

Medieval and other Material in Linlithgow Palace Museum

by Lloyd R. Laing

The material in Linlithgow Palace Museum represents finds made during the last century or so in consolidation and clearance work in and around the Palace. About the beginning of this century considerable landscaping was carried out, especially on the N. side of the Peel, and according to local information, considerable quantities of earth were removed from around the Palace and taken to the edge of the Loch by a miniature railway. During these landscaping operations it is probable that much of the material now in the Museum came to light.¹

This material, therefore, is from unstratified contexts, and dating to a large extent is dependent on comparison with dated material from other sites. With a few exceptions, which are noted, the entire collection dates from the time of the occupation of the Palace, and may therefore be ascribed to the period between 1425, when James I began the existing structure, and 1746, when it was burnt down.² The majority of the finds from the Palace should in fact be ascribed to the period *c.* 1450–1650, as after that date the structure began to fall into a state of neglect. Thus it may be said that the pottery in particular is of interest, as it presents a fairly typical cross-section of the material in use in the late medieval and early post-medieval period, a time for which there is very little published Scottish comparative material, or indeed very little published comparative material from North Britain. The publication of this material, too, forms a useful sequel to the earlier stratified finds from the excavations of 1966–7, published by the present writer.³ The earlier and the present papers may be taken together as illustrating a typical series of pots from the Linlithgow area.

The material chosen for publication here does not constitute the entire collection, but a selection illustrating the main types represented, together with the more unusual finds.

A. FINDS OTHER THAN POTTERY

1. Bronze seal-matrix of William de Westondeb. Conical handle with pierced loop of trefoil design (cf. *London Museum Medieval Catalogue*, fig. 90, 3). Probably fifteenth-century. Legend reads (in Lombardic letters) S WILL'I DE WESTONDEB. Mullet stop of six rays. The device: on a fess three sexfoils between in chief a lion passant and in base three crosses fitchée. Found in the Presence Chamber, 1938.

2. Bronze spout, with traces of gilding, both inside and out. Length: 10.5 cm. Attached to the lip is a fantastic animal head, which has been made separately and fitted on. Where the spout is truncated the truncation is also gilded (fig. 2, 2).

¹ For a general discussion of the Peel, see *Linlithgow I*, esp. 111.

² For the history, see Richardson, J. S. and Beveridge, J., *Linlithgow Palace*, Official Guide (1948), and

Ferguson, J., *Linlithgow Palace, its History and Traditions* (1910).

³ See *Linlithgow I*, 129–39.

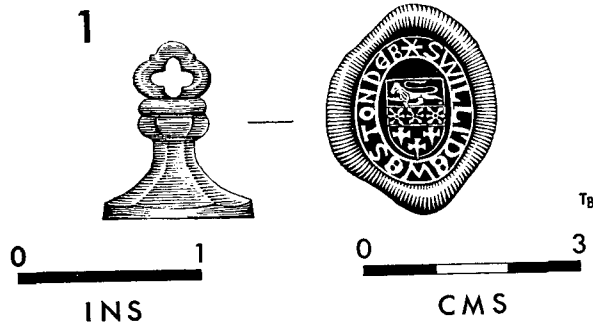


FIG. 1.

This possibly could be the spout of a very large lion-shaped aquamanile, or more accurately, *manile*. This type of vessel, which is fairly well represented in Scotland, was used for pouring water into the piscina for the washing of hands before and after Mass. Although they range in date from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries, the majority seem to date from the thirteenth or fourteenth century. The spout compares closely with one from Copenhagen Museum, figured by Anderson.¹ Presumably this originally came not from the Palace but St Michael's Kirkyard

