

No. 8, CASTLE GATE, NOTTINGHAM: WELL 2

by

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In October 1966, during the clearance of a site in Castle Gate, Nottingham, to build offices for the Leicester Building Society, workmen discovered a number of caves and a well, hitherto unknown. The well and its contents—an important group of late 17th century pottery—are discussed in this paper. The caves will be published separately.

No. 8, Castle Gate, is situated on the north side of the street adjacent to Castle Gate Church Hall and was the site of the former cigar factory of Tyler and Company, probably built between 1888 and 1902. As in the case of many 19th century industrial buildings in Nottingham deep cellars underlay the main street frontage. The Leicester Building Society required a two-storey office with toilet facilities at a lower level on the back half of the site. Here there were no recent cellars. In the sand behind 19th century disturbance the entrance shaft to the filled-in caves occupied the western side. On the east, adjoining the west wall of the Church Hall was a well shaft (well 2) whose top had been removed by contractors' labour before its relationship to any superstructure could be established. The well was cut in sandstone, and was about 1.3 m. in diameter with foot and hand-holds formed diametrically opposite one another. Its bottom lay seven metres below the top as found, and was dry.

Another well on the same site (well 1) was found within the caves, and had been infilled in the 17th century. When excavated it contained one metre of water, with a bottom at 22 m. above Newlyn Datum and 9.25 m. below the present floor of the offices. Well 2 was soon covered by the new building, and is now inaccessible, but the caves and well 1 (which is still open) in 1978 contained water at a level of 24.2 m. above Newlyn Datum. This suggests that well 2 was dug and used during a period of relatively high water table in the Castle Gate area of Nottingham. Well 2 had been filled rapidly; the great majority of finds were of late 17th century date and parts of a Thomas Toft King Charles charger were found in many of the alternating layers of domestic refuse and sand which made up the fill.

THE POTTERY

This group of pottery is the first of its kind from Nottingham to be published. The catalogue which follows includes all the pieces, numbered in series. Not all are illustrated here: full drawings are deposited in the Castle Museum and the University Museum, Nottingham. The pottery is now housed in the Nottingham Castle Museum.

Toft Slipware

- 1 A Thomas Toft dish. Creamy-red fabric with some millimeter size flint grits; white slip with a dark brown and orange trailed slip decoration, some white slip used as a form of jewel type decoration on the brown. Dish is wheel-turned, with knife trimming; glaze crazed. At the time of writing this is the first Toft dish to be excavated outside Staffordshire. A similar dish to this is to be found in Ronald G. Cooper *English Slipware Dishes* (1968), plates 99-100. There are minor differences in the hair styles and the letter 'C' is also different. These differences are to be expected in these hand-decorated dishes, that may have been made at different times. This type of dish is dated to the last quarter of the 17th century, *Connoisseur*, 187, (December 1974), no. 754, p. 252-3.

Combed Slipware: Hollow-ware

- 2 Bleeding bowl or porringer with moulded horizontal handle; handle perforated with a single hole. Hard creamy buff fabric, combed decoration on internal surface only. External surface a dark yellow crazed glaze, little glaze around the base.
- 3 Cup, hard buff fabric, with a plain dark dirty yellow glaze inside. Externally very slightly ribbed and combed decoration. No glaze on base, one bob mark on base.

