

Appendix 3: Specialist reports

Boston Rd, Sleaford (EPBR08): the Iron Age and Romano-British pottery

R.S. Leary

530 sherds of Pre-Roman Iron Age and Romano-British coarse pottery (10480g. 7.83 estimated vessel equivalents) were recovered from the site. An archive catalogue was compiled for all the pottery according to the standard laid down by the Study Group for Romano-British Pottery (Darling 2004). Pottery was recorded detailing specific fabrics and forms, decorative treatment, condition, cross-joins/same vessel and was quantified by sherd count, weight and rim percentage values, giving estimated vessel equivalents. All the pottery from the site was catalogued in the archive and the stratified pottery was examined in order to date the features. Key groups are illustrated and catalogued below and unillustrated material is summarised. CLAU (City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit) and NRFRC (National Roman Fabric Reference Collection, Tomber and Dore 1998) fabric codes are included where possible.

The samian counts, weights and estimated vessel equivalents and dating are included in this report, in the discussion and the tables. The full samian report is given in Ward.

Pottery fabric descriptions

The fabric of the pottery was first examined by eye and sorted into fabric groups on the basis of colour, hardness, feel, fracture, inclusions and manufacturing technique. A sample of the sherds was further examined under an x30 binocular microscope to verify these divisions. The size of the sample was as large as was felt necessary for each fabric group.

Colour: narrative description only

Hardness: after Peacock 1977
soft - can be scratched by finger nail
hard - can be scratched with penknife blade
very hard - cannot be scratched

Feel: tactile qualities
smooth - no irregularities
rough - irregularities can be felt
sandy - grains can be felt across the surface
leathery - smoothed surface like polished leather
soapy - smooth feel like soap

Fracture: visual texture of fresh break, after Orton 1980.
smooth - flat or slightly curved with no visible irregularities
irregular - medium, fairly widely spaced irregularities
finely irregular - small, fairly closely spaced irregularities

laminar - stepped effect
hackly - large and generally angular irregularities

Inclusions:

Type: after Peacock 1977

Frequency: indicated on a 4-point scale - abundant, moderate, sparse and rare where abundant is a break packed with an inclusion and rare is a break with only one or two of an inclusion.

Sorting: after Orton 1980

Shape: angular - convex shape, sharp corners
subangular - convex shape, rounded corners
rounded - convex shape no corners
platey - flat

Size: subvisible - only just visible at x30 and too small to measure
fine - 0.1-0.25mm
medium - 0.25-0.5
coarse - 0.5-1mm
very coarse - over 1mm

Shelly and vesicular wares

The shelly wares were mostly brown with moderate, ill-sorted, medium to coarse shell and/or vesicles. Usually fairly hard with a rather soapy feel. It is often very difficult to assign undiagnostic sherds to a specific ware group and the coding reflects this difficulty.

CT undiagnostic shell-tempered and vesicular wares are coded CT when it is not possible to attribute them to the CTB or CTA group. *CLAU SHEL*.
CTA shell-tempered wares, probably a late shell-tempered ware. *CLAU CASH*
CTA2 Dales ware. *CLAU DWSH, NRFRC DAL SH*
CTA4 South Lincolnshire shell-tempered ware, Bourne/Greetham industry. *CLAU SLSH, NRFRC BOG SH*
CTB1 early shell-tempered ware. Usually thicker bodied than CTA2 and 4 and characteristically has brown margins and darker core. Some sherds could be Pre-Roman in date. *CLAU IASH*
CTG as CTB1 but grey. *CLAU IASH*
CTOX as CTB1 but oxidised. *CLAU IASH*

Grog-tempered wares

GTA8 grey/brown with grey core and orange/brown margins. Hard, smooth with slightly gritty feel. Moderate, ill-sorted angular and subangular argillaceous inclusions, sparse medium shell and moderate, medium, subrounded quartz.
CLAU NAT

Grey wares

NVGW white with grey surfaces *CLAU NVGW*

GRA1 light grey throughout. Hard, smooth feel and fracture. Moderate fine quartz and rare, coarse black inclusions – iron rich *CLAU GFIN*

GRA2 medium grey with self slip. Hard. Smooth with fairly smooth fracture. Sparse, medium, fine, subangular quartz and rare, fine, rounded, grey inclusions – clay pellets? *CLAU GFIN*

GRA7 black with black core and brown margins. Hard and smooth. Rare, medium, subangular quartz and ?medium subvisible quartz. *CLAU PART*

GRB1 medium grey ware *CLAU GREY*

GRB1B medium grey ware as GRB1 with brown core *CLAU GREY*

GRB2 medium grey sometimes with brown margins with moderate, medium, well-sorted, subangular/subrounded quartz sparse, ill-sorted fine to coarse rounded white incl – reacts ?shell/limestone. Sparse, ill-sorted, fine to coarse subrounded black/brown inclusions. Finer than GRB6 below and grey rather than dark grey/brown. *CLAU GREY*

GRB3 light grey with core. Fairly hard, slightly sandy feel and finely irregular fracture. Subvisible, very fine quartz with sparse ill-sorted medium subrounded quartz. *CLAU GREY*

GRB4 gritty usually dark grey. Hard, gritty feel and hackly fracture. Abundant, moderately well-sorted, medium with some coarse subangular/subrounded quartz *CLAU GREY*

GRB5 light grey with slightly darker surfaces. Fairly hard, slightly sandy feel and finely irregular fracture. Moderate well-sorted, fine/medium quartz with sparse ill-sorted medium subrounded quartz. *CLAU SLGY?*

GRB6 dark grey/black with brown margins, sometimes brown core. Hard, gritty feel and hackly fracture. Abundant, moderately well-sorted, medium with some coarse subangular/subrounded quartz, rare white incl – shell. *CLAU GREY*

White ware

FLA1 cream with traces of self slip. Hard and smooth. Sparse, medium, subangular quartz and rounded, red/brown inclusions *CLAU CR*

FLA2. cream. Hard with smooth surfaces and irregular fracture. Abundant, well-sorted, medium, subrounded quartz and rare, ill-sorted, rounded and angular, fine to medium orange and black inclusions. *CLAU CR*

FLA2P as FLA2 but pink. *CLAU CR*

FLA3P pinkish cream, hard and slightly sandy with irregular fracture. Moderate, well-sorted, medium, subangular quartz and sparse, fine to medium, rounded, black/brown inclusions. ? *CLAU SLCR*

Fine wares

CC3 Cream with pale orange/brown colour coat. Smooth feel and fracture. Hard. Rare, fine subangular quartz, sparse ill-sorted fine to medium, rounded red

- brown and white/cream inclusions. Possibly Central Gaulish colour coated ware 2 Tomber and Dore 1998 *NRFC CG CC2, CLAU CGCC*
- NV Nene Valley colour-coated ware. This can be white with darker colour coat (NV1) or oxidised with darker colour coat (NV2) or greyish white with grey colour coat (NVG). Usually hard and smooth with finely irregular or smooth fracture but can be soft and powdery due to burial conditions. Well-sorted, moderate, fine quartz, sparse red, iron-rich inclusions and red and white clay pellets. *NRFC LNV CC, CLAU NVCC and NVGCC*

