

The Medieval and later Pottery from SPA98-9, Bath

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Summary

One thousand, seven hundred and nineteen sherds of pottery of post-Roman date were recovered from the excavations, representing a maximum of 1541 vessels and weighing 22.688 Kg. The majority of the material is of 11th to early 13th-century date and there is very little pottery from the site which can be dated between the later 13th and the early 16th centuries, even as residual sherds in later contexts. There is a reasonable quantity of post-medieval pottery, dating between the later 16th and the mid 18th centuries and large groups of pottery from deposits dating to c.1765-76 and c.1829. In addition there is a small quantity of pottery from deposits dated to c.1790-95. These latter deposits are useful for refining the chronology of late post-medieval and early modern pottery.

Methodology

The pottery was identified using the Bath medieval fabric classification (Vince 1979) whilst medieval types not present in that classification have been identified by common names, where such exist, rather than extending the fabric series. The post-medieval and early modern pottery is mainly of types for which widely-accepted common name codes are in use, based on the system adopted by the Museum of London. Only wares which have not been published elsewhere are described in any detail here. The pottery was quantified by sherd count, weight and maximum number of vessels in a context. The latter figure is certainly an over-estimate as there are clearly sherds from some vessels which occur in several contexts, both within the same phase and residual in later phases. Details of decoration, glaze, traces of use and post-burial alteration (eg mortar concretions or abrasion) were noted.

Catalogue

The catalogue is arranged by approximate date in order of frequency and source, the most common and locally-made types being described before the rare and non-local ones.

Early to Mid-Anglo-Saxon

There were no sherds of early to mid-Anglo-Saxon pottery from the excavations. One would not expect to find pottery of the 5th to 6th centuries in Bath since the area was probably under British control but sherds of chaff-tempered handmade pottery of late 6th to late 9th-century date have been found at other sites in the city and on rural settlements to the north and west of Bath. In Hampshire and probably parts of Wiltshire chaff-tempering was being replaced by coarse mineral tempers (such as chalk and flint gravel) during the later 7th and early 8th centuries. Finds in north Wiltshire, however, suggest that it continued in use into the 9th century, and may have been in use at the time of construction of the first defences at Cricklade (Radford med arch REF).

Late Saxon to mid 13th century

Late Saxon wares

The earliest post-Roman pottery type recognised was Bath Fabric E, of which three sherds from jars were tentatively identified. This ware was widely distributed in Avon, Wiltshire and Somerset (Vince 1985b, Fig 00) and from its stratigraphic context at Cheddar Palace (where it was termed Cheddar E ware, 1979) it appears to date to a period between the mid 10th to early 11th centuries. Unfortunately, none of the SPA98 finds was stratified in a late Saxon context, nor is it certain without thin-section analysis that they are in fact Bath E ware. A jar sherd from an early 19th-century context was visually similar to Stafford-type ware but given the similarity in appearance of this ware to many Romano-British sand-tempered wares this too is a tentative identification, and is well outside the normal distribution of this ware (the closest finds come from Gloucester and Worcester).

Nevertheless, these wares hint at a phase of late Saxon activity, but since the sherds are redeposited they may in any case, have been originally deposited elsewhere in the city and brought to the site later.

Bath Fabric B

The earliest post-Roman pottery which was undoubtedly used on the site was Bath fabric B/D ware (the distinction between sherds with oolitic limestone and those without made in 1979 was not thought to be significant). There is no stratigraphic proof that this ware pre-dates the major coarseware used in Bath in the 11th and 12th centuries, Bath A, but in sequences of 11th/12th-century pottery, both at this site and elsewhere, Bath A ware is most common in the earliest levels. At SPA98, Bath B jar sherds were present without Bath A sherds in three of the earliest pits (P1131, P1134 and P1544) as well as in two other Period 4 features (F769/F863 and F2197). The majority of the 100 sherds found were probably contemporary with Bath A, however. They occur in deposits alongside definite late 11th-century or later and early 12th-century or later sherds but in the latter form less than 4% of the sherds found.

