



Royal  
Commission on the  
Ancient and  
Historical  
Monuments of  
Scotland

# KNOYDART

an archaeological  
survey



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A1-7 The Royal Commission  
KMO on the Ancient & Historical  
Monuments of Scotland





## Preface

### EDITORIAL NOTES

In June 1991, at the behest of the John Muir Trust, an archaeological field survey was undertaken by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) on the Trust's land on Knoydart, Skye and Lochalsh District, Highland Region. Extending over some 1,393 ha, the area embraces considerable tracts of upland terrain, exploited by man at various points in the past, but now largely given over to pasture. In the area lie extensive stretches of old settlement and cultivation remains, many of which, though well preserved, have not previously been recorded. The distillation of archaeological information presented in this report, though tailored to only a small part of the coastal strip, represents a significant advance in our understanding of the successive phases of Knoydart's settlement history, especially that of the pre-Clearance period, and highlights its archaeological potential.

The items included in this survey, which is mainly concerned with the archaeological evidence, principally range in date from the mid to late eighteenth century, to the nineteenth century. All sites and monuments up to 1900 have been recorded. Buildings at present in use are omitted.

The text has been written by IM Smith BA, PhD, and edited by JB Stevenson, BA, FSA, MIFA and GS Maxwell, MA, FSA, FRSA. The drawings and other illustrative work have been undertaken by AJ Leith, S Scott and A Wardell. The photographs were taken by IM Smith. The layout has been designed by JN Stevenson, NDD.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge the assistance given by the owners of the archaeological monuments, who have allowed access for study and survey. Thanks are due to the following for assistance and information: M Bangor-Jones, E Beaton, Professor J Caird, Lady P Twisleton-Wykeham-Fiennes, R Gourlay (Highland Region Archaeologist), J Harden, I Mackenzie, the late AG Mitchell, Professor D Mollison, RW and J Munro, S Nash, R Rohde, JR Souness, CR Wickham-Jones; and to the following for assistance in the field: W Gruellich, M Jarvis, L Morrison, and A Thompson.



## INTRODUCTION EDITORIAL NOTES

In June 1991 an archaeological survey of the Knapdale area was carried out by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland in conjunction with the Ordnance Survey. The site descriptions presented in this report represent a synthesis of the material gathered in the field, and more detailed accounts of many of the monuments may be consulted in the National Monuments Record of Scotland.

### Grid References

At the beginning of each article or sub-article will be found the article number and the appropriate National Grid reference followed by the National Monuments Record of Scotland record card number.

### Bibliographic references

Harvard style short titles, which are located within the text, are expanded in the full bibliography at the end of the report.

### Dates of Visit

All monuments listed in the report have been visited in the course of the survey (2-8 June 1991).

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## The Survey

Prior to the survey, there was an initial period of preparation of 1:50,000 sheets, and 1:25,000 sheets, research, by which to gain an overview of the area. The objectives could be assessed in a number of ways. The 1:50,000 would be the basic map, the 1:25,000 would be a larger scale to illustrate the details of the area.

The survey area is divided into four Ordnance Survey (OS) sheets (NG 80 NW, NE, SW and SE). The map is a photographically enlarged 1:25,000 map and is divided into 100m squares. It is fitted with overlays and which the survey data is entered. At this stage a map of the area is given. The earlier editions of the OS 1:25,000 map, known as the Ordnance Survey in 1875 (1875) have been used.

## INTRODUCTION

In June 1991 an archaeological survey was undertaken by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), in conjunction with members of the John Muir Trust, on the Trust's land on Knoydart.

The Knoydart peninsula extends out towards Skye between the waters of Loch Nevis and Loch Hourn. It is one of the most impressive mountain areas in all Scotland, and one of the least accessible. The area embraced by the survey (see location map) comprises all the ground between the watershed and the S side of Loch Hourn, bounded on the NW by Druim an Aoinidh and, on the SE, by Creag Bheithe. Here there were formerly four farms: Glac nan Sgadan, Li, Muineil, and Inbhir Dhorrcail. Today only Li is occupied.

In the 13th century Knoydart formed part of the wide mainland and island territories of the descendants of Somerled. Thereafter, for several generations, it was held by a branch of the MacDonalds of Clanranald, passing in 1611, through the Camerons of Lochiel, to MacDonell of Glengarry; the lands being parcelled out among the younger sons of the family. In 1734, by wadsett, Li and Muineil became part of the disjointed estate of Barrisdale, lands forfeited to the Crown after the Jacobite Rising of 1745-46 and not returned to the family until 1784. Due to the Annexing Act (1752), the forfeited estates are well documented, and the Barrisdale landholdings in particular have been the subject of detailed research (Wills 1973, 49-52, 99-101; Munro 1984). This level of information is of value for the light it casts on the social and economic background of Knoydart on the eve of the Improvements. The Knoydart Clearance of 1853 was notorious (cf. Blackie 1885, 66-70) but, with the exception of Muineil, each of the farms within the survey area was re-tenanted, accompanying a change in land use away from mixed farming in favour of the rearing of sheep. The census returns, at ten year intervals from 1841 to 1891, provide a valuable source of information on the character of these farms, and the status of their inhabitants, in this latter phase of Knoydart's settlement history. As a result of the emphasis on sheep farming in the mid to late 19th century the archaeological landscape of the pre-Clearance period remains largely intact. The archaeological potential of Knoydart is therefore great, and this is borne out by the survey results (see also Harden and Duncan 1991).

### The Survey

Prior to the survey, time was devoted to organizational matters, to the preparation of field-sheets, and to a limited amount of pre-fieldwork research, by which to gain an overview of the archaeology so that survey priorities could be assessed. In discussion with the Trust it was agreed that 1:10000 would be the basic mapping scale, with select surveys thereafter at a larger scale to illustrate points of special archaeological interest.

The survey area is covered by four Ordnance Survey 1:10000 map-sheets (NG 80 NW, NE, SW and SE). The relevant parts of these maps were photographically enlarged to 1:5000 for use in the field, and these were fitted with overlays onto which the archaeological information could be transcribed. At this stage priority was given to assimilating detail from the earlier editions of the OS 6-inch maps. Knoydart was first surveyed by the Ordnance Survey in 1873 (1876, Inverness-shire, sheet 77) and a second



edition of the same map, revised in 1899, was published in 1902. Both editions contain information which has for several reasons been omitted from the current maps, and this detail was added to the field-sheets. In 1771 William Morrison, land surveyor, drew up plans for each of the farms on the Barrisdale estate and these were later redrawn to give an overview (SRO RHP 111, 112, 3460, 22813). The plans are in the Scottish Record Office, West Register House, and photostat copies were obtained for use during the survey. Archaeological information compiled to-date is held on archive in the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and in the Highland Region Sites and Monuments Record. These were consulted, together with the Historic Buildings' Lists.

Time given to documentary research was necessarily tailored by the remit of the survey. The priority was to obtain an outline of the settlement history in order to derive an approximate chronology for the sites recorded and nothing more. The principal sources consulted comprised those in the NMRS collection and those on open access in the National Library of Scotland. Further information was solicited in discussion from individuals who have either first-hand experience of the terrain or related research interests. In preparation of the final report, some further documentary research has been undertaken, and items studied include the Reports of the Annexed Esates (Wills 1973), the Ordnance Survey Name Book (1873, Inverness-shire, No. 29), held on microfilm in the NMRS, and the Census Records from 1841 to 1891, in General Register House.

Throughout the survey considerable use has been made of aerial photographs held in the NMRS and the Central Register Air Photographs Unit. Of these the most useful is a set of stereoscopic colour photographs taken in 1975 by Fairey Surveys Ltd. These are at a scale of 1:10000 and are remarkable for their exceptionally high resolution. For the purposes of the report the photographs have been used as a basis to schematically map the cultivation-ridging, the precise extent of which was measured-in and logged in the field.

Altogether about twenty 'archaeological' sites are shown on the respective maps. Excluding cultivation remains, a further eleven sites were added to the field-sheets on the basis of literary and documentary sources, and information supplied by Caroline Wickham-Jones derived from earlier fieldwork which she had undertaken on behalf of the Trust. In the course of our own survey a further 158 sites have been recorded. These account for all structures up to and including those of 19th-century date, together with a few which are more recent, excluding the roofed buildings at Li that are still in use. Nevertheless, whilst collectively these probably represent a large proportion of the sites present on the Trust's land, others may from time to time come to light under more favourable field conditions, or as a result of agricultural disturbance, or afforestation. The sites noted, however, can probably be taken as representative. Supplementary information, including computerized survey data, photographs and primary documentation, will be kept on file in the NMRS. The 189 'archaeological' sites, some of which are related to each other, have been consolidated in the accompanying gazetteer into 26 entries. These are organized by map-sheet, and numbered by reference to their place in the gazetteer. Hence the mill at Li, on map-sheet NG 80 NW (sheet 1), article 8, sub-number 4, is referred to in the text which follows as no 8.4.

The survey was directed by Dr Ian M Smith, and the team members comprised, Messrs Sam Scott and Alan Leith, from the RCAHMS drawing office, and Dr Margaret Jarvis and Mr Wolf Gruellich, on behalf of the

Trust. Valuable assistance was also given by Andrew Thompson, the Trust's Conservation Officer, and Len Morrison, the ferryman at Arnisdale. The team was based in Corran and crossed Loch Houran each day by boat from Arnisdale to Knoydart. Ian Smith was responsible for recording, Sam Scott and Alan Leith for survey and illustration. For practical purposes, whenever possible in the field, the team was divided into three groups of two, with the tasks of walking, field-checking and noting being shared by all.

Fieldwork began on Sunday 7 June and continued for six days. The weather during this time was exceptional and the only limiting factor, in terms of archaeological visibility, was the height of the bracken. Ideally a survey of this type should be undertaken no later than the last week in May. The area encompassed by the survey comprised all the ground, from the foreshore to the watershed, between Rubha Ruadh on the NW to Inbhir Dhorrcail on the SE, a distance along the coast of about 6.3 km and an area inland in excess of 1,393 ha. The work was organized according to the distribution of 1:10000 map-sheets and proceeded from NW to SE. The entire area was systematically quartered and walked with a view to the checking of sites already on the field-sheets, and the identification of others hitherto unrecorded. For recording, an NMRS Record Sheet was used and a written description, with salient measurements and annotated sketches, was prepared for every site. Where appropriate, a 35mm colour slide was taken both as an aide-mémoire and to give an overview. Using Electronic Distance Measuring (EDM) equipment, in conjunction with a SOKKISHA data-logger, or, where terrain proved too inhibiting, by taping, all the sites identified were located with sufficient accuracy and control to generate an 8-figure grid reference for each. Sufficient survey points were taken on all the buildings to allow a rudimentary outline of any of these to be subsequently printed from the digital information stored on computer, should they be required (i.e. for enhancement or the clarification of map detail). Thereafter, priority was given to securing enough survey points to fix the principal land boundaries and areas of cultivation, accounting too for the information derived from aerial photographs. In addition, there was time within the initial phase of prospective walking to undertake one detailed survey at a scale of 1:500. Priority here was given to a survey of the pre-Clearance farmstead at Glac nan Sgadan (fig. 1). Although outwith the Trust's land, this is a site of clear chronological depth with a range of buildings of representative type. But for the bracken, a complementary survey of the farmstead at Inbhir Dhorrcail would have been highly desirable.

## Geography

As a context for the discussion which follows, the character of the landscape may be usefully summarized. It is almost everywhere mountainous. 'The whole district is poor, wet, and dreary in the extreme', was the impression left on the enumerator of the 1851 census. From the steep seaward crags of Druim an Aoinidh on the NW, SE to the high ridge of Druim a' Choire Odhair, the ground, stream-riven and punctuated by intervening spurs which pitch steeply towards the sea, is possessed of slopes that are relentlessly steep. Relatively level ground is scant and for the most part tailored tightly to the indented shoreline. However, within each of the respective bays, to the rear of a raised beach (a favoured location for settlement probably at all periods), there are many broad expanses of more gentle slope which are suited to husbandry. These lower slopes are mainly grass-covered, and in summer with bracken. Higher up, the slopes, on an indurated base of peat, are strewn with boulder and rock debris, mingling with the screes beneath the crags, corries and high peaks which punctuate



the skyline, dominated on the S by Ladhar Bheinn (1020m OD). At Muineil, a rocky promontory thrusts its way seaward, the elongated island at its tip defined on the landward side by a small tract of more manageable ground - the site of the Muineil farmstead (no. 18). To the S, the coastal path to Barrisdale is precarious, steep slopes hemming-in the shoreline as far as Inbhir Dhorrcail - an outwash fan at the mouth of the Allt Coire Dhorrcail. This mountain stream traces its course inland, through a tight defile, before branching into its headwaters amid the rock-strewn wastes and deeply-riven sides of Coire Dhorrcail - probably one of the most spectacular features of the Knoydart landscape with its gaunt amphitheatre-like head and precipitous backdrop. Traces of scrub and relict woodland survive close to many of the more sheltered crags and beside the major stream-gullies. Woodland regeneration is being actively encouraged by the Trust both at Li and on the hillside overlooking Inbhir Dhorrcail.

### The Historical Background

Before commenting in detail on the archaeology it is worth considering the documentary and map evidence for the light it casts on the people, their buildings and land use. Although by its nature relating specifically to the Barrisdale estate, the documentation probably provides a reasonable overview applicable to a greater part of the coastal strip.

In 1755 Mungo Campbell was appointed factor to the then forfeited Barrisdale estate. He, along with Henry Butter, who succeeded him as factor five years later, submitted detailed reports, accounts and memoranda to the Commissioners in Edinburgh (appointed under the act of 1752) on the state of land under their management. Visits of inquiry or supervision were few, but Archibald Menzies, the Commissioners' General Inspector, came to Knoydart by sea in 1768, and three years later William Morrison drew up plans for each farm and reported on their extent, tenancy, produce and subdivisions. Unless otherwise stated, the information derived from these sources is to be found in Reports of the Annexed Estates 1755-1769, edited by Virginia Wills (1973, pp. 49-52, 99-101).

