

## X

### AN EXCAVATION IN THE CLOTH MARKET, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, 1979

*Edmond Tullett and Grace McCombie*

IN JANUARY 1979, the Department of the Environment sponsored an excavation at Nos. 38–40 Cloth Market, Newcastle upon Tyne (National Grid reference NZ 2488 6412, see fig. 1). These premises were part of a larger block, Nos. 28–40, scheduled for demolition and redevelopment, and this plan provided an opportunity to excavate in a part of the City where there had not before been archaeological exploration. As all the buildings fronting on to the street, and some of those behind, were known to contain cellars, the only space which was both wide enough to investigate and on the edge of the street was the passage recently called Hindhaugh's Yard, and before that Garrick's Head Yard. The excavation was directed and the report written by Edmond Tullett, and the historical note contributed by Grace McCombie.

#### *The history of the site*

It is likely that early settlement in Newcastle was near the entrance to the castle, and associated with the setting up of market stalls along the natural ridge which provided the best route from the surrounding countryside to castle and church. Brand cites a document of 1091 as evidence of the existence of St. Nicholas' church before 1100.<sup>1</sup> The parish church was the usual meeting-place in a medieval town, and trading was carried on in its vicinity. However, by the thirteenth century there was conflict between church and trade. In 1200, Pope Innocent III sent Eustace, Abbot of Flaye, to England to preach against the holding of markets on Sunday<sup>2</sup>; in 1274, the Fourteenth General Council of the Church, the Second Council of Lyons, ruled that "In the churches and in the cemeteries let business matters, and especially fairs and markets, be excluded"<sup>3</sup>; and in 1285, the Statute of Winchester ordered that "henceforth neither Fairs nor Markets be kept in Church Yards for the Honour of the Church".<sup>4</sup>

In Newcastle, as elsewhere,<sup>5</sup> the market was broadest close to the church, tapering away to form a rough triangle. The apex of this triangle was at the Nuns' Gate, where today Nuns' Lane joins Newgate Street; at this point, another triangle began, broadening in the direction of St. Andrew's church. In the St. Nicholas-based triangle the market area evolved into four principal streets: Groat Market, Middle Street, Cloth Market, and Bigg Market. The earliest reference to the market street of Newcastle occurs in a document of the thirteenth century, a grant, sometime before 1235, by Daniel son of Nicholas of Newcastle to John of Pampedene of 4s. annual rent

