

The querns

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Fragments from two rotary querns were found at Coton Lane, both of probable Millstone Grit. A large fragment from context 2244 is a typical lower stone of the Roman period, the complete perforation suggesting a middle or later Roman date, which is in keeping with the chronology of the site, although the feature itself is undated. An upper stone, found in context 2507 is also of typical form, this time of disc type with flat faces. Millstone Grit was the preferred quern material in the midlands during the Roman period, and querns of it are to be expected on sites here. However, the difference in the petrology of the two querns suggests that they are not from the same source and it is not clear precisely where they were manufactured.

Catalogue of querns

Lower rotary quern. Quarter with sloped grinding surface rising up to a socket around the fully perforated spindle hole. This appears to be a deliberate rise as the lower face is hollowed out in the same way. The edges and grinding surface are neatly pecked while the lower surface is roughly tooled. Measures 370mm diameter x 33-42mm thick and 57mm high at centre. Weighs 3062g. Probably Millstone Grit: medium to coarse grained well sorted slightly feldspathic sandstone with some white feldspar. Ctx 2244, fill of pit 2243 (unphased).

Upper rotary quern. Circumference fragment of flat disc type with neatly pecked upper face and grooved grinding surface, possibly harped but not enough survives to be sure. Straight pecked edges. Measures 29mm thick x approx 470mm diameter. Weighs 799g. Millstone Grit: medium to coarse grained well sorted heavily feldspathic sandstone with lots of pink feldspar. Ctx 2507, fill of well 2486 (mid to late Roman 125-410AD).