
7 THE MEDIEVAL FINDS

7.1 *Small finds*

The very small quantity and lack of quality among the small finds is initially surprising in the context of an episcopal manor. In part this may reflect the very small area excavated but also suggests that during the use of the buildings in Phases 3 and 4 the area was kept fairly clean. This is also true of the ditch until it was filled with rubble in Phase 6 after the manor buildings were demolished. The Phase 5 midden is unusual as it seems to have been almost purely comprised of food waste with little general rubbish and very little pottery. It is notable that there is a total lack of more personal items such as knives, buckles or brooches.

Copper alloy

Three fragments of copper-alloy scrap were found, one in the Phase 3–4 oven in Building 10, the others in the rubble of Phase 6. Two are probably small rim fragments from copper-alloy vessels.

- 1 Copper-alloy scrap fragment.
180 × 190mm; 1mm thick. SF 7, context 8, Phase 6.
- 2 Copper-alloy scrap, slightly curved.
Probable vessel fragment. 460 × 280mm; 2mm thick.
SF 8, context 3/1, Phase 6.
- 3 Copper-alloy scrap, twisted with one edge possibly from rim of a vessel.
48 × 11mm; <1mm thick, SF 9, context 42, Phase 3–4.

Lead

A single piece of lead window came was found in the widespread burnt layer overlying the Phase 4 ovens in Building 16. This is quite likely to be from Building 16 itself as it appears to have become fairly derelict at this time before the midden dumping of Phase 5.

- 4 Twisted lead window came fragment.
Length 68mm. One end appears to be *c* 5mm wide with flattened U- or H-section. SF 10, context 43, Phase 4.

Iron

Preservation of iron on the site was very poor. A total of only 52 nails or nail fragments were recovered. Most were from rubble, where they may be assumed to be part of the demolition of the stone buildings. Others were in contexts associated with ovens or hearths 42 and 51, and overlying burnt spreads suggesting the re-use as firewood of timbers taken from

the possibly already derelict buildings. Those that could be measured ranged between 37mm and 80mm in length. Other iron finds are described below.

- 5 Fragment of horse shoe with one nail hole.
53mm x 28mm. SF 11, context 22, Phase 5.
- 6 Flat tapering strap with wider end bent at right angles.
Possible fitting from chest or furniture. 75 × 10–13mm.
SF 12, context 43, Phase 4.
- 7 Strap fitting with two rectangular plates riveted together.
50 × 13mm. SF 13, context 20/4, Phase 6.
- 8 Barrel padlock spring?
Length 37mm. SF 14, context 51, Phase 4.

