

THE POTTERY FROM THE WALBERTON NURSERIES EXCAVATION 2011

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

This report encompasses a single season of excavation undertaken at Walberton Nurseries by Worthing Archaeological Society in 2011. The aim of the report is to establish a likely chronological range and provenance for the recovered pottery, and whether this would add to an understanding of the supply and use of pottery at the site.

The excavation yielded 190 sherds (weighing 1262 grams) of pottery, most of which is dateable to the Roman period. There is however a comparatively small amount of pottery of Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval date. The assemblage consists of material from six contexts none of which appear to be securely stratified. Yet, the overall impression is one of deposition of discarded pottery from a period from the late-1st century AD continuing to the early-3rd century AD with little evidence of previous or subsequent occupation.

METHODOLOGY

All of the pottery was counted and weighed and then quantified by number and weight of sherds per fabric. Rims were measured using a rim chart to determine Estimated Vessel Equivalents (EVE's) and to ascertain vessel forms wherever this was achievable. Where applicable the colour values of the fabrics have been described using *Munsell Soil Color Charts* (Munsell 2000). 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. Also where applicable, pre-existing Roman-period fabric codes have been cited which can be found in previous pottery reports prepared for Worthing Archaeological Society by the writer for the Slindon Park (Hayden 2011) and Blacksmith's Corner, Walberton assemblages (Hayden 2014), and in *The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection* (Tomber & Dore 1998). In addition to the above,

fabric codes used in previous work on Rowland's Castle (Dicks 2009) have also been cited in the fabric series below. No thin sectioning was undertaken as most sherds of adequate size could be identified using the methods stated above.

THE FABRICS

As stated above the Roman-period fabrics have been assigned pre-existing fabric codes. Fabric codes assigned to each fabric which follow the format used in previous pottery reports prepared for Worthing Archaeological Society by the writer, are shown in brackets at the end of the fabric name.

1) Roman-Period Coarsewares

Rowland's Castle Reduced Coarseware [Fabric C1B]

A wheel-thrown hard, rough fabric with an irregular fracture and harsh feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant quartz particles up to 1.0mm in size with common ferrous particles also up to 1.0mm. Also present are sparse calcined flint particles up to 1.5mm. The major period of production of this fabric dates from the mid-1st century to the end of the 3rd century AD (Dicks 2009: 55 & 65; fabric code: A).

Rowland's Castle Reduced Coarseware [Fabric C1C]

A hand-made, sometimes wheel-finished hard, rough fabric with an irregular fracture and rough feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant quartz particles between 0.1-0.4mm in size, with common flint particles up to 3.0mm and ferrous up to 0.5mm. Production is from the Late Iron Age to the late-3rd century AD (Dicks 2009: 55 & 65; fabric code: C).

Arun Valley Reduced Coarseware [Fabric C2A]

A wheel-thrown hard, rough fabric with an irregular fracture and rough feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant quartz particles between 0.3-1.0mm in size, common ferrous particles up to 0.5mm, rare mica of 0.1mm, and particles of 0.3mm which are possibly glauconitic. The major period of production dates from the mid-1st century to the latter part of the 2nd century AD (Lyne 2005: 105-106).

Alice Holt/Farnham Reduced Coarseware [Fabric C3A]

A wheel-thrown very hard, rough fabric with a hackly fracture and harsh feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant quartz particles of 0.2-0.3mm in size, sparse mica of 0.1-0.2mm, and rare clay pellets of 0.3-0.5mm (Tomber & Dore 1998: 138; fabric code ALH RE). The major period of production is from c. AD 270 until the later-4th century AD (Tyers 1996: 180), but the form identified in this fabric dates to c. AD 150-180.

Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [Fabric C8]

A dump category consisting of wheel-thrown hard, rough fabrics all with an irregular fracture and a rough feel. Inclusions consist of common to abundant quartz particles up to 0.4mm in size, and sparser ferrous particles up to 0.2mm. Also present are sparse to rare flint particles, clay pellets and mica. No provenance could be ascertained; although the range of inclusions cannot rule out a local source for the majority (if not all) of this category.

Miscellaneous Oxidised Coarsewares [Fabric C9]

A dump category consisting of wheel-thrown hard, rough fabrics all with an irregular fracture and a rough to smooth feel. Inclusions consist of common to abundant quartz particles of 0.2-0.4mm in size, and sparse ferrous particles up to 0.2mm. No provenance could be ascertained, and the lack of adequate size and abraded nature of much of this category means it is difficult to ascertain whether some fragments are indeed pottery or ceramic building material.