Due to the mountainous and rocky nature of the terrain, in Campbell's estimation, it was fit 'only for pasture and the rearing of black cattle, and there being very little or no arable ground, the inhabitants live chiefly upon the product of their cattle. They, however, sow a little grey oats and barley and the raising of potatoes is much attended by the whole inhabitants'. The farms were relatively small and the landscape at this date was still unenclosed; boundaries were determined according to custom and tradition and, as the farms were undivided, they gave the impression of being 'possessed almost in common'. In 1755 there were four families at Li, and two at Muineil; a total of thirty-five inhabitants, eighteen of whom were under the age of seventeen.

The state of housing is tacitly summed up by Mungo Campbell, 'The whole houses of the country are made up of twigs manufactured by way of creels called wattling and covered with turf. They are so low in the roof as scarce to admitt of a person standing in them, and when these are made up with pains they endure ten or twelve years. They thatch them [with] rushes'. Eight years later the factor was still shocked to find, 'the whole inhabitants living in miserable timber wattled hutts with turf on the outside, without beds, chairs or tables'.

In the winter the inhabitants were generally busy preparing the ground for their crops and tending to their black cattle, with some at the herring fishing; in the judicial rental of 1755, horses, sheep and goats are also mentioned (Wills 1973, ii, 4). Cattle were allowed to roam free on the hill pastures throughout the year and were not brought indoors even in winter. In the summer the inhabitants were 'generally very idle', with little more to do than to herd their cattle and attend to the repair of their dwellings. At this time of the year they took to their shielings, often situated on the higher ground overlooking the farms or else some distance away. Here, surplus milk was turned into butter and cheese, part of which was later exchanged for oatmeal from Sleat.

Each of the farms had a small amount of 'cornland' attached. In 1755 Li had four acres, while Muineil (with Camusdoun) had two, but Campbell notes that, on comparison with other parts of the Highlands, yields of oats and barley were relatively high; at Li from three bolls of oats they got nine bolls of meal. The arable was entirely spade-dug, the only plough on Knoydart being one at Inverie. Seaweed and ferns were used as manure and Menzies notes that this brought great returns, particularly for barley; dung was used on the potato plots. Due to the nature of the terrain, pack horses were of little use on the farms and the manure, together with turf and wood for fuel, had to be carried on men's and women's backs. At Muineil, a father, son and four servants, kept a simple form of crop rotation: one year's potato plots in lazy-beds being sown the next with oats, cropped for two years and then turned to grass; but they still had to buy in three bolls of meal yearly (Munro 1984, 19). In 1755 none of the farms had a mill, the inhabitants preferring instead to grind their meal by using a quern (examples of several were recorded during the survey, see nos. 8.1, 8.2), having first separated the grain from the stalk by setting the sheaves on fire; some of the stances close-in to the farmsteads were perhaps used as bases upon which to stack the sheaves (e.g. nos. 8.1, 21.4). For food, Campbell notes, the people had bread all winter, with less in spring, and, in season, fish, potatoes, a little beef, butter and cheese.

Natural woodland at this time was a valued but diminishing asset (birch, alder and fir are mentioned). Campbell reports several reasons for this, but notes in particular the depredations caused by the fishing; the fishermen taking wood to build their temporary huts on shore in spite of all attempts to stop them. Fishing was an important part of the Knoydart economy, and Loch Hourn especially was renowned for its herring. This too is reflected in the place-names (e.g. Glac nan Sgadan, 'hollow of the herring'). Each year, from as early as June through to mid autumn, the inner reaches of the loch were thronged with fishing vessels, including some from as far away as the Clyde. Just such a scene is described by the traveller Pennant who notes: 'a great fleet of busses, and all the busy appearance of the herring fishery; with multitudes of little occasional hovels and tents on the shore, for the accommodation of the crews, and of the country people, who resort here at this season to take and sell herring to the strangers. An unexpected sight, at the distance of thirteen miles from the sea, amidst the wildest scene in nature' (1772, i, 342; see also Stat. Acct., 16[1795], 269).

By 1767 the first agricultural improvements were taking place. A stone dwelling-house, byre and kiln had been built at Skiary and soon after, Menzies notes, two stone houses at Li and 'a stone house harled with lime [built] by Donald McDonald at Muinnel' (Wills 1973, 101). Morrison's 1771 survey of Li and Muineil (SRO RHP 112) sets out the bounds of the farms and notes the cost of enclosing the arable and erecting the march-dyke; a prominent feature of the landscape still apparent today (see no. 9). At Li,



Morrison depicts a cluster of seven buildings at the mouth of the main stream, with eight plots of lazy-beds disposed over the slopes to the S and, on the NW, another field of rig (identifiable still, no. 6). At Muineil, two buildings are shown, roughly end-on to each other, with rig both to the front of the buildings and straddling the neck of the promontory (see no. 18.1). Morrison's survey, however, seems to be highly schematic and detail was rationalized more than once in redrawing his plans (comp. SRO RHP 111 and 112). At Inbhir Dhorrcail, although cultivation-ridging is shown, no buildings are noted - but this may only reflect Morrison's preoccupation in planning the Barrisdale landholdings.

In 1795 the minister of Glenelg parish noted that Knoydart then had 1000 inhabitants, but had lost 800 by emigration between 1770 and 1793 (*Stat. Acct.*, 16[1795], 267). By 1841 this trend is all the more apparent with, in contrast to the situation some ninety years earlier, only two families still resident at Li and Muineil; fourteen inhabitants in all, including one farm servant. In the census records of that year Alexander Smith is denoted as 'tenant' in Li, Duncan Smith of Muineil simply as 'labourer'. At Glac nan Sgadan there was a family of six, and an agricultural labourer, and at Inbhir Dhorrcail there were a further three families; thirteen inhabitants in all, four employed as fishermen, and each family apparently in possession of a dwelling (see also p. 9).

Ten years later the picture was very different. With the exception of Li, each of the farms had been cleared, apparently ahead of the Clearance of 1853 (cf. Blackie 1885, 67-9). At Li new tenants were installed: John Cameron, 'shepherd', married with a family of six and two farm servants, and Angus MacDonald, 'cotter', married with six children. It was probably during Cameron's tenure that the sheepfold at Li was built, together perhaps with that on the hillside overlooking Poll a' Mhuineil (no. 15.2, see photograph), though the work entailed may have been contracted to outsiders (see also Kahane 1985). It is, however, unclear whether MacDonald was still in residence at Li in 1853 when Knoydart was visited by the officers of the Ordnance Survey. On the first edition of the OS 6-inch map, the buildings are all depicted as unroofed, though the Name Book records the presence of a shepherd's house at Li together with one at Glac nan Sgadan, the latter apparently roofed (Name Book, no. 29, pp. 35, 40). At this date, according to the Name Book, all the land on the S side of Loch Hourn was the property of James Baird Esq.

In 1861 Cameron was joined by a second family at Li; a widow with six children, five receiving relief as paupers. Three new families were installed at Inbhir Dhorrcail; the status of two of the men being given as 'labourer and crofter' (the third, Angus McGillvry, 'labourer'). Neil McPherson was installed as shepherd at Glac nan Sgadan. He was succeeded by his wife and, though widowed and described in 1881 as 'squatter', she was still resident there in 1891; at which date both her sons were employed as fishermen.

By 1871 only Angus McGillvry's family remained at Inbhir Dhorrcail. He died soon after and by 1881 his widow had moved to Camusbane, her status there being given as 'pauper'. At Li, the shepherd was replaced by Duncan McKay, married with four children. Father and son both worked as shepherds, and were probably responsible for consolidating the grazings of Li and Muineil. By 1891, the father had retired but the son continued as shepherd. In 1899, when the OS 6-inch map was revised, the only remaining roofed buildings comprised two at Li (the house and bothy in use today) and one at Glac nan Sgadan (A on fig. 1).

## The Archaeology

The sites identified in the course of the survey relate principally to the farms of Glac nan Sgadan, Li, Muineil, and Inbhir Dhorrcail. The majority of the remains are probably of 18th-century date or later. Nevertheless, the sites chosen probably offered optimum settlement locations at all periods and thus each farm could be a site of some chronological depth. Peripheral to the farms, there are extensive traces of cultivation-ridging, the majority enclosed by earth or stone dykes. Dotted among the fields, and occurring in discrete clusters elsewhere, there are numerous stances or platforms. These could have fulfilled a variety of functions and not all may be of the same date. There is evidence too of peat-cutting, and of the stripping of turf at Glac nan Sgadan, together with a range of miscellaneous structures. On the upper slopes, there are the shieling-grounds with their characteristic huts and pens.

The most striking structural remains identified in the course of the survey are those of the buildings themselves, and, though many of these are reduced to their lower wall-courses, sufficient often remains to mark many of them out as of considerable vernacular interest.

## Buildings

These fall into three categories: farmbuildings, outbuildings, and buildings situated on the hill margins.

In terms of numbers one might anticipate that the greatest weight of evidence would lie with the remains of the creel-houses of the type noted both by Campbell and Butter (above, p. 4). However, such semi-permanent buildings, with their dependence on turf and timber as a structural medium, would, once abandoned, rapidly decay to leave few discernible traces - and these are especially prone to subsequent plough damage or other forms of activity related to the site. One might also anticipate, at the very least, the survival of a house-stance, and it is certainly possible that some of the larger platforms identified in the survey may have fulfilled such a function (e.g. no. 4.17). Nevertheless, given the nucleated character of the mid-to-late 18th-century farms, particularly apparent in Morrison's 1771 survey of Li, and the tendency in landscapes where arable was at a premium to set the buildings in marginal positions as close-in to the arable as possible, the likelihood of in situ building replacement is all the greater, and with it the chance that earlier remains will be destroyed or at best be severely obscured.

At Muineil, however, there are the remains of what may be a turf-built house (no. 18.1) and, if this is the case, this is certainly a remarkable survival. It is probably to be identified as one of the two buildings depicted by Morrison (SRO RHP 111) and is conceivably the forerunner of the stone house on record in 1768 (above, p. 5). This would need to be tested by excavation. Although severely wasted, it would seem to hold out the possibility that under optimum field conditions other examples may occasionally come to light. As buildings of the pre-Improvement period, the 'creel-houses' deserve special notice. However, for the present our knowledge of them must rest principally on the documentary evidence, although any light that archaeology can shed on this important vernacular tradition is not to be overlooked.



In 1768 Archibald Menzies drew attention to 'a stone house harled with lime [built] by Donald McDonald' at Muineil (Wills 1973, 101). This building, which is distinguished by its use of lime-mortar, the first such instance outside Barrisdale itself, is reasonably to be identified as that incorporated in the boundary wall which straddles the landward side of the Muineil promontory (no. 18.2). The whole character of this building is distinctive, ranging from its meticulous attention to the use of masonry and slab-pinnings, the slight external batter of its long-walls, to the form of its surviving window and unusually small aumbry (see photograph). As a building type it is unparalleled in the survey area. Moreover, there is no indication for the use of crucks, a feature of many of the later buildings, and from this one may infer that the roof was of common-rafter type and pitched. Whilst clearly an 'Improvement' dwelling, one might wonder whether in conception it owes more to the lesser lairds' houses of the late 17th and early to mid 18th century. It was still occupied in 1841 but was abandoned shortly after. A young married couple were the last to reside there - Duncan Smith (labourer) and his wife Anne with their five-year old son John.

In 1768 Menzies (*op. cit.*) also notes the presence of two stone houses at Li. Whilst we can be less certain as to which these are, it nevertheless seems reasonable to identify them as the pair of buildings which are arranged parallel to each other, end-on to the 19th-century fank (no. 9). The buildings form a distinct unit ranged to either side of a narrow yard. They have in common a range of structural attributes shared by other buildings, notably those at Inbhir Dhorrcail and Glac nan Sgadan (nos. 1[A], 21.1, 21.3), and these attributes are worth summarizing.

The buildings are generally set back into the slope and provided with a drainage-trench to the rear. They are invariably of random-rubble build, using stone gathered from field-clearance, local rock outcrops, or, in the case of Inbhir Dhorrcail, from the beach. The walls are unmortared, often founded on substantial grounders, and usually have a slight external batter; the external angles are finished either square or rounded (e.g. nos. 6, 9, 21.2). From surface evidence most appear to have been cruck-framed, with the cruck blades (probably no more than reused boat-timbers) springing from the walls, generally about 0.5m above ground level. The use of end-crucks is also attested and similarly appears to be a diagnostic trait of the Knoydart buildings. It provides the clearest proof that the buildings were hip-roofed. Rushes and bracken were probably used for thatch, on a turf-groundwork pegged or roped to the cabers.

A number of the dwellings also retain evidence of a window, generally to one side of the entrance (e.g. nos. 1[B], 9). In the 1861 census, three out of the six dwelling-houses listed possessed two rooms with one or more windows. Sometimes there is evidence of an internal partition, indeed most of the dwellings were probably of two compartments, but the use of a wattle-daubed partition-wall need leave few archaeological traces. Occasionally, as at Glac nan Sgadan (no. 1, building B), the entrance emits to a stone-revetted terrace, or path, extending the length of the building; this served to reduce wear and to offset run-off from the midden - at Inbhir Dhorrcail a stone-lined drain was used to the same effect (no. 21.1). Buildings sharing some or all of these attributes are a staple part of the Knoydart vernacular tradition and probably span a period from about 1770 to 1850, but some may be earlier, and others were certainly still in use well into the 19th century.



