

ART. VI. – *The Pottery from Turret 52a, Banks East*. By J. S. DRYDEN, B.A., M.Phil.
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THE turret was excavated in 1933 by the Cumberland Excavation Committee and subsequently reported upon by F. G. Simpson and I. A. Richmond in CW2 xxxiv. While the turret was described structurally, there were few relevant sentences on the large amounts of pottery recovered and subsequently stored in the Tullie House Museum. The original excavators recognized two phases in the first period and three in the second; the present writers, working solely from the pottery, have been able to distinguish the two phases of period one, but could only distinguish two ceramic phases in the second period. We have followed the marking scheme on the pottery throughout and quote the relevant levels for the coarse pottery.

Samian Ware

Decorated

1. From the level above the threshold, a rim, form 37, badly worn. The indistinct ovolo did not allow a choice of central Gaulish potters.

Plain

2. From the first phase in Period II. Seven pieces of a Dr. 33 stamped VIVAN; the potter is unidentified though the form of the vessel is Antonine.
3. From the first phase in Period II. Six pieces of a Dr. 32, stamped MATVRIM, Maturus. Date: Antonine.
4. From above the threshold, a base stamped TASCILLVSI, Tasgillus of Lezoux. Date: Hadrianic-Antonine.

The first period also produced two fragmentary bases, while the second yielded two more fragmentary and badly worn bases and three pieces of different rims, one of which was another Dr. 37. Outside the building four rims and three bases were recovered, none were decorated or stamped and are not illustrated.

Coarse Pottery Level IA (Area 3)

5. Mortarium. Hard white-cream fabric with smooth finish, containing a small amount of very fine grit. Leaf or herring-bone stamp on rim.¹
6. Mortarium. Hard buff fabric with light brown grit, cf. Gillam 245.²
7. Mortarium. Red fabric containing white grit with pale pink-cream slip, cf. Gillam 250.
8. Mortarium. Pale pink fabric containing fine grit, possibly with a pink wash.³
9. Flagon rim. Pink fabric containing black grit, with a cream gritty slip.

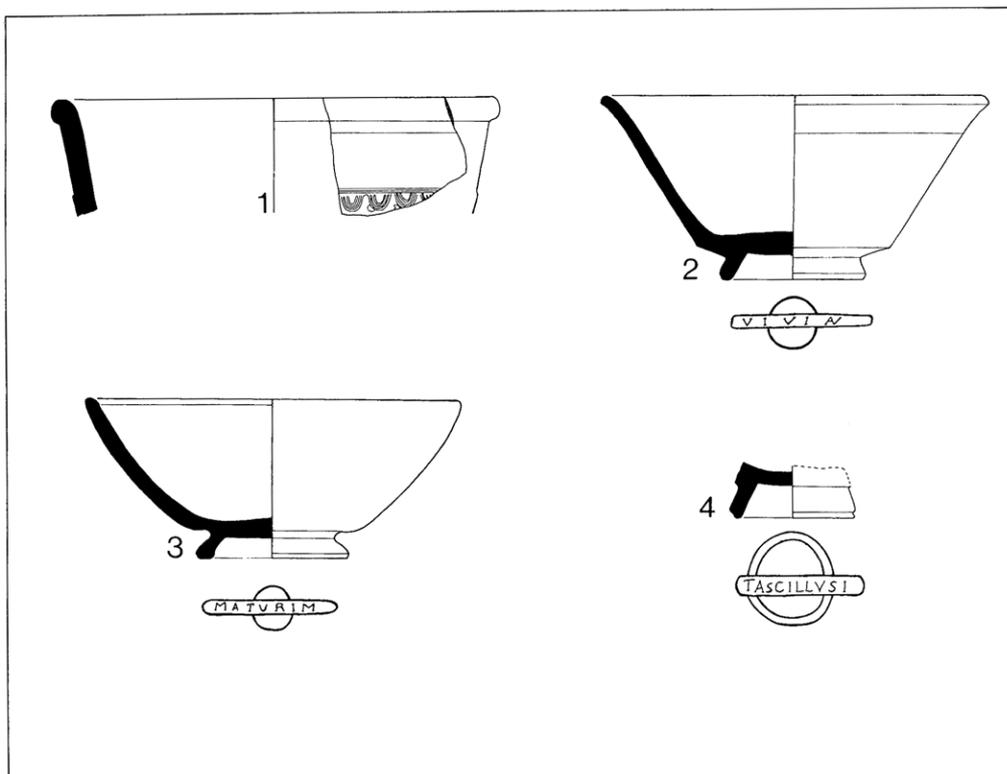


FIG. 1. — Decorated and plain Samian Ware: Periods I and II. ($\frac{1}{4}$, stamps $\frac{1}{2}$).