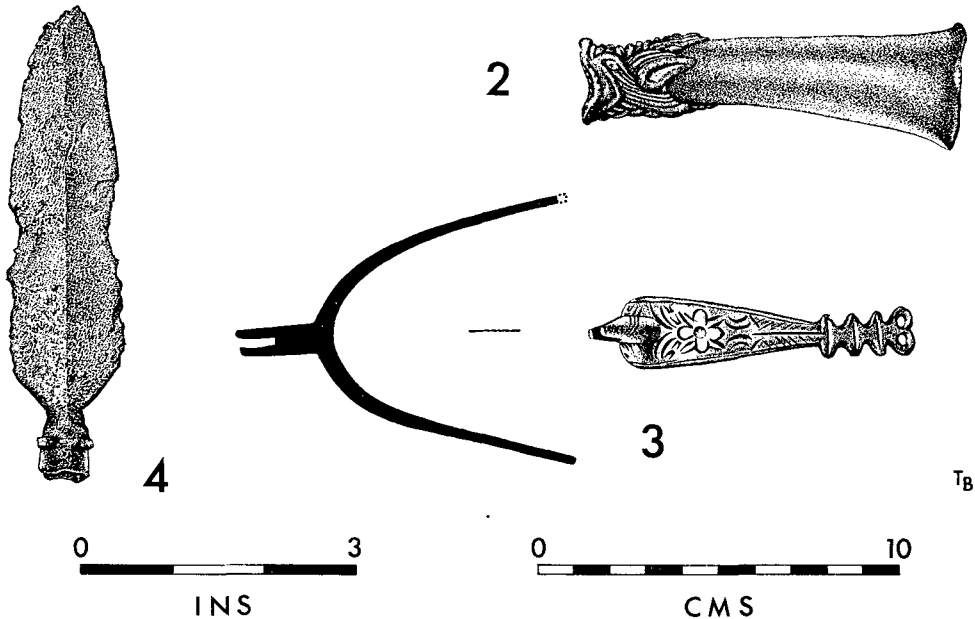


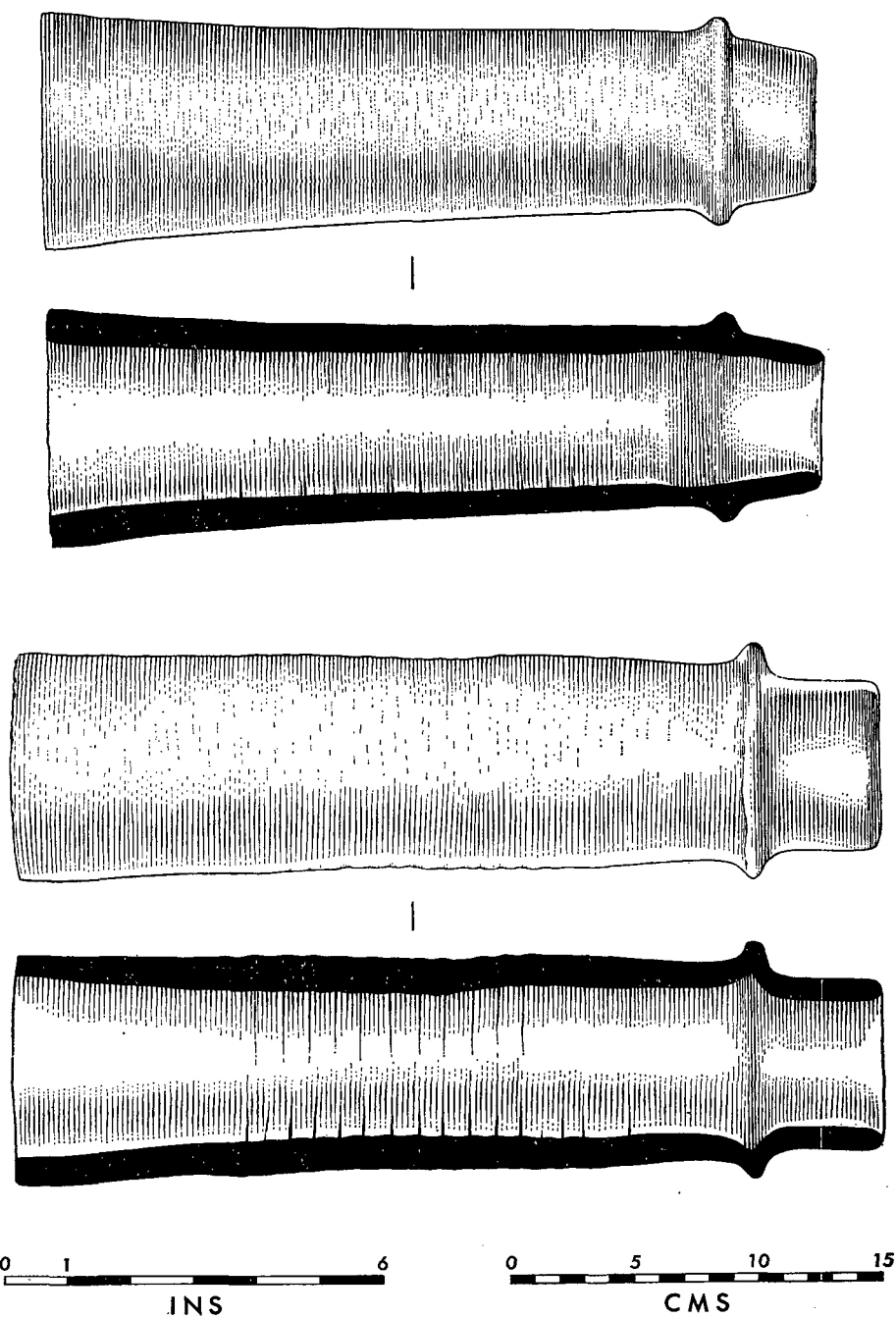
FIG. 2.

adjoining, and could date from as early as the thirteenth century. Many aquamanile were imports from Germany or Scandinavia, although they were also made in Britain, and copied in pottery. This is possibly, but not certainly, an import.

3. Lady's rowel spur. Bronze, decorated with punched and engraved decoration. Length:

¹ Anderson, J., 'Notices of a Mortar and Lion-Figures of Brass', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* New Series

1 (1878-9), 48-64 for general discussion. Copenhagen example illustrated as fig. 5, p. 53.



T_B

FIG. 3.

10 cm. Originally slightly longer, but the tip of the shank has broken off at the rowel-hole. The rowel is missing (fig. 2, 3). Probably late sixteenth or early seventeenth-century – the type, in which the shank is in a straight line with the body, is characteristically late.