The disposition of the dwellings, in respect of their immediate outbuildings, is also noteworthy. In each case this probably reflects, in the main, the availability of suitable stances, and the need to preserve all possible ground capable of tillage. Thus at Glac nan Sgadan (fig. 1), where available ground is scarce due to the dissected nature of the slopes and the cumulation of stream outwash deposits, the buildings appear almost randomly disposed, with the respective dwellings alone occupying prepared stances to the rear, overlooking the foreshore. Conversely at Inbhir Dhorrcail (no. 21.1), where the main dwelling and outbuildings are grouped on the river terrace, a more systematic layout was possible, with the principal buildings arranged in parallel, leaving a sizeable free area available for cultivation. At Li, however, the situation was otherwise. Here the buildings are more loosely ordered and randomly disposed over a wide area (nos. 8.1-12), and this probably reflects the presence at Li of more extensive ground suited to cultivation, coupled perhaps with a greater chronological depth to the site which might tend to produce a more piecemeal development. Of course, there is also some advantage in constructing a building as close as possible to its source material. At Glac nan Sgadan a number of the outbuildings are set around, and even set into, the stream outwash deposits (D and E on fig. 1). A building constructed in this way demanded a minimal level of input and would be naturally free-draining.

From 1841, the census returns record, alongside the families resident on each farm, the number of dwellings, and this provides a useful pointer in further categorizing the surviving remains. However, at Inbhir Dhorrcail (no. 21), where on field evidence there appear to be no more than two buildings suited for use as dwellings, in 1861 we learn of the presence there of three families, and three dwellings are specified. The most likely explanation is that two of the families occupied one house, and this is probably to be identified as that on the river terrace, beside the Allt Coire Dhorrcail (no. 21.1).

This is a sizeable dwelling (17.2m by 5.1m overall) of two compartments and five cruck-bays, with access to each compartment being served by entrances in the NE long-wall. Whilst it is possible that this building was roofed as one unit, it is also likely that it may have been roofed using two hipped-sections end-on to each other (for which there is a surviving example on Berneray, N Uist). This would reflect the more formal division of the interior and might explain its designation as two dwellings in the census of 1861. Either way, from the census records, it may be deduced that the building was divided into either two or three rooms, each lit by one or more windows. In the 1870s, in its final phase of use and with only one family remaining at Inbhir Dhorrcail, the building was probably remodelled, apparently for use as a byre-dwelling. In comparison with others, the scale of the building is clearly ambitious and the thrust of its roof structure pressing out on the walls may account for the need to buttress them. The second dwelling at Inbhir Dhorrcail is probably no. 21.2. It has the unusual feature of a buttressed door-jamb. Strengthening here seems unnecessary, and it may have been designed simply to provide some protection against the wind, or else as a means to pitch the thatch forward in the form of a porch.

With the possible exception of Muineil, each farm, in addition probably to a byre and barn, was accompanied by a range of outbuildings. These probably fulfilled a variety of functions (net-sheds, implement-stores etc.), and in crofting parlance these are often referred to by such simple terms as 'the shed', 'the annexe', 'the henhouse', 'the sheephouse', 'the hut' and so forth. Some are well constructed, others less so, but most probably came about as occasion demanded utilizing whatever materials came readily to

hand, with an economy of effort and regard to minimal expense. Thus at Glac nan Sgadan (no. 1, fig. 1) such buildings are to be found amid the outwash and storm deposits of the main stream, beside a boulder, or prominent rock outcrop, where with only minor enhancement a 'free' wall was to be had. The underlying proposition is that it is often easier to add to an existing feature (whether man-made or natural) than to rear a wholly new one; in practical terms the difference between what might be feasible and non-feasible. As farms changed hands so further outbuildings may have been added, alongside others perhaps left to decay, or to be adapted to new requirements (e.g. a building at Glac nan Sgadan remodelled for use as a naust, F on fig. 1). This would all add to a perceived confusion in the juxtaposition of the archaeological remains, for example, both at Li and in relation to the subordinate farm unit at Inbhir Dhorrcail (nos. 8, 21.4). Function is invariably difficult to deduce simply on the evidence of the field remains alone, but the presence of drains issuing from the end-walls of a few buildings (e.g. no. 1, building D) may denote their use as byres; though on poorly-drained ground, with the added need to aid run-off from the buildings, this may not always be the case.

Buildings on the hill margins peripheral to the farms may similarly have fulfilled a wide variety of functions. However, most are severely wasted and it is often difficult enough to be certain of their extent, let alone their date.

Structures of a more specialized nature are represented by the remains of a horizontal mill at Li (no. 8.3), and kilns both at Li and Inbhir Dhorrcail (nos. 8.3, 21.1). The mill at Li is the only surviving example of its type within the survey area and, though reduced to little more than its turf-covered wall-footings, a surprising amount of detail can be teased from its remains. The earliest corn mill documented for Knoydart is that built by one of the MacDonell wadsetters, Ranald of Scotus, in 1762 (Munro 1984, 23). The mill at Li is probably no earlier than this, and if the extent of cultivation depicted on Morrison's plan of 1771 is anything to go by, one would hardly have been justified even then. However, some time thereafter, there was evidently an intensification in agricultural activity at Li. This is no more clearly seen than in the blanket cover of cultivation ridging, embracing not only most of the lower ground but, extending also for some distance upslope (no. 8.12). By 1851, with the first presence of a shepherd at Li, most of this ground must have been thrown open to grazing. The opening up of arable at Li therefore probably belongs to the period roughly 1780 to 1840. The mill and kilns were probably built at this time. The kiln at Inbhir Dhorrcail has been almost entirely robbed of its stone for reuse elsewhere; that at Li is one of the best-preserved examples of its type, lacking only its interwoven gridiron (supported on the scarcement of the kiln) and thatched roof.

### Cultivation

The prolific cultivation remains, which form such a marked feature of the coastal strip, especially when seen from Loch Hourn, are a vital and integral part of the archaeological landscape. Mungo Campbell reported that due to the unsuitability of the terrain, no plough was in use on Knoydart except at Inverie (Wills 1973, 50). All the ridging apparent today was therefore probably spade-dug. Although used for potatoes, the ridging on Knoydart was evidently also planted with oats and barley.

The precise form of the ridging is best observed at Glac nan Sgadan where the cultivation is tailored to the slopes directly overlooking the farmstead (fig. 1). Here the soil is of no great depth and by virtue of heaping up what little there was on to the ridges, the underlying rock surface has been exposed in several of the furrows. Moreover, to minimize soil-loss brought about by hillwash, clearance has been banded across the furrows at intervals to provide in effect a series of low retaining walls; a simple but no less effective solution to what must have been a perennial problem.

### Stances

Dotted at intervals amid the tilled ground at Glac nan Sgadan (no. 1), but occurring also upslope and in still greater numbers on the hillside overlooking Allt na Leth-bheinne (no. 4), there are a great many stances or platforms. Isolated examples are also present among the shielings and around the farms at Li and Inbhir Dhorrcail (nos. 8.1, 21.4). Some of these stances are highly enigmatic, and are little more than shallow scoops on the hillside, while others are clearly intentional, with well-constructed aprons and stone-faced rear-scarps. Most are in the order of size of 5m by 3m overall, some are much smaller and roughly circular, and a few are larger (e.g. nos. 4.21, 4.25-8, see photograph). Others, however, attain the proportions of huts or buildings, and several were clearly so used (nos. 4.17, 8.6, 8.10). It is, nevertheless, far from clear what function the majority of the stances fulfilled, though similar examples have been noted at the head of the fields behind Arnisdale (NG 844 109). Some, and particularly those close to cultivation, may have been constructed as working-platforms, perhaps for stacking sheaves, potatoes, or implements when idle. Others too could have been used for drying peats, and a few may have been used as charcoal-burning platforms. But if the latter, this was presumably at a date before the destruction of the native woodland and, while this is clearly a possibility, Mungo Campbell, for one, was apparently unaware of it. There is also a chance that a few of the stances, especially those close to the foreshore, may have been used to provide a base for the tents and temporary shelters of the herring-fishermen as recalled by Pennant (1772, i, 342). However, this can be no more than an excursion into possibilities and for the present the date and function of the stances eludes us. This is a problem which can only be resolved by excavation.

### Nausts

Access to the sea was an important part of the Knoydart way of life and features related to boat-handling have been identified at intervals along the coastal strip. Unroofed boat-shaped shelters, with turf or stone walls, end-open to the sea, are present at Glac nan Sgadan, Li and Inbhir Dhorrcail (nos. 1, 8.2, 21.6, 21.8). These are referred to as 'nausts' (sometimes spelled noost or noust, from Old Norse, naust, 'boat-shed dock'). They are generally centred on or above the shoreline - the latter position preferred for 'winter nausts' in which fishing boats were laid up off season (e.g. no. 21.6). A pair of nausts at Inbhir Dhorrcail is particularly noteworthy (no. 21.8). Both have been cut back into the slope and consequently have some depth to the interior, and, in the case of one, the side-walls have been consolidated with masonry.

Often one finds that a stretch of the shore to the front of the naust has been cleared for use as a slip-way, with a further cleared area beyond, below mean sea-level, for use as a boat-landing; the site of which is often



indicated by a line of boulders, or occasionally two parallel rows (referred to as 'jetties' in the gazetteer). These elements, together with the boat-sheds, constitute what is termed a 'naust-ground'. Sometimes, as probably on Eilean a' Phioaire (no. 20.2), the site of a destroyed or obliterated naust-ground is indicated by a surviving landing-place.

### Shielings

Morrison's plans convey no evidence of shieling activity accompanying any of the farms that fall within the survey area. Shieling-groups, however, are well represented with particularly good clusters in Coirein na Leacainn and Coire Dhorrcail (nos. 3, 25). Many of the shieling-huts are diminutive, being reduced to little more than turf-covered rickles of stone no more than 2m in overall diameter. Elementary structures of this type are rare in Scotland, but huts of much the same size have been noted close to Lonbain, on the Applecross peninsula (NMRS Record Sheet RCR/27/1). Alongside these there are a range of subrectangular huts, often founded on well-formed stances which have been terraced into the slope and edged with masonry (e.g. nos. 3.6, 25.1). Structures of this type probably had roofs of branch and turf construction. The best-preserved shieling-group, however, is that beside Allt Li, situated at a height of about 236m OD (no. 11, see photograph). This is remarkable for its turf- and variety of stone-built structures, and is probably also a site of some chronological depth.

### Miscellaneous

Of the miscellaneous structures recorded during the survey, there are three of note. There is a grave close to the shoreline on the S side of Camas Domhain, probably either a victim of suicide or drowning (no. 13). An island, no more than a rocky boss, to the S of Inbhir Dhorrcail, has been connected to the shoreline by a boulder causeway (no. 22). The rock may have been used either as a pulpit, or for celebrating mass. As late as 1755 Knoydart was still a staunchly Catholic district. Two priests lived constantly on the Barrisdale estate, but took care to 'abscond' when the factor was there (Munro 1984, 28). On the islands of Eilean a' Mhuineil and Eilean a' Phioaire, there are a number of slit-trenches (nos. 19, 20). In the Second World War Knoydart was used as a commando-training area, and the slit-trenches are probably a product of this activity (Mackenzie, I pers. com., 1991).



Royal Comm  
Anc Mons Scot

1      Glac nan Sgadan, cottage, farmstead and cultivation remains  
NG 826 087 NG 80 NW 1

Glac nan Sgadan embraces an area of gently-sloping ground fronting an indented foreshore, which is bounded on the S by the Allt Glac nan Sgadan, a stream with rock- and rubble-strewn banks, with steeper, grass- and bracken-covered slopes rising to the rear. On the N and S, the hillsides are punctuated by rock outcrops and close by there is some scrub and relict woodland.

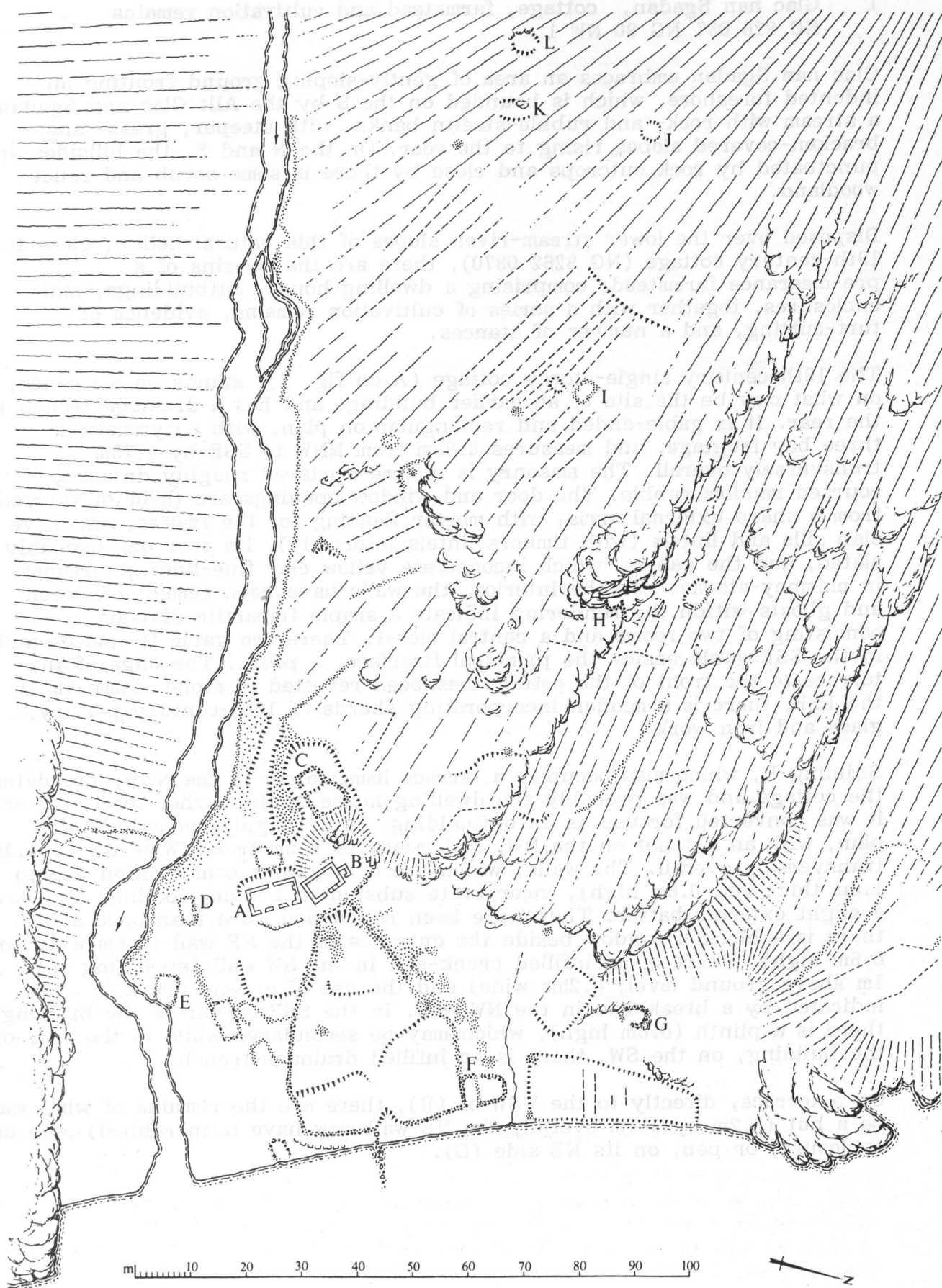
Disposed over the lower stream-riven slopes of this natural hollow, close to a 19th-century cottage (NG 8262 0870), there are the remains of a pre-clearance farmstead, comprising a dwelling-house, outbuildings, and enclosures, together with a series of cultivation remains, evidence of turf-cutting, and a number of stances.

