

## The Glass by D Allen<sup>1</sup>

The glass from these excavations provides further examples of types recovered during previous work in and around the fortress. Most common are fragments of blue-green bottles, but several items of tableware, including a facet-cut beaker fragment (no. 6) were also found. The majority belongs to the later first and second centuries.

### Phase II

- 1 Small fragment of the handle of a jug; blue-green glass; streaky and bubbly. Flattened cross-section with raised central rib slightly off-centre. Width of handle c. 2.9cm (D19 SF123)

This small handle fragment almost certainly came from a long-necked jug of a type made in the Seine-Rhine region during the period c. A.D. 50-130/50 (Price 1978, 74)<sup>2</sup>. Varieties occur with both conical and globular bodies, the former most often having the type of handle with raised central rib represented here. These vessels have been fully discussed elsewhere by Harden (1967, 138-40) and Price (1977, 155-8; 1980, 66). There are several fragmentary examples amongst earlier finds from Caerleon, particularly from excavations in the *vicus*, and in the *fabrica* in Jenkins's Field (National Museum of Wales)<sup>3</sup>.

- 2 Small body fragment of a pillar-moulded bowl of blue-green glass. Cast in a ribbed mould, inner surface rotary polished, ribs fire-polished. (Unillustrated). (D7 SF102).

Pillar moulded bowl fragments, particularly those of blue-green glass, are amongst the commonest glass finds on first century sites in Britain and elsewhere<sup>4</sup>. They were made

1 This report was written soon after the excavations and not revised during the 1996 phase of post excavation work

2 See now Price and Cottam 1998, 150-57.

3 Other published examples from Caerleon now include those from the *canabae* Allen 2000, 434 nos. 85-90, the Fortress baths Allen 1986, 103 no. 13; and the Roman Gates site (Allen 1992, 180 no. 8).

4 See now Price and Cottam 1998, 44-6.

until some time within the Flavian period, but clearly some of these thick-walled, sturdy vessels survived for years, since they have been found on sites in northern Britain, for example, where occupation did not begin until the early second century (Charlesworth 1972, 198-9)<sup>5</sup>.

### Bottles

- 3 Base fragment of a hexagonal bottle of blue-green glass; iridescent. Blown into a hexagonal-sectioned body mould; design in low relief on base: central dot surrounded by two closely spaced concentric circles and a larger circle around the edge of the base. (D10 SF117).
- 4 Base fragment of a prismatic bottle of blue-green glass. Mould-blown; body shape indeterminable; design in low relief on base: part of four concentric circles and a central dot extant. (D10 SF115).

The following bottle fragments were also found in Phase II contexts:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| D9 SF113 | One base fragment, probably a cylindrical bottle.                           |
| D9 SF114 | One neck fragment.  |
| D7 SF73  | Five cylindrical bottle body fragments.                                     |
| D7 SF104 | One square bottle body fragment.  |
| D7 SF106 | One prismatic bottle body fragment.   |
| D7 SF109 | One prismatic bottle base fragment, part of four concentric circles extant. |

As on most sites in the Province occupied during the first and second centuries, most of the glass finds comprise fragments of blue-green mould-blown bottles. They occur in a variety of body shapes, most often square and cylindrical, but also hexagonal, rectangular and octagonal. Their characteristics have been discussed by Charlesworth (1966)<sup>6</sup>. One blue-green prismatic bottle has moulded trade-marks on their bases, often varying numbers

5 Other published examples from Caerleon now include those from the *canabae* Allen 2000, 426 nos. 4-6, the Fortress Baths Allen 1986, 10 nos. 6-7, 103 no. 24; the Roman Gates site (Allen 1992, 179 nos. 1-2) and the Legionary Museum site Zienkiewicz 1992b, 3 no. 1.

