



The Study Group for Roman Pottery

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2016

S.G.R.P. Website - www.romanpotterystudy.org.

Remember to use our website for information and queries. If you would like to add an item, or suggest how the website may be developed, please contact

Ed Biddulph Email: edward.biddulph@oxfordarch.co.uk

Other Contacts:

Treasurer and Membership Secretary : Diana Briscoe,

Email: archive@aasps.org.uk

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Peachey

E-mail: ajpeachey@yahoo.co.uk



News from the Committee



✓ A 'Standard' Newsletter Welcome

Welcome to the Study Group for Roman Pottery Autumn 2016 newsletter; though it is anything but 'standard'. The SGRP and its workings are underpinned by the key tenets laid out in the Groups's Research Strategy, most recently in Journal of Roman Pottery Studies 11. Sometimes these may appear understated, but they are an important foundation stone (or pot). The promotion and unification of standards for the recording and archiving of Roman pottery has been a long term aim within this framework, and it was with great delight that 'A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology' was unveiled at our recent conference. This document was the product of collaboration between the SGRP, the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group and Medieval Pottery Research Group, and was enabled due to a great amount of work by Paul Booth and Jane Evans of the SGRP, amongst others. Many of us work or study alongside specialists in other periods, and some of us are also members of the PCRG and MPRG, and this process has highlighted the benefits of cross-period co-operation and projects. 'A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology' has fulfilled an important aim of our Research Framework (no. 3.7) and will hopefully promote the processes of pottery analysis and recording to those who regulate, curate and edit projects in the wider archaeological community. Therefore we would like offer our **congratulations** to all involved in the development and writing of 'A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology'.

If you would like to download a PDF copy of 'A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology' then it is available on the SGRP website.

If you would like to be sent a hard copy of the pottery standards volume, or would like more to distribute, then several boxes worth are currently residing with Paul Booth at Oxford and they can be obtained directly from him.



The book is free but we are asking you to send a SAE to save costs and admin. If you would like a copy (copies) please send an A4 stamped (£1.20 (2nd class) a copy) (£3.70 overseas), addressed, envelope to: Paul Booth at Oxford Archaeology, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES.

Compiling this newsletter has it challenges, and sometimes this is eliciting contributions from out members, so please consider if you have anything of interest, large or small that you might like to offer forth for the Spring newsletter. I am always delighted to hear from you.

Many thanks to all contributors

Andrew Peachey

✓ Subscriptions

Subscriptions will be due on 1st January 2017. Annual subscription £15 (overseas £20). Cheques should be made payable to the Study Group for Roman pottery. Payments by Standing Order would be preferred. Please contact Diana Briscoe (Hon Treasurer). Email: archive@asps.org.uk Address: 117 Cholmley Gardens, Fortune Green Road, London, NW6 1UP. Individuals who are not up to date will be removed from the circulation list. Please contact Diana if in doubt.

✓ The John Gillam Prize

The 2016 John Gillam prize was presented to Andrew Peachey for his work in updating The Pottery Kilns of Roman Britain website, continuing the work of the late Vivien Swan, and updating the database and searchable map to include records of over 300 kilns recorded between 1982 and 2014. Andrew was surprised and delighted to receive the prize, and has considered it a great honour to continue Vivien's original project, with work now completed to encompass all counties in England, effectively surveying the extensive results produced by developer funded archaeology since its conception in the 1990s. Andrew was also eager to say that he is very proud of reaching a milestone in this project, also a key aim of the SGRP, but that he was eager for the project to remain dynamic and long term. Since the website was re-launched, exposure to so many pottery-orientated minds and Historic Environment Records has revealed occasional kinks in the historic data, identifying the potential to review previously unquestioned historic data. Also, although considerably slighter in number, records have been acquired for new Roman kilns in Wales and Scotland and will be added in the next phase of updating the website. It is also hoped to develop new features to the website, allowing a greater manipulation of data by the SGRP, and Andrew can now look forward to anticipating a new search of Historic Environment Records to incorporate kilns recorded since 2014. He would also like to thank all those that have provided advice and input into the project.

We are constantly looking for nominations of articles or reports for the 2017 John Gillam prize. Please send your nominations to the Gillam Committee, consisting of the President and Publication Committee at youngokthorpe@btinternet.com. A wide range of work on pottery found in Roman Britain is eligible, so long as it was completed within the last two years. Nominations can include pottery reports (both published and grey literature), synthetic studies, websites, student dissertations, and theses etc. These contributions can range from day-to-day pottery or site reports to monographs and digital projects, as long as they highlight specific aspects of Roman pottery from a technological, regional or thematic perspective.

✓ The SGRP Bibliography

By Diana Briscoe

The SGRP Bibliography currently includes detailed data about the fabrics, vessel shapes and other ceramic information from each report &/or site recorded. Doing this takes a lot of time for each entry and the Bibliography Secretary (Diana Briscoe) asked the last AGM whether they would prefer to continue at this level of detail or would prefer to have more sites recorded but lacking the ceramic details. The AGM generally agreed that they would prefer more sites and less detail, but the Committee felt that we should consult the wider membership before making this change, therefore if you have any thoughts please contact Diana at archive@asps.org.uk

✓ The Committee and 2016 Elections

Following the 2016 AGM during the annual conference, the SGRP committee comprises the following members:

President:	Christopher Young
Treasurer:	Diana Briscoe
Secretary:	Jane Timby
JRPS Editor:	Steve Willis
Ordinary Member (Newsletter Editor):	Andrew Peachey
Ordinary Members:	Rachael Seager-Smith, Ed Biddulph, Stephen Wadeson, Jane Faiers & Roy Friendship-Taylor
Website:	Ed Biddulph

The AGM marked the last formal appearance as treasurer for Derek Hurst, and we would like to express out gratitude and appreciation for the hard work and tenacity that he dedicated to the post.

