
VATNSFJÖRÐUR 2011

FRAMVINDUSKÝRSLUR/INTERIM REPORTS



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Fornleifarannsóknir í Vatnsfirði. Yfirlit 2003-2011

Garðar Guðmundsson

Inngangur

Árið 2011 var níunda ár rannsókna í Vatnsfirði við Ísafjarðardjúp. Rannsóknirnar eru eitt af fjölmörgum verkefnum sem aðilar sem standa að félaginu Vestfirðir á miðöldum vinna að. Markmið félagsins er að stuðla að rannsóknum á sögu og menningu Vestfjarða á miðöldum og skjóta styrkum stoðum undir menningartengda ferðaþjónustu í héraðinu. Að félaginu standa Byggðasafn Vestfjarða, Súðavíkurhreppur, Fornleifastofnun Íslands ses, Háskólasetur Vestfjarða á Ísafirði, Háskóli Íslands, Atvinnuþróunarfélag Vestfirðinga, Oslóarháskóli, North Atlantic Biocultural Organization (NABO), International Polar Year Program, Northern Science and Education Centre, City University of New York (CUNY) og Háskólinn í Aberdeen. Félagið Vestfirðir á miðöldum stendur m.a. fyrir ráðstefnuhaldi, útgáfu á fræðiritum og fræðsluefni og umfangsmiklum fornleifarannsóknum. Í þessu stutta yfirliti er gerð grein fyrir rannsóknum á fornleifum. Sumarið 2005 barst verkefninu góður liðsauki því Fornleifaskólinn, sem Fornleifastofnun og NABO höfðu starfrækt í Mývatnssveit frá árinu 1997 til ársins 2004 flutti sig um set, kom sér upp bælistöðvum í Reykjanesi og varð þátttakandi í rannsóknunum við Ísafjarðardjúp. Verkefnið hefur verið styrkt m.a. af Alþingi og Fornleifasjóði.

Yfirlit rannsókna 2003-2010

Fyrsti áfangi fornleifarannsóknanna fólst í því að taka saman yfirlit yfir fornleifar á Vestfjörðum og stöðu fornleifarannsókna í þeim tilgangi að meta hvaða minjaflokka og staði væri heppilegast að hefja rannsóknir á. Hefur samantektin verið birt í Ársriti Sögufélags Ísfirðinga, en meðal markverðustu minjastaða héraðsins er Vatnsfjörður við Ísafjarðardjúp, enda er hann með helstu sögustaða héraðsins. Var því ákveðið að leggja sérstaka áherslu á athuganir þar. Andrea S. Harðardóttir sagnfræðingur hefur tekið saman sögulegt yfirlit og safnað helstu heimildum um Vatnsfjörð og búsetu þar. Ragnar Edvardsson fornleifafræðingur skráði fornleifar í Vatnsfirði og fann 52 fornleifar á jörðinni. Er nú fengið gott yfirlit yfir þekktar og sýnilegar minjar í Vatnsfirði. Ragnar stjórnaði jafnframt forkönnun á bæjarstæði Vatnsfjarðar sumarið 2003. Grafnir voru

nokkrir könnunarskurðir, sem m.a. leiddu í ljós að fornleifar í bæjarhól og túni eru vel varðveittar og ákjósanlegt rannsóknarefni. Í túninu fundust jafnframt leifar skála með langeldi fyrir miðju.

Árið 2004 var rannsókn haldið áfram á skálaleifum, en þær eru um 100 m norðan við gamla bæjarhólinn. Uppgraftarsvæðið var 70 fermetrar að stærð, en reyndust mannvistarlög hvergi dýpri en 20 sentimetrar. Minjarnar voru aðeins nokkra sentimetra undir yfirborði. Skálinn er um 16 m langur og 6 m breiður að innanmáli og snýr norður-suður.

Árið 2005 var uppgraftarsvæðið stækkað verulega til austurs, eða um í 310 fermetra. Suðaustast á svæðinu fundust leifar lítillar byggingar sem voru rannsakaðar undir stjórn Karen Milek. Í ljós kom að húsið hefur líklega verið smiðja sem gæti hafa orðið eldi að bráð. Rannsóknir á fornum bæjum á Íslandi hafa gjarnan takmarkast við húsin sjálf. Hér var ráðist í þá nýjung að grafa fram og rannsaka opin svæði utan húsa. Að þessu sinni var svæðið milli skála og smiðju opnað og til norðurs á móts við norðurgafli skála. Þar komu fram áberandi, tröðkuð mannvistarlög, svo sem vænta mátti, en athyglisvert var að sjá að þar leyndust einnig soðhola og tvö lítil eldstæði. Líklega hefur eldamennska verið stunduð utandyra og má vera að þessi niðurstaða kalli á frekari athuganir á athöfnum fólks utandyra að fornu en hingað til hefur verið gert. Þetta ár – 2005 – varð verkefnið viðameira. Fornleifaskólinn var fluttur frá Mývatni til Vatnsfjarðar og 11 nemendur víða að úr heiminum stunduðu nám í uppgraftartækni undir leiðsögn kennara. Þá bættist við nýr rannsóknarþáttur þar sem lögð er áhersla á að kanna staðhætti í því augnmiði að varpa ljósi á uppruna og þróun byggðar í Vatnsfirði. Landslagsathuganir eru nýleg en ört vaxandi grein innan fornleifafræði en þar eru minjar og landslag skoðað í staðfræðilegu samhengi. Einnig var byrjað á verkefni sem lýtur að því að rannsaka frjósemi jarðvegs og hvernig honum er viðhaldið með áburði. Vonir standa til að með slíkum rannsóknum verði hægt meta grasnytjar og hagvöxt jarðarinnar og hvaða þátt jarðnytjar túnsins áttu í vexti og framgangi búsins.

Árið 2006 var opnað enn stærra svæði við skálann og þrjár nýjar byggingar komu í ljós – allar frá víkingaöld. Þá hófust einnig rannsóknir á bæjarhól Vatnsfjarðar en þangað er

talið að bærinn hafi verið fluttur í öndverðu og þar stóð hann fram á 20. öld. Þar fundust vel varðveittar leifar seinasta torfbæjar Vatnsfjarðar. Auk þess voru grafnir könnunarskurðir til að kanna dýpt og umfang bæjarhólsins í því augnmiði að afmarka og staðsetja rannsóknarsvæði framtíðarinnar. Fornleifaskólinn var starfræktur áfram og 17 nemendur og 2 sjálfboðaliðar frá ýmsum löndum sóttu hann; frá Noregi, Danmörku, Englandi, Skotlandi, Írlandi, Frakklandi, Bandaríkjunum, Kanada, Ástralíu og Nýja-Sjálandi.

Sumarið 2007 kom enn ein rúst í ljós á víkingaaldarsvæðinu og var hafinn uppgröftur á henni auk þess sem lokið var við að grafa fram minjar sem fundust sumarið á undan. Á bæjarhólnum var opnað um rúmlega 400 fm² svæði og austari hluti yngsta torfbæjarins í Vatnsfirði afhjúpaður. Sá bær fór í gegnum umtalsverðar breytingar frá því hann var byggður 1884 og þar til hann lauk hlutverki sínu í gerbreyttri mynd á 6. áratug síðustu aldar, þá sem skemma og smiðja. Einnig voru gerðar viðnámsmælingar á hólnum til að kanna eðli, þykkt og umfang mannvistarlaganna. Landslagsrannsóknir héldu áfram, gengið var um Vatnsfjarðardal og minjar skráðar, en einnig var landslagið skoðað af sjó, siglingaleiðir farnar og mið skoðuð. Þá voru aðstæður til þess að gera rannsóknir á sjávarstöðubreytingum kannaðar, einnig tekin sýni úr seti í vötnum til að kanna jarðvegsþykknun, gjóskulög, gróðurfar og loftlagsbreytingar.

Sem fyrr voru nemendur víða að, 15 talsins auk 4 sjálfboðaliða, meistara- og doktorsnemar sem vinna jafnframt að sínum rannsóknum.

Sumarið 2008. Grafið var í 4 vikur í Vatnsfirði, frá 7. júlí til 1. ágúst. Rannsóknirnar hófust viku fyrr eða 28. júní en þá voru snið í niðurgrofnunum lækjarfarvegi vestantil í bæjarhólnum könnuð af prófessor Ian A. Simpson jarðvegsfræðingi við Stirling háskóla í Skotlandi og nemendum hans. Tekin voru sýni úr mismunandi mannvistarlögum til að fá hugmynd um eldsneytisnotkun í gegnum aldirnar. Einnig voru tekin sýni til C14 aldursgreingar og sýna þau að elstu minjar í bæjarhólnum eru frá því í kringum 1000 (sjá skýrslu Simon Parkin, Stuart Morison og Ian A. Simpson). Sem fyrr stýrði Garðar Guðmundsson fornleifafræðingur verkefninu en fornleifafræðingarnir Guðrún Alda Gísladóttir og Uggi Ævarsson stjórnðu uppgreftinum og unnu úrvinnslu auk Asridar

Daxböck. Auk þess unnu á bæjarhólnum meistaranemi í fornvistfræði, Véronique Forbes frá Háskólanum í Laval, Quebeck. Hún sá um að taka skordýrasýni og vinna úr þeim (sjá skýrslu) og Gunnhildur Garðarsdóttir sem vann sitt þriðja sumar sem grafari.

Markmiðið rannsóknarinnar nú var að afhjúpa síðasta torfhúsið á bæjarhólnum og hefja rannsókn á því og hafa þau markmið náð fram að ganga. Hús þetta (kallað mannvirki 7500) var byggt árið 1884 en rífið að stórum hluta 1907 þegar timburhús með niðurgrofnum kjallara var byggt suðvestan þess. Leifar þessa húss frá 1907 má núna sjá í suðvesturhorni uppgraftarsvæðisins. Ljóst er eftir sumarið 2008 að mannvirki 7500 var margoft breytt á sinni stuttu ævi. Þegar 1907 húsið var byggt var hið eldra rífið að stórum hluta, sennilega til að nýta grjót og viði úr því. Eftir stóð aðeins austasta húsið og það áfram notað fram á miðja 20. öld sem smiðja og geymsla.

Fjöldi gripa hafa fundist frá því rannsóknum hófust, nálægt 5000 í allt. Gripirnir, dýrabein (matarleifar), jurta- og skordýraleifar munu einnig segja sína sögu og saman mun rannsókn sérfræðinga á þessum minjaflokkum gefa okkur mynd af lífshlaupi og háttum manna í Vatnsfirði og endurspegla líf á reisilegum bæ á Vestfjörðum í lok 19. aldar og í byrjun þeirrar 20. Sumarið 2009 er áætlað að mannvirki 7500 verða kannað áfram og markmiðið er að reyna að ljúka þeirri rannsókn og komast niður á eldri minjar. Fyrsti hluti fornleifauppgrftarins á bæjarhólnum yrði þá langt kominn í lok uppgraftartímabilsins 2009.

Norður í túninu, um 100 metra frá uppgreftinum á bæjarhólnum, fara fram rannsóknir á fyrstu búsetu í Vatnsfirði, minjum frá 10. öld. Á víkingaaldarsvæðinu stjórnaði Karen Milek uppgeftri auk þess að vera skólastjóri Fornleifaskólans sem nú var starfræktur 4ja árið í röð í Vatnsfirði. Með Karen unnu fornleifafræðingarnir Astrid Daxböck, sem einnig bar hitann og þungann af innslætti gagna frá Vatnsfirði, og Ramona Harrison, sem einnig sá um rannsókn á dýrabeinum og að kenna þau fræði í Fornleifaskólanum. Svæðið var stækkað umtalsvert og nú var áherslan lögð á 'útisvæði', svæðið austan við aðal rústasvæðið. Í ljós komu vísbendingar um mikil umsvif m.a. tvær djúpar og umfangsmiklar eldahlur fullar af eldasteinum og kolum. Einnig kom í ljós ræfill af byggingu austast á svæðinu og þar í hruni perla frá Víkingaöld. Auk þess voru grafnir

tveir könnunarskurðir í vænlegar þústir norðan skálans og í þeim fundust mannvistarleifar sem rannsakaðar voru 2009 (sjá hér að neðan)..

Sem fyrr fóru fram landsháttarannsóknir í Vatnsfirði, af sjó og landi og skráning á fornleifum í Vatnsfjarðardal og nágrenni.

Sumarið 2009. Gríðarmikill árangur varð á báðum uppgraftarsvæðum í Vatnsfirði.

Víkingaaldarsvæði: Nú sá fyrir endann á rannsóknum á víkingaaldarsvæði, aðeins átti eftir að klára eitt hús og kanna tvö svæði. Stefnt var að því að ljúka uppgreftri þar og hefja úrvinnslu af krafti, sem mun enda með heildarútgáfu ár rannsóknarniðurstöðum svæðisins ásamt landslags- og umhverfisrannsóknum.

Bæjarhóll: Það markmið að kanna og grafa yngsta torfbæinn í Vatnsfirði náðist að mestu. Ljóst er að sá bær fór í gegnum miklar breytingar á síðasta skeiði sínu. Rannsóknin hefur leitt í ljós að bærin, sem var reistur árið 1884, var byggður utan í og á grunni eldri bæjarhúsa og hluti eldri húsa notuð áfram samtímis þeim yngri. Það hefur sýnt sig að byggingarsaga bæjarhóla er flókin og skil milli byggingarstiga oft ekki skörp. Sífelld var verið að endurbyggja; laga vegg, fylla upp í rými og hlutar af eldri byggingarstigum nýtt í þau yngri t.d. öflugir inn-og útveggir en auk þess líka tekið hleðslugrjót úr eldri byggingarstigum og endurnýtt í nýrri. Mikið safn dýrabeina fannst í herbergi sem hafði verið fyllt af ösku og úrgangi eftir að fyrra hlutverki þess lauk. Minna magn af gripum fannst sé miðað við undanfarin ár enda var aðallega unnið í byggingarleifum en ekki yfirborðs- og ruslalögum.

Auk uppgraftarins þá var landslagsrannsóknum framhaldið og voru meðal annars tekin borkjarnasýni úr nærliggjandi vatni, Sveinshúsavatni, til að freista þess að fá hugmyndir um sögu sjávarstöðu í Vatnsfirði sem getur gefið vísbendingar um forsögulegt landslag og e.t.v. varpað ljósi á athafnir mannsins við sjávarsíðuna. Þá voru tekin viðtöl við Vatnsfirðinga og í heimsókn kom fólk af svæðinu sem gat frætt okkur um sögu jarðarinnar og umhverfisins á 20. öld. Allt er þetta akkur fyrir þjóðháttafræðilegan þátt rannsóknarinnar. Sem fyrr komu að rannsókninni fjöldi manns (sjá yfirlit yfir starfsemi fornleifaskólans í fylgiskjali); með sérþekkingu á greinum innan fornleifafræði;

gripafræði, beinafræði, skordýrafræði, plöntufræði og örformgerðarfræði, svo eitthvað sé nefnt. Fjölmargir gestir komu m.a. Allison Bain skólastjóri vettvangs-fornleifaskóla Lavalháskóla í Qebeck í Kanada og prófessor við háskólann þar. Hún vann við uppgröft í nokkra daga við hlið nemenda sinna. Þá vann Dr. Peter Langdon frá háskólanum í Southampton með nemendum í viku. Aðrir gestir og fyrirlesarar eru tíundaðir í fylgiskjali um starfsemi fornleifaskólans.

Átak var gert í kynningarmálum á staðnum og fjölmörg skilti reist með upplýsingum á íslensku og ensku um umhverfi, jarðfræði, náttúrufar og síðast en ekki síst sögu staðarins og helstu niðurstöður uppgraftarins. Sem fyrr var prentaður upplýsingabæklingur fyrir ferðamenn á íslensku, ensku, þýsku og dönsku, og dreift í söluskála víða um land. Þá var að venju opinn dagur, svokallaður, einn laugardaginn. Samkomulag hefur verið um það milli kennara, starfsmanna og nemenda í Vatnsfirði að vinna einn laugardag í þessu augnmiði. Til okkar lögðu leið sína fjöldi manns (milli 40 og 50) í blíðskaparveðri og gengu um svæðið og fengu leiðsögn og fræðslu.

