

A MEDIEVAL POTTERY INDUSTRY AT OLNEY HYDE

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Olney Hyde, a deserted medieval settlement and pottery production centre, was identified by fieldwork in 1957. The site lies one mile north of the town of Olney in North Buckinghamshire. Only a portion of the extensive production area has been examined. Two basic types of pottery fabric were produced: 'A', a limestone tempered ware of developed St Neots type, and 'B', a sand tempered ware with some limestone. Excavation in 1967 of part of a croft revealed an associated house/workshop and clay pit, and a kiln which produced 'B' ware during the fourteenth century. In 1969 an adjacent kiln was excavated. Its products, also of 'B' ware, were considered to date from the late fourteenth to early fifteenth century. Both kilns were of Musty's type 1b (Musty 1974, 44), being stone built and of single-flue, circular type with a central pedestal. 'A' ware was found in levels associated with the earliest activity on the excavated croft, and the sites of two kilns producing it were located nearby. These were not excavated, but the 'A' ware from the site suggests a date from the mid twelfth to the late thirteenth century.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The presence of large scatters of medieval pottery sherds in ploughed fields at SP 886 545, north of Olney Hyde Farm House was reported to the author in 1957 by Gordon Osborne of Olney.

On a subsequent visit the author recognised the site as that of a medieval settlement and pottery production centre. The site covered a considerable area (See Fig. 1 and Plate IIIa), and at least eight possible kiln sites were identified by the presence of burnt soil and numerous wasters on the ploughed field surface. Occasional visits over the next few years located further possible kilns to the east, south east, and north west of the main area.

In 1965 the site was surveyed by the Wolver-

ton and District Archaeological Society, who recorded the scatters of pottery sherds and associated stony areas.

In 1967 the then Ministry of Public Building and Works was approached for an excavation grant, and this was subsequently made to the Buckinghamshire County Museum. The excavation of Kiln 1 and its associated platform (see Figs. 2 and 3) took place in August of that year under the direction of Philip Mayes.

Two years later, in 1969, the author returned to the site with a small team to excavate a further kiln (Kiln 2, see Fig. 4), situated in Market Hill Close to the west of the area previously excavated.

Geology

by Gordon Osborne

Olney Hyde is situated on the south-facing slope of the high ground overlooking the valley of the Great Ouse. The hill is capped with both the Upper and Lower Cornbrash, below which is the Blisworth Clay, about 3 m thick, under which is the Bilsworth Limestone, which was at one period quarried for building stone at the bottom of the valley opposite the road to Lavendon Grange.

The clay for the kilns came from the two clay pits on the site and may have been extracted lower in the valley or brought from the two clay pits situated on Pastures Farm, close by. There was a brick industry here until the turn of the century. The water was obtained from the stream running down the valley.

These valleys running down from the high ground of Yardley Chase were formed by the melt water from the small ice cap on the high ground, water running during the summer and little in the winter. As the weather improved the ice finally disappeared, leaving the thick deposit of boulder clay on which the forest grows today.

Earlier Discoveries

The discovery of Roman material at Olney Hyde Farm during the last century (Ratcliffe and Brown 1893, 26) was first recorded by

Walter Pennington Storer, whose unpublished drawings of several finds preserved in the Cowper and Newton Museum at Olney confirm that medieval material was also discovered.

Storer's unpublished notes (Gough MSS 33, 263) record the discovery during hedging and ditching of medieval finds, foundations, and a kiln, although the finders did not recognise it as such. Writing c.1850-60, Storer gives the following account:

On the Earl of Dartmouth's farm, rented by Charles Talbot, John Clark says that about twenty years since he was quicking, making hedges and discovered in ye corner of ye Feoffee Close foundations of a chimney corner and ashes containing three black whetstones, one long enough to whet a scythe with also remains of pottery—extensive foundations as of a church—wells, pitching nine inches below the surface and circa two acres in extent called now Market Hill Close. The foundations were said to be those of a church by a farmer.

Much of the site was contained within the Feoffee Close (see Fig. ID, and Market Hill Close (now Market Close) was formed out of the north west corner of it.

History

The hamlet of Olney Hyde was part of the manor of Olney, and within the area of land which formed the ten hides in Olney given in 979 by King Ethelred to Aelfere (Mynard 1967 and Baines 1981).

The earliest reference to Olney Hyde is in 1261 (VCH 1927, 432 n. 67). A survey of the Someries manor in Olney in 1284 (*Cal. Close Rolls*, Edward I, vol. 2, 1279-1288, 289-294) refers to a furlong called Le Longdale on Le Hidehull (Hide hill) and to a meadow in Hidemead.

Part of the Someries manor passed to the Basset family in the middle of the thirteenth century by the marriage of Margaret Somery to Ralph Basset (*Cal. Close Rolls*, Edward I, vol. 3, 1288-1296, 288).

In 1343-4 Ralph Basset was the tenant of La Hyde, a member of the manor of Olney, and paid an annual rent of five pounds twelve shillings and five and a half pence (PRO C/135/70/8). In 1353-4 Ralph Bassett was still the tenant but the value of the annual rent had fallen to four pounds and ten shillings 'on account of the pestilence' (PRO C/135/122/-11).

In 1374 Ralph Lord Basset emparked 206 acres of land in Olney (VCH 1927, 432, n57). This land, which is now the civil parish of Olney Park, situated to the west of Olney Hyde, may represent all or part of the open fields of this hamlet. Possibly a decline in population as a result of the plague enabled Basset to empark this land.

In 1411 the population of Olney Hyde consisted of twelve customary tenants as well as freemen and cottagers (VCH 1927, 432, n69).

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there are references to the Hyde Field which was part of the Open Field System of the parish of Olney. Enclosure took place in 1767, and the present farmhouse dates from the nineteenth century. The farmhouse is situated some 500 m south of the medieval settlement (Fig. 1). To the east of the house a brickworks was established in the nineteenth century, and this continued in use until the early years of the present century. The field names *Clay Pit* and *Pasture Close at Brickfield*, situated to the west of the medieval settlement, are further confirmation of brickmaking in the area.

THE EXCAVATION

Introduction

Excavation took place for four weeks in August 1967, and for four weeks in September 1969.

In 1967 the work was to have been directed by Philip Mayes, but shortly before the proposed commencement date Mr Mayes was called upon to excavate the newly discovered multi-kiln site at Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire. Rather than cancel the Olney Hyde excavation, it was agreed to go ahead, with the author carrying out the work under the general guidance of Mr Mayes, who visited the site at weekly intervals.

The principal objectives of the excavation were to ascertain the extent of plough damage to the medieval levels on the site, and to excavate and record a pottery kiln and any associated structures. The area selected for excavation was part of a croft on the west side of the sunken roadway (see Fig. 1), and on the eastern side of the east hedge of Market Close, in the upper part of the Feoffee Close. Surface evidence in the form of numerous pottery wasters, and a general scatter of stone, suggested the former existence of a kiln and possibly an associated building. In 1965 Dr

Martin Aitken had carried out a geophysical survey of the area which suggested the presence of two kilns and several pits.

In 1967 a base line was established along the hedge dividing Market Hill Close and Feoffee Close and an area on the east side of this, 160 × 70 ft, was selected for excavation. The site was initially trial-trenched using a Drott mechanical digger with a 4 in 1 bucket. Once medieval surfaces had been located the total area was stripped mechanically to a level immediately above them, and the remainder of the topsoil was removed by hand (see Pl. IIIb).

Site recording was based on a grid of 10 ft squares numbered 1-16 north to south and A-G west to east. These 10 ft squares were each subdivided into four 5 ft squares, numbered 1-4 from top left to bottom right. Finds from the initial cleaning of the site were recorded by their grid location, until individual contexts had been identified.

The excavation (see Fig. 2) revealed traces of an 'L' shaped building, identified as a workshop and possibly also dwelling. To the south and east of the building were yard surfaces of limestone and pebbles, in which was located



Plate IIIa. Air photograph of the Olney Hyde area from the north, 1970. (D. C. Mynard)



Plate IIIb. General view of the 1967 excavation from the north.



Plate IVa. The stone-lined pit (F1) in the workshop.



Plate IVb. The pivot stone (F15), possibly the base of a potter's wheel.



Plate Va. Kiln 1 from the stoke hole.



Plate Vb. Kiln 1: side view of furnace chamber showing pedestal which supported the floor of the firing chamber.



Plate VIa. Kiln 1: detail of fill of furnace chamber, showing broken fire bar and crushed vessel.



Plate VIb. Kiln 2: detail of fill of furnace chamber showing pot sherds.



Plate VIIa. Kiln 2 in 1969, before excavation, with topsoil only removed showing stone scatter over kiln.



Plate VIIb. Kiln 2, 1969: photograph from the same position as VIIa showing the kiln after excavation.

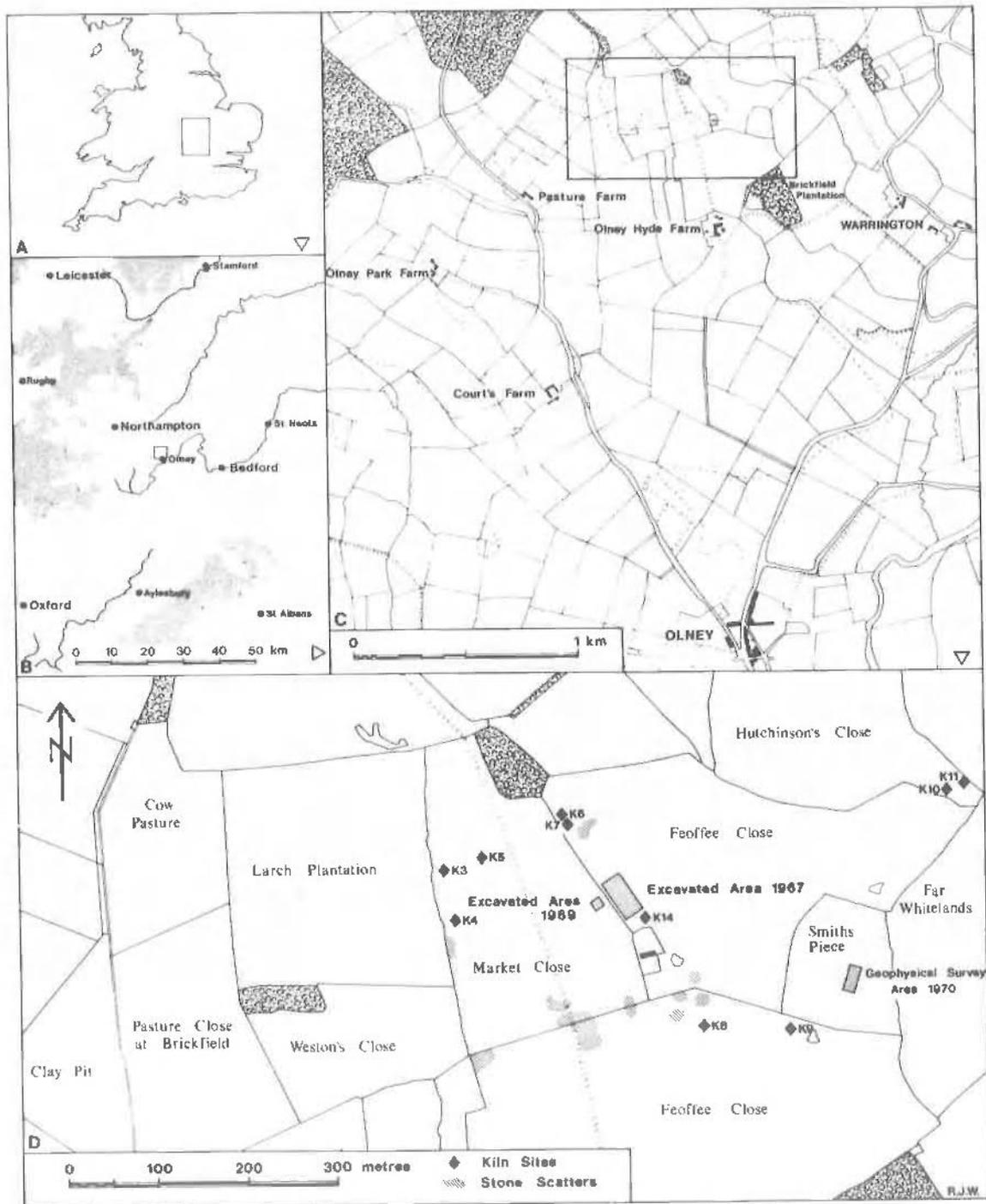


Fig. 1. Site Location. A: Great Britain. B: The Midlands. C: Olney area. D: Olney Hyde.

