosures or settlements. This strongly illustrates the effects of the preservational biases on traditional typological classification.

Given the problems of the previous lack of work on landscape formation in West Galloway and those difficulties inherent in the comparison of modern land potentials with prehistoric landscapes can we say anything about the depositional, sedimentary state of the ground surfaces of the Iron Age of Wigtownshire and how these were formed by the societies living on them? To gain any glimpse of this we must inspect the fairly meagre excavation record for sites of the Iron Age in the area. Can we however, extend any of the insights gained from these intensive investigations into the broader spaces and places of the Wigtownshire Iron Age? What relationship might there be between the excavated sites and the large numbers of prehistoric places known from the aerial photographs of the last decade or so?

Many of these complexes of archaeology (discussed in detail in chapter 3) no doubt contain elements from a long aggregation of use if the situation at the excavations of Fox Plantation (Macgregor, et al 1996) (see chapters 2 +3), and Dunragit, (Thomas, et al, 1999) is typical. At these sites long periods of occupation were attested which included faint traces of Mesolithic activity, through to Neolithic and Bronze Age structures and material, and into Late Prehistoric roundhouses, enclosures and pits. In the case of the excavated site of Fox Plantation (published as a data structure report,

with a more extensive monograph forthcoming) radio-carbon dates place some of these later structures and material in the centuries either side of 0 BC/AD, (Macgregor pers. comm. more detail below). This palimpsest state of being speaks of use and reuse, of change, of alteration of buildings and delimited space and of the objects used and deposited within these spaces. This in turn reflects the human practices and the social reproduction, which must be evinced in this architectural and spatial reproduction and reinterpretation. The crop mark complexes show a consistency and continuity of space and the persistence of interest in particular places despite what archaeological/chronological and cultural categories we slice them up into.

This persistent longevity or time depth is not visible in the late prehistoric archaeology of the upland Rhins area, however. There is little evidence that the sites upon which promontory enclosures, hillfort enclosures, massive dry-stone roundhouses, crannogs and open settlement are located has anything like the longevity of settlement evidenced in the loch Ryan-Luce Bay isthmus, although the lack of recent excavation in relation to this issue is contributory to uncertainty. However, it would seem fairly incredible that there was little earlier activity in the area, and indeed the occurrence of standing stones both singly and in circle groups and the existence of chambered cairns and prehistoric rock art, in the Rhins area demonstrates the participation of communities of the uplands in what we would identify as characteristic Neolithic and early Bronze Age material and social life. Nevertheless, there is nothing to suggest that the strong tendency of specific locations to be recurrently utilised over millennia is a feature of the Rhins archaeology as it is so clearly demonstrated in the Stranraer Lowlands cropmark sites. Iron Age sites on the Rhins upland appear to stand alone with no vast history of recurrent occupation behind them. This appearance may be deceptive; the late prehistoric archaeology may

be masking earlier settlement and there may be sub-peat archaeology in the vicinity of Iron Age structures that we are simply unable to see. The relative lack of excavation is sorely felt and we have to admit that there is therefore a bias in our resources.

In this respect the Rhins uplands and Stranraer Lowlands may not be readily working comparanda because they are not formed by entirely similar preservational characteristics. We cannot compare them uncritically without paying heed to the dislocations between the distributional landscape, the social landscape and what Gosden styles; the *depositional landscape* (1997, 305) and expect to initiate an effective or satisfactory archaeology of the area. There are problems involved in reconciling the contemporary archaeological manifestations with the social or cultural realities of people in the past and the long-term historical and on-going formative processes of landscape development that serve to mediate the relationship between the two. We cannot ignore the fact that -*"some features are better traps of sediments and artefacts than others"* (Gosden 1997, 305) or indeed that some landscapes are relatively better traps of artefacts, sites and landscape features.

For example, at first glance it looks as if the Stranraer lowlands represent a preserved landscape with plenty of archaeology and important off-site landscape features showing on aerial photographs and that, conversely, composed, as it is; of the isolated promontory forts, hillforts and occasional open settlement the Rhins upland has a paucity of such landscape information. In fact it may be that the Rhins archaeology lies preserved under a metre or more of Sub-Atlantic peat formation and that the apparent ubiquity of inter-site detail on the Stranraer Lowlands is a function of their degradation. The recognition of the largely crop-mark formed archaeology on these photographs is reliant on the production of a smooth agricultural plough-soil and the removal of old ground surfaces and floor levels within buildings and working areas to

leave the out-lines of ring-ditches, enclosures, post-holes, pits and other sub-soil disturbance. If these sites were not compromised by plough erosion they might be visible as amorphous blobs rather than the crisp incisions in the landscape that often appear in the aerial photographic resource. That this truncation of the archaeology is an on-going feature of the area is supported by Murray (1988, 26) where she details two definite examples from this research area where archaeology has been completely lost due to the depredations of agriculture. In March of this year this author witnessed the almost supernaturally smooth plough-soil, no doubt achieved with the use of the harrow, of several fields in the areas of East Galdenoch. East Galdenoch is one of the areas which was so replete with crop-mark archaeology in the aerial surveys of the early 1990's. It is instructive to see this even regularity at ground level since it is probably the diligence of local farmers in this respect that is partly responsible for the remarkable aerial visibility of archaeology in this region. That visibility is perhaps more redolent of the crop mark landscapes of southern England than of southern Scotland and in common with that region it is being annually degraded.

However, if there is a great deal of good photographic evidence for landscape features from the Stranraer Lowlands area there remain large areas of little or no useable information on the Rhins and even within the Stranraer lowlands there are gaps. We cannot decry this lack of information as an impediment to a total understanding of archaeological landscapes, however, since such an enterprise is a fallacy in any case for many of the reasons given here already. Nevertheless, we might hope to attempt to reach some understanding of the links between what we define as "sites"; the gross focal points of observable material culture/monument and other such focal points and between these points and the range of places in their landscapes used in a variety of ways. We might hope to gain an impression of social scale and community

interaction. Without consideration of the links between different landforms and how they interacted we can hardly present a convincing analysis of prehistoric landscapes.

In this first chapter then we have examined the history of the development of Iron Age studies as well as the effects of Romanist discourse on interpretations and values placed on later prehistoric material culture. The tendency up to recent years has been for fairly large scales of analysis to predominate the literature. In the theoretical discussion on landscape we saw how the scale of analysis of landscapes is crucial to producing a narrative of communities' perceptions of their spaces and places which is sensitive to culturally contingent values. The scale of analysis therefore advocated in this project is small, bringing out the intimacies of buildings, monuments, deposited items and the spaces between them which were the arena for social practices and embodied actions in face-to-face communities. This archaeology of the intimate landscape is at variance with the externalised view of medium and large-scale studies that have been more common in the past. In discussing these, this chapter has served to raise the issue of the scales of analysis that will predominate in chapter 3.

In the next chapter the research area of West Wigtownshire is introduced and theoretical treatment is given to the classification and typologies of monuments which seeks to follow the theoretical implications of small-scale, locally specific concepts of material culture and landscapes.

Chapter 2: West Wigtownshire: Monuments, Sites, Typologies

The Form of the Landscape

The geographical study area of this thesis is an area of Galloway called western Wigtownshire (Figure 2.1). The region that I have delineated is a fairly arbitrary one, but one with certain geographical/topographical features which serve to delimit it. The region is composed of several varied topographical/environmental sub-regions, and as we shall see a highly varied late prehistoric field resource both in terms of the diversity of material morphology found there and in the differential material preservation of the monuments. Before discussing the archaeology in detail we shall look at the way in which contemporary geographers and soil scientists would characterise the area and then move on to a discussion of how examination of the late prehistoric material culture allied to contemporary social theory may garner insights into the manner in which people in the period 200 BC-200 AD may have perceived this landscape.

In 1979 Bown and Heslop characterised the region of Western Wigtownshire according to the methodology of contemporary soil science with the particular aim of compiling information on the region in order to facilitate future agricultural policy on a variety of scales. The resultant document gives much more insight into the region than any mere agricultural guide. Bown and Heslop are especially evocative with regard to the geo-morphological layout of the region. The initial view of that

Fig. 2.1: The research area within Scotland

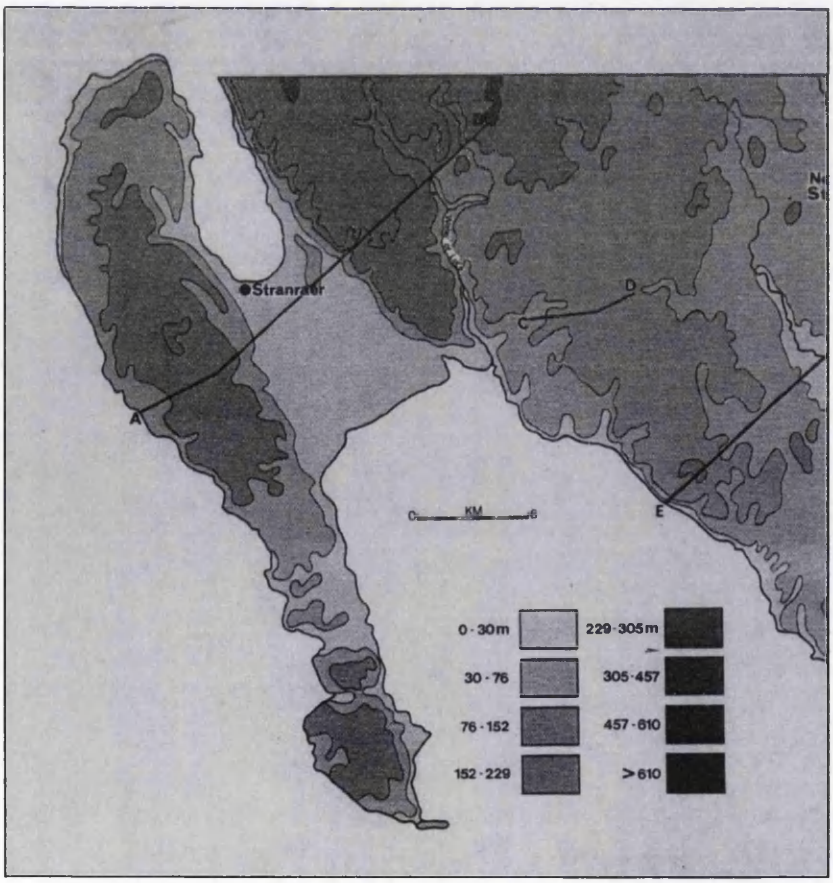


Fig 2.2 The topography of Western Wigtownshire showing the 3-fold divide of the Stranraer Lowlands sandwiched between two upland areas – The Rhins double promontory on the west and the Luce Moors on the East.

landscape presented here will follow much of the structure they set out in defining these various "natural" landforms. Later in this discussion we shall examine whether these landform blocks have genuine utility in a study of later prehistoric archaeology. The Rhins of Galloway is a double-pronged peninsula that is formed by pinching on the North and South of West Wigtownshire by the sea inlets of Loch Ryan and Luce Bay. The most southerly point on this peninsula, the Mull of Galloway, forms the most Southerly terrain in Scotland. This sea girt promontory is almost an isolated land form. The Stranraer lowlands immediately to the East of the Rhins form an isthmus of low lying fairly flat ground which connect the Rhins to the rest of the Southern Upland chain. The study region is bounded on the East by the Main Water of Luce; a fairly significant water course which rises in the high upland moors (from here on called the Luce Moors) on the eastern side of Loch Ryan. There are therefore essentially three major zones within this area a lowland area sandwiched between two areas of upland (see Figure 2.2). It is this three-fold geographical area that will form the material landscape study of this thesis.

The Form of The Rhins

The Rhins uplands is the Western bound of the terrain sandwich defined above and is a narrow peninsula which projects into the North Channel of the Irish Sea running from Milleur Point in the North to the Mull of Galloway in the South. This represents a distance of around 45 K.M. in length although nowhere on the peninsula is more than 5 K.M. from the coast. Bown and Heslop (1979) divide the area into three zones: *The Sedimentary Uplands*, *The Barncorkrie Intrusion* and *The Rhins Lowlands*. The first of these the Sedimentary Uplands is the largest of these sub-regions and the most generally upland although it lies mostly below 150 Metres

Ordnance Datum. Exceptions are Cairn Pat at 182 Metres and Craigenlee Fell at 173 metres both in the central area of the Rhins and the site of a major Iron Age monument discussed below. This area is predominantly composed of glacial drumlin land forms which present an uneven but fairly smooth undulating surface some times becoming steeply undulating and a coastal zone which is commonly of steep to vertical cliffs, many of which have been picked out during the Iron Age as appropriate to enclose with sets of multiple banks and ditches or to build dry-stone settlements upon (discussed in detail below).

The Rhins lowlands (not to be confused with the more extensive Stranraer Lowlands to the East) are largely composed of the narrow coastal strip of land on the eastern margin of the Rhins to the South West of Luce Bay. This is a low, moundy and terraced area with a raised coastal margin. The area is dominated by fluvio-glacial and marine sands and gravels.

The Barncorkrie moorland is located on the West side of the southern part of the Rhins peninsula and is a craggy ring of rock outcrop covered slopes surrounding a softer drumlin centre. The moors reach heights of 150 Metres although within the drumlin centre elevations are below 100 Metres.

The Form of the Stranraer Lowlands

The Stranraer Lowlands lie immediately to the East of the Rhins and form an isthmus of low-lying fairly flat ground that connects the Rhins peninsula to the rest of the Southern Upland chain. This is an alluvial plain of rich farming land with sand and gravel sub-soils. Several Lochs and Lochans occur in the area. The former existence

of many more is indicated by the presence of lacusrine clays found in pockets as sub-soils in certain localities (Jardine 1966) and by the cartographical evidence presented in such early maps as Timothy Pont's Gallovidia, (fig.2.3) itself based on Blaeu's 1654 Atlas; and such place-name evidence as is given in the likes of the village name of Lochans where today there are no bodies of water to be found. The labours of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century *Improvements* lie behind at least some of this alteration of the landscape as do the straightening of the Piltanton Burn the major water course in the region. The formerly meandering nature of the stream is also seen in Ponts map which shows the Piltanton prior to its incorporation within the drainage system of the farm lands of the Stranraer Lowlands. Here it is wider and much more meandering from the point where it descends from the Rhins upland. It was also shallower if the number of points at which it is shown to be fordable may be taken as a measure of this.

The Piltanton drains the Rhins and flows east through the centre of the Stranraer Isthmus where its several tributary streams drain the low lying plain before it issues into the eastern side of Luce Bay. Luce Bay itself is bordered by a large belt of sand dunes known as Torrs Warren built up of large mounds of wind blown sand and anchored in places by vegetation. The antiquity of this fairly extensive landscape is shown by the fairly frequent discovery over the last couple of centuries of well preserved prehistoric sites and isolated finds of prehistoric and Roman artefacts (Cowie 1977) which have periodically been uncovered by the vagaries of the shifting sands and the inundation of the sea from the South encouraged by severe storms.

Fig 2.3 Ponts *Gallovidia* itself based on Blaeus Atlas of 1654

At a more remote period, during the Mesolithic, the entire Loch Ryan/Luce Bay isthmus was periodically inundated by the Sea. Geomorphological research summarised by Jardine (1966) shows that the lowlands was possibly intermittently a shallow sea or partly tidal in nature and this has resulted in the alluvial nature of the lowland as seen in the sands and gravels sub-soils which overlie Permian solid geology. Indeed, this is a strong contributory factor to the modern identification of the particular fertility of the area. It is also largely responsible for the singular high quality and quantity of archaeology recognised in aerial photography.

The Form of the Luce Moors

To the East of the Stranraer Lowlands and on the eastern side of Loch Ryan the land gains altitude very rapidly in the shape of a steep scarp slope which rises from near sea level to 180 Metres and which forms the western margin of the Luce Moors. This region represents the highest region in the study area rising to 239 Metres on Lamb Hill. It is essentially a plateau of rough moorland, only slightly improved or unimproved as pasturage. While it contains very considerable numbers of upstanding archaeology this resource has been largely un-utilised.

Current knowledge of Iron Age archaeological monuments in the research area.

West Wigtownshire has been a largely forgotten corner of Scotland in terms of its representation in archaeological literature. Recently, the whole region of Galloway has been designated as a research 'black-hole' (Haselgrove, Armit et al. 2000) and characterised thus: "*...site types are still ill-defined or unknown, and have seen little or no modern research beyond the site-specific.*" (op cit. Section E2 (of HTML on-line document with no page numbers)). In reality the types of monuments present in

the region are mostly well known representatives of the existing orthodox Scottish typologies such as hillforts, enclosures, crannogs or brochs (discussed in detail in the section below (see appendix at end of thesis)). However, there have been no attempts to structure these known monuments in any kind of framework which might synthesise what is present and what is known about it, highlighting future priorities. There are approximately 180 known monuments, or complexes of monuments, in West Wigtownshire (west of the Luce Water) which are, or may potentially be, of late prehistoric/Iron Age date. There is a large number of monuments in a small area (Figure 2.4)

Of this figure 151 appear to be enclosed monuments and 90 of these are enclosed by a single enclosure ditch or bank element of a variety of shapes. Only 3 have been defined as hillforts by the RCAHMS and 27 are so called coastal promontory forts. There are 20 of what I have grouped together as "substantial houses" this includes 2 brochs, 2 duns and 9 crannogs but it also includes 7 "massive timber roundhouses" surmised from aerial photographs and usually present as parts of other complexes of archaeology such as enclosure monuments. The reasons for separating out these large timber buildings from other associated archaeology are explained in the discussion below (Typology and Monuments section).

If we look at the distribution of these varieties of settlement types across three major geo-morphological regions of West Wigtownshire we may gain a more specific picture of the distributional situation in this small-scale region. This picture will be finer grained than general statements made about the heterogeneous nature of Southwest Scottish settlement studies.

West Coast	Stranraer Plain	Rhins Upland
Coastal promontory enclosures	Enclosures	Complex hill-top enclosures (hillforts)
Duns	"Complex" Enclosures	Enclosures
Brochs	Open and enclosed timber roundhouses	Large Timber roundhouses (e.g. Cairn Connell)

Table 2.1: Iron Age Monument types and landforms in West Wigtownshire.

The table above shows the relative breakdown of Iron Age monument types as they appear over different topographical landforms within the research area. There is some sharing of several of the monument types among the areas but there are also apparent types of monument which are found only in certain of these types of landform. "Enclosures" are present across the three zones. They are most common in the Stranraer plain where aerial evidence in recent years has shown them to swarm across this flat, arable land. They are less common in the upland region and only a handful are known from the West coast area.

These physically different landforms of upland, plain and coast seem to recommend themselves to archaeological enquiry. Composed of quite different topographical and environmental conditions; they represent our modern units of analysis. Do these natural/topographical categories really stand up? They reflect similarities and differences in material forms comparatively across the regions. However, do they also represent significant preservational differences due to specific land use histories subsequent to the Iron Age? The fairly few non-complex "enclosures" evident in the upland area have been alluded to however, are there are likely to be many more which have not been recognised because they are sited on pastureland rather than arable crop-mark conducive areas? Coastal promontory enclosures turn up only on the West coast area but clearly, once defined as a discrete entity, this is the only terrain of the three areas in which such monuments could have been built.

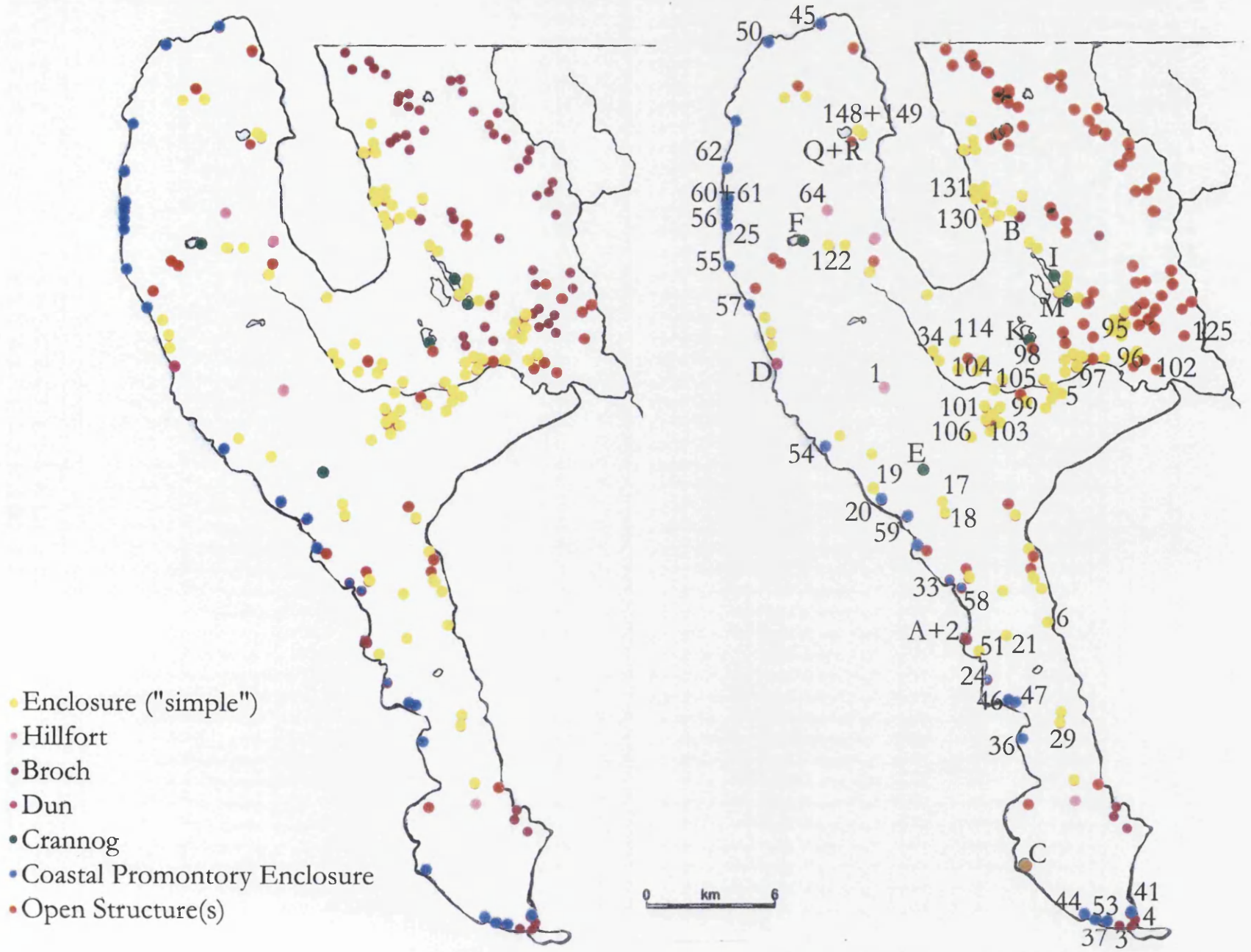


Figure 2.4. Map showing all of the certain and possible later prehistoric archaeology in West Wigtownshire. Sites are arranged into classificatory groups and numbers and letters refer to major sites listed in the appendices 1 and 2.

The utility of these landscape divisions will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 with the aim of reaching a more mature view of the relationship between landscape and monuments.

The dearth of modern research in West Wigtownshire has already been alluded to. In recent years there have been only 2 major excavation programmes. The first is that resulting from the SNIP (Scotland Northern Ireland Pipe-line) project conducted by GUARD (Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division) (Bain and Cullen 1996, Macgregor, Donnelly et.al. 1996) which primarily focused on the site of Fox Plantation (discussed in detail in chapter 3) a multi-period complex of enclosures, pit alignments and buildings situated on the Stranraer Lowlands. The second major excavation is that currently under way at Dunragit being conducted as the research project of Professor Julian Thomas of Manchester University (Thomas 1999, Thomas, Fowler and Leivers 1999). Here a primarily Neolithic and Bronze Age complex of funerary monuments has also demonstrated some more modest evidence for Iron Age elements. This site is again situated on the Stranraer Lowland.

Moving back in time there has been a remarkable lack of antiquarian interest in the region with no recorded excavation having taken place and only the odd isolated find finding its way into notes in the journals.

