

## Thirteenth Century and Later Pottery from the Clarendon Hotel and other sites in Oxford

BY DAVID STURDY

THE important associated groups of Late Saxon and 12th century pottery from the site of the Clarendon Hotel have already been published.<sup>1</sup>

A large quantity of later pottery was also found, much of it from Z, the large modern excavation at the rear of the site. This cut through a great complex of pits but little of the pottery was recovered in dated contexts. Some of this, however, is of importance when compared with pottery from other sites in Oxford. Other sherds were also found in the upper levels of the modern excavations over the rest of the site.

### THIRTEENTH CENTURY COOKING POTS

(FIG. 8)

Large cooking pots of hard thick red shell-filled pottery in the Late Saxon tradition, and with a distinctive line of finger-tipped decoration round the shoulder were plentiful in Z. Other examples came from pits of early to mid thirteenth century date under the New Bodleian,<sup>2</sup> and, from a pit found at Queen's College in 1958, with glazed thirteenth century sherds and a double-shelled lamp. These great pots, larger than even the most capacious of twelfth century examples represent the final development of the Late Saxon tradition. Their size must have been a formidable challenge to the housewife: for instance, one would take up the whole of the top of a modern oven. Probably they were used for stews and broths where frequent handling of full vessels was not needed.

FIG. 8

1. Hard shell-filled ware, dark grey to black. Exterior surface in places light red. Clarendon Hotel, Z.
2. Hard shell-filled ware. Light grey core, purplish-grey interior and light red exterior surfaces. Clarendon Hotel, Z.
3. Hard grey shell-filled ware. Light brown exterior surfaces. Base blackened. Queen's College, 1958.<sup>3</sup>
4. Hard grey shell-filled ware. Exterior surface light brown, much blackened. Queen's College, 1958.
5. Lamp of friable buff ware. Speckled green glaze in bowl and on exterior. Found with 3 and 4 at Queen's College, 1958. Mid thirteenth century or later.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. M. Jope: *Oxoniensia*, xxiii (1958), 1-83.

<sup>2</sup> *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), 99 (well 1, 7, fig. 23A): 108 (well 10, 8); 109 (well 12, 1).

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> *Oxoniensia*, xv (1950), 57-60.

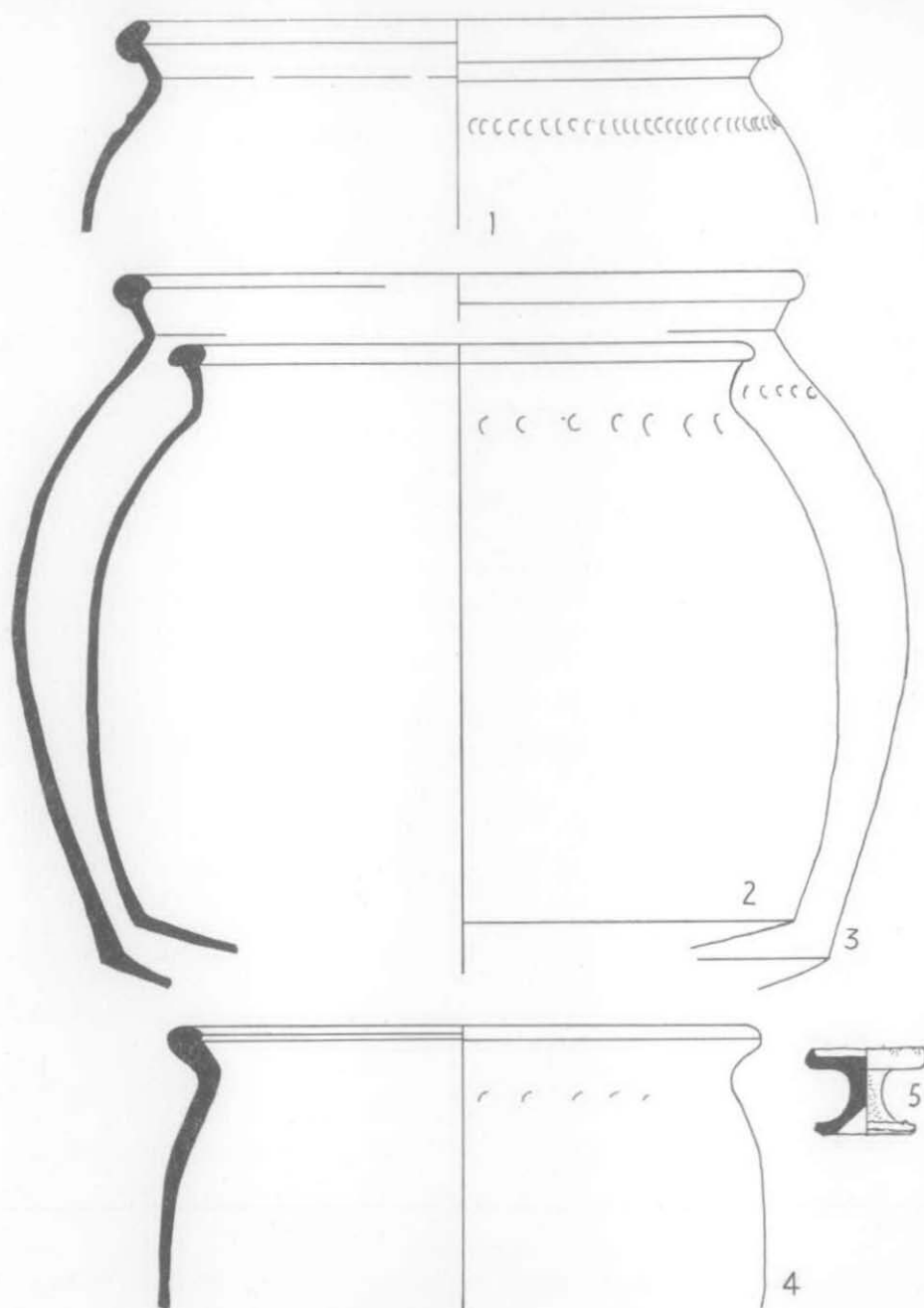


FIG. 8  
Early 13th century cooking pots and lamp: (1) and (2) from the Clarendon Hotel,  
(3) to (5) from Queen's College, 1958. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

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### A THIRTEENTH CENTURY GROUP OF POTTERY

(FIGS. 9-10)

The only large group of later pottery found on the site of the Clarendon Hotel was recovered from a large well or pit which lay in the extreme south-east corner of Z. The pottery covers the whole of the thirteenth century. Perhaps the earlier vessels came from the primary silting deposited while the well was in use, and the later pottery was included in the rubbish used to fill it when it became foul.

