

## Medieval potters in west and central Surrey

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*Contemporary documents name over a dozen potters who might have made Surrey whiteware in west Surrey between 1244 and 1348, and others refer to clay-digging and the transportation of both clay and pots. These are presented and discussed, together with the results of a field walking survey that sought to identify production sites and clay pits.*

[Note: This paper is the result of research by Phil Jones over many years and was still in draft at the time of his death in 2016. It has been edited to include a few further references and the bibliography completed. However, the main text remains as written by him.]

### The documentary evidence

#### INTRODUCTION

Two transcriptions of contemporary documents are the principal sources for the historical details of this review. Brooks and Graham translated extracts of the Pipe Rolls and other accounts of the Bishop of Winchester's Farnham estate,<sup>1</sup> but with one exception<sup>2</sup> references to potters and related matters have not been more widely disseminated. The other major sources have been the Chertsey Abbey cartularies and Court Rolls Extract that were translated and published by Surrey Record Society between 1915 and 1963. Further information was collated from the Surrey volume of the English Place-name Society.<sup>3</sup>

The documentary evidence is reviewed for Farnham, Egham, Staines, Chobham, Frimley, East Clandon, Kingston, Cheam and other certain or likely production sites and potters, as well as the transportation of pottery and clay through west and central Surrey.

#### FARNHAM

Nicholas *le Pother*, the earliest named potter in west Surrey, held half an acre within the borough of Farnham in 1244.<sup>4</sup> It has been suggested that his plot may have lain between the street frontage of the burgage plots and the borough ditch, and that the pottery kiln excavated at Park Row could have been within his land or else close-by.<sup>5</sup> The pottery from Park Row, however, is likely to be later than when Nicholas had been in operation (see p 245), but his mention in the Winchester Pipe Rolls occurs at about the same time as sales of pots and potters clay from Farnham first appear.

The single account of sales is of a batch bought for the bishop's palace at Wolvesley in 1252/3 that included 300 *scutells*, 100 *platells*, 100 *salsers* and nine large *scutells*,<sup>6</sup> and it is possible that these were made by Nicholas *le Pother*. It is likely that these are ceramic pots, in view of the numbers, although these terms, especially *scutells* (*scutella*) are often used for vessels of other materials, including those made of wood.

Margaret *Pothe*, who may have been Nicholas's widow or daughter, is recorded as paying 12d for land in 1265,<sup>7</sup> and two or three generations later Nicholas *le Crocker* is recorded in

<sup>1</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983.

<sup>2</sup> Graham 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Gover *et al* 1934.

<sup>4</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983, 51.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 11; Cole 1982; Graham 1984.

<sup>6</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983, 71.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 90.

the 1332 Pipe Rolls for the borough.<sup>8</sup> No such names appear thereafter, and the last likely record of a potter on the bishops' Farnham estate is of Richard Poter in a 1349 document pertaining to Tilford, a tithing in the parish of Farnham 4km south of the borough.<sup>9</sup>

Clay from Farnham Old or Great Park was sold during the 1250s, and the trade is recorded intermittently down to 1348 after which no more sales are recorded.<sup>10</sup> In 1348/9 there is an entry in the Winchester Pipe Rolls: 'and [potter's] clay from La Rude nothing this year because there were no buyers and potters' clay (*t'figulatorum*) in the Park nothing for the same reason' – presumably a consequence of the outbreak of plague.<sup>11</sup> This could imply a much-diminished trade, which might have become a much more expensive enterprise as wages rose sharply after the Black Death, and although those for clay diggers are not known, the rates for tilers in Farnham increased by almost 100% between the early 1340s and the mid-1350s.<sup>12</sup> However, some clay was still being dug in Farnham during the second half of the 14th century, as a load was sent to Shalford, south of Guildford, in 1371, but for tiles rather than pottery, and possibly a special clay for the inlay of encaustic tiles.<sup>13</sup> Tiles made at Shalford for Farnham Castle in 1418 and 1421 are said to have been of clay carted from Farnham,<sup>14</sup> and this may also refer to white pipe clay for encaustic work. Shalford would have been ideally placed for the production of decorated floor tiles, not for Farnham Castle which was some distance away, but for the royal palace at Guildford, which flourished during the late 13th and early 14th centuries.<sup>15</sup> White-firing clay was certainly sent to Otterbourne in Hampshire from Farnham in 1395/6,<sup>16</sup> and further afield.<sup>17</sup>

Who bought the clay from the park in the century before 1349 is not known, and although some may have gone to potter/farmers on the rural estate of Farnham as well as to others working within the borough, the accounts may only record the transactions of clay for distant trading.

Farnham Old Park lies north-west of the bishop's castle and includes a complex of ancient workings within Claypit Wood that straddles the Reading Beds clays on both sides of a south-flowing stream. Its valley is probably *La Rude*, recorded in at least two entries of the Pipe Rolls, as in 1244 permission was granted for a bank and ditch to enclose a field of that name in the Old Park,<sup>18</sup> and there is a 1337 transaction concerning a plot of one rood and three perches of the waste of the *Cleyputtes* next to *La Rude*.<sup>19</sup>

Clay was still being dug and fired 130 years later for the production of bricks, with 33,000 made in the 'brick place' in the Old Park to build a new tower within the castle in 1473.<sup>20</sup> It is not certain that the clay had been from Claypit Wood, however, or whether clay continued to be dug in the park for the making of pottery in the same century, although this seems likely from some slightly later accounts. Evidence for clay-digging in the park to make green glazed pottery in the early post-medieval period comes from two sources. One is a letter of 1594 that describes the continued digging of white clay there for such pots to be made and

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 228.

<sup>10</sup> Robo 1935, 87, 217.

<sup>11</sup> HRO: EC 159358.

<sup>12</sup> Robo 1935, 227.

<sup>13</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983, 248.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 266 and 268.

<sup>15</sup> Poulton 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Cherry 1991, 189; Norton 1974, 30.

<sup>17</sup> Clay was being shipped to the Tower of London from the Blackwater area in the late 16th century (Pearce & Tipton 2011). Farnham clay was shipped very widely and not just to Farnborough, Cove, Hawley, Ash, Frimley, Chobham, Pirbright and Addlestone (Peter Tipton, pers comm).

<sup>18</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983, 59.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 199.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 281.

supplied to the Inner Temple,<sup>21</sup> and the other is a reference to 120 cart-loads of white clay sold from the park in 1603.<sup>22</sup>

#### EGHAM AND STAINES (fig 1A)

William *le Crakkyere* acquired the cottage of his late father, Alexander, in the Egham estate of the abbot of Chertsey in 1326.<sup>23</sup> Eight years later he was admitted with his wife Alice to (another?) cottage next to the church,<sup>24</sup> and in 1337 he enlarged this holding with a small enclosure to the east of the headland of their house.<sup>25</sup> Further enlargement followed in 1342 with the enclosure of 22 feet by 14 feet at the western headland and 11 feet at the eastern headland.<sup>26</sup> There are no later accounts of William or his family.

William's holding cannot have been east of the church, however, since that was where the demesne farm of the abbot had lain (Manor Farm (fig 1C), a timber-framed hall that retained some 14th century fabric).<sup>27</sup> Neither can it have lain south of the church, since its yard backed directly onto the common arable fields of Egham. His cottage may have been west of the church, with the later enclosures taken in from the common field that lay to the south, since the 1342 account suggests that his new enclosures had included parts of the adjoining headlands of both western and eastern parts of that arable land. In the 1980s, however, some sampling trenches opened-up on the fringes of this area by the Spelthorne Archaeological Field Group found only a few medieval sherds, none of which is obviously a waster.<sup>28</sup>

The only alternative site was opposite the church on the other side of the highway, and immediately east of that position evidence of later 12th–early 13th century pottery production was recently excavated at Oliver Court.<sup>29</sup> This included a kiln close to the street frontage filled with wasters of coarse sand and flint-gritted ware, and a waster pit 30m further north-east in the backlands that suggests a larger area of production. Because of its probable dating, however, such pottery cannot have been made by William, nor by his father Alexander, but the discovery demonstrates the longevity of pottery production in Egham, which can be surmised to have continued for at least three or four generations. William's holdings may have lain west of those discoveries, and more directly north from the church, because no comparable concentration of later 13th to mid-14th century pottery, which would have been of whiteware, was found on the site.

Manor, church and potter's holding seems an incongruous juxtaposition, given the low status generally afforded to the craft during the medieval period. Egham is suggested to have been planned as a double row village, possibly under the entrepreneurial regime of Abbot Rutherwick in the early 14th century, and based on the regularity of some surviving property boundaries this may have extended west from the church and manor,<sup>30</sup> but perhaps not east to include the area of the discovered kiln. This period is when whiteware came to dominate the supply of pottery in west Surrey and began to flood the London market, and it seems reasonable to expect middlemen to have played significant roles in such trading. One such might have been William *le Crakkyere*, with the advantage of his holding being adjacent to the highway and close to the Thames. Unlike his perhaps more lowly forebears, he might have been of sufficient status to warrant such an auspicious site within the village for his holding.

<sup>21</sup> Rackham 1952, 50, reproduced as Appendix A.

<sup>22</sup> Holling 1969, 19.

<sup>23</sup> SRS 1937, 3, no 22.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 58, no 592.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 88, no 879.

<sup>26</sup> SRS 1954, 133, no 1297.

<sup>27</sup> SCC 1976, 175.

<sup>28</sup> S Dyer, pers comm.

<sup>29</sup> Jones 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Blair 1991, 60.