Most of the vessels were undecorated cooking pots or jars with everted rims but four sherds come from stamped spouted pitchers (DR15, DR19 and DR20). The stamp in each case is a ring and dot pattern.

Bath Fabric A

The majority of the early medieval pottery from the site is of Bath Fabric A, characterised by the presence of polished rounded quartz grains of lower Cretaceous origin and a micaceous groundmass. In all probability this ware came from more than one production site but no attempts to find regional differences in fabric has been successful and the ware must therefore be broadly ascribed to a west Wiltshire source. The ware is, however, distinguishable from the chert-tempered wares found in the Somerset levels and further into the southwest peninsula.

A proportion of the sherds come from vessels with sparse to moderate rounded calcareous inclusions. In most cases these have leached out but some survive. They may be chalk or calcareous algae nodules

and are distinguishable from the fossiliferous and oolitic limestones found in Bath B. The presence of these inclusions was noted in all sherds and varies from about 50% in 11th and early 12th-century assemblages down to about 10% in late 12th-century and later deposits. It is likely, in fact, that the calcareous examples in these later groups are actually residual. No other significant variations in fabric were noted.

Over 96% of the sherds come from jars, often with soot encrusted exteriors. A single bowl sherd was found in a late 11th-century context in Period 5, two sherds of spouted or socketed bowls were found. This form was used as a container for the Wedmore hoard (Rahtz 1974) and is therefore locally known before the Norman conquest. Ultimately, it is presumably a handmade version of the late Saxon wheelthrown vessels found in Torksey ware and elsewhere in the Danelaw from the mid 10th-century onwards. Fifteen sherds of spouted pitchers were found, less than 1% of the total. Two of these were decorated with horizontal grooved lines and four with stamping, in one case alongside a ring handle (DR5, DR8, DR16, DR17). Seven glazed sherds were found, probably from tripod pitchers. The earliest two were stratified in late 12th-century deposits and the remainder were residual. Finally, 6 sherds of 'west country vessels' were found. These vessels have the size and form of the top third or quarter of a jar and can only be recognised from their sharp base angles. This figure is therefore only a minimum. The examples were stratified in late 11th-century and later contexts in Period 5.

Although Bath A and B wares account for the vast majority of the pottery used in the late 11th to early 13th centuries there are other wares present. These consist of a few sherds of coarsewares from surrounding regions and a range of non-local glazed wares.

The coarsewares consist of single examples of Box B ware (BOX B), Newbury B ware (NEWBURY B), Chert-tempered ware (SWCHT) and a coarseware from central Wiltshire (WARMINSTER COARSE). In no case have these attributions been tested by scientific analysis but it is in no way unusual to find stray vessels in medieval urban pottery collections. They may have been brought to Bath with travelling households or as a result of a hawker travelling outside his or her normal market area.

The glazed wares are more common. They consist of Ham Green ware (HG), Minety ware (MINETY), South East Wiltshire glazed ware (SEW), Stamford ware (STAM) and Winchester ware (WINC).

Late 13th to early 16th century

The later medieval pottery supply in Bath is poorly known in comparison to the preceding period. Almost every assemblage of pottery that can be dated to the later 13th to early 16th century contains a few sherds of types which are known to date to this period, and which provide the dating for these contexts, together with numerous sherds of the same types which occur in the 12th and 13th centuries. In most cases the fragmentation and condition of the sherds suggests that the entire assemblage consists of material which has been mixed through redeposition and does not allow the assemblage to be separated

into a 'contemporary' and 'residual' component. This is true of the SPA finds although there are hints, as noted above, that some of the Bath A vessels found in these later medieval contexts are contemporary.

Twenty one sherds of wares which were first produced in the late 13th century were recovered. Where an end date for the industry is known it appears to have been in the 15th century. These sherds may therefore have either been in use in the high medieval period, before the Black Death, or the late medieval period. Only 6 of these sherds came from medieval contexts (P794, P1097 and P1098). The remainder were either from late 18th- (F907) or early 19th-century contexts.