2) Roman-Period Fineware

Arun Valley (Hardham/Wiggonholt) Oxidised Fineware [Fabric F12C]

A wheel-thrown, hard and fine fabric with a smooth fracture and feel. The fabric consists of common mica and oxidised ferrous inclusions, and sparser quartz all up to 0.1mm in size. The major period of production is from the mid-1st century until the mid-2nd century AD (Lyne 2005: 105-106), and although the exact production area has yet to be identified the Hardham/Wiggonholt area is the most likely source.

3) Miscellaneous Finewares

The fabrics in this category have not been recognised by the writer before and therefore cannot be realistically assigned a Roman or medieval date; although a Roman date is the more likely.

Fabric FW1: Miscellaneous Roman-Medieval Finewares

A wheel-thrown, hard and fine fabric with an irregular fracture and feel, which is coloured reddish yellow (5YR 6/6) on the surface with a grey (5YR 6/1) core. The fabric consists of sparse, well-sorted, sub-angular quartz and ferrous inclusions and elongated voids up to 0.5mm in size, and rare sub-angular mica particles up to 0.02mm. Differing wall thicknesses indicate more than one vessel. No provenance could be ascertained; although the range of inclusions may indicate a local source.

Fabric FW2: Miscellaneous Roman-Medieval Finewares

A wheel-thrown, hard and fine fabric with a laminated fracture and feel, which is coloured pinkish white (7.5YR 8/2) on the surface with a dark grey (7.5YR 4/1) core. The fabric consists of sparse, well-sorted, sub-angular quartz inclusions up to 0.2mm in size, and rare sub-angular mica particles up to 0.02mm. All the sherds appear to emanate from one vessel. No provenance could be ascertained.

4) Prehistoric and Post-Roman Fabrics

Bronze Age Flint-Tempered Ware

A hand-made soft, rough fabric with a hackly fracture and rough feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant flint particles of 0.5-3.0mm in size, sparse quartz of 0.1-0.2mm, ferrous of 0.05-0.2mm, and mica particles of 0.05-0.1mm. No provenance could be ascertained, but the fabric is similar to Fabric BA1 found at nearby Blacksmith's Corner (Hayden 2014: 19-20).

Bronze Age Flint/Grog-Tempered Ware

A hand-made fairly soft, rough fabric with a hackly fracture and soapy feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant grog particles of 1.0-2.0mm in size, common flint of

0.5-1.0mm and ferrous particles up to 0.05mm. No provenance could be ascertained, but the examples found would appear to be slightly similar to the Deverel-Rimbury Fabric BA2 datable to c. 900-700 BC found at nearby Blacksmith's Corner (Hayden 2014: 20).

Bronze Age-Iron Age Grog-Tempered Ware

A hand-made soft, rough fabric with a laminated fracture and rough feel, with inclusions consisting of abundant, poorly-sorted, sub-angular grog particles of 0.5-2.0mm in size, and sparse sub-angular ferrous particles up to 0.2mm. No provenance could be ascertained; although the range of inclusions may indicate a source local to the West Sussex area.

Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware

A hand-made hard, rough fabric with an irregular fracture and soapy feel, with inclusions consisting of common to abundant, sub-angular flint particles of 0.5-2.5mm in size, and sparse sub-angular quartz and ferrous particles up to 0.1mm. No provenance could be ascertained; although the range of inclusions may indicate a source local to the West Sussex area. Grouped together here the category is similar to Fabrics IA1 to IA3 found at nearby Blacksmith's Corner (Hayden 2014: 21).

Late Medieval Sand-Tempered Glazed Ware

A wheel-thrown hard, slightly rough fabric with a hackly fracture and smooth feel, with inclusions consisting of sparse quartz particles of 0.5-1.0mm in size, and ferrous particles of 0.1-0.2mm. No provenance could be ascertained, but the fabric shares similarities with Fabric MED2 found at nearby Blacksmith's Corner (Hayden 2014: 22).

Post-Medieval Coarse Glazed Ware

A wheel-thrown hard, slightly rough fabric with an irregular fracture and smooth feel, with inclusions consisting of sparse quartz particles of 0.2-0.5mm in size, ferrous particles up to 0.4mm and mica of 0.2mm. No provenance could be ascertained, but the fabric is similar to Fabric PM1 found at nearby Blacksmith's Corner (Hayden 2014: 23).

Post-Medieval Fine (Porcelain) Glazed Ware

A wheel-thrown hard, slightly rough fabric with a hackly fracture and smooth feel, with inclusions consisting of rare quartz and ferrous particles up to 0.1mm in size. No provenance could be ascertained, but the fabric is similar to Fabric PM7 found at nearby Blacksmith's Corner (Hayden 2014: 24).

