

An 18th-century pirlie pig from Aberdeen

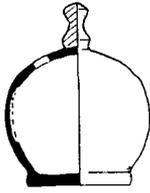
D H Evans*

In 1913 a pirlie pig was donated to the Society's Museum by an Aberdeen resident (*Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 47 (1912-13), 341), but unfortunately no further details of its provenance are known (accession numbers MEA 294 and ME 411).

The vessel is in a hard brick-red fabric, which has been very highly fired to a near stoneware; its surfaces are dark red, and the upper two-thirds of the body have been dipped in a thick, iron-rich, dark brown lead glaze which bears numerous tiny white or cream flecks. It was clearly thrown as a small hollow-ware, and closed at the top; a solid knob was then luted on to it. Wire-marks on the base show that it was removed from the wheel with a straight pull from a single wire; the slot would have been cut when it was green-hard (illus 1).

In the peculiar characteristics of its glaze, its fabric and its production techniques, it is identical to a range of iron-glazed and slip-decorated cups and mugs found in contexts of c 1760

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ILLUS 1 Pirlie pig from Aberdeen
(Royal Museum of Scotland
MEA 294; ME411) (scale
1:4)

and later at Albion Court, Aberdeen (Evans 1986, 286, fig 10); these have been attributed to either the Clayhills or the Footdee potteries during the second half of the 18th century, and it seems reasonable to suggest that this pirlie pig is of similar date and was made in the same pottery as the Albion Court group.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCE

Evans, D H 1986 'Excavations at 18 Castle Street (Albion Court), Aberdeen', *Post-Medieval Archaeol*, 20 (1986), 271-95.