

New light on Saxon pottery from the London area

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH on the middle and late Saxon periods has always lagged behind that of the early Saxon and post-conquest medieval periods. One of the main reasons for this has been the paucity of datable artefacts with which to identify occupation sites and to study changes in settlement pattern and the economy. In 1973 the Department of Urban Archaeology was founded and it has been hoped that one outcome of the subsequent expenditure of vast amounts of time and effort on the archaeology of the City of London would be a much clearer idea of the range and sequence of artefacts of the middle to late Saxon period. However, it now seems that the City of London was only sparsely occupied until late in the 9th century¹. This probably does not mean that the London area was only the site a series of small farming settlements, as has been suggested². A synthesis of the evidence for settlement of 7th to 9th-century date, derived from all sources, is shown in Fig. 1. What had previously appeared to be a series of separate settlements strung out along the bank of the Thames now appears to have been a single large settlement which in area at least is probably two or three times the size of the middle Saxon settlement at Southampton, recently hailed as the largest town of its date in England³. A detailed discussion of the archaeological evidence for this settlement has been prepared⁴ and two reviews of the evidence presented⁵. The evidence is therefore not dealt with here. Instead, this article explores the implications for the study of middle and late Saxon pottery of the hypothesis that most of the middle Saxon settlement of London was undefended and lay along the Strand. Furthermore, it raises some of the problems with the interpretation of the pottery

evidence and suggests where further work might help to solve them.

Middle Saxon handmade wares

There is at least some measure of agreement over the character of the pottery used in the early Saxon period in south-eastern England, from the late 4th or early 5th centuries to some time in the 7th century. However, the spread of Christianity deprived archaeologists of the type of data used to construct a pottery chronology of the early Saxon period, that is, the vessels buried in graves accompanying an inhumation or containing a cremation. Excavated settlement sites, such as those along the Thames gravels in Oxfordshire or at Mucking in Essex, appear likewise to be abandoned during the 7th century while few excavated medieval settlements have been proved archaeologically to have been occupied before the late 9th or 10th centuries⁶.

In recent years some inroads into the archaeology of this murky period have been made, notably in southern Hampshire where excavations at Winchester, Southampton, Portchester and Chalton between them combine to produce a coherent sequence spanning the whole Saxon period. Of the pottery from these sites only two collections are published, that from Portchester and some of that from Saxon Southampton (*Hamwih*)⁷. These sites indicate that handmade pottery tempered mainly with chaff predominated in the early Saxon period but was replaced by a variety of handmade 'grit'-tempered wares in the middle Saxon period which were joined by wheelthrown sandy wares, such as Portchester ware, in the late 10th or early 11th century. In eastern England it is normal to date the first wheelthrown pottery to the late 9th or early

1. A. Vince 'In Search of Saxon London' *Popular Archaeol* 5 no.4 (1983) 33-7.

2. J. Haslam 'The Saxon Pottery and the Tudor Pottery Group from the Cesspit' 221-65 in M. J. Hammerson 'Excavations on the site of Arundel House in the Strand, WC2 in 1972' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 26 (1975) 209-266.

3. N. Hammond 'Largest Saxon Town Found' *The Times* (Thurs. Sept. 1st, 1983).

4. A. Vince 'The topography of Saxon London' (forthcoming).

5. A. Vince 'The Aldwych: mid-Saxon London rediscovered' *Current Archaeol* (forthcoming). M. Biddle 'London on the Strand' *Popular Archaeol* July 1984, 23-7.

6. P. A. Rahtz 'Appendix A: Gazetteer of Anglo-Saxon domestic settlement sites' 405-452 in D. M. Wilson (ed.) *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England* 1976.

7. B. W. Cunliffe (ed.) *Excavations at Portchester Castle* (1975). R. A. Hodges *The Hamwih pottery: the local and imported wares from 30 years excavation at Middle Saxon Southampton and their European context* Council for British Archaeol Res Rep 37, 1981.

