

The Medieval and early Post-Medieval Pottery from Croft Castle, Herefordshire

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Introduction

The medieval and earlier post-medieval pottery from the excavations at Croft Castle was examined by the authors and recorded using the Hereford fabric series (Vince 1985 #83). Forms were identified and classified where possible using the Medieval Pottery Research Group's *Dictionary of Pottery Forms* (MPRG 1998 #45563)). The pottery was quantified by sherd count, the number of vessels represented by those sherds (without making cross-context searches for cross-fits) and by weight. In total, 1410 sherds were recorded, representing no more than 1061 vessels and weighing 21.209 Kg.

Catalogue

Romano-British Wares

Six very abraded sherds were tentatively identified as Romano-British Severn Valley ware (Hereford Fabric A1). Only one rim was found, identified as that of a tankard. Two of the sherds were identified as being from jars. The sherds cannot be closely dated, since the Severn Valley ware industry began in the later 1st century and continued into the 4th century.

Medieval Wares

A total of 372 sherds of pottery, representing no more than 358 vessels and weighing 2.180Kg, datable to the medieval period were recovered from the Croft Castle excavations. Few, if any, of these sherds were actually found in medieval deposits and the size of the sherds, and the general lack of sherds from the same vessel, suggest that the collection has been through several depositional cycles, including in most cases some time in a chemically active soil horizon, such as thin topsoil or ploughsoil.

Less half of the sherds found are of types known from the excavations in the City of Hereford, and the remainder mostly contain inclusions of rounded fine-grained sedimentary rocks and flakes of biotite, up to 1.0mm across.

The earliest datable type present is Hereford Fabric D2 (henceforth abbreviated to HERD2). This ware was produced in the Vale of Gloucester, probably at Haresfield, mentioned as a pottery production site in the Domesday survey. However, this ware continued to be produced into the early 13th century and was certainly in use in Hereford in the later 12th to early 13th century. Of similar age is HERC1, produced in the Worcester area from the late 11th or early 12th century onwards. One of the 24 sherds of this ware comes from a vessel

which is unlikely to date later than c.1150, and is thus the earliest positively dated vessel from the site. However, as with the other wares, this ware continued in production into the 13th century and there are sherds of HERC2 jugs from the site which are certainly of early to mid 13th-century date. The majority of these non-local sherds, however, are of HERB1, produced in the Malvern Chase from the early 12th century onwards. The products of this industry can be dated, approximately, because of the sequence of rim forms and manufacturing techniques used in the industry. By applying this dating evidence, we can show that the Croft Castle vessels include a few later 12th-century vessels but are predominantly of early to mid 13th-century date and include a few of later 13th to early 14th-century date. A few sherds of other wares of late 12th to mid 13th-century date were present (HERA4, HERA6).

A small quantity of glazed jugs, of HERA7B fabric, must date to the mid 13th century or later but there is a relative paucity of later 13th to 14th-century wares, that can be externally dated, and few, if any, which date to the later 14th or 15th centuries. The sequence then seems to pick up again in the later 15th century (catalogued below).

The non-local wares, therefore, indicate that the Croft site was occupied from the mid 12th century into the later 13th or 14th centuries, with the majority of the wares being of early 13th century date. Now, it may be that the locally-made vessels are the same date, or it may be that the local industry was in competition with the non-local wares and that its dating is complementary. A consideration of the typology of the vessel forms, rim types and manufacturing methods suggests perhaps that the local industry started late within the medieval settlement history and took a larger share of the market in the later 13th to early 14th century than before. However, there is nothing to suggest that it continued into the later 14th or early 15th centuries. The pottery therefore indicates a settlement which was not using pottery in any quantity before the mid 12th century (which may or may not indicate that the settlement itself did not exist before that date) and that the settlement ceased to exist during the 14th century. By the time the first castle was constructed, therefore, the site had probably been deserted for at least a century.

The range of vessel forms represented in the collection is limited to jars, most of which show signs of use as cooking vessels, tripod pitchers and jugs. The ratio of jars to the other vessel forms is high. This is often a feature of low-status, rural settlements.

