

White celadon bowl

This bowl from the late twelfth century is thought to have been an offering in a ceremony for the decommissioning of a well. Ritual items were often buried inside wells that were no longer going to be used. Archaeologists recovered the well-preserved bowl in the Yanaginogosho area of Hiraizumi, which was both the residence and political center for the Northern Fujiwara clan at the time.

The bowl is a classic example of white celadon pottery (*seihakuji*). Small amounts of iron are used in the glaze to produce the blue-white tone. It was produced in Jingdezhen in Northeastern China, an area famous for its white celadon pottery. The rim is decorated in a style known as *rinka* that has small notches which simulate an open flower. Celadon pottery is rarely found in excavations in Japan, making this bowl a valuable discovery. Many ceramic wares were imported to Hiraizumi from China during the heyday of the Northern Fujiwara clan in the area.