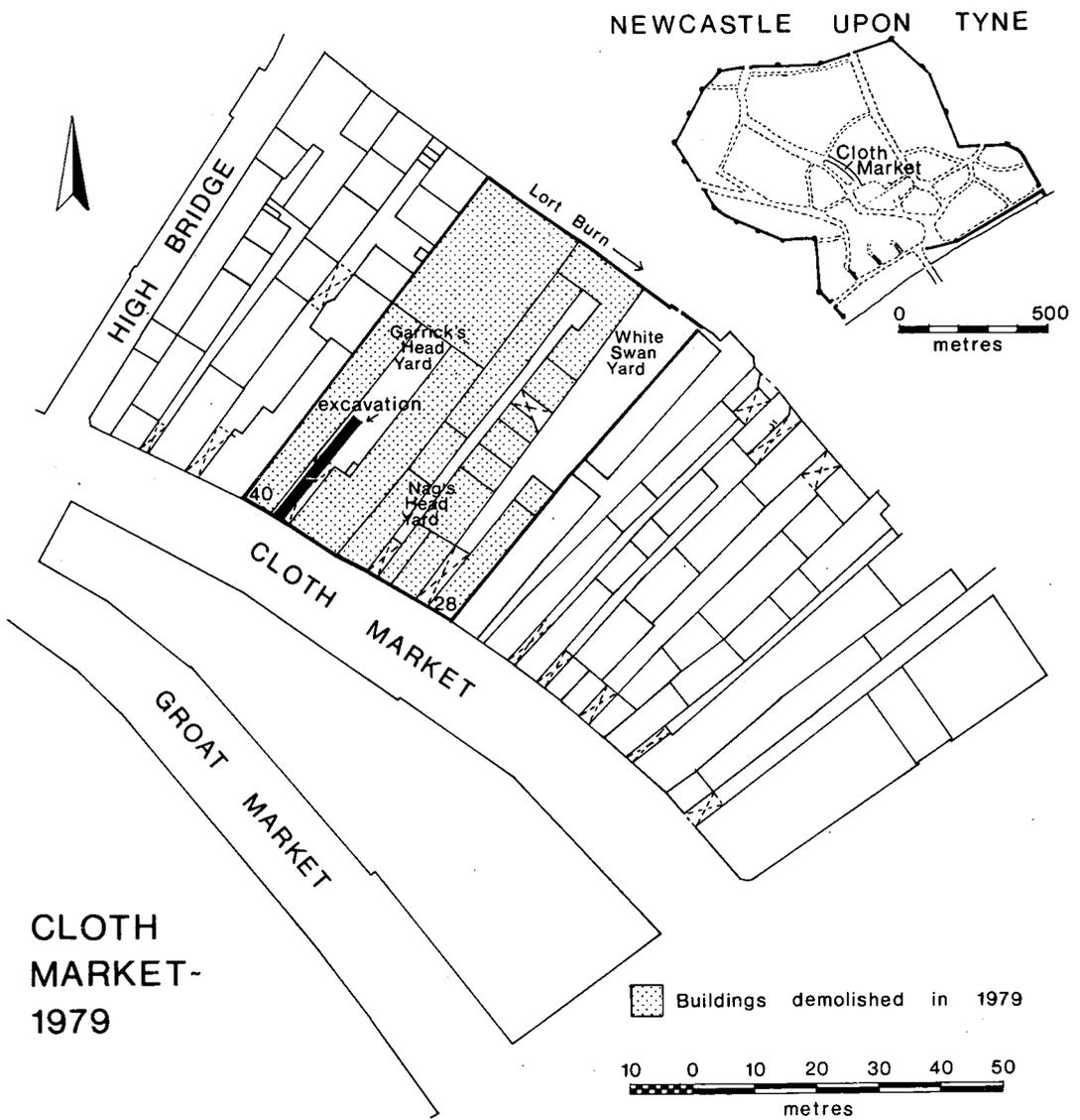


Fig. 1. Location.

from land in the market street (*in vico fori*).<sup>6</sup> A deed of 1323 refers to the market street again (*in vico fori intra bothas pellipariorum*)<sup>7</sup>; another, of 1401, mentions tenements in "Clothmarketgate",<sup>8</sup> and a fine of 1571 concerns a messuage, four shops, a garden and an orchard "in the street called the Cloth-market".<sup>9</sup> By 1649, when Gray published his *Chorographia*, it was known as the Flesh Market; and so it remained until, in 1829, the Common Council ordered that it should thereafter be known as the Clothmarket.<sup>10</sup> The habit had developed in the town of calling it the "Old Butcher Market", to which Mackenzie objected on the grounds that it was not for the sale of butchers.<sup>11</sup> The Flesh Market had meanwhile been transferred—in 1808—to the site created by the filling in of the dene of the Lort Burn, in the centre of the block formed by High Bridge, Pilgrim Street, Mosley Street, and the street shortly to be re-named the Cloth Market.

In 1978, it was decided to demolish the early nineteenth-century buildings numbered 28–40 Cloth Market; this provided an opportunity to investigate an area which had been in continuous occupation since the Middle Ages. Eighteenth-century maps show gardens extending from the backs of the Cloth Market houses to the Lort Burn, but by 1808 these gardens were all built on,<sup>12</sup> and early nineteenth-century directories record a multiplicity of tradesmen living and working in the yards behind the commercial and residential properties which fronted on to the street. The area to be cleared had, in the nineteenth century, included three public houses—the White Swan, the Nag's Head, and the Garrick's Head—though these had occupied five sites at various times, so that it was possible that unrecorded cellars might be found. In 1844, the properties fronting on to the Cloth Market had housed—reading from south to north—a fruiterer, a draper, a hairdresser and perfumier, the Nag's Head, a hat manufacturer, a confectioner, the Garrick's Head, and a chemist and druggist. The most southerly yard gave access to the White Swan Inn, and to the premises of a soda water manufacturer, a glove maker, a japanner and clock dial maker, a baker, and a french polisher. In the second yard were the Nag's Head Inn, a box and trunk maker, a grocer, and a hairdresser and newsagent.

It was the third yard which was the site chosen for excavation. In 1844, this had led to the rear of the Garrick's Head, and to the premises of a corn merchant and miller, a travelling draper, and a grocer and tea dealer. In the shop on the north side of the yard entrance (later number 42, and eventually number 40, in 1963), there was Weir, a chemist, who had given place to Barker and Thompson, ironmongers, by 1850. This firm, under the name of J. Thompson from 1875, occupied the shop until 1895, after which it is listed as "S.A. Short, ironmongers" until 1933.

In the premises on the south side of the yard entrance there were, in 1844, the Garrick's Head, and Margaret Creighton, fruiterer and confectioner. Hindhaugh's had taken over the shop (later number 38) by 1847, describing themselves at various times as cheesemonger, seedsmen, tea dealer, grocer, and even (in 1850) as "dealer in tar and grease". They are listed in the directories as "J. Hindhaugh & Co., seed importers" from 1855 to 1871; as "Hindhaugh & Son, grocers" from 1873 to 1896; and as "Hindhaugh's Ltd., seedsmen" from 1898 to 1962. In 1963, the firm moved to new premises in Walker, and the Cloth Market property remained empty until its demolition in 1979.



38-40 Cloth Market, 6 April 1977

*Photo: D. Fitton Tyne & Wear County Council Photographic Department*

The Garrick's Head had a narrow frontage on the street immediately south of the yard entrance and extended approximately half-way along the yard. It was in use as a public house until 1888; the licence was then given up and the property used to accommodate offices and to supply storage space by the new owners, Jonathan Barker Ellis and Joseph Baxter Ellis (Sheriff of Newcastle in 1888, and later knighted), who were "strong temperance advocates".

