For richer, for poorer

A study of pottery distribution in medieval Southampton within its socio-economic context

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Summary

A discussion of the distribution of pottery types in high medieval (c1250–1350) and late medieval (c1350–1500) Southampton is presented, drawing on recently analysed assemblages from the east of Southampton and previously published material. By placing the pottery within a national and international context it is demonstrated that different ware types and vessel forms have varying degrees of utility as tools for understanding the social dynamics of a medieval town.

Introduction and background

Southampton has produced a large and varied assemblage of medieval pottery, which has been periodically studied and reviewed as excavations have taken place in the city. The earliest work, by Colin Platt and Richard Coleman-Smith (1975), demonstrated the range of sources of the pottery represented in Southampton. More recent work by Duncan Brown (2002), focussed on assemblages from the western half of the town. He produced a detailed discussion of the pottery, backed up by quantitative methods for the first time. This paper is a natural development, introducing sites from the east of the town into the discussion. These have generally been excavated over the last 25–30 years, with most of the pottery being recovered from the large site at York Buildings (SOU 175), excavated in the late 1980s. The aim of this work is not to duplicate that of previous scholars in the characterisation of the pottery, but to question and further their conclusions regarding the social role of pottery in the town, principally through a broad discussion of the distribution of ceramic forms in the high and late medieval periods.

Historical context and the sites considered

Southampton holds a strong position for trade, located on a peninsula at the confluence of the Rivers Test and Itchen. The south west of the town is located at the mouth of the Test, making this area a suitable harbour. This area was occupied for much of the medieval period by merchants both from England and abroad; first from France and later the Mediterranean, principally Italy. Their presence in the town is well documented, both from historical and ceramic perspectives (Platt 1973, Brown 2002). To the north of this area stood the Norman castle, which is also well understood thanks to major excavations (SOUs 29, 124 and 125) (Oxley 1986) (Figure 1).

The eastern side of the High Street is more enigmatic. To the south east of the Bargate, the main entrance to the medieval town, lies the largest site considered in this paper, York Buildings (SOU 175), excavated in the 1980s. Historically this area of Southampton High Street (English Street as it was known in the medieval period) was known as the 'Street of the Smiths' (Platt 1973, 52). Excavations revealed evidence of metal working to support this. Evidence of other craft activities, such as leather working and pottery manufacture was also identified. Excavations revealed a mass of archaeological evidence dating from the late Saxon to post medieval periods. High medieval settlement (c AD 1250–1350) was aligned along English St and the yards of several tenements were identified during excavation, principally that of 4 English Street. Excavations also focussed on understanding the construction of the defences, built in the early 13th-century as an earthen rampart and later strengthened in stone. The build up of layers of dumped material and historical evidence from the Southampton Terrier of 1454 (Burgess 1976), suggest large areas of the site remained unoccupied during the late 14th- or early 15th-centuries following the French raid in 1338.

Excavations south of East Street, at Holy Rood Place (SOU 106) and High Street (SOU 105) during the 1970s by Robert Thomson, revealed evidence of medieval occupation; however, there are few surviving records of these excavations. Holy Rood church was constructed in the 14th-century on the site of at least two earlier phases of timber construction. During the 16th-century a large building was constructed on the site. There is evidence of pottery production at the High Street site (Brown 2002, 144), where wasters of Southampton Whiteware have been excavated.

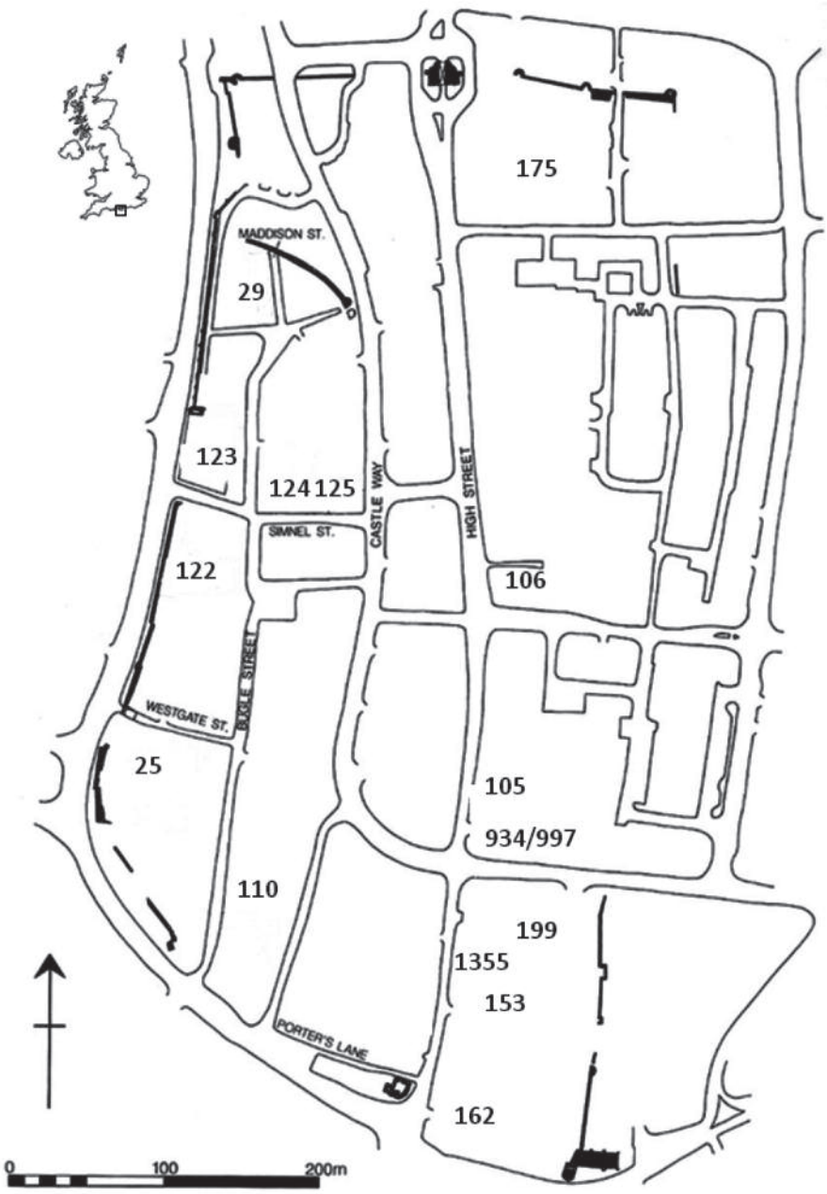

Figure 1
Location of sites considered in medieval Southampton

Excavations by Michael Smith (SOUs 934 and 997) at the former site of the Pouparts Warehouse (66 High Street) found evidence of several medieval tenements and earlier activity. Although small scale excavations, in the wider scheme these are important, as the pottery can potentially be related to particular tenement plots. Two medieval cottages are known to have been constructed on the site and evidence of these was located through excavation. A larger capital tenement was also identified, with associated rubbish pits and yard layers. During the 15th-century these tenements were under single ownership but were rented, so we know nothing of the people actually occupying the premises (Smith 2001, 11).

Three excavations (SOUs 153, 199 and 1355) have uncovered remains of Southampton Friary, as well as the associated graveyard, although much of the evidence had been truncated by post medieval activity. The friary was founded in 1233 and finally went out of use in 1540, going through a period of decline in the mid-late 14th-century. The medieval remains at Gloucester Square (SOU 153), excavated by Alan Aberg (1975), were badly truncated but excavations in the 1980s carried out by Simon Hardy revealed evidence of the Friary buildings. Further excavations at Telephone House (SOU 1355) revealed the associated graveyard as well as evidence of the neighbouring tenement (Everill and Russel 2008). Excavations at Telephone House included land belonging to the tenement occupied by the Barbflete family, however very little pottery was recovered from stratified contexts related to this area of the site. Most of the pottery from these sites was residual in layers, graves and structural features and it is unclear how representative it is of the pottery used at the site and it is not possible to discuss the friary as an entity.

The final site to be considered lies just within the wall in the south eastern corner of the town on Winkle Street (SOU 162). Excavations by Colin Platt (1975) revealed a series of medieval construction phases, as well as associated rubbish pits dating from the late Saxon to post medieval periods.

This series of sites gives a wide area of coverage from the north east to south east corners of the town. The material recovered from these excavations will be considered alongside that excavated elsewhere in Southampton (see Brown 2002), to contrast the similarities and differences in the archaeology of these tenements.

Phasing information is not available for several of these sites, and for this reason all of the high and late medieval pottery is considered here. Whilst this means that residual and intrusive material is included but not identified as such, it is hoped that the discussion will give a general impression of pottery distribution through the town.

High medieval period c AD 1250–1350

(Tables 1 and 2 . Figures 2 and 3)

High medieval assemblages in Southampton are typified by a majority of local wares (Table 1). Generally, around half of these are Southampton Coarseware jars, whilst glazed jugs and a small quantity of jars are present in local sandy wares (Figure 2). In the south west of the town more imported vessels, generally jugs, are present, typically from French sources (Table 1). The most abundant imported vessels are Saintonge whiteware jugs, which were probably available on the local market (Brown 1997a). High medieval pottery has typically been recovered from pits and closed structural features.

