

# Pottery from Late Saxon Chichester

## A REASSESSMENT OF THE EVIDENCE

by Ben Jervis

*This article is a synthesis and analysis of the locally produced pottery recovered from excavations in Saxon Chichester. The context of Saxon Chichester from an archaeological and historical viewpoint and the pottery is discussed in detail. Descriptions of locally identified fabrics are presented along with discussion of their relationship to each other and pottery from other Saxon settlements in Sussex and Hampshire. The pottery is then discussed in relation to production, distribution, use and chronology, placing it in its local and regional context.*

### INTRODUCTION

This article is a synthesis and analysis of pottery recovered from excavations by the Chichester District Excavation Committee between the 1930s and 1984 (Fig. 1). All of the material presented here was determined as being of Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman date by the original excavator in the reports, although not all is from sealed contexts of this date. Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman features are defined here as those cutting Roman features or ground surfaces and containing Saxon artefacts, usually pottery. Some of this material may have been residual in what could be interpreted as post-twelfth-century features, where the stratigraphy was unclear. Most of the material included in this article is from features defined as

Saxon or Saxo-Norman. The only exception is the material from East Street (Marks and Spencer) and the Post Office sites where no context numbers were assigned to the finds and they are therefore classed as unstratified. No clear distinction has been made between pre- and post-Conquest deposits by the excavator and it is unclear how the division between Saxon and medieval was created. Much of the dating is on the basis of pottery, so there has been a degree of circularity in the excavator's dating system.

This article presents a type-series of the ceramic fabrics present in the assemblages from these sites, as well as a description of the vessel and decorative forms present. This catalogue will be followed by a discussion of quantification and ceramic production, use and distribution. Site and context specific reports are not presented here, although these have been deposited with Chichester District Museum. This report does not cover imported wares as these are adequately reported elsewhere (Hodges 1978, 352–3) and will also be discussed in a forthcoming report on the Shippams site (Chris Jarrett, pers. comm.).

Pottery dominates the artefact assemblage from Saxon Chichester and the aim of this report is to go beyond providing a catalogue of finds from the city. One main intention of the analysis was to establish a chronology for the ceramics and to examine how relevant this is for dating assemblages from rural Sussex. It is also intended that this chronology will enable us to understand the development of Saxon Chichester better, both in terms of space and time.

The analysis of the material took place during early 2007 as part of an AHRC-funded MA course in Ceramic and Lithic Analysis at the University of Southampton. This research formed the basis of

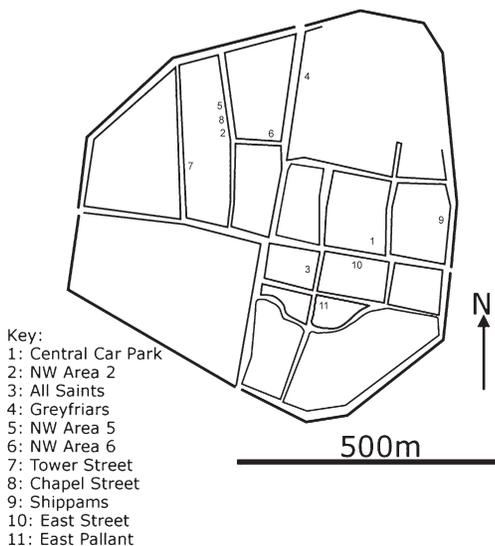


Fig. 1. Distribution of Saxon assemblages from Chichester.

Table 1a. Concordance of Down's (1978) fabric groups with fabrics used by Jervis.

Down's group	Description	Fabrics
1	Handmade wares. Soft, gritty fabrics, almost always reduced to black/grey. Very occasional organic tempering.	8, 11, 12, 14, 18, 32, 33, 34
2	Handmade and turntable finished wares. Soft, gritty fabrics, sometimes tempered with chalk or shell. Increasingly oxidized and some are decorated with stick-end and stamped decoration.	3, 6, 10, 15, 23, 27, 29, 36
3	Wheel-turned, oxidized. Often gritty, chalk or flint-tempered. Increasingly vessels are stamped and rims are thumbled on some vessels.	1, 9, 17, 19, 20, 24

the dissertation 'Making Pots, Making Identities in a Late Saxon Town' submitted for assessment as part of this course.

## METHODOLOGY

All of the retained sherds which had been identified by the excavator as being of Saxon date from sites excavated in Chichester were examined. It is unclear what percentage of the total assemblage was retained. The analysed assemblage comprised 7739 sherds weighing 302.2 kg. Fabrics were established through examination using a hand-lens and ×10 binocular microscope at Chichester District Museum. Thin-section analysis was carried out at the University of Southampton in order to define further the fabrics present. Fabrics were initially given a numerical code and have now been correlated with Down's original fabric groupings (Table 1a) and the Sussex medieval fabric type series (Table 1b). A type sherd of each fabric can be found at Chichester Museum. Individual fabrics were then grouped depending upon the primary inclusions (flinty ware) or their production centre (Portchester-type ware).

Each part of a vessel was recorded using a numeric code with an alphabetical prefix; 'R' for rim, 'S' for spout, 'H' for handle, 'T' for body and 'B' for base. Therefore R1 denotes a specific rim form and B1 a specific base form. Complete vessel profiles are rare, diagnostic sherds, however, allowed the assignment of particular rim and body forms to specific vessel types.

The presence of sherds in particular fabrics and forms within every context was recorded by

Table 1b. Concordance of West Sussex medieval fabric series with fabrics used by Jervis.

West Sussex medieval fabric series	Fabrics
F/M4	8, 11, 16, 29, 34
F/M5	12
F+c/M2	1, 15
F+c/M5	10, 22, 36
F+c/M6	13
F+c/M7	31
F+q/M5	27
C+f./M1	3, 9
C+f/M2	6, 19, 20, 24
C+f/M6	17
C+s/M1	14
C+s/M2	32
C+s/M3	18
C/M4	33
C/M5	23

sherd weight and sherd count. Rim percentage was used to generate Estimated Vessel Equivalent (EVE) figures based on measurable rims (cf. Orton *et al.* 1993, 168–71). These will primarily be used in discussions of quantity as they are the most reliable quantification method available. This is due to the fact that all of the rim sherds were retained, whereas many undecorated body sherds were discarded.

## HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR SAXON CHICHESTER

Chichester is referred to in several historical sources relating to the period. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle describes Chichester as a place of 'defence, trade and refuge' (Dunning & Wilson 1953, 140). We know that the first of these purposes was met in 894 when 'many hundreds' of Vikings were killed by the *burhwara* (garrison) of Chichester (Savage 1997, 106). Although the Chronicle arguably exaggerates the size of the Viking army (Brooks 1979, 4), the defensive role of Chichester should not be underestimated. The Burghal Hidage, although a document of disputed date, suggests that Chichester had 1500 hides attached to it (Hill & Rumble 1996, 75), making it one of the largest burhs in England.

