



Photo. C. J. Marshall

(a) *The Kiln*



Photo. C. J. Marshall

(b) *The Pottery on Exhibition, December, 1923*

THE CHEAM DISCOVERY

A MEDIÆVAL POTTERY KILN DISCOVERED AT CHEAM.

BY

CHARLES J. MARSHALL, F.R.I.B.A.

ON April 29, 1923, pottery was unearthed during the digging for a soak-away in the garden at the back of a house in course of erection in Parkside, Cheam, Surrey. The

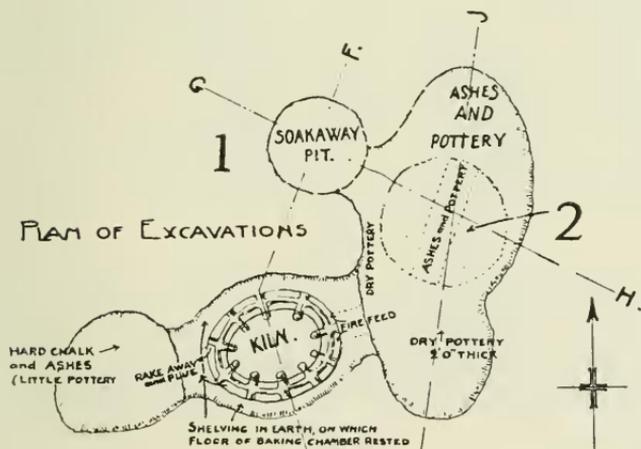
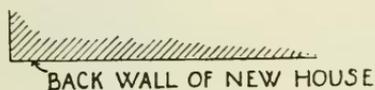


FIG. I.

house was being built on the site of the tennis court of Cheam House, an old house recently pulled down, the ground of which

is now being developed for building. By the kind permission of the owners of the ground, the Onyx Building Company, further excavations were undertaken and a large amount of pottery wasters from a kiln were recovered; and finally the firing chamber of the kiln itself was found.

The pottery had evidently been thrown into the kiln and other excavations in the chalk to level it up for a clay floor which was found intact. The top 2 ft. of ground were made earth, thrown in possibly to form the tennis court; the kiln and other excavations having been made in the chalk subsoil.

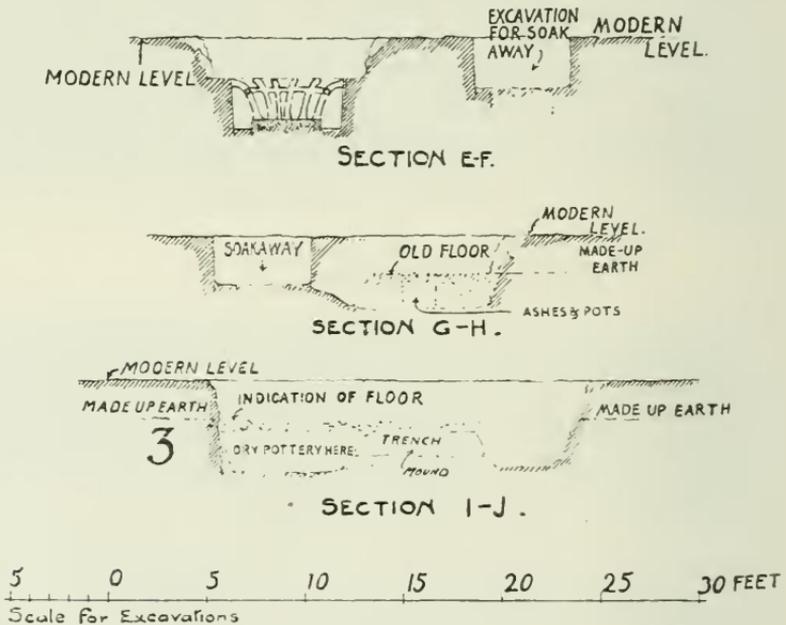


FIG. 2.

From the curved outlines of portions of the original excavations, it is possible that there may have been a series of kilns which had fallen in and been abandoned as kilns, but used as the stoking chambers of new kilns which were dug further on in the chalk.

The *KILN* itself was an oval 6 ft. 8 in. on the long diameter and 5 ft. 3 in. on the short, and 2 ft. 6 in. deep to the bottom of the fire trench. The walls of the kiln were battered outwards 2 in. from the bottom, and there was a rise in the floor of the fire trench and of the bottom of the whole chamber of 4 in.

central raised portion was a curb of stone in small pieces averaging 8 in. by 6 in. of Gatton Stone, and it is to be noticed that the old portion of Cheam Church was built of this stone. Some portions of the same sized pieces of stone dug up near this excavation have traces of mouldings, and perhaps may be a piece of mullion and part of the tracery of a window. Rising from this curb and curving back to the sides of the kiln were circular clay "guards" (?) about $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter with a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. hole in the centre, probably caused by the clay having been moulded round a wattle. These "guards" are burnt black outside and red inside. About 6 in. from the top was a collar of the same diameter which went round from guard to guard. There were ten of these guards irregularly placed, one being opposite to the east arch and two opposite the west arch. These two archways were each 18 in. wide and 16 in. high from the bottom of the fire trench, and were roughly semi-circular. The thickness of chalk left for walls at east and west ends was 18 in., the sides of the kiln being in the solid chalk. The whole of the inside of the sides of the kiln was coated with clay. The bottom of the fire trench was also covered with clay.

