

II

A Reassessment of the Prehistoric Pottery from the 1952–62 Excavations at Yeavingering

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The prehistoric material from Dr. Brian Hope-Taylor's excavations at Yeavingering has recently been transferred to the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle, thus making it available for study. Examination of the material has shown that the collection includes additional material not discussed in the site report (Hope-Taylor 1977).

The additional material would in itself justify this note. Although the pottery cannot be assigned to stratified contexts, it comprises a sizeable assemblage and at a time when only 11 sites in Northumberland have produced Neolithic pottery (mostly from secondary contexts) a body of evidence such as this must have an intrinsic worth.

However, the real value of a re-appraisal of the material at this time is that it need no longer be looked at in isolation. Not only has work undertaken since Isla McInnes presented her report on the pottery (Hope-Taylor 1977) considerably enlarged our understanding of pottery styles in the area, we are now beginning to have a much wider view of an entire prehistoric landscape in the region. The Milfield Basin is a relatively small and geographically distinct area (fig. 1) in which recent excavation has revealed much prehistoric activity on a variety of site types. The recognition that there is a henge monument at Yeavingering (Harding 1981) has been a crucial factor in relating the site to the surrounding landscape. It is therefore to be hoped that a review of the evidence at this time may reveal something of the processes of interaction between the component parts of this landscape.

Excavation work began at Yeavingering in 1952 when the site was threatened by quarrying and was carried on for eight seasons under the

directorship of Dr. Brian Hope-Taylor, being finally completed in 1962. The excavation records have been published (Hope-Taylor 1977) and the reader is referred to the full report. However it does seem relevant here to discuss those features which are demonstrably prehistoric and thus provide contexts for that portion of the pottery which can be considered stratified. (For a general plan of the site see Fig. 2.)

The Western Ring-Ditch

The Western Ring-Ditch is, as the name suggests, a circular feature with a diameter of 15.8 m, the "ditch" being segmented rather than continuous. The segments are said to have been rarely more than 18 cm deep, only one hole reached a depth of 45.5 cm. The present writer would question at the outset whether this feature does warrant the term ditch as opposed to a ring of pits. Indeed, these irregularities were initially considered to be merely natural phenomena. The possibility of these holes having held posts was considered by the excavator but it was later felt that the evidence was more in keeping with them having held squat upright stones.

Towards the centre of the area, a pit 2.29 m diameter survived to a depth of c. 61 cm. Centrally placed within this pit was a feature containing fill of the same type as the presumed stone-holes. However, this also held traces of the decay in situ of a heavy wooden post, the bottom of which would have rested on the remains of a cremation burial. There were also 3 other post-holes within the central area and a number of smaller holes forming a rectangle within the ring. Lines of what appeared to be stake-holes were taken as indicating that wall

screens ran between the structural posts and a substance presumed to be the product of the erosion of unburnt daub was discovered in the fill of the post holes. There was no evidence to indicate whether or not this was a roofed structure nor indeed what was the relationship between the central timbers and the rectangular feature.

The sequence of events proposed by Hope-Taylor (1977) for this area is as follows:

1. Digging of the "interrupted ditch" and central hole.
2. Insertion of the cremation into a pit within the central hole.
3. Erection of the central upright stone probably at the same time as the stone circle was constructed.
4. Removal of all the stones, insertion of a wooden post into the central hole and the erection of the timber structure.

As well as the central cremation burial there were several other cremations either within or close to the circular feature, some of which had prehistoric pottery associated with them.

There were also 31 inhumation burials within the ring. Only four of these lay outside the rectangular post setting. In a few cases the graves were dug through the post-holes but most could have been dug whilst the timbers were still in place. Some of the graves had tooth enamel remaining in them but otherwise there was no organic survival. The burials were unfurnished apart from two containing iron knives one of which certainly appears to cut an earlier grave. This phase of burial is thus very difficult to date, save to set it in the late prehistoric or early historic time-zone. The excavator believes the graves to be focusing on the central post; those where enamel survives apparently buried with their feet towards the centre. However, only 6 graves are oriented in a rough north-south direction, the rest have an approximate east-west orientation as indeed do the majority of inhumations on the site. We cannot therefore rule out the possibility that nothing remained of the timber structure by the time the graves were dug.

The features in this area are particularly

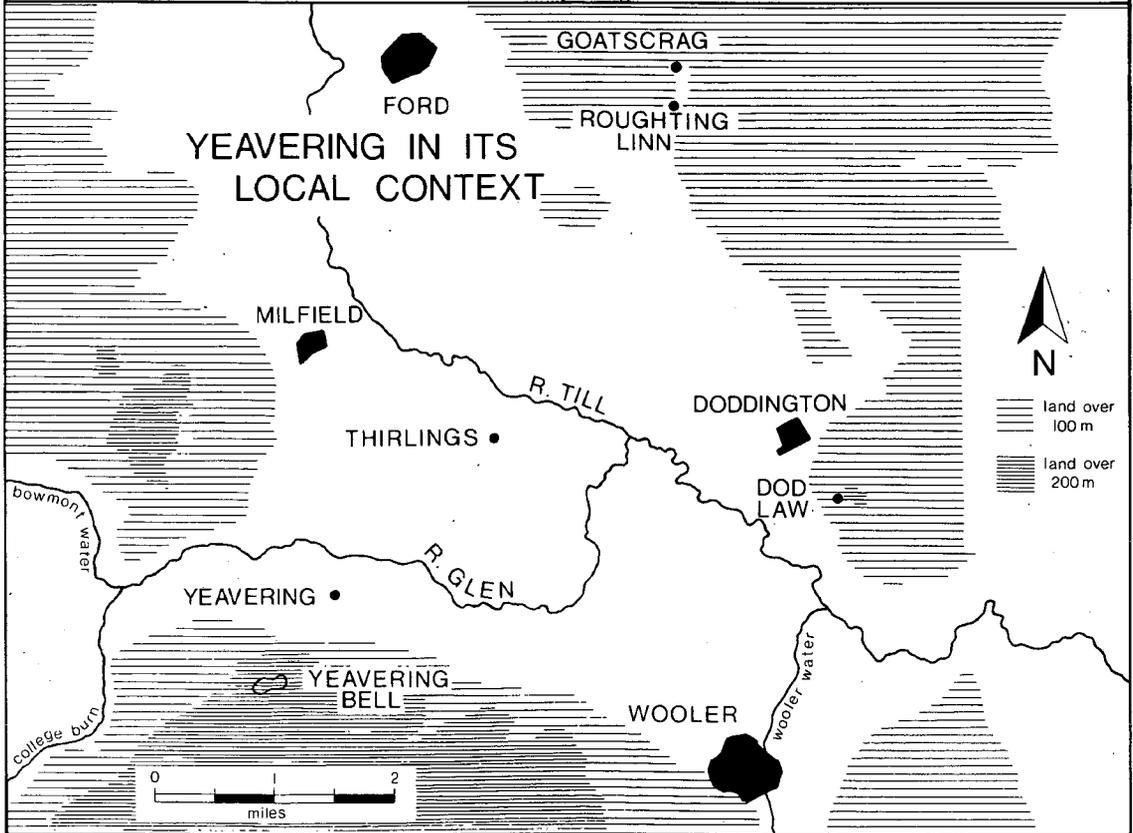
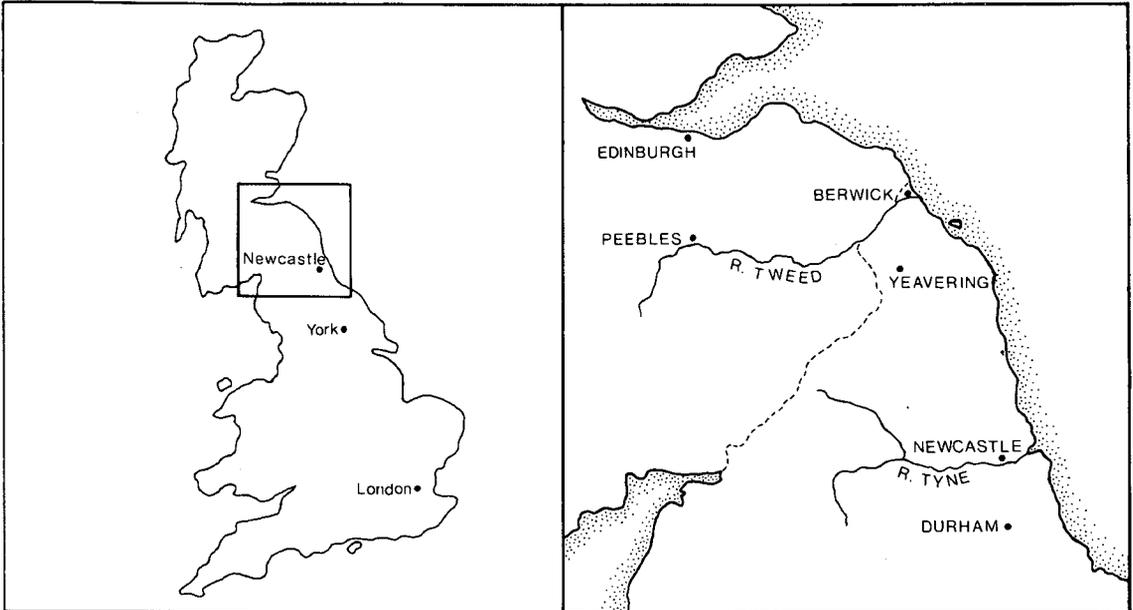
enigmatic and lacking in direct dating evidence so any interpretation of them has to be extremely cautious. The evidence behind the identification of the circular feature as a stone circle would appear to be somewhat tenuous to say the least. Unfortunately though, the failure to publish any vertical sections through the presumed stone-holes precludes any real reinterpretation.