Charter evidence informs us that the church was granted land within Chichester, although its location is not specified. Through the seventh and eighth centuries the charters suggest that an increasing amount of land was under the control of the church. In AD 740 Bishop Wilfred was granted land in the southern part of Chichester, near the wall (S47). This grant is suggestive of some occupation within Chichester and of some importance still being bestowed upon the land. The development of Chichester as a burh seemingly caused the division of land within the town. A charter of AD 930 granted to the bishop of Selsey (S403) four hides of land, some of which is in the southern half of Chichester. This grant was made by King Aethelstan and was made not during the initial development of the burh, but in the early tenth century, when the archaeological evidence suggests that the town was developing increasingly as an economic entity. It is at this period that the mint was founded in the town (Hill 1978, 187).

At Domesday the population of the Chichester area was around 15–20 people per square mile, making it one of the least densely populated areas on the coastal plain (King 1962, 436). There was considerable population growth within the town between 1066 and 1086. This possibly represents some decline in the rural population, although it is probable that many town dwellers worked in the surrounding fields (King 1962, 465). At the time of Domesday the surrounding landscape was composed of small settlements, with limited meadowland and little woodland. The south may have been reliant on the exploitation of the sea, whilst the vale of Rother and the Downs had better agricultural land (King 1962, 476–7). Chichester appears to have been able to call on a range of resources to sustain its economy.

Archaeological evidence of the earliest Saxon occupation within Chichester is sparse. A sunken-featured building of Early or Middle Saxon date has been excavated at East Pallant (Wilson 1951). Recently a similar structure, as yet undated, was identified at the Shippham's site (Chris Jarrett, pers. comm.). It appears likely that the southern part of the town was the centre of occupation in the early phases of the town's Saxon life. The presence of an 'eared handled' vessel as well as a handled cup in the pottery assemblage implies that occupation may have resumed in the seventh century (cf. Dunning 1959, 48; Myres 1977, 9).

Evidence from Tower Street suggests that shellfish were an important foodstuff in the town (Down 1978, 158). The absence of large assemblages of animal bones contrasts with urban centres such as *Hamwic* (Vince 1994, 116) and supports the notion that settlement was only at a small scale. However, it is possible that the small assemblages are the result of the disturbed nature of many of the early deposits or even of the retention strategy of the excavator.

Evidence from the ninth to eleventh centuries suggests that Chichester grew as a town in this period. Three coins (one from the Central Car Park site and two from the Northeast Quadrant) date from this period. Excavations in the Northwest Quadrant revealed a number of pits, related to holdings along Tower Street (Down 1978, 158). At Chapel Street, five clamp kilns were discovered. These are clay-lined features, dug into the Roman floor surface, with a large quantity of associated charcoal and pottery (Down 1981, 138). Based on the presence of wasters, it was established that this was the production centre of the oxidized pottery which dominates the Late Saxon assemblage. Whilst an initial archaeomagnetic date placed the last firing in the eleventh century (Down 1981), it has since been refined to a late-tenth-century date (Clark *et al.* 1988, 651). Investigations in the 1980s at the Greyfriars site revealed further pits and similar pottery to that from the rest of the city (Down 1993).

This project will be the first synthesis of the ceramic evidence from the city since Dunning and Wilson (1953). They identified changes in pottery manufacture, especially a shift from reduced to oxidized pottery, and attempted to relate these changes to the town's historical background. Whilst the dating used in their paper has since been refined, the key themes addressed by them: the relationship of pottery production to the growth of the town and the understanding of its development in relation to the countryside around Chichester, have been expanded in this research.

Further work has been carried out by Kenneth Barton and Alec Down, following intensive excavation in Chichester during the 1970s (Down 1978; Barton 1979). The pottery was originally divided into three fabric groups, but no petrological work had previously been carried out (Down 1979, 341). The concordance of these fabric groups to the fabric series devised in this study

is summarized in Table 1. Form has also been considered in these studies, although no formal typology has previously been defined. Similarly, these early studies lacked detailed quantification or consideration of distribution. This study builds upon these important earlier works to define further both fabric groups and form typology, as well as developing themes such as production and distribution.

## FABRICS AND FORMS

Thirty-eight fabrics were initially identified. Two of these were the imports reported by Hodges, whilst a further six were later re-assigned to existing fabrics, meaning that thirty-two fabrics are reported here. These have been divided into local and non-local wares and further subdivided by the key temper used. Whilst this appears a substantial number of fabrics, many are represented only by a few vessels or on a few sites. Sample sherds and thin-sections accompanied by a full petrological report is deposited with Chichester District Museum with details on the ADS Supplement. The range of forms is described below and illustrated in Figures 2–4 and a quantification of the assemblage is given in Table 2.

### LOCAL WARES

The majority of fabrics were of local manufacture. This was determined from the temper and clay used and because the fabrics have not been reported in higher quantities elsewhere. Twenty-two fabrics have been identified in this group which has been subdivided into four sub-groups. Fabric descriptions follow the terminology outlined by Orton *et al.* (1993).

**Group I: Mixed-grit wares** (Fabrics 1, 9, 10, 15, 20, 27, 36: *see* Table 3 ADS Supplement)

This group forms the majority of the assemblage, largely because Fabric 1 comprises 51 per cent of the entire assemblage by EVE (Table 2). The seven fabrics have been distinguished on the basis of the proportions and size of inclusions as well as firing. This group has been given a broad name as the wares described have inclusions of flint, quartz and chalk in roughly equal proportions. It is generally accepted that in Sussex this type of pottery starts to be produced in the seventh century and continues into the twelfth century. In Hampshire it starts around 100 years later (Lyne 2000, 25). Large dumps of wasters in Fabric 1 are associated with

the Chapel Street kilns and therefore this fabric is assumed to be one of their products.

Fabric 1 stands out from the other fabrics in this group as it has a much finer matrix and noticeably different feel. It is probable that this was produced from the London or Reading Clays, available to the south of the city. The coarser nature of the remaining fabrics mean they may have been produced from the drift deposits which surround and underlie the city (cf. Hodgson 1967). No definitive patterns in the distribution of these fabrics can be determined as they are present in small quantities across the city.

**Group II: Chalky ware** (Fabrics 6, 19, 24, 33: *see* Table 4 ADS Supplement)

This group consists of four fabrics which have chalk as their primary inclusion. The group forms around 9–10 per cent of the pottery from the assemblage by all measures. Chalky wares occur in small quantities in several Late Saxon assemblages in Sussex, most notably at Bishopstone (Jervis forthcoming). Vessels in similar fabrics occur in Late Saxon Southampton and make up 4 per cent of the assemblage (Brown 1994, 139). This method of tempering appears to have originated to the west of Chichester, around the Marlborough Downs and Salisbury Plain (Hodges 1981, 57).

