



<http://kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/archaeologia-cantiana/>

Kent Archaeological Society is a registered charity number 223382

© 2017 Kent Archaeological Society

THE ROMAN CEMETERIES AT OSPRINGE.

DESCRIPTION OF FINDS CONTINUED.

BY W. WHITING.

No. 80. FLOWER VASE OR FLASK, $7\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; hard, smooth tile-red clay with grey core.

The grooved cordon at root of neck, the complete upper portion of this vessel and also the appearance of the ware compare almost exactly with the Belgic Vase with pedestal foot, 1984.10 illustrated pl. iv., Colchester Museum Report for 1910, which is dated first century A.D., but the Ospringe flask is considered to be derived from, and of somewhat later date than, the Colchester example.

No. 81. URN, containing calcined bones, 18 in. high, about 18 in. diameter, with indented ornament on shoulder; sandy grey clay.

No. 82. Olla-shaped BEAKER, 4 in. high, $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; hard grey clay. Third century.

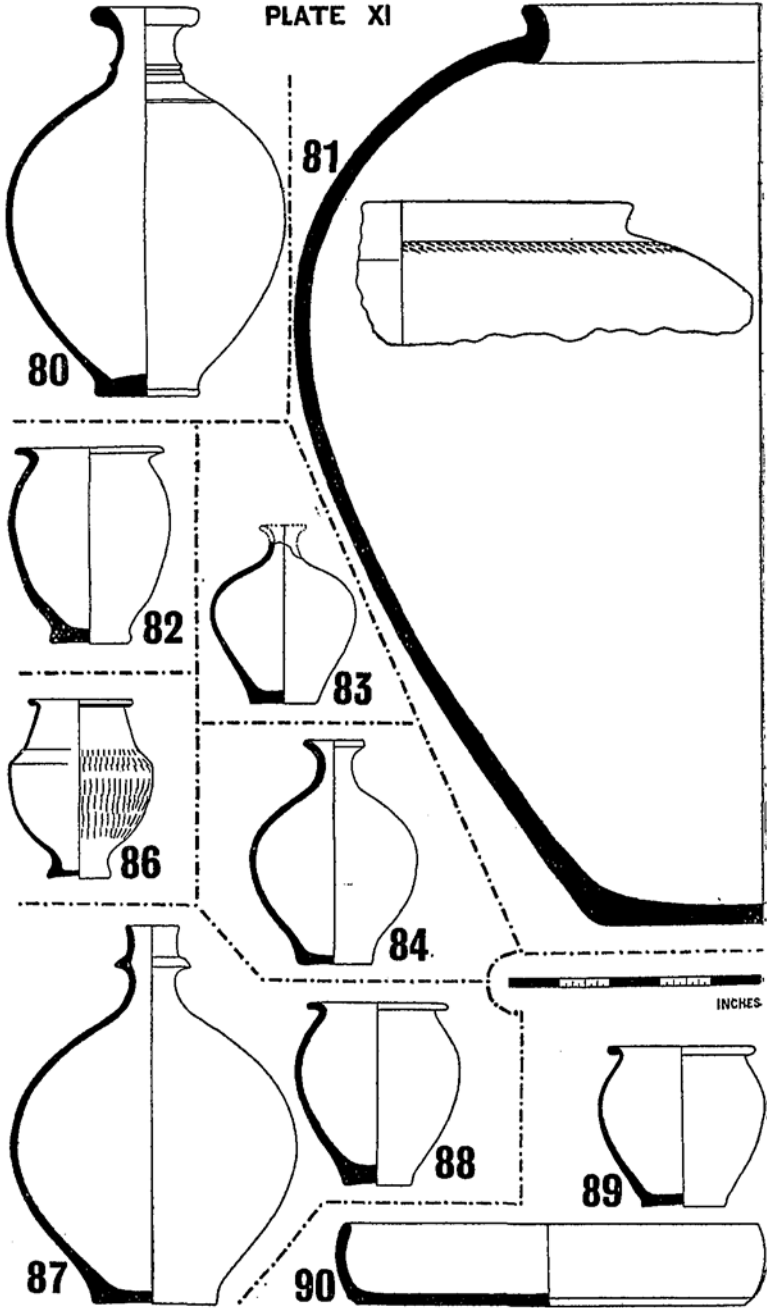
Near this beaker were several fragments of pottery and apparently the remains of a skull or other bones.

