

ALPHORAE FROM THE CENTRAL AREA DEVELOPMENT, STAINES, 1977

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Introduction

The amphorae from the 1977 excavations at the Central Area Development, Staines, mainly body-sherds but with some rims, handles and spikes, were classified by fabric and form, and in order to consider the material quantitatively were then weighed and counted. The classification of types is principally based on Dressel (1399), Pélisset (1946) and the Camulodunum series (Hawkes and Hull, 1947), supplemented by descriptive terms suggested by Peacock (1977).

The types present are Dressel 20, which is by far the commonest amphorae recorded, together with lesser amounts of Catalan and Gallic amphorae, Camulodunum 185A, Rhodian style and some unassigned types. Brief notes on the origins and chronological span of the amphorae are given below.

Total weight of amphorae	194,309gms
Total number of amphorae sherds	1,973

% Total of each fabric

	<u>% by weight</u>		<u>% by count</u>	
Dressel 20	184,199gms	94.8%	1,808	91.6%
Catalan	3,238gms	1.7%	38	1.9%
Gallic	741gms	0.4%	15	0.8%
Cam. 185A	262gms	0.1%	6	0.3%
Rhodian Style	258gms	0.1%	1	0.1%
Unassigned	5,611gms	2.9%	105	5.3%

Dressel 20

This is easily the commonest amphorae type from the CAD excavations, and is represented by 25 rim sherds, 19 handles and 1,764 body-sherds. Dressel 20 amphorae were made along the banks of the River Guadalquivir and its tributaries between Seville and Cordoba in the Roman southern Spanish province of Baetica (Bonsor, 1931; Ponsich, 1974; 1979). They were used for the transportation of olive-oil. This type of amphora has a wide date-range, from the Augustan prototype (Oberaden 83) to the well-known globular form which, with some typological variation, was in use up to the late third century A.D. (Zevi, 1967).

The Dressel 20 rims from the CAD excavations can be roughly paralleled in Tchernia's (1967) scheme for their evolution. Tchernia's Type 2, which is Claudian-Neronian in date, is represented by sherds secT, W625, W105, W27, W536, W474(2), W1, W427, A54, W536 and W460. While Tchernia's Type 3, roughly dateable

from the Flavian period to the early second century A.D., is represented by sherds W520, W165, W452, W589, W536, W389, W667, W413, W479, W687, A21, W478, W383 and W406. However, the dangers of attributing a too close dating for the Dressel 20 rims has already been pointed out (Peacock, 1981).

Six amphorae stamps were present:

- 1) CFA BST on a handle (A077).
- 2) SAENAES on a handle (W505). cf. Callender (1065) no.1559, who attributes variations on the theme SAENIANENSES to a figlina in Baetica, probably Las Huertas del Rio. The stamps are dated c. A.D.80/90-130/140.
- 3) MSAENANJA on a handle (W571).
- 4) POP R on a handle (W80).
- 5) ASVEN OL on a handle (A21).
- 6) RAAIT on a handle (W631).

In addition, a rim sherd (W383) has graffiti marks on it. While a number of sherds showed evidence that the neck and rim had been carefully removed and the junction with the body smoothed over (W132, W373, W1, W589, W356, W352, W275 and G8). A rough shaped disc of Dressel 20 fabric was also noted (W360).

Box I

W131, W490, W506, W291, W134, W200,
W131(9), W490, W506, W291(6), W134, W200(20), W515(2), W673(12),
W278(23), W158(16), W133(2), W135, W275(6), W165(2), W520, W259(7),
W106(13), W132(31), W673(60).

Box 2

W340(3), W347, W352(3), W334, W324(25), W357, W347, W353(5),
W325, W356(2), W35I(2), W323(5), W334(I3),

Box 3

W436(3), W43I(II), W428(IO), W442(5), W427(2I), W430(I3), 438(2),
W700(8), W426(36).

Box 4

W360(I6), W370, W373(3), W36I(2), W409(6), W383(2), W390(3),
W372(I3), W406(2), W408, W389(7), W406(I5), W365(2), W396(2),
W360(6), W408(5), W37I(3), W392, W405(2), W373(42).

