

Excavation of pits containing Grooved Ware at Hillend, Clydesdale District, Strathclyde Region

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with contributions by Sheila Boardman, Ann Clarke, Geraint Coles & Bill Finlayson; and illustrations by Martin Wilson

ABSTRACT

Limited excavations were carried out in advance of pipeline construction in the area between two adjacent cropmark enclosures at Hillend, near Robertson, Clydesdale District, Strathclyde Region. The principal features comprised three pits which produced an assemblage of Grooved Ware, strengthening the possibility that one of the enclosures may have been a henge monument and inviting speculation as to the date and relationship of the other enclosure, hitherto identified tentatively as a later prehistoric settlement. An isotopic date for one of the pits is discussed. The archaeological potential of the sites has been highlighted and their fragility demonstrated.

INTRODUCTION

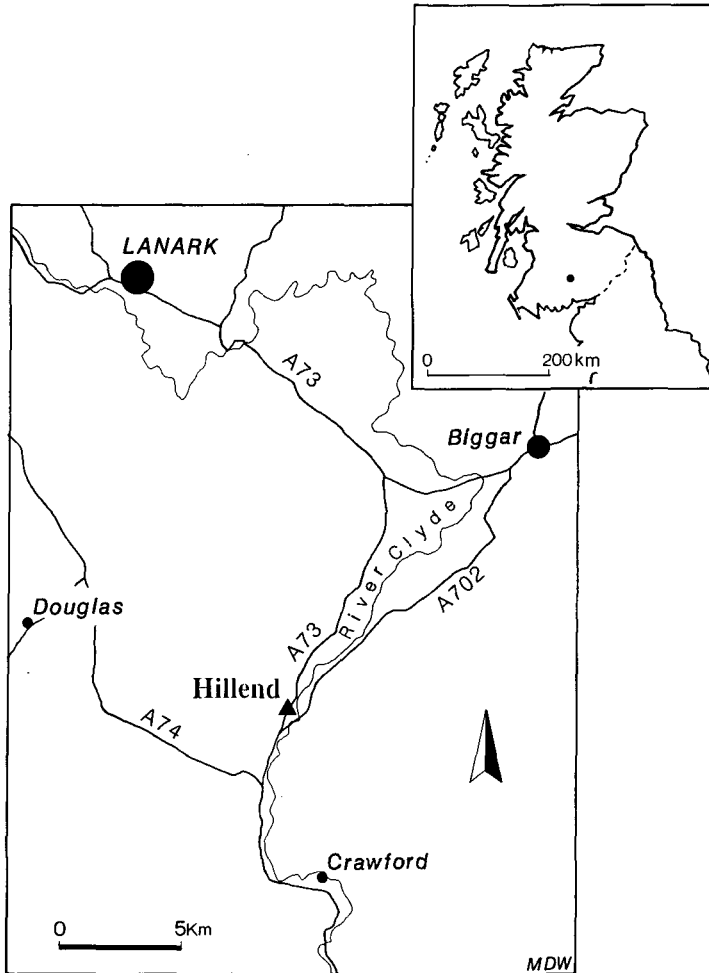
The construction in 1991 of the Scottish section of the North Western Ethylene Pipeline from Grangemouth to the Border for Shell Chemicals UK Ltd was preceded, from 1988, by a programme of archaeological studies carried out by the University of Edinburgh, and latterly by its Centre for Field Archaeology. The principal aim was to avoid damage to archaeological sites wherever possible, through the careful integration of archaeological constraints into the planning of the pipeline route. This approach meant that the great majority of archaeological remains along the pipeline route were left undisturbed. Resources could thus be concentrated on the few sites where excavation was unavoidable, either because other constraints prevented a change of route, or because archaeological features could not be identified prior to topsoiling.

Amongst the sites affected by pipeline construction were cropmarks at Hillend, near Robertson in Clydesdale District, Strathclyde Region (illus 1). Here, two enclosures had been identified in the 1970s as cropmarks on oblique aerial photographs (illus 2; RCAHMS 1978, 152, no 303, Pl 17–18). Non-archaeological constraints on the pipeline route prevented the complete avoidance of the field in which these two sites are located (Ralston & Armit 1990a; 1990b). It did prove possible, however, to align the pipeline between the two enclosures, the precise positions of

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ILLUS 1 Hillend, Clydesdale: location plan

which had been fixed by geophysical survey (Geophysical Surveys of Bradford 1990). The pipeline working width in this area was reduced to a minimum (3 m compared to a routine swathe of 20 m) and a length of c 110 m was hand-cleaned by a CFA team following initial topsoiling to investigate the possible presence of further archaeological features (illus 3).

THE ENCLOSURES

The enclosures lie in agricultural land on a gently undulating terrace at c 230 m OD above the west bank of the River Clyde, east of the A73 road (illus 3). The western part of this area is fairly level, but towards the river the ground slopes gently before falling sharply at its bank. The larger, western enclosure (NS 943 279) is rectilinear, measuring c 80 m east/west by 60 m, with a clearly defined entrance, marked by expanded ditch terminals, on the east. The eastern enclosure (NS 944



