

## **The Pottery from Sprotbrough Gardens, Sprotbrough (OSA01 WB15 and OSA01 EX03)**

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### **Summary**

Archaeological fieldwork at Sprotbrough Gardens, Sprotbrough, South Yorkshire undertaken by On Site Archaeology produced a collection of 1074 sherds of pottery, representing no more than 796 vessels and weighing in total 20.354 Kg.

The pottery ranged in date from the Roman period through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and included sherds of Anglo-Scandinavian wares of types not previously recognised in South Yorkshire. The main periods of activity on the site, however, were considerably later. There is a large amount of pottery of later 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> century date and a second peak in the mid to late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Most of the pottery used in the medieval and post-medieval periods was locally made, mostly coming from Doncaster, but in the 17<sup>th</sup> century a number of imported Rhenish stoneware vessels and flasks produced in northern France were used.

### **Methodology**

All of the pottery was examined, either by eye or with the aid of a binocular microscope at x20 magnification, and assigned to a common name code. The codes used are based on those in use in Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire, both of which areas share a number of the same wares. They are also compatible with the author's archive reports for pottery from sites in North Yorkshire, principally the City of York.

Where possible, vessels were also assigned a form code. The form classification used is based on that published by the Medieval Pottery Research Group (1998).

A quantified record was made of the collection noting in addition to the context, common name and form the number of sherds, the maximum number of vessels represented, the weight in grams and details of the fabric, decoration, traces of use and condition. Each record represents one or more sherds with the same characteristics and was assigned a unique ID number, which was marked on the bag.

Where sherds from the same vessel were found in different contexts the 'sherd family' was assigned a number which is recorded in the database. In theory, such 'cross-fits' can provide useful information about site formation and the correlation of stratigraphically unrelated deposits although in the case of Sprotbrough Gardens the actual number of cross-fitting sherds is very small. This is probably due to the fact that the pottery was recovered from relatively small trenches spread across the site so that only a small fraction of the pottery once present on the site was recovered.

Sherds were selected for illustration using the following criteria: a) that they are examples of types which are rare in South Yorkshire, b) that they are earlier than the late 12<sup>th</sup> century (from which period onwards the publications of medieval pottery from Doncaster provide a good parallel for most of the wares found and c) if a complete profile of the vessel could be reconstructed. Therefore, only 18 vessels were drawn out of a total of 135 featured sherds.

## Description

The pottery is described here in chronological groups. In some cases the sherds were stratified in later deposits or were unstratified and in some cases the sherds were recovered from deposits which probably pre-date the use of the pottery. The stratigraphic interpretation of the finds is discussed later.

## Roman

Three sherds of Romano-British pottery were found. All come from greyware jars with a fine, sandy fabric and burnished external surfaces. Such vessels were probably produced locally between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries (Table 1). Only one of the three sherds is potentially stratified in a contemporary deposit, the Phase 2 buried soil.

**Table 1**

REFNO	Context	period	context group	Description	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh
526	2046	2	2	Buried soil east of well. Same as (2043) (2028) (group 2)	RPOT	GREY	JAR	1
527	2068	7		Backfill of drain [2002]	RPOT	GREY	JAR	1
525	3079	4	11	Upper fill of ditch re-cut [3218] (group 11)	RPOT	GREY	JAR	1

## Anglo-Scandinavian

Eleven sherds, representing no more than 10 vessels are of types which are definitely of pre-conquest date. Two of these were probably made in the York area (YORKA and YORKD) and two were probably made somewhere in the Trent valley, including sherds from Torksey. In addition, some of the shell-tempered pottery found is of long-lived types which were first produced in the pre-conquest period but continued to be used into the 13<sup>th</sup> century (e.g. LFS). Given the large quantity of 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century pottery from the site and the small quantity of earlier wares it is likely that the shell-tempered wares are of 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century date.

## York Anglo-Scandinavian Ware (YORKA)

York Anglo-Scandinavian ware is an oxidized wheelthrown ware containing moderate to abundant angular fragments of quartz and quartz sandstone up to 2.0mm across.

Under x20 magnification the inclusions can be identified as being predominantly of lower Carboniferous sandstone, which is extremely common in glacial sands and gravels in the Vale of York.

Excavations in York, mainly at Fishergate and Coppergate, have shown that this ware was probably produced from very early in the Scandinavian occupation of York but ceased manufacture during the 10<sup>th</sup> century (1993; 1990).

The only vessel form known is the jar, which typically has a wire-cut base and a tall shouldered profile.

Outside of York itself the ware is rare but has been found at Beverley (Watkins in 1991), Tadcaster (Vince 1991), Lincoln forthcoming and Newcastle upon Tyne. The ware is absent, however, from two major collections containing late 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>-century pottery from the south bank of the Humber: Flixborough and St Peter's Church Barton-upon-Humber.

DR5

### York D ware (YORKD)

York D ware is characteristically a reduced light grey wheelthrown ware. It contains similar inclusions to those in York Anglo-Scandinavian ware but usually in lower quantities, giving it a finer-textured appearance.

Excavations at Coppergate, York, have shown that York D ware is contemporary with York Anglo-Scandinavian ware. Examples have been found on various sites in York itself, at Lurk Lane in Beverley and at Thwing (Mainman forthcoming). A single sherd has been identified at St Peter's Church, Barton-upon-Humber. It has not been recognised at Lincoln but is so similar to Romano-British greywares that it is quite likely that examples have been missed there.

DR7

### Torksey ware (TORK)

Torksey ware is typically a reduced wheelthrown greyware. The vessels contain abundant rounded and subangular quartz grains, mainly up to 0.5mm across and can also contain large subangular calcareous inclusions, usually present as voids. A characteristic of the ware is the 'sandwich' pattern of firing with a light grey core, dark brown to reddish margins and grey surfaces.

At least nine kilns are known from Torksey and undoubtedly many more await discovery. They cover an area from the modern village southwards to the junction of the Foss Dyke with the Trent (Barley 1964; Barley 1981). Thin section and Neutron Activation Analysis of examples of Torksey ware from the kiln sites and from sites in York suggest to the authors that the York examples were not made at Torksey but a re-examination of these thin sections and further chemical analysis carried out by the author suggest that the York vessels are actually Torksey products but that some locally produced wares were included in the original York samples. Torksey ware has a much wider distribution than

either of the two York Anglo-Scandinavian wares although the term has unfortunately been used, like Thetford ware, in a generic sense to denote any wheelthrown sandy greyware of late Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian ware found in the east midlands or north of the Humber. Examples of Torksey ware have been noted on sites throughout central and northern Lincolnshire, on sites in the Trent valley as far upriver as Repton, at Leicester as well as on sites in North and East Yorkshire. They have been noted at Doncaster, where all the published examples appear to be of later 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>-century date. The ware appears to have different distributions in the late 9<sup>th</sup> to mid 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and the later 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the earlier period the ware is found mainly on sites in the Trent valley, with rare examples in York and Lincoln whereas in the later 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries it is much more widespread. It is therefore likely that the Sprotbrough examples are of later 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>-century date.