Stone

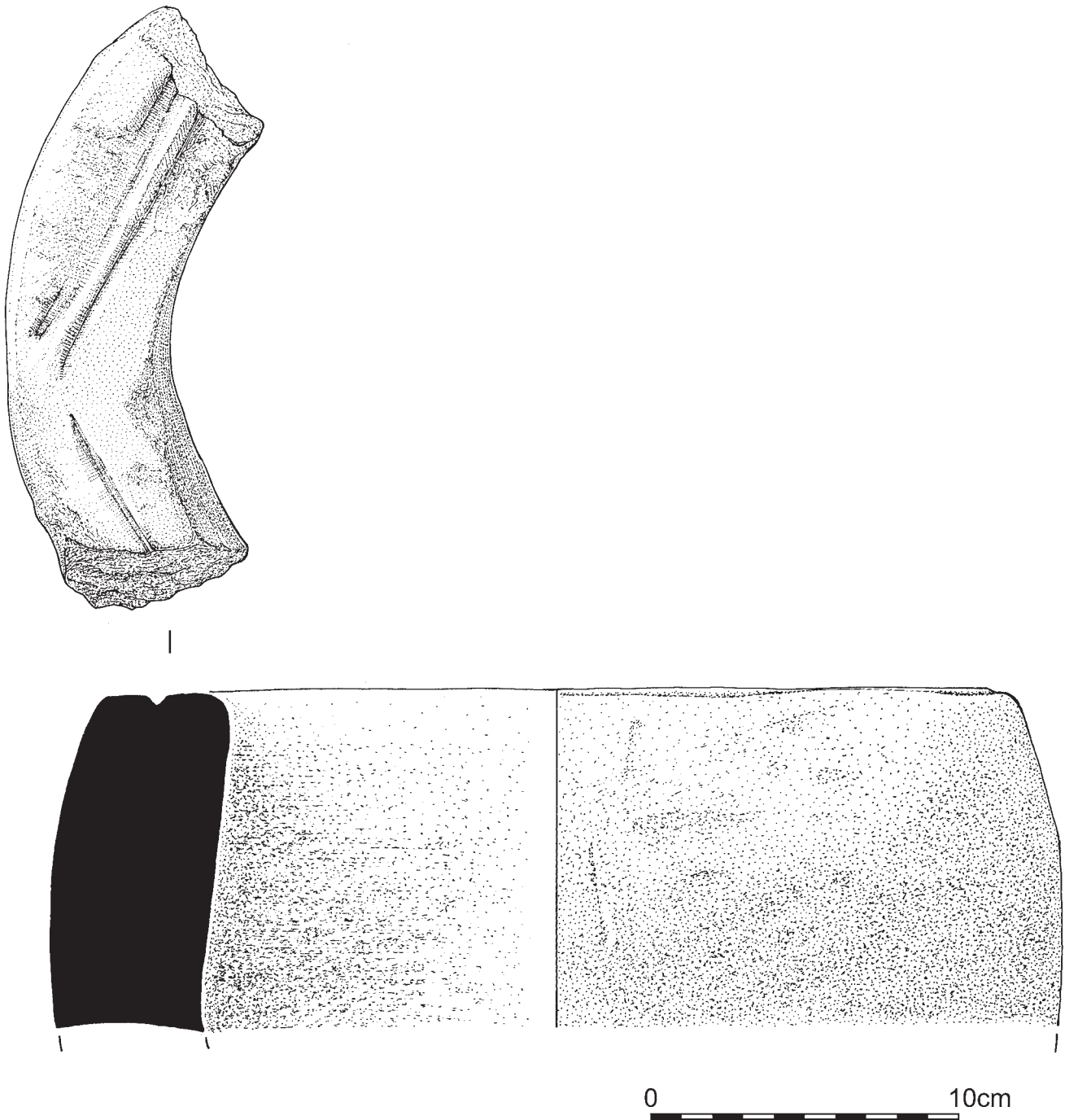
Part of a decorated stone basin or bowl (*illus 12*), *c* 300mm in diameter, may be compared with a stone basin from the Carmelite Friary at Linlithgow (*Stones 1989*, ill 90: 181L) or with the portable font *c* 266mm in diameter from Greyfriars Church in Aberdeen (*Reid 1912*, 20) and thought to date from the 15th/16th century. The context of the Old Rayne basin suggests that it was broken and discarded by the late 13th century. Although the suggested parallels are from religious contexts, it is equally possible that this had a secular use, possibly as a stone mortar (*Platt & Coleman-Smith 1975*, fig. 269, especially 2199: 13th century).

- 9 Roughly circular disc made from slate.
800 × 850mm; <10mm thick. Possible vessel lid. SF15, context 2/1, Phase 6.
- 10 Rim and part of wall of stone basin/bowl.
300mm external diam; 110mm surviving height, beginning to curve in to base; 45mm thick at rim, thickening to 55mm. Worn incised linear decoration on top of rim. SF 16, context 54, Phase 2.

7.2 *Non-ceramic building materials*

7.2.1 Slate

There were a very large number of broken and complete stone roofing slates (*illus 13*) from the rubble layers of Phase 6, especially from context 8 and from 20/3 where they appeared to have been thrown in to fill the top of the cistern pit. A large number of the more complete slates were sorted and a sample representative of the full range of sizes and types measured, ranging between 425 × 265mm × <25mm thick and 115 × 70mm × <10mm thick. All had peg holes at the slate head. These stone slates were clearly from a graduated slate roof, a long tradition in



Illus 12 Stone basin/bowl (No. 10). (Illustration by Jan Dunbar.)