Sumarið 2010. Víkingaaldarsvæðið: Á víkingaaldarsvæðinu var lokið við að grafa fram lítið jarðhús og þar með rannsókn á síðasta mannvirkinu á víkingaaldarsvæðinu. Jarðhús þetta er það næstminnsta sem grafið hefur verið fram á Íslandi, aðeins 3x2 m að innanmáli. Í húsinu hefur verið bekkur og í því fannst m.a. steinn með gati úr mjúkum sandsteini, sem gæti verið kljásteyn og bent til að þar hafi verið vefstaður. Auk þessa voru grafnir allnokkrir könnunarskurðir á svæðinu í leit að víkinggaldarminjum og svæðið telst nú allvel kannað.

Bæjarhóllinn: Á bæjarhólnum var haldið áfram rannsóknum á flóknum byggðaleifum bæjarhúsasamstæðu þar sem sífellt hefur takið breytingum í áranna rás.

Fjölbreytni gripa sem fundist hafa á herbergjum bæjarhúsanna hefur aukist eftir því sem dýpra er grafið og í lok sumars var komið talsvert magn af 17. aldar leirkerjum, ofnum og þrjúnuðum efnispjöttlum og viðargripum.

Markvert er að nokkrir veggir, sem kalla má stofnveggi innan bæjarhúsanna og eru gríðarlega miklir að umfangi og gerð, allt að þriggja metra breiðir, virðast vera mun eldri

en talið var. Veggir þessir eru í herbergjum sem hafa verið í notkun a.m.k. frá 17. öld og allt fram til 1900. Upp að veggjunum að utan lá þykkt gjóskulag sem er úr Heklugosi árið 1693 og virðist eina gjóskulagið sem barst vestur í Djúp í því magni að það er vel greinanlegt.

Lítið vitað um byggingargerð og endurbyggingar bæjarhúsa á vestfjörðum. Norðanlands, þar sem loftslag er þurr og kalt er það talin þumalputtaregla að torfveggi þyrfti að endubbyggja á um 100 ára fresti en 60 ára fresti sunnanlands þar sem vætusamara er og veggir fúnuðu hraðar. Vestfirskir grjót og torfveggir virðast mun lífseigari og ef dæma má útfrá veggjum í bæjarhúsum Vatnsfjarðar þá geta þeir ennst í nokkur hundruð ár með góðu viðhaldi.

Þar sem bæjarhólauppreftir eru langtímaverkefni voru því verkefninu reistar nokkrar áfangavörður á leið aftur í tímann. Fyrsti áfangi miðaði að rannsóknum á yngstu bæjarhúsunum frá 19. og 20. öld og náðist hann að mestu 2010, utan þess að enn átti eftir að fjarlægja nokkur mannvistarlög og veggir syðst á uppgraftarsvæðinu sem tilheyrðu þessu yngsta byggingarskeiði bæjarhúsanna. Í lok uppgraftartímabilsins 2010 var því ljóst að næsti áfangi rannsókna var farinn að taka á sig mynd, þe. torfbærinn sem var í notkun frá 17 öld og fram til 1884, þegar síðasti torfbærinn var reistur og var ljóst að veggir hans höfðu verið endurnýttir við byggingu yngri bæjarins. Landslagsrannsóknum var fram haldið í Vatnsfirði og fornleifaskráning fór fram innantúns á bæjum í Vatnsfjarðardal (Vatnsfirði, Vatnsfjarðarseli, Miðhúsum, Hálshúsum og Sveinhúsum). Fornleifarnar voru fjölbreyttar, bæði hvað varðar gerð og aldur. Skráðar voru minjar allt frá Víkingaöld fram á 20. öld, allt frá eyðibýlum og selstöðum langt inni til heiða að hjöllum og verbúðum við sjávarsíðuna. Fornleifarnar voru í mjög misjöfnu ásigkomulagi, sumar eru í hættu m.a. vegna ábúðar og uppblásturs, aðrar standa grónar á fáförnum stöðum þar sem fátt ógnar þeim. Landslagsrannsóknir og fornleifaskráning veita fjölmargar upplýsingar t.d. um tengsl milli bæja, samband við höfuðból og landnýtingu (s.s. torfskurð og beitiland). Áfram voru tekin viðtöl við staðkunnuga og eru þau gulls ígildi.

Sem fyrr var fornleifaskólinn starfræktur og hann sóttu 11 nemendur að þessu sinni (sjá fylgiskjal 2)

Eins og undanfarið var haldinn opinn dagur í Vatnsfirði og sótti fjöldi manns staðinn heim og hefur fjöldinn farið vaxandi ár frá ári.

Sumarið 2011

Hafist var handa við lokaúrvinnslu gagna frá Víkingaaldarsvæðinu og er áætlað að niðurstöður komi út á bók 2013. Á bæjarhólnum var rannsóknum haldið áfram og var markmiðið að fjarlægja mannvistarlög sem tilheyrðu yngsta torfbænum. Undir lok uppgraftartímabilsins var farin að koma skýrari mynd á eldri bæjarhús og virðist vera um að ræða dæmigerðan gangabæ sem ætlunin er að halda áfram að grafa fram sumarið 2012.

Sumarið 2008 höfðu komið í ljós leifar íbúðarhússins frá 1907 sem var rífið um 1970, í suðvesturhorni uppgraftarsvæðisins. Grafinn hafði verið djúp gryfja, niður í óhreyfð jarðlög, og leifum kjallara hússins rutt ofan í hana. Gryfjan var tæmd og kom þá í ljós ágætis snið í gegnum bæjarhólinn sem gefur góða hugmynd um þykkt mannvistarlaga. Virðast þau vera að minnsta kosti um 70 cm þykk. Í gryfjunni kom jafnframt í ljós öskuhaugur sem grafinn var upp að hluta og bendir frumgreining gripa, sem í honum fundust, til þess að hann sé frá miðöldum, að öllum líkindum frá 12. öld. Er ætlunin að halda áfram að rannsaka hann sumarið 2012.

Í ár vann hluti starfsliðsins í Vatnsfirði einnig að rannsóknum á minjum meðfram strönd Vatnsfjarðar. Voru grafnir nokkrir könnunarskurðir í mannvirki þar og á grundvelli niðurstaðna úr þeim var valin ein rúst til frekari rannsókna. Rústin er talin hafa verið naust og lauk rannsókn hennar í sumar. Fornleifaskóli var sem fyrr starfræktur í ár og sóttu hann níu nemar að þessu sinni (sjá fylgiskjal 2). Þá voru til aðstoðar tveir sjálfboðaliðar sem áður höfðu sótt fornleifaskólann og voru nú að heyja sér efnivið í doktorsverkefni í fornleifafræði. Landsháttarannsóknir sem hafa verið stundaðar í Vatnsfirði undanfarið voru með minna móti en Oscar Aldred sem hefur séð um þær er

að ljúka doktorsritgerð og eru landsháttarannsóknir hans í Vatnsfirði ein af uppistöðum þess verks. Nemendur fengu kennslu í þessum fræðum og nutu leiðsagnar Oscars.

Hinn árvissi opni dagur var haldinn laugardaginn 13. ágúst og komu um 100 gestir og nutu leiðsagnar fornleifafræðinga um rannsóknarsvæðið.

Unnið er að úrvinnslu gagna frá sumrinu 2011 og er skýrslu að vænta á útmánuðum 2012.

Framvinduáætlun fyrir sumarið 2012

- o Vinna að úrvinnslu og undirbúningi útgáfu á niðurstöðum rannsókna á Víkingaaldarsvæði.
- o Áframhaldandi rannsóknir á bæjarhól.
- o Áframhaldandi rannsóknir á sjávarminjum.
- o Áframhald verður á rannsóknum á landslagi, umhverfi og samfélagi.

Verkefni sem þetta er ekki eyland, styrkur þess liggur í því að vera þverfaglegt rannsóknarverkefni. Stefnt er að því að niðurstöður úr rannsóknum á höfuðbólínu Vatnsfirði við Ísafjarðardjúp verði notaðar til að draga fram hinar afdrifaríku breytingar sem urðu á félags- og hagkerfi Vestfjarðakjálkans sem og á menningu landsvæðisins. Með niðurstöðum úr fornleifarannsóknum, landsháttarannsóknum og umhverfisrannsóknum í samvinnu fornleifafræðinga, sagnfræðinga og umhverfisfræðinga frá mörgum löndum eykst verulega þekking okkar á umhverfis- og menningararfi Vestfjarða og jafnframt skapast grundvöllur til samanburðar við gagnvirkni náttúru og menningar í öðrum landshlutum og annars staðar á Norður-Atlantshafssvæðinu.

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Annað:

Svokallaður opinn dagur hefur verið haldinn í Vatnsfirði sumrin 2007 -2010. Er þá tekið á mótum gestum og gangandi, sagt frá rannsókninni og staðháttum.

Tekið hefur verið á mótum nemendum vinnuskóla Reykhólasveitar og Súðavíkurbrepps og þeim kynnt starf fornleifafraeðinga, svæðið og rannsóknin.

Excavations on the Vatnsfjörður Farm Mound in 2011

Oddgeir Isaksen

Introduction

The sixth field season on the Vatnsfjörður farm mound lasted from the 25th of July to the 20th of August 2011.

The excavation was supervised by Oddgeir Isaksen, Guðrún Alda Gísladóttir and Garðar Guðmundsson, assisted by Óskar Gísli Sveinbjarnason, Dawn Elise Mooney and Céline Dupont-Hébert. The excavation was staffed by nine students of the 2011 Field School in North Atlantic Archaeology: Gilles Marciniak, Katarina Kolar, Lindsey Stirling, Matthew Cox, Nathan Rokke, Nika Shilobod, Sally Evans, Teva Vidal and Verena Höfig. Post-excavation work was carried out by Oddgeir Isaksen, Guðrún Alda Gísladóttir and Garðar Guðmundsson. The project was managed for Fornleifastofnun Íslands by Garðar Guðmundsson

Background – Previous Seasons

In 2009 the emphasis had been on excavating post abandonment deposits which filled rooms and corridors revealed during the 2008 field season. The 2008 season had however mostly been dedicated to the removal of demolition deposits created by a late 20th century leveling of the home field and farm mound (see Gísladóttir in Milek 2010, 66-77). By the end of the 2009 season most of the excavation area could be divided into separate areas (see Figure 1 below: Groups 10671, 10662, 10590, 10515, 9502, 9560, 8590 and 8562), defined by different rooms and corridors, some of which had thick floor deposits. These deposits were largely excavated in 2010.

With demolition deposits and post abandonment deposits out of the way, the goal of the 2010 season was to continue work on those rooms as well as extending the excavation area to the west in order to get a clearer view of a large turf and stone wall, aligned north to south that had been uncovered in 2009 and formed the western wall of rooms (10662) and (9502) (see Figure 1). This wall was clearly extending beyond the western limits of excavation.



Figure 1: An overview of the research area, at the end of the 2010 season, showing major context groups.

The 2010 excavations revealed that rooms (10662), (9502) and (8562) as well as corridor (10590) were all of 17th century origin, a dating supported both by tephrochronological evidence as well as the artifacts found in their earliest excavated

phases. Room (10662) and the corridor (10590) had remained in use into the 20th century and formed a part of the farm as rebuilt in 1884. Areas (8590), (10671), and (9560) were on the other hand still covered with 19th-20th century deposits belonging to the 1884 farm as well as a vegetable garden built into its ruins in the early 20th century (see figure 2 below, see also Isaksen in Milek 2011, 58-59, and Gísladóttir in Milek 2010, 72-73).

The 2011 Season

The main focus of the 2011 season was to finish excavating the 19th-20th century deposits in areas (8590), (10671) and (9560), as well as emptying a foundation cut in

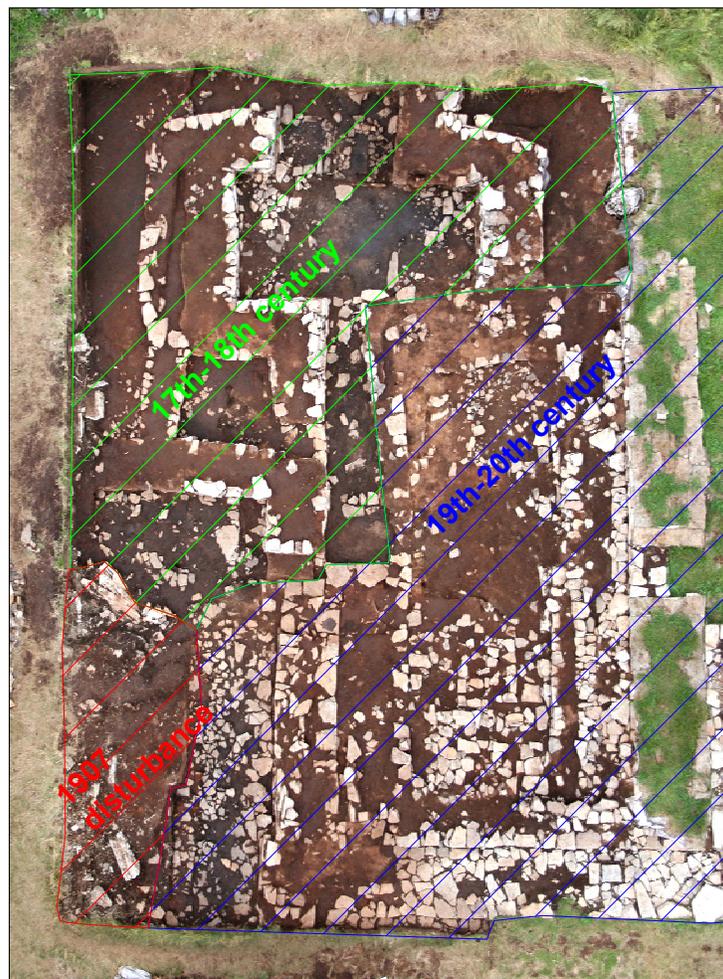


Figure 2: An overview over the phasing of the farm mound research area at the end of the 2010 season.

the south-western corner of the site containing the remains of a farm house built in 1907 (see figure 2).

Excavation Methods

The excavation method followed standard FSÍ protocol, using a “single context planning” approach. This method entails that each deposit (feature or layer) is considered an individual event (unit) in the creation of an archaeological site. Each unit is recorded, planned, elevations taken and photographed as well as being given a textual description. Each unit is given a number from a running numbering sequence that is unique within the research area. Thus there is one numbering system used for all deposits excavated in the Farm Mound and Viking age areas in Vatnsfjörður. A Harris Matrix was established on site, and refined during the post-excavation phase. Deposits which are found within the same area, structure or are thought to belong to the same phase are given a collective group number to keep track of their relationship. A group number is taken from the same numbering sequence as the units (Lucas, 2003).

Finds were categorized and labeled on site, washed, dried, packed and registered in the excavation database. Finds were given basic conservation attention if necessary. All bones were collected, bagged and will be sent to the University of Laval for identification and analysis. Bulk soil samples were taken for archaeo-entomological and botanical analyses, and undisturbed blocks were taken for micro-morphological analysis. These await further analysis.

The 2011 Excavation Results

Group 8590 “The Vegetable Garden”

Group (8590) is a large and badly disturbed area, about 91 m², in the middle of the farm mound research area. This group contains an early 20th century vegetable garden that was partially based on the walls of earlier buildings as well demolition deposits belonging to its construction and post- abandonment deposits. A large number of those



Figure 3: An overview of the area covered by vegetable garden (8590) at the end of the 2010 field season.

demolition deposits were excavated in 2008. At the end of the 2009 season earlier structures were starting to emerge beneath these deposits, and the shape of the vegetable garden was becoming clearer.

Little work was done in this area in 2010, as the focus of excavation effort was targeted elsewhere. The main focus of the 2011 excavations was therefore to continue work on area (8590), as well as adjacent areas (9560) and (10671) that also contained 19th to 20th century deposits.

Quite early on in the season, most of the post abandonment deposits had been removed and the form of the vegetable garden was starting to take shape, with earlier structures also becoming more visible beneath. In the center of the garden a large pit [11571] started to appear. This feature was filled with a mix of turf and stones (in chronological order, latest to earliest, [11520], [11522], [11527] and [11562].)



Figure 4: An overview over pit [11571] before excavation, camera facing west.