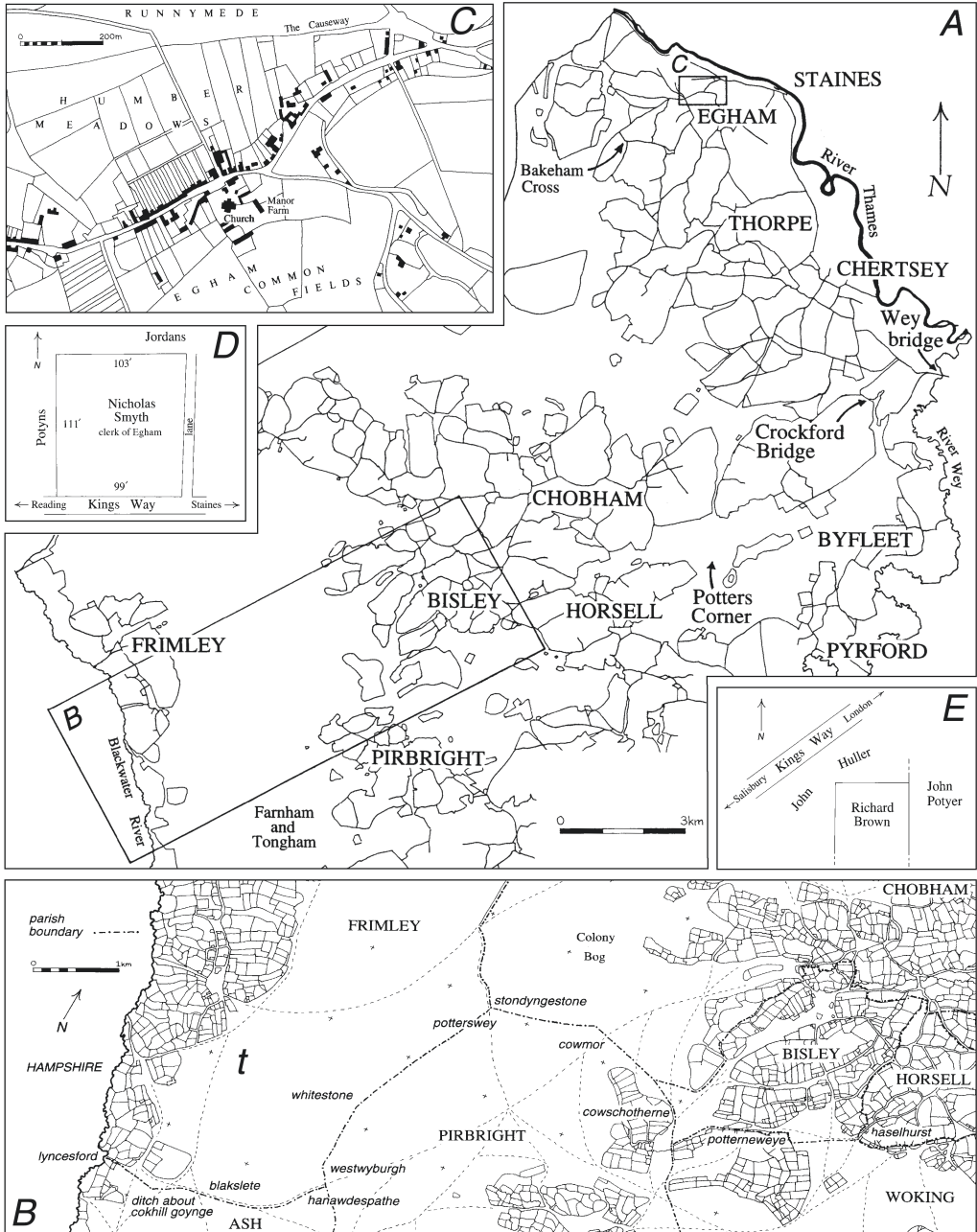


Fig 1 Medieval potters. Egham–Pirbright area of north-west Surrey with detailed inset maps showing locations and landholdings referred to in the text.

Also on the north side of the High Street another Egham family might have been involved in the manufacture of pottery. A plot of land with a two-storeyed hall, kitchen and barn granted to the clerk of Egham in 1437 is said to have lain north of the King's Way (fig 1D), west of a lane to Jordan's tenement and east of another tenement called *Potyns*.<sup>31</sup> The

<sup>31</sup> SRS 1958, 49, no 734.

description also provides the lengths of each side of this rectangular plot (fig 1D). The juxtaposition of the other tenements and the status of the clerk<sup>32</sup> strongly suggests that this may have been a burgage plot within the village, as might that of *Pobyns*. In 1305 Agnes *Poteyn* held land in Egham abutting the *Estfurlong* of Homworth Common Field;<sup>33</sup> *Pobyn* is also a personal name recorded in Rutherford's survey of the manor that was begun in 1316,<sup>34</sup> and Agnes *Pobyn* held the land of her mother of the same name in villeinage in 1329.<sup>35</sup> The possibility that the family was associated with pottery making might be thought slim, and any doubt could seem to be compounded by the similarity of their name to the first element of *Potenhale*, the name of a district in the north of the Egham estate that was so called in 1348, but first mentioned as *Poddehale* ('Poddas's nook of land') in 1219.<sup>36</sup> The *Poteyns* could have been descendants of this 'Podda'. The area lay between the London to Salisbury highway and the boundary of Berkshire in the 13th century, and it had belonged to the nuns of Broomhall whose priory lay close by. That suitable clay sources exist there is evident from *tigelbeddeburne* ('tile bed bourne'), which was the name of the watercourse that separated the two counties in a 12th century boundary charter of Chertsey Abbey.<sup>37</sup>

Another potter may have been working within the Egham estate during the later medieval period. In 1443 the abbot granted to Richard Brown a croft and part of the heath at Bakeham Cross, south and east of John Huller's land and west of the land of John *Potyer* (fig 1A and E). John Huller's lands lay on the south side of the King's Way between London and Salisbury.<sup>38</sup> By this date such vocational surnames do not always match the craft of the appellant, but it is interesting that his land lay in the heathland waste close to the main highway and closer to Egham than *Potenhale*/*Poddehale*.

Knowle Hill lies c 4km from Egham and adjacent to the same London to Salisbury highway. Gilbert *de la Knolle* was the first of the family to be recorded in Egham in a document of 1271, but others resided in Staines on the Middlesex side of the Thames. Knowle Green of that parish bears the family name,<sup>39</sup> and William *de la Knolle* still resided in Egham during the reign of Henry III.<sup>40</sup> The possible potting connection is that John *de la Knolle* of Staines was one of the sons of Peter *le Poter* of Clandon who died before 1318, but John still held lands there, alongside those of his brothers who were potters until as late as 1338 (see p 230).

#### CHOBHAM AND FRIMLEY (fig 1A and B)

In 1329 part of a pasture in Chobham called *Trandelgarstone* that belonged to Jordan *le Crockere* was bought by Robert *le Hunte* of Tongham,<sup>41</sup> a parish where tiles had been produced in the late 14th century (Brooks & Graham 1983, 257).

John *le Crockere* of Chobham, perhaps the son of Jordan, was allowed to enclose some lands in the estate in 1340, including three roods at *Cristemed*,<sup>42</sup> and in 1344 the same, or another John *le Crockere* pledged the readmission of Robert *le Crockere* of Frimley to a cottage and lands that he had previously surrendered, with the remainder passing to his son, Ralph.<sup>43</sup>

Chobham was a relatively large estate on the abbot of Chertsey's lands, and bounded Frimley along the upland spine of the Chobham Ridges in the west. The 'Metes and Bounds

<sup>32</sup> A clerk was a cleric or priest at this date.

<sup>33</sup> SRS 1963, 382, no 1305.

<sup>34</sup> Turner 1926, 44.

<sup>35</sup> SRS 1937, 16–17, nos 169, 170.

<sup>36</sup> Gover *et al* 1934, 122.

<sup>37</sup> Kelly 2015, 108–11. The approximate location of 'Tilebed burn' is shown in Williams 2002, 44.

<sup>38</sup> SRS 1958, 48, no 733.

<sup>39</sup> Turner 1926, 57.

<sup>40</sup> Gover *et al* 1934, 125.

<sup>41</sup> SRS 1937, 19, no 202.

<sup>42</sup> SRS 1954, 113, no 1112.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 160, no 1526.

of the Hundred of Godley' (1446) refers to 'potters ways' in the high heathland<sup>44</sup> where the Frimley and Chobham estates met that of Pirbright, an estate of Woking hundred (fig 1B; see below).

In Pirbright parish close to the boundary with Frimley among the heights of the Chobham Ridges is Porridge Pot Hill, or Pottage Pot Hill according to 19th century maps. Early post-medieval sherds have been recovered from its lower slopes,<sup>45</sup> but its name, suggestive of greyware, might indicate earlier pottery production in its vicinity. On the slopes of another such Porridge Pot Hill at Pinner, not far distant within the Thames basin in north Middlesex, a 13th century production site has been found, indicating, perhaps, that such names had been more generally applied to medieval pottery debris in more recent times.<sup>46</sup> The Surrey hill also lies very close to one of the 'potters ways' (see p 234).<sup>47</sup>

The only other possible reference to medieval potters or pottery production in Frimley is a 15th century rental that mentions a Potmoor and a Willelmi Potelle.<sup>48</sup> The land had previously belonged to the Burstow family, whose principal holding of Burstow Farm lay in the north-west of the Frimley estate overlooking the Blackwater valley. *Potmoor* may, however, simply be a corruption of peat moor, extensive tracts of which fringe the valley, and *Potelle* need not allude to William's occupation or those of his forebears.<sup>49</sup> In the same rental there is reference to John *Crocker* (30, 31) and Robert *Crocker* (30) who held a '*purpresturam* (encroachment) *apud Cristmell*'.

#### EAST CLANDON (fig 2)

Most people with crocker or potter vocational names in the lands of Chertsey Abbey are recorded from *Clandone Abbatis*, a small subsidiary estate that was largely coterminous with the modern parish of East Clandon. Six are recorded between 1284 and 1348, and others of their families may also have been involved in pottery production, not just within Clandon, but in other abbey estates such as Egham and Chobham (fig 4).

The earliest recorded is Richard *Crokere*, whose lands are mentioned in a document of 1283<sup>50</sup> and may have been the same as Richard *le Crokker* who witnessed a rental agreement in 1318 between the abbot and one of, at least, two sons of Peter *le Poter*. These had been William *le Potier* and John *de la Knolle* of Staines, and the agreement was for John to pay 18s yearly rent on two parts of the lands and tenements that had previously belonged to his brother William.<sup>51</sup> Although their father was dead, some of his brothers' holdings passing to John cannot have meant that William was also deceased, since his son, also called William, was only admitted to the cottage held by his late father in 1333<sup>52</sup> It is interesting to note that the father is described as William *le Potier* and his son as William *le Crockere*. As in 1318, pledges were made by a Richard *le Crockere* in the admission of William to his father's cottage, just as he apparently does in many other transactions in the accounts for Clandon down to 1343, for which year is an entry pledged by, among others, Richard and Nicholas *le Crocker*.<sup>53</sup> In the following year Nicholas was admitted to the cottage and 2 acres that had been freely

<sup>44</sup> SRS 1915, 128, no 143.

