

# **Assessment of Pottery from the Royal Worcester Porcelain Factory (RWP 04/65F and PWP 04/65G)**

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A moderate-sized collection of pottery from an archaeological watching brief carried out at the Royal Worcester Porcelain Factory was submitted to the authors for identification and assessment. It consisted of a single piece of medieval pottery; a small collection of later post-medieval date and a collection of porcelain production waste and kiln furniture, probably of 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

## **Description**

### **Pottery**

#### **Medieval**

A single sherd of Malvern Chase glazed ware jug of late 13<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> century date was recovered from context 372 (Vince 1985, Fabric B4).

#### **Post-Medieval**

Fourteen sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered. Apart from a single sherd of Staffordshire butterpot type (STBU), all are of mid 17<sup>th</sup> century to mid 18<sup>th</sup> century types and all are of non-local manufacture. They include Nottingham stoneware (NOTS); a post-medieval ware of unknown origin (PMEDX); Refined Redware (REFR); Staffordshire press-moulded slipware (STCO); Staffordshire wheelthrown red-bodied slipware (STRES); English White Saltglazed Stoneware (SWSG) and Tin-Glazed Earthenware (TGW).

#### **Modern**

Eighty-six sherds of probable early modern date or modern were recovered. With the exception of a sherd of Creamware (CREA) and a sherd of 19<sup>th</sup>-century or later buff ware (NCBW) all of the material is likely to have been made on site and probably dates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Six fragments were made in an off-white fabric containing large pellets of clay, of similar colour and texture to the groundmass. This is likely to have been a Coal Measures white-firing clay (CMW). Three of these are interpreted as spacers, used to separate vessels or saggars in the firing chamber. One is a fragment of a saggar, but is too incomplete to reconstruct and the remaining two pieces are saggars of similar type. These are distinct from the four types of saggar previously recorded by the authors from the Royal Worcester Porcelain Factory and one example should be recorded, by photography or illustration.

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The remaining sherds are of porcelain (ENPO). They include fragments of kiln furniture, in the form of unglazed rings, fragments of pottery vessels, such as bowls, cups, dishes and plates, and fragments of other porcelain objects, including a spark plug and an insulator. These objects are mostly unmarked and undecorated but examples with painted marks, stamps, moulded decoration, slipping and in one case what appears to be a pencil drawing on the biscuit fired surface were present. Several of these are worthy of illustration, by photography, line drawing, or both.

## Assessment

The material comes from two areas, F and G.

### Area F

Context 353 was a deposit overlying structures of a definite mid/19th century date. It produced two sherds of post-medieval pottery, both likely to be of mid 17<sup>th</sup> century or later date. These are therefore residual.

Context 364 was a levelling/demolition layer. It produced a sherd of tin-glazed chamber pot, of mid 17<sup>th</sup> century or later date.

366 was a well cut infill. It produced two sherds of pottery, one of them a buffware bowl of early 19<sup>th</sup> century or later date.

367 was the fill of a small pit. It produced a small assemblage of post-medieval and early modern pottery of which the latest sherd was a Creamware plate. This assemblage is probably of mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century date.

372 was an alluvial clay layer and the sherd was recovered from its horizon with an overlying deposit, so the context is not really secure. It is also possibly a residual find as 372 and 370 were located in the corner of a churchyard where considerable disturbance has taken place. The sherd itself is no earlier than the later 13<sup>th</sup> century and would not have been current after the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### Area G

The material from Area G came from modern dumping and was assigned to six different contexts. That from Context 451 includes only porcelain vessels and although its appearance suggests to the authors that it is of 20<sup>th</sup>-century date it might be earlier. That from context 454 includes kiln furniture and is dated to the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the presence of the electrical insulator. That from context 456 is of similar character and presumed date. That from context 457 includes saggars and other kiln furniture and the piece of biscuit porcelain with a pencil drawing on the surface. Those from contexts 459 and 460 are of similar character, producing

a mixture of kiln furniture and porcelain fragments but contain no distinctive types which could be readily dated.

*Table 1*

Sitecode	Context	Cname	Total	spot date	
RWP 04/65F	353	STBU	1		
		STRES	2		
	353 Total		3	mid 17th c	
	364	TGW	3		
		364 Total		3	mid17th c
	366	NCBW	1		
		REFR	1		
	366 Total		2	e 19th +	
	367	367 Total	CREA	1	
			NOTS	1	
			PMEDX	1	
			STCO	3	
			SWSG	1	
			TGW	1	
			8	mid 18th+	
	372	HERB4	1		
	372 Total		1	late 13th +	
	RWP 04/65G	451	ENPO	11	
			451 Total	11	20th c?
454		CMW	1		
		ENPO	10		
454 Total			11	20th c	
456		CMW	1		
		ENPO	10		
456 Total			11	20th c	
457		CMW	3		
		ENPO	32		
		PMTIL	1		
457 Total			36	20th c?	
459		CMW	1		
	ENPO	10			
459 Total		11	20th c?		
460	ENPO	5			
460 Total		5			
Grand Total			102		

**Further Work**

Several of the fragments are products of the porcelain factory or were used in porcelain manufacture. It is therefore recommended that the typology of these vessels is recorded since they cannot be precisely matched with previous finds from the site assessed by the authors. In total, seven vessels were selected for recording. These have been assigned drawing numbers in the same series as that used for previous finds from the site assessed by the authors (Table 2).

*Table 2*

Action	451	454	456	457	Grand Total
PHOTO 53			1		1
PHOTO 54	1				1
PHOTO 55		1			1
PHOTO 56				1	1
PHOTO 57			1		1
PHOTO 58				1	1
PHOTO 59				1	1
Grand Total	1	1	2	3	7

It is clear that a comparison of the porcelain with pattern books and dated products of the factory could probably narrow down the likely period of use of the material and that this date could then be transferred to the rest of the assemblage, assuming, as seems likely, that the material from Area G consists of fresh waste rather than material which has been moved from area to area and thus is of mixed chronology. It is not suggested that this work takes place in the immediate future, but the finds should certainly be retained until this more detailed study has been undertaken.

