

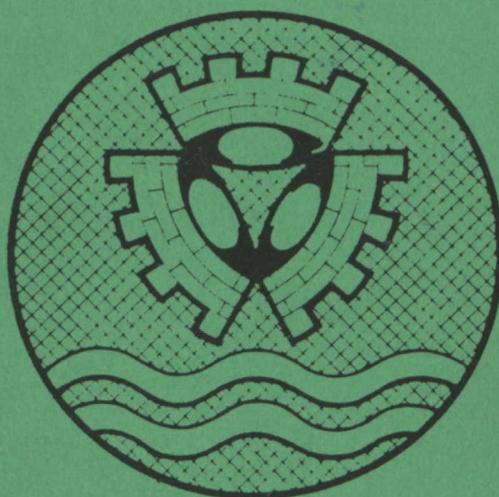
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## ARCHAEOLOGY IN PRESCOT 1978-1986

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	List of Illustrations	(ii)
	List of Council Members 1982 and 1983	(iv)
1.	Archaeological Research in Prescott 1978-1986	P.J.Davey 1
2.	Observations on the site of Moss Pottery, Prescott 1978 (Site 1)	P.J. Davey 5
3.	Pollen Analysis from Warrington Road, Prescot (Site 31)	P.R. Tomlinson and J.B. Innes 7
4.	Excavations at Prescott, December 1980- January 1981 (Sites A-E)	R. Holgate 11
5.	Observations at 82, Eccleston Street, 1980 (Site 2)	D.J. Freke 22
6.	Observations during landscape work at High Street (Sites 3 and 4) and Church Street (Site 5) 1981	D.J. Freke and R. Holgate 22
7.	A Timber Framed Building at 21-23 Eccleston Street, Prescott (Site 30)	R.W. Cowell and G.S. Chitty 23
8.	45-50 Derby Street, Prescott, Merseyside (Site 29)	M. Hollis 35
9.	Sampling Excavations in Prescott, 1983-4 (Sites 6-26)	R.A. Philpott and P.J. Davey 39
10.	Excavation of an Eighteenth Century Pottery in Eccleston Street, Prescot (Site F)	R. McNeil 49
11.	Pottery from High Street, Prescott 1986 (Site 27)	R.A. Philpott 95
12.	Pottery from Twist's House, Prescott (Site 28)	C. Cresswell and P.J. Davey 97
13.	Pottery Production in Prescott	P.J. Davey 103
14.	Prescot and its Archaeology	R.A. Philpott 107
	Appendix: Lancashire Potters Recorded in the Much Wenlock Area of Shropshire	D.A. Higgins 110
	Bibliography	111

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
Frontispiece:	
Richard Edge's Map of Prescott, 1743 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside)	
P.J. Davey	
1.1 Prescott location plan	1
1.2 Prescott geology	1
1.3 Prescott site location plan	3
P.R. Tomlinson and J.B. Innes	
3.1 Pollen diagram: Warrington Road, Prescott	8
R. Holgate	
4.1 Site A: location plan of trenches A, B and C Trench A: Section	12
4.2 Site B: location plan of trenches A and B Trench B: context plans and section	13
4.3 Site C: location plan	14
4.4 Site D: location plan	14
4.5 Site E: location plan	15
4.6 Pottery Site C: nos. 1-17	17
4.7 Pottery Site C, D and B: nos. 18-64	19
4.8 Clay tobacco pipes from Prescott	21
R.W. Cowell and G.S. Chitty	
7.1 21 Eccleston Street: location plan	23
7.2a Northern elevation	24
7.2b Ground floor, first floor plans	24
7.3 Eastern section of rear yard	25
7.4 Pottery: nos. 1-9	30
7.5 Pottery: nos. 10-20	32
P.J. Davey and R.A. Philpott	
9.1 Distribution of stratigraphy	40
9.2 Distribution of medieval pottery	45
9.3 Distribution of pottery manufacturing waste	46
R. McNeil	
10.1 General plan, Eccleston Street Pottery site	50
10.2 Plan of store 5	51
10.3 Pottery workshop walls: plan and elevations	52
10.4 Prescott potteries P1-P4	55
Liverpool potteries L1-L8	55
10.5 Buckley Potteries Bu1-Bu4, Bu8 and Bu9	56
Burslem Potteries B2-B5	56

	Page
McNeil cont.	
10.6 Diagram to show relative sizes of 18th and 19th century potteries	58
10.7 Blackglazed storage vessels: nos. 1-5	76
10.8 Blackglazed storage vessels: nos. 6-16	77
10.9 Blackglazed storage vessels: nos. 17-22	78
10.10 Blackglazed storage vessels: nos. 23-27	79
10.11 Blackglazed pancheons and bowls: nos. 28-32	80
10.12 Blackglazed pancheons and bowls: nos. 33-42 Blackglazed other forms: nos. 43-44	81
10.13 Blackglazed other forms: nos. 45-53	82
10.14 Blackglazed other forms: nos. 54-61	83
10.15 Blackglazed other forms: nos. 62-70	84
10.16 Mottled ware etc. bowls and dishes: nos. 71-75	85
10.17 Mottled ware etc. bowls and dishes: nos. 76-81 Mottled ware etc. beaker and tankards: nos. 82-87	86
10.18 Saggars etc: nos. 88-89	87
10.19 Saggars etc: nos. 90-92	88
10.20 Saggars etc: nos. 93-100	89
10.21 Saggars etc: nos. 101-107	90
10.22 Stilts: nos. 108-117, Bats: nos. 118-120	91
10.23 Clay pipes: nos. 135-142	92
10.24 Clay pipes: nos. 143-150	93
10.25 Sugar refining pottery: nos. 151-159	94

C. Cresswell and P.J. Davey

12.1 North side of Prescott from the tithe maps of Knowsley (1848) and Eccleston (1840); Woodbine Cottage circled	97
12.2 A later plan of Woodbine Cottage (Twist's House), showing location of excavated pit	97
12.3 Pottery from Twist's House, Prescott: nos. 1-3	98
12.4 Pottery from Twist's House, Prescott: nos. 4-7	100
12.5 Pottery from Twist's House, Prescott: nos. 8-9	102

Plate

M. Hollis

8.1 Saltglazed stoneware flagons	37
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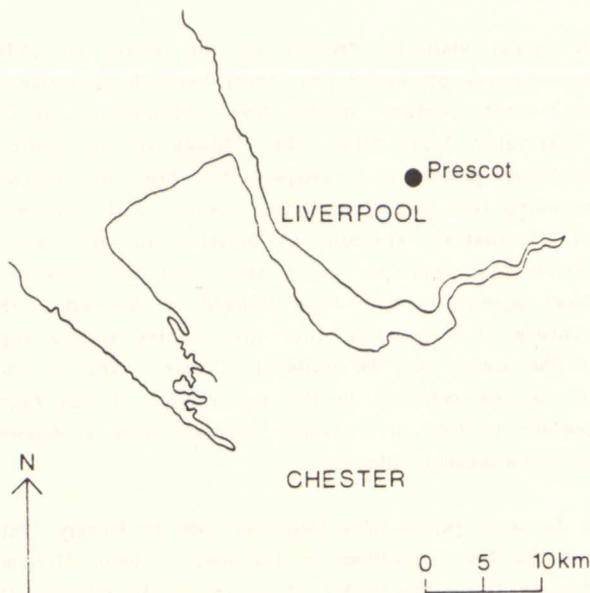
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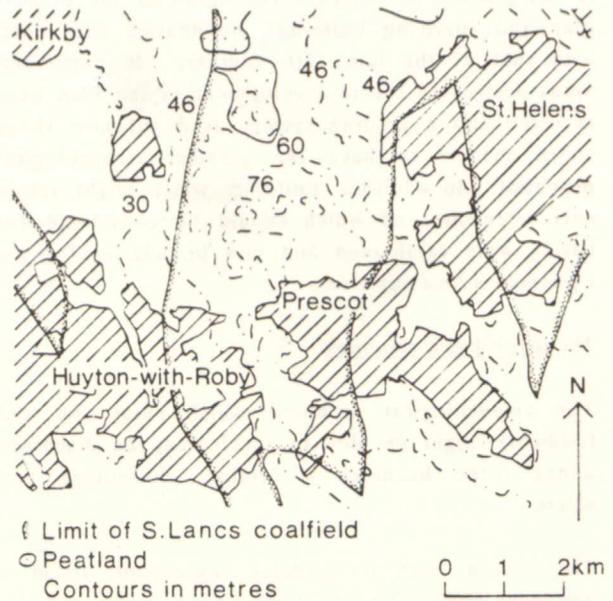
Introduction

The town of Prescott lies on a coal-measure sandstone ridge at some 80m above sea-level, roughly half-way between Liverpool and Warrington (Fig. 1.1). The sandstones have been subject to complex faulting which results in the frequent exposure of coal seams at the surface. As the ridge dips away steeply south towards the Mersey Basin, and more gently to the north, the solid geology is obscured by glacial till. The extensive peat deposits of Eccleston and Knowsley Mosses provide the northern boundary of the town and clearly have limited urban development in that direction, whilst the poorly drained clays to the south have also been unattractive for settlement (Fig. 1.2).

The place-name is first met as *Prestecota* in 1178. This seems to mean the manor or cottage of the priest or rectory (Ekwall 1922, 108; Potter 1959, 12) A further name - *Churchley* - occurs in 13th century personal names. In 1286 a Richard de Churchley granted his lands to his son *in villa de Churchley de deo et de Sancta Maria ecclesie de Prestecota* (Bailey 1937, 312), thus linking the two names. Churchley survives name on the 19th century Tithe Map on the east side of the township (Davey 1978a, 64-5).



1.1 Prescott location plan



1.2 Prescott geology

A market was in existence before 1322 and Charters survive from 1333 and 1458 (Bailey 1937, 309). Although the 1333 Charter described Prescott simply as a manor, 16th century records often use the term *burgagium*, so it is likely that burgage tenure was adopted at some time after 1333. There is no independent evidence that the town ever received Borough status. In 1445 Henry VI granted the patronage of Prescott rectory as an endowment to his newly founded College of Our Lady and St Nicholas (known as King's College) in Cambridge (Bailey 1937, 1-2). The College kept good records so that the town is well documented from the 16th century onwards. Originally in Lancashire, Local Government reorganisation in 1974 placed Prescott on the eastern edge of the Knowsley Metropolitan District of Merseyside. A much fuller discussion of the documentary evidence has recently been published in *Historic Towns of the Merseyside Area: a survey of urban settlement to c. 1800* (Philpott 1988).

The Town Centre Plan Report

In 1978 the Archaeological Survey of Merseyside carried out an assessment of the archaeological potential of the town as part of the background documentation for the Town Centre Plan being prepared by the Knowsley Borough Planning Officer (Davey 1978a). This showed that Prescott is one of the oldest and best documented settlements in Merseyside. Using Bailey's reconstruction of the plan of the town

from the 1592 survey carried out by King's College, it was possible to compare the detail of the present plan and surviving buildings, boundaries and plots, with that of the late 16th century. In particular, areas designated for re-development in the Plan were assessed and a grading system used to show those which seemed to have the greatest archaeological potential. In addition, buildings which might retain early elements and which should be considered for listing were catalogued and new boundaries for the Conservation Area suggested.

#### The archaeological objectives

The archaeological problems which excavation and fieldwork might be able to tackle may be discussed under three headings - origins, chronology and nature.

The church, with its circular churchyard, is in a dominant position in the town and is primary to its structure. This, together with the ecclesiastical place-name elements, the small size of the township compared with its neighbours, its Holy Well and proximity to Eccleston - a contiguous township whose name may refer to the church in Prescott - suggests that modern Prescott may have originated as a pre-Norman religious centre which later took on Sunday market functions. Neither the documentary evidence nor the shape of the town plan suggest any significant amount of planning during the medieval period. A primary objective of archaeological activity would, therefore, be to establish the locus of the town's origin and to trace its subsequent development. Secondly and linked to this, it would be important to try to date those elements which could be identified and to try to establish at what period the settlement became truly urban. Thirdly, archaeological evidence should provide some idea of what kinds of activities were going on in the town. Although the 16th century documents give the impression of a very small settlement, of possibly fewer than 500 people, whose economy was largely agriculturally based, there is a hint that the natural resources of coal and clay were beginning to be exploited and that a number of minor industrial activities were being practised. It is not clear whether this picture shows Prescott at the beginning of post-medieval expansion or whether it represents the nadir of a late medieval economic decline.

Answers to all three questions would be of significance not just for Prescott but in the study of early Christian origins and town development throughout the north-west of England, where very little archaeological work has been carried out in the large tract of country between Chester and Carlisle.

Since 1978, with these kinds of objectives in view, there has been considerable archaeological activity in the town. This volume of the *Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society* contains reports on the majority of this work which is presented in roughly the order of its execution. Figure 1.3 shows all the sites and should be referred back to when the individual reports are read. Sites A to F are those of full-scale excavations, whilst Sites 1 to 30 cover observations of contractors' work (dots), small excavations (diamonds) and sampling excavations (squares). The position of the peat sample (Site 31) is shown as a small triangle. The individual contributors have allowed the writer to conflate and summarise their introductory sections in order to avoid repetition of the description of Prescott's topography and documentary history. For the same reason a summary of the documentary and archaeological evidence for the pottery industry in Prescott, an evaluation of the contribution made by archaeology to the understanding of the town and a comprehensive bibliography are presented at the end of the volume. Material which is integral to the understanding of the individual sites is retained in the separate reports.

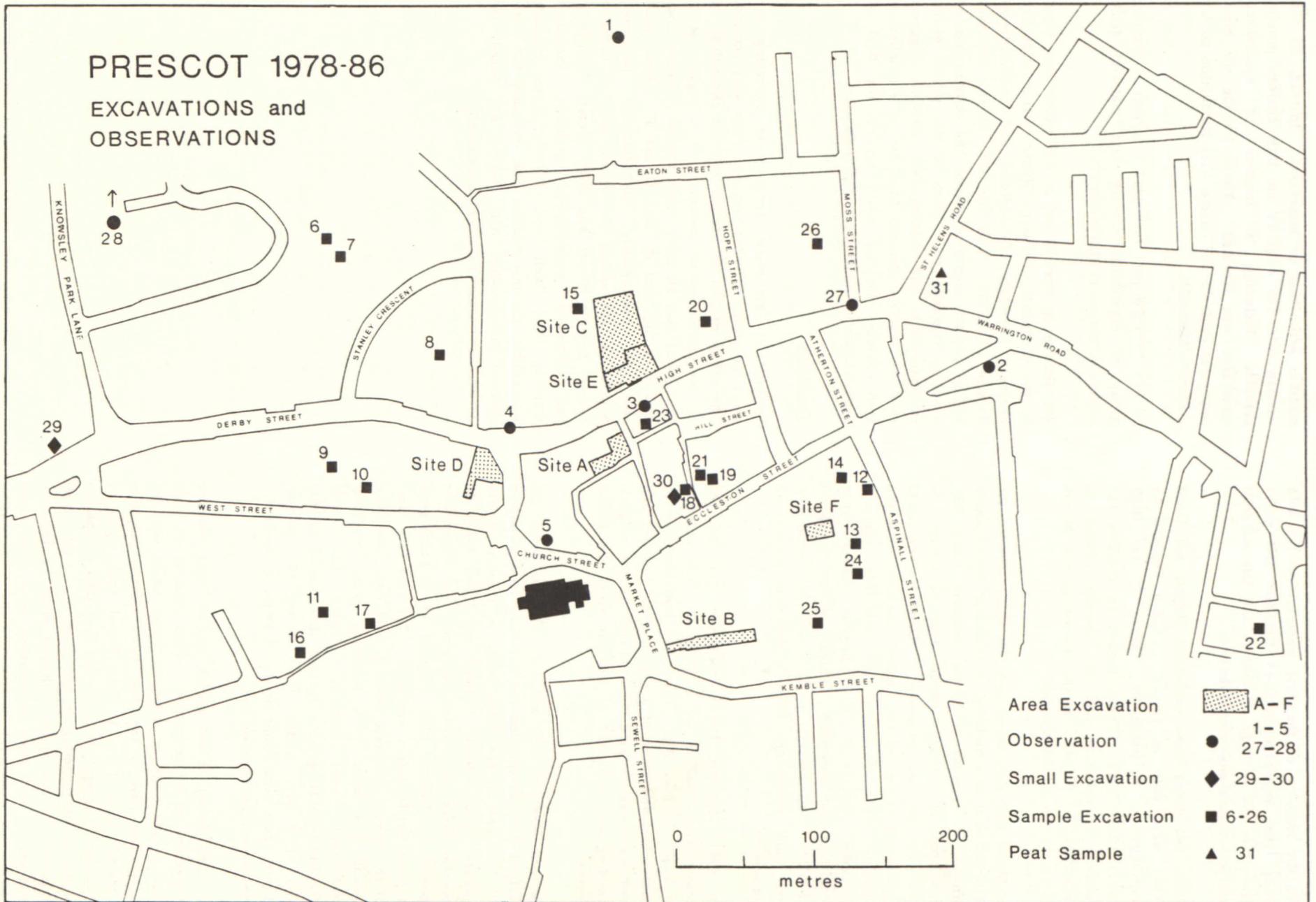
#### Archaeological Fieldwork 1978-1986 - a Summary

During the 1978 survey it was possible to spend a short time examining the foundation trenches for an extension to the town football stand (Site 1). These revealed traces of 19th century pottery kilns - part of the Moss Pottery pre-dating the layout shown on the 1848 50" Ordnance Survey map.

A casual visit to Prescott by the writer in 1979 recovered a preserved peat layer beneath demolished eighteenth century stables and outbuildings at 1, Warrington Road (Site 31). Study of the pollen sequences present in a sample taken from this deposit revealed five forest clearance zonules, with evidence of fluctuating agricultural activity in the area. Given that this particular site, part of Eccleston Moss, appears to have been enclosed in the early 16th century, it is possible that the zonules at the top of the sample may be medieval in date. This is one of the few occasions in the region when it has been possible to look at a pollen sequence from a deposit so close to a major settlement.

A five-week period from December 1980 to January 1981 saw the first excavations in the town. Robin Holgate dug on five sites (A-E), three in the back-lands of putative medieval burgage plots and two on frontages. 18th and 19th century cellarage had destroyed the frontages, but to the rear garden soils containing medieval and post-medieval finds were recovered. These did not appear to represent intense occupation in the earlier periods. A bonus of these excavations

**PRESCOT 1978-86**  
**EXCAVATIONS and**  
**OBSERVATIONS**



- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Area Excavation   |  A-F  |
| Observation       |  1-5<br> 27-28 |
| Small Excavation  |  29-30  |
| Sample Excavation |  6-26   |
| Peat Sample       |  31   |

1.3 Prescott site location plan

was the recovery of the first medieval pottery kiln group from anywhere between Cheshire and north Lancashire and a range of wasters and kiln material from post-medieval production in the town.

Before and during these excavations Holgate and David Freke were able to record evidence exposed by contractors in Eccleston St., Church St. and High Street (Sites 2-5). These tended to confirm the problem of cellarage and the damage caused to archaeological deposits by the intense growth of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In March 1982 Ron Cowell and Gill Chitty recorded the refurbishment of a building in Eccleston Street which proved of interest in three respects (Site 30). First, part of a timber-framed structure survived to the rear of the property. Dendrochronological assessment of one of the timbers showed that the building must post-date the mid-16th century. Secondly, associated archaeological layers were identified and excavated. Thirdly, a fine group of probable 17th century pottery was recovered, the first such assemblage from a domestic context in Merseyside.

In 1981 Maureen Hollis examined part of the construction trenches for a group of 1830s cottages in Derby St, (Site 29). These had been deepened by contractors and revealed a group of earthenware and stoneware wasters used as hard-core in the original building and presumed to emanate from the Brook Pottery.

Between November 1983 and June 1984 the writer and Robert Philpott sampled the surviving stratigraphy in 20 locations in the town using a 1-metre square quadrat (Sites 6-26; cf. Philpott and Davey 1984). In general these excavations confirmed the impression gained by Holgate that survival of archaeological deposits on frontages was poor. The fact that most of the sample quadrats were in back-lands, however, meant that more sites retaining some medieval stratigraphy were located. These, like those described by Holgate, suggested that human activity was at a very modest level during this period. Again, these excavations produced ample evidence for post-medieval pottery production.

In 1985 Robina McNeil carried out the most extensive excavations so far undertaken. These were in an open area to the south of Eccleston Street which was due to become part of the new Town Centre Shopping Precinct (Site F). It was hoped that signs of medieval "burgage" divisions and back-land occupation would be forthcoming in the area of c. 180 sq.m. explored. Once again, although much of the site appears to have been undisturbed until very recent times, no significant medieval finds were made,

whether artifactual or structural. Instead, on the eastern side, the edge of an 18th century pottery complex, including a number of specialised structures, was revealed. These provide the most important evidence for coarse ware production so far available in Merseyside.

In July 1986 Philpott recovered a further interesting group of eighteenth century kiln material from contractors' trenches in High St (Site 27).

The final group reported on in this volume was found by the occupants of Twist's House, just outside the northern boundary of medieval and post-medieval Prescott (Site 28). This consisted of two suitcases full of pottery excavated during the construction of a vehicle inspection pit. Much of this proved to be reconstructable and documentary research suggests that this material derived from one of a number of 18th century potteries which lay on the Earl of Derby's Estate just inside the boundary of Knowsley.

#### The Results

Despite all this work, progress in answering the three questions posed above has been very limited. The urban origins of Prescott and the chronology of its development remain obscure. In a negative sense, it is clear that an early focus almost certainly does not lie in the area of Sites C and F. There must still be considerable archaeological potential, however, in and around the western parts of Eccleston Street, Kemble Street and High Street. Similarly, the enigmatic ecclesiastical complex, including Church, Holy Well and Priest's Cote remains unexplored. On the positive side, evidence for post-medieval Prescott, which both confirms and extends the documentary evidence, has steadily accumulated.

2. Observations on the site of the Moss Pottery,  
Prescot, 1978 (Site 1).

P.J. Davey

During the 1978 Survey a small contractor's excavation was discovered just north of the main stand of Prescot Football Club (Fig. 1.3), dug apparently for the construction of a new changing room for the players which would form a northerly extension of the stand. It was possible to spend only one day (18th June) investigating this area as completion of the Survey was a priority.

The contractor's excavation consisted of a pair of roughly parallel construction trenches (A and B) extending from the base of the stand to a distance of 9.9m, with a third trench (C) linking them at the northern end and parallel to the present northern end of the stand. Trench A, the more easterly, was between 0.4m and 0.5m wide and up to 0.6m deep below the base of the stand. Trench B was between 2.6m and 2.9m wide and up to 3.0m deep. Trench C was 1.9m wide and sloped steeply from 0.5m deep at its eastern end to 2.7m at the west. These three trenches left a more or less rectangular island unexcavated between them.

In the time available it was found possible to record the position of the three trenches (above), to clean up the deepest section (Trench B, west face) and record it and to excavate a small amount of material from each layer visible in the section so that a representative sample of artifacts could be collected. The section was divided into 6 more or less horizontal layers as follows (from top to bottom):

6. Loose clay and artifacts on the surface deposited by contractors.
5. 0.0m-1.0m: Clay, pottery, kiln debris poorly sorted.
4. 1.0m-1.15m: Burnt, orange clay containing compacted pottery wasters.
3. 1.15m-2.15m: Fragments of shale, clay and loose stones; no artifacts.
2. 2.15m-2.6m: Loose brown clay with some sand; pottery and kiln debris.
1. 2.6m-2.9m: Loose brown clay with some sand. The upper 0.09m was much more compacted. No artifacts.

The numbers of sherds from the excavated part of the section, which was 9.2m north of the base of the stand, were as follows:

<u>Pottery</u>	<u>Context</u>				<u>Total</u>
	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	
Black-glazed red earthenware*	7	16	11	23	57
Self-coloured red earthenware	2	9	-	5	16
Mottled red earthenware				1	1
Brown glazed red earthenware				1	1
Yellow slipped red earthenware		2			2
Brown salt glazed stoneware*	19	38	-	-	57
Other stonewares			2		2
"China"		1			1
Clay pipe stems				1	1

N.B. \* indicates the presence of wasters.

Kiln Furniture, etc.

Saggars (earthenware)	1				1
Saggars (salt glazed stoneware)		7	2		9
Separators (earthenware)	2	19	24	1	46
Separators (salt glazed stoneware)	1				1
Stilts/bars (red earthenware)	1	1	1		3
Glazed fire-bricks; fired clay lumps				4	4
Biscuit red earthenware		37	77	6	120
Moulded fire-brick	1				1
Glass		4			4

Discussion

The material and artifacts discovered in 1978 are consistent with a series of levelled waster tips which had been deposited on the moss a short distance to the north of the pottery shown on the 1848 map (Davey 1978a, 56). The finds establish the production of black-glazed red-bodied earthenware and salt glazed stoneware at the Moss Pottery at some time during the first half of the nineteenth century. Although only one sherd of a black-glazed fine ware, probably a cup, was found, the occurrence of saggars

material does establish that some of this type of vessel was being produced at the pottery alongside the ubiquitous large storage vessels. Salt glazed stoneware production consisted largely of flagons, of a type known from other centres (e.g. Buckley; cf. Davey 1975, no. 81). On the basis of analogies with other finds from Prescott and the kiln excavations in Rainford the mottled and self-coloured earthenwares found in small quantities in the Trench B section are very likely to have been local products, but there was no direct evidence of production on the site. The large quantities of biscuit earthenware recovered in the excavation shows that by the early 19th century the two stage firing process, foreign to the "country" potteries in the region, had been adopted in Prescott and suggest an industrial scale of production.

Finds and notes have been deposited in the Merseyside County Museums. The photographs remain in the possession of the writer.

#### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to members of the Merseyside Archaeological Society and the St. Helens Extra-Mural class for assistance in carrying out the work; in particular to Elizabeth Davey for doing the recording. The writer is also grateful to Prescott Football Club for its co-operation throughout.

### 3. Pollen Analysis from Warrington Road, Prescott (Peat Sample - Site 31).

P.R. Tomlinson and J.B. Innes.

Peat deposits were revealed when the site at no.1 Warrington Road was excavated for building development in 1979 (Fig. 1.3). A sample was collected in a monolith tin in June 1979 and the level at the top of the profile was found to be 76.52m O.D. Pollen analysis was carried out as part of a programme of research into the environmental history of the area for the Archaeological Survey of Merseyside. This is a summary of the results.

#### Historical Background

The site is located in an area adjacent to Prescott Moss and the peat exposed is presumably associated with this Moss. In 1508 Ralph Eccleston granted an area of Hackley Moss, (also referred to as Hadley, Heally and Hattle Moss) in Eccleston, to the town of Prescott (Bailey, 1937, 281) and it became known as Prescott or the Town Moss. This area is not likely to have been previously enclosed as the people of Prescott were instructed to mark out the area with a new ditch. They were to use the land for pasture only and were not allowed to dig turves or put any gravel, earth or "slutch" onto the Moss (Bailey, 1937, 161, 187, 282). There is no evidence to indicate when the area of the sampled site was enclosed or when it was first cultivated. The earliest reference occurs in the Rolls of the Prescott Court Leet (Bailey 1937, 228, 236). In 1585 and 1587 it was described as "one messuage or tenement" and presumably contained buildings and a garden. In the 1592 survey of Prescott the site was described as "one burgage croft containing by estimation one rood", which was held by Jane Kenrike (cf. Bailey 1937, 46-48). The Tithe Map of 1847 (Lancashire Record Office DRL 1/65) shows the site occupied by the Public House with stable block behind, which was demolished recently prior to the re-development. From the Eccleston Tithe Map of 1840 (Lancashire Record Office DRL 1/24) it is impossible to see the exact extent of the mossland in the area, but a number of "moss" field names occur just to the north of Prescott Moss indicating drainage and enclosure from the mossland.

#### Stratigraphy and Ecological History of the Site

The stratigraphy is indicated on Figure 3.1 using the symbols proposed by Troels-Smith (1955). Samples for pollen analysis were taken at 2cm intervals throughout the profile and were prepared using standard techniques (Dimbleby 1961; Faegri and Iversen 1964). Pollen grains were counted until a total of 150 tree grains were identified.

The deposits were beneath a thick layer of dumped rubbish material. At the base of the profile was a coarse red sand overlying sticky grey clay containing large pebbles. The lower part of the profile showed a developing hydrosere succession with diverse aquatic environments. At the bottom was 6cm of fine black gyttja (organic mud laid down in shallow water) with occasional *Phragmites* (common reed) rhizomes. Above this was a well humified, *Phragmites* peat, with amorphous organic material. This peat contained a rich flora of herbs and ferns and significant frequencies of Gramineae (grasses) and Cyperaceae (sedges), indicating reed-swamp and fen conditions. The main tree pollen types were *Pinus* (pine), *Betula* (birch) and *Alnus* (alder) while *Corylus* type (hazel), cf. *Corylus/Myrica*, was also a major contributor. A drying out of the bog surface was indicated between 53 and 43cm where an increasing quantity of *Betula* wood and bark fragments occurred in the amorphous organic peat. The tree pollen values were generally higher, with *Quercus* (oak) and *Alnus* dominating. *Corylus* type and the wetland and aquatic taxa were much reduced in frequency, while a strong ruderal (weed) presence was noted. Between 36 and 43cm a *Betula* tree stump filled the profile and appeared to be *in situ* or near to it.

Above the tree stump was a sticky grey-brown peaty clay soil of homogeneous structure. The flora no longer indicated an aquatic environment, but plants which enjoy drier conditions, *Calluna* (heather), *Pteridium* (bracken) and ruderal herbs increased in value. The pollen assemblage suggested a heath vegetation locally, with *Alnus* and *Betula* scrub on the bog surface. *Alnus*, *Betula*, *Quercus* and *Corylus* type formed the characteristic assemblage between 36 and 0cm and although *Betula* was low at first it recovered towards the end of the profile, when *Tilia* (lime) and *Fraxinus* (ash) became consistently recorded.

#### Landscape History and Forest Clearance

The pollen diagram (Figure 3.1) has been divided into five Forest Clearance Phases which are intended to show vegetation changes which may be related to human activity. An index is included which shows the representation of total trees, shrubs and herbs, calculated as percentages of a pollen sum, excluding fern and moss spores. It gives an approximate suggestion of the proportion of the dryland area under agriculture at different times.

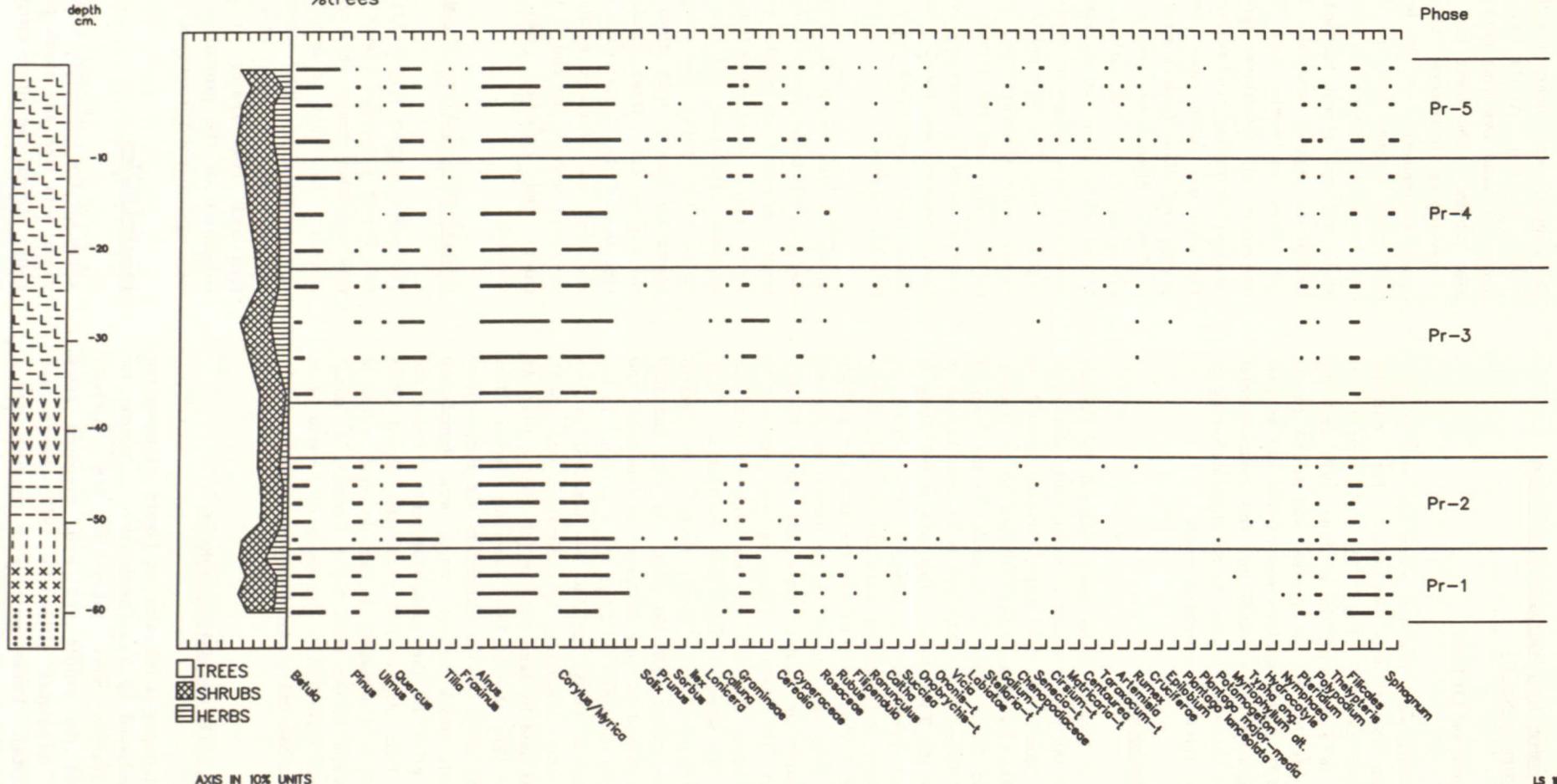
#### Phase Pr-1 60-53cm

There are few indications of forest clearance in this phase, with tree and shrub pollen dominant. Herb pollen records can all be attributed to vegetation on the mire itself.

PRESCOT

Warrington Road  
%trees

8



LS 1086

3.1 Pollen diagram: Warrington Road, Prescott

#### Phase Pr-2 53-43cm

During this phase *Quercus* values are increased which indicates the establishment of oak woodland. Herbaceous pollen taxa which may indicate disturbance of drier soils are recorded, suggesting that some clearance may have occurred at this time. Chenopodiaceae (goosefoot family) pollen is present, with Compositae Tubuliflorae (daisy family), *Taraxacum*-type (dandelion) and *Rumex* (dock). A single grain of cereal-type pollen might suggest that cultivation was taking place nearby.

#### Phase Pr-3 37-22cm

Above the intervening *Betula* layer, the dryland pollen assemblage records a landscape of open woodland, chiefly composed of *Quercus*, *Alnus* and *Corylus*. Some clearance of land for pasture was apparently occurring as Gramineae frequencies rise and *Ranunculus* (buttercups), *Rumex*, Compositae Tubuliflorae, and *Taraxacum*-type are recorded. *Pteridium* returns to high values. Significantly, *Epilobium* (willow-herb) is present and, with high bracken values, may suggest that fire was being used as an agent for woodland clearance.

#### Phase Pr-4 22-10cm

Cereal pollen is recorded in quantity in this phase. In addition, there are herbaceous taxa which may be associated with arable cultivation, especially *Stellaria* (chickweed) and *Vicia* (vetch). The low-intensity pastoral land use of the previous phase appears to have given way to a mixed agricultural phase in which major clearance of woodland was undertaken. For the first time *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain) enters the assemblage. Pastoral indicators such as *Ranunculus*, Compositae Tub., and *Pteridium* continue to be recorded.

#### Phase Pr-5 10-0cm

The indications of human activity of the previous phase become clearer during this period, as increased forest clearance ensues. Tree and shrub pollen values as a whole show a reduction relative to grass and herb pollen. Cereal pollen reaches new peaks, accompanied by herbs such as *Artemisia* (mugwort), Chenopodiaceae, Cruciferae, *Centaurea cyanus* (cornflower), *Cirsium*, *Plantago major* (greater plantain) and *Matricaria*-type (mayweed), all of which suggest arable cultivation. Open habitat, ruderal and grassland species such as *Taraxacum*-type, Compositae Tubuliflorae, *Galium* (bedstraws) and *Rumex* are present with *Plantago lanceolata*, *Pteridium* and Gramineae achieving high values. These species may be from pasture, or possibly, from abandoned field

communities. The high values of *Calluna* may be caused by grazing on the mossland. The percentage of total dryland trees shows a peak towards the end of this phase.

#### Discussion

The site of Warrington Road, Prescott is of great interest as it provides information regarding land use in an area which is likely to have been an important focus for settlement in the past. The site forms what was the southern fringe of a large extent of mossland. The basal deposits record the succession through aquatic and reedswamp communities as the hydrosere developed. The drying out of the bog surface in the upper profile is probably not an autogenic process, but a consequence of drainage and reclamation of the surrounding area. The pollen assemblages show quite intensive land use, including arable cultivation. Agricultural indicators are present in high frequencies in the top of the profile, suggesting that much of the surrounding area had been brought under cultivation by this time. It is difficult to establish if the profile provides a continuous record, or whether a depositional hiatus may have occurred above the birch tree stump. The pollen spectra do seem to indicate continuous, if slow, deposition throughout the upper part of the profile at least and it is likely that they provide a reliable record of the vegetation changes nearby. That the site itself had been enclosed and was in use as a messuage or tenement in 1585 provides a *terminus ante quem* for organic deposition, but it is very likely that later deposits were truncated, by peat digging and/or erosion due to cultivation and drainage. The latest cultivation evidence may be of medieval date, although it is impossible to be specific in this respect. Forest trees recover and produce a peak during the agricultural Phase 5. This apparent paradox is perhaps due to the localised effect of the Royal Forests which reached their maximum extent in the 14th century. Although Royal Forest does not imply actual woodland, some areas (for example Kirkby and Knowsley) are known to have been well wooded (Shaw 1956). The park at Knowsley had been enclosed sometime before 1292 when Robert of Lathom's father "enclosed a wood with a paling ..... and this wood he held as a park" (Shaw 1956, 123). It is possible that this accounts for an unusually high proportion of background tree pollen coming onto the site in this agriculturally intensive area. It is possible, however, that the pollen profile could be much earlier in date, and truncated due to drainage and cutting. Without independent dating its age cannot be established.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Dr. Malcolm Hughes and Dr. Gareth Evans of Liverpool Polytechnic for the use of their laboratory, and to Brian Sheppard for carrying out the levelling.

#### 4. Excavations at Prescott, December 1980-January 1981

##### (Sites A-E)

R. Holgate

##### The Finds

##### Pottery

D.J. Freke

The pottery was analysed into fabric and form types for each context and quantified by weighing, sherd counts, minimum number counts and vessel equivalent (rim proportion) counts. These figures are lodged as an archive with the material and only conclusions are presented here, except for the kiln waster groups which are discussed in more detail. The results are considered by site.

The post-medieval fabric type series was based on that established for the analysis of the South Castle Street (1976) excavations by P.J. Davey, to whom I am grateful for advice in identifying the post-medieval groups.

##### Introduction

In 1979, Knowsley Borough Council proposed an Action Area Plan for the rejuvenation of Prescott (Knowsley Borough Council 1979), which revolved around the construction of a large shopping centre between Eccleston Street and Kemble Street. Following the archaeological and historical survey of the town (Davey 1978a), the Liverpool University Rescue Archaeology Unit considered it necessary to carry out trial excavations in Prescott to assess its archaeological heritage. Five derelict sites, three of which await redevelopment, were selected for this purpose (Fig. 1.3). Trenches were dug on each site over a five-week period from early December 1980 to mid-January 1981 with the financial assistance of a grant from the Department of the Environment.

##### The Excavations

The location of the sites investigated is shown in Figure 1.3; Figures 4.1 - 4.5 summarise the contexts encountered at each site. Three sites examined the back of later medieval burgage plots; two, the front. Post-medieval cellar construction had destroyed all street front structures, but garden deposits containing medieval pottery (including wasters and daub at site D) were recovered, as were quantities of post-medieval pottery produced in the town's 18th and 19th century potteries. Detailed reports on each site are contained in the archive.

##### Medieval fabrics

2 Sandy inclusions no larger than 0.25mm unglazed.

2g Sandy inclusions no larger than 0.25mm glazed.

3 Sandy inclusions no larger than 0.5mm unglazed.

3g Sandy inclusions no larger than 0.5mm glazed.

4 Sandy inclusions no larger than 1.00mm unglazed.

6 Creamy fabric, unglazed.

7 Salmon pink fabric.

##### Site A

All contexts contained 18th and 19th century types. The saggars and stilts found in such mixed layers of this date in Prescott can only be interpreted as demonstrating the presence of kilns somewhere in the town.

##### Site B

Context 12 contained two seconds or possibly wasters of off-white salt glazed stoneware and white salt glazed stoneware, which supports the suggestion that these types were being produced in the town (Smith A. n.d.). This context also produced a considerable quantity of late medieval sherds, none showing any sign of being seconds or wasters although most are comparable in fabric to wasters found on Site D (below). One was a creamy fabric, and another a salmon pink type; the rest were oxidised or reduced sandy wares. Context 24 contained only medieval pottery, though very little (Fig. 4.7, nos. 54-64).

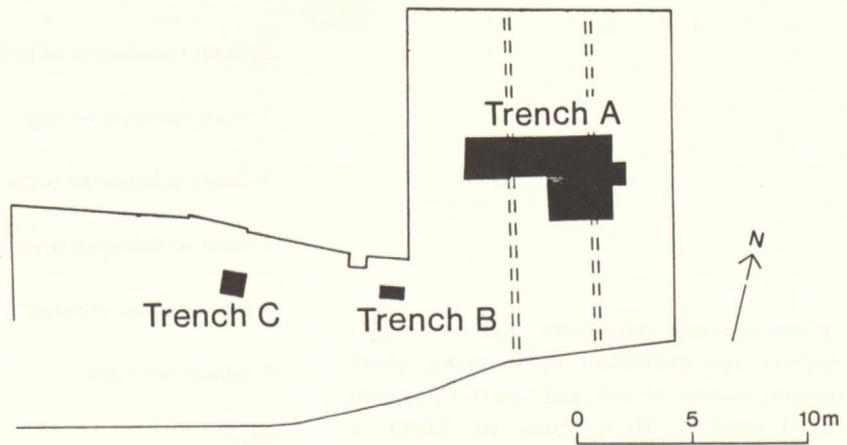
##### Site C

In the levelling-up material were many wasters of mottled ware and of black-glazed earthenware both fine and coarse, together with saggars, but this material was presumably brought in from nearby as hard-core to level the area for the bowling green. All the wasters are illustrated together with rims and bases of the same fabrics (Figs. 4.6 and 4.7, nos. 18-36) to show the range of forms. A small number of medieval sherds were also recovered from the lowest contexts of this trench.

