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AMPHORAE FROM OWER, DORSET

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The amphorae sherds were classified by fabric and form and then weighed and counted. The types represented are Pascual 1, which is by far the most common type present, Dressel 2-4, Dressel 20, Dressel 30, a probable Campanian amphora/jug fabric and a small number of unassigned types. The origin and dates of these amphorae are summarized below.

Total weight of amphorae	16,076gms
Total number of amphorae sherds	353

% Total of each fabric

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	13,947gms	86.8%	269	76.3%
Dr. 2-4	291gms	1.8%	3	0.8%
Dr. 20	483gms	3.0%	6	1.7%
Dr. 30	532gms	3.3%	36	10.2%
? Campanian amph/jug	387gms	2.4%	18	5.1%
Unassigned	436gms	2.7%	21	5.9%

Pascual 1 (Illustrations: 513,703,383,813,699,574,533 and 418)

This is the first identification in Britain of this distinctive Catalan amphora type. Based on the Italian Dressel 1B form, it is characterized by a high vertical rim, cylindrical neck, ovoid body, straight rounded handles with a narrow longitudinal groove and a chunky conical spike (see Tchernia,1971 for illustrations of the complete form). Two fabrics are represented at Ower: a hard rough, dark red to reddish-brown fabric, with large white inclusions of quartz and felspar, golden mica and fragments of granite scattered throughout (illustrations: 513 and 703), and a slightly softer, smoother creamy-white fabric, lacking the mica but containing the quartz and felspar present in the previous fabric (illustrations: 533,418, 383,813,699 and 574). Both fabrics appear to have been produced in the Barcelona region (Pascual,1977), but the lighter coloured one may also have been made a little further down the south coast. These amphora probably held wine, as the Layetanian area was praised by Martial as having a quality of wine second only to that of Campania (xiii,118). A single kiln producing similar types is known at Aspiran in south-west France (Tchernia,1971,85), but its products do not seem to be represented at Ower.

Pascual 1 types are present on the continent in contexts ranging from late Republican/early Augustan at Vieille-Toulouse to A.D. 79 at Pompeii, and may well go on later than this (Tchernia,1971,52-54). At Ower, Pascual 1 sherds are found in the securely stratified early first century A.D. levels (see below). A late Augustan or Tiberian date for the northern export of this amphora type at Ower would broadly agree with the dating of a similar find from the east Rhineland fort of Westphalie, near Holsterhausen, which should be dated to the last decade of the first century B.C. - early first century A.D. (Tchernia,1971,56-57). As far as is known, Pascual 1

amphora are rarely found in post-Conquest contexts in Britain (see below), and the occurrence of sherds of this form in the later levels at Ower no doubt represents residual material from the early first century levels.

Outside Spain, the main distribution area for Pascual 1 amphorae was Narbonensis and Aquitania, and these types appear only rarely in northern Gaul and the Rhineland. In Britain, besides Ower, sherds from likely Pascual 1 vessels have recently been recognized at Hengistbury Head (stratification details awaited), Bagendon, Gloucestershire (site dated A.D. 20-50) and Knighton, Isle of Wight (unstratified), while single sherds have been found at Colchester (unstratified) and Thaxted¹, Essex (associated with a Dressel 1B amphora-burial). On present evidence, the distribution of the Pascual 1 form in Britain shows a distinct southerly bias, more especially towards the territory of the Durotriges, and seems likely to have arrived in late Augustan or Tiberian times. Given the paucity of finds in northern Gaul and the Rhineland, and only one pre-Conquest find in eastern Britain, it seems probable that the Pascual 1 amphorae from Ower came from northern Spain via the Narbonensis-Garonne route around the coast of Brittany. This would also help to explain the presence of early Augustan pottery from Aquitania in the early levels of the site (see elsewhere).

It seems significant that no southern Spanish or Italian Dressel 2-4 types of amphorae appear in the early first century levels at Ower, although both of these types are to be found in some numbers in the eastern part of the country at this date (Peacock, 1971). The answer may lie in some form of regional differentiation of amphorae deliveries to the late Iron Age tribes of pre-Conquest Britain, whereby the south-eastern tribes received southern Spanish fish products and Italian wine via the Rhone-Rhine route, while the Durotrigian region and surrounds were receiving Catalan wine

by way of the Garonne waterway.

Dressel 2-4

This type of amphorae was made in a variety of places during the first and second centuries A.D., e.g. Italy, southern France and Spain, and was probably used for carrying wine.

Dressel 20

Dressel 20 amphorae come from the Guadalquivir region of Spain, between Seville and Cordoba, where they were used primarily for the transportation of olive-oil. This type of amphorae has a wide date-range from the pre-Roman Period I levels at Camulodunum to the third/fourth centuries A.D.

Dressel 30

Wine-amphora, probably from southern Gaul, in particular the area around the mouth of the Rhone. In Britain, these vessels date from the latter half of the first century A.D. to the beginning of the third century, with the main concentration occurring during the second half of the second century.

