

Report on the Roman glass vessels from Crossrail Broadgate Tickethall (XSM10)

Michael Marshall

1.1 Introduction and overview

The assemblage of Roman vessel glass from Crossrail Broadgate Tickethall was fairly small comprising 81 sherds of which 46 could be more closely identified. Most is derived from dumps in open areas but a small proportion can be associated with the roadside ditches. No vessels are directly associated with a burial with the exception of <2176> a single naturally coloured body sherd found in a grave [6839], OA5, period 4 phase 2, which is presumably residual rubbish rather than a grave good.

The overall dating emphasis is clearly on the 2nd century AD and this is reflected in the general range of vessels, largely restricted to naturally-coloured and utilitarian types, most of which could be assigned a 1st–2nd century AD date but which are present in 2nd or 3rd century deposits, and the near total absence of the diagnostic 1st century AD forms such as cast ribbed bowls (Isings 3) and Hofheim cups (Isings 12) which are normally present in early assemblages in London. Diagnostically late Roman vessel forms and late Roman green glass are also absent.

Colour	401	402	403	501	502	6	7	801	9	Total
Colourless		1	1	1	2					5
Natural blue green	6	22	17	18	6	1	3	1	1	75
Opaque turquoise		1								1
Total	6	24	18	19	8	1	3	1	1	81

Table 1 Glass colours by period

Form	401	402	403	501	502	6	7	801	9	Total
Bowl		1		2						3
Cup?			1							1
Jar	1	1	1	1						4
Jug/jar base		1	1							2
Jug	1	2	3	1	1					8
Bottle		7	6	7	2					22
Flask?						1				1
Unguentarium	1	2	1	1	3					8
Vessel	3	10	5	7	2		3	1	1	32
Total	6	24	18	19	8	1	3	1	1	81

Table 2 Identified glass forms by accession per period

Form	401	402	403	501	502	6	Total
Bowls		1		2			3
Cup?			1				1
Jars	1	1	1	1			4
Jugs	1	4	5	1	1		12
Bottles		6	6	6	2		20
Unguentaria and flasks	1	1			3	1	6
Total	3	13	13	10	6	1	46

1.2 The assemblage by form

Fig 1 Glass jars <2183>, <2181>, <2208> bowls <2206>, <2179>, <3020>, cup or bowl? <2227>

Jars (ENV 4)

With folded horizontal rim (ENV 1)

A NGB rim fragment <2183> is from a 1st–2nd-century convex jar with a horizontal folded rim (as Price and Cottam 1998, 140–2, fig 60a). It comes from a period 4 phase 1 deposit. Large examples of this form are commonly used as cinerary urns but the rim diameter here is only 105mm.

With funnel mouths and rolled in rims (ENV 3)

NGB rim fragments <2237> and <2181> are from jars with funnel necks and rolled in rims of the late 1st or 2nd century AD (as Price and Cottam 1998, 143–5, fig 62) and come from period 4 phase 3 and period 5 phase 1. The neck of <2181> below the rim is unusually straight, somewhat resembling that of a funnel-mouthed jug. Their rims are 50 and 70mm in diameter.

A COL rim fragment <2208> from period 4 phase 2, rim diameter 65mm, is probably also from a jar of this form although the colour is unusual.

Bowls (ENV 3)

Opaque cast bowl?

<2206> from period 4 phase 2 is a tiny fragment from the rounded rim of an opaque turquoise cast vessel. It is too small to determine anything about its form but the colour and technique would be most appropriate for a 1st century AD vessel.

Bowl base rings

<2179> from period 5 phase 1 is a NGB base fragment with a rather ovoid applied diagonal base ring. This type is most usually found on tubular rimmed bowls of the 1st and 2nd century AD (Price and Cottam 1998, 77–80; Cool and Price 1995, 168, table 10.2).

Also from this period, period 5 phase 1, came <3020> a NGB base fragment with a rather large and shallow diagonal tubular base ring and a slightly convex base. This may come from

a large shallow bowl with a splayed tubular rim (as Price and Cottam 1998, 110–11, fig 44, 2nd–4th century date).

Cup (ENV 1)

Fig 2 Glass cup <2227> and glass bowls <2179> and <3020>

Vessel with fire rounded rim

The only possible drinking vessel <2227> from a period 4 phase 3 deposit is a small fragment with a fire rounded rim 62mm in diameter. The small size would seem to preclude it from being a bowl and several types of drinking vessels in use during the 2nd–3rd century have rims of this basic type (eg Price and Cottam 1998, 103–6, figs 39 and 40).

Jugs

Fig 3 Glass jugs <2192>, <2244>, <2186>, <2201>, <219>, <3027>, <2213>, <2241> and <2234> and glass ?flask <2174>.