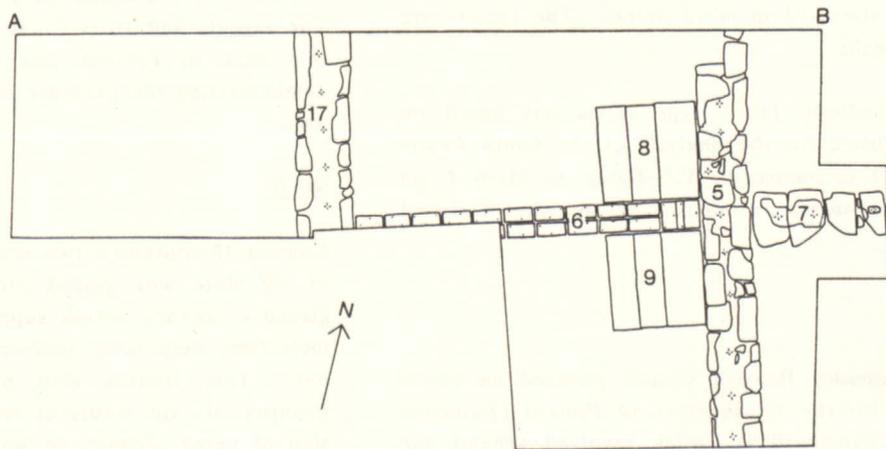
##### Site D

The most significant group from this site was the sealed group of medieval sherds from context 6. Out of a total of 399 sherds of fabrics 3 and 3g (minimum number of vessels 19), 74 were considered to be from wasters. Ten of these were glazed over a crack, two

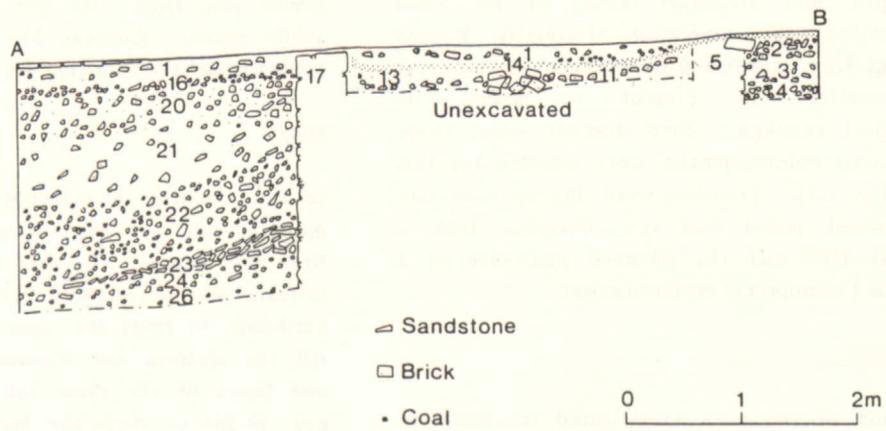
SITE A  
PLAN OF SITE



Trench A



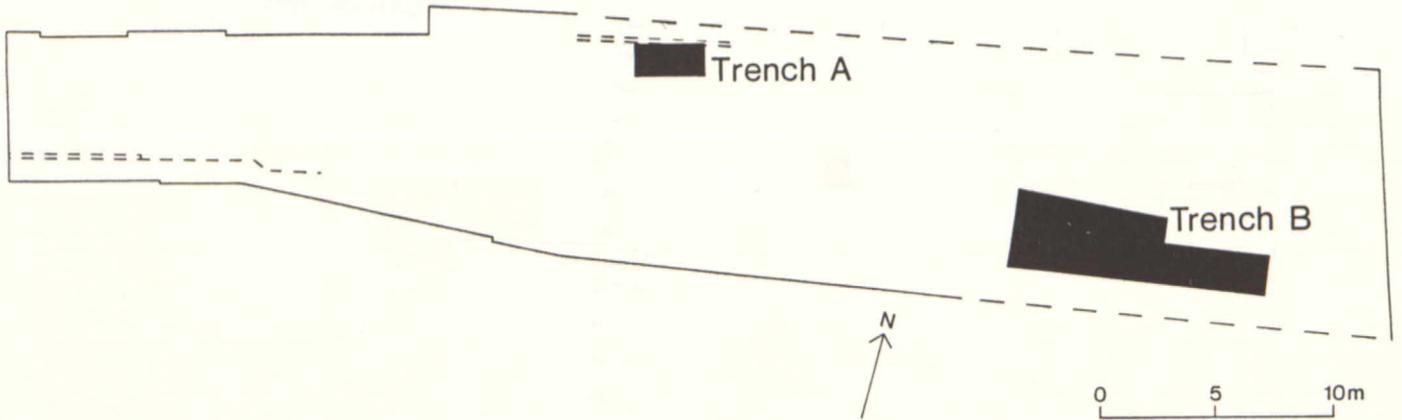
Trench A - sections



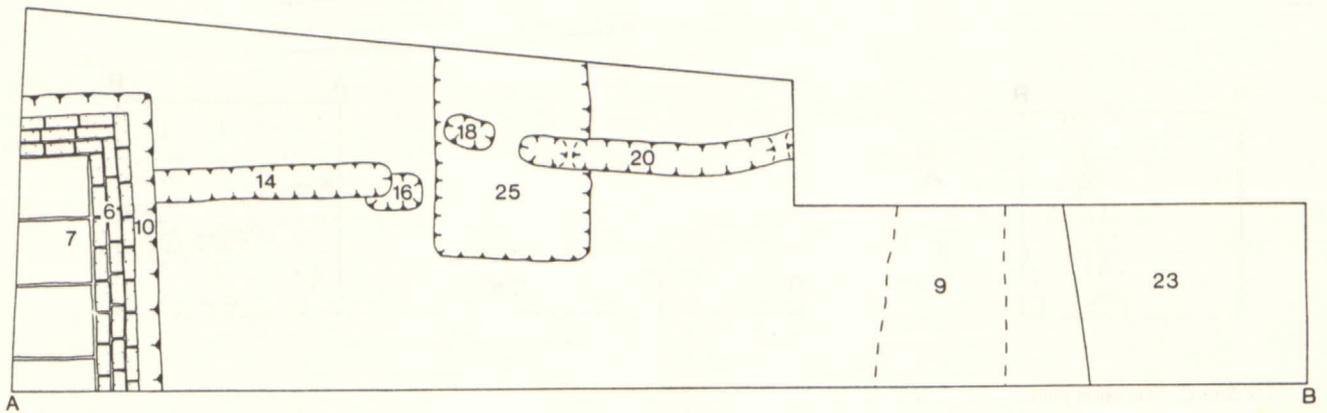
4.1 Site A. Location plan of trenches A, B and C; Trench A. Section

# SITE B

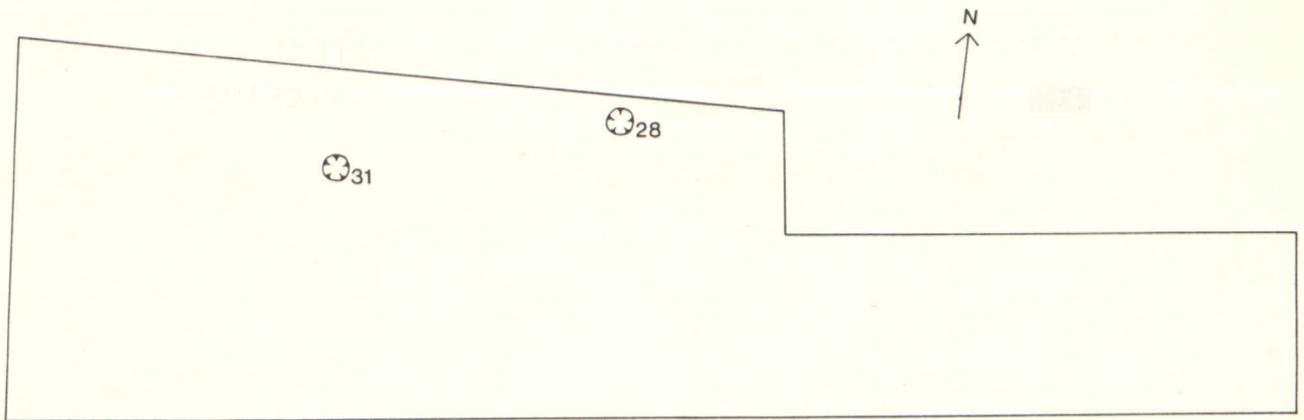
## PLAN OF SITE



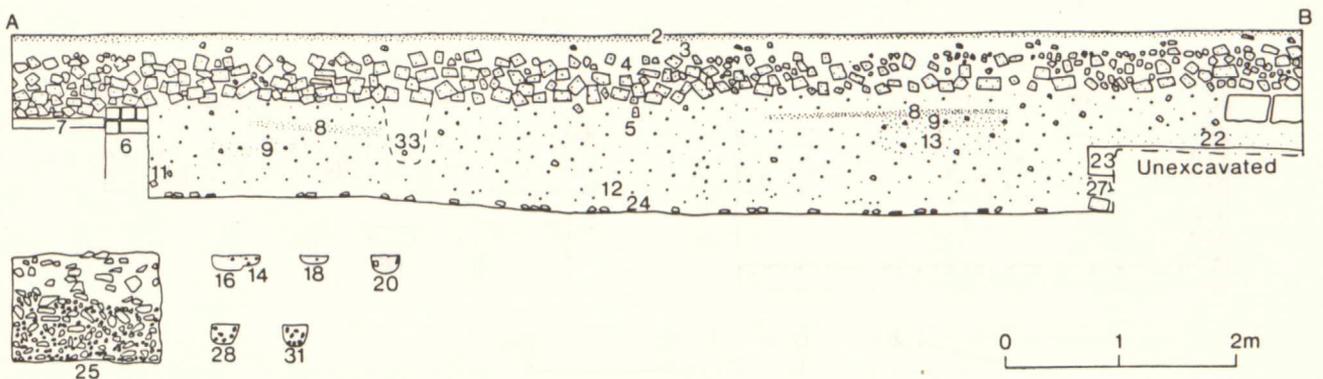
## Trench B - 18th & 19th century contexts



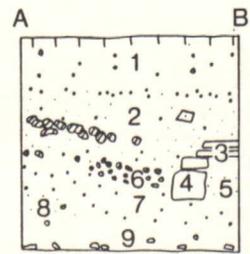
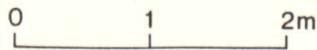
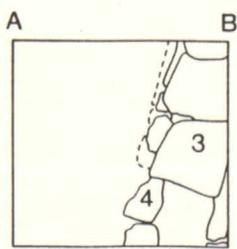
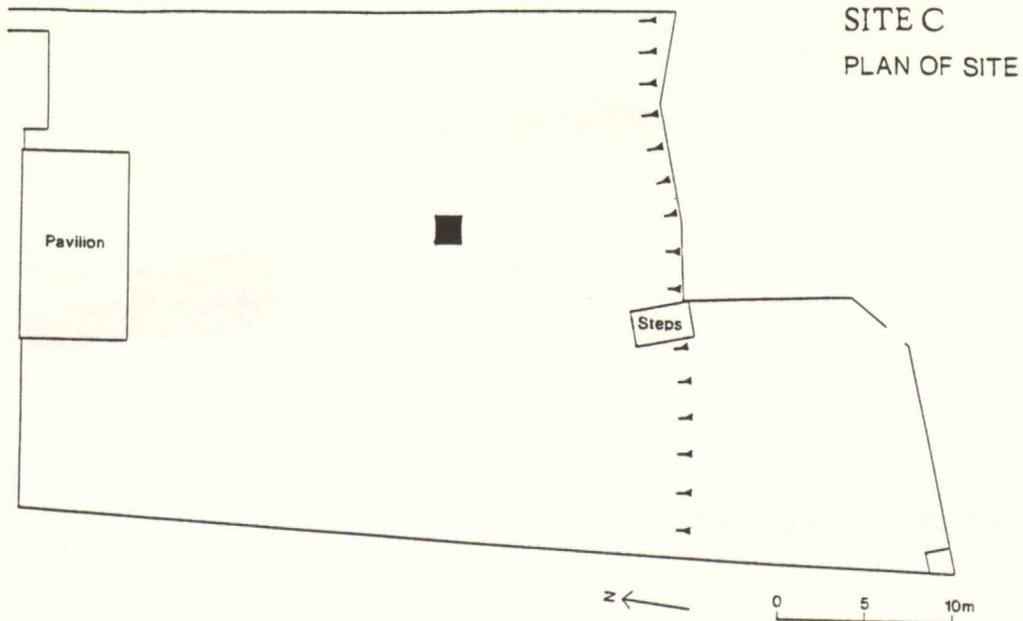
## Trench B - later medieval contexts



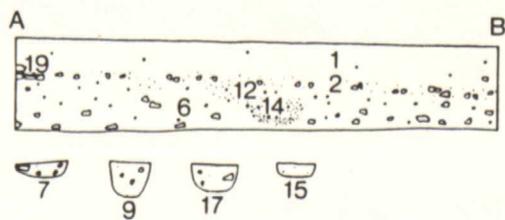
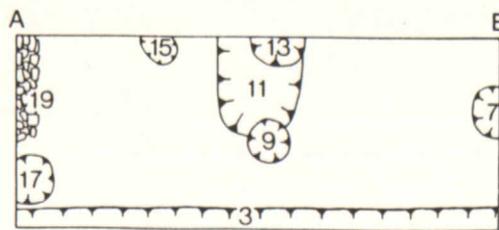
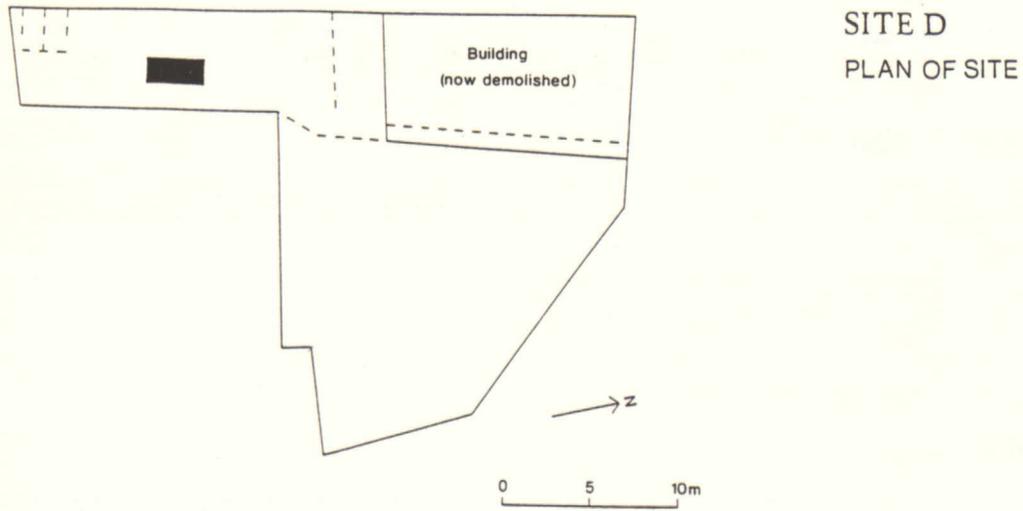
## Trench B - sections



4.2 Site B. Location plan of trenches A and B; Trench B. Context plans and section

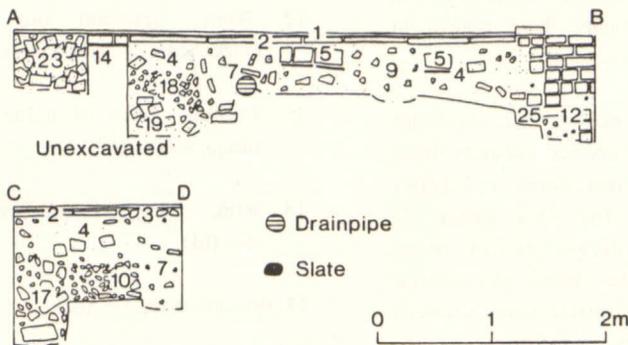
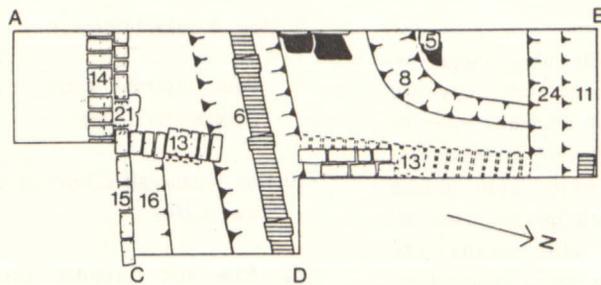
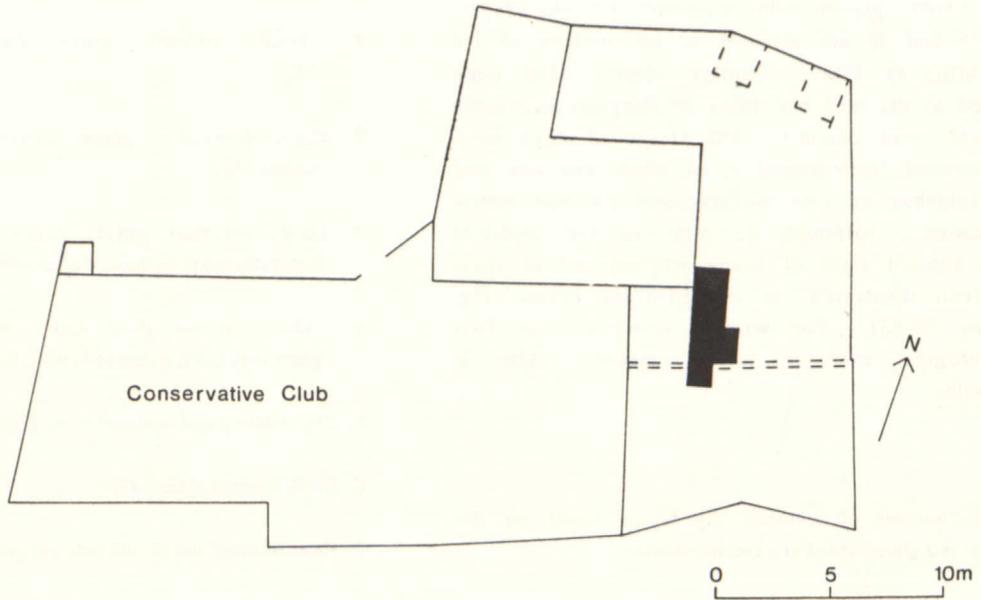


4.3 Site C. Location plan



4.4 Site D. Location plan

**SITE E**  
**PLAN OF SITE**



4.5 Site E. Location plan

had unvitriified glazes and the remainder showed differentially oxidised crack surfaces. This feature only occurs on pottery from kiln sites and is presumably caused by a crack in the vessel opening during firing allowing the normally reduced core to oxidise. At the 16th century kiln in Lower Parrock, Sussex, this fault accounted for 12% of all faults (Freke 1979, 110-111). The proportion here of cracks, both glazed and oxidised (if the fabric groups 3 and 3g are assumed to be products of the same kiln) is 19%. Similar effects have been observed at the medieval kilns at Ringmer in Sussex (Hadfield, pers. comm.). 132 pieces of daub were also recovered from context 6, of which two had lead glaze splashes on one surface and six had wattle impressions. Although no rims in the medieval fabrics showed signs of being wasters, all of them have been illustrated, as a significant group (Fig. 4.7, nos. 37-53). The wasters constitute the first archaeological evidence for a medieval kiln in Merseyside.

#### Site E

A small number of medieval sherds as found on this site. One is a glazed sherd in a creamy fabric.

#### Conclusions

These excavations have hinted at the range of Prescott's post-medieval and medieval ceramic industries. Although there is now evidence that in the post-medieval period black-glazed earthenware, mottled ware and a form of white salt glazed earthenware were all being produced in the town, an adequate study of this activity still awaits the thorough investigation of the kiln sites themselves. Several other centres in the region were producing similar wares, for example Liverpool, Rainford and Buckley, and further work may enable these centres to be distinguished, and their market areas isolated.

The medieval kiln debris from D extends our knowledge of Prescott's involvement in the ceramic industry back to the later medieval period. Firm dates and fuller details of forms and fabrics for this phase of Prescott's industry await the excavation of more securely dated sites, ideally the kilns themselves. This is the first medieval kiln material from between the Mersey and the Lune and is important for the light it throws not only on Prescott's development but also on the ceramic industry of the north-west (Davey 1977, 5).

#### Description of illustrated sherds

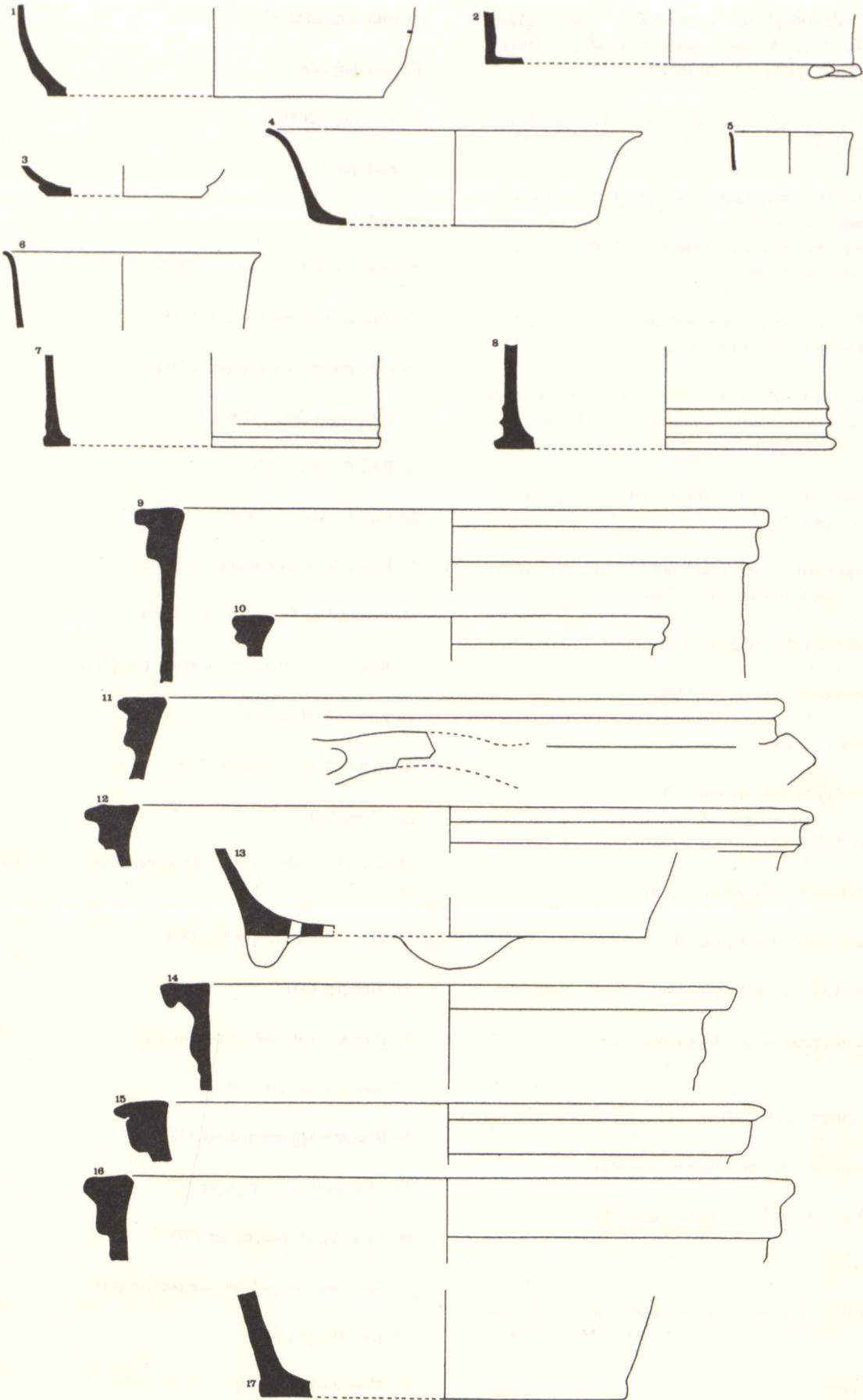
##### Site C, context 2

Fabric 2. Earthenware, red-bodied, black-glazed, fine (Fig. 4.6, nos. 1-7) (numbers in brackets refer to archive drawings).

1. Base, internal glaze, glaze in crack, waster. (50)
2. Base, internal glaze, separator stuck to base, waster. (52)
3. Base, internal glaze, glaze very thick, plucked separator mark on base, waster. (55)
4. Dish, internal glaze and over rim, plucked rim, glaze very thick, oxidised breaks, waster. (45)
5. Cup, internal and external glaze. (222)
6. Bowl, internal glaze. (47)
7. Base, internal and partial external glaze. (57)

Fabric 3. Earthenware, red-bodied, black-glazed, coarse (Fig. 4.6, nos. 8-17).

8. Base of tankard (turned).
9. Rim, internal glaze, scars on rim and plucked glaze, waster? (58)
10. Rim, internal glaze, external unvitriified glaze, waster. (60)
11. Rim and handle, internal and external glaze, plucked rim, waster. (64)
12. Rim, internal and external glaze, glaze in cracks, scars on body, waster. (65)
13. Footed base of colander, internal glaze, badly fitting, waster. (67)
14. Rim, internal and external glaze, except over rim. (61)
15. Rim, internal glaze. (62)
16. Rim, internal and external glaze, except over rim. (63)
17. Base, internal and partial external glaze. (66)



4.6 Pottery Site C. Nos. 1-17. Scale: x1/4

Fabric 5. Earthenware, buff fabric, clear glaze streaked with dark brown stains ("mottled", Davey 1975, Fig. nos. 3 and 4) (Fig. 4.7, nos. 18-36).

18. Base, globular mug, internal glaze, bottom fallen out, waster. (83)
19. Base, globular mug/jug, internal glaze, separator stuck to base, waster. (85)
20. Base, jug, internal and external glaze, separator stuck to base, waster. (84)
21. Base, globular mug, internal and external glaze, separator stuck to base, waster. (82)
22. Base, tankard, internal and external glaze, scar and piece of pot adhering near bottom, waster/second. (79)
23. Base, tankard, internal glaze, debris in glaze on bottom, waster. (78)
24. Base, tankard, internal and external glaze, separator stuck to bottom, waster. (78)
25. Rim, internal and external glaze. (69)
26. Rim, internal glaze and over rim. (72)
27. Rim, internal glaze and over rim. (71)
28. Rim, internal glaze and over rim. (73)
29. Rim, internal glaze and over rim. (108)
30. Rim with lid seating, internal glaze. (74)
31. Rim, internal and external glaze. (109)
32. Rim, internal and external glaze. (75)
33. Plate, internal glaze and patchy external glaze. (70)
34. Base, jug, internal glaze. (81)
35. Base, tankard, internal and external glaze. (80)
36. Base, tankard, internal and external glaze. (77)

#### Site D, context 6

Medieval fabrics 3 and 3g (glazed) (Fig. 4.7, nos. 37-50).

37. Rim, jug. (207)
38. Rim, jug. (210)

39. Rim, jug. (211)
40. Rim, jug. (204)
41. Rim, jug? (203)
42. Rim, jug. (212)
43. Rim. (209)
44. Rim, everted, cooking pot? (200)
45. Rim, everted, cooking pot? (213)
46. Rim, everted, cooking pot? (201)
47. Rim, slight flange. (206)
48. Rim, flanged. (208)
49. Rim, hooked, cooking pot? (205)
50. Rim, thumb decoration, jar? (214)

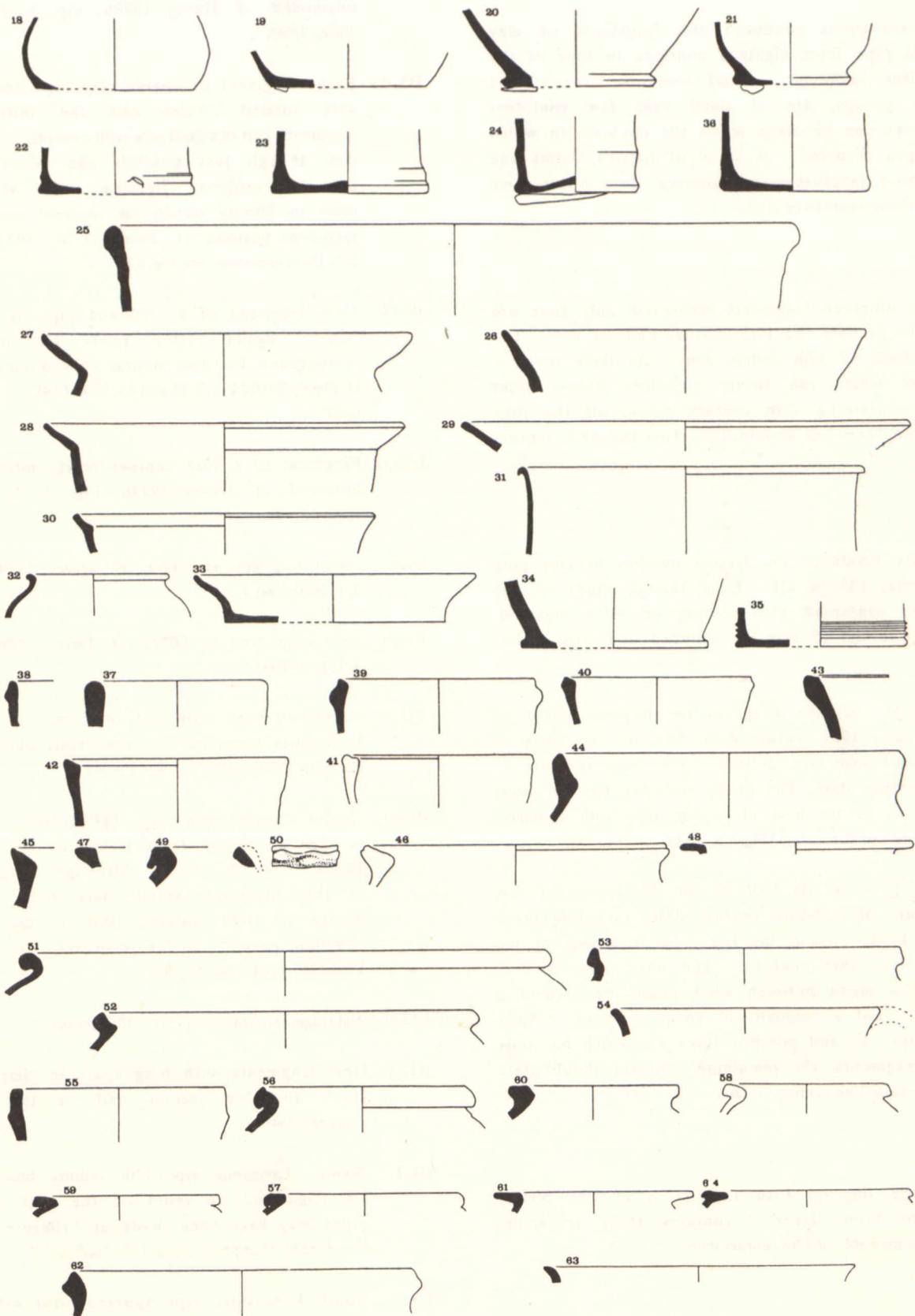
Medieval fabric 4 (Fig. 4.7, nos. 51-53).

51. Rim, everted, thickened, cooking pot. (215)
52. Rim with lid seating, cooking pot. (217)
53. Rim with internal bevel. (216)

#### Site B, context 12

Medieval fabrics 3 and 3g (unglazed) (Fig. 4.7, nos. 54-64).

54. Rim with handle scar, jug. (53)
55. Rim, jug. (44)
56. Rim, everted, cooking pot/jar. (36)
57. Rim, everted, jar. (40)
58. Rim, strongly everted, jar. (38)
59. Rim, strongly everted, jar. (39)
60. Rim, slightly flanged, jar. (37)
61. Rim, wide flanged, cooking pot/jar. (41)
62. Rim, flanged. (48)
63. Rim, thickened. (49)
64. Rim, thickened, everted. (53)



4.7 Pottery Site C, D and B. Nos. 18-64. Scale: x1/4

### Clay Pipes (Fig. 4.8)

P.J. Davey

The excavations produced 162 fragments of clay tobacco pipe from eighteen contexts in four of the five sites examined. Total numbers, even in the largest groups, are so small that few confident assertions can be made about the contexts in which the pipes occurred. A study of fabrics, forms and stem bore measurements, however, does allow some minimal statements to be made.

#### Site A

Of the nineteen fragments recovered only four are likely to predate the 19th century and, of these, two are probably of 17th century date. As these occur in contexts which are firmly stratified above other layers containing 19th century pipes, all the pipe containing contexts should date from the 19th century or later.

#### Site B

This site produced the largest number of clay pipe fragments, 135 in all. Even though many of the contexts contained 19th century or later material, the two lowest (5 and 12) included distinctly earlier pipes.

Context 5 - Of the 49 pieces the majority appear to be of early 19th century date, but, on the basis of fabric and bore size, at least seven fragments are of 17th century date. The group includes part of what appears to be the bowl of a giant pipe with extremely unusual incised decoration (Fig. 4.8, B5.1).

Context 12 - Nearly half of the 68 pieces in this group are of mid-17th century date, including three of the bowls present; the rest seem to belong to the mid-to late 18th century. The bore date of 1692 reflects a mean between what might be termed a "derived" and a "depositional" group of pipes. Apart from layer 12 and possibly layer 11, which has only three fragments, the remaining contexts should date from the early 19th century, or later.

#### Site C

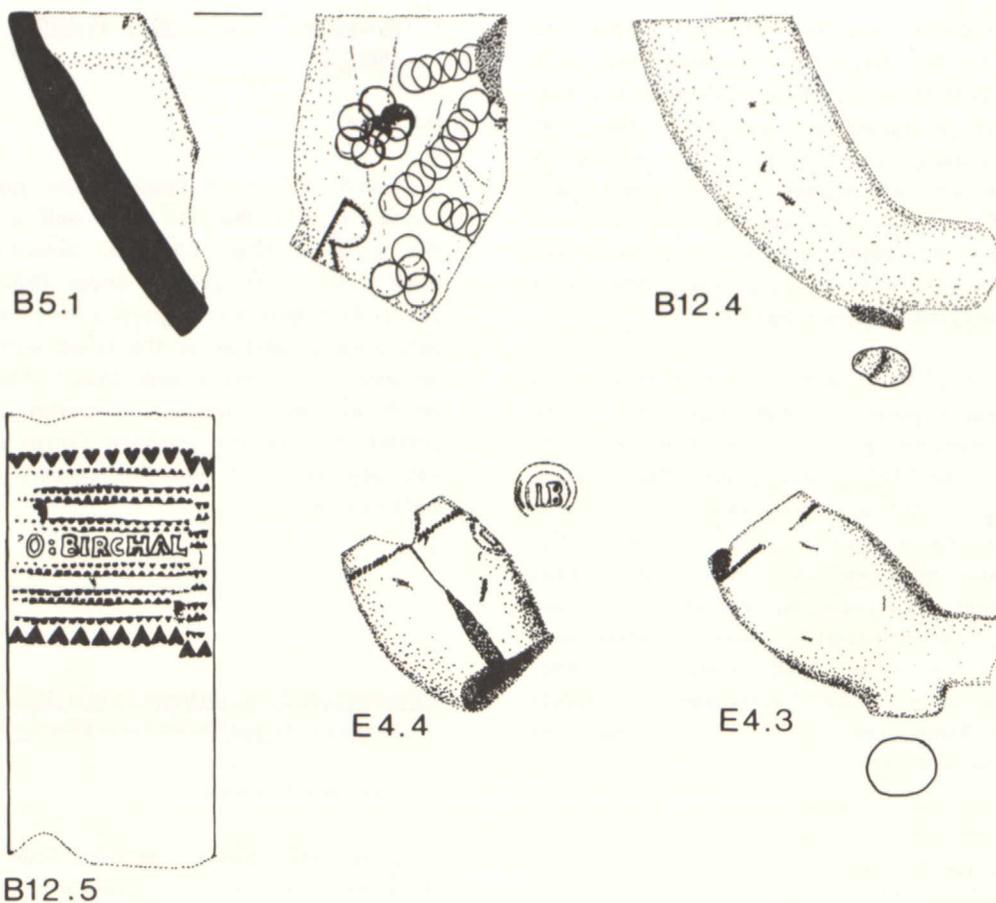
The single fragment from Layer 1 is of 19th century date, or later; layer 7 contains three fragments which are probably of 17th century date.

#### Site E

The four bowls from this site (E4) are all of mid-17th century type.

The following finds deserve individual mention:

- A16/1 Bowl fragment; milled and bottered; apparently unsmoked. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 3, J. 1660-1680. 7/64".
- B5/1 Large fragment of coarse clay pipe decorated with incised circles and the initial R. Apparently part of a giant pipe with a cut off rim, though just possibly the skirts of a pipe-clay religious figurine, such as were made in Utrecht during the medieval and post-medieval periods. cf. Baart *et al.* 1977, 472-275. Date uncertain. See Fig. 4.8.
- B5/2 Heel fragment of a smoked pipe in "local" clay. Relief stamp reads HB or HS (retrograde). For two similar stamps and heels cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 2, 14 and 15. 1700-1730. 6/64".
- B12/1 Fragment of a 17th century bowl; milled and bottered. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 3, A. 1640-1660.
- B12/2 Bowl fragment as B12/1. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 3, 1. 1640-1660.
- B12/3 Very worn bowl as B12/2. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 3, 1. 1640-1660. 6/64".
- B12/4 Burnished bowl with cut off rim. A south Lancashire form, but not previously published. Probably 1730-1760. 5/64". See Fig. 4.8.
- B12/5 Roller stamped stem with ..O:BIRCHAL. Similar in type to others from Rainford. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 2, 22-25. Although fragments of this particular stamp have been found before in field walking, this is the most complete example so far recovered. Probably 1720-1760. 6/64". See Fig. 4.8.
- B12/6 Bowl fragment; "imported clay". 18th century.
- B12/7 Heel fragments with long spurs in "imported clay". Probably second half of the 18th century. 5/64".
- E4/1 South Lancashire type 17th century bowl with HL (ligatured) in relief on the heel. These pipes may have been made at Primrose Hill, Rainford by Humphrey Lyon. 1640-1660. 6/64".
- E4/2 South Lancashire type spurred bowl with IB stamp on the front facing the smoker. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 1, 3. 7/64".



4.8 Clay tobacco pipes from Prescott. Scale: x1/1

E4/3 Bowl with a flat heel; milled and bottered. Although an unusual form, probably made locally. 1630-1650. 6/64". See Fig. 4.8.

N.B. E4/1-3: Although all apparently smoked, these pipes are in a low-fired, off-white fabric which seems to have been fumed in the firing.

E4/4 Fragment of a highly burnished, good quality product; milled and bottered. IB stamp in circular frame on the bowl. cf. Davey 1978b, Fig. 1, 6. (See Fig. 4.8).

#### Summary

Apart from the giant pipe, all the pipes from the Prescott excavations are of South Lancashire types and two certainly from Rainford (B12/5 and E4/1). Two are new forms (B12/4 and E4/3). There is no evidence for production in the town itself. Much larger groups will be required to provide a clearer picture of pipe production, consumption and loss in Prescott.

#### Other Finds

The excavations also produced 33 fragments of glass, 24 metal objects, two pieces of brass foundry slag (from site B) and a small quantity of animal bone and marine molluscs. Detailed reports are in the archive.

#### Discussion

The excavations produced no evidence for settlement before the 13th century. The development of the town into its 1592 form probably did not begin much before the Monday market, replacing an earlier Sunday one, became established in 1333. Thus, until the early 14th century, it was probably a religious centre surrounded by farms and farmland with possibly a small settlement to the east at Churchley. As a town, Prescott really grew after the establishment of the market. Its advantageous situation on the edge of the South Lancashire coalfield subsequently enabled it to develop into an industrial centre. Apart from the processing of agricultural produce, the first major industry recorded is the manufacture of pottery.

The later medieval wasters and daub from the excavations at 7-9 Derby Street form the first evidence for pottery manufacture in Prescot and hint at the presence of a kiln near the site. The court rolls and 1592 survey refer to two potters working in Prescot in the late 16th century: Edward Glover and James Ditchfield. James Cropper of Eccleston and Lawrence Gorsuch, whose son owned property in the town, are referred to as potters, though they need not have necessarily been working in Prescot.

Glover lived at 27-31 High Street, while Ditchfield's "workhouse" was opposite, at 24-30 High Street. The 1592 survey mentions potter's ovens being sited to the north of Ditchfield's workhouse (Bailey 1937, 40), probably on Glover's plot, thus bordering the Town Moss on the north-east edge of the town. This location outside the town centre is similar to many known medieval town potteries, presumably to avoid fire risk and the dispersal of noxious fumes near domestic buildings (Platt 1976, 57-8). All other kilns referred to in the court rolls and 1592 survey are probably kilns used for malting or processing other agricultural commodities.

#### Conclusion

The excavations demonstrate that post-medieval cellar construction has destroyed most of Prescot's later medieval street frontages. However, the back of building plots, unless built upon or modified in some way since the 17th century, still retain later medieval garden layers and potentially features. Later medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered, some of which comprised wasters from the town's potteries.

#### Acknowledgements

For permission to excavate on the sites, I would like to thank Mr. C.M. Krelle, Messrs. J. and R. Jefferies of Grant Investment Trust Ltd., Mr. G. Beasley (Chairman of the Constitution Club) and Mr. S. Afzal. David Freke gave much help throughout the preparation of this report and I am particularly indebted to him. I would also like to thank Peter Davey and David Freke for the specialist reports; Clem Fisher for the archive bone report; Peter Trewin from the Knowsley Borough Council; and all those who dug on the various sites - Jimmy Irvine, Carmel and Gerry Glynn, Andy Dutton, Judith Callister, Betty Bottomley, Bobby Entwistle, Philippa Tomlinson, Peter Leather, Julian Bowsher and Catherine Eastman.

#### 5. Observations at 82, Eccleston Street, 1980 (Site 2).

D.J. Freke

In January 1980, Peter Trewin of the Knowsley Borough Council noticed that the front wall of the cellar of this property (Fig. 1.3) was stone-built, with the brick wall of the present house constructed on it. The cellars were being given a brick inner skin and only a small portion of the stone wall was available for study. The stones were 15cm x 25cm, of unknown depth, and well coursed and mortared. It was not possible to date the masonry, except that this stone wall pre-dates the mid-19th century brick building now on the site.

#### 6. Observations during landscape work at High Street (Sites 3 and 4) and Church Street (Site 5), 1981.

D.J. Freke and R. Holgate

In January 1981, Knowsley Borough Council engaged an Manpower Services Commission scheme to landscape three sites in Prescot (Fig. 1.3).

The work on the High Street (Sites 3 and 4) consisted of laying kerbstones to define and protect approximately five metres by one metre areas where trees were planted. The maximum depth reached was half a metre. Only 20th century building demolition layers were encountered.

At 12, Church Street (Site 5), the area was lowered by approximately half a metre, footings for flower beds were constructed and trees planted. The front portion of the site comprised infilled cellars from the 18th century building formerly standing on the site. No medieval deposits or any significant post-medieval deposits survived on the site.

## 7. A Timber Framed Building at 21-23 Eccleston Street, Prescott (Site 30).

R.W. Cowell and G.S. Chitty.

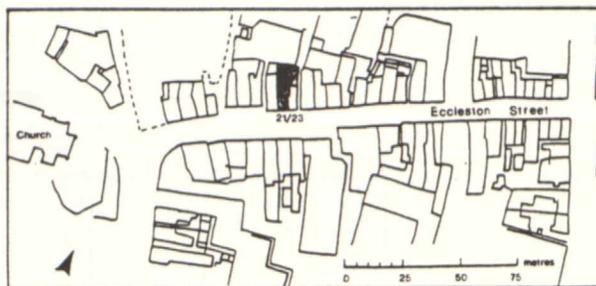
In March 1982, the Archaeological Survey of Merseyside was alerted by Knowsley Planning Department to the refurbishment of a shop at 21 Eccleston Street, Prescott, where removal of internal plaster at the rear of the building provided evidence of unsuspected timber framing. The timbers were rotten and had to be removed, although time was allowed for their survey prior to removal.

It was apparent from the building survey that some timber-framing continued into the adjoining no. 23, when the workmen partially removed the cement rendering in this gable, to reveal a complete timber box-frame. It was not possible to record the timbering in no. 23, except in the roof. The building has subsequently been listed. Work was also in progress at the rear of no. 21 to provide footings for an extension to the north. The workmen had put to one side a small quantity of pottery from their excavation and further quantities were recovered from their skip. The quantity and type of pottery collected made it seem worthwhile to try to understand its stratigraphical context and so the workmen's trench was cut back under controlled conditions producing a further quantity of pottery, and the section recorded.

### The Building

No. 21 is the middle shop of a block of three, fronting the street to the south, with narrow alleys bounding the block to the east and west (Fig. 7.1). All three buildings have early 19th century frontages. However on the west, no. 19, which is all of one build, extends further back into the rear yard than the other two shops, although out-housing has been added, some time during the 19th century, to the rear of no. 21 to cover most of the western part of its shared yard with no. 23. To the north of the block the land falls quite steeply from the High Street down into the back yard, with the rear boundary wall being placed across the lower part of the slope.

In the gable wall of no. 23, visible from the alley, is a distinct joint and change of alignment approximately mid-way along, which corresponds to the southern limit of the timber cross-frame occupying the northern gable of this twin-gabled elevation. This shows that the block formed by nos. 21-23 is of at least two phases, and that a 19th century frontage has been added to an earlier timber-framed building, presumably at a date contemporary with the 19th century shop frontages of nos. 21-23.



7.1 21 Eccleston Street. Location plan

In 1592 the modern plot was occupied by a "burgage with a cottage and garden" owned by Ralph Fletcher (Bailey 1937, 40). The OS 1848 edition shows the three buildings with the frontages that exist today.

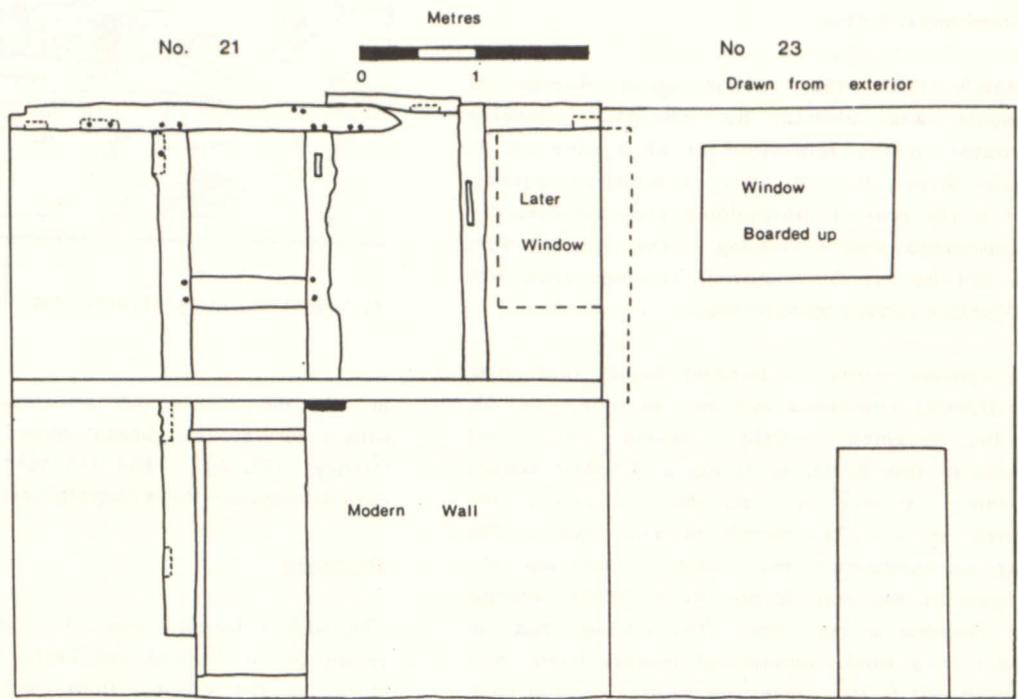
### The Survey

The timber framing was only recorded in the rear rooms of no. 21 and was best exposed on the first floor, as the ground floor walls were either not available for detailed inspection or had been largely rebuilt in the 20th century.

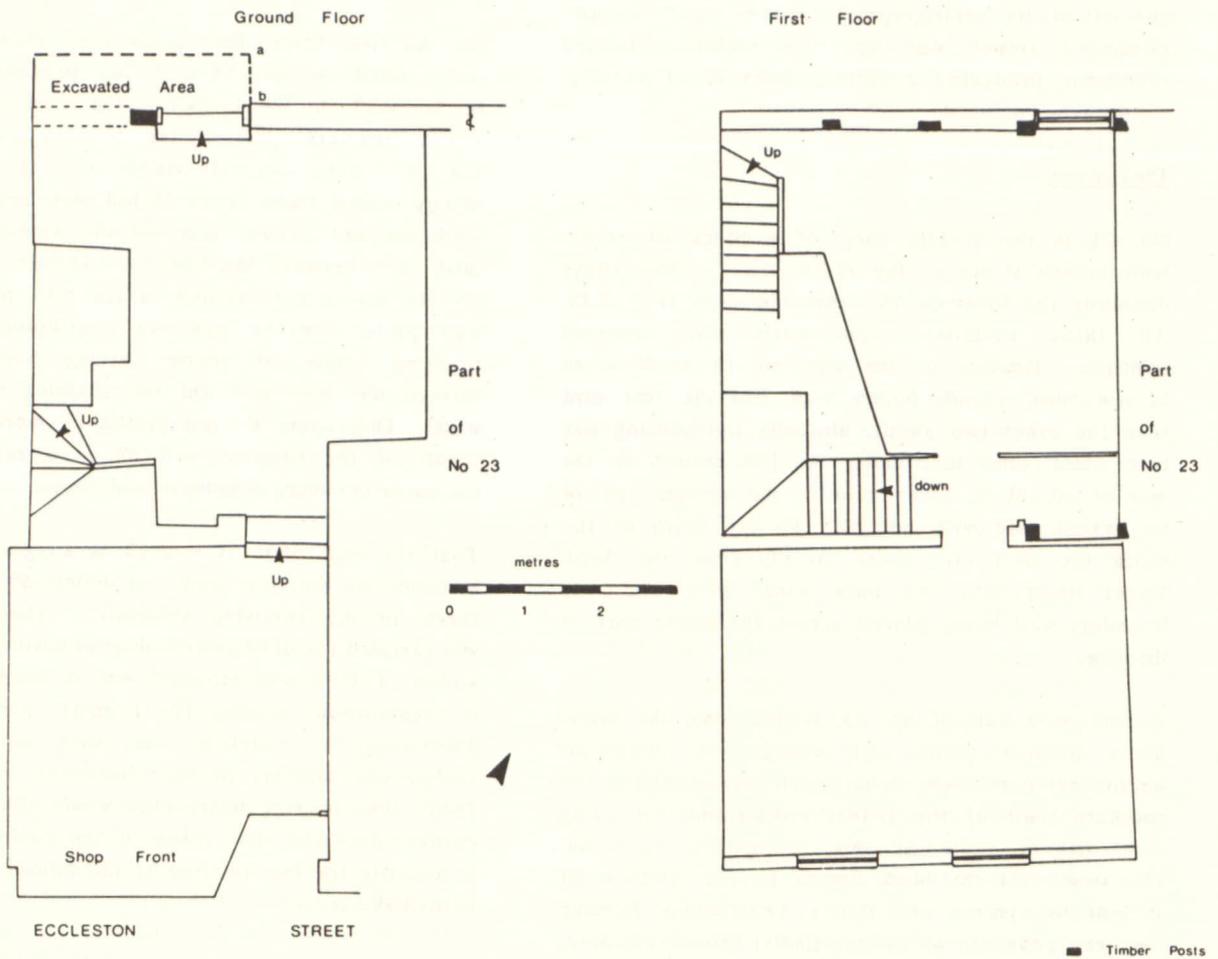
On the first floor, four posts were visible on the outer, northern, wall (Fig. 7. 2a), previously hidden by brickwork on the exterior. The most easterly post was a structural part of the dividing wall between nos. 21-23, and was only visible once the early 19th century window frame in no. 21 had been removed. The workmen had already removed the wattle and daub infill from between the framing, although the sockets for the staves still existed in the wall plate. This wall plate however was not continuous, a short bridging length of timber having been inserted between the main post and the adjoining post to the west. This could be interpreted as merely a hasty repair of the original wall or as a rebuilding of this section of framing including re-used timbers.

That the wall plate is re-used is suggested by the evidence of mortices and peg holes which do not relate to the surviving structure. The wall plate was sampled for dendrochronological dating which gave a date of 1513, with sap-wood and an unknown amount of heart-wood missing (P. Leggett, pers. comm.). This suggests, therefore, that with sap-wood, the timber was unlikely to have been cut before about 1543. The missing heart-wood would thus place the earliest date for the felling of the timber, but not necessarily for the building of the house, in the mid to late 16th century.

The inner, southern wall of the rear room of no. 21 revealed two posts at first floor level, the eastern



7.2a Northern elevation



7.2b Ground floor, first floor plans

one again marking the dividing wall between no. 21-23 (Fig. 7.2b). This eastern wall was plastered and so could not be investigated. The western wall of this room forming the side elevation of no. 19, was free of plaster and consisted totally of brick, into which had been set the western end of the timber wall-plate of the outer wall. It is probably of early 19th century date.

At ground floor level, only one post, part of the northern outer wall, had survived the 20th century rebuild and was cut away about 50cm from ground level (Fig. 7.2a). Other ground floor posts in this wall had been removed and replaced by modern brickwork and replastered internally. The southern wall of this room had not been disturbed and therefore was not investigated.

The roof is of two bays, with central king post truss and queen strut with straining beam, and upper king post truss in the east gable of no. 23. Against this gable had been inserted an internal brick chimney. There was also a brick chimney in the west gable, although here a staircase from the first floor into the roof space ascended behind the stack, between it and the brick gable wall of no. 19. At ground floor level, a butt joint in the brick-work of this chimney suggests it may have been extended into the room, possibly to allow the construction of the stairs in what may have been the former chimney space.

The rebuilding of this western gable with the addition of no. 19, early in the 19th century could have been the reason for these changes. However an alternative may be that the chimney was not on the gable and there was an extra bay to the west, which has been partly destroyed by the building of no. 19. This would, however, give a timber-frame building of unusual proportions. Other probable features of this later period are the doors in the rear ground floor wall and the inserted vertical sliding sash window at first floor level in the same wall, the peg holes for the wattle uprights being visible on the underside of the wall plate, once the window was removed.

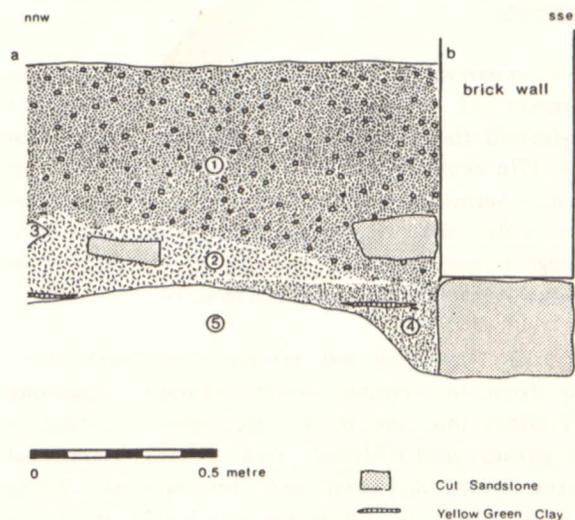
#### The Excavation

General development of the building involved the contractors levelling the rear yard. During this process it was possible to cut back the two section faces under controlled conditions, in the hope of retrieving pottery from stratigraphical contexts to augment that already found in the contractors' spoil.

The workmens' trench, of irregular shape, was located immediately north of the rear door (Fig. 7.2b), where the yard was about 60cm higher than the internal floor level. The eastern face (a-b) was cut back about 40cm in stratigraphic sequence and the northern

face was straightened back between c. 2 - 10cm in the same manner.

The stratigraphy as recorded is shown in Figure 7.3. At the base, what was interpreted as the natural subsoil consisted of a clean, light brown sand (5). The sandstone plinth which originally supported the timber framing was set in a ditch cut into this layer to a depth of c. 22cm. This represents the foundation trench for the wall. The fill of that section of the ditch not occupied by the plinth was a fine, black, soft, sticky silt containing occasional fragments of charcoal and coal and the occasional lens of yellow green clay (4), which extended c. 60cm northwards from the plinth, and post-dates the



7.3 Eastern section of rear yard

erection of this part of the building. At the very base of the northern side of the section a thin greeny clay lens in a similar fill was becoming apparent, but was not identified securely.