Scotland (Naismith 1989, 98). Two of the slates had opposed U-shaped notches below the shoulder; these slates would have been from a valley between two sections of roof at right angles to each other – a good parallel to this can be seen in the roof of 16th-century Tilquhillie Castle, Aberdeenshire (Coyne 2000, fig. 6). The source of the slate is likely to have been in the Foudland area, some 10km away.

7.2.2 Worked red sandstone

Dressed red sandstone blocks survived in both

Buildings 10 and 16 at corners and doorways with small fragments elsewhere in the rubble. However, over the years sandstone from the site has been ploughed up and reused elsewhere. A block ploughed up in the 1960s, kept in a garden in Old Rayne and now in a garden in Elgin, gives an indication of the quality of the stonework that has been lost (illus 14).

7.3 The pottery

The assemblage of medieval pottery from Old Rayne is comparatively small, amounting to some 380



Illus 13 Roofing slates



Illus 14 Dressed red sandstone fragment from Old Rayne, now in private ownership in Elgin.

Table 2 Pottery by Phase

Phase	C13/14th Redwares	Imports	Modern C19th/20th	Prehistoric Pot
1-2	–	–	–	1
2	1	–	–	–
2-3	59	–	–	–
2-4	2	–	–	–
2-5	–	–	–	–
2-6	–	1 White gritty ware	–	–
3	–	–	–	–
3-4	7	–	–	–
3-6	1	–	–	–
4	64	2 N Yorkshire 1 early stoneware?	–	1
4-5	5	1 greyware	–	–
5	7	–	3	–
5-5	–	–	–	–
5-6	2	–	–	–
6	147	4 N Yorkshire (plus tiles + roof finials)	10	1

sherds, of which c 300 derive from Phases 1–6, with the remainder being from unstratified topsoil and a very small amount from the evaluation trenches.

With the exception of seven sherds, all the pottery is in the Scottish Redware tradition, locally made and dating to the 13th/14th centuries. Most of the Redware sherds are body sherds with only seven rims and five handles, four of which combined rim and handle. Two sherds of greyware may be of local production. With the exception of one sherd of glazed White Gritty Ware and a sherd of possible Stoneware, the only imported ware present is from N Yorkshire, probably Scarborough, and accounts for three sherds of the same jug (Table 2). Almost 50% of the pottery was recovered from Phase 6, the final destruction and levelling of the site. Not surprisingly, most of the material showed considerable erosion and was clearly redeposited. Although not closely datable, the pottery suggests that the main activity on the site was in the 13th and 14th centuries.

7.3.1 Form and function

As is often the case in the 13th and 14th centuries, the most common form of vessel in use is the jug. Almost without exception this is the case with the Old Rayne assemblage, and it is assumed that these are mainly table wares for water, beer or wine. The only exceptional form represented is a single, fairly abraded sherd of a urinal with a portion of the aperture. One striking aspect of the pottery assemblage is the virtually total absence of cooking pots; all the more surprising in the context of the Phase 4 ovens. Also absent are other forms of cooking vessels

such as skillets, dripping pans and meat dishes. This may be a reflection of the use of metal cooking vessels.