4. Iron leaf-shaped spear-head or javelin head with medial ribs giving a flattened diamond-shaped section. The socket has a brass mount. Late seventeenth or early eighteenth-century. The use of brass mountings is a late feature. Length: 13.5 cm (fig. 2, 4). Found in 1938 to the W. of the Palace at a depth of less than 2 ft.

B. WATER PIPES (fig. 3)

Two sections of water pipes are illustrated, in unglazed sandy orange fabric. They belong to the original water system of the Palace, and accordingly date from the second quarter of the fifteenth century. They were socketed into one another, each having an entasis and slight intake at one end. There is a ridge 4 or 5 cm from this end to prevent one pipe sliding too far into the next. It is interesting to compare these pipes with the pipes and junction box from Glenluce Abbey, Wigtown.¹

The pipes measure 31 cm and 35 cm respectively (fig. 3).

C. POTTERY (figs. 4–7)

(1) Roman

There are three Roman sherds in the Palace Museum, although four are recorded as having been recovered. Two mortaria rims were found with an 'amphora' rim in 1862, to the N. of the Peel, while another 'amphora' rim was found in St Michael's Kirkyard in 1925.² Presumably the three sherds now in the Museum are those found in 1862.

1. Mortarium rim and part of spout. Fine buff fabric with grey grits.

2. Rim of similar vessel, with grits carried over on to flange.

Both these would seem to be of second-century, probably late second-century, date. This type, in which the top of the flange is level with the bead, and in which the flange has a pronounced hook, first appears at the end of the first century, but becomes more common in the early second³ – these would seem however to be rather later, and should be compared with *Gillam* 1957, Type 261 (A.D. 160–210). See also *Duntocher*, fig. 15, 8.

3. Rim of narrow mouthed jar. Diam, 13.5 cm. Light grey fabric fired to orange on the surface, and with cream external slip. Probably second-century.

(2) Thirteenth-fourteenth centuries

4. Body and neck of jug in grey sandy fabric, with orange surface, found by a skin-diver in Linlithgow Loch in June 1966 (Pl. 11a). Worn green glaze. Sagging base, strap-handle broken off at junction with the body. Lead plug in wall. Possibly a waster. Lower part of vessel knifed. Compare *Bothwell*, 20, etc, for type – this vessel is somewhat larger with a girth of 32 cm.

5. Body sherds and strap-handle junction of a jug in hard grey sandy ware, creamy-white externally. Orange-green glaze. Decorated with comb-impressions which probably covered the surface of the pot, and applied strips, decorated with finger tip impressions, comb-decoration, and stamped raised crosses in incuse circles. The comb-impressions may be compared with *Motte of Urr*, 1. This type of decoration as far as is known is otherwise unparalleled in Scotland,

¹ Cruden, S. H., 'Glenluce Abbey: Finds Recovered During Excavations, I', *Trans. Dumfriesshire Galloway Natur. Hist. Antiq. Soc.* xxxix (1952), 177–94. For water supply, see p. 185.

² For references to these, see *Linlithgow I*, 113, and n.

³ See Keynon, K., *Excavations at the Jewry Wall Site, Leicester* (1948), 77.