The remainder of the property adjacent to the Garrick's Head Yard was occupied by various grocers, merchants, and agents in the course of the nineteenth century, with the occasional incursion of a tailor, a gun manufacturer, a tinsmith, a cordial manufacturer, a horse dealer and a boot maker. It is not possible to establish which house was used by each of them, as there were no numbers identifying individual buildings. By 1890, this kind of multi-occupation had ceased; there were "J.J. Wilkinson, and Son, merchants" until 1923; "W. Diskett & Co., wireless outfitters" in the one year of 1924; and, until 1953, "H. Olsover and Son Ltd., wholesale warehousemen", who took over the premises formerly occupied by Short's.

With regard to structural details: there is evidence of a new shop front being made in 1894 at number 38 (Hindhaugh's); of a new shop front in 1926 at number 42 (Short's); but most important, of demolition of existing buildings in 1924, widening of the entrance to the Cloth Market, and erection of new offices, and of storage, milling and packing accommodation by Hindhaugh's.<sup>13</sup> A newspaper article of that year gives a brief history of the firm, and is accompanied with a photograph of an etching by F. W. Corner.<sup>14</sup> This shows a yard with, at the farther end, an archway through the buildings to the street. Along the right-hand side of the yard is a three-storeyed house, the upper two floors jettied and the top floor showing timber framing; on the left is a two-storeyed structure leaning against a taller building. Comparison of this with the first and second editions of the O.S. maps, and with the insurance maps of Newcastle, suggests that the buildings at the farther end are the Cloth Market houses (they closely resemble those houses as they appeared in 1979), and also that the two-storeyed structure on the left is the Garrick's Head, while the three-storeyed building on the right is the warehouse accommodation behind the ironmonger's shop. It is unfortunate, however, that the article refers to the demolition of "an Elizabethan structure—the back premises of the Garrick's Head . . . at present used as warehouses by Messrs. Samuel Short and Son, ironmongers"; one must assume that in the interval between the closing of the public house in 1888 and the writing of the article in 1924, the exact whereabouts of the Garrick's Head had been forgotten. Reference is made to another drawing of the building made the day before by J. F. Slater; it would be interesting to know whether either this drawing or the etching by Corner has survived.

Perhaps the last word should go to the anonymous writer of the article: "Bit by bit, the few remaining vestiges of old Newcastle are being pulled down to meet modern requirements. . . . The archway entrance has been increased in width several feet to cope with modern transport, and a practically new front is to be put in. Altogether, the alterations are likely to improve the Cloth Market". *Sic transit gloria fori!*

Cloth Market 1979: extent of excavation

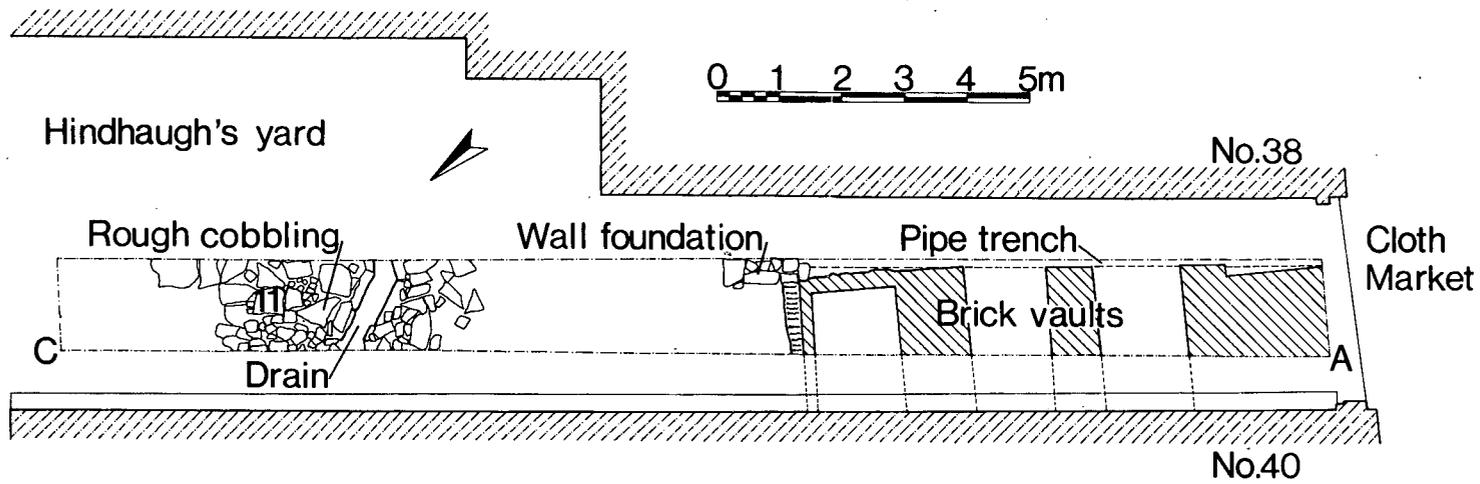


Fig. 2.

CLOTH MARKET 1979. Main section.

