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**THE ARCTURUS YMERS ISLAND EXPEDITION  
JULY/AUGUST 2000**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT**

by

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**CHELTENHAM 2001**

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"Observations on the Eskimo remains on the east coast of Greenland between 72° and 75° north latitude", *Meddelelser om grønland*, 92(6): 1-69, and secondly, to David, Robert G, 1995, "A survey of Eskimo sites from Mesters Vig to Kuhn Island, North-East Greenland" *Polar Record* (179) pp 389-398 (1995). A few comparisons, too, are made with features found and recorded (though not published, the information has been passed to the appropriate Greenland authority) by the author and others on Erskine Expeditions to Hold-with-Hope (1989) and Traill Island (1991), and on the Arcturus Expedition to Clavering Island (1999).

**(i) The group of features at the "Ancient Settlement" shown on the Greenland 1:250,000 map on the eastern side (Botaniker Bugt) of the Konglomeratnoes headland (73° 21'N, 24° 49'W).**

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This compact, 300' x 150', site fronting Botaniker Bugt (Photo 1) contained tent-rings, caches/fox traps, graves/fireplaces, a shelter, and possible winter houses, has undoubtedly been surveyed before by Danish or Inuit archaeologists. However, because of the inevitable damage to the site over time, caused by animals (and possibly, man), and natural forces, particularly coastal erosion, it was considered worthwhile to re-survey the site and its features, to provide evidence of any physical changes to the Greenland Authority. Some two half-days were spent on the site and its environs, and one composite feature (a tent-ring with adjacent shelter-stone and cache/fox trap) and eight other identifiable features were sketched, roughly measured and photographed. Clearly there were other features on site which could not be easily identified in two days, and others which were inevitably "missed" by the author's inexperienced survey techniques. The adjacent areas of the headland were inspected for features, but apart from a few "modern" surveyor's cairns, and modern tent-rings near to the trapper's hut, no other archaeological features were found.

The individual features identified, and as shown on the overall plan of the ancient settlement (Drawing 1), are described below, numbered as on Drawing 1.

Tent-ring (1), Shelter (1a) and Cache/fox trap (1b)

This striking, and easily identifiable composite feature (photos 2-6) is in danger of being eroded away (see Photos 2 and 4), and hence was surveyed in more detail (Drawing 2). The 18' diameter tent-ring (Photo 5) was made up of mixed angular and rounded rocks, mainly 4" to 6" high, and well embedded. Three large rocks running W-E across the floor of the ring to a seaward entrance hint at the presence of a central aisle, while the floor itself is well vegetated with willow on its inner, landward, side, and is mainly stones and gravel on its eastern seaward, side. A jumble of 12" high rocks on the northern side of the ring suggest the kind of store found as an annex on the edge of such rings elsewhere in Greenland (Johnson, and more recently by the author on Clavering Island, 1999). This possible annex store also joins the ring to the 4' high Shelter stone (Photo 3 and 6) and the pile of rocks, most probably a cache or fox trap, on its southern and western sides. A line



### Fox trap/cache (8) (Photos 15, 16 and 17 and Drawing 5)

This interesting feature, comprised of a large boulder on its eastern side and a pile of rocks around, and part-covering, an open compartment, was on the northern extremity of the ancient settlement, only 20'-30' south of the composite feature of Tent-ring (1). Drawing 5 shows its dimensions, approximately 15" high, 12' wide (including boulders fallen to one side of the main structure) and 18' long (E-W), including the large boulder on its eastern side. Such a structure is an enigma, but given its location, close to tent-rings, it is possible it started as a cache and maybe later, when the settlement was abandoned, became a fox trap.

### Open cache (9) (Photo 18)

This cache, unlikely to have been a fox trap, was located close to the possible winter houses (5). It was only photographed, but it would seem to be a typical cache which has collapsed following the removal of its contents (as described by David).

