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Charred plant remains from the bulk soil samples

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TREATMENT OF THE SAMPLES

Bulk samples, usually 7-14 litres, were collected from all soil contexts and processed using a standard water separation machine (Kenward et al. 1980). The light fraction (flots) were collected in sieves with mesh sizes of 1 mm and 300 microns, and the heavy residue (retent), in a 1 mm mesh. The flots and retents from the 1 mm meshes were completely sorted, by eye or using a low power light microscope. The quantity of remains did not warrant sorting of the flots from the 300 micron mesh. Macrotossil identifications were carried out using a low power, light microscope and a modern seed reference collection held by Historic Scotland, Edinburgh.

RESULTS

DALGINROSS

Upper fill of ditch Area B (see text): Carex sp. (trigonoius) (sedge) x 1. This context could be modern.

Primary ditch fill Area C (see text): Spergula arvensis L. (corn spurrey) x 1. This may have been present in the soil when the ditch was dug.
DUN

From the pre-modern ploughsoll, Area 1 (see text):

Hordeum sp. (barley) - hulled asymmetric grains\(^1\) x 4
- hulled symmetric grains x 1
- hulled grains x 1
- asymmetric grains x 1
- cf. asymmetric grains x 1

Triticum dicoccum Schubl. (emmer wheat) x 1
Cereal Indet. x 1
Chenopodium album type (fat hen) x 1

From the lower ditch fills Area 1 (see text):

Hordeum sp. (barley) - hulled asymmetric grains\(^2\) x 4
- hulled symmetric grains x 1
- asymmetric grains x 1
- Indet. grains x 1

Both seeds recovered from the Dun ditch fills are common in archaeological crop assemblages. They are not found in association in economic crops here, however, and may have been present in the soils before the ditches were dug.

The two small deposits of cereal grains from Dalginross were not accompanied by cereal chaff and straw, or weed species which might suggest their local cultivation and/or processing. It is unlikely that either deposit provides an accurate reflection of Roman or Medieval crop agriculture.

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\(^1\) Syn H vulgare L. (hulled six row barley)

\(^2\) syn. H. vulgare L. (hulled six row barley)