

## **Anglo-Saxon Pottery from Site 4, Silk Willoughby to Staythorpe Pipeline (ssp252:00 Int 10, Field 14)**

### ***Alan Vince***

Fragments of five Anglo-Saxon pottery vessels were submitted for fabric analysis. All five are of different fabrics, indicating that pottery was obtained from a wide variety of sources. These five fabrics can be tentatively assigned to groups known from other sites in southern and central Lincolnshire but require thin-section analysis for a positive identification.

### **Fabric Descriptions**

#### **No. 20 F37 C1058**

In addition to the sample of the vessel being studied by C Haughton, sent for identification, a further 12 sherds were present in the collection sent to Lincoln for study. It is assumed that they are from the same vessel

Tempered with abundant quartzose sand. There are moderate rounded fragments of a sandstone, composed of illsorted subangular quartz grains up to 0.3mm with sparse light-coloured cement. Most of the quartz sand is composed of grains of similar character to those in the sandstone but a few larger, rounded grains with a matt surface, up to 1.0mm across. Sparse fragments of biotite up to 1.0mm across were also noted.

This fabric is distinctive but does not fall into any of the defined Early Anglo-Saxon pottery fabrics known from sites in Lincolnshire or other east midlands counties. It is likely, therefore, that it was not produced locally. Thin-section analysis would provide greater detail of the sandstones and might reveal rock or mineral inclusions which might help to localise the source.

#### **No 19 F34 C1052**

Tempered with abundant quartzose sand, including sandstone fragments of two lithologies: a fine-grained rock with well-sorted, overgrown quartz grains c.0.2mm across and a fine-grained rock with well-sorted quartz grains and a brown, haematite-rich cement.

This fabric is possibly SSTCL - Anglo-Saxon Central Lincolnshire Sandstone-tempered ware. This ware has previously been recognised on sites in the Sleaford area, and it is presumed to be a local product. However, at present there is no geological testing of this hypothesis and thin-section analysis is required to confirm the presence of these sandstone fragments.

### **No 18 F46 C1074**

Tempered with abundant quartzose sand and moderate fragments of biotite-rich acid igneous rock up to 2.0mm across. There are possible fragments of a coarse-grained sandstone composed of overgrown quartz grains, up to 2.0mm across.

This fabric is possible a variant of CHARN, thought in the East Midlands to contain fragments of Mountsorrel granodiorite. Typically, this ware does not contain quartz sand but a sandy variant has recently been recognised at Dunholme, north of Lincoln. A thin-section is required to confirm this identification.

### **No 242 F311 C1428**

The fabric of this vessel is not readily visible as a result of concretions on the surfaces and broken edges of the sherd. However, a number of rounded limestone fragments, up to 5.0mm across, are present. It is not clear under x20 magnification what type of limestone these fragments come from. Also present are subangular quartz grains and medium-grained sandstone fragments.

A thin-section is required to adequately describe this fabric, after which it might be possible to point to comparable wares and establish a source area.

### **No 1070 C1039**

The fabric is tempered with moderate angular fragments of oolitic limestone up to 4.0mm across and sparse subangular quartz grains.

This vessel is an example of LIM, which is a common Early Anglo-Saxon pottery fabric in southern Lincolnshire and the Lincolnshire Fens. The limestone has both sparry calcite and micrite cements but cannot be identified further without thin-section analysis. It is likely, however, to be from the Lincolnshire Limestone, which outcrops along the Lincoln Edge. The fact that the fragments are angular either indicates the use of crushed rock, which is unlikely, or a talus or *in situ* weathering deposit on or close to the outcrop.

## **Conclusions**

All five vessels have distinctive fabrics which would repay further analysis using thin-sections. Two of the vessels might have been produced locally (Nos 1070 and 19) whereas the others are either definitely not locally-produced (No 18), or might not be (Nos 20 and 242).

## **Costing**

It is recommended that thin-sections are produced of all five vessels. These would be polished, to allow future identification of the opaque inclusions using reflected light, and stained using Dickson's method, to allow the composition of the carbonate in the limestone inclusions to be determined. The sections would be produced at the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Birmingham.

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5 samples at £21 plus VAT = £105 plus VAT = £123.38