# Roman pottery report

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## Introduction

The excavations at Marcham produced an extremely large assemblage of Roman pottery amounting to some 104,404 sherds from the *c.* 50 trenches excavated. For reasons made clear in the introduction to the report no detailed analysis of the pottery has been undertaken for the site. The extant pottery records were compiled by volunteers as part of a Heritage Lottery funded exercise largely under the supervision of Sheila Raven (see Volunteers Pottery Spreadsheets, this website). Following a couple of introductory sessions by the author at the beginning of the project the pottery was sorted into fabrics as recognised by the volunteers and recorded by sherd number for site zones MFNA, MF and MFP. Collective weights per context were also recorded for MFNA. It was not possible to check the accuracy of the work as it proceeded. The sorted fabrics were bagged separately according to the designated fabric code for each excavated context. Decorated sherds were removed and bagged together and recorded separately as a group and although comprising various fabrics which were not identified further. The data was recorded as an MS Excel spreadsheet which gives totals (count) and overall percentages of prehistoric to Roman. A small selection of rims were recorded by count, diameter and percentage of rim present (estimated vessel equivalence (EVE)) but only a small number of these were actually identified to broad form type (see Volunteers Pottery Spreadsheets, this website). No illustrations were undertaken.

The author subsequently looked at a selection of pottery from specific contexts highlighted by the authors compiling the various stratigraphic texts. Given the time constraints and quantity of material this took the form of extracting the relevant context bags and eyeballing the contents in order to provide a spot date for the groups in question. At the same time fine wares, (samian, continental imported wares, Oxford red-slipped ware), were noted if present and any easily recognised forms noted, specifically for the samian and the Oxfordshire red-slipped wares, parchment ware or white wares. The latter were referenced to established typologies, for example, Dragendorff (1895) and Young (1977). No attempt was made to review the coarse wares largely comprising oxidised, white-slipped and reduced products of the Oxfordshire industries or to re-bag erroneously identified pieces. For reasons outlined further below the figures produced for the various fabric groups cannot be regarded as very reliable other than in a very broad-brush way.

## Condition of the assemblage

In general terms the condition of much of the pottery seen by the author was poor with often well-fragmented sherds displaying very abraded edges and the loss of surface finishes. There is clearly a moderately high level of residuality with earlier sherds, including some prehistoric material, in later contexts. This would prove a challenge to an experienced pottery specialist so it is perhaps not surprising that some material has been misidentified. It was observed that some of the Roman handmade sandy wares, including Dorset black burnished ware, occasionally featured in the prehistoric bags.

**Methodology**

The volunteers were given a series of fabric recording codes into which to sort the pottery. The bulk of the material comprised sandy coarse-wares and this was treated simplistically with sorting based on firing colour (basically oxidised, reduced (grey/black) and white) and texture (fine/coarse). Oxfordshire colour-coated wares (OXF RS) and samian (collectively), where recognised, were also labelled and counted. All other wares not matching these groups were separated out with sherds selected as reference material. Most of these wares were subsequently identified by the author and, where relevant, identified and labelled using the National fabric reference collections codes which are largely related to traded and named wares. Details of these with images could also be consulted on-line by the volunteers (Tomber and Dore 1998). The sherds from each group were counted with the individual fabric totals recorded onto an Excel spread-sheet as single lines per context with summary columns giving the overall totals for Roman and prehistoric wares.

**Composition: fabrics**

The Roman assemblage can be divided into continental and regional imports; local products and wares of unknown origin. Most of the recognised continental imports are fine ware products from France and Germany. The commonest of these is samian with most of the sherds coming from Central Gaulish sources and date from the early-mid 2$^{nd}$ century on. Also present are wares from Central Gaul (CNG BS); Argonne (ARG CC); Moselle (MOS BS) and Cologne (KOL CC), largely in the form of beakers or cups. There are in addition a few sherds of amphorae with the only recognised pieces coming from Baetican types (BAT AM) from Southern Spain largely used for the transport of olive-oil although the containers themselves were often re-purposed. Some confusion with sandy grog-tempered storage jar was encountered.

Prominent regional wares identified include Savernake ware storage jar (SAV GT) and South-west white-slipped wares (SOW WS) from Wiltshire; Dorset black burnished ware (DOR BB1); Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware (LNV CC); New Forest colour-coated wares (NFO RS/CC); Alice Holt grey ware (ALH RE) and late Roman shelly ware (ROB SH). Single sherds of Midlands pink-grog-tempered ware (PNK GT) and Overwey white ware (OVY WH) were also observed in spot dating suggesting potentially other sherds might be present.

The local wares are predominantly wheel-made products of the Oxfordshire industries with oxidised, reduced and fine reduced ware (OXF FR); parchment ware (OXF PA); colour-coated wares (OXF RS) and white-slipped ware (OXF WS) (Booth *et al* 1993; Young 1977). Also quite prominent are sherds of grog-tempered storage jar and Oxon handmade shelly ware.

