
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

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Welcome to the Study Group for Roman Pottery Autumn 2017 newsletter; at a time when archaeological investigations and research appear to be identifying an ever greater density of pottery production in Great Britain (see below!), neatly coinciding with the updating of the website for the Pottery Kilns of Roman Britain (https://romankilns.net/). The superficial appearance of the website has changed very little, with the viewer now greeted by the search interface, but importantly behind the façade the SGRP now has a vastly improved ability to update and develop the website, which no doubt in future will include some of the kilns appearing in this edition of the newsletter. Compiling this newsletter, principally searching for contributions from our members can be arduous but fun, 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 2018. 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@aasps.org.uk

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The John Gillam Prize

We are constantly looking for nominations of articles or reports for the 2018 John Gillam prize. Please send your nominations to the Gillam Committee, consisting of the President and Publication Committee at youngoakthorpe@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 Committee and 2017 Elections

Following the 2017 AGM during the annual conference, the SGRP committee comprises the following members:

President: Christopher Young
Treasurer: Diana Briscoe
Secretary: Jane Timby
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Ordinary Member (Newsletter Editor): Andrew Peachey
Ordinary Members: Ed Biddulph, Stephen Wadeson, Jane Faiers & Roy Friendship-Taylor, Jane Evans, Alice Lyons
Website: Ed Biddulph
The Annual SGRP conference was held at Carlisle this year, hosted at Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, which proved not only a first class conference venue but came with the added bonus of a temporary exhibition of rare artifacts associated with Roman cavalry. Lectures spanned introductions to the archaeology and pottery of Roman Carlisle, new discoveries in the northern zone, and interesting talks on recent research and emerging evidence across the UK.

The conference also afforded opportunities to visit Vindolanda, and we are very grateful to Andrew Birley for providing such a welcome and so much information. We were also fortunate enough to have Graham Taylor hosting the firing of a reconstruction kiln at Vindolanda, provoking interest and discussion as to the working of industry almost as fierce as the flames of the firing chamber; many thanks to Graham and all his team over the weekend for all their graft.

The SGRP would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Stephen Wadeson, Jane Timby and Diana Briscoe who worked so hard to make this event a success, as well as the staff at Tullie House. Thanks are also due to Christopher Young and Paul Bidwell who acted as superb guides along Hadrians Wall. For those who could not attend the conference, and those who would like a reminder, summaries from a selection of papers are included below....
✓ **Excavations at William Street Car Park, Botchergate, Carlisle 2015**

*Megan Stoakley (Wardell Armstrong)*

Our excavation uncovered a formalised civilian cremation cemetery of late 1st to 2nd century date. A total of 46 adult and non-adult individuals were interred in urns and un-urned deposits within formalised burial plots along the street frontage. Star finds included a number of complete urns, a large quantity of accessory vessels (probably buried in caskets / chests), a glass tear vial, beads, ceramic lamps and a partial cist lid used as a gaming board. The function of the site had completely changed by the mid-2nd century and this phase is represented by two circular buildings - environmental evidence has shown that small-scale localised industry was taking place within these 2 buildings e.g. dyeing or glass-working. The site had been largely abandoned by the early 3rd century and occupation at the site re-commenced in the medieval period.

![The Cremation Urns & Accessory Vessels](image)

✓ **Mid-Roman Campanian Amphorae in the Northern Frontier Zone: the significance of their distribution**

*Paul Bidwell*

The presence in Britain of Campanian amphorae of mid-Roman date, assumed to have contained wine, was first recognised by David Williams in his report on the amphorae from the *colonia* at York which was published in 1990. Amphorae of this type had only been identified in Italy a few years earlier. They showed that Italian wine was still being exported in the third century; previously, the apparent near absence of mid-Roman Italian amphorae had seemed to demonstrate a decline in viticulture after the first century AD. The amphorae are similar in form to the earlier Dressel 2-4 (Peacock and Williams 1986, Class 10), but features such as their rim-profiles, which are almond-shaped, and their handles with oval sections distinguish them from the earlier type. Two fabrics are represented amongst the British exports: the commoner one contains black sand, suggesting a source in the Pompeii-Herculaneum area (NRFRC CAM AM 1) and the other has volcanic inclusions consistent with an origin in northern Campania (CAM AM 2).
Arthur and Williams noted the presence of 109 sherds in these fabrics from the fort and supply base at South Shields in levels no earlier then the mid-third century, and of sherds from two amphorae of this type from Claydon Pike, Glos. A detailed report on the South Shields sherds were published by Williams in 1994, and the exceptional quantities of these amphorae that had reached the eastern end of Hadrian’s Wall, when compared to the rest of Britain, suggested to him ‘the possibility of direct importation of Italian wine to the River Tyne, or at least missing out the southern ports’.

Equally large quantities have since been found at Wallsend and Newcastle, while the publication of pottery from the forts at Vindolanda, Housesteads and Carlisle has further illustrated the scarcity of these amphorae further west along the Wall. The new finds show that there were considerable variations in their form, particularly in the shape of their rims and of their handles which include examples with the bifid section typical of the original Dressel 2-4s. It is likely that the amphorae came from a number of production centres with their own idiosyncrasies. Perhaps the most puzzling aspect of these amphorae is their distribution. In the frontier zone they reflect to a certain extent the diffusion of BB2 and reduced wares from south-east England and of third-century imports from northern Gaul such as grey-ware beakers and Gauloise 12 amphorae, which are most prolific at the eastern end of the Wall with a lesser concentration at York and other sites in its vicinity.

