

Scotland's First Settlers: Report on the Coarse Pottery

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This report presents the pottery finds from the Scotland's First Settlers project as a whole. Because of the diversity in site type, geographical location and chronology, it is presented as a catalogue. The more substantial sherds are recorded in full and small fragments and crumbs are listed. In the majority of cases the sherds were small or abraded and had no diagnostic attributes, and there are only a few instances where comment is made on the possible date of a sherd. As has been commented on in various papers (eg Lane 1990; Campbell 2002; MacSween 2002) fabric has yet to be proved a reliable indicator of date. Individual references to pottery finds are also included in the accounts of individual sites (see sections on **Sand**, and the **active sites section**)

NB: **P numbers** relate the catalogue entries back to the individual bags.
For crumbs weighing less than 2g, no weight is recorded.

SFS 10 ALLT NA UAMHA

TP1 context 1

P80 Eleven body sherds, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional rock fragments which has fired hard and is grey with a brown exterior margin. Interior surface sooted.

Th 4mm; Wt 8g

TP1 context 2

P81 One body sherd, fresh. The exterior surface is smoothed. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with a red interior surface. The exterior surface is sooted.

Th 6mm; Wt 5g

P82 One body sherd, abraded. The exterior surface is smoothed. The fabric is sandy clay with occasional mixed rounded and angular rock fragments which has fired hard and is grey. The interior surface is sooted.

Th 7mm; Wt 4g

P83 One body sherd, fairly fresh. The exterior surface is smoothed. The fabric is fine sandy clay which has fired hard and is red.

Th 7mm; Wt 2g

Comment: Probably Iron Age or later

SFS 30 AN CORRAN C

Surface

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P6 Rim which has been pinched up, leaving a slight bevel on the exterior. The fabric is fine clay with small voids (organics) which has fired hard and is grey with red surfaces.

Th 5mm; Dia 120mm; Wt 4g

SFS 101 AN CORRAN E

Surface

P7 V1 One body sherd, slightly abraded, decorated with deep oblique incisions, 3mm wide and 1mm deep. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional rock fragments and round/triangular voids (possibly shell) which has fired soft and is brown. Light sooting on both surfaces.

Th 8mm; Wt 8g

Comment From the angle of the sherd and the nature of the decoration, this sherd is probably from an Unstan Ware vessel, dating to the earlier part of the Neolithic. (cf, for example, pottery from Bharpa Carinish, North Uist [MacSween 1993, 373, Fig 8, V54]).

P8 V2 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine clay with occasional rock fragments which has fired soft and is grey with a red exterior surface.

Th 7mm; Wt 6g

SFS 66 ARD CLAIS SALACHER 2

P14 V1 Sherd, probably from the rounded part of a base, fresh. The fabric is coarse sandy clay with occasional rock fragments which has fired hard and is buff. There are finger impressions on the interior surface, probably from shaping.

Th 9mm; Wt 18g

P15 V2 Body sherd, fresh. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is black. Both surfaces are sooted.

Th 6mm; Wt 11g

P17 V1A Two sherds, probably from the same vessel. The fabric is sandy clay with occasional coarse quartz which has fired hard. Exterior surface sooted.

Th 7mm; Wt 12g

P18 V2A One sherd. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is black. Sooting on both surfaces.

Th 6mm; Wt 7g

P19 V3A Sherd from the neck of a vessel, decorated with a horizontal line around the neck of the vessel, with vertical lines c12mm long and 3mm apart below it. The fabric is sandy clay with occasional rock fragments which has fired hard and has a red exterior and a grey interior.

Th 10mm; Wt 31g

Comment: the nature of the decoration - a band of incised decoration around the neck of the vessel - is indicative of an Iron Age date (cf decoration on a vessel dating to the earlier Iron Age from Kebister, Orkney [Dalland and MacSween 1999, illus 159.1, p 181]).

TP 1 Context 4 S1032

P20 One body sherd from a coil-constructed vessel, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine clay with c20% of angular rock fragments up to 6mm long which has fired hard and is grey with a red exterior surface. There is light sooting on both surfaces.

Th 8mm; Wt 14g

P16 Sherd of modern glazed pottery.

SFS 99 CLACHAN CHURCH

TP1 Context 4

P23 One sherd, broken in two. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is black. There is sooting/residue on both surfaces.

Th 4mm; Wt 5g

One fragment. The fabric is sandy clay.