**Chronological indicators**

The appearance of certain known wares within the pottery assemblages can be broadly dated thus giving some indication of whether the deposits can be considered early, middle or late Roman. Most of the Marcham assemblage is dominated by coarse wares most of which come

from the various kilns forming the Oxfordshire industry. Production in Oxfordshire is known to have extended from the mid-1st A.D. through the later 4th century and perhaps beyond. As yet the early phases of the Oxford pottery industry are not that well understood and no kilns have been found specifically dating to the suspected earliest phase of production. Young (1977) suggests the first standard wares perhaps date from the Flavian period but not really becoming common until the 2nd century. More recently an early fine-ware industry producing copies of continental imports such as butt and girth beakers has been identified possibly with a source in the Abingdon-Dorchester-on-Thames area based on incidence of sherds (Timby *et al*. 1997). The fabrics are slightly different to the later more familiar wares of the industry and the forms strongly suggest a pre-Flavian date. The first appearance of the typical Oxfordshire Roman reduced and oxidised coarse wares thus have a notional start from the Flavian period and dominate local assemblages from the 2nd century onwards. Early 2nd century production has also been identified at Lower Farm, Nuneham Courtenay (Booth *et al*. 1993) where amongst other types the potters were experimenting with glazed wares and roughcast colour-coated wares. Oxfordshire white wares including mortaria only manifest themselves from the 2nd century onwards. The main colour-coated industry, along with the parchment wares, only appear from the mid-late 3rd century with certain forms, particular decorated bowls, more typical of the 4th century.

Chronologically sensitive Imported fine wares such as samian appear to be moderately sparse throughout the assemblage, certainly in the contexts observed by the author. Some confusion with the colour-coated wares and material which has been burnt occurred in the identifications. Dating contexts on the basis of individual sherds of samian can also be hazardous as the dates reflect a production date and so not take into account use and curation of vessels well beyond this date.

Of the regional wares Dorset black burnished ware (BB1) does not appear to have reach Oxfordshire before *c* AD 120 only becoming common in the mid-later Roman period. Again certain forms and styles of decoration will reflect differing chronologies. Late Roman shelly wares date to the latter part of the 4th century but can be confused with an earlier handmade shelly ware found in Oxfordshire from the early Roman periods onwards unless the form is recorded. The later version is moderately well represented in the late Roman assemblage suggesting considerable activity across the area in the later 4th century perhaps extending into the 5th century.

## Zone summaries

### Zone MFNA[1]

The six trenches forming Site MFNA collectively yielded *c.* 7,642 sherds of Roman pottery (Table 1). Sherds identified as samian formed a very small component of the overall assemblage contributing just *c.* 1.3% (count). Spot dating was undertaken on 14 contexts

[1] In the context descriptions the numbers quoted are for total number of Roman sherds not including, in most cases, designated prehistoric wares.

distributed across Trenches 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7. In Trench 1 the Roman pottery from five upper fills of the middle Iron Age Barrel-shaped Enclosure ditch which was recut in the late Iron Age was briefly examined. Sherd size varied from 7.2g, which suggests very fragmented material, up to 13g more typical of refuse material. Most of Roman pottery appears to comprise types current in the Flavian or Flavian-Trajanic periods and is confined to coarser and finer wares presumed to be of local manufacture. The finer wares in particular include sherds from various decorated beakers. The only imported ware noted was samian, limited to a single sherd from (1015).

Gully [2026/2040] in Trench 2 yielded a very small group of pottery which is also consistent with an early Roman date. By contrast ditch terminal [3008] in Trench 3 contains late Roman wares. The destruction horizons in Trench 6, despite having a very late Roman *tpq*, contained a marked quantity of 2nd-3rd century material suggesting a high level of re-deposition. Similarly the five contexts examined in Trench 7 produced an admixture of 2nd to 4th -century types. Imported fine wares include samian, Central Gaulish black-slipped ware and Cologne colour-coated beaker, whilst regional wares feature Dorset BB1, and Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware.

If the examined assemblage is typical of the MFNA area of the site overall it would highlight two points. First that there was activity at the location in the early Roman period, i.e. in the mid-late 1st century. Second, the occupants of the site were embracing the use of new forms such as the butt and girth beakers both of which have continental antecedence, but most of the pottery was being locally sourced with negligible imported ware.

***Trench 1***

*Barrel-shaped Enclosure Ditch group [1016]:*

*[1014]*: North-south side: Upper ditch fills: overall total: 1,872 sherds

*(1015).* Total 721 designated Roman sherds. Wt 7583g. Average wt. 10.5g. Spot dating identified South Gaulish samian (Drag. 27); early Oxon cream rouletted beaker; oxidised sandy and white-ware butt beaker; Oxon coarse white-ware; one sherd from a globular beaker with applied decorative roundel as Young (1977) form R31.6; grog-tempered storage jar; shelly ware and sandy coarse-wares. Date: mid –late 1st century.

*(1017).* Total 489 Roman sherds. Wt 5532g. Average wt. 11.3g. Local grey coarse-wares; coarse white ware and burnished grog-tempered storage jar. Featured sherds include barbotine ring-and-dot decorated beaker; oxidised sherds with white painted decoration and white-ware beaker. Date: late 1st-early 2nd century.

