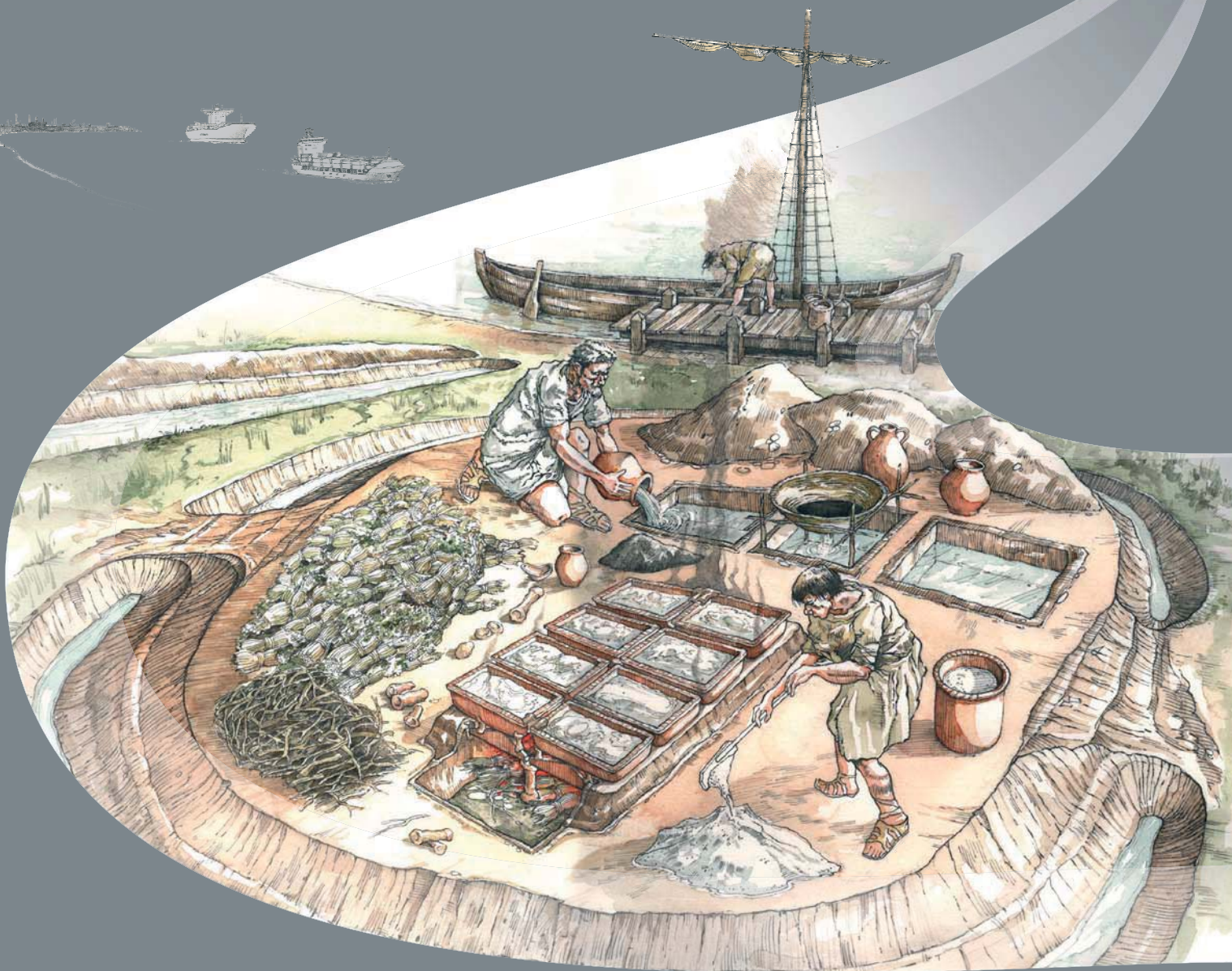


# LONDON GATEWAY

## IRON AGE AND ROMAN SALT MAKING IN THE THAMES ESTUARY

EXCAVATION AT STANFORD WHARF  
NATURE RESERVE, ESSEX



SPECIALIST REPORT 7

GLASS

BY IAN SCOTT

## **Specialist Report 7**

### **Glass**

*by Ian Scott*

#### **Introduction**

The glass assemblage from the site is small, comprising 37 sherds of vessel glass and six fragments from beads. Most of the glass is from Area A (21 sherds). There is a single sherd from Area B. The sherd totals for Areas C and D are inflated by numerous sherds from single vessels. The vessel/object count gives a better picture of the distribution of the glass (Table 7.1). The vessel glass comprises for the most part single small sherds from vessels, with only the jar from Area C and the medicine/tonic bottle from Area D having more than single sherds. Both of these are of recent date. Many of the vessel sherds recovered are small and undiagnostic to vessel type.