Mortaria

- MH Fine-textured, cream fabric, varying from soft to very hard, sometimes with pink core; self-coloured or with a self-coloured slip. Inclusions usually moderate, smallish, transparent and translucent white and pinkish quartz with sparse opaque orange-brown and rarely blackish fragments; rarely white clay pellets (or re-fired pottery). The range in fabric is, in fact, quite wide, from that with virtually no inclusions to fabrics with a fair quantity and fabrics with hard, ill-sorted black inclusions. *NRFC MAH WH, CLAU MOMH*

The trituration grit after AD130-140 consisted of hard red-brown and/or hard blackish material (probably re-fired pottery fragments denoted in the catalogue by MH2), with only very rare quartz fragments. This grit is easy to recognize, but earlier mortaria usually have a more mixed trituration grit in which quartz and sandstone are normal components (MH1) and some early second-century mortaria seem to have entirely quartz trituration grit. The Mancetter-Hartshill fabrics of AD100-130 are variable in texture and tempering. It is also at this period when there is difficulty in distinguishing Mancetter-Hartshill, Little Chester and Lincoln.

- MH/LINC White, hard and smooth fabric. Inclusions: moderate, very fine, subvisible white and pinkish quartz with sparse opaque orange-brown. Trituration grits: sparse quartz, flint, red sandstone and grey inclusion, c2-3mm. Mancetter-Hartshill or Lincoln. *NRFC MAH WH, CLAU MOMH or MOML*

Pre-Roman Iron Age

- PQ1 dark grey with brown margins and core. Handmade. Hard and sandy feel with finely irregular fracture. Sparse, fine, subrounded quartz and rare, coarse, rounded grey inclusions and long thin vesicle. Two sherds were identified in this fabric which had clear finger marks on the inside and lacked throw lines. However this fabric shares some characteristics with GRB6 and finer versions of GRB6 belonging to the transitional group of the mid- to late first century. These sherds appear to come from near the base of a jar and it may be that hand working by the potter after throwing has resulted in an apparently hand made sherd

Fabrics and forms (

Ware	Fabric	Nos	Weight	EVES	Rel % nos	Rel % weight	Rel EVES
CT		17	140.7		3.1	1.3	
Late CT	CTA	1	19.6		0.2	0.2	
Late CT	CTA4	42	414.5	0.65	7.7	3.8	8.0
Late CT		43	434.1	0.65	7.9	4.0	8.0
Early CT	CTB1	30	462.5		5.5	4.3	
Early CT	CTG	1	19.3		0.2	0.2	
Early CT	CTOX	10	154.8		1.8	1.4	
Early CT		41	636.6		7.5	5.9	
GRB	GRB1	105	3002.1	1.58	19.2	27.8	19.5
GRB	GRB1B	17	252.9	0.61	3.1	2.3	7.5
GRB	GRB2	27	532.2	0.41	4.9	4.9	5.1
GRB	GRB3	1	2.3		0.2	0.0	
GRB	GRB4	12	129.5	0.6	2.2	1.2	7.4
GRB	GRB5	28	383.6	0.57	5.1	3.6	7.0
GRB	GRB6	49	907.8	0.58	9.0	8.4	7.2
GRB		239	5210.4	4.35	43.8	48.3	53.7
NVGW	NVGW	30	488.2	0.71	5.5	4.5	8.8
NVGW		30	488.2	0.71	5.5	4.5	8.8
GTA8	GTA8	8	163.2	0.32	1.5	1.5	4.0
GTA8		8	163.2	0.32	1.5	1.5	4.0
GRA	GRA1	4	174.5		0.7	1.6	
GRA	GRA2	6	78.5		1.1	0.7	
GRA		10	253		1.8	2.3	
Parisian	GRA7	4	10.2		0.7	0.1	
Parisian		4	10.2		0.7	0.1	
FLA	FLA1	40	127	0.4	7.3	1.2	4.9
FLA	FLA2	11	199	0.2	2.0	1.8	2.5
FLA	FLA2P	15	78.9		2.7	0.7	
FLA	FLA3P	2	11.7	0.15	0.4	0.1	1.9
FLA		68	416.6	0.75	12.5	3.9	9.3
F	CC3	1	1.7		0.2	0.0	
F	NV	1	2.1		0.2	0.0	
F	NV1	12	181.4	0.46	2.2	1.7	5.7
F	NV1G	5	35.6		0.9	0.3	
F	NV2	9	75		1.6	0.7	
F		28	295.8	0.46	5.1	2.7	5.7
M	MH	2	893.4	0.38	0.4	8.3	4.7
M	MH/MLINC	1	409.7	0.21	0.2	3.8	2.6
M		3	1303.1	0.59	0.5	12.1	7.3
A		37	1098.9		6.8	10.2	
TS	CG	15	262	0.27	2.7	2.4	3.3
TS	EG	1	48		0.2	0.4	
TS		16	310	0.27	2.9	2.9	3.3

Ware	Fabric	Nos	Weight	EVES	Rel % nos	Rel % weight	Rel EVES
PQ		2	28.8		0.4	0.3	
Grand Total		546	10789.6	8.1	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 1 and Figure 1)

Grey ware sherds made up the greatest proportion of the assemblage (Figure 1). This group was made principally of fabrics likely to have been made locally in south Lincolnshire and related to the early Nene Valley grey ware industry. The unsourced grey ware GRB1 and its variant GRB1B is likely to include local products and also wares from adjacent areas. Vessel types included jars, bowls and dishes based on the black burnished ware types including flat-rim bowls/dishes, bead rim bowls/dishes, a grooved-rim dish and everted-rim jars. In addition indented jar/beakers with everted rims, a regional form, and East Midlands burnished type wide-mouthed jars (Todd 1968b) were represented in this fabric group. Some GRB1 early types included rusticated ware, a flat-rim bowl related to the reeded-rim bowl series, and an early necked wide-mouthed jar with everted rim. The GRB1B group included a flat-rim bowl and a small everted-rim beaker. A rim in this fabric, sharply everted with expanded rim tip, resembled rims from butt beakers. The GRB2 fabric with its characteristic sparse calcareous inclusions was used to make small everted-rim beakers and rusticated ware and seems to be an early fabric group of the late first to early second century. The GRB5 may belong to the South Lincolnshire grey ware group identified by Barbara Precious and Maggi Darling (Precious 2001). Comparison with sherds in the City of Lincoln fabric collection suggested this fabric was close to CLAU fabrics SLGY. Fabric GRB5 was used to make an everted-rim beaker, a cavetto-rim jar and an indented jar/beaker with everted rim suggesting a date range in the later second to mid-third century. Fabric GRB4 has been noted by this author previously in Lincolnshire but its source is unknown. The forms made in this fabric included a BB1 type jar, a funnel-necked beaker, a folded jar/beaker with everted rim and a rebated-rim jar. These types would be consistent with a date range in the late second to mid-third century. GRB6 is very similar to material found in quantity in the Trent Valley at Bantycok and Rampton, Nottinghamshire and examined by the author. Lower Nene Valley grey ware was present in small numbers (around 5% of sherds numbers and weight, the larger amount by estimated vessel equivalent is due to a grave pot) suggesting human activity resulting in the ceramic sherds from the site did not date to the period from late second to the third century, particularly the early third century, when NVGW was most common. Two vessel forms were identified: a simple, wide-necked jar and a small beaker with everted rim (cf Perrin 1999, fig. 57 nos 33 and 31-2 respectively). Three sherds from a Parisian ware vessel were identified. These were in a black, fine fabric with brown margins and belonged to Elsdon's early group (1982). The edge of a stamp was visible inside the vessel suggesting it may have been a maker's mark. Two other fine grey ware fabrics were identified. These were unsourced and the sherds undiagnostic. The vessels in fabric GRB6 included a lugged large jar, rusticated jars, jars with rather everted rims, a carinated bowl with a cordon on the carination and burnished decoration and a dish with a plain rim. Most of the vessels indicate a date range in the late/mid first to early second century except the plain rim dish which is likely to be at least mid-second century in date. However it may be that the fabric of this sherd is a