The lack of modern investigation in the region is particularly frustrating given the numerous set of monuments which are now known in the region (as described above). The number of monuments has vastly increased since the later 1970's due to aerial reconnaissance undertaken by the RCAHMS and both Fox Plantation and Dunragit were identified by this process. The mid 1990's in particular saw an exponential growth of sites recognised from aerial photographic flights across the Stranraer Lowland. There have been far fewer new monuments identified on the Rhins Upland

or the West Coast area by this means although the differential landuse, topographical and geological nature of these regions is unlikely to be conducive of cropmark archaeology.

While a sophisticated interpretation of the later prehistoric archaeology of the region must depend on more than simply a sustained programme of fieldwork, it must be admitted that the current lack of detailed contextual information is a major hindrance to defining suitable and interesting research objectives. The plethora of monuments now recognised can be frame-worked under the conventional typologies of Iron Age Scotland and some sense of the character of the scope and condition of the material can be characterised. In the next section the classifications of Iron Age monuments come under scrutiny for their utility when actually applied to a data set.

Sites and Senses: Critiques of Classification, Typology and Monuments of Southwest Scotland

" I have seen people like you before- people who obsessively collect objects and nik naks and make notes on them with the mistaken apprehension that they are of some importance. I have seen them in the lunatic asylum."

Lady Audley's Secret Mary Elizabeth Braddon.

In Chapter One of this thesis we saw how the study of Iron Age society, as in all other archaeological specialist periods, has followed a very particular set of principles of order and classification. These categories consisted of the grouping of material culture into functional concepts such as utility or ritual. The reason for this can readily be found within the history of the study of the Iron Age itself. Research revolved around the study of the high profile, physically impressive monuments in the landscape. This meant that attention was principally paid to hill fort sites in southern and eastern Scotland or to the impressively preserved dry-stone sites- the brochs and duns of the Scottish Highlands and Islands. In explaining these monuments and the

relationships between them archaeologists resorted to that mainstay of Culture-History – typology. Cultural identity was generated by the arrangement of Iron Age monuments into tight morphological/architectural types such as "hillforts" or brochs and duns. Narratives of what these relative similarities and differences in form and structure meant were built up with recourse to the dominant archaeological discourse of the day.

Several scholars have expressed the analytical significance of these classifications. They saw them as representing major social divisions, political affiliations or ethnic groups. They followed a culture historical methodology in which major cultural groupings were constructed from the material evidence to form the agents of historical processes. This concept was coupled with that of diffusionism the mechanism by which these culture groups were held to have originated and developed via migration or invasion. Some of the actual settlement forms were claimed to reveal such exogenous interpretations (Scott 1947, 1948).

Many of these works have come under considerable criticism in recent decades. Recent studies of the Iron Age period in Britain have critiqued the rigidity of morphology of different categories of sites such as hillforts and enclosures, (Bowden and McOmish 1987, Hingley 1990a), and brochs and timber houses (Macinnes 1984, Hingley 1990b, Armit 1997c, Parker Pearson and Sharples 1997). Some common elements have been demonstrated in them. They question some of the traditionally held assumptions, for instance about the nature of the architectural basis for the definition of brochs and duns. They accentuate the social nature of the various monuments by looking at specific archaeological contexts in the light of contemporary archaeological and social theory. The implications of some of these

studies will be discussed in more detail shortly in this chapter and in chapter 3 in assessing their possible applicability to the monuments of the study region.

However, we can summarise that these studies have shown how many of our archaeological categories, so carefully arrived at, do not always suit the nature of the excavated material culture with any real feeling for the way in which that material culture was meaningful within the societies which created, used and deposited it. The sections that follow look at the individual categories of monument typology which are held to cover the archaeology of the Wigtownshire research area for the period. They attempt to discern their relevance in light of the critical theory already outlined.

West Wigtownshire contains a large variety of monument types (as we have seen above). Under the traditional categorisations of Scottish Iron Age studies monument types include brochs, duns, crannogs, several forms of enclosures, hillforts, coastal and inland promontory forts, timber roundhouses, and a good deal of non-settlement features such as souterrains and more broader landscape works such as linear earthworks. In fact, the repertoire of material forms of Iron Age lived spaces in the locality is one shared across large parts of Britain. We may suspect that this diversity within the study area reflects chronological changes, however, as outlined above the array of forms of archaeology can all be demonstrated with recourse to excavations that have provided dateable material, and by analogous parallels with those outside, to occur contemporaneously. This large array of apparently divergent forms has sometimes been held to reflect a more general tendency in Southwest Scotland towards a high degree of material admixture. This has led some to conclude that this reflects a fairly weak level of social cohesion in the Iron Age of the region and to posit a variety of incoming cultural elements from a number of different sources, each

bringing their own forms of settlement (Cunliffe 1988). The credibility of this scenario, however, rests on a rather static and passive view of material culture and architecture that sees variations in form as reflecting differential cultural or ethnic affiliations. While differences in architecture must reflect specific social practices and activities within certain built spaces, those variations in social practice need not preclude shared political and social identities at other levels between these apparently divergent material places. The variation in "settlement" form from one place to another may reflect different elements in the economic, political and social/cosmological organisation of communities. Each "site" may therefore be complementary to each other built element in the wider landscape.

We may proceed here to analyse in detail the traditional typologies and contemporary arguments concerning the monuments of the Iron Age of Southwest Scotland. Where possible relevant examples will be drawn from the case study of the thesis.

Enclosure monuments

Enclosures are currently the most prolific Iron Age monument type or more properly, types, to have been recognised in most British landscapes. As such, they represent an extremely vital component in understanding Iron Age landscapes. In this discussion, "enclosure" is intended to define the full range of all the many forms of enclosed places that are commonly found. This includes the "hillforts" both great and small, as well as the visually less complex demarcated enclosed spaces, single ditched enclosures or palisaded or narrow ditched enclosures, as well as all their varied morphologies from rectilinear to curvilinear. We shall review these individual classifications in more detail presently.

It may well be that non-enclosed forms of structures occurring singly or in groups

were also extremely common but there are difficulties in recognising these in all but the most favourable and fortunate of circumstances of aerial photographic conditions. Having said this there are several examples of such open structures within the major cropmark-bearing region of our study area discussed below.

However, it is the phenomenon of enclosure that is our immediate concern here. Enclosed spaces are by no means limited to the Iron Age there is also a large variety of types of enclosure known from the earlier prehistory from cause-wayed enclosures to cursus and hengi-form monuments. Nevertheless, the sheer numbers of enclosures and their variety of shapes and sizes in the Iron Age make them of crucial importance in understanding why societies chose this way of signing the landscape. To some extent comprehension of just how vast this body of material is may be hidden by the rigid archaeological typologies which dissect the various forms into many specific types. Thus, hill forts are considered as necessarily a different kind of thing from *regular* enclosures. Indeed, the word enclosure has come to be associated exclusively with the smaller, less complex enclosures such as the *palisaded* or *rectilinear* examples while large, "complex" hill top enclosures are *forts*- pre-empting any further discussion of their function and role within societies. It is arguable therefore that the overall significance of the ubiquity of the phenomenon of enclosure during the Iron Age has been ignored. The consistency of Iron Age communities in choosing to bound off places across their landscapes has frequently been characterised as a product of paranoid, fractured and fractious social groups aggressively competing over territorial claims often within a scenario of a climatic downturn (for an example within the West Wigtownshire area see- Murray 1988, 31). This form of explanation is largely a product of the professional attitudes that have influenced late prehistoric studies through the kinds of historical developments of the discipline as outlined in

Chapter 1. The discussion that follows inspects each of the typological variants of the late prehistoric enclosure phenomenon and analyses the utility of such classificatory schemes.

"Simple enclosures"/"non-hillfort enclosures"

As stated above, the use of the term enclosure has come to refer in British Iron Age studies to a very considerable number of monuments which are held to be less complex than other monuments, specifically the hill forts of the period. These supposedly simpler enclosures appear to be unified by the criteria that they bound off points in the landscape which are smaller and usually lower in altitude than the hill fort monuments. Apart from these aspects, however, enclosures display a very considerable diversity which is reflected in the morphological characterisations given them by most UK governmental archaeological curatorial bodies such as RCAHMS or the newly merged RCAHME/English Heritage body. Shapes vary a good deal from square and less regular rectilinear examples to oval and sub-circular. Size too varies, however, there would seem to be an unspoken rule in these typologies, certainly in Scotland, that anything approaching 100 Metres in diameter or above is considered as something different; usually a fort. Constructional differences are also apparent. Some enclosure monuments are broad ditched while other narrow ditched examples probably represent foundation trenches for vertical timbering or palisades. In some excavated cases both of these elements are seen to have currency in complex sequences which usually confound simplistic putative evolutionary schemes.

In the research area of West Wigtownshire there are a very large number of monuments classified as enclosures given the relatively small scale of the region.

Most of these are known only from aerial photography. Of the total number of 151 certain and probable Iron Age enclosed monuments in the study area 90 appear to fall into this bracket. This relative numerousness is common in other regions of Britain and enclosures are often rather uncritically assumed to represent the lower order of monuments in a general settlement hierarchy (Cunliffe 1984). However, the diversity amongst the enclosures in West Wigtownshire is considerable, and if we hold that the construction of architectural order, including that of enclosure ditches, is the outcome of conscious and deliberate human action and itself helps mediate practices and social relations then the variety in form and construction of enclosures may evince very different roles and activities at these various bounded places.

Differential size and constructional complexity mean that some sites represented bigger investments than others did. The increased effort in these constructional programmes must have meant that they involved larger sections of local communities in their creation and in their maintenance. Additionally, there is the question of the temporality of the monuments we see in the aerial picture. Many apparently more "complex" monuments may actually be multi-phased. Nevertheless, even if many enclosures were accretions of built elements over time those that received elaboration and alteration over time ultimately became more physically complex than some others and, arguably, often more impressive.

Hillforts

Perhaps the quintessential Iron Age field monument is the hillfort. No other monument of the later prehistoric period has such an ingrained hold on our

consciousnesses or such a demand on our attention. This is partly because of the history of Iron Age studies as a field of study. There has been a very long tradition of the identification of these monuments. We need only look at some of the early Stukely antiquarian illustrations of South Cadbury hillfort (Figure2.5) to appreciate how long the stock image of these monuments has been with us and how effectively it has seeped into our perceptions. Equally, the dramatic sojourn of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles'* eponymous heroine to the ramparts of Maiden Castle shows how it has entered literary culture as well.

The very term Hillfort implies a fortification, a military/defensive purpose. In chapter 1 above it was argued that that Iron Age socio-political groups may have been far more complex, under constant reproduction with the coming of age of each dominant generation who would reinterpret and renegotiate their role within the wider political and geographical landscape. Group identities, then, may have been permanently transitional, open to fusion via the mechanisms of alliance and exchange and just as capable of fission through conflict or the cessation of communication and exchange. It must be remembered however, that warfare might represent opportunities for social formation as well as dissolution. War is a discourse in power. That discourse expresses the aspirations of interest groups and highlights, in dramatic fashion themes of domination and resistance preoccupations which are tensions present in every social intercourse. In warfare those whom we style the opposing forces are embarked upon a resolution of these tensions, whether this be a short term defining of the power-play or the more lasting establishment of long term social and political ranking. Conflict, then, may be not only destructive and divisive but actively constructive of the social identities of those that are in conflict.

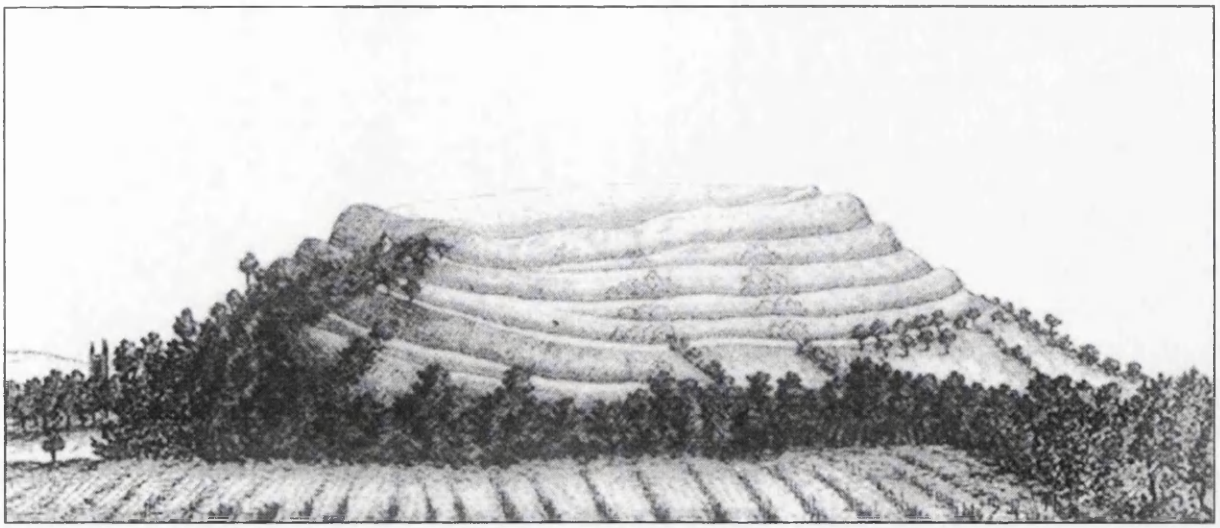


Figure 2.5. Stukely's illustration of South Cadbury hillfort, Somerset as it appeared to him in 1723. A classic view of a hillfort and perhaps the kind of image which continues to inform our ideas about classification and the archetypal hillfort up to the present.

Visions which see Iron Age defensive architecture as a last line of defence of a beleaguered population against an encroaching aggressive enemy smack more of the twentieth century values of all-out armed conflict than that of prehistoric social conditions. It must be remembered that non-western conflict is rarely as ruthless and blitzkrieg in nature. Warfare is more often ritualised, and frequently conforms to certain conventions whether they be the kinds of feuding rules seen among the African Nuer people or the codes of Medieval European chivalry. Those conventions, whatever they were, are probably enshrined in the architecture of Iron Age fortifications, as the seats of such activity. We must see monumental architecture as intimately related to the social practices that took place within and around those monuments and this may have included the regulated practice of warfare. Having drawn attention to this link between the form of the built environment and activities carried out there, it is worth remembering that social practice may change, altering peoples' perceptions of their surroundings but leaving the basic architecture in place. This is part of the reason why monuments abandoned by the time of the middle and

later Iron Age in Southwest Scotland, are still important in any discussion of that period. The landscape understood by late Iron Age populations will have included consideration of these places.

Even if many of the larger Scottish hillforts were abandoned, or rather de-settled, by the later centuries BC this does not mean that these sites did not form significant parts of the social practices and cosmologies of the local populations. These large and often dramatically situated monuments will have continued to form integral parts of the social landscape (Gosden and Lock 1999). They may have retained certain associations or have garnered new ones as each new generation reinterpreted the landscape. In this sense hillforts were not abandoned but would have remained as important places, continuing to impose sets of meanings on the land while they were still visible upstanding monuments. They would have leant a time depth to the landscape, a sense of continuity and tradition that may have been linked with the ancestors, to mythico-historical events and even with supernatural powers. That such places might continue to form important reservoirs for social, religious and ceremonial ideas and expression is shown by the continued ritual activity at many of the southern British hillforts, even centuries into the Roman period (e.g. South Cadbury and Uffington).

It would seem as likely that northern hillforts continued to represent foci for metaphorical and literal power and order only a few score years after their de-settlement. Cunliffe would have us believe that- *"The general pattern in southern Scotland ..... was for the hillforts to be abandoned in favour of farmsteads or larger agglomerations, a number of which are found to overlie the earlier, now defunct, fortifications."* (Cunliffe 1988, 167).

There seems to be a preconceived assumption being made here, as to what constitutes a hillfort and when it may be said to be defunct. There is a traditional definition implicit in this; which sees hillforts as static, of one build, rigidly single functioned as a class of strictly defensible units with a clear dichotomy of perimeter and occupation areas. Under this model, settlement which is later than the initial foundation or sullies the perceived holistic blueprint is in some way not a part of the site history of the hillfort, as though there is a neat cut off point at which these later occupation phases are socially and culturally divorced from what has gone before. Thus there is a claimed certainty or knowledge about the "completeness" of the monument and when something may be said to be at an end; finished. This certainty draws a line between different episodes of social practice- a disjunction between one form of "dwelling" on or nearby monument(s) and another kind. But this disruption is entirely conceived by the author (in this case Cunliffe) and it is a purely arbitrary one. It may not have been a recognisable division for communities who lived at these monuments in the later centuries BC. This notion of the completeness and totality of a monument ignores the tendency towards the continuity and reinvention of values attached to places in landscapes in pre-modern societies. Obviously, hillforts are frequently located in topographically elevated positions and they will have served to recommend themselves, generation after generation, as special places.

If this analysis of the importance of the highly visible hillfort monuments is accurate then we must examine how that continued set of associations may have impacted on the views of Iron Age communities on the landscape and their utilisation of its resources- physical and ideological. That these abandoned monuments remained part of the social cosmology of the later Iron Age peoples means that those communities had a sense of the past, and will have possessed a history of the landscape (Lock and

Gosden 2000). These societies would have had complex systems of categorisation for ordering their world and will have used these to understand events, both expected, for example: the seasons changes and the cycle of life and death, and less so, such as: sudden flood, drought, blight or the arrival of a vast body of men from the alien Roman South. This cultural conception of the landscape will have directly fed into the way in which it continued to be constructed. The landscape will therefore have been a complex, layered thing that will have been explained by, and will itself have reflexively helped to form, the social histories of the communities that lived in it.

One common, traditional way of looking at the place of hillforts in specific landscapes might be to analyse a distribution of forts within their own geo-morphological region and to study their relationship with each other or smaller, putatively "dependant" enclosures in the local area. This kind of analysis would focus on aspects such as altitude, geological background, spatial patterning or in regions where numbers of hill forts have been excavated; an exploration of the possible subsistence/economic catchments of forts as re-distributive centres has been a favourite approach (Cunliffe 1984, 1995).

Recent work in Galloway in general which included our study area, by Ronan Toolis formerly of "Solway Heritage" has sought to show clear correlations between site locations and good quality agricultural land and between site size and altitude. He posits that rank-size in the region indicates a poorly developed settlement hierarchy in the region, with a small number of large forts among a large number of small forts and duns. The sites covered in the survey are classified into eight groups, distinguished by locational aspects and defensive features. Differentiating functions are postulated and a hierarchy of defended settlements emerges.

However, work by Gosden and Lock on the Oxford ridge-way hill forts (Gosden and Lock 1999 and Lock and Gosden 2000) should introduce caution here. Excavations have demonstrated the variety of social practices attested at sites which would have formerly been considered united in form and therefore function. Some are full of buildings and structures; others are almost empty, while one contains many pits and a few structures placed up against the entrance. However similar the hill forts look to us now the variations in practices attested at them through excavation shows that simplistic morphological classification may well be inappropriate.

Additionally, we may wonder at the efficacy of the central place/redistributive centre approach when we subject it to a closer, more detailed inspection in holding it up against the light of a more closely scrutinised example in our area. Cairn Pat is the largest hill fort in the entire research area and sits on the highest point in the Rhins hills. When we look at the surrounding site distribution we can see that there is an empty landscape around it (Figure 2.6). There are no smaller sites to form this putative settlement hierarchy. It certainly does not seem to be a focus for lower rank settlement. Cairn Pat does not seem to be a "central place". It sits awkwardly in its immediate landscape. How do we explain this absence? It is possible that there are questions of preservation at work here. The presence of peat on these upland Rhins may be having a masking effect on nearby archaeology. On the other hand, this upland pastureland is precisely the kind of terrain we would expect to find upstanding late prehistoric structures. Other places in the Rhins have yielded identification of Iron Age sites so why not here? We may have to face the strong possibility that the absence of sites around Cairn Pat is a genuine one. In chapter 3 we will return to Cairn Pat and examine it and its relationship with the surrounding landscape in detail.

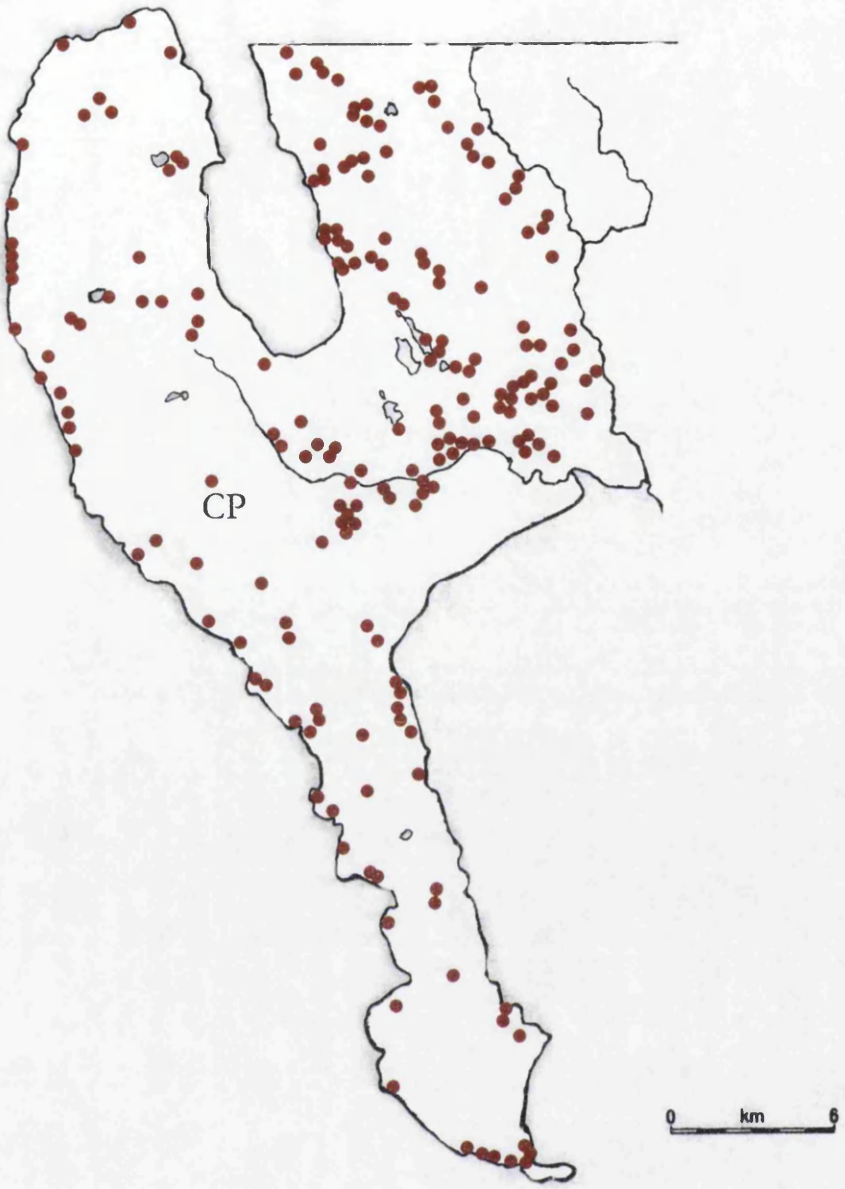


Figure 2.6 Cairn Pat hillfort and late prehistoric monument distribution in the West Wigtownshire area. CP = Cairn Pat

The remainder of this chapter will examine the other forms of enclosed and non-enclosed monuments in West Wigtownshire.

Coastal enclosures

Coastal promontory enclosures are traditionally termed promontory forts or even cliff castles, so just as with the case of the hillforts there is an a priori assumption of function even in their terminology. Very little work has been conducted on coastal promontory enclosures and even less on synthetic works which look at their roles in societies. Indeed, it is curious that even though the classification of these sites as a self-consistent, single class has gone unquestioned the only modern work specifically devoted to the subject is that of Lamb (1980) and this presents a rather less than inspiring account, based largely on descriptive survey rather than analysis. Perhaps the reason for this lack of work is due to the normally assumed relationship between "hillforts" as a class and coastal "promontory forts"; that is that coastal promontories are simply topograhical variations on the hillfort theme. As we have attempted to demonstrate that there may be strong differences between the activities at individual hillforts it is impossible to tidy up the ambiguous relationship of coastal promontory sites to inland forts by asserting a mere topographical adaptation for the former as a means of explaining their function. If we hold that the relationship of a monument to the land around it is important in defining the way in which people interacted with the place and that the built environment is a deliberate conscious scheme enacted through the architectural order; then the specific features of coastal enclosures are important in the social practices and the conception of the landscape by Iron Age communities.

