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EXCAVATIONS AT SMALHOLM TOWER, ROXBURGHSHIRE

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SMITHHOLM

G L GOOD AND C J TABRAHAM

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Excavations at Smailholm Tower, Roxburghshire

George L Good and Christopher J Tabraham

THE EXCAVATIONS

With the exception of one small exploratory trench immediately to the north of the towerhouse, excavation was confined to the area of the barmkin. The entire area, including the barmkin wall itself, was investigated except for a small area on the south side of the towerhouse which was in use by the stone-masons for stone storage and cutting.

For economy of space, the features and layers are not indexed in this report; sufficient detail, where relevant, is provided in the text. Features are shown thus: F42; layers are shown thus: ABC.

THE WEST COURT

The larger of the two courts, measuring 18 m by 15 m, lay on the west side of the towerhouse between it and the gateway into the barakin through the west wall. This west side was the only part of the perimeter wall still standing to any substantial height at the time of excavation, being in places over 4 m high. In view of the fact that this wall, which like the remainder of the original barakin wall had been constructed of the local igneous rock and bonded with a yellow clay-silt, was in a parlous condition, it had been consolidated by pressure grouting with lime mortar in the early 1970s before excavation work began. The gateway, centrally placed, was represented by a gap 2.7 m wide, though clearly it had been narrower when entire. How much narrower excavation at ground level failed to reveal for all trace of threshold, if any, and door rybats had gone. The faint signs of the tails of dressed rybat stones higher up suggest a narrowing by about 1 m, giving a doorway perhaps

1.7 m wide. No more information was forthcoming as to the number or position of doors sealing the opening and all that survived was the slot for the timber draw-bar in the south side.

The barakin wall skirting the west court varied between 1.5 m and 2.2 m in thickness and was generally built directly on top of the bedrock. In places along the north edge, where there were gaps in that rock, the wall had slipped outwards and downwards, so affecting the floor levels within the north range of buildings. A block of fallen masonry outwith the north wall was mortar-bonded, strongly hinting that this had come from the rebuilding of the north barakin wall when the range was remodelled in the 17th century.

Along the south edge of the west court, the barakin wall narrowed considerably immediately east of the south range of buildings. Here it was arched over a large gap in the bedrock, and again consolidation work had been carried out prior to excavation in order to preserve it. On the south

side of the towerhouse the wall hugged the very edge of the cliff to leave as much space as possible in the vicinity of the entrance into the tower.

The area of the west court was taken up by two ranges of building, the one north of and the other south of a central courtyard. This courtyard consisted mainly of flat slabs of igneous rock interspersed with the occasional block of sandstone. In places the natural rock projected through this crude metalling and had in places been chipped away to provide a more even surface. Considerable wear was evident throughout the courtyard, both on the metalling and on the bedrock, and this wear pattern was particularly noticeable along the routes linking the several doorways.

THE NORTH RANGE

The north range used the barakin wall for its east, north and west walls. The south wall was built largely of the igneous rock but showed signs of having been substantially altered, being bonded variously with yellow clay-silt and an off-white lime-mortar. During the course of excavation it became apparent that there had been two main phases of building. In the first, the range had comprised two rooms, a small one to the east and a larger one to the west. This was replaced by a three-roomed structure using the same external walls, with an extension on the south east built against the west wall of the towerhouse. With the sole exception of the secondary wall dividing the west and east courts, the only use of lime-mortar as a bonding agent throughout the entire complex proved to be confined to alterations associated with this remodelling of the north range.

PHASE ONE

The south wall (F1) in this first phase was clay-silt bonded and was built at the same time as the barmkin wall itself since the two are jointed together at the east end where the barmkin wall abutted the towerhouse. At the west end the wall abutted the barmkin wall just north of the gateway into the courtyard. The position of the entrance(s) into this north range from the courtyard could not be ascertained on account of the extent of the reconstruction work (the mortar-bonded sections) carried out on this wall during the second phase.

The building was partitioned into two rooms by a wall (F19), 1.1 m wide. The larger room on the west measured 10.2 m by 5.6 m; the smaller room to its east was about 5 m square. The doorway linking the two rooms lay towards the south end of the partition wall but its exact position and width could not be determined because of its demolition during the subsequent alterations.

The floor in the larger room was a brown humic silt which overlay the uneven bedrock. The larger gaps in the bedrock had been infilled with rubble. The movement and settling of this infill material had caused considerable disturbance in the floor levels along the north part of the room and had forced the north bankin wall to bulge outwards in places. The instability of this north wall could well have prompted the major remodelling associated with the later phase.

There were scarcely any features surviving in this main room which could be associated with this first phase. The most obvious was a roughly square stone setting (F1B) near the middle of the room. It measured 1 m across and the east part had been subjected to intensive burning. The floor immediately to its east was equally heavily burnt, strongly suggesting that this feature had been a hearth or fireplace. The restricted area of burning on the stonework indicated that the fire itself had been raised above floor level, probably contained within a grate. The area of burning on the stones and the adjacent floor

could well have resulted from the raking out of the cinders from that raised grate. A narrow clay- and stone-filled trench around the four edges of the feature, which cut through the burnt soil associated with it, probably represented the removal of a stone edging, or korb, around the hearth.

In the north-west corner of the room there was a recess (F35) set into the north barakin wall. This may have been the location of a narrow window, perhaps even a gunhole covering the northern approach to the site.

In the smaller room on the east, the bedrock projected very unevenly and, because of this and the patchiness of most layers, the stratigraphy of the occupation levels was often difficult to sort out. It was obvious that the floor surface was far from even; indeed, there may have been a split-level floor for the east part was markedly higher than the remainder.

In the north-east corner was a cobbled hearth (F21), 1.8 m by 1 m, set against the east wall. A

spread of ash and burning over and around this hearth was the only occupation layer that could with any certainty be associated with this phase. Smoke from this fireplace was doubtless carried upwards and out of the room by a "hingin' lue", a hooded flue of lath and clay applied to the inside face of the wall.

Also associated with this phase was a small aumbry, or wall-cupboard (F48), 500 mm wide and 400 mm deep, set into the east wall near the towerhouse. This had subsequently been blocked up with similar masonry and was only partially visible during the excavation, though it became clearer during the consolidation programme.

Despite the comprehensive nature of the excavation, including even the removal of much of the rubble infill beneath the floor of the larger room, there was scarcely anything in the way of artefacts discovered, and certainly nothing that would indicate a date of construction or occupation of this phase-one north range.

PHASE TWO

This second phase saw considerable alterations to the north range. The partition wall (F19) was demolished and replaced by a silt-bonded wall (F4), 200 mm wide, a short distance to the east. This effectively reduced the width of the east room to 3.4 m. An additional partition, the earth-bonded wall (F7), 450 mm wide, was inserted to create an extra room, 2.8 m wide, at the west end of the range. This reduced the length of the large room in the centre to about 9 m. All three rooms had had their wall surfaces rendered with plaster.

