

## CERAMIC PHASE 11: *c.* AD 370-400+ (Key Groups 37-9)

In total, there are just three quality well-dated groups that fall within a late 4th/early 5th century date range at Elms Farm that are worth detailed analysis and these are presented below. These groups comprise the most securely dated accumulations of pottery assigned to this final ceramic phase and thus provide the most dependable evidence for understanding pottery supply and use in this period. By comparison, the other groups generally contain higher levels of residual material and much smaller amounts of ‘latest’ Roman pottery. High levels of residuality is often an effective obstacle to the reliable dating of assemblages on almost any site where long sequences of occupation are present, like Elms Farm, while very small amounts of very late pottery could quite easily be intrusive. Consequently, dating is less securely established. Such groups provide less reliable data about pottery supply and use, and are therefore only mentioned in passing. The pottery from the three key groups is broadly comparable with assemblages from Chelmsford (Going 1987), Great Dunmow (Going and Ford 1988; Wallace 1997), Great Holts Farm, Boreham (Martin forthcoming) and Great Sampford (Martin 1998), for example. These groups, along with others from the county, help place the pottery from Elms Farm within its regional setting for the late 4th and early 5th centuries.

### Key Group 37

Area J: Pit 5209, fill 5210 (Fig. 00)

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Sherd no.</i>	<i>Wt. (g)</i>	<i>Average sherd wt.</i>	<i>% Wt.</i>	<i>EVE</i>	<i>%EVE</i>	<i>Forms</i>
ALH	2	44	22	1%	-	-	-
BB1	1	6	6		-	-	-
BSW	63	1075	17	15%	1.44	20%	B1, B3.2, B4, B5.1, B6.1, B6.2, G
BUF	5	70	14	1%	0.08	1%	B6.1
CGSW	2	16	8		0.08	1%	-
COLC	1	2	2		-	-	-
EGSW	2	90	45	1%	-	-	-
GRF	53	852	16	12%	1.36	19%	B1, B2, B4, B3.2, B6.2, G, ?H
GRS	140	1653	12	22%	1.83	25%	B1, B6.2, G24
HAR	2	30	15		-	-	-
HAX	18	144	8	2%	0.11	2%	C, E
LSH	20	220	11	3%	0.41	6%	G27.1, G27.2
NVC	28	530	19	7%	0.86	12%	B1, G, K7, H –folded
NVM	15	420	28	6%	0.41	6%	D14
OXRC	27	218	8	3%	0.25	3%	C8; Young 1977, C48 & C55
OXRCM	1	6	6		-	-	-
OXSWM	3	20	7		-	-	-
OXWM	10	306	31	4%	0.20	3%	Young 1977, M22 (reeded rim) & M22 (plain rim)
RED	5	44	9	1%	-	-	H – folded
RET	25	382	15	5%	0.17	2%	G24
STOR	17	1265	74	17%	0.12	2%	G44
VRW	1	12	12		-	-	-
<i>Totals</i>	441	7405			7.32	-	

The top fill of pit 5209 contained a group of 441 sherds weighing 7.4kg. This group produced a wide range of forms and fabrics that are attributable to the period *c.* AD 360/70 onwards. However, ‘latest’ Roman material comprises a relatively small

portion of the pottery, with Oxfordshire red colour-coat and late shell-tempered ware forming just 6% of the assemblage by weight. A small amount of Alice Holt grey ware is also present. Fine and sandy grey wares represent 34% of the assemblage by weight, while flint-tempered Rettendon wares account for a further 5%. However, when measured by weight, fabrics that are obviously residual account for little more than 1% of the total assemblage and are confined to BB1, Colchester colour-coat, Verulamium region white ware, and Central and East Gaulish samian. It is noticeable that no vessel forms were identified in these fabrics (?apart from the samian). Mid-2nd to mid-3rd B2 and B4 type dishes are present in several fabrics, which suggests that the level of residuality is much higher than in the other late groups. The EVE to weight ratio of about 1 EVE to 1kg suggests reasonable preservation. Overall, the condition of the group seems to be quite good with few really abraded sherds.