The basic structural definition of a coastal promontory enclosure accepted here and for inclusion in the construction of the database was the deliberate selection of a headland or other coastal located place for demarcation by earthen banks and/or ditches which cut off the coastal portion but which do not usually fully circumscribe the cliff area.

In chapter three we shall explore how the interpretation of coastal promontory enclosures within their land/sea settings and their relationships to each other might help us to reach an interpretation of these structures which is more contingent on their specific monumental forms and their landscape contexts.

"Substantial Houses"

The term "substantial house" has gained currency in the last decade or so as part of the general goal of attempting to understand the widespread phenomenon of elaborate, monumental house-type constructions in the Iron Age. The term, coined by Hingley (1992) is particularly apposite to the archaeology of the Northern and Western Isles where such elaborate "houses", such as the brochs, display a stunning confidence and architectural sophistication in massive dry-stone constructions. A few such structures are also present in West Wigtownshire. There are two monuments which have been classified as Brochs and two as Duns. We might widen the substantial house category to include crannogs which represent a large investment in materials, constructional effort and present very powerful images as complex monumental constructions.

Brochs/Duns

In recent years debate around the relative merits of the classification of substantial massive walled late prehistoric settlement sites has ranged around terminology and the debate can sometimes appear to be rather sterile orbiting about the issues of origins and perhaps overly concerning itself with the classification of these structures in minute detail for its own sake. The result has been that perhaps too much ink has been spilt on the over elaborate arrangement of structures into tight morphological schemes. This is evident in the terminology itself. When we begin to witness categories like "semi-brochs" (Mackie 1987) and "true brochs" entering the literature we must worry that an inability to think beyond strict typological traits and see the strong fluidity of the social life of material worlds is causing some scholars to create ever more elaborate schemes to account for the differences between monuments. This is particularly evident in Mackies' work when he uses architectural traits to define his conception of what a broch ought properly to be (1965, 1987, and conference paper "Scottish Brochs at the start of the New Millennium" given at Lerwick, Shetland 3rd March 2000). The problem with this is fairly obvious when it begins to throw up anomalous sites which do not fit the strict morphological rules for being a good broch- they are dumped into semi-broch or dun categories and the circularity of the argument is complete. We may worry that the whole enterprise is in danger of becoming entirely abstracted from the categories of meaning and the every day lives of communities in the Iron Age. This abstraction from the human actors who built,

lived and worked within and around these monuments will reduce our study to nothing more than a form of inaccurate scientific taxonomy.

Crannogs

Crannogs represent a group of sites which have been argued to represent a considerable expenditure of time, effort and labour in their construction (Nieke 1990) as representing substantial houses of a fairly high status, as outlined by Hingley (1992). We might well imagine that in the crannogs we have a perfectly appropriate self-defining single monument typology since the locational context of these sites is the definitive factor and is so apparently unique. However, even this firm internal consistency can be seen to be blurred in such manifestations as the island duns and island brochs; where monumental dry-stone houses are located on semi-natural platforms in lochs. These monuments are found mostly in the Western Isles and Western Highlands of Scotland

Additionally, the vast majority of supposedly conventional crannogs are unexcavated and their exact nature is unknown. How many actually consist of platforms for substantial timber roundhouses is also unknown. Their very conventional status is assumed from analogy with excavated sites and the conventional image of the crannog is based on several excavations undertaken in the Nineteenth Century (Munro 1882) and the excavations at Milton Loch in the first part of the Twentieth Century (Piggott 1953) as well as recent work at Oakbank on Loch Tay (Dixon 1995) and Buiston (Crone 2000). The extremely ambitious reconstruction on Loch Tay at Fearnan also perpetuates the traditional image of the Crannog as a platform with

roundhouse. More recent work is undermining simplistic uniform definitions of crannogs (Morrison 1985), (Alex Hale pers. comm.).

In West Wigtownshire nine sites are classified as crannogs. They consist of small Islets in Lochs; some barely visible above water level, others stand proud of their Loch (plate 2.1).

It is clear that the construction of just one of the crannogs in the area will have represented a large scale building scheme and would have required large numbers of people as a labour force (Nieke 1990 138). The involvement of persons beyond the group who were to occupy the crannog will have had implications for social relations in the local area. Construction of brochs, as with other substantial structures, will have presented opportunities for reaffirming the organising principles of ideology and identity and the system of obligations to present authorities.

The labour for these building projects may have been drawn from other crannog households and it seems likely that there will have been frequent contact between the inhabitants of the crannogs that were occupied simultaneously. Indeed the existence of social ties, possibly along lines of kin-ship would seem probable among them, and it is likely that the inhabitants of existing crannogs will have taken an active role in the construction of new foundations. The inhabitants of any of the other nearby terrestrial settlements could also have been directly involved in assisting in the crannog construction and maintenance. At any rate, if crannogs, as substantial, elaborate houses, were built to participate in strategies for accruing elevated social status then the nearby presence of persons who were subjected to this form of display of prestige may be implicit. The mobilisation of this work force in periodic bouts of building will have formed the background to ratification of the social order and those

social relationships and practices, themselves, will have fuelled the ongoing reproduction of the built environment.

That the inhabitants of crannogs were comfortable and adept in the water is evidenced by the considerable effort that would be required in building on water and the dangers which would have been involved, both in the process of construction of crannogs, and in their subsequent use as living and working areas. The positioning of the crannogs, creates for these substantial houses a watery road which accentuates their image of high status and prowess. It would also be a medium in which the movements of persons could be easily monitored and controlled. The significance of water in the social practices in many regions in the Iron Age is well attested by the numbers of apparently ritual votive deposits (Green 1986, Fitzpatrick 1984, Bradley 1990). It may be speculated that the belief in the ritual potency of the water may have been encouraged by the crannog dwellers as a symbol of their empowerment.

Plate 2.1 A Crannog on Loch Naw in the Rhins Upland visible as the small island just off the far shore covered in dense bushes and trees.

Plate 2.2 Doon Castle Broch, Ardwell Point

Typologies and Practices

In concluding this chapter I feel that from the above discussion, it is clear that there are problems with the typologies that have been constructed for monuments in the Scottish Iron Age. Many of the site types discussed show that the categories relate and interconnect with each other in subtle ways. It has not been the intention, however, to abandon classification altogether, at least in the most general sense of the word. We must continue to draw out points of comparability from the materials we study. However, I would contend that many of our current typologies rely upon a fairly static and non-dynamic approach to the relationships between human activities and monuments. Functional interpretations based upon aerial photographs of sites have tended to amplify this. Uncritical use of aerial photographic evidence can make a static record of a fairly ephemeral and usually piecemeal phenomena-the appearance of crop marks. Many sites may be more complex than, or very different from, the apparent aerial archetype.

Many of the supposed categories are assailable on the grounds that they perpetuate formulations which are the product of historically incidental perceptions of site types and which can now be seen to be outmoded in their appreciation of the role(s) of material places in societies. We have to return to the criticisms of archaeological definitions of "settlement" and the dichotomy of utility/function and ritual which we can see to be a product of modernist cultural alignments outlined in chapter one. These are inappropriate when applied uncritically to late prehistoric contexts. This Western disarticulation of significance/meaning of ritual practice and function/utility is an impediment to a specific appreciation of the possible social significances of

enclosures in the Iron Age period; within the actual communities which produced and utilised these spaces.

Individual monuments are routinely designated within a definition of *enclosure* as equalling settlement. This occurs even in the absence of excavation; which might demonstrate the presence or absence of a package of domestic material culture. There may be a much more diverse range of possible functions, meanings and significances for particular individual enclosure sites. Again I would point to the normative qualities of uncritical aerial photographic interpretation and suggest that local specific meanings and significances are lost in this generalising tendency. There is no one simple function or overall theme which circumscribes all of the enclosed spaces known from the period. Each act of enclosure represents the work of a body of people assembled through social ties of obligation or negotiated reciprocity and operating within a range of very specific and local social strategies and circumstances. These strategies accounted for the exact motivations behind, and appropriate manner of, the construction of a demarcation of space.

"1. Enclosure- the act of enclosing" - OED

In the Oxford English Dictionary, the first and second definitions of the word "enclosure" are treated as verb forms. As archaeologists I believe we should literally take a leaf out of the OED and hold a similarly simple, act based, definition of enclosure for the demarcated spaces that we find so commonly in the archaeology of the First Millennium BC/AD. Historically, archaeology has been obsessed with the practice of classifying ranges of material from the past and ordering them into chronological and cultural sequences which have attempted to lend structure, and historical agents to culturalist narratives of the past. These culture-historical

conceptions of the classification of material culture, although now heavily critiqued, continue to influence the types of configurations within which we arrange monuments. This continues to be witnessed in the awkwardness with which many archaeological syntheses deal with the concept of enclosure - "non-hillfort enclosures" or hillforts as "non farmstead enclosures" (Hill 1995). This clumsiness in definition would seem to hint that our categories are highly problematic.

This thesis advocates that we should employ an approach to enclosure which looks at the individual specific context of construction, use, deposition and contents of each example set within the landscape setting and possible associations with other elements in the landscape. The construction of typologies and sequences from aerial photographic evidence analogised with excavated "examples" or parallels has produced normative accounts of the function of these enclosures. This process removes individual circumstances and builds gross categories with which to create narratives of social development based upon technological/material evolutionist perspectives. These accounts assume similar function for similar shape/scale morphologies. They presume a knowledge of intent and motive behind enclosures which is not based upon an appreciation of social practice within and around these enclosed spaces. In the thousands of enclosed monuments recorded in various archives (and the 151 in this small research area) we have something of the spatial/architectural layout but none of the artefactual/depositional detail and temporal sequencing of individual monuments.

We should see the act of enclosing spaces within boundaries of various shapes, materials, scales and media as an active practice, as part of the performance of social practice of Iron Age communities- as a task, as an activity and an on-going act of

social reproduction. The meaning of something is continually "becoming". The definition of a thing is therefore to be constantly undergoing change in the social world. Places are constantly under re-interpretation they never mean any one thing for all, or for long, but are always under re-interpretation according to the person involved in the interpretation and the context within which that person is present at the place. These enclosed places were given roles, meaning(s) and associations by the human agents who lived out their lives in them. Rather than representing a fully formed product of human labour we should see enclosed spaces as constituted by the repeated actions of social practice within them.

In aerial archaeology we see something of the outcome of the social practice but it is frozen in time. It says fairly little of the smaller actions of people on the land; little about the complexity of changes and the episodes of activity at places. The aerial archaeology is un-peopled although it is the outcome of peoples' actions.

What is an enclosure? What does it mean to enclose an area? Should we necessarily look for a settlement function for enclosed spaces? What kinds of activities could have taken place there? - Can they represent living spaces/domestic arena, production e.g. metalworking, burial/funerary purposes, livestock containment or other agricultural practice or any combination of these or other factors or indeed all of them at once. Indeed we must be alert to the possibility that these categories themselves might have been fairly meaningless to people in Iron Age South West Scotland and that distinctions along such lines may have been blurred or non-existent.

There is therefore no direct relationship between the configurations of material culture archaeologists excavate in the "archaeological record" and the social configurations of past cultures. However, if social practice is constitutive of, and constituted by, meaning(s) then the material residues of that practice present in the archaeology must

reflect, albeit mediated through the blur of subsequent taphonomic processes, categories of meaning relevant to the past.

If we turn to reconsider the "Substantial Houses" we can see that many of these monuments occupy enclosures or are associated with nearby enclosure monuments. Several examples from West Wigtownshire demonstrate this relationship. The broch of Doon Castle sits on the West Coast of our study area. The fact that the broch sits within a coastal promontory enclosure must be a factor of the complex continuities and traditions of occupation on particular places.

As to the wrangle over the typological definition of this class into broch, dun, or whatever, such rigid rules of classification are only of any utility in an investigation of the origins and development of these classes of monuments over time and regionally. My concern is not to chart such origins and development but with what occurred in and around these buildings and the landscapes they were part of. I am interested in what it was like to inhabit these spaces at particular points in their life histories- to examine the social practice. I believe that this activity framed by these buildings and built spaces were also constitutive of them. We should take the daily and routinised practice in these locations as the definition of what they were. This is a definition of places, buildings that privileges what occurred there. It is about human agency, an archaeology of inhabitation (Barrett 1994, 2000?)

The different material manifestations of the substantial house may reflect different local conceptualisations of the significance of the substantial house and may also reflect the different periods at which they were built.

Macinnes has highlighted the non-discontinuity of the massive dry-stone houses, especially the Brochs, to the lowlands settlement history (1984). She would see instead the common internal architectural order of dry-stone houses and timber round houses and crannog houses as reflecting wider social continuities. This is not to see massive dry-stone houses as simple translations of the same ideas in a different material as though they were simple monumental skeuomorphs of timber architecture. However, there are issues of perceptions of temporality involved in this. Timber has less permanency than stone and stone structures may have been deliberately initiated to draw on ideas about the future integrity of such stolid buildings. The brochs and duns have been argued to have potent symbolic content in their external visual characteristics- they are extremely impressive. However, substantial timber round houses also appear to have often been very impressive monuments despite the issues of permanency. In the following sections of this thesis we will examine in detail the issues of the relationship of monuments, people, landscapes and social practices in West Wigtownshire.

Chapter 3
Social space and communities in West Wigtownshire c.200BC-200AD

The first three sections of this chapter discuss the three major landscapes of the research area in terms of the monuments located in them, but attempt to foreground the social spaces of these landscapes as the experienced situation of places rather than as a mere backdrop to sites or monuments. The theoretical treatment of landscape in chapter 1 asserted a culturally specific locally generated conception of landscapes as the starting point for examination of small-scale communities relations with their world. The sections which follow attempt to address this more intimate relationship of material culture and identities with the movement of the body in social space.

The Coasts

The western coast of the Rhins promontory is a craggy, indented one with a preponderance of fairly high rocky, cliff forms battered by the arm of the Atlantic known as the Celtic Sea. However, there are also many points at which the cliffs give way fairly rapidly to sheltered bays. Many of the cliffs have been selected in later prehistory as the location for multivallate enclosures (Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). The discussion in chapter two outlined some of the characteristics of this type of monument. A major hindrance to their interpretation is the lack of fieldwork that has taken place on them. Even the usually very industrious Nineteenth Century antiquarians seem to have almost entirely left the West Wigtownshire coastal promontory sites alone. Only one work has dealt explicitly with coastal promontory enclosure in modern times (Lamb 1980) and it is restricted in geographical coverage to the Northern Isles.

Attention to the immediate landscape and the physical ordering of space created by the construction of promontory enclosures may be fruitful in coming to terms with what kinds of places these monuments represented for the Iron Age communities actively involved in their construction and use.

The large number of accessible bays and sheltered points along this coast make it difficult to believe that the coastal promontory sites can have been protecting harbours and preventing access by unauthorised persons to come ashore since there are a myriad of potential such sheltered landing points. Indeed, there are very many more sheltered bays than there are bays with promontory enclosures even if there are more sites to be located. It would seem that if the promontory sites are concerned with sea borne traffic then other factors are involved than defence. It would seem more likely that Iron Age communities were making specific choices about where to locate their places based on social/economic factors.

It is possible that these sites were the bases for the surveillance of the coasts since it is obviously people who spot unauthorised movement and not the sites themselves, but then this argument negates the equation of coastal sites with the protection of their respective nearby bays.

It might still be arguable that coastal promontory sites were the lookout points for communities inland from specific landing points. This would imply a small-scale threat presumably from local neighbouring communities since we have already seen that parts of the coast were not under direct observation. However, why would these promontory lookout points require the substantial complexes of ramparts and ditches, which make them visible to us today, if they were simply advance warning stations? These specific arrangements of banks and ditches are often least impressive from the seaward angle of view since there is apparently no vallation on this side However,

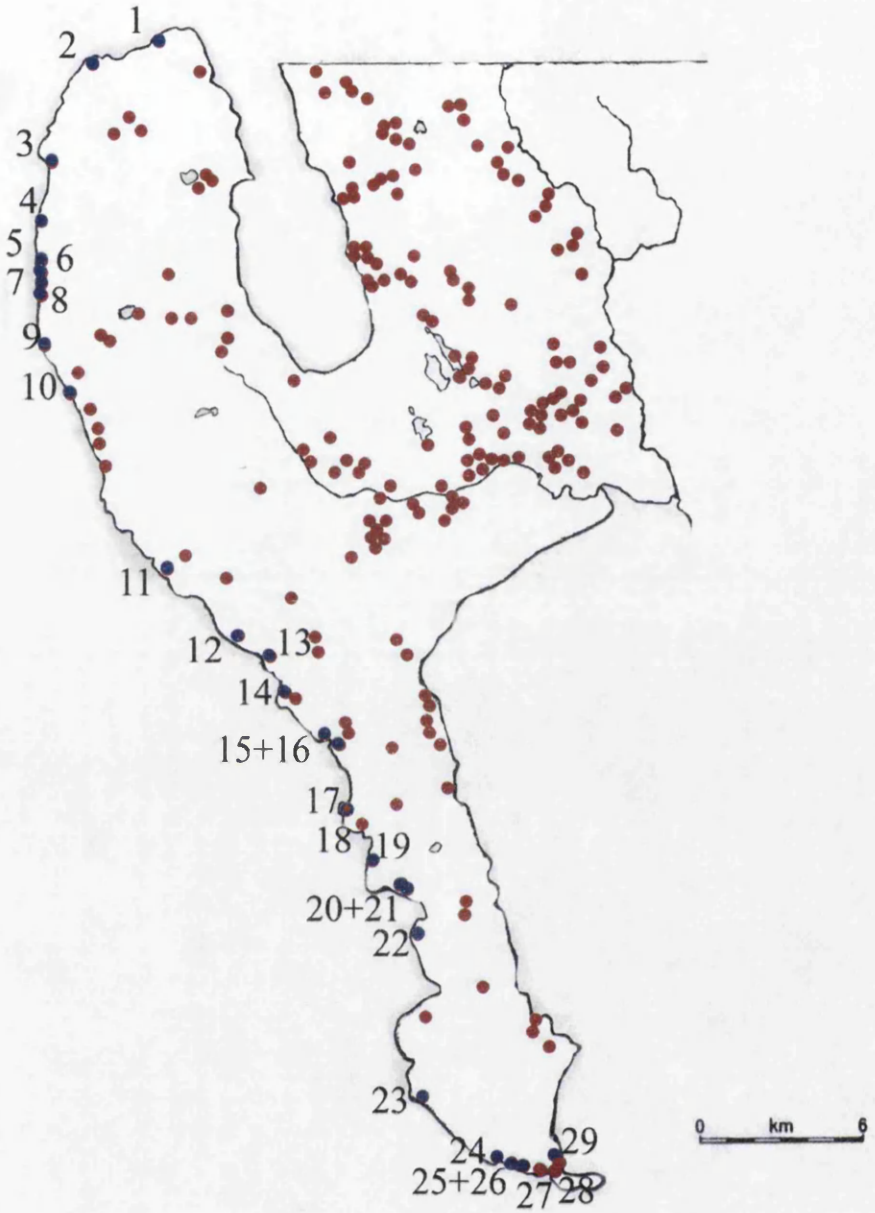


Fig 3.1 Later prehistoric coastal archaeology of the west Rhins. 1= Caspin, 2 = Dove Cave Head, 3 =Dounan Bay, 4 = Portobello, 5 = Mare Rock1, 6 = Mare Rock2, 7 = Juniper Face, 8 = High Auchneel, 9 = Fort Point, Salt Pans Bay, 10 = Kemps Walk, 11 = Dunskirloch, 12 = Dunskey Golf Course, 13 = Kirklauchline, 14 = Cairngarroch, 15 = Little Float, 16 = Kenmuir Graves, 17 = Doon Castle Broch, Ardwell Bay, 18 = Grennan Point, 19 = Duniehinnie, 20 = Clanghie Bay, 21 = Clanghie Point, 22 = Muldaddie, 23 = Crammag Head Dun, 24 = Dunman, 25 = Carrickcamrie, 26 = Dunnoroch, 27 = West Tarbet Enclosure, 28 = Mull of Galloway Earthworks, 29 = The Dounan, Portankill.

with no excavation having taken place we can not know if palisades circumscribed the edge of the promontories in the manner seen in New Zealand Maori promontory forts or *Pa* (Figure 3.2). The systems of banks and ditches are always substantial from the land-ward side and we must assume that it was from this general direction that approaching persons were intended to be most impressed. Nevertheless, the connection of coastal promontory enclosures with very good nearby naturally sheltered bays can not be denied. Indeed, at Port Logan Bay no fewer than three promontory enclosures overlook the wide, sheltered bay; Clanghie Bay, (NX04SE19) and Clanghie Point (NX04SE20) on the North and Muldaddie (NX03NE2) to the South. The obvious solution here is that for many of the situations in which people were envisaged approaching the coastal promontory enclosures the scenario would be arrival by sea along the coast and landing within the sheltered bays below the enclosure. Visitors may then have had to climb up to the shore, winding their way up the coastal scarps and finally approaching the impressive enclosures from the complex monumental land-ward side. The promontory site of Kemp's Walk (NW95NE1) consists of just such an arrangement. On the shore a small beach would have allowed any traveller by Sea to come ashore before having to negotiate a small gap or defile which penetrates the vertical cliff guiding movement up through this narrow egress to the exterior of the three large ramparts which enclose the place. A single centrally located gap through these on the East side admits access through the most visually impressive sections of the walls (Figure 3.3).

Arguments for coastal promontory enclosures as defensive and/or lookout points do not work unless we accept a picture of Iron Age society which was so defensively paranoid and socially fragmented that every single settlement was at risk from every other. This must be inherently unlikely from what we have seen of the evidence for roughly contemporary large scale corporate works such as long linear features in the

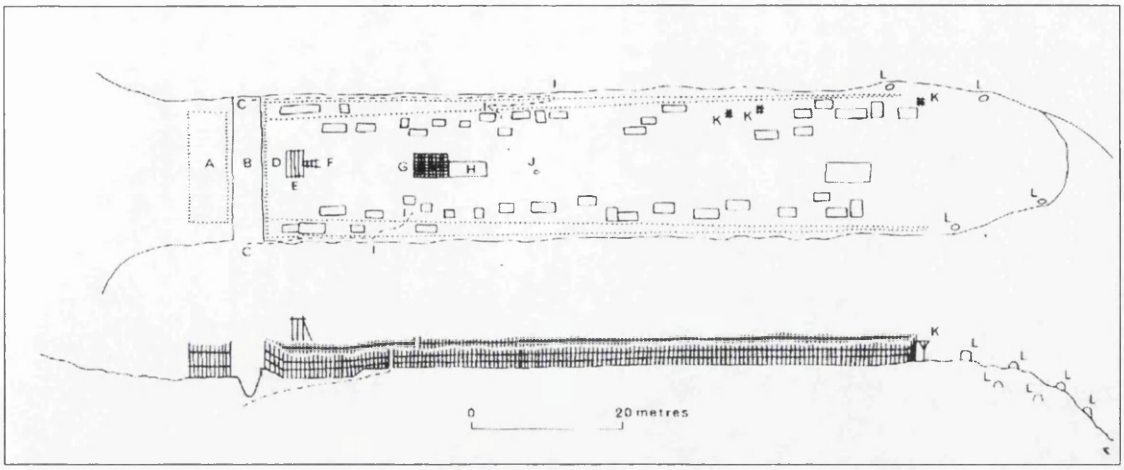


Figure 3.2. A Maori coastal *Pa* or promontory fort from New Zealand. (After Bellwood 1987). Note that although the bank and ditch is situated at only the open land-ward western side the entire monument is enclosed with a palisade. It is not suggested here as anything like a direct comparison with British Iron Age period monuments rather it illustrates the variety of evidence that may be hidden at prehistoric promontory structures.