7.3.2 Decoration

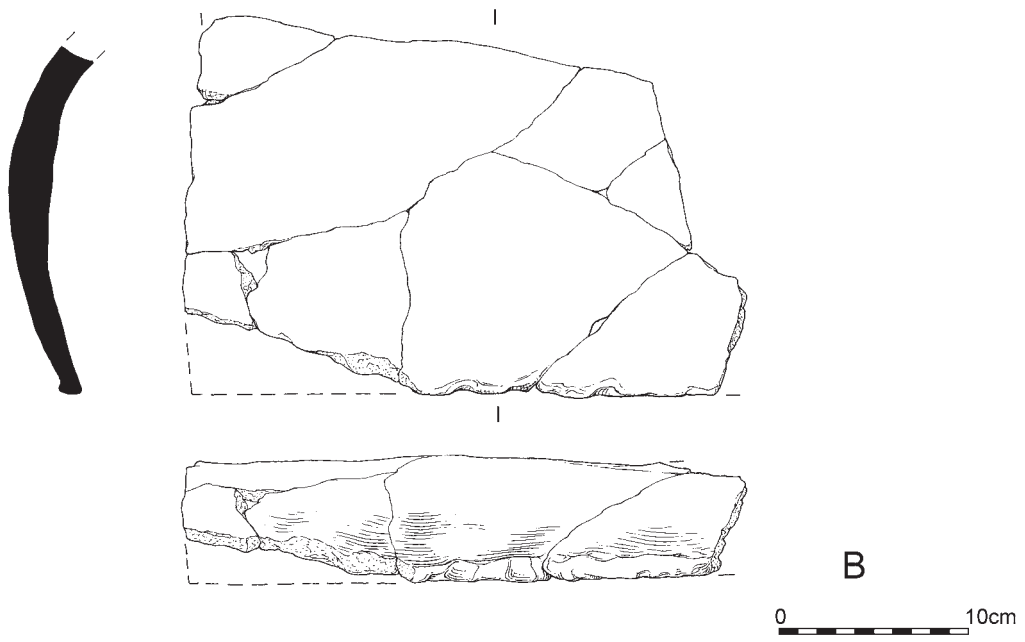
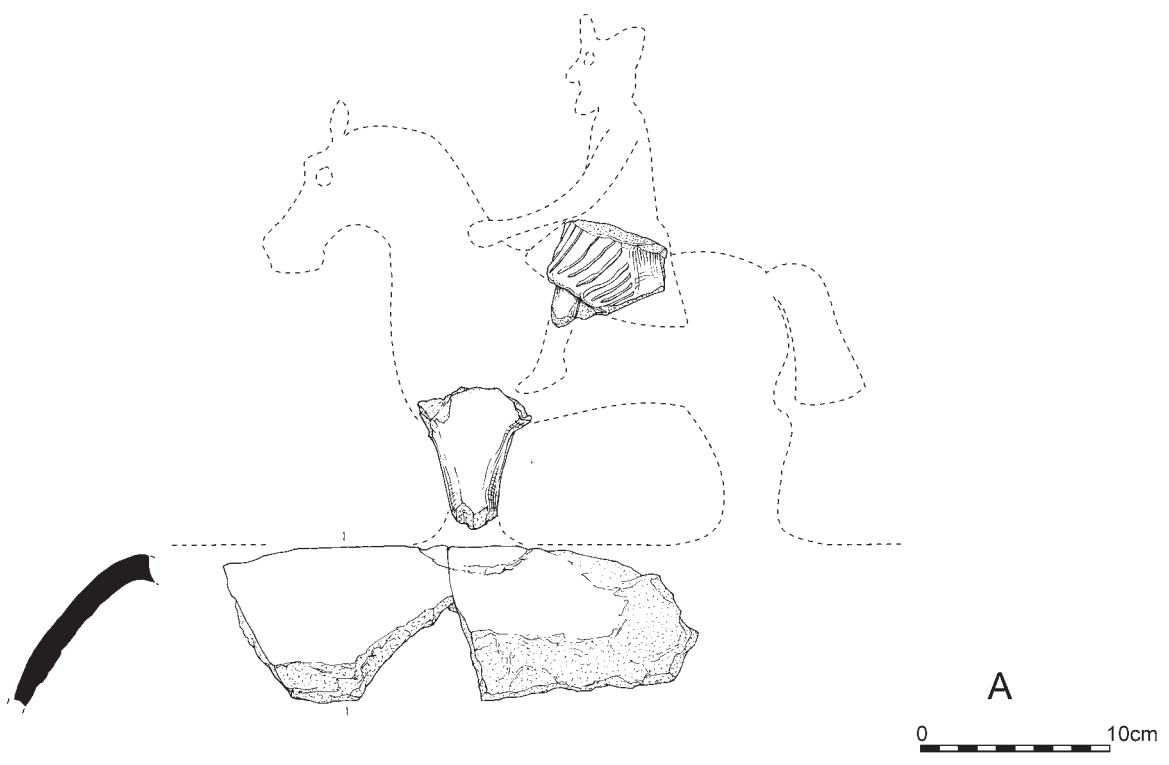
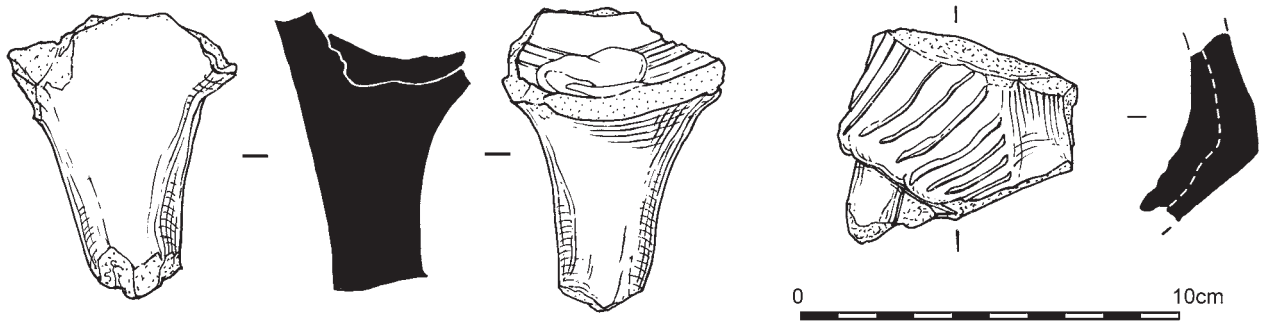
In general the vessels represented are glazed externally and lack the highly decorated features that are a common feature of English and continental pottery of this period. Some body sherds have rouletted decoration on applied strips and there is a single example of a possible face mask jug. A small number of sherds bear incised wavy line decoration and two have ‘raspberry’ roundels.

