



Colchester Archaeological Group

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ANNUAL BULLETIN VOL. 1 1958

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PART 1 MARCH 1958

In presenting our first Bulletin we feel that some introduction and explanation is necessary. Colchester Archaeological Group was formed by members of a second year Workers' Educational Association course on Archaeology sponsored by the University of Cambridge. The first year course began in September 1955; the second followed a year later with some field work during the summer months. In the third year the course developed into a study and discussion group. Throughout Dr John Morris, M.A. has been our tutor, joined in our final year by Mr M.R. Hull, M.A., F.S.A., and during the summer of 1957 various members have carried out exploratory work on selected sites under the direction of Mr Hull.

Our aim is to produce a Bulletin of interest to local people and, possibly, to similar groups elsewhere. We hope by this means to increase interest in the subject and to encourage sufficient awareness in the district so that no sites of significance may go unexplored. We also hope to help and encourage people who think they have made a discovery worthy of investigation.

Our activities during our first summer of field work as a group have been varied and have served to show how wide are the prospects which lie before us when we have gained more experience and enlisted more members. We feel that the Colchester Archaeological Group consisting, as it does, chiefly of part-time amateur Archaeologists, can make a really useful contribution to local archaeological knowledge.

This Bulletin deals with our work during the last summer with notes and illustrations of our findings. We began the season by looking for traces of an early Roman camp or fort to the west of the town. On another occasion we made a series of recordings on a "Wheatstone Bridge" - (described below) and plotted the results. We followed this up with experiments using an auger in places where the graph showed unexpected variations. We then tested an area where a kiln was thought to be, situated just within the limits of the well known Camulodunum excavations. At the very end of the season we explored an opening in the Roman wall in Vineyard Street which gives every indication of being an original Roman drain, made when the wall was built.

We need keen and active amateurs to join us and any enquiries may be addressed to Mrs K. de Brisay, 89, Maldon Road, Colchester.

SEARCH FOR AN EARLY ROMAN FORT OR CAMP

We began our 1957 season on 29th April. We accompanied Mr Hull when he inspected various sites awaiting excavation where existing evidence suggested the lines of the ditches of a possible camp. It was agreed that a trial trench should be made across a vacant allotment to the west of the junction of Park Road and Norman Way (Grid No. TL 976247). The object was to establish whether the long narrow piece of ground in which the allotments lay occupied the site of the ditch of an early Roman camp or fort. A military ditch was found near this point in 1938 and this seemed a possible continuation of it. Work went on here for two or three weeks; the dark top soil was found to be only 9 inches deep, then there were 24 inches of dirty sand and gravel, and finally, at a uniform depth of 33 inches we found the flat top of the undisturbed gravel so we had to recognize the fact that there had never been a ditch here.