The 19th-century single-storey cottage (A on fig. 1), stands on a terrace, on what may be the site of an earlier building, and has a drainage-trench to the rear. It is gable-ended and rectangular on plan, with a symmetrical three bay frontage, and measures 8.95m from NNW to SSE by 4.75m transversely overall. The masonry is of lime-mortared roughly dressed, coursed random rubble. The door and window openings are through splayed from a sharp external arris, with mortar flashing for the frames, and have slab sills and lintels (with timbers lintels internally). Its roof was probably slated, and the gables, which incorporate yellow clay flue-liners, terminate in chimney-stacks. To the interior, the walls have been cement rendered and ghosts within the rendering indicate a simple tripartite division consisting of two rooms and a central closet. There are gable fireplaces and, in the SSE gable beside the principal fireplace, a press. The edge of the terrace to the front of the cottage has been revetted in stone. Some 7m to the ESE, there is a midden incorporating sherds of 19th-century pottery, glass and iron work.

Building B, which also occupies a terrace immediately to the NNW, pre-dates the cottage and was probably the dwelling-house of the earlier farm. Latterly it was converted for use as an outbuilding. It is roughly rectangular on plan, with an outshot on the NW, and measures 6.5m from NW to SE by 4.4m transversely overall. The walls, which are of drystone construction (up to 1.6m thick and 0.6m high), incorporate substantial boulder footings and have a slight external batter. They have been remodelled more than once and there is a blocked window beside the entrance in the NE wall (0.6m wide and 0.6m high). There is an infilled cruck-slot in the SW wall (springing from 1m above ground level, 0.25m wide) and the use of an end cruck is indicated by a break-line in the NW wall. In the SSE corner of the building there is a plinth (0.6m high), which may be secondary, while to the rear of the building, on the SW, there is an infilled drainage-trench.

On a terrace, directly to the WSW of (B), there are the remains of what may be a hut (3.2m by 3.1m overall, the NE wall may have been robbed) with an enclosure, or pen, on its NE side (C).





1 Glac nan Sgadan, farmstead, 1:1000

The area of ground between the cottage, building B, and the foreshore is heavily dissected and overlaid with storm and outwash deposits accruing from the Allt Glac nan Sgadan. These deposits have been partly adapted to leave clear a number of small cultivated plots and terraces. There are traces, too, of at least a further two buildings (D and E on fig. 1).

Building D, which was probably a byre, has slightly rounded end-walls, a possible entrance in its NNW wall, and what may be a drain emitting from its ENE end-wall. It measures 5.4m from WSW to ENE by 3.8m transversely over walls reduced to heaps of rubble 0.6m in thickness and 0.7m in height.

Building E, which is set end-on to the stream-gully and has been truncated by the stream, is in a severely wasted condition, but seems to have measured about 6.3m from WSW to ENE by 4.7m transversely overall.

Enclosing a plot of ground, which has been partially terraced, between (B) and the foreshore, there is an irregular-shaped enclosure, surrounded by an earth-and-stone bank which has been substantially revetted on its seaward side. The NW side of the enclosure is partly obscured by field clearance. On the ENE side of the enclosure, perhaps the original point of access to (B) from the foreshore, there is a hollowed depression from which a line of boulders extends seaward. This may be the remains of a naust. Peripheral to the enclosure, on the ESE, there are the remains of a second naust (consisting of a penannular stone setting, end-open to the sea) and a revetted terrace.

Building F, at the NE corner of the enclosure, which is set parallel to the foreshore and end-on to a burn which drains an area of low-lying ground to the rear, is roughly rectangular on plan and has a slightly rounded NNW end-wall. It measures 7.5m from NNW to SSE by 4.7m transversely over walls reduced to their lowest courses 0.8m in thickness and up to 0.9m in average height. Latterly, the interior of the building on the SSE has been subdivided by the insertion of a partition-wall, for use as a naust, and a corresponding portion of the adjoining long-wall has been removed to facilitate this.

Beside the foreshore, to the N of (F), there is a narrow strip of ground which has been cleared and cultivated. To the W, there are the remains of a small hut (G). It has been terraced into the slope and measures 5.2m from N to S by 3.9m transversely over walls reduced to their lowest courses 0.6m in thickness. The hut has a curved revetted rear-wall (1.1m high in about nine courses), rounded internal angles, and incorporates a substantial boulder at the NE corner; the entrance was probably on the SE. The higher ground overlooking the farmstead from the W and N has been used for two principal purposes. The S-facing slopes, which are divided at intervals by a series of linear rock outcrops and crags, have been systematically stripped of turf, presumably for fuel, in such a way that the sequence of cutting is readily identifiable. Moreover, where the cutting has taken place, due to the minimal soil depth, large expanses of the underlying rock surface has been exposed. Peripheral to the turf-cutting, there are small pockets of cultivation and a number of linear clearance-heaps. There is also a hut (H). It occupies a small terrace at the foot of a prominent rock outcrop and measures 4.5m from NW to SE by 1.9m transversely overall. The rock-face and a boulder outcrop form the walls of the hut respectively on the SW and SSE; the entrance was probably on the NNW. Formed around a hollow, some 10m to the NNW, there are traces of what may be a building, or an enclosure (7.4m from SW to NE by 6.3m transversely overall), with a small pen at the NW end of its NE wall defined by stones set on edge (1.5m by 0.7m internally).

The steep but sheltered E-facing slopes to the rear of the farmstead have principally been given over to cultivation. The soil depth over these slopes is negligible, with the result that the furrows between the cultivated ridges are often grounded directly on the underlying bedrock. The ridging is well developed. On average the ridges measure up to 2.2m in width and 0.4m in height; the furrows are up to 1.5m in width. Within and peripheral to the area of cultivation, there are occasional stone clearance heaps and at least eight stances (others may be concealed by bracken). In part, the clearance has been re-utilized to form a series of low 'catchment' walls, which extend at intervals across the furrows between the cultivation ridges. The purpose of these walls was presumably to capture soil-loss from the ridges; a simple but effective solution to what must have been a perennial problem.

Amid the cultivation, and set end-on to the slope, there are the wasted remains of a hut (I) measuring 5.7m from WNW to ESE by 3.3m transversely overall. Immediately downslope, to the S, there is the first in a series of stances which are of similar character. Generally, these stances are quarried into the slope to provide a terrace, rear-scarp, and a built-up front edge. Their purpose is unclear, but some may have been used as working-platforms in conjunction with the husbandry of the slope. The stance measures 3m by 2.6m overall.

Upslope to the W, there is a second stance (J)), which measures 4.3m by up to 3.1m overall, with a rear scarp 0.9m in height and a built-up, revetted front edge up to 1.6m in height. To the S, although its detail proved difficult to make out due to the bracken, there is a platform (K), which appears to be rectangular on plan (6.6m by 4.9m overall) with a pronounced rear-scarp up to 3m high. The platform is partially edged with boulders. Immediately to the NW, there are the ill-defined remains of what may be another platform (L)(4.5m by 3.1m overall).

The following structures fall outwith the area of figure 1 and are located by reference to their NGRs.

Some 30m upslope from (L), beside a prominent boulder (NG 8237 0871), there is a double stance (5.2m by 1.8m and 4m by 2.2m from SSW to NNE respectively), that on the NNE being partially edged with boulders. About 20m to the WNW, there is a solitary stance (3m by 2m overall), while some 30m to the NNW there is a small rectangular platform, and about 10m upslope from this, there is another (4m by 3m, with stone revetted edges).

Beside a solitary ash tree, towards the head of the slope (NG 8234 0872), there is a natural gully, within which, at its N end, at the foot of a boulder, a small pen has been constructed (2m by up to 1.2m internally); there are traces of what may be a second pen immediately to the WNW.

## **2 Creag an Fhithich, buildings**

NG 824 088      NG 80 NW 2

Towards the head of a gully to the ENE of Creag an Fhithich, NW of Glac nan Sgadan, there are the remains of two buildings. The first, on the WNW (NG 8243 0881), measures 8.9m from WNW to ESE by 3.8m transversely over stone wall-footings up to 1m in thickness and 0.3m in height. A drainage-trench extends the length of the WNW end-wall and the entrance is central to the NNE wall. On the ESE there is a slightly dished hollow (3.5m by 5.8m). The second building occupies a subordinate terrace to the E of the first (NG 8244 0880). It measures 6.1m from NE to SW by 3.7m



transversely over severely wasted stone wall-footings 0.8m in thickness and 0.3m in height.

**3 Coirein na Leacainn, shieling-huts, enclosure, pens, and platforms**  
NG 82 08 NG 80 NW 3

Disposed over the boulder-strewn slopes of Coirein na Leacainn, ranging in height from 76m to 152m OD, there are the wasted remains of at least twelve shieling-huts, an enclosure and several possible pens, whilst downslope (generally between 53m and 83m OD) and principally grouped on the SE-facing slope to the N of Allt Coirein na Leacainn, there are at least seven platforms and a clearance cairn. The remains are as follows.

.1 (NG 8234 0826) Situated on a terrace, there are the remains of what may be a shieling-hut, its rear-wall formed by a large boulder, measuring 4.3m from WNW to ESE by 1.5m transversely internally.

.2 (NG 8235 0826) Immediately to the E of (.1), there are the remains of what may be either a hut, or a pen, reduced to its turf-covered stone wall-footings and measuring 4.1m overall.

.3 (NG 8235 0827) About 5m to the NNE of (.2), there are the partial remains of a possible hut, defined by a crescentic rickle of stones, measuring 5.2m overall.

.4 (NG 8238 0824) To the SE of (.3), there are the remains of a subrectangular structure, probably a hut (3.2m by 6.1m overall).

.5 (NG 8243 0819) Formed around a slight depression, there are the remains of a hut measuring 2.5m in diameter overall.

.6 (NG 8244 0819) Formed around a second depression there are the turf-covered wall-footings of a hut measuring 2m in overall diameter, and beside it those of another (2.6m in diameter).

.7 (NG 8245 0819) The remains of what may be either a hut or a pen (1.5m in diameter).

.8 (NG 8247 0816) The remains of a hut measuring 5m from N to S by 3.5m transversely over turf-covered stone wall-footings 0.9m in thickness; the entrance was probably in the W wall.

.9 (NG 8249 0815) A roughly D-shaped hut measuring up to 2.4m overall. Its WNW wall is formed by a large boulder and on the S side of the hut there is an enclosure (9m by 5m).

.10 (NG 8250 0816) The remains of a shieling-hut measuring up to 4m in diameter over stone wall-footings up to 1m in height, where best preserved on the E; the entrance was on the N.

.11 (NG 8248 0817) A hut measuring 2m in overall diameter.

.12 (NG 8250 0814) The wasted remains of a sub-rectangular hut (5m by 3.3m overall).

.13 (NG 8255 0812) A platform with a roughly crescentic setting of stones on its E side.

- .14 (NG 8256 0812) A platform roughly 3.5m in diameter.
- .15 (NG 8257 0814) This shieling-hut, immediately to the E of (.14), is roughly circular on plan. It measures 2.7m in diameter over stone walls reduced to their turf-covered footings and is a particularly fine example of its type.
- .16 (NG 8259 0818) A subrectangular hut, with rounded end walls. It measures 3.2m by 5m overall and there is an entrance in the S wall.
- .17 (NG 8260 0817) A hut roughly 3m in overall diameter with an entrance on the S.
- .18 (NG 8261 0815) A subrectangular hut (4m by 3m overall) with an entrance on the W.
- .19 (NG 8258 0820) This hut is roughly circular and measures 3.5m in overall diameter.
- .20 (NG 8268 0817, 8270 0820, 8270 0819, 8271 0820, 8267 0821) A group of at least five platforms disposed over a SE-facing slope. On average the platforms measure 3m by 2m overall.
- .21 (NG 8264 0823) The turf-covered remains of a wedge-shaped enclosure (up to 4m overall) which is open on the ESE.
- .22 (NG 8268 0820) A clearance cairn (2m in diameter).

