

8 ARTEFACTS AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION

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8.1 Medieval pottery

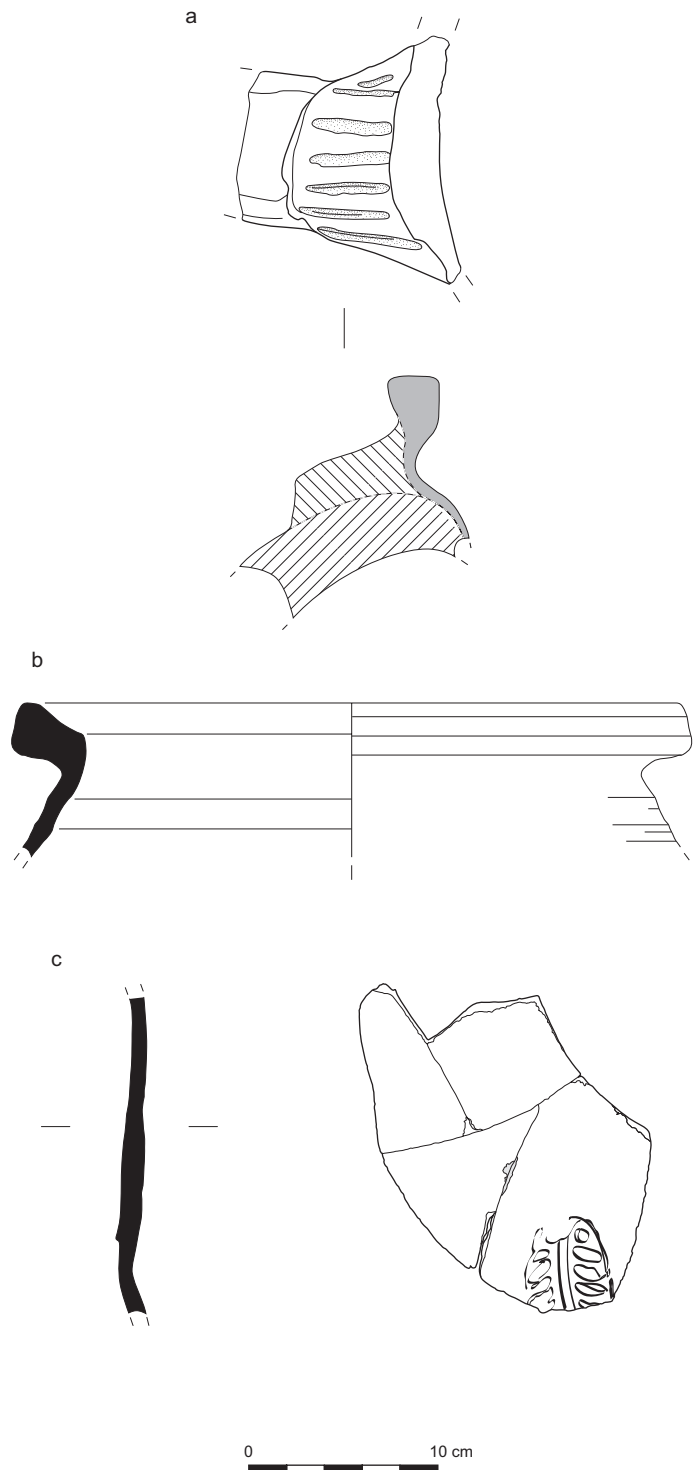
The pottery assemblage numbered 505 sherds, 318 of which were of medieval date. These were concentrated in the midden layers of Trench 1 on the High Street, with a small outlying group from Abbey Road and the Westgate, towards the lands of the Cistercian nunnery.

For the most part these sherds are small, abraded and clearly redeposited. The only exception to this is a silty deposit from Trench 41 on Market Street (Context 146), containing seven large joining sherds, making up half the base of a cooking pot. Though there are no sherds from the rest of the vessel, this deposit would appear to be less disturbed than others.

Most of the medieval sherds are of Scottish White Gritty Ware. It is generally off-white to pale buff or pale grey, with a surface often slightly darker or redder. A small proportion of sherds are reduced to a darker grey. This is typical of the kind of pottery widely produced in Scotland, particularly the south-east, between the 12th and 15th centuries (Hall 2004; Jones et al 2003). The fabric changes little over this period, though the forms and decoration present suggest the bulk of the material dates to the 13th and 14th centuries.

The small sherd size means there is little evidence for vessel form, though rims indicate the usual types of jars, cooking pots and jugs. Jugs most commonly have strap handles, about half of which are decorated with longitudinal grooves. The most unusual sherd is a jug handle with a large incised hump at the top handle junction, similar to the 'beards' accompanying face mask decoration (illus 11a). Similar sherds have been found at the nearby White Gritty kiln site of Colstoun, just south of Haddington (Brooks 1980; Hall 2004). In fact all the fabrics, forms, decoration and glazes seen in the North Berwick White Gritty assemblage are represented at Colstoun. It is not known how common these kilns were or how wide an area they served but it is possible Colstoun supplied North Berwick's pottery needs in the 13th and 14th centuries. Several sherds are decorated in Yorkshire-inspired styles. These include rod-handled jugs, two of which are glazed in a bright copper speckled green, iron-coloured ridges, applied scales and impressed wheat-ear motifs.