Hereford Fabric A4

At Hereford, handmade vessels with large, rounded red mudstone inclusions were thought to have been imported to the town from the north, since their distribution outside of Hereford was almost entirely on settlements in that area. Despite this, there are only a handful of

possible examples from Croft, and some of these show features not found on the Hereford vessels.

Most of the sherds found are too abraded to tell whether or not they were made by hand or on the wheel but some of the Croft examples certainly appear to be wheelthrown. At Hereford, the main form present was the tripod pitcher. Examples of this form were present at Croft, including a base sherd with a rectangular foot (DR27) and the rim of a large-diameter vessel with traces of a handle and either no glaze or a very corroded glaze, DR24). Other forms include probable jugs (DR25, a plain-glazed vessel with a narrow, stabbed strap handle, and DR26, a narrow strap handle similar in character to those found on Ham Green and Worcester jugs of the early to mid 13th centuries). Other sherds include the rim of an everted, flat-topped rim jar with wavy combed decoration on the upper surface (DR28, very likely a wheelthrown vessel), the base of a handmade jar with internal plain glaze.

Six samples of this ware were analysed using thin sections and ICPS analysis for comparison with the Hereford finds and local products from Croft. The results indicate that the parent clay is a micaceous silty clay, similar to that used throughout Herefordshire, but that fragments of bentonite, biotite and siltstone all derived from the Silurian rocks of the Ludlow Anticline occur, together with the characteristic mudstone and fragments of volcanic origin. This suite of inclusions suggests that the ware was produced in the Teme Valley and tempered with a terrace gravel derived from Ordovician rocks on the Shropshire/Powys border and Silurian rocks from north Herefordshire and south Shropshire. The Hereford samples have a similar petrology and the lack of wheelthrown examples in Hereford probably indicates that the industry continued to supply North Herefordshire after it had ceased to supply Hereford itself.

Hereford Fabric A6

A single sherd from a jug whose fabric contains abundant quartz and muscovite silt inclusions with moderate quartz of coarse silt to fine sand grade was found. Such vessels in Hereford appear to date to the 13th century.

Hereford Fabric A7B

Eighteen sherds of Hereford Fabric A7B were present. This ware was produced at several centres in the county, including Hereford itself and Weobley, from the middle of the 13th to the 15th centuries. Most of the sherds come from wheelthrown jugs with an external glaze. The sherds are mostly too abraded to determine the colour of the glaze but in five instances it was a copper-mottled glaze. One sherd with a devolved collar rim, of 13th-century character was present, two sherds came from jugs with thumb bases and one sherd came from a vessel with rectangular-toothed roller-stamping. One sherd from a small dish,

probably used to present condiments at table, was found. It had an internal copper-mottled glaze. All 18 sherds could be of 13th-century date.

Hereford Fabric B1

One hundred and nineteen sherds of Hereford Fabric B1 were recovered. This ware is characterised by the presence of coarse angular fragments of Malvernian rock (mainly gneisses and granites) and each sherd was examined at x20 magnification to confirm the presence of these inclusions. All of the sherds came from jars, most of which has sooting on the exterior, indicating their use as cooking vessels. There were no signs of internal deposits, which sometimes indicate the presence of burnt food debris or kettle fur from the boiling of water, but this may be due to the burial conditions and abraded nature of the sherds.

Twenty rim sherds were recovered. Of these, one had a rim form typical of vessels of 12th-century date (paralleled by a vessel from Hereford found with a coin of the 1180s or later); four were from large vessels typical of the later 12th to early 13th centuries; nine were from vessels with inturned rims, typical of the early to mid 13th century; and six were from vessels with wheel-thrown or wheel-finished rims, of later 13th to early 14th-century type. No examples of definitely wheelthrown vessels with internal plain lead glaze, typical of the 14th century, were present.

Hereford Fabric B3

A single sherd from a glazed tripod pitcher of Hereford Fabric B3 was identified. This ware contains rounded quartz sand, similar to that found in HERC1 and HERC2 but with sparse angular Malvernian rock fragments. The fabric replaced the coarser Malvern Chase glazed ware, HERB2, in the late 12th century and is of later 12th and early 13th-century date.

