

# Smythen Street, Exeter

## ESS 01

### The Roman Pottery

#### Introduction

The assemblage consists of 1395 sherds weighing 24.006kg from a total of 78 individual contexts; all but 2.6kg was stratified. The pottery dates from the military period of c. AD 50/55-75 up to the fourth century with a probable gap in the early second century. All tables include a total value of weight and an estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) with the proportion of individual fabrics given as a percentage of that total.

#### The amphorae

The forms present in this assemblage are similar to those from previous excavations at Exeter (see Williams 1992, 56-62). Almost 70% of the amphorae carried fish-based products, most from the fish oil amphora commonly known as *Cam* 186 from the southern Spanish coast, although there are no rim sherds to differentiate the variations of the types known in this fabric. Dressel 20 was only recovered from the military levels, and although it is the second largest group in the assemblage (12.9%), it is poorly represented considering this is usually the most common amphora type, with 33.7% and 40.4% recovered from the previous excavations of the military levels in Exeter (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 215-219 and 1992, 56-62).

The fabric classification consists of the common name followed by the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998) coding in brackets.

**Table 00. The amphorae**

Fabric	% of Weight	% of EVE
Rhodian type (P&W AM 9)	1.6	0
Koan type (CAM AM 1)	5.5	0
Carrot (P&W AM 12)	0.5	93.5
Richborough 527 (P&W AM 13)	7.8	0
<i>Cam</i> 186 (CAD AM)	65.0	0
Dressel 20 (BAT AM 1)	12.9	0
Pélichet 47 (P&W AM 27)	1.3	0
North African	1.9	0
Spanish	1.4	0
Amphora lid	<0.1	6.5
Indeterminate	2.6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.458kg</b>	<b>31%</b>

#### The mortaria

*Identifications by K. Hartley*

No locally-produced mortaria were recovered. Most examples were from Northern France and could fit within the date of military occupation, although many of the types are common into the second century. The only mortarium that definitely dates to after AD 100 is an undiagnostic body sherd from Oxfordshire.

**Table 00. The mortaria**

Fabric	% of weight	% of EVE
Oise/Somme (70-150)	16.3	16.4
N. France (50-100)	69.8	55.7
Verulamium (50-110)	13.3	27.8
Oxfordshire (100-400)	0.6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.303kg</b>	<b>61%</b>

#### The fine wares

The number of individual drinking vessels recovered probably does not exceed ten. The percentage of *terra nigra* and its imitations is very similar to that excavated from 1980 to 1990 (Holbrook and Bidwell 1992, 37, table 1). There is also a similar pattern to the other pre-Flavian/Flavian fine wares such as Lyon ware and Pompeian-red ware. There is an apparent absence of fine ware drinking vessels from the first half of the second-century, including samian forms. This is also true of flagons,

which are predominantly first-century. The base of a *ceramique à l'éponge* bowl was recovered from an unstratified deposit. This ware is characterised by a mottled red slip and comes from western France, but was not widely exported until the fourth century.

**Table 00. The fine wares**

Fabric	% of Weight	% of EVEs
Samian South Gaulish	58.1	57.3
Samian Central Gaulish	22.0	11.6
Samian East Gaulish	0.3	0
Samian: unsourced	8.1	20.8
<i>Terra nigra</i>	0.8	0
Exeter fabric 375 (imitation <i>terra nigra</i> )	0.2	1.7
Lyon	1.2	1.7
Pompeian-red ware 3	1.2	1.4
North Gaulish fabric 2	0.1	0
Mica-dusted	0.9	0
Nene Valley colour-coated	0.9	2.7
<i>Moselkeramik</i>	0.1	0
<i>Céramique à l'éponge</i>	3.6	0
Oxfordshire red-slipped	1.5	2.7
Unidentified fine ware	0.8	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.447kg</b>	<b>293%</b>

#### The coarse wares

The coarse wares are mainly local in origin. The fabrics are as those in Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, with the fabric number included in the brackets where applicable, with the exception of Colchester fabric DJ from Symonds and Wade 1999.

**Table 00. The coarse wares**

Fabric	% of Weight	% of EVEs
Colchester fabric DJ?	0.7	0.8
Exeter flagon fabric 405	0.8	3.2
Exeter flagon fabric 406	0.3	0
Exeter flagon fabric 435	3.7	5.4
Exeter flagon fabric 440	3.1	4.6
Exeter flagon fabric 451	1.5	0
Exeter fortress ware A (100/371)	0.6	1.3
Exeter fortress ware B (190)	2.4	5.5
Exeter fortress ware C (191)	0.6	0.8
Exeter fortress ware D	<0.1	0
South Devon ware (5)	0.7	0
South-east Dorset BB1 (31)	25.0	19.3
South-western BB1 (40)	40.2	40.0
Fine south-western BB1 (60)	<0.1	0.5
Exeter micaceous grey ware (125)	8.4	9.5
Exeter sandy grey ware (151)	2.5	6.4
Exeter gritty grey ware (101)	4.2	2.2
Exeter handmade grey ware (81)	1.3	0.4
South-western grey ware storage jar	1.4	0
Exeter miscellaneous fabric 10	0.2	0
Exeter miscellaneous fabric 11	<0.1	0
Unidentified oxidised ware	0.2	1.5
Unidentified reduced ware	0.3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.798kg</b>	<b>1425%</b>

