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Medieval Pottery in East Hampshire: A Preliminary Survey

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Abstract

Small scale excavations across east Hampshire have yielded a number of small assemblages, which when considered together can allow us to begin to understand patterns of ceramic production and exchange in this region. The important Anglo-Saxon assemblage from Chalton is briefly discussed, as are previously unpublished groups from Alton, Basingstoke, Liss and Petersfield, alongside information gleaned from previously published analyses.

Introduction

Archaeology in East Hampshire, an area characterised by small villages and market towns, has largely been very fragmented. Unlike the larger cities of Winchester, Portsmouth and Southampton and the nearby town of Romsey, this area has not been subjected to sustained medieval archaeological research. This paper provides a preliminary statement on the medieval pottery recovered from a number of, generally small scale, investigations at a disparate collection of sites in eastern Hampshire. These include the identification of two potential production sites and evidence from consumer sites, principally around the small town of Alton. These stretch from Basingstoke in the north to Fareham in the south (Fig.1). A brief summary of the Anglo-Saxon pottery from the important site at Chalton is also presented. With the exception of Chalton, all of the pottery is in the collections of Hampshire Museums Service, with much being part of old collections, collected during the 1960's and 70's and was studied as part of the author's doctoral research (Jervis forthcoming a). The aims of the survey are to provide a brief overview of the main types of pottery encountered in and to present a preliminary consideration of ceramic production, distribution and consumption in the region. Reports on individual assemblages, as well as a fabric type series, have been deposited with Hampshire Museum Service.

The Archaeology of East Hampshire

East Hampshire is characterised by villages and small towns, such as Alton and Petersfield. A number of excavations have taken place in these towns from which ceramic assemblages have been recovered. Within the study area there are 4 large sites of Anglo-Saxon date. In the north, around Basingstoke, excavations at Cowdery's Down revealed a number of timber structures dating to the 5th-7th centuries. The size of the structures, coupled with the presence of a 'special deposit' of an articulated cow, have been taken to suggest that the site was of relatively high status (Millet and James 1983; see also Hamerow 2005). More recently, excavations at Riverdene revealed a number of sunken featured buildings and timber structures, believed to date to the 7th-8th centuries (Hall-Torrance and Weaver 2003). Further south, excavations at Chalton uncovered a number of timber structures and a sunken featured building, dating to the 6th-7th centuries, which have been identified as being part of an extensive Anglo-Saxon landscape (Addyman, Leigh and Hughes 1973; Addyman and Leigh 1973). The final large site of Anglo-Saxon date is Portchester. Much of the evidence recovered relates to the later Anglo-Saxon period, but there are also a number of early Anglo-Saxon features, which may be indicative of some continued occupation of the shore fort in the 5th century (Cunliffe 1976). Rescue excavations during the 1970's have also recovered evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation at a number of other sites in the region, for example at Fareham (Holmes 1978) and Rowner (Lewis and Martin

1973). Small quantities of Anglo-Saxon pottery were also recovered at Basing House (Allen and Anderson 1999), from excavations around Alton (e.g. Millett and Graham 1986) and at Emsworth (Bradley 1973).

The bulk of the material being discussed here dates from the 10th-15th centuries and comes from excavations in small towns across the region. Basingstoke was a market town in the medieval period and a small quantity of material was recovered during building work, but not from comprehensive excavation. Around Basingstoke, excavations at Basing House (Allen and Anderson 1999) and the deserted village at Hatch (Fasham, Keevill and Coe 1995) have provided evidence of extensive medieval occupation. Excavations have also taken place at Odiham Castle (Allen and Stoodley 2010). Further south, Alton saw a relatively intensive programme of rescue excavation during the late 1970's, largely under the direction of Martin Millett. A number of small pits were excavated at various sites in the town, with material also being recovered during building work. The largest excavations were at Johnson's Corner where a series of pits, generally dating to the later medieval period, were excavated (Millett 1983). These excavations also recovered a large and important post medieval assemblage, not discussed here. More recently, excavations have examined further 13th-15th century pits on Alton High Street (Taylor and Hammond 2007). Pottery production is known in the region around Alton, at Bentley (Barton and Brears 1976; Lyne and Jefferies 1975) and the products of this centre are summarised below.