Hereford Fabric C1

Twenty-four sherds of Hereford Fabric C1 were recovered. This fabric contains a rounded quartz sand, derived in part from Triassic sandstones, which does not occur locally in Herefordshire, even in Quaternary deposits, and it is probable that most of these vessels were produced at Worcester, where a pottery industry is documented from the later 12th century and was probably in existence from the early 12th century. Four rim sherds were present, of which one comes from a cylindrical vessel with a club rim, a type restricted to the early to mid 12th century. The other two rim sherds were from vessels with everted, flat-topped rims, of later 12th to early 13th-century date.

Hereford Fabric C2

Five sherds of Hereford Fabric C2 were recovered. This fabric contains similar quartz sand to that in HERC1 but in a lower quantity. The sherds come from three vessels, all jugs. One sherd is an oval-sectioned handle with a row of rounded stab marks down the back and three at the handle/rim join. Another sherd is a body sherd with a copper-mottled glaze. This ware was produced from the early 13th century onwards and in Herefordshire the majority of the vessels imported into the county pre-date the start of the local wheelthrown glazed ware industries, in the mid 13th century.

Hereford Fabric D2

A single sherd of Hereford Fabric D2 was identified. This ware contains rounded inclusions of oolitic limestone in a fine-textured, micaceous groundmass and was produced in the Vale of Gloucester, perhaps in the parish of Haresfield, where the Domesday survey records pottery production (one of only three such records in the whole survey). The sherd is a club rim, a type which appears to be of post-conquest date in this fabric, dating to the later 11th and earlier 12th centuries.

Local North Herefordshire Medieval wares

One hundred and ninety-nine sherds could not be paralleled in the Hereford fabric series and most of these contained sparse to abundant flakes of biotite, usually appearing gold rather than black, together with a range of sedimentary rock fragments.

The range of forms present is similar to that of the non-local pottery: handmade jars; handmade glazed wares, probably tripod pitchers (although no feet were found); wheelthrown jars and wheelthrown jugs. A comparison of the rim forms of the jars with those of the Malvern Chase vessels (HERB1) indicates a strong connection, either because the vessels were made by a potter, or potters, trained in the Malvern Chase potteries, or because the customers for this ware preferred these non-local products and so the local wares were made in imitation.

Handmade jars include a couple with simple everted, beaded rims, a form which is most common in the later 12th and early 13th centuries (e.g. at Ham Green, {Barton 1963 #30333}). The majority of the handmade forms, however, have the forms of early to mid 13th-century Malvern Chase vessels, as noted above.

The wheelthrown jars are mostly of a single type, with an almost cylindrical bowl with a simple lid-seated rim. In some cases, however, the rim is infolded.

Most of the glazed sherds have a plain glaze and are too small and abraded to determine whether they were thrown on a wheel or not. However, there are a couple of sherds which

are definitely wheelthrown. Two of those come from jugs with applied, thumbled strips around the rim, which is a common technique in the later 13th and 14th centuries.

Samples of the handmade jars, dated to the early to mid 13th century by their rim forms, wheelthrown jars, dated to the later 13th or 14th century by their rim forms, and glazed vessels, some of which appear to be handmade and others wheelthrown, were selected for thin section and chemical analysis. The results show that the samples mainly fall into two groups. The most common, here termed Northern Herefordshire Medieval Biotite-rich ware (NHMB), was made from a clay which appears to be derived from weathered bentonite, which fires to a light colour and has a low vitrification point. The inclusions in this ware consist of biotite and plagioclase feldspar, both of which were probably present in the parent bentonite, and rounded fragments of siltstone. Bentonite beds occur at several places within the Silurian rocks of the Ludlow anticline but the lack of limestone inclusions or voids which might once have contained limestone indicate that in this case the bentonite was probably within a sequence of siltstones, such as the Elton Beds. Examination of the 1:50000 geological map of Ludlow enables the potential source to be localised to the centre of the anticline, around the shores of the glacial Lake Wigmore. Deposits of fluvioglacial gravel occur on the south side of this lake, in the parish of Yatton, but other smaller deposits may well exist elsewhere.