10. Rim and shoulder fragment of a jar; light grey fabric with a black core. No signs of burnishing; the upright rim is slightly beaded and is slightly sooty.⁴
11. Large rim fragment of a Severn Valley tankard; light pinky brown fabric with a smooth finish, containing a little fine red grit, cf. Gillam 180.
12. Large rim fragment of a bead-rim jar in BB1, cf. Gillam 118.
13. Large rim fragment of a cooking-pot in BB1. The combination of a scored line above the zone of cross-hatching with a barely splayed rim is rare.
14. Rim and body fragment of a jar; hard grey fabric; the interior is of a yellowish grey colour and displays fine wheel marks, the exterior is barbotine-decorated. Probably a pre-Hadrianic survival.⁵
15. Rim and shoulder fragment from a short-rimmed jar; light, hard grey burnished fabric.
16. Rim fragment of a jar in hard grey fabric.
17. Rim fragment of a flat-rimmed bowl, light hard grey fabric; slightly discoloured by heat. Probably an early imitation of the flat-rimmed bowl in BB1.

The level also yielded approximately seven fragmentary bases, and seven other rim fragments of the same types as those illustrated.

Level IB (Area 5)

18. Mortarium. Reddish brown fabric with white grit, a salmon-pink slip, cf. Gillam 243.
19. Mortarium. Brick-red fabric, with purple and white quartz grit, cf. Gillam 264.