Chalk-tempered pottery may have been produced for a specific function, given the number of pitchers present in these fabrics. The clustering of chalk-tempered fabrics in the Northwest Quadrant, an area possibly linked to industrial and craft activity, may support this suggestion. It is possible not all were made in the city, but it is likely that the majority were, with the calcareous clays used to produce these fabrics possibly collected from the Charity series deposits or Clay-with-Flints, which are present to the north of the city.

**Group III: Flinty ware** (Fabrics 3, 8, 11, 12, 17, 23, 29, 34: *see* Table 5 ADS Supplement)

This group consists of eight fabrics, all of which are present in exceptionally small quantities. These fabrics all contain flint as their main inclusion, however other inclusions are also present. This group comprises around 7 per cent of the assemblage by EVE. Flint tempering is common across Sussex and appears in both Early (e.g. at Bishopstone: Bell 1977, 227) and Late (e.g. in the Adur Valley: Gardiner 1990, 251) Saxon contexts. It is also common further west, in Late Saxon and Anglo-

Table 2. Quantification of fabrics by sherd count, weight and EVE.

		Count	%ge	Weight (g)	%ge	EVE	%ge
<b>Mixed-grit wares</b>	<b>Group I</b>	<b>5012</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>200,155</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>152.57</b>	<b>70</b>
	Misc. Group I	20	<1	200	<1	11.05	6
	1	3817	49	147,204	49	110.9	51
	9	223	3	9680	3	4.26	2
	10	425	5	20,600	7	13.35	6
	15	300	4	9510	3	4.87	2
	20	223	3	12,821	4	8.09	4
	27	2	<1	70	<1	0.05	<1
	36	2	<1	70	<1	0	<1
<b>Chalky ware</b>	<b>Group II</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27,505</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23.94</b>	<b>11</b>
	Misc. Group II	6	<1	60	<1	5	2
	6	44	<1	2080	1	1.2	1
	19	480	6	21,520	7	14.33	7
	24	18	<1	800	<1	0.77	<1
	33	115	1	3045	1	2.64	1
<b>Flinty ware</b>	<b>Group III</b>	<b>759</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26,960</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14.83</b>	<b>7</b>
	Misc. Group III	3	<1	30	<1	2	<1
	3	68	1	2780	1	0.79	<1
	8	153	2	3820	1	3.48	2
	11	38	<1	1130	<1	0.7	<1
	12	31	<1	910	<1	0.66	<1
	17	268	3	11,130	4	4.05	2
	23	56	1	2570	1	0.25	<1
	29	118	2	3830	1	2.2	1
	34	24	<1	760	<1	0.7	<1
<b>Iron-rich fabrics</b>	<b>Group IV</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12,835</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5.09</b>	<b>2</b>
	13	22	1	870	<1	0.79	<1
	16	157	2	7445	2	3.7	2
	22	9	<1	160	<1	0.05	<1
	25	22	<1	1110	<1	0.3	<1
	31	84	1	3250	1	0.25	<1
<b>Reduced shelly ware</b>	<b>Group V</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33,687</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18.69</b>	<b>9</b>
	14	903	12	31,127	10	17.39	8
	18	47	1	2230	1	0.98	<1
	32	9	<1	330	<1	0.32	<1
<b>Sand-tempered ware</b>	<b>Group VI</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>
	30	8	<1	180	<1	0.05	<1
<b>Imports</b>	<b>Group VII</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>1</b>
	26	5	<1	180	<1	0.1	<1
	28	37	<1	690	<1	0.55	<1
	37	1	<1	10	<1	1	<1
	38	1	<1	10	<1	1	<1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7739</b>		<b>302,212</b>		<b>217.82</b>	

Norman contexts in Southampton, for example (Brown 1994; 2002).

The abundance of flint, some of which appears to occur naturally in the clay, suggests that these fabrics may have been produced from the non-calcareous gley drift deposits which surround and underlie Chichester. The small quantities of these fabrics makes any discussion of distribution difficult.

**Group V: Reduced shelly ware** (Fabrics 14, 18, 32: see Table 6 ADS Supplement)

These fabrics seem to be the earliest Saxon pottery from Chichester. They are black in colour, fired in a reducing environment, and feature shell as an inclusion, although other grits are also present. These fabrics make up around 9 per cent of the assemblage by all measures. Shell tempering is common in coastal Saxon contexts in southeast England (Hodges 1981, 57), as well as in Frisian coastal areas (Stilke 1995, 11) and it is possible that links with these areas, most likely the coast of East Sussex and Kent, are responsible for the adoption of this tradition. It forms the largest group of pottery at the trading site at Sandtun (Kent) (Cross *et al.* 2001, 198) and is also present at Pevensey, where oxidized shell-tempered fabrics are the most abundant in Late Saxon contexts (Lyne unpub., 357). Shell is used as temper further west at Pagham (Gregory 1976, 215) and *Hamwic* where it makes up 2 per cent of the assemblage (Timby 1988, 87). It is largely absent from Late Saxon contexts in Southampton. Therefore shell tempering seems typical of seventh- to ninth-century pottery from coastal areas in southeast England.

**Group VI: Micaceous sand-tempered wares** (Fabric 30: see Table 7 ADS Supplement)

One fabric is particularly sandy and micaceous. It is possibly Roman in date and was only recovered in small quantities.

### LOCAL FORMS

Three main vessel forms; jars, bowls and pitchers, are present in these local wares. Their key attributes are discussed in this section.

**Jars** (Fig. 2; Tables 8 & 9)

Jars are the most common vessel form amongst the local wares (Table 8), occurring in every fabric. These typically have a round base and an everted rim. This form is common across southern England in this period (Cunliffe 1976, 186). The majority of vessels have rim diameters between 90–150 mm.

There appears to be a general trend of increasing standardization, in both size and form, through the life of the town, but also a move towards larger vessels, which is possibly linked to the use of the turntable in production.

The main variation in the jar form is the rim. A total of 93 per cent of jars have everted rims. Of these 66 per cent have the squarer R1 form (see Fig. 2 & Table 9) and 27 per cent have the rounded R3 form (Table 10 ADS Supplement). In many cases it appears a thumb was run around the shoulder of the vessel to create a notch. A similar feature has been observed on oxidized jars from the Adur Valley (Gardiner 1990, 251). In Chichester, however, this feature appears more common and more marked. It appears on vessels with both R1- and R3-type rims. In Southampton, it occurs on eleventh-century vessels and has been interpreted as a sign of the use of the turntable (Brown 2002, 111). Further variations on this everted rim occur. R10 is particularly thickened whilst R12 (not illustrated) is slightly clubbed and R13 is bevelled. Straighter rims are less common, these include the simple upright R2 form, the slightly everted R4 form, and the R6 and R9 forms where the rim is folded over itself. Some jars exhibit pie-crust (thumb) rims (R8); these are generally modified versions of the R2 form. The variation between upright and everted rims can perhaps be interpreted as a functional variation. The narrow, upright neck may have been intended to prevent evaporation, whilst the sharply everted rim may have been intended to be used to tie on a lid or to pour out the contents, for example.