<sup>45</sup> Holling 1971, 62.

<sup>46</sup> Sheppard 1977, 31.

<sup>47</sup> There is a Porridgepot Hall in the parish of Terling, Essex, TL 764 127. The 2 edn 6 inch OS map shows old clay pits immediately to the south. Field (1993) notes that 'porridge' was a metaphor for soft and sticky soil, hence the likely association with clay suitable for pottery, bricks and tiles, but not necessarily an indicator of pottery production.

<sup>48</sup> SRS 1915, 26, no 44.

<sup>49</sup> See 'Potell' in Reaney & Wilson 1997.

<sup>50</sup> SRS 1958, 107, no 843.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 112, no 856.

<sup>52</sup> SRS 1937, 51, no 523.

<sup>53</sup> SRS 1958, 120, no 869.



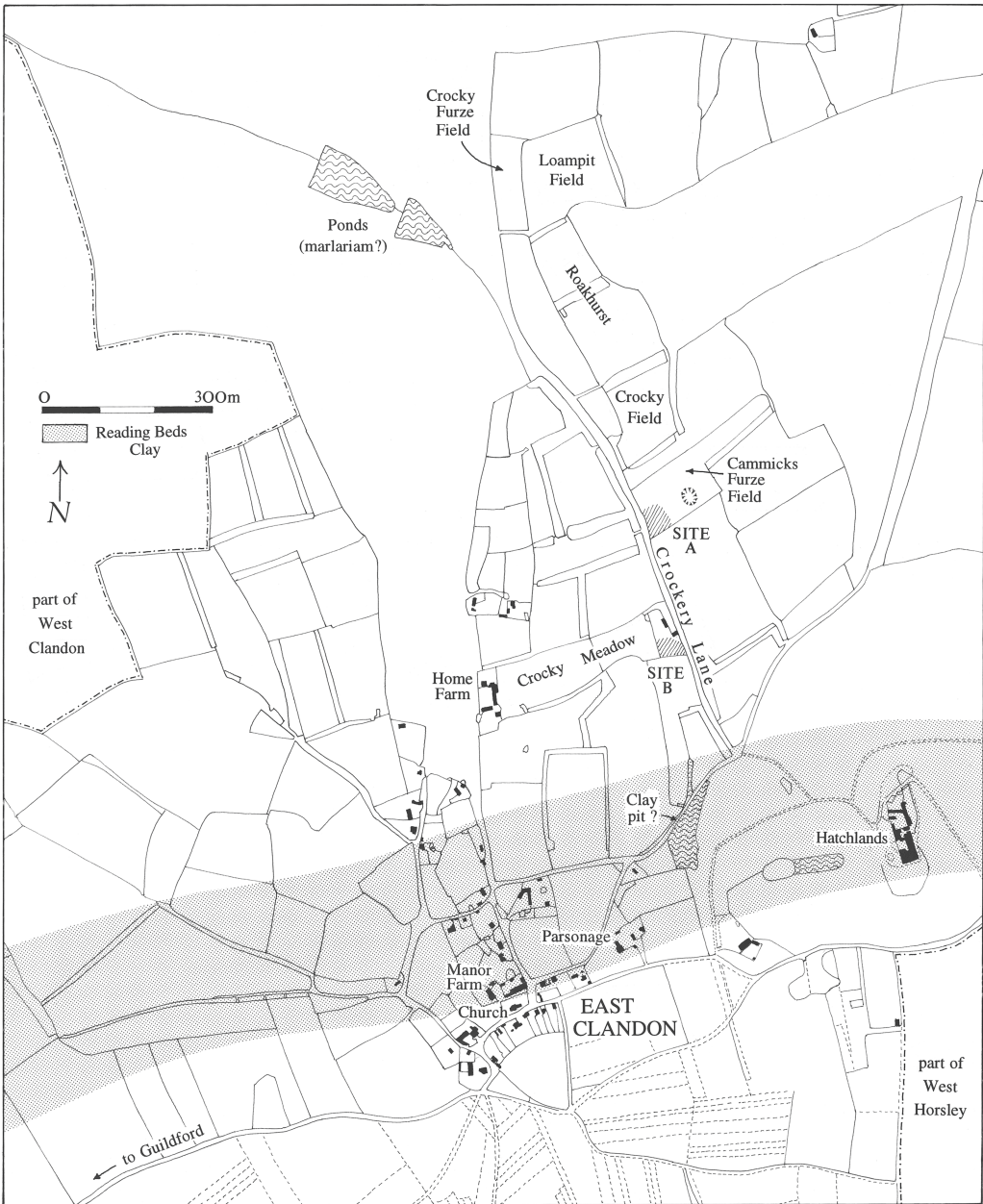


Fig 2 Medieval potters. Map of East Clandon showing locations referred to in the text and the band of Reading Beds clay.

held by ‘Richard *Crocker*, Senior’ [*sic*].<sup>54</sup> If the translation is correct, there may have been an intention to identify an older Richard from one that was younger. If the same Richard *Crocker* of responsible age was recorded in documents of 1284 and 1343, he would have been at least 75 years old at the time of his death, which is possible but unlikely for a 14th century artisan (see below p 242). There is some evidence to suggest that Richard might have been

<sup>54</sup> SRS 1954, 162, no 1544.

of greater status. He may have been, for instance, the Richard *le Crokker* who, in 1341, sued Roger Andreu in Southwark that he had, by force, cut down his trees in East Clandon which, together with other goods, were worth 100s.<sup>55</sup> Perhaps, also, he was the Richard *le Crokker* who was a juror on an inquisition post mortem on Hugh le Despenser, 1st Earl of Winchester's manor of Woking following his execution on 27 October 1326.<sup>56</sup> In 1318 a Richard *le Crockere* sued a man for disseizing him of his messuage in Clandon Abbatis.<sup>57</sup> It is significant since it was the date that William *le Crockere* (the first) died, which might suggest that Richard was his son as well as William (the second). This may have been when the property was divided, but may have been reunited when William (the third) died (presumably without heirs).

The holdings of William *le Potyer* were still the subject of land transactions during the decade after his death in 1332. Ten years later Richard *le Crocker* granted 2½ acres and ½ a rood of land previously belonging to William, to Peter *ate Mulle* of Cobham,<sup>58</sup> which, later in the same year, was acquired by Abbot Rutherwick. They were in 'a certain place called *Middlele*', and in the same account reference is made to other lands in *Middlele*', with their size and geographical relationship to each other. They include a holding of 3 roods and 10 perches adjoining the lands of the abbot to the west and east, land belonging to John *atte Roke* to the south, that of the Prior of Newark to the north, and another ½ acre and 32 perches that lay south of the Kings Road, north of John Aylewyne's land, west of William *le Crocker's* land and east of that of Richard *le Crocker* (fig 3). A marlpit that had once belonged to William *le Potyer* is also mentioned in the same account.<sup>59</sup> For 1345 there is a record of a quitclaim for lands that had been given to Henry *Westwode* by John, son of its former owner William *le Potier*. It excluded, however, a parcel of *Middlele*' between the lands of Richard *le Crocker* Courteys to the west, Richard Bonvalet's in the east, and, 'in length', between the Prior of Newark's land to the north, and that of *Swythred* to the south.<sup>60</sup> It is possible that Richard *le Crocker* Courteys could have been the junior Richard inferred in the reference to Richard senior in 1344, and that John had been the John *de la Knolle* who still held lands in Clandon down to 1338.<sup>61</sup> There was, however, a John *le Crocker*, who is first named in a document of 1335, when he surrendered his rights in the common pasture of Siggeworth in Clandon to the abbot, together with Richard *le Crokker*, William *le Crocker*, Roger *le Crochull*, John *Aylewyne* and John *de Chabeham*.<sup>62</sup>

In 1344 there were still two or more *le Crockers* in Clandon. Nicholas *le Crockere* provided pledges in the grant of *le Erycroft* to William *le Crockere*<sup>63</sup> in the same year that he was admitted to his father's lands;<sup>64</sup> Richard *le Crocker* Courteys' lands are mentioned in an account of the following year.<sup>65</sup> Nicholas was a witness in a 1347 account,<sup>66</sup> and in the following year he gave four parcels of his land to Henry *de Kent* of Great Bookham which lay in *Middlele*' next to a marlpit of Newark Priory.<sup>67</sup> This could have been the same *marlariam* that belonged to the prior in 1262.<sup>68</sup> The 1348 entry concerning Nicholas *le Crockere's* land is the last account of potters and crockers in the Court Rolls.

<sup>55</sup> TNA: CP 40/326 f220d.

<sup>56</sup> BL: Add MS 6167.

<sup>57</sup> TNA: JUST 1/888 f61d.

<sup>58</sup> SRS 1958, 119, no 867.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 118–19, no 866.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 114, no 859.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 114, no 863.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 111–12, nos 849–855.

<sup>63</sup> SRS 1954, 162–3, no 1550.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> SRS 1958, 114, no 859.

<sup>66</sup> SRS 1958, 120–1, no 871.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 121, no 872.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 121, no 873.