### Illustrated pottery

Fig.00.00	B1, BSW	Archive No. 2809
Fig.00.00	B1, BSW	Archive No. 2810
Fig.00.00	B1, BSW	Archive No. 2811
Fig.00.00	B1, BSW	Archive No. 2812
Fig.00.00	B1, GRF	Archive No. 2820
Fig.00.00	B1, GRF	Archive No. 2821
Fig.00.00	B1.2, NVC	Archive No. 2805
Fig.00.00	B3.2, BSW	Archive No. 2813
Fig.00.00	B4, BSW	Archive No. 2815
Fig.00.00	B4, GRF	Archive No. 2822
Fig.00.00	B5.1, BSW	Archive No. 2814
Fig.00.00	B6.1, BSW	Archive No. 2816
Fig.00.00	B6.1, BUF	Archive No. 2795
Fig.00.00	B6.2, BSW	Archive No. 2817
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRS	Archive No. 2818
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRS	Archive No. 2819
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRF	Archive No. 2823
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRF	Archive No. 2824
Fig.00.00	C (Young 1977, C55), OXRC	Archive No. 2802
Fig.00.00	D14, NVM	Archive No. 2800
Fig.00.00	D, NVM	Archive No. 2801
Fig.00.00	D (Young 1977, M22 – reeded rim), OXWM	Archive No. 2803
Fig.00.00	D (Young 1977, M22 – plain rim), OXWM	Archive No. 2804
Fig.00.00	G27.1, LSH	Archive No. 2796
Fig.00.00	G27.2, LSH	Archive No. 2797
Fig.00.00	G27.2, LSH	Archive No. 2798
Fig.00.00	G27.2, LSH	Archive No. 2799
Fig.00.00	G (Howe <i>et al.</i> 1980, No. 70), NVC	Archive No. 2806
Fig.00.00	G, NVC	Archive No. 2807
Fig.00.00	H, GRF	Archive No. 2825
Fig.00.00	H, GRF	Archive No. 2826
Fig.00.00	K7, NVC	Archive No. 2808

### Key Group 38

Area M: Gully 25079, Seg. 15055, fill 15056 (Fig. 00)

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Sherd no.</i>	<i>Wt. (g)</i>	<i>Average sherd wt.</i>	<i>% Wt.</i>	<i>EVE</i>	<i>%EVE</i>	<i>Forms</i>
BB1	1	2	2		-	-	
BSW	28	160	6	6%	0.47	16%	B1.3, B6.2, G

BUF	1	1	1		-	-	
GRF	41	442	11	16%	0.76	26%	B6.2, E5.4, B1, H
GRS	60	588	10	21%	0.23	8%	B6.2, B4.2, G
HAR	5	14	3		-	-	
HAX	3	12	4		0.02	1%	?E
LSH	19	170	9	6%	0.27	9%	G27.2
NVC	22	107	5	4%	0.26	9%	B, ?C, H42.1, H – funnel-neck type
OXRC	28	372	13	13%	0.07	2%	H; Young 1977, C40, C45 & C75
OXW	2	190	95	7%	0.75	26%	Young 1977, W25
OXWM	1	164	164	6%	-	-	
RED	1	1	1		-	-	
RET	16	364	23	13%	0.10	3%	G24.2
STOR	2	238	119	8%	-	-	
<i>Totals</i>	230	2825			2.93	-	

The fill of gully 15055 contained 230 sherds weighing 2.8kg. Although a total of four segments were excavated through this feature, the pottery from the segment presented here provided the most secure dating evidence for the feature. This relatively small group produced a wide range of forms and fabrics that are attributable to the period *c.* AD 360/70 onwards. Latest Roman material comprises a significant portion of the pottery, with Oxfordshire red colour-coat and late shell-tempered ware forming important assemblage components (19% by weight). Fine and sandy grey wares represent 37% of the assemblage, while flint-tempered Rettendon wares account for a further 13%. Although this group comprises a narrow range of fabrics, none are clearly residual. The only residual vessel form is a sandy grey ware B4.2 type dish. The EVE to weight ratio suggests that this group is reasonably well preserved. However, much of the Oxfordshire red colour-coat is very badly abraded, implying that this fabric may have had a different depositional history compared with the rest of the pottery.

### Illustrated pottery

Fig.00.00	B1, BSW	Archive No. 2198
Fig.00.00	B1, BSW	Archive No. 2199
Fig.00.00	B1, GRF	Archive No. 2201
Fig.00.00	B6.2, BSW	Archive No. 2200
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRF	Archive No. 2202
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRS	Archive No. 2205
Fig.00.00	C (Young 1977, C40), OXRC	Archive No. 2194
Fig.00.00	C, NVC	Archive No. 2197
Fig.00.00	E, GRF	Archive No. 2204
Fig.00.00	G24.2, RET	Archive No. 2195
Fig.00.00	G27.2, LSH	Archive No. 2193
Fig.00.00	H, NVC	Archive No. 2196
Fig.00.00	H, GRF	Archive No. 2203
Fig.00.00	J (Young 1977, W25), OXW	Archive No. 2192

### Key Group 39

Area I: Well 5806, fill 5763 (Fig. 00)