There is very little clear evidence of use, such as sooting, on any of the examined sherds. Handles occur on six jars, mostly in Fabric 1. There is no link between a particular rim form and the occurrence of a handle.

**Bowls** (Figs 2 & 3; Tables 9; Table 11 ADS Supplement)

Bowls comprise 7 per cent of the total assemblage by EVE. Two basic bowl forms existed, those with spouts and those without. Socketed (spouted) bowls (Fig. 3: B. Rim R4) may have been used as saucepans (Van Es & Verwers 1980, 118). The small number of non-socketed bowls implies that if this vessel form was present in any quantity, it was generally made in another material, such as wood, and was only ceramic where it was intended heat would be applied. These vessels are generally in oxidized

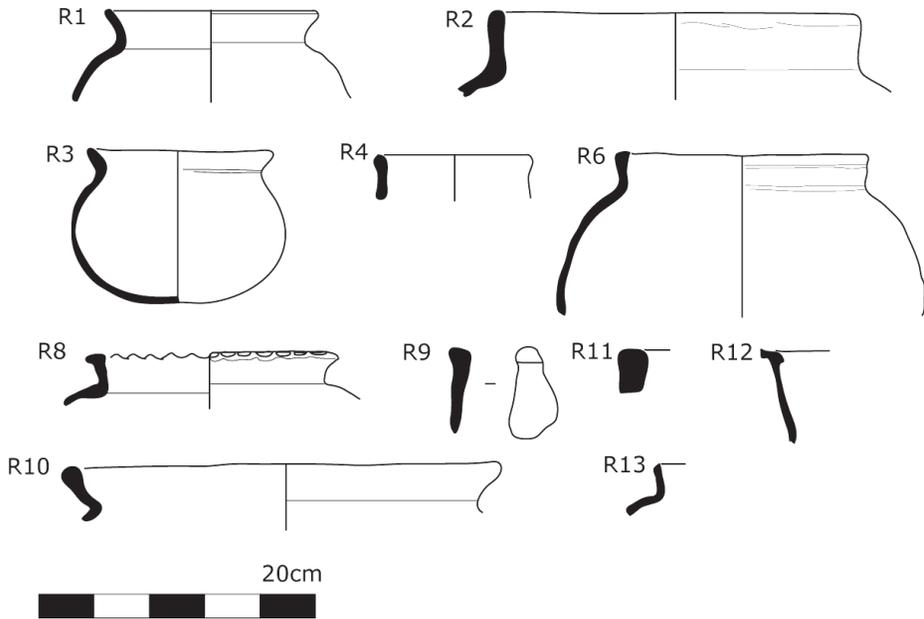


Fig. 2. Jar rim types.

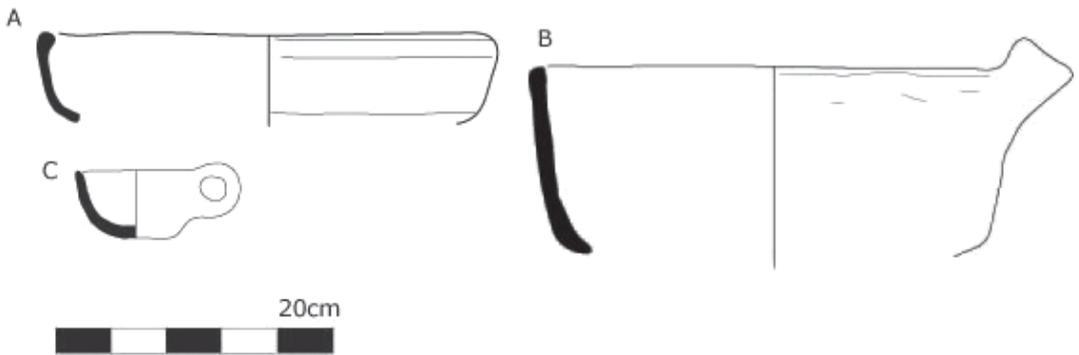


Fig. 3. Cup and bowl types.

fabrics, primarily Fabric 1. The socketed bowls occur almost exclusively in Fabric 1. A large proportion of the bowls (34 per cent) have inverted rims (R7: Fig. 3, A, Tables 9 & 11 ADS Supplement) whilst there are also a significant number of pie-crusting (R8) rims (27 per cent) and R3-type rims (24 per cent). One curiosity is a small handled cup with R4 rim from East Pallant in fabric 14 (Fig. 3: C). This vessel is unique in Chichester. Similar vessels are known from Bishopstone as well as the Netherlands, Scandinavia and East Anglia (Jervis 2008a). It is possible that

this pot was a one-off production by a local potter. All of the bowls have gently sagging bases, similar to the bases found on the majority of jars.

#### Pitchers (Fig. 4)

It is not possible to give an accurate estimate of the number of pitchers present using rims, because of the difficulties of differentiating jars and pitchers. Instead the most diagnostic feature, the spout, will be used. Pitchers are often triple-spouted and based on this assumption, it can be suggested that the

Table 8. Occurrence of vessel form by fabric using EVEs.

	Jar	%ge	Bowl	%ge	Pitcher	%ge	UNID	%ge	TOTAL	Bowl spout	Pitcher spout
<b>Group I: Mixed Grit</b>	115.62	73	7.06	50			29.89	71	152.57	22	22
Misc. group I	8.05	5	3	21					11.05	1	1
1	82.43	52	3.33	23			25.14	60	110.9	18	16
9	3.06	2	0.1	1			1.1	3	4.26	1	1
10	12.47	8	0.18	1			0.7	2	13.35	1	
15	2.47	2	0.1	1			2.3	5	4.87		3
20	7.14	4	0.35	2			0.6	1	8.09	1	1
27							0.05	<1	0.05		
<b>Group II: Chalky</b>	14.65	9	5.37	38			3.92	9	23.94	5	18
Misc. group II			5	35					5	3	
6	0.15	<1					1.05	2	1.2	1	4
19	11.59	7	0.37	3			2.37	6	14.33	1	14
24	0.67	<1					0.1	<1	0.77		
33	2.24	1					0.4	1	2.64		
<b>Group III: Flinty</b>	11.26	7	0.2	1			3.37	8	14.83		8
Misc. group III	2	1							2		
3	0.42	<1					0.37	1	0.79		
8	3.03	2	0.05	<1			0.4	1	3.48		
11	0.65	<1					0.05	<1	0.7		
12	0.46	<1					0.2	<1	0.66		1
17	2.15	1	0.1	1			1.8	4	4.05		7
23	0.1	<1	0.05	<1			0.1	<1	0.25		
29	1.95	1					0.25	1	2.2		
34	0.5	<1					0.2	<1	0.7		
<b>Group IV: Iron-rich</b>	2.45	2	1.24	9			1.4	3	5.09		1
13	0.44	<1	0.15	1			0.2	<1	0.79		
16	1.91	1	1.09	8			0.7	2	3.7		1
22	0.05	<1							0.05		
25							0.3	1	0.3		
31	0.05	<1					0.2	<1	0.25		
<b>Group V: Shelly</b>	14.94	9	0.35	2			3.4	8	18.69	1	
14	14.14	9	0.1	1			3.15	7	17.39	1	
18	0.65	<1	0.13	1			0.2	<1	0.98		
32	0.15	<1	0.12	1			0.05	<1	0.32		
<b>Group VI: Sandy</b>							0.05	<1	0.05		
30							0.05	<1	0.05		
<b>Imports</b>	0.45	<1			2	100	0.2	<1	2.65		
26	0.05	<1					0.05	<1	0.1		
28	0.4	<1					0.15	<1	0.55		
37					1	50			1		
38					1	50			1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>159.37</b>		<b>14.22</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>42.23</b>		<b>217.82</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>49(21)</b>

