

Wider Horizons

1485 to 1642

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1 - Bowl

Around 1500-1550

From Acorn roundabout, Exeter

This is the type of pottery made in Exeter in the 16th century. It would have made a good mixing bowl.

2 - Jug

Around 1500-1550

From Paul Street, Exeter

Used to hold beer, cider, milk or water. North Devon pottery, such as this, was widely used in Exeter.

3-7 - A Dutch potter in Exeter

Around 1500-1550

From Goldsmith Street, Exeter

This pottery was found crammed into two rubbish pits. Much of it was imperfect and so must have been dumped near to where it was made. The pots are unlike those made locally, but do look like those made in Holland. Records show the names of three Dutchmen working in St Paul's parish: perhaps Peter Schere, Garret Growning or James Selond was the potter?

8 - Skillet

Between 1806 and 1831

Made in Bristol

Skillets were pans with long handles, designed for cooking on an open fire. These standard products of the Birdall foundry in Exeter would have been similar to this much later example made by Thomas Blinman.

9 - Skillet handle mould

Around 1525-1625

From Cowick Street, Exeter

The flat upper surfaces of skillet handles were often ornamented, and sometimes bore the name of the maker. This mould bears the name 'N*BIRDALL' showing that it came from the Birdall foundry. It probably refers to John Birdall II, the last of the family to run the foundry.

10 - Four skillet handle moulds

Around 1525-1625

From Cowick Street, Exeter

Even though skillets were everyday cooking vessels they were still decorated. These mould fragments show the type of ornamentation used.

11 - Cauldron mould fragments

Around 1525-1625

From Cowick Street, Exeter

Cauldrons were cast between clay moulds, which were broken open and discarded after casting.

The clay used to make the moulds for the Birdall foundry was dug from pits at the back of the foundry. Archaeologists found thousands of fragments of such moulds when they excavated the site. Piecing together these fragments show details of cauldron feet, rims and bases.

12 - Bell mould

Around 1550-1625

From Cowick Street, Exeter

Large amounts of molten metal had to be poured into bell moulds under controlled conditions – it was a skilled and dangerous business that was often passed down through families. The Birdall foundry was run by members of the family for several generations. Examples of their bells can still be found in Exeter Cathedral and Woodbury.

13 - Cauldron

Around 1660-1700

Made in Somerset

As cauldrons were used for cooking and heating water, they were in constant use and so became battered and worn. This one has been repaired several times. It has the maker's mark of Francis Sturton I of South Petherton.

14 - Cauldron

Around 1660-1690

Made in Somerset

Cooking vessels such as cauldrons and skillets were made in huge numbers and were the everyday output of the Birdall foundry. They were similar to this example, made by John Fathers I of Montacute.

15 - Silver tankard

1683-1684

Made by Thomas Cory, London

The engraved inscription is dedicated to Christopher Monck, 2nd Duke of Albemarle (1653-1688), a soldier and statesman of Devon.

16 - Silver two-handled cup and cover

1674-1675

London maker unknown, but marked WW

Another inscription related to Christopher Monck, 2nd Duke of Albemarle (1653-1688). It reads: 'EX DONO MI ILLUSTRIS DUCIS XTOFERI D'ALBERMARLE IN USUM CHORI EXON 1676'.

17 - Silver gilt communion cup and cover

About 1572

Made by John Jones, Exeter

From St Petrock's church, Exeter

In the churchwarden's accounts it is recorded that in 1571 Jones was paid one pound, 15 shillings and five pence for converting this piece from a Roman Catholic chalice into a Protestant communion cup.

18 - Silver partly gilded communion cup and cover

1573-1574

Made in London, maker's mark indecipherable

From St Martin's church, Exeter

19 - Silver gilt communion cup and cover

About 1575

Made by John Jones, Exeter

From Holy Trinity church, Exeter

20 - Silver gilt communion flagon

1692-1693

Made in London, probably by John Yateman

From St Petrock's church, Exeter

21 - Silver communion flagon

About 1683

Made by John Verdun and Nicholas Tripe Senior, Exeter

From St Nicholas' church, Combeinteignhead.

22 - Silver gilt communion cup and cover

About 1572

Made by Richard Hilliard, Exeter

From St Sidwell's church, Exeter

23 - Silver communion cup

1576

Made by John Jones, Exeter

Engraved with a view of Exeter from the west, and the arms of the city and Fortescue family. Although Exeter communion cups from the late 1500s were similar to those made in London, they had one unique feature – the concave rim.

Nobody knows how this came about, but it was used by a number of Exeter silversmiths at this time.

24 - Stoneware jug with silver gilt mounts

About 1580

Mounts made by John Eydes, Exeter

Stoneware jugs were imported into England from Germany in quantity during the late 1500s, and a number have survived. The unusual texture of the salt glaze clearly gave them an exotic appeal, just like the silver gilt mounted coconut displayed nearby.

25 - Silver communion cup

1660-1661

London maker unknown but marked WM

From George's Meeting House, Exeter

Meeting houses like St James's and St George's, which still stands in South Street, allowed non-conformist religious groups to celebrate mass in their own way. Some of the wealthiest city merchants supported the purchase of silver and new buildings.