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Sherd no.</i>	<i>Wt.(g)</i>	<i>Average sherd wt.</i>	<i>% Wt.</i>	<i>EVE</i>	<i>%EVE</i>	<i>Forms present</i>
BSW	5	46	9	2%	0.05	2%	B2/B4
BUF	4	27	7	1%	-	-	

GRF	7	86	12	4%	0.35	9%	<i>B6.2, ?G42</i>
GROG	1	8	8		-	-	
GRS	10	166	17	7%	0.11	2%	<i>B2/B4, H, G28</i>
HAB	2	27	14	1%	0.12	4%	<i>B1.3</i>
HAX	18	112	6	5%	0.10	3%	<i>?G40</i>
LSH	69	495	7	22%	0.87	27%	<i>B1, G27.2</i>
NVC	24	147	6	6%	0.36	11%	<i>B1.2, E4, C18</i>
OXF	1	43	43	2%	0.08	3%	<i>Young 1977, P17</i>
OXRC	55	434	8	19%	1.12	35%	<i>C8, C25, E4, Young 1977, C69, C79</i>
OXRCM	1	6	6		-	-	<i>D12</i>
OXSW	1	12	12		-	-	<i>?J</i>
OXSWM	4	94	24	4%	0.07	2%	<i>Young 1977, WC7</i>
OXWM	1	24	24	1%	-	-	
STOR	6	564	94	25%	-	-	
<i>Totals</i>	209	2291			3.18		

The top fill of well 5806 contained a group of 209 sherds weighing 2.2kg. This material is securely dated to the late 4th to early 5th century on grounds of both form and fabric, and stratigraphy. In range, the mass of the pottery appears to be typical of the period, although Oxfordshire red colour-coat and late shell-tempered ware are exceptionally well represented (41% by weight). Indeed, these two fabrics completely dominate the group. Moreover, there is also a very wide range of Oxfordshire products present, while grey wares of any kind are very rare. The high levels of late shell-tempered ware are closely paralleled in the Late Shrine Group at Great Dunmow (Going and Ford 1988, table 2), although the exceptional level of Oxfordshire red colour-coat is largely without parallel. All this points strongly to a date well within this final Roman phase and one around *c.*400 at that.

Residual pottery is barely represented in this group. The fragmentary black-surfaced ware and the sandy grey ware B2/B4 dishes are the only vessels in this group that are clearly residual, while only two fabrics present, the miscellaneous buff ware and the grog-tempered ware are obviously residual. These account for about 2% of the total assemblage by weight. Fabrics dating exclusively to later 4th century account for 47% of the total assemblage measured by weight. The poor condition and low showing of the sandy grey wares is particularly noteworthy and implies high levels of residuality within this fabric group. The contrast in condition between the Oxfordshire red colour-coat and late shell-tempered ware on the one hand and the sandy grey wares on the other is quite considerable. It would seem to imply that at the time of deposition, the supply of the sandy grey ware had all but dried up.

### Illustrated pottery

Fig.00.00	B1, LSH	Archive No. 1706
Fig.00.00	B1, LSH	Archive No. 1713
Fig.00.00	B1.2, NVC	Archive No. 1714
Fig.00.00	B1.3, HAB	Archive No. 1701
Fig.00.00	B6.2, GRF	Archive No. 1707
Fig.00.00	C (Young 1977, P17), OXF	Archive No. 1700
Fig.00.00	C (Young 1977, C69), OXRC	Archive No. 1705
Fig.00.00	C8 (Young 1977, C51), OXRC	Archive No. 1708
Fig.00.00	E4 (not closely paralleled in Young), OXRC	Archive No. 1704
Fig.00.00	E, OXRC	Archive No. 1709

Fig.00.00	E, NVC	Archive No. 1711
Fig.00.00	G27, LSH	Archive No. 1710
Fig.00.00	G27, LSH	Archive No. 1712
Fig.00.00	G28, GRS	Archive No. 1703
Fig.00.00	G42, GRF	Archive No. 1702

### The Latest Roman/Early Saxon Transitional Groups (Key Group 40)

In addition to the three groups described above, the three fills within pit 14529 also contained considerable amounts of Ceramic Phase 11 pottery. However, this material is associated with substantial amounts of handmade Early Saxon pottery (cf. report by S. Tyler, below). This means that they were deposited subsequent to Ceramic Phase 11. These groups are presented in detail as a means of investigating the relationship between Latest Roman and Early Saxon material culture. They are potentially of regional significance, as so few groups of this type have been published supported by quantified data. Not only can these groups be compared with each other, but they can also be examined with reference to other stratified groups of this nature from Essex. These comprise the Early Saxon *Grubenhäuser* on the Crescent Road site (Drury and Wickenden 1982, 20-5) and the Early Saxon upper filling of pit 520 at Downhouse Farm, West Hanningfield (Tester and Martin in prep.). The pottery from the Saxon settlement at West Stow, Suffolk, is also of use in this respect (Plouviez 1985). All of these groups provide important insights into the manner in which Roman pottery was deposited in contexts of 5th to 7th century date and its relationship with Germanic handmade wares of this period.