5) Summary of the Pottery Fabrics

Although the pottery was counted and weighed, much of the material consists of small featureless bodysherds making identification and the quantification of a reasonable vessel population problematical. As can be seen purely from the fabrics the majority of this assemblage derives from the Roman period (Table 1). There is a small amount of Bronze Age, Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval pottery, but these have proved harder to provenance. Moreover, as this material appears in Roman contexts it is likely that some deposits were compromised in antiquity. A more detailed account of the fabrics found in each context is given as an appendix (Appendix 1).

Table 1. General summary of the pottery found at Walberton Nurseries.

PERIOD	Sherd Count	% Qty	Weight (grams)	% Wgt
Bronze Age	8	4.21	37	2.93
Bronze Age or Iron Age	3	1.58	7	0.55
Iron Age	15	7.89	42	3.33
Roman	148	77.89	1106	87.64
Roman or Medieval	7	3.69	23	1.83
Medieval	1	0.53	22	1.74
Post-Medieval	8	4.21	25	1.98
TOTAL	190		1262	

Using either the sherd count or weight methods, coarsewares make up the majority of the Roman-Period pottery, with a single sherd of datable fineware, whilst no mortaria or amphorae were found. The assemblage is dominated by products from the Rowlands Castle industry, with Arun Valley the next most abundant (Table 2). Of the prehistoric and post-Roman pottery very little can be assessed from the relatively small amount of material recovered. A few sherds have been assigned a Late Bronze Age date, whilst

others could date to either the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age. All the flint-tempered sherds of Iron Age date are comparatively small in size to be able to determine a likely date. On the basis of this a Middle-Late Iron Age date has tentatively been assigned. Consequently as the site has yielded so little pottery dating before or after the Roman period, very little can be inferred on the pre- and post-Roman occupation of the site based on the pottery alone.

Table 2. Breakdown of the pottery fabrics found at Walberton Nurseries.

Fabric Group	Sherd Count	% Qty	Weight (grams)	% Wgt
Bronze Age Flint-Tempered Ware	3	1.58	4	0.32
Bronze Age Flint/Grog-Tempered Ware	5	2.63	33	2.61
Bronze Age-Iron Age Grog-Tempered Ware	3	1.58	7	0.55
Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware	15	7.89	42	3.33
Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	70	36.84	459	36.37
Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1C]	18	9.47	278	22.03
Arun Valley Reduced Coarseware [C2A]	24	12.63	239	18.94
Alice Holt/Farnham Reduced Coarseware [C3A]	8	4.21	33	2.61
Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [C8]	21	11.05	71	5.63
Miscellaneous Oxidised Coarsewares [C9]	6	3.16	24	1.90
Arun Valley Oxidised Fineware [F12C]	1	0.53	2	0.16
FW1 - Miscellaneous Roman-Medieval Fineware 1	2	1.06	6	0.48
FW2 - Miscellaneous Roman-Medieval Fineware 2	5	2.63	17	1.35
Late Medieval Sand-Tempered Glazed Ware	1	0.53	22	1.74
Post-Medieval Coarse Glazed Ware	3	1.58	22	1.74
Post-Medieval Fine (Porcelain) Glazed Ware	5	2.63	3	0.24
TOTAL	190		1262	

THE FORMS

Most of the rim sherds from the Roman-period pottery (Table 3) could be classified by using type-series from Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971) and Alice Holt/Farnham (Lyne & Jefferies 1979). No unusual forms were found and therefore no pottery had to be drawn as part of this report. The Rowland's Castle bead-rimmed jar of Fishbourne type 166 dates to *c.* AD 60-120, but the other jar forms can be paralleled at Fishbourne and have a longer lifespan, dating from the late-1st century continuing to the early-3rd century AD. The bowl forms start in the late-1st century and continue to the late-2nd century AD whilst the single Alice Holt/Farnham jar of type 1.28 dates to *c.* AD 150-180.

Table 3. The Roman-Period coarseware forms from Walberton Nurseries.

Type	Form	Fabric	Rim Dia	EVE
Bowl	Fishbourne 183	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	7cm	0.03
Jar	Fishbourne 161	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	12cm	0.09
Jar	Fishbourne 164	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	18cm	0.02
Jar	Fishbourne 166	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	5cm	0.02
Jar	Fishbourne 314	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	20cm	0.06
Jar	Fishbourne 162	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1C]	14cm	0.19
Bowl	Fishbourne 83	Arun Valley Coarseware [C2A]	7cm	0.07
Jar	Fishbourne 161	Arun Valley Coarseware [C2A]	14cm	0.11
Jar	Lyne & Jefferies 1.28	Alice Holt/Farnham Coarseware [C3A]	8cm	0.06

THE SITE PHASING

Pottery Phase 1 - Prehistoric

No features can be datable to the pre-Roman period. There are enough sherds of Middle-Late Iron Age pottery to suggest there was an occupation phase of that date.

