

IV.

SCOTTISH MEDIEVAL POTTERY.

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The following illustrated catalogue of miscellaneous ware from several Scottish sites rounds off a survey of the medieval pottery which has been recovered and treated by the Ministry of Works in Scotland. It completes the review of monastic ware which is plentiful in Scotland, in contrast to its apparent scarcity at monastic sites in England. One secular piece is included in this paper, from St Andrews Castle, because it matches another from the nearby Cathedral (Nos. 58 and 53 respectively). A few isolated pieces from secular sites remain to be published. These will be published with new material, such as that of 13th-century type recovered from the deep mud of the moat at Cærlaverock Castle, where work is in progress, but the general review, ecclesiastical and secular; is now completed.¹

It cannot claim to be more than a presentation of the material with comments and a working bibliography. Provisional dates have been hazarded. They are based upon closely dated English parallels and are subject to revision when comparable Scottish material from stratified deposits, or closely related to datable objects or structures, has been recovered and published.

For the thin-walled ware with characteristic glaze and decoration a 13th-century date is very probable. It is offered with confidence, for the characteristics have a strong "period" quality and seeming authenticity. The applied strips, stamped pellets, incised wavy and reticulated lines, and highly individual bridge-spouts and face-masks are comprehensively paralleled in dated English collections at York, Cambridge, the British Museum and elsewhere, and the characteristic thin splashed and speckled glaze seems to be a contemporary feature. But for those vessels not thus distinguished and which are classified on more general considerations, the dating is questionable. Certain peculiarities of shape and texture permit confident conclusions and attention is drawn to them, but for many of the less distinguished pots the dating must be received with reserve. Where the date is given dogmatically the writer has good reason to believe it, by comparison with relevant English parallels included in the bibliography appended in footnotes, otherwise "probable" or "possible" indicate degrees of doubt.

¹ For the Glenluce Abbey collection see *T. Dumf. and Gall. A.S.*, xxix (1950-1), 177-94; illustrated. Bothwell Castle in *P.S.A.S.*, lxxxvi (1951-2), 140-70; illustrated. Melrose Abbey *ibid.*, lxxxvii (1952-3), 161-74; illustrated.

The apparent lack of late 15th- and 16th-century ware seems to be a fault; especially so as there are valuable and unequivocal records of pottery manufacture at this late period in the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer in Scotland, concerning no less than Bothwell Castle, the home of the finest collection recovered from any single site in Scotland, and for which distorted vessels in the collection prove local manufacture. The writer has attributed most of this ware to the 13th and 14th centuries.

The entries in the accounts are:—

- 1501-2 Item, be the Kingis command, to the pottair of Bothuile
xiiij s.
- 1502-3 Item, for pottis, to the pottair of Bothuile xiiij s.
- 1503 Item, to the pottar of Bothuile for pottis, xxviiij s.
- 1504 Item, to the pottar of Bothuile, that brocht pottis to the
King xiiij s.
- 1504 Item, to the pottair of Bothuile brocht pottis to the King
xxviiij
- 1504 Item, to the pottair of Bothwell for pottis xiiij.²

The writer's inability to refer these late dates to the surviving Bothwell pottery suggests a continuing manufacture of genuinely early types into this late period, so that some of the surviving "pottis" might wrongly have been given an early date.

Notwithstanding the impossibility of attributing indisputable dates the survey reveals a remarkable variety and richness in medieval household effects pertaining to the kitchen and the table. Not by any manner of means "exclusive" or princely in manufacture and use—many of the vessels must have been commonplace, and certainly many were locally made—these jugs, pots, dishes and utensils (even a hunting horn is included), afford an interesting and sometimes amusing commentary on medieval domestic life in Scotland. Furthermore, the pottery is generally of excellent quality. In shape, glaze, surface decoration and construction, and in the variety of each of those elements which combine to make pottery the art it is, this Scottish material is first class. And it is widespread, even within a distribution restricted to Ancient Monuments.

Of the material published in this instalment the most imposing vessels come from Jedburgh Abbey. Large multiple-handled pitchers, so well represented at Bothwell, continue the northern tradition and are the first examples from a Scottish monastic site. These large ovoid vessels have each three broad strap handles with raised edges and a rope-twist strip down the centre. The base of the handle is thumb-imprinted with a larger spread than is usual. Two or three broad thumb impressions, one downwards the other two swept outwards make the usual terminal to a strap handle, but

¹ *Accounts of Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, II (1500-4), 140, 361, 367, 434, 444, 448.

here and at Crossraguel we have no less than five or six thumb impressions fanning out from the foot of each. On one Jedburgh example there are large face-mask medallions between the three handles, and across the wider expanse of the front, which was surmounted by the spout, another two were placed. These medallions are curiously Renaissance in feeling and may conceivably indicate a post-medieval date, although the form of the pitcher is certainly of the 13th or early 14th century.

The two-handled cooking pot from Deer is now a familiar type. It occurs at Bothwell and Glenluce and is probably dated to the 14th century. Another like it, but smaller, comes from Eccles (fig. 74), from which site there is also a jug. These pots have squared overhanging rims with an internal bevel. Glaze is apparent on both the inside and the outside most noticeably round the rim. The inside is more comprehensively glazed than the outside. The little vessel of thin biscuit-coloured ware is coated with a cream slip and bears a sparse yellow glaze (fig. 29). Its handle is unusual and worthy of comment. Rising from the body of the vessel in orthodox fashion it crosses the neck to join the rim flush with the top, so that rim and spout appear to be an extension of the handle. Another example of this feature, in the same slipped material, was found in Newbattle Abbey, and the National Museum of Antiquities has a precisely similar complete example found beneath a house in Leith. Of these vessels Mr G. C. Dunning has kindly written: "The jugs found at Deer Abbey and Leith and the fragment found at Newbattle Abbey are of a particular type without parallel, to my knowledge, elsewhere in Great Britain. The special features of these jugs are the very narrow neck on the globular body, the flat base raised underneath at the centre, and the long strap handle which curves round from the mouth to the shoulder. Seen from above the mouth is slightly pinched-in at the sides, giving it a trefoil shape, and forming a channelled lip for pouring. The shape and details of these jugs suggest that they are copied from metal work, such as ewers for holding oil or wine.

The only parallel that I am able to quote for these jugs is a group of four, found with a small jug of another type, inside a large pot beneath a 14th-century grave-slab in the south chapel of the crypt of Nantes Cathedral in 1886.¹ The Nantes jugs are of the same type, varying from $6\frac{3}{4}$ ins. to $9\frac{3}{4}$ ins. in height. A drawing of one jug is given here (fig. 32) for comparison with those found in Scotland. It is of light red ware with mottled green glaze on the upper part of the body and also under the base. The surface of the neck and body are lightly grooved; this feature is not present on all the vessels, but it can be detected on the neck of the jug from Newbattle Abbey.

The occurrence of these jugs at Nantes, but apparently not elsewhere in

¹ *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique de Nantes*, xxvii (1888), 60 and pl. 17; *Catalogue du Musée Archéologique de Nantes* (1903), 352, no. 419.

France, suggests that the jugs found in Scotland are imports from the region of Nantes in the 14th century. As such they help to fill in the gap between the imports of the 13th century and those of the later medieval period that have already been published."

Deer and Jedburgh Abbeys yield the first-tripod bases to be published. There is another at Stirling Castle. Jugs with a tripod base are rare in Scotland, but are more frequent in the south, particularly in the Oxford region.¹ They are not likely to be later than the 13th century. And as for the far north; a site with an Early Christian, Viking and medieval history, on the small tidal island of Birsay, has yielded two splendid face-masks, detached from the vessels they enriched, an interesting occurrence.

DESCRIPTION.

THE DRAWINGS.

Jedburgh Abbey.

1. (Pl. V, 1, 3.)

Three-handled pitcher: dark green glaze: three broad strap-handles with thumb-impressed central ridges: probable pinched spout: between the handles a circular face-mask medallion surrounded by small pellets and large thumb impressions: the highly stylised face is ornamented all over with crude embossed leaves (see detail Pl. V, 3). This bizarre and telling rendering is accomplished with the utmost economy of effort. The only modelling is of nose, eyebrows and eyes all simply formed by two applied strips of clay like volutes back to back; the rest is leaf or fern decoration, embossed, which conveys added impression of modelling. Across the wider expanse of the front (not illustrated) which was probably surmounted by a spout there were apparently two such medallions together, of which the survivor has been built into the reconstruction. An incised irregular zigzag runs round the neck. Reconstructed height $16\frac{1}{2}$ " : aperture diam. $3\frac{1}{2}$ " : max. diam. 12" : 14th century (the lower half and part of the upper front is conjectural but beyond reasonable doubt accurate as far as it goes).

2. (Pl. V, 2.)

Upper half of a barrel-shaped pot: dark-green glaze inside and out. Hard thick-walled fabric decorated with girth grooves. Abrupt angle of neck suggests a lid: 15th or 16th century: aperture diam. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".

3. (Pl. VII, 1.)

Reconstructed fragments of a large multiple-handled pitcher: light yellow-green glaze: broad fluted handles: decorated in vertical zones of applied purple-brown stamped pellets; the vertical strips are arranged in pairs of the same colour. The base is encircled with an applied thumb-impressed ribbon of clay. Approximate height 20" : max. diam. 15" : 13th century (this is a drawing reconstruction only: the fragments remain detached).

¹ *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), 96 ff.; xv (1950), 47 ff.; *Ant. J.*, xx (1940), 103 ff.; *Oriel Record*, January 1942, 175 ff.

4. (Pl. VI, 1.)