Table 9. Descriptions of rim forms. (Note R5 was merged with R3 in the course of the analysis.)

Rim	Description	Vessels
R1	Everted with squared profile	Jar, Bowl
R2	Straight-sided with flat top	Jar, Bowl
R3	Everted with rounded profile	Jar, Bowl
R4	Straight-sided with rounded top	Jar, Bowl
R6	Upright, folded over to create very thick profile	Jar, Bowl
R7	Inverted	Bowl
R8	Pie crusted	Jar, Bowl, Pitcher
R9	Upright, folded over; excess trimmed to create clubbed effect	Jar
R10	Everted at top; lid seated	Jar
R11	Thickened at top, folded over; thinner than R6	Jar
R12	Clubbed	Jar
R13	Bevelled	Jar

49 spouts present may represent a minimum of 21 vessels. It should be noted that some pitchers will have had only one spout, and therefore a maximum of 49 vessels are present. Sixteen spouts are in Fabric 1, whilst 14 are present in Fabric 19. Others occur in Fabrics 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17 and 20. Pitchers generally occur in oxidized fabrics. The size of the spouts, and of the two complete vessels from Chapel Street, suggests that triple-spouted pitchers were sizeable vessels which may have been used in some kind of food processing rather than serving; brewing has been suggested (Down 1981, 189). Based on the complete examples, as well as examples from other sites, it is likely that these pitchers had pie-crusted (Fig. 4 shows one such R8 rim) or slightly everted rims. Stamped single-spouted pitchers are present in eastern England from the ninth century (Hurst 1959, 29). They have primarily been recovered from coastal

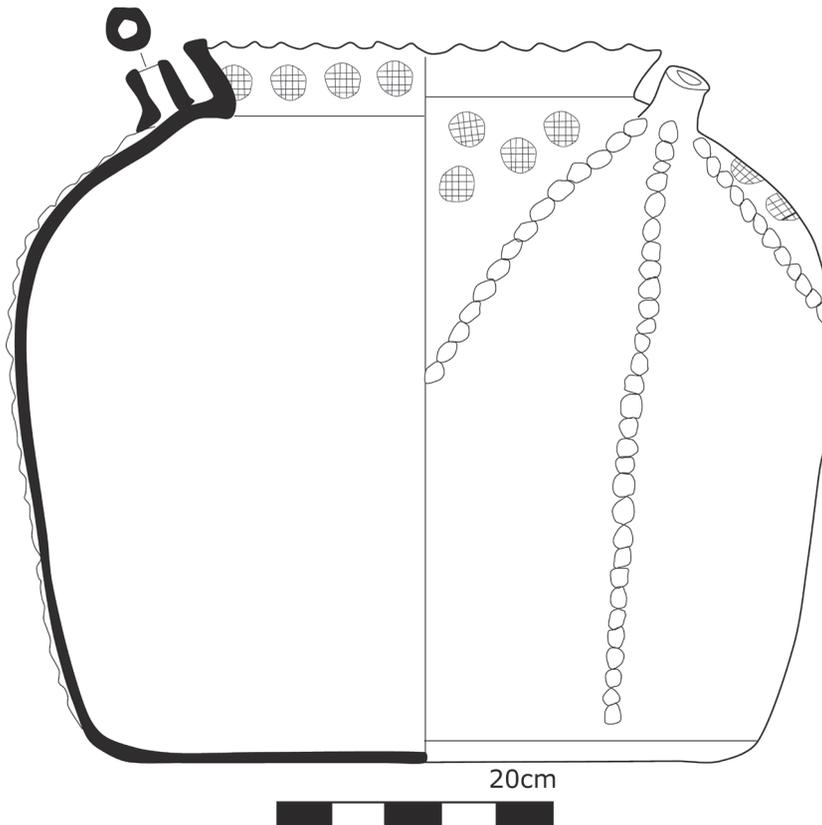


Fig. 4. Spouted pitcher.

areas and were probably influenced by the pottery coming from a range of continental sources (Hurst 1959, 29). The chalk-tempered pitcher tradition is focussed on Wessex and the Thames Valley and dates from the tenth to the twelfth centuries (Dunning 1959, 34).

#### NON-LOCAL WARES

Six fabrics have been identified as not having been produced in Chichester or the immediate area (defined as south of the South Downs and within ten miles of Chichester). One of these types is Portchester ware, whilst the other five fabrics have been classed as 'Iron-Rich'. These are likely to have been produced to the north of the South Downs, from Weald or Greensand clays.

**Group IV: Iron-rich fabrics** (Fabrics 13, 16, 22, 25, 31: see Table 12 ADS Supplement)

This is a small group making up only around 2 per cent of the assemblage by EVE. It can be suggested on the basis of the high iron content that the clays used here may have originated in the Weald, to the north of Chichester and that the small quantity could suggest that these pots were 'imported' to the town. The use of iron-rich clays is common to the east of Chichester, where they are the best potting clay available, for example at Botolphs and Steyning in the Adur Valley and as far east as Hastings (Vahey 1991, 6). It is possible that the vessels were brought from these areas, though it is equally likely that they came from the area north of Chichester where these clays are abundant (Gallois 1965).

**Group VII: Other non-local fabrics** (Fabrics 28, 26, 37, 38: see Table 13 ADS Supplement)  
*Portchester-type ware* (Fabric 28)

Thirty-seven sherds of this wheel-thrown fabric were identified. Sherds are often decorated with rouletted decoration, in the form of two parallel lines of squares. The true quantity of this pottery in Chichester is not known as much of it was disposed of in the 1970s, although a significant amount has recently been recovered from the Shippam's site (Chris Jarrett, pers. comm.). The pottery often demonstrates rilling, a sign of wheel-throwing and was originally classed by Barton as Chichester Rilled ware (1979, 76). It has since been identified in greater quantities at Portchester. Whilst a production centre is not known for this type of pottery, it has been suggested that it was

produced in the vicinity of Portchester, perhaps to fill a gap in the market between Chichester and the Hampshire industries based at Michelmersh and Winchester.