*(1183).* Total 221 Roman sherds. Wt. 2876g. Average wt. 13g. Featured sherds include a ring-necked flagon with an expanded beaded rim; white-ware roulette-decorated beaker accompanied by reduced coarse-wares. Trumpet-mouthed ring-necked flagons are generally dated A.D. 60-120 whilst ring-and dot beaker were most popular in Flavian period. *Tpq*. Flavian - ?Trajanic.

*(1197).* Total 404 designated Roman sherds. All the sherds are from reduced coarse-ware jars.

*(1052)*. Top fill. Total 91 sherds, Wt. 658g. Average wt. 7.2g. Mainly coarse-wares including a pre-Flavian rouletted fine white-ware beaker; white-slipped oxidised flagon sherds; a beaker with barbotine ring-and-dot decoration. Coarse-ware sherds probably from the same vessel in (1052) and (1015). *Tpq*: Flavian. Six intrusive medieval sherds. Coin A.D. 41-54.

**Trench 2**

*Gully[2026/2040].* 10 Roman sherds recorded from (2041). Early wheel-made coarse-wares and two fine red colour-coated wares, possibly early Oxfordshire wares. Date: ?1$^{st}$-2$^{nd}$ century.

**Trench 3**

*Barrel-shaped Enclosure Ditch terminus [3008].* 21 Roman sherds from top fill (3009) including Oxon colour-coated ware Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware, samian and reduced coarse-wares. Date: Late Roman.

**Trench 6**

*Destruction horizons (6008), (6010) and (6018)*. Total 1,761 Roman sherds. Samian including examples of forms Drag. 18, 18/31, 33, 35/6, 37 and 38; one sherd with a rivet repair hole. Mainly reduced coarse-wares including BB1 copies of plain-rimmed dishes and flat-rim bowls. Other sherds of note include a burnt Oxfordshire white ware jar (Young 1977, form BW2); a grey roughcast decorated beaker; a poppyhead beaker with lozenge-shaped barbotine dot decoration; Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware and Oxfordshire white-wares including a mortaria, probably (ibid. type M14) produced in the late 2$^{nd}$-3$^{rd}$ centuries. Coin A.D. 364-375. Most of the Roman pottery dates to the 2$^{nd}$-3$^{rd}$ centuries despite the late coin suggesting it is largely re-deposited material.

**Trench 7**

*Robber trench [7020] (7021*). Total 116 Roman sherds (one post-medieval). Mixture of 2$^{nd}$-4$^{th}$ century sherds including Oxfordshire white ware and colour-coated ware; one sherd of samian; 2$^{nd}$ -century Dorset BB1; Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware and coarse-wares.

*Layer (7015).* Total: 432 Roman sherds. Mainly coarse wares. Of note a 3$^{rd}$-century wall-sided flagon (*ibid*. type W98) and a 4$^{th}$-century trefoil-mouthed jug (*ibid*. type W27) both in Oxfordshire white ware.

*Layer (7022).* Total: 280 Roman sherds. Mixture of 2$^{nd}$-4$^{th}$-century sherds including Oxfordshire white ware, white-slipped ware parchment ware and colour-coated ware the latter including a beaker with barbotine decoration; 2$^{nd}$-century Dorset black burnished ware jar; fine grey ware including sherds with barbotine dot decoration; samian (Drag. forms 33. 37); Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware and coarse-wares.

*Destruction horizon (7027*). Total 11 Roman sherds. Mainly reduced coarse wares but including one rim from a Central Gaulish black-slipped beaker and a fine white ware flagon sherd. Date: later 2nd-3rd century.

*Destruction horizon (7080*). Total 221 Roman sherds (x1 post-medieval stoneware). Mixture of sherds including samian, colour-coated wares from Cologne and the Lower Nene Valley; Oxon red-slipped mortaria; a parchment ware jar, Oxon white wares and handmade shelly ware. Date: 4th century.

**Zone MF**

**Summary**

The *c.* 39 trenches in area MF were extremely rich in pottery producing in the region of 89,794 sherds (Table 2). Samian approximately accounted for 3% of this. Some 94 contexts distributed across 12 trenches (Tr 1, 2, 8B, 9/29, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 36 and 40) were briefly re-examined and spot dated. Overall the assemblage was composed of a mixture of wares typical of the 2nd to 4th centuries or later, with the presence of sherds from the later Roman industries in most contexts providing a 4th century or later *tpq* across all the trenches looked at. A sparse scattering of medieval and post-medieval sherds are regarded as intrusive. There was a noticeable absence of the earlier wares witnessed in Zone MFNA. At an overall assessment of 3% the level of samian present would be regarded as typical of that to be expected from a rural settlement showing no specific higher levels to indicate any specialised activities associated with the temple. The emphasis on Central Gaulish material would imply that imported wares were not reaching the site in any quantity until well into the 2nd century and then at a moderately low level.

Of the reviewed material the only contexts that could perhaps be regarded as mid-Roman in date, (2nd-mid 3rd century), rather than late Roman, include the lower fill of pit [14295]; layer (15022) and gully [21070] and drain [40008]. Many of the contexts contain odd small sherds of fine imported wares, largely from beakers and often decorated, largely types in production in the mid-2nd-early 3rd century. These include Central Gaulish and Moselle black-slipped wares; products from the Cologne area and Argonne ware alongside the more ubiquitous samian. The presence of these wares in many of the latest Roman assemblages either indicates curation of such table-wares beyond the production periods or re-deposition and mixing of chronologically different deposits, for example from dispersed middens.