Pitcher: sparse yellow-green glaze on shoulder but pot mainly unglazed: slightly sagging base: pinched spout: broad strap-handle. Height 12": aperture diam. $3\frac{1}{4}$ ": max. diam. $10\frac{3}{4}$ ": 13th century.

5. Fragment of pitcher: dark-green glaze: very fine ware. Vertically applied strips of darker colour on shoulder: 13th century.

6. Fragment of pitcher: green glaze: vertical slashes with stabbed marks either side, made with a blunt tool: 13th century.

7. (Pl. VI, 2.)

Incomplete globular jug: thin-walled fabric: sparsely glazed speckled-green: max. diam. 9": 13th century.

8. (Pl. VI, 3.)

Lower half of a jug: sparse light-green glaze: raised moulding round neck: irregular thumbed base indented during firing: strap-handle. Max. diam. 9": 13th century.

9. Fragment of pitcher: green glaze: vertically applied strips of finger-pressed scales in purple-brown: 13th century.

10. Rim of a three-handled pitcher with round handles: bearded face-mask under spoutless rim which probably connected rim with shoulder: diam. 3": 13th century. 13th century.

11. (Pl. VII, 3.)

Neck of a three-handled pitcher: light-green glaze: pinched spout: strap-handles: moulding under rim and base of neck: aperture diam. $2\frac{3}{4}$ ": 13th century.

12. Thumbed base of pitcher: the thumbing is arranged in pairs of impressions which extend below the base and serve as feet: 14th or 15th century.

13. Rim fragment with boldly projecting and thumbed flange: light-green glaze: 13th or 14th century.

14. Tubular spout of a large pitcher.

15-19. Stamped surface decoration.

20. The knob of a lid of a dish (*cf.* Bothwell no. 49).

21. Rim fragment: unglazed: hatched decoration: rounded rim.

22. (Pl. VII, 2.)

Fragment of light thin-walled vessel: light-green glaze: ornamented with a double cordon at lower shoulder-level: the horizontal zoning is unusual: 13th century.

23. Two pierced glazed sherds probably of a strainer.

24. One foot of a tripod base: green glazed: 13th century (*cf.* no. 34).

25. (Pl. VII, 2.)

Fragment of light thin-walled vessel: light-green glaze: ornamented with a double cordon at lower shoulder-level: the horizontal zoning is unusual: 13th century.

26. Fragment showing vertical applied ridges as ornament: 13th century.

27. Handle fragment: greenish-brown glaze with trailed white slip on handle and shoulder, a rare occurrence: 13th century.

Deer Abbey.

28. (Pl. VIII, 1.)

Two-handled cooking pot: everted rim: sparse green glaze. Height $6\frac{3}{4}$ " : aperture diam. 5" : max. diam. $7\frac{1}{4}$ " : 14th century (*cf.* nos. 59, 60, 62, 74; Bothwell no. 59, Glenluce no. 12).

29. (Pl. VIII, 2.)

Small flagon: spout restored: white clay: sparse pale yellow glaze: strap-handle (*cf.* below no. 32, 77). Height $5\frac{1}{8}$ " : aperture diam. $\frac{1}{2}$ " : max. diam. $4\frac{3}{4}$ ".

30. Rim fragment with part of face-mask; 13th century, associated with 46.

31. Base fragment.

32. From Nantes (see p. 69).

33. Base fragment.

34. (Pl. VIII, 3.)

Part of the base of a tripod cooking-pot: light-brown glaze inside, unglazed exterior (*cf.* no. 24).

35. Lower part of a heavy pot: glazed on both sides: 15th or 16th century.

36. Lower part of a thin-walled small pot: max. diam. $4\frac{5}{8}$ " 13th century.

37-39. Three base fragments. No. 38 has speckled-green glaze and is probably 13th century.

40-41. Two fragments of tubular spouts supported by struts: probably late 13th century.

42, 44 and 45. Rims and spouts: probably 13th century.

43. Fragment of a tripod cooking-pot: green glazed inside only.

46-48. Surface decoration: probably 13th century.

49-52. Handles. No. 49 must be the curving side-handle of a long dish (*cf.* Bothwell no. 40).

St Andrews Cathedral.

53. (Pl. IX, 1.)

Baluster jug: rim restored: brownish-green glaze: face-mask on front: the beard forms a three-strand plait, each strand has a spatulate end on to the shoulder of the pot. On shoulder two applied pellets of clay are stamped with end of a hollow stick, at the same level are fern-like decorations made by oblique stabbing. The base is flared and rippled by finger pressure. Height $12\frac{1}{4}$ " : max. diam. $7\frac{1}{4}$ " : aperture diam. $2\frac{1}{4}$ " : 13th or early 14th century (*cf.* no. 58).

54. (Pl. IX, 2.)

Pirlie pig: onion-shaped: light-green glaze. Height $3\frac{3}{4}$ " : max. diam. $3\frac{1}{2}$ " : 16th century (*cf.* Melrose no. 32).

55. Fragment of rim of open ware: broad square section. Rim perforated by pin-holes. Buff-sandy clay: unglazed.

56. Reeded and twisted handle: 13th century.

57. Small ovoid jug on narrow base: small everted rim. Height $3\frac{7}{8}$ " : aperture diam. $1\frac{1}{4}$ " : max. diam. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ".

58. (Pl. IX, 3.)

Lower half of a jug similar to no. 53. Yellow-brown glaze: max. diam. $9\frac{1}{4}$ " : base diam. $5\frac{1}{4}$ ". (From St Andrews Castle.)

Inchcolm Abbey.

59-60. Handles from cooking pots with everted rim: glazed inside only (*cf.* nos. 28, 62 (Bothwell 59, Glenluce 12)).

61. (Pl. X, 1.)

Upper part of a pitcher: light yellow-green glaze: short upright neck: pinched spout: widely spaced leafy design imprinted vertically round shoulder: 13th century.

62. Handle from an open globular pot (*cf.* nos. 59, 60).

63. (Pl. X, 2.)

Base fragment of triangular or flat-sided vessel suggests travelling costrel: globular, one side flattened to make it lie easily: pierced basal ridge for attaching supporting thongs. Base diam. $3\frac{1}{4}$ " : green glaze.

64. Lug handle.

65. Base of a small cup neck zoned in horizontal grooves. Max. diam. $1\frac{1}{2}$ " : green glaze (*cf.* Glenluce, figs. 13 and 14).

66. Upper part of flagon: probably 15th or 16th century: aperture diam. $1\frac{3}{8}$ ".

67. Fragmentary pedestal base stamped inside.

68. Fragment of tubular spout with evidence of attached loop.

69. (Pl. X, 3.)

70. (Pl. X, 3.)

} Face-masks: 13th century.

Crossraguel Abbey.

71. (Pl. XI, 1) Part of ovoid jug: light green glaze: strap handle. Approximate height $10\frac{3}{4}$ " : aperture diam. $2\frac{1}{4}$ " : max. diam. $7\frac{1}{2}$ ". Probably 13th century.

72. (Pl. XI, 1.)

Part of an open pot with everted rim: 13th or 14th century.

Eccles.

73. (Pl. XI, 3.)

Jug: strap handle: green glaze. (Now in Eccles House). Height 7": aperture diam. $2\frac{1}{4}$ " : max. diam. $6\frac{3}{4}$ ".

74. (Pl. XI, 4.)

Small cooking pot: two restored handles: everted rim (*cf.* Deer no. 28): 14th century. Height $5\frac{1}{4}$ " : aperture diam. $4\frac{1}{2}$ " : max. diam. $6\frac{1}{4}$ ".

*Lincluden.*75. Lower part of a jug: badly made: sparsely glazed. Max. diam. $5\frac{3}{8}$ ".*Eccles.*

76. Lower part of a pitcher: thick heavy ware: probably 15th century.

Newbattle.

77. (Pl. XI, 2.)