Jars

Jars are the second most commonly identified vessel form on all of the sites, except for those associated with the castle (Table 3), where they are the most common. They are believed to have been used for cooking. Evidence from the castle (SOU 29) demonstrates that Southampton Coarseware vessels occasionally had other functions, for example, here a number had been put to an industrial use, having a coating of pitch (Pieskma 1986, 103–4). Elsewhere, at Westgate Street (SOU 25) a Southampton Coarseware jar appears to have been made to function as a lantern, having pre-firing cut outs (Figure 2.1). Once the industrial deposit (SOU 29, context 980) at the castle has been discounted, jars are still considerably more abundant than jugs in this area. None of these deposits have been identified as directly related to domestic activity in the castle, so it is not possible to determine whether jars were used in any greater quantity at the castle than elsewhere. At all of the sites, jars are most commonly present in Southampton Coarseware (Table 4), usually with the typical internally beaded rim. Jars in other coarsewares are rare, demonstrating that these vessels fulfilled the majority of functions required of them. Small quantities of partially glazed sandy ware jars are present on many sites, particularly in the west of the town, and it is probable that these were used for storage rather than cooking.

The similarity of the jar assemblages between sites in the east and the west of the town demonstrates a degree of social cohesion, with the cooking practices of the merchants, castle and poorer households in the east of the town being served by a similar suite of vessels (Table 4). All households seem to have been served by the same markets and appear linked, to an extent, by their kitchen practices. The absence of significant quantities of imported jars shows that even wealthier households felt that local vessels were suitable for their needs. These vessels appear to have been purchased purely for their function. Local potters were able to supply glazed and unglazed vessels for consumption as storage and cooking vessels, as well as for other purposes to meet the needs of the whole of Southampton's population. The higher

Table 1
High medieval wares present at sites considered (sherd count and sherd weight in grams)

		SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant			castle				total
ware	*SOU*	*105*	*106*	*934*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*25*	*110*	*122*	*29*	*123*	*124*	*125*	
Southampton coarseware	SC	1960	68	38	151	188	229	175	2686	845	90	208	31	626	445	816	1327
	SW	17042	1280	390	1342	2249	1810	1532	22161	15692	1264	3328	2128	8882	5090	16936	101126
other coarseware	SC	22							42	27	8	14	4	11	6	33	95
	SW	178							315	486	138	163	42	141	190	689	2342
South Hampshire Redware	SC	561	38	47	83	104	234	172	1441	436	89	304	6	260	131	78	627
	SW	3973	296	544	564	1129	1896	949	12979	12802	748	4812	148	5060	2503	936	31067
Southampton Sandy Ware	SC	944	25	10	16	38	64	33	667	185	24	430	15	276	136	168	474
	SW	6746	196	196	134	298	472	259	5585	2056	207	6431	203	4404	1495	2440	16438
Southampton Whiteware	SC	518	71	26	103	56	91	39	260	84	27	75		29	27	60	895
	SW	6012	502	286	724	578	745	224	2625	1963	339	980		284	282	691	49191
other sandy ware	SC	770	6	4	1	10	26	3	399	214	81	367	63	270	140	141	878
	SW	5857	101	69	48	76	382	14	7850	3880	859	6528	1454	4774	1735	1991	35618
high medieval non local	SC	151	14	8	20	14	51	15	291	43	18	154	9	89	25	60	497
	SW	840	66	149	127	290	559	126	4123	730	179	3905	203	1573	572	1224	14666
Saintonge	SC	806	19	40	73	124	185	89	303	541	176	358	12	106	132	184	900
	SW	3730	235	718	493	675	1005	461	2415	15078	850	7934	115	1019	1149	2732	38609
other French	SC	50	2	1	2	8	57	8	96	106	149	26	5	13	11	9	221
	SW	276	47	8	44	48	496	44	2328	1459	766	253	113	99	166	65	6212
other high medieval import	SC	1					15	1	8	15	3	4	1	6	2	2	36
	SW	2					126	2	52	770	9	39	3	16	7	57	1083
total SC		5783	243	174	449	542	952	535	6193	2496	665	1940	146	1686	1055	1551	5950
total SW		44656	2723	2360	3476	5343	7491	3611	60433	54916	5359	34373	4409	26252	13189	27761	296352

Table 2
The distribution of high medieval wares in Southampton (sherd weight in grams)

		SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant			castle				total
ware	*SOU*	*105*	*106*	*934*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*25*	*110*	*122*	*29*	*123*	*124*	*125*	
Southampton Coarseware		17%	1%	0.4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	22%	16%	1%	3%	2%	9%	5%	17%	101126
other coarseware		8%							13%	21%	6%	7%	2%	6%	8%	29%	2342
South Hampshire Redware		22%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	18%	7%	1%	21%		14%	5%	8%	31067
Southampton Sandy Ware		37%	3%	2%	4%	4%	5%	1%	16%	12%	2%	6%	1%	2%	2%	4%	16438
Southampton Whiteware		8%	1%	1%	1%	2%	4%	2%	26%	26%	2%	10%		10%	5%	2%	49191
other sandy ware		16%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	1%	0.0%	22%	11%	2%	18%	4%	13%	5%	6%	35618
high medieval non local		6%	0.5%	1%	1%	2%	4%	1%	28%	5%	1%	27%	1%	11%	4%	8%	14666
Saintonge		10%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	6%	39%	2%	21%		3%	3%	7%	38609
other French		4%	1%	0.1%	1%	1%	8%	1%	37%	23%	12%	4%	2%	2%	3%	1%	6212
other high medieval import		0.2%					12%	0.2%	5%	71%	1%	4%		1%	1%	5%	1083
total		15%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	20%	19%	2%	12%	1%	9%	4%	9%	296352

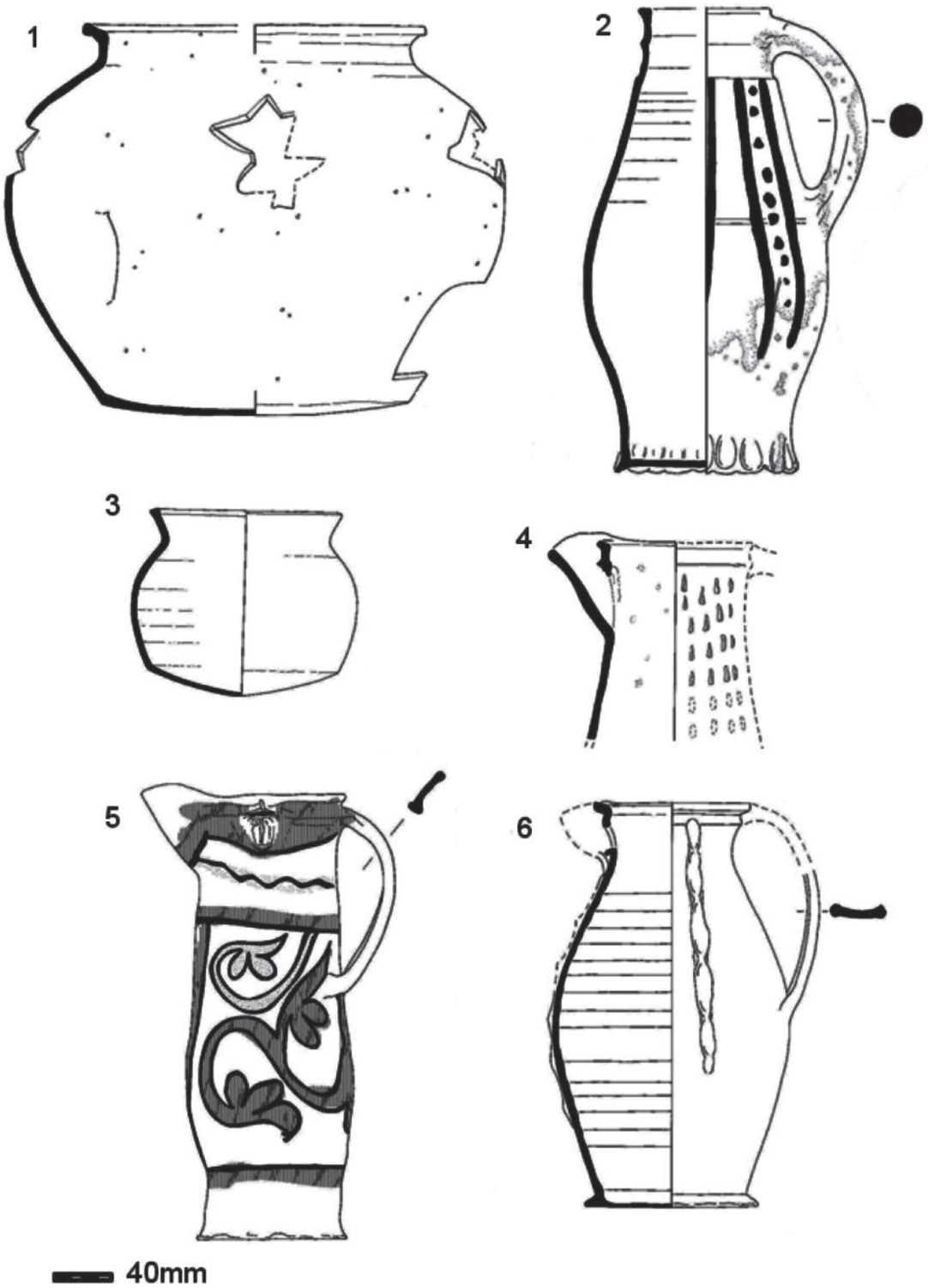

Figure 2 Typical high medieval vessel forms
2.1 Southampton Coarseware jar/lantern
2.2 South Hampshire Redware jug
2.3 Southampton Sandy Ware jar
2.4 Southampton Whiteware jug
2.5 Saintonge Polychrome jug **2.6** Saintonge Whiteware jug
Reproduced by kind permission of Duncan Brown