No. 83. FLASK, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $2\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter; grey clay.

No. 84. FLASK, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $3\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; hard grey clay, coated black.

Again traces of bones, apparently a skeleton, were noticed close by this vessel.

PLATE XI



- No. 85. Fragments of a WINE AMPHORA, on which the graffito illustrated can be traced, also some portions of another roofing tile similar to that described with Group XXIII., found together with:—
- No. 86. BEAKER, $3\frac{7}{8}$ in. high, $2\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter; thin hard white clay; the bulge decorated with roulette hatching.
Colchester Museum, Joslin Coll., Grave 100/72, 413, A.D. 200—250.



GRAFFITO ON No. 85, ($\frac{1}{2}$).

GROUP XXV.

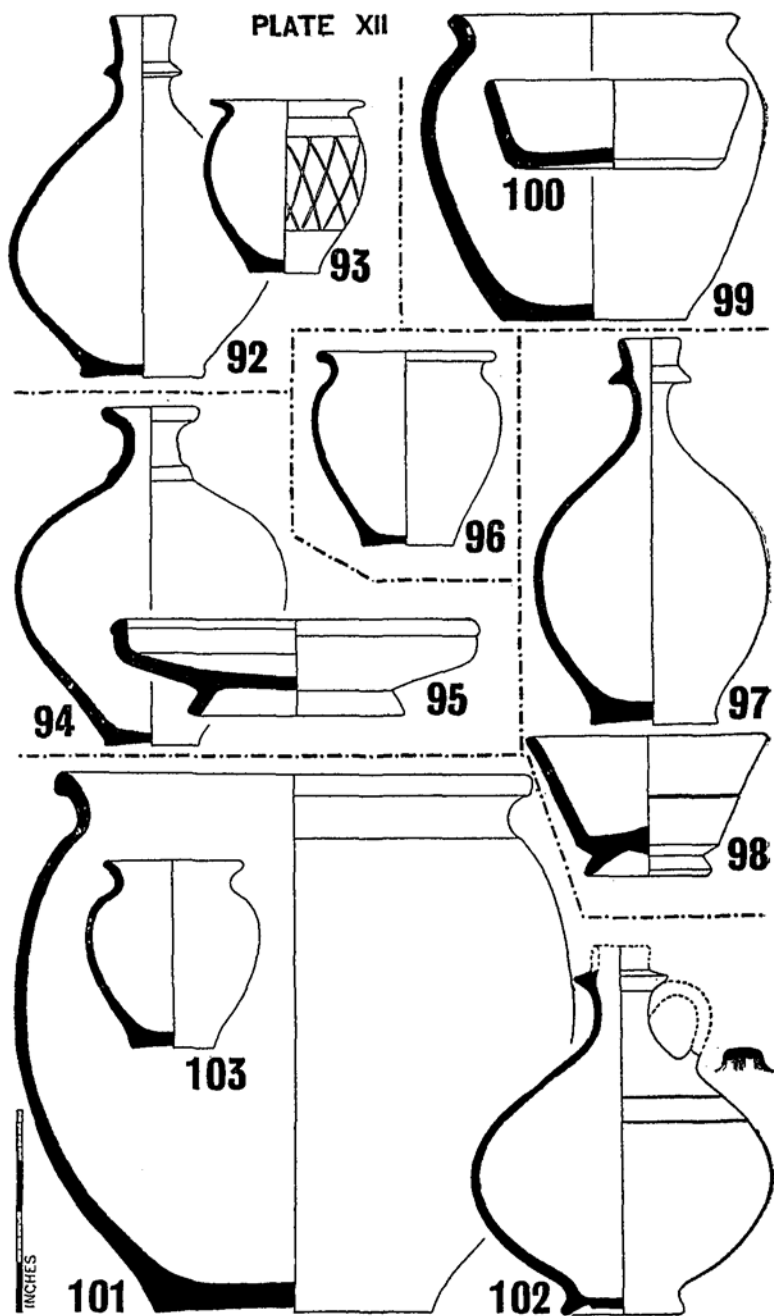
- No. 87. FLASK, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $5\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter; drab grey clay, coated black; A.D. 200 or later.
- No. 88. Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{5}{8}$ in. high, $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; soft grey clay. (?) late third century.