While these imports also occur in south-east England, mid-Roman Campanian amphorae are virtually unknown at London and other settlements in the region. They might have been imported directly from Italy to the army in northern Britain, as Williams suggested, but it is also possible that they arrived via a more extended pattern of distribution. These amphorae are known as far east as the military site at Zeugma on the Euphrates, and an example has been noted at Neuss on the Rhine frontier.
Pre-Flavian finewares re-visited
Kevin Greene (Visiting Fellow, School of History, Classics and Archaeology Newcastle University)

At the 1972 meeting of SGRP in Cardiff, I presented a preliminary summary of my doctoral research into the production and distribution of pre-Flavian fine wares. By then - in addition to travelling around Britain - I had conducted visits to sites and museums along the Rhine and Danube from the Netherlands to Austria, and from central and northern Italy to Provence and central France. This research was eventually published in the first volume of the Usk excavation report series in 1979.

After retiring from my lecturing post in 2011, I took advantage of a visit to friends in Lyon to check up on what had happened to Lyon ware since I had last looked at it. A doctoral thesis about fineware production in Lyon had been completed in 2000, and published online (written by Eric Bertrand, who now works for the city archaeological service in Lyon). I visited Eric in 2012, and he showed me finds from the astonishingly well preserved production facility for Lyon ware discovered at the Chapeau Rouge site. Other significant indications of production had already been recovered from La Butte. Eric had extended and renumbered my type series, and had added some new findspots, but had not substantially changed the dating of this ware (which is found in Britain from the 40s to the early 70s). Production probably continued into the 70s, but the later output does not seem to have been exported as far as Britain. Chapeau Rouge produced a number of vessels whose barbotine decoration showed Spanish influence, but I have rarely encountered these elsewhere.

I also visited Arles in 2012, and was shown the astonishing recent finds from the bed of the Rhône by David Djaoui. Copious quantities of the beautiful honey-coloured cups and bowls produced in southern Spain were present, but no Lyon ware. This confirmed my findings from the 1970s, i.e. that there was a real division between Spanish and Italian products that were traded around the Mediterranean, and those made in Lyon, which travelled North and West. In 2015, thanks to Alain Grandieux, I was able to view the reserve collections of the archaeological museum at Cimiez (Nice), where once again the presence of Spanish and Italian sherds highlighted the absence of vessels from Lyon. The quantities of first-century pottery at Cimiez are small, as the city was founded by Claudius, and the early levels are buried deep below the later levels. In 2016, Emmanuel Pellegrino showed me large quantities of finewares spanning the period from Caesar/Augustus through to the mid-first century AD from Fréjus, where the presence of a single sherd of Lyon ware underlined the findings from Arles and Nice. At Fréjus, the early levels are easily accessible because the naval port silted up, and the fleet moved elsewhere by the Flavian period.

I had not visited Spain or Portugal during my doctoral research because a fellow student in France (Françoise Mayet) was working on Iberian fine wares, and we kept each other informed about our findings. In May 2017, during a visit to Lisbon, José Quaresma, Rodrigo Banha da Silva and Catarina Viegas showed me quantities of fine wares from Lisbon itself and other sites in the Lower Rineland and Lyon ware cups from Vindonissa, Switzerland
vicinity. I also saw some vessels from the Algarve on display in the National Archaeological Museum. This material included typical Baetican vessels of the kind with which I was familiar in Britain, and from continental finds down the Rhine to Switzerland as well as from Provence. Alongside the familiar forms and fabrics were many others in different fabrics and finishes. Recent publications of fineware in Spain indicate a number of major regional production centres, such as Mérida and León, but Baetica seems to have been the only source from which vessels travelled to Britain. Some finewares of Spanish forms were also made at Fos-sur-Mer on the south coast of France, but I know of no evidence for significant distribution. To confuse matters further, bowls very like those from central Italy were made in the Balearic islands, and some are found in eastern Spain.

The complexities of the Iberian provinces and around the western Mediterranean make things look a lot simpler further north. In addition to the source of Lyon ware having been established, Bernd Liesen has published production debris from Xanten that indicates a centre for the production of a fineware that I attributed to the Lower Rhineland in 1979.

So, 45 years after my preliminary presentation in Cardiff, I can confirm that the general outlines detected in the 1970s were not misleading. It is satisfying to have pinned down some of the production centres, and it is clear that recent finds have done little to extend the distribution maps of pre-Flavian finewares in Britain. The only expansion that has taken place has been towards the North and the West, adding some sites occupied in the early Flavian period. The quantities involved are so small that they do not argue for any significant importation of these wares (or the contemporary central Gaulish lead-glazed wares) after AD 70.

NB: I am always interested in hearing about new finds of pre-Flavian colour-coated or glazed wares - please drop me an email at kevin.greene@ncl.ac.uk.

Iron Age & Roman Pottery from north-eastern Lincolnshire
Ian Rowlandson

Over the past eight years more than 60,000 sherds (1.26 tonnes, RE738) from the north-eastern portion of Lincolnshire have been recorded by the author. These were from the area bounded to the west by the River Ancholme, to the south by Caistor and Tetney, and by the Humber estuary to the north and east. A number of excavations in advance of some significant infrastructure projects have been undertaken, most notably in the area from East Halton to Immingham, and some key groups of previously unpublished material have been studied. Many of these projects are moving towards publication and this paper presents some preliminary findings.