Figure 3 Typical high medieval vessel forms
Photo courtesy of Duncan Brown

proportion of jars at the castle sites than elsewhere, even once the industrial deposits are discounted, is interesting, if confusing. None of the deposits from the castle bailey (SOU 29) can be directly related to domestic activity, in the way that pits in the backyard at Westgate Street (SOU 25) can be. It is possible that deposits from Upper Bugle Street (SOUs 123, 124 and 125) were produced from houses backing onto the castle ditch (Brown 1986). These sites do form a group where jars are either more common than jugs, or are more abundant than elsewhere in the town. This is suggestive of some difference in the consumption of jars at these sites. If related to the castle, it is possible that these vessels were consumed in greater quantities, perhaps with large numbers of people being catered for on particular occasions. This patterning can perhaps be understood through comparison with some other castle sites. At Guildford it is not until the late 14th-century that jugs become a major component of the royal castles ceramic assemblage (Jones 2005), however at Portchester castle there is an exceptionally high quantity of jugs and pitchers (Cunliffe and Munby 1985). It is possible then, that there is a chronological explanation, with the depsoits dating from the earlier part of the period. Gerrard and King (2000) demonstrate that at Ludgershall castle, cooking vessels are the most abundant type, arguing that highly decorated wares were only used at castles if they fall within the catchment area of an industry producing these wares and were only purchased for specific occasions. Perhaps then, the high number of cooking vessels can be explained through the nature of everyday castle life, and the rarity of events where a large and varied group of pottery would have been consumed. It is reasonable to suggest that at least some of this material derived from the castle and that ceramics were primarily used as kitchen vessels, with serving vessels being acquired from the towns markets. This means that they used a range of wares more akin to those in households in the eastern side of the town rather than those used in the merchants quarter (see below). The absence of large quantities of jugs, and the presence of abundant Anglo-Norman pottery (including tripod pitchers) may suggest that the castles main period of occupation was early in the period.

It is also important to note however, that the area inside castles was usually kept clean of rubbish (Milligan 1997) and this is supported by the evidence from Southampton Castle's bailey. It is possible then, that these deposits may represent household waste from homes on Bugle Street. This explanation begs the question of why higher proportions of jars were

disposed of here, than in the nearby tenements in the south west of the town. It is possible that these households were more similar to those occupying York Buildings, where jugs are a less common component of the ceramic assemblage.

In summary, the presence of jars in specific fabrics or wares does not appear to be reflective in any way of the social status of the occupants of a tenement in Southampton. Similar vessels are present on all of the sites considered. It is possible however, that the number of vessels and thus scale of consumption might, as may the proportion of the assemblage that they compose relative to jug forms.

Jugs

The jugs used in high medieval Southampton were considerably more varied than the jars in terms of form and source (Table 5). Locally produced jugs are present in three main wares; Southampton Sandy Ware, South Hampshire Redware (Figure 2.2) and Southampton Whiteware (Figure 2.4). Imported jugs from the Saintonge are present at the majority of sites (Figure 2.5–6). Particularly in the west of the town, other sources in France are represented. In the south east of the town around 20% of the jugs are typically present in South Hampshire Redware; these are often tall baluster forms (Table 5). These are usually fairly plain, however more elaborately decorated vessels do exist, but in the same forms as the undecorated examples. Southampton Sandy Ware, often in more rounded forms, is present in smaller quantities. Southampton Whiteware is generally decorated with a green glaze and has a pronounced spout. It makes up varying proportions of the assemblages as they were produced close to Holy Rood church (SOUs 105 and 106). Because of this, all sherds identified as wasters have been removed from the data for the analysis of the distribution of jugs. Combined with Saintonge Whiteware, a similar vessel form, possibly with a similar function, whitewares make up around 60% of the jug sherds in the majority of the assemblages considered. It can be suggested that these ware types were seen as interchangeable, given their similar distribution and physical characteristics. Given their different forms and their joint presence on all of the sites (Table 5), it is possible that South Hampshire Redware and Southampton Sandy Ware had complementary uses. A similar argument has been put forward by Paul Blinkhorn (1998, 39–40) for the site of West Cotton, Northants, where it is demonstrated that jugs from a range of sources were required in the household, as
they were designed to fulfil certain roles, with a degree of crossover between them.

At York Buildings (SOU 175), jugs are present in similar proportions to other sites in the east of the town (Table 3), but in a noticeably different variety of wares (Table 5). Both South Hampshire Redware and Southampton Sandy Ware occur in higher quantities in relation to other wares at this site, and whitewares are less well represented than elsewhere. This illustrates that pottery was consumed differently at York Buildings than further south in the town, with whiteware jugs, not being used in any great quantity at this site. This may have been due to economic reasons or because they were not deemed appropriate for the lifestyle of the people occupying this site, either by the consumers who saw them as unnecessary or, less likely, the sellers who did not perceive the occupants of York Buildings as a market for their products.

Considerable contrast can be drawn between the jugs used in the south west of the town and the east. Jugs are considerably more abundant in the assemblages in the west of the town, and a wider variety of sources are represented. The local sandy wares are present, and comprise similar proportions of the jug assemblages to the east of the town, the presence of other imported wares, generally from France, mean that Saintonge and Southampton whitewares compose smaller proportions of these assemblages. The local wares appear to have sufficed for kitchen vessels in these households, but a wider variety of sources provided the serving vessels.

At the sites related to the castle in the north west of the town, jugs make up a smaller proportion of the vessels present than in the south west, but typically a greater proportion than in the east (Table 3). Jars are also present in higher quantities at these sites than in the south west. It is not possible to compare the castle with the east of the town, as considerably higher proportions of these assemblages could not be assigned to a specific vessel form, largely due to a lack of diagnostic sherds. At the castle, the majority of jugs are in local sandy wares, with whitewares being considerably scarcer than elsewhere. This suggests that at the castle the majority of pottery was used in the kitchen, with vessels in other materials being used in the serving of food, or a chronological distinction exists, as discussed above. There are also some rare non local varieties present, perhaps reflecting the castles status as part of a nationwide network (Table 5) (see Moorhouse 1983).

Whilst the kitchen wares present a picture of general social homogeneity, the serving jugs present a different story. At York Buildings these vessels don't appear to have been used in any great quantity. In the south west of the town, the serving jugs reflect a different lifestyle, with these vessels being an integral part of the consumption of food and drink. In the east of the town these vessels are present, but only two sources are represented in any great quantity (Saintonge whiteware and Southampton whiteware), perhaps demonstrating that these households aspired to emulate the lifestyle of the wealthier inhabitants of the town, such as the merchants. Alternatively, it is possible that whilst these vessels were adopted by those in the east of the town, they were not used as serving vessels, but instead were seen of equivalent function to the local sandy ware

Table 3
High medieval vessel forms present at sites considered (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant			castle				total
SOU	*105*	*106*	*934*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*25*	*110*	*122*	*29*	*123*	*124*	*125*	
jar	32%	5%	7%	13%	10%	7%	8%	16%	22%	17%	11%	81%	27%	25%	58%	27%
jug	33%	22%	44%	21%	14%	20%	14%	21%	46%	37%	64%	4%	41%	32%	17%	33%
bowl/dish	1%						0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	1%	0.4%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%
drinking vessel															0.1%	0.1%
other kitchen vessel	2%			1%		1%		1%	15%	7%	11%	1%	7%	5%	1%	5%
other	0.2%					3%		1%	9%	6%	1%		0.2%	2%	1%	2%
unidentified	31%	73%	49%	65%	75%	69%	77%	62%	8%	32%	12%	14%	22%	36%	23%	32%
total	44656	2723	2360	3476	5343	7491	3611	60433	54916	5359	34373	15790	26252	13189	27761	307733