Entry from the courtyard was by way of an inward-opening doorway through the south wall at the east end of the central room (Room I). The basal rybats of the doorway survived and were finely-moulded sandstone blocks. Attached to the west rybat was an iron crook set in lead into the stone on which the lower hinge of the door would have pivoted. The entrance into the room was stepped down with blocks of sandstone and igneous

rock.

The doorway linking Rooms I and III (the west room), at the north end of the partition wall (F7), also had dressed sandstone jambs, though more simply fashioned than the main entrance doorway with just a plain broad chamfer. Here too the door crook was in position on the north side of the opening, allowing the door to open into Room III against the north wall. One of the jamb stones had a square hole in it which had been blocked up with mortar and small stones, suggesting that it had been re-used. Indeed, from the rubble debris (AAB; AAK; AAT) sealing this later building came a number of assorted dressed sandstone pieces which had quite clearly come from another building, or buildings. That the origin of the stone was not Smailholm itself (that is, from the phase-one north range) is demonstrated by a window sillion which had clearly come from a quite elaborate traceried window ; a possible credence bearing several crosses; a piece of possible keeled plinth- or string-course bearing a 'dog rose' motif; and numerous other fragments of filleted mouldings.

These would suggest an ecclesiastical context, in which case their exclusively pale pinkish-grey Upper Old Red Sandstone composition would point to the nearby Premonstratensian abbey of Dryburgh 3.5 miles (5.5 km) south west of Smailholm Tower (MacGregor & Eckford 1952 246-8). None of the dressed stonework appears to have been incorporated into Smailholm in the manner first intended, but used merely as building material. An exception may be the probable credence which, since all the pieces recovered were found together, seems to have been re-used as a decorative feature, probably an aumbry, in the north wall of Room I.

The fireplace (F2) in Room I was recessed into the south wall. To accommodate it, this wall had been partially demolished and rebuilt so that it boldly projected into the courtyard on the south. The rebates of the fireplace were simply chamfered and the hood had been arched over, for nearly all the plain sandstone voussoirs were found amongst the demolition debris. The hearth was raised slightly above the general floor level of the room and consisted of igneous slabs

interpreted with some wandstone. A fireback (F37), made up of randomly-set stones, had been built against the back wall as a protection. A thin patchy layer of ash and the heavily cracked hearthstones were evidence of substantial use. Set into the west side of the fireplace, 850 mm up from the hearth, was part of an ambry (F49), used most likely for housing the salt-box. It was 700 mm wide and 380 mm deep and, though its full height could not be determined, a groove 220 mm up from the base indicated the position of a shelf. The stump of fireplace masonry incorporating this ambry, the only portion of barkin building surviving to any substantial height prior to excavation (some 3 m), had been consolidated in its ruined state in the distant past for a buttress of stone had been built across the ambry so as to support the column of stonework above. This repair may well date from the time Sir Walter Scott was expressing concern about the "disappearance" in 1799.

Immediately west of the fireplace was a window recess (F50) with the remnant of a stone window seat. This had been blocked up to sill level at a later date and sealed below this blocking was an iron spur of a type common in the 17th century. Opposite the fireplace, in the north barmkin wall, had been the aumbry made up of the pieces of credence already referred to.

In Room II, there was little surviving of floor levels, although the projections of bedrock suggested that there was the same unevenness of floor as in the earlier phase. One particular ledge of rock at the entrance through the partition wall, which incidentally does not appear to have been given dressed sandstone rybats, provided a step up into the room from Room I. A refacing of the inside face of the barmkin wall on the north side of the room emphasised the extent of the repair work here necessitated by the settlement of this wall.

The phase-one hearth was now replaced by a fireplace (F5) set into the east wall. It measured 1.2 m wide by 300 mm deep and its large sandstone hearthstones projected 400 mm into the room. That this fireplace was not mortar-bonded might suggest that it had been inserted at a time preceding the major remodelling of this north range. In support of this is the fact that this second fireplace was further altered when mortar-bonded stonework reduced the width of this fireplace to 550 mm. At the same time, the fireplace was raised a little. The sandstone blocks forming the sides of the fireplace had small holes in them where an iron grate had been attached across the front.

Room III at the west end of the range was disproportionately narrow (2.9 m wide). Apart from the possible narrow window-light / gunhole tucked into the north-west corner, a legacy from the phase-one building, there were no other features, not even a fireplace, to suggest a function. The lime-mortared floor and the nicely-dressed sandstone doorway linking with

Room I, however, suggest something more important than storage space and it may be that here had been a timber staircase leading to private chambers on the upper storey.

At some stage during the second phase an additional room (Room IV, measuring 5.5m by 3 m) was built at the south-east corner of the north range against the towerhouse. Access into the room had at one time been gained via a doorway linking directly with Room II. With the south and west walls of this added room so extensively robbed, it is impossible to determine whether there had been any entrance directly from the courtyard, though in view of the room's use, at least in part, as a coal-store, this seems more than likely.

In the north-west corner was the remnant of a pink clay floor with patches of gravel but again projections of bedrock indicated much unevenness. Much of this floor was covered with coal up to a thickness of 200 mm. The only feature noted was a large igneous block laid flat on top of projecting bedrock in the north-east corner creating a shelf or

platform (F8) 600 mm above the floor.

Room IV was probably demolished whilst the remainder of the north range was still in use, judging by its very denuded state and the fact that the doorway linking with Room II had been blocked up. It is with this Room IV, though, that the roof-raggle 6 m up from ground level on the west elevation of the towerhouse is associated, and this height would indicate that the extension, and by implication the whole of the north range in this second phase, was a two-storeyed construction.

Artefacts recovered from this second phase point most forcibly to a date of occupation through the latter half of the 17th century. They include the iron spur from Room I and numerous clay-pipe fragments. Certainly the cyma moulding on the entrance doorway into Room I from the courtyard cannot be earlier than the 17th century.

There was evidence to suggest that this north

range had been used after its abandonment as a residence. The mortared floor in Room III had been overlain at a later date by a well-laid and cambered floor of igneous cobbles bonded in red clay. These showed no signs of wear on their surface. The cobbling stopped short of the side walls leaving gaps (300 mm wide on the west, 500 mm wide on the east) filled with large stones and silt (AAT) from which came a hardhead of James VI, minted in 1588 but in this context clearly in a redeposited level. The gaps hint perhaps that something had been built or placed against the walls, though there was nothing to suggest what that something might have been or indeed whether it continued around the north and south sides of the room. A few pieces of manganese-glazed pottery of 18th-century date associated with it (ABB), suggest that this part of the north range at least continued to be used into that century, probably as a farm outbuilding.

THE SOUTH RANGE

The south range was built against the south and west bankin walls and comprised two rooms - Room V, between 5.4 m and 6 m long by 4 m wide, and Room VI, 4.8 m by 4.2 m. The north and east walls of the range (F10 and F14 respectively) were built of the local igneous rock bonded with pink clay and orange silt. Around Room VI these walls had been almost completely robbed out, though their positions could be determined from the lack of wear on the projecting bedrock. Separating the two rooms was the earth-bonded wall (F11) and it would appear that there had never been a doorway through this wall to connect the rooms directly. For this reason it was difficult to be certain whether alterations in the two rooms were made at the same time.

