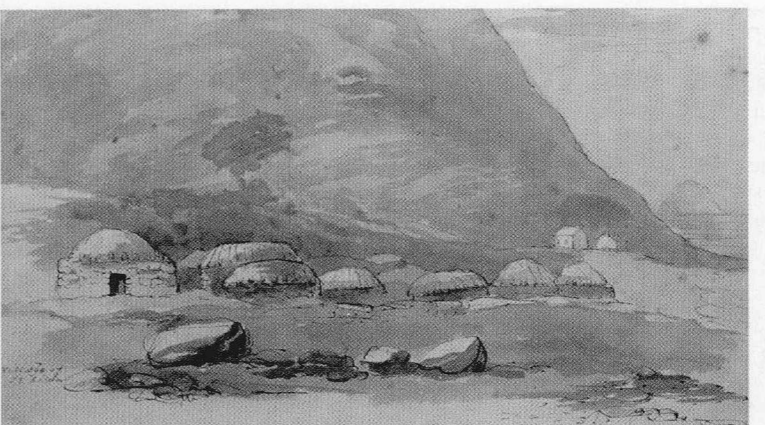


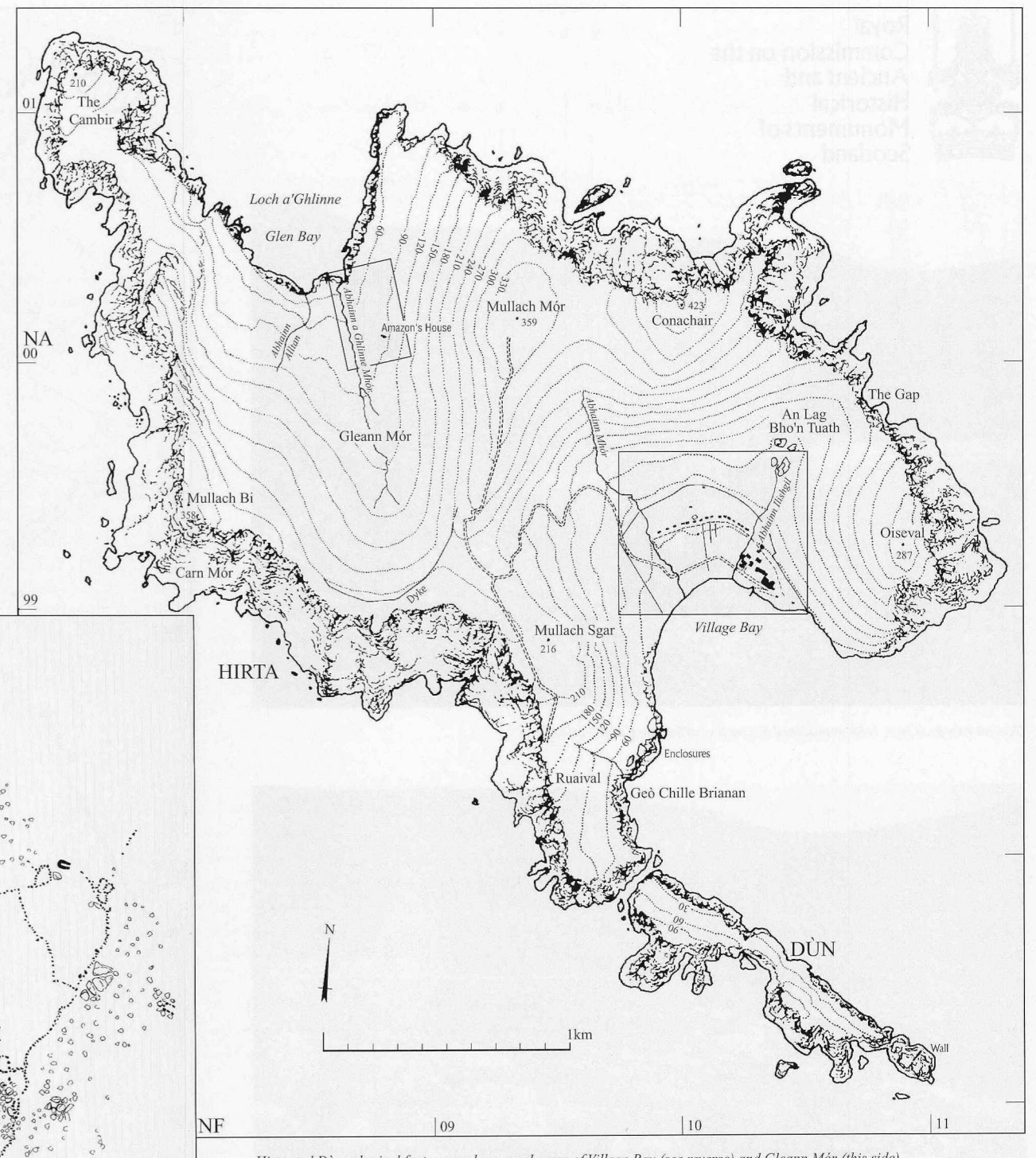
marked on Sharbau's plan. Dunvegan estate. Two of these new houses are under the direction of craftsmen from the sixteen cottages of standard mainland design of 1861 work began on the first of a series of 1830s black houses, and during the summer sweep away the thatched roofs of many of the houses and associated cultivation plots in the village at that date. In October 1860 a storm of hurricane force made a total of twenty-one or twenty-two probably represented three original divisions, ground, now occupied by the army camp, quarantine. The eastern strip of common half of whom died on voyage or in migration in 1856 of thirty-six islanders, Australia, a touching reminder of the because their former occupants had gone to attendant stacks. The historical record of human settlement on St Kilda is largely confined to the last three centuries. Martin Martin's visit in 1697 produced the first full-length account, and among the most significant of the later descriptions are those by the Reverend Kenneth Macaulay, who visited St Kilda in 1758, and by the Reverend J B Mackenzie, Mackenzie, minister on St Kilda from 1829 to 1843. During his incumbency there was a major transformation in the form and pattern of settlement on Hirta. The village began to assume its familiar crescentic layout with a street and associated cultivation plots formed within a head dyke. A further programme of house-building was undertaken in the 1860s. Thereafter, descriptions and pictures chart the decline of the island community which led eventually to the evacuation of the last thirty-six inhabitants in August 1930. From 1957 St Kilda became the site of a permanent military base housing a unit of the Royal Artillery detached from the garrison of the Guided Weapons Range on Benbecula; it also became the scene of regular seasonal activities on the part of The National Trust for Scotland and the Nature Conservancy Council.