Table 4
Composition of high medieval jar assemblages at sites considered, following the removal of wasters from SOU 105 and industrial feature at SOU 29 (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant			castle				total
SOU	*105*	*106*	*934*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*25*	*110*	*122*	*29*	*123*	*124*	*125*	
Southampton Coarseware	98%	100%	100%	91%	100%	78%	86%	69%	90%	72%	69%	94%	88%	98%	93%	89%
other coarseware								0.5%	3%	2%	3%		0.2%		1%	1%
Southampton Sandy Ware	1%							4%	2%		2%		11%		6%	4%
Southampton Whiteware											15%	1%				1%
South Hampshire Redware				9%			14%	1%								0.2%
other sandy ware	0.2%							3%	3%	26%	4%	5%	0.3%	2%	0.1%	2%
high medieval non local	0.3%				22%			4%	0.2%		4%		0.2%			1%
Saintonge								0.1%								0.01%
other French								19%	1.4%		4%					3%
total	14191	136	166	460	548	533	305	9551	12354	897	3651	1679	7115	3234	15994	70814

Table 5
Composition of high medieval jug assemblages at sites considered, following the removal of wasters from SOU 105 and industrial feature at SOU 29 (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant			castle				total
	SOU	*105*	*106*	*934*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*25*	*110*	*122*	*29*	*123*	*124*	*125*	
Southampton Coarseware		5%												1%	1%	5%	1%
other coarseware																0.4%	0.02%
Southampton Sandy Ware		22%	12%	11%	1%	5%	3%	12%	8%	4%	6%	25%		18%	15%	12%	14%
Southampton Whiteware		35%	32%	6%	35%	6%	15%	18%	7%	7%	14%	1%	11%	1%	3%	3%	10%
South Hampshire Redware		11%	8%	20%	21%	41%	30%	19%	32%	43%	7%	14%		34%	45%	8%	26%
other sandy ware		11%	12%				3%		35%	6%	18%	25%	73%	26%	13%	16%	18%
high medieval non local		1%	5%	7%	4%	14%	9%	11%	8%	2%	5%	15%		13%	10%	11%	8%
Saintonge		13%	25%	55%	32%	28%	17%	38%	8%	31%	19%	19%		6%	13%	44%	20%
other French		1%	6%	1%	6%	6%	21%	2%	2%	5%	31%	0.2%	16%	0.4%	1%	1%	3%
other high medieval import							2%			3%		0.1%					1%
total		14955	591	1044	717	764	1521	500	12390	25102	1959	22097	498	10866	4189	4596	101861

vessels. At the castle, the pottery assemblage appears related to the preparation of food. It seems that different demands were placed on the pottery in this setting than in the south west of the town, meaning that the jug assemblage is different in character to those from elsewhere in Southampton.

Discussion

Living with pots in high medieval Southampton

Duncan Brown (2002) has previously argued that the pottery of Southampton 'reflects a merchant society where French and English people had the same opportunities and shared similar cultural and social values'. Whilst this argument is sound for the south west of the town, and to an extent the castle area, it is less appropriate for the east of Southampton. Eastern Southampton can be divided into two groups. The first, not so much a group but a single site, consists of the tenements at York Buildings. It is markedly different to the other excavated sites in the town. Here, not only are imports scarce in comparison with the merchant's quarter, they are scarce in comparison with sites in the south east (Tables 1 and 2). The assemblage is lacking in those imports available on the open market (Saintonge Whiteware) and those vessels which were interchangeable with them – decorated Southampton Whiteware jugs, for example. The assemblage is characterised by a high proportion of locally produced jars and jugs, which were likely used in the storage and preparation of food, with very little pottery present which can be identified as 'tableware'.[1] It is possible that the tenements at Upper Bugle Street could also belong to this group, if the pottery excavated from the castle ditch is deemed to have not come from the castle, but these households. Further south, the assemblages have a more cosmopolitan character, but the composition of the assemblages is still noticeably different from those in the south western quarter. Here, the presence of Saintonge jugs, presumably acting as tableware, demonstrate that people were engaging in the commercial life of the port and possibly adopting elements of the merchant's way of life. The absence of significant quantities of other imports, suggests that these people did not have such easy access to imports other than Saintonge products as they were not actively marketed, with local glazed wares perhaps being used as a substitute.

It is useful to note that in Norwich, another medieval port, there is a similar pattern of distribution of fine imported wares and regional imports, such as highly decorated Grimston-type ware. At Westwick Street, for example, the range of imports (mostly from the Low Countries) and highly decorated English wares (including Scarborough ware) illustrates the relative wealth of the occupants of this site close to the river (Jennings 2002a). In contrast, excavations in the suburbs at Heigham (Jennings 2002b) revealed no imports whilst unglazed and plainer Grimston-type wares were more common.

A similar scarcity of imported wares was noted in the Botolph Street area, comparable to York Buildings (SOU 175) on the grounds that it was the centre of an iron working industry (Evans 1985). It is possible that such patterning is unique to, or at least more marked, in ports. In Oxford, taken as an example of an inland town, Brill/Boarstal type jugs are fairly ubiquitous (Mellor 1997), although it can be argued that superficially the majority share more in common with plainer wares such as South Hampshire Redware. Whilst English industries produced equivalents to the imported 'tableware' jugs in the French style, for example in Brill/Boarstall, London and Rye-type wares, these are rare in comparison to plainer jugs and were made at only a small number of centres, illustrating a limited if consistent demand for these vessels. Highly decorated vessels were made in local industries in southern England, but were these elaborate kitchen vessels, or equivalent to imported serving vessels? Important questions will remain unanswered here: to what extent were the vessels we identify as highly decorated serving vessels distinguished from the 'kitchenware jugs', especially given that some of these forms are decorated themselves? Were these distinctions household specific, and where those highly decorated vessels are not present in such quantities (both at inland towns and at some tenements in Southampton), were 'kitchen' jugs used in the serving as well as the preparation of food? A more detailed study of pottery distribution within a range of towns could help to answer these questions, by distinguishing how important elaborately decorated jugs are within individual ceramic assemblages from specific settlements.

As an aside, it is also useful to briefly consider the vessels recovered from sites in France. At St Denis both unglazed and glazed jugs were recovered (Meyer, Coxall and Meyer, 1981). The only exact commonality between this group and those from Southampton is the presence of Parisian glazed jugs. The presence of these types in St Denis arguably illustrates a more defined division between decorated and undecorated jugs than is present in most English urban assemblages. It is understandable then, that French immigrants and merchants with French contacts may have sought out the ceramic vessels required to mark this distinction, a concept that many in Southampton would not have been familiar with. Pottery from the Saintonge is abundant in Southampton, but only represents a portion of that produced in south-western France, where less decorated forms have been found (Chapelot 1983). Again, this appears to suggest that vessels were exported to supplement the English wares, by providing a vessel form not perceived to be available locally, but adopted in Southampton, perhaps due to the quantities in which it was imported.

It is easy, through the study of the English and imported glazed jugs, to see fragmentation in the population of Southampton, between the rich merchants with their large quantity of highly decorated jugs and the poorer occupants of York Buildings, who appear to have been slow to adopt these wares. Within ports this distinction appears more marked than in inland towns, possibly due to familiarity with continental food consumption practices, or easier access to pottery vessels, through which these distinctions could be enacted. Amongst the kitchen wares there is less variability through the town. This demonstrates that these pots were seen as functional, used for cooking food in the appropriate manner. The kitchen wares, and by implication practices, demonstrate a degree of social cohesion, which is attested to historically, with the burgesses of the town being described as a close knit group with a great deal of interaction and a strong feeling of community (Platt 1973, 59). Such co-operation and personal relationships extended between foreign and English merchants, as well as wealthier members of the existing community such as skilled artisans (Platt 1973, 69), making it clear how certain households were in a position of appropriate wealth and had the desire to emulate the social practices of the newcomers, whilst other households did not (see Platt 1973, 69). Such emulation and differences in practice, as seen through the pottery evidence, surely helped to exacerbate the isolation of the wealthy from the poor, a process Colin Platt (1973, 95) describes as 'the clear stratification of society' in the early 14th-century. It has already been suggested that this difference appears more marked in ports than in other towns, where, perhaps, residents are united by a more homogenous supply of pottery, for example the high quantities of Brill/Boarstal jugs in Oxford or the consistently high quantities of Newbury-type wares in Newbury. It is possible in these settings, that access to markets through wealth and status was displayed through the use of other materials, rather than through different types of ceramics (see Brown 1997b, 88). This follows Victoria Bryant's (2004) conclusion that imported pottery was not consumed in any great quantity outside of ports, as they were too expensive to market, but of too low a status to be considered a symbol of wealth.