In the second phase, the flagged floor was overlain by a floor primarily made of hard-packed pink clay with some stones, pieces of coal and patches of orange silt. Because of later

floor level. rotary - quern was recovered from this earliest fairly thin layers of burning and peaty soil. A from it over the flagged floor were successive considerable use. Overlying it and spreading out corner indicated that the fireplace had been burning of the soil and of the south wall in this been no well-laid hearth floor, but intense slightly below the general floor level. There had the room were the remains of a hearth (F43) sunk to effect repairs. In the south-west corner of weathered nodules of igneous rock had been used places the surface had settled and thin slabs and of igneous rock, showing considerable wear. In floor of this phase was a flagged surface, mainly phase, there was a step down into the room. The along the north side where, in the earliest

The entrance to Room V was situated midway

ROOM V

disturbances the floor did not survive throughout the room. Little also remained of the fireplace associated with this phase, but its position was ascertained from burning on the east wall of the room. There were also a few burnt stones and patches of burnt soil (F55) immediately in front of this wall. Overlying the pink clay floor was a layer of orange silt containing a very large amount of coal. Indeed, in the north-west corner of the room the layer was entirely coal. In places where the floor level was sealed by later stone features, patches of occupation material survived containing large amounts of animal bone.

There was a further, and final, phase of alterations. Once again the fireplace was moved, this time to a central position against the west wall. This fireplace (F12) was substantially intact. The hearthstones were raised slightly above the general floor level and like the large fireplace from Room I in the north range, it had a stone-built fireback set against the west wall. The intensity of burnt hearthstones and soil was much greater in the centre and south of the hearth, suggesting either that the north part had

subsequently been repaired or, more plausibly, that this right-hand side had been reserved for cooking pots placed adjacent to the fire-basket.

A slightly raised rectangular stone platform (F31), measuring 1.8 m by 1.3 m, was positioned in the north-east corner of the room just inside the entrance. Robustly built, it may conceivably have served as a solid base for supporting a heavy item of equipment, perhaps a brewing vat. Another stone feature (F39), roughly T-shaped, ran from this base to the south wall and off to the west for a short way. It was partially covered by the flooring material of orange-brown silt and wear on the uppermost edges of many of the stones suggested that it may have provided a solid foundation for a regularly-walked route through the room, perhaps passing between work-tables. Fragments of clay pipes recovered from this floor (ACE) date this last phase of occupation to the latter half of the 17th century. Sealing this floor and patchy occupation level was a loamy layer containing a large amount of fibrous material which may have been the debris of the collapsed turf roof. This in turn

was sealed by a rubble demolition level which covered the entire range.

ROOM VI

Although the north wall of this room had been completely robbed, the probable position of the entrance to the room was indicated by patches of wear on the bedrock running across the line of the wall near the middle. Within the room, because of the ridge of bedrock in the north-east corner and the considerable animal disturbance, especially in the south half, it was difficult to be sure as to the phase with which certain of the features were associated. Owing to a lack of time, excavation in Room VI was halted at a higher level than in Room V, on a brown silt layer very similar to the natural subsoil overlying the bedrock outside the barkin. It may be, however, that this was a redeposited layer and that there was yet another floor level beneath this, though the projections of bedrock would suggest otherwise.

Over a brown silt subsoil in the south-east part of the room, a matrix of silt and small stones provided a foundation for the flagged floor of the earliest phase. This had settled considerably, largely thanks to the activity of burrowing animals. Also associated with this phase were two lengthy slabs of sandstone, one beside the south wall, the other beside the north wall just west of the presumed entrance. These were placed so that their long sides were in line and it would seem most likely that there had once been additional slabs continuing between the two. This alignment of slabs separated out an area about 2 m wide against the west wall, and at the south end of this was a hearth (F46) which showed signs of considerable use. The hearth was made up of small stones and nodules of weathered igneous rock, with the line of sandstone slabs forming the front edge. To the north of the hearth there was no indication of flooring and it may be that this area was used for storage space. The projecting bedrock provided the floor surface throughout most of the remainder of the room. The only stratified sherd of identifiably medieval pottery (that is, pre-17th century) from the

entire excavations was recovered from this earliest hearth.

In the second phase, this hearth (F46) was relaid with small slabs and nodules of igneous rock (F42) and given a stone fire-back (F34) to protect the partition wall. An extra fireplace (F56) was added against the east wall near its south end. There was considerable animal disturbance here but some of the collapsed flags showed signs of burning and had obviously come from this hearth. There were also patches of burnt soil overlying them. Burning also showed on the wall face in this area at a level 300 mm higher than the burnt flagstones suggesting the use of a raised grate. The projecting bedrock immediately to the north was also burnt, though this may represent the moving of the fireplace in the following phase of alterations.

This third and final phase saw a further raising of the floor level using a predominance of flat igneous slabs. Few showed signs of wear and it may be that, in this case, the true floor level was represented by an overlying spread of

yellow silt. The hearth (F42) was now abandoned but the fire-back (F34) was apparently retained as a feature projecting above the new floor level. Perhaps it was used as a base, possibly for shelving against the west wall. The hearth against the east wall appears to have been moved slightly further to the north, though the evidence was ambiguous and it may be that there was no fireplace in use in this room in this final phase.

Slightly to the east of the centre of the room was a small, square patch of stonework (F33), 800 mm across, projecting slightly above the floor level. A spread of mortar to its north-east may have been associated with it. The stonework may have served as a base for a pillar or post, perhaps forming a partition in the room, though there was no further evidence to support this. The patch of mortar was sealed by a thin patchy spread of brown silt which may have been an occupation layer. This might suggest that it was the north-east corner which had been partitioned off and that it had a mortared floor. A coin of Charles II and a pottery vessel date

this latest phase to the later 17th century. The inclusion of a block of window mullion in the post base (F33) suggests that these last alterations were carried out contemporaneously with the major remodelling of the north range where there was considerable re-use of fine-quality dressed stonework, most probably taken out of Dryburgh Abbey.

Immediately outside the south range, against the north wall, two stone-built platforms (F51 and F52) had been built upon the sloping bedrock. These provided level surfaces above the sloping courtyard and may have been used for external storage.

THE EAST COURT

The smaller court to the east of the towerhouse, measuring 11 m by 8 m, was similarly defined by a stone barmkin wall which had clearly undergone change during its period in use. The original wall, built of the local igneous rock set in a yellow clay-silt, was between 1.2 and 1.5 m

wide and hugged the very edge of the craggy rock around the north, east and south sides. Little of the south side survived but its position could be determined from the lack of wear on the bedrock. In general in the area of the court, the bedrock was highly polished where it had been continuously walked on but the areas once occupied by walls retained the dull surface of exposed but unworn rock. In the north-west corner of the area were the foundations of a wall (F41) built parallel to and abutting the east wall of the towerhouse. The wall was about 1.15 m wide and was clearly bonded into the original barmkin wall, suggesting that it may have been the base for a stair giving access to the barmkin wall-top.