A fine two-handled vessel and a tripod pitcher from this well have already been published.<sup>5</sup> A vessel closely similar to the tripod-pitcher in ware and glaze, but with a plain handle and no legs comes from the Examination Schools (FIG. 10, no. 1). Both are of early thirteenth century date, probably made by the same potter. The differences between them are significant and the vessels together show the latest form of the tripod-pitcher and its development into the normal thirteenth century pitcher.<sup>6</sup> The rest of the pottery is of late thirteenth or early fourteenth century date and can probably be considered as a group of contemporary vessels.

FIG. 9

1. Hard sandy ware. Light grey core. Light pink surface layers. Olive green glaze with orange blotches.
2. Hard light pink to light grey ware. Blotchy olive-brown glaze.
3. Hard grey ware, upper part with applied stripe decoration and dark olive-brown glaze.
- 4-8. Cooking-pot rims of hard sandy ware. Black to light grey.

FIG. 10

1. Complete pitcher of hard white sandy ware. Girth grooves on shoulder overlain by light brown applied strips; thin lemon-yellow glaze with chocolate specks. From Examination Schools. Early thirteenth century (Ashmolean Museum, 1891.6).
2. Rim and lower part of pitcher. Handle restored from another handle from Z. Fine sandy light buff ware; speckled green glaze. Late thirteenth century.
3. Lower part of baluster jug. Light grey ware; dark brown painted decoration and speckled olive green glaze. Late thirteenth century.

### THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURY POTTERY

(FIG. 11)

A few complete sections could be reconstructed from sherds found in pit Z.

<sup>5</sup> E. M. Jope: *Oxoniensia*, xxiii (1958), 72, fig. 21, nos. Z21, 22.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), 98, fig. 22 A-D; 100, fig. 23, B, C, F.

# THIRTEENTH CENTURY AND LATER POTTERY

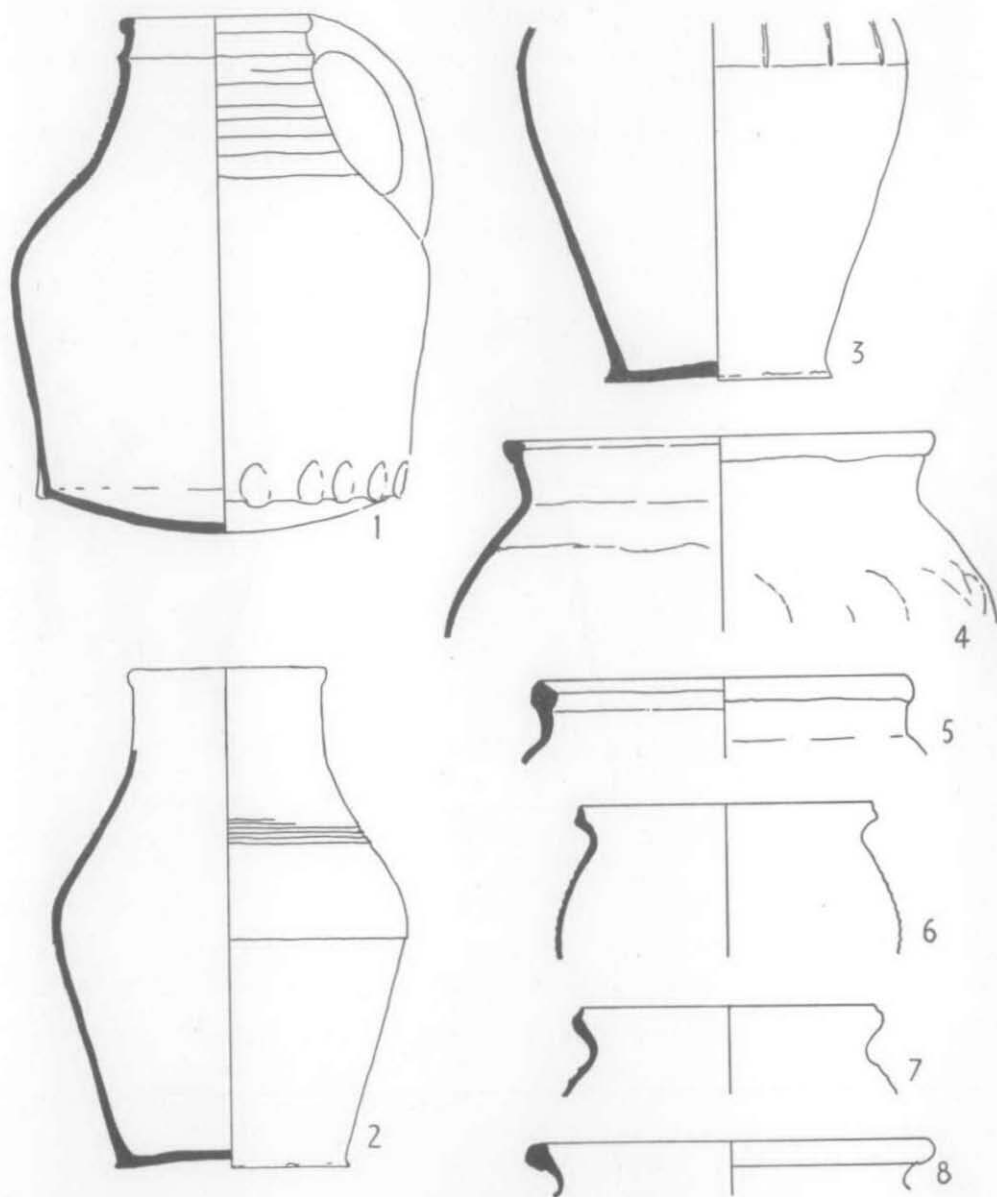


FIG. 9  
13th century pottery from the Clarendon Hotel, Z. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