Late Medieval Wares

Two hundred and seventy-five sherds of later medieval or early post-medieval pottery were recovered from the excavations. Potentially, the earliest of these are of Malvern Chase ware (Hereford Fabric B4). The Malvern Chase industry by this date had an almost complete monopoly in the southern Marches and the Severn Valley, from Worcester down to Bristol (Vince 1977 #10133). The only other sherds found which are likely to be as early are two Coarse Border ware lobed cup sherds, from the Surrey/Hampshire border (Pearce & Vince 1988 #22183). Lobed cups in this fabric, and in the finer Tudor Green ware, were present in dated deposits at the London waterfront from the early 15th century onwards. The remaining sherds are all of wares which are likely to be of early to mid 16th-century date (such as the black-glazed Cistercian ware cups), although some of these could conceivably date to the later 15th century. The wares present include imports from the Rhineland (Raeren and Cologne stonewares) and the Low Countries (South Netherlands maiolica). The proportion of imported sherds is quite high, (17% by sherd count and weight, but only 7.6% by number of vessels), for the land-locked Welsh Marches and this clearly demonstrates that in the early 16th-century the Croft site was occupied by a household of a much higher status than in the earlier medieval period.

The range of vessel forms present in this collection is much greater than in the medieval period and this is typical of the later 15th and early 16th centuries. However, the frequency of

Cistercian ware cups is much higher than found in contemporary deposits in Hereford, suggesting that drinking was an important activity on the site.

Another difference between this material and that of the earlier medieval period is in the condition of the pottery. Not only are the sherds somewhat larger and less abraded, but there are several instances where several sherds from the same vessel are present (especially noted for the Cistercian ware and the South Netherlands Maiolica).

Hereford Fabric A7C

A single sherd of Hereford Fabric A7C, an inclusionless, red earthenware, was found. It came from a dark brown-glazed cup of Cistercian ware type. Such vessels occur rarely in mid 16th-century deposits in Hereford, predating the appearance of post-medieval Welsh borderland wares (HERA7D) and the texture of the fabric appears to be finer than that of these later vessels, suggesting a non-local origin. However, there is documentary evidence for pottery production at Hope-under-Dinmore in the mid 16th century and this ware is the only possibility for what was being produced there.

Hereford Fabric B4

Sixty-three sherds of Hereford Fabric B4 were recovered. This fabric was produced in the Malvern Chase potteries, from the later 13th to the early 16th century but is uncommon in Herefordshire until the later 14th century. By the later 15th century, almost all the pottery used in Herefordshire was made in this fabric.

Most of the sherds from Croft are from jugs (23 sherds), but few details of their typology are discernable. Two rims were found, one with a pulled spout and three body sherds had a plain external lead glaze whilst two had a copper-mottled glaze. Jars were the next most common form (13 sherds) followed by cups (9 sherds). These cups probably date to the later 15th or early 16th centuries and may represent an attempt by the Malvern Chase potters to copy Cistercian ware forms. Other forms were represented by single vessels: a lid, a pipkin and a pancheon.

Coarse Border Ware

Two sherds of Coarse Border Ware were found (Pearce & Vince 1988 #22183). Both are from small vessels, probably lobed cups, with a copper-mottled glaze. Such vessels were produced earlier than and then alongside the finer Tudor Green ware cups which are known from other sites in Herefordshire but this is the first time that this ware has been recorded from the county.

Cistercian ware

One hundred and sixty-one sherds of Cistercian Ware (Hereford Fabric G8) were present. Most are too fragmentary to determine the precise shape of the vessel that they came from, although most probably came from two-handled cups. Two main forms are present: a globular-bodied vessel with a tall flaring rim and a cylindrical-bodied vessel decorated with corrugations. There is no apparent difference in date between these forms in Herefordshire. A couple of sherds were decorated with white slip circular blobs. A single sherd from a costrel and a single lid decorated with white slip were present. In some parts of the country, Cistercian ware cups appeared in the later 15th century but in the Welsh Marches it is likely that they first appeared in the early 16th century (i.e. before the Dissolution) and were replaced by locally-produced blackwares in the later part of the century. The source of the Croft vessels is unknown, although the presence of rounded quartz grains suggested that they might have been made in the Severn Valley (e.g. at Falfield, to the north of Bristol).

Raeren Stoneware

Five sherds of Raeren stoneware were identified, coming from no more than four vessels. All come from small drinking jugs, the most common form. Raeren stoneware was produced from the mid 15th to the mid 16th centuries but is most common in England in the early to mid 16th century (Hurst & van Beuningen 1986 #11313). Although found throughout the country, Raeren stoneware is uncommon in land-locked parts of the Welsh Marches.

