

IMPORTED ROMAN POTTERY FROM OLD MARKET HALL,  
CHESTER, 1967-9 EXCAVATIONS

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1) CHE/OMH AI CC

Part of the top half of a small ? jar or ? amphora, with an upright, slightly inverted rim, and deep horizontal rilling on the body, in a hard, fairly smooth, sandy fabric, light red (between Munsell 10R 6/8-2.5YR 6/8) slipped outer surface which continues down the inside rim.

It is difficult to be precise in the identification of the form involved here, as there is no real indication of the length of the body. However, it is highly probable that the vessel originates from the Mediterranean region. It is possible that it may in fact be a small amphora, possibly related in some way to the 'carrot' type, although the fabric of the Chester vessel is rather finer-textured than that normally associated with carrot amphora (cf. Peacock and Williams, forthcoming). This type of amphora is commonly associated with early military sites in Britain and Germany (Reusch, 1970), though examples are also known from Pompeii. Carrot amphora occur in early first century A.D. contexts at Wiesbaden and Vindonissa and are common at Claudian Hofheim (Reusch, 1970) and Claudian-Neronian Colchester (Hawkes and Hull, 1947). They are also found after A.D. 75 at Fishbourne (Cunliffe, 1971). The origin and contents carried in these very interesting

amphorae are unfortunately unknown. Scanning electron microscopy of the quartz inclusions suggests an origin in a desert environment (Shackley, 1975), and Palestine has been mentioned as a possibility (Green, 1980). However, to the best of the writer's knowledge no examples of carrot amphora have so far been recovered from that area.

2) CHE/OMH TH 50/N C

Small amphora handle in a hard, rough sandy fabric, pinkish-white (7.5YR 8/2) outer surface, pinkish-buff inner surface and red core.

It is again difficult to be completely confident of the amphora type represented here, but it may be Mañá C (1951). This amphora has a long cylindrical body, two small handles attached to the side and a flaring rim. The form has recently been divided into three categories (van der Werff, 1978), but it is not possible to say to which the Chester vessel belongs on the evidence of the handle alone. The date range for Mañá C is predominantly second and first centuries B.C. continuing into the early first century A.D. A kiln producing this form is known at Kouass in Morocco, and it is probable that it was also made in Tunisia (ibid.). The contents carried are not known. Mañá C is rare in Britain, one or perhaps two, examples are known from Canterbury.

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