

A late medieval enclosure in Donington Park

by *P. Liddle*

From December 1960 until his untimely death in Autumn 1962, John Lomas was engaged in the excavation of a small ditched enclosure at national grid reference SK 423.266 lying about 300 yards from the present Donington Hall and 1½ miles west-south-west of Castle Donington Village. This report has been compiled from his surviving plans, notes, photographs and finds which are housed at Jewry Wall Museum¹ (accession number 6IL 1963).

The site is set in the midst of Donington Park and a consideration of its history is essential to the proper understanding of the site, but it must be stressed that the conclusions of both the fieldwork and documentary research are very much of an interim nature.

THE DOCUMENTARY AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The medieval park was primarily a hunting-ground consisting of securely enclosed well-wooded land providing cover for deer, but other activities were carried out that did not conflict with this, such as the grazing of swine (pannage) and cattle (herbage and agistment) and the collection of wood. The park was maintained by a parker (park-keeper) and his activities are of especial interest as the excavated site is almost certainly the lodge in which he would have lived.

Donington Park is normally considered to have been created in 1229 when John de Lacey was granted deer by the Crown to stock the park,² although John Nichols prints a document listing officers including the 'Keeper of Castle Donington Park' which he dates to 1155.³ In Domesday Book⁴ (1086) a 'wood twelve furlongs in length and eight in breadth' is mentioned and this may well have been a direct fore-runner of the Park itself. The park passed from the de Lacey's to the earls of Kent⁵ and dukes of Lancaster⁶ and thence to the Crown. In 1482 Edward IV extended the park by enclosing 'Shortwode',⁷ an area of common grazing, granting in exchange all his Castle Donington demesne land. In 1490 the park was restocked and in 1492 hunting was prohibited, presumably to allow the deer to re-establish themselves.⁸ In about 1535 the park was granted to the Grey family,⁹ but in 1594-5 a grant to the earl of Essex, Gilley Merrick and Henry Lindley¹⁰ was made. They soon sold it to Sir George Hastings,¹¹ in whose family it remained until the nineteenth century. The exact date at which a mansion was built in the park, marking the transformation from a medieval deer park to an amenity park, is not known, but the first reference suggesting this is in the 1565 Inquisition Post Mortem of Thomas Grey,¹² who is described as 'of Castle Donington Park'.

The documents also give some insight into the working of the parker. He was responsible for the delivery of two cart-loads of brushwood to St. John's Hospital in Castle Donington every Saturday,¹³ and would presumably also be in charge of the collection of underwood for sale as well as supervising the cattle and swine grazing in the park. He was of course responsible for the welfare of the animals and it would be his duty to lay in winter feed.¹⁴ The only reference that has been traced which refers to the lodge comes in the 1399-1400 Duchy of Lancaster Ministers Accounts where four shillings and ten pence is recorded as being spent, presumably on building work.¹⁵

The parker also had to maintain the enclosure of the park and in 1322 one element of the boundary was certainly a hedge (as in that year the King's Army 'carried off and burnt' the old hedge, necessitating 97 perches being replaced.¹⁶ Fieldwork suggests that there was also a bank and ditch, although this has so far only been certainly located on the north-west boundary of the park. Here there are two roughly parallel banks lying approximately 300 yards (265 m) apart that must represent successive boundaries. The more easterly bank, followed by the old Melbourne-Donington parish boundary, is presumably the original bank, while that to the west must represent some unrecorded extension to the park. Attached to this bank are two contiguous enclosures of unknown purpose.

An estate map of 1735¹⁷ shows the then boundaries of the park and it seems probable that this represents more or less the medieval position (fig. 1). The position of 'Shortwode', added to the park in 1482, can also be inferred from this map. In 1585, a special commission investigating the 1482 exchange of lands mentioned that the then current name for 'Shortwode' was 'The Launde'.¹⁸ On the 1735 map a group of names including the element 'Lawn' (clearly deriving from 'Launde') are to be found just to the south-east of the park proper (see fig. 1). This area and the land to the west, which in 1735

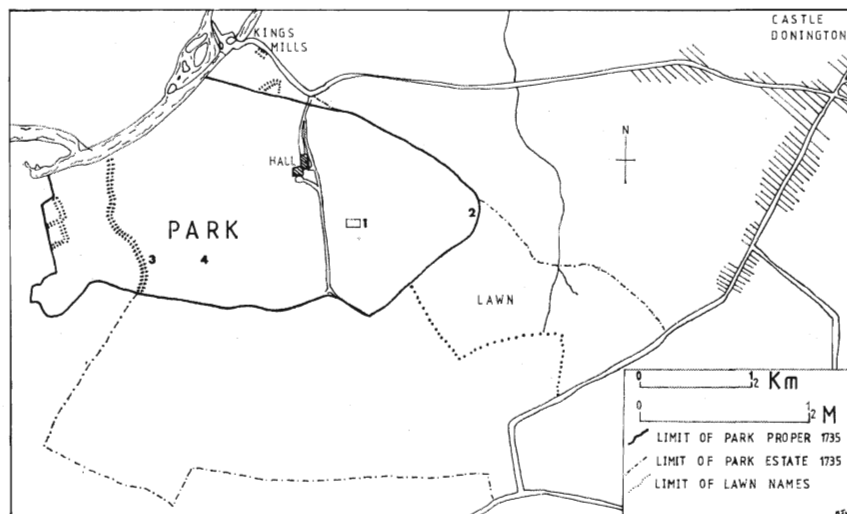


Fig 1. Donington Park estate

formed part of Donington Park Estate but by then farm land, were probably part of the Shortwode/Launde area constituting a contiguous, but in some ways separate enclosure. The re-partition of the park into hunting and farming areas seems to have occurred on or before September 1554 when it was noted that Thomas Grey had divided the park for his own use taking crops of hay and flax from it and pasturing cattle and sheep.¹⁹ It is also clear that by the mid-fifteenth century the offices of bailiwick and parkership of Donington had become a sinecure held by the Staunton family and later Robert Hasilrigge.²⁰ However, the park pales were repaired about 1550 by Thomas Grey²¹ and as Burton includes Donington Park in his 1641 list of existing deer parks²² there is no doubt that the practical work of the parker was being maintained.

THE EXCAVATION

The site lies on the fairly level end of a northward-running spur and has wide views over the park (see fig. 1, site 1). When Mr. Lomas originally noticed the earthwork it appeared as three sides of an approximate rectangle, the west side not being visible. During the excavation the north and east ditches were completely emptied and the south and west ditches were sectioned, while over two-thirds of the interior were opened. There was a certain amount of Roman material from the site (including Samian ware) although no structures were identified dating to this period.

1. *The Enclosure Ditches* (fig. 2)

The east ditch in 'section AA' was found to be flat-bottomed with sloping sides and about six feet (1.80 m) wide at the top and two feet at the base, which was just over four feet (1.20 m) below the turf. The top two feet (0.60 m) of the fill was light coloured soil with very few finds and was perhaps derived from the upcast mound. The next layer was much darker with charcoal flecking and contained the bulk of the finds in the ditch. These included a large number of sherds of Midland Purple Ware some 'Tudor Green Ware' and some sherds of sandy ware, including two small pottery mortars. All this pottery is of late fifteenth or sixteenth century types. There were also bones and deer-antlers fire-reddened stones and drilled roofing slates.²³ This layer extended nearly to the bottom of the ditch, the bottom layer not being recorded. A stoney layer, three to twelve inches (0.075 to 0.30 m) thick, sealing a thin dark layer and set back several feet from the outer edge of the ditch, almost certainly represents the base of an external bank with an old turf-line below. From the stretch of ditch north of section 'AA' came a fire-brick a buckle, a piece of bronze plate, some fused lead, much stone including squared sandstone slabs and a great amount of pottery of the same types as before. Towards the North-East corner which was rounded the finds became much less frequent. On either side of the corner the ditches became much shallower although deepening a little to about three and a half feet (1.05 m) at the corner itself.