A range of vessel forms were produced at Torksey and there is some evidence for standardisation of sizes as well as forms. However, the Sprotbrough sherds are probably all from medium jars, the most common form and one used throughout the life of the industry.

DR13

DR15

### **Torksey-type ware (TORKT)**

The term 'Torksey-type' ware is used here in the sense defined at Lincoln, to denote vessels which have a fabric which is visually similar to those produced at Torksey but which are somehow different, either in the quantity of inclusions or the firing (forthcoming). Such vessels may indeed have been atypical Torksey products but there were also certainly other production sites in the Trent valley (for example, wasters are known from Newark) and a possible model is that when the Torksey industry ceased, some time in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, some of the potters set up workshops elsewhere.

### **12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Three hundred and ninety-five sherds of pottery, representing no more than 251 vessels and weighing 5.709 Kg are of types dating to the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The majority of this pottery was probably made in Doncaster, where kilns and waste of 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>-century date have been excavated at Hallgate and the Market Place (1979; 1989). The products of these kilns were made in several distinctly different fabrics, described below (DONCA, DONCB, DONCC, DONCF).

Alongside these Doncaster wares, most of which were glazed jugs, were a range of shell-tempered wares which are thought mainly to be of Lincolnshire origin (although this requires scientific analysis to confirm). Some of these wares are identical visually to those used in Lincoln in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (LEMS, LFS) whilst others are of types found on sites in the north of the county (NLEMS, NLFS, NLST). All other wares were present in small numbers only. They consist of three vessels of Beverley ware (BEVO1A, BEVO2, BEVO2B), three gritty whiteware vessels (YG) and one unsourced vessel (MED).

### Doncaster Fabric A (DONCA)

This ware is a sandy red-firing wheelthrown earthenware. The sand inclusions are mostly rounded quartz grains. The Sprotbrough pieces have been identified by comparison with samples from the Hallgate kiln-site (1979).

The majority of the vessels present were jugs (59 out of 68) followed by jars (7 vessels) and single examples of a bowl and a pipkin. All of these types are represented in the Hallgate waste.

Within the jugs there were examples with strap handles (12 vessels) and rod handles (6 vessels). One of the strap handles has an applied strip on the back (DR4) probably applied as a sinuous strip. The top appears to have been shaped into an animal head, perhaps a snake. Another strap handle had combed facets applied at either side of the back of the handle, a form of decoration probably first used in South Lincolnshire in the Stamford industry. The only substantial fragment of any vessel consists of sherds from a jug (DR3) with a bridge spout, thumbled base and vertical applied strips.

The pipkin sherds come from a vessel with a short everted rim and pulled lip.

The Hallgate kilns are broadly dated to the later 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. There are several typological features on the vessels which can be paralleled with London-type ware types of the early to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century but the tubular-spouted jugs which are the most highly-decorated form found at the kiln site are probably copying those produced in Stamford in the later 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Doncaster Fabric A vessels were apparently not widely traded although the failure to recognise them on many sites outside of the town may be partly due to the similarity of the ware to other lead-glazed sandy red earthenwares, such as those produced in the Low Countries and London or, more locally, Lincoln.

### Doncaster Fabric B (DONCB)

This ware is a sandy white-firing wheelthrown lead-glazed earthenware. The sand is similar in character to that in Fabric A. The lead glaze is usually applied quite thickly and typically has a yellow or pale green colour.

Jugs are the main vessel form present in this fabric (52 out of 72 vessels) followed by jars (18 vessels) and pipkins (2 vessels).

The jugs had strap handles (2 examples, one plain and one decorated with stabbed combing, DR2). Body decoration was uncommon but examples with incised lines and roller stamping were present.

Only two sherd families were found. One has sherds in contexts 2081 and 2152 and the other has sherds in contexts 2081, 2152 and 2068. These indicate disturbance of Phase 3 deposits and the redeposition of sherds in Phase 6 and 7 deposits.

Despite the more distinctive appearance of Doncaster Fabric B vessels they are still rarely found outside of Doncaster and its environs.

It is possible that Fabric B came into use later than Fabric A and continued longer. Indeed, there are strong similarities between this fabric and the Coal Measures whiteware produced at Firsby and it is possible that the pottery industry at Doncaster moved to Firsby. However, it would seem that the majority of finds from Sprotbrough date to a period when both fabrics were in use in roughly equal quantities.

### **Doncaster Fabric C (DONCC)**

Doncaster Fabric C is a red-firing earthenware. Some vessels were made by hand, others are wheelthrown and it has been suggested that the vessels may have had handmade bodies with wheelthrown or turntable-finished tops. Unlike Fabrics A and B, Fabric C contains little quartz sand. The main inclusions are rounded iron-rich clay/iron pellets. It is not clear to the authors what the identity of these pellets is but they are clearly detrital fragments, suggesting that they originate in deposits cut through by the river Don or its tributaries.

The Doncaster Fabric C vessels at Sprotbrough consist of both jars and jugs, in similar quantities (5 vessels each).

The crudity of the vessels suggests that they pre-date the Hallgate industry, and wasters from the Market Place have indeed been dated to the later 11<sup>th</sup> to mid 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, there are other examples of handmade glazed wares being produced alongside wheelthrown wares and in south Lincolnshire the wheelthrown Stamford industry was supplanted in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century by that based at Lyveden and Stanion, where the wheel was not used.

### **Doncaster Fabric F (DONCF)**

Doncaster Fabric F is a reduced sandy wheelthrown earthenware. The fabric is similar to that of Fabric A but is perhaps finer-textured and higher fired.

All of the 22 vessels found at Sprotbrough were jugs, of which one had tripod feet. It is noticeable that in the Hallgate report numerous feet are published and interpreted as those of cauldrons. However, the cauldron form is rare in pottery until the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and it is at least possible that some of these feet come from tripod pitchers, perhaps the same vessels as had tubular spouts since in the Stamford industry tripod-footed tubular spouted jugs were produced, imitation of the metal ewer form.

Three strap handles were present. Decoration consisted of applied strips. Most of these strips were vertically applied and decorated with combing, in a similar fashion to those found on Developed Stamford ware vessels. In one case the strip seems to have been decorated with a simple rectangular-toothed roller. Vessels with such decoration were common on the Hallgate kiln-site and it is likely that the Sprotbrough vessels were produced at Hallgate.