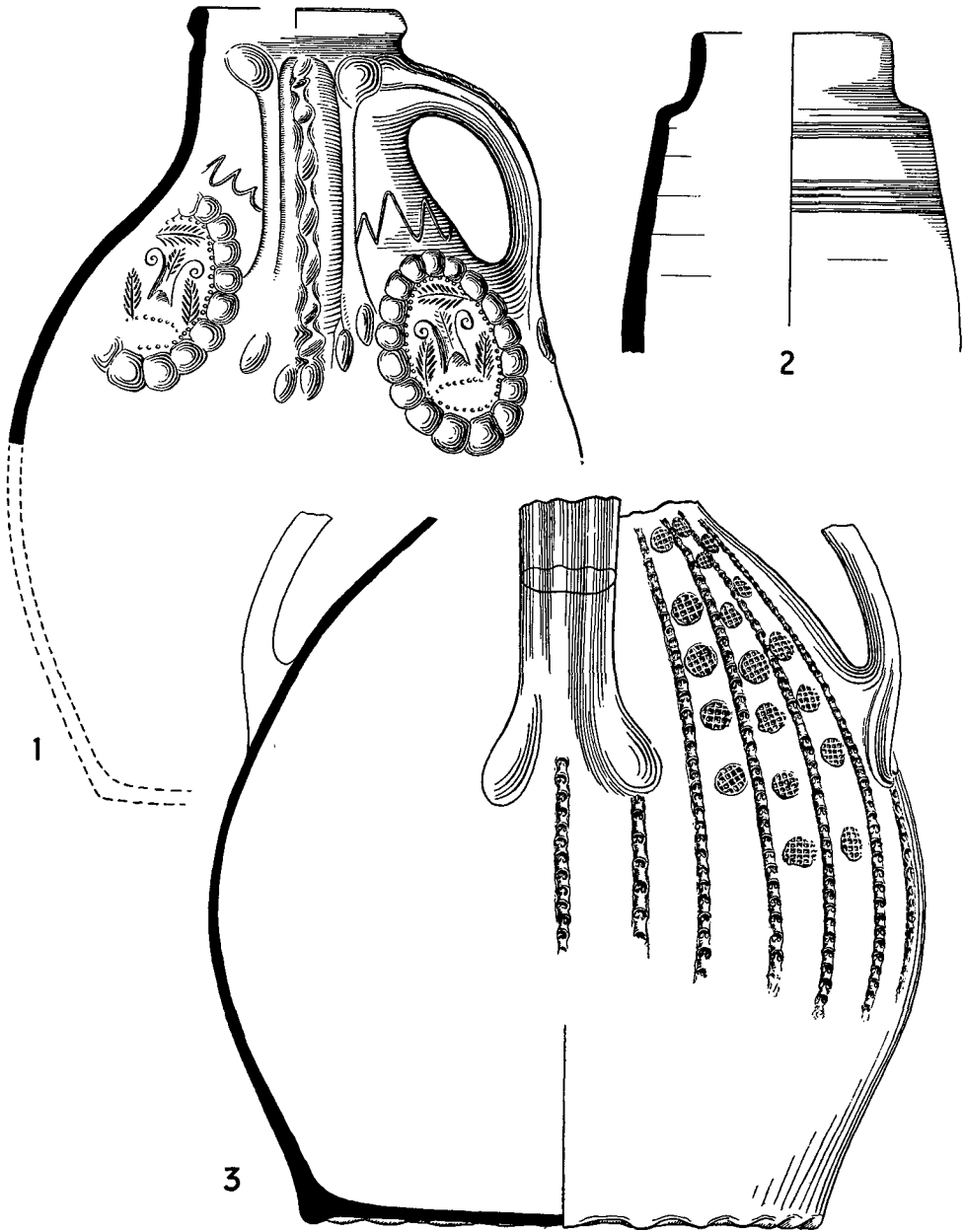
Neck and handle of a flagon (*cf.* nos. 29, 32: see p. 69).

*Arbroath.*78. Part of a domed lid, with flange: olive-green glaze. Approximate diam. $4\frac{1}{2}$ " (*cf.* Bothwell 49). 13th or 14th century.*St Peter's, Birsay or Christ Church, Orkney.*

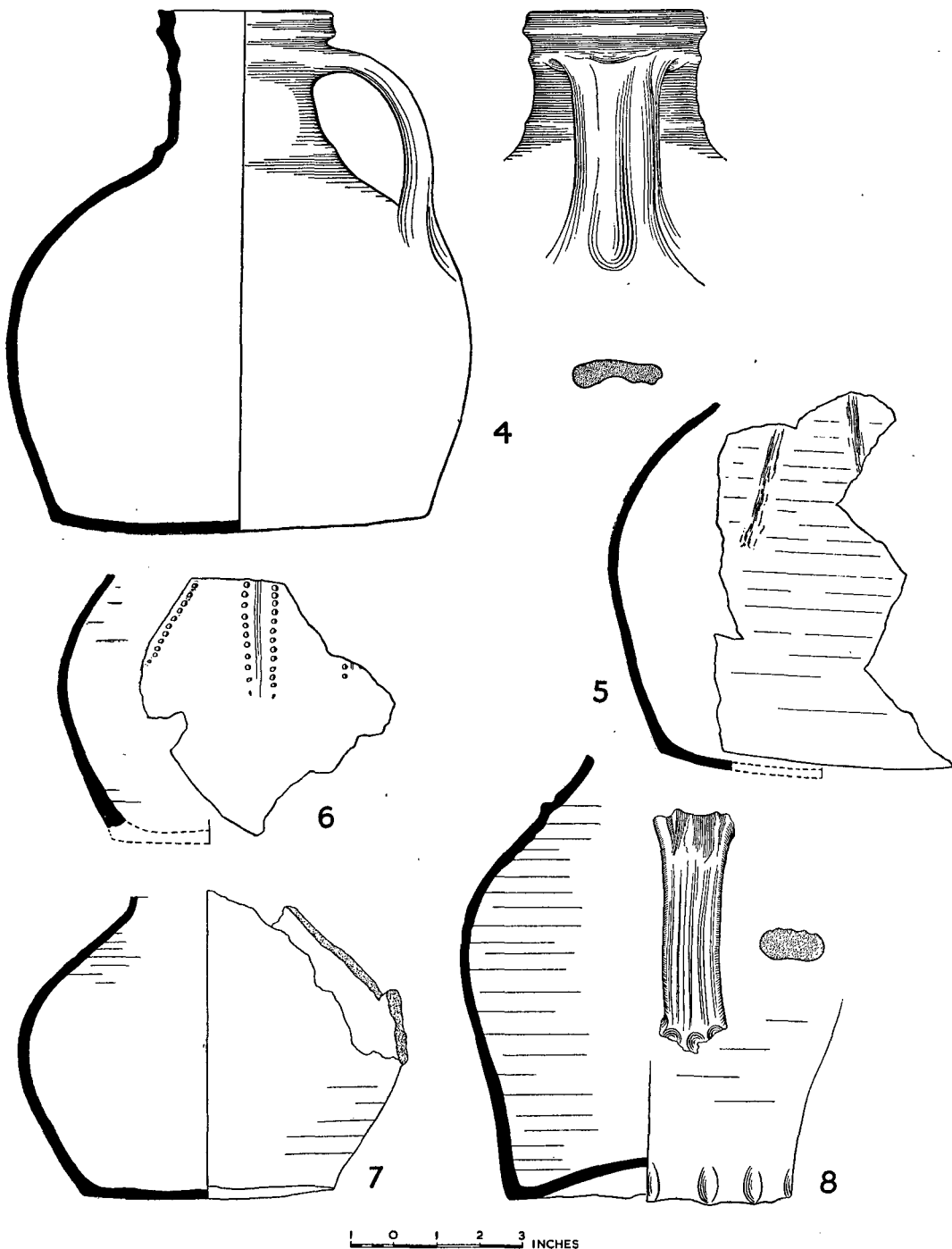
79. Fragments of a tall jug: blue-green glaze: flat-topped rim: bearded face-mask: expanded base. 13th century.

80. Fragment showing scratched lattice-work on shoulder: light-green glaze. 13th century.

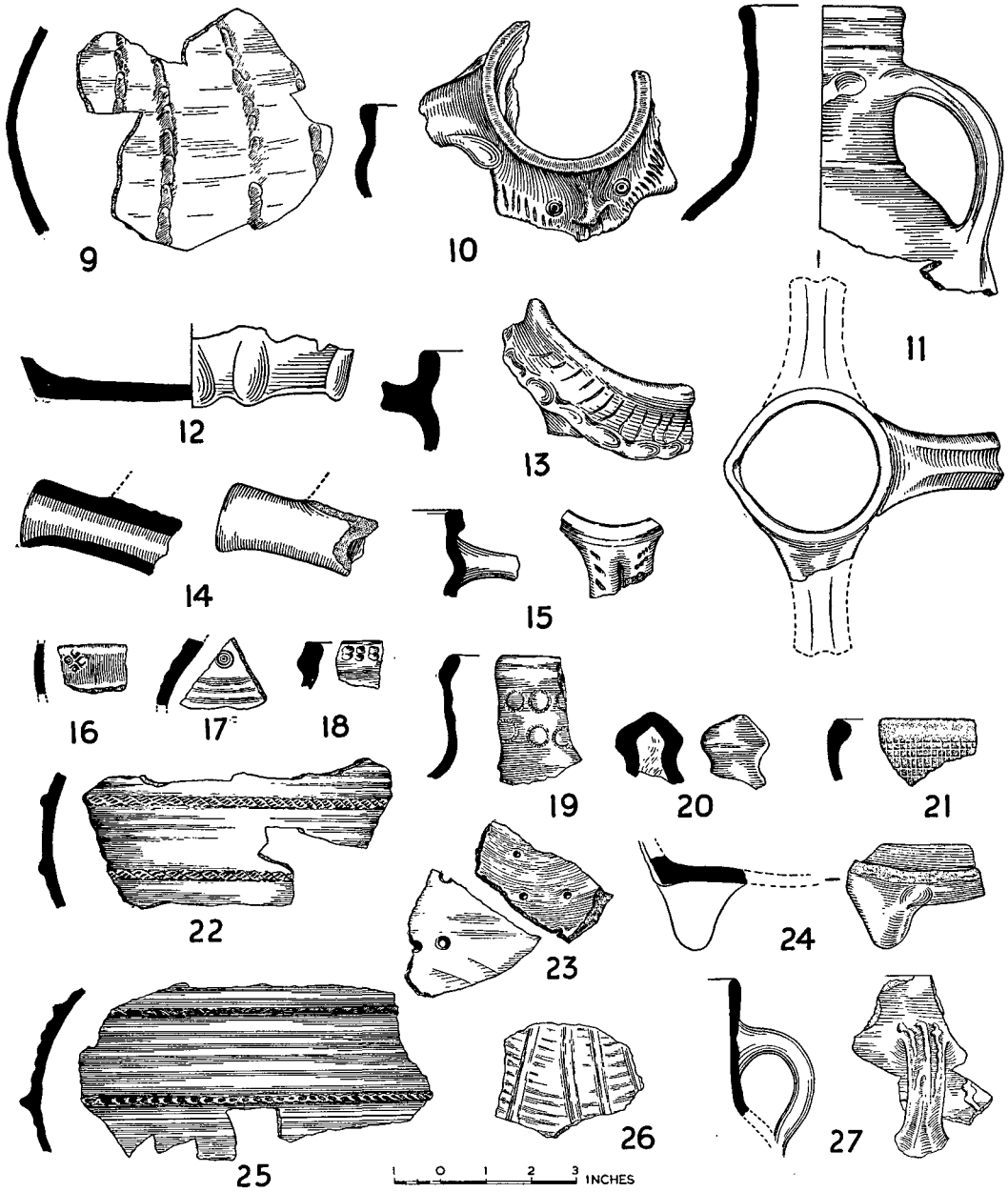
The Council is greatly indebted to the Ministry of Works for meeting the cost of the illustrations for this paper.



