

CHAPTER THREE

TPOLOGY

The organisation of a typology must be justifiable in respect of the assemblage in question. If a natural order is not obvious, it is misleading to create an artificial structure without explaining that it is simply for convenience. In this work, the division of vessels into types is hierarchical, so one can see the relationship between vessels simply by referring to type numbers. This simplifies the identification of fragmentary sherds and avoids the need for unique 'type specimens'. It allows considerable scope for revision and expansion whilst allowing the critical to ignore levels of sub-division they do not agree with. It was not possible to produce a totally objective division of vessel forms due to the variety of distinguishing criteria within different vessel classes and the imbalance in the number of complete examples of particular types. This means that a finer level of division has been possible amongst the commoner forms than amongst those which are virtually unique. Considerable latitude has been allowed within the categories in the absence of evidence that further sub-division would be either realistic or useful.

Archaeologists have been using forms rather longer than fabrics as tools in their research and there is a great deal of literature concerning description and nomenclature (Webster 1964, Celoria 1980, Balfet et. al. 1983). Forms are more subjective than fabrics and perhaps because of this, are more frequently used in archaeological interpretation. This is also a more realistic approach historically: the potter could detect slight aberrations from his ideal form - should he care to - whereas he would remain unaware of relatively large variations in fabric. By looking at forms we can gain a better insight into the ancient potter's professional pride.

The overriding concern in the production of a form is function. The specialised vessels of types 8, 10, 11 and 12 are obvious examples. The potter will have made vessels with a range of possible uses in mind, but those to which they were put need not have been the same ones the manufacturer visualised. Whether wider or deeper versions of the same form had different intended functions is open to debate, other than to assert that size limits the potential uses of a vessel (See chapter 4).

Tradition heavily influenced forms. Most obvious are the local conservative tastes which determine the choice of decorative schemes and extend to the use of cordons, foot-rings, carnations and similar distinctive features of the region's pottery. The potters were constrained by their technology: the introduction (or adoption) of the fast wheel enabled the fine and more elaborate forms to be produced. Certain crude vessel shapes are due to the limitations of hand-building, such as 3D and 3G. The clays of north Kent prohibited the manufacture of pale fabrics and hence limited the scope for production of appropriate 'pale' forms. The kilns favoured reduction rather than oxidation and so the regional pottery was chiefly grey or black. The potters' skill and motivation is

another factor determining the forms produced. More care and forethought would be required when producing goods for sale rather than just for personal use. A specialist potter can maintain and improve his standards better than can one who is mostly engaged in other activities. The post-invasion improvement in coarse wares at Upchurch reflects a conscious change to a more professional attitude amongst the potters. Many features of the pottery were pre-determined, with limited scope for experimentation. The Kentish potters combined external stimuli with convention to produce a slowly evolving range of forms without much true originality.

In the proposed system, the TYPE is determined largely by function. CLASS is a stylistic division which equates to fashion and tradition. VARIANT expresses the variation in the shape. This may be an indication of date, as when fashions change or one generation of potters is replaced by another. It is doubtful whether the exact form of vessel rims would trouble the potter unduly. The less specialised a potter was, the more his rim-forms would vary due to his lower tolerance; this explains the observed variety amongst the early forms. The variations also represent the differences between individual potters' interpretation of the general style. Assigning a variant code is more a useful archaeological shorthand than a realistic indication of ancient practices.

Classification System

TYPE An integer, 1-14. Miscellaneous vessels are TYPE 14.
 Unidentified vessels are TYPE 0.

CLASS A letter A-Z. Unclassified vessels are CLASS 0.

VARIANT An integer 1-infinity. If no variant can be assigned
 the VARIANT is 0.

EXAMPLE A serial integer for each example of a variant.
 Refers to a single unique vessel only.

When searching for a parallel, start at the most general type, using the key . Work down the dendritic classification until either a parallel is found or the search is exhausted. It may not be possible to assign a code to variant level if the sherd is fragmentary. Quoting a code at this level is preferable to estimating a more detailed code on insufficient evidence. If a vessel appears to not to be of any of the variants listed it is variant '0'. A parallel should not be quoted to example level.

Vessel TYPE definitions

TYPE 1

Enclosed form. The vessel mouth is less than a third of its height. Specifically flagons, flasks, jugs etc.

TYPE 2

Beaker. The vessel mouth is less than its height. The fabric is normally fine. The vessel has a lip to facilitate drinking, but often the vessel is too large for this to be practical.

TYPE 3

Jar. A partially enclosed vessel with a mouth narrower than the vessel height.

TYPE 4

Bowl. A partially enclosed vessel with maximum width greater than vessel height, but not more than double. There is a constriction, however slight, below the rim.

TYPE 5

Dish. An open vessel with maximum width greater than vessel height, but not more than five times this. The maximum width is at, or slightly below the rim. 5b note the stylistic difference between a "bowl" and a "dish" used here, which may reflect a functional difference.