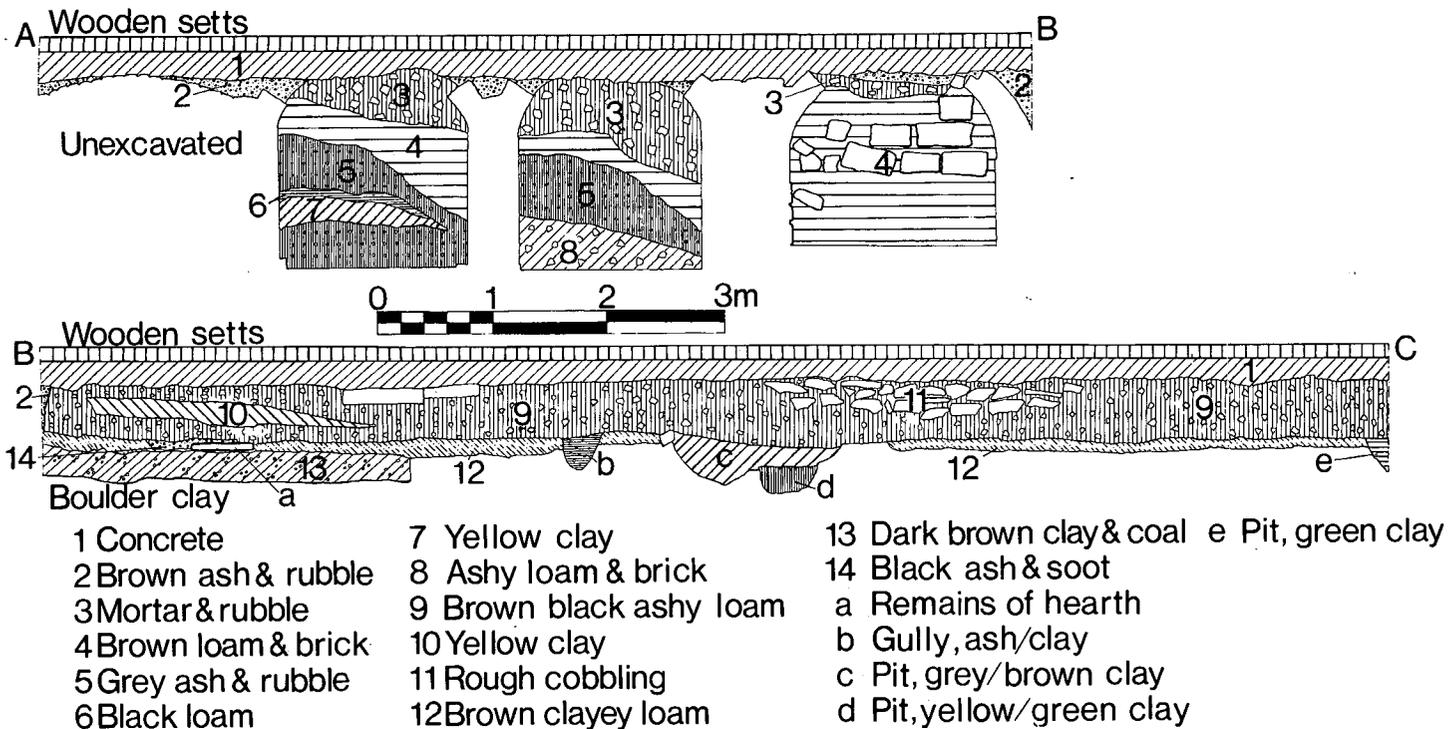


Fig. 3.

### *The Excavation*

The excavation took the shape of an exploratory trench, 1.5 m wide and 20 m long, running south-west to north-east from the Cloth Market through the passage and into Hindhaugh's Yard proper. It must be stressed that for logistical and practical reasons the trench was extremely narrow and consequently only clues as to the archaeological layout of the Cloth Market would be gathered.

The first features to appear were a series of four brick arches at the south-west end of the site (see figs. 2 and 3). They cut down into about 2 m of boulder clay completely destroying any archaeological evidence. Three of the four brick vaults had had their roofs destroyed and were accordingly excavated. The fourth arch was still complete and, as nothing could be gained from excavating it, it was left untouched. While the cellars were constructed from hand-made bricks the first three courses of the north-eastern one were of sandstone. This cellar also had a brick floor, was lower than the others and appeared to be of earlier construction. All three had been filled up with various types of rubbish and rubble, and under the north side of the passage was found evidence that they had been closed up with brick walls. This presumably took place in 1924 when the passage was widened.

#### CLOTH MARKET 1979: features a-m

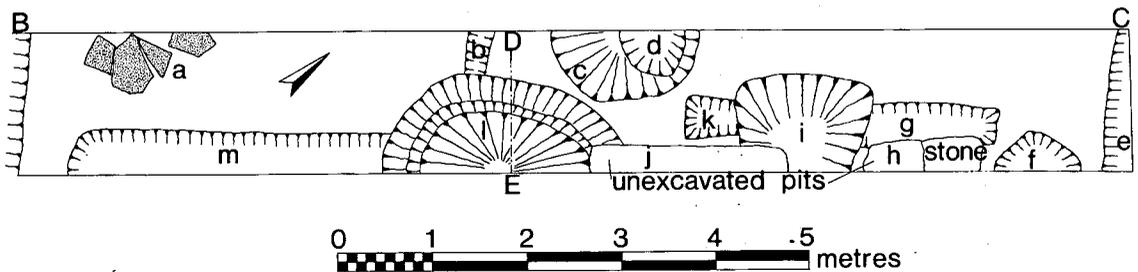


Fig. 4.