### **Feature (ii) A tent-ring on a low shelf above Karl Jakobsen's Bugt, just east of the point where the Munotbjerg cliffs drop steeply into the fiord, (73° 4'N, 24° 50'W).**

This isolated, enigmatic, structure is illustrated in Photos 19 and 20 and Drawing 6. It consists of two broadly parallel (N-S) double rows of mainly flat-sided small rocks (all of a similar height above ground) on a sand and gravel flat floor, encircled by a 28' (N-S) x 18' (E-W) diameter tent-ring of large, generally flat and well-embedded, rocks. The author has not seen a similar structure elsewhere, but notes that Johnson describes a similar but smaller feature at West Eskimo Bay, Clavering Island ie "A circular ring 3.8m, with a group of large stones arranged in two rows in the south part of the ring and whose significance is unknown." However, the origin of this structure, and more particularly the central double rows, could be modern, as they could be rests for a wooden platform or table, used as a temporary structure by much later, even contemporary, visitors to Ymers Island.

### **Feature (iii) A cache/fox trap in Fladedal at the lower end of the Munotbjerg Waterfall river gorge, (73° 4'N, 24° 43'W).**

This single isolated structure (Photos 21 and 22) was found well inland (2-3kms from the coast at Karl Jakobsen's Bugt), at a point above the low gorge of the tributary river which flows into Fladedal via the Munotbjerg Waterfall. Its circular form, size and large central cavity would suggest that it is more likely to be a cache rather than a fox trap. When considered together with feature (v), a cache/fox trap in Juluts Dal, 8 kilometres from the coast, it does suggest that the Inuit did travel inland away from the coast, perhaps hunting musk-oxen or even, the historically extinct, reindeer.

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KEJSER FRANZ JOSEPH

GUNNARLANDERS

YMER'S

DUSÈNS FJORD

SOFI

- (i) Ancient settlement
- (ii) Tent ring
- (iii) Cache/fox trap
- (iv) Botanikenbugt
- (v) Tent ring



# SKETCH-MAP OF INUIT SETTLEMENT ON KONGLOMERATNOS EASTERN HEADLAND 73°2'N, 24°40'W

YMERS Ø

Botaniker bugt

N ↙

→ To eastern headland of Konglomeratnos

⑤ Possible winter houses

Cache/foxtrap

⑨ cache open

small cache open

Open cache

Tent ring

Shelter stone

Cache/foxtrap

③ 9' diameter tent rings well embedded

⑦ Large cache

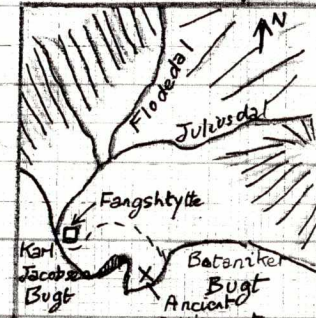
50 yards

Large boulder foxtrap

⑥ Graves/ fireplaces?

② 15' diameter tent ring well embedded stones

RGW 29/7/00



Location map

100 yards

DRAWING 1





7<sup>N</sup>

Konglomeratnoes, eastern headland—showing site of Photo 1  
ancient Inuit Settlement (first landfall at 10 minutes to the  
hour from two smaller icebergs in Botanikerbugt ) 73°2'N, 24°40'W  
Group (i)



✓  
N

Looking east to Tent ring ① and Shelter stone ⑫ overlooking low cliff Photo 2  
Group (i)

Note - circled numbers are as on Drawing 1 showing the location of Group (i) features.









N

Looking north over Tent ring ①, Shelter Stone ⑩ and Cache/foxtrap ⑩ Photo 3  
Also Drawing  
Group (i)



N<

Tent Ring ① looking east over Botanikerbugt  
Group (i)

Photo 4





Looking north over  
Tent Ring ①

Group (i)

