
5 The Pottery

5.1 Pottery of prehistoric and indeterminate date by Alison Sheridan & Catherine McGill

This was found in Areas B, C and F, and comprised:

- a plough-truncated, undecorated Early Bronze Age Beaker from Area B (SF 28)
- one near-intact coarse plain bucket-shaped pot from Area B (SF 40) of probable Late Bronze Age date (early 1st millennium BC)
- 35 sherds and several fragments from Areas B, C and F, mostly small and undiagnostic, but probably ranging from Early Neolithic to Iron Age date
- fragments of daub, of probable Iron Age date (SF 3), from Area B.

5.1.1 Area B

Neolithic

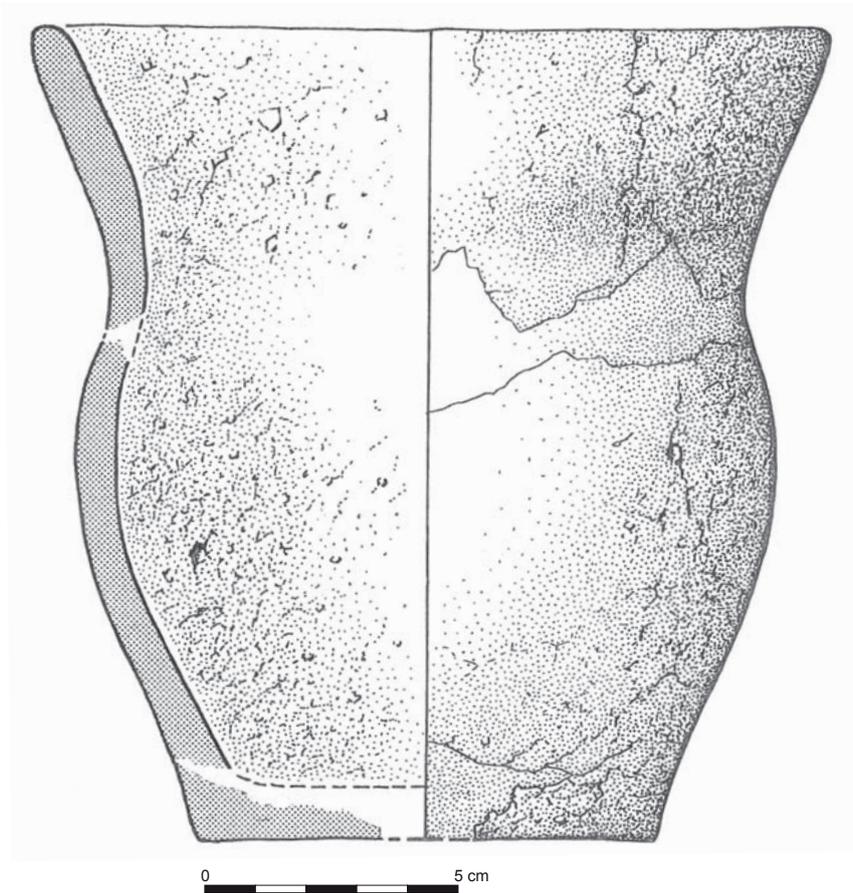
Four small body sherds (of which two conjoin to form a piece 45mm by 33mm), together with a fragment and a crumb, from between one and three vessels (SFs 54, 55 & 59; not illus). From fill of Pit 673 (context 649). All slightly abraded. These near-featureless body sherds would be hard to date on their own, but the fact that they come from a pit that has produced two fourth millennium radiocarbon dates (GU-11071 and GU-11072, 3640–3360 and 3950–3660 cal BC, respectively) suggests that they are Neolithic. The burnished finish, albeit crudely executed, on both surfaces of SF 55 and on the interior of SF 54 is consistent with an attribution to the Carinated Bowl ceramic tradition (Sheridan 1997; Sheridan 2003a). However, given the discrepancy between the dates and the otherwise undistinguished nature of the sherds, it is impossible to say whether they are of the earliest, ‘traditional’ kind of Carinated Bowl pottery or the later, ‘modified’ variety. Linear marks on both surfaces of these two sherds relate to the process of smoothing and burnishing, and do not represent deliberate decoration. The sherds have wall thicknesses up to 9mm. The conjoining sherds SF 55 and the sherd SF 59 are black throughout; the SF 54 sherd has a black interior and core and a pinkish-brown exterior. SF 55 has hackly fracture surfaces and uneven exterior and interior surfaces, interrupted by the stone temper inclusions. The latter are sparse (with a density of *c* 5%), rounded to angular, up to *c* 4mm × 3mm in size, and of more than one kind of stone. They include a black and white speckled crystalline stone, which may also be present in SFs 54 and 59.