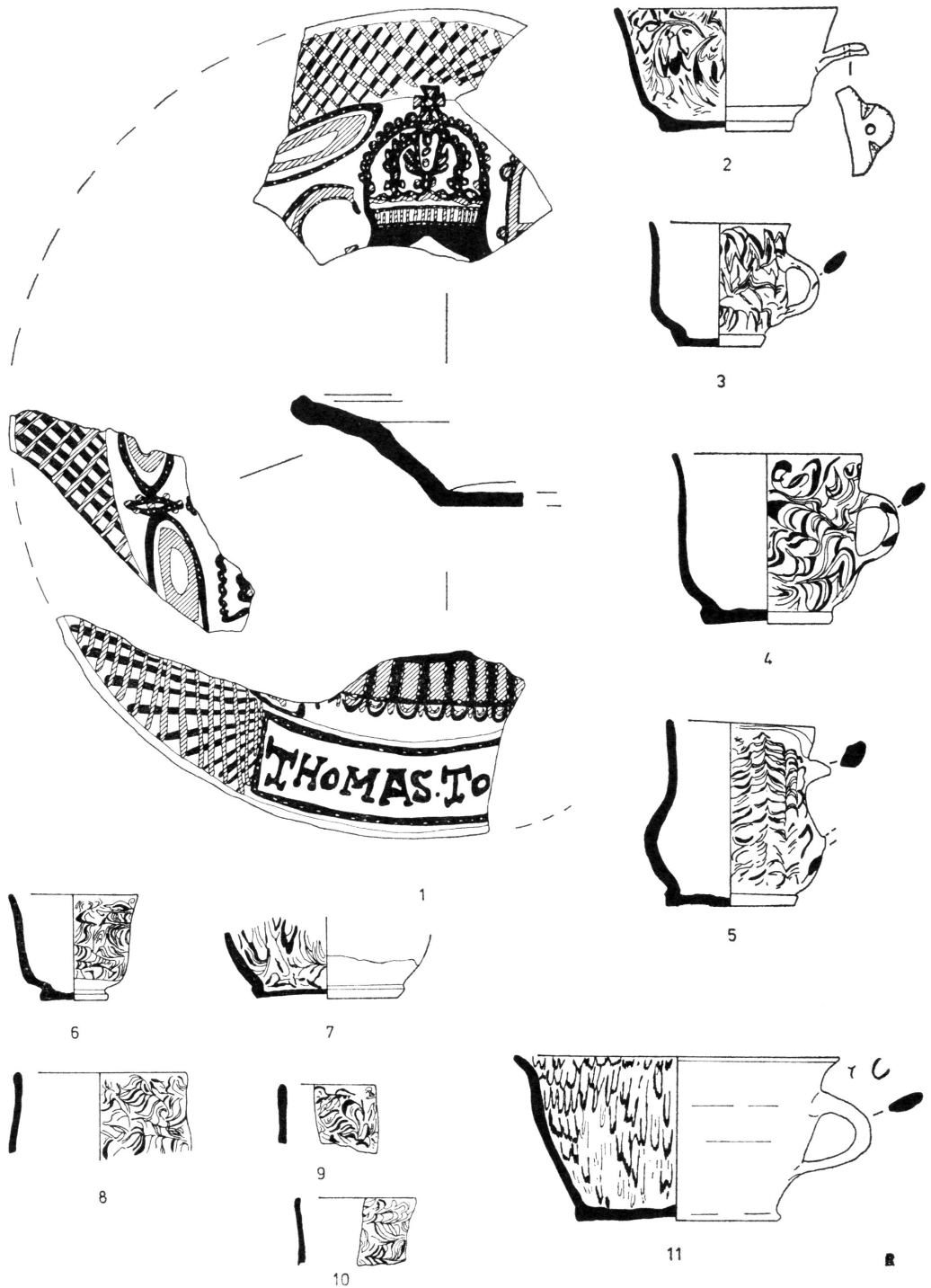


FIGURE 1 Slipware

- 4 Cup, hard reddy-buff fabric, plain dark crazed lead glaze inside. External surface combed decoration only as far as the foot ring. Runs in the glaze suggest it was fired the correct way up.
- 5 Hollow-ware vessel, creamy white fabric, with some large whitish inclusions (flint or crushed pot). Inside plain crazed, lead glaze, orange. External surface combed, and on the upper surface of handle, combing finishes at the level of the foot ring. No glaze on underside of the base.
- 6 Cup, creamy white fabric with some flint grits. Internal surface plain, crazed, lead glaze a brownish yellow. External surface combed to just above the foot ring. Possibly it had a handle.
- 7 Hollow-ware base, creamy pink fabric with some flints; combed decoration inside only. Exterior has a reddy-brown slip just above foot ring, no glaze on base.
- 8 Hollow-ware, creamy white fabric, with some flints. Combed external decoration.
- 9-10 Hollow-wares, as above, diameters?
- 11 Hollow-ware. Domestic pot. Hard creamy buff to white fabric, with grits. Rim surface slightly corrugated to the touch, not really noticeable to the eye. Combed decoration internally; external dark yellow crazed lead glaze. No glaze on the base, one square bob mark; fired the correct way up. Under the glaze on the right side of the handle are what appear to be the initials T C incised into the body of the vessel.
- 12 Hollow-ware vessel, creamy white fabric; external combed decoration only. No glaze on base.

Combed Slipware: Flat ware

- 13 Part of a rectangular press-moulded dish, creamy pink to white fabric with wide-spaced combed decoration on internal surface. Externally no glaze or slip.
- 14 Rectangular press-moulded dish, creamy buff fabric with some flint inclusions. Combed decoration internally and embossed letters R M on surface. External surface has no glaze, but some sooting. Similar vessel in J. H. Kelly and S. J. Greaves, *The Excavations of a kiln base in Old Hall Street, Hanley*, City of Stoke-on-Trent Mus., Arch., Soc. Report no. 6 (1974), fig. 13, 108.
- 15 Flatware, press-moulded, creamy pink fabric; flint grits; combed decoration on internal surface only.