The small towns of Petersfield and Liss have seen less excavation than Alton. Excavations at Sheep Street, Petersfield (Fox and Hughes 1993) revealed the remains of two 13th-14th century tenements, and further medieval evidence has been recovered from watching briefs in the town (Torrance and Ford 1993). The only material from Liss discussed here comes from chance finds from gardens. To the north of Liss a surface scatter appears to indicate the presence of a pottery production centre at Hawkley. As well as recovering Anglo-Saxon material, excavations in the Chalton area provided evidence for later medieval and post medieval occupation (Cunliffe 1973). In Portsmouth, a small quantity of medieval material was recovered at Oyster Street (Barton and Fox 1986), whilst excavations at Market Quay, Fareham, have also recovered a small assemblage (Brown unpublished). Excavations at Portchester Castle have provided a corpus of medieval material, and includes pottery produced nearby at Boarhunt (Cunliffe and Munby 1985).

Ceramic Production

Four production centres are known in east Hampshire. Two of these waster groups, one from Bentley and one from Jack O'Tooles Row, Boarhunt have been published (Barton and Brears 1976; Whinney 1981). Two more have been identified in the course of this research, on the basis of wasters from surface scatters. A collection from Aldershot appears related to the production of Coarse Border Ware, whilst a larger collection from Hawkley, near Liss, indicates the presence of a production centre, possibly dating to the 13th or 14th centuries.

Bentley

Potters at Bentley were producing both coarsewares and glazed sandy wares, probably in the later 13th-14th centuries. The coarsewares are principally jars, often decorated with thumbled applied strip decoration (e.g. Fig.5c). These fall into a group of coarse Micaceous Sandy Wares present across the mid part of the region (see discussion of material from Alton below), although wares are also present with large, angular, flint inclusions. The

glazed wares are in a slightly different fabric, typically being a dense, greyware with a dark, rich green glaze (Barton and Brears 1976, 71). In terms of the decorative techniques used, these wares demonstrate influences from West Sussex and Northern France (Barton and Brears 1976, 74). The forms produced at Bentley have been well discussed elsewhere and will not be dealt with here (see Barton and Brears 1976; Lyne and Jefferies 1975).

Jack O'Tooles Row (Boarhunt)

This site was identified following the surface collection of pottery sherds, including wasters (Whinney 1981). The fabric is an iron rich sandy ware, with calcite or flint temper present in some sherds, which ranges in colour from pinkish-red to grey. A range of vessels appear to have been produced, including tall, narrow jugs with thumbled bases and squared off rims, jars with simple everted rims and straight edged profiles, curfews and skillets, as well as roof furniture. All of the pottery is wheelthrown and is sometimes decorated with applied pellets or strips, or incised lines. The jugs are typically glazed, with glazes ranging in colour from light yellow-green to brown. The production centre has been dated to the 13th-14th centuries, on the basis of similar vessels being excavated in Winchester, Portsmouth (where it accounts for a third of the medieval pottery from Oyster Street), Portchester (where it may be related to the 'developed medieval tradition') and Wickham Common. A link to late-Saxon Portchester Ware has been suggested on the basis of fabric, but this remains to be proven.

Aldershot

Three assemblages are present amongst material from the Basingstoke Old Collection from Newport Road, Aldershot. Of the 376 sherds present, 320 are of Coarse Border Ware (see Pearce and Vince 1988, 9). Three sub-groups were identified, of which one dominates. Based on the general homogeneity of the group it can be inferred that this site may have been a production centre of this ware. Sherds are not illustrated, but parallels are cited with the corpus published by Pearce and Vince (1988).

Sherds from bowls, jars and jugs are present, with the majority coming from jars and bowls, with only three fragments identified as coming from jugs (table 1). Jars typically have clubbed rims, suggesting that the production centre was operating in the 14th century (Pearce and Vince 1988, 84-5). Jars are rarely decorated, one example has combing around the shoulder. Glaze is rare on these vessels, one vessel has a splash of bright green glaze on the interior and another a splash of clear glaze on the exterior. The forms and general lack of decoration on these vessels corresponds well with the known corpus of Coarse Border Ware jar forms.

Several bowl rims are present, the most common being clubbed or hammerhead forms. A single example is thickened and flat topped, with slight clubbing. This form has not been identified by Pearce and Vince. These vessels are rarely glazed and never decorated. There are three examples with splashes of bright green glaze on the interior. As with the jars, the forms present can be paralleled elsewhere and Coarse Border Ware bowls are rarely decorated (Pearce and Vince 1982, 65).

The sherds present at this site suggest it was operating within the Coarse Border Ware tradition, producing forms well known from excavations in London. It was one of a number of centres producing these wares. The forms are principally jars and bowls and are generally undecorated. The lack of decoration and of jug sherds implies that the centre focussed on the production of relatively plain, utilitarian vessels.

Hawkley

A total of 329 sherds were recovered from a surface scatter at Hawkley (table 2). All of the sherds are in a single fabric, a harsh, sandy oxidised ware characterised by the presence of common, sub-rounded quartz with occasional other gritty material. The most common form are jars. Tile fragments were recovered in a similar fabric.