The next committee meeting will be on 19th November in Oxford, and if anyone would like an item added to the agenda, please contact the secretary. (The Secretary apologises but she is having on-going issues sending to 'hotmail' addresses which return mail undelivered. She is endeavouring to forward most SGRP mail via an alternative route but if anyone with a 'hotmail' account has an alternative email address they could forward it would make life easier).



SGRP 2016 conference



Study Group for Roman Pottery Annual Conference

Saturday June 12th – Sunday June 12th 2016

The Annual SGRP conference was held at Peterborough this year, the first time that our group has visited one of the main centres of Romano-British pottery production. The lectures covered an introduction to the archaeology of the Lower Nene Valley, local pottery production and two interesting contributions on the social implications of pottery usage, relating to Oxford wares, and differences in London assemblages, perhaps reflecting different dining practices. On Sunday, Dr. Stephen Upex led a field visit to the industrial suburbs of Durobrivae in Normangate Field, where we stood on Ermine Street, and later to Castor where we looked at the large Roman building which E.,T. Artis called "The Praetorium", and the Anglo-Saxon church.

Favourable reports from a number of those attending indicate that this formula of a "one-night stand", when we need to use commercial accommodation is a viable concept, and should enable us to extend the geographical scope of our annual meetings.

Dr. Stephen Upex introducing Castor, its landscape, the Roman industrial areas and kilns of the Lower Nene Valley



The SGRP would like to extend their thanks to Geoff Dannell, Stephen Upex and all who worked so hard to make this event a success, and to the Nene Valley Research Committee for its support. For those who could not attend the conference, and those who would like a reminder, summaries from a selection of papers are included below....

✓ **Edmund Tyrell Artis F.G.S., F.S.A. (1789-1847)**

Geoff Dannell

Edmund Tyrrell Artis was born at Swefling (near Saxmundham, Suffolk), the son of James and Mary Artis (née Watling). His father was a carpenter or cabinet maker, and although Edmund was later described as being born in “easy circumstances”, his mother was illiterate, and both parents died poor. In 1805, Edmund came to London to work for an uncle in the wine trade, but by 1811 he had opened his own shop in Dorset Street, W.1, as a confectioner. In the same year he married Elizabeth Poole at St. James, Piccadilly. She came from the Bristol area, and a year later they had daughter, also named Elizabeth, but known as Betsy.

In 1813 it would appear that one of Edmund’s iced cakes, in the shape of a fantastic castle attracted the attention of the 4th Earl Fitzwilliam, who took him into his household, and by 1816 he had risen to the position of House Steward of the Earl’s seat at Milton then in Northamptonshire. Artis was clearly a man of multiple talents, for in 1816 he painted a portrait of the Earl in oils, and he made the acquaintance of John Clare the poet in 1820, who freely acknowledged the debt he owed to Artis on matters of Natural History. This interest must have been the stimulus for Artis to start collecting fossils, first from the gravels of the river Nene terraces, and soon after from the Carboniferous deposits found in the Fitzwilliam’s coal mines, principally that of Elsecar in South Yorkshire. This led to his election as a member of the Geological Society in 1824. Concurrently, he discovered a mosaic pavement in the churchyard at Castor, near Milton, and from then on he began a long investigation of the Roman remains of the area, and from 1823-5 published the first four parts of the current volume by subscription, and was rewarded by being elected to the Society of Antiquaries of London.

In 1826 he published *Antediluvian Phytology*, which contained illustrations of his collection of Carboniferous fossils, and in that year, he left Milton, apparently in minor disgrace over a sexual indiscretion (which was probably his second offence, a record existing of an earlier illegitimate child, known as Edmund Hales). In October of that year, he held an auction of his Castor household effects, including a Clementi piano, and a Poussin painting, which he appears to have inherited from a relative. His relationship with the Earl Fitzwilliam could not have been irretrievably damaged, since in that year, he both designed a commemorative medal of the Earl, and on quitting Milton, he bought the Doncaster Race-Club House, which was a lodging place for the ‘great and the good’ during the St. Leger race meeting each September, which was under Fitzwilliam patronage. He also became Secretary of the Race Club, which organized events. He sold his fossil collection, some of which remains today in the Natural History Museum. The remaining parts of ‘*The Durobrivae*’ were published in 1827 and 1828.



Members of the Nene Valley Research Committee recreating and celebrating the 1828 work of Artis (a slightly younger Geoff Dannell in the foreground)

From then on, he acted as *mâitre d'hôtel* in the grand manner, his crowning glory being the provision of a celebratory dinner for the Duke of Wellington in 1829. Advertisements in the Doncaster Gazette speak of his ability to deliver 'live turtles of over 100 lbs, and ice' during Race Week. At first the business prospered, and Artis enjoyed some considerable wealth, buying two houses in Castor, and maintaining a carriage. However, it then ran into a series of difficulties due to an over-optimistic extension of the premises, which came just as a scandal enveloped Yorkshire racing and led to the 5th. Earl Fitzwilliam withdrawing from the sport. The succession of Queen Victoria to the throne in 1837, could not have helped, for she was not an enthusiast of horse-racing, and this must have affected the whole social fabric of the races.

