

ART. VII. – *The Pottery From the Two Turrets at Garthside on Hadrian's Wall.*

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Introduction

IN 1933 the Cumberland Excavation Committee, in the course of a general search for turrets on Hadrian's Wall west of Craggle Hill, found and excavated Turret 54a, Garthside. The excavations revealed the remains of two turrets, the earlier of which had been refloored once before its north wall subsided and collapsed into the turf wall ditch. Another freestanding turret had then been built immediately to the south while the turf wall was reconstructed on a more northerly line. With the replacement of the turf wall in stone in this sector, the freestanding turret was incorporated into the wall. Subsequently the turret was demolished, and in the course of a general rebuilding of Hadrian's Wall in this area, the recess was blocked.

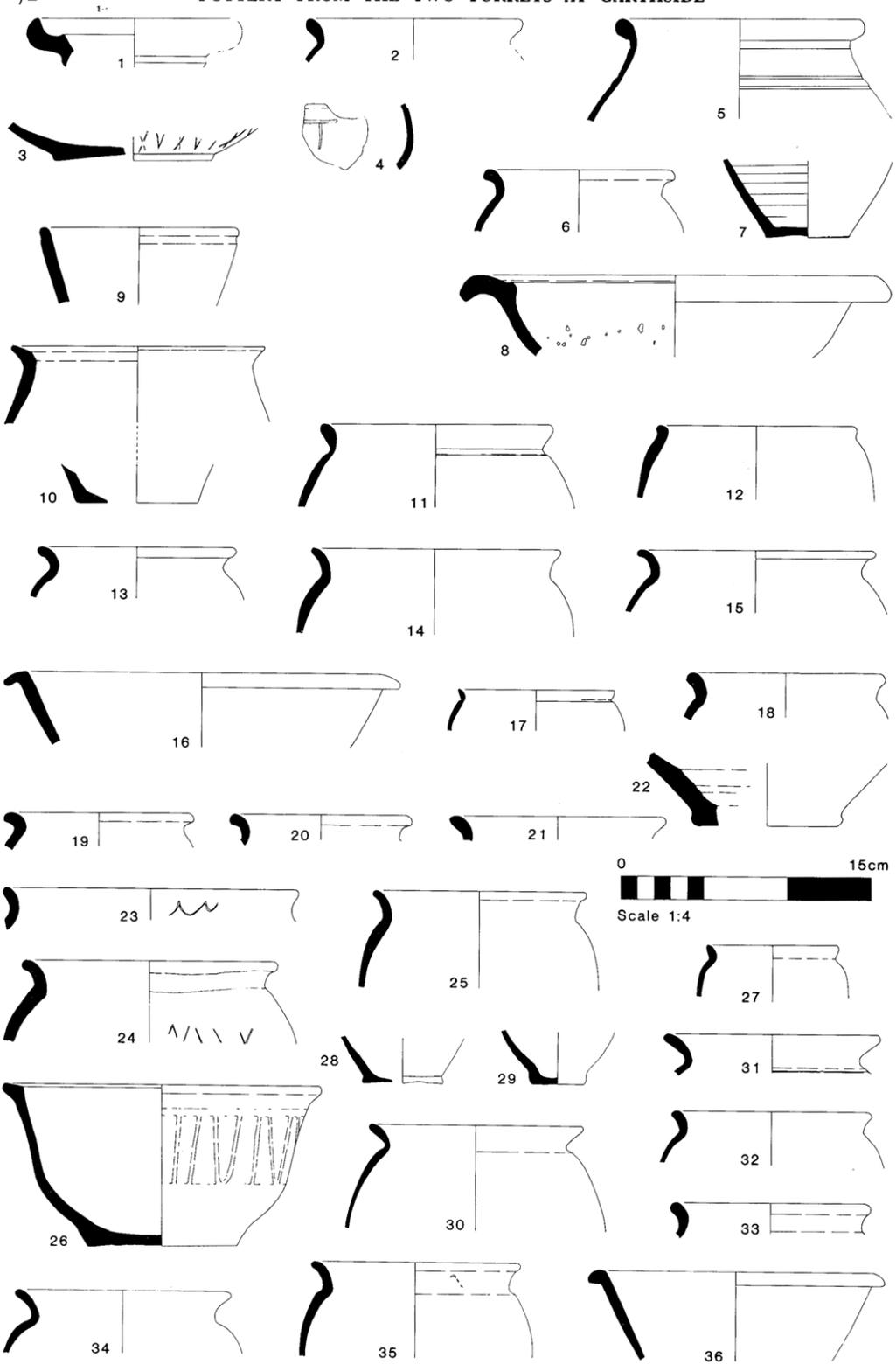
Although the results of these excavations were published in *Transactions* as part of a general report on the Excavation Committee's activities in 1933, none of the pottery was published.¹ Over 300 sherds of pottery from five contexts were recovered and are described below. Groups C and D are both labelled 'South Turret' and probably came from the same general context. All the finds are now stored in Carlisle Museum (Acc. no. 57-1933-10).²

