

Denver, Norfolk: Plant remains associated with Roman kiln furniture

Four bags of fired clay fragments have been examined. Impressions of plant material, consisting largely of cereal remains are abundant on the surfaces of the fragments and in the matrix of the fired clay. Voids representing small wooden rods about 8mm. in diameter, which would originally have formed a framework for the kiln, are visible in some of the clay 'bars'. In the fragment from Bag 107 one of these rods survives as charcoal.

The surfaces of the fragments were inspected and plasticine casts were taken from impressions which appeared to be identifiable. The impressions identified represent only a small proportion of the total, and quantification would therefore perhaps be misleading. (Table .) This outline study, however, serves to establish that vegetable temper used in the kiln structure consisted largely of waste from the processing of spelt (Triticum spelta) and six-row hulled barley (Hordeum vulgare). From the components of cereal plants represented it appears that a mixture of threshing floor waste and sievings was used (cf. Hillman 1984, 10). This implies that there was some cereal production and processing in the vicinity of the site.

Hillman, G.C. (1984) 'Interpretation of archaeological plant remains: The application of ethnographic models from Turkey' in Van Zeist, W. and Casparie, W.A. (eds). Plants and Ancient Man Studies in Palaeoethnobotany, 1-42. A.A. Balkema. Rotterdam, Boston.

Bag No.	62	100	107	169
<u>Triticum spelta</u> L (spikelets)	+	+	-	+
(glumes)	+	+	-	+
<u>Triticum</u> cf. <u>spelta</u> (rachis internodes)	+	+	-	-
<u>Triticum</u> sp. (spikelets)	+	-	-	+
(glumes)	+	+	+	+
(?lemmas)	-	-	-	+
(grains)	+	-	-	+
<u>Hordeum vulgare</u> L emend Lam (lateral grains)	+	-	-	+
<u>Hordeum</u> sp. (rachis internodes)	+	-	-	-
(grains)	+	-	-	-
<u>Avena</u> sp. (florets)	-	-	+	-
Indeterminate cereal/grass (culm and leaf frags)	+	+	+	+
(?awns)	+	+	+	+
<u>Bromus</u> sp. (caryopses)	-	+	-	-
Indeterminate Gramineae (caryopses)	+	+	+	-

Table : Impressions of plant material identified on kiln furniture

Plate : Plasticine casts of impressions on kiln furniture.

- a. Triticum spelta. Spikelet.
- b. Triticum spelta. Glume.
- c. Triticum sp. Grain.
- d. Hordeum sp. Two rachis internodes.
- e. Hordeum vulgare. Under-developed lateral grain, probably from base of ear.
- f. Hordeum vulgare. Lateral grain clearly showing rachilla and lemma.

Scale: 5mm.