Trenches 22 and 36 had significant quantities of later prehistoric material associated with the Roman; the former often in a better condition than the Roman where the sherds showing signs of wear and being well fragmented. Whilst it is uncertain whether the Roman wares could potentially signal continued activity at the site after the 4th century, the presence of products from the latest phases of the Oxfordshire industries and late Roman shelly ware in many contexts certainly points to activity in the latest 4th century. No examples of early medieval (Saxon) material were observed in this sample although documented elsewhere on the site.

**Trench 1 Main arena entrance area**

*Context (1145).* Total 15 Roman sherds. Well-fragmented sherds including small pieces from an Oxfordshire white ware mortarium and an Oxfordshire colour-coated ware. Date: mid-late 3rd-4th century.

*Context (1205).* Total 110 Roman sherds. Sherds include grog-tempered storage jar; BB1 copies amongst which is a flanged rim conical bowl, Oxfordshire white ware; a bodysherd from an Oxfordshire red-slipped bowl with white painted decoration (Young 1977) type C82. Date: AD 325-400+

*Context (1284).* Total 153 Roman sherds. A well-fragmented group of mainly coarse-wares with two sherds of Central Gaulish samian and Oxfordshire colour-coated ware. Date: Mid-3rd -4th century.

*Context (1291).* Total 21 Roman sherds. Sherds include Oxon colour-coated beaker and an oxidised (?white-slipped) mortarium indicating a date after the mid-3rd century.

**Trench 2**

*Layers associated with Large Shrine Structure*

Pre-fire layers

*(2070)*. Total 212 Roman sherds. Accompanying the coarse-wares are sherds of imported Moselle beaker; Oxfordshire red-slipped mortaria and beaker, the latter with applied scale decoration and a sherd with impressed 'maggot' decoration; a BB1 plain-rim dish and late Roman shelly ware. Date: late 4th century A.D. +

*(2145).* Total 202 sherds. Similar to (2070) with sherds of rilled late Roman shelly ware, Oxon parchment ware (ibid. form P24) and Oxon red-slipped mortaria and beaker intimate a late 4th century *tpq*.

*(2188*). Total 259 Roman sherds. Large quantity of late Roman shell-tempered ware accompanied by an Oxon red-slipped bowl (*ibid*. form C68); a plain-rimmed BB1 dish and a shallow, curved-dish in grog-tempered ware decorated with diagonal tooled lines all pointing to a date of later 4th or 5th century.

*(2195).* Total 365 Roman sherds plus three medieval and one post-medieval sherd. Very similar to (2188) with significant quantities of later Roman shelly ware, some scrappy Lezoux samian; an Oxon red-slipped bowl C68 and late Roman grog-tempered dish. Date: Disregarding the post-Roman sherds later 4th-5th century.

*Post-fire layers*

*(2198).* Total 106 sherds. Late Roman shelly ware and Oxon red-slipped mortaria (ibid. C97) and bowls (ibid. C45 and C68) indicated a later 4th + date for this layer.

*(2221).* Total 374 Roman sherds with one Tudor Green early post-medieval sherd. The group includes late 3rd-4th century BB1 flanged rim conical bowl; late Roman shelly ware; Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware and Oxon red-slipped beaker. Date: Later 4th+.

*Beamslot (2172).* Total 17 Roman sherds. One sherd of samian and two Oxon red-slipped jar (*ibid.* C18) rims. Date: late 3rd-4th century.

*Cobbled surface (2222).* Total 71 Roman sherds including an Oxon red-slipped beaker decorated with a barbotine animal; samian and late Roman shelly ware. Date: Later 4th+.

**Trench 8B**

*Key contexts*

*(8505).* Total 292 Roman sherds. In addition to the coarse-wares, sherds of Lezoux samian (Drag. 33); Oxon red-slipped mortaria; grog-tempered storage jar; late Roman shelly ware and New Forest colour-coated ware are present. Date: Later 4th century.

*(8512).* Total 210 Roman sherds. Very similar to the material from (8505) including further Oxon mortaria and New Forest colour-coated ware. Date: Late 4th century.

*(8563).* Total 88 Roman sherds. Includes late Roman colour-coated ware (Oxon and Lower Nene Valley); BB1 flanged bowl; Lezoux samian (Drag. 37 decorated); Oxon white ware; reduced sandy wares and shelly ware. Date: Late Roman.

*(8564).* Total 54 Roman sherds. In very poor condition with few rims. Includes various Oxon grey coarse-wares and white ware; Lezoux samian and shelly ware. Date: Late Roman.

**Trenches 9 and 29: Main arena trench and west entrance trench**

*(9005).* Total 100 Roman sherds. Samian (drag. 31 and ?crater base; grog-tempered and sandy storage jar; fine, matt black ware possibly Cologne. Date: ?3rd-4th century.

*(9008).* Total 111 Roman sherds and three medieval cooking pot sherds. Sherds include a fine matt black ware as (9005); Oxon whiteware mortaria, samian, BB1 copies of flanged bowl and plain rim dish; Oxon red-slip ware bowl *(ibid.* C68) and one sherd of late shelly ware. Date: Late 4th century +.