The late Bronze Age to earlier Iron Age pottery assemblages from the low lying sites on the east coast predominantly consisted of handmade rock-gritted or sand-gritted wares made by the
potter exploiting the local Boulder clay deposits. Assemblages from Tetney and the pottery from the early phase of Weelsby Avenue, Grimsby show this compositional make up. By the late Iron Age shell-gritted pottery, presumably manufactured to the west of the Lincolnshire Wolds, featured in most of the assemblages studied. The forms included large jars and bowls along with a range of finer, thin walled necked jars and bowls in a Late La Tène III style. Examples of these types of wares have been recorded from Kirmington, Weelsby Avenue and South Killingholme where shell-gritted wares often made up 30% of the assemblage by sherd count. During this period a considerable proportion of the assemblage was still made up of locally made rock-gritted and quartz sand-gritted wares.

In the early Roman period small quantities of local rock-gritted and shell-gritted wares were often still present but transitional ‘gritty’ wares, often wheel made, largely replaced them and made up around 40% of the assemblage by sherd count. Grey wares typically made up over 20% by sherd count of the assemblage and small quantities of samian, white wares and fine grey wares were also typically present. Groups such as the single period assemblage from Cartergate, Grimsby best illustrate this.

By the mid to late 2nd century AD transitional ‘gritty’ wares made up around 30% by sherd count but local grey wares made up the majority of pottery by this stage, typically around 65% by sherd count, with small quantities of samian and mortaria also typically present. A similar pattern continued into the 3rd century AD with shell-gritted Dales ware, produced to the west of the Lincolnshire Wolds, replacing the transitional ‘gritty’ wares. Nene Valley colour-coated wares were the commonest fine ware from the 3rd century AD onwards but typically only occurred in small quantities on rural sites. By the end of the Roman period wheel made shell-gritted wares and coarse quartz gritted wares replaced the supply of Dales ware. A small quantity of Crambeck and Huntcliff wares were also found amongst assemblages dating to the end of the 4th century AD.

It was notable that there were few vessels imported from beyond the boundaries of modern-day Lincolnshire. Shell-gritted wares became important from the later Iron Age onwards and continued to be used until the end of the Roman period. However, the majority of pottery in use consisted of plentiful supplies of local utilitarian grey wares. Published kilns such as Elsham, South Ferriby and sites in the Market Rasen area probably produced the majority of the pottery used from the 2nd century AD onwards though further local production sites will undoubtedly be confirmed in future. There was a thriving maritime trade in pottery and other goods traversing
the east coast of England during the Roman period but it appears that little pottery was
offloaded in this area as occurrences of Black Burnished wares 1 and 2 and other wares
commonly seen on Hadrian’s Wall sites are rare. It is likely that the thriving local pottery
industry meant these wares were not required to serve the needs of the local population and
only small quantities of fine wares, amphora and mortaria were imported into the area from
further afield.

Maria presented an overview of her doctoral research on the imported pottery found at sites
along the Atlantic Seaboard. These sherds of amphorae and Red-Slipped finewares (largely of
Aegean/East Mediterranean origin, with a smaller amount from North Africa) have had a long
history of scholarship and have frequently been used to connect sites in western Britain and
Ireland (such as Tintagel in Cornwall) with the Byzantine World. However, a recent surge in data
from western France (principally Bordeaux), north-west Spain (particularly Vigo in Galicia) and
Portugal has suggested new interpretations. The British finds can now be positioned within
much wider Atlantic distributions, reflecting networks of contact and trans-shipment between
post-Roman communities along the Western Seaboard. Variations in the distribution of the
ceramic wares indicate some differences in consumption within the Atlantic zone. Imported
Aegean wine (or possibly oil) was prized by communities in western Britain, but unlike the
Galician or Portuguese sites, fineware was less common – the limited number of sherds is
therefore unlikely to reflect widespread, complex dining-practices.

Maria hopes to continue this research – especially as a new phase of excavation at Tintagel,
conducted by Cornwall Archaeology Unit for English Heritage, promises many new finds. Studying these imports within an Atlantic context has the potential to provide new insights into the motivations for these shipments (demand for exotic commodities, raw materials etc.) and the mechanisms by which the maritime exchange operated. This will enable new narratives of shifting connections in this zone, and between the Mediterranean and Britain.
Returning to Pudding Lane: an early Flavian port assemblage from London (amphora at Centurion House)

Fiona Seeley (Museum of London Archaeology)

The stratified pottery from Centurion House primarily relates to the function of the port and the importation of amphorae-borne commodities in the early Flavian period. Notably contrasting to the earlier excavations on the site in 1981 where, although there was pottery associated with the port such as the discarded amphorae on the foreshore, substantial quantities of pottery deemed domestic waste were found (based on the used condition of the samian) to backfill the quays alongside discarded amphora from the port (Milne 1985, 41). In 2011 no assemblages came from the infills of the late 1st century quay (known as the East Quay) and thus it is possible to view this pottery as ostensibly relating to the use of the port as opposed to being waste disposal brought in from other areas of the City.