Photo 5

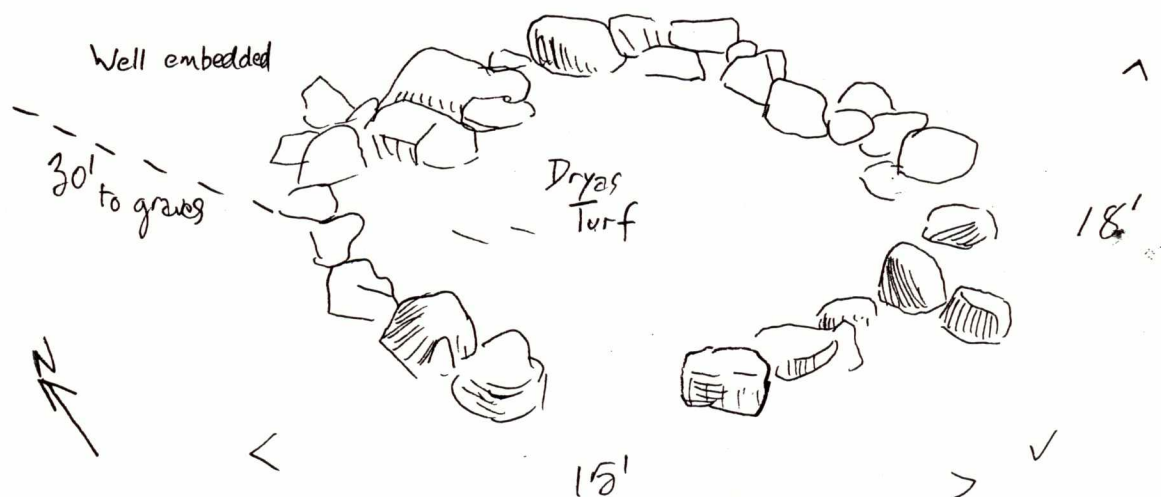
N  
X



N Shelter stone (a) and Cache/fox trap (b) obscuring Tent Ring ①  
Group (i)

Photo 6





Tent-ring shown as ② on overall Plan (Drawing 1)

DRAWING 3

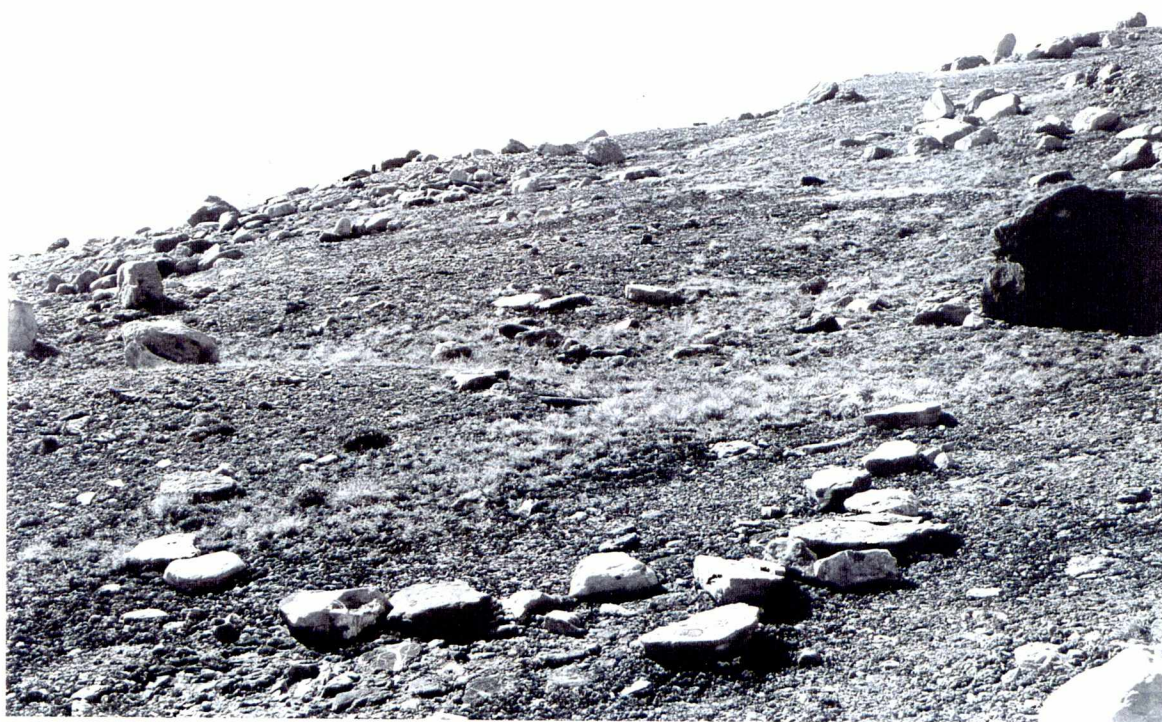




Tent Ring ② (Drawing 3)

Photo 7

Group (i)



Tent Ring ③ in foreground with Tent Ring ④ behind

Photo 8

Group (i)





N↙

Tent Ring ③ looking east  
Group(i)