At a subsequent period, the stretch of barmkin wall along the east side was replaced by a second wall (F54) to its west and marginally nearer the towerhouse. Only its east face survived so that its width could not be assessed. In stark contrast to its predecessor, this wall contained a substantial quantity of red sandstone, suggesting maybe a contemporaneity of construction with the topmost storey of the

towerhouse. At a still later date, this east wall, along with the remainder of the circuit around the east court, was rebuilt on slightly different lines. The northern stretch was reduced to a width not exceeding 1 m; the eastern stretch (F53) was rebuilt, again slightly nearer the towerhouse, with a width of about 1 m; of the south stretch, the greatest change was the construction of a cross-wall (F47) running north to abut the south-east corner of the towerhouse, thereby separating this east court from the rest of the barmkin area. A doorway just under 1 m wide was centrally positioned through this wall. This stretch of wall was mortar-bonded suggesting that it may well have been contemporary with the phase-two north range.

Considerable animal disturbance had destroyed any stratigraphy there may have been in the east court. The courtyard comprised flat stones positioned between projections of bedrock so as to form a reasonably level surface. There were a few short stretches of walling and faced stonework which might have been footings of structures, though none was really convincing.

One stretch of wall (F44) cut right across the line of the last of the barnkin walls on the east side. In places, apparent faces showed in the courtyard stonework but this was generally because of the positioning of the stones against slight projections in the bedrock so that faces appeared parallel to the pitch of the rock. The single course of faced stonework (F45) may have been due to such positioning but it had a more positive face than usual and may just have been the foundation of a courtyard structure. The general impression, however, was of a court that had always served as open ground. The depth of topsoil and yellow-brown humic silt, 200 mm, may indicate gardening activity during the latest phase, dated from the pottery and clay pipes to the later 17th century. A roughly semi-circular stone setting (F40) placed against the east wall of the towerhouse seems to have been associated with this latest phase, perhaps a base for a compost heap.

EXTERNAL NORTH TRENCH

A small trench was excavated immediately to the north of the towerhouse, directly below the chutes serving the latrines in the north-east corner of the tower. In view of the dearth of artefacts recovered from the barmkin area itself, it was hopefully expected that such a trench might yield more in the way of datable artefacts. In the event, this small trench produced more artefacts than the entire barmkin area but, though these included objects of some antiquity - namely the two pieces of flint, one an arrowhead - they were associated with clay pipes, coins and pottery vessels of undeniably later-17th-century date. Contrary to giving a broad picture of artefacts in use throughout the occupation of the rocky summit, the material recovered from this trench would appear to represent what was cleared out of the towerhouse when the last resident, the old dowager lady, died there at the beginning of the 18th century.

THE FINDS

COINS

David Caldwell

Seven coins were found in the excavations, all Scottish of the 16th and 17th centuries. Most show moderate signs of wear from circulation except no 2, which is almost illegible, and no 4, which is quite rubbed. No 7 has been pierced with a small hole for suspension in such a way that the obverse design of a crown with the initials C R and the value II would be the right way up. It is also bent almost in two.

- 1 Turner (2d), copper, of Charles II (1663).
Wt 1.21 grains.
(80/62(ACM); Room VI-phase 3).
- 2 Turner (2d), copper, of Charles II (1663).
Wt 1.68 grains.

- (80/7(AAC): south range-destruction debris).
- 3 Hardhead (2d), billon, of James VI, 2nd issue (1588) with lion rampant and two pellets on the reverse. Wt 0.42 grains.
- (80/25(AAT): Room III-robbing of cobbles).
- 4 Plack (4d), billon, of Mary (1557), counterstamped on the obverse with heart and mullet stamp (official mark used in 1572 to distinguish genuine from false coins). Wt 0.77 grains.
- (81/77(AAT): External north trench).
- 5 Turner (2d), copper, of Charles I, 2nd issue (1632-9). The obverse has an English crown and lozenge mint mark (mm); the reverse a flower mm. Wt 2.60 grains.
- (81/104(AAA): External north trench).
- 6 Turner (2d), copper, of Charles I, 2nd issue (1632-9). As no 5. Wt 2.62 grains.
- (81/90(ADA): External north trench).
- 7 Turner (2d), copper, of Charles I, 2nd issue (1632-9). The details of the obverse are obscured by bending. The reverse has a lozenge mm. Wt 2.42 grains.
- (80/29(AAA): north range-unstratified).

ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTS

1 Three pieces from a finely-dressed stone feature (only the largest illustrated).
Medium-grained buff Upper Old Red Sandstone. Each bears an incised cross. The pieces may originally have formed an impressive item of stone furniture, quite possibly of an ecclesiastical nature although the crosses are perhaps a little too crudely-wrought to be "consecration crosses". A credence table may be one possibility. The roughly-chiselled horizontal V-shaped grooves are clearly later and suggest that the item may have been re-used as an aumbry, or wall-cupboard.
(79/9-11:AAB - Room I).

2 Window mullion fragment. Medium-grained brown Upper Old Red Sandstone. Finely moulded with glazing check and hole for saddle bar.
(80/28:AAK - west court).

3 ? Arch - stone fragment. Medium-grained purplish Upper Old Red Sandstone.

(B1/75:ACQ - Room VI).