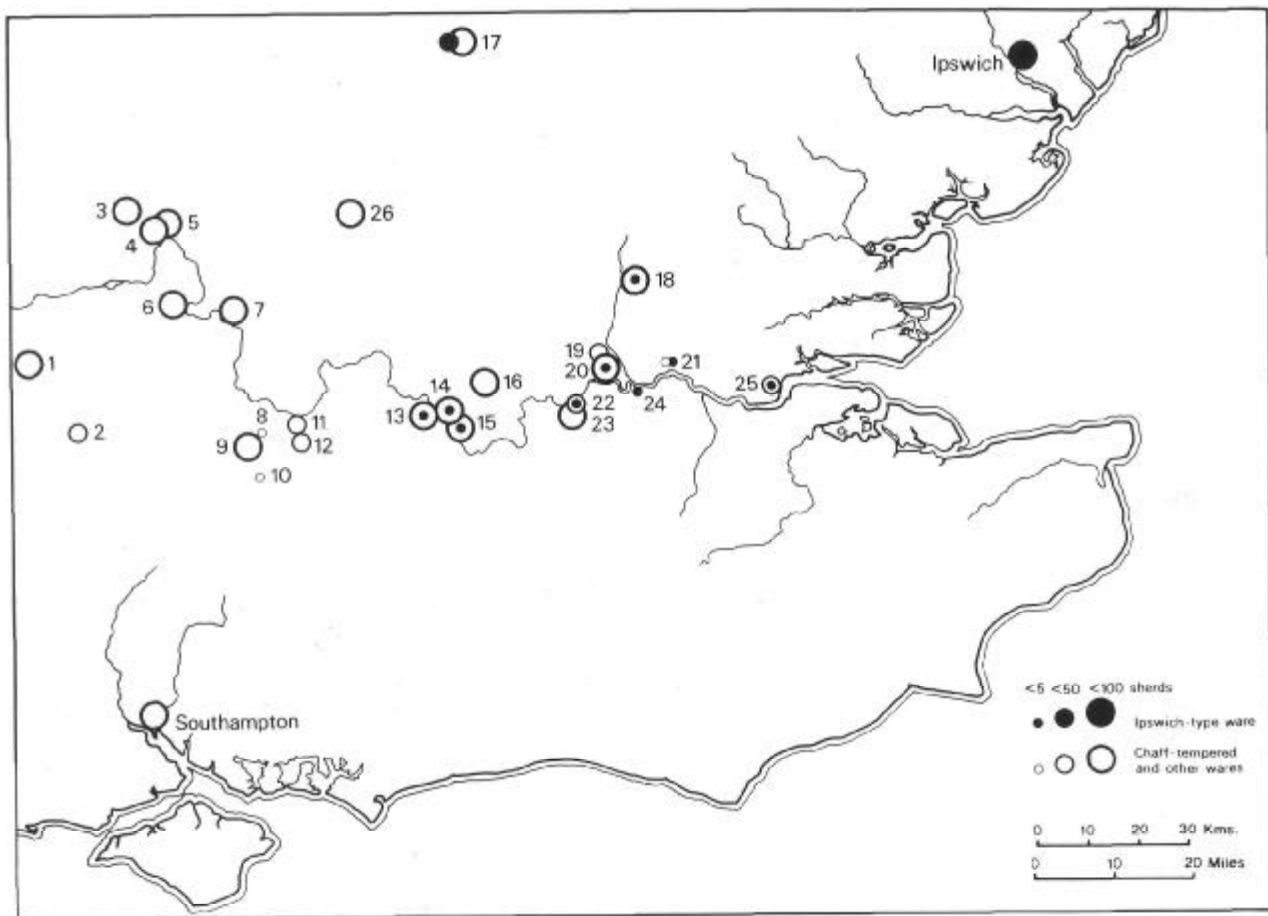


Fig. 1: Distribution of Early to Middle Saxon pottery in the Thames Valley.

(Drawn by Nick Griffiths)

The map shows that Ipswich-type ware was carried up river as far as Wraysbury. Further upstream there is no diagnostic type fossil of the mid-Saxon period. Either these sites were abandoned during the 7th century or, more likely, 8th and 9th-century pottery cannot be distinguished from earlier material.

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Swindon, Wilts. | 9. Ufton Nervet, Berks. | 18. Waltham Abbey, Essex. |
| 2. Ramsbury, Wilts. | 10. Silchester, Hants. | 19. Tottenham Court. |
| 3. Shakenoak, Oxon. | 11. Reading, Berks. | 20. Strand settlement. |
| 4. New Wintles Farm, Eynsham, Oxon. | 12. Earley, Berks. | 21. Barking Abbey, Essex. |
| 5. Cassington, Oxon. | 13. Old Windsor, Berks. | 22. Althorpe Grove, Battersea. |
| 6. Abingdon, Oxon. | 14. Wraysbury, Berks. | 23. Rectory Grove, Clapham. |
| 7. Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxon. | 15. Staines, Surrey. | 24. Greenwich. |
| 8. Theale, Berks. | 16. Harmondsworth. | 25. Mucking, Essex. |
| | 17. Bedford, Beds. | 26. Walton, Bucks. |

10th century but in general there is thought to be a similar sequence, with handmade shelly wares and wheel-finished Ipswich-type ware taking the place of the 'grit' tempered wares in the middle Saxon period⁸.

It has long been recognised that these two regions were anomalous and that much of lowland Britain was in an area of 'infrequent domestic potting', as summarised by Hodges⁹. The Thames valley, around Oxford and London, however, is shown by Hodges

as an isolated pottery-using region (on the basis of tentatively identified middle Saxon pottery from sites in the two cities). However, if the theory that London was an extra-mural settlement until the late 9th century is accepted then the wheelthrown, shell-tempered pottery which forms the bulk of the late Saxon pottery in the two towns, and which was thought to originate in the middle Saxon period, is probably of late 9th-century origin. It is certainly not present on sites in the Strand area. This leaves two

major groups of pottery in the London area to fill this gap, chaff-tempered ware and Ipswich-type ware.

Chaff-tempered ware

A few sherds of chaff-tempered ware have been found in the Strand area. They form a small part of the assemblages from the Treasury site in Whitehall and the unstratified collection from Arundel House, while a complete chaff-tempered pot was found at Drury Lane and is thought to have accompanied an inhumation¹⁰. The Drury Lane pot is probably 7th century and is decorated with vertical burnished fluting while the other sherds are featureless and indistinguishable from those from nearby rural Saxon settlements, such as Tottenham Court and Rectory Grove, Clapham¹¹. The few chaff-tempered sherds found within the City walls are likewise featureless and indistinguishable from those from the Strand.

Ipswich-type ware

In many ways, one of the most important yet badly understood pottery types in use in middle Saxon England is Ipswich-type ware. A summary of its distribution and date was given by J. G. Hurst in 1976 and little has taken place since then to change the views given there¹². Although not a single Ipswich-type ware vessel has been found accompanying a pagan burial, which would suggest a starting date late in the 7th or early in the 8th century, there are sherds of Ipswich-type ware from the backfill surrounding the Sutton Hoo ship burial, which suggests an early to mid 7th-century starting date for the ware. Sherds of Ipswich-type ware occur throughout eastern England, from the Thames valley up to Yorkshire. Visually, the fabric and typology of these sherds can be paralleled on vessels from Ipswich itself. This is as true for the London area sherds as for those from Norfolk, for example. However, thin-section analysis of a sherd from Waltham Abbey showed that it was not made in the same fabric as those from kilns in Ipswich¹³. Either the sample of Ipswich products needs to be increased or there are other manufacturing sites producing almost identical products.