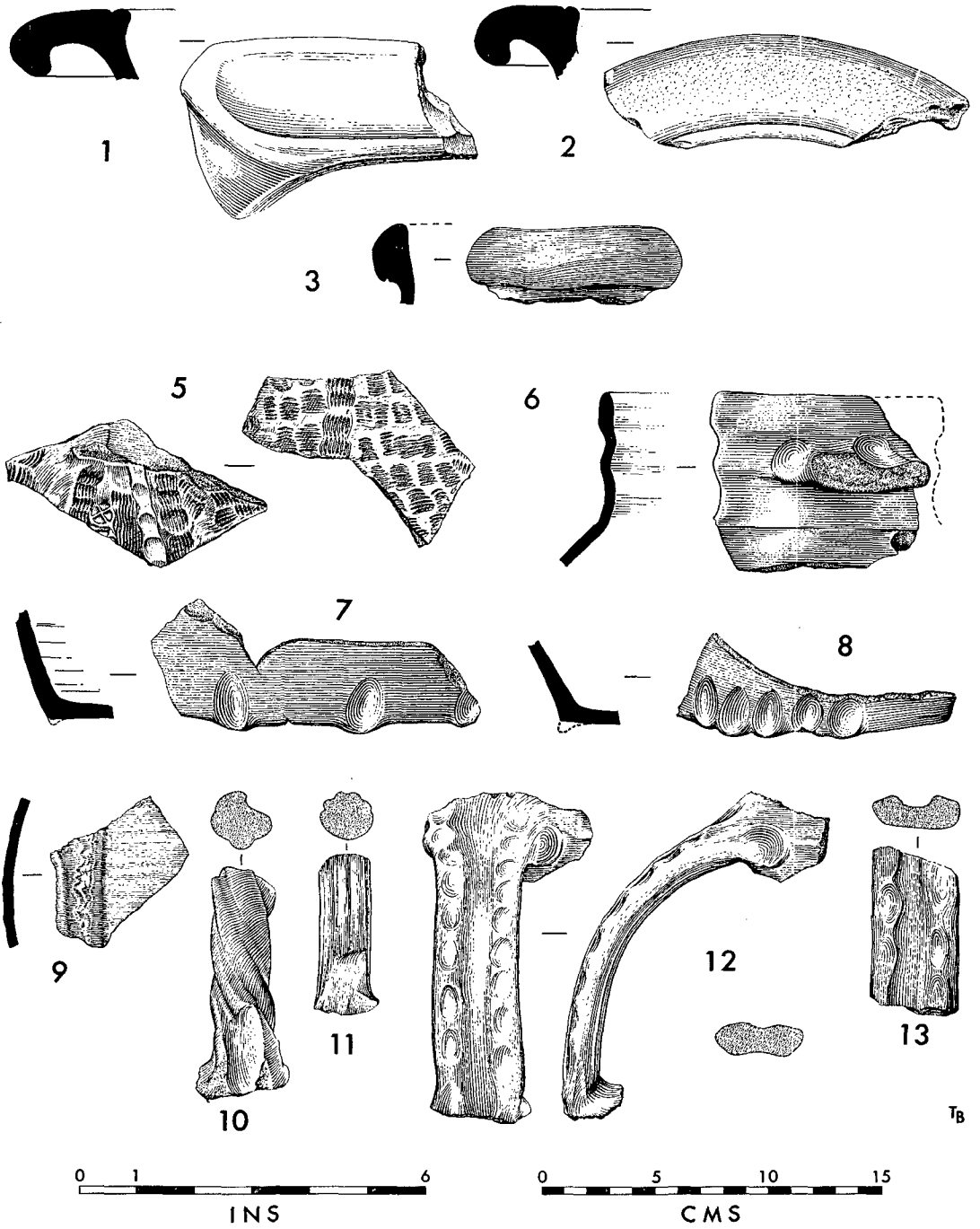


FIG. 4.

and the vessel is probably a thirteenth-century import. It possibly stems from a type of decoration with a twelfth-century date – compare *Corfe Castle*, fig. 14, 1–2, where a continental proto-type (Rhineland) is postulated. A thirteenth-fourteenth-century use of a related decorative feature can be seen at *Old Sarum*. The cross-stamp can be compared with *Bothwell*, 48.

(3) Fifteenth century

Although many of the sherds described below might at first seem to be earlier on account of their light coloured fabrics and decorative features, for the most part they may nevertheless be paralleled by sherds from other Scottish sites which do not appear to have occupation before the fifteenth century – e.g. Ravenscraig, Fife. Archaism probably accounts for the long continuance of such features, although thumbed bases, a feature of thirteenth-century pottery in both England and Scotland, are known to have enjoyed a further period of currency in England in the fifteenth century.¹ Strap-handles were in use throughout the middle ages and continued into post-medieval times, rod-handles (i.e. those with a circular or oval section) and rope-twist or barley-sugar handles are usually thought of as early, but again these occur in other fifteenth-century contexts in Scotland.

6. Rim of jug in pale orange fabric with grey core. Partial deep green glaze. Strap-handle, flattened rim. A common Scottish type, with long survival, which may be paralleled at *Bothwell* and elsewhere. Compare *Linlithgow*, 18 (fourteenth-century).

7. Base of a jug in sandy light-grey ware with uneven light-green glaze. Decorated with widely spaced thumbing, with thumbing under the base as well as on the side. This belongs to Hurst's Group 2 in his series of types of thumbed bases.² The same feature occurs on pots from *Bothwell* and *Kirkcudbright*.

8. Base of jug in fine creamy-white ware fired to pale pink on external surface. Patches of clear glaze. Decorated with regularly spaced groups of thumb impressions.

9. Body sherd of jug in creamy-white ware with pale-green glaze and two appliqué strips of brownish-green, between which, lightly incised zig-zag ornament.

10. Barley-sugar or rope-twist handle, grey fabric fired to orange on outer surface, partial green/brown glaze. Compare *Linlithgow*, 47 (where it appeared in a fifteenth-century context, but was then suggested as being a residual) or *S.M.P.*, 56.