The most common ware is Nash Hill ware with 14 sherds, all of which are from jugs (REF to Nash Hill). Ridge tiles from this source were also present (XREF to CBM report). The remainder were from Bristol (BR, 2 sherds, Dawson and Ponsford 1972), Laverstock (LAVE, 3 sherds, Musty and Ewence 1969 and an unknown source (MEDX, 1 sherd). The lack of jar sherds suggests either that handmade Bath A vessels were used alongside these glazed wheelthrown jugs or that metal vessels had supplanted the use of ceramic ones for cooking.

Four sherds are of wares which first appeared in the later medieval period (ie late 14th century or later) but which continued in use to the middle of the 16th century. They are Tudor Green ware (TUDG, 2 cup sherds and one jug, 1992; 1988) and Malvern Chase glazed ware (HERB4, 1 jug sherd, Vince 1985a, Fabric B4). It is likely in both cases that the SPA sherds date towards the end of this period. Two of these sherds were residual in early 19th-century deposits, one came from the late 18th-century F907 and the last from layer 430.

Finally, two sherds of black-glazed Cistercian ware were present. This ware was first introduced in the later 15th century but in the Bath area the sherds are likely to be of mid 16th century or later date. One came from the late 18th-century F907 and the other is residual in an early 19th-century context. There is thus no stratigraphic clue as to the date of the sherds nor any proof that they were actually used on the site.

Late 16th to mid 18th centuries

There was a fundamental change in pottery manufacture in the west country in the middle of the 16th century. This was reflected both by the cessation of production of medieval industries (as at Bristol, and at Laverstock and Nash Hill, if these industries had not disappeared beforehand), and by the emergence of new centres (such as South Somerset and Verwood). The period also saw the importation of Frechen stoneware from the Rhineland. In the mid 17th century tin-glazed vessels made their first appearance in the area.

Towards the end of the 17th century a range of slipware vessels, produced both in Staffordshire and at Bristol, were introduced alongside the earlier earthenwares. Such vessels continued to be produced throughout the early and middle years of the 18th century. Alongside these wares some coarse earthenwares were introduced. Almost all of these wares were actually recovered from late 18th-century

or early 19th-century contexts and there is thus little evidence for the date of the SPA finds and a strong suspicion that many of them date to the mid 18th century and could therefore have been still in use in the late 1760s/early 1770s. However, with the exception of one of the coarsewares (PMLOC) only a handful of vessels were represented by more than a single sherd, in contrast to some of the definitely contemporary late 18th-century vessels. Some, at least, of these vessels therefore probably dated to the late 17th to mid 18th-century.

Late 18th to early 19th centuries

The excavations produced important collections of late 18th and early 19th century pottery to which deposition dates in the 1760s/70s, 1790s and 1820s can be assigned (see below). However, all of these groups contain definite or probable residual sherds and the exact age of many of the finds is therefore a matter of debate.

The wares can be considered as three groups: coarse earthenwares, sometimes at this period known as Country Pottery; English factory products and imports.

The coarse earthenware consists of a single ware, termed here Weston Super Mare type (code WSM). The distinctive feature of the ware is that it was made from a fine-grained, homogenous calcareous clay which was usually fired to a red colour throughout and has a plain lead glaze which is usually brown as a result of iron adsorbed from the body. The glaze was clearly applied in a liquid state with a clear demarcation between glazed and unglazed areas, although there were occasional dribbles of glaze over otherwise unglazed surfaces. The vessels appear to have been turned to trim away unwanted clay. Of the 45 vessels recovered from the excavations, 39 were bowls. Other vessels were mainly represented by single examples: a dish, a jug, a flowerpot, two jars, a sherd from either a jar or a jug and a pipkin.

There are no sherds of this ware in either F907 or any other deposit earlier than the 1790s and it is therefore likely that the ware was introduced between c.1770 and 1795.