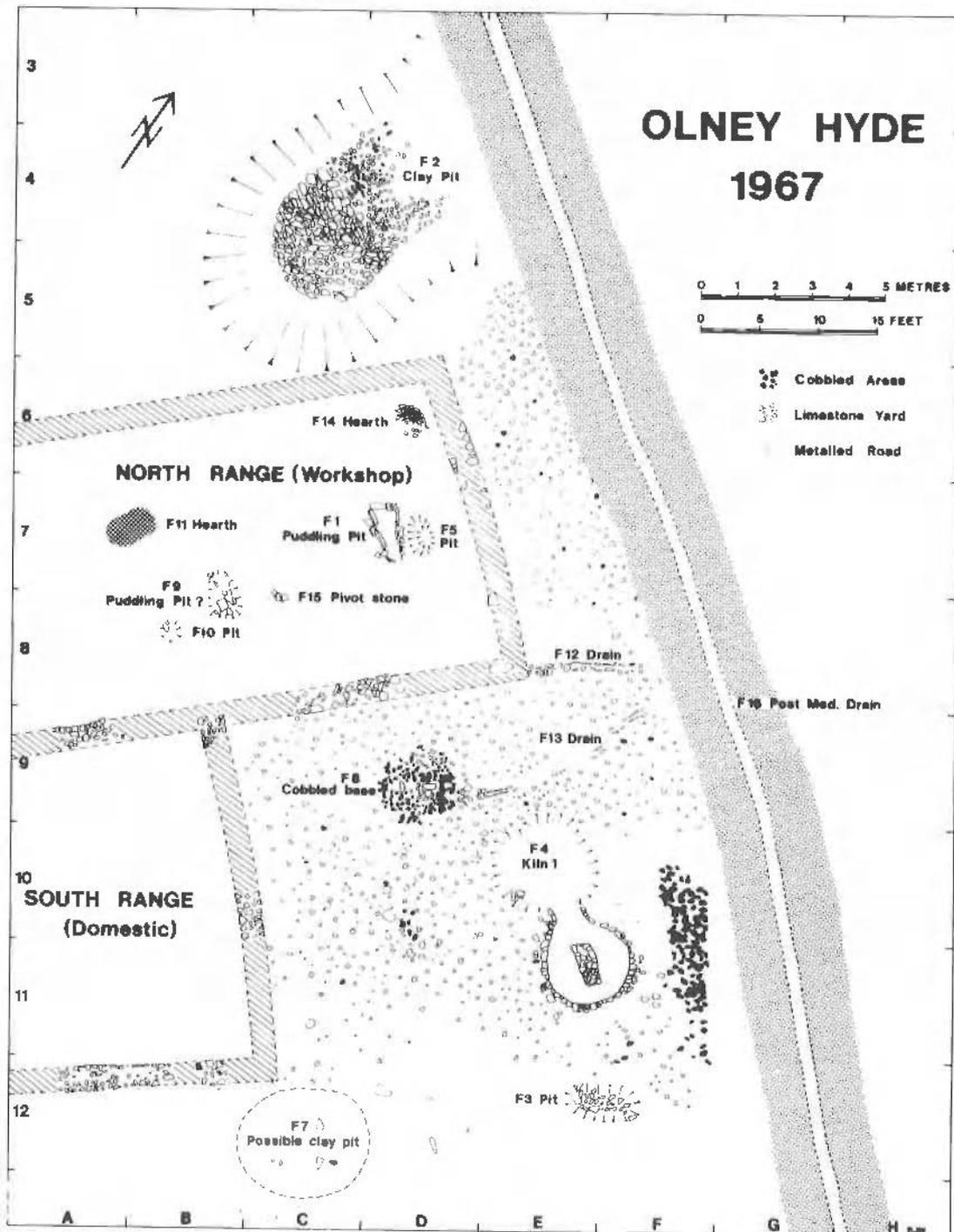


Fig. 2. Olney Hyde 1967: Excavation Plan.

Kiln 1, F4. To the north was a large oval clay pit, F2. The evidence recovered by excavation suggests four phases of activity.

Phase 1, twelfth-thirteenth century: represented by two pits F5 and F6 and sherds of 'A' ware in the floor of the south range of the building.

Phase 2, thirteenth-fifteenth century: the main period of use of the house, associated yards, and kilns.

Phase 3, fifteenth century: the period in which the croft ceased to be occupied and the house and kilns fell into disuse.

Phase 4, seventeenth-nineteenth century: represented by agricultural activities.

Phase 1, twelfth-thirteenth century

This represents the earliest recorded activity on the croft excavated. Only two sealed contexts of this date were located: F5, an oval pit 1.2 × 640 mm and 300 mm deep, situated in D/7/1-4 and sealed by the clay floor of the workshop; F6, a large pit c.2 m in diameter, at the south end of the site in C/16/1-4, not fully excavated and not shown on the site plan.

Both of these features contained sherds of 'A' ware pottery only. Pit F6 contained the pottery classified as Group 1 (Fig. 5, 1-23).

The only other context to produce 'A' ware pottery alone was the clay surface uncovered at the south end of the south range both internally and also immediately outside the building.

These features relate to an occupation phase predating the stone building. Had time allowed the total removal of the Phase 2 yards, more evidence of this early activity on the site might possibly have been revealed.

Phase 2, thirteenth-fifteenth century

This covers the main period of use of the building and pottery manufacture on the excavated croft. All excavated surfaces produced a mixture of both 'A' and 'B' wares,

which might suggest that the building and yards were in use during the production of both fabrics.

The building consisted of a north range aligned north east to south west, and a south range. The complete plan was not recovered, since the south west end was beyond the limits of the excavation. The following dimensions are all internal.

The north range was on average 8 m wide and more than 14 m in length. The south range was approximately 10 m in length and more than 6 m wide. Assuming that the south range ran from the south west end of the north range, and that it was of the same width (8 m) as the north range, then the latter would have been approximately 16 m in length. The walls of the building were of limestone, on average 600 mm thick, and were laid straight onto the natural clay. For the most part the walls had been robbed away or removed by plough damage, but what survived, together with the evidence of the floor and yard edges, is sufficient to allow a reconstruction of the building plan.

The north range is interpreted as a workshop, on the evidence of the internal features, which consisted of a Puddling Pit, F1, at the north end; a hearth, F14, in the north corner; a second hearth, F11; two other pits, F9 and F10; and a pivot stone, F15, possibly the base of a potter's wheel, set in the clay floor.

The Puddling Pit, F1 (Pl. IVa), was 200 mm deep, and the sides were lined with limestone slabs. It was 1.5 m long, aligned across the building, being 500 mm wide at the north west and tapering to only 300 mm wide at the south east end. Pit F9 was roughly oval in shape, 1.4 m × 900 mm, and 34 mm deep. At the bottom were several flat stones forming a base; this may also have been a puddling pit. Pit F10 was a shallow circular pit, 500 mm in diameter. The Hearth, F14, situated in the north corner of the workshop, was formed of limestone fragments set on edge, forming a circular base originally 1 m in diameter, which had been subjected to heavy burning. To the north of Pit F9, two fragments of limestone, F15, originally one but

fractured across a pivot hole (Pl. IVb), may represent a base for a potter's wheel, or a door pivot. The stone was originally 225 × 125 mm, and the pivot hole was 4 mm in diameter. To the south east of Kiln 1 an oval pit, F3, 2 × 1 m and 400 mm deep, contained a few limestone fragments and sherds of both 'A' and 'B' wares.

The south range contained no internal features.

The surfaces around the buildings, particularly on the east and south sides, were metalled with limestone fragments and the occasional pebble to form substantial yards particularly in the angle of the building. Set in this yard was Kiln 1, F4, and adjacent to it a circular patch of cobbles, F8, 2.2 m in diameter, which may have been a base on which fuel for the kiln was stacked, or merely a patching up of the yard where it was subsiding into an earlier feature.

There was not sufficient time to remove the yard surfaces, which were sectioned and found to be on average 100-200 mm in depth. Two stone-lined drains ran across the yard to the medieval road. The first, F12, ran from the east corner of the north range, and the second, F13, ran from F8, adjacent to the stoke hole of Kiln 1. The road into which these drains carried water ran on a north-south alignment along the eastern boundary of the excavated croft. It was on average 2.75 m wide, and consisted mainly of heavily weathered small limestone rubble.

At the north end of the platform a large pit, F2, 6 × 8 m and 1.5 m deep, was probably a clay pit which later served as a pond. The pit had steep sloping sides on the south, east, and west, with a gentle sloping entry on the north east from the roadway.

Immediately to the south of the south range, an area of the yard surface consisted of larger stone fragments and pottery wasters which appeared to be sinking into an underlying feature, F7, which may also have been a clay pit. The limited resources available did not allow further investigation of this.

The 1969 excavation concentrated solely on Kiln 2, situated on the same croft but over the hedge to the west of the area excavated in 1967. Kiln 2 was located by a dense concentration of pottery sherds. An area 20 ft square was marked out over this scatter, and a proton magnetometer survey carried out by Bradford University clearly identified the site as that of a single-flue circular kiln. The excavation was limited to the area surveyed, and work took place for four weeks in September.

The Kilns

Both kilns were of single-flue updraught type, roughly circular in plan with a central rectangular pedestal, and each was constructed in a pit dug into the natural clay subsoil. The stoke hole of Kiln 1 was to the north west whilst that of Kiln 2 was to the south east.

Kiln 1 (Fig. 3 and Pls. Va & b)

The furnace area of the kiln was constructed in a pit 450 mm deep and roughly 2.70 m in diameter. The pit was lined with a battered stone wall, reducing the diameter to c.2.30 m. The walling continued into the mouth of the kiln, 750 mm wide, but not into the stoke hole. In the centre of the kiln was constructed a rectangular stone pedestal, to support the floor of the firing chamber above. The pedestal (Pl. Vb), built of limestone rubble of up to eight courses in height and battered towards the top, was 1.45 m long, 500 mm wide at the base, narrowing to 370 mm at the top, and 500 mm high.

There was no evidence surviving to suggest that the sides of the kiln and pedestal had been rendered with clay. The surviving kiln bars (Pl. VIa), c.150 mm in diameter, were roughly made from small branches covered with a layer of clay. The bars ran from the side wall of the kiln to the pedestal and did not appear to have been attached in any way. The stoke hole was a simple pit of similar depth to the kiln and 3 m in diameter. The side furthest away from the kiln was sloped to provide easy access for firing.

Kiln 2 (Fig. 4 and Pls. VIIa & b)

This was of similar construction to Kiln 1, but the furnace was roughly oval and the stoke

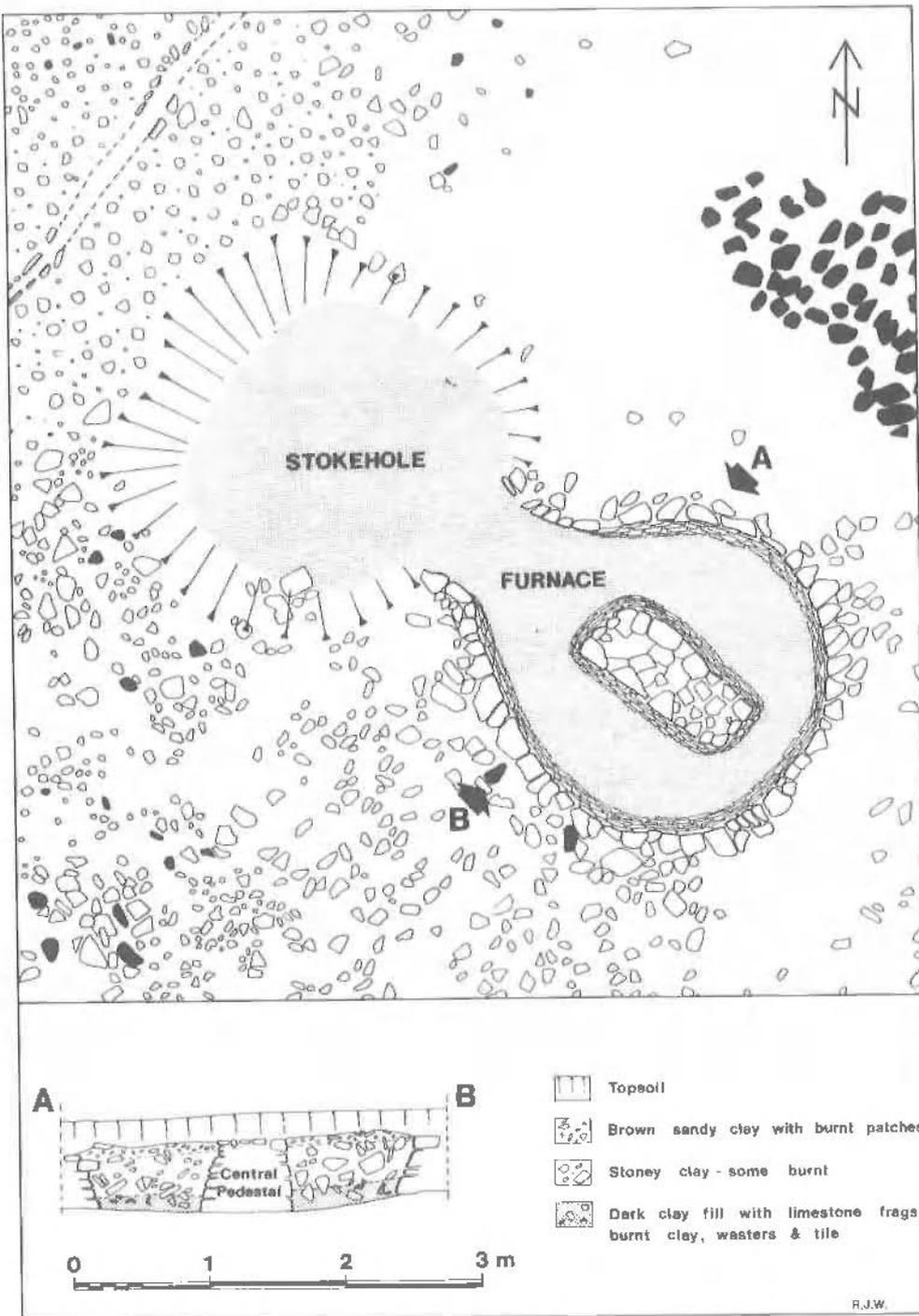


Fig. 3. Olney Hyde 1967: Kiln 1.