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FIG. 11

1. Portions of storage vessel of fine hard shell-filled ware; dark grey core. Light brown surface layers. Thirteenth century.
2. Fine hard ware. Light brown core; dark grey surface layers; interior streaked with light red. Thirteenth-fourteenth century. Made at the Brill kilns?
3. Friable sandy light buff ware with small pebbles. Blotchy olive green glaze. Fourteenth century.

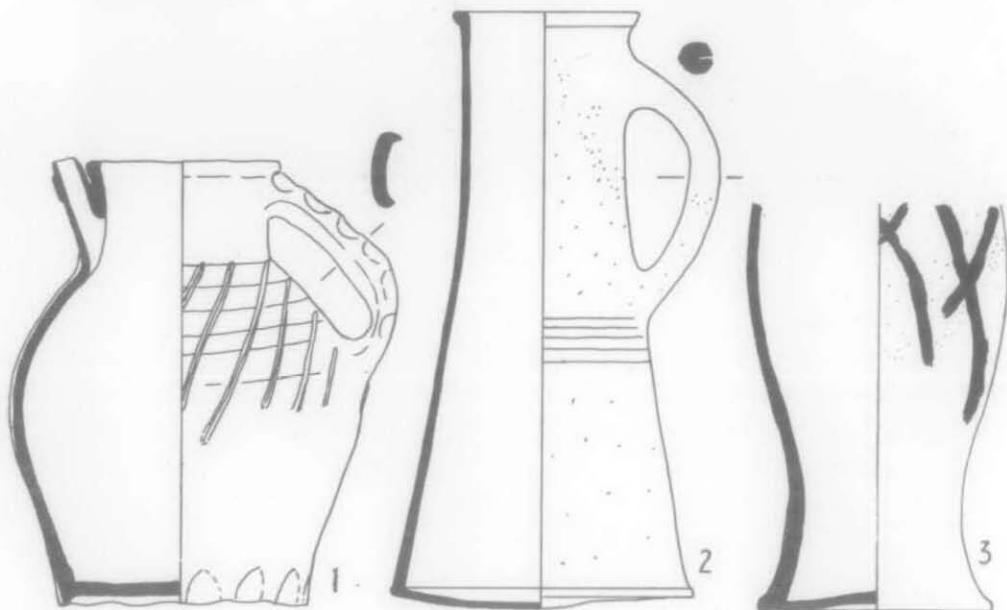


FIG. 10

13th century jars: (1) from the Examination Schools; (2) and (3) from the 13th century pit or well, Clarendon Hotel, Z. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

## FINE BUFF POTTERY OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

(FIGS. 12-14, 15, NOS. 1-2)

The hard fine wares of the fifteenth century (dated indirectly by documentary evidence, through their presence or absence in ancient layers in college quadrangles) were found at the Clarendon Hotel in Z and in other modern pits in quantity for the first time in Oxford.

No kilns of this date have yet been found at Brill,<sup>7</sup> but closely comparable fabric is known from the kilns at Potterspury, Northants., 1948<sup>8</sup> and Cheam,

<sup>7</sup> *Oxoniensia*, vii (1942), 74-5; *Records of Bucks*, xvi (1953-4), pt. 1, 39-42.

<sup>8</sup> *Oxoniensia*, xiv (1949), 78-9; *Arch. News Letter* II (1950), 156-7.

