The Lands of Ancient Lothian

Interpreting the Archaeology of the A1

Olivia Lelong and Gavin MacGregor

Chapter 10

Tapestries of life in late prehistoric Lothian, *c.* 1000 BC–AD 400

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Introduction

During the first millennium BC and the early first millennium AD, the character of life in Lothian changed considerably from that of earlier millennia, with developments in agriculture, settlement, society and ritual practice. This chapter uses the evidence from the excavations discussed in Chapters 6 and 7 and from other sites in the region to develop a contextual study of Lothian's later prehistoric communities. It is concerned mainly with how society worked: the relationships between people and households within communities, between one community and another, and between people and the past as they perceived it. It seeks to explain the patterns in the evidence for Lothian in terms of social structure and changes in society over time, and to examine how life in the Lothians differed from or was similar to society elsewhere in Britain.

The chapter begins by summarising the evidence for settlement and other activity in the Lothians and setting it in chronological order, using the available dating evidence. From the results of excavations, it compiles a picture of farming and social life at these sites, weaving together different kinds of evidence to evoke the daily, seasonal and annual routines that made up community life. The second part of the chapter further interprets the evidence for these routines to understand the role of social memory and the nature of ritual thought in later prehistoric Lothian.

The Lothian Settlement Sequence

The dated evidence from excavated sites in the Lothians forms an overall sequence for settlement in the region; other sites, excavated but not yet dated, are woven here into the sequence where they most likely fit. Figure 10.1 shows the sites mentioned in the chapter. Where no published works are cited for radiocarbon dates, these were extracted from data compiled and provided by Patrick Ashmore, formerly of Historic Scotland.

In the early to mid second millennium BC, as Chapter 9 describes, settlement in the Lothians appears to have been relatively limited in scale. Small, mainly pastoral farming communities may have shifted their settlements on a regular basis, perhaps moving on to fresh grazing within a limited area, with some establishing more permanent settlements on the uplands. This pattern seems to have continued through the second millennium and into the first, although the upland settlements may have become less economically viable during the first millennium BC, resulting in greater competition for fertile, lower lying land (Macinnes 1982, 59). In Lothian, the evidence for settlement in this period is fairly sparse. What was probably a small farming settlement with associated field systems existed at Howmuir, with radiocarbon date ranges of 1680–1490 and 1610–1410 for the main period of occupation (see Chapter 6). A palisaded enclosure may have stood at Melville Nurseries around the same time (Raisen and Rees 1996), although its date of 1740–1300 BC is somewhat unreliable due to the mixed charcoal assemblage from which it derived.

There is also some evidence for larger scale activity. Towards the end of the second or the early part of the first millennium BC, the first monumental enclosures were built on the hill of Traprain Law: the summit enclosure was built after the early thirteenth to ninth or tenth centuries BC, and the inner rampart after the early eleventh to the late eighth centuries BC (F Hunter, pers comm; Armit *et al* 2002). The rock-art on the north-east shoulder, the quantity of Neolithic polished stone axe-heads and the bronze hoard found on the Law all suggest that the hilltop had been a significant place in earlier millennia (Jobey 1976, 192). During this period, when communities were small, dispersed and somewhat geographically transient, Traprain Law may have been a place with which many identified; it may have drawn people together from across the region for social, economic and religious or ceremonial purposes. In building banks that enclosed the hill, people were giving expression to commonly held beliefs and

10.1   Map showing the locations of sites mentioned in the chapter.

Key

> 0 ft
> 500 ft
> 1000 ft
> 1500 ft
> 2000 ft

0   10 km

N

Firth of Forth

Edinburgh

River Esk

River Tyne

North Berwick Law

Castle Park, Dunbar
Eweford Cottages
Broxmouth
Dryburn Bridge
South Belton
Biel Water
New Mains
Phantassie
Knowes
Howmuir
Farm
East Linton
East Bearford
Traprain Law
Standingstone
Whittinghame Tower
Craig's Quarry
Foster Law
The Chesters, Drem
Fishers Road East
St Germains
Fishers Road West
Melville Nurseries
Brixwold
Kaimes
Castlelaw

690 000
680 000
670 000
660 000
650 000

350 000
340 000
330 000

perceptions about the world they inhabited. After the early first millennium BC, on current evidence, the hilltop saw little further activity that left archaeological traces until the first century AD. However, the many different phases of rampart that encircle the hilltop, recently exposed through fire damage and recorded in survey (Armit *et al* 2002), may in fact have been created over hundreds of years during apparent hiatus, as later generations continued to express long-held beliefs, building new banks and expressing that wider sense of community.

From at least the start of the first millennium BC, groups of people began to establish more substantial, longer-lived settlements in the Lothians, sometimes on hilltops and often inside enclosures. One such group established a settlement in a palisaded enclosure at Standingstone, on the site of an earlier cremation cemetery; they erected a palisade inside a curvilinear ditch, and overlapping radiocarbon dates place the settlement between 1320 and 830 BC (Haselgrove forthcoming). Another curvilinear ditched settlement may have existed at Whittinghame Tower from about 1200 to 940 BC (*ibid*) Another community built a palisaded enclosure containing ring-ditch houses at Dryburn Bridge, also on the site of a much earlier cemetery. As the settlement expanded, the palisade fell out of use and a further 10 people were buried in and around it (Triscott 1982, 117–22). Although the span of calibrated dates from the site is large because of calibration plateaux, on balance it probably existed between *c.* 800 and 400 BC. North of the River Forth, in Angus and Fife, similar clusters of ring-ditch houses were generally not built inside enclosures (for example, Douglasmuir; Kendrick 1995) (Macinnes 1982, 60). During the same period, at South Belton in East Lothian, a community created two large scoops. They floored one with stones and eventually filled both with domestic rubbish. This midden layer accumulated between 760 and 400 BC, probably as a result of domestic occupation close by (see Chapter 6).

During the lifespan of Dryburn Bridge and South Belton, a much larger settlement was established on a hill at Broxmouth (Hill 1982b). It began as an open cluster of large, circular timber houses that were rebuilt several times (Figure 10.2). Over the succeeding centuries, later generations of occupants enclosed the settlement with a series of curvilinear ditches and ramparts. These went through several episodes of elaboration, expanding and contracting from one ditch to two and back again, with phases of neglect, destruction and refurbishment associated with various gates and roadways. The occupants built successive ring-groove houses inside the enclosure, and there was evidence of woodland management during Period VI (Ashmore and Hill 1983). Radiocarbon dates place this overall sequence between the eighth and the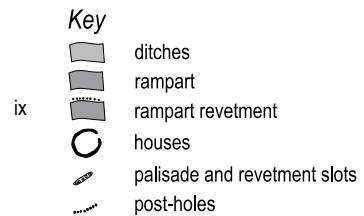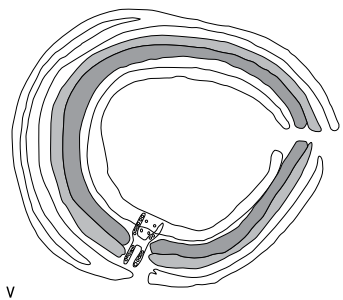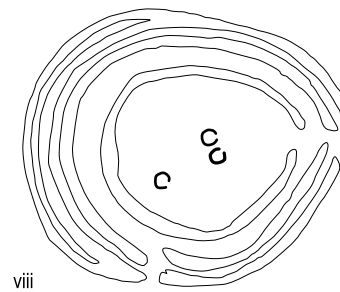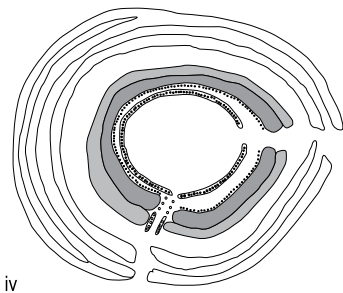 first centuries BC. From about the middle of the first millennium BC, southern Scotland saw large-scale forest clearance across huge tracts of land (Tipping 1994). This probably coincided or overlapped with the establishment of these enclosed settlements.

While Broxmouth was thriving as a large, elaborately enclosed settlement, another group of people established a settlement on a slight knoll at Eweford Cottages (see Chapter 6). They dug concentric ditches to create a large, circular enclosure around the settlement. The ditches were probably maintained for a period, but later generations allowed them to silt up, sometime between 390 and 200 BC. Around the same time, a community at Dalhousie Mains, Brixwold created a small, square, ditched and banked enclosure. Charcoal from the results of primary weathering in the ditch dated to 390–100 BC, but the ditch was kept open for another 300 years afterward (Crone and O'Sullivan 1997). Also during this period, a small enclosed homestead stood at Biel Water (see Chapter 6). As one of its smaller buildings fell out of use, the occupants dumped midden in it that contained charcoal dating to 390–170 BC.

During the same approximate period, a community established a small settlement on the site of the former palisaded enclosure at Standingstone. It consisted of 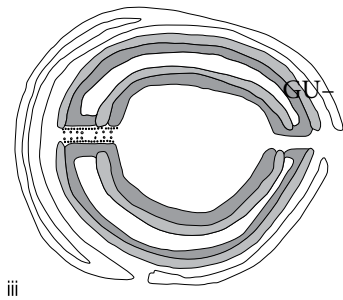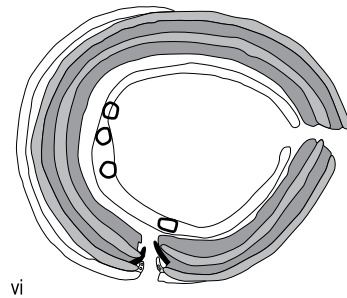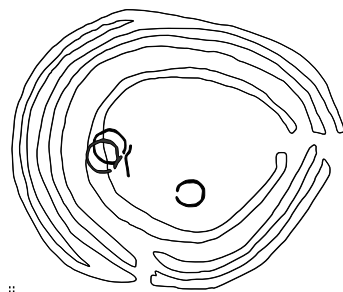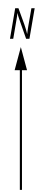several sunken-floored buildings and associated gullies, constructed over two phases between 400 and 50 BC (Haselgrove forthcoming). At Knowes, a rectilinear enclosed settlement was established from as early as the third century BC, continuing in use until the late first century BC (*ibid*).

During the last few centuries BC, some sort of activity also began on damp ground at Fishers Road West, Port Seton. Households were processing cereals in the area and perhaps creating a shallow-ditched enclosure, and at least by the second century BC a substantial, ditched, curvilinear compound stood here (Figure 10.3). People may have occupied the place several times each year for occasional markets or festivals (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 83). In the late second or early first century BC, two conjoining curvilinear enclosures containing houses were built at nearby Fishers Road East (Figure 10.4), and later generations enlarged and extended these during the following 200 years (*ibid*, 183–4).

During the last two or three centuries BC, those living at Eweford Cottages filled in the ditches that defined the settlement with midden material (Chapter 6). Charcoal from the midden produced dates of 350–40 BC. Subsequently, the settlement – consisting at this stage of paved surfaces and stone-built structures – crept out over the old ditches. Charcoal from occupation deposits dated this phase of settlement to around 40 BC–AD 210, spanning the first two periods of Roman incursion into Scotland (*c.* AD 80 to 87 and AD 139 to 160 (Hanson 1997)).

N

ii

vi

iii

GU–

vii

iv

viii

v

ix

Key

ditches
rampart
rampart revetment
houses
palisade and revetment slots
post-holes

0   200 m
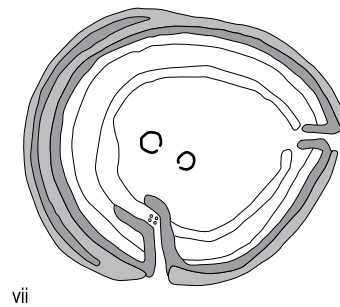
10.2   Plans of phases ii–viii at Broxmouth (after Hill 1982b).

Probably about the same time as the Fishers Road West enclosure was built and after the ditches at Eweford Cottages had fallen into neglect, a group of people settled above the valley of the River Tyne at Phantassie (Chapter 7). After an early phase of settlement dating to the second or first century BC, they built a more substantial, stone-built structure inside a palisade. Later generations expanded the settlement into a crowded farming hamlet by the first century AD, abandoning old buildings and constructing new ones, with areas of paving and hard standing to accommodate cattle. Around the same period, from *c.* 40 BC to AD 140, the ditches at Knowes were filled in and replaced by a scooped complex of stone-built structures and surfaces (Haselgrove forthcoming). The second-phase ditched enclosure at Fishers Road West was also abandoned, although it may have been re-occupied periodically during later centuries (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 83). Activity at Fishers Road East ceased soon afterward, perhaps in the mid second century (*ibid*, 174–5).

By the first century AD, the ditches and ramparts at Broxmouth had been completely abandoned, and a new generation of occupants built sunken, stone structures and paved surfaces on the stances of former ring-groove houses and over the old ditches (Hill 1982b, 150). These houses may have begun to be built as early as the second century BC (Hill 1982c), and they had probably fallen out of use by the second century AD. The scooped settlement at Knowes ceased to exist by the early third century AD (Haselgrove forthcoming), and the inhabitants of Eweford Cottages also abandoned their settlement by the late second or early third century AD (Chapter 6). The hamlet at Phantassie was gradually deserted, too; the last occupants had probably left by the mid third century AD. Around the time that these settlements were being abandoned, a scooped settlement with cobbled surfaces grew up at Whittinghame Tower, on the site of the earlier enclosed settlement; it continued in use until the fifth or sixth centuries AD (Haselgrove forthcoming).