Apart from the marriage of Betsy in 1836, little is known of Artis in these years, but in 1838 he met with the noted London antiquary Charles Roach Smith, and they clearly became firm friends. It led to a new burst of archaeological activity, and Artis was associated with finds of Roman statuary near Kingscliffe, attended the opening of a Roman gypsum burial at York, recorded wall paintings in churches around the Castor area, and produced a number of papers discussing pottery kilns for the recently formed British Archaeological Association. It may be significant that he was then working on land owned by the Duke of Bedford, and not that of the Fitzwilliams.

In 1846 a subscription announced the impending publication of a text to '*The Durobrivae*', but in 1847 he continued to excavate in appalling conditions at Kingscliffe, so cold that his labourers deserted him, and it would appear that he succumbed to an illness. On December 24th, 1847 he died, and he was buried just outside the porch of Castor church. His friends were unable to find sufficient notes to complete his project. That Artis was a great man of his times is indisputable. The *Phytology* remained a work quoted by geologists for nearly a century after its publication, and the illustrations in the *Durobrivae* show that he understood stratigraphy completely. His accounts of the workings of Roman pottery kilns were unsurpassed until very recent times. He was a man of an insatiable curiosity, with acute powers of observation and deduction, blessed with great skill as an artist. As his widow wrote of him 'everything but a poet'.

✓ Some Nene Valley Kilns of Old Acquaintance

John Peter Wild

The Golden Age of kiln-digging in the Nene Valley – at least in the post-Artis era – was between 1957 and 1974, and this lecture revisited a number of the key sites. Most have been published already, but not in full colour! Included were the pre-Flavian surface-built and dug kilns associated with the vexillation fortress at Longthorpe (1972-4), the third-century kilns built in true Nene Valley fashion with a prefabricated fire-brick lining by a fen-edge potter at Stanground to the east of Peterborough (1965-7), and the classic workshop, pair of kilns and well at Stibbington to the west (*below*), in operation during the early fourth century (1969). Brief mention was made of the kilns along the line of the A1 (dug 1967-59 by Brian Hartley, John Gillam and Graham Webster), publication of which is on the horizon.



✓ Nene Valley Pottery in the Northern Frontiers

Paul Bidwell

Sites in northern Britain associated with the Roman frontier works and their supply systems provide vital evidence for the chronology and development of the Lower Nene Valley pottery industry. There are rare occurrences in the North of mortaria from this source in the earlier second century. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated wares are not known from the Antonine Wall, which began to be abandoned in AD 158, which probably means that their production, at least for export, dates to no earlier than the AD 160s. Unfortunately there are few closely-dated groups from Hadrian's Wall in the second half of the second century. The earliest contexts for the colour-coated wares are Severan deposits from the fort and supply-base at South Shields, which have produced a few beakers, a lid and a flagon (*below*).



The colour-coated wares become common in the North around the middle of the third century. At about the same time mortaria from the Lower Nene Valley also began to arrive in large numbers. They are found mainly at forts in the eastern and central sectors of Hadrian's Wall. Their pattern of distribution conforms to that of imports from south-east England in the third century (e.g. BB2) and from northern Gaul. The mortaria will have travelled north via the east-coast sea routes, taking advantage of the cheap transport costs of a major artery of military supply. The colour-coated wares have a much wider distribution throughout the North and presumably reached sites in the North-West by road; the higher costs of transport by road presumably made the export of the bulky mortaria unprofitable.

Importation of the colour-coated wares, particularly in coarse ware forms such as bowls and dishes, continued throughout the fourth century, and they occur in the latest deposits at Carlisle, Birdoswald and South Shields.



A Lower Nene Valley 'hunt cup' from Newstead, 'one of eight to ten such vessels found in 1911

✓ Status or what? More thoughts on the broad characterisation of pottery assemblages in the Oxford region

Paul Booth

For pottery evidence to be used to inform debates about site status in a meaningful way a systematic approach to the data is needed, as well as a clear understanding of the nature of the questions that could be addressed with those data. Work on a group of assemblages from the Oxford region was published some years ago (eg Booth 2004). Recent analysis of a large assemblage (over 60,000 sherds) from Gill Mill, a Roman settlement some 10 miles west of

Oxford, has prompted reconsideration of the potential of pottery evidence to inform what might better be considered as aspects of site character, involving (at a generalised level) aspects of both wares and vessel forms. Analysis of the former is concerned with 'fine and specialist (F&S) wares' – material that was not essential to perform the most basic functions for which pottery could be used, the simple underlying premise being that such wares will be better represented at relatively higher status sites than for example at typical rural farmsteads. The assemblages from the region are analysed in three main phases – early, middle and late Roman, with approximate date ranges of late Iron Age to c AD 120, 120-250 and 250-400 – rather than the simple early and late Roman phases used in the previous work.

The anticipated correlation between apparent site character based on the excavated evidence and on the pottery data was seen to varying degrees in the three phases, most clearly in the early Roman period. The data show a decline over time in the overall number of assemblages from sites that can be classified straightforwardly as rural settlements (ie essentially farmsteads) which would generally be considered to be lower status sites. Rural settlements dominate the early Roman dataset (19 out of 24 assemblages) and account for all assemblages in the lowest 70% of the range of F&S ware values. Middle Roman assemblages show a range of F&S ware values not dissimilar from the early Roman one, but starting from a slightly higher base level. An increase in the number of assemblages from minor nucleated settlements is notable. The late Roman pattern represents a significant development from the middle Roman one. The base line of F&S ware representation has moved significantly – values are more than doubled across the board compared to the middle Roman picture – reflecting the influence of late Roman Oxford F&S wares. A further decline is seen in the number of straightforward rural settlements, now accounting for less than half of the 20 assemblages considered.