The differences and similarities between the merchant and working class populations of the town illustrate how whilst the merchants became embedded in the social life of the town, they retained a unique social and economic identity through their employment of local resources alongside imported goods, such as pottery. Their engagement in practices involving other imports however, may have appeared 'foreign' to the less cosmopolitan population of the town. In terms of understanding the social dynamics of medieval Southampton a multi-layered approach needs to be adopted. The merchant population consisted of English as well as French families, yet their household practices, as seen through their pottery assemblages, differentiate them from the 'English' population of the town. These groups did not emerge along purely ethnic lines, but more through social interactions in the form of commercial activity (cf Jones 1997, 87). The contrast

in table wares illustrates this; a division can be drawn between the merchants and the rest of the population. From a ceramic perspective, a further economic contrast can be seen to exist, between those with and without means or, more importantly, desire to attempt to emulate the household practices of the merchant group. The relative absence of imported wares, or significant quantities of decorated English wares, should not be seen as a strictly economic indicator, but as a measure of the perceived appropriateness of such pottery to the lifestyle of the residents of the different quarters of Southampton.

Late medieval period c AD 1350–1500

(Tables 6 and 7)

The late medieval period began with a massive economic downturn, caused by the aftermath of the French raid and the epidemics of the late 14th-century (Platt 1973, 120). This led to the decline of the town as a port, particularly following intensified hostilities between England and France. This period is marked ceramically by a lack of imported wares and a limited range of fairly plain, functional vessels in Southampton organic tempered sandy ware (see Brown 2002). The more stable political situation of the 15th-century brought recovery, including the rebuilding of areas of the town by the local burgesses, the arrival of a new community of Mediterranean merchants (Platt 1973, 152) and the development of new local pottery industries, producing well fired sandy ware vessels (see Brown 2002). Late medieval pottery assemblages are characterised by a higher proportion of imported wares from a wider range of sources than the high medieval period, including the Low Countries, Spain, Italy and France (Table 6). Local sandy wares were still produced, although in a different tradition (see Brown 2002) and in a wider range of forms, including cooking vessels, jugs, dripping pans, pancheons, bunghole pitchers and dishes. These typically date from the 15th-century. Late 14th-century features are scarce, they are characterised by dump deposits, in the form of layers and pits filled with demolition debris (Brown 2002, 103). In the late medieval period there was a marked change in the way rubbish was deposited, it is principally from layers and closed structural features, rather than pits as in the high medieval period. In the case of closed structural features this allows pottery to be related closely to particular tenements, as was the case with the backyard pits dug in the high medieval period. At some sites, particularly in the east of the town, much of the pottery was recovered from layers however and such clear definition of the source of rubbish is not possible. It should also be noted that documentary evidence demonstrates that much domestic waste was deposited in this way, or was dumped in the sea (Platt 1973, 171). Because of these inconsistencies, only broad conclusions about the distribution of pottery in this period can be made.

Jars and cooking pots (Figure 4.1 and 4.9)

As in the high medieval period, locally produced kitchenware appears to have been utilised in all households. The distribution of local sandy wares in general is focussed on the east of the town (Table 7), suggesting that in the west, other materials were used to produce cooking vessels. With the exception of the High Street site (SOU 105) there are very few imported cooking vessels present in the eastern part of the town, with significantly lower proportions in particular, of Low Countries Redware cooking pots (Table 8). Despite this, jars from a range of sources are present in this area, particularly at the Pouparts (SOU 934/997) site (Table 8). Amongst the western sites, the converse is true, with imported cooking vessels being considerably more abundant (Table 8). The distinctive tripod cooking pot forms may have been adopted more slowly away from the south west of the town, where they may have been deemed a more suitable alternative to metal vessels than the local wares. They demonstrate a different set of kitchen practices which may relate to differences in the preparation or consumption of food. Other vessels reflect this patterning. Whilst dripping pans and dishes are present on all sites, pipkins have rarely been identified in the eastern part of the town (Table 9). New vessel forms in general are more abundant in western Southampton, suggesting perhaps that the occupants of these tenements were quicker to adjust to new trends in ceramic consumption.

Jugs and mugs

Jugs are considerably more varied than in the high medieval period, with a greater number being used in the consumption of drink. They can be loosely divided into three groups; kitchen jugs, drinking vessels and highly decorated vessels. Mugs have been included in this section as many jugs probably fulfilled a role as drinking vessels.

Locally made, coarseware jugs are present at all sites. The local jugs are principally in Southampton Organic Tempered Sandy Ware, believed to date from early in the period (Brown 2002). It is possible therefore that these represent a degree of continuity in pottery use, especially given the stylistic similarities between these and high medieval jugs (ibid). They are largely functional and appear to be representative of the period of extreme hardship in the late 14th-century. Late well fired sandy ware jugs, dating from later in the period are also present, but are a lesser part of the assemblage than in earlier periods.

Drinking vessels include Tudor Green mugs, cups and jugs (Figure 4.8), Rhenish stoneware (Figure 4.5) and imported vessels from Beauvais. Tudor Green appears across the town, but is most common in the east, particularly at York Buildings (SOU 175) (Table 7). It is present in varying quantities in the west of the town. Its distribution is different to that of coarser

Table 6
Late medieval wares present at sites considered (sherd count and sherd weight in grams)

			SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant					castle	total
	ware	SOU	105	106	997	162	153	199	1355	175	110	122	123	124	125	29	
late medieval English	Southampton Organic	SC	96	17	34	2	40	16	15	945	48	15	153	93	31	248	1753
	Tempered Sandy Ware	SW	1333	424	833	74	999	396	234	25794	809	445	4172	1829	746	9973	48061
	late medieval Sandy Ware	SC	148	22	54	55	23	128	5	547	16	84	63	81	88	93	1407
		SW	1759	308	847	702	552	1204	32	11162	108	1846	894	1538	1274	1711	23937
	late well fired sandy ware	SC	329	157	214	60	93	298	56	1085	28	269	97	194	162	164	3206
		SW	3871	2106	3329	1230	2285	4786	974	25057	376	7257	1589	11223	4628	4187	72898
	late medieval non local	SC						2									2
		SW						23									23
	Surrey Whiteware	SC	35	17	33	4		9	2	151	2	19	8	3	2	7	292
		SW	270	852	683	59		147	30	2184	26	217	130	135	12	99	4844
	Tudor Green	SC	86	22	62	9	2	15	4	251	1	25	14	11	20	45	567
		SW	179	109	201	18	7	116	62	1503	4	149	93	280	117	216	3054
late medieval English SC			694	235	397	130	158	468	82	2979	95	412	335	382	303	557	7227
late medieval English SW			7412	3799	5893	2083	3843	6672	1332	65700	1323	9914	6878	15005	6777	16186	152817
late medieval French	late medieval Saintonge	SC	18	9	5	13	4	12	11	46	8	62	4	11	1	14	218
		SW	304	196	128	173	166	175	193	4115	91	3147	147	527	120	355	9837
	Beauvais	SC	12		6	1	2	10	2	41	1	3	5	15	2	4	104
		SW	160		172	11	58	158	40	675	1	46	84	162	5	30	1602
	Martincamp	SC	4		4		3	3		4	1	6	10	10		2	47
		SW	14		38		161	27		79	4	92	83	203		23	724
	Normandy Stoneware	SC	108	1	10	5		14	2	16	2	33	5	29	5	4	234
		SW	1879	25	191	66		220	35	646	41	1345	80	902	102	205	5737
late medieval French		SC	142	10	25	19	9	39	15	107	12	104	24	65	8	24	603
late medieval French		SW	2357	221	529	250	385	580	268	5515	137	4630	394	1794	227	613	17900
	Low Countries Redware	SC	138	8	28	24	25	87	15	194	199	139	42	127	43	71	1140
		SW	1645	114	874	398	790	1648	541	3914	3486	5950	1153	4925	801	1975	28214
	Rhenish stoneware	SC	83	11	80	61	63	72	11	305	28	155	16	92	32	53	1062
		SW	1032	297	2870	965	2278	1417	606	12417	350	4718	261	3827	1179	1476	33693
late medieval Spanish	Iberian Micaceous Redware	SC	109	2	19	3	16	27	4	53	24	25	21	23	18	8	352
		SW	979	47	556	80	758	284	120	574	305	791	257	457	278	196	5682
	Spanish Coarseware	SC	49	11	124	29	17	55	8	146	166	188	14	37	22	11	877
		SW	1590	521	5528	5446	593	1890	751	7620	933	7253	261	3298	683	478	36845
	Spanish Decorated	SC	6		2		1	1		17	3	25	4	4	21	4	88
		SW	26		33		21	138		427	25	949	84	47	172	340	2262
late medieval Spanish		SC	164	13	145	32	34	83	12	216	193	238	39	64	61	23	1317
late medieval Spanish		SW	2595	568	6117	5526	1372	2312	871	8621	1263	8993	602	3802	1133	1014	44789

late medieval Italian	Archaic Pisan Maiolica	SC	13		3		1	1	1	6		3		1	3	32
		SW	61		28		7	5	19	76		325		31	14	566
	other Italian	SC	2		1			1	1	11		11	25	12	5	69
		SW	4		6			15	4	90		76	1164	158	109	1626
late medieval Italian		SC	15		4		1	2	2	17		11	28	12	6	3	101
late medieval Italian		SW	65		34		7	20	23	166		76	1489	158	140	14	2192
	Maiolica	SC	22	5	58	5	6	23	6	126		6	45	2	132	15	19	470
		SW	102	110	474	30	56	204	44	1999		21	1324	13	3966	338	238	8919
	other import	SC	2	1	1			4		9		2	5	2	1	1	1	29
		SW	26	15	4			38		130		12	65	22	59	6	1	378
							total SC	1260	283	738	271	296	778	143	3953		546	1126	460	875	469	751	11949
							total SW	15234	5124	16795	9252	8731	12891	3685	98462		6668	37083	9323	33536	10601	21517	288902