Presumably this was the firing chamber of the kiln, the stoking-door being at the east end and the flue at the west end. A clay-and-tile floor would be constructed over this heating chamber, and the pottery to be baked would be placed on this floor and a dome of wattle and clay built over the whole with escape holes for the smoke. Quantities of pieces of tile were found which had been used in the construction of the kiln, and these were ordinary roofing tiles, some with round peg holes and some with square diagonal holes; they are marked with glaze where it had run down from the pots and in many cases there are marks where the pots had stuck to them. There are also a good many examples where the tiles have been used several times, as there are spots of glaze on both sides. A small number of pieces of burnt clay were found with marks of wattles, but there is very little of it.

The *CLAY* used for the pottery was of many colours and qualities, from a red-pink through yellows to black, showing that it probably came from the large ancient clay pit at the back of Cheam Church, where there are seams of many different clays.

The POTTERY was mostly in fragments, but a few nearly complete examples were found. From the way pieces of the

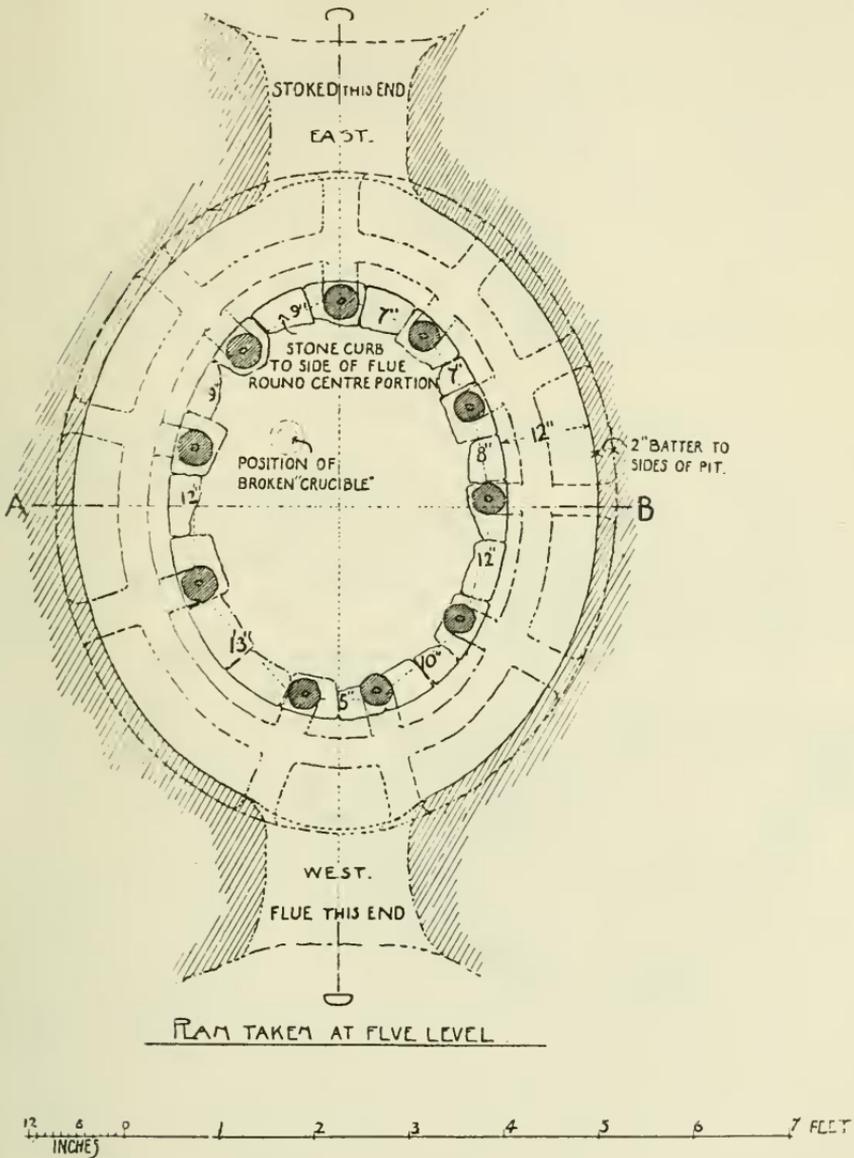


FIG. 4.

same pots were scattered about it would seem probable that they were all taken from the heap of wasters and dumped into

the kiln and other excavations to level up for the clay floor. In some parts the broken pottery formed a layer 2 ft. 6 in. deep, quite clean, and not even mixed with earth or ashes.