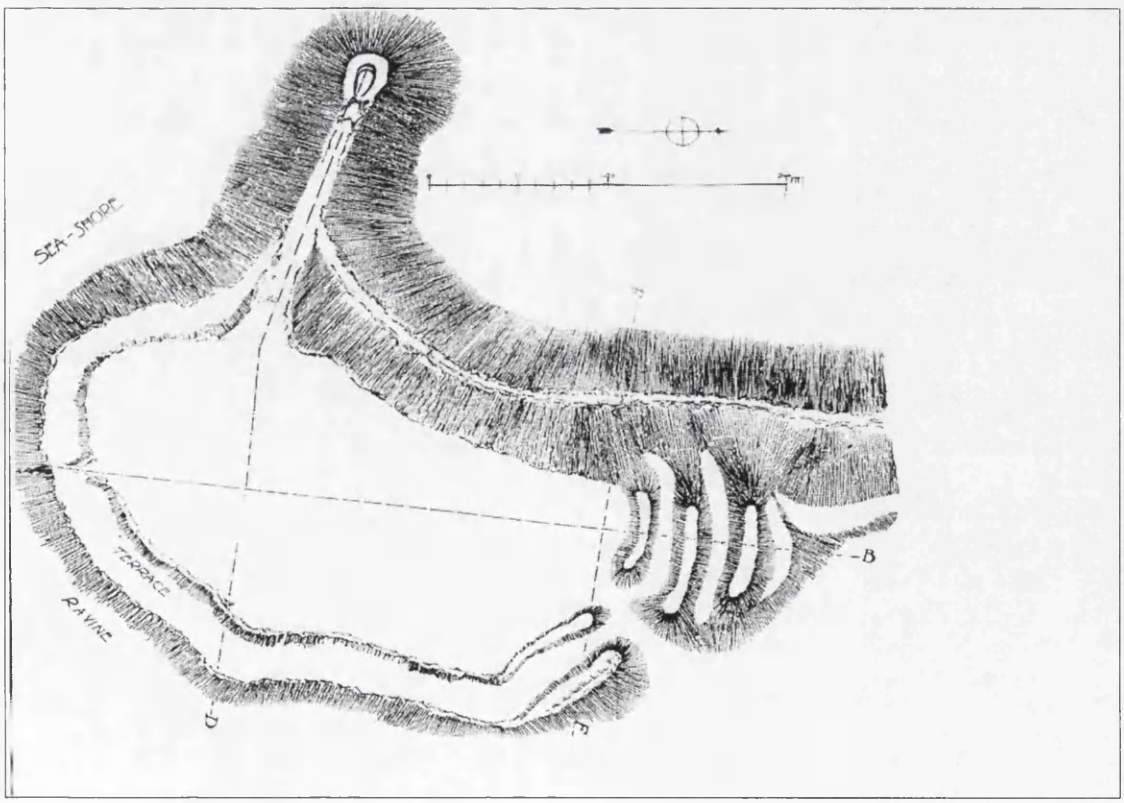


Figure 3.3. Kemps Walk from the RCAHMS 1912 inventory of Wigtownshire

landscapes of other areas nearby. More importantly actual physical examination of many of the coastal promontory enclosures reveals just how poorly defensive they would have been. On the land-ward side many are directly overlooked by the main coastal escarpment which is higher than most of the sites occupied by coastal enclosures. This would have made their interiors easily observable from outside. In the majority of cases it also means that many do not have a good landward view at all; being blocked out by the sweep of cliff above. Strictly, rational military factors therefore are not articulated in the form and location of many of the coastal enclosures. This does not mean that they were never the scenes of conflict- simply that such conflict was not a single over-riding factor in their construction. Many societies attempt to control the nature of aggression through feuding rules and codes of conduct and they often recognise conflict taboos such as the exclusion of certain groups of persons or places from combat and the immunity of particular items from attack such as crops. Some aspects of coastal enclosures may have been suited to the specific culturally acceptable manifestations of violent combat but to judge these monuments as seats of conflict and defence from the evidence of their surviving physical remains is to pre-judge what culturally contingent beliefs and traditions governed the construction and morphology of suitable theatres of combat.

Indeed, it is a product of the archaeological obsession with dichotomising the social and the functional which has lead to discussions of military/defensive aspects as opposed to social/symbolic significance. This reductive situation masks the complex interplay between practices and perceptions. Warfare is also a social phenomenon. We need to address the social and cosmological factors that must lie behind the placement of these enclosed promontories. This is not an argument to say that all

aspects of the siting of the coastal sites were governed by the religious/ritual scheme of Iron Age peoples in the area. That would be to privilege another crudely dissected and ill-defined sphere of living existence. The point to be reiterated here is that all aspects of the interpretation of the world by communities are negotiated within social discourses and that concepts such as ritual, economy, politics and culture are all closely interrelated to the point of being satisfactorily inseparable.

To illustrate this point about the multi-dimensionality of meanings as regards the material and the social we can inspect one aspect which might be proffered for the siting of coastal promontory sites. A good example of the complexity of social discourse is the control of communication. An archaeologist may well identify the coastal route along the West shore of the Rhins as a good one along the traditional pragmatic lines. The use of sea craft hugging close to the shore is efficient and swift in comparison to long distance movement across a "land"-scape with no really centrally organised road network.

Coastal enclosures might therefore be poised to centralise certain communities to this traffic which may have brought items of exchange, news and of course the human traffic itself with all of its multitude of conditions and contexts for social relations- peaceful, equanimous, celebratory, connubial, empowering, manipulative, coercive, acquisitive or destructive etc.; and over short, medium and long durations of intercourse. The siting of coastal sites would have facilitated the monitoring and attempted control of this communication in their area and the construction of monumentally powerful places would have signalled such local authority to visitors. However, the evidence from many Iron Age contexts would indicate that at least some kinds of watery places were also a significant and potent substance with connotations of sanctity and ritual power perhaps even as a conduit to the supernatural, the underworld or with death and spirituality; in short a liminal region. If coastal

enclosures were sited so as to draw on such metaphors of the extreme in life and death then this might have further gathered to them notions of power and over time the acquisition of biographies of place, local oral narratives and histories of their role in the lives and cosmologies of Iron Age communities. The character of these coastal places would be imbued with the associations of the Sea and with those who travelled on it. Marine travel itself- a thing which brings new people and objects from distant regions has a host of magical and exotic associations in many societies. (Parker Pearson and Sharples 1999, Schama 1995, 362-374) Whatever specific traditions were current concerning the properties of the Sea in Iron Age west Wigtownshire we may be sure that living on coastal sites brought these beliefs into sharp relief in the negotiation of social identities of both persons resident at these monuments and between them and inland communities. Community biographies will have developed at promontory monuments like Kemps Walk to account for the history of the relationships of the people who dwelled there with the landscape and seascape. This is why this author believes that coastal enclosures are fundamentally different kinds of places to inland hillforts or enclosures and not just the coastal adaptation of hillforts.

The definition of the significance of specific monuments in this thesis is one which privileges practice as the ultimate arbiter of the meanings and identities played out through particular places and monuments. What humans do at points in the landscape, the accretion of activities that occur there and the willingness of people to hold memories about what has taken place and share them with others form the basis of identities of places and communities. As archaeologists we must seek to gain some insight into the character of these people/place relationships through discussion of the range of actual physical experiences that were available at particular locations or monuments.

In the absence of any excavated evidence from the examples from West Wigtownshire it is currently impossible to guess at the kinds of social practice which may lie behind the choices of siting and of the kinds of activities which occurred inside these monuments. To some extent this discussion has treated coastal

promontory enclosures as a single class of site on the basis of morphological characteristics and location; namely the siting of the enclosures on cliff coasts, open at the seaward side. However, we must bear in mind the potential for excavation of apparently similar types of sites to demonstrate the radically divergent nature of practices occurring between them (e.g. Gosden and Lock 1998 on hillforts of the Oxfordshire ridgeway) so undermining apparently water-tight typologies. One coastal promontory site which has been excavated is Cruggleton Castle which lies in East Wigtownshire immediately outside our research area. The motivation for excavation at this site was to explore a series of Medieval timber halls, and castle precincts, and perhaps lesser attention has been paid to the earlier evidence in the report (Ewart 1985). However, later prehistoric features, which had been disturbed by the Medieval activity, were discovered (Figure 3.4). These consisted of a complex roundhouse about 8 Metres in diameter cut in the rock outcrop surface with evidence of internal partition walls and several post holes and pits (Ewart 1985, 12). The presence of such a substantial roundhouse demonstrates that at least some coastal promontory enclosures contained circular buildings of the kind usually identified as domestic from substantially enclosed sites inland. There is even stronger evidence of the permanency of occupation at coastal locations in the occurrence of substantial dry-stone sites. These monument types to be found on the Rhins occur regularly in other landscape contexts and in much larger numbers elsewhere but there are a small number of brochs and duns such as the examples at Crammag Head and Killantringan Bay. One particularly interesting monument is that of Doon Castle Broch, Ardwell Point (NX04SE1) (number 17 on Figure 3.1) a substantial stone structure which was actually built within an apparently earlier coastal promontory enclosure (Plate 3.1). The siting of this massive dry-stone walled monument on its rocky coastal headland is remarkable in that it is constructed to virtually rise continuously with the cliff edge.

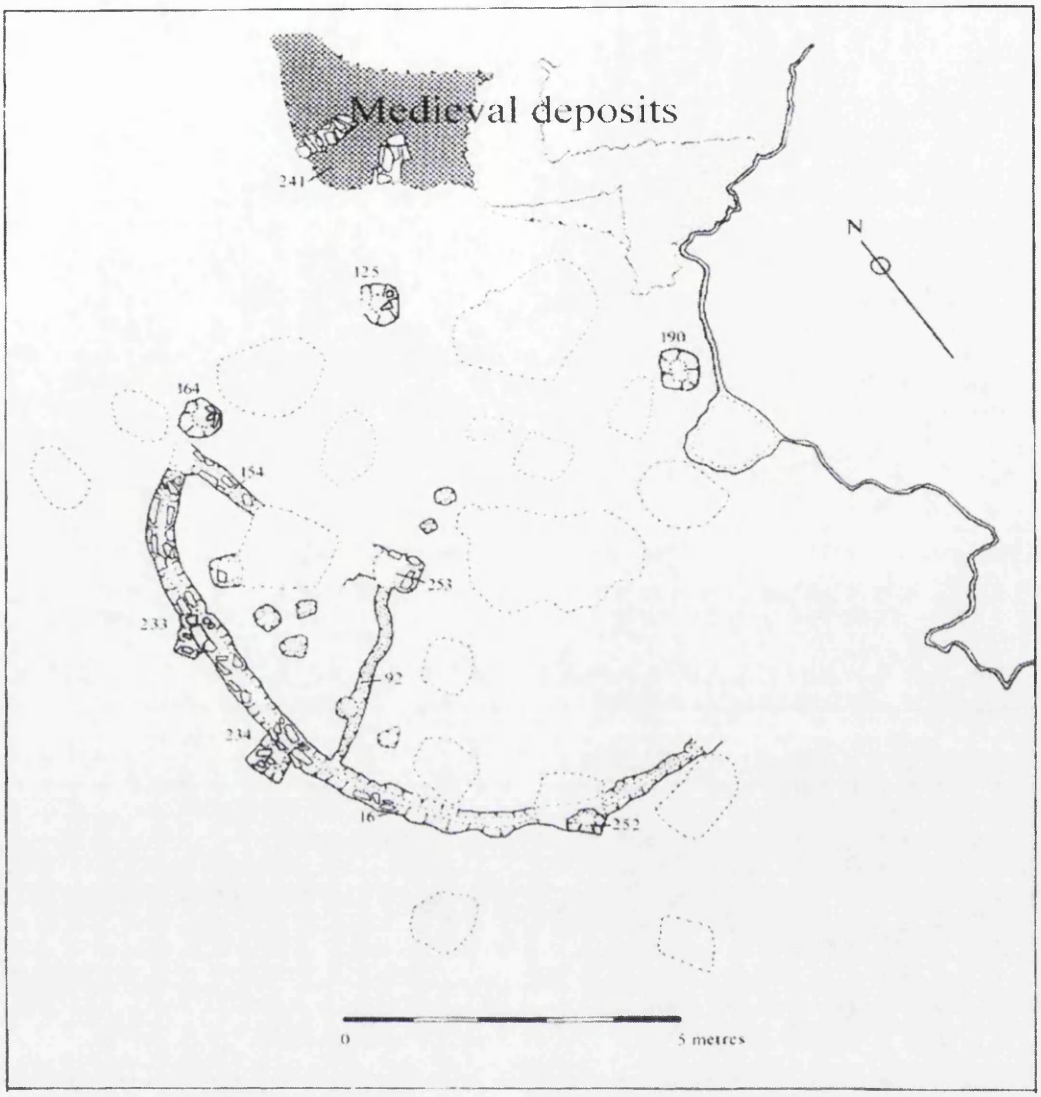


Figure 3.4 The main late prehistoric structures found at Cruggleton Castle Ewart 1985

Plate 3.1. Part of the surviving structure of the Broch of Doon Castle Ardwell Point (photo: the author)

This must have presented a fairly awesome appearance, particularly in approaches from the coast. Indeed, the broch sits on such a narrow rock promontory that the presence of an unusual double entrance on opposed sides of the wall may have been felt necessary to accommodate ease of movement around the headland (plate 3.2). Alternatively, it may further support the chronological complexity of the structure.

The major point of significance here, though, is the relationship of the broch with the earthworks enclosing the promontory. It seems likely that the enclosure antedates the broch but the fact that the ditch and bank remained a part of the visual topography of the site is supported by their slight survival even today (Plate 3.3). Whatever the relative sequence of elements, the on-going elaboration of Ardwell point; especially as seen in the massive investment in resources, materials and labour that is represented by the undertaking of broch construction, further supports the idea that Rhins coastal locations had become extremely important at this time. Increasing monumentality on these promontories probably indicates the continued, sustained interest of certain communities or family groups in both the portrayal and literal maintenance of authority and control as powerful statements within a material discourse.

All of this strong evidence of permanency at coastal sites demonstrates that some at least are not the seasonal camps of local groups usually resident further inland encamped on these sites to exploit short term resources there as they are sometimes argued. And it further indicates that coastal promontory monuments were the resident locations of communities who were involved in discourses of communication and power which focused on drawing potent symbols from those culturally contingent beliefs concerning the coast and the Sea which fed into and were in turn reflected by the coast as a major route-way of movement.

The location of West Wigtownshire within a Marine circle of intervisible landmasses negotiable only by sea may well be relevant here. This ring of coastal lands includes the Western coastal Scottish highlands and Islands to the Northwest, Northwest England across the Solway, the Irish Coast to the West, the Isle of Man in the centre

Plate 3.2. The North and South entrances of Doon Castle Broch. (photo: the author)

Plate 3.3. The slight surviving outer bank and ditch of the promontory enclosure at Doon Castle, Ardwell Point may represent evidence of the chronological and structural complexity of the life of this monument.

and of course South West Scotland itself (Figure 3.5). Seen within this orbit of longer distance relations the coastal sites of Wigtownshire gather a spatial logic that would be interesting to explore through sustained fieldwork. However, until even the most modest, small scale of excavation programmes occur on coastal promontory sites it will be impossible to gauge the usefulness of the Irish Sea ring as an historical entity or the nature and complexity of social relations of communities encircling it.

From the above discussion it is clear that it is difficult to come to conclusions about the exact reasons behind the location of coastal promontory enclosures. Not the least difficulty lies with any form of archaeological enquiry that sets out from its starting point to get at the single, empirically observable truth behind the function of an aspect of the material world.

Figure 3.5. West Wigtownshire in its wider coastal setting demonstrating its proximity to a range of other coasts and its pivotal position in this region of the Irish Sea.

#	Name	Entrance	Size/scale
51	Duniehinnie	S?	77M x 29M
20	Dunskey Golf Course	NE – poss' -could	26M x 23M
49	Dounan Nose, Dally	-	52M x 24M
41	The Dounan	E and NW	33.5 x 27.5
44	Carrickcamrie, West	NNE	42Mx18.5M
36	Muldaddie	SE prob'	26Mx20m
46	Clanghie Bay	-	56M in length
24	Grennan Point/ Grennan Hill	-	42M x 5-12M
47	Clanghie Point/Mull Hill	SE?	67M by 25M
25	High Auchneel	ESE	23.5M x 16M
63	The Dunnan, Portankill	-	12.3M x 10.3M
45	Caspin	N?	69M x 43M
56	Juniper Face	E?	32M x 19.5M
62	Portobello	ENE	58M x 25M
61	Mare Rock 2	E	66M x 29M
60	Mare Rock 1	SE	67M x 25 M
59	Kirklauchline	-	39M x 30M
50	Dove Cave Head/Little Float	E	27.5M x 19M
57	Kemp's Walk	NNE?	83M x 44.5M
58	Kenmuir Graves, Island	ENE	35Mx 19.5M
55	Fort Point, Salt Pans Bay	E	30M x 22.9M
53	Dunorroch, West Cairngaan		45.5M in length
54	Dunskirloch	ESE	71M x 41M
94	Muldaddie	SE- prob.	26M x 20M
2	Doon castle, Ardwell Point	E	14M x 10M

Table 3.1: A digest of Coastal Promontory Enclosures in The Rhins and a selection of some of their attributes. Taken from the Enclosure Database access file.

The Uplands

The Uplands of West Wigtownshire as defined earlier predominate the Rhins peninsula and are largely composed of a complex of drumlin groups and some occasional high, level moorland areas such as that of Barncorkrie.

The types of monuments found in this region are fairly varied from complex hill-top

enclosures (hill forts), less complex enclosures of both rectilinear and curvi-linear types to the cropmarks of substantial timber roundhouses in apparent isolation or within enclosures and possibly also as parts of the several known crannog platforms. As we saw in chapter two the monuments normally listed as characteristic of this region differ in some respects from the neighbouring region of the Stranraer Lowlands. Indeed one member of the RCAHMS believes that these are not superficial preservational biases at work constructing this dichotomy but are real differences in the character of monument types relative to the two areas (Marylin Brown pers. comm.). However, the example of the Cairn Connell enclosures demonstrates that where conditions are right types of monument more common on the Stranraer lowlands as cropmarks can be identified in the Rhins upland (Plate 3.4). The Cairn Connell images show the parch marks of two ditched rectilinear enclosures containing ring-ditches likely to represent long decayed large timber circular buildings. External to these enclosures are the marks of several other ring-ditches, a series of pits and a possible souterrain. There is therefore potential for the compartmentalised monument/landscape complexes of these areas to be undermined by our developing recognition of the archaeology. This must be borne in mind in consideration of the monuments in both the upland and lowland regions described in the next sections.

We also saw in the typology discussion in chapter two how hill forts hold a unique place in the historiography of British prehistoric studies. Few other monuments have held such a hold on our consciousness or such a demand on our attention from the

Plate 3.4 The crop mark archaeology at Cairn Connell on the North of the Rhins upland

early recording work of Stukely to Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles'* eponymous heroines' dramatic sojourn to the ramparts of Maiden castle. The hill fort, then, has had a long time to develop as a stock image in cultural and archaeological literatures.

Theories concerning the roles and significance of hill forts, however, have developed in the modern period. In the 1970's with the advent of processual approaches which sought to place the hill fort within rational, economic, farming landscapes, the hill fort was placed at the hub of the economic lives of Iron Age polities as the major re-distributive centre; often seen as literal central places (Champion 1979, Tringham 1972, Cunliffe 1983).

This led to the study of the distribution of forts within their own geo-morphological region. Analysis revolved around the study of their relationship with each other or smaller, putatively "dependant" enclosures in the local area. This kind of analysis would focus on aspects such as altitude, geological background and spatial patterning. In regions where numbers of hill forts had been excavated (or was on-going) an exploration of the possible subsistence/economic catchment areas of forts as re-distributive centres was a favoured approach (e.g. Cunliffe 1995). This form of analysis continues to find popularity amongst some students.

We have seen how recent work in the West Wigtownshire area has followed this line. In this section we will examine an example from the Rhins upland and examine how well it fits this model for hillfort functions and relations.

Cairn Pat is the largest hill fort in our West Wigtownshire research area and sits on the highest point in the Rhins hills atop a conspicuous hill which dominates the central portion of the Rhins peninsula Plates 3.5 and 3.6). Despite this it has never been excavated although its preservational characteristics allow us to describe some of its features in a little detail. The ramparts of Cairn pat enclose an area of about 1.2 ha and the monument measures 118m from East to West by 102m transversely within twin ramparts set between 5.5m and 9.5m apart; a third rampart arcs around the gentle southern approach to the fort (Plate 3.7). The stonework of these ramparts is exposed in some sections and is composed of local white Permian *Greywhackes*. At least one entrance is on the South-south-east, where a modern track passes through the walls, and penetrates to the interior. Apart from the remains of a bank reduced to little more than a low scarp and a scatter of stones, which is visible 14m within the inner rampart on the South, the interior of the fort is devoid of any obvious archaeology.

It is the surrounding site distribution of Cairn Pat which is of immediate concern in our aim of judging the efficacy of the model for hill fort functions outlined by Cunliffe. This distribution is curious in that there is a lack of even roughly contemporary archaeology nearby. This gap was alluded to in chapter two. There appears to be a landscape empty of monuments around it (Figure 3.6). There are no smaller sites to form a putative settlement hierarchy. Cairn Pat does not readily form part of a focus for dense settlement and it does not seem to be a "central place" in the "Cunliffian" sense. The large impressive, well preserved monumentality of Cairn Pat only serves to make it appear all the more naked within its immediate landscape, awkward in its isolation. How can we attempt to explain this absence? Of course, it

Plate 3.5 Aerial Photograph of Cairn Pat hillfort clearly showing several upstanding earthworks (photo: RCAHMS)

Plate 3.6 Aerial photograph of Cairn Pat hillfort showing its elevated position on the upland Rhins with the low-lying Stranraer Lowlands beginning to appear just beyond to the East. (Photo:RCAHMS)

Plate 3.7 Upstanding earthworks at Cairn Pat on the Northwest of the Hill fort curve off into the background. (photo-Author).

is possible that there are questions of preservation and destruction at work here. The presence of peat on these upland Rhins has already been discussed and it may be that this is having a masking effect on nearby archaeology. On the other hand we saw in chapter two how in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries the Rhins upland was considered a poor candidate for improvement and this largely unimproved pastureland is precisely the kind of terrain we would expect to find upstanding late prehistoric structures even of an unenclosed variety. Other places in the Rhins have given positive identification of up-standing Iron Age monuments such as Doon Hill rectilinear enclosure and another smaller Hill fort; Tor of Craigoch, c.9 Kilometres to the North West, so why not in the vicinity of Cairn Pat? We may have to face the strong possibility that the absence of sites around Cairn Pat is a genuine one.

To approach this problem we may examine the potential of visual and physical aspects of the monument and its landscape and we may hope to bring out some of the localised contingencies and subtleties of a more intimate archaeological landscape. The way in which people were able to move around the countryside will have fundamentally influenced their view of the world. Not only are the focal points of settlement important to an appreciation of archaeological landscapes, then, but movement will have been responsible for forming the social landscape. In attempting to understand an ancient landscape, on however small a scale, we must examine the potentials for movement and mobility within that landscape if we are to say anything meaningful about communities activities and the relationship of practices with places. If we devolve the scales of the geographical units which we normally subject to analysis, we may be able to attune ourselves to the physicality of later prehistoric landscapes, acknowledging their intimacy of bodily scale. We can try to think about

moving around them in something approaching the mode of people in the past. This is to privilege an embodied archaeology in which the scale of movements of human beings within landscapes should be the appropriate scale of our analysis. That movement around prehistoric landscapes will normally have been on foot. So in light of that on several field visits this year the author has taken the opportunity to scrutinise the landscape from positions around a number of field monuments both in the Rhins upland area and in the Stranraer Lowlands. On several of these visits I took the opportunity to visit Cairn Pat and the surrounding landscape for many kilometres around.

