

GLASS, ST CROSS COLLEGE, OXFORD (OXSC14)

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Introduction and methodology

The glass comprises a total of 192 sherds of glass, most of which are vessel glass (n = 163). There just 27 pieces of window glass and two beads. The assemblage is relatively small and has been quantified by sherd count alone. The glass has been identified and where possible dated and the information recorded onto a spreadsheet, a copy of which will be available in the archive.

Distribution and composition of the glass assemblage

Medieval contexts produced just one sherd of vessel glass and four sherds of window glass with a total weight of 15g. Contexts dating from the mid-16th to mid-17th century produced just 14 pieces of glass weighing a total of 298g. By contrast, glass from contexts dated to the late 17th and 18th centuries produce 59 sherds of predominantly vessel glass with a total weight of 11.43kg. Glass from contexts dated after c 1800 produced 112 sherds of glass weighing 11.63kg.

Medieval (to AD 1550)

The glass from medieval contexts comprised four pieces of window glass from ditch 1106, and a single sherd from a flask or bottle in green glass from pit 1175. The window glass looks to be post medieval rather than medieval, but window glass is difficult to date.

Sixteenth to seventeenth century

Contexts of late 16th- to early 17th-century date produced just 12 sherds of vessel glass, one sherd of post medieval window glass and tiny spherical opaque bead. The latter came from grave 1138 (context 1140).

Late seventeenth century and eighteenth century

There were 43 sherds of vessel glass and 16 sherds of window glass from this phase. The total weight of glass was 11.43kg. Seventeen sherds of vessel glass came from pit 1161 (contexts 1162 and 1163) and was a dump of wine bottles that included 12 complete or almost complete bottles ranging in date from the very end of the 17th century to mid-18th century. The vessel glass from pit 1161 weighed almost 10.1 kg. The only other glass of note from the pit was part of a stemmed wine glass probably of late 17th- or early 18th-century date.

The window glass was post medieval rather than medieval and 11 of the 16 sherds were recovered from fill 1170 and 1173 of pit 1169. The glass from fill 1170 included a bullseye from the centre of a sheet of crown glass, a possible piece of cylinder or muff glass and some coloured glass. There were sherds yellow, dark green and dark blue green glass.

Modern (AD 1800 to present)

The glass from 19th-century contexts was comparable in weight – 11.63kg - to that from the previous phase, but comprised almost double the number of sherds (n = 112). There is very little window glass (n = 6). The contexts which produced the most glass were dump 1023 (n vessel = 14; n window = 3; total weight 1746g), and a bottle dump 1030 (n vessel = 48; total weight 7335g). The glass from 1023 included five complete or near complete medicine bottles). The glass from context 1030 included two complete bottle, but also large pieces of numerous bottles made in the later 19th century.

Conclusions

The glass assemblage is dominated by three substantial dumps of glass. The most substantial is the dump dating to the very end of the 17th and first half of the 18th century from pit 1161 and including a number of complete or almost complete wine bottles. The smaller dump from context 1023 included a number of complete 19th-century medicine bottles. The larger of the 19th-century dumps (context 1030) had fewer complete bottles but large portions of a number other bottles. These dumps bear witness to the use of the area for dumping rubbish until comparatively recently. The remaining glass mainly was found in small quantities in a number of contexts. With exception of a few sherds of window glass possibly of medieval date, there was no glass that could be dated before the mid-16th century and overwhelming bulk of the glass was dated to the 18th and 19th centuries.

Table 1: Glass from medieval and post-medieval contexts

Phase	Feature type	Feature/cut	Context	vessel	window	bead	Total
Medieval	Pit	1174	1175	1			1
	Ditch	1106	1110		4		4
			Total	1	4		5
16th to 17th Century	Ditches	1007	1006	1			1
		1106	1107	3			3
			1108	2			2
			1111		2		2
	1180	1189	4	1		5	
	Garden features	1012	1013	1			1
		1016	1017	1			1
		1038	1039	1			1
		1055	1056	3	1		4
	Pit	1169	1170	12	9		21
1173			4	2		6	
Grave	1138	1140			1	1	
		Total	32	15	1	48	
Late 17th to 18th century	Ditches	1002	1003	1			1
		1004	1005	4			4
	Pit	1161	1162	2			2
			1163	15	2		17
			Total	22	2		24

Table 2: Glass from modern (19th-century and later) contexts

Phase	Feature type	Feature/cut	Context	vessel	window	bead	Totals	
	modern drain	1085	1089	1			1	
MOD	garden feature	1014	1015	2			2	
			1076	1079	6			6
				1080	5			5
				1082	7			7
				1083	2			2
			Total	20			20	
	ditch	1087	1088	3			3	
	structure	1205	1205 (recte 1207)	2			2	
	deposits	area of fill between 1020	1023	14	3		17	
		backfill	1026	2			2	
		garden soil	1029	5			5	
		glass bottle dump	1030	48			48	
	??		1031	7	3		10	
??		2002	1			1		
		Totals	105	6		111		

Table 3: Glass from Unphased contexts and Unstratified Glass

Phase	Feature/cut	Type	Context	vessel	window	bead	Total
Unphased	1018	Garden feature	1019	1			1
	1025	Wall	1020	1			1
		Void	1021			1	1
			u/s	1			1
		Totals		3		1	4