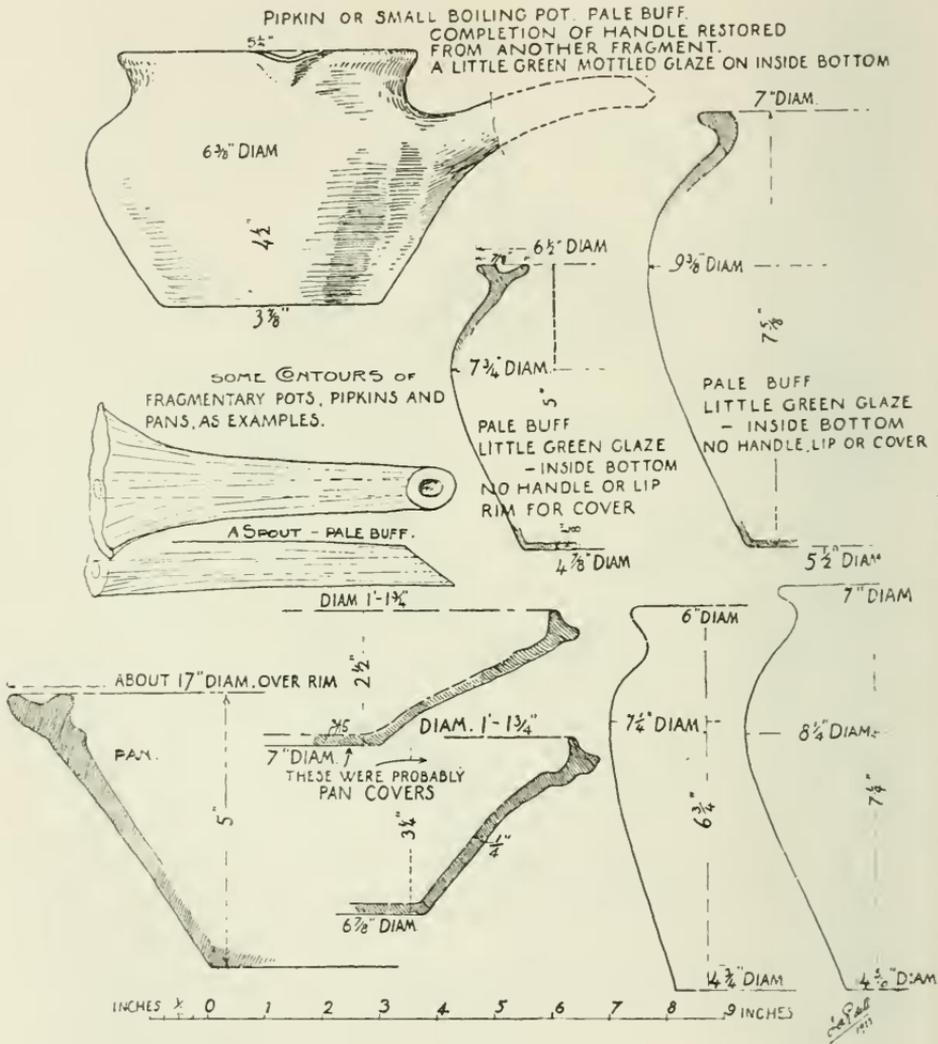


FIG. 5.

In other parts the pottery was embedded in ashes, and in another part in a bed of stiff clay. The clay floor put over the fragments was about 6 in. thick and formed of clay and reeds, the fragments of reeds being well preserved. To show

how airtight the floor was—on breaking through it the smell of burnt wood was as strong as from a recently extinguished bonfire.

The *Pipkins* are a very graceful shape, and in one case the pouring-lip is at right angles to the handle. The moulded rim would appear to be for a cover, and though no actual entire covers have been found, still there are many fragments of moulded rims that just fit into these pipkin rims; and from some fragments found it would appear that the tops were shallow flat pans, though it is possible that it is only a coincidence that the rims of this class of flat pans fit into the rims of the pipkins.

Most of the pottery is of a type for holding liquids, and it has

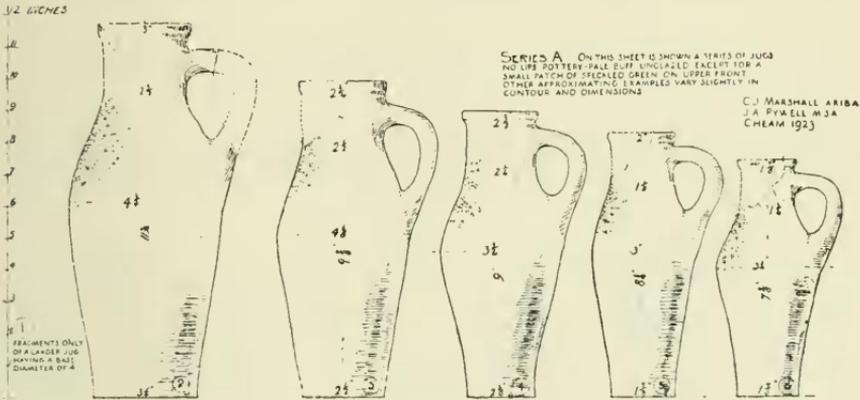


FIG. 6.

been suggested that the kiln may have been established there in connection with the ancient brewery which has only recently been pulled down. The most numerous class is of the type we have called *Jugs*. They are of a wide type, and appear to have been made in two halves; the upper half having been made separately from the lower, and then the two joined together, forming a ridge at the junction. This type always shows deep finger-marks from the wheel inside, and occasionally outside as well; these lines are probably caused from the wheel being turned very slowly.