During the excavation of deposit [11527], a skeleton of a dog was found, wrapped in textile, sitting in a shallow cut [11523].

With the fill of pit [11571] removed, it became clear that it extended beneath the western wall, unit [11541], of the vegetable garden and therefore predates it. The pit was irregularly shaped and deepest along the northern and southern edge, about 0.4 m, and shallowest in the center, circa 0.2 m. Along its northern and southern edges, the pit clearly truncated two earlier walls made of turf and stone, both running east to west. It is thought likely that the pit forms part of the construction process of the vegetable garden - that it was dug to harvest building rocks for the walls of the garden from earlier structures. After that the pit was filled, and the walls built over part of it.

The garden seems to have been split up in two parts, as a single row of stones (unit [11509]) was found running east-west about 2 m from the southern wall, creating a separate space of about 8 m² in size (see figure 8 below).

The four main walls of the vegetable garden were all of rather poor quality. A typical turf and stone wall usually has an outer facing made of stone, but the inside is usually made of turf. In some cases, if the wall is not expected to support any weight like from a roof, the fill of the wall might just be made up soil taken from surrounding area. That seems to have been the case with the walls of the vegetable garden.

The northern wall gr. (11625) seems to have been built up against the southern wall of building (10662). Its condition was the poorest of the four walls of the vegetable garden (8590) and it seems to have been pushed into the vegetable garden during the late 20th century flattening of the farm mound, as well as having collapsed and been repaired during the use of the garden. Two turf deposits (units 9510, and 9518) and a single row of stones (unit 9514) were the only in situ parts of this wall and probably belonged to its last phase. They were also the only surviving indications of the walls dimensions. It seems to have been about 0.4 m high, 1.6 m wide and probably about 6.5 m long, like its counterpart at the southern end of the garden.

The eastern and southern walls of the vegetable garden were both built on top of earlier walls belonging to the 1884 farmhouse. Both were of poor quality, in poor condition and thus difficult to define. They were therefore excavated in a number of components.

The eastern wall, group (11623) was composed of thirteen deposits (in chronological order, units [11505], [11508], [11514], [11515], [11526] [11529], [11531], [11539], [11566], [11569], [11580], [11586], [11588]), and was built on top of earlier walls that are thought to belong to the same phase as buildings (10562), (9502), (8562), and therefore date to the 17th century. Group (11623) also postdates the western wall of some of the 1884 structures, for instance group (7500), excavated in 2007 (see gr. 9560 below, see also figure 8).

The eastern wall measured about 14m in length and 1.70m in width. The northern half of the wall was about 0.45 high, but at the southern edge only about 10-15 cm high. The northern half of the wall was composed of a stone facing made of rocks of irregular shape and a fill made of turf rich soil. This soil was probably taken from the farm mound,



Figure 5: The eastern wall, camera facing south.

as it contained a small collection of late 19th-20th century pottery, vessel glass and window glass. The southern half of the wall was mostly made of stones but slightly



Figure 6: The southern wall (gr.11624) of the vegetable garden, camera facing east.

mixed with turf rich soil (also containing 19th-20th century pottery). The southern half of the wall was in much poorer condition than the northern part, likely due to the late 20th century leveling of the farm mound. The southern wall, group (11624), was in a very poor state of preservation and had collapsed into the garden - in all likelihood when the home field was flattened in the late 20th century. It was composed of 6 deposits (units, [9578], [9590], [9621], [9640], [11504] and [11535]). The latter deposits chiefly contained stone and turf rich soil, including some charcoal and a small assemblage of late 19th- 20th century pottery, vessel glass and window glass. Due to the poor condition

of the wall, it is difficult to be confident of its dimensions. However, it appears to have been about 1 m wide, about 6.5m long and between 0.4 and 0.5m in height.

The western wall (unit 11541), was about 11m long, 0.4-0.7m in width and survived to circa 0.3m in height at most. It was composed of an interior stone facing of large flat stones and a fill of strips of turf (*strengur*). The southern half of the wall was built up against a wall (units [11549] and [11609]) that is believed to be a part of the 1884 farm house. The northern half of the western wall sat on top of an earlier wall, believed to date back to the 17th century.



Figure 7: The western wall (gr. 11541) of the vegetable garden, camera facing north.

The removal of features and deposits belonging to vegetable garden revealed a series of walls that appear to belong to the same phase as buildings (10562), (9502) and (8562), dating to the 17th- 19th century. Roughly in the middle of the area, excavations revealed a corridor, group (11627), running east to west and a room extending north from the corridor. These features are thought to form part of the earlier phase of

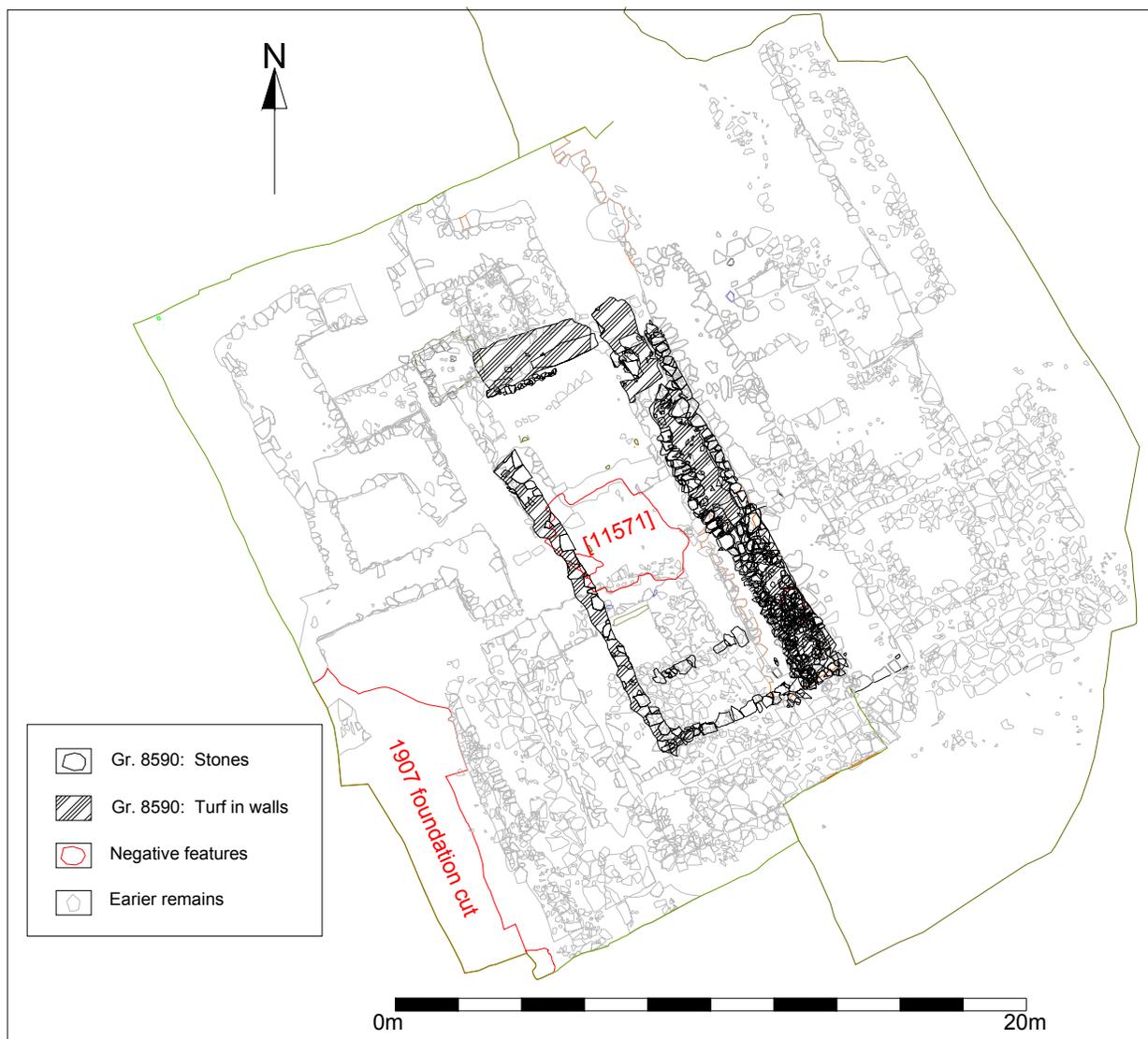


Figure 8: A simplified drawing showing vegetable garden (8590) in relation to earlier remains.

remains within the research area, dating to the 17th century.

Group 9560

Group (9560) contains deposits and features in the south part of the excavation area, believed to belong to the 1884 farmhouse. In 2007 a block of features (group 7500) belonging to this same phase was excavated in the eastern part of the area (Ævarsson and Gísladóttir in Milek 2008). This area is separated from the rest of the site by a large wall, running roughly north-south (see figure 9). In 2008 the decision was made to preserve those remains as a monument to the 1884 farm house, and focus the

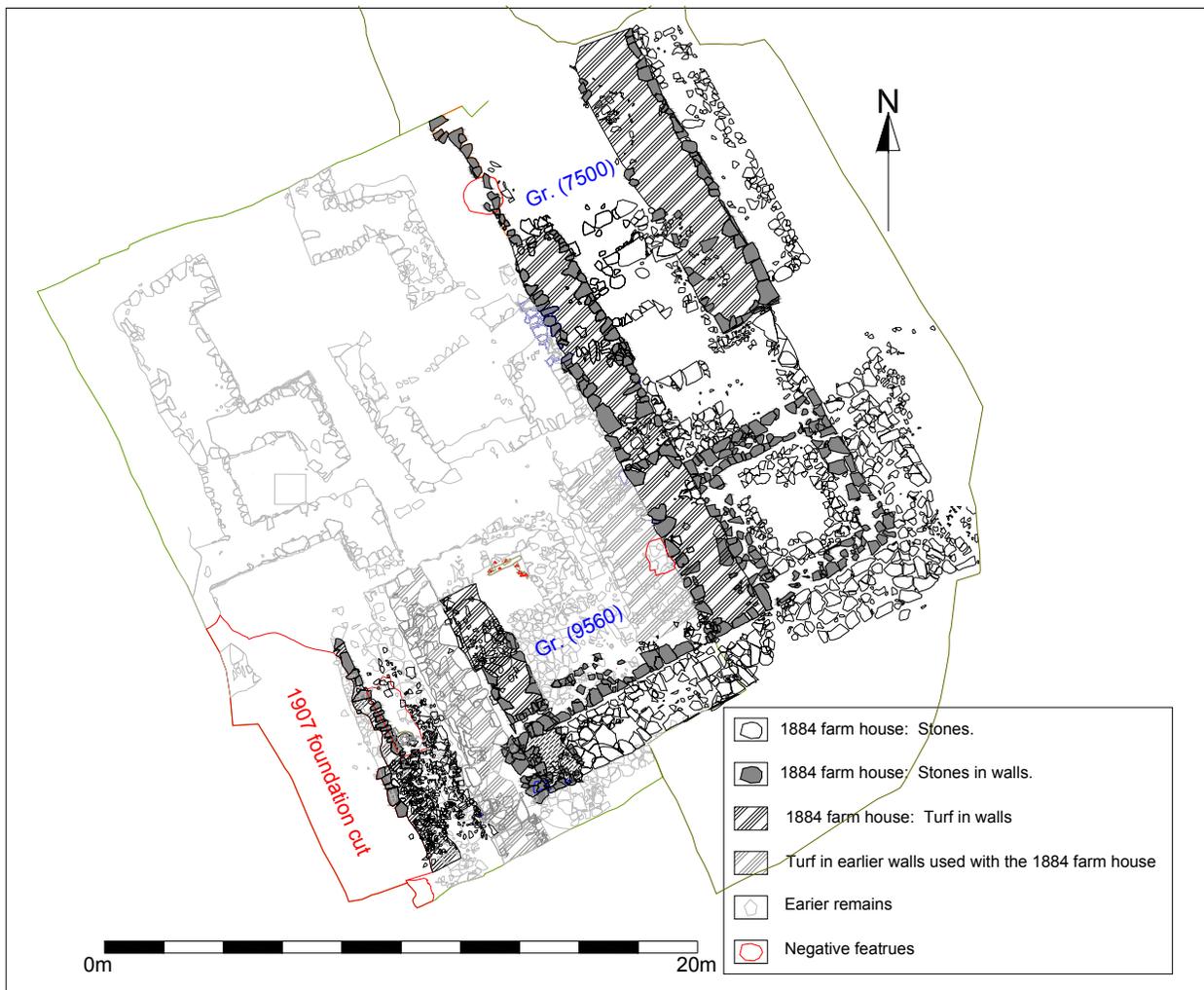


Figure 9: A simplified drawing showing the remains of the 1884 in relation to earlier remains.

excavations on extending the research area westward in order to expose more of the house. By the end of the 2008 season it became clear though that the new area was much more damaged than was originally thought (Ævarsson and Gísladóttir in Milek, 2008) due to the construction of an early 20th century vegetable garden (see group 8590) and a late 20th century flattening of the farm mound (Isaksen in Milek 2011, 58-59, and Gísladóttir in Milek 2010, 72-73).

It was only in the 2011 season when the remains of the vegetable garden (gr. 8590 above) had been removed, that it became clear how much survived of the 1884 farm house. Within an area of about 5.6 x 6.6m the remains were discovered of a paved room with narrow corridor running north from it, along its eastern wall (see figure 9). The eastern and northern wall, the pavement and the corridor, all clearly belonged to an earlier phase (the 17th century farm house), although they had been reused as a part of the 1884 farm. The only elements that seemed to belong to the 1884 construction were the western wall and the southern wall.

The western wall (units [11609] and [11549]) was built up against an earlier wall with the same alignment - that most likely belonged to the 17th century farm house. It was about 5m long, 1.5m wide and about 0.4 m high. It was composed of a facing of flat stones and a turf fill mixed with small rocks, possibly to strengthen the wall. The wall was not fully excavated in 2011.

The southern wall (group 11621) was clearly an external wall and was more or less missing its inner facing, likely due to the construction of vegetable garden (8590) (see



Figure 10: The south facing of the southern wall of gr. (9560), camera facing north.

above). The southern facing of the wall (unit [11608]) was however in a much better condition.

It was made of massive stones partially bonded with concrete, that were sitting in a foundation trench (unit [11620]), filled with turf rich soil mixed with rocks (unit [11613]), up to 0.5 m deep. The foundation trench clearly truncated earlier remains.

The wall was about 6m long and survived to circa 30cm above ground, seen from the outside. From the surviving remains of the inner facing of the wall, it appears to have been 1.3m wide. The wall was truncated by a pipe trench at its eastern end, where it adjoins a large wall of turf and stone, running north to south that belongs to the 1884 farm buildings revealed and partly excavated in 2007 (group 7500)

A stone paved floor was revealed after the removal of vegetable garden debris, on the north site of wall (11621). This paved floor is not contemporary with the 1884 house as the wall (11621) was clearly built on top the flat floor stones. However it was probably



Figure 11: Foundation trench [11620] for the southern wall of gr. (9560).

reused as a part of the 1884 farmhouse. No floor deposits were found inside the room that could be associated with the 1884 construction phase. It is likely that floor deposits belonging to this phase, were lost with the cultivation of the vegetable garden (8590) (see above).

At the junction of the southern and western walls was a platform of turf and stone, about 2.5m long (north-south), 2m wide and about 0.3m high. This platform is thought to be the remains of a front porch. It was badly disturbed and therefore had to be excavated in a number of parts (units [9584], [10623], [10626], [10629], [10631], [10644], [10636], [10637], [10658], [10642], [10656], [10657], [10630], [11530][11533] and [11551]). The latter units were given the collective group number (11628) (see figure 12).



Figure 12: Platform (11628), camera facing east.

On the south side of wall (11621) an external pavement (unit [7541]) had been uncovered in 2007 and 2008, also belonging to the 1884 farmhouse. The pavement had been left unexcavated as a part of the structures (gr. 7500) that were intended to be preserved as a monument of the 1884 farm (see here above). The pavement was composed of large flat stones, was about 2m wide and extended about 15m to the east and then about 7m to the north, around the remains belonging to the 1884 farm house (gr. 7500 and 9560).