The north ditch was proved (in section 'BB') to be of a similar profile to the east ditch, but was about six feet (1.80 m) wide at the top, one foot eight inches (0.5 m) wide at the bottom and five feet two inches (1.57 m)

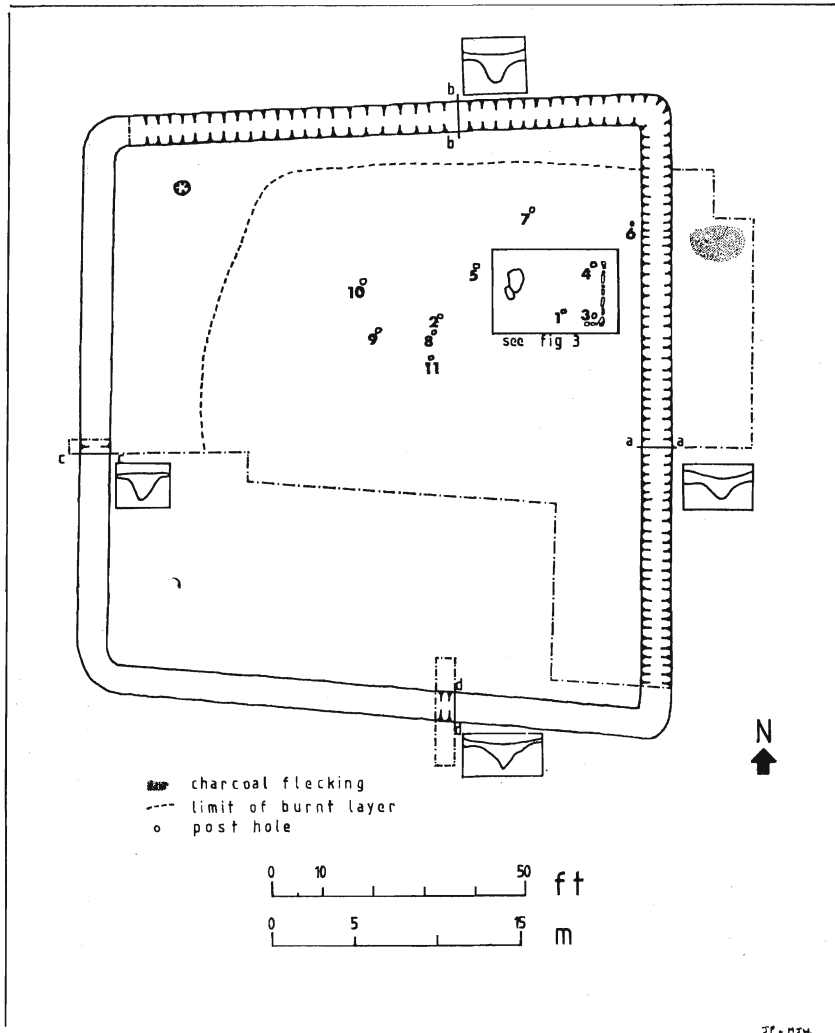


Fig 2. Donington: the Enclosure

deep from the surface. Only two layers are recorded from this section. The top sixteen inches (0.40 m) beneath the turf was soil that had probably been derived from the bank. From this layer came a small clay-pipe bowl of early (probably early seventeenth century) type, a small piece of lead and drilled slates. Below this was heavily charcoal-flecked soil which formed the remainder of the fill of the ditch. Further to the east there appears to have been a rather different sequence. The top layer was the same but below that was a particularly dark band loaded with bone, antler and pottery but without any charcoal flecking.

The west ditch in the single section ('CC') cut across it was about six feet (1.80 m) wide and five feet deep (1.50 m). There was very little pottery or bone in the fill although a large piece of cow-skull was found.

The south ditch had only one recorded section ('DD') dug through it. Here the ditch proved to be six feet (1.80 m) wide and five feet (1.50 m) deep with a V-shaped profile with a small shelf on the south side. There were few finds and these were mostly small bones.

The distribution of finds in the ditches showed a marked concentration in the northern half of the east ditch and a lesser concentration in the east half of the north ditch, although the north-east corner itself produced very few finds. The sections along the west and south ditches produced very little material, and the distribution of finds suggests a focus of occupation in the north-east of the enclosure. This conclusion is amply justified by a consideration of the finds from the interior of the enclosure.

2. *The Interior of the Enclosure*

The north-east corner of the enclosure was covered, somewhat discontinuously, by a layer of heavily charcoal-flecked soil, some six to nine inches thick (the approximate limits of this layer to the north and west are shown on figure 2). In this layer were found a spur of Late Medieval rowel type, a whetstone, worked flints and a glass linen smoother, as well as Late Medieval pottery including Midland Purple, Tudor Green, Cistercian and Midland Yellow wares. The layer gradually died away to the west and south, as did the number of finds in the layer. On the west, this layer immediately overlaid undisturbed natural soil, but further to the east it covered the fragmentary remains of a building (fig. 3). The most easily identifiable feature was a dry-stone-wall, consisting of flat-stones set closely together with a fairly level upper surface, running for about twelve feet (3.65 m) north to south, joined at the south end to a short stretch of wall running east to west for about three feet (0.90 m). Nearly sixteen feet (4.87 m) west of the main wall was a hearth consisting of a large sandstone slab with indications of fire damage on its upper surface and particularly at its edges. Between the wall and the hearth was a scatter of flat stones, mostly sandstone. Mr. Lomas considered that these constituted the remains of a sandstone floor, though it seems equally likely that the scatter represented the collapsed remains or disturbed extension of the stone wall, while the blocks found in the ditch must derive from this building.

Also in this 'focal' area of occupation was a series of post-holes although it is by no means clear whether any of these are associated with the walls or belong to another phase. Mr. Lomas regarded PH3 as earlier than the wall, but whether this view was correct, and, if so, could also be applied to the other post-holes is unknown.

Details of the post-holes (numbering as on the site plan).

PH1 Post-hole two feet one inch (0.64 m) in total depth, cut nine inches (0.23 m) into rock and one foot (0.30 m) below the level of the rubble. The fill was of the same heavily charcoal-flecked soil as overlay it and there was a packing stone one foot (0.30 m) by six inches (0.15 m) by five inches (0.13 m).

PH2 was cut two feet six inches (0.76 m) deep, one foot nine inches (0.53



Fig 3. The house area

m) of that being into rock. It was round at the top being about one foot (0.30 m) across, and roughly rectangular at the bottom, about eight inches (0.20 m) by six inches (0.15 m). The fill was charcoal-flecked and there were no packing stones.

PH3 Roughly circular hole about one foot (0.30 m) in diameter with charcoal in the fill. The top fill of the hole contained burnt stones and several sherds of a large Midland Purple-type ware pot. This was sealed by a sterile red soil layer that Mr. Lomas suggested was to level up the hole when the wall was built.

PH4 This was roughly one foot (0.30 m) in diameter, circular and with a charcoal-flecked fill.

PH5 No details.

PH6 Post-hole with rotten wooden stump about five inches (0.13 m) in diameter, of larch or similar, going down about two feet (0.60 m). The top of the hole was at nine inches (0.23 m) below the turf.

PH7 Hole cut into natural rock with packing stones, one being large.

PH8, PH9, PH10 No details.

PH11 Approximately rectangular hole cut one foot (0.30 m) into the rock and through nine inches (0.23 m) of soil.