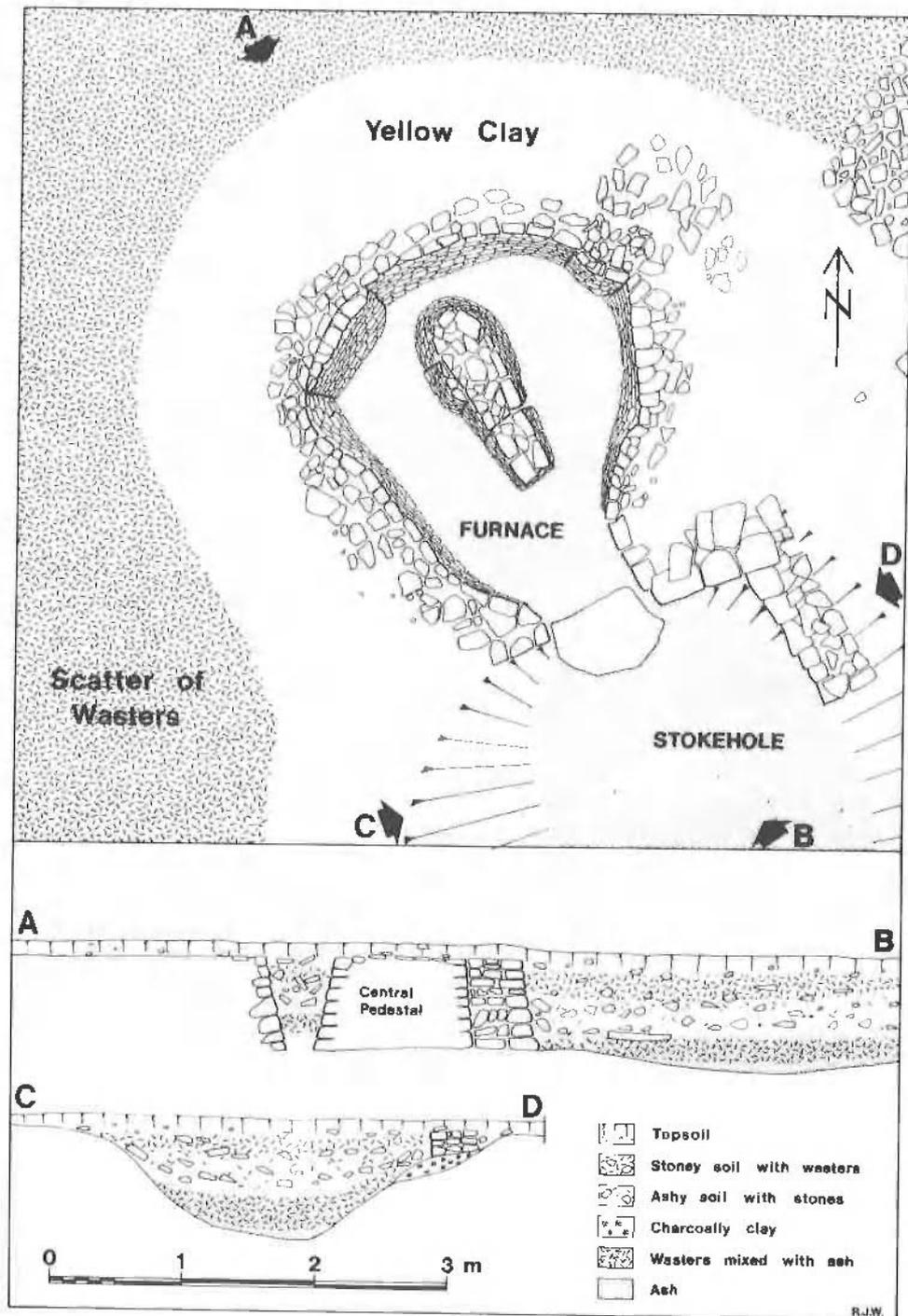


Fig. 4. Olney Hyde 1969: Kiln 2.

hole was partly enclosed by a stone wall on the north east side. The kiln showed signs of considerable use, since the stone lining of the furnace chamber had been patched with new stone in two places, where it had perished due to continual firing. The pedestal also had a patch on one side, and had been rebuilt and extended towards the stoke hole.

The dimensions of the furnace pit were originally 3 m long by 2.85 m wide, reduced to 2.8 × 2.2 m with the construction of the stone lining; the depth was 550 mm. The pedestal, originally 940 mm long, was extended to 1.4 m; it was 550 mm high and 600 mm wide at its base, narrowing to 400 mm at the top. The mouth of the furnace chamber was 600 mm wide, and a large slab of limestone had been placed on the floor of the stoke hole at this point. The stoke hole, roughly 3.8 m wide, was not completely excavated. On the north east side, the stoke hole was enclosed by a stone wall, on average 400 mm wide, and surviving to a height of four courses, 220 mm. The flat stone at the mouth of the furnace chamber was not a primary feature, being laid on a layer of ash and pottery sherds. Similarly, the wall around the north east side of the stoke hole was built on a layer of charcoal and clay which had been placed against the original edge. A fragment of ridge tile, type 3, had been built into this wall.

The fill of both kilns was similar. The stoke holes contained layers of charcoal, ash, and potsherds, above which was stone rubble, and potsherds in burnt soil.

The furnace areas both contained collapsed

kiln bars, broken pots and burnt stone rubble (Pl. VIb), suggesting that each kiln had been finally abandoned when the floor of the firing chamber had collapsed.

Phase 3, fifteenth century

All activity on the site probably ceased after the last firing of the kilns. Both kilns appear to have collapsed during firing and to have been subsequently abandoned after any whole vessels had been rescued.

The date of their products is late fourteenth to early fifteenth century.

Three features, F1 (the Puddling Pit), F2 (the Clay Pit), and F7 (?a Clay Pit), contained wasters and destruction material in the form of limestone rubble, and were presumably filled in after the abandonment of the house and workshop.

Phase 4, sixteenth-nineteenth century

A few finds, mainly ironwork and potsherds, found in the topsoil over the site, are considered to be the product of agricultural activity. The roadway running up the east side of the croft apparently remained in use up to the eighteenth century, since finds of this date were discovered on its surface.

At some time in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, perhaps as a result of enclosure in 1767, a stone-lined drain was inserted down the centre of the sunken roadway. This drain contained pottery, two horse-shoes, and a halfpenny of George III, first issue 1770-5.

THE POTTERY

Introduction

Fieldwork prior to excavation on the site produced sherds of two basic pottery fabrics from at least fourteen potential kiln sites (see Fig. 1D). The two fabrics, classified as 'A' ware and 'B' ware, are described below.

'A' Wares

The fabric contains plentiful small limestone

grits which have the appearance of shell. The surface colour is generally a buff-pink with a reduced grey core, although occasionally it is completely oxidised (pink) or reduced (grey). The surfaces are often quite smooth to the touch. This fabric was not produced in Kilns 1 or 2 but was found associated with the earlier, Phase 1, occupation of the croft on which the kilns were located.

Fieldwork during the winter of 1967-8 located a heavy surface scatter of 'A' ware sherds some 270 m to the south east of the 1967 excavation, in a field called 'Smith's Piece' (see Fig. 1D). Subsequent geophysical survey of this area confirmed the presence of the remains of two circular single-flue kilns, which were given the numbers K12 and K13.

'B' Wares

These are harder fired and contain much less limestone than 'A' wares. The surfaces are coarser to the touch and there is a higher proportion of oxidised vessels, the general colour being a brownish red with a grey core. Some vessels contain no limestone at all and are in a brighter red-brown sandy fabric. This fabric was produced by both Kilns 1 and 2, and was used for both pottery vessels and roof tiles.

Study and Analysis

The pottery consists of five groups, four being from the excavation and the fifth being surface material from the 'A' ware kiln sites.

The five groups are:

('A' ware)

Group 1: surface finds, sites K12 and K13.

Group 2: residual material, 1967 excavation, (Phase 2).

Group 3: pit group F6, 1967 excav. (Phase 1).

('B' ware)

Group 4: products of Kiln 1, 1967 excavation (Phases 2 and 3).

Group 5: products of Kiln 2, 1969 excavation (Phase 3).

Each group was manually sorted into the three most common vessel types, Jug, Bowl, and Cooking Pot. Rims and handles were easily sorted, but wall sherds and bases required more attention since the difference between Jug and Cooking Pot was not always obvious. This left a residue of unidentified pieces, mainly from minority types of vessels. The estimated maximum numbers of each type of vessel were established by sorting the sherds and combining those that joined together or were apparently from the same vessel. No group was so large that this method was not considered practical.

The next stage of analysis was to establish a type series (see Fig. 5) of the main types of rim form, jug handles, and body decoration. The type series is fairly simple, and has been established after considerable experience of handling medieval pottery and that of other periods. It attempts to define the basic types of rim form, jug handle, body decoration, and finishing treatment that are present in the pottery from Olney Hyde. Sections through the rims of medieval pots show a wide variety of shapes, often several on the same vessel, all of which derive from the varying pressure of the potter's hand and the consistency of the clay.

The basic Bowl and Cooking Pot rims identified in the type series can be further subdivided by the three main variations, A with an internal hollow, B undercut externally, or C which is both A and B. Not all the possible variations are present at Olney.

The jug handles were mainly of strap type, either plain or with single or double grooves running down them, and there were few rod handles. The three finishing treatments were both functional and decorative:

1. Stabbing: served mainly to open the clay to allow even drying and reduce cracking during firing.
2. Thumbing: functional when, at the junction of the handle and body, large thumb impressions smoothed the handle clay over the body, creating a better join; decorative where thumb impressions ran down the sides of the handle.
3. Vertical knife slashing: seems mainly to be decorative, but would, like stabbing, also serve to open the clay and prevent cracking.

One type of handle was peculiar to 'B' ware and was apparently only produced in Kiln 2. This is type 5, which is a single-grooved strap handle that has been squeezed together to close the groove except at the top of the handle.

Body decoration consisted of rouletted impressions (types 1-3), strips of clay added to the body (type 4), or incised horizontal lines (type 5). The following tables show the percen-

	COOKING POT RIMS	NORMAL	VARIATIONS		
			A	B	C
1	ROUNDED				
2	BEVELLED				—
3	SQUARED				
4	FLANGED		—	—	—
5	BIFID		—	—	—
6	PLAIN		—	—	—
7	TRIANGULAR			—	—
8	HEAVY ROUNDED		—	—	—
	BOWL RIMS				
1	PLAIN		—	—	—
2	THICKENED		—	—	—
3	ROUNDED		—	—	—
4	FLANGED				
5	TRIANGULAR			—	—

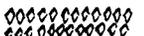
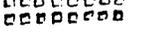
	JUG HANDLES	SECTION PROFILE	FINISHING TREATMENT		
			A	B	C
1	STRAP		✓	✓	✓
2	STRAP WITH SINGLE GROOVE		✓	✓	—
3	STRAP WITH DOUBLE GROOVE		—	✓	—
4	ROD		✓	✓	—
5	STRAP WITH SINGLE CLOSED GROOVE		—	—	—
	DECORATION				
1	ROULETTED NOTCHES				
2	ROULETTED DIAMONDS				
3	ROULETTED SQUARES				
4	FINGER/THUMB IMPRESSIONS				
5	INCISED HORIZONTAL GROOVES				

Fig. 5. Olney Hyde: Vessel Rim, Handle and Decoration Type Series.

tages of the decorative types within each group. For Groups 4 and 5, only the material recovered from the firing chambers of the kilns has been used for statistical analysis. This is because each kiln appeared to have collapsed during firing and to have been abandoned after the complete vessels in the load had been rescued. The firing chambers were therefore considered to be safer contexts on which to base statistical analysis than the stoke holes, which contained some sherds deposited during the life of the kiln, but which were largely filled with wasters after the kiln had gone out of use.

