

Excavation of a moated site at Cranleigh Rectory, 1985

JUDIE ENGLISH

Medieval pottery, by †Phil Jones

INTRODUCTION

A total of 523 sherds (3.92kg; 8.7 estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs), Orton 1975) were recovered, of which *c* 80% are from pre-moat contexts. Most of these are of mid–late 12th century types, but with some that are probably earlier, possibly as early as the Conquest. A smaller group of *c* 15% is from contexts presumed to belong to the early use of the moated enclosure, and included residual material as well as some sherds that could date to the early 13th century. Another *c* 5% is from post-medieval contexts, although all are of medieval types except for a single sherd of Tudor Brown pottery.

The collection was separated into three ceramic groups that correspond with the main phases of usage of the site:

Group A: Pre-moat contexts (420 sherds; 3.24kg; 1.44 EVEs)

- 204: upper horizon of pre-moat deposits (mid–late 12th century)
- 205: pre-moat deposits below 204 (early 12th century)
- 206: pre-moat deposits below 205 and above ‘natural’ clay (mid–late 12th century)
- 209: same as 205
- 3081/2: layers of pre-moat deposits overlying ‘natural’ clay (later 12th century)
- 309: ditch fill; cutting ‘natural’ clay, below 3081/2 (early 12th century)

Group B: Moat construction and early enclosure contexts (79 sherds; 0.53kg; 0.40 EVEs)

- 202: possible clay floor of earliest enclosure occupation (early 13th century)
- 207: soil/clay mix above 208 (early 13th century)
- 208: eroded part of 202 (early 13th century)
- 306: yellow clay with dark soil lens; possibly upthrow from moat digging (late 12th or early 13th century)
- 307: same as 306

Group C: later contexts (24 residual sherds; 0.15kg; 0.03 EVEs)

The assemblage is from contexts 201, 304 and 305, but the post-medieval material, which dates up until the 19th century has not been studied in detail for the purposes of this report.

All medieval sherds were separated into fabric types in accordance with the provisional type series for Surrey (Jones 1998) and quantified by count, weight and EVEs.

WARES, FABRICS AND FORMS

Fourteen fabrics of nine ware types were identified, and are described below together with summaries of their respective vessel forms.

S2 Coarse Shell-tempered Ware: 114 sherds (0.73kg) representing *c* 20% of all medieval pottery, and 16, 36 and 42% of A, B and C respectively. The shell is represented by plate-like voids as the inclusions have dissolved. Rim sherds include one from a cooking-pot (cp)/jar with a diameter of *c* 17cm (fig 4, 11), and five others of between *c* 23 and *c* 31cm diameter are large enough to be described as storage jars (including fig 4, 12). They appear to have wheel-thrown rims, although most body sherds seem to have been hand-turned. One of the storage jars has a vertically-applied finger-impressed strip below the neck (fig 4, 12), and two other body sherds bear parts of similar strips.

SNC Saxo-Norman Chalk-tempered fabrics: 185 sherds (1.44kg) representing *c* 36% of all medieval pottery and *c* 40% of Group A. The ware is predominantly tempered with amorphous calcareous inclusions that were most probably chalk (they are represented by voids), but also includes increasing quantities of crushed flint and quartz sand grains in each of three variants. Two of these broadly

correspond with the fabrics of two variants identified at Bridge Street, Godalming (Jones 1998, 196), with SNC 1B containing relatively few accessory inclusions of flint and sand, and SNC 1C containing a little more. A significant number of sherds at Cranleigh characterised by almost equal quantities of chalk, flint and sand have been designated as SNC 1D. There are far fewer sherds of SNC 1B in the collection as a whole and in the Group A assemblage, and roughly equal quantities of SNC 1C and D.

Of 22 rim sherds, all but one are from cp/jars, with diameters, where measurable, of between 18 and 25cm (including fig 4, 1–9). All are simply everted, a few have slight end-thickening or beading and only one is finger-impressed along its rim top (fig 4, 5). There is also the rim of a large bowl (not illustrated), and the base of a smaller bowl that includes part of the base of a spout sprung from its rim (fig 4, 10). Where it is possible to determine, the vessels seem to have been handmade, but have turned rims.

