

A NOTE ON THE POTTERY FROM THE ROUGH COPSE EXCAVATION 2017

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The fieldwork undertaken by Worthing Archaeological Society at Rough Copse in 2017 yielded 36 sherds (weighing 146 grams) of pottery from four contexts (plus an unstratified find). The overall date of the assemblage is *c.* AD 43-180. This comprises two phases; the first dating *c.* AD 43-60, whilst the second dates to *c.* AD 60-180.

METHODOLOGY

All of the pottery was counted and weighed and then quantified by number and weight of sherds per fabric. Sherds were examined using a hand lens at X20 magnification, whilst a pocket microscope (at X60 magnification incorporating a built-in artificial illumination source) was used to ascertain the size, form, frequency and nature of inclusions, and also to determine a fabric series. Colour hues of the fabrics have been described using *Munsell Soil Color Charts* (2000).

THE FORMS

Table 1: Breakdown of the pottery rim forms found at Rough Copse 2017.

SF No.	Context	Fabric	Rim Dia	EVE	Vessel
2010 & 2011	210	ST4A	60mm	0.12	'Belgic' style beaker
3001	305	C2A	100mm	0.08	Jar (Fishbourne type 161.4)

THE FABRICS

Table 2: Breakdown of the pottery fabrics found at Rough Copse 2017.

Fabric Code	Fabric Group	Sherd Count	Weight (grams)
F1	South Gaulish (La Graufesenque) Samian [NFR Code: LGF SA]	1	4
F12C	Arun Valley (Hardham/Wiggonholt) Oxidised Fineware	11	8
C2A	Arun Valley Reduced Coarseware 1	2	27
ST4A	Arun Valley Handmade Reduced Coarseware	21	104
ST5B	Arun Valley Handmade Burnished Finer Coarseware	1	3
TOTAL		36	146

Table 3: Petrological description of the pottery fabrics found at Rough Copse 2017.

Fabric Code	Description
F1	A wheel-thrown, hard and fine fabric with a smooth fracture and feel. The surface has a slip coloured red (10R 5/6) with a red (2.5YR 5/8), core. The fabric consists of abundant, well-sorted, sub-rounded limestone inclusions 0.1-0.3mm in size and sparse, elongated voids up to 2.0mm (Tomber & Dore 1998; fabric code LGF SA). The major period of export to Britain is between the Claudian and Trajanic periods (Tyers 1996).
F12C	A wheel-thrown, hard and fine fabric with an irregular fracture and smooth feel. The surface has a slip coloured light red (2.5YR 6/8) with a light reddish brown (5YR 6/4), core. The fabric consists of common, well-sorted, sub-angular non-oxidised and oxidised ferrous inclusions varying in size from 0.05-1.5mm, sparse sub-angular and sub-rounded quartz up to 0.3mm, and sub-angular mica of 0.05mm. The major period of production is from the mid-1 st century until the mid-2 nd century AD (Lyne 2005).
C2A	A wheel-thrown hard, rough fabric with an irregular fracture and rough feel, which is coloured light grey (10YR 7/1) throughout. Inclusions consist of abundant, well-sorted, sub-angular quartz particles between 0.3-1.0mm in size, common sub-rounded ferrous particles up to 0.5mm, rare angular mica particles of 0.1mm, and sub-angular particles of 0.3mm which are possibly glauconitic. The fabric contains an additional filler of ironstone particles between 0.5-4.0mm in size. The major period of production dates from the mid-1 st century to the latter part of the 2 nd century AD (Lyne 2005).
ST4A	A handmade fairly hard, rough fabric with an irregular fracture and rough feel which is subsequently tournette-finished. The surface is coloured light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4), with a yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) core. Inclusions consist of abundant, well-sorted, sub-angular quartz particles between 0.3-1.0mm in size, common sub-rounded ferrous up to 0.5mm, and rare angular mica of 0.05-0.1mm. Production dates to c.AD20-60 (Hayden 2013).
ST5B	A handmade fairly hard, rough fabric with a smooth fracture and fairly smooth feel, which is subsequently tournette-finished with a burnished outer surface. The outer surface is coloured dark grey (7.5YR 4/1), with a brown (7.5YR 5/2) inner surface, and a pale brown (10YR 6/3) core. Inclusions consist of common, well-sorted, sub-angular quartz particles up to 0.5mm in size, and sparse sub-angular ferrous and mica of 0.02-0.05mm. Production dates to c.AD20-60 (Hayden 2013).

Table 4: The pottery catalogue from Rough Copse 2017.

SF No.	Context	Qty	Wgt	Fabric Code	Type
1003	103	1	4	F1 [LGF SA]	Drag. 15/17 platter footring
2010	210	1	9	ST4A	'Belgic' style beaker
2011	210	1	8	ST4A	Same vessel
2012	210	2	4	ST4A	Same vessel
2014	210	2	9	ST4A	Same vessel
2015	210	1	1	ST4A	Same vessel
2016	210	1	4	ST4A	Same vessel
2017	210	1	8	ST4A	Same vessel
2018	210	1	6	ST4A	Same vessel

2019	210	1	6	ST4A	Same vessel
2020	210	1	14	ST4A	Same vessel
2021	210	1	4	ST4A	Same vessel
2022	210	1	5	ST4A	Same vessel
2023	210	1	2	ST4A	Same vessel
2024	210	1	13	ST4A	Same vessel
2025	210	1	3	ST4A	Same vessel
2026A	210	4	8	ST4A	Same vessel
2026B	210	1	3	ST5B	Beaker body
3001	305	2	27	C2A	Jar (Fishbourne type 161.4)
3002	306	2	2	F12C	Beaker bodies
3003	306	6	1	F12C	Same vessel
3004	306	2	3	F12C	Same vessel
3529	Unstratified	1	2	F12C	Same vessel

DISCUSSION

The assemblage consisted of pottery from five vessels. Most of the sherds emanated from a ‘Belgic’ style beaker. Although this beaker appears in a Late Iron Age derivative fabric, the form itself can be paralleled – albeit with different decorative patterning – at Hordean (Cunliffe 1961: 27 and Fig. 2, no. 19) and Chichester (Down 1993: 240 and Fig. 30.2, no. 24). At both locations it has been dated as post-Conquest (Claudian-Neronian). The jar with an outbent rim and stubby neck can be paralleled at Fishbourne and dates from the pre-Flavian period until the late-2nd Century AD (Cunliffe 1971: 212 and Fig. 101, no. 161.4). The only piece of non-local pottery is the footring base from an imported samian Dragendorff 15/17 platter dating to the pre-Flavian period.

Although the pottery from Trenches 1 and 2 dates to *c.* AD 43-60, whilst the assemblage from Trench 3 dates to *c.* AD 60-180, it must be stressed that the dating of the site using the pottery is problematical, and extreme caution should be taken. All of the pottery from Trenches 1 and 2 show signs of long-term weathering and has undoubtedly been exposed to the elements – rather than rapidly deposited within a fill – for some not insignificant time before eventual deposition. The pattern of degradation noticeably differs from pottery exposed to acidic soil conditions. The pottery from Trench 3 is more reliable and was clearly deposited shortly after breakage. With this in mind it is hereby suggested that the pottery from Contexts 305 and 306 in Trench 3, given the present evidence, provide a less problematical indication of the date of occupation on this site.

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