The pavement was partially excavated in 2011, up until the western wall of the buildings belonging to gr. (7500). Its removal revealed number of leveling deposits (units [11513], [11565], [11567] [11519] [11593], [11576] [11597] and [11599],) composed of turf rich soil mixed with other anthropogenic materials such as peat ash, wood ash and charcoal, some containing 18-19th century pottery. These latter deposits were seen to cover an earlier pavement (gr. 11629), running along the southern edge of the excavation area (see gr. 10671 below).



Figure 13: Pavement [7541], camera facing east.

Group 10671

Group (10671) contains deposits and features in a badly disturbed area or room near the southwest corner of the excavation area. Due to extensive disturbance caused by a foundation of a farm house built in 1907, the interpretation of this part of the site has been problematic. The area was defined by two badly disturbed walls (north and west) and an eastern wall, relatively well preserved and clearly belonging to an earlier phase, possibly the 17th century farm house. Taken together these walls, all made of turf and stone, comprised a room some 8m long and about 2m wide. In 2009 a large hearth (unit [9616]) was found sitting up against the western wall, dug into a sequence of gravel deposits mixed with turf debris, peat ash, wood ash and charcoal.

The hearth and the ash rich gravel deposits were thought to be an indication of the building having been used as a kitchen (group 8563). The removal of the gravel deposits revealed an earlier phase of this building (group 10676), likely the original phase of this room. One floor or leveling deposit (unit [10537]), made of turf and stone, was removed from this phase but no artefacts were found that could give an idea of the role of the room. However one sherd of 19th to 20th century pottery was found near the bottom of the western wall, indicating that it might have been a part of the 1884 farm

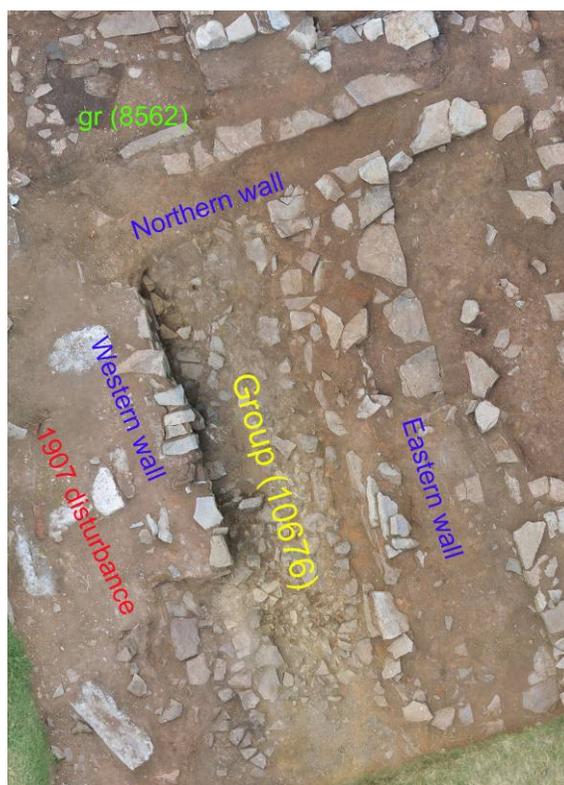


Figure 14: Overview of group (10676) with the hearth at the beginning of the 2010 field season

house complex (see figure 9 above). The removal of this deposit revealed a sequence of mixed leveling deposits, of turf stone and ash (units [10563], [10577], [10536], [10543], [10638], [10546], [10646]), that clearly belonged to an earlier phase (gr. 11627) seen to be extending beneath the western and northern walls. The removal of the eastern wall (gr. 10582) and western wall (units: 10528 and 10530)), as well as the

leveling deposits belonging to the earlier group (11627), revealed a pavement apparently associated with the eastern wall that has not yet been excavated and therefore has not been given a unit number.

One of the goals of the 2011 seasons was to clear a foundation cut truncating the southwest corner of the research area, filled by the remains of a farm house, built in 1907. Once the cut had been machine excavated, a continuation of the leveling

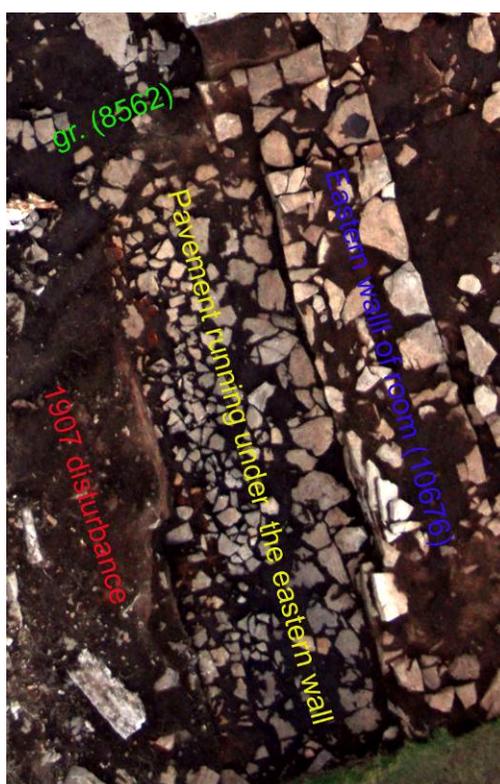


Figure 15: An overview of gr. (11627).

deposits belonging to gr. (11627) was revealed. Below them, a medieval midden was seen in section (see gr. 11545 below). Further excavations of these deposits revealed more of the aforementioned pavement associated with the eastern wall of area (10671). In one of them (unit [11547]) a small collection of late 18th century pottery was found as well as pieces of an early 18th century clay pipe which indicates that the deposits of group (11627) indeed predate the 1884 farm house.

Although the pavement revealed in 2010 and 2011 seasons, was thought to be associated with the eastern wall of area (10671), it clearly seemed to extend beneath the southernmost portion of the wall. As this part did not follow the same alignment as the rest of the wall, and since the pavement was running under it, it is thought to be a

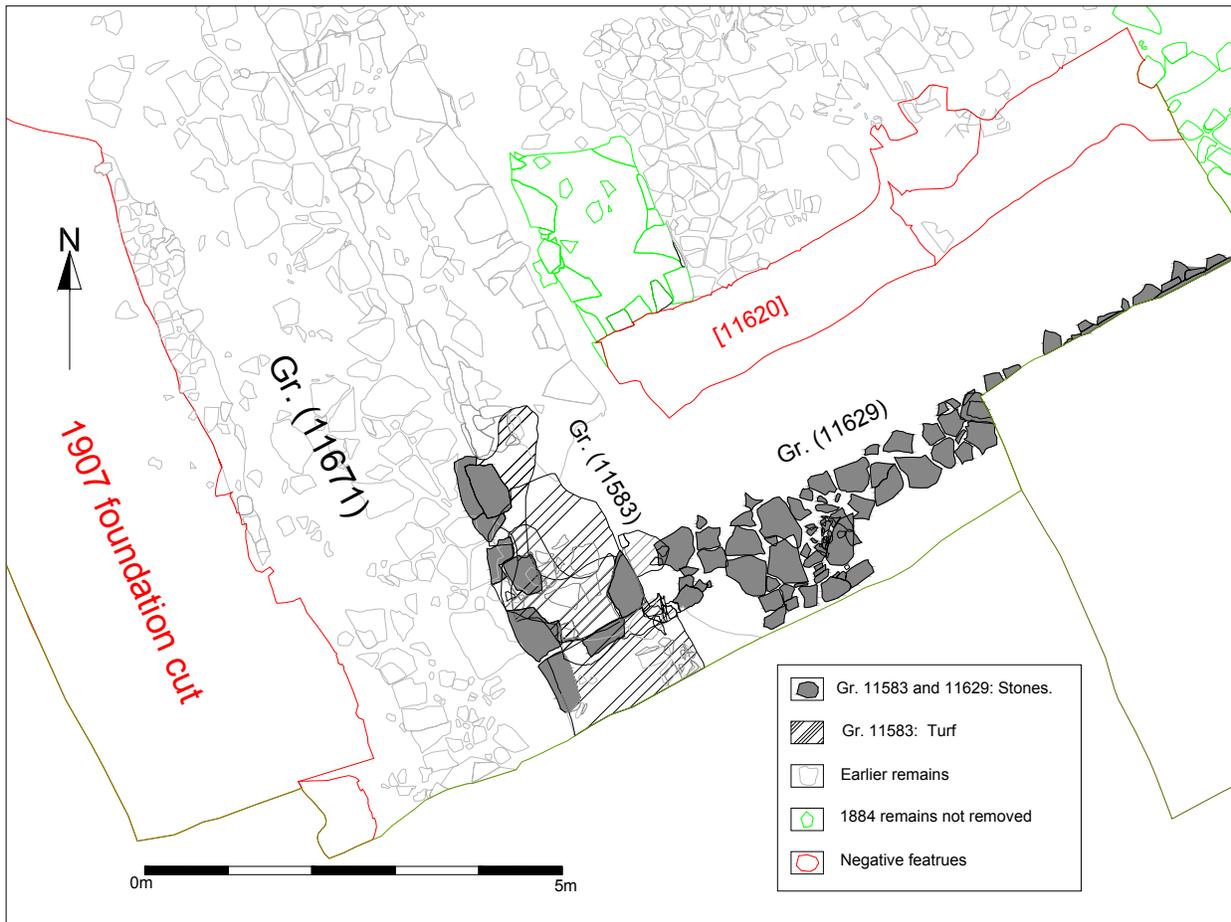


Figure 16: A simplified drawing showing wall extension (11583) and pavement (11629) in relation to other remains

later addition. This addition, about 3m long, 1.5m wide and 0.4m high, was therefore excavated. It was quite disturbed, especially on the eastern side and was excavated in four parts (units [11543], [11568], [11575] and [11585]) that were given the collective group number (11583). On the less disturbed western side it had a stone facing made of rather large flat rocks, some about 0.6m across, but on the east side the stone facing was missing entirely. The turf fill of the wall was sitting directly under a sequence of

leveling deposits, which were under pavement [7541] in group (9560), which were also covering an earlier pavement, gr. (11629). Wall extension (11583) and pavement (11629) are therefore thought to be contemporary, and belong to a phase earlier than the 1884 farm house.

Group 11545: A Medieval Midden

After the removal of the remains of the 190 farmhouse, a midden (gr. 11545) was discovered in section, beneath deposits in gr. (10671) on the east side and gr. (8562) on the north side of the cut.



Figure 17: Archaeologists Guðrún A. Gísladóttir and Céline Dupont-Hébert cleaning the west facing section of midden (11545), shortly after it was revealed.

The total dimensions of this midden are as yet unclear, as its extent is obscured by later remains. The removal of the remaining deposits of gr. (11627), along the eastern edge of the foundation cut, did however uncover about 0.5m wide portion of the midden that was excavated for the recovery of dating evidence. It is however known to predate building (8562), a structure built prior to 1693 AD (see Isaksen, in Milek 2011, 52-53).

As excavated to date, the midden is about 0.5m thick and about 5m long, and is sitting directly on top of natural gravels. The midden is composed of a series of peat ash and wood ash deposits, mixed with charcoal, along with occasional clean charcoal deposits separated by layers of turf. The latter turf deposits may represent consolidation between dumping events. This part of the midden produced a large collection of bones (pending



Figure 18: The 12th-13th century gaming piece found in midden (11545).

analysis) indicating good potential for further study. Altogether the midden did not produce many finds (mostly nails and other non-diagnostic iron objects), but one datable artifact was found, a 12th-13th century gaming piece from layer [11596] (see figure 18.).

The remainder of the midden awaits further investigation.

The 17th Century Farm House.

At the end of the 2011 season, when the remains of vegetable garden (8950) and most of the 1884 farmhouse (apart from group 7500) had been removed, the remains of an earlier farm house became apparent. These earlier structures may be dated to the 17th century by tephrochronology, but were likely in use in one form or another until the late 19th century, as a part of the 1884 farm house.

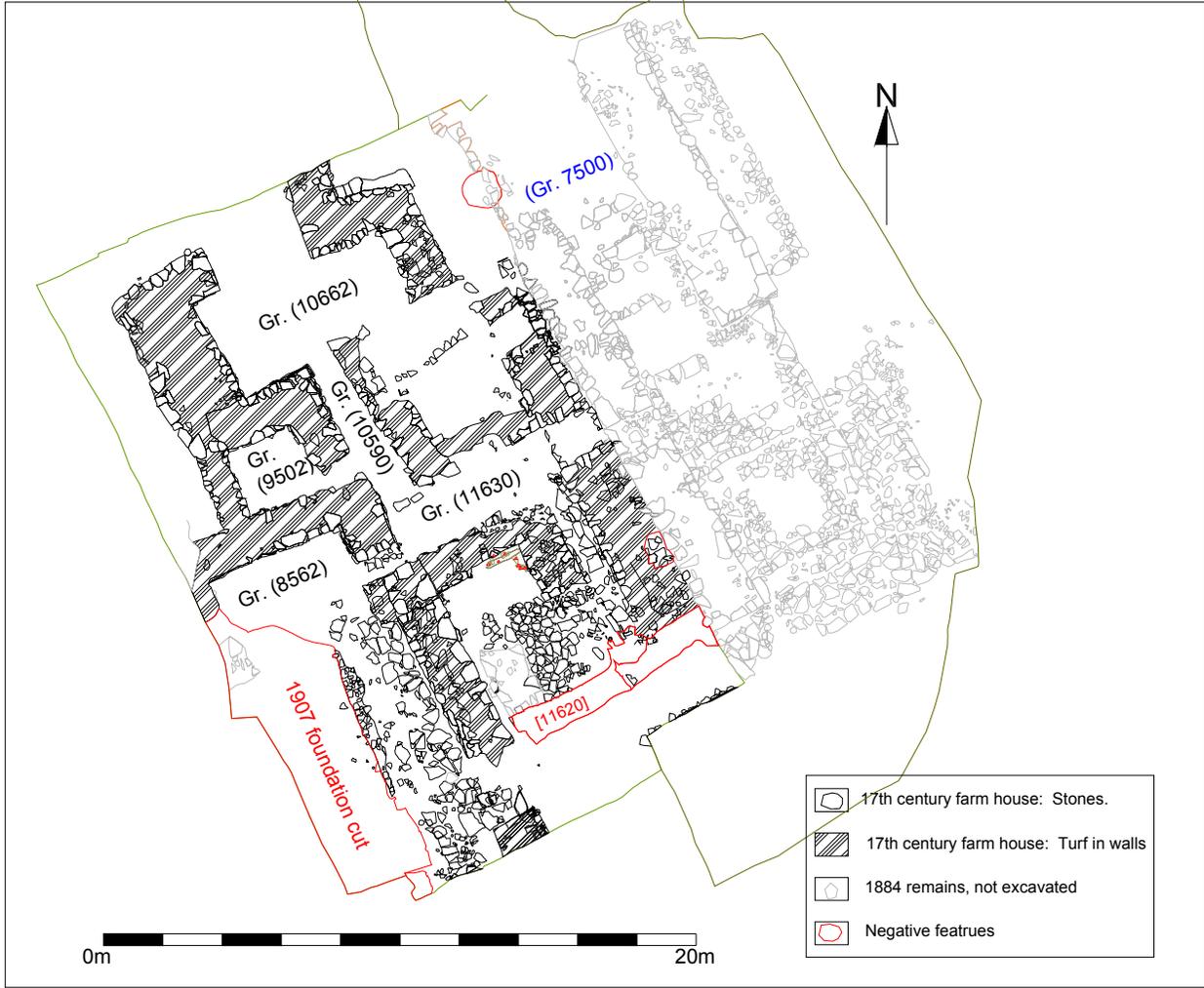


Figure 19: A simplified drawing showing the remains of the 17th century farm house in relation to other remains.

In 2009 and 2010 the earliest phases of buildings (10662) at the northern end of the research area, and (9502) and (8562) on the western side, were exposed along with corridor (10590) that was connecting them. In 2011, the removal of vegetable garden (8950) revealed a corridor (group 11630) in the middle of the research area. This corridor that was also connected to the aforementioned buildings, was aligned west to east and extended beneath the remaining elements of group (7500). On the northern side of corridor (11630) yet another room was also starting to appear and on the south side of the corridor, a narrow corridor was running from it connecting it to a room that had last been used as a part of the 1884 farm house (see group 9560 above.).