The factory products include refined earthenwares of two types: Creamware (CREA) and Pearlware (PEAR); Stonewares of three types: White Salt-glazed stoneware (SWSG), London stoneware (LONS) and Bristol stoneware (BRIS) and tin-glazed ware (TGW). Of these, the White salt-glazed stoneware and the tin-glazed ware are types which ceased manufacture during the late 18th century although it is clear that they were being discarded alongside Creamware in F907 (see below, Period 6). Pearlware, London and Bristol stonewares were absent in F907. In the case of Pearlware this is probably because the deposit pre-dates the introduction of Pearlware but in the case of the stonewares it is probably due to the small size of the assemblage.

Imports consist of Chinese Export Porcelain (CHPO), European Porcelain (CONP) and Andalusian Coarseware. Of these, only the latter requires any description. Andalusian coarsewares contain large angular inclusions of reddish coarse-grained metamorphic rock and have a pinkish body with a light coloured 'salt-surface'. The inclusions have been identified as Malagan schist, which outcrops in the Malaga region and is the identifying characteristic of Andalusian lustreware which was produced in the

late 13th and 14th centuries. Finds from Southampton indicate that alongside and later than these fineware imports, coarseware vessels were being imported, probably as containers, in the late medieval and early post-medieval periods. However, these vessels are so far limited to Southampton and it is not until the late 18th century that Andalusian coarseware vessels are found at other sites in the British Isles (Gerrard and others 1995).

The early 19th century saw the introduction of more factory-made refined earthenwares. These were mainly transfer-printed whitewares (TPW, 41 vessels) but include vessels with a porcelain body (ENPO, 1 vessel), wares with a buff body (NCBW, 4 vessels) and Derbyshire stoneware (DERBS, 6 vessels). All of these types occur first in deposits associated with the 1829 rebuilding.

Stratigraphy

Intrusive pottery in Roman levels

Three sherds of medieval or later pottery were recovered from Romano-British strata and are interpreted here as being intrusive (Table 1).

Table 1

Phase	Context	Context Group	Ware	Form
1 PreH-E.Ro	543	576, 385	CHPO	DISH
2 Early Roman	646		ENGS	WALT
3.1 Mid Roman	440	Bldg D - Rm V	BATHA	JAR

Period 4

Eighteen sherds of pottery were recovered from Period 4 deposits. Of these, one, from 765, must be intrusive and of 19th-century date. The remainder all have a *tpq* of early to mid 11th century apart from three pits and F2197 which contains a sherd of Bath Fabric B, which may have a slightly earlier starting date (Table 2).

The three pits: P1131, P1134 and P1544 (in cellar 2) contained sherds of Bath Fabric B without Bath Fabric A. These may therefore have a slightly earlier ceramic TPQ than those containing Bath Fabric A. In the first two cases there appears to be no stratigraphic objection to an early date, which would make these pits contemporary with F2197. One unusual sherd in P1134 is tempered with coarse flint gravel in a silty groundmass (EMFL). The form of the vessel is unusual, having a pronounced lid seating (Fig 00 DR18).

The sherd of Derbyshire stoneware in F769/F863 is assumed to be intrusive from the period of Decimus Burton's reconstruction. The sherd of Winchester-type ware from this latter feature has a distinctive raised curved band with finger-nicked decoration, similar but not identical to several vessels published by Barclay and Biddle, some of which were found in late 10th-century deposits. However, the

ware is thought to have been produced throughout the 11th and into the early 12th century (Biddle and Barclay 1974).

Table 2

Context group	TPQ	BATHA	BATHB	DERBS	EMFL	WINC	Grand Total
F1087	E11th C	2	0	0	0	0	2
F2021	E11th C	1	0	0	0	0	1
F2197	E11th C	0	1	0	0	0	1
F769/ F863	E11th C	2	1	1	0	1	5
P1125	E11th C	4	0	0	0	0	4
P1131	E11th C	0	1	0	0	0	1
P1134	E11th C	0	2	0	1	0	3
P1544 (cellar 2)	E11th C	0	1	0	0	0	1
Grand Total		9	6	1	1	1	18

Period 5

Pottery was recovered from 39 pits dating to period 5.

