Report on a Pottery Assemblage from Bradgate Park Lawns, Leicestershire.
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Summary:

A small assemblage (MPRG 2001, 19) of pottery comprising five (5) sherds from five (5) vessels with a combined weight of 30.4g was recovered from test pitting at Bradgate Park Lawns, Leicestershire in 2021. The pottery includes a sherd from a vessel of Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon date, three sherds from three vessels of 1st century AD Romano-British date, and a single sherd from a single vessel of early post medieval date.

Methodology:

All sherds were examined by eye and at 20x magnification using a Brunel Microscopes MX1 stereomicroscope. The assemblage was quantified using sherd count, sherd weight and vessel count. Weighing of sherds was via a Maplin VV52G digital load cell electronic balance with rated accuracy of +/- 0.1 g, calibrated prior to each session of use. The weight of the pottery sherds was recorded to the nearest 0.1g. The sherds were quantified by weight, sherd count, and maximum vessel count.

The data were input into a Microsoft Access database using the ware names and codes of the Leicestershire Ceramic Type Series, including the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) Prehistoric Ceramic Fabric Series (Marsden 2011); the Leicestershire Museums Roman Fabric series (Pollard 1994, 112-4), the ULAS Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon Pottery Fabric Series (Cooper and Forward in prep) and the Leicestershire Medieval Ceramic Fabric series (Sawday unpublished). Identification of inclusions under low power magnification follows 'Peacock's Principles' (Peacock 1977) with modifications after Wright and Davey (1980, 52); description of characteristics such as fracture, rounding, etc., is based on Adams Gilmour (1988, 62). Size ranges for inclusions are as follows:

Very fine – less than 0.2mm
Fine – 0.2mm to 0.5mm
Medium – 0.5mm to 1mm
Coarse – 1mm to 2mm
Gritty – over 2mm

Nomenclature of vessel forms, parts and rim types follows the guidelines for identification of medieval vessel forms by the Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG 1998) and the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG 2010)

Presence and location of use-wear traces, sooting, etc. visible macroscopically or under low power magnification are recorded on the database.

Rim diameters were measured, wherever possible (where the sherd was of sufficient size and apparent regularity to allow a relatively reliable reading to be obtained), by matching the outside or inside curve of the sherd to the rings of a rim chart. Whether internal or external diameter was measured, the external diameter is recorded in the database. Where measurement was successful the percentage of surviving rim arc was estimated using radial rays emanating from the central point of the chart.

The degree of abrasion was recorded using the Mercian Archaeological Services CIC system which categorises it as one of six categories: 1 = fresh (sharp edges no surface abrasion), 2 = slightly abraded (slight rounding of edges), 3 = moderately abraded (edges somewhat rounded, surface slightly abraded), 4 = abraded (edges rounded, surface noticeably abraded), 5 = heavily abraded (only minor survival of original surfaces, edges very rounded), 6 = extremely abraded (original surfaces completely gone, edges very well rounded). The system is designed to take account of the hardness of the fabric.

Some inclusions may have been deliberately added to clay by potters while others occur naturally within the clay. Without scientific analysis of the clay sources surrounding a given production site it may be impossible to determine whether a particular inclusion was deliberately added or naturally occurring in the clay as dug (e.g. Perry 2016, 91). Amongst

likely ‘opening materials’ (Gibson and Woods 1997 - deliberately added inclusions, mainly intended to improve the drying and firing properties of the clay) are grog (crushed pre-fired clay, often in the form of recycled pots), chaff/grass (most likely actually the dung of large herbivores) and probably the larger angular fragments of rock such as acid igneous rocks, calcined flint, etc. Inclusions such as quartz and sandstone, and fossil shell / limestone fragments, are more problematic: scientific analysis of clay sources is required to determine if they were added or natural. As such, use of the terms ‘temper’, ‘inclusion’ and ‘gritted’ in this report, which historically may have been used to suggest a deliberate addition of material to a clay, should not be taken to imply any belief on the part of the writer about whether the inclusions in question were added or naturally present. These terms are used as they represent a convenient short-hand to convey certain concepts, such as ‘calcite gritted ware’ or ‘quartz tempered ware’; these are more succinct and more widely recognised terms than the more accurate ‘pottery containing fragments of fossil shell and limestone that may be deliberately crushed and added or might be naturally occurring within the clay’ or ‘pottery containing quartz sand that may be naturally occurring in the clay or may have been added to it, or may represent a mixture of naturally occurring sand and deliberately added sand from another source’. Only when the term ‘opening material’ is used should it be considered that there is a belief that the inclusions in question were deliberately added by the potter: in all other cases the inclusions may be natural or added.