*Imported wares* (Fabrics 26, 37 and 38)

Fabric 26 is a pink, sandy ware which may be Middle Saxon in date, being similar in appearance to Hamwic fabric 187. Alternatively it may be twelfth century in date (Chris Jarrett, pers. comm.) Fabrics 37 and 38 are the imports identified by Hodges (1978, 352). One vessel in each fabric is present. The fabric 37 vessel is a red-painted white-ware pitcher, probably imported from Northern France. The fabric 38 vessel is a black-ware pitcher (Hodges Hamwic class 14). Further grey-ware imports have recently been discovered at the Shippams site (Chris Jarrett, pers. comm.).

#### QUANTIFICATION

The quantities of fabrics and forms by EVE is given in Tables 2 and 8. Local fabrics comprise over 95 per cent of the total assemblage. Half of the assemblage is in fabric 1. This fabric appears in all areas of the city. This evidence is consistent with the bulk of Chichester's pottery having been produced in this fabric, during the late tenth to early eleventh centuries. The remaining fabrics each make up less than 10 per cent of the total assemblage. This may be due to pottery being produced at a small scale, with a range of sources and clay pastes used. Such a model has previously been suggested by Hodges (1980, 98). The presence of jars in all of the fabrics highlights the importance of this form, either in that it fulfilled specific purposes such as storage and cooking, or perhaps suggests that it was perceived as being a useful multi-functional form (Brown 2003, 25). Similarly, the presence of bowls in all of the fabric groups suggests that this vessel had a specific and important function, but the small number of these vessels highlights the fact that they represent only a small proportion of the output of Chichester's potters. The presence of pitchers, primarily in chalk-tempered fabrics and Fabric 1, perhaps demonstrates the specific function of this type of vessel as well as the fact that they may have been difficult to produce. There may also be a chronological element to their occurrence. The small numbers of non-local vessels conform to the same range of forms produced in the city.

Their presence, therefore, may not demonstrate the filling of a gap in the city's ceramic repertoire, but instead may represent the small-scale movement of vessels, perhaps due to the movement of people or coastal trade.

This assemblage is very small in comparison with assemblages from other Saxon towns such as Southampton (Timby 1988; Brown 1994) and London (Vince 1991). Whilst this is partly due to the retention policy of the excavators and the small size of the settlement, it is also possibly linked to disturbance of Saxon features in later periods. This is particularly demonstrable at the All Saints and Greyfriars sites (Fig. 1).

### CHRONOLOGY

Archaeomagnetic dates from the clamp kilns in Chapel Street initially suggested an eleventh-century date for its last firing (Down 1981, 138). Reworking of this figure has demonstrated that a tenth-century date is more likely (Clark *et al.* 1988, 651). Fabric 1, which makes up half of the assemblage from Chichester appears to have been fired in these clamps and therefore there is arguably a *terminus post quem* of this last firing date for these wares. It is highly likely, based on the similarity to this material of some post-Conquest pottery (see Down 1978, 353), that other kilns in the area were producing pottery of this type after the dated kiln went out of use.

At the Central Car Park site a coin of Alfred (late ninth or early tenth century) was found in a pit which also contained oxidized pottery (probably Fabric 1, although the pottery could not be located in Chichester Museum). The deposit was disturbed, meaning that the coin and pottery were not necessarily deposited together (Down 1974, 114). At Northwest Area 2, two mid-tenth-century coins were found with large quantities of Fabric 1 and 19, supporting the archaeomagnetic dating of the clamp kilns and suggesting Fabric 1 was in use as early as the mid-tenth century (Down 1978, 85). The presence of ninth- to tenth-century imported pottery in nearby deposits, suggests that this site was in use at least from the ninth to the eleventh century and that the fabrics other than Fabric 1 may predate, or be contemporary with, the earliest Fabric 1 deposits. The ninth-century occupation is further attested by a coin of Charles the Bald (AD 840–877) found in Area 8 (Down 1981, 136). This

was from a disturbed deposit, but coupled with the evidence of small amounts of imported pottery (including the material recently identified from the Shippham's site), it implies that Chichester may have had some contact, either with a trading site such as *Hamwic*, or directly with the Continent in the ninth century, before Viking activity prevented frequent cross-Channel trading.

Portchester ware dates from the tenth century on the basis of both its absence from *Hamwic* and of stratigraphic evidence from Portchester. It may have continued into the eleventh century but probably did not last long after the Norman Conquest (Cunliffe 1976, 191–2). It can be suggested that Portchester ware is contemporary with the Chapel Street pottery, on the basis of its co-occurrence with Fabrics 1 and 19, but that its presence in some contexts without these fabrics may date Portchester ware in Chichester to the period in the mid-tenth century when the Chapel Street workshop was developing, corresponding with evidence from further west. It is possible that Portchester ware acted as some competition for the Chapel Street pottery, although the small quantities make it seem unlikely that this would have persisted. It is likely that Portchester ware is under-represented in the retained Chichester assemblage, based on Barton's comments (1979, 76–7) relating to material disposed of in the 1970s. Cunliffe (1976, 188) suggests that Portchester was intended to fill a gap in the market between Winchester and Chichester and this seems the most likely conclusion. The presence of bun-shaped loom-weights alongside pottery at Chapel Street (Down 1981, 192) supports a date for the pottery of the ninth or tenth centuries, although it should be stressed that these objects have very wide date ranges (Hurst 1959, 24).

At Pagham to the south of Chichester, reduced, handmade pottery is dated to the eighth to ninth centuries on the basis of a radiocarbon date (Gregory 1976, 216). The published date is calibrated to 820±60 years. This has been recalibrated using the Oxcal 4.0 programme, using the Intcal 04 curve, to AD 730–1020 at 95 per cent confidence, giving a median of AD 875. A slightly later date can be suggested for the similar pottery from the burh at Burpham, which was occupied until the early tenth century, although the later pottery here is partially oxidized (Surtermeister 1976, 203). In the Adur Valley decoration and vessel forms similar to those

at Chichester are present, particularly at Botolphs where a mid-tenth-century date is suggested for the Saxo-Norman material (Gardiner 1990, 253). The earlier wares from the Adur Valley are oxidized and are tempered with quartz sand (Gardiner 1990, 245–6). Seriation analysis at Steyning demonstrates that reduced and handmade pottery preceded oxidized and wheel-thrown pottery (Orton 1993, 44). By the end of the tenth century it is likely that oxidized, wheel-finished pottery similar to that produced at Chichester was in use in the Adur Valley. The ninth- and tenth-century assemblages from *Hamwic* are made up largely of mixed grit- and flint-tempered wares with shell-tempering being present in the late ninth- and early tenth-century contexts (Timby 1988, 114). At *Hamwic*, in contrast to Chichester, some shell-tempered wares are oxidized, whereas the majority of wares are reduced, meaning that as a parallel for dating there are problems. Oxidized and wheel-made wares are extremely rare in Late Saxon Southampton as well (Brown 1994, 131). The absence of organic tempering in Chichester suggests that occupation is no earlier than the seventh century, based on the Sussex trend, or the eighth century based on the Hampshire trend (Lyne 2000, 25). On the basis of evidence from local sites it can be suggested that reduced pottery preceded oxidized pottery and, as the evidence from All Saints and the Central Car Park suggests, the development of oxidization was experimental. The fact that there is some correlation between handmade pots and reduced firing suggests both of these are traits of earlier assemblages.