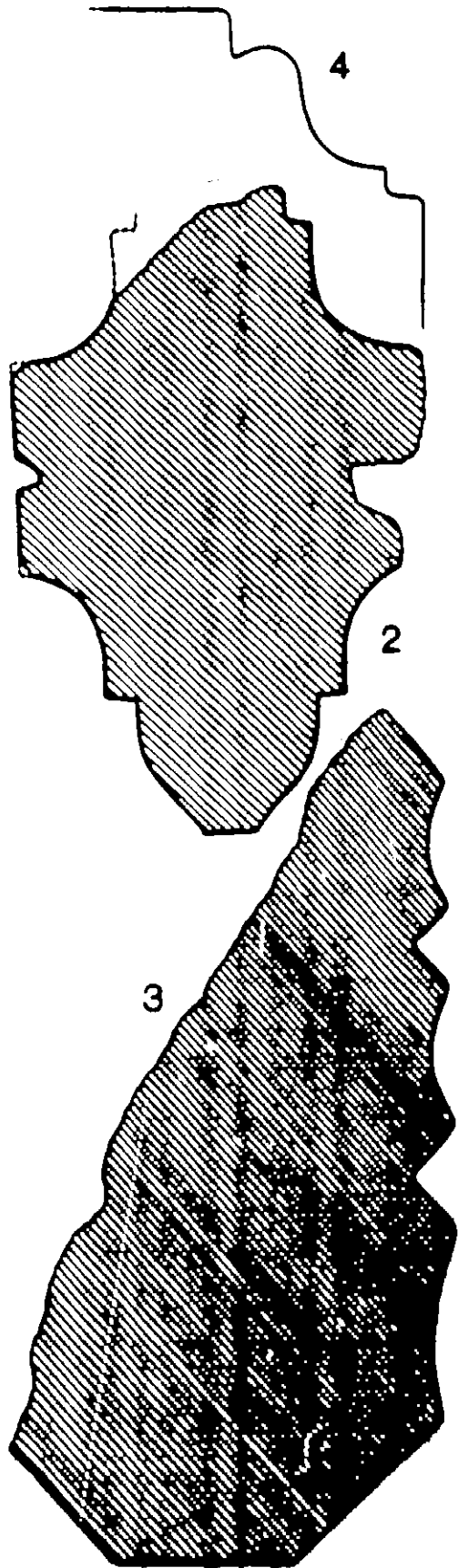
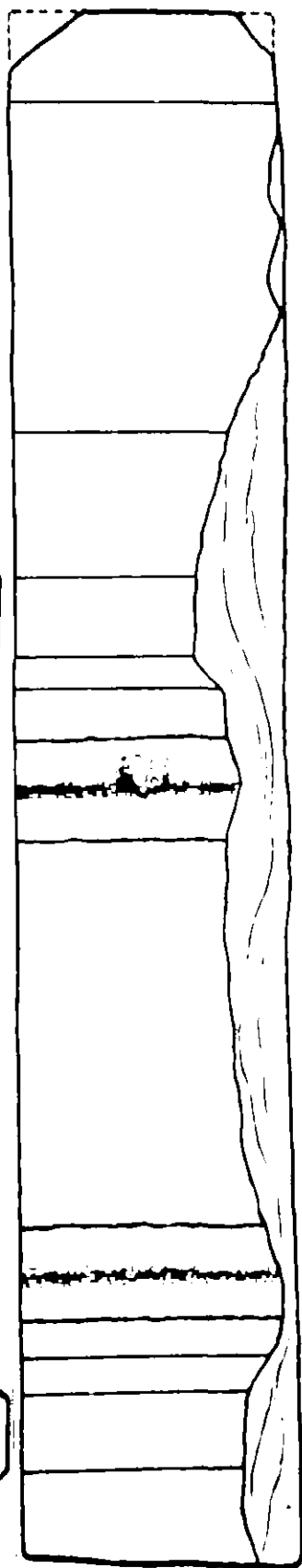
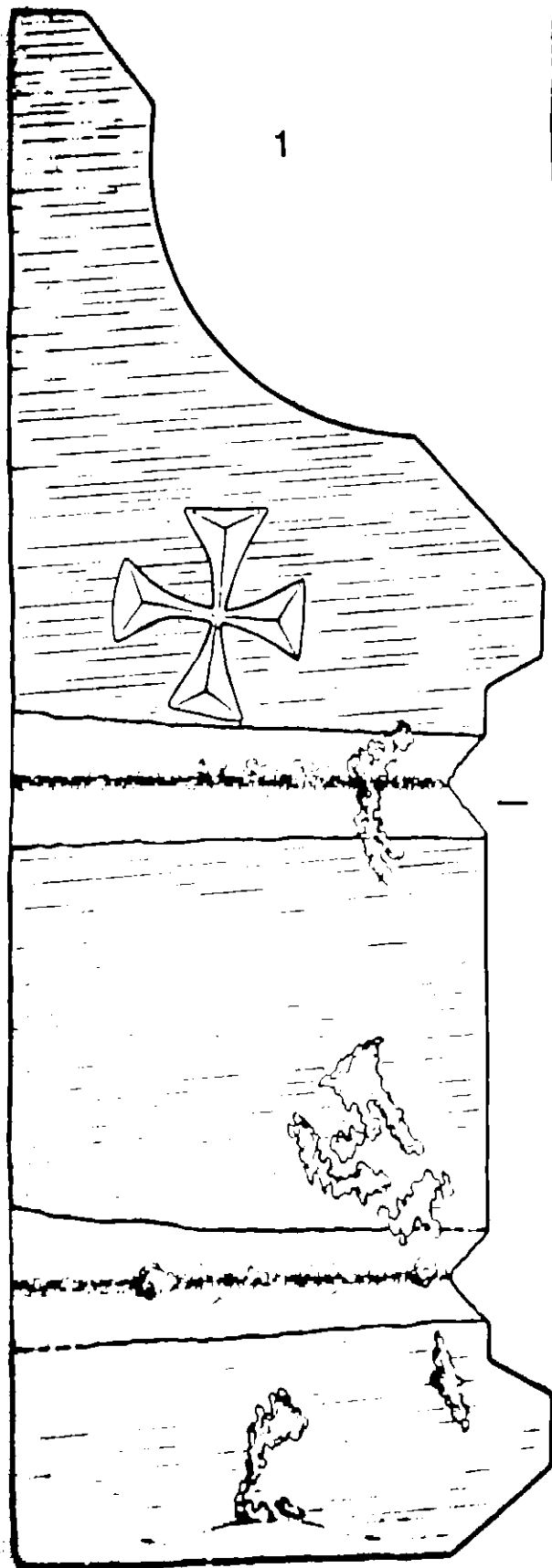
4 Door rybat. Medium-grained pink Upper Old Red Sandstone. With cyma moulding.

