

Romans and the North: The Wine Trade

Elizabeth Lyding Will

Amherst College

Interactions between the Romans and distant markets in all directions, from northern Europe to India, were profoundly stimulated by Rome's victories over Carthage in the third and second centuries B.S. Finds of Roman wine amphoras in Germany and Switzerland, to consider just those two areas of temperate Europe, go back at least to the early second century B.C. Taken with the parallel finds from the lower Grand Congloue wine freighter, sunk off Marseilles about 200 B.C., and with the material from other Roman shipwrecks in the western Mediterranean, the finds of early Roman amphoras from, for example, the great Celtic *oppidum* of Manching, north of Munich, reflect the energetic expansion of trade by sea and river between Italy and the peoples of the North as soon as Carthage had been temporarily removed as a trading competitor in the West at the end of the Second Punic War in 201 B.C. The Transalpine peoples became an insatiable market for Italian wine, and finds of later amphoras at Manching belong to the same type as the jars in the huge cargo of the upper Grand Congloue ship, wrecked in about 100 B.D. on its way from Cosa to Marseilles. Still later amphoras at Manching were of the same type as part of the cargo of Italian wine jars from the Spargi wreck, which met its fate off Sardinia in the 80s or 70s B.C. IN the last part of the first century B.C., amphora finds at such Augustan camps as Oberaden, Haltern, and Hofheim show that the taste for Italian wines persisted in the North into the first century A.C. After that time, Italian vintages gradually gave place there to wines of the Roman provinces. Wine is a fragile and ephemeral commodity, but fragments of many of the Roman shipping amphoras and some of the wrecked Roman ships in which that wine was carried survive as testimony to its exportation to the North and to the interaction between temperate Europe and the Mediterranean world represented by that exportation.

*This is an abstract from a paper presented by E.L. Will at the 92nd AIA annual conference. It is made available on the E.L. Will memorial website with the permission of the American Journal of Archaeology. This abstract is published in the American Journal of Archaeology, full citation below.

Will, E.L. 1991. Abstract of "Romans and the North: The Wine Trade." *American Journal of Archaeology* 95:309-310.