In the north-west corner of the enclosure, well away from the main area of occupation, was the base of what may be interpreted as an oven. It was a roughly oval pit about three feet six inches (1.07 m) by two feet six inches

(0.76 m) and cut six inches (0.15 m) into the natural marl-stone. It was filled with charcoal-flecked soil and the sides showed fire reddening. The fragments of fire-brick found elsewhere on the site may well come from this structure.

3. *The Exterior*

A small area was also excavated outside the bank at the north-east corner. A spread of mortar and a patch of heavily charcoal-flecked soil were found. The latter was up to six inches (0.15 m) thick and in it was found pottery, a piece of lead, a lump of iron or iron slag and several nails.

THE ANIMAL REMAINS by D. C. Bent

Mammalian Remains

Fallow Deer: 5 L. Humeri, 2 R. Humeri, 2 L. Radium, 1 R. Radius & Ulna, 1 L. Astragalus, 3 L. Metacarpals, 1 L. Femur, 1 R. Femur, 1 Tibia (frag.), 1 L. Metatarsal, 5 Phalanges I, 1 Phalange II, 3 Molars, 1 Premolar, 6 Antlers (frags.), *Horse*: 1 R. Humerus, 1 R. Radius, 1 R. Tibia, 1 Metatarsal (frag.), 1 Incisor, 3 Molars, 1 R. Mandible with teeth of young animal, 1 L. Mandible with teeth of old animal. *Calf*: Skull (frags. including both Maxillae and teeth), 1 R. Scapula, Femur (frag.), 1 Phalange II. *Sheep/Goat*: 1 R. Scapula, 1 L. Femur (deformed, see below), 1 L. & R. Mandible with well worn teeth. *Pig*: 2 Upper and Lower R. Canines (male), 1 R. Maxilla. *Fox*: 2 skulls. *Dog*: 1 R. Tibia.

Bird Remains

Chicken: L. Tibia. *Large Bird* (Swan?): R. Humerus.

Invertebrate Remains

Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*): 2 valves. *Whelk* (*Buccinum undatum*): 1 shell.

Comments

As the animal remains are all unstratified, comments will be kept to a minimum. The relatively large number of Fallow Deer bones (some 60% of the mammalian remains) would seem to indicate that venison was an important element in the diet. The horse bones are those of at least two individuals. One was a young animal of about three to four years old, the other being about eight years old. The calf bones are most probably from one animal, as they are all of a porous nature. As the first molar has just appeared but is not yet worn, it shows that the porosity is more likely due to the youth of the animal (about one year old) than to chemical attack in the soil. The fragments of skull from the west ditch have all separated along the sutures and the left frontal bone has an obviously fresh break in it suggesting that the skull was buried entire and only broken during excavation. The pig canines are well worn and obviously from a male, although whether domesticated or wild is not discernible.

The sheep/goat bones are interesting for the occurrence of a deformed left femur. The age of this animal is indicated at about three and a half years by the fact that the distal epiphysis is almost entirely fused to the diaphysis. The deformed portion, the head and neck of the proximal articular region, is very much reduced, the neck of the femur being almost absent and the head twisted into the anterior-posterior plane of the bone. The major and minor trochanters are little affected, but the area between them has been smoothed

flat and the twisting of the head has made the Fossa trochanterica a deep groove into the bone. This flatness seems to have been caused by the pelvis, unfortunately not recovered, butting up against the femur, with the head possibly articulated in a modified Acetabulum. This arrangement would have given some support to the limb and joint but the amount of movement would have been very limited. A further symptom is that the bone at the bottom of the Fossa trochanterica resembles the inside of a walnut. There would seem to be two possible causes of this malformation, a disease of some sort, or traumatic injury when the animal was young.

POTTERY

The pottery from this site constitutes one of the largest groups of material of this period from Leicestershire. Unfortunately, whatever system Mr. Lomas had to distinguish pottery from various layers has not been perpetuated and all the pottery (with the exception of pots recognisable from Mr. Lomas' notes) is effectively unstratified. Consequently there is little point in attempting the use of complicated statistical analysis on this material. Stephen Moorhouse has studied the Tudor Green ware and has contributed a separate report. The remainder of the material has merely been sampled and a small proportion illustrated and described. Mrs. R. Woodland who has studied the similar pottery from the Augustinian Friary Leicester, has kindly looked at this material. On the basis of macroscopic examination, she has suggested into which of her fabric groups each sherd may fit.

Sandy Wares (Fig. 4 Nos. 1-9)

This is a rather heterogeneous group and makes up only about 10% of the collection. There are no examples of distinctively late thirteenth or early fourteenth century wares, but some of the material (1-6) suggests a starting date in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. The group includes jugs, bowls, urinals and rather unusual mortars. In many ways it is transitional between early and late medieval types, with much higher firing temperatures. No. 5, for example, is virtually Midland Purple ware, although the form can be closely paralleled amongst sandy wares.

No. 1. Strap-handle and adjoining rim of jug. Hard cream fabric with grey core. Tiny splash of purple glaze under the handle. Probably late fourteenth century. Comparable to Friary fabric P (xii).

No. 2. Rim sherd of bowl with flaring rim. Gritty fabric with cream finish. Late fourteenth- early fifteenth century. Comparable to Friary fabric P (viii) or P (xv).

No. 3. Rim sherd of bowl with curvilinear decoration on flaring rim. Grey internal finish with cream external finish and grey core. Comparable to P (viii) or P (xv).

No. 4. Similar to 2 with grey-brown internal, and cream external, finish. Comparable to P (viii) or P (xv).

No. 5. Horizontal strap-handle from urinal. Fabric hard-fired and pimply with grey internal finish and purple-brown external.

No. 6. Horizontal rod-handle from urinal with orange-brown external and cream internal finish. Comparable to P (viii) or P (xv).