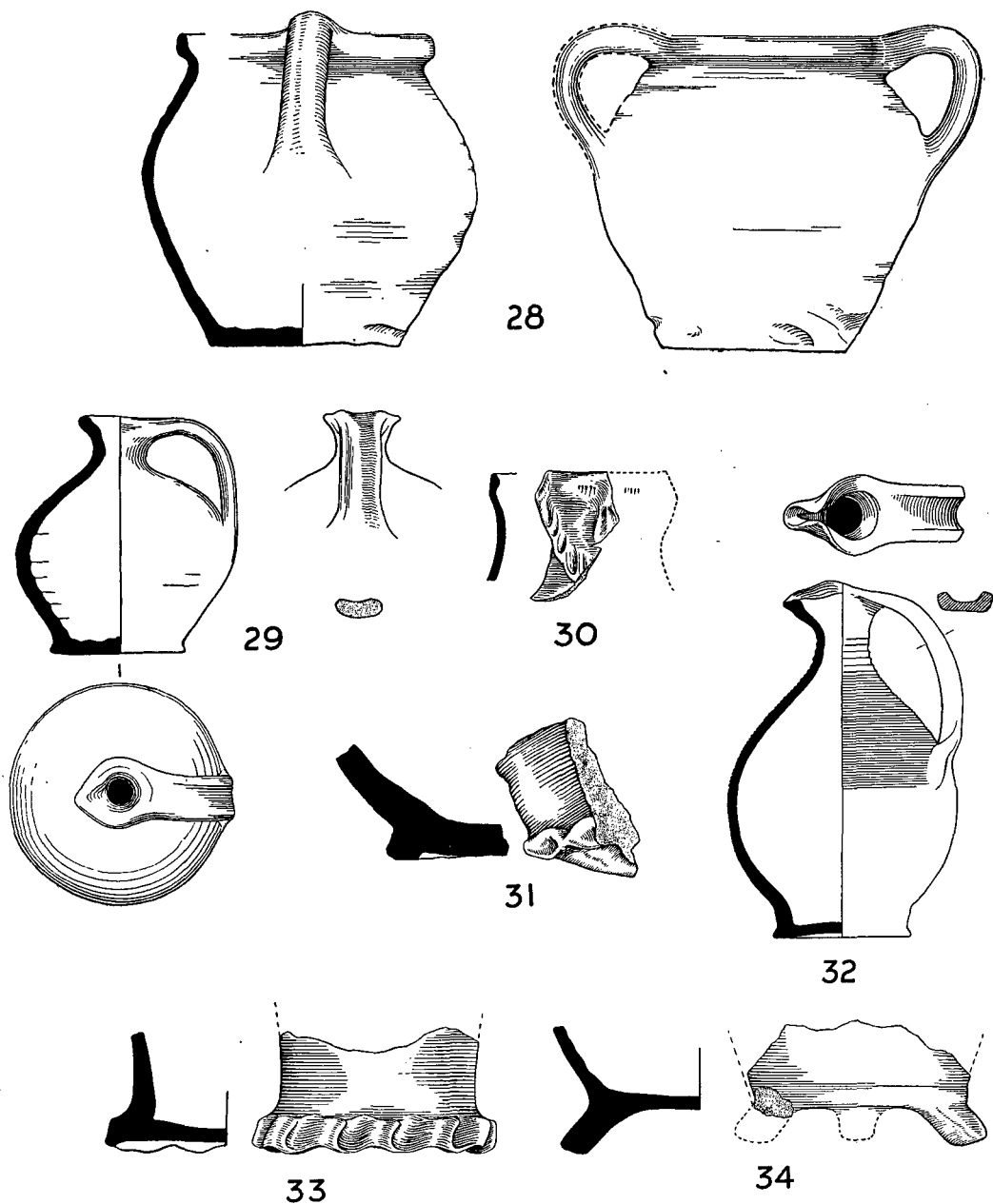
Medieval pottery: Jedburgh Abbey (figs. 1-3).



Medieval pottery: Jedburgh Abbey (figs. 4-8).

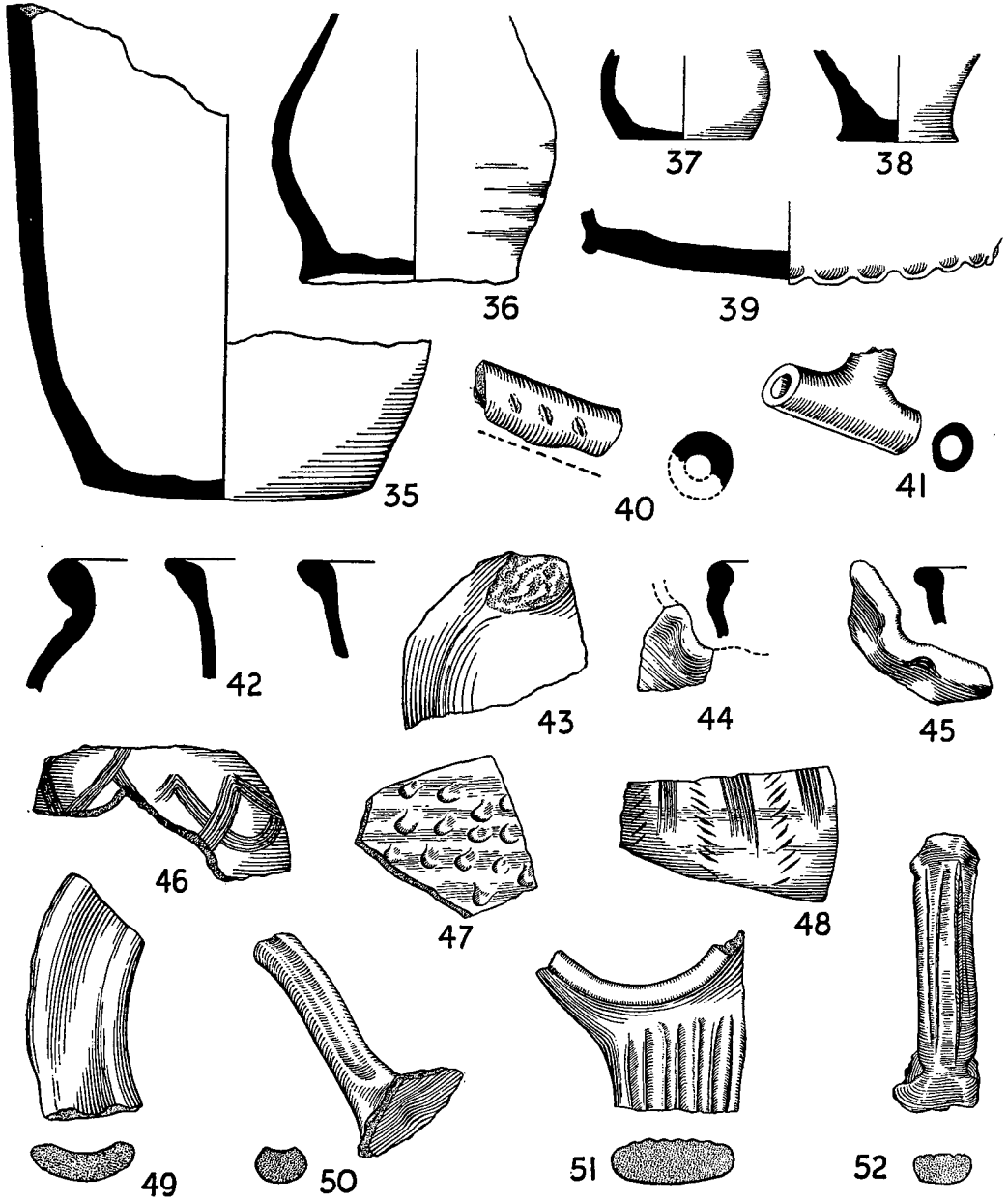


Medieval pottery: Jedburgh Abbey (figs. 9-27).