The glass was identified and recorded onto a database, and quantified by sherd and object count. Overall the glass assemblage comprises a small quantity of mainly small sherds of vessel glass and a small number of beads. The absence of more and larger sherds of vessel glass suggests that occupation of the site did not include any significant settlement element. The absence of any window glass points in the same direction.

#### **Area A**

There are 21 glass sherds from Area A, including four beads (five fragments) and 16 sherds of vessel glass. The beads all date to the late Roman period and comprise two small annular beads, a small ovoid bead and a 3rd- to 4th-century segmented bead:

Small ovoid bead, in blue glass (D: 3mm; L: 5mm), context 1540, LR2.

Small annular bead in black metal (D: 4mm; L: 2.5mm), context 5134, LR.

Tiny annular bead, blue metal (D: 2mm; L: 1.5mm), context 5030, LR2.

Two fragments of a segmented bead, with four segments. Green glass. (L: 15mm), context 1114, sf 1008, 3rd- to 4th-century date, LR2.

Most of the vessel glass (13 sherds) is undiagnostic to vessel form, although most is

Roman glass or probably Roman glass. The identifiable Roman vessel glass comprises just four sherds:

A sherd in very pale green metal from a vessel with a flattened base and no footring. There is a pontil mark on base. The sherd is probably from a Roman-period flask or jar; fragment attributed to sub-group number 1376, ER.

A small sherd probably from the base of a square bottle in blue green glass of late 1st- to 2nd-century date, context 1078, LR. The sherd is clearly residual or redeposited.

A rim sherd from a Roman-period flask or jug with a folded horizontal rim in blue green glass, context 1531, LR2.

A handle sherd from a blue green jug of Roman date, context 1018, LR2.

### **Area B**

The single piece of glass is a dark blue cylindrical bead from a late Roman context:

Cylindrical bead in dark blue (L: 14mm; D: 4mm), context 4241, sf 4030, LR.

### **Area C**

There are 15 sherds of vessel glass from two modern screw top jars, both from modern contexts (contexts 3004 and 3005). The jar from context 3004 alone comprises 14 sherds.

### **Area D**

There six sherds of vessel glass from two vessels from Area D. These comprise five sherds from a single late 19th- or early 20th-century medicine bottle (context 2003), and a small sherd from a modern wine bottle still with part of its paper label attached (context 2079).

### **Discussion**

Although the glass assemblage is small and although in terms of sherd count about half the assemblage is of 19th-century or later date, the modern glass is derived from a

small number of vessels from modern or undated contexts. In terms of vessel or object count the Romano-British glass forms a larger portion of the assemblage.

If we discount the modern glass the remainder of the assemblage is unmistakably Roman-period in date and largely recovered from Roman contexts. The datable glass included both early and late Roman-period material (Table 7.2). The fact that the assemblage is small, and that the identifiable vessels are represented by single small sherds suggest that some of the Roman glass may have been redeposited.

The assemblage is too small to be characterised with any confidence, especially given the wide chronological span represented and the possibility that some of the material was redeposited. The presence of early glass albeit redeposited (context 1078) hints at early occupation in the vicinity with some pretensions to status. The number of beads recovered is interesting given the small size of the assemblage. However, three of the five beads were recovered through sieving, and this may explain in part the number of beads.

## Glass Tables

**TABLE 7.1: SUMMARY QUANTIFICATION OF GLASS FINDS BY AREA AND GLASS IDENTIFICATION (OBJECT AND SHERD COUNTS)**

Area	Data	bead	bottle	flask or jug	jug	jar	wine bottle	vessel	Total
A	Object count	4	1	1	1			13	20
	Sherd count	5	1	1	1			13	21
B	Object count	1							1
	Sherd count	1							1
C	Object count						2		2
	Sherd count					15			15
D	Object count		1				1		2
	Sherd count		5				1		6
Totals	Sherd count	6	6	1	1	15	1	13	43
	Object count	5	2	1	1	2	1	13	25

**TABLE 7.2: SUMMARY QUANTIFICATION OF GLASS FINDS BY AREA AND PHASE, AND OBJECT DATE (OBJECT AND FRAGMENT COUNTS)**

Area	Phase		Glass date						Total		
			RB	?RB	1C-2C	3C-4C	late RB	19C-20C		20C	
A	ER	Object count	1							1	
		Sherd count	1							1	
	LR	Object count	7		1		4			12	
		Sherd count	7		1		4			12	
	MR	Object count	3			1				4	
		Sherd count	3			2				5	
	Roman	Object count		1						1	
		Sherd count		1						1	
	undated	Object count	1						1	2	
		Sherd count	1						1	2	
	<b>Totals</b>		<b>Object Count</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	
			<b>Sherd Count</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>	
	B	LR	Object count	1							1
			Sherd count	1							1
C	modern	Object count						2		2	
		Sherd count						15		15	
D	undated	Object count						1	1	2	
		Sherd count						5	1	6	
<b>Total</b>		<b>Object count</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	
		<b>Sherd count</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>43</b>	



Figure 7.1: Selection of glass beads

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