



The Study Group for Roman Pottery

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2018

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

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News from the Committee



✓ Introduction: Moving between chapters of the SGRP and onwards to publication

Welcome to the Study Group for Roman Pottery Autumn 2018 newsletter; and a time of minor transition when we can salute the work and depth of the SGRP membership. At the last conference and AGM, fittingly in Oxford, it was time for our chairman Christopher Young to step down from the position, and on behalf of all of us I would like to offer him our heartfelt thanks for all his hard work. Christopher has been able to bring not only his passion for Roman pottery, but also his wider expertise and diplomacy (and once his kitchen) to the presidency and his contributions as president will be sorely missed. But in closing Christopher's chapter as president, we do get to open up a new chapter, and welcome in Rob Perrin as the new SGRP president. Rob has served in several offices previously on the committee, including president, and has constantly been involved in a wide range of SGRP projects, even when he'd managed to escape the committee, so we are very much looking forward to hearing his views on the group's activities going forward.

THE JOURNAL FOR ROMAN POTTERY STUDIES

Sticking with my metaphor on 'chapters' I would also like to highlight that the Honorary Editor would welcome contributions for JRPS 18. The Journal is currently being assembled but there is space for further contributions. Enquiries over potential contributions are likewise welcomed. Please contact S.Willis@kent.ac.uk

Compiling this newsletter, principally searching for contributions from our members can be arduous but fun, and contributions recently have been slender, so please consider if you have anything of interest, large or small (research or commercial work, local interest or personal study, or exhibitions or publications) 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 2019. 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.

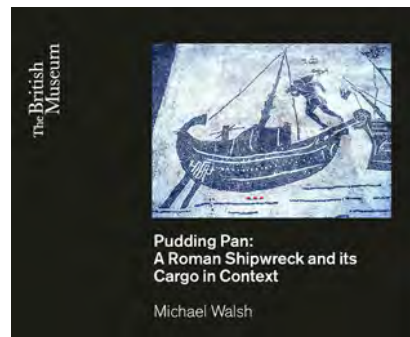
✓ The John Gillam Prize

We are constantly looking for nominations of articles or reports for the 2019 John Gillam prize. Please send your nominations to the Gillam Committee, consisting of the President and Publication Committee at robperrin@ntlworld.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.

Following several worthwhile nominations for the 2018 John Gillam prize, the committee was delighted to announce joint winners:

Michael Walsh, for: *Pudding Pan Rock: a Roman shipwreck and its cargo in context* and,

Morgane Andrieu, for: *research (including her thesis) on graffiti and samian ware*.



Both winners had conveyed their gratitude and thanks to the group, and expressed that they hope that not only have they made a contribution to the group, but that the recognition of the prize will make a contribution their academic studies and research goals.



✓ The Committee and 2018 Elections

Following the 2018 AGM during the annual conference, the SGRP committee comprises the following members:

President:	Rob Perrin
Treasurer:	Diana Briscoe
Secretary:	Jane Timby
JRPS Editor:	Steve Willis
Ordinary Member (Newsletter Editor):	Andrew Peachey
Ordinary Members:	Ed Biddulph, Jane Faiers, Roy Friendship-Taylor, Jane Evans, Alice Lyons
Website:	Ed Biddulph



SGRP 2018 conference



Saturday 16th June – Sunday 17th June

Roman pottery specialists gathered at the King's Centre in Oxford for the annual conference; and we were delighted to welcome 42 delegates. The theme of the meeting was late Roman pottery, though talks were not confined to that topic. Paul Booth from Oxford Archaeology began proceedings with an introduction to late Roman Oxfordshire. Edward Biddulph, also of Oxford Archaeology, was next with a talk on the later Roman pottery from the roadside settlement at Berryfields in Aylesbury. Malcolm Lyne rounded the morning session off with a talk on a late Roman kiln from Canterbury. After coffee break, delegates heard about pottery from Southwark, courtesy of PCA's Enikő Hudák, and Jane Timby then talked about pottery from rural Gloucestershire. Isobel Thompson followed with a talk on aspects of regionality in the types and distribution of grog-tempered ware in south-eastern Britain.