This complex of buildings and corridors that date to the 17th century seems to form a typical Icelandic passage way farm house, where the farm buildings radiate from one central passageway. These are believed to have become a common form of building in the 14th century (Ágústsson, in Jóhannsson 1987, 240).

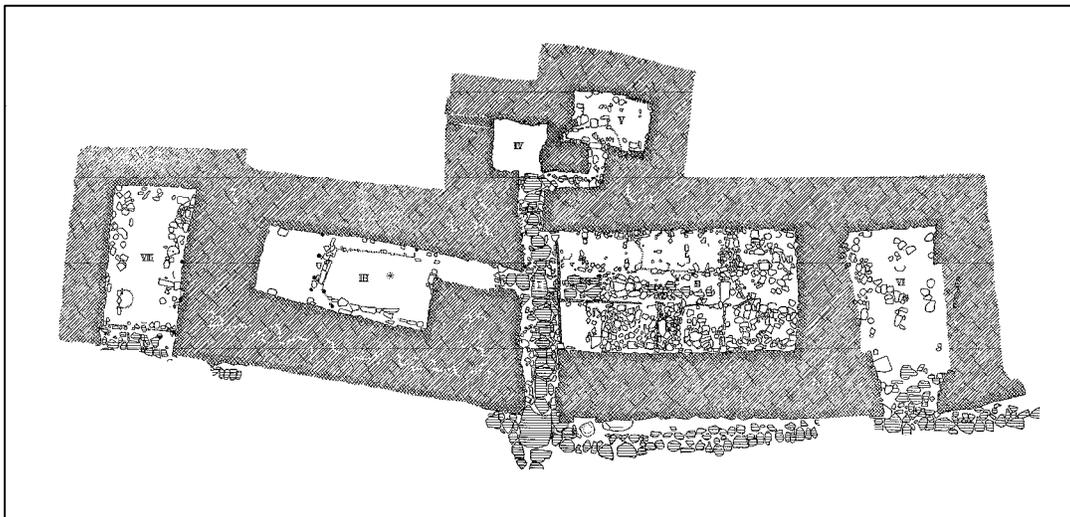


Figure 20: A ground plan of a 14th century farm house at Gröf in Öräfaveit, south-east Iceland. (Ágústsson in Jóhannsson 1987, 240).

The 17th century farm complex appears to be in rather good condition judging from buildings thus far exposed, apart from truncation at the southwest. It is however

running under the remains of the 1884 buildings on the east side of the research area (gr. 7500), and hence its full size and condition is still unknown.

Conclusion

The main aim of the 2011 season was to finish removing deposits belonging to the early 20th century vegetable garden and the 1884 farmhouse from the current research area, in order to establish contemporaneity with the 17th century structures excavated in 2009-2010. At the end of the season the ground plan of a typical Icelandic passageway farm house was starting to take shape.

Another aim of the 2011 excavations was also to empty the 1907 foundation trench truncating the southwest corner of the research area, containing the remains of a farmhouse built in that year. Once the building rubble had been removed, a midden was seen in section that can, in all likelihood, be dated to the 13th century. The midden was clearly sitting directly under the 17th century farmhouse remains and over natural gravel. The 17th century farmhouse remains therefore seem to be the earliest building remains in the south-western part of the research area.

The natural gravel that is underlying all deposits in Vatnsfjörður can be seen in a section in the stream, west of the research area. When measured, the level of the gravel in the stream is the same as the gravel underneath the medieval midden. The gravel level indicates the depth of the remaining occupation deposits on the farm mound, at least at the western site of the research area, but the land seems, however, to slope towards the east. The southern wall of the 1884 building, gr. (9560) was sitting in a foundation cut that was truncating earlier remains. The base of the cut, which was not dug down to natural soil, has the same level as the natural gravel seen in the 1907 foundation cut. The corridor (gr. 11630) also slopes down gently to the east. Its eastern end is also at a similar level as the natural gravel in the 1907 foundation cut. From this the conclusion has been drawn that the remains in the current research area seem to be respecting a natural slope, dipping to the east and southeast. It is therefore likely that remains predating the 17th century farmhouse will be found in the eastern and southeastern parts of the research area.

The Aims of the 2012 Field Season

Drawing from the conclusions of the 2011 season, the main focus in 2012 will be to remove the remaining 1884 buildings (gr.7500) in the hope it will reveal the full extent of the 17th century farm complex.

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Introduction to the Farm Mound Finds 2006-2011

Guðrún Alda Gísladóttir

The finds database from the farm mound in Vatnsfjörður now yields more than 11000 finds. The assemblages date from the 17th century to the mid 20th century with the exception of finds retrieved in the midden in the field season 2011. All finds are have been registered, processed and given conservation attention. Preservation is varied, in the machine levelled top layers it ranges from poor/average to excellent. Organic material has in general been well preserved especially in floor and midden deposits, and good amount of leathers, textiles, bone material and other organic materials is present. Metal objects on the other hand are generally in bad condition and iron and copper alloys objects heavily corroded. Basic identification has been made but formal research process of textiles, pottery and glass has started and identification of metal objects is in preparation for this year. The finds count partially includes numbers of food waste (animal bones) and industrial waste (slag) but those groups have not been fully quantified so an exact number is not in hand.

The major material groups are ceramic, glass and iron, which represent 80% of the total assemblage, - ceramic and glass 60%. The objects types are of diverse nature and reflect the daily life on a self-sufficient high-status farm stead with good connection to the outer-world that can be seen through the imported items. Changes in material culture are noted through the 300 years time span the excavation has revealed, especially in increase of material types in the 19th century and quantities of glass and ceramics in 18th – 19th century deposits. The objects reflect the housing, agriculture-, fishing- and domestic activity, transport, outfit, dress accessories, personal items, entertainment and children games through structural fittings, timber and bricks, scythes, fish hooks, cooking vessels, riding gear and bicycle, woven and knitted textiles, buttons, beads, gaming pieces and dolls, etc. etc.

Through comparison to finds assemblages of the church place Eyri in Skutulsfjörður (Ísafjörður) and the bishop residence in Skálholt, differences and similarities may be spotted. Large quantities of 20th century materials have also been collected at

Vatnsfjörður which gives a great base for the study of material culture of the recent past, some of which is attached to memories of people still living in the area.

The analysis of the Vatnsfjörður assemblages will add greatly to the knowledge of the life on a marginal high-status farm stead through a long time span.

Evaluation Trenches and Excavations of the Coastal Structures at Vatnsfjörður

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Introduction

Test trenching during the 2010 excavation season at Vatnsfjörður identified a structure on a small promontory near the shore to the east of the 10th century excavations as a productive location for further excavations of the Vatnsfjörður surroundings (Mooney, 2011). This structure was excavated in 2011 as Area 40 (see below). A survey of ruins in the coastal area the previous year had identified this structure as the most likely location of the boat house for the Viking Age farm, due to both its visibility from the farm itself, and its height above sea level which would place it near to the shore but above the water line in the 10th century (Mikołajczyk & Gardela, 2010). However, the 2009 survey identified several other structures in the shore area which were not evaluated during the 2010 test trenching program. As the aim of this excavation was to understand how the shore area was utilised during the earliest occupation of the site, these structures were evaluated during the 2011 field season in order to ensure that the structure chosen for excavation was the earliest in this sequence of construction in the coastal region. A survey of coastal structures in the wider region at Vatnsfjörður was also conducted to provide comparative material and assess the potential for future coastal research in the area. Excavations were conducted by the authors, with the help of students from the Field School in North Atlantic Archaeology.

Evaluation Trenches

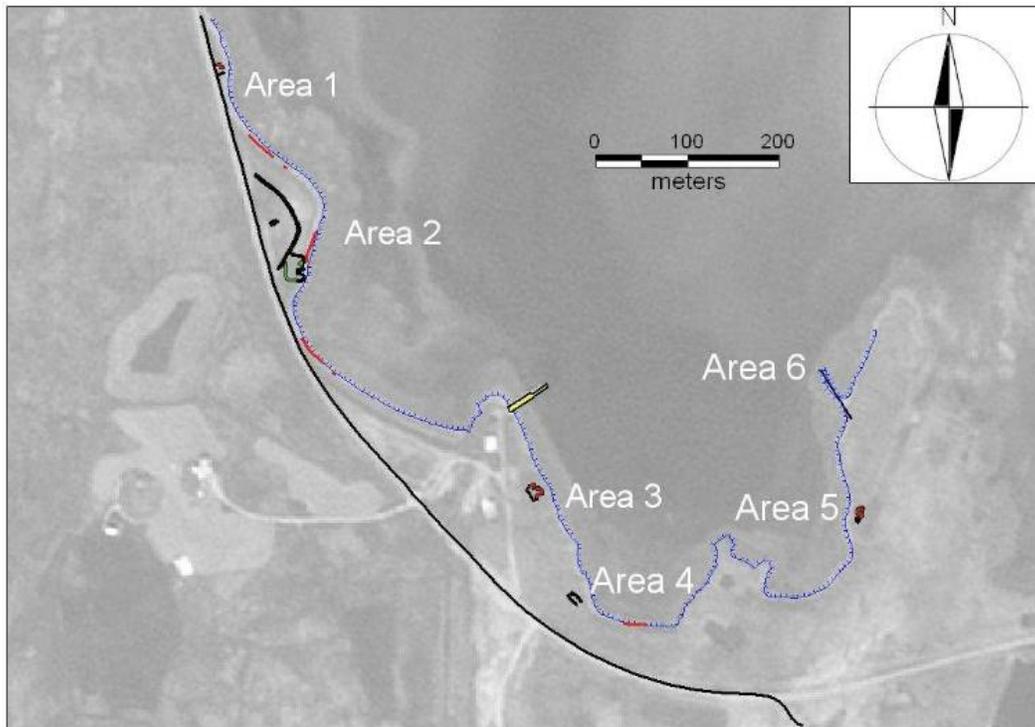


Figure 1: The areas of use and coastal structures identified in the 2009 coastal survey. Red areas marked along the coast indicate clear beaches with landing potential for boats. (After Mikołajczyk & Gardęła, 2009)

Mikołajczyk & Gardęła's 2009 survey divided the shore area into six areas, which contained within them seven structures (see figure 1). After re-examination of these structures and a brief survey of the shore area surrounding Sveinshúsavatn, it was decided that the structures in areas one, two and four would be assessed. Six evaluation trenches were excavated into five potential structures. Three of these were identified by Mikołajczyk & Gardęła (2010), and a further two were identified by the authors after survey during the 2011 season. The position of these trenches is shown in figure 2. Trench 3, located across a mound visible to the north of Structure 2, did not reveal any anthropogenic deposits or activity, and as such has not been included in the detailed discussion below.

Trench 1

A fifteen-metre long horseshoe-shaped structure was identified during the 2009 survey in Area 4, clearly visible in figure 1. This was postulated to be a boat house, although its position with the long walls parallel to the shore renders this hypothesis somewhat less likely. To assess the age and function of the structure, a 1 x 4 m test trench was excavated from the top of the northern wall of the structure into the centre of the building (see figure 2). The location was chosen so as to establish the presence or otherwise of a central hearth in the building. As the topsoil of the trench was removed, a layer of tephra, presumably the Hekla 1693 layer which is present across Vatnsfjörður, was observed in situ, giving a *terminus ante quem* date of AD 1693 to the ruin below. After the topsoil was removed, several layers of turf collapse were uncovered. These were excavated to reveal a wall of over 1 m in thickness, lined on the inner edge by a large stone, with a charcoal-rich deposit lying alongside it. On the inside of the structure, below the collapse layer was a possible floor layer which again contained charcoal flecks and fragments. The collapse material immediately above this layer yielded a single corroded iron clench nail or rivet, and several fragments of slag. Considering this, the building seems likely to be a workshop or possibly a smithy dating to the Medieval period, contemporaneous with some of the deposits yet to be excavated on the farm mound, and with Medieval outbuildings

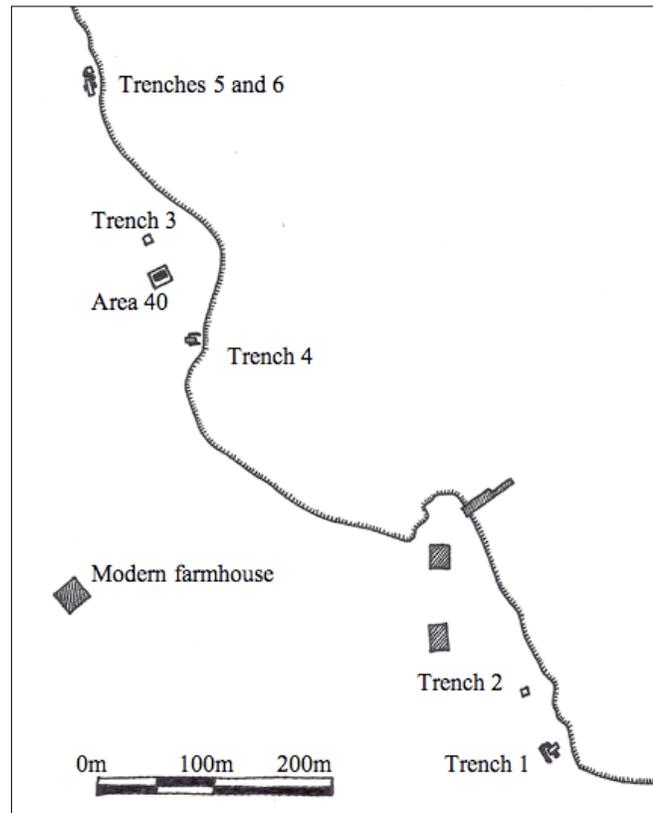


Figure 2: Locations of trenches excavated on the shore during the 2011 season, and of the open area excavation in Area 40

lying alongside it. On the inside of the structure, below the collapse layer was a possible floor layer which again contained charcoal flecks and fragments. The collapse material immediately above this layer yielded a single corroded iron clench nail or rivet, and several fragments of slag. Considering this, the building seems likely to be a workshop or possibly a smithy dating to the Medieval period, contemporaneous with some of the deposits yet to be excavated on the farm mound, and with Medieval outbuildings

identified elsewhere in the homefield such as Structure 7 (Milek, 2009; 2010), and others discovered during 2010 (Mooney, 2011).

Trench 2

Further upslope to the north-west of Trench 1, two parallel raised linear features were observed during survey in 2011, and a 1 x 1.5 m evaluation trench was excavated over the southernmost of these parallel ridges, Trench 2. The excavation of the trench revealed thin deposits of turf and charcoal, with a small patch of tephra present towards the base of the main light brown turf layer [11008]. Again, this has been interpreted as the Hekla 1693 tephra which is so commonly present at Vatnsfjörður, and its presence within the lowermost turf layer suggests a post-Medieval origin for these deposits. No clear structural evidence was found in this evaluation trench, and it seems unlikely that they represent a significant building of any kind, rather simply the remains of a small turf dump or midden deposit. This, combined with the late date of the deposits, does not recommend this area to further investigation during future seasons at Vatnsfjörður.