From 1957 St Kilda became the site of a permanent military base housing a unit of the Royal Artillery detached from the garrison of the Guided Weapons Range on Benbecula; it also became the scene of regular seasonal activities on the part of The National Trust for Scotland and the Nature Conservancy Council.

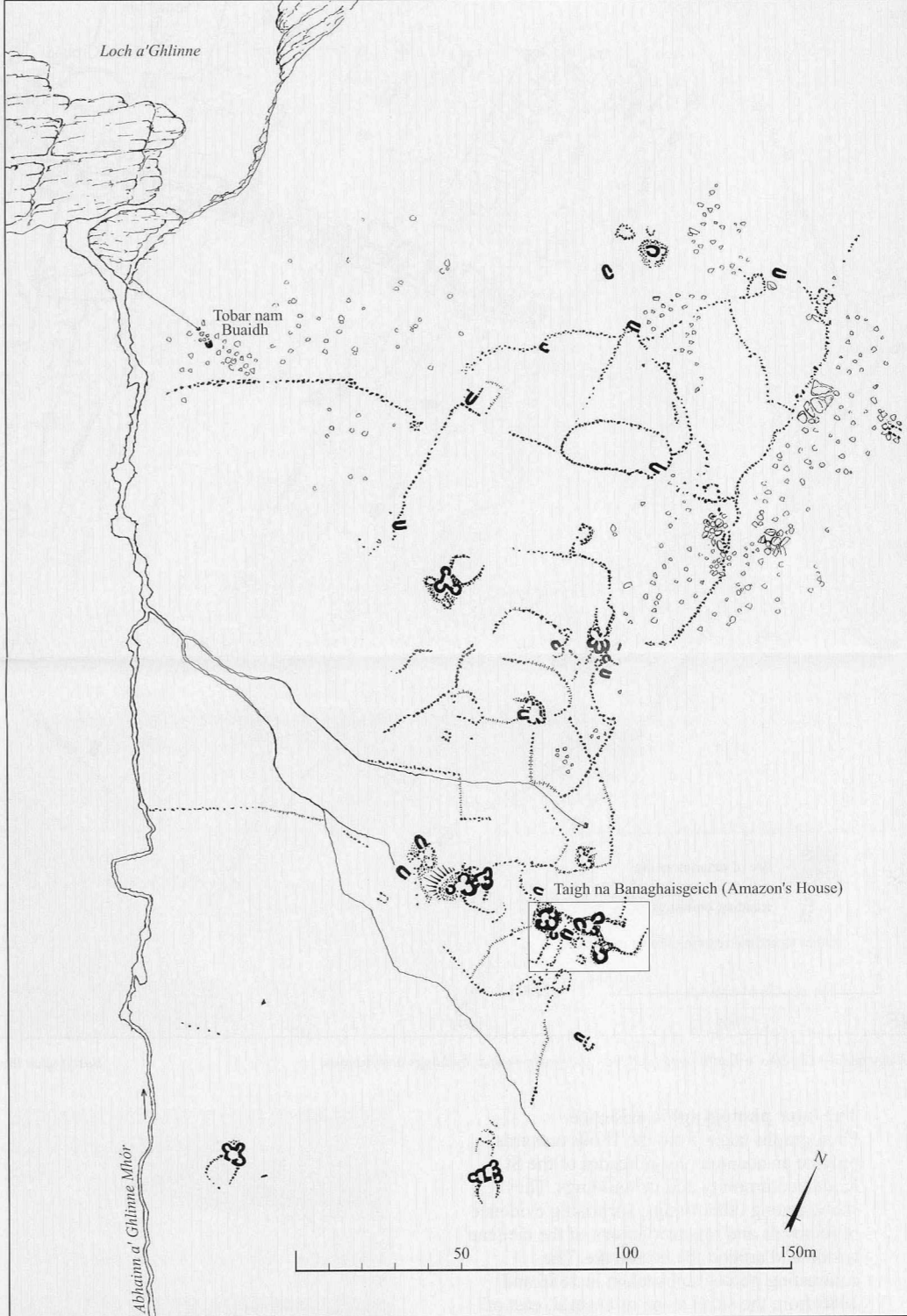


'Sketch of the Village of St Kilda', by George Clayton Atkinson, June 1831 (reproduced by courtesy of Dennis Atkinson).

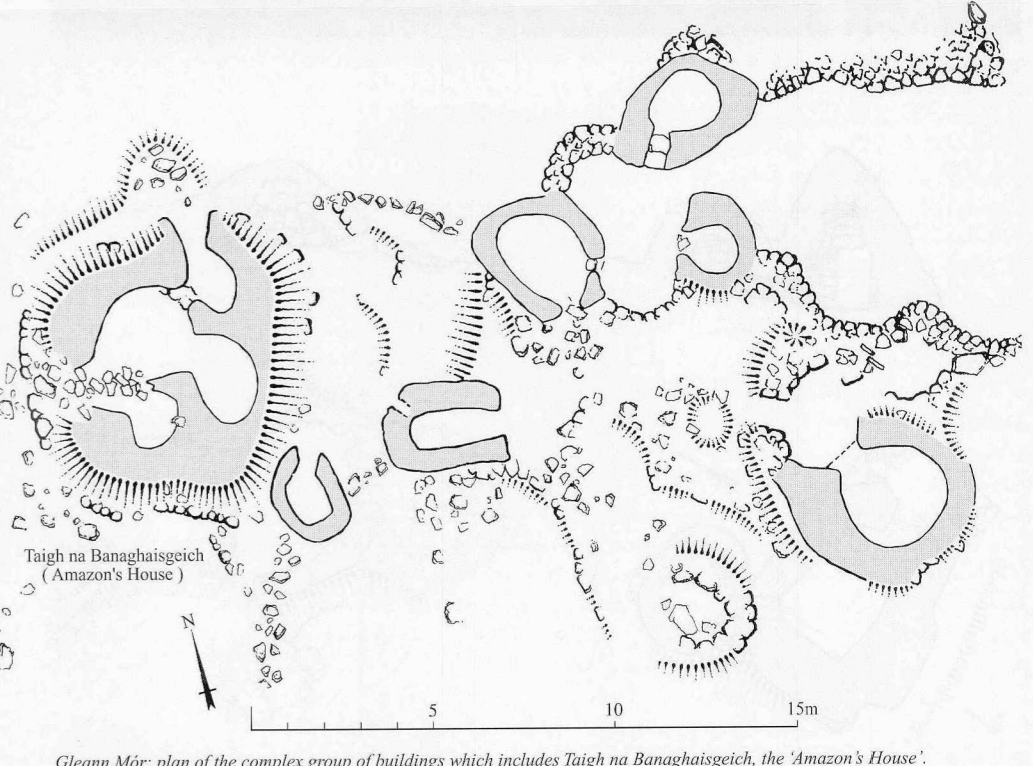
Early houses in the village
The earliest known illustrations of the village are a pair of watercolours prepared in 1812 by Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, a Devon man who in 1834 left £20 with the minister, in order to encourage the people to build better houses'. One of these views shows buildings with straw-thatched roofs which are also depicted on the recently-discovered watercolour of 1831 shown above. This view shows even more clearly the technique of rope-thatching with anchor-stones, and, in the background, the newly-built church and manse.