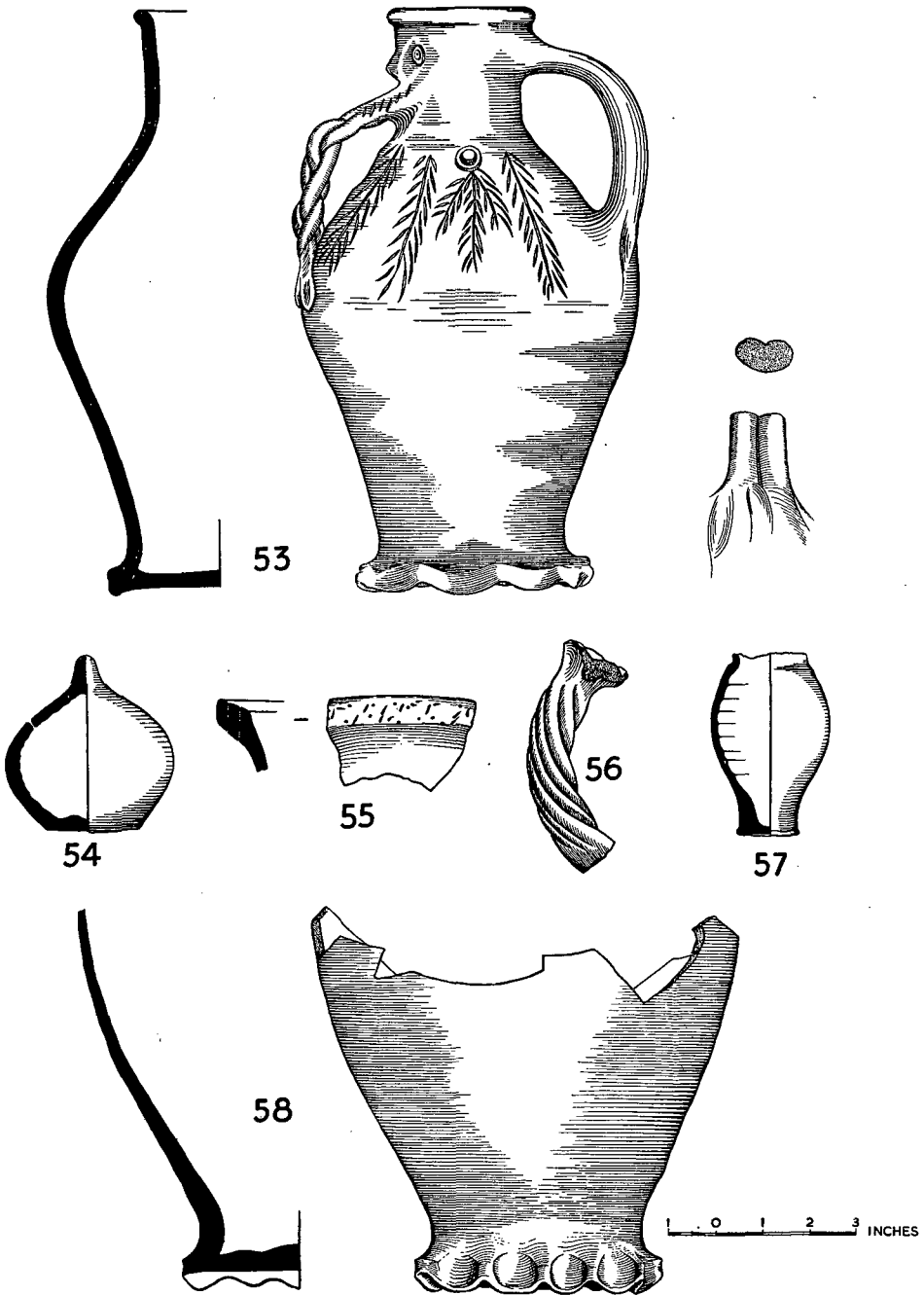
Medieval pottery: Deer Abbey (figs. 28-34).

Fig. 32 is from Nantes (p. 69).

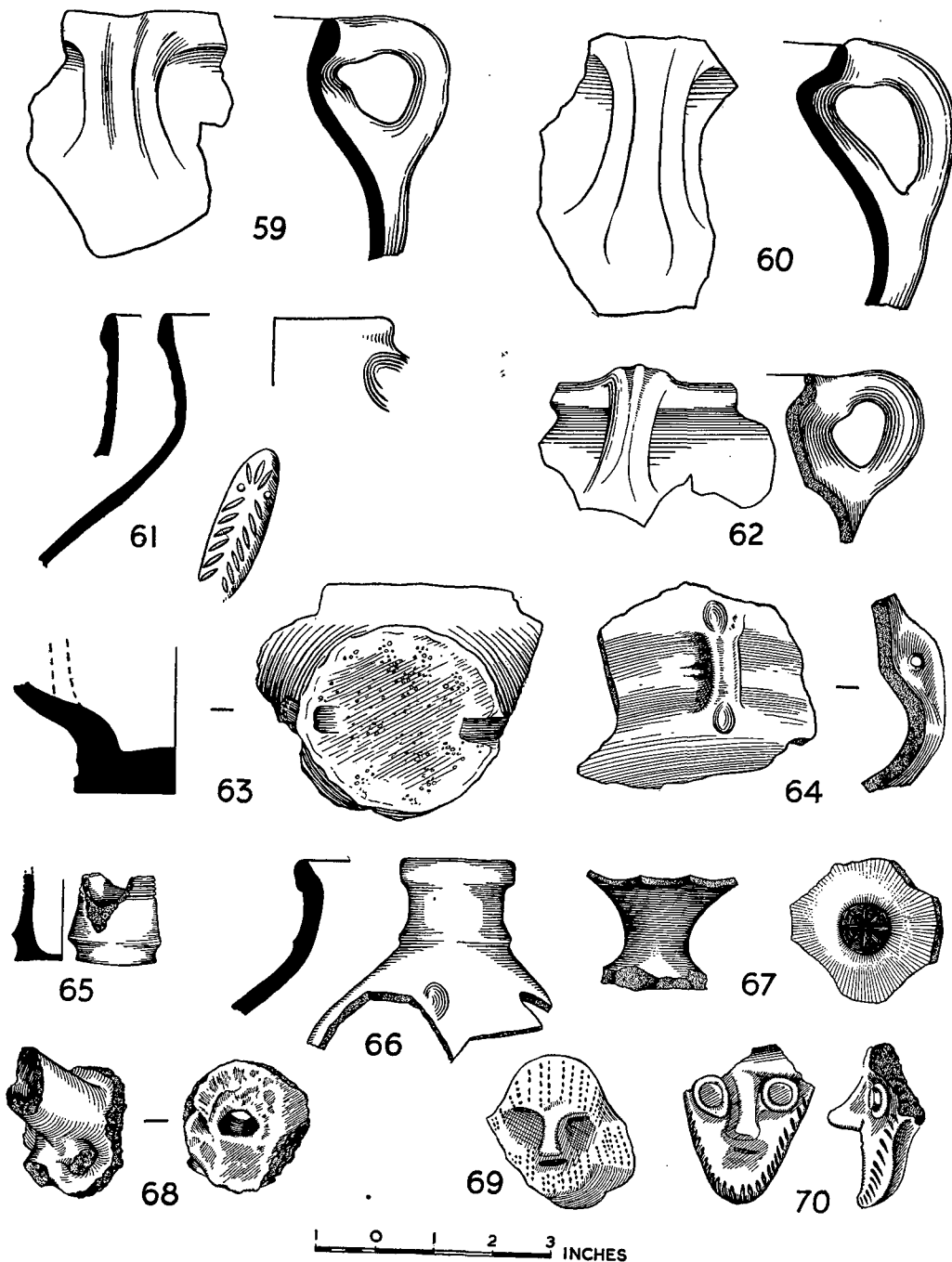


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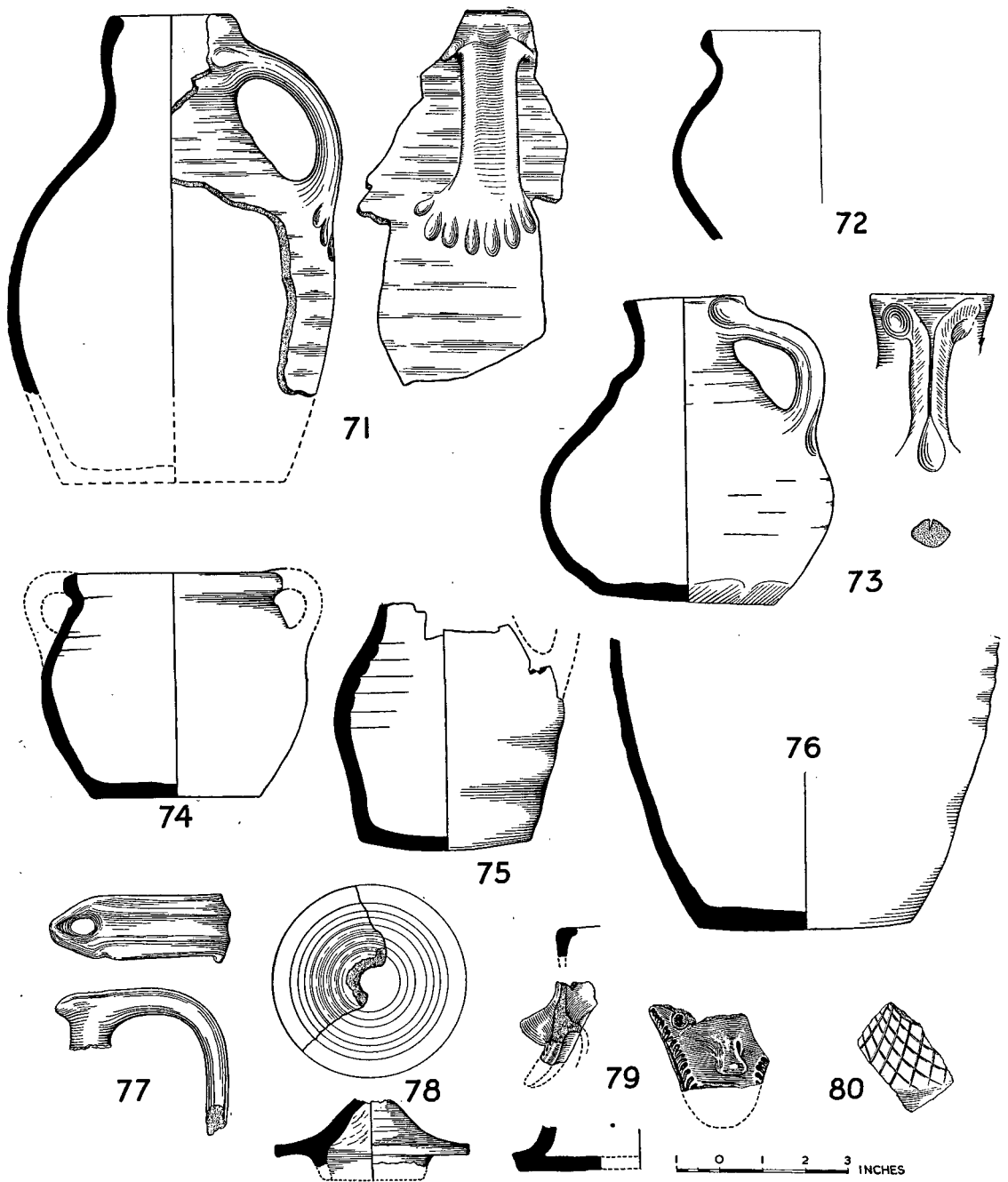
Medieval pottery: Deer Abbey (figs. 35-52).