Beaker (SF 28; illus 21; illus 22) From fill of truncated pit (context 507); associated with cup-marked stone (SF 38). Sherds from the rim, belly and base of an undecorated Beaker; much of one side is missing, through plough damage. The pot was tilting when discovered, but had probably been deposited upright. It contained densely packed sediment from the pit fill. The estimated height, rim diameter and base diameters are *c* 160mm, 158mm and *c* 92mm, respectively; the wall thickness ranges between 5.5 and 10.5mm. The rim is gently rounded; the neck short and splaying; the belly high and slightly globular; and the base flat on its exterior. (Its interior base shape cannot be determined.) The exterior and upper part of the interior surfaces are a light orange-brown, darkened in places by the recent application of a consolidant; the lower part of the interior is a medium-brown; and the core is blackish, indicating that the pot had been fired rapidly. There are no traces of any former contents. The surfaces have been smoothed and slipped, but fragments of the stone temper protrude, especially through the interior surface. The fabric tends to spall and has a hackly fracture. Inclusions occupy 10–15% of the body and consist of angular fragments of a blackish-brown crystalline stone up to 6mm by 8mm in size. Overall, the pot is neither markedly fine nor markedly coarse in appearance.

In shape, the Beaker is comparable with Clarke’s ‘Developed Northern’ (N2 or N3) types, and with a few ‘Northern/North Rhine’ (N/NR) examples (Clarke 1970). According to Lanting & van der Waals’ scheme, it can be ascribed to their ‘step 4’ (Lanting & van der Waals 1972).

Pottery of definite and probable Late Bronze Age date

SF 40 Near-complete, undecorated, roughly bucket-shaped coarseware pot (illus 23; illus 24). From fill of shallow pit (context 547), cut into the top of – and thus post-dating – the trackway; there were no associated finds. The pit is close to two others that also post-date the trackway (contexts 758 & 712), with radiocarbon dates of 1130–830 and 980–800 cal BC at 2-sigma, respectively (GU-11069 & GU-11073). Just over a third of the rim is missing, and below the fracture edge a large part of the exterior surface has spalled off. The pot had been deposited upright, and it contained a hard-packed deposit of sediment from the pit fill, including some sizeable pebbles; there were no traces of any original contents. The height, rim and base diameters and wall thickness are 143mm, 158mm, *c* 100mm and 10–13.5mm, respectively. The pot has a squared-off, internally-bevelled rim and a body that swells out slightly (and unevenly) from below the rim before narrowing (again unevenly) towards the base, forming a slight and discon-



Illus 21 Beaker (SF 28)