## Lincolnshire Shelly wares (LFS, LEMS, NLFS, NLEMS, NLST)

Seventy-three sherds of shell-tempered pottery were found at Sprotbrough. They were examined by Jane Young who divided them into five groups (Table 2)

**Table 2**

Code	Name	Earliest date	Latest date
LFS	Lincoln Fine Shelled ware	Late 10 <sup>th</sup> C	
LEMS	Lincoln Early Medieval Shelly ware	Mid 12 <sup>th</sup> C	
NLEMS	North Lincolnshire Early Medieval Shelly ware	Mid 12 <sup>th</sup> C	
NLFS	North Lincolnshire Fine Shelled ware	Late 10 <sup>th</sup> C	
NLST	North Lincolnshire Shelly ware		

All of these wares are handmade and contain abundant fragments of bivalve shell, mostly nacreous (ie like mother-of-pearl). Thin section analysis of these wares shows that the shell is derived from a shelly limestone with a calcareous cement. The probable source of this limestone is the Great Oolite series which outcrops in a north-south band to the east of the Lincoln Edge. Those fabrics with a code beginning with N contain sparse quartz grains absent in LFS and LEMS. They are more common on sites in north Lincolnshire (and are the main shelly ware types found on sites in Yorkshire). The other differences between the wares are related to the texture of the shell temper. LFS and NLFS have abundant fine shell fragments, mostly less than 2.0mm across. LEMS and NLEMS are slightly coarser and NLST contains some large shell fragments, several mm across. Chemical analysis is required to identify the wares more accurately and to investigate the number of sources they were produced in.

All of the vessels found at Sprotbrough were globular-bodied jars used for cooking.

Details of fabric, surface treatment and typology allow the vessels to be dated. Most (35 vessels) were datable to the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> centuries with a minority (23) being either later 12<sup>th</sup> or early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

DR16 NLFS jar rim Late 11<sup>th</sup> to mid 12<sup>th</sup> century

DR9 NLFS jar rim 12<sup>th</sup> century

DR18 NLFS jar rim 12<sup>th</sup> century

DR14. LEMS jar rim. Mid 12<sup>th</sup> century

DR8 NLEMS jar rim. Mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century

DR11 NLEMS jar rim. Mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century

DR12 NLEMS jar rim. Mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century

DR17 NLEMS jar rim. Mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century

DR6 NLST jar rim Late 12<sup>th</sup> century to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century

DR10 NLST jar rim Late 12<sup>th</sup> century to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century

### **Beverley wares (BEVO1A, BEVO2, BEVO2B)**

Three examples of Beverley glazed ware were present. They were examined by Jane Young who identified one as a Beverley 1A jug, another as a Beverley 2 jar and the third as a Beverley 2B jug. The Beverley glazed ware industry was in operation from the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century through to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It is thought that the main output of the industry was during the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when they are found in some quantities at sites in the Trent Valley as far south as Newark as well as on sites in York. Later on, they are found mainly on sites in East Yorkshire (and possibly north Lincolnshire), presumably because of the emergence of other glazed ware industries and the establishment of market zones around these potteries.

In the case of Sprotbrough, however, there seems no reason to doubt that the vessels are contemporary with the products of the Doncaster kilns with which they are associated.

### **Gritty Whiteware(YG)**

The tradition of coarse-gritted, white-firing wheelthrown pottery seems to have started in the later 11<sup>th</sup> century and spread rapidly throughout the north of England and southern Scotland. The identity of the gravel inclusions is a guide to their source but cannot be accurately made by eye. The ware is common in York although the characteristics of the fabric suggest that it may have been produced further to the west in an area of Coal Measure clays. Without further analysis it is not possible to say whether the Doncaster vessels were produced in the same centre or centres as those from York. A single sample of gritty whiteware from the 1995 excavations at Hallgate, Doncaster, was studied using thin sections and chemical analysis, both of which showed conclusively that it was made from different materials from those used by the Hallgate potters.

In York, Gritty whiteware was supplanted during the 13<sup>th</sup> century by sandy whitewares, some of which were produced in the same centres as York Glazed ware.

### **Other medieval (MED)**

A single jar sherd found in a modern deposit could not be assigned to any of the above groups but is thought from its general characteristics to be of medieval date.



## **Later medieval**

There is a scarcity of later medieval pottery from the site with only two wares of this date being present. One of these, Coal Measures Whiteware (CMW) was produced at numerous centres in the midlands and north of England but by far the closest to Sprotbrough were at Firsby, near Conisbrough, a few km to the southwest of the site, and Rawmarsh, further to the southwest but still within 20km of the site. The second ware, Humber ware, was also produced at several centres, of which the closest known to Sprotbrough was at West Cowick, near Snaith and the lower reaches of the Don.

### **Coal Measures Whiteware (CMW)**

Coal Measures whiteware is a white-firing ware with varying quantities of quartzose and iron-rich inclusions. The former are usually fragments of Coal Measures sandstones whilst the iron-rich inclusions may come from iron-rich beds within the Coal Measures seatearths. The vessels are wheelthrown and lead glazed, sometimes with copper added to the glaze to give a mottled green colour.

The products of the Firsby industry tend to have a high quartz sand component and their unglazed surfaces have a browner colour, which might be due to the deliberate slipping of the vessels or might be an effect of firing. The products of the Rawmarsh industry are typically fired to an extremely high temperature, at which point the body forms a grey stoneware and the iron-rich inclusions bloat into black slaggy blisters. There are, however, high-fired sherds from the site of the Firsby potteries and the two industries were probably exploiting exactly the same clay beds, either side of the same valley.

Most of the vessels from Sprotbrough were large closed forms, either jugs or jars. Large bowls were also present. None of the sherds were decorated and a single, plain strap handle was found.

There is documentary evidence for pottery production at both Firsby and Rawmarsh from the later 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards and later medieval wasters from fieldwalking at Firsby whilst a pit containing a group of wasters, including near-complete vessels, from Rawmarsh includes some forms which appear to be late medieval or early post-medieval in date.

### **Humber ware (HUM)**

Sherds from eight Humber ware vessels were found at Sprotbrough. Humber ware is a fine-textured, silty red-firing earthenware, although it is often reduced grey. Plain lead glaze, often with brown colouration acquired from the body.

The vessels present include large jugs and jars.

There is documentary evidence for pottery production at West Cowick from c.1320 onwards whilst excavation has revealed a number of kilns, the earliest of which is typologically dated to the late 13<sup>th</sup> century. However, these early West Cowick products are decorated and probably earlier than those found at Sprotbrough, all of which are typical of the later medieval period.