The majority of the pits contain sherds of Bath Fabric A and Bath Fabric B but without any definitely post-conquest types (Table 3). These pit fills may therefore be contemporary with the majority of pottery-producing features in Period 4. Sherds from spouted pitchers and bowls in both Bath Fabric A and Bath Fabric B occur in these pits (marked SP in Table 3).

Table 3

Context Group	SP	BATHB	BATHA	WINC	STAM	Total
P726	0	2	12	0	0	14
P732	0	1	13	0	0	14
P872	0	0	1	0	0	1
P909	0	0	2	0	0	2
P930	SP	1	1	0	0	2
P934	SP	0	4	0	0	4
P940	0	3	11	0	0	14
P950	0	4	26	0	0	30
P954	0	0	4	0	0	4
P1044	0	1	14	0	1	16
P1075	SP	2	6	0	0	8
P1077	0	0	2	0	0	2
P1079	0	0	3	0	0	3
P1096	0	0	2	0	0	2
P1132	0	2	10	0	0	12
P1226	0	0	1	0	0	1
P1263	0	0	1	0	0	1
P1293	0	1	3	0	0	4
P1570 (cellar 4)	0	0	1	0	0	1
P1719 (cellar 1)	0	0	1	0	0	1
P1725 (cellar 4)	0	0	2	0	0	2
P2025	0	0	3	1	0	4
P2055	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTAL		17	124	1	1	143

A further five pits can be dated to the late 11th century or later by the presence of South East Wiltshire tripod pitchers (Figs 00-00 DR7, DR9, DR10, DR11), which are known to have been present in the late 11th century following the discovery of a vessel at Winchester Cathedral in a deposit of this date. Two further pits contain sherds of Minety tripod pitchers which probably have a starting date in the 12th century, and are certainly absent from late 11th-century deposits in Gloucester. P1044 contains a sherd of Stamford ware of a type which is likely to be of early to mid 12th century date. Finally, three pits contain sherds of Ham Green ware jugs and one contains a sherd of Newbury Group B coarseware, both of which types are thought to have late 12th-century starting dates (Table 4). Sherds of Winchester-type ware occur in late 11th and 12th-century pits, including a roller-stamped vessel (Fig 00 DR14) and a vessel with incised decoration (Fig 00 DR12).

Table 4

Contx Gp	Date		Ba A	Ba B	Ba E	HG	Min	Newb B	SEW	SW Cht	Warm coarse	Stam	Winc	Total
P910	L11th	SP	7	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	9
P935	L11th	SP	15	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	18
P960	L11th	SP	123	5	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	1	137
P1046	L11th	~	6	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11
P1152	L11th	SP	32	5	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	44
P701	E12th	~	68	6	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	79
P2022	E12th	SP	16	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
P1044	E-M 12th	~	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	16
P443	L12th	~	74	5	0	7	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	94
P913	L12th	SP	152	6	0	1	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	166
P930	L12th	~	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
P2023 /2024	L12th	SP	102	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	107
Total			595	37	2	9	11	1	23	1	1	1	3	684

The remaining pits have *TPQs* of late 13th century or later but in most cases these dates are based on single sherds rather than assemblages and may either indicate intrusion into earlier features or substantial quantities of residual pottery in these features (Table 5). Only five such features were excavated. P794 contains what is otherwise likely to be an 11th-century or later assemblage but has one possible sherd of Nash Hill ware within it. P1098 contains a single sherd of Nash Hill ware. P1097 contains a mixed assemblage in which the latest sherds are of late 16th-century or later date. P985 contains two sherds, the latest of which has a late 17th-century or later date. Finally, two pits in cellar 2 (P1548) and cellar 5 (P1598) contain single sherds of very late 18th or early 19th date, but both are likely to be intrusive from cellar or services construction.