Surrey Whitewares, present largely as kitchen vessels. This suggests that Surrey products were available to all, but that Tudor Green was deliberately acquired in greater quantities by particular members of the community. It is noticeable that Tudor Green is more common on sites where maiolica is not present in any great quantity, perhaps suggesting that these vessels were purchased as an alternative to highly decorated drinking vessels. There appears to be a relationship between Beauvais monochrome drinking vessels and Tudor Green, the distribution of both wares appears fairly similar (Table 7), perhaps suggesting they were seen as interchangeable; vessels of similar appearance, serving the same function. Rhenish stonewares have a different distribution; they are fairly evenly distributed across the town, suggesting that they were used everywhere, perhaps as a basic drinking vessel in most homes. They are marginally less common in the west of the town however. A useful parallel can be drawn from two sites in Norwich. The housefire assemblages excavated at Pottergate, deemed to be of some status due to the presence of a number of metal cooking vessels, contained large numbers of Rhenish stonewares. This was also true at peripheral sites, occupied by the poorer members of Norwich's society (Evans and Carter 1985).

Highly decorated vessels, principally Italian maiolica jugs, ring handled vases and cups (Figure 4.3–4) are considerably more abundant in the west. It is possible that they were acquired for display purposes, however the discussion will assume that the majority filled a function in drinking. It is only at one site, SOU 124, where highly decorated drinking vessels account for more than 2% of the late medieval vessels (by weight) (Table 9). It can be argued therefore, that we give too much weight to these wares in analysis. The drinking vessels appear to generally be similar across Southampton, which may indicate a consistent culture of drinking. These small quantities of highly decorated vessels may only have been used at special occasions, or were purchased when they were available; when Italian ships landed in Southampton. It is possible that their rarity meant that they were curated. When broken, they may have been replaced with Tudor Green or Beauvais mononchrome ware, which fulfilled a similar function, if not with the same aesthetic value.

Whilst kitchen jugs were used across the town, the patterning of drinking jugs and mugs is more subtle. Where they used ceramic drinking vessels, the population of the east of the town appear to have chosen Rhenish stonewares, Tudor Green or Beauvais wares. The Beauvais wares and Tudor Green wares may have been seen as equivalents, whilst the majority of drinking vessels are Rhenish stonewares. In the west the general picture is the same. Highly decorated drinking vessels are rare, whilst other drinking vessels are represented in similar proportions to elsewhere in the town (Table 10). Whilst maiolica vessels may have been used in drinking as a tool for the display of wealth

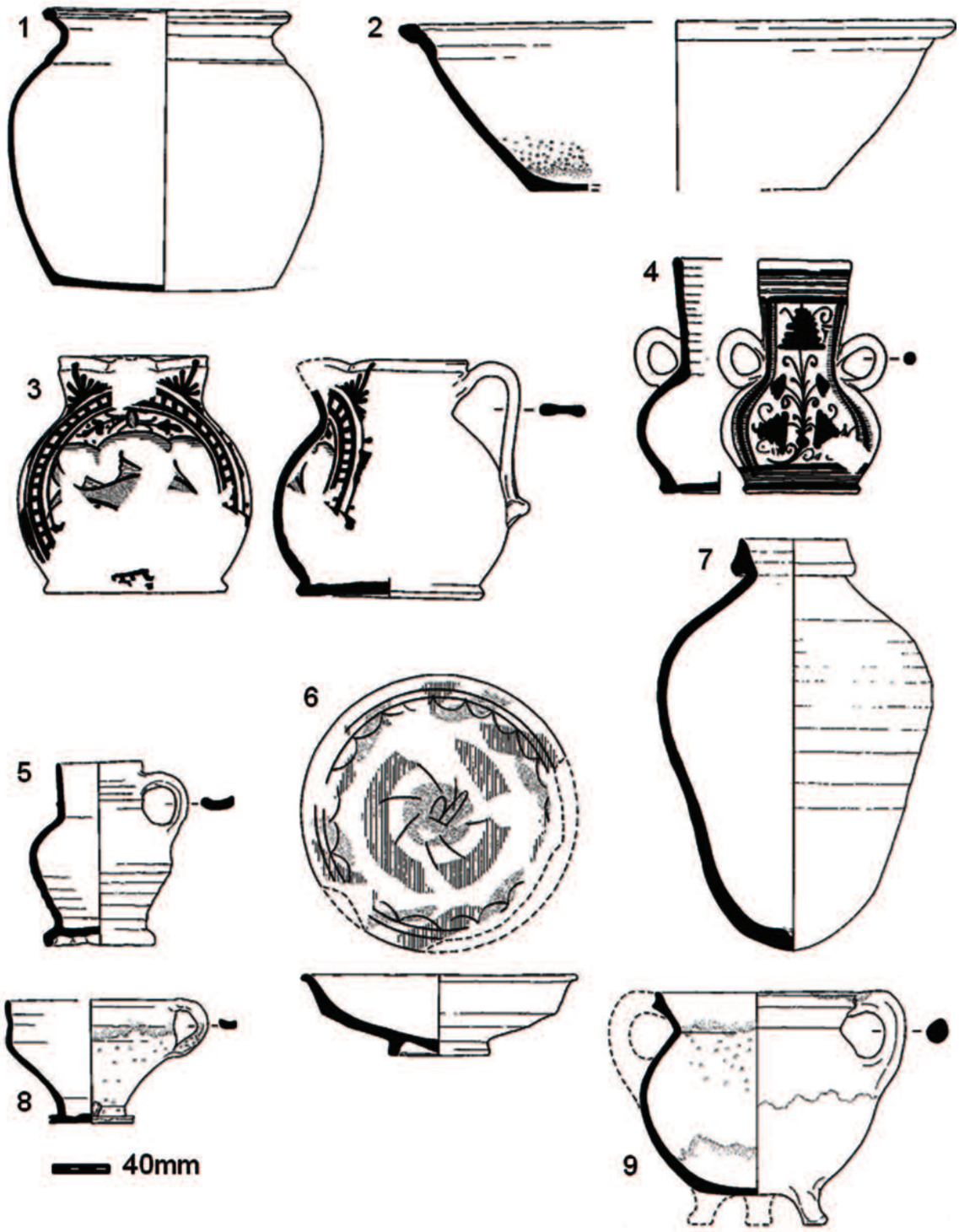

Figure 4
Typical late medieval vessel forms
3.1 Late Well-Fired Sandy Ware jar
3.2 Late Well-Fired Sandy Ware pancheon
3.3 Faenza Maiolica jug
3.4 North Italian Maiolica ring handled vase
3.5 Raeren Stoneware mug
3.6 North Italian Sgraffito dish
3.7 Spanish Coarseware olive jar
3.8 Tudor Green cup
3.9 Low Countries Redware tripod cooking pot
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Table 7
The distribution of late medieval wares in Southampton (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				**friary**			**NE quadrant**	**SW quadrant**					**castle**	**total**
SOU	*105*	*106*	*997*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*110*	*122*	*123*	*124*	*125*	*29*	
Southampton Organic Tempered Sandy Ware	3%	1%	2%		2%	1%		54%	2%	1%	9%	4%	2%	21%	48061
late medieval sandy ware	7%	1%	4%	3%	2%	5%		47%		8%	4%	6%	5%	7%	23937
late well fired sandy ware	5%	3%	5%	2%	3%	7%	1%	34%	1%	10%	2%	15%	6%	6%	72898
late medieval non local						100%									23
Surrey Whiteware	6%	18%	14%	1%		3%	1%	45%	1%	4%	3%	3%		2%	4844
Tudor Green	6%	4%	7%	1%		4%	2%	49%		5%	3%	9%	4%	7%	3054
late medieval Saintonge	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	42%	1%	32%	1%	5%	1%	4%	9837
Beauvais	10%		11%	1%	4%	10%	2%	42%		3%	5%	10%		2%	1602
Martincamp	2%		5%		22%	4%		11%	1%	13%	11%	28%		3%	724
Normandy Stoneware	33%		3%	1%		4%	1%	11%	1%	23%	1%	16%	2%	4%	5737
Low Countries Redware	6%		3%	1%	3%	6%	2%	14%	12%	21%	4%	17%	3%	7%	28214
Rhenish stoneware	3%	1%	9%	3%	7%	4%	2%	37%	1%	14%	1%	11%	3%	4%	33693
Iberian Micaceous Redware	17%	1%	10%	1%	13%	5%	2%	10%	5%	14%	5%	8%	5%	3%	5682
Spanish Coarseware	4%	1%	15%	15%	2%	5%	2%	21%	3%	20%	1%	9%	2%	1%	36845
Spanish Decorated	1%		1%		1%	6%		19%	1%	42%	4%	2%	8%	15%	2262
Archaic Pisan Maiolica	11%		5%		1%	1%	3%	13%		57%			5%	2%	566
other Italian						1%		6%	5%	72%		10%	7%		1626
Maiolica	1%	1%	5%		1%	2%		22%		15%		44%	4%	3%	8919
late medieval Import	7%	4%	1%			10%		34%	3%	17%	6%	16%	2%		378
total	5%	2%	6%	3%	3%	4%	1%	34%	2%	13%	3%	12%	4%	7%	288902

Figure 5
Typical late medieval vessel forms
Photo courtesy of Duncan Brown

and status, the small quantities suggest that they are one of range of vessels used for this purpose, with glass (large groups of which were excavated from SOU 124 (SARC 1977)) and metal vessels, perhaps having a greater role.

