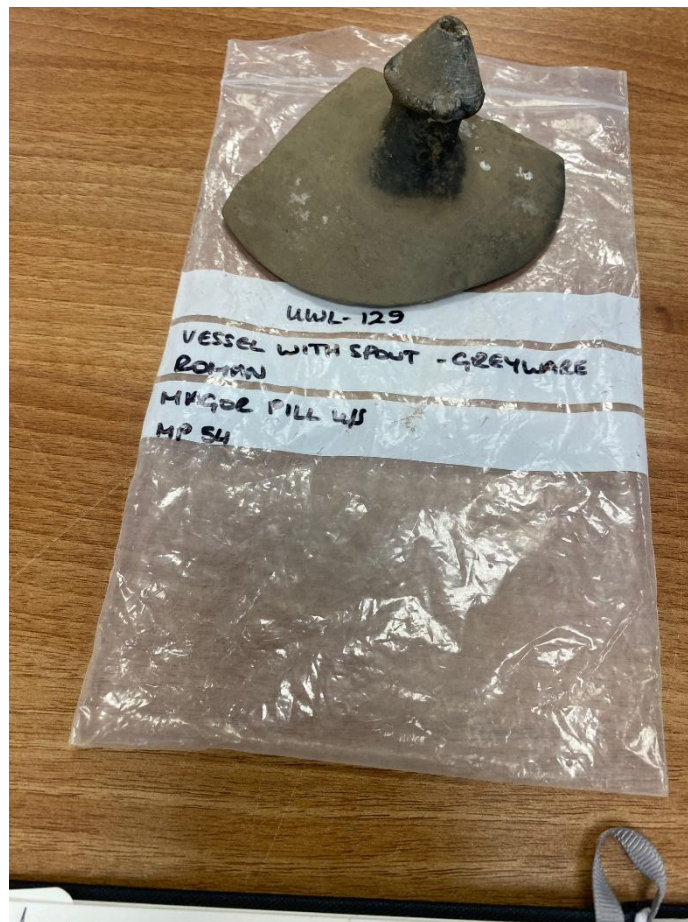


OBJECT BIOGRAPHY REPORT

W E Montague

HPAR4011



UWL-129

“Vessel with Spout”- Greyware Roman

Magor Pill u/s

MP 5

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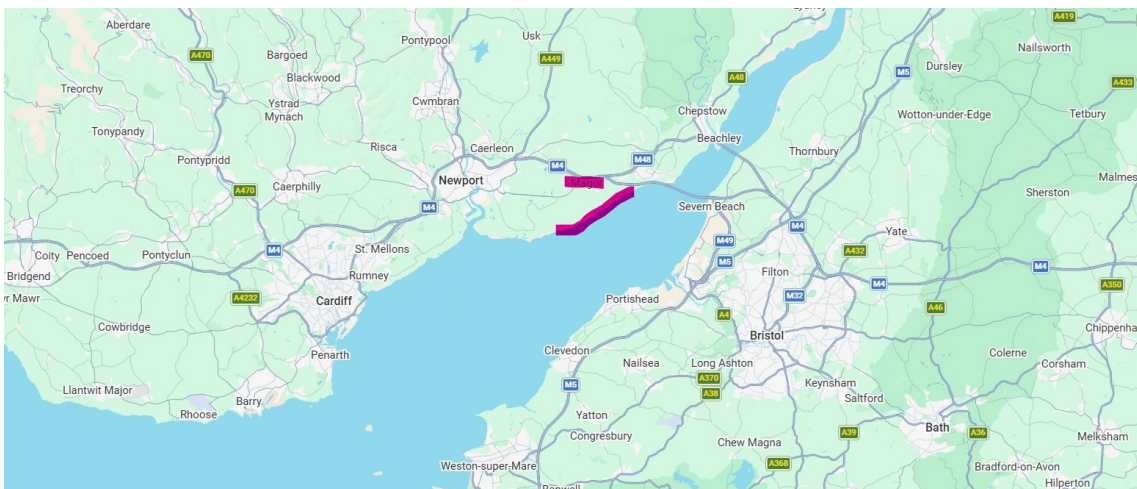
1. Location of Artifact

1.1

The Item location is currently within the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Lampeter collection, however as of 2025 the collection is currently held at the University's Carmarthen Campus rather than it's Lampeter Campus. It is a part of the teaching collection and is used as such.

