**FOOTWEAR FINDS FROM NEAR CUMMINGSTON (BRACO, BENNACHIE) 2014**

*compiled by CM May 2014, rev. 7 & 8/2014*

The following is a list of items of footwear found by Bailies of Bennachie volunteers at grid reference NJ 6952 2159 while tree planting in Bennachie Forest, near the ruined house known as Cummingston, on 5th April 2014. These were all found embedded in the surface of disturbed ground, i.e. “surface finds”. No excavation was undertaken. Presumably the materials had originally been buried in a pit. However, two or possibly three disturbance events have occurred – namely, creation of a drainage ditch, conifer planting 50-60 years previous to 2014, and tree harvesting c. 2012.

59 items are described, all of leather unless otherwise noted, mostly ladies footwear comprising dress shoes, work boots, and pieces thereof. There is one child’s boot. At least 14 different pairs of footwear are represented, referenced **A – N** below. Where number of eyelets is given, this refers to a single row of eyelets (i.e. “10 eyelets” indicates that the original complete item had 10 pairs of eyelets). Interestingly, no laces whatsoever were found. Perhaps these were kept for re-use?

Finds were cleaned, air dried at ambient temperature, but then subjected to a variety of rather random processes – bagging & labelling, chilling, some were placed in freezer, all received subsequent air-drying at ambient temperature, during which time items were turned. Subsequently, one instance of mould development was observed in July 2014. [subject to update].