6 See now Price and Cottam 1998, 194-200

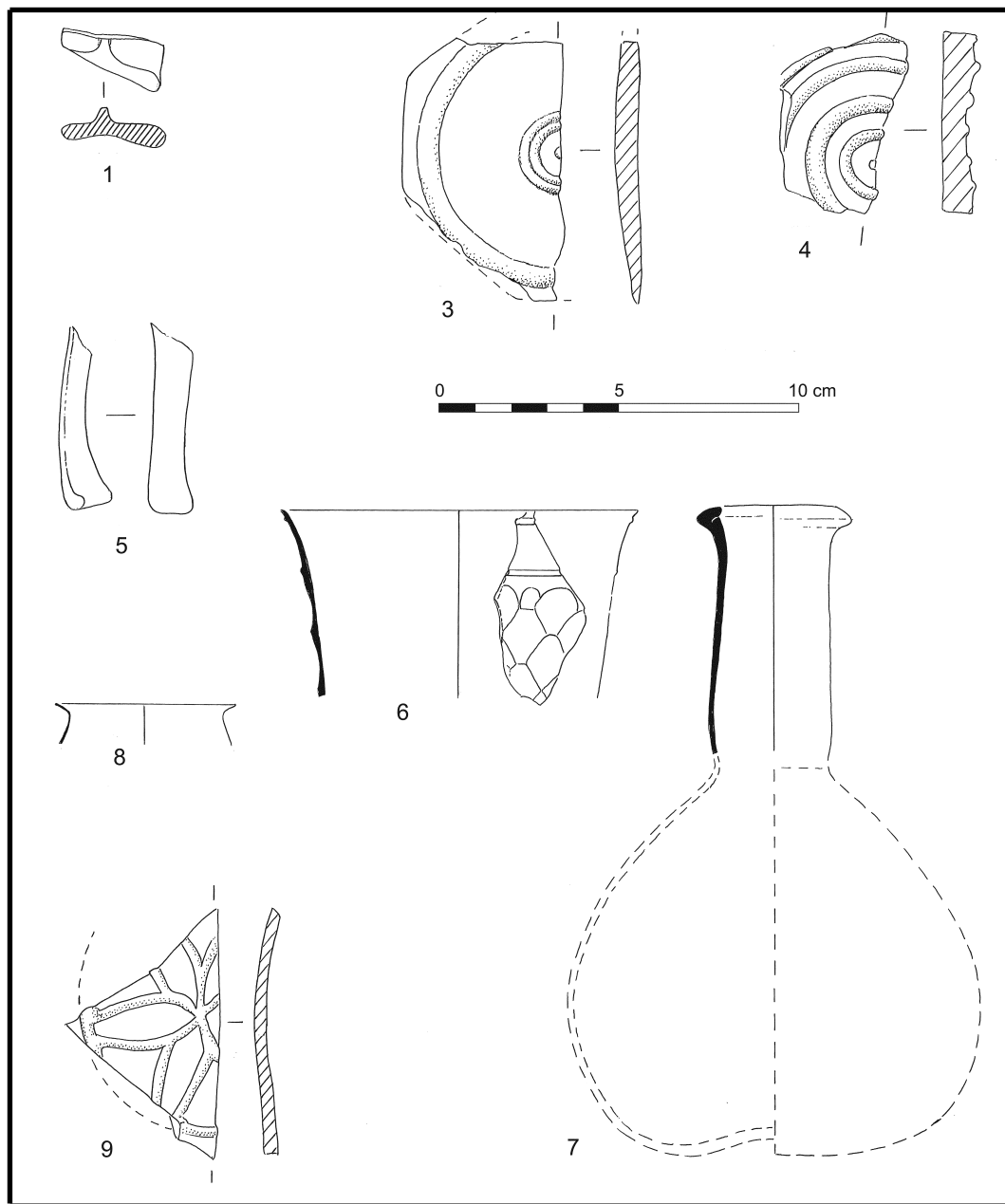


Fig. 47: Glass vessels

of concentric circles, but many other designs also occur. A wide range of liquid substances would once have occurred in these vessels, most of which were made between the years c. A.D. 60-130, although some manufacture, especially of the square variety, probably continued until the end of the second century<sup>1</sup>.