1.2

The item was found in during an unspecified excavation at Magor Pill, the date of which is also unspecified. Magor Pill is in Monmouthshire in Wales and sits across the channel from Bristol. It is between New Port and Chepstow on the Severn estuary. And has been used a Port since the Iron Age. A number of shipwrecks have been excavated from the site most famously the “Magor Pill Boat” a medieval shipwreck discovered in 1994. [Harris, C]



1 "Google Map" of Magor Pill [Google]

With Pill (or “Pîl”) being a Welsh placename element, meaning Harbour or inlet, describes the sites coastal proximity and possible historical uses.

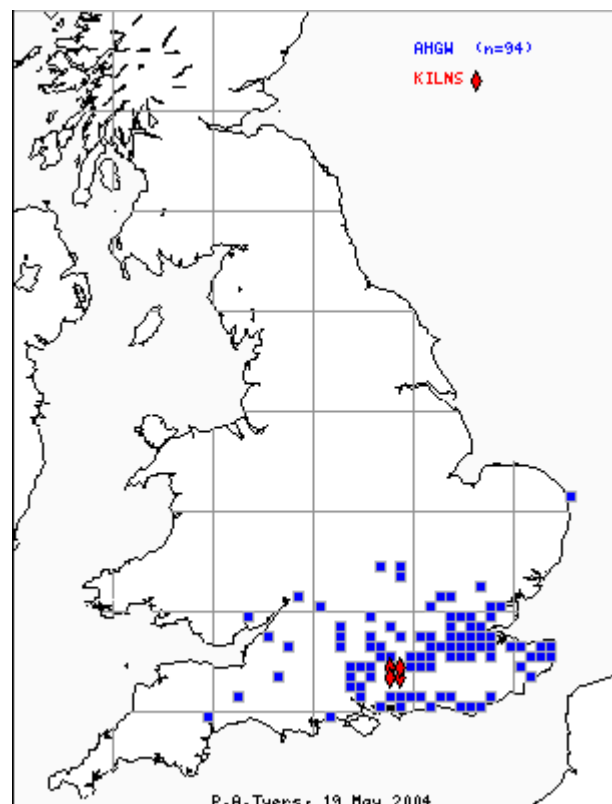
2. Background Detail

2.1 Greyware

The Object is made out of Greyware, which is relatively common in terms of Roman pottery found within Brittan. Unlike other forms of roman pottery such as Samian Wear, Greyware was produced locally within Roman Britian.

It can be identified as greyware by it's grey fabric (which can range for light grey to almost black) and its overall lack of decoration due to its utilitarian purpose.

Although the origin site of this greyware is unknown. A large of Greyware was Congresbury between the 2nd and 4th century AD,. The site of the Congresbury Kiln excavated by Wessex Archaeology in 2017. It is possible that this piece was from the southwest of England and transported across the Bristol channel to Magor



2004 Greyware distribution Map [P.A. Tyers] prior to the discovered of the Congresbury Klin in 2017

Pill. Possibly out of Bristol due to its geographical proximity to the site and due to large amounts of Roman Greyware being found in the area [Local_Learning].

Greyware was fairly unitarian, often without decoration commonly being used for cooking pots and storage.

2.2 Roman

The item is Roman, this is known by its fabric being Greyware, a common type of roman pottery. Magor Pill excavation has discovered a few roman sites, although the object is unstratified this still supports the statement that is Roman.

Roman occupation in Wales started from around 43AD [Johnson, B.] and had notable settlements around Magor Pill.



Map of Roman Wales [CADW]

2.3 *Decoration*

In terms of decoration there is none as such, the service is smooth to the touch.

The interior hole for the “spout” is rough in shape unlike the outside, which is smoothed and circular, it is possible that the “inside” of this item was not meant to be seen, explaining its rougher interior.