The majority of the stratified pottery from Centurion House was retrieved from features ascribed to period 201 (89 % by weight of the entire assemblage). The dating of this phase is predicated on a dendrological sample date of AD 70 from timber used in the construction of Waterfront 1. Secondary waterfront development is dated from AD 77 based on dendrological sample dates from a Waterfront 3 post and from AD 78 from the pier base samples taken in the earlier excavations (Milne 1985, 37). Therefore, it is suggested that the pottery from this phase was deposited in a relatively short time period. Unlike the previous excavations at Pudding Lane, those at Centurion House did not reveal the later 1st-century infilled east quay (contemporary with period 203) and this is where the majority of the 1st-century pottery was located in 1981. Those landuses from the earlier excavations that are contemporary with period 201 produced a significantly smaller assemblage (23.3kg compared to 155.9kg) (Tyers 1984) although both assemblages have high amounts of amphorae than subsequent phases for each excavation and oxidised wares are the second most common ware. So what this new excavation adds to our knowledge of the site is an insight into activities at the port before the large late 1st-century east quay.

Southern Spain is the main source of amphorae-borne commodities, notably the Roman province of Hispania Baetica, both in period 201 and subsequent periods. Based on the known typical contents of the different types of amphora and the analysis of the fabrics, it can be demonstrated that olive oil (Dressel form 20), wine (Dressel form 2–4), fish sauce (garum I muria) (Camodunum form 186) and defrutum (must syrup) (Haltern form 70) were being transported from this province to London.

The pottery from period 201 indicates no importation of samian or indeed any other ceramics apart from amphorae at this part of the port. This is corroborated by the evidence from the earlier excavations where although quantities of samian were high - 22% of the non-amphora assemblage by weight - the evident wear on the vessels suggested a domestic source rather
than stock (Milne 1985, 41). This is in marked contrast to other port sites where substantial amounts of stock samian have been found such as at Regis House, Three Quays and St Magnus House. Despite the low quantities of samian, there are three examples of the relatively uncommon Ritterling form 13 inkwell (SAMLG 6RT13), two of which are from period 201. As the footrings are worn these are unlikely to be stock and may relate to the administration of trade at the port. In a study of the distribution of inkwells in Roman London, it is demonstrated that during the Flavian-Trajanic period their occurrence on sites east of the Walbrook is mainly related to trade and commerce (Monteil 2008, 179).

**Bibliography**

Tyers, P A, 1984 *The Roman pottery from Pudding Lane: an appraisal*, unpublished Department of Urban Archaeology rep

✓ ‘I saw the sign’: Chi-Rho graffiti from Brandon House, Southwark

*Eniko Hudak (Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd)*

Excavations at 170-194 Borough High Street, Southwark, London – also known as Brandon House – by PCA Ltd. between November 2014 and December 2015 unearthed a substantial amount of Roman pottery (over 13,000 sherds weighing more than 300kg), but most interesting of all was a single sherd: a fragment with a Chi-Rho graffito.

The sherd is an Oxfordshire Red Colour-Coated Young type C100 mortarium fragment dated to AD300-400+. The graffito is located on the exterior just underneath the flange of the vessel; Roger Tomlin has kindly confirmed it to be a Chi-Rho, an example of the earliest and most widespread Christian symbol. This first appeared as a capital letter P overlaid by a capital X – in our example the X is slightly off centre. These letters stand for the first to letters of the Greek word *Christos* meaning ‘the anointed one’.

There is a variety of objects in Roman Britain bearing the Chi-Rho: from coins to dress accessories, seals, metal vessels, lead tanks – and some pottery. C. F. Mawer’s work ‘Evidence for Christianity in Roman Britain: The small-finds’ (1995) lists only eight verified or possible examples of pottery with Christian symbols, and only one other example was found in the Museum of London archives since publishing, which shows what a rare find our sherd from Brandon House is. At the conference we explored the potential questions the presence of this extraordinary find raises: Was this symbol to be intended on display? Was it a mark of ownership? Was the vessel the possession of a Christian individual/family or the Christian community living in Southwark? What was its function? How does Christianity fit into the religious landscape of ritual shafts, wells, and the temple district in Southwark?
The answers to these questions are far from straightforward. We do not know who used this vessel and what the intent was behind scratching the Christian monogram on it – in fact, the very presence of this sherd raises more questions than it might ever answer. The Chi-Rho from Brandon House is nevertheless an important and rare find. One should not jump to wide ranging conclusions about Roman Christianity from a single find, however, this sherd suggests a Christian presence in the complex and dynamic religious scene of Roman Southwark.

“ The Footprint of Potters” – Calculating the carbon footprint of the 2017 SGRP conference in Carlisle

Derek Hurst

When SGRP treasurer it occurred to me to calculate the impact of a SGRP conference in terms of its carbon footprint, as this seemed a natural extension of financial accounting. I have here taken travel to and from the 2017 conference as a first case study, and the total combined mileage of those attending the conference is estimated to be c 9600 miles. Using a calculator on www.carbonfootprint.com this comes out as the equivalent of generating the following quantities of CO2:

- If all travel was by average car manufactured 2005 = 0.22 metric tonne;
- If all travel was by train = 0.19 metric tonne.

I was surprised how similar the figures were for rail and car – if, just for the sake of argument, we had all flown, then the figure would have gone up ten-fold.