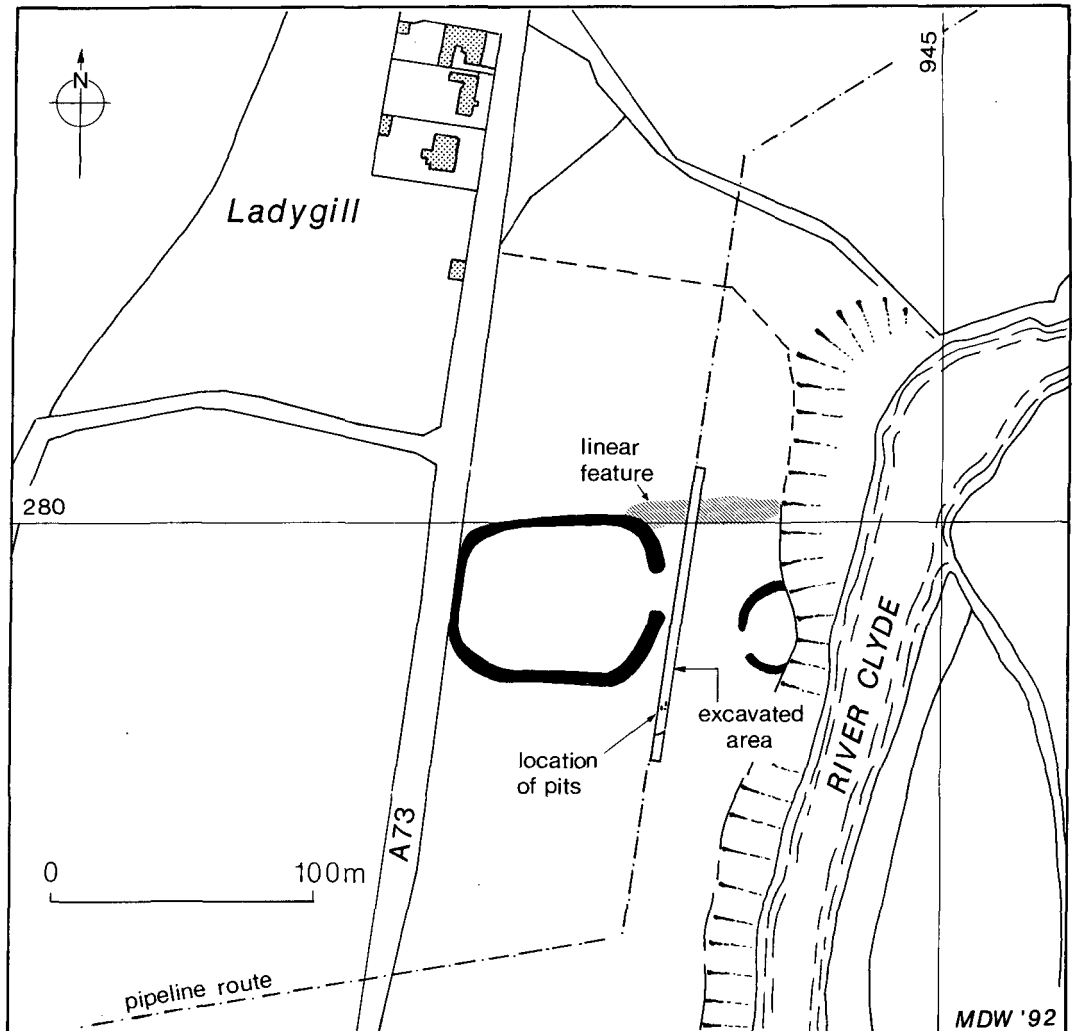
ILLUS 2 Hillend, Clydesdale: aerial photograph (LA/1475) showing the two enclosures (*Crown copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland*)

279) is under active erosion from the Clyde but its surviving sector indicates that it was smaller, possibly c 35–40 m in diameter and probably circular, with a definite entrance on the west-south-west (illus 3). No trace of the enclosures is normally visible at ground level, although the ditches were observed under the favourable conditions offered by light snow cover.

No previous excavation had been carried out and little had been written about the nature or possible date of these cropmarks. Welfare tentatively suggested that the larger enclosure might be a native settlement of the Roman Iron Age, on the basis of its rectilinear form (1980, 6). However, he acknowledged the underdeveloped state of cropmark classification in southern Scotland. The smaller enclosure was considered but rejected as a henge-related structure in Harding and Lee's corpus of henges and related structures in Britain (1987, 397–8), essentially because of lack of information about it. This interpretation, however, merits reconsideration in the light of the discoveries described below.

EXCAVATION

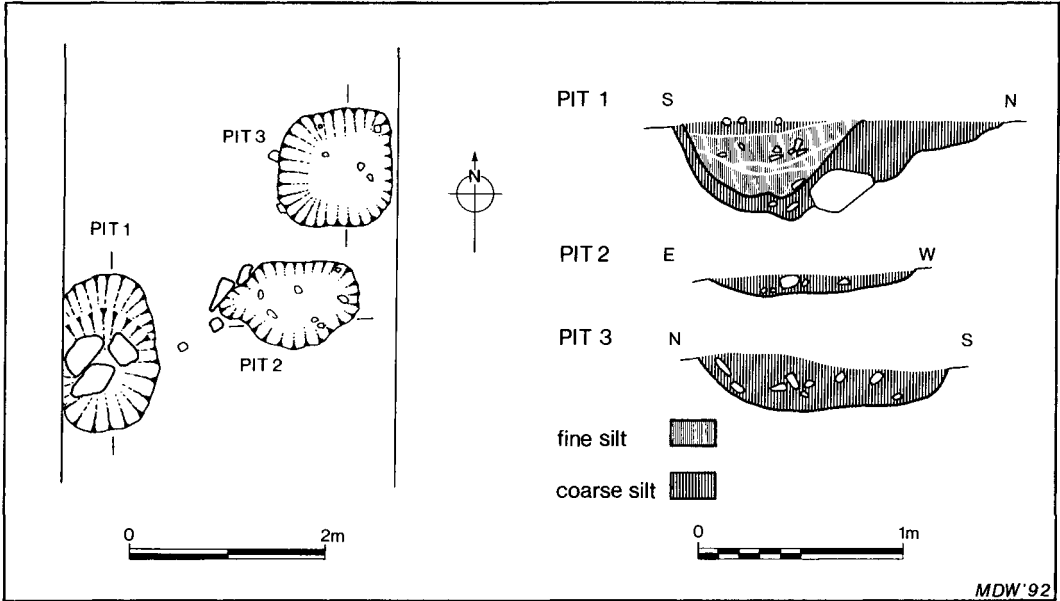
Geophysical survey commissioned independently by the project sponsor had firmly located the enclosures on the ground, but did not identify any features between them (Geophysical Surveys of Bradford 1990). After initial topsoiling and cleaning of the future pipeline trench, however, it became apparent that a number of pits were present in the area to the south of the entrances of the enclosures (illus 3).