Where there is doubt as to the identification of a ware, pattern or other feature then that detail is preceded by a question mark in the database.

The resulting archive conforms to the Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology (MPRG et al 2016), the individual guidance of the period specific ceramic specialist groups (MPRG 2001; PCRG 2010; Darling 1994) and the Leicestershire Museums Service Guidelines (LCC 2022).

The Pottery:

The five sherds were recovered from three separate test pits. One Romano-British sherd was found in test pit 21.12, one post medieval sherd came from test pit 21.10, and one Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon and two Romano-British sherds came from test pit 21.17.

The ware types identified in the assemblage are displayed in Table 01.

Code name	full name	period	earliest date	latest date	total sherds	total vessels	total weight
Q1/F1	Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon quartz tempered fabrics	IA/Emed	-750	850	1	1	10.9
MC	Miscellaneous Early Roman Coarsewares	Ro	43	150	1	1	4.9
MG3	Mixed Gritted Wares - Leics transitional Roman reduced surfaced wares	Ro	43	150	2	2	14
RA	Raeren type stoneware	pmed	1475	1600	1	1	0.6

Table 01 – ware types identified in the Bradgate assemblage

Condition:

The pottery varies in condition, with the slightly abraded Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon body sherd (F01) from test pit 21.17 being the freshest, and the heavily abraded Romano-British body sherd from TP21.12 being the most abraded. The remaining sherds are moderately abraded to abraded. The burial environment has lead to the leaching of the calcareous inclusions (probably originally limestone or lumps of thick fossil shell) from the Romano-British body sherd F03 from 21.17, while the rim sherd from this test pit (F02) is heavily abraded on its internal surface but only slightly abraded externally: this pattern of abrasion could occur if the sherd was lying partially buried on the ground with its internal surface uppermost for a time. This would protect the outer surface from abrasion and allow the inner to become extremely worn, as can be seen in the sherd.

Two of the sherds, both from TP21.17, are of medium size (over 10g) (F01 and F02), all the other sherds are small or very small. The heavy abrasion of the Romano-British sherd from 21.12 and the very small size and abrasion (with abundant surface scratches and micro-rounding of the edges) of the German Stoneware sherd from 21.10 suggest that both sherds suffered extensive disturbance following breakage. In the case of the Roman sherd from 21.12 this is probably post depositional, for example by subsequent cultivation or perhaps as a result of it being kicked around and trampled on the ground surface for a long time before

being buried. The stoneware sherd was apparently found in a drain so the abrasion is most likely to have occurred post-breakage but pre-deposition: the tiny sherd may have been bashed and knocked around on an occupation surface before making its way into the drain, where it may have been further abraded as it was washed down.

Evidence of Use:

Only two sherds displayed evidence of use, both from test pit 21.17, and both of Romano-British date. Jar rim F02 and jar body sherd F03 both have traces of external sooting. It is most extensive on F02. Such sooting is consistent with the vessels having been used with fire to heat their contents. This could have been done as part of wide range of industrial, agricultural, medicinal, and alchemical processes (e.g. Moorhouse 1983, 182-2; Moorhouse 1987, 171-3), as well as during domestic cooking. Domestic cooking was a widespread and basic daily necessity, while other uses were more specialist and less commonly practiced, so on these grounds it is most likely that the sooting on these sherds results from domestic cooking, though the sherds themselves do not have any visible evidence for what was heated in them, and without knowing the nature of the site they were used on it is not possible to be certain that they were not employed for non-domestic use.