At Traprain Law, both the inner and outer ramparts had fallen into disrepair before the first century AD (Armit *et al* 2002, 10). During the same century, it became a densely settled place for, it appears, the first time: recent work suggests that buildings were crammed into every available space, and the masonry and artefacts associated with them suggest that some were high-status buildings (*ibid*, 9). Occupation of the hilltop continued until the start of the fifth century AD (Jobey 1976; Close-
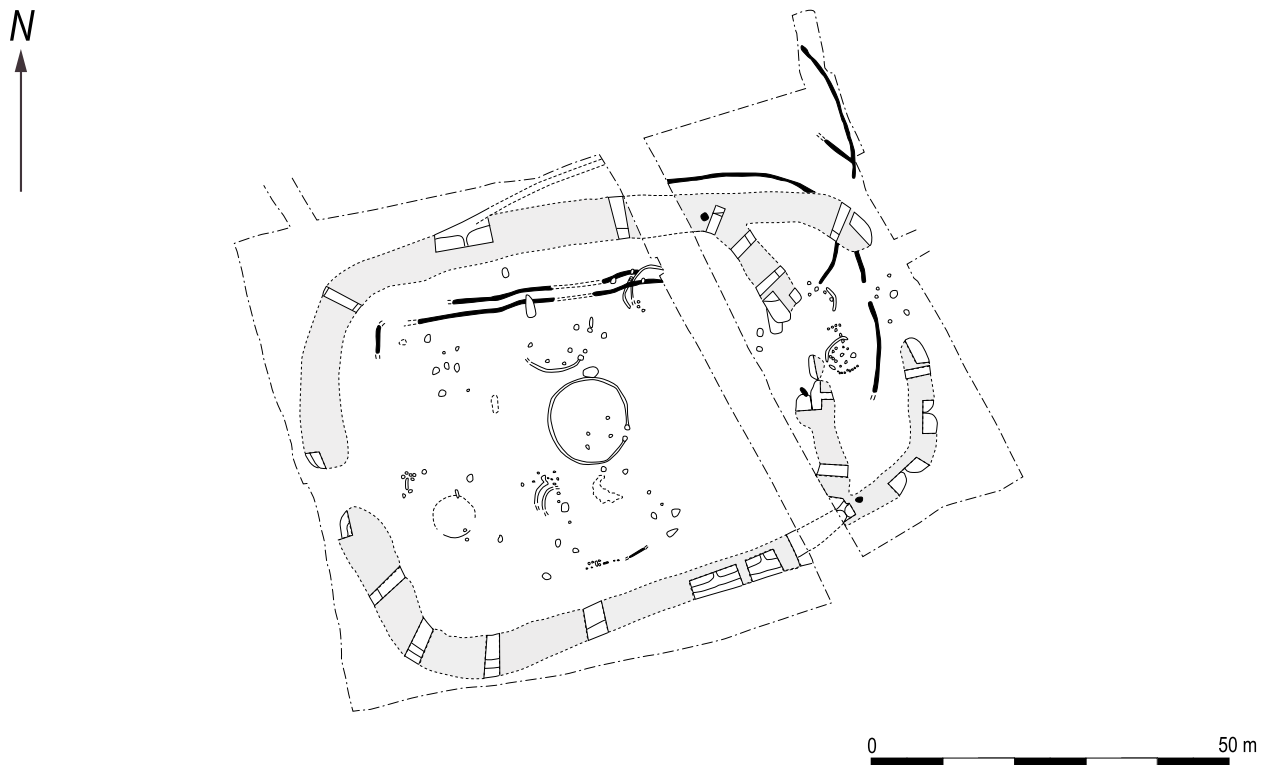
10.3 Plan of the Fishers Road West enclosure (after Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000).

N

0   50 m
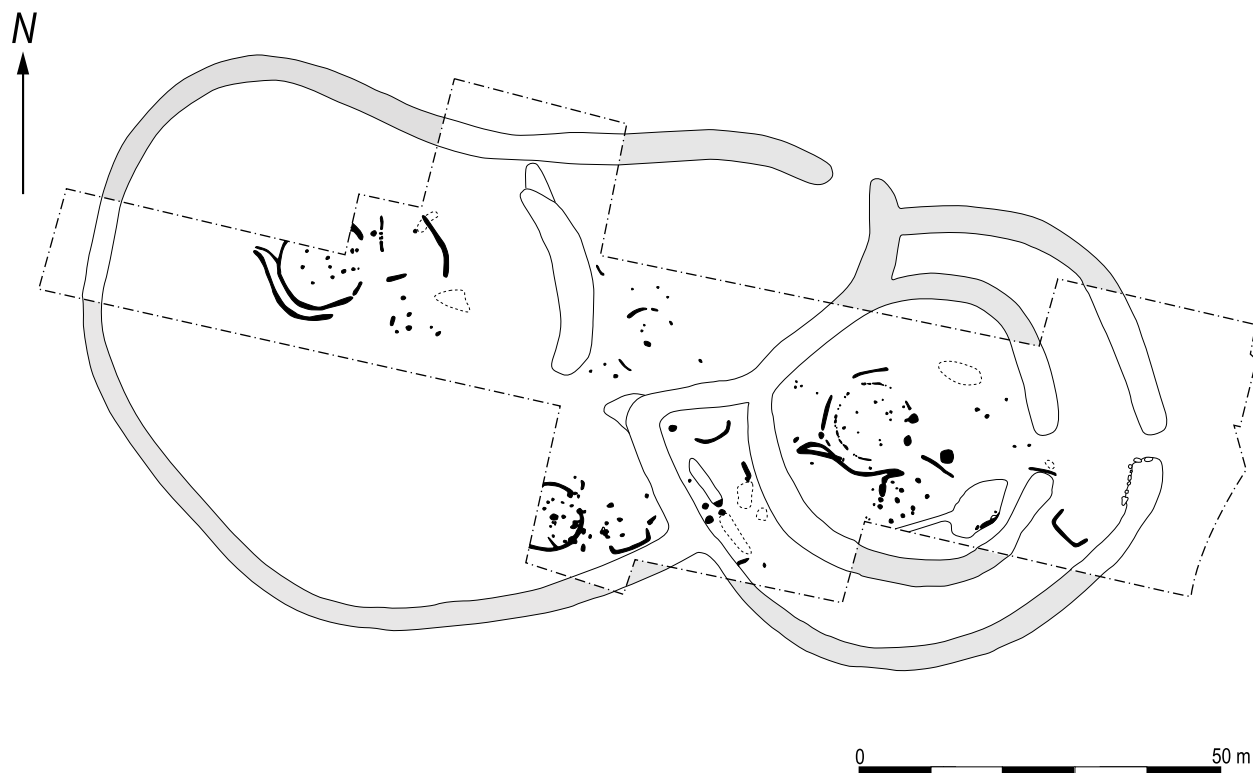
10.4   Plan of the enclosed settlement at Fishers Road East (after Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000).

Brooks 1983), long after many smaller settlements in the surrounding area had been abandoned. The hill was re-fortified not long before it was finally abandoned (Close-Brooks 1983).

We can place other settlements approximately within this overall dated sequence. The enclosed hilltop settlement of Kaimes, near Ratho, produced evidence of a main phase of settlement in the mid to late first millennium BC (Simpson *et al* 2004). Several enclosed hilltop settlements, including those at Craig's Quarry, Braidwood (Piggott and Piggott 1952; Piggott 1958) and Castlelaw (Childe 1933), have produced artefactual evidence indicating they were occupied during the late first millennium BC and into the first or second century AD, but none have been securely dated.

At St Germains, an open settlement with a ring-groove building became enclosed with successive phases of ditch and a rampart (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 216–24). The ditch and rampart were neglected and then refurbished, but finally they fell out of use altogether and scooped, stone-built structures were built (Figure 10.5). Although the sequence at St Germains is undated, the excavators interpreted it as extending from the mid first

millennium BC until the second or third century AD (*ibid*, 244). An unenclosed settlement that produced high-status metalwork and Roman pottery stood at New Mains, probably during the first or second century AD (Clarke 1969; Stevenson 1966).

These excavated sites account for a tiny fraction of the known archaeological sites that may date to this period: hundreds of enclosures, pit alignments and other linear features which cross the land are visible as cropmarks (Lelong and MacGregor forthcoming). Projecting from the fairly consistent sequences of the dated enclosures, we could guess that many or even most of these cropmark enclosures date from the mid to late first millennium BC and were out of use by the early first millennium AD. In addition to the sites known as cropmarks, there may have been hundreds of small farmsteads or hamlets, similar to Biel Water and Phantassie, which are invisible in the cropmark record. The linear cropmarks are evidence for an extensively organised and managed farming landscape, with pit- and ditch-defined boundaries marking out fields for stock or crops (Halliday 1982, 75).

The evidence provides us with a general sketch of the

ways in which the Lothians were inhabited during this period. We can picture a more sparsely settled region in the second millennium and early first millennium BC, perhaps with many little pockets of land cleared for growing crops and herding animals. Small, open or lightly enclosed settlements may have come and gone, lasting perhaps for a few generations, as communities shifted their settlement locations. Then, from the early first millennium BC, communities began to establish new, more permanent settlements or expanded existing ones. These more substantial farmsteads and villages may have sprung up on the sites of older ones, but they were altogether different in scale and commitment and in the marks they left in the ground. Groups put considerable energy into building them, nestling settlements inside ditches and sometimes also ramparts. They practised mixed farming and built large, circular, ring-ditch or ring-groove houses using timber, usually dividing the houses internally into concentric rings. The emergence of more permanent, substantial, enclosed settlements coincided with a phase of widespread tree felling – probably to free up more land for farming and also to produce timber to use in building the settlements.

Then, at the end of the first millennium BC, the people

living in the enclosures abandoned the monumental architectural ideas of their ancestors and filled in the ditches that enclosed their settlements. In some cases, such as Phantassie, new settlements of quite different form sprang up. Communities began to adopt new kinds of domestic architecture, too, building stone-paved, stone-walled houses ('Votadinian houses') that were divided internally in radial fashion, or which had no clear internal divisions at all (Hill 1982c). Hill (1982a, 9) argues that the Votadinian houses evolved from the earlier architectural traditions of timber-built houses. At this time, communities continued to practise mixed farming, although there is some evidence that certain places specialised in arable or dairy (Halliday 1982).

By the second or third century AD, many of these settlements were deserted, and the silent, disintegrating remains of farmsteads and villages must have been a common sight in the region. The hilltop of Traprain Law stands out as an exception: it became crowded while the land around it drained of settlement, based on the currently available excavated evidence. A few settlements, such as the one at Whittinghame Tower (Haselgrove forthcoming) and another at Castle Park, Dunbar (Perry 2000), continued in use until the fifth or sixth centuries

Composite plan   Phase 1   Phase 2

Phase 3   Phase 4a - c   Phase 5

0   100 m
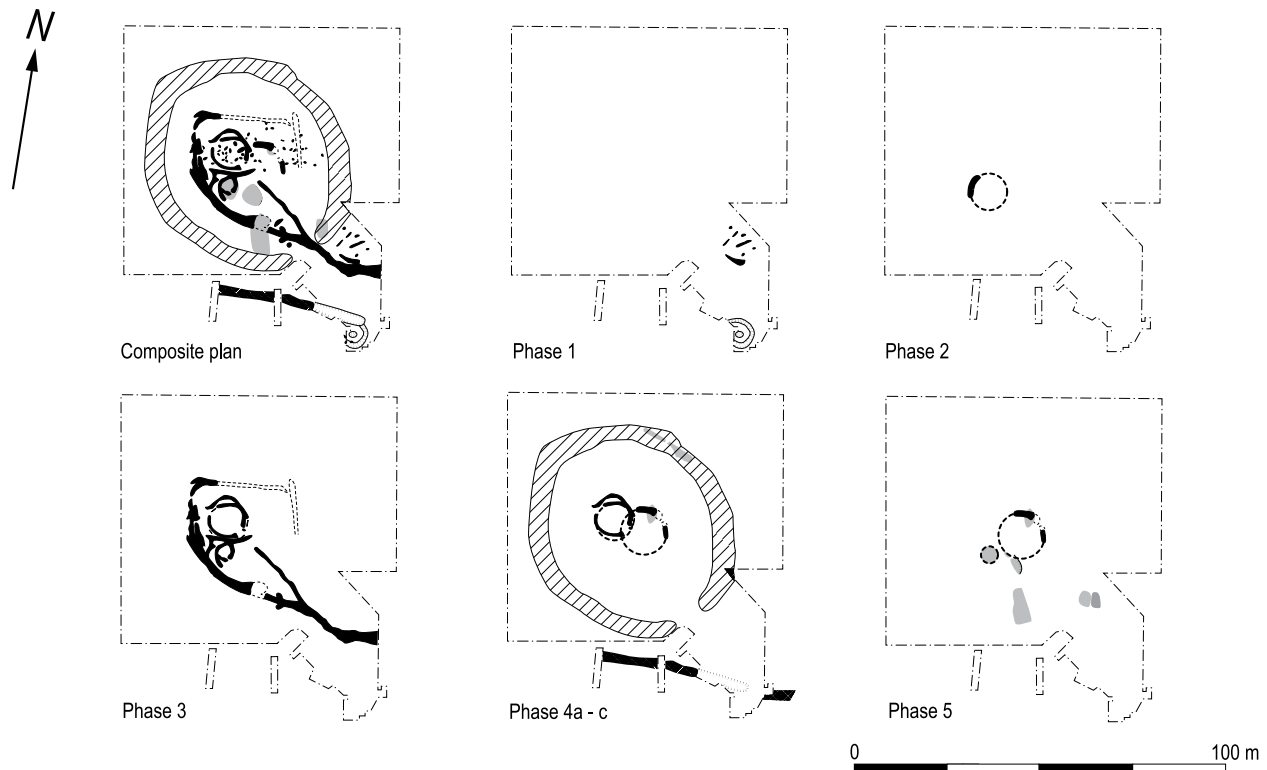
10.5   Plans of phases 1–5 at St Germains (after Alexander and Watkins 1998).

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AD, the period of Anglian conquest and occupation in the Lothians.