- 16 Flatware, press-moulded sherd, creamy fabric. Combed decoration internally and embossed letters I F on surface.
- 17 Flatware, press-moulded; creamy white fabric with small white grits. Scalloped edge knife cut. *Op. cit.*, fig. 13 no. 107 as above.
- 18 Flatware, press-moulded, creamy white fabric, combed decoration internally.
- 19 Flatware press-moulded, creamy white fabric, combed decoration in three colours. Reddy-brown, orange and white.
- 20-24 Flatwares, press-moulded. No. 24 has a single hole through the body, for hanging.
- 25 Flatware. Turned, flanged rim. Hard pinkish brick-red fabric with a few sand grains. Knife trimming around the base. Combed decoration internally with some reddish slip on the external surface. The glaze does not come beyond the rim edge. Two holes through the rim for hanging, pushed through from the top, hole diameter 3·6 mm.
- 26 Flatware, turned. Reddish pink fabric with inclusions of large cinders and a few sand grains. Knife trimmed base. Combed decoration internally. On the external surface just on the underside of the rim, are what appear to be the initials R A scratched into the surface.
- 27 Hollow-ware, creamy white fabric. Trailed slip decoration, red covered with a clear lead glaze. Runs from the slip show the vessel to have been fired the correct way up in the kiln.
- 28 Hollow-ware, creamy pink fabric, with some small red grits. Trailed slip decoration, brown and white, covered with clear lead glaze.
- 29 Hollow-ware lid. Creamy pink fabric, with some small red grits. Trailed slip decoration, brown and white. J. H. Kelly, *Post Medieval Pottery from Newcastle Street, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent*, City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum Arch. Soc. Report no. 8, (1975), fig. 3, no. 19.
- 30 Dish, thrown with flanged rim; red body with small inclusions of flint. Internal surface decorated with trailed cream slip underlying a lead glaze. The base edge is slightly scalloped by knife trimming.
- 31-33 As above.
- 34-40 Fragmentary thrown dishes, trailed slip decoration on red bodies.

Midland Blackware

- 41 Hollow-ware, jug; part reconstructed. Hard red fabric with some skerry. Black lead/iron glaze inside and out. Fired the correct way up in the kiln.