The assemblage is dominated by jar fragments and these would appear to be the main product of this centre. There are two broad groups of rim forms present (table 2). The first are simple everted forms, in which both rounded and straight edged profiles are present, with the rounded form being more common (Fig.2c). The second, and most common form, are thickened, everted forms with an internal lip, again rounded and straight edged forms occur (Fig.2b). There are three examples of thickened, everted rims with a rounded profile, and one with a straight edged profile, which do not have an internal lip. The only other form present, and only in small quantities, is the hammerhead rim (Fig.2a). Again, both rounded and straight edged versions are present. There appears to be some standardisation in vessel size, with most vessels having a rim diameter between 220-240mm (Fig.3). Vessels are rarely glazed, two examples have partial, exterior, clear glazes and two have partial, interior, clear glazes. One sherd possibly had an interior white slip.

Bowls are much more variable, with 6 rim forms being identified. There are three examples of hammerhead rims, two are rounded, everted forms and one is a flat topped, straight edged form, which has thumb impressions along the top edge. There is one example of a simple, inturned, rounded form and two thickened forms, one of which has an internal lip. There is also one example of a clubbed form with a rounded profile. One example has a partial, exterior, clear glaze. There are four examples of curfews within the assemblage. One rim sherd is present, a thickened, flat form. There are three curfew handles, one is a strap handle and two are rod handles. The strap handle has stick-end (stabbed) decoration. None of the sherds are glazed. Jugs were only identified by their bases. There are three examples of a flat base with pulled feet (Fig.2d), a further example of a flat base and two examples of a slightly sagging base, which have thumb impressions. Two of these examples have partial, external, clear glazes.

A further 185 sherds could not be confidently assigned to specific vessels forms. These include strap and rod handles (probably from jugs). Most of the sherds are undiagnostic body fragments, but there are 43 examples of slightly sagging bases with an obtuse basal angle. These are probably jar and bowl bases. One example has an exterior white slip. The sherds are rarely glazed, twelve body sherds have partial, clear, exterior glazes. Five bases have a partial, clear, internal glaze and one has an exterior glaze. Like Bentley, this centre would appear to have been founded to supply coarsewares to nearby towns, with examples having been identified in Petersfield and Liss (Fig.8d).

Anglo-Saxon Pottery in East Hampshire

There are few collections of Anglo-Saxon pottery from settlement sites in the region, although important cemetery assemblages have been excavated from the Alton area (Evison 1988). The sites considered here principally date to the early- and mid- Saxon periods, with later material only being recovered in quantity from Portchester and Fareham. Small groups of early-mid Anglo-Saxon pottery have been recovered from Alton (Amery House) and from a sunken featured building at Neatham, consisting of a mixture of Organic-tempered and Coarse Flint-tempered wares (Millet and Graham 1986), typical of

West Sussex and southern Hampshire (e.g. Jervis 2008; Jervis 2009b). At both Riverdene and Cowdrey's Down over 90% of the pottery by count and weight consists of Organic-tempered Ware (Timby 2004; Millet and James 1983) (table 3). At Portchester Castle 54% of the earliest Saxon sherds are Organic-tempered Wares, with the remainder being Sandy Wares (Cunliffe 1976: 182). As elsewhere in Hampshire and in West Sussex, the later Anglo-Saxon pottery (8th century) is typified by Flint- or Chalk-tempered Wares. At Fareham, the majority of later Anglo-Saxon pottery consists of Flint-tempered Wares (Holmes 1974, 53-4), which are noted as being similar to the latest wares from *Hamwic* (see Timby 1988). Gritty wares are also the most common later type at Portchester (Cunliffe 1976) and both Flint- and Chalk-tempered wares were identified at Catherington (Pile and Barton 1973).

The assemblage from Chalton appears to cover the shift from the earlier Sandy/Organic-tempered tradition to the later gritty tradition. Organic-tempered wares are the most common type from stratified deposits, with most sherds being in sandy fabrics with organic temper (table 3). There are small quantities of, possibly transitional, Organic-tempered wares with gritty inclusions, either flint, shell or chalk. Most of the sherds which could be identified to a vessel form were from jars (with a maximum of 78 being present). These are rarely decorated, one sherd has an applied boss, one is burnished, one is combed and one is stabbed. Sandy wares are also present and although less common than the Organic-tempered Wares, their presence here is noteworthy. These wares are not common in western Hampshire, with the exception of *Hamwic* (Timby 1988) and sites around Andover, on the fringe of the Thames Valley tradition, in which Organic-tempered Wares do not play such a major role. In Sussex, Organic-tempered Wares are relatively uncommon, and therefore Chalton can be seen as being on the fringe between two ceramic traditions (see Blinkhorn 1997). This may also be supported by differences in decoration, as one jar is stamped and 5 exhibit stick-end decoration (see Cunliffe 1974; Jervis 2008). Alternatively, there could be a chronological explanation, with the sandy wares pre-dating the Organic-tempered wares, although the structural evidence makes this unlikely.