Dishes, bowls and other tableware

Dishes and bowls are present both as coarse, kitchen vessels (including pancheons (Figure 4.2)) and as decorated tablewares. With the exception of SOUs 25 and 153, where there is no direct evidence of late medieval occupation, coarseware dishes and bowls are present in locally produced sandy wares. These can be viewed as being kitchen wares as they are in the same fabrics as cooking pots and jugs. Occasional imported dishes are present in coarser and undecorated wares, including Spanish coarseware and Low Countries Redware, which may also have been used in kitchen contexts. Unlike decorated imports, these are especially common in the east of the town. It is noticeable that Low Countries Redware dishes, but not cooking pots, are present in these areas. This demonstrates that Low Countries Redware vessels were available to all, but that a decision was made not to purchase tripod cooking pots by some households. The presence of imported dishes here may suggest they had a place in food consumption in lower status households. In these households wooden vessels were used in food consumption, two being found in waterlogged deposits at York Buildings (SOU 175). Low Countries Redware dishes, for example, are glazed and this may have made them more desirable for use on the table than unglazed, locally produced equivalents.

A small range of decorated dishes are present in imported wares (Figure 4.6). The most common is Beauvais Sgraffito, and its presence as relatively substantial components of the dish and bowl assemblages from sites in the east of the town, suggests that it was perhaps more easily available than some wares. As with the drinking vessels, highly decorated Spanish and Italian vessels are most common in the west of the town, particularly at St. Michaels House (SOU 122) and Upper Bugle Street (SOU 124). Maiolica dishes do appear more common in the east of the town than maiolica drinking vessels, possibly due to there being a lack of decorated alternatives available. A division can also be drawn between drinking vessels, possibly used in taverns and for social drinking, and dishes used in the formal setting of a meal.

Olive jars (Figure 4.7)

The distribution of Spanish Coarseware olive jars generally follows the distribution pattern of late medieval pottery as a whole across Southampton

Table 8
Composition of late medieval jar/cooking pot assemblages at sites considered (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant				castle	total	
SOU	*105*	*106*	*997*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*110*	*122*	*123*	*124*	*125*	*29*	
Southampton Organic Tempered Sandy Ware	1%	7%	2%		38%	0%	36%	40%	2%		29%		3%	20%	18%
late medieval sandy ware	4%		3%			8%		13%		13%	8%	8%	1%	2%	8%
Surrey Whiteware			5%					3%							1%
Tudor Green															0.04%
late well fired sandy ware	34%	46%	22%	1%	12%	32%	64%	31%		6%	21%	41%	71%	24%	25%
late medieval Saintonge										1%					
Normandy Stoneware			5%			1%		1%		15%					2%
Iberian Micaceous Redware	24%		19%	1%	46%	2%									3%
late medieval import		4%													0.03%
Low Countries Redware	36%	15%	13%	3%	3%	57%		10%	98%	65%	41%	50%	25%	54%	30%
Spanish coarseware		27%	31%	95%				1%				1%			12%
total	1438	338	1439	5489	1205	1285	89	18949	2326	6231	1391	5877	2227	2284	50568

Table 9
Late medieval vessels forms present at sites considered (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant					castle	total
SOU	*105*	*106*	*997*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*110*	*122*	*123*	*124*	*125*	*29*	
jar/cooking pot	9%	7%	9%	59%	14%	10%	2%	19%	35%	17%	15%	18%	21%	11%	18%
jug	7%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3%	7%	9%	1%	2%	18%	5%	10%	22%	8%
drinking vessel	7%	6%	14%	7%	20%	8%	15%	9%	6%	10%	4%	12%	12%	7%	10%
highly decorated drinking vessel			2%			1%		1%		3%		8%	1%		2%
bowl/dish	5%	2%	2%	2%	5%	5%	12%	2%	10%	8%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%
highly decorated tableware	2%		1%			2%		1%	2%	7%		3%	1%	2%	2%
costrel/flask					1%				4%	1%	1%	1%		1%	1%
olive jar	10%	8%	19%	1%	2%	4%	2%	6%	14%	17%	2%	10%	6%	2%	8%
other kitchen vessel	6%	2%	3%	1%	2%	5%	6%	9%	7%	5%	4%	22%	0%	17%	9%
other		1%		1%	2%				1%	5%	1%	2%	2%		1%
unidentified	54%	70%	48%	27%	50%	63%	55%	43%	21%	25%	54%	17%	45%	35%	39%
total	15234	5124	16795	9252	8731	12891	3685	98462	6668	37083	9323	33536	10601	21517	288902

Table 10
Composition of late medieval drinking vessel assemblages at sites considered (sherd weight in grams)

		SE quadrant				friary			NE quadrant	SW quadrant					castle	total
form	**ware**	*105*	*106*	*997*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*110*	*122*	*123*	*124*	*125*	*29*	
jug	Southampton Organic Tempered Sandy Ware	13%	38%	2%	8%	8%	12%	12%	24%		6%	61%	10%	3%	63%	22%
	late medieval sandy ware	5%		3%	4%		1%		8%	5%	3%	5%	2%	10%		4%
	late well fired sandy ware	4%	4%	6%	11%	10%	13%	18%	11%	5%	4%	10%	2%	28%	8%	9%
	late medieval Saintonge				1%		2%		1%			1%				
	Martincamp											2%				
	Normandy Stoneware	30%							2%				6%		3%	3%
	Iberian Micaceous Redware										2%	3%		1%		
	Low Countries Redware								1%			1%				
	Spanish coarseware															0.03%
jug total		52%	41%	11%	25%	18%	28%	30%	47%	10%	15%	83%	19%	43%	74%	39%
drinking vessel	late medieval sandy ware															0.04%
	Surrey Whiteware		7%	1%			4%		1%	6%		2%				1%
	Tudor Green	4%	4%	1%	1%		2%		3%	1%	2%	1%	3%	4%	2%	2%
	Beauvais						1%					2%	1%			
	Rhenish stoneware	44%	48%	78%	73%	82%	60%	68%	42%	83%	64%	10%	45%	47%	23%	47%
drinking vessel total		48%	59%	79%	74%	82%	68%	68%	46%	90%	65%	16%	49%	52%	25%	50%
highly decorated drinking vessel	Beauvais			6%	1%	0	4%		1%			1%				1%
	Spanish Decorated										1%			5%		
	Archaic Pisan Maiolica															
	Maiolica	1%		4%		1%		2%	5%		19%		32%		1%	9%
highly decorated drinking vessel total		1%		9%	1%	1%	4%	2%	7%		20%	1%	32%	5%	1%	10%
total		2174	501	2939	904	2130	1535	808	19473	407	5802	2059	8358	2378	6297	55765

Table 11
Composition of late medieval tableware assemblages at sites considered (sherd weight in grams)

	SE quadrant				**friary**			**NE quadrant**	**SW quadrant**					**castle**	**total**
SOU	*105*	*106*	*997*	*162*	*153*	*199*	*1355*	*175*	*110*	*122*	*123*	*124*	*125*	*29*	
Southampton Organic Tempered Sandy Ware							11%	6%	64%			3%	0%		5%
late medieval sandy ware				35%	20%	6%		7%		1%		2%	10%	8%	4%
Surrey Whiteware	10%					2%		17%		1%					4%
Tudor Green			4%			0		2%			15%			1%	1%
late well fired sandy ware	15%	91%	2%	39%		13%	9%	14%	14%	43%	30%	16%	42%	48%	27%
Late Medieval Saintonge								2%							
Iberian Micaceous Redware	2%	0			4%		20%	1%	1%		4%	7%			2%
late medieval import						1%						3%			
late medieval non local						2%									
Low Countries Redware	48%		53%	26%	71%	49%	38%	15%	8%	4%	36%	12%		5%	17%
Spanish coarseware							21%	2%		4%		0%			2%
total undecorated bowl/dish	76%	91%	59%	100%	95%	72%	99%	66%	87%	53%	85%	43%	52%	62%	63%
Beauvais	14%							6%						1%	2%
Spanish decorated	1%		5%			16%		13%	3%	17%	15%	2%	17%	32%	12%
Archaic Pisan Maiolica	5%									6%				1%	2%
other Italian					0	2%		1%	9%	22%		9%			9%
Maiolica	4%	9%	36%		5%	10%	1%	15%	1%	3%		46%	31%	4%	12%
total decorated bowl/dish	24%	9%	41%		5%	28%	1%	34%	13%	47%	15%	57%	48%	38%	37%
total	1017	140	461	168	449	881	454	2363	792	5354	196	1765	290	1060	15390