Looking at the London area it is possible to erect a chronological sequence (albeit based on very little

actual evidence) in which the earliest Saxon pottery assemblages contain solely chaff-tempered and other handmade wares, and therefore date to the 5th, 6th or 7th centuries while later ones consist of higher and higher quantities of Ipswich-type ware. Using this sequence London emerges as the only substantially occupied site in the lower Thames valley during the middle Saxon period. This theory has the merit of agreeing with the impression gained from the study of other artefacts, principally metalwork, that the majority of rural settlements in the Thames valley produce no finds which need be later than the 7th century.

Another possibility, however, is that the relative frequency of Ipswich-type sherds at a site is only indirectly a function of the date of occupation of the site. Fig. 2 shows that only two sites have produced large quantities of Ipswich-type ware and low quantities of chaff-tempered and other handmade wares: the Strand and Ipswich itself. This suggests that the absence of Ipswich-type ware at a site is not a reliable chronological indicator but does show the intensity of contact between people at that site and those from areas in which Ipswich-type ware is common. In other words, it is probably an indicator of trade. If this is so then it means that once again we have no means of identifying the majority of middle Saxon settlements in the Thames valley since if the settlement was not involved in long-distance trade its pottery assemblage might be indistinguishable from that of an early Saxon settlement. At Shepperton Green, for example, a sunken-featured building which would have normally been dated without hesitation to the early Saxon period contained an 8th or 9th-century pin in its backfill while a ditch crossing the site produced a coin of Offa, likely to have been lost c 800. Without these two artefacts the site would have probably been dated by the stamped pottery to the 6th century, with the possibility of earlier and later occupation¹⁴.

Imported Pottery

Setting aside the uncertain dating of middle Saxon pottery, there are still problems raised by the theory that the Strand settlement is middle Saxon London. Firstly there is the very low quantity of stray pottery finds, although this can probably be accounted for quite adequately since there has been as much later

8. For a summary see J. G. Hurst 'The Pottery' 283-348 in D. M. Wilson (ed.) *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England* 1976.

9. Hodges *op cit* fn. 7, Fig. 6.1.

10. J. N. L. Myres 'Three styles of decoration on Anglo-Saxon Pottery' *Antiq J* 17 (1937) 424-37.

11. Tottenham Court: pottery report by Lyn Blackmore (forthcoming); Clapham: R. Densum & D. Seeley 'Excavations at Rectory Grove, Clapham, 1980-81' *London Archaeol* 4 no. 7

(1982) 177-84.

12. Hurst *op cit* fn. 8, 299-303.

13. D. F. Williams 'Petrological note on an Ipswich-type sherd' 104 in P. J. Huggins 'The excavation of an 11th-century Viking hall and 14th-century rooms at Waltham Abbey, Essex, 1969-71' *Medieval Archaeol* 20 (1976) 75-133.

14. R. Canham 'Excavations at Shepperton Green 1967 and 1973' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 30 (1979) 97-124.

