

Shootinglee Excavation 2021

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Excavation took place during April to November 2021 on the site of a building previously recorded in 2012 as part of the survey of Shootinglee, a forest stead in what was formerly Ettrick Forest (DES 2012, 166). The building is situated on a wide terrace 25m NW of a peelhouse (DES 2019, 184). The previous season's excavation (DES 2020, 125) revealed that the building stands within/on the walls of an enclosure on ground levelled off with a thick spread of reddish brown clay.

With further excavation of the S half of the interior it was found that, as well as the central byre drain, there is another drain round the edge of the cobbled surface. This drain is cut into the reddish brown clay layer, with sloping edge stones and capping: it terminates at the same point in the W wall as the byre drain which it cuts. Excavation of the S wall revealed a blocked up single width entrance (0.8m wide) which predates the curved drain in the interior. Outside the entrance a bridge of slabs covers an open drain running adjacent to the wall and led to a roughly paved yard. A possible cruck slot was found in the outside of the S wall about 1m from the SW corner. In the middle of the N wall there is a second entrance with a built up area of paving outside. Further excavation of the stone-lined drain outside the N wall found that it did not extend under this built-up area.

The NW corner of the building was removed to excavate the earlier enclosure. Outside the building to the S a 1m wide trench cut alongside the S baulk found that the clay levelling here was 0.35m deep and a section across the enclosure wall was also excavated. Some pieces of charcoal have been recovered from the core of the wall, but no other finds. Work will continue to obtain dating evidence of the enclosure wall.

Finds have been mostly from the 17th century onwards and consist of clay pipes, pottery, glass and metal including a small billon coin.

The building is interpreted as having had two phases. It was originally a 17th century byre with a door in the S wall and a central drain. In the later 18th century it was rebuilt possibly as a stable with a cobbled floor and covered drain on the S side of the byre drain and an entrance in the N wall leading to a paved yard.



Figure 1: Shootinglee excavations in progress - © Peeblesshire Archaeological Society.



Figure 2: orthorectified aerial photograph of building in course of excavation. The NW corner of the building has been removed in order to investigate the earlier enclosure wall - © Peeblesshire Archaeological Society .



Figure 3: the byre drain and the later stone-capped drain leaving the building at the same point in the W end wall - © Peeblesshire Archaeological Society.



Figure 4: view of cruck slot in S wall of building - © Peeblesshire Archaeological Society.