

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 49/88

A NOTE ON THE PETROLOGICAL
EXAMINATION OF AN ARRETINE SHERD
FROM THE 1986 EXCAVATIONS AT
FISHBOURNE, SUSSEX.

D F Williams PhD FSA

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Summary

Thin section examination showed the identification of a Roman arretine cup, rather than early samian, with a likely origin from Arezzo, Italy.

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A small sherd from a cup of Arretine/Samian ware. This sherd was submitted for thin sectioning and study under the petrological microscope as part of a current programme of petrological analysis of arretine and early samian ware. An examination under the microscope showed that texturally the fabric of this sherd has much in common with arretine from Fishbourne previously chemically analyzed by Maurice Picon and attributed to the Arezzo production centre, and then subsequently thin sectioned for comparative purposes (Williams and Dannell, 1978). A similar origin seems likely for this Fishbourne cup.

Reference

- Williams, D.F. and (1978) 'Petrological analysis of arretine and early
Dannell, G.B. samian: a preliminary report', in Arthur, P.
and Marsh, G. (eds.), Early Fine Wares in Roman
Britain, BAR 57, pp. 5-12.