

A DARK AGE/EARLY MEDIAEVAL SHERD
FROM GOONHILLY DOWN, LIZARD, CORNWALL

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Soft, fairly smooth, sandy fabric, very dark grey to black (Munsell 2.5YR N3/ to N2.5/) outside surface, greyish-buff inside surface and reddish-brown core. Study in thin section under the petrological microscope reveals frequent subangular grains of quartz, average size 0.10mm and under, with a few slightly larger grains. Also present are flecks of mica and a few grains of plagioclase feldspar and amphibole. It is difficult to suggest a likely source of origin for this sherd. Much of the Lizard is made up of large deposits of serpentine, gabbro, schists and granite, but the petrology does not suggest a direct derivation from one of these. However, there are windblown surface deposits on the Lizard which might account for the mineralogy of the Goonhilly sherd, though on the other hand an origin further afield, perhaps even the other side of the Channel, cannot be ruled out.