The finds from this fill consisted largely of pottery, the sherds, with one exception, being of mid-17th century date, forming a homogeneous domestic group. The stray 18th century sherd (see page 32, no. 11) need not totally devalue the group as the manner in which the site was dug meant that contamination of the lower layers was always possible.

Above layer 4 and partly resting on layer 5 to the north, lay a compacted rubble, varying in depth from c. 5-15cm, with some brick, crushed mortar, roof slate and the occasional sandstone block (layer 2). This also contained thin lenses of black soil or greeny clay within it, with a thicker lens of black soil appearing in the northern edge of the section

(layer 3). Against the wall, where layer 2 may have been cut away, layer 1 rested directly on layer 4.

Layer 1, below the more compacted top 5-10cm, was a loose rubble fill with crushed brick and mortar and included finds of china, stamped ware and late 19th century wares. Both these layers, 1 and 2, represent construction or destruction phases, presumably associated either with some or all of the operations related to the addition of the frontages, the replacement of the timber framing in the rear ground floor wall of no. 21, and levelling of the yard and construction of out-houses. This all probably took place within a short time during the earlier 19th century.

### Conclusions

It is apparent that nos. 21-23 Eccleston Street represent two relatively recent units formed from a box-framed timber building of probable late 16th to early 17th century date, with a 19th century frontage added. Surviving elements show that the building was 5.5m wide and at least 12.6m long, east-west, although it may have been truncated on the west by an unknown amount with the construction of no. 19.

The earlier building was therefore set back about 4.5m from the present street frontage, suggesting that either this line marks the former frontage of the earlier post-medieval town or that individual houses within the town were set back at varying distances from the old street line within their own burgage plots. It is often found that burgage plots remain constant within the layout of medieval towns and that successive developments take place within them (Platt 1976, 55). The area explored was however far too limited to investigate questions of this sort.

As it was impractical to survey no. 23 in any detail, further understanding of the internal plan of the timber building is not possible. It does seem apparent, however, that enough may survive in no. 23 to make such study worthwhile should the opportunity arise. The blocked window at the rear of no. 23 (Fig. 7.2a), for example, is of different proportions from that noted in no. 21 and may represent an earlier opening, and attention has already been drawn to the complete timber framing in the east gable wall.

It is unfortunate that the greater portion of the pottery was unstratified, as in fabric and type it forms an homogeneous group, paralleled at other sites in the county, such as at Rainford where it dates to the mid-17th century (Brown, Davey and Freke forthcoming). The only stratified pottery which should relate quite closely to the construction of the building is from layer 4, which contains fabric

types similar to those from Rainford, but unfortunately no discernible forms. The similarities between the fabric, glaze and forms from layer 4 and the unstratified 17th century pottery, and the fact that nothing earlier than late 18th century material was found in layers 1 and 2, would suggest however that many of the unstratified finds are likely to have come from layer 4.

There are three possibilities in trying to understand the nature of the building and its relationship to the pottery, assuming that layer 4 was deposited fairly soon after the construction of the building:

- a) the building, as suggested by the dendrochronological dating, is approximately late 16th century in date, but was partly rebuilt in that section surveyed and the current dating of this pottery type provides a mid-17th century date only for the rebuilding;
- b) the mid-17th century date for the pottery provides a date for the building's construction, but 16th century timbers were used or re-used;
- c) that the building is late 16th century and pottery of this type was in circulation at this time, perhaps half a century earlier than on existing evidence.

The evidence from the surviving timber framing (see above p. 23) makes it safer to assume that either a) or b) is the more likely. Without placing a great deal of weight behind the argument, however, the comments concerning the possible 16th century date of the soft orange fabrics from layer 4 (cf. Philpott below p. 28), may suggest that the last alternative need not be rejected out of hand.

The speed with which the survey and excavation had to be conducted, and hence its limited scale, meant that enough evidence could not be secured to answer questions such as these with any certainty. However, the exercise did provide a number of positive results: a good group of pottery, with some stratigraphic validity, was recovered; elements, now destroyed, of a building relating to the period of the town's history just prior to its expansion were recorded and approximately dated, and pointers to the lay-out of the town indicated. This shows the value of liaison between planners and archaeologists, which allows even last minute investigation of sites to be fruitful in recovering information about the past, that would otherwise be totally lost. It also gives some indication of the archaeological potential of the town of Prescott, especially for larger planned excavation projects.

## The Finds

R.A. Philpott.

One hundred and eight sherds of pottery were recovered from the excavations, of which all but thirty-three were unstratified. Layer 2 produced a few pottery sherds of 19th century date, a clay pipe stem fragment and a sherd of an 18th century glass wine bottle. A single sherd of recent white earthenware was recovered from layer 1. Finds from these layers are not discussed further.

The most significant finds were derived from layer 4 or were unstratified in the spoil heap. Layer 4, which formed the fill of the construction trench for the rear wall, contained twenty-eight sherds of pottery and a fragment of cow radius. However, the similarity of the glaze, fabric and form of pottery from layer 4 and the seventy-four unstratified sherds suggests that almost all the unstratified material originally came from layer 4. Also unstratified were 9 fragments of leather, including 2 soles of a child's shoe, a butchered thoracic vertebra of a sheep (identified by Clem Fisher, Liverpool Museum), a fragment of coal measures sandstone roof tile and a body sherd from an octagonal 18th century wine bottle.

## The Pottery: Forms

The range of forms represented in this group is fairly limited. Many of the sherds are derived from drinking vessels, mostly tall cups sometimes called tygs. None of the surviving examples has more than two handles. Several rim sherds of these cups have an external projection about 1 - 1.5cm below the rim, which may have been a lid seating. Several forms of tall cup are represented in this material:

- 1) Cups with a spreading foot and faceted stem, produced by trimming with a knife. Although no complete profile is represented, the widest part of the body appears to be at the waist, with the upper portion resembling no. 2 below. Probably two-handled and closely similar to that illustrated by Harris Gibson (1877, pl. IX). (Fig. 7.4, nos. 6, 7, 8).
- 2) An undecorated plain tall form, with narrowing stem and a spreading foot, the upper part tapering slightly towards the rim and two opposed large looped handles (e.g. Fig. 7.4, no. 1).
- 3) Cups with a squat sharply bulging lower profile, narrowing waist and broad base (Fig. 7.4, nos. 4). This form may be a local late Cistercian ware type, but no complete profile is present.
- 4) Cups similar to 3) above but with a less sharply

curved globular lower profile and a smaller spreading foot. Although no whole profile survives, a vessel perhaps of this type is illustrated by Harris Gibson (1877, pl. IX). Probably a south west Lancashire form (Fig. 7.4, no. 5).

- 5) Cups with a broad base and gently out-curving walls. No whole profile was recovered but this may resemble late Cistercian forms from Bewsey Old Hall (Fig. 7.5, nos. 15, 16, 17).

The first detailed publication of tall faceted cups appeared as early as 1877 (Harris Gibson 1877, 167-169) and subsequent finds show they have a wide distribution in south Lancashire. The discovery of this type of waster group from Rainford provides at least one certain place of manufacture although it is quite likely to have been produced elsewhere in the area (Brown, Davey and Freke forthcoming). It appears to be a local form and, apart from odd examples imported into the Isle of Man, is not apparently recorded outside south Lancashire and west Cheshire.

Large vessels in coarser fabric include incomplete profiles of what are probably barrel-shaped storage vessels (e.g. Fig. 7.5, no. 20) and bowls of truncated conical shape with flanged rims (Fig. 7.5, no. 13). Two large handles, one attached to the upper portion of a large storage vessel (Fig. 7.5, no. 10), may indicate that loop handles were current for this type of vessel in the 17th century, which is supported by similar but more complete vessels from Bewsey Old Hall, Warrington. The large stratified group of early 18th century black-glazed ware from South Castle Street, Liverpool shows that loop handles had been largely superseded by horizontal strap handles on large storage vessels by then (e.g. Philpott 1980, Fig. 34, nos. 226, 229), while the mid 17th century Rainford kiln dump includes both loop and more rarely horizontal strap handles.

One almost complete profile occurs of a bottle or jug with a globular body and at least one handle, although the neck is missing (Fig. 7.4, no. 9). Bottles and jugs do not appear to have been produced in large quantities in south Lancashire in the 17th and 18th century.

A sherd of unusual form from layer 4 is derived from a wheel-thrown, thick-walled unglazed vessel, of which only a portion survives. It has been extensively trimmed with a knife to give a triangular "gable" shape, and both the form and external sooting indicate that it may have served as a clay oven. A further unusual body sherd of very coarse fabric, glazed internally only and externally sooted, resembles sherds from "cooking pots" from Church Field, Rainford. A similar coarse fabric was

employed for very large cauldrons from the Brookhill site at Buckley, Clwyd in the mid-late 17th century (Amery and Davey 1979, 76-77, Fig. 13).

### Glazes

The great majority of the vessels are glazed to a dark brown or purple colour, and occasionally black. The exceptions consist of a single yellowish brown vessel (Fig. 7.5, no. 14), a few fragments of one or more large coarse vessels which have a thin and very patchy light purplish glaze, and a few sherds from small bowls or cups with a glossy even black glaze. In general the finishing on the fine ware drinking vessels, is careful, with thick, evenly applied glaze, except in the confined interior of narrow-stemmed tygs. The larger coarse forms, such as large storage vessels and bowls, are poorly finished by comparison, with uneven and patchy glazing. A few sherds are overfired and reduced, some with a blistered surface (e.g. Fig. 7.4, nos. 4, 9).

Examination of the sherds indicates that the colour of the glaze is determined by the underlying body and the degree of oxidation or reduction. Where the body is overfired and reduced to a dark purple the overlying glaze is also purple or brown, but in the less highly fired, oxidised sherds with an orange body the final effect is lighter in colour. The absence of colouring agents in the glaze is indicated by the yellow appearance of the glaze over an area of buff clay in the body of a tall faceted cup which is otherwise purplish brown to purplish black over red clay (Fig. 7.4, no. 7). By the early 18th century a black finish was achieved more regularly, as for example in the pottery from large stratified groups at South Castle Street, Liverpool (Philpott 1980, 87). This may be the result of the deliberate addition of iron to lead glazes rather than relying on naturally occurring iron oxides in the red clay for the glaze colour.

### Fabrics

The fabrics were examined macroscopically with a x10 hand-lens and divided into six main groups, based on the size, frequency and combinations of inclusions. The validity of such categories is open to question in view of the results of thin-sectioning of sherds of mid-17th century pottery from the production site at Rainford, which reduced the fifteen fabrics identified by macroscopic examination to just two basic types, buff and red. The inclusions in the Rainford fabrics were found to form a continuum from coarse to fine and the degree of mixing of the clay also varied considerably (Brown, Davey and Freke forthcoming) This has thrown considerable doubt on the usefulness of detailed analysis of post-medieval fabrics produced from coal measures clays, since it

appears that many of the perceived differences between fabrics are matters of degree not of absolute distinction. The fabrics described here are therefore not to be taken as representing wholly different sources of clay but rather of the degree of preparation of clays which are likely to derive from the boulder clay and coal measures in the Rainford-Prescot area.

1. Dense well-sorted fabric with few inclusions. A few small rounded quartz to c. 1mm, very few large rounded ferruginous particles to 2mm, some small irregular space to 1mm. Purplish red to dark purple. Used for mid-17th century tall cups (e.g. nos. 1, 9, 15, 16, probably 12).
2. Dense well sorted fabric with few inclusions. Very few rounded white clay to 2mm; few rounded quartz to 1mm; many spaces to 3mm; very few rounded ferruginous to 1mm; few very small mica to 0.2mm. Purplish red to dark purple. Used for tall faceted cups of mid-17th century date (e.g. nos. 6, 7, 8, 17).
3. Dense fabric with some banding of red and white clays. Inclusions comprise some rounded cream-white clay to 1mm; few small rounded brown inclusions, mostly to 1mm, occasionally to 3mm; some small quartz to 1mm; few spaces to 2mm. Often reduced to a dark purple (e.g. nos. 10, 20).
4. Dense brick red fabric. Many rounded quartz to 1mm; very few light yellow brown flat or angular shale to 2mm; few small rounded dark brown ferruginous inclusions to 1mm. Often well fired to brick red (e.g. no. 18).
5. Soft fairly pure fabric. Very few spaces; many rounded quartz to 1mm; very few white rounded clay to 1mm; few very small mica to 0.2mm; very few rounded brown inclusions to 1mm (e.g. no. 14).
6. Brick red hard, "granular" texture. Few spaces to 0.5mm; many small rounded quartz to 1mm; few white clay to 0.5mm. A late 18th century fabric used in vessels manufactured on the pottery site excavated by Robina McNeil in 1985 (Site F) - described as fabric 1 in Philpott and Davey (1984, 21) (e.g. no. 11).

### Dating

The complete absence from layer 4 of mottled ware and salt glazed stoneware which began production in the later 17th century and were in common use in the 18th century suggests an earlier date for much of this material. In addition a number of both stratified and unstratified sherds (e.g. Fig. 7.4, nos. 1, 6, 7, 8, 9) resemble closely in form, glaze and fabric the pottery from a manufacturing site at Church Field,

Rainford, excavated in 1979-80 (Brown, Davey and Freke, forthcoming). Clay tobacco pipes within the pottery manufacturing waste dumps at Church Field dated the use of the Rainford pottery kiln to the mid-17th century. A clay pipe kiln dump at the same site dated to c. 1635-55 on both typological and palaeo-magnetic grounds (Games and Davey 1985, 44) also sealed domestic pottery of similar type and thus provided a secure mid-17th century date for the Rainford material. The pottery from layer 4 at Prescott would therefore appear to be no later than mid-17th century in date.

However, it is less certain how early this type of pottery was produced. Apart from a group sealed by a construction layer of c. 1550 at the Billiard Room at Speke Hall (Higgins forthcoming), there is little securely dated 16th century pottery from south Lancashire. The Speke material shows that carefully finished Cistercian ware was current in the area alongside sandy bodied purple/brown glazed coarse wares in the mid 16th century. However, few complete profiles are represented in the Speke material and therefore the forms cannot be directly compared.

The broad-based cups (Figs. 7.5, nos. 15-18) resemble undated but probably 16th century local Cistercian ware types from Bewsey Old Hall. The presence of such vessels among the material from Eccleston Street, Prescott suggests that the date range of the group may extend over fifty years or more, perhaps beginning in the later part of the 16th century.

Coarseware sherds that may predate the mid-17th century include seven sherds of large coarse vessels with a patchy thin, purplish glaze, including Fig. 7.5, no. 13 which are rather different in glaze and finishing from the majority of the reduced, well-glazed vessels and may be a little earlier in date. Thumb or finger impressions, a decorative feature often found on local early post medieval vessels, occurs at the base of a large loop handle (not illustrated), a feature common on what appear to be 16th or early 17th century vessels from Bewsey Old Hall. However, the rarity of closely dated stratified groups of early post medieval pottery in the area at present makes it difficult to assess how early the forms and fabrics represented in the Prescott material developed locally. Although some forms, such as the tall faceted cup, were clearly in production in the mid-17th century, an earlier date should remain a possibility.

One exception to the late 16th to mid-17th century date proposed is a rim sherd (Fig. 7.5, no. 11), stratified in layer 4, with a smooth black metallic glaze. The fabric is of a type identical to sherds recovered in the 1984 sampling project behind no. 6

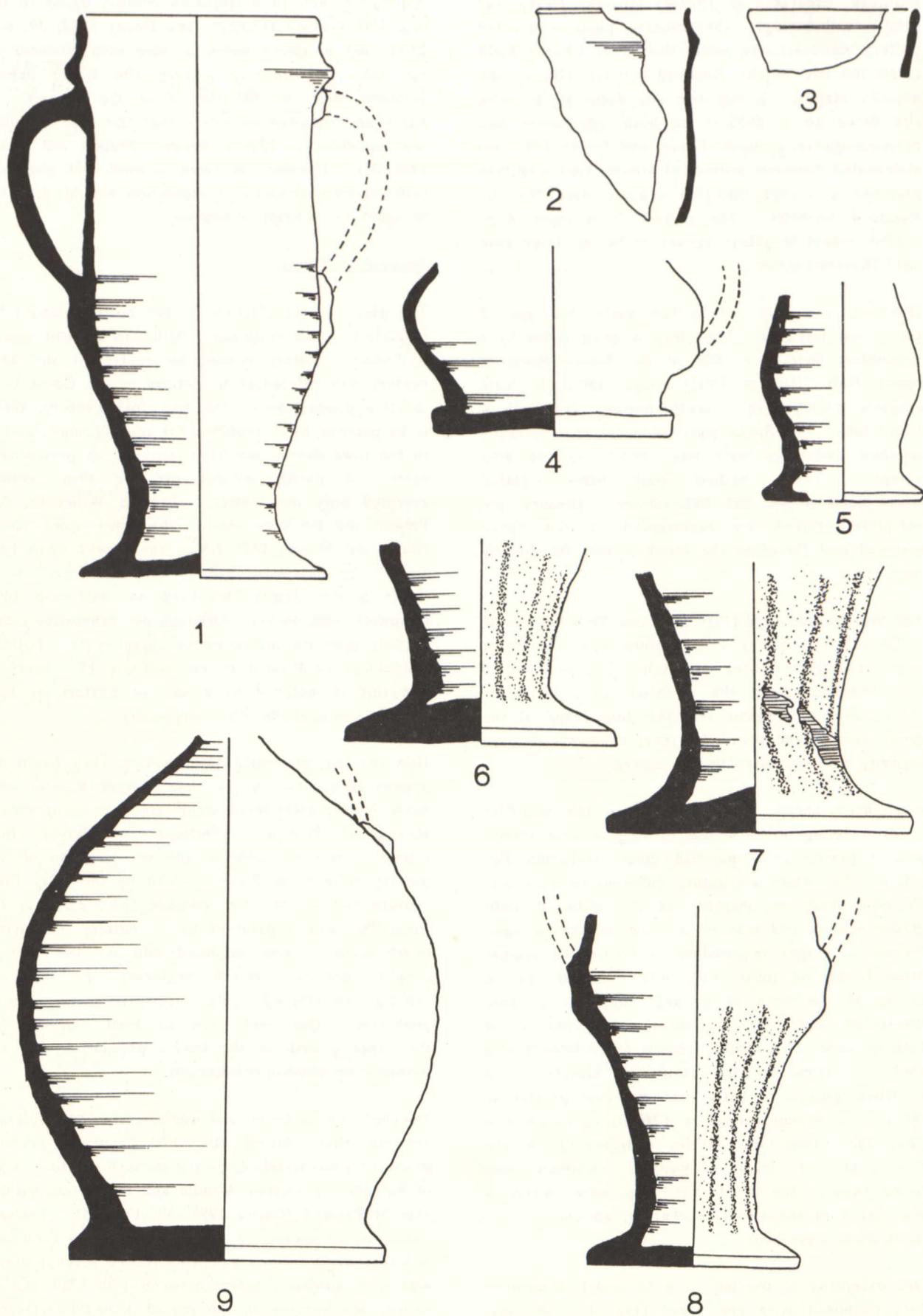
Aspinall Street, in a stratified context dated to the late 18th century (Philpott and Davey 1984, 30, nos. 27-32) and to sherds known to have been produced on the late 18th century pottery site found behind Eccleston Street in 1985 (Site F in this volume). It has been suggested elsewhere that this type of glaze was introduced c. 1750 at Prescott (Philpott and Davey 1984, 22). However, the sherd is small and given the difficult circumstances of excavation should probably be regarded as an accidental intrusion.

#### Source of the Pottery

The place of manufacture of the pottery cannot be identified with certainty. Although Prescott was a well-known pottery production centre in the 18th century and references to potters in the Court Leet indicate production in the late 16th century, there is at present little evidence for pottery manufacture in the town during the 17th century. A preliminary search of parish records for the 17th century revealed only one potter, Thomas Willcocke, for Prescott, and the same man is also listed under Sutton (Davey and Morgan 1977, 128). The Prescott Court Leet Records for the period 1601 to 1648 refer only to a single potter, James Ditchfield, in 1604 and 1607 (Knowles 1980, 44-51). Although not exhaustive these records give no indication of large scale pottery production in Prescott in the mid-late 17th century, and this is matched by a lack of wasters or kiln furniture associated with 17th century pottery.

However, by the early 18th century they begin to appear frequently in the documentary sources and waste from pottery manufacture starts to occur widely throughout Prescott (Philpott and Davey, this volume). This may coincide with the expansion of the pottery industry in Prescott, which by the early 18th century had six factories (Baines 1870, 245, no. 2). Prescott's later reputation as a pottery producing centre seems to have originated with the 18th century output, potteries either beginning life as, or rapidly developing into, factories for mass production. This process was no doubt stimulated by the rapid growth in the town's population and an increase in the wealth of its inhabitants.

Documentary evidence and wasters from fieldwalking indicate that during the 17th century pottery production was widely dispersed through the townships of Rainford, Eccleston, Windle and Sutton, all within 8km of Prescott (Chitty 1981, 50, Fig. 15). Potters continued to operate in the 18th century in Rainford and the parish records and wills record seven potters who were probably active between 1700-1750 and a further six working in the period 1750-1800 (Davey and Morgan 1977, 126-128). This rural industry may have developed on the former waste moss land with easy access to raw materials such as peat, coal, clay



7.4 Pottery. Nos. 1-9. Scale: x2/3

and water, by contrast with the increasingly densely populated town of Prescot.

Although much of the present group closely resembles the products of the mid-17th century kiln site at Church Field, Rainford, in the absence of detailed knowledge of the output of the numerous rural potters in the St Helens area it is not possible to attribute the group to a closer source than the south west Lancashire area. It remains a possibility that vessels indistinguishable in form, fabric and glaze were being produced in Prescot itself during the mid-17th century, although to date neither documentary nor archaeological evidence have been found to support this. Further research is needed on the local pottery industry of the 17th century to throw light on the relationship between the rural and urban production centres and to assess the volume and nature of pottery production in Prescot in the 17th century.

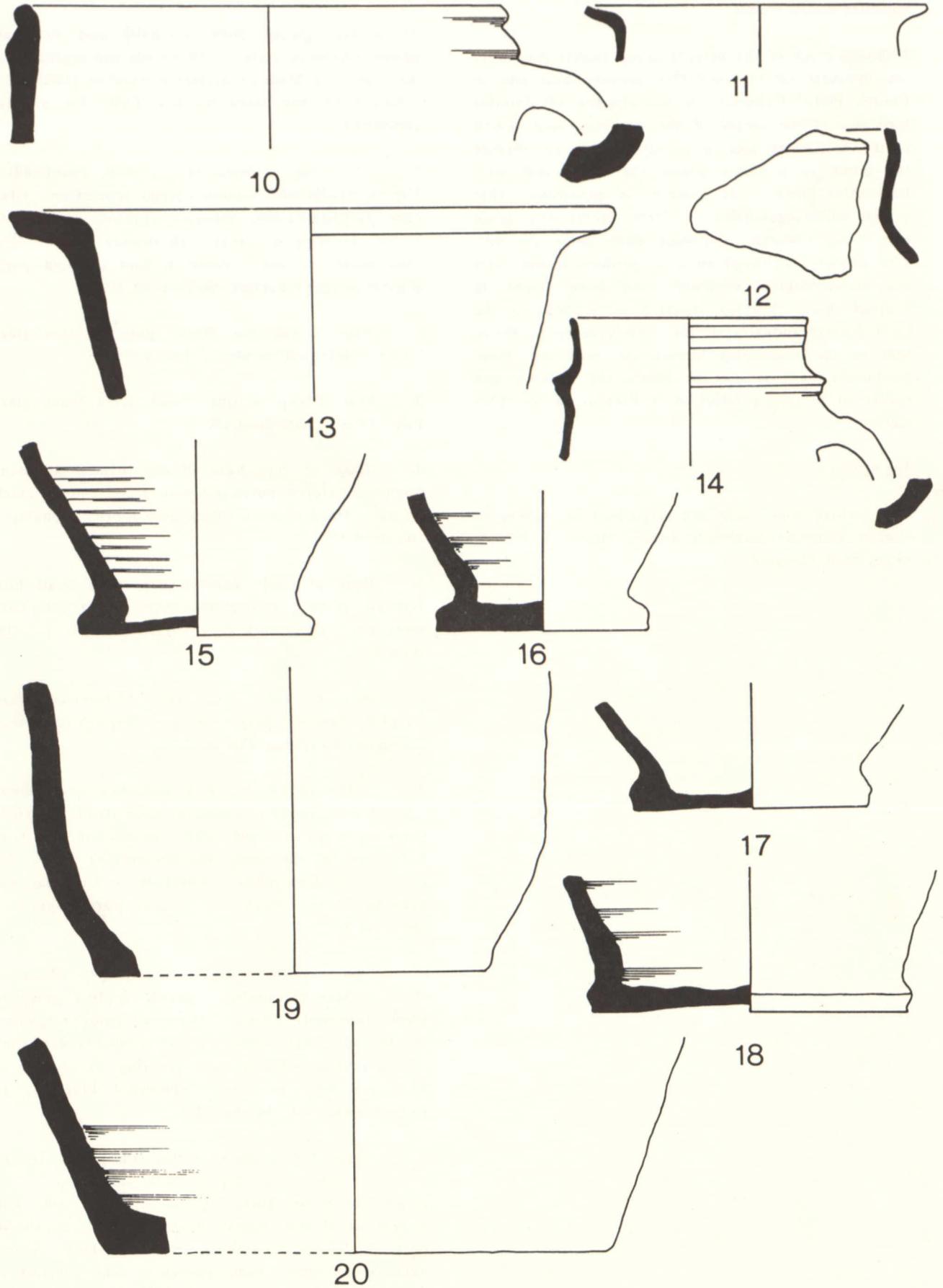
#### The Archive

The archive and finds are deposited in Liverpool Museum (formerly Merseyside County Museums), William Brown Street, Liverpool.

#### Drawn Vessels

All vessels glazed both internally and externally unless otherwise stated. All sherds are marked with the Liverpool Museum accession number (1982. 163), followed by the layer number (NB. US signifies unstratified).

1. Tall cup, complete profile, two-handled. Narrow handle with shallow central depression. Glaze dark purplish-brown, unevenly applied, with lighter brown streaking in areas with thicker glaze. Wire draw marks on base. Fabric 1, hard overfired purple at top to purplish red at base. Seven sherds, US.
2. Rim of tall cup. Dull purplish-black glaze. Purple, slightly overfired fabric 2. Two sherds, US.
3. Rim of cup or fine bowl. Even black glaze. Purple fabric 1. One sherd, US.
4. Base of cup, base of one handle surviving. Slightly blistered purplish-brown glaze. Wire marks on base. Hard overfired dark grey fabric, probably 1. One sherd, US.
5. Base of tall, handled cup, with small foot. Uneven, gritty purple glaze, dribbled and volatilized internally. Hard dark grey, overfired fabric 1. One sherd, 4.
6. Base of tall cup with 13-faceted stem. Purplish-black to purple glaze. Purplish-red fabric 2 (with very few spaces). One sherd, US.
7. Base of tall cup with 13-faceted stem. Evenly applied but variable coloured glaze from purplish-black to purplish-brown, with one oblique streak of buff clay in the body (as illustrated) which has glazed to a light yellow. Underside of base has wire drawing marks. Brick red to dark purple fabric 2. One sherd, US.
8. Base of narrow-footed tall cup with 13-faceted stem. Glaze externally is evenly applied purplish-black, internally pitted. Many irregular fragments of clay adhering to the interior, probably deposited during firing, one fragment adhering to outside of foot, and hole in base. Overfired blue-grey to purplish-red fabric 2. One sherd, US.
9. Round-bodied jug or bottle, lacking rim. Uneven purplish-black blistered glaze with small patches of purple and brown glaze. Glazed externally only, with a few accidental spots inside. Hard overfired, purplish fabric 1, with a few very large quartz inclusions to 4mm. Some patches of sand adhering to dribbled glaze on base. Five joining sherds, US.



7.5 Pottery. Nos. 10-20. Scale: x2/3

10. Rim and handle of large vessel of unknown form. Mottled brownish purple glaze on handle, darker purple on body. Hard, dark purple body with white banding, fabric 3. One sherd, 4.
11. Rim of fine cup or bowl. Even, black glaze with metallic streaking. Probably late 18th century. Brick red fabric 6. One sherd, 4.
12. Body sherd of tall cup. Blistered and overfired black glaze externally, internally purplish brown to black. Dark grey fabric 1. One sherd, US.
13. Rim of deep bowl. Patchy uneven purple glaze all over except on underside of rim; orange fabric 2 with slight banding of buff clay. One sherd, US.
14. Rim and handle of tall cup. Reddish brown glaze except on underside of handle. Soft orange fabric 5. Probably 16th or 17th century. Eight sherds, US.
15. Base of small jug or cup. Externally thin purplish brown glaze with gritty surface; internally very thin purple volatilized glaze. Wire marks on base. Well finished and fired; brick red dense fabric 1. One sherd, US.
16. Base of tall cup. Even brownish purple glaze. Very dark grey overfired fabric 1. One sherd, 4.
17. Base of cup with pronounced conical point in centre of base. Even black glaze. Purplish red fabric 2. One sherd, 4.
18. Base of cup or jug. Unglazed internally; externally dark purplish brown. Wire marks on base. Brick red, evenly fired fabric 4. Two sherds, US.
19. Base of large jar. Externally very patchy splashed glaze, internally uneven purple glaze. Soft light orange body, as fabric 6 but very coarse inclusions. One sherd, 4.
20. Base of large storage vessel. Patchy metallic brown glaze unevenly applied. Poorly finished vessel, base not flat and lower wall dented. Streaked buff and orange red fabric 3, overfired to dark blue-grey in parts. Two sherds, US.



8. 44-50 Derby Street, Prescott, Merseyside (Site 5).

M. Hollis

Site

The site lies on the north side of Derby Street, west of the junction with Knowsley Park Lane, Prescott, within a Conservation Area (Fig. 1.3). It was originally occupied by a terrace of four small cottages, built in 1830. These buildings had been scheduled for demolition and reconstruction as four housing units by Knowsley Borough Council. A survey of the site revealed original foundations which were insufficient to support the proposed reconstructed buildings, and new, deeper foundations were required.

In 1981 contractors' excavations for these new foundations revealed quantities of pottery sherds, which had apparently been used to infill the original (i.e. 1830) foundation trenches. This latter was the only stratified material recovered from the site.

Finds consisted of sherds of rather coarse black-glazed red ware, suggesting a range of at least four different vessel forms; sherds of salt-glazed stoneware, mainly from large "flagon" type vessels; and from the stratified material, large sherds of extremely coarse saggar rims, bases and bodies. Very few sherds of black-glazed fine ware were found. Finger-impressed fired clay, separators and stilts were also recovered.

All the finds are deposited with the Prescott Museum.

The Pottery

Earthenware - Coarse Black-Glazed

Body sherds	121
Rims	49
Bases	32
Handles	5
Clay spacers	2
Clay spacer adhering to rim	1
	—
TOTAL	210

Earthenware - Fine Black-Glazed

Body sherds	3
Rims	7
Bases	3
	—
TOTAL	13

Black-Glazed Redwares Total 223 sherds

Coarse Black-Glazed Redwares - Rim Types

1 "Pan Mug" Type

Rims of this type recovered from the site often have horizontal strap handles still attached. The width of the rims vary and diameters fall mainly between 32 and 37cm. One rim of 48cm diameter compares almost exactly with that of a complete profile found at "Twist's House" (Site 28).

The run of glaze on some recovered rims, together with rim indentations on finger-moulded clay spacers one of which still adheres to a rim may indicate that the pots were stacked rim to rim during firing.

2 "Pancheon" Type (deep)

This type displays some variation in width of rim and diameter of vessel and slight variation in rim form. Some of these rims compare with that of a complete profile recovered from "Twist's House" site (cf. Fig. 12.3, p. 98).

3 Large "Pitcher" Type

A rim and handle compare with a complete profile from "Twist's House" (cf. Fig. 12.5, p. 102).

4 "Pancheon" Type, but smaller, shallower

A complete profile of this type was recovered from the site. Three rims not conforming to these types were recovered.

Fine Black-Glazed Redware - Rim Types

Only seven fine ware rims were recovered. These were of three types. One "bowl" type rim compares to that of a complete profile of a fine ware bowl from the "Twist's House" site.

<u>Salt Glazed Stoneware</u>	<u>Nos.</u>
Body sherds	44
Rims	11
Bases	35
	—
TOTAL	90

Base diameters

5.2cm	1
6.0cm	2
7.0cm	1
14.0cm	7
16.0cm	11
18.0cm	9
20.0cm	4

Neck diameters

2.2cm	3
2.4cm	2
2.6cm	3
2.7cm	2
2.8cm	1

The majority of the sherds of stoneware recovered appear to belong to large "flagon" type vessels. Many of these vessels exhibit incised ring decoration in the area of the handle. There are slight variations in rim and neck forms.

Base diameters of these stoneware vessels range from 5.2cm (one small vessel) to 20cm. Internal neck diameters range between 2.2cm and 2.8cm. The number of rings in the incised decoration also varies.

Stratified Material

Stratified material all came from the north, south and east trenches. This consisted of large sherds of very coarse salt-glazed saggars, some complete profiles of unglazed earthenware saggars and a large

quantity of finger moulded fired clay fragments, probably separators or bungs.

Stoneware Saggars

Bodies	2
Rims	10
Bases	1
TOTAL	13

Only one complete profile of salt-glazed stoneware saggars was recovered, which measured as follows:

Rim - internal diameter 30cm; external diameter 36cm

Base - internal diameter 24cm; external diameter 30cm

Height approximately 32cm

This complete profile has oval apertures approximately 13cm high, at least two, probably three, situated close to the base.

The internal rim diameters of the rest of the salt-glazed stoneware saggars range from 24cm to 36cm. The external diameters of the bases are approximately 32cm.

Unglazed Earthenware Saggars

Complete profiles	5
Rims	1
Bases	8
Lids	1
Props	10
TOTAL	25

In addition, 42 pieces of fired, finger moulded clay, some with evidence of glazing were recovered. These are probably mostly separators or bungs.

Five complete profiles of earthenware saggars were recovered.

Discussion

The finds from this site raise a number of questions. First, it is not at all clear from which pottery the material, which was obviously redeposited, came. The

bulky nature of the waste recovered from the site would seem to argue a nearby source for the material. The nearest known production site would appear to be the Brook Pottery, which was situated south of the site on the opposite side of Derby Street. At the moment nothing is known about the type of vessels produced at the Brook Pottery, but it was in production at the relevant date (Davey 1978a, 56-7).

Comparisons can, however, be made with other material found in the area. The rims of some of the coarse black-glazed redware and one fine ware rim found on this site can be compared with those of some complete profiles recovered from "Twist's House", a site two or three hundred yards to the north (Site 28). As it was possible to reassemble a number of almost complete vessels from "Twist's House", the pottery from that site would appear to be from an undisturbed dump. The production site of the "Twist's House" pottery has not yet been identified.

A large proportion of the recovered material consists of saggars of extremely coarse fabric with very large inclusions, coarse black-glazed earthenware and fired clay spacers. It is interesting to speculate how far this material was pre-selected, either by the 1830 builder or originally, by the potter. It is perhaps possible that some types of wasted material were re-usable, for example wasted fine wares may have been ground down for use as grog. Selection by either builder or potter could perhaps explain why so little fine ware was recovered from the site.

It is assumed that fine wares were produced at the source site, as earthenware saggars were recovered which were too shallow to have contained the coarse black-glazed redwares. These shallow saggars could have been used to hold small fine ware vessels during firing.

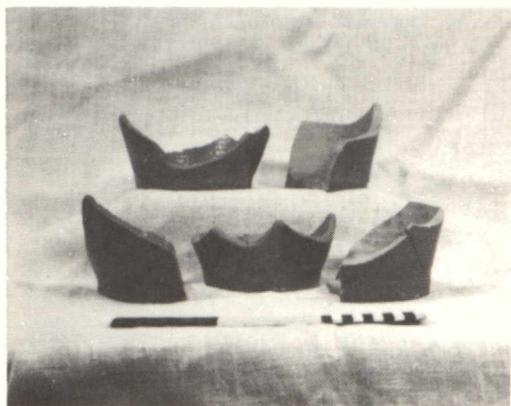
Examination of the run of glaze on "pan-mug" type vessel fragments and rim indentations on fired clay spacers suggest that these particular vessels were fired stacked rim to rim and then, possibly, base to base.

The recovered fragments of large salt glazed stoneware saggars pose a problem as to their use. The majority of stoneware fragments belonged to large "flagon" type vessels. It seems unlikely that such large vessels were fired in these saggars, yet only two bases of small stoneware vessels were found.

A number of complete necks of flagons were found, many of them displaying incised ring decoration. The decoration varied in numbers of rings, depth of incision and width between incisions. There did not appear to be any correlation between variety of decoration and the size of vessel.

It would appear that wasted pottery and kiln furniture was used as foundation material for other buildings in the immediate area. A former stable block to the rear of nos. 44-50 Derby Street was refloored a few years ago by the owner, Mr Lumley, of 52 Derby Street. Mr Lumley discovered large quantities of pottery waste beneath the original floor surface. This material is very similar to that recovered from this site. Whether this particular use of pottery waste was common elsewhere in Prescott remains to be seen, but it was obviously used for more than one building in this area.

The production site of the Derby Street material cannot now be identified. These finds, however, indicate a range of pottery produced, certainly in Prescott and presumably close to the site and give a *terminus ante quem* for the vessel types recovered.



8.1 Saltglazed stoneware flagons



## 9. Sampling Excavations in Prescot, 1983-84 (Sites 6-26).

R.A. Philpott and P.J. Davey.

### Introduction

Between November 1983 and June 1984 a series of twenty small sample holes was dug in various locations in Prescot under the direction of P.J. Davey and R.A. Philpott, with the help of volunteers from Merseyside Archaeological Society and members of the 1982-3 Prescot Extra-Mural Class. The location of the holes is marked on the plan (Fig. 1.3).

In the knowledge that proposed redevelopment in Prescot would destroy archaeological deposits over a large area behind the street frontage where disturbances might be less severe, a sampling project was established to assess the degree to which these deposits had survived in different parts of the town. The main concern was to discover the depth, extent and distribution of medieval stratigraphy, with a view to pinpointing sites which might merit large scale trial excavations (Philpott and Davey 1984).

### Methods

The distribution of the holes clearly could not be random, due to a number of factors, not least the continuing existence of the town. Holgate's excavations of 1980-81 (Sites A-E) indicated that the street frontage had been extensively disturbed by later building and so most of the holes were located in the open plots to the rear. Another factor was the need to explore the area between Eccleston Street and Kembles Street where large scale development was due to take place. Difficulties of permission and access meant that only three squares could be investigated within the redevelopment zone, but as many as possible were examined on the periphery of the site to assess the likelihood of survival of medieval deposits in the general area. A number of sites were located close to the documented late medieval town centre where medieval deposits might reasonably be expected. In addition, several were chosen to investigate the evidence for the reclamation of the Moss to the north of the town.

The size of the holes was kept, as far as local conditions permitted, to a metre square. This format had several advantages over a core sample. It allowed the interfaces between layers and soil changes to be observed in the sections, thus cancelling out the effect of localised disturbance and small features. It also enabled pottery and other artifacts to be collected from individual horizons and features, thereby providing an indication of date. Since the aim was not to recover

structures or property boundaries, which are best observed in open area excavations, the smallest sized hole which could practicably be excavated to natural was desirable. In addition, the squares had to be of a size which could be dug by a team of two people with limited time and resources.

Recording of the holes followed usual archaeological practice. Each layer or feature was assigned a number and the characteristics of the soil noted on a standard form. Finds were collected from each context and at least one section from each hole was photographed. The main departure from normal procedure in the case of straightforward sections was to measure the stratigraphic sequence and draw a schematic representation showing the average depth of each layer, in the manner of a geological column. The sections and detailed discussion of individual holes have been published in a monograph (Philpott and Davey 1984).

The finds and archive will be housed at the Liverpool Museum, William Brown Street, Liverpool. The finds and context sheets are marked with a three element code referring to the project (P84), the individual site code and the layer or context number.

### Soils

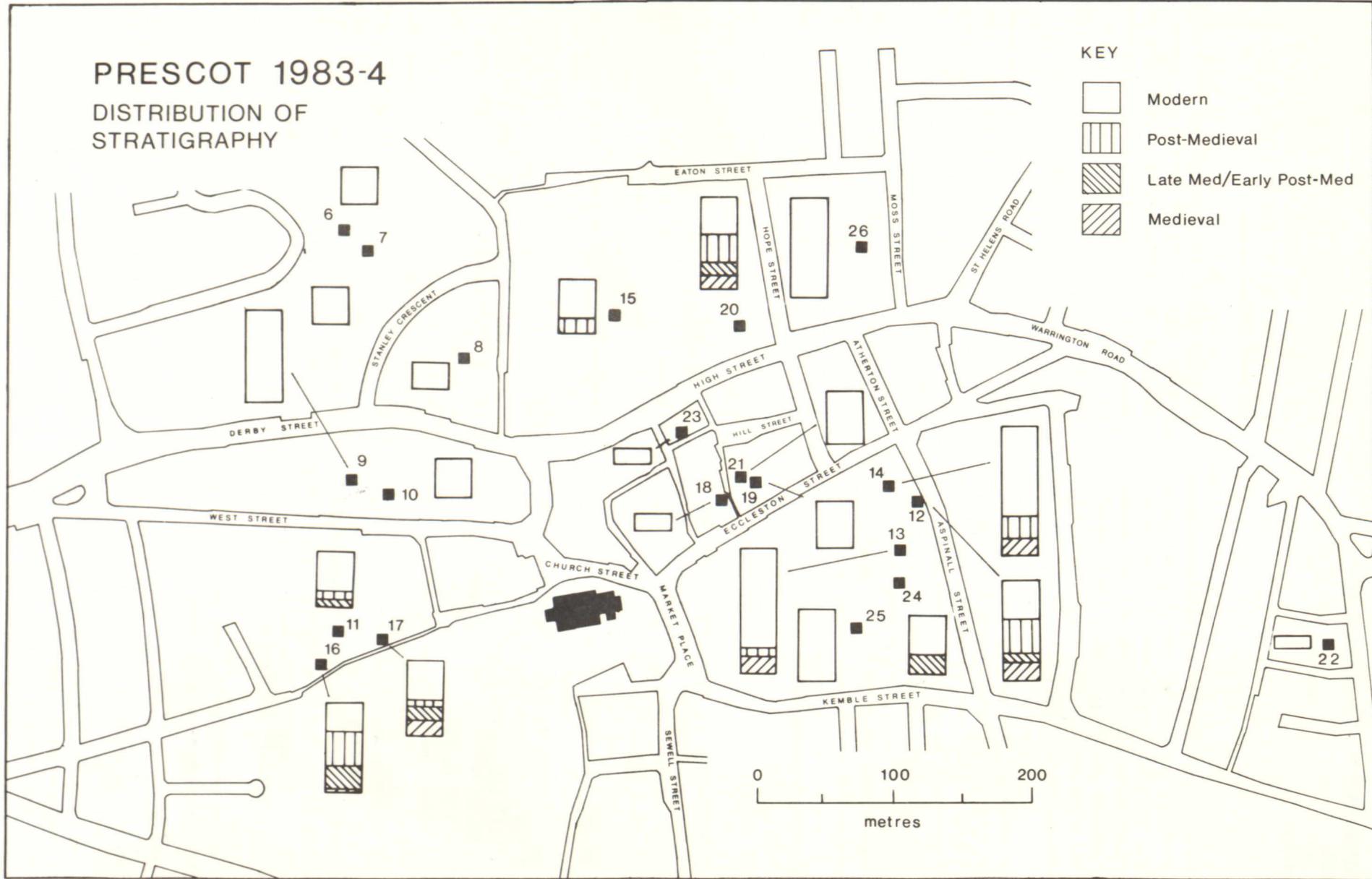
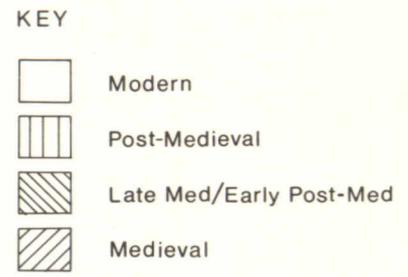
The soils encountered on the ridge in Prescot are characteristic of those developed over a shallow fine-medium till on Carboniferous coal measures sandstone. In general they are a well-drained silty clay, yellowish brown in colour, but tending towards dark-brown or black with an increased humic content nearer the surface. To the south of the town centre on lower-lying land the sandstone is overlain by Boulder clay but no fully developed soil profiles on the clay were encountered in the sample holes. The well-mixed nature of the soils, often with weakly differentiated horizons, is consistent with continuous cultivation. This is reinforced by the documented land-use from the late medieval period onwards, together with the location of many of the holes on intensively exploited land close to the settlement focus. On the Moss to the north of the town centre the relatively late exploitation of the peatlands yielded dark soils rich in organic matter.

### Stratigraphy

In a number of squares located on the sandstone ridge but away from the nucleus of the town the complete profile of the cultivated soil had survived and in these a consistent stratigraphic sequence was observed:

1. A light yellowish brown to buff silty clay at the base of the profile, with a few flecks of

**PRESCOT 1983-4**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF**  
**STRATIGRAPHY**



40

9.1 Distribution of stratigraphy

charcoal and very occasional fragments of coal; a few lumps of clay and sandstone; the only finds a few abraded sherds of medieval pottery. Varying in depth from c. 6 to 33cm (squares 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20).

2. A light brown to buff silty clay soil, with a few fragments of coal and some charcoal; late medieval and/or early post-medieval pottery. Depth c. 12 to 31cm (squares 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 24).

3. Mid yellowish brown clay soil, with increasing quantities of coal, some charcoal; 17th-18th century finds. Depth c. 9 to 46 cm (squares 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).

4. Dark brown to black humic topsoil with abundant coal, charcoal, fragments of brick and coal ash; late 18th to 20th century finds (squares 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26).

No settlement is static, however, and demolition and construction continually disturb the soil and deposit new material. In Prescot these processes, together with other activities which have left traces in the archaeological record, are illustrated at work in the Court Rolls of the 16th and 17th century. Here are recorded such activities as the illegal digging of clay pits by potters in search of raw materials, the mining of coal in "delves", the dispersal of noxious middens set illegally in the street, and the encroachment onto the Town Moss, set aside for pasture, immediately north of the town centre (cf. Bailey 1937).

Close to the heart of the town the stratigraphic sequences were frequently extensively disturbed. The following processes were observed in the archaeological stratigraphy:

5. Levelling, which has truncated existing layers or entirely removed suspected deposits (squares 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24).

6. Dumping to raise the ground surface artificially, often in advance of construction work; consists of imported soil (squares 9, 12, 13, 26) or demolition rubble (squares 9, 13, 20).

7. Building construction, typified by deposits of mortar, brick and stone fragments lying on a pre-existing ground surface (squares 14, 16); or construction trenches into which wall footings are set (squares 11, 14, 18).

8. Deposits of bricks, mortar and tile, often of considerable depth, derived from the demolition of 18th or 19th century structures (squares 9, 10, 12, 20, 24, 25, 26).

Figure 9.1 shows the location of the holes with a schematic representation of the depth and period of stratigraphy.

#### Features

The sampling project was primarily concerned with locating and identifying intact medieval soil layers rather than exposing structural remains, and few features were discovered which could be dated earlier than 1800.

The only stratified medieval feature occurred in P84/20 behind 29 High Street and consisted of a linear deposit of charcoal with lumps of blue clay approximately 35cm wide and a maximum of 10cm deep. The relative position of the feature showed that it was cut into undisturbed sandy clay subsoil, and all the pottery recovered from the two horizons immediately above it was medieval. The small area available, however, precluded interpretation.

A gully, surviving to a depth of approximately 45cm, was found running north-south down the slope at the rear of a vacant plot in Aspinall Street (P84/24). The upper layers had been cut away in later construction work and the original depth could not be determined; 16th century pottery in the upper fill suggests an early post-medieval date for the feature. It may have been used both for drainage and as a property boundary.

Structural remains were encountered in P84/25 between Kemble Street and Eccleston Street comprising the lowest course of a Bunter sandstone wall and an associated floor of Coal Measures sandstone flags with a ridged soakaway. This appears on the 1848 OS map as a small rectangular building approximately 3.5 x 4.5m, butting onto a major boundary, of which a part still survives as a sandstone wall running north-south c. 2.6m to the east of the hole. The presence of a soakaway together with the rough nature of the floor suggests a function such as a dairy or byre for the building. The 1848 OS map shows that the surrounding area remained as gardens and open ground until a relatively late date. Finds inside the structure indicate that it had fallen into disuse and was filled in during the later 19th century, but no dating evidence for the construction was recovered. The type of construction, employing large squarish Bunter sandstone for the wall, is characteristic of 18th century and later work in the region.

Behind no. 23 Eccleston Street in P84/18 the level surface of the natural clay against the foundations of a sandstone wall were encountered, which presumably comprised a small rear extension to the house.

In the square behind no. 6 Aspinall Street (P84/14) the footings of a wall were uncovered. Although almost completely demolished, the base of the wall, which was constructed of thin coal measures sandstone flags, remained. The backfill above the footings contained numerous bricks, suggesting that the superstructure was brick. Dating of the construction of the wall was facilitated by the discovery of hundreds of fragments of waste pottery and manufacturing debris from the mid to late 18th century.

### Results

The sampling project established that medieval and post-medieval stratigraphy survived in a number of areas of the town. The pattern of stratigraphy in the various quarters was often fairly consistent and the results of the sample holes are discussed for each zone of the town. Brief details of the documented history of each site are given where this helps to elucidate the archaeological evidence. The principal historical sources used are a reconstruction of the town based on the surveys of 1592 and 1721 by F.A. Bailey (1937), the 1847 Tithe Map of Prescot (Lancs Record Office DRL/1 65), and the 1848 1:1056 Ordnance Survey map of Prescot.