(Table 9), although it is noticeably over represented at Pouparts (SOU 934/9997) and Winkle Street (SOU 162) and under represented at York Buildings (SOU 175) and the castle bailey (SOU 29), where the late medieval deposits are primarily dumps of rubbish. The wide and even distribution of olive jars demonstrates that the commodities contained in these wares were utilised across the town, their absence from dump deposits perhaps suggests olive jars were reused either for their original purpose, or for household storage. Iberian Micaceous Redwares also acted as containers, with vessels such as flasks, and costrels being present. The distribution of these wares is more scattered but the high density of these wares at the High Street site, Pouparts and Gloucester Square (SOUs 105, 934/997 and 153) (Table 7) suggests that their contents was consumed in the east of the town as much as the west.

Discussion

Living with pottery in late medieval Southampton

The late medieval period saw profound changes within the social life of the town. The French raids and subsequent unrest saw areas of the town become unoccupied. The mercantile population developed a more Mediterranean character. Pottery assemblages are much smaller, partly due to rubbish often being deposited on abandoned land, or in the sea. There is a marked difference in the distribution of pottery. Southampton Organic Tempered Sandy Ware, believed by Duncan Brown (2002, 131) to form a stopgap between the end of the prolific high medieval pottery industries and the late medieval industries, demonstrates a focus of activity in the west of the town in the early 15th-century (Table 7). The forms present suggest little change in the way pottery was used in the kitchen, but there is considerably less variation in the local jug forms present and this vessel type eventually becomes significantly less abundant than in the high medieval period.

In the late medieval period, there appear to be deeper divisions within the town, related to the way pottery was used, with differences in the distribution of vessel forms as well as ware types. This is most noticeable in the distribution of decorated tablewares and drinking vessels. Their presence alongside fine glassware suggests that mealtimes were much more extravagant and colourful in the west of the town, than the east. It should be stressed that pottery only formed a small amount of this highly decorated tableware, particularly in regard to drinking vessels, with the majority of these being similar to those used elsewhere in Southampton. The presence of these imported wares can be seen to mark the climb out of recession in the 15th-century (Brown 2002, 131). Imported tablewares were used across the town, and their distribution suggests two tiers of consumption. The first is likely to represent the majority of households, who used Rhenish stoneware alongside Tudor Green and Beauvais monochrome drinking vessels, and possessed a small quantity of moderately decorated tableware, such as Beauvais sgraffito dishes. The second tier is composed of wealthier inhabitants of the town, who used all of these wares alongside a small number of more exotic, highly decorated imports, principally maiolica, alongside non-ceramic vessels, particularly Italian glass. It is likely that this division was created not by a lack of perceived need for this functional group of vessels, but by a lack of desire for these wares (or at least to the level where consumers would be willing to pay for them), or that the cost was prohibitive, if indeed they were marketed to the wider population at all.

The presence of ceramic tablewares could also be seen as a response by wealthier households to the prevailing economic conditions (see Dyer 1989), with the use of cheaper, highly decorated tablewares being reflective of the tightening of household budgets, meaning that vessels in other materials were used in lower quantities. The increase in vessels associated with beer drinking may also relate to rises in the price of wine (Dyer 1989, 108), meaning those classes who consumed wine, with the associated Saintonge vessels in the high medieval period, preferred beer and the associated Rhenish stonewares in the late medieval period. These differences are also reflected in the kitchen wares, with Low Countries tripod cooking pots being considerably more abundant in the west of the town (Table 8) and local cooking vessels being scarcer, suggesting differences in the way food was prepared, cooked and served. An important exception is the Iberian olive jars, indicative of the consumption of olive oil throughout the town. This may be representative of some form of emulation, or of a taste for olive oil having been developed through some interaction with the mercantile community. This supports the general conclusions of Duncan Brown (2002, 167), but the social fragmentation seen through pottery appears more marked than Brown, whose study focussed on the south west of the town, has demonstrated. He is correct in suggesting that pottery saw a wider variety of uses in late medieval Southampton (Brown 2002, 138). This analysis demonstrates that these uses varied across the town, dependent upon the requirements of specific households and social groupings.

Pottery consumption is deeply embedded in the economic lives of the consumers, in terms of the variety of foodstuffs consumed, as well as the scale of consumption and the economic systems in which the non-merchant population could participate in. Kitchen wares, such as tripod cooking pots, may be demonstrative of particular cultural identities, created through specific ways of preparing and cooking foods. There are also differences in the role of pottery in consuming this food. The use of a wider sample can lead us to question Browns' (2002, 167) conclusion that cooking vessels in the late medieval period are not such sensitive indicators of cultural identity. If anything, this analysis has suggested the reverse is true, with

a more developed understanding of the distribution of these vessels, and thus the associated practices, through the town. As in the high medieval period the town can be split along lines of wealth and class. This division appears more polarised from a ceramic perspective in regard to highly decorated wares and kitchen wares such as Low Countries Redware cooking pots. Their presence in the cosmopolitan south west of Southampton indicates a group joined by a similar set of practices derived from contact with northern and Mediterranean Europe, perhaps through trade and through merchants and other immigrants living in the town. Other wares demonstrate that the population of the east of the town were also joined by a common set of practices, with vessels such as stoneware and Tudor Green drinking vessels being present as part of a change in ceramic use which spanned southern England (Gaimster 1999). Whilst at the extremes the population appears split, it should be emphasised that a number of vessels and wares are commonly found across the town, and that these differences may only have been stressed on certain occasions or in particular situations.

Conclusions

That pottery is a good indicator of social differentiation and relationships in the past is well established. This analysis has demonstrated that we must be careful and use appropriate types of pottery when making such contrasts and that these are specific to particular settlements and time periods. In high medieval Southampton, there generally appears to be little variation in the way pottery was used. There are exceptions; the castle for example, possibly has a much larger assemblage of kitchen wares than elsewhere. It is the place of imports and the ways by which they were acquired, which makes the most marked social contrast between the east and the west of the town. Whilst Saintonge wares are used across the town, the quantity on a given site appears related to the access to other imported wares, which may have fulfilled a similar function, and the appropriateness of these vessels to the lifestyles of those occupying a specific tenement. At York Buildings (SOU 175), the craftsmen who occupied the site were slow to adopt these vessels, whilst in the south west of the town, jugs from other areas of France appear to have been used to complement the Saintonge wares. It is not the fact that vessels were imported which is important, it is their function which is their key attribute and this was not required or recognised in every home.

In the late medieval period there are more profound differences, deeply embedded in the social construction of the town. These are related to how food was both processed and consumed, with marked differences occurring in the kitchen wares, as well as the serving vessels. Whilst those living in the east of the town purchased imported wares, the range which was available to them appears limited and the extent to which they were adopted seems to vary between households. Similarly, in the west of the town, the exact range of serving vessels varies along the lines of personal, social and commercial relationships. The pottery is more subtle than marking a division between rich and poor. For the high medieval period it demonstrates a greater degree of social cohesion, both in commercial and practical terms, whilst in the late medieval period it appears to have acted as a medium for social contrast. This analysis has demonstrated that the use of pottery had a major part in defining social roles and relationships in Southampton. Further analysis of exact vessel functions and contexts of use will expand these conclusions yet further.

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Endnote

1 The term tableware is taken here to mean decorated serving vessel, given that it is unlikely that these vessels would always have been consumed at a table in the modern sense.

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Résumé

Afin de comprendre comment la poterie peut être employée comme outil pour étudier la population de la cite médiévale, la distribution des formes de céramiques du Haut et Bas Moyen Âge de Southampton est ici étudiée sous un angle socio-économique. Les données proviennent de l'étude faite par Duncan Brown sur les céramiques médiévales de Southampton et de fouilles plus récentes menées dans l'est de la ville jusqu'alors non publiées.

Zusammenfassung

Die Verteilung hoch- und spätmittelalterlicher Gefäßformen in Southampton wird unter sozialwirtschaftlichen Aspekten erörtert, um zu verstehen, wie Töpferwaren als Werkzeug benutzt werden können, die Menschen einer spätmittelalterlichen Stadt besser zu verstehen. Die Daten wurden sowohl Duncan Browns Studie über Southamptons mittelalterliche Töpferware entnommen, als auch von einer Anzahl bisher unveröffentlichter Ausgrabungen im Osten der Stadt.