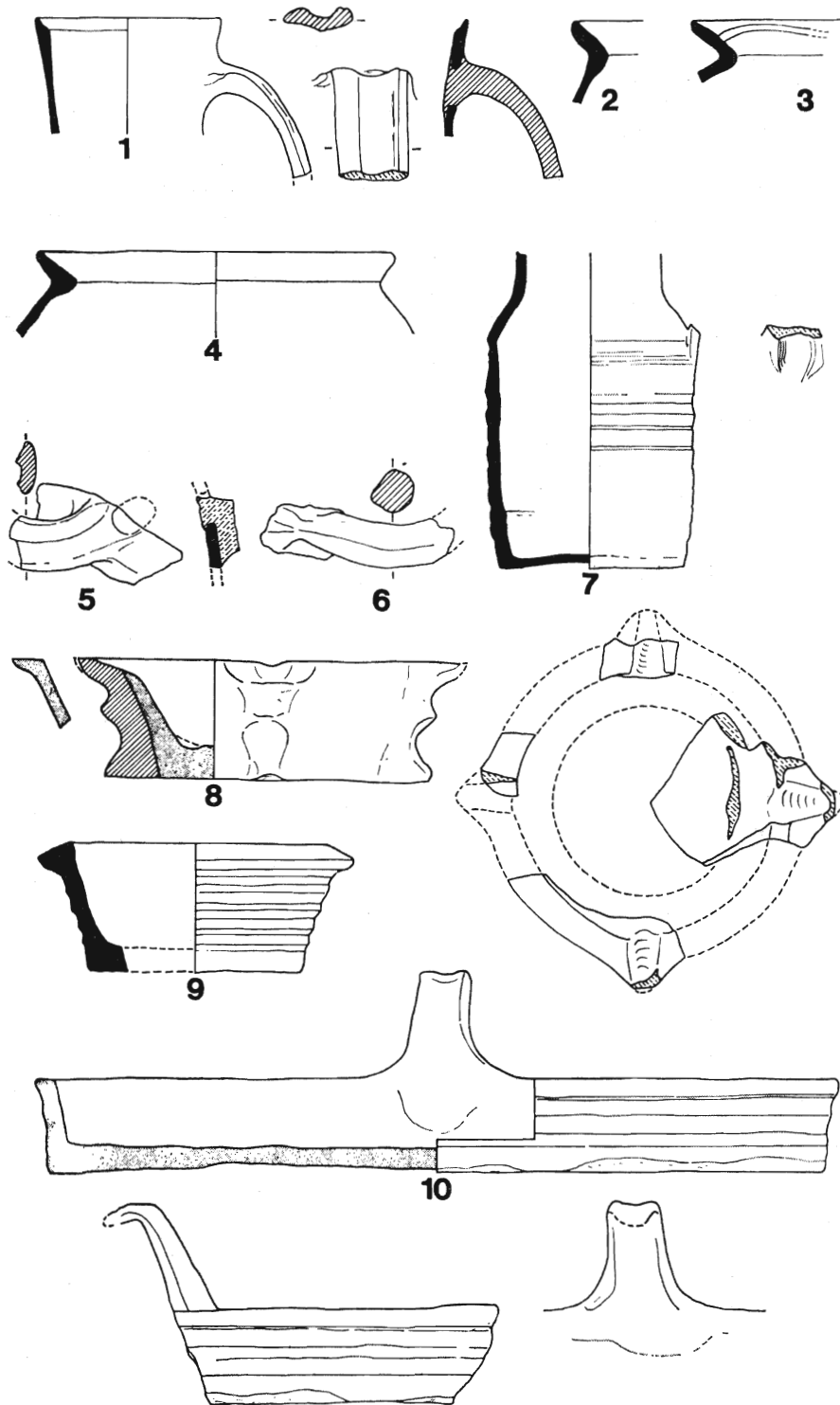


Fig 4. The Pottery (1:4)

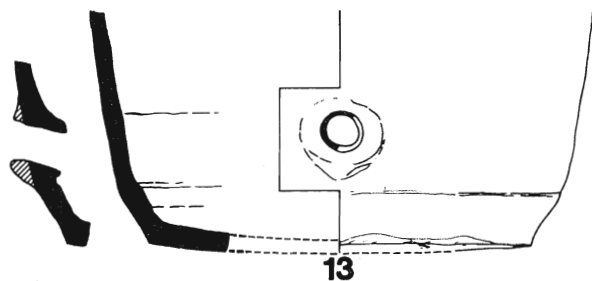
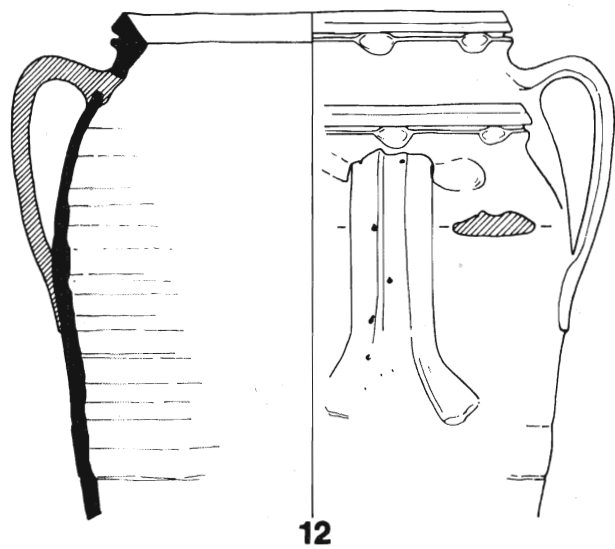
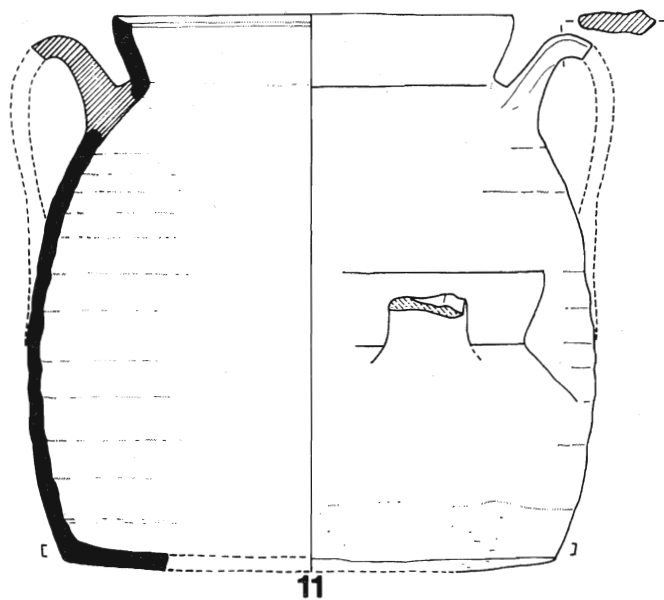


Fig 5. The Pottery (1:4)