Since I did not know precisely how (car or train) individuals travelled, I have taken a nominal figure of 0.20 metric tonne CO2 for the present exercise. Apparently a mature tree absorbs 50lb (22kg) of CO2 per annum, so our two days of travel (50 participants, so 100 person days) would require about 10 tree-years or 3650 days of tree growth to counter this effect, that is in terms of getting the CO2 safely locked away rather than being freed into the atmosphere as a greenhouse gas. Or looked at another way, that is in terms of two days in the life of the landscape, it would take about 1800 trees (equivalent to about 300 acres of mature woodland) to neutralise the effects of the travel, if a real-time countermeasure was employed.

Carbon offsetting has been developed, where various tree-planting schemes in the UK, and often also in other countries, get the benefit of being supported as a way of countering the negative effects of CO2 emissions. The calculator seems to work on 7 trees/tonne of CO2 being ‘adopted’ and, therefore, protected, and so balancing the 2017 conference CO2 emissions would be about 1.5 tree’s worth. Looking at the various schemes being offered, it seems that this could be offset by paying £3 to a community project overseas, or £10 if trees in the UK. This is all just worked through by way of an example.

I hope this will not be regarded as in any way a disincentive to having conference meetings, nor viewed as an attempt to instil a sense of guilt at attending such meetings! On my part, it is really just a matter of interest to understand the effects of group activities, so that we are at least aware of the consequences that a group that studies the past might be having on the present (and future).
✓ Pot photos – a possible threat?

Rob Perrin

On a couple of occasions recently, the possibility of using colour photographs of pots instead of drawings has been mentioned to me. I believe the chief reason behind this notion is cost – it is seemingly cheaper to take photos than to do line drawings – together with deadlines and staffing issues where deadlines are suddenly brought forward. Photos may work well with some pottery, perhaps, for example, a Mancetter-Hartshill mortarum with red-painted decoration or a beaker with white-painted scroll decoration (both seen in a publication) and, of course, photos attached to line drawings are a very useful add-on. I don’t believe, however, that photos alone would be appropriate for the majority of pots where it is important to see the profile. Lesley Collett’s 2008 profession practice paper ‘AN INTRODUCTION TO DRAWING ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTTERY’ (IfA professional practice paper no 10) covers all the main issues. Could any members who have had similar experiences or suggestions please contact me so that I can get an idea of just how prevalent the practice may be already or is developing… robperrin@ntlworld.com

✓ A Roman ‘vase’ from Ashstead

David Bird

The Ashtead Roman villa and tileworks project has drawn renewed attention to finds made in the 1920s in the excavation directed by A W G Lowther and A R Cotton. As part of the project all the previous finds are being re-examined. They include several of great interest including a very unusual pottery vessel. Lowther published a note on this vessel (1933) some years after his three reports on the excavation, possibly because he had given up trying to find a parallel. He had published a photograph of the pot in one of the site reports (1929, pl 7b) at an earlier stage of its reconstruction, but without comment. I have taken his illustrations to several pottery conferences, here and abroad, and asked a number of British experts, and still cannot find a close parallel. The pot itself was recently relocated in the Guildford Museum store and it was possible to establish that the fragments really did join together in the way that Lowther had illustrated them. It should also be noted that it does not seem to be possible for there to have been a handle.
Joanna Bird studied the pottery from John Hampton’s 1960s excavations on the Ashtead site several years ago and as a result suggested that there was a previously unrecognised local pottery industry, probably to be associated with the tileworks, as is not uncommon. Research into the pottery found in the excavations of 2006-2013, by a Surrey Archaeological Society finds group led by Isabel Ellis with the assistance of Louise Rayner, has confirmed the existence of this industry and the likelihood that the vessel under consideration was one of its products.

It was found in the fill of the ditch at the north-east corner of the villa, associated with many other finds. Some of these can be identified among the many unprovenanced objects from the site, including samian vessels stamped by Boutius and Martius which can be dated to 125-155 and 130-160 respectively (and not the early 1st century as Lowther thought in 1933). Occupation at Ashtead seems to have come to an end in the early 3rd century so it is likely that the vessel is to be dated to the 2nd century.

The illustrations show Lowther’s drawing and photograph (taken at an exhibition) together with a view of the fragments as they now exist (the white blotches are part of a plaster restoration of missing fragments in the 1920s). Lowther described the pot as a ‘vessel of rare, vase form, …convex-moulded rim, the upper three-quarters of the vessel of truncated cone shape, the lower quarter hemisphere, ending in a slightly concave base with very neatly moulded foot-ring’.

The vessel was of ‘grey-coloured ware, varying to reddish-brown on the outer and inner surfaces. Externally … coated with a thick, enamel-like, cream-coloured slip … on the underneath of the base as well as on the sides of the vessel’. The height is given as 12 inches.

Any information about possible parallels would be gratefully received! It is relevant to add that there is now a considerable body of evidence suggesting a close link between the site and the military community, possibly starting as early as the 1st century.