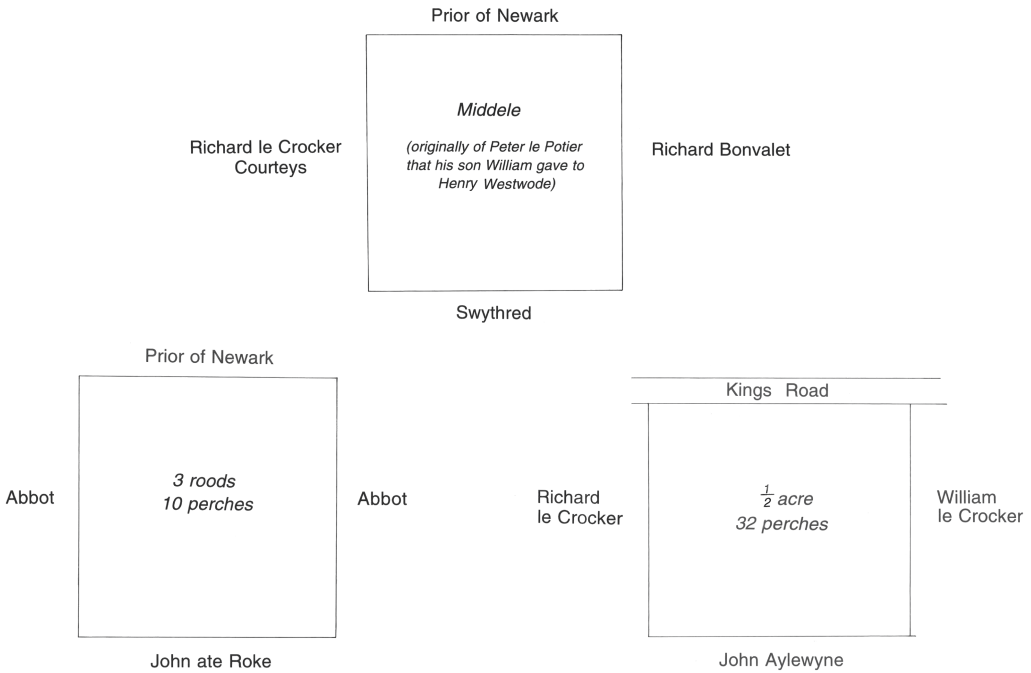


Fig 3 Medieval potters. Relationships between landholdings in the Clandon area.

A Chancery certificate of Statute Merchant<sup>69</sup> records that Nicholas le Crocker of Clandon, Surrey acknowledged in public in 1345 before the clerk of the Statutes Merchant and the Lord Mayor of London his indebtedness to John and Walter Bonet, citizens and woodmongers of London. This may have been for the purchase of wood (for the pottery kilns?), but since merchants often traded in goods unrelated to their nominal trade, it may have been for some other commodity.<sup>70</sup>

*Clandone Abbatis* seems, therefore, to have been host to, at least, two dynasties of potters during the first half of the 14th century, and their presence is not difficult to explain as it was the only estate of the abbey through which ran the potting clay of the Reading Beds.

The cartularies provide few clues as to where the potters had lived and worked, despite the detailed locational references of some accounts, such as those in relation to *Middede*, which had probably been common arable or waste. A green track called Crockery Lane, however, runs north from the rising ground of Fullers Hill and Hatchlands Park alongside the eastern side of a north-flowing stream (fig 2). East Clandon is a typical chalk downland dip-slope settlement close to the source of this stream, which lies a few metres north-east of the present village, near the south end of Crockery Lane. A medieval occupation site, as well as a smaller scatter of medieval sherds, has been discovered by fieldwalking on both sides of the lane (see p 238).

The tithe map of 1843 shows the north end of Crockery Lane opening out onto a large common, perhaps of *Siggeworth*, and two large, dammed ponds on the London Clay are also shown (fig 2). These still exist, and may be the remains of the *marlariam* of the prior of Newark, since they lie closest to the priory within the northern waste of the abbot's estate. It may have continued in use, however, since brick production on Clandon Common is documented in the accounts of the king's palace at Woking. In 1534, Edward Lydger made

<sup>69</sup> TNA: C 241/126/230.

<sup>70</sup> Graham Dawson, pers comm.

Chertsey Abbey Estates				
	Chobham	Frimley	Egham	East Clandon
1230	Winchester Estate of Farnham			
1250	1244 Nicholas Pother			
	1265 Margaret Pothe			
	1283 William and Joan le cruc			
1300				1284 Richard Crockker
1310			1305 Agnes Poteyn	
1320	Jordan le Crockere		Alexander	
			1326 William le Crakyere	
1330	1329 Robert le Hunte (Tongham)		1329 Agnes Poteyn	
				1333 William le Crockere
1340	1340 John le Crockere			
	1344 last m.			
1350	1349 Richard Poter (Tilford)			
1400				
1450	15C Wilhelm Potelle		1443 John Potyer	

Fig 4 Medieval potters in the Winchester estate of Farnham and the Chertsey abbey estates.

a kiln there and fired 230,000 bricks, mostly for Woking, but some for Chobham Place, the then residence of the abbot of Chertsey.<sup>71</sup>

On the eastern edge of the common within a sub-divided rectilinear assart is a small area called Crocky Furze Field in 1843, and another called Loampit Field immediately to the east. These remain wooded, with a ground cover of leaf litter. Between Loampit and Crocky Furze Fields and, along the western slopes of the higher ground above Crockery Lane, lie fields called High Roakhurst and Great Roakhurst in 1843. They probably represent some of the lands held by John *atte Roke* in 1342. The hill implied in the appellation of Roger *de Crochull* (who gave up his rights in Siggeworth Common in 1335), cannot, as yet, be positively identified. It may have been the high ground east of Crockery Lane, but the south part of this was called Hoyle in 1843, which may, in part, derive from OE *hoh* to imply a continuity of the name since long before the Anglo-French '*crochull*'. The most prominent hill close to Crockery Lane rises at its southern end through Hatchlands Park, and was called Fullers Hill in 1843. This might have been *Crochull*, and it straddles the outcrop of Reading Beds, with a large duck pond on its western side that is the source of the stream that runs alongside Crockery Lane. This may originally have been dug as a clay pit to supply the needs of the nearby medieval potters. There are many other undulations in Hatchlands Park to the north of the house that could also be ancient clay diggings.

#### KINGSTON AND CHEAM

The earliest documented potters in Kingston are named in the Surrey Eyre for 1263. Isabella, the daughter of Robert *le Potter* brought an assize of mort d'ancestor against Peter *le Potter* concerning a message with appurtenances in Kingston.<sup>72</sup> In plain words, she was claiming that Peter had entered the freehold property of her father, but whether the two litigants were related or from different potting families remains unknown. Among them could be the potters of Kingston who supplied 3800 'pitchers' in five batch orders for the royal household between 1264 and 1266 as recorded in the Calendars of Liberate and Close Rolls.<sup>73</sup> The earliest whiteware in the City belongs to this period and is of Kingston type, so named from the discovery of a number of kiln sites making such ware within the town although the pottery from them belongs to the 14th century. Two later potters known from documents include John *le Poter*, who received land in Surbiton, the southern suburb of the town, in 1296, and Alicia *Poter* who is included in a Lay Subsidy of 1332.<sup>74</sup> It is more uncertain when Galfridus *le Potter*, mentioned as once holding a toft on the west side of Heathen Street in a 15th century rental, had been at work, but since the place became Eden Street it might have been during the 14th century.<sup>75</sup>

There is no white-firing clay in or close to the town, but the Reading Beds runs through Cheam, 8km south-east from Kingston, where excavations have demonstrated pottery production from at least as early as the middle of the 14th century.<sup>76</sup> Scientific analyses, however, indicate strong matches between wasters from Eden Street and clay from Farnham Old Park (see below), although no clays from Cheam were involved in that programme of comparative work.<sup>77</sup> If clay had been carted the 48km from Farnham during the earlier phase of whiteware production in Kingston, the increased costs after 1348 might have led to the prospection and exploitation of closer sources, such as at Cheam. Recent research by Merton Historical Society<sup>78</sup> has revealed a possible three potters in Cheam in documents

<sup>71</sup> Colvin 1982, 346.

<sup>72</sup> SRS 2006, 114, no 168.

<sup>73</sup> Hinton 1980, 382.

<sup>74</sup> SRS 1923, 4.

<sup>75</sup> SHC: 1306/1 M1v; Hinton 1980, 382.

<sup>76</sup> Orton 1982, 80.

<sup>77</sup> Newell & Hughes 2002/3.

<sup>78</sup> Peter Hopkins, pers comm.

from 1393–7, including a Walter Potter and a Richard and Nicholas Waterservant (?Walter's servants), the last two of whom are specifically referred to as potters, presented for trespass [...] *with their sheep* perhaps indicating their potting was a seasonal activity. All three men were tenants of the archbishop of Canterbury's manor of East Cheam.<sup>79</sup>

#### OTHER MEDIEVAL POTTERS IN WEST AND CENTRAL SURREY

William *Crokere* is recorded in a Dorking parish document of 1384,<sup>80</sup> and west of Anstiebury hillfort in the south of the same parish is a Crockers Farm next to a Crockers Wood. Both lie over the Lower Greensand, and if a pottery production site is buried nearby, then the raw material is likely to have been the Gault or Wealden clays rather than the Reading Beds, which are too far distant.

Documentary references to potters in Ashtead are not known, but a production site has been found and sampled.<sup>81</sup> It is on London Clay, which is unsuitable for most pottery, but Reading Beds clay was observed by the author on parts of the top of nearby Ashtead Common during the mechanical scouring of a Roman clay pit, although no outlier is shown on current geological maps. This is the most likely source of clay for the Ashtead pottery, which belongs to the Grey/Brown Sandy Ware tradition with vessel forms typical of the late 13th and early 14th centuries. The principal market for this, and perhaps other kilns in Ashtead, would have been the nearby medieval town of Leatherhead. Recent analysis of some pottery from Bridgecroft, Mickleham just south of the town has shown a number of Grey/Brown types with sparse flint inclusions very similar to the Ashtead kiln material.<sup>82</sup>

### The transport of clay and pots

The movement of goods in the Surrey/Hampshire border district during the medieval period would have been over land, since neither the Blackwater nor the Wey rivers, were navigable that far upstream.<sup>83</sup> In 1391, 229 earthenware pots were taken from Farnborough to the royal stews or bath-house of Windsor Castle by a carter called John Brown in a journey that took two days.<sup>84</sup> They may have been from the excavated production site at Farnborough Hill<sup>85</sup> or from some other undiscovered site in the parish, and the route is likely to have been via the London to Salisbury road through Frimley, Bagshot and Chobham and on into Berkshire. The *le Crockeres* of Egham, Chobham and Frimley of the previous century may also have used clay carted from Farnham or Tongham, since no suitable sources existed within their own neighbourhoods. It may be interesting to note that in 1530/32, in the Exchequer accounts there are three records of the purchase of *erthen potts for the stue howsz or baynes* at Hampton Court in batches of *c* 400 from Stock in Essex and their transport by river. Were suitable pots not by then available in Surrey?<sup>86</sup>

A direct route between Farnham and London lay across the vast heath of north-west Surrey. A longer alternative would have been by way of the road that hugged the dip-slope of the North Downs to Stoke-by-Guildford, and on to Kingston and London wholly by road, or else by road to Weybridge, a little further upstream on the Thames, and thence by river. Timbers from Farnham for a new quay at Southwark were carted as far as Weybridge in 1284 by road, and then down the Thames.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/projects/lsparrowfield> (accessed 12 February 2017).