# THIRTEENTH CENTURY AND LATER POTTERY

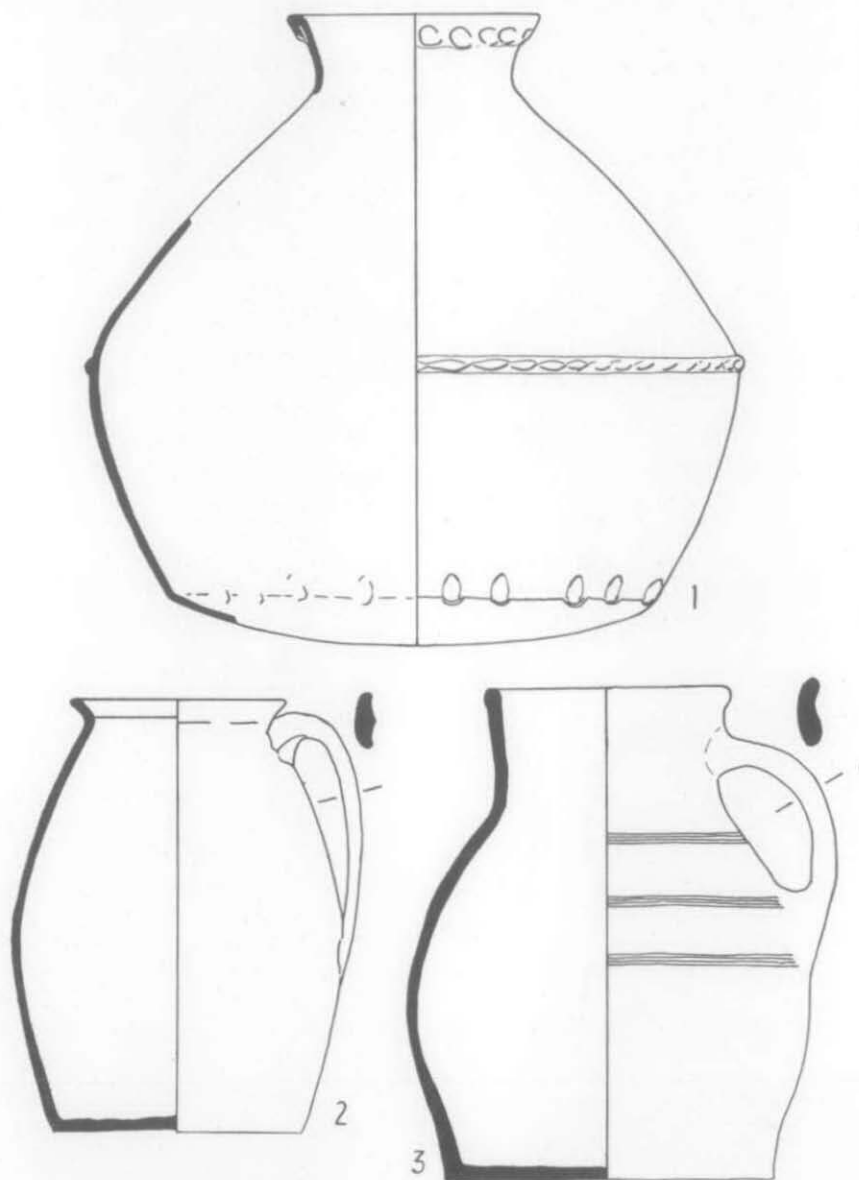


FIG. 11  
13th and 14th century vessels from the Clarendon Hotel, Z. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

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Surrey,<sup>9</sup> while some comparison, especially (FIG. 14, no. 11), can be made with pottery from a kiln at Exeter.<sup>10</sup>

Examples are illustrated from the Clarendon Hotel and with them finds from Alfred Street, Christ Church and Magdalen College and Magdalen College School, Oxford, from Holton and Wheatley, Oxon., and from East-leach, Glos. Other late medieval examples from the district came from: All Souls College, 1941,<sup>11</sup> Aston's Eyot (Y.M.C.A. Sports Ground),<sup>11</sup> Bodleian Quadrangle, 1941,<sup>11</sup> Brasenose College,<sup>12</sup> Broad Street,<sup>12</sup> Carfax, 1931,<sup>11</sup> Church Street, St. Ebbe's, 1938,<sup>11</sup> Cornmarket,<sup>12</sup> Lincoln Hall, Turl Street, 1939,<sup>12, 13</sup> Magdalen College School, 1957,<sup>14</sup> Oriel College, 1941,<sup>11</sup> Pembroke College, 1941,<sup>11</sup> Radcliffe Square, 1912,<sup>12, 13</sup> St. John's College, 1947,<sup>12, 13</sup> Thames Street,<sup>12</sup> Oxford, Longworth, Berks,<sup>15</sup> Marston<sup>13</sup> and Minster Lovell, Oxon.,<sup>16</sup> and Seacourt, Berks.<sup>11</sup>



FIG. 12

15th century pottery: (1) from Magdalen College, 1912; (2), (3) and (9) from the Clarendon Hotel; (4) and (5) from Wheatley; (6) from Alfred Street, 1914; (7) and (8) from Christ Church, 1954-5; (10) and (11) from Holton. Scale:  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

<sup>9</sup> *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, xxxv (1924), 79-98.

<sup>10</sup> *Antiq. Journ.*, xxxvii (1957), 43-54.

<sup>11</sup> E. M. Jope, *Oxoniensia*, vii (1942), 76-9.

<sup>12</sup> E. M. Jope, *Oxoniensia*, xv (1950), 60-2.

<sup>13</sup> E. M. Jope, *Oxoniensia*, xiv (1949), 78-9.

<sup>14</sup> *Oxoniensia*, xxiii (1957), 136-7.

<sup>15</sup> E. M. Jope, *Berks. Arch. Journ.*, I (1947), 66, fig. 9, 10.

<sup>16</sup> I saw some in the caretaker's shed at Minster Lovell Manor.

## THIRTEENTH CENTURY AND LATER POTTERY

FIG. 12

1. Hard buff ware with specks of green glaze. Magdalen College (Ashmolean Museum, 1911.475).
2. Fine hard ware; core light brown; surfaces dark brown; exterior streaked with light red. Clarendon Hotel, A.5.
3. Hard ware. Core orange; surfaces dark brown. Interior of pot flaking. Clarendon Hotel, Z.
4. Coarse buff ware. Light orange glaze on exterior, speckled with green. Wheatley.<sup>17</sup>
5. Coarse light buff ware with dark buff surfaces. Handle deeply slashed. Wheatley.<sup>17</sup>
6. Hard buff ware. Bib of crackled orange glaze with green and brown specks on side opposite handle. St. Columba's Presbyterian Church. Alfred Street, Oxford. Found '14 ft. down 25 ft. west of Alfred Street' (under East Wall). (Ashmolean Museum: 1914.630.)
7. Hard buff ware, sparse orange glaze. Christ Church 1954-5.<sup>18</sup> Found in ground made-up in the seventeenth century.
8. Fine white ware with olive green glaze on exterior. As no. 7.<sup>18</sup>
9. Hard buff ware. Clarendon Hotel, Z.
10. Fine hard light buff ware. Holton.<sup>19</sup>
11. Fine slightly gritty ware; buff surface layers; off-white core and surfaces. Speckled green glaze on exterior. Holton.<sup>19</sup>

## FIFTEENTH CENTURY WARES FROM THE CLARENDON HOTEL

FIG. 13

- 1-10. Large Pans. Fine hard buff ware. Interior of lower half of 10 with thin light orange glaze.
11. Small pan, coarse hard sandy ware with grey core and dark red surface layers. Irregular orange brown glaze (possibly sixteenth century).
12. Small pan, hard buff ware with dark red surfaces.
13. Small pan, hard dark red ware.
14. Small bowl, hard buff ware with specks of orange glaze.
15. Small jug, hard buff ware. From Rectory Garden, Eastleach, Glos. (Ashmolean Museum: 1935.36).