ILLUS 3 Hillend, Clydesdale: site plan showing position of excavated areas relative to enclosures (rectified from RCAHMS aerial photograph LA 1475). A broad linear infilled hollow crossing the north end of the swathe here was demonstrably of geomorphological origin. Based upon the Ordnance Survey map © Crown copyright

PITS AND A CURVILINEAR FEATURE

Three pits were recorded, varying between c 1 m and 1.5 m in diameter and from 0.1 m to 0.5 m in depth (illus 4). One of these, Pit 1, had clearly been recut. All three pits had coarse silty fills and contained carbonized organic material. The shallowness of the topsoil deposits indicated that the features to be described are substantially truncated and that agricultural activities are likely to cause further erosion of archaeological features on this site. Some 10 m to the south of these pits lay an indistinct curvilinear cut c 4.5 m long and 0.3 m wide, oriented WSW/ENE. This feature (context 016) was infilled with a pebble-rich coarse, orange sand, and was 0.2 m deep. There is no evidence of any association between it and the pits. As has been noted, considerable truncation of these deposits by ploughing is envisaged.



ILLUS 4 Hillend, Clydesdale: plan and sections of the excavated pits

All three pits produced sherds of Grooved Ware, which together represent between eight and 11 vessels. The distribution (Table 1) and the generally similar condition of the sherds support the interpretation that these pits were filled about the same time. For the purposes of Table 1, sherds catalogued separately but considered to be possibly from the same pot have been treated together so as to accord with the estimated minimum number of eight vessels. Even within Pit 1, stratigraphically the most complex of the features, the filling sequence must have proceeded fairly rapidly as the variation in the contents of the surviving original fill and the series of deposits in the recut is not marked. It should be remarked, however, that the inclusion of one aceramic layer (context 008: contexts are discussed on the fiche) within the recut would allow the topmost fill (007) to be interpreted as a later episode of deposition, although the inclusion of sherds seemingly from some of the same vessels as those recovered in both the initial infill and the first fills of the recut supports the hypothesis, propounded above, of near-contemporaneity.

TABLE 1
Distribution of pottery by context

Catalogue nos	Pit 1		Contexts			
	Initial fill 012	Recut 009	014	007	Pit 2 005	Pit 3 003
1				*?	*	*
2-7, 16	*	*	*	*	*	*
8, 16	*			*	*	
9				*		
10	*	*				
11		*		*		
12		*		*		*
13-15	*	*		*	*	

One sample for radiocarbon dating was submitted to Beta Analytic to provide an estimation of the date of the Hillend Grooved Ware material. This consisted of the carbonized material from the initial fill (012) of Pit 1. The complex stratification of this pit, and the recovery of sherds from different contexts within it, suggests that the potentially residual nature of the deposits might diminish the significance of the determination obtained. However, inspection of the sample (Coles *et al*, see fiche) indicates that modern contamination is absent and that the sample lacks charcoal derived from long-lived species. Equally, the pottery from this feature seems to provide a reasonably closed ceramic group (discussed further below), strengthening the likely validity of the determination obtained from this material, despite the reservations voiced above. Further samples from this feature that would be suitable for isotopic dating have been stored.

The result obtained from this sample was:

Beta-73955 4410 ± 70 BP C13/C12 ratio: 25 o/oo

The C13/C12 ratio is an estimate. Following convention, the quoted error term represents one standard deviation. The laboratory offers the following calibration to calendar years, following the procedures identified in *Radiocarbon*, 35 (1993): intercept with calibration curve 3030 BC; there is a 68% probability that the date lies between 3100 and 2920 BC; and 95% probability that it falls in the range 3340 to 2890 BC.

LINEAR HOLLOW

Towards the north end of the sector a linear feature, c 60m long, broader than all the recognizably archaeological features, and with indistinct limits, was identified. Examination of the aerial photographic evidence indicated clearly that it was cut by the ditch of the western enclosure (illus 2 and 3). Within the excavation trench, this feature comprised a band of homogeneous deposits of natural origin, with infrequent flecks of charcoal, infilling the hollow.