Photo 9

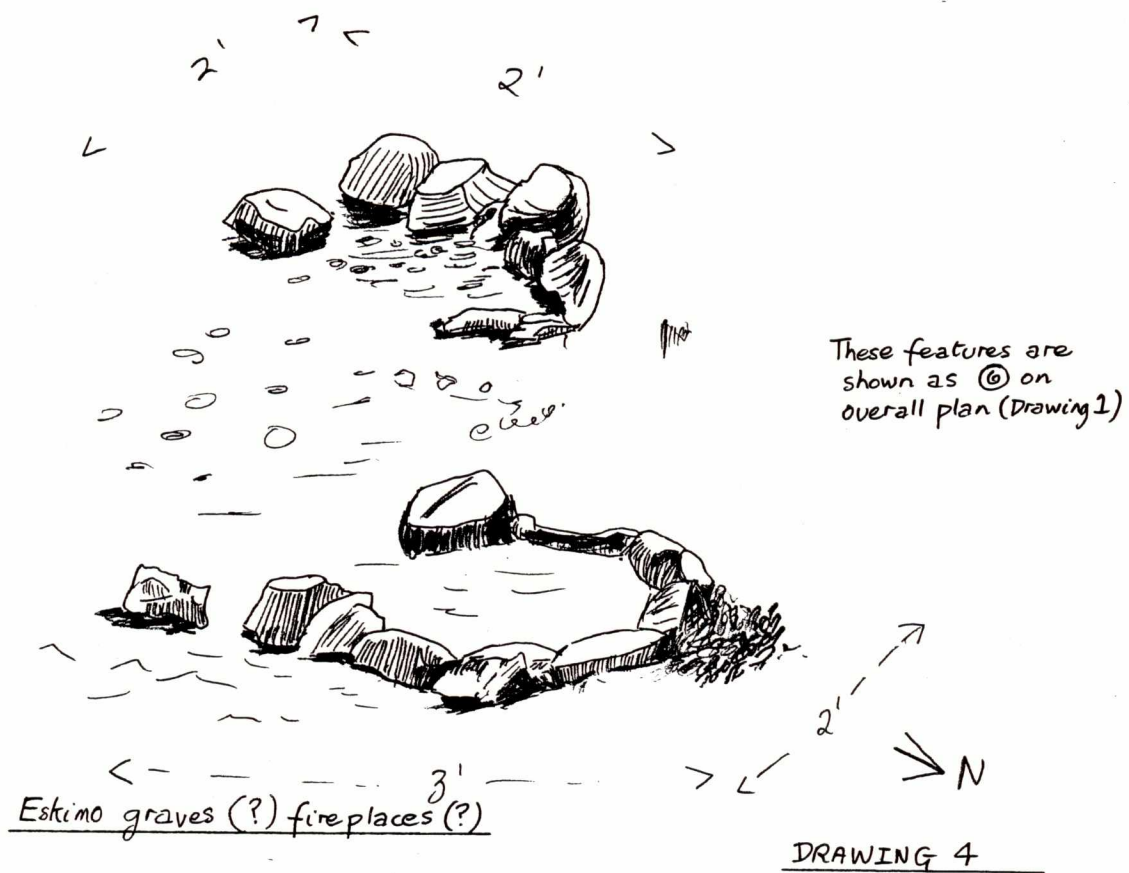


↙N

Tent Ring ④  
Group(i)

Photo 10









↘N

Two possible winter houses (5) (foreground) at southern  
end of ancient settlement

Photo 11

Group (i)



↘N

Eskimo graves or fireplaces (6) between Tent Rings (2) and (4)  
Also Drawing 4

Photo 12

Group (i)





Large cache ⑦

Group (i)

Photo 13

N  
7



N  
X

Large cache ⑦  
Group (i)

Photo 14



This feature is shown as ⑧ on overall plan (Drawing 1)



DRAWING 5





N  
^

Foxtrap/cache ⑧ (Drawing 5)  
Group (i)

Photo 15



N <

Foxtrap/cache ⑧  
Group (i)

Photo 16





N<

Fox trap/cache ⑧

Photo 17

Group (i)