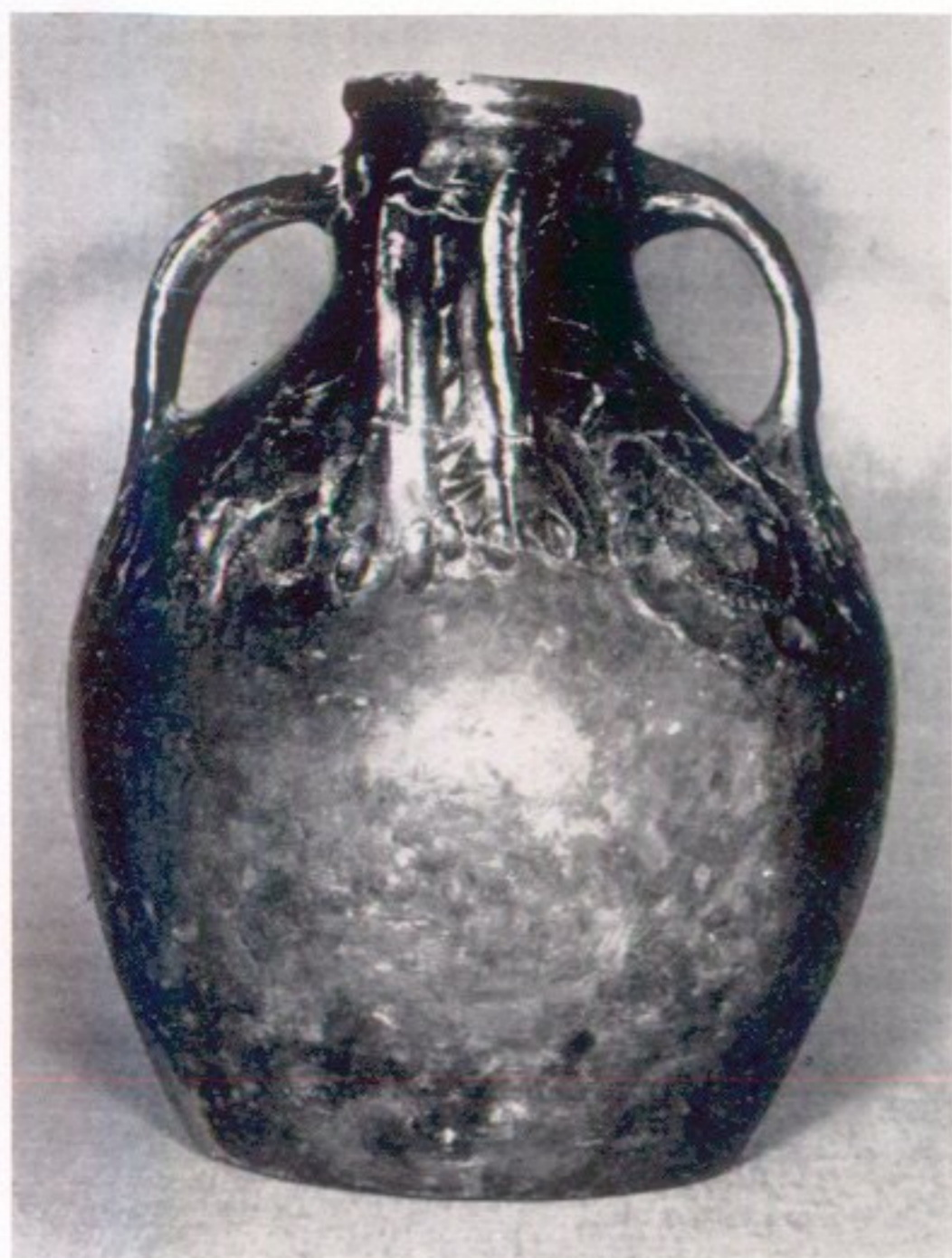
Medieval pottery: St Andrews Cathedral, (figs. 53-57); St Andrews Castle (fig. 58).



Medieval pottery: Incheolme Abbey (figs. 59-70).



Medieval pottery: various sites (see pp. 73-4).



1. (Fig. 1.)

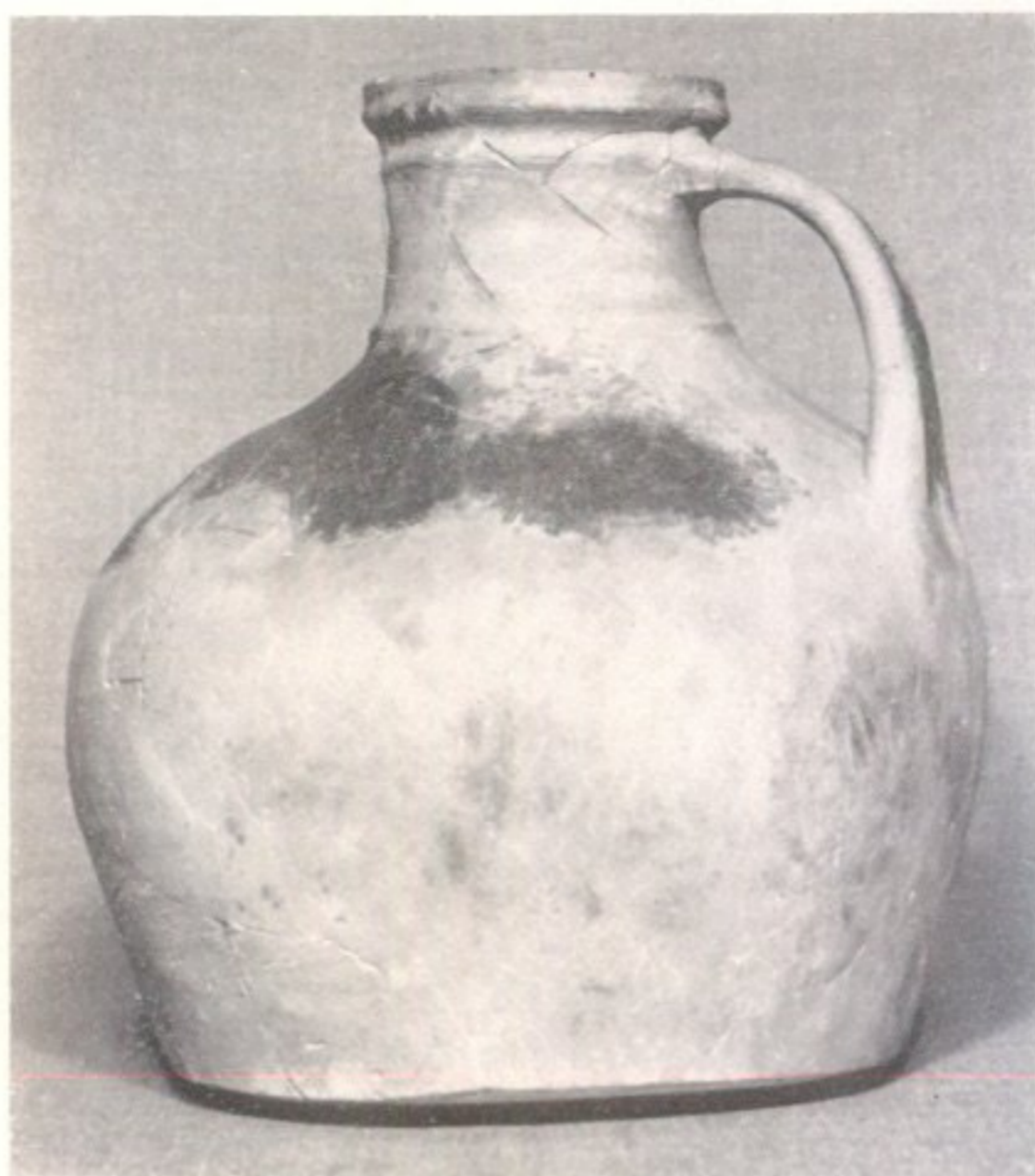


2. (Fig. 2.)



3. (Detail of 1, above.)

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1. (Fig. 4.)



2. (Fig. 7.)