FIG. 14

- 1-12. Jars of hard fine ware.
1. Brick-red to orange throughout.
2. Dark grey core with thin light red inner surface layer and exterior streaked with light red.
3. Light grey core and buff to orange surface layers: speckled olive green glaze bib above bung hole.
4. Buff with dark red exterior surface, red brown glaze above bung hole.

<sup>17</sup> In the collection of Dr. W. O. Hassall, from the Manor House garden.

<sup>18</sup> *Oxoniensia*, xx (1955), 91.

<sup>19</sup> In the collection of Mr. E. V. Roberts, from the deserted medieval village (see below, p. 100).



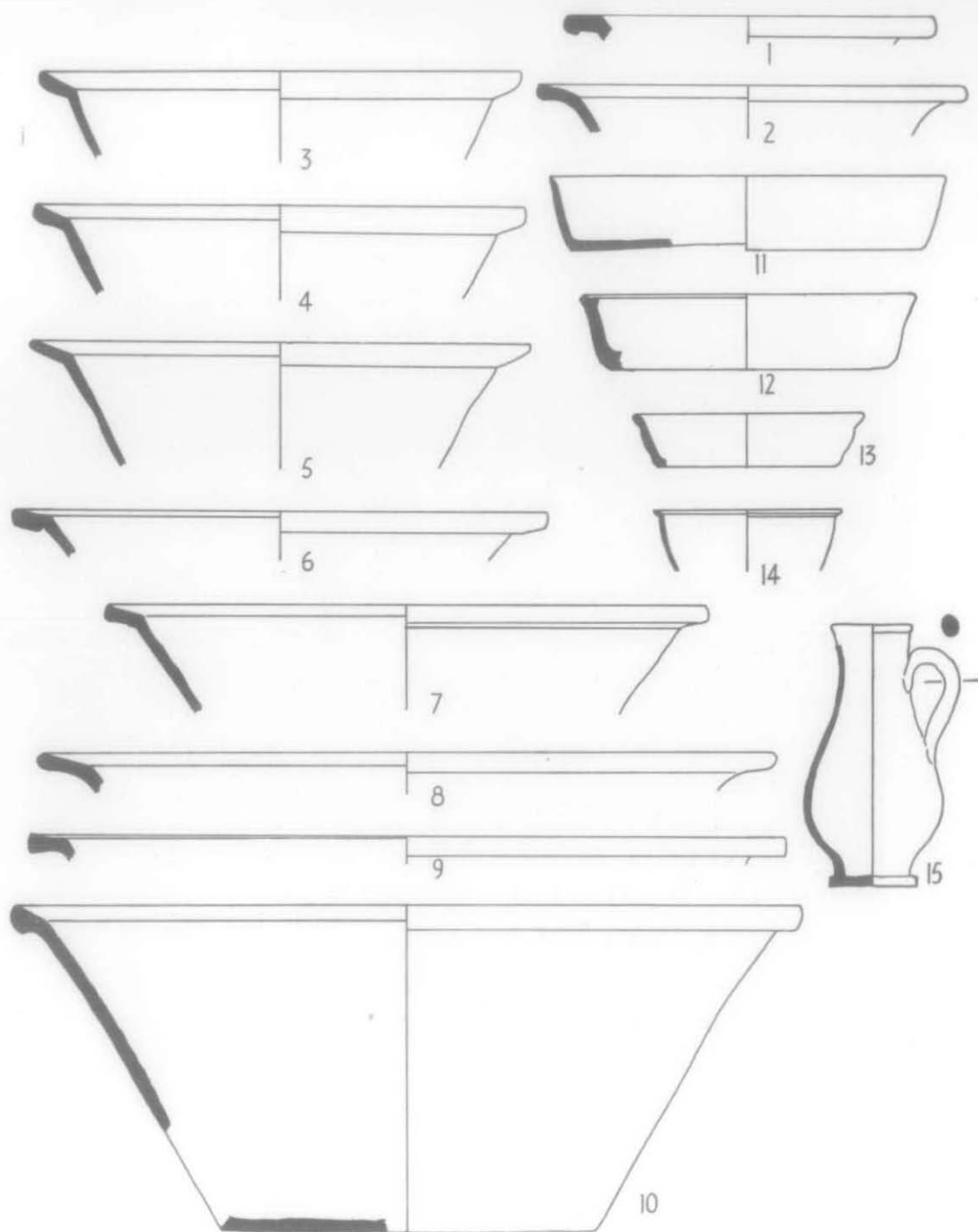


FIG. 13  
 (1) to (14) 15th century pans and bowl from the Clarendon Hotel; (15) Jug from Eastleach, Glos.  
 Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