variant of fabric GRB4. The diagnostic Nene Valley grey ware sherds came from a chamfered bowl/dish and a wide-mouthed jar of unknown type.

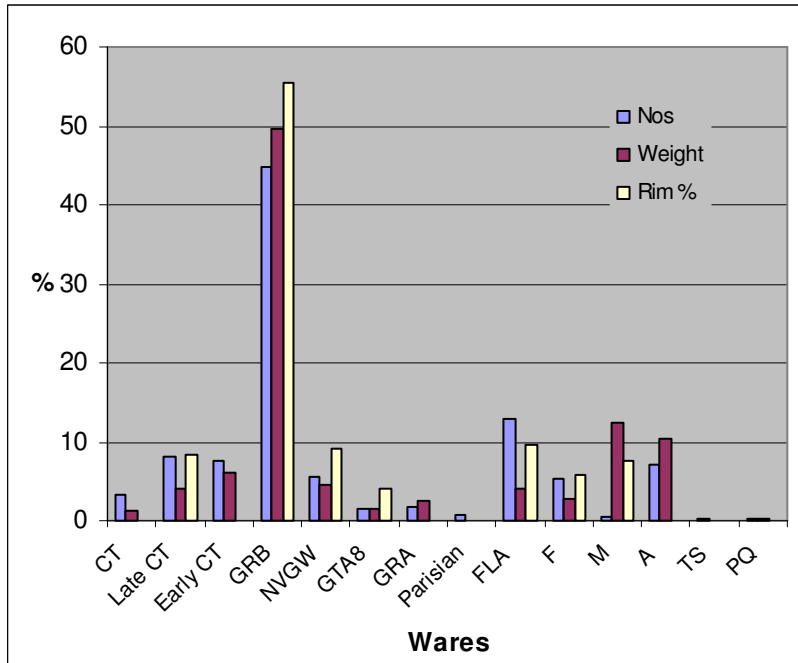


Figure 1 relative proportions of wares by sherds count, weight and rim % values

The early shell-tempered wares comprised undiagnostic jar bodysherds and bases and one CTOX sherd from the shoulder of a large storage jar. The late shell-tempered ware included two necked jars with a sharply everted and a bead rim and a dish/bowl with a grooved bead rim. The jars compare very well with the necked jars made at Bourne and Greetham with in-sloping necks. The dish/bowl is grooved on the top like a grooved flat-rim bowl of the late second to mid-third century and can be paralleled at Bourne (Samuels 1983 fig. 214 no. 61) and in a mid-third to early fourth group at Leicester (Clarke 1999, 131 fig. 71.193).

One grog-tempered jar was present, GTA8. This vessel had an everted rim and compared well with the jars identified by Todd in his Trent Valley group (1968a type) dated by him to the mid-late first century but surviving into the early second century in the Trent Valley.

Three or four white ware fabrics were present. The fine FLA1 ware was represented by body and basal sherds and one rim, a splayed ring necked flagon of the early second century. This vessel was abraded, severely burnt and was probably from a cremation pyre. A similar vessel in fabric FLA2 had rather more rounded rings and a slight internal cupping. This form is also likely to date to the early second century. No diagnostic sherds were found in the variant FLA2P but a small everted rim beaker was identified in FLA3P. FLA1 and FLA2 could be from kilns at Lincoln or in South Lincolnshire. FLA3P is quite a coarse vessel and might be very local in origin.

The fine wares came from two main sources: the Nene Valley industry and imported fine wares. The Nene Valley industry was well represented (5%) and included oval and slit folded, barbotine decorated and pentice moulded beakers and copies of samian form 36 and 38.

Amphorae were restricted to bodysherds of the Spanish Dressel 20 olive oil amphorae so common in Britain from the mid- first to third century. Mortaria were represented by several Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria and one vessel from there or possibly Lincoln. One large sherd came from vessel of early second century type with a stamp on either side of the flange. The stamp has been tentatively identified as Vitalis, a pottery from the Mancetter-Hartshill kilns, but this must be confirmed by the national stamp specialist Kay Hartley. Another fragment from the rim of a flanged mortarium is of Mancetter-Hartshill type dating to mid- to late second century and a third flanged vessel is of mid-second century form. This last vessel may be a Lincoln product.

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Table 1 Quantification of wares and fabrics

Taphonomy and conditions

The sherds showed some distinct patterns relating to their deposition history (Figure 1 and Table 2). Very small abraded sherds were recovered from trench 9 while trenches 9, 11 and 15 had high levels of brokenness. The material from trench 14 in particular had a large average sherd weight and low levels of brokenness suggesting the material from this trench was the freshest and least abraded.