Cologne Stoneware

Five sherds of Cologne stoneware were identified, coming from no more than four vessels. One of these was a foliage band *bartmann* jug decorated with Janus medallions. A similar vessel is present in the Van Beuningen collection (Hurst 1986, 211, Pl.38 & 39). The remaining sherds come from undecorated drinking jugs.

South Netherlands Maiolica

Thirty-seven sherds of South Netherlands Maiolica were identified, but they come from no more than four vessels. The sherds come from ring-handled flower vases decorated in blue on a white tin-glazed background. The interior of the vessel has a plain lead glaze (cf Hurst 1986, 118, Fig 54 No.168). The sherds are too fragmentary to identify the design.

Earlier Post-Medieval Wares

Seven hundred and seventeen sherds, representing no more than four hundred and nineteen vessels, could be assigned to the period from the later 16th century to the middle of the 18th century. Some of these sherds are of wares which continued to be used into the later 18th and 19th centuries and it is a matter of judgement as to whether they belong in this period or the succeeding one. The majority of the sherds, however, are of Post-Medieval North Herefordshire ware (HERA7D), produced at a number of sites in the forest of Deerfold

from the later 16th to the later 17th century. Excavations at Wigmore Abbey and at sites in Pipe Aston have shown that before the end of the 17th century this industry had ceased to exist and that black-glazed vessels made from poorly mixed red- and white-firing Coal Measure clays were used in their stead (STCOAR). Since there are about five times as many HERA7D vessels to STCOAR vessels present, and since the two wares were used for similar amounts of time, it is clear that the majority of the post-medieval pottery from the site dates to the later 16th to later 17th centuries with much less material from the succeeding century. Accordingly, an attempt has been made to separate the earlier from the later pottery.

The earlier group (later 16th to later 17th century) consists of five hundred and fifty-nine sherds, representing no more than three hundred and twenty-one vessels. The earliest ware present is Hereford Fabric B5, the latest products of the Malvern Chase potteries (36 sherds, from no more than 29 vessels). This ware was replaced by the Post-Medieval North Herefordshire ware during the later 16th and early 17th centuries so that by the 1620s or 1630s the only coarseware in use was the local ware (four hundred and twenty-five sherds, from no more than two hundred and twenty-three vessels). The remaining sherds were either from other parts of England (Border ware; Midlands Yellow ware; Staffordshire redware; and tin-glazed wares) or were imports (Frechen stoneware; Martincamp ware; and North Italian Marbled Slipware). Less than 5% of this pottery was imported, a significant drop from the previous period.

Border ware

Three sherds of Surrey-Hampshire Border ware were identified. Two of these were from bowls (one with an internal copper-stained green glaze) and the third was the rim of a pipkin or skillet, not precisely matched with material from the City of London (Pearce 1992 #22203).

Post-Medieval North Herefordshire Ware (Hereford A7D)

Fabric

The majority of the later 16th and 17th-century pottery from Croft Castle was probably produced in the North Herefordshire potteries situated in the Forest of Lingen. The fabric of these vessels contains few visible inclusions, tends to be oxidized throughout and is well-mixed. By eye, the only inclusions visible are sparse dark brown clay/iron pellets up to 2.0mm across and under x20 magnification the groundmass contains abundant quartz and muscovite of fine silt grade (maximum c.0.05mm).

Forms

Bowls

Several different bowl forms occur. All have an internal plain lead glaze, usually applied over an overall red/dark brown slip which extends over the unglazed exterior.

Type 1 is a large cylindrical form with a flat-topped rim with a triangular profile. These are similar in size and shape to the deep Bowls found at Newent Glasshouse in the late 17th to mid 18th centuries although those vessels have rounded rims.

Type 2 is a smaller form, but also cylindrical. The rims are distinguished by a slight concavity on the interior.

Type 3 is a small, straight-sided vessel with a conical profile, of which only one example was present. The rim has a rounded flange set below the top of the rim, leaving a short rounded rim which might have secured a lid (although no lids were found on the site).