The Pottery by Period:

ROMANO-BRITISH

Three sherds of Romano-British pottery were present. Two sherds, one the rim of a jar and the other a body sherd from a small jar, were recovered from test pit 21.17. The rim (F02) was found in the same spit as Iron Age or Saxon sherd F01 (see below); the body sherd (F03) was found at greater depth. Both sherds are coarsewares probably intended for kitchen or storage use. The other Roman sherd came from test pit 21.12. It is a very abraded body sherd probably from a large jar, possibly intended for storage.

The Roman pottery occurs in fabrics and forms that can all be dated early in the Roman occupation of Britain. The two sherds from TP21.17, though visually quite different, both contain a mixture of quartz sand, grog, and calcareous inclusions and were fired so as to give the finished vessel a reduced grey surface. More consistent reduction was achieved during the firing of vessel F03, which is fully reduced to grey throughout: F02 in contrast shows a 'sandwich' pattern of reduced surfaces, oxidised margins and a reduced core. Wares of this type are known as mixed gritted ware in Leicestershire (Pollard 1994, 114) and are considered to represent the transition from late Iron Age quartz sand, grog, and calcite tempered wares to fully Romano-British fabrics that contain only quartz sand temper (Pollard 1994, 74-5). They are likely to be the products of early local attempts to produce the Grey Wares that were the ubiquitous Romano-British kitchenwares.

F02 and F03 have been classified as MG3 (Pollard 1994, 114); MG3 belongs to a group of 'transitional' grey wares that probably began in Claudio-Neronian times (Pollard 1994, 75): they are one of the dominant ware types in the middle of the 1st century AD in Leicester assemblages, but 'true' Grey Wares (containing quartz sand only) had replaced them as the dominant type by c.70AD and mixed gritted wares had become residual by the early to middle decades of the 2nd century (Buckley et al 2021, 238-241).

The single datable form in the Bradgate Park assemblage, jar rim F02 (Figure 01), confirms the early date suggested by the fabrics. Everted rim jars with an internal bevel, squared or bevelled exterior rim edge and internal lid seating are related to calcite-gritted ledge-rim jars (e.g Clark 1999, fig 63:61) but are a Romano-British phenomenon of the second half of the first century (Pollard 1994, 75), though the form may possibly persist into the first quarter of the second century in Grey Ware fabrics (Clark 1999, 117-8 no 57). The shape of the rim indicates that the vessel was designed to fit a lid, though this may have been of material such as wood, rather than ceramic. The undercut rim would have allowed an organic cover (such as cloth or leather) to be tied securely in place and may suggest an intended use for storage or transport. However, the external sooting indicates that this vessel was used to heat its contents, possibly for cooking, though these uses need not be mutually exclusive.

The very abraded body sherd from 21.12 also appears to represent an early attempt to produce a vessel with reduced (grey) surfaces. It has a sandwich firing pattern similar to 21.17 F02 indicating a similar firing regime. The fabric, however, is atypical (E Johnson pers comm.). The fabric contains a wide range of inclusions, with quartz sand, mica, grog, and

calcite present along with a range of coarse to gritty rock fragments up to c.5mm in size. There are several different rock types present, most of which cannot be identified without thin section analysis, though rounded fragments of siltstone; acid igneous rock fragments featuring unidentified mafic minerals, possibly amphiboles (hornblende?), and large lumps of ?feldspar are provisionally identified.