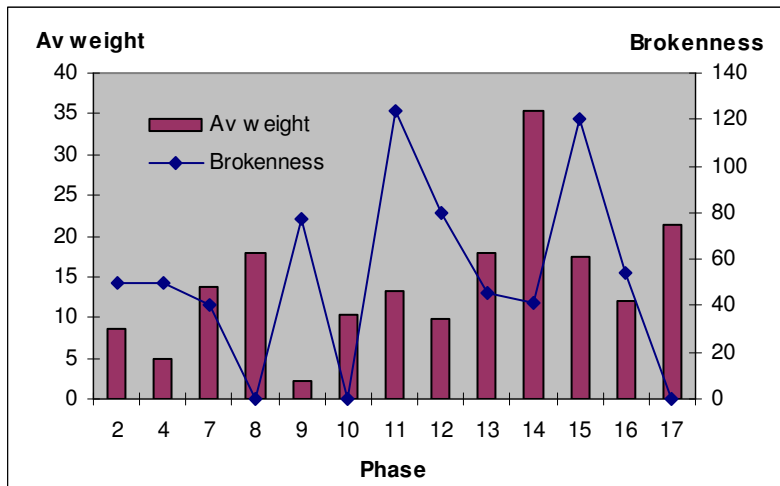


Figure 2 average sherd weight and brokenness (sherds count/estimated vessel equivalents) by trench

Significant amounts of stratified pottery were limited to trenches 11, 13, 14 and 15 with small amounts from single features in trenches 8, 9 and 12 and two features in trench 16. The processes resulting in sherd deposition varied through time and place. In trenches 14 and 15 cremation and inhumation graves were found. The rites being enacted resulted in intense burning of some vessels as pyre goods, causing cracking

and break-up into small discoloured scraps, and also in the preservation of some vessels as unburnt grave goods. These grave goods result in the high average sherd weight and low brokenness observed in trench 14 while the effects of the high temperatures within the pyre have resulted in the break up of the flagon in trench 9 giving a very low average sherd weight and high brokenness. Some pits appear to also have been used for the disposal of near complete vessels, perhaps used in the funerary rites or subsequent memorial feasts, for which we have accounts in Roman literature and evidence from other excavations. Heavily burnt material from trench 9 suggests that fragments of vessels relating to this activity were also deposited there.

Context	Description	Date range	Ceramic group	Nos	Weight	Rim %
1000	topsoil	L3-4	0	4	41.3	0
1007	Fill of ditch 1008	180-250	3	1	48	0
1100	topsoil	M2+	0	24	31.8	2
1104	fill of pit 1103	2	RB	3	9.6	
1106	fill of ditch 1105 (?)	M/L2-E3	3	9	65.9	6
1108	fill of pit 1107	L3-4 with sherds of the mid/late 2nd-3rd	4	124	1718	111
1112	1st fill ditch 1111	RB	RB	5	109.7	
1113	2nd fill of large ditch [1111]	120-160	2	2	10	0
1114	3rd fill ditch 1111	L3-4 with earlier material	4	11	118.6	27
1115	4th fill ditch 1111	170-200	3	2	266.5	0
1200	topsoil same as 700	Mid/late 2-?3	0	3	33.5	5
1220	fill of pit 1221	LPRIA- early RB	1	1	5.5	
1300	topsoil	L3-4 with earlier M1st and 2nd century sherds	0	14	359.7	20
1306	fill of pit 1306	L2-m3?	3	3	56.7	24
1308	fill of ditch 1307	M-L2	3	12	192.7	28
1312	fill of 1311 pit/ditch	M1-2	2	7	183	
1314	fill of pit 1313	L2-M3 + ?Med	3	15	126.2	41
1400	topsoil	4 with earlier material, L1-E2 and late 2nd	0	31	2279	64
1404	fill of large pit 1403	E-M2	2	61	2054	194
1406	fill of grave 1405	M/L2+	3	16	375.1	91
1408	fill of pit 1403	M/L2+	3	35	606.7	24
1412	fill of pit 1411	M2+	3	10	86.3	
1500	topsoil	L2-3	0	21	118	8
1503	fill of grave 1502	E-M2, after AD130	2	2	37	0
1506	occupation layer	LPRIA-early RB	1	2	48.1	
1508	fill of ditch 1507	E2 with one vessel pos L2-3	2	51	719.3	36
1510	fill of ditch 1509	M/L2, 140-180	3	2	439.7	21
1600	topsoil	L3-4	0	15	170.1	31

1604	fill of big pit 1603	L2-E3	3	8	124.7	8
1612	fill of ditch 1611	L2-3	3	8	80.2	18
1700	topsoil	120+ and Med	0	4	85.3	
200	topsoil	L2-4	0	2	17	4
400	topsoil	120-150	0	2	23.9	2
700	topsoil	150-200	0	2	27.4	5
800	topsoil	RB + MED	0	1	1.6	
802	fill of re-cut 803 of ditch 806	M/L2+	3	2	51.8	
932	fill of pit/ph 933	E2	2	31	67.4	40

Table 2 Quantification of pottery by trench and contexts with date ranges of assemblages (E= early, M=mid, L=late, RB= Romano-British, Med= mediaeval, +=or later, PRIA=pre-Roman Iron Age). Ceramic group 0 topsoil levels, RB- only broadly dated to Roman period, 1= late pre-Roman Iron Age or Conquest period, 2= mid/late first to mid-second, 3 = mid-second to mid-third and 4=late third to mid fourth.

Several vessel sherds were burnt, cracked and flaked due to the effect of heat. Although these were concentrated in trench 14, burnt sherds were present in other trenches also. Burnt sherds from a Dressel 20 oil amphora and a NV1 beaker were found in trench 11 contexts 1106 and 1108. The amphora sherds were flaked due to heat. Sherds from flagons from trench 9 context 932 and trench 13 context 1314 were severely burnt and may relate to cremation ceremonies. A burnt and flaked rusticated sherd from trench 15 may be related to the burial activity in that trench. In trench 14 evidence of scorching and burning were found in context 1404 on a white ware flagon, a small near complete beaker and a small incomplete beaker and a GTA8 jar. The mortarium from this context showed signs of wear. In context 1406 a rusticated jar was burnt and a near complete necked wide-mouthed jar bore a series of linear and curvilinear scratches on the neck and shoulder which may be graffiti which had some ritual significance. Context 1408 contained a burnt samian sherd from 18/31R or 31R dish dated to AD150-180. Two burnt grey ware sherds came from context 1412, one of which appeared to be heat affected inside the body, suggesting it may have broken on the pyre. An indented beaker in GRB4 grey ware from trench 13 1306 would be of a significantly later date than the burial activity and the surface flaking on this vessel looks, although possibly caused by changes in temperature, looks more like the effect of frost and seasonal freezing.

In addition many of the Nene Valley colour coated and grey wares had suffered from some sort of brownish staining resulting in a dirty fawn/cream core colouring. As this occurred on the white colour-coated wares it was assumed to be post-burial.

No sherds with burnt matter adhering were noted and this emphasises the non-domestic nature of the area excavated. One complete base and lower body of a jar in a shell-tempered ware had been modified by a large, slightly off centre perforation made in the base after firing. The perforation was c22mm x 30mm in size and was oval in shape. The vessel was either pre-Roman Iron Age in date or early Roman, around the middle of the first century AD.

Chronology

The ceramics indicate activity on the site from the late pre-Roman Iron Age or Conquest period until the fourth century AD (Figure 3). Most of the contexts belonged to the earlier part of Roman period from the Conquest to the late

second/mid-third century with the greatest number belonging to the early second to mid-third century. Only two contexts dated to the late third to fourth century, pit 1108 and ditch 1114 although further sherds of this date were recovered from the topsoil.