After lunch, there was an opportunity to view pottery assemblages brought by some of the group's members (many thanks to Paul Booth, Christopher Young, Edward Biddulph, Ian Rowlandson and Jane Timby). Attendees were treated to groups of colour-coated wares and white ware mortaria from Oxford-region kiln sites (the original excavator and Oxford industry expert Christopher Young was on hand to answer questions), as well as pottery from west Oxfordshire, the New Forest and elsewhere.

The group's annual general meeting, held as part of the conference, was a chance to present Christopher Young, the group's outgoing president, with a replica face-pot in gratitude for his hard work in the post.

The day closed with a talk by Christopher on how to put the Oxford industry back on the map and make it relevant to schools and the local community. The following day, Christopher led a smaller group of Study Group members on a tour of North Leigh Roman villa and the pottery collections at the county museum in Woodstock.



Oxford pottery industry luminaries Christopher Young (front) and Paul Booth (middle) at North Leigh villa (Photo: Jane Timby)

Documenting the Conference

We are always eager as Roman pottery enthusiasts to photograph a myriad of sherds and archaeological sites, and often also the conference speakers and each other....



...but this year we were very grateful that Kate Brady conducted an experimental exercise to film part of the proceedings, in this instance a lot of pottery handling, and we hope it demonstrates some of what was an excellent display or normally archived materials, and provokes a few memories for those who could attend.

You can view the video via a private Youtube link at:

<https://youtu.be/h8na9XfVIJE> and it will appear very much like the screen capture to the left.

For those who could not attend the conference, and those who would like a reminder, summaries from a selection of papers are included below....

✓ Looking at the transition from late Iron Age to Roman through grog-tempered wares.

Isobel Thompson

Transitions can't fail to be interesting. This talk was to present part of a larger research project, still in early stages, which is considering how pottery might help illuminate the transition from 'late Iron Age' to 'Roman' in Hertfordshire, London and their environs. How did it work at local level, and what different trajectories can be seen in the areas of classic grog tempering? A great deal of data is now available, although there are problems: quantified assemblages are the essential basis, but Hertfordshire (the heartland of grog-tempered pottery in the 1st century) is still comparatively poorly provided with these. And it is a great pity that it isn't possible to consider Colchester, as the fabric codes used for 1st century pottery there are not compatible. So although other data are being collected, for now the project is focusing on the relationship between Londinium and Verulamium, 20-odd miles apart, until the start of the Flavian period c.AD 70. Both places have a lot of material, so can the pottery shed any light on the relationship, and what might it tell us about the transition?

The relationship is that of a new planted settlement of incomers on the Thames, with an existing polity to the north ruled by a client or friendly king. Our evidence for this lies in his high-status burial, at Folly Lane, St Albans. Ros Niblett has allowed me to coin a pseudonym for him, 'Incognitus' – shorthand for 'the man who was a client king at the time of the Roman invasion and was not buried until the mid 50s'. When Londinium was founded in AD 48, five years after the invasion, he was still ruling a prosperous, well-connected and populous territory which was very much a late Iron Age society.

But this is not 'native Verulamium' versus 'Roman Londinium'. Verulamium in the mid 1st century, still in the lifetime of 'Incognitus', has three clear strands in its material culture: insular, continental (Gaulish), and Mediterranean (Roman). Although there is something in Jerry Evans's suggestion in the Horningsea volume that Verulamium may have been a Gaulish settlement, it is more complex than this – as the pottery shows. Copies of Gallo-Belgic imports, for instance, are made locally, but the fabric is different, and a local version (red-surfaced grog) used. They are never slavish copies, but an interpretation by confident potters willing to experiment.



Pottery handling at the conference

So what is the relationship in pottery between Verulamium and Londinium? Surprisingly, it seems that there isn't one, or at least nothing direct. Verulamium has imported goods which may have come via the Thames, but no obviously Hertfordshire pots go to London, not even the special fine wares. Between Verulamium and Londinium is the north London ridge and the sparsely settled London basin, a sort of no-man's-land between, although they were rapidly connected by roads. Within this no-man's-land, between Watling Street and Ermine Street but not close to either, the Highgate Wood workshop appears soon after Londinium's foundation. HWB is grog-tempered, and much used in London, but the forms are utilitarian and designed for the London market, and don't occur in Hertfordshire. HWB isn't used to make the elaborate cordoned and distinctly late Iron Age forms for which grog is so suitable. Did London markets regard them as old-fashioned? Did Verulamium restrict the consumption of these vessels, and not allow them onto an open market? Yet the vessels known as Highgate Wood A reveal an indirect connection, as although they were not certainly made in the Highgate Wood kilns, they look distinctly like Hertfordshire products. Highgate Wood is one of the handful of new workshop industries set up to fulfil contracts with Londinium for coarse wares (with others in north Kent and Surrey), but it appears suddenly, without context, and exactly who set up this workshop and directed it is unclear.