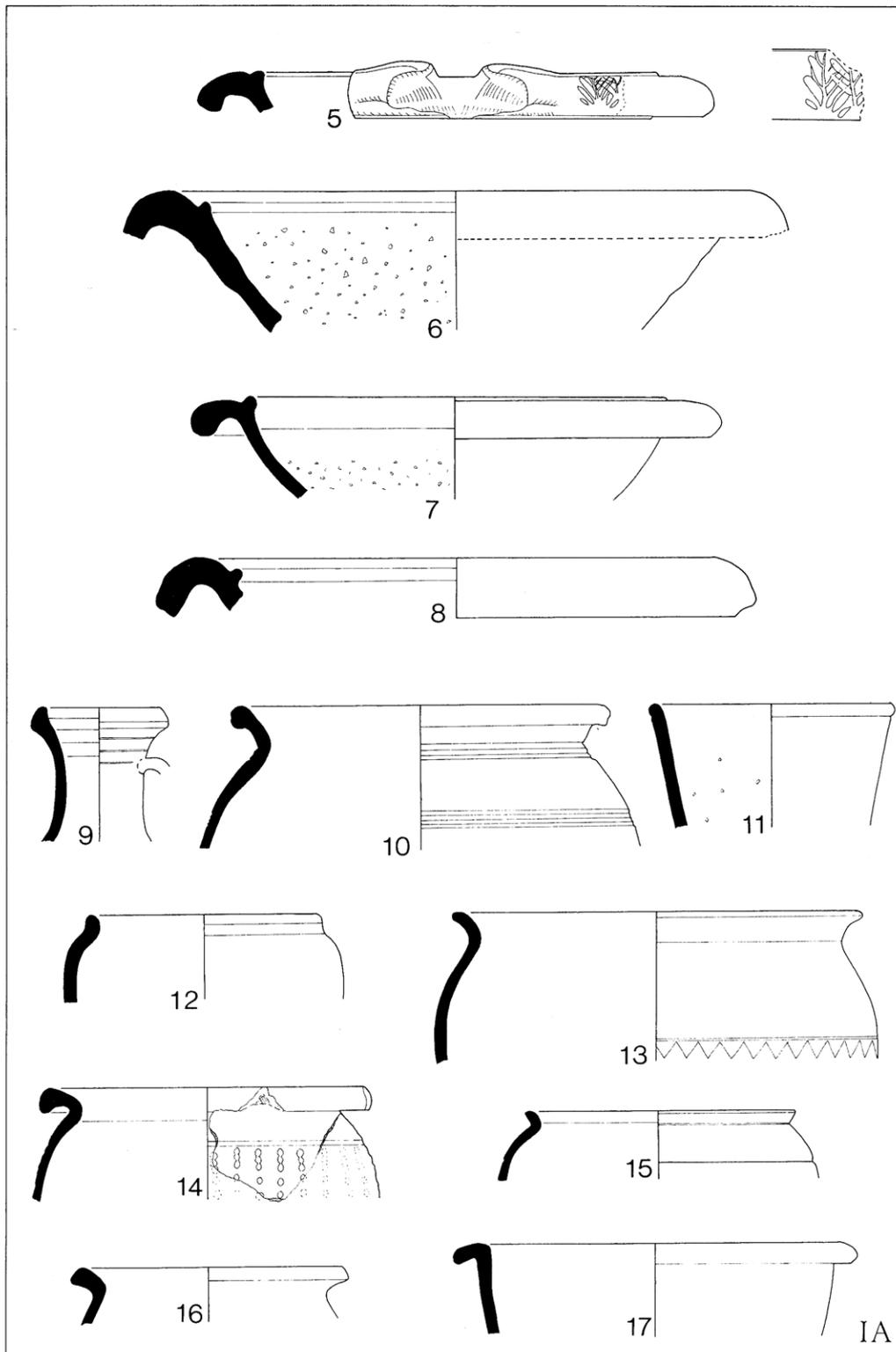


FIG. 2. - Coarse Pottery: Period IA (¼).

20. An almost complete small flask; sandy-pink fabric with fine black grit, cf. Gillam 38.⁶
21. An almost complete miniature jar of tan brown fabric with a smooth finish; no external decoration.
22. An almost complete small rough-cast beaker; fine hard red fabric with a dark-brown slip.

There were also assorted body sherds in BB1 but no distinctive rims or bases. The group is small, as is not infrequently the case in the levels of period IB; it includes at least one Hadrianic survival.

Level IIA (Area 6)

23. An almost complete beaker in salmon-pink fabric, burnished on the shoulder, decorated with light scored lines.
24. An almost complete jar; black fabric, containing coarse black grit. Irregular lattice decoration on body.
25. Rim and shoulder fragment of a small jar, in dark grey fabric with lighter interior.⁷
26. Rim and body fragment of a jar in dark grey fabric.⁸
27. Rim fragment of a cooking-pot in a black-burnished ware other than BB1; discoloured by heat but probably not originally BB1. Internal wheel-marks.⁹
28. Rim fragment of a jar, medium tan fabric with internal grooves; incised linear decoration. Signs of heat.¹⁰
29. Rim fragment of a jar, hard grey gritty fabric, much abraded.
30. Rim and body fragments from an unusual jar in grey, burnished fabric. Discoloured.
31. Rim fragment of a jar, fine hard grey fabric with slight burnish. Fine wheelmarks.¹¹
32. Rim fragment of a jar, hard grey fabric.¹²
33. Rim fragment of a small jar in grey fabric, much abraded.
34. Rim fragment of a flagon, sandy white coarse fabric with fine grit.
35. Rim fragment of a jar or cooking-pot, light grey, burnished fabric.
36. Rim fragment of a jar in a black-burnished ware, other than BB1.
37. Rim fragment of a jar or cooking-pot in light smokey-grey fabric with fine, hard smooth finish, cf. Gillam 135.

In addition there were approximately thirty-eight rims repeating in form those illustrated, and some twenty-three fragmentary and undecorated bases.

Level IIB (Area 2)

38. Mortarium. Red fabric with darker red slip and white, black and red grit, cf. Gillam 271.
39. A base in black-burnished ware, decorated with groups of lines.
40. Rim fragment of a jar in BB1, cf. Gillam 141.
41. Rim and shoulder fragment from a bead-rim cooking-pot, in BB2; vessels in BB2 are extremely rare in the western half of the Wall.
42. Rim fragment of a cooking-pot in BB1, rough inside.
43. Rim fragment of a jar, light grey, burnished fabric, discoloured by heat.
44. Rim fragment of a jar in light grey fabric, upper part burnished.
45. Rim fragment of a jar in hard, light grey fabric, lightly burnished, cf. Gillam 133.
46. Rim fragment of a jar in hard, light grey fabric.
47. Rim fragment of a jar in hard, light grey fabric, burnished.
48. Rim fragment of a cooking-pot in BB1.
49. Rim fragment of a cooking-pot in BB1, abraded and worn.
50. Rim and body fragments of a jar in hard, light grey, burnished fabric.
51. Rim fragment of a cooking-pot in BB1, much worn, cf. Gillam 136.
52. Rim fragment of a jar in dark grey, burnished fabric, cf. Gillam 135.

