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AMPHORAE FROM ALLINGTON AVENUE,
DORCHESTER, DORSET.

D F Williams PhD FSA

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Summary

Identification of a small group of featureless body-sherds of Roman amphorae of the forms: Dressel 20, from southern Spain carrying olive oil; Pelichet 47, from southern France probably carrying wine; and a 'carrot' type of unknown origins.

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Dressel 20

881(2), 598(6), 506(1), 418(7), 448(6), 263(11).

All the above material is in the form of featureless bodysherds of the Dressel 20 form. This is the most common amphora type imported into Roman Britain, though it had started to arrive in small numbers during the late Iron Age (Williams and Peacock, 1983). Dressel 20 amphorae were made in the southern Spanish province of Baetica, along the banks of the River Guadalquivir and its tributaries between Seville and Cordoba, and carried olive-oil (Ponsich, 1974; 1979). This type of amphora has a wide date-range, and with some typological variation was in use at least up to the late third century A.D. (Zevi, 1967).

Pélichet 47 / Gauloise 4

899(1), 351(1).

Two featureless bodysherds which probably belong to the Pélichet 47 flat-bottomed wine amphora form that was predominantly made in southern France, more particularly around the mouth of the Rhône in Languedoc, where a growing number of kilns have been discovered in recent years (Laubenheimer, 1985). This amphora form had a relatively long life from about the middle of the first century A.D. to at least the early third century A.D. (Panella, 1973; Laubenheimer, 1985). In Britain, Pélichet 47 does not appear to be present in pre-Boudiccan levels (Peacock, 1978).

Carrot type

880(1).

One rilled bodysherd of a carrot amphora type. The origin of this form is uncertain, although scanning electron microscopy of the quartz grains in the fabric suggests an origin in a desert environment (Shackley, 1975). A Mediterranean source seems likely, but the relative dearth of finds from this area is curious. They may possibly date from the very end of the first century B.C. and continue until the latter part of the first century A.D. (Peacock and Williams, 1983).

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