Bibliography
✓ 3D Modelling of a flagon kiln at Silchester

Excavations by the University of Reading at Little London, c.1 mile to the south-west of the Roman town of Silchester this summer uncovered a tile kiln and two pottery kilns to add to the plethora of evidence for early Roman activity around the urban centre. The tile kiln was notable for identifying production of tiles stamped with the name of the emperor Nero (AD54-68), potentially identifying imperial involvement in construction at Silchester. A small circular kiln producing flagons was also identified, and included the use of Roman brick to construct a wall within the chamber, as well as a re-modelling of the chamber floor with re-used roof tiles. The recording methods used by the team have included survey methods that allowed for the development of 3D models of the kilns, with a screenshot below, and the full model available at: https://sketchfab.com/models/95f35f85412444359bb148edfafa10f93

![Screenshot of a 3D model of the flagon kiln, including re-used tegula roof tile](image)

✓ Tegula mammata from Usk

Joyce Compton

Following my return to South Wales I arranged to work on the unpublished ceramics from the 1986/8 excavations at Usk, under the auspices of the Curatorial Officer, Mark Lewis. The site report was published in Britannia 27 (Marvell 1996). However, the only finds included in this report comprise the coins and samian, and the intaglio (Marvell 1996, 100-10). Initially, my aim was to record and publish the ceramic objects, including the remains of several putative ovens. Currently, I am working through the tile assemblage, firstly to check there are no stray ceramics boxed with the tile, but, increasingly, because the tile assemblage is interesting in its own right. The following note describes one of the tile types present (tegula mammata). These are Brodribb’s Type B (1987, 63-5) and, with only four find-spots recorded in Roman Britain, are less common than his Type A (1996, 60-2). Examples of Type B tegulae mammata have already been recorded at Usk (Manning 1995); Usk being one of the four sites listed by Brodribb.
Brodribb ascribes different functions for his two types, with Type B coming under the heading of cavity walling (1996, 63). In each case, the *mammae* appear to be conically-shaped pieces of clay which are fixed one to each corner of a rectangular tile. A probable method of fixing to a wall is shown in a reconstruction diagram in Manning (1995, fig.95), where eighteen examples of the type are noted (1995, 301-2).

The current work is ongoing but several *tegulae mammata* have been recorded so far. The best examples are shown in Plates 1 and 2. That in Plate 1 is from the fill of a pit associated with Period I barrack buildings (Marvell 1996, fig.5). The fabric is a smooth orange-red with few inclusions. The tile itself is unusually thin at 16-20mm, as are the other recorded examples, and the *mamma* is 50mm deep with a base diameter of approximately 60mm. The *mamma* has been luted into position and finger-tip pressure has formed a channel around the base.

The second examples in Plate 2 are from Period II demolition debris deriving from Building 5 (Marvell 1995, fig.7). These are in a paler, sandy fabric and the complete *mamma* is 56mm deep with a base diameter of 65mm. The *mamma* has been luted is less prominent, but there is an obvious line at the join.

The fragments shown in Plates 3 and 4 below plainly show the method of attachment. A hole has been made in the tile and a plug of clay inserted. The *mamma* appears to have been luted on over the top. The scars where the *mammae* have attached provide base diameters of 61mm and 66mm, respectively. It is not immediately obvious whether there is a matching hole/plug in the base of the *mammae*, or whether the plug is used as a positioning device.

As mentioned above, Brodribb lists four findspots, Braughing, Cirencester, Dorchester and Usk (1987, 65). All are early Roman foundations, with the implication that Type B *tegulae mammata* were used in mid-1st century buildings in Roman Britain and not used thereafter. Usk seems to have produced the largest number, although the building(s) from which they are derived are yet to be identified.
In his note in Manning (1995), Webster sets out the background to the use of *tegulae mammata* elsewhere and identifies a further findspot at Exeter (Webster 1995, 300). However, the examples described by Bidwell (1979, 149 and fig.51) appear to be Brodribb’s flanged half-box tiles (1987, 65-7) rather than bossed *tegulae mammata*, although they are ascribed the same cavity-walling function.

There is more recording work to be done on the tile from Usk, including the *tegula mammata*, along with further research. It’s possible there may be examples from North Wiltshire (Clarke 2001) but these aren’t certainly Roman, and others seem to have been reported to the PAS website. If there are further Type B *tegulae mammata* of which Study Group members are aware, please could they get in touch and let me know.

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**Bibliography**

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- **Brodribb, G.** 1987 *Roman Brick and Tile*, Gloucester
- **Clarke, B.** 2001 ‘Recently Discovered Tegula Mammata from North Wiltshire’, *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, Volume 94, 228-30
- **Webster, P.V.** 1995 ‘Tegulae Mammatae at Usk’, in Manning, 1995, 299-302
Grey ware kilns at Congresbury, North Somerset
Amy Thorpe (Wessex Archaeology)

Wessex Archaeology has recently undertaken an excavation of a Romano-British kiln at Congresbury, North Somerset as part of Bristol Water’s new Southern Strategic Support Main pipeline works. An exciting discovery and opportunity given this is the first kiln investigated under modern conditions, with the last example excavated in the 1960s. In my new role as a pottery specialist at Wessex Archaeology I have started the assessment of the substantial quantities of pottery (approximately half a tonne) retrieved from the site. Domination of everted rim jars is immediately apparent, but an interesting range of other forms is present including the more unusual component of strainers/colanders. A fascinating journey is ahead of me in the production of a re-evaluated typology for Congresbury Grey Ware so watch this space for further updates ...

Two 3D models of the kiln can be viewed at https://sketchfab.com/wessexarchaeology

Beginning the examination of grey ware vessels from the Congrebury kiln
Enhancing the Worcestershire Ceramics On-line Database
Laura Griffin & Derek Hurst (Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service)

An updated and enhanced version of the Worcestershire Ceramics On-line Database (www.worcestershireceramics.org) is now available thanks to financial support from Historic England as part of their 'Improving Sector Reference Resources' initiative.