**4 Allt na Leth-bheinne, huts, building, enclosure, platform, and  
and peat-cut**  
NG 82 07                      NG 80 NW 4

Disposed over a series of E-facing slopes to the N of Allt na Leth-bheinne (between 114m and 175m OD), to the rear of a prominent rock outcrop and close to an area of peat-cutting (.24 below), there are the remains of at least three huts, together with over thirty stances, or platforms. It is possible that some of the platforms may also have provided a level footing for buildings, or further huts, but the evidence is equivocal. Tracing a course upslope from the lowest platform, the remains are as follows.

- .1 (NG 8269 0789) At the foot of a rock outcrop, there is a platform, measuring 4.4m from W to E by 1.6m transversely, with a low bank on its leading edge.
- .2 (NG 8268 0788) This well-constructed platform has been terraced into the slope and the quarried material has been carried forward and deposited as an apron in front. It measures 2.6m from WSW to ENE by 2.4m transversely. The back scarp is 1.4m high and the front scarp, which is revetted with stone, 1.8m high.
- .3 (NG 8268 0789) Terraced into the slope at the foot of a rock outcrop, there are two contiguous stances measuring 3m by 2.6m and 2.9m by 2.6m respectively.
- .4 (NG 8267 0788) A platform measuring 3m from SW to NE by 2.5m transversely.

- .5 (NG 8265 0787) A platform measuring 3.5m from SW to NE by 2.4m transversely.
- .6 (NG 8264 0788) This hut has been terraced into the slope and has a slightly hollowed interior. It measures 4m from N to S by 2.5m transversely overall; the entrance was probably on the S.
- .7 (NG 8264 0789) A platform (2m in length) with an enclosure on its SE side (3.3m in internal diameter).
- .8 (NG 8262 0789) This platform, which is roughly rectangular on plan, measures 4.6m from N to S by 2.6m transversely and has a back scarp 1m in height. Immediately to the W, there is a second platform (roughly 1.7m overall).
- .9 (NG 8263 0788) This well-constructed platform measures 3.5m from NNW to SSE by 2.8m transversely. The front of the platform's apron (up to 1.4m high) is revetted with stone.
- .10 (NG 8262 0787) A platform measuring roughly 3m square with a back scarp 0.3m in height.
- .11 (NG 8261 0787) A roughly circular setting of stones (up to 2.8m in internal diameter).
- .12 (NG 8261 0788) A platform measuring 4m from SSW to NNE by 3m transversely overall.
- .13 (NG 8260 0792) A platform measuring 2.6m from NNW to SSE by 2.4m transversely overall.
- .14 (NG 8259 0792) A possible platform measuring 2.9m from N to S by 2.2m transversely.
- .15 (NG 8259 0791) A platform measuring 5m from NNW to SSE by 3m transversely.
- .16 (NG 8258 0792) A platform measuring 3.5m from N to S by 2.2m transversely, with a well defined apron to the front.
- .17 (NG 8258 0793) This platform is relatively well defined and measures 4.5m from NNW to SSE by 3.4m transversely. It has a slightly hollowed interior and a rickle of upcast extends along its outer edge. Contiguous with it, there are traces of another platform (up to 7m long) with a gap, possibly an entrance, on the SSE side. Together, these features may be the remains of a severely-wasted two-compartment building which has been terraced into the slope. Downslope, immediately to the NE, there are the remains of a hut (roughly 3m square) defined by a rickle of stone with an entrance possibly on the SSE.
- .18 (NG 8257 0792) The wasted remains of what may be a hut. It measures 5.4m from NNW to SSE by 3.5m transversely.
- .19 (NG 8256 0792) A platform measuring 4m from SW to NE by 2.7m transversely.
- .20 (NG 8255 0794) A platform measuring 5m from N to S by 4m transversely.



- .21 (NG 8254 0790) This particularly well-defined platform (see photograph) has been terraced into the slope and has a pronounced front edge formed from upcast (0.8m thick). It measures 5.3m from N to S by 4.3m transversely and the back scarp is 1m high.
- .22 (NG 8256 0796) A platform measuring 3.5m from NNW to SSE by 2.6m transversely.
- .23 (NG 8254 0796) A platform measuring 3m from N to S by 2.5m transversely.
- .24 Upslope, to the W of (.23), at a height of 160m OD, and defined by an edge extending from NG 8253 0795 to 8252 0796, there is an area of peat-cutting.
- .25 (NG 8249 0791, 8248 0790, 8247 0790, 8246 0791) A group of four platforms measuring respectively: 3.8m from N to S by 3.2m transversely; 7.2m from SSW to NNE by 3.2m transversely; 3.1m square, and 4.5m from N to S by 3.5m transversely.
- .26 (NG 8247 0796, 8247 0795, 8247 0794) A group of three platforms measuring respectively: 2.6m from N to S by 2.2m transversely; 2.3m from SW to NE by 1.9m transversely, and 3.8m from N to S by 3.2m transversely.
- .27 (NG 8247 0799) This platform, which has been terraced into the slope, measures 6.9m from NNW to SSE by 3.5m transversely and has a back scarp 0.8m in height. A possible extension to the platform on the NNW measures up to 5.9m in length.
- .28 (NG 8247 0798) A platform measuring 7.9m from NNW to SSE by 3.3m transversely.

## **5 Creag Dhubh, platforms and stone setting**

NG 828 077      NG 80 NW 5

Situated towards the head of a slope broken at intervals by rock outcrops (83m OD), some 65m to the W of the NW corner of the perimeter fence around Li, there are two platforms (NG 8289 0775). These measure in length respectively 7m and up to 3m. On a terrace immediately to the W (NG 8288 0774), there is a circular stone setting (1.8m in diameter).

## **6 Allt na Leth-bheinne, building and cultivation remains**

NG 8304 0785      NG 80 NW 6

Occupying a grass-covered terrace close to the foreshore, near a burn, to the S of Allt na Leth-bheinne, there are the well-preserved remains of a building, probably a dwelling. It is rectangular on plan and constructed of unmortared random rubble with rounded outer angles, and measures 10.8m from NNW to SSE by 5.2m transversely over walls 0.7m in thickness and up to 1.2m in average height, in up to eight courses. A drainage-trench extends the length of the SSE end-wall. The entrance (0.8m wide) is central to the ENE wall and, to the interior, the use of crucks, including an end-cruck, is indicated by surviving slots in the WSW and ENE long-walls, and the SSE end-wall (the NNW wall seems to have been remodelled). The cruck-slots spring from a height above the present ground level of between 0.4m and 0.75m and vary in width from 0.15m to 0.4m, and in depth from

0.15m to 0.3m; that at the NNW end of the WSW wall has been infilled. To the W of the building there are traces of a yard, defined in part by an arc of field-clearance.

Disposed over the marginally higher ground provided by the raised beach between Allt na Leth-bheinne and Allt Coirein na Leacainn, and bounded on the NW by a head-dyke approximating to the 30m contour, there are tracts of spade-dug cultivation. The ridging seems to have extended the breadth of the raised beach, excepting some poorly-drained pockets of ground, and there are further traces of cultivation, and at least four clearance cairns, on the lower ground immediately to the rear of the foreshore.

**7 Ceum an Doill, structure**  
NG 8281 0845 NG 80 NW 7

On the foreshore, some 240m to the SSE of Ceum an Doill, there are the remains of an open-ended subrectangular structure, possibly a naust. It measures 3.9m from SSW to NNE by 2.4m transversely over low boulder walls up to 0.5m in height and 0.6m in thickness; it is open-ended on the NNE.

**8 Li, township**  
NG 83 07 NG 80 NW 8

At Li, on and close to the site of the present house, there are the remains of what has probably been a small township, together with its outbuildings, ancillary structures, and cultivation. Not all the features may be contemporary and it is likely that the nucleus of the township is a site of some chronological depth. Other features, including possibly the remains of further buildings, may be obscured due to the redevelopment and planting which has taken place at Li. The site is sub-numbered as follows.

.1 (NG 8332 0751) The house at Li has been built on the footings of an earlier building, which, together with one to the S, is shown as unoccupied on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (1876, Inverness-shire, sheet 77). The first building, which is now represented by a plinth of grounders exposed within the drainage-trench on the W and S sides of the present house, measured 12.8m from NNW to SSE by 5.8m transversely overall. Two fragments of a rotary quern are displayed at the front of the house. The second building (NG 8333 0749), now rebuilt and in use as a bothy, measured 7.3m from N to S by 4.9m transversely overall; 14m to the S, there are traces of what may be a stance. Some 17m to the E of the NE corner of the present house, there are the remains of a rectangular building measuring 11m from NNW to SSE by about 5.9m transversely over turf-covered stone wall-footings 0.7m in thickness.

.2 (NG 8339 0756) Close to the point where the Allt Li emits to the foreshore at Li there are two roofed buildings and that on the SW overlies the remains of a third and earlier building, the stone wall-footings of which are exposed on the SW side. This earlier building measured 11.9m from SW to NE by 5m transversely over walls up to 0.9m in thickness. The rebuilt NE end-wall has rounded external angles and this may reflect their original form. The building (or possibly an upstanding portion of it) is shown as roofed on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (1876, Inverness-shire, sheet 77) and occupying the W corner of a sheepfold of which there are now no visible remains. The lower stone of a rotary quern is incorporated in the threshold of the building to the NE of the first. On the foreshore, there is

a well-constructed naust comprising two parallel freestanding drystone walls. A pierced stone weight, which was found close by, may have been used as an anchor.

.3 (NG 8329 0748) Built against a steep slope, on the right bank of the Allt Li, some 40m to the WSW of the house at Li, there are the well-preserved remains of a drying kiln. Its bowl, which is largely intact and devoid of debris, measures up to 2.6m in diameter, at least 1.2m in depth and is contained by a wall 0.8m in thickness. The flue was on the N and is lintelled. The kiln stands within the remains of an enclosure, which is now almost entirely reduced to its turf-covered stone wall-footings. Within the enclosure, 6m to the NNE of the kiln, there is an hemispherical pit (2m in diameter and up to 0.8m deep) with a rickle of stone (0.7m thick) around its perimeter. Its function is unclear, but it may be another kiln.

.4 (NG 8325 0749) On the right bank of Allt Li, some 30m upslope to the W of the kiln (8.3), there are the wasted remains of a horizontal mill, with lade and tail race. The mill is rectangular on plan and measures 7.3m from N to S by 3.8m transversely over turf-covered stone wall-footings 0.9m in thickness and 0.6m in height; the entrance was in the S end-wall. The interior has been subdivided to accommodate, on the N, the wheel-pit with its dressing floor above - the lade being channelled directly through the building at this end. The tail race emits from the N end of the E long-wall and the lade can be traced from a corresponding position in the W wall, upslope for a distance of some 40m to a point where the burn has been dammed (NG 8321 0749).

.5 (NG 8323 0750) On the right bank of Allt Li, to the W of the mill (8.4), there are the turf-covered stone wall-footings of what may be either an enclosure or a building. It measures 5.9m from W to E by 2.7m transversely overall. On the S side of the enclosure there is what may be a pen (detail was obscured on the date of visit due to the bracken), and on the N a drainage-trench. The rubble of a wall skirting the burn has probably been intended to protect the NW angle of the enclosure in times of spate.

.6 (NG 8326 0747) On an E-facing slope, some 45m to the S of the mill (8.4) and set end-on to the slope, there is a subrectangular building stance with a boulder revetment on it downslope, ENE side and edges. The stance measures 8.2m from WSW to ENE by 4.5m transversely and has a back scarp 0.4m in height.

.7 (NG 8327 0746) On a terrace beside the burn, some 7m to the SSE of (8.6), there are the turf- and bracken-covered remains of a building. It measures 7.2m from N to S by 3.9m transversely over boulder wall-footings up to 0.6m in thickness and 0.4m in height. The entrance probably lay towards the N end of the W wall. A trench-like hollow on the W side of the building may have served as a pen for livestock or else to assist drainage.

.8 (NG 8327 0745) Beside an unnamed burn to the S of Allt Li and situated on a terrace at the foot of the stream gully, there are the remains of a building. It measures 7.5m from NW to SE by 4.2m transversely over walls reduced to their turf-covered stone wall-footings 0.7m in thickness. The NE long-wall is distinguished by its substantial boulder footings.

.9 (NG 8324 0745) Some 35m upstream from (8.8) and occupying a comparable position, there are the turf-covered stone wall-footings of a



subrectangular building. It measures 4.8m from W to E by 2.9m transversely overall.

.10 (NG 8323 0755) Terraced into a SE-facing slope, to the WNW of the house at Li, there is a possible building platform (9.8m from SSW to NNE by 2.5m transversely) with a back scarp about 1.8m high; the approach to the platform seems to have been from the SSE. On the S there is a small depression (about 1.9m in diameter). The front apron of the platform is cut on the SE by a second platform (3.2m by 2.9m), which is stone revetted and incorporates a boulder to the rear.

.11 (NG 8324 0762) Terraced into the slope some 70m to the N of (8.10), there is a platform.

.12 (NG 8315 0762, 8304 0749) The principal cultivation remains at Li comprise two fields, which are respectively defined by turf-covered earthen banks, and each contains tracts of well-defined cultivation ridging. The first (centred at NG 8315 0762), occupies the rounded summit of a prominent knoll overlooking Li from the NW. In the interior, the ridges are variously orientated and grouped in swathes. The second field (centred at NG 8304 0749), in which the ridges are generally orientated downslope, is defined by an arc of bank and accounts for an area of ground bounded on the N by Allt Li. Earthen banks link the fields to the predominantly cultivated slopes which are bounded on the S by Allt a' Bhealaich Bhain (no. 9). Faint traces of cultivation are also apparent over the improved ground immediately to the N of Li, and skirting the foot of the neighbouring slope, over which there are further traces of ridging, there is a sizeable earthen field-bank. There is a clearance cairn at NG 8324 0753. The character of the cultivation noted above differs markedly from one area to another. Where best preserved the ridges are up to 3m wide and 0.5m high; the width of the furrows varies from 2m to 4m.

