

WOOLLEY BARROW, CORNWALL

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(DOE Ceramic Petrology Project)

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1) Small unmarked body-herd

Hard, fairly smooth sandy fabric, red and black slip on the outer surface, red slip on the inner, with a light buff core. Thin sectioning and study under the petrological microscope reveals little else but frequent subangular quartz grains and a little sandstone, giving no real indication of origins.

2) A number of small abraded fragments of a glazed dish

These sherds have obviously suffered from adverse burial conditions, the greeny-yellow glaze is fairly soft and the white clay body is somewhat friable. Thin sectioning and study under the petrological microscope shows that the clay body has a high limestone content. We can therefore rule out the suggestion (made elsewhere) that this was a 'Victorian' dinner plate made from the local Cornish deposits of China Clay, as the mineralogy is quite different to what one would expect for this type of clay. However, it is at present difficult to put forward a likely origin or date for the vessel, except to speculate that because of the fine-texture of the clay body it is probably of post-Mediaeval manufacture.