11. Round rod-handle in grey fabric with light-orange outer surface. Green glaze. Reeded decoration.

12. Strap-handle in dark grey fabric fired to light-grey and orange on outer surface. Raised thumb-imprinted edges.

13. Similar, in light-grey ware fired to buff on outer surface. Both 12 and 13 with green glaze, streaked with brown.

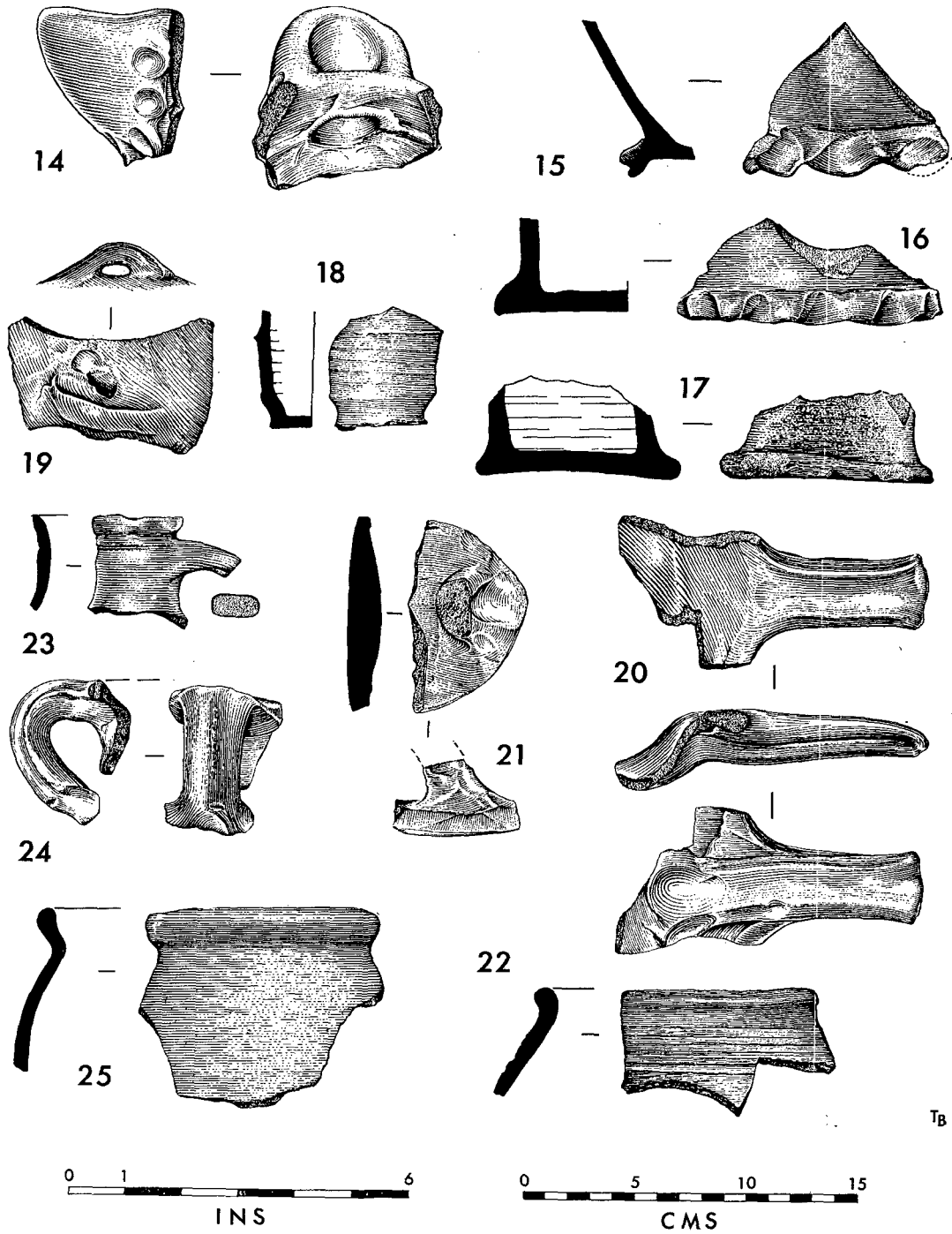
14. Bridge-spout of large jug in grey ware with orange external surface. Brown and green mottled glaze. Thumbing all round lip. Compare *Linlithgow*, 78.

15. Base of jug in very hard grey ware with lustrous brownish-green glaze. Both ware and glaze are characteristic of the late fifteenth century in North Britain, and probably carry on into the sixteenth.³ Compare with 16 and 17 below. It is possible that this type of frilled base is imitating Sieburg stoneware of c. 1500, and if this is so it should be ascribed to the sixteenth rather than the fifteenth century. A few sherds of vessels which probably have come from the Sieburg kilns have been found in Scotland (e.g. at *Dundee Overgate*), as yet unpublished.

¹ *London Museum Medieval Catalogue*, 213.

² Hurst, J. G., 'Jugs with bases thumbed underneath', *Medieval Archaeol.* vi–vii (1962–3), 295–8.

³ Jope, E. M. and H. M., Stewart, I. H. and Thompson, J. D. A., 'A Hoard of 15th Cent. coins from Glenluce Sands and their context', *Medieval Archaeol.* iii (1959), 259–90. For ware, p. 266.



TB

FIG. 5.

16. Base of jug in hard, fine orange ware with medium green and brown good glaze. Decorated with finger impressions. Probably this, and 18, are in turn derived from frilled bases similar to 16. In which case a sixteenth-century date is possible. Compare *Warkworth*, 13 (late fourteenth fifteenth-century).

17. Base of small jug in similar ware with light-grey core. Irregular rough green and brown glaze. The splayed base is decorated with shallow finger tip impressions. For dating, see 15–16 above.

(4) Sixteenth century

18. Small drug pot; hard, reddish fabric, patches of yellow-green glaze. This type is fairly widespread in North Britain, and is in fact a native imitation of a Netherlands majolica vessel – for original and native copy see *Hungate, York*, fig. 25, 6 and 10. The prototypes antedate 1570.¹

19. Lug with vertical piercing from globular vessel, Hard sandy grey ware, with brown and green glaze, very lustrous. While fabric and glaze are typical of the late fifteenth century, the nature of the vessel and lug would suggest a sixteenth-century date. Compare *Potovens*, fig. 7, 8 (late fifteenth to late sixteenth-century).