The Flint-tempered Wares from Chalton are generally sandy and the flint is often patinated, suggesting that it may have derived from gravel deposits. All of the diagnostic sherds are from undecorated jars. Chalk-tempered wares also occur and may be of mid- or late- Saxon date. They are likely to be locally produced, given the sites location on chalk downland. Again, the only diagnostic sherds are from jars and these are rarely decorated. The Chalton assemblage is of considerable importance for two reasons. Firstly, it is one of the few rural assemblages from Hampshire in which we can observe the decline of earlier types and the emergence of later gritty wares and secondly the site appears to lie where two ceramic traditions, those of Hampshire and Sussex, meet, as is evidenced through both fabric and decoration. This is a pattern which continues into the medieval period (Barton 1969). Further analysis is required to allow this potential to be met, and central to this will be final analysis of the stratigraphy and other finds from this site.

Another type of importance in the region is Portchester-type Ware. This wheelthrown, reduced sandy ware is relatively common at Portchester (Cunliffe 1976) but is only encountered in small quantities outside of the settlement. A single sherd has been recovered from Southampton (Brown 1994) and small quantities are known from Winchester (Holmes and Matthews forthcoming), Romsey (Jervis forthcoming b), Chichester (Jervis 2009b) and Bishop's Waltham (Lewis 1985). It would appear that this ware was produced in the vicinity of Portchester, principally for consumption there, fitting

into a general pattern whereby pottery industries emerged to serve particular burghal sites (Jervis 2007).

Post-Conquest Pottery in East Hampshire

The region can be divided into several zones in general terms, based both on geography and the types of pottery present. The first is the Basingstoke area, characterised by the presence of Kennet Valley types, the second is the Alton area, characterised by the presence of micaceous coarsewares, including those produced at Bentley, the third is the Petersfield area, characterised by the presence of Hakwley-type Wares and other distinctively local types and finally the coastal zone, including Chalton.

The Basingstoke Area

The evidence from the Basingstoke area consists of a collection of 178 sherds from Basingstoke itself, largely collected during building work, 200 sherds collected in similar circumstances from Overton and 123 sherds from Long Sutton, as well as previously published material from Basing House, Odiham Castle and Hatch Warren (Rees 1995) (table 4).

The range of wares present in Basingstoke itself are fairly limited. The earliest pottery (11th-12th century date) is characterised by the presence of Flint and Sand Tempered wares, most of which fall into the Kennet Valley 'A' Tradition (Vince et al 1997). These are also the most common type in the assemblage from Hatch Warren, on the outskirts of the town (Rees 1995, 116) and were also identified at Basing House (Allen and Anderson 1999, 61) and at Overton and Long Sutton. All of the diagnostic sherds from Basingstoke were from jars, with simple, everted rims. A range of Early Medieval Sandy wares are also present. Sherds are typically partially glazed and at least one is from a tripod pitcher. Sherds of coarser quartz-tempered wares, in the Wessex Coarseware tradition (Brown 2002; Jervis forthcoming b) are also present in small quantities. These are considerably more common in western Hampshire (e.g. Romsey; Jervis forthcoming b), but the tradition would appear to extend as far eastwards as the Basingstoke area, with wares in this tradition also being recovered at Odiham Castle (Brown and Thomson 2010). The 13th-14th century coarsewares in the area principally consist of Kennet Valley 'B' Wares, with flint and chalk temper. In Basingstoke, 8 jars were present in this ware. It was also common at Hatch Warren (Rees 1995, group 1) and occurs in Overton. The coarsewares used in the Basingstoke area fall into a ceramic zone stretching along the Kennet valley, seemingly centred on Newbury, but extending at least from Andover in the west and extending southwards down the tributaries of the Kennet. In east Hampshire it is not common in the Alton area so its southwards distribution is fairly limited (Fig.8a).

