





HOUSE III

Only the two gable ends of this house remain. At the east end a well preserved area of two types of cobbling has been exposed. There is the threshold of a doorway on the south side. This end of the house has provided accommodation for animals, probably goats, and on the northern outside wall at the east end there is the outfall of a drain.

The west end of the house has a fine example of a drystone built fireplace. A close look at the outside wall of this west end shows that the fireplace has been inserted after the house was built. The fireplace could be associated with the second and last phase of occupation of the clachan perhaps reflecting a higher standard of living following on the improvements in rural economy at the end of the 18thC.

THE KILN

The corn drying kiln has been built into a natural slope in the northeastern part of the clachan. The chamber has been in part cut out of the living rock, with a thick collar of dry stone building at ground level.

The original lintelled flue is short and narrow but it has been lengthened at a later period by two wings built forward at either side. When used for corn drying the corn in the sheaf would be laid on a grid supported by a scarcement built halfway up the inverted cone of the chamber. A fire was then lit at the outer end of the flue and the heat, inducted inwards, dried the cereal without any risk of fire. Most deserted rural settlements in Perthshire have a corn drying kiln, an essential adjunct when barley was sown as late as June and often not harvested until November. But with the agricultural improvements brought in at the end of the 18thC, with better seed, earlier sowing and summer harvesting the corn drying kiln became obsolete. Several examples in Central Perthshire like this one at the clachan were converted to burning limestone. Increasing the draught by lengthening and narrowing the flue was the usual method of conversion. At the clachan partly burnt limestone was found at the bottom of the chamber but the amount which could have been burnt at one time must have been minimal. However the small area of ground cultivated combined with the probable rate of distribution of approximately 2oz to the square yard must have reconciled the inhabitants to the inconvenience of production.

EXCAVATION

The clachan was excavated in 1972 and 1974 by members of the Breadalbane, Strathearn Society and Abertay Archaeological Societies and by members of the Stirling Field and Archaeological Societies under the auspices of the Forestry Commission (East Conservancy).

A selection of relics found during the excavation is on exhibition at The Queen's View Information Centre.

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HIGHLAND CLACHAN

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