

Digital Chapter 6 : the Southern *vicus*

Part 1 : Summary of the samian pottery

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Summaries of the samian pottery

D6.1

Chapter 6: The southern *vicus*

Summary of the samian pottery

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Holme House, Field 1 1971-2 Excavations

The total collection of 603 vessels (maximum) was composed of 816 sherds. The C.G. vessels formed 86% of the total, and the E.G. vessels formed 14%. Strikingly, there were no S.G. vessels to support any suggestion of 1st-century occupation in the area of excavation in this field. Of the E.G. samian, more than 30% was of Rheinzabern origin in the later second- or third-century; specifically 3rd-century forms such as the plain beaker Ludowici Vd were identified. There was also Trier ware, including two decorated bowls dated c AD 160/165-190 (Nos. 10, 70). A few pieces might reasonably be ascribed to earlier production centres in East Gaul: at least one decorated vessel (No. 42) was apparently manufactured in an Argonne workshop.

Owing to the largely unstratified nature of much of the material, no attempt has been made to divide the samian according to phase: a distinction has been made only between the material from the *vicus* and that from Bridge contexts. However, two interesting pit-groups should be noted: these included vessels No. 20-25 and 38-42 respectively. In contexts related to the Bridge, original records revealed at least 163 vessels, of which only one (No. 67) could be dated as early as c. A.D. 120-150, and only five others were Hadrianic-Antonine products. Of the remainder in Bridge contexts, the great part was manufactured after c. A.D. 160 and showed varying degrees of wear in use; the 26 E.G. vessels (16%) were all of later second- or third-century date.

Looking at the collection as a whole, the small amount of earlier second-century material is manifest in the low proportion of early forms represented on Table 1: compare, for instance, the numbers of vessels firmly identified as Dr. 18/31 with those of Dr. 31, or the single Dr. 27 with 94 examples of Dr. 33. Reflecting the pattern for the samian from Bridge contexts, the sample as a whole seems to indicate a surge of activity after c. A.D. 160 and particularly after 170; this is clear in the numbers of late forms on Table 1, including Dr. 31R and especially the mortaria forms 43 and 45 (for details of dating, see Overview). That activity in the area continued in the third century or beyond is apparent in the quantity of worn vessels from the later E.G. centres (a proportion which may be compared with that in groups from the *vicus* north of the Tees). Owing to the general lack of dating evidence for the late-second and third centuries, it is impossible in many cases to say with certainty which of the E.G. specimens were of third-century manufacture, but it is noteworthy that none of the moulded bowls from Rheinzabern or Trier was amongst the later products of those centres, the latest here being datable as early as c 160-200/220. On the other hand, a few plain vessels (notably a beaker and one or two flagons) may have been third-century products.

The proportion of moulded bowls was approximately 24% (lower than Holme House 1969/70, but higher than at most Piercebridge sites). Forty vessels displayed potters' stamps: three of these were too fragmentary to read and one was a rosette-stamp (No. 52). Of the remaining 33 plainware stamps, the 28 C.G. examples were attributable to 22 potters: three were not identifiable, while those potters represented by more than one stamp were Scoplus (3), Iullinus ii (2), Namilianus (2) and Sacrilus (2). All five E.G. stamps (Nos. 5, 29-31 and 75) were attributable to Rheinzabern potters of the late-second or third centuries: two of these belonged to the potter Avetedo. Amongst the decorated vessels there were three intra-decorative stamps, by Servus iv, Do(v)eccus and Paternus v (Nos. 51, 80 and 90). Of the unstamped vessels, 13 E.G. bowls bore identifiable decoration of the later second- or early third-century date, including pieces in the styles of the Rheinzabern potters, Ianu(s) and Comitalis, and the Trier potters Dexter and Maiiaaus. Amongst many C.G. instances (not all listed above), mid- to late-Antonine bowls in the styles of Do(v)eccus were particularly well represented (by 9-10 vessels) while Paternus v and Iullinus styles were both represented by 5-6 vessels respectively, followed numerically by Banuus (2), and Servus iv, Casurius and Secundus (ovolo Rogers B143) – all single vessels. Bowls in the styles of the most prolific C.G. potter, Cinnamus, were less frequent: five bowls, of which one was in the style of the early Cerialis i - Cinnamus ii group (c 135-160) and one was in a late style (ovolo B182) probably to be dated after c 155. Those vessels bearing non-moulded decoration comprised two mortaria with lion-headed spouts (nos. 47, 63), one 'cut-glass' beaker (no. 66), one decorated with fragments *en barbotine*, and one with an *appliqué* fragment (no. 71).

