

SOME ROMAN AND POST-ROMAN POTTERY FROM STANTON PRIOR

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The material which forms the subject of this note was found during pipe-laying operations at Stanton Field, Stanton Prior (ST 688638) in 1970, and has recently been presented to the City Museum, Bristol. The site lies *c.* 1 km north of Wandsdyke and 900 m north-west of the dyke section recorded by Fowler in 1967 (cf. Fowler, P. J., in *Archaeological Review* 2, 20, and 4, 52), but no other archaeological evidence seems to have been previously recorded from the immediate area. Mr. John Hitchings, the finder, commented *in litt.* that the pottery was found over a distance of 10-15 m, and was '... probably lying just under the surface'. No evidence for a pit or other feature was noted, and no further archaeological evidence was observed.

In the main the material consists of sherds of sandy grey wares, usually attributed to the 2nd-3rd centuries A.D., but one sherd has characteristics which suggest a post-Roman date. The following sherds are illustrated (Fig. 1), and unless otherwise noted are all from jars with everted rims:

1. Sandy, micaceous grey fabric, with small black and brown inclusions. Cf. Cunliffe, B. W., *Roman Bath*, Rept. Res. Comm. Soc. Ant. London. 24 (1969), Fig. 60, 1.
2. Smooth sandy grey fabric. Some traces of burnishing survive. Cf. Cunliffe, *op. cit.*, Fig. 60, 8.
3. Sandy, micaceous black fabric. Heavily burnished on the exterior, and on the interior of the rim. A ridge on the interior shows the rim to have been infolded.
4. Sandy, micaceous grey fabric, with large black grits and rounded quartz particles.
5. As 3, but the burnishing has been eroded. Cf. Cunliffe, *op. cit.*, Fig. 24, 48.
6. Pie dish. Fabric as 3.
7. Small ?bowl. Sandy grey fabric fired to an orange.
8. Shoulder and neck of a hand-made biconical bowl or jar. Soapy fossil shell-tempered fabric, with black interior and a light to dark brown exterior.

The unillustrated material comprises some 100 sherds in fabrics as 1-6 above, representing a minimum of 14 vessels. The majority of these would appear to be from jars, some of which bore a burnished lattice pattern, but a few may well belong to pie dishes and similar vessels. Six other fossil shell-tempered sherds were also found, representing a further two vessels.

Of the material illustrated, No. 8 stands out on account of its fabric and hand-made form. Mr. P. J. Fowler has commented that although the shelly fabric is similar to many Iron Age wares, the pronounced shoulder and thin neck has rarely, if ever, occurred on Iron Age pottery known to him. Moreover, according to Mr. Nigel Kerr the form is not inconsistent with vessels recently excavated by him at the early pagan Saxon cemetery at Lovedon Hill, Lincolnshire. Research has since shown that the closest parallels for this form of vessel appear solely in early Saxon contexts, a particularly close example (decorated) being a vessel recently excavated at the pagan Saxon village near West Stow, Suffolk (West, S.E., 'Pagan Saxon Pottery from West Stow, Suffolk', *R.O.B. Jaargang* 19 (1969), Fig. 4, 18).

While it is not suggested that the Stanton sherd is 'Saxon', it would certainly appear to be Saxon in inspiration, and therefore may well represent a 'native' product of immediate post-Roman date (the terminology is used advisedly). If this interpretation is correct, it would appear that at least some reciprocity existed between the indigenous population and the immigrants. The other shell-tempered sherds are thicker and use a finer temper. They may well be 'native' products of pre-Roman or Roman date, but the possibility that they are post-Roman cannot be excluded, for it has already been noted that shell-tempered pottery is common to late and sub-Roman sites elsewhere in the south (cf. Brodribb, A.C.C., *Hands*,