Diversification in vessel form appears to occur in line with the development of the Chapel Street industry, although bowls and pitchers were being produced in smaller quantities before this. Similar diversification does not occur elsewhere in Sussex until later (e.g. Gardiner 1993) and only occurs in ninth- to tenth-century *Hamwic* through the occurrence of imported vessels. Locally made bowls are present in tenth- to eleventh-century Southampton, however (Brown 1994, 13). This diversification in Chichester can be dated to the mid-tenth century, and may possibly have occurred in line with similar diversification at other larger settlements. Elsewhere, the bowl function may have been fulfilled by vessels in other materials, if at all.

The decoration is deceptive from a dating point of view. Combing and stamping are characteristic of fifth- to seventh-century assemblages but the

traditions continue in Chichester. It is not really possible, therefore, to use decoration as an indicator of date, beyond the fact that thumb impressions appear to have developed in line with the Chapel Street industry. This continuity of decorative forms is an argument against Lyne's (2000, 26) suggestion that there was a hiatus in pottery manufacture in Sussex in the seventh to eighth centuries.

In summary, the earliest pottery in Chichester appears to be the Group IV reduced, shell-tempered fabrics. These can be dated to the seventh to ninth centuries on the basis of their occurrence in early contexts and comparison with other sites. As the town expanded in the ninth to tenth centuries, there was an increasing variety of pottery used, principally in regard to fabric, with a range of resources being utilized. The Chapel Street industry appears to have been in operation from the tenth to eleventh centuries, and it is possible that similar pottery was produced elsewhere in the town. This was the dominant supplier of pottery in this period. The transition to what Down classes as 'medieval' wares is difficult to determine. No deposits have been firmly dated to the Anglo-Norman period and therefore there is something of a gap in our understanding of pottery of the eleventh to twelfth centuries in Chichester. It is likely that Chapel Street-type pottery continued in use through this period, possibly produced at kilns located elsewhere in or around the town. This would correspond with the situation elsewhere, for example in Southampton, where flint-tempered pottery continued in use, possibly as late as the early thirteenth century (Brown 2002).

#### PRODUCTION, TECHNIQUE, TRADITION

All of the pottery appeared hand-built using the coil technique, although 93 per cent of sherds appear to come from vessels finished using a turntable. The only evidence of kilns comes from Chapel Street. These clamp kilns were dug into the Roman floor surface and were lined with clay, implying that they were intended to be at least semi-permanent structures (Down 1981, 190). The kilns were probably used to fire the oxidized Fabric 1 and may have been used to fire other vessels too. A range of firing atmospheres appear to have been achieved by potters in Chichester, from

almost complete oxidation through to complete reduction. It is possible that some pots were fired in small bonfires, whilst the dominance of a particular type of firing in particular parts of the city may imply that pots were fired communally.

The range of fabrics present could suggest that fashioning took place at a household level. The cooking-pot form is similar to that present at other sites in southern England which was produced from the seventh to thirteenth centuries (Brown 2002, 136). Rims are noticeably more sharply everted than in earlier examples from elsewhere in Sussex (cf. Bell 1977; Gardiner 1990). The number of sherds exhibiting decoration appears high compared to finds from rural sites as well as from Southampton. The types of decoration present; stamping and stick-end decoration, perhaps demonstrate something of a coming-together of eastern Sussex and Hampshire traditions. Stamped sherds are common in Late Saxon deposits in Hampshire and West Sussex (Cunliffe 1974, 132), whilst stick-end decoration is more common in eastern Sussex (Barton 1979, 80). The relatively high number of bowls present also contrasts with these rural sites, although the forms present are similar.

As discussed above, the rim forms of jars are typical of this vessel form in Sussex and Hampshire. The variations between these general forms is probably more linked to the finishing techniques of individual potters. The squarer profile of the R1 form may be linked to the turntable, as this technique would make this easier to achieve and technological analysis suggests some correlation between the use of the turntable and the presence of this rim form. The variation represented in the rim forms, as with fabrics, can be related to small-scale domestic production and a range of influences on potting in Chichester, within a broader tradition (Jervis 2008b).

The absence of organic tempering is consistent with Late Saxon deposits from elsewhere in Sussex and eastern Hampshire (Hodges 1981, 57; Lyne 2000, 25). The presence of flint and shell temper is similarly consistent. The use of these tempering materials was probably a technical consideration, intended to prevent pots from cracking. The presence of chalk-tempered vessels is more of a curiosity. The production of chalk-tempered pitchers in Chichester perhaps places it within a network of producers of this type of pottery in Southern England (Brown 1994, 144–5). The access to chalk

was probably a key factor behind the production of these vessels in Chichester and other centres such as Winchester. They were then distributed over a wide area. The function of these vessels is unknown, but the basic homogeneity in fabric and form suggests they fulfilled a similar role across Wessex. A more detailed study of the distribution of these wares may demonstrate whether Chichester examples reached the town's hinterland.

Portchester-type ware has a limited distribution through eastern Hampshire and West Sussex (Cunliffe 1976, 185) and its presence in Chichester is probably representative of 'coastwise' trade and possibly the movement of goods inside these pots. The small quantity of Portchester ware in Chichester perhaps suggests that people were unwilling to purchase pottery when they could make it themselves, or could source it more cheaply from the local industry.

Pottery was initially manufactured in Chichester on a small scale and possibly linked to households. The vessel forms and fabrics show affinity with the pottery produced and used at local rural sites. As Chichester grew as an urban entity, its own pottery industry was established in Chapel Street and this was probably at the scale of a small workshop. The vessels it produced were similar to those produced previously but were more consistently fired and demonstrate a degree of standardization in size and form.