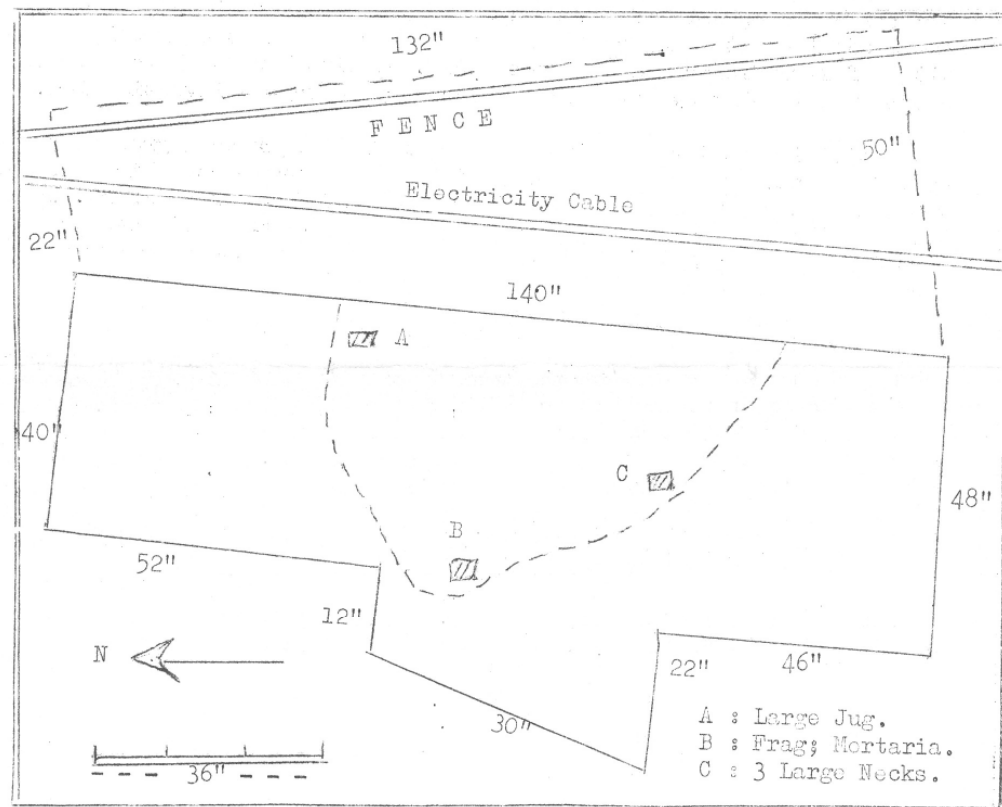
POSSIBLE KILN SITE

During the operations described above it was reported to Mr Hull that a quantity of pottery had been found by workmen laying an electricity cable at the new Technical College building in Sheepen Lane. The site lies to the north of the gap between the two new buildings, about forty yards from Sheepen Lane (Grid No. TL 987257). At the time it was traversed by a wire fence and this with the electricity cable, prevented access to most of it. The part which was accessible, however, lay immediately on the west side of the fence and seven yards from the

"Mare and Foal" statue.

This places it in the area D of the Camulodunum excavations but in the east part approaching an area which had not been excavated. In the small area available for excavation a quantity of broken pottery was found, details of which are given below. The density of this increased until 34" depth was reached and gradually petered out below this level. The pattern of this tightly packed patch of broken pottery is indicated by the dotted line on the plan given below, but it was impossible to deduce with any accuracy what the site may have been. However, the absence of any definite indication of a building and the presence of undoubted 'wasters' seem to show that it was a kiln site.

PLAN OF NEW TECHNICAL COLLEGE SITE. JUNE 1957



DESCRIPTION OF THE POTTERY

PLATE ONE

la. The most remarkable sherd found comes from the shoulder of a globular flagon or jug of soft red buff ware with a barbotine representation of a stag upon it. Barbotine has been recorded in the Claudian period. Several examples are known on the Continent - e.g. at Hoffheim (p.253 Fig. 54) It was also recorded at Newstead (p 255.) . The Hoffheim example is almost exactly similar to the bowl Camulodunum 62 and the beaker Camulodunum 94, We are not aware that any Barbotine decoration has been found on flagons at this early period. The style of this work is quite different from that well-known at Caister and other patterns of the late 2nd Century.

lb. Two fragments of flagon neck in soft pink buff ware. Not to be found in Camulodunum, the nearest approach being 136.a and b, the neck being shorter and the handle having four ribs instead of three. It does, however, resemble very closely a vessel found in Grave 840 at St Matthias Cemetery at Trier; this cemetery is in Tiberia - Claudian. The illustration used for the body does not fit on and may or may not belong to the neck. Certainly it is not of the usual type for it has no foot ring and all the others have. The base rises strongly beneath and is

cracked in the middle - an undoubted waster.

2. Flagon necks in soft pink buff ware, very similar to lb, and closely resembles Cam: 140c and 142. P1, LXI(11) fig.51,
3. Flagon neck and handle, soft grey buff ware, like Form 140b(5) Cam: P1 . LXL with usual four ribbed handle.
4. Flagon neck in soft grey buff ware, see Form 140r. Cam: Pl. LXI (6 & 7).
5. Flagon neck and shoulders with three ribbed handle in pinkish buff ware, approaching: Cam: 140b. This already beginning to have a definite cupping on the halve of the rim but this characteristic is more marked in a later example.
6. Flagon neck in pink buff ware. The rim is centrally grooved and strongly offset at the neck. This groove, which did not appear at Camulodunum, did appear quite commonly at the Endsleigh second kiln in 1955. There is a cordon round the base and the handle has four ribs. For a similar type see Richborough Third Report No 187 but here the handle is grooved only.
7. Flagon neck in soft grey buff ware. This begins a series of necks with a pronounced hollow inside the rim - cf. Cam: 140D which, however, is only illustrated by the native copy in Pl. LXI No 2. There are two other fragments of rim like this. The cupping of the rim is very deep and it is very sharply offset. Although very different in this way from the next two items, relationship to them is well illustrated by the two grooves on the neck which occurs in all three. Four ribbed handle.
8. Flagon neck in pinkish buff ware. The rim is flat with shallow cupping inside. Three ribbed handle.
9. Flagon neck similar to No 8 but larger with four ribbed handle. There are five other fragments similar to Nos 8 and 9.
10. Flagon neck in buff ware with four ribbed handle. The neck has a flat upward curve and is slightly conical. The mouthpiece is straight and gently everted with five rings - the lowest ring being sharply offset. Cf. Cam: Form 154 Pl.LXII. Fragments of three other ring mouthed flagons of this largo size were disc found.
11. Similar to No.10 but smaller, with three ribbed handle.