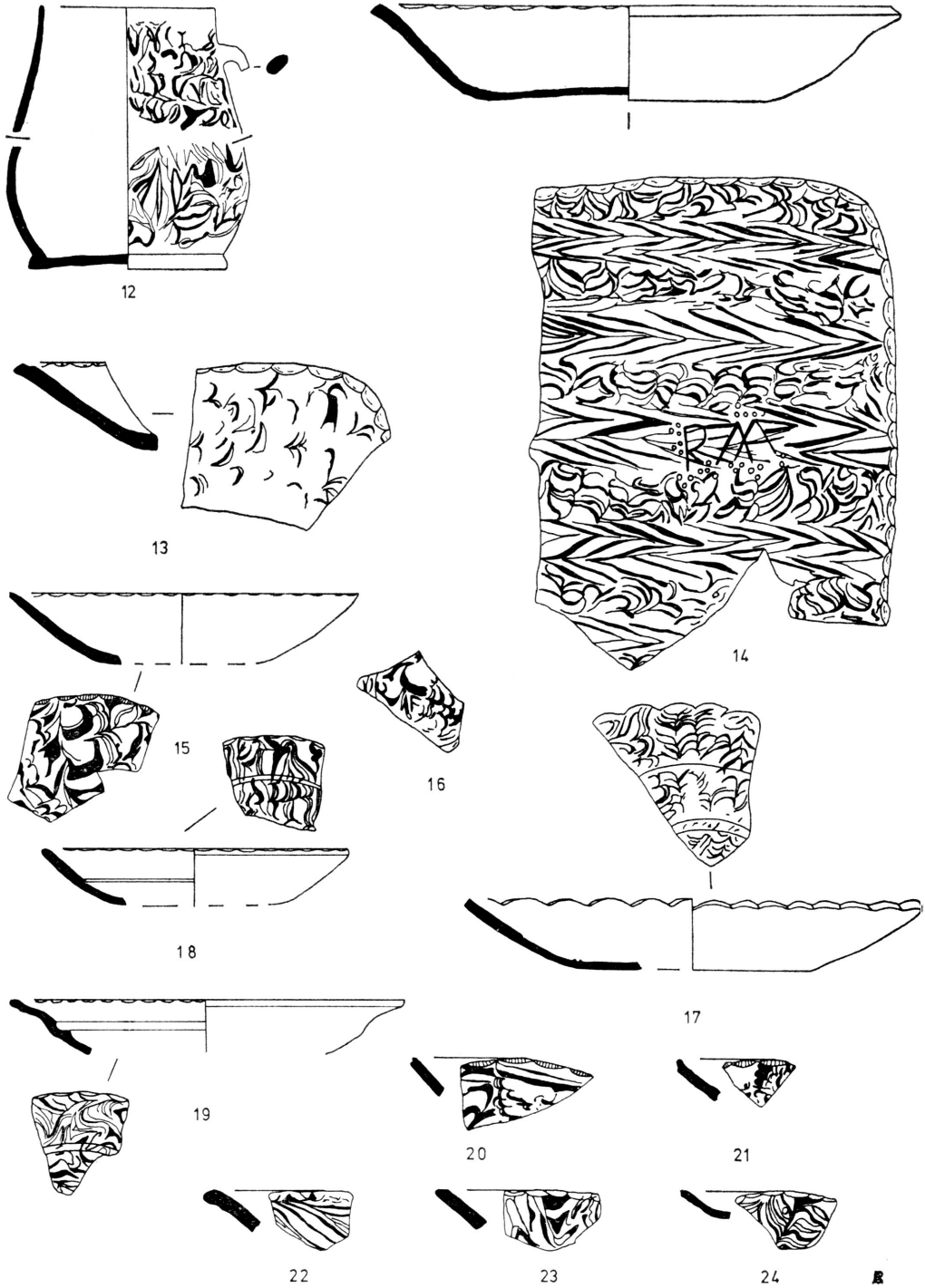


FIGURE 2 Slipware

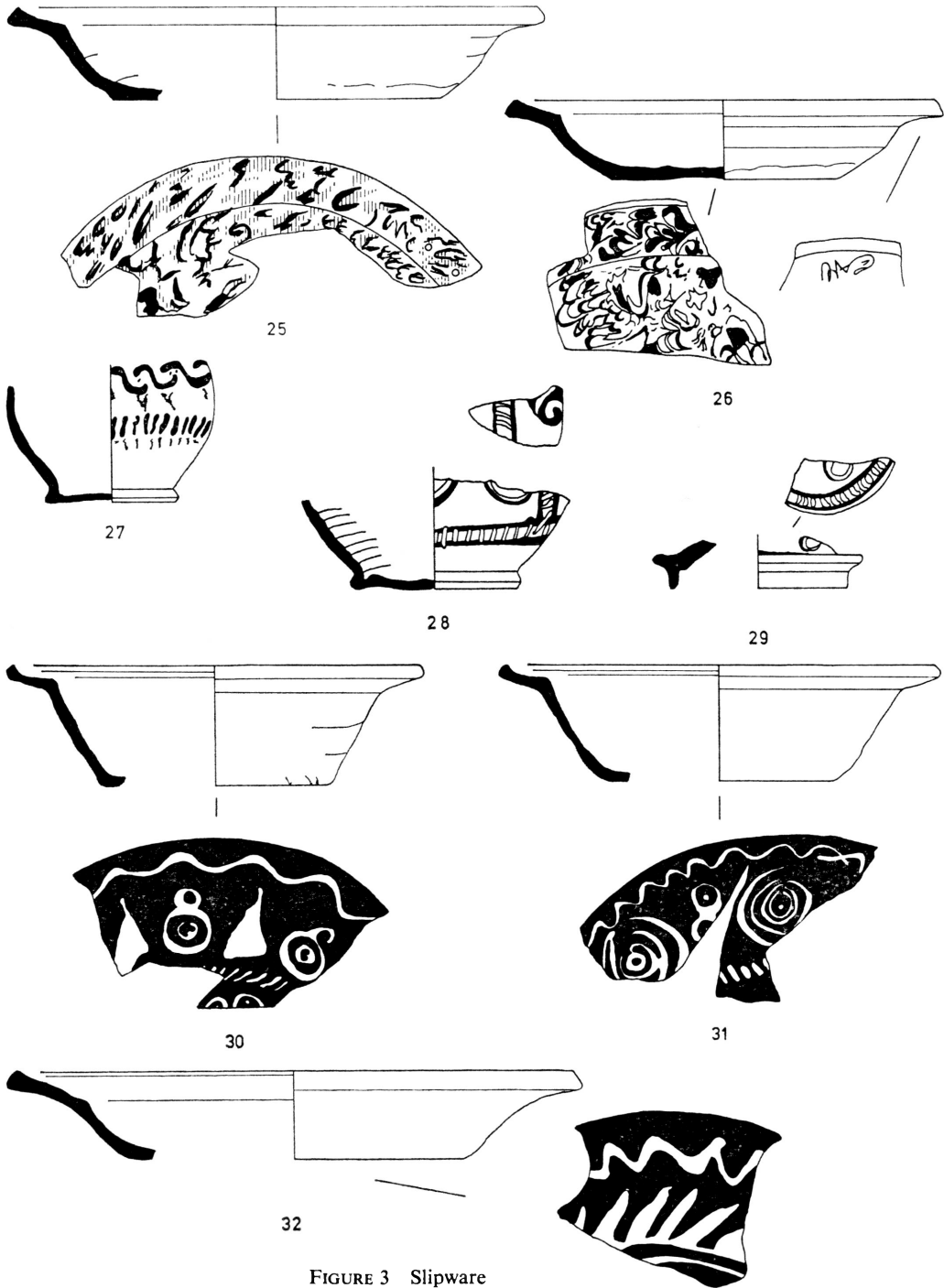


FIGURE 3 Slipware

- 42 Hollow-ware, domestic pot. Hard purple fabric with a little skerry. Black to purple lead/iron glaze inside and out, small flecks of white showing through glaze. Also the surface is pitted.
- 43 Hollow-ware, domestic pot. Hard purple fabric with some air pockets in it. Purplish lead/iron glaze inside and out, pitted, and not reaching quite to the base. Inside surface scratched by the use of sand for cleaning.
- 44 Hollow-ware, cup. Hard purple smooth fabric, black lead/iron glaze both sides. Fired correct way up.
- 45 Hollow-ware. Double handled drinking vessel. Hard reddish purple fabric and a little skerry. Black lead/iron glaze inside and out. Fired correct way up.
- 46 Hollow-ware, double handled drinking vessel. Red body with black lead/iron glaze.
- 47 Hollow-ware, vessel. Hard reddish purple fabric with a little skerry. Black lead/iron glaze inside and out. Three loop handles and six multi-loop handles.
- 48 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard red fabric; glaze black lead/iron glaze inside and out. Four loop handles and four double loop handles.
- 49 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard red fabric; black lead/iron glaze inside and out. Three loop handles and three multi-loop handles.