Top View of the "spout"

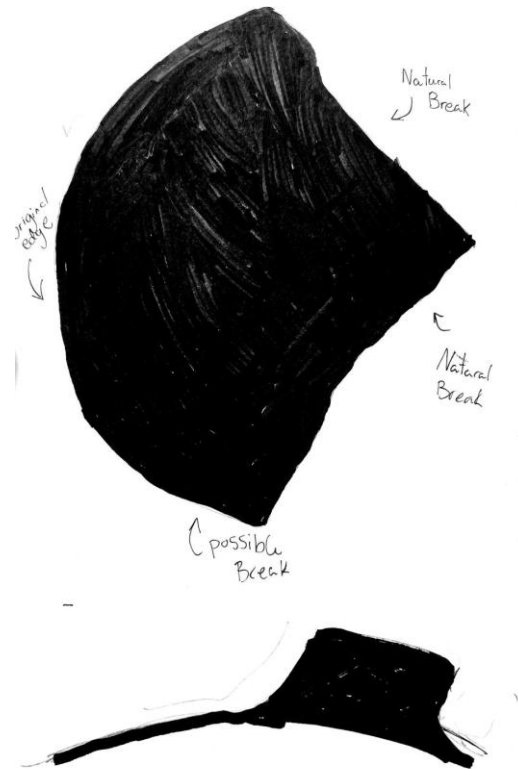
However, purpose of the “spout” or it’s need for it’s rather elaborate shape is unknown therefore may be for decorative purposes however without a known function for the item this is impossible to say.

3. Form

3.1 Size and Shape

The object in its current broken state is approximately 6cm across. The spout is at a roughly 30-degree angle from the main surface. The 'spout' is roughly 4 cm tall.

Its shape is similar to that of a lid and has a steady curve. It has two distinguished fractures and one edge which is likely still intact.



To scale outline of the object

3.2 Fabric Description

The fabric is standard for greyware connecting small inculcation which may be a type of sand which creates a stronger structure when fired

3.3 Colour



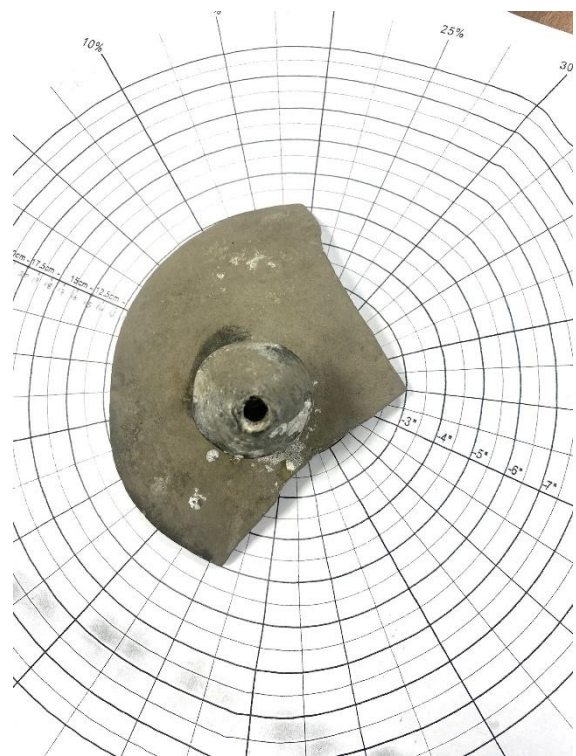
Underside of the Piece

Its colour is primarily a midtone grey however in places around the edges has a black area likely due to element exposure. The barnacle also makes it white in some places. All standard for greyware. However, the underside is slightly orange tinted, possibly also due to exposure to elements.

3.4 Reconstruction



Digital Reconstruction



Original image

After an attempt at digital reconstruction, it seems likely the piece originally had a diameter of around 10cm, the spout appears slightly off centre, due to the curved edge it's likely the object was originally circular.