The *Pitchers* and *Ewers* are smooth inside, and do not show the deep finger impressions found on the *jugs* and *measures*; proving that the wheel was turned more rapidly when they

were being moulded. The *pitchers* and *ewers* are similar in

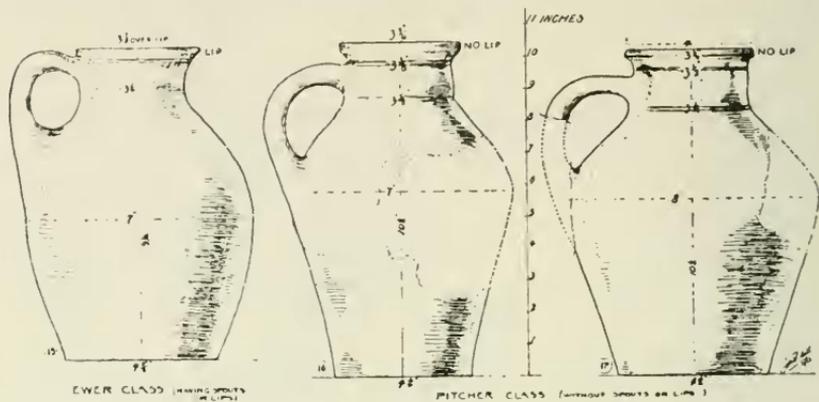


FIG. 7.

form, but the *ewers* have pouring lips and the *pitchers* have none.

The *Measures* are of a form very comfortable for holding in the hand. They have deep finger-marks inside from the

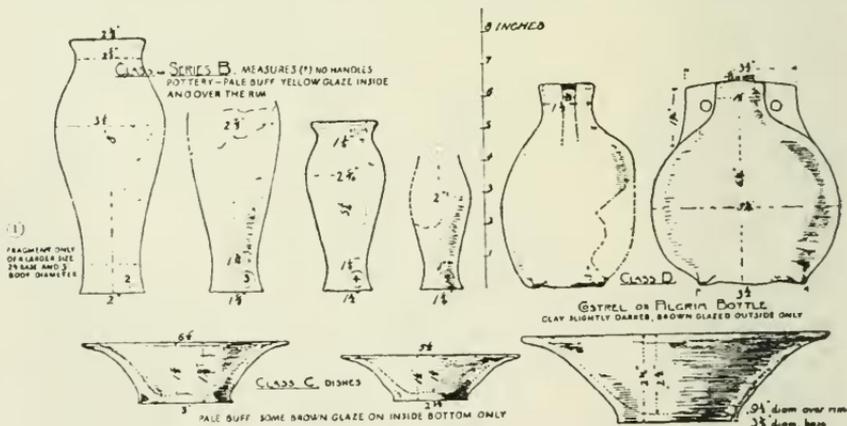


FIG. 8.

wheel having been driven slowly, and they are always glazed inside; usually yellow, sometimes a yellowish-green.

A green¹ glazed costrel was found in the black earth above the clay floor, so it must be later than the kiln; and the kiln must be later than the portion of crucible found under the floor.

¹ Not brown, as incorrectly described on drawing.

In shape there are two distinct sections of *Handles* used in the pottery, a *flat oval* section with ornamental incised straight or wavy lines or dots, and a *round* section type with strongly marked finger impressions at the lower part dying away into the body of the vessel. In the case of the oval

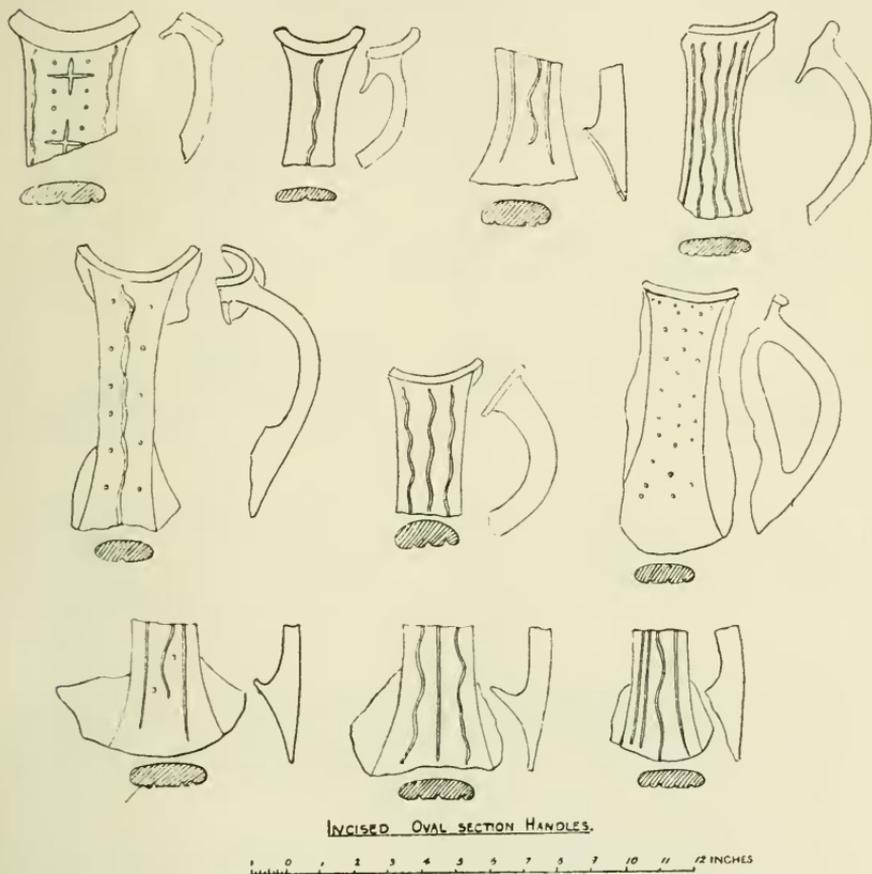


FIG. 9.