These broad changes in the form and location of settlement must have stemmed from deep-rooted changes in society. The following section considers the nature of those social changes, while the final part of the chapter explores the implications of changes in domestic architecture, material culture and settlement pattern for Lothian society in the early centuries AD.

Social life in the Lothians

Using the evidence and landscape contexts of the sites discussed above, it is possible to evoke a more textured picture of the cycles and rhythms of work that made up Lothian farming life during this period, and how those in turn related to social life. These tasks would have been closely interwoven; each one focused on particular parts of the settlement or its environs and led from or on to another. Together these strands of activity carried society forward, ensuring that communities survived and thrived from each day, month, year and generation to the next. In maintaining and sometimes changing the daily and seasonal routines that made up their lives, people were drawing upon shared practical knowledge and the material aspects of life. These were the means by which the social system was continuously reproduced. The relationships of cooperation, affinity, obligation or authority between older and younger members of society, men and women, and between one community and another were all lived out through these routines; people's routine lives structured social relations and were in turn constantly restructured by them (Barrett 1989a, 113–14). The longer-term historical movements that swept through the Lothians during later prehistory can only be understood in terms of how these routines were maintained and transformed, day by day and through time.

This section works through the evidence, first of all, for the broad structure of society, which provided the social context for daily routines. It then considers evidence for the building projects that created architectural frameworks for daily life and the ways that households organised space and moved around in the settlements. It goes on to consider the work that communities put into feeding themselves and making the things they needed, and the different rhythms of effort and modes of interaction with the environment that these tasks demanded. It moves between different scales and periods of settlement, as the dataset permits, zooming in on sites where the evidence allows closer discussion of aspects of farming life.

The structure of society

Iron Age society in Britain and across temperate Europe is often assumed to have been hierarchial (for example, Cunliffe 1975, 305); however, there has been relatively little detailed consideration of what that society was like, the nature of those presumed hierarchies or the evidence for and against them in different regions (Hill 2006, 2–3). For southern Scotland, the settlement record (large cropmark enclosures and hillforts) and material culture ('conspicuous consumption' in hoards, and the circulation of exotic, prestige objects, particularly Roman material in the later Iron Age) have sometimes been interpreted as evidence of the ways in which elite groups maintained their authority over less powerful members of society (for example, Macinnes 1989; Hunter 1997).

The settlement record for Lothian, and for central and southern Scotland as a whole, however, points to a more complex and dynamic picture of how society organised itself politically, economically and symbolically in the first millennium BC. A more nuanced understanding of late prehistoric social structure is possible if we consider the broad changes from which it emerged, the daily routines through which it was lived, and which model might best explain the patterns in the evidence.

The trend toward enclosure in southern Scotland stretched across the Forth as far as Fife, but petered out farther north in Angus (Macinnes 1982, 67–8). The ramparts and ditches enclosing hilltops and marking out lower-lying settlements like the Lothian cropmark enclosures have traditionally been interpreted as efforts at defence (Hingley 1990a, 96). This interpretation has its roots in the Hownam model proposed by Piggott (1948), which argued that Iron Age elites moving northward from England brought new techniques of warfare and established themselves in positions of defended authority, but that harmonious conditions brought about by the *pax Romana* made such enclosures redundant. The results of more recent excavations in Lothian and elsewhere have shown that many of the enclosures went out of use before the first Roman incursions (Hill 1982a; Haselgrove forthcoming); even so, this model continues to influence interpretations of Iron Age life in southern Scotland (Armit 1999). Other authors have argued that the creation of such earthworks increased the degree of social isolation and the prestige of a settlement and its inhabitants (for example, Bowden and McOmish 1987, 77; Hingley 1990, 101–2).

Any interpretation of the social changes that prompted communities to establish more permanent and enclosed settlements must fit the contemporary context of economic change. The sequence sketched in the preceding section demonstrated how, around the early to mid first millennium BC, the pattern changed from one of small, dispersed, relatively transient settlements to one of larger, formally enclosed settlements, and how this coincided

with a significant burst in woodland clearance and land management. This increasing clearance and organisation could have coincided with the growing availability of iron tools (see Armit and Ralston 2003; Hingley 1997, 10–11), facilitating a trend toward more extensive farming and woodland management that was linked to or triggered by social and political changes (Armit 1999, 76).

More extensive farming would have required greater social organisation and cooperation within communities, and more complex negotiation and competition between communities for land and other resources (Tipping 1997b). Before this period, communities may have been relatively unstable and fluid, dissolving and re-forming in various configurations based on kinship or economic activity. Now, with greater commitment to farming particular tracts of land and with bigger labour requirements, as well as potential competition from other groups, these clusters of households needed stronger communal identities. The building of enclosures around settlements seems designed to make a vivid impact upon those both inside and outside the settlement, and not necessarily always in a military sense. A community with a strong sense of its own identity would have had no need to declare its coherence through a physical boundary.

Enclosure construction would have crystallised group identities that existed only loosely, as 'unstable entities … prone to fission' (Hill 2006, 9). It required communal effort, whether willingly provided or given under obligation or duress, bringing members together in physical labour. The resulting earthworks clearly defined the locus of their settlement, to its members and to the outside world. At many of the excavated enclosed sites, such as Fishers Road West and Broxmouth, there was evidence that the ditches were cleaned out, the ramparts were rebuilt and the gate structures were renewed on a regular basis (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000; Hill 1982b). This could have been done in order periodically to reaffirm community bonds, to draw its members together in physical acts of communal work. Phases of neglect, such as those evident at Broxmouth, may have reflected times when community identity was stronger and could be taken for granted; these may have been followed with bursts of enclosure renewal, out of a perceived need to fortify the communal sense of self.

This discussion of enclosed settlements requires a caveat. While enclosure was undeniably a strong trend during the first millennium BC in southern Scotland, our picture of its prevalence may be skewed by archaeological survival. Enclosures survive as cropmarks in arable landscapes, while unenclosed settlements are much less visible; the known unenclosed settlements (such as Phantassie) tend to be discovered by chance. It is difficult to evaluate the importance of enclosure in society without knowing whether it was common or exceptional (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 77). If it were exceptional, then enclosed settlements might have been surrounded by many more small, unenclosed farmsteads and villages.

What were the relationships between different communities? How did they establish themselves in certain places and maintain their rights to the resources within reach? One means may have been by stating affinities to ancient ceremonial sites and claiming access to the ancestral powers associated with them; there is evidence for this at both Eweford West and Pencraig Hill (see Chapters 6 and 11). The emergence of distinctive communities may have been motivated and facilitated by competition for resources, and the greater or lesser success of different groups may have given them more or less economic and political power. Certainly some settlements in Lothian, such as Broxmouth (0.65ha) and Fishers Road East (0.8ha), were larger than others, such as Standingstone (0.2ha) or Brixwold (0.16ha). By implication, the inhabitants of Broxmouth had access to more resources than those living in the smaller settlements; by further implication, certain resources were off limits to the latter. However, this does not necessarily simply equate to a highly stratified society, or to a small upper echelon of society wielding power over those with less material wealth or resources. Excavation of these settlements has produced evidence of varying degrees of material wealth that do not always correlate to hectarage. It has not usually been possible to identify, on the basis of architectural form or size, the houses of 'big men' within settlements or a hierarchy between them, as might be argued for the Atlantic region of Scotland (one exception is Fishers Road East, where the excavator speculated that Enclosure 1 was built for a group of higher social standing than those in the rest of the settlement (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 175)). It is, of course, possible that differential status was expressed through other media, such as hoarding or feasting or the size of cattle herds.

Hill (2006) proposes a model for less hierarchical, more segmentary, late prehistoric societies which seems to achieve a better fit for the southern and central Scottish evidence. In his model, each community drew on the resources within a limited territory of a few kilometres across, but there were networks of cooperation between them along lines of kinship and economic relations, with both competition and mutual defence coming into play at different times. Communities probably owned or controlled certain resources in common, including arable land, grazing land and woodland. While kinship was an important social glue, it did not necessarily hold over multiple generations. Instead, it produced a complicated, untidy network of relationships between different households, in which other strands were created

through marriage, gifts, traded commodities, reciprocal obligations and mutual dependence.

The tribal group of the 'Votadini', noted by the Greek geographer Ptolemy in the second century AD (Hogg 1951; Armit 2005, 69), may have been how people in this region identified themselves in broad terms, although there is no way of knowing to what degree information about local groups was simplified or distorted in the process of eventual transmission to written form. In any case, the 'Votadini' need not have been the fixed, stable identity that a simple tag implies (see text box 10.1).

Some excavators have suggested that enclosures would have required more people to dig ditches and build ramparts than could have lived in the spaces they enclosed (for example, Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 186). There may have been close social links between communities in a particular area, with each contributing to the creation of the others as expressions of those links. Alternatively, members of a subservient, unfree class who lived outside the enclosures might have been forced to help build them. Pairs or small clusters of enclosures such as Fishers Road East, or the concentration centred on The Chesters, Drem, may relate to social territories in late prehistoric Lothian (*ibid*, 187). These clusters of enclosed farmsteads, along with unenclosed settlements, like Phantassie and other places used for fairs or markets, like Fishers Road

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10.1

The Votadini

According to the Greek geographer Ptolemy, by the time the Romans first invaded Scotland in the second century AD, the land was occupied by various tribes. He described their territories, placing the Votadini in the south-east in what is now the Lothians. It is likely that Ptolemy presented a heavily schematic, simplified picture; he was not concerned with presenting an accurate account of indigenous society for its own sake. Even so, the impression he gives of many different groups, defined by kinship links and occupying particular areas, is probably a a fairly accurate picture of the society that the Roman army encountered.

Traprain Law was traditionally identified as the capital of the Votadini. While it does not seem to have functioned as an oppidum, in the sense of the large, fortified, hilltop proto-towns of southern England and Gaul, it seems to have been considered a significant place by groups from the surrounding area well before the first Roman invasion around AD 80.

There are no Roman forts and marching camps in East Lothian, except for Inveresk at Musselburgh on its western edge. This has led some to argue that the Roman army made alliances with the local tribe(s) before it ventured northward. This was a typical Roman tactic along its frontiers, and it would suggest there was rivalry between the different tribal groups occupying Scotland. The lack of defences or evidence for warfare at indigenous sites in the Lothians during the early centuries AD would also support the idea that the Votadini enjoyed relative freedom and prosperity because of their peaceable relations with Rome. The inhabitants of Traprain Law in the first and second century AD, in particular, had abundant fine artefacts of Roman origin or stylistic influence, suggesting that they possessed both wealth and healthy trade links.

We know little of how the Votadini defined themselves – whether they would have recognised themselves as belonging to a coherent group with that name, or whether they considered themselves members of many disparate groups that had a very loose, broad, shared identity. While the people occupying East Lothian may not have felt the need to defend themselves against the Roman army, it does appear that knowledge of and contact with the Roman Empire introduced new complexity to their social structure. Pressure from outside may have led to the rise of leaders in the tribe who could organise its members and negotiate on their behalf. A potential threat from Rome may have led loosely affiliated communities to move closer together under a more clearly defined tribal identity.

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West, would have been connected by the fluid ties of kinship, marriage, mutual dependence and obligation evoked by Hill (2006, 9). Members of these different communities may have banded together to raid other groups or defend their own territories when necessary. These linked communities may have been similar to the discrete settlement clusters identified by Wise (2000) in the middle Tweed Valley, where each focused on a river or loch and averaged 2km² in extent.

The daily routines considered below were lived out within many interlinking contexts: relations within and between the households that made up communities; kinship groups and their role in social life; political relations between communities; agricultural production, and the uses of land, fertility and agricultural products as cultural and political resources (Hill 2006, 11). The following sections explore the evidence for these routines and for the social conditions that shaped them and which they reproduced.

Building work

By definition, the creation and maintenance of a settlement involved building houses, outbuildings and in some cases ditches and ramparts around them. These architectural features framed and choreographed the daily lives of people who inhabited them, both producing and reproducing their social relations (see Foster 1989). Different building projects would have demanded different combinations and numbers of workers. At Fishers Road West, successive phases involved digging six enclosures, two of which held palisades, that may have been used seasonally for markets or festivals over perhaps 500 years (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 83). Every 50 to 100 years, those who had inherited the tradition of gathering there renewed the enclosure, digging a new ditch that followed the ground plan of the previous one; they may have inherited the obligation to do this periodically, along with rights to the ground. If different communities came together here on a regular basis, this is likely to have been a communal effort, with members from each one contributing labour. Such acts of physical renewal may have also reaffirmed a shared sense of mutual dependence and obligation.

At much larger settlements like Broxmouth, phases of construction work involved building and remodelling ring-ditch houses; digging enclosure ditches and building ramparts and gateways; re-cutting ditches and refurbishing ramparts after periods of neglect or destruction; filling in the ditches, and building and then remodelling new stone-paved buildings (Hill 1982b). The interim results evoke the dynamic, changing character of the settlement over time. There were periods of intense, ambitious activity that must have involved thousands of hours of work, such as Period III, which saw the construction of the first

ditch and rampart, the addition of a second and then the enclosure's contraction to a single ditch, with successive gateway structures. There were also phases when the intensity of activity fluctuated, such as Period V, when a new ditch, rampart and gateway structure were built, but eventually fell derelict, and squatters may have occupied the site for a time (Hill 1982b, 161).

The phases of construction would have involved marshalling and organising the community. To hack out the ditches would have first involved collecting hundreds of deer antlers to make picks like the broken ones found near a Period III ditch terminal (*ibid*, 155). Creating the ramparts involved shovelling the spoil to mound up the banks, cutting hundreds of trees for the rampart frames and gate structures, setting them in place and pinning or tying them together. The timber requirement has further implications: the evidence suggests that the occupants during Period VI were managing woodland (Ashmore and Hill 1983); they therefore had control over particular forests, and the foresight to manage them in such a way that they would meet their needs for building materials.