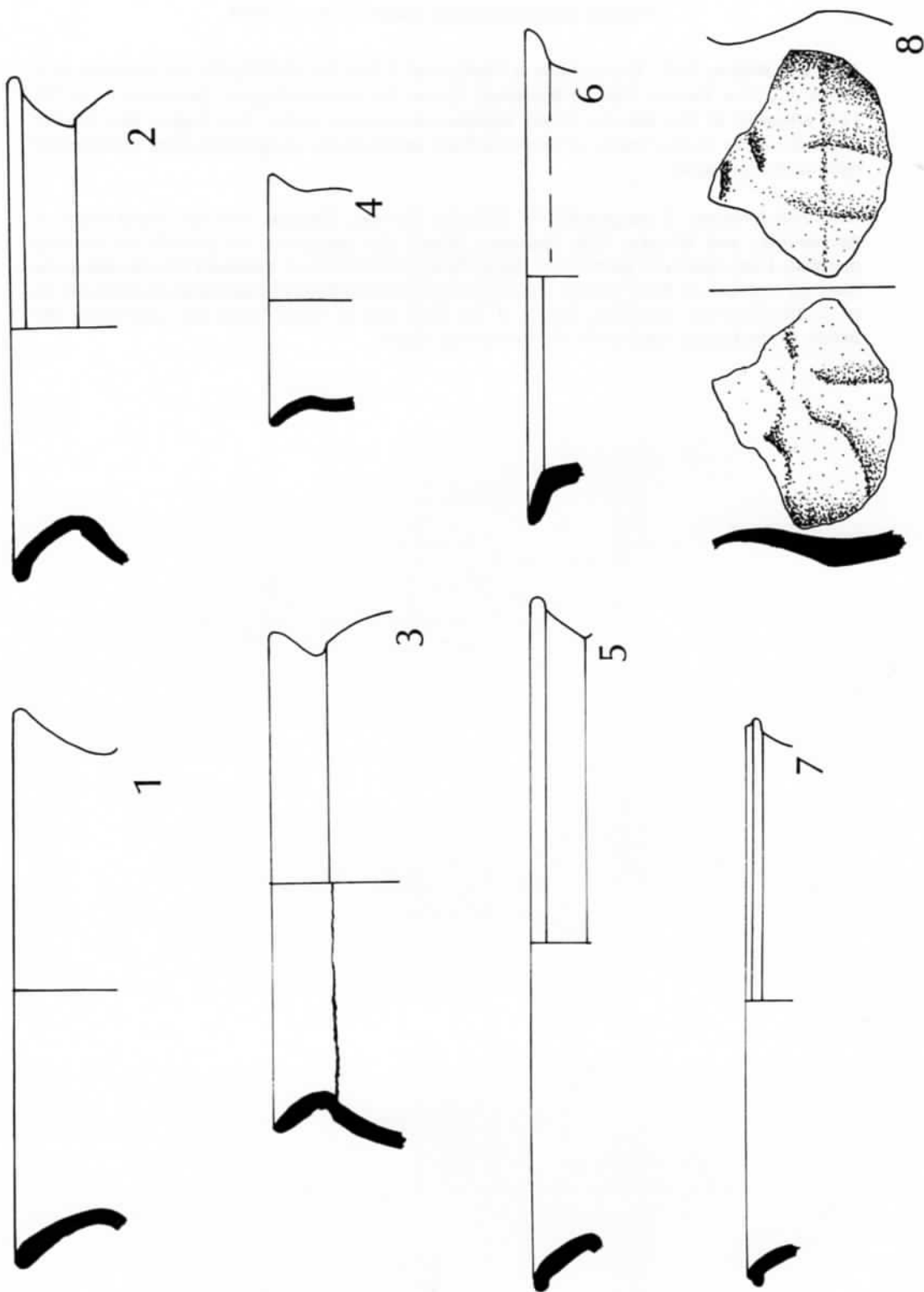


Fig. 1 Roman (1-7) and Post-Roman (8) pottery from Stanton Field, Stanton Prior (Scale $\frac{1}{2}$).

A.R. and Walker, D.R., *Excavations at Shakenoak I*, 2nd Ed. (1971), 68; and Rodwell, W.J. and K.A., 'The Roman Villa at Rivenhall, Essex: An Interim Report', *Britannia* 4 (1973), 124, although at this site the dating evidence is extrinsic only). It is hoped that further research on the 'native' wares at South Cadbury and Cadbury Congresbury may shed further light on this question.

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