

The Pottery from Area 22, Melton (OSA04 EX03)

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The 2004 excavations at Melton revealed an area of medieval settlement, Area 22 which produced pottery ranging in date from the mid 12th to the post-medieval period. A terminus post quem was assigned to each assemblage of pottery recovered and these, modified by the stratigraphic relationships of the contexts which produced the finds, allowed the occupation sequence to be divided into two phases, the second of which can be dated to the mid 14th century or later by the presence of Humberware. The various wares present are described in the pottery report (this vol. p.00).

Phase 6.1

A maximum of 455 vessels were represented in the fills of 29 separate features or deposits (Table 1). All of the assemblages contain sherds of Beverley glazed wares or wares of similar date and on this evidence it is suggested that the settlement came into existence in the mid 12th century or later. This is also suggested by the presence of jugs with their strap handles attached to the top of the rim, a typologically early feature in Beverley Glazed ware. Similarly, a small proportion of the Beverley Glazed wares have a noticeable calcareous sand temper, either with a splash glaze (BEVO1A, 5 vessels) or a dipped glazed (BEVO1B, 9 vessels). The use of this calcareous sand is also an early feature and in some Beverley assemblages occurs to the exclusion of the finer, untempered fabric (BEVO2A – splash-glazed, BEVO2B – dipped glaze). However at Area 22 no assemblage contained the calcareous sanded ware without sherds of the fineware. Pit 6273 produced a sherd of a jug with the handle attached at the rim top and no typologically later types. Together, these features suggest a mid to late 12th century start to the occupation.

Sherds of Beverley glazed ware jugs with dipped copper mottled glaze or decorated with stamped bosses or applied slip were present in some of these assemblages and indicate a deposition date after c.1200.

Table 1

Context group	BEVO1A	BEVO1B	BEVO2A	BEVO2B	BEVOA	BEVOB	EYQC	HUM	STAXT	YG	YORK	Grand Total
6231		3	1	1	1	1	64					72
6240				4		2	7					13
6264			1	2		2	7					12
6267	1				1	2	4					8
6273	1	3		19	1	14	48					86
6278						1						1
6299							1					1
6301					1							1
6307			4	15	1	98	14					132
6309				1			1					2
6317		2		6		4	16	1	2		1	32

6322				2			1		2				5
6326	1	1		1			1		5				9
6331				1									1
6337				1			1						2
6348				1			1		1				3
6350				1					1				2
6351				1									1
6353	1		1						13		2		17
6364				1			1						2
6374							1						1
6386				2			1		1				4
6393				7	1		6		3	1	7	2	27
6394				5			1		9				15
6395										1			1
6409				1			1						2
6448							1						1
6456				1									1
6467	1												1
Grand Total	5	9	7	73	6	139	196	5	11	2	1		455

The maximum number of vessels of each ware type present in assemblages with post-c.1200 Beverley types (1b) and those without (1) is shown in Table 2 as a percentage of the total maximum number of vessels. The major differences between the two groups in quantitative terms are that the locally-produced coarseware, EYQC, is much more common in the earlier assemblages whilst unglazed, non-calcareous wheelthrown Beverley vessels are more common in the later groups, as are sherds of Staxton-type ware. This suggests that initially Beverley only supplied Melton with glazed jugs with unglazed jars being obtained from a local source but that at some point after c.1200 and before c.1350 the local industry either ceased operation or declined in output and Beverley then supplied both glazed jugs and unglazed jars. The Staxton-type ware vessels may well be Beverley products.

Table 2

cname	1	1b	Grand Total
BEVO1A	1.90%	0.43%	1.13%
BEVO1B	2.86%	1.29%	2.03%
BEVO2A	0.48%	2.15%	1.35%
BEVO2B	15.24%	16.74%	16.03%
BEVOA	1.43%	1.29%	1.35%
BEVOB	11.90%	48.07%	30.93%
EYQC	63.81%	23.61%	42.66%
HUM	1.43%	0.86%	1.13%
STAXT	0.95%	3.86%	2.48%
YG	0.00%	0.86%	0.45%
YORK	0.00%	0.43%	0.23%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Only 17 rim sherds of EYQC were recovered from Area 22 contexts and a typology for these was constructed (this vol. p.00 and Fig.00). All the types were present in Phase 6.1 deposits

apart from Type 4, a jar with a bead rim, which was recovered from a Phase 6.1b deposit (Table 3).