As an individual walks west from the coast through the Rhins towards Cairn Pat hill fort, Cairn Pat itself is not visible until nearly arriving at the monument. From the coastal zone where the promontory forts dominate through the central West parts of the Rhins where enclosures sit on low hills or the sides of glens nothing is visible of Cairn Pat. This is an occluded landscape of Drumlin hills whose undulations, although never higher than the eminence of Cairn Pat itself nevertheless serve to block out any view of the hill fort from the locations of the other known Iron Age monuments. Views of Cairn Pat can be had from the tops of some of these drumlin peaks; however, if these hill tops were on an Iron Age route West from the coast they would represent an exhausting traverse. It seems more likely that the common routeways would have been along the several East-West orientated streams such as Dinvin Burn and Pinminnoch Burn which flow through flatter ground in the lee of large drumlin masses. Perhaps more significantly, many of the Iron Age monuments which do occur on the Rhins upland (several miles distant from the negative monument zone around Cairn Pat) actually avoid a position which would have been in

visual contact with the massive complex enclosure. An example of this is the Doon Hill enclosure, already mentioned above, which sits c.4 Kilometres to the south of Cairn Pat on the southern slope of a drumlin hill facing the opposite direction from Cairn Pat.

Returning to our hill fort monument, it is only within 150 metres of the southern approach of the hill itself that Cairn Pat emerges from the cover of the other Rhins hills (Plate 3.8). As the traveller then moves past the fort, moving east-wards the fort rapidly disappears from view again behind other elements of the undulating topography of the Rhins.

However, as they pass down into the Stranraer Lowlands toward the village of Lochans 2 KM to the East it takes on a different prospect for the traveller. The hill fort rapidly becomes visually impressive from almost every direction (Plate 3.9 and Plate 3.10) in this broad flat plain of cropmark archaeology which is discussed in detail below. It is within the lowland zone that the appreciation of Cairn Pat becomes most intense. All of the various foci of later prehistoric archaeology on the plain have a direct view of the Cairn Pat hill fort. It looms over them on the horizon and would have been a constant real and imagined presence whatever beliefs and social practices revolved around the relationship of the lowland communities with the hill monument. The white stonework of the ramparts of Cairn Pat may have assisted in this high visibility while the banks of the monument remained fresh or maintained.

What we see, then, is that the "logical" self-contained, geo-morphological regions do not really stand up when we actually observe the monuments within those supposedly homogeneous regions. Cairn Pat is a monument at the heart of the Rhins upland, indeed at its highest most central point. However, of all the terrain adjacent to the hill

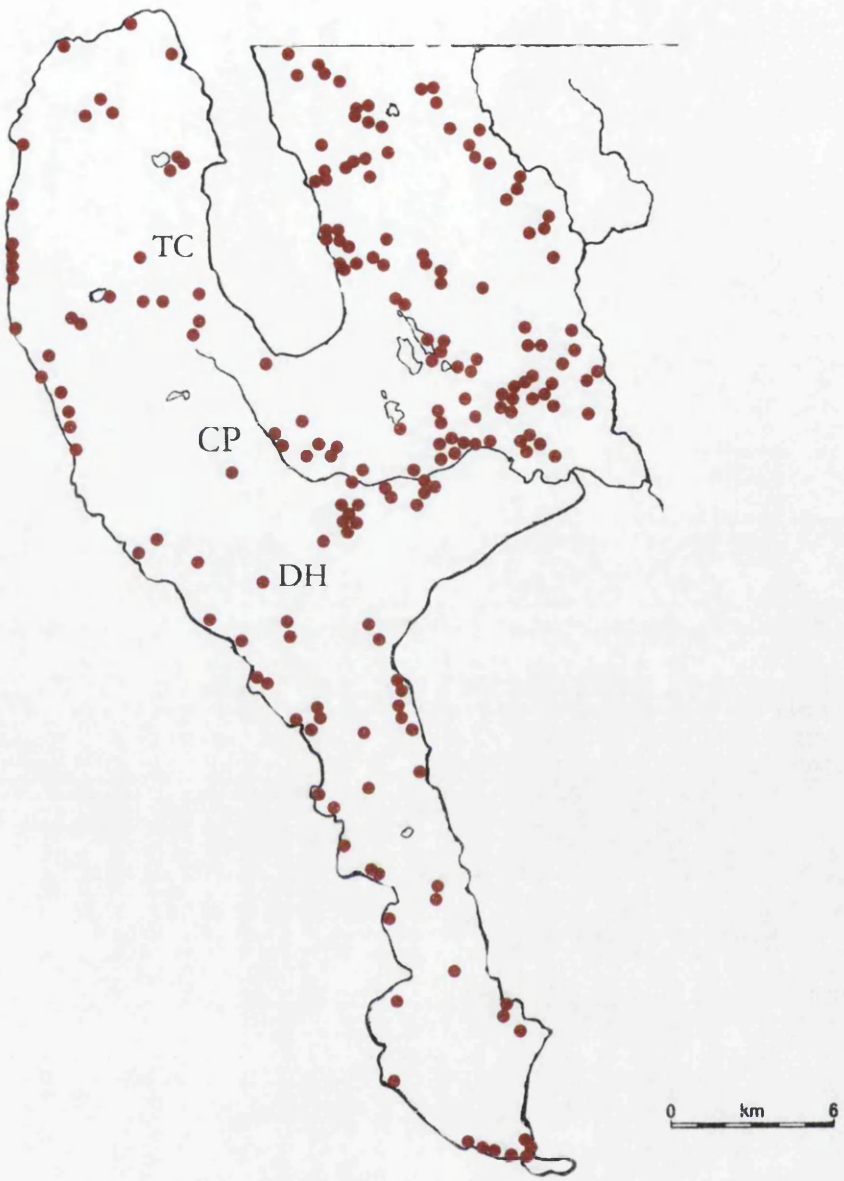


Figure 3.6 Distribution of sites around Cairn Pat with sites discussed in text annotated thus- CP = Cairn Pat, ToC = Tor of Craigoch, DH = Doon Hill enclosure.

Plate 3.8 This view of Cairn Pat shows the hillfort as it first becomes visible on the Southwest as it emerges from surrounding drumlin hills.

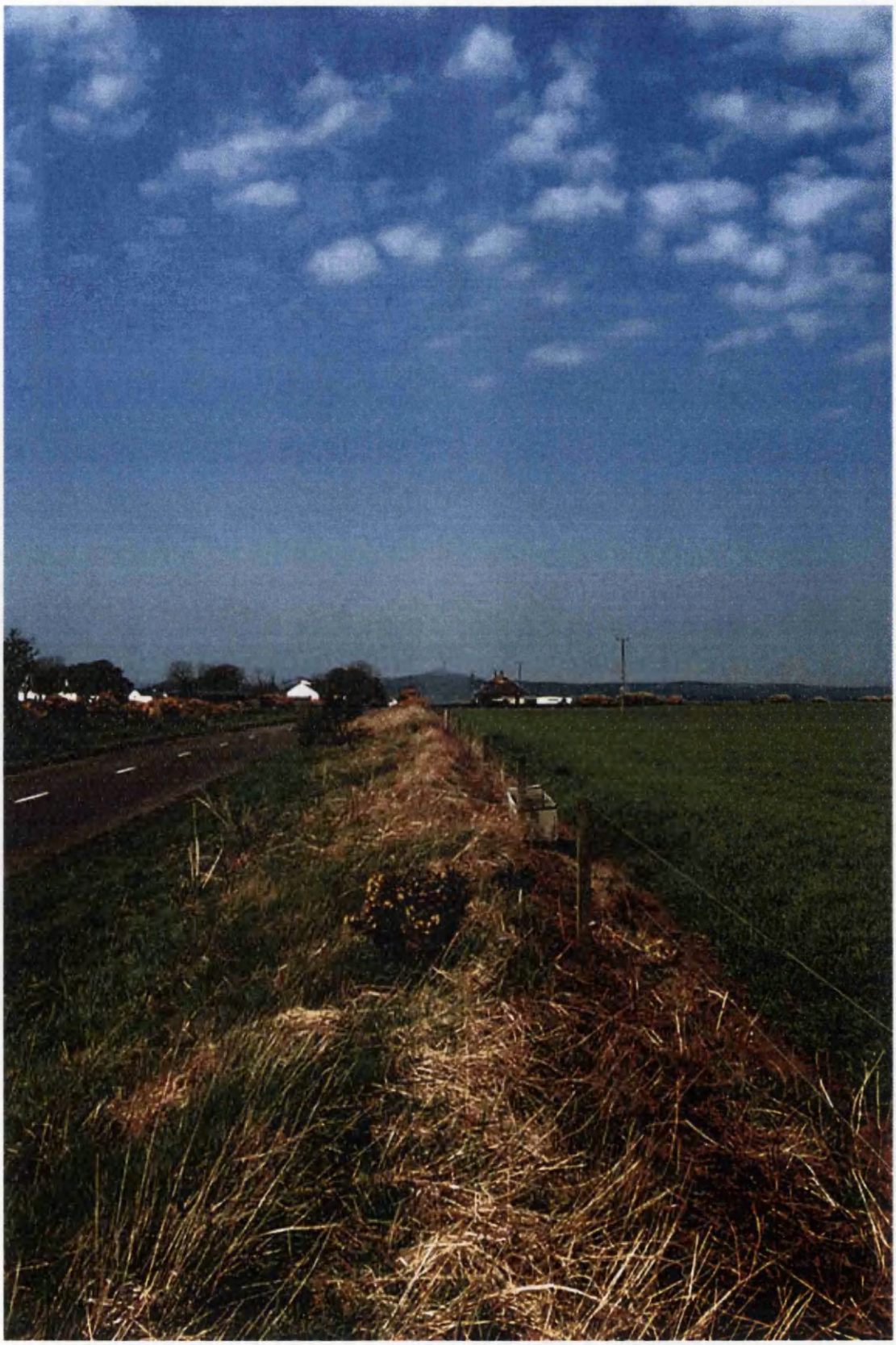


Plate 3.9 Cairn Pat from the Stranraer Lowlands. This photograph was taken from Several Hill, the location of one of the major concentrations of cropmarks. Cairn pat is a subtle yet imposing presence. (photo: the author)

Plate 3.10. The Stranraer Lowlands seen from the top of Cairn Pat (photo: the author)

fort the it is actually the Stranraer Lowland area which provides the stage from which the monument is at its most physically and visually significant. The logic of past perceptions to terrain may have operated along different lines to ours. I would suggest is that "Settlement" is shown to be more than rational functional, utilitarian arrangements of space. The nature of the relationship of Cairn Pat Hill fort to the settlement in the Stranraer Lowlands shows us a less funtional side to settlement distribution. One not based upon the rational blocks of modern pedological/topographical entities but upon quite different operating concepts. There are signs in the landscape; associations which cut across the rigid boundaries of modern land classification and provide links between places which might not normally be considered together in archaeology. Exactly what this relationship signifies or how it operated in terms of social practice or belief/ideology is uncertain but the mere visual omnipresence of Cairn Pat from the Stranraer Lowlands might serve to reinforce its place in the social lives and memories of communities on the Stranraer Lowlands. It does not even matter if we do not know if Cain Pat had "gone out of use" by the time many of the places on the Stranraer Lowlands were being occupied in the late Iron Age as conspicuous places will continue to hold power over the imagination.

Indeed, the central potency of Cairn Pat does not appear to have involved the direct presencing of the major multi-vallate monument in close proximity with a dense concentration of houses and enclosures or among more minor complex enclosures in a pragmatic, economy based Cunliffe/Danebury type scenario. The landscape around Cairn Pat appears to be maintained as a landscape devoid of monuments. This is not to say that it was not used and not important in a variety of ways. The immediate landscape around Cairn Pat may have been empty of monumental construction but not

empty of meaning, not devoid of significance.

It is quite clear that the construction of monuments like Cairn Pat would have required large numbers of people as a labour force. The implications of this are that the involvement of people in large scale building schemes, other than those who were to live in them or near them, means that travel would have taken place. It is likely that this travel to, and the arrival at, construction sites will have presented opportunities for those initiating monumental building or maintenance programmes to impress and reiterate the system of obligations to authority structures and maintain and reaffirm the dominant discourse of ideology and identities. This movement within the landscape is important in this affirmation. It provides the context within which the organising principles of social practice could be emphasised in the material world, the socially construed landscape.

The Plains

In the early part of the 1990's an extensive group of archaeological sites was recognised on the Stranraer Lowland during flights undertaken by the RCAHMS. The area is a low-lying coastal hinterland which slopes relatively gently from Luce Bay in the south to the slightly higher area around Soulseat Loch at 24-30 metres above sea level and north to Loch Ryan around Stranraer. This is rich agricultural land, yielding cereals on a rotation basis throughout the area. Although some crop mark sites had previously been noticed from the 1970's onwards the yield of new sites from the 1990's flights demonstrated for the first time the high potential of the Stranraer Lowlands. The extensive range, often excellent clarity and complexity of the archaeology evinced in these photographs places them on a par with the best aerial photographic images known from the other regions in Scotland and indeed they are similar in quality to some of the best Southern British examples.

Some of these aerial photographic complexes were investigated fairly soon after the initial discovery as the Scotland Northern Ireland Pipeline (SNIP) project got underway. Commercial excavations were undertaken by GUARD (Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division) to mitigate any damage incurred by the development. This investigation sampled several points along the length of the proposed pipeline corridor in 1994 (Bain and Cullen 1996) and an extensive area was investigated at Fox Plantation from September to November 1994 (MacGregor 1996). The findings from this excavation will be the subject of a sustained study below. More recently, the ongoing long term field research project at Dunragit undertaken by Julian Thomas at Manchester University has investigated a location of many cropmarks towards the eastern fringe of the Stranraer Lowlands. Here, a massive

complex of concentric and linear timber post alignments of Neolithic and Bronze Age date is overlain by several smaller ring post features- apparently round houses/buildings of later, probably Iron Age date (Plate 3.11).

Even with these exceptions excavated monuments in Western Wigtownshire from c.200BC-AD200 are rare and it may be profitable to examine closely those that have been examined in assisting in possible interpretations of sites known solely through aerial reconnaissance.

If we consider in detail one of the sites which was excavated by GUARD, that of Fox Plantation, we can gain some idea of the sorts of depositional conditions we can expect to find in the Stranraer Lowlands.

The major structures located at Fox Plantation matched the aerial evidence well and included evidence of a group of sub-circular gully cuts which appeared to represent the foundational foot-print of a large timber round house around fourteen Metres in diameter (Figure 3.7 and Plate 3.12, Plate 3.13). This sat within a narrow ditch which is interpreted as a palisade less than 4 metres distant from the wall of the circular building (parallels for this tight arrangement are Area B at Burnswark, (Jobey 1978), and possibly at McNaughtons Farm (Scott-Elliot et al. 1996)). These structures sat nearby a large ditch that appears to be cognate with the 50 Metre diameter enclosure from the aerial photographs. Arrangements in both the inner and outer structures towards the Southeast seem to indicate an entrance orientation contiguous over both house and palisade.

How should we interpret the significance of this tight palisade feature? If we pursue the approaches of an archaeology of dwelling we would look at the effect this would have on actual lived space. The palisade would have blocked out light in all but an easterly direction. The entrance orientation of due east is an extremely common one

which Oswald (1997) convincingly associates with more symbolic and social aspects rather than with a desire to face the entrance away from prevailing wind direction or maximising sun-light even if these were additional outcomes of this configuration. If this interpretation of the significance of door orientation is correct then the Fox Plantation building shared this tradition with most British Iron Age round buildings but the external palisade served to intensify the dominance of this obsession with eastern light. It is possible that there were more open points on houses than is usually held to be the case. There may have been sky-light apertures in thatched roofs. However, windows would seem to be really a feature of a quite different concept of the world and of architectural order. This view of the world can be seen in some of the architecture of the classical world where some types of Roman buildings frequently had windows and it reaches its zenith with the enlightenment period where the landscape is to be seen framed almost like a picture; privileging "the gaze". The evidence of most vernacular timber buildings from ethnographic work on non-western societies would indicate that apertures as windows are rare.

It seems likely that if the tight palisade feature reached any reasonable height it would block out natural light around the building with the exception of the short period when light cast directly through the gap in the palisade. This might serve to curtail a whole series of activities that required good light which are often in evidence in Iron Age domestic buildings such as weaving, working skins, corn grinding, bone tool-working, etc. This must give us cause to wonder as to the activities that were undertaken in this building. The examination of further deposits found within the building may throw some light on the kinds of activities that were practised there.

One of the most significant features discovered at Fox Plantation was the occurrence of the deposits found at the southern part of the house ring-slot and at the adjacent

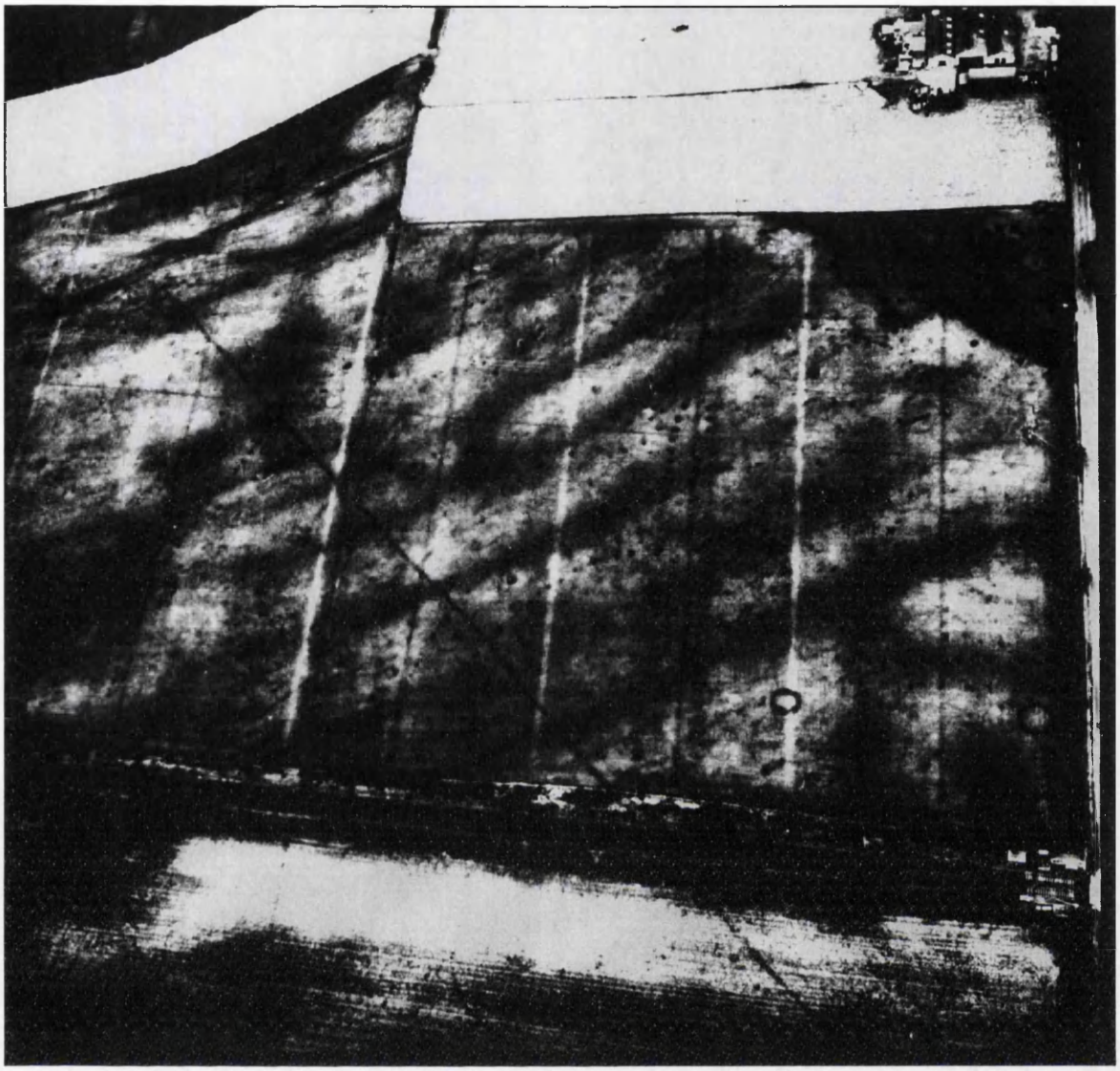


Plate 3.11 Aerial photograph of the stunning complex of archaeology at Dunragit. The dark ring-ditches of later prehistoric circular buildings overlie a bewildering array of earlier (Neolithic and Bronze Age) post circles and alignments.

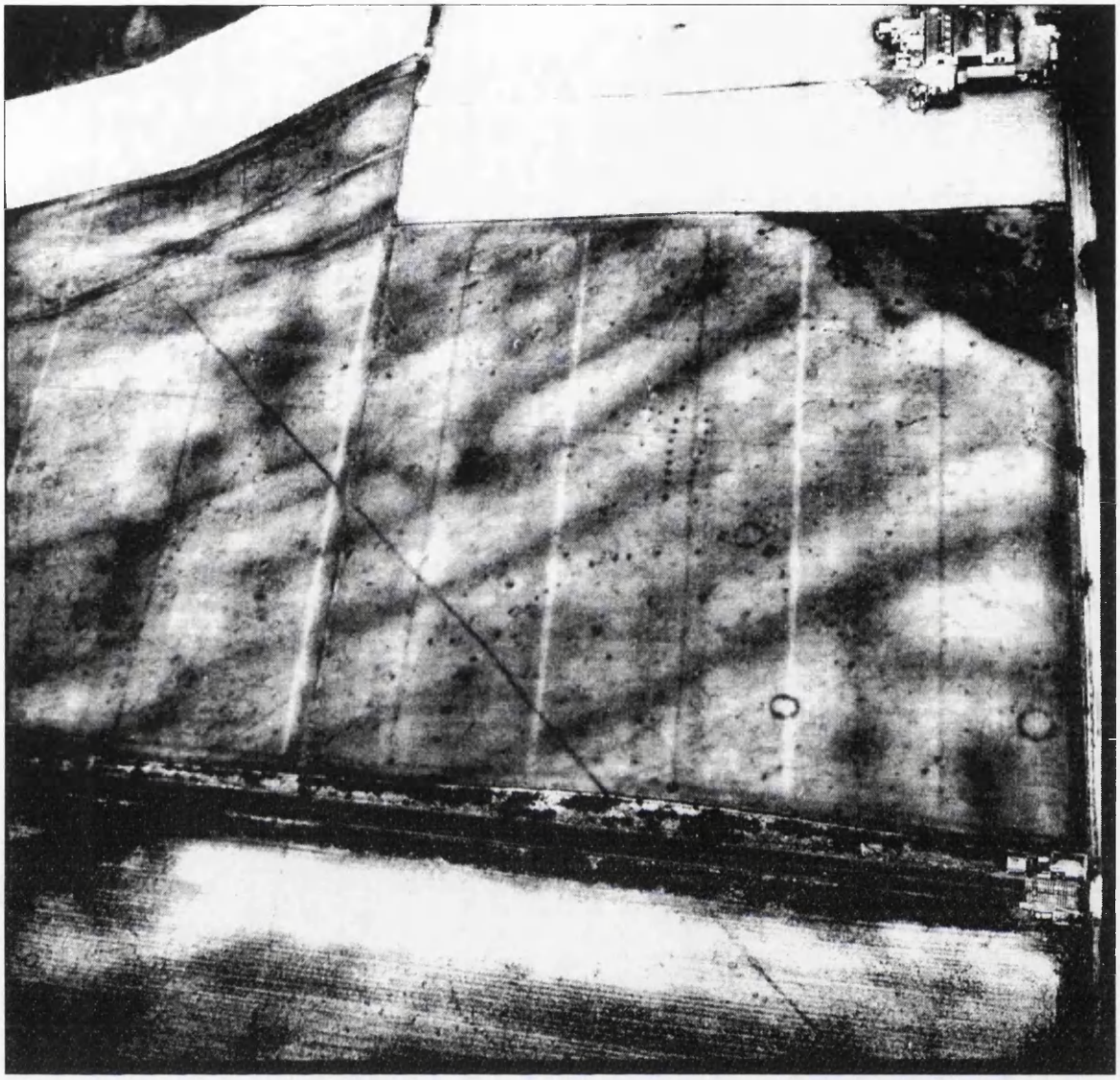


Plate 3.11 Aerial photograph of the stunning complex of archaeology at Dunragit. The dark ring-ditches of later prehistoric circular buildings overlie a bewildering array of earlier (Neolithic and Bronze Age) post circles and alignments.

section of the outer palisade. Pits excavated at these points contained the remains of human cremation deposits. (figure3.7).