Th 5mm

SFS 17 CHUCH CAVE, RONA

TP2, Context 1

P84 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is coarse sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with a red interior margin.

Th 7mm; Wt 4g

TP2, Context 2

P85 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The exterior surface is smoothed and possibly burnished. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with a brown interior surface.

Th 4mm; Wt 2g

P86 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red surfaces.

Th 6mm; Wt 1g

P87 One body sherd, abraded. The exterior surface is smoothed and decorated with incised lines probably forming a chevron pattern. The fabric is fairly coarse sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey.

Th 6mm; Wt 3g

Comment: Probably Iron Age or later. The motif on the one decorated sherd is indicative of an Iron Age date, and the fabrics and fineness of the undecorated sherds indicate an Iron Age or later date.

SFS 117 DUN HASAN

Surface

P25 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The exterior surface is smoothed. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional rock fragments and voids which has fired hard and is grey with brown surfaces.

Th 10mm; Wt 25g

SFS 08 LOCH A SGUIRR

TP1 Spit 1

P4 One body sherd, slightly abraded. There are finger smoothing marks on the interior and exterior surfaces. The fabric is fine clay with small voids (possibly organics) which has fired hard and is grey with a red exterior margin. The exterior surface is sooted with small patches of residue.

Th 6mm; Wt 8g

TP9 Spit 7

P5 Two abraded fragments from the same vessel. The fabric is fine sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red surfaces.

Th 11mm

TP9 Spit 8

P1 V1 Body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional voids (organics) which has fired hard and is grey. The exterior surface is sooted.

Th 7mm; Wt 3g

P2 V2 Two body sherds, fresh. The fabric is fine sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red margins. The exterior surface is sooted and there is lighter sooting in the interior.

Th 5mm; Wt 4g

P3 2 crumbs. Sandy clay. Grey with a red exterior margin. c 4mm.

SFS 106 LOCH TOSCAIG 3

Surface

P24 Small abraded fragment. The fabric is fine sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red margins.

Th 7mm

SFS 171 MEALL NA H'AIRDIE 2

TP1 context 2

P79 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with a red exterior margin. The exterior is sooted and the interior is sooted with a residue.

Th 6mm; Wt 14g

Comment: Probably Iron Age or later.

SFS 96 MEALLABHAN

Surface

P28 V1 One body sherd (fresh) and one fragment (slightly abraded). The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with brown surfaces. Sooting/residue on the exterior and interior surfaces.

Th 6mm; Wt 14g

P29 V2 One body sherd from below the neck of the vessel. The fabric is fine clay with organics (incompletely burnt out) which has fired soft and is light grey with a buff exterior surface. The exterior surface is smoothed.

Th 6mm; Wt 6g

P30 V3 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional rock fragments which has fired hard and is red. The exterior surface is sooted.

Th 6mm; Wt 6g

P31 V4 One body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine sandy clay which has fired soft and is grey with a red interior margin. The exterior surface is sooted and there is light sooting in the interior.

Wt 7g; Th 7mm

P32 V5 One body sherd and two rim sherds (flat rim), abraded. One sherd is from the neck of the vessel (33mm from the lip of the vessel to the point of inflection). The fabric is coarse sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with buff margins. The exterior surface is sooted.

Th 7mm; Wt 16g

P33 V6 Three body sherds (abraded). The fabric is coarse sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with a brown interior margin. The exterior surface is sooted.

Th 5mm; Wt 12g

P34 V7 Plain rim from a necked vessel (22mm from the lip of the vessel to the point of inflection). The fabric is coarse sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red margins.

Th 9mm; Wt 16g

P35 V8 Body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional voids and occasional rock fragments which has fired soft and is grey with a red exterior margin.

Th 6mm; Wt 6g

P36 V9 Forty body sherds and fragments plus two rim sherds from a necked vessel with a flattened lip. Slightly abraded/abraded. 23mm below the lip of the vessel, above the point of inflection, is a pinched up cordon. The fabric is sandy clay with some voids (organics) which has fired hard and is

grey with a buff exterior margin. Some of the body sherds have been combed on the exterior surface. Both surfaces are sooted.
Dia at neck 100mm; Th 7mm; Wt 176g

P37 V10 Two rim sherds and two body sherds from a necked vessel with a slightly everted lip, abraded. 18mm below the lip of the vessel is a pinched up cordon. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with a buff exterior margin. There is light sooting on the exterior surface.
Wt 12g

P38 V11 32 body sherds and a rim sherd, probably all from the same (flat-rimmed) vessel. One sherd has a pinched up cordon, abraded. The fabric is sandy clay with c10% of inclusions which has fired hard and is grey with a buff/red exterior margin. There are patches of residue in the interior.
Th 7mm; Wt 102g

TP1 Context 1 S1095

P22 3 crumbs, probably pottery, from different vessels. The fabric is fine sandy clay.