### West Street

At the time of the 1592 Survey the land on both sides of the present line of West Street was occupied by open fields. Three holes on the south side of West Street, within the area of Higher Field (as shown on the 1847 Tithe map), contained straightforward sequences of garden and cultivated soils (P84/11, 16, 17). These are characterised by light brown to buff clay soils with an increase in humic content towards the surface. The only feature encountered was the foundation trench for a wall with sandstone footings in P84/11 behind no. 7 West Street, although no wall is shown on the 1848 OS map. The earliest layers above natural contained a few abraded fragments of medieval pottery and flecks of charcoal. Coal appears first in quantity only in the early post-medieval layers, providing a useful means of distinguishing between the two phases.

The archaeological evidence for the widespread appearance of coal in the early post-medieval period is supported by documentary sources. The earliest record of coal mining in Prescot is found in a lease for Prescot Hall in 1568, which allowed extraction purely for domestic use, but commercial exploitation was not permitted on the Hall estate until 1597/8. It is likely, however, that coal had been dug locally from at least as early as the middle of the 16th century for trade (Bailey 1947, 3-7), and the copyholders are recorded as illegally digging for

coal in their tenements in the late 16th century (Bailey 1937, 304).

In 1592 Nell Miller's Croft occupied the area to the north of the later West Street and in 1847 the Tithe Map still shows the area as gardens. On this side of the street the results were inconclusive due to the difficulty of digging in confined spaces. In P84/9 brick and sandstone rubble were encountered to a depth of 1.25m, beyond which further excavation was impractical. This material probably represents a dump to level up the site prior to the construction of the houses in the late 19th century. The present difference in level between the gardens of no. 8 West Street and its immediate neighbour to the west is nearly 1m and it is likely that a layer of clay encountered in P84/10 to the rear of no. 4 West Street was a similar levelling dump.

### Eccleston Street

Together with the Market Place, Eccleston Street formed the focus of the late medieval town. In the 1592 Survey the street frontage has a number of substantial houses, probably set back from the present building line and, in archaeological terms, this area was potentially one of the richest in Prescot. Excavation to the rear of shops on the north side of Eccleston Street suggested, however, that extensive levelling had taken place on the steep southern slope of the ridge, destroying all significant archaeological deposits. To the rear of no. 29 Eccleston Street, P84/19 revealed a layer of rich black humic soil, associated with garden features, lying directly on the natural sandstone. A nearby hole (P84/21) in the same plot behind no. 27 produced a brick floor set on a black humic layer. Both of these humic deposits contained only 19th century pottery. The site had clearly been levelled to natural in the 19th century when a garden was laid out and outbuildings or a yard constructed.

Earlier deposits had also been removed behind no. 23 Eccleston Street, a timber framed building fronted by a 19th century extension. Here the upper surface of the natural clay had been levelled for a floor associated with the stone wall of a demolished outbuilding (P84/18). The finds suggested that this was a 19th century development although no wall in this position occurs on the mid 19th century maps. A small excavation in 1982 to the rear of nos. 21-23 Eccleston Street, when the back wall of the timber-framed structure was being replaced, produced a quantity of mid-17th century pottery (Site 30).

Observation of two holes dug for other purposes between Eccleston Street and Hill Street show that soil creep and human activity have almost stripped this area of archaeological deposits. On Hill

Street, Council workmen resetting kerbstones reached natural sandstone 22cm below the car-park surface (P84/23) while on the western edge of the car-park on Highfield Place a hole dug by British Telecom reached similar natural c. 60cm down. In the latter hole the sections were not visible and so the overlying stratigraphy could not be examined. Holgate's excavations and observations in 1980-81 showed that extensive levelling during the construction of a lorry park in 1980 had destroyed all earlier stratigraphy on Site A, and cellars lay under the backyards and frontage of the street to the north. The maximum depth of stratigraphy observed during landscape work on High Street in January 1981 was c. 50cm and only 20th century building rubble was encountered (Sites 3 and 4).

Taken together, the evidence for the south slope of the ridge indicates that extensive destruction and levelling have occurred in this area of the town, although the possibility should not be discounted that islands of intact stratigraphy survive on the terrace nearer Atherton Street.

#### Aspinall Street

A creation of the late 19th century, Aspinall Street was cut through a 19th century public park between Atherton Street and Hillock (now Kemble) Street. In 1592 a croft had occupied all this area, with the exception of the frontage on Eccleston Street where a large three-bay house stood. The stratigraphic sequence in P84/12 and 13 included not only cultivated or garden soils dating from the medieval period to the 19th century associated with the croft and later park, but also layers of humic topsoil dumped to level the site for the construction of the houses on the west side of the street in the 1870's. The cultivated soils are characterised by the mid brown to yellowish buff colour described above.

A similar sequence was found in P84/14 behind no. 6 Aspinall Street, but was here complicated by the discovery of the partially robbed footings of a wall bedded on a 40cm layer of pottery manufacturing waste (see above, p. 42). The waste material included ash, clinker, saggars, kiln furniture and broken pottery, including many fragments of a white salt-glazed Staffordshire plate dated to c. 1750-1770 (Barker 1984, 79, Fig. 8, no. 67), which provided a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the wall. The 1848 Ordnance Survey map shows that the wall forms the southern side of a small extension to the rear of a large building fronting Eccleston Street. Robina McNeil's excavations in 1985 to the south west of this (Site F) revealed further walls of identical construction and with similar pottery waste under the footings and it is probable that the large building represented by this wall formed part of the late 18th

century pottery works whose drying sheds and sunning pan were discovered in the 1985 excavations. The large building was presumably demolished to make way for the construction of Aspinall Street in the early 1870's.

To the south, a gully cut into natural in P84/24 may have been a garden feature or drainage ditch and contained 16th century pottery in its upper fill (P84/24/13) but the soil horizon from which this was cut had been removed by the building of the social club in the late 19th or early 20th century (see above, p. 41).

The remains of a small byre or outbuilding were discovered in P84/25 between Kemble Street and Eccleston Street, comprising the lowest course of a sandstone wall and an associated flagged floor with a ridged soakaway. The structure is discussed above (p. 41).

#### The Moss

Until the 19th century Prescott was bordered on the north by extensive peat mosses, which were divided between the townships of Prescott, Eccleston and Knowsley, and at one point extended as far south as Prescott High Street.

Four squares were dug within the area of the former Moss. The first three were in gardens behind Stanley Crescent: one of these was situated immediately outside the township boundary in Knowsley (P84/6) within a field shown to have been enclosed by 1783 on the Molyneux Estate map (Lancashire Record Office DDK 1770/18), while two squares lay just inside Prescott (P84/7 and 8) on ground which formed part of Glover's Field at the time of the 1847 Tithe map. The fourth hole was located on the west side of Moss Street in the Town Moss on land which had been granted in 1508 to the inhabitants of Prescott by the lord of Eccleston manor on condition that it was used for pasture only (Bailey 1937, 281-283).

Two of the squares on Stanley Crescent (P84/6 and 7) had similar stratigraphy overlying the boulder clay and it appears that here the plough had broken up the peat leaving less than 50cm of humic topsoil. None of the finds predated 1800, but the evidence of the Estate map indicates that the field in Knowsley immediately outside the boundary of Prescott had been reclaimed by the late 18th century. The third hole (P84/8) struck a filled clay or coal pit and could not be bottomed. The square (P84/26) in the Town Moss, like the others in Stanley Crescent, produced no direct evidence for dumping and reclamation before the end of the 18th century when a row of cottages shown on the OS and Tithe maps was built. Pollen analysis of a core sample taken in 1979 on St Helens

Road, Prescott, which lay in Prescott immediately south of the township boundary with Eccleston, indicated that intensive arable activity had taken place on the site, probably during the late medieval period (Tomlinson and Innes - site 31). This suggests that this area did not form part of the Town Moss which was given by the lord of the manor of Eccleston to the inhabitants of Prescott.

Eccleston had large areas of mossland, especially in the north of the township, and much of this remained unreclaimed to a relatively late date. Some of the large townships on mossland such as Rainford and Eccleston were slow to convert their marginal land to pasture (Chitty 1981, 45). The evidence from pollen analysis suggests that on the northern fringe of the town the mossland within Prescott was taken into cultivation before the rest of the Moss which lay in Eccleston, presumably in response to greater pressure on marginal land in this small but densely populated township. The proximity of this area to the settlement focus must have been an additional factor in its comparatively early agricultural exploitation. However, the absence of finds dated to before c. 1800 in the dumping layers of the Moss Street square (P84/26) suggests that, apart from the permitted development of the Grammar School, the agreement that the Town Moss should not be reclaimed or built on seems to have been largely adhered to, and the land was used for pasture.

#### Warrington Road

Excavations on open ground near the site of the Mill Pottery works at the rear of a row of now demolished houses fronting Warrington Road were hampered by a deep layer of demolition debris covering most of the site, causing one attempted hole to be abandoned. Another square about 4m to the east (P84/22) indicated that the area had been thoroughly levelled down to the natural boulder clay, removing any archaeological deposits.

#### North of High Street

Two squares excavated north of the High Street produced markedly different stratigraphy. P84/15 behind the Registry Office at the foot of a steep slope had only post-medieval finds in humic soils which overlay glacial sands and gravels. The site had clearly been levelled and terraced in modern times.

The other hole (P84/20), to the rear of 29 High Street, revealed the greatest depth of medieval stratigraphy yet encountered in the town, including the only feature which could be certainly identified as medieval (see above, p. 41). In 1592 a potter, Edward Glover, had a message and kiln on this plot.

By 1848 the Two Bulls' Heads public house occupied nos. 27-29A Fazackerley Street (now High Street). A series of yard surfaces, one cobbled, may have been associated with the public house, and these produced a large quantity of comminuted 18th century pottery, including fragments of wasters, saggars and kiln furniture, which had been consolidated with ash and clinker and it appeared that pottery waste was again being used as hardcore.

#### The Distribution of Pottery Finds in Prescott

The great bulk of the finds from the sample holes consisted of pottery and the distribution and nature of the sherds recovered have thrown new light on the pottery industry in Prescott. The distribution of medieval pottery and of kiln furniture and other evidence for pottery manufacture is illustrated in Figs. 9.2 and 9.3.

Eight of the twenty sample holes produced a total of forty-six pottery sherds that appear to be medieval, although independent dating evidence is required to confirm the chronology of the local pottery. In the absence of stratified comparative material from north of the Mersey, the date of the earliest medieval pottery recovered is uncertain, but it is not likely to be earlier than the mid-14th century and may be largely 15th century (Davey, forthcoming). The total number of medieval sherds is small, but they were widely distributed around the town. The majority of sites where medieval sherds occur lie in areas which were probably arable land in the medieval period and the presence of small quantities of pottery may relate to the well-documented practice of manuring the land by spreading the kitchen midden over the fields. In Prescott during the 16th and 17th centuries the Court Rolls repeatedly order the inhabitants to disperse middens which had become a public nuisance. The density of finds of pottery is consistent if low, only three producing more than half a dozen sherds each (P84/12, 17, 20). We might expect the volume of pottery from the open fields at Prescott to diminish gradually the further away from the town centre, on the basis of economy of effort in dispersal of the middens. Preliminary results from field walking suggest that this is the case at Newton-le-Willows. Here a large modern field immediately north of the medieval town has the greatest concentration of both medieval and post-medieval pottery and other finds. The density of artifacts decreases steadily away from the High Street.

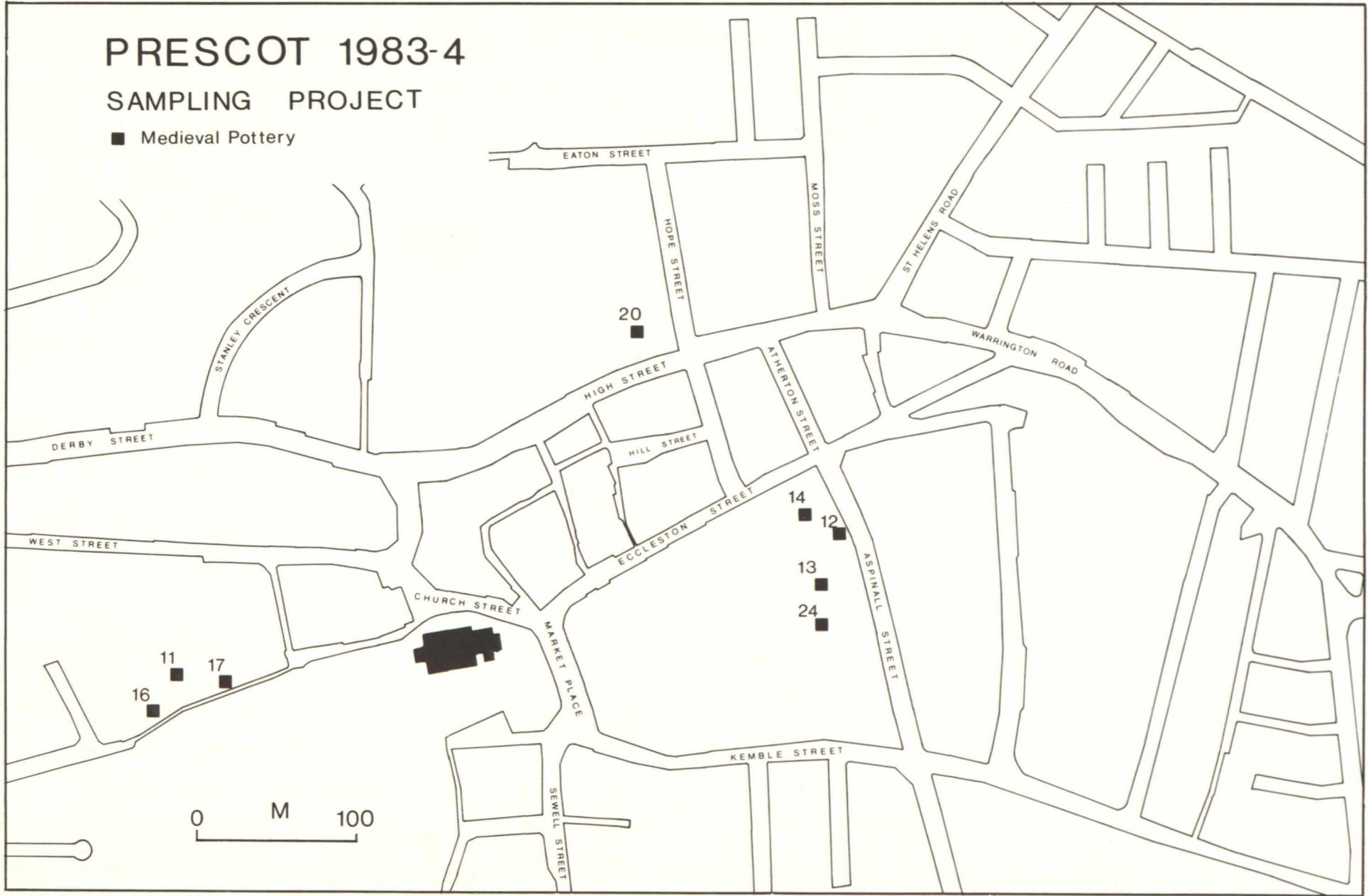
Ironically, in Prescott most squares nearer the heart of the medieval town produced little or no medieval pottery, the principal exception being P84/20 behind no. 29 High Street, which contained twenty-five sherds from three distinct layers. These represent

# PRESCOT 1983-4

## SAMPLING PROJECT

■ Medieval Pottery

45

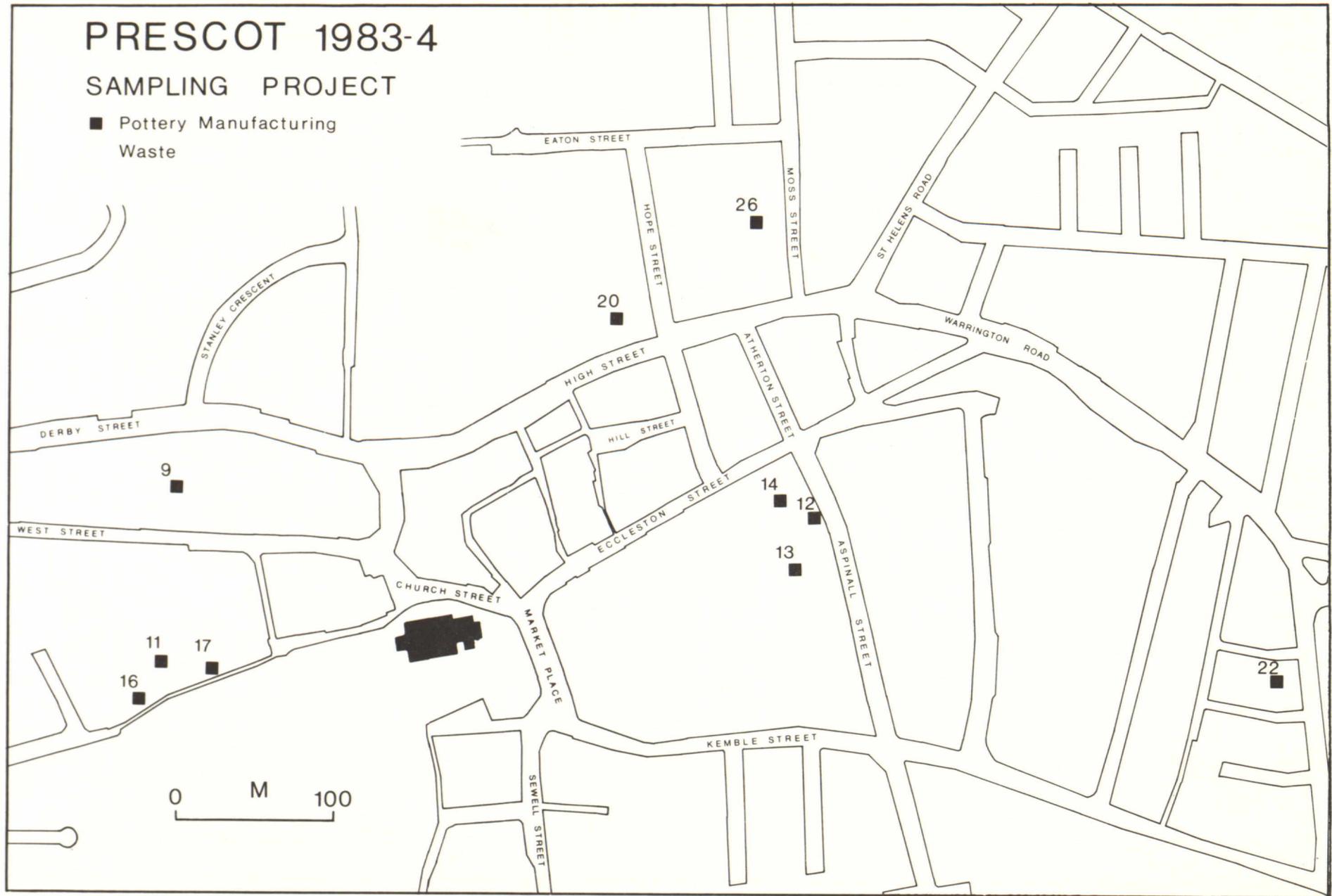


9.2 Distribution of medieval pottery

# PRESCOT 1983-4

## SAMPLING PROJECT

■ Pottery Manufacturing Waste



9.3 Distribution of pottery manufacturing waste

the only clearly stratified contexts containing nothing later than medieval pottery found in the sampling project; most of the other finds occurred in loosely stratified plough soil horizons. The dearth of early pottery in the town centre reflects the degree of later disturbance and levelling over a wide area which has removed most of the medieval deposits in this part of the town.

For the post-medieval period the quantity of pottery from the sample holes is considerably higher than for the medieval period. Early post-medieval wares, characterised by patchy purplish glaze on a sandy, often overfired body, occur in significantly larger quantities than medieval sherds. The 17th century sees the development of better finished purplish and black-glazed wares, although comparatively little of this date was recovered, and, towards the end of the century, the introduction of mottled ware. The same period, from the late 17th century onwards, sees a sharp increase in the quantity of pottery recovered in the sample holes and most have produced at least a few sherds from the late 17th-18th century, while several hundred sherds from individual contexts were found in others.

By the early 18th century pottery is frequently accompanied by stilts, saggars, wasters and other waste from pottery manufacture and it is clear that by this period the normal domestic pattern of use and discarding of pottery is distorted in Prescott by large scale pottery production, which together with the growth of population in the 17th and 18th century and the consequent expansion of the town, resulted in the predominance of post-medieval wares over medieval.

Ten of the twenty holes produced post-medieval saggars, kiln furniture or wasters (Fig. 9.3). This wide dispersal of pottery waste throughout the town is a result of the local practice of using the waste dumps as hardcore for buildings and surfacing and it cannot be taken as proof of a kiln in the immediate vicinity, although there is evidence that in some cases the material did not travel very far. The kiln debris from Aspinall Street (P84/14) was clearly derived from the pottery works found only a few metres to the south west in 1985.

### Conclusions

The sampling project revealed medieval stratigraphy in six of the twenty holes (Fig. 9.2). The stratified medieval deposits tended to occur on the edge of the town rather than in the centre, and in general the deposits were shallow, in some cases appearing to be only loosely stratified plough horizons. The peripheral location of the medieval deposits in part reflects the extensive disturbance

of the ground in the centre of Prescott in the post-medieval and modern periods. Holgate's excavations in particular revealed that large areas of the cellaring and other disturbance along street frontages had removed structural remains (Sites A-E). The absence of any deep surviving medieval stratigraphy away from the frontages, however, requires some explanation.

The dearth of deep stratigraphy is partly due to the topography of Prescott. The ridge on which the late medieval town stood drops away steeply to the south, and erosion and soil creep on the slope have been inimical to the formation and survival of any depth of deposit. It is significant that some of the deepest medieval stratigraphy was encountered on the gentler north slope to the rear of the High Street.

Prescot lacks the depth of medieval deposits which elsewhere are associated not only with successive phases of building but also the intensive use of rear plots for rubbish disposal, small scale industry, such as smithing, tanning or pottery manufacture, and domestic activities, such as bread making, livestock rearing and brewing. Most of these activities are documented for the early post-medieval period in Prescott, but so far little or no archaeological evidence has been recovered for them. Although the sample holes were too small to examine structural remains, nevertheless the lack of rubbish pits or other features, apart from the one linear charcoal deposit behind the High Street, is particularly surprising, and may be due to the practical difficulty of cutting rubbish pits through the sandstone bedrock which resulted in a preference for surface middens.

In addition the absence of deep medieval stratigraphy reflects to a large extent the nature of the settlement, and in particular the agricultural basis of the economy in the medieval period, compared with larger administrative and ecclesiastical centres such as Chester and Shrewsbury.

Another related problem is the scarcity of finds of medieval date from the sampling project. This can be attributed in part to the peripheral location of many of the holes, where only scattered sherds from manuring of the fields have been recovered. The general scarcity of finds in all the excavations however is consistent with archaeological and documentary evidence which suggests that the development of the town occurred late in the medieval period and the town probably supported a relatively small population until the expansion of the 17th century.

In the wider context of Merseyside as a whole, medieval pottery is comparatively scarce compared

with areas such as the Midlands or Cheshire, and in Prescot itself, which is likely to have been producing pottery in the medieval period, only a little over five hundred sherds have been recovered in a total of six area excavations and twenty sample squares between 1980 and 1985. The shortage of finds from the medieval and early post-medieval period may have a wider significance. In 1586 the vicar of Prescot wrote that of the town population of just over four hundred most were under twenty-six years old, and the majority of families were unable to support themselves (Bailey 1937, 300). Such pleas were a common feature of the time and were prone to a degree of hyperbole, but nevertheless, taken with the pottery evidence, it suggests that the material culture of the majority of the townspeople was fairly low. Prescot appears to have suffered heavily from the rising prices of the 16th century, perhaps due to the shortage of agricultural land within the township, and the standard of living of its inhabitants relying on trade may have remained low throughout the century.

Although a nucleated settlement had developed by the mid-14th century, the town lacked a prosperous and well populated hinterland which might have enabled it to grow into a major commercial and administrative centre in the medieval period. The town served primarily as a market focus for the sale of local agricultural produce and small-scale manufactured goods, supplemented by limited trade from farther afield. The latter was assisted by exemptions on tolls for the town's goods by virtue of the charter granted in 1447 to all tenants of King's College, Cambridge which included the town of Prescot (Bailey 1937, 64-73). Although Prescot is unusually well-documented for a town in the North-West from the early post-medieval period onwards, nevertheless it is clear that the town did not develop beyond a local market and distribution centre until the Industrial Revolution.

The nationwide population increase was reflected in the growth of Prescot from the 17th century onwards as the 1743 Edge plan shows, and the same period saw the development of industry in the town, both of which were reflected in the upsurge in the volume of late 17th and 18th century pottery from the sample squares. By the Industrial Revolution, coal mining, pottery manufacture and watchmaking were well established in the town, and all three exported their products on the new Turnpike roads and canals. Of these pottery production has left most archaeological traces, in the form of the finished and discarded objects as well as the debris from manufacturing processes, while a possible bell-pit from coal or clay extraction was also detected in Stanley Crescent (P84/8).

The sampling project has provided a cross-section of the archaeological deposits in locations throughout Prescot which will not only be of value in determining future archaeological strategy in the town, but also, when set against the background of earlier archaeological and documentary evidence, adds a little colour to the sketchy picture of the early history and development of the town.

#### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the following:

The landowners and tenants who permitted holes to be dug in their lawns and gardens: The Archdiocese of Liverpool and Rev. B. Forshaw, B. Chorley, C.R. Chorley, V. Cubbon, J. Deary, J.M. Holt, Knowsley Borough Council, Hugh Lewis and Sons Ltd., K. Maddox, F. and V. Richards, D. Scotson, Speedy Fixings Ltd., S. Strettle, N. Tittle and A. Weston;

The volunteers: M. Barron, B. Battle, M. Byrne, J. Esling, R. Fish, W. Highcock, M. Hollis, K. Lamb, B. Lewis, Y. McAllister, L. McCracken, P. Molloy, P. Skipworth, A. Sclater, E. Smith, K. Taylor, R. Wafer, R. Whyard and S. Williams;

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10. Excavation of an Eighteenth Century Pottery in  
Eccleston Street, Prescot (Site F).

R. McNeil

THE EXCAVATION

A rescue excavation was carried out in advance of the redevelopment of the town centre on a site between Kemble Street and Eccleston Street and to the west of Aspinall Street on waste ground behind the National Westminster Bank (Fig. 1.3). An initial area of c. 180 sq.m. was enlarged by 30 sq.m. with an extension to the east and by two trial trenches north and south of the main area.

A mechanical excavator removed the top overburden to a depth of 1.50m. Layer 1 consisting of brick rubble, concrete and sand, is post-1950 in date and is probably associated with the construction of the National Westminster Bank. Layer 2, a black loam containing much coal, brick and clinker was dumped in the late 19th century to level up the area when Aspinall Street was beginning to be developed. Underlying (2) and throughout the site was an orange brown sandy loam (46), which had developed above the undisturbed natural sands. The deposit was remarkably uniform, although there was a greater density of charcoal and less coal in the lower levels. Medieval sherds only were found in (46) whereas later artifacts were mixed in the upper deposits.

The site divided naturally into two zones. To the west there was little activity until the 19th century. A clinker yard surface (5), a rubbish pit dug to dispose of 20th century glass bottles and two shallow scoops probably tree root holes, constitute the only evidence for any disturbance to the area in post-medieval times. In the east there was a similar quiescent period until the 18th century when a pottery was built on the site (Fig. 10.1).

Only a small portion of the pottery works was uncovered and comprised various tanks or stores used in the preparation of the clays. All the tanks were appended onto the exterior walls of a workshop, of which only the west wall and the south corner wall were contained within the excavation. The limits of this building and of the pottery complex remain unknown but the probable extent of the works is discussed later.

A row of north-south fence posts delineate the west boundary of the pottery. Four square posts were sunk into square or rectangular pits (PH 1-4). The wood of the posts survived in all four instances. Although there was no indication of any buildings associated with the pottery to the west of this line, the kiln tips (7) had spilled through the fence,

confirming that the west plot was untenanted at this time.

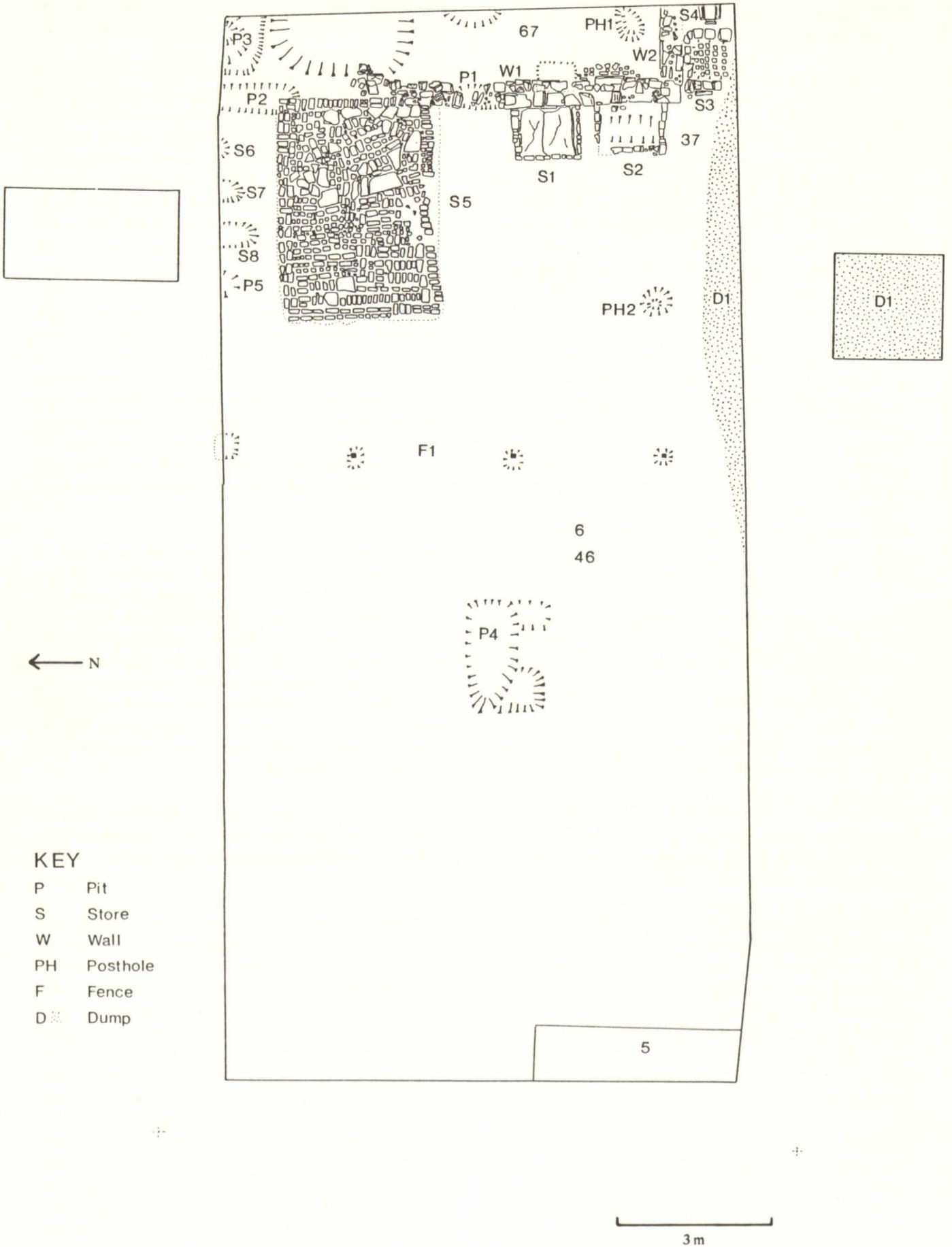
Store 1 was built with three brick walls on a sandstone slab floor. The fourth wall was formed by the north-south sandstone wall of the workshop. The walls were one brick wide, unmortared and can only be described as jerry-built. The front wall had been partially demolished. Three well laid sandstone slabs made up the floor, with the brick walls sitting directly on them. The store was filled with a red gritty clay, the colour of which had stained the workshop wall.

Store 2 was set adjacent to Store 1, but not using its walls. It was built in a similar manner, though larger in size, with brick walls on a sandstone slab floor. Its front wall had largely been demolished. In this case the slab floor had also been dug and levered out, leaving a V-shaped depression in the subsoil. The store minus its floor had subsequently been reused and held a clay, varying in colour from white to yellow, which had also coloured the workshop wall.

Store 3, unlike its two western counterparts, was a much more substantial and solid construction. It was smaller than the other two and built with uncoursed stone walls, to a height of three blocks laid on a brick floor. This store did not utilise the exterior wall in its construction, instead its north wall was built up against the back of the workshop. It was not demolished, probably because of its superior method of construction. A white clay similar to that in Store 2 was contained within Store 3 and was piled up above the level of the walls.

Immediately to its east, was a small box, Store 4, sunk into a tailor-made pit and constructed with edge-set sandstone buffs, lying directly on the subsoil.

The dimensions of Store 5 infer a use different from that of Stores 1-4. This store again dispensed with the need for a fourth wall and utilized the back wall of the pottery workshop. The three remaining walls, brick-built in English Garden bond, survived in part to their full height. These retaining walls stood directly on a well-laid brick and sandstone slab floor (Fig. 10.2). Many of the floor setts were heavily fragmented, suggesting two points: first that there was heavy wear on the floor and a second that the sandstone slabs represent patching and repair to the original brick surface. The floor dropped down towards the east, although this distortion is not assumed to be a deliberate policy, but was caused by continual use. The floor, although underlying three of the walls, butted up against the workshop wall. This repeated relationship between



10.1 General plan, Eccleston Street Pottery site

wall and store argues for the later installation of the tanks against a pre-existing building.

A thin layer of yellow clay (38) extended over most of the floor and up the walls and may have been used as a bonding or lining to the store. Alternatively, it could represent the remains of a removed clay deposit for use in the manufacture of pottery. Although dissimilar from any other clay found on the site, this may result from the refining process to which it had been subjected.

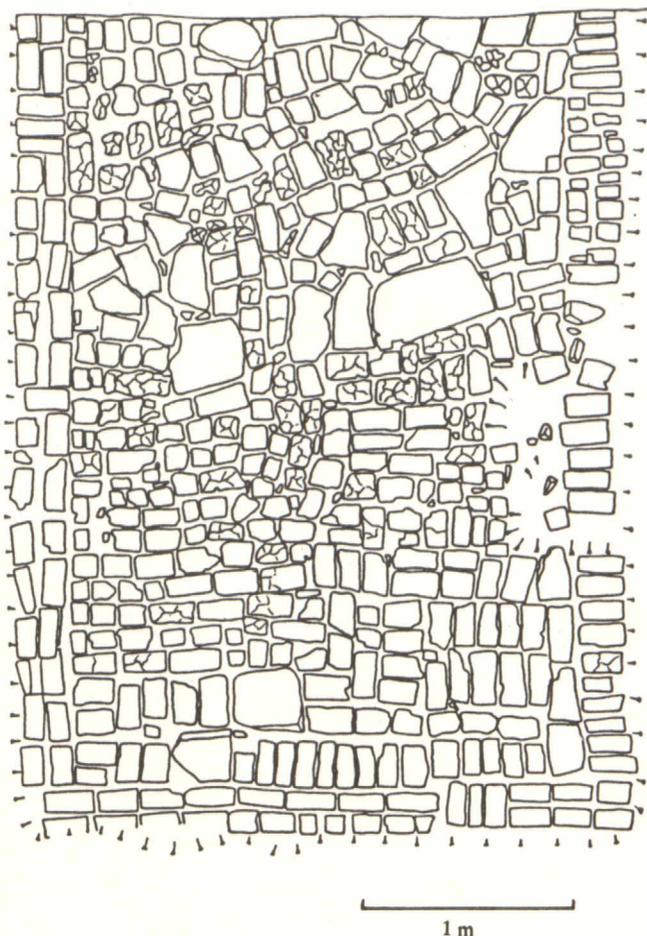
Like the other stores, Store 5 had been made unusable. This defacement consisted of the partial demolition of the walls and the dumping inside of large quantities of demolition rubble. This demolition (8) comprised burnt clays, numerous bricks and half-bricks and large quantities of kiln furniture and its associated waster pots and saggars, deriving from pottery production elsewhere on the site.

Three oval pits, and a putative fourth, all of which partially underlay the north section, were set in a line at a slight angle to Store 5. Although none was

completely excavated, all were cut to a similar format, with 2 vertical long sides and 2 sloping ends and a rounded bottom. The excavation of these pits by the potters followed a series of guidelines, and this uniformity of execution argues for an identical function. The likeliest explanation for these pits is that they were used as underground stores for the clay, whereby the clay was formed into balls and rolled down the ramp into the pit until it was required. The moist conditions of the soil and a wooden lid over the top ensured that the clay remained in a plastic state. The pits were filled with varying quantities of clinker, charcoal and clay. The similarities in the fills indicate that all the pits were filled in at the same time and, indirectly, that all were in use together.

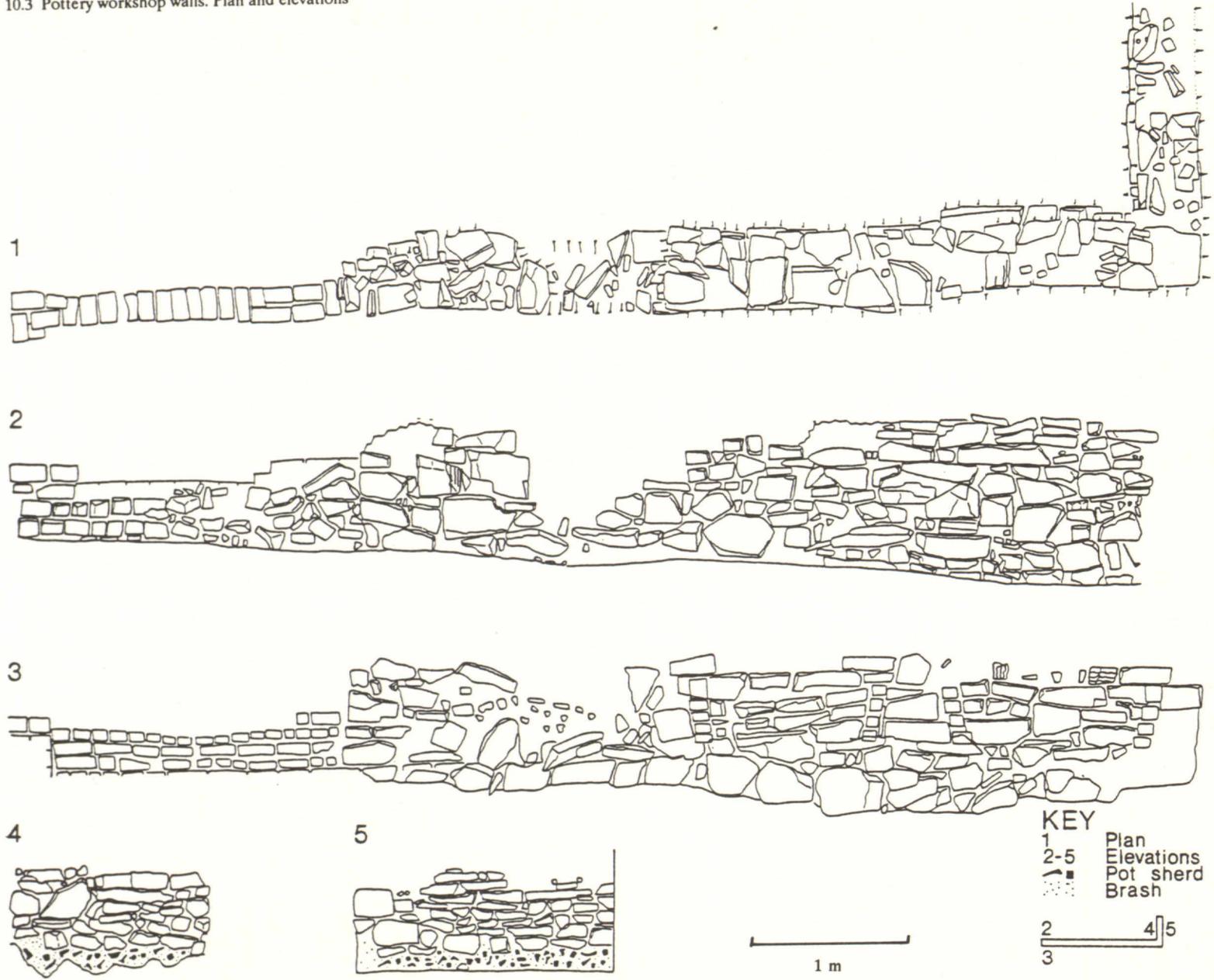
The workshop walls were built in several units (Fig. 10.3). The earliest section housing Stores 1 and 2 and ending with a straight face c. 1m beyond the robber trench (52) was also the best preserved. It was constructed in dry stone walling, using thin yellow sandstone buffs and clay was occasionally used for pointing in its lowest courses. The wall was on the narrow side, but the flat horizontal top represented its full height. The second section to be built in dry stone was the east-west section housing stores 3 and 4, which was butt-jointed against the north-south wall. Both the early and later wall had foundation trenches dug marginally bigger than the intended wall, but where the later wall differed was in the use of pottery wasters and saggars in its foundations. This method of construction was used under the section of brick wall belonging to Store 5, and was observed by Davey and Philpott in their sample quadrat 14 (Philpott and Davey 1984).

At some time it was decided to enlarge the premises by extending the wall northwards. A continuous foundation trench was dug, following the line of the existing wall, part of which was subsequently backfilled when it was decided to reduce the scale of the operation. The section next to the original end of the sandstone wall continued the tradition of using sandstone buffs to tie in the back wall of Store 5. The rest of the store wall dispensed with this method and replaced it with a brick construction, whose foundations cut through and used the levelling up material (54). The use of brick in the retaining wall may have had a practical basis. On the inside of the wall and just below its top were the remains of a brick floor, bonded into the wall itself. The brick floor was seemingly only present in this area, but its reconstruction remains problematic. A small, semi-circular, 2-course brick plinth lay athwart the original sandstone wall at its southern end, with no attempt to key the two together. These two structures, contemporary with each other, if not their wall sections, and found at



10.2 Plan of store 5

10.3 Pottery workshop walls. Plan and elevations



the same relative depth, may have had analogous functions, acting as internal buttresses or standing as the equivalent of stone or timber post-pads. The sandstone wall had been robbed out in its central section and then roughly backfilled with clay and the unwanted stone, saggars and waster pots. (P1, 52) The wall was visible as a dwarf wall from the yard where the stores were, but was invisible inside, where it acted as a typical foundation wall whose top was flush with the floor. This means that the workshop was designed on two levels, with the stores being at the lower level, and the interior wall at the higher level. The building was deliberately sited to take advantage of the rising ground, so that minimum effort was involved in levelling up the interior. The floor, a burnt red clay, was largely complete at the south end of the building, but was found in isolated patches in the north, where it had slumped over the hardcore (55) which here constituted the floor foundation. This deposit again utilised the waste materials from the kiln, recognising that their porous qualities facilitated drainage. The presence of kiln waste sealed by the floor implies that the floor was a successor to other floors, laid at some time after pottery production had begun on site.

A rectangular pit, below a layer of demolition material was filled with saggars and waste pots. It is unclear whether it dates to the abandonment of the pottery or to its usage. In view of the content of other pits and foundation trenches, the later case is considered more likely.

The absence of such structures as drying racks, workbenches, cisterns etc. must directly equate with the proportion of the pottery uncovered, but also suggests that the design and the layout of the works was planned, whereby each process involved, such as shaping and throwing the vessels, applying slips and glazes, and adding handles or other decorations, was carried out in separate zones within the pottery.

The frequent use of kiln waste as a wall foundation, as hardcore or as levelling up material implies that although the building was fairly shortlived as a pottery, it was continuously being repaired and altered during its lifetime. The end of the pottery is seen with the destruction of many of the structures and with a layer of demolition material spread over the inside of the building.

The floor and its hardcore surface overlay an orange brown loamy sand, which is viewed as the same deposit as that found outside the building. In one area only, both within and without the workshop a dark brown loam (37, 67) with large quantities of charcoal, developed above the loamy sands. This deposit, containing a limited range of forms dating

to the 17th century, is significant because it provides a *terminus ante quem* for the beginning of pottery production on site.

Two post holes (PH1, PH2) remain unallocated and predate the pottery. The post holes measured 5.00m centre to centre and both posts of c. 0.20m scantling had been pulled out. There is some evidence, based on the morphology and alignment of Pits 3 and 5, (see plan) that these pits formed the end post holes to this structure, giving a rectangular building of c. 5.00m x 8.00m.

#### DISCUSSION

Surprisingly, few potteries have been totally excavated. Most work has concentrated on the kilns with little attention given to the sheds and workshops. The site of a kiln is easily recognisable, by survey or by excavation, usually identified by a high degree of burning, waster pots and kiln furniture, concentrated in one limited area. With the identification of the location of the kiln the excavation attempts to resolve the two immediate questions that are asked: namely by what means and at what date were the pots fired. The imbalance in the evidence means that all the remaining processes involved in the making of a clay vessel remain largely unknown.

The structure of Stores 1 and 2 precludes their use as soaking pits, as they were neither well made nor watertight. The stores were so similar in their appearance and size that they must have been used for the same purpose, that is, for storing the raw clay, where presumably the only requirements of the store was to contain the clay on a temporary basis. The clay box at the Albion Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent, was placed on the floor and was of an equivalent size to Stores 1 and 2 (Celoria and Kelly 1973, 52, 54, Fig. nos. 3, 5). Store 3 was in a different class and resembled structures at Pinfold Lane, Site 2, Buckley, (McNeil 1985) which were built as cists, with edge set stones on a slab floor and the whole tank sunk in a pit. It is feasible that Store 3 was used as a soaking pit, but the evidence is equivocal. The dimensions and precise engineering of Store 4 argues for a specialised function. As a container it was not suitable for large quantities of clay and could only be used to keep some material that was needed rarely and in small quantities such as sand or grog. A handful of sand would be sufficient to act as a separating agent between pots and the kiln floor. Grog was often added as filler to the raw clay, but only small amounts were needed at any one time.

The key to the understanding of Store 5 is in its floor which, as has been noted, was heavily worn and

patched. The description of the use of the brick floor at the Verwood Potteries, Dorset (Young 1979) is valid for Store 5. Young describes how the clay was spread on the floor, which was previously coated with a thin layer of sand. The clay was then worked by treading it with bare feet. This incorporated the sand into the clay, removed any impurities and made it uniformly plastic. Next the clay was cut into strips and rolled up. This process of sanding, treading and rolling was repeated three times at the Verwood Potteries to ensure a correct degree of tempering and an absolutely even texture. The three Stores 6-8 located immediately outside Store 5 were suitable as temporary containers for the balls of clay between any of these refining stages.

A contemporary illustration of treading clay is depicted on the porcelain jug presented to Thomas Spencer, a Liverpool potter, who subsequently moved to Prescott. The view is a representation of his works where sugar loaf moulds and industrial pots were manufactured (Hillis 1985, 2).

Store 5 also fits the description of a sunning pan where the raw clay was left to weather for sometime. At the Longton Hall Porcelain factory (Tait and Cherry 1978) a brick-built rectangular chamber had almost identical proportions to the sunning pan at Prescott, although in this case there was a central fire box. The chamber is termed a smoke/drying house. There was no indication of a fire box or central hearth at Prescott, although some of the bricks were displaced along the southern edge, and may have been removed when a portable brazier was inserted. Although the rectangular store was probably custom-built for a specific function, in practice it was probably used for numerous refining processes, such as a sunning pan, a puddling floor and a drying room.

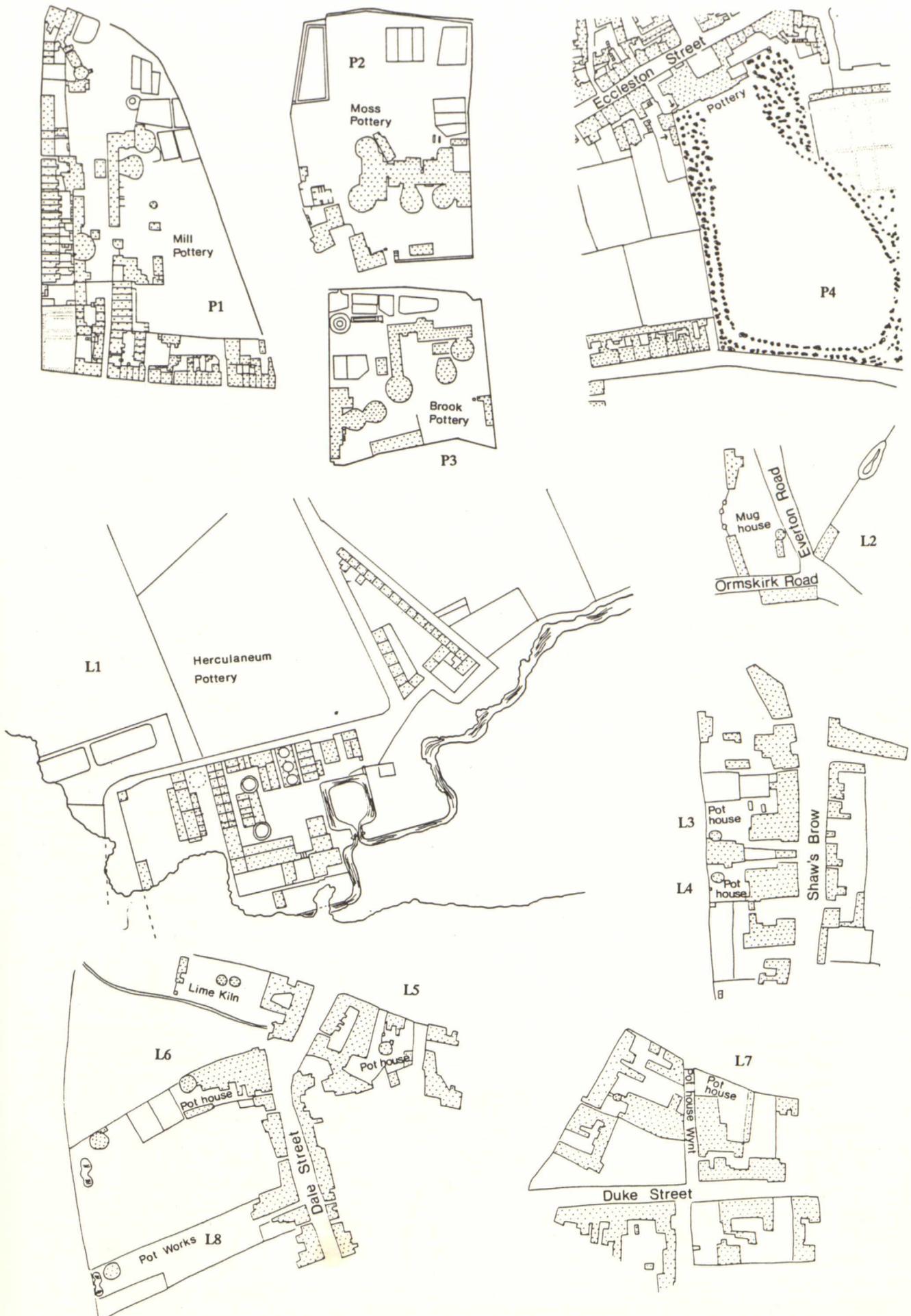
The dwarf walls were not capable of supporting a two storey building. Their function was to act as a base for vertical uprights, spaced at intervals of c. 2-2.5m. This means that the building was never intended to be more than a single storey open shed. Few sheds and outbuildings have been excavated, but there are valid comparisons to be made with these few. At the Verwood Potteries there are both single and two storey buildings, both being long and narrow. In the two storey buildings, the wares were made on the ground floor and dried and stored before firing on the first floor (Young 1979). Wind baffles, slight brick walls, protected the 17th century kiln at Woolwich from the worst weather (Pryor and Blockley 1978). A rectangular building, c. 9 x 5m was excavated at the 18th century pottery at Donyatt, Somerset (Moorhouse 1971, 215). The standing sheds at Buckley, of a variety of dates from 18th-20th century, are all single storeyed (Davey 1975).