New features include the addition of detailed form information for locally produced medieval wares, as well as fabric and form information for the most commonly identified later post-medieval and modern fabrics. The inclusion of concordance data for medieval and later fabrics, allows cross-referencing to other fabric series for surrounding counties and is the first step towards creating a regional rather than a purely county-based type series. In addition, a software upgrade means that not only is data more accessible but the site is now also optimised for use on mobile devices.

Although this particular stage of development has mainly focussed on pottery of medieval and later date, the Roman fabric data still includes high-definition photographs of sherd sections, as well as detailed written fabric descriptions to aid identification. There are also bibliographic references for each fabric type, and concordance with the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (NRFRC). Furthermore, these latest updates have provided a template for future enhancements to the website which will include a form series and concordance for locally produced Iron Age and Roman wares.

Although aimed primarily at aiding consistent and high quality recording of pottery fabrics by ceramic specialists and students, the database is also easily accessible to anyone interested in the study of pottery, and is known to be used widely, indeed internationally, as a source of ceramic data.
In August 2017, the second excavation season of The Aylsham Roman Project was undertaken, advancing the results of the 2016 season of excavation, which had defined the location of two Roman kilns. The excavation was successful in fully excavating the Roman kilns, and also identified a number of enclosure boundaries near to the kilns.

**Kiln 1**

The kiln was semi-sunken with a single flue, and had a kiln chamber with permanent clay lining. One of the most interesting aspects of Kiln 1 is that it showed evidence of reuse, in this case 3 separate instances. The flue was re-lined after the first firing. The associated rake pit adjacent to the kiln contained approximately 7000 sherds of pottery as well as numerous pieces of kiln lining, construction material and debris. It appears that something went wrong in the final firing of the kiln which resulted in a high percentage of wasters within the firing chamber, as well as possibly causing the kiln to collapse internally. Based on the evidence recovered during the excavation it appears that the structure of the suspended floor surface of the kiln, collapsed, causing the contents of the kiln to spill over and break. This floor surface was still present along with the pedestal (central structural) pillar once the kiln was excavated. The clay lining of Kiln 1 was used for archeomagnetic dating samples which were taken onsite and are being processed by the University of Bradford. This will give us a working date range for the final firing of the kiln.

**Kiln 2**

The initial evidence for Kiln 2 was solely based on the results of the preceding geophysical survey which revealed a strong positive anomaly. Similar to Kiln 1, Kiln 2 also had a substantial associated rake pit which contained a large amount of waster pottery. Further excavations this season produced far more building material and more pottery. Interestingly all the mortaria recovered from the site have been associated with this kiln. Originally it was believed that Kiln 2 was in a far more damaged condition than Kiln 1. However; as excavation continued and as more of the structure was uncovered it was found that this was not the case. This kiln not only showed evidence of re-lining (in the same way as Kiln 1) but as the firing chamber was excavated it became apparent that the kiln contained an extant raised perforated floor. While a perforated floor is not uncommon in Roman kilns finding one so well preserved is. Beyond this it appears that originally Kiln 2 was much larger than it is now. The perforated floor was built in the original kiln construction. When the kiln was partially demolished after firing, part of the floor was also destroyed. The Romans then built a secondary kiln wall out of tiles and bricks with kiln lining on top. This gave the firing chamber its rather peculiar elliptical shape. Another nice detail is that the Roman workers repaired the perforated floor in a couple of places by using...
large floor tiles, motored into place and even in one area a large piece of pottery where a tile would have been too large. If you look closely in the photographs you can see the finger-marks of the workers in the mortar.

The second season at the Aylsham Roman project has produced some fantastic results. The excavation of the kilns has shown there to be a significant Romano-British presence in the area in the mid 1st to mid 2nd centuries. The project produced over 10,000 finds all of which are now being carefully processed ready for specialist analysis. Kiln 2 has been described as one of the best preserved Roman kilns excavated in recent years and is a fantastic example of a kiln serving a utilitarian function in Norfolk.

✓ A Head Pot from excavations by Allen Archaeology Ltd. At Bourne Grammar School, South Road, Lincolnshire (BOGS16)
I.M.Rowlandson & H.G Fiske

Allen Archaeology Ltd. undertook archaeological investigations at Bourne Grammar school, Lincolnshire in 2016. Eighty nine sherds (2.386kg, 1.9 RE) were presented for study. The majority of the vessels present dated to the 2nd to 3rd century AD. The pottery present was dominated by Nene Valley grey wares and a small quantity of the local shell-gritted wares produced at the Grammar School kiln (Precious n.d., Samuels 1983). A single sherd from a South Gaulish samian form 27 cup and a small quantity of native tradition wares suggested some activity in the late 1st to early 2nd century AD.
The most notable vessel was a unique head pot found in large fragments within a ditch fill. Ritual or ‘cult’ vessels such as these have been found at other roadside settlements in Lincolnshire such as Navenby and at Lincoln (Darling 2011, 2014, Darling in Rowlandson 2015, Darling and Precious 2014). Bourne has generally been considered to be a Roman roadside settlement and the presence of this specialist vessel would fit the pattern seen at other such sites in the county where ritual and mercantile activity probably went hand in hand. The face pot was of a significantly later date than the majority of the pottery, probably 4th century AD, but other finds from the site suggest that some activity did continue until then (Yvonne Rose pers. com). The face pot is unique and of national significance and contributes to a growing corpus of similar vessels that were often produced to represent deities or members of the imperial family.