- 50 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard red fabric; black lead/iron glaze over a purple slip. Three loop handles and three multi-loop handles. Scar of a bob on base; fired correct way up.
- 51 Hollow-ware vessel sherd. Multi-handled.
- 52-53 Hollow-ware eggs. Hard reddish purple fabric. Black lead/iron glaze both sides. Base has two bob marks. Three handles.
- 54 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard brick red fabric; black lead/iron glaze inside and out. ? one handle.
- 55 as 52-3.
- 56 Hollow-ware, cup. Hard red fabric; black lead/iron glaze inside and out.
- 57 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard red fabric; black lead/iron glaze inside and out.
- 58 Hollow-ware bottle—a copy of a Bellarmine stoneware bottle. Purple fabric with pitted purple lead/iron glaze on both sides of rim. Rim has scars to where it was in contact with another vessel.
- 59 Hollow-ware bowl. Reddish purple fabric with skerry; black lead/iron glaze both sides.

Midland Yellow-ware

- 60 Flatware, dish. Creamy white fabric, with butter yellow lead glaze inside with run on the external surface showing it to have been fired on its edge. Turned and knife trimmed base edge.
- 61 Flatware, dish. Creamy pink chalky fabric with some large quartz grits. Glaze inside, sooted and burnt outside.
- 62 Flatware, dish. Creamy pink fabric, some large grits. Butter yellow lead glaze inside only and just over the rim.