Vessel class data are presented in terms of a three way vessel-class based split: plotting jars against bowls and dishes, and both against a third grouping of vessels related (loosely) to the storage and consumption of liquids – amphorae, flagons, beakers, cups and tankards. In broad terms the plot, using the same three phase scheme applied to the F&S data, underlines the well-known trend of jar dominance to decrease with time. In the early Roman period two thirds of the 15 sites (all rural except one) have jar levels (sometimes well) above 80%. The typologically most diverse groups are from a roadside settlement and two proto-villa/villa sites in this phase group. The middle Roman phase group shows a similar spread, though by now the highest percentage figure for jars has dropped to 78%. In the late Roman phase group most sites cluster relatively tightly, with jar percentages from 54-68%, bowls and dishes all between 20 and 30%, and the liquid related vessels ranging from a maximum of 18% down to as little as 7% or 8%. In terms of the site based definitions the villas and complex or minor nucleated settlements are distinguished from the farmstead types by slightly lower percentages of jars and slightly higher percentages of liquid related vessels. The distinction is a fairly subtle one, but probably significant.

Overall, therefore, it is clear that in many cases differences in pottery assemblage composition, whether in terms of proportions of fine and specialist wares or of major vessel classes, can be related to other differences in site character based upon morphological and structural characteristics, though potential correlations have to be interpreted with care. The corollary, that assemblage composition may help to define settlement character in the absence of clear site evidence, is supported by these analyses.

✓ Pottery from Brading Roman Villa

Jane Timby

The Roman villa at Brading on the Isle of Wight is a typical later Roman courtyard villa which has been very well-known since its first exposure in 1880. In 2007 the Oglander Roman Trust invited Barry Cunliffe to carry out a new programme of research and between 2008-10 three summer seasons of work were undertaken. Four pieces of work were targeted 1) to fully re-excavate the North range; a large aisled building ; 2) examine the South range by sample excavation; 3) look at the extant remains to try and determine the building sequence and 4) look at the area of the car park where there was evidence of an early enclosure. Further geophysical surveys were also undertaken around the villa by EH showing an extensive layout of paddocks and enclosures.

The 2010 excavations, largely focussed on the car park east of the villa complex, resulted in the recovery of c 12,557 sherds of pottery which suggested a phase of occupation on the site dating from the later Iron Age. The group includes a small but quite diverse range of continental fine table wares, amphorae and mortaria imported from Gallia-Belgica, Central Gaul, the Rhineland, Southern Spain and Southern Italy. A few sherds of Durotrigian ware were probably imported in the pre-conquest period. Accompanying all these wares is a vast quantity of Vectis ware clearly demonstrating a pre-conquest origin for this industry based on the Isle of Wight itself. The assemblages recovered from the early phases of the villa were very small and difficult to characterise, particularly for the second and third centuries. Imported wares include samian from Central and East Gaul; beakers from Central Gaul (Lezoux) and the Moselle region; mortaria from North Gaul and the Rhine Valley and amphorae from South Gaul (wine) and Baetica, South Spain (olive-oil). Coarse-wares are largely provided for by the local Vectis ware industry some of which copy contemporary Dorset BB1 forms. Regional imports from the mainland include Dorset BB1, Rowland's Castle grey ware, and mortaria from Wiggonholt, Sussex. A Gauloise 12- type amphora from Normandy, dating to the first to third centuries A.D came from earlier work.

The later Roman assemblage is more easier to characterise as from around the mid third century Brading was receiving a small number of imports from the large colour-coated industries based on the mainland; in particular in the New Forest and Oxfordshire regions and to a lesser extent the Lower Nene Valley. Other imports include Oxfordshire white-ware mortaria, Alice Holt grey wares, other New Forest products and Dorset black burnished ware. In the later Roman period handmade grog-tempered wares start to appear in the assemblage probably dating to the last phases of occupation. The results of the excavation are now published and further details can be found in: Barry Cunliffe (2013): *The Roman villa at Brading, Isle of Wight. The excavations of 2008-10*, Oxford Univ School of Archaeol monog 77, Oxford.



SGRP members
viewing pottery in
Peterborough
Museum

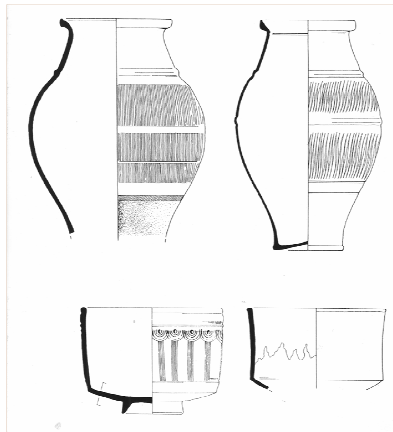
✓ Some samian ware copies & other imports from the Piddington Roman Villa, Northamptonshire

R.M. Friendship-Taylor

The Upper Nene Archaeological Society has been continuously excavating the late Iron Age & Romano-British villa at Piddington, Northamptonshire since 1979 (some 37-38 Years) and has amassed a huge archive of finds and pottery – some c 2 tonnes of it, and that does not include CBM, there are some 35k oysters and other marine mollusca together with animal bones etc.