To build timber ring-ditch buildings like those that stood at Dryburn Bridge, Fishers Road West, St Germains and Broxmouth would have required some communal effort, perhaps from the family that would use each one or from the stronger members of several families. For Dryburn Bridge House 2 or Broxmouth Building 2, for example, they would have had to travel to a forest and cut oak trees for the building's plank walls (Reynolds 1982, 51). They may have split the trunks (radially, in this case (Triscott 1982, 120)) in the forest to make them easier to carry back to the settlement. Assembling the house involved digging the ring-groove, setting the uprights against its edge, erecting posts at the right height to form a properly pitched roof frame and covering it with thatch (Reynolds 1982).

At Phantassie, we have a fairly detailed picture of the building projects that marked the settlement's expansion from the second or first century BC to the second or third century AD (Chapter 7). When the inhabitants took on new phases of building, they would have had to collect stones from the fields or riverbeds to make the wall bases. They cut trees and branches from scrub woodland for posts and wattling, and the consistent diameters of hazel rods in the wall of Structure 1 suggest that they were coppicing woodland to produce good building material (Miller and Ramsay, see Chapter 12 and Archive). They dug holes to hold posts and hammered stones around their edges to keep them upright. They collected clay from some local quarry or riverbed to plaster some of the walls; charred wattle-and-daub were found in the midden store (Structure 4), and other fragments of daub were recovered

from across the settlement. At other times they cut heather, travelling to heathland to which they had access, to thatch the roofs; much of the charcoal assemblage from the site consisted of burnt heather, some of which may have begun as the constituents of buildings. They may have tempered turves with animal manure to make them more usable for wall-building (Simpson, see Chapter 12 and Archive). Households may have gathered materials like this every few years to make repairs or weave new hurdles in small-scale, piecemeal fashion, but the more intensive phases of building must have required large efforts to gather materials. Before they began building, they may have had to pull down an old structure on the site, throwing soot-penetrated thatch on the midden and posts on the firewood pile.

What are the implications of these building projects for social organisation inside and between settlements? Domestic architecture can be a useful indicator of social complexity (Reid 1989; Armit 1997). Certainly, in excavated settlements in Lothian and elsewhere in the Tyne–Forth province, it is difficult to identify evidence of hierarchies between households on the basis of house size or complexity. There are no obvious equivalents to Classical villas or Medieval manor houses, the homes of the social elite in other contexts. This might suggest a relatively egalitarian social structure, at least within settlements. In the larger settlements like Broxmouth, it may be that several families pitched together to build each one's house.

The shift from timber-built to stone-built houses in the early first millennium AD may reflect less abundant supplies of suitable wood for construction (Reynolds 1982, 55). The profligate woodland clearance of the mid to late first millennium BC may have been followed by a period of more careful management, like that in evidence at Broxmouth (Ashmore and Hill 1983) and Phantassie (see Chapter 7). Perhaps later, as forests dwindled and more land was enclosed for farming, communities adapted their building projects to the now-available resources, drawing on stone more than wood.

Making space

The built features of each settlement framed the lives of its inhabitants, both expressing and influencing the social relations between them (Foster 1989). At some of the excavated sites, it is possible to place ourselves in the settlement and understand the ways that people entered it, occupied its buildings and moved between them, and the effects of these movements upon social life. Studies of the alignment of doorways in houses (for example, Oswald 1997) and of the distribution of artefacts within them (for example, Fitzpatrick *et al* 1995; Hunter 1998b) have highlighted how, in later prehistoric Britain, the

use of space could be highly charged with cosmological significance. The organisation of a house or placement of a doorway may have reflected labour divisions or concerns with the climate, but they also expressed people's beliefs about those aspects of life.

At Dryburn Bridge, it is possible to see how the farmstead was organised into domestic space and outbuildings or areas devoted to animals. The excavator identified two main zones in the mid first millennium BC palisaded enclosure: the community built houses in the northern part of the enclosure and reached these through the north entrance; a separate entrance led to the working areas and animal pens in the southern part (Triscott 1982, 119). At the later settlement of Fishers Road East, we can see some of the architectural components that made up each household. All of the circular timber houses except one had U-shaped gullies close by; two were paired with small, rectangular, post-built structures, and a possible midden base stood next to Structure 1 (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 104–8; 174). Each house may have had a small fenced yard beside it, represented by the gullies, and some may have had sheds for storing grain or fuel. Each house probably had a mouldering heap of household rubbish outside like that represented by the midden base, one which was augmented daily and cleared away periodically. The careful curation and selection of domestic rubbish, both as a nutrient-rich resource and for symbolic purposes, is discussed further below.

At St Germains, the evolving ground plan also gives some idea of how the inhabitants lived and moved and how this changed over time. The successive ring-groove houses (RG 2 and 3) that stood on the same stance during phase 3 were tucked into the back corner of an enclosure. An entrance led into the yard from the south, with an antenna ditch funnelling people's movement toward the houses and screening off the back of the enclosure from view, creating a private space to the east of the houses (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 243). In the next phase, a ring-groove house and a stone structure stood in the middle of a much larger, deep-ditched enclosure. The space these buildings occupied was more expansive and open; perhaps the bank and ditch gave the occupants a greater sense of security within the enclosure, so they did not feel the need to screen off space inside it or tuck themselves in against the perimeter. Alternatively, in the earlier phase, more space inside the enclosure was given over to animals or craft activity, traces of which did not survive.

At less truncated sites, it is possible to infer even more subtle variations on the uses of space. At Broxmouth, for example, the excavator has been able to speculate on how House C in Area 10 was put to different uses over several seasons after people ceased to live in it. Based on the nature of the deposits and the distributions of finds,

he speculates that it was first used in winter as a cattle byre, which left a thick dome of accumulated dung; then in spring as a lambing pen; then in summer or autumn as a workshop where needlework and other crafts were carried out, and finally as a dumping ground for butchery and meat processing waste related to a pig cull (Hill 1995). This small piece of informed speculation gives a tantalising glimpse into how complex and varied the use of space may have been, even over a short period, and also into the complex understandings we might be able to reach through close study of the better preserved sites.

Circular, timber-built, ring-ditch houses, like those found at Broxmouth and Dryburn Bridge in East Lothian (Hill 1982b; Triscott 1982) and High Knowes in Northumberland (Jobey and Tait 1966), occur in many other settlements between the Tyne and Forth and also north of the Forth (Hill 1982a; Macinnes 1982). These were typically divided inside into concentric rings by progressively higher walls. House 2 at Broxmouth, for example, had an overall diameter of 17m, with an outer wall of planks or split timbers (Hill 1995). A ditch concentric to this wall was paved along its inner edge, probably to prevent wear. In some examples (as at Douglasmuir; Kendrick 1995) these inner ditches seem to have been part of the original design, whereas others (such as those at High Knowes; see Jobey and Tait 1966) seem to have been worn away through use. Another concentric plank or wattle wall was seated in the ditch in Broxmouth House 2, with a third one built of posts inside this, creating a central space 8.5m in diameter. The three would probably have supported a thatched roof (Reynolds 1982, 52).

It seems likely that the ground floors of these houses were used as byres, with cattle stalled during the winter in the different rings to protect them and to allow pastures to recover (Reynolds 1982, 53). Mucking out of stalls may have created the ditches in some (Jobey and Tait 1966, 14). Reynolds (1982, 54) has calculated that about 30 cattle could have been stalled in House 2 at Broxmouth if both rings were used. Households may have lived on the upper floors of ring-ditch houses, with clay hearths built upon timber floors and the cattle emanating additional heat upwards. This would also explain the paucity of hearths in excavated ring-ditch houses.

The general trend toward the end of the first millennium BC toward radially divided, stone-built houses may have been motivated by dwindling supplies of timber, as suggested above, but also by changes in lifestyle and animal husbandry. It may be that settlements were keeping larger herds than could be over-wintered in dwellings, and were devoting large enclosures or separate byres to their accommodation. Houses were being redesigned according to different economic principles, but the new layouts would also have had implications for social relations between the occupants.

The uses of space at Phantassie

At Phantassie, a closer look at the layout of buildings during each phase (except for Phase 1, for which evidence was limited) and the distribution of artefacts and environmental remains can illuminate how people organised and moved around the farmstead's spaces at different times. In particular, the size and condition of pot sherds – even from the relatively small assemblage of 349 sherds – can add another layer to the story of the site. This analysis draws on the degrees of abrasion recorded on the sherds by Ann MacSween, as follows:

1 Fresh
2 Slight edge abrasion
3 Edge abrasion
4 Slight edge and surface abrasion
5 Edge and surface abrasion
6 Edge and surface abrasion, and rolled

Cooking pots have been identified as those sherds to which burnt residues adhered, either on the inside or outside, or which had been spalled or otherwise fire-damaged.

During the second phase, in the second or first century BC, the settlement's layout was fairly simple. Activity focused on the main dwelling, structure 1, which stood

Table 10.1 Analysis of pot sherds from Phantassie by phase, degree of abrasion and sooting, residues or fire damage.

Phase	Total Sherds	% 1 Abr.	% 2 Abr.	% 3 Abr.	% 4 Abr.	% 5 Abr.	% 6 Abr.	% Cooking Pots
2	34	0	17.6	2.94	0	38.2	41.2	32.35
3	112	0	20.5	5.36	7.14	47.3	19.6	49.10
4	70	4.29	17.1	4.29	20	28.6	25.7	61.42
5	93	0	30.1	3.23	8.6	31.2	26.9	53.76
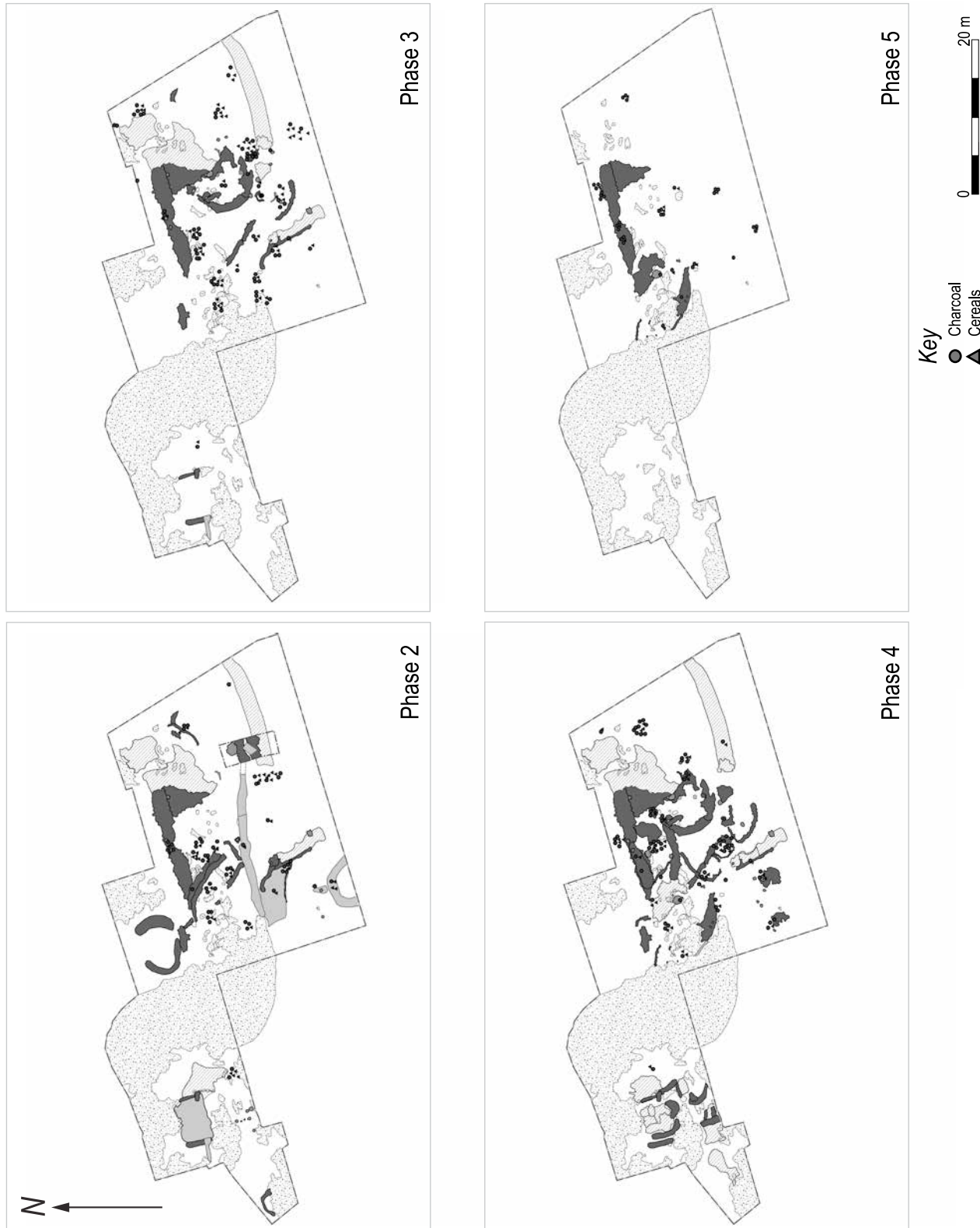
10.6　The distribution of charcoal and cereals at Phantassie (phases 2–5).

beside a fenced yard where livestock may have been penned. The inhabitants entered the yard through a gateway on the south-east, and passed through it to a doorway that led into the house. They left the farmstead to work in their fields, collect fuel and building materials or visit other settlements via a hollow-way that led eastward, passing through what may have been a paved gate structure. A boulder-built wall base, surmounted by a fence, partly enclosed the farmstead on the north.