27

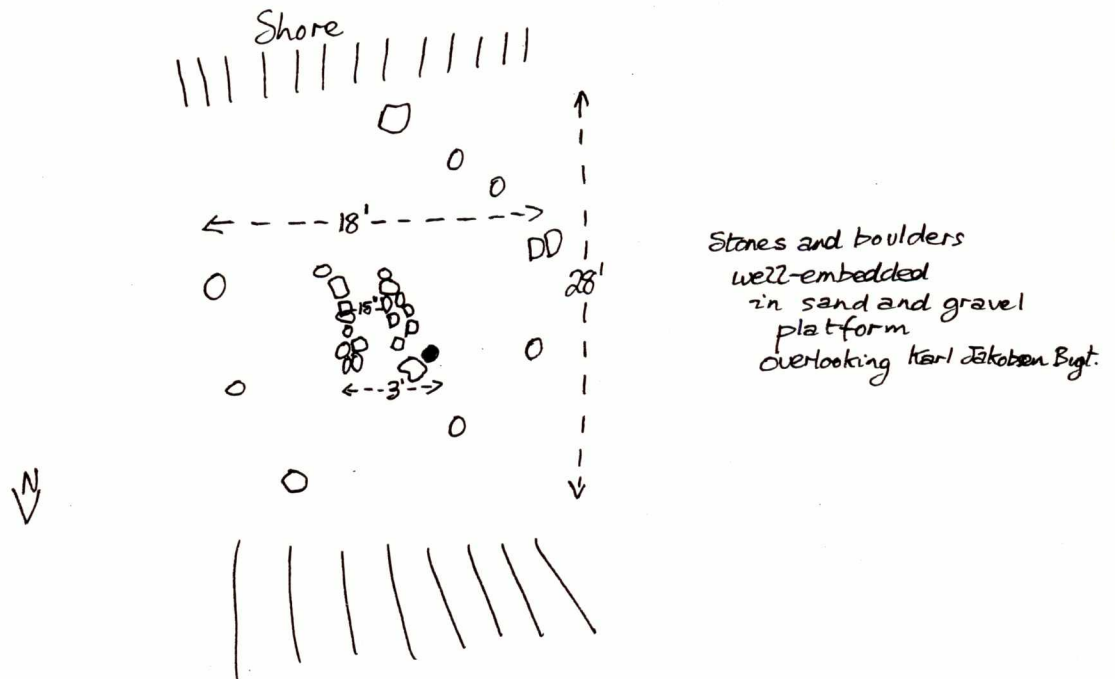
Open Cache ⑨

Photo 18

Group (i)



Possible tent-ring on shelf underneath Munottbjerg cliffs  
overlooking Karl Jakobsen Bugt ( $73^{\circ}4'N$   $24^{\circ}50'W$ )



DRAWING 6





N

Possible Tent Ring overlooking  
Karl Jakobsen Bugt -  $73^{\circ}4'N$ ,  $24^{\circ}50'W$   
Feature (ii)

Photo 19



N

Possible Tent Ring overlooking  
Karl Jakobsen Bugt -  $73^{\circ}4'N$ ,  $24^{\circ}50'W$   
(Drawing 6)  
Feature (ii)

Photo 20





Cache/foxtrap, Fladedal - 73°4'N, 24°43'W

Photo 21

Feature (iii)