The Pottery

Floor of North Turret group A (bag no. 62)

- 1 Flagon, hard orange fabric, common small translucent and brown quartz and sparse large pale grey inclusions.
- 2 Jar, hard black fabric with a thin white layer immediately below the dark grey surface, moderate amount of very small white inclusions.
- 3 Base of a jar, hard brownish-grey fabric, abundant medium sized translucent quartz inclusions, moderate amount of white mica on the surfaces, faint burnished lines on the underside of the base.
- 4 Wall sherd possibly from a beaker, hard very pale grey fabric mid to dark grey surface, sparse small black and red ironstone inclusions, wheel made. A letter 'T' has been lightly scored on the exterior surface before firing.

Sherds not drawn include two plain cut-away bases and 18 wall sherds from two grey jars; 12 wall sherds probably from five other grey jars, one with acute angled lattice decoration; one base and five wall sherds from a BBI cooking pot with acute angled lattice decoration; eight wall sherds from one vessel in an orange fabric and five amphora sherds.



Low level pocket at south-east angle, South Turret group B (bag no. 26)

- 5 Jar, hard black fabric tending to brown towards the interior of the vessel, sandy surface, abundant small translucent quartz inclusions, wheel made.
- 6 Three rim and one wall sherd from a jar, hard mid grey fabric with brown core and paler grey gritty surfaces, moderate medium and small translucent quartz, black and calcite inclusions.
- 7 Base of a jar, very hard pale grey fabric with dark grey surface, fine white striations and a moderate amount of small dark grey grit in the fabric.
- 8 Mortarium, very hard deep orange fabric with a mid grey core and a cream slipped surface, inclusions – common medium sized angular white and translucent quartz, and a moderate amount of red ironstone, trituration grit large white quartzite, probably a North Western product, Hadrianic to Antonine in date.

Sherds not drawn include seven in an orange fabric, two with a white slip, from a minimum of four vessels; seven wall sherds and one plain cut-away base, two with rusticated decoration, from at least six vessels; three sherds of BB1 from at least two vessels and an amphora sherd.

South Turret group C (bag no. 81)

- 9 Tankard, hard orange fabric with a blue-grey core and burnished outer surface, moderate amount of small red ironstone and sparse small white calcareous inclusions, common golden mica on the surface. A very abraded sherd from the same vessel came from group B. Severn Valley Ware.³
- 10 Nine rim, wall and base sherds from a jar, hard fabric, ranging in colour from black through dark grey and brown to orange, sparse small red ironstone and calcareous grits, and common white mica inclusions, wheel made. A lead rivet survives *in situ*.
- 11 Jar, hard mid grey fabric, pale grey surface, common small translucent quartz, and very sparse brown iron ore inclusions. Another rim sherd from this vessel was found with group D.
- 12 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, early to mid second century (cf. Gillam 1970, Ty 118).
- 13 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, mid second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 62, no. 2).
- 14 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, early to mid second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 62, no. 1).
- 15 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, mid to late second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 62, no. 3).
- 16 Bowl, hard mid grey fabric with dark grey surface, abundant medium sized translucent quartz inclusions, moderate amount of white mica on the surface, mid to late second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 69, no. 35-41).