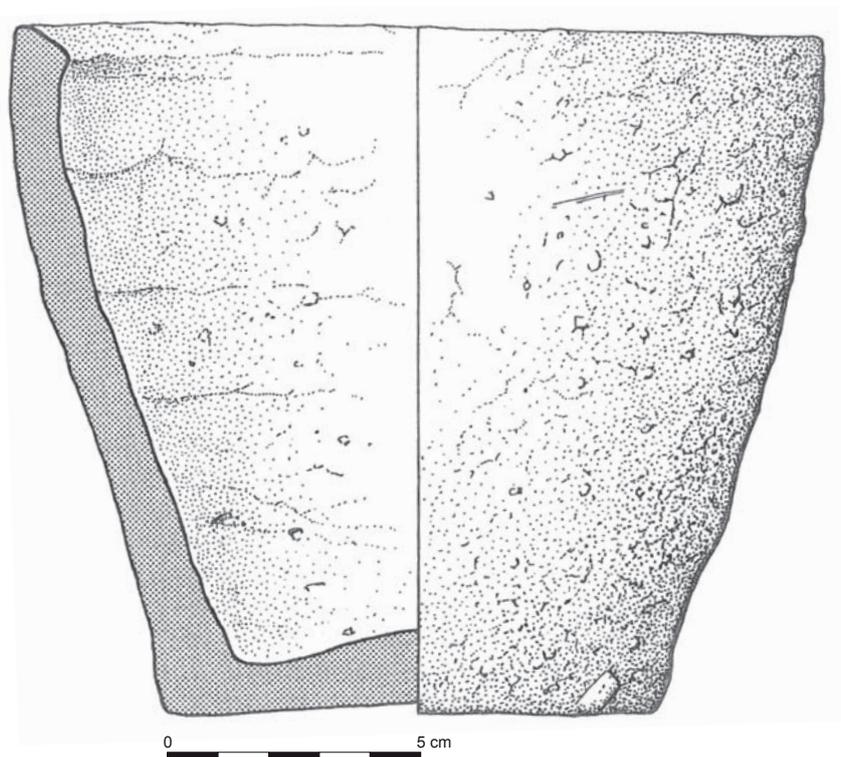


Illus 22 Beaker (SF 28) and stone object (SF 38)

tinuous pedestal immediately above the base. The latter is slightly dished on the outside and convex on the inside. Although covered with a thick slip, the surfaces are very uneven, with roughly smoothed-down coil joints clearly visible on the interior surface, and many grits protruding through the surfaces. The exterior, which has hairline cracks, is a mottled medium and dark brown; the core and interior are blackish. The pot has fairly abundant (c 15–20%) angular and sub-angular fragments, mostly of the black and white speckled crystalline stone as previously noted in SF 55; they range in size up to at least 17.5mm by 13.5mm, and their angularity indicates that the stone had been deliberately crushed and added as temper.

SFs 68, 78, 80 & 81 Rimsherd and three body sherds of similarly coarse pottery, probably from two vessels (*illus 25*). From the fill of a post-hole (context 826) cut into the fill of Pit 828. The rim (SF 68, estimated diameter c 200mm; wall thickness c 10mm) is flat and has a shallow bevel; below it, the body curves inwards. The surfaces, though slipped, are uneven, and the sherd edges are slightly abraded. Inclusions are sparse (<5%) and small (up to 4mm × 2mm), and are of the speckled crystalline stone. Most of the external surface had spalled off from the body sherds, but where it survives the wall thickness is 13mm. The interior had been slipped or wet-smoothed. Inclusions comprise sparse but fairly large (up to 8mm × 5mm) angular and subangular fragments of black and brownish stone.

SF 64 Small, very slightly abraded rimsherd (*illus 26*) from pit fill (context 552, Pit 758), post-dating the



Illus 23 Bronze Age bucket-shaped pot (SF 40)