A great many bottle fragments have been found in previous excavations at Caerleon, and in addition a few substantially complete examples have been preserved by their re-use as cinerary urns (Lee 1862, 49-50, pl. 27.1-3; Boon 1967b, 95, fig. 1).

<sup>1</sup> Work since the early 1980s, when this report was written, has shown that Charlesworth's AD 60-130 date range is too short. Prismatic bottles

remained common throughout the second century with some continuing in use during the first half of the third century.

### Window Glass

All window glass fragments were made of the matt/gloss variety, made by casting in a tray, and in use until c. A.D. 300. The techniques of manufacture and previous finds from Caerleon have been discussed by Boon (1966b). One blue/green fragment was found in each of the following contexts.

D17 SF118

D10 SF116

D9 SF111

D9 SF112

D9 SF114

D7 SF103

D7 SF73

### Phase III

- 5 Tubular fragment of blue-green glass; surfaces dulled, with whitish iridescence. One end extant, fire-rounded and thickened by flattening on a surface; curving tube, oval cross-section, broken edge having part of a sharper reverse curve extant. Finished end 1.3 x 1.2 cms; broken end 1.2 x 0.7 cms. (D6 SF65).

The narrowness of the end opening of this curious piece of glass makes it likely to represent a spout of some sort, rather than a rim of an unguent bottle or flask. The curve is unusual, but it is possible that this is a later distortion caused by heat, as in a fire (there are one or two other fragments showing signs of heat distortion from the same context). This piece may therefore be the spout of a glass funnel, a fairly uncommon first and probably early second century form (Isings 1957, 92, form 74). British finds include a fragmentary example from a context dated before A.D. 130 at the Caerleon *vicus* (National Museum of Wales), another from Exeter (Charlesworth 1979, 229, no. 40, fig. 71), and possible spouts from Colchester, Verulamium and the *fabrica* in Jenkins's Field at Caerleon<sup>1</sup>.

### 6 Rim and side fragment of a beaker of buff-

<sup>1</sup> See now Cool and Price 1995, 174. Most appear to be of first century date.

coloured glass; surfaces pitted and iridescent. Blown; outer surface rotary-cut and polished: horizontal ridge beneath rim, another further down the side, beneath which is the zone of decoration, comprising diamond-shaped facets set in quincunx, the top row having rounded upper sides, and smaller facets filling the gaps in between them. Diameter of rim c. 10cm. (D6 SF88).

Facet-cut beakers of this type belong to the Flavian and Trajanic periods, and fragments are quite often found on British sites. Their characteristics have been discussed by Harden and Price (1971, 339-44)<sup>2</sup>, and variations include the overall shape, which may be tall or squat, and the shapes of the facets, which may be hexagonal, oval, diamond-shapes, curved, or, in the case of a rare vessel from a Flavian context in the Caerleon amphitheatre used to depict a scene such as a chariot race (Boon 1967b, 98, fig. 3). Most were probably imported to Britain from Italy, although the type is likely to have originated further East, perhaps Alexandria. The form is well represented amongst earlier finds from Caerleon: 17 fragments are known to me, from excavations in the *vicus* and in and around the fortress, all from late first/early second century contexts (National Museum of Wales; Nash-Williams 1929b, 257, no. 2; Nash-Williams 1932a, 85-7, no. 53; Wheeler and Wheeler 1928, 170, no. 6; Boon 1967b, 98, fig. 3; GGAT excavations)<sup>3</sup>. It is interesting that there does seem to be a very general trend for these beakers to occur most frequently on sites where the military presence was strong: at Caerleon, Chester and Corbridge, for example. However, this distribution bias is far from exclusive, and a number of pieces have been found at sites such as Verulamium (Charlesworth 1972,

<sup>2</sup> See now Price and Cottam 1998, 80-83. The date range would now generally be accepted as extending into the second quarter of the second century.