A handful of other pre-Flavian structural kilns which made grog-tempered vessels are known, as well as those at Highgate Wood. Bricket Wood just south of Verulamium, dating within the lifetime of 'Incognitus', made red-surfaced import copies, probably with advice from Gaulish potters. The Grove on the north-west edge of Watford, post-Boudican in date, supplied large late Iron Age cordoned jars to Verulamium. Possibly Bromham/Clapham at Bedford should be included, although it is not clear how many of these kilns are pre-Flavian; further afield, Sawtry and Swavesey made handmade grog vessels in conjunction with other fabrics. Perhaps most interesting are the group of kilns at Broughton, Caldecotte & Wavendon Gate, Milton Keynes, making Hertfordshire-type pots on Watling Street. Which came first? Did the road go this way because it went as far as it could within friendly territory?

I am not considering kilns in Kent, where grog-tempering continued in use alongside new Roman fabrics. But downriver from Londinium, in south Essex, is Mucking. This is another new workshop, set up by AD 50 to produce coarse wares in local shell, and grog-tempered fine wares in 'late Iron Age' forms – who were the potters here, and who the consumers? Much more shell was produced than grog, distributed along the Thames into Greater London. The grog-tempered fine wares, new to south Essex, were used locally (largely for burials). Whatever was going on here was quite different to Hertfordshire (and Kent); and again, Mucking products in grog did not go to Londinium itself, and not much in shell did either.

There are a great many London sites to examine, but so far I have only used published work, particularly quantification and illustrations. In Londinium 'unsourced grog' (some of which will be HWB) is quite common, but it occurs as bead rim jars, plain everted rim jars, storage jars, and other utilitarian varieties. These are the insular forms found in Londinium. Distinctive late Iron Age forms, such as copies and local versions of Gallo-Belgic butt beakers, plates and girth beakers, and the finer insular forms such as all the cordoned vessels, pedestal urns, carinated cups and bowls which were still being made in Hertfordshire, are conspicuously absent although there may be a sherd or two. It will be interesting to find out. HWB is even more ubiquitous, and was used for bead rims as well, and for some more interesting 'romanised' vessels, especially hook-rim bowls. Shelly ware is used for bead rim jars and storage jars (and the occasional oddity). Only a small amount of it is from south Essex and the distinctive 'graffito' jars from Mucking and Gun Hill are absent; this is because there was an organised supply of North Kent Shelly Ware and its distinctive storage jars.



SGRP members perusing new publications at the conference



Christopher Young, as outgoing SGRP president, receiving a 'ceremonial' face pot

A number of sites in Londinium north of the river have sherds described as 'late Iron Age', but these are never illustrated or described in unequivocal terms and I have yet to check them out. They could be a) early-middle Iron Age; or b) genuinely late Iron Age in fabric and form. The latter would be interesting, but are they vessels dating to the early years of the new city, or residual sherds from rural farmsteads predating the foundation of Londinium? Certainly nothing much is ever made of them in the available reports – but they deserve more attention. They need comparison with sites described as 'late Iron Age/early Roman' in Greater London, such as Marloes Road Kensington, which has distinctive native pottery and then an early Roman phase beginning in the post-Boudican period – another example of post-Boudican consolidation. Overall, what this means is that like Hertfordshire, the Greater London area remained in a 'late Iron Age' phase until after the Boudican revolt.