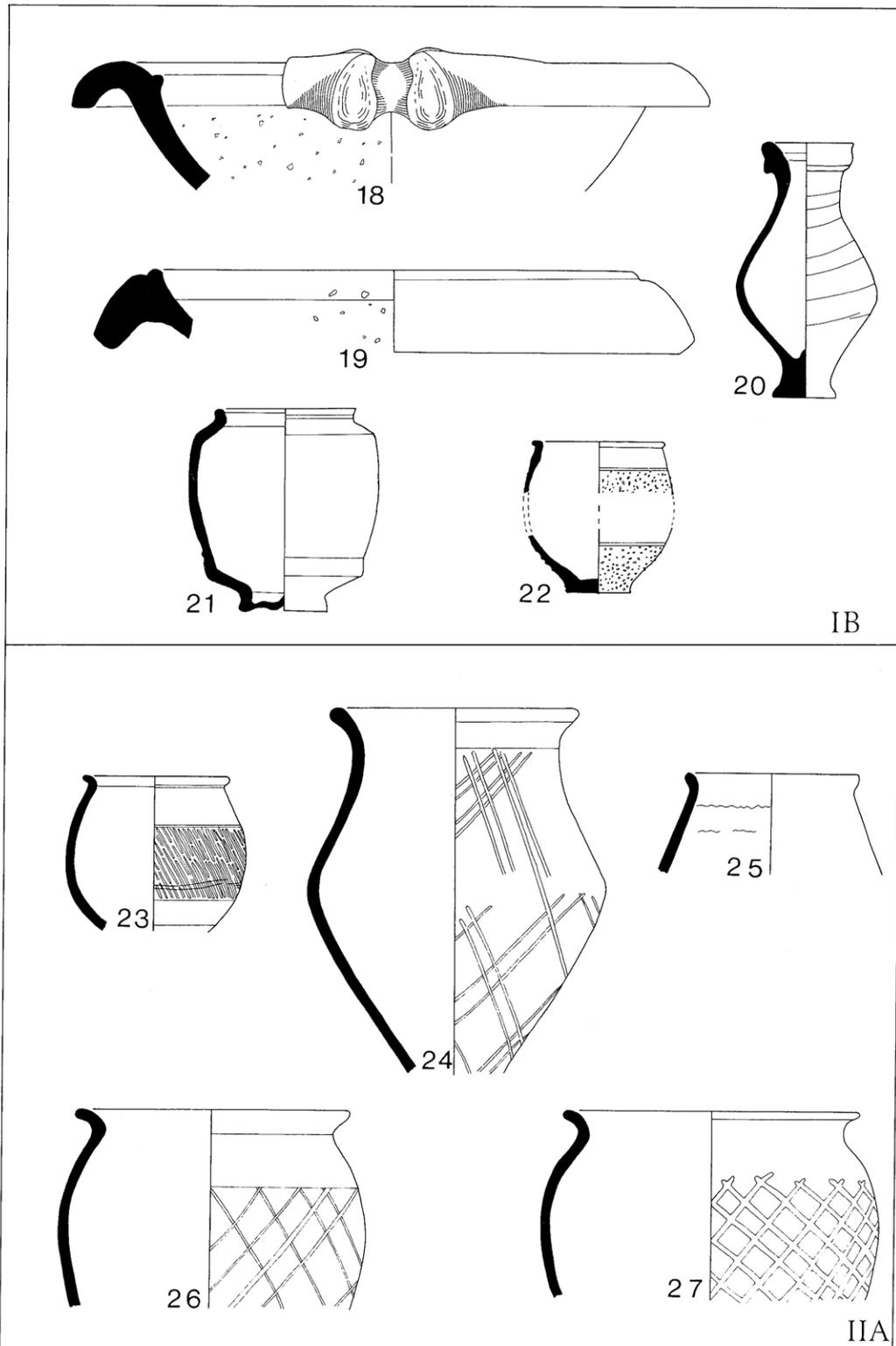


FIG. 3. - Coarse Pottery: Period IB and IIA ($\frac{1}{4}$).