The only imports found were Yorkshire wares, with seven small Scarborough-type sherds recovered. This was the most commonly imported pottery in south-east Scotland between the mid 12th and mid 14th centuries (Farmer 1979). The lack of any other types, again, suggests a 13th and 14th century date for the bulk of the assemblage. These imports



Illus 11 a) White Gritty jug rim. Incised hump at handle junction, patchy pale olive green glaze. Tr.20, unstratified; b) White Gritty jar rim. Sooted cooking pot rim with spots of yellow and copper green glaze on rim. Tr.28, unstratified; c) Reduced Gritty jug shoulder sherd. Impressed wheat-ear decoration, olive-green glaze. Tr.1, unstratified.

Table 2 Pottery sherd count (ordered by street/trench)

Fabric	White Gritty (12th-15th)	Yorkshire (13th-mid 14th)	Import?	MEDIAEVAL TOTAL	Post-Medieval Reduced (15th-17th)	Low Countries (14th-16th)	Rhenish Stoneware (15th-17th)	Tin-Glazed Earthenware (17th-18th)	POST-MEDIAEVAL TOTAL	Unidentified	Modern Red Earthenware (18th-20th)	Modern Stoneware (18th-20th)	Modern White Earthenware (18th-20th)	White Salt Glazed Stoneware (18th)	Porcelain (18th-20th)	MODERN TOTAL	Location
251	4			4								1				1	Abbey Rd
256	15			15													Abbey Rd
213													4			4	Balfour St
222												1				1	Balfour St
50	8	1		9		1			1		1					2	East Rd
9	2			2													High St
11	1	1		2												1	High St
14	4			4								1				1	High St
17																	High St
18	4			4												1	High St
20	1			1													High St
22	5			5													High St
27	1			1													High St
28	2			2													High St
30	3			3								1				1	High St
32	1			1			1		1								High St
35	1			1													High St
79																	High St
1	191	5	1	197	1												High St
16	5			5	1				1	1						3	High St
33	1			1					1				1			4	High St
52	4			4				1	1	2						1	High St
49	5			5						1	2					4	High St
116																	Kirk Ports
117																6	Law Field
47	2			2						2						12	Law Field
41	8			8												1	Law Rd
44	1			1							1	20	7			29	Market St
										10			4			14	Market St

Table 2 (cont.) Pottery sherd count (ordered by street/trench)

Fabric	White Gritty (12th-15th)	Yorkshire (13th-mid 14th)	Import?	MEDIAEVAL TOTAL	Post-Medieval Reduced (15th-17th)	Low Countries Redware? (14th-16th)	Rhenish Stoneware (15th-17th)	Tin-Glazed Earthenware (17th-18th)	POST-MEDIAEVAL TOTAL	Unidentified	Modern Red Earthenware (18th-20th)	Modern Stoneware (18th-20th)	Modern White Earthenware (18th-20th)	White Salt Glazed Stoneware (18th)	Porcelain (18th-20th)	MODERN TOTAL	Location
45								1	1	3	1	1	28	4	36	Market St	
190										1					1	Melbourne Pl	
203										1					1	Melbourne Pl	
206											1				1	Melbourne Pl	
207												1			1	Melbourne Pl	
208													1		1	Melbourne Pl	
173	1			1	1				1							Melbourne Pl	
260	1			1												Quality St	
266	2			2	1				1							Quality St	
268					1											Quality St	
160	19			19	3				3							Quality St	
3	13			13						1					1	Quality St/High St	
277															1	Victoria Rd	
278										2					3	Victoria Rd	
91										1					1	Westgate	
100	2			2						1					1	Westgate	
106										1		1			2	Westgate	
109	2			2												Westgate	
114													1		1	Westgate	
115										2		4			6	Westgate	
118												2			2	Westgate	
119										2		4			6	Westgate	
82					1				1							Westgate	
83					1				1						1	Westgate	
84	1			1	5				5							Westgate	
TOTAL	310	7	1	318	15	1	1	2	19	3	33	36	86	1	9	168	505

represent only 2% of the sherd count, a smaller percentage than might be expected from a port and suggests pottery may not have been directly imported into North Berwick, but was instead reaching the burgh via Edinburgh or Dunbar. The large medieval assemblage from Castle Park, Dunbar (Hall 2000) contained nearer 13% of Yorkshire wares, though again, no other imported types.

8.2 *Medieval roof tiles*

Two sherds of medieval roof tiles, each of quite different fabric, were also found. The first, from Trench 1 on the High St, is of a sandy orange fabric with dark grey core, tempered with frequent small shell inclusions. Shell tempers are more often associated with early medieval pottery from the London area and East Anglia, and it is possible that this sherd was imported.

The second, from Trench 104 on the Westgate, is pale pink with a white core, containing frequent large white and red stone inclusions. It is more akin to the local pottery, though coarser, and may well be locally produced.

Roof tiles are known from medieval contexts from the 13th century onwards. They are not common and are assumed to have been used only for edging on the roofs of higher status buildings (Cox 1996, 724). While a high-status building on the High St is no surprise, the sherd from Westgate may be associated with part of the nunnery.

8.3 *Later pottery and finds*

There are surprisingly few finds dating to the later medieval and early post-medieval periods. There is a handful of sherds of 16th- and 17th-century date, including a sherd of Low Countries Redware, a fragment of Rhenish stoneware and two pieces of Delft, and two fragments of clay pipe. Post-medieval finds are scattered around the High Street, but the largest group came from the Westgate.

Modern finds were more numerous, more varied and wider spread throughout the trenches. These included pottery, glass bottles, a coin, pieces of pan tile and brass door furniture.