#### The Documentary and Map Evidence

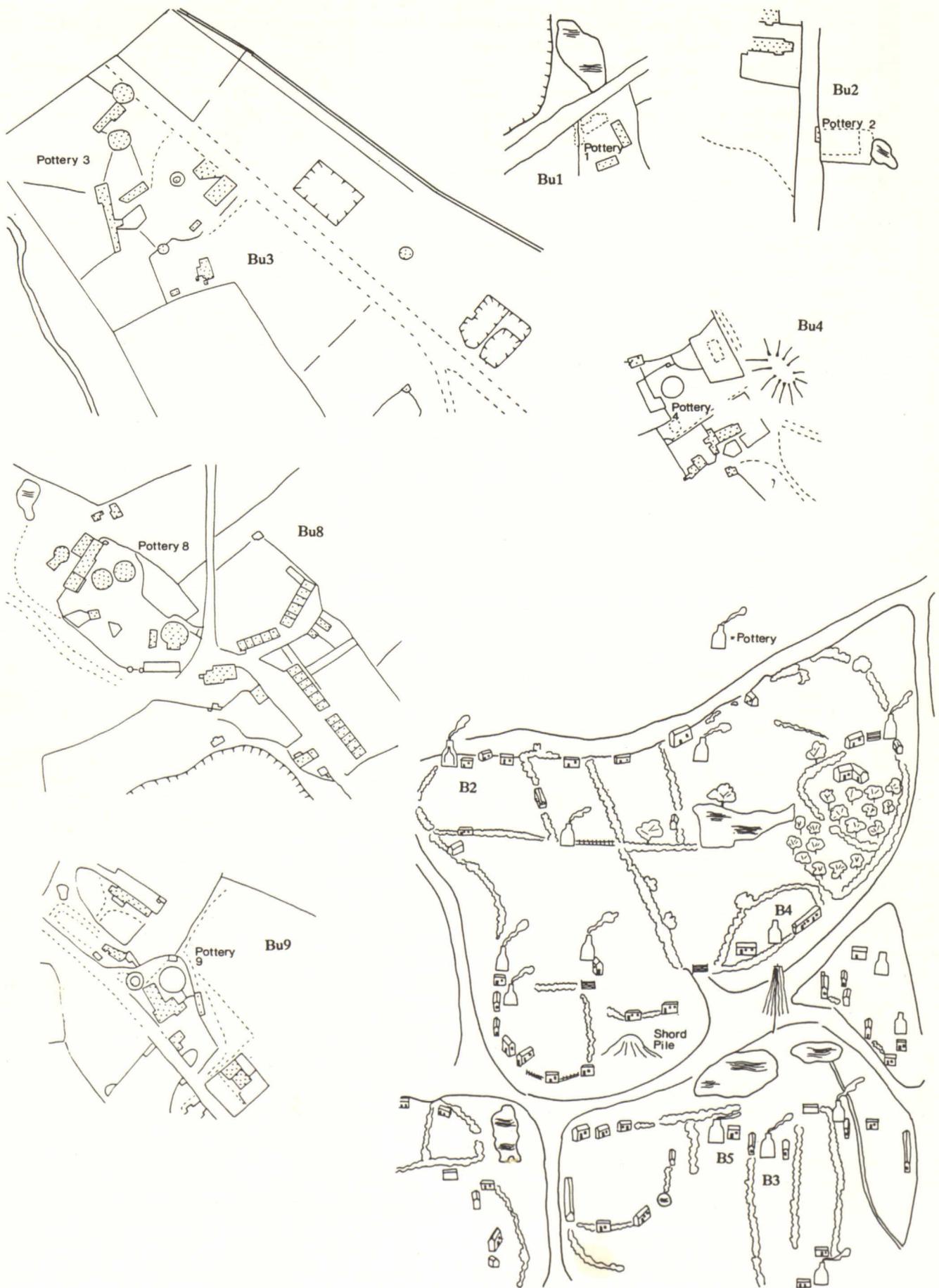
Six Prescott potters had wills registered at Chester between 1734 and 1768. These are as follows:- Peter Sephton, claypotter, 1734; James Pye, claypotter, 1743; William Ashcroft, potter, 1745; James Barlow, claypotter, 1762; Thomas Wheatcroft, potter, 1767; Edward Whitlow, potter, 1768. Two of these potters are also mentioned in the Manor Court Rolls: in 1742 John Sefton is described as "son of Peter Sefton, late of Prescott aforesaid, claypotter, deceased" and in 1792 James Barlow is recorded in a surrender of a messuage in Prescott recently purchased by him and rebuilt as "late of Prescott, clay potter". The Court Rolls also mention other potters. In 1743 Lawrence Kay of Prescott "claypotter" is described as living in Eccleston Street and a second surrender of 1756 mentions that he previously owned a "mugworks" there. This document refers to mug ovens and other buildings lying on the North side of Eccleston Street and to a passage called Gateway Road which led from the street to the mug oven and buildings which "are walled off from the other lands".

Another "clay potter", Henry Woods, is mentioned in a surrender of 1768. In this document a messuage, dwelling house and tenement are described as being "on the westside of a certain New Street Lane, an opening within Prescott aforesaid, leading from the Hillock Lane (now Kemble Street) aforesaid to the dwelling house of Henry Woods Claypotter in Prescott, aforesaid, then in the possession or occupation of James Curry". Whilst Lawrence Kay's pottery is very clearly described as being north of Eccleston Street - and it is difficult to imagine that in a legal document of this kind such information would be inaccurate, as it would have been immediately contested - that of Henry Woods lies to the west of Aspinall Street (New Street Lane) and to the north of Kemble Street, in an area of land called "Bonds Acre". Given that the area of Prescott between Kemble Street and Eccleston Street was already occupied by the copyholders by the late 16th century, it seems likely that the pottery in question lay in the area of land immediately to the west of Aspinall Street, which, at the time of the Tithe Map, appears to have reverted to some kind of parkland or open space, not used for agriculture. If this is the case, then the pottery excavated in 1985 is most likely to have been that of Henry Woods or his successors on the site.

The 1848 map shows a complex of buildings south of Eccleston Street, bounded by a park wall, which cannot be domestic in character. Almost certainly the buildings depicted represent the 18th century pottery uncovered in the 1985 excavation. Furthermore the position of the excavated wall can be pinpointed and is the southern-most shed shown on the 1848 map. The robbed wall in sample hole 14



10.4 Prescot potteries P1-P4. Liverpool potteries L1-L8. Scale: 1: 2, 750



10.5 Buckley Potteries Bu1-Bu4, Bu8 and Bu9. Burslem Potteries B2-B5. Scale: 1:2,750

excavated by Davey and Philpott in 1984 is the small west cross section backing onto the garden wall. Both walls are indicated by an arrow in Figure 10.4, P4. The alleyway still functions as a passageway from Eccleston Street, although it is now covered. There is no indication of the kilns on the 1848 map but these were probably demolished with the abandonment of the works.

It is also interesting to observe how the potter was forced to expand around the garden/parkland (36a on the 1847 Tithe map for Prescot) instead of directly south from the main road as might be expected. The oblique line of the park boundary has survived to form the pottery boundary between nos. 6 and 8 Aspinall Street whilst the core of the north-south park wall has been incorporated into the boundary wall behind nos. 8 - 18 Aspinall Street (Davey 1978, 25).

#### The nature and status of the site

It should be possible to correlate the area covered by a pottery with the type of manufacture. The plans of a number of potteries were examined and have been redrawn at a common scale in Figs 10.4 and 10.5. As far as circumstances permitted, local sites were selected, although some comparison has been made with the Staffordshire and Buckley potteries.

In Prescot there are no reliable 18th century maps of the town. There is, however, one of the few early OS maps of towns which were produced at an experimental large scale of 1:1,056. On the 1848 OS map the 19th century Brook, Mill and Moss Potteries are drawn with great detail, showing the number of kilns, blunging pits, sunning pans and workshops (Fig. 10.4, P1-3, L1; Davey 1978a, 56).

Liverpool has the advantage over all the neighbouring areas in that a large scale map 40 yards to the inch was drawn up by George Perry in 1769. The work is commensurate with the later OS maps in attention to detail and is taken to be accurate. Several premises are shown as potteries with kilns clearly visible (Fig. 10.4, L2-L8). The Liverpool potteries have been well researched and documented so that now many of the potters have been identified (Mayer 1855; Smith 1970; Hollis 1985). The 1800 map of the Herculaneum pottery (Fig. 10.4, L1; Smith 1970) was consulted and is included to show the 19th century development and diversification of the industry.

The plans of the Buckley potteries are reproduced from a directory of all known 18th and 19th century sites, based on the 25" 1871 OS sheet, but updated where necessary (Davey 1975). The numbers allocated

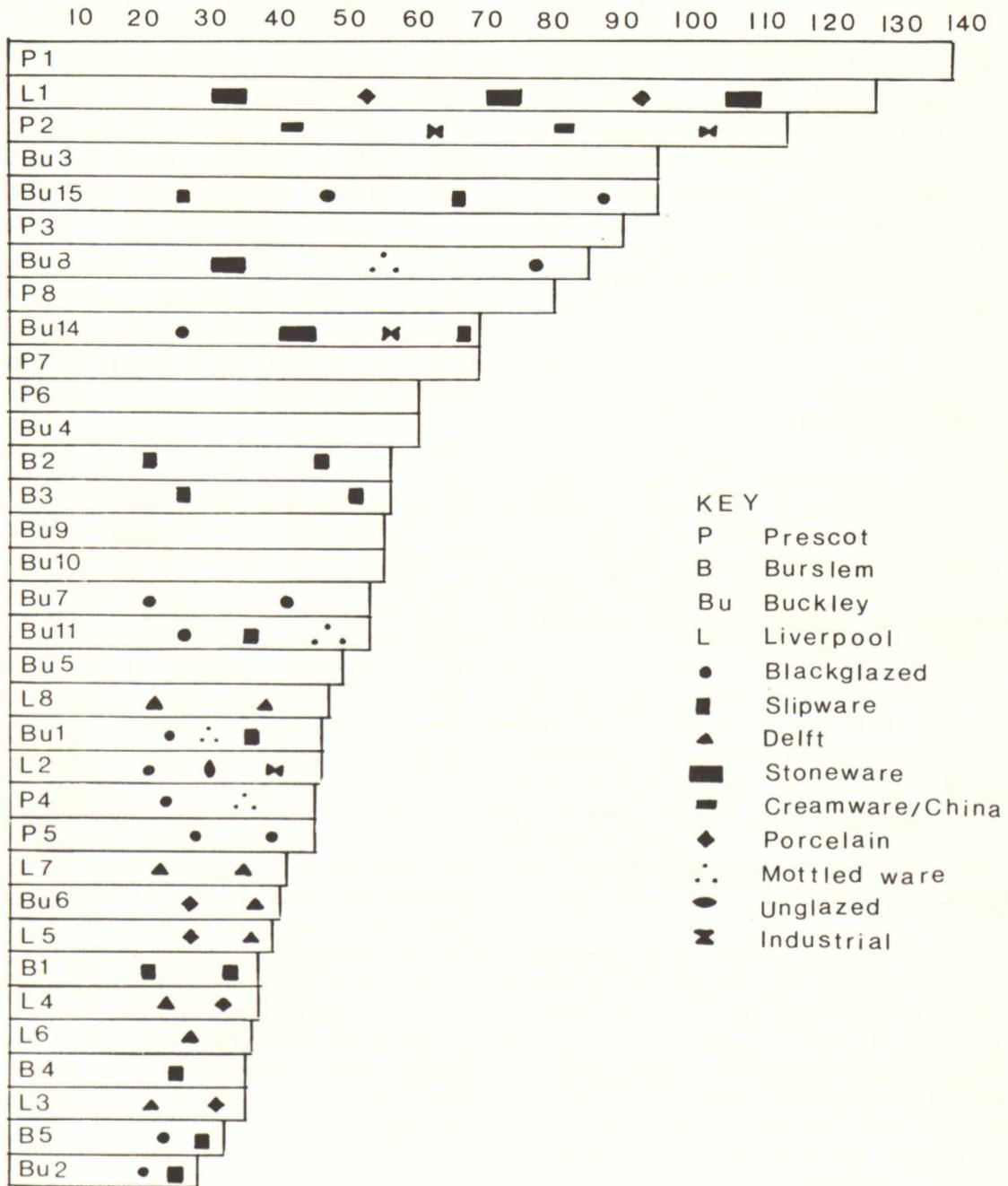
there have been retained (Fig. 10.5, Bu1-Bu4, Bu8, Bu9).

In the case of the Staffordshire Potteries two estate maps of 1720 and 1750 were consulted (cf. Hawke-Smith 1986, 76), the latter being reproduced in a simplified form in Figure 10.5, B2-B5 ("Wood's Map"; Wedgwood 1908, opposite 121). Although the topography of Burslem can be recognised, the maps were never designed to be the work of surveyors, but were pictorial representations of the number of inhabitants and their trades.

Many potteries throughout Britain had small multi-flued kilns with a number of fireboxes some 3-4m in diameter which were regularly demolished and rebuilt during their lifetime. As firing developed into a more organised and controlled affair, the primitive kilns were replaced by permanent and more substantial ones like the bottle kilns found in Staffordshire or like those indicated for the Brook, Mill and Moss potteries on the OS map.

Figure 10.6 represents the relative areas of these 33 potteries. The measurements are based on the area of the curtilage in square metres and not on the size of the individual sheds. The number given at the top of the diagram is the square root of that area. There is a clear distinction between the large 19th century industrial and fully mechanized complexes and the 18th/19th century urban/rural potters, with the 19th century businesses occupying areas between 8,100 sq.m. and 19,600 sq.m., and the family concerns occupying substantially smaller plots ranging between 900 sq.m. at the bottom end and 3600 sq.m., at the top. Within this latter group it is difficult to isolate any sub-group on size criteria alone. If some consideration is given to the type of wares manufactured, it is observable that the six largest potteries of the twenty-two (27%) specialised in the production of one or two wares at the most, whereas the eight medium-sized concerns manufactured a more comprehensive range of wares. In the final eight small scale potteries the emphasis is again on the production of a limited number of wares, with Delft, slipware and black-glazed earthenware being individually favoured. The pottery excavated in 1985 falls within this sub-group.

Like many crafts, pottery production has developed into a highly organised and structured industry, commencing with the small scale potter of the medieval and early post-medieval periods, producing wares solely for the personal and domestic markets, through to the stage of the urban potter, producing high quality wares, as for instance at the slipware potteries in Burslem, Staffordshire where there was a dense concentration of skilled potters in the 18th century (cf. Wedgwood 1913, maps opposite pages 107,



10.6 Diagram showing relative sizes of 18th and 19th century potteries

131). The Herculeum Pottery, Liverpool is a good example of the final development of the industrial pottery at the end of the 18th to the beginning of the 19th centuries, where the sheds are built as stream-lined factory units, as befitting an industry concerned with mass production, diversification and marketing (Smith 1970, 94-5).

The decline in the popularity of pewter as table wares between 1650 and 1750 encouraged the emergence of the urban pottery, producing high quality decorative items, that were both attractive to handle and were more hygienic with their smooth easily cleaned surfaces. This change in the pottery industry has been well described by Peter Brears (1971) who discusses the emergence and diffusion of the different types of potteries and their economic position. At the same time there was a corresponding and perhaps unexpected rise in a totally new class of potter, the rural agricultural potter, who catered for the growing needs of a semi-industrial and urban population by producing cheap lead glazed earthenwares, suitable for use in the kitchen in the preparation of food and drink. In the north-west, tankards, jugs, storage vessels and pancheons form the bulk of these wares. The pottery in Eccleston Street falls into this category, being neither an urban pottery in the true sense with its large and expanding markets, nor the family concern typical of the late medieval period, with its emphasis on local consumption.

## POTTERY

### Black-glazed Pottery

Black-glazed earthenwares represent the most common type excavated and can be divided into coarse wares (large utilitarian vessels) and fine wares, generally for table use.

Fabric types fall into three main categories with further subdivisions depending upon the size and frequency of inclusion.

In general, coarser wares were produced from less refined clays, although there were exceptions. Whilst the majority of larger vessels had substantial white clay laminations with moderate to abundant inclusions ranging from fine to very coarse in size (16, 112), there were nevertheless, those with only moderate laminations (32, 10) within the same fabric groupings. Because the site is a pottery, the finds do not represent a typical domestic assemblage, but are instead the pottery rejected from the firing. The majority of sherds are therefore seconds. Of

these, 1,232 sherds were coarse wares and only 508 sherds were fine wares. Philpott has commented on the general decline in black-glazed fine wares in the 18th century and the corresponding rise in mottled and stonewares (Philpott 1985, 86). It is worth noting, however, that coarse and fine wares were fired under different conditions; the coarse wares probably being fired in an open kiln and the fine wares generally being fired in saggars, so the likelihood of defects, seconds and waster pots was greater with the coarsewares and this may partially explain the high number of these sherds.

Tables showing total forms excavated are as follows:

### Coarse wares:

<u>Form</u>	<u>Number of Sherds</u>	<u>Estimated Vessel Equiv.</u>
Storage vessel	710	114
Pancheon	133	25
Bowl	94	28
Jug	12	8
Wide-necked dish	143	7
Large-handled vessel	4	1
Globular Jar	28	3
Tankard	3	2
Plate	1	1
Beaker	1	1
Candle holder	5	1
Test Piece	1	1
Syrup collecting jar	1	1
Unrecognized	142	--
	---	---
	1,278	193

### Fine wares:

<u>Form</u>	<u>Number of Sherds</u>	<u>Estimated Vessel Equiv.</u>
Bowl	245	31
Jug	84	12
Globular jar	6	2
Beaker	12	4
Tankard	88	17
Posset Pot	39	8
Wide-necked dish	23	11
Pedestal dish	2	1
Cup	12	5
Plate	2	2
Tyg	1	1
Large-handled vessel	46	2
	---	---
	560	96

Defects tended to differ between coarse wares and fine wares: this being largely due to firing technology for the different wares (see kiln report). The most common fine ware defects were caused by firing in upright positions, which resulted in vitrification of the internal base (44, 51). Furthermore, pooling to one side of internal bases was a common feature (51, 37, 38) caused by slight tilting of vessels within the saggars in order to prevent adhering. Many sherds had fairly thick external runs of glaze (36, 41). Again, coarse ware defects are largely related to the firing position, the stacking method and positioning in the kiln. These wares, unlike fine wares, were probably placed in the open kiln, hence greater problems occurred with temperature control, resulting in overfiring (14, 21, 29). Far more of the coarser wares showed evidence of reduction - due undoubtedly to thicker vessel walls and more open textured fabrics, (68, 33, 23, 16). Separator and stilt marks are also regarded as features likely to make a vessel fall into the classification of "seconds". These features were more evident on coarse as opposed to fine wares.

Much separator evidence, on uppermost rim areas, amounts to no more than lighter coloured patches than the surrounding areas. Also, many vessels were stacked rim to rim which has resulted in glaze running from inverted vessels, pooling and vitrifying around separators (13, 10, 1, 30). In some instances, separators have adhered to bases (22, 21). Stilt marks were mainly found on pancheon sherds with pooling of glaze around areas where stilts have been situated (28). This feature is, however, not exclusive to pancheon forms and a few were found on storage vessel bases (26), a stilt mark was found on the rim of a storage vessel from which it is suggested it had been fired in an inverted position (12). Separation fabric was used occasionally when firing fine wares in saggars (43, 40, 37) presumably just sufficient to tilt a vessel slightly and represent the potter's attempts to prevent fineware vessels adhering to saggars given that running glaze was an ever-present possibility.

In all instances, the thickness of the glaze determined the overall quality of the finished product. The majority of coarse wares were found to be unevenly glazed, often with a gritty texture (12, 19) caused undoubtedly by a combination of thin glaze mix and poor application. Where glazes are thickly applied, finishes were found to vary from glossy to metallic lustre (13, 31) although fewer coarse wares displayed this feature. Finer wares tended to have a more consistent and uniform glaze application, some with fine metallic-lustrous finishes (38, 43, 37). Even where "grittiness" is evident, the lustre of the glaze has not been affected to any great extent (36, 68, 56).

#### Mottled and Self-Coloured Wares

Six main fabrics have been identified at Prescott (Philpott and Davey, 1984), and five of these have been found in the recent excavations. Descriptions follow those of Philpott and Davey and are correlated where possible.

1. Pure hard greyish buff fabric with few small dark inclusions up to 0.2mm, few reddish brown inclusions up to 0.4mm and a few white clay inclusions up to 0.5mm. Used for thin walled vessels, tankards and cups. Philpott and Davey Fabric 1.

2. Hard greenish grey buff fabric, often overfired; a few small mica inclusions up to 0.2mm, a few dark inclusions up to 1mm, a few quartz inclusions up to 0.5mm and some white clay up to 0.3mm. Philpott and Davey Fabric 2.

3. Poorly mixed buff pink body with some banding of clays. Few red grog inclusions up to 1mm, few white clay inclusions up to 2mm and few quartz up to 0.5mm. Used for large bowls. Philpott and Davey Fabric 4.

4. Buff pink with slight banding of clays. Many white inclusions of white clay up to 3mm, some reddish brown grog up to 3mm and few quartz up to 1mm, used for large bowls and chamber pots. Philpott and Davey Fabric 5.

5. Very coarse pinkish orange fabric. Many white clay inclusions up to 3mm, many quartz up to 1.5mm and some smaller dark inclusions up to 0.05mm. Used for larger bowls. Philpott and Davey Fabric 6.

A range of forms is represented at Prescott. Large wide-mouthed bowls and dishes are the most common. One chamber pot was also found. Amongst the fine wares, tankards are the most common type, with posset cups, beakers and skillets also represented. The majority of coarse wares were manufactured locally and probably on site; most of these are seconds, with some defects in the glazing, but there are also a few badly warped bowls and dishes, which are seen as waster pots. The fine wares are not so easily attributed to this kiln, although they appear to be manufactured from local clays. The few pieces of kiln furniture and equipment which show evidence for mottled ware production indicate that a limited range of these wares were manufactured on site. Decoration is restricted to bands of turned decoration on the tankards. Most coarse ware vessels were unslipped, but a pale yellowish slip was applied frequently to tankards and fine wares. Glazes vary in colour from a yellowish brown to a deep reddish brown and are usually glossy. The mottling is found most commonly

as streaking on the coarse vessels, but is often only slight spotting or even a clear glaze on the tankards. This variation in the mottling agrees with the material found on the sampling excavations (Philpott and Davey 1984, 23).

#### Saggars - Kiln Technology

127 saggars sherds were excavated, constituting an estimated vessel equivalent of 39. Total figures as follows:

<u>Rim</u>	<u>Body</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Profile</u>
35	30	60	2

Fabrics fell into three types:

1. An open textured yellowish-buff coloured material with moderate inclusions of red grog, buff clay, dark shale and chert. Saggars manufactured from this particular fabric tended to be less roughly made than others.

2. A harder, more compacted material varying in colour from brown/red, muddy mustard-red or grey. Inclusions were abundant, consisting mainly of a very hard fabric with a slightly glossy appearance (probably chert) and varying in size from medium to very coarse (15mm x 9mm). Other inclusions consisted of buff clay, red grog and burnt grey shale.

3. A finer version of 2, where the background fabric and colour tended to be similar although inclusions were fewer and smaller in size. Again, these comprised buff clay, chert, grog and shale.

All saggars were roughly circular in shape, except two (99 and 88), which were oval. It was only possible to measure the depth of one saggars (120mm) as this was the only one with a complete profile. Thickness of saggars walls varied, those of fabric 1 being the finest of all (c. 18-20mm) with saggars sherds of fabrics 2 and 3 measuring c. 25-30mm thick. Evidence of reduction and/or overfiring was clear on many sherds (103, 105, 94, 97, 90) suggesting that these vessels were used for several firings.

Traces of glaze were found on many saggars sherds, tending in the main to be iron-stained lead glaze with only one profile sherd having a small patch of manganese-stained lead glaze to the internal body.

The large oval saggars (88) had the most substantial evidence of iron-stained lead glaze to the internal base; drips and patches were present in roughly circular formations suggesting that several small fineware vessels may have been fired simultaneously.

Wherever runs of glaze were visible these flowed from rims downwards to bases, both internally and externally (104, 96, 89), occasionally running into the base and vitrifying (104, 90), suggesting that the saggars were used in an upright position. This method of firing contrasts with that found by Brears where the vessel was placed on the floor of the kiln and a saggars inverted over it (Brears 1971).

Evidence shows that separation techniques were required, not only for vessels, but for saggars themselves, although given that saggars were not likely to fuse together, as unglazed, the need for separation is unclear. It is possible that bats or bobs may have been inserted between saggars to ensure some degree of air circulation (88, 107, 93, 96, 89).

Use of saggars did not exclude the use of parting sherds and other propping devices. Indeed, evidence from saggars and vessel sherds show that separation methods were vital to prevent glazes fusing with anything with which they came into contact. The remains of stilts can be seen on 90; small ceramic pieces were used to tilt a vessel slightly thus facilitating easy removal from the saggars base once the firing process was completed.

Given the size of vessels and depth of saggars, it is fairly certain that only fine ware items were fired within them (see 107). Fine ware items would not have been able to withstand the pressure which a stacking method would inevitably entail. A significantly greater proportion of coarse ware sherds showed evidence of reduction and/or overfiring, suggesting exposure to greater fluctuations of temperature due to firing in an open kiln. Figures for overfired sherds as follows:

Coarse wares - total 1278 (405 overfired)

Fine wares - total 562 (66 overfired)

Potters needed to utilise kiln space as economically as possible for one firing, so placing and stacking of pots was extremely well planned. Fine ware items were placed upright within upright saggars, the latter being stacked on top of each other. Coarse wares were undoubtedly stacked rim to rim, base to base in a column or "pyramid" formation. Table for firing positions as follows:

#### Coarse wares

<u>Form</u>	<u>Total sherds</u>	<u>Upright</u>	<u>Inverted</u>	<u>N/A.</u>
Storage vessel	710	121	53	536
Pancheon	133	14	27	92
Bowl	94	40	—	54
Jug	12	10	—	2
Wide-necked dish	143	50	—	93

Large-handled vessel	4	--	--	4
Globular jar	28	28	--	--
Tankard	3	3	--	--
Plate	1	--	--	--
Beaker	1	--	--	1
Candle holder	5	5	--	--
Test piece	1	--	--	--
Syrup collecting jar	1	1	--	--
Unidentified	142	--	--	142
	<hr/>			
	1278	272	80	926
	<hr/>			

#### Fine wares

Bowl	247	108	--	139
Jug	84	36	--	48
Globular jar	6	4	--	2
Beaker	12	8	--	4
Tankard	88	57	--	31
Posset pot	39	18	--	21
Wide-necked dish	23	18	--	5
Pedestal dish	2	--	--	2
Cup	12	10	--	2
Plate	2	--	--	2
Tyg	1	1	--	--
Large-headed vessel	46	4	--	42
	<hr/>			
	562	264	--	298
	<hr/>			

N.B. It was only possible to deduce firing positions from sherds such as rims and bases, hence the large number of body sherds are not attributed.

#### Kiln Furniture - Separation Technology

##### Bats

This term applies to items of kiln furniture used in the separation process and in the main taking the form of roughly formed or moulded flat pieces of clay usually square or oblong in shape. Several potsherds also served to act as separating agents (121, 129). A total of 23 bats in all were excavated at Prescott. The most notable feature of these pieces was evidence indicating stacking systems and the type of vessel separated. Iron-stained lead glaze was found on most in varying degrees from only slight traces (123) to substantial coatings (126, 127) and as with stilts, provided extra assistance in the prevention of glaze adhering, although more evidence of this was found on bats than was the case for stilts. The majority of bats suggest that wide-rimmed storage vessels had been stacked and separated in a rim to rim formation, for instance 123, 125, 126 indeed, one rim

fragment had adhered to a bat (124) - presumably the vessel was fired in an inverted position, glaze has run and separation proved inadequate in this instance. These pieces also acted, presumably, as separating agents between external bases of vessels although evidence of this was more difficult to ascertain as opposed to the more obvious rim features.

The majority of evidence from the pottery sherds themselves shows that bats were used for the larger, coarser wares rather than for finer wares.

The following table illustrates this point:

<u>Coarse ware sherds</u>	<u>Rim</u>	<u>Rim/handle</u>	<u>Base</u>
Storage vessel	42	12	21
Pancheon	17	--	2
Bowl	--	--	1
Jug	--	--	1
Wide-necked dish	--	--	2
Beaker	--	--	1
<u>Fine ware sherds</u>			
Bowl	--	--	1
Jug	--	--	3
Tankard	--	--	2
Wide-necked dish	--	--	1
Cup	--	--	2

N.B. All separator marks on fine wares were on bases.

##### Bobs

15 of these were excavated. Bobs are generally smaller and more roughly shaped than bats, although usage was similar. Many bobs had impressions (130, 86, 132) some visible on both faces (134), several to the extent that fragments of vessel rims had adhered (133), whereas this was only evident on one bat. Bobs were used to separate black-glazed vessels, only one being used to separate a manganese-stained vessel (131). As with bats, glaze was accidental, originating from the fired pot.

##### Stilts

A total of 64 stilts were excavated at Prescott. All were roughly moulded by hand, conically-shaped and fell into four approximate sizes:

<u>Large</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Medium-small</u>	<u>Small</u>
15	22	12	14

The majority had been used for separating black-glazed vessels, iron-stained lead glaze being evident

on stilts to a greater or lesser degree. Some stilts had merely a thin band of glaze around the circumference of the bottom (narrow area) (108). Many had thick runs of glaze to the face and the remainder substantially coated with iron-stained lead glaze (117). Only a few stilts had traces of manganese-stained lead glaze (115, 116) indicating that either fewer of these wares were produced at Prescott or that only the larger of manganese-stained vessels required stilt separation (chamber pots, for instance). All stilts were placed in an upright position (the narrow area of stilts being designated bottom, the wider area to be the top) to separate vessels during the firing process. Moreover, stilts were mostly used for separation of coarse black-glazed wares and in the main positioned within vessel bases, 14 stilt marks being found on storage vessels, two on pancheons and two on bowl sherds. Confirmation of this is a black-glazed storage vessel base sherd which has a piece of stilt adhering internally. This sherd has been designated kiln furniture as the stilt category takes precedence over the actual potsherd. There was only one notable exception, two stilt marks being found on a fineware bowl sherd (34), comprising two small circular pale patches to the external base. The tops of several stilts showed distinct impressions (that is depressions in the fabric of the stilts) of either rims or more probably bases, indicating a system of stacking to be in operation. Furthermore, sand was utilised in the separation process as a means of preventing glaze adherence. Traces of other fabric than that of the stilt - presumably the fabric of vessels themselves - was found to be yet another common characteristic (111, 112, 115, 117) indicating poorly developed separation technology and only minimal control of glaze in high kiln temperatures. Interestingly enough, one stilt had traces of a buff-white coloured fabric which was also in evidence on several black-glazed pottery sherds and one bat.

#### The Clay Pipes

256 clay pipe fragments were found, the majority in disturbed 19th century contexts. The only group which can be used for dating purposes is context 37, from which pipes and pottery belonging to the 17th century only were recovered. This context is an important one because it was sealed by the walls and floor of the pottery and as such it provides a *terminus ante quem* of c. 1680 for the start of production on site. Considering that the main period of use of the site was between 1740 and 1780, there were remarkably few 18th century pipe forms. Most of the pipes were of local Rainford types, although one example was probably made in Chester. The pipes had little decoration, the only decorated stem being the example from Chester. Full quantification of all pipe fragments are contained in the site archive.

#### The Sugar-refining Pottery

C.M. Brooks

The pottery assemblage includes 73 sherds belonging to vessels intended for use in the refining of sugar. The main vessel types are those in standard use in the industry in the 17th and 18th centuries (Brooks 1983), comprising conical sugar-loaf moulds and syrup pots. A third form with feet is also present.

#### Fabrics

The majority of sherds, belonging to Types 1 and 3, are in the same fabric, an orange-red to brick-red earthenware with fairly sparse small quartz inclusions; two examples are over-fired to vitrification. In a few sherds the clay is poorly mixed and has a laminated appearance with thin streaks of whitish clay.

The five sherds of Type 2 syrup jars are in grittier fabrics. Two sherds are pink to creamy-pink with some lighter and darker clay laminations; the inclusions are slightly larger and more frequent than in the red fabric. One of these sherds has red slip on both surfaces. The remaining Type 2 sherds are also somewhat gritty, but are orange-red to dark red in colour. Two have red slip, darker than the body colour, on one or both surfaces; the fifth sherd is over-fired to dark purplish red and brown, but it too seems to have had a red slip, on the internal surface at least.

#### Forms

The form numbers follow those given in Allan 1984, 138-9.

Type 1: Sugar-loaf moulds (Nos. 153-5). These are conical vessels with thickened rims, each pierced by a single hole in the pointed base, the size of the hole depending on the size of the vessel. The moulds are unglazed, and the internal surfaces are carefully smoothed. Two base sherds are present, one from a small mould and the other from a much larger one. One rim (No.5) most probably belongs to a sugar-loaf mould rather than a Type 3 vessel, because of its small rim diameter.

Type 2: Syrup jars (Nos. 151-2). These jars have high shoulders and heavy rims, and although no base sherds are present, they usually have sturdy ring-footed bases. Only five sherds of this type were found, two of them being rims. Most of the sherds have red slip on one or both surfaces. Black glaze is present round the interior of the rim, but there are only spots or slight traces of glaze elsewhere.

Type 3: Tall vessels with tripod feet (Nos. 157-8). This form is represented by one foot, and two basal sherds with scars where similar feet have become detached. The basal sherds are unglazed and have smoothed internal surfaces. Bases with feet were found at Exeter, in a group dated to c. 1680-1720; although no complete vessel could be reconstructed there, it was deduced that the form was a large conical vessel with rounded, unperforated base and tripod feet. Rims were slightly thickened and square-topped, and their diameters ranged from 28-48 cm (Allan 1984, 139).

Type 1 or 3 (Nos. 156, 159). Some 55 unglazed, internally smoothed body sherds and 7 rim sherds cannot be assigned with certainty to Type 1 or Type 3. At Exeter, the forms could be distinguished on wall thickness; the body sherds of Type 1 were c. 4-8 mm thick, whereas those of Type 3 were c. 10-18 mm thick. This distinction is not possible with the Prescott material, however; the two Type 3 sherds with foot scars vary from 5-9 mm in thickness, and the Type 1 bases also range from 5-9 mm. The remaining body sherds vary from c. 5-11 mm. in thickness. It is also impossible to estimate the number of Type 1 or 3 vessels represented by the body sherds because of the homogeneity of the fabric, the lack of joining sherds and the fragmentary nature of much of the material.

The 7 rim sherds, which represent 6 vessels, range in diameter from c. 3-41 cm. With the exception of No. 156, the rims are all of the same flat-topped type as Nos. 155 and 159. The evidence of rim size and form are not sufficient to determine whether these vessels belong to Type 1 or Type 3.

Five of the 62 Type 1 or 3 sherds have a very thin creamy wash or slip externally; of these, two also have shallow horizontal grooves. Four unslipped sherds are similarly ornamented with shallow grooves. In some instances these grooves are well defined and deliberate, but in others they amount to little more than pronounced throwing marks. Combed or grooved decoration of a very simple kind occasionally occurs elsewhere (e.g. Brooks 1983, Fig. 1, no. 1).

#### The use of pottery in sugar-refining

Sugar which had gone through preliminary refining processes at the plantation was refined again on being imported into Britain, and formed into sugar loaves. After being boiled and clarified, the sugar in syrup form was strained and poured into conical moulds, the basal holes being sealed with temporary bungs. Once the sugar had crystallized, the bungs were removed and the moulds were seated on syrup

jars, which collected the excess syrup or molasses as it drained through. A process known as "claying" was then used to purify and whiten the sugar. A mixture of fine white clay and water was poured on the the sugar loaves in their moulds, and the water then percolated slowly through the jars, carrying away more molasses. The molasses was collected for further refining, or for distillation. The process of claying could be repeated several times. (For more detailed accounts of sugar production, see Brooks 1983; Allan 1984, 138-41).

The conical moulds varied in size, and were used to produce loaves of different qualities, the smallest loaves usually being for the finest quality sugar and the largest being the lowest grade. The careful smoothing of the interior of the moulds, noted also on these vessels elsewhere, presumably helped to prevent the sugar sticking too much and facilitated the removal of the finished loaves. Both moulds and jars are found in considerable numbers on refinery sites.

The function of the Type 3 tripod vessels with no basal holes is less clear, as they are not described or illustrated in contemporary sources. They have so far only been identified at Exeter, where it has been suggested that they were used for preliminary crystallization of the sugar after boiling (Allan 1984, 140-1); this explanation seems most likely. These pots have been compared to an 18th century French representation of similar large conical vessels in which granulation was sometimes begun. These French vessels had no feet but were supported in a wooden stand; the syrup was stirred with a stick to break up the crust adhering to the sides of the vessels. Shallow wooden tanks were later used to complete the granulation process. The feet on the English vessels presumably supported the pots without the need for the wooden stand.

The Illustrations (Figs. 10.7-10.25)

Black-glazed wares (1-70)

Storage vessels (1-27)

1. Two rim sherds, one with strap handle, fabric poorly mixed orange clay, overfired, moderate inclusions white clay.

Fired upside down, glaze running towards rim internally and forming blob of glaze uppermost rim area. Separation marks on both sherds, glaze pooling around area where separator situated. Also many particles of sand around separator areas, glaze internal and external even but dull. 1985/1/7.

2. One rim/handle sherd (complete strap handle attached). Fabric buff moderate inclusions. Vessel fired in upright position with substantial light area to uppermost rim (separation). Glaze is uneven, gritty and dull in appearance. 1985/1/54.

3. Three rim sherds of large vessel, one sherd with strap handle - fabric poorly mixed orange clay with heavy white clay banding - slightly overfired, moderate inclusions of red grog (one measuring 10mm) and white clay glaze uneven/gritty texture internally, externally glossy where glaze is even 1985/1/7.

4. A rim-handle storage vessel. Fabric buff, moderate inclusions. Core reduced grey. Vessel fired upright with lighter patch uppermost rim area suggesting separation. Glaze is uneven and dull. 1985/1/54.

5. One rim with complete strap handle attached. Fabric orange with white clay banding. Moderate inclusions of white clay (moderate to very coarse or 0.05mm to 10mm) and red grog (though the latter more sparse, largest particle visible being 2mm). Vessel fired upright and glazed overall. No slip internal or external. Where glaze is correct thickness is very glossy and smooth (more so externally) although somewhat gritty texture internally. Glaze applied unevenly or not thickly enough to ensure perfect glaze finish. Firing position upright ascertained from very slight run of glaze downwards (handle area). Separator mark uppermost rim though with no glaze running from vessel above - merely lighter coloured patch indicating where separator situated. 1985/1/8.

6. One rim. Fabric orange clay with substantial white clay banding. Large area of upper rim missing (separation). Slight running of glaze externally suggests vessel fired in inverted position. 1985/1/8.

7. Two rim sherds. Fabric orange clay, substantial white clay banding. Slight running of glaze externally and pooling under lip of outer rim area suggest vessel fired in inverted position. There is a substantial area of upper rim missing, caused by separation of the vessel. "Bobs" from same layer have substantial portions of different vessel rims adhering to them. 1985/1/8.

8. One rim. Fabric buff, moderate inclusions. Vessel fired upside down although glaze has not run to any great extent - with paler area on uppermost rim. Glaze finish is fairly glossy although some grittiness of fabric showing through. 1985/1/54.

9. One rim. Fabric orange and substantial white clay banding although overfired purplish. Moderate inclusions white clay and red grog. Vessel fired upright and glazed overall although uppermost rim area covered with iron stained lead glaze with runs from this onto external rim and two large thick runs internally. Distinct separator mark on rim. Vessels fired rim to rim, inverted vessel above the glaze of which has run onto vessel below. 1985/1/8.

10. Two rim sherds. Fabric orange brick-red slight white clay banding. Moderate inclusions of white clay up to 3mm also red grog. Vessel fired upside down with runs of glaze towards rim externally; internally runs onto uppermost rim area forming into thick blobs. Separator marks on one rim sherd (could be the wider area of a stilt as the shape is similar), also sand particles. Removal of separator has taken piece of rim vessel with it. Where even, glaze is glossy. 1985/1/7.

11. One sherd. Fabric orange with many white clay inclusions and mica. Slightly reduced. Glaze dark brown with black streaking (due to no slip?) uneven internally. Fired upright but with black glaze congealing around separator mark on uppermost rim area (also sand particles adhering here). Glaze has run from vessel positioned above it during firing (?). 1985/1/7.

12. One sherd. Fabric orange with many white clay inclusions up to 2mm. Glaze uneven internally with gritty texture (also external rim). Body area even and glossy. Vessel fired upside down with glaze pooling/thickening at point where body/underside rim meet. Glaze has run onto uppermost rim area with round stilt mark thereon. Brick-red slip. 1985/1/7.

13. Three rim sherds (two wasters). Fabric orange with a few red grog and many white clay inclusions up to 2mm. Glaze has run through crack into body of rim. Fired upside down - glaze running towards rim area and congealing on 2 sherds, with other fabric adhering. All three sherds glaze uneven/gritty

internally. Externally on actual rim areas, the glaze is similar but, where thick, it is metallic-lustrous or glossy. 1985/1/7.

14. One rim; hard fabric, over fired reddish-purple with many white clay inclusions. Glaze running onto rim (uppermost) and pooling, and other fabric adhering to this inadequate separation between 2 pot rims (?) i.e. rim to rim firing. Glaze internal and external uneven and quite dull. 1985/1/7.

15. One rim. Fabric red-brick, well sorted, hardly any inclusions, occasional flakes of mica. Fired upright glaze running down over rim. Glossy glaze internal. Unglazed external. Rim diameter 0.54m. 1985/1/50.

16. One rim. Fabric is reduced grey - core has spaces in which oxygen has been trapped. Fired in upright position with lighter area uppermost rim where separators has been situated; glaze has collected and vitrified around area with particles of sand adhering. Glaze finish is uneven and dull. 1985/1/54.

17. One base. Fabric poorly mixed orange clay with heavy white banding very reduced (body area grey). Fired upright, runs of glaze externally, one of which has run underneath vessel and collected around piece of fabric (separator)? Dull internally, fairly even and glossy externally. 1985/1/7.

18. One base. Fabric poorly mixed orange clay with heavy white banding. Firing position uncertain though there is a stilt mark (narrow area) at edge internal base with some pooling of glaze around this. No runs of glaze externally. Glaze glossy internally. 1985/1/7.

19. Four base sherds. Fabric orange with white clay banding - inclusions red grog (2mm) and white clay (2mm) moderate. Slip internally and externally; internally glaze has dull appearance and rough, gritty sandy texture. Distinct pale patch on bottom external indicating separation (possibly the wider areas of a stilt). 1985/1/7.

20. Two bases, one body sherd overfired purple. Fabric orange with white banding. Fired upright and glazed internally and externally with glaze pooling towards approximate centre internal base where stilt (narrow area) has been positioned. Glaze running down towards base (externally) with blob formed on one base sherd. Separator mark (around which glaze has collected) with particles of sand on other base. 1985/1/7.

21. Two base sherds. Fabric orange with white banding, overfired reddish-purple. Glaze has

somewhat different appearance to other iron stained lead glazed sherds, being more brown looking although this probably due to no internal slip being used and glaze thinly applied. Brick red slip externally. No pooling of glaze internally but thick run of black glaze externally (one sherd) which has pooled around base externally and to which separator has adhered. Patch of thick glaze on outside of base on second sherd although no actual separator stuck to this. Glaze fairly glossy. 1985/1/7.

22. One flat base. Fabric hard laminated buff-brown clay, poorly sorted, inclusions moderate sizes ranging between 0.25-0.05mm with the occasional finer and coarser grain. Rounding sub-angular. Inclusions mainly white clay, chert, iron. Fired upright indicated by separator ("bob") attached beneath the base and what may be other traces of separator adjacent to the "bob". Clay appears to have collapsed around the "bob" and glaze run into the pot depression. Glaze dull black. Pot has been overfired. The fabric and the glaze shows evidence of vitrification near the base and air bubbles on the side. 1985/1/50.

23. One rim. Fabric buff with laminations, reduced grey. Firing position probably upright as there is slight depression uppermost rim (where a separator has been sited) presumably from weight of vessel balanced above. Glaze finish is uneven and dull with fragments adhering internally. 1985/1/54.

24. Two conjoining rim sherds. Fabric buff with laminations. Vessel fired in upright position. Slip only applied internally with mere patches externally. Glaze is unevenly applied and has a patchy, gritty appearance. 1985/1/54.

25. Two base, one body sherd. Fabric orange clay with heavy white banding, reduced grey core. Fired upright glaze pooling. Base sherds have glaze running downwards externally with other fabric (fairly large pieces) adhering to glaze which here congealed, possibly no separators used rather base of another vessel has come into contact with running glaze (?). Glaze of dull appearance externally and internally. 1985/1/4.

26. Two base sherds. Fabric buff with laminations. Fired upright with pooling of glaze to one side internal base. (3mm). Pooling of glaze around two areas where stilts have been positioned. Evidence of sand separation (underneath base) although no obvious signs of separation - vessel probably internal base where glaze has collected. 1985/1/54.

27. One base sherd, with hinged footring. Fabric red-orange clay with slight buff laminations, well sorted abundant inclusions of quartz and white clay.

Size range 0.25-0.05mm and finer. Fired upright indicated by glaze vitrification in base and separator trace marks beneath the base. Base appears to swell internally in a dome shape and the glaze has cracked internally having a crazed appearance. A piece of material adhered to the base may be a fallen separator. Glaze dull black. 1985/1/50.

#### Pantheons and bowls (28-42)

28. One base sherd. Fabric buff with laminations. Vessel fired in upright position with pooling of glaze where there is a slight depression (internal base). Also substantial pooling of glaze around area where the bottom of a stilt has been snapped off. Glazed internally and externally (glaze has run externally to underneath of vessel with some vitrification and sand separation). This vessel was probably balanced upon the uppermost rim of another vessel, accounting for slight depression of fabric in base. Glaze finish - metallic sheen. 1985/1/54.

29. Two rim sherds. Fabric orange. Substantial white clay banding although overfired purplish. Abundant inclusions of white clay (these being moderate to very coarse in size). Vessel fired upside down with iron stained lead glaze running towards rim forming thick blobs and also pooling around area where separator snapped off (traces of this remaining). No external glaze. Internally, glaze even and glossy. 1985/1/8.

30. One large rim sherd. Fabric buff with laminations. Vessel fired in upside down position with glaze running onto uppermost rim area where it has collected around separator (sand particles adhering also). The vessel is slipped all over although glazed internally only. Glaze is glossy but thin (gritty texture of fabric showing through this). 1985/1/54.

31. One rim. Fabric buff with laminations. Vessel fired upside down with considerable run of glaze onto uppermost rim area. One small patch of glaze appears to have collected around separation fabric. Sherd is unglazed externally with patches of brick-red slip and glaze. Vessel slipped internally only. Glaze finish is metallic lustrous. 1985/1/54.

32. One rim. Fabric orange with slight white clay banding. Fired upside down - glaze running onto rim from inside forming thick blobs on uppermost rim. Brick red slip. 1985/1/7.

33. One 17th century sherd with footring. Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay and mica. Evidence of reduction/oxidisation (ie fairly thick band of greyness to external base area).

Vessel fired in upright position, glaze has run (but thinly externally giving a patchy appearance), and is more of a brown colour than the majority of these wares possibly indicating that this sherd is of earlier date. Internally the glaze is smooth, even and fairly glossy, with mottled - looking brown-black appearance, which may be due to lack of slip but more likely to be the particular glaze mix used. 1985/1/8.

34. One base sherd with footring. Orange fabric with some white clay banding inclusions. Fired upright, thickening of glaze internal base. Glaze running unevenly externally hence some gritty patches. Brick red slip; 2 small lighter round patches external bottom (stilt marks?) 1985/1/7.