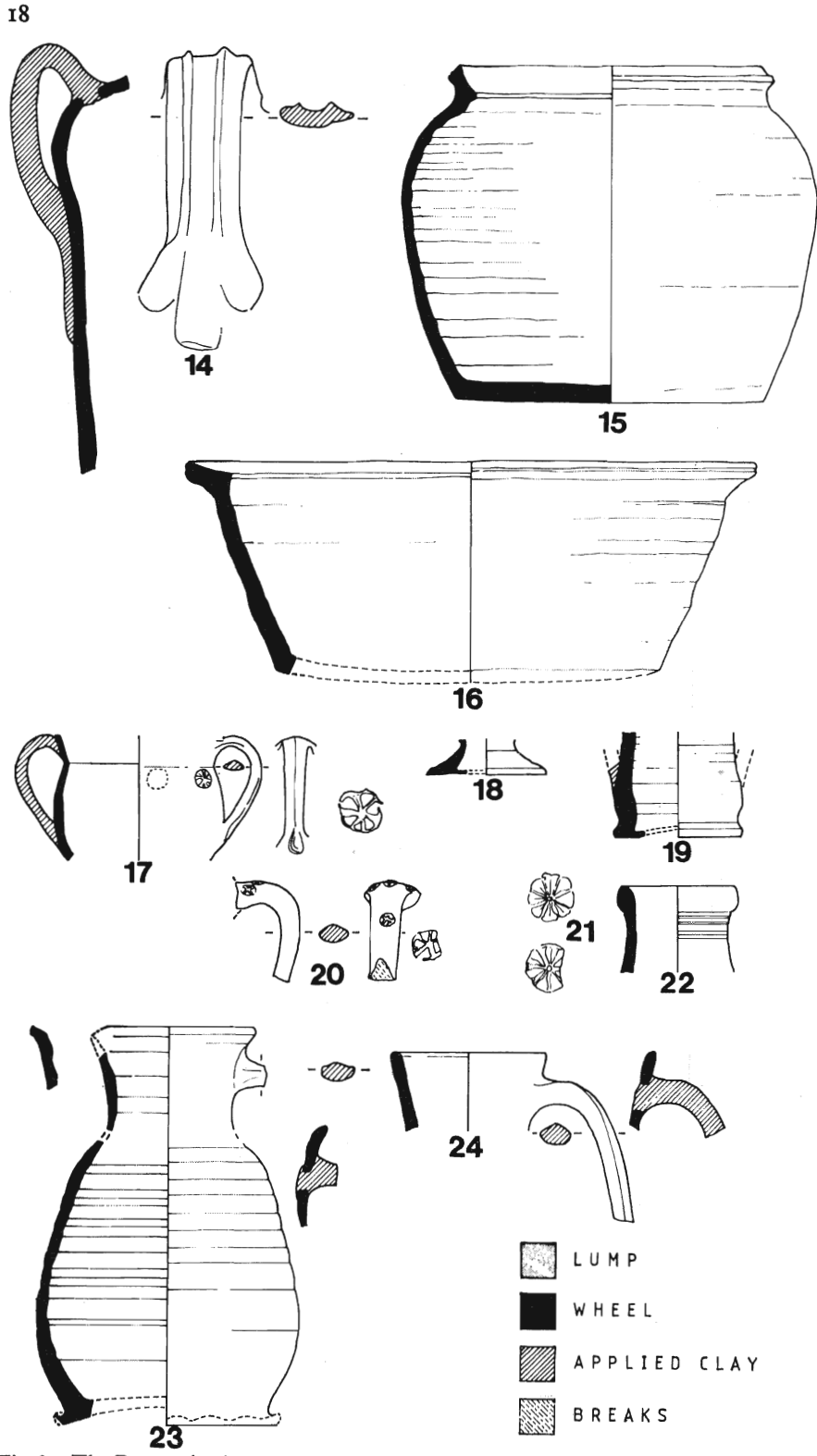


Fig 6. The Pottery (1:4)

No. 7. Small jug with heavily rilled exterior. Colour ranges from sandy-brown to pink-brown with brown-green glaze. Comparable to P (xviii).

No. 8. Thick based bowl, probably a mortar, with heavy external rilling and evidence for a pouring lip. Orange-pink finish ranging to purple with splashy glaze. Comparable to P (xix). From second layer in east ditch.

No. 9. Mortar with applied corner lugs. Dimensions conjectural. Probably lump-built with heavy knife-trimming at the base, which seems to be square. Comparable to P (xix). From second layer in east ditch.

Midland Purple Ware (Figs. 4, 5 & 6 Nos. 10-16)

The vast proportion of pottery from the site is in this group. The forms represented are mainly cisterns (bung-hole pitchers), storage-jars, smaller cooking pot/jars and pancheon-type bowls, although there are more specialist forms such as the fish-dish. Many of the cisterns and storage-jars have three thumb marks fixing the handle to the body (e.g. No. 14) rather than the more normal two, (e.g. No. 11 & 12). The former may well be from one workshop. A closely comparable piece is dated to before 1475 at Ashby-de-la-Zouch Castle.

The dating of Midland Purple Ware in general is still much disputed, but must mostly be in the period 1450 to 1600. The distinctive purple colour of this ware is caused by high firing temperatures. In fact, when earlier medieval green-glazed pottery is accidentally over-fired the result in glaze and fabric is similar to Midland Purple. The difference, is essentially technological. The large vessels serve a dual purpose, acting in the kiln as containers (saggers) to protect the finer Cistercian and Midland Yellow Wares, and were stacked on top of each other in an inverted position. This is demonstrable from glaze runs and rim-scars on the base of the pots.

Little is known of the production centres or sub-styles of Midland Purple. It may be suggested on purely geographical grounds that Ticknall was the major kiln-site producing for Donington as it is only some five miles away in Derbyshire. However, Pottery was being produced at Melbourne (the parish immediately to the west) in the eighteenth century and it seems possible that it could also have been produced at this earlier period. It should be noted, however, that some of the fine ware has travelled a considerable distance and a local source can not be automatically assumed. It is to be hoped that the publication of groups such as the present one will help in the study of Midland Purple.

No. 10. Fish-dish of 'figure-of-eight' shape with handle. Buff finish with green-glaze. Not as highly fired as normal. From the burnt level south of the house area.

No. 11. Storage-jar or cistern (there is no evidence for or against a spigot-hole) with flaring rim and two handles, heavily knife-trimmed around base. Purple-grey finish with purple-brown glaze on interior of base. Very hard fired.

No. 12. Rim and body of storage-jar or cistern, stabbing on handle. Decoration at rim may have been produced by a former rather than applied clay band. Grey-purple exterior finish, purple interior finish. Large patch of brown-purple glaze on exterior. Hard fired and well-produced.

No. 13. Base and lower body of cistern, including spigot-hole. Grey-purple finish with one splash of purple glaze on base. Hard fired.

No. 14. Body-shoulder and handle of storage-jar or cistern. Handle has stabbing along centre-line and three thumb-marks at the base. Grey finish with bubbly purple glaze on exterior. This appears to have been over-fired, there is some warping, suggesting that it is a waster or second.

No. 15. Cooking-pot/jar with grey-purple finish. Green glaze on interior of base which is slightly warped. Hard fired, apparently over-fired, in places.

No. 16. Bowl of 'pancheon' type with purple finish and interior green-brown glaze towards the base. Hard fired with grey-core and rather sandy fabric.

Cistercian Ware (Fig. 6 Nos 17-21)

This is typical fifteenth and sixteenth century English table-pottery found north of a line from Bristol to London. The date of its introduction and its prototypes have not yet been satisfactorily explained. The name was applied because it was first defined on the Cistercian abbey sites in Yorkshire, although it now appears to have no religious connection. The present group seems mainly to be two-handled cups, although the pedestal base (No. 18) may be from a chafing-dish used for keeping food hot on the table. This brown-glazed pottery is decorated with applied pellets of yellow which are stamped.

No. 17. Cup with globular body and 'wheel' stamps on applied yellow pellets. Glaze ranges from black to 'marbled' purple.

No. 18. Pedestal base probably from a cup but possibly a chafing-dish. Marbled effect in black-purple glaze.

No. 19. Base and body of a cup, probably two-handled. Thick body with throwing marks internally. Dark glaze.

No. 20. Handle of cup with remains of five applied stamped pellets. Dark glaze.

No. 21. Two stamps possibly from the same pot. Brown glaze.

Salt Glaze (Fig. 6, 22)

No. 22. There is only one sherd with this collection. It is probably from an English 'bellarmine' and may date *circa* 1600.

Midland Yellow Ware (Fig. 6, 23-4)

This, like Cistercian Ware, was fired inside Midland Purple Ware vessels. It used to be thought of as a late introduction of the mid-sixteenth century, but now is considered to have been introduced in the late fifteenth century.

No. 23. Jug with yellow glaze that has brown splashes. Internally unglazed except for a band at the rim and the inside of the base, where the glaze is exceptionally thick. There is rilling on the exterior and thumbing around the base. Probably copying early stone-ware.

No. 24. Rim and handle of a small jug. Yellow glaze with brown splashes both externally and internally.

TUDOR GREEN by *Stephen Moorhouse*

Excavations at Donington Park produced 129 sherds from a minimum of 31 vessels. A number of different forms were represented, the most common recognisable forms being pedestal cups, lobed cups, jugs and corrugated cups,

in that order. As many of the features of the individual vessels are similar, a general type description is followed by more detailed discussion of each form represented.

General type description

All the sherds fall within the class of pottery generally defined as Tudor Green. The fabric is fine grained, light buff in colour with smooth surfaces. The vessels are very finely potted with generally thin bodies. Glaze is bright glossy green in colour, with occasional bright yellow mottling. With the exception of rims, the vessels are covered all over internally, with most forms having glaze externally on the upper part of the rim only. The gathering of glaze on some vessels reveals the position of the pot in the kiln during firing, the fluxing glaze running and collecting at the lowest point to either collect in the angles of bases or fuse as concentrated drips on the edges of rims or handles. All handles have the characteristic Tudor Green section and are secured onto the body without the aid of thumb impressions or rivetting. In keeping with other Tudor Green vessels, decoration is absent.