20. Skillet handle in hard orange ware with lustrous green/brown glaze. The handle has been produced by bending over a long strip of clay extended from the body of the vessel, pinching it together and thumbing it on to the body of the pot. There are many of these from Linlithgow, of varying sizes.

21. Lid, in grey hard fine ware with olive-green glaze. Strap-handle broken off at thumbled junction.

22. Vessel with constricted mouth and bead rim in gritty grey and red-brown hard ware with lustrous green and brown glaze on the interior and rim, and uneven glaze on body. Incised grooves below rim. This type belongs to a general late medieval tradition in the NE. of England – cf. *Newcastle Carmelite Friary*, 60.

23. Neck and rim of jug in hard orange-buff ware with orange surface and yellow-brown glaze with traces of green. Slightly pinched spout. Grooves below simple rim. Strap handle. Compare *Finchale*, 13 (sixteenth-century).

24. Bar handle with rib and part of rim of small ovoid vessel in sandy orange ware with mottled green and brown glaze (Pl. 11b).

25. Rim and body of rather coarser vessel in orange sandy fabric. Similar glaze. These last two vessels are difficult to date, and could belong to any period from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. In general, they are similar to the two-handled posset pots which Cruden dates to the fourteenth century (*SMP*, 28, and *SMP*, 59–60, *Bothwell*, 59 etc.). They are, however, closely related to the two-handled vessels of later date, and are unlikely to be as early as this here.

(5) Sixteenth-seventeenth centuries

Probably many of the sixteenth-century types continue into the seventeenth. The following are however more likely to be seventeenth on account of fabric, glaze and form.

26. Two-handled globular pot in orange sandy ware with orange lustrous glaze. Streak of green glaze on handle. Everted rim, rod-handle rising above level of rim. Glaze on both interior and exterior. Compare *Newcastle Carmelite Friary*, 119 (seventeenth-century).

27. Rim of similar pot in similar fabric with the glaze rather browner. Even glaze on interior, sparse on exterior. Compare *Linlithgow*, 63 for form, but not glaze.

28. Everted rim in hard, fumed fine-grey ware with orange surface. Lustrous green-brown

¹ Rackham, B., *Early Netherlands Majolica* (1926), 111.

