

## **Assessment of the pottery from 26-27 Staple Gardens, Winchester (AY 65 01/108)**

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Excavations by Thames Valley Archaeological Services at 26-27 Staple Gardens, Winchester, Hampshire, produced a large collection of pottery. This pottery was submitted to the author for provisional spot-dating and this information was then used alongside the site stratigraphy to provide a provisional phasing for the site.

This assessment report is based on that initial spot-dating, in which every sherd was examined, albeit briefly, by the author, the site phasing provided by Ms H Moore of TVAS and a second viewing of the pottery carried out by Ms K Steane of AVAC to assess the potential for illustration and typological analysis.

### **Description**

#### **Roman pottery**

Only a small quantity of pottery dating to the Roman period was found stratified in probably Roman deposits. This pottery consists of 33 sherds weighing in total 176gm and coming from 4 deposits. The mean weight of the sherds is just over 5gm.

In addition, there is a small quantity of residual Roman pottery scattered throughout the sequence.

#### **Early to Mid Anglo-Saxon pottery**

There are no deposits dating to the early to mid Anglo-Saxon period but a handful of residual sherds of chaff-tempered pottery were noted in later deposits. These were clearly distinguished from the medieval chaff-tempered copper alloy mould fragments from the same deposits.

Chaff-tempered pottery in southern Hampshire appears to have been current from some time in the 5<sup>th</sup> century until the late 7<sup>th</sup> century. Excavations at Saxon Southampton (Hamwic) indicate that it was only used in the earliest phase of occupation of that site, which appears to have been founded c.700 or just before (Timby 1988 #9603).

#### **Late Saxon pottery**

There are three main phases of late Saxon pottery use in southern Hampshire: in the first, handmade bag-shaped vessels with everted rims and thickened necks were used. These vessels were current at Hamwic in the 8<sup>th</sup> century but were still in use in the 10<sup>th</sup> century in the earliest deposits in the medieval town of Southampton. In the second phase,

wheelthrown, sand-tempered vessels were introduced. Some, if not all, of these were produced at Michelmersh (Addyman & Norton 1972 #29733) where a kiln was recently excavated by Wessex Archaeology and dated to the later 10<sup>th</sup> century (L Mephram, pers comm). In the third phase, handmade squatter profiled jars, with sagging bases, were introduced. This replacement of wheelthrown by handmade vessels occurs throughout southern England and has been dated at the City of London to the early to mid 11<sup>th</sup> century (Vince & Jenner 1991 #9923), dated by dendrochronology to sometime later than c.1020 and earlier than c.1039).

No deposits dating to the first phase (c.8<sup>th</sup> to mid 10<sup>th</sup> century) were found at Staple Gardens although it is possible that vessels of this period are present as residual sherds in later deposits. Alternatively, these vessels may be contemporary with the second phase and have been used alongside wheelthrown sandy wares (c. late 10<sup>th</sup> to early/mid 11<sup>th</sup> century). Deposits dating to these second and third phases were common at Staple Gardens. 752 sherds, weighing 8.683kg and coming from 138 deposits were recovered. In addition, a further 94 sherds, weighing 1.092kg and coming from 17 deposits were tentatively dated to these phases.

At Southampton, 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>-century deposits contain a high proportion of imported pottery, but no such wares were noted at Staple Gardens nor were any regional imported recognised.

### **Late 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>-century pottery**

Although many of the wares introduced in the early to mid 11<sup>th</sup> century continued to be used in the post-conquest period, there is one significant introduction, scratch-marked ware from south east Wiltshire, and the handmade tripod pitcher ware which was made alongside these handmade jars. A number of sherds of these types were found in the Staple Gardens collection and their stratigraphic position seems to show that most of these 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century assemblages were deposited after the Norman Conquest.

One hundred and one sherds of pottery, weighting 0.776kg and coming from nine deposits could be dated to this period.

### **Late 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery**

During the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the handmade coarsewares and coarse sandy glazed wares found in the earlier part of the century were joined or replaced by a range of fine sandy wares. These include vessels with a low iron content, handmade jars and jugs and wheelthrown jars and jugs. Visually, these vessels are very similar to samples from Alton, to the northeast of Winchester, which were analysed by the author and found to be made from a lower Cretaceous clay. Such clays do not outcrop in the Winchester area and it is therefore likely that these vessels were imported to the city. It is recommended that a

sample of the Winchester vessels is analysed for comparison with these Alton samples. A few vessels appear to have been made from the same white-firing clay as was used in south-east Wiltshire but with a finer quartz sand temper. Laverstock, near Salisbury, is a source for these wares but waste from the manufacture of similar vessels has been recovered from Southampton. There is also evidence for their manufacture in Salisbury.