7.4 Ceramic roof furniture

One of the more unusual aspects of the surviving ceramic on the site was the presence in the demolition rubble of Phase 6 of portions of at least two locally produced ridge tiles and an imported exotic Scarborough Ware ridge tile or finial bearing a possible equestrian figure.

The locally produced ridge tiles are in the Scottish Redware tradition with a very coarse red fabric and covered with a drab olive-green glaze (illus 15: B). The more complete example measures at least 350mm in length by 240mm across. Although not common in Scotland, locally produced Redware ridge tiles of a similar type were found at the deserted medieval settlement at Rattray, also in a manorial context (Murray & Murray 1993, 168 and fig. 29).

Portions of a Scarborough Ware ridge tile were found. Although not complete, the surviving portions



Illus 15A: Details and reconstruction of decorative ceramic ridge tile and finial imported from Yorkshire. B: Locally produced Redware ceramic ridge tile. (Illustration by Jan Dunbar)

measure 240mm in length by 160mm across, in a pinkish-beige fairly fine sandy fabric (illus 15: A). The tile, which has suffered severe spalling, was covered on its upper surface with a thick, lustrous green glaze, much of which has also become detached. Although it is far from certain, the upper surface of the tile has scarring, which may indicate the position of the finial.

Only two pieces of the possible finial, in the form of an equestrian figure, survive. Both pieces are in the same fabric as the ridge tile and covered in the same lustrous green glaze. The first piece (75mm long and, at the body, *c* 55mm across) represents the upper portion of a horse's leg where it joins the body of the horse (illus 15: A). The second piece (*c* 77mm long × 66mm) would appear to be the lower portion of the rider. A series of incised horizontal lines may

represent the lower part of the rider's tunic, below which projects a possible piece of the rider's leg (illus 15: A).

No parallels have so far been found that would indicate how precisely the figure and the ridge tile come together but it is assumed that it would be similar to the zoomorphic finial on the ridge tile from Miserden Castle, Gloucestershire (Hurman & Nenck 2000).

The occurrence in Scotland of ridge tiles with either zoomorphic or equestrian finials is extremely rare, no parallels are known of 13th/14th-century date, the only definite known example being a highly decorated equestrian roof-finial from Canongate, Edinburgh which dates to the 16th century and is a Low Countries import (Haggarty & Murray 1992).