Pottery Phase 2 – Roman

The top/ploughsoil layer at the west end of Trench 1 (Context 101W) was the only feature to include pottery entirely datable to the Roman period. Two closed contexts (Contexts 103 and 104) include the most datable forms (see above), and although contain residual and intrusive material, a date of *c.* AD 80-180 can be postulated for these layers.

Pottery Phase 3 – Post-Roman

No features can be datable to the post-Roman period therefore nothing can be inferred on the post-Roman activity on the site.

THE PATTERN OF POTTERY SUPPLY TO WALBERTON NURSERIES

There is nothing to suggest that the prehistoric pottery recovered from the site was not made in the local area. Of the material datable to the Roman period, the fabrics found here are similar to those found at the nearby Blacksmith's Corner site at Walberton (Hayden 2014), although they do not appear to share the lifespan of the pottery found at Blacksmith's Corner. All of the Roman-period fabrics identified emanate from the Rowland's Castle, Alice Holt/Farnham and Arun Valley industries, and may well have been acquired from markets in Chichester or yet to be identified local seasonal markets.

Little can be inferred on the post-Roman pottery. With such a small amount of pottery recovered, most may have arrived at site via some form of agricultural practice.

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Appendix 1: Walberton Nurseries Pottery Assemblage 2011 By Context

Context	Fabric	Sherds	Weight (gms)	Forms
101W	Date - c.AD80-220			
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	7	49	Fishbourne 164
	Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [C8]	3	5	
	Miscellaneous Oxidised Coarsewares [C9]	4	16	Includes possible CBM
	TOTAL	14	70	
101E	Date - c.AD80-220 [disturbed residual and intrusive material]			
	Bronze Age Flint-Tempered Ware	3	4	
	Bronze Age-Iron Age Grog-Tempered Ware	1	1	
	Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware	2	2	
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	9	44	

	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1C]	3	47	Fishbourne 162
	Arun Valley Reduced Coarseware [C2A]	11	143	Fishbourne 83, 161
	Alice Holt/Farnham Reduced Coarseware [C3A]	2	6	BB1 copy
	Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [C8]	4	13	
	Late Medieval Sand-Tempered Glazed Ware	1	22	Flat-rimmed bowl
	Post-Medieval Coarse Glazed Ware	1	8	
	Post-Medieval Fine (Porcelain) Glazed Ware	2	2	Transfer printed pattern
	TOTAL	39	292	
102	Date - c.AD80-220 [disturbed residual and intrusive material]			
	Bronze Age Flint/Grog-Tempered Ware	2	13	
	Bronze Age-Iron Age Grog-Tempered Ware	1	4	
	Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware	2	9	
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	7	38	
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1C]	1	2	
	Alice Holt/Farnham Reduced Coarseware [C3A]	1	6	
	Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [C8]	4	15	
	Miscellaneous Oxidised Coarsewares [C9]	1	7	Possible CBM
	Arun Valley Oxidised Fineware [F12C]	1	2	
	FW1 - Miscellaneous Roman-Medieval Fineware 1	2	6	
	Post-Medieval Coarse Glazed Ware	1	6	
	Post-Medieval Fine (Porcelain) Glazed Ware	3	1	Transfer printed pattern
	TOTAL	26	109	
103	Date - c.AD80-180 [disturbed residual and intrusive material]			
	Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware	6	15	
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	25	164	Fishbourne 161, 314
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1C]	11	97	
	Arun Valley Reduced Coarseware [C2A]	8	68	Fishbourne 83
	Alice Holt/Farnham Reduced Coarseware [C3A]	3	18	Lyne & Jefferies 1.28
	Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [C8]	6	27	
	Miscellaneous Oxidised Coarsewares [C9]	1	1	
	TOTAL	60	390	
104	Date - c.AD80-180 [disturbed residual and intrusive material]			
	Bronze Age Flint/Grog-Tempered Ware	1	18	
	Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware	2	4	
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1B]	22	164	Fishbourne 166, 183
	Rowland's Castle Coarseware [C1C]	3	132	Fishbourne 162
	Arun Valley Reduced Coarseware [C2A]	5	28	
	Alice Holt/Farnham Reduced Coarseware [C3A]	2	3	
	Miscellaneous Reduced Coarsewares [C8]	4	11	
	Post-Medieval Coarse Glazed Ware	1	8	
	TOTAL	40	368	
201	Date - Prehistoric [disturbed intrusive material]			
	Bronze Age Flint/Grog-Tempered Ware	2	2	
	Bronze Age-Iron Age Grog-Tempered Ware	1	2	
	Iron Age Flint-Tempered Ware	3	12	
	FW2 - Miscellaneous Roman-Medieval Fineware 2	5	17	Beaker footing
	TOTAL	11	33	

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