Indeed the Milfield Basin has produced so many oddities of prehistoric date that it may well be presumptuous to attempt to fit this feature into the current repertoire of non-domestic monuments at all. It is possible that the site in the area of Floddenford noted by Harding (1981) from air photographs and consisting of a ring of pits *c.* 15 m in diameter surrounding a central pit may prove to parallel this one.

The Eastern Ring-Ditch

This feature lies within the Great Enclosure, the enclosure ditch having cut into the western side of the ring-ditch in a late phase of its construction. Slightly smaller than the Western Ring-Ditch, it has a diameter of approximately 13.4 m. The material dug out of the ditch was not returned to it and is likely to have been made into a mound. Indeed the structure does appear to have been a round barrow. No obvious primary burial was discovered but many small fragments of cremated bone were found in the upper fill mixed with numerous crumbs of pottery which appeared to have been derived from a single urn probably originally situated near the centre of the circle. The excavator notes (Hope-Taylor 1977 p. 348) that the size and character of the urn suggest it to be late Bronze Age and therefore probably itself associated with a secondary burial. The ring-ditch was cut into by pit BX which held a post and it was in turn cut by grave BX1. All the evidence, however, points to both of these features being of considerably later date than the barrow.

Fig. 1.



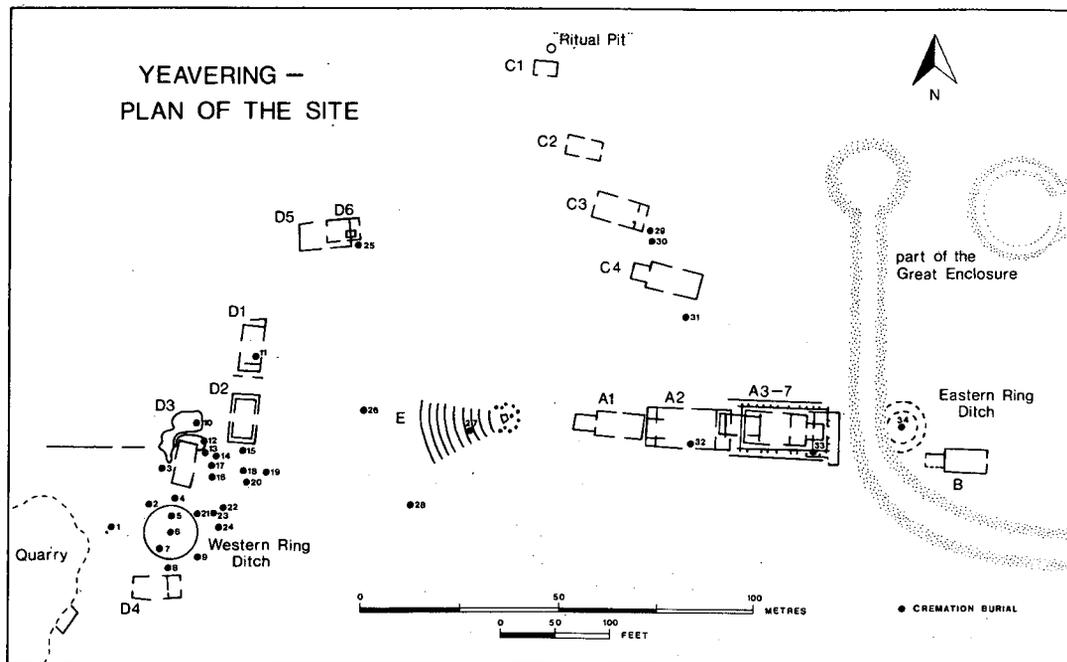


Fig. 2.

The "Ritual" Pit

The feature referred to as a "ritual" pit (the question of its function will be discussed later) lies close to the north-east corner of building C1. Approximately 91 cm in diameter, its fill is divided into three layers. The uppermost layer, A, was brownish-black and contained fragments of pottery, burnt bone, charcoal and reddened clay. Layer B was subdivided into B.a) sand and gravel subsoil, B.b) similar but containing lenses of humus and B.c) brown humus with charcoal inclusions. Layer C had a black and greasy fill with a central concentration of charcoal and hazelnut shells; it was subdivided by a lens of yellow sand and also contained burnt bone, pottery sherds and two struck flakes of flint (see Hope-Taylor 1977 fig. 120 p. 349).

The Henge

The class II henge monument at Yeavinging lies 200 m E.S.E. of the palace site, outside the

area of the 1952-62 excavations. It was not recognized as a henge by Hope-Taylor, being noted merely as a "circular/elliptical enclosure", with an east-west orientation. Excavation by A. F. Harding (Harding 1981) showed it to measure roughly 22 m north-south by 23 m east-west, with two entrances just under 5 m wide. Pits were discovered outside both entrances as well as a burial beneath a stone outside the western entrance.

The Standing Stone

The standing stone lies some 122 m due west of the henge in line with the henge entrance. However, it was re-erected in 1925 by the Berwickshire Naturalists Field Club and set in concrete so it may not necessarily be in its original position (Harding 1981 p. 119). It stands to a height of 2.0 m.

It must be noted at this stage that the ritual and/or sepulchral monuments at Yeavinger are only part of a complex of sites within the Milfield Basin and should be viewed as such. Such information as we have at present on the subject has been treated fully by Harding (1981, pp. 87-136) and Miket (1981, pp. 137-146)

and it should suffice here to refer the reader to Fig. 3. This shows the henges of the complex in relation to one another and to the strange feature known as the Avenue. This consists of a pair of roughly parallel ditches varying from 15 to 30 m apart, running for around 1.75 km. It seems to be something of a unique feature as

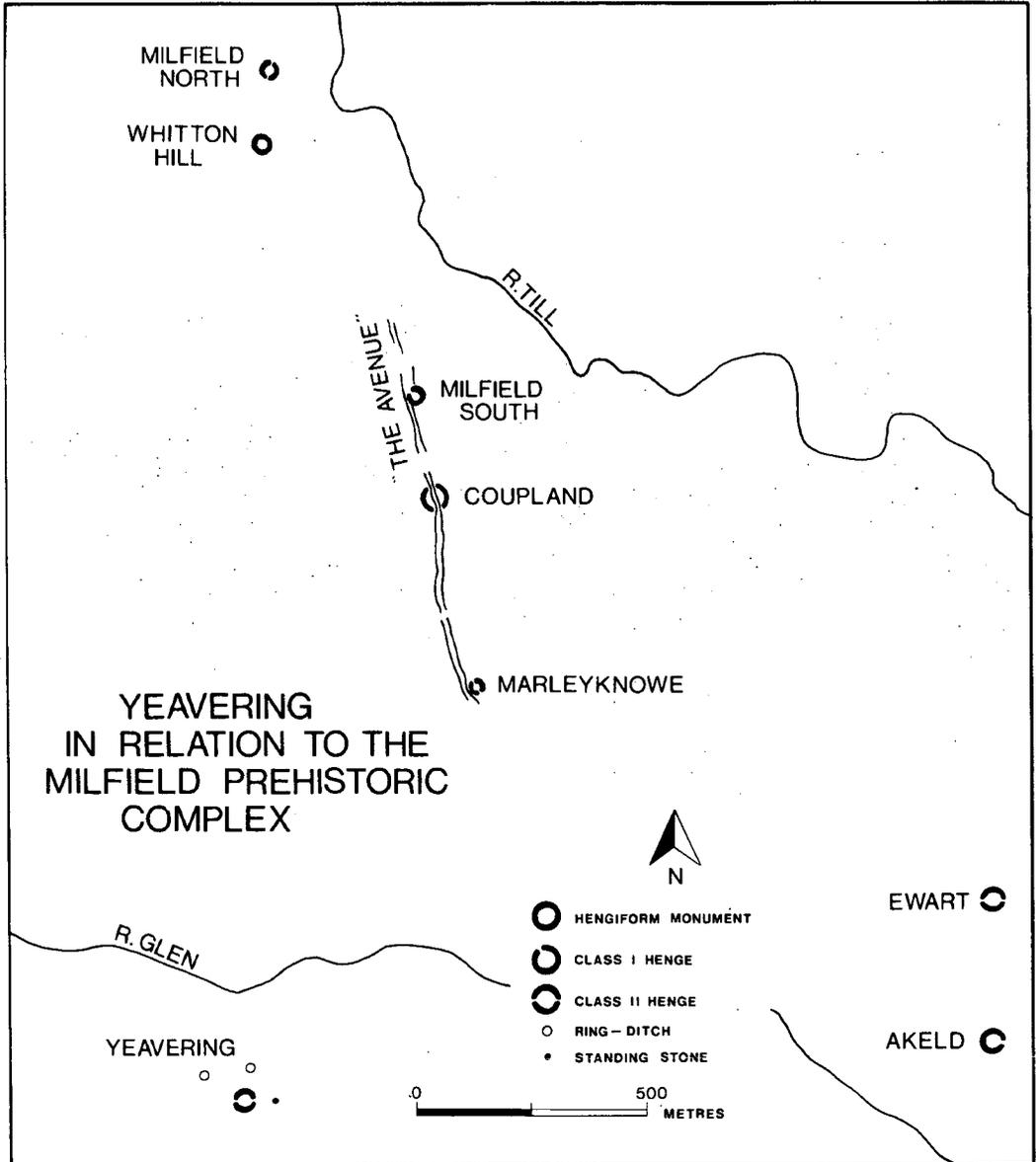


Fig. 3.

it is too irregular to be classed as a *cursus* and passes through the middle of a henge, which no other known *cursus* does. There are also a number of pit alignments in the area (Miket 1981) which appear to be related to the rest of the complex but do not, as yet, form any coherent pattern. Harding (1981) has suggested that the different orientations of the henges may have allowed the observer to view different parts of the horizon from each one but how their functions differed otherwise and why some, like Yeavinger, were used for sepulchral purposes, while others were not, remains as yet unanswered.