The level also yielded approximately thirty more indeterminate bases and about forty more rims, all of which are paralleled by those illustrated, and one fragmentary mortarium base.

? Area 7

- 53. Rim of a jar in BB1, severe wear.
- 54. Rim of a jar, black fabric with white calcite grit.

In addition, there were found two very fragmentary mortarium rims and seven base fragments; there were also approximately eighteen rims, all paralleled by the pottery illustrated, and twelve bases in black-burnished ware or in the hard grey fabric also prevalent in the pottery record. There was no mention of any level for this pottery or of an exact location.

Conclusions

The earliest pottery is the barbotine-decorated jar (no. 14), which is probably a pre-Hadrianic survival. Otherwise, in the two phases of the first period the pottery record is largely one of material in current use. Two samian vessels (no. 1 and 4) belong to the first period of occupation, and also several mortaria whose presence is noteworthy by their absence in Turret 51b nearby.¹³ "Some pottery from the later first period layer fitted with sherds from above the fallen masonry",¹⁴ that marked the end of Period I, and this is illustrated with the miniature jar (no. 21) from IB whose pieces came from Area 5 (IB) and 6 (IIA).

As mentioned, only two phases of Period II can be distinguished, but the chronological distinction between IIA and IIB is not as pronounced as that for IA and IB. The pottery contains a number of second century survivals (e.g. no. 40 and 28), as well as a variety of vessels in current use in the third century (e.g. no. 44 and 47). The third century levels are significant for the quantity of jars and cooking-pots produced, and also for the disappearance of the finer wares – only one mortarium (no. 38) is attested in Period II and the samian more probably belongs to disturbance at the end of IB than to period II proper. The nature of the deposit suggests that the occupation in the third century may not be as prolonged as the quantity of pottery may suggest.

We are inclined to see Area 7 as that immediately under the modern road. Pieces from Area 2 (IIB) and 7 joined to form the jar no. 43; also, there is the record of a calcite-gritted jar (no. 54) and of the nine pieces of mortaria which are all mentioned in the original report as belonging to that layer immediately under the road surface. Owing to the lack of definition concerning this layer we are inclined to classify Area 7 and the unmarked mortaria as unstratified.

Mr. J. P. Gillam gave much valuable advice on the coarse pottery, and we would also wish to express our thanks to the staff of the Tullie House Museum and our indebtedness to the late Miss K. S. Hodgson for her original study of the pottery.