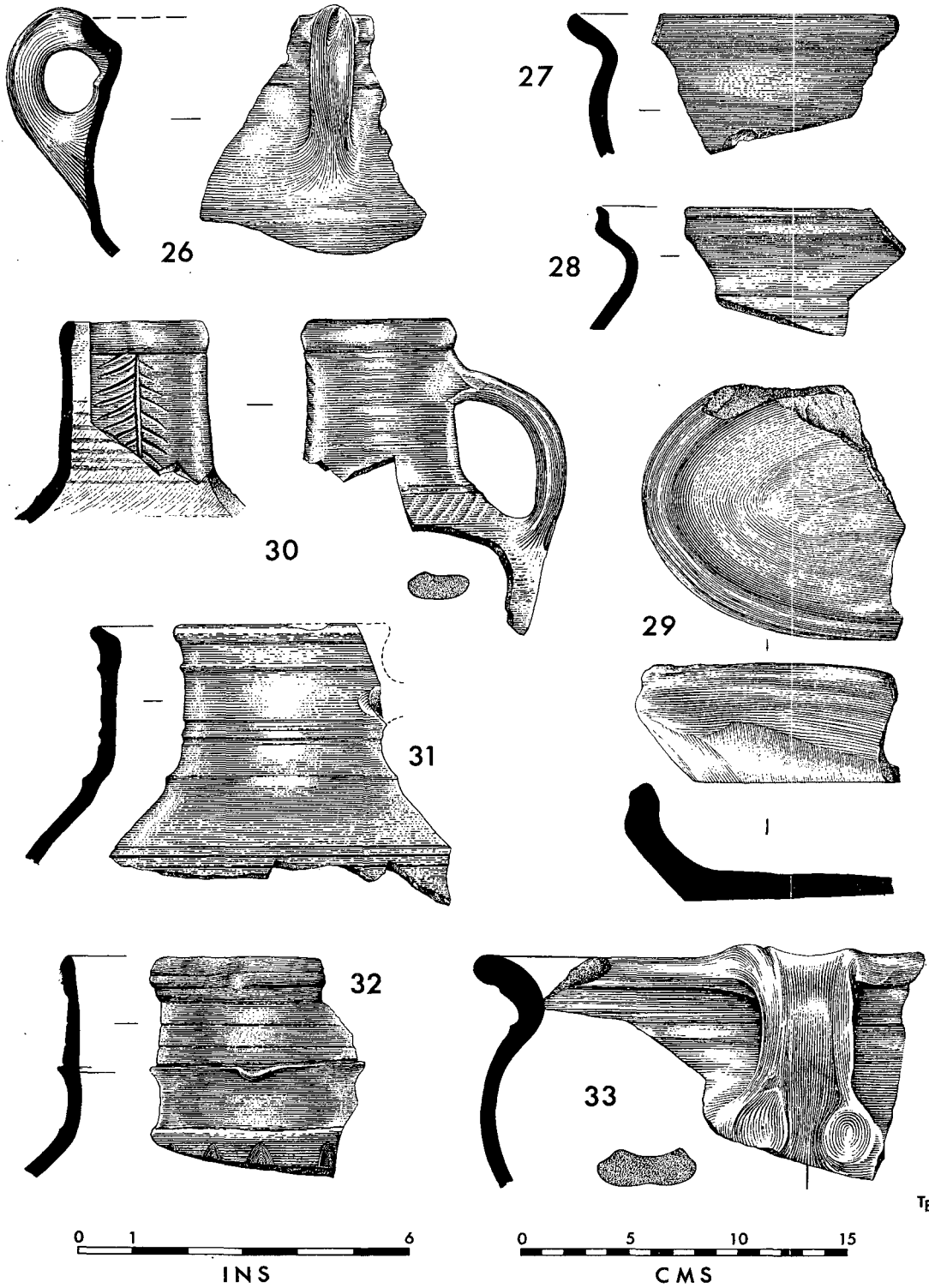


FIG. 6.

T_B

glaze. Cordon on shoulder. Deep lid seating. Compare *Finchale*, 95 and *Bothwell*, 59 (both fourteenth-century). Here the fabric and glaze precludes such an early date.

The above pots are in general related to the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries of *English Country Pottery* 1a, or *Potovens*, fig. 11, 9–10.

29. Dish, in hard grey ware with green-brown glaze. Compare *Potovens*, Kiln 17, E (seventeenth-century).

30. Jug in hard grey ware (almost stoneware) with orange surface. Dark olive-green and Bovril-coloured lustrous glaze. Strap handle. Feather decoration on the neck. Slight spout. Groove below simple, slightly swollen, lip. Pattern of lightly incised lines on shoulder.

31. Jug in hard fine fumed-grey ware with olive-green and brown glaze. Incised lines and cordon on neck. Cordon on shoulder.

32. Similar but larger vessel, with wavy incised decoration.

33. Large pancheon in fine grey ware with brown and green lustrous glaze. Simple strap-handle.

34. Jug in orange-buff hard ware with orange lustrous glaze. Two cordons on neck. Pinched spout. Probably seventeenth-century (Pl. 11b).

Not figured

35. Bellarmine jug of Rhenish stoneware with a Type V mask.¹ Second quarter of seventeenth century. Girth diam. 23 cm (Pl. 12a).

36. Bellarmine jug, probably English, with Type VIII mask. Late seventeenth-century. Girth diam, 13 cm (Pl. 12a).

37. Fragments of Delft majolica coloured plate. Late seventeenth-century.

38. Delftware drug jar. Albarello form, decorated with chain pattern and plain blue bands. Late seventeenth-century. Compare *Finavon*, Pl. XLVII, 1 and 2 – the latter from the Guildhall Museum, London. Height: 12 cm. Diam. of mouth 13.5 cm (Pl. 12b).

39. English and Netherlands delftware. Late seventeenth to early eighteenth-century.

40. Dish with *chinoiserie* decoration in blue on white ground. Probably English, early eighteenth-century.

REFERENCES

Bothwell

Cruden, S. H. 'Scottish Mediaeval Pottery: The Bothwell Castle Collection'. *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* LXXXVI (1951–2), 140–70.

Corfe Castle

R.C.H.M. (England). 'Excavations in the west bailey of Corfe Castle'. *Medieval Archaeol.* iv (1960), 29–56.

Duntocher

Robertson, A. S. *An Antonine Fort, Golden Hill, Duntocher* (1957).

English Country Pottery

Brears, P. *A Catalogue of English Country Pottery in the Yorkshire Museum* (1968).

Finavon

Simpson, W. D. 'Finavon Castle'. *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* LXXXIX (1955–6), 398–416.

¹ Holmes, M. R., 'The So-called "Bellarmine" mask on imported Rhenish Stoneware', *Antiq. J.* xxxi

(1951), 173–9, esp. 175–6 (for Type V) and 178 (for Type VIII).

