

SCOTTISH BORDERS (local authority)

Cavers (parish)

Stobs Camp pre-First World War practice trenches

Excavation

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NT 50207 09402 (centred on) A community excavation was undertaken, 22-23 May 2018, at Stobs Camp by Archaeology Scotland.

The aim was to investigate two practice trenches believed to be dug by British soldiers prior to, or during, the First World War, to determine their depth and construction method.

Practice Trench A (NT 50181 09398) was marked by a curvilinear feature approximately 29m in length, 2-3m wide with a visible depth of 1m. One excavation trench measuring 4 x 2m was located perpendicular to the practice trench on an approximate E-W alignment. On de-turfing a rubble re-deposit was found on the N side of the trench. The vertical sides of the practice trench were excavated to a depth of 0.36m whereupon large stones (up to 0.5m in size) prohibited continued excavation. The practice trench was 0.4m wide and was infilled with compact light-brown silt and 10% angular stone inclusions. No finds of archaeological note were discovered.

During a metal-detector survey prior to excavation a handful of ammunition cartridges were found along with a George V penny dated 1911 and a small military button.

Practice Trench B (NT 50235 09406) was marked by a large curvilinear feature approximately 62m in length, 2m wide with a visible depth of 1m. A communication trench running S and measuring 17m in length connected the larger curvilinear feature to a smaller curvilinear feature 14m in length, 1.5m wide and 0.5m in depth. One excavation trench measuring 4 x 2m was located perpendicular to the larger curvilinear feature on an N-S alignment. The vertical sides of the practice trench were excavated to a depth of 0.29m whereupon a natural context of orange-yellow clay was discovered. The practice trench was 0.56m wide and was infilled with compact dark-grey clay and 30% angular stone inclusions. No finds of archaeological note were discovered.

During the two-day excavation 22 pupils and 2 teachers from Kelso High School took part in the dig. A further 4 adult volunteers joined the excavation.

Archive: Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Borders Council, Historic Environment Record (intended)

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