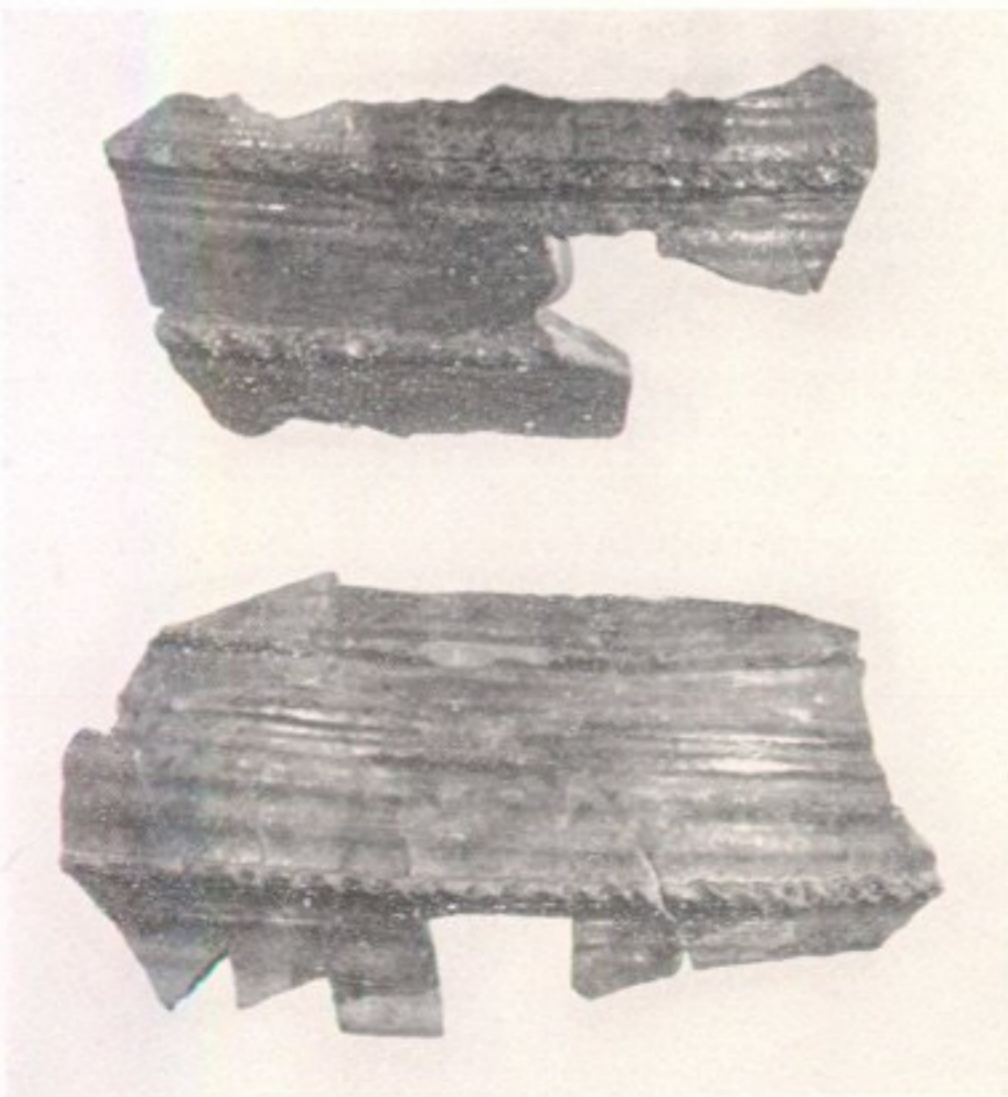


3. (Fig. 8.)

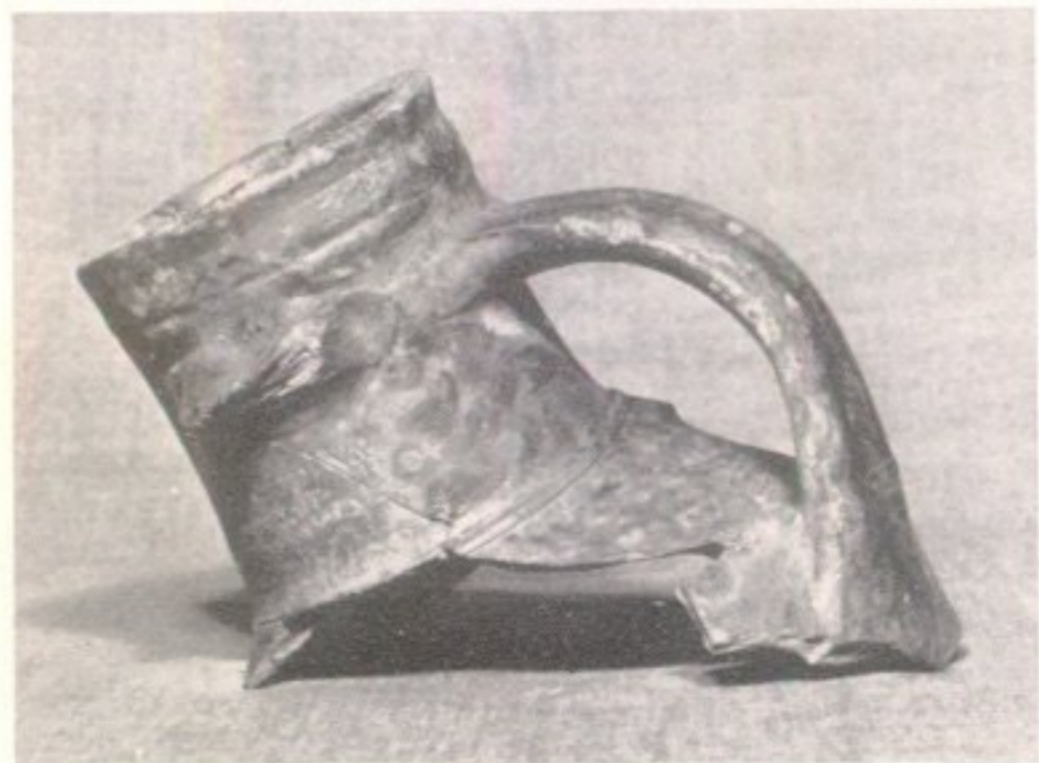
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1. (Fig. 3.)



2. (Figs. 22 and 25.)

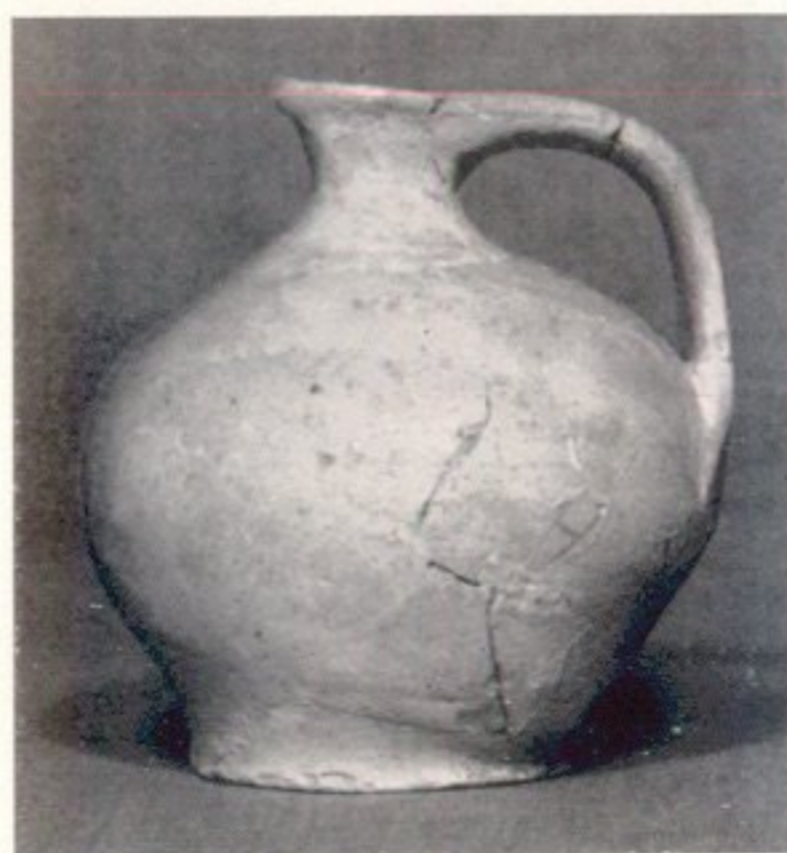


3. (Fig. 11.)