<sup>3</sup> Other published examples from Caerleon now include those from the Fortress Baths Allen 1986, 101 nos. 17, 103 no. 24; and the Roman Gates site where they were relatively common (Allen 1992, 182 nos. 21-24).

206-8, nos. 1-2, fig. 77.41-2) and villas such as Fishbourne (Harden and Price 1971, 340, nos. 39-44). It is therefore not clear whether this slight tendency towards military sites reflects a major source of wealth at this time, or a favour for the type amongst army personnel, or the fact that some examples came into the country in their private possessions.

### *Bottles*

D6 SF54	One square bottle body fragment.
D6 SF59	One neck fragment.
D6 SF60	One handle fragment.
D6 SF96	One prismatic bottle base fragment, part of two moulded concentric circles.
D6 SF97	One cylindrical bottle body fragment.
D5 SF40	One prismatic bottle body fragment.
D5 SF42	One cylindrical bottle shoulder fragment.
D5 SF93	One prismatic bottle body fragment.
D5 SF94	One neck fragment.
D4 SF17	One square bottle body fragment.
D4 SF28	One handle fragment.
D4 SF83	Two handle fragments.

### *Window Glass*

One blue/green fragment was found in each of the following contexts

D6 SF51
D5 SF32
D5 SF95
D4 SF27

### **Phase V**

- 7 Rim and neck fragments of a flask of clear blue-green glass; elongated bubbles within the metal. Rim folded outward, upward and inward and flattened to 'mushroom' shape; cylindrical neck with constriction at its base. Diameter of rim 4.3cm. (B2 SF132).

The body of this vessel would almost certainly have been of a rounded-conical shape with a

slightly concave base, thus representing the commonest first century flask type (Isings 1957, form 16). Several complete examples have been found in burials at Colchester, including that of the Claudio-Neronian Child's grave, and another Neronian grave salvaged in 1970 at Sheepen (Colchester and Essex Museum). The manufacture of these vessels probably ceased towards the end of the first century<sup>1</sup>.

- 8 Rim fragment of a beaker of colourless glass, now milky white and opaque; some bubbles within the metal. Rim out-flared and ground smooth, diameter c. 5.5 cms., sides expand downward. (D11 SF20).

Colourless glass beakers, often decorated with horizontal wheel-cut lines, were popular from the Flavian period and throughout the second and more of the third centuries. Variations include truncated conical, cylindrical, hemispherical, globular and carinated vessels, and the expanding sides of the rim fragments catalogued here suggests that one of the last two shapes is represented<sup>2</sup>. Possible parallels include a carinated beaker from a late first/early second century pit at Wroxeter (Bushe-Fox 1916, 34, pl. XXIII), another from a pit group dated A.D. 155-165 from Park Street, Towcester (Price 1980, 64, no. 4, fig. 14) and a globular beaker from a late second century burial at Ford Street, Braughing, Herts. (Harden 1977, 102, pl. IX).

### *Bottles*

- D11 SF24 One square bottle body fragment.

### *Window Glass*

- B2 SF131 One greenish-colourless fragment.

### **Phase VI**

#### *Bottles*

- E1 SF14 One cylindrical bottle base fragment.

- 1 See now Price and Cottam 1998, 171-2.  
2 See now Price and Cottam 1998, 88-9, 91-2

*Window Glass*

E1 SF14 One blue-green fragment.

**Unstratified**

- 9 Base fragment of a prismatic bottle of pale green glass; pinhead bubbles within the metal, surface flaky and iridescent. Moulded design in relief: part of a flower surrounded by an extant circle. (Site D Unstratified).

Floral motifs were fairly commonly used as trade-marks on bottle bases. There is another base fragment apparently bearing a mark identical to this one amongst older finds from Caerleon (National Museum of Wales acc. no. 31.78), possibly made in the same mould and perhaps part of the same consignment of filled bottles bought into the fortress.