This sherd has been classified as a Miscellaneous Coarseware (MC, Pollard 1994, 73) as the inclusions have similar type and size ranges to those in the ware defined as MC4 at Leicester (Pollard 1994, 73), and the MC1 sherd in the Leicestershire CTS is visually similar to the Bradgate sherd, though the rock fragments are of different type, but the similarity suggests they come from related potting traditions. The Miscellaneous Coarse ware category has largely been abandoned in modern reporting on pottery from Leicestershire (E Johnson pers comm.) as MC2 and 3, at least, were umbrella codes for late Iron Age to early Roman wares 'where clearly residual' in later Roman assemblages and where more detailed classification was not considered justified at the time (Pollard 1994, 55). However, as the fabric does not fit into the usual Romano-British ware types, use of the MC category is justified in this instance (E Johnson pers comm.). The MC wares are generally considered to date to the Late Iron Age to IA/Roman transition in Leicester, with MC4 dated first century BC to AD (Pollard 1994, 72-3). However, as a somewhat catch all ware group the Leicester dates may not be directly applicable to the Bradgate sherd, and the firing pattern, intended to produce a dark surfaced ware and probably kiln fired, is suggestive of an early Roman date. Indeed, the combination of a rock tempered fabric, something that was common in the Iron Age, fired in a reduced surfaced Roman style, suggests this ware is very much the definition of a transitional ware. A date in the second half of the first century, with the other Roman sherds from the assemblage, is entirely appropriate.

This is a very small assemblage of Roman pottery, but the overall impression is that it perhaps belongs to the earlier part of the suggested date range. The range of fabrics present and the absence of sandy Grey Wares that should make up a significant proportion of any assemblage by the latter part, as well as the association with a possible Iron Age sherd in TP 21.17, gives this impression. However, the apparent absence of Grey Wares could be a product of the very small sample size, and as such it is unwise to pursue too close a dating at this time.

PREHISTORIC OR ANGLO-SAXON:

F01 from test pit 21.17 is a body sherd from a large hand-built jar. It is unoxidised (black) with oxidised light brown exterior surface and margin. It contains common very fine to fine, occasionally to medium, clear quartz and common fine to coarse rounded iron-rich clay pellets, sometimes with a fine sandy texture. It has burnished or well smoothed internal and external surfaces: this can be seen to have been achieved using mainly horizontal strokes. In addition to smoothing the surface this aligned the quartz grains so their flat surfaces are parallel to the walls of the vessel, and wiped their surfaces clear of excess clay, allowing them to reflect light unimpeded and producing a sparkly surface.

The vessel form is unclear but a slight shoulder is present. The texture and form of the break at one edge reveals the shape of one of the coils or rings from which the pot was originally constructed. Fragmentation along the boundaries between coils is a common phenomenon in prehistoric pottery, caused by the clay being too dry to bond completely to the next ring and possibly a product of a relatively universal basic flaw in the production process: potters may have formed the straps or rings and conducted some initial shaping, allowing them to dry a bit, before joining them together (Gibson and Woods 1997, 39). The 'S' shaped join (Gibson and Woods 1997 fig 11 no 2) seen on this sherd is more typical than a straight join, and was designed to help produce a stronger bond between the coils (Gibson and Woods 1997, 38), perhaps to counteract the problems of trying to bond clay that was too dry!

The sandy fabric of this sherd broadly belongs to Leicestershire prehistoric pottery fabric Q1 (Marsden 2011, 62) and Leicestershire Anglo-Saxon Fabric 1 (Cooper and Forward in prep), although it is atypical as the quartz is finer than the type descriptions of both and the common iron-rich clay pellets are not mentioned in either. However, thin sectioning of samples of Iron Age Q1 fabrics from Humberstone recorded the presence of clay/iron pellets in some, though no size ranges or frequency were provided (Vince 2011, 78). The ferruginous mudstone pellets noted to sometimes be present in Saxon Fabric 1 (Cooper and Forward in prep) may be related to these, but this seems unlikely as mudstone should not be sandy and they are recorded as only sparsely occurring.