- 63 Flatware, dish. Hard creamy white fabric, some large grits. Butter yellow lead glaze inside, runs on the outside.
- 64 Flatware, dish. Hard creamy white fabric, grits. Butter yellow lead glaze inside and over edge of rim. Knife trimming around base.
- 65-71 Flatware, dishes. Creamy white fabric. Butter yellow lead glaze with some spots of iron, inside only.
- 72-76 Flatware, dishes. Fragmentary.
- 77 Hollow-ware vessel, fragmentary.
- 78 Hollow-ware, domestic pot. Light grey semi-stoneware. Greeny yellow to brown, lead glaze, with spots of iron. Outside large smudges of glaze. Vessel not quite round.
- 79-81 Hollow-ware, bases. Creamy white fabric, glazed inside and out in a butter yellow lead glaze. Number 81 is over-fired and the glaze is a brownish green.
- 82 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard creamy white fabric, butter yellow lead glaze inside and out, some sooting on external side.

Lead Manganese Ware (Mottled Ware)

- 83 Hollow-ware, vessel. Hard creamy pinkish fabric with some small white grits. Manganese glaze inside and out. Possibly had a single handle. c. 1700. A. R. Mountford, *The Sadler Teapot Manufactory Site, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent*, City of Stoke-on-Trent Mus., Arch., Soc., report no. 7 (1975), fig. 13, no. 100.
- 84 Hollow-ware vessel. Hard semi vitrified creamy white fabric, with one large stone 13.5 mm. long. Manganese glaze outside and a little inside around neck. Glaze flaking off.