Type 4 is probably a large conical bowl with a thin flat flanged rim. The overall shape and form of this type is similar to that of Malvern Chase bowls of the 16th century (Hereford B5).

Type 5 is a small straight-sided cylindrical form with an external bead and rounded rim. The type example has a band of close-set grooves, applied on the wheel, situated just before the rim.

Jars and Tripod Pipkins

A number of sherds come from vessels with a globular body and everted rim. In several instances, including one complete profile, these are identifiable as tripod pipkins. However, it is possible that some were jars and were never supplied with handles and feet. Remarkably, very few of the vessels have traces of soot, which typically encrusts the outside of post-medieval tripod pipkins.

Type 6 has an everted rim with a flat top, the neck angle is often quite wide, giving an almost vertical profile.

Type 7 also has an everted rim, but the top of the rim is rounded and the thickening less than on Type 6 vessels. There is usually a distinct concavity on the interior of the rim. The complete tripod pipkin profile has a Type 7 rim. This vessel has a wheelthrown, slightly tapering hollow cylindrical handle and the three feet have oval cross sections and a triangular shape. The base of this vessel, and of one other, have foot ring moulding but other bases which seem to come from similar vessels have a simple base angle.

Type 8 is an everted, flat-topped rim similar to Type 6 but with a wide groove along the top, possibly seating for a rim.

Type 9 is an everted, flat-topped rim in which the internal neck angle has been accentuated, again probably as a lid seating.

Storage Jars

Some body sherds probably come from large storage jars, Type 10. These vessels have internal glaze, a curving profile and an oval-sectioned handle luted onto the girth and attached to the top of the rim. On the only example with a surviving rim the form of the rim is obscured by the added handle. However, it is almost certainly an everted rim, possibly similar to Type 7.

Pancheons

A number of sherds come from large conical bowls, appreciably bigger than the conical bowls and flanged bowls described above.

Type 11 has an externally-thickened rounded rim with a concave facet on the inside. At least one example had a wide pulled pouring lip. It is suggested that this form was used in the separation of cream.

Type 12 has a flat-ended rim and a sharp ridge on the interior, dividing the rim from the body. On one example this ridge is reduced to a simple change of angle (only showing on the interior, distinguishing this form from the flanged rimmed bowls and pancheons).

Type 13 has a flat-topped flanged rim, much more robust than Type 4.

Type 14 is a much larger version of Type 3.

Type 15 has a triangular profile with an outward-sloping flat rim and a deep concavity on the inside of the rim.

Type 16 has a T-sectioned, hammer-head rim.

Jugs

Fragments of several jugs were present. All have a similar form, Type 17, consisting of a flat footing base, a globular body and a cylindrical neck with a sharp angle between the various parts of the vessel. The jugs have strap handles. The one surviving rim has a deep groove jug below the rim, suggesting that it was made to have a metal (presumably pewter) lid, like those found on Rhenish stoneware drinking jugs of the mid 16th to early 17th centuries. All the jug sherds have a glossy external glaze covering the entire exterior of the vessel.

Lid

A single large lid, or candlestick, was found, Type 18. The vessel was wheelthrown and the surviving fragment consists of a small conical bowl form with a central solid column, which has broken off. This might have been the lid handle or the stem of the candlestick. Glaze is restricted to the underside and exterior of the object, which is why the lid interpretation is favoured over the candlestick option.

Cups

Small thin-walled cups with overall internal and external black glaze were present. The most common form, Type 19, has a globular body, footring base and flaring rim. The vessels have two or more small oval-sectioned handles, one of which has a strip of white-firing clay inlaid down the back of the handle. Some sherds have applied plastic white slip decoration on the body. These vessels are similar in size and shape to the Cistercian ware cups.

The other form is a cylindrical mug or tankard, Type 20, with bands of close-set grooves applied on the wheel and a footring base.

Chafing Dish

Two sherds from the same chafing dish were found, Type 21. The vessel has a black overall glaze and consists of an hour-glass shaped body with an added base between the top and bottom. Holes have been knife-cut in both the top and bottom halves of the vessel and the rim has been cut into crenulations.

Porringer

Two sherds from the same vessel with overall black glaze were found, Type 22. The vessel has a small bowl body and vertical rounded rim. The body has a sharp carination and a horizontal handle made from two twisted oval rods of clay.