Statistics for material from the kiln stoke holes and other large contexts are preserved within the site archive at the Buckinghamshire County Museum.

Table 1. Percentages of vessel types in each group.

	'A' WARES			'B' WARES	
	1 (140)	2 (866)	3 (55)	4 (1044)	5 (565)
Cook Pot	57.8	51.0	41.8	4.4	0.7
Bowl	22.8	31.6	20.0	14.1	7.6
Jug	12.8	16.0	23.6	65.8	91.1
Decorated vessels	5.7	1.0	12.7	14.4	0.2
Pipkin	—	0.2	—	0.1	—
Fish Dish	—	—	1.8	0.3	—
Lid	—	—	—	0.2	0.1
Storage Jar	0.7	—	—	—	—
Lamp	—	—	—	—	—
Bottle	—	—	—	0.1	—
Bunghole pitcher	—	—	—	—	—
Money box	—	—	—	0.1	—
Curfew	—	—	—	0.1	—
Chimney pot	—	—	—	0.1	—
Mortar	—	—	—	0.1	—

Table 2. Percentages of rim, handle and decoration types in each group.

	'A' WARE			'B' WARE	
	1	2	3	4	5
Cook Pot Rims					
1	3.7	38.0	39.1	—	—
1a	12.3	27.3	30.4	—	—
1b	13.5	14.2	4.3	—	—
1c	1.2	—	26.0	—	—
2	3.7	3.8	—	—	—
2a	2.4	1.8	—	—	—
2b	2.4	—	—	—	—
3	4.9	4.2	—	—	—
3a	—	7.6	—	—	—
3b	1.2	0.4	—	—	—
3c	1.2	—	—	—	—
4	7.4	2.0	—	—	—
4a	4.9	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	32.4	50.0
6	—	—	—	29.7	50.0
7, 7a	examples from Kiln 2 Stoke Hole				
8	—	—	—	37.8	—
Bowl Rims					
1	81.2	62.2	36.3	—	—
2	2.4	21.8	9.0	—	—
3	2.4	15.6	27.2	—	—
4	2.4	—	27.2	7.6	100.0
4a	—	—	—	0.8	—
4b	2 from Kiln 2 Stoke Hole				
4c	—	—	—	21.3	—
5	—	—	—	70.0	—
Jug Handles					
1	—	21.5	20.0	0.3	46.3
1a	46.6	2.5	40.0	—	—
1ab	26.6	—	—	—	—
1bc	6.6	—	—	—	—
2	13.3	59.4	—	96.7	51.2
2a	—	7.5	—	0.9	1.8
2ab	—	2.5	20.0	—	—
2b	—	5.0	—	0.3	—
3	—	—	—	0.3	0.6
3a	—	1.2	—	0.3	—
3b	6.6	—	20.0	0.3	—
4a	—	—	—	0.3	—
4b	—	—	—	0.3	—
Decoration					
1	—	44.4	—	—	—
2	—	55.5	28.5	—	—
3	50.0	—	14.2	2.5	—
4	50.0	—	57.1	12.5	—
5	—	—	—	85.0	100.0

Catalogue of the Illustrated Pottery

B, Bowl; CP, Cooking Pot; D., Decorated; Ht, Height; J, Jug; JH, Jug Handle; SJ, Storage Jar. All measurements in mm.

'A' WARE GROUP 1 (Fig. 6)

No.	Form	Type	Diam.	Ht.	Context
1	CP	1b	200		Surface finds (1-23)
2	CP	1b	240		
3	CP	1b	180		
4	CP	1c	220		
5	CP	3	230		
6	CP	3a	220		
7	CP	3a	200		
8	CP	3c	220		
9	CP	2a	260		
10	CP	2b	180		
11	CP	4	220		
12	CP	7	180		
13	B	3, D.4	380		
14	B	3, D.4	340		
15	B	3, D.4	240		
16	SJ	3, D.4	380		
17	JH	1a	—		
18	JH	1bc	—		
19	JH	1ab	—		
20	JH	1ab	—		
21	JH	2	—		
22	JH	3b	—		
23	J	—	120		

'A' WARE GROUP 3 (Fig. 7)

24	CP	1	121	107	Pit F6 (24-34)
25	CP	1	170	—	
26	CP	1a	260	—	
27	CP	1b	240	—	
28	CP	1c	220	—	
29	CP	1a	340	—	
30	B	1	320	—	
31	B	3	480	—	
32	B	4	198	—	
33	FD	—	202	—	
34	JH	1	—	—	
35	JH	1a	—	—	
36	JH	2ab	—	—	
37	D.	3	—	—	
38	D.	3	—	—	
39	D.	2	—	—	
40	D.	4	—	—	
41	J	—	90	—	
42	J	—	120	—	
43	J	—	100	—	

'B' WARE GROUP 4 (Figs. 8-11)

No.	Form	Type	Diam.	Ht.	Context
44	CP	5	190		K1, firing chamber
45	CP	5, D.3	230		K1, firing chamber
46	CP	5	178		Clay pit F7 upper fill
47	CP	6	228		K1 firing chamber
48	CP	6	163		K1 firing chamber
49	CP	7	135		K1 firing chamber
50	CP	7	180		K1 stoke hole
51	CP	7	260		K1 stoke hole
52	CP	7, D.4	258		K1 stoke hole
53	CP	7, D.4	256		K1 stoke hole
54	CP	7	230		K1 stoke hole
55	CP	8	202		Clay pit F7 upper fill
56	B	4a	408	c140	K1 firing chamber
57	B	4	258	c72	K1 firing chamber
58	B	4a	410		K1 firing chamber
59	B	4a, D.4	410		K1 firing chamber
60	B	4	282		K1 stoke hole
61	B	4	225	c60	K1 firing chamber
62	B	4a	163	35	K1 firing chamber
63	B	5	380		K1 stoke hole
64	B	5	255	c85	K1 firing chamber
65	B	1	204	c52	K1 stoke hole
66	J	—	102	272	K1 firing chamber
67	J	Handle 2	110	210	K1 firing chamber
68	J	Handle 2	95	c180	K1 firing chamber
69	J	D.5	—	—	K1 stoke hole
70	J	D.3	98	—	K1 firing chamber
71	JH	2			K1 firing chamber
72	JH	2			K1 firing chamber
73	JH	2a			K1 firing chamber
74	JH	2ab			K1 firing chamber
75	JH	3			K1 firing chamber
76	JH	3a			K1 firing chamber
77	JH	2b			K1 stoke hole
78	JH	4a			K1 stoke hole
79	JH	4b			Clay pit/pond F2
80	Lid	D.3	224	c140	Waste heap by K1
81	Lid		151	c87	Clay pit F7
82	Lid	D.3	101	c85	Topsoil
83	Bottle		81		Clay pit F7
84	Bottle		85		Clay pit F7
85	Bottle		54		Clay pit F7
86	?		78		Clay pit F7
87	Lamp		76		Clay pit F7
88	Lamp				Waste heap by K1
89	Handle	—	—	—	K1 firing chamber
90	Foot	—	—	—	Clay pit F7
91	Foot				?
92	Dish	D.4			K1 firing chamber
93	Mortar		120		On road surface F9
94	Money Box		c177	c170	K1 firing chamber
95	Chimney Pot	—	140	—	K1 firing chamber

96	Chimney Pot		183 104	Topsoil
97	B + side handle	D.4	308	K1 firing chamber
98	Basket handle	D.4	230	K1 firing chamber
99	Curfew	D.4	c400	c175 Waste heap by K1

'B' WARE GROUP 5 (Figs. 12-13)

No.	Form	Type	Diam.	Ht.	Context
100	CP	5	178	70	K2 firing chamber
101	Lid	—	170	70	K2 firing chamber
102	Knob	—	—	—	K2 firing chamber
103	CP	6	175	153	K2 firing chamber
104	CP	7a	160	—	K2 stoke hole
105	B	4	480	—	K2 firing chamber
106	B	4	260	—	K2 firing chamber
107	B	4b	400	—	K2 stoke hole
108	B	4b	222	—	K2 stoke hole
109	B	4	380	—	K2 stoke hole
110	J	Handle 3	108	277	K2 firing chamber
111	J	Handle 6	95	202	K2 firing chamber
112	J	D.4	115	—	K2 stoke hole
113	JH	2	115	—	K2 firing chamber
114	JH	2a	—	—	K2 firing chamber
115	JH	3	—	—	K2 firing chamber
116	JH	1	—	—	K2 firing chamber
117	JH	5	—	—	K2 firing chamber
118	JH	5	—	—	K2 firing chamber
119	JH	5	—	—	K2 firing chamber
120	Bunghole	—	—	—	K2 stoke hole

Discussion of 'A' Ware
(Groups 1-3, Figs. 6-7)

Group 1 was collected from the ploughed field surface on the site of K12 and K13. Group 2 is from the Phase 1 contexts in the area excavated in 1967, as is Group 3, which has been recorded separately since it was a pit group from Pit F6.

All three groups were individually sorted to provide the statistical analysis given in Tables 1 and 2. The principal products were bowls, cooking pots, and jugs. In the three 'A' ware groups the cooking pot was the most common form of vessel, next the bowl, whilst jugs represented only a small proportion of the vessels. All vessels appear to be wheel thrown.

The average cooking pot rims were 200 mm in diameter (nos. 1-12); the small example,

no. 24, was unusual. The majority of cooking pot rims were simple everted thickened types with rounded profiles, type CP1. Only two complete profiles, cooking pot no. 24 and dish no. 33, were recovered.

Bowls ranged in diameter from 240 to 480 mm, and the majority of the rims were simple, type B1 (no. 30) or B2 (no. 31), but some, mainly examples with small flanges, type B3 (nos. 13-15), had thumb impressions around the outer edge.

The jug handles were either curved straps, type 1 (nos. 17-20 and 34-5), or had single or double grooves running down them, type 2 (no. 21) and type 3 (no. 22). Decoration on the handles consisted of thumbing down the edges and random stabbing. Sherds nos. 37-8 were from jug bodies near the base of the handle and have applied thumb-decorated strips which are a continuation of thumbing running down the handles.

Decoration was limited to a small proportion of the sherds examined, and consisted of finger or thumb impressions around the rims of bowls (nos. 13-15), on the bodies of storage jars (no. 16) and jugs (nos. 37-8), and running down jug handles (nos. 18-20, 22, 36). Decoration on the handles ranged from individual impressions (nos. 18-20) to 'fluting' or overlapping impressions (no. 22). The latter could equally have been made with a round-sectioned wooden or metal object. Stabbing appeared to have been effected with a pointed instrument or with the top of a knife blade.

There was also some rouletted decoration on jug body sherds which consisted of horizontal lines running around the body. There were three types: fine rouletted notches (not ill.), rouletted diamonds (no. 39), and squares (no. 40).

Dating

'A' ware, by analogy with its fabric, forms, and decorative technique, can be placed within the wide range of wares called 'Developed St Neots wares'.