*(9012).* Total 60 Roman sherds. The presence of Oxon red-slipped ware; a residual decorated samian bowl Drag. 37 and shelly ware suggest a late Roman date.

*(9041).* Total 113 Roman sherds. Interesting group with an Oxon red-slip closed form showing a frieze of barbotine hunt scene of running animals; an Oxon red-slipped bowl decorated with impressed star in circle stamps and vertical rouletting; shelly ware and a reduce Oxon grey ware sherd with a post-firing incised X. Date: Late 4th century +.

*(9052).* Total 170 Roman sherds. Coarse wares; Oxon white ware mortaria and flagon (*ibid.* type W8); Lezoux samian (Drag. 31 and 33) and one body sherd with part of a post-firing graffiti. Date: mid-late 2nd century +.

*(9267).* Total 84 Roman sherds. Samian; Oxon red-slipped ware and a triangular-rimmed late Roman shelly ware jar. Date: later 4th century +.

*(9268).* Total 62 Roman sherds. Poor group, mainly coarse-wares so dating slightly ambiguous although a possible colour-coated sherd suggests late Roman.

*(9292).* Total 52 Roman sherds. The presence of one sherd of Oxon colour-coated ware and a grooved rim plain-walled dish in Oxon reduced ware intimate a late Roman date.

*(9306).* Total 76 Roman sherds. Wares include grog-tempered storage jar; samian; an Oxon mortaria (ibid. C100) with grits extending over the flange; one sherd of Baetican amphora and a triangular rimmed jar in late Roman shelly ware. Date: Later 4th century +.

*(9311).* Total 81 Roman sherds. Samian; late Roman shelly ware and Oxon colour-coated ware indicate a late 4th century + date.

*(29027).* Total 65 Roman sherds. Oxon red-slipped ware; samian; BB1 flanged bowl and late Roman shelly ware. Date: late 4th century +.

*(29032).* Total 31 Roman sherds. Fine wares comprise single sherds of samian and Oxon red-slipped flagon. Date: late 3rd-4th century.

*(29049).* Total 62 sherds. Fine wares limited to Oxon red-slipped ware and the rim of an Oxon white-ware ring-necked flagon. Date: late Roman.

**Trench 12**

*Furnace feature [12002]*

*(12004).* Total 50 Roman sherds. Several fine-ware imported sherds: samian, Central Gaulish black slipped ware. Cologne colour-coated ware; BB1 jar decorated with acute lattice; Oxon white-ware and shelly ware. Date: 3rd century.

*(12023).* Total 5 sherds comprising Moselle beaker and grey wares. Date: 3rd century.

**Trench 14**: **Area within corner of Roman temenos enclosure , including large 'favisa' pit and Roman midden**

*'Favisa' pit [14295]*

*(14208).* Total 61 Roman sherds. Samian; Oxon red-slipped ware including beaker and bowl (*ibid* C69); grog-tempered storage jar; BB1 plain rimmed dish; reduced ware flanged-rim bowls; Overwey white ware and late Roman shelly ware. Date: Late 4th century+.

*(14292).* Total 839 Roman sherds. Condition in terms of sherd fragmentation good. Large quantity of Oxon red-slipped ware (*ibid*. forms C14, C48, C51, C68, C97 and beaker); samian (Drag. 33); BB1 and late Roman shelly ware jar. Date: late 4th century +.

*(14312).* Total 95 Roman sherds. Oxon red-slip and parchment wares; BB1; late Roman shelly ware and burnished decorated grey ware with similar sherds in (14325). Date: late 4th century +

*(14325).* Total 38 sherds. Same vessel as (14312) accompanied by an Oxon red-slipped ware jar (ibid. C18) and handled and a plain-rimmed BB1 dish. Date: 4th century.

(14329). Total 86 Roman sherds. Oxon white and red-slipped ware sherds and a BB1 flanged-rim conical bowl. Date: Later 3rd-4th century.

*Lower fill (14234)*. Total 70 sherds. Acute lattice BB1 copy; Oxfordshire white-ware; Lezoux samian (Drag. 37); shelly ware. Date: ?2nd century.

**Midden group [14012]**

*(14030).* Total 34 sherds including two very tiny glazed sherds, probably Roman in date and grey wares. Glazed wares would be early 2nd century but these pieces are probably residual.

*(14073).* Total 47 sherds. Oxon red-slipped mortaria. White-wares and reduced wares. Date: mid 3rd-4th century.

*(14163*). Total 123 Roman sherds. Oxon red slipped bowl (ibid) C568 and flagon (C14); BB1 flanged-rim bowl; late shelly ware triangular-rimmed jar; Lower Nene Valley colour-coat. Date: Late 4th +.

*(14164).* Total 250 sherds. Oxon white ware mortaria (ibid. M22) and flagon (W9); samian; Lower Nene Valley colour-coat; Oxon red-slipped ware including copy of a Drag. 33 (ibid. type C88). Date: Late 4th century +.

*(14179).* Total 228 sherds. Late colour-coated wares Oxford and Lower Nene Valley; parchment ware (*ibid*. form P2); oblique lattice BB1 jar; shelly ware. Date: 4th century +.

