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narrow flakes (illus 1.52, 1, 2) have any diagnostic characteristics as they were made by the same technology as the Early Neolithic artefacts recently published from Crathes (Murray, Murray & Fraser 2009, 101–2). It seems possibly that they are associated with the same phase of activity as the oldest group of radiocarbon dates from Broomend of Crichie.

Otherwise the only datable items are two flint arrowheads (illus 1.52, 3, 4) found in trenches originally excavated by Dalrymple. Both had been burnt and may originally have accompanied cremation burials. One (illus 1.52, 3) was found just beyond the western limit of the central shaft grave, but there is no evidence that it had originally been deposited in that feature. The other (illus 1.52, 4) was beside the western portal stone and may have accompanied one of the burials found there in the nineteenth century. Three candidates are mentioned in Dalrymple’s report, one of them associated with a Vase Urn and another with a stone battle axe. Details of these artefacts are as follows.

Illus 1.52, 3: tanged flint arrowhead. It was originally worked on both surfaces but much of one face and small parts of the illustrated surface have been detached by spalling in a fire. The edges show clear evidence of serration. From Context 1125, an area disturbed by Dalrymple west of the central burial pit.

The size of this artefact allies it with Green’s Sutton a type which is especially common in southern England. The evidence of serrated edges suggests a link which his Ballyclare type, but the arrowheads in this group are significantly larger than this example. The associations of both forms extend from the Beaker period into the full Early Bronze Age (Green 1980, chapter 6).

Illus 1.52, 4: fragmentary flint arrowhead, lacking its tip, one barb and the base of the tang. It was found in the filling of Dalrymple’s excavation beside the western portal stone. It has been badly damaged by fire and one surface has flaked away almost completely. It is difficult to classify this artefact as the tang is incomplete, but its size and the form of the surviving barb link it to Green’s Kilmarnock type which is particularly common in Scotland. This form has been found in association with Collared Urns, a Food Vessel and an Encrusted Urn and should date from the full Early Bronze Age (Green 1980, chapter 6). That would be consistent with the chronology of the other artefacts deposited close to the portal stone.

**Stone battle axehead**

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NMS X.EP 2 (illus 1.53). From Dalrymple’s excavations; found close to the foot of the north-western monolith (Dalrymple 1884, fig 1, stone 1, no 2). L 102; max W 76.5; Th 52; perforation diameter c 17 at its narrowest. Waisted, with a round, wide blunt blade, a narrower, rounded butt and a central shafthole that had been drilled from both sides. On the exterior, around each edge of the waisted area, are three incised grooves, each up to 1.5 wide. In the waisted area, around the perforation, there are facets on one side from its shaping, and on the other an abraded band, perhaps worn from contact with a haft. At the butt end are a few shallow batter-marks, suggesting that it may have seen some use. Its surface had been carefully smoothed but is naturally pocked. It is a bluish-grey colour, with a paler grey patch and a dark brown area on one side and larger brownish areas on the other. This variegation might reflect slight heat damage from its inclusion in the pyre, and the presence of hairline cracks plus a vertical crack across the narrowest part of the body on one side, with a corresponding crack around part of the body on the other, might be cited in support of this interpretation (although accidental post-exavation damage cannot be ruled out). If these characteristics do indeed indicate its exposure to fire, the relatively restricted extent of the damage could indicate that it dropped off the pyre at a fairly early stage. The rock type has been determined, through petrological thin-sectioning (ABN 149), as a metamorphic schistose rock containing andalusite, cordierite, muscovite, quartz and hornfels (Fenton 1983, 32), and it is typical of the local metamorphic schists (Simon Howard pers comm). It is likely that a river- or glacially-rounded cobble had been used.

The battle axehead is of a distinctive type which is named after this findspot (Roe’s ‘Crichie’ group, in her ‘Intermediate’ series: Roe 1966). According to Malcolm Fenton’s scheme (1983, 46–8, Appendix 1), it is a ‘Northern Variant’ with incised grooving. In Ireland, battle axeheads of this type are called ‘Bann type’ (Simpson 1990). This type of ‘fancy’ battle axehead would have taken longer to make than the 20–25 hours needed to make a less elaborate specimen; Fenton’s experimental work has shown that incising a single line 130mm long and 0.5mm deep would have taken nearly an hour (Fenton 1984, 230). The object had clearly been a prestigious symbol of power.
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It has been identified by Dr Simon Howard as a mudstone, and may well have been obtained locally, as fine-grained metamorphic rocks are associated with the local igneous rocks.

That this object is more likely to have been a pendant than a toggle fastener for a funerary garment is suggested firstly, by its lack of resemblance to the bone toggles that are known from Early Bronze Age deposits of cremated remains, and secondly, by the fact that a parallel – albeit not very close – is known from Seggiecrook, Kennethmont, just over 30km to the NW of Broomend of Crichie (Callander 1905, fig 1). Here, a small, subrectangular flat slate pendant around 37 × 23 in size, perforated at two of its corners along its long axis and with two incised lines running close to its edge, was found in a grave pit beneath the bottom of an urn. The latter, buried upright and full of cremated bone, resembles the Collared/Vase Urns from Broomend of Crichie, and a radiocarbon date of 3495 ± 29 bp (GrA-19427, 1940–1690 cal bc at 2σ; Sheridan 2007b, 183) for its associated bone indicates it is contemporary with them. Both the Broomend of Crichie and the Seggiecrook pendants are very unusual within the canon of Early Bronze Age cinerary urn grave goods.

Bone pin fragment
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Context 1100 (illus 1.55). Fragment from the shaft of a burnt bone pin, found along with sherds of

Burnt stone pendant
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Context 1075 (illus 1.54). Burnt fragment of a thin stone object with a V-perforation at one corner, probably a pendant. Found among the cremated bones of an adult, probably female, in Pot 2. It measures 16.2 × 14.6 × 3.3, and the perforations are slightly oval at their outer ends, one measuring 1.9 × 2.3, the other 1.9 × 2.6. One side – from which a large spall had broken away – is very slightly convex (and may have been the front), the other correspondingly concave, and the edges have been gently squared off. There are hints that the object had originally been diamond-shaped, and probably not much larger than its present form: two, possibly three of the original sides are present, and along one of these both ends kink out, suggesting that it had not been longer. The stone is dark grey and laminar, with whitish patches on its surfaces, caused by heat damage from the pyre;