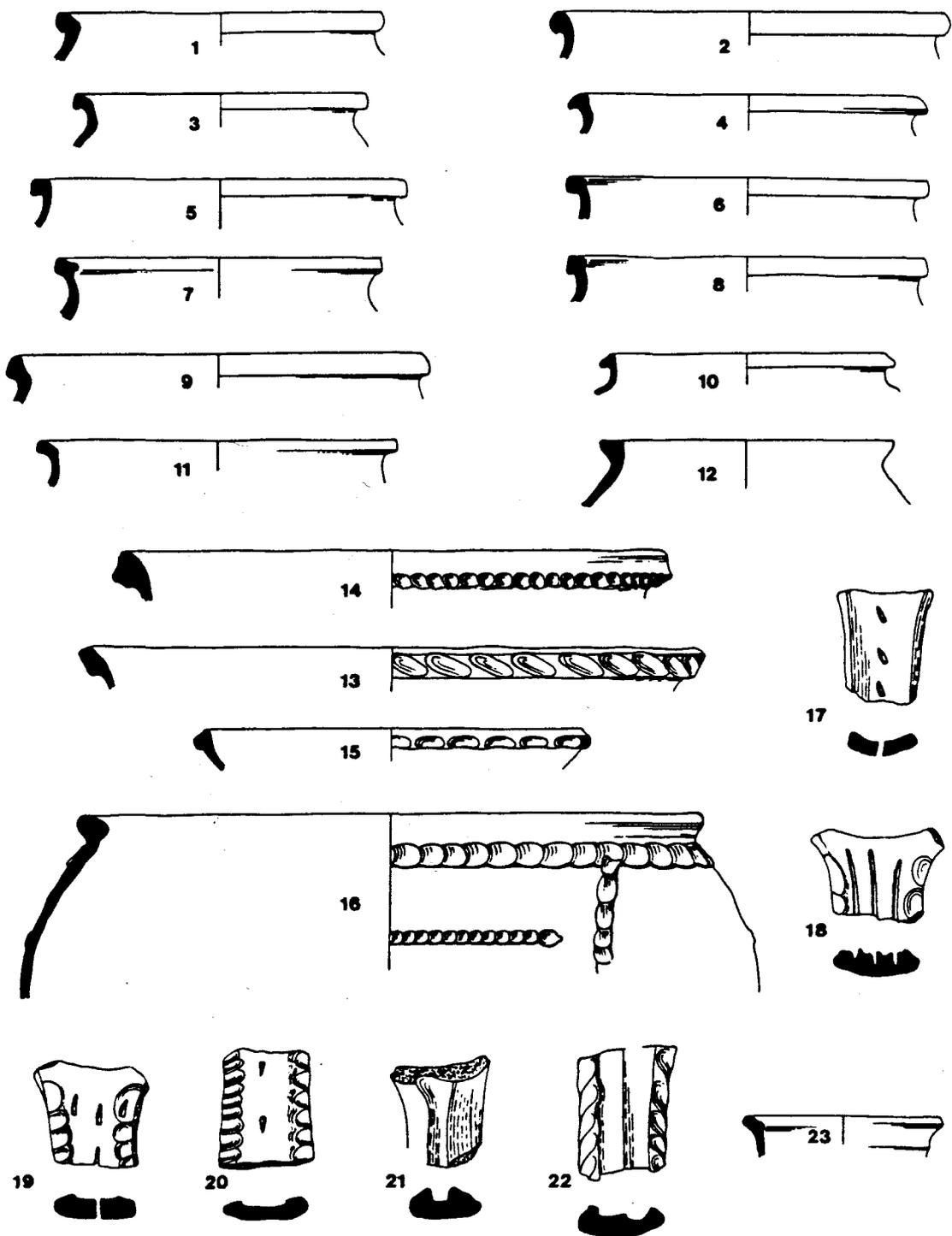


Fig. 6. 'A' Ware Group 1, 1-23 Surface finds from the site of Kilns 12 and 13 (1:4).

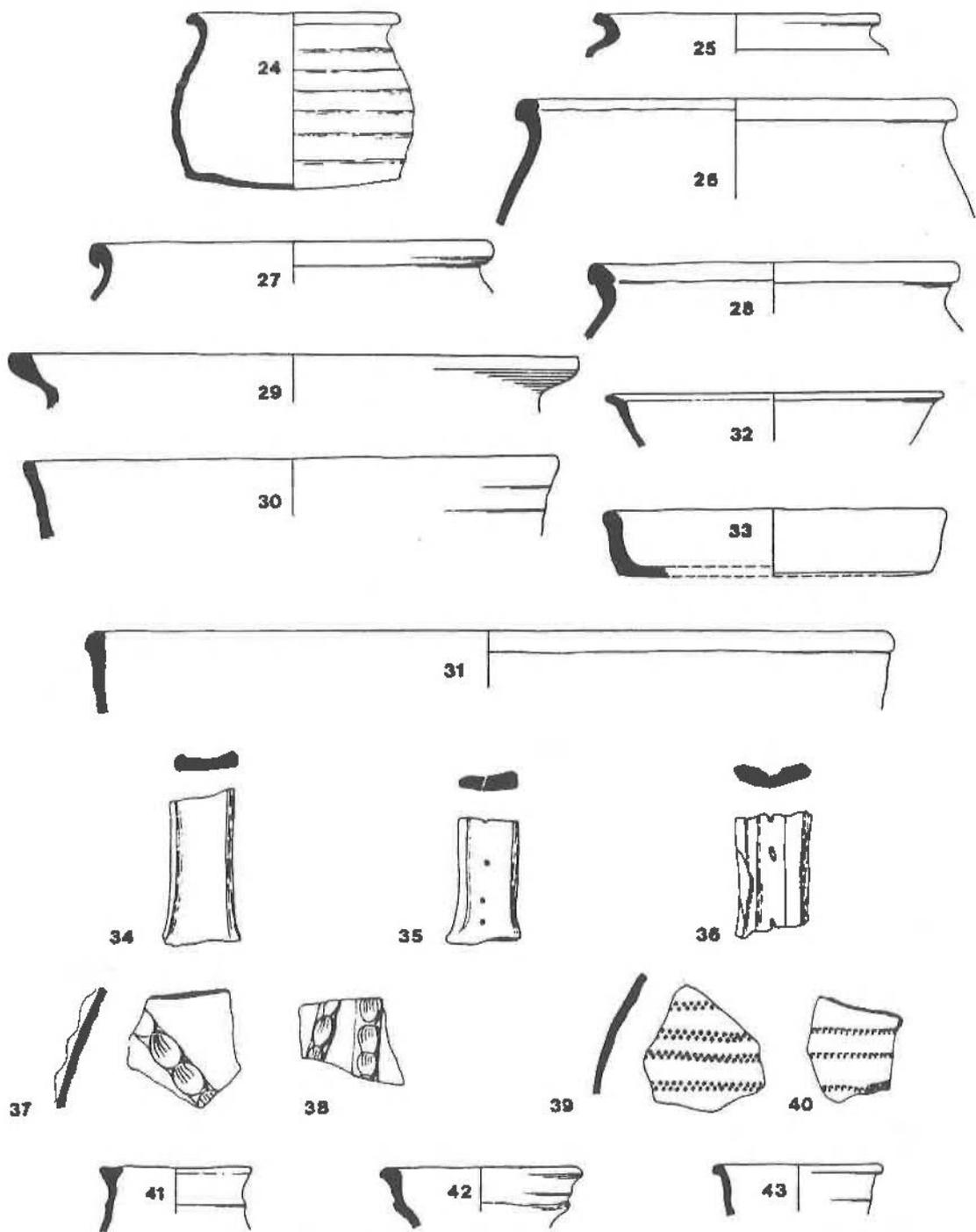


Fig. 7. 'A' Ware Group 3, 24-43 Pottery from Pit F6 (1:4).

It is clearly related to pottery from both Bedford and Northampton, which are market centres that one might expect Olney Hyde products to reach.

Bedford fabrics B5, B8, and B11 (Baker and Hassall 1979, 167-71) were compared with 'A' ware; none of these wares, however, are exactly paralleled at Olney. Bedford B5 is a very similar fabric to 'A' ware, but the vessel forms and decoration are paralleled in the pottery probably produced at Harrold (Hall 1972). This similarity is noted by Baker and Hassall (1979, 167), but I would suggest that Olney Hyde is unlikely to be the source of Bedford B5.

B8 is also unlikely to have been produced at Olney, since vessels in this ware at Bedford (Baker and Hassall 1979, Fig. 113, 370-385) are in traditional St Neots ware forms, with spouted bowls and inturned rims that are not found at Olney. Bedford B11 is similar to Olney 'A' ware, but the forms present at Bedford, particularly the cooking pot rims (nos. 33 and 440), are characteristic of the products of Lyveden, Northants (Steane 1967, Fig. 4, a-f, Fig. 5, g; Bryant and Steane 1969, Fig. 10a), and the thin band of rouletted decoration on the lower body of jug no. 441 is not found on any examples from Olney.

Whilst it seems therefore unlikely that Olney Hyde 'A' ware was traded as far as Bedford, it is quite possible that it was, and that amongst the mass of calcite-gritted shelly wares found there it is just not recognisable. In fact, the basic rim forms of the Olney Hyde vessels and the body decoration types are so common that they occur throughout most of the similar wares at Bedford.

A publication describing pottery from recent excavations in Northampton (McCarthy 1976) dealt with Saxo-Norman calcite-gritted wares only superficially. The problem of precise identification of wares from several centres was not tackled owing to 'the difficulty which sometimes arises in distinguishing the product of one kiln from those of another' (McCarthy 1976, 156). Olney Hyde ware was therefore included by McCarthy under the heading 'T2',

which also covered the products of Harrold (Beds), and Lyveden and Stanion (Northants). The date range for T2 is given as 1100-1400, and whilst the report publishes close parallels to the Olney forms (e.g., the Pit Group, nos. 78-107, from House 1), it does not provide close dating evidence for Olney Hyde products.

The 'A' ware forms from Olney are readily recognised as common thirteenth century types. The absence of St Neots types such as the spouted bowl with inturned rim, and the developed nature of the cooking pot rims, makes it likely that the pottery is not earlier than the latter part of the twelfth century. Similarly, there is apparently nothing at Olney of fourteenth century date.

A general date range from the mid twelfth to the late thirteenth century therefore seems most likely.

Discussion of 'B' Ware Group 4 (Figs. 8-11)

Group 4 consists of the products of Kiln 1 and is made up of vessels from that kiln, from a nearby waste heap, from the fill of the clay pit F7, and from several other contexts.

The principal products of kiln 1 were jugs (65.8%), bowls (14.1%), cooking pots (4.4%), and decorated sherds (14.4%). One jug (no. 66) had anthropomorphic decoration in the form of a face mask applied to the rim. The pottery was well made, and the following remarks apply to both groups 4 and 5.

Jugs were wheel thrown, with clear throwing marks often visible both internally and externally. Excess clay was trimmed off with a knife towards the base, which is normally sagging. The jug rims were thickened and the top edge was probably trimmed off with a knife. Most jugs had a simple pulled out lip for pouring; in one instance the lip was close to the handle and not opposite it.

The jug handles were made of a simple strip of clay, pushed on to the body and secured by thumb presses at the base both inside and out; the top and bottom junctions were then

smoothed over the body. A common feature of all jug rims were four finger impressions on the inside of the vessel at the upper junction of the handle; the two leading fingers created a deeper impression, from which it can be seen whether left or right hand had been used. The small size of the finger marks confirms that children assisted in the manufacture. Tests carried out at Thornton Convent when sorting the pottery showed that girls of ages nine to eleven had fingers of the same size as those that made the finger marks. Jug handles were 'decorated' with stabbing and thumb impressions, the latter normally at the base. Both techniques were a necessary part of the production technique rather than being purely decorative.

Jugs were of three sizes, large (no. 66), medium (no. 67), and small (no. 68), and were squat and heavy in appearance, although one vessel (no. 69) was more globular. Decoration where present consisted of rouletting (type 3), or incised grooves (type 5), and was restricted to the upper body. The handles were applied after the body had been decorated, the decoration running under the handle and being visible on several body sherds from which the handle had become detached. The jug handles were mainly of type 2 (single-groove) and type 3 (double-groove), although there were a few rod handles (type 4).

Cooking pots were also wheel thrown. The bifid rims (nos. 45-6) were made by adding an internal flange (see no. 45). The cooking pots had three basic rim forms, the most common being type 7 (nos. 49-55). The vessels ranged from small examples (no. 49, diam. 135 mm, which was presumably globular in shape) to large examples (e.g., no. 52, diam. 258 mm), which often had an applied strip of clay around the neck, with heavy thumb impressions. The next most common rim was type 5 (nos. 44-6), the late medieval bifid type which is clearly designed to take a lid. Several of these had heavy thumb-decorated strips around the neck. A minority of the cooking pots had simple thickened rims, type 6 (nos. 47-8).

Bowls were wheel thrown, and some rims

were simple plain examples, type 1 (no. 65), but the majority were thickened and triangular in section, type 5 (nos. 63-4); the remainder had pulled out flanges, type 4 (nos. 56-62). Several almost complete bowl profiles were recovered; most examples had heavy knife trimming towards the sagging base. A small proportion of the bowl rims had thumb impressions around the outer edge (see no. 59).