THE POTTERY

Grimston Ware

Sherds 1–10 from the palace site and 43–55 from Yeavinger henge (Harding 1981, p. 127) fall readily into the category of Grimston Ware. This class of pottery is characterized by uncarinated vessels with upright sides and slightly inturned rims, vessels with s-shaped profiles, round-bottomed carinated bowls, everted and rolled-over rims and highly burnished surfaces. It represents the earliest detectable occupation of the site and is known to have gone out of use shortly after 2700 b.c.

Unfortunately, most of the finds were from secondary contexts. We have a single date of 2940 + 90 b.c. for a sample of charcoal from the middle fill of the domestic pit outside the western entrance to the henge. There were no pottery finds from this pit but the date may equally well apply to the probable domestic area outside the eastern entrance from which the Grimston sherds came. Only the bowl from pit 30 appears to be *in situ*, though it had been disturbed by ploughing.

Other Grimston ware finds in the region appear to be derived from domestic contexts. At the nearby site of Thirlings (Miket 1976) pit F366 produced over 400 sherds representing a minimum of 12 vessels, all but one decorated example of common, plain Grimston type. The pit had been used for storage then filled with domestic refuse including charcoal fragments

of hazel, oak and birch. A date of 5250 + 150 b.c. from this pit is considered by the excavator to be unlikely and probably caused by contamination. A nearby post-pit contained a sherd which joined with another from pit F366 and gave the more likely date of 3280 + 150 b.c.

Greenwell (1862) also found such material underneath a round barrow at Broomridge, a sandstone escarpment north of Roughting Linn. The layer in which the pottery was found appears to have been composed of domestic debris, comprising charcoal, burnt earth and bones, flint flakes including a leaf-shaped arrowhead and the butt-end of a Neolithic axe-head. The 204 pottery sherds resemble in form and fabric the material from Yeavinger and Thirlings (Newbigin 1935). Greenwell (1862) describes them as "plain, hard-baked pottery, quite unlike that of which the sepulchral vessels are made and having the appearance of domestic vessels".

At the Hirsell, near Coldstream in Berwickshire, Prof. R. J. Cramp (1980) discovered a Grimston ware vessel during the excavation of the Early Medieval site there. The site is in a similar location to that of Yeavinger (and Thirlings) being on a gravel ridge in the Tweed basin. The pot was associated with the "floor" of structure 112, which was covered by a layer containing early prehistoric flints and finally by a Medieval cobbled surface. To the west of structure 112 was a pit which yielded a black burnished vessel also presumed to be Neolithic.

Peterborough Ware

Yeavinger has yielded a fairly small quantity of Peterborough style pottery. Only sherds 12–16, 43 and 46–48 of the palace site can be classed as such. The henge yielded no such material.

Until *c.* 20 years ago, Peterborough ware was rare north of the Wash and studies of Peterborough ware have generally tended to concern themselves with the abundant southern evidence. However, as long ago as 1954, Piggott suggested that a northern variety might one day emerge. Now that excavation of northern sites has produced a larger body of evi-

dence this has proved to be the case. Manby (1975) defined a Rudston style and more recently, Burgess (1976) proposed another version of this further north based on the abundant ceramic material from Meldon Bridge, a defended Neolithic settlement in Peeblesshire.

It is to this Meldon Bridge style that most of the known finds from Northumberland can now be ascribed. The vessels are characterized by rims which differ from the southern styles, being more angular in section, flattened on the exterior projection and bevelled internally or on top, with narrow, shallow necks and very slight shoulders and sharply sloping sides. Bases are either rounded or flat and abundant twisted cord decoration is a common feature especially on top of the rim. Some vessels have the normal round-topped rim but bear the same decorative traits.

The Peterborough sherds from Yeavinging fall readily into this Meldon Bridge style. Only one of them was in any sense stratified, coming from the fill of a segment of the Western Ring-Ditch. Of the other sherds whose circumstances of recovery were recorded one was discovered in the vicinity of the central pit of the Western Ring-Ditch whilst clearing the debris left by the bulldozer and the other came from somewhere to the west of building C2. Vessel 43 is not typical of the series having a somewhat elongated neck. However, the element of fingernail decoration along with the incised herring-bone pattern on the rim, relate it most closely to this tradition. Sherds 46-48, although not particularly diagnostic, probably also belong in the Peterborough category. Similarly, the well-known sherds found in the area of Ford, possibly near Crookham and given to Greenwell (Longworth 1969) were seen as somewhat unusual, although firmly in the Peterborough tradition. Re-examination in the light of recent work shows that they too are in the Meldon Bridge style with both rim types represented.

The small hengiform monument at Whitton Hill (Miket 1985) has also produced a vessel of this type. The site consists of a ditch but no internal bank and a central cremation burial surrounded by others. The ditch appears to

have been immediately refilled and a ring of timbers, leaning inwards to rest on an inner ring, was set in it. The Meldon Bridge style pot accompanied the central burial. Radio-carbon dates for the site are fairly consistent at c. 1900-1800 B.C. however these dates do fall within the B.M. lab's problem area.

The angular rim form of the Meldon Bridge style can be seen to anticipate the characteristic Food Vessel rim type. Longworth (1969) noted the similarity between vessels 3 and 4 from Ford to Food Vessels of the Yorkshire Vase series and Manby (1975) suggested the Rudston style could be considered to stand in the same ancestral role to Food Vessels as the Mortlake and Fengate styles did to the Collared Urns. The relationship now seems beyond doubt and indeed at Meldon Bridge itself, with its five radio-carbon dates ranging from c. 2236-2132 B.C., vessels with many of the traits of Food Vessels and Food Vessel Urns had already appeared (Burgess 1976). Similarly, in vessel 43 from Yeavinging with its accentuated neck we begin to see Food Vessel characteristics.

Thirlings too produced some pottery of this type (Miket pers. comm.) but the majority of the Peterborough sherds belong to the Fengate sub-style with the characteristic collar (Miket 1976). This pottery came from pits and post pits which unfortunately do not appear to form any recognizable pattern. Charcoal from one of the pits gave the date 2130 ± 130 B.C. The absence of the Fengate style from Meldon Bridge can be explained by the fact that the main period of occupation there had probably ended by the time this style appeared in the area.

Grooved Ware

Sherds 17-31 and 68 from the palace site may be ascribed to the Grooved ware class. The henge produced no sherds with the characteristic forms of decoration but some of the pottery may be a form of undecorated Grooved ware (Harding 1981).

All of the sherds whose context was recorded came from a pit to the north of building C1, described as the "ritual" pit (Hope-Taylor

1977, fig. 120 p. 349). The fill of the pit was divided into three layers and it is claimed that sherds from layer A joined exactly with others from layer C. However, which sherds are referred to here is not apparent from the report or from examination of the material and the present writer feels this statement should be treated with some caution.

The term Rinyo-Clacton ware used to describe the published material (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 354) is now somewhat out of date. Piggott first introduced the term in 1954 in trying to demonstrate the existence of a Rinyo-Clacton culture comprising distinctive house plans and ritual structures as well as pottery evidence. It has since been suggested (Wainwright and Longworth 1971) that to speak of a culture is to claim too much, although there is some similarity of cultural background, and a return to the original term Grooved ware has been advocated and generally accepted. Four sub-styles have been defined within the series, the Clacton, Woodlands, Durrington Walls and Rinyo styles. None of the types other than the Rinyo style show any marked territorial separation.

Most of the Yeavinger material belongs to the Woodlands style with its typical features such as internally bevelled rims decorated with grooved ladder pattern, ladder pattern on the external surface, incised herringbone pattern and plain and slashed horizontal cordons. Others have the vertical cordons characteristic of the Durrington Walls style. The large vessel, 23, finds its closest parallel in the Woodlands style pots from Flamborough (Manby 1974 p. 73) and vessel 29 is paralleled in the Clacton style sherds from the pit alignment at Ewart (Miket 1981 p. 144). Sherd 31 was originally identified as being from a rather late and degenerate form of Beaker (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 355). Its fabric, although of fine quality, is on the whole rather coarse for Beaker but comparable with that of sherds 17-20 and the incised herringbone design is entirely in keeping with the Woodlands style.