This sherd may be of Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon date. Due to similarities in the raw materials used, manufacturing techniques employed, and the bonfire firings used, it can be difficult to distinguish between undecorated body sherds of vessels of Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon date when no feature sherds (i.e. rims, decoration, etc.) or contextual information is available to provide more confident dating. The same quartz tempered and igneous rock tempered fabrics were used in both the Iron Age and Saxon periods in Leicestershire, and assigning isolated plain body sherds of these fabrics to one period or other in the absence of datable forms or decoration requires a somewhat subjective assessment of the presence of a generally finer size and a more even sorting of the inclusions in the Saxon sherds, even though the quartz in both the Iron Age and Saxon fabrics is recorded as ranging up to the same size of 1mm (Marsden 2011, 62; Cooper and Forward in prep).

In the absence of other evidence to assist dating, and the somewhat atypical nature of this fabric, it is not possible to positively assign this sherd to either the Iron Age or the Anglo-Saxon period at present. The rather fine quartz and the sparkly surface may suggest an Anglo-Saxon date: in the East Midlands much Saxon pottery is made using clay containing inclusions that result in a sparkly surface in the finished vessels and this is sufficiently common (amongst those vessels not tempered with fossil shell or chaff) to suggest that this was probably a desired effect (pers obs). The sparkly effect has also been noted in Fabric 1 at Eye Kettleby, Leicestershire (Cooper and Forward in prep). However, the burnishing of a vessel containing quartz with flat surfaces would produce this effect whether deliberate or not, and burnishing was also a widely utilised prehistoric finishing technique, so a sparkly surface does not have to indicate a Saxon date in the absence of other evidence. While the dominant middle and late Iron Age potting tradition in Leicestershire was Scored Ware, by no means all sherds in assemblages of this date are scored (e.g. 35% at Humberstone, Marsden 2011, 65; 36.6% at Wanlip, Marsden 1998, 47), and burnishing was employed (Marsden 1998, 49), though it became more common at the very end of the Iron Age.

There are some minor points that may argue against an Iron Age date for this sherd: mid and late IA assemblages north of Leicester are usually dominated by fabrics containing Charnwood granodiorites (Buckley et al 2021, 237). As Bradgate Park is located in the heart of the volcanic geology that is the source of these rocks it would be expected that fabrics with non-igneous opening materials would form only a very minor part of an Iron Age assemblage here. However, as with the Romano-British sherds, the extremely small sample size could easily mean this sherd is an anomaly, and it is not possible to rely on this without further supporting evidence. It may also be noted that late Bronze Age and early Iron Age assemblages may show very different preference in choice of clay or opening materials: grog and shell tempered wares were dominant amongst an assemblage of this period at Hamilton, near Humberstone, in marked contrast to the quartz and igneous temper of middle and late Iron Age sites nearby, for example (Cooper 2008, 56).

This sherd was found in the same spit of test pit 21.17 as MG3 rim F02, while MG3 F03 was found further down the profile in the same pit. The discovery of three sherds in this test pit, compared to only two sherds from all the other pits combined, may suggest they derive from a feature that could not be recognised within the confines of the small test pits that were dug. The co-occurrence of Iron Age and transitional Roman wares in the fills of features can be paralleled, for example in the fill of some of the pits at the hillfort of Burrough Hill (Cooper 2012, 89). Indeed, there may only be a very short span of time separating Iron Age and transitional Roman sherds, and ethnographic parallels suggest that vessels used for storage may have a much longer life span than those used for cooking, so an Iron Age date is perhaps most likely on these grounds. However, it is notable that F02 is rather more abraded than F01

If F01 is Anglo-Saxon it may require a slightly more convoluted interpretation of its presence in the same deposit as the early Roman sherds. At the simplest this could be Saxon disturbance of an early Roman feature. Alternatively, it may have been deposited in soil that contained 1st century material disturbed in the Saxon period. Such an hypothesis could neatly account for the fact that F02 and F03 appear to have already been somewhat abraded at the time of their deposition, while F01 is the freshest of all the sherds in the assemblage and appears much less abraded than F02, which it was recovered from the same spit as. However, this explanation may require an additional hypothesis to be feasible: either the Roman activity in this part of the park was very short in duration, or that its focus shifted. Otherwise it is likely that the 1st century signal would have been swamped by material deposited during the much greater span of the 2nd-4th centuries, and/or the early deposits

would have been buried beneath the later: any Anglo-Saxon activity in this area would otherwise have been more likely to have disturbed and incorporated pottery of the 2nd to 4th centuries into features rather than an exclusively 1st century assemblage.