section shape, ten different arrangements of straight and wavy lines and dots have been noted.

There were two ways in which the *Handles* were fixed on to the body of the vessel. In one case holes were made with a skewer in the body of the vessel from the outside in an inverted Δ form, and the wet clay handle was then pressed on, the

centre finger forming the finger impression on the bottom of the handle, which is characteristic of the round section handle, and the other fingers smoothing the handle on to the body of the vessel; the top join of the handle was then smoothed off inside, but the lower part was left rough where the fingers could not reach. The other system of fastening on the handles was to push out a hole from the inside with a finger or an instrument and then press on the wet clay handle in the same way as above; and the wet clay went through the hole and flattened out, forming a kind of dowel. Hence we have called this form *dowel handles*, and the former method *skewer handles*. Both methods of fastening were used for each kind of handle, round section or oval, but each class of vessel always had entirely one method or the other. For example, the *jugs*

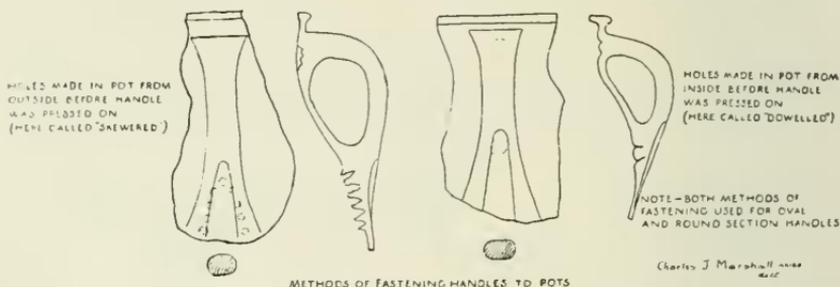


FIG. 10.

always had skewered handles and the *pitchers* and *ewers* always had dowel handles. Both methods of fastening appear to have been effective, for in very few cases were handles found that had come away from the vessel.

In many cases the bottoms of the larger vessels were slightly convex, and to make them stand evenly, three, four, or five finger-marks were made in three places to form supports. These finger-marks are those of big men, and also small ones of boys or women.

Some remains of *Crucibles* have been found, including two fairly complete ones with rounded bottoms, and these are remarkable in view of the records that Cheam clay was used for goldsmiths' crucibles.

Most of the pottery has a patch of *Glaze* on the front, the

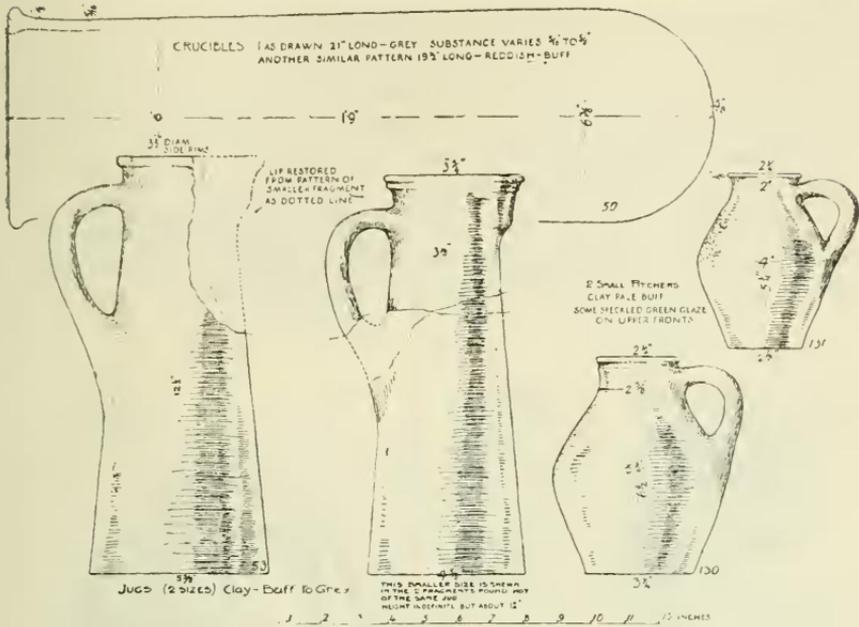


FIG. 11.

colours ranging from mottled greens to bright reddish-browns. This appears only to have been put on as an ornament, though in the case of the measures the insides were glazed and also the interior of the bottoms of the pipkins.