## **16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Sherds of four hundred and sixty seven vessels of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-century date were found at Sprotbrough. The majority of these sherds have a fine silty fabric similar to that of Humber ware, and are indeed probably products of a pottery somewhere in the Humber wetlands using alluvial clay. Some are quite light coloured, and in one case a bodysherd with a Humber fabric had a sherd of a light-firing vessel attached to it and covered with glaze. It is not known where the white-firing clays were obtained from, but the most likely source would be the Coal Measures of South or West Yorkshire. These wares have been divided into groups based on their method of glaze or decoration, a distinction which may lead to sherds of a single vessel being given different codes. However, this classification is standard within Yorkshire, for example in the publications of the post-medieval pottery from Hull and Beverley, and has some justification in that contemporary references suggest that the classification was recognised at the time these pots were made. Vessels with a mottled brown glaze are classed as Brown Glazed Earthenware (BERTH), those with a black glaze are classed as Blackwares (BL) and those with a white slip are classed as slipwares (SLIP). In each case, where the silty Humber fabric was identified this is noted as a subfabric. Post-medieval plain lead-glazed earthenwares with a silty Humber fabric are, conversely, termed Late Humber ware (LHUM).

A smaller quantity of pottery was made in finer-textured clays in which no inclusions could be seen in the groundmass (although larger inclusions might be present). These wares are identified as being made with Coal Measure white-firing and red-firing clays (or sometimes a mixture of the two). They are subdivided, again, according to the colour of the body, treatment and the range of forms produced. They are undoubtedly the products of several different areas but probably include vessels from West Yorkshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire (CSTN, MY, MP, STMO, STRE, STSL). A small number of fineware vessels were present, mostly tin glazed ware (TGW), and imported stonewares (FREC and WEST) and unglazed stoneware and earthenware flasks (MART). There appears to be a late 17<sup>th</sup>-century cut-off date for the post-medieval assemblage and it is likely that this corresponds to the rebuilding of the house in 1685. There is no similarly sharp starting date but it seems that the majority of the collection dates towards the end of the period (ie. mid to late 17<sup>th</sup> century) rather than the beginning.

### **Post-medieval wares with a Humber fabric (BERTH, BL, SLIP, LHUM)**

Three hundred and eight sherds from no more than 267 vessels (weighing 6.404Kg) of post-medieval pottery with a silty fabric of probable Humber origin were recovered. Most of these were brown-glazed earthenwares (BERTH, 192 vessels), followed by Black wares (BL 40 vessels) and slipwares (27 vessels). Plain lead-glazed vessels were rare (8 vessels). The majority of these wares were reduced or only partially oxidized and have a grey colour. The slipwares, however, are typically oxidized.

There are clear differences in the range of forms produced in these different wares (Table 2). Most of the slipwares were bowls with the slip used to give an internal wash. Some also had slip-trailed decoration over the top of the white slip, often just around the rim. Bowls were also present in BERTH

but the majority of the BERTH vessels were jars, some or all of which had strap handles (4 examples found). One jar had a rod handle and one lug handles formed from luting two large sheets of clay to the rim of the vessel. Glaze was limited to the interior of the bowls but was used on both the inside and outside of the jars. Other vessel forms in BERTH were the barrel costrel, represented by a single sherd from a vessel with a cylindrical body and a sharp neck angle, and a pipkin. The only vessel form present in BL was the jar. Finally, both bowls and jugs were present in LHUM.

**Table 3**

cname	BOWL	COSTREL	JAR	JUG	JUG/JAR	PIPKIN	Grand Total
SLIP	26	0	1	0	0	0	27
BERTH	46	1	141	2	1	1	192
BL	0	0	40	0	0	0	40
LHUM	4	0	0	2	2	0	8
Grand Total	76	1	182	4	3	1	267

During the 16<sup>th</sup> century the products of the Humber industry underwent a period of transition in which some features of the medieval industry seem to have survived alongside the introduction of new forms and techniques. A particularly distinctive feature of that period is the introduction of iron in the lead glazes (over and above that which was present through adsorption from the body). In contrast to the BERTH vessels seen at Sprotbrough, however, most of these vessels were fired at a temperature high enough to produce a purple colouration to the glaze. At Sprotbrough the glazes are not overfired and range from those in which the added iron is hardly noticeable (except where the glaze forms pools) to those in which it renders the glaze totally opaque (classed as BL).

The slip vessels are very similar to those produced in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century in the Staffordshire potteries which subsequently were elaborated there to become the classic Staffordshire slipwares of the type made by the Toft family and which include dated vessels of the 1680s onwards. These slip vessels may have copied the Staffordshire types (which are also present at Sprotbrough) and are probably contemporary with them. In some assemblages at Sprotbrough slipwares are absent. This may simply be due to differences in the source of the refuse, or the size of the assemblages, but it is likely also to indicate that some of these post-medieval Humber wares pre-date the introduction of slipwares and are therefore likely to be of later 16<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> century date.

### Cistercian ware (CSTN)

The term Cistercian ware was originally given to small black-glazed cups found on the sites of the Yorkshire abbeys and surmised to have been produced by the Cistercian monks. Subsequently, it was realised that they had a much wider distribution and date range and the term Blackware is preferred by

some specialists. The term is retained here since the vessels were clearly a distinct product and were often produced in industries specialising in these smaller vessels.

Sherds from 16 Cistercian ware vessels were present. The vessels all have a dark red, inclusionless body and are possibly products of the Wrenthorpe industry (1992). However, the fabric is typical of the red-firing Coal Measures clays and without either distinctive decoration or scientific analysis of the clay it is not certain that these are Wrenthorpe products.

Most of the vessels at Sprotbrough were small cups with a thick black glaze inside and out. No complete forms could be recognised but the vessels have footings around the bases, have roughly cylindrical forms and sometimes have a raised cordon or rib below the rim. They probably had two or more handles each. One rim may come from a small shallow dish (or salt or candlestick) whilst a body sherd from a narrow vessel with external glaze only cannot be identified.

Cistercian ware was first produced in the later 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century but very similar vessels were produced throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and into the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Wrenthorpe industry itself is documented in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and this part of south Yorkshire is within the area supplied with distinctive slip-decorated cups produced in that industry.