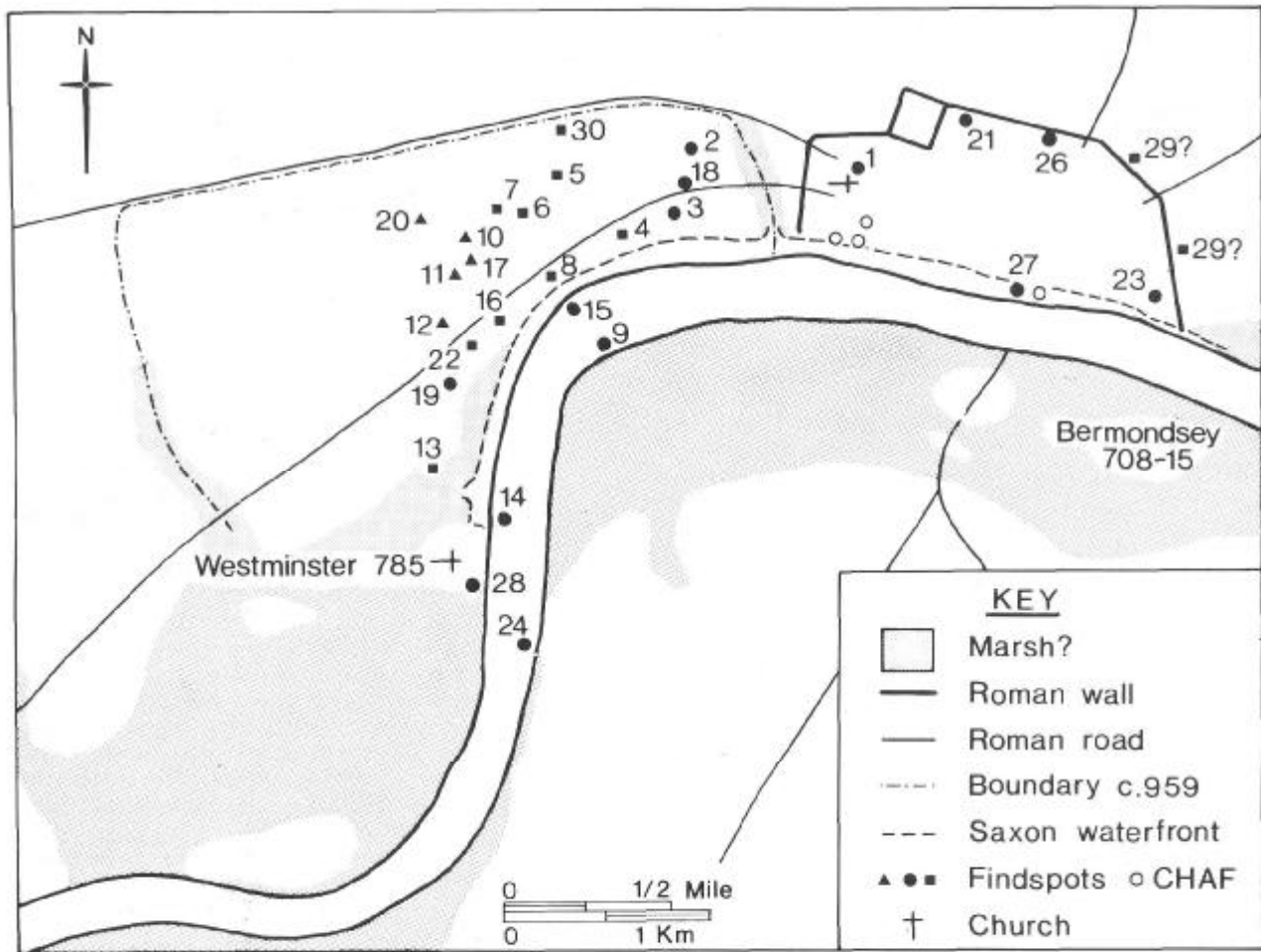


Fig. 2: Middle Saxon Finds in the London area.

(Drawn by Anne Jenner)

The area marked as marsh on this map and on Fig. 4 is the extent of alluvium minus areas shown by the Dept. of Greater London Archaeology to have been gravel cyots slightly higher than the surrounding silt. The exact boundary of useful land would have shifted during the Saxon period due to fluctuations in the relative river level and cannot yet be plotted. The dates for Westminster and Bermondsey are those of the earliest charters. Other settlements within the area of this map are not recorded at this period, although place-name evidence would in many cases suggest an early to middle Saxon origin.

Triangles = probable burials
 Squares = occupation debris
 Circles = loose finds
 CHAF = finds of chaff-tempered pottery within the city walls

development in the area as in the City but much less archaeological attention. Secondly, there is the apparent difference between the character of the middle Saxon pottery from London and that from the two other archaeologically investigated English ports of this period, Ipswich and Southampton, both known for their middle Saxon imported pottery. As suggested above, Ipswich-type ware itself may be regarded in London in the same way as the continental wares which have been found in such numbers in Southampton and the availability of

good quality English pottery on the east coast might be expected to result in a lower quantity of continental imports at Ipswich and London in comparison with Southampton. The few imports from the Strand settlement are all from the Treasury excavation, and therefore peripheral to the settlement, but they do include sherds of Tating ware, one of the rarer imports at Southampton, together with sherds of Badorf-type amphorae and cooking pots (types not present at Southampton at all). The Treasury middle Saxon pottery assemblage is much too small to