The glazed sandy wares present are generally of Surrey type. In Basingstoke itself sherds of Surrey Whiteware and London-type Ware were identified and both were also present at Basing House (Allan and Anderson 1999). At Hatch Warren, sherds of Coarse Border Ware and Kingston-type Wares were recovered, along with a range of Thames and Kennet Valley types (Rees 1995). Sherds of both Kingston-type Ware and Coarse Border Ware were recovered from Overton and 17 sherds of Coarse Border Ware were identified in the assemblage from Long Sutton. Thirteen sherds of a further Iron Rich Whiteware were present in Long Sutton, which may have been produced locally within the same tradition. A small quantity of non-local wares, including Oxford types and imported Saintonge Whiteware and Normandy Blackware were identified at Hatch Warren (Rees 1995, 117). As elsewhere in Hampshire the later medieval period is marked by the presence of redware

fabrics. Sherds from Long Sutton and Overton are similar to those from the Test Valley (Jervis forthcoming b) and may have been exchanged through Andover, whilst sherds of well fired Transitional Sandy Wares also occur (see Brown 2002; Blinkhorn and Brown 2007).

The Alton Area

The evidence from the Alton area principally consists of material recovered during rescue excavations in Alton itself, although a small collection from the nearby village of West Worldham was also examined, but is not quantified here.

The largest class of early medieval pottery in Alton would appear to be a group of Flint and Sand Tempered Wares (table 5; Fig.4). Whilst some are potentially of Kennet Valley type, the micaceous nature of the fabrics suggests that they are local products, being similar in character to the flint tempered wares excavated at Bentley. Flint and sand tempered wares are common across Hampshire and West Sussex in the Saxo-Norman period, being found in Chichester (Jervis 2009b), Winchester (Holmes and Matthews forthcoming) and Southampton (Brown 1994; 2001), for example, as well as into Surrey (Jones 1998). Jars are the only forms present, with simple, everted rims (Fig.4). A small quantity of Flint and Chalk-tempered wares, possibly of Kennet Valley 'B' type were identified. This attribution is supported by the presence of a bowl with an inturned, hammerhead rim. Most of the sherds were recovered from unstratified contexts, so can only be dated on typological grounds. A corresponding group of Flint and Chalk-tempered wares were identified by Blinkhorn and Brown (2007; fabric 11).

The bulk of the coarsewares present in Alton are Micaceous Coarsewares, of the type produced at Bentley (table 5). Two broad classes can be defined. The earliest are the Micaceous Coarse Sandy Wares, characterised by common-abundant quartz inclusions and micaceous clay bodies. Oxidised and reduced variants are present. These wares are similar in character to the Wessex Coarsewares common in west Hampshire (Jervis forthcoming b) as well as micaceous coarse sandy wares found in west Surrey (Jones 1998), whilst coarse sandy wares were also produced in Berkshire (Mephram and Heaton 1995), being part of tradition which covers most of central southern England. Most of the vessels in this group are jars, although bowls, jugs and a curfew have also been identified. The jars generally have simple or slightly thickened everted rims (Fig.5a), although hammerhead (Fig.5b) and clubbed variants also occur (Fig.5c; table 6). A similar range of rim forms are present on the bowls (Fig.5e). Vessels are rarely glazed and where this does occur it is generally in the form of a partial, clear glaze. Decoration is scarce but a small number of jars are scratch marked or wiped, or decorated with thumb impressed applied strips (Fig.5c).

These wares appear to be replaced to a group of Micaceous Fine Sandy Wares; a very fine, wheelthrown sandy ware, typically with micaceous surfaces. Sherds of this type are also present in the assemblage from West Worldham and have been found further south in the Liss/Petersfield area (Fig.6c). Vessels range in colour from grey-buff. As with the earlier type, jars, jugs (Fig.7H) and bowls are present and everted, hammerhead rims (Fig.6a; 6g) are the most common form (table 7). Jars are present with thumbed applied strip decoration (Fig.6a and 6b), matching those from the Bentley kiln (although this fabric is not present in the material in the British Museum) and fitting into a decorative group stretching into West Sussex (Barton and Brears 1976). Two sherds are painted, perhaps indicating some influence from the 15th-16th century West Sussex painted ware tradition. A local redware was also produced, dated on the basis of parallels in west Hampshire to the 14th-15th century. Similar transitional redware fabrics were produced in West Surrey during

the 15th-16th centuries (Jones 1998, 223). This widespread redware tradition is likely to be a precursor to the later Post Medieval Redwares produced across Hampshire from the 16th-20th centuries. This fabric is similar to the redware identified in the Basingstoke area, but is micaceous. A wide range of vessels are present, including jars (Fig.7a and 7b), jugs (Fig.7c, 7d, 7e and 7g), bowls (Fig.7f), dripping pans, pipkins and bunghole pitchers. Jars typically have simple, everted rims, although lid-seated varieties also occur (Fig.7a and 7b), whilst bowls generally have simple, inturned rims (Fig.7f). Vessels are scarcely decorated and only patchily glazed, and fit well into a tradition of utilitarian late medieval sandy wares, which occur across Hampshire at this time (Brown 2002). A group of Transitional Sandy Wares are also present (see Blinkhorn and Brown 2007, 129-31). Two further late medieval coarsewares co-occur with these wares, a Sandy Ware with Chalk and an Organic-tempered Sandy Ware, although neither are major types.