Cache/foxtrap, Fladedal - 73°4'N, 24°43'W

Photo 22

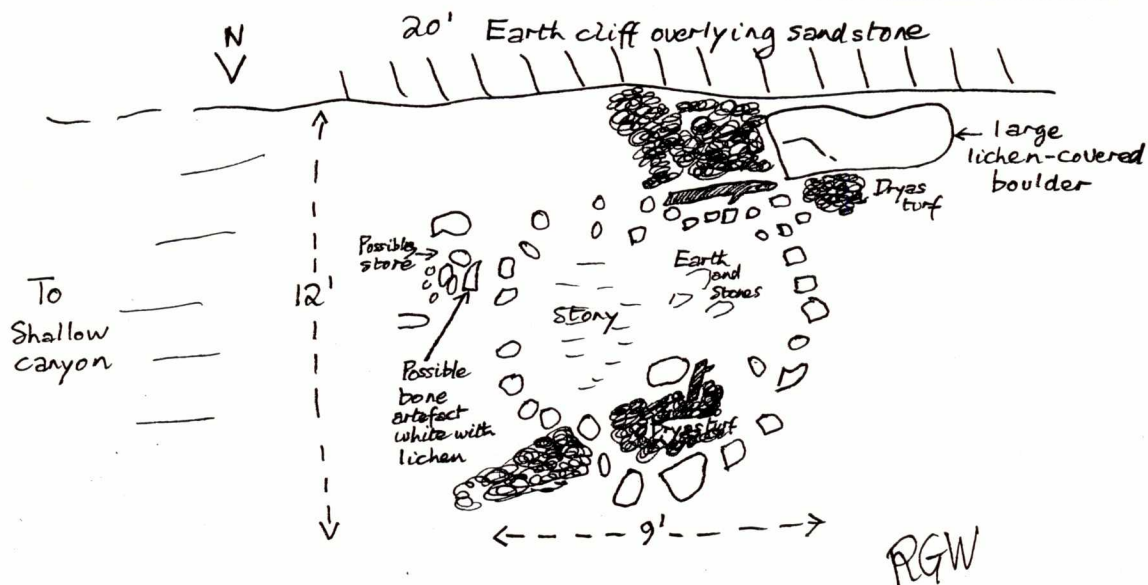
Feature (iii)



Sketch of Tent-ring-Botaniker Bugt 73°2'N, 24°35'W



Tent Ring - overlooking Botaniker Bugt 3kms E of Konglomeratnes  
at about 73°2'N 24°35'W



DRAWING 7





V  
N

Tent Ring overlooking eastern end of Botanikerbugt -  $73^{\circ}2'N, 24^{\circ}35'W$  Photo 23  
(Drawing 7)  
Feature (iv)



N

Tent Ring overlooking eastern end of Botanikerbugt -  $73^{\circ}2'N, 24^{\circ}35'W$  Photo 24  
Feature (iv)





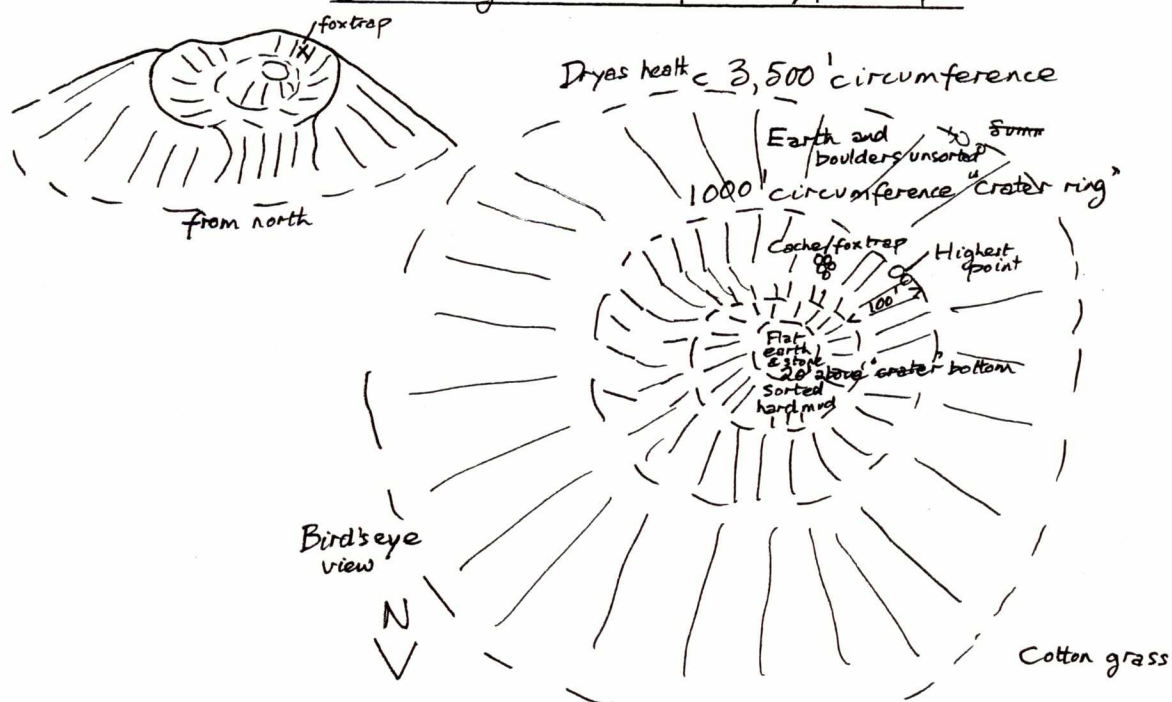
↙ N Tent Ring overlooking eastern end of Botanikerbugt-  $73^{\circ}2'N, 24^{\circ}35'W$  Photo 25  
Note possible bone artifact amongst large rocks (foreground) on eastern side of ring  
(Drawing 7)  
Feature (iv)