#### CERAMIC USE

The homogeneity in vessel form across Sussex and Hampshire may be related to a common pattern and tradition of ceramic use. The limited range of forms may indicate a limited range of functions for vessels, although size may have differentiated how vessels were utilized (Barton 1979, 77). There is little conclusive evidence of use on any of the pottery, however the jar form was most likely used for cooking or storage. The increasing size of jars through the Saxon period may be linked to the need to store greater quantities of produce, perhaps as the towns' populations increased. Bowls may have been used for serving and the presence of handles or sockets on some bowls may indicate their use as saucepans for heating small amounts of liquid. Pitchers are probably associated with liquid. Their weight may mean the spouts were not functional for pouring and these vessels may

have been used in the brewing process (Down 1981, 189). The small number and range of vessels perhaps implies that pottery fulfilled a very limited role within the Saxon household. These functions may have been limited to storage and the heating of liquids. Vessels in other materials such as wood, metal and leather were probably also used in the preparation, storage and consumption of food.

### DISTRIBUTION

As ever, a study of pottery distribution is influenced by the location and size of excavations within the town. This will be overcome in part by comparing the proportions of fabrics present from sites with the proportion of the total of that site (Table 14 ADS Supplement). Table 14 also allows the study of the composition of individual site assemblages. Sherd weight has been used as it is the measure least sensitive to taphonomic processes. This analysis can only give an impression owing to the quantity of pottery disposed of in the 1970s. Patterns in distribution may be influenced by a number of factors including chronology, taphonomic processes, site function and the people occupying a particular area. The percentage of a particular fabric present at a site can be compared with the proportion of the total pottery studied from Chichester. If the figure for the particular fabric is higher than that for the proportion of the total assemblage, the fabric can be said to be over-represented. If the opposite is true, the fabric is under-represented.

#### GROUP I WARES: MIXED-GRIT WARE

Fabric 1 is found on all sites and can be taken as an indicator of tenth- to eleventh-century activity. It is over-represented at Chapel Street and in Area 1, which is unsurprising given that the pottery appears to have been produced at these sites. Similarly, in Area 2 it is over-represented, possibly owing to this being an area of similar 'industrial' use (Down 1978, 83–5). That fabric 1 appears under-represented on other sites is due to the presence of these production sites, which skew the distribution. Its presence on all sites is indicative of its having been the main type of pottery used in Chichester from the tenth to eleventh centuries. Other Group I wares are spread across the town. Fabric 9 for example is most common at All Saints, Tower Street, East Street, Area 1 and Area 5, whilst

fabric 10 is most common at the Post Office site, Greyfriars and Area 2. This pattern can be further understood when the proportions of particular fabrics composing the assemblages from specific sites are examined, with one or two fabrics typically composing significant proportions of a given assemblage. For example, at East Street, fabric 9 comprises 17 per cent of the assemblage whereas in Chichester as a whole it comprises only 3 per cent. This pattern of distribution, with different fabrics being noticeably prevalent at different sites suggests localized patterns of production and consumption and that these fabrics were essentially equivalent to each other within the context of use.

#### GROUP II WARES: CHALKY WARE

Chalk-tempered pottery is less evenly spread over the town than the Group I wares, implying some other influences on distribution. These wares were typically used to produce particular vessel forms, not typically found in other fabrics (pitchers). At the Post Office Site and Areas 2 and 5 there is a particular abundance of chalk-tempered wares, with a range of fabrics represented. The absence of chalk-tempered fabrics at the Central Car Park Site and East Street, coupled with the relative lack of fabric 1, is suggestive of these sites' comparatively earlier date. With the exception of fabric 19, the Group II fabrics are minority wares, each composing less than 1 per cent of the assemblage by weight and therefore little can be read into the distribution of individual fabrics.

#### GROUP III WARES: FLINTY WARE

As with the Group I wares, there is an uneven distribution of particular fabrics through the town, suggesting localized patterns of production and consumption. The pattern is potentially more subtle than the Table 14 (ADS Supplement) suggests. At Tower Street, where pits can tentatively be assigned to tenement plots, clear groupings of particular fabrics could be identified, suggesting that the fabrics used varied between households as much as between streets and areas of the town. The relationship between Group I and Group III wares is difficult to discern. The highest proportions of each generally occur together, suggesting they were complementary rather than equivalent fabrics, although there may be some chronological pattern. This would require much firmer stratigraphic sequences to identify.

**GROUP V WARES: REDUCED SHELLY WARE**

The presence of these wares can be taken as an indicator of early (eighth- to ninth-century) activity on a site. No pattern can be discerned in the distribution of the fabrics themselves, but this group is over represented in relation to other fabric groups at the Central Car Park, All Saints, Post Office and East Street, all of which are deemed to be relatively early in date, either because of the pottery or, in the case of the Post Office site, the presence of a sunken-featured building

**SUMMARY**

The distribution of local wares demonstrates spatial and chronological patterns which can help us to understand the relevance of the fabrics defined. The earliest fabrics (Group V wares) are present on all sites but are most abundant in the southern portion of the town. The spread of chalk-tempered wares through the town is suggestive of functional differences between sites — that they were most prevalent where activities such as brewing were perhaps taking place. Future analysis of pottery from pits related to structures may enable better understanding of the distribution of these wares. At present no suitable deposits have been identified. The use of different fabrics on particular sites is suggestive of a range of clay resources being used. It may also suggest that the town was being populated from a range of settlements in its hinterland during the ninth to tenth centuries, producing pottery in a range of fabrics which were functionally equivalent. The presence of fabric 1 on all sites demonstrates that the Chapel Street industry supplied the whole town with pottery, during the late tenth to eleventh centuries at least.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Interpretation of the Saxon ceramics from Chichester suggests that there are two phases of manufacture. During the first phase pottery production was probably at a small, household scale, with wide variation occurring in fabric. This was later replaced by more intensive, workshop-level production, possibly linked to limitations placed upon the access to resources and to the development of economic activity as Chichester grew as a town. The fabric types and range of vessels present place Chichester within a local tradition

stretching through the Saxon and Saxo-Norman periods. The growth of a workshop in Chichester contrasts with the pottery used in the few local rural settlements which have been excavated. Carrying out large-scale rural excavations around Chichester may widen our understanding of the distribution of Chichester products and, if found in secure contexts, may actually be of more use in calibrating the Chichester sequence, thus allowing further re-evaluation of our current understanding of the town's chronology.

Chichester is similar to other Burghal centres such as Portchester and Winchester which were producing distinctive pottery within a local tradition. The presence of pitchers and bowls suggests that in general terms pottery was used for a wider variety of functions by the eleventh century and that vessels developed for use in particular tasks. This, coupled with an increase in vessel size is perhaps linked to a more intensive storage and use of the products, primarily agricultural produce, from the town's hinterland. In order to develop this analysis more fully, further investigation of sites within Chichester as well as in the surrounding landscape is required, in order to understand how Chichester acted as a focus for local economic and political activity.

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**ADS supplement**

Supplementary information on this article can be found on the ADS website at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library>. Follow the link to *Sussex Archaeological Collections* and select Volume 147.

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- Table 14. Distribution of fabrics throughout Chichester.

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