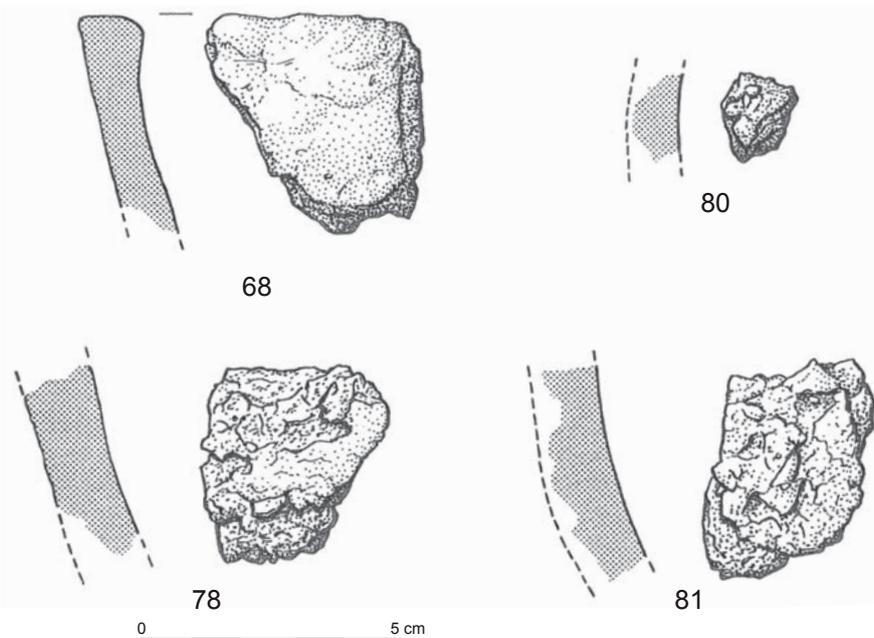


Illus 24 Bucket-shaped pot (SF 40) under excavation

trackway. Charcoal from this context produced the aforementioned date of 1130–890 cal BC (GU-11069), and this provides the basis for dating this sherd to the Late Bronze Age; otherwise, it could pass for Early Neolithic carinated pottery, although its small size (28mm × 12mm) renders any definitive dating on stylistic grounds alone impossible. From a fairly fine-textured pot, with a wall thickness of 9mm and hackly fracture surfaces; the sherd is too small to allow diameter estimation. The rim is very slightly rolled over and flattish. The surfaces have been smoothed to a low sheen; the exterior is pinkish-brown, the core greyish and the interior grey-brown. Inclusions

comprise sparse (<5%), fairly small (up to 4mm × 2mm), angular fragments of the speckled crystalline stone.

SF 65 Featureless body sherd (not illus) from the fill of one of the putative hearths near the southern edge of the trackway (context 718, Hearth 712). As with SF 64, the attribution of this sherd to the Late Bronze Age is based solely on the radiocarbon date of 980–800 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11073) obtained from charcoal in this fill. The sherd measures 35mm × 32mm, with a wall thickness of up to 9mm; the surfaces are uneven, and there are traces of a thin blackish encrustation on the exterior. Inclusions are



Illus 25 Rimsherd and three body sherds of probable Late Bronze Age coarse pottery

hard to discern, being the same grey-brown colour as the fabric, but appear fairly sparse.

Pottery and daub of probable Iron Age date from in and near the 'banjo' feature

SF 1 Rimsherd from a large flat-rimmed pot with an upright neck (*illus 26*) from the surface of the 'banjo' feature (context 009). The rim diameter had been at least 200mm, and the wall thickness 13.5mm. Although slightly uneven, the surfaces had been smoothed and slipped. The exterior and interior are medium brown, the core blackish. The inclusions comprise fragments of angular and sub-angular crushed stone of various kinds up to *c* 10mm × 9mm in size, and with a density of 7–10%; they include the black and white speckly crystalline stone noted in other Maybury Park pottery, as well as a fine-grained blackish stone.

SF 2 Rimsherd from a thinner-walled (*c* 6mm), flat-rimmed pot with upright neck (*illus 26*), from the same context. The rim is club-shaped and too small to permit diameter estimation. The colour varies throughout from pinkish-brown to blackish-brown. Inclusions comprise angular and sub-angular fragments of the speckly crystalline stone along with a fine-grained dark brown stone, up to 7mm × 5.5mm, at a density of 10–15%.

SF 3 Lump of daub in several pieces (not illustrated, context 012), found adjacent to the 'banjo' feature. Soft, pinkish-brown, virtually inclusion-free clay. On one side they bear impressions of the ?wattlework structure against which the daub had been applied.

Sherds of indeterminate date

These comprise a rimsherd, a base sherd and five featureless body sherds.

SF 41 A small, abraded rimsherd (from colluvium, context 543; *illus 26*) from a fairly fine flat-rimmed pot. The wall thickness is *c* 6mm; the surfaces brown and the core black. Inclusions are sparse (<5%) but may include the speckly crystalline stone.