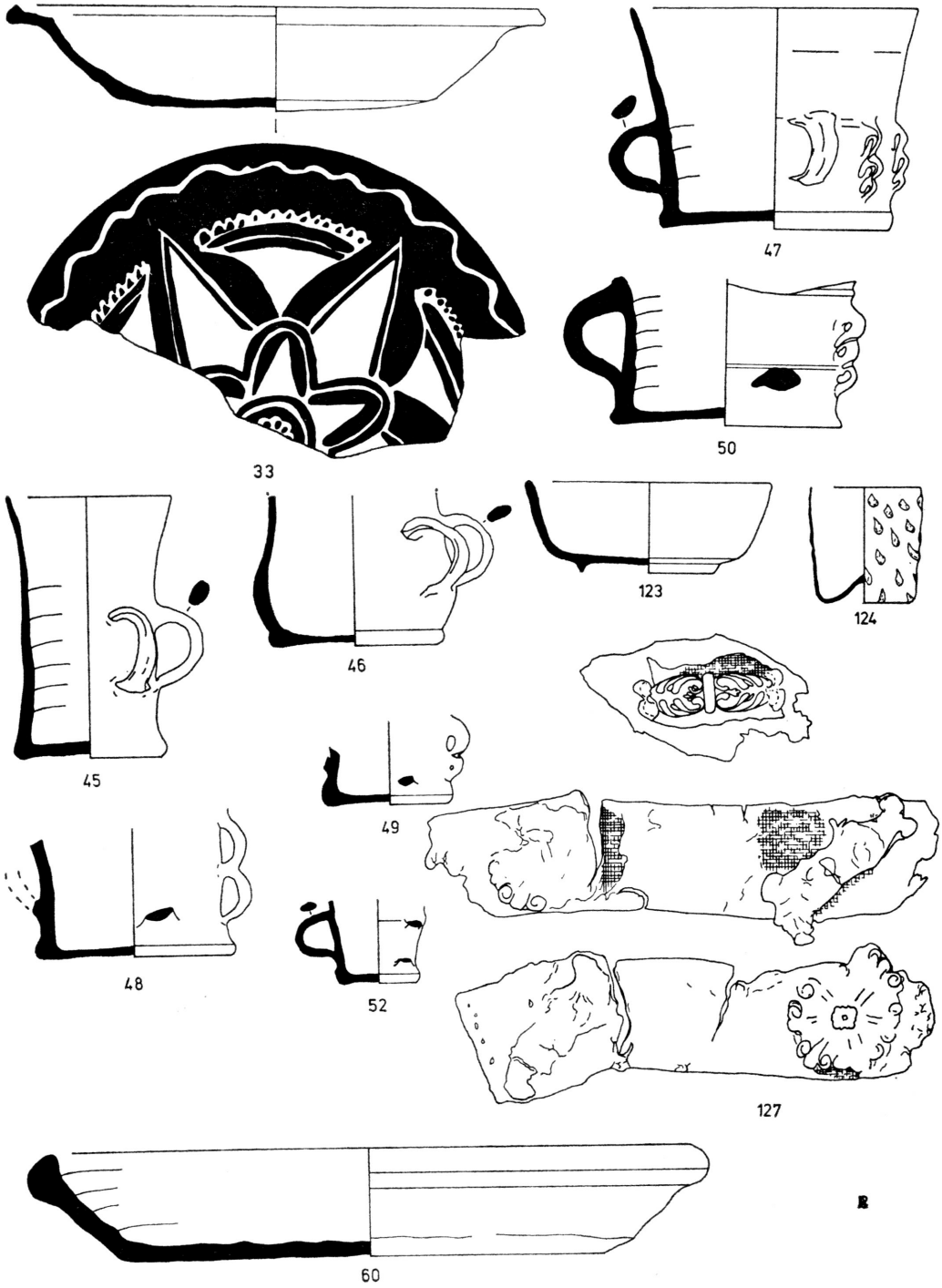


FIGURE 4 Pottery, Glass and Leather

Midland Purple Ware

- 85 Hollow-ware, bottle. Very hard purple fabric, with a purple slip and a blackish purple lead/iron glaze.
- 86 Hollow-ware, base. Very hard purple fabric with some air pockets. Purple slip, black pitted lead/iron glaze.
- 87 Hollow-ware, cistern. Very hard purple fabric with some skerry present. Glaze inside purple over a purple slip. Bung hole just above base edge, base knife trimmed. On the underside of this base are the marks of three smaller pots, have slim diameter of around 7 cms. From these scars the vessels would appear to have been a white stoneware. Parting sand is also noted around the edges. It has been noted before that these large vessels have served as saggars for finer wares.
- 88-103 Butter pots. Hard reddish purple fabrics. Some have skerry inclusions. Glazed on the inside, purple over a purple slip. No. 88 has a wire cut base. No. 92 has four cuts in the body just below rim. The above rim form have been found in waste heaps in Chuck Lane, Ticknall, (427-76, Derby Museum).
- 104 Handle of a horizontal type often found on butter pots.
- 105 Hollow-ware, dish. Hard grey to purple fabric, some sand; has large fragment of lime that has blown a hole in the inner surface. Only a slight trace of purple glaze on edge of rim.
- 106 Dish. Vitrified purple fabric, some skerry and air pockets. Glaze and slip purple inside only.
- 107 Hollow-ware, jug. Hard purple fabric and a little skerry. Glaze outside and just in the neck, dull purple and pitted; over-fired as flaze is burnt in places.
- 108 Hollow-ware, base. Hard purple fabric and flaze.
- 109-111 Panchions, flanged rimmed. Hard reddish to purple fabric and skerry. Glazed inside only purple. Number 109 has large air pockets in rim, and some parting sand on the rim. Diameter between 40·5 cm. to 41·3 cm.

