

SHERDS WITH RSX DECORATION

Pottery with so-called Romano-Saxon decoration is now generally thought to be a mid to late 4th century manifestation. The decorative styles can variously be represented by dimples, impressed lines and symbols, moulded animal figures and bosses. The styles recorded at Elms Farm can be paralleled in Roberts (1982). Only thirty-one examples (listed below) were noted in the entire assemblage, with just under three-quarters of these appearing in appropriately-dated contexts (cp25 is the notation for late 4th century+). Only two contexts, however, are key pottery groups but, interestingly, two features, 8736 and 15354, are Saxon.

As would be expected, more than half of the sherds are in fine fabrics, such as fine and Hadham grey wares and Hadham oxidised ware. This would confirm a Hadham source for this style of decoration. The average sherd weight, at 8g, is low.

A gazetteer of Essex findspots was published some time ago (Rodwell 1970). These include Chelmsford, Wickford, Mucking, Stanford-le-Hope, Rawreth, Great Chesterford and Colchester. Rodwell has pointed out that not all of these findspots have firm Saxon connections and that most of the gazetteer is represented by unstratified material. Heybridge, which does have a firm Saxon connection, can now be added to the list of findspots.

Given that the number of occurrences at Elms Farm is so low, and context information so general, establishing connections between the presence of RSX sherds and any Saxon influence is an impossible task. If anything, the evidence seems to be contradictory.

References

- Roberts, W.I., 1982 *Romano-Saxon Pottery*, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Brit. Ser. **106** (Oxford)
- Rodwell, W.J., 1970 'Some Romano-Saxon Pottery from Essex', *Antiq. J.* **50**, 262-76

Context	Feature	Fabric	Description	cp	Phase
5159	Layer	BSW	Body sherd with embossed lion	25	V-VI
5227	Layer	HAX	Body sherd with embossed lion	25	V-VI
5275	Layer	GRF	Body sherd with RSX decoration	25	V-VI
5306	Layer	BSW	E3 rim with RSX dimples	25	V-VI
5453	Layer	BSW	Body sherd with RSX dimples	25	V-VI
5713	13707	GRF	Body sherd with RSX decoration	18-20	IIIB
6153	Layer	GRF	Body sherd with RSX dimple	21-25	V-VI
7470	Collapse	GRF	Body sherd with dimple	25	V
8636	8635	GRS	Body sherd with RSX decoration	25	VI
8737	8736	HAR	Body sherd with dimple	25	VI

LIA/Roman Pottery: Saxon Interface
Archive Note

Context	Feature	Fabric	Description	cp	Phase
<i>8737</i>	<i>8736</i>	BSW	Body sherds with RSX decoration	25	VI
8967	8966	HAR	Body sherd with ?boss	22-23	V
10017	10067	GRS	Body sherd with RSX decoration	24	V
10405	10538	BSW	Body sherd with possible RSX decoration	25	V-VI
10516	10518	GRF	Bowl rim with RSX decoration	25	IV
12206	Layer	HAX	Body sherd with RSX dimples	0	0
13721	13284	GRF	Body sherd with raised boss - RSX	17	IIIA
14244	14245	HAX	Body sherd with raised boss - RSX	20-25	0
14564	14655	BSW	Body sherds with impressed RSX	22-23	V
14635	14632	HAX	Body sherd with RSX line decoration	19-20	V-VI
<i>15353</i>	<i>15354</i>	GRF	Body sherds with bosses - RSX	25	VI
16230	16231	HAX	Body sherd with lion motif	25	VI
19048	19047	GRS	Body sherd with boss	25	VI
20034	14934	HAX	Body sherd with groove and boss	23-24	IV-V
20334	Layer	HAX	Body sherd with RSX decoration	0	0
20533	20532	GRS	Body sherd with bossed decoration	25	V
20533	20532	HAX	E3 rim and body sherds with RSX dec.	25	V
20815	20814	HAR	Body sherd with boss- RSX	25	VI
21500	Layer	BSW	Body sherd with possible RSX decoration	25	0
22386	Layer	HAX	Body sherd with RSX decoration	25	0
24001	Layer	GRF	Body sherd with RSX decoration	0	0

Table 00. List, by context, of pottery with RSX decoration
(Bold indicates a key pottery group; italics indicate a Saxon feature)