GROUP XXVI.

- No. 89. Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. high, $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; soft grey clay.
- No. 90. DISH or PLATTER, $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter, $1\frac{5}{8}$ in. high; hard sandy clay, with black core and red to black surface.

Remnants of some bones were observed about 9 inches below these two vessels.

PLATE XII



GROUP XXVII.

The next find comprised a WINE AMPHORA, from which the neck and handles had been removed to adapt it for its funerary purpose, and of which the aperture was covered with a red brick or tile, 18 in. long, 13½ in. wide by 1¼ in. thick. When the tile was removed it was seen that the vessel was not filled with earth which had washed in in the course of centuries, as had been the case in almost every other burial examined; a layer of calcined bones was at the bottom of this urn, and on them were lying the flask and beaker. Among the bones was a disc of very thin glass, about 2½ in. diameter, slightly concave and comparable with a modern watch glass. The only similar discoveries, so far as the writer is aware, are two recorded in the *Antiquaries Journal*, vol. iv., p. 24; but since this one was exhumed a further half dozen have been found in the Ospringe Cemetery.

GRAFFITO ON No. 91, (½).

- No. 91. WINE AMPHORA, used as Urn, height and diameter both about 24 in. Scratched on the side of the vessel, previous to its firing, were the letters illustrated.
- No. 92. FLASK, 7¼ in. high, 5½ in. diameter; hard dark-grey clay.

- No. 93 Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; clay similar to last, latticed with a blunt tool on rough middle zone, polished above and below.

This burial may be dated about the end of the third century.

GROUP XXVIII.

- No. 94. FLASK, $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $5\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; hard sandy clay, drab to black.
- No. 95. BOWL, $7\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter, $1\frac{7}{8}$ in. high; Samian ware, form 79 Walters, stamped **CELSIANI F.**, (?) A.D. 160—190; C.I.L., xiii., 10010, 520.

- No. 96. Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{7}{8}$ in. high, $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter; sandy red-brown clay, with grey core.

Fragments of an amphora and a tile were found near this beaker.

GROUP XXIX.

- No. 97. FLASK OR BOTTLE, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $4\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter; soft tile-red clay.
- No. 98. CUP, $4\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter, $2\frac{7}{8}$ in. high; imitation of form 83 Drag., unstamped; smooth orange-red clay with mottled surface.
(?) New Forest ware, A.D. 250—300.

GROUP XXX.

- No. 99. URN, $6\frac{1}{8}$ in. high, $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter; heavy British gritted ware, light drab to black, with smooth soapy surface.
- No. 100. BOWL OR PLATTER, $5\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. high; hard light-grey clay.

The urn was over-filled with calcined bones, and the bowl, which had apparently been used as a cover, inverted, was broken into three pieces, which were lying on either side of the urn.

GROUP XXXI.

- No. 101. URN, $10\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, 11 in. diameter; hard sandy grey clay.
- No. 102. ONE-HANDLED FLAGON, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $5\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter; soft tile-red clay, originally white coated.
- No. 103. Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; hard sandy drab-grey clay.

In this group the flagon was alongside the urn, the beaker inside the latter on the calcined bones, and among these were found pieces of a thin glass disc similar to that recorded in Group XXVII.

-
- No. 104. DOLIUM or STORE VESSEL, used as Urn, 16 in. high, 16 in. diameter; coarse gritty clay with soapy surface, dark brown to black, ornamented with scored latticed lines.

The neck of this vessel has been broken off and the aperture covered with lead; among the burnt bones inside the only things found were:—

- No. 105. The neck of a red ware one-handed FLAGON, and one other fragment apparently of the same vessel.