Hirta and Dùn; physical features and surveyed areas of Village Bay (see reverse) and Gleann Mòr (this side). © Crown copyright. RCAHMS Licence no GD03127G/008/98.

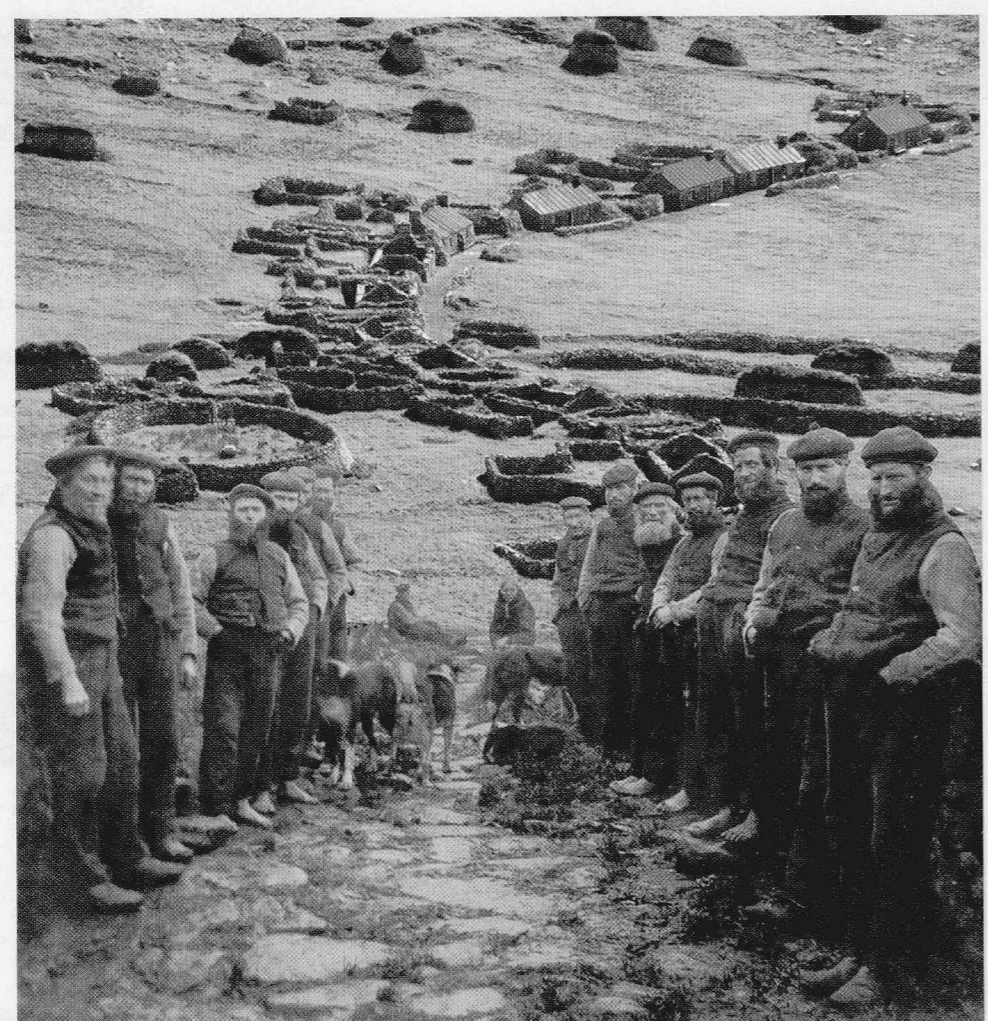


Gleann Mòr; area of settlement and fields east of Abhainn a'Ghlinne Mhòr.



