SGO AMPHORAE FROM THE PUCKERIDGE/BRAUGHING 1971-72 EXCAVATIONS

D.F. Williams, Ph.D., F.S.A. (DOE Ceramic Petrology Project) Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton

Introduction

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The amphorae were classified by fabric and form, and in order to consider the material quantitatively were then weighed and counted. The classification of types is based on Dressel (1899), Pélichet (1946), and the Camulodunum series (Hawkes and Hull, 1947), supplemented by descriptive terms suggested by Peacock (1971). The types represented are Dressel 1, Dressel 2-4, Dressel 20, Pélichet 47, ?Camulodunum 185A, Camulodunum 186sp, Southern Spanish and one unassigned sherd. Brief notes on the origins and chronological span of the amphorae are given below.

| To ta l | Weight | o f | amphorae | | 6,767gms |
|---------|--------|-----|----------|--------|----------|
| To ta l | number | ٥f | amphorae | sherds | 103 |

% Total of each fabric

% By Weight

<u>% By Count</u>

| Dressel 1 | 698gms | 10.3% | 1 | 1.0% |
|-------------------|----------|-------|----|-------|
| Dressel 2-4 | 231gms | 3.4% | 1 | 1.0% |
| Dr.1 or Dr.2-4 | 2,078gms | 30.7% | 54 | 52.4% |
| Dressel 20 | 2,896gms | 42.8% | 35 | 33.9% |
| Pélichet 47 | 64gms | 0.9% | 1 | 1.0% |
| ?Camulodunum 185A | 281gms | 4.1% | 1 | 1.0% |
| Camulodunum 186sp | 108gms | 1.6% | 7 | 6.8% |
| Southern Spanish | 400gms | 6.0% | 2 | 1.9% |
| Unassigned | 11gms | 0.2% | 1 | 1.0% |

-2-

The amphorae from the site can be usefully considered under two headings : sherds from (1) those levels which are potentially pre-Conquest, and (2) those which are post-Conquest.

Camulodunum 186sp ?Camulodunum 185A Southern Spanish Dr.1 or Dr.2-4 Dressel 2-4 Pélichet 47 Unassigned Dressel 20 Dressel 1 (1) Potentially Pre-Conquest (sherd weights in brackets) 1(11) 42(1186) 22(1889) APW (Pit C5) 1(698) 1(121) ARG (Pit C36) 2(100) 2(264) ARH (Pit C36) 1(281) 1(6) 1(456) AKA (Pit B50) 1(231) 1(49)

(2) Post-Conquest

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| AQT (Pit 29) | 1(325) | | | | |
|----------------|----------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| AQP (Ditch 28) | 1 | L(97) | | | |
| ABX (Site A) | 8(254) 9 | 9(354) | 1(64) | 6(102) | 1(279) |

Comments

It is possible that none of the material from the potentially pre-Conquest deposits is later than the end of the first century B.C. or early first century A.D.. Only the Dressel 1 handle can be securely dated to the first century B.C., although Dressel 2-4, Dressel 20, Camulodunum 186sp, Southern Spanish, and Camulodunum 185A could all have reached the site some time before the Roman Conquest (see below). Any Dressel 1 sherds from the post-Conquest deposits should therefore be regarded as residual, though at present it is difficult to differentiate undistinguished bodysherds of Dressel 1 from the later Dressel 2-4 type. The variety of amphorae types noted in pre-Conquest levels at previous excavations at Puckeridge and Braughing (Peacock, 1979), and at nearby Gatesbury Track (Williams and Peacock, 1979) and Skeleton Green (Peacock, 1981), is also reflected here, with common forms appearing on all of the sites.

Comments on Individual Forms

Dressel 1 and Dressel 2-4

Dressel 1 are wine-carrying amphorae that were made primarily in the Campanian, Latium and Etruria districts of Italy (Peacock, 1971; 1977a). The 1A form was produced from about 130 B.C. till around the middle of the first century B.C., while the 1B form was made from the first quarter of the first century B.C. until the last decade of the century (<u>ibid</u>.; Tchernia, 1983). Fairly large numbers of Dressel 1A have been recovered from Hengistbury Head in Dorset, while the majority of Dressel 1B vessels are found north of the Thames (Peacock, 1984). It is clear, however, that the 1A form did occasionally reach the latter region, as a

1A rim from Gatesbury Track demonstrates (Williams and Peacock, 1979). By and large though this twofold division of the Dressel 1 distribution in Britain appears to be valid (cf. Peacock, 1984). The comparatively large size of the Dressel 1 handle from APW (Pit C5) suggests that it belongs to the 1B form rather than the 1A.