Comment: Some of the pottery from this site, in particular V9 and V10 may be medieval in date (Julie Franklin, pers com), cf, for example, the form of a vessel of the Scottish White Gritty ware, 13-14th century, from Kirkwall (MacAskill 1982b, reproduced in McCarthy and Brooks 1988 Fig 114, no 525, p 210).

SFS 58 RUBHA CHUAIG

Surface

P9 Body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is fine sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red margins. The exterior surface is sooted.
Th 5mm; Wt 5g

Test Pit 1

P12 Three body sherds from the same vessel. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red/brown margins. There is sooting on the exterior and interior surfaces.
Th 10mm; Wt 29g

TP 1 Context 1

P13 Another sherd from the same vessel
Th 10mm; Wt 13g

TP 1 Context 4

P11 Abraded body sherd from the same vessel. The fabric is sandy clay which has fired hard and is grey with red/brown margins. There is sooting on the exterior and interior surfaces.
Th 10mm; Wt 11g

TP 2 Context 2

P10 Body sherd, slightly abraded. The fabric is coarse clay which has fired hard and is grey with red margins. Raised surface (?unsmoothed coil junctions). Sooted.

Th 5mm; Wt 5g

SFS 4 SAND 1 (MAIN EXCAVATION SITE)

Surface - Molehill

P27 Three fragments from different vessels. Fine sandy clay with c10% of rock fragments which has fired hard and is grey with a brown exterior.

Th 8mm

TP7 Spit 3

P26 Abraded sherd. The fabric is sandy clay with c10% of rock fragments up to 5mm long which has fired soft and is grey with a brown interior margin.

Th 6mm; Wt 4g

B4B SE Spit 6 context 7/8

P21 Small abraded sherd. The fabric is fine sandy clay with occasional rock fragments which has fired hard and is grey with buff margins.

Th 6mm; Wt 2g

Sand: coarse pottery from sorting (all very abraded)

No weight = total weight less than 1 g

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------|--------|------------------------------|---|--------|
| P39 | A1B NE | Spit 2 | 1 sherd | fine sandy | 5g |
| P40 | A2B SE | Spit 3 | 1 frag | sandy | 5mm |
| P41 | A2B SW | Spit 4 | 3 crumbs | fine sandy | |
| P75 | A2B NW | Spit 5 | 2 crumbs | fine sandy | |
| P119 | A2B SE | Spit 5 | 1 crumb | fine sandy | |
| P120 | A2B SW | Spit 6 | 2 crumbs | fine sandy, occ rock (possible rim frag) | 2g |
| P42 | A3B NE | Spit 4 | 1 frag | sandy | |
| | A3B SW | Spit 5 | white material (not pottery) | | |
| P43 | A3B NW | Spit 2 | 1 frag | sandy, voids | |
| P118 | A3B NW | Spit 6 | 2 crumbs | fine sandy, organics | |
| P44 | A6B | Spit 1 | 1 frag | fine sandy | 6mm |
| P45 | B1A | Spit 2 | 3 crumbs | fine sandy clay | |
| P46 | B1A | Spit 2 | 2 crumbs | sandy | 3g |
| P115 | B1A | Spit 2 | 1 crumb | sandy, occ rock | |
| P77 | B1A | Spit 2 | 1 sherd | sandy | 5mm 3g |
| P47 | B1A | Spit 3 | 2 frags | fine sandy/sandy | |
| P48 | B1B NE | Spit 4 | 2 crumbs | fine sandy | |
| P49 | B1B SE | Spit 1 | 1 sherd | fine sandy | 6mm 4g |
| P50 | B1B | Spit 2 | 2 frags | sandy | 7mm 3g |
| P51 | B1B NW | Spit 3 | 1 frag | fine sandy, voids | |
| P52 | B2 | Spit 2 | 1 crumb | fine sandy clay | |
| P53 | B2B | Spit 2 | 1 body | sandy | 7mm 2g |
| P54 | B2B | Spit 3 | 2 sherds | sandy | 7mm 3g |
| P55 | B2B | Spit 3 | 1 frag | fine sandy | 7mm |