PLATE ONE

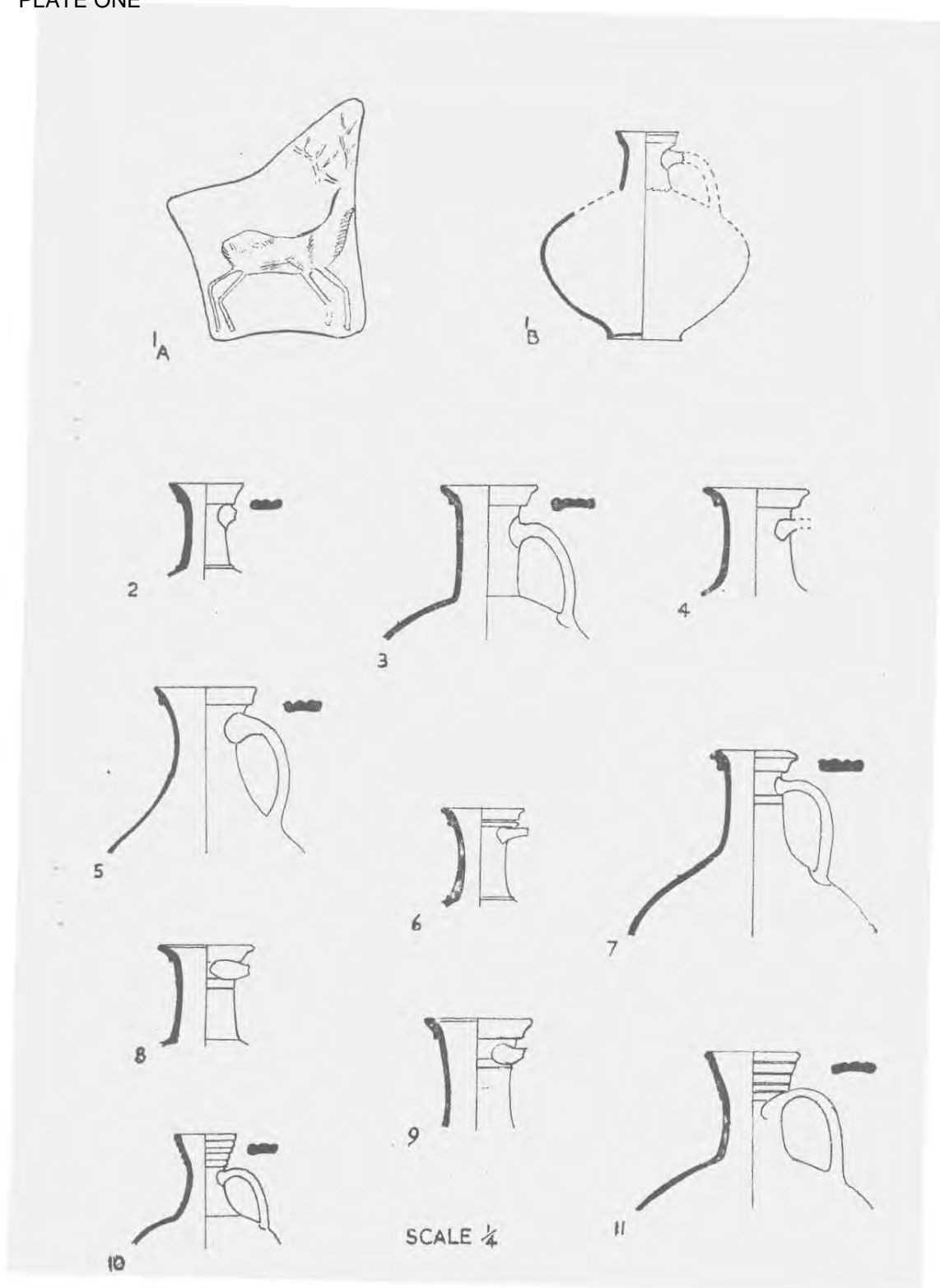


PLATE TWO

The next three necks belong to double handled jugs; very conical in shape and strongly horizontally corrugated. The rim, on the outside, takes the form of Cam: 140, and on the inside, is hollowed out like our Nos. 7 and 9. No. 12 in addition, is strongly grooved on the outside. The handles may be four or three ribbed. Two are reddish buff and the third, the more normal, light buff.