35. One base sherd with footring. Orange brick-red, overfired grey-purple, very hard fabric, moderate inclusions. Fired upright - thickening of glass on one side (tipped sideways in kiln during firing?) internal base with run external. Piece of clay (broken from another pot ?) or separator adhering to base. Red slip discernible on the base (bottom, external). Glaze even with metallic lustre. 1985/1/7.

36. One base sherd with footring. Overfired hard reddish-purple fabric with moderate white clay inclusions. Glazed all over - thick pooling to one side internally (8mm thick) with glaze running externally forming thick blob on bottom (which corresponds with pooling) - tipped sideways during firing? 1985/1/7.

37. One base sherd with flat bottom. Fabric brick-red hard and close grained with moderate inclusions of white clay fine to medium in size. This vessel has been fired in upright position with pooling of glaze (internal base) 3-4mm in thickness. Internally, dull though external glaze has one run which has extended down to and underneath the base, where it has collected around a piece of buff coloured fabric. 1985/1/8.

38. One flat base sherd. Fabric orange brick-red with moderate inclusions of white clay medium in size. Crack through vessel into which glaze has seeped (can clearly be seen at the top of the sherd). Iron stained lead glaze which has run considerably externally, one run in particular forming a fairly thick blob underneath. Glaze has crazed internally with pooling to one side of the internal base. Overall finish is even with a fine metallic lustre. 1985/1/8.

39. One base sherds with footring. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions of white clay fine to moderate in size with only one very coarse white clay inclusion measuring 4mm x 2mm. Vessel fired upright

with considerable pooling of glaze to one side internal base (4mm). Glaze finish metallic sheen. A fragment of what appears to be saggar has adhered to internal base (presumably during the stacking process). A small piece of fabric, identical to the vessel, adheres to the exterior of the base. 1985/1/8.

40. One base and one body sherd with footring. Fabric brick-red in colour with sparse inclusions of white clay (fine to medium in size). Vessel fired upright and although glaze has run externally and thickened slightly it has not, however, formed dribbles. Glaze has pooled internally; underneath, slight traces of other fabric adhering. Iron stained lead glaze even and metallic lustrous. 1985/1/8.

41. Five base sherds with footring. Fabric brick-red hard and close-grained with moderate inclusions of white clay fine to medium in size. Vessel has been fired in upright position with considerable pooling of glaze to one side of the vessel (4mm thick). Glaze has crazed internally (base and body areas). Externally there are several fairly thick runs of glaze, one extending down over the footring area and forming into a blob. Glaze is metallic lustrous and even although there are small dull areas, due to weathering/erosion. 1985/1/8.

42. Two flat base/body sherds. Fabric is orange brick-red in colour, is hard, close grained with moderate inclusions of white clay and mica which are fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position with slight pooling of glaze to one side internal base. Externally the glaze has run. Overall appearance is glossy, some patches of dullness presumably caused by erosion/weathering. Colour is dark brown with black streaking. 1985/1/8.

#### Other forms 43-70

43. One base sherd fine ware jug with footring; the rim of vessel has collapsed and fallen into and stuck to internal base. Fabric brick-red in colour with sparse inclusions of white clay (fine to medium in size). Vessel fired in upright position with glaze running down towards base (3 fairly thick glaze runs). Glaze running from elsewhere has run underneath vessel and collected around other fabric which is similar to that found on separator from layer 52 and bowl sherds layer 3. This fabric has appearance of coarsely mixed white clay which could have been used to tilt vessel slightly to prevent it adhering to saggar base during firing. There are also small traces of same fabric as vessel adhering to this area (i.e. where glaze has run underneath). Overall appearance of glaze finish is fine and even metallic lustre. 1985/1/8.

44. One base sherd of fine ware posset pot. Orange brick-red fabric, overfired red/purple moderate inclusions. Fired upright. Thickening of glaze internal/base. Glaze running externally, forming two blobs/dribbles. 1985/1/7.

45. Three base sherds of fine ware wide-necked serving dish/soup tureen with splayed foot. Fabric is a bright orange colour with soft chalky texture. Sparse inclusions of red grog of moderate size; also sparse inclusions of white clay up to 5mm in size. Externally there is one ring near to base with another two slightly further up the side of the vessel. Vessel fired in an upright position (slight pooling of glaze - internal base). Iron stained lead glaze internally dull and crazed, fragments of this being loose and easily removed. External glaze extends down only to cover the two upper rings worked on side of vessel and is more glossy than that internally. 1985/1/8.

46. One base sherd of wide-necked dish with footring. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions white clay fine to medium. Vessel fired in upright position with glaze dribbling externally and running underneath forming patch to which other fabric adhering. Pooling/thickening of glaze internal base. Metallic-lustrous even finish. 1985/1/8.

47. One base sherd of large handled vessel with footring. Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay (fine to medium). Vessel fired in upright position with slight pooling/thickening of glaze to one side internal base. No glaze externally on this sherd. Internal glaze even, with metallic lustrous finish. 1985/1/8.

48. One base sherd of wide necked dish (tureen?) with flared footring. The whole sherd is reduced purplish-grey and the fabric is brick-red with sparse to moderate inclusions of white clay and mica fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position with considerable pooling of glaze (up to 4mm thick) with glossy appearance. No glaze externally. Underneath the slip has a purplish appearance and there is a small patch of vitrified glaze. 1985/1/8.

49. One sherd 17th century wide necked dish with flat bottom. Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay and mica. Firing position unknown. Externally only traces of glaze near bottom side of vessel with some mottled traces also underneath. Internally, an area where no glaze has come into contact with the vessel is purplish-brown which could be the colour of a slip. Some reduction evident. 1985/1/8.

50. One base, one body sherd of wide necked dish with footring; the body is fairly thick and flares

outwards. The vessel type falls somewhere between the very coarse storage vessel/pancheon type and the finer table wares. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions of black grog, white clay and mica. Externally the vessel is unglazed. Internally glaze is black, dull and appears to have seeped into the fabric of the vessel to a depth of 1mm body area and some 4mm at base. The vessel may have been left standing for too long before firing which could account for the seepage of glaze into the fabric. Slip is brick-red with a thick run/dribble external body area. 1985/1/8.

51. One base sherd of wide necked dish (?) with footring. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions white clay fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position with thick dribbles of glaze externally running underneath to form blobs. Internally, glaze has pooled considerably (3mm thick). Metallic-lustrous finish to glaze. 1985/1/8.

52. One base sherd of wide mouthed shallow dish. Orange fabric with white clay banding. Internal glaze thin with gritty texture. Brick-red slip externally. Piece of fabric (same as vessel) adhering to external side of sherd (this piece has traces of black glaze around it). Vessels stacked too closely together in kiln. 1985/1/7.

53. One base sherd of fine ware wide necked shallow dish, flared footring with worked ring just above, with two more rings a little further up the vessel. Fabric orange brick-red in colour with moderate inclusions of white clay, medium to coarse in size; slight white clay banding. Glaze extending down side of vessel to the uppermost ring. Vessel fired in upright position with glaze running slightly externally, with only slight thickening of glaze internal base, although glaze is iron stained type, it has somewhat lustrous streaky appearance. 1985/1/8.

54. One rim sherd of fine ware (?jar). Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay, fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position and glazed overall with metallic, lustrous overall finish. 1985/1/8.

55. One rim sherd of fine ware bowl. Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay, fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position and glazed overall with iron stained lead glaze. Slight grittiness to overall finish with glaze appearance rather more of a gloss than metallic lustre.

56. One rim sherd of fineware bowl. Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay, fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position and glazed overall with iron stained lead glaze. Glaze

applied thinly as some grittiness visible; but has metallic-lustrous overall finish. 1985/1/8.

57. One rim sherd of wide necked shallow dish. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions white clay fine to medium. Vessel fired in upright position with glaze running slightly to just below actual external rim area. Glaze has glossy overall finish. 1985/1/8.

58. One rim sherd of wide necked shallow dish. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions white clay fine to medium. Vessel fired in upright position with glaze running slightly to just below actual external rim area, remainder unglazed externally. Overall dull finish to glaze. 1985/1/8.

59. One rim sherd of wide necked shallow dish. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions white clay fine to medium. Vessel fired in upright position with glaze running slightly to just below actual external rim area. 1985/1/8.

60. Four sherds (two rim, two body) of fine ware posset-pot. Fabric brick-red with moderate inclusions of white clay fine to medium in size; all sherds are overfired purplish colour. Vessel fired in upright position. Glaze glossier internally than externally and has overall streaked appearance. 1985/1/8.

61. One rim sherd of posset pot with ring at point where main body of vessel begins to flare. Fabric hard pure brownish brick-red with no obvious inclusions. Glaze is dull and overall colour is more of a dark purplish brown rather than black suggesting that no slip was applied (?). 1985/1/7.

62. Five sherds of fine ware beaker with footring. Fabric pale yellowish pink-orange, close-grained and soft in texture. Inclusions are moderate in frequency and in size, consisting of red grog, ironstone, white clay or quartz (?) and micaceous. Slip all over although a darker orange than that of the fabric (could be slurry as opposed to slip). Glaze metallic lustrous iron stained lead glaze. Glazed overall save band unglazed near base. Fired upright with very slight pooling to one side. 1985/1/8.

63. One flat base sherd of beaker with distinctive swirl formed in fabric internally. Fabric buff coloured with moderate inclusions of white clay (although few, quite coarse 2mm), slight thickening of glaze; fired in upright position. No distinctive marks externally apart from accidental splash of brick-red slip. 1985/1/7.

64. Two conjoining sherds of fine ware tyg. Fabric brick-red in colour, is hard and close-grained with

sparse inclusions of white clay which are fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position with slight glaze vitrification internally where body area meets with base. 1985/1/8/6.

65. Five sherds (three neck, two rim) of candlestick. Orange fabric, inclusions white clay (moderate) 1mm; red grog. All over brick-red slip, all over black glaze. 1985/1/7.

66. One base sherd of fine ware tankard with footring; a worked ring directly above this with another two a little further up side of vessel at area where handle has been attached (handle missing). Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions white clay, fine to medium in size. Vessel fired in upright position with thin run of glaze externally and pooling to one side internal base. Patch of glaze underneath with traces of fabric adhering. Glaze even internally and metallic-lustrous. 1985/1/8.

67. One handle, probably of a jug handle. Fabric brown (probably red clay in reduced state due to overfiring). Hardly any inclusions just occasional flakes of mica. Handle zig-zag shaped for required grip. Firing position impossible to ascertain. Glaze dull black/brown, appears to have some manganese content in glaze. 1985/1/67.

68. Three body sherds of globular vessel, two rings externally, near rim area. Fabric orange, all three sherds reduced grey. Glazed all over externally and upper section internally - glaze running internally. Slip has purplish appearance. 1985/1/7.

69. Globular jar. Fabric buff with moderate laminations inclusions white clay, grog medium to large in size (10mm). Red slip. All over glaze. Glaze generally glossy, some grittiness. Vessel fired upright. Fabric adhering to base. 1985/1/54.

70. Five conjoining sherds of globular jar. Fabric orange with substantial white banding. Firing position of vessel upright (slight vitrification of glaze towards bottom of vessel). Glaze internally is glossy but thin, some grittiness and has more of a brown appearance than black? Glaze appears darker externally though with a streaky appearance. 1985/1/52/55.

Mottled and self-coloured wares (71-87) (mottled unless otherwise stated)

Bowls and dishes (71-81)

71. Four sherds (two rim, one body, one base), manganese glazed rimmed dish. Fabric pink-orange, buff laminations and surrounded with clay, quartz and

grog inclusions 0.25-5mm. Fired upside-down. Glaze golden-brown with speckling. 1985/1/50.

72. Eleven sherds (six base, three body, two rim) with footring. Fabric overfired purplish brown-grey with banding. Inclusions of red grog and white clay. Fired in upright position; however the thickness of glaze pooling to one side of the vessel (5mm) debris adhering to rim and internal and external body, and external manganese runs of glaze which form into blobs underneath suggest that the vessel tipped sideways during firing process. Glaze colour yellowish-green with thick brown runs, although where glaze is evenly manganese mottling is much slighter. 1985/1/7.

73. Four sherds (three base, one body) of clear lead-glazed wide necked bowl with footring. Fabric pinkish brown-buff (all slightly overfired) with fairly substantial white clay banding. Inclusions of red grog - (1 particle measuring 5mm x 2mm) though these sparse - and white clay in moderate quantities and varying from medium to very coarse in size. Fired upright although no obvious evidence of this firing position, merely very slight thickening of an external rim of glaze, and very slight thickening internal base. Brick-red slip, external only. 1985/1/7.

74. One rim. Fabric pinkish-brown buff with moderate inclusions of white clay and grog, medium to coarse in size. Glaze clear with streaking. Probably fired in upright position. 1985/1/54.

75. Profile (three rims, two bases). Fabric coarse orange clay with white clay laminations. Moderate inclusions of grog, white clay and chert, small to medium, sub angular to angular. Glaze thick and lustrous with streaking. Fired in upright position with glaze running to form blobs near base. Internal glaze cracked. Some warping of vessel. 1985/1/55.

76. One rim/handle of waster from a chamber pot. Fabric buff clay with moderate inclusions of white clay and chert up to 5mm in size, sub angular to angular. Glaze greeny dull and pitted with streaking. Fired in upright position with pot inverted over it. Fabric of other pot stuck to rim, also mottled glaze from other vessel running to form blobs. Other vessel same fabric, possibly was also chamber pot. 1985/1/54.

77. One sherd (profile) unglazed wide rimmed dish. Fabric cream-buff colour. Inclusions abundant, ill sorted, size range mainly 0.25-0.5mm, mainly iron, grog, quartz and large white clay inclusions 1.0mm, sub angular to angular. Difficult to ascertain which way it has been fired, maybe upright as rim sags down and separator marks at base. Some warping. 1985/1/64.

78. One jar. Fabric pink-orange to buff clay with moderate inclusions, clear glaze fired in upright position, with slight runs of glaze from rim.

79. One base sherd with footing. Fabric hard close-grained, pale pinkish-orange colour with sparse inclusions of medium sized white clay particles, and mica. Glaze even and glossy, yellowish pale brown with dark brown-black speckles and slight streaking. Flat external base with piece of separator fabric adhering. 1985/1/7.

80. One skillet handle. Fabric close-grained pinkish orange with sparse inclusions of white clay. Fired upright with glaze collecting in area where handle folded. Other fabric than that of handle adhering along bottom suggesting that skillets, being very open-necked and shallow, were stacked inside each other for firing with large on bottom, smaller vessels towards top. Glaze colour pale tan-brown with dark brown-black manganese mottling. 1985/1/7.

81. One skillet handle. Fabric close-grained pinkish orange with sparse inclusions of white clay. Glaze collecting in fold of handle. 1985/1/7.

#### Beaker and tankards (82-87)

82. Three rim sherds of beaker. Fabric creamy yellowish-white coloured with no obvious inclusions. Colour of vessel yellowish pale brown with dark brown mottling/streaks. 1985/1/7.

83. Four base sherds. Fabric buff-green overfired; inclusions low in frequency, well sorted and of a very fine grain size 0.1mm mainly sub-rounded iron, grog, quartz inclusions. The tankard has been fired in an upright position and may have been tilted at a slight angle when in the kiln as the glaze on one end runs down the external side of the base and on the internal side vitrification of the glaze occurs. Further evidence that the base of the tankard was tilted is suggested by the remains of a stilt trace mark (in the form of fabric and glaze) at the base of the tankard and the lack of glaze on the part of the tankard's external side, due to tilting. 1985/1/50.

84. One clear glazed base sherd with splayed foot. Fabric pinkish yellow-buff with slight clay banding and inclusions (sparse) of white clay (coarse). Slip creamy yellow colour. Vessel fired upright with pieces of debris adhering to internal base. Particles of sand collecting small area external base (sand separation or vitrified glaze?) Vessel glazed overall pale yellowish green-brown. 1985/1/7.

85. One base sherd with footing. Fabric pure buff-white with no obvious inclusions. Fired upright,

slight thickening of glaze on inside of base and externally collecting and thickening slightly above area where footing begins to flare outwards. Slipped externally only (creamy-yellow colour). Where glaze has collected internal base its dark brown, though where it is more even (i.e. body area) it is lighter brown with dark streaks/speckles. 1985/1/7.

86. One base sherd with splayed bottom and one ring just above this. Fabric hard close grained, pale pinkish-orange with sparse inclusions of medium sized white clay particles and mica. External slip creamy pinkish orange. Fired upright with thickening of glaze on inside of base. Glazed all over yellowish pale brown with dark brown/black manganese mottling/speckles. Glossy finish. Underneath traces of black glaze (?) and particles of sand or other fabric adhering to this indicating some form of separator used. 1985/1/7.

87. Base and handle stilt; fired in upright position, glaze running downwards externally from handle and collecting where narrow end of stilt broken away and also collecting and running near external base of vessel and forming fairly thick blob underneath. Internally glaze has pooled on the base. Glaze colour-greenish yellow brown with speckling. 1985/1/7.

#### Saggars etc. (88-107)

88. Six base and two rim sherds. Two bung-holes near base and one on one of the rim sherds. Fabric yellowish creamy white with few small inclusions of grog, chert and shale. Underneath there are traces of other fabric around edges (where saggar has been balanced above another during firing?). Fabric adhering to uppermost rim area (from saggar or lid balanced above). Saggar is very large in size and oval in shape. There are traces of iron-stained lead glaze internal base (drips of which have formed in a roughly circular formation). Used to fire smaller fineware vessels. 1985/1/7.

89. Profile (two sherds), base diameter 36cm; rim diameter 30cm; height 22cm. Fabric colour brown-red. Inclusions grog, mica, ironstone, sand and buff clay, sorted medium to coarse grained. Two bung holes are at either side of the profile and are found near the base. Separator (bat) attached to top of rim and there is a small piece attached to the bottom. Black/brown slip. 1985/1/52.

90. Base (2 sherds), diameter 34cm. Fabric buff with green-grey tinge, due to reduction during firing; inclusions grog, mica, ironstone, sand and chert, well sorted, medium to coarse grained sub-

angular. Evidence of sanding in base; also black iron stained lead glaze in centre of base, where vitrification has occurred and glaze has formed in bubbles in the fabric when it has run. Both sherds have bits of broken stilt and separator attached to them. 1985/1/69.

91. Kiln pillar base (two sherds) with bung holes. Diameter of base 17cm. Fabric coarse buff clay with moderate inclusions of grog, mica, ironstone, sand and chert, well sorted, medium to coarse stained sub-angular, used in inverted position. The underside of the base has evidence of sanding, black glaze from a probable storage vessel (diameter c. 17cm) and glaze from a separator. Evidence of some sanding. 1985/1/54.

92. Test piece (or possibly handle of enormous vessel). Fabric orange brick-red with laminations of white clay. Sparse inclusions of burnt shale and white clay up to 0.5mm, angular red slip patchy black glaze. 1985/1/52.

93. Rim with separator (bat) attached on top of rim. Diameter of rim 28cm. Fabric colour buff/light brown. Inclusions grog, ironstone, mica, sand, chert. Well sorted medium to coarse grained, sub-angular. Glaze running down from internal side of rim of the saggar. Some vitrification in glaze type iron stained lead glaze. Saggar covered in a broken slip and parts of the surfaces sanded. 1985/1/50.

94. Rim with separation marks on top. Fabric colour greyish-buff becoming reddish due to overfiring, used for several firings. Moderate inclusions of shale, chert and grog very coarse in size (10mm x 5mm). Slight traces of iron-stained lead glaze externally (accidental splash). 1985/1/7.

95. Two rim sherds. Fabric grey in colour with abundant inclusions of chert and shale which are buff to creamy-white, varying in size from medium to very coarse (8mm x 5mm). Slipped a mustard colour all over. Depression in uppermost rim suggests another saggar situated above with weight causing rim to sag. 1985/1/7.

96. Rim with separator (bat) attached on top. Diameter of rim 24cm. Fabric colour buff/light-brown. Inclusions grog, ironstone, mica, sand, chert. Well sorted medium to coarse grained, sub-angular. Glaze running down external side of rim. Glaze type iron stained lead glaze. Saggar appears to be designed for a deep vessel, pancheon or storage vessel. 1985/1/52.

97. Rim, diameter 26cm. Fabric buff with green tinges due to reducing during firing, inclusions grog, ironstone, mica, sand, chert, well sorted

medium to coarse grained, sub-angular inclusions. Evidence of sanding on rim top. Golden-brown slip on saggar. 1985/1/69.

98. Profile; diameter of base 24cm, of rim 20cm; height 15cm. Fabric colour brown-red with dark shale and buff coloured inclusions - white clay/chert, also concretions of buff-green sand grog ironstone, mica, sand. Poorly sorted, medium to coarse grained sub-angular inclusions. Red brown slip. 1985/1/52.

99. Profile; diameter c. 36cms; probably oval. Fabric colour is yellowish creamy-white with few inclusions of grog, chert and shale. Fairly shallow, height c. 12cm. Bung hole situated near the basal area. Internally there is a small patch (accidental splash) of manganese stained lead glaze on the body of the saggar. Probably used to fire fineware wide necked shallow dish or bowl, or several smaller vessels in the one firing such as cups, beakers or small tankards. 1985/1/7.

100. Profile (two sherds); diameter of base 22cm, of rim 26cm; height 9cm. Fabric red clay 80% with buff clay 20% laminations inclusions ironstone, mica sparse. Saggar covered in a brick-red slip externally and internally. Probably used for a fineware wide rimmed shallow vessel, or may have been made very quickly for immediate saggar use. 1985/1/52.

101. One purplish-red overfired base. Moderate inclusions of grog, shale and chert which are mostly medium in size with very few coarse/very coarse particles. Traces of glaze internally (body area of vessel) which are purplish in colour (vitrified iron-stained lead glaze). Slight traces of underneath external base. This saggar used for several firings. Glazed. 1985/1/7.

102. Base with bung hole at the side. Diameter 34cm. Fabric colour, pale buff; inclusions grog, ironstone, mica, sand buff clay/chert. Well sorted medium to coarse grained inclusions, sub-angular. No glaze. Appears to have a clear slip which, on heating, has become dark golden/yellow then burnt to black. Probably used for deep wide rimmed vessel like a pancheon. 1985/1/52.

103. Two base sherds. Fairly small diameter (c. 22cm). Overfired and used for several firings. Internally the fabric is a muddy mustard colour with red core, external face reduced grey. Inclusions are abundant and consist of grog, shale and chert which are medium to very coarse in size and irregular, angular or sub-angular in shape. Small vessels such as beakers, tygs, cups or small tankards were fired in this particular saggar. 1985/1/7.

104. Base, has separator on internal side of base, may be base of stilt or a bat. Diameter of base 22cm. Fabric colour brown/red. Inclusions grog, ironstone, mica, sand, chert / white clay (possibly thuyolite) and burnt hardened shale. Some laminations of red and white clay. Glaze runs into base. Slight vitrification of glaze. 1985/1/52.

105. Joining body and base sherd showing some evidence of reduction hence used for several firings. Fabric varying in colour from muddy mustard-red to brick-red. Abundant inclusions of very coarse grey shale, white and buff coloured particles, white clay and chert?, which vary in size from medium to coarse (9mm to 15mm). The base is three times thicker than the side. 1985/1/7.

106. One base; fabric colour pale buff. Inclusions grog, ironstone, mica, sand, buff clay. Inclusions sub-angular, well sorted, medium grained. Base of saggar external side covered in parts with black iron stained lead glaze. Internal side has 'cinder like' vitrified material, which has accumulated at the centre of the saggar base. 1985/1/52.

107. One base with separator mark underneath and traces of vitrified glaze. Fabric is a yellowish buff colour with inclusions of white clay, chert and black shale. The most distinctive feature of this sherd is a small fragment of black-glazed fine ware rim which has adhered to internal base. 1985/1/7.

#### Stilts (108-117)

108. Fabric brick-red, moderate inclusions of white clay. Band of iron-stained lead glaze around bottom. Stilt snapped off at base, with buff fabric adhering. Used in upright position (widest end = top; narrow end = bottom). 1985/1/54.

109. Fabric buff coloured clay with sparse to moderate inclusions of grog and white clay, red slip. Bands of iron-stained lead glaze around bottom. Glaze has also run from top, covering one side. Top and bottom of stilt have traces of black glaze. Used upright. Stilt fairly cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

110. Fabric buff coloured clay with sparse to moderate inclusions of grog and white clay, red slip. Band of iron stained lead glaze around bottom, pooling to one side also run of glaze down one side. Used upright. Stilt snapped off cleanly. 1985/1/54.

111. Fabric buff coloured with moderate inclusions of grog and white clay, red slip. Band of iron-stained lead glaze around bottom. Also some trace of

red bodied fabric. Used upright. Stilt cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

112. Fabric brick-red with sparse inclusions of white clay. Thin band of iron-stained lead glaze around bottom. Also remains of red-bodied fabric. Used upright. Stilt cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

113. Fabric buff coloured clay with sparse inclusions of white clay. Coated all over with manganese stained lead glaze. Glaze from vessel has also vitrified on top. Used upright. Stilt cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

114. Fabric buff coloured clay with sparse inclusions of white clay, red slip. Glaze has run from top down one side, with band of iron stained lead glaze at bottom where glaze has pooled. Traces of glaze on top. Used upright. Stilt cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

115. Fabric buff orange clay with moderate inclusions of white clay and grog. Two streaks of manganese stained lead glaze have run down side and pooled at base. Thin band of glaze around base. Also brick-red fabric adhering to bottom. Used upright. Stilt quite cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

116. Fabric buff-orange clay with moderate inclusions of white clay and grog. Manganese-stained lead glaze has run down and coated one side, pooling at base. Glaze has also vitrified on top. Red bodied fabric adhering to base. Used upright in same firing with 86. Stilt cleanly snapped off. 1985/1/54.

117. Fabric buff-orange clay. Black iron stained lead glaze has run and substantially coated the stilt. Glaze has pooled at bottom and run over end. Glaze also found on top. Traces of red fabric adhering to base. Used upright. 1985/1/54.

#### Bats (118-127)

118. Orange brick-red fabric - irregular in shape. There is a fine rim shaped depression in the fabric surrounded by iron stained lead glaze to which another fabric has adhered. 1985/1/52.

119. Orange brick-red fabric. Impression and glaze large black-glazed vessel, probably panchcon or from storage vessel. Glaze has run onto bottom surface. 1985/1/54.

120. Fabric buff coloured clay. Finger impressions from hand moulding. Traces of black-glazed buff bodied vessel (possibly stilt) on top surface. 1985/1/54.

Bats not illustrated (121-127)

121. One unglazed potsherd (orange clay with white clay inclusions and white clay banding) with area on face (on which vessel rim situated for firing) being paler than surrounding area. Very slight traces black glaze with similar quantity of other fabric adhering (from inner area vessel rim?). 1985/1/7.

122. Purplish-brown fabric overfired therefore evidence of re-use? Distinct paler area (rim shaped) where vessel situated for firing. Small patch iron stained lead glaze to one corner of bat. Particles of sand all over both faces. 1985/1/7.

123. Orange coloured fabric with white clay inclusions/banding. Distinct rim shaped depressions either face of fabric with traces of iron stained lead glaze to area where bat has come into contact with outer rim area of vessel. Sand particles all over. 1985/1/7.

124. Orange coloured fabric with white clay inclusions. Same fabric as 74. Part of rim adhering (glaze has run down during firing and rim has firmly stuck to area where glaze has collected between actual rim and separator). Glaze has also run down two edges of separator. Iron stained lead glaze has greyish metallic sheen. Underneath fabric looks as though a layer of bat has come away with base (?) of vessel that has been removed. 1985/1/7.

125. Orange coloured fabric with white clay inclusions. Distinct rim impressions both sides (2 vessels fired rim to rim with bat in between). Iron stained lead glaze which has collected fairly thickly to one corner and coated 2 edges (via what would have been inner area of rim hence glaze has run from upper, inside down vessel and here pooled on bat underside ie rim area of upright vessel) glaze thicker underside than upper. Also on upper face of bat, rim shaped traces of glaze from external rim edge of inverted pot. 1985/1/7.

126. Orange coloured fabric with white clay inclusions. Distinct rim impressions both sides (2 vessels fired rim to rim with bat in between). Traces of rim fabric adhering one face with only very slight traces of other fabric on underside of bat. Sand particles both sides. Iron stained lead glaze has run and coated one complete edge (running glaze from internal vessel) and half length of two other edges - one edge no glaze run although traces of glaze from external rim areas. Used for firing two vessels, one upright and one inverted. 1985/1/7.

127. Orange coloured fabric with white clay inclusions. Although rim impressions are not quite so distinct as those present on other bats they are

nevertheless distinguishable as such on both faces. Iron stained lead glaze has run and coated one edge. Sand particles present both faces. This bat could possibly have been used for several firings given direction of rim impressions. 1985/1/7.

Separators/bobs not illustrated (128-134)

128. Iron stained lead glazed potsherd. Face 1 - piece of other fabric adhering to one corner. Face 2 - fragments adhering to one corner, also sand particles adhering to area of glaze vitrification. The actual edge of potsherd (above which fragments adhering) is reduced grey. 1985/1/7.

129. Iron-stained lead glazed potsherd. Face 1 - sand particles adhering and has gritty texture. Face 2 - substantial fragment of other fabric adhering. This potsherd reduced grey - two edges. 1985/1/7.

130. Very small in size with distance rim impressions both faces (though one more so than other). In fact the more distinct rim impression represents the upper face (upright position) as glaze has run down one edge from this area (i.e. outer rim area of inverted vessel). All edges pretty well coated with iron-stained lead glaze. Size of bob and that of rim suggests fine ware vessels fired. 1985/1/7.

131. Face 1 - manganese stained lead glaze pooling thickly around traces of other fabric which appears to be from base of vessel measuring from 8-10cm. Glaze has run down edges and congealed/pooled very thickly under face. 1985/1/7.

132. Large sized bob with one face showing distinct rim impression (other fabric). Iron-stained lead glaze running down two edges, hence vessel fired in inverted position. 1985/1/7.

133. Large sized bob with one face showing distinct rim impression with other fabric adhering there upon. Iron stained lead glaze running down two edges, hence vessel fired in upright position. May have been used for several firings. 1985/1/7.

134. Medium-large sized bob with two faces upon which flat section of rim adhering (more so one face than other). Iron-stained lead glaze running/coating edges; although difficult to ascertain firing position (i.e. whether upright/inverted). This bob has nevertheless been used to fire two vessels simultaneously rim to rim. 1985/1/7.

## The Clay Pipes (135-150)

### Date ranges after Oswald 1975

135. This is the earliest pipe found. The bowl and foot project forwards and there is milling around the edge; the stem is thick (1580-1610). 1985/1/2.

136. The bowl is red with a pinched mouth and flat heel; the clay is a reddish colour due to overfiring (1640-1660). 1985/1/2.

137. The bowl has a pinched mouth a flat heel and is milled around the rim. It is a second and has been squashed during manufacture (1640-1660). (2).

138. The pipe is similar to forms produced by Alexander Lankton of Chester (Rutter and Davey 1980, 217, Fig.77, no. 29) but there is no stamp. The angle of the bowl is lower than the Rainford model, it is burnished and the rim is lined and has a flat heel (1640 - 1680). 1985/1/2.

139. The bowl is more rounded and better finished than 138. There is milling around the rim and a more pronounced flat heel with a distorted stamp. (1660-1680). 1985/1/2.

140. The bowl is similar to no. 135 but it is more globular. It has a flat heel and is milled. 1985/1/2.

141. A large nineteenth century bowl with a raised leaf moulding on both of the seams. A small spur has been broken off (1790-1840). 1985/1/2.

142. A nineteenth century bowl, slightly smaller than no. 141. It leans in a forward position has a small spur with no seam moulding (1790-1840). 1985/1/2.

143. Fragments of a nineteenth century bowl with a damaged stamp; the initials read P/S or R/S which are on a shield with three ribs on either side and three four-pointed stars above. 1985/1/2.

144. This is similar to no. 135 but has a slightly pinched longer bowl. It has a flat heel and milling around the rim (1660-1680). 1985/1/7.

145. This has a small spurred bowl which is damaged and is rim milled. It has a distorted stamp on the back of the bowl (IB). The bowl has been badly fired, the clay has turned red (1660-1680). 1985/1/7.

146. The pipe has a damaged bowl and a badly lined rim. The heel is flat and has the stamp (HL); Possibly made by Hugh Lyon of Windle (1663) (Davey 1978b) (1640-1680). 1985/1/8.

147. The bowl has a pinched mouth and a badly lined rim with a flat heel (1640-1660). 1985/1/37.

148. The bowl has a pinched mouth a flat heel and is slightly larger than no. 147. (1660-1680). 1985/1/37

149. A large thin walled damaged bowl with a small spur and narrow bore. The rim of the bowl is parallel to the stem, (1740-1770). 1985/1/45.

150. Half a white clay wig curler which is well formed and flat ended. (Around 1700). 1985/1/16.

### Sugar-refining pottery (151-159)

151. Rim of Type 2 syrup jar, dark purplish red and brown fabric partly over-fired to vitrification; slightly distorted. Black glaze on interior of rim, a few small glaze spots externally. Internal surface red-slipped. 1985/1/54.

152. Rim of Type 2 syrup jar, pale creamy-pink fabric with black glaze internally. 1985/1/54.

153. Base of large Type 1 sugar-loaf mould. 1985/1/54.

154. Base of small Type 1 sugar-loaf mould. 1985/1/54.

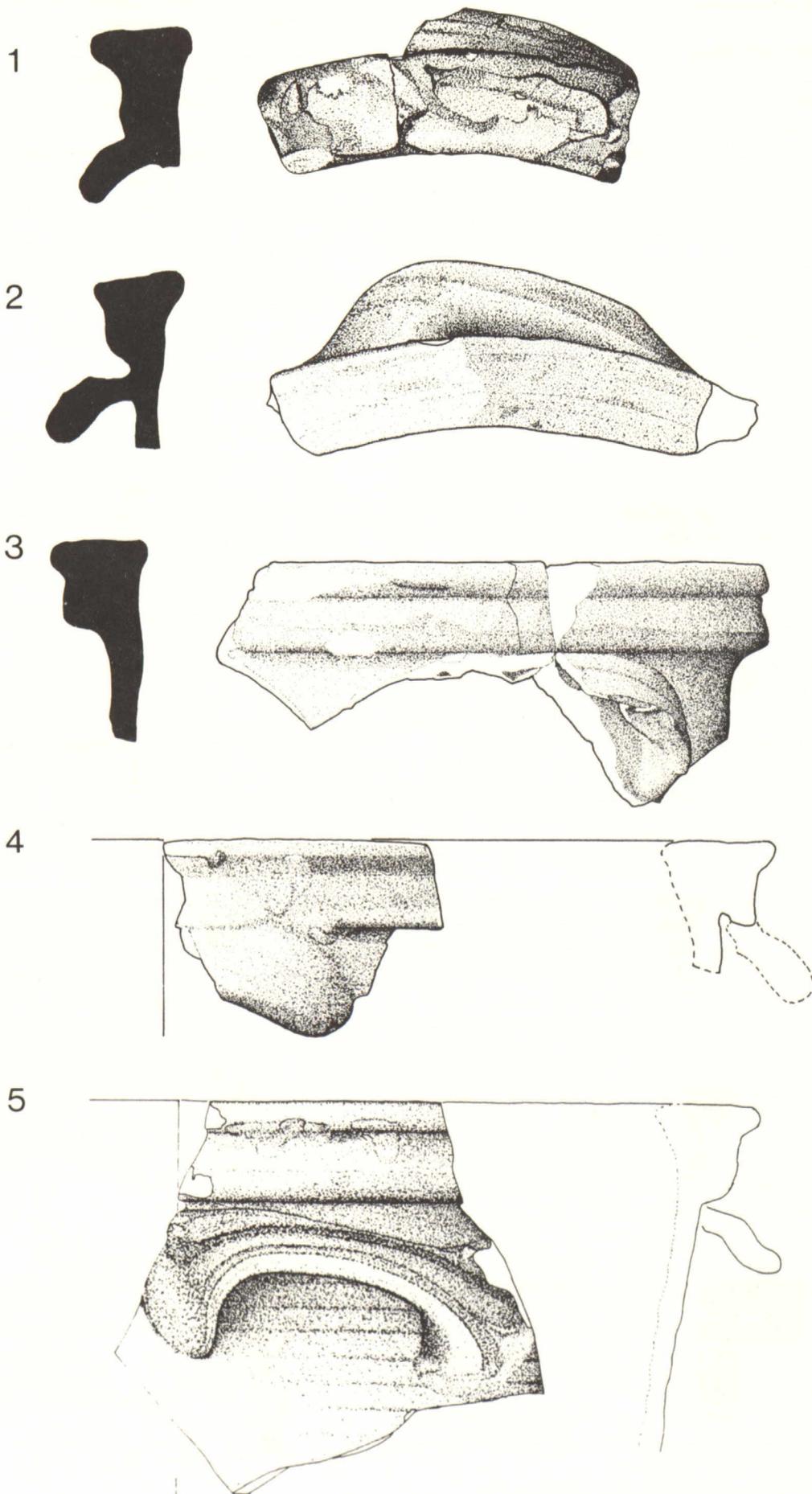
155. Rim of Type 1 sugar-loaf mould, in part overfired to vitrification and slightly distorted. 1985/1/54.

156. Rim of Type 1 or 3 (2 sherds). 1985/1/8.

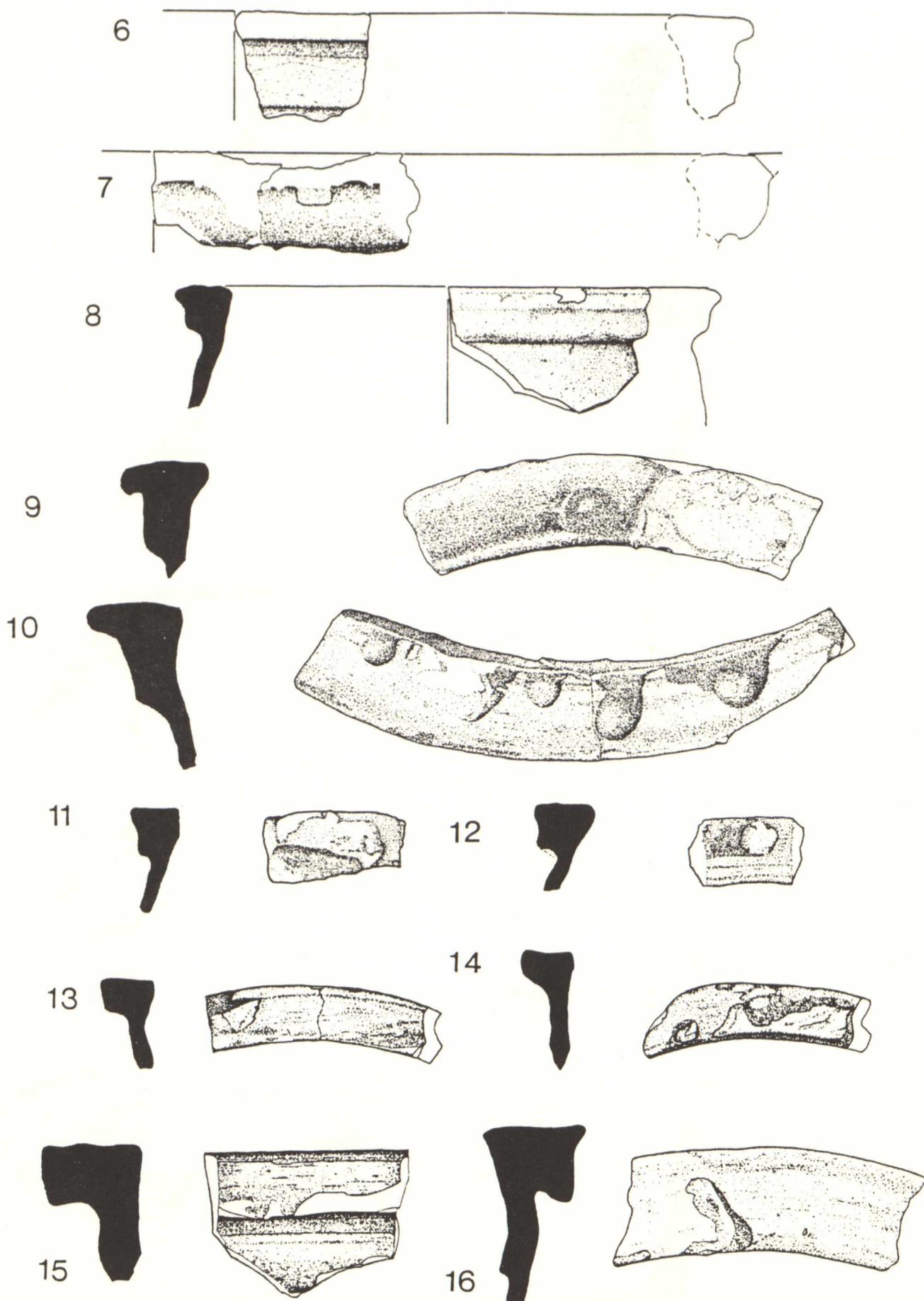
157. Sherd of Type 3 tripod vessel, with scar where foot has broken away. 1985/1/3.

158. Foot of Type 3 tripod vessel. 1985/1/54.

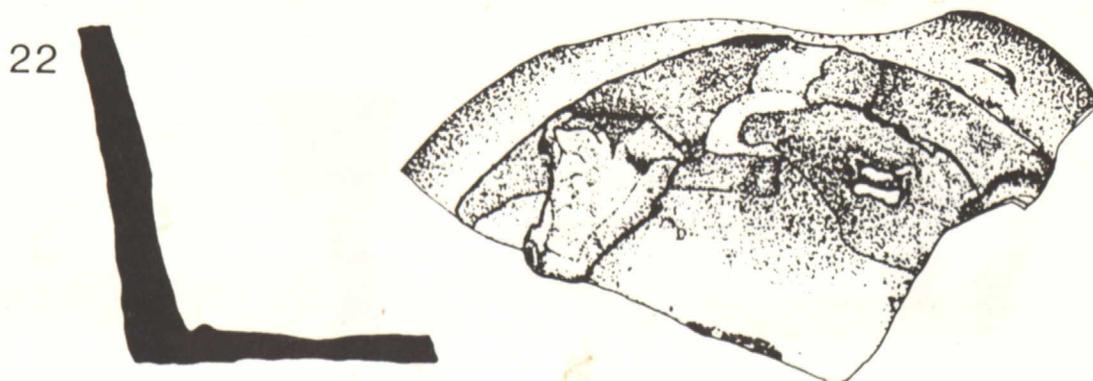
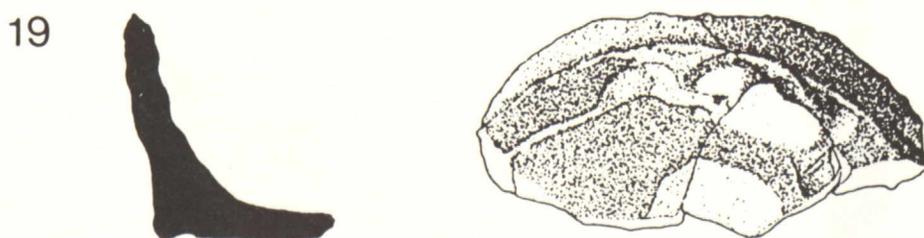
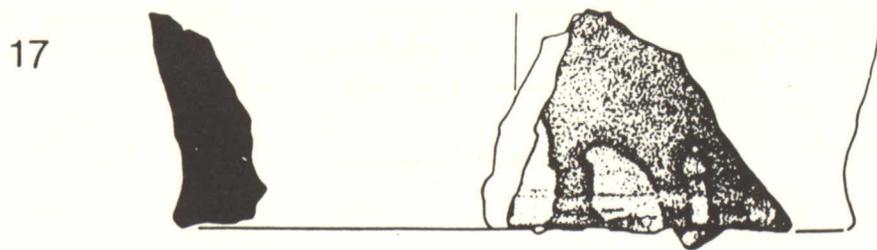
159. Rim of Type 1 or 3, with shallow horizontal grooves externally. 1985/1/54.