The north-eastern half of the trench was more promising, with little modern disturbance (see figs. 2–5). Natural clay was found at a depth of about 1.5 m, but fell only 0.17 m (34.93 m to 34.76 m O.D.) from south-west to north-east over the length of the trench, a surprising lack of steepness since the Lort Burn flows only a couple of hundred metres away to the east. Lying over the natural clay there was a layer of brown clay (13) in which were found two sherds of fourth-century Roman pottery. These are the only stratified Roman objects found north of any proposed line of Hadrian's Wall in the city centre.<sup>15</sup> There was then a long and inexplicable pause in the sequence of deposits since the pottery from layer 12 was no earlier than the mid-fourteenth century. This layer predated a few minor features—the remains of a hearth (a), which consisted of four partly burnt pieces of sandstone beneath ash (14), a gully (b) running across the trench parallel with the street, and several pits (c–m). The latter were presumably

# CLOTH MARKET 1979

## Section through Pit I

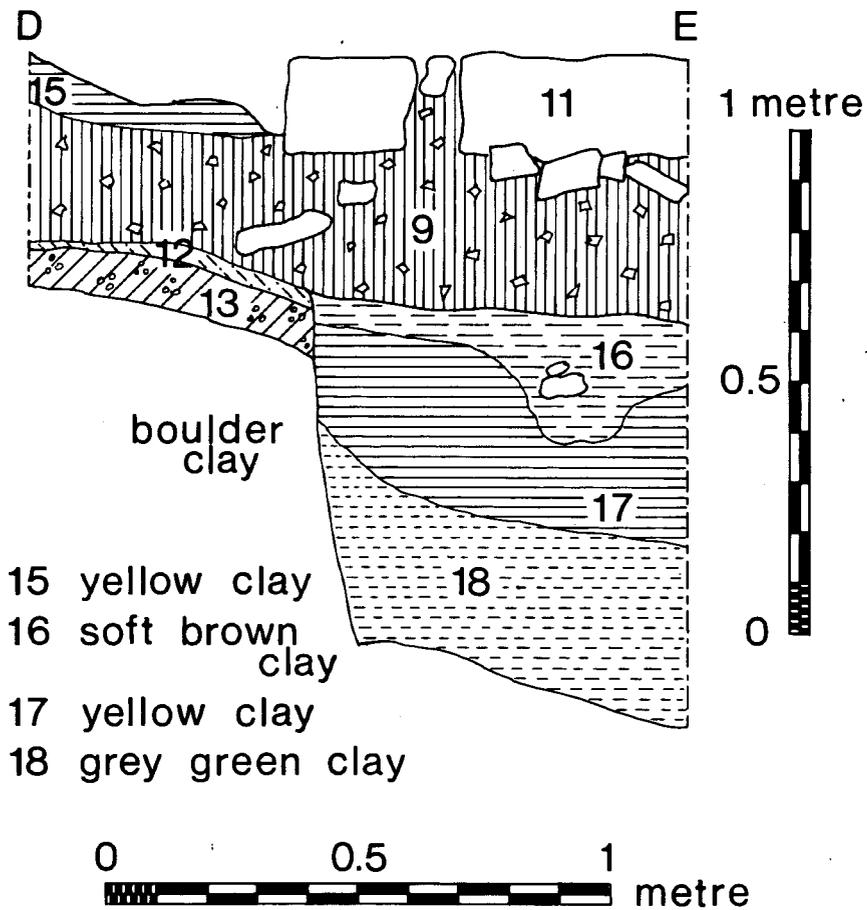


Fig. 5.

rubbish or cess pits but the finds from them were few, twenty-six fragments of pottery, three clay plain roof tiles and sixteen animal bones. The pottery from the pits and over the hearth was early fourteenth-century, and hence earlier than that from layer 12. Over all these features was a thick layer of rubbish (9), which contained over 250 sherds of late fourteenth-century pottery, clay roof tiles and animal bones. Set into this layer was a large area of rough cobbling, consisting of big sandstone blocks infilled with small chips (11), and running across the trench and through the cobbling there was a stone-sided drain with a clay bottom.