This evidence indicates an interest on the part of the builders of this structure in the kinds of structured deposition attested at other late prehistoric sites in the UK (Hill 1995) and which is increasingly recognised as a feature of Iron Age contexts in other regions of Scotland (At Cnip on Lewis, and Sollas on North Uist; Armit 1996, 153). It is argued that many of these depositional events represent activity of a ritual nature. That ritual content is often construed as relating to the domestic cosmology of the later prehistoric houses within which it is found. At the Sollas house, mentioned above, preservation was such that it was possible to trace these floor deposits across the interior of the building and they were observed to occur at significant points of egress to other rooms or partitioned spaces within the house. These are argued as representing foundational deposits intended to articulate the structure of the social relations with the religious/cosmological spheres via votive or propitiatory emplacement (Armit 1996, 156).

At Fox Plantation the uncertainties involved in concluding how much of the deposits on the site have been compromised by the plough and are truncated and non-recoverable, prevent such an intimate charting of the distribution of floor deposits. However, the number of pits within the interior of the ring-ditch which do not have an obvious architectural/structural function may hint at a strong practice of deposition within this space.

One such small pit within the ring-ditch is particularly interesting in this context of deliberate structured deposition. Pit [523] was located towards the west of the interior of the circular building and when excavated it was found to contain a Beaker sherd of pottery. In subsequent post-excavation analysis a quantity of carbonised cereal grain

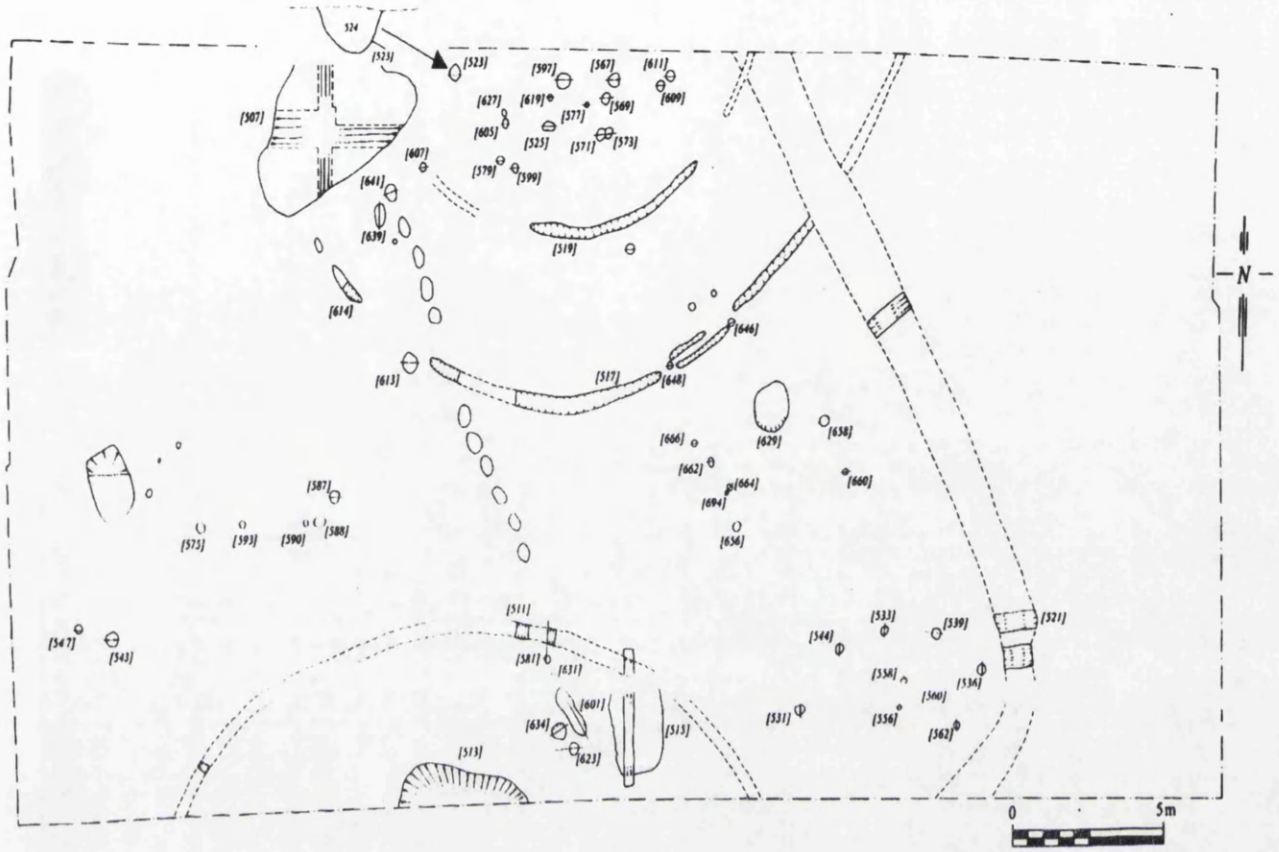


Figure 3.7. Plan of the main features excavated at Fox Plantation. The section through the pit [523] containing the beaker sherd and carbonised grain is shown at top. The human cremation deposits were found at the western terminals of the inner ring-ditch/roundhouse structure [519] and in the same region of the outer palisade [517]. After Macgreggor forthcoming.

Plate 3.12 Aerial photograph of Fox Plantation (photo: RCAHMS). The circular enclosure is visible at the centre of the photograph partly within and partly overlying the rectilinear enclosure. Part of another enclosure is visible in the adjacent field at the top of the image.

Plate 3.13 Fox Plantation under excavation in 1996. The roundhouse and the tight palisade enclosure are visible as arcs to the left-centre of the picture. Also visible is the underlying Neolithic pit alignment on the near-side of which can be seen the continuing line of the palisade enclosure. Another enclosure ditch arcs around the right side of the trench. (photograph courtesy of Gavin Macgregor)

from the pit was studied and gave a C-14 determination for the grain of 190 BC-AD 70 placing the content of the pit well within the later Iron Age for the region. However, this incongruity in dates between the grain and the Beaker sherd, which ought to be later Neolithic, throws up a problem in interpretation.

The excavator (Macgreggor (pers. comm.), posits that the grain used for the C-14 determination may have been intrusive to the pit or alternatively that the sherd may be the intrusive element. However, I would suggest that the care for stratigraphy and context with which the site was excavated should restore the excavators confidence in the contemporary nature of these deposited elements. In fact if this grain was an intrusive erratic blown about the site area and finally trapped by pit [523] then that would imply that the pit cut was at least partly open in the Iron Age and had been so since the late Neolithic when the beaker sherd would have been deposited. It seems fairly improbable that a gravel cut feature could survive this length of time (over two thousand years) without its sides collapsing and/or subsiding. That the feature was not re-cut is indicated by the section through the pit and the careful stratigraphic attention given by the excavators. The alternative is to consider the agency of bio-turbation, that earthworm or small mammal action intruded one of the items into this context. This would seem unlikely in the case of the fragile carbonised grain which probably could not remain intact from such an encounter and similarly unlikely for something larger like the beaker sherd since there were no animal intrusions apparent in the intact, compact fill of the pit context.

I would like to offer an alternative scenario for this curious juxtaposition of wildly non-contemporary elements from this single, small-scale context. Not simply to

explain away an awkward anomaly from an excavation but to challenge the neat cultural and temporal packages which we so readily construct in our narratives concerning prehistoric peoples and the materials that have survived them. This is an approach which is only possible with the recognition of the stranglehold which tight periodization holds over any alternative interpretations within sub-disciplines of archaeology and the realisation of the archaeological, depositional and social complexity coupled with the longevity of occupation at places like Fox Plantation.

Fox Plantation, Cultural biographies and the Stranraer Lowland crop mark complexes

Communities in the later prehistoric period were primarily farming groups. As such, probably most individuals spent the majority of their waking hours in working the land. In this respect, they were people of the earth. Digging ditches, depositing rubbish and/or ritual deposits, digging the foundations of building ring slots and post-holes will have meant cutting into the remnants of earlier activity on the site. Indeed any disturbance of the ground surface will have turned up material from the accretion of thousands of years of occupation on these particular spots on the alluvial lowlands. The day-to-day activities of the Iron Age occupants of sites like Fox Plantation and Dunragit would have brought them into contact with the detritus of their spatial and temporal progenitors. It may never be possible to find out how these chance finds were understood by people during the late first millennium BC and early AD and it seems extremely unlikely that they would have understood discrete patches or features in the soil as elements of buildings and structures. However, a body of received wisdom, a social tradition perhaps in the form of narratives about the objects and the beings that created them will have been formed and in currency to account for

what will have been quite regular and routine unearthings. When expounding this view it has been suggested to the author that people in the Iron Age may not have noticed these items at all and that the recent experiences of archaeologists working with farmers should remind us that indeed modern farmers can be blind to the evidence of the past in their soils. However, the perceptive faculties of modern farmers do not represent an appropriate analogy with those of the Iron Age. The majority of modern farmers practising mechanised, high yield agriculture, distancing contact between the body and the earth, do not have the kind of sustained and intimate contact with the soil that would have been the prevalent experience in prehistory. The author might also point out the many cases where modern farmers have been the first individuals to recognise the presence of the past on their land subsequently alerting archaeologists to it. This is a frequent occurrence in the crofting and small-scale landscapes of Atlantic Scotland, in the Western and Northern Isles where we might wonder if the continued closeness with which people work with the land might be the contributing factor to these levels of what we might call "popular" discovery by non-archaeologists. Perhaps most interesting about this contact with the past is the fact that these rural communities have ways of accounting for the presence of these ancient artefacts and deposits along the lines of their own traditional explanations and which are often at variance with archaeological narratives. The kinds of effects on individuals which unfold from the discovery of the physical presence of their ancestors in their midst in the accounts of Aberdeenshire rural life given in Lewis Grassic Gibbon's trilogy of novels "A Scots Quair" (1946) although fictionalised and dramatic are based upon the genuine strong folk traditions which permeated pre-modern farming social life in that part of the world.

To return to late prehistory and to Fox Plantation I would suggest that it is entirely

likely that "anomalies" like the Beaker pottery from the Iron Age pit at Fox Plantation represent actual evidence of the response of later prehistoric people to the discovery of such items in the course of everyday activities. In this specific case the discovery may have perhaps occurred in the digging out of the ring-slot for the roundhouse wall foundations. The Beaker sherd with it's strange form and decoration will have immediately marked itself out as an unusual object quite at variance with the ceramics of the Iron Age. This may have meant that the object had to be dealt with along specific lines circumscribed by the body of social custom concerning such matters. The upshot of this was that it was included in a foundational deposit (of a kind increasingly found in Iron Age contexts such as Sollas and Cnip, (Armit 1997), (and discussed above), in a pit in the floor of the house perhaps before the building was completed.

We do not know what level of memory or tradition may have been extant as regards the longevity of settlement in the immediate areas of Fox Plantation or Dunragit by the later centuries BC and the apparent short-lived nature of the earlier prehistoric structures at Dunragit envisaged by Thomas may mean that very little if any above ground, upstanding trace of the monumental nature of the site would have been visible to be recognised by the Iron Age population (J Thomas pers comm.). However, the earth moving described above will have brought about a realisation that there was an antiquity to Dunragit as a location whatever concepts of time and the past were prevalent in local social belief in the Iron Age. One thing that we can be fairly certain of is that since we have such evidence for late prehistoric juxtaposition with earlier activity this awareness of past activity under their feet did not occasion uneasiness or reticence among those that lived on these cultural soils in the Iron Age.

The Fox Plantation circular structure and the features associated with it raise many

interesting questions about the nature of late prehistoric archaeology in South West Scotland as we currently understand it. One of the most important aspects of the material from Fox Plantation is that it challenges several of the assumptions present in our current normative interpretations of even the most basic of structural evidence. We are forced to ask what constituted a house in the Iron Age of West Wigtownshire when the classic archetype for a house; the roundhouse turns out, at Fox Plantation, to be rather more uncertain and complicated in its domesticity. The carefree designation of the functional interpretation of this context turns out to be rather more problematic. The palisade screen around the building may have at least limited the kinds of activities we normally associate with domestic contexts. As far as deposits of human remains go- did the construction of monumental buildings require their deposition as foundational rites or are the buildings constructed as part of a funerary/commemorative process or indeed is their something much more complex going on here? Need there be a neat conceptual contrast between domestic and funerary contexts? The places of the living need not be divorced from those of the dead.

There still seems to be a desire on the part of many archaeologists to reach for single rigid functional explanations for material phenomena. That activities and practices at places can vary over time within variable social contexts, lending places different social significances, is seldom considered. The excavation of the floors of buildings often involves the deployment of sample strategies to acquire magnetic susceptibility results or phosphate enrichment patterns in different parts of structures as representing different activity areas. However, these places can have had very different sets of significances over different temporal scales for those resident there. Locations can have everyday meanings as well as other roles of a more exceptional kind at other

times that hold more intense meanings and associations for those who actively participate in practices there. Fox Plantation challenges the value of a system of functional categorisation which deploys *ritual* as an exclusive term capable of isolation from other categories of meaning; to be disarticulated from supposedly rational concepts such as *domestic* or *defensive* in our archaeological interpretations. What I would wish to reiterate is the idea (put forward in chapter 1) that these divisions are wholly anachronistic when applied to a study of later prehistoric houses and "settlement" compounds.

Religion and ritual in the Iron Age seems very strongly to have orbited about the constellation of working routines of farming life. The annual, seasonal and daily cycles of farming life were the focus for those rituals and the house and often enclosures appear to have formed the hub of this farming faith (Barrett 1989, 1994). The house, then, may have been imbued with special ritual power and the meaning of the roundhouse in the Iron Age was probably inextricable from agriculturally related social and ritual action. It may be no surprise, therefore, that places in the landscape deemed to be of special significance by communities might be marked out in monumental expression through the construction of large houses and enclosure boundaries.

In conclusion, this section on the deposits at Fox Plantation illustrates how attention to the smaller scales of analysis of pits, posts, ditches and buildings can bring out some interesting aspects of depositional practices. The theoretical ideas espoused in chapter 1 concerning subjecting monuments and landscapes to the smaller scales of analysis in order to get at concomitantly small scaled social relations and practices are worked through in the exploration of the deposits at Fox Plantation. The specific

configuration of these deposits undermines the normative definitions of Iron Age settlement that have been argued to be ingrained in studies of typology and morphology. At Fox Plantation we witness that the boundaries between "domestic" and funerary or ritual and practical function are blurred. It seems that these sharp Westernist categories of meaning are inappropriate to the practices attested at Fox Plantation where the realm of the living seems to stand juxtaposed with that of the dead. Additionally, the tight periodisation of "phases" of sites tends to drop away when we witness the unusual deposition of late neolithic pottery in the pits at Fox Plantation. The deposition of items of material culture which were already very old by c.200BC may demonstrate an interest in the past on the part of the Iron Age inhabitants which hints at traditions of landscape histories and the identities which would have been reproduced and transformed in such oral traditions. The curation and deposition of such items will have been part of an active assertion of identities by those involved. There will have been an interplay between the received social wisdom for dealing with such objects and the agency of persons establishing their role in the community.

The Several Hill complex, aerial archaeology and the interpretation of landscapes

The arrangements at Fox plantation must give us pause for thought when ascribing functional typologies to common features identified in the process of interpretation from aerial archaeology. The circular building excavated there seems to involve a far more complicated set of social practices, as seen in the architectural organisation and in structured deposits, than is usually allowed for in the normative interpretation of domestic which is usually applied to roundhouses. How then can we establish the

particular meanings and practices in relict materials from individual monuments and locations in landscapes if we acknowledge the gross generalisations inherent in typological analogy? All archaeologists recognise that the complete excavation of all of the "sites" that we know of now is unrealistic in the extreme and total numbers of known sites grow year by year. Even if we were to achieve this miracle of total excavation coverage it would take so long that we would probably be embarked upon radically different theoretical and methodological trajectories by the end of the enterprise. There is a requirement, then, to attempt to make sense of the unexcavated sites along slightly different lines from those that we privilege through excavation.

One of the premises of this thesis has been that the material we excavate should be interpreted as three-dimensional material culture. That evidence of buildings, ditches, pits, and other contexts is at its most enlightening when interpreted as the outcomes and scenarios of active, mobile human agents operating within socially contingent discourses. With excavated material culture we can have some successes in frame-working our findings within this archaeology of the dimensions of embodied dwelling. This is not to imply that excavation solves all interpretative ills. In fact it raises as many questions as it answers and leads us down new lines of enquiry. At their worst excavations are two dimensional in their interpretations. Ditches can be reduced to drawn sections and plans within flat interpretive narratives which tell us very little about the lives of the human beings that constructed, maintained and transformed monuments.

However, at its best excavation may bring us into contact with the everyday lives of people in the past and with some of the qualities and scales of their physical existences. Aerial archaeology is probably the biggest source of the identification of new sites and monuments. It has been responsible for an exponential growth in the

places that we know were of interest to people in prehistory and other times. The density and complexity of large-scale patterns and distributions of human activity on landscapes which is revealed in aerial archaeology can be quite stunning and a host of methodological and analytical research has been facilitated by this aspect of the aerial visibility of "the big picture" (Figure 3.8). However, we may wonder if this engages well with the theoretical concerns of contemporary archaeologies of practice-based or embodied archaeologies that seek to come to terms with the more intimate scales of human practices. Are aerial archaeology and embodied archaeologies incompatible, irreconcilable and necessarily destined to be pursued by different individuals with different agenda? I would argue that we need to be concerned by this situation that far from the view that these disparate approaches are simply different but complementary, they involve quite radically different interpretive discourses which do not sit comfortably together.

To attend to some of these theoretical and methodological problems we may look at a particular set of aerial photographs from the Stranraer lowlands and assess their potential for archaeological interpretations. One of the complexes of archaeological features which was recognised on the Stranraer Lowlands from aerial photographs in 1992 is Several Hill (NX15 NW59). These images demonstrate perhaps the densest concentration of archaeological features from the Stranraer Lowlands area and detail a complex interconnecting and inter-cutting palimpsest of features (Plates 3.14, 3.15, 3.16, 3.17). The visible archaeology recognised by the RCAHMS includes several enclosures (palisaded, rectilinear, sub-circular), linear cropmarks, a circular sunken feature, ring-ditches and a large number of pit features (RCAHMS canmore notes).

As with all aerial photographs there are difficulties in assessing the temporal

relationships of these various juxtaposed elements. It is difficult to interpret all of the

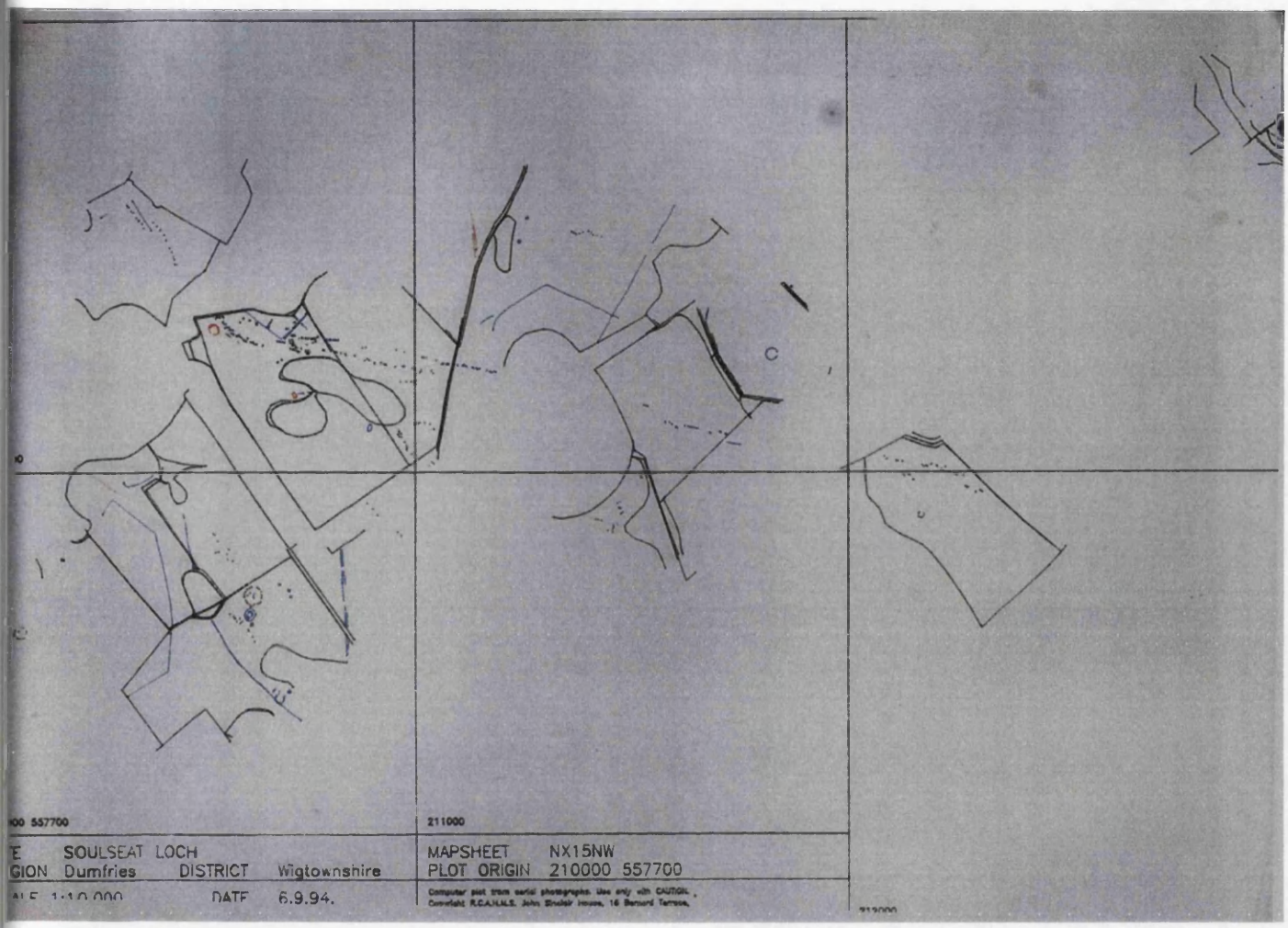


Figure 3.8 RCAHMS transcription of a part of the Stanraer Lowlands (RCAHMS 1992).

Plate 3.14 Aerial photograph of Several Hill. The small ring-ditch just inside the entrance of the sub-circular palisaded enclosure (enclosure 2 in the text) is particularly clear.

Plate 3.15 Another aerial photograph of Several Hill. This view shows the double linear features well (D in the text).

