

Pottery from Site SAY97/29 (2402) CS24

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A small collection of potsherds, 16 in total, was submitted for identification. At least two vessels are present.

Vessel One

Thirteen sherds from a handmade globular jar with vertical rounded rim and sagging base. The external surface shows signs of rough vertical smoothing. In their present condition, the sherds are a light brown colour on all surfaces and breaks. However, a few sherds have broken after burial and in these it can be seen that the core of the sherds is dark grey or black. The sherds have therefore been subjected to heating after breakage.

The fabric contains sparse polished quartz grains, up to 2.0mm across with rare rounded fragments of chalk (7mm across) and red iron-rich compound (3mm across). Finer, subangular quartz is present in moderate to abundant quantities.

Vessel Two

Three body sherds from a vessel of unknown form. The internal surface of the largest sherd can be seen to be burnished and all three sherds have a smoother finish than vessel one. No inclusions are visible to the naked eye.

Discussion

Vessel one is almost certainly of early to mid Anglo-Saxon date. The polished quartz grains and chalk are typical of fabrics produced on or close to Cretaceous deposits, which run diagonally through eastern and central England from the Yorkshire Wolds, through Lincolnshire down to Wiltshire and Dorset. Much of the early to mid Anglo-Saxon pottery from Bedford is of similar appearance (Baker and Hassall 1979, 152-4, Fig 91). The burnished interior of vessel two is likewise a typical treatment on early to mid Anglo-Saxon pottery.

Bibliography

Baker, E & Hassall, J, 1979 Early Middle Saxon Pottery: Discussion in Baker, D, Baker, E, Hassall, J and Simco, A (eds) Excavations in Bedford 1967-1977. Bedfordshire Archaeological Council.