Table 5

context	group	date	BATHA	BATHB	BR	FREC/LONSLAVERSTOCKNH	NH?	SSOM	STCO	WINC	WSM	PEAR
P794		L13th	40	5				1		2		
P1098		L13th	3				1					
P1097		L16th	26		1	1	1	2	4			
P985		L17th							1	1		
P1548, (Cellar 2)		L18th										1
P1598, (Cellar 5)		E19th										1

Period 6

One hundred and fifty sherds of pottery were recovered from Period 6 deposits (Table 6), of which fortysix were Medieval. The largest assemblage comes from F907 which contains Creamware and is clearly later than c.1765 on that basis. It contains no examples of later 18th and 19th century wares, such as transfer printed vessels or Pearlware. F1580 in Cellar 3 contains two sherds of similar date but probably deposited immediately before the construction of the cellar in 1790-95. The remainder either contain medieval wares, presumably residual or South Somerset wares which are likely to date to the later 16th to 18th centuries (the only coarseware likely to be contemporary with the 18th-century finewares in F907 is South Somerset ware). Layer 486 produced a single sherd of a plain tin-glazed ware bowl. Such vessels were made in England from the early 17th to the mid 18th century but plain ones are more common in the mid 18th century.

Table 6

Context Gp	TPQ	Med (resid)	SSOM	Cream	Other Post-Med wares	TOTAL
486	18 th	0	0	0	1 (TGW)	1
F1580 (Cellar 3)	1765 +	0	0	1	1 (Verw)	2
F907	1765 +	36	23	14	52	125
G973	L16th +	6	1	0	0	7
PH990	L16th +	0	1	0	0	1
PH992	L16th +	0	1	0	0	1
430	L16th +	4	8	0	1 (TUDG)	13
TOTAL		46	34	15	55	150

The excavators suggest that most of the features in this phase were backfilled immediately prior to the construction of the Hot Bath in the 1770s but that F907 must be earlier. Since it contains sherds which cannot be earlier than 1765 this gives a tight date for the assemblage, which therefore repays more detailed study.

Much of the pottery present is clearly residual and of medieval date. There is also definite evidence for a later 16th to early 18th-century component, consisting mainly of small abraded sherds of South Somerset ware, Cistercian ware and a few more closely-datable types, such as Frechen stoneware. In a few instances, however, it is not clear whether the wares are contemporary or residual, in the sense of being re-deposited from an earlier deposit. There is also clear evidence for the redeposition of parts of the F907 deposit during the construction of the Decimus Burton baths, since there are joins between some of the sherds in F907 and those in context 755.

The F907 contemporary assemblage contains approximately equal quantities of English coarsewares and finewares with a very few imported vessels. This is in contrast to many mid 18th-century urban

assemblages where Chinese Export Porcelain provides much of the fineware. Whilst it may be an indication of relative poverty it is more likely in this case to indicate the success of Wedgwood's Creamware production in supplying the English fineware market.

The most common coarseware is South Somerset ware. There is at least one clearly contemporary vessel, a jar or chamber pot with a moulded base, internal glaze and a band of combed decoration on the shoulder (Fig 00 DR21). Sherds of this vessel come from several contexts and make up the entire profile of the pot up to a sharp neck angle. The rim is missing. The base of a second similar vessel is also present. A complete profile of a shallow pie dish, probably oval, was present (Fig 00 DR34).

A few sherds of another local red earthenware are present, here termed LPMLOC. These sherds include internally-glazed bowls and unglazed flowerpots with a central hole in the base. The characteristics of the fabric include moderate muscovite and abundant quartz silt. A source in the upper Lias which is exposed in the Avon valley at Bath is likely but unproven. No rims or substantial parts of a profile were present.

