

A MOULDED FACE-FLAGON NECK FROM CHURCH TERRACE, HENDON

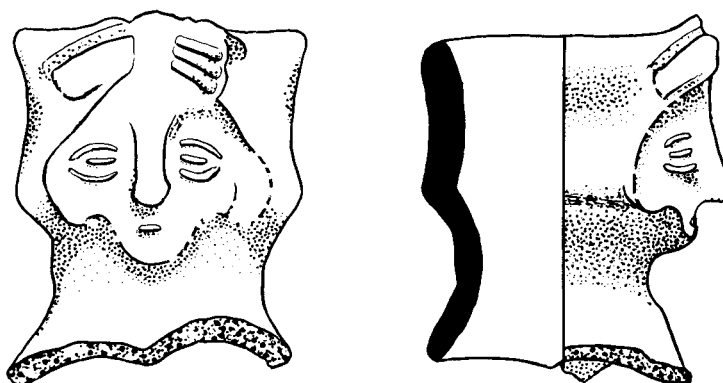
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The demolition of a group of shops and terraced houses at Church End, Hendon, N.W.4 in early 1973 created the need for a rescue excavation ahead of redevelopment (TQ 2289 8953). This was carried out by members of the Hendon and District Archaeological Society in 1973-4.

The site is on the edge of a hilltop, 87m above O.D., and in Roman times it could have afforded a view across the valley to Brockley Hill, (*Sulloniacae?*).

From an area on the west side of the excavation a quantity of Roman sherds and broken *tegulae* were excavated. The material can be dated to the late 3rd early 4th century and consists of coarse red ware, imitation samian, colour coated and grey wares.¹ In addition sherds of Saxon chaff/grass-tempered ware were found in a ditch adjacent to the parish church of St. Mary on the north side of the excavation area².

Amongst the redware sherds is a flagon neck bearing a stylised face. The red fabric has fine quartzite inclusions and though sherds of a similar texture came from the same area, they are probably not part of the same vessel. The coarse redware could perhaps be of local manufacture.



The neck has a distinct indent on the inside where pressure has been exerted in moulding. There is however no thickening of the sherd on this side, and the face has been moulded from the clay of the neck of the thrown flagon. It has not been applied as a separate moulded piece like the moulded-face flagons from the Oxford kilns.³ The face is simply portrayed, the hair being parted down the middle, and represented by three raised sloping bands. The eyes are small and owl-like and the mouth is scarcely present. Generally the workmanship is inferior to that from the Oxford kilns³.

In addition the Roman material includes fragments which could have come from the wide-mouthed section of a multiple vase. It is interesting to note that both these types of vessel have associations with religious beliefs.

NOTES

1. Mr. R. Merrifield kindly inspected the material and expressed an opinion on the date.
2. It is possible that St. Mary's has a Saxon foundation date. A priest is mentioned in the Domesday entry for Hendon, and in addition in a charter of the reign of King Edgar, in the muniment room of Westminster Abbey, dated AD 959, Hendon is mentioned as being in the possession of the Abbey, (see Brett-James N. G. *The Story of Hendon, Manor and Parish* (1932) 12-15).
3. J. Munby 'Some Moulded-Face Flagons from the Oxford Kilns. *Britannia* 6 (1975) 182-188.