As in the Basingstoke area, most of the glazed sandy wares come from the Surrey/Hampshire border, with Surrey Whitewares including Kingston-type and Coarse Border Ware being the most common (table 5). The base of a Surrey Whiteware jug was present in the small group from West Worldham. Single sherds of South Hampshire Redware and Laverstock-type Ware were present in the assemblages analysed and small quantities of the latter were identified by Blinkhorn and Brown (2007). Locally produced glazed wares are present in the form of Bentley-type Ware jugs (although these are uncommon) and sherds of West Sussex Ware are also present (see also Barton 1969). A small group of other Iron Rich Sandy Wares, typical of central Hampshire (see Blinkhorn and Brown 2007, 129) and a Whiteware with Flint, possibly produced in the Surrey tradition, are also present. Imported wares are rare and consist of a single sherd of Saintonge Whiteware and a further sherd of possible north French provenance. It can be demonstrated that Alton was provisioned with coarseware pottery from local centres such as Bentley, with the localised, whilst glazed sandy wares were primarily sourced from the west, with Surrey and West Sussex types being most common.

Petersfield and Liss

The 12th-13th century pottery recovered from excavations in Petersfield is quite distinct from that from Alton, principally consisting of dense sandy wares (Timby 1993), although sherds of Micaceous Coarse Sandy Ware, Micaceous Fine Sandy Ware and Micaceous Redware were present, suggesting a convergence of traditions in the later medieval period (table 8). Liss, just to the north of Petersfield has a quite different assemblage (table 8). Here, Micaceous Coarse Sandy Ware dominates an unstratified assemblage, with sherds of Micaceous Fine Sandy Ware, Hawkley-type Ware and West Sussex Ware also being present. Jars are present along with a group of socketed bowls (Fig.6E). The rim forms present on the Micaceous Coarse Sandy Ware vessels are noticeably different to those present in Alton, perhaps indicating that this ware was produced at several centres (table 6). This pattern, principally the presence of thickened rims in Liss (Fig.6a; Fig.7D, 7E, 7F), continues into the later Micaceous Fine Sandy Ware vessels (table 7). Further excavations are required in these towns to fully understand the relationship between these markets and production centres.

The Coastal Zone

Archaeological research in the Chalton area has revealed evidence of occupation from prehistory to the modern day, recovering an important assemblage of medieval pottery. This was characterised by the prevalence of West Sussex Ware types from the 13th century onwards, whilst the coarsewares fit into a tradition which is distinctive from those sites

further north, being characterised by the presence of chalk or flint temper (Cunliffe 1973). Excavations at Oyster Street, Portsmouth (Barton and Fox 1986) recovered a large post medieval assemblage, but also several important medieval groups. Many of the coarseware vessels are similar to those produced at Jack O'Tooles Row (see above), whilst the jugs principally consist of a mixture of South Hampshire Redwares and West Sussex Wares, with a small quantity of imports also being present. The pottery from Portchester Castle is similar, containing coarse flint-tempered wares (including some of Jack O'Tooles Row type), although some wares bear some similarity to those produced at Bentley (Cunliffe and Munby 1985, 213). Here too, the sandy wares principally consist of red sandy types, probably South Hampshire Redware, with some imported and non-local wares being present, as is to be expected in a coastal castle. Further westwards, at Fareham an assemblage was present characterised by Quartz-rich and Flint Tempered coarsewares, South Hampshire Redware and West Sussex types (Brown 2004). The pottery of the coastal zone is distinctive of that from areas further north. The coarsewares are characterised by the presence of flint and chalk inclusions, demonstrating that the pottery was locally produced, with these inclusions being distinctive of coastal gravels and the chalk downland in. Rather than being sourced from Surrey, jugs and other glazed sandy wares principally came from West Sussex, or further westwards, from the South Hampshire Redware industry. The quartz rich coarsewares from Fareham have parallels in west Hampshire. The assemblages from this area are more similar to those from Southampton, with this port perhaps acting as a point for the coastal redistribution of some wares or, more likely, being provisioned by redware industries which were set up to supply Southampton and Winchester, as well as the surrounding area.