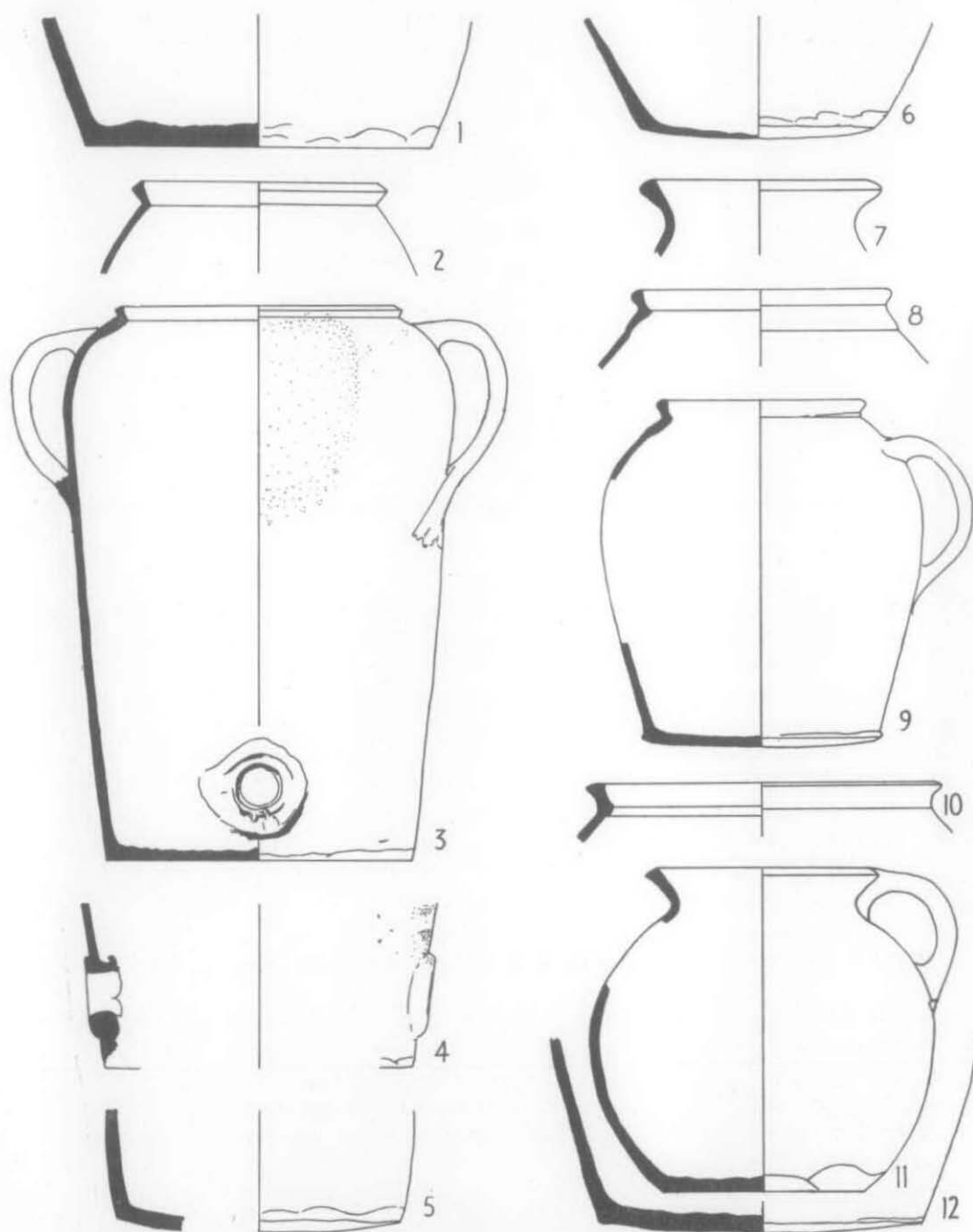


FIG. 14  
15th century jars from the Clarendon Hotel. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

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5. Buff throughout: slight knife trimming.
6. Buff throughout, specks of orange glaze on slightly convex base.
7. Buff throughout.
8. Core and interior surface layers grey with red-brown interior surface; thick light red exterior surface layers with dark grey exterior surface speckled with light red.
9. Light red-brown ware with grey core in rim and base. Dark reddish-grey surfaces.
10. Buff throughout; flaking badly.
11. Hard light red brickish ware: knife trimming on base.
12. Light pink ware. Light buff core in base.

FIG. 15

1. Off-white ware with buff surfaces.
2. Core and outer surface buff; exterior and interior surface layers light buff.

## RHENISH STONEWARE AND OTHER ELIZABETHAN POTTERY

(FIG. 15, NOS. 3-11; FIG. 16)

Among the material in the Ashmolean collections are two mugs of stoneware, probably of the fifteenth century and perhaps earlier, from King Edward Street, 1873. Fragmentary examples came from the Bodleian Quadrangle in 1941, and from the Clarendon Hotel: none however, were in the All Souls group of pottery of earlier than 1495,<sup>20</sup> although they could be expected at this date. These mugs mark the early stages of a trade in fine drinking vessels from Germany which lasted until the end of the seventeenth century when the Fulham factory started production. Further examples are also given of plain mugs of the early sixteenth century from the City Ditch and of the late sixteenth century from the Clarendon site, and from the Bodleian Quadrangle, and of a decorated Greybeard of c. 1590-1600 also from the Bodleian Quadrangle.

The two mugs from the Bodleian Quadrangle were found in 1941 with fragments, probably of 20 more of plain late sixteenth century type and a large quantity of other medieval and later sherds. The quadrangle of the Bodleian Library was built in 1613-24.<sup>21</sup>

Most of this material with its high proportion of late sixteenth century stoneware, was probably deposited shortly before the building of the Quadrangle. Besides the Rhenish wares and a tin-glazed drug-pot, the group contained 3 jars, a bowl and a large rectangular dish and several fragments of other large vessels of hard red ware developed from the hard red and buff wares of the fifteenth century.

<sup>20</sup> *Oxoniensia* VII (1942), 76-9.

<sup>21</sup> I. G. Philip, *Oxoniensia*, XIII (1948), 39-48.