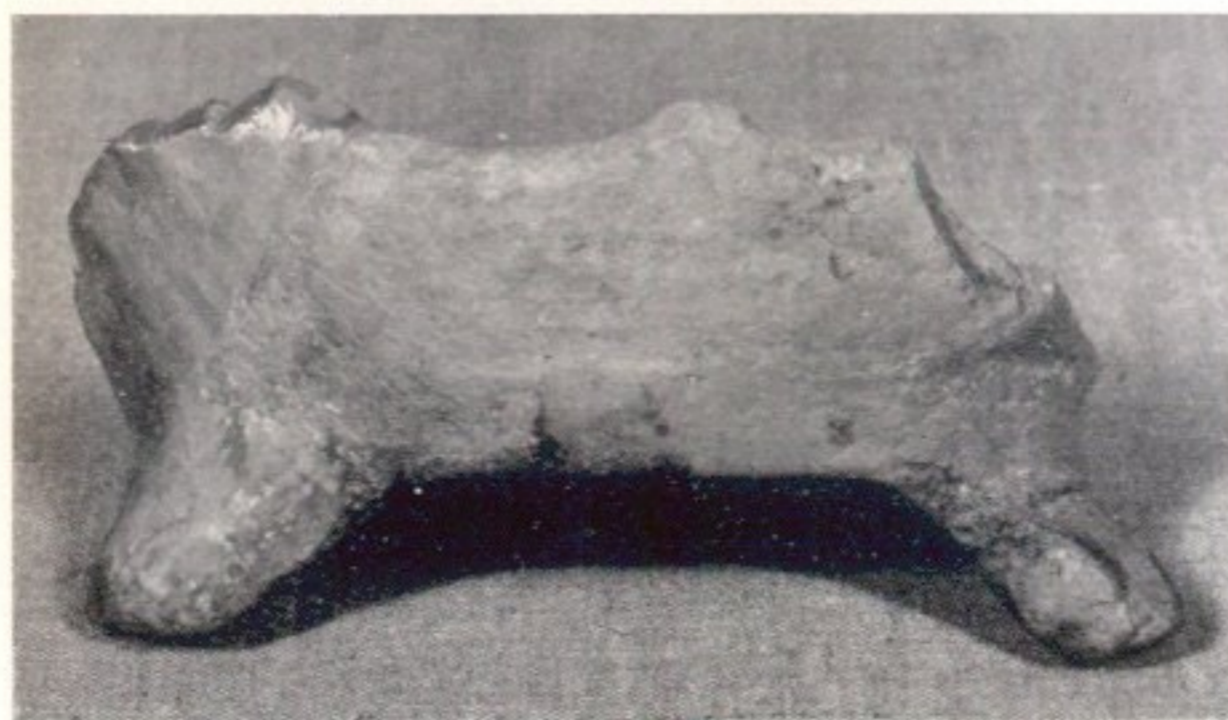
1. (Fig. 28.)



2. (Fig. 29.)



3. (Fig. 34.)



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2. (Fig. 54.)



1. (Fig. 53.)



3. (Fig. 58.)

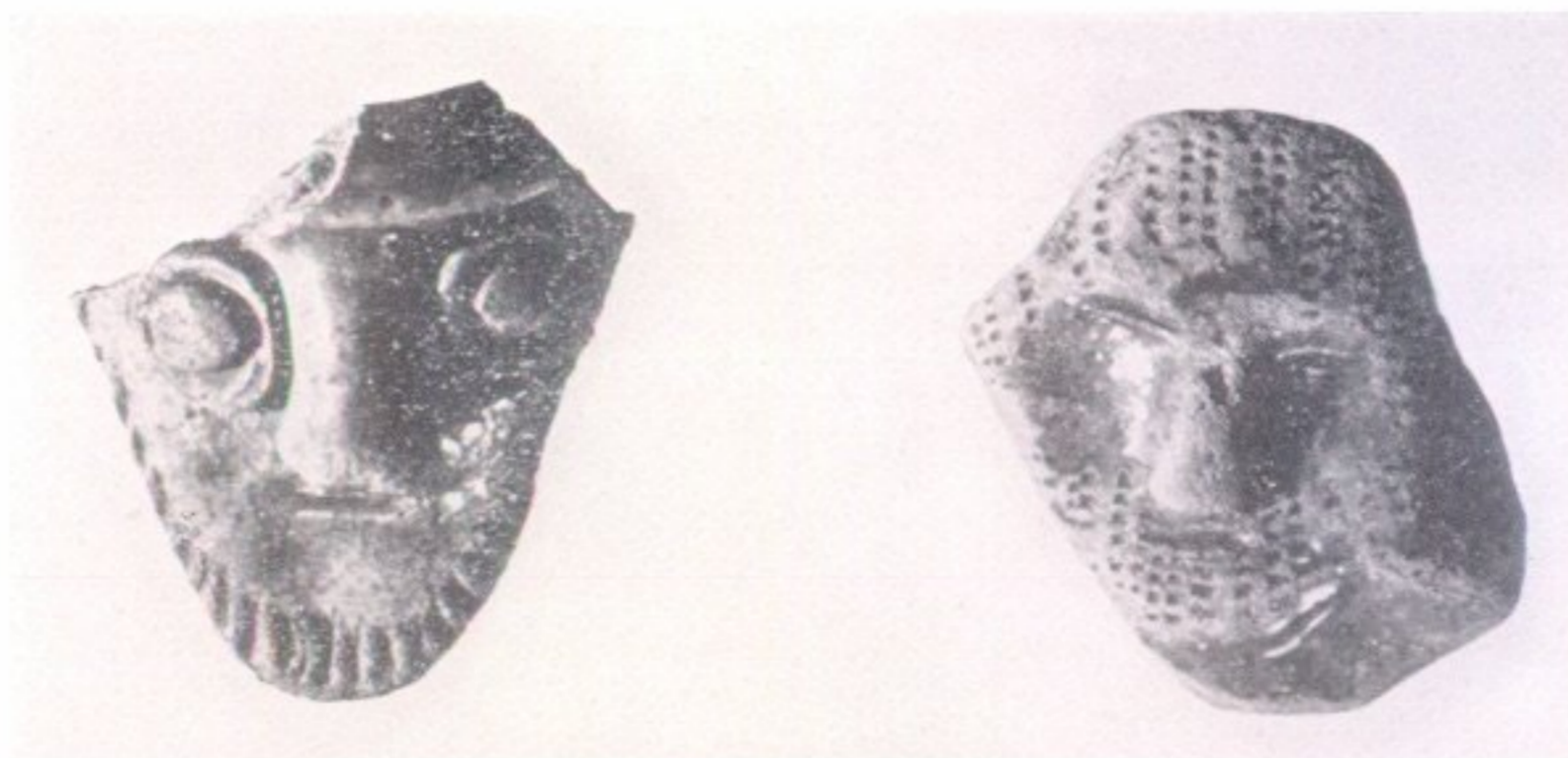
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1. (Fig. 61.)



2. (Fig. 63.)



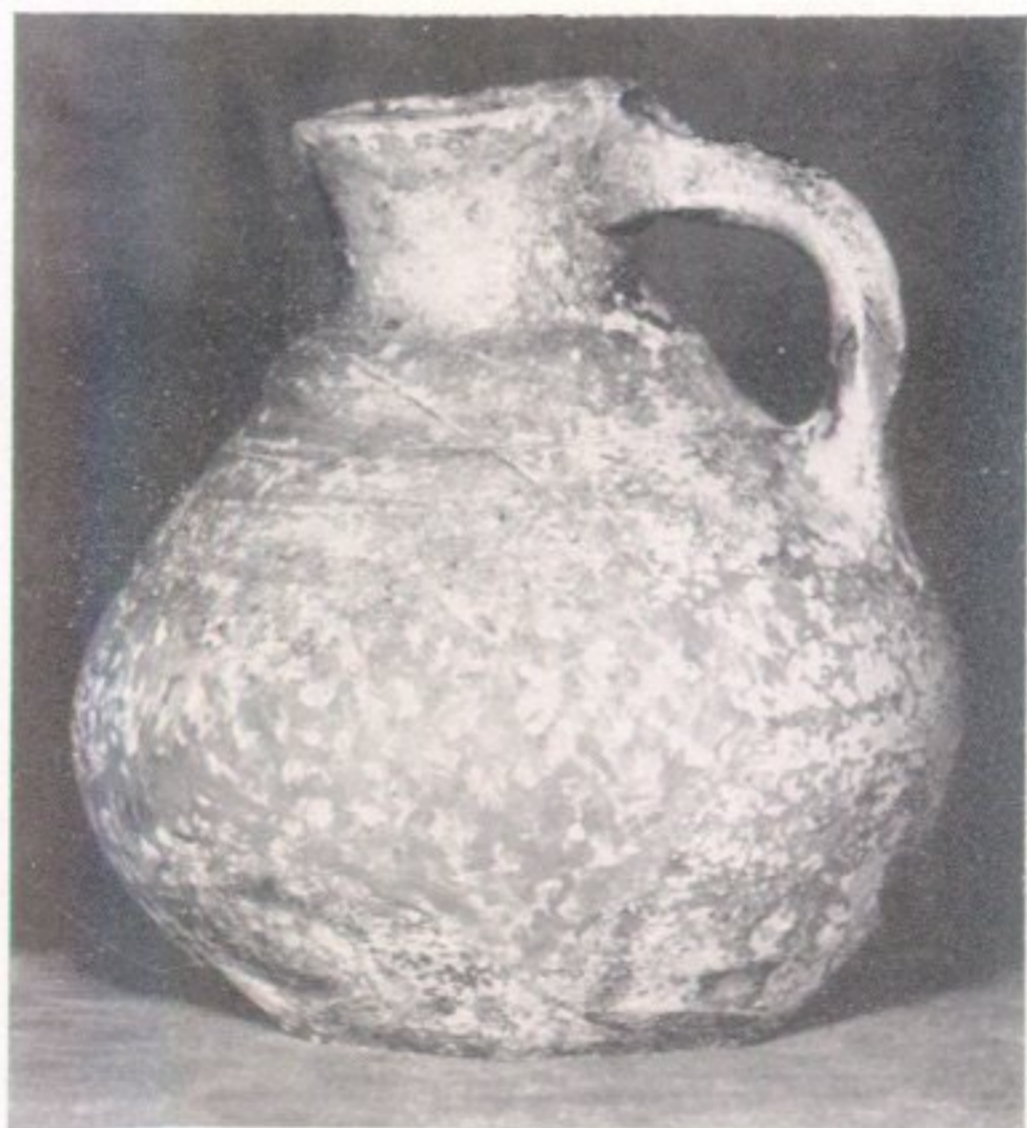
3. (Figs. 70 and 69.)



1. (Figs. 71 and 72.)



2. (Fig. 77.)



3. (Fig. 73.)



4. (Fig. 74.)