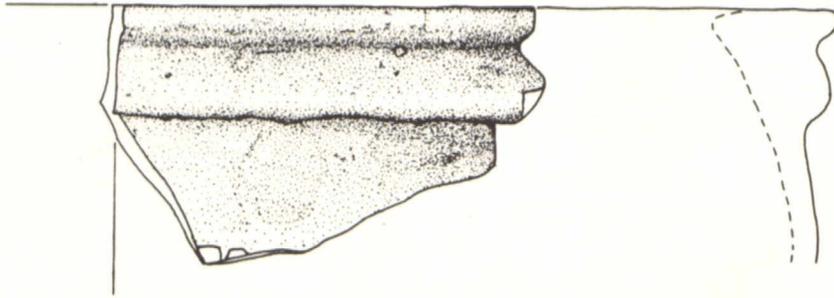
10.7 Blackglazed storage vessels. Nos. 1-5. Scale: x1/2



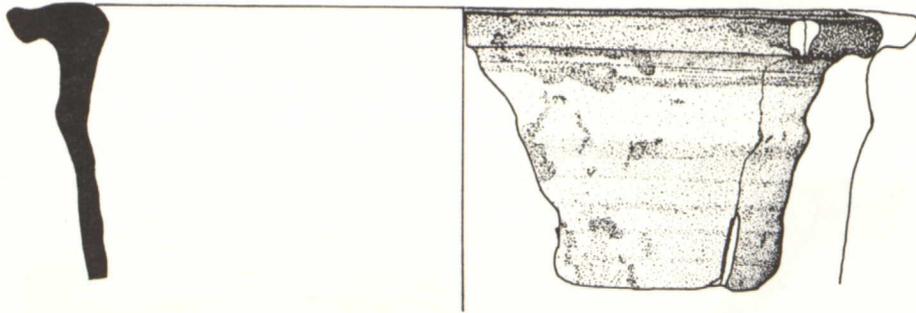
10.8 Blackglazed storage vessels. Nos. 6-16. Scale: x1/2



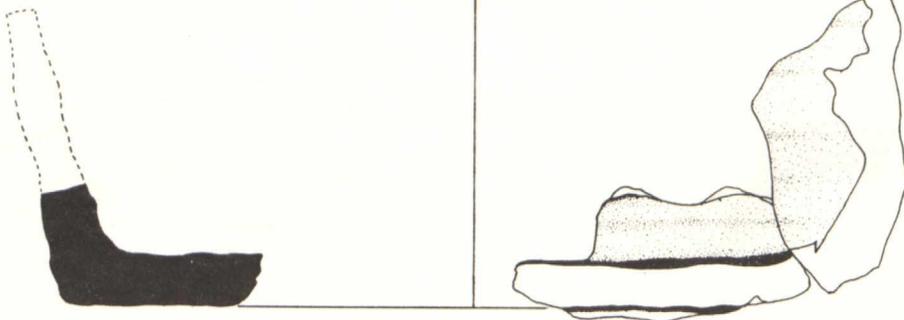
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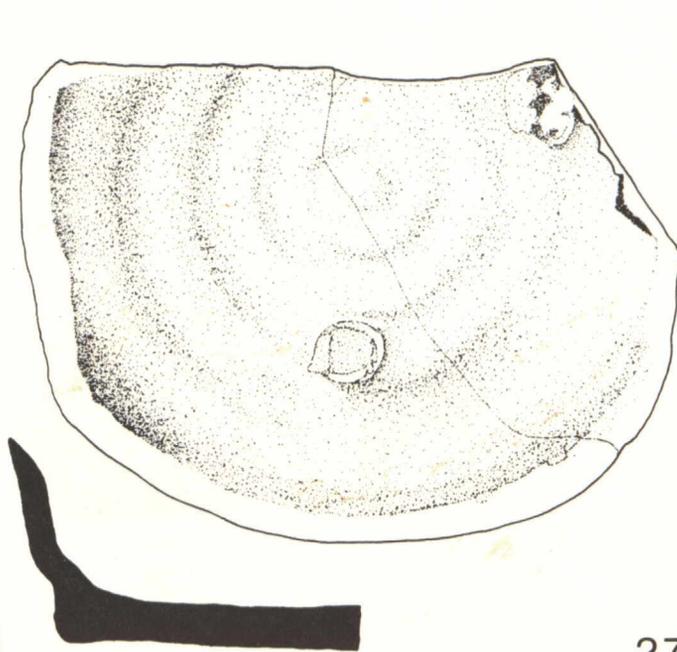
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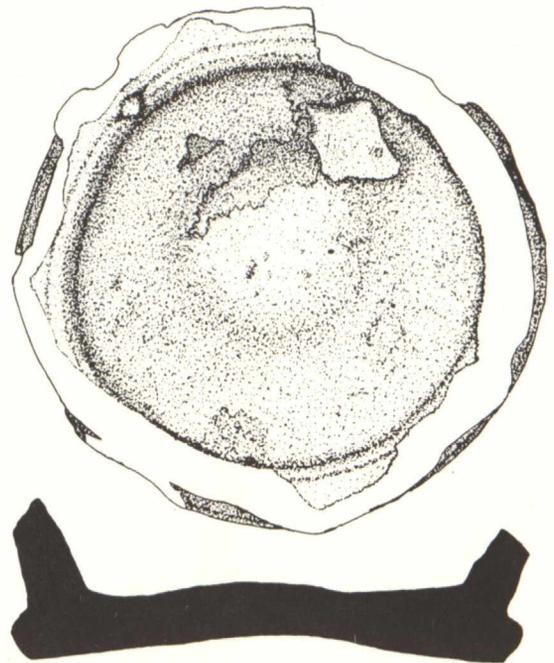
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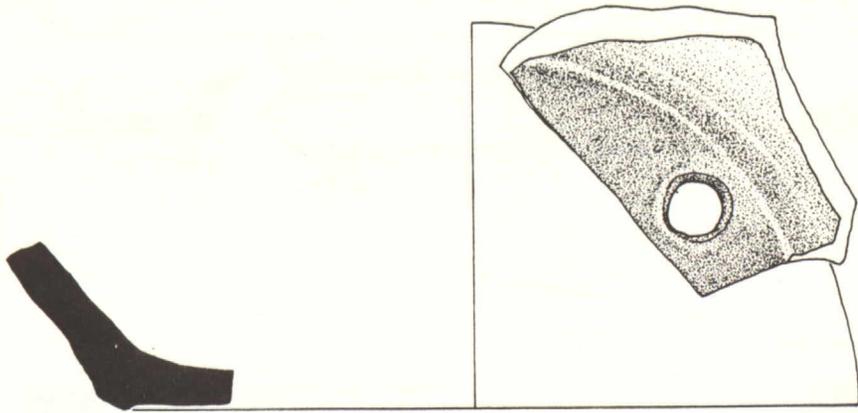
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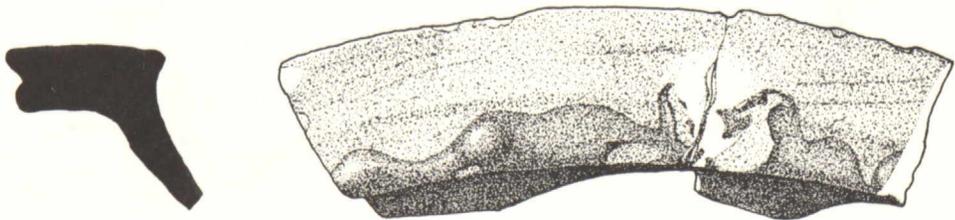
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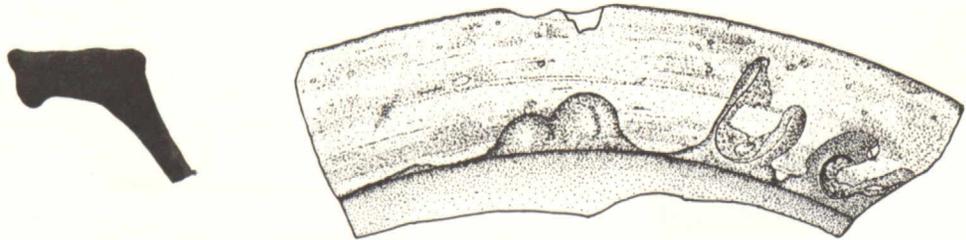
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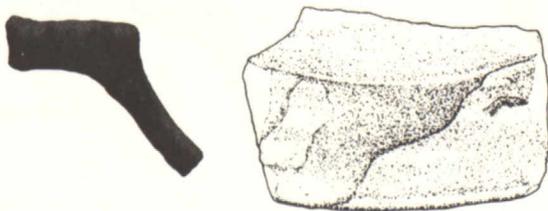
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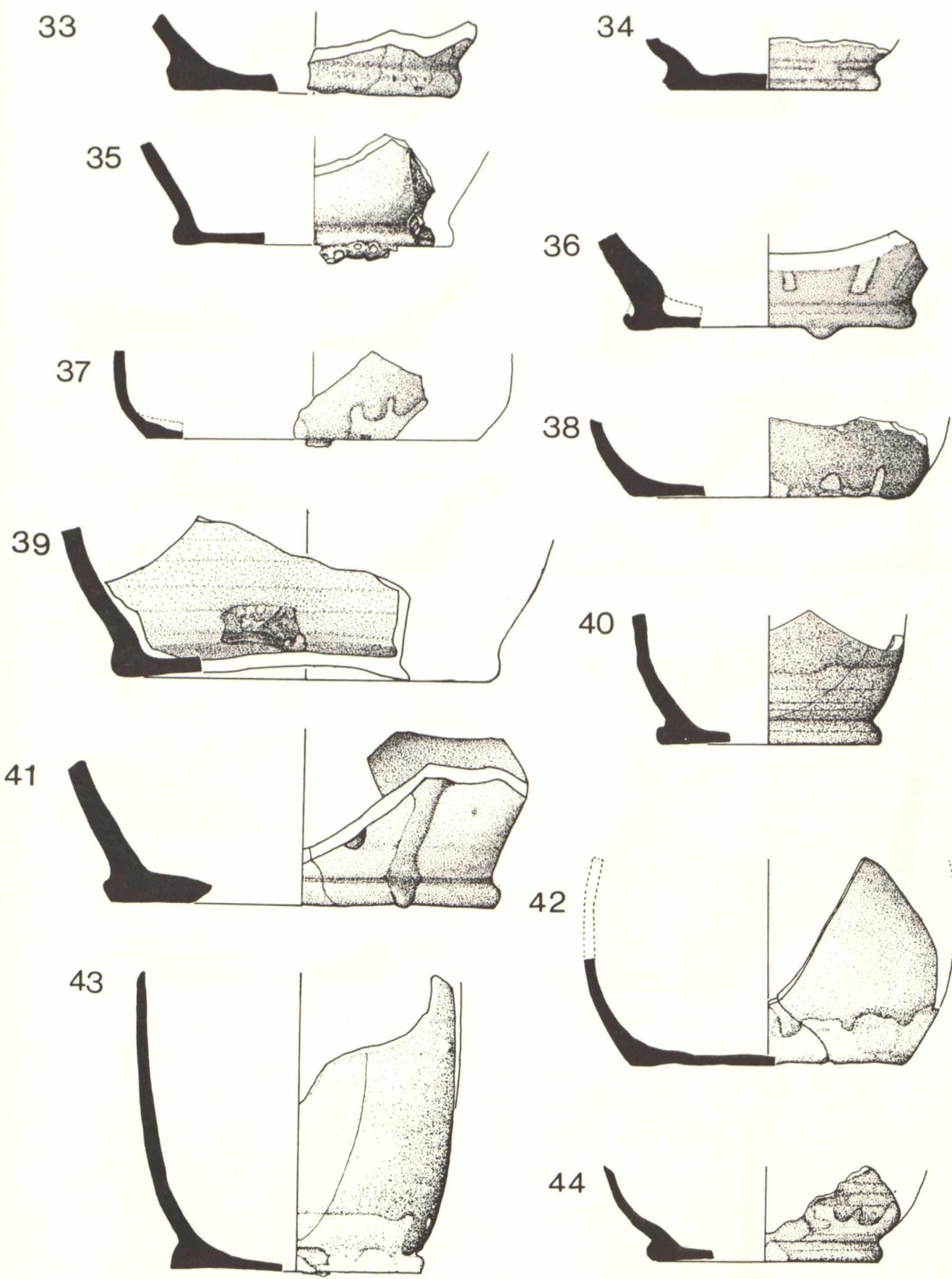
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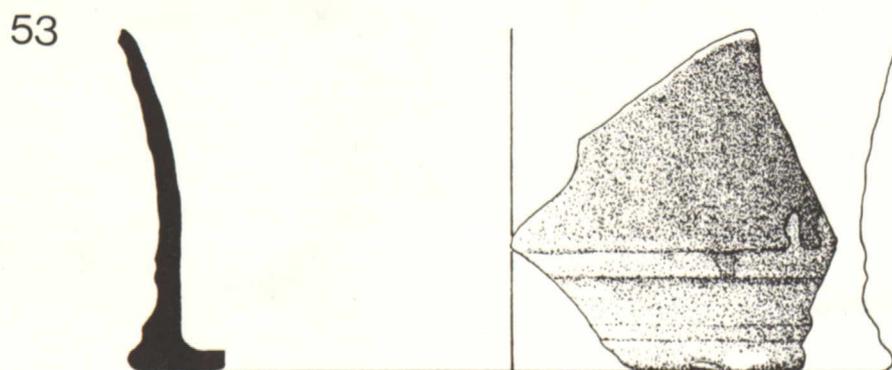
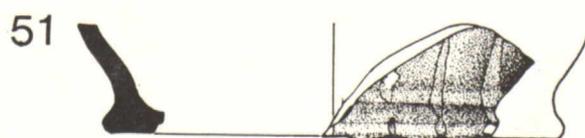
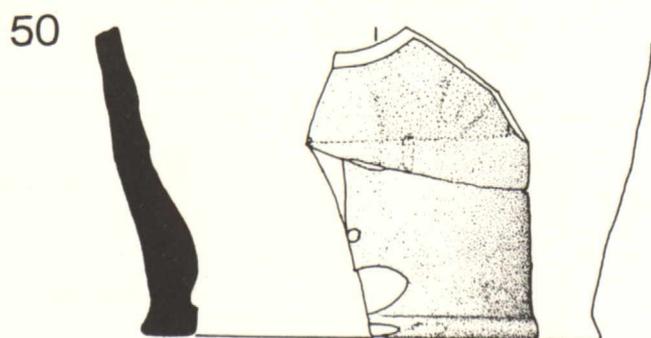
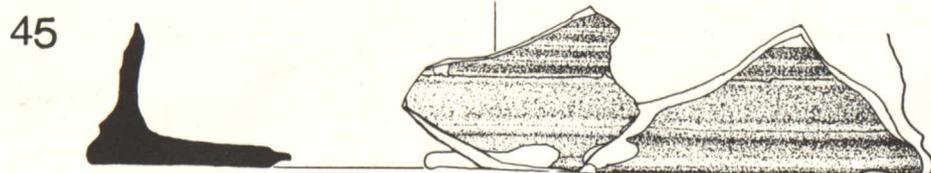
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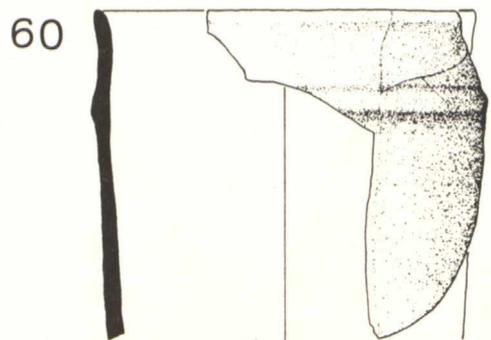
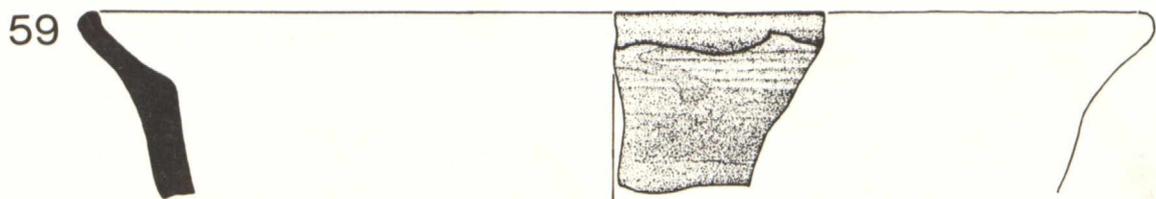
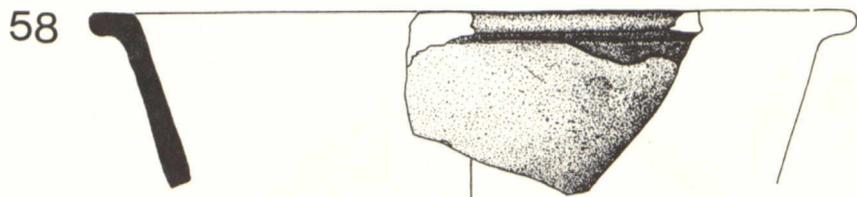
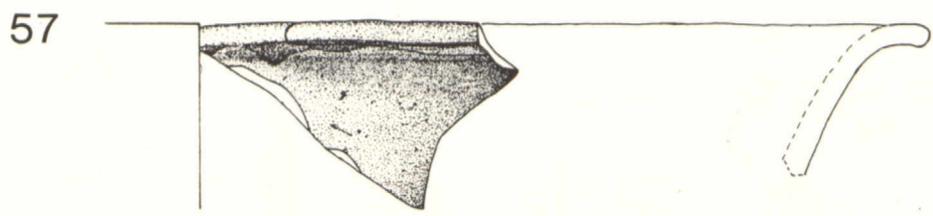
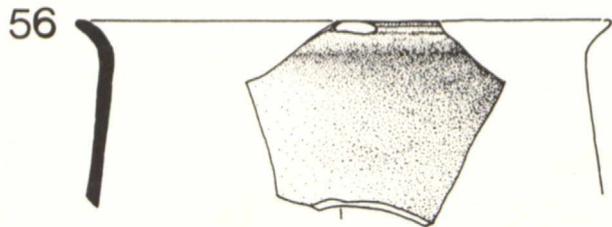


10.11 Blackglazed pancheons and bowls. Nos. 28-32. Scale: x1/2

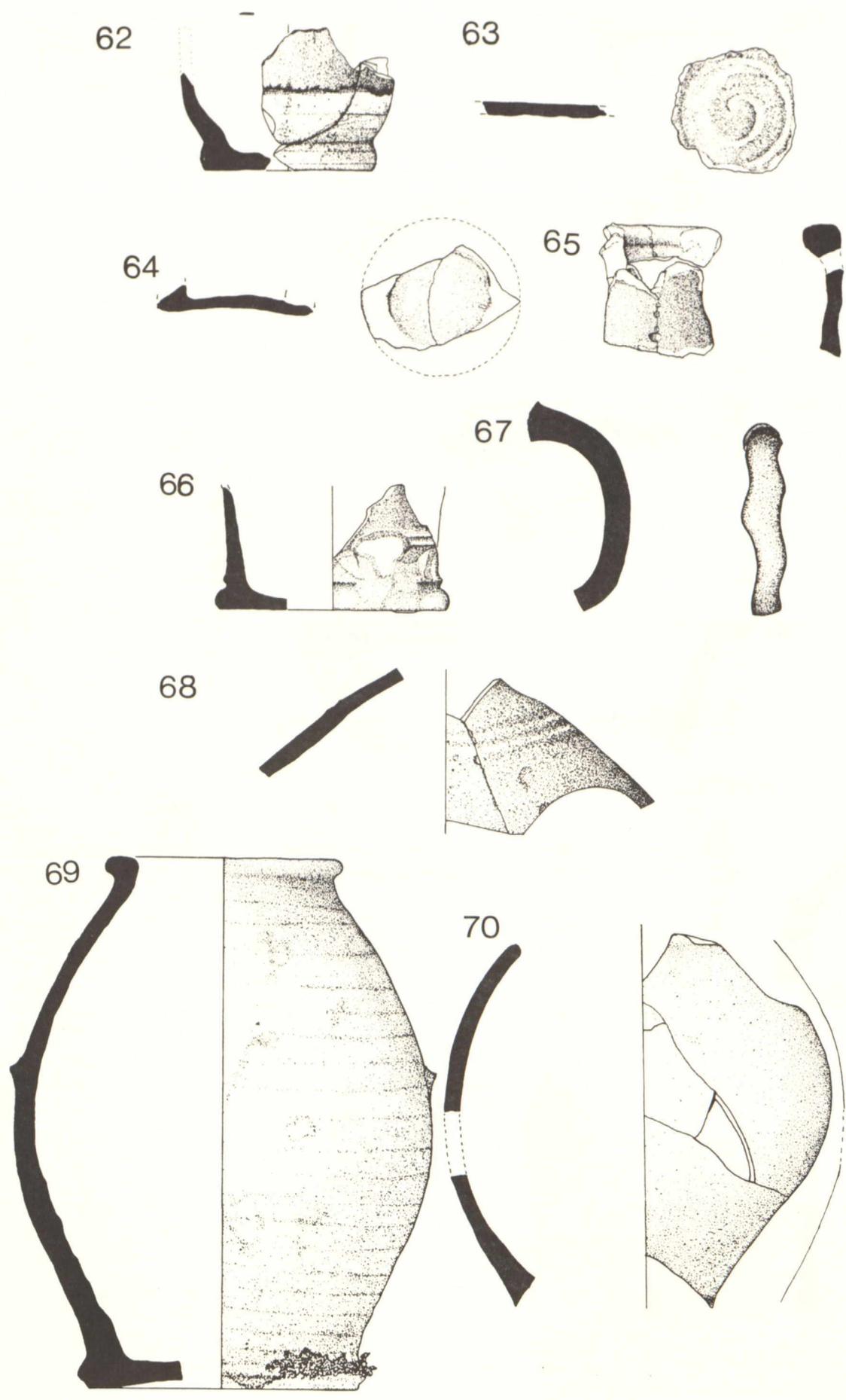


10.12 Blackglazed pancheons and bowls. Nos. 33-42. Blackglazed other forms. Nos. 43-44. Scale: x1/2



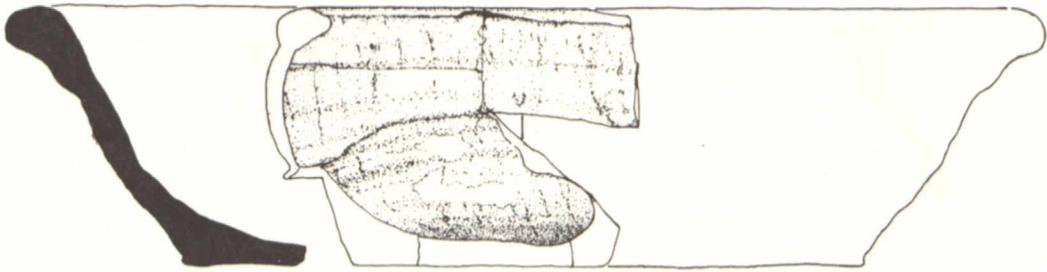


10.14 Blackglazed other forms. Nos. 54-61. Scale: x1/2

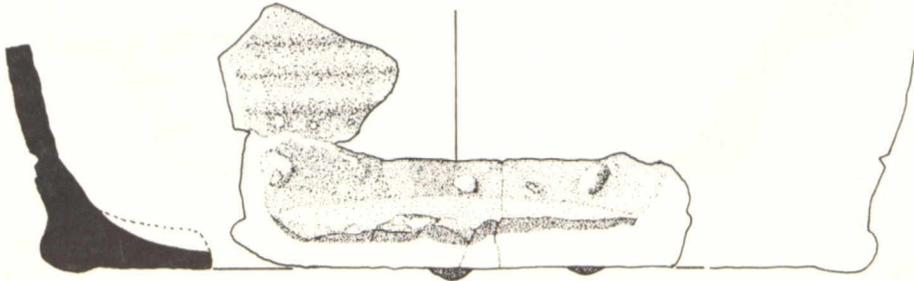


10.15 Blackglazed other forms. Nos. 62-70. Scale: x1/2

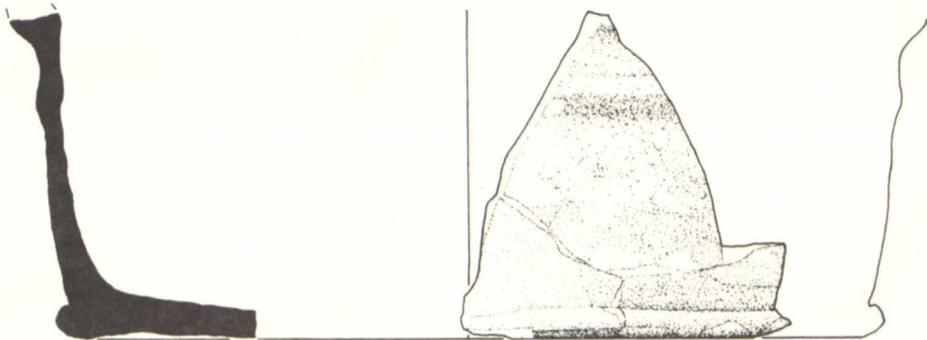
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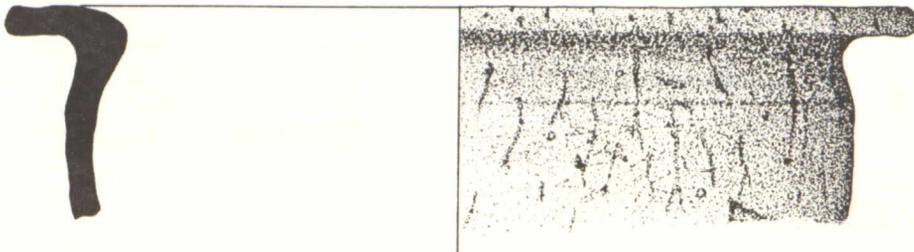
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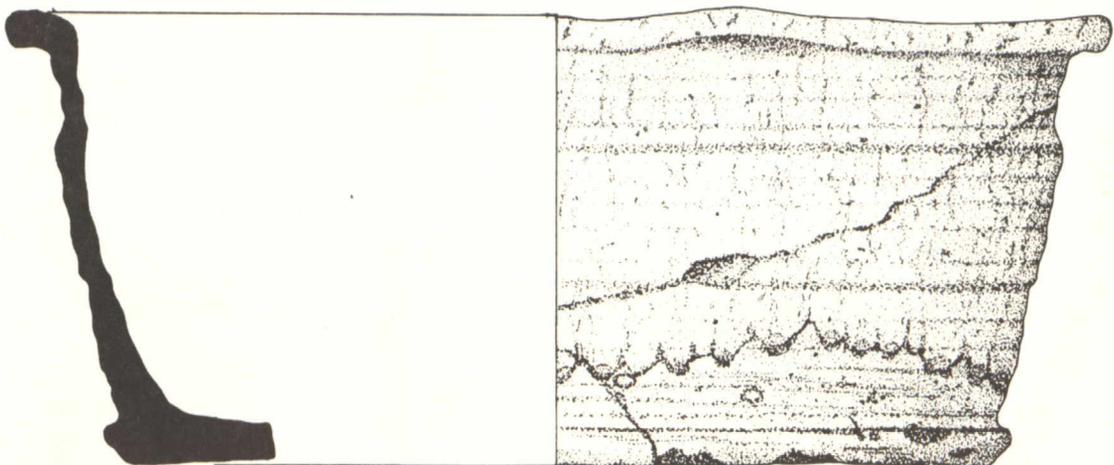
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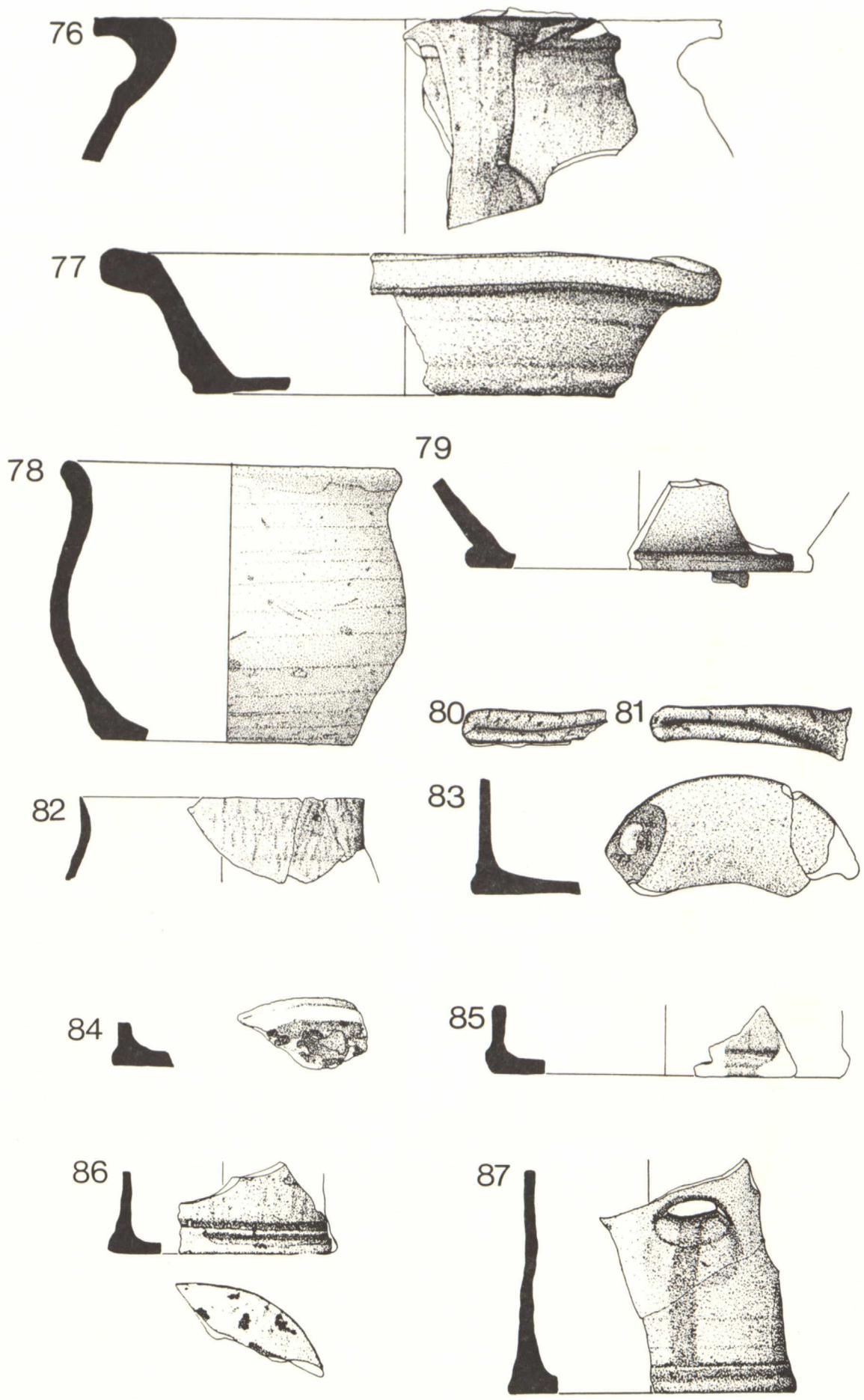
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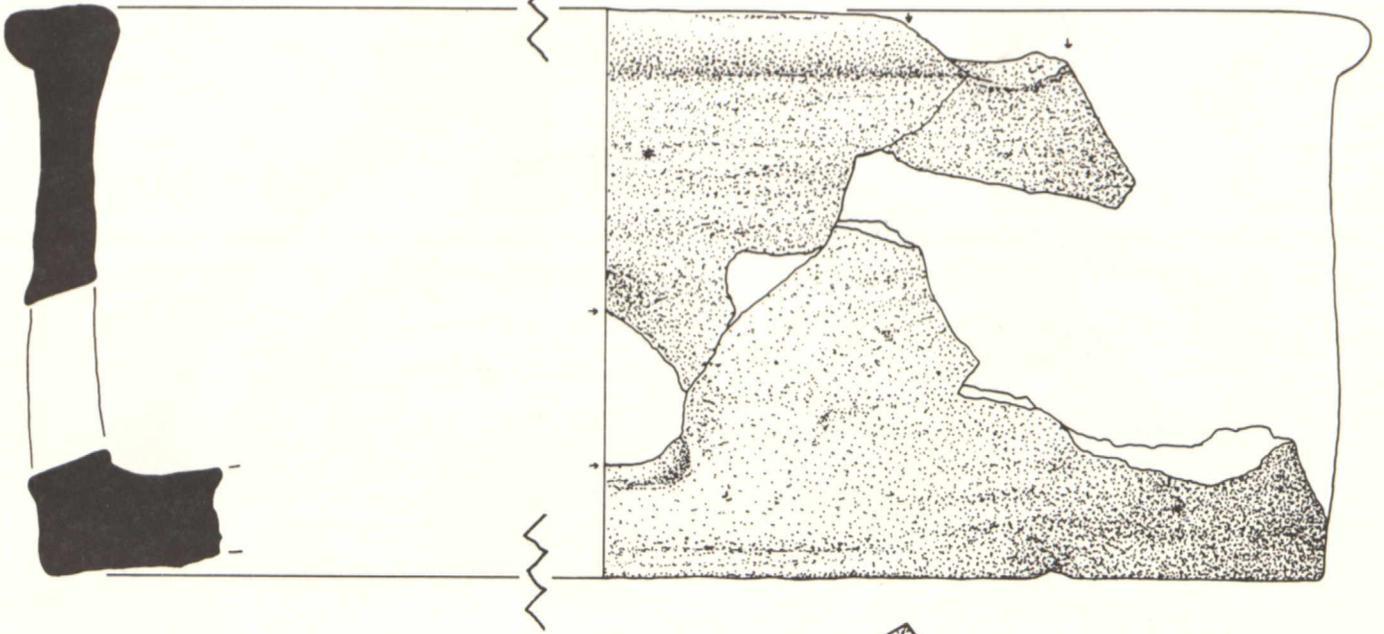


10.16 Mottled ware etc. bowls and dishes. Nos. 71-75. Scale: x1/2

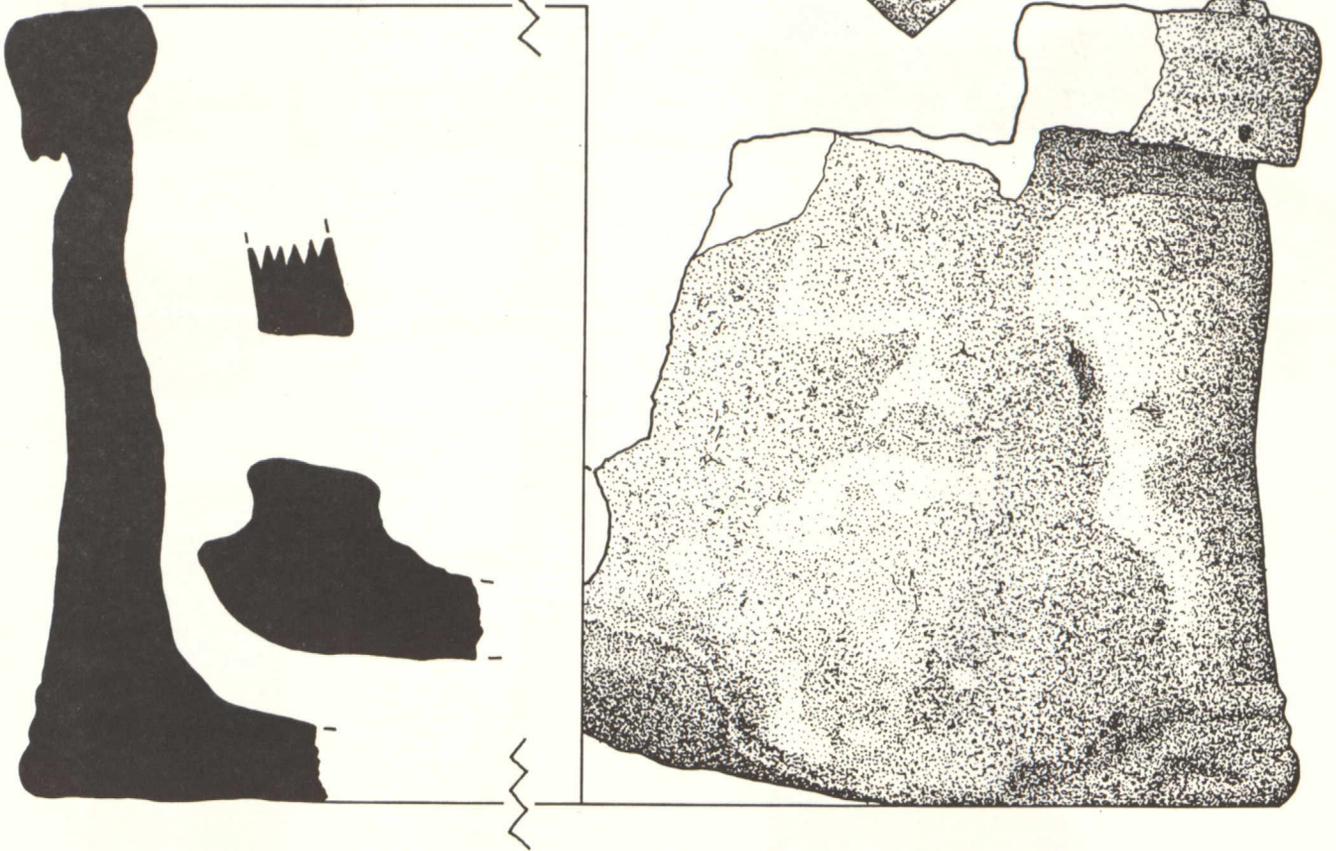


10.17 Mottled ware etc. bowls and dishes. Nos. 76-81. Mottled ware etc. beaker and tankards. Nos. 82-87. Scale: x1/2

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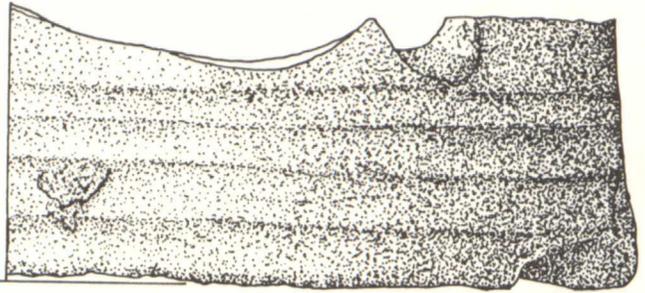
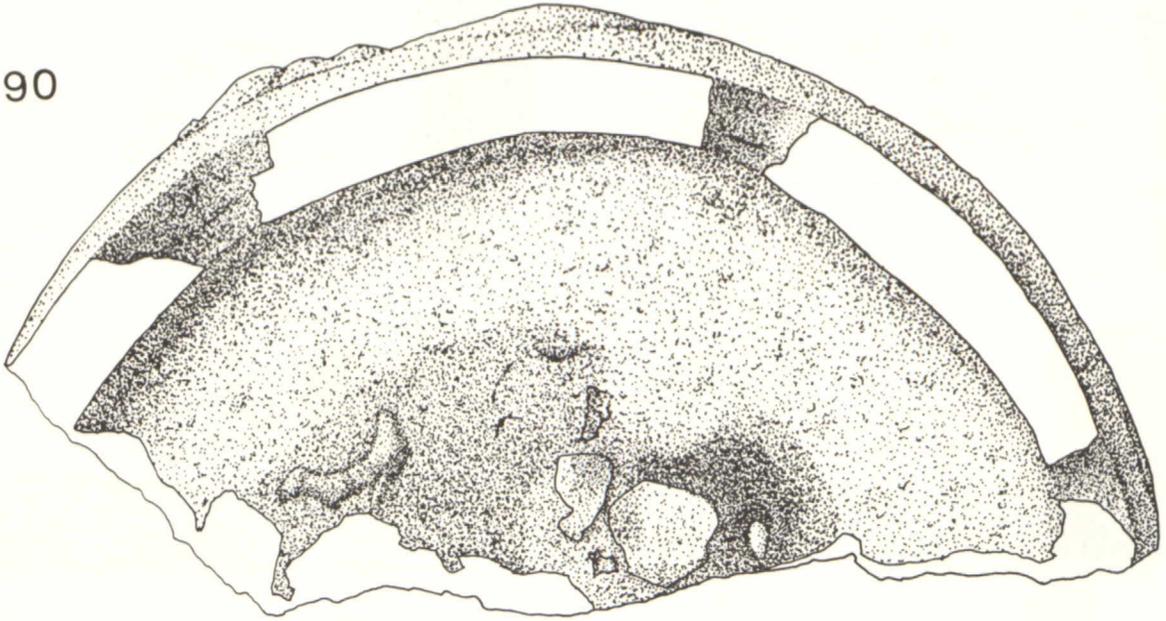


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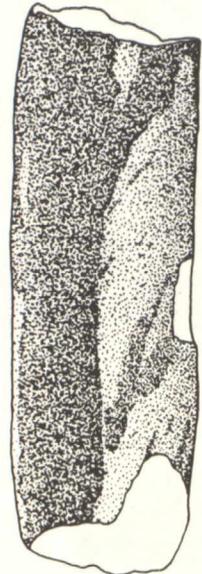
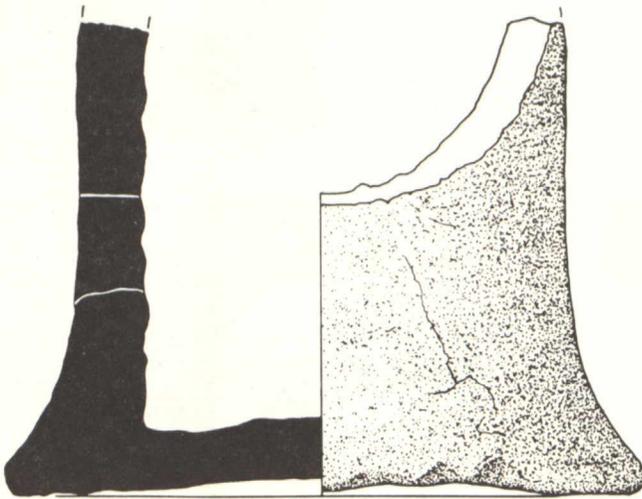
10.18 Saggars etc. Nos. 88-89. Scale: x1/2

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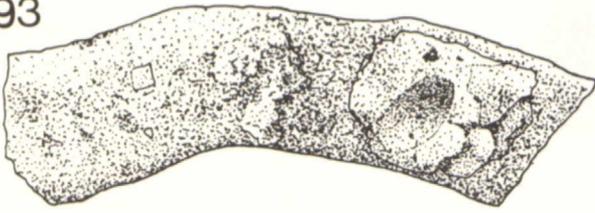


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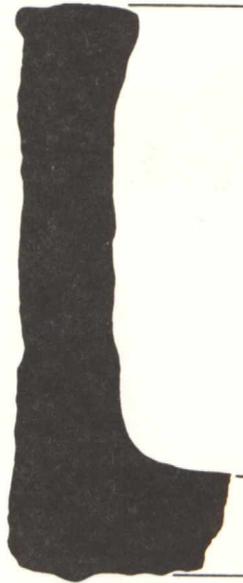
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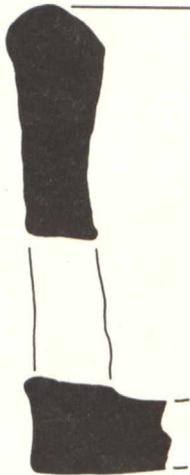
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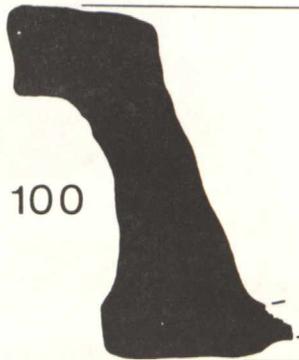
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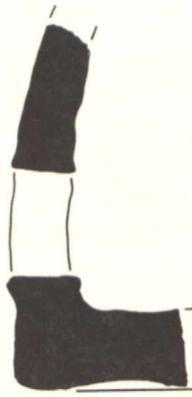


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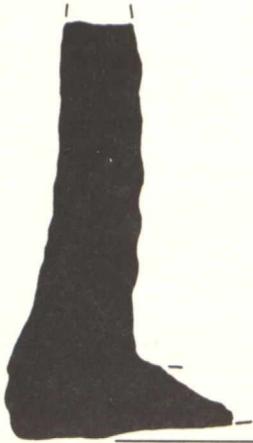




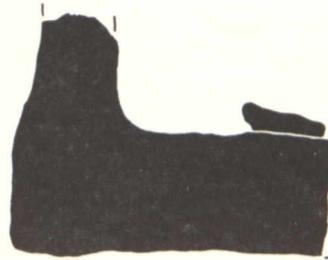
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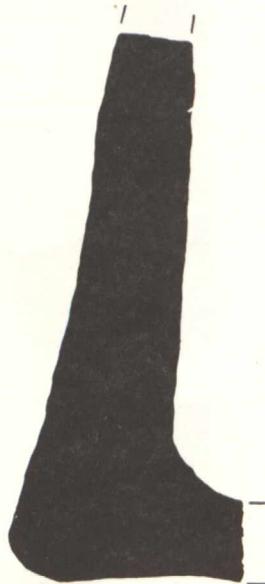
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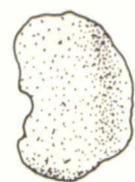
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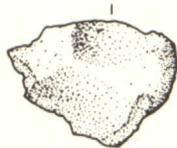
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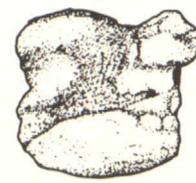
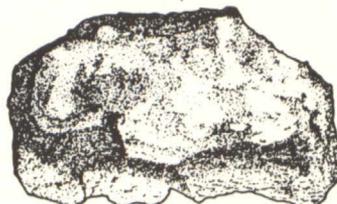
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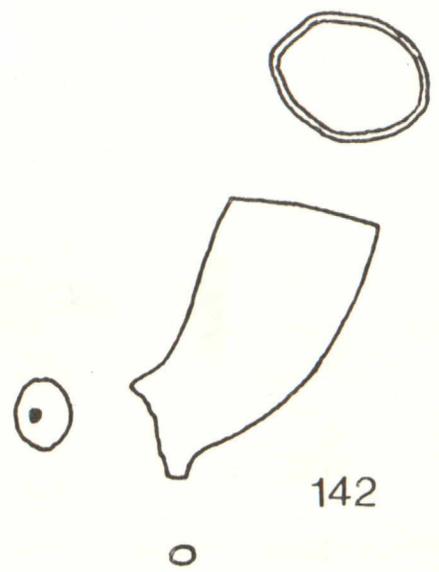
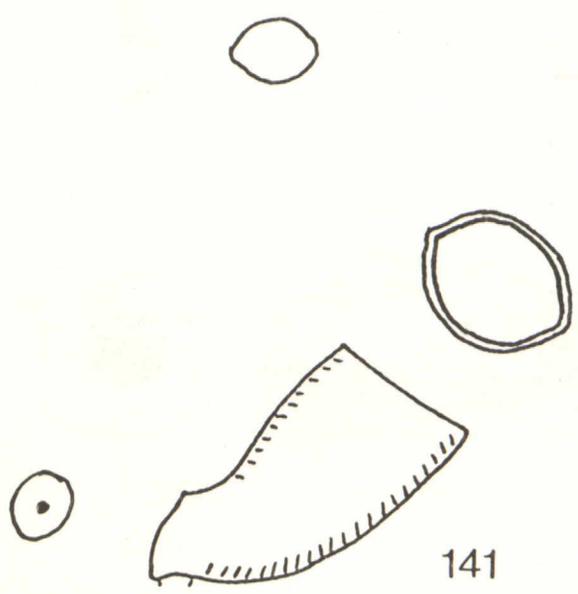
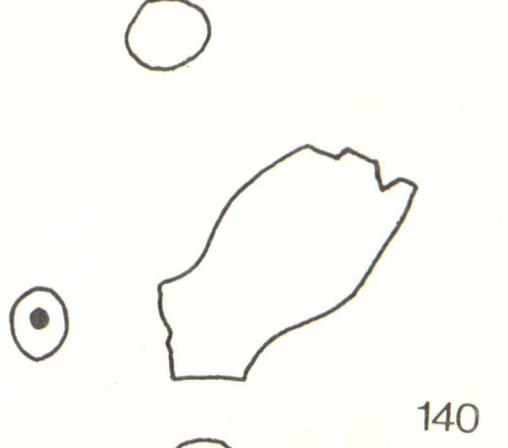
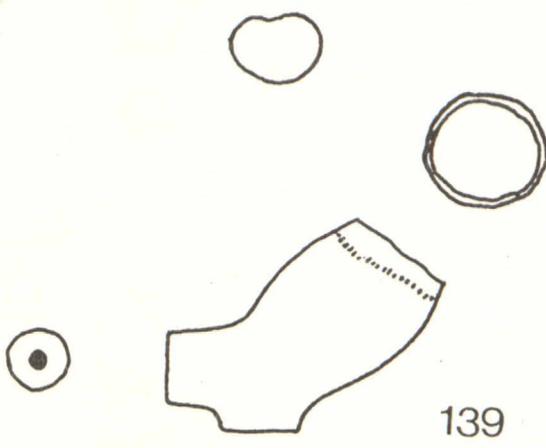
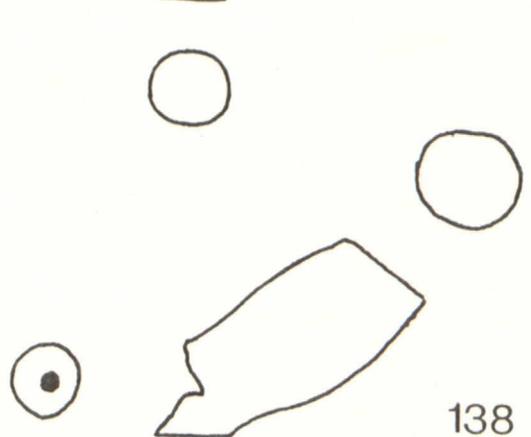
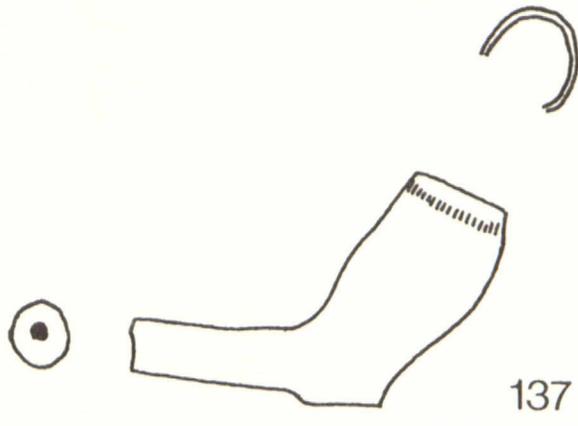
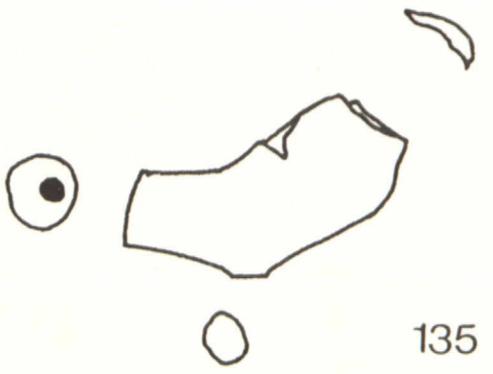


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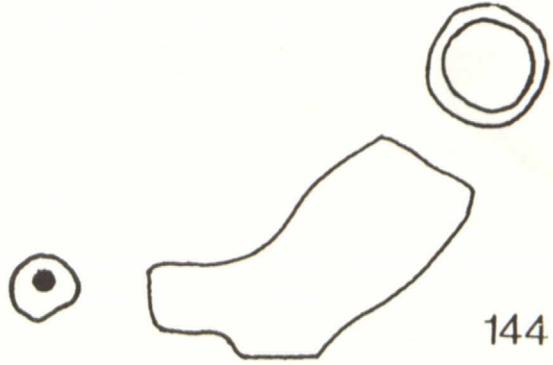




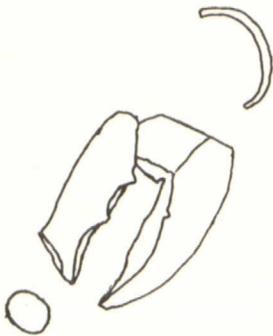
10.23 Clay pipes. Nos. 135-142. Scale: x1/1



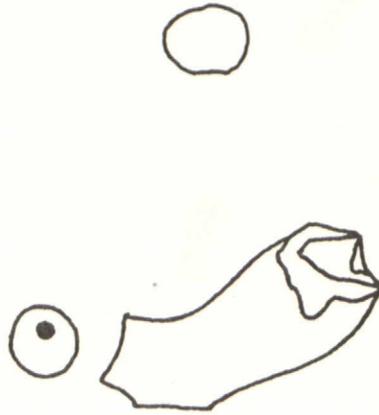
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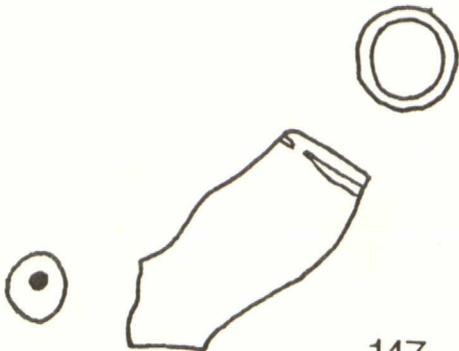
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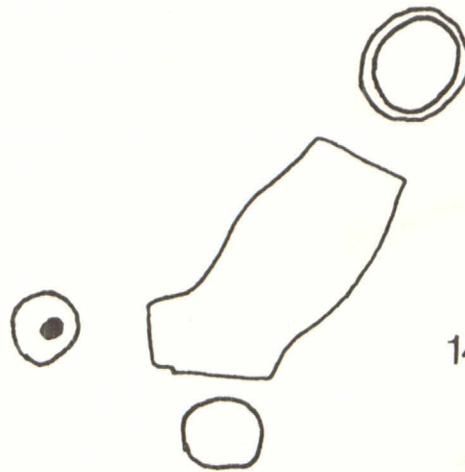
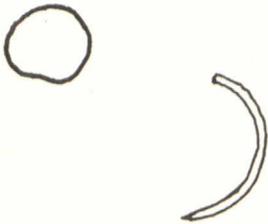
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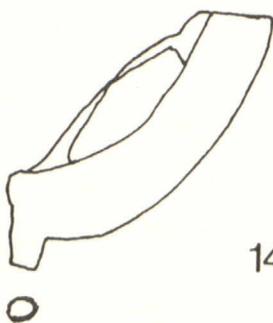
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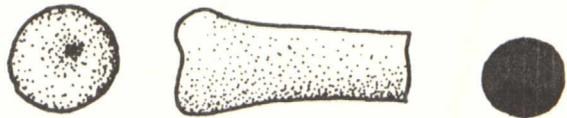
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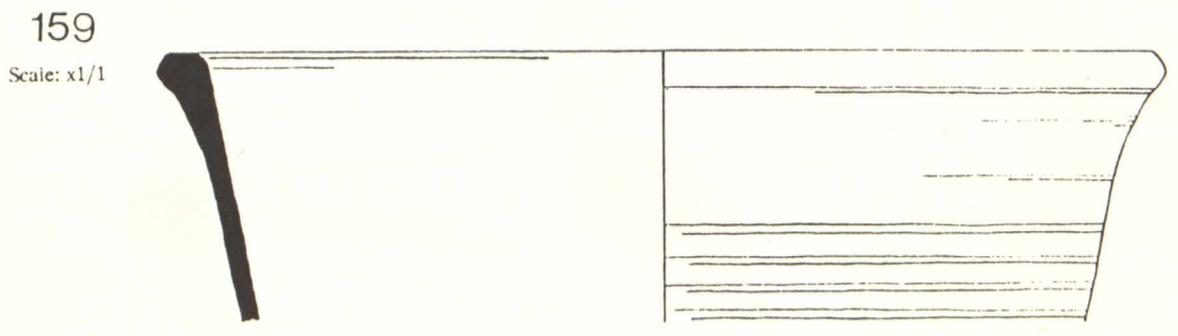
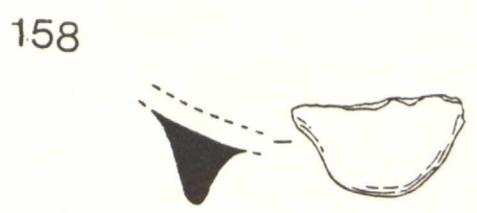
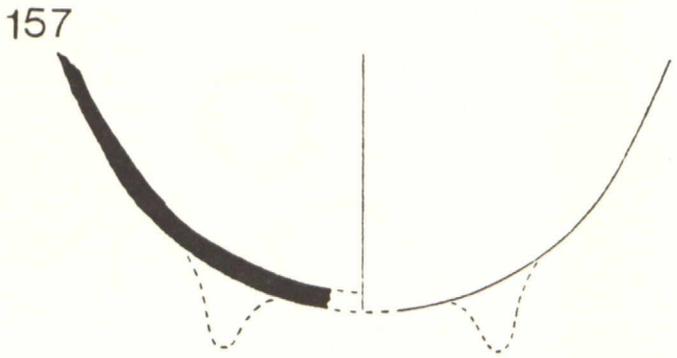
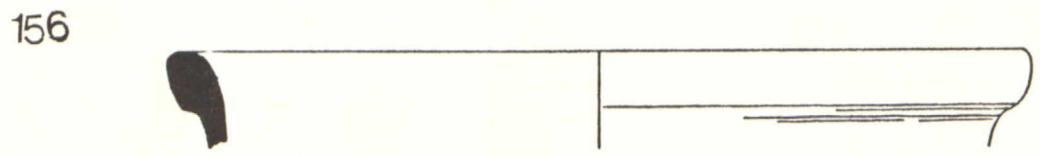
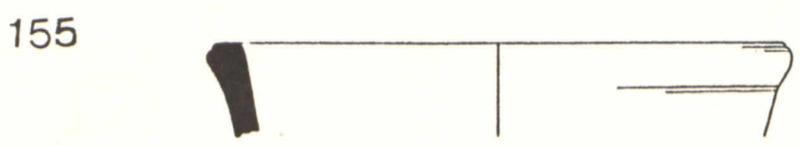
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150



10.25 Sugar refining pottery. Nos. 151-159. Scale: x1/3

## 11. Pottery from High Street, Prescot 1986 (Site 27)

R.A. Philpott.