*(14110*). Total 98 Roman sherds. Late shelly ware; flanged greyware bowl and Oxon red-slipped ware. Date: Later 4th century +

Other contexts

*Layer over cobbled area (14211).* Total 46 sherds. Oxon white ware, white-slipped ware, fine grey ware and red-slipped wares; Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware and shelly wares. Date: Late Roman.

*?Laid surface (14266).* Total 40 sherds. Oxon red-slipped ware, white-slipped and grey ware; Lower Nene Valley colour-coat; BB1 and shelly ware. Date: Late 3rd-4th century.

*Midden deposit (14268).* Total 65 sherds. Oxon red-slipped, white-slipped and grey ware; shelly ware; BB1 copies and Lezoux samian (Drag. 31). Date: late 3rd-4th century.

*Midden (14302).* Total 54 sherds. Oxon red-slipped ware, white ware and grey ware and samian. Date: mid-3rd-4th century.

*?Midden (14324).* Total 50 Roman sherds. Oxon red-slipped ware (*ibid.* forms C45; C18) and burnt white ware; Lezoux samian Drag. 37; Central Gaulish colour-coated ware; Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware and BB1. Date: mid-3rd century +.

**Trench 15: Area outside and within *temenos* wall and entrance area with structures**

*Layer (15013).* 49 Roman sherds including samian (Drag. 27); pink grog-tempered ware; Oxon white ware (ring-necked flagon, ibid. W6) and red-slipped ware and later Roman shelly ware. Date: 4th century.

*Layer (15022).* Total 84 sherds. In addition to coarse-wares is a samian sherd from a Curle 21 bowl and Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Date: Later 2nd-3rd century.

*Layer (15063).* Total 295 sherds. Imported ware samian (Drag. 37 decorated); Cologne colour-coat with rouletted or roughcast decoration) and Central Gaulish black-slipped ware alongside local Oxon wares and late Roman shelly ware. Date: Later 4th century +.

*Layer (15083).* Total 394 sherds. Largely Oxon wares including red-slipped beaker and parchment ware, BB1 copies with imported sherds of samian and Central Gaulish black-slipped ware. Date: 4th century.

*Layer (15084).* Total 266 Roman sherds and one glazed medieval piece. Similar range of material to (15083) with a bowl (*ibid* type P24) and a sherd of Cologne colour-coated ware. Date: 4th century.

*Layer (15173).* Total 142 sherds. Similar range of wares as (15063) and (15064). Date: 4th century.

*Layer (15195).* 185 Roman sherds. In addition to coarse-wares sherds include Central Gaulish samian (Drag. 33 and decorated); Central Gaulish black-slipped ware; Lower Nene Valley colour-coat and Oxon white-ware. Date: late 2nd-3rd century.

*Layer (15197).* 281 Roman sherds. Includes a range of imported continental and regional wares amongst which are samian (Drag. 37). Central Gaulish black-slipped ware; Cologne colour-coat; Lower Nene Valley colour-coat; BB1 and a late Roman shelly ware plain rimmed bowl. Local wares include Oxon red-slipped ware, burnt white-ware and an oxidised ware jug. One Oxon red-slipped bowl shows a post-firing graffiti on the interior. Date: 4th century.

*Layer (15203).* Total 260 sherds. Residual sherds include a 2nd-century grey-ware bowl with London-style decoration (as Young 1977, R68) accompanied by late Roman shelly ware, samian, Nene Valley colour-coated ware and Oxon red-slipped ware. Date: 4th century.

**Trench 18: Area outside temenos, buildings and hearths**

The ten contexts selected for spot dating can be divided into those with pottery dating to the 3rd century and those more clearly of 4th century date.

Selected contexts dating to the 3rd century*: (18109); (18182); (18216) and (18246).* Collective total 1,188 Roman sherds. In addition to the standard coarse-wares all these contexts yielded small quantities of imported fine-ware including Cologne colour-coated ware; Central Gaulish black-slipped ware and samian. One example of the latter from (18246) shows part of a post-firing graffiti. Also present across the group are sheds of Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware, Dorset BB1 and Oxon white ware.

*Context (18062).* Total 387 sherds. This context contained a significant number of 3rd - century sherds but with occasional later 4th-century pieces such as Oxon red-slipped ware and late Roman shelly ware. Samian is particularly well represented accounting for nearly 15% by sherd count. Other wares include further sherds of Central Gaulish black-slipped ware; Lower Nene Valley ware and a 3rd-century Oxon white-ware mortarium (ibid. type M17).

Selected contexts dating to the 4th century*: (18003); (18012); (18013); (18022); (18055).* Collective total 2991 Roman sherds. All these contexts produced sherds from fine ware imports including Central Gaulish and Moselle black-slipped wares, Argonne and Cologne colour-coated wares and samian (Drag. forms 27, 30, 31, 33, 35/6, 37 and beaker). Regional, imports include Dorset BB1 (flanged-rim conical bowl), Lower Nene Valley wares and late Roman shelly ware. Local Oxon wares included parchment, red-slipped and white wares. Of note is a plain-walled BB1 dish from (18003) with at least four cut marks incised on the rim after firing.