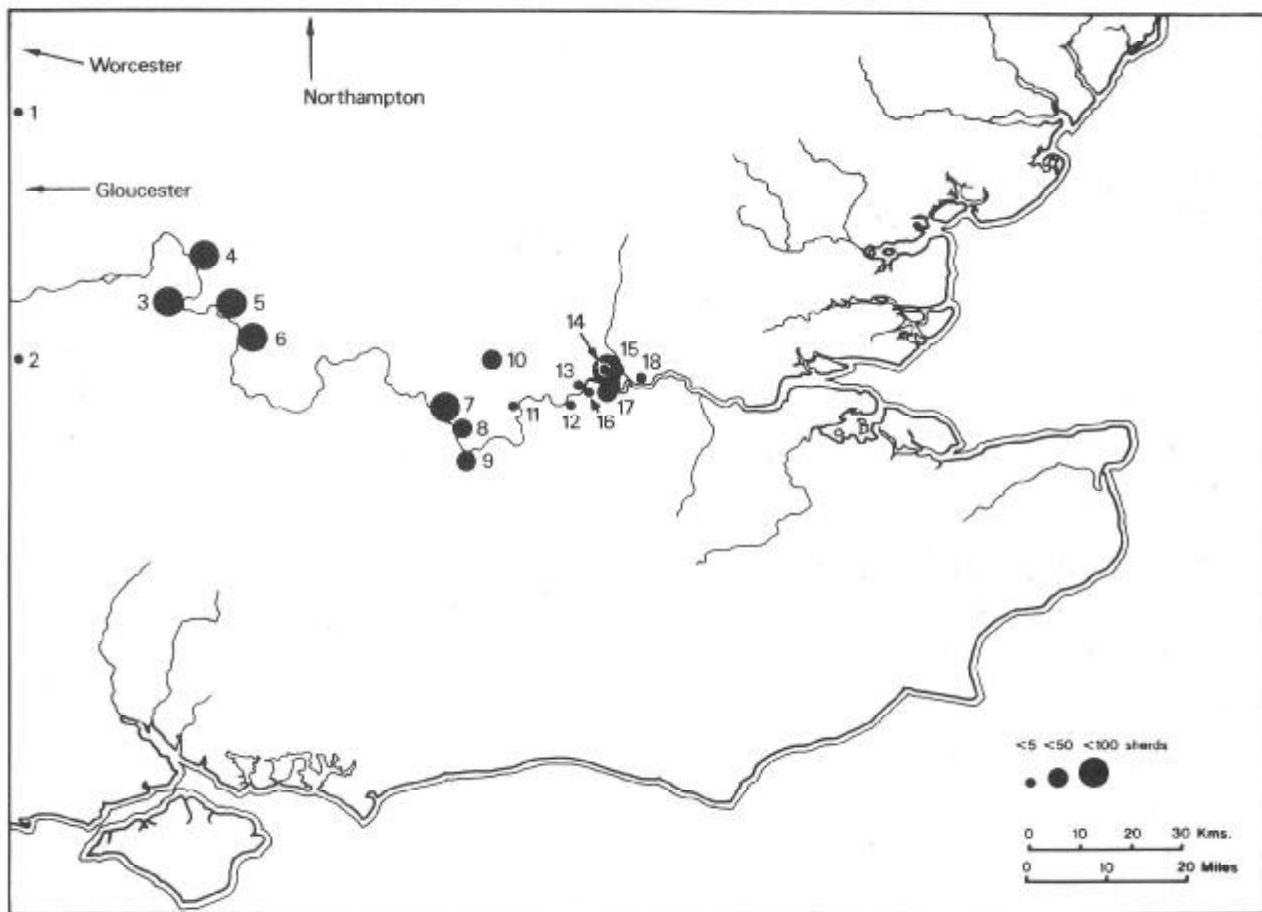


Fig. 3: Distribution of Late Saxon pottery in the Thames Valley.

(Drawn by Nick Griffiths)

Only sherds of London Late Saxon Shelly ware are plotted here. However, within the confines of the Thames valley there are as yet no other definite finds of late 9th to early 11th-century pottery of other types.

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| 1. Upton, Blockley, Glos. | 8. Staines, Surrey. | 14. Moorfields (considerable later medieval dumping here). |
| 2. Swindon, Wilts. | 9. Shepperton. | 15. City of London. |
| 3. Abingdon, Oxon. | 10. Northolt. | 16. Kennington Palace. |
| 4. Oxford, Oxon. | 11. Syon Park, Hounslow. | 17. Southwark. |
| 5. Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxon. | 12. Althorpe Grove, Battersea. | 18. Silvertown. |
| 6. Wallingford, Oxon. | 13. The Treasury, Whitehall. | |
| 7. Wrayisbury, Berks. | | |

produce an adequate assessment of the relative frequencies of these wares but as a simple count of sherds, including material residual in medieval and later contexts, the imports must account for between 5% and 10% of the pottery.

The relative quantity of imported to local pottery at Saxon Southampton has, surprisingly, not been published but a recent re-examination of the entire collection by Dr. J. R. Timby for Southampton Museums has shown that the overall percentage of imported pottery there is only 5% by weight¹⁵. Until a larger sample of the Strand settlement pottery is

available for study it would not be fair to compare the range of imports at the two settlements but the relative frequency of imports at the two sites is clearly comparable.

Late Saxon Shelly ware

Moving into the late Saxon period discussion is now on much safer ground, at least in the lower Thames valley. There is an almost complete ceramic break between the Strand settlement and that within

15. Information presented by Dr. Timby at a seminar at Southampton, 1983.

the City walls. No Ipswich-type ware has been found in the City and virtually no Late Saxon Shelly ware (LSS) has been found in the Strand area (the exception is a sherd from a medieval pit at the Treasury site). Since we know from indisputable documentary evidence that the walled City was occupied from the late ninth century and since there are coins found in the City which would have gone out of use early in the reign of Alfred, in the 870s, we know that in the London area Ipswich-type ware is earlier than the 870s while LSS is later. The problem is just how much later? Since LSS is found in the earliest late Saxon occupation deposits in the City it is reasonable to date its inception to the late 9th century. There are a few sites which have produced early late Saxon deposits containing no late Saxon pottery, for example the first road surfaces of Bow Lane, examined at Well Court in 1979¹⁶. However, these do not prove that LSS was not in use in the City at this time but do emphasise that streets like Bow Lane were probably laid out over unoccupied land from which domestic refuse was absent.

It is known that LSS was still used in London in the early 11th century but it is nevertheless also clear that the ware had completely gone out of use before the Norman conquest. The distribution of LSS therefore gives a good idea of the extent of 10th-century settlement, although individual sherds may be as late as the early 11th century. In Fig. 4 the distribution of the ware within the City walls is shown by open circles. They cluster along the main streets of the City and there is notably less pottery from sites around the periphery of the City, although few sites have produced no sherds at all. Outside the walls the ware has been found in Southwark, on sites at the northern end of the medieval town, and on sites immediately outside the gates to the north and east of the City. Further afield in the London area there is a remarkable dearth of LSS and no sign of other wares being used in its place. At Battersea, for example only one or two sherds of LSS have been found. At Rectory Grove, Clapham, the topsoil overlying the Saxon settlement contained a collection of early medieval sherds which might extend back as far as the beginning of the 11th century but no sherds of LSS.

