

# **A note on the medieval and later pottery from Crossrail Central, Broadgate Ticket Hall (XSM10) phase 3, Time Team**

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## **Introduction**

The post-Roman pottery assemblage from the Time Team work on the site (phase 3) amounts to 82 sherds (76 ENV, 3.416kg) from contexts [723], [732] and [733]. The sherds were examined macroscopically and using a binocular microscope (x 20), and recorded on paper and computer using standard Museum of London codes for fabrics, forms and decoration. The numerical data comprises sherd count, estimated number of vessels and weight. A few finds merit illustration. The data can be accessed on the Oracle database and also in an excel spreadsheet.

## **The medieval wares**

One sherd of mature Valencian lustreware, from Spain ([733]) was recorded as being medieval, although it is of late 15th- or possibly early 16th-century date. The decoration comprises an open design with floral motifs in blue; the lustre decoration that would have filled the intervening spaces has completely vanished.

## **The post-medieval wares**

Post-medieval wares are present in all three contexts. Tin-glazed wares, mainly forms that would be used at the table, are the most common category by sherd and vessel count (23 fragments, 21 ENV). It is likely that most are from factories along the south bank (Britton 1987; Noël Hume 1977; Tyler et al 2008). A range of different decorative styles is represented, with two possible 16th-century wares, a fairly even mix of 17th-century and 18th-century wares. The former comprise a handle fragment from a Malling-type jug with blue glaze from [733] and part of an albarello from [732] could be earlier, perhaps from the Aldgate pottery at Holy Trinity Priory (Blackmore 2005, 237–42, 246–7).

The 17th-century wares include five sherds (5 ENV) with blue and white or polychrome decoration (TGW D, 1630–80), and one sherd has with Chinaman in grasses decoration (TGW F, 1670–90). Three sherds are from a fluted bowl with 'Lambeth polychrome decoration (TGW G, 1701–11), while one has blue on blue decoration (TGW H, 1680–1800); four other sherds recorded as TGW also have typical 18th-century style decoration. Vessels with a plain white glaze (TGW C; 7 sherds, 7 ENV) were produced from c 1630–1846 and so are difficult to date precisely but most sherds probably date to after c 1650; they derive from two porringers, a bowl, a plate and a chamber pot.

Coarse redwares from London area are the second most common category, with a total of 22 sherds (19 ENV); they comprise 6 sherds of early post-medieval redware (PMRE, c 1480–1600), 12 sherds of post-medieval redware (PMR, c 1580–1900) and three of London-area early post-medieval slipped redware (PMSR/G/Y, c 1480–1650). Also present is one sherd of calcareous redware, probably from Essex (PMREC, c 1480–1600). Most sherds are from heavy duty vessels, mainly associated with the storage, preparing, cooking and serving of food. Of note are a very large angled rod handle,

probably from a cauldron, and the rim of a dripping dish with incised wavy line decoration around the rim, both from [733] (to draw). Two sherds appear to be from a distillation bottle, or cucurbit, although the beaded rim form is unusual (also [733]; draw?). In addition there are two sherds (2 ENV) of fine post-medieval redware from Essex (PMFR, 1580–1700).

In third place are Surrey-Hampshire border wares (13 sherds, 12 ENV), of which seven sherds (6 ENV) are from dishes, a bowl, a drinking jug, a skillet and a tripod pipkin in the white fabric (BORDG/O/Y) and the remainder are from dishes and mugs in the redware equivalent (RBOR), the latter including the complete base and lower body of a rounded mug and part of a dish with painted slip decoration (RBORSL).

Other English ware types comprise two sherds of Staffordshire ware, one with combed slip decoration (STSL), the other with a brown glaze (STMO), and five of English stoneware, including the rim of a Midlands purple ware (MPUR) butterpot and part of a London stoneware (LONS) flagon with thumbled rat tail handle; both are from [733], which also contained a sherd of drab stoneware (DRAB, 1720–1750). The most unusual piece is the rim of a teapot in a very fine dark purple-brown fabric; this has been recorded as red stoneware (REST), but could be a Chinese import. This should be verified prior to any publication of the finds.

Definite imports amount to 14 sherds (14 ENV). As usual most are German stonewares, mainly from Frechen (8 sherds), but with three from Raeren. Other imports comprise part of an 18th-century German Selzer bottle (for mineral water) from [732] and part of a 16th-century Italian tin-glazed vase/altar vase with polychrome decoration ([733]).

## Discussion

The site would appear be within the precinct of the Austin Friars, and some of the pottery could date from either the Dissolution period or the later 16th century, but all is residual, being mixed with later wares. The largest group is from [733] (53 sherds, 51 ENV 2.115kg), which is dated to after 1720 by the presence of drab stoneware, while [732], which contained 25 sherds (23 ENV), is dated to after 1750 by the Selzer bottle. As a whole the assemblage is typical for London, although the possible sherd of Chinese brown stoneware is a rare find.

## Bibliography

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