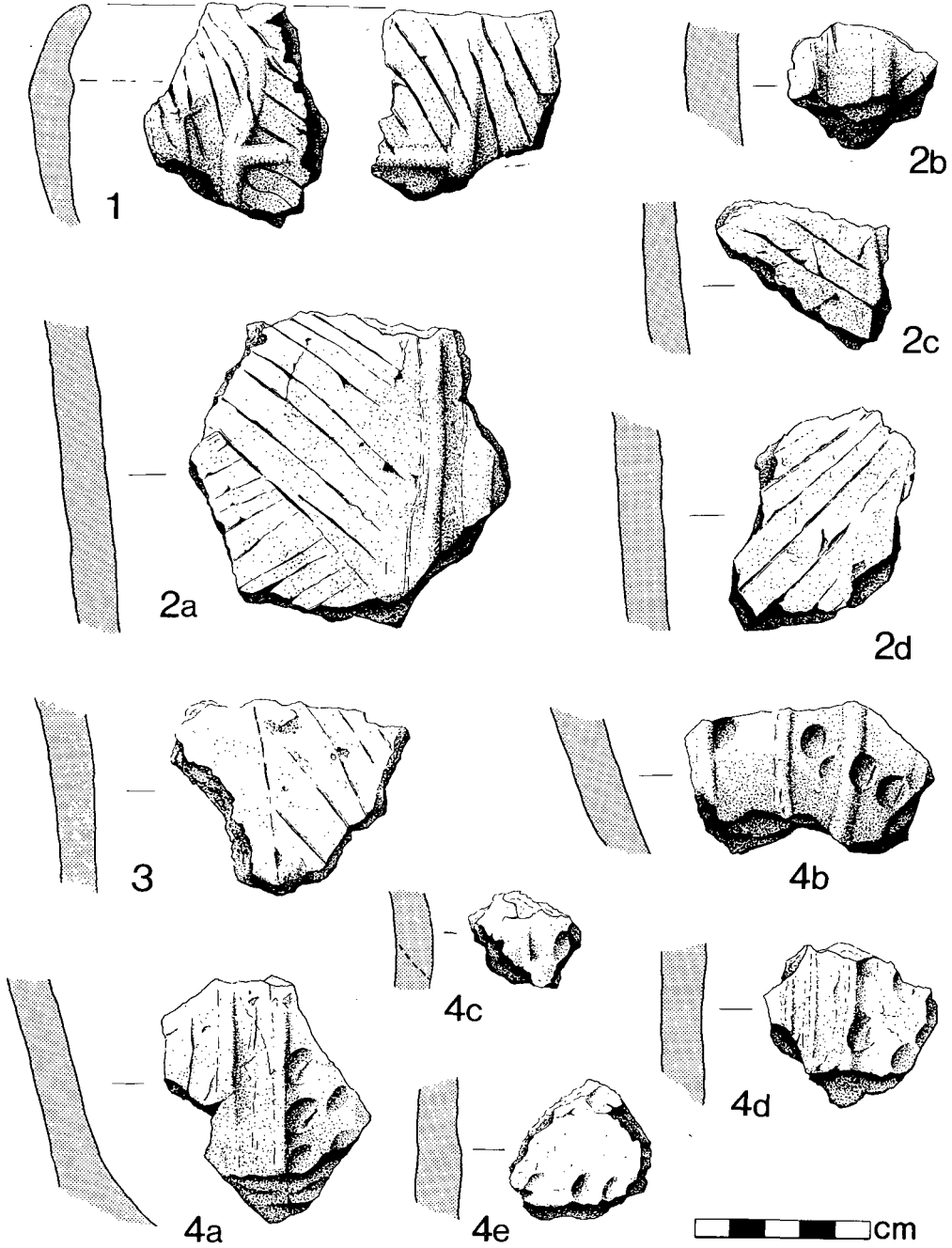
REPORT ON THE POTTERY (ILLUS 5 & 6)

INTRODUCTION

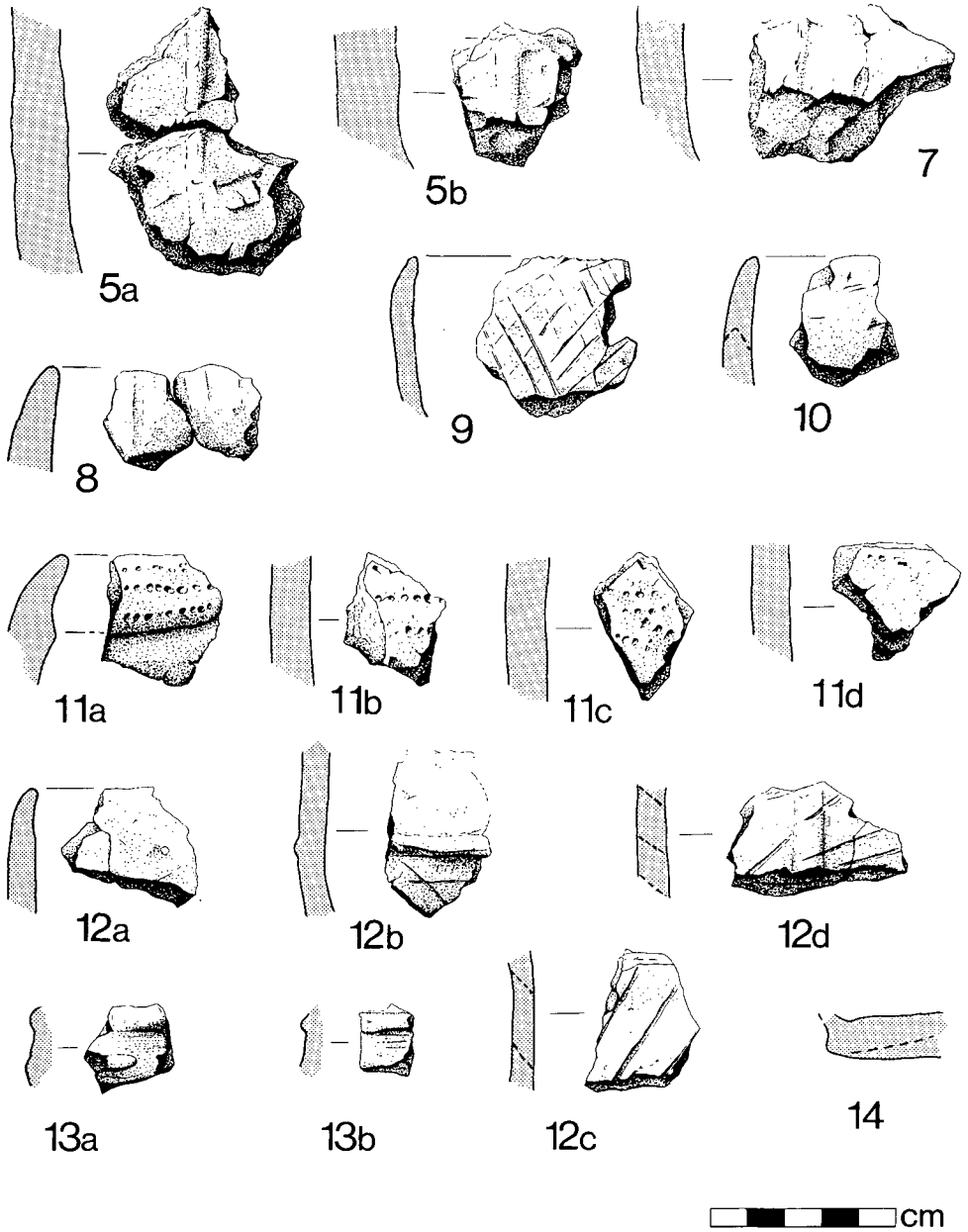
The pottery assemblage from the excavated pits comprises some 70 sherds, fragments and crumbs with a total weight of approximately 800 g. The full catalogue is presented on microfiche. The assemblage represents small portions of a number of Grooved Ware vessels deposited in fragmentary condition. In no case is a complete vessel profile available, and most of the individual pots are represented by only a few sherds. None of the rims, for example, is represented by more than 5–10% of the original circumference. Nevertheless, apart from a few characterless fragments and crumbs (cat no 16), most of the pottery recovered can be assigned with varying degrees of confidence to separate vessels on the basis of fabric, wall thickness and decoration. The minimum number of pots which can be distinguished in this way is eight, but taking into account those catalogue entries (eg 2–6) that may represent portions of several vessels, the total could rise to 10 or 11.

