

## **Oxford, St Aldates (OXSTAD 16)**

### **Glass**

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#### **Introduction and methodology (Table glass1)**

The glass assemblage is small but has some interesting elements. The glass has been identified to form, quantified by sherd count and recorded onto an Excel spreadsheet. The assemblage comprises just 103 fragments, of which 20 are unstratified. The glass comprises mainly vessel glass, but does include 14 pieces of window glass. Almost half the assemblage by number comprises wine bottle sherds. Summary quantification of glass by area, phase, context and glass type is provided in Table 3

#### **Table 1**

#### **Assemblage Composition and Context (Table glass2)**

The glass assemblage from the site is quite small but it is clearly dominated by bottles, particularly wine bottles, and also contains a small number of sherds from drinking vessels.

#### **Table 2**

#### **Area 1**

In Area 1, Phase 3 contexts produced eleven pieces of glass, including four pieces of vessel glass and a piece of window glass from pit 1193. The vessel glass comprises two sherds from late 18th- or early 19th-century wine bottle sherds, a sherd from broad cylindrical wine bottle of mid-18th-century date and the fourth wine bottle sherd is not closely datable. The window glass from pit 1193 is slightly weathered and yellow green in colour and is probably post medieval. Other Phase 3 glass comprises a sherd of a late 18th- early-19th-century wine bottle from pit 1200, a small undated sherd probably from a wine bottle in dark green glass

was recovered from context 1082 (pit 1100). A small weathered and de-vitrified sherd of window glass from layer 1029 was possibly medieval, but could be post medieval. The remaining glass from Phase 3 comprises three small undiagnostic chips of glass (layer 1188, pit 1144 and from context 1087).

Phase 4 context 1022 produced a large thick piece of pale glass with regular flat surfaces (Th: 8.6mm), possibly window glass. This is not closely datable. A similar thick piece of glass was recovered from Area 1 Phase 8 context 1020.

Phase 8 contexts in Area 1 produced 21 sherds of vessel glass, and seven pieces of window glass. The vessel glass includes a complete small moulded bottle (2 sherds), the base of second similar small bottle and two sherds from other moulded bottles from context 1003. From context 1004 there are five sherds from various bottles of late 19th- or 20th-century date, and two pieces of window glass. The latter includes a small edge piece from a disc of crown glass. Glass from context 1006 includes sherds from wine bottles including early 18th-century examples. It also produced part of the neck and rim of a wide necked cap-seated early milk bottle. This type of milk bottle was sealed with waxed card insert that fitted on a seating or ledge inside the rim, and were in use in Britain from the 1910s to the late 1940s. Context 1007 finds included three sherds from a machine moulded bottle in colourless glass and three sherds of window glass. Window glass from context 1015 was possibly modern, while the glass from 1378 was an undiagnostic body sherd in green glass.

#### **Area 4**

Phase 7 context 4014 produced 31 pieces of glass, most of which was recovered from two 17th-century 'globe and shaft' bottles both which have datable bottle seals. One seal shows a mermaid, with the waves of the sea in the background, holding a mirror and apparently brushing her hair (Cat. No. 3). The letters 'A H' to the right are the initials of Anthony Hall senior, who was licensee of the 'Mermaid' from c 1660 to 1675 and was mayor of Oxford in 1673-74 (Leeds 1941, 46-7, pl. ix, nos. 5). His son, also Anthony Hall, was licensee from 1675-1691.

The second seal has the letters 'W<sup>M</sup> A' above a crown (Cat. No. 4). The letters form the cipher of William and Anne Morrell who were licensees of the 'Crown' from 1660 to 1679. William Morrell died in 1679 and his widow Anne continued as licensee until 1696 (Leeds

1941, 47-8, pl ix, no. 9). The Crown was located at what is now No. 3 Cornmarket and is not to be confused with the present Crown Inn at 59A Cornmarket (op. cit. 46).

The vessel glass from Phase 7 context 4056 comprises a distinctive baluster from a stemmed vessel of early 17th-century date and possibly of Venetian manufacture, but more likely to be English in the *façon de Venise*.

### **Area 10**

*Phase 4* contexts produced the upper half of a small squat early 18th-century wine bottle with short tapering neck and cracked-off finish from context 10012, and the indented base from a free blown vessel, possibly cylindrical, from context 10013. The latter looks to be post medieval in date.

### **Area 11**

*Phase 6* context 11021 produced two pieces of post medieval vessel glass, one a body sherd with optic blown ribs (Cat. No. 1), the other a pedestal base Cat. No. 2). Although there is no refit, it is possible that the sherds are from the same pedestal beaker. The form dates to the second half of the 16th or first half of the 17th century and would fit well in a *Phase 6* context. The final piece of glass is a fragment of dark green window glass from context 11001, and this is probably post medieval in date.

### **Area 13**

*Phase 4* context 1390 (Structure 4.5) produced a small piece of window glass with opaque weathering, which might be medieval or post medieval in date.

*Phase 8* context 1365 produced a wine bottle neck in dark olive green glass from a late 18th- or early 19th-century wine bottle, and a free blown small cylindrical bottle base with push up in blue green glass. This is possibly earlier in date than the wine bottle neck. Context 1414 produced a complete large cylindrical wine bottle with long neck in dark olive green glass. The bottle was almost certainly made in a dip mould, and dates from the middle decades of the 18th century.

## Unstratified glass

There are 20 unstratified sherds. These include the neck and shoulders of mid-18th-century pickle or condiment jar with cracked-off rim and hand-applied string rim (Cat.No.5), and also necks and body sherds from small cylindrical pharmaceutical bottles or phials of similar date, and more sherds from wine bottles.

### *Illustrated glass*

- 1 Beaker body sherd with optic blown fluting or ribbing. Possibly from a pedestal beaker. Colourless glass. 43 x 28mm  
Possibly part of same beaker as Cat. No.2
- 2 Pedestal beaker base, colourless glass. D of base: 74mm; Extant Ht: 27mm.  
Possibly part of the same beaker as Cat.No. 1
- 3 Seal of the Mermaid tavern. Portrays a mermaid holding a mirror and combing or brushing her hair against a background of waves, together with the initials 'AH' probably for Anthony Hall senior, who was licensee of the Mermaid c1660 -1675 (Leeds 1923, 405-07; Leeds 1941, 46-7, pl. ix, 5). From 'globe and shaft' bottle. Green glass. Context 4014.
- 4 Seal of the Crown with initials of William and Anne Morrell. 'Globe and shaft' bottle. The crown has a rounded cushion and central fleur de lis on the coronet (cf Leeds 1941, pl ix, no. 9). Olive green glass. Context 4014.
- 5 18th-century pickle or condiment jar with wide neck, cracked-off finish, and hand-applied string rim. Dark green glass. Rim D: 62 x 61mm. Unstratified

### Table 3

#### *References*

Leeds, E T, 1923 Oxford Tradesmen's Tokens, 355-453, in Salter, Rev H E (ed.), *Surveys and Tokens*, Oxford Historical Society vol. 75, Oxford

Leeds, E T, 1941 17th and 18th century wine-bottles of Oxford Taverns, *Oxoniensia* 4, 44-55