SF 29 A very abraded basal sherd (from topsoil, context 401, not illustrated) from a fine, vessel of soft fabric.

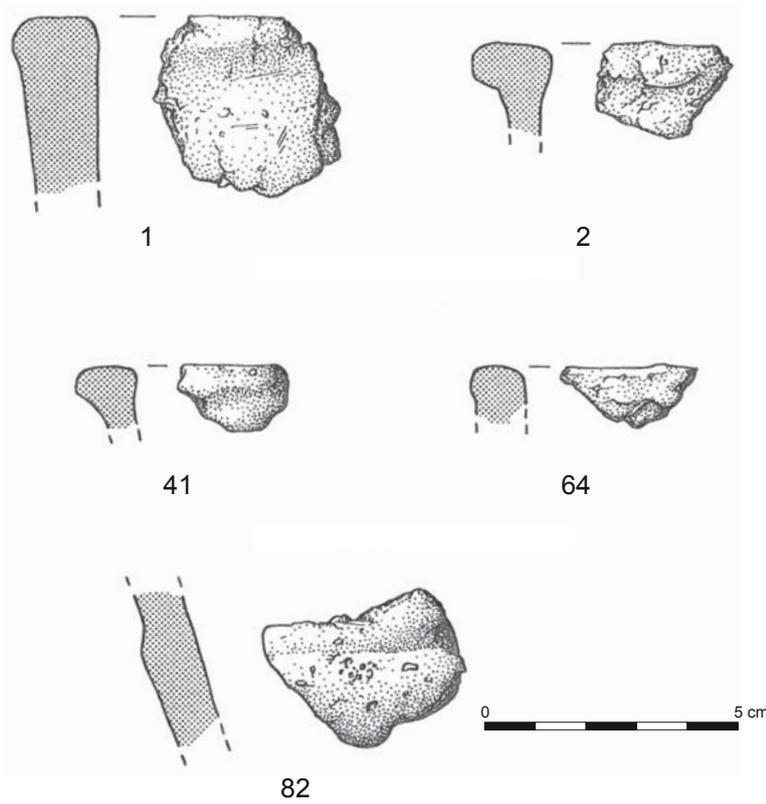
SF 20 (not illustrated, from Trench 8 extension); **SF 30** (from topsoil); **SF 36** (from colluvium, context 543); **SF 49** (from pit fill, context 550); and **SF 52** (from stone-lined Pit 681) are featureless body sherds from coil-built pots. Little can be said about them other than that all but SF 36 are abraded to varying degrees, and that SF 36 contains fragments of the speckly crystalline stone.