## **9 Li, Allt a' Bhealaich Bhain, farmstead and cultivation remains**

NG 8343 0728

NG 80 NW 9

On the right bank of the Allt a' Bhealaich Bhain, there are the remains of a farmstead comprising two buildings, whose NNW end-walls have been incorporated in the SSE wall of a 19th-century fank, whilst within the fank there are the wasted remains of a third building which may, or may not, be related to the farmstead.

The buildings comprising the farmstead are set parallel to each other, 2.6m apart. Each is terraced into the slope and has a drainage-trench to the rear. The larger of the two buildings, probably the dwelling, directly overlooks the foreshore. It is rectangular on plan and constructed of random rubble built to a course, with squared angles, and measures 10.4m from NNW to SSE by 5.2m transversely over walls 0.6m in thickness. The long-walls have been reduced to their lowest courses but the end-walls survive to a height of 1.4m in twelve courses. The entrance was towards the NNW end of the ENE long-wall. On the NNW side of the entrance there is a surviving window jamb. A possible cruck-slot (0.2m wide and springing from a point 0.6m above ground level) is located 1.2m from the SSE end of the WSW wall. To the front of the building there is a small enclosed yard (7.6m by 2.5m internally), and, to the N and partially overlain by the fank, traces of spade-dug ridging.

The second building, upslope from the first, is rectangular on plan, constructed of random rubble with rounded outer angles, and measures 8.1m from NNW to SSE by 5.3m transversely over walls that have, with the exception of the NNW end-wall, been reduced to their lowest courses (0.75m thick and up to 0.9m high internally). The NNW end-wall stands to a height of 1m in eight courses. The entrance (0.9m wide) was towards the NNW end of the ENE long-wall.

On marginally higher ground to the NW interior of the fank, and set end-on to the slope, there are the wasted remains of a building measuring 6m from SW to NE by about 4.6m transversely overall. An upright boulder has been incorporated in the NE wall.

Extending upslope and S along the lower slopes bordering Camas Domhain, there are extensive traces of cultivation ridging. To the N of Allt a' Bhealaich Bhain, the cultivation rises to a height of 122m OD, the ridging being subdivided into parcels by a series of transverse and lateral field boundaries. The limit of cultivation upslope is defined by an earthen head-dyke which is a conspicuous feature over this part of the coastal strip. To the S of Allt a' Bhealaich Bhain, the head-dyke embraces a large tract of ground, encompassing the headland of Rubha nan Tulachanan and extending E into the neighbouring bay of Poll a' Mhuineil. This block of ground is further subdivided by a lateral boundary, probably the march dyke between Li and Muineil depicted on Morrison's survey of 1771 (SRO RHP.112), which extends upslope from the S end of Camas Domhain. The course of this boundary beyond the head-dyke is fragmented but a 40m stretch of it is still visible at NG 8308 0671 (about 175m OD). There are clearance cairns respectively at NG 8345 0705 and 8345 0704, and a platform at NG 8316 0688 (no. 10).

**10 Camas Domhain, platform**  
NG 8316 0688 NG 80 NW 10

Situated high up on a NE-facing slope (171m OD), overlooking Camas Domhain, there is a platform (4m by 3m).

**11 Allt Li, shieling**  
NG 8260 0726 NG 80 NW 11

On the left bank of Allt Li, at a height of about 236m OD, there are the remains of a remarkable shieling comprising a cluster of turf- and stone-built structures (see photograph). These are subdivided 'A-F' and are as follows.

The principal hut (A) occupies a slight terrace towards the head of a NE-facing slope. It is well built, oval on plan and measures 5.3m from NW to SE by 3.7m transversely over random rubble walls on average 0.55m in thickness and up to 1.2m in height in seven courses. The walls have a slight external batter and rounded outer angles. The entrance (0.6m wide) is off-centre in the E wall. To the interior, in the S corner, a lambing pen has been constructed on the level surface of a large micaceous slab.

Terraced into the slope immediately to the NW of (A), there is what may be either a hut or a pen (B). It is roughly rectangular on plan and measures 3.6m from NNW to SSE by 2.6m transversely over rubble walls up to 0.8m in thickness and 0.9m in height. The entrance is on the NW.

Immediately to the N of (B), there are the remains of what has probably been a circular turf-built hut (C). It measures roughly 3.8m in diameter over a bank about 0.6m in thickness and up to 0.3m in height.

Downslope, 9.6m to the NE of (A), there are the remains of what may be a hut (D) which has been truncated by the burn. It appears to have been roughly square on plan (3.9m overall). The SE wall has been removed by the stream and only the footings of the E wall remain; the W angle is externally rounded.

In a shallow hollow to the W of (D), there are the indeterminate remains (E) of what may be either a hut, with a slightly scooped interior, or an enclosure. It measures 4.2m in diameter over a rickle of stone 0.6m in thickness.

Some 4m to the SSW of (A) and partially set into a boulder-scrree beside the burn, there are the remains of what may be either a hut or a pen (F). It is roughly oval on plan and measures 3.8m from SSW to NNE by 3.5m transversely over rubble walls up to 0.7m in thickness and 0.9m in height internally. The entrance was in the SSW end-wall.

Linking (B) and (F), there are traces of what may be a rubble wall delineating a slightly dished yard area (approximately 11m by 7m internally) to the rear of (A). A trough-like hollow has been cut-back into the slope beside (A).

## **12 Creag Dubh, peat-cuts and mounds**

NG 82 07 NG 80 NW 12

Disposed over the slopes to the E of Creag Dubh, at a height of about 198m to 222m OD, there are traces of peat-cutting and several turf-covered mounds, which are probably the product of the same activity.

.1 (NG 8260 0735) This mound measures 8m in diameter by up to 1m in height. It has been despoiled by a slit-trench which has been cut across its summit. Some 19m to the NE, there is a second mound (6m in diameter, 0.4m high).

.2 (NG 8264 0750) On a terrace about 140m to the NNE of (.1), there are the remains of an extensive peat-cut. On the NNW side of this cut there is a turf-covered mound (5m in diameter by up to 1.3m high).

## **13 Camas Domhain, grave**

NG 8354 0706 NG 80 NW 13

A probable grave is situated to the rear of the foreshore on the S side of Camas Domhain. It is orientated WSW-ENE and consists of a stone edging, with a boulder at the head and foot, and measures 4m by 1m overall.



**14 Camas Domhain, boat-landing**  
NG 8357 0706 NG 80 NW 14

At the foreshore, on the S side of Camas Domhain, there are the remains of a boat-landing which is defined by a line of boulders (18m long) which extend seaward from the high water mark.

**15 Poll a' Mhuineil, building and sheepfold**  
NG 83 06 NG 80 NW 15

On an E-facing slope (about 84m OD) overlooking Poll a' Mhuineil and set at the head of a series of fields delineated by low drystone dykes, there are the remains of a building and a remarkably well-preserved sheepfold (see photograph). The fold, but not the building, is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (1876, Inverness-shire, sheet 77).

.1 (NG 8355 0636) To the rear of a terrace at the foot of a steep boulder-strewn and outcrop-studded slope, beside a burn, there are the remains of a building. It is rectangular on plan, constructed of random rubble, and measures 7.5m from NW to SE by 4.4m transversely over a wall reduced to its lowest course (0.7m in thickness and 0.4m in average height). There are opposed lateral entrances towards the NW end of the long-walls (0.7m and 0.65m wide respectively). A drystone wall extends from the SE end-wall of the building and hooks round the front of the terrace to delineate a field bounded on the WNW by the burn. The pattern of field-walls over this part of the hillside is exceptionally well preserved and provides a contrast to the use of earthen banks elsewhere.

.2 (NG 8356 0642) Bounded by the head-dyke at the head of the fields overlooking Poll a' Mhuineil, and occupying a gentle S-facing slope, beside a burn, there is a subrectangular 19th-century sheepfold. It is well built of random rubble, with rounded angles and a turf coping, and measures 35m from W to E by 27.3m transversely over walls 0.9m to 1.2m in thickness, standing on average 1.2m in height. The interior is divided into a yard and two pens (that on the N subdivided), with a passage between. There are entrances respectively in the N, W and S walls of the fold, and lintelled creeps emitting from the pens. The central passage terminates at the yard in a projecting, curved spur-wall. There is a lambing pen in the NW angle of the fold and a rubbing stone (1.15m high, 0.65m wide at the base and 0.2m thick) beside the SW corner. A drystone dyke (lintelled over the burn) links the fold to the field enclosing the terrace on the S and to the neighbouring building (.1).

**16 Poll a' Mhuineil, building**  
NG 8380 0630 NG 80 NW 16

Close to a prominent boulder (about 30m OD), on a slight terrace overlooking Poll a' Mhuineil, there are the turf- and bracken-covered stone wall-footings of a rectangular building. It measures 6.3m from NNW to SSE by 3.8m transversely overall. It appears to be open-ended on the SSE.

**17 Poll a' Mhuineil, enclosure and boat-landing**  
NG 8411 0611 NG 80 NW 17

Close to the foreshore on the S side of Poll a' Mhuineil, there is a trapezoidal-shaped enclosure with walls up to 1.6m high. The adjacent foreshore has been partially cleared of boulders for use as a boat-landing. The enclosure is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (1876, Inverness-shire, sheet 77).

**18 Muineil, farmstead and cultivation remains**  
NG 84 06 NG 80 NW 18

All that remains visible of the farmstead at Muineil, which was cleared in 1851, are the remains of two buildings and extensive traces of cultivation ridging. The buildings, one probably turf-built, the other of stone, are probably successive dwelling-houses.

.1 (NG 8443 0638) Situated on the gentle NW-facing slope of the Muineil promontory, some 30m from the foreshore, there is a low subrectangular turf-covered mound. This is probably the wasted remains of a turf-built building. The mound measures 14m from NW to SE by 8m transversely and is up to 0.4m in height. On the NW side there is a rickle of stone and overlying the N side there is a clearance heap (4.2m by 1.7m). The entire area of the promontory, peripheral to the mound, has been cultivated, and, on the NE, single ridges have even been formed in the limited spaces between the rock outcrops. The ridging is generally grouped in swathes. On average the ridges are 2m wide, however, on the NW side of the promontory, there are a series (aligned WNW-ESE) of between 5.2m and 5.9m in width.

.2 (NG 8439 0635) Incorporated in a dog-leg of the 19th-century boundary-wall which skirts the landward side of the Muineil promontory, there are the remains of a building. It is rectangular on plan, constructed of coursed random rubble, and measures 7.5m from WSW to ENE by 4.6m transversely over walls 0.6m in thickness and up to 1.4m in height. The ENE and NNW walls, however, are reduced to little more than their turf-covered stone wall-footings. The SSE long-wall has a slight external batter. There is a blocked window towards the ENE end of the SSE wall (0.73m high and up to 0.3m wide), and what appears to be a small aumbry in the WSW wall (0.18m high, 0.35m wide and 0.3m deep). The form of the window is rather unusual (see photograph). It is internally splayed (0.25m wide externally, 0.4m internally), but the jambs are tapered and the sill is set only 0.3m above ground level. The building is shown as unroofed on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (1876, Inverness-shire, sheet 77).

**19 Eilean a' Mhuineil, slit-trenches**  
NG 8436 0661, 8428 0677 NG 80 NW 19

On the W and NNW sides of Eilean a' Mhuineil, there are at least three slit-trenches. The largest, one of two on the NNW, measures 2.5m by 4m and up to 0.8m in depth.

**20 Eilean a' Phiobaire, slit-trenches, boat-landings and structure**  
NG 83 08 NG 80 NW 20

The following features were noted on Eilean a' Phiobaire, however, due to the intensity of vegetational cover at the date of visit, observation of specific detail was difficult.

- .1 (NG 8308 0842 to 8314 0841) On the N periphery of the island there are a series of Second World War slit-trenches.
- .2 There are boulder jetties on the foreshore at NG 8317 0833 and 8301 0838, and a strip of the foreshore at NG 8300 0834 has been cleared for use as a boat-landing.
- .3 (NG 8309 0436 to 8313 0436) In the saddle between the island's two rocky knolls, there are traces of a stony bank. Its function is unclear.
- .4 (NG 8310 0430) Let into the ground on the SE side of the island there is a sunken structure which may be artificial in origin. Its side-walls, however, are entirely reliant on natural rock-faces.

**21 Inbhir Dhorrcail, farmstead and cultivation remains**  
NG 85 05 NG 80 NE 1

On the outwash fan at Inbhir Dhorrcail, and bounded by an earthen head-dyke, there are the remains of a farmstead, comprising three buildings and a kiln, outbuildings, boat-landings, nausts, and cultivation ridging. These features are sub-numbered as follows.

- .1 (NG 8523 0559) This farmstead, which comprises three buildings and a kiln, is situated to the rear of the foreshore, in a sheltered hollow, on relatively level ground beside the Allt Coire Dhorrcail. The buildings are set roughly parallel to each other and lie end-on to the stream. The largest building, probably a dwelling, is square angled, rectangular on plan, and built of random rubble incorporating many beach boulders (17.2m from NW to SE by 5.1m transversely over walls 0.6m thick and up to 1.1m high). The NE wall is slightly battered and both long-walls have been buttressed. The interior seems to have been divided into five cruck-bays and two principal compartments (entered independently from the NE long-wall); that on the NW was latterly probably used as a byre. Of the surviving cruck-slots, the best example is that set 1.2m from the SSE angle in the NE long-wall. It springs from a height of 0.5m above ground level and is up to 0.15m wide and 0.15m deep. On the ENE side of the building there is a midden hollow, and on the N, emitting to the burn, a stone-edged drain.