<sup>80</sup> Gover *et al* 1934, 274.

<sup>81</sup> Frere 1941.

<sup>82</sup> Nelson 2016.

<sup>83</sup> Savage 2003.

<sup>84</sup> Holling 1971, 59; Salzman, 1952, 276; Wood 1981, 372.

<sup>85</sup> Pearce 2007, 11.

<sup>86</sup> Musty 1977, 102.

<sup>87</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983, 116.

There is documentary evidence of two routes associated with potters through the high ground of the heath during the later medieval period. In 1446, the anti-clockwise boundary points of the west end of Godley hundred, which was co-terminous with most of the Chertsey Abbey estate, followed thus:

the middill' of haselhurst and fro thennes to potterneweye. And fro Potterneweye to Cowschotherne. And fro thennes to Cowmor' And fro thenns to the Stondyngestone And fro the Stondyngeston by the potterswey to the Whitestone And fro thenns over the Westwyburgh' And so to hanawdespathe and fro hanawdespathe to the Blakeslete stretching to a diche above Cokhill' goynge thane forthright' to lyncesford<sup>88</sup>

*Haselhurst* (hazel wood) probably lay close to the meeting of Bisley, Woking and Horsell; *Cowmor* is shown on 19th century maps as the open heath west of the assart of Cowshot, now occupied by the Bisley rifle ranges; and *lyncesford* is shown as a ford and causeway between Surrey and Hampshire over the Blackwater river. It is less easy to be certain where the standing stone, the Whitestone, *westwyburgh* (defended enclosure by the west path), *hanawdespathe*, *Blakestrete* or *Cokhill goynge* had been. One of the stones could have been the 'pillar of ironstone' marked on an OS map of 1811 in this area, and the other might be represented by the Mainstone, which stood at the meeting point of the estates of Frimley, Chobham and Pirbright during the medieval period (fig 1B).<sup>89</sup>

The *potterneweye* (potters new path) and the *potterswey* ran through inhospitable terrain where the high heath runs as a north–south spine, and an almost continuous bog swallows the spring-line (fig 1B). Even parish boundaries in this district are only shown as dotted lines on tithe maps, inferring that they had never been marked by banks or ditches. With so few fixed points of reference, therefore, it is difficult to be certain about exactly where the two ways had run, but figure 1B indicates the most likely routes. The *potterswey* may have continued through the Chobham estate towards Egham and the Thames. The *potterneweye* seems to have been a route further south, which might have taken it through Knap Hill and on towards Weybridge. This would have taken it through 'Potters Corner', the name of a neck of heathland at the eastern end of the enclosed lands of Horsell from at least as early as the beginning of the 19th century and quite possibly before. The road between Chertsey and Guildford also passed through 'Potters Corner'. It is a possibility, therefore, that pottery (and perhaps clay) going from Farnham to Weybridge, Kingston and London, may have crossed the path of pottery (and perhaps clay) being carried from Clandon to Chertsey. Further south is a Potters Lane that runs north–south through Send, and which may have followed through from Crockery Lane in Clandon.

Crockford Bridge near Chertsey (fig 1A) was the site of an earlier *Crocford* mentioned in a boundary charter of the abbey transcribed in the 13th century.<sup>90</sup> Although the derivation may simply be to a crooked ford, it may refer to a river crossing associated with the passage of potters and could, therefore, indicate yet another potters' carting way, perhaps between Clandon and Chertsey.

## The archaeological survey work

### INTRODUCTION

Because the quality of its clays had been recognised across southern England from at least as early as the Roman period, the author undertook a fieldwalking survey during the winter months of 1987 to 1989 to discover pottery production sites and quarries along the narrow outcrop of the Reading Beds within Surrey and a broader corridor either side of it from west

<sup>88</sup> SRS 1915, 128, no 143.

<sup>89</sup> Gover *et al* 1934, 116.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 105.



of Farnham to Horley in the east. Parts of it north of Guildford in the former royal park and through Stoke and Merrow east of the county town, and further east of Horley and Bookham could not be examined as much was buried beneath suburbia.

Eight Roman occupation sites were found,<sup>91</sup> but most of the medieval discoveries are summarised below.

#### FARNHAM OLD PARK

The bishops of Winchester's medieval estate of Farnham included enclosed parkland north and north-west of their castle and borough, much of which survives as municipal parkland, agricultural land or wood. In the present area of the 'Old Park' is Claypit Wood, which most probably includes all or part of the *Cleyputtes* of 1337 (see above, p 224), and which extends along the west flank of a south-flowing tributary stream of the Wey. The wood straddles and includes almost the full width of the Reading Beds outcrop, and is pock-marked with obviously ancient clay workings beneath a ground cover of neglected coppice stools and leaf litter (fig 5).

The bank sides of the stream (in *la Rude*) allowed an examination of the lithological succession, with the pale grey/lilac and almost iron-free clay of the near-basal part of the formation observed towards the south end of the wood before it passed up into the greater bulk that is mottled red, brown and buff (the so-called 'cat's brain clay'). Small boulders of fossil-rich sandstone that litter the stream bed derive from the basement beds of the London Clay that begin only a few metres upstream within the wood.

Only the pale grey/lilac clay can produce white-firing pottery, and bulk samples of it were retrieved and donated to the British Museum where they have since been used in inductively-coupled plasma-atomic emission spectrometry analyses (ICP-AES) that sought to compare the clay body with whiteware sherds from the Eden Street production site in Kingston and 'Coarse Border ware' from London.<sup>92</sup> The results suggested that Kingston-type whiteware was very likely to have been made of clay from the Old Park, but not the whiteware sherds from the City.

The only artefact found during the inspection of the wood was a large sherd of late 15th or 16th century unglazed whiteware from a strand along the stream bed. Its presence here might indicate the production of such pottery further upstream.

#### BADSHOT, RUNFOLD AND TONGHAM

There are several references to tilers working in Tongham from the 14th century, and families of tilers are recorded at Runfold and Badshot from the early 13th century.<sup>93</sup> The Farnham tithing districts of Tongham and Runfold lay east of the borough and straddle the Reading Beds outcrop. Holling first drew attention to documentary evidence that unlicensed digging of potters clay had occurred in Tongham in 1574, with a description in dog Latin that implies that it had been white clay. He also noted the contents of an 1844 lease that refers to 'potters earth' in terms that this extended over large parts of the lands and park belonging to Poyle Farm in the east of the Tongham parish.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Jones 2008.

<sup>92</sup> Newell & Hughes 2002/3.

<sup>93</sup> Brooks & Graham 1983, 203–23.

<sup>94</sup> Holling 1969, 19.

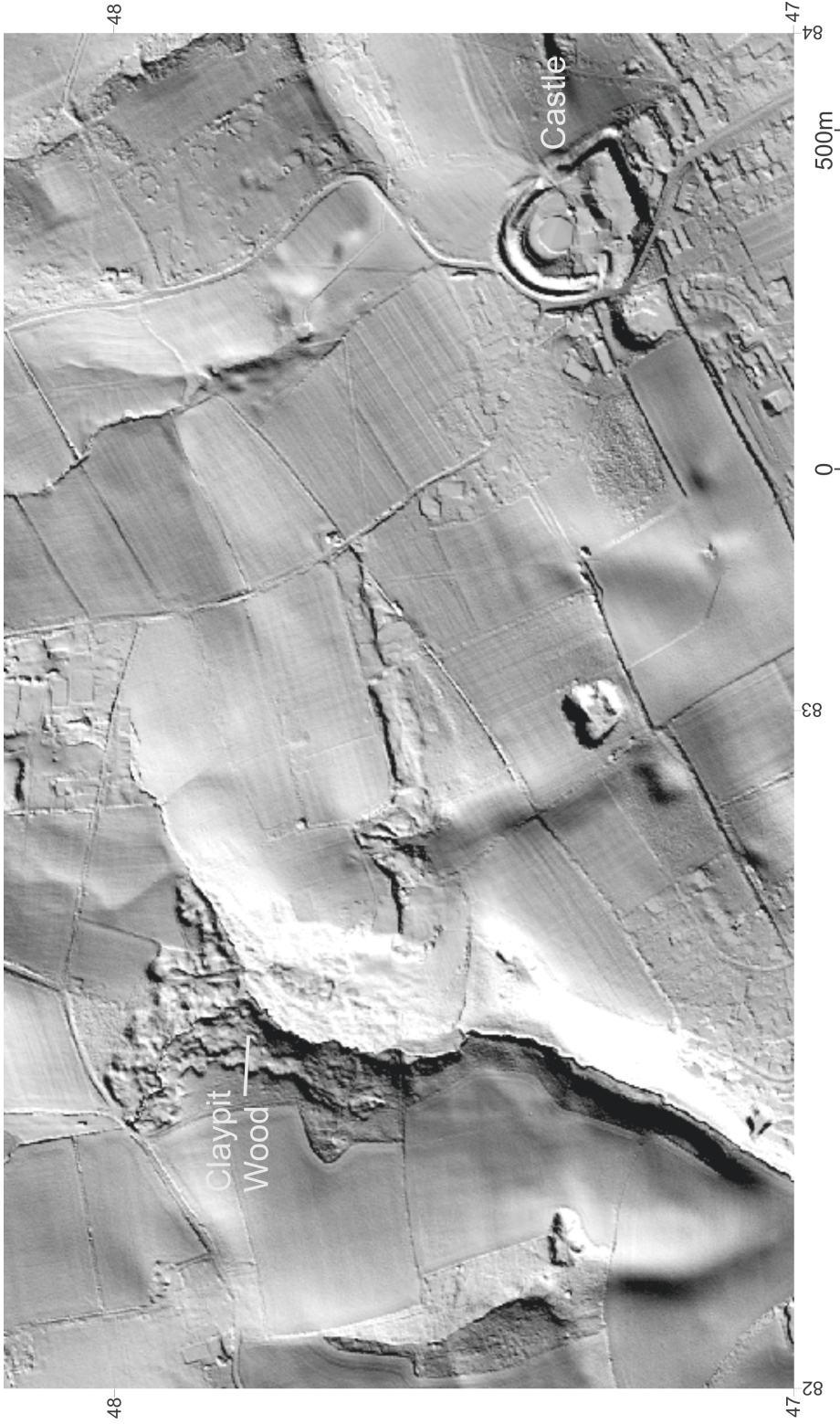


Fig 5 Medieval potters. Claypit Wood, Farnham LiDAR image (area shown SU 8200 4700-8400 4816). The irregular surface in the wood shows the extent of clay extraction. (Source: <http://environment.data.gov.uk/ds/survey/#/survey>). Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

## ASH

Three possible medieval pottery production sites of whiteware have been identified in Ash,<sup>95</sup> and further waster dumps have been discovered close to the village.<sup>96</sup> The parish was an important source of Border ware in the post-medieval period,<sup>97</sup> and many more production sites than have been found can be inferred from field names in the tithe apportionment of 1843.

