



FINDS IN CONTEXT

July 29, 2011 Cosmeston Community Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Education, Finds, Medieval, Post Medieval archaeologist, Archaeology, Bristol, Bristol tin glazed, Cardiff Castle, Cardiff University, Cistercian, Cosmeston Castle, Cosmeston Medieval Village, digitising, Excavation, experimental archaeology, France, head, Kyle Young, Louise, made products, marking, Medieval reenactment, Post-excavation, pottery, Saintonge, sgraffito



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Hey, well I suppose I should start by introducing myself. My name is Kyle Young and I'm a second year (going into third year) student studying Archaeology at Cardiff University. I am currently taking part in the post-excavation archiving of the Cosmeston site, mainly dealing with the past three years of excavations. The past three digging seasons have concentrated on the area of the site marked as [Cosmeston Castle on the Ordnance Survey maps](#), which refers to the manor house complex. The post-excavation work involves sorting through, and labelling the archaeological material (mainly pottery) that was excavated, along with creating the digital archive from the paper record sheets.

I was at Cosmeston for the 2010 season and the work I am currently doing with the finds from the site is enabling me to have a better understanding of what occurred there. Through working on the site I could see and understand what it was, but it is through studying the finds that I am beginning to fully



Pot sherds awaiting cataloguing

appreciate what actually happened within the manor house, and also during the post-medieval period when it was demolished.

The medieval pottery that has been uncovered at the site appears to be of quite fine quality. There are a large number of imports from France and large amounts of Bristol-ware. This suggests a high-status household. There are also examples of extremely fine locally made products, such as the **ram's head vessel** (a possible **aquamanile**) found in this season's excavations. The only other similar vessel from this area was found at Cardiff Castle during excavations in 2004-2005 **by local unit GGAT**, indicating that this was a high-status item.

The large quantities of post-medieval pottery excavated at the site – such as **North Devon sgraffito wares**, **Bristol tin glazed bowls** and a Cistercian style lid (a 16th Century style of glazed pot) – are useful in dating the final phases of the manor. Found in contexts associated with the **demolition of the manorial buildings and robbing of walls for building material**, they help tell us when these activities occurred.