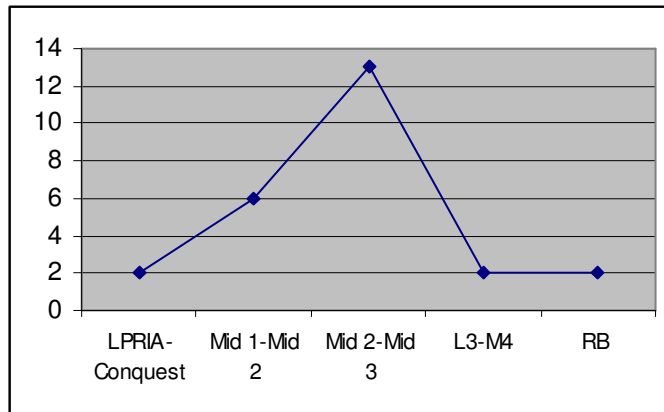


Figure 3 Numbers of contexts dated within broad chronological periods

Late pre-Roman Iron Age-Conquest period

Two contexts belonged to this period, occupation layer 1506 in trench 15 and fill 1220 in pit 1221 in trench 12. The two sherds from 1506 were both shell-tempered and included an oxidised shell-tempered sherd from the shoulder of a large, storage jar. These could belong to the late pre-Roman Iron Age and the absence of any later pieces makes this likely. However such forms and fabrics continued into the early Roman period in the mid-first century AD so a later date cannot be ruled out. A sherd from pit 1221 was in a similar oxidised shelly ware fabric and may also be of this early date or belong in the following chronological period.

In addition to these contexts, material from later contexts and the topsoil included a handmade jar base with a large, round, off centre, basal perforation from 1300, two PQ1 handmade sherds from 1406, sherds from a wide-mouthed vessel in 1114 of late pre-Roman Iron Age or mid-first century AD date, and a number of undiagnostic shell-tempered bodysherds which cannot be more closely dated than pre-Roman Iron Age to early Roman.

Mid-first to early-second century

Six contexts dated within the period from the Conquest to the early second century. Samian from fill 1113 in ditch 111 dated to AD120-60. Seven sherds from pit 1311 included a fine white ware flagon base. Such flagons date to the mid-first to second century and those present on the site were all of early second century type. The very fine fabric points to an earlier date in the possible range. The coarse fabric of three Dressel 20 scraps from here would also support an early date range. More tightly dated material came from the contexts in trench 14. The large pit 1404 contained a group of at least 17 vessels. These included parts of three flagons and one FLA3P beaker. One of the flagons had had its rim removed and the neck smoothed to

form a new plain rounded rim. A second flagon was represented by a rim and neck fragment from a ring-necked flagon with pronounced upper ring and cupped form. Such a form is likely to belong to the early second century. A small sherd from a CC3 roughcast beaker was present and at least two small GRB2 jars/beakers with short everted rims. These jars/beakers are not easily dated being simple types which did not change over time. Since Nene Valley colour-coated beakers were distributed in Sleaford in the mid- to late second century, a date prior to this trade might be appropriate. A further eight jars were represented, all had short everted rims and one was rusticated. Two non-adjoining sherds came from a jar found in grave 1405 with an everted, almost horizontal rim and the body seems to be indented with a shoulder groove. A thumb indented bodysherd in a similar fabric was found in the topsoil in this trench. Indented jars and beakers date broadly to the mid-second to third century. An example from north Lincolnshire comes from the Antonine kiln at Roxby (Stead 1976, fig. 68 no. 67). Jars with small round indentations like this vessel were made at kilns at Little London (Oswald 1937 58a), dated to the early third century by Buckland and Dolby (1980) Lea and Newton-on-Trent (Field and Palmer-Brown 1991 fig. 18 no. 29-30 and fig. 17 no. 15) dated to the second century. This vessel therefore suggests a date within the second century. Another jar was represented by a sherd from the upper body and beginning of the rim. This was similar to the neckless jars with short everted rims common at military kilns of the late first-early second century. The other jars had rims similar to "native" jars of the mid-first to early second century but were in grey and GTA8 wares rather than shell-tempered ware. Bodysherds from one shell-tempered jar were present. A GRB6 cordoned sherd may come from a beaker or bowl and belongs to a carinated and cordoned group made in the mid/late first to early second century. A good third of a stamped mortarium was present. The stamp has yet to be firmly identified by the relevant specialist but preliminary examination suggests this is a Mancetter-Hartshill pottery of AD100-140, perhaps Vitalis. The mortarium gives a date in the early second century and the other fabrics and forms would support this dating. These vessels point to a date range in the first half of the second century for this group. The absence of NVGW points to a date before its floruit in the mid-second to third century and probably before its manufacture from the second quarter of the second century.

In trench 15 grave 1502 yielded one small basal sherd from a jar in a GRB1 fabric with a fairly fine quartz temper and brown margins. Although this cannot be firmly dated its similarity to "transitional" fabrics in Leicester and the Trent Valley would make a date in the early Roman period, mid- to late first/early second century, appropriate if not certain. A samian sherd from this fill was dated to AD130-60 and probably after AD140. At least nine vessels were identified from ditch 1507. These comprised very abraded FLA2P sherds from a flagon, an everted rim from a GRB6 jar, of late first-early second century type, a large rusticated GRB6 sherd of the same date, CTB1 bodysherds from a jar of the same date range, the middle and lower body from a carinated bowl with cordoned carination and burnished wavy line decoration in GRB6, an everted rim, expanded at the tip, of a type typically found on butt beakers, bodysherds from a GRB6 closed vessel with zoned decoration of burnished lattice or oblique lines within two horizontal grooves, a GRA7 Parisian bowl with the edge of a stamp inside the body, perhaps a name stamp and six very abraded sherds in NVGW from a wide-mouthed shouldered vessel, probably a wide-mouthed jar. The presence of the NVGW sherds gave a *terminus post quem* in the early-mid second century but other vessels clearly belong to the mid-late first century. The transitional character of

the carinated bowl and the closed vessel with burnished lattice or oblique lines points to such as date on the ground of both details of the fabric and the forms. The everted rim, if correctly compared with butt beaker rims would be of a similar date. The rusticated jar dates to the late first to early second century. It seems likely therefore that the moderately abraded material belongs to the early fill of this ditch dating to the late first century while the very abraded NVGW sherds are perhaps later additions sometime after the second quarter of the second century.

Finally a post hole in trench 9, 932, contained 31 small fragments from a ring-necked flagon of early second century type. These were badly burnt, cracked and fragmented and this vessel is every likely to be one of the pyre goods relating to the cremation rites being carried out in the area.

Early second to mid-third century

The pottery from grave 1405 comprised most of a NVGW necked, wide-mouthed jar with everted rim. This belongs to a long-lived typological group but compares well with vessels dated to the mid/late second to third century (Perrin 1999 fig. 57 no. 33). The PQ1 bodysherds are residual prehistoric sherds or date to the mid-to late first century AD and abraded, burnt rusticated sherds of late first-early second century type may also be residual, derived from earlier cremation activity.