Box 5

W4I3(I2), W452(9), W4II(7), W4I2(2), W4IO(I2), W405(5), W406,
W404(2), W408, W400(5).

Box 6

WI42(I9), W449(4), W276, W28I, W275(27), W706, W370(II), W278,
W257(9), W300, W290(I2), W30I(2), W708(4), W276, W3IO(8), W300(3),
W543(4), W705, W286(II), W294(5), WI36(7), W305(I6), W278(9),
W279(4), W3I5(I3).

Box 7

II3 sherds.

Box 8

WI89(4), WI7I(II), WI98, W244(2), W2I7(7), W26I(II), W200(3),
WI6I(I4), WI72(7), W257(4), W262, WI86, WI23(3), W220(3), WI73(3),
WI9I(3), W258(6), W263, WI46(3), W236, W203, W269, W225, W20I(2),
WI67(2), W254.

Box 9

W649, W640(5), W667(II), W626(I5), W635(6), W625(7), W63I(4),
W648, W639(2), W682(2), 670, W644, 677, W503, W686, W572, W68I(2),
W647, W643, W483, W323(2), W678(2), W690(2), W674(4), W680(2),
W65I.

Box IO

W53(3), WI29, WI(I8), WI(2), WIO5(20), WIO5(53), W79(2), WI36,
WII4, W95, WII8(2), W59(II), W35, W687, W80(II), W687(8), W638(2),
W679, W676(2), WII8(3), WI7(5), WIO5(4), W48, W89(5), W43(3),
W93, W37, W52, W675(3), W94, W686(6), W37(5), W93.

Box II

W573(6), W536(4), W57I, W536(4), W572(6), W540, W537(I5), W536(22),
W560(5), W528(4), W562(I5), W578, W562, W557(5), W3I8(4), W563(IO),
NP77, W538, W524(2), W552(2).

Box I2

W74(2), W485(2), W478(5), W38(2), W452(7), W474(IO), W452(2),
W457, W452, W476(8), W460(IO), W77(2), W444(I8), W505(4), W45I(I7),
W699, W479(2I), W35, W483(8), W488.

Box I3

W648(2), W5I6(I5), W5I8(IO), WI74(2), W229(4), W230(I5), W642(2),
W224(23), W205(6), W243(4), W207(3), W524(4), W520(2I), W204(2),
W505(55).

Box I4

W6I3(4), W583(6), W583(II), W589(II), W589(IO), W623(II), W6I9(I4),
W605(3), W244, W604(IO), W589(5), W58I(4), WI32, W290, W608(8),
W6I4(2), W620(4).

Box I5

42 sherds.

Odds

WI94(9), W2I5, WI38, W206(2), W286(2), WI05(7), WI05, WI, W598(2), WI42(7), G8(4).

Catalan Amphorae

Part of the spike (W413), a grooved handle (W373) and over 35 body-sherds of an amphora or amphorae in the Catalan fabric. Hard, fairly rough fabric, between light red and buff (Munsell 2.5 YR 6/6 -7.5YR 7/4) in colour, with large white inclusions of quartz, feldspar and limestone scattered throughout (the 'points blancs' of Tchernia and Zevi, 1972). The spike is much grittier than the other sherds, which may lead one to suppose that more than one vessel is present. It is difficult, however, to suggest the form or forms represented by the sherds. The spike could belong to either of the two main types of Catalan wine amphorae : Dressel 2-4 and Dressel 1-Pascual 1. While the grooved handle is not of the bifid type associated with Dressel 2-4, nor is it of the lightly grooved rounded form common to Dressel 1-Pascual 1 (cf. Williams, 1981). Instead, it is flatish to oval in section with a fairly deep central groove. It could possibly be a variation of Dressel 1-Pascual 1, though it is clear that other amphora forms were also produced in the Catalan area and it may be from one of these (Keay and Jones, 1982).