The neighbouring building, 4.1m to the NE, is round angled, rectangular on plan, and measures 5.5m from NW to SE by 3.2m transversely over rubble walls 0.7m in thickness and up to 0.8m in height in six courses. The NE and SE walls, however, are reduced to their turf-covered stone wall-footings; the entrance has been in the SE wall. In the interior, there are three cruck-slots in the SW wall and one for an end-cruck in the NW wall. Each slot springs from a height of 0.5m above ground level and is about 0.15m wide, 0.15m deep and 0.4m high. A portion of the interior, beside the NW wall, has been cut by a trench.



Some 3m to the NE of the previous building, there are traces of a further structure, possibly also a building. It has been reduced to a few turf-covered boulder-footings and measures 2.9m from NW to SE by 2.2m transversely overall.

Some 12m to the E of the farmstead, on the nose of the terrace overlooking the mouth of the stream gully, there are the remains of a grain-drying kiln (NG 8526 0559). It has been almost entirely robbed leaving a depression up to 3.2m in diameter and 0.8m deep; the flue was on the N.

The entire area of the outwash fan surrounding the farmstead has been cultivated, whilst close to the kiln there are at least three clearance cairns and traces of terracing (see also no. 21.3). The cultivated area is bounded by an earthen head-dyke and on average the respective ridges measure 2m in width. Close to the farmstead, sections of the stream bank have been revetted with masonry.

.2 (NG 8519 0547) This building, which stands on the line of the head-dyke (though it is unclear whether it pre- or post-dates the head-dyke), occupies a bracken-covered hollow on the left bank of the Allt Coire Dhorrcail. It has been terraced into the slope and there is a drainage-trench to the rear. The building is round angled, rectangular on plan, and measures 8.8m from NW to SE by 4.7m transversely over walls 0.9m in thickness and 0.9m in average height. The entrance, now partially blocked, is towards the NW end of the NE wall. The NE jamb of the entrance is unusually thick (1.9m) and externally has the form of a buttress, or plinth. Due to the fragmentary nature of the walls to the interior of the building, it is difficult to determine whether crucks were used or not. At the NW end of the building there is an outshot (3.1m by 2.8m over walls up to 0.6m thick and 0.5m high) with an entrance in the NE wall. On the NE side of the building a small yard is defined by fragmentary turf-covered boulder-footings (5.6m by 7.8m overall). Some 25m to the NNE (NG 8520 0550), beside the stream, there is a small hearth edged with stone (0.8m in diameter).

.3 (NG 8519 0549) Some 13m to the NNW of building (21.2), on marginally higher ground, there are the wasted remains of what may be a building. It measures 8m from NNE to SSW by 4.9m transversely over a low turf-covered stony bank up to 0.8m in thickness. To the ESE, between the building and the burn, the slope is slightly dished and this is probably a result of cultivation; there are traces too, to the NW, of terracing over which later cultivation ridging has been carried.

.4 (NG 8519 0545, 8517 0545, 8517 0543) About 18m to the S of building (21.2), there are the turf-covered remains of a trapezoidal-shaped enclosure (9.5m by 6.5m overall). Some 15m to the W there is a small circular pen, and, about 20m from this, a stance (2m in diameter).

.5 (NG 8521 0545) Some 30m to the SE of the above building there are two masonry bridge abutments marking a crossing-point of the Allt Coire Dhorrcail.

.6 (NG 8506 0562) At the W end of the outwash fan at Inbhir Dhorrcail, close to a prominent rock outcrop, there is a naust and boat-landing. The naust is set back 7.2m from the foreshore and has been cut into the peat. It measures 8m from NNW to SSE by about 8m transversely and is up to 0.8m in depth at its SSE end. A 3.3m wide and 23m long strip of the foreshore to the front of the naust has been cleared of boulders to create a boat-landing.

.7 (NG 8525 0562) At the point at which the E arm of the Allt Coire Dhorrcail reaches the foreshore, the mouth of the stream has been cleared of boulders and its W bank enhanced by a boulder edging (28m long) to provide a boat-landing and jetty.

.8 (NG 8536 0545, 8537 0545) Close to a rock outcrop at the S end of the bay, some 160m to the SSE of the farmstead (21.1), there are two boat nausts, which are both fine examples of their type, and the wasted remains of a building. The nausts have been cut back into the slope to the rear of the foreshore and measure respectively 4.5m by 2m and 3.3m by 1.5m internally, by up to 1.3m in depth. The sides of the N naust have been consolidated with masonry. Terraced into the slope at the foot of the rock outcrop, directly to the rear of the S naust, there are the remains of a small rectangular building (perhaps a net store), measuring 4.6m from WNW to ESE by 3m transversely overall, with an entrance in its ESE end-wall.

**22 Inbhir Dhorrcail, causeway**  
NG 8547 0540 NG 80 NE 2

Within the bay to the S of Inbhir Dhorrcail, there is an island which has been linked to the beach above high water mark by a boulder causeway (19m long, 2m wide and 0.4m high). The island, no more than a small rocky boss, bears no trace of habitation, but it may have been used as a pulpit or for celebrating mass. In the 1750s, Knoydart was still a staunchly Catholic district (cf. Munro 1984, 28).

**23 Inbhir Dhorrcail, hut**  
NG 8551 0535 NG 80 NE 3

On the E side of the bay to the SE of Inbhir Dhorrcail, there are the turf-covered boulder-footings of a structure, perhaps a hut, with what may be an outshot on its NW side. It has been terraced into the slope and measures 7.5m by 3m overall.

**24 Inbhir Dhorrcail, peat-cutting**  
NG 8547 0534 NG 80 NE 4

Some 40m to the WSW of (23), there are a series of crescentic scarps, each on average 10m long, which may be the product of peat-cutting.

**25 Coire Dhorrcail, shieling**  
NG 8492 0439 NG 80 SW 1

Disposed over a S-facing slope, bisected at intervals by minor left-bank tributaries of the Allt Coire Dhorrcail, there are at least sixteen shieling-huts and associated structures. These are as follows.

.1 (NG 8495 0437) Terraced into the slope directly overlooking the braided main stream and at a height of roughly 229m OD, there is a well-constructed hut platform (5.5m by 3m) with a boulder-strewn apron to the front. The rear scarp of the platform is bowed and has been revetted with masonry (up to 1m high in seven courses). The hut was entered through the WSW end-wall. Immediately downslope, there is what may be another hut platform (4.4m from WSW to ENE by 3.3m transversely), while

some 7m below this, there is a third (4m from WSW to ENE by 2.4m transversely).

.2 (NG 8498 0438) Some 25m to the ENE of (.1) and occupying a small terrace, there are the turf-covered wall-footings of an oval hut measuring 5.1m by up to 3.4m transversely overall.

.3 (NG 8491 0435) Terraced into the slope, on the nose of a narrow spur beside the burn, there are the turf-covered stone wall-footings of a shieling-hut. It is roughly oval on plan (5.3m from WSW to ENE by up to 4.2m transversely overall) and its ENE wall is distinguished by the size of its boulder pinnings.

.4 (NG 8487 0433) Situated on shelving ground between two burns, to the WSW of hut (.3), there is a hut platform which has been revetted with stone on its SW and SE sides. The platform measures 7.7m from SW to NE by 7m transversely overall.

.5 (NG 8490 0443) On a slight terrace at the head of a boulder-strewn slope overlooking (.1), there are the turf-covered wall-footings of a small hut measuring roughly 2m in diameter overall.

.6 (NG 8486 0441) On a grass-covered terrace close to a burn high up on the S-facing slope, there are the severely wasted remains of a hut comprising what may be two oval compartments. It measures 7.1m from SW to NE by 3.6m transversely over turf-covered boulder footings. Immediately to the ENE there are the turf-covered stone wall-footings of a hut measuring roughly 3.2m in overall diameter, whilst downslope from these, to the SE, there are those of another (about 2.6m in diameter overall). Upslope, 2.5m to the NW of the two-compartment hut and let into the side of the burn gully, there are the turf-covered wall-footings of a hut measuring 4.5m from W to E by 3.7m transversely overall, with an entrance probably in its S wall. Immediately to the E, there are traces of what may be another hut (roughly 4.6m overall). Some 6.5m upslope from the latter, beside a boulder and terraced into the slope, there are the remains of an oval hut (4.4m from W to E by 3.3m transversely overall).

.7 (NG 8485 0444) Some 20m to the NNW of (.6), beside a rock outcrop at the foot of a boulder-strewn ridge, there are the remains of a subrectangular hut or enclosure. It measures 4.7m from NNE to SSW by 3.8m transversely over turf-covered stone wall-footings. The SSW end-wall is formed by a sizeable rock fragment. On the ESE side of the structure there is a small circular box-like stone setting.

.8 (NG 8485 0446) About 13m to the NNE of (.7), and similarly set at the foot of the ridge, there are the turf-covered stone wall-footings of what may be a hut (3.4m in overall diameter).

.9 (NG 8485 0449) On a rock-strewn slope, some 25m to the N of (.8), there are the turf-covered stone wall-footings of another hut (3.2m in diameter).

.10 (NG 8483 0451) Upslope to the NNW of (.9), there are the turf-covered remains of a hut measuring 3.3m in overall diameter.

.11 (NG 8487 0453) On the left bank of the burn which bounds the shieling on the NE (about 312m OD), there is a small circular setting of stones (1.8m



in diameter), extending downslope from it, and cut by the burn, there is what may be a second stone setting.

**26 Coire Dhorrcail, Allt Tarsuinn, shieling-hut**

NG 8469 0388 NG 80 SW 2

On the right bank of Allt Tarsuinn, in boulder-strewn ground, there are the footings of a small shieling-hut. It measures 2.7m from WSW to ENE by 2.1m transversely over a wall, composed of upright slabs and rubble, up to 0.6m in thickness and, where best preserved on the NNE, up to 1m in height. Downslope, immediately to the N, and set back into the slope, there are the turf-covered boulder footings of what may be a small enclosure (3.3m by 2.6m internally).

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### **NMRS**

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**SRO**

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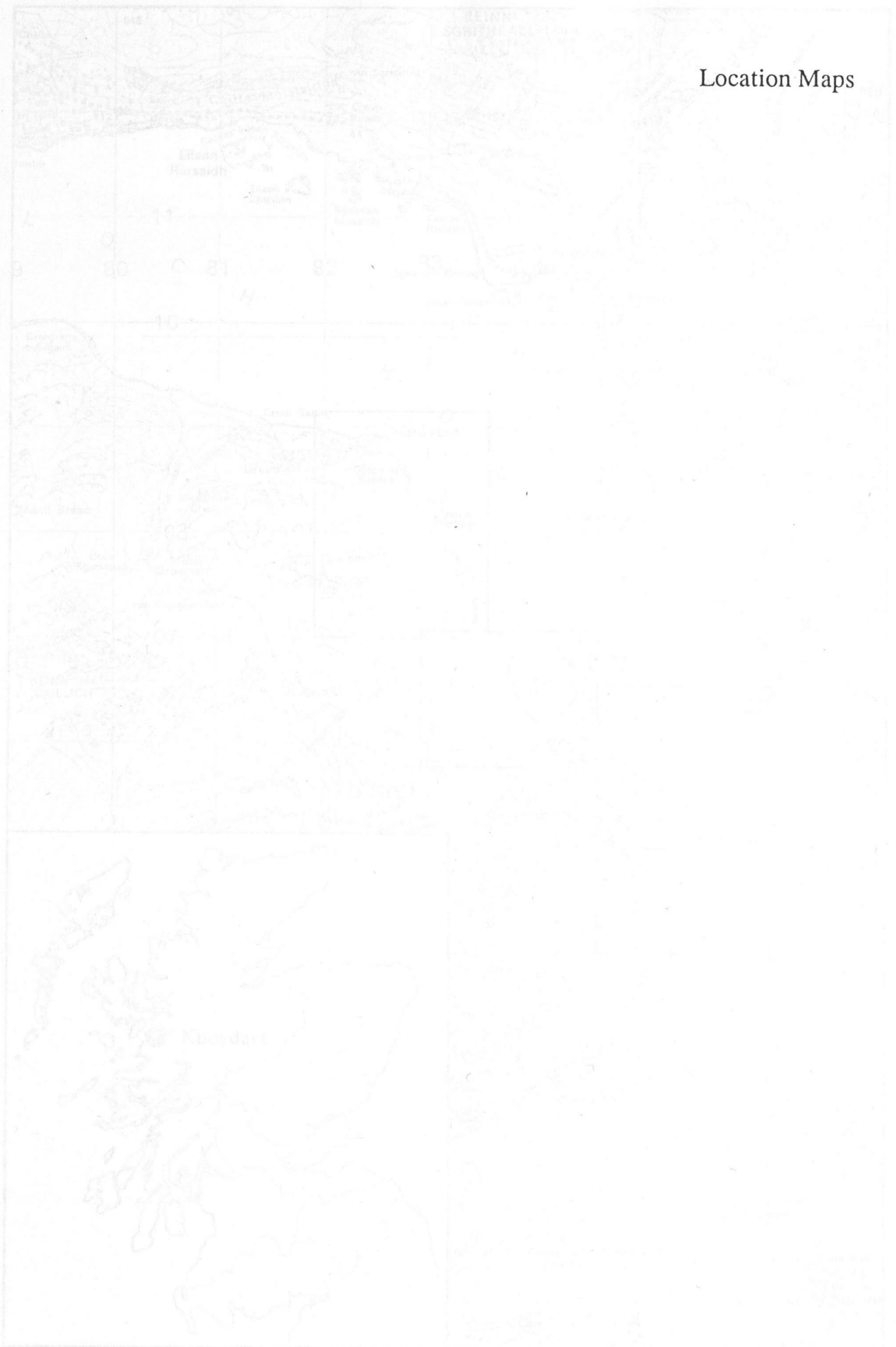
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## Location Maps



