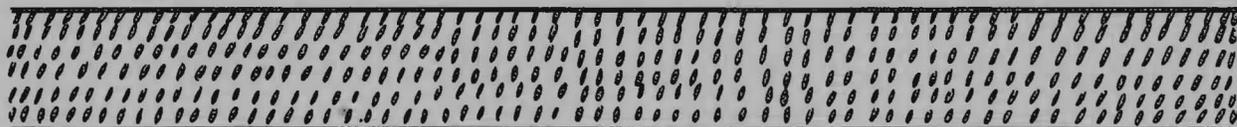
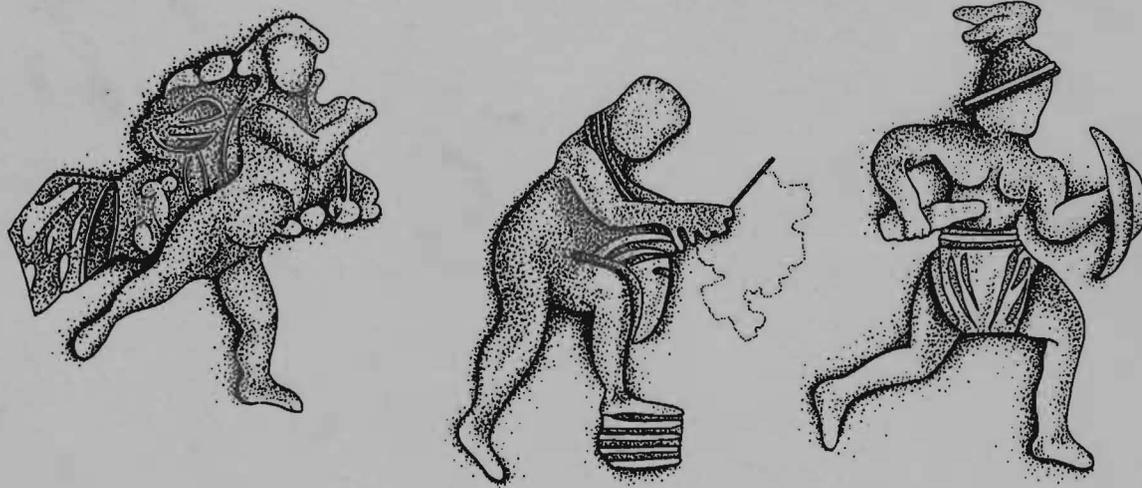


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STUDY GROUP FOR ROMANO-BRITISH POTTERY

The Study Group was founded in 1971 in order to provide a forum for the discussion of questions relating to Romano-British pottery and meets annually in various parts of the country for a weekend conference during which short papers are read and pottery is exhibited; an opportunity is also taken to visit sites and museums to examine collections of pottery.

In 1986, the Study Group is to publish the *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies*, an annual volume, issued free to members and containing articles on Romano-British pottery and related topics.

Membership of the Study Group is open to all interested in Romano-British pottery on the nomination of a member and elections take place at the annual conference.

For further information, write to Dr A. P. Detsicas, Dunelm House, 159 Downs Road, Hastings, E. Sussex, TN34 2DY.

The Journal will be available to non-members at a cost of £5. Orders to J. R. Perrin, N.V.R.C., Archaeological Field Centre, Ham Lane, Orton Waterville, Peterborough PE2 0UU.

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The views expressed in articles are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the Study Group for Romano-British Pottery

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 - * The Journal of Roman Pottery Studies is issued free to members of the Roman Pottery Study Group. Copies can be obtained by non-members from R Perrin for £5 (including postage and packing).
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INTRODUCTION

R. Perrin

The publication of a journal devoted to Roman pottery studies is a logical progression for the Roman Pottery Study Group which, over the last decade, has seen its membership rise to around one hundred, half of whom are employed to study pottery full-time. What began as a call to publish some of the lectures given at its annual meetings has been augmented by the vast reservoir of information currently lodged in the collective heads of the membership, and which may not be released through the existing pottery publication outlets. The lack of additional publication media has been identified as being one of the prime causes of the "crisis in archaeological publication" (Department of the Environment Report, 1975) but, unfortunately, the response to the crisis has been largely negative, based on the premise that the answer is to restrict the amount of material appearing on paper in favour of large numbers of *microfiche* containing the bulk of the report. While pottery studies can probably continue under various constraints they will swiftly be stifled if full publication ceases, and despite all arguments to the contrary *microfiche* are, by their very nature, an anathema to the future of pottery research.

It is strangely curious that at a time when there appears to be a call for "more interesting" pottery reports which concentrate on aspects of people and society rather than date, one of the prime means whereby such information can be gleaned, namely fully published pottery assemblages, is being curtailed. It seems appropriate, therefore, to reiterate in the first *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies* the reasons why pottery is of importance to all aspects of archaeology, and some of the many particular aspects of ancient life for which it is of especial relevance. In terms of archaeology as a whole, pottery is pre-eminent in that:

1. It is the only major type of artefact that has almost total survival.
2. It is the most abundant type of artefact found, and occurs on most sites.
3. Pottery vessels remain in use for limited periods only, and change in source, style and technique through time.

These facts enable pottery to:

- a. provide the strongest and most reliable dating evidence;
- b. be the primary source for determining local and international trade patterns and routes;
- c. provide evidence for economic conditions, development and change;
- d. give insight into cultural and social conditions;
- e. provide information on the state and development of technology.

It is hoped that by providing an additional regular and relatively cheap medium for the publication of pottery the *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies* will help to offset the detrimental effects of *microfiche* and

the publication policy of which their use is part. Its success, following on that of other multi-author Roman pottery volumes of the last decade, will also serve to remind dissenters of the vigour of pottery studies and their financial viability.

This first volume contains two large, important reference items, a bibliography of published Roman pottery, 1981-1985, and a five-language dictionary of pottery terms. Though their presence restricts the space available for more usual pottery articles, the decision to have them in the same volume is felt to be justified as both are sure to be of great use to all pottery researchers from the moment they appear. Two of the other articles are based on work incorporating both typological and petrological studies. The pottery in question, types of early imported gallo-belgic ware and late amphorae, could not be more different, but in both cases show how the two disciplines can combine to great effect. Future research on both pottery types will be enhanced by these articles. The paper on the pottery of Warwickshire is precisely the kind of study which might not easily find an outlet in existing publications given the current policy emphasis. Pottery researchers will recognise its true worth, however, and it is hoped that many such articles will appear in future volumes of this journal.

The paper touches on the need for uniformity of approach with regard to the recording and processing of pottery if comparative studies are to be possible. The co-editors of the journal will welcome any articles on methodology, as well as other ideas, thoughts, proposals and opinions. It is intended that future volumes will contain reviews and, if possible, summaries of published books and articles on pottery, both British and continental, including those in other national and local journals. Short notes on particular pots or aspects of pottery, similar to that on a beaker from Colchester in this volume, are considered to be of great value, and the co-editors would like to see the journal become a forum for the fairly rapid interchange of information about new discoveries, specific areas of interest, current and future research, and people as well as objects. In this way it is hoped that the journal will reflect what is actually happening in the world of Roman pottery studies. To succeed, however, texts are needed, so pens must be put to paper!