W413(12), W373, W476(3), W194(2), W158, W172, W460(2), W430, W200, W103, W172, W158, W412(6), W406, W451, W145, W105, W39.

Gallic Amphorae

These are represented by 4 bases with a small footring (W291, W650, W700 and W230) and 11 body-sherds. The most common type present is doubtless Pélíchet 47, which can probably be equated with form no.4 in the Gauloise type series (Laubenheimer et al, 1981). However, until the latter form is more precisely defined it is probably better to remain with the commonly accepted name for this particular type (e.g. Panella, 1973).

Pélíchet 47 amphorae were predominantly made around the mouth of the Rhône in Languedoc, where a large number of kilns producing this form are known (Widemann et al, 1981). Panella (1973) has shown that the principal content carried was wine. The form had a fairly long life from about the mid first century A.D. to at least the early fourth century A.D. (ibid.). In Britain Pélíchet 47 is not found in pre-Boudiccan contexts, while the main concentration of finds seems to occur during the second century A.D. (Peacock, 1978).

W243, W291, W650, W121, W324, W700, W230, W563, W598, W230, W573, W623(3), W105.

Camulodunum 185A (Haltern 70)

This amphora type, represented by 6 body-sherds, has its origin in southern Spain, the similarity in fabric with Dressel 20 suggesting a source in the region of the River Guadalquivir (Peacock, 1971). Due to the fabric similarities of the two

types it is possible that some of the featureless body-sherds from the CAD excavations tentatively ascribed to Camulodunum 185A are in fact thin-walled Dressel 20 sherds. Amphorae of the Camulodunum 185A form from the Port Vendres II shipwreck carry inscriptions naming the contents as defrutum, a sweet liquid obtained by boiling down the must (Colls et al, 1977; Parker and Price, 1981). However, fish-sauce also appears to have been carried in this form, a recent titulus pictus from London reading mur(ia). (Rodriquez-Almeida, 1981). The date range for this amphora type is from about the mid first century B.C. to the mid first century A.D. (Colls et al, 1977; Tchernia, 1980). W430(2), W347, W200, W523, W145.

Rhodian Style

One handle (W626) of a Rhodian style wine amphora in Peacock's Fabric 1 (1977), with a probable origin in Rhodes. This form had developed from late Hellenistic prototypes by the late first century B.C. and probably lasted until the early second century A.D. (Panella, 1973; Peacock, 1977). It has been suggested by Peacock (1977), that the predominance of this amphora type on pre-Flavian military sites in Britain may be associated with the possible tribute of Rhodian wine exacted during the period A.D. 43-53, when Claudius rescinded the liberty of the Rhodians. W626.

Unassigned

This group of for the most part featureless body-sherds may also contain material from large storage jars.

W1(5), W427, W275, W667, W208, W687, W158, W39, W408, W444(2), W224, W80, W315, W485, W536(2), W229(2), A127, W583, W215, W426(7), W639, W678, W431, W171, W431, W105(4), W194, W172, A45(2), W109(2) W479, W505, W194, W613, W625(4), W133(2), W238, W224(2), W174, W369, W229(2), W700(19), W230, W222, sect(3), W361, W427(3), W598, W536(3), W352, W158, W515, W536, W215, W230, W699, W324.

Non-Amphorae

W426(6), W229, W589, W400, W230, W623(2), W324, W206, A95, A21, W700(2), W427(4), W589, W444, W479(4), W642, W613(2), W279, W573, W109, W619(2), W138, W122, W389, W230, W200, sect, W35, W699, W105, W673, W598, W537, W700, W347(2), W370, W70, W699(3), W38, W430, W230(5), W1, W224, W365(2).

Comments

The predominant amphora type present at the CAD excavations is Dressel 20, comprising almost 95% of the total weight percentage. This compares well with a figure of 96% for this type obtained from the nearby Friends Burial Ground excavations at Staines (ref.?). These figures fall in line with other detailed analyses of amphorae from British sites in showing the dominant position achieved by Dressel 20 in amphorae imports to Roman Britain

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