### **Midlands Yellow ware (MY)**

Midlands Yellow ware was first defined by Woodfield & Woodfield (REF). It was produced from Coal Measures white-firing clays and has a thick yellow-tinged lead glaze. Typically, this glaze fits the body poorly causing both crazing and spalling of the glaze. In both appearance and the range of forms and decoration this ware is ancestral to the Staffordshire Potteries slipware of the later 17<sup>th</sup> century and later and it was probably made in the Potteries in the earlier 17<sup>th</sup> century, if not before. However, it was certainly produced over a much wider area, including Wrenthorpe (1992).

Fifteen sherds, represented no more than 8 vessels were found at Sprotbrough. Three were too small to identify their form whilst one came from an unidentified but closed form. The remainder consist of two bowls (one of which is part of a sherd family spread across three contexts), a chamber pot (found in two contexts) and an albarello. The chamber pot and albarello forms suggest a 17<sup>th</sup> century date.

Midlands Yellow ware was being produced by the 1560s, since it occurs in a deposit of this date at Coventry Whitefriars, and developed into/was replaced by Staffordshire slipware in the 1670/80s. Midlands Yellow vessels are, however, most common in early to mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century deposits.

### **Midlands Purple ware (MP)**

The term Midlands Purple ware is used to denote vessels made in a red-firing clay (typically a Coal Measures redware) fired at a high enough temperature to turn the body a purple colour. If glaze is present it is usually blistered.

There are six sherds of Midlands Purple ware from Sprotbrough, all from different vessels, probably jars.

Midlands Purple ware was produced in several centres in the later medieval and earlier post-medieval periods and it is likely that the Sprotbrough sherds are of 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century date.

### **Staffordshire Mottled-glazed ware (STMO)**

Staffordshire mottled-glazed ware has a Coal Measures whiteware fabric with a mottled glaze, comparable with that used on BERTH. It was first produced in Staffordshire in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century (its introduction in Gloucester was later than c.1690 and before c.1710, Vince 1983).

Ten sherds were found at Sprotbrough, coming from 3 vessels. Only one of these vessels is a typical STMO vessel, from context [1037]. The other two appear to come from flagons, of the type produced in stoneware in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with a narrow neck suitable for use with a cork. Whilst it is likely that these are actually early modern vessels they come from several different mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century contexts.

### **Staffordshire Redware (STRE)**

The term Staffordshire Redware is used here to denote vessels made in a Coal Measures red-firing clay. The iron content of the vessels included in this group varies, however, and includes some vessels with dark red fabrics comparable with those seen in Cistercian ware as well as some with much lower iron contents, having a pinkish colour. The vessels are all of types produced in the Staffordshire Potteries but it is quite possible that vessels from other sources are also present.

Eighteen sherds of Staffordshire Redware were found at Sprotbrough. Of these, 17 came from white-slipped bowls similar to those in the Humber SLIP ware. Two of these vessels have brown slip-trailed decoration over the internal white slip.

A single sherd came from a posset pot with a dark red fabric and slip over which white slip-trailing has been applied.

In the Staffordshire Potteries there seems to be a typological sequence of these redware dishes in which the earliest examples have a white slip trailing over a red body (usually enhanced by a red slip). These vessels have been found in association with clay pipes of mid 17<sup>th</sup> century date (c.1640-60). Vessels with a white slip with/without brown slip trailing appear somewhat later and both the bowls and the posset pot from Sprotbrough probably belong to this later 17<sup>th</sup>-century phase.

### **Staffordshire Slipware (STSL)**

Staffordshire slipware was made using Coal Measure whiteware clays, usually having a white slip over a body which might be less pure, but is often of the same colour as the slip. The vessels were wheelthrown and decorated with various slip techniques: trailing and jewelling, marbling and combing.

The glaze is usually a glossy lead glaze with a slight yellow tinge. In some cases the vessels have a dark red slip over which white slip decoration could be applied.

Only two sherds of this ware were present at Sprotbrough, both from posset pots, large two-handled drinking vessels.

Staffordshire slipware developed out of the Midlands Yellow tradition in the Staffordshire Potteries although very similar vessels were produced in Bristol by the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, if not before. The Sprotbrough examples may be of late 17<sup>th</sup>-century date but could be later.

### Tin-glazed ware (TGW)

Eighteen sherds of tin-glazed ware were found, represented up to 18 vessels. The vessels have a light brown fabric, made from a calcareous clay with few visible inclusions. In most cases the vessels have a thick opaque white glaze on both surfaces although in one case the vessel has a plain lead-glazed back (context 2054).

Seven vessel types are present. They are a mixture of serving vessels (a charger, plates, bowls and a possible *crespina* a fluted dish used as a centre piece on a dining table), chamber pots, a lid and two albarelli – small storage jars used for foodstuffs, medicines and the like. One of the albarelli was decorated with blue and purple.

Tin-opacified glazed wares first became common in England in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, following the establishment of the south Netherlands majolica industry, centred at Antwerp. By the end of the century production centres had been established in England, the most successful of which was in London. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century daughter industries were set up, for example in Bristol and Liverpool. However, the most likely source of the Sprotbrough pieces is either London or the Low Countries. The products of the two industries are very similar during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although during the century stylistic differences developed. However, these pieces are mainly undecorated and of standard forms, even the *crespina* initially an Italian form, was copied throughout western Europe. Chemical analysis can distinguish London from Antwerp and Italian pieces but without such analysis the source of the vessels is unknown (Vince and Brown 2002).

### Frechen Stoneware (FREC)

Frechen stoneware was produced at Frechen, to the west of Cologne, from the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. It is typically a grey or buff stoneware with abundant fine quartz sand inclusions, up to 0.3mm across. This sand distinguishes Frechen stoneware from the earlier Cologne stoneware which is otherwise very similar (Cologne potters founded the Frechen industry and for a short time there was probably an overlap between the two centres). Frechen stoneware usually had a brown slip which, when combined with salt glaze, produced the distinctive mottled brown/grey, pitted surface. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the London stoneware industry, again set up with the help of Rhenish potters,

took over the English market, although dark green bottle glass had by then replaced stoneware as the most common medium for storage of wine and spirits.

There are 35 sherds of Frechen stoneware from Sprotbrough, coming from no more than 17 vessels. Most of the sherds are featureless body sherds which could come from either bottles or drinking jugs but three vessels were certainly bottles, with applied face masks (often called belarmine bottles). Four vessels were drinking jugs. There is a slight difference in date between the two forms. Drinking jugs were produced from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century whereas belarmine bottles do not appear until the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (although, confusingly, bearded face masks were applied to drinking jugs from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the difference is mainly in the width of the neck and rim).

The Sprotbrough pieces are undecorated, except for the face masks on the belarmine bottles, and of unexceptional size. They are therefore typical of Frechen stoneware which was used by all classes of society during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### Westerwald Stoneware (WEST)

Westerwald stoneware is a grey or off-white stoneware decorated with blue and purple paint and stamps and sprigging.