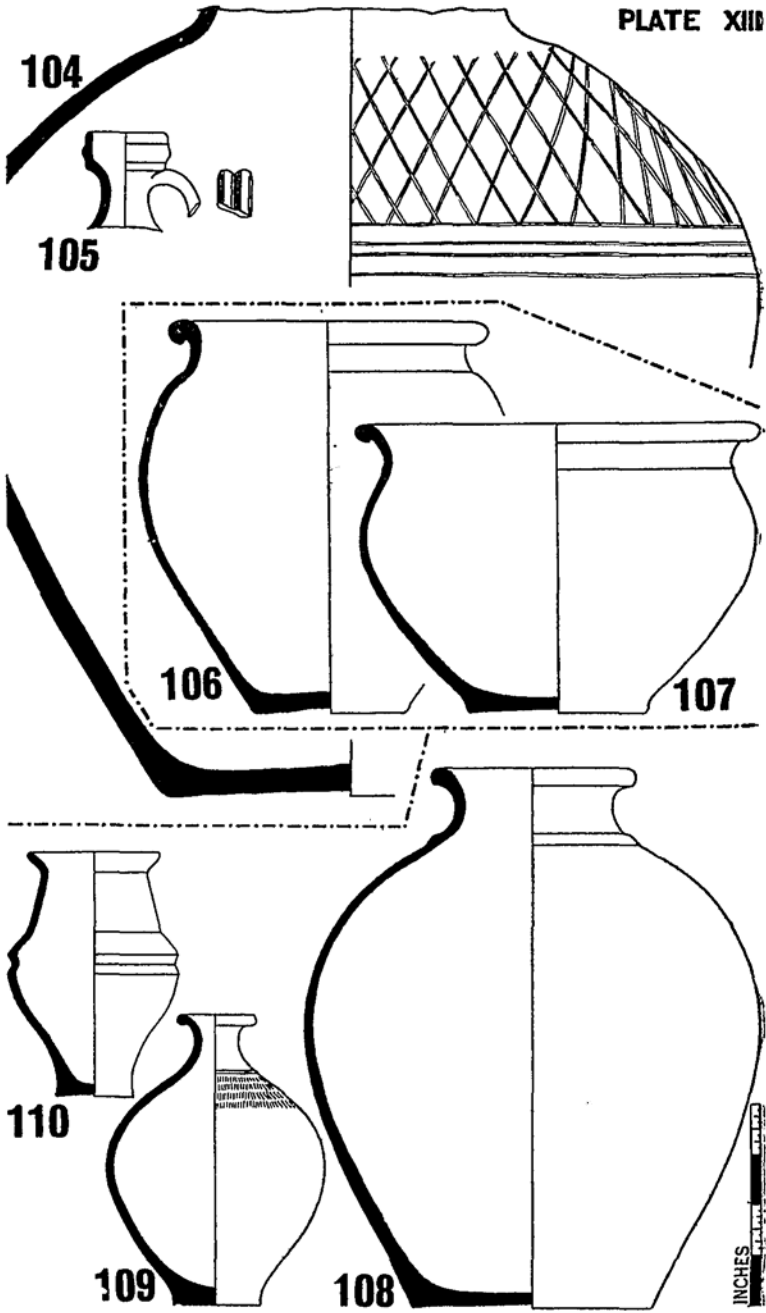
GROUP XXXII.

- No. 106. Olla-shaped URN, $7\frac{7}{8}$ in. high, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; hard light-grey sandy clay, red brown in places.
- No. 107. Bowl-shaped URN, $7\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter, $5\frac{3}{4}$ in. high; clay similar to last.

This group is dated c. A.D. 150; both the pots were full of calcined bones.

GROUP XXXIII.

- No. 108. URN, $10\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $8\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter; light drab-grey clay.
- No. 109. FLASK, 6 in. high, $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; soft drab-grey clay, apparently coated black.



- No. 110. BEAKER, $4\frac{7}{8}$ in. high, $3\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; hard light-brown sandy clay, coated with black varnish.