Gleann Mòr; plan of the complex group of buildings which includes Taigh na Banaghaisgeich, the 'Amazon's House'.

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
ST KILDA
Settlement and Structures on Hirta



The National Trust for Scotland
Urras Nàiseanta na h-Alba
HISTORIC SCOTLAND

Crown Copyright: RCAHMS 1998
ISSN 1358-3441

This Broadsheet was produced with financial assistance of The National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland.

© Crown copyright. RCAHMS Licence no GD03127G/008/98.

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS)

John Sinclair House
16 Bernard Terrace
Edinburgh EH8 9NX

RCAHMS is a non-departmental government body financed by Parliament through The Scottish Office. Its main objectives are to record and interpret the sites, monuments and buildings of Scotland's past, to promote a greater appreciation of their value through the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS), and to present them more directly by selective publications and exhibitions. The NMRS, which is open to the public, 9.30-16.30 (16.00 on Fridays), at the address given above, contains an extensive collection of material relating to the archaeology and architecture of Scotland, including a large collection of aerial photographs covering the whole of Scotland.

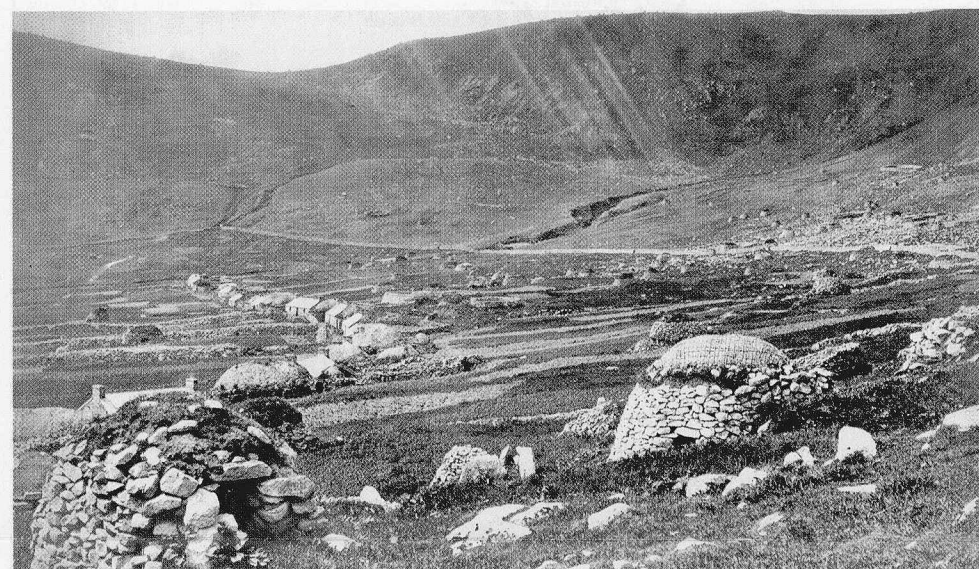
Front cover: Village: street from west. St Kilda 'Parliament', 1886 (reproduced with permission from the George Washington Wilson Collection, Aberdeen University Library).

St Kilda was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland in 1957, and is now cared for in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage. For more information about St Kilda, contact: Argyll, Lochaber and Western Isles Regional Office of The National Trust for Scotland, Lochvoil House, Dunuaran Road, Oban, Argyll PA34 4NE.