A wide range of other vessel types was found, such as lids for the bifid rim cooking pots (nos. 80-2), bottles (nos. 83-5), lamps (nos. 87-8), handles (no. 89), tripod feet (nos. 90-1, presumably from pipkins), shallow dishes (no. 92), a mortar (no. 93), a money box (no. 94), a chimney pot (no. 96), bowls with side handles (no. 97) and basket handles (no. 98), and a curfew (no. 99). Whilst these vessels represent only a small minority of the kiln's products they illustrate the skill of the potters and the wide range of vessels available.

Dating

The 'B' ware fabric has no precise parallel at Bedford or Northampton, or from the recent large-scale excavations on medieval sites in Milton Keynes.

The products of Kiln 1, particularly the bifid cooking pot rims and the proportionally small number of cooking pots in relation to other vessels, suggest a late medieval date. On the other hand, there are no bunghole pitchers and the bowls still tend towards the medium-depth medieval pancheon. Many aspects of the pottery, such as the rouletted decoration, the applied thumb-strip decoration and the anthropomorphic decoration, are in the full medieval tradition, and a date range from the early to late fourteenth century is suggested.

Discussion of 'B' Ware Group 5 (Figs. 12-13)

The products of Kiln 2 are like those of Kiln 1 in that the techniques are similar, but the range of vessels is much less extensive. The swing from cooking pots to jugs is more heavily marked, the proportions being jugs 91.1%, bowls 7.6%, and cooking pots only 0.7%.

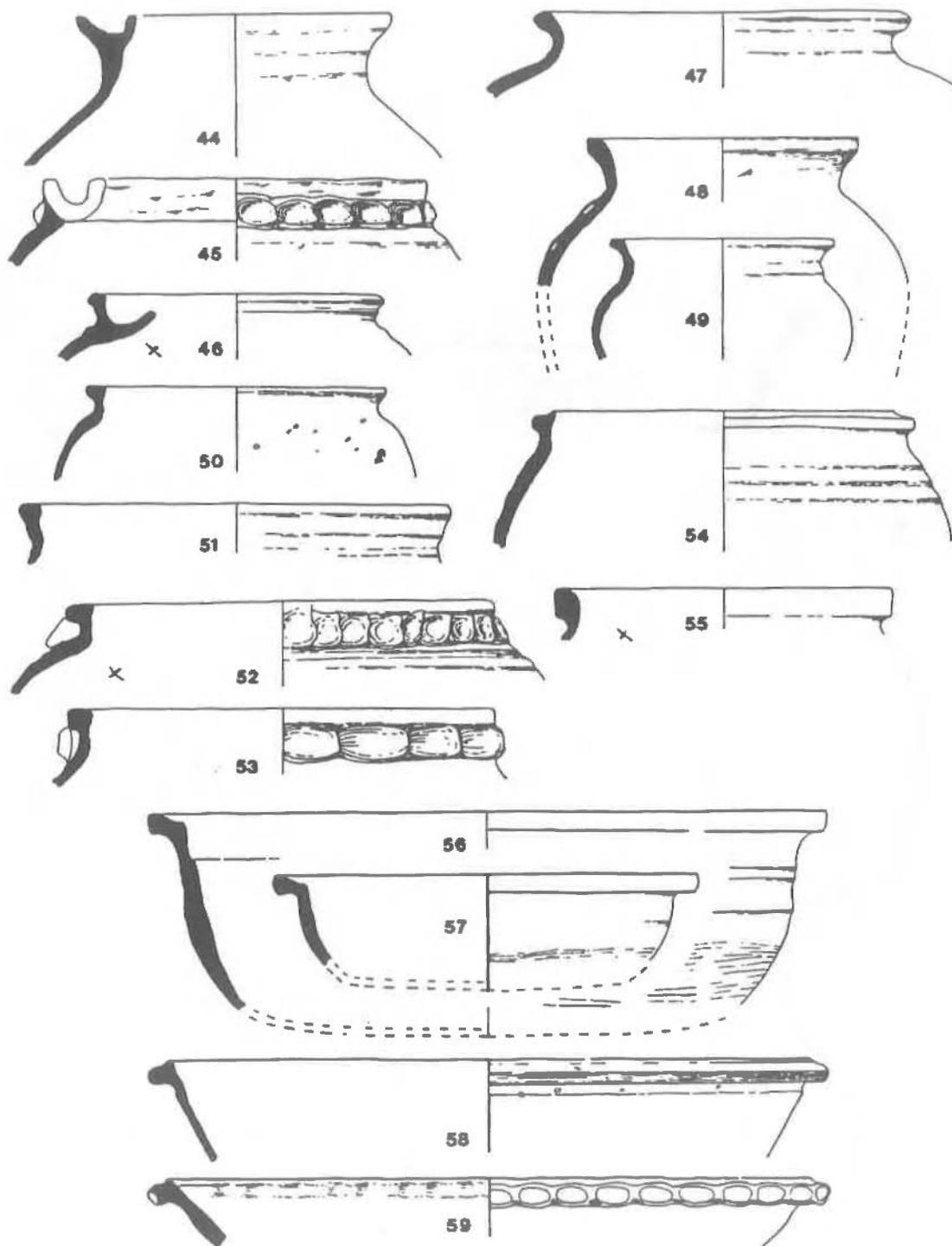


Fig. 8. 'B' Ware Group 4, 44-59 from Kiln 1 (1:4).

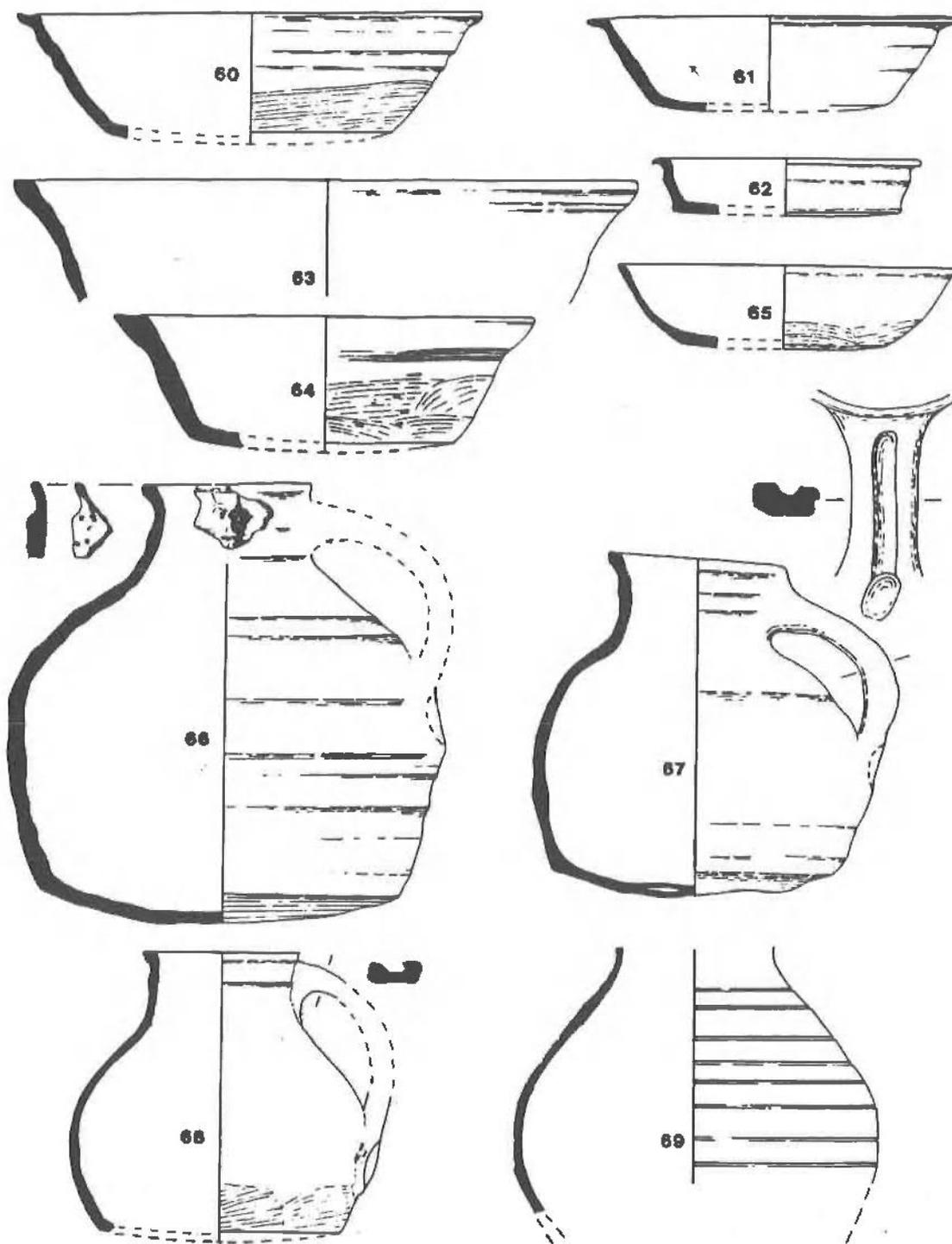


Fig. 2. 'B' Ware Group 4, 60-69 from Kiln 1 (1:4).

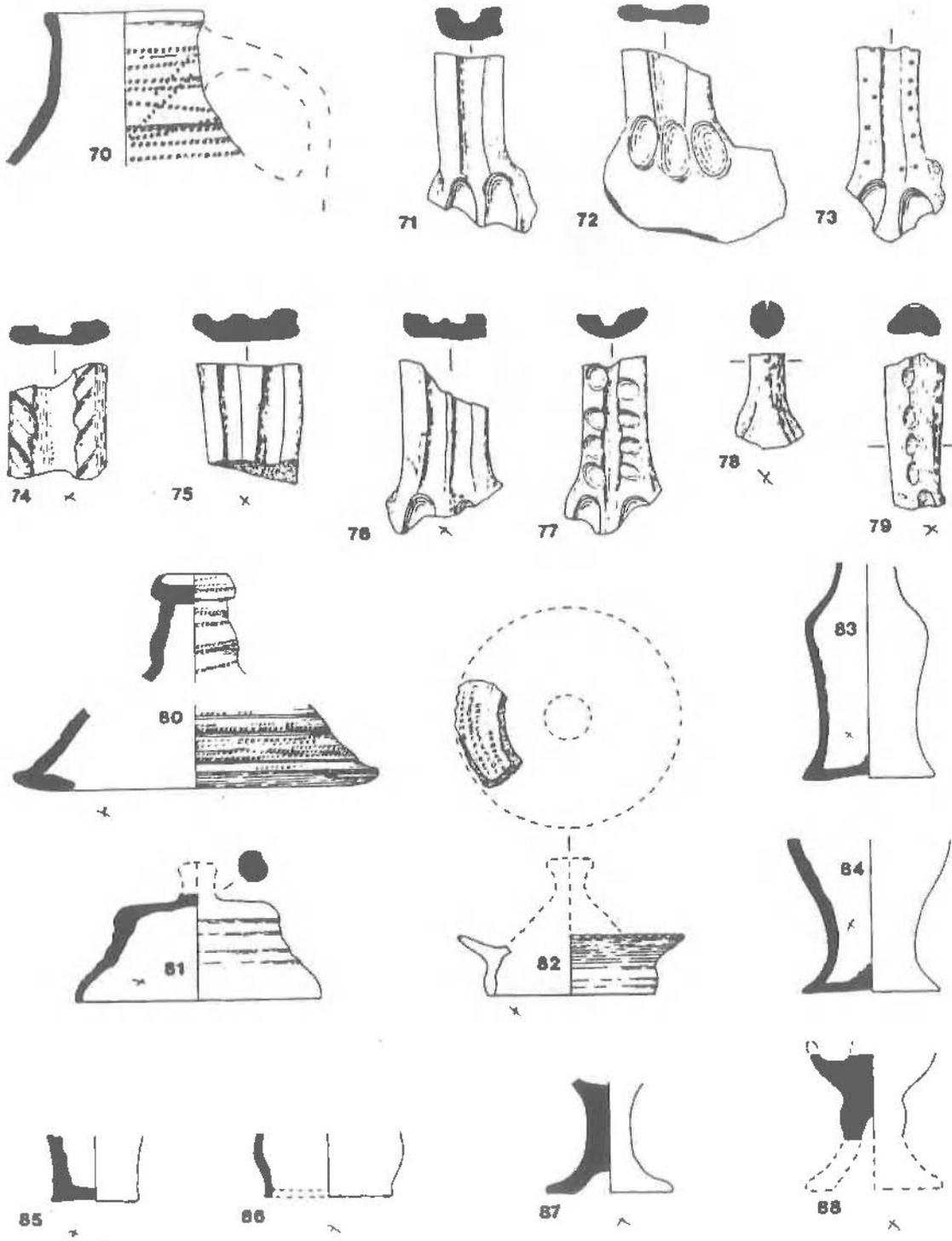


Fig. 10. 'B' Ware Group 4, 70-88 from Kiln 1 (1:4).