The conclusions which could be reached from such a small excavation were bound to be limited, but on this occasion the work produced problems rather than solutions. The absence of structures suggests that the passage and yard have always been an open space, presumably along the south side of the burgage represented by No. 40. The lack of pottery earlier than the fourteenth century cannot be explained since it is not credible that this central part of the medieval town was not settled until after 1300. The second gap in time, between layers 9 and 1, must have been created by levelling the yard to lay the concrete, thus removing among other things evidence of occupation in the late Middle Ages when the Cloth Market housed some of the leading merchants of Newcastle.<sup>16</sup>

### *Acknowledgements*

Thanks are due to Tyne and Wear County Council for additional financial help with the excavation; to the workers, F. Burton, C. Crammond, I. Shepherd and C. Taberham, for digging in some very cold conditions; to Mrs. Margaret Ellison for her report on the pottery and to D. J. Rackham for his report on the animal bones, and to Miss Margaret Finch for the pottery illustrations. We are both grateful to Miss R. B. Harbottle for her help and encouragement.

## THE FINDS

### THE POTTERY (fig. 6)

*Margaret A. Ellison*

#### *Roman*

Two sherds of Roman coarse pottery were recovered from layer 13. These were identified by Mr. J. P. Gillam as a body sherd of Huntcliff ware (fourth century) and no. 1, a weathered rim sherd of a cooking pot in Black Burnished ware 2 (second century).

#### *Medieval*

The deposition of the medieval pottery apparently occurred over a relatively short period

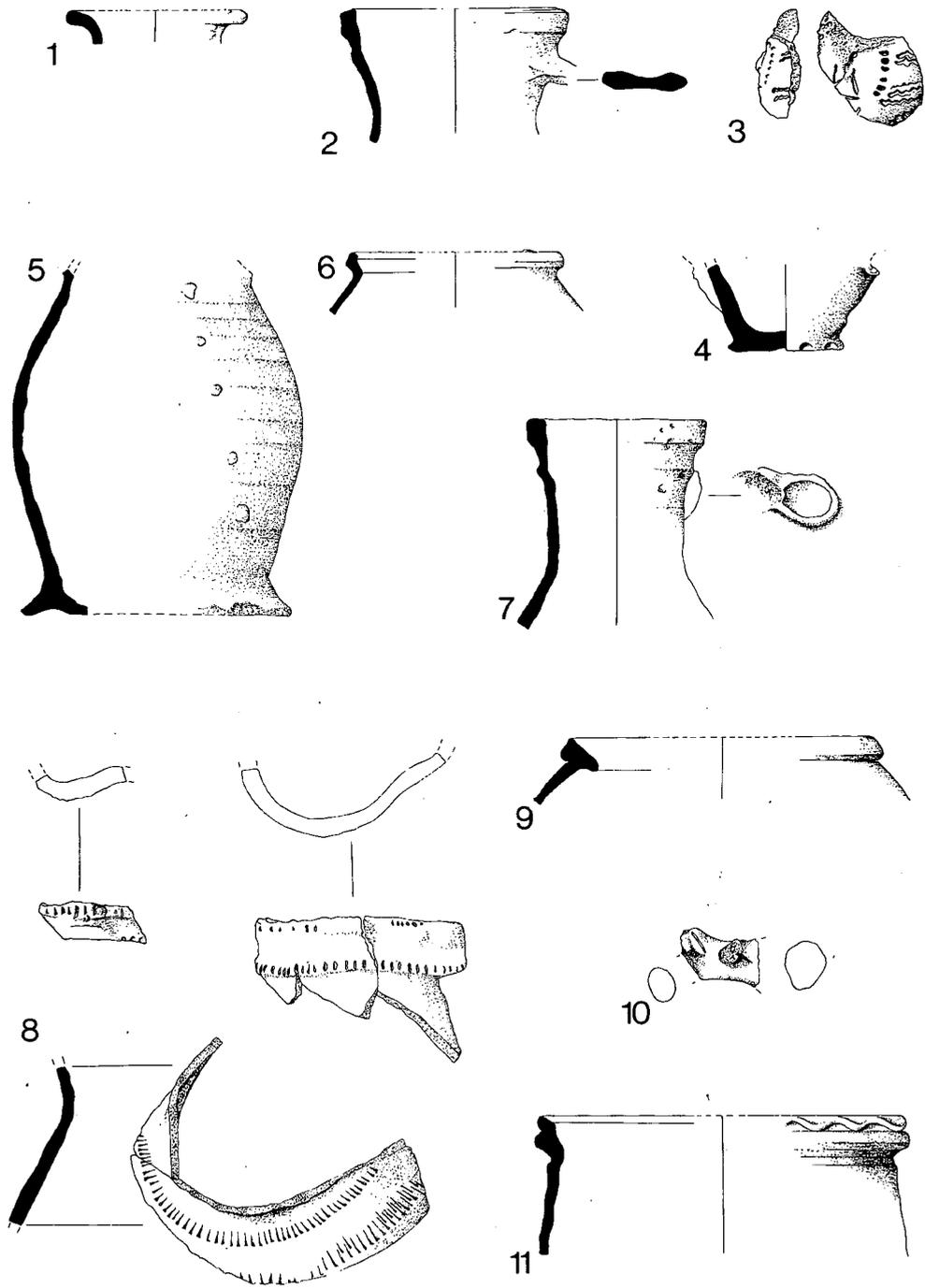


Fig. 6. (1:4)

MF

from the mid- to late fourteenth century, but quite a large proportion of earlier material was included in the sample, suggesting that the deposits resulted from clearing of earlier sites as well as contemporary rubbish tipping.