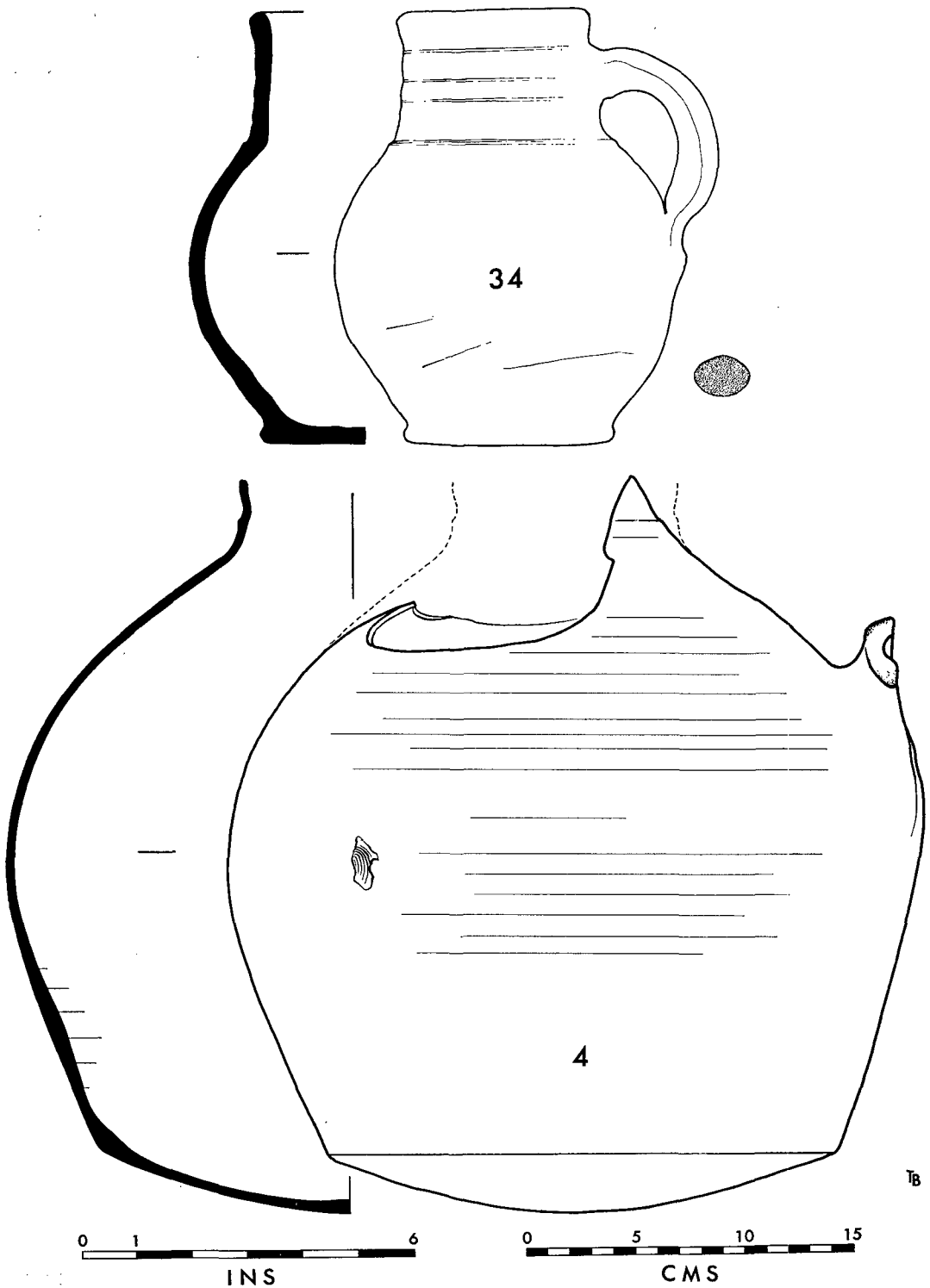


FIG. 7.

Finchale

Jarrett, M. G. and Edwards, B. J. N. 'Medieval and other Pottery from Finchale Priory, Co. Durham'. *Archaeol. Aeliana*⁴ xxxix (1961), 229-78.

Hungate

Richardson, K. M. 'Excavations in Hungate, York'. *Archaeol. J.* cxvi (1961), 51-114.

Linlithgow I

Laing, L. R. 'Excavations at Linlithgow Palace 1966-67'. *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* xcix (1966-7), 111-47.

Motte of Urr

Truckell, A. E. and Williams, J. 'Medieval Pottery in Dumfriesshire and Galloway'. *Trans. Dumfriesshire Galloway Natur. Hist. Antiq. Soc.* xlv (1967), 133-74.

Newcastle Carmelite Friary

Harbottle, R. B. 'Excavations at the Carmelite Friary, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1965 and 1967'. *Archaeol. Aeliana*⁴ xlvi (1968), 163-223.

Old Sarum

Stevens, F. 'Old Sarum Pottery'. *Wiltshire Archaeol. Natur. Hist. Mag.* xlvi (1932-4), 259-69.

Potovens

Brears, P. 'Excavations at Potovens, near Wakefield'. *Post-Medieval Archaeol.* i (1967), 3-43.

SMP

Cruden, S. H. 'Scottish Medieval Pottery'. *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* lxxxix (1955-6), 67-82.

TRCP

Gillam, J. P. 'Types of Roman Coarse Pottery Vessels in North Britain'. *Archaeol. Aeliana* xxxv (1957), 1-72.

Warkworth

Harbottle, B. 'An Excavation at Warkworth Castle, Northumberland, 1966'. *Archaeol. Aeliana*⁴ xlv (1967), 105-21.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to Mr W. N. Robertson for discussing various matters relating to the Linlithgow finds with me, and offering stimulating suggestions. The drawings are by Mr T. Borthwick, to whom I also owe thanks.

This paper is published with the aid of a Treasury grant.



a Linlithgow: Jug No. 4



b Linlithgow: Jug No. 24



a Linlithgow: Bellarmine Jugs Nos. 35 and 36



b Linlithgow: Delftware Drug Jar, No. 38