FLQ Saxo-Norman Flint-tempered Ware: five sherds (35g), with four from Group A contexts. The fabric is predominantly tempered with coarse crushed flint, and also contains moderate amounts of quartz sand grains. The only featured sherd is a rim from Group B context 306 that has a square-beaded termination (not illustrated).

QFL Sand- and Flint-tempered Ware: seventeen sherds (0.14kg), including eleven from Group A contexts and five from those of Group B. The ware is similar to that of FLQ except the proportions of tempering media are reversed, with frequent sand and moderate quantities of crushed flint. All three rim sherds are from cp/jars and simply everted (including fig 4, 15).

IQ Ironstone Sandy Ware: 25 sherds (0.13kg) that include frequent ‘standard’-sized quartz sand grains (*c* 0.2–1mm) that retain microcrystalline grains of iron on their surfaces, as well as sub-angular fragments of the same matrix material: a ferruginous sandstone (Jones 1998, 219).

Seven rim sherds, all from cp/jars, including one that is finger-impressed along its top. Three are simply everted, and the remainder have slightly expanded or beaded terminations (including fig 4, 13).

Grey/brown Sandy Wares: 169 sherds (1.32kg) are of this potting tradition that was commonly employed across Surrey during the 12th and early 13th centuries. They contain a temper of sub-rounded quartz sand grains in a continuum of sizes, as well as variable quantities of iron mineral inclusions that were probably naturally occurring in the clay body. As elsewhere in the county, the Cranleigh sherds could be separated into three sub-types according to their mean grain sizes, but three sherds with more iron inclusions than usual constitute a fourth sub-type.

- a *GQ2 Coarse variant*: 69 sherds (0.58kg) with grain sizes between 0.2 and 2mm (mostly between *c* 0.5 and 1.5mm). Over half are from contexts 205 and 209.
- b *Q2 ‘Standard’ variant*: 80 sherds (0.65kg) with grain sizes between 0.2 and 1.5mm (but with most between *c* 0.2 and 1mm). Over three-quarters are from contexts 205 and 209.
- c *FQ2 Fine variant*: seventeen sherds (0.09kg) with finer grains.
- d *Q2 variant*: with moderate amounts of sub-angular iron mineral inclusions that are buff in colour and range in size between 0.2 and 2mm. Of three sherds, two are from 202 and one from 207 of Group B.

Eighteen vessels of Grey/Brown Sandy Ware are represented by rim sherds, of which all five of GQ2 are simply everted and from cp/jars with slightly end-thickened terminations (including fig 4, 14 and 16–18). Ten of the ‘standard’ Q2 types are also from cp/jars with similar end-thickened rim forms, although two that are simply everted are apparently of ‘archaic’ forms (including fig 4, 17). Only one, of Q2, is finger-impressed along the rim top, and is the largest example with a diameter of *c* 30cm. The diameters of the others vary between 16 and 25cm. Two rims are from bowls of over 26cm diameter with slightly curving body walls. One with a pronounced triangular beading is in Q2 (fig 4, 19), and the other is the only featured sherd in the TQ2 finer variant and has a simple upright rim (fig 4, 20).

The ware represents between 14 and 17% (weight and count) of Group A (two sherds each of GQ2 and Q2), 32 and 34% (weight and count) of Group B, and 33 and 34% (count and weight) of Group C.

FJW Fine Jug Ware: four sherds (0.3kg) with abundant small quartz sand grains (*c* 0.2–0.5mm) and sparse iron mineral inclusions. A friable, even-textured fabric with pale grey core and buff surfaces. Three sherds from Group B contexts include one that is glazed green externally, and the relatively thin walls and small estimated diameters of the others suggest that they are all from jugs or pitchers. None was recovered from Group C contexts and the three of Group B represent 4–5% (count and weight) of that assemblage.