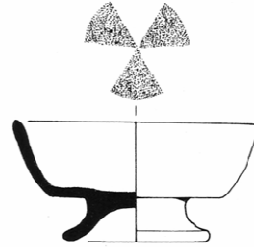
The study of the pottery from Piddington has shown that typical Continental pottery forms had been copied from an early stage even before the Roman occupation; these were from a limited number of mainly Gallo-Belgic types, many of which had been derived from earlier native and continental Roman types. Among the early imported forms copied were, TR (*terra rubra*) and TN (*terra negra*) especially the Gallo-Belgic platter copies (as well as the real-thing) and, rarely, bowl forms (sometimes with illiterate name stamps) eggshell wares (both black and white types were also imported); these occurred before and immediately after the military period at Piddington and probably reflect the existence of early trade and military influence with the continent and consequent rapid changes in diet, especially noticeable with the introduction after the Conquest of mortaria which had been adopted by much of the local native population, particularly in the south-east and east midlands. Though many of these new styles of pottery seem to have arrived with the advent of the Roman army as mentioned above. Messrs Hawkes and Hull, working in Colchester, shortly after WWII classified many of these new forms in their seminal publication '*Camulodunum*' which was published in 1947 – form numbers from this work are still frequently quoted today.

Copies of samian ware types seen within our pottery assemblage of late Iron Age and Roman coarse wares from Piddington cover virtually the whole main Roman period. Mainly starting in a small way during the later first century BC and then picking up from the middle of the second century. For example, a mid to late first century AD ditch at the neighbouring site of Quinton (Friendship-Taylor, 1979) produced good copies of both forms 29 and 37, these were found together with other bowl and platter forms which were obviously derived from these early samian forms. Other types of pottery with a military influence we have at Piddington, emanating from Gaul are moulded lead glazed forms such as flagons and cups (*right*) and presumably made at the same sites as South Gaulish samian ware.

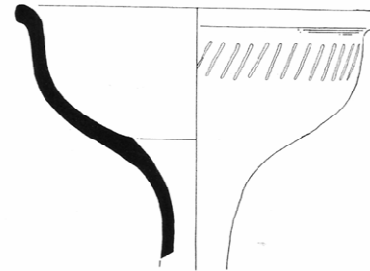


During these earlier times, decorated bowl forms such as the Dr 30 & 37's seem to be the most popular types copied, but not so much the decoration. Though, however, if there was decoration to a vessel, perhaps the most common type to occur was on later 'London Ware' pottery usually copying form's Dr 30 & Dr 37's often with a row of incised compass drawn arcs arranged below the rim, these were their interpretation of the common ovolo similar to that seen on the genuine mould-decorated samian Dr 30's and Dr 37's, often below these compass-drawn 'ovolos' were a series of scribed vertical strokes extending down to just above the foot-ring or carination (*left*).

Both the Dr 30 and Dr 37 and their 'London Ware' variants were mainly made in fine black fabrics; some however contained distinct fine mica inclusions and can be helpful in identifying their source of manufacture. This 'London Ware' was produced at centres such as Highgate Wood (Nth. London), the lower Nene Valley (Nr Peterborough – *Durobrivae*) and Packenham, (Suffolk). There were other more rare forms to be found in other fabrics, though mostly from unknown sources and may possibly have been inspired by local potters, Forms, such as Dr 64 (beakers), Ritterling 12 (bowls), Curle 15 (bowls), Dr 42 (bowls/dishes) and the rather obscure Dr 44 (bowl). However, the Dr 38 (flanged bowls), did seem to be a particular favourite.



During this early period of copying, very few of the above copies attempted to copy either the fabric or colour. For example the 'London Ware' forms Dr 30 (straight-sided bowl) and Dr 37 (bowl) as mentioned earlier were mainly in black or grey and the example of the form 64 was in a creamy white fine ware – not the samian red – that came later! Another centre producing copies of samian derived pottery mainly in bowl forms is the industry found in the Savernake forest (Wiltshire) – although



the ware does not seem to have penetrated very far north or east to Piddington, but examples do turn up in London – no doubt using the Thames as a direct means to transport the pottery. Also, perhaps it is significant that it is not that far from the important Roman town of *Corinium* (Cirencester), which would no doubt have been a strong local market.

At Piddington, it was very noticeable that the main thrust of copying a limited number of samian forms both in colour and form came in the later 3rd and throughout the 4th centuries and even possibly into the early 5th century when the samian industry in Eastern Gaul had either shut down or was in serious decline! This is when the Oxford potters really got under way. Here, the following forms were very closely copied both in colour, form and to a lesser extent the fabric. Although it has to be said the fabric never did get that close to true samian but to the unwary they can be easily mistaken for some East Gaulish fabrics. These later Roman copies were mainly in bowl forms of one kind or another such as: Dr 18, Dr 38, Dr 18/31, and Dr 81. But the mortaria form 45 was a very popular type copied and produced by the Oxford potters, together with a samian bowl form similar to the mortaria but usually with little or no grits. This is the Curle 21 – except the Oxford potters it seems did like to include some grits.