Some fragments of slag were found, which may have come from the preparation of the lead glaze. There are very many shades of each colour of glaze, hardly any two colours being exactly alike; possibly the glaze varied with the different kinds of clay used.

There is a large class of *Painted Vessels*, comprising jugs, pitchers, and ewers. The patterns are geometrical or flowing scrolls, or repeats of lily-leaves, etc. The colour is red or black put on with bold free lines and often having the glazed patch as well. The pattern ran round the vessels, extending from the neck to about half-way down the body.

A portion of the upper part of a two-handed vase was found practically intact. It is the top 10 in. of a vase 15 in. in diameter, and has a neck mould that would be suitable for a cover. The handles are of the oval incised kind. The vase has been painted in red with a naturalesque fern-leaf pattern

quite different in character from anything else found, and the whole was glazed yellow all over. This size of vase appears to have been a class as several fragments of painted ware are of vessels 14 in. to 15 in. in diameter. The vase with curved base and painted scroll is in shape like one in the British Museum dated thirteenth century.

The painted patterns are difficult to date,¹ but from comparison with the ornamental margins of manuscripts, are most like those of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

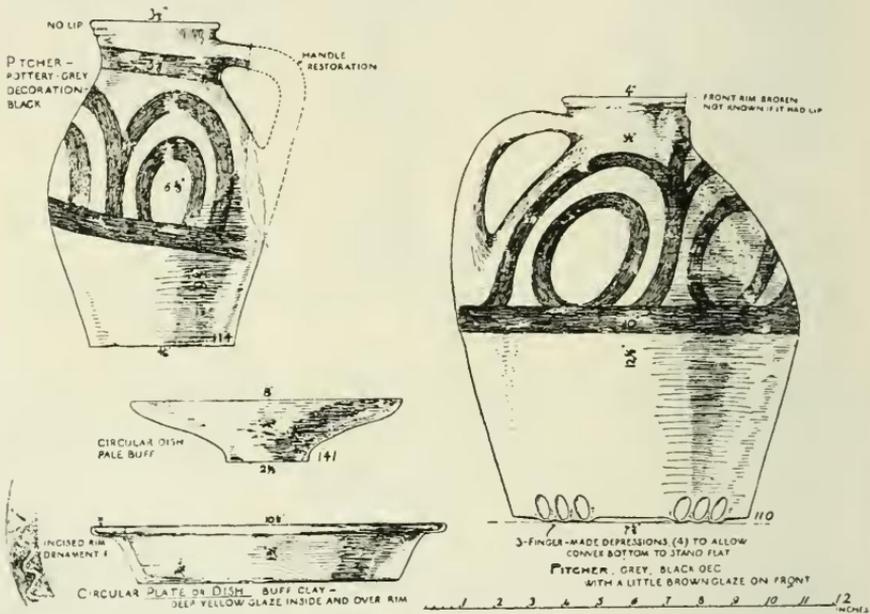


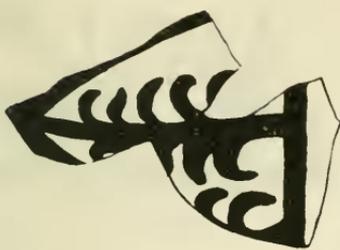
FIG. 12.

One class of vessels had *Bungholes* placed from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 in from the bottom, but, unfortunately, it has not been found possible to restore any of these.² It would appear that they

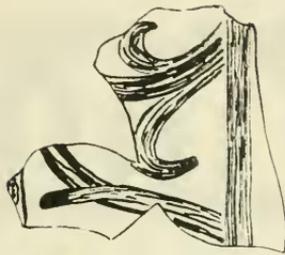
¹ It is not improbable that the question of dating may furnish a further note when these finds have been more fully examined from this point of view.

² Since writing the above, I have found that one of the helpers has succeeded in piecing one of the type of pots with a bunghole, and has presented it to South Kensington Museum. It is not among those here illustrated. The vessel is of the Pitcher variety, and has a bold red scroll with fleur-de-lys painted on it. Its dimensions are: Height, 12 in.; diameter, 10 in.; diameter of base, $7\frac{3}{8}$ in.; bunghole, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11



FRAGMENT OF VASE 4 1/2" DIA.
YELLOW POTTERY BROWN DESIGN



FRAGMENT 10" DIA. GREY POTTERY
BLACK PATTERN MUCH WEATHERED

Charles J. Mansel



TWO HANDED VASE
YELLOW GLAZE ALL OVER, RED DESIGN

SIDE

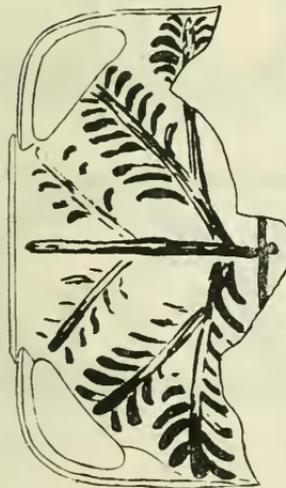


PRINTED DESIGN ON CURVED BASE VASE



FRAGMENT 16" DIA. RED ON YELLOW

RED ON YELLOW



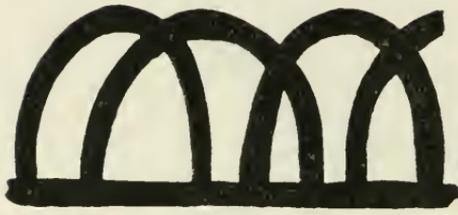
FRONT



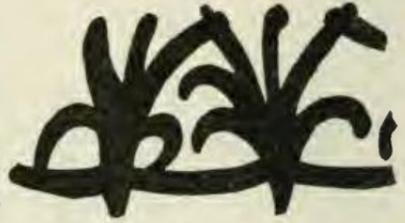
CURVED BASE VASE
YELLOW POTTERY YELLOW GLAZE ON FRONT BROWN PATTERN



FIG. 13.