Pit 1403 contained sherds from at least eight vessels. A burnt samian sherd from a dish was present in this group. Two sherds from a Dressel 20 oil amphora were identified. An indented sherd may have come from the jar found in context 1404 and 1405, a type present in Trent Valley kilns of second to early third century date.. The rim and body of a bowl with flat rim is likely to belong to the reeded-rim bowl series of the late first-early second century rather than the BB1 type flat-rim bowls of cAD120-200AD. A wide-mouthed jar with curving everted rim has faint traces of lattice decoration on the shoulder. This vessel belongs to the second century. A chamfered base in a NVGW fabric would be dated to the second quarter of the second century at the earliest on present evidence (Perrin 1999, 78). This group dates to the second century. The linear shoulder decoration on the jar, the flat-rim bowl and the samian form point to a date in the early or mid-second century. The sherds from pit 1411 were less easy to date precisely as they were bodysherds of GRB1, GRB2, NVGW, GRB6 and FLA1. However the presence of burnt sherds of GRB2 and GRB6 would suggest contemporaneity with the other features while the presence of NVGW indicates a date in or after the second quarter of the second century when this ware began to be made in the lower Nene Valley kilns (Perrin and Booth 1990, 41). This feature may be contemporary with grave 1405 cut through pit 1404.

Ditch 1105 contained a small group of nine sherds which included a small abraded fragment from a NVGW cornice rim beaker of the mid/late second to early third century, a very small scrap from a NV beaker (burnt) and a GRB1 everted rim probably from a necked carinated bowl/beaker, a type common in the late first-second century. This ditch was still open to receive ceramic debris in the mid/late second and perhaps as late as the early third century.

Three features in trench 13 belong to this phase. Eight sherds from ditch 1307 included a sherd from an NVGW bowl or dish, a NV beaker with traces of decoration en barbotine (cf Perrin 1999 fig 60 no. 118 dated late second- early third century, a jar with a curving everted rim, almost cavetto and an incomplete mortarium rim from a

flanged mortarium with the flange rising almost level with the bead rim, a type (cf Gillam 1970 no. 246, AD120-60). A date from the mid- to late second century can be suggested. A large sherd from a grooved rim bowl in CTA4 was found in pit 1306. The vessel had a rather beaded rim with the groove next to the inner lip. It can be paralleled at Bourne and (Samuels 1983 fig. 214 no. 61) and in a mid-third to early fourth group at Leicester (Clarke 1999, 131 fig. 71.193). The vessel is closer to the grooved flat rim bowls of the late second to mid-third century than the bead and flange bowls dating after cAD270 so the Leicester example may be a late occurrence. Also in the pit was a sherd from a funnel necked indented beaker dating from the second quarter of the third century typologically. These vessels point to a date in the first half of the third century. Pit 1313 burnt sherds from a FLA1 flagon may be residual from earlier cremation rites. An abraded rim and body sherd from a NV beaker came from quite a globular beaker with cornice rim and shoulder groove of a type often rouletted and dating to the second half of the second century to the mid-third century (Perrin 1999, 93). A small GRB1B beaker in this group with short everted rim would fit this date range. One large mortarium sherd from ditch 1509 dates typologically to mid-second century (Gillam 1970, no. 243, probably Antonine, M. Darling pers comm.) and compares well with the products of the Mancetter-Hartshill industry near Coventry although a source at Lincoln cannot be ruled out completely since mortaria from these two sources can be very similar during this period. A samian sherd from this context gave a *terminus post quem* of AD140-80. In trench 16 pit 1603 included a bead-rim bowl/dish as Gillam 1970 no. 225 dated late second to mid third century and a fragment from a NV beaker of at least mid/late second century date or later. Ditch 1611, also in this trench, included a sherd from a NV folded beaker and a CTA4 bead-rim jar from the South Lincolnshire kilns at Bourne and Greetham. Evidence from Empingham, Rutland and Morton, Lincs. demonstrates that these jars were present in the mid- to late second century (Cooper 2000, 75-6 and Precious) while Clarke record third century examples at Leicester (1999, 127-8 in phase 3 fig. 69 no 151 and phase 4 fig. fig. 69 no. 163, phase5c fig. 71 no. 193). The folded beaker was not scaled. Folded beakers appear in the mid-late second century and were popular through the third century. Without the rim they are harder to date but this sherd seems to come from a more elongated vessel rather than the earlier fat globular vessels and a date in the late second to mid third century would be the optimum range. A GRB1 flat-rim bowl/dish and concave bodysherd were also present and would be consistent with mid- to late second century date. An NV beaker base from 802, the re-cut of ditch 806, although not closely datable can be given a date range from the mid/late second century or later. A sherd from a samian mortarium from ditch fill 1007 was dated to AD 180-250.

Late third to fourth century

Two features contained much later pottery. Sherds datable to the late third or fourth century came from both pit 1107 and ditch 1111 although earlier types were also present. A bead and flange NV1 bowl from 1111 belongs to the late Nene Valley colour-coated ware range of the late third to fourth century and a small fragment from a long necked beaker with small bead rim is of similar date. The material from 1107 was quite abraded but included much of a South Lincolnshire shell-tempered jar, necked with bead rim and a very fine grey, colour-coated ware pentice-moulded beaker with zones of rouletting on the pentice moulding and on the neck. This very

fine vessel is the latest Nene Valley beaker form and belongs to the late third to mid fourth century (Perrin 1999, 97). Another beaker/jar with sloping neck, everted rim and folded body in fabric GRB4 resembled the funnel-necked beaker from 1306 in fabric and by analogy with the Nene Valley beakers would date to the late second/early third to late third century (Perrin 1999 94 no. 155). Other NV colour coated ware fragments from beakers or other closed vessels and a bowl or dish were present and NVGW bodysherds from jars and a wide-mouthed jar. These may indicate some accumulation in the third as well as in the first half of the fourth century.

Late Nene Valley colour-coated vessels were also present in the topsoil in trenches 11, 13, 14 and 16 in the form of bowl/dish fragment or late beaker types.

Status and function

The overall ratios of jars to tableware and the proportions of amphorae and samian (Evans 1993 and 2001, Willis 2005) all suggest the site is urban rather than rural in character and are consistent with the status of Sleaford as a small town. The activity represented in the excavated area clearly related to funerary rites and thus have particular characteristics relating to that function. Although the funerary character of the site would increase the amounts of tableware during the cemetery phase and may have increased the quantities of samian, the relatively high proportion of amphora cannot be readily explained by this nor would this account for the high proportion of bowls in the late groups. Thus a small town character is indicated by the assemblage.