Trench 4

In the part of the coastline described here as Area 2 (see figure 1), a second building was identified by Mikołajczyk & Gardęła's survey in addition to the potential boathouse examined in 2010. This second structure is positioned immediately next to the modern shoreline, and has previously been interpreted as a modern sheep-house or shelter (Mikołajczyk & Gardęła, 2010). The structure appears to be mainly built of stone, and as such it was somewhat difficult to find an area through which a trench could be located. A region of the western or rear wall of the structure was chosen for this, as it seemed upstanding and likely to have been least affected by coastal erosion. Excavation revealed that the structure was built with stone-lined walls with a turf core. This structure was certainly used in recent times as east of and above the wall several fence posts with attached barbed wire were discovered. Barbed wire was first used in Iceland in the early 20th century, which indicates that this structure has certainly been used within the last 100 years. Below these deposits relating to the collapse of the structure were several alternating layers of turf collapse material and mixed shell sand and beach

material, probably indicative of storm events during the abandonment and collapse of the building. At the base of these deposits was a dark brown buried soil, with patches of tephra included. Below this was the natural beach gravel. This structure appears to have no previous phases of use, and is too close to the modern shore line to have been in use early in the history of the site, so will not be examined further during investigations of pre-modern Vatnsfjörður

Trenches 5 and 6

The last two evaluation trenches excavated were set up to examine a structure identified as Structure 1 by Mikołajczyk & Gardęła (2010). The trenches were located on the northern and southern walls of the structure, which was postulated to be a naust or boat house. Trench 6, a 1 x 1 m test pit across the north 'wall' of the structure, revealed no clear anthropogenic deposits such as turf, but did reveal a cut into the beach gravel [11030], which was overlain by alternating levels of soil development and beach material probably deposited by storm events, with the Hekla 1693 tephra observed in situ. This indicates that the cut itself, creating a linear step in the beach gravel natural, was created prior to the tephra fall, however this trench unfortunately revealed no clear or dateable



Figure 3: Evaluation trench 5, looking south

structural or cultural deposits. Excavations in Trench 5, which measured 1 x 2.8 m across the southern 'wall', were more productive. As figure 3 shows, this trench uncovered a low linear turf wall approximately 1 m in width, which was edged by flat stones. The alignment of these was clear on the southern edge of the wall, although the stones had slumped downwards on the northern side. The turf core of this wall was overlain by the Hekla 1693 tephra and aeolian soil deposits, indicating that the wall had

gone out of use by the time the tephra was deposited. Unfortunately, this area of the shore was significantly disturbed during the construction of the coast road in the late 1980s, which appears to have truncated parts of this structure, making it unclear how the features observed in these two trenches relate to one another (if at all!). Given this disturbance, and the limited nature of the deposits uncovered in these two trenches, it is likely that little more could be revealed about the use of this part of the shore in pre-modern times at Vatnsfjörður. We can be certain that this area of land was utilised in the Medieval period or earlier, but due to the truncations it is not possible to identify the exact nature of this usage.

Survey of Coastal Structures

Part of the work undertaken in this 2011 season in the Vatnsfjörður region was a wide ranging coastal survey and recording of all identifiable coastal structures (all periods, all states of preservation) in Vatnsfjörður and the two neighbouring fjords of Ísafjörður and Mjóifjörður. The aim of this action was to gather comparable data from the largest possible group of structures of this kind. Collected information will in the future evolve in the form of a database covering a larger area, becoming a useful tool to identify patterns and similarities, and help in interpretation during later research and excavation on shorelines both at Vatnsfjörður and in the wider context of Icelandic archaeology. This survey is a continuation of the work of Mikołajczyk & Gardela (2010) in the Vatnsfjörður farm coastal area.

Survey started in the Vatnsfjörður area and expanded both to the east and west to cover the neighbouring fjord of Ísafjörður to the east, and the eastern shore of Mjóifjörður to the west. As mentioned above, the authors were interested in structures related to the exploitation of marine environments and resources, including boat building and maintenance, and fisheries. In all of the examples presented below it was impossible to assess the dating of the structures. Factors such as proximity to the shore (in the context of sea level change), preservation state or presence of modern components could give a faint impression of an age of a given building but can as well be very tricky and misleading. This is why no division for “older” and “younger”

structures was made and all of them were treated equally. The only exceptions were cases of fully concrete structures that were still in use and therefore discarded from the examination.

Another reason for choosing such a wide chronological spectrum was an assumption

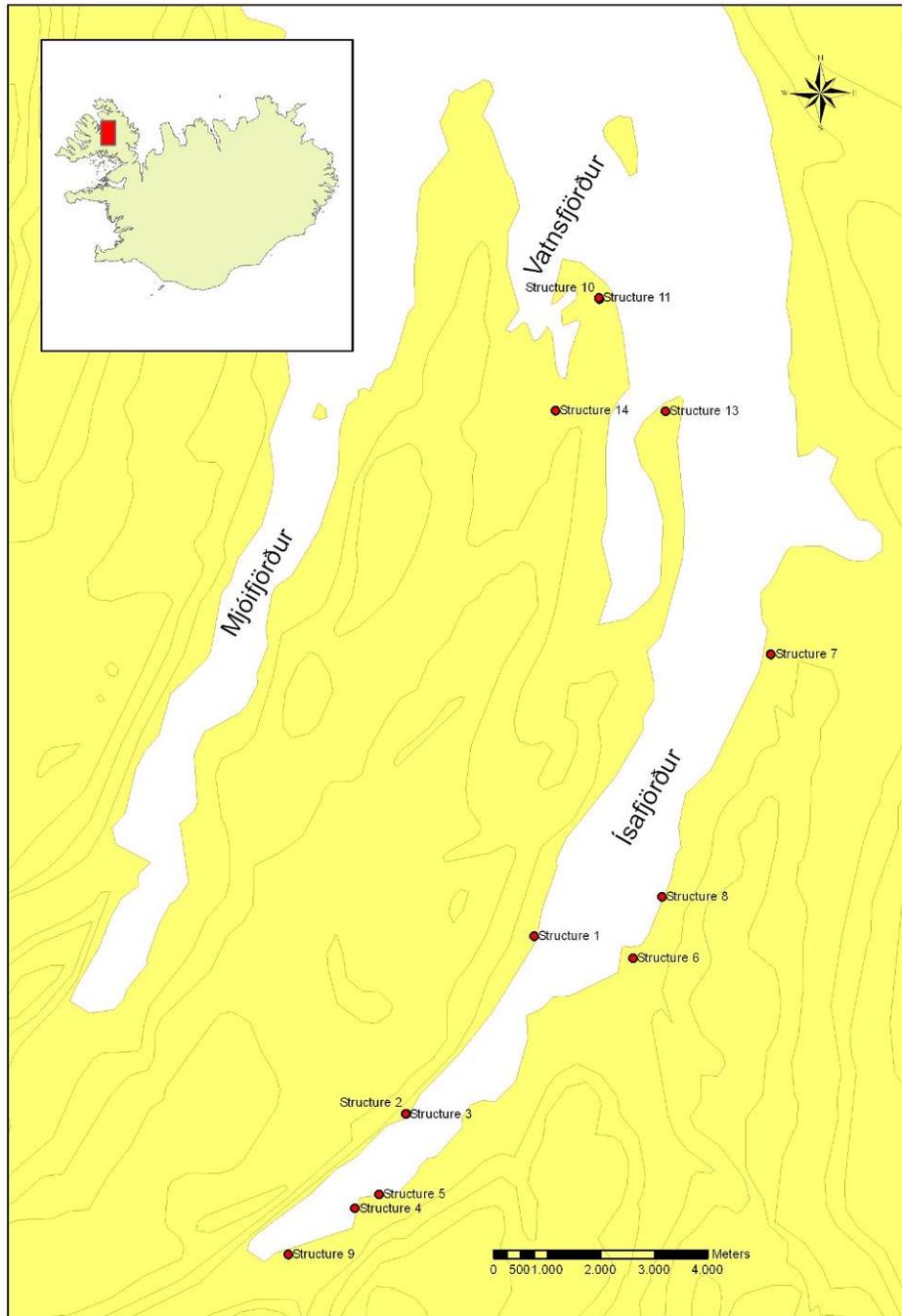


Figure 4: Locations of surveyed coastal structures

that shore structures in their very utilitarian character have not changed much through time. Construction techniques (before the time of commercial import of “new” building materials such as brick and tin ware) seems to be very similar from Medieval Age to present days regardless of environmental conditions; builders seem to repeat the established form which presumably was the best possible design attained with a use of traditional materials. The authors hope that the data gathered during this survey will serve as a useful, ethnographical comparative material for future research.

Survey Results

The distribution of the surveyed coastal structures can be seen in figure 4 and the results of the survey conducted in 2011 is summarised in figure 5 below.

There were 14 structures identified, all interpreted as possible boat houses, boat shelters or *nausts*. Their functional interpretation is based on their location, orientation, and form resembling well examined structures from Northern Europe and the North Atlantic (Stylegar & Grimm, 2005). A set of features was analysed in order to identify any type of common regularities and patterns in construction, localization etc.

Form: Structures consisted mainly of walls. There was only one structure with a still standing roof recorded and one with its roof collapsed. In some of the other 12 cases, structures seemed not to have roof at all.

Shape: There were three common shapes represented in this area: rectangular with one side open (6 structures), hove shaped (4 structures), and two parallel walls (4 structures). Two of the rectangular examples created a twin structure sharing the inner wall.

Material: Materials used for erecting structures were mainly turf and stones. There were examples of wooden elements used, as well as modern building materials – tinware. In two cases spaces between stones were filled with gravel. Two constructions were settled on natural boulders incorporated into walls, another two were partly sunken into the ground.

Location and orientation: Structures were located on the shore line, sometimes on small peninsulas. There were no regularities in orientation and structures were mainly facing open sea or small bays with one exception of a structure standing parallel to the shore and facing modern buildings. (It is good to keep in mind that the change of sea level in this region could alter the shape of a shore line)

Dimensions: Only in one case does the height of the structure reflect its exact size. In this one example the roof was preserved and the maximum height was recorded 2,8m. In other cases measured heights have more to do with the preservation state and varied (in the highest part) from 0.4 m to 2.15 m. Length and width of the structures were not measured precisely due to the fact that most walls were covered with mounds of turf collapse obscuring the exact width of the wall. The longest and the widest structure was more than 12 m long and 8 m wide, the shortest only 4 m long, and the narrowest only 3.5 m.

Distance to the sea: Presumably it was convenient to have a boat house located as close to the sea as was reasonably possible. This is why the measured distance between the structure's entry and the sea (in relation to the sea level change data) can be used as one of the factors allowing to assess dating of the structure. Analysed examples varied much concerning this feature – one was almost standing in the water, the other was 20 m away on the shore. Unfortunately no striking relation between sea proximity and preservation state (resembling structure's age) was observed.

Additional equipment: Two of the described structures were still equipped with a winch used to pull the boat from the water and those were the only two examples which boat-related function is almost sure. Inner and outer length: width ratio was also calculated so comparisons can be made to larger amount of recorded structures from other areas and sites.

Features/Structure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Form	walls	walls	walls	walls	walls	Walls, roof	walls, roof collapse	walls	walls	walls	possible walls remains	walls	walls	walls
Shape			U			U		U						U
Entry orientation	SE	NE	NE	SW	NE	N	NE	NW	n/a	NE	NE	N	N	N/NE
Location	Shore line	small peninsula	small peninsula	shore line	shore line	little peninsula	shore line	shore line	small peninsula	small peninsula	small peninsula	shore line	shore line	shore line
Facing	open water	small bay/chanel	small bay/chanel	open water	open water	little bay	open water	open water	small bay	n/a	open water	small bay	small bay	modern buildings
Max height (m)	1,55	1,85	0,5	1,2	1,3	wall: 1,8 roof: back 2,8 front 1,75	0,9	0,4	0,9	2,15	0,45	0,77	1,3	1,6
Length (m)	6	5,3	9	7,6	8,2	8,7	I - 4,5 II 8,5	7	6	4,1	n/a	9,1	11	12,5
Width (m)	5,7	5	6,2	4,6	4,4	4,9	I - 4,8 II - 5,8	4	n/a	4,95	3,5	7	5,2	8,3
Walls width (m)	1,65/1,6	1,4/1,5	2/1,5	0,8/1	1,1/1,1	0,9/1	I - 1,2/1,4 II - 2,7/1,6	n/a	n/a	0,95/0,95	n/a	1,4/0,9	0,9/0,9	2,3/2,2
Back wall width (m)	n/a	0,5	1,2	1,4	0,8	1	1,1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	2,7
Distance to sea (m)	20	11,8	17	4	4,2	0	5	1,8	n/a	n/a	n/a	6,5	6,5	n/a
Material	stone, gravel	stone, gravel	n/a	stone, turf	stone, turf	stone, turf, natural boulders	stone, turf	n/a	n/a	stone	stone	stone, turf	stone, turf	stone, natural boulders
Additional info.	equipped with winch	possible earlier phase	eroded, cut by road	partly sunken, equipped with winch	attached to farm buildings	wooden front wall with a door frame	possibly half of the structure reused as a II phase	part of the complex of three structures	collapsed and eroded	partly collapsed, in relation with str11	n/a	twinstructure with str. 13, possible division wall added later.	twinstructure with str. 12, front wall 0,6m thick possibly added later	partly sunken, parallel to the shore
Coordinates isnet93	N598001 E341570	N594681 E339178	N594681 E339168	N592920 E338223	N593180 E338671	N597595 E343412	N603264 E345992	N598737 E343954	N592062 E336970	N609901 E342786	N609923 E342782	N607805 E344018	N607805 E344018	N607816 E341964
Outer length-width ratio	1,05	1,06	1,45	1,65	1,86	1,77	I - 0,93 II - 1,46	1,75		0,82		1,3	2,11	1,5
Inner length-width ratio	1,73	2,28	2,88	2,21	3,36	2,56	I - 2 II - 4,9			1,34		1,72	2,94	2,57

Figure 5: Results of surveyed coastal structures

Open Area Excavation

Excavation Strategy

After the comprehensive survey and examination of other potential structures on the shore at Vatnsfjörður, it was decided that Structure 2, the potential boat house evaluated in 2010, seemed likely to be the most productive area for a larger excavation, as it appeared to contain significant cultural deposits postulated to date from at least the Medieval period and possibly earlier (Mooney, 2011). As can be seen in both Mikołajczyk & Gardęła's survey (2010) and the report of the evaluation trench placed across the southern wall of the structure (Mooney, 2011), the structure consisted of two parallel walls approximately 1 m wide, the northernmost of which appeared to taper and curve at the eastern edge, towards the shore. There also appeared to be a small internal division across the centre of the structure, which had led Mikołajczyk & Gardęła to suggest that this structure had been reused as a sheep pen in more recent times. To encompass the visible upstanding ruins of the structure along with an area to the outside of the two parallel walls visible, an excavation area was opened measuring 10 x 7 m. This area was recorded as Area 40, following the practice in other areas at Vatnsfjörður of naming open areas after their original evaluation trenches. The excavation of Area 40 was conducted during the last three weeks of the 2011 field season and was undertaken by the authors, assisted by students from the Field School in North Atlantic Archaeology.

Excavation Results

Early Modern Use of the Structure

After deturfing and the removal of the topsoil [11031], a layer of reddish-brown turf collapse [11032] was revealed which covered much of the excavation area. During excavation of this deposit, a boulder which had been visible from the outset in the interior of the structure, interpreted as a stone which had at one time been part of the stone lining of one of the parallel walls, was removed.



Figure 6: Late 1980s Coca Cola can found during the early stages of the excavation.

Immediately beneath this stone was discovered a Coca-Cola can, still displaying a clear 'best before' date of 1990 (see figure 6). A large number of iron nails and rivets were recovered from within the collapse layer, possibly relating to timber components of the walls or roof of the structure. However, very little evidence was found to indicate that the building ever had a roof, apart from one shallow post hole in the south-west of the building. Several further layers of turf collapse relating to the walls were uncovered beneath this, also containing iron nails and rivets. Other finds from these phases included a small piece of felt or other textile, a copper alloy button and a copper alloy wire or ring, all of which were dated typologically to the post-medieval period. Several charcoal patches and small charcoal spreads were found amongst these collapse layers to the exterior of the building, most likely relating to rubbish dumping events after the abandonment of this structure. The small internal division observed before excavation was revealed to consist of stratified reddish-brown turf with the Hekla 1693 tephra included within the turves. The position of this feature above further collapse deposits (see below) suggests that this does indeed relate to the latest phase of use of the structure. No floor deposits contemporaneous with this division were uncovered, which supports the interpretation of this last use phase as a coastal shelter.