### Key Group 40

Area L: Pit 14529, fills 14613, 14558 and 14528 (Fig. 00)

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Sherd no</i>	<i>Wt. (g)</i>	<i>Av wt.</i>	<i>% Wt</i>	<i>EVE</i>	<i>%EVE</i>	<i>Forms</i>
ALH	7	272	39	3%	0.28	3%	B6, G
BB1	1	4	4				
BB2	1	14	14		0.08	1%	B2/B4
BSW	98	890	9	10%	1.02	12%	B1.2, B3, B2/B4, B6.1, G, G/H, ?H14, M
BUF	4	46	12	1%			
CGSW	4	14	4		0.09	1%	
COLB	3	78	26	1%			?J4 (neck and handle)
EGSW	1	8	8		0.03		
GRF	42	462	11	5%	0.59	7%	B1.2, B1.3, B6.2, B, G, H
GROG	16	284	18	3%	0.01		G
GRS	119	1150	10	13%	2.02	23%	B1, B6.2, E5.2, G5.4, G24.1, G42.2, G, (graffiti)
HAB	3	50	17	1%	0.08	1%	B2/B4
HAR	4	88	22	1%	0.11	1%	B6
HAWO	1	36	36				G
HAX	10	254	25	3%	0.06	1%	B10/Young 1977, C49, ?J
LSH	31	358	12	4%	0.22	3%	G27.1, G27.2
NVC	19	283	15	3%	0.52	6%	B1.2, B6, C8, E6.1, H
OXF	1	7	10				
OXRC	37	740		8%	1.52		C8.1, Young 1977, C45, C52, C70, C75, C83, plus other bowls C100,
OXSWM	4	116	29	1%	0.11	1%	Young 1977, WC7

OXWM	1	56	56	1%	0.08	1%	<i>Young 1977, M17</i>
RED	3	54	18	1%			
RET	7	290	41	3%	0.14	2%	<i>G24</i>
SGSW	2	6	3				
STOR	15	1037	69	12%	0.12	1%	<i>G</i>
SAXON	115	2328	20	26%	1.47	17%	
<i>Totals</i>	545	8902			8.61		

The three fills of pit 14529 contained 115 Saxon sherds weighing 2.3kg associated with 430 sherds of Roman pottery, weighing 6.5kg. Saxon pottery accounts for 26% of the total assemblage, which suggests that deposition occurred well within the post-Roman period. There was also a wide range of Roman pottery present. This material included latest Roman pottery that is typical of Ceramic Phase 11 horizons at Elms Farm. Measured by weight, Oxfordshire products account for 10% of the total assemblage, while late shell-tempered ware represents a further 4%. A notable presence is the B6 type dish in Alice Holt grey ware. Although a rare form in Essex in this fabric, what dating evidence there is seems to suggest that this might be one of the last Roman ceramic types to arrive in the county. The amount of late Iron Age and earlier Roman pottery present amounts to 5% measured by weight. Forms that are exclusively pre-4th century in date are few; those represented include fragmentary B2/B4 in BB2, black-surfaced ware and Hadham black-surfaced ware, a black-surfaced ware B3 type dish, and a sandy grey ware G5.4 jar. This again suggests relatively low levels of early material laying about the site in the immediate post-Roman period.

### Illustrated pottery

Fig.00.00	B1, NVC	Archive No. 838
Fig.00.00	B1.3, GRF	Archive No. 832
Fig.00.00	B1.2, BSW	Archive No. 834
Fig.00.00	B6, HAR	Archive No. 836
Fig.00.00	B6, ALH	Archive No. 835
Fig.00.00	B6, GRF	Archive No. 822
Fig.00.00	C, OXRC	Archive No. 828
Fig.00.00	C, OXRC	Archive No. 829
Fig.00.00	C, OXRC	Archive No. 839
Fig.00.00	C8, OXRC	Archive No. 826
Fig.00.00	C8, OXRC	Archive No. 827
Fig.00.00	D6, OXRCM	Archive No. 825
Fig.00.00	D, OXSWM	Archive No. 824
Fig.00.00	D, OXWM	Archive No. 837
Fig.00.00	E6.1, NVC	Archive No. 823
Fig.00.00	G24.1, GRS	Archive No. 831
Fig.00.00	G27.2, LSH	Archive No. 833