Pedestal Cups (Fig. 7 Nos. 25-31)

This is the most common form of vessel in the group. None of the vessels are complete. The wide variation in profile for this form is well represented in the group. Two (Nos. 26 and 27) have evidence for the single vertical handle, while that of No. 25, is complete. No. 28 is covered internally with green glaze and externally on the rim with a yellow glaze. Concentrations of glaze on the rims show that the vessels were fired in an inverted position in the kiln.

Lobed Cups (Fig. 7, Nos. 32-35)

At least four lobed cups were represented. Perhaps more are present but this is uncertain due to the similarity of the flared rims to some forms of pedestal cup forms and the absence of characteristic fragments from the lobes themselves; lobed cups were present in other fabrics (including Oxfordshire). All were covered internally and externally on the rim only, with the exception of No. 35, which is a single large sherd from the body of the bowl with external glossy green glaze and covered internally in a deep yellow ochre-coloured glaze. The surviving rim for No. 32 shows that there were probably four lobes, and that they were formed by the right hand; no lobes survived from the other Tudor Green lobed cups.

Jugs (Fig. 7, Nos. 36-38)

Fragments from at least three jugs were found, all the sherds coming from the upper part of the body or shoulder. The jugs were small in size, and although the shape is uncertain from the remaining fragments, they all probably belong to the globular bodied jug with clubbed footring and vertical neck, similar to those copying Beauvais or German stoneware forms.

All three sherds show that the jugs were glazed externally on their upper parts only, a feature in keeping with Tudor Green jugs of this form. One has a scar where a handle has parted from the body, while a second is sooted externally below the glaze, suggesting that it may have been used for mulling its liquid contents.

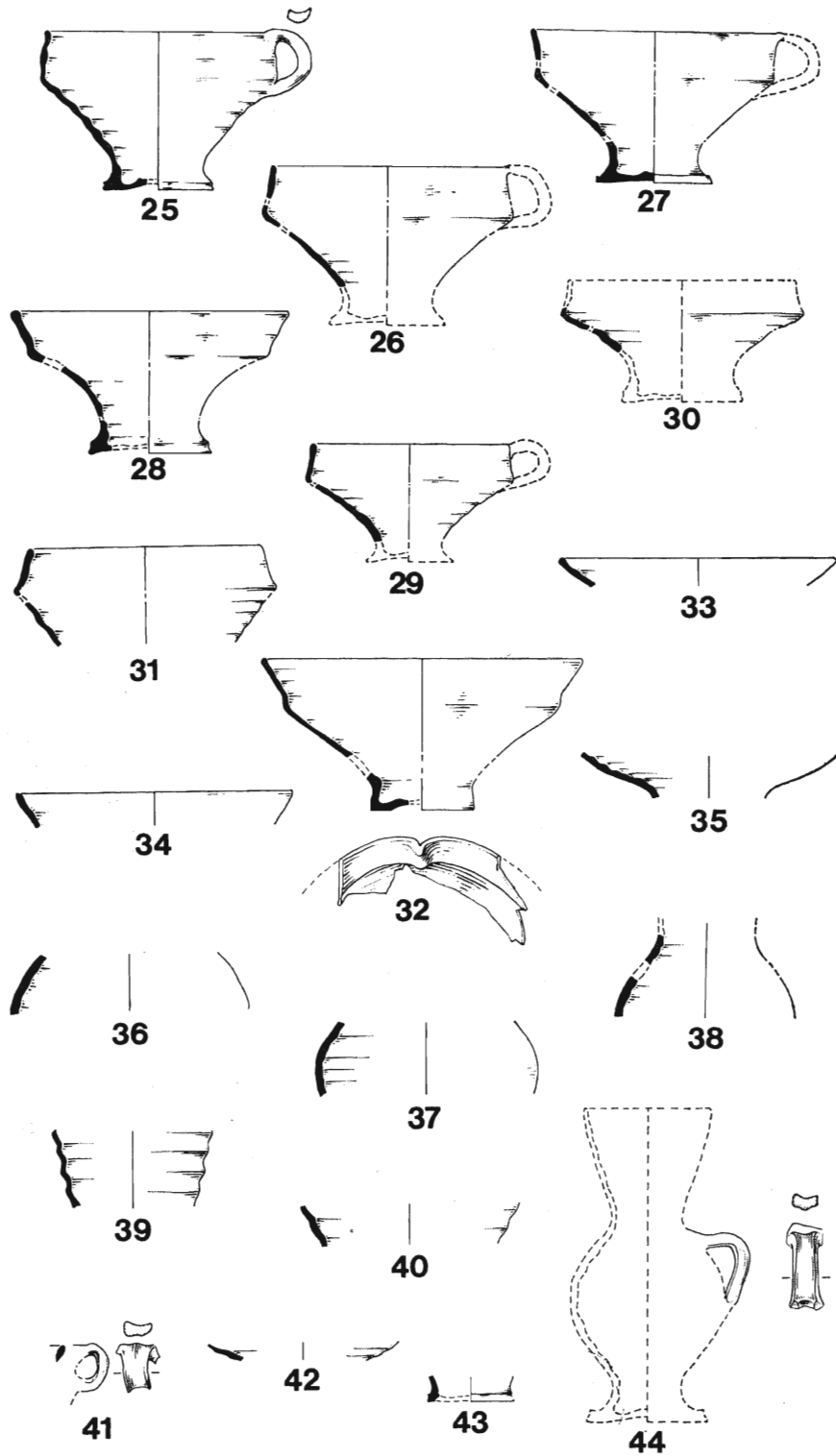


Fig 7. The Pottery (1:4)

Corrugated Cups (Fig. 7, Nos. 39-40)

At least three corrugated cups were found. The type is characterised by the wavy, or 'corrugated' effect of the body of the pot, resembling the wooden stave cups which they may be copying. The type usually has two vertical diametrically opposed handles which spring from either on, or just below, the rim then rejoin the body above the base. No handles or their scars are represented by the illustrated vessels here, nor were any handles from this form identified in the collection from the site. These forms are usually glazed all over internally with small runs externally.

Miscellaneous forms (Fig. 7, Nos. 41-44)

Sherds were identified from vessels of which only one example was noted. These are discussed independently.

No. 41. Handle from either a lobed or pedestal cup, probably the former.

No. 42. Small single sherd, possible from the bowl of a lobed cup.

No. 43. Small single sherd from a vessel of unknown shape. Covered all over both internally and externally with rich glossy glaze, the glaze concentration on the foot ledge suggesting that it was fired upright.

No. 44. Complete handle fragment as drawn. The profile of this handle and the angle of the body attached at the top suggests that it comes from the form of vessel as reconstructed, a form which imitates a characteristic German stoneware shape. A number of these copies in Tudor Green are now known, notably from the Inns of Court, London and Newport Castle, Gwent. They are usually covered with a sparse watery yellow glaze on the upper part of the body, but this example is covered with a bright glossy green glaze on the upper part of the handle.

Discussion

The recovery of 129 sherds representing 31 vessels of Tudor Green from a site in Leicestershire seems surprising, as the production centre lay in northern Surrey. Recent finds, however, reveal that large quantities were distributed all over the country. For example, excavations at Westbury College, Bristol produced many fragments from over 50 vessels, and the total excavation of Sandal Castle, West Yorkshire, has produced sherds from a minimum of 25 vessels. Although Tudor Green distribution was known to have covered most of the country; with many sites producing only a few sherds, it is only in recent years when large open excavation techniques have been used that the true significance of this distribution has been appreciated. It appears that Tudor Green was marketed in quantity from its source in northern Surrey, and can claim to be the earliest recognised class of commercially distributed medieval pottery. It is therefore not surprising that a relatively large group was recovered from Donington.