## WYKE

In fieldwalking east of Ash, a scatter of 13th/14th century whiteware and near-whiteware sherds was found in plough-soil next to Follyhatch Lane in Wyke (SU 914 508),<sup>98</sup> although there are no obvious wasters. The site is on level ground immediately north-east of a spring that flows east through the wood of Catherine Frith, and which, in antiquity, fell through a series of six ponds separated by five earthen dams that still straddle the valley over a distance of *c* 150m. Although these could have been fishponds, they may have served as settling ponds for potting clay. The Follyhatch sherd scatter lies on the southern edge of the Bagshot Beds sands, but is less than 2km from the Reading Beds outcrop.

## FLEXFORD

Very few signs of ancient pitting of the Reading Beds were evident between Tongham and Guildford, but two closely adjacent medieval sherd scatters were found in plough-soil at Flexford<sup>99</sup> and a small collection of sherds was recovered north-west of Guildford close to the Home Farm complex of the royal park.

The Flexford scatters are of late 14th and 15th century whiteware, and the largest lay next to West Flexford Lane (SU 946 496) that was formerly part of the principal east–west route between Farnham and Stoke-by-Guildford along the base of the Hog’s Back scarp. The smaller scatter (SU 946 495) was 100m to the south-east on the valley side of a stream. Although both could represent domestic occupation, the Reading Beds outcrop lies 200m further south where it would have been accessible in the valley sides of the stream, and the closeness of the east–west way would have made this an ideal location for pottery production. Among the collection was a piece of burnt rectangular brick that could have been a kiln support or fire bar, similar to those at Clandon (p 240).

## EAST CLANDON

The name of Crockery Lane (fig 2) invited the first day of fieldwalking undertaken by the author in Surrey. It is a green lane running north-north-west from the edge of parkland surrounding the Georgian mansion of Hatchlands, where a pond feeds a stream that flows along its western side and the tithe map of 1843 shows it opening out onto the waste of East Clandon Common, 750m further north. Prior to the first survey of 1987 copses on its west side (at TQ 063 524) and on the rising ground further north on the east side of the lane (at TQ 063 526) had not long been cleared. The area of the northern copse had been ploughed, and the southern one was being excavated by machine preparatory to being flooded to create a duck decoy. Medieval pottery sherds were recovered from both areas. These were analysed

<sup>95</sup> Holling 1971, 60–1.

<sup>96</sup> Hayman 1996; Platt 2013.

<sup>97</sup> Pearce 1992, 3.

<sup>98</sup> Jones 1987/8, 4.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, sites a and b.

in accordance with the current Surrey type series codes.<sup>100</sup> A concordance of fabric types used in Surrey and London is given below:

Surrey	London
IQ	ESUR (Early Surrey ware) (c 1050–1150)
S1	LSS (Late Saxon Shelly) (c 900–1050)
S2	EMSH (Early Medieval Shelly) (c 1050–1150+)
Q2	EMGY/LOND types (Early medieval Gritty/London type ware) (c 1080–1200/1350)
WW1A	CBW (Coarse Border ware) (c 1270–1500)
WW1B	KING (Kingston type ware) (c 1240–1400+)

*Cammocks Furze Field (site A) (figs 2 and 6)*

This was the name of the area of the northern copse in 1843 when it was described as being under furze (tithes apportionment). It is conceivable that it had never subsequently been ploughed until the year of the author's first visit. After several sessions of systematic fieldwalking, during which it had been ploughed twice more, a general impression of the spread of finds and features was gained. On the lower slopes in the south-west corner of the field immediately next to the lane, the foundations of a rectangular building were observed, with many irregularly squared blocks of chalk, Upper Greensand and flint having been brought to the surface along the lines of its walls. Some medieval sherds were recovered from this area, but proportionately more were found immediately behind the building slightly further up the valley side. Sherds became less plentiful in further ascent, but 30m distant from the lane and half-way up the hill is the roughly circular depression of an old clay pit.

A little further north along Crockery Lane was where Crocky Field had lain in 1843, but no significant quantities of sherds were found in this, or in any of the adjacent fields on the east side of the lane when they were examined after ploughing in 1987.

The collection of pottery from Cammocks Furze Field amounts to 373 sherds, of which 184 are of Q2, Grey/Brown Sandy Ware, 101 of S2 shell-tempered ware and 88 of coarse sandy whiteware.

The S2 sherds include twelve everted rim fragments, all from cooking pot/jars of typical 13th century forms with round or square-beaded terminations (nos 1–12). One more fragment is from the end of the handle of a frying-pan (no 13).

The Grey/Brown Sandy Ware includes seventeen rims from unglazed cooking pots/jars of similar forms (nos 14–29), but there are also, at least, fifteen green-glazed sherds from jugs, including two rims, one of which bears the upper spring of a slashed strap handle (nos 33 and 34). There are also two segments of green-glazed rod handles, one with three axial slashes (no 36), the other plain (no 35); the lower spring of a handle with finger impressions (not illustrated); the neck of a green-glazed jug with a horizontal row of stabs between two incised lines (no 37); another sherd with a stabbed row (no 38); part of a finger-impressed 'pie crust' base (not illustrated); a bulbous neck fragment (no 32) and seven body sherds with external green glaze. Another handle fragment that is straight and unglazed is probably from a skillet (no 31). All of the recognisable forms in this ware are of 13th or early 14th century types.

Six of the fifteen cooking pot/jar rims in WW1A whiteware are of similar types as those of S2 and Q2 (nos 39–44), but the others are of types that appear in the London sequence after the middle of the 14th century. The earlier form is similar to London Type 1 cooking pot/jars in 'Coarse Border Ware'.<sup>101</sup> The Type 2 bifid-rimmed cooking pot/jar appeared in the City during the second half of the 14th century and became common during the early 15th century.<sup>102</sup> It is represented by a single example (no 49). London Type 3, of which there

<sup>100</sup> Jones 1998.

<sup>101</sup> Pearce & Vince 1988, 61.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.



are three rim fragments from the site (nos 45–47), probably reflects the general trend towards flanged rims that occurred during the second half of the 14th century. There are another five flanged rims that probably belonged to bowl-like variants of the basic cooking pot/jar form, in which the diameter of the shoulder is less than that of the rim flange (nos 48, 50–53). Other whiteware vessels are represented by the rim of a glazed jug with the spring of a slashed and stabbed strap handle (no 61); two rims from other glazed jugs (nos 59 and 60); three rims that may be from skillets (nos 56–58) and two tubular handles from frying-pans (nos 54 and 55). There are also two fragments from finger-impressed ‘pie crust’ base angles, four body sherds with applied finger-impressed ribbon strips and a sherd with part of a red slip stripe. The tubular handled frying-pan is another whiteware form that only appears in London after c1350,<sup>103</sup> and red-slipped decoration has only been noted on 15th century whiteware cisterns in the City.<sup>104</sup>

Unless there are differences between the dating of whiteware forms in the City and rural Surrey (see p 244), the Cammocks Furze Field site could have been occupied from the 13th or early 14th century until the 15th century. The makers of S2 shelly ware managed to retain their minority niche in the west Surrey market for, perhaps, much of the 13th century,<sup>105</sup> which may, in part, explain its presence at the site. Little is certain about the decline and eventual eclipse of the Grey/Brown Sandy Ware tradition by the potters of whiteware, but only the latter was in circulation by the 15th century in the towns of west Surrey and London. The presence of cooking pot/jars with bifid or flanged rims and frying-pans may be sufficient evidence of the use of the site extending into the late 14th or early 15th century. This would be after the last record of potters operating in East Clandon.

Part of a possible fire-bar of a heavily sand-tempered fabric was also found, as well as three fragments of fired ‘bricks’ that may also represent kiln furniture, but there is no certainty in their identification.

Some of the sherds from the site are most likely to belong to the period when potters were working in Clandon and the collection, therefore, probably includes samples of their products. Whether these were shelly ware, Grey/Brown Sandy Ware or whiteware, or some or all of them is uncertain, but since whiteware became the dominant coarseware across north Surrey during the late 13th and early 14th centuries, it seems reasonable to surmise that some of the Clandon potters had made whiteware. This does not exclude the possibility that the other two wares had also been made by Clandon potters.

### *Brickyard Field* (site B)

This was the name of the area of the southern copse in 1843, and it had occupied part of the narrow flood plain of the Crockery Lane stream. When first examined after being newly cleared of trees and undergrowth a few medieval sherds were recovered from some of the machined exposures, but it seemed likely to have been peripheral to medieval occupation and/or any production sites. The following visit after mechanical excavators had dug out most of the decoy found it largely filled with water, but some areas not yet inundated yielded a larger sample of sherds. A few minor ditch and pit features were noted in various temporary sections during subsequent visits, and but not enough to alter the original conclusions. A rammed chalk floor observed in a section close to Crockery Lane was most probably that of one of two barn-like structures shown on the tithe map on the edges of the small enclosure that was the self explanatory-named Brickyard Field, and a scatter of 19th century brick and tile debris was observed across the site. The Brickyard had been a late enclosure of part of a narrow field running west from Crockery Lane to Home Farm and the Clandon to Send road. The unenclosed part of it was called Crocky Meadow in 1843, but since it

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, Fig 44, 87.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, 56.