Dating

There are assemblages from various sites in Hereford which contain Hereford B5 vessels, Frechen Stoneware and Cistercian ware but no examples of this ware. Hereford is so close to the source(s) that this probably indicates that manufacture did not begin until the later 16th century.

Hereford Fabric B5

Thirty-six sherds of Hereford Fabric B5, representing no more than thirty-three vessels, were identified. This fabric contains sparse large angular fragments of Malvernian rock, has a lower iron content than HERB4 and contains less rounded quartz sand. The main forms found in this collection were jars and pancheon, followed by bowls, jugs, pipkins, and single examples of a cup, a skillet and a watering pot. The latter form has not been found in this fabric before and consists of a bottle with a narrow hole at the rim and a based pierced with several holes. It was used to sprinkle water and a thumb placed over the narrow rim would cause a vacuum and stop the flow of water.

Midlands Yellow ware

Two sherds of Midlands Yellow ware were found. This ware has a Coal Measures light-firing body, similar to that of later Staffordshire slipwares, but the vessels are usually thicker-walled and the yellow glaze typically has a poor fit with the body, causing it to spall away and craze (Woodfield 1966). Neither sherd was large enough to identify the form. The ware was a midlands counterpart to the Border ware industry and produced a similar range of vessel types.

Staffordshire Butter pot ware

A single sherd of Staffordshire butter pot was found. These vessels were made from Coal Measures red-firing clays fired to semi-stoneware temperatures and therefore have a grey or purple colour. They were cylindrical, unglazed vessels, apparently used to transport butter. They are relatively common in London but rare in Herefordshire, presumably because there was no market for Staffordshire butter in an agricultural county like Herefordshire.

Staffordshire Redware

Seven sherds of Staffordshire Redware were present. This ware was made from a red-firing Coal Measures clay. Five of the sherds come from open vessels, dishes, bowls or plates, decorated with white slip trailing. One sherd comes from a multi-handled cup with black internal and external glaze and one sherd comes from a black-glazed chamber pot. All three types occur in the mid 17th century and are the earliest Staffordshire products to be used in the Welsh Marches.

Tin-glazed ware

Seventy-two sherds of tin-glazed ware were recovered from the Croft excavations, representing no more than fifty-four vessels, and probably considerably less (there are several instances of sherds from what were probably the same vessel recognised in different contexts). In several instances, the opaque tin glaze was restricted to the visible surfaces whilst the remaining surfaces were glazed with a plain translucent glaze. This technique is typical of the mid 17th century and before, after which vessels with tin-opacified lead glaze

on all surfaces are found. Bowls were the most common form, followed by plates (which may be late 17th/18th-century in date but lack distinctive typological or decorative features), albarellos and chamber pots. Single examples of a jug, a cup, a charger, a crespina, a lid, a mug, an ointment pot (of later 17th or 18th-century date) and a porringer were found. With the named exceptions, these are all forms which occur in the early to mid 17th centuries.

Martincamp ware

Fourteen sherds of Martincamp ware were present. This ware occurs in three fabrics: a white earthenware; a red earthenware and a grey stoneware. No examples of the white earthenware were present whilst three of the sherds were of grey stoneware and eleven of red earthenware. All the sherds come from spherical flasks with a long, narrow wheelthrown spout added. The vessels were apparently imported to England from the Paris basin without contents and are found throughout the country in the later 16th and 17th centuries.

Frechen Stoneware

Eight sherds of Frechen stoneware were present (Hurst 1986, 214-221). Where the form of the vessel could be determined, the sherds came from drinking jugs. In one case, part of a sprigged medallion was present and two sherds come from a moulded footring base but the remaining sherds are featureless. The lack of the distinctive bases, narrow necks and face masks suggests that none of the vessels are Belarmine bottles, the most common form exported to England in the mid/late 17th century.

North Italian Marbled Slipware

A single sherd from a North Italian Marbled Slipware bowl was present (Hurst 1986, 33-37). These vessels were produced at several centres in Italy, including Pisa, in the first half of the 17th century. They are not common finds on inland English sites although a similar bowl was present in an unstratified collection from Goodrich castle, which is interpreted as being predominantly composed of material used during the Civil War (Vince in Shoemith forthcoming).