The double pit alignment at Milfield North also yielded sherds of Grooved ware although none distinctive enough to be assigned to a

particular sub-style (Harding 1981). The pit from which the sherds came once held a post which was later extracted. Charcoal from the pit gave radio-carbon dates of 1820 + 50 b.c., 1790 + 50 b.c. and 1655 + 80 b.c. The sherd, recorded by Greenwell in 1865 as having been discovered in the wood near Redscar Bridge, Ford, has grooved decoration with alternate filled triangular zones and rows of deeply impressed round pits (Longworth 1969). It is a rather curious example of the Clacton style. The pits are more easily paralleled in the Peterborough tradition but Longworth suggests this need not imply an early date as an Enlarged Food Vessel from Kirkwhelpington (Abercromby 1912, Vol. II fig. 494) is decorated by similar pits making a date of no earlier than the sixteenth century B.C. seem reasonable. Greenwell mentions the sherd as having been found beneath a flat stone without any bone associated. Some fragments were found about a yard away but have since been lost.

Thirlings has produced some Grooved ware, all sherds having been discovered in the topsoil during fieldwalking. This material is far from typical of the series having corded rather than grooved decoration but the "flowerpot" shape of the vessels is in keeping with the tradition.

The site of Whitton Hill (Miket 1985) has also produced two rather unusual vessels of a type which although it cannot be ascribed to a particular style of Grooved ware is commonly associated with the Grooved ware tradition. One of the vessels came from the ditch of the hengiform monument mixed with "ritual debris" comprising hazelnut shells, twigs and cremated bone. The other, from a layer by the side of and projecting over the top of the central burial. Both are small, flat-based, lugged cups of common "flowerpot" shape but lacking in grooved decoration. The radio-carbon dates for the site fall consistently around 1900-1800 B.C.

Beaker Wares

Beaker material is rare on the site, only sherds 32 and 33 and the missing sherds Fig. 123.14 from the palace site are certainly from Beakers, there were no finds of Beaker pottery from

the henge. The stratified sherds came from segments of the Western Ring-Ditch and the missing sherd was said to have been "securely stratified under the surviving base of cremation 7's otherwise disintegrated urn" (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 354). The sherds are of AOC type.

This scarcity of finds is perhaps rather less surprising when one considers the general paucity of Beaker finds in the Milfield Plain as a whole. Thirlings has produced no Beakers and it would seem to be to the "public monuments" and burial sites of the Milfield area, that we should look for Beaker material, if at all. The henge at Milfield North (Harding 1981) produced a single sherd, decorated with rows of small dots, from the middle fill of the ditch. Abercromby (1912, p. 89) records a Beaker found near Ford but gives no further information concerning it.

The rather enigmatic vessel 36, associated with cremation 25 is of Beaker fabric but lacks obvious affinities among other Beaker wares in form and association. It may be an example of Beaker coarse ware also known as domestic Beaker or Potbeakers. Gibson (1984 p. 94) suggests that the functions of Beakers may have changed through time with even potbeakers being selected as grave goods, perhaps indicating that the original prestige value of Beakers was waning.

McInnes (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 355) regards it as a Food Vessel and explains its association with a cremation in this way but as we have seen above this need not preclude a coarse Beaker label. It may however belong to a group of hybrid vessels. Gibson (1984 p. 85) has discussed the problem of interaction between Beakers and Food Vessels with some pots showing traits of both. This is illustrated at Kilellan Farm on Islay (Burgess 1976). At Milfield North too the same problem of definition arises (Harding 1981, p. 114). Vessel P1 from the henge is of Beaker-like shape but with a carination more akin to the Food Vessels series. The fingernail impressed decoration does little to sway the decision either way.

Both Potbeakers and these hybrid forms are such ill-defined groups that it would be foolish to assign vessel 36 to any particular class.

Suffice it to say that such a vessel does nothing to demonstrate the presence of Food Vessel material at Yeavinging.

Cinerary Urns

The various urn types once thought to span the whole of the Middle and Late Bronze Age are now seen to have been contemporary with one another and have all been pushed back into the Early Bronze Age. Hence Food Vessel Urns, Collared Urns, Bucket-shaped Urns and Cordoned Urns were all part of the Early Bronze Age ceramic repertoire of northern England and the association of a particular urn type with a burial must be seen to have social rather than chronological implications.

Even though much of the material from Yeavinging is too fragmentary to allow an accurate reconstruction of vessel forms, there is still a variety of urn types represented.

Two Collared Urns have been discovered, vessel 45 and the complete urn 73 (Hope-Taylor 1977 fig. 117, p. 344) associated with cremation 19. Both fall into this category, previously known as Overhanging-Rim Urns. The latter appears to have been inverted in a pit, cremation 19 having been poured through a hole in the base.

This type of urn appears to have developed from the Fengate style of Peterborough ware with little direct influence from Grooved ware (Longworth 1961, Gibson 1978). Vessel 45 has an undecorated collar which is paralleled in shape in Longworth's primary series (1961). The other vessel has stamped decoration and may be later in date. It is almost identical with an urn from Forfar (Abercromby 1912 Vol II, No. 185).

Vessel 44 associated with cremation 33 is a simple, undecorated, bucket-shaped urn, with a slight internal rim bevel. The vessel represented by sherds 49-54 has a very wide base and is probably also of the bucket-shaped variety, although it appears to have all-over decoration of fingernail and dragged fingernail impressions, whereas decoration on this type of vessel is usually confined to the upper part (Burgess 1980, p. 93). The cordon decorated sherds 69, 70 and 71 were also associated with

this burial. Sherds 37, 38 and 40-42 represent a crude urn which likewise has decoration, in this case an incised criss-cross design, all over the body.

Sherds 57 and 58 are also from coarse thick-walled urns but are too fragmentary to assign to a particular type.

Later Bronze and Iron Age Pottery

The remainder of the pottery cannot readily be identified and dated save to ascribe it loosely to the later Bronze or early Iron Age. Some of the sherds may be of "Flat-Rimmed" ware, a simple and long-lived type with a flat or internally bevelled rim. Sherds 61 and 62 in particular recall the material from the settlement site at Green Knowe in Peeblesshire (Jobey 1981) bearing in mind Jobey's warning that "the angles of the rim sherds may at times be uncertain". Green Knowe was occupied during the second half of the second millennium.

It would be tempting to identify lugs 63 and 64 as possibly being from Food Vessels were it not for the fact that sherds 63-67 form a distinct group of calcite gritted vessels and a date in this later period would appear more appropriate for the rest of the group. Sherds 66 and 67 bear a rather unusual and distinctive form of decoration consisting of an applied cordon with finger impressions. It is difficult to find immediate local parallels for this style of decoration. The technique is somewhat similar to that used on the material from the brock at Clickhimin, Shetland (Hamilton 1968). I am grateful to Susan Mills for this observation. However, the Yeavinger sherds are much cruder, the cordons on the Clickhimin material having been neatly rucked with the thumb, the rim forms are also different being mainly everted. Traprain Law has also produced material of this type with the everted rim and rucked cordon (Plowright 1978). Fingertipping in general, though usually impressed directly onto the pot, is a feature of the earlier Iron Age and is rare on sites such as Stanwick and Thorpe Thewles. However, on analogy with continental sites, especially those of northern France, it may be that some of the material will eventually be pushed back to fill

the ceramic "gap" in the late Bronze Age.

DISCUSSION

The earliest phase of use on the site with associated pottery is datable to the early Neolithic period and is represented by finds of Grimston Ware. The date given in Hope-Taylor (1977 p. 356) for the beginning of this occupation "shortly before 2000 B.C." may prove rather too late. The single radio-carbon date for the henge indicates activity on the site well before 2000 B.C. and analogy with Thirlings which produced an even earlier date suggests that occupation could have begun by c. 3500 B.C. Indeed the Grimston style of pottery appears to have gone out of use shortly after c. 2700 B.C. This first phase of occupation seems to have been primarily domestic in nature. It may well have begun near the site of the later henge and moved uphill. The Grimston bowl (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 349 fig. 119) could be seen as occupation or feasting debris rather than as a funerary container or accessory vessel.

It would seem to be worth defining at this point exactly what the term "domestic" is taken to mean in this paper. Difficulties are frequently encountered in attempting to decide whether a particular deposit represents "domestic" or "ritual" use of a site. If typically domestic debris, such as food remains and broken pottery, is in fact the remains of a ritual feast, its nature may be coloured by the nature of the ritual involved. Similarly "ritual" monuments, such as henges, are considered by some to have served a secular function. This problem remains unresolved but for the present the writer has adopted Gibson's definition (1982 p. 2) that "domestic" is taken to mean "any sherd and 'occupation debris' not associated with a burial or any unequivocal signs of ritual".

The next set of radio-carbon dates we have which is suitable for comparison with the Yeavinger material applies to styles of pottery current over a millennium later. This poses the question of continuity of occupation. The small quantity of material is rather feeble evidence against continuity, as there is little enough material of any period and the site is known to

have suffered extensive plough damage.