Sherds not drawn include one in a hard cream fabric, two in orange fabrics; 43 wall sherds and four plain cut-away bases from at least six grey jars, one with acute-angled lattice decoration and 14 cooking pot sherds in BB1 fabric, one with acute-angled lattice decoration.

South Turret group D (bag no. 136)

- 17 Beaker or mug, hard dark grey fabric with buff surface, moderate amount of very fine translucent quartz inclusions.

- 18 Jar, very hard mid grey fabric with darker grey burnished external surface, moderate amount of medium sized black grit and small sparse white grit in the fabric, wheel made.
- 19 Jar, hard pale to mid grey fabric with dark grey external surface, sparse small translucent quartz, and brown ironstone inclusions.
- 20 Jar, very hard mid grey fabric with a reddy-brown core and a pale grey surface, common small to medium sized translucent quartz inclusions and one pebble 8 mm across.
- 21 Jar, hard mid grey fabric, moderate amount of medium to small translucent quartz, and sparse red ironstone inclusions.
- 22 Base of a jar, hard fabric, orangy-brown core tending to mid grey on the exterior and pale grey on the interior surface, common small translucent quartz, and moderate amount of small dark brown ironstone inclusions, wheel made.
- 23 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, early to mid second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 62, no. 1).
- 24 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, second century.
- 25 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, early to mid second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 62, no. 1).
- 26 Bowl, very hard brick red fabric with an externally burnished surface, common small to medium sized white and translucent quartz, and very sparse dark brown ironstone inclusions, wheel made. The burnished decoration lies in an unburnished zone. (cf. Gillam 1970, Ty 218, A.D. 130-140).

Sherds not drawn include two in a creamy-white fabric; six wall sherds and a plain cut-away base in orange fabric from at least three vessels; 72 sherds from a minimum of seven grey jars, two with acute angled lattice decoration; one base sherd from the same vessel as no. 28 and 24 wall sherds from at least two BB1 cooking pots.

From outside the South Turret group E (bag no. 95).

- 27 Beaker or mug, moderately hard mid grey fabric with a pale grey abraded surface, common small to medium sized translucent quartz, and sparse dark brown ironstone inclusions.
- 28 Base of a jar or beaker, fine hard mid grey fabric, sparse black ironstone, and small white quartz inclusions, wheel made. Another base sherd from this vessel was found in group D.
- 29 Base of a beaker, hard orange fabric with a paler core and abraded surface, common small to medium sized translucent quartz, and sparse medium sized red and black ironstone inclusions, wheel made.
- 30 Jar, moderately hard mid grey fabric with an abraded surface, common small and sparse large translucent quartz inclusions. Another rim sherd from this vessel came from group D.
- 31 Jar, very hard pale to mid grey fabric with traces of a darker now abraded surface, moderate amount of small and medium sized translucent quartz inclusions.
- 32 Jar, soft pale grey fabric with traces of a darker now abraded surface, moderate amount of small to medium sized black gritty inclusions.

- 33 Jar, hard mid grey fabric, common small translucent quartz, and sparse medium sized black grit and calcareous inclusions.
- 34 Jar, hard mid to dark grey fabric, mid grey slightly burnt surface originally dark grey, abundant small to medium sized translucent quartz inclusions, ?BB1 fabric.
- 35 Cooking pot, BB1 fabric, early to mid second century (cf. Gillam 1976, 62, no. 1).
- 36 Bowl, hard mid grey fabric, abraded pale grey surface, very sparse brown ironstone, sparse white flecks in the fabric, (cf. BB2 round rimmed bowl, Gillam 1970, Ty 225, A.D. 180-240).

Sherds not illustrated include a rim fragment from a Samian (Dr 37); 28 wall sherds, one with acute angled lattice decoration and three plain cut-away bases from a minimum of four grey jars; three wall sherds from a grey narrow mouthed jar with a cordon at the junction of the neck and body; six plain cut-away base and 15 wall sherds from an orange vessel with a grey outer surface; 15 wall sherds from cooking pots in BB1 fabric, one with a tight and acute angled lattice decoration, and two amphora sherds.