WW1B Surrey Whiteware: two sherds (0.02kg) from two vessels found in separate contexts of Group C. The relatively sparse quantities of coarse quartz sand grains (*c* 0.2–0.8mm) more closely resembles the WW1B variant of the ware that is more commonly, but not exclusively, found on 14th–16th century assemblages in the rest of the county, and which approximates to the Kingston type of the London series. The exterior of three joining fragments (counted as one) from 305 are partly green glazed over a pink/buff body, and a sherd from 304 is internally splashed with a green glaze over a pale pink body.

RWTB Tudor Brown Redware: a single sherd (10g) from context 305 of Group C is of a pink/buff ware containing moderate amounts of fine quartz (*c* 0.2–0.3mm), sparse amounts of iron mineral grains and possibly some grog. The sherd has an internal clear glaze.

THE GROUP A ASSEMBLAGE

A total of 419 sherds (3.22kg), excluding the Roman example, of which between 40 and 42% (count and weight) are of SNC fabrics and 35–38% (weight and count) of the Grey/Brown Sandy Ware tradition. There is also between 15 and 18% (weight and count) of S2 shelly ware and *c* 4/5% of IQ Ironstone Sandy Ware, as well as eleven, four and one sherd respectively of QFL, FLQ and FJW Fine Jug Ware. This last is the only glazed sherd, and the only jug or pitcher represented, but it is from 3081 that probably incorporates slightly later debris than most other context assemblages of Group A.

Pre-moat ditch 309: twenty sherds, including eight of SNC fabrics, seven of Grey/Brown Sandy Ware, two of QFL and single sherds of S2 shelly and IQ Ironstone Sandy Wares. There is also a rolled Late Roman greyware sherd. The S2 sherd is from the everted rim of a large cp/jar or storage jar, three rims of SNC includes two from cp/jars and one from a probable large bowl and another simple everted rim of a cp/jar is in QFL.

Pre-moat layer 204–206, 209, 3081/2:

Basal spit 206: eight sherds, including three of SNC, two of IQ and single examples of S2, GQ2 and Q2 fabrics. Featured sherds include everted rim sherds of cp/jars in SNC1D and IQ fabrics.

Spit 205/209: 256 sherds (2.21kg), of which 45% (count and weight) are of SNC fabrics, and *c* 40/41% (count and weight) of the Grey/Brown Sandy Ware tradition. There are also eighteen sherds of S2 shelly ware, ten of IQ Ironstone Sandy Ware, six of QFL and three of FLQ sand- and flint-tempered fabrics. The S2 sherds include the rims of a cp/jar and a storage jar; ten rim sherds of SNC fabrics are all from cp/jars, including one that is finger-impressed; twelve rims of Grey/Brown Sandy Ware are all of cp/jars, except for two bowls; and there are three more cp/jar rims in IQ including another that is finger-impressed, and yet one more cp/jar rim in QFL.

Layer 3081/2: 120 sherds (0.69kg), of which between 42 and 49% (count and weight) is of S2 shelly ware; a disproportionate amount compared to other assemblages of Group A that is the result of 43 sherds (0.31kg) recovered from 3081. Many of these may belong to a single large storage jar of which there is a rim sherd of *c* 30cm diameter.

Unlike the other context assemblages considered to date to before the moat digging, both 3081 and 3082 contain medieval roof tile fragments (two and three respectively), suggesting that they

