

Assessment of Ceramic Building Material from Boston Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire (BORH07)

Alan Vince

A single fragment of ceramic building material from an archaeological intervention at Boston Road, Horncastle, undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) Ltd was submitted for identification and assessment.

The fragment is a Romano-British tile, probably a *tegula*, and indicates the probable existence of a Romanized building in the neighbourhood.

Description

Ceramic Building Material

Roman

A single fragment of tile from context 009 was submitted. At x20 magnification the fabric appears to be a silty, calcareous clay with moderate fine rounded quartz sand inclusions c.0.1m to 0.2mm across. Some of these quartz grains are polished.

These features indicate the probably use of estuarine or marine silt with a quartzose sand used to temper the clay. The sand probably originated downriver of the outcrop of the Lower Cretaceous. Lower Cretaceous quartz is found in cover sands in the Horncastle area and the tile could therefore have been made locally.

The tile has a partial dog paw print on the upper surface and has moulding sand, similar in character to that in the body, on the underside. The upper surface and one broken edge of the tile have been burnt after breakage and may therefore have been re-used in a hearth.

Assessment

The tile is of some interest, in that Roman tiles from Partney and Fishtoft have recently been analysed using thin sections and chemical analysis and shown to be Lincoln area products, in contrast to the locally-produced medieval tiles from the same sites. This tile suggests that there were local tileries supplying the Bain valley and that the Fishtoft and Partney tiles were in all probability shipped down the Witham by boat and redistributed from the Witham mouth.

Paw prints are quite common on Roman tiles and indicate that the tiles were left to dry on the ground, where animals were able to walk across them.

Further work

No further work is recommended.

Retention

The tile should be retained for future study.

Appendix 1

Context	Cname	Weight	Form	Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Condition	Use
009	RTIL	168	TEG?	PARTIAL DOG PAW PRINT ON UPPER SURFACE;SANDED BASE	BS	1	1		SOOTED ON TOP SURFACE AND ONE EDGE