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Abstracts of Journal Articles

Verulamium Region White Ware production at the Roman kiln site of Brockley Hill, Middlesex: a compositional and technological reassessment

Silvia Amicone and Patrick Sean Quinn

Discovery of a Roman kiln site dated to the second century AD at Northgate House in the present day City of London has begun to alter the view of pottery production and workshop organization, as well as the distribution of pottery, in and around Roman London. This kiln site produced a range of material closely matching Verulamium Region White Ware (VRW). Production of this common Roman coarse ware was hitherto thought to have been restricted to workshops of the Verulamium region between Stanmore and St. Albans but evidence for the manufacture of pottery types resembling VRW within London calls for a reassessment of this class of pottery and its circulation in Roman Britain. This paper reports the findings of a scientific reassessment using a combination of thin section petrography and geochemical analysis. Some 50 well-dated VRW sherds from the important Roman pottery production centre of Brockley Hill, near Stanmore, were examined by these means, with the results indicating that several distinct ceramic recipes were used to manufacture flagons and mortaria between c AD 50-160, perhaps reflecting natural variation in local clay sources. Comparisons with published compositional data on VRW from the second century AD production centre of Northgate House, London, confirms that a surprisingly similar array of fabrics also occur at this site, suggesting that Brockley Hill and Northgate House were closely linked. This compositional match means it may be difficult to distinguish between their products at other Roman sites in Britain and classifications may need revisiting. Several possible explanations for the compositional and technological variability of VRW pottery at the two sites, as well as their possible relationship with one another, are discussed in the light of the available archaeological and scientific evidence. The implications have significance for informing our understanding of the organization of pottery production in the early Roman period.

Keywords: London area, archaeology; early Roman period; pottery production and organization; thin section petrography; geochemical analysis; trade

'Hoo ware' - an investigation and comparative analysis of evidence recovered from a first century AD Romano-British site in north Kent

David Applegate

The discovery in the mid-1950s of an assemblage of sherds from Romano-British flagons of mid-first century AD date amidst the tidal saltmarshes at Hoo, on the Medway estuary in Kent, resulted in a short published typology of the pottery. Whilst no evidence of a pottery kiln was discovered the assemblage was suggested to be the working debris from a possible kiln. In 1996 members of the Upchurch Archaeological Research Group discovered another large assemblage of typologically identical pottery from the same location. This included evident waster material and parts of 'failed pots' alongside kiln bar fragments. The new evidence in particular indicates production at this location, particularly of flagons. The paper presents the material from the 1990s, with attention to typology and quantification, in a manner that moves beyond the initial publication of finds from 60 years ago. Petrological

analysis was undertaken to determine if the flagons, the other pottery forms, and the kiln bars and debris, recovered were all manufactured from the same clay source. The site indeed appears to be the location of a Romano-British workshop subsequently submerged by river and tide. During the early decades of the Roman province in Britain potters had exploited local clays, and specialized in flagon manufacture for regional distribution. These finds are placed within a wider perspective.

Keywords: Hoo/Medway estuary, north Kent, archaeology; early Roman period; pottery production; thin section petrography; flagons

Roman pottery production at the site of Vervoz, Belgium, between the mid-first century and the end of the second century AD

Barbara Borgers

This paper explores the potential of ceramics as a source for understanding social and technological traditions, focusing on the pottery production site of Vervoz in the Meuse region of Belgium. Excavations between 1962-72 revealed evidence for pottery manufacture during the Roman period consisting of seven workshops, production debris and pottery, dated to between the mid-first century and the end of the second century AD. This evidence was not written up following the conclusion of the fieldwork in the 1970s but is considered in detail here. By using a compositional approach, combining typo-morphological study with thin section analysis, aspects of the raw materials and production technology of this pottery are investigated. The results indicate both threads of continuity and meaningful discontinuity in Roman potters' choice of raw materials and technological traditions at the site over a period of 150 years. These technological practices are likely to reflect the social organisation of the Roman potting groups.

Keywords: Vervoz, the Meuse region of Belgium, archaeology; early Roman period; pottery production and organization; thin section petrography; technology

Unusual kiln vessels from Danbury, near Chelmsford, Essex

Joyce Compton

This paper provides an appraisal of a number of unusual vessels, deemed to be kiln products, recovered during the excavation of a Roman pottery kiln near Danbury in 2006. The robust appearance of the vessels in question has suggested an 'industrial' function, and a number of possibilities are considered, for instance, as parting vessels or as saggars, used in the firing of fragile vessels within the kiln, or as a type of 'refractory vessel'.

