

## Justification for sampling of pottery from Brough (GLF02)

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Excavations at Brough, site GLF02, produced a small collection of Anglo-Saxon pottery. The pottery is similar to that from the neighbouring site excavated by TPAU (GFB). That pottery was investigated using petrological and chemical analysis. The results of that study indicated that much of the pottery contained inclusions which do not, so far as we know, occur in local clays or sands whilst others contained rock and mineral fragments which are present in this part of the Trent valley (Vince 2003).

Interestingly, however, the chemical analysis shows that both groups of fabrics have similarities to each other, and are more similar to each other than to samples of similar wares from sites at Dunholme and Sleaford. There are two possible explanations for these results:

- The pottery may have been made locally, but with the addition of non-local sands, perhaps for the ritual significance of the sand?
- The pottery may have been made in different places and imported to Brough but was subsequently contaminated during burial through contact with groundwater

If the first option is correct then we have learnt something new and surprising about Anglo-Saxon customs and beliefs whereas if the second option is correct then the basis upon which chemical analysis of pottery is based must be questioned.

Distinguishing between these two options requires further study and this new Brough site would provide a good test case. If the sites are very close together then one might be able to say with some certainty that the pottery was made from the same range of raw materials as was noted at the TPAU site. Therefore, if there is a systematic difference in chemical composition it must be due to burial conditions.

It is therefore proposed to repeat the analysis carried out at GFB for TPAU on samples from GLF02 and to then carry out a statistical comparison of the two groups of samples, having first established through thin-section analysis, that the fabrics are indeed petrologically identical.

At GFB 16 samples were taken but as a result of analysis it was shown that they represented only 12 fabrics. We might therefore expect to find a similar number of fabrics at the GLF02 site, and by using the results of the previous study we should be able to avoid unnecessary duplication. Ideally, therefore, 12 samples would be taken from GLF02, matching those from GFB. If less than 10 samples are taken then it is unlikely that the sample will be large enough to test the overall similarity of the groups.

### **Bibliography**

Vince, Alan (2003) *Petrological and Chemical Analyses of Anglo-Saxon Pottery from Glebe Farm, Brough (GFB)*. AVAC Report 2003/28. Lincoln, AVAC.