Temporary abandonment during the Middle Neolithic is however what Whittle (1978) suggests for many sites throughout the country. This theory is based on widespread evidence for the regeneration of woodland in a variety of environments, not just in marginal areas. Unfortunately, there is only one pollen diagram for the Milfield Basin (Borek 1976), from Akeld (NT 966 305) and this merely shows that forest clearance on a scale large enough to be noticeable, did not occur until the Bronze Age. Burgess too (1984 p. 141) favours the idea of abandonment of settlement sites in the Milfield Basin and uses the distribution of stone-axes to suggest a shift of population to the nearby Fell Sandstone uplands and the beginning of clearance there.

Whatever the case, there is once again abundant evidence of settlement on the plain during the later Neolithic period. This phase is represented at Yeavinging by finds of Peterborough ware and Grooved ware. The Grooved ware sherds whose context is recorded came from the pit (Hope-Taylor 1977 p. 349) considered a "ritual" pit by the excavator. This interpretation is questioned here as the pit would fit the definition of "domestic" given above. In Wainwright and Longworth's (1971 p. 249) study of the Grooved ware tradition, of 116 sites known to have produced such pottery, 54% were of domestic type. This figure may well be increased as some material in the 33% stray finds category may be derived from domestic contexts. Of the finds in the domestic category 62% came from pits. However, this is not to deny the apparent association of Grooved ware with henge builders. This period appears to have seen one of the major phases of activity on the site and it is not unreasonable to assume that there may be domestic structures of this henge-building period yet to be discovered. The discovery of the Grooved ware pit was entirely fortuitous; it lies some distance from the henge and a typical excavation of a henge and its immediate surroundings would not reveal such outlying features.

The period c. 1900-1700 B.C. was generally one of change in the Milfield Basin. The settle-

ment record at Thirlings ends suddenly at this time. There seems to be a move into the surrounding uplands, which remained uninhabited during the Neolithic. Burgess (1984 p. 143) records the opening up of extensive tracts of land up to a height of 400 m and it may be that the decline in tree pollen in the area from 88% to 34% (Borek 1976) began at this time. The beginnings of this activity appear to be associated with Beakers and Food Vessels.

The Milfield Plain was not entirely abandoned though; instead, it became the site of a major "ritual" complex of which the Yeavinging henge was a part. Numerous henges were constructed and pit alignments dug; whether these served some ritual purpose or were major land boundaries as Burgess (1984 p. 143) suggests or both is uncertain. The alignment at Milfield North (Harding 1981) gave radio-carbon dates of 1655 + 80 b.c., 1790 + 50 b.c. The henge there yielded dates of 1590 + 100 b.c., 1740 + 80 b.c. and 1950 + 110 b.c.

Thus far however there is no real evidence for Yeavinging being a major cemetery site. This cist disturbed by building D2(a) may well be among the earliest burials on the site. It appears from the plan (Hope-Taylor 1977, fig. 43 p. 97) to be oval in form and may be of a type which commonly lacks a capstone and could equally well be described as a burial pit. It was probably covered by a cairn and it is likely to have contained an inhumation which has since disappeared. The cremated bone found inside the cist, along with the pottery sherd, which fits readily into the Grooved Ware tradition, may be intrusive. We cannot rule out the possibility that many inhumations have disappeared from the acid soil and that further excavation may produce evidence of more cists or burial pits.

Indeed the discovery of other cists in the immediate vicinity of the site make this seem more than likely. MacLauchlan (1867) records three cists dug up in the area. The first he describes as a tumulus or cairn known as Tom Tallon, lying c. 800 m south of Yeavinging Bell. The cairn was removed to put up a fence in July 1858 and a cist was discovered towards its

north side. It is described as being of "unhewn stones, and about 3' 6" (1 m) long, 1' 6" (0.45 m) wide and 1' (0.3 m) in depth; there were a few bones towards the middle of the cairn, and towards the bottom there was a very disagreeable smell; diameter 25 yards (22.8 m)." The second excavated some time before c. 1860 lay c. 365 m to the west of the Palace site in a field called Sandy Knowe. It was roughly built, narrow and about 3' long and contained nothing but sand. MacLauchlan also records that about 777 m N.E. of Yeaverling Bell is a knoll called Worm Law, "there are faint traces of a circular form: this has lately (1862) been opened and found to contain a cist". He also notes a prostrate stone 2.4 m in length, 55 m east of the cist and presumes it to have stood erect.

Inhumation burial had become rare in the area after c. 1550 b.c. and cremation took over as the main rite. The evidence for Yeaverling's use as a cremation cemetery is readily apparent within the excavated areas, especially around the Western Ring-Ditch. We cannot say how long after its construction the feature began to attract burials as the central one may have been merely a foundation deposit. However some form of cemetery use would be an obvious suggestion for the primary function of this feature and may go some way towards explaining why the henge did not attract burials. The majority of pottery from now on consists of sepulchral vessels. This material testifies to intensive use of the site throughout the early Bronze Age (with perhaps a late Bronze Age burial (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 348) inserted into the Eastern Ring-Ditch but there is no longer any clear evidence of domestic occupation (although the pyramidal loom-weight may be of Bronze Age date). On analogy with the rest of Northumberland these sepulchral ceramics would appear to have a lifespan extending down to c. 1250 b.c.

There is little evidence of later second millennium activity and this is not a situation peculiar to Yeaverling. Settlements and artefacts of this period have eluded archaeologists in the area for some time. Burgess (1974 and 1984) attributes this to social and economic

collapse. There is countrywide evidence for a worsening of climate at this time and this is thought to have made many uplands unsuitable for agriculture thus creating pressure on more fertile land and eventually forcing people to defend themselves and their property by building hillforts. However the evidence is hardly sufficient to suggest abandonment of the site at this time. Some of the urned cremations may belong to this period and there is a strong possibility that detailed re-examination of the palisade sequence may reveal an enclosure of this date; the precursor to the hillfort (I am grateful to Roger Miket for this observation). Certainly on the evidence of the two glass beads found with cremations 1 and 27 (Hope-Taylor 1977) burials seem to have been deposited on the site up to the Roman Iron Age.

This re-evaluation of the evidence may indeed pose more questions than it provides answers, but we are now in a position to begin to ask the right questions. The site can now be looked at as part of a landscape and the answers lie in the social processes at work within that landscape. Pottery is one indicator of these processes; it is futile merely to fit it into a chronological sequence and explain any apparent gaps in the sequence as due to abandonment of the site. The "gaps" may only reflect gaps in our knowledge of how the various sites interacted and how their functions differed. For instance why is there no Food Vessel at Yeaverling? When we look at the Milfield Basin as a whole it appears that none of the sites which use Peterborough or Grooved Wares go on to adopt Food Vessels, even though much of the Peterborough Ware exhibits proto Food Vessel traits. Many sites in the region do not mix Peterborough and Grooved Ware e.g. Meldon Bridge and the Grooved Ware at Thirlings is hardly classic in form.

As yet we are still looking at a very incomplete picture of the Yeaverling evidence. The legitimate concern of the excavator was the study of an Anglo-Saxon palace and it was to this end that the excavation strategy was directed. Such a strategy allowed only fragmentary glimpses of the wealth of prehistoric

features on the site and much more surely remains to be discovered.

However even those fragmentary glimpses give every indication of a dynamic site capable of adapting to change and surviving. Finds of Mesolithic flints in the topsoil (Hope-Taylor 1977, p. 181) suggest that occupation may have begun even earlier than is indicated by the pottery evidence. It is the continuity at Yeavinging that is significant and any interruptions in this seem to be fairly minor episodes in its long history but this continuity was a far cry from stagnation. Hope-Taylor's view (1977 p. 338) of a "peasant community securely entrenched in a cultural backwater" seems particularly inappropriate. We do not need to seek "Iron Age immigrants" who introduced the field system and built the hillfort. The reason why their pottery resembled the "vilely debased native wares" was not one of "culturally weakened social groups yielding to native Bronze Age ways in an unfamiliar environment". They were the same native people, familiar with the environment, who successfully adapted to whatever environmental and/or social pressures caused the changes at the end of the Bronze Age. The subsistence base of these and earlier native peoples is a key area for further study and may reveal much about the differences between sites.

APPENDIX: Catalogue of Pottery

Included in the catalogue is a full description of all the prehistoric pottery from the 1952-62 excavations at Yeavinging, now housed in the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle. Only those sherds which have not been published before are drawn but a verbal description of the published material (Hope-Taylor 1977) is included for completeness. The colour of each sherd is given using Munsell terminology, followed by the precise specification in brackets for ease of comparison and may therefore differ somewhat from that given in Hope-Taylor. The pottery from the 1976 excavation of the Yeavinging henge has been discussed elsewhere (Harding 1981) and will only be

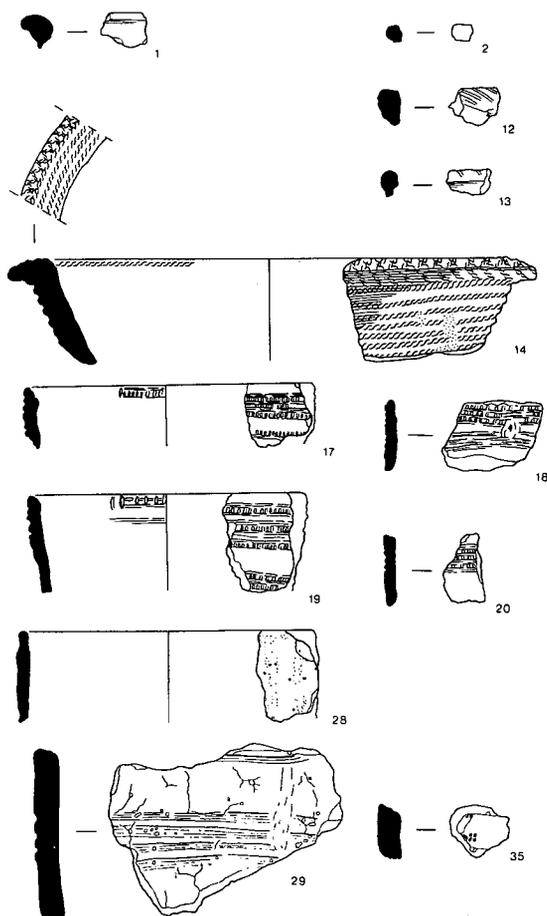


Fig. 4. Scale 1:4.

referred to here for comparative purposes.