Keywords: Danbury, Essex, archaeology; kiln site; ceramic vessels of likely industrial function

Getting samian ware to Britain: routes and transport possibilities

Geoffrey Dannell and Allard Mees

The paper demonstrates the changing supply of samian ware to the Roman province of Britain, principally from workshops in Gaul, through the early and middle Roman era. This is via a series of maps relating to presence and quantities. The data used come from Names on Terra Sigillata volumes 1-6, being the work of Hartley and Dickinson, and therefore represents signed and stamped vessels only. The developing routes to supply the British market are mapped. The nature of supply arrangements is discussed, and in turn placed in perspective through a number of observations. It is emphasized that samian travelled alongside other, often more important, cargoes. The maps suggest interesting trade route differentiation that highlight the need for a multi-disciplinary approach. The value of more quantitative work is stressed. So too is the need for much more integrated analysis of trade patterns drawing upon complementary datasets and, within samian studies, a greater attention to comparative approaches.

Keywords: Britain and Gaul/France, archaeology; early and mid-Roman era; samian ware (*terra sigillata*); trade; economy

Pottery production in Roman Cologne: A summary of old and new finds

Constanze Höpken

This paper summarizes the phases of pottery production in Cologne through the Roman era. This is combined with observations upon the organization of production and its regional role. The workshops had the advantage of an excellently suitable local clay and within the city no less than fifty Roman pottery production sites are known, mostly through excavations. The developing typologies are shown, and influences noted. By the late Roman era Cologne wares were less prominent, with imports making up for some of the shortfall.

Keywords: Cologne, north-west Germany, archaeology; Roman era; pottery production; typology; technology

The ancient Tripolitanian amphora: the evidence from France and the recent excavation at Toulouse ‘caserne Niel’

Matthew E. Loughton and Laurence Alberghi

The paper examines the typology and distribution of the Ancient Tripolitanian amphora in the late Republican era with particular attention to its presence in Gaul, a subject hitherto hardly documented. The origins, chronology and frequency of this amphora type are considered. Its role in conveying olive oil from Tripolitania is clarified. The evidence of examples from sites in France is drawn upon, especially the recently excavated Late Iron Age trading and industrial settlement at Toulouse ‘caserne Niel’ which has produced a large number of examples. Examination of this assemblage is particularly instructive, with extensive illustration presented. Broader conclusions are suggested on the basis of the new knowledge of this amphora type.

Keywords: Tripolitania/Libya and Gaul/France, archaeology; Late Republican era; amphora; types; olive oil; trade; economy

A gazetteer of the incidence of less common samian ware fabrics and products in northern and western Britain: Roman rubbish, or riches? Part 1: Introduction and South Gaulish fabrics

Margaret Ward

This paper presents the extensive evidence for the presence of the less common samian ware fabrics from Southern Gaul in northern and western Britain during the early Roman period. A substantive listing of the material with typological and context detail is laid out. The material includes samian from the workshops at Montans and Banassac. An important element of the distribution is the supply of samian to the Roman army though this is far from being the single determinant or destination.

Keywords: Northern and western Britain, archaeology; early Roman era; samian ware (*terra sigillata*); Montans samian ware; Banassac samian ware; distribution; trade

Late Montans decorated samian ware from Scotland and North-West England

Felicity C. Wild

The presence of quantities of South Gaulish samian ware from Montans at sites of Antonine date in Scotland is documented, with particular attention to examples of decorated ware. Montans samian from Manchester and Wilderspool is part of the same picture and accordingly this material is included in the study. The paper thereby addresses a known gap in the literature on samian ware in second century Scotland and northern England. The potters represented and the typology and decorative styles of the vessels are examined. The paper pays close attention to the chronology of the vessels and the indications of trading that these vessels provide. A catalogue is included, with illustration, organized by find-site. This paper should provide a helpful reference for the identification of vessels from this source in the future.

Keywords: Scotland and north-west England, archaeology; Roman period; samian ware (*terra sigillata*); Montans samian ware; chronology