Pottery Production and Distribution

In simple terms, the distribution of pottery follows a two tiered model. Unglazed coarsewares were principally produced at centres related to particular settlements or groups of settlements, and glazed sandy ware industries were set up to supply wider markets, and often competed with each other. The general homogeneity of the coarsewares in Alton demonstrate this, as does the relationship between the Jack O'Tooles Row pottery and the material excavated in Portsmouth (Fig.8d) and the Hawkley, Petersfield and Liss (Fig.8d). The market for jugs in Alton would appear to have been saturated with Surrey products, with local potters also making competing vessels, possibly only for a small period, based on the relative quantities of these wares. Further south, the West Sussex Ware industries dominated the market (Fig.9c), but as we move westwards we can observe the South Hampshire Redware industries competing with these products in the market place (Fig.9d). These would appear to have been traded along the coast, whilst the Surrey wares in Alton are likely to have been transported via established road routes from Surrey to Winchester and on to Southampton (Fig.9a). The distribution of West Sussex Ware suggests that vessels may have been transported via the River Arun. We can see that potters set up workshops in strategic locations to supply certain markets. Some focussed on supplying a single market with relatively disposable plain, utilitarian wares (Fig.8). Glazed wares, with longer use lives and requiring more capital investment in their production (see Mellor 2005), were supplied over longer distances, using a range of transportation routes (Fig.9). Given the presence of several known or postulated production centres in the region, further research into these exchange mechanisms could prove fruitful and could also inform us about the likely provenance and marketing of other wares which are currently unsourced, such as the numerous iron rich sandy wares present in assemblages from mid Hampshire.

Pottery Consumption

Because of the unstratified, small or fragmented nature of many of the assemblages considered, a detailed study of pottery consumption cannot be carried out. We can however compare the pottery used in Alton with other small towns in Hampshire and with Southampton, and make some basic comments about the composition of assemblages from rural sites in the region. Of the 12th-14th century pottery from Alton, 16% by weight were jugs/pitchers (table 9). This is slightly higher than in the assemblages from Christchurch and Romsey, two medieval towns of comparable size. In Southampton, jugs are much more common, accounting for around a third of the pottery. This is not uniform across Southampton however, with the quantity of jugs being higher in the merchants quarter (Jervis 2009a). The proportion of jugs from Alton is similar to that from poorer tenements in Southampton and the composition of the jug assemblage is also similar, with plain, locally produced types dominating, rather than highly decorated serving vessels. This suggests that whilst the merchants living in Southampton used a wide range of highly decorated wares, those living in smaller towns and in the poorer areas of Southampton lived similar lifestyles, perhaps using jugs for a range of domestic functions. Jars dominate the assemblages from all of the small towns and are also common in Southampton, demonstrating that unlike jugs, these fulfilled roles common to every home, in cooking, storage and preparation for example. Bowls are rare in Southampton and are generally more common at rural sites, where they had a wide range of functions including as measures and in dairying (e.g. Blinkhorn 1999). A common theme across the assemblages from small towns is that bowls are a small, but consistent component, generally accounting for around 5% of the pottery. This may illustrate that there was a semi-rural component to small town life, with pottery users perhaps engaging in some agricultural (or perhaps more accurately horticultural) tasks, requiring these vessels. Other kitchen vessels, such as pipkins, are rare, suggesting that cooking practices, as in the poorer areas of Southampton, were fairly simple and diet relatively limited.

Jars and bowls are most common in rural assemblages, with jugs being very rare. There is clearly a difference in the function of pottery in this context, however quantitative analysis of securely stratified assemblages is required to fully understand this patterning, which has also been observed by Brown (1997). These bowls were generally sourced from the same industries as the jars and plainer jugs (e.g. at Hatch; Rees 1995). Rather than seeing a strict dichotomy between urban and rural ceramic use, we can observe a continuum, with jugs becoming increasingly prominent in urban contexts, and particularly wealthy homes, whilst vessels associated with processing are more common in rural contexts. The evidence from small towns such as Alton, as well as poorer areas of Southampton, shows that this was not a clear cut distinction however.

Conclusions

This analysis is intended to offer a preliminary statement on the pottery from East Hampshire and has raised a number of key areas for future research. We are fortunate in this area to have a number of production centres and further work is required to fully understand the markets which these wares supplied, in particular further excavation is required in rural areas. Further work in small towns would expand both our corpus of wares from this area, but also our understanding of the role of pottery in everyday urban life. In the course of this research important post medieval collections, particularly from Alton, were identified, and these warrant further recording and dissemination. The project has highlighted the potential of museum old collections for filling in the gaps

created by the developer driven nature of modern archaeology, but also the limitations, as these are often from poorly stratified contexts, with no associated documentation. We can now however begin to build a picture both of the types of pottery present in this area in the medieval period, as well as beginning to understand the mechanisms behind its distribution and use.

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Captions

Figures:

Figure 1: Location of sites mentioned in the text. Drawing: Ben Jervis.