PITCHER 12 ³/₈ DIAM.



PITCHER 8" DIAM.



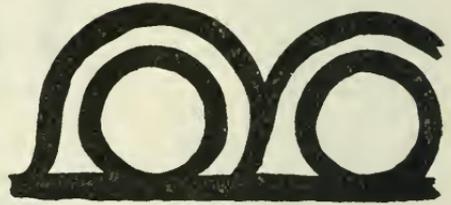
PITCHER 10 ³/₈ DIAM.



FRAGMENT 10" DIAM.



PITCHER 6 ¹/₂ DIAM.



PITCHER 10" DIAM.



PITCHER 12" DIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 INCHES

Charles J. Marshall
1914

FIG. 14.

were used for something which had a sediment, so that the liquor could be drawn off without shaking it up. Some of the

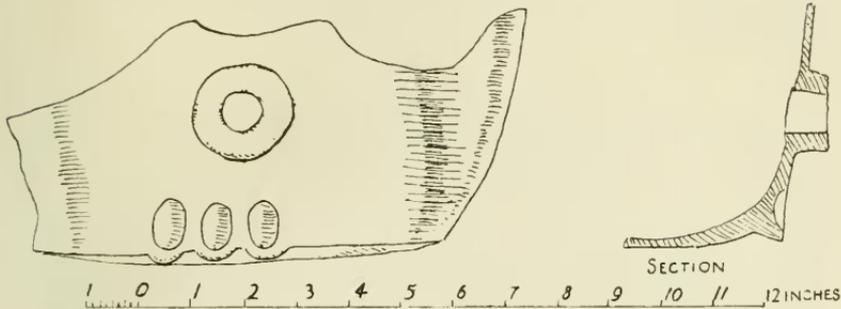


FIG. 15.

vessels with bungholes were only 9 in. in diameter, so would not be too heavy to lift.

The following are some of the *HISTORICAL REFERENCES* to potteries at Cheam.

In the history of Banstead (written by Sir Henry Lambert), it is recorded that in 1374 John, potter of Cheyham (Cheam), sold for a shilling each two figures of knights on horseback to Banstead Manor House.

Leyland says:

“Crompton of London hath a close at Cuddington, in Southery (Surrey), where the King buildeth. In this close is a value of fine yerth to make moldes for goldsmiths and casters of metale, that a load of it sold for a crown of gold. Like yerth is not found in all England.”

From Camden's *Britannia* (edition 1610):

“About foure miles from the Thamis within the Country, Nonesuch a retiring place of the Prince putteth downe, and surpasseth all other houses round about; which the most magnificent Prince King Henrie the Eighth, in a very healthfull place called Cuddington before selected for his own delight and ease, and built with so great sumptuousnesse and rare workmanship, that it aspireth to the top of ostentation for show. . . . Neere hereunto (and worth the

“noting it is) there is a vaine of potters earth highly com-
“mended and therefore sold the deerer for the making of those
“crucibles and small vessels which goldsmiths use in melting
“their gold.”

Thanks are due to all those who contributed to the success of the find; to the Onyx Building Company, the owners of the land, for permission to dig; to Mrs. Birch of Wallington for assistance in excavation and piecing; to Mr. J. A. Pywell, M.S.A., of Cheam for his drawings of the specimens; and to Messrs. Homersham, Norman and Robins for help in piecing and research work. The pottery found is to be distributed between the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Society's Museum, and the local Museum at Cheam; the kiln itself going to the Science Museum at South Kensington.

APPENDIX.

Note.—N.B. in these tables stands for Neck Broken ;
M. for Museum Specimen.

CLASS A: JUGS. (Fig. 6.)