The most common fineware in the assemblage is Creamware. Four vessels are represented: a bowl with a small moulded band below the rim externally (Fig 00 DR23); a plain shallow dish (Fig 00 DR24); a tea pot (Fig 00 DR25), of which a non-joining sherd comes from context 755; a lid, probably from this or a similar vessel (Fig 00 DR26) and a tankard. The handle of this tankard has a complex handle probably formed using a decorated nozzle in the manner of cake icing (Fig 00 DR27).

English white salt-glazed stoneware is the second most common type. Vessels present include a plain bowl (Fig 00 DR28) and two small cups (Fig 00 DR29 and 00 DR30). A sherd from a tankard handle is slipped in the manner of early 18th-century examples and is either an heirloom or residual.

Tin-glazed earthenware is also present. A couple of sherds of plain chamber pots are present but could be residual. Several sherds from a cylindrical ointment pot (Fig 00 DR33) decorated with horizontal blue lines were present. An undecorated bowl with a tall footring base is probably also contemporary.

Two sherds of a Staffordshire brown stoneware tankard base are definitely contemporary (Fig 00 DR31) but a single sherd from a flanged dish in Nottingham stoneware may be residual. The vessel is either oval or circular and if the latter is c.260mm diameter, which would suggest that it was a pie dish (Fig 00 DR32).

Finally, several sherds of Andalusian coarseware jar were present (as well as sherds in context 755). They represent several different vessels and were clearly imported with their contents rather than as souvenirs of an Iberian holiday. Sherds have also recently been recognised in two rural pipeline collections in the area: Sharpness to Lydney in Gloucestershire and Eaton Gray to Minety in north Wiltshire. These finds support the interpretation of these vessels as representing a trade in their contents via the port at Bristol.

Period 7

Eight sherds were recovered from Period 7.1 contexts. These can be dated to 1790-5 or earlier since they are associated with the construction of buildings of this date. All but three were of Weston Super Mare-type coarseware are thus the earliest dated examples of this type. The sherds come from Cellar 2 and from F1585 and F1724, both in Cellar 3. The other sherds are a residual sherd of Crockerton ware, probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date, a sherd from a South Somerset bowl with a white internal slip and clear lead glaze and a sherd of an unidentified porcelain jar, coated in mortar. Two other sherds, from F1580 in cellar 3, are likely to be contemporary. They are a sherd of Creamware plate and a Verwood ware jar.

Three hundred and seventy one sherds were recovered from Period 7.2 contexts associated with the construction of Decimus Burton's baths in 1829/30 (Table 00). At least a third of these sherds were residual and of medieval date. Every context with 10 or more sherds, however, contained types of 19th-century date and, given the closed nature of the deposit, these are of some interest for the dating of early 19th-century pottery, especially the coarsewares which are rarely recovered from datable deposits.

Table 7 TPQ for Context Groups in Period 7.2

context group	TPQ	Grand Total
1307, F2013	1770s +	1
300	1800 +	110
300, 349	M18th C	3
300, 635	1765+	1
300, 686	1770s +	1
340	1800 +	17
340, 902	1800+	43
402/405	1770s +	1
403	1765+	3
403, 450	1800+	3
403, 702	1800+	3
495	1800+	29
496	1800+	14
F813	1800+	1
429	1765+	1
F433	1770+	1
Grand Total		232

This assemblage contains the earliest stratified examples on this site of several wares (Table 8). In some cases, the ware itself may have been in use at an earlier date but because of the small size of the assemblages was not present in any earlier stratified context. This may be the explanation of the presence of Staffordshire/Bristol mottled-glazed ware and North Devon Gravel-Tempered ware in this list (STMO and NDGT). The major group of new wares consists of factory products made in refined

bodies. These include transfer-printed vessels (TPW), Pearlware (PEAR), buff wares (NCBW), European porcelains (CONP) and plain white earthenwares (without a cobalt tinge to the glaze, as found in Pearlware. WHITE). The assemblage also produced sherds of five Chinese Export Porcelain vessels (CHPO).