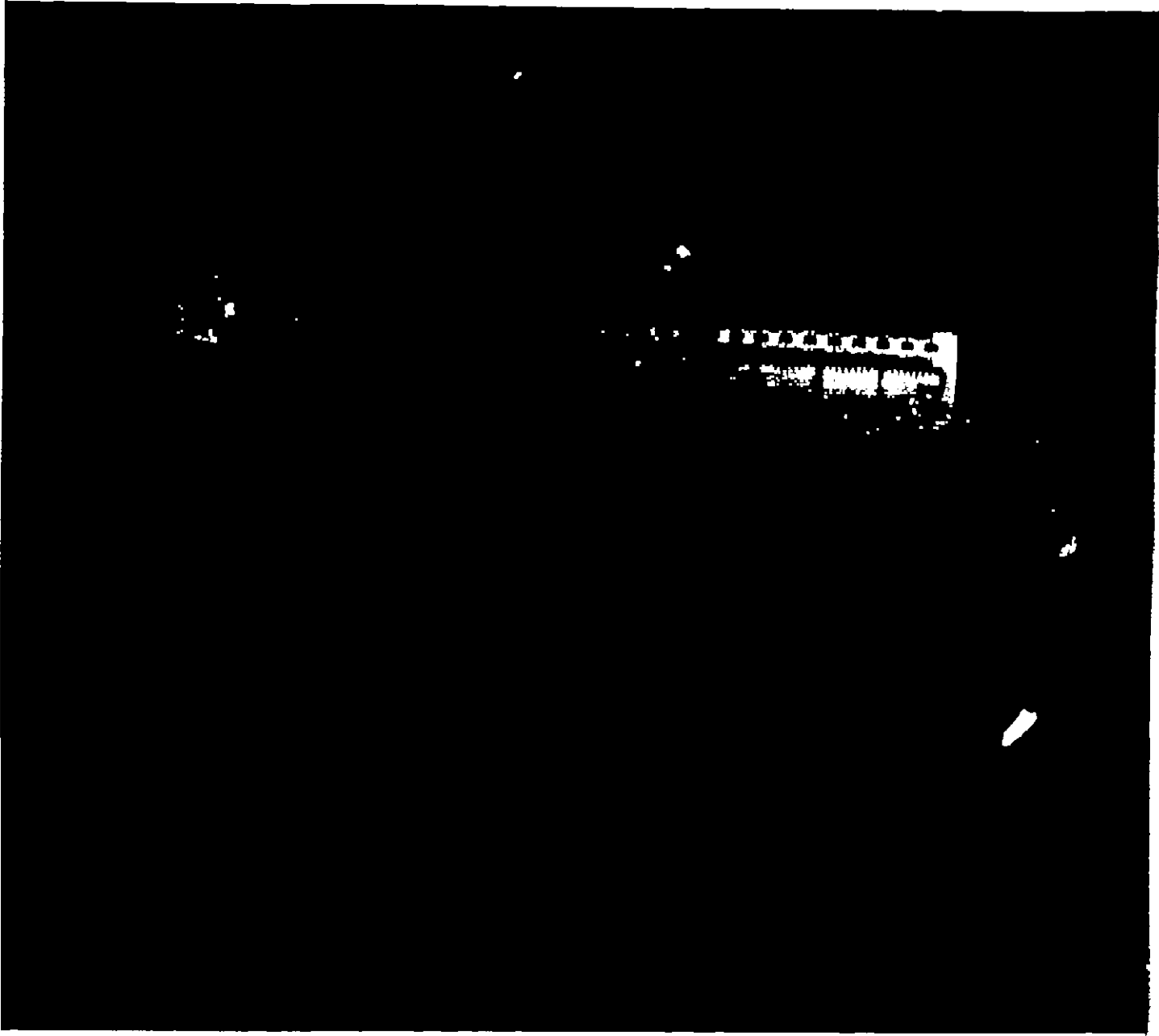
(no number; still *in situ* - entrance door to Room I).

5 Keeled plinth- or string-course fragment fine-grained purple Upper Old Red Sandstone. With finely-carved 'Tudor rose' serving as a stop for the keel.

(B0/26:AAT - Room III).

Not listed a number of other architectural fragments found in period-2 (ie Scott) levels.





POTTERY

George Haggarty

CATALOGUE OF ILLUSTRATED POTTERY

1-3 Medieval strap-handle fragments.

(ACO: east court garden soil; AAA: west court-unstratified).

STONEWARE

- 4 Approximately one third of a bellarmine in a light-grey fabric with red interior slip and speckled, orange - peel pitted salt glaze over patchy iron wash on exterior. It has three impressed roundels and a mask. There is a small hole on top of the handle, probably where a metal lid was affixed, a feature that does not seem to occur on London-made bellarmines (Pryor & Blockley 1970,).

(AAK: north range destruction debris;
ACP: east court garden soil; ACY: External
north trench).

- 5 Large basal fragment from a stoneware vessel,
probably bellarmine, in an off-white fabric
with orange-peel, pitted over
runs of a brown iron wash on exterior and a
wire-cut base.

(AAV: north bankin wall-unstratified; ACY,
ACZ and ADA: External north trench).

TIN-GLAZED EARTHENWARE

- 6 Many sherds from what has been drawn up
tentatively as a two-handled posset pot. The
pale-cream fabric has a white glaze with a
light-blue tinge on both exterior and
interior. English.

(ACT, ACY, ACZ and ADA: External north
trench).

- 7 Small sherds from the base of a charger in a
cream fabric with small black inclusions. The
glaze on the exterior is very pale grey and
it has light, mid and turquoise blue
decoration on the upper face. One sherd also

has a small patch of light-brown colouring.

Possibly Dutch.

(ACT and ACZ: External north trench).

- 8 Sherds from a plate in cream fabric with thick off-white glaze on base and blue decoration over white glaze on the upper surface. Probably Dutch.

(ACW: east court).

- 9 Approximately three quarters of a lid in a fine white paste with small red inclusions. It has been slab made and knife trimmed. Probably French, Saintonge.

(ACO, ACP and ACW: east court).

SCOTTISH POST-MEDIEVAL OXIDISED WARES

Unless otherwise stated, the glaze varies from green to brown.

- 10 Large fragment from a substantial storage jar internally glazed.

(ACP: east court).

- 11 Rim fragment from a storage vessel with internal and external glaze.

(ACT and ACZ: External north trench).

- 12 Rim fragment, almost certainly from a skillet. There is a slight trace of a handle scar. Glazed internally.
(ACY, ACZ and ADA: External north trench).
- 13 Fragment of a pirlie-pig money box with external glaze.
(ACY and ACZ: External north trench).
- 14 Rim fragment with attached strap handle from a small squat, rounded jug, glazed internally and externally.
(AAC: north range-unstratified).
- 15 Basal angle sherd showing the typical knife trimming of this material. Traces of internal and external glaze.
(AAK: north range-destruction debris).
- 16 Complete profile of a small, well-thrown pot with traces of fuming on exterior. Internally glazed and glazed to within 20 mm of the base on the exterior.
(AAC: north range-unstratified; ABL: Room VI-phase 3).

CLAY TOBACCO - PIPES

Dennis Gallagher

CATALOGUE OF ILLUSTRATED PIPES

These entries are in the following order:
description; stem bore in /64 inch; suggested
maker and / or place of manufacture; date range
of pipe; site context.

- 1 Burnished bowl with mould-imparted W/B
with evidence of mould recutting on W, poor
impression of portcullis-type stamp,
burnished and partially milled; 7/64";
William Banks of Edinburgh; (1640-60).
(AAG: Room IV-phase 2).
- 2 Tall bowl fragment with damaged base,
mould-imparted ?I/C, bottered and finely
milled; 6/64"; possibly James Colquhoun of
Glasgow; (1660-80).
(AAG: Room IV-phase 2).
- 3 Bowl, bottered; 6/64"; probably an Edinburgh

- product; (1620-40).
(ADF: Room VI-phase 2).
- 4 Bowl and part of stem, mould-imparted
W/B, poor impression of castle-type stamp,
bottered and milled ; 7/64"; William Banks
of Edinburgh; (1640-60).
(ADD: Room VI-phase 2).
- 5 Fragment of burnished bowl, bottered and
milled, castle -type basal stamp; 7/64";
probably Patrick Crawford of Edinburgh;
(1670-90).
(ACD: east court).
- 6 Bowl in off-white fabric, bottered; 6/64";
probably an Edinburgh product; (1620-40).
(ACT: External north trench).
- 7 Biconical bowl with mould-imparted W/B,
bottered, milled and polished with poor
impression of castle basal stamp; 6/64";
William Banks of Edinburgh; (1640-60).
(ACT: External north trench).
- 8 Bowl with mould-imparted W/B, evidence of
recutting of W, poor impression of
portcullis-type basal stamp, bottered but
not milled; William Banks of Edinburgh;
(1640-60).

