

CARRINGTON'S FARM, TOLLESBURY (TCF05)

ROMAN POTTERY NOTE; BY JOYCE COMPTON, ESSEX FAU; PROJECT 1297

Fourteen cremation burials produced Roman pottery, mainly in the form of individual vessels. The pottery from each burial has been recorded by fabric and vessel type; details by burial can be found in the table at Appendix 1. The fabrics were recorded using the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit fabric code which is standard for all Roman pottery recorded by the unit. A concordance is supplied beneath the table in the appendix. Vessel forms are coded with the appropriate Chelmsford typology reference (A-J; Going 1987, 13 - 54).

A total of twenty-five vessels was estimated, with the quantity in any single burial ranging from one to five. Eight burials (2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 15) contained single vessels and a further three (11, 13 and 14) contained two. Only three burials produced three or more vessels, one of which, Burial 10, may only have had two, as one vessel is represented by just two sherds. Most burials contained intact or semi-intact vessels, some of which had been truncated in antiquity. Six burials produced pottery in the form of sherds only, some of which only hinted at the vessel types represented. However, thirteen funerary urns were identified, and eleven accessory vessels. The accessory vessels exhibit a full range of forms, as indicated in the table below. Besides sherds from a flagon and a beaker Burial 10 contained two sherds from a grey ware jar. These may represent the remains of the urn but, since this is uncertain, the sherds have been excluded from most of the statistics. Only one vessel, the accessory jar in Burial 11, showed signs of burning presumably as a result of being placed on the pyre and it was noted that several vessels were in a poor surface condition, probably as a result of adverse soil conditions.

Class	Vessel Nos.	%
Dish (B)	1	4
Bowl-jar (E)	1	4
Flask (G)	1	4
Jar (G)	13	54
Beaker (H)	6	25
Flagon (J)	2	8
Total	24	

Class	Vessel Nos.	%
BSW	7	29
BUF	2	8
COLB	1	4
COLC	1	4
GRF	5	21
GRS	6	25
UCC	2	8
Total	24	

Pottery characteristics

Jars are the most common vessel class with more than half of the total number of vessels, followed by beakers (one quarter of the total). Dishes, flagons and flasks are restricted to just one or two examples. As might be expected, coarse fabrics are most in evidence, although there are a relatively high number of well-finished vessels in fine grey ware. Colour-coated beakers are the sole fine wares.

The pottery dating evidence suggests that the burials took place over a period of about 150 years, from the mid to late 1st century AD up until the late 2nd century. It is notable that no samian vessels seem to have been deposited, which might have been expected for the

burials of this date. Most of the ancillary vessels comprise drinking vessels; beakers, flagons and a flask. Even jars accompanying the urn in Burials 11 and 14 might be considered to be drinking vessels, rather than for any other function. It may also be notable that the only food-serving vessel, the dish in Burial 1, was used as a cover for the urn. This would tend to preclude a vessel for food-offerings. No grave goods other than pottery were noted. Iron nails, most with cremated bone attached, were collected from several burials; these probably derive from either coffins, if used, Or from the pyre itself.

The vessels form a discrete group and, as such, might benefit from publishing as a shorter note in the Essex Archaeology and History journal. This would require the more complete vessels to be drawn and for study of most of the cremated bone to take place. Deposition, as a group, at Colchester museum is also recommended.

References:

- Going, C.J 1987 *The Mansio and Other Sites in the South-eastern Sector of Caesaromagus: the Roman pottery*, Chelmsford Archaeol. Trust Rep. **3.2**, Counc. Brit. Archaeol. Res. Rep. **62**

APPENDIX 1: The Pottery Present at Each Burial

Burial	Vessel	Description/Comments	Burial Date
1	1	Large bowl-jar E6, zone of burnished cross-hatching on shoulder, fabric GRF, reconstructed Rim dia. 354 mm; height 290 mm	Mid-late 2 nd C
	2	Bead-rimmed dish B2.1, fabric BSW, used as a cover for vessel 1; elongated X-graffito and an incised B in centre of underside of base Rim dia. 338 mm	
	3	Flask G40-type, fabric GRS with darker zone on shoulder, section of rim missing, perhaps removed in antiquity Rim dia. 50 mm; height 170 mm	
	4	Plain-rimmed beaker, fabric GRF Rim dia. 60 mm; height 105 mm	
	5	Plain-rimmed beaker with exterior groove below rim, as <i>Cam</i> 392, fabric BUF (possible colour coat) Rim dia. 50 mm; height 90 mm	
2	1	Lower half of jar, fabric GRS, reconstructed	Roman
3	1	Butt beaker H7, fabric GRF, three panels of rouletting between cordons, section of rim missing Rim dia. c. 110 mm; height 330 mm	Early-mid 2 nd C
	2	Plain-rimmed beaker, <i>Cam</i> 392; remains of dark colour-coat, possibly not Colchester Rim dia. 45 mm; height 90 mm	
	3	Identical plain-rimmed beaker Rim dia. 45 mm; height 90 mm	
4	1	G16 jar with plain shoulder cordon, fabric BSW with red core showing over most of upper body, reconstructed Rim dia. c. 210 mm (distorted); height c. 220 mm	Mid-late 1 st C
5	1	Sherds only (30); rim and body sherds G16 jar with plain shoulder cordon, fabric BSW	Mid-late 1 st C
6	1	Lower half of G23 jar (reconstructed up to shoulder, rim separate), fabric GRS Rim dia. c. 210 mm; height c. 300 mm	2 nd C +
7	1	Sherds only (40); jar base and lower wall sherds, fabric BSW	Roman
8	1	Lower half of jar, G9.1 type with burnished cross-hatching, fabric BSW, reconstructed	2 nd C +
10	1	Sherds only (55); base, body sherds and handle, flagon, reddish-buff sandy fabric	Mid 2 nd C
	2	Sherds only (20); rim, base and body sherds, small H20 beaker, fabric COLC	
	3	Sherds only (2); single base and body sherds, ?jar, fabric GRS	
11	1	Sherds only; large G23.4 type jar, fabric GRF	2 nd C +
	2	Sherds only; G19/20 jar, burnt, fabric BSW	
12	1	Lower half of jar, fabric GRS, reconstructed	Roman
13	1	Lower half of jar, fabric GRS	Early Roman
	2	Sherds only; footring base and body sherds, globular flagon, found inside the jar, fabric COLB	

Burial	Vessel	Description/Comments	Burial Date
14	1	Jar with angled shoulder and groove above, ?G18/19, fabric BSW, reconstructed, rim detached Rim dia. c. 170 mm; height > 160 mm	Mid-late 1 st C
	2	Small round-bodied jar with everted rim, fabric GRF Rim dia. 95 mm; height 95 mm	
15	1	Sherds only; large G23 type jar, fabric coarse GRS Rim of similar dia. to Vessel 1 in Burial 1	2 nd C +

Fabric code concordance:

Fabric Code	Fabric Name
BSW	Black-surfaced wares
BUF	Un-sourced buff wares
COLB	Colchester buff ware
COLC	Colchester colour-coated ware
GRF	Fine grey ware
GRS	Sandy grey ware
UCC	Un-sourced colour-coated wares