? Campanian amphora/jug

This fabric is particularly distinctive in the hand-specimen as it appears to contain numerous inclusions of 'black sand' set against a white to light grey clay background. Thin sections were made of four of the eighteen sherds represented in this group, and study

under the petrological microscope revealed grains of green or colourless augite scattered throughout the clay matrix, together with sanidine felspar, a little basaltic hornblende and fragments of volcanic rock. Both in the hand-specimen and in thin section, these sherds recall the 'black sand' fabrics of certain Dressel 1 amphora types and Pompeian red slipped wares convincingly shown by Peacock (1971,1977) to have been made in Campania, more especially the area around Pompeii and Herculaneum. A similar origin for the Ower material is highly likely.

Only one of the Ower sherds is other than a featureless body sherd. The exception is a small flat-topped rim from second/third century layers (illustrated: 639). A similar type, though in a red fabric, has recently been found at Mushrooms Farm, Broughing in first century contexts. One sherd of this fabric at Ower, identical in the hand-specimen to the above amphora/jug rim, was found in early first century contexts, which might imply that the material found in the later levels is residual.

Summary of amphorae present in the different phases

Early first century Context: rectilinear enclosure; butt end of steep sided ditch.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	2648gms	95.7%	43	89.6%
? Campanian amph/jug	15gms	0.5%	1	2.1%
Unassigned	105gms	3.8%	4	8.3%

Pascual 1 dominates in this early level, but the sherd of a Campanian amphora/jug shows that pottery from Italy was also reaching

the site at this early date.

First century (including late first century) Context: ring ditch enclosure; residual material from rectilinear enclosure.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	486gms	60.1%	4	36.3%
Dr. 20	233gms	28.8%	2	18.2%
Dr. 30	38gms	4.6%	1	9.1%
? Campanian amph/jug	45gms	5.6%	3	27.3%
Unassigned	7gms	0.9%	1	9.1%

The Pascual 1 and Campanian amphora/jug sherds probably belong to the earlier part of the century.

First/second centuries (including late first/second century)

Context: gully below building 905; built up layers below 142; built up levels immediately below 707.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	1315gms	80.2%	37	77.1%
Dr. 2-4	109gms	6.6%	2	4.2%
Dr. 20	7gms	0.4%	1	2.1%
Dr. 30	175gms	10.7%	6	12.4%
? Campanian amph/jug	14gms	0.9%	1	2.1%
Unassigned	20gms	1.2%	1	2.1%

The Pascual 1 and Campanian amphora/jug sherds probably belong to the earlier part of the first century. What is somewhat surprising is that only one sherd of the most common amphora of the second century, Dressel 20, occurs in these levels, and none in the second/third century levels (see below). This would seem to imply that the nature of the site had changed from that of an important (?) trading post/port in the first century, especially the earlier part of the century when the Pascual 1 amphorae arrived, and that in the later period the site was no longer able to command quantities of long-range wine or oil supplies. For example, the production of black-burnished ware seems to be important in the economy of the site in the later period.

End of second century Context: kiln/oven.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	191gms	66.1%	4	57.1%
Dr. 2-4	82gms	28.4%	1	14.3%
Unassigned	16	5.5%	2	28.6%

The known amphorae sherds are residual from the earlier levels.

Second century onwards Context: Roman yard levels.

Pas. 1	5215gms	96 sherds
? Campanian amph/jug	83gms	1 sherd.

Residual from earlier levels.

Second/third centuries (including mid second to late third century)

Context: general level with bldgs 706/707
and yard 147; briquetage/burnt clay
feature; post-packed stone feature
below 906, with residual material
from 288 and 338; road robbing 727;
'road' levels.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	1817gms	93.6%	46	92%
Dr. 30	35gms	1.8%	1	2%
? Campanian amph/jug	61gms	3.1%	2	4%
Unassigned	30gms	1.5%	1	2%

The Pascual 1 and Campanian amphora/jug sherds are residual
from earlier levels.

Third century (including late third century) Context: potters yard;
Roman gully feature to east of site; post-pad
bldg adjacent to yard 147; muscle shell tips
to east of 904; bldg adjacent to 904; mixed
levels immediately below wall of 904.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	1612gms	88.5%	24	80%
Dr. 30	51gms	2.8%	1	3.3%
? Campanian amph/jug	101gms	5.5%	3	10%
Unassigned	57gms	3.1%	2	6.7%

The Pascual 1 and Campanian amphora/jug sherds are residual from earlier levels.

Post-Roman Context: post-Roman agricultural disturbance.

<u>% By weight</u>			<u>% By count</u>	
Pas. 1	2071gms	75.4%	42	60%
Dr. 20	243gms	8.8%	3	4.3%
Dr. 30	181gms	6.6%	15	21.4%
? Campanian amph/jug	68gms	2.5%	2	2.9%
Unassigned	183gms	6.7%	8	11.4%

¹ I am grateful to Chris Going for drawing my attention to this vessel.

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