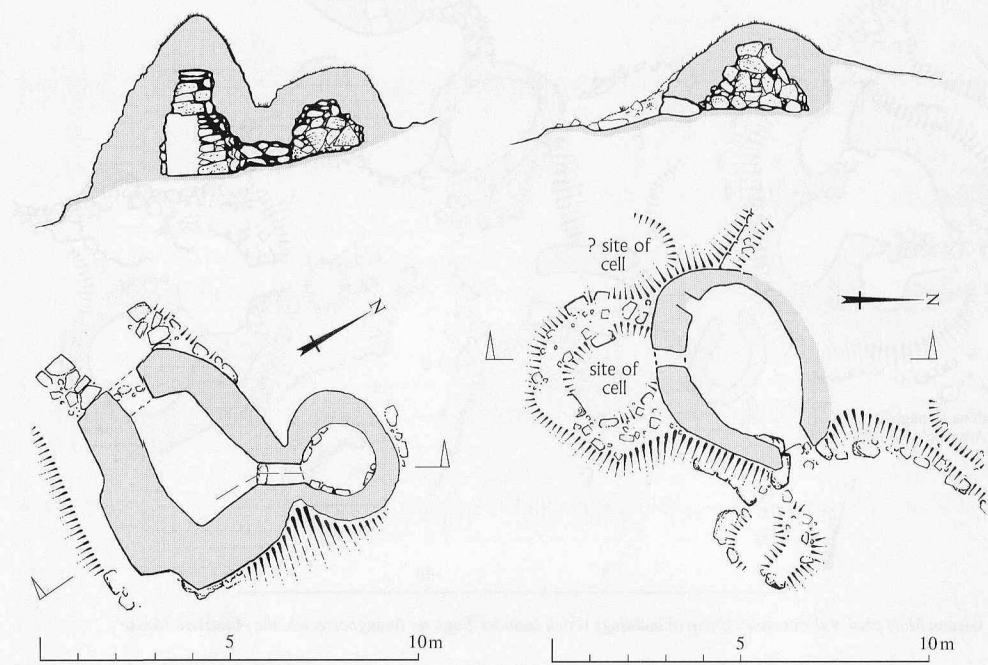
Further information about the sites referred to in this broadsheet can be obtained from the NMRS and from the RCAHMS publication, Geoffrey P Stell and Mary Harman, *Buildings of St Kilda* (HMSO, 1988), copies of which are available from RCAHMS, price £7.00 including postage and packing. A fuller account of the background is provided by Mary Harman, *An Isle Called Hirta, A History and Culture of St Kilda to 1930* (Maclean Press, Skye, 1997), price £35.



General view from east, 1886 (reproduced by courtesy of Stirling Council Libraries).

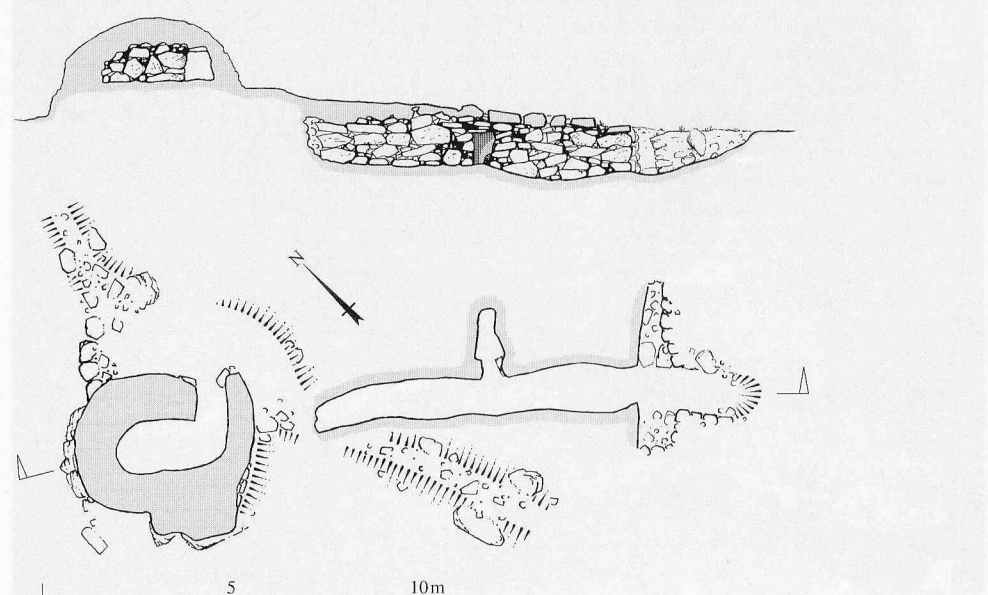


View from east, c.1878.



Plan and section of 'cellular' cleit (at A on plan).

Plan and section of 'cellular' cleit, known as 'Calum Mór's House' (at B on plan).



Plan and section of souterrain and cleit (at C on plan).



Village and An Lag Bho 'n Tuath; contoured plan showing principal buildings and features.

Based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. RCAHMS Licence GD03127G/008/98.

The later photographic evidence

Photographs taken from the 1860s onwards provide an accurate visual record of the St Kildan community and its buildings. They show, among other things, surprising evidence of removals and reconstructions of the cleitean within and around the head dyke. The contrasting photographs taken in 1886 and 1986 from the steep slope of Oiseval, east of the village, demonstrate some of these changes. Apart from the obvious intrusion of the Ministry of Defence establishment with its associated road and quarry, there is the jetty, built in 1901. Several cleitean on the lower meadows and one just above the Store have appeared since 1886, whilst a cleit below the Factor's House has been demolished and another built a little further down the slope. The photographs of 1886 show domed roofs of thatch on the black houses between the newer houses, and there is clear evidence of cultivation in places.