✓ Carry on Counting. A review of Roman pottery in Gloucestershire and Avon

Jane Timby

This talk was based on a recently published paper undertaken as part of the Roman rural settlement project (Timby 2017). Data was collated from a number of published and unpublished pottery reports for sites located in the western part of the Central Belt region encompassing Gloucestershire and the unitary authorities of South Gloucestershire and Bristol (formerly Avon). The paper was a pilot study to determine what data were available; how accessible they were and to examine how they could be exploited in terms of looking at pottery supply to defined rural settlements in the region. The collected data was used to present three case studies to illustrate the research potential of pottery and to see what the data for the study area could show. The first case study focused on coarse ware supply; specifically comparing Severn Valley ware, Lower Severn Valley micaceous grey ware and Dorset / South-west black-burnished ware. The second case study addressed site status through the presence or absence of traded fine wares, mortaria and amphorae whilst finally, the third case study was targeted towards site function by looking at the composition of the assemblage on the basis of vessel types.

Reference

Timby, J, 2017, What's on the table? A review of Roman pottery in the Western Central Belt, in M. Allen, L. Lodwick, T. Brindle, M. Fulford and A. Smith, *The rural economy of Roman Britain*, Britannia monog 30, 305-36



A selection of Roman pottery from Oxfordshire and the surrounding region on display at the conference



✓ Obituary notices

Steve Willis

In recent months, the SGRP have been deeply saddened to lead of the passing of two figures who have featured prominently in the past of the Study Group

Andrew Savage, Roman pottery expert at Canterbury Archaeological Trust, passed away in April after a short illness. Andrew had worked in archaeology with CAT for over thirty years. Rapidly building a very strong knowledge of the Roman pottery of Kent, Andrew was especially active with the SGRP, and with pottery matters in general, in his earlier career. In more recent years he took on the role of specialist photographer for the Trust but still undertook, as routine, all the Trusts' spot-dating. His contribution to the study of archaeology in Kent was enormous and his loss is deeply felt. An obituary notice by colleagues will appear in JRPS 18.

Alain Vernhet, the former curator of the museum and site at La Graufesenque, died in the late summer. Alain was an expert in samian ware and a frequent communicator of that knowledge at conferences and other gatherings. He was instrumental in enabling access to material for international study and was well known to attendees at SFECAG meetings and the Fautores. An obituary for JRPS 18 is being prepared by Peter Webster. An appreciation by Geoff Dannell is also in preparation for the Fautores.

✓ Roman pottery from Ancaster, Lincolnshire

Shirley Priest (with photos by Jim Priest)

Members of the SGRP may be familiar with previous excavations at Ancaster by Malcolm Todd of Nottingham University, however further excavations have been carried out over the last few years by a local amateur archaeological society called Farndon Archaeological Research and Investigations, or FARI for short. One member of FARI lives in Ancaster, and excavations are carried out in his gardens, (the property is outside the scheduled area). During these excavations ditches, roadways and walls have been located, and finds include metalwork, and pottery. The pottery finds include Iron Age, Romano-British coarse and fine wares, Samian, imports, amphora, and Anglo-Saxon. When my husband and I visited the site, we were shown one or two unusual items which at that point had not been identified. Sometimes it can be a little awkward on the amateur side of archaeology, we have a fair amount of knowledge of Roman pottery but we simply do not have the range of experience that a professional will have, so we try research and find an answer quickly, at other times it seems like we are hitting our heads against the proverbial wall.

One item was a Samian potter's stamp, when I could not trace it, I asked Dr Gwladys Monteil, who thought it to be an illiterate stamp, but during our conversations I mentioned the kind of pottery that was being found at Ancaster, and Gwladys was curious when I said that I had seen a piece of what I thought might be a piece of Samian mould there. Photos were sent, and passed round, and Geoffrey Dannell identified it not as a Samian mould, but as a coming from Water Newton and for the Colour-coated ware that was produced there in emulation of Samian.



A pottery mould from Ancaster

Another item was quite curious, there were two pieces of quite thin pottery, decorated with what at the time I called "tadpoles", and from a vessel about the size of a drinking cup. I tried to find examples, but failed, so I sent an appeal to Jane Timby for dissemination amongst the members in the hope that someone had seen something like it before. Jane herself answered within minutes, it was Lyon ware, and first century AD, the decoration is professionally described as "stem and bud".