Rim fragments from jugs or small bottles, folded out then in

Three fragments of naturally coloured rims, folded out then in with diameters lying between 35 and 40mm, could come from either jugs (as Price and Cottam 1998, 1507, figs 66–8) or small bottles: <2244>, [6856] from period 4 phase 1, OA4; <2186>, [6777] from period 4 phase 2 OA5 and <2192>, [6772] from period 4 phase 3, OA6.

Rolled-in rim fragment, probably from a spouted vessel

An irregular rolled-in rim fragment <2201>, [6772] comes from period 4 phase 3, OA6 and is probably from of a spouted jug of late 1st–3rd-century date (Price and Cottam 1998, 157–61, figs 69 or 70).

Neck/shoulder fragment probably from a jug

Fragment <2229>, [6777] period 4 phase 1, OA5 comes from the neck/shoulder of a jug, perhaps conical form.

Handle from spouted jug

<219> from period 4 phase 3 is a handle with pinched projections which probably comes from a spouted jug of late 1st–3rd century date (ibid, 157–9, fig 69; cf Cool and Price 1995, 139–43, fig 8.8 no.1007).

Handle fragments from globular or conical jug (Isings 52/55)

<2213> from period 4 phase, OA5 is a fragment with tooled projections from the base of a handle extension while <2241>, [6772] from period 4, phase 3 OA6 is a fragment of ribbon handle with a single central rib. Both are both most likely to be from jug of Isings type 52 or 55, dated c 60–175 although they could alternatively be from a slightly early amphorisk as Isings 15 (Price and Cottam 1998, 147–57, figs 64, 67 or 68).

Undiagnostic ribbon handle fragments

Two fragments of ribbon handle could come from a range of jug forms. <3027>, [8341] from period 5 phase 1, S25 is from a narrow naturally-coloured handle while <3028>, [8322] is from period 5 phase 2, S12 phase 6 is from the edge of a colourless handle.

Open base rings

<2234> from period 4 phase 2, OA5 and <2196> from period 4 phase 3, OA6 are both open base ring fragments from jugs or jars. They can be dated *c* AD 43–175.

Flasks and unguent bottles

Rim folded out and then in

<2174>, [6599] from period 5 phase 2, OA8 could come from a small jug or an unguent bottle/flask and has a basic folded out and rolled in rim only *c* 30–2mm in diameter.

Narrow and pinched cylindrical necks

<2218> and <2219> are fragments of narrow necks, *c* 15–17mm in diameter, with constrictions. They both come from [6583] in period 5 phase 2 and could derive from the same vessel but they do not join.

Tubular body/base fragments

Two small base fragment are probably from tubular phials as Isings 8 (Price and Cottam 1998, 169–71) and come from period 4 phase 1 <3025> and period 4 phase 2 <2233>.

Bath flask handle?

A small rather amorphous naturally-coloured fragment <3021>, [8287] from period 6, with signs of having been looped/trailed may be from a bath flask handle but is too poorly preserved for certainty

Bottles

Square and cylindrical mould-blown bottles

Fig 4 Glass bottles <2226>, <2245> and <3023>

Both square bottles (Isings 50) and cylindrical bottles (Isings 51) are represented. A single NGB rim/neck fragment rim of the appropriate size was found <2226> which is of the typical folded out then in construction and is quite large at 55mm in diameter. A group of six sherds, four joining, <2222> from period 5 phase 1, can be identified as a probable bottle because of their size and thick wall.

Nine body sherds can be identified as coming from square bottles while only two <2239> and <2230>, can be identified as coming from cylindrical bottles.

Four fragments came from bases of square bottles (Isings 50) and all had small traces from the edge of mould blown base designs. In three cases this was probably only part of a circular border which is extremely common but <2190> has a slightly more diagnostic L shaped moulding. Price notes this feature on several bottle base designs most notably a group with the inscription SAI in the centre examples of which have been found in late 2nd century deposits contemporary with this finds from period 4 phase 3 (2011, 22, map 3). However, as the centre is missing it is not possible to say what the full design was.

Four fragments came from handles of which <441> and <2033> are simple ribbons and <2245> and <2246> are reeded.

1.3 Bibliography

Cool, H E M, and Price, J, 1995 *Roman vessel glass from excavations in Colchester, 1971–85*, Colchester Archaeol Rep 8, Colchester

Price, J, and Cottam, S, 1998 *Romano-British glass vessels: A handbook*, CBA Practical Handbook in Archaeology 14, York

Price, J 2011 Mould-blown and impressed designs and names on vessels in Britain in Foy, D and Nenna, M D (eds) *Corpus des Signatures et margques sur Verres Antiques 3*, Lyon, 15–80