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| **Pair ref.** | **Item/**  **label number** | **Image details (CM file)** | **Description** | **Disposal** |
| **A** | 1a | 219, 2102 | Ladies shoe or low boot: length 22cm, tapered heel up to 4.5cm high. |  |
| **A** | 1b |  | Shell-like, ?Fe concretion attached to heel when found, but separated during cleaning. Probably a corroded tacket head. |  |
| **A** | 1c |  | Miscellaneous detached fragments. |  |
| **B** | 2 |  | Eyelet piece, complete; 9 holes. |  |
|  | 3 |  | Piece 11x2cm; complete; eyelet at 1 end. |  |
| **C** | 4 |  | ?Ladies boot; length at least 19cm (toe ?incomplete); tapered heel up to 3cm high; 10 eyelets in right section of upper (left not present); piece of stitching surviving in heel upper; many nails; evidence of reinforcing patch on exterior of ankle. |  |
|  | 5 |  | L-shaped piece; complete; max. dimension 20cm; no conventional eyelets; ?leg part of ladies boot. |  |
| **D** | 6 |  | Mid-portion of boot; incomplete; incl. part of right upper with 4 of the eyelets surviving; eyelet spacing suggests not part of Items 2 or 4; design shows not part of Item 1. |  |
| **E** | 7 | 205 | Ladies shoe; incomplete; length 23cm (from toe to assumed extremity of heel); toe cap almost intact, with perforated ornamentation (similar to Item 52). |  |
| **F** | 8 |  | Eyelet piece; complete; 5 eyelets; 2 detached bits of thread. |  |
|  | 9 |  | Part of mid-sole; 14x7cm; nail holes at 1 end. |  |
|  | 10 |  | U-shaped piece; max. dimension 13cm; ?ladies heel upper. |  |
| **G** | 11 |  | Insole for right foot; incomplete; est. length 25.5cm. |  |
| **H** | 12 |  | Work boot for left foot; ?ladies; length toe-heel 27cm; toe plate *in situ*; tacket sockets; mark “VIII” (underscored as shown) on underside of heel; toe cap band; part of upper became detached during cleaning. |  |
|  | 13 |  | Curved piece; complete; 15x3-4cm. |  |
|  | 14 |  | Eyelet piece; incomplete; 4 eyelets. Matches Item 6, including incomplete character and dimensions. |  |
|  | 15 |  | Insole of heel; ?stone adhering; nail holes. |  |
|  | 16 |  | Insole of heel; complete; length 15.5cm. |  |
|  | 17 |  | Piece; complete; 9.5x2-3.5cm; 2 eyelets at one end; comparable to Item 3. |  |
|  | 18 |  | Insole of toe; nail holes. |  |
|  | 19 |  | Upper; 10 eyelets; piece of thread; does not match Item 4. |  |
| **I** | 20 | 199, 205, 218 | Front half of shoe; perforated edge to toe cap; also a detached piece; does not match Item 7. |  |
|  | 21 |  | Heel counter piece with lining. |  |
| **J** | 22 | 211 | Heel half of ladies work boot; eyelet and heel uppers complete; 10 eyelets. |  |
| **K** | 23 |  | Ladies high shoe upper (right eyelet piece); 9 eyelets. Detached 4 eyelet fragment may be part of this item. Tapered heel strap-shaped piece became separated during cleaning. |  |
|  | 24 |  | As Item 23, but left eyelet piece. May conjoin with Item 23. Eyelet liner detached. |  |
|  | 25 |  | Heel plate (leather); horseshoe-shaped. |  |
|  | 26 |  | Insole; some loss of heel material; est. original length 23.5cm; fibrous material on underside of heel. Might relate to Item 7? |  |
|  | 27 |  | Tongue piece; complete; 14.5x5-6.5cm. Not found during bagging (?included in error with other items). |  |
| **L** | 28 |  | Heel half of ladies shoe; nails; heavy. |  |
|  | 29 |  | Part of an upper; length 16.5cm; poor condition; thin leather. |  |
|  | 30 |  | Eyelet uppers, heel counter piece, and narrow piece with 1 eyelet (?heel upper) – all pertaining to a 9 eyelet boot. Outer layer of left eyelet piece missing. Pieces became separated during cleaning. Narrow piece does not match Item 3. Eyelet piece much longer than Item 2. |  |
| **M** | 31 |  | Upper from 1 side of footwear; 13 eyelets. Matches Item 37. |  |
|  | 32 |  | Toecap. |  |
|  | 33 |  | Heel (incomplete) and midsole; nut-shaped encrustation on heel (probably a corroded tacket); nails. |  |
|  | 34 |  | Heel layer; semicircular. |  |
|  | 35 |  | Insole; full length. May match Item 26. |  |
|  | 36 |  | Scrap; nutshell-like attachment (? corroded tacket). |  |
|  | 37 |  | Upper from 1 side of footwear; 13 eyelets. Matches Item 31. |  |
|  | 38 |  | Part of upper, with uppermost eyelet. |  |
|  | 39 |  | Sole in 2 parts, with corroded tackets. |  |
|  | 40 |  | Part of heel; incl. much corroded metal. Fragment became separated during cleaning. |  |
|  | 41 |  | Eyelet piece (incomplete); 6 eyelets. |  |
|  | 42 |  | Eyelet piece (complete); 10 eyelets. Matches Item 47. |  |
|  | 43 | 205 | Upper, toecap (incomplete) and front sole of ladies shoe; toecap grey; upper light brown. |  |
|  | 44 |  | Narrow piece; 2 eyelets. May have been with Item 43, but thicker leather. |  |
|  | 45 |  | Front insole. Marked “4” and “IIII”. Not found during bagging (?included in error with other items). |  |
|  | 46 | 211 | Metal heel, eyelet piece (10 eyelets), 2 fragments, thread. Pieces became separated during cleaning. Possibly a child’s boot. Lacing holes at back. |  |
|  | ?46 |  | [Possible duplicate number] |  |
|  | 47 |  | Eyelet strip (10 eyelets). Matches Item 42. |  |
| **N** | 48 | 205 | Ladies dress lace-up shoe (4 eyelets); length 22.5cm measured along sole from toe to heel; metal heel (<6cm high); toecap mostly gone. Similar to Item 1 but not a match. |  |
|  | 49 |  | Boot upper with eyelet piece (9 eyelets) and associated liner; tongue; oval reinforcing patch. All pieces separated. 4 pieces. |  |
|  | 50 |  | Heel (3cm high), with incomplete bits of heel upper. |  |
|  | 51 |  | Eyelet upper with 9 holes and liner. |  |
|  | 52 |  | Ladies shoe toecap with perforations and fabric lining. Similar to Item 7. |  |
|  | 53 |  | Heel counter piece. |  |
|  | 54 |  | Front ?midsole. |  |
|  | 55 |  | Eyelet piece (9 holes). |  |
|  | 56 |  | Narrow piece (?from heel upper); poor condition. |  |
|  | 57 |  | Thin leather ribbon, length 8cm, with thread holes. |  |
|  | 58 |  | Scraps. |  |
|  | 59 |  | Eyelet strip fragment; 3 holes extant. |  |

Also an insole – number lost – bagged with other soles.