

Pottery from Little Hallingbury Test-Pits (2007)

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Roman Greyware. This was one of the most common types of Roman pottery, and was made in many different places in Britain. Many different types of vessels were made, especially cooking pots. It was most common in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, but in some places, continued in use until the 4th century.

Ipswich Ware. The first industrially produced pottery to be made after the end of the Roman period. Made in Ipswich, and fired in kilns, some of which have been excavated. Most pots were jars, but bowls also known, as are jugs. It is usually grey and quite smooth, although some pots have varying amounts of large sand grains in the clay. Very thick and heavy when compared to later Saxon pottery, probably because it was made by hand rather than thrown on a wheel. Dated AD720 – 850.

EMW: Early Medieval Sandy Ware: AD1100-1400. Hard fabric with plentiful quartz temper. Manufactured at a wide range of generally unknown sites all over eastern England. Mostly cooking pots, but bowls and occasionally jugs also known.

GRIM: Grimston Ware. Made at Grimston, near King's Lynn. It was made from a sandy clay similar with a slight 'sandpaper' texture. The clay is usually a dark bluish-grey colour, sometimes with a light-coloured buff or orange inner surface. It was made between about AD1080 and 1400. All sorts of different pots were made, but the most common finds are jugs, which usually have a slightly dull green glaze on the outer surface. Between AD1300 and 1400, the potters made very ornate jugs, with painted designs in a reddish brown clay, and sometimes attached models of knights in armour or grotesque faces to the outside of the pots. It is found all over East Anglia and eastern England. A lot of Grimston ware has been found in Norway, as there is very little clay in that country, and they had to import their pottery. Nearly half the medieval pottery found in Norway was made at Grimston, and was shipped there from King's Lynn.

TG: 'Tudor Green' Ware. Made between 1380 and 1550 in Surrey, near London. Pots made from a very smooth white clay, with bright green glaze, usually on the inside and out. Usually cups, bowls and small jugs. Quite a rare find in Cambridgeshire.

MP: Midland Purple ware. Made and used between AD1450-1600. Very hard, red to dark purplish-grey in colour, usually with a dark purple to black glaze. Wide range of different pots made such as jars, bowls and jugs.

CW: Cistercian Ware: Made between AD1475 and 1700. So-called because it was first found during the excavation of Cistercian monasteries, but not made by monks. A number of different places are known to have been making this pottery, particularly in the north of England and the midlands. The pottery is very thin-walled and hard, as they were made in the first coal-fired pottery kilns, which reached much higher temperatures than the wood-fired types of the medieval period. The clay fabric is usually brick red or purple, and the pots covered with a dark brown- or purplish-black

glaze on both surfaces. The main type of pot was small drinking cups with up to six handles, known as 'tygs'. They were sometimes decorated with painted dots and other designs in yellow clay. Cistercian ware was very popular, and is found all over England.

GS: German Stonewares. First made around AD1450, and still made today. Made at lots of places along the river Rhine in Germany, such as Cologne, Siegburg and Frechen. Very hard grey clay fabric, with the outer surface of the pot often having a mottled brown glaze, with some having blue and purple painted decoration, and others moulded medallions ('prunts') with coat-of-arms or mythical scenes on them. The most common vessel type was the mug, used in taverns in Britain and all over the world. Surviving records from the port of London ('port books') show that millions such pots were brought in by boat from Germany from around AD1500 onwards.

GRE: Glazed Red Earthenwares: Just about everywhere in Britain began to make and use this type of pottery from about AD1550 onwards, and it was still being made in the 19th century. The clay fabric is usually very smooth, and a brick red colour. Lots of different types of pots were made, particularly very large bowls, cooking pots and cauldrons. Almost all of them have shiny, good-quality orange or green glaze on the inner surface, and sometimes on the outside as well. From about AD1680, black glaze was also used.

Border Ware. Made near London, in Surrey and Hampshire, between 1550 and 1700. White, slightly sandy clay, lots of different types of pots such as cups, mugs, bowls and candlesticks, as well as many types of specialist cooking and eating vessels, usually with a bright green or yellow glaze.

HS: Harlow Slipware. Similar to glazed red earthenware (GRE), but with painted designs in yellow liquid clay ('slip') under the glaze. Made at many places between 1600 and 1700, but the most famous and earliest factory was at Harlow in Essex.

SWSG: Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware. Hard, white pottery with a white glaze with a texture like orange peel. Made between 1720 and 1780, pots usually table wares such as tea bowls, tankards and plates.

'Victorian'. A wide range of different types of pottery, particularly the cups, plates and bowls with blue decoration which are still used today. First made around AD1800.

Results

Test Pit 1

Test Pit	Cntxt	Ipswich		GRE		SWSG		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
1	1							1	7	1800-1900
1	2			5	24			13	31	1550-1900
1	3	1	25	1	3	1	3	11	29	720-1900
1	4			2	8			19	48	1550-1900
1	5			3	35			15	49	1550-1900
1	6			5	39	1	1	11	21	1550-1900
1	7			1	2			3	8	1550-1900

Most of the pottery from this test-pit dates to the post medieval period and shows that people have been here more or less continuously since 1550. The single sherd of Ipswich ware also shows that people were here during the Saxon period, between AD720 and 850. Ipswich ware is very rare in Essex and suggests that the site may have been quite important in the Saxon period, perhaps the home of a local lord, or a market place.