The Post-Medieval Phase

After the removal of this small internal division, collapse and slump layers continued to be excavated to the outer edges of the structure. Between the two walls, a layer of mid-yellowish brown sandy silt [11048] was found confined to the inside of the structure, between the two parallel walls. Like previous collapse layers, this too contained numerous iron nails and rivets. The limits of the walls of the structure were defined, revealing two parallel walls approximately 1 m wide (see figure 7). The northern wall displayed a stone lining on the

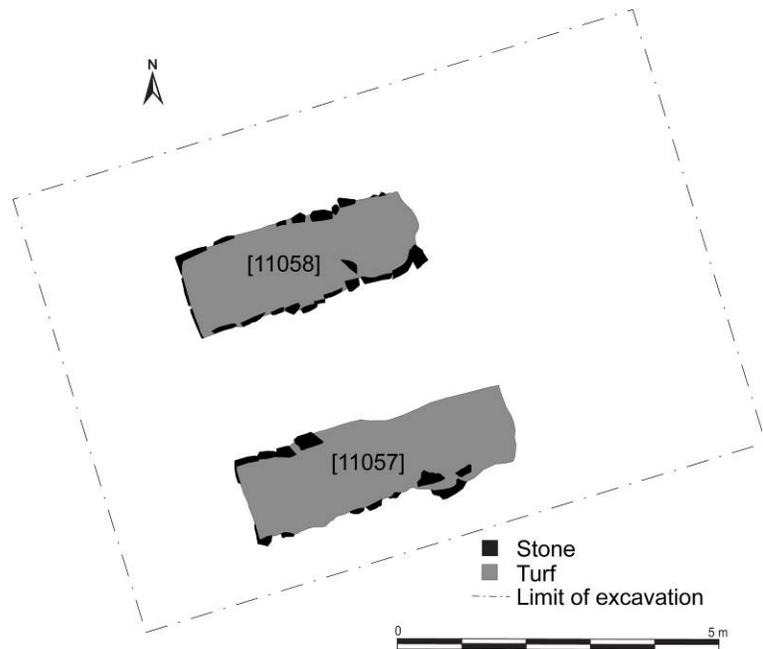


Figure 7: The minimum extent of the post-1693 walls of the structure

outer and inner edges, while on the southern wall edging stones were found to the outside of the wall and to the western end of the inner edge of the wall. During excavation, the walls were recorded as being just over 4 m long, with extensions to the eastern end, of approximately 1.5 m. However, it seems likely that these 'extensions,' [11068] and [11069], are more likely to have been parts of the main wall and have been more subject to erosion and slumping than the western ends of the walls. The northern wall [11056] was also unfortunately truncated somewhat during deturfing of the site. The turf core of both walls consisted of a mottled dark reddish brown and light brown sandy silt, which like the later internal division showed a tephra layer, presumed to be Hekla 1693, included within the individual turves, which seemed to be of the *strengur* type. The inclusion of this tephra indicates that this phase of the walls was built some time after the Hekla 1693 eruption, giving the structure a clear post-medieval date. Below the collapse layer [11048], the floor of the building was mostly clear apart from a small compacted organic deposit up against the northern wall at the eastern end of the

structure [11059], which has been interpreted as the possible remains of a thin floor layer. Soil micromorphology samples were taken in order to confirm or refute this hypothesis, and are awaiting analysis. In addition to this, a single shallow post hole [11053] was found to the south west of the structure, but no other evidence of posts was found, nor evidence of wooden gable ends as might be found in a coastal storage structure similar to the later *hjallur* or fish-drying shed preserved near the jetty close to the entrance to the modern farm at Vatnsfjörður. This suggests that this was an open-ended structure as would be expected from a boat house or naust (Stylegar & Grimm, 2005), however both the limited artefactual evidence and the tephra inclusions in the walls suggest that this structure was contemporary with the latter phases of occupation excavated on the farm mound at Vatnsfjörður rather than the Viking Age or Medieval occupation of the site.

Earlier Phases of Use

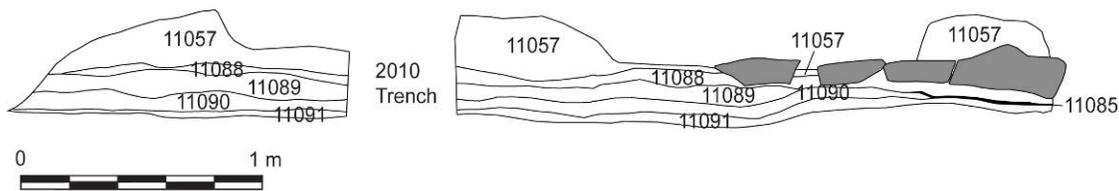


Figure 8: South wall. Elevation drawing facing north. The Hekla 1693 tephra is unit [11085].

The northern wall of the boat house showed no traces of earlier phases of construction, and in addition to this the Hekla 1693 tephra was observed in situ underlying the wall at the western end of the structure. No clear ‘blanket’ layer of in situ tephra was observed during the excavation of the site as has been observed in both the 10th century excavations and on the farm mound (Milek, 2006; 2008; 2009; Gísladóttir, 2010), which complicated the understanding of the use phases of the building. Instead, patches of tephra were observed to the west and south of the structure, and on the inner edge of the north wall at the eastern end. It is not likely to be a coincidence that these are the most sheltered areas of the site – the situation of the structure close to the shoreline, while not exposing it to immediate coastal erosion, does make the structure more

vulnerable to the erosive forces of wind and storm events than the buildings discovered in the main excavation areas. In other words, it is likely that the tephra fall which once covered the site has been eroded away, leaving only disconnected patches. While no earlier phases of construction were visible in the northern wall, the southern wall appears to show at least two earlier phases, as shown in figure 8. The phase of construction visible immediately below the post-1693 turf is composed of a mid greyish yellow turf mottled with iron orange [11089], likely to have been cut from a podzolised soil. It has previously been noted in the Viking Age area of the site that such turf was used in the construction of buildings from the 10th century, while later buildings tend to comprise dark reddish brown turf taken from aeolian sediments (Milek, 2008; 2009; 2010). While this in itself cannot be considered to give any conclusive date to this phase of the structure, the clear difference from the turf observed in later deposits must be taken into account. Furthermore, the construction technique of this phase of construction is clearly different, apparently built using *klambra* or *snitta* rather than the *strengur* turves used in the later phase. Unfortunately no dateable artefacts were recovered, and as figure 8 shows there is no immediate link between the tephra deposit, unit [11085], observed at the western end of the wall and this phase of the building. However, two earlier deposits were observed below this context. The earliest of these deposits, [11091], is a uniform dark brown silt which is likely to represent a buried land surface, but this is overlain by a lensed reddish brown turf layer [11090], which may represent the earliest phase of construction on the site. This deposit is only a few centimetres in depth, as were many of the walls observed in the 10th century excavations (Milek, 2006; 2008; 2009), but the key point to observe is that the tephra [11085] at the western end of the wall lips up against this deposit, which indicates that a structure was present on this site at the time that the tephra fell. This dates this context, and thus the earliest construction here, to before AD 1693.

Discussion

The earliest phases of use on this area of the shoreline at Vatnsfjörður are only visible in the southern wall, which presents a difficulty in interpretation. As described above, one or two phases of construction are visible here before the later phase which forms

the most upstanding remains of both walls. While it may not be possible to give an exact date to these early phases, it is clear that they predate the Hekla 1693 tephra deposit. It is unclear, however, why only one of the walls displays evidence of this earlier construction. It is possible that no earlier phases ever existed in the northern wall, but this calls into question the purpose of the now lone southern linear wall. No further ruins were observed to the south of the structure during survey, and the collapse deposits excavated during these excavations gave no indication that further archaeological remains might be present to the south of the structure. It is possible that the erosive processes which appear to have scoured the unprotected northern and eastern parts of the site of tephra remains are also responsible for the destruction of earlier phases of the northern wall. It is clear that the post-medieval structure was purposefully located on the remains of an earlier structure, but it is possible that the north wall was damaged so badly by this point that either no remains were visible, or that they were removed to some extent before the construction of the later wall.

The lack of remains present means that this speculation is entirely hypothetical, but there are some aspects of this structure about which we can be more certain. The style of the later structure with its parallel open ended walls and lack of occupation deposits allow us to interpret it as a boat house or naust, and the later internal division shows that after the structure fell out of use in its original form it may have been used as a sheep pen or shelter. The fact that earlier phases exist, predating the Hekla 1693 tephra fall, show that this area of the shore has been in use for 400 years or more, but unfortunately we cannot be certain of when this use began.

Therefore, the search for the Viking Age naust and boat houses at Vatnsfjörður may have to continue. It is possible that these structures were positioned further south, in the vicinity of the modern jetty, which may mean that early modern activity and construction in this area has destroyed any early remains. Another avenue of research would be to focus investigations around Sveinshúsavatn, which due to a fall in sea level of up to 2 m since the 10th century may well have been open to the sea during the Viking Age, and could have provided a natural harbour. While the 2011 excavations on the shore at Vatnsfjörður did not accomplish their goal of locating the Viking Age boat house, they

have shown that throughout the occupation of the site there has been a great level of activity and construction around the shore. In order to fully understand the life of the inhabitants of Vatnsfjörður it is essential to continue to expand excavations beyond the home field boundary, to place the findings at the farm itself within the context of the wider landscape.

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Appendices: Registers 2011

Appendix 1: Excavated Units on the Farm Mound

Unit No.	Unit Type	Group	Description
7541	D	9560	A stone pavement at the south end of the 1884 farm house.
11501	D	8590	A demolition deposit made of turf collapse, bricks and stones. From the making- and cultivation of a vegetable garden (8590)
11502	D	8590	A demolition deposit made of turf collapse, and stones. From the making- and cultivation of a vegetable garden (8590)
11503	D	9560	Topsoil in an extension of the research area to the south. Made medium brown silt.
11504	D	11624	A part of the south- stone facing of the south wall of vegetable garden (8590)
11505	D	11623	Stone collapse. A part of the eastern wall, of vegetable garden (8590)
11506	D	8562	A spread of stones.
11507	D	8590	A demolition deposit made of turf debris, sand and stones. From the making- and cultivation of vegetable garden (8590)
11508	D	11623	A part of the fill of the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11509	D	8590	A row of stones in the southern part of vegetable garden (8590). Forming a partition.
11510	D	9560	Sandy silt with charcoal and a few stones.
11511	D	8590	Dark brown clay silt with patches of orange turf and organic material. From the cultivation of vegetable garden (8590).
11512	D	8590	Multi collared deposit, composed of turf debris and organic material. From the cultivation of vegetable garden (8590).
11513	D	9560	Dark brown uniform clay silt, slightly mixed with small gravel. A levelling deposit under pavement [7541].
11514	D	11623	Dark brown sandy silt and turf debris. Part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11515	D	11613	A part of the inner stone facing of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590). Partially collapsed to the east.
11516	D	11629	Flat stones. A part of pavement (11629), witch is earlier then pavement [7541].
11518	D	8590	A mix of stones and mottled multi collared turf debris (dark brown, orange brown, orange). Demolition deposit from the cultivation of vegetable garden (8590)
11519	D	9560	A dark brown to black deposit of silty sand and irregular rocks. A levelling deposit under pavement [7541].
11520	D	11521	A part of the fill of pit [11571] that seems to have been dug to harvest rocks, for vegetable garden (8590), from earlier remains.
11521	G	8590	Deposits making up the fill of pit [11571]. Units [11520], [11522], [11527] and [11562], as well as the pit.
11522	D	11521	A fill of a cut containing a skeleton of a dog. Dug into deposit [11527]
11523	C	11521	A cut containing a skeleton of a dog. Dug into deposit [11527]
11524	D		A deposit of orange and light brown turf collapse with lenses of sand. North east corner of the research area.
11525	D	9560	A deposit of turf debris and sandy silt, with few rocks, directly under topsoil in an extension of the research area to the south.

Unit No.	Unit Type	Group	Description
11526	D	11623	Stones and turf debris. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11527	D	11521	A part of the fill of cut [11571]. Composed of turf debris and stones of various size and shape.
11528	D	8590	A demolition deposit probably from the cultivation of vegetable garden (8590). Composed of turf debris and stones of various size and shape.
11529	D	11623	stone rubble. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11530	D	11628	A mixed deposit of turf and rocks. A part of platform (11628) at the western end of pavement [7541].
11531	D	11623	A deposit of turf and rocks. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11532	D	8590	A spread of stones. A demolition deposit from the construction and cultivation of vegetable garden (8590).
11533	D	11628	A mixed deposit of turf and rocks. A part of platform (11628) at the western end of pavement [7541].
11534	D	9560	A deposit of turf debris and gravel, directly under deposit [11525] in an extension of the research area to the south.
11535	D	11624	A deposit of turf and stones. A part of the fill of wall (11624), the southern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11536	D	10671	A deposit of turf and stones. In an extension of the research area to the south.
11538	D	8590	A deposit of turf and rocks. A demolition deposit from the cultivation of vegetable garden (8590).
11539	D	11623	A part of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590). Turf fill and stone facing.
11540	D	9560	Turf debris and fine gravel. A part of the overburden in an extension of the research area to the south.
11541	D	8590	The western wall of vegetable garden (8590). Turf fill and inner stone facing.
11543	D	11583	A part of an extension to the eastern wall of group (10671). Turf and stones.
11544	D	10671	Turf collapse with charcoal and stones
11545	G		Deposits belonging to a medieval midden.
11546	D	8590	A deposit of turf and stone connecting southern and western walls of vegetable garden (8590).
11547	D	11627	A sheet midden. Composed of wood ash, peat ash, and charcoal, w. bones.
11548	D	9560	Light brown turf collapse.
11549	D	9560	A part of a turf wall behind wall [11541], the western wall of vegetable garden (8590). Believed to be a part of the 1884 farm house.
11550	D	11627	Turf collapse in area (11627) close to a 1907 foundation cut in the south west corner of the research area.
11551	D	11628	A mixed deposit of turf and rocks. A part of platform (11628) at the western end of pavement [7541].
11552	D	11627	A deposit of turf and stones. Possibly remains of a pavement or a wall.
11553	D	8590	A part of a turf wall behind wall [11541], the western wall of vegetable garden (8590). Believed to be a part of the 1884 farm house.
11554	D	11630	A firm yellow levelling deposit, of turf, sitting in corridor (11630). Predating the 1884 farm house
11555	D	11545	A charcoal deposit in a medieval midden.

Unit No.	Unit Type	Group	Description
11556	D		Pavement in a corridor running north-south at the eastern edge of the 2011 research area, connecting to corridor (11630).
11557	D	9560	A deposit of turf collapse and rocks sitting in a room south from corridor (11630) that was reused with the 1884 farm house.
11558	D	9560	Turf and stone collapse from the southern wall (11621) of the 1884 farm house.
11559	D	11545	A turf deposit between ash dumps in a medieval midden.
11560	D	9560	A charcoal dump on the south side of the 1884 farm house.
11561	D	11545	A mix of wood ash, peat ash, charcoal, gravel and shells, in a medieval midden. Bone rich.
11562	D	11521	The lowest part of the fill in pit 11571
11563	D	11629	Flat basalt stones. Part of pavement (11629).
11564	D	11545	Silt and charcoal deposit. Part of a medieval midden.
11565	D	9560	A dark brown levelling deposit under pavement [7541]. Composed of turf.
11566	D	11623	Turf and rocks. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11567	D	9560	A levelling deposit under pavement [7541]
11568	D	11583	A part of an extension to the eastern wall of group (10671). Orange turf and stones.
11569	D	11623	Turf and rocks. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11570	D	11545	A peat ash deposit in a medieval midden.
11571	C	11521	A large pit. Probably dug to harvest rocks for the building of vegetable garden (8590).
11572	D	11545	A turf deposit between ash dumps in a medieval midden.
11573	D	11630	A wall collapse from the southern wall of corridor (11630)
11574	D	11545	A charcoal deposit in a medieval midden.
11575	D	11583	A part of an extension to the eastern wall of group (10671). Orange turf and stones.
11576	D	11576	A yellow brown levelling deposit under pavement [7541]. Composed of turf.
11577	D	11630	A floor deposit at the west end of corridor (11630)
11578	D	11545	A charcoal deposit in a medieval midden.
11579	D	11545	A peat ash deposit in a medieval midden. Bone rich.
11580	D	11623	Turf and rocks. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11581	D	11545	A mottled turf deposit in a medieval midden.
11582	D	11545	A peat ash deposit in a medieval midden. Bone rich.
11583	G	11627	Deposit making up an extension to the eastern wall of group (10671).
11584	D	11630	A levelling deposit of orange turf, under floor [11577].
11585	D	11583	A part of an extension to the eastern wall of group (10671). Multi coloured turf and stones.
11586	D	11623	Turf and rocks. A part of the fill of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11587	D	11630	A blocking of turf and stone. Sitting in a doorway connecting corridor (11630) to building (8562).
11588	D	11623	Stones of various size and shape. Part of the inner facing of wall (11623), the eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).