Much of the pottery showed clear signs of a funerary function in the form of evidence for burning and scorching on the cremation pyres and of a function as an accompanying cremation urns and grave goods. This activity would appear to span much of the second century. Some earlier material was present for which a mid- to late first century might be suggested. Apart from pit 1220 and layer 1506 this material was included in later assemblages and the material from these two features was too sparse to provide certain dating. Some of the burnt material such as the rusticated wares had a date range spanning the late first to early second century so it is possible that some cremation may have taken place in the late first century. The group from 1404 is very likely to be a cremation related deposit of some sort, a pit where pyre goods were deposited. Several vessels appeared to be burnt, pyre goods including two small jars/beakers, with more than half of one of these being present as a single sherd, and a flagon with its rim broken off and the broken edge smoothed into a reworked rim. The group from 932 is also of this type comprising very badly burnt fragments from a flagon. The group from 1508 may, on the other hand, be domestic debris. This group included some early material, probably first century rather than early second century, and none of the sherds were obviously burnt although two may have been.

The large group from 1408 pit 1403 included several burnt sherds and these are related to the cremation rites. The vessels from this pit included burnt samian, dated AD150-80, almost certainly pyre goods and other debris which perhaps also related to funerary rites. The use of samian is of interest. Samian is rarely included on the pyre on cemetery sites and where present, the sites are predominantly military in character (Cool and Leary forthcoming). The grave pot found with the inhumation is somewhat later and, while NVGW was made from the second quarter of the second century, its *floruit* was in the late second to third century and it is in this period that this simple

bowl is likely to belong. The sherd from grave 1502 is probably residual. Burnt sherds of Dressel 20 amphora and a NV1 bowl/dish were present in context 1108 but their significance is not clear. The other assemblages did not have any sherd conditions relating to function and the area may have reverted to domestic usage sometime in the third century.

In terms of the overall functional make-up of the assemblages, the earliest group was too small to consider. There were marked differences over time however. During the mid-first to early second century the pottery from the site included few bowls or dishes but many beaker and flagons types. If the beakers (fine ware vessels) and small jar/beakers (coarse ware vessels) are combined there is an unusually high percentage, greater than for jars. This high ratio of flagons and beakers is in keeping with the burial rites being carried out on the site at this time. The presence of mortaria is not common on cemetery sites but is known and can be associated with the preparation of funerary and memorial meals. The absence of bowls and dishes suggest that the tablewares used in such feasts were not deposited within the excavated area.

In the mid-second to mid-third century groups bowls and dishes were represented, flagons were scarcer and were not represented by rim fragments. More fine beakers were represented. The greater number of fine ware beakers marks the start of trade in Nene Valley colour-coated wares. The large proportion of wide-mouthed jars seems to be related to their function as grave goods. A mortarium of this date was present but was not represented in the EVES total. The late third to fourth century group was rather too small for analysis but did show a rise in jars and bowls perhaps signalling a change in use of the site from funerary to domestic at this time or, more probably in the second half of the third century. The topsoil finds have a similar character with no rim sherds of beakers and flagons.

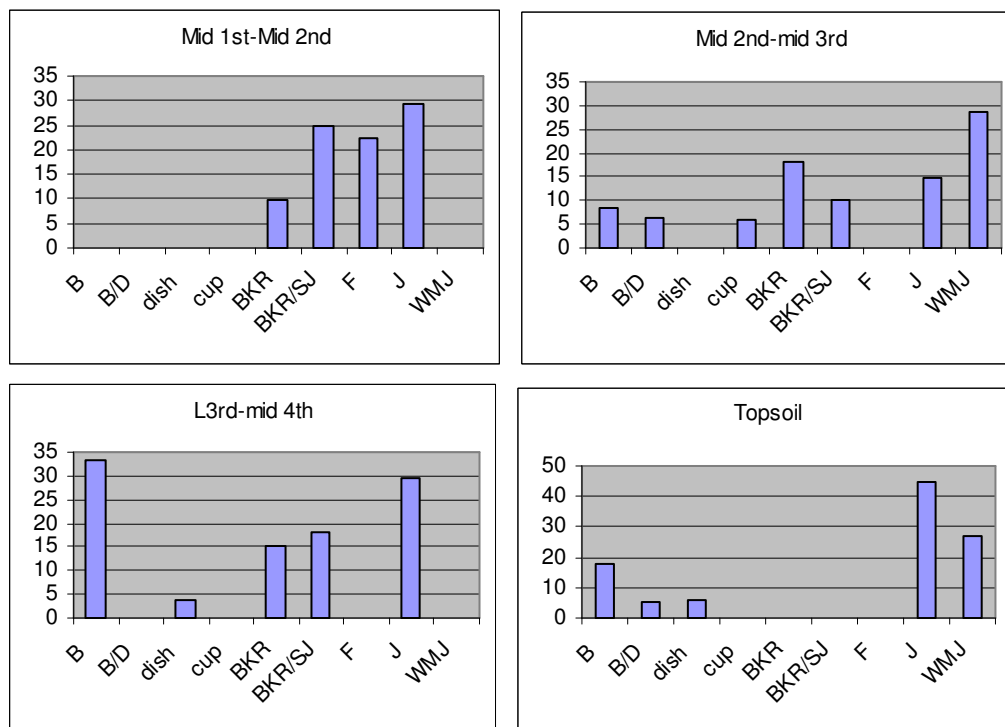


Figure 4 Relative proportion of vessel types by chronological groups (using EVES)

Trade and exchange (Table 3)

The small early group dating to late pre-Roman Iron Age or Conquest period is made up of shell-tempered ware for which a local origin can be suggested. In the mid-first-mid-second century group these are supplemented with grey wares. These were predominantly not Nene Valley grey wares and related types but other fabrics, probably predating the rise of that industry. Some 7% of the group continued to be made up of shell-tempered wares but to this were added 12% white wares (by weight) and 6% grog-tempered wares (only present in this group). Imported roughcast ware was present as was Parisian ware and Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria. This period shows a marked increase in traded and imported ceramic with both samian and Dressel 20 amphora present at around 2% and 3% respectively. In the mid-second to mid-third century the assemblage was altered by the arrival of the both Nene Valley grey wares and colour-coated wares. Nene Valley grey wares account for some 8-9% in both this and the following phase while the colour-coated wares make up 3-5% in the mid-second to mid-third century rising to 9-10% in the late third to fourth centuries as samian levels fall. Also present in the mid-second to mid-third century were the South Lincolnshire shell-tempered wares from Bourne and Greetham kilns, c2% by sherd weight and count and 7% by rim equivalents. This ware rises in the latest groups (18-28%) but only one vessel is represented so this may be misleading.

Recommendations

The group merits publication on account of the evidence for funerary rites in the second century alone. Well-published cemetery sites are uncommon in the region and this evidence adds to our understanding of the funerary customs practised at the settlement either side of the cremation to inhumation transition. The use of samian as pyre goods is of interest and further excavation may clarify the function of the unburnt samian. If publication in a local journal is anticipated 27 vessels should be illustrated which should be accompanied by a catalogue. If publication is intended the group could usefully be compared with other groups from Sleaford and the surrounding region largely contained in unpublished "grey" reports. Such "contextualising" of the assemblage is recommended should further work be undertaken.