Five hundred and seventy six sherds of pottery were recovered from deposits dated to the late 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. In total, these weighed 5.034kg and come from 27 different deposits. In addition, a further 175 sherds, weighing 1.174Kg and coming from 24 deposits were recovered from deposits probably dating to this period.

### **Later 13<sup>th</sup>-century and later pottery**

There was an almost complete lack of sherds of later 13<sup>th</sup>-century and later date and most of those that were found came from deposits of garden soil where they were associated with post-medieval wares. This suggests that the site underwent a change of use during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps reverting to gardens or orchards. It is unlikely that all later medieval deposits could have been removed by earthmoving, since there are no cut features of this date and the garden soil contains a large amount of residual 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century pottery.

### **Assessment**

The character of the Roman use of the site can be studied by the analysis of the stratified and residual Roman pottery. It is proposed that this work is undertaken in Lincoln by staff of the Alan Vince archaeology consultancy with the assistance of Maggi Darling and/or Barbara Precious.

The early to mid Anglo-Saxon pottery should be recorded and documented as evidence for the use of this site in a crucial period of Winchester's history, even though none of the sherds is stratified.

The apparent low level of activity on the site before the later 10<sup>th</sup> century and the large quantity of pottery dated to the later 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries means that this site has the potential to provide useful evidence for the character of pottery used in Winchester from the later 10<sup>th</sup> century through to the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century. Because most of the pottery comes from intercutting pit groups there is likely to be considerable mixture of pottery within this period however and there does not seem to be any single groups which can be selected as contemporary assemblages. To extract useful information on the sequence of pottery fabrics and forms, therefore, all of the material excluding the late garden soils would have to be recorded.

In total, there are 1429 sherds of pottery from phased deposits of secure date and a further 430 sherds of pottery from deposits which are less securely dated. Assuming that 150

sherds can be recorded in a day, this pottery would take 12.5 days to record. The record would be made according to Medieval Pottery Research Group guidelines and include sherd count and weight. Total cost: £2250 plus VAT.

The fabrics of this pottery requires some further work, ideally before the recording stage, in order to establish whether slight variations in colour, texture or inclusions are significant, and therefore require recording for every sherd, or whether fabric groups can be established, which would speed up recording (Table 00). The costs given in table 00 include that of analysis and report preparation. The technical report would be published in pdf format on the AVAC website.

*Table 1*

Ware	Samples and justification	Costing
Chaff-tempered ware	To establish, if possible, whether the ware was made locally and for comparison with the material from Hamwic. 3 thin sections at £22.50 each and 6 chemical analyses at £23.50 each	£208.50 plus VAT
Wheelthrown sandy wares	For comparison with Michelmersh products. 3 thin sections and 6 chemical analyses.	£208.50 plus VAT
Gravel-tempered wares	To establish whether there is any difference in fabric and source between those vessels of mid/late Saxon form and those of early medieval character. 6 thin sections and 12 chemical analyses.	£417 plus VAT
Fine sandy wares	For comparison with samples from Alton. 3 thin sections and 6 chemical analyses.	£208.50 plus VAT
South-east Wiltshire and other whitewares	To compare with Laverstock, Salisbury and other Southampton whitewares. 3 thin sections and 6 chemical analyses	£208.50 plus VAT
Total	21 thin sections and 42 chemical analyses	£1459.50 plus VAT

There are 93 sherds of medieval pottery which could be illustrated. Most of these are jar rims and it is assumed that the number which would need to be published would be much lower than this because of the similarity in form of many examples. It is therefore recommended that all 93 sherds are extracted and their typology studied, after which a

smaller number, perhaps 30 sherds, are selected for illustration and sent to TVAS for drawing. Total cost (excluding drawing): £90 plus VAT.

The recorded data then needs to be analysed and any discrepancies between the pottery data and the stratigraphy need to be sorted out with the site stratigrapher. Total cost: £180 plus VAT.

Once this has been done, the pottery report can be written, incorporating the results of fabric analysis and the typological study. Total cost: £360 plus VAT.

### **Costing**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Grand total</b>
Recording	£2,250.00	£393.75	
Fabric analysis	£1,459.50	£255.41	
Selection for illustration	£90.00	£15.75	
Analysis of stratigraphic data	£180.00	£31.50	
Report writing	£360.00	£63.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,339.50</b>	<b>£759.41</b>	<b>£5,098.91</b>