FORM

Portions of six rims are present. While they differ in fabric quality and wall thickness, the surviving profiles of 1, 8, 11 and possibly 12, indicate pots with rounded inturned rims and slightly closed mouths. Vessel 10 appears to have had a more upright rounded form of rim. Owing to the fragmentary condition of the assemblage, the overall shapes of the pots are uncertain, but the straight profiles of the wall sherds



ILLUS 5 Hillend, Clydesdale: Grooved Ware



ILLUS 6 Hillend, Clydesdale: Grooved Ware

comprising 2, and comparison with related assemblages, indicate barrel- or bucket-shaped vessels with upright sides. Vessel 9 is exceptional in having a more pointed rim, a high rounded 'shoulder' and what appears to have been a more tapered body. Open forms, with straight splaying walls, appear to be absent. A single base sherd (14) with slight protruding foot may represent part of the same pot as 13.

The fragmentary nature of the pottery leaves the size range of the vessels uncertain. However, the range of wall thicknesses, together with variations in the quality of the fabrics, suggests a range from pots of medium size (perhaps about 200 mm in diameter: eg 9, 11) to one or more larger pots up to 280–300 mm in diameter (1–4).

FABRIC

The pottery may be grouped into two main fabrics. The majority is coarse ware, some of it (eg 1–11) rather friable and profusely tempered with grey stone grits, grog and organic inclusions such as chaff; the surfaces are rough and, where the chaff content has burnt out, heavily pitted. However, some better-fired sherds have a relatively more compact clay matrix with less prominent inclusions (12–15). The colour of the outer surfaces ranges from light yellowish-brown, brown or grey-brown to dark grey, with dark grey cores and internal surfaces being usual. Construction joints are visible in many of the sherds, usually simple angled joints, although mention may be made of the probable 'false rim' from 10, resulting from the loss of the topmost strip of clay and indicating occasional use of a tongue-and-groove technique.

DECORATION

Every vessel distinguished appears to have been ornamented – even if only sparingly (eg 10). However, the possibility of plain vessels cannot be entirely discounted, as some undecorated body sherds can be assigned only tentatively to decorated pots (eg 15). The decorative techniques include the application of vertical or horizontal cordons, incision, fingertip and fingernail impressions, and comb impressions.

Horizontal and vertical cordons occur on cat nos. 1–5, 7, 10 and 12–13, either worked up from the surface of the pot or applied as strips of clay; in most cases the plastic ornament is badly abraded and leaves the original method of application in some doubt. On some sherds, however, principally parts of 2 and 4, a series of low vertical ridges appears to have been formed by drawing the fingertips or an implement (eg a stick or a bone) down the wall of the pot, so as to create the vertical divisions between filled panels. The upper portion of 1 has had vertical cordons extending up and onto the rim top, resulting in a slight upward projection of the rim at those points; the rim sherds in question are in poor condition but the vertical cordons appear to have been quite closely set, or possibly arranged in pairs around the circumference of the vessel. Although differentiated from 1 on the grounds of surface colour and texture, 2 and 4 appear to represent portions of the body of a very similar vessel, on which closely spaced or paired vertical cordons may have extended to the base of the pot. The vertical and horizontal cordons form panels for the application of incised or more roughly slashed ornament, comprising diagonal lines or arrangements of opposed oblique lines (as on 1, 2). While some of the incised lines run onto cordons, none of the cordons appears to have been embellished methodically. In the case of 3, possibly from a different pot, one edge of the filled zone is defined by an incised line rather than a cordon.