A number of stoneware vessels were present. These include London stoneware vessels, including a number of sherds from a single large jar, unfortunately with no diagnostic features surviving. Sherds of several Derbyshire stoneware vessels were present. All are black-leading jars, including one vessel with the words 'black leading' stamped near the base (Fig 00 DR35) and another with an indistinct curved stamp (Fig 00 DR36). The group also contains a sherd from a Bristol stoneware vessel.

Finally, it seems that neither South Somerset nor the local red earthenware, LPMLOC, were in use and in their place was Weston-super-Mare-type coarseware. The earliest documentary reference to pottery production at Weston is dated 1837, and so this deposit predates, but only just, the known starting of the pottery. Most of the vessels were large internally glazed bowls, one of which had a flat-topped flanged rim (Fig 00 DR43) but most of which had rounded rims, often with a single groove below the rim on the outside (Fig 00 DR38 and Fig 00 DR42). Shallow, internally-glazed dishes (Fig 00 DR39 and 00 DR41) and internally-glazed jars (Fig 00 DR37) complete the list of forms.

Table 8

Code	Name	NoV
WSM	Country	34
NDGT	Country	3
TPW	Fine	35
PEAR	Fine	12
NCBW	Fine	3
CONP	Fine	2
WHITE	Fine	1
CHPO	Porcelain	5
STMO	Staffs/Bristol	2
LONS	Stoneware	7
DERBS	Stoneware	6
BRIS	Stoneware	1

Period 8

Two sherds were recovered from a single period 8 context (593) associated with alterations to the cellar (606) sometime during the Victorian period. Both are of types present in Period 7.2 or earlier and are likely to be entirely residual.

Period 9

Twenty-five sherds were recovered from period 9 contexts associated with the construction of the Taylor building between 1925 and 1927. All are of types present in Period 7.2 or earlier and are likely to be entirely residual.

Discussion

The post-Roman pottery from these excavations throws some light on the history of activity on the site which in the main confirms that provided by the stratigraphy. However, in a few instances the pottery provides an alternative source of evidence. Firstly, it confirms that there is no evidence for activity on the site from the end of the use of Romano-British pottery (whenever that might have been in Bath) and the late Saxon period. It also confirms that there was indeed occupation on the site before the Norman conquest, albeit probably only from the late 10th or early 11th-century onwards.

For the late 11th, 12th and early 13th-century, the site produced further stratified groups of pottery. These mainly confirm that Bath was supplied mainly from sources to the east, in central Wiltshire, but including vessels from sites on the Gloucestershire/Wiltshire border (Minety) and a number of vessels from south-east Wiltshire. The very small quantity of pottery from the Bristol area in this sequence is a feature first noted in the 1970s. A few Ham Green vessels, all jugs, were present together, later on, with a few Bristol vessels, also all jugs.

The pottery indicates that there was very little pit digging on the site after the middle of the 13th century and the pottery from later levels, confirms that there is only a small amount of evidence for activity in the area during the late medieval period. Many of the wares which could date to the late medieval period are probably to be interpreted as either late 13th/early 14th century, or as early to mid 16th century finds.

The post-medieval re-occupation of the site probably started in the later 16th or early 17th centuries but the pottery does not indicate a large amount of activity until immediately before the construction of the baths in the 1770s. The pottery from F907 is important for ceramic studies in that its deposition can be dated by internal evidence to c.1765 or later and by stratigraphic and historical evidence to no later than the early 1770s. The pottery from Cellars 2 and 3 is also of interest, in that it shows that by the 1790s South Somerset wares were no longer being used in the city, their place having been taken by Weston-Super-Mare type coarseware. The 1829-30 assemblages, by contrast, conform very much to accepted ceramic dating although in the future it may well be worthwhile studying the wares in more detail since there is increasing interest in the pottery of this period, both from an archaeological and art-historical viewpoint. None of this latter assemblage seems to indicate any unusual activities on the site although it is presumably mainly derived from domestic refuse incorporated in the construction levels of the baths.

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