

ROMANO-BRITISH POTTERY, NEAR IPSWICH.

BY JOHN SHEWELL CORDER.

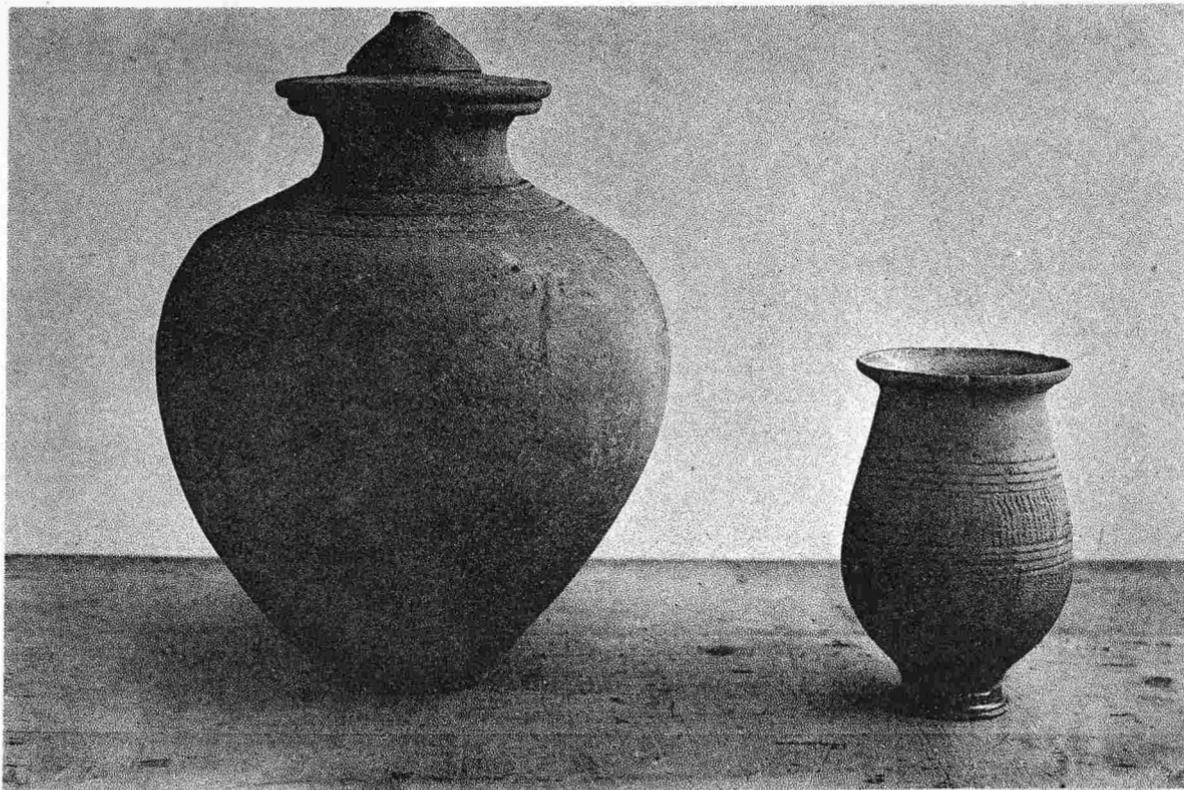
From time to time people delving in the soil in and around the town of Ipswich have discovered specimens of fictile ware, buried but a short distance beneath the surface of the ground. The specimens, when found, have been recovered in a more or less perfect condition, according to the nature of the subsoil in which they have been deposited. But not unfrequently the pick and shovel have demolished them ere the excavator was aware of their presence.

Towards the end of 1902, two fine specimens were recovered, in a nearly perfect condition, from the place of their concealment, in the sandpits now being worked at the Dales, near Mr. Fonnereau's brickfield. They were found buried about 3 ft. 6 in. beneath the present surface of the land, just where the vegetable soil merges into the sandy sub-soil, which in its turn overlays the valley gravels and flint deposits of an ancient river bed.

When found, the pots were standing upright in small cave-like hollows roughly formed in the ground, and were both empty. One pot had a nicely moulded cover over its aperture. They are made of brown clay, moulded on a wheel and burnt in the sun, and are exceedingly elegant in outline, being ornamented with moulded bands in relief; whilst the smaller pot is decorated with surface incised indentations executed with a comb or small sharp wood implement.

The larger pot has a cover, and measures 15 ins. to the top of the cover, and is 11 ins. in diameter in the widest

part, or shoulder; and $5\frac{1}{4}$ ins. across the lip of the opening. The smaller pot measures 7 ins. to the top of the rim, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. across the widest part of the vase. There seems little doubt that the two pots are specimens of early Romano-British manufacture, and that they are cinerary urns. But they are exceedingly interesting from the fact that they are so perfect, due, no doubt, to the dryness of the soil, and that their position and locality can be so clearly identified. The discovery of the pots and of others in the immediate vicinity, clearly exemplifies that ancient settlements existed all round the neighbourhood of Ipswich prior to the Roman Invasion; for though signs of occupation by the latter nation are rare in the adjacent valley of the River Gipping, yet it is almost certain that all along the banks, amidst the oak forests which spread like a mantle over this part of the country, many early settlements existed. Specimens of pottery have been unearthed in the brickfields on the Norwich Road, and right away to Westerfield where the railway line crosses the road, a workman, laying drain pipes in a meadow, came across several more or less perfect examples. The pots are now in my possession, and I shall be pleased to show them at any time.



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ROMANO-BRITISH POTS.

FOUND AT IPSWICH.