This group is dated late second century, and the rim of the urn was only 12 inches below the present surface of the ground.

GROUP XXXIV.

- No. 111. URN, $7\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, 8 in. diameter; hard, smooth drab-grey clay.

- No. 112. URN, $6\frac{1}{4}$ in. high, $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; coarse, gritty, drab to black clay, with smooth soapy surface.

In this burial the former vessel only contained calcined bones.

-
- No. 113. ONE-HANDLED FLAGON, $7\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $5\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter; soft red clay with white coating, which is much better preserved and less eroded than usual.

With this flagon were small flakes of metal, apparently lead or pewter, and traces of unburnt bones were observed close by.

The whole of the above pieces are recorded strictly in the order in which they were recovered during and previous to November 1921, but the following records show groups found during the early months of 1923, which are being numbered as and when the pots are sufficiently restored to be measured and drawn.

GROUP XXXV.

- No. 114. URN, containing calcined bones, $12\frac{1}{8}$ in. high, 9 in. diameter; smooth light-grey clay.

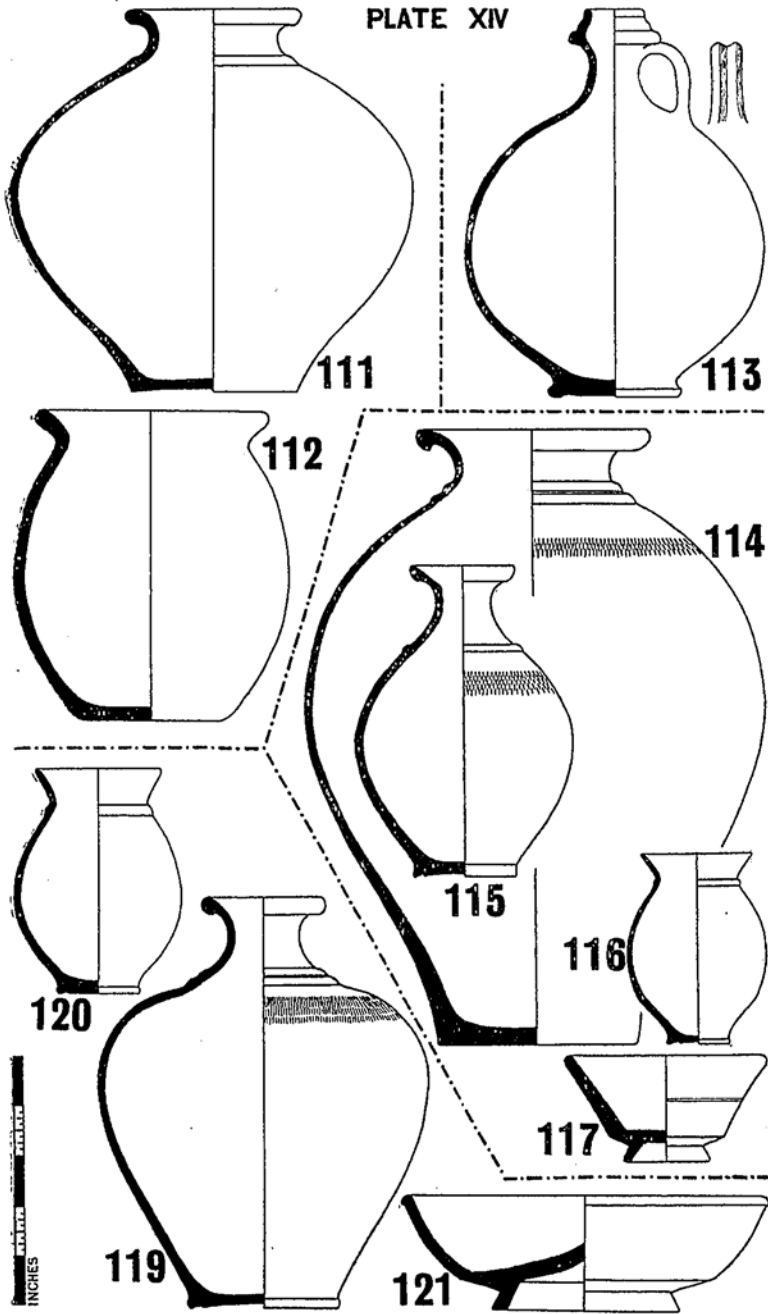
- No. 115. FLASK, $6\frac{1}{8}$ in. high, $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; light-grey clay.

