

Identification of pottery from the Eardisland Project, Burton Court, Herefordshire

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Three sherds of pottery discovered by the Eardisland Project at Burton Court, Herefordshire, were submitted for identification. They include two of Roman date and one sherd of Stamford ware.

Pot PC03 110 F 1.7.03

This is a rim sherd from a vessel of Dorset Black Burnished ware (BB1). This handmade pottery was produced in large quantities in the Poole Harbour area of Dorset and was distributed over the entire British province (Williams 1977). The production of BB1 started in the early Roman period, and had its origins in the pre-Roman Iron Age Durotrigian pottery industry. It continued throughout the Roman period, ending at some point in the early 5th century. The Burton Court sherd is from a jar with a flaring rim. The dating of the type depends on the relative diameter of the rim and the girth (which is missing in this piece) and on the type of burnished lattice decoration. I think that this piece is of Gillam Form 148 and therefore of later 3rd or 4th-century date but it might be one of the earlier forms, Gillam 139 or Gillam 137 both of which might be expected at any date after 120AD.

Pot 110F 24.6.03

This is an undecorated body sherd of Severn Valley ware. This ware was produced at a number of sites in the Severn Valley as well as a few centres elsewhere, such as Shepton Mallet in Somerset. The low quantity of silt and muscovite in the fabric, combined with the colour range suggest that this particular piece was produced in the Malvern Link area, immediately to the east of the Malvern Hills. This industry is also long-lived and in the absence of any typological features cannot be dated except broadly to the late 1st to 4th (or early 5th) centuries.

The small abraded nature of the two Roman sherds suggests that they might have been present at Burton Court through the manuring of fields and the settlement where the pots were used and broken might be some distance from the excavation site.

11.11.03 105K

This is an undecorated body sherd of Stamford ware. A national survey of Stamford ware was produced in the 1970s by Dr K Kilmurry (1980) and this sherd is of her Fabric B, which is of late 11th or early 12th-century date. The sherd comes from near the base of a small jar or pitcher with knife-trimming of the base. Stamford ware, like the other medieval wares found at Burton Court, is a common find in late 11th/early 12th-century contexts in Hereford (Vince 1985; Vince 2002).

Bibliography

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