Lyon ware found at Ancaster

I would just like to say a big thank you to everyone in the Study Group who very kindly helped in the identifications, but it occurs to me that other members might find the excavations of interest, the site Director of the current excavations has a blog, stonetosteel.blogspot.com which has some detail about the site and finds. In the future he is planning a day at Farndon Memorial Hall in Nottinghamshire when all the pottery from this year's excavations will be on display, mainly for FARI members to see, but any interested professionals would be welcome. This event is in the early stages of being arranged but I would be happy to confirm details to anyone when I have them, so please let me know if you are interested in attending, my email is priest118@virginmedia.com

✓ **New 'waster' material from Market Rasen, Lincolnshire**

Andrew Peachey (ajpeachey@yahoo.co.uk)

Recent investigations in Market Rasen by Allen Archaeology have begun to reveal further waster deposits associated with the major industry there. An initial scan of the material suggests a date in the 4th century AD, and that a limited range of coarse grey ware forms, notably large wide-mouth bowls, bead-and-flange rim dishes and jars with lug handles, amongst others; were being fired alongside a single type of Parisian ware beaker (with stamped decoration), in a fine reduced mid grey or black fabric.



'Waster' sherds of Parisian ware beakers

The only anomalous vessel type that does not appear in the waster deposits is a single coarse grey ware beaker that was deposited (and remains) complete, with a stamp decorated cordon.



An anomalous coarse grey ware beaker with a stamp-decorated cordon that was deposited complete and intact.

✓ The Kay Hartley Mortarium Archive Project

Ruth Leary

The SGRP have been very happy to provide a financial grant to assist in launching an application and project with the primary aim to secure Kay Hartley's archive on mortaria in a digital format for the use of other scholars and ultimately to make the information available on a web site where provision will be made for future additions and updating to be done by authorised persons with appropriate expertise.

Kay Hartley began to study name stamps on amphorae and mortaria (encouraged by Eric Birley) in 1956 but soon concentrated on mortaria. In the sixties and seventies with a help from two grants from the University of London, she visited France, Belgium and the Netherlands to find out which mortaria found in Britain were made there. She has continued to work on mortaria ever since and is the leading scholar in mortaria studies both here and on the Continent. She has served as a Trustee for the Roman Society on the committee of the Malton Museum. She also joined in rubbing name stamps on samian vessels with Brian Hartley. She contributed to excavations at Mancetter-Hartshill, Lezoux, and Heronbridge and in the Nene Valley

Throughout this long career Kay has faithfully recorded all name stamps that passed through her hands. This has taken the form of taking rubbings of the stamps themselves and recording the details relating to the stamp on card index cards.

In the Journal for Roman Pottery dedicated in her honour, the following comment aptly summarises the worth of Kay's life work:

"It is a measure of her supremacy that no serious excavation report of the Roman period can be completed without either a contribution from her or a reference to her work, JRPS vol 12, 2.@

Kay has kindly estimated the numbers of cards and rubbings and outlined the data on the cards.

- Approx 8,000 cards with an estimated total of 18,000 records (where a record= all the information relating to one stamp)
- 2, 000 rubbings to cover known potters and dies excluding Mancetter-Hartshill where these will be scanned as part of the Mancetter-Hartshill project and made available to this project for inclusion in the web site

Stage 1 will incorporate the digitising of primary records; Stage 2 the improvement and clarification of the database; and Stage 3 website design.

The later stages for this project will be the subject of applications to other funding bodies including the Haverfield Bequest perhaps but also Heritage England, the British Academy, the Pilgrim's Trust and the Society of Antiquaries of London. We are aware that these stages will involve engaging suitably qualified personnel and negotiating with possible homes for the website which will ensure its future curation. We are engaged already in researching these aspects of the project.

✓ Whats cooking in Roman Worcester? Street Food!

Jane Evans

Presentations at previous SGRP conferences and a recent article in JRPS have highlighted the recognition and reconstruction of ceramic ovens, notably in Worcester, and it is fantastic to see these finding an outlet into the public and educational sphere. We have a new exhibition on level 2 at The Hive, Worcester showcasing Roman archaeology discovered during The Hive excavation, including a rare portable oven used to cook street food.



We experimented on a reconstruction oven, created by Potted History, at King's Worcester fete in May.

Thanks to the Roman Society for funding the project. I hear school groups having tours of the Hive this week have been fascinated by it.