5.1.2 Area C

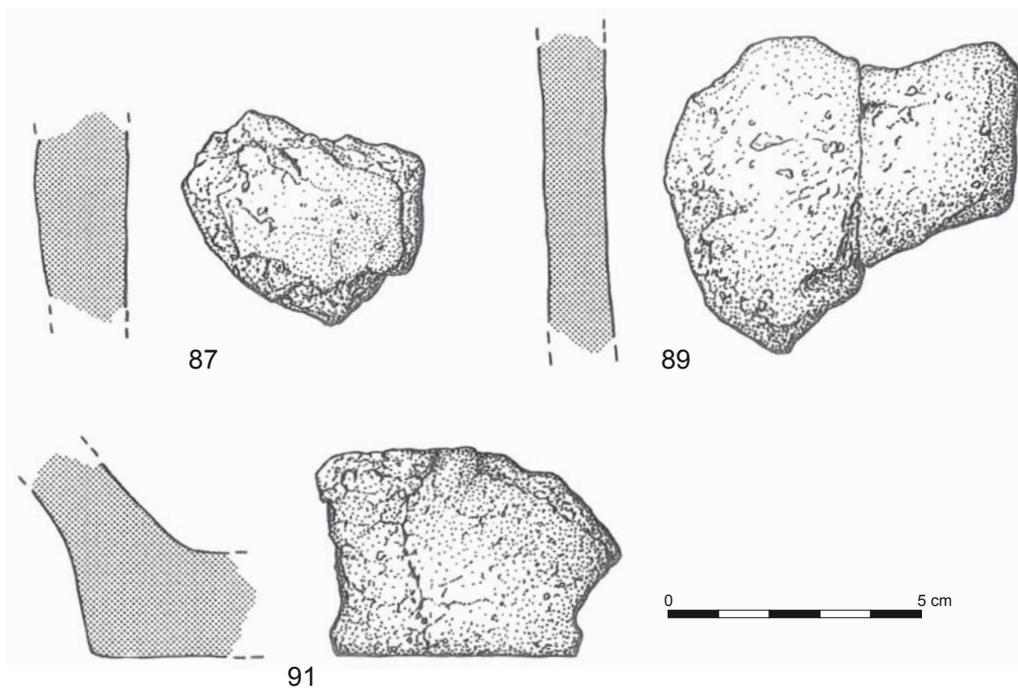
Probably and possibly Early Neolithic

SF 82 Gently carinated sherd from a carinated bowl of probable Early Neolithic date (*illus 26*); stray find (context 1000). The sherd is 40mm × 32.5mm, with a wall thickness of 10–12mm and an estimated carination diameter of *c* 170mm. Its edges and interior surface have been abraded; the fabric is fairly soft. The exterior is smooth, but pitted where inclusions have fallen out. The exterior is black, the core and interior mid-brown. Inclusions are sparse (5–7%) and small (up to 3mm × 2mm), varying in shape from round to angular; they include speckled crystalline grits similar to those seen in the other Maybury Park pottery.

SFs 69, 71, 72, 74, 76 Five featureless body sherds, with wall thicknesses between 8mm and 11.5mm, abraded to varying degrees from the base of the colluvium (not illustrated, context 1002). SF 69 and SF 76 may belong to the same pot – a smooth-surfaced vessel, with tiny patches of blackish encrustation on the exterior surface



Illus 26 Probable Late Bronze Age property



Illus 27 Probable Iron Age Pottery from Area F

of SF 76 and inclusions, up to 8mm × 6mm in size, of the speckled crystalline stone. Although they have no diagnostic features, an Early Neolithic date cannot be ruled out.

5.1.3 Area F

Pottery of Iron Age (and possibly later) date from the stone structure

Sherds of four pots were found at various depths in the fills of the hollow.

SFs 87 & 89 (context 1101); **SF 91** (context 1102)

Three soft, abraded body sherds (of which two are now conjoined) and a wall-and-base sherd from a large, undecorated, thick-walled coarseware pot (illus 27). The pot had a flat, pedestalled base above which the wall splayed. The estimated base diameter is *c* 200mm; wall and base thicknesses are 11.5–17.5mm and 21mm, respectively. The largest sherd is 75mm × 60mm. The exterior surface is a mottled orange-brown, pale and dark grey and black; the core blackish; the interior orange. The surfaces are uneven, and SF 91 has hairline cracks on both its interior and exterior. Inclusions are relatively sparse (*c* 7%) and mainly comprise angular and sub-angular fragments of the speckled crystalline stone up to 5mm × 4.5mm. Some small reddish, iron-rich(?) inclusions are also present in SF 87.

SF 97 Body sherd (not illustrated, context 1130), 50mm × 35mm, from just above the base of a coarse, flat-based pot, from the basal silt. The sherd had broken along a coil joint line at the junction of the base and wall; the latter rises with a very slight splay from the base, suggesting that the pot had probably been bucket-shaped. The pot's estimated diameter at this point is *c* 160mm; wall thickness is *c* 12mm. The exterior is a purplish-brown, and the core and interior are black. The fabric is hard and the surfaces slightly uneven, with grits protruding. Inclusions comprise sub-angular and angular fragments of the speckled crystalline stone up to *c* 7mm × 6.5mm, at a density of 10–15%.

SF 88 Heavily abraded fragment, 16.5mm × 13 × 9mm (not illustrated, context 1102). Mottled orange and dark grey throughout. Contains one inclusion of the speckled crystalline stone.