Strikingly, only 9% of the total was of indeterminate form and there were indeed six vessels that presented complete profiles (see Nos 34, 55, 56, 76; also one on the Quarry floor (4122) and one in Q51.1 (4033)). The assemblage contained many signs of use: more than 20% displayed evidence of use; there were three graffiti (Nos. 7, 28, 69) and a nicked footring (No. 16), 29 vessels had seen extreme wear, of which seven had had surfaces scoured away in use. 26 or more showed signs of re-use, or intentions of re-use, after breakage: the latter group comprised 13 repaired vessels with rivet-holes or attempts at repair. There were two spindle-whorls (Nos 48, 57). At least 12 pieces had been re-used upside-down after breakage in some uncertain function - perhaps as palettes; at least four and possibly eight bases could have been used as spinning tops. Two of the bases with scoured undersides (Nos. 5 and 20) may have been re-used, inverted.

The number of sherds showing evidence of burning to various degrees formed approximately 22% (twice that at the Holme House villa excavations).

TABLE of forms of vessel from HH71-2 (maximum nos)

| Form | SG | CG | EG | Total |
|-----------------|----|-----|----|-------|
| 18/31 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 18/31 or 18/31R | | 2 | | 2 |
| 18/31 or 31 | | 9 | | 9 |
| 18/31 or 31R | | 2 | | 2 |
| 18/31R | | 16 | | 16 |
| 18/31R or 31R | | 22 | | 22 |
| 27 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 30 | | 10 | | 10 |
| 30 or 37 | | 4 | | 4 |
| 31 | | 51 | | 51 |
| 31 or 31R | | 16 | | 16 |
| 31R | | 38 | | 38 |
| 31R group | | | 23 | 23 |
| 32 | | | 2 | 2 |
| 33 | | 83 | 11 | 94 |
| 33 or 80 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 35 | | 4 | | 4 |
| 36 | | 10 | | 10 |
| 37 | | 101 | 19 | 120 |
| 38 | | 19 | | 19 |
| 40 | | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 42 | | 3 | | 3 |
| 43 | | 3 | | 3 |
| 43 or 45 | | | 2 | 2 |
| 44 | | 8 | | 8 |
| 45 | | 47 | 8 | 55 |
| 46 | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 54 | | | 1 | 1 |
| 72 | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 72 or 74 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 79 | | 6 | | 6 |
| 79R | | 1 | | 1 |
| 80 | | 1 | | 1 |
| Beaker | | | 1 | 1 |
| beaker or jar | | | 1 | 1 |

| Form | SG | CG | EG | Total |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Curle 15 | | 2 | | 2 |
| Curle 23 | | 3 | | 3 |
| flagon | | | 2 | 2 |
| Ind | | 45 | 9 | 54 |
| Tb | | | 1 | 1 |
| Tc | | | 1 | 1 |
| Tg | | 1 | | 1 |
| TgR | | 2 | | 2 |
| Vd | | | 2 | 2 |

1975 Excavations

Summary of the samian pottery

The total number of sherds recovered was 32, representing a maximum of 25 vessels. Of these, the single S.G. fragment formed 3% and the C.G. vessels formed as much as 91% (one a mortarium produced no earlier than c 170-200). The two E.G. vessels (6%) were both of late-second or third-century origin. That at least some of the vessels were long-lived was indicated by four or more specimens showing signs of considerable use or re-use, including repairwork and re-working as a counter (e.g. Nos. 3 and 4): all were of late second- or third-century date of manufacture. Only 3% of the vessels were of indeterminate form.

As noted of the Kilnarth Field 1974 collection, allowing for the small size of the sample here again the proportion of moulded bowls was very low (8%). The sole surviving stamp was that by an illiterate East Gaulish potter (No. 2) and only one sherd (No. 1) bore recognisable decoration. Only one sherd (3%) showed definite signs of burning.

TABLE of forms by fabric from HH 75 (maximum nos)

| Form | SG | CG | EG | Total Nos of vessels |
|------|----|----|----|----------------------|
| 30 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 31 | | 5 | | 5 |
| 31R | | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| 33 | | 5 | | 5 |
| 36 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 37 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 38 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 43 | | | 1 | 1 |
| 44 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 45 | | 1 | | 1 |
| 67 | 1 | | | 1 |
| Ind | | 1 | | 1 |