<sup>105</sup> Jones 1998, 230.



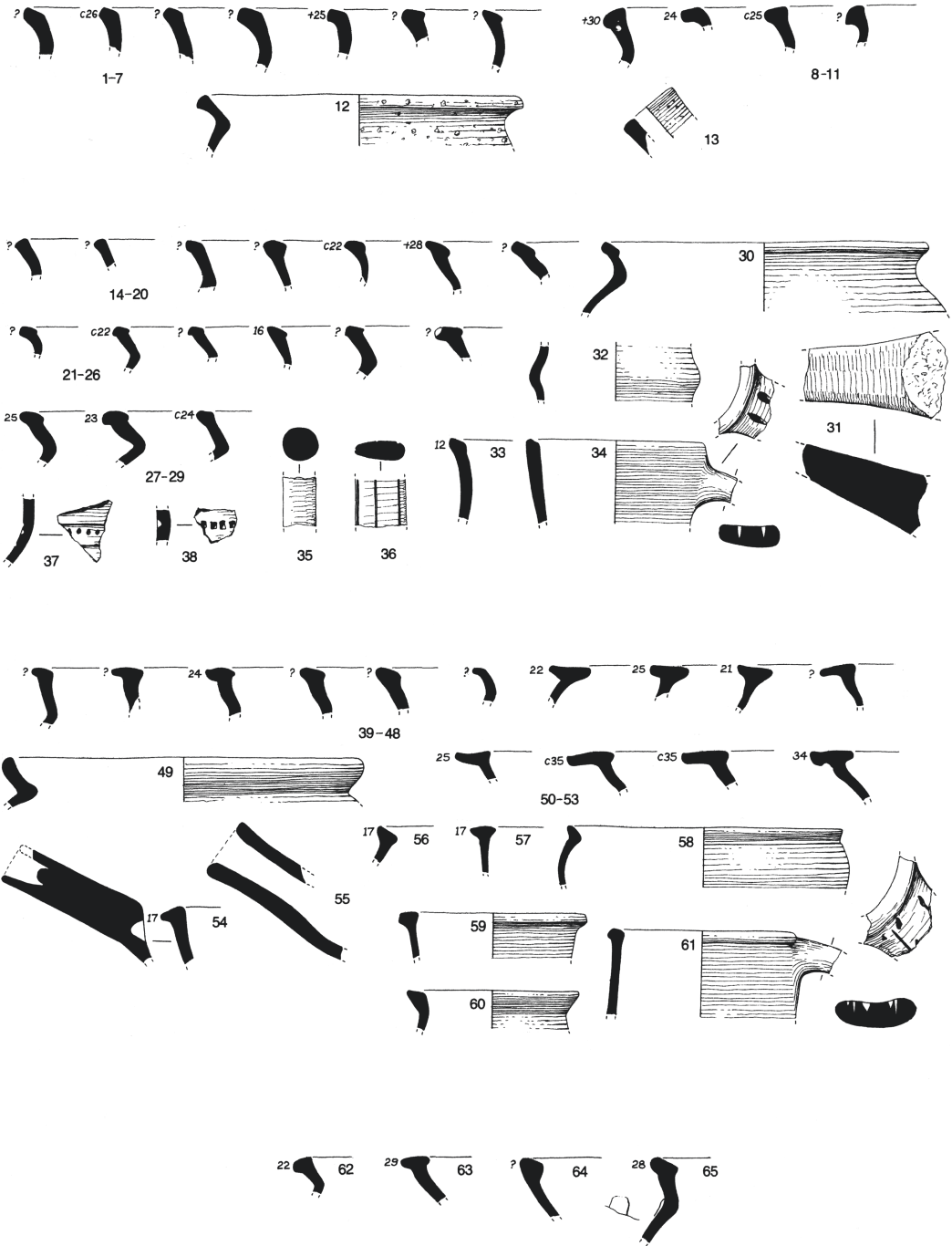


Fig 6 Medieval potters. Pottery from Cammocks Furze Field (nos 1-61) and Brickyard Field (nos 62-65), East Clandon (scale 1:4).

currently remains as permanent pasture it could not be assessed as the possible site of pottery production. A few metres east of the Home Farm complex is a hollow that might represent an ancient clay pit.

Fifteen medieval sherds were recovered: two of S2 shelly ware, eight of Grey/Brown Sandy Ware and five of WW1A coarse sandy whiteware. The sample includes rim sherds of cooking pot/jars in S2 (no 62), Q2 (no 63) and WW1A (no 65); the last of which bears part of an applied finger-impressed ribbon strip. There is also the rim of a bowl in Q2 (no 64). All are of typical late 13th and early 14th century forms.

## Discussion

Most of the dozen or so people with potter and crocker surnames in west Surrey had been active during the first half of the 14th century, when whiteware became the dominant pottery in use throughout most of the county as well as in London. Many, if not most, might have made whiteware.

Their dynastic relationships are implicit in some documents, especially those of Clandon for which there are intriguing possibilities of familial connections with potters elsewhere on abbey lands and beyond (fig 4). John *de la Knolle* of Staines in Middlesex, for instance, retained lands on his father Peter *le Poter's* Clandon holding until his death sometime after 1338, which might suggest a continuing interest in the craft. Richard, William and John *le Crocker* are all mentioned in the same 1335 document as Roger *de Crochull*, John *de Chabeham* and Henry *Westwode* and since three were 'crockers' and another lived at 'crockery hill', John and Henry may also have been involved in potting activities. Five years later in 1342, John *le Crockere* is recorded in Chobham, but since John *de Chabeham* is not mentioned in any later Clandon documents, they may have been the same person, especially since the rights in *Siggeworth* surrendered to the abbot by John and the four others in the 1335 document might have been for the digging of clay. Also, the 'west wood' of Henry *Westwode* is not otherwise recorded in Clandon, and the nearest *Westwode* of any significance was at Wyke, 15km further west<sup>106</sup> next to where a scatter of medieval whiteware sherds was discovered during the fieldwork (see above, p 238).

Two interesting aspects of the Clandon potters concerns Richard *le Crokker's* presence in Southwark and his apparent status in owning trees and other goods to the value of 100s. Although the sum concerned should not be regarded as accurate, as these figures are usually nominal, that Richard chose such an amount rather than 40s, which is very much more common, suggests that a substantial amount of money was involved. A 14th century potter with goods of such value is at odds with their commonly conceived lowly status. His presence might also suggest an involvement with a dump of medieval whiteware wasters found at 9–15 Bankside along the southern shore of the Thames in 1981<sup>107</sup> and subsequently other Bankside sites. Since there is no white-firing clay in the immediate environs of London/Southwark, the clay must have been carted in, and although Farnham and Cheam are possibilities, perhaps it was Richard who had made the pottery, and with clay brought from Clandon. There was, however, another probable potter known to have been present in Southwark named Martin *le Crockere*, who was accused in documents of 1341 and 1342 of assaulting Martin Hughet in that town, but there is no information as to where he had lived.

The marketing of Surrey whiteware became widespread across south-east England, and extended to distant locations in Britain and maritime Europe. Some aspects of a few mentioned in the documents, however, allude to possible entrepreneurial status above that of peasant farmer-potters. A transaction of John *de la Knolle*, son of Peter *le Poter*, has the clerk of Staines as a witness, which was unusual; William *le Crackyere*, and perhaps also the *Potyn* family, held plots close to the church and manor complex of the newly planned village of

<sup>106</sup> Gover *et al* 1934, 137.

<sup>107</sup> Dennis & Hinton 1983.

Egham<sup>108</sup> on the London to Salisbury road. If potters or marketers of pottery, they occupied auspicious sites for such enterprises, although this was not without local precedent, since a medieval pottery production site lay immediately adjacent to the parish church of Ash in west Surrey (see above, p 238).

At Kingston, evidence for the manufacturing of medieval white and redware pottery has been discovered on the outskirts of the town at Eden Street and London Road<sup>109</sup> and along the Portsmouth Road south of the Hogsmill river.<sup>110</sup> This seeming continuity of potting from whitewares to red is paralleled at Cheam. Excavations over the bridge on the other side of the river Wey from the town of Guildford have produced whiteware wasters from Park Street and part of a possible kiln at 5/6 Millmead.<sup>111</sup> Pottery production requires relatively large areas for working: for the storage of clay, fuel, green pots and finished stock, as well as regular supplies of water. At Farnham, a stretch of the town ditch parallel to Bear Lane had been close at hand, and may have been the formalised line of a short tributary stream of the Wey that sprung from the Old Park above it. Its presence could have been one of the reasons why Nicholas *le Pother*, and the potter who operated the Park Row kiln over a century later, chose the north-east fringe of the borough for their operations.

The potters of *Clandone Abbatis* may have lived and worked in a ‘potters row’ along Crockery Lane, although they could have operated within the nucleated focus of the village with its church, manor and tithe barn, or else along the fringes of the woods and waste in the northern end of the small estate, like their contemporaneous counterparts in the Limpsfield district further east in Surrey,<sup>112</sup> but in such a small estate as this, however, the centre and fringe are only a few minutes walk from each other.

No similar rural community of potters in west Surrey has yet been identified from documents, but perhaps several potters had been involved in the production of Cheam wares, especially as so much of it seems to have been found (see above, p 233).

A rural community of potters largely known from field discoveries in west Surrey from the late 13th to the 15th century includes at least four production sites in and around the village of Ash. Numerous documentary references to post-medieval potters in the parish<sup>113</sup> suggests the possibility of a continuity of pottery production in Ash over five or six centuries.

In addition to small parish communities of potters, there may also have been some who worked as single family units in villages or rural isolation, and these might include William *le Crackere* of Chobham and the potter of Farnborough Hill. None had any local source of potting clay, and if the Chobham and Egham *Crackeres* had made whiteware, then the nearest source within Abbey lands would have been Clandon. Because of its proximity the Farnborough Hill potter, however, is more likely to have worked with the white-firing clays from the bishop of Winchester’s estate.