SF 93 Burnt and abraded curving body sherd, 37mm × 34mm × 10mm (not illustrated, context 1120). Buff-orange throughout, with a dark grey encrustation on the exterior. Soft, fine, no inclusions visible.

5.1.4 Discussion

This small assemblage reflects the chronological diversity of the activities attested at Maybury Park; and the recurrent presence of a particular kind of stone as temper, in pottery from different periods, suggests that most, if not all, of the pottery had probably been made locally. (Geological sourcing of the stone would, however, be required to verify this.)

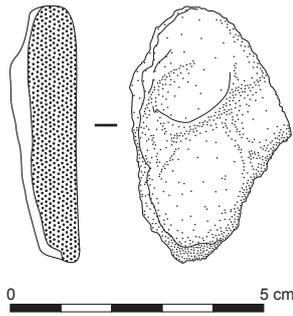
The ten small sherds of probable and possible Neolithic date from Areas B and C are not particu-

larly informative as regards the nature of Neolithic activities at Maybury Park; but the carination sherd SF 82 appears to belong to the Early Neolithic Carinated Bowl tradition, whose dating is consistent with the dates (GU-11071–2) obtained from the fill of the oval Pit 673, which also produced Carinated Bowl pottery (see Sheridan 1997 and Sheridan 2003a on the dating of this pottery in Scotland).

The Beaker is scarcely more informative as to its circumstances of deposition – and the severe plough-truncation of the large oval pit in which it was found hinders interpretation. The size and shape of the pit would be consistent with it being a grave pit, but no trace of human bone was found; indeed, the presence of several large lumps of charcoal adjacent to the Beaker is puzzling. Furthermore, Clarke has pointed out that undecorated Beakers are relatively rare in funerary contexts (Clarke 1970, appendix 7.20). Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to allocate the Beaker to a date range narrower than *c* 2600–1800 BC (Kinnes *et al* 1991) – a situation that may eventually be remedied through new dating programmes such as the one currently underway for the National Museums of Scotland. However, the date of 2310–1950 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11070), obtained from a disturbed hearth around 19m to the south-east, is further evidence for Beaker period activity and might indirectly provide a date for the Beaker in the pit.

The flat-based coarse vessels from Area B are of particular interest because, despite their superficial homogeneity, they appear to span at least a millennium. Four pots (detailed above) probably date to *c* 1000–800 BC (in line with the radiocarbon dates obtained from Features 552 and 718 in Area B, ie GU-11069 and GU-11073, respectively), while the pottery from the 'banjo' feature in Area B and from the structure in Area F is likely to date from the centuries around the time of Christ (in line with the date GU-11074 from Area F).

The flat-based and flat-rimmed undecorated coarseware of the Bronze and Iron Ages is notoriously difficult to date on stylistic grounds and has been the subject of some debate. In his discussion of the late second to early first millennium BC assemblage from Ormiston Farm, Fife, Halliday (Halliday 1988) proposed the abandonment of Coles & Taylor's term 'Flat-rimmed Ware' (Coles & Taylor 1970, 97–8) to describe this kind of pottery, as it implies an unwarranted unity of tradition. The same could be said for the term 'bucket urn' to refer to flat-rimmed coarse pots from Bronze Age funerary contexts, whose currency appears to span up to a millennium from *c* 1700 BC to at least 800 BC (Sheridan 2003b, 210–13). The formal simplicity of flat-based undecorated coarseware has led several commentators (eg McLellan 1992) to suggest that it is unlikely to show chronological or regional patterning. However, as Halliday and others (eg Cool 1982; Burgess 1995) have suggested, this may not be the case. This position is vindicated by the doctoral research carried out by one of us (CMcG), which has succeed-



Illus 28 Possible Post-Roman pottery

ing in teasing out some such patterning, however subtle.