26 - Stoneware jug with silver gilt mounts

About 1580

Mounts made by Peter Quick senior, Barnstaple

27 - Coconut cup with silver gilt mounts

About 1580

Made by Peter Quick, Barnstaple

Mounted wares of this type were especially popular during the 1500s. As here, the precious metal usually complemented a rare or exotic object of curiosity, such as a shell, crystal, or piece of glass or porcelain.

28 - Maple wood mazer with silver gilt mounts

About 1490

From St Petrock's church, Exeter

Mazers were commonly used as drinking cups, but before the Reformation they also served as bridal drinking cups in the Nuptial Mass.

29 - Silver communion cup and cover

About 1572

Made by Richard Hilliard, Exeter

From St Peter's church, Brampford Speke, with an 'Exeter' type rim and engraved strapwork decoration.

Popular in Elizabethan times, 'strapwork' is so called because of its resemblance to leather straps.

30 - Silver communion cup

1684-1685

London maker unknown but marked EG

From the church of St George the Martyr, Exeter

31 - Silver alms dish

1671-1672

London maker unknown but marked RD

From St Thomas of Canterbury church, Bovey Tracey. With embossed and chased decoration including a lion, stag, hound and flower heads. Alms dishes were used for the collection of money during church services. Like some other articles of church plate from the 1600s, this dish was made originally for domestic use.

The inscription tells us that it was presented to the Church by William Stawell, MP for Ashburton, in 1691.

32 - Silver alms dish

1679-1680

Made in London, maker's mark IC

From St Martin's church, Exeter

This piece was probably made for domestic use and later presented to the Church. In the Anglican Church service money collected from the congregation was transferred into alms basins or dishes for presentation at the altar.

33 - Pewter saucer

Around 1300-1500

From Goldsmith Street, Exeter

This could be described as a middle class possession. If you were wealthy you would have eaten off silver dishes, while poorer people had wooden bowls. It is a rare survival, as most pewter was melted down when it became unfashionable.

34 - Blue soda glass dish

Around 1500-1600

From Paul Street, Exeter

This dish was imported from Venice, the home of the finest glass-makers in Europe. It is decorated with gold enamel on the blue surface. Sadly, this is now almost lost. It was found with a hoard of glass that probably represented the shop stock of an Exeter glass-seller.

35 - Wine glass

Around 1600-1650

From Trichay Street, Exeter

This is an example of an English-made glass in the fashionable European style that was just reaching Exeter.

36 - Flute glass

Around 1600-1650

From Trichay Street, Exeter

Similarly elegant glasses have been found in London and other English cities and were probably made in southern England. The vessel was made in two pieces, the base, now partly missing, being blown separately from the tall bowl. The two pieces were joined together in a second stage of production.

37 - Albarello

Around 1500-1550

From Fore Street, Exeter

A medicine jar made in Beauvais, northern France. The inscription reads 'TOUT YRA BIEN', meaning 'all will be well', no doubt a reference to the healing properties of the jar's contents.

The *albarello*, with its distinctive incurving shape, was a vessel form copied by European potters from the Islamic world.

38 - Drinking jug with lid

Around 1500-1550

From Goldsmith Street, Exeter

Imported from Siegburg in the central Rhineland. An interesting feature of the vessel is its hinged pewter lid. Lids of this sort, usually called covers, seem to have been quite common Tudor possessions. Whilst the cheaper ones were of pewter or tin, more costly ones were of silver.

39 - Drinking jug

Around 1500-1550

From Goldsmith Street, Exeter

Imported from Cologne in Germany. Wooden templates were used to make these jugs in standardised forms.

40 - Drinking jug

Around 1500-1550

From Goldsmith Street, Exeter

A plain form of salt-glazed stoneware imported from Cologne.

41 - Drinking jug

Around 1500-1550

From Friernhay, Exeter

Imported from Beauvais in northern France. More of this pottery is found in Devon than elsewhere in the country, reflecting the importance of trade between Exeter and northern France.

42 - Drinking jug

Around 1600

From Queen Street, Exeter

Imported from Frechen in Germany. These jugs were extremely popular in Exeter over the next 100 years.

43 - *Cuerda seca* dish

Around 1500-1550

From Preston Street, Exeter

Imported from Spain, this is the only complete example excavated in Britain. It was decorated using the *cuerda seca*, meaning 'dry cord', technique. The outlines of the pattern were laid out in wax.

Then coloured glaze was placed within each part of the design. The glazes often ran together, so the result was often messy.

44-45 - Bowl and dish

Around 1500-1550

From Paul Street, Exeter

Trade with Spain brought pottery into Exeter alongside wine, fruit and wool. These are simple tin-glazed pots from Seville.

46 - Maiolica dish

Around 1500-1520

From Paul Street, Exeter

Maiolica is the name given to Italian tin-glazed earthenware painted with bright patterns. The pattern on this dish matches that made in the town of Montelupo between 1480 and 1520.

47-55 - Stoneware drinking jugs

Around 1500-1600

From High Street, Goldsmith Street, Paul Street and Cathedral Close, Exeter

Table manners in this period underwent great changes. People started using individual drinking jugs, rather than large communal jugs and wooden cups.

Stoneware jugs were favoured for being strong and easy to keep clean. Much of the new demand for drinking jugs was met by imports of salt-glazed stonewares from Raeren in eastern Belgium.