

Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland

SC4028 Whitrighill, Berwickshire (Whiterigg Hill)



HER: Scottish Borders 57258 (None)

NMR: NT 63 SW 44 (57258)

SM: None

NGR: NT 6224 3453

X: 362240 **Y:** 634530 (OSGB36)

Summary

The site of this fort was first revealed by cropmarks, occupying the crest of a low rise extending NE from Whitrighill farmhouse. Oval on plan, it measures about 95m from NE to SW by 70m transversely (0.51ha) within two ditches set about 5m apart and there is a possible entrance on the NE. The inner ditch appears little more than 3m in breadth, and excavation (Dent 1992) has shown that it is barely 1m deep, but the outer is much more substantial, measuring up to 6.5m in breadth by 3m in depth. This disparity in size suggests that the two circuits were not conceived as an unitary scheme and that the outer may

well have formed a free-standing enclosure; allowing for the presence of internal ramparts the two circuits would have enclosed 0.46ha and 0.6ha respectively. A large macula visible on the cropmarks at the SW end of the interior and identified by geophysical survey (Jones et al 1991, 14-15) was also excavated, uncovering a substantial round-house, beneath which there were traces of a smaller timber round-house; a yellow glass bead was recovered and is probably of late Iron Age date (Dent 1992).

Status

Citizen Science: X

Reliability of Data: Confirmed

Reliability of Interpretation: Confirmed

Location

X: -289527 **Y:** 7479776 (EPSG: 3857)

Longitude: -2.6008616616623588 **Latitude:** 55.60294621121932 (EPSG:4326)

Country: Scotland

Current County or Unitary Authority: Scottish Borders

Historic County: Berwickshire

Current Parish/Community/Council/Townland: Mertoun

Monument Condition

None

Condition:

Extant	X
Cropmark	✓
Likely Destroyed	X

Land Use

None

Current Use:

Woodland	X
Commercial Forestry Plantation	X
Parkland	✓
Pasture (Grazing)	✓
Arable	X
Scrub/Bracken	X
Bare Outcrop	X
Heather/Moorland	X
Heath	X
Built-up	X
Coastal Grassland	X
Other	X

Landscape

Hillfort Type

None

Type:

Contour Fort	✓
Partial Contour Fort	✗
Promontory Fort	✗
Hillslope Fort	✗
Level Terrain Fort	✗
Marsh Fort	✗
Multiple Enclosure Fort	✗

Topographic Position

Position:

Hilltop	✗
Coastal Promontory	✗
Inland Promontory	✗
Valley Bottom	✗
Knoll/Hillock/Outcrop	✓
Ridge	✗
Cliff/Plateau-edge/Scarp	✗
Hillslope	✗
Lowland	✗
Spur	✗

Dominant Topographic Feature: None

Aspect:

North	✗
Northeast	✗
East	✗
Southeast	✗
South	✗
Southwest	✗
West	✗
Northwest	✗
Level	✓

Altitude: 137.0m

Boundary

N/A

Dating Evidence

The bead has no bearing on the date of the enclosures

Reliability: D - None

Principal Activity:

Pre 1200BC	✗
1200BC - 800BC	✗
800BC - 400BC	✗
400BC - AD50	✗
AD50 - AD400	✗
AD400 - AD 800	✗
Post AD800	✗
Unknown	✓

Other Activity:

Pre Hillfort: None

Post Hillfort: Ploughed flat

Evidence:

Artefactual: Yellow glass bead of probable late Iron Age date but context has yet to be published

Investigation History

Photographed by RCAHMS Aerial Survey Programme in 1983 and 2006, and by John Dent in 1993

Investigations:

1st Identified Written Reference (1954):	Identified from vertical aerial photographs by the RCAHMS Survey of Marginal Lands
Other (1983):	First photographed by the RCAHMS Aerial Survey Programme
Geophysical Survey (1991):	For the Newstead Research Project (Jones et al 1991, 14-15)
Excavation (1992):	Directed by John Dent (1992)

Interior Features

Single large macula on the cropmarks has been excavated and shown to mark the position of a substantial round-house, beneath which traces of a second smaller structure were found