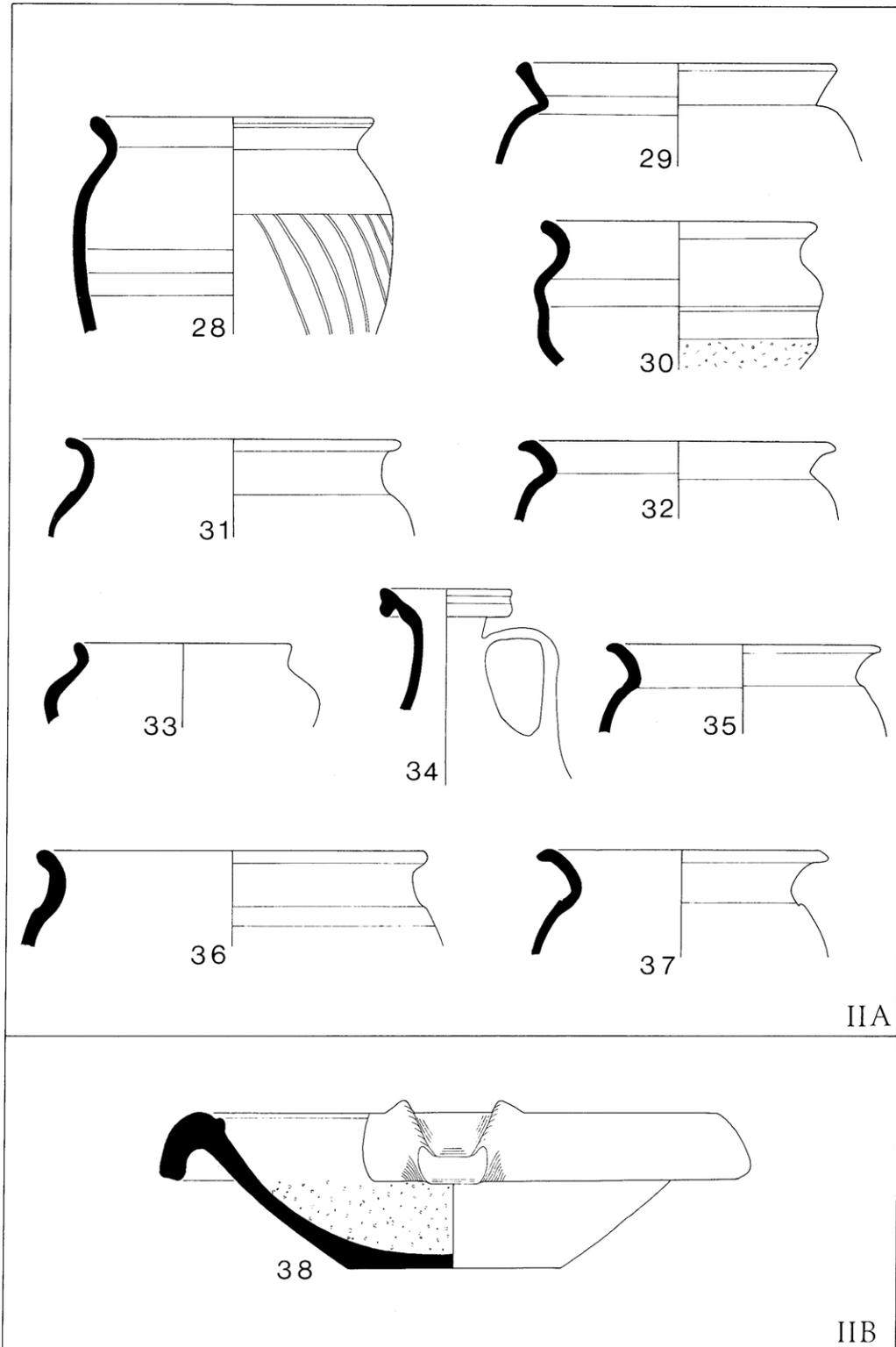


FIG. 4. - Coarse Pottery: Period IIA and mortarium from IIB (¼).