- No. 116. BEAKER, $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter; grey clay.

- No. 117. CUP, form 33 Drag., Terra Sigillata ware, with central stamp **NAMIL CROESI**.*

* See May's *Silchester Pottery*, p. 241.

PLATE XIV



GROUP XXXVI.

- No. 118. WINE AMPHORA, used as Urn, similar to No. 91.
 No. 119. FLOWER VASE OR FLASK, $8\frac{1}{4}$ in. high, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; smooth drab-grey clay.
 No. 120. BEAKER, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $3\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; smooth drab-grey clay with red-brown core.
 No. 121. BOWL, $7\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter, $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. high; form 31 Drag., Samian ware; no potter's stamp.

This group is dated c. A.D. 150.

GROUP XXXVII.

- No. 122. WINE AMPHORA, used as Urn.
 No. 123. CUP with Pedestal Foot, $5\frac{7}{8}$ in. high, $3\frac{7}{8}$ in. diameter; red ware, coated black; decorated *en barbotine* with drooping heart-shaped leaves and spikes of blossom or corn on long curved slender stalks, within a stud-bordered zone around the bulge.

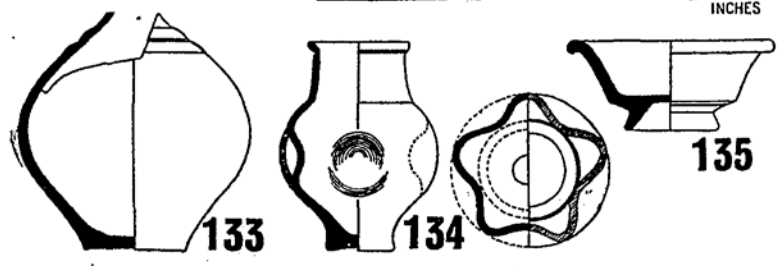
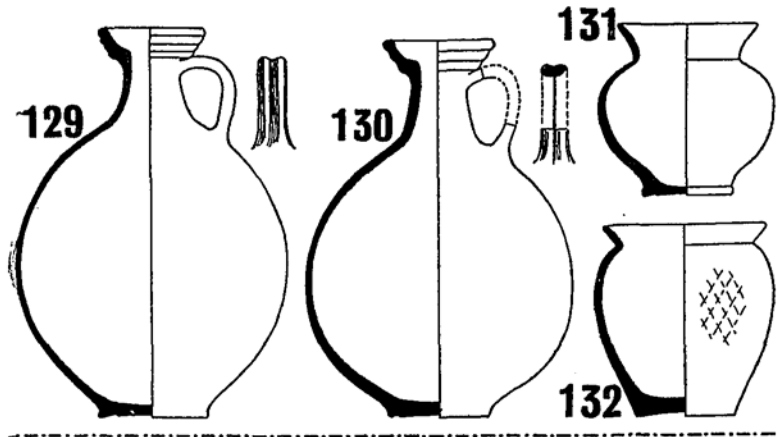
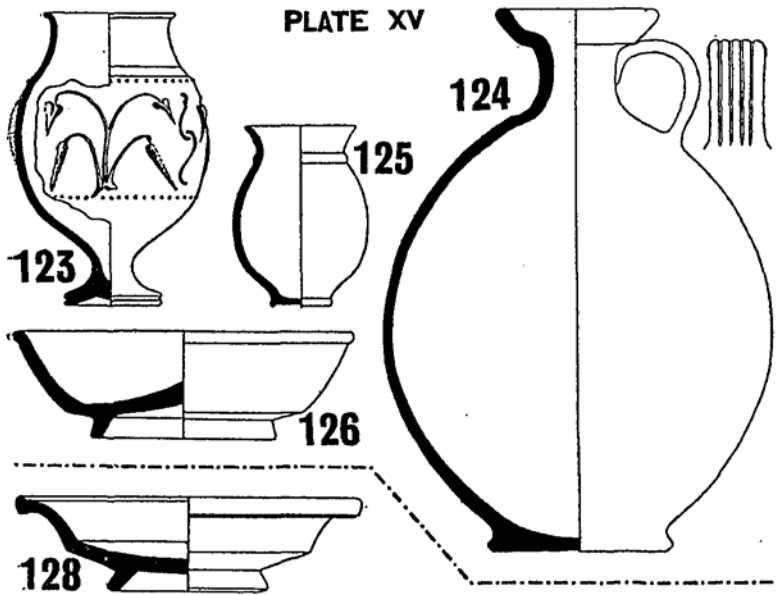
This cup may be compared with Walter's Catalogue, M. 140, in the British Museum, and May's No. 12, pl. ix., York Museum Catalogue; neither of these latter, however, has the graceful pedestal foot.