Water Source

None

Source:

None	✓
Spring	✗
Stream	✗
Pool	✗
Flush	✗

Well X
Other X

Surface

None

Interior Features (Surface):

No Known Features	✓
Round Stone Structures	X
Rectangular Stone Structures	X
Curvilinear Platforms	X
Other Roundhouse Evidence	X
Pits	X
Quarry Hollows	X
Other	X

Excavation

None

Interior Features (Excavation):

No Known Excavation	X
Pits	X
Postholes	X
Roundhouses	✓
Rectangular Structures	X
Roads/Tracks	X
Quarry Hollows	X
Other	X
Nothing Found	X

Geophysics

None

Interior Features (Geophysics):

No Known Geophysics	X
Pits	X
Roundhouses	✓
Rectangular Structures	X
Roads/Tracks	X
Quarry Hollows	X
Other	X
Nothing Found	X

Finds

Yellow glass bead

Interior (Finds):

No Known Finds	X
Pottery	X
Metal	X
Metalworking	X
Human Bones	X
Animal Bones	✓
Lithics	X
Environmental	X
Other	✓

Aerial

Single large macula

Interior Features (Aerial):

APs Not Checked	X
None	X
Roundhouses	✓
Rectangular Structures	X
Pits	X
Postholes	X
Roads/Tracks	X
Other	X

Entrances

See main summary

Total Number of Breaks Through Ramparts:

1: Whole circuit has been levelled

Number of Possible Original Entrances:

2: Diffuse marks the ditches on the NW possibly hide an irregularity in their line, the likely explanation being that there is another entrance on this side

Guard Chambers: X

Chevaux de Frise: X

Entrances:

1. Simple Gap (North east): None

Enclosing Works

Twin ditches, presumably with upcast ramparts, but possibly representing several periods of construction

Enclosed Area:

Area 1: 0.46ha.

Area 2: 0.6ha.

Total: 0.6ha.

Total Footprint Area: Noneha.

Ramparts

None

Multi-period Enclosure System:

None

Ramparts Form a Continuous Circuit:

None

Number of Ramparts:

NE Quadrant: 2

SE Quadrant: 2

SW Quadrant: 2

NW Quadrant: 2

Total: 2

Morphology

Current Morphology:

Partial Univallate

Univallate

Partial Bivallate

Bivallate

Partial Multivallate

Multivallate

Unknown

Detailed Morphology:

Partial Univallate

Univallate

Partial Bivallate

Bivallate

Partial Multivallate

Multivallate

Surface Evidence

None

Enclosing Works (Surface):

None

Earthen Bank

Stone Wall

Rubble

Wall-walk	X
Evidence of Timber	X
Vitrification	X
Other Burning	X
Palisade	X
Counter Scarp Bank	X
Berm	X
Unfinished	X
Other	X

Excavated Evidence

None

Enclosing Works (Excavation):

None	X
Earthen Bank	X
Stone Wall	X
Murus Duplex	X
Timber-framed	X
Timber-laced	X
Vitrification	X
Other Burning	X
Palisade	X
Counter Scarp Bank	X
Berm	X
Unfinished	X
No Known Excavation	✓
Other	X

Other

Gang Working:

X None

Ditches:

✓ None

Number of Ditches: 2

Annex:

X None

References

Dent, J S (1992) 'Whittrighill (Mertoun parish): Iron Age enclosure and post-medieval settlement'. Disc Exc Scot (1992), 8

Jones, R F J et al (1991) 'The Newstead project'. Univ Bradford Archaeol Sci Annu Rep, 1990-1, 5th

annual report, 14-15

Links

Atlas of Hillforts:

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/40ccda26452f427a9f081506958e1d81/#data_s=id%3Aacf7b6cc651c4bc1a392992140d959ca-1cbc55d5d6c9413a8e28ea115b03f70f%3A3820&widget_23=active_datasource_id:acf7b6cc651c4bc1a392992140d959ca,center:-289527%2C7479776%2C102100,scale:10000,rotation:0

Wikidata:

<https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q31107002>

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