Other centres where Oxford potters may have been involved producing these copies during the 4th century, were probably migrant potters' from the Oxford region, was at Cherry Hinton (Cambridgeshire), Hartshill area, (North Warwickshire) and possibly Much Hadham (Hertfordshire). These centres or industries where this type of red colour-coated pottery was being made were probably already established as potteries well before the samian copies became popular. Most of the above centres are represented at Piddington along with other non - samian forms from these kiln groups. From the later C3rd or early C4th Century coal was being imported into Piddington from Nuneaton (north Warwickshire or the south Leicestershire area) for use in the under floor hypocaust heating systems at Piddington. Presumably, pottery was also coming down the Watling Street from the same area, on the back of the transported coal.

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- ✓ Writing, drawing and counting in pots. The latest French Research about Graffiti on Roman Pottery

Dr. Morgane Andrieu (Université Paris-Sorbonne, MOLA)

As an introduction to the forthcoming publication of 689 new *graffiti* from *Gallia Lugdunensis*, Morgane Andrieu presented a poster to the SGRP where the importance of their study was strongly highlighted. As scored, spontaneous and functional handmade marks, the importance of *graffiti* on pottery lies in the fact that pottery was produced in enormous quantities, that it was affordable for most, if not, all the population and is relatively well-preserved compared to perishable writing mediums such as wooden tablets. As such, *graffiti* are a good way to study common people's writing which we still know too little about.

In the three different *civitas* studied, most of the writing found on Roman pottery consists of names. Those names are mostly Romans' and natives' ownership marks. Less often, some vessels were engraved with a deity's name or the name of the vessel directly engraved on it such as the words *Lagona* and *Olla*. If names are the most common types of *graffiti* found in the *civitas*, they are not the only ones. Roman numerals are also found engraved on the shoulder of storage vessels. The numbers often relate to weight or volume measurements. They can be associated with the mention of wine such as *Mulsum*, *Ammineum*, *Caecubum* which gives clear evidence of a vessel's use at a given time. One can also find drawings such as phalluses, palm branches and geometric patterns (crosses, stars, lattice, etc) for which the signification is not always clear.



Selection of graffiti on Roman pottery (Andrieu in prep.)

The poster also put the emphasis on the different epigraphic codes used in different contexts. The 689 *graffiti* found in three different *civitas* capitals of *Gallia Lugdunensis* (Autun/Chartres/Sens, France) show a common pattern where, in those urban contexts, the majority of the writing clearly consists of ownership marks engraved on samian pottery dating from the 1st to the 2nd century AD.

These *graffiti* are often carefully engraved on a hidden part of the vessel (generally under the base). Most of the ownership marks are singles names, very often abbreviated to between 1 and 3 letters and rarely exceeding 5 letters (see examples below).



A

Single letter engraved after-firing on the underside of the base of a samian cup (re-used as a game-counter?) Prov.: Autun, France.



SABINA[.../...]SA

Sabina-, latin cognomen well attested through the Empire. The second line is perhaps a first attempt, finally engraved above in order to have more space. On the underside of the base of a samian cup from Southern Gaul. Prov.: Chartres, France.

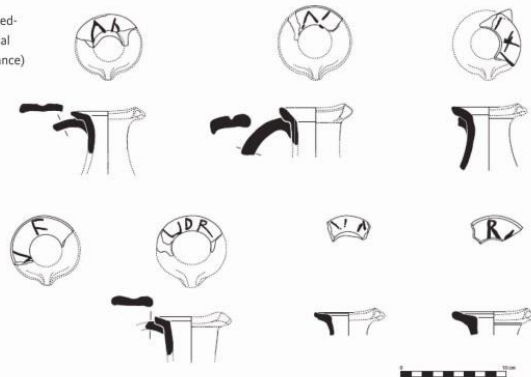


SEGOMA/RV

Sego-maros, from *Sego-*, 'victory, force' and *-maros* 'tall': 'tall by his victories' (Delamarre 2003). Gaulish name engraved on the underside of the base of a samian cup from Southern Gaul. Prov.: Sens, France.

In contrast, the comparison of these results with other recent publications shows that the context clearly influences the type of writing found on a site. The *graffiti* found on the summit sanctuary of the Ceyssat mountain pass (Puy de Dome, France) for example, reveals different epigraphic codes. There, *graffiti* are found on pinched-mouth flagons in common oxidised ware, and are scored on the upper part of the vessel many directly on the rim! Some are associated with perforated vessels. These perforations were probably a voluntary gesture done in relation to the religious rites undertaken at the sanctuary. It is clear that further work is required on the ranges of epigraphic codes according to contexts.

Examples of Graffiti on pinched-mouth flagons from the cultual complex of Puy de Dôme (France) (Trescarte 2007)



Graffiti on pottery not only tell us about writing but also about pottery and the way people would regard their vessels as precious enough or not to inscribe their ownership mark on it. In Gaul, the 1st century AD corresponds to the largest distribution of pottery made at La Graufesenque and Lezoux; the results of the study undertaken in *Gallia Lugdunensis* show that it was also the 'Golden Age' for *graffiti* on samian pottery. At the time, samian was a novelty and its price, slightly higher than that for more local products, may have led some owners to inscribe their vessels in order to deter thieves. By the turn of the 2nd century, however, the situation changed as the amount of *graffiti* was much reduced. The production and distribution of samian pottery became regionalised (Brulet et al 2010, p. 35), leading to a massive increase in the manufacture of samian which became less expensive – i.e. the increased output led to cheaper prices. Such changes may explain the new scarcity of *graffiti* found on samian.