The only dating evidence for the material from Donington comes from the pottery itself. This would suggest a general date during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although the name Tudor Green suggests a date range during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, recent evidence has shown that the type was in wide circulation by the early fifteenth century, and

is likely to have an earlier date of origin. The Tudor Green group cannot therefore be used to date the rest of the material from the site, but would fit happily within the date range suggested by that material.

The Donington group both supports existing evidence and adds further to our knowledge of Tudor Green pottery. Concentrations of glaze strengthens the suggestion that particular forms of Tudor Green were fired in the kiln in a certain position. The range of recognisable forms are well known in the Tudor Green repertoire, with the exception of No. 43. The large numbers of pedestal bowls is not significant, for they figure prominently in a number of large groups from various parts of the country. Recent finds suggest that the straight-sided corrugated cups (Nos. 39, 40) are as common as either the pedestal cups of type 4. The German stoneware copy, No. 44, now appears to be more than just an occasional product.

Despite the lack of any dating evidence from the site, the Donington Tudor Green group is a useful addition to the rapidly growing quantities of known Tudor Green.

Summary of the Pottery Report

The whole group of pottery seems to run from the end of the fourteenth to the mid-sixteenth century. The single sherd of salt glaze pottery coupled with the early clay-pipes might suggest a later terminal date for the group, but the context of the one stratified pipe is clearly post-destruction and the one sherd of pottery may be from a similar deposit and without any confirmatory evidence can, perhaps, be discounted. The group is closely comparable to material from the Augustinian Friary, Leicester which Mrs. Woodland will discuss at much greater length than has been possible here.²⁴

THE SMALL FINDS by *Patrick Clay* (Fig. 8)

Only a proportion of the finds mentioned in Mr. Lomas' notes have survived and regrettably some finds including the buckles and rowel spur (see above) are now lost.

1. Fragment of a linen smoother in dark green glass including part of the handle. These objects of stone or glass consisted of an oval disc with convex lower surface and were used for calendering linen during the medieval period. In the sixteenth century these objects were made with handles.²⁵
2. Two clay pipe bowls (one illustrated). Oswald Type 4 circa 1600-1640.²⁶ (There were also two later, (19th century) bowl fragments).
3. and 4. Two whetstones of Triassic Sandstone.
5. Iron object with rectangular cutting blade and 'V' shaped socket for wooden handle. Possible turf cutter.
6. Shutter pivot.²⁷
7. Two large square headed nails (one illustrated) for studding the surface of a door. This type of nail is mentioned in the records of the Borough of Leicester under the term 'Clout nail'.²⁸

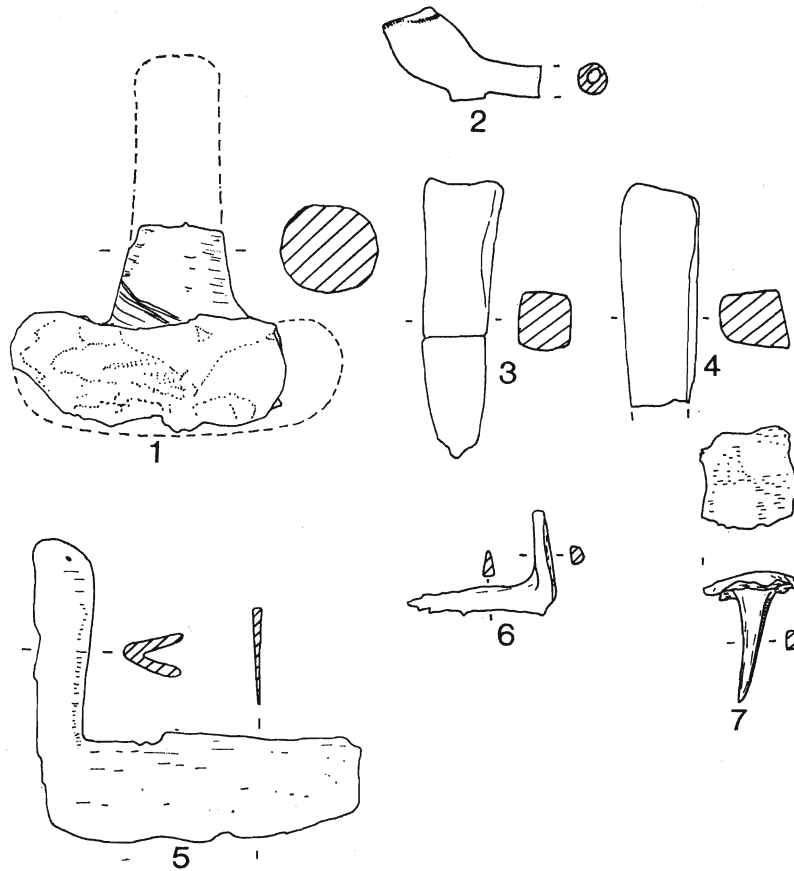


Fig 8. The Small Finds, scale: 1 and 2 are 1:2, 3 to 7 are 1:4

Interpretation and Discussion

Mr. Lomas considered it likely that the site, at least during one stage of its existence, was a potter's workshop. He interpreted the 'oven' as a kiln, the fire-bricks as kiln furniture, and saw some of the Midland Purple Ware as 'wasters'. While the sheer bulk of material seemed to support this conclusion, a close examination of the evidence, however, does not support this seemingly plausible hypothesis. The structure in the north-west corner of the enclosure is most unlike any conventional kiln, and is certainly nothing like the relatively sophisticated kilns producing Midland Purple Wares, but is most probably a domestic oven. Again, the fire-bricks fit into a domestic rather than an industrial context, while none of the alleged 'wasters' can be shown to be from unusable pots, although some must surely be 'seconds'. The homogeneity of the pottery must relate rather to purchase from the local market and thus the local pottery industry. General considerations also militate against the interpretation of the site as industrial, as it is set in the midst of a

great medieval hunting park and it seems hardly likely that the owners of such an exclusive preserve would have tolerated such activity within it. In fact, the only type of site that one would expect to find in a park is the park-lodge, and that is what the site, with its wide views over the park, must surely be.

The excavations give little insight into the economy of the site. As might be expected, about 60 per cent of the bones examined were fallow-deer while fox, swan, cattle and pig, all known or likely inhabitants of the park, are also represented. Chicken, sheep/goat, horse and dog, the remaining species, must then be the domestic animals kept at the lodge or brought in from outside. The overwhelming impression gained from the analysis of the animal remains, is that this was a rather isolated, self-sufficient household, living largely off the surrounding land. This is strengthened by a consideration of the pottery, most of the vessels being storage jars and cisterns.

The enclosure-ditches are almost certainly not defensive features as they are too slight and have the bank on the outer lip. It seems much more likely that they were rather to protect the lodge from the incursions of the deer and other animals that lived within the park.

It is very difficult to say much about the building (or buildings) within the enclosure. It is not certain whether the post-holes and the stone wall represent one or two phases, and whichever interpretation is correct we are not in a position to offer any convincing reconstruction. The only certainty is that the 'stone' building must be over twelve feet (3·60 m) long, while the 'post-hole' building could be up to forty-eight feet (14·50 m) long. The interpretation of the post-holes is certainly not helped by the fact that the recording techniques employed allows a margin of error of several feet for the position of each post-hole. It seems possible that post-holes one to five may represent some of the timbers of a timber-framed house running east-west. The 'stone wall' and the stone scatter could be the remains of a collapsed stone gable at the east end of such a building. Alternatively, the stone wall may belong to a later phase and may never have been more than one course thick, acting as a plinth upon which a rigid-frame timber building was built. Post-holes 8, 9 and 11 could represent part of a shed or small room at the west end.