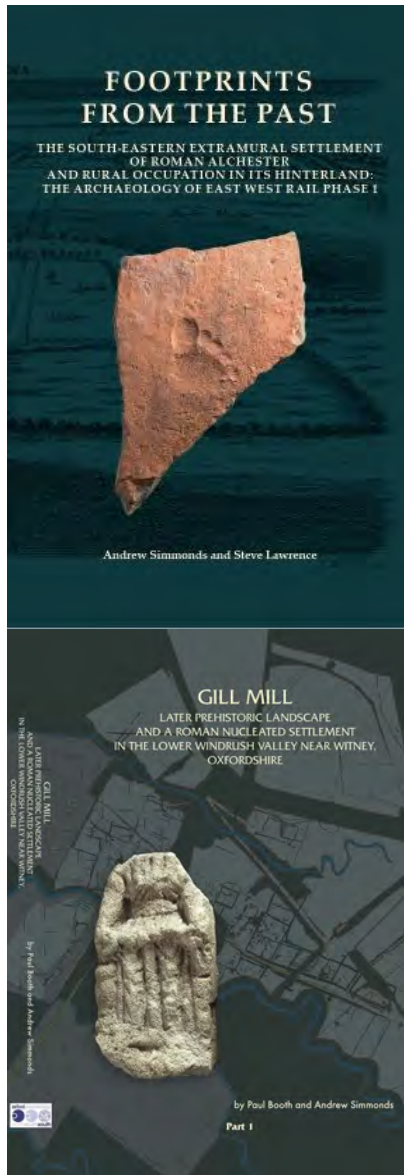
Jane Evans and the portable oven display in The Hive, Worcester

✓ Recent Publications from Oxford Archaeology South

Paul Booth

Two recent OA South monographs, obtainable from Oxbow Books, may be of interest to members of SGRP. *Footprints from the past* (Simmonds and Lawrence 2018) reports on a series of sites examined in the course of work on the East West Rail Link between Oxford and Bicester, mostly of Roman date, and with a focus on sites closely adjacent to the small town of Alchester. *Gill Mill* (Booth and Simmonds 2018) deals with middle and late Iron Age and Roman settlement excavated over a period of 25 years in the eponymous gravel quarry ten miles west of Oxford. Both volumes have pottery reports by Paul Booth.

The material from eight sites (two with tiny, mostly later prehistoric assemblages) on the railway project totalled just under 11,000 sherds, with the majority from two sites close to Alchester. A site immediately east of Alchester next to the spur running into the town from Akeman Street produced pottery ranging from the late Iron Age to the 2nd century, with limited hints of associations to contemporary military activity located just to the west. The site to the south, adjacent to the main Dorchester to Alchester road, had a slightly later date range, mostly from late 1st to early 3rd century. An overall lack of late Roman evidence was a striking characteristic of all but one of the railway sites, for reasons that are not entirely clear.



The Gill Mill pottery report deals with just over a tonne of pottery, amounting to c 61,000 sherds out of a total of 63,000 recovered. About 1500 of these were prehistoric and the rest late Iron Age and Roman, with the great majority deriving from a minor nucleated settlement roughly 10 hectares in extent (not entirely excavated) that seems to have been established in the early 2nd century and effectively superseded the elements of a more dispersed Iron Age and early Roman settlement pattern. The economic emphasis of this later settlement, sited on the floodplain of the river Windrush, seems to have been on cattle management, perhaps operating as part of a larger estate centred outwith the extensive area examined (c 129 hectares, of which some 75 hectares were fully stripped).

As with the railway sites, relative proximity to the Oxford industry means that the products of that industry were important (and some of the material was displayed at the SGRP conference in Oxford in June), but in the 2nd and 3rd centuries products of an as yet unlocated 'West Oxfordshire' industry formed a major part of the assemblage. In the later Roman period the assemblage is notable for significant quantities of black-burnished ware, a number of these vessels carrying a variety of 'owners' marks. The size of the assemblage, and over 1000 coins, enable the end of occupation at the site to be defined fairly closely, at about AD 370, with minimal evidence for later activity.