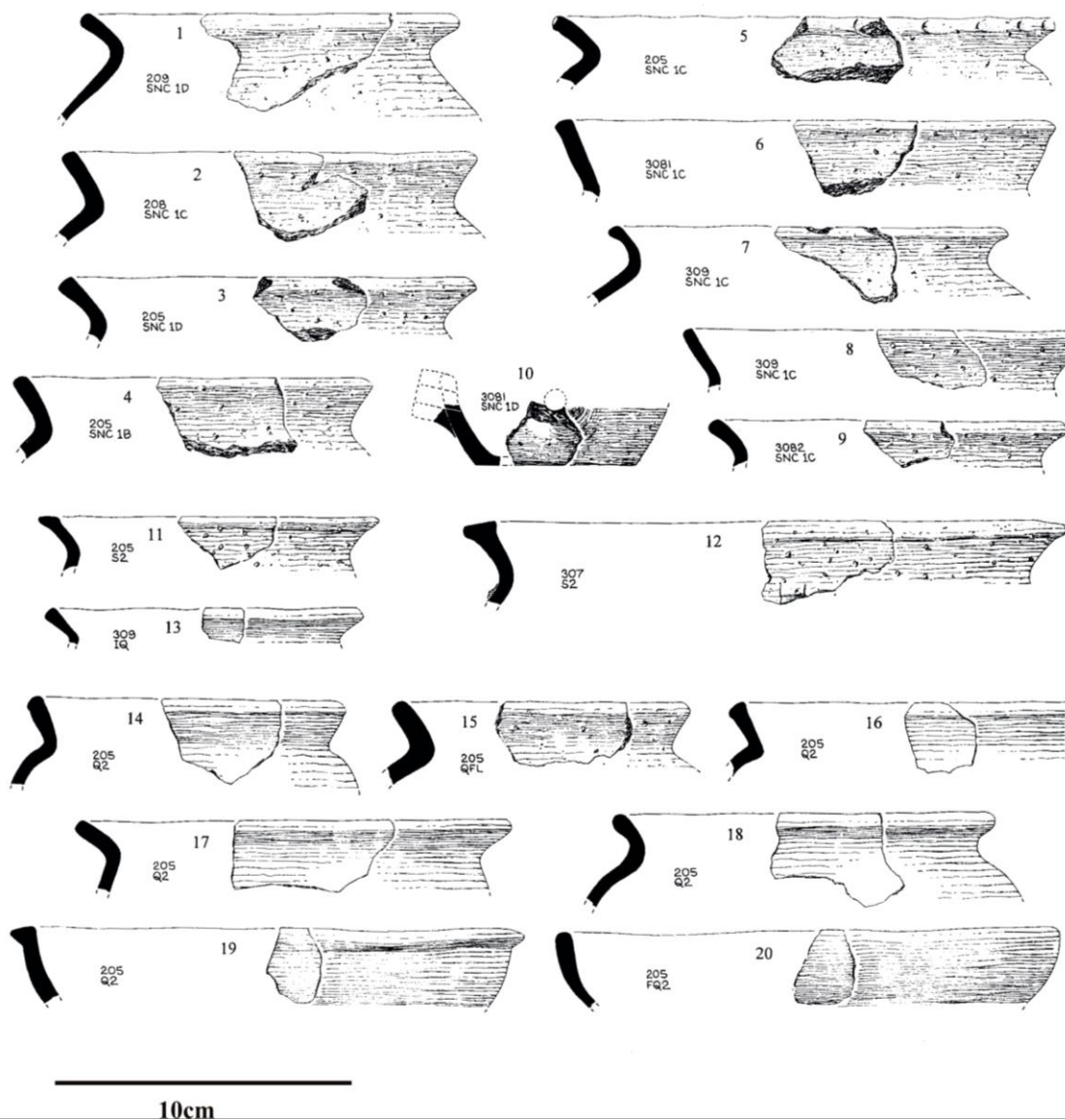


Fig 4 The pottery from Cranleigh Rectory (drawn by †Phil Jones)

may include detritus that dates to the second half of the 12th century. This is because the current consensus has it that roof tiling began to be used in London (Ian Betts, pers comm) and probably also in the Surrey area from its common association with later 12th and early 13th century occupation (cf the various reports in *SyAC* 1998 and Riall 2005 esp 77–9). There is also a fragment of a glazed floor tile from 3081.

Spit 204: sixteen sherds (0.082kg), including seven of SNC, five of S2, three of GQ2/Q2 and one of IQ fabrics.