If all the sherds described in catalogue entries 2 and 4 do represent portions of the same pot, as seems likely, then the original decorative scheme of the vessel appears to have been complex, for its lowermost portion indicates the introduction of a further technique – closely spaced fingertip depressions resulting in a form of rustication filling the panels between the vertical strips. Vessel 4 includes examples of fingertip impressions applied vertically to one side of, and in one case between, low vertical ridges formed by drawing fingertips or an implement down the wall of the pot (and thus very similar to 2); moreover on one of the sherds (4), there is a trace of an incised line near the break edge, which may indicate alternating panels of fingertip and incised ornament on the lower body of the vessel. While superficially similar, the horizontal orientation of the fingertip/nail impressions on 5 and 7 may indicate that these sherds derive from the walls of a different vessel or vessels. Oblique incisions have also been used to ornament the exterior surface of 9. In

this example, diagonal lines encircle the rim above what appears to have been a pattern composed of opposed triangles extending to the lower break edge. Cordons or low ridges worked up from the surface, apparently bordering panels with incised ornament, also occur on the body sherds of 12: both vertical and horizontal cordons appear to be present, but the original scheme is unclear. What may be a plain rim sherd from the same vessel suggests that the uppermost portion of the pot may have been undecorated.

The range of ornament present on the remainder of the pottery may be described briefly. Vessel 8 also appears to bear traces of moulding of the clay extending up and onto the rim top: in this case, low ridges may have been defined on the uppermost part of the pot by drawing two shallow vertical grooves or channels so as to emphasize the intervening area, but the sherds in question are in such poor condition that the original effect is uncertain. Rather irregular fingernail impressions occur around the rim of 10, and the absence of ornament on the other sherds assigned to this pot suggest that it may have been relatively plain. In the case of 11, the surviving portions again suggest that only the upper portion of the vessel was decorated – in this instance with rather irregular pointed comb impressions (which alternatively may have been applied as individual close-set impressions so as to resemble combed ornament). Finally, mention may be made of 13, which appears to comprise fragments of a vessel ornamented with worked-up and applied horizontal (and possibly wavy-line) cordons. Unfortunately the fragments are very small and their original position and orientation, as well as the precise nature of the design, are alike unclear.

CONDITION

The fragmentary condition of the pottery has been stressed. Many of the sherds, especially those comprising 1–7, are very friable while several appear to have been burnt or scorched (eg 5). Organic deposits adhere to the internal surfaces of a large number of the sherds, indicating that the pots in question have seen use. Indeed the relatively few sherds which lack obvious organic deposits are notable for this reason (and in some cases this has been a factor in suggesting their derivation from separate pots (eg 7, 12–15)). Perhaps significantly, these deposit-free sherds include several in the noticeably more compact fabric. Samples of the adhering deposits have been taken for residue analysis, which it is hoped will form part of a separate research project involving comparative study of the residues on Grooved Ware from several sites.

DISCUSSION

The Grooved Ware from Hillend may be compared with related groups and assemblages in Scotland and England, in particular, with pottery of the Durrington Walls sub-style, as defined by Wainwright and Longworth (1971, 240–2). The range of vessel forms, in so far as they can be reconstructed, invites closest comparison with the upright straight- to barrel-sided vessels, frequently with closed mouths, characteristic of that sub-style (Hillend 1, 8, 11, & 12: cf Wainwright & Longworth 1971, 55–7, rim forms 4, 9, 13; Hillend 10: cf rim form 7). The form of 9 is less readily matched, but a vessel from Luce Sands, Dumfries and Galloway, may have had a rather similar tapering profile (McInnes 1964, cat no 104) while pots with trunco-conic bodies are well represented at Durrington Walls (Wainwright & Longworth 1971, 56).

While embellishment of rims is a well-known feature of Grooved Ware (cf MacSween 1992, 265, Table 19.2), vertical cordons which extend onto the uppermost portion of the pot or onto the rim itself appear to be uncommon in the Durrington Walls sub-style. However, comparison may be made with examples from Durrington Walls itself (Wainwright & Longworth 1971: plain cordon: P36; embellished cordons: P125, P149), North Carnaby Temple Site 4, Yorkshire (Manby 1974, 48, Fig 20.45–6) or Luce Sands (McInnes 1964, cat no 101). The pairing of vertical cordons noted on 1–4 is matched on a number of sherds from Durrington Walls (eg P 50–61), where they may extend to the foot of the vessel (as suggested for 2 and 4 if seen as parts of a single pot). The combination of cordons and panels of filled incised designs can also be readily matched there (eg P

49–61) and elsewhere, for example, on northern English sites producing pottery related to the Durrington Walls sub-style (eg Carnaby Top Site 23: Manby 1974, 37, Fig 9.32–3; North Carnaby Temple Site 3: *ibid*, 46, Fig 19.23, 29 and Low Caythorpe, *ibid*, 64, Fig 27.6, 18). The use of incised lines to create a border to a filled panel design, as on 3, is also readily paralleled at Durrington Walls (eg P 211–21).

The precise form of the combination of cordons and fingertip impressions seen on 4 cannot be readily paralleled, but generally similar features occur among the illustrated pottery from Durrington Walls (eg P111; P116A; P117; P118) or North Carnaby Temple Site 3, Yorkshire (Manby 1974, 46, Fig 19.30). The possible decoration of alternate panels with fingertip and incision seen on 4 is paralleled on P107 from Durrington Walls, bearing vertical cordons with fingernail to one side and incisions to the other; fingertip/fingernail impressions occur in various combinations among the Grooved Ware from Tye Field, Lawford, Essex, where the pottery is again mainly in the Durrington Walls sub-style (Shennan *et al* 1985, 170, P 63, P 75).