Figure 2: Examples of medieval pottery from Hawkley. Drawing: Frances Saxton.

A: Jar with an everted, hammerhead rim, with a rounded profile.

B: Jar with a thickened, everted rim, with an internal lip.

C: Jar with a simple, everted rim.

D: Jug base.

Figure 3: Rim diameters of Hawkley-type Ware jars from Hawkley.

Figure 4: Examples of Flint and Sand Tempered Ware jars from Alton. Drawing: Frances Saxton.

A: Simple everted rim, with slight beading. Alton (Amery House; A1984.31), Context 5.

B: Simple everted rim. Alton (Amery House; A1984.31), Context 3.

Figure 5: Examples of Micaceous Coarse Sandy Ware vessels from Alton and Liss. Drawing: Frances Saxton.

A: Jar with thickened, everted rim. Liss (ACM1960.8).

B: Jar with everted, hammerhead rim. Alton (Amery House; A1984.31), Context 5.

C: Jar with clubbed rim with a rounded profile and thumb impressed, applied strip decoration. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

D: Socketed bowl. Liss (ACM1960.8).

E: Bowl with a hammerhead rim. Alton (Johnson's Corner Site A; HCMS1979.3), Context 59.

F: Curfew handle. Alton (Police Station Site; A1978.7).

Figure 6: Examples of Micaceous Fine Sandy Ware vessels from Alton and Liss. Drawing: Frances Saxton.

A: Jar with everted, hammerhead rim and thumb impressed applied strip decoration. Alton (Police Station Site; A1978.7).

B: Jar with everted, hammerhead rim and thumb impressed applied strip decoration. Liss (ACM1960.8).

C: Jar with everted, hammerhead rim. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

D: Jar with simple, everted rim, with a straight edged profile. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

E: Jar with simple, everted rim, with a straight edged profile. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

F: Jar with a thickened, everted rim, with a rounded profile. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

G: Jar with an everted, hammerhead rim. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

H: Jug with a beaded rim and strap handle. Liss (ACM 1960.8).

Figure 7: Examples of Micaceous Redware Vessels from Alton. Drawing: Frances Saxton.

A: Jar with a simple, inturned rim. Alton (Johnson's Corner; HCMS 1979.3), Context 74.

B: Jar with a lid seated rim. Alton (Johnson's Corner; HCMS 1979.3), Context 53.

C: Strap handle from a jug. Alton (Johnson's Corner C; HCMS 1979.3), Context 92.

D: Jug with a thickened, everted rim. Alton (Johnson's Corner A; HCMS 1979.3), Context 33.

E: Thumbed jug base. Alton (Johnson's Corner A; HCMS 1979.3), Context 33.

F: Bowl with a simple, inturned rim, with a straight edged profile. Alton (30 High St; A1994.28), Context 5.

G: Jug with a simple, inturned rim, with a straight edged profile. Alton (30 High St; A1994.28), Context 20.

Figure 8: The distribution of major coarseware types in east Hampshire. Drawing: Ben Jervis.

A: Kennet Valley Wares.

B: Micaceous Coarse Sandy Wares.

C: Micaceous Fine Sandy Wares.

D: Hawkley-type Wares and Jack-O-Tooles Row-type.

Figure 9: The distribution of major glazed sandy ware types in east Hampshire. Drawing: Ben Jervis.

A: Surrey Whitewares.

B: Bentley-type Wares.

C: West Sussex-type Wares.

D: South Hampshire Redwares.

Tables:

Table 1: Quantification of the Coarse Border Ware from Newport Road, Aldershot.

Table 2: Quantification of the assemblage from Hawkley.

Table 3: Quantification of Anglo-Saxon assemblages from East Hampshire. With the exception of Chalton, data is taken from published reports; Millet and Graham 1984, Timby 2004; Cunliffe 1976; Holmes 1974 (note Sherd Weight data was not available for Portchester and Sherd Count data was not available for Fareham).

Table 4: Quantification of post-conquest pottery from the Basingstoke area. Hatch Warren data taken from Rees, 1995.

Table 5: Quantification of post-conquest pottery from Alton by ware group and vessel form. MVC=Maximum Vessel Count.

Table 6: Comparison of rim forms on Micaceous Coarse Sandy Ware vessels from Alton and Liss (Rim %).

Table 7: Comparison of rim forms on Micaceous Fine Sandy Ware vessels from Alton and Liss (Rim %).

Table 8: Quantification of post-conquest pottery from Petersfield and Liss by ware group and vessel form. MVC= Maximum Vessel Count.

Table 9: Comparison of vessel forms from urban assemblages in Hampshire (sherd weight).