

The Petrology of some Anglo-Saxon Pottery from Tallington, Lincolnshire

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Introduction

The early Anglo-Saxon pottery from Tallington was examined using a x20 binocular microscope and the petrology of the rock and mineral inclusions noted was compared with data collected for the East Midlands Anglo-Saxon Pottery Project (Vince & Young. 1991).

Description

Three vessels were associated with early Anglo-Saxon burials, from contexts 231, 235 and 269. In addition, a body sherd was found below the skull of the burial in context 231. Further sherds were found in later deposits and are either evidence of feasting at the graveside or were disturbed from other burials.

Context 231

Body sherd from vessel with a light grey core and darker surfaces. Abundant sand temper, consisting of grains of quartz and a coarse-grained sandstone up to 1.0mm across. A single large lath of biotite was also noted. This fabric is widely-distributed in the East Midlands and has been recorded in the East Midlands Anglo-Saxon Pottery project as SST.

Complete bowl with a black core and surfaces. Abundant coarse grit temper including subangular fragments of grano-diorite and its component minerals (feldspar, quartz and biotite). Moderate voids are present on the vessel surface produced by the burning-out of chaff fragments. This fabric too is widely-distributed in the East Midlands and has been recorded in the East Midlands Anglo-Saxon Pottery project as CHARN+CHAF.

Context 235

A complete decorated jar. Thinly potted (walls c.2.0mm thick). Dark brown core with black surfaces. Abundant grit inclusions up to 2.0mm across. These include sandstone fragments and grano-diorite and its constituent minerals. No evidence of chaff tempering. This fabric is widely-distributed in the East Midlands and has been recorded in the East Midlands Anglo-Saxon Pottery project as CHARN.

Context 269

The lower part of a large globular vessel with black core and surfaces. Abundant angular red inclusions. These are of two types: fine-grained dark red material, possibly haematite, and a sandstone with red cement. This ware has been recognised on other sites in the East Midlands and is recorded as FE.

Later contexts

Nineteen sherds of early to mid Anglo-Saxon pottery were noted in later contents. Although the majority of these were of fabric types already represented in the cemetery, they also included a sherd with polished quartz inclusions, typical of sandstones of Cretaceous date (ESGS) and two sherds with limestone and sandstone temper (LIM/SST).

Table 1

Context	Trench	cname	Form	Nosh
201		CHARN	JAR	1
201		ESGS		1
201		LIM/SST		2
201		FE	JAR	1
201a		CHARN	JAR	1
201a		CHARN	JAR	3
201a		SST	JAR	3
201b		FE	JAR	1
201b		FE	JAR	1
220		SST	JAR	2
220		CHARN	JAR	1
U/S		FE	JAR	1
U/S		CHARN	JAR	1

Conclusions

The pottery fabrics used at Tallington are almost all of types recognised elsewhere. The exception is the LIM/SST sherds from context (201). Vessels from Leicestershire (CHARN, CHARN+CHAF, SST) are the most common, followed by west Lincolnshire products (FE and LIM/SST) with a single vessel probably obtained from the Lincolnshire Wolds. The widespread sources found at Tallington are typical of early to mid Anglo-Saxon assemblages in the east midlands although there is too little information on pottery supply in southwest Lincolnshire to tell how typical the precise proportions found are. Similarly, there is at present no reliable information on the chronological range of the fabrics found.

Acknowledgments

The pottery was initially examined by Jane Young, of the CLAU, and recorded by Alison Oliver.

Bibliography

Vince, Alan & Young, Jane 1991 East Midlands Anglo-Saxon Pottery Project In
 Jones, Michael J (ed) *Lincoln Archaeology 1990-1991* City Lincoln Archaeol
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