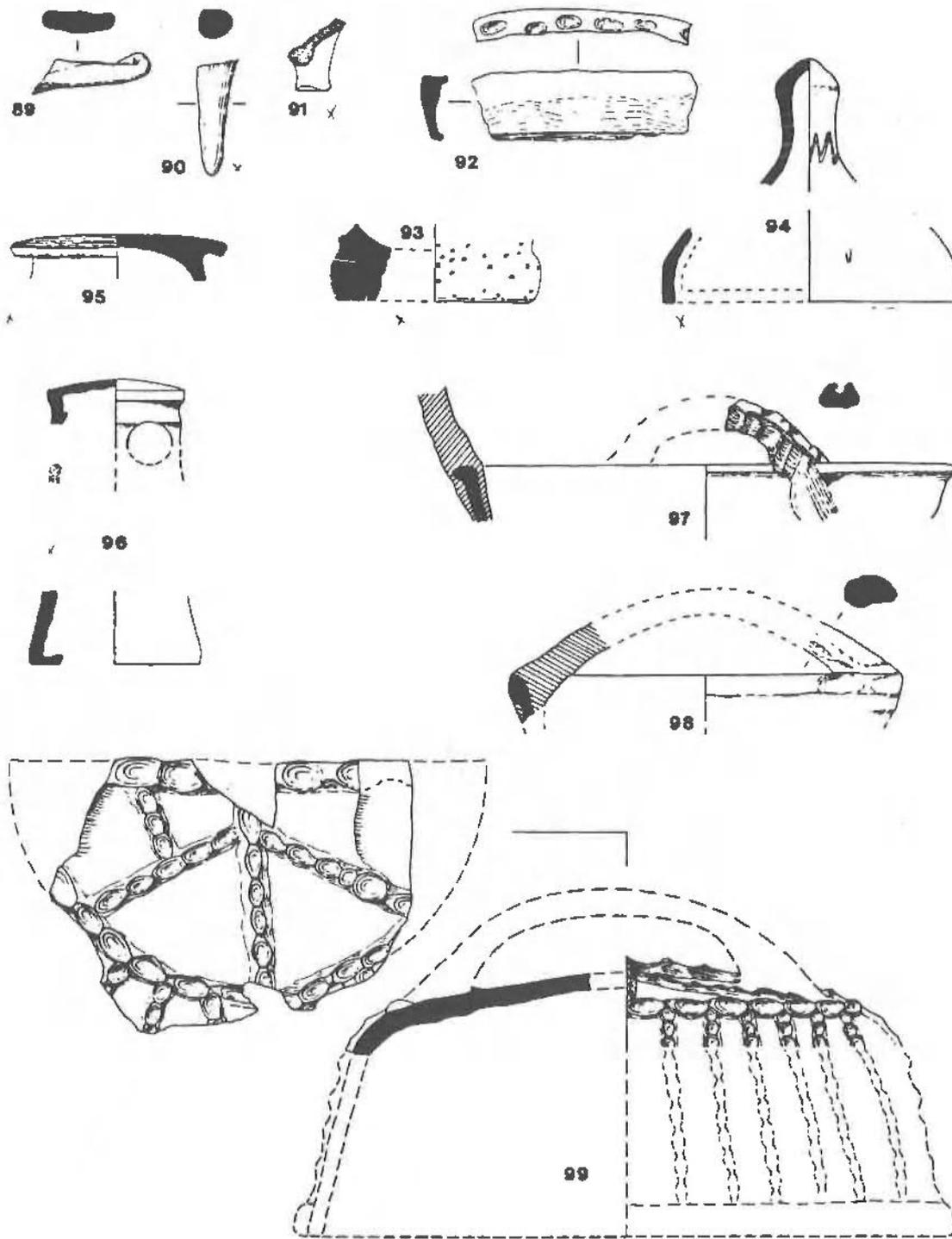


Fig. 11. 'B' Ware Group 4, 89-99 from Kiln 1 (1:4).

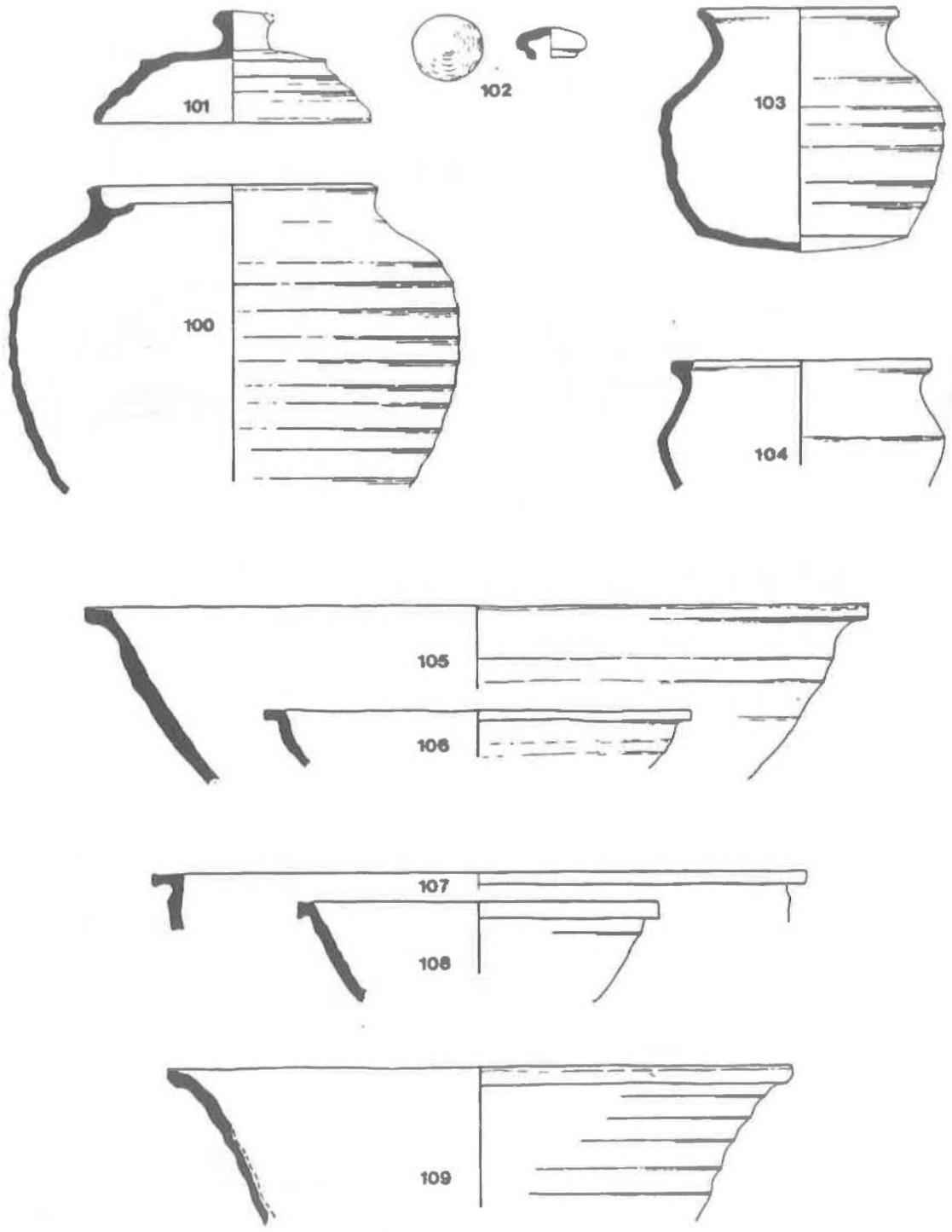


Fig. 12. 'B' Ware Group 5, 101-105 from Kiln 7 (1:4).

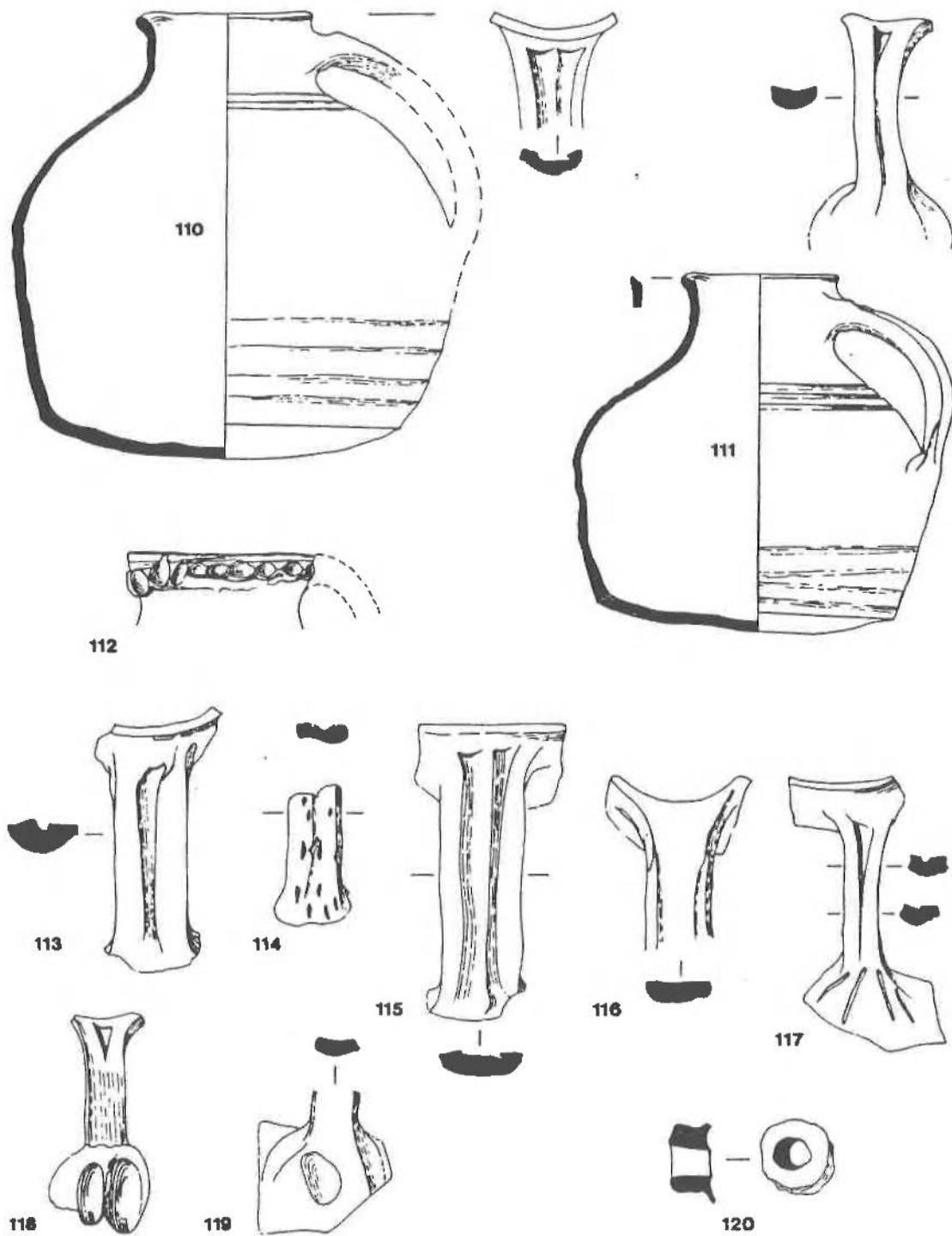


Fig. 13. 'B' Ware Group 5, 110-120 from Kiln 2 (1:4).