The mortaria included a vessel with double stamp which could easily be firmly identified by Kay Hartley, the national expert for mortaria stamps, her opinion should also be sought on the source and date range of the rim from context 1510.

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		LPRIA-Conquest			Mid 1st-mid 2nd			Mid 2- mid 3			L3-M4			RB			Topsoil			Total		
Ware	Fabric	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %
A	DR20				2.6%	0.9%		2.4%	20.1%		22.2%	30.7%								6.8%	10.2%	
A Total					2.6%	0.9%		2.4%	20.1%		22.2%	30.7%								6.8%	10.2%	
CT	CT	33.3%	36.0%					5.7%	1.7%		1.5%	1.0%		12.5%	3.0%		4.9%	1.8%		3.1%	1.3%	
CT Total		33.3%	36.0%					5.7%	1.7%		1.5%	1.0%		12.5%	3.0%		4.9%	1.8%		3.1%	1.3%	
Early CT	CTB1				2.6%	4.7%		0.8%	0.3%								20.5%	9.8%		5.5%	4.3%	
	CTG							0.8%	0.8%											0.2%	0.2%	
	CTOX	66.7%	64.0%		3.9%	2.2%		1.6%	2.2%											1.8%	1.4%	
Early CT Total		66.7%	64.0%		6.5%	6.8%		3.3%	3.3%								20.5%	9.8%		7.5%	5.9%	
F	CC3				0.6%	0.1%														0.2%	0.0%	
	NV							0.8%	0.1%											0.2%	0.0%	
	NV1							3.3%	2.6%	3.4%	5.2%	5.7%	23.2%				0.8%	0.4%	3.5%	2.2%	1.7%	5.7%
	NV1G										3.7%	1.9%								0.9%	0.3%	
	NV2							2.4%	0.5%		1.5%	0.9%					3.3%	1.4%		1.7%	0.7%	
F Total					0.6%	0.1%		6.5%	3.2%	3.4%	10.4%	8.5%	23.2%				4.1%	1.8%	3.5%	5.1%	2.7%	5.7%
FLA	FLA1				20.8%	2.7%	14.8%	6.5%	1.8%											7.3%	1.2%	4.9%
	FLA2				5.2%	6.1%	7.4%	0.8%	0.1%								1.6%	0.3%		2.0%	1.8%	2.5%
	FLA2P				5.8%	2.2%											4.9%	0.4%		2.8%	0.7%	
	FLA3P				1.3%	0.4%	5.6%													0.4%	0.1%	1.9%
FLA Total					33.1%	11.4%	27.8%	7.3%	1.8%								6.6%	0.6%		12.5%	3.9%	9.3%
GRA	GRA1										3.0%	9.5%								0.7%	1.6%	
	GRA2				3.9%	2.6%														1.1%	0.7%	
GRA Total					3.9%	2.6%					3.0%	9.5%								1.8%	2.3%	
GRB	GRB1				3.2%	2.7%		30.9%	16.9%	15.3%	9.6%	4.9%	7.2%	62.5%	78.5%		36.1%	72.9%	76.6%	19.3%	27.9%	19.5%
	GRB1B				4.5%	2.0%	7.0%	2.4%	1.3%	6.5%	3.7%	8.3%	18.1%				1.6%	0.2%		3.1%	2.3%	7.5%
	GRB2				8.4%	12.6%	15.2%	3.3%	1.7%		1.5%	0.4%					6.6%	3.0%		5.0%	4.9%	5.1%
	GRB4				1.3%	0.6%	7.4%	2.4%	0.8%	5.7%	3.7%	3.5%	18.1%	12.5%	2.1%		0.8%	0.8%		2.2%	1.2%	7.4%

		LPRIA-Conquest			Mid 1st-mid 2nd			Mid 2- mid 3			L3-M4			RB			Topsoil			Total		
Ware	Fabric	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %	Nos	weight	Rim %
	GRB5				3.2%	2.0%	6.7%	12.2%	7.7%	14.9%	5.2%	6.4%					0.8%	0.3%		5.1%	3.6%	7.0%
	GRB6				17.5%	20.1%	10.0%	5.7%	2.2%	5.7%	0.7%	0.8%	3.6%				10.7%	6.3%	7.8%	8.8%	8.3%	7.2%
GRB Total					38.3%	40.1%	46.3%	56.9%	30.6%	48.3%	24.4%	24.3%	47.1%	75.0%	80.6%		56.6%	83.4%	84.4%	43.5%	48.2%	53.7%
GTA8	GTA8				5.2%	5.3%	11.9%													1.5%	1.5%	4.0%
GTA8 Total					5.2%	5.3%	11.9%													1.5%	1.5%	4.0%
Late CT	CTA CTA4							1.6%	2.3%	7.3%	28.1%	18.0%	26.1%	12.5%	16.4%		1.6%	0.8%	7.1%	7.7%	3.8%	8.0%
Late CT Total								1.6%	2.3%	7.3%	28.1%	18.0%	26.1%	12.5%	16.4%		1.6%	0.8%	7.1%	7.9%	4.0%	8.0%
M	MH MH/MLINC				0.6%	27.6%	14.1%	0.8%	1.8%								0.4%			0.4%	8.3%	4.7%
								0.8%	16.3%	8.0%							0.2%			0.2%	3.8%	2.6%
M Total					0.6%	27.6%	14.1%	1.6%	18.1%	8.0%							0.6%			0.6%	12.1%	7.3%
NVGW	NVGW NVGW?							8.9%	13.6%	27.2%	8.1%	5.1%					1.6%	0.8%		4.4%	4.3%	8.8%
					3.9%	0.9%											0.8%	0.1%		1.3%	0.3%	
NVGW Total					3.9%	0.9%		8.9%	13.6%	27.2%	8.1%	5.1%					2.5%	0.9%		5.7%	4.6%	8.8%
Parisian	GRA7				1.9%	0.3%					0.7%	0.1%								0.7%	0.1%	
Parisian Total					1.9%	0.3%					0.7%	0.1%								0.7%	0.1%	
PQ	PQ1							1.6%	1.1%											0.4%	0.3%	
PQ Total								1.6%	1.1%											0.4%	0.3%	
TS	CG EG				3.2%	4.1%		3.3%	2.3%	5.7%	1.5%	2.8%	3.6%				3.3%	0.9%	5.0%	2.8%	2.4%	3.3%
								0.8%	1.9%											0.2%	0.4%	
TS Total					3.2%	4.1%		4.1%	4.2%	5.7%	1.5%	2.8%	3.6%				3.3%	0.9%	5.0%	2.9%	2.9%	3.3%
Grand Total		3	53.6		154	3071.1	270	123	2520.5	261	135	1836.7	138	8	119.3		122	3169.5	141	545	10770.7	810

Table 3 Relative proportion of wares and fabrics with total sherd numbers, weights and estimated vessel equivalents given, includes samian.