A more formal cobbled path, probably lined with hurdling or timber walls, led up to the dwelling [1] from the south, while a light corral [3] stood to the north of it with an entrance facing down slope. What may have been a parching frame [2] stood to the south. From the house, the inhabitants would have carried rubbish north-westward into the midden store (structure 4), dumping it inside a wattle fence that enclosed the compost heap. Small post- and stone-built sheds stood to the south of this. Charcoal, burnt cereals and animal bone were scattered around the house and yard but also to the south, in the trampled fill of a hollow and around the putative parching frame (Figure 10.6).

Of the 34 pot sherds from this phase, 32 per cent derived from cooking pots. These were concentrated in and around the house, especially to the north (Figure 10.7). Almost 80 per cent of the sherds from this phase were in the 5–6 abrasion range, with only one or two sherds from each vessel. This would suggest that when pots broke, most of the sherds were gathered up and disposed of elsewhere. A few were left, and these were kicked and trampled over time. The most abraded sherds occurred in and to the north of the house, with a few in the yard to the east. Those to the north may have worked their way downslope, catching against the wall of the corral [3]. Sherds in the yard may have been dropped from baskets of household waste and been trampled by hooves. Four highly abraded sherds from one vessel, found in the wall fill of the house, may have lain in a midden until they were gathered up with other midden material and dumped to pack or insulate the wall.

During the late first century BC or the first century AD, a later generation of Phantassie dwellers altered the form and make-up of the farmstead. The boulder-built wall base continued to define the farmstead on the north. The inhabitants metalled the hollow-way that had formerly led into the settlement from the east, and mud, pot sherds, bone and charcoal became trampled among the stones. They built new structures to the south of the earlier dwelling, and these new buildings huddled together as if leaning on each other for support. A paved porch [8] led from the track to a new house [9], centred on a fire pit with a stone hearth setting where people cooked and warmed themselves; in colder months it might have been

the social heart of the farmstead. A cellular building [7] beside it, containing a possible quenching tank and a pit filled with shale fragments, may have been a workshop. Eventually, the old house [1] was dismantled or allowed to fall down. The inhabitants still used the cobbled path that led up to it from the south, and they continued to dump rubbish in the rock-cut midden store [4]. At some point, they also collected midden and dumped a thick layer of it over and around the former house stance, perhaps to mark a significant transition in how the space was used.

Charcoal and burnt cereals were scattered all over the farmstead in this phase, with heavy concentrations around the hearth and in the porch (Figure 10.6). Some fragments found their way into deposits and post-hole fills. The inhabitants were parching large quantities of grain each autumn in the hearth in structure [9], and ashes scraped up from the hearth were carried out through the porch for disposal on a midden, scattering in transit.

Of the 112 pot sherds from this phase, just under half came from cooking pots, and these were found in and around all of the buildings, with far fewer in the putative workshop [7] (Figure 10.7). Over 66 per cent of the sherds were in the 5–6 abrasion range, with low sherd to vessel ratios. The most heavily abraded ones lay in the porch and outside it, in the matrix of the metalled track, where traffic had been constricted and they had been abused by the passage of feet. Those pressed into the track were heavily abraded on one side, from having been walked on. The midden material that had been stored up in the rock-cut hollow [4] contained both small, abraded sherds and large, conjoining ones; the former may have been churned over and left behind when midden was collected for other uses, such as fertiliser, while the latter may have been more recently deposited. Other large but fairly abraded sherds from up to 21 pots were found in the midden that had been spread over and around the old house stance. Their large size evokes pots having been broken in the farmstead and dumped on the midden, where they lay undisturbed until they were gathered up for redeposition. Other large, unabraded and conjoining sherds had been left in a hollow to the south-west of the former house, which may have been a more local, temporary midden store.

Phase 4 saw the architectural elaboration of the farmstead within the existing layout. The inhabitants built more structures, cramming them into the spaces between the earlier ones, with small cellular buildings [11]/[12]/[13] leaning against existing walls and a large, paved building with a yard [10] replacing the original house. They sealed the midden store with areas of cobbling that formed floors for workshops or byres.

Of the 70 pot sherds from this phase, 61 per cent came from cooking pots and 54 per cent were heavily abraded. Many of these were found in the porch (Figure 10.7).

Phase 3

Phase 5

20 m

0

Phase 2

Phase 4

N

Key

● Cooking Pot Sherds
▲ Pot Sherds

10.7   The distribution of sherds from cooking pots at Phantassie (phases 2–5).

Some worked their way into the stony base for a timber or straw floor in the new building [10]. Burnt residues clung to several sherds found in the rake-out from the hearth in structure [9]; broken on the fire during cooking, they may have been left behind when most of the pieces were swept up with the ashes.

By the final phase of the hamlet, most of the smaller buildings had fallen out of use. People were still using the large, paved building [10] with its yard, and they still walked up to it along what had been a cobbled path in earlier phases, but now the cobbles were covered with trampled soil. Of the 93 pot sherds from this phase, many were trampled into ground surfaces, but some notable exceptions illuminate how people were using other parts of the farmstead (Figure 10.7). They tossed large, conjoining sherds from several cooking pots to either side of the path and onto the floor of the now-abandoned house [9]. The sherds lay undisturbed until excavation, suggesting that these areas were no longer used or even walked on regularly by the last inhabitants.

Daily bread

The question of how people organised and moved around settlements nests in the larger context of their purposes and routines. These were farming communities, and raising food to sustain their members was the main focus of their existence. It required steady, consistent attention and effort, and the results would carry each community through from one day to another, and from one season, year and generation to the next.

Evidence for one of the main foods on which communities depended comes in the form of the almost ubiquitous burnt cereals, and querns for grinding grain. These two kinds of archaeological find signify a symphony of tasks and processes that led to their deposition, beginning outside the settlements in the arable fields. In a region as heavily cultivated in modern times as the Lothians it is difficult to identify these, but cultivation terraces and narrow rig elsewhere in southern Scotland and north-east England show how closely they were associated with settlements (Halliday 1982).

Like any form of arable farming, the work involved in generating grain had particular rhythms that were matched to the seasons. In late winter or early spring, fields were tilled with cattle- or horse-drawn ploughs. Direct evidence for this is sparse from the excavated sites in the Lothians, as animal bone assemblages (with the exception of Broxmouth (Barnetson 1982)) are generally small. Cattle bone from Fishers Road East showed no signs of traction pathologies so, if cattle were used to pull ploughs, it was light work on the sandy soils (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000, 155–6). Wooden ard-shares from waterlogged sites such as Milton Loch crannog in Stewartry (Piggott 1955;

Guido 1974) and Dundarg promontory fort in Moray (Rees 1984) show that these were used in contemporary agriculture.

Weed seeds from macroplant assemblages sometimes indicate the kinds of land that made up the fields. At Fishers Road East, most of the grain grew on nutrient-enriched, damp soils, with some grown on drier, sandy soils. Those tilling the fields may have fertilised them using seaweed from the coast nearby (Huntley 2000, 170). Midden that accumulated in settlements would have been rich in nutrients. At Phantassie, this material was piled up in a separate store, probably to compost before it was spread on the fields – as well as inside the settlement at certain times.

The ways that labour and agricultural produce were divided within communities, by age, gender or social status, may have been complex; they would have been interwoven with cycles of farming and consumption (see Barrett 1989b, 309) . The autumn harvest may have involved most members of a relatively small community like St Germains or Fishers Road East, all pitching in to gather the grain while the weather held. Larger communities, such as Broxmouth, presumably grew more grain and therefore would have needed more workers to harvest it. We do not know whether individual families in the larger settlements farmed together or looked after their own fields separately but, on the basis of the butchery evidence from Broxmouth (see below), it may have been a communal effort. Individual households may have cultivated plots separately but helped each other with the harvest.

If each community grew its own grain, there is evidence that households processed it in their settlement in some cases (where assemblages have been analysed), but not in others. At Fishers Road East, the abundance of chaff fragments shows that grain was sieved to separate it from the chaff inside the settlement (Huntley 2000, 169). A small amount of chaff from the ditch fills at Eweford Cottages suggests that its inhabitants also cleaned their own grain (see Chapter 6). However, chaff was noticeably absent at Phantassie (Miller and Ramsay, see Chapter 12 and Archive), and also at Whittinghame Tower (Huntley, pers comm; Haselgrove forthcoming).

Cereal also seems to have been brought ready-cleaned to the enclosure of Fishers Road West (Miller *et al* 2000, 46). The diverse species at that site, including hulled and naked barley, emmer and bread/club wheat and oats, are not likely all to have been grown by a single community (*ibid*, 49). This further supports the interpretation of the site as a place where people from different communities met to trade, among other things, grain. The evidence from Fishers Road East adds an important extra dimension to our understanding of the contemporary economic

landscape in the late first millennium BC to early first millennium AD. It shows that not all communities were necessarily self-sufficient; some may have specialised in one kind of farming above another, trading their surplus beasts or other produce for grain they did not grow themselves, or surplus grain for other essentials. It raises the possibility that settlements like Phantassie, which built such extensive hard surfaces (presumably for cattle), may have concentrated more on pastoral agriculture and did not grow their own grain.

Whether communities harvested grain they had grown themselves or traded for it, every autumn must have seen a frenzy of parching of each one's stock. People parched it in order to draw moisture out of the grains and protect them from mildew during the cold, damp months to follow, filling sacks, baskets or pots with dried cereal to see them through the winter (see text box 6.2). At least a few carbonised cereal grains have been found on almost every excavated site, showing that this practice was universal. At Phantassie, for example, the fire-pit in structure [9] would have been constantly burning during the parching season (see Chapter 7). The smell of smoke from heather twigs and burnt cereals lost to the embers would have been a familiar autumn scent, drifting through this and every other farmstead and village along the coastal plain. The burnt grains recovered from excavated deposits were surely a tiny fraction of the number that were successfully parched every autumn over the generations at each settlement.

The number of querns (or fragments of querns) found at many sites points to the vital role they played in converting grain into flour that could, in turn, be made into bread. Milling the grain into flour must have been a routine task, perhaps a daily one for which a member of each household took responsibility. About 80 querns were recovered at Broxmouth (Hill 1982b, 181) and 37 saddle querns at Dryburn Bridge (Triscott 1982, 123). Fishers Road East produced one saddle quern (Gwilt and Lowther 2000, 142) and Fishers Road West three rotary querns (Rees 2000, 35). Six rotary querns were found at Phantassie (see Chapter 7), three at Eweford Cottages (see Chapter 6) and at least four (two rotary and two saddle) at St Germains (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 223, 236, 241).

Two observations about these querns are worth noting here. The first is the context in which many have been found – often built into walls, pavings or post settings. This highlights their important role in the thought-lives of the late prehistoric inhabitants of Lothian (and elsewhere in Britain), a role considered further below. The second is the relative paucity, if not the complete absence, of whole, usable querns on these sites. At Phantassie, for example, every quern or fragment of one found had been built into a structure or surface, with the exception of a rough-out that the maker had abandoned before finishing it. This means that, when the occupants abandoned these settlements, they took their querns with them. They were portable objects, but more than that, they were absolutely vital to a community's ability to feed itself.

Animal attraction

Animal bone assemblages from the excavated sites show the importance of animals to the local subsistence cycles. Most of the assemblages are small, with poor survival of bone, but the larger ones allow a deeper interpretation of the contemporary pastoral economy. The mid first millennium BC inhabitants of both Dryburn Bridge and Broxmouth kept cattle, with fewer sheep, pigs and goats in descending quantities, as well as a few horses (Triscott 1982, 122–3; Barnetson 1982, 102). At Fishers Road East from the last century BC to the second century AD, cattle were the main source of food on the hoof, and there were enough older animals to have provided a steady source of dairy products (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000). However, much of the sheep bone was retrieved from the sieved assemblage, leading the excavator to suspect that the apparent prevalence of cattle was due to a bias in preservation (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 176). Other settlements have produced much smaller assemblages of animal bone. Cattle, pigs, sheep/goats and horses are represented at all of them, although not all these species appear at all of the settlements. The absence of some animals from the various assemblages may well be due to their small size and fragmentary nature, rather than indicating a real absence of certain species.

The herds would have made daily and seasonal demands on time. They may have been over-wintered in the settlements, in ring-ditch houses, as discussed above. At Phantassie, large spreads of cobbling close to the hamlet's core would have accommodated them (see Chapter 7), and enclosures 2 and 3 at Fishers Road East may have been used as animal pounds in the settlement's last phase (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 176). During the winter, daily chores would have included feeding the beasts with hay cut the previous summer, mucking out byres and putting the manure on the midden, unless it was allowed to pile up until spring in the byres. Cattle and other animals would have provided an important source of fertiliser for the fields. Turf impregnated with animal manure found in a midden at Phantassie may have been used to bed livestock over the winter (Simpson, see Chapter 12 and Archive). During the warmer months, households may have taken the herds to graze on higher ground, if their settlements had access to high grazings. Pigs might have been kept in the settlements and fed scraps, or left out in woodland to forage; however, the latter would only have been advisable if the arable fields

were enclosed (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000, 156).

The many linear boundaries visible as cropmarks in the Lothians may have defined large fields for grazing stock. Halliday (1982, 87) argues that the construction of these indicates that there was a shift from close, labour-intensive supervision of stock to less intensive herding. He further suggests that the first millennium BC saw a trend away from small, mixed farms, such as that at Dryburn Bridge, towards large stock farms with an arable component. That shift may have corresponded to changes in domestic architecture and seasonal routines, if communities were no longer overwintering cattle in their houses and grazing them on upland pastures in the summer but leaving them free to graze in large fields.