Although the rim form of 9 appears to be unusual, the technique and general design of the decoration is well known (eg Durrington Walls: P208, P220). Comb impressions (11) are a rarer feature of the Grooved Ware decorative repertoire, although general parallels for the use of such impressions occur on pottery from Carnaby Top Site 20 (Manby 1974, 33, Fig 11.5) while comb ornament also occurs on several vessels from Durrington Walls itself (eg P400). Longworth has suggested that the presence of comb technique in Grooved Ware assemblages may reflect absorption of traditions more at home in a Beaker context (Wainwright & Longworth 1971, 70).

The use of fingernail impressions was rare at Durrington Walls itself (Wainwright & Longworth 1971, 70) although, as Smith (*in* Shennan *et al* 1985, 175) has noted, the frequency with which various decorative techniques occur may vary from assemblage to assemblage (perhaps reflecting regional variations). While the irregular arrangement of fingernail impressions around the rim of 10 cannot be precisely paralleled, it may be compared more generally with casual jabbed impressions or rows of fingertip impressions around the rims of some relatively plain vessels (eg North Carnaby Temple site 3: Manby 1974, 46, Fig 19.35).

Three of the pieces making up 13 appear to bear traces of worked-up or applied horizontal and wavy-line cordons. It is unfortunate that these are so very fragmentary, for the nature of the vessel from which they derive, and indeed their position on the pot, is uncertain, but they may be associated with portions of a flat base (14). If the fragments represent part of a zone or zones of heavy plastic decoration, they may possibly derive from a vessel of the Clacton or Rinyo sub-styles, but apart from the basal angle the original form of this vessel is unknown. Two comparable sherds occur among the few sherds of Grooved Ware recovered from a series of pits at Kirkburn, near Lockerbie, Dumfries and Galloway (Cormack 1963, 122, Fig 6k; Wainwright & Longworth 1971, 302). There is no telling reason why a mixture of sub-styles should not be present, for pottery of the Durrington Walls sub-style occurs together with others on a number of sites (eg at Firtree Farm and Wyke Down, Dorset: Cleal 1991, 136–7) although examples of deposits exclusively in one sub-style are also known (eg Puddlehill, Bedfordshire: Matthews 1976, 10–11).

Despite its small size, the Hillend group is a significant addition to the limited inventory of Grooved Ware from sites in southern Scotland, where hitherto the tradition has been represented almost entirely by unstratified material recovered from sand-dune systems (eg Luce Sands: McInnes 1964) or by much smaller unrepresentative groups or individual sherds from a few inland sites (listed by Wainwright & Longworth 1971, 268–306). To their list can now be added small groups recovered in the course of recent excavations at Machrie Moor, Isle of Arran (Haggarty 1991), Wellbrae, Clydesdale District (*Discovery Excav Scot* (1991), 65; Alexander & Armit,

1993), Biggar Common, also in Clydesdale District (*Discovery Excav Scot* (1993), 87; T Ward, pers comm), and Beckton, Annandale District (*Discovery Excav Scot* (1992), 19–20).

Unfortunately, none of these groups of Grooved Ware is large enough to be defined with precision. Hillend and Wellbrae have provided the first excavated groups to include material recognizably in the Durrington Walls sub-style from southern Scotland; however it would be misleading to read too much into stylistic parallels drawn with material from distant sites while the range of comparative material in the region is so restricted. Nevertheless, they do strikingly reinforce the notion that we are dealing with a ceramic tradition widely distributed within Great Britain (Wainwright & Longforth 1971, 243–4; Kinnes 1985, 43).

Finally, the date of the Hillend assemblage may be considered briefly. Available radiocarbon dates suggest that Grooved Ware appeared first in northern Britain where, as MacSween (1992, 269) has pointed out, the tradition had appeared by the last quarter of the fourth millennium BC. On the available evidence, the majority of radiocarbon determinations associated with Grooved Ware in southern Britain fall into the period 2500–1800 BC in terms of calibrated radiocarbon dates, but a small number of early dates go some way towards narrowing the chronological gap (Clea 1991, 145). These include Barholm, in Lincolnshire, 2355 ± 130 uncal BC (UB – 457), calibrated to 3365–2520 BC; 2305 ± 135 uncal BC (UB – 458), calibrated to 3344–2560 BC (Simpson, 1993, 23; Bradley *et al*, 1993, 71), and Christchurch, Dorset, 2220 ± 80 uncal BC (HAR – 2907), calibrated to 2898–2615 BC (Jarvis 1983, 134–9). The Grooved Ware settlement at Trelystan, in Powys, also probably dates to the first half of the third millennium BC (Britnell 1982, 184). A further date of 2750 ± 150 uncal BC (OxA – 1396) from a pit on King Barrow Ridge, Wiltshire, is considered to be anomalously early (Richards 1990, 114, 121). The calibrated date-range for what is, admittedly, only a single determination from Hillend is thus consistent with the early currency of north British Grooved Ware and, on present evidence, is certainly amongst the earliest associated specifically with the Durrington Walls sub-style.

CATALOGUE

A full catalogue of the pottery is presented on fiche. Selected sherds are illustrated (illus 5 & 6). All the material discussed below was recovered stratified in the three pits (see Table 1).