The dating is derived from the dates ascribed to the phases of the large rubbish tip deposited in the castle ditch beside the Black Gate. The names and type numbers for local pottery from the Black Gate are also used here. The Black Gate excavation report is to be published shortly with a full pottery report giving a more detailed description of these local wares.

#### *Layer 12*

This was the earliest medieval deposit on the site and could probably be equated with phase 4 of the tip at the Black Gate (mid-fourteenth century). It contained local reduced green ware type 4, a hard smooth fabric without visible inclusions, which first appears at the Black Gate in phase 4 (7 body sherds), and at the same time the earlier quartz-gritted reduced green wares, types 1-3, which occur principally in phases 1 to 3 at the Black Gate (thirteenth to early fourteenth century), (7 body sherds and 1 base sherd). The local buff/white wares (made from clays with low iron content, possibly fire clay from the coal measures), which predominate in phase 4 at the Black Gate, are less common here (1 body sherd of a jug with grooved rod handle and 3 body sherds), but they do not have the deliberate quartz gritting typical of these wares in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, so these also indicate a mid-fourteenth-century date for the deposit.

#### *The Pits*

Of the pits which immediately post-dated layer 12, c, e, i, j and l contained pottery, generally of earlier types than the majority from layer 12. The following wares can all be considered residual by the mid-fourteenth century.

*Oxidised gritty wares* (orange/buff fabric abundantly quartz-gritted): Pit i 1 body sherd; Pit l 10 body sherds and 3 base sherds of cooking pots.

*Gritty reduced green wares*: Pit c 1 body sherd type 3; Pit e 1 body sherd type 3; Pit i 1 base sherd type 3; Pit l 1 body sherd type 2, 1 body sherd type 3.

2) From Pit j a jug rim in type 3 fabric with oxidised, buff external surface and external splashed green glaze.

*Gritty buff/white ware*: Pit c 1 body sherd.

*Scarborough ware*: Pit i grooved rod handle in off-white/buff (phase 2)<sup>17</sup> fabric with applied knob in pink (phase 1) fabric. Copper green glazed.

Pit l was the only one to contain mid-fourteenth-century pottery: *Buff/white ware without quartz gritting*: 2 body sherds and 1 base sherd.

This pit also contained 1 body sherd of a light grey reduced ware with external copper stained green glaze, which probably indicates that it is not local.

#### *Layer 14*

The ash associated with the hearth also contained only the gritty local wares which are residual by the mid-fourteenth century:

*Oxidised gritty wares*: 1 body sherd of a cooking pot; 2 glazed body sherds.

*Gritty buff/white wares*: 1 body sherd of a cooking pot; 1 glazed body sherd; 1 base sherd glazed internally (probably from a storage jar).

*Gritty reduced green wares*: 1 body sherd type 2; 1 rod handle fragment type 3.

*Rubbish tipping (layers 9 and 10) and the associated cobbling and drain (11)*

These can be equated with phase 5 at the Black Gate (late fourteenth century), where reduced green ware type 4 was the dominant type and Dutch redware and Langerwehe stoneware occur with some frequency. There is also quite a lot of earlier material still present in this group.

*Reduced green ware type 4*: 2 fragments of a cistern rim and strap handle (the common cistern form in this fabric at the Black Gate), 8 base sherds of large jugs or cisterns, 1 lid-seated jug rim sherd, 2 rounded rim sherds (1 with a strap handle) probably jugs, fragments of 8 wide strap handles (cisterns) and 1 narrow strap handle (jug), 115 body sherds.

3) Fragment of the shoulder of a ?jug, probably of no. 4. Fabric partly oxidised, glazed internally and externally. Decoration moulded and scratched.

4) Base of a ?jug. Fabric and glaze as no. 3.

*Gritty reduced green wares*: 23 body sherds, 1 base sherd, 1 fragment of a large rod handle, of types 1 and 2; 15 body sherds, 2 fragments of strap handles (1 with finger-pressed and stamped decoration) of type 3.

5) Balluster-shaped ?jug in type 3 fabric with full external cover of green glaze with applied iron spot decoration.

*Gritty buff/white ware*: 2 body sherds.

6) Probably a small cooking pot. Patchy external green glaze and external sooting.

*Buff/white ware (not gritted)*: 1 rim sherd (probably a jug), 1 strap handle fragment, 1 small handle with scored lines decorating top and base, 5 base sherds, 60 body sherds including 1 blackened internally in use. A small chip of a rim in pink (oxidised) fabric appeared to come from a straight-sided vessel of some kind.

7) Jug in pale grey fabric with full cover of green glaze on the external shoulder, and splashed on the external neck and rim.

8) Jug. Kiln second or waster. Buff fabric with external red wash, vertical band of thin whitish slip (probably accidental), splashed yellow glaze and rouletted decoration.

9) Cooking pot or storage jar. White fabric with buff surfaces. Thin green glaze smeared on outer rim. No sooting visible.