THE GROUP B ASSEMBLAGE

A total of 79 sherds (0.5kg), of which both S2 shelly ware and Grey/Brown Sandy fabrics are represented by 35% of the assemblage by count and weight, and another 15% by those of the SNC fabrics. Since the relevant contexts have been identified as belonging to the construction and earliest phase of the moated enclosure, it is not surprising the assemblage seems to be dominated by residual sherds.

Layer 306/307: 24 sherds (0.17kg) from the layer thought likely to be upcast from the digging of the moat. Nineteen are of S2 shelly ware including two base angles and the rim of a storage jar with an applied finger-impressed strip at the neck. There is also the rim of a cp/jar in FLQ (fig 4, 23), and parts of a Roman tile (from 306) and one of medieval type (from 307).

Clay floor? 202/208: 32 sherds (0.25kg), of which nineteen are from the *in-situ* yellow clay layer 202, and the remainder from an eroded part of it. Featured material among the assemblage of the former includes a Q2 cp/jar rim and part of a finger-impressed ribbon strip in S2 ware. Those from 208 include the rim of a cp/jar in GQ2 and the simple everted rim of another in SNC 1C fabric (fig 4, 5). There are also two glazed body sherds in FJW and three fragments of medieval roof tile.

Layer 207: 23 sherds (0.10kg), from the layer over the possible clay floor. There are rim sherds of cp/jars in GQ2 and SNC 1D fabrics and part of a finger-impressed strip in S2 ware.

THE GROUP C ASSEMBLAGE

The assemblage includes 24 sherds (0.14kg) of residual material of which eleven are of S2, four of Grey/Brown Sandy Ware, two of the only medieval whiteware from the site and one of Tudor Brown ware of late 15th or early 16th century date. The remainder are of various post-medieval types dating up to the 19th century.

DISCUSSION

The assemblage of Group B is of limited local interest since it largely includes residual material, and whatever pottery had been used during the early occupation of the moated enclosure seems barely represented. However, the pre-moat material is not only the first early medieval collection to be excavated from the village, but may be representative of the range of wares that were in use along this north-western fringe of the Weald during the later 11th and 12th centuries. The site is as far from Winchester and Chichester as it is from London, in an area of pioneering settlements during the early post-Conquest period. That said, it bears strong similarities with the succession and mix of ware and fabric types identified at Godalming, nearly 10km north-west of Cranleigh. There, the same range of SNC types, S2, FLQ and IQ wares and Grey/Brown Sandy fabrics have been identified from excavations in Mint Street and Bridge Street (Jones 1998), where they represent the principal pottery types of the post-Conquest period down to the middle of the 13th century. Absent from the Cranleigh collection are the pre-Conquest types that were exceptionally represented at the Bridge Street Co-operative site (*ibid*, 194) and which are suspected to have spanned the Middle and Late Saxon periods. The Cranleigh Rectory site, therefore, may not have been occupied until after the Conquest. Another significant factor of the Cranleigh material is the rarity of whiteware, being represented by only two sherds and of a fabric type more usually associated with the later medieval period. At face value, therefore, or at least in the area that was excavated, there appears to be an absence of pottery of later 13th and 14th century date, since during this High Medieval period, pottery of the whiteware tradition had increased to such an extent that it virtually monopolised the market throughout Surrey and its neighbouring counties. Since this period was when it might have been assumed that the domestic use of the moated enclosure was at its most intense, perhaps the disposal of debris had been by other means than by pits and midden accumulation. Alternatively, given the shallowness of any topsoil, the island may have been levelled and the stratigraphy truncated when the Victorian rectory was built.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Jones, P, 1998 Towards a type series of medieval pottery in Surrey, *SyAC*, **85**, 211–38
 Riall, N, 2005 The medieval ceramic roofing materials and the tile kiln, in R Poulton, *A medieval royal complex at Guildford: excavations at the castle and palace*, Guildford: SyAS, 77–102
 SyAC 1998 Archaeological investigation of historic Surrey towns: Chertsey, Dorking, Farnham and Godalming, *SyAC*, **85**