1. Rim sherd (fig. 4.1) of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow in colour (7.5 YR 6/6) with a black core. The surface bears the remains of a black slip coating. Undecorated and too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel. Probably from the same vessel as 2.

2. Rim sherd (fig. 4.2) of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow in colour (7.5 YR 6/6) with a black core. The surface bears the remains of a black slip coating. Undecorated and too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel.

3. Large shoulder and body sherd of a carinated bowl. Published as Fig. 113.30. Of very hard fabric with sparse grits of crushed stone. The outer face is reddish yellow (7.5 YR 6/6), the inner surface is dark grey. Decoration is in the form of burnishing on the outer face. The vessel came from a bowl shaped pit which also contained flecks of charcoal and three fragments of crushed bone. The excavator considers it to be a "ritual" accompaniment to and contemporary with the pit containing cremation 29 and a sliver of flint debris.

4. Rim sherd published as Fig. 123.1, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow (7.5 YR 6/6) in colour with a black core. Too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel. Found in the sandy soil used to level and heighten the floor of building D3 as were sherds 5-10 and many similar body sherds.

5. Rim sherd published as Fig. 123.2, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow (7.7 YR 6/6) with a black core and a black slip coating on the outer face. Too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel.

6. Rim sherd published as Fig. 123.3, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow (7.5 YR 6/6) with a black core and a black slip coating on the outer face. Too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel.

7. Incurving rim sherd published as Fig. 123.4, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow (7.5 YR 6/6) with a black core. Diameter of vessel approx 13 cm.

8. Rolled-over rim sherd published as Fig. 123.5, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow in colour (7.5 YR 6/6) with a black core. Too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel. Burnished inside and out.

9. Rolled-over rim sherd published as Fig. 123.6, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow in colour (7.5 YR 6/6) with a black core. Too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel. Burnished inside and out.

10. Rolled-over rim sherd published as Fig. 123.7, of hard fabric with fine grits. Reddish yellow (7.5 YR 6/6) with a brown core paler than that of sherds 4-9. Diameter of vessel

approx 28 cm. Burnished on both surfaces.

11. Rim sherd published as Fig. 123.9, of very hard fabric. Black in colour and undecorated. Too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel. From the backfill of one of the north-east stone holes of the Western Ring-Ditch, associated with three small fragments of cremated bone.

12. Rim sherd (fig. 4.12) of very hard fabric. Reddish yellow outside (5 YR 7/6) with a black core (the inner surface no longer remaining). Decoration consists of incised diagonal lines along the rim. The sherd is too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel.

13. Rim sherd (fig. 4.13) of hard fabric. Pink outside (5 YR 7/4) (the inner surface no longer remaining). Decoration consists of two incised, diagonal lines along the rim. The sherd is too small to permit any estimation of the diameter of the vessel.

14. Large rim sherd (fig. 4.14) of fairly hard fabric with some quartz temper. The exterior is very dark brown (10 YR 2/2) and the interior light yellowish brown (10 YR 6/4). The outside of the pot is burnished and the rim and wall are decorated with horizontal rows of twisted cord impressions. There are also two rows of twisted cord impressions inside. Diameter of the vessel approx 23 cm. This sherd came from somewhere to the west of building C2.

15. Rim sherd published as Fig. 123.10, of hard fabric. Reddish brown (5 YR 5/3) outside with a light red (10 R 6/8) inner surface. Decorated with twisted cord impressions along the top of the rim. Diameter of the vessel approx 21 cm. Discovered in the fill of one of the segments of the Western Ring-Ditch.

16. Rim sherd of black ware, published as Fig. 123.8, of very hard fabric. Decorated with twisted cord impressions on the inner face. It was discovered on the upper surface of the debris filling the central pit of the Western Ring-Ditch complex. Too much stratigraphical uncertainty exists to say much more than that it had some probable association with the pit.

17. Rim sherd (fig. 4.17) of hard, well-fired ware, light red in colour (10 R 6/8) with a black core. The rim has an internal bevel and the sherd is decorated inside and out with horizon-

tal grooving and incised ladder pattern. Diameter of the vessel approx 15 cm.

18. Body sherd (fig. 4.18) of hard fabric possibly tempered with sand. The external surface is light reddish brown in colour (2.5 YR 6/4) while the inside is black. Decoration consists of horizontal grooving and incised ladder pattern.

19. Rim sherd (fig. 4.19) of hard fabric, possibly sand tempered, light red in colour (10 R 6/8) with a dark core. The rim is internally bevelled and both the interior and exterior bear decoration of horizontal grooving and incised ladder pattern. Diameter of vessel approx 14 cm.

20. Thin walled body sherd (fig. 4.20) of very hard fabric. Light brown outside (7.5 YR 7/6) and black inside. Decoration consists of horizontal grooving and incised ladder pattern.

21. Rim sherd published as Fig. 121.5 of very hard fabric. Reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) on both surfaces with black core. It was not possible to estimate the diameter of the vessel. Decoration is grooved with incised ladder pattern and two raised cordons inside the rim. From layer C of the "ritual" pit (fig. 120 p. 349). Sherd 22-27 & flints Fig. 121.7 & 8 were also from this pit.

22. Body sherd published as Fig. 121.6, of very hard fabric with some crushed stone grit. Outer face red (2.5 YR 5/6) with some blackening, inner face black with sooty deposit. Decorated by horizontal and oblique grooving with incised ladder pattern. From layer C of the "ritual" pit (fig. 120 p. 349).

23. Base sherd published as Fig. 121.4. Of very hard fabric with large grits of crushed stone. Light yellowish brown in colour (10 YR 6/4) with a black core and some blackening on the inside. Diameter approx 16.5 cm. Decorated with raised cordons and incised ladder pattern. From layer A of the "ritual" pit (fig. 120 p. 349).

24. Rim and wall sherd and body sherd published as Fig. 121.2, of very hard fabric with some large grits of crushed stone. Both light yellowish brown in colour (10 YR 6/4) with a black core and some blackening on the inside. Decoration is grooved and there is a

single perforation 4 cm below the rim. The two sherds are from the same vessel and were discovered in layer A of the "ritual pit" (fig. 120 p. 349).

25. Rim and body sherds of large straight-sided vessel published Fig. 122, of hard fabric with large grits of crushed stone. Reddish yellow on the outside (5 YR 7/6) but very blackened and reddish brown (5 YR 5/3) on the inner face. Decoration is in the form of horizontal raised bands with a row of indentations 5 cm below the rim. Part of the rim has applied pellet running across it. From layer C of the "ritual pit" (fig. 120 p. 349).

26. Rim sherd published as Fig. 121.1, of very hard fabric. Outer face dusky red in colour (2.5 YR 3/2) with some blackening (the inner face no longer remains). Decoration consists of horizontal applied cordons with what are probably finger impressions. This sherd came from layer A of the "ritual pit" (fig. 120 p. 349).

27. Body sherd published as Fig. 121.3 of very hard but friable fabric. The outer face is yellow (10 YR 7/6) and the inner black. Decoration is in the form of horizontal raised cordons. From layer A of the "ritual pit" (fig. 120 p. 349).

28. Rim sherd (fig. 4.28) of fairly hard fabric, tempered with quartz. Reddish yellow in colour (7.5 YR 7/6) with some blackening on the inside and a grey core. Decoration consists of vertical raised ribs. Diameter of vessel approx 15 cm.

29. Large body sherd (fig. 4.29) of very hard fabric with large, crushed stone grits showing through on the surface. Reddish yellow on the outside (7.5 YR 7/6) the inside being black with a sooty deposit. Decoration is in the form of horizontal grooving, which seems to have been accidentally smudged in one place, whilst the pot was at the leatherhard stage.

30. Body sherd, published as Fig. 123.11, of fairly soft fabric. Reddish yellow outside (7.5 YR 7/6) with a brown (7.5 YR 5/2) inner face. Very worn but appears to have applied decoration in vertical bands. This sherd was discovered within the Western Ring-Ditch, close to the southern edge of cremation 5. It underlay a

deposit of compacted black soil containing cremated bone. However it is the opinion of the excavator that the sherd (and the cremation burial) had been redeposited by the bulldozer and that their association was therefore fortuitous.