✓ Obituary

It was with great sadness that we learnt Cathy Tester passed away on the 14th August. It was peaceful at the end and she died at home with her daughters. Cathy was a specialist on pottery in Suffolk and East Anglia and had been a long term member of SGRP, had served on the Committee, and was a warmly welcoming and informative presence to all who had the pleasure of talking with her. Although not able to come to recent meetings she was still in touch with the group. We will forward our condolences to the family; and if anyone would like to share memories or pictures of Cathy, we would welcome them for a more substantial tribute to her in a future newsletter.

✓ Roman Credenhill: A Community Investigation

By Christopher Atkinson

The 'Roman Credenhill: A Community Investigation' project was established by Hereford Sixth Form College and is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Young Roots Programme. The aim of the project was for archaeology students of Hereford Sixth Form College to spend their summer investigating and promoting the Roman history of Credenhill by means of an archaeological excavation on the Roman Park Playing Fields, Credenhill. With advice and training provided by a team of archaeologists from Community Heritage and Archaeology Consultancy; and archaeological finds training provided by Herefordshire Council Museum Service, students put their new found skills to the test and excavated a little known Roman farmstead/villa and industrial site first discovered in 2014 as a result of a community project funded by the Armed Forces Community Covenant. The three week long excavation, held between the 11th and 31st July was also open to the public, who received full training from the students and archaeologists alike.

The excavation identified at least three phases of occupation at the site (*please note that the post-excavation analysis is on-going, as such, details are likely set to change*).

Phase 1

The earliest phase of activity relates to the industrial use of the ditched enclosure. The industrial activity is marked by a charcoal rich clay trample or working surface that was present across the entirety of the excavation, sealing the underlying natural gravels. Included within this horizon was a multitude of ceramic materials including Samian wares from the 1st and 2nd century AD. Of particular note were the numerous fragments of fired clay, including fragments bonded with slag indicating the presence of at least one bloomer furnace within the vicinity together with other probable-kiln structures. Contemporary to this phase was the construction of a south-facing wall of a rectangular building oriented roughly east-west. Only the foundations of this wall remain. The foundations had been constructed in four phases; the linear foundation trench cut the industrial trample horizon and natural gravel subsoil, into which an initial layer of large sandstone angular cut blocks were placed on edge. This was overlain by coarse gravel and then capped by a cemented fine pebble layer. It was onto this foundation that a substantial stone wall would have been constructed, bonded with mortar, of which only the rubble core remains as a dump.

Phase 2

The second phase of activity is marked by a continued accumulation of industrial waste materials across the site to a depth of c.30cm, during which phase the material had sealed and butted against the south-facing wall of the building. It is into this accumulation of industrial trample that the pottery kiln, first recorded in 2014 and dated by C14 to c.140AD was constructed. The construction involved the digging of a circular pit (for the kiln) and trench stretching c.5m to the south (the flu) into the industrial trample horizons and natural subsoil. The stoke hole to the kiln was constructed of sandstone bonded with clay and capped by a stone lintel, the kiln along with the supporting pilasters had been moulded using clay. Due to the small size of the kiln (c.0.80m diameter) no central column was required to support the interior shelf, instead it rested on the protruding pilasters.



View of the kiln when first excavated in 2014 detailing the remains of the pilasters and the collapsed shelf at the base (scale is 0.50m). Copyright Community Heritage & Archaeology Consultancy



Image of the kiln, stoke hole and flu extending to the south. The partially excavated ash pit is visible to the right of the flu. Copyright Community Heritage & Archaeology Consultancy

Contemporary with the kiln was a pit to one side of the flu. Although it was initially thought to represent a waster's pit, it would appear that it was established as an ash pit, providing a location for the ash to be deposited following the firing of the kiln. Following the final firing (c.140AD) the kiln, flu and pit were deliberately closed and sealed using stacked stone roof tiles. This may indicate an intention to possibly return to the site and re-use of the kiln or alternatively it may mark a change in use of the site. Either way a great deal of care was taken in sealing the kiln and may indicate pride in work by the individuals involved.

Phase 3

The final phase relating to the Roman period was the extension of the building first begun in the late first/early second century. By this date (mid-second century AD) it would appear that the site had ceased to be industrial in nature and was primarily domestic, either as a high status farm or small villa. This phase of construction is represented by the large rectangular complex enclosing a courtyard that is visible in the geophysical survey produced in 2014. The site appears to have been abandoned during the late 4th century AD.

This is only a brief summary of results. The report and specialist analysis will be completed by January 2017. To keep up-to-date with the project and its results visit:

<https://romancredenhillblog.wordpress.com/>

✓ **Dolia Defossa, wine vessels, fermentation and storage**

University of Sheffield

Until now, very little was known about Rome's Imperial leaders aside from their battle triumphs, territorial conquests and monumental legacies. Researchers from the University of Sheffield's Department of Archaeology investigating the vast Imperial estate of Vagnari in Italy, have now unearthed evidence of wine production on an industrial scale – shedding light on their home life away from the battlefield.



The excavation team discovered the corner of a *cella vinaria*, a wine fermentation and storage room, in which wine vessels, known as *dolia defossa*, were fixed into the ground (*left*). The heavy and cumbersome wine vessels have the capacity of more than 1,000 litres and were buried up to their necks in the ground to keep the temperature of the wine constant and cool – a necessary measure in hot climates.