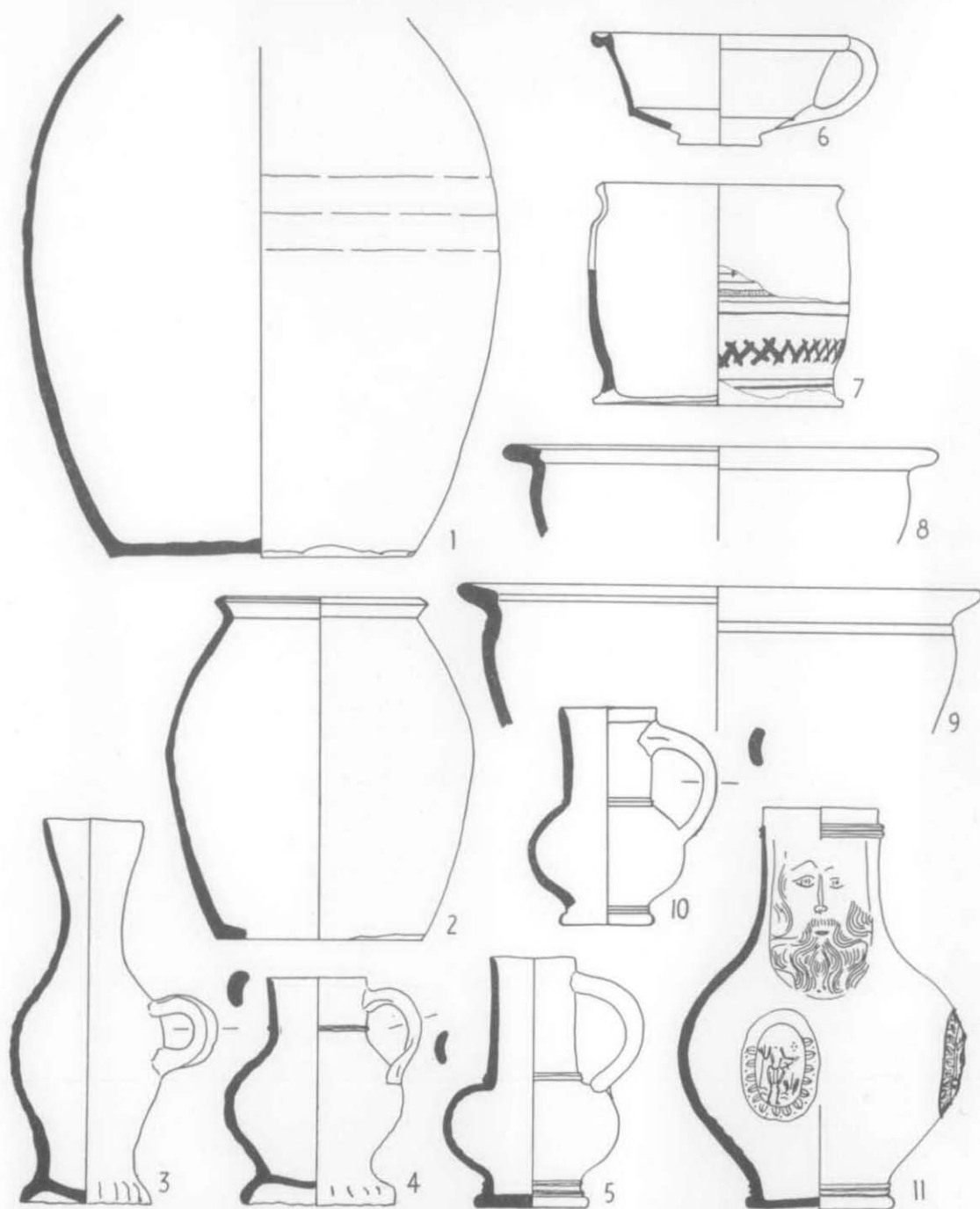


FIG. 15

(1) and (2) 15th century jars from the Clarendon Hotel; (3) 15th century stoneware mug of a form found on various sites in Oxford; (4) early 16th century stoneware mug from City Ditch, 1912; (5) late 16th century stoneware mug from the Clarendon Hotel; (6) to (11) late 16th century pottery from the Bodleian Quadrangle, 1941. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

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### RHENISH STONEWARE

(FIG. 15, nos. 3-5; 10, 11)

3. Four almost identical drinking mugs of Rhenish stoneware of the fifteenth century. The profile drawn is that of (a) the high neck restored from (c).

(a) from the Clarendon Hotel, Z; hard stoneware, core grey, surface light grey to brown; neck missing.

(b) from the Bodleian Quadrangle 1941; as (a).

(c) from King Edward Street, 1873;<sup>22</sup> hard stoneware, core grey, surface brown (Ashmolean Museum: 1873.238).

(d) as (c), surface white (Ashmolean Museum: 1873.239).

4. From City Ditch, probably George Street, Oxford, 1912; hard stoneware, core grey, external surface light grey, in places brown, internal light brown (Ashmolean Museum: 1912.1128). Early sixteenth century.

5. From the Clarendon site, Z; hard stoneware, core grey, external surface dark brown speckled with light brown, internal surface light brown. Late sixteenth century.

### BODLEIAN QUADRANGLE, 1941

(A late sixteenth century group, FIGS. 15, 6-11, and 16, 1-7)

6. Fine hard white ware, cracked glaze, on rim and exterior green with chocolate specks, on interior yellow to light buff with green, chocolate and blue specks (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.1182).

7. Three body sherds of a drug-pot, possibly an import from the Netherlands or made in London after 1571 at Aldgate. Fine white ware with thick white tin-glaze ornamented with blue and the central band of the design in purple. Although only the lower portion survives, the upper part of the design appears to have been a repeat of the lower, a simpler pattern than on most Oxford drug-pots, with a common upper and lower motif enlarged to cover the whole pot. The base, rim and shoulders are restored from a drug-pot of similar size (Ashmolean Museum: M.33) from Parks Road, Oxford. (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.1185).

8. Hard brickish ware, narrow core grey, thick surface layers light red; exterior surface dark red, rim and interior surface dark reddish-brown with olive glaze (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.1191).

9. Hard brickish ware, light red throughout, interior surface and rim with blistered orange glaze (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.119).