Only a small sherd was present in the Sprotbrough collection, which from its curvature probably came from a drinking jug. This form was introduced in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century but continued to be produced up to the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. Initially, Westerwald stoneware seems to have been restricted to high status households but by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was found widely on English sites. Given the lack of other 18<sup>th</sup>-century finds in the collection it is likely that this vessel was of 17<sup>th</sup> century date.

### Martincamp wares (MART)

The term Martincamp wares is used to describe unglazed flasks made as globular or squashed globular closed forms with a long tapering neck added on one side of the vessel. They were first recognised by John Hurst, who established that there were three basic types: a white-bodied earthenware, often with a squashed body and found in 16<sup>th</sup>-century deposits, a grey- or red-bodied earthenware, usually with a globular body, and a white or grey stoneware, also with a globular body. These latter types were certainly present by the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century but are found throughout England in later 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century contexts.

Ten sherds were found at Sprotbrough, representing no more than 7 vessels. Most of these were red earthenwares (5 vessels) with one red stoneware and one white stoneware vessel. The lack of white earthenwares examples suggests a later 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century date.

These flasks were apparently imported to England empty and may have been used for carrying liquids when travelling or in the fields and/or for the storage of wine or spirits.

## **18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Eighty-two sherds of pottery of 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>-century date were present, weighing 2.228Kg. Most of these are factory-made vessels but they include a high proportion of locally-made flowerpots (LPMLOC). The factory-made products include Nottingham and Derbyshire stonewares (NOTS and DERBS), buff-bodied kitchen wares (NCBW), whitewares (WHITE), Pearl wares (PEAR) and transfer-printed wares (TPW).

Excluding the flowerpots, the collection is very small and includes vessels used for serving food and drink, chamber pots, a blackleading bottle – which was used as a container for graphite, used for polishing ironwork, especially in fireplaces, and bowls used both for food preparation (NCBW) and serving (PEAR and TPW).

There are no sherds of definitely early to mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century wares in the collection, and no sherds of Creamware, which was at its height of popularity in the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The collection seems, as a group, to date to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Discussion**

Although the pottery collection from Sprotbrough ranges from the Roman period to the 19<sup>th</sup> century it seems that the pottery indicates a few episodes of activity with large periods of time either completely unrepresented or only represented in a very minor way. To summarise, the sequence starts with a few sherds of Roman pottery, then a gap, then a small (but highly significant) collection of late 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>-century pottery, then another gap (corresponding to the later 11<sup>th</sup> to early 12<sup>th</sup> centuries) and then the first main period of pottery deposition. This phase of activity includes some wares which are probably of mid 12<sup>th</sup> century date (such as DONCC) and others which are probably of later 12<sup>th</sup>-century date (such as the majority of the shell-tempered wares, and probably most of the Hallgate products (DONCA, DONCB and DONCF). That the phase continued into the early 13<sup>th</sup> century may be indicated by the presence of pipkins and jugs with bridge spouts and raised footrings. However, there are very few sherds in the collection which can be dated to the later 13<sup>th</sup> to mid 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and this probably indicates another hiatus in deposition. There is certainly some later medieval pottery present on the site, indicating some activity in the later 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, but then probably another hiatus, since there are no sherds of later 15<sup>th</sup> to mid 16<sup>th</sup> century date, and none certainly dating to the later 16<sup>th</sup> century. Pottery deposition began again in the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century and ceased sharply c.1680. This corresponds closely with the demolition date of 1671 given for the demolition for the manor house which preceded Sprotbrough Hall. If the activity had continued down to c.1685 when construction of the hall began we might have expected more slipwares and for those slipwares to show later typological features.

Surprisingly, there appears to be little pottery actually associated with the construction of the hall from the excavations. It has been suggested above that this is partly because the earlier structures were demolished well before work on the hall began, but even subsequent deposits contain no late 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>-century pottery, merely residual medieval and 17<sup>th</sup>-century wares. The final period of pottery



deposition took place during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is dominated by the presence of flowerpots, appropriate finds from a large landscaped garden.

## Dating of stratigraphy

NB. At the time of writing, the implications of the pottery dating have yet to be integrated into the site phasing and this section will be re-written once this has taken place.

## Phase One

No pottery was recovered from Phase 1 deposits, which did produce a cast copper alloy object and some slag of Iron Age or early Roman date. This may suggest that pottery was not in common use in the Sprotbrough area before the Roman period.

## Phase Two

Six sherds of pottery were recovered from the burial soil which existed over most of the site (Table 4). One of these sherds is of Roman date and the remainder of Anglo-Scandinavian to Saxo-Norman date. Two of the sherds are of types which were probably only current in the late 9<sup>th</sup>/mid 10<sup>th</sup> centuries (YORKA and YORKD) and three of types which were probably of 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>-century date. The two Anglo-Saxon coins from the deposit, and the Mid Saxon copper alloy pin indicate activity in the 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> centuries, but there is no pottery of this date from the site. As in the pre-Roman Iron Age, it is likely that this area was one in which pottery was little used during the mid Saxon period.

Unless the shell-tempered sherds are intrusive from Period 3 activity, the finds seem to indicate a long period during which the site was close to human settlement but whether the activity took place on site or nearby is impossible to say from the evidence gained from the excavations, given that artefacts were probably scarcely used during much of the period.

**Table 4**

REFNO	Context	context		cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	NoV	Action	Description	Weight
		Phase	group								
277	2028	2	2	NLFS		JAR	1	1		11-12	6
526	2046	2	2	RPOT	GREY	JAR	1	1			15
227	3093	2		YORKD		JAR	1	1	1DR07		42
261	4006	2		NLFS		JAR	1	1		11-12	3
280	4013	2		NLFS		JAR	1	1		11-12	10
225	4013	2		YORKA		JAR	1	1	1DR05		22

## Phase Three

Two hundred and ten sherds of pottery were recovered from Phase 3 deposits. Of these, one is a residual 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>-century sherd and eight are of late medieval or later date. Most of the latter must be intrusive from later deposits and all are small sherds (Table 00). However, three sherds of Frechen stoneware, from two separate vessels, were recovered from a post pit, 2108. These may have fallen into the pit when the post rotted or was pulled out but if they were in the initial packing they are unlikely to have been intrusive. Given these sherds, the presence of a sherd from a tin-glazed albarello from the make-up for a mortar floor in the building, 2142, may also be *in situ*. Both of these groups of pottery probably date to the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, however, and it is more likely that they are intrusive from Phase 5.