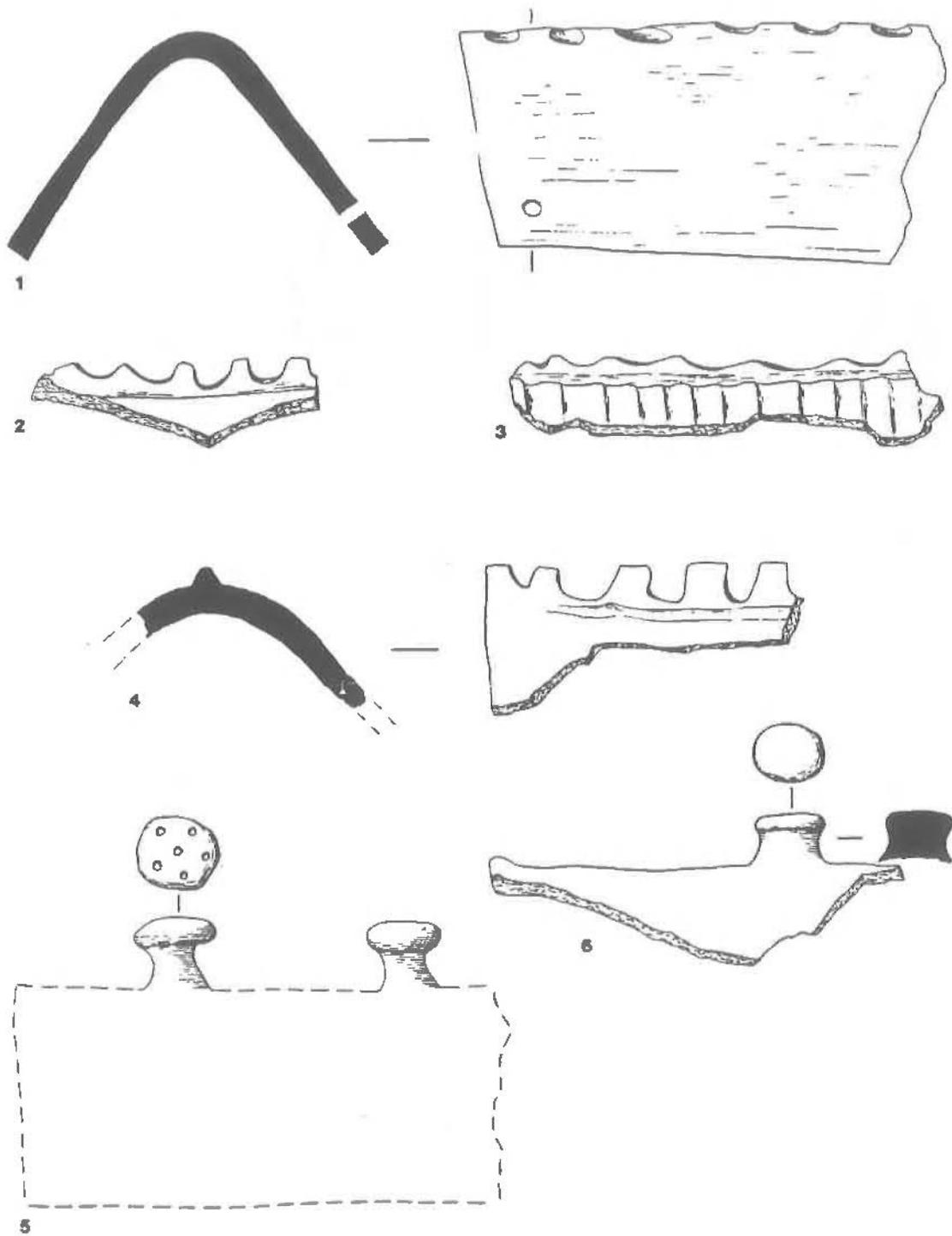


Fig. 14. Ridge Tile (1:4).

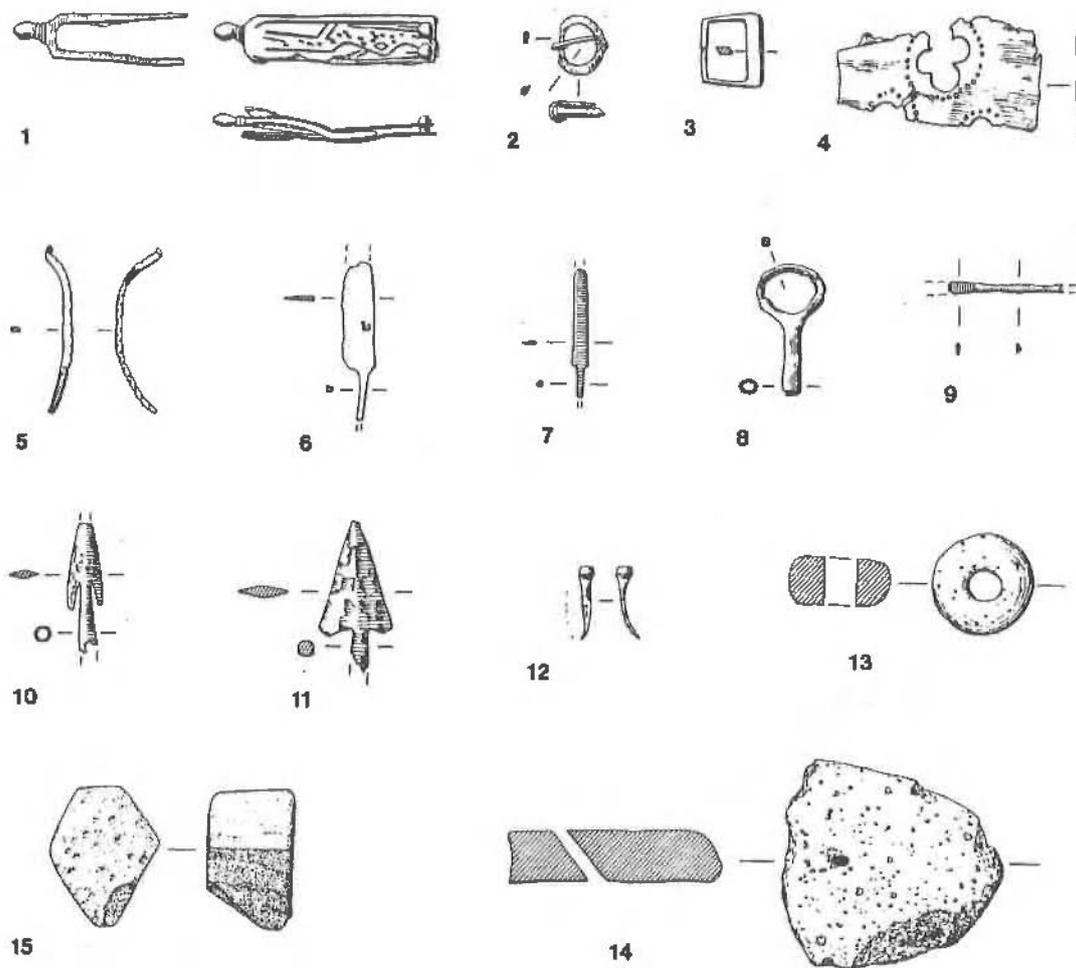


Fig. 15. Bronze Objects 1-5 (1:2); Iron Objects 6-12 (1:4); Fired Clay Objects 13-14 (1:2); Worked Stone 15 (1:2).

There were fewer decorated vessels—0.2% of the total as compared with 14.4% from Kiln 1.

The cooking pots were divided almost equally between those with bifid rims (type 5) and simple thickened rims (type 6), apart from a few isolated examples of the flat-topped type 7. There is an almost complete cooking pot profile (no. 100), and the lid (no. 101) to go with the vessel. The simple cooking pot rims were all from small globular vessels like nos. 103 and 104.

The bowls all had flanged rims, although some (like no. 109), were not as well formed as others (nos. 105-8). The bowls were of two sizes, small, with an average rim diameter of 224 mm, and large, up to 480 mm.

Both cooking pots and bowls had well defined throwing grooves on the body. The jugs came in two sizes only, there being no small jugs like those from Kiln 1. They were similar in shape to those from that kiln, but had a distinctive feature in the form of a band of three grooves, not always well defined, around the upper body towards the neck. One jug rim, no. 112, from the stoke hole, had an applied strip around the rim with finger-tip impressions.

The jug handles tended to be mainly undecorated and consisted principally of type 2 with single grooves, and type 5 with a closed groove; there were also a few of plain strap type 1.

There were two bungholes from large pitchers found in the stoke hole.

Dating

It is likely that the products of Kiln 2 are later in date than those of Kiln 1. The cooking pots are predominantly of late medieval type and the bunghole pitcher is now present. The proportion of decorated vessels is much smaller; in fact only 0.3% of the sherds recovered were decorated. A late fourteenth to early fifteenth century date is therefore suggested.

Roofing Tiles (Fig. 14)

Ridge tiles with decoration along the crest

formed by thumb or finger impressions, knife-cut 'cockscomb', 'crenellation', and applied knobs were produced in both kilns. The body fabric was the same as the pottery produced by the kilns.

There were five main types of decoration of the roofing tiles:

1. Thumb or finger impressions along the top of the tile (Fig. 14, 1).
2. An applied strip along the top of the tile with knife-cut decoration, which varied between 'cockscomb' with pointed tops (Fig. 14, 2) and 'crenellated' with flattened tops (Fig. 14, 4).
3. Similar to 2 but with wider and shallower knife cuts (Fig. 14, 3).
4. Applied tall knobs with rounded tops which are stabbed on top (Fig. 14, 5).
5. Similar to 4 but shallower knobs, generally with rectangular tops rather than rounded, and not stabbed (Fig. 14, 6).

The 1967 excavation produced examples of all types, mainly from a deposit of waste material from Kiln 1 (F4). This material had been placed on top of the fill of the earlier pit, F7, which was probably compacting.

A much larger amount of tile came from the 1969 excavation of Kiln 2, where it was found dumped into the upper fill of the oven and stoke hole. A fragment of type 3 was also found built into the wall around the stoke hole (see Fig. 4). Several fragments had a circular hole, average diameter 10 mm, pierced through the side near the corner before firing (Fig. 14, 1). This may have been to take a wooden peg.

The most common decoration was the knife-cut crest, sometimes pointed (cockscomb) and sometimes flattened (crenellated) on top. Both types were often noted on the same tile, and may be the product of haphazard manufacture. These knife-cut types represented 98% of the decorated tile, 63% of type 2 and 35% of type 3. Type 4 represented 1.75%, and types 1 and 5 less than 1% each.

The total weight of tile recovered was 95 kg, made up of 65 kg (70%) of plain side pieces and 28.5 kg (30%) of decorated pieces. The distribution of tile fragments over the site, apart

from the kilns, was concentrated around the walls of the north range, suggesting that this part of the building had a tiled roof.

OTHER FINDS

The following sequence has been used throughout the descriptions of the finds: illus. no., description of object, grid location and description of findspot, and object no. in the site archive.

Copper Alloy Objects (Fig. 15, 1-5)

1. Decorated strap end. D/10/3, on stones near Kiln 1 in destruction level. SF4.
2. Decorated buckle. E/9/2, north of Kiln 1 in destruction level. SF13.
3. Buckle. Trench 6, in rubble south of wall (1969). SF2.
4. Fragment of sheet with fretted quatrefoil decoration with pierced holes around. Topsoil. SF15.
5. Part of bracelet, Roman? D/9/2, yard surface near Kiln 1. SF10.

Iron Objects (Fig. 15, 6-12)

by Ian H. Goodall

Iron objects 6-12 are all late medieval. The inlaid cutler's mark on knife 6 indicates that it was made under the regulation of a cutlers' guild; such marks, which first appear in significant numbers on knives in the thirteenth century, were rarely inlaid after the mid sixteenth century. The binding strip, 9, from a box or casket, was probably originally plated in imitation of the more usual pieces made from more noble metals. Arrowheads 10 and 11 indicate hunting over the site.

6. Knife with whittle tang and inlaid cutler's mark on blade, incomplete. A/12/3, on clay south of south range. SF9.
7. Knife with whittle tang, incomplete. Trench 1, on stones (1969). SF1.
8. Key with oval bow and broken hollow stem. E/10/1, destruction level over Kiln 1 (F4). IW5.
9. Shaped piece of binding strip, one end

broadening to terminal, the other broken across a hole. A/10/3, in floor of south range. IW8.

10. Barbed and socketed arrowhead, incomplete. E/12/3, clay surface near Pit (F3). SF5.
11. Socketed arrowhead with triangular-shaped blade. A/4/3, in clay west of clay pit (F2). SF23.
12. Horseshoe nail with shouldered head. E/10/1-4, destruction level over Kiln 1 (F4). IW7.

A number of iron objects came from Phase 4 contexts, the recognisable ones all associated with the road. The road surface produced two horseshoe arms, a complete small horseshoe with toe clip, a horseshoe nail, part of a chain link, a rake tine, two timber nails, two studs, and two perforated objects. The stone-lined drain, F16, inserted down the centre of the roadway, contained two horseshoes, one incomplete.

Fired Clay Objects (Fig. 15, 13-14)

13. Spindle whorl, made of 'B' ware. C/14/4, on clay surface of F7. SF13.
14. Fragment of Roman tile pierced as if for suspension, perhaps used as a weight? G/11/3, in road surface. SF12.

Worked Stone Objects (Fig. 15, 15)

15. Stone gaming piece? D/6/1, on floor in north west corner of the workshop near the hearth. SF21.

There were also fragments of three micaceous schist whetstones, one from the clay surface north of the workshop, one from the floor of the workshop, and the third on the yard surface over the drain (F12).

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