Test Pit 2

Test Pit	Cntxt	EMW		TG		CW		GS		GRE		BW		HS		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
2	1									3	32					13	31	1550-1900
2	2			1	1			1	2	1	5					19	55	1380-1900
2	3					4	19			33	195					25	81	1475-1900
2	4					6	16	1	6	103	1037	1	3	3	12	9	16	1475-1900
2	5	1	4			1	4			31	327							1100-1600

This test-pit produced a very wide range of pottery from the medieval period onwards, and shows that people have been living at the site more or less continuously for 900 years.

Test Pit 3

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
3	1			1	4	1800-1900
3	2			6	18	1800-1900
3	4	1	2			1550-1750

This test pit did not produce much pottery, and most of it dates to the Victorian period. The single piece of GRE shows that people did use the site in the 16th or 17th century, but it was probably fields at that time.

Test Pit 4

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRIM		GRE		HS		SWSG		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
4	2	1	5			1	9			6	21	1450-1900
4	3			4	16					2	9	1550-1900
4	4							2	9			1550-1750

This test-pit did not produce very much pottery, but that which was there shows that there have been people at the site from the 13th century onwards. The fact that there was not very much pottery suggests that it was not a site at which people lived, but may have been fields.

Test Pit 5

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
5	1	1	15	3	8	1550-1900
5	2	2	14	9	53	1550-1900
5	3	1	18	3	15	1550-1900

This test-pit did not produce very much pottery, but that which was there shows that there have been people at the site from the 16th century onwards. The fact that there was not very much pottery suggests that it was not a site at which people lived, but may have been fields.

Test Pit 6

Test Pit	Cntxt	RB Grey		Ipswich		EMW		LMT		MP		GRE		HS		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
6	1					1	4			2	28					7	12	1100-1900
6	2															43	137	1800-1900
6	3			1	7	6	23	2	7			8	44	1	19	31	81	720-1900
6	5	4	14	2	16													100-850
6	P/Hs							5	52									1400-1500
6	20	3	6	1	24													100-850

This test-pit produced a wide range of pottery. The presence of Roman pottery shows that there were people here at that time. The sherds of Ipswich ware show that people were here during the Saxon period, between AD720 and 850. Ipswich ware is very rare in Essex and the fact that it was found in the foundations of a building suggests that the site may have been quite important in the Saxon period, probably the home of the local lord.

Some of the medieval pottery came from postholes, showing that there were also buildings here in the 13th – 15th centuries, with the rest of the pottery indicating that people have been living on the site ever since.

Test Pit 7

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
7	2	1	93	2	16	1500-1900
7	3			4	8	1800-1900
7	4			20	44	1800-1900
7	5	1	22	41	71	1550-1900
7	6			3	5	1800-1900
7	8			4	25	1800-1900
7	10	1	91	1	3	1800-1900

All the pottery from this test-pit dates from the 16th century onwards. The fact that there was not very much pottery dating to before the Victorian period suggests that it was not a site at which people lived before the 19th century, but may have been fields.

Test Pit 8

Test Pit	Cntxt	EMW		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
8	1			1	9	1800-1900
8	2	4	21			1100-1400

This test-pit did not produce much pottery, but shows that people were probably living here in the medieval period. The medieval pottery is all unglazed, and probably dates to the 12th – 13th centuries.

Test Pit 9

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
9	1			1	4	1800-1900
9	4	3	18			1550-1750

This test pit did not produce much pottery, and most of it dates to the Victorian period. The pieces of GRE shows that people did use the site in the 16th or 17th century, but it was probably fields at that time.

Test Pit 10

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
10	2			6	50	1800-1900
10	3	1	10	6	15	1550-1750

This test pit did not produce much pottery, and most of it dates to the Victorian period. The single piece of GRE shows that people did use the site in the 16th or 17th century, but it was probably fields at that time.

Test Pit 12

Test Pit	Cntxt	RB Grey		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
12	1	1	4	3	18	100-1900

This test pit did not produce much pottery, and most of it dates to the Victorian period. The single piece of Roman pottery shows that people did use the site at that time, but it was probably fields then.

Test Pit 13

Test Pit	Cntxt	GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	
13	2	1	3	4	15	1550-1900

This test pit did not produce much pottery, and most of it dates to the Victorian period. The single piece of GRE shows that people did use the site in the 16th or 17th century, but it was probably fields at that time.

School Test-pit

Test Pit	Cntxt	Bronze Age		EMW		GRE		Victorian		Date Range
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
School	2&3			4	11	6	18	2	8	1100-1900
School	4	20	52							?1500BC

The range of pottery types shows that there has been human activity at the site in the prehistoric period, and then from the medieval period onwards. The medieval and later pottery is all in quite small pieces, and so may be from a field rather than a habitation site. The prehistoric pottery was found in association with some flint tools, and no later pottery, and so is from a settlement, dating to around 1500-2000BC.