**The Head Pot by H G Fiske**

Height: 178 mm  
Weight: 0.483 kg  
Rim diameter: 10 cm  
Percentage of rim (RE): 34%

**Form**

Close parallels with this vessel are not easy to find and it is likely that this type of vessel was made to order by individual potters rather than being mass-produced (Darling 2014). It does have some stylistic similarities to a well-known example from Lincoln inscribed 'DOMIIRCURIO' and now in the British Museum, that vessel is heavily restored but comparison can be made with the pre-restoration photograph below. Another from Colchester has similar vertically compressed facial features but the remainder of the vessel is much more plain (Braithwaite 2007, Pl. S13).
The treatment of the ‘hair’ is particularly unusual in this example; a prominent applied frilled strip extends down from the forehead to below the chin, and projects outwards from the vessel instead of being laid flat across the surface as more commonly seen, e.g. from Lincoln (Darling & Precious 2014 No. 1406), Margidunum (Braithwaite 2007 Fig. S4.7), and Sleaford (Elsdon 1997 Fig. 72.323). The nose is relatively naturalistic and appears to be pinched out rather than applied. Ears are not represented.

The eyes are similar to the British Museum example in that the outlines are incised, emphasised with painted lines and have an impressed and painted circular pupil. The eyebrows are also represented by scored lines and paint but not the eyelashes. The mouth is a narrow single scored horizontal line with paint representing the lips.

Unlike two other head pots from Lincoln already mentioned which are both dedicated to Mercury either by inscription or the depiction of associated iconography (his caduceus, or staff) and therefore likely to have been made for ritual use, this example does not appear to be dedicated to any particular deity. As such it is more difficult to suggest its original purpose; it may be that the more prominent than normal representation of hair denotes a female but more study and comparisons with contemporary images may be needed to clarify this further.

**Fabric**

The vessel is formed of dark- and mid-brown painted Parchment ware, under x 20 magnification it is very similar to sherds seen from Lincoln (Fiske & Rowlandson forthcoming). As such it represents the southern tradition of head pot manufacture which was broadly centred on the Nene Valley industry and utilised painted Parchment ware as here, rather than the northern tradition which was centred on Yorkshire and beyond and mostly used oxidised coarse wares. Other head pot vessels in similar fabric to this one from the local area include partial examples from Water Newton, Cambridgeshire, Lincoln Flaxengate and Denver in Norfolk.

**References**

Braithwaite, G., 2007, *Faces From the Past: A Study of Roman Face Pots from Italy and the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire*, British Archaeological Report Int. Ser. 1651
A Neo-Classical Perspective on Roman Pottery

Many thanks to Isobel Thompson for reporting back on this exhibition

Leighton House, Kensington has recently been host to ‘At Home in Antiquity’, an exhibition of late 19th century paintings by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836-1912), who was born in the Netherlands but resided from 1870 in London. Alma-Tadema was renowned for his paintings of opulent classical scenes and the realistic representation of ancient artefacts, in part fueled by visits to Rome, Naples and Pompeii. One such painting was influenced by the account of Cassius Dio of Hadrian’s visit to Britannia in 122 AD:

“Hadrian travelled through one province after another, visiting the various regions and cities and inspecting all the garrisons and forts. He personally viewed and investigated absolutely everything, not merely the usual appurtenances of camps, such as weapons, engines, trenches, ramparts and palisades, but also the private affairs of every one, but of the men serving in the ranks and of the officers themselves, — their lives, their quarters and their habits...” Cassius Dio Epitome of Book LXIX

[Image of a painting]
The painting ‘Hadrian in England: Visiting a Romano-British Pottery’ was originally a single enormous canvas more than 2.5m high, but after a negative reaction from the critics was cut into three stand-alone pieces. Now housed in three different museums in the Netherlands and Paris, it was a rare site to see the three pieces hanging together on the staircase at Leighton house, and a reminder of how long people have been examining Roman pottery closely (even if it was for art’s sake). Many of Alma-Tadema’s pots are exacting reproductions of colour-coated beakers all too familiar to members of the SGRP.

![Image of the painting 'Hadrian in England: Visiting a Romano-British Pottery']

✓ Do Androids Dream of Identifying Sherds?

If you will excuse the poor science-fiction pun, pottery specialists have long speculated on the possibility of using XRF or other microscopy techniques that would allow for the computer analysis of the composition of pottery, thus defining the provenance of sherds (even that mass of grey wares? I hear you ask), or computer scanning to classify form types and vessel size. The prospect of such technology becoming feasible on a wide scale may have moved a step closer with the launch of the development of ArchAIDE, a proposed app for tablets and smartphones designed to create a new system for the automatic recognition of archaeological pottery, funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. Some links to youtube videos about the project including the 2016 launch in Pisa are below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDbO3Eww8wU
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbG0wuK_xU
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MxqXf2DeLY

Intended to run over a three year program, this ambitious project may bring the far-fetched closer to reality, and if you would like to read more on ArchAIDE and follow their interesting blog, then do check http://www.archaide.eu/project