Later Post-Medieval Wares

The later group (late 17th to mid 18th century) consists of one hundred and thirty-nine sherds, representing no more than ninety-nine vessels. Most of this pottery came from Staffordshire (but possibly including the Ironbridge area in Shropshire) and consisted of coarsewares; slipwares; mottled wares; and white salt-glazed stonewares with a few sherds of North Devon Gravel-Tempered ware and London Stoneware. Only two sherds of imported pottery, both Westerwald Stoneware, were present, despite this being the period in which the fashion for Chinese porcelain was at its height. Therefore, not only was less pottery being discarded in this period, but it was also of lesser quality.

London Stoneware

Five sherds of London stoneware were present. They consist of the rim of a tankard and body sherds from jars, bottles and drinking jugs. The London stoneware industry began in a small scale at Woolwich in the early 17th century but was a commercial failure until Dwight's Fulham pottery in the 1670s. From that time onwards, English stoneware ousted Rhenish products although by the end of the 17th century Dwight was suffering competition from provincial English producers, such as those in the Staffordshire potteries and Nottingham. London stoneware is not common in Herefordshire and its presence at Croft may indicate direct, non-market orientated contact with London.

North Devon Gravel-tempered ware

Four sherds of North Devon Gravel-Tempered ware were present. They consist of the rim of a pipkin and body sherds from a bowl, a jug and a pancheon. Unfortunately, there is little difference in typology or fabric between the vessels used in the later 16th century, when this ware first appeared, and those used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when it finally ceased to be produced. In Herefordshire, following the pattern at Bristol and sites on the river Severn, the ware first appears in the later 17th century, becoming common in the early to mid 18th century.

Staffordshire Press-moulded slipware

Only one sherd from a press-moulded, combed slipware plate of Staffordshire type was present. Such vessels are common in Herefordshire in the early to mid 18th centuries.

Staffordshire Coarseware

Eighty-four sherds of Staffordshire Coarseware were present, representing no more than 62 vessels. It is quite likely that these were produced at centres closer to Croft than Staffordshire and suitable clays exist in the Forest of Dean (where the Coleford industry exploited them in the 19th century) and in south Shropshire (where they were exploited in the Broseley area). Nevertheless, the range of vessels produced and the typology and manufacturing details are paralleled in the Staffordshire potteries. The most common form is the unglazed, red-slipped flowerpot (343 sherds, from no more than 29 vessels); followed by pancheons (33 sherds, representing no more than 21 vessels). Deep bowls, normally the most common form in this ware in Herefordshire, account for only 9 sherds.

Staffordshire Mottled ware

Eleven sherds of Mottled ware, with a mottled brown glaze and a light-firing Coal Measures body, were present, representing no more than 9 vessels. Most of these come from bowls with short, vertical walls with only one tankard and two sherds from unidentified vessels.

Staffordshire Slipware

Twenty-two sherds of Staffordshire slipware were present, representing no more than ten vessels. These come from wheelthrown vessels with a light-firing, Coal Measures clay body. Cups were the most common form (six sherds from no more than three vessels), followed by bowls, jugs, and posset pots (no more than two vessels of each type). This type was produced from the 1670s into the middle of the 18th century. Eighteenth-century vessels often have a brown slip with white slip-trailing, and all but two of the sherds are of this type. However, those of the mid 18th century were usually turned before slipping, and these sherds do not appear to be turned. They therefore probably date to the early to mid 18th century.

White Salt-glazed Stoneware

Ten sherds of white salt-glazed stoneware were present. The earliest examples of this ware were made from a Coal Measures clay with a thick white slip, probably a mixture of China Clay and crushed flint. One example of this type was present, a tankard, probably dating to the 1720s to 1730s. The remaining sherds are all made from a refined white body and were turned after wheelthrowing. Bowls were the most common form (seven sherds, from no more than three vessels), with single examples of a chamber pot and a plate. These vessels probably date to the 1730s to 1750s.

Westerwald Stoneware

Two sherds of Westerwald Stoneware were present, both coming from the same drinking jug. Such vessels were imported in large numbers in the late 17th and earlier 18th centuries.