

ROSA LAST – PINCHAS PORATH

A ROMAN STAMPED AMPHORA RIM FROM BETH-SHEAN

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The amphora rim stamped in Latin was found in Beth-Shean in the area between the mound of Beth-Shean and the Roman theatre. It was brought to the attention of Pinchas Porat, then the Inspector of Antiquities in Beth-Shean. The rim is now in the Beth-Shean Museum of Local and Mediterranean Archeology. The clay is brown and gritty. The stamp is preserved completely. The stamp length is 5.5 cm, the width is 3.5 cm. The stamp contains two lines as follows:

GEMO
NNEA

Taf. I a

It is paralleled by an amphora stamp indicating *figlina*;¹ e.g., (*figlina*) *Gemelliana*, *Geraria*, *Scalensia*, *Virgensia*, *Bellucana*² or indicating an estate, e.g. the estate of *Flaviana* situated at *Astigi*.³ These are most common in the case of stamps from Southern Spain.

Since the word "*Gemonnea*" does not appear as a personal name on any inscription known to the authors, it was perhaps derived from a geographical name like *Scalensia*, *Scimniana*, *Virginensia*. It is difficult to say where the *figlina Gemonnea* was situated.

According to M.H. Callender, the stamps of *figlina* can be dated with some degree of certainty to the first two centuries A.D. "Stamps on the rim, immediately below the rim, on the neck and on the spike are normally of early date and of Italian origin."⁴

Since a Roman stamped amphora handle discovered by N. Tsori⁵ almost in the same place at Beth-Shean is stamped close to the rim and paralleled by an amphora stamp from Rome, our rim probably came from the same place. On the other hand, our type of stamp can be dated to an earlier period, perhaps to the first century A.D. It is well known that in the days of Columella, Pliny the Elder and Martial Italy exported much oil and wine.⁶

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¹ M.H. Callender, *Roman Amphorae with index of stamps*, London 1965, p. xxvi (vii).

² *Ibid*, No. 294, 303, 306, 1576, 1792, 185.

³ Tenney Frank, *Notes on Roman Commerce*, JRS 27, 1937, 76.

⁴ M.H. Callender, *op.cit.*, p. xxvii.

⁵ N. Tsori, *Roman Stamped Amphora Handles from Beth-Shean*, IEJ. 27 No. 2-3, 1977, 125 No.1.

⁶ Tenney Frank, JRS 27, 1937. 79.



Römischer Amphorenhenkelstempel aus Beth-Shean