Thin-section analysis of LSS sherds from London and Oxford has shown that the pottery was made from a clay containing fragments of shelly limestone

and fossil shell derived from the limestone. Similar fabrics are found throughout the Jurassic belt, from Oxfordshire to Lincolnshire, and petrological analysis would only help to locate the source of this pottery more precisely if the exact species of shell and micro-fossils were to be examined, which to date they have not. The distribution of the ware, as shown in Fig. 3, does define the area in which the source probably lies. Vessels made in exactly the same way and with exactly the same petrology occur in the Thames valley from Oxford down to London, with a gap (so far) in the Chilterns between Wallingford and Wraybury. Further afield, at Gloucester, Worcester, Swindon, Blockley and Northampton, sherds of LSS are rare finds, testifying to a considerable overland traffic from the middle Thames area. To the north of the Thames 'negative' sites, that is those which can be shown to be of 10th-century date but which have produced no sherds of LSS, are only easy to come by much farther to the north and east where wheelthrown sandy greywares, collectively Thetford-type ware, are known¹⁷. Immediately north of the area using LSS another wheelthrown shelly ware, St. Neots-type ware, was in use. Unfortunately this ware increased in importance during the 11th century, at the time when Oxford-London LSS had ceased manufacture¹⁸. For a short time in the early to mid 11th-century St. Neots ware was the most common pottery in use in Oxfordshire. Excavations at St. Albans Abbey on the site of the Chapter House have shown that St. Neots ware was also the main pottery at the time when a small cemetery and boundary ditch were in use¹⁹. At Walton, just to the east of Aylesbury, St. Neots ware occurred alone in some features, thought to date to the 10th century, and alongside 'early medieval wares' in others²⁰. However, there is no independent dating for any of this pottery which could as easily be of 10th as 11th-century date.

It is clear that more basic data are required before even a secure framework for the late Saxon pottery of this area is available and it is quite impossible to draw a boundary between LSS using areas and those using 10th-century St. Neots ware. To the south of the Thames even greater problems exist. A few sherds from Wraybury are the wheelthrown products of a 10th to 11th-century pottery which might have a local distribution but a museum search of Berkshire and Surrey has failed to produce any other

16. T. Dyson & J. Schofield 'Excavation in the City of London Second Interim Report, 1974-1978' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 32 (1981) 57.

17. The classic gazetteer of these wares, now over 20 years old, is J. G. Hurst 'Saxo-Norman pottery in East Anglia: Part II Thetford ware' *Proc Cambs Ant Soc* 1 (1956) 42-60.

18. M. Mellor 'Late Saxon Pottery in Oxfordshire: Evidence and Speculation!' *Medieval Ceram* 4 (1980) 17-28.

19. Inf. ex. Prof. M. Biddle.

20. M. Farley 'Tenth and Eleventh-century Walton' *Records of Bucks* 20 pt.2 (1976) 228-50.

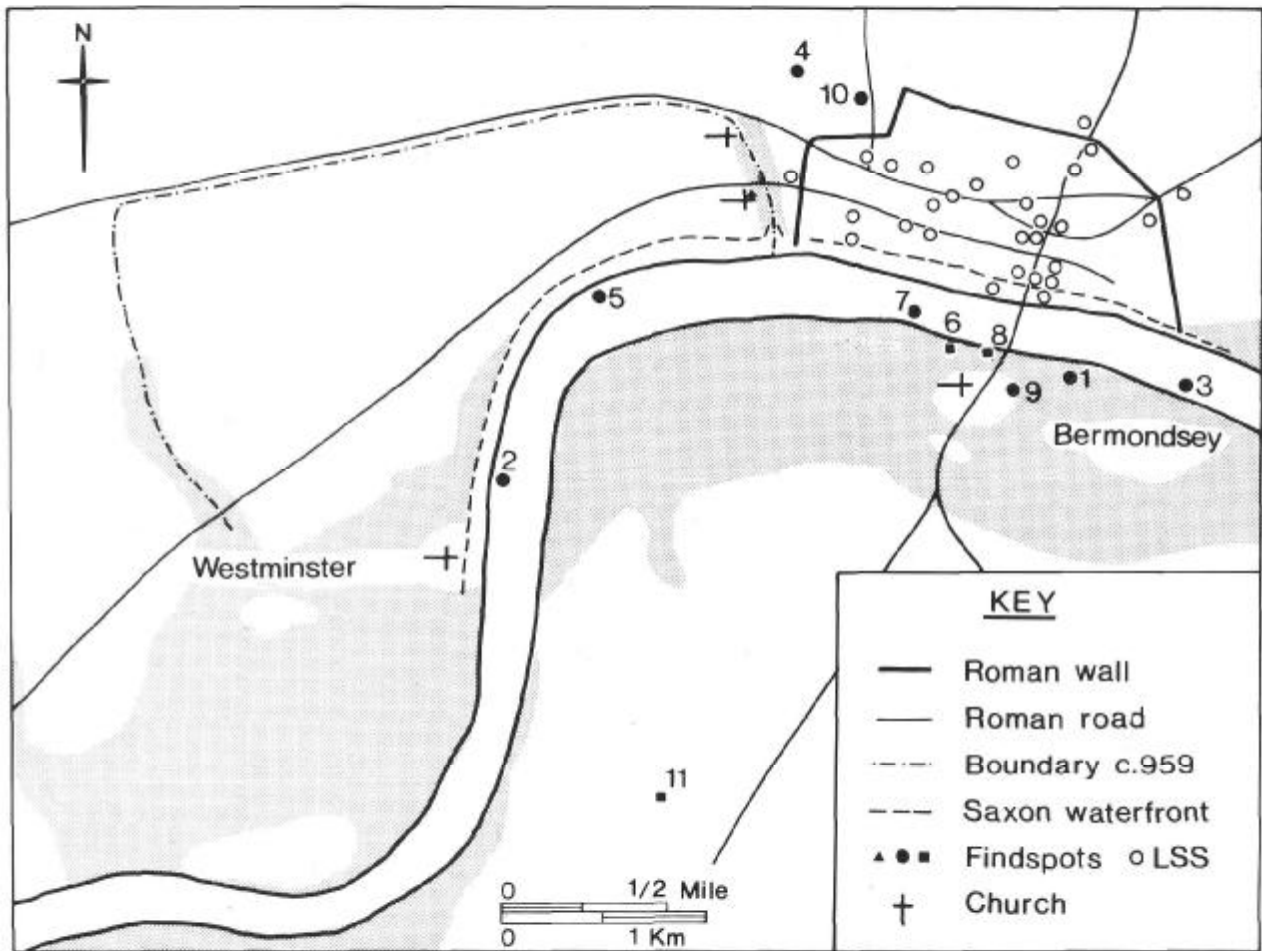


Fig. 4: Distribution of Late Saxon finds in the London area.