No.	Height.	Dia- meter.	Base.	Top.	Handle.	Glaze.	Colour.	Condi- tion.
90	11"	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	3 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	S.	green	yellow	N.B. M.
91	10"	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	—	S.	"	"	M.
92	11 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	5"	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	S.	green- bronze	red- brown	M.
93	9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	5"	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	S.	green	grey- brown	M.
94	10"	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2"	broken	S.	"	orange	wheel- marks.
95	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	5"	2"	"	S.	"	red- brown	M?
96	9 $\frac{7}{8}$ "	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	S.	"	red- brown	M?
97	9 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	S.	"	red- brown	M?
98	9"	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	S.	"	yellow	M?
99	9 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	4"	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	broken	S.	"	pink	M?
100	9"	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	S.	yellow- bronze	red- brown	M.
101	8"	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2"	broken	S.	green	pink	M?
102	7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2"	S.	"	red- brown	M.
103	7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2"	S.	bronze	pink	M.
104	7"	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2"	S.	"	red- brown	M.
105	7"	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	broken	S.	"	grey	M.
[Thre 2	ee more, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	as la 5"	st, bad 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	ly brok 3"	en.] broken	S. green	dark yellow	M.
3	10"	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	broken	S.	"	"	—
4	9"	4"	2"	2 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	S.	"	"	M.
4a	8 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	S.	"	"	M.
5	8"	4"	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	broken	S.	"	"	—
6	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	4"	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	"	S.	bronze- green	"	—
4b	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	2"	"	S.	"	"	—
4c	9 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	"	S.	—	"	—
4d	broken	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	"	S.	—	"	—
4e	"	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	"	S.	—	"	—
4f	"	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	"	S.	green and bronze	"	—
2a	"	5"	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	"	S.	"	"	—
2b	"	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	"	S.	"	"	—

CLASS B: MEASURES. (Fig. 8.)

No.	Height.	Dia- meter.	Base.	Top.	Handle.	Glaze.	Colour.	Condi- tion.
70	—	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	broken	—	yellow	yellow	lower part only
71	8 $\frac{5}{8}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	—	green	"	M.
72	—	—	1 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	—	—	—	—	lower 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " only.
73	—	—	$\frac{3}{4}$ "	—	—	—	—	lower 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " only.
74	—	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	—	—	—	—	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " only.
75	—	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2"	—	—	—	—	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " only.
76	7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	—	—	—	M.
77	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{5}{8}$ "	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	—	—	—	—	M.
78	6"	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	—	—	—	—	M.
79	6"	3"	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	—	—	—	—	M.
80	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	—	—	—	—	M.
8	8 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	2"	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	—	yellow inside	yellow	—
9	broken	3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	1 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	broken	—	—	"	—
10	6 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	1 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	1 $\frac{7}{8}$ "	—	"	"	—
11	broken	2"	1 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	broken	—	"	"	—
8a	"	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	"	—	"	"	—

CLASS C: SAUCERS. (Figs. 8 and 12.)

140	—	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	—	—	—	unglazed	red clay	rim broken.
141	—	8"	—	—	—	yellow	—	M. rim broken.
142	Plate	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
12	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	—	—	—	no glaze	—	—
13	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	—	—	—	green glaze inside	—	—

CLASS D: PITCHERS (NO LIP). (Figs. 7 and 12.)

110	12 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	10"	7 $\frac{1}{8}$ " fingers	4"	dowel (lines)	painted black	red-brown	M.
111	10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	—	dowel	bronze	"	M.
112	10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	7 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	"	green and pink	"	damaged.
113	10 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	"	painted yellow;	light yellow	M.
114	9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	6 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	broken	green glaze painted	green-yellow	M.
115	10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	—	dowel	green glaze painted red-brown;	red-brown	M.
117	10 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	"	green glaze yellow-green	green-yellow	M.
16	10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	"	green	yellow	M.
17	9 $\frac{7}{8}$ "	9 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4"	"	"	—	front broken.
17a	10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	8"	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	4"	"	"	—	body broken.

EWERS (WITH LIP). (Fig. 7.)

No.	Height.	Dia- meter.	Base.	Top.	Handle.	Glaze.	Colour.	Condi- tion.
116	10¼"	8"	4⅞"	4⅞"	broken	crimson- brown	grey	M.
118	10½"	8⅞"	5"	4"	dowel	brown- green	grey	M.
119	10½"	7½"	4¼"	3¾"	"	green	red- brown	M.
120	10¼"	7½"	4¼"	3¾"	"	"	"	M.
15	9¾"	7¾"	4½"	3¾"	"	"	yellow	M.

SMALL JUGS. (Fig. 11.)

130	6½"	5¼"	3¼"	2½"	S.	green	red- brown	M.
131	5¼"	4"	2⅞"	2¼"	broken	"	orange	—
132	5¼"	4¼"	2"	broken	"	"	red- brown	—
133	broken	4¼"	2"	"	—	bronze	red- brown	—

PIPKINS. (Fig. 5.)

60	4¼"	6¾"	4"	5¼"	broken	green inside	yellow	M
61	7⅝"	9¾"	Lip 5½"	right 7"	angles —	to handle. green inside	yellow	side broken.
62	5"	7½"	5"	6½"	—	green inside	—	side broken.

CRUCIBLES. (Fig. 11.)

50	1' 9"	6"	6¼"	—	—	green glaze on neck; grey- yellow; convex base.		
51	1' 7½"	neck 6¼"	6¼"	—	—	green glaze on neck; grey- yellow; convex base.		

FLAGONS. (Described as JUGS on Fig. 8.)

52	1' 2"	4½"	5½"	—	—	—	—	part only.
53	1' 0½"	3½"	5⅞"	—	dowel	no glaze	red- brown	standing base.

TWO-HANDED VASE (UPPER 9 INCHES ONLY) (Fig. 13.)

broken	15"	miss- ing.	7½"	—	yellow	painted red design	—
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CURVED-BASE VASE. (Fig. 13.)

11⅞"	6"	5¼"	3"	—	yellow	painted design	—
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