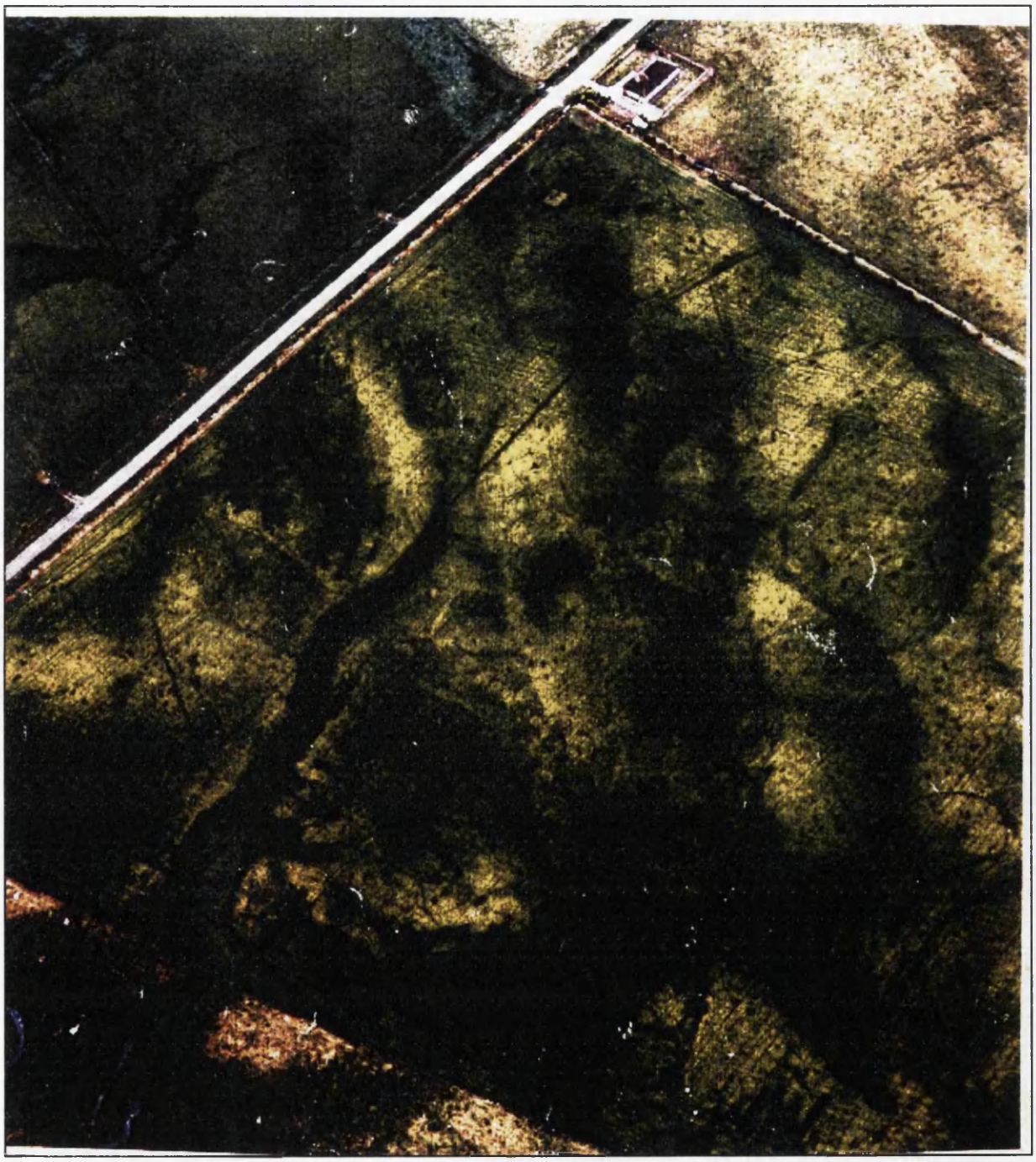


Plate 3.16 Colour aerial photograph of Several Hill which shows the possible fields or paddocks (C) clearly in the light area to the upper centre of the image. The possible souterrain and substantial circular structure (both under A) also show up well.

Plate 3.17 A second aerial colour image of Several Hill (all aerial photographs-RCAHMS)

specific crop-marks represented on the Several Hill photographs still less to place them in a coherent and meaningful relationship to each other. In addition, some areas are obscured by differential underlying geology and by possible glacial melt-water channels and it is difficult to separate what may be archaeological pits or posts from what may be tree holes, although scanning for the classic D-shaped configuration of throw-holes can assist here.

Not-withstanding these difficulties in interpretation the quality of the archaeological detail on these photographs must be recognised and addressed. The author has undertaken a transcription of the archaeology from this series of images (Figure 3.9) and this may be compared with the more minimalist transcription of the RCAHMS (Figure 3.10). While it must be noted that the role of the Royal Commission in accurately and judiciously recording archaeology from images necessarily leads to some caution in transcription it is also possible that the shear volume of material analysed by them means that they have neither the time, personnel or other resources to devote to a sustained assessment of every individual image they process. Close inspection of the aerial photographs reveals a far greater number of features than is represented on the RCAHMS transcription, both in terms of the omission of details of parts in some of the features and in the presence of elements which are entirely left out of the RCAHMS version. For example, the RCAHMS version does not pick up on the presence of a quite clear ring-ditch that sits just inside the entrance of the sub-circular enclosure with the in-swinging or hooked entrance. Neither does it feature

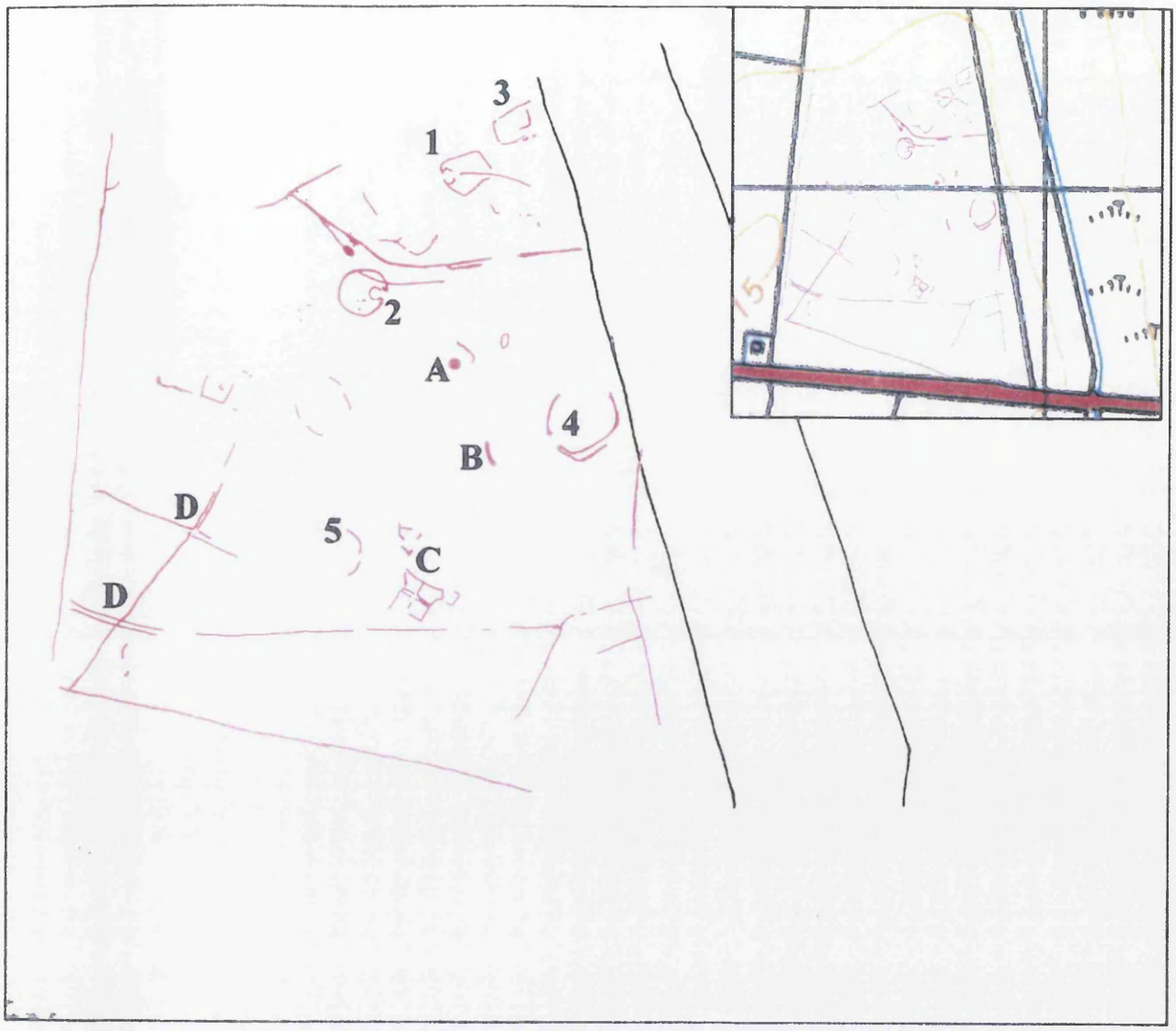


Figure 3.9 Transcription by the author of the archaeology on aerial photographs of Several Hill on to O.S. base map. The larger image details some of the major features on the photographs.
Nos 1-5 are various enclosures. **A**= Large circular feature- possible substantial roundhouse, with possible associated souterrain nearby, **B**= Another possible souterrain, **C**= Possible fields or paddocks, **D**= Double linear features- Possible elements of ditched tracks or droves.

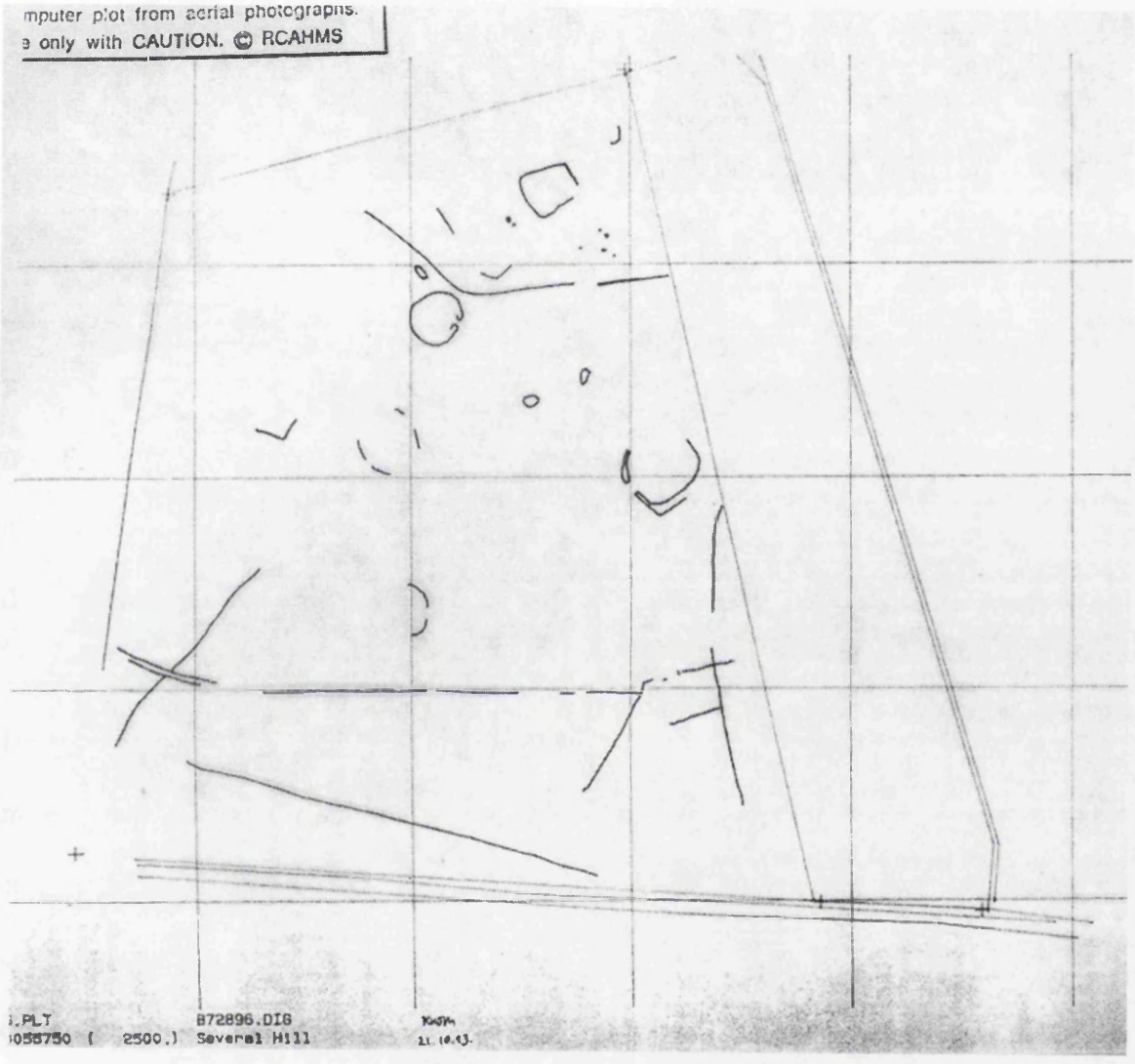


Figure 3.10 Transcription of the archaeology on aerial photographs at several Hill created by the RCAHMS.

anything like the number of pits or post-hole features present on the photographs.

There are also several more linear features on the images including one which clearly cuts through, or is cut by, the sub-circular enclosure and which runs parallel with the very clear curving linear feature immediately to the North. Another feature is the thick, short curved line to the south of the very dark circular feature which has the very characteristic look of a souterrain.

An applied study of the Several Hill photographs, then, can reward us with very much more archaeological detail than a cursory examination would reveal and there is even more in these images than has been mentioned above. This more sustained examination of the images allows for a greater appreciation of the complexity and density of archaeology on aerial images of the Stranraer Lowlands.

If we attempt to recognise and define the Several Hill features along the usual lines of matching them with typologically cognate monuments we are employing one of the strongest and most pervasive archaeological tools- the use of analogy. We can compare these elements both with previously aerially recognised monuments and with excavated examples in an attempt to understand the character and common elements visible amongst these disparate slashes, dots and lines. The elements thus defined would include both sub-circular and rectilinear enclosures, linear features, double linear features, a possible souterrain, a possible substantial roundhouse, possible fields or paddocks and a huge number of pits or large post settings.

The first thing which is notable concerning the transcription is the number of enclosures present. There are between four and six possible enclosures represented on the photographs ranging in form and in definition. The clearest is enclosure 2 (*my*

numbering- as on fig.3.9) a sub-circular enclosure consisting of a single narrow ditch or palisade with a distinctive in-swinging, hooked entrance oriented East South East around 25 metres in diameter and containing a possible ring-ditch type roundhouse just within the entrance. The clarity of this enclosure can be contrasted with the extremely ephemeral enclosure 5 (*my numbering again*) as noted by the RCAHMS and which is barely perceptible as two stretches of curvilinear ditches representing the eastern quarters of a sub-circular enclosure. Along with this multiplicity of enclosures several linear features are present. The crispest of these is that which takes a long curve to almost form an L-shape the corner of which runs between enclosures 1 and 2. However there are other linear features and some which appear as double linear cropmarks.

A traditional account, of the kind which has developed since the 1970's (critiqued in Chadwick 1999), of the archaeology we see on these images would no doubt seek to see these features as elements in a working prehistoric farming landscape (Pryor 1996 and 1998) and would posit an essentially economic/subsistence logic behind their function. If we indulge this characterisation for the moment we might apply it to the Several Hill images and formulate quite an effective narrative of the parts played by the individual elements of Several Hill in the working life of the Iron Age community who lived there. The enclosures, whose chronology and relative development whether contemporary, sequential or more complex is unknown to us, would represent the agricultural and domestic focus of the settlement. The linear features are possible broad ditched field boundaries and short gaps in some of them might be interpreted as "race-gates" to assist in the control of animals, perhaps moving them from in-field to out-field locations. The double linear features might represent

ditched tracks or droves through the settled area and which help segregate movements of livestock from the growing crops ensuring no damage within the arable fields. These are possibly represented by the small square and rectangular features visible towards the south of the photographs. An agricultural surplus might be represented in some possible storage features such as the many pits or the possible souterrain.

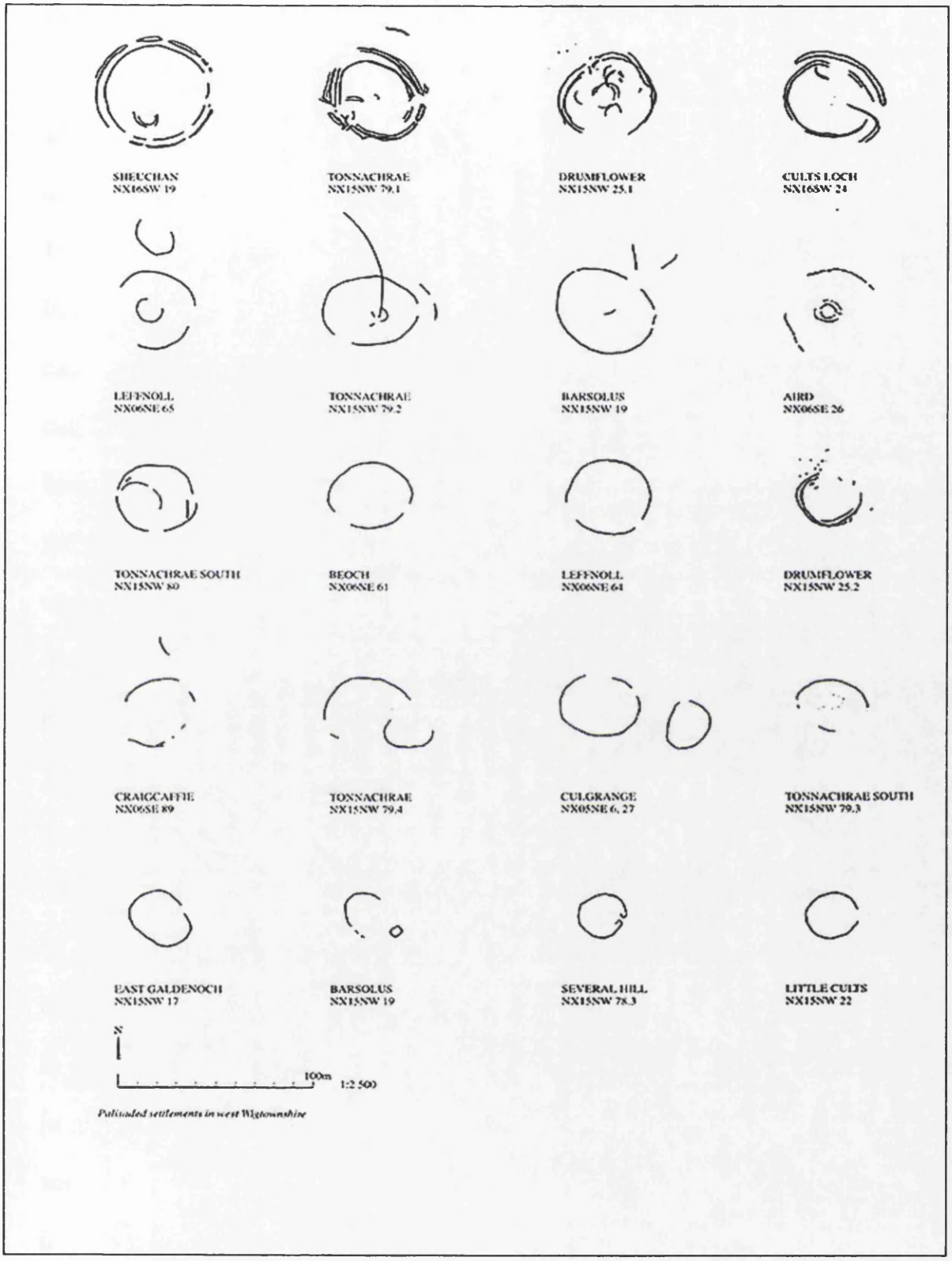
To some extent the outcome of this method of analysis is very attractive it provides a view of the prehistoric landscape as operating as a rational working whole. It makes of cropmark complexes completed places, common sense landscapes. A landscape which works as a total holistic entity appears to obviate the worst excesses of the tendency in typological studies for features such as enclosures to become isolated from their immediate material landscapes. Often the fetishism of typologies mean that such features become single units of analysis capable of morphological comparison with other similarly divorced and decontextualised units from across a wide geographical scale (Figure 3.11). So we have the situation where quantitative analyses based on these categories purport to tell us something significant about these site types and Iron Age lives when in all likelihood they would never be recognised as isolatable units by the people who constructed them. These locations had already been the locations of monumental constructions prior to the addition of the enclosure elements which under the quantitative approach become prioritised as the primary character of the site. Instead, we should see the addition of a ditched enclosure to these locales as a contribution to the material and social complexity of monumental locations that already have a history and value attachments for communities present there.

However, such a "pragmatic" working landscape approach also contributes to the on-

going bogus dichotomy of function versus social significance or ritual in archaeological studies. From a modern Western capitalist perspective the field systems represent economic intensification and a rationalisation of the landscape. These ordered landscapes are essentially familiar to us in the present, and features such as the linear ditches are merely passive functional agricultural features. Approaches that portray aspects of the Iron Age and Romano-British periods as 'familiar' or unproblematic have been critically re-examined (Barrett and Foster 1991; Hill 1989, 1992).

Recent work has suggested that during the later prehistoric period there was sometimes marked ordering of the layout and use of household and settlement space (Fitzpatrick 1994, Parker Pearson, Sharples and Mulville1996) and the deposition of artefacts and refuse (Hill 1989). Ditches and boundaries may have held significance above and beyond functional concerns (Bowden and McOmish 1987, Hingley 1990a), and remains of the dead were dispersed across settlements or incorporated into storage pits and boundary ditches as we saw from the Fox Plantation evidence. All of this evidence may reveal aspects of a wider belief system which stressed fertility, the seasons and cycles of birth, death and renewal (Barrett 1989, Parker Pearson 1996).

Too often ditches are regarded as essentially passive, static features. They are functional dividers of space, elements in animal control, or drainage. Ditches are almost always excavated in a limited slit trench fashion; illustrated as plans or in section. This two-dimensional view-point has produced two-dimensional



Palisaded settlements in west Wigtownshire

Figure 3.11 "Palisaded settlements" as portrayed in the RCAHMS catalogue of aerial photographs 1992. The graphic groups together enclosures from the West Wigtownshire area in a sequence of visible complexity and scale. However, depictions like these tend to divorce monuments from the local landscape and render them as isolateable and quantifiable units.

archaeologies. If we are serious about constructing histories of the communities responsible for these landscape features then we need to introduce living human actors into these abstract cartesian spaces to bring about the kinds of "archaeologies of inhabitation" envisaged by, for example, Barrett (1989, 1994) Thomas (1991, 1996).

In order to affect this dwelt-in perspective the focus has to be on human action. In the case of ditch features the interest lies in evidence for the complex sequences of cutting, deliberate deposition, re-cutting and alteration. Many ditches may never have been intended to look like the pristine, cleared out, cut ditches that we are frequently presented with in reconstructions and in maintained heritage sites such as at the enclosure ditches of Gurness Broch, Orkney. These deposits are not the accidental or incidental accretion of detritus within ditches over time but their planned deposition may be the entire raison d'etre behind the digging of these ditches in the first place. Not as convenient rubbish tips but as ritualised, socially powerful boundaries given additional social potency by the deliberate selection of certain kinds of deposits and artefacts for deposition in specific places which were commonly deemed appropriate by common agreement and shared community tradition. This does not return us to the old dichotomy of ritual versus function since ditches may simultaneously be ritualised in character and perform a physical division of space and represent locales of activity in their own right. Most importantly though, the conceptual boundaries between these various dimensions of meaning are fluid, dynamic, plastic; not set in stone or ossified in a rigid set of stark oppositions. Instead, the meanings, functions, significances of places are open ended and malleable to the active interpretations of communities and individuals through their practices at these meaningfully constituted places and spaces.

This focus of discussion on the cosmological, social ordering of space is very different from the common sense familiarity of the working landscapes of Pryor (1998, 89) and others which we tested against the Several Hill aerial photographs.

> "...we confront a past in which there appears to be familiar objects..... farms and fields, and a lack of the overtly ritual which we encounter in earlier periods. But these are features *in becoming*. They may appear familiar to you, but Iron Age people lived in their own worlds of meaning, whose similarity is deceptive. This is to suggest that we have to envisage situations where such features can be organised into a very different world." (Hill 1989: 22,).