**Table 5**

REFNO	Context	period	group	context cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	NoV	Description	Weight
155	2191	3		CMW	RAWMARSH	JUG/JAR	1	1		21
333	2211	3a		CMW	SANDY	JAR	1	1	PLAIN SPLASHED GLAZE INT;BROWNISH TINGE TO SURFACES	12
193	2133	3		CSTN		CUP	1	1		4
57	2108	3b	6	FREC		DJ	3	2		25
18	3123	3		LPMLOC		FLP	1	1		3
34	2142	3a	3	TGW		ALB	1	1	DEC	7
4	2085	3c		TPW		BOWL	6	1	FLOWERS	15

The remaining 195 sherds are all of mid 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup>-century date and include a number of Lincolnshire shell-tempered types whose equivalent types in Lincoln are found primarily in mid/late 12<sup>th</sup>-century deposits. A small quantity of pottery comes from levels pre-dating or associated with the construction of the Phase 3 building. Some come from a pit sealed by the floor of the building, indicating that it was not the first human activity on the site. These finds are all assigned to Phase 3a.

Another group of pottery could be assigned to features and contexts contemporary with the use of the building (Phase 3b) and a final group, Phase 3c, comes from the demolition spread over the site of the building and from the fill of the re-cut ditch associated with it.

There is very little difference in the character of the pottery from these three sub-phases. Most of the pottery comes from the Doncaster potteries and examples of fabrics A, B, C and F are present, with no evidence for differences in the relative frequency of the types through time (Table 6). Given that the Phase 3c assemblage is over 50% of the total it is not surprising that the Beverley wares only occur in this latest deposit. It may be more significant that in Phases 3a and 3b Doncaster A fabric, the red earthenware, is the most common ware whereas in Phase 3c it is Doncaster B, the whiteware. The relative proportion of the various Lincolnshire shelly wares does not appear to change significantly during the three sub-phases. What may be more significant, however, is that the overall percentage of shelly ware sherds in Phases 3a and 3b is 26% and 32% respectively whereas in Phase 3c it has declined to 13%.

**Table 6. Contemporary pottery from Phase 3 deposits.**

cname	3a	3b	3b-c	3c	Grand Total
BEVO1A				1	1
BEVO2				3	3
BEVO2B				2	2
DONCA	10	18	1	16	45
DONCB	8	7		51	66
DONCC	2	2		9	13
DONCF	3	3		8	14
LEMS		1			1
LFS				2	2
NLEMS	5	5	2	2	14
NLFS	4	5	1	5	15

NLST	3	5	8
ROM/MEDX	1		1
YG	2	1	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>4 105</b>

The dating of the individual Lincolnshire shelly ware vessels by Jane Young seems to agree well with the stratigraphic sequence (Table 7). On her dating, assuming that there are no intrusive sherds in the medieval collection, Phase 3a would be mid 12<sup>th</sup> century or later, Phase 3b would be late 12<sup>th</sup> century or later whilst Phase 3c is also late 12<sup>th</sup> century or later.

**Table 7**

JY Date	3a	3b	3b-c	3c	Grand Total
11-12	5	5		5	15
12	2			1	3
12-E13	1				1
L11-M12				1	1
L12-14		3	1	3	7
L12-M13				2	2
M12		1			1
M12-E13	1	5	2	2	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>

## Phase Four

One hundred and sixty-seven sherds of pottery were recovered from Phase 4 deposits. Many come from the upper fills of the recut ditch (Group 11) and are mainly of similar character to those from Phase 3c. The next largest assemblage comes from various deposits of burnt waste, which produced 24 sherds of CMW. All but two of these were high-fired examples similar to those made at Rawmarsh.

Pottery from dumped and charcoal-rich deposits, contexts 2007, 2019 and 2020, is similar to that from Phase 3 and probably redeposited from that phase.

The remaining deposits in Phase 4 produced assemblages which contain a mixture of types present in Phase 3c and CMW vessels. The sherds from context 2018, a possible midden, include two Rawmarsh types and two residual earlier medieval. The remainder contain CMW wares which might be from Firsby and of later 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>-century date (contexts 2013, 2022, 2027, 2074, 3048 and 4064). Two sherds of Humber ware were found in Phase 4 deposits, 3079 (Group 11) and 2013.

## Phase Five

Two hundred and eighty sherds of pottery were recovered from Phase 5 deposits. Of these, 16 are of definitely residual types and are probably residual from Phase 3. Most of these come from dump deposits (Group 10) or construction fills where disturbance of earlier deposits might be expected.

Pottery of the type found in Phase 4 (mainly CMW and HUM) was only slightly more common, 23 sherds (Table 8).

**Table 8**

cname	subfabric	Group 10	Group 6	Group 7	culvert 4012 (4005)	ditch 3030 fill (3001)	flagged floor (4080)	flagged floor constr (4082)	pipe trench 2078 (2079)	stone channel 4079 etc fill (4113)	Grand Total
CMW							2	3	2	1	8
CMW	RAWMARSH	4	3	1	1	1		2			12
HUM			2						1		3
Grand Total		4	5	1	1	1	2	5	3	1	23

The remaining pottery, 248 sherds, are of types current in the later 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The largest groups come from construction levels and make-up deposits (Groups 10 and 6) and these contain mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century wares. Thus, the majority of the pottery in this phase was actually deposited in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century or later, although it may include earlier material (Table 9). Two Staffordshire Mottled glazed ware sherds were present. This ware was not produced until the very late 17<sup>th</sup> century but it is argued here that these are actually late 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>-century examples and intrusive.

**Table 9**

cname	subfabric	Group 10	Group 6	Group 7	culvert 4012 (4005)	ditch 3030 fill (3001, 3004)	F2090 fill (2050)	F2182 fill (2181)	F4087 fill (4086)	flagged floor constr (4082)	stone channel 4079 etc fill (4113, 4081)	stone lined channel 4112 (4112)	Dump (2039, 2052, 2134)	Grand Total
BERTH	HUM	48	47	3		1	2	1	3	1	30		1	137
BL	CMR									1		1		2
BL	HUM	7	11						1					19
BL	MISC													1
CSTN			6		1		2						1	10
FREC		6	4						1					12
LHUM		1	3		1	1								6
MART	RED EARTHENWARE	4	1											5
MART	RED STONEWARE	2												2

MY		6	3							1			10	
PMX													1	
SLIP	HUM	4	16	2									22	
STMO		2	3										5	
STRE		2	6										8	
STSL											1		1	
TGW		3	3							1			7	
Grand Total		85	103	5	2	2	4	1	5	2	32	1	6	248

Three sherds were recovered from context 4001, the backfill of a stone tank which is phased to Phase 5 or 6. The pottery includes sherds of BERTH (HUM fabric) and TGW, and these date deposition to the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century or later.