#### Catalogue

The catalogue comprises of the catalogue number followed by the vessel classification, the fabric identification or description and finally the context number. All type numbers are from Holbrook and Bidwell 1991.

- 1 Amphora. Peacock and Williams 1991, type 12 (Carrot), 3344.
- 2 Flagon. As type 1.1 but with an addition ring on the neck. Exeter flagon fabric 405, 3441.
- 3 Flagon. Type 1.1b. Exeter flagon fabric 406, 3858.
- 4 Flagon. This is a variant of type 1.1 and 1.2 but with a slight internal scooping and groove. Exeter flagon fabric 440, 3852 and 3856.
- 5 Jug. Soft orange fabric, slight flange at rim, moderate wear, unstratified.
- 6 Jar. Type 3.1. South-east Dorset BB1, 3615.
- 7 Cooking pot. Type 18.1. Exeter fortress ware B, 3441.
- 8 Cooking pot, wavy line under rim. The execution of the decoration is crude. South-western BB1, 3751.
- 9 Cooking pot, worn around rim. South-western BB1, 3441.
- 10 Jar. Type 4. Exeter hand-made grey-burnished ware, 3751.
- 11 Jar. Type 4.1. Exeter sandy grey ware, 3620.
- 12 Jar. Type 33. South-western BB1, 3302.
- 13 Bowl. Exeter gritty grey ware, 3619.
- 14 Bowl, heavily sooted. Type 43 but with an additional groove below the rim. South-western BB1, 3850.
- 15 Handled bowl. This form and fabric compares well to Colchester fabric DJ, form *Cam* 326/331, and is also seen at Usk (Type 20, Greene 1993, 36). Darling reports that this type is rare in Britain with an example from a Neronian context at Wall, and that it was being made at Longthorpe and Brockley Hill (Darling 1977, 60). Soft, fine, pale orange/buff fabric, moderately micaceous, 3751.
- 16 Bowl. Soft orange, micaceous fabric with occasional red inclusions, 3787.
- 17 Bowl. South-east Dorset BB1, 3294.
- 18 Bowl. Exeter sandy grey ware, internal sooting, 3751.
- 19 Bowl, sooted on rim and lower body. This form, in this fabric, has not been previously recorded in Exeter. Exeter fortress ware C, 3427.
- 20 Bowl. South-western BB1, 3729.
- 21 Lid. South-western BB1, 3302.
- 22 Lid. South-east Dorset BB1, 3302.
- 23 Lid. Exeter micaceous grey ware, 3619.
- 24 Mortarium. AD 50-90. Heavily burnt with repair rivet-hole. Verulamium, 3289.

### Discussion

The pottery would seem to indicate a reduced occupation from the military period to the early second century. Contexts directly related to the early Roman period contained no pottery. No pottery was