This supports the contention that, in fact, the holistic, inclusive, totalising aspects of the working pragmatism model may be deceptive. In fact this type of analysis remains dependant upon the categories from typological/morphological analyses. In analysing Several Hill in this manner we are creating a set of archetypes which can be held up for dissected scrutiny in assessing their greater or lesser fit with a background of existing sets of archetypes. The individuality, coherence, internal consistency and richness of Several Hill as a place is being eroded by recourse to universalising comparatives. This is a search for overall significance in a normative archaeological record across large spatial areas. The implication is that similar modes of thought and practices must have motivated the creation of these similar material manifestations. But the argument is a circular one in which we look for pattern and then having found that pattern along our own aesthetic and logic values hold it up as evidence of the authentic pattern of a past time.

Several Hill demonstrates the inappropriateness of analysing enclosure monuments as discrete objects in quantitative studies divorcing them from their surrounding wider material landscapes. The large number of enclosures at Several Hill in close proximity to each other and apparently linked with a large variety of different types of

complicated features tends to undermine such a decontextualised mode of approach. A mature understanding of the circumstances within which such enclosed spaces were constructed and inhabited and how these places might precipitate social production and transformation has to be approached from a contextual mode of thought. We must attempt to contextualise the construction and subsequent life histories of these enclosure monuments within the detailed, complicated vagaries of site deposition over landscapes if we are to catch even the faintest whiff of the social lives of Iron Age communities in West Wigtownshire or beyond. Here we can see the major benefit of aerial information in establishing the existence of material effects of human agency on larger scales. On the Stranraer Lowlands there are some extensive linear crop marks which may indicate large-scale land management schemes. While not all of these elements need have been contemporary the general impression is of a relatively densely populated area with intensive land division perhaps demarcating fields and the various foci of buildings and enclosure monuments.

In particular, the crop marks in the region of Soulseat Loch are noteworthy. Some of these are as much as 500 metres in length and one alignment of stretches of ditch apparently extends east of the loch, approximately, some 1750 metres (Plate 3.18). The pattern of crop marks in the vicinity of the loch is such that long stretches of linear features extend from its southern shore in easterly and southerly directions, respectively. There appears to be a concern on the part of the creators of these features to delineate approaches to the southern shore of the loch, perhaps prescribing permitted directions of access to the loch. The majority of the enclosures and round houses lie due South and South East of Soulseat Loch and the large linear works would have been visible to people at these places, sloping gently up hill from the direction of the buildings. It may be that the loch is symbolically or legitimately

Plate 3.18 Part of the extensive linear crop marks in the region of Soulseat Loch. (RCAHMS aerial Photograph)

demarcated by the linear works and that this demarcation demonstrated the relationship between the settlements and the loch. Access to its resources and/or its symbolic and ritual importance, then, may have made the physical, demarcation of the landscape an appropriate way of expressing these rights of access and use.

This act of display is in keeping with what seems to have been a general concern to express relations of power, authority and rights of access and control over places and landscapes through recourse to the physical and visual aspects of architecture and monumentality. The construction of such large earthworks as the Soulseat loch linear features and indeed the enclosure monuments will have required fairly large numbers of people and must have included elements who lived further off from the ditch monuments. The involvement of people in large scale building schemes, other than those who were to live in them or near them, means that travel would have taken place.

Movement of people around the landscape in the day-to-day activities of their lives is highly important if we view perceptions of the world as formed and framed by the routines of moving around that world. It is likely that this travel to, and the arrival at, construction sites will have presented opportunities for those initiating building programmes, whether they were organised by elites or more egalitarian communities, to impress and reiterate the system of obligations to authority structures and maintain and reaffirm the dominant discourse of ideology, identities and their organising principles of society. In effect, this social practice will have served to maintain social relations, kin-groups and the bonds of dependency and clientage. It will also have served to reproduce the socially construed landscape.

We would know little or nothing of these arrangements where it not for aerial information. But to move beyond their simple identification we must attempt to

analyse their significance as locations of past human action in far more detail than the interpretation just given by this author. To accomplish that would involve more sustained pro-active fieldwork with the specific research aims of investigating the character and sequences of construction, maintenance, alterations and transformations, in short the social complexity, of these large landscape features.

Primary to such an endeavour, however, is that fieldwork should be in continual, on-going and intimate contact with changing theoretical interpretations concerning the material. In short there has to be a reflexive sensitivity to the dialogue between the two categories in archaeology which are so difficult to adequately define and yet continue to resist satisfactory fusion- theory and practice. We might look to the kinds of reflexive methodologies espoused by Hodder (1997), or Chadwick (1997b.) as a starting point. There is also a requirement to ground both theory and fieldwork in local contexts making more sympathetic archaeologies of human scaled prehistoric landscapes. This can bring about genuine change in the theoretical concerns themselves. We will continually find new avenues of research in explorations of the vagaries of localised, specific contexts for material culture. "Interpretative devolution", (Bevan 1999), will bring about a realisation of the incredible diversity in British Iron Age regional material culture assemblages. That diversity should be seen as an extremely positive advantage. Since it can be treated as a comparative resource as rich as, and possibly more appropriate than, the rich ethnographic corpus which has been so cherry-picked in late Prehistoric interpretations; from Fox's interest in the Maori hillforts (1976) to the use by Giles and Parker Pearson of the seasonal cycles of agriculture and festivals of the early modern Gaelic Scottish rural Highland communities (1999). Exploration of the rich, specific contingencies of localised archaeological landscapes may allow us to construct narratives that are responsive to

the material and social conditions of past practices however dimly and indirectly the process of archaeology is able to engage with these.

Conclusions and Prospects

This thesis has attempted to privilege explicit interpretation as a conscious and integral process from the outset and through the body of the text. Therefore each section has aimed at building upon a broad theoretical stance that would see the social aspects of human life as extremely important in assessing archaeological material. The implications of all of these discussions are given coverage in their respective sections above. This concluding statement will therefore focus on articulating some implications of these aspects and pull out some of the links between the theoretical approaches expounded and the material examined in practice.

In chapter 1 an examination of the approaches taken to studies of the Iron Age in the twentieth century and the first years of the 21st century charted the development of interpretations which rely on much of the theory of post-processual archaeologies in insisting on the meaningful constitution of material culture. Iron Age material culture, whether composed of monuments, landscapes or portable items requires to be contextualised. This was supported by the critique of Romanist discourse which has

been seen to have associated certain reductive values with Iron Age or "native" representations that are seen to stand in the way of the study of locally contingent late prehistoric communities. Also in chapter 1 we saw how contemporary theory, concerning the landscape, social space and places, critiques simplistic notions of the landscape as a mere back-cloth to archaeological sites. Rather than an inert background it is to be seen as an intensely encultured region of numerous meanings and values attached by knowledgeable agents. Those agents continually produce and reproduce their social conditions through practices and relations which contribute to the material landscapes that archaeologists investigate. In the small-scale societies of British later prehistory these relations will have largely taken place at close quarters and this motivates us to ask what is an appropriate scale of analysis in specific archaeological studies.

A critique of our current typologies for later prehistoric monuments found the current process of classification unsatisfactory, as these sets of archetypes tend to result in normative interpretations again blurring the individual characteristics of monumental places. Additionally, simplistic notions behind uncritical use of terms such as "settlement", "domestic", and "landscape" itself have been held up to some scrutiny. These terms are often used loosely and if not explicitly defined from the outset they can serve to obscure the significance of specific local monuments, objects and contexts when applied uncritically in the field. Additionally, the issue of the restriction of periodization has been discussed using the example of deposits at the site of Fox Plantation. From that discussion it can be suggested that contextual analysis of material culture from excavations which traverses the normally bounded concepts of our chronologically fixed assemblages can give insight into the

deployment of objects in discourses of identity; especially those concerning the articulation of a sense of the past in the past.

We have explored both aerial archaeology and excavated material from West Wigtownshire. It is hoped that scrutiny of such a small case study region allows for a more intimate and finer grained analysis of the relationship of monuments to landscapes. We have seen how attention to these relations grounded in specific material locations may undermine normative accounts of the roles of monuments. The hillfort of Cairn Pat seen in relation to other monuments nearby and further afield and in relation to local physical conditions of the topographical landscape tends to negate the frequently held functional attribution of the hill fort as a rational, economic central place or indeed as the apex of a settlement hierarchy. Instead of trying to pin down a single function for the monument attention to the local context can perhaps begin to hint at some of its significant features of relations with other parts of the landscape and other monumental places. For example its physicality and the possibly symbolic power which it might convey for communities in different parts of west Wigtownshire, perhaps contrasting it's cosmological role amongst communities in the lowlands to the east in contrast to those of the uplands in which it sits.

This work has also dealt with aspects of aerial archaeology and offered a contrastive account of its practices with that of excavated material in a critical fashion. One of the upshots of this has been the recognition of the fundamentally different discourses in which these two archaeological practices have often been conducted. These two quite different sets of rhetoric affect a basic difference in the interpretative frameworks which they offer to account for the past. As archaeologists, we should be interested in what embodied approaches or "archaeologies of dwelling" can reveal about the reflexive relationships between human beings, material places and social

practices within quite intimate, modestly scaled socially and historically contingent discourses. But we also want to make effective study of the wider landscapes which people also moved, met in, worked, built and interpreted. To reconcile these two aims, then, we have to wrestle with the methodological gulf that exists between practice based theories of inhabitation of an approximately phenomenological character (though there are several "phenomenologies") and the largely cartesian morphologically based interpretive schema of aerial archaeology. We have to engage aerial archaeology in the kinds of questions concerning the complexity of landscapes, the changes that occurred within them, and the implications this had for the routine daily practices of the inhabitants. And it was also these routine daily practices by inhabitants as well as the less usual practices, which precipitated landscape change itself and the accretions of landscape histories.

Although we may be at pains to point out that further knowledge of the Iron Age of Southwest Scotland rests on far more than a simple programme of field excavation, we nevertheless must recognise the dearth of structured research here, a deficiency also recognised in the recent UK Iron Age research agenda document (Haselgrove, Armit et al.) where Galloway achieves the status of a research "blackhole". If understanding of the Iron Age in South West Scotland is to proceed it must be drawn into coherent frameworks which marry social theory, rigorous and strategic fieldwork and the wider dissemination of the excellent resource of its archaeology. Only then may we feel confident in an on-going, sustainable project of study in the region and it's ensured place at the wider discussions and debates of archaeology and prehistory. This thesis is offered as a small contribution to that discourse and to the survival and resurgence of archaeological interest in Southwest Scotland.

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Appendix1
Enclosure Monuments: West Wigtownshire

#	co-ordinates	nmrs#	name	form	RCAHMS Category
1	NX044 563	NX05NW1	Cairn Pat / Cairn Piot	Substantial Hill Top Enclosure-	Hillfort
2	NX 067 446	NX04SE1	Doon castle, Ardwell Point	Coastal promontory enclosure	Promontory fort
3	NX141 306	NX13SW17	Mull of Galloway 1	Coastal promontory Linear earthwork	Promontory fort
4	NX 141 305	As above	Mull of Galloway 2	Coastal promontory Linear earthwork	Promontory fort
5	Complex		Several Hill complex	Complex	
6	NX098 486	NX04NE29	Ardwell Mill	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
7	NW999 694	NW96NE30	Balgown	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
8	NX092 506	NX05SE22	Ballochalee Bridge	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Palisaded enclosure
9	NX089 464	NX04NE8	Barrack Knowe, High Clachanmore	Simple Enclosure	
10	NX143 358	NX13NW25	Cairngarroch	Enclosure Oval Simple	Enclosure
11	NX113 317	NX13SW47	Cardryne	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
12	NX020 632	NX06SW25	Challoch	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
13	NX104 451	NX14SW6	Chapel Rossan	Enclosure Oval Simple	
14	NX084 565	NX05NE6	Culgrange 1	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
15	NX085 565	NX05NE27	Culgrange 2	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
16	NX078 570	NX05NE8	Culgrange 3	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure
17	NX067 447	NX05SE2	Doon Hill, Kildonan 1	Enclosure no trace can now be	
18	NX059 523	NX05SE3	Doon Hill, Kildonan 2	Enclosure Rectilinear	Enclosure
19	NX006 554	NX05NW2	Dunskey	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	
20	NW994 544	NW95SE6	Dunskey Golf Course	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
21	NX089 441	NX04SE4	Drumbreddan, Fort Hill	Substantial Hill Top Enclosure	Hillfort
22	NX 115 383	NX13NW31	Garrochtrie	Enclosure Circular	Settlement
23	NX079 549	NX05 SE21	Garthland	Enclosure Circular Simple	Enclosure
24	NX076 437	NX04SE2	Grennan Point/ Grennan Hill	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
25	NW 960 653	NW96NE8	High Auchneel	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
26	NX 007 635	NX06SW3	Kemp's Graves, Aldouran Glen	Inland Promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
27	NX 068 543	NX05SE11	Kilbreen	Enclosure Circular Simple	Settlement
29	NX 112 407	NX14SW7	Killumpha	Enclosure Unknown	?
30	NX101 477	NX14NW9	Kirkmabreck	Enclosure Circular Simple	Enclosure
31	NX 017 546	NX05SW22	Knockhornan	Enclosure Oval Simple	Enclosure
32	NW 984 580	NW95NE2	Lashendarroch Hill, Knock	Enclosure Oval Simple	Enclosure

#	co-ordinates	nmrs#	name	form	RCAHMS Category
33	NX 065 474	NX047NE27	Little Float	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
34	NX070 571	NX05NE20	Lochans	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
35	NX102 472	NX14NW7	Low Auchleach	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
36	NX091 397	NX03NE2	Muldaddie	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
37	NX138 310	NX13SW15	Mull Glen, West Tarbet	Enclosure Rectilinear	Enclosure
38	NW981 700	NW97SE10	North Cairn	Enclosure Oval	Settlement
39	NW983 585	NW95NE3	Portslogan	Enclosure Oval	Enclosure
40	NW983 590	NW95NE4	Rough Cairn Hill, Portslogan	Enclosure Oval Simple	Enclosure
41	NX019 523	NX05SW12	The Dounan	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
42	NX093 559	NX05NE12	West Galdenoch 1	Enclosure Circular	Settlement
43	NX057 581	NX05NE36	Dunbae	Inland Promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
44	NX129 310	NX13SW12	Carrickcamrie, West Cairngaan	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
45	NX 005 732	NX07SW2	Caspin	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
46	NX087 415	NX04SE19	Clanghie Bay	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
47	NX 085 415	NX04SE20	Clanghie Point/Mull Hill	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
48	NX124 368	NX13NW6.00	Core Hill, Kirkmaiden	Enclosure Sub-circular	Enclosure
49	NW 967 687	NW96NE1	Dounan Nose, Dally	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
50	NX 059 473	NX04NE13	Dove Cave Head/Little Float	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
51	NX 075 425	NX04SE3	Duniehinnie	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
52	NX 097 335	NX03SE2	Dunman	Sub-circular	Enclosure
53	NX 130 310	NX13SW13	Dunorroch, West Cairngaan	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
54	NW 982 727	NW97SE1	Dunskirloch	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
55	NW 963 615	NW96SE2	Fort Point, Salt Pans Bay	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
56	NW 960 650	NW96NE27	Juniper Face	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
57	NW 975 598	NW95NE1	Kemp's Walk	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
58	NX 066 469	NX04NE5	Kenmuir Graves, Island Bouy/ Float	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
59	NX 066 469	NX05SW6	Kirklauchline	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
60	NW959 651	NW96NE26	Mare Rock 1	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
61	NW960 650	NW96NE29	Mare Rock 2	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
62	NW960 664	NW96NE9	Portobello	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
63	NX141 322	NX13SW8	The Dunnan, Portankill	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
64	NX008 646	NX06SW1	Tor of Craigoch	Substantial Hill Top Enclosure-	Hillfort
65	NX129 602	NX16SW22	Balnab 1	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure
66	NX128 603	NX16SW22	Balnab 2	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure

#	co-ordinates	nmrs#	name	form	RCAHMS Category
67	NX105 564	NX15NW19	Barsolus 1	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
68	NX105 564	NX15NW19.01	Barsolus 2	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
69	NX128 602	NX16SW22	Balnab 3	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure
70	NX089 639	NX06SE27	Craigcaffie 1	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Settlement
71	NX082 641	NX06SE90	Dalminnoch 3	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
72	NX026 640	NX06SW24	Mid Dinduff	Inland Promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
73	NX106 569	NX15NW15	Fox Plantation 1	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure
74	NX117 573	NX15NW16	Fox Plantation 2	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
75	NX105 573	NX15NW17	Fox Plantation 3	Simple Enclosure	
76	NX135 562	NX15NW23	Genoch	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Settlement
77	NX 121 584	NX15NW24	Kirminnoch	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
78	NX128 603	NX16SW22	Balnab 4	Simple Enclosure	
79	NX193 573	NX15NE12	Mote Hill, Glenluce	Inland Promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
80	NX118 608	NX16SW19	Sheuchan	Enclosure Sub-circular	Palisaded Enclosure
81	NX097 600	NX06SE26	Aird	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
82	NX079 656	NX6NE65	Leffnoll / Beoch 2	Enclosure Sub-circular Simple	Palisaded enclosure
83	NX 1433 5785	NX15NW25	Drumflower	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
84	NX 104 556	NX15NW17	East Galdenoch (2)	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
85	NX 1217 5792	NX15 NW42	Kirkminnoch	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
86	NX 079 657	NX06NE64	Leffnoll / Beoch 1	Enclosure Sub-circular Simple	Palisaded enclosure
87	NX 1183 5875	NX15NW22	Little Cults / Pennyliggit	Enclosure Circular Simple	Palisaded enclosure
88	NX 118 608	NX16 SW19	Sheuchan (2)palisade	Substantial Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
89	NX179 621	NX16SE6	Cruise Back Fell	??Fort??-	Fort
90	NX119 605	NX16SW18	Cults Loch 1	Inland Promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
91	NX 102 553	NX15NW20	East Galdenoch (4)	Substantial Enclosure	Enclosure
92	NX111 577	NX15NW90	Mark	Enclosure Rectilinear	Enclosure
93	NX123 604	NX16SW24	Cults Loch 2	Enclosure Sub-circular	Palisaded Enclosure
94	NX 091 397	NX03NE2	Muldaddie	Coastal promontory Enclosure	Promontory fort
95	Complex		Tonnachrae Complex	Complex	Enclosures
96	Complex		Drumflower Complex	Complex	Settlement
97	Complex		Piltanton Burn Complex	Complex	Settlement
98	Complex		Soulseat Loch Complex	Complex	Settlement
99	Complex		Barsolus Complex	Complex	Enclosures
100	NX093 559	NX05NE28	West Galdenoch 2	Enclosure Circular	Enclosure

# co-ordinates	nmrs#	name	form	RCAHMS Category
101 Complex		Garthland Mains Complex	Complex	Enclosures
102 Complex		Dunragit Complex	Complex	Enclosures
103 Complex		Kildrochat Mains Complex	Complex	Enclosures
104 Complex		Lochans Complex (may have to get	Complex	Enclosures
105 Complex		Culgrange Complex	Complex	Enclosures
106 NX082 565	NX05NE2	Kildrochet House	Enclosure	Enclosure
107 NX059 579	NX05NE37	Dunbae	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
108 NX085 640	NX06SE28	Dalminnoch 2	Enclosure Oval	Enclosure
109 NX084 656	NX06NE68	Beoch	Simple Enclosure	Settlement
110 NX082 655	NX06NE61	Beoch	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
111 NX 092 688	NX06NE44	High Croach/ Fairy Knowes	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
112 NX 081 532	NX05SE35	Hill Plantation	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
113 NX085 644	NX06SE81	Dalminnoch 1	Simple Enclosure	Settlement
114 NX072 580	NX05NE43	Little Lochans	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
115 NX086 640	NX06SE88	Craigcaffie 2	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure
116 NX053 598	NX05NE35	Ochtrelure	Enclosure Oval Simple	Enclosure
117 NX 058 560	NX05NE29	Kilhilt	Enclosure Circular Simple	Enclosure
118 NX 059 560	NX04SE25	Cauldhame Loch	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
118 NX051 486	NX04NW41	Cairnmon Fell 1	Enclosure sub-circular Simple	Enclosure
119 NX048 488	NX04NE1	Cairmon Fell 2	Simple Enclosure	Settlement
120				
121 NX082 533	NX05SE34	Mains of Caldons	Enclosure	Settlement
122 NX023 639	NX06SW6	Challoch, Leswalt	Enclosure Circular Simple	Enclosure
123 NX121 579	NX15NW42	Kirminnoch 2	Enclosure Oval Simple	Palisaded enclosure
124 NX 105 556	NX15NW18	East Galdenoch (3)	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
125 NX185 584	NX15NE77	Back of the Wall / Glenluce Abbey	Simple Enclosure	
126 NX169 565	NX15NE75	Whitecrook	Enclosure Rectilinear	Enclosure
127 NX17 59	NX15NE6	Airyhemming	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
128 NX081 652	NX06NE71	Beoch	Enclosure Circular Simple	Palisaded enclosure
129 NX142 306	NX13SW9	Lagganusk	recent- Delete	
130 NX 089 636	NX06SE101	Innermessan	Simple Enclosure	Settlement
131 NX092 643	NX06SE100	Craigcaffie 4	Enclosure Circular Simple	Enclosure
132 NX 083 637	NX06SE98	Innermessan	Enclosure- Possible Roman Camp	Enclosure
133 NX109 669	NX16NW62	Beoch Burn	Enclosure Oval Simple	Settlement

#	co-ordinates	nmrs#	name	form	RCAHMS Category
134	NX092 683	NX06SE89	Dalminnoch	Simple Enclosure	
135	NX093 693	NX06SE92	Craigcaffie 3	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
136	NX132 329	NX13SW57	Auchie Glen	Simple Enclosure	
138	NX108 560	NX15NW78.03	Several Hill 6	Simple Enclosure	Palisaded enclosure
139	NX143 578	NX15NW25.2	Drumflower	Enclosure Sub-circular	Palisaded
140	NX108 560	NX15NW78.04	Several Hill 9 Possible	Simple Enclosure	enclosure
141	NX108 560	Not sorted byRCAHMS	Several Hill 7	Simple Enclosure	Setlement
142	NX108 561	NX15NW78.02	Several Hill 8 Possible	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
143	NX108 561	NX15NW78.01	Several Hill 4	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
144	NX108 560	NX15NW78.00	Several Hill 3	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
145	NX112 560	NX15NW59	Several Hill 2	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
146	NX111 562	NX15NW57	Several Hill 1	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
147	NX107 560	NX15NW78.05	Several Hill 9 Possible	Simple Enclosure	Enclosure
148	NX024679	NX06NW41	Cairn Connell 1	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Palisaded enclosure
149	NX025679	NX06NW42	Cairn Connell 2	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Enclosure
150	NX092 643	NX06SE100	Craigcaffie 5	Enclosure Circular Simple	Enclosure
151	NX092 643	NX06SE100	Craigcaffie 6	Enclosure Rectilinear Simple	Settlement

Appendix 2
Substantial Houses: West Wigtownshire

# co-ordinates	*name*	*form*	*traditional category*
A NX067 446	Doon castle	sub-circular	Broch
B NX099 641	Teroy	sub-circular	Broch
C NX089 340	Crammag Head	sub-circular	Dun or Broch
D NW983 571	Killantringan Bay	oval	Dun
E NX049 533	Awhirk	Low rise in drained bog	Crannog
F NW995 632	Bramble Island, Lochnaw Loch	submerged	Crannog
G NX113 611	Black Loch, Castle Kennedy	submerged	Crannog
H NW996 632	Lochnaw 2	low Island	Crannog
I NX112 610	Black Loch 2	low Island	Crannog
J NX145 700	Grey loch	submerged	Crannog
K NX120 604	Cults loch 1	low Island	Crannog
L NX120 606	Cults Loch 2 (3 in Barber and Crone)	submerged	Crannog
M NX150 533	Black Loch, Leswalt	low Island	Crannog
N NX089 636	Innermessan	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse
O NX089 635	Innermessan	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse
P NX089 649	Innermessan	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse
Q NX 024 679	Cairn Connell	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse
R NX 024 679	Cairn Connell	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse
S NX097 600	Aird	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse
T NX 106 569	Fox Plantation	circular	Massive Timber Roundhouse