Discussion

It has long been a vexed question as to when the turf wall was replaced by a wall of stone from the Irthing to the western end of the Wall at Bowness-on-Solway. Simpson and Newbold demonstrated conclusively that the turrets and the milecastle on the stone wall between Birdoswald and Milecastle 51 date to the reign of Hadrian. Clearly in this sector the turf wall was replaced by a stone wall of 'narrow' gauge at an early date. Such 'narrow' gauge wall extends a little beyond milecastle 54, which itself would seem to have been rebuilt in stone under Hadrian.⁴ The date of replacement of the turf wall by a stone wall of 'intermediate' gauge to the west of milecastle 54 is more difficult to ascertain. At milecastle 79, not only did the occupation of the turf wall milecastle appear on the ceramic evidence to begin later than at milecastle 50 Turf Wall, it was also occupied for a longer period, but not as the excavators suggested, into the early Antonine period.⁵ Two dates were offered for the rebuilding of the milecastle (and the turf wall) in stone; immediately prior to the advance northwards to the Antonine Wall or in the early A.D. 160s when Hadrian's Wall was reoccupied by Calpurnius Agricola. The latest sherd of Samian recovered from the turf wall milecastle could be of Hadrianic or Antonine date and thus is of no help in dating the building of the stone wall milecastle.

At Garthside the structural sequence would suggest that a considerable period of time had elapsed between the building of the turf wall, (and the north turret) and the building of the 'intermediate' stone wall in this area. In an attempt to assess the length of time involved the pottery from the north turret is directly relevant. Two groups can be regarded as dating from the occupation of the north turret, group A, the occupation material from the two floors within the structure, and group B. In the excavation report it is noted that the foundations of the later turret at its south-east corner cut through occupation earth from turret 1.⁶ The pottery in group B labelled 'South Turret, from a low level pocket at the south-east angle', is presumably this material. Clearly no precision in dating the occupation of the north turret can be attained from the small amount of pottery recovered. The pottery that can be identified, however, would not be out of place in a Hadrianic context. The pottery associated with the occupation of the south

turret dates from the Hadrianic to the late Antonine period, the latest piece would seem to be no. 36, probably a grey ware copy of a BB2 vessel type which is not thought to have appeared on the market until *circa* A.D. 180. The pottery evidence suggests that both turrets were built in the earlier second century. As regards the date of the replacement of the turf wall by stone, the structural and ceramic evidence together imply that this did not occur until late in Hadrian's reign at the earliest. Certainly in the vicinity of T54a the stone wall must have been built before the south turret went out of use. The small sample of pottery recovered from the turret suggests that occupation ceased *circa* A.D. 180 or soon after.

Notes and References

- ¹ Simpson, F. G., Richmond I. A. and McIntyre, J. 'Garthside turrets, 54a', CW2, xxxiv, 138-44.
- ² The writer would like to thank Mr C. Richardson of Tullie House Museum for allowing him access to this material and to Mr J. P. Gillam who made a number of helpful comments concerning the pottery.
- ³ This vessel has previously been published, see P. V. Webster, 'Severn Valley Ware on Hadrian's Wall', AA4, 50, (1972), Fig. 2F.
- ⁴ Allason-Jones, L., Bennet, J., and Welsby, D. A. 'The finds from Milecastle 54 Randylands', AA5 12 (1984), 228-35.
- ⁵ Richmond, I. A. and Gillam, J. P. 'Milecastle 79 (Solway)', CW2, lii, 17-40.
- ⁶ Simpson, Richmond and McIntyre, *op. cit.*, CW2, xxxiv, p. 141.

Bibliography

- Gillam, J. P., *Types of Roman Coarse Pottery Vessels in Northern Britain*, Third edition (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1970).
- Gillam, J. P., 'Coarse Fumed Ware in North Britain and Beyond', *Glasgow Archaeological Journal*, (1976), 4, 57-80.