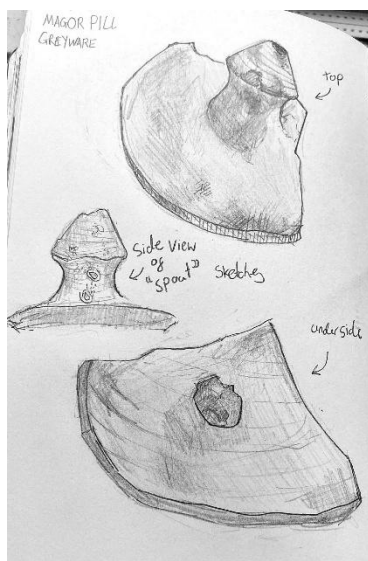
4. Condition

4.1 breaks / wear / abrasion



Barnacles attached to the surface.

The item has been broken along two edges, these edges are now smooth to the touch, this is likely due to it spending time submerged in sea water, the barnacles attached to the surface also suggests this as well as the site location, Magor Pill, being coastal.



Sketches of the Objects condition

The spout is for the most part intact however it contains a few small chips at the end, none of which would overly impact usage. These are possible to have been caused prior to the time being discarded, but it's impossible to tell.

5. Construction

5.1 production / distribution



Spun Lines made more visible with a touch

The production of the item can be seen on the side, it was spun on a wheel, as is shown by the presents of spun lines, this is a key feature of roman pottery. [Oxford Archaeology]

Roman ships wrecks were found at the site and although it's unspecified what site it was actually from however with the barnacles attached to the surface this seems likely. Meaning the item may have been on a boat at some point.

However, it's likely that it's spent a lot of time submerged in silt or mud which is part of the Magor Pill landscape. Possible helping to preserve it.

Due to its site location being a trade route, it is possible that the object was discarded prior to its use, however it is unable to tell.

5.2 Possible uses



Sketch of Object (to scale)

Currently the use of the item is unidentifiable. The “spout” could be that, a spout or however with it seemingly being part of a lid could have the usage as a vent of some kind

The shape of “spout” is similar to other “spouts” found on roman pottery however not commonly on greyware nor on what appears to be lid.

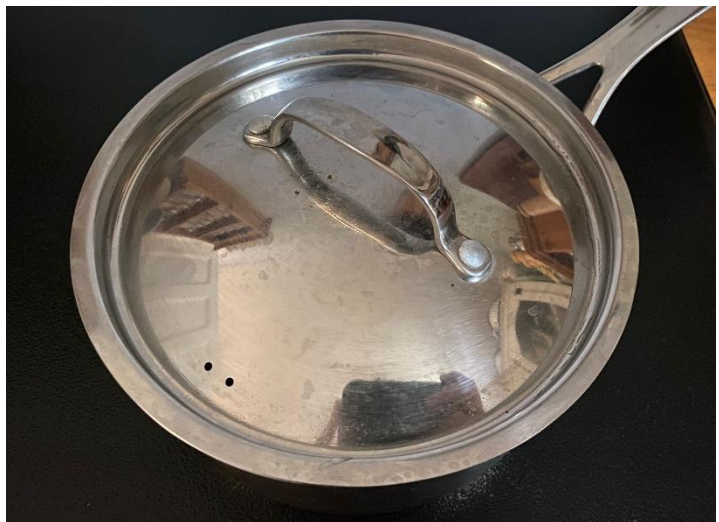
But with the item being greyware, an often purely utilitarian material means it’s unlikely to that complex shape for purely



*Figure 3 Roman greyware flagon with Floral Motif
[Wiseowl Themes 2020]*

decorative/artistic purposes, although this as a possibly cannot be complete discredited, as some cases of decorated greyware have been discovered, such as a this Flagon with a floral motif that is made out of Greyware.

However, it could also be used for ventilation, as a cooking pot lid or sorts, Although the need for the complex shape of the “spout” rather than just a hole which would hold the same ventilation purpose, but it would explain why it was off centre. Grey ware was also common for use for storage therefor the usage could be to ventilate something while it was stored rather than while cooking. Although there are no



Modern pot lid with off centre ventilation holes

Roman exsamlpes of this yet, it l somehting seen univesally on cooking pots acorss time and area.

However all of this is just a guess, and the true usage of this time is unknown for the time being.

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Appendices



