

**A FRAGMENT OF A LATE MEDIEVAL CHAFING DISH OF
SAINTONGE WHITE WARE FOUND AT BINSTEAD,
ISLE OF WIGHT**

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In September 2003, an unusual sherd of pottery was shown to the writer for identification. It was reported as having been found with other sherds during routine gardening at 7 Greenway Road, Binstead. The other pottery was later discarded when the finder sold the property. Due to its unusual decoration, this particular sherd was retained by Mrs Brenda Butler.

The fragment is of early Tudor date and belongs to a late Saintonge white ware chafing dish. It is decorated with an applied face on the crown of the vessel. It displays a dark olive brown glaze (2.5Y 3/3) with a strong brown glaze (7.7YR 5/6) applied over the face and exterior to create a mottled appearance.

This chafing dish can be dated around c. 1490-1510. It claims parallels with further Saintonge vessels found in excavations in Southampton where this ware has been classified as fabric SOU125 46. A similar face appears on vessel No 1065 recovered from a pit 66 in the High Street excavations at Southampton (Platt & Coleman-Smith, 1975, (2) 148-9, fig 190). Evidence in Southampton shows a marked decline in the import of Aquitainian pottery after the mid-14th century yet there is a perceptible revival in the 16th century. Other imported French chafing dishes, devoid of anthropomorphic lugs, have been reported from 16th century contexts at Carisbrooke Castle (Young, 2000, 130, fig 46, nos 73-75).

The find spot at Greenway Road, Binstead, has not been subject to archaeological investigation. It is situated in a shallow valley some 1.5km from the medieval Cistercian abbey of Quarr and 1km south of the medieval church of Holy Cross and its nearby medieval limestone quarries. To the southwest of the find-spot lies the Newnham valley with its medieval fishponds and monastic grange. This imported item hints at further medieval/Tudor settlement in the Binstead area and the possibility of a dwelling in this particular vicinity.

References

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SAINTONGE WHITE WARE FOUND AT BINSTEAD

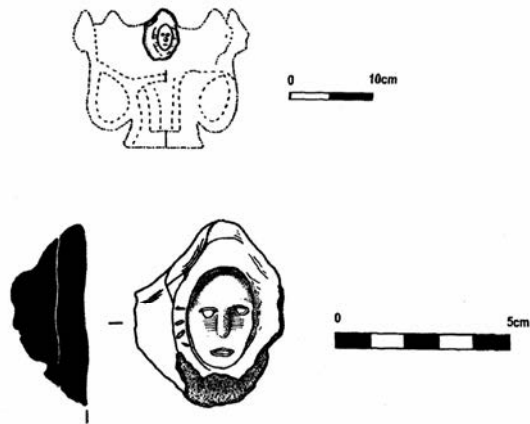


Fig 1. Reconstruction of the Binstead chafing dish and the original fragment

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