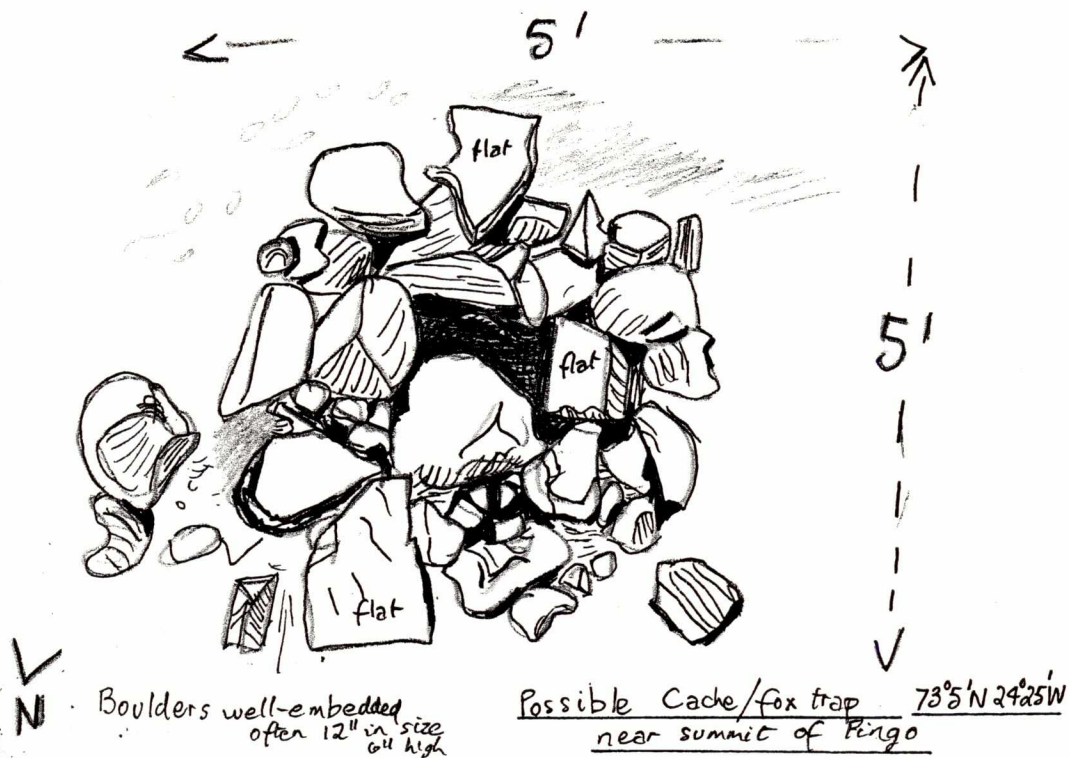
↙ N Possible bone artifact in possible store on eastern side of Tent Ring Photo 26  
overlooking eastern end of Botanikerbugt-  $73^{\circ}2'N, 24^{\circ}35'W$   
Feature (iv)



Large Pingo Juluts Dal  $73^{\circ}5'N$   $24^{\circ}25'W$   
also showing location of cache/fox-trap



This pingo was the largest of a series of three in the Juluts Dal and the most easterly and highest, about 200' above the river on the northern slope of the valley. A second pingo, cut into by the river lay some 2 kms west, and a third, much smaller pingo some 2 kilometres west again.







$\nearrow$ N Fox trap/cache near summit of large pingo in Julutsdal Photo 27  
 (extend dotted arrow lines to meet at site) -  $73^{\circ}5'N, 24^{\circ}25'W$   
Feature (v)



N $\nwarrow$  Fox trap/cache near summit of large pingo in Photo 28  
Julutsdal,  $73^{\circ}5'N, 24^{\circ}25'W$  (Drawing 8)  
Feature (v)