There is some evidence that, in the later phases at Broxmouth (Periods VI and VII, dating to the late first millennium BC and early first millennium AD), the inhabitants' economy was mainly pastoral (Hill 1995) and, as already noted, the same could be argued for Phantassie. A trend toward pastoralism might also have been expressed through changes in domestic architecture: large, ring-ditch byre dwellings, which might have housed a family's own small herd over the winter, gave way to smaller stone-built houses when herds were larger and perhaps managed communally, no longer stabled seasonally in domestic dwellings. Halliday (1993) has also suggested that increases in livestock contributed to woodland decline in the late first millennium BC, as ever larger areas of pasture were created to feed them. Classical writers noted the quantities of cattle that communities in Britain kept during the Roman Iron Age, and in some contemporary societies cattle were seen as symbols of wealth (Barnetson 1982, 104). If this were the case in Scotland, it could explain why a relatively small farming hamlet like Phantassie, which had extensive accommodation for animals, also produced evidence of unusually high-status craft activity.

If some settlements concentrated on raising animals, these stock farms may have traded cattle, sheep and pigs for grain at markets like the one perhaps held at Fishers Road West; Structure 2 at the site has been interpreted as a possible stockyard (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 76). Animals are likely to have been traded in the late summer, after they had grown fat on good grazing and at the time of year when arable-dominated settlements would have needed beasts as a source of food over the impending winter. If cattle herds were valued more highly than arable capacity, then settlements specialising in pastoral agriculture may have wielded economic power over those that did not, perhaps driving hard bargains with the latter.

In general, excavated assemblages indicate that the domestic animals were healthy and well-managed (Barnetson 1982, 103; Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000, 155), although many illnesses leave no traces on the bones. About half of the cattle from Fishers Road East survived to adulthood (two to four years old) (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000), but it is difficult to reconstruct the herd's age structure for Broxmouth (Barnetson 1982, 102–3). In a meat economy, most animals would be slaughtered at between 2 and 5 years old – old enough to fatten up but not to become tough – with some kept longer for breeding. In a dairy economy, animals would be kept alive much longer. Neither pattern is particularly obvious in the Broxmouth assemblage, and it need not have been one or the other (Barnetson 1982, 102). The cattle herds would have given families a supply of milk and the chance to make cheese at least once a year; they may or may not have bothered with the effort required to encourage cows to lactate throughout the year (*ibid*, 103). At Fishers Road East, most of the pigs were killed before they reached the age of three, but as pigs breed from the age of one and produce large litters, the herd would still have been sustainable (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000, 155). The sheep assemblage shows a similar pattern, with enough older animals to have served as breeding stock (*ibid*).

Those living in the settlements probably butchered beasts as and when they needed to, but there was some evidence in House C at Broxmouth for episodes of more extensive slaughter, specifically a pig cull (Hill 1995). Butchery marks on bones from Broxmouth show that cattle were probably tethered and speared through their shoulder blades, which would have penetrated the vital organs and facilitated a clean kill (Barnetson 1982, 104). Most of the sheep bone at Fishers Road East was burnt and more highly fragmented than the cattle or pig, suggesting that it was processed and cooked in different ways (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 176). Certain members of larger communities like Broxmouth may have had particular skills in butchery. During Period VI, the waste from relatively small joints was found in different parts of the settlement. This suggests that the carcasses were divided up in one location and the joints distributed to the inhabitants (Hill 1995). It also points to communal sharing of food and considerable organisation of labour within the settlement.

Because of the large size of bovine carcasses, which would have been too big for one family to consume while the meat was fresh, the questions of how and to whom butchered meat was distributed have implications for social organisation. The life cycles of livestock may even have determined the timing of certain social events that involved cooking and sharing fresh meat (McCormick 2002, 25–6). (While it is possible that meat was preserved using salt, very large amounts would have been required for each carcass and the cost was probably prohibitive for

most communities in late Iron Age Lothian.) In Medieval Ireland, for example, different cuts of meat from bovine carcasses were distributed according to the quality of the cut and the recipients' social rank (*ibid*, 27). More detailed analysis of the distribution of different joints to different parts of Broxmouth might illuminate the social structure of the inhabitants during that phase of the settlement.

Some of the assemblages show that communities kept dogs, perhaps as watch or war dogs or to help with herding. Those from Fishers Road East showed no signs of having been treated badly (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000, 156), but one dog found at Broxmouth had died after being hit on the muzzle with a blunt instrument (Barnetson 1982, 104).

10.2

Craft and production at Phantassie

As with most Scottish later prehistoric sites, the vast majority of finds from Phantassie were domestic in character. Yet these show that people were practising a range of crafts in the settlement, notably metal- and stone-working, the latter to produce shale jewellery and rotary querns. It is likely that the community was largely self-sufficient for other things such as pottery, textiles and leather, but the evidence for these is less clear or does not survive.

The inhabitants of Phantassie were working both iron and copper alloys. Iron-working is not surprising, although the evidence is rarely considered. By the late Iron Age, iron was a vital part of the everyday tool kit, and even if smelting iron from ore remained a specialist task, most communities would have needed access to a craftsman who could produce or (perhaps most commonly) repair their agricultural tools and weapons. Phantassie produced only a small quantity of iron-working debris, much of it from poorly sealed contexts, but there was a background scatter in many phases. This shows that iron-smithing was going on in the vicinity over a period of time, although no workshop was identified. More spectacular was the evidence of copper alloy working, in the form of an iron draw plate, used to produce copper and brass wire for jewellery or complex metal objects (see text box 7.4). This unusual tool indicates that specialist craftsmen (or women) were at work in the settlement, at least occasionally.

SF 21

0   5 cm
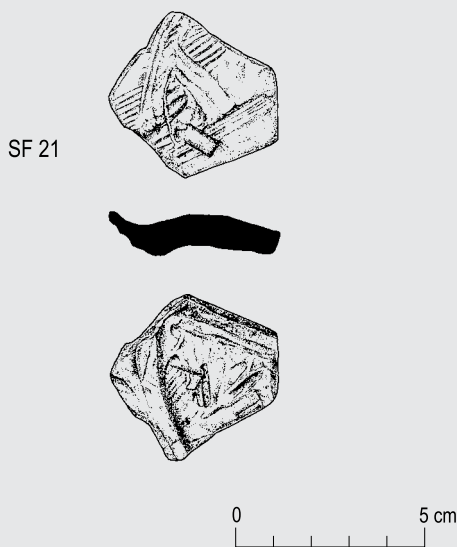
10.8a   Shale objects from Phantassie and Pencraig Hill.

SF 16

SF 127

0   2.5 cm
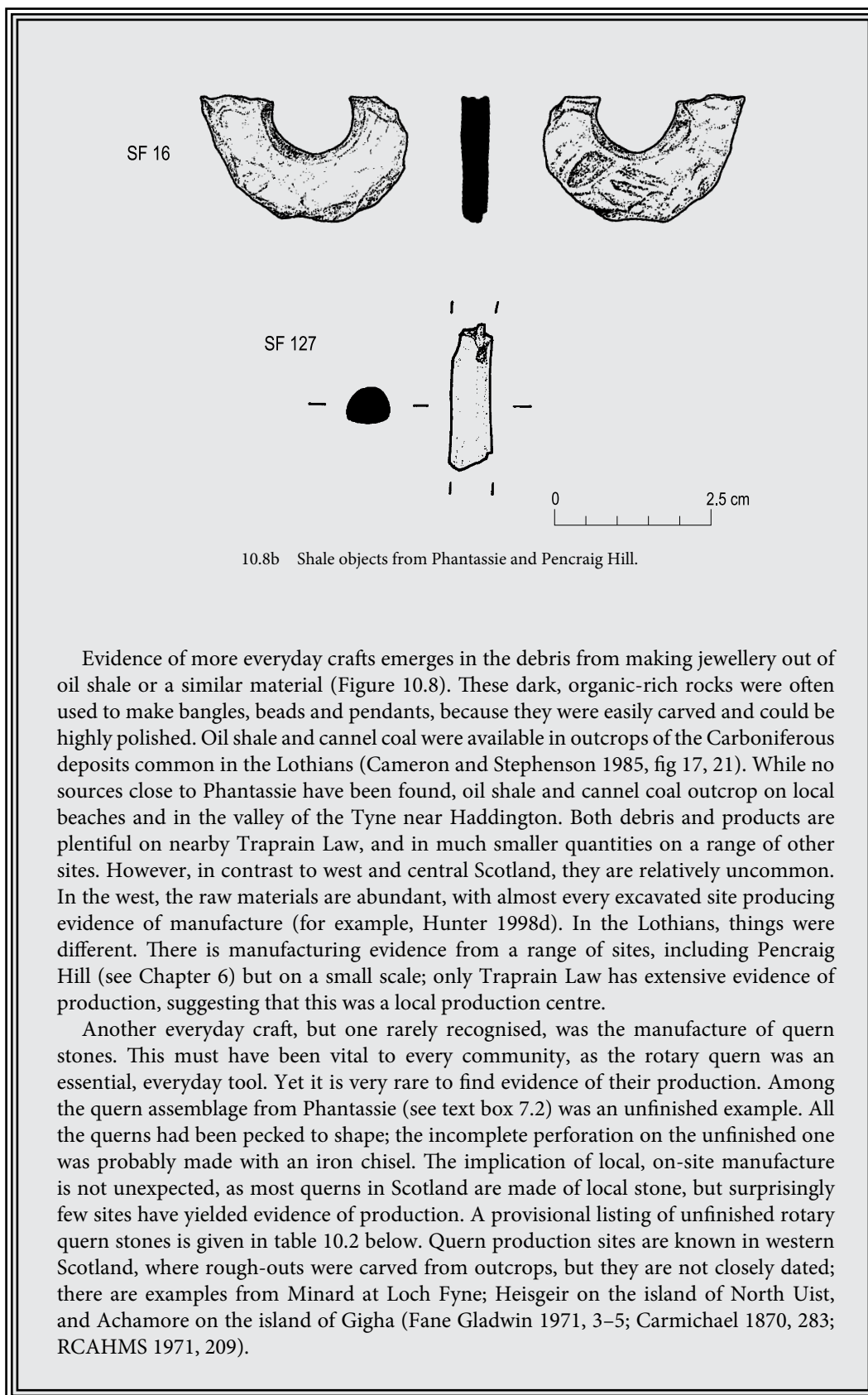
10.8b   Shale objects from Phantassie and Pencraig Hill.

Evidence of more everyday crafts emerges in the debris from making jewellery out of oil shale or a similar material (Figure 10.8). These dark, organic-rich rocks were often used to make bangles, beads and pendants, because they were easily carved and could be highly polished. Oil shale and cannel coal were available in outcrops of the Carboniferous deposits common in the Lothians (Cameron and Stephenson 1985, fig 17, 21). While no sources close to Phantassie have been found, oil shale and cannel coal outcrop on local beaches and in the valley of the Tyne near Haddington. Both debris and products are plentiful on nearby Traprain Law, and in much smaller quantities on a range of other sites. However, in contrast to west and central Scotland, they are relatively uncommon. In the west, the raw materials are abundant, with almost every excavated site producing evidence of manufacture (for example, Hunter 1998d). In the Lothians, things were different. There is manufacturing evidence from a range of sites, including Pencraig Hill (see Chapter 6) but on a small scale; only Traprain Law has extensive evidence of production, suggesting that this was a local production centre.

Another everyday craft, but one rarely recognised, was the manufacture of quern stones. This must have been vital to every community, as the rotary quern was an essential, everyday tool. Yet it is very rare to find evidence of their production. Among the quern assemblage from Phantassie (see text box 7.2) was an unfinished example. All the querns had been pecked to shape; the incomplete perforation on the unfinished one was probably made with an iron chisel. The implication of local, on-site manufacture is not unexpected, as most querns in Scotland are made of local stone, but surprisingly few sites have yielded evidence of production. A provisional listing of unfinished rotary quern stones is given in table 10.2 below. Quern production sites are known in western Scotland, where rough-outs were carved from outcrops, but they are not closely dated; there are examples from Minard at Loch Fyne; Heisgeir on the island of North Uist, and Achamore on the island of Gigha (Fane Gladwin 1971, 3–5; Carmichael 1870, 283; RCAHMS 1971, 209).

Table 10.2   Scottish sites with unfinished rotary quernstones.

Site Name	Region	Reference
West Mains of Ethie	Angus	Unpublished, NMS HH 924
Dunadd	Argyll	Lane and Campbell 2000, 185-6
Dun Mor Vaul, Tiree	Argyll	MacKie 1972b, 140
Druim an Duin	Argyll	Christison and Anderson 1905, 292
Harpercroft	Ayrshire	Unpublished, NMS BB 125
Dunion	Borders	MacSween and Rideout 1982, 100
West Water Reservoir	Borders	Hunter 2000, 167
Crosskirk	Caithness	Fairhurst 1984, 270-1
North Berwick Gas Works	East Lothian	Unpublished, NMS BB 104
Beirgh	Lewis	Harding and Gilmour 2000, 40
Aldclune	Perth and Kinross	Cool 1997, 440
Castlehill Wood	Stirling	Feachem 1957, 36

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The inhabitants of later prehistoric Lothian seem to have hunted and fished relatively little. Broxmouth produced much antler but only a few roe deer bones, a little whale or seal and several species of salt water fish, probably caught inshore (Barnetson 1982, 104), as well as abundant marine molluscs (Hill 1982b). At Fishers Road East, also close to the coast, there was little fish, only a few marine shells and some whale bones that probably came from a beached carcass (Hambleton and Stallibrass 2000, 154–5). Someone threw the bones of a butchered crow or rook into the midden-filled scoop at South Belton (Smith, see Chapter 12 and Archive), and an undated pit at Eweford Cottages was full of limpet shells (Chapter 6). In general, however, it seems that communities were raising their food rather than hunting it in the wild. If so, this has certain implications for both the environment and for everyday practice. We might picture a wholly tamed landscape along the Lothian plain, with few pockets of woodland left where game of any size survived. By this time, people may also have lost the hunting skills that earlier generations possessed. Cultural values may have determined what animals were eaten (J D Hill 1995a, 103–5); communities may have possessed taboos against wild game, taboos which developed as hunting skills disappeared, to be replaced by distrust of the wild. It is also possible that hunting had become an increasingly rare skill, perhaps reserved to a few members of the populace – political or religious leaders, for example – and that the detritus from kills was disposed of in equally distinct ways, apart from normal domestic waste.