This is not entirely a speculative discussion, as evidence of Saxon activity was discovered during excavation of the moated site in proximity to the test pit location: a pit containing a deposit of charcoal, possibly hearth material, was found and carbon dated to 793-971AD at 95.4% probability on a hazel wood fragment (Thomas et al 2019, 188). No artefacts of this date were recovered during those excavations.

If 21.17 F01 is Anglo-Saxon only a broad date range can be assigned. In the East Midlands the hand built wares of the Early Anglo Saxon period (c.5th – mid 7th century) still occur in Middle Saxon assemblages containing the markers of this ceramic period, Maxey ware and Ipswich ware, of the 8th to mid 9th century. The hand-built early Saxon wares do not continue into the Late Saxon period (mid 9th century onwards) (Young and Vince 2005, 27; Nailor and Young 2001). Such a dating would permit this sherd to be contemporary with activity to the east on what became the moated site, but only just, at the earlier end of the date range for the charcoal, and the pottery could easily derive from activity many centuries earlier than the pit.

LATE MEDIEVAL / EARLY POST MEDIEVAL:

The single sherd of this period is a small body sherd from an imported Rhennish stoneware vessel. It is a Raeren type stoneware.

Raeren, located in modern day Belgium one kilometre from the German border, was one of centres in the Aachen / Cologne area of modern day Germany producing stoneware. Stonewares are fired to a temperature high enough (over c.1200 degrees Celsius) to melt the microscopic particles that make up clays and, as a result, have a solid vitrified body. Unlike the porous, relatively low-fired earthenwares produced in most of Britain in this period (though sites like Ticknall in South Derbyshire were producing high fired pottery that is close to stoneware by the late 15th century), stoneware is impermeable and also rather hard wearing. It was exported from Germany to Britain in increasing quantities from the late 13th or early 14th century onwards (Jennings 1981, 109). English production of true stoneware on any meaningful scale did not occur until the late 17th century and it was only in the 18th century that English stoneware could finally compete successfully with Rhennish products. During the heyday of Rhennish wares between the 14th and 18th centuries the dominant production centres supplying the export trade changed over time. The wars that swept the Continent played their part in ending the dominance of certain centres, while the tendencies of sparks from the kilns to burn down the towns within which they were located, as well as the clouds of sulphuric acid the kilns emitted during salt glazing, also lead to the movement or expulsion of potters from some centres.

Raeren became the dominant stoneware producer at the end of the medieval period, and a rounded mug with a frilly base, formed by pinching the edge of the base after removal of the pot from the wheel was imported into Britain in such quantities that it forms a type fossil for the period 1485 – 1550. These Raeren mugs are found on sites across the whole social spectrum, from rural peasant dwellings to royal palaces (Hurst et al 1986, 194). The potters of Cologne and nearby Frechen began to dominate the export trade in the second half of the 16th century (Jennings 1981, 117), though certain vessels, including small long necked jugs and small twin lugged standing costrels, both probably used to contain oil for spinning, continued to be exported from Raeren throughout the 16th century (Hurst et al 1986, 198).

The Bradgate sherd is from a hollow vessel of globular form. It is glazed only on the exterior. There is insufficient of the vessel present to be certain what form it came from, though the thin walls and curvature suggest it was fairly small, and most likely one of the typical Raeren rounded mugs (MPRG 1998 form 6.3.5; Hurst et al 1986 XXX) as these are by far the most common form encountered. However, it could also come from one of the other forms with a biconical or globular body such as the long necked oil pots; both these and the rounded mugs may be unglazed on the interior (Hurst et al 1986, 194-8). A late 15th–mid 16th century date is most likely, but continuation into the second half of the 16th century is not impossible.

This vessel is likely to have been used in the household of the Grey family, who had one of their residences in Bradgate Park at the time the vessel was likely to have been in use.