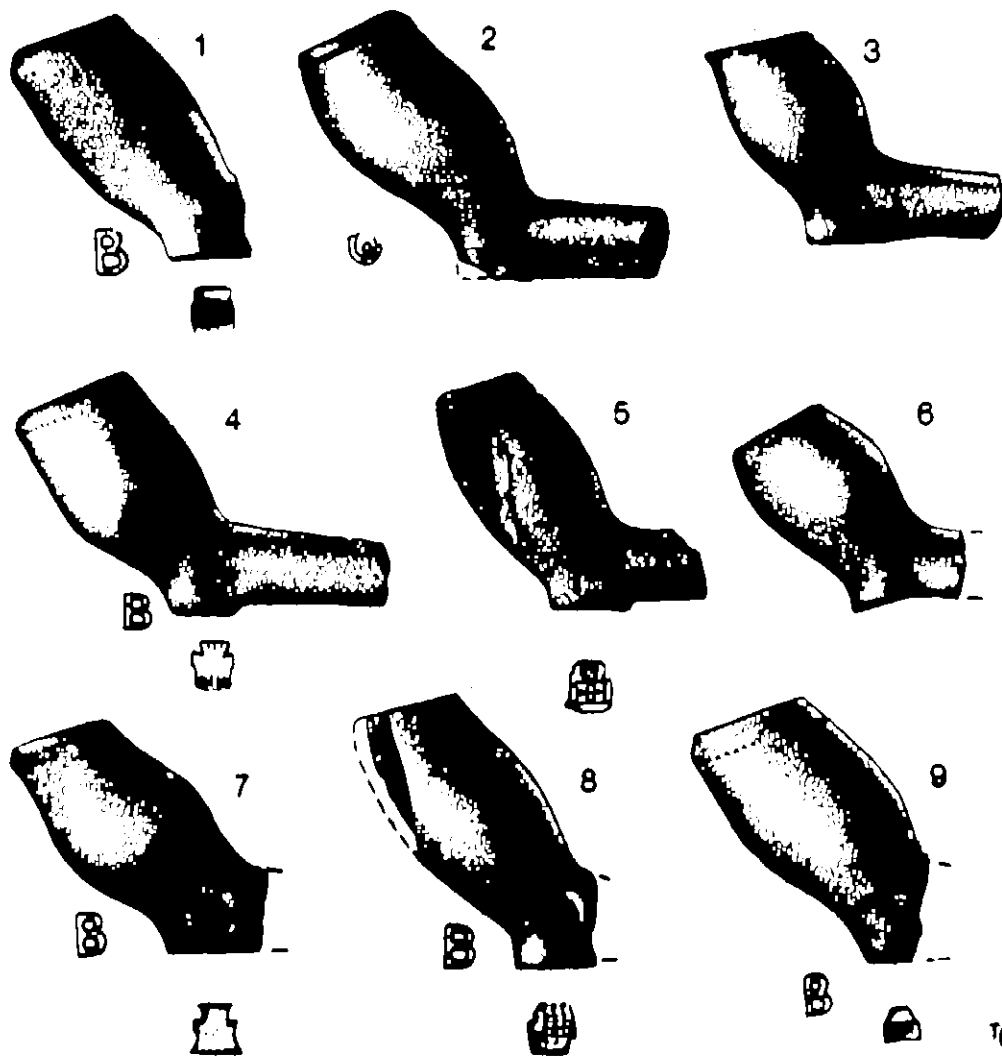
- (ACT: External north trench).
- 9 Bowl with mould-imparted T or I/B basal stamp of portcullis type, bottered and milled; 8/64"; Thomas or John Banks; (1650-70).
- (ACT: External north trench).
- 10 Slender biconical bowl, burnished, bottered and milled, with PC/E basal stamp; 7/64"; (1670-90).
- (ACT: External north trench).
- 11 Tall bowl with mould-imparted Y/? , lightly bottered; 7/64" (1690-1730).
- (ACT: External north trench).
- 12 Basal fragment with BC in heart-shaped stamp; 8/64"; probably Gateshead; (1640-60) (Oswald 1983,189-90).
- (ACT: External north trench).
- 13 Basal fragment (not illustrated) bearing a heart-shaped stamp with I. above a fleur de lis; no measurable stem bore; this may be identified with an IG stamp from the Newcastle area; (1635-60). (Oswald 1983,191-2, Black Gate no 417).
- (ACT: External north trench).
- 14 Highly burnished bowl with mould-imparted

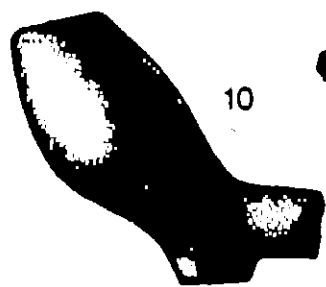
W/B and basal stamp with small
castle, bottered and milled; 6/64"; William
Banks of Edinburgh; (1640-60).
(ADA: External north trench).

15 Lower bowl fragment with flared base, basal
stamp of portcullis type; 6/64"; (1690-1750).
(ADA: External north trench).

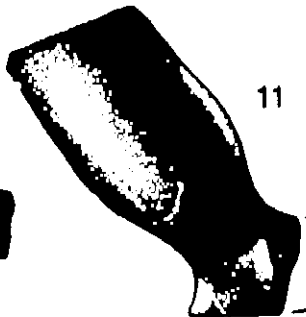
16 Bowl, bottered; 6/64"; probably an Edinburgh
product; (1620-40).
(AAN: Outside north barmkin-unstratified).

17 Lower bowl fragment, burnished, with mould-
imparted W/Y and castle basal stamp; 7/64";
? William Young of Edinburgh; (1650-70).
(AAA: unstratified).

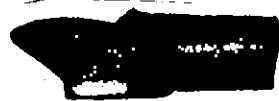




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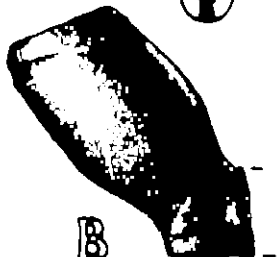
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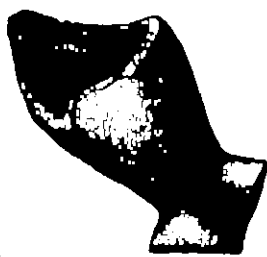


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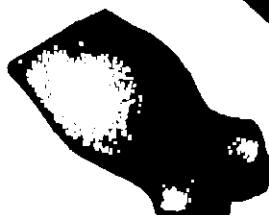


B

14



15



16

Tb

FAUNAL REMAINS

Lin Barnettson

Despite considerable disturbance of the site by rabbits, several deposits yielding mammal, bird and fish bones could be firmly assigned to 16th- and 17th- century contexts. Although most of the assemblage was highly fragmented and much of it weathered or badly eroded, 974 fragments were identified to bone and species, excluding about 400 pieces of fish bone of which less than half could be assigned to species. The number of fragments identified is given in Table 1 (p 000) and the skeletal element fragments of cattle and sheep in the phase-two deposits in Room V are given in Table 2 (p 000).