Craftwork

Domestic animals would have provided not only meat and milk, but the materials for the clothes, shoes and tools that figured in people's everyday lives. The animal bone assemblages are clues that point to these other, more perishable materials, the uses to which they were put and the work involved in transforming them into usable form.

The hides of slaughtered animals would have been tanned and worked to make shoes, bags and clothing; although none survive from sites in the Lothians, examples from waterlogged sites such as Buiston crannog in Ayrshire and Oakbank crannog in Loch Tay show that hides were put to use in these ways (Crone 1993). Wool collected from sheep was spun into yarn, using spindle whorls like those found at Phantassie (Hunter and McLaren, see Chapter 12 and Archive) and St Germains (Hunter 1998a, 236), and then presumably woven into cloth (see text box 10.2). Bone and antler were carved into combs at Fishers Road West (O'Sullivan 2000, 55), rubbing tools at Fishers Road East (Lowther 2000, 145) and other objects at St Germains (Hunter 1998a, 239) and Broxmouth (P H Hill 1995). Craftsmen and women shaped shale into rings, bangles and other objects at Phantassie (see text box 10.2 and Chapter 7), Broxmouth (P Hill 1995) and Traprain Law (Jobey 1976). At Phantassie, they also made querns,

10.3

Phantassie and the Roman world

Although the nearest Roman site to Phantassie is about 30km to the west at Inveresk, it is clear its inhabitants tapped into the Roman world. We can see this in two areas: the presence of Roman artefacts in the settlement, and the more indirect influence of Roman raw materials.

Some objects from the excavations at Phantassie are easily identifiable as Roman. There is a single piece of Roman pottery, a fragment from a decorated Samian bowl that was made in central Gaul (Dragendorff form 36; see Wallace, Chapter 12 and Archive; Figure 10.9). Such fine tablewares were highly desirable in local society, a way of showing off to the neighbours. Clear Roman contact is also evident in the trumpet brooch, a typically Romano-British form which found favour with groups in and around the frontier because its style echoed local traditions. This preference for Roman objects concerned with jewellery and feasting, both ways of showing off in local society, is quite typical of the late Iron Age in southern Scotland.

SF 622

0   5 cm
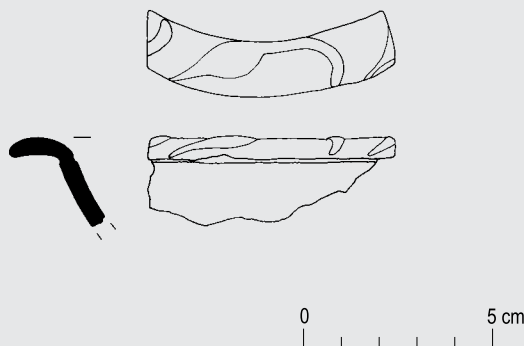
10.9   A sherd from a Samian bowl from Phantassie.

More problematic are some of the other pieces, like the penannular brooch and the glass bangles. Penannular brooches were originally an Iron Age habit, but a re-analysis of the Scottish evidence (see Hunter, Chapter 12 and Archive) suggests that the style found at Phantassie is not a local type; like the trumpet brooch, it too is a Romano-British form, developed out of local traditions. Even more complex are the glass bangles; these are discussed in more detail elsewhere (Hunter, Chapter 12 and Archive), but it seems that some types are most common on Iron Age sites and others on Roman ones. While the habit of wearing glass bangles was shared in both indigenous and Roman contexts, the style of bangle would have marked the wearer's identity out. The Phantassie ones (a type 2 and two type 3A) are some of the commonest, found in abundance on both Roman and Iron Age sites. Even if they were made locally, they are in a style shared with the Roman world and most probably were made with recycled Roman glass.

This question of raw materials leads to one of the main indirect influences of the Roman world on late Iron Age society. It is most clearly evident in the iron draw plate, which was used to make wire (see text box 7.4). Analysis by Dr Jim Tate showed that the holes in the draw plate contained shavings of brass mixed with copper. Brass is a Roman metal (Dungworth 1996, 407–10), and its presence here shows that it was being recycled.

While Roman objects may have been desirable status objects, once broken they were rapidly turned to other uses.

The Roman objects also raise the question of status. The range from Phantassie is fairly typical of East Lothian settlements, but it is dwarfed by the range of artefacts from Traprain Law. This would suggest that Traprain Law was the economic and cultural centre of the region, in close contact with the Roman world, passing some of the powerful Roman objects on to descendants and dependents to grease the lines of local social networks.

But is this the full story? Other finds from Phantassie could suggest that this was not simply a dependent settlement. The draw-plate points to high-calibre metalworking, while the decorated linch pin, a most unusual find, suggests the presence of prestige vehicles on the site. Perhaps we should think of more complex relations to the central site of Traprain Law – with a number of smaller power centres around the focal site, and local elites going to the Law at certain times of the year to bargain, argue and foster the relationships which bound local societies together. This is certainly speculative, but the Phantassie evidence does offer hints that a simple model of hierarchies may not be entirely appropriate for the East Lothian plain.

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indicated by the rough-out abandoned in a small cell [12] (see text box 7.2).

Whetstones like those found at Phantassie (Hunter and McLaren, see Chapter 12 and Archive) and St Germains (Hunter 1998a, 236) signify the metal tools that communities possessed: knives for butchering animals, chisels for making querns, axes for cutting trees, scythes for harvesting grain. At several settlements, evidence has been found for small-scale smithing. These smiths may have been members of the community with the skills to produce the tools that were sharpened on the whetstones, along with the scythes and ploughshares of which farming settlements needed a reliable supply. Fishers Road East produced evidence for iron smithing and copper alloy working; the absence of zinc as a component in the copper alloy indicates either that the work took place before the Roman army arrived in the neighbourhood, or that the smiths did not have access to Roman metals (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 176) St Germains also produced evidence of both ferrous and non-ferrous metalworking (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 240), as did Broxmouth during Period II, in the form of bowl furnaces and casting pits (Hill 1982b). Smiths operated on a small scale at the putative occasional market or fair held at Fishers Road West (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 55).

Phantassie also produced evidence for small-scale smithing, and it yielded evidence for surprisingly fine-quality copper alloy working, in the form of an iron draw bar found in a midden deposit deliberately spread over an abandoned structure [1]. The process of drawing wire for jewellery or chain mail had left shavings of pure copper and brass in its holes. Their purity points to a Roman origin for the metals (Hunter, see Chapter 12 and Archive; see text box 10.3). In the early centuries AD, Traprain Law was a centre for fine metal smithing on a scale unmatched anywhere else in the region (Armit *et al* 2002). If metal-working was a fairly common craft, practised in most settlements on a small scale to produce everyday objects, there is also evidence that it was perceived as special, perhaps magical. We consider the evidence for this further in Chapter 11.

We can infer other crafts from the artefacts found at settlement sites, even where there are no traces of production. Artisans would have also used knives and chisels to shape wood into vessels, furniture, handles for querns, scythes and other tools, and wheels for carts and chariots – like the one excavated with a burial at Newbridge (Carter and Hunter 2003), or the chariot from which the linch pin at Phantassie came (see text box 7.3).

Somewhere along the coastal plain, there were potters living from the mid first millennium BC onward, going by the evidence from Dryburn Bridge (Triscott 1982), Broxmouth (Hill 1982b) and the later sites. Although some sites have produced relatively little pottery (the Fishers Road enclosures and Dryburn Bridge, for

example), others such as St Germains, Phantassie and Broxmouth have produced larger quantities. The inhabitants of these settlements used pots to store and cook food, and they would have needed a regular supply of vessels. The fabrics indicate local production (Gwilt 2000, 133; McSween, see Chapter 12 and Archive). If individual settlements made their own pots, no concrete evidence for kilns has yet been found, although clays for possible pottery manufacture were identified at Fishers Road West (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 77). The pounders, grinders and mortars found at many sites might have been used to crush minerals or old pots to use as temper in new ones.

These crafts might have been part of the regular work of certain people in the settlements. Each community might have had its own skilled smith, weaver, stone- and bone-carver and potter who made tools, clothing, querns or pots as they were needed. Alternatively, perhaps individuals based at one settlement or another worked a neighbourhood, trading his or her wares to the other farms and villages in the surrounding area.

The Communal Self? Metaphors for life, regeneration and change

The aspects of the later prehistoric settlement archaeology of Lothian discussed so far are threads that, woven together, made up the fabric of everyday life (Figure 10.10). These threads were stitched across the landscape by people's regular passage to and from the fields, forests and moors that framed their settlements and from which they drew their sustenance. The land around settlements was not simply a physical environment; it formed the taskscape that was part of human existence (Ingold 1993). The threads of everyday life were also interwoven with social life. People's everyday lives continuously reproduced and sometimes transformed the relations between them, and in their routines we find subtle expressions of social structure and of how they viewed the world and their place within it (see Barrett 1989a).

The second part of this chapter begins by addressing certain aspects of the archaeological record that contribute to our understanding of social and ritual practices, through metaphors of fertility, transformation, regeneration and memory. Many writers have commented on how instances of structured deposition and other ritual behaviour in late prehistoric Britain seem to have expressed metaphors relating to agriculture and fertility (for example, Barrett 1991; Hingley 1992; Parker Pearson 1996). At the same time, much of the literature on the period has tended towards a normalised view of its archaeology, interpreting it in mundane and functionalist terms, skirting around the examples of less pragmatic behaviour with the

barest mention. This is understandable; in general, the archaeological record could be read as indicating that communities in later prehistoric Britain were much more concerned with the business of everyday living than with the spiritual world. Their archaeological remains are largely domestic, in contrast to the dramatic ceremonial monuments and elaborate burial sites of their fourth to second millennium BC forebears.

There are, however, other ways of reading the record. Later prehistoric communities' domestic architecture and agricultural endeavours were more demanding and perhaps more ambitious than during earlier millennia, so people did expend large amounts of time and energy in those areas, and their efforts left substantial archaeological traces. At the same time, we argue that they were as caught up in belief, cosmology and the realm of the spirit as their ancestors were – in fact, so much so that these aspects of life were entirely interwoven with the threads of everyday existence. Their practical acts could carry considerable symbolic meaning (Hingley 1990; Bowden and McOmish 1987). Therefore, the material ways in which they expressed belief and ritual thought were often small, mundane acts carried out in their settlements, rather than dramatic ones in separate locations, and some of these expressions may have left no traces at all. The evidence we do have gives clues to the nature of that thought, to what people considered important and to how they understood their lives and the world around them. This view of the archaeological record also means that we should not look for evidence of the purely pragmatic or the purely symbolic, but for ways of understanding how the two were thoroughly interwoven (see Bradley 2005). The next section examines three kinds of deposition which expressed symbolic or ritual thought in the context of late prehistoric settlements: the re-use of quern stones, the uses of midden, and the treatment of the dead.

Querns

Querns, perhaps more than any other objects found in excavated settlements, were wholly embedded in the daily practices of people in late prehistoric Lothian, and elsewhere in Britain. Complete, functioning querns left lying where they were last used are a rare find. Instead, on excavated sites in Lothian, we often find parts of them deliberately built into boundaries, floors and post-settings. Elsewhere in contemporary Britain, querns are commonly found built into similar contexts (see Hingley 1992). They include both saddle and (from the third or second century BC onward) rotary querns.

At Phantassie, parts of four querns and one mortar were built, right side up, into the fabric of the settlement: a post-setting in structure [7], the massive boundary that defined the settlement platform, paving in what may have

been a gate and cobbling in structure [10]; three of these were decorated (McLaren and Hunter, see Chapter 12 and Archive). Querns were used as post-pads and incorporated in paving in Whittinghame and Knowes enclosures (Haselgrove forthcoming). One was built into the wall of a stone-paved building at St Germains (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 223), and another was used to pack a post of the unenclosed ring-ditch at Melville Nurseries (Raisen and Rees 1996). A quern formed part of a hearth kerb sealed beneath the Cruden Wall on Traprain Law (Close-Brooks 1983), and another one was built into the ramparts of Castlelaw fort (Piggott and Piggott 1952). Several were found built into pavings and walls at Broxmouth (Hill 1982b). Querns were also built into ramparts or entrances in numerous other sites in southern Scotland, including Hownam Rings, Bonchester Hill and Hayhope Knowe (Roxburgh), Castlehill Wood dun (Stirling), and Boonies (Annandale and Eskdale) (cited in Hingley 1992, 32).

Querns transformed the cereal crop – that nearly ubiquitous find, so precious that it was parched in large quantities to make it last the winter – into something edible. They were the essential tool that transformed grain into flour, which could be further transformed by water and fire into bread or porridge, common food and vital for health. Querns were, therefore, key to each community's continual regeneration and the sustaining of social and physical life. The careful ways in which they were used architecturally express how deeply they symbolised that regeneration. In particular, their incorporation into boundaries may show how querns as symbols of community regeneration were bound up with that community's identity, as these boundaries defined the locus of dwelling.

Querns like the decorated and heavily used examples from Phantassie may have been personal possessions, identified with a particular woman or family, and the decorations may have marked them out as such. They may have come to stand for a family's vitality and well-being, or become souvenirs of the care given by a mother or grandmother to the generations she had bred.