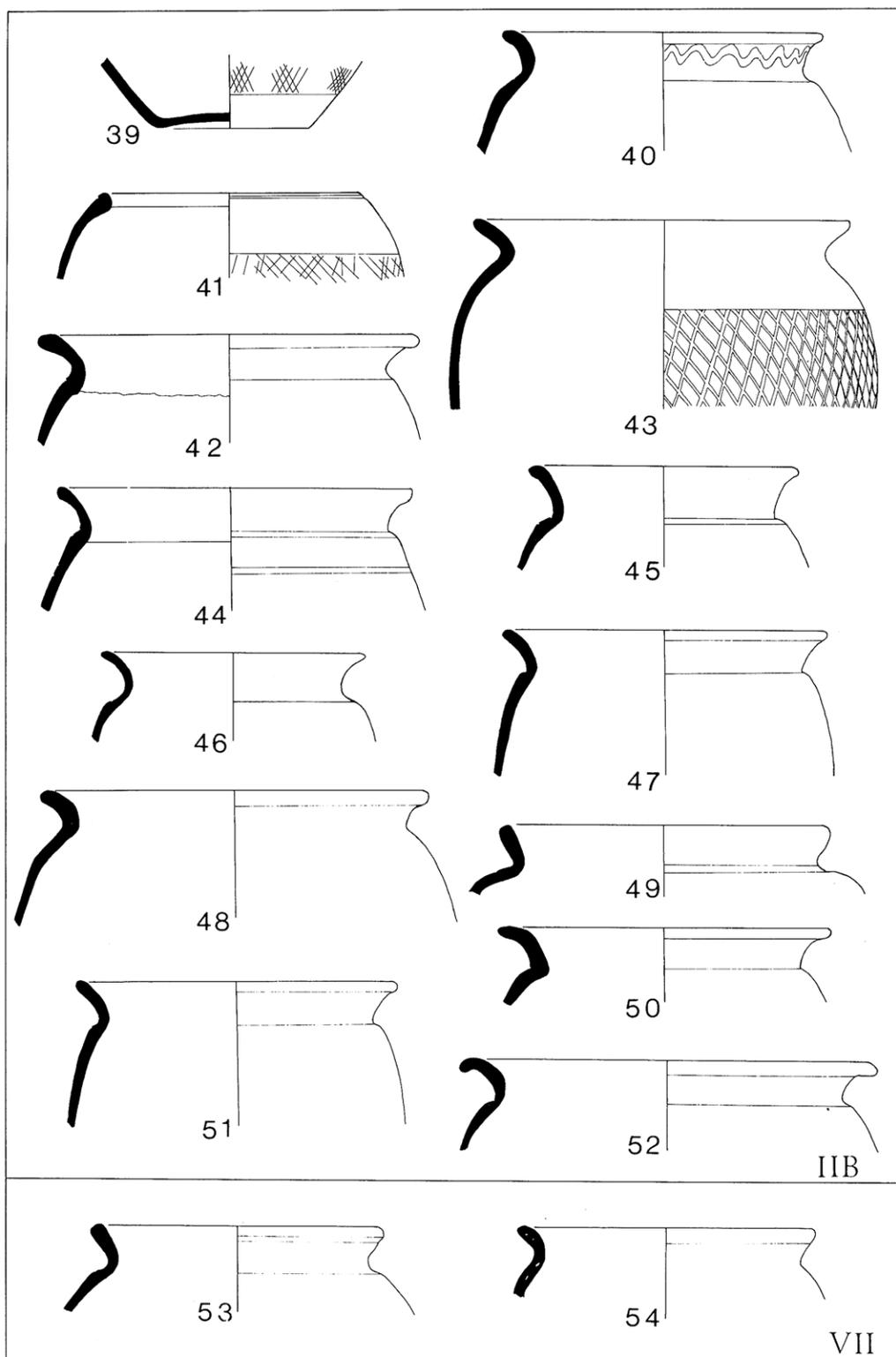


FIG. 5. - Coarse Pottery: Period IIB and Area 7 ($\frac{1}{4}$).

References

- ¹ Cf. B. R. Hartley, "The Roman Fort at Bainbridge. Excavations of 1957-9". *Proc. Leeds Phil. & Lit. Soc.*, Lit. & Hist. Section. vol. IX, pt. III, 1960, fig. 7, no. 41.
- ² J. P. Gillam, *Types of Roman Coarse Pottery Vessels in Northern Britain* (3rd edition 1970, Newcastle upon Tyne).
- ³ Cf. F. G. Simpson et al., "Excavations on the line of the Roman Wall in Cumberland during the years 1909-12", CW2 xiii, plate 18, no. 96.
- ⁴ Cf. L. P. Wenham, *Romano-British Cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York* (London 1968), fig. 23, no. 6.
- ⁵ Cf. J. S. Wachter, *Excavations at Brough-on-Humber, 1958-61* (Leeds 1969), fig. 54, no. 40,
- ⁶ And also M. R. Hull, *Roman Colchester* (Oxford 1958), fig. 123, nos. 389A and B.
- ⁷ Cf. R. E. Birley, "Excavation of the Roman Fortress at Carpow, Perthshire 1961-2" *PSAS* 96, 1962-63, fig. 7, no. 7.
- ⁸ Cf. L. P. Wenham 1968. *Op. cit.* fig. 29, no. 1.
- ⁹ Cf. I. A. Richmond et al., "The Temple of Mithras at Carrawburgh", AA4, 29, 1959, fig. 9, no. 2.
- ¹⁰ Cf. L. P. Wenham, 1968. *Op. cit.* fig. 29, no. 8.
- ¹¹ Cf. F. G. Simpson et al., "The Roman Fort at Bewcastle", CW2, xxxviii, 1938, fig. 24, no. 26.
- ¹² Cf. *Ibid.* fig. 24, no. 25.
- ¹³ C. Woodfield, "Six Turrets on Hadrian's Wall", AA4, 43, 1965, p. 185 f.
- ¹⁴ F. G. Simpson and I. A. Richmond, "Section V. Banks East Turret, 52a", CW2, xxxiv, 1934, p. 150.