(Drawn by Anne Jenner)

Triangles = probable burials
 Squares = occupation debris
 Circles = loose finds
 LSS = finds of late Saxon shelly ware within the city walls

definite Late Saxon, as opposed to Saxo-Norman, pottery from these two counties except that shown in Fig. 3. Excavations in northern Hampshire, at Netherton, have shown that good quality, probably wheelthrown pottery was in use there from the late 9th century²¹. Its absence from the intervening area could either be because we have not yet found the sites or because the population was so sparse that the area could neither support a local pottery industry nor induce merchants to import pottery from other areas.

It has been established, therefore, that the pottery used in the lower Thames valley in the 10th century was manufactured further west, probably in the Oxford region. It seems very likely that the river

played an important part in the distribution of the pottery, perhaps as part of a two-way trade. Imported goods and coastal products (such as marine fish and shell-fish, both of which are recorded from late Saxon Oxford) could travel up-river while pottery and other goods came down. The gap in the distribution pattern in the Chilterns does, however, leave this interpretation open to revision. It is equally possible that the goods were travelling overland. Northolt, for example, is a long way from the Thames but is on the medieval road from Oxford to London. The examination of pottery from Late

21. Excavations by the City of London Archaeol. Soc. *Pers. comm.* J. Fairbrother.

Saxon sites in the Chilterns might solve this problem.

Other late Saxon wares

As mentioned above, there were numerous sources of good quality wheelthrown pottery in the area north of London. Many vessels of these types occur as occasional finds in Oxford, testifying to the position of Oxford on the overland trade route from Southampton to Northampton and the volume of traffic which must have flowed along this route²². London, however, has no such collection of exotica. There is perhaps one late 10th or early 11th-century Northern French glazed pitcher to compare with the documentary evidence for northern French wine merchants in the London of Æthelred II²³ and no examples of 10th-century Ipswich-Thetford type

ware to compare with the abundant evidence for both earlier and later Ipswich products in London (and, from the 12th century, London area products in Ipswich).

We have here an apparent dichotomy between the historical evidence, which shows abundant foreign contacts in the late Saxon period, and the pottery evidence, which implies a City in the 10th century in which pottery supply was a monopoly of the Oxford region. However, the historical evidence consists of a list of merchants and goods contained within the laws of Æthelred II and datable to c 1000. By this time pottery too indicates wide trading contacts (see below). Perhaps the historical evidence cannot be taken to show that this situation extended back to the late 9th-century foundations of the walled city. Before too much can be made of this evidence a

22. Mellor *op cit* fn. 18.

23. Associated with LSS in a pit found in the 1982 excavation at

Puttling Lane. However, since the feature was unsealed except by post-medieval cellar floors it might be of later date and a fortuitous association.

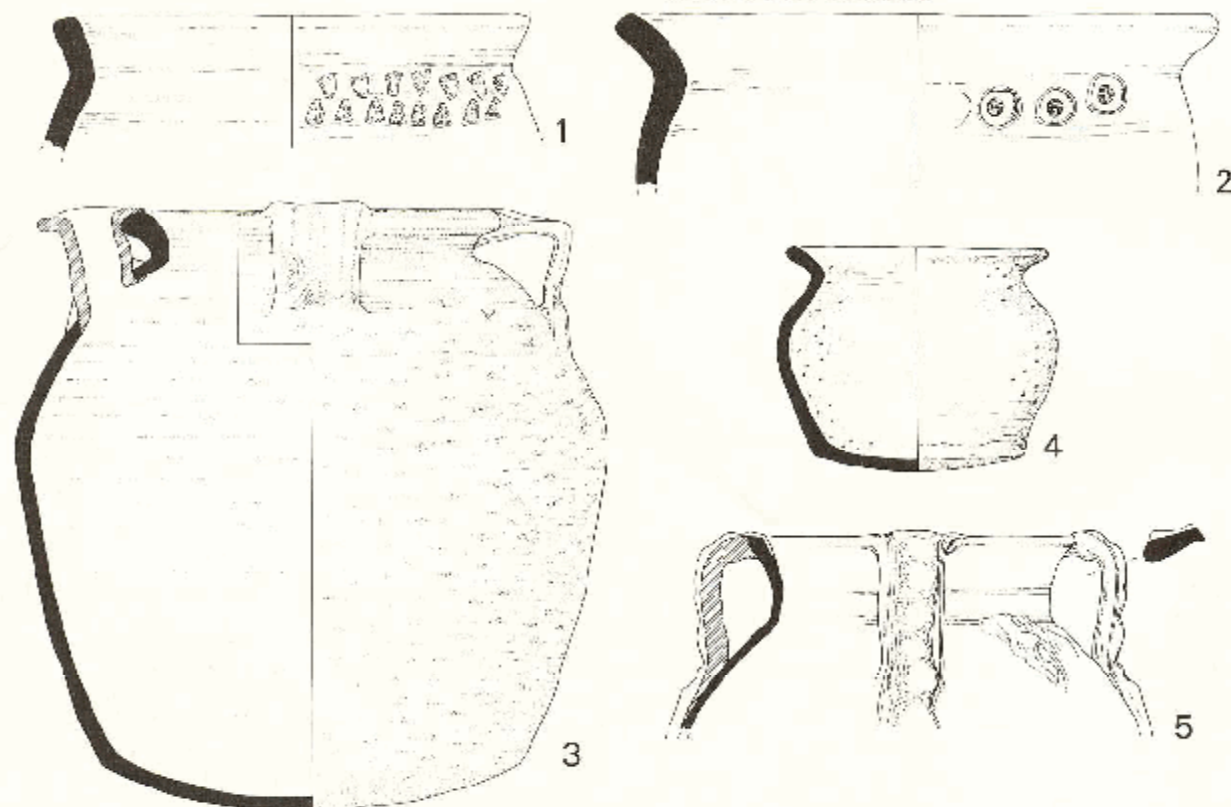


Fig. 5: Middle and Late Saxon Pottery from the London area.