TYPE 6

Cup. A finer variant of bowl, with a lip for drinking and of a size to make this feasible. Includes tazze.

TYPE 7

Platter. Open vessel with width over five times its height. Dish class 5B are little more than deep platters.

TYPE 8

Mortarium. Open vessel with internal gritting.

TYPE 9

Miniature. A small vessel, often but not always in the style of a larger prototype. To be a miniature, a vessel must not be able to reasonably fulfil the function of the prototype.

TYPE 10

Cheese press. Specialised food-processing form with internal grooves and pierced holes. Includes cheese press lids.

TYPE 11

Strainer. Specialised food-processing form with holes pierced in the base before firing. Does not include conventional forms "converted" to strainers by piercing the base.

TYPE 12

Lid. Does not include re-used vessels serving as lids.

TYPE 13

Spouted vessel. Any vessel manufactured with an enclosed spout

TYPE 14

Miscellaneous. Any form which does not fall into the above categories. Would include costrels, clay buckets, salting pans, lamps etc.

	KEY	TYPE
a> Is vessel too small to be of practical use ?	Yes	9
No		
b> Is it internally gritted ?	Yes	8
No		
c> Is it spouted ?	Yes	13
No		
d> Does it have multiple pre-firing holes in the base ?	Yes	
e> Does it have raised internal ridges?	Yes	10
No		11
f> What is the height to width ratio ?		
Over 3:1		1
Over 1:1	g> Is the style suited to drinking from ?	2
No		3
Over 1:3	h> Is the style suited to drinking from ?	6
No		
i> Is there a constriction below the rim ?	Yes	4
No		
j> Could the vessel possess a central handle or knob ?	Yes	12
No		
k> What is the height to width ratio ?		
Over 1:5	Yes	5
No		7
l> Is the vessel unclassifiable using the above scheme ?	Yes	14

Note on form listing

Code : unique code for each illustrated vessel.

Origin : assumed production zone.

Fabric : that of the illustrated vessel, followed by those in which very similar vessels have been noted.

Colour : Unless a colour is specified, it is black or dark grey. Where two colours are mentioned, the first is that of the slip.

Site : The site or collection the vessel came from, plus any accession number or identification vessels may have. Some antiquarian vessels have been marked with their find-spot. Site codes are listed and discussed in Appendix I.

Date : an estimate of the date range in which vessels similar to that illustrated were in production. Where possible, the established date of the illustrated vessel is given. All dates are AD. Some early forms are given as "AD10": the true date may be earlier. The indication '+' means that the form could persist beyond the limits of the evidence. A date given as "50/70-100/120" is to be interpreted as "First manufactured between 50 and 70 AD, goes out of use between 100 and 120 AD". Dates without slashes are simple estimates of the period of use. Where the date range for a variant as a whole is wider than those shown for the illustrated examples, this general date is shown in brackets after the variant definition.

Abundance :

Unique - illustrated vessel is only known example. Rare - vessel comprises a small but distinct proportion of output. Common - illustrated vessel is a typical product of the industries. Abundant - illustrated vessel represents dozens, if not hundreds of very similar ones.

Parallels : some of the more appropriate or contrasting parallels have been given. Common site abbreviations are:

Camulodunum type series number (Hawkes and Hull 1947). with continuation in Hull (1958) and Hull (1963).

Canterbury - personal comments by members of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust and unpublished work by M. Green, M. Taylor, R.J.Pollard, N.C. McPherson-Grant et. al.

Canterbury Castle (Bennet, Frere, Stow 1982).

Canterbury Defences (Frere, Stow, Bennet 1982).

Canterbury Burgate St (Frere and Stow 1983).

Chalk (Johnson 1972).

Darenth (Philp 1984).

Dover (Philp 1981).

Faversham (Philp 1969).

Gillam type number (1970).

London - comments by members of the DUA and Inner London Unit: B. Davies, B. Richardson, C.R. Orton, S. Pierrepoint.

Mucking (Jones and Rodwell 1973).

Hew Forest (Fulford 1975a),

Oakleigh (Catherall 1983).

Ospringe (Whiting, Hawley and May 1931).

Oxford (Young 1977).

Richborough (Bushe-Fox 1926, 1928, 1932, 1934) plus Cunliffe (1968).

Southwark (1978).

Swarling (Bush-Fox 1925).

Thompson (1982) type number.

Vindolanda (Bidwell 1985).

West Kent (Philp 1973)

Any site named without reference is one examined personally.

Reconstruction : it was not possible to locate and draw - or redraw -substantially complete examples of some dozen distinct examples of vessels. Reconstructions of these have therefore been drawn with suitably general textural comments.

Gaps : Apologies are offered for gaps in the typology. The class identifiers 3K and 4K were deliberately omitted in favour of the more mnemonic 3L and 4L (both are lid seated). Although the existence of classes 3C and 1C is postulated, no examples could be found. Type 8 is completely unknown in these industries.