Building-types

From the souterrain which has produced pottery of Iron Age type through to the estate and community buildings of the 19th century, the village on Hirta retains considerable evidence of building through the ages. Evidence of early houses, which appear to pre-date the reorganisation of the 1830s, is provided by the corbelled, cellular structures in the backlands which survive in the form of modified cleitean. Cleitean are small, drystone structures used for storage, and although they are particularly numerous in the village area, there are no less than about 1,430 of them in the archipelago overall.



General view from north, 1986.

ST KILDA • The Village

Settlement and Structures on Hirta



General view from east, 1986.



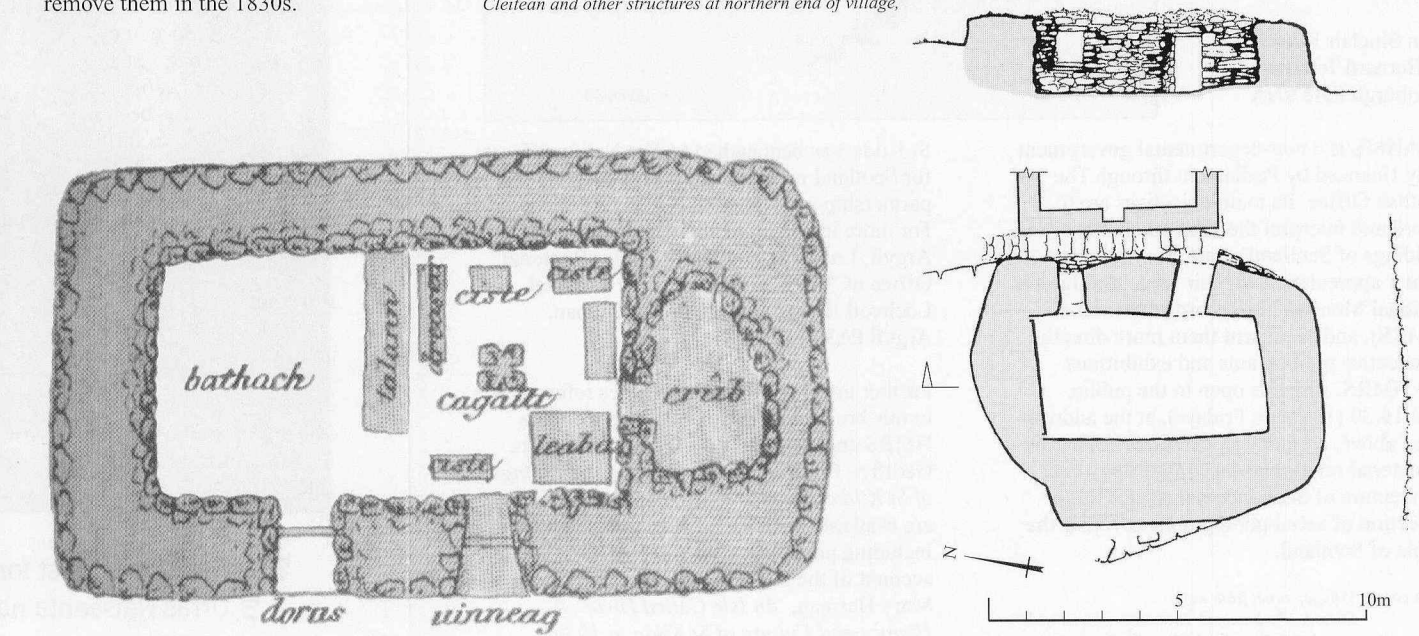
View from east, 1986.



Cleitean and other structures at northern end of village.

Wall-beds

A feature of the early dwelling houses, which most visitors remarked upon, was the construction of bed-recesses (crub) within the walls. One visitor likened them to stone-vaulted ovens, disposed around the walls of the huts according to the size of the family. Some of these wall-beds were noted on Sharbau's plan, despite Mackenzie's intention to remove them in the 1830s.



'Taigh Dubh with Crub' (black house with wall-bed); plan published 1870.

Plan and section of Black House identifiable as 'Betsy Scott's Cottage' (at D on plan).