10. Stoneware, core grey, external surface brown and dark brown speckled with grey, internal surface light grey, in places dark brown speckled with ochre. Base restored from other examples. Late sixteenth century (Ashmolean Museum: 1959.165).

11. Stoneware, core grey, external surface grey and light brown speckled with grey, internal surface pink to light red ornamented with a face mask and 4 figure-medallions. Cf. Holmes type II<sup>23</sup> c. 1590-1600. (Ashmolean Museum: 1959.166).

<sup>22</sup> Laid out and commenced in 1871. C. L. Shadwell and H. E. Salter, *Oriel College Records* (1926), 178.

<sup>23</sup> *Antiq. Journ.*, xxxi (1951), 174-5.

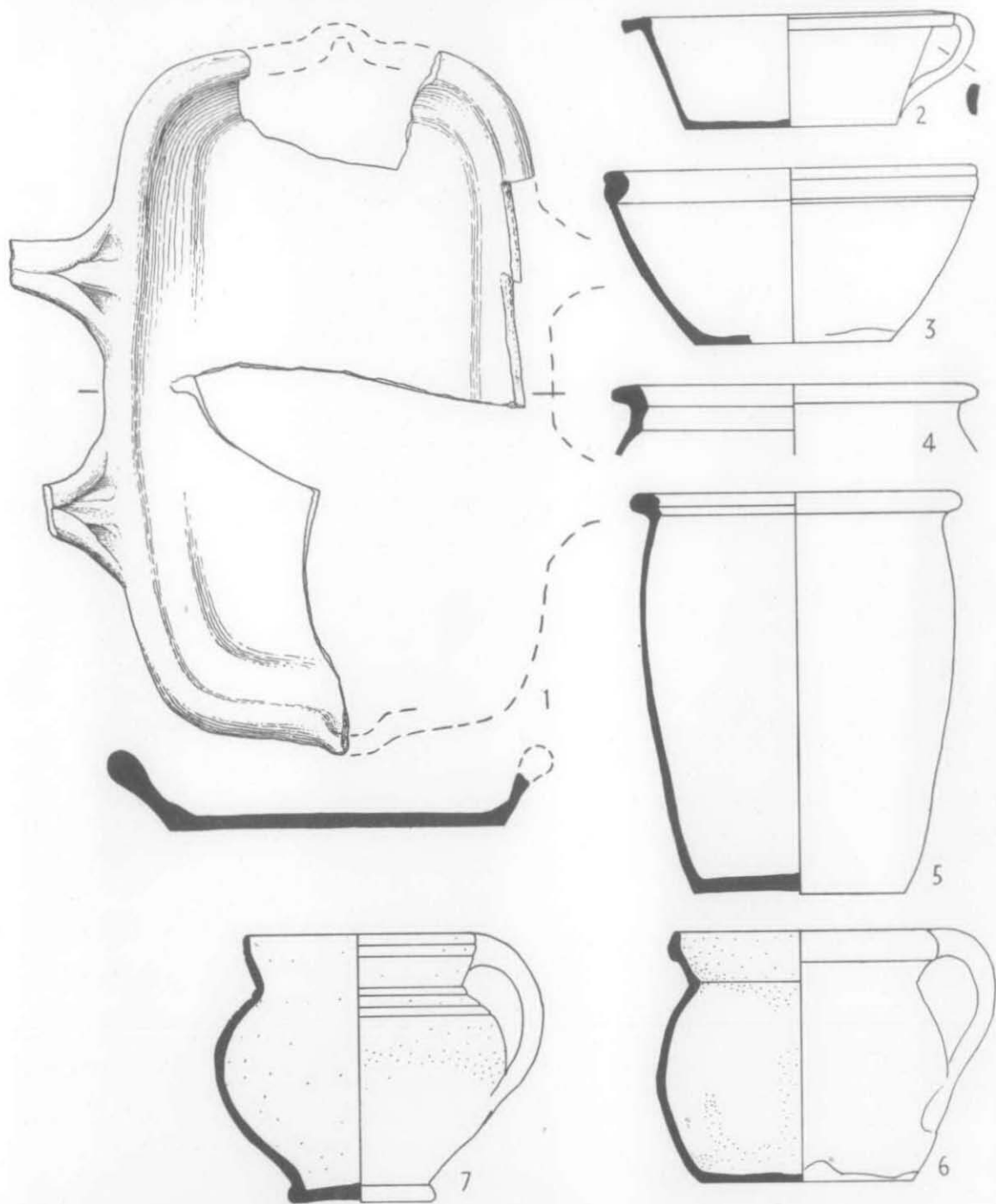


FIG. 16  
Late 16th century pottery from the Bodleian Quadrangle, 1941. Scale:  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

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FIG. 16

1. Dish for joints, etc.; fine hard smooth ware, light grey core, light red surface layers, rim and upper surface with speckled olive-green and orange glaze (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.1181).
2. Fine white ware, rim and interior with fine yellow glaze speckled with dark brown with a few green specks (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.118).
3. Hard brickish light red ware with grey core at base and rim, interior with dark olive-green glaze (Ashmolean Museum: 1959.164).
4. Hard brickish light red ware, interior with dark olive-brown glaze which also spread onto the rim but has perished (Ashmolean Museum: 1941.1191).
5. Hard grey ware with light red and grey speckled with light red, exterior surface layers and surface, slightly pitted; interior with dark olive-green, slightly crackled, glaze with chocolate specks: the glaze spreads onto the rim but has been partly torn off when the pots were separated after firing. The base is also partly glazed and in turn retains some of the glaze of the rim of a similar vessel (Ashmolean Museum: 1959.161).
6. Hard grey ware with dark red surfaces, the interior with irregular dark olive-green glaze; knife-trimmed base (Ashmolean Museum: 1959.162).
7. Hard light red brickish ware with dark red surfaces, the upper part of the exterior and the interior with orange to olive-brown glaze with dark brown specks (Ashmolean Museum: 1959.163).