

APPENDIX IV

FABRIC DISCRIMINATION

Simply describing a fabric is often insufficient to distinguish it from others, especially if these have been characterised in different manners by different archaeologists. Listed below are the common fabrics within the normal distribution range of Upchurch and Thameside pottery, with which this pottery could be confused. An attempt has been made to identify the main distinguishing criteria.

Wantsum fine ware

A small fine ware industry discovered during the course of this study appears to have manufactured vessels in a similar style to first century Upchurch Ware in a fabric which could be mistaken for HI/lb (Monaghan in Perkins 1985, 66).

- i) Its surface colour is an ashen grey.
- ii) Its section colour tends to be light buff.
- iii) Iron inclusions are more frequent than in N1/lb, the surface is therefore softer and is spotted with red (oxidised) iron.

Highgate Wood

Poppyhead beakers from Highgate differ in form from those at Upchurch. Fragmentary remains may be distinguished by examining the fabric.

- i) It is a very light ashen grey colour.
- ii) White slips are common.
- iii) Fabric has a harsh, brittle texture.
- iv) There is less definition on the cordons etc.

London Ware

This may easily be distinguished from HI and H2, less easily from N3/lb.

- i) Fabric has a brittle feel.
- ii) The surface finish is usually dull.
- iii) There is high mica at the surface.
- iv) Its surface coloration tends to be light.
- v) It often has a distinctive light grey section and pink margins.

Unsourcesd Essex beaker fabric

This was noticed by the author and R.S. Jeffries on certain South Essex sites.

- i) The colour is lighter grey.
- ii) The texture is harsh.
- iii) The section commonly has red margins.
- iv) Tooling is more positive than at Upchurch (cf comments on Highgate Wood).

Unsourcesd poppyhead beaker fabric

This fabric was noticed by the author whilst examining the Castlecary finds (Christison 1902).

- i) It contains more sand than is found in N2/lb.
- ii) The sand has an angular, yellow 'sugary' appearance similar to BB2 fabric T (below).

Mucking fine ware

This is the Essex equivalent of S6/6b.

- i) Surface tends to be light grey or brown.
- ii) Section tends towards sandy buff shades.

Mucking grey ware

The Essex equivalent of SI.

- i) Fabric contains angular gravel and ironstone inclusions.
- ii) Surface is often micaceous.
- iii) Colour tends towards brown or sandy grey shades.

Mucking storage jars

Superficially resemble vessels in H1/4h. i) Fabric is tempered with coarse sand and gravel, not shell.

Eccles flagons

These cannot easily be confused with flagons in N4/lb.

- i) Fabric contains much more sand.
- ii) Fabric is very much harder.
- iii) Small sherds will lack the distinctive red blotching on the surface of an eroded N4/lb sherd.

"Shorne" flagons

A group of flagons from Shorne gravel pit could not be traced to any source within north Kent. It is assumed for the moment that they are exotic, possibly coming from Mutch Hadham. They should be distinguished from N4/lb.

- i) Surface is burnished pale orange.
- ii) A white slip is not employed.

Greensand Ware

Greensand or 'Glaucanite'-tempered wares were produced in the Maidstone region in late Belgic forms. It is easily distinguished from early S3h.

- i) Fabric contains abundant rounded black sand (Greensand).
- ii) The section consequentially has a greenish-yellow tinge.
- iii) The surface is a yellow hue or is brown where burnished.

BB1

This may be distinguished from Sib by classical criteria.

- i) It is handmade.
- ii) When distributed it has a narrow range of distinctive forms.
- iii) The burnish is in facets and does not achieve the silky finish of Sib.
- iv) The fabric tends to be of coarser sand.
- v) Whereas small pieces of BB1 could be confused with S3/lhb, this fabric predates its introduction into Kent, so the forms are totally distinctive.

BB2 and pseudo-BB2 fabrics.

There is a variety of fabrics in the BB2 tradition, of which Sib, S1b and S5b are only three. S5b is distinct from all those below (except 'H') on the basis of its lack of quartz inclusions. S1b and S1bs are more difficult to distinguish: these were compared to a selection of other "BB2" type fabrics.

The Greenhithe fabric (IV Kent).

- i) Inferior burnish.
- ii) Brick red in section.
- iii) Brown and streaked where burnished.
- iv) Forms are crude.

BB2 'A' - Mucking

- i) Inferior burnish, often does not extend to dish bases.
- ii) Pink tinge common in section.
- iii) Sand is darker than is common in Kent.
- iv) Inferior technique leads to more slipshod decoration.
- v) Dish chamfers are rounded rather than angular.

BB2 'B' - SW Essex

This fabric was the dominant one in the Passmore-Edwardes Museum collections from eastern London. It was also seen at Castlereay, Corbridge and Wallsend.

- i) High mica content at surface.
- ii) Colour is either a deep, dull black or a sandy grey.
- iii) Section is sandy grey or buff.

BB2 'C' - Colchester?

- i) Very light shades of grey on surface and section.
- ii) Fabric contains low quantity of sand.

BB2 'D' - Colchester?

- i) Light grey in section.
- ii) Dirty sand-grey colour at surface.
- iii) Inferior burnish and overall finishing.

BB2 'E' - Colchester?

This was also noted at Housteads.

- i) Section is brown to brick red.
- ii) Surface is brown-black.

BB2 'F' - Colchester?

This fabric is common in London and is thought by many (R. Symonds and B. Davies pers. coms.) to originate in Colchester.

- i) Consistent occasional inclusion of very coarse, rounded quartz grains in fabric.
- ii) Quartz is generally more rounded than is common in Kent.
- iii) Slip is very thick when employed, burnish is heavy giving appearance of a slip.

BB2 'G'

This was seen at Housteads and Wallsend.

- i) Fabric tempered with abundant fine sand.
- ii) Surface has a very silky finish.

BB2 'H'

This was seen at Wallsend.

- i) Surface has a fine slip and very silky burnish.
 - ii) Section is very light grey.
 - iii) Paste is virtually devoid of inclusions.
 - iv) Fracture is very uneven, showing a lumpy paste.
- Features (i) and (iv) serve to distinguish this from S5b.

BB2 'I'

This was seen at Rough Castle and was the predominant fabric at Murrills.

- i) Sand is angular with a distinct yellow tinge giving the section a sugary appearance.
- ii) Section colour tends to be shades of brown.

BB2 'J'

This was seen at Newstead.

- i) Fabric contains sparse but coarse sand, as S2/1, from which it may be distinguished by its forms.