Unit No.	Unit Type	Group	Description
11589	D		Deposits making up a medieval midden at the south-west corner of the research area.
11590	D	11630	Stones. A part of a blocking sitting in a door way corridor (11630) to building (8562).
11591	D	11545	A gravel deposit in a medieval midden.
11592	D	11545	A mixed deposit of charcoal, stones wood and organic matter in a medieval midden. Containing badly preserved bones.
11593	D	9560	A levelling deposit of turf and stones, under pavement [7541].
11594	D	11627	A levelling deposit/pavement on the west side of the eastern wall of gr. (10671).
11595	D	11627	A row of stones on the west-side of gr. (10671).
11596	D	11545	A thick deposit of sandy silt in a medieval midden. Containing lenses of peat ash, wood ash,
11597	D	9560	A levelling deposit of turf and stones, under pavement [7541].
11598	D	11627	Mixed deposit of silt, peat ash and rocks. Above medieval midden (11545).
11599	D	9560	A levelling deposit of turf and stones, under pavement [7541].
11600	D	11627	Possible remains of a turf and stone wall. Above medieval midden (11545).
11601	D		The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).
11602	D	11629	A layer of flat stones. A part of pavement (11629)
11603	D	11621	A part of a fill in a foundation cut for wall (11621), the south-wall of gr. (9560).
11604	D	11621	A fill in a pipe trench [11626], truncating wall (11621).
11605	D	9560	Turf and stone collapse from a wall on the west-side of wall [11541], the western wall of vegetable garden (8590). Believed to be a part of gr. (9560).
11606	D	11627	A lump of turf and stones. Possibly same as (11600).
11607	D	11545	a deposit of sand containing sea shells. Under medieval midden (11545).
11608	D	11621	The south stone facing of wall (11621), the south wall of gr. (9560).
11609	D	9560	Turf and stones. Part of a wall on the west-side of wall [11541], the western wall of vegetable garden (8590). Believed to be a part of gr. (9560).
11610	D	10671	A charcoal deposit
11611	D	11545	A charcoal deposit in a medieval midden.
11612	D	11545	A turf deposit below medieval midden (11545).
11613	D	9560	The main body of the fill in foundation trench [11620]
11614	D		Stones belonging to a drain at the south edge of the excavation.
11615	D	11627	Dark organic charcoal deposit. Above midden (11545)
11616	D	11545	A deposit of silt containing some bones and charcoal. A part of a medieval midden.
11617	D	11627	A gravel deposit.
11618	D	11627	A turf and stone deposit.
11619	D	11627	A mottled deposit of silt. Brown to orange.
11620	C	11621	A foundation trench for the south facing of wall (11621)
11621	G	9560	The south wall of gr. (9560)
11623	G	8590	The eastern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11624	G	8590	The southern wall of vegetable garden (8590).
11625	G	8590	The northern wall of vegetable garden (8590).

Unit No.	Unit Type	Group	Description
11626	C	9560	A pipe trench, truncating wall (11621)
11627	G	10671	The earliest group of deposits excavated so far in area (10671).
11628	G	9560	Deposits making up a platform at the western end of pavement [7541].
11629	G	11627	An earlier pavement under pavement [7541]. Possibly associated with gr. (11627).
11630	G		A corridor running east-west in the middle of the research area. A part of a 17th century farm house.

Appendix 2: Farm Mound, Samples.

Sample No.	Unit	Grid	Quant. Bags/buckets/tins	Description/information	Type
1	11555	890/210	1/2 bucket	A charcoal deposit in a medieval midden.	Flotation
2	11561	890/210	6 buckets	A mix of wood ash, peat ash, charcoal, gravel and shells, in a medieval midden. Bone rich.	Flotation
3	11561	890/210	Included w. sample 2	A mix of wood ash, peat ash, charcoal, gravel and shells, in a medieval midden. Bone rich.	Flotation
4	11564	890/210	1 bucket	Silt and charcoal deposit. Part of a medieval midden. Bone rich.	Flotation
5	11596	890/210	4 buckets	A thick deposit of sandy silt in a medieval midden. Containing lenses of peat ash and wood ash	Flotation
6	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
7	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
8	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
9	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
10	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
11	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
12	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
13	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
14	11601	895/220	1 small bag	The remains of a timber structure in a room south of corridor (11630).	Wood identification
15	Multi	890/210	1 tin	Midden deposits	Micromorphology
16	Multi	890/210	1 tin	Midden deposits	Micromorphology
17	Multi	890/210	1 tin	Midden deposits	Micromorphology

Sample No.	Unit	Grid	Quant. Bags/buckets/tins	Description/information	Type
18	Multi	890/210	1 tin	Midden deposits	Micromorphology
19	Multi	890/210	1 tin	Midden deposits	Micromorphology

Appendix 3: Excavated Units at the Seashore

Unit No	Unit Type	Group	Area	Description
11001	D		Trench 1	Mid orange brown turf collapse
11002	D		Trench 1	Mid greyish brown turf collapse
11003	D		Trench 1	Wall collapse at north of trench
11004	D		Trench 1	North wall of Structure 5
11005	D		Trench 1	Thin charcoal layer
11006	D		Trench 1	Charcoal-rich floor of Structure 5
11007	D		Trench 2	Turf with charcoal inclusions, Structure 8
11008	D		Trench 2	Thin turf layer on natural gravel, Structure 8
11009	D		Trench 2	Turf lens with charcoal, Structure 8
11010	D		Trench 2	Sterile/up cast gravel, Structure 8
11011	D		Trench 5	Charcoal patch in Structure 1
11012	D		Trench 5	Stone collapse in Structure 1
11013	D		Trench 5	South wall of Structure 1
11014	D		Trench 5	Turf patches north of southern wall in Structure 1
11015	D		Trench 5	Buried soil horizon in Structure 1
11016	D		Trench 4	Root mat and topsoil in north facing section
11017	D		Trench 4	Very mottled turf & sand with barbed wire in north facing section
11018	D		Trench 4	Shell sand mixed with some turf in north facing section
11019	D		Trench 4	Stratified turf in north facing section
11020	D		Trench 4	Beach shell sand in north facing section
11021	D		Trench 4	Dark brown turf/soil in north facing section
11022	D		Trench 4	Root mat and topsoil in south facing section
11023	D		Trench 4	Turf in south facing section
11024	D		Trench 4	Turf collapse in south facing section
11025	D		Trench 4	Beach sand in south facing section

Unit No	Unit Type	Group	Area	Description
11026	D		Trench 4	Sandy layer in south facing section
11027	D		Trench 4	Turf collapse, wood, barbed wire and stones in south facing section
11028	D		Trench 4	Beach sand and turf mixture in south facing section
11029	D		Trench 4	Dark turf layer in south facing section
11030	D		Trench 6	Cut creating northern 'wall' of Structure 1
11031	D		40	Root mat and topsoil
11032	D		40	Reddish brown turf collapse
11033	D		40	Slipped turf collapse against northern edge of north wall
11034	D		40	Charcoal patch to south of south wall
11035	D		40	Charcoal patch to southwest of south wall
11036	D		40	Small charcoal patch to west of north wall
11037	D		40	Secondary turf collapse to south of south wall
11038	D		40	Mid yellowish-brown turf collapse
11039	D		40	Small wall or division in centre of Structure
11040	D		40	Gravelly turf collapse to northwest of north wall
11041	D		40	Stratified turf in central division
11042	D		40	Mid to dark brown silty/organic layer west of the internal division
11043	D		40	Gravel layer to south of south wall
11044	D		40	Organic layer at base of internal division
11045	D		40	Turf collapse deposit to southeast of south wall
11046	D		40	Gravel and turf collapse to south of south wall
11047	D		40	Turf collapse north of south wall
11048	D		40	Roof collapse inside Structure
11049	D		40	Turf collapse to south of north wall
11050	D		40	Charcoal deposit west of south wall
11051	D		40	Turf collapse north of south wall

Unit No	Unit Type	Group	Area	Description
11052	D		40	Turf and stone collapse layer in western half of Structure
11053	Cut		40	Cut of post hole
11054	D		40	Fill of post hole
11055	Group		40	South wall of Structure 2
11056	Group		40	North wall of Structure 2
11057	D	11055	40	Latest phase of south wall with tephra included in turves
11058	D	11056	40	Latest phase of north wall with tephra included in turves
11059	D		40	Possible floor deposit in northeast of Structure
11060	D		40	Turf collapse north of north wall
11061	D	11056	40	Collapsed western end of north wall
11062	D	11055	40	Collapsed western end of south wall
11063	D		40	Collapse to north of north wall
11064	D	11056	40	Collapse at eastern end of north wall
11065	D		40	Gravel lens to south of south wall
11066	D		40	<i>In situ</i> tephra up against north wall
11067	D		40	Stone cluster and turf in northeast of Structure
11068	D		40	Slipped turf eastern end of north wall
11069	D	11056	40	Collapsed eastern end of north wall
11070	D	11056	40	Upper rooty turf in north wall - Section 1 (Equiv. [11058])
11071	D	11056	40	Mid yellowish brown turf with tephra in north wall - Section 1
11072	D	11056	40	Bright red turf in north wall - Section 1
11073	D	11056	40	Yellowish orange turf in north wall - Section 1
11074	D	11056	40	Disturbed area behind stone in north wall - Section 1
11075	D	11056	40	Mid orangey brown turf in north wall - Section 1
11076	D	11056	40	Firm lensed turf deposit at base of north wall - Section 1
11077	D	11056	40	Buried soil horizon under north wall - Section 1
11078	D	11056	40	Natural gravel under north wall - Section 1

Unit No	Unit Type	Group	Area	Description
11079	D	11056	40	Firm brown turf in north wall - Section 2
11080	D	11056	40	Mottled turf in north wall - Section 2
11081	D	11056	40	Bright orange turf block in north wall - Section 2
11082	D	11056	40	= [11080]
11083	D	11056	40	Dark reddish brown turf at bottom of north wall - Section 2
11084	D	11055	40	Collapsed eastern end of south wall
11085	D		40	Tephra <i>in situ</i> under south wall - Section 4
11086	D		40	Tephra <i>in situ</i> at eastern end of north wall
11087	D		40	Tephra <i>in situ</i> under [11064]
11088	D	11055	40	Buried soil horizon in south wall - Section 4
11089	D	11055	40	Podzol turf in south wall - Section 4
11090	D	11055	40	Reddish brown lensed turf in south wall - Section 4
11091	D	11055	40	Buried soil/land surface under south wall - Section 4

Appendix 4: Finds from the Seashore.

Find No	Unit No	Area	Material Type	Object Type
1	11002	Trench 1	Iron	Nail
2	11002	Trench 1	Metal	Slag
3		Trench 2	Discarded	Discarded
4	11032	40	Iron	
5	11032	40	Iron	
6	11032	40	Iron	Nail
7	11032	40	Wood	Peg
8	11032	40	Iron	
9	11032	40	Iron	Nail
10	11032	40	Iron	
11	11032	40	Iron	
12	11032	40	Wood	
13	11032	40	Iron	
14	11032	40	Stone	
15	11032	40	Iron	
16	11032	40	Iron	
17	11032	40	Iron	
18	11032	40	Iron	Nail
19	11032	40	Iron	Rove
20	11032	40	Metal	Coca Cola can
21	11032	40	Iron	
22	11032	40	Iron	
23	11032	40	Iron	Nail
24	11032	40	Iron	
25	11032	40	Iron	Rove
26	11032	40	Iron	

Find No	Unit No	Area	Material Type	Object Type
27	11032	40	Iron	
28	11032	40	Iron	Nail
29	11032	40	Iron	
30	11032	40	Textile/Iron	Felt
31	11032	40	Iron	
32	11032	40	Iron	
33	11032	40	Unknown	
34	11032	40	Ceramic	
35	11035	40	Iron	
36	11032	40	Copper	Pin
37	11032	40	Iron	
38	11032	40	Iron	Nail
39	11039	40	Iron	Rove
40	11039	40	Iron	
41	11039	40	Iron	
42	11037	40	Iron	Nail
43	11041	40	Iron	Nail
44	11042	40	Iron	
45	11042	40	Iron	
46	11044	40	Ceramic	
47	11042	40	Iron	
48	11042	40	Iron	Nail
49	11045	40	Metal	
50	11045	40	Iron	
51	11047	40	Iron	
52	11047	40	Iron	
53	11048	40	Iron	Nail

Find No	Unit No	Area	Material Type	Object Type
54	11048	40	Ceramic	
55	11048	40	Iron	
56	11048	40	Textile	Wool
57	11048	40	Iron	Nail head
58	11048	40	Iron	Slag
59	11048	40	Iron	
60	11048	40	Iron	
61	11048	40	Iron	
62	11048	40	Iron	
63	11048	40	Iron	Nail
64	11048	40	Iron	Hook
65	11048	40	Iron	Nail
66	11048	40	Iron	
67	11048	40	Iron	Nail
68	11048	40	Ceramic	Part of rim
69	11048	40	Iron	Rove
70	11048	40	Iron	2 nails
71	11048	40	Iron	
72	11048	40	Ceramic	Part of rim
73	11048	40	Iron	Nail
74	11048	40	Iron	Nail
75	11048	40	Iron	
76	11048	40	Iron	Nail
77	11048	40	Iron	
78	11048	40	Bone	Bone
79	11048	40	Iron	
80	11048	40	Iron	Nail

Find No	Unit No	Area	Material Type	Object Type
81	11048	40	Iron	Rove
82	11048	40	Iron	
83	11048	40	Iron	Nail
84	11048	40	Iron	Nail
85	11048	40	Iron	
86	11048	40	Copper	Button
87	11048	40	Iron	
88	11048	40	Iron	Rivets
89	11048	40	Iron	Nail
90	11048	40	Iron	Nail
91		40	Iron	Rove
92	11057	40	Iron	Nail
93	11058	40	Iron	Nail
94	11062	40	Bone	Long bone
95	11062	40	Bone	Long bone
96	11061	40	Iron	
97	11061	40	Bone	
98	11061	40	Iron	
99	11064	40	Iron	
100	11064	40	Iron	Iron object
101	11057	40	Clay	Pipe stem
102	11056	40	Bone	
103	11058	40	Bone	
104	11057	40	Wood	Birch bark
105	11057	40	Iron	Nail head
106	11069	40	Copper	Button

Appendix 5: Samples from the Seashore

Sample No	Unit No	Area	Grid	Sample Type	Description
1	11004	1		Tephra	Wall of Structure 5
2	11034	40	100/205	Flotation	Charcoal spread
3	11035	40	100/200	Flotation	Charcoal spread
4	11036	40	100/205	Flotation	Charcoal spread
5	11047	40	105/205	Flotation	Charcoal spread
6	11054	40	100/200	Flotation	Post hole fill
7	11059	40	106/203.6	Chemical	Structure 2 possible floor
8	11059	40	106.5/203.6	Chemical	Structure 2 possible floor
9	11059	40	107/203.6	Chemical	Structure 2 possible floor
10	11059	40	106.5/203.1	Chemical	Structure 2 possible floor
11	11059	40	107/203.1	Chemical	Structure 2 possible floor
12	11059	40	107.5/203.1	Chemical	Structure 2 possible floor
13	11059	40	105/200	Archaeoentomology	Structure 2 possible floor
14	11059	40	106.5/203.6	Micromorphology	Structure 2 possible floor
15	11059	40	105/200	Flotation	Structure 2 possible floor
16	11066	40	100/200	Tephra	Tephra up against northern wall
17	11063	40	100/200	Flotation	Charred turf
18	11087	40	105/200	Tephra	In situ to west of Structure
19	11068	40	100/200	Tephra	Within turves of south wall
20	11069	40	105/200	Tephra	Tephra up against south wall
21	11058	40	105/205	Tephra	Tephra from north wall
22	11058	40	105/205	Tephra	Tephra from north wall
23	11068	40	105/205	Flotation	Seed remains
24	11058	40	100/205	Tephra	Tephra below west face of north wall

Sample No	Unit No	Area	Grid	Sample Type	Description
25	11059	40	105/200	Flotation	Structure 2 possible floor
26	11085	40	100/200	Tephra	Tephra from west face of south wall