31. Body sherd of a thin walled vessel in a very hard fabric. Published as Fig. 123.12. The outer surface is pink (5 YR 7/4) and the inner is black. Decoration consists of incised grooves in a somewhat haphazard herring-bone design. This sherd is considered by the excavator to be intrusive to cremation 4 where it was discovered in the basal level.

32. Body sherd published as Fig. 123.15, of very hard fabric. Pink in colour (5 YR 7/4). Decorated with horizontal rows of twisted cord impressions. This sherd was stratified in the original fill of a north-western segment of the Western Ring-Ditch.

33. Body sherd published as Fig. 123.13, of hard fabric, thin walled. Light reddish brown (5 YR 6/4) on the outer face and reddish brown (5 YR 5/3) inside. Decorated with horizontal rows of what appear to the present writer to be more obviously twisted cord impressions than is apparent from the drawing.

34. Rim sherd published as Fig. 118.26 of very hard fabric with some crushed stone grit. The outer face is pink (5 YR 7/4) and the core and inner face black. The top of the rim is decorated with a row of twisted cord impressions and the edge of the rim and wall heavily rusticated. This sherd was associated with cremation 26. The excavator records it as having been discovered in a shallow pit (six inches deep from the subsoil surface), close to the edge of the natural hollow which allowed building E's ground level partially to survive, with in a sandy, grey matrix in which small fragments of charcoal and cremated bone were interspersed (as plums in a pudding). Four body sherds and one more rim sherd of the same vessel also came from this context.

35. Body sherd (fig. 4.35) of very hard fabric, tempered with large grits of crushed stone. Light red on the outside (2.5 YR 6/8) with a black, sooty interior. Decoration is impressed, probably done with small bone.

36. Rim and wall sherd and base published as Fig. 118.25, of hard fabric with numerous small grits protruding on the surface. Reddish yellow (5 YR 7/6) both inside and out. Decoration consists of horizontal rows of oblique stab marks. An alternative reconstruction of the vessel to that published would allow the two sherds to join. This vessel was associated with cremation 25 and was discovered in a pit which had suffered much later damage. Two more base sherds and several wall sherds of the same vessel were also discovered.

37. Body sherd (fig. 5.37) of fairly hard but friable ware, tempered with large grits of crushed stone. Reddish yellow on the outside (7.5 YR 7/6) with a black, sooty interior. Decorated with incised, criss-cross lines. Its similarity to the sherds associated with cremation 21, leaves no reason to doubt that they are part of the same vessel.

38. Body sherd (fig. 5.38) of fairly hard but friable ware with much crushed stone grit. Reddish yellow on the outside (7.5 YR 7/6) with a black core (the inner surface no longer remaining). Decorated with incised, criss-cross lines. Its similarity to the sherds associated with cremation 21, leaves no reason to doubt that they are part of the same vessel.

39. Body sherd published as Fig. 115.6, of hard fabric with crushed stone grits. The outer surface is pink (7.5 YR 7/4) and the core and inner face are black. Decorated with a horizontal incised zig-zag line. This sherd was considered by the excavator to be intrusive to the disturbed cremation deposit in the central stone hole of the Western Ring-Ditch.

40. Body sherd published as Fig. 115.21b, of hard but friable fabric with large grits of crushed stone. The outer face is reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) in colour and the inner is brown (7.5 YR 5/4). Decorated with incised criss-cross lines. This sherd appears to have been associated with cremation 21, as were 41 and 42.

41. Base sherd published as Fig. 115.21c, of hard but friable fabric, with large grits of crushed stone. The outer face is reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) and the inner is brown (7.5 YR 7/4). Decoration is in the form of incised lines.

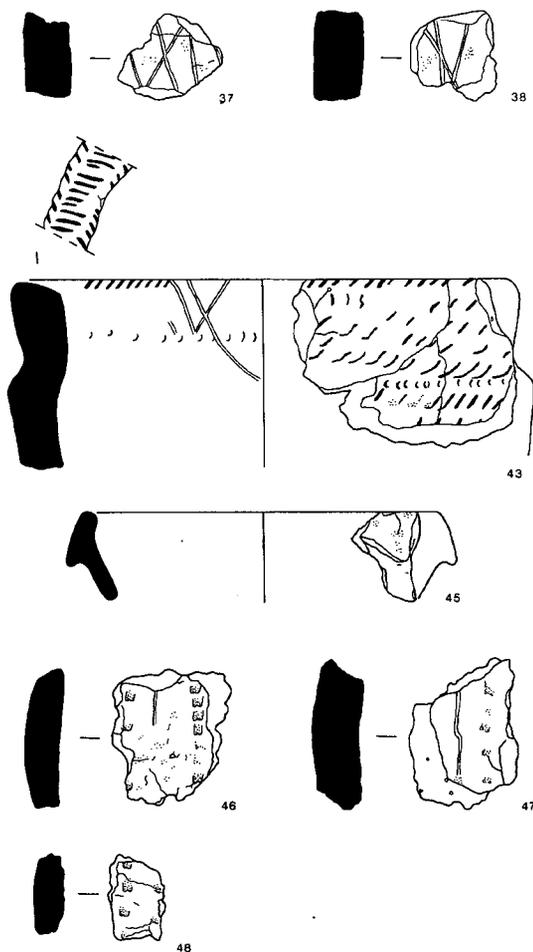


Fig. 5. Scale 1:4.

The diameter of the base is approximately 28 cm.

42. Body sherd published as Fig. 115.21a, of hard but friable ware with many, rather larger grits of crushed stone. The exterior is brown in colour (7.5 YR 5/4) (the inner surface no longer remaining). The sherd is from the shoulder of the vessel and bears very worn decoration in a herring-bone design.

43. Rim sherd (fig. 4.43) of hard fabric with sparse grits of crushed stone. Dark reddish brown in colour (5 YR 3/3) with some blackening on the inside. The rim, collar and body of the vessel are decorated with horizontal rows

of stabbed and fingernail impressed decoration, both inside and out. There is also an incised criss-cross shape on the inside. Diameter of the vessel approx 25 cm.

44. Most of the fragment of a crude urn published as Fig. 118.33, of fairly hard but friable fabric, with numerous large grits of crushed stone which protrude on the surface of the vessel. Yellow outer face (10 YR 7/6) and dark brown inner face. The vessel is undecorated. Diameter of the rim approx 26 cm and at base approx 16 cm. This urn is described in the published report as having a deliberately made hole in the base. However the urn is now in a very poor and fragmentary condition and when the pieces of the base are reconstructed, the hole no longer has the appearance of being deliberately made, but this may simply be the result of post-excavational deterioration of the vessel. It may be worth noting that the vessel was discovered between the door pits of building A4's inner threshold, standing on its base. The excavator believes "fragments of cremated bone scattered over a wide area of its wall trench probably indicate that the original pit lay close to the site of the urn's redeposition." He suggests that the burial in the originally inverted vessel was unearthed in the seventh century A.D. during the digging of the wall trench and deliberately redeposited.

45. Rim sherd (fig. 5.45) with overhanging collar, of fairly soft fabric with quartz and calcite temper. Exterior light red (2.5 YR 6/8) with a dark core and a black interior. Diameter of vessel approx 18 cm.

46. Body sherd (fig. 5.46) of hard but friable fabric containing very large grits of crushed stone which protrude on the surface. Pink on the outside (5 YR 7/4) (the inner surface no longer remaining). Decoration is in the form of a single incised line and two rows of impressions, possibly made with a bone. Similar to and probably from the same vessel as 47 and 48.

47. Body sherd (fig. 5.48) of hard but friable fabric, tempered with large grits of crushed stone. Pink outside (5 YR 7/4) (the inner surface no longer remaining). Decoration is in the form of rows of impressions, possibly made with a bone.

48. Body sherd (fig. 5.48) of hard but friable fabric, tempered with large grits of crushed stone. Pink outside (5 YR 7/4) (the inner surface no longer remaining). Decoration consists of an incised line and a row of impressions, possibly made with a bone.

49. Body sherd published as Fig. 115.3a, of hard but friable fabric. Reddish yellow outside (7.5 YR 7/6) and dark brown inside (7.5 YR 4/2). Decorated with dragged fingernail impressions. Similar to and probably from the same vessel as 50 and 51. Associated with cremation 3.

50. Body sherd (fig. 6.50) of hard but friable fabric. Reddish yellow outside (7.5 YR 7/6) and dark brown inside (7.5 YR 4/2). Decorated with dragged fingernail impressions.

51. Body sherd (fig. 6.51) of hard but friable fabric. Reddish yellow outside (7.5 YR 7/6) and dark brown inside (7.5 YR 4/2). Decorated by dragged fingernail impressions.

52. Rim sherd (fig. 6.52) of hard fabric, tempered with large grits of crushed stone which protrude through on the surface of the vessel. The outside is reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) and the interior is black and sooty. The rim has an internal bevel and decoration consists of dragged fingernail impressions. It was not possible to make any estimation of the diameter of the vessel from this sherd. Very similar to 53 and 54 and probably from the same vessel.

53. Body sherd (fig. 6.53) of hard fabric, tempered with large grits of crushed stone. Reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) on the outside with a black and sooty interior. Decoration is in the form of fingernail and dragged fingernail impressions.