**Trench 21: Area of southern drain and water-logged Roman pit**

*Water-logged pit [21010]*

*Upper fills (21011) and (21016).* Total 28 sherds. The presence of a Oxon red-slipped bowl (*ibid*. type C84) from (21011) and late Roman shelly ware in (21016) indicates a later 4th - century + date for these layers. Overall the material, with one exception, is very fragmented particularly that from (21011) with an average sherd weight of 5 g. A complete grey ware pot (SF 4840) is recorded from (21016) (not seen by the author).

*Fills (21078) and (21080).* 16 sherds. Sherds of Oxon red-slipped ware from a bowl (ibid. C84) and a jug (ibid. type C14) from (21078) point to a date in the later 4th century or beyond for this layer. Further red-slipped sherds from (21080) with burnt flagon and folded beaker (C20) reflects a similar chronology. A complete grey ware pot (SF 6384) is recorded from the latter context (not seen).

*Gully [21070] (21071).* Total 35 sherds. In addition to coarse-wares the fill produced single sherds of a Baetican amphora and decorated samian. In the absence of any obvious late sherds this group is probably mid-Roman.

*Colluvial wash layers (21002/21089).* Total 1,574 Roman sherds. The material is in poor condition with abraded, worn sherds. Overall the composition of wares indicated a late 4th + date for the horizon with a range of most of the major Oxon wares, BB1; late shelly ware; Moselle fine-ware; grog-tempered storage jar and Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Of

note are examples of (*ibid*) types C98 and bowl sherds with impressed decoration including rosettes and curved maggot stamps. Residual samian includes examples of Drag. 18/31, 31, 33 and 37.

*Layer (21094).* Total 653 Roman sherds. A fragmented group of material with few diagnostic rims and an average sherd weight less than 5 g. The presence of late Roman shelly ware and Oxon colour-coated wares indicates a 4th century + date.

*Layer (21067).* Total 949 sherds. Imports include Baetican amphora and samian (Drag. 37) and BB1 whilst the local wares comprise grog-tempered storage jar, local shelly ware; local roughcast colour-coated beaker and Oxon white ware. The latter feature a mid-later 2nd-century mortaria (*ibid*.) type M2 and a pinch-mouthed flagon. The lack of any later wares suggests a later 2nd-3rd century date for this deposit.

**Trench 22**: **Roman building with veranda and hearth feature**

*Context (22086).* Total 153 Roman sherds. A mixed deposits with later prehistoric, Roman and post-medieval pottery present. The Roman includes sherds of samian, Cologne and Argonne fine-ware imports alongside typical late Roman (4th century +) local wares.

*Context (22079).* Total 374 Roman sherds. As with (22086) the assemblage includes a large quantity of prehistoric sherds (29% of the total assemblage) alongside medieval and post-medieval pieces. Imported fine-wares include further samian, Argonne wares as well as Moselle and Central Gaulish black-slipped sherds. Late Roman shelly ware and Oxon red-slipped pieces point to a later Roman date for the Roman material.

*Context (22084).* Total 48 Roman sherds, 30 later prehistoric. The Roman pieces suggest a late 2nd-3rd century date with mainly coarse-wares and local roughcast decorated colour-coated beaker.

*Context (22012).* Total 92 Roman sherds. Very similar composition to (22084) but with additional sherds of red-slipped ware and white-slipped oxidised ware suggest a mid-later 3rd century + date.

**Trench 36**: **Small square walled shrine with 'ritual shaft' and Iron Age pits**

*Ritual shaft [36123], upper fill (36054/36058)*. Total 24 Roman; 90 later prehistoric sherds. *Lower fill (36163).* Total 33 sherds. The presence of Oxon red-slipped mortaria and sherds of late Roman shelly ware suggest a late 4th+ date for both fills.

*Iron Age pits [36025] (36018); [36023] (36004) and [36132[] (36005).* All the later prehistoric pits produced small quantities, (11, 36 and 20 sherds respectively), of undiagnostic local coarse-ware Roman sherds from the upper fills.

*Layer (36002).* Total 51 sherds (309 later prehistoric sherds; one medieval sherd (Brill-Boarstall ware). Date of Roman: late 3rd-4th century.

*Layer (36001).* Total 108 Roman sherds (209 later prehistoric sherds). Mainly Roman coarse-wares but with samian and Oxon red-slipped ware including beaker with barbotine scale decoration. Date: late 3rd-4th century.

*Layer (36070).* Total 108 Roman sherds (186 Iron Age). The Roman includes late Roman shelly ware; Oxon parchment wares; red-slipped wares including (*ibid*.) bowl C64; grog-tempered ware and a BB1 flanged rim conical bowl. Date: Later 4th century +.

**Trench 40**: **Area at end of drain and close to river**

*Drain cut [40008] fills (40009) and (40074).* Total 7 and 33 sherds respectively. Coarse wares only. Date: 2nd-3rd century.

*Layer (40075).* Total 132 sherds. 3rd -century coins. Wares include an Oxon white-ware reeded rim bowl; red-slipped beaker and BB1 jar. Date: late 3rd century +.