The four probable Late Bronze Age pots can be paralleled in shape, size and fabric among funerary and domestic pottery dating to between the 13th and 9th centuries BC. This includes:

- 1 The assemblage relating to secondary, funerary activity at Old Keig recumbent stone circle in Aberdeenshire (Childe 1933, 44; Childe 1934, 386–8), recently dated to 2820 ± 50 BP (1130–830 cal BC at 2-sigma, GrA-21696: Sheridan 2003b).
- 2 The urn from Duff House, Banff, which looks like a slenderer version of Maybury pot SF 40 and is dated, through its associated gold jewellery, to around the 13th century BC (Eogan 1994, 75–7).
- 3 The Late Bronze Age domestic assemblage from Myrehead, Falkirk, dating to between 1260 and 810 cal BC (2825 ± 85 BP, GU-1608; 2830 ± 60 BP, 1190–830 cal BC at 2-sigma, GU-1609: Barclay 1983, SFs 6, 9 & 10; cf in particular SF 6 with Maybury SF 68).
- 4 The aforementioned domestic assemblage from Ormiston Farm (Sherriff 1998), dated to 2935 ± 60 BP (1370–940 cal BC at 2-sigma, GU-1669). A further example of coarseware, from Claish, Stirling – albeit coarser in fabric than the Maybury material – has recently been radiocarbon dated to 3005 ± 35 BP (1380–1120 cal BC at 2-sigma, AA-49634: Sheridan 2003a, illus 20).

As for the pottery of probable and possible Iron Age date, the date of 2020 ± 50 BP (170 cal BC–cal AD 80, GU-11074) from the structure in Area F provides the basis for dating this pottery; there is no reason to believe that the sherds in question were residual from an earlier period of activity. The base sherd with its splaying wall (SF 91) invites comparison with a near-complete bucket-shaped pot from Myrehead

(Sheridan 2003a, SF 15), from a context dating to 1885 ± 60 BP (cal BC/AD 0–cal AD 320, GU-1610). As for sherds SF 1 and SF 2 from the ‘banjo’ enclosure in Area B, general similarities in form and fabric are to be found among assemblages such as Traprain Law (eg Curle 1915, figs 11–13; Curle & Cree 1921, fig 13; McGill forthcoming a), Kaimes Hill (Simpson 1969), Cardean (McGill forthcoming b) and the souterrains in Angus and Perth & Kinross (eg Shanzie: McGill 2002; McGill forthcoming c; McGill forthcoming d), so perhaps a date in the late first millennium BC to early first millennium AD can be proposed. Upright-rimmed pots with wall thicknesses comparable to that of SF 1 tend to appear on Late Iron Age settlement sites such as Traprain Law and Enochdhu (RCAHMS 1990).

5.2 Post-Roman pottery by John A Lawson

A tiny buff body sherd ($32\text{mm} \times 14\text{mm} \times 6\text{mm}$ at its maximum) with a slightly paler oxidized surface. A sandy/gritty fabric rich in quartz inclusions and some unidentified black rock fragments. The quartz varies from opaque to a pinkish brown in colour with the grains varying in size up to $c 2\text{mm} \times 2\text{mm} \times 4\text{mm}$. What is almost certainly the exterior surface is decorated with what may possibly be a thin applied $c 8\text{mm}$ broad. This strip has been impressed to form what maybe a row of shallow slightly random oval impressions $6\text{mm} \times 8\text{mm}$. Due to the small size of the shard it is not possible to ascertain if this decoration is vertical or horizontal. Context 103, Area F, illus 28.

This sherd does not fit within any known Scottish ceramic groupings, being rejected by prehistorians (A Sheridan, pers comm), Romanists (F Hunter, pers comm) and medievalists (G Haggarty, pers comm). This might suggest a possible later first millennium AD date and would benefit from being compared to the Scottish Redware database, and in particular with the Anglian loomweights excavated from South Platt hill near Ratho (Norton & MacSween 1995).

5.3 Post-medieval pottery by Valerie E Dean & John A Lawson

A small assemblage of domestic post-medieval pottery was recovered from areas B, F and U. The assemblage consisted of four sherds of Scottish post-medieval Reduced Ware and three sherds of Scottish post-medieval Oxidized Ware dating to the 16th–17th centuries.