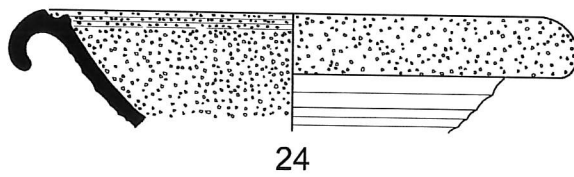
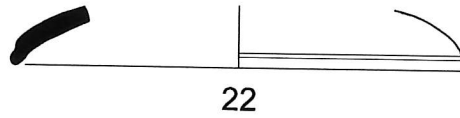
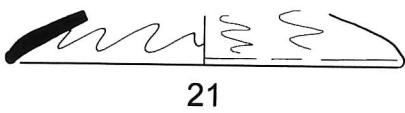
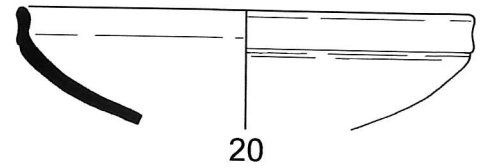
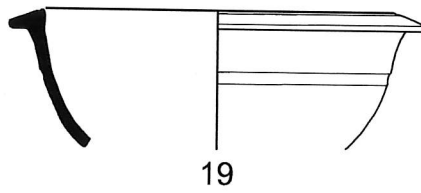
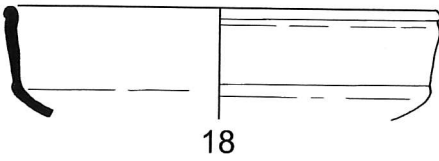
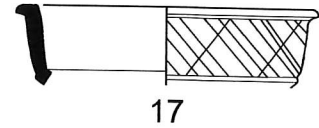
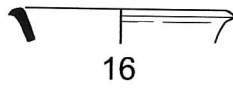
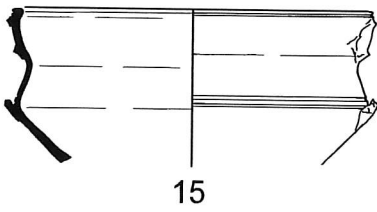
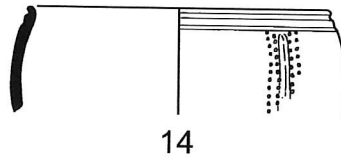
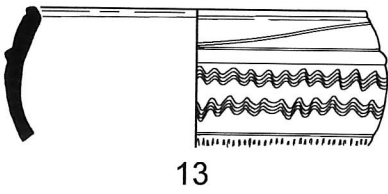
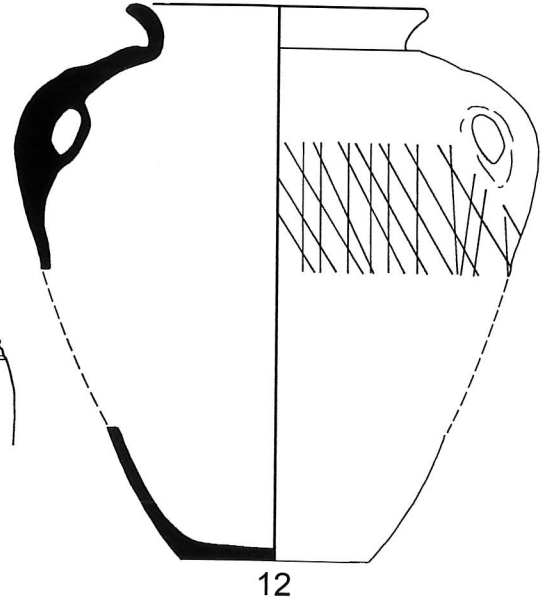
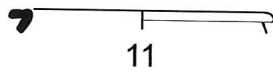
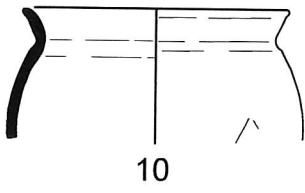
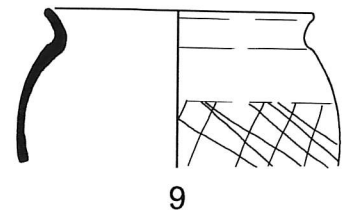
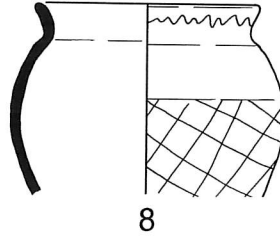
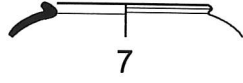
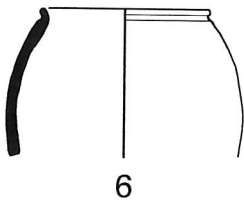
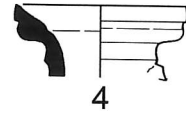
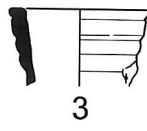
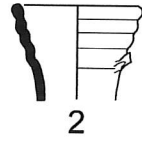
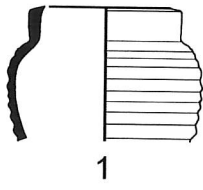
recovered from the military levels of the street. Contexts 3301 and 3302, representing two civilian-period remetalling phases over the earlier military street have pottery dating from the mid-second century onwards. The quantity of pottery relating to the second civilian remetalling phase is significantly larger than the first. The presence of Exeter micaceous grey ware (125), a fabric dated to the late military period onwards, in context 3787, the fill of an early Roman ditch, suggests that the ditch was open throughout the military period.

Samian potters' stamps  
by B. Dickinson

- 1 ESS01 3034 QVINTI on form 33: Quintus iv of Lezoux, Die 2a. This is from a die of the earlier Lezoux Quintus, used on forms 33 and, occasionally, 27. Examples of the stamp are known from Corbridge and Newstead (Curle 1911, 239, 77). His other common stamp occurs several times at forts in the Danube provinces and is in a burnt layer at Salla (Gabler 1989, Abb. 7, 14). The combined evidence for the two stamps suggests a range c. A.D. 140-170.
- 2 ESS01 3441 OF[ on a dish, South Gaulish (La Graufesenque). Flavian.

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