*Layer (40004/40158)*. Total 677 Roman sherds. Typical late 4th+ century group of material with Oxon parchment ware (*ibid*.) bowl P24; red-slipped wares with mortaria (ibid. C100) and bows (C51); BB1 flanged rim conical bowls and late Roman shelly ware.

*Palaeochannel (40033).* Total 33 sherds. Range of typical later 4th-century material with late shelly ware and Oxon mortaria.

*Palaeochannel (40049 )and (40123).* Total 133 and 684 sherds. Familiar range of late Roman (4th century +) Oxon wares (ibid. mortaria forms M17, WC7) and late shelly ware jar and one possible sherd of New Forest colour-coated wares.

**Zone MFP**

**Summary**

The six trenches forming zone MFP collectively produced a further 6,968 sherds of which samian only formed 0.3% (Table 3). This zone revealed mostly Iron Age features including many large enclosures and pits, with Roman finds restricted to upper layers and recuts. Only five contexts from Trench 2 and one from Trench 3 were spot dated. A high incidence of later prehistoric material from these contexts clearly reflects the earlier pre-Roman focus of activity in this area. Potentially early Roman material was present in ditch recut [2206] with a number of decorated local fine wares but this seems to be re-deposited with other wares suggesting a mid-Roman date. The ditch entrance in Trench 3 may also contain early Roman pottery but the sample is very small. The midden deposits in Trench 2 were also chronologically mixed with material spanning the 2nd through to the 4th century.

**Trench 2**

*Ditch recut [2206] (2056).* Total 2,754 Roman sherds (plus one post-medieval piece). Mainly coarse wares with a significant number of potentially mid-late 1st-century re-deposited sherds including rouletted butt beaker; vertically combed fine grey ware; roulette and comb decorated girth beaker and oxidised fine ware decorated with barbotine dots alongside

handmade early Roman coarse wares; shelly ware and sandy grog-tempered storage jar. However, a later date, perhaps later 2nd-3rd century, is inferred from the presence of Oxon white-ware (ring-necked flagon); burnt white-ware and white-slipped oxidised ware; BB1; samian and Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware.

*Midden deposits (2009), (2010), (2328) and (2329).* Total 438, 45, 109 and 121 sherds respectively with one glazed medieval sherd in (2009). Significantly more prehistoric material, in a better state of preservation compared to the Roman, was recovered from (2009) and (2010). The Roman sherds were in poor condition but the presence of Oxon red-slipped beaker and parchment ware suggests late 3rd-4th century *tpq* for (2009). Potentially slightly earlier material perhaps dating to the late 2nd-3rd came from (2328) and (2329) with grog-tempered ware; early Oxon shelly ware; Oxon oxidised and white wares, some decorated with red painted dots and one BB1 plain-rimmed dish.

**Trench 3**

Ditch entrance [3011] (3084). Total 36 Roman sherds and estimated 211 later prehistoric pieces. The Roman comprises largely undiagnostic coarse-wares with a single fine white-ware with rouletted decoration. Dating uncertain but possible 1st or 2nd century.

**Tables**

| **MFNA ROMAN POTTERY** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Tr** | **Roman total** | **samian** |
| 1 | 2456 | 6 |
| 2 | 37 | 0 |
| 3 | 128 | 0 |
| 6 | 2346 | 47 |
| 7 | 2573 | 43 |
| 8 | 102 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **7642** | **97** |

*Table 1*

| **MF ROMAN POTTERY** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Trench** | **Roman total** | **samian** |
| 1 | 816 | 8 |
| 2 | 6501 | 157 |
| 3 | 542 | 25 |
| 4 | 108 | 7 |
| 5 | 185 | 0 |
| 6 | 85 | 6 |
| 7 | 86 | 0 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1451 | 34 |
| 9 | 2105 | 53 |
| 10 | 187 | 27 |
| 11 | 199 | 10 |
| 12 | 971 | 256 |
| 14 | 3759 | 68 |
| 15 | 7343 | 161 |
| 16 | 83 | 2 |
| 17 | 86 | 1 |
| 18 | 19179 | 734 |
| 19 | 9 | 0 |
| 20 | 51 | 0 |
| 21 | 9486 | 218 |
| 22 | 8828 | 284 |
| 23 | 514 | 8 |
| 24 | 6119 | 193 |
| 25 | 2007 | 97 |
| 26 | 708 | 25 |
| 27 | 28 | 3 |
| 28 | 263 | 2 |
| 29 | 759 | 19 |
| 30 | 2405 | 63 |
| 31 | 491 | 15 |
| 32 | 601 | 22 |
| 33 | 206 | 1 |
| 34 | 136 | 4 |
| 35 | 218 | 5 |
| 36 | 565 | 12 |
| 37 | 6 | 1 |
| 38 | 3 | 1 |
| 39 | 2619 | 139 |
| 40 | 10086 | 26 |
| **TOTALS** | **89794** | **2687** |

*Table 2*

| **MFP ROMAN POTTERY** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Tr** | **Roman total** | **samian** |
| 1 | 71 | 1 |
| 2 | 5938 | 13 |
| 3 | 843 | 2 |
| 4 | 38 | 0 |
| 5 | 54 | 1 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | 24 | 3 |
| **TOTAL** | **6968** | **20** |

*Table 3*

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