Despite the selling of clay from the district, even to possible commercial rivals in Kingston, the potters of the Surrey/Hampshire border not only maintained their position, but gained a predominant share of the whiteware market in London and its western hinterland. It is a paradox that the quantity of ‘Coarse Border Ware’ in the City surpassed that of supposed ‘Kingston-type whiteware’ during the second half of the 14th century, despite the much greater distance and a difficult overland journey between Farnham and London (60km) compared to that between Kingston and the City (35km by river). One might have expected that the exploitation of Reading Beds clays at Cheam and elsewhere along its outcrop would have led to the eclipse of the old border industry, but, instead, ‘Coarse Border Ware’ became the most popular whiteware type in the City during the 15th century, representing over 90% of all pottery in most assemblages. The same is true for excavated 15th century assemblages

<sup>108</sup> Blair 1991, 60.

<sup>109</sup> Howe *et al* 2002, 271.

<sup>110</sup> Nelson 1981.

<sup>111</sup> Audrey Monk, pers comm.

<sup>112</sup> Ketteringham 1989; Jones 1997.

<sup>113</sup> Holling, 1969; 1971.

from Staines, Chertsey, Guildford, Dorking and Farnham. Such quantities from the City, and both Surrey towns and rural occupation sites in the region, imply production on a massive scale, yet only two production sites have been excavated, at Farnham Park Row and Farnborough Hill, and until recently, only two field scatters of sherds from others have been identified.<sup>114</sup> Park Row was probably a later 14th century kiln, and although Farnborough Hill provides some evidence of production at a similar date, there is not much evidence of production during the 15th century, despite the manufacture of early post-medieval wares on the site.

If the border district was wholly responsible for the manufacture of 'Coarse Border Ware', it is uncertain where all the clay was dug and the pots fired. The outcrop of Reading Beds is never more than 500m wide through west Surrey, and that of its white-firing basal seam is even narrower and would, very quickly, have become too difficult to extract. The surviving earthworks through Claypit Wood, Farnham, although extensive, are unlikely to have satisfied the demand.

Two other sources of Reading Beds clay include Tongham, with its references to 'potters clay' in the 16th century<sup>115</sup> and perhaps the seemingly ancient pit in the vicinity of Crockery Lane in East Clandon.

It would be curious if Guildford lacked pottery kilns in the town or its royal estate. The castle was probably built before the end of the 11th century,<sup>116</sup> and Henry III developed a palace and created a park north-west of the town. Although the potters of the border district and Clandon may have precluded the need of a Guildford manufactory, it is hard to imagine that the Reading Beds that runs through Stoke-by-Guildford 0.5km north from the borough had been ignored as a resource for the royal estate. There might, therefore, have been Guildford potters, by licence from the king and as counter-balance to ecclesiastical enterprise (see above, p 238).

Bunghole pitchers and tubular spouted frying-pans in whiteware are first found in London deposits after *c* 1350.<sup>117</sup> Since they are represented at both kiln sites found in the border district, and in all kilns and waster dumps so far found in Kingston, no whiteware production sites of its first century of manufacture have, as yet, been positively identified. At Park Row, two bungholes from cisterns came from the fill of the kiln,<sup>118</sup> but at Farnborough Hill it is, as yet, unclear whether the frying-pan handles and bungholes belonged to a later phase of a long period of production, since the excavator has suggested that the medieval material from the site is probably of early 14th century date.<sup>119</sup> All the discovered production sites at Kingston have been acknowledged as being of later medieval date, the archaeomagnetic dates obtained are all in the 14th century and perhaps early 15th century,<sup>120</sup> for which period there is only a *Pottersforlong* recorded in 1438, and a reference in a 15th century rental to a potter who had once held a toft in Heathen Street. Heathen Street was renamed Eden Street in the 19th century and lies adjacent to where at least two sites of later medieval whiteware production have been found on the fringes of the medieval town.<sup>121</sup> At East Clandon the northern of two sites at Crockery Lane included two whiteware frying-pan handles. If the London sequence is applicable, this would mean that the site had remained in use after the Black Death and the last documented account of potters on the estate.

However, the hollow-handled frying-pan is commonly found in Grey/Brown Sandy Ware across north Surrey, which could imply that it might have been in regular use in that area before its whiteware version became popular in the City. An earlier date for the form in

<sup>114</sup> Holling 1971, 58.

<sup>115</sup> Pearce 1992, 4.

<sup>116</sup> O'Connell 1977, 29.

<sup>117</sup> Pearce & Vince 1988, fig 44, 87.

<sup>118</sup> Timby 1982, fig 4.

<sup>119</sup> Holling 1971, 68.

<sup>120</sup> Miller & Stephenson 1999; Jarrett 2002.

<sup>121</sup> Hinton 1982, 383; McCracken 1984.

Surrey is also provided by the recent excavations of two late 13th century pottery production sites in Titsey, close to Limpsfield Chart in East Surrey. Both produced comparable frying-pans with long hollow handles as a minor, but consistent, component of the vessel form repertoires. It is interesting to note, also, that both Titsey sites yielded one or two bungholes from cisterns.

Although, therefore, all the discovered kiln/waster sites in Kingston are probably of later 14th or possibly early 15th century date, and not just on account of the presence of these two forms, the same late dating need not necessarily apply for Park Row, Farnborough Hill or Clandon, simply because of the presence of the two forms. The published assertions that Park Row could be of late 13th or early 14th century date<sup>122</sup> and that of Farnborough Hill had been operating during the early 14th century,<sup>123</sup> therefore, need not necessarily be dismissed, simply on the basis of the London sequence.

The report on the pottery from Park Row, Farnham remarked upon the absence of bifid-rimmed cooking pots as being an indicator that the last firing had occurred before the 15th century, and from this it was suspected that Park Row could have been last fired at any time between the inception of whiteware during the mid-13th century and the late 14th century.<sup>124</sup> However, two bung-holes were recovered from the fill of the kiln,<sup>125</sup> and are from cisterns, an innovative late medieval form that appears in London contexts from the second half of the 14th century.<sup>126</sup> This suggests that the final firing at Park Row had probably occurred at least a century after the only mention of Nicholas *le Pother*.

Surrey whiteware had probably been developed by potters of Grey/Brown Sandy Ware, the previously dominant coarseware throughout most of the county during the 12th and early 13th century. White jugs imported from France became status objects for rich and aspirant households during that period, and Surrey potters must have been stimulated to emulate the vogue.

Much of the ubiquitous Grey/Brown Sandy Ware of west Surrey is likely to have been made from Reading Beds clay, but it is only the near-basal lilac to buff iron-free seams of this formation that fires off-white in oxidising kiln atmospheres. This was previously known to the potters of the first mass-produced and distantly-traded medieval sandy ware of the Farnham district: IQ Ironstone Sandy Ware (IQ) of the Surrey type series, which, as 'Early Surrey Ware' (ESUR), is common in London deposits of the late 11th and early 12th centuries, where it represents between 9 and 17% of all coarseware.<sup>127</sup> Some IQ/ESUR vessels are patchily, or almost completely, off-white in colour, and made from a highly plastic and thixotropic clay that enabled the production and transportation of relatively thin-walled cooking pot/jars. This was, almost certainly, from the basal clay seams of the Reading Beds.

There is one common link between the early whitewares that clearly distinguishes them from other 13th and 14th century ceramic traditions of the region. The rims of whiteware cooking pot/jars, by far the most commonly produced vessel type, are almost always round-beaded. The angular severity of square-beaded rims of neighbouring traditions of Hertfordshire, south Buckinghamshire and north Middlesex reduced wares, and of Limpsfield and allied ware types in east Surrey, is not often found, except on some storage jars. This might indicate more than just a communality of a ceramic tradition, and may represent familial relationships between whiteware potters. Another possible indicator of relationships is the realistically moulded 'King's' head plaque from the Eden Street kiln, Kingston<sup>128</sup> and its parallel from the Whitehall, Cheam waster material.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Timby 1982.

<sup>123</sup> Holling 1971.

<sup>124</sup> Timby 1982, 111.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, Fig 4 nos 15 and 16.

<sup>126</sup> Pearce & Vince 1988, 84.

<sup>127</sup> Vince & Jenner 1991, 73.

<sup>128</sup> Hinton 1980, 382.

<sup>129</sup> Nelson 2014; Orton 2016, 78.



## Conclusion

The documentary references to potter-type names and places indicate a probable spread of potting activity across the county, at least, between 1244 and 1348, much of which probably produced whitewares of various types. Despite the fieldwork carried out few indicators of pottery production in the medieval period have been identified to augment the previously known sites of Farnborough, Farnham, Kingston and Cheam and even fewer examples of production in the first 100 years of whiteware production in the county. This survey has concentrated on the current county but we know that the pottery industry on the Surrey/Hampshire border in villages on either side of the Blackwater produced whiteware products in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The boundary was no inhibition to the ceramic tradition or to family connections. Further research into potter/crocker names in east Hampshire may well underline this connection.

## APPENDIX

Letter dated 19 August 1594 from Julius Caesar, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty to Sir William More of Loseley, one of those then charged with control of the bishop's park at Farnham:

Wheras in tymes past the bearer hereof hath had out of the Parke of Farnham belonging to the Busshoppricke of Winchester certaine White Cley for the making of grene pottes vsually drunke in by the gentlemen of the Temple. And nowe understanding of some restraint thereof, and that you (amongst others) are authorised there in divers respectes during the vacancye of the said Busshoppricke. My request therefore vnto you is, and the rather for that I am a member of the said house, that you would in favour of vs all, permytt the bearer hereof to digge and carye awaie so muche of the said claye as by him shalbe thought sufficient fo the furnishing of the said howse with grene pottes as aforesaid, paying as he hath heretofore for the same. In accomplishment wherof my self with the whole societie shall acknowledge ourselves muche beholden vnto you &c. &c.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Rackham 1952, 50.

- HRO: Hampshire Record Office, Winchester  
 EC 159358 Winchester Pipe Roll for the year Michaelmas 1348–Michaelmas 1349
- SHC: Surrey History Centre, Woking  
 1306/1 M1v A 15th century rental of the Kingston properties of Merton Priory
- TNA: The National Archives, Kew  
 CP 40/326 f220d Chief Justice's roll, 15 Edw III, Easter term (1341)  
 C 241/126/230 Chancery certificate of Statute Merchant, 1345  
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