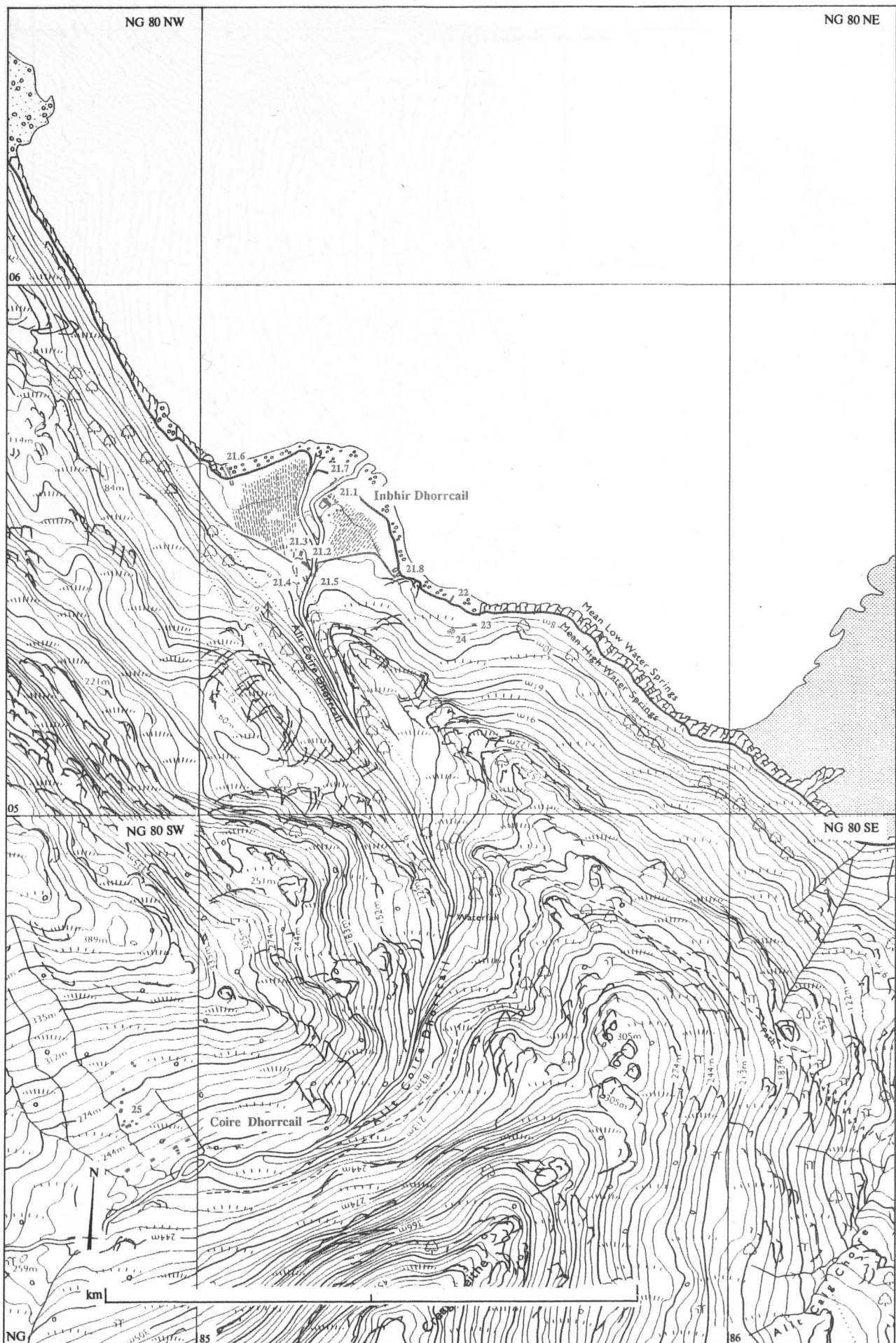
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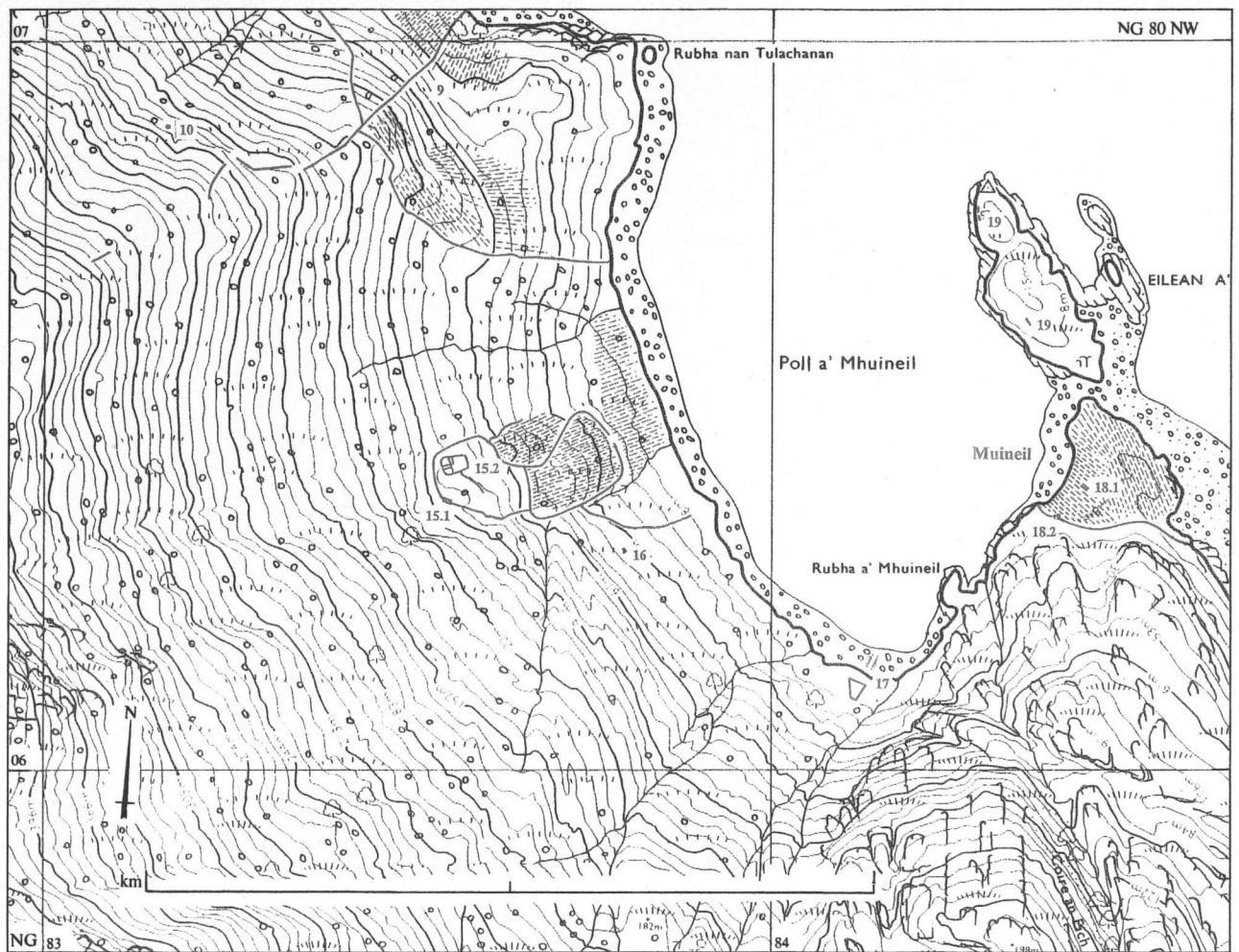


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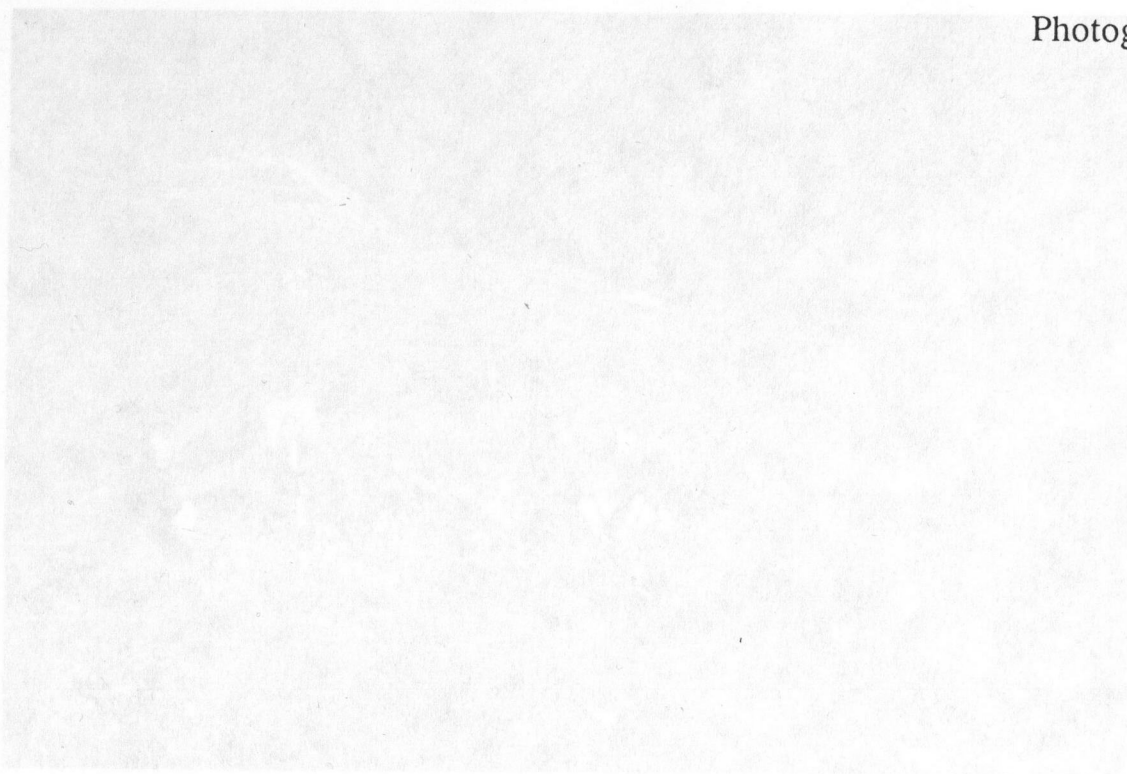




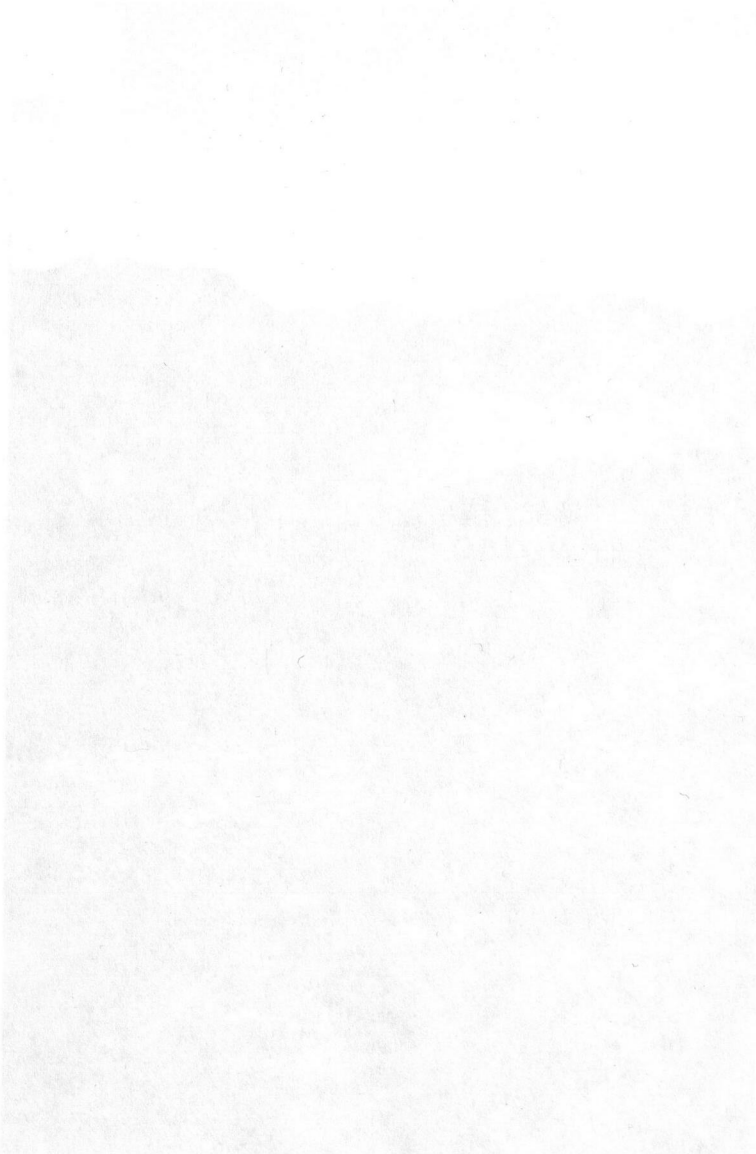




Sheet 2



42.1 Allt na Leith-bheinne  
seen from NW



42.2 Allt Li, looking from N





42.1 Allt na Leth-bheinne,  
4.21 stance from NW



11 Allt Li, shieling from N



15.2 Poll a' Mhuineil, sheepfold from S



18.2 Muineil, building, detail from SSE