A kiln waster consisting of the base of one vessel fused to a body sherd of another. Both sherds are near vitrified and contain quartz, and quartzite in occasional large lumps. The body sherd also has iron inclusions appearing as melted black spots on the surface. Both fabrics are reduced, the body sherd to a mid-grey colour and the base to a darker blue/grey. Both the fabrics come within the general description of buff/white ware but are obviously the products of different, though similar, clay sources. The significance of this find is that it indicates that different clays were in use simultaneously at the same kiln. There are two similar examples from the Black Gate site of jugs (not wasters) where the body and handle are of different clays. This suggests the possibility that some or all of the range of similar fabrics grouped under the

heading buff/white ware, and thought to be from a number of local sources, could represent the production of one kiln site only.

*Scarborough ware*

10) Fragment in pink (phase 1) fabric with copper stained green glaze. Probably part of the decoration of a Knight jug.

*Langerwehe*: 2 body sherds (salt-glazed), 1 frilled base (iron-washed).

*Dutch redware*: 1 sherd. (There were 2 unstratified sherds of the same vessel), with internal amber glaze and external sooting.

*Unprovenanced*

11) A cooking pot in an orange/buff (oxidised) fabric with reduced core at the rim and sooted externally. The fabric is not typical of local quartz-gritted oxidised wares (see above). It has moderate inclusions of quartz, mica and iron. The finger-pressed decoration (but not the bifid form) of the rim and the fabric show some similarity to cooking pots from the south curtain wall of the castle.<sup>18</sup>

A small sherd, thinly thrown, fairly hard. White fabric, copper green glazed externally, yellow glaze with specks of copper green internally.

There were also 10 unidentifiable burnt and abraded sherds.

Medieval pottery in the cellar fill and other unstratified contexts appeared to have resulted from disturbing the stratified medieval deposits. It included the same types and forms and, in one case, sherds of the same vessel as found in a proper context (see above).

## CLAY ROOF TILES

*Barbara Harbottle*

Most of the roof tiles were clay plain tiles, i.e. flat tiles in a red fabric hung by nibs. Their use in fourteenth-century Newcastle was already known from finds made in the castle ditch where it seemed likely that they were used in conjunction with glazed ridge tiles such as those recovered from layer 9. There is no doubt that the ridge tiles were made locally, but the fabric of the plain tiles is foreign to this area and they must therefore have been imported, probably from the Netherlands.

*Layer 13*: one fragment of presumed *tegula*.

*Layer 12*: 4 fragments of clay plain tiles, and one small curved piece. The latter looks suspiciously modern and its presence in this group is suspect.

*Pit 1*: 2 fragments of clay plain tiles.

*Drain*: 2 fragments of clay plain tiles.

*Layer 9*: 25 fragments of clay plain tiles, average thickness 12 mm, 4 with nibs. The largest fragment was 195 mm wide, and more than 210 mm long.

Two fragments of partly glazed ridge tiles. One is an over-fired example of the local buff/white ware, and the other of reduced green ware.

## ANIMAL BONES

*D. J. Rackham*

Eighty-four bones and bone fragments and four oyster shells were recovered. One bone came from a Roman context, and the remainder from deposits of the fourteenth century. The latter have been catalogued in three groups, early, mid- and late fourteenth century, and the catalogue will be deposited with the excavation archive in the Museum of Antiquities at the University of Newcastle. The deposits contained a large amount of residual pottery and the contemporaneity of the animal bone with the period cannot be relied upon and a proportion may be derived.

The following species were present: cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse, cat, goose.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. Brand, *History of Newcastle* (1789), I, 237 note p.

<sup>2</sup> A. L. Poole, *Domesday Book to Magna Carta* (1955), 76.

<sup>3</sup> J. Gilchrist, *The Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages* (1969), 194.

<sup>4</sup> M. Beresford and J. K. St. Joseph, *Medieval England. An Aerial Survey* (1958), 161.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>6</sup> A. M. Oliver, ed., *Early Newcastle Deeds*, Surtees Society 137 (1924), no. 217.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 147.

<sup>8</sup> *Calendar of Close Rolls 1399-1402*, 267.

<sup>9</sup> Black Gate MS. M15 B35, p. 93. Information from Miss Harbottle.

<sup>10</sup> I am indebted to Mr. A. G. Chamberlain for this information.

<sup>11</sup> E. Mackenzie, *History of Newcastle* (1827), 175 note \*.

<sup>12</sup> Map engraved by J. Roper, from a drawing by J. Cole, to accompany the Beauties of England and Wales.

<sup>13</sup> City of Newcastle: Engineer's Department, submitted plans 15855.

<sup>14</sup> *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 20th September, 1924.

<sup>15</sup> D. W. Harding, ed., *Archaeology in the North* (1976), 112, 117 and fig. 16.

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Robert Rhodes and John Brandling, Oliver, *op. cit.*, nos. 310-12.

<sup>17</sup> Peter G. Farmer, *An Introduction to Scarborough Ware and a Re-assessment of the Knight Jugs* (1979).

<sup>18</sup> Barbara Harbottle, "Excavations at the South Curtain Wall of the Castle, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1960-61", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4, XLIV (1966), 114, no. 60.