Apart from the Dressel 1 handle, there are a number of featureless bodysherds from the site which may also belong to this form. However, it is difficult to be precise because similar fabrics were used for the later Dressel 2-4 form, which is the direct successor on Italian kiln sites to Dressel 1 amphorae (Peacock, 1977a). It is possible therefore that these bodysherds belong instead to the Dressel 2-4 form, which ranges in date from the later first century B.C. to the mid second century A.D. (2evi, 1966). In particular the comparative thin-walling of some of the sherds from APW (Pit C5) is suggestive of Dressel 2-4 rather than the heavier, thicker-walled Dressel 1. In addition to Italy, this important form, widely distributed in late Iron Age and Roman Britain, was also made in a range of different fabrics in France, Spain and the Aegean, as well as in England, at Brockley Hill (Castle, 1978). A thin section of the Dressel 2-4 rim and part-handle from AKA (Pit E50) suggests an Italian origin for this particular sherd.

Five bodysherds from APW (Pit C5) and ABX (Site A) are in a distinctive 'black sand' fabric - caused by dark-coloured inclusions of augite - which occurs in both the Dressel 1A and 1B forms as well as Dressel 2-4. The recent find of a Dressel 1A rim from Lake Farm, Dorset, in the 'black sand' fabric demonstrates that this fabric also reached Britain in the 1A form as well as the 1B mentioned by Peacock (1971). The presence of yellow (melanitic) garnet in this fabric led Courtois and Velde (1978) to suggest an origin in the Latium region. However, yellow-brown garnet is also a feature of the sands further south, and a Campanian origin, in particular the area around Pompeii and Herculanium, has been advocated by Peacock

- 5 -

(1977b). Further analysis by Velde and Courtois (1983) using an electron microprobe has distinguished two separate compositional groups of yellow garnet, of which one source they propose is situated near to Rome and another in the Vesuvius region. The latter suggestion agrees with Peacock's (1977b) suggestion, but as yet there is no archaeological evidence for an origin near Rome for the 'black sand' fabric.

Dressel 20

This is the most common amphora type imported into Roman Britain, though recent research has shown that it was already present in some numbers during the late Iron Age (Williams and Peacock, 1983). Dressel 20 amphorae were made in the southern Spanish province of Baetica, along the banks of the River Guadalquivir and its tributaries between Seville and Cordoba, and carried olive-oil (Ponsich, 1974; 1979). This type of amphora has a wide date-range, from the Augustan prototype (Oberaden 83) with a fairly upright rim, a short spike and less of a squat bulbous body than the later form, to the developed well-known globular form which, with some typological variation, was in use at least up to the late third century A.D. (Zevi, 1967). Rims of the Oberaden 83 type are known from pre-Roman levels at Prae Wood and Gatesbury Track, so that importation of Baetican olive-oil into Britain may have begun as late as the last decade of the first century B.C. (Williams and Peacock, 1983). The Dressel 20 rim from level AQP can be paralleled with late second and early third century A.D. examples from Augst (Martin-Kilcher, 1984).

Pélichet 47

Part of a flat base with a foot-rim was recovered from ABX. The fabric suggests

-6-

that this represents Pélichet 47, a flat-bottomed wine amphora form predominantly made in southern France, more particularly around the mouth of the Rhône in Languedoc, where a number of kilns are known (Peacock, 1978; Widemann <u>et al</u>, 1979). It was also one of the amphorae types made at the recently excavated kilns at Crouzilles, Indre et Loire (information from Alain Férdiere), indicating that the form was also made in central Gaul as well. The type had a long life from about the middle of the first century A.D. to at least the early fourth century A.D. (Panella, 1973). In Britain, Pélichet 47 is not found in pre-Boudiccan levels (Peacock, 1978).

Camulodunum 185A

This form has its origin in Baetica (Tchernia, 1980), the similarity in fabric with the more common 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 thin-walled sherds from layer APW classified as Dressel 20 are in reality Camulodunum 185A. While the broken spike from AKA (Pit B50) which at first glance appears to come from a Camulodunum 185A, may just possibly be from an Oberaden 83, the Augustan proto-type of the Dressel 20 form (see above, and Williams and Peacock, 1983).

Amphorae of Camulodunum 185A form (Haltern70) recovered from the Port Vendres II shipwreck carry inscriptions describing the contents as <u>defrutum</u>, a sweet liquid obtained from boiling down the must (Colls <u>et al</u>, 1977; Parker and Price, 1981). The date-range for this form is from about the mid first century B.C. to the mid first century A.D. (Colls <u>et al</u>, 1977; Tchernia, 1980).

-7-

Camulodunum 186sp and Southern Spanish

This material probably derives from the coastal regions of southern Spain, between Cadiz and Malaga, and seems to have been mainly used to carry fish-based products from the late first century B.C. to the second century A.D. (Peacock, 1971; 1974). The Southern Spanish sherd from ARG (Pit C36) has a centrally made hole in the sherd, possibly to make it useful as a loom-weight? This feature is found from time to time in broken amphorae sherds.

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-9-

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