Reference

Booth, P. and Simmonds, A., 2018 *Gill Mill Later prehistoric landscape and a Roman nucleated settlement in the lower Windrush valley near Witney, Oxfordshire*, Oxford Archaeology Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph No. **42**, Oxford

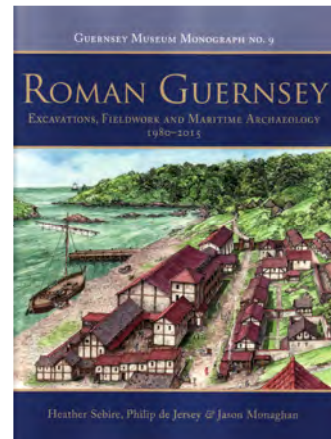
Simmonds, A. and Lawrence, S., 2018 *Footprints from the past The south-eastern extramural settlement of Roman Alchester and rural occupation in its hinterland: The archaeology of East West Rail Phase 1*, Oxford Archaeology Monograph No. **28**, Oxford

✓ Roman Guernsey

Jason Monaghan

'Roman Guernsey' is the culmination of work over the last 35 years and the ninth in Guernsey Museums' Monograph series. It includes reports on urban excavation in St Peter Port at the Bonded Store by Heather Sebire and Bob Burns at La Plaiderie – the last written up by Phil de Jersey.

A gazetteer rounds up some 100 small excavations, shipwreck sites and chance finds of Roman objects across Guernsey and Herm going back as far as the antiquarians. Although even the main two sites are small compared to UK urban sites the book is important for what it adds to our knowledge of Roman trade. Evidence suggests that a Roman town once stood on the site of St Peter Port, acting as a Port of Call on the trade route coming up the Atlantic coast and along the Channel. Guernsey has half of all Britain's suspected Roman shipwreck sites and receives a remarkable cross-section of traded wares considering its size and position on the fringe of the empire.



An extensive pottery report begun by Mark Wood in the 1990s and edited by Jason Monaghan with some quantification is supplemented by samian reports by Brenda Dickinson and Brian Hartley and smaller notes by other specialists. We have described and illustrated more vessels than would be normal for assemblages of this size (<15,000 sherds total) as this is the first full presentation of material from the islands. With little local manufacture, we know that almost every vessel has been made elsewhere and it all arrived by sea.



The authors: Jason (front), Philip and Heather at the launch of 'Roman Guernsey'

As an island we have none of the 'edge effects' blurring interpretation of pottery supply to a terrestrial town. Internal dating is limited but we have identified some general trends in pottery use throughout the Roman period, which for Guernsey begins soon after 56BC and ends in the mid/late 5th century. There are notable gaps in our knowledge, in particular that we haven't located a significant cemetery and the fact that we don't know what the settlement that grew into St Peter Port was called. The book does not cover Alderney or Sark, but draws on the exciting evidence now emerging of how they too also have significant Roman archaeology.

'Roman Guernsey; Excavations, Fieldwork and Maritime Archaeology 1980-2015' by H. Sebire, P. de Jersey and J. Monaghan is published by Oxbow Books and is available for order online at £40.

A limited number of copies are available from Guernsey Museum shop at the heavily discounted price of £24 including P&P to the UK. Please pay by cheque, made out to 'States of Guernsey'. Please post to: Amanda Cook, Guernsey Museum, Candie Gardens, St Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 1UG and enclose your address.

✓ Through the eye of a...?

A recent early 2nd century deposit in the enclosure of a villa has revealed an intriguing small object: a coarse ware cone with a narrow perforated tip; possibly the stopper of a lamp, incense burner or similar apparatus to draw up or drip down oils. The interior has a lustrous residue, while the exterior is burnished with a ring of wear, as if it rested on the neck of another vessel below. If any one has any further ideas or comparisons, please contact the *newsletter editor*.



✓ Autumnal musings and a vintage photo

The newsletter editor was feeling rather seasonal as the recent summer weather deteriorated, and more so when he saw this vintage photo shared on the newsfeed of the Parco Archeologico di Pompei – entitled ‘Amphorae from Oplontis’ (the villa of L.Crassius Tertius, devoted to the production of wine, oil and agricultural goods), with the associated quote, which plunged me into musing on how we consider the secondary use of pottery vessels, why they were retained and arranged.



‘In August, they stripped the leaves off the vine to foster the growth of the bunches, then they gathered the fruit to store it as winter supply, after being dried or dipped in must or honey: peaches, figs, blackberries, plums, apples and pears. They collected water to wash the amphorae used to contain wine. The recipients, after being scraped to clear all the residuals from the year before, were washed with sea water, left to dry and coated in tar. In Pompeii we often found piles of upside down amphorae left there to dry.’