

For: CFA
Site: Turweston, Buckinghamshire
Site code: AC 250/27
Status: assessment/spot date
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POTTERY

1 Introduction and methodology

- 1.1 The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of 58 sherds pottery weighing c 1003 g largely dating to the late Roman period. The assemblage was also accompanied by single pieces of fired clay and ceramic building material.
- 1.2 The pottery was recorded using selected recommendations outlined in Pottery Standards (Barclay *et al.* 2016). Sherds were sorted macroscopically aided with a x20 microscope into provisional fabric groups based on the principal inclusions present in the clay, along with the frequency and grade of the inclusions. Known or traded Roman wares are coded with reference to the National Roman fabric reference series (Tomber and Dore 1998). Other Roman wares were either coded using a similar format to that used in the NRFRC or coded more generically according to the firing colour and texture.
- 1.3 The entire sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. In addition rims were measured for diameter and percentage present, for the estimation of vessel equivalents (EVE) (Orton *et al.* 1993). Rimsherds were coded to broad form type or to established corpora where these exist (e.g. Dragendorff 1895; Young 1977). The resulting data can be found in Table 1 along with a spot date for each context.
- 1.4 The pottery assemblage was recovered from five defined contexts; three within Trench 7 and two from Trench 31/31B with the quantities ranging from single sherds to a maximum of 30 sherds from slot [708]. Overall the pieces are in moderately good condition with an overall sherd weight of 17 g.
- 1.5 No ancillary research has been carried out as part of this assessment to check for other similar assemblages from the area or to put the assemblage into its local or site context.

2 Description

- 2.1 Although small the Roman assemblage comprises a mixture of continental and regional imports and local wares.

- 2.2 Continental imports are represented by four sherds of plain Central Gaulish (Lezoux) (LEZ SA 2) samian all associated with slot [708]. Vessels include a cup Drag. 33 and one or two dishes Drag. 18-31/31.
- 2.3 Regional imports are limited to four sherds of Oxfordshire colour-coated ware (OXF RS) from pit [705] and two probable small sherds of Oxfordshire whiteware from slot [708]. Three of the OXF RS sherds are from a mortarium (Young 1977, form C100) and one from a bowl (ibid. form C81).
- 2.4 The remaining sherds all appear to be 'local' products and include 17 sherds of pink-grog-tempered storage jar ware (PNK GT) (Booth 1999) for which a source in Buckinghamshire has been proposed. Also present are oxidised grog-tempered wares (OXGR) which equate with Marney (1989) fabric 2a; shelly ware (ibid. fabric 1a); oxidised sandy and fine wares (OXID; OXIDF) and grey sandy ware (GY). The latter may come from the Nene Valley grey ware industry. The only forms present amongst the local wares based on rims are three everted rim jars.
- 2.5 One very small sherd from ?ditch 31B010 is tentatively dated to the medieval period. In addition there is some uncertainty about two shelly wares from the environmental sample from pit [705]. The two sherds are from a quite thin-walled vessel with a black exterior and red-brown in exterior with a fabric containing sparse shell. Provisionally these appear to be more medieval in date than Roman but given that they come from what appears to be a more securely dated Roman pit, their identification must remain slightly uncertain.

3 Chronology

- 3.1 The earliest group of material appears to be that from slot [708] which on balance suggests a date in the latter part of the 2nd century. Pink-grog-tempered ware is thought to appear in the later 2nd century. The samian is 2nd-century in date and there is nothing identifiably later amongst the local wares. This group accounts for 52% of the total assemblage.
- 3.2 The second largest group of sherds; that from pit [705] with 27 sherds, appears to be later in date. Most of the pottery supports a 4th-century date with the two Oxfordshire vessels in production in the period of AD 300-400 (Young 1977). The exceptions are the two shelly wares.
- 3.3 Possible ditch 31B010 produced one very small sherd (1 g) which is probably medieval in date whilst ?pit 3104 contains a minute fragment of fine oxidised ware (less 1 g) which is probably but not certainly post-medieval. Post-medieval drain [710] contained a single piece of Roman tile.

4 Fired clay/ ceramic building material

- 4.1 One very small fragment of fired clay weighing 1 g was recovered from pit [705]. The piece is too small to determine original purpose/function.

4.2 One fragment of ceramic building material (44 g) was recovered from post-medieval drain [710]. The item is quite worn and in the same fabric as the pink-grog-tempered ware and undoubtedly comes from the same Roman Buckinghamshire industry.

5 Potential and recommendations

5.1 This is a very small assemblage which is not large enough to provide any meaningful statistics other than show the presence of mid-late Roman activity in the area of Trench 7. The near absence of any further activity across the other 50 trenches investigated points to a particularly low density of archaeological activity across the area looked at.

5.2 No further analysis is required. The assemblage should be retained for future reference.

References

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