Discussion:

This is a small but interesting assemblage of pottery. 'Ephemeral' evidence of Roman and Saxon period activity has only recently been identified within what is now Bradgate Park (Thomas et al 2019, 190). Few details of the finds and no quantified data are presented in the published report on this recent work, and the specialist reports, to be made available online (Thomas et al 2019, 195) were not available at the time of writing. It was, however, noted in the published report that two of the sherds from these earlier excavations are combed calcite gritted wares of 1st/2nd century date (Thomas et al 2019, 175). The current assemblage adds usefully to knowledge of Roman period activity in Bradgate Park. It suggests that activity on the terrace of the River Lin, at least in the vicinity of the area investigated by the test pits, is early, with all the pottery being types that are considered to be 'transitional' wares from the earliest Romano-British period, confirming the impression of early activity given by the only dated Roman pottery from the earlier excavations. The sooted vessels and the presence of both cooking and storage vessels in the current assemblage may suggest domestic activity, though the evidence is too slight to establish this with certainty. The presence of three out of the total of five sherds in a single test pit (TP 21.17) may suggest these came from an archaeological feature that was not recognisable due to the small size of the test pits.

It is unfortunate that the evidence does not allow the sherd F01 from 21.17 to be positively dated to one of either the Anglo-Saxon or Iron Age periods. The 'ephemeral' evidence for Saxon activity recovered during recent excavation of the moated site did not include any artefacts of this period. Should future work in the Park or its vicinity recover pottery datable to the Iron Age or Anglo Saxon periods either on stratigraphic or typological grounds it would be worth revisiting this sherd to see if it is possible to refine its dating, and it would also be worth considering it in any wider study of Anglo-Saxon pottery in Leicestershire in general.

The fragment of Raeren type stoneware was imported from the Continent and is thus the furthest travelled of the finds in the assemblage. These durable stonewares were brought to England in great quantity and occur widely on sites of all status in the first half of the 16th century. However, this sherd may be given additional interest as Bradgate Park is associated with Lady Jane Grey, queen of England for a few days in 1553: the Grey family had a residence in Bradgate Park and Jane's life overlaps with the period in which this vessel may have been imported and used. It is possible to say that it is highly likely the vessel was used in the Grey household.

The assemblage should be retained for future study.

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Pottery Archive for Test Pitting at Bradgate Park, Leicestershire (XA78.2021)

David Budge

Test pit	Find ID	code name	full name	sub fabric	form type	NoS	NoV	W(g)	part	description	decoration	condition
21.10	F01	RAER	Raeren stoneware		hollow;mug or small jug	1	1	0.6	BS	ext salt glaze only		mod abraded
21.12	F02	MC	Miscellaneous Early Roman Coarsewares	R/Ox/R/Ox/R;very mixed atypical fabric	jar?	1	1	4.9	BS	mix of Q;rock fragments;grog;fine calcareous;not the same rock as in the type sherds but fits into the same tradition		heavily abraded
21.17	F01	Q1/F1	Iron Age or Anglo Saxon quartz tempered fabrics	SR-R Q VF to F occ to 0.7mm;rare feldspar to 0.75mm;com rounded iron rich CP <0.05 to 2.5mm	jar	1	1	10.9	BS	broken along coil line;very similar fabrics in IA and AS periods		slightly abraded
21.17	F03	MG3	Mixed Gritted Leics Transitional Roman grey wares	grey;mod med Q mod-com grog coarse;com SA voids prob leached calc med to coa;mod-com SR brown CP	closed;small jar or beaker	1	1	1.6	BS	voids probably leached ?limestone though thick shell possible		leached, sl abraded
21.17	F02	MG3	Mixed Gritted Leics Transitional Roman grey wares	R/Ox/R/Ox/R;com fine-med Q occ coarse;sparse rounded fine calc;mod coarse sandy grog	jar	1	1	12.4	rim	everted rim jar form as Pollard 1994 no 33		abraded