

A NOTE ON THE PETROLOGY OF A LATE IRON AGE SHERD

FROM GALLOWS HILL, THETFORD

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59353 THD 3864

Hard, rough sandy fabric with conspicuous pieces of soft argillaceous material scattered throughout, light red (Munsell 10R 5/6) abraded outer surface, dark grey core. Thin sectioning and study under the petrological microscope shows numerous angular pieces of grog (i.e. crushed up pottery), together with some subangular quartz grains, flecks of mica and a little iron ore.

This grog-tempered sherd brings to mind the late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog fabrics of south-eastern England (Thompson, 1982). Gallows Hill lies well outside the main concentrations of this type of pottery (*ibid.*, Map 1), and given the common nature of grog-tempering it is difficult to say whether the Gallows Hill sherd was made locally or some distance away. However, large handmade jars (presumably what this bodysherd is from) were included in the 'Belgic' grog-tempering tradition, and a somewhat similar sherd (in this case a base) has come from a late Iron Age context at nearby Tasburgh Camp. It is difficult at this stage to say whether these two vessels should be regarded as 'Belgic' or perhaps a local imitation. In view of their 'uniqueness' in the region and the quite different potting technique they represent, it may be that the former suggestion is the more likely.

Reference

- Thompson, I. (1982) Grog-tempered 'Belgic' Pottery of South-Eastern England, BAR 108 (i-iii).