54. Large base sherd (fig. 6.54) of hard fabric, tempered with very large grits of crushed stone, which protrude through on the surface of the vessel. The outside is reddish yellow in colour (7.5 YR 7/6) and the interior is black and sooty. Decoration is in the form of fingernail and dragged fingernail impressions. The diameter of the base is approx. 26 cm.

55. Body sherd (fig. 6.55) of fairly hard fabric. Some quartz temper is visible and holes in the fabric suggest the possibility of some

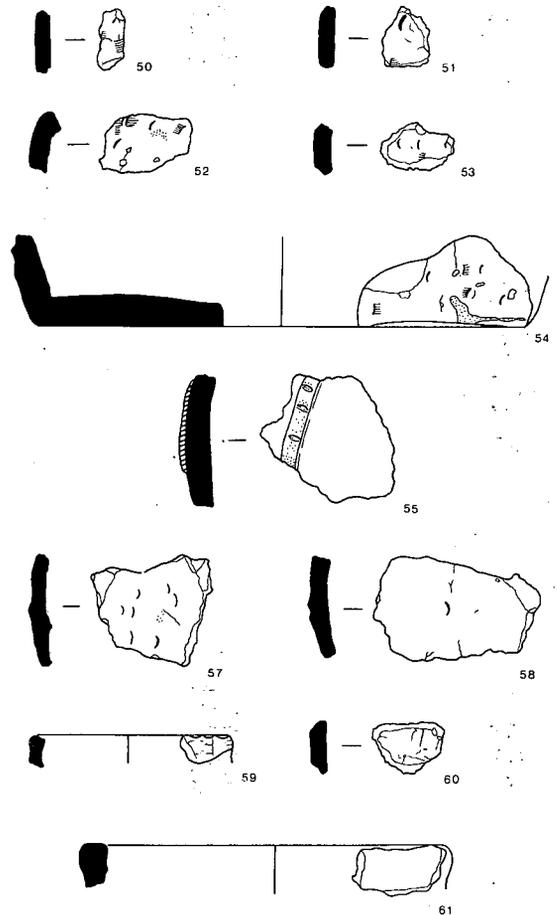


Fig. 6. Scale 1:4.

organic temper having also been used. The surface, both inside and out, is reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) and the core is grey. Decoration consists of an applied cordon with stabbed decoration along it, now in very poor condition. It was packaged with a flint core and fifteen jet disc beads and 56. Its similarity to this piece suggests it was from the same vessel and hence associated with cremation 11.

56. Rim sherd published as Fig. 115.11, of fairly hard fabric, reddish yellow (7.5 YR 7/6) on both the inner and outer surfaces, with a dark grey core. Decoration consists of an applied chevron and stab marks, both on the outer face and along the top of the vessel.

57. Body sherd (fig. 6.57) of fairly hard fabric tempered with crushed stone. Light reddish brown outside (7.5 YR 6/4) with some blackening and a black sooty interior. Fingernail impressed decoration. Similar to 58.

58. Body sherd (fig. 6.58) of fairly hard fabric, tempered with crushed stone. Light reddish brown outside (5 YR 6/4) with a black sooty interior. Decorated by a single fingernail impression.

59. Rim sherd (fig. 6.59) of fairly hard fabric. Light red (10 R 6/8) in colour with a badly cracked surface. Undecorated. From a fairly small vessel, diameter approx 10 cm.

60. Body sherd (fig. 6.60) of a rather crude, thick-walled vessel. Reddish yellow (5 YR 7/6) in colour. Fabric fairly hard but friable with crushed stone grits protruding on the surface. The only decoration consists of the remains of some incised lines.

61. Rim sherd (fig. 6.61) of fairly hard but friable fabric with some large grit. Brown (7.5 YR 5/4) inside and out, with blackening on the outside of the rim. Undecorated. Diameter of the vessel approx 18 cm.

62. Rim sherd (fig. 7.62) of fairly hard ware with much grit. Dark reddish grey (5 YR 4/2) in colour, with sooty patches inside. Undecorated, Diameter of vessel approx 10 cm.

63. Body sherd (fig. 7.63) the remains of a perforated lug. Soft fabric with a calcite temper. Light red outside (2.5 YR 6/8) and black inside.

64. Body sherd (fig. 7.64) with lug. Fairly soft fabric with calcite temper. Yellow in colour (10 YR 7/6) inside and out, with dark grey core.

65. Rim sherd (fig. 7.65) of fairly soft fabric, tempered with calcite. The exterior surface is reddish yellow (5 YR 6/8) and the interior reddish brown (5 YR 4/3) with dark grey core. Decoration consists of raised cordon just below the rim, with a row of fingernail impressions in it. Diameter of vessel approx 11 cm.

66. Rim sherd (fig. 7.66) of fairly hard fabric, heavily tempered with calcite. Both interior and exterior surfaces are red in colour (10 R 5/8) with a pale grey core. Decoration is applied, with impressions, possibly made by a

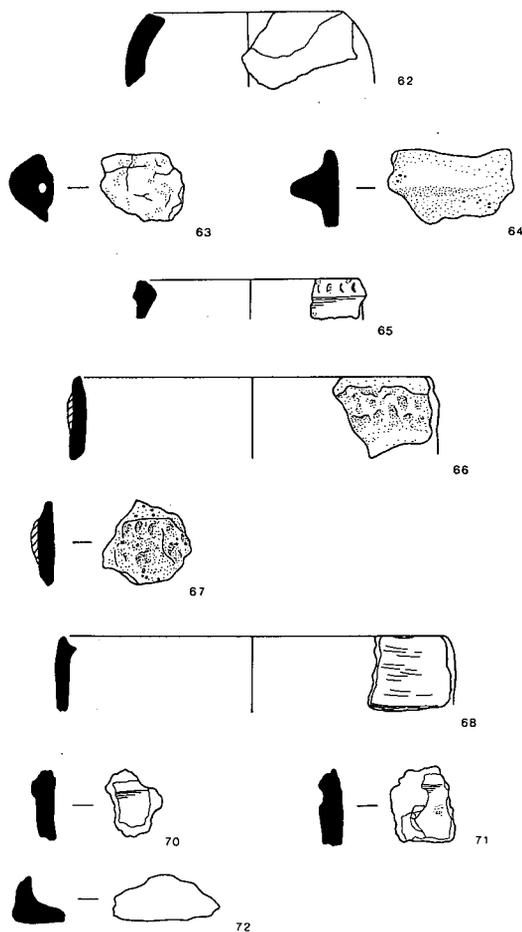


Fig. 7. Scale 1:4.

small finger. Diameter of vessel approx 18 cm.

67. Body sherd (fig. 7.67) of fairly hard fabric with much calcite temper. Reddish brown outside (2.5 YR 4/4) and very dark grey inside. Decoration is applied, with impressions probably made by a finger. Similar to 66 but of slightly coarser fabric with more numerous grits, so probably not from the same vessel.

68. Rim sherd (fig. 7.68) of very hard, well-fired fabric. Light red (2.5 YR 6/6) outside, the interior being black with a sooty deposit. Undecorated but with an internal bevel and possibly a groove where the sherd broke off from the rest of the body. Diameter of vessel approx 20 cm.

69. Body sherd published as Fig. 115.3b, of hard fabric, light red outside (2.5 YR 6/8) with a black, sooty interior. Decorated by a slight cordon. Packaged with 70 and 71 which bear a close resemblance to it, suggesting perhaps that all the sherds were originally associated with cremation 3.

70. Body sherd (fig. 7.70) of fairly hard but friable ware. Reddish yellow (5 YR 6/6) on the outside and reddish grey (5 YR 5/2) inside. Undecorated apart from a slight cordon.

71. Body sherd (fig. 7.71) of very hard fabric with a very smooth surface. Light reddish brown (5 YR 6/4) outside and dark reddish grey (5 YR 4/2) inside. Decorated only by a slight cordon.

72. Base sherd (fig. 7.72) of very hard ware. Numerous small holes in the fabric suggest an organic temper may have been used. Its surface is reddish yellow (5 YR 7/8) with flecks of darker orange and cream. The core is light grey. It is much finer than most of the pottery from this site and may even be wheel made. It was packaged with the pottery associated with cremation 21 but bears no similarity to the rest of these sherds and is probably of Romano-British date. Whether this represents a disturbance of cremation 21 or mere accident is impossible to determine.

73. Collared Urn, published as Fig. 117. Found inverted in a pit with cremation 19 having been poured through a hole in its base. Hard fabric with many large grits showing on the surface. Reddish yellow in colour (5 YR 7/6) with patches of blackening near rim and stamped half-moon shapes on upper body and rim. Diameter of rim 34.5 cm, diameter of base 12.5 cm, height 47 cm.

74. Loomweight of coarse pottery about the size of a fist. Probably pyramidal in shape. No indication as to where it came from is given.

The sherds published as Fig. 118.10 a-e and Fig. 123.14 are no longer to be found in this collection and have not therefore been seen by the present writer.

N.B. Preliminary research by Gibson (1983) into the possible clay sources used for prehistoric pottery in the Milfield Basin, including

Yeavinger, although far from being conclusive, seems to indicate that local clays were widely used.

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