## Phase Six

One hundred and ninety-one sherds of pottery were recovered from Phase 6 deposits. Most come from dumped deposits (186 sherds, contexts 1083, 2054, 2055, 4000, 4051) with 5 sherds coming from a cobbled path (2057). Almost all the sherds present are of types found in earlier phases, from Phase 2 onwards. This is consistent with the interpretation of the deposits in this phase as being the result of landscape gardening. The only types present in this phase and not before are a Westerwald stoneware vessel and a possible TGW crespina. Both could be of mid 17<sup>th</sup> century date and their absence from Phase 5 is probably only an indication of the relatively small size of collection and the fact that the assemblage of mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century pottery from Phase 6 is almost as large as that from Phase 5.

## Phase Seven

One hundred sherds of pottery were recovered from Phase 7 deposits. Of these, 66 are of mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century or earlier types and have clearly been redeposited during construction of Phase 7 features and dumps (35 come from dump deposits and 23 from the backfill of construction cuts and similar deposits). The remaining 34 sherds are of five types: LPMLOC flower pots, NCBW, PEAR, STMO and TPW. The high proportion of flowerpot sherds is consistent with their context, within a large landscape garden. Many of these sherds come from the construction levels of garden features whereas in three cases, culvert 4061, ditch 3047 and ditch 2066 the flowerpot sherds come from the fills of the features and may have been used nearby. The collection, as a whole suggests that most of these alterations took place in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century or later.

cname	Flagged floor	dump	backfill	constructi on cuts	culvert 4061 fill	ditch 3047 fill	ditch 2066 fill	Grand Total
LPMLOC		2	5	12	1	1	2	23
NCBW								
PEAR				1	2			3
STMO				1				1
TPW			2	5				7
Grand Total		2	7	19	3	1	2	34

## Evidence for redeposition

In seven instances, sherds of the same vessel were present in different contexts. They provide a close as to the site formation processes acting on the site (Table 10)

**Table 10**

Sherd family	3c	4	5	6	7	Grand Total
1				3	1	4
2				3		3
3				1	2 1	4
4			1	4		5
5	1				1	2
6	25				8	33
7				2		2
Grand Total	26	1	13	2	11	53

Sherd family 1 consists of MY bowl fragments from a Group 6 wall and a Group 10 wall in Phase 5 together with sherds in a Phase 7 dump. Clearly, the two walls were constructed at the same time and debris from their demolition was incorporated into Phase 7 dumping.

Sherd Family 2 consists of sherds from a MY chamber pot, from a Phase 5 Group 10 pit (3036) backfill and building foundation. In this case the probable explanation is that the pit was backfilled at the same time as the building was constructed.

Sherd Family 3 consists of sherds of a STMO flagon which were found in a Phase 5 levelling layer and two Phase 6 features (drain 2002 and cobbled path 2057). In this instance it is most likely that all the sherds are intrusive (or that the vessel has been mis-identified) since the form suggests a 19<sup>th</sup>-century date.

Sherd Family 4 consists of sherds of a similar (but not the same) STMO flagon. One sherd comes from the upper fill of the Phase 3 recut ditch and the remaining sherds come from three different dumps all associated with the construction of Phase 5 structures. The same comments apply as for Sherd Family 3.

Sherd Family 5 consists of two sherds of DONCB jar, one from the fill of the recut of the Phase 3 ditch and the other from a Phase 7 feature.

Sherd Family 6 consists of 35 sherds of a DONCB jug, mainly from the fill of the recut Phase 3 ditch but also found in the fills of two Phase 6 and 7 features, presumably cut through this fill (2002 and 2080).

Sherd Family 7 consists of two sherds of a LHUM bowl, one from the backfill of culvert 4012 and the other from the fill of gully 3003, assigned to Phase 6 or 7.

## **Source of pottery**

The nearest market to Sprotbrough, Doncaster, lies on a navigable river, the Don, with easy access to the Humber ports (Hull and Barton) and to the Trent river system. Excavations in the town reflect those connections and include a variety of medieval and post-medieval non-local wares. The Sprotbrough collection, by contrast, is dominated by very few sources, and where these are known or can be surmised they are close to the site. Doncaster itself supplied the majority of the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century pottery, Firsby and Rawmarsh the majority of the later medieval pottery and a single unknown Humber source provided most of the later 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>-century pottery.

The only exceptions to this rule are in the pre-conquest period, when the little pottery present is all of types made outside of the immediate area, and the shell-tempered wares, which probably came to the site from two directions: by river up the Don and overland from the Trent crossing at Littleborough. Interestingly, there are no sherds of the contemporary glazed wares produced in Lincolnshire in the collection.

Although there are differences in the actual sources of supply through time, the general pattern does not change from the later 12<sup>th</sup> to the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. Imported pottery is not found until the late 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and then consists of wares which are widely-distributed types, to be expected in any large assemblage of the period.

## **Status**

The use of pottery to express social position in the medieval and post-medieval periods is difficult to interpret. The presence of non-local and imported wares may be an indication but is also likely to be affected by the business contacts of the household concerned (the clay tobacco pipes, for example, suggest a connection in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the Horncastle area, although this is not reflected in the pottery). It has been suggested for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries that the relative quantity of jars to jugs is an indicator of status, since the higher status sites would have used metal vessels in preference to ceramic ones and probably higher status households actually used more jugs than lower status ones since they would have been more involved in hosting feasts where such vessels could be used for display. On these criteria, the Phase Three structure may be interpreted as a high status structure.

## **Activities**

The pottery collection sheds little light on activities taking place on the site. Almost all of the collection consists of vessels used in the preparation and serving of food and drink with no particular concentration noticeable on any one aspect of these activities, such as might indicate the location of kitchens or dining areas nearby. This is probably because the pottery has clearly been through a number of processes before being eventually discarded. Exceptions to this rule can be seen where there are

numerous sherds from the same vessel found in the same context. Examples of this occur in the filling of the recut of the Phase Three ditch (Group 11) which contain smashed jug sherds from at least three separate vessels, a smashed DONCB jar recovered from the Phase 3c dump over the site of the demolished structure (good supporting evidence for an early demise of the building), three separate Rawmarsh type CMW vessels, all associated with burnt material in Phases 4 to 5, and a BERTH bowl found in the filling of a stone channel in Phase Five. FREC belarmine bottles from Phase Six and Seven dumps are probably an exception in that it is quite likely that these vessels were complete until recent times as they are very robust vessels.

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