The scale of the wine production provides clear evidence for industrial activities and provides a glimpse into the range of specialist crafts and industries practised by residents – painting a better and more complete picture of life on the Imperial estate and the wealth it provided for its owner. Maureen Carroll, Professor of Roman Archaeology at the University of Sheffield, said: "Before we began our work only a small part of the *vicus*, which is at the heart of the estate and its administrative core, had been explored though the general size and outline of the village had been indicated by geophysics and test-trenching.

“The discovery that lead was being processed here at Vagnari is also particularly revealing about the environment in which the inhabitants of the village lived and potential health risks to which they were exposed. Scrap lead found during excavation consisted of roughly torn and cut pieces taken from other objects such as pipes, vessels and tools which had been collected to be re-worked. The substantial amounts of molten lumps of lead and smelting debris show that this activity was intensive. Finished lead products include weights, fishing net weights, and sheet lead clipped into small squares – perhaps handy repair patches for mending tools and containers.”

Vagnari is situated in a valley of the Basentello river, just east of the Apennine mountains in Puglia (ancient Apulia) in south-east Italy. After the Roman conquest of the region in the 3rd century B.C., Vagnari was linked to Rome by one of Italy’s main Roman roads, the Via Appia. Excavation and survey by British, Canadian and Italian universities since 2000 have furnished evidence for a large territory that was acquired by the Roman emperor and transformed into imperial landholdings at some point in the early 1st century A.D. Professor Carroll added: “Few Imperial estates in Italy have been investigated archeologically, so it is particularly gratifying that our investigations at Vagnari will make a significant contribution to the understanding of Roman elite involvement in the exploitation of the environment and control over free and slave labour from the early 1st century AD. “We now aim to determine how diverse the estate’s economy was, and how the cultivation of vines and wine-making fitted in to the emperor’s wider agricultural and industrial landscape.

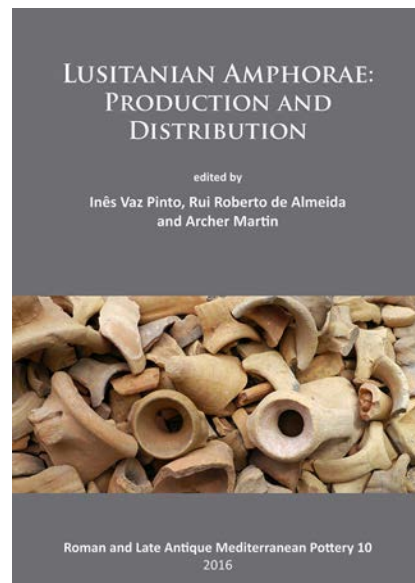
✓ And more wine and amphorae from Lusitania

A new publication on amphorae that are maybe under-represented in Britain

edited by Inês Vaz Pinto, Rui Roberto de Almeida and Archer Martin. (<http://www.archaeopress.com>)

More than a century of archaeological investigation in Portugal has helped to discover, excavate and study many Lusitanian amphorae kiln sites, with their amphorae being widely distributed in Lusitania. These containers were identified in Ostia and Rome from the 1970s and thereafter in many sites around the Mediterranean, but their numbers have always seemed scarce. Were they not being recognized and therefore underestimated? Were they all fish-product amphorae? Did they ever reach a significant market share in the other provinces of Hispania? And what was their contribution to the supply of the city of Rome or to other cities in the centre of the Empire?

This collective volume is a contribution to the discussion of these and other questions, and to a better understanding of the production and distribution of Lusitanian amphorae.



✓ Less wine, but more amphorae....and money

In late April Ana Navarro, head of Seville's Museum of Archaeology, announced the incredible and fortuitous discovery of 19 amphorae in Seville Spain by workmen digging a water line. However; the contents of these amphora weren't perishable: they contained 1,300 pounds of Roman coins, most minted with images of the emperors Constantine, who ruled the Roman Empire from 306 to 337 A.D., and Maximian, who held the post from 286 to 305 A.D. "It is a unique collection and there are very few similar cases. The majority were newly minted and some of them probably were bathed in silver, not just bronze". The amphora used to hold the coins appear smaller, specialized containers used specifically for treasure. The researchers think the vast coin hoard was a shipment meant to pay taxes or to pay the Roman army in Spain. It is not known why it was never distributed or why it ended up under a park in Tomares, a suburb of the city.



✓ From the Inside out: Upscaling organic residue analyses of archaeological ceramics

By Mélanie Roffet-Salque, Julie Dunne, David T. Altoft, Emmanuelle Casanova, Lucy J.E. Cramp, Jessica Smyth, Helen Whelton, Richard P. Evershed

Investigations of organic residues associated with archaeological pottery using modern analytical chemical methods began in the 1970s. There was early recognition that the analysis of lipids (i.e. fats, waxes and resins) preserved in surface residues or the fabric of single pottery sherds, representative of single vessels, was a powerful method for defining pottery use at higher specificity. Subsequent developments saw a significant change of scale with studies usually involving lipid analyses of tens to hundreds of sherds per archaeological assemblage, providing information which extends beyond pottery use. The identification of animal and plant foodstuffs processed in pots lends insights into herding and farming; while trade in exotic organic goods can also be detected. Information about environment and climate can be derived from the isotopic composition of compounds detected in sherds, providing potentially novel avenues of investigation. The direct dating of lipids in pottery sherds is opening up new opportunities for building archaeological chronologies. The integration of lipid residue analyses with other environmental and cultural proxies in interdisciplinary projects is already providing unprecedented insights into past lifestyles from site to regional scales. (*published in the Journal of Archaeological Science 2016*).