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------|--------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| P56 | B2B NW | Spit 4 | 1 frag | sandy | |
| P78 | B3B | Spit 2 | 2 frags | sandy | 6mm 3g |
| P57 | B3B SW | Spit 3 | 1 crumb | fine sandy | |
| P113 | B3B SE | Spit 3 | 1 crumb | sandy | |
| P114 | B4B NW | Spit 2 | 1 crumb | sandy | |
| P58 | B4B NE | Spit 7 | 1 frag | fine sandy, occ rock, organics | |
| P59 | B4B SE | Spit 7 | 1 frag | fine clay | 8mm |
| P60 | B4B SW | Spit 2 | 1 frag | sandy | |
| P61 | B4B SW | Spit 5 | 1 crumb | fine sandy | |
| P76 | B4B SE | Spit 3 | 1 crumb | fine sandy | |
| P62 | B5B NW | | 1 crumb | sandy | |
| P63 | B5B NE | Spit 2 | 1 frag | sandy, occasional large quartz | |
| P64 | B5B SE | Spit 4 | 1 crumb | sandy clay | |
| P65 | B5B SE | Spit 6 | 2 sherds | fine sandy, voids | 6g |
| | | | 2 frags | fine sandy, voids | |
| | | | 2 crumbs | fine sandy, voids | |
| P66 | B6B SW | Spit 4 | 1 crumb | fine sandy, occ rock, voids | |
| P67 | B6B SE | Spit 5 | 1 crumb | fine | |
| P68 | B6B SE | Spit 6 | 1 frag | sandy, voids | |
| P69 | B20B | Spit 1 | 1 frag | fine, sandy | 7mm |
| | | | 1 crumb | fine, sandy | |
| P70 | B24B | Spit 2 | 1 crumb | fine sandy clay | |
| P117 | B24B | Spit 2 | 2 crumbs | sandy, occ rock | 2g |
| P112 | B25 | Spit 2 | 1 crumb | sandy | |
| P71 | B25A | Spit 2 | 1 frag | fine sandy clay | 6mm |
| P72 | B25A | Spit 3 | 1 crumb | fine sandy clay | |
| P73 | B25B SE | Spit 4 | 1 frag | fine sandy | |
| P74 | B24B SW | Spit 3 | 1 tiny crumb | sandy | |
| P116 | B25B | Spit 2 | 1 crumb | sandy | |

NB: finds from squares Area B1 - B24/25 were affected by a recording error on site that makes their location uncertain.

GLAZED POTTERY AND GLASS

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| P95 | SFS 76, Camusteel 1, TP1 context 1, s1105 | 19 sherds/fragments |
| P96 | SFS 77, Camusteel 2, TP1 context 1 | 6 sherds |
| P88 | SFS 23, Crowlin 4, TP 1 context 1, s1105 | glazed pottery (4 small pieces) |
| P90 | SFS 22, Crowlin 3, TP1; context 3 | 3 pieces glazed pottery 4 pieces glass |
| P106 | SFS 22, Crowlin 3, TP1 context 3 | 2 sherds |
| P107 | SFS 22, Crowlin 3, TP1 context 3 | 1 fragment |
| P91 | SFS 4, Sand 1, spit 1 | 1 piece glazed pottery |
| P92 | SFS 4, Sand 1, TP11 spit 2 | 1 piece glazed pottery |
| P93 | SFS 4, Sand 1, B17A, Turf; | 1 sherd |
| P104 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, surface | 2 sherds |
| P101 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, surface | 1 fragment |
| P98 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, TP1 context 1 | 3 fragments |
| P103 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, TP2 context 1 | 1 sherd |
| P99 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, TP3 context 1 | 2 fragments |

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| P100 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, TP4 context 1 | 3 sherds |
| P102 | SFS 104, Fearnmore 1, TP6 context 1 | 5 sherds 3 fragments 1 pipe stem |
| P89 | SFS 100, Fraser's Croft, TP1 context 2, s1082 | glazed pottery (1 piece) |
| P97 | SFS 100, Fraser's Croft, TP1 context 2, | 1 handle |
| P105 | SFS 19, Toscaig 1, TP1 context 1 | 4 sherds |