## Bibliography

- Vince, A. G. (1985) "Part 2: the ceramic finds." in R. Shoesmith, ed., *Hereford City Excavations: Volume 3. The Finds*, CBA Research Report 56 The Council for British Archaeology, London,

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Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition
353	POTTERY	STRES		FLANGE WITH DK BROWN WAVY LINE; LIGHT/DARK BROWN DEC INT	BOWL	R	2	1	48	
353	POTTERY	STBU			JAR	BS	1	1	33	
364	POTTERY	TGW		GREY GLAZE; STRAP HANDLE 36 ACROSS, CENTRAL DIP	CHPO	R;H	3	1	89	
366	POTTERY	REFR			JUG	BS	1	1	1	
366	POTTERY	NCBW			BOWL	BS	1	1	14	
367	POTTERY	STCO			DISH	BS	2	1	14	
367	POTTERY	STCO			DISH	R	1	1	13	
367	POTTERY	PMEDX			BOWL	BS	1	1	2	
367	POTTERY	TGW		BLUE PAINTING ON WHITE GLAZE	PLATE	BS	1	1	6	
367	POTTERY	CREA			PLATE	B	1	1	4	
367	POTTERY	NOTS			TANK	BS	1	1	4	
367	POTTERY	SWSG			DISH	PROF	1	1	62	SALT? INTERIOR GLAZE
372	POTTERY	HERB4			JUG	BS	1	1	9	
451	POTTERY	ENPO		INDUST TEAL SLIP IN BAND ROUND RIM	PLATE	R;BS	5	1	48	FRESH BREAKS LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVER
451	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	R;BS	3	3	213	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVER
451	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	MOULDED DEC FROM HANDLE BASE	DISH	BS	1	1	26	
451	POTTERY	ENPO		MOULDED DEC INT	PLATE/DISH	B	1	1	56	
451	POTTERY	ENPO			LARGE PLATE/DISH	B	1	1	290	
454	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED; 16 THICK	KILF	BS	1	1	23	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVER
454	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	DISH	KILF	BS	1	1	25	HEAVY ASH DEF EXT
454	POTTERY	ENPO			PLATE	BS	3	3	68	
454	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	R;B;BS	4	4	135	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVER
454	POTTERY	ENPO		GLAZED ELECTRICAL INSULATOR	INSULATOR	PROF	1	1	320	
454	POTTERY	CMW	BISCUIT	SPACER 25 ACROSS; 10 THICK	KILF	BS	1	1	14	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVER
456	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	BS	1	1	201	MOSTLY HEAVY ASHY DE
456	POTTERY	CMW	BISCUIT	SPACER 14 ACROSS; 13 THICK	KILF	BS	1	1	19	LIGHT ASHY DE

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Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition
456	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		LID	R	1	1	31	ASHY DE ALLOVEF
456	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	R;B;BS	3	3	81	ASHY DE ALLOVEF
456	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED	KILF	PART	1	1	32	ASHY DE ALLOVEF
456	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED	KILF	WHOLE	1	1	43	ASHY DE ALLOVEF
456	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	1941	SPARK PLUG?	PART	1	1	139	ASHY DE ALLOVEF
456	POTTERY	ENPO		BLUE LINES AROUND RIM AND INT	PLATE	R	1	1	20	
456	POTTERY	ENPO		'9594 E' PAINTED ON BASE TOGETHER WITH A STAMP WITH INTERCONNECTING Ws AND A CROWN; GOLD LINE EXT FOOTRING	BOWL	B	1	1	176	INCLUDE HEAVY ASHY DEPOSIT
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	R;BS	2	2	13	
457	POTTERY	CMW		HALF?	SAGGER 5	BS	1	1	88	
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED; 18 THICK, WITH EXT GROOVE	KILF	PART	1	1	27	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED; 16 THICK	KILF	PART	1	1	33	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED; 16 THICK	KILF	PART	1	1	25	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	PENCIL DRAWING INT	RECT DISH	PROF	1	1	39	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		CUP	B	1	1	20	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		DISH	B	1	1	54	
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		LARGE PLATE	PROF	1	1	109	ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; CENTRAL GROOVE, 11 THICK	KILF	PART	1	1	12	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED	KILF	PART	1	1	13	
457	POTTERY	ENPO			PLATE	BS	3	3	40	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	CMW		FRAG	SAGGER 5	BS	1	1	36	
457	POTTERY	CMW		FRAG	SAGGER	BS	1	1	46	
457	CBM	PMTIL			BRICK	BS	1	1	24	
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	R;B;BS	17	17	405	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF
457	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED; 16 THICK	KILF	PART	1	1	32	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVEF

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Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition
459	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		DISH LID?	BS	1	1	23	ASHY DE ALLOVE
459	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	R;BS	6	6	86	ASHY DE ALLOVE
459	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		BOWL	R;BS	2	2	38	ASHY DE ALLOVE
459	POTTERY	CMW	BISCUIT	SPACER 7 THICK	KILF	BS	1	1	3	ASHY DE ALLOVE
459	POTTERY	ENPO			PLATE	B	1	1	13	
460	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT		PLATE	BS	1	1	32	
460	POTTERY	ENPO			PLATE	R;B;BS	3	3	61	
460	POTTERY	ENPO	BISCUIT	RING; ANGLED; 16 THICK	KILF	BS	1	1	28	LIGHT ASHY DE ALLOVE

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