Querns are usually found re-used in parts, either as fragments or missing their upper or lower partners. If a quern was a personal possession, perhaps when its owner died it was broken or deliberately separated from its other half in a symbolic, parallel death. Fragmented in this way, it was effectively silenced; it ceased to produce the rhythmi, grinding noise that must have been an everyday sound in each settlement. It remained, however, a potent symbol of the life of the community, the family's history and its memory about itself. In putting querns into the buildings that framed their lives, people were finding new, pragmatic uses for stones that no longer worked as mills, but they were also expressing those powerful symbolic links.

Middens

Midden material was used in specific ways at many later prehistoric sites in Britain, among them Phantassie. The term 'midden', as it is used here, applies to deposits resulting from occupation and everyday activities, which contain a high proportion of refuse (including both organic and inorganic material), and which were deliberately allowed to accumulate or were collected and piled up over time (see Needham and Spence 1997).

The phase of midden-spreading at Phantassie marked a significant transition in the life of the settlement. After the farmstead began to expand, probably in the first century BC or early first century AD, midden was dumped over and around the stance of the earlier principal building [1]. The midden partially sealed its walls, built up against the wall defining the cobbled passageway to the structure and covered an area of open ground that formed a central yard (see Chapter 7). Afterwards, a larger building [10] defined partly by massive slabs was built on top of the midden spread, over the site of the old one. The inhabitants also stored midden in a large, rock-cut hollow in a separate part of the farmstead. Charcoal from fires and burnt buildings, broken pottery, charred cereals, animal bone and other food waste, and turves used for livestock bedding or walls were dumped there to compost (Simpson, see Chapter 12 and Archive). This composting process effected its transformation from unwanted rubbish to material that could enhance the fertility of agricultural fields and bolster crop yields.

Midden was also piled up and used in specific ways at other settlements in the region. The fills of the palisade trench and the House 2 ring-ditch at Dryburn Bridge were rich in animal bone (Triscott 1982, 122). Midden was used to fill in the enclosure ditches at Eweford Cottages (see Chapter 6) and the phase 4 ditch at St Germains (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 248). Successive midden deposits were dumped into the ditches defining Broxmouth during Period VIII (Hill 1982b, 150). At Fishers Road East, midden was tipped into the main internal ditches and cereal waste, in particular, was dumped into the inner enclosure ditch in the first century BC (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 173). At Fishers Road West, midden was mixed with upcast to build a rampart (*ibid*, 25); micromorphological analysis also showed that there were eroding midden dumps near the open ditches, and midden was dumped into the ditches at the end of phase 3 (*ibid*, 78–9).

The hoarding, movement and deliberate deposition of midden, often in pits, is a phenomenon observed at settlements dating from the mid second millennium BC onward, as far afield as southern England (for example,

Potterne (Lawson 2000), Runnymede (Needham and Sorensen 1988) and Danebury (Cunliffe and Poole 1991)). The often peculiar juxtapositions of refuse with special animal deposits show that these were not the result of casual discard (J D Hill 1995a), at least not in many cases. Nor, given the importance of midden heaps as 'stores of fertility' (Parker Pearson 1996, 124), should we expect that they were incidental deposits.

Heaps of domestic waste were rich sources of nutrients for the soil, and therefore important resources to farming communities. They were stored up for use as fertiliser, but their occurrence inside settlements as deliberate deposits shows that they held deeper meanings as well. At Phantassie, midden may have been spread over the former dwelling in a necessary act of preparing the ground for construction of a new house. Perhaps the inhabitants of the old one had died of disease, or the family that occupied it had come to the end of its line. In covering it with midden, the community may have been marking the death of the house and also trying to ensure the prosperity and fertility of a new house and those who would inhabit it. They may have been using dead materials from the past – generated through acts of living – to bring about regeneration, a metaphysical use that echoed how they used midden on the fields. These deliberate deposits, which included placing an iron draw bar vertically into the midden that covered the old house, contrast sharply with how people behaved during the farmstead's final abandonment. Toward the end, broken objects were left scattered about in disused areas, but with no indications of deliberate dumping or placing, as if by this time people

had little sense of engagement with the place and felt no need to mark its passing.

Parker Pearson (1996) has noted the proximity of middens to front doors of houses at several later prehistoric sites; he suggests that this relationship expressed associations between the east and the rising sun (the predominant position of doorways) and the life-giving qualities of the midden. Similarly, the rubbish used to fill up abandoned storage pits at Danebury (J D Hill 1995a) and Cadbury Castle (Lelong 1993), sometimes in combination with animals or even human burials, might have been seen as an offering or sacrifice designed to regenerate life and fertility (also see Parker Pearson 1996).

When midden was dumped into the enclosure ditches at Eweford Cottages, St Germains, Broxmouth and elsewhere, these acts may have carried similar meanings. They marked a fundamental transition in the physical character of the settlements – from enclosed, with perimeters definitely marked out, to unenclosed, with those boundaries erased. It also frequently marked a change in the character of domestic architecture – from annular ring-ditch houses to stone-built structures. Dumping symbolically potent midden into the ditches may have symbolised a desire for a new phase of growth to coincide with this architectural transition.

Death

Death, as well as birth and growth, forms part of the agricultural cycle, and the evidence from Phantassie suggests that people saw death – including their own –

10.10   Reconstruction of Eweford Cottages enclosed settlement in its landscape.

as inextricable from it. The scatter of burnt human bone recovered from numerous deposits across the site has been interpreted as the result of deliberate deposition (see Chapter 7). After death and cremation, the remains of each inhabitant may have been spread on middens and agricultural fields, providing nutrients for the crops that would feed the community through the next year. In death as in life, concern for the prosperity and continuity of the community prevailed over concern for individual preservation.

A sample of each person's remains was also brought back into the farmstead as a scattered handful, to remain a part of the physical and social fabric. That act may have ensured his or her continued integration in the collective social memory. The re-assimilation of the dead into the settlement and the agricultural system might, like the building of boundaries, have also been a way of working against communities' tendencies to fracture and fragment.

Human remains also appear in much more fragmented, disarticulated form in numerous other settlements. In the Lothians, a few examples of similar practices are known. At Fishers Road East, human bone was found along with animal bone in one of the ditch fills, while a probable juvenile burial was found with animal bone in a pit (Haselgrove and McCullagh 2000, 145–6). At Broxmouth, as well as several inhumation burials in pits and cists, a lower human jaw bone was found along with bone artefacts, a broken antler comb, gaming pieces and whale bone below a wall of House IV (Hill 1982b, 175). Instances of partial or whole human bodies being put into pits, rubbish deposits, foundations and boundaries in later prehistoric settlements are known as far as the south of England and the Continent, and in Orkney, Caithness and the Western Isles, a trend that began early in the first millennium BC (see J D Hill 1995a, 118). Philpott, commenting on this practice, suggests that the dead were not considered a source of 'ritual pollution', as for example they were under Roman law (1991, 236). The spirits of the dead may not have been feared; instead, perhaps the boundaries between living and dead were somewhat fluid. This incorporation of unburnt body parts in domestic contexts might have had a similar purpose to that in evidence at Phantassie.

It may be that, in late prehistoric Britain, most people were not treated after death as discrete individuals. Instead, their bodies were broken up through fire, excarnation or dismemberment, and the parts were re-used in particular and powerful ways, for symbolic purposes that went beyond individual interests. If this breaking up and re-use of the individual body was the fate of most members of communities, who were the relatively few people whose remains we find in cists, graves and under mounds? They

may have been communities' leaders, or those seen as special because of their personal histories, genealogies or physical characteristics, or their powers of healing or spiritual communion.

The number of known discrete burials from first millennium BC and early first millennium AD Scotland is gradually increasing all the time, but they must still represent only a tiny fraction of the population that lived during this period. Many of the known burials in eastern and southern Scotland were single inhumations in graves and cists, multiple inhumations in cists or inhumations sealed below mounds, with one example of cremation in the Lothians (see Lelong and MacGregor forthcoming for a review of the evidence; also Ashmore 1980). In the north and west, a few more cremations are known, along with single and multiple inhumations and burials below cairns or mounds (Ashmore 1980).

The increasing use of inhumed cist burials for a few in the early centuries AD, and eventually the formal burial of many more in cist cemeteries, suggests that the ways people viewed themselves as individuals and as members of a community were changing in important ways.

Fluid boundaries and broader identities

The end of the first millennium BC and the first few centuries AD saw fundamental changes in Lothian society, changes that are evident in several aspects of the archaeological record.

Communities neglected and then actively filled in the ditches that defined their settlements, erasing the enclosures that had expressed communal identity for hundreds of years. If acts of building and renewing enclosures had crystallised those identities where they were weak, then simple neglect of enclosures might have meant that communities by then possessed strong, shared notions of who they were and where they belonged, so that maintaining the enclosures no longer seemed so important. Actively erasing the enclosures, however, implies a rejection of earlier notions of what they bounded and defined. Economic and architectural changes occurred around the same time. Domestic architecture changed from ring-ditch to stone-built houses, and this may have corresponded to a shift toward larger herds coupled with less intensive stock supervision and decreasing woodland resources.

Within a few generations, at most 300 years, life in Lothian changed even more fundamentally with the abandonment of many settlements. This took place soon after the burgeoning of Traprain Law as a 'boom town' – an intensely crowded hill top settlement – from about the first century AD (Armit *et al* 2002). There is traditionally considered to be a 'hiatus' in activity on Traprain Law

from about the eighth or seventh century BC until this time. It seems likely that, in fact, the Law had continued to be an extremely important place during that time. It had symbolic importance, as a place where these disparate communities came together – perhaps to trade, to worship their gods, to find mates or settle disputes. The various ramparts that run around the hilltop's perimeter – which had fallen out of use by the first century AD – may have been created by these various communities, for the same reason they enclosed their own settlements – in order to physically express and re-affirm their larger communal identity.

Then, from about the first century AD, perhaps various smaller communities chose to subsume their individual identities under that larger identity, and they began coalescing, choosing to live together in centres like Traprain Law and Dunbar. During the period in which Traprain Law was becoming crowded, its relationship with nearby settlements like Phantassie and later Whittinghame Tower – which lay almost in its shadow – may have changed; perhaps the much larger settlement on the hill came to dominate or demand tribute from the smaller farms, or it absorbed their lands and people among its own. The disposal of a few of the dead in single or multiple inhumation burials – in which human bodies were treated more or less as discrete entities – also began to be more common practice during this period, with a significant swing toward inhumations in cists in the early centuries AD.

What might have motivated these trends? It is tempting to attribute it to the Roman army's presence, but in fact the erasing of enclosure began before the Army's incursions to Lothian beyond in the AD 70s. By then, perhaps Lothian society was already seeing the rise of 'big men' – leaders who emerged from the general, messy jostle of inter-community relations to exert greater influence over the region and its inhabitants, eventually changing the ways communities constituted themselves. It is also quite possible that changes in political and social structure on the Continent, rolling ahead of Rome's advancing waves, caused early ripples in mainland Britain decades before the first Roman soldier set foot on the island. Lothian communities lived in a well-connected world, where technologies like the rotary quern, styles of metalwork and burial practices travelled across large distances (Carter and Hunter 2003). Those living in the first century BC and first century AD would have heard of the Roman imperial advance across Gaul and eventually into southern Britain. They would also have heard of the large, sophisticated hilltop towns or *oppida* in which their contemporaries on the Continent lived; on rare occasions they might have entertained visitors with first-hand experience of such towns, or made visits themselves while pursuing trading

or kinship links.

It has been argued that the Roman army's presence in southern Scotland is given far too much weight in explaining social change, serving too often as 'a chronological magnet for change' (Armit 1999, 72) to explain changes in architecture, burial traditions, settlement and art. Recent interpretations have challenged the traditional view of the Votadini as a client state of the Empire that benefited from the *pax Romana* (for example, Erdrich *et al* 2000, 454). The Army's presence in the Lothians lasted only 15 or 20 years during the Flavian incursion (before AD 79 to AD 87), less than 30 years during the Antonine occupation (AD 139 to after AD 160) and only four or five years during the final, Severan incursion (AD 208–12) (Hanson 1997, 195–8).

While these arguments have merit, the Roman army's presence must still have had a significant, permanent impact upon society. An enormous, well-organised force that was culturally and linguistically alien marched into the Lothians and imposed a new order on parts of the landscape by constructing roads, forts and (to the west) the Antonine Wall (see Hanson 1989). This would have over-ridden, at least for a while, the existing spatial order, cutting across communities' lands and territorial boundaries. It commandeered land and resources (Breeze 1989), imposing demands for grain that may have had long-ranging effects upon how communities farmed and distributed agricultural products.

The fact that each spell of occupation was relatively short does not matter; at the end of each, the generation that had lived through it inherited and passed on a different world than the one that had existed before. Each incursion would have somehow changed the ways that communities saw the landscape they inhabited, the world beyond the coastal plain, their own social relations and perhaps even themselves. The military force also brought new forms of material culture – fine pottery, new kinds of metalwork, glass bangles and so on. The odd collections of such objects found in pits at settlements like Broxmouth (Hill 1987, 89) and in the souterrain at Castlelaw fort (Childe 1933) show that people saw them as special, perhaps as powerful. They would have evoked other-ness – new technologies, distant places and alien views of the world.

Even before the Roman army entered Scotland, news of its tide advancing across the Continent and then into southern Britain must have reached the Lothians – and so might have news of the hilltop towns of the Continent that had resisted Rome (see Collis 1984, 22–30). By the time that Lothian communities chose to abandon their individual settlements, perhaps to gather in larger ones, they would have been familiar with the notion of a vast, highly organised state. They did not group together for defence; certainly Traprain Law was not defended by

ramparts by this time (Armit *et al* 2002, 8–9; Close-Brooks 1983, 215). Instead, they may have been motivated by the novel concept of a much larger social entity. Their knowledge of both Continental *oppida* and the Empire provided new models for organising society on a scale unprecedented in the Lothians. A much broader regional identity gelled out of an incipient spiritual one, which had been expressed for centuries in ritual acts carried out on the Law.