In at least one phase the infilling seems to have been wattle and daub as fragments of burnt daub from the house area indicate. Several drilled slates and one ridge tile were found on the site, but not enough to cover even a small proportion of the roof. It would seem likely that either much of the roofing material was collected for re-use or to be dumped elsewhere (see site 2 for a possible dump site), or, alternatively, that only the area of greatest fire-risk above the hearth was covered with slates while the rest was thatched. It is, perhaps, remarkable that the building appears to have been so insubstantial. It certainly does not seem to have been suitable for the accommodation of its noble owner on his hunting trips. It is, in fact, more comparable with contemporary peasant buildings. The most likely explanation is that as the park is near to Castle Donington village, alternative accommodation, even perhaps the castle itself, could be offered. On the other hand, it is not impossible that this might only be a subsidiary enclosure and that a more substantial site might lie elsewhere, perhaps where the Hall now stands.

The building within the enclosure was quite clearly destroyed by fire as the large area of burnt material indicates. The small secondary area of burning containing nails outside the enclosure at the north-west corner seems to have been a timber structure that was destroyed at the same time. A possible use for such a structure is a folder rack upon which hay could have been laid out for the deer, as shown on an eighteenth century engraving of Bradgate.²⁹ After the fire the site seems to have been levelled off by the dumping of material into the ditches and then abandoned.

Occupation of the site, dated almost wholly by the pottery, would seem to fall within the period 1375 to 1600. The presence in the collection of several clay-pipes of early seventeenth century type might be taken to indicate, along with the single sherd of salt-glazed pottery, a date towards the end of this range for the destruction of the site. However, the only pipe actually mentioned in Mr. Lomas' notes was stratified above the destruction layer in the north ditch and it seems likely that the others also came out of the top-soil and only indicate casual visits to the site. There is no pottery of earlier medieval types from the site and although the excavation of the house area was not completed one would have expected a general residual scatter of such material if the site had been occupied. It seems, therefore, that the lodge was located elsewhere when the park was created and only moved to this site in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. A possible context in the documentary evidence is the work at the lodge in 1399-1400, although the cost of the work at four shillings and ten pence seems small. No remains of an earlier lodge have been located, although Mr. Lomas did find thirteenth or fourteenth century roofing material and mortar in the fill of a ditch west of Dalby's Covert. This appears to have been part of the boundary of the park prior to 1482 and may have been filled with material from the earlier lodge at that date.

The destruction date of the site is even more difficult to deduce, but it might well have gone out of use when the mansion in the park was built in the mid-sixteenth century, although at Bradgate small enclosures were in use on the hill above the house while it was occupied. The pottery does, however, suggest a destruction before about 1600, and a date of about 1550 would seem reasonable.

Other sites in Donington Park

All these sites were found by Mr. Lomas as scatters of material after ploughing. The numbers refer to figure 1.

Site 2 (SK 428.267)

The main feature was a ditch, apparently over three feet in depth, with a possible bank alongside. The fill of the ditch included slates, stone tiles and ridge-tiles (with both 'handle' and 'spike' crests). There were also spreads of mortar but apparently no occupation material. There were indications of ridge and furrow in the area.

Ground inspection shows no sign of this ditch under a grass field, while there are signs of ridge and furrow in Dalby's Covert to the south-east.

Examination of the 1735 estate map.¹⁷ shows that the park-pale ran across this field and it seems likely that this ditch may represent one element of the boundary.

Site 3 (SK 414.264)

After ploughing in September 1962, an area of about one acre (0.4 ha) was found to be covered with iron slag (including several large 'cakes' of slag), coal, coal-dust, thin bricks, mortar, one or two dressed stone, pottery (including slip-ware), two bottle-necks and many bones, mostly deer. It was obviously an iron-working site and corresponds to two rectangular buildings shown on the 1735 estate map.¹⁷ The site is probably tentatively identified as a forge.

Site 4 (SK 416.266)

In the same field as site 4 another scatter was found in plough-soil which was re-examined in 1978. This was found to be of Roman date and clustered around a slight hollow at the lowest point of which were levels containing Roman pottery as much as 18 inches thick. The scatter included substantial building material consisting of stone (some apparently paving stones), building-tile, roof-tile and slate, and must have been a not inconsiderable building, presumably a farm. Other finds were a fragment of Later Roman-type quern, two horseshoes, two pieces of lead and a wide range of pottery. This included Samian, mortaria, colour-coated wares, Derbyshire ware, grey-ware and Oxford-type ware, which seems to indicate occupation throughout the Roman period.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. All the interpretation in this report is the responsibility of P. Liddle, although wherever possible Mr. Lomas' opinions are given. For a brief description of Donington Park see L. M. Cantor, 'The Medieval Parks of Leicestershire' *T.L.A.H.S.*, XLVI., 1970-1 pp. 9-24
2. *Calendar of Close Rolls*, (1227-31), 222
3. Nichols J., *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (1795-1815), III, Pt. 2, p. 770 (hereafter Nichols)
4. *Victoria County History (Leics.)*, (1907), I, p. 40 (hereafter VCHL)

5. Nichols, III, Pt. 2, p. 775, e.g. IPM of Edmund Earl of Kent
6. *Ibid.*
7. Public Record Office, DL/42/19 fos 118, 118^v—reference courtesy of Dr. D. T. Williams
8. Somerville, R., *The Duchy of Lancaster* (1953), p. 269 (hereafter Somerville)
9. Nichols, III, Pt. 2, p. 775
10. Transactions of the Leics. Archæological Society (*T.L.A.H.S.*), XIV, Pt. I (1925), p. 44
11. Nichols, III, Pt. 2, p. 776
12. *T.L.A.H.S.*, XIV, Pt. I (1925) p. 68
13. *Ibid.*, XIV, Pt. I (1925), p. 50
14. Duchy of Lancaster, Ministers Accounts (1399–1400). Printed *T.L.A.H.S.*, XIV, Pt. I (1925), p. 54
15. *Ibid*
16. Ministers Accounts of the Honor of Leicester (1322–1323), Printed *T.L.A.H.S.*, XIV, Pt. II, p. 245
17. Leics. Record Office, Reference DG/30/Ma/64/3
18. Duchy of Lancaster, Special Commissions 370. Printed *T.L.A.H.S.*, XIV, Pt. I (1925), p. 72
It should be noted, however, that the name 'la launde' was already current in 1331. *Ibid*, p. 51
19. Somerville, p. 573 and p. 307
20. *T.L.A.H.S.*, XIV, Pt. I (1925), p. 44 (Staunton); Somerville, *op. cit.*, p. 574 (Hasilrigge)
21. Duchy of Lancaster Special Commissions, 105. See note 18 above
22. Nichols, IV, Pt. II, p. 782
23. The surviving fragments are so battered that the original shape is uncertain. Geologically they are 'Charnian, but not Swithland'
24. Mrs. R. Woodland. The pottery report in 'Excavation of the Augustinian Friary, Leicester', by Ms. J. E. Mellor (forthcoming)
25. Crossley, D. W. and Aberg F. A., *Sixteenth Century Glass Making in Yorkshire*, 'Excavations at Hutton and Rosedale, North Riding. 1968–1971'. *Post-Medieval Archæol.* 6 (1972), p. 143, VIII and p. 149 fig. 67, pp. 108–110
26. Oswald, A. (1972) 'Clay Pipes for the Archæologist', *Brit. Archæol. Rep.*, 14, p. 37, fig. 39.4
27. Biddle, M., (1962). The Deserted Medieval Village of Seacourt, Berkshire, *Oxoniensia*, XXVI/XXVII, (1961/2), p. 175, fig. 29, 13–4
28. *Records of the Borough of Leicester Vol. I* (1901), p. 353
29. By Knyff 1710

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