Chance observation of a trench dug by North West Water in High Street, Prescot at the junction with Moss Street in July 1986 revealed a number of sherds of 18th century mottled ware together with many fragments of saggars and a few sherds of other wares (Fig. 1.3). These comprised two body sherds of brown salt-glazed stoneware, a body sherd of self-coloured ware, all probably of 18th century date, and two later, and probably intrusive, cream earthenware sherds. The matrix within which the pottery occurred was dark brownish-grey with a high ash and clinker content, and was almost certainly derived from one of the numerous 18th century pottery factory waste dumps which were consistently exploited for hardcore, in this case for the road foundation, in the town at a later date (Philpott and Davey 1984, 19).

The mottled ware sherds totalled fifty-one, of which all but three were recognisably from tankards, a common 18th century form in this ware. Two sherds are from cups, and another is an undiagnostic handle. Three sherds had turned decoration at the base, which appears to have been common in the early 18th century, as at South Castle Street, Liverpool in deposits sealed in c. 1726 (Philpott 1980a, 51). Others however have plainer bases and may belong nearer the middle of the century. A range of glaze colours and degree of mottling is present, and this variety in the material may indicate that it is derived from a waste dump which was in use over a period of time and was mixed on re-use as hardcore.

Eleven fragments of saggar and one piece of possible kiln floor were also recovered. One complete profile of saggar shows the height to have been about 14.5cm, with a slightly projecting rim, and the base a little wider than the mouth. Another has a diameter of about 35cm. Two saggars have red clay separators adhering to pooled black glaze inside the base, indicating that they had been used to fire black-glazed vessels. Three of the eleven fragments had evidence of holes cut in the side to allow circulation of hot gases around the vessels inside the saggar during firing.

Although unstratified, the finds form a fairly homogeneous group, with the exception of the two later cream earthenware sherds, and are further evidence for the prolific 18th century pottery industry in Prescot.

The finds are in the Liverpool Museum, William Brown Street, Liverpool.

## Mottled Ware.

Total number of sherds - 51.

Estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) - 14.

Minimum vessel analysis (MVA) - 2.



12. Pottery from Twist's House, Prescot (Site 28).

C. Cresswell and P.J. Davey

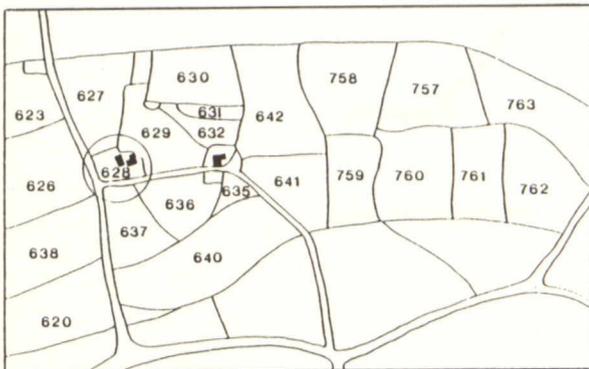
Circumstance of the Find

Twist's House is located in Knowsley Park Lane, Prescot, just to the north of the junction with Park Road (NGR SJ 462 931: Fig. 1.3). In the spring of 1980, the owner of the property, Mr John Leigh, together with his son Simon, was excavating for a car inspection pit and discovered a large number of sherds of coarse red pottery. The pottery was found under the cobbled floor of a former barn or outbuilding marked on the plan (Fig. 12.2). The sherds appeared to be packed in the ground rather than tipped and were confined to an area 90cm x 74cm at the southern end of the pit within 70cm of the surface.

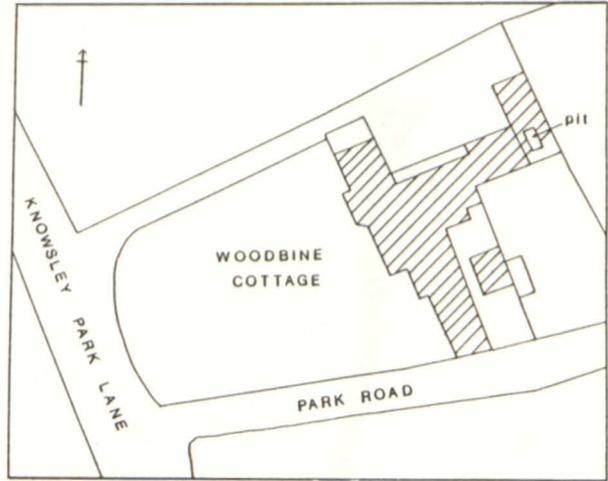
The Leighs identified the potential interest their find might arouse and stored the pottery fragments in two suitcases. They subsequently very generously allowed the writers to study and reassemble the fragments and donated them to the Prescot Museum.

The Site

Twist's House is shown on the Tithe Map (Fig. 12.1) as Woodbine Cottage. The name was changed within the last 30 years by Mr and Mrs Evans, former owners of the property, to acknowledge an earlier occupancy by the Twist family. Joseph Twist was a builder who diversified, to be described in the 1861 census return as a "Builder and Earthenware Manufacturer". In 1871 the cottage had passed to his son John, who with his brother Charles are entered in the census of that year as "Earthenware Manufacturers". The Mannex Directory, 1855, bears the following entry: "Earthenware Manufactures Joseph and Edward Twist, New Road [New Road is now Warrington Road, and was the site of the Mill Pottery], while that Directory for 1871 lists "Richard and John Twist, Earthenware Manufacturers, Kemble Street".



12.1 North side of Prescot from the tithe maps of Knowsley (1848) and Eccleston (1840), Woodbine Cottage circled

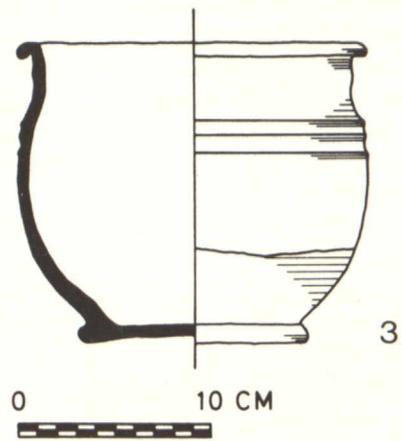
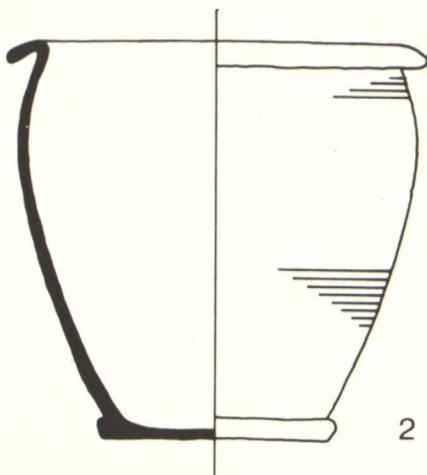
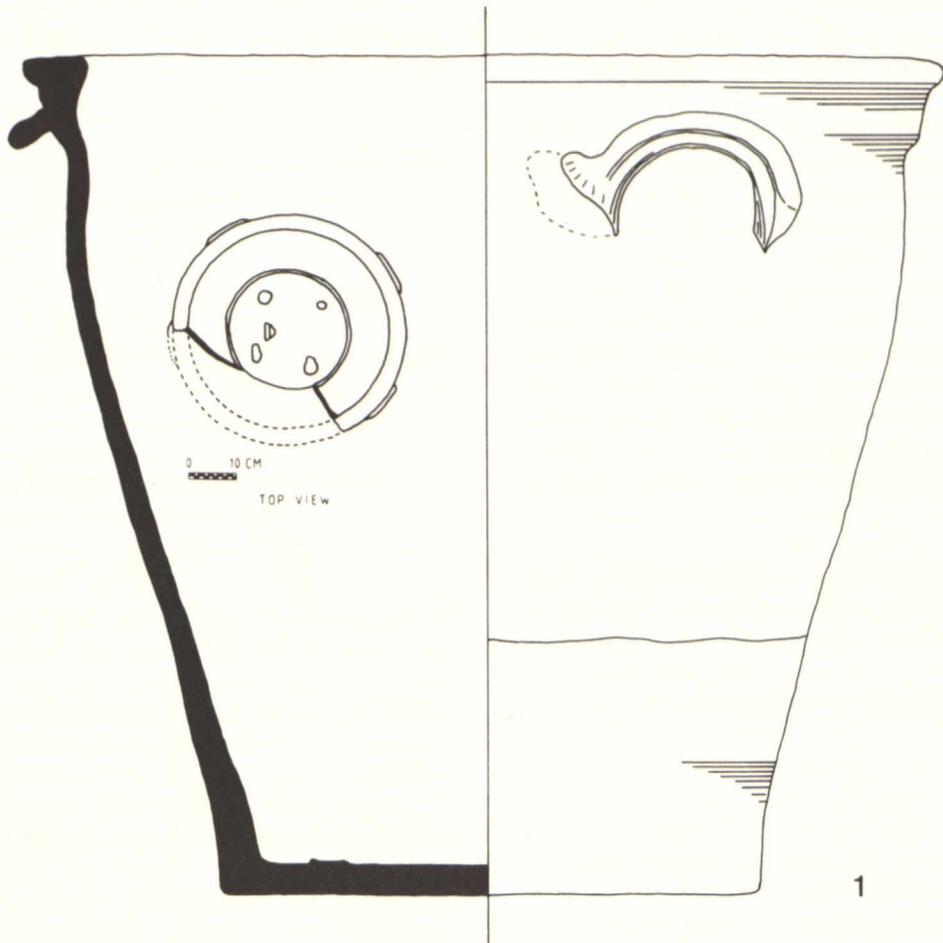


12.2 A later plan of Woodbine Cottage (Twist's House), showing location of excavated pit Scale: 1:1,000

In the garden of Twist's House and on adjacent land, have been found kiln stilts and pieces of saggar. Such finds are usually identified with pottery sites rather than domestic tips, but no direct documentary evidence has yet been found to confirm the date or ownership of a pottery here. The Ordnance Survey map, 1848, marks the Mill (New Road) Pottery, Moss Pottery and Brook Pottery but no works in the area of Knowsley Park Lane. The Twist's era of pottery manufacture does not appear to relate to the Knowsley region and it is unlikely therefore that the Twist family were responsible for the excavated sherds which were probably buried before their entry into the mughouse trade.

A lease dated 1789 refers to a parcel of land at or near Parkside in Knowsley containing two "Potworks" or "Mugworks" (Lancashire County Record Office DJOS 17/5). The lease was drawn up between William Ward and Thomas Ashcroft and included the house of Thomas Spencer, Clay Potter. The boundaries of Knowsley, Prescot and Eccleston met close to Parkside and thus the "parcel of land" in the lease is defined fairly closely in the vicinity of Woodbine Cottage. The Tithe map (1848) describes a plot of land to the north of the cottage as Mughouse Field (Plot 630, Fig. 12.1) and probably refers to a pottery site.

Thomas Spencer of Knowsley (Claypotter) is first mentioned in Coroners' Inquest Proceedings of 1774, but it is not until 1819/20 that a commercial directory locates the site of T.J. and W. Spencer at Drown Pitcher (Plots 641 and 759 Fig. 12.1), land to the east of Woodbine Cottage through which runs the boundary between Knowsley and Eccleston. In 1855 Spencer and Co. are at the Moss Pottery (Plot 760 Fig. 12.1) east of Drown Pitcher and now occupied by Prescot Football Club.



12.3 Pottery from Twist's House, Prescot. Nos. 1-3

It may be concluded that no pottery has existed near the site in question since 1850 and probably none since 1820, but two potteries were present in 1789. One may surmise that Thomas Spencer worked in Knowsley at the end of the 18th century and his pottery moved progressively to the east until its final site described in 1855. The sherds found at Twist's House may therefore date from the period of the lease, that is, the end of the 18th century, but the name of the manufacturer remains a mystery.

### The Pottery

A total of 342 sherds had been recovered from the inspection pit excavation and these were examined and sorted into 64 base sherds, 38 rim sherds, 223 body sherds and 17 sherds showing evidence of handles. All the pottery was of a coarse red earthenware fabric with streaks of yellow clay intermixed, with the exception of 7 sherds of fine red body and 8 sherds of a fine grey body. Generally the pottery was either unglazed or with a lead glaze producing a black or brown finish.

By careful sorting and matching it was possible to reassemble 16 separate identifiable vessels incorporating a total of 253 sherds. Whilst not complete, several of the vessels were sufficiently

Table showing number of sherds in each vessel

<u>Vessel Type No</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Rim</u>	<u>Body</u>	<u>Handle</u>	<u>Total No of sherds</u>
1/1	5	3	10	4	22
1/2	5				5
2	3	1	6		10
3	3	3	2		8
4	1	2	2	2	7
5	2				2
6	4	1	2		7
7	6	4	2		12
8	6	1	39	1	47
9/1	1		24		25
9/2	1		30		31
9/3	4		23	1	28
9/4	4		15	1	20
9/5	2				2
9/6	2		1		3
9/7	1		20	2	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>253</b>

complete to allow full profiles to be recorded. The 16 separate vessels are represented by 9 distinct types and these are illustrated in Figures 12.3-5 and described below. From the remaining sherds 11 different rim forms were identified. One pouring lip, possibly from one of the large pitchers (type 8 or 9) is illustrated in Fig. 5. Altogether the recovered sherds represent a total of 20 different forms from a relatively small sample.

### Discussion

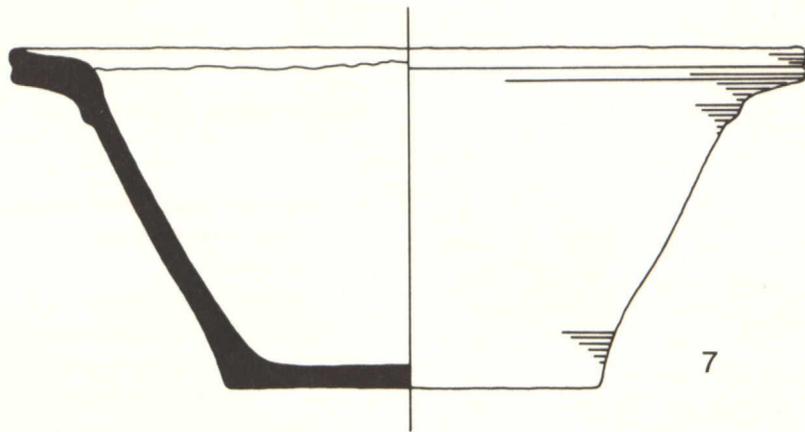
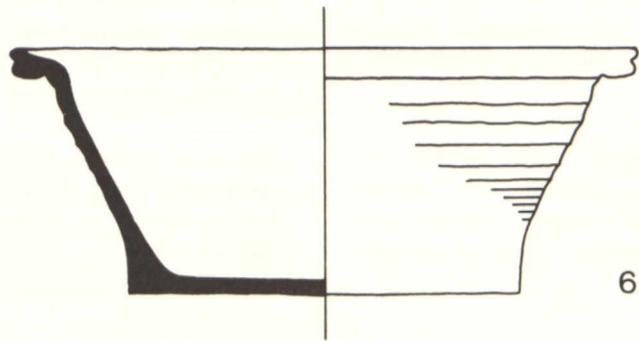
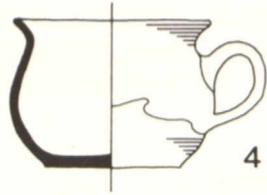
Black-glazed, red-bodied earthenware was made at many centres in the British Isles, particularly in the 17th to 19th centuries. A problem for archaeologists, who frequently recover many fragments of this kind of material in the upper layers of excavations, and collectors, who can often find complete vessels in antique shops and sales, is that the ware was so ubiquitous and long-lived that it is very difficult to date or assign a source to a particular fragment or vessel.

The Twist's House finds are important because they are clearly local products and because they almost certainly date from the late 18th or early 19th century and were probably made very near to the site - yet before the pottery moved east to Drown Pitcher.

The large pitchers, panchcons and jars described here were probably made to be used as containers for bread, milk and other foodstuffs in the kitchen and dairy. They represent the cheapest vessels available at that time and were, therefore, in use in most of the houses in Prescot and the neighbouring farms.

### Illustrated vessels (Figures 12.3-5) Examples

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Large open storage vessel-straight sides<br>Diameter at rim-48cm<br>Height-43.6cm<br>Outside-partially glazed<br>Handles-4 horizontal strap handles run in an eccentric arrangement around the circumference<br>Marks of 4 separators on inside base. | 2 |
| 2 | Open jar<br>Diameter at rim-22cm<br>Height-21cm<br>Outside-unglazed<br>In-fully glazed<br>Handles-nil   | 1 |

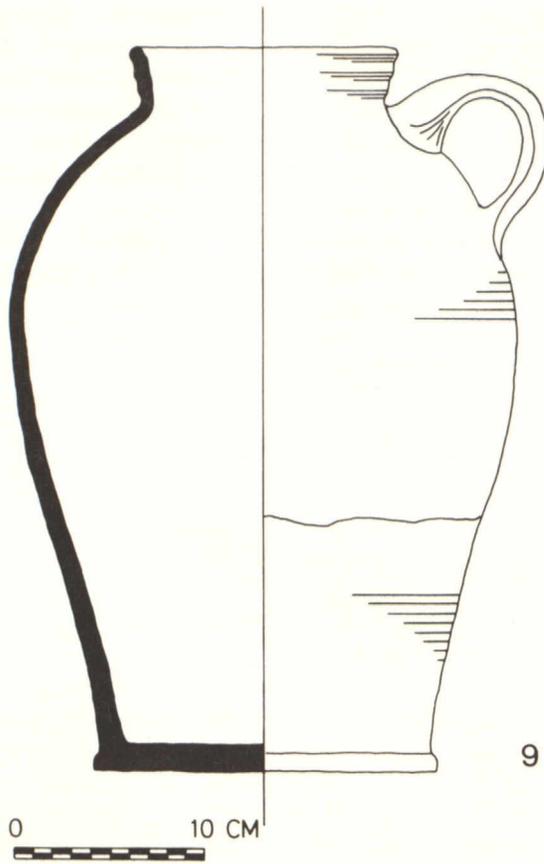
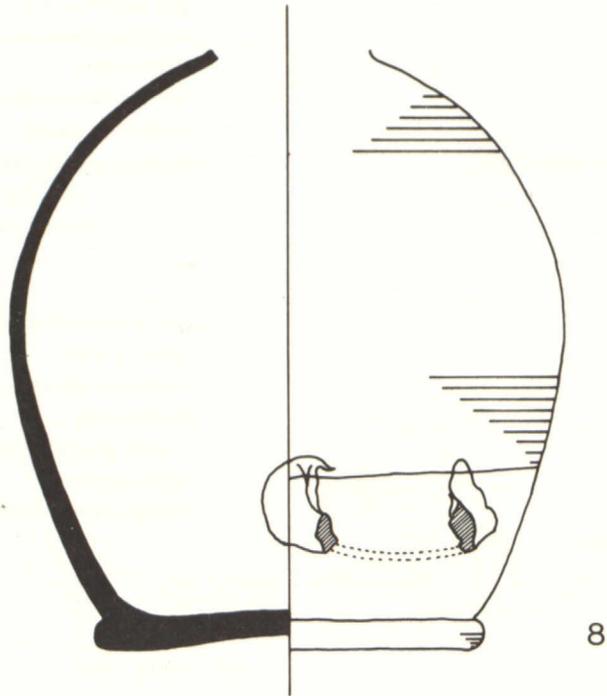


12.4 Pottery from Twist's House, Prescot. Nos. 4-7

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>3 Open jar-fine grey fabric 1<br/>         Diameter at rim-18cm<br/>         Height-15.8cm<br/>         Outside-partially glazed<br/>         Inside-fully glazed<br/>         Handles-nil<br/>         Fragments of saggar or similar glazed onto<br/>         inside of base.</p> | <p>8 Large pitcher-bulbous convex sides 1<br/>         Rim not recovered<br/>         Maximum diameter-29cm<br/>         Height-31cm<br/>         Outside-partially glazed<br/>         Inside-fully glazed<br/>         Handles-horizontal strap handles set in an<br/>         inverted position near the base;<br/>         evidence of one handle only</p> |
| <p>4 Small cup-fine red fabric 1<br/>         Diameter at rim-10cm<br/>         Height-7.6cm<br/>         Outside-partially glazed<br/>         Inside-fully glazed<br/>         Handles-one</p>   | <p>9 Larger pitcher-convex sides 7<br/>         (drawing of lip)<br/>         Maximum diameter-26.5cm<br/>         Height-38cm<br/>         Outside-partially glazed<br/>         Inside-unglazed<br/>         Handle-short vertical strap</p>   |
| <p>5 Small hollow ware vessel-base only 1<br/>         Diameter of base-12.5cm<br/>         Height-unknown<br/>         Outside-partially glazed<br/>         Inside-glazed</p>  |  |
| <p>6 Small shallow pancheon-straight sides 1<br/>         Diameter at rim-32cm<br/>         Height-13cm<br/>         Outside-unglazed<br/>         Inside-fully glazed<br/>         Handles-nil</p>  |  |
| <p>7 Shallow pancheon-straight sides 1<br/>         Diameter at rim-41cm<br/>         Height-17.9cm<br/>         Outside-unglazed<br/>         Inside-fully glazed<br/>         Handles-nil</p>  |  |

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Ron Dagnall for drawing the vessels and preparing the illustrations of the maps; to C.P. Downes, W. Highcock, M. Holker, M. Hollis, J. Lewis, E.G. Lumley, M. McNulty, H.B.W. Richardson, G.P. Smith, J.H. Taylor and T. Williets, the members of the pottery class held in Prescot in 1981 under the supervision of P.J. Davey, for their help in sorting and reassembling the pottery.



12.5 Pottery from Twist's House, Prescott. Nos. 8-9

### 13. Pottery Production in Prescott

P.J. Davey

#### The documentary evidence

The *Victoria County History of Lancaster* records the paying of rents by potters in Knowsley and Roby for digging clay in Knowsley Park and making pots there (Farrer and Brownbill 1907, 161, note 4). The will of the second Earl of Derby which was proved on 27th of June 1524 implies that the rents of potters who dug clay in Knowsley Park might be increased, possibly as a means of inhibiting their activities near to the Hall itself. There is also a reference to the turbarry as a source of income. Although this probably refers to the use of turf for domestic fires, it probably provided the major fuel for pottery firing as well. The 16th century Court Leet and related records contain regular references to potters and their activities. In 1534 the Churchwardens' Accounts include a complaint about potsherd being on the roads.

At least three individual potters are recorded in the sixteenth century. In 1577 Edward Glover is awarded damages of 30s for "an oven ffull of earthen pottes" and another 18d for two loads of turves. In 1579 he is awarded 8s 8d for "half one oven of yearthen pottes". In 1584 Lawrence Gorsuch, clay potter, is recorded as the father of the new tenant of a property belonging to Katherin Ollerton. A surrender of 1585 involved one James Ditchfield, clay potter, who, in the Survey of 1592, appears to be living on the opposite side of High Street to Edward Glover, in the north-eastern part of the town (Bailey 1937; Davey 1978a, 2, 51-53). Ditchfield is referred to again in the Court Leet for 1604 and for 1607 (Knowles 1980). It is possible that a number of other kilns referred to in the Survey belonged to potters, but without more specific information about their owners, the quantity in use at this date remains uncertain. In 1592 another potter, James Cropper of Eccleston, also held land in Prescott towards the east end of Eccleston Street, but it is not clear whether he actually possessed a kiln in the town.

In the 17th century documentary evidence for potting becomes more sparse. The paucity of references, after those to Ditchfield - a recent search of the Parish Records by Philpott (above p. 29) produced only one, a Thomas Willcocke, who is also listed under Sutton (Davey and Morgan 1977, 128) - may indicate a decline in the industry during this period. Against this are the notices of petition from Prescott potters detailing grievances to the trade (Hoult 1927), which, although indicating financial problems do show that a number of potters were, in fact, still working. In addition, the large

quantity of contemporary 17th century records which survive in the Lancashire County Record Office have not been systematically studied and published in the way in which Bailey dealt with those of 16th century.

The fact that, at least by the end of the 17th century, pottery production was in a reasonable state of health is indicated by the earliest 18th century references which imply a well established industry with developed markets. For the first 10 years of the century the *Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell* is particularly revealing (Tyler 1968). On 24th September 1702 he records: "I went from Ditton to Mr Harrop in Warrington according to my Brother's orders, from thence I came to Prescott where I bought Fine Muggs of Mr Cubben thence I came to Leverpole." In October of the same year he packs up a case of "Prescott mugs" for export and resale by his brother in Virginia (Tyler 1968, 19). His accounts of December 10th 1709 include: "Coffy pots of Prescott Wair .... 3s 0d" (Tyler 1968, 238). In addition Baines notes that an early 18th century plan of the town shows six potteries (Baines 1870, 245 no. 2).

Another feature of the 17th century is the growing documentary and field evidence for pottery production in the Prescott hinterland, especially in Rainford, Eccleston and Sutton (Chitty 1981, 50, Fig. 15). Many of these potters, whose townships of residence lay within Prescott parish may also have been considered and recorded as Prescott potters. Only field evidence will establish how completely pottery production during this period had moved out of town. The same applies to the tobacco-pipe making industry. Although the earliest reference to a pipe-maker in north-west England is to Henry Billinge in the Prescott Court Leet of 1622 (Knowles 1980, 50), the lack of any further references to pipe-making in Prescott itself and their dense concentration in Rainford, suggests that a rural setting for his production is more likely. Again the location of kiln sites would help to elucidate this problem. Whether or not pottery and pipes were made in quantity in Prescott during the 17th century, it is clear that the town would have provided the major market outlet for both commodities.

A wider range of documentary evidence is available for the 18th century. Surrenders of the 1740s and 50s show quite clearly that potters and kilns were occupying the town during that period and give some idea of the actual location of some of them. (McNeil above). Richard Edge's map of 1743 (frontispiece) shows what appears to be a large conical ?glass kiln to the north-west of the church and, at the north end of Trap Lane and just north of the junction of Derby Street with Church Street, two pairs of much smaller conical ?kilns which may well be for pottery. William Winstanley's engraving of the *South Prospect*

of Prescott also dated 1743 shows the larger ?glass kiln and a smaller one to the east of the church, which, again, is likely to have been for pottery production. These two views of the town are confirmed by Richard Pococke when he describes the potteries in his account of a visit made in 1751: "I went on to Prescott a little town most delightfully situated on a hill, its steep windmill, glasshouse and earthenware houses render it a very beautiful point of view at 2 or 3 miles distance. They have 2 or 3 houses for Coarse Earthenware and one for the Whitestone, where they also make the Brown stoneware and work it as they say higher with the fire than Lambeth. They make it of 2 sorts of clay which they find here" (Cartwright 1888).

Leases of land on Knowsley Estate, just to the north of the town boundary, show that at least two potteries were in existence in that area towards the end of the 18th century (cf. Site 28 above) and numerous references in the Parish Registers show that potters were still active in Rainford and Eccleston (Davey and Morgan 1977, 126-128). The wills of six Prescott potters proved at Chester between 1734 and 1768 show them to have been men of substance and confirm the impression that this was a prosperous period for the industry.

The *Victoria County History* entry which reads: "1773 a manufacture of coarse earthen mugs ... 'Prescot for pan-mugs' says the old rhyme. A coarse red ware was the chief product but at one time there was a factory of white ware" (Farrer and Brownbill 1907, 353), suggests that the potteries had declined, at least in terms of the quality of their output. Webb, in his essay on the "Country Potteries of St. Helens and Prescott" notes six manufacturers in Prescott in 1825: Acres Pottery Co. and Mill Pottery, both in New Road, Edward Bradshaw of Eccleston, John Dale of Snig Lane, Moss Pottery and Webster Bros in Fall Lane, which later became the Brook Pottery (Webb 1982, 23). Three of these, the Brook, Mill and Moss Potteries are shown in some detail on the 1848 large-scale OS map (Davey 1978a, 56). The use of the term "country pottery" by Webb and others for such industrialized, urban production units, each with a sizeable labour force, is clearly inappropriate and seems to stem from a need to apply pejorative descriptions to the kinds of ceramic they produced, rather than to any attempt to assess their socio-economic significance. The three 1848 sites had all been abandoned by 1869 (Davey 1978a, 57) and by 1892 only two potters remained - Pearson Twist in Kembel St and Thomas Davies at Eccleston Lane Ends. Only Davies continued into the 20th century (Webb 1982, 24).

## The Archaeological Evidence

### 1. "Medieval Pottery"

Fragments of pottery which is technologically "medieval", fairly highly fired, with quartz inclusions and patches of ?lead glaze have been recovered from a number of sites in the town. The most important is Site D, where 74 sherds out of 399 are considered to be wasters which, together with pieces of glazed daub, provide the only evidence for the actual production of medieval pottery between Cheshire and the Lune Valley. Although the material is very fragmentary, fabric and form contrast strongly with the identified kilns from Cheshire and seem to represent the division between the more sophisticated production of the west Midlands and the range of northern "gritty" types known from both sides of the Pennines. Holgate also found sherds of this type at both sites B and C in probable domestic contexts, 8 out of the 20 sampling excavations (Sites 6-26) produced a total of 46 pieces and the ploughsoil at Site F provided another good collection. These latter groups seem to represent the dispersal of domestic rubbish in adjacent fields and gardens. The sampling project recovered similar medieval pottery from eight of the quadrats (Fig. 9.2). Similar groups have been found in fieldwalking by the Archaeological Survey in Knowsley and Newton-le-Willows (Davey forthcoming).

The dating of these finds is extremely problematic. There are no reliably dated groups of medieval pottery to use as a yardstick for their assessment. The few finds from Birkenhead Priory (Laing 1975) and the published group from West Derby Castle (Droop and Larkin 1927), both of which are probably of 13th or 14th century date, do not appear to include pottery of this type. This is most probably because they pre-date the Prescott material, but may, of course, be due to the socio-economic differences between Castle or Abbey and the inhabitants of Prescott. Given the apparent establishment of a well developed "Cistercian" type industry in the region by the 16th century, together with highly fired local "purple" coarse wares, it seems likely that the Prescott kiln was in production before 1500. Until well dated groups are recovered, a 15th century provenance may be tentatively suggested.

### 2. The Sixteenth Century

Despite ample documentary evidence of pottery production in Prescott during this period, no actual kiln sites have been located, nor have any wasters been recovered. Diagnostic finds from the domestic

assemblages are rare. Only the group from 21-23 Eccleston Street (Site 30) contained any material which might belong to this phase of activity. Even here, the single yellowish-brown tyg and seven sherds from large coarse vessels with a patchy, thin, purplish glaze which appear to be typologically and technologically earlier than the rest of the Cistercian-type wares seem well established all over the region at sites like Chester and Norton Priory, the latter in probable 16th century contexts. There is good evidence from Rainford that by the mid-17th century local potters were confidently using developed forms of the same technology, so it seems highly probable that potters like Glover, Gorsuch and Ditchfield were producing them in Prescot. The problem at the moment is that there is no proof of this. The recovery of good 16th century sealed groups, and in particular a kiln assemblage, is urgently needed. The sites, on either side of the High Street, known to have been lived on by Glover and Ditchfield, must be primary targets for future excavation.

#### The Seventeenth Century

Although there is less documentary evidence for pottery making in Prescot in this period, compared with the previous century, the evidence for the kinds of pottery being made in the hinterland at, for example, Rainford and Eccleston and in use widely over the north-west and beyond, is much better understood. The kiln group excavated at Rainford and waster assemblages from a large area beyond (Chitty 1981) establish the production of a local form of "Midland Yellow" as well as a range of fine wares in an almost black-glazed red earthenware, including a distinctive tyg with a faceted stem. In addition, patchily glazed coarse redwares were also found. The latter two types were also found in the group from 21-23 Eccleston Street (Site 30). Despite the suggestion that clay tobacco pipes may have been made in Prescot at an early date, there is no artifactual evidence to support this, nor any of the kiln debris which is so common in the surrounding townships of Rainford, Windle, Eccleston and Parr. Again, good, sizeable, stratified assemblages of both pottery and pipes are urgently needed in order to clarify production and use during this period.

#### The Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries

Material evidence for pottery production in the town is abundant from the middle of the eighteenth century up to the first two or three decades of the nineteenth. Twelve of the sampling quadrats produced saggars or stilts of this period, while seven of the other sites (B, C, F, 1, 27, 28, 29) recovered important groups.

The technological and typological range is, throughout, quite limited. All of these groups included evidence for the production of mottled wares and black-glazed earthenwares and are dominated by large coarse kitchen or dairy vessels. The presence of finer wares in small quantities and the abundance of saggars used in their firing, suggests that the saggars were successful in protecting these small, thin-walled products from the most extreme of kiln conditions and that they will always make up a small element in any waste assemblage.

An interesting side-line in the later 18th century was the production of sugar-refining pottery including sugar-loaf moulds and syrup jars (Site F).

At Site B apparent wasters of off-white and white salt-glazed stoneware were found. These tend to support the assertions of Pococke that brown and white stoneware were in production by 1751. Brown stoneware flagons were found at the Moss Pottery (Site 1) and at 44-50 Derby Street (Site 29), where they had probably been brought from the nearby Brook Pottery. As both of these groups are of early 19th century date and included virtually no fine stoneware, there is a still major *lacuna* in the artifactual evidence for this period.

The early 19th century sites also illustrate some of the changes which took place in the industry between groups such as those from the Eccleston Street kiln site (Site F) and Twist's House (Site 28), which seem to represent fairly small scale production and the fully "industrial" units shown on the 1848 map. The early 19th century earthenwares are virtually all red bodied and made from a very consistent, well-prepared clay. They exhibit none of the variability and mixing of the earlier wares. The mottled wares, "self-coloured" wares and internally yellow slip-coated wares all use the same body. For the first time, too, a biscuit firing appears to have become standard. Separators seem to have been mould-made and mass-produced. Stilts became taller and thinner and saggars more standardized.

#### Summary

Despite nearly a decade of research unequivocal archaeological evidence for pottery production in Prescot remains elusive for many types and periods. The late medieval group from Site B is so fragmented and the technological evidence so slight that it is very difficult to reconstruct either the vessels themselves or the method of their manufacture. Evidence for any earlier medieval production is totally lacking.

Despite ample 16th and 17th century documentary references to pottery production no kiln sites have

been located. The attribution to Prescott of the most common wares, such as the "local" Cistercian and Midland Purple types, although likely, remains unsafe. A parallel lack of domestic sequences means that the evolution of these local wares is still only vaguely understood.

Whilst the output of black-glazed red earthenwares and mottled wares in the 18th century is much better represented from a number of sites, the few sherds of white salt glazed stoneware are tantalizingly fragmentary and cryptic.

Many more kiln sites, of all periods, are needed for a rounded picture of Prescott's pottery industry to be produced. In addition long, well-stratified domestic sequences must be examined before its economic significance can be truly assessed.

#### 14. Prescott and its Archaeology

R.A. Philpott

The development of Prescott as a town, as distinct from an ecclesiastical centre with its associated manor, appears to have taken place in the 13-14th century with the nationwide rise in population and development of the market economy. In south west Lancashire, as elsewhere, this resulted in the granting of market charters to a number of settlements, many of which subsequently were granted borough status by local landowners. At Prescott the growth of the market function of the settlement was stimulated by the parishioners attending church from the surrounding townships taking the opportunity to engage in unofficial exchange or sale of surplus produce. The rector and lord of the manor, Ralph Dacre, attempted to profit from this by obtaining a charter for a market in 1322 but was thwarted by the bishop's reluctance to sanction trading on a Sunday. In 1333 however the rector was successful in securing a charter for a Monday market. The growth of a parish centre into a market town and borough is paralleled nearby at Ormskirk.

Although no borough charter survives for Prescott, the use of the term *burgagium* (burgage) in the 16th century for the larger portion of subdivided plots which were then held by copyhold tenure provides compelling evidence that earlier in the medieval period the town became a borough. Prescott, in common with other south Lancashire medieval boroughs, did not however survive the 15th century with its privileged burghal status intact. Manchester similarly lost its borough status by the 16th century and there, too, copyhold plots retained the name, if not the privileges, of the burgage (Morris 1983, 40). The granting of borough status may have been accompanied by some reorganisation of the settlement into regular plots, some along a newly created street known in the 16th century as Newgate Street (now Eccleston Street) (Philpott forthcoming).

In other respects the plan of the town testifies to its ecclesiastical origins. The proximity of the church and market place, which grew up around the churchyard wall, reflected the close connection between attendance at church and trading. The settlement stands at the junction of a through route, probably of early origin, east from Liverpool which divides south east to the river crossing at Warrington and north east to Wigan. The plan is that sometimes described as a suspended form, developing to one side of the main route way which itself served the early ecclesiastical settlement. Topography and the pattern of land-holding defined and delimited the town itself. To the north, skirting the southern edge of an area of peat bog known as Heally or

Hackley Moss, lay the boundary with the townships of Knowsley and Eccleston. To the south and west of the church lay the demesne/glebe estate of the lords of the manor who were also rectors of Prescott church. The Hall estate remained distinct from the town until the mid 19th century. This western part of the township was known as 'Prescot' in the 12th century to distinguish it from Churchley which was applied to the eastern portion. Although the name is probably of Anglo-Saxon origin, Churchley is first recorded in 1286 when it is described as a "villa" and seems to have included the nucleated settlement as distinct from the ecclesiastical section of the township. The settlement possessed open fields, at least one of which was still called Churchley Field in the 19th century. By the later 14th century the name Churchley was in decline and with the growth of the town, the name Prescott was applied to the whole township (Bailey 1937, 313).

#### The Town of Prescott: the Evidence of Archaeology

Despite the intensity of archaeological activity in the town since 1978, evidence for its origin or early development has not so far been forthcoming. The probable early ecclesiastical focus lies in relatively undisturbed ground to the south and west of the church and has not been examined archaeologically.

However, some evidence has been recovered of later medieval activity. Both area and sample excavations have been conducted in parts of the town known to have been occupied at the 1592 survey and which probably formed the principal focus of the medieval market town and borough. Here a fairly consistent pattern was observed. Street frontage sites had been largely disturbed by extensive levelling, cellaring and rebuilding which had removed all traces of earlier structures or other archaeological features. The problem was most acute between High Street and Eccleston Street where the difficulty of building on the steep slope had necessitated terracing against the hillside.

By contrast, examination of areas lying either to the rear of street frontages or a little away from the presumed medieval heart of the town revealed less disturbance of archaeological deposits. Three area excavations and six sample holes encountered early soil horizons which contained only medieval and early post-medieval pottery. The 1592 Survey confirms that these areas were occupied by gardens or crofts and very few features associated with these deposits were located. The only 16th century or earlier features consisted of a gully, perhaps for drainage, with 16th century pottery in the fill (P84/24), a spread of charcoal within a deep clay soil layer behind no. 29 High Street (P84/20) and a row of post-holes,

probably of late medieval date, dividing two burgages behind 19 Market Street (Site B).

For the early post-medieval period, however, excavation and structural survivals begin to complement the picture of Prescott revealed in the excellent documentary record. Not only do several 17th century or earlier buildings survive in the town (rear of no. 33, nos. 21-23 and no. 30 Eccleston Street; no. 21 High Street), but also numerous sections of boundary walls, some of early date, others on earlier lines, preserve much of the structure of the late medieval town (Davey 1978, 19-26).

Intact stratigraphy of this period had survived to the rear of one of these early buildings, nos. 21-23 Eccleston Street (Site 30). Salvage excavation located the foundation trench of the back wall of the timber framed building and a significant group of pottery, probably of 17th century date, was recovered. The felling date of c. 1543 for a structural timber may provide a date for the initial construction of the building but is more likely to indicate reuse of the timber.

For the 18th century onwards, archaeological evidence becomes abundant, in particular for one of Prescott's major industries, pottery production. Fragments of saggar, kiln stilts and wasted pottery have turned up in most formal area and sample excavations and continue to appear in many service trench spoil heaps in the town. The secondary use of pottery waste as hardcore in building foundation trenches, road construction and bedding material for yard surfaces indicates that caution is needed both in the attribution of dumps or wasters to individual potteries and in the use of distribution of waste to locate pottery sites. However, a previously unsuspected pottery manufacturing site was encountered in excavations in Eccleston Street. Abundant pottery waste in sample hole (P84/14) was followed in 1985 by the discovery of structures associated with manufacture in the adjacent plot (Site F). Dating to the late 18th century, the site provides excellent evidence of the range of wares and forms in production in Prescott in a century when at least six potteries are documented.

The first decade of archaeological work in Prescott has raised a number of questions. In particular medieval occupation in the town, although firmly documented, has remained elusive. The degree of later disturbance revealed in archaeological work suggests that surviving medieval structural remains are likely to be limited in extent. However, the potential for survival of rock-cut features has recently been demonstrated with the discovery of a probable late 16th stone wall foundation in road

widening in Kemble Street during October 1987 (Philpott in preparation). In areas of the town which lie on gently sloping or level ground a combination of relatively shallow later building foundations and considerable accumulation of soil may preserve buried features, especially if they cut the underlying sandstone.

Although the potential for survival of archaeological features is greater towards the rear of burgage plots, the work carried out to date suggests that little early activity should be expected in these locations. Robina McNeil's excavation to the rear of Eccleston Street (Site F) was in part intended to recover evidence for the function of burgage plots. However, in the rear of the plot, no medieval features were encountered. Similar garden or cultivated soil layers, containing late medieval pottery, were encountered in three of Robin Holgate's excavations, behind 19 Market Street, 11 High Street, and 7-9 Derby Street (Sites B, C and D). In other towns in Cheshire and Lancashire excavation within burgage plots has produced a similar pattern. No early features were recovered in Robina McNeil's excavation of part of a burgage in Frodsham in 1984. In excavation of part of a burgage in Wigan the only substantial medieval feature recovered was a well, and after this had fallen into disuse, from the late medieval period through to the 17th century the entire site was covered with a layer of garden or plough soil (Jones and Price 1985, 29). In all cases finds are confined to dispersed, often abraded, sherds of pottery, consistent with the casual disposal of rubbish on open ground.

The conclusion is inescapable that the burgages were largely given over to agricultural activities in the medieval and early post-medieval periods. The 1592 Survey indicates that many plots were occupied by gardens or orchards, while the Court Leet for the 16th century provides evidence that some townspeople kept livestock. These have left no archaeological trace other than blanket layers of cultivated soil and several kilns are documented, some clearly for pottery, others for malting or baking. Small scale industrial processes such as pottery production, weaving, tanning, smithing or leather working, recorded for the 16th century, will have taken place in the burgages during the medieval period, in some cases in workshops attached to dwellings, but so far archaeological evidence for these has not come to light. Even during the population expansion of the post-medieval period, apart perhaps from barns or byres, the rear of some plots do not appear to have been developed and remained in agricultural or horticultural use. The absence of rubbish pits, which are common on densely occupied urban sites, may merely reflect the relatively small area of the town that has been examined archaeologically. However, by

the 16th century rubbish disposal appears to have been effected through the dispersal of surface middens, which provoked frequent disputes heard in the Prescott Court Leet, and resulted in dispersed scatters of worn pottery.

Although technically urban in the sense of possessing not only a market grant but also, for a time in the late medieval period, borough status, the archaeological evidence suggests that the level of urbanism in a small market town like Prescott was low. Complex and deeply stratified urban deposits, reflecting centuries of intensive use and dense occupation of burgages, should not be anticipated in the relatively late market towns of south west Lancashire. Prescott was one of a network of small market towns serving the fertile arable land of south west Lancashire. It supplied the needs of the agricultural hinterland as a source of manufactured items, equipment and other services while providing a market for local produce. However, the town lacked the favourable combination of circumstances, such as wealthy patronage or hinterland, access to major trade routes by land or sea, or important administrative or ecclesiastical functions that might have elevated it to regional pre-eminence. The concentration of resident artisans and purveyors of services in the town together with the regular influx of local people from the surrounding rural townships to the market and church were typical of small towns which developed in response to the growth of the market economy in the 13th and 14th centuries. Although increasingly removed from cultivation of the town's fields during the post-medieval period, the townspeople still supplemented their income from trade by growing food and keeping livestock in their copyhold plots. In Prescott, therefore, the medieval 'urban' landscape seems to have remained largely rural in character.

The process of development of Prescott from a small, late medieval market town to an industrial manufacturing town was well under way by the 17th century. Illegal subdivision of former burgages as early as c. 1513 hints at a growing population, which had risen to over four hundred by the last decade of the century (Bailey 1937, 283, 300 n.). The occupations of the townspeople as recorded in the Court Leet and wills and inventories included a range of craftsmen, artisans, victuallers. Although little industry is recorded, only 43 (19%) from a total of 225 recorded occupations in wills and other records for the period 1560-1720 are described as yeomen or husbandmen in contrast to surrounding rural townships where around two-thirds of the population were concerned directly with agriculture (Cleaver 1982, 58). Coal mining and watchmaking are well documented for the 17th century and by the early 18th century several pottery factories had been established.

Richard Edge's map of Prescott in 1743 shows the main streets of the town with continuous built-up frontages, and although lateral expansion of the town was restricted by tenurial considerations and township boundaries, infilling of the former burgage plots, particularly between High Street and Eccleston Street, created the densely occupied town centre illustrated by the 1848 Ordnance Survey map.

## APPENDIX

### Lancashire potters recorded in the Much Wenlock area of Shropshire

D.A. Higgins

The following references were noted in the Much Wenlock Borough Archives which are held at the Old Corn Exchange in Much Wenlock. These potters had probably come to the area to seek work at the potteries which flourished in and around the Ironbridge Gorge. The first two were noted in the Examinations Book (Q1/3/1):

Page 89, 7 February 1734 (1735). The examination of Edward Williamson otherwise Davies, Labourer, records that he was born in Berhill (?) in Lancashire where he lived for about a year with his parents before moving to Rainford about twenty years previously (i.e. 1715). In Rainford he was hired for seven years by Joshua Lyon and then two years previously (c. 1733) he had married Elizabeth Ffairest of Rainford at Ligh [sic] in Lancashire. He had a daughter, Mary, then (i.e 1735) about three-quarters of a year old. He signed with a cross. I am grateful to Ron Dagnall of Rainford for the following notes on Joshua Lyon. He is recorded as a smallholder and potter in 1723 and 1727 and presumably employed Williamson to help with both activities. An apprenticeship dated 1 Jan 1727 records that he took Charles Swift, a poor child, for seven years, to instruct in the art of Husbandry and Common Labourer's work about a Mughouse. So although Williamson is only described as a labourer he would presumably have been working as a potter for Lyon.

Page 131, 31 May 1737. The examination of Richard Atherton of Broseley, Potter records that he was born in Prescott [sic] in Lancashire but that his father was a certified person from the parish of Bould [sic] in Lancashire. The Lancashire Justices at their Quarter Session had therefore determined his legal place of settlement to be Bould. No other information is given in this entry but it may be worth trying to locate the Lancashire examination referred to. He signs with a good signature.

The final entry comes from the Bastardy Examination Book (After Birth), Q1/6/11. An entry dated 17 May 1830 records that Margaret Roden of Broseley gave birth to a child on 1 March 1830 the father of whom was William Prescott, potter, late of Sutton in Lancashire.

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