Red Earthen Ware

- 112-113 Butter Pots. Hard red brick fabric with a few sand grains and skerry. Purple slip and purplish-brown glaze inside.
- 114-122 Panchions. Hard pinkish red brick fabric with some large stones and skerry. Purple slip and reddish-brown glaze inside only. Knife trimming around base edges. Diameter between 40·5 cm. and 43·2 cm.

Delftware

- 123 Bleeding bowl. Hard creamy fabric, glaze inside and out, pinkish white, no glaze on base. Not illustrated. Fragment of round section handle.

Nottingham Stone Ware

Not illustrated. Two sherds, grey fabric with brown glaze both sides and white line below glaze; and creamy orange fabric, brown glaze both sides, white line below glaze.

OTHER FINDS

Glass

- 124 Beaker. Clear glass with a few air bubbles, tear drop decoration. High kick base, decoration continuing into highest point of base. Pontil scar 5·5 mm.
- 125 Bottle neck green glass with elongated air bubbles: thick silring ring. Late 17th century.
- 126 Glass rod with tapped end, clear glass.

Leather and Bronze

- 127 Leather strap of between 2·4 mm. to 3·0 mm. thick; needle holes in one piece and another is joined together by a thong of leather with half knot on the underside. It is decorated with bronze fittings that are very badly corroded; each item of bronze has a cloth backing that could have covered the whole strap.

Clay Pipes

Not illustrated. Thirty-two pipes in all, only six having maker's mark, five I. James and one of W. Sefton, and one bowl with a mulberry decoration. The pipes can be dated between 1670 and 1710. R. C. Alvey and R. R. Laxton, 'Analysis of Some Nottingham Clay Pipes', *Science and Archaeology*, 13 (1974), 3-12.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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