- 1 Two decorated rim sherds from vessel with inturned rim with horizontal and vertical cordons; incised lines. Also a small body sherd possibly from same vessel.
- 2 Four decorated body sherds, from a fairly straight-sided pot, probably the same vessel as 4 but unlikely to be same vessel as 1; incised lines bordered by low vertical ridges formed by drawing fingertips or an implement down the wall of the pot.
- 3 Decorated body sherd, similar in fabric/colour to 2 but possibly from a different vessel; incised lines.
- 4 Five decorated body sherds, probably all from the lower portions of a fairly straight-sided pot, probably the same vessel as 2; fingertip impressions to one side of, and in one case between, low vertical ridges formed by drawing fingertips or an implement down the wall of the pot (and thus very similar to 2).
- 5 Three decorated body sherds, similar in fabric/colour to 2 but possibly from a different vessel; *fingernail impressions between low vertical ridges worked up from the wall of the pot.*
- 6 Two plain body sherds and three fragments, similar in fabric and probably from the same vessel(s) as 2–5.
- 7 Decorated body sherd; generally similar in fabric/colour to 2–6 but slightly more compact and probably from a different vessel; fingernail impressions.
- 8 Two rim sherds, probably joining, and four fragments from vessel with inturned rim; traces of low ridges defined by shallow vertical grooves or channels so as to emphasize the intervening area but very worn.

- 9 Two decorated rim sherds and a small body sherd; upright rim, high rounded 'shoulder' and tapering body; incised lines.
- 10 Decorated rim sherd and three body sherds (one of them a 'false rim'); fingernail impressions.
- 11 Decorated rim sherd, and three decorated body sherds; comb impressions or individual close-set impressions resembling comb. Also a small plain sherd possibly from the same vessel.
- 12 Plain rim sherd, and five decorated and two plain body sherds; low groove-defined ribs bordered by incised lines.
- 13 Three decorated and two plain body sherds and fragments, and two crumbs probably all from the same vessel; traces of possible worked up wavy-line cordons and converging mouldings.
- 14 Five plain sherds and fragments including two from basal angle of vessel with flat base with slight protruding foot.
- 15 Two plain body sherds, similar in fabric/colour to 13–14 but possibly from a different vessel.
- 16 Three plain body fragments and a crumb, not assigned to any of the above, but generally similar in fabric/colour to 2–8.

OTHER FINDS

Bill Finlayson & Ann Clarke

Other finds from the site were restricted to a small and undiagnostic chipped stone assemblage comprising 19 pieces of worked flint and locally derived chert. The general impression is that this assemblage is post-Mesolithic in date. Two cobbles with traces of use-damage were recovered as surface finds. Full catalogue descriptions of these finds are presented on microfiche.

ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Geraint Coles & Sheila Boardman

All the samples examined from pit contexts contained at least some carbonized organic material. The charcoal was dominated by *Corylus* and *Betula*. Abundant nut shells (again *Corylus*) were also recovered, suggesting that hazel nuts played a seasonal role in the economy. It is unlikely that these nuts were obtained accidentally as a by-product of collecting firewood since they are fully developed: wood gathered in the autumn would lose its nuts during felling and transportation.

Other plant macrofossils were rare, comprising only a few carbonized seeds of indeterminate species: cereals were absent. The palaeoenvironmental report is presented on microfiche.

DISCUSSION

The recovery of Grooved Ware from the excavated pits allows a re-evaluation of the nature and chronology of the neighbouring cropmarks. While recognizing that these features may be entirely unrelated to either of the enclosures, the possibility that the smaller, eastern enclosure may be a henge or related structure must again be countenanced (*pace* Harding & Lee 1987, 397–8). Sheridan and Sharples have recently stressed 'the need for more Grooved Ware assemblages in mainland Scotland to elucidate the origins and development of this pottery type' (1992, 6). Hillend, together with a broadly contemporary Grooved Ware component in the assemblage from the excavations at nearby Wellbrae (Alexander & Armit 1993), demonstrates the potential which exists in Clydesdale to achieve this objective. It should be emphasized that neither of these discoveries was made from an archaeological site of recognizable type, such as might be routinely targeted for research work. They thus provide an illustration of the value of applied archaeological

work related to development projects in extending the range of contexts from which material can be recovered.

The nearness of this Neolithic pottery to the two enclosures is intriguing whatever the date or dates of the latter. If the two enclosures were to prove to be respectively, a Late Neolithic henge and an Iron Age settlement, their juxtaposition might reflect the appropriation of an earlier monument by a later prehistoric community in order to legitimize claims to landscape or territory. Such actions appear to have occurred in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland, as for example at more prestigious monuments at Forteviot, in Perth and Kinross District, or at Tara in Ireland (cf Bradley 1993, 113–21 for a discussion of the ‘reinterpretation’ of early monuments by later societies). The Iron Age date suggested by Welfare (1980, 6) was supported by a geophysical survey in 1992, which – by analogy with work at Annieston, near Biggar – identified six ring-ditch houses within the western half of the western enclosure (T Neighbour, pers comm). Other rectilinear enclosures broadly of this date are known in southern Scotland (eg Rispsain: Haggarty & Haggarty, 1983; Carronbridge: Johnston, this volume).

Whatever the nature and chronological range of the complex of features at Hillend, therefore, the examination of the features adversely affected by the ethylene pipeline amplifies the considerable potential significance of these neighbouring enclosures for elucidating the prehistory of the region. However, it may be noted that, owing to continued attrition by arable ploughing and riverine erosion, their long-term future is by no means secure.

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The site archive and copies of the CFA reports written during the preparatory stages of this project (eg Armit & Hamilton 1992) have been deposited in the National Monuments Record of Scotland. A copy of the archive report is also lodged with Strathclyde Region Sites & Monuments Record. Illus 2 is reproduced by kind permission of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

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