Table 3

Form	REFNO	1	1b	3
JAR	TYPE 1	4		
	TYPE 2	1	1	
	TYPE 3	1	3	1
	TYPE 4		1	
	TYPE 5	1		
	TYPE 6	1		
	TYPE 7	1		
JUG		2		
Grand Total		11	5	1

Phase 6.2

A smaller number of features produced assemblages containing Humberware (Table 3). A high proportion of the sherds present in these groups, however, are exactly the same types as were present in the earlier deposits and these include the local coarseware, EYQC, which it is argued fell out of use well before the mid 14th century. It is therefore likely that an unknown proportion of these sherds, perhaps all of them, are residual. The Humberware sherds are of two types: white-slipped vessels with copper mottling in the glaze and plain glazed, unslipped vessels. Where rims are present, the first type either has triangular or rounded rims whilst the second has flat-topped rims, which often come from larger vessels than the first group. Waste from the production of copper-glazed, white-slipped Humberware with rounded and triangular rims has been excavated at Fishergate, York, and dated to the mid-to-late 14th century, whilst the second type was certainly still current in the early 16th century. At Melton, however, the two types occur in the same deposits, and this may be because they come from two sources, each adhering to a different tradition, or because the Phase 6.2 deposits contain mixed assemblages representing a long period of activity. The presence of sherds of the second group does, however, suggest that occupation continued into the later 14th century, post-dating the Black Death. A sample of Humberware sherds, three “early” and three “late” was taken for chemical compositional analysis and the results (Vince 2008) indicate that there are slight differences in chemical composition between the two groups but that these are so small that they could represent a change in clay source over time, or a shift from one kiln site to another with a potting community. The chemical analysis indicated that the source for both groups of Humberware was likely to be in East Yorkshire, with similarities to samples from Wawne rather than with the production sites at West Cowick, York and Holme-upon-Spalding Moor.

Table 4

context group	BEVO1B	BEVO2A	BEVO2B	BEVO2C	BEVOB	EYQC	HUM	STAXT	YG	Grand Total

6258			2		2	3	3			10
6260				1			1	1		3
6261	1		1				1			3
6264		1	2		2	7				12
6276			1				2			3
6280			3		2	3	47			55
6283	1		1			1	14			17
6286						4		1	1	6
6371			1		1		2			4
6388			1				1			2
6390			1				2			3
6392			3							3
6405			6				2			8
Grand Total	2	1	22	1	7	18	75	2	1	129

Table 5

cname	Total
BEVO1B	1.55%
BEVO2A	0.78%
BEVO2B	17.05%
BEVO2C	0.78%
BEVOB	5.43%
EYQC	13.95%
HUM	58.14%
STAXT	1.55%
YG	0.78%
Grand Total	100.00%

The majority of the sherds from all phases were either from jugs or jars, the latter often having evidence for use in cooking. There is a sharp decline in the frequency of jars (expresses as a percentage of the total maximum number of vessels) with the advent of Humberware and this is even clearer if it is assumed that the third phase contains a high proportion of residual material. In Table 5 the relative frequency of different forms in Humberware alone is given in brackets. The implication of this change must be that either a higher number of jugs were used, perhaps for different purposes, or, more likely, that the function carried out by jars in the later 12th to mid 14th centuries was carried out using vessels in other materials in the later period.

Table 6

Form	1	1b	3	Grand Total
BOWL	0.00%	0.43%	1.55% (1.33%)	0.52%
JAR	79.52%	78.97%	37.98% (29.33%)	69.93%
JUG	20.48%	20.60%	58.91% (69.33%)	29.20%
PEAT POT	0.00%	0.00%	0.78% (0%)	0.17%
PIPKIN	0.00%	0.00%	0.78% (0%)	0.17%

There remain a handful of features whose pottery assemblages do not allow them to be assigned conclusively to one or the other phase (e.g. just one or two sherds of Humberware in a collection of earlier material). These have been omitted from Table 1 to 5.

Bibliography

Vince, Alan (2008) Characterisation Studies of Humberware from Melton, East Yorkshire (OSA04 EX03). AVAC Reports 2008/37 Lincoln,