(Drawn by Anne Jenner)

1. Ipswich-type ware from the Savoy site, Strand (MOL Acc. No. A27145).
2. Ipswich-type ware from Gate Street, Kingsway (MOL Acc. No. A21049).
3. Late Saxon Shelly ware spouted pitcher 'found in London' (MOL Acc. No. 23112).
4. Late Saxon Shelly ware cooking pot from Cornhill (MOL Acc. No. A26275).
5. Ipswich-Thetford ware storage jar or spouted pitcher from 18 Billiter Street (MOL Acc. No. 11517).

survey of the other Saxon artefacts from the City must take place, to see if these too show evidence for a sharp increase in foreign contacts in the late 10th century or whether the pottery is alone in this respect.

The beginnings of medieval London

In 1974 and 1982 excavations on the City waterfront, at New Fresh Wharf and Billingsgate Lorry Park, revealed that the first major activity to leave any archaeological trace later than the 3rd-century quay was a bank of clay. At New Fresh Wharf this overlay a possible timber jetty and rows of stakes set into the river silt. A date for the bank was provided by tree-ring analysis which showed that the felling dates for these timbers clustered around the end of the 10th century, with one timber probably felled in the early 11th century. However, all of the timber had been re-used and provides only a *terminus post quem* of c 1000 for the construction of the bank and a mid-tenth-century date for the earliest activity below it²⁴.

The Billingsgate bank had a vertical timber front but tree-ring analysis has not yet been completed. However, a worn halfpenny of Edgar (959-973), which must have left circulation before his reform of the coinage in 973, was found in a gravel spread associated with the construction of the bank²⁵. This provides a *terminus post quem* for the construction which would make it possible for the Billingsgate bank and the first activity at New Fresh Wharf to be contemporary, in the late 10th century.

The pottery associated with these two banks is interesting since that from Billingsgate is mostly very similar to that from other 10th-century contexts in the town while that from New Fresh Wharf, perhaps half a century later, is predominantly of types which occur in groups which are definitely post-conquest in date. There are differences in the precise range of types which show that the New Fresh Wharf pottery is not itself post-conquest in date, for example there is only one sherd of glazed ware, from an Andenne ware pitcher, from New Fresh Wharf, and that found during the watching brief which followed the excavation in 1978. Nevertheless, a comparison of the pottery from the Billingsgate bank, the New Fresh Wharf bank and post-conquest groups from the city shows that the major break in pottery sources and styles occurred closer to 1000 than 1066.

In many ways this early 11th-century pottery can be seen as the beginnings of the medieval pottery sequence. As in the later period there is a wide variety of sources, including imports from the Rhineland and northern France. Gone is the re-

liance on the Oxford region and, indeed, neither St. Neots ware nor the coarse gravel-tempered pottery which ultimately supplied Oxford is found in the City. However, overland contacts are shown by the presence of coarse handmade pottery containing a flint and chalk temper which probably come from Hertfordshire (they predominate in early 12th-century groups from St. Albans Abbey, for example) and handmade shelly wares of the types commonly found in the east midlands and termed there 'developed St. Neots type wares' as well as (although probably in the post-conquest period) by the presence of glazed pitchers and other vessels of Stamford ware. The Ipswich connection, apparently broken in the 10th century, is back in the 11th and it is likely that all of the wheelthrown greyware of Thetford ware type from the City is actually from Ipswich kilns.

Conclusion

The theory that middle Saxon London was an undefended extra-mural settlement until its abrupt transfer into the Roman walled area late in the 9th century makes the pottery sequence in the London area easier to define. However, we are still at the very beginning of our understanding of Saxon London, in both its middle and late Saxon phases. It is quite clear that a study of the pottery of London cannot take place in isolation. Not only is it important to know what pottery was in use in the surrounding counties it is also important to compare the evidence derived from pottery with that from other sources. Although we may well now know where Saxon London was we are a long way from knowing what happened there.

Acknowledgements

This work involved much discussion with other archaeologists, both those primarily concerned with the excavation of settlements and those whose main interest is in the artefacts found. In particular I would like to thank my colleagues at the Museum of London, especially John Clark, for their help and encouragement, Prof. M. Biddle for discussing his excavations at St. Albans with me, Lyn Blackmore of the DGLA for allowing me to examine the pottery from Tottenham Court and Althorpe Grove, Battersea, D. Brown of the Ashmolean Museum for showing me the Saxon pottery from the Upper Thames valley and R. Huggins for allowing me to examine the Treasury pottery in advance of her report. Maureen Mellor and Brian Durham of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit have been exceptionally helpful in discussing the Oxford pottery sequence.

24. Dyson & Schofield *op cit* fn. 16, 61. Dendrochronological analysis by J. Hillam, University of Sheffield.

25. Identified by M. Archibald, Dept. of Coins and Medals, British Museum.