THE NORTH RANGE

The phase-one deposits in the north range contained only 24 fragments of bone - all domestic animals except for one rabbit radius. Only one bone was cut - a sheep tibia which had been chopped half-way down the diaphysis, obviously to break the bone into two.

The phase-two debris comprised principally sheep remains concentrated in Room I and there was much evidence of gnawing both by carnivores (presumably dogs) and rodents - the latter, for example, having gnawed through a sheep metatarsal along the entire length of the diaphysis. Two sheep bones had been cut, both tibia fragments, of which one had been chopped in much the same way as the previous example in the phase-one deposit. Periodontal disease, not an uncommon occurrence among ancient livestock, particularly sheep, was present on one sheep mandible at the fourth premolar / first molar position.

All the pig, horse and rabbit remains here were loose teeth only but an almost intact cranium of weasel was recovered (from ABN). Both domestic

hen and goose were identified among the few scraps of bird bones and a single coracoid of duck seems to be of teal - a small, fairly common dabbling duck. Smailholm Tower was situated beside a mill-pond which could have supported various species of wild fowl.

The few remains in Rooms III and IV, probably post-dating the occupation of the site, again comprised sheep, cattle and domestic fowl.

THE WEST COURT

The stratified courtyard deposits consisted mainly of cattle and sheep remains besides a large number of rabbit bones. Many of the sheep bones bore carnivore gnaw-marks, presumably caused by dogs, who probably scavenged among the debris in the yard. Remains of dogs, besides the indirect evidence of gnawing, have been found at several medieval sites in southern Scotland (eg Cruggleton and Threave castles, in Galloway) but no canid bones were recovered at Smailholm. It is feasible that foxes could have scavenged near the tower, drawn by the prospect of food debris

and perhaps the occasional chicken, though it is unlikely they would have left their pickings *in situ*.

THE SOUTH RANGE

By far the largest deposits of bone were in the adjoining Rooms V and VI in the S range, both identified as service offices, and in view of the debris both likely to have been areas of food preparation. Sheep, bird and fish remains were present in large numbers, particularly in the phase-two levels in Room V. As may be seen in Table 2 (p 000), the sheep bones were predominantly lower leg, back, rib and cranium with relatively few limbs. Furthermore, only one fore-limb bone was identified compared with 19 hind-limb fragments. Although the overall sample is relatively small and sample-bias is likely, it would appear that the meatier joints of the sheep carcass are not well represented in Room V. If the majority of these joints were cooked, or roasted, on the bone and taken to the table as such, the bones would perhaps have been thrown onto the fire

or discarded onto the floor for the dogs before being swept out into the yard or taken to the midden. Unfortunately, because of disturbance and very small sample size, it was not possible to make comparisons between room and yard debris. One context (ABR) in the west court did yield three fore-limb bones out of a total of seven fragments but most of the other deposits in Rooms V and VI contained roughly similar quantities of fore- and hind-limbs.

Butchering cuts were noticeable on several sheep and cattle bones in the phase-two levels in Room V. Thin knife cuts were visible on a number of sheep ribs, metapodia (at the proximal end - a common severing point) and innominates (pelvis) where the H-bone had been cut to loosen the hind legs. Vertebrae had been split through the midline indicative of carcass halving and several cattle lumbar vertebrae had been cut into quite deeply. The cattle ribs were cut across close to the sternal end, a result of either scraping meat from the ribs or, more likely, removing the sternum.

Five sheep mandibles (from five different

individuals) and one maxilla showed signs of dental anomalies. Tooth crowding, not particularly common among sheep from Scottish medieval and post-medieval contexts, was noted on one mandible and the remaining four all showed signs of impaction and anomalous wear. The maxilla fragment also displayed impaction. In the case of the lower jaws, the fourth premolar had impacted against the first molar and in the maxilla the second molar had impacted against the first molar.

The P4/M1 junction is the primary site of many dental infections, such as periodontal disease, being the area of mandible under greatest stress. Thinning of the alveolar bone due to calcium deficiency results in loosening and expulsion of teeth with subsequent infection of the jaw when food particles become trapped (Noddle 1980,405). However, the Smailholm sheep showed no visible sign of periodontal disease and the impaction is probably a developmental abnormality due either to inbreeding or possibly some nutritional disorder during early growth. All five animals were fully mature with the third molar in wear. In view of the high incidence of this condition in such a

small sample it seems likely that all these animals came from the same (possibly inbred) flock.

The only other pathological condition noted was a callus marking the site of a healed fracture on a sheep rib.

Few measurements were possible but several intact sheep metapodia here, and a single radius in the phase-two north range deposits, gave withers' heights between 534 and 616mm, very much the lower end of the range of medieval sheep.

In phase-two Room V, the bird assemblage was dominated by domestic fowl (90%), some of whose bones bore small cut-marks. In contrast to the large domestic animals, fowl were well-represented by all parts of the skeleton but there were no phalanges or beaks and only three cranial fragments.

Almost all the fish bones were found in these same levels and the deposit comprised mainly neurocrania, spinae and costae (that is, heads,

fins and ribs), the majority of which could not be identified to species. Fish were probably imported whole and prepared in this kitchen area where the non-edible parts (heads and tails) were discarded. There were relatively few vertebrae which may indicate that fish were not completely filleted before cooking. None of the specimens was large and most of the fish seem to have been less than 1 lb (<0.45kg) in weight. The majority of bones were Gadoid (cod family) and although both haddock and cod were positively identified, the former was predominant. Ling and whiting were tentatively identified from a few small pieces of vertebrae and dentale fragments. As Smalholm is 27 miles (44 km) from the sea, these salt-water fish must have been brought from the east coast, perhaps from a sea-fishing port such as Eyemouth where recent excavations have yielded large quantities of ling, cod and haddock (Dixon 1986, 65-74). Unlike other rural dwelling close to water the occupants of Smalholm do not seem to have fished the loch - perhaps it was deficient in suitable fresh-water species, or fished only occasionally.

The phase-three remains from both Room V and VI were similar to those from phase two in that sheep were predominant and the birds were mostly domestic hen and goose. However, it was phase three which yielded virtually all the pig remains from Smailholm - that is, ten fragments. The only other evidence of pig (two molars) was found in each phase in the north range. Again there was considerable evidence of butchering marks on the sheep and rattle bones and two of the pig mandible fragments had also been cut , perhaps when de-fleshing the head either before or after cooking.