- No. 124. FLAGON, with 5-ribbed band handle, $10\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $7\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter; bright red clay, apparently with white slip coating eroded.
 No. 125. BEAKER, $3\frac{5}{8}$ in. high, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter; brown-grey clay, black coated.
 No. 126. BOWL, $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter, $2\frac{1}{8}$ in. high; form 31 Drag., Samian ware; central stamp PRIMULI.

Primulus is the name of a Lezoux potter, c. 75—110 A.D.,* but this group of pottery generally is dated about the end of the second century.

* Wroxeter Report, 1912, p. 58, and Corinium Museum Guide, 1922, p. 29.

PLATE XV



Two ivory dice and 24 counters—consisting of 12 white ones, 4 yellow, 4 black, 1 blue and 1 green one, all of vitreous paste, and 2 of bone—were found in the bottom of the amphora, and had apparently been dropped in before the calcined bones; among these also there were a few hobnails. The four pieces of pottery were lying on the bones, the beaker being in the mouth of the flagon like a stopper.

It is interesting to compare the pieces in this game with the *three* dice and apparently 36 counters in the Joslin collection, Colchester Museum, grave group 94; paste counters are also illustrated in Curle's *Newstead*, pl. xciii. As to the common use of the game, see "British Museum Guide to Greek and Roman Life" (1920), p. 204.

GROUP XXXVIII.

- No. 127. WINE AMPHORA, used as Urn.
- No. 128. BOWL, form 51 Drag., Samian ware; $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter, $1\frac{7}{8}$ in. high; no stamp.
- No. 129. ONE-HANDLED FLAGON, $7\frac{5}{8}$ in. high, $5\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; buff clay.
- No. 130. ONE-HANDLED FLAGON, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter; buff clay.
- See British Museum "Guide to Roman Britain," p. 121, pl. xii., Nos. 13 and 14.
- No. 131. Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{3}{8}$ in. high, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; smooth drab-grey clay, reddish-brown near surface.
- No. 132. Olla-shaped BEAKER, $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; clay as last, but showing black core where fractured and traces of lattice marking around bulge.

This group may be dated *c.* A.D. 200; among the bones was found a glass disc as before described, but only $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter, the smallest so far seen.

GROUP XXXIX.

- No. 133. FLASK, with neck missing, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; drab-grey clay with grey core.
- No. 134. BEAKER or THUMB POT, with five indentations, $4\frac{1}{8}$ in. high, $3\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; drab-grey clay, reddish-brown near surface, with black core.
- No. 135. CUP, form 46 Drag., Samian ware, 4 in. diameter, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. high.

British Museum "Guide to Roman Britain,"
p. 111, fig. 125, A.D. 140—190.

No trace of urn nor unburnt bones could be seen near these pieces of pottery, but iron nails and two small brass bracelets near by may have been connected with the group.



OSPRINGE CEMETERY
Cup, Dice and Counters, *see* Grave Group XXXVII.