12. Small part of a heavy jug neck in red buff ware with pair of very broad four ribbed handles. The rim compares with our N. 6.

13. Jug neck in red buff ware, very similar to the last but the handle is only three ribbed. Handle restored.

14. Again similar to the last but in light buff ware. The handle is three ribbed. Nothing quite like those three jugs appeared at Camulodunum but they must be related to Cam: Form 163.

15. Fragments of neck of two handled jug in grey buff ware. A heavy variety of Cam: Form 170. Number of ribs in handle uncertain.

Apart from the pieces of jugs which could be illustrated, there was a large number of fragments among which we note examples of large sized handles, two inches or more wide with four ribs which must have come from necks at least six inches tall. These are probably Cam: Form 140. There are in all thirty two examples of this type. The fourteen small handles are mostly four ribbed but often three ribbed and one cannot say to what form they belong.

The bases all have foot rings, twenty eight of which may be attributed to Form 154, having a tall or low foot ring which may be of a sharply squared all-rounded section with a very broad groove or fluting - full 1/2" wide inside.

The other bases differ in being almost perfectly flat within the foot ring but sometimes with a kick in the centre. These may be attributed to Cam: Form 140.

BEAKERS.

A few fragments represent the local copies of Cam: Form 94 poorly made and in very soft buff ware but dusted over the outside with grit as in the original. In no case could the original red coating be discerned.

16. The largest rim fragment of this type found.

BOWLS

Only two or three very small fragments were found; in a very soft and thin buff ware. Our fig. 17, shows the rim of one and the base of another. The Form is Cam: 62 and, again, there is no trace of the red coating which they should have.

MORTARIA.

Most of the few represented have a sloping flange and an inner lip which rises above it. In our fig. 18 this inner lip projects strongly inwards - compare Cam: Form 192, fig. 53/22, and Form 193b. Eight similar rims were found and, in all, the clay varies from reddish to pinkish buff, the large flange drooping and undercut. In the one base found the workmanship is rough, very thick and the grit, which is mixed black and white, appears to be of flint. Of the two spouts found, one is solid and square with an even width and square end. The other is smaller and tapers slightly. The main point of interest is that all these examples have a pronounced inner protruding rim, some more than others, and this feature does not appear in any mortarium from Camulodunum. They all seem, however, to fall into the same period, that is, the first half of the first Century.

Also Cf. Richborough CXV fig. 495.

19. Several fragments of a mortarium. This is quite unusual with a small round everted rim and the inner rim scarcely marked off at all. The material is buff ware with large mixed black and white grit. Again, nothing quite like this was found at Camulodunum; perhaps the nearest is pl. LXXII 193Aa

There remains to mention a mortarium spout in buff ware with a thick rather horizontal rim like Cam: Form 192a and a very square spout such as those shown on pl. LXXII Forms 192 & 193. Grit black and white mixed.

GREY WARE This was very scarce and only two fragments could be illustrated.

20. Two fragments of grey blackware with horizontal rim. Compare Cam: Form 244. The body seems to have been very much more rounded than usual locally and, indeed, Cam: 244 was never common and was nearly always red ware. It is Claudian date

21. Finally we have part of a small lid with grey core, reddish rind and grey surface. A common known type. Compare Cam: pl LXXXV 6 & 8.

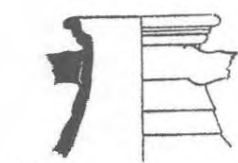
The dating of this kiln has to be done from this pottery, no small objects having been found. The pottery can mostly be paralleled in the pages of Camulodunum and those which cannot be paralleled on any later British site. It is therefore either of the same Claudius - Nero date or possibly a little later, we have no evidence to judge by how much, if this is so. The following fragments which were also found, certainly emphasize the Claudius - Nero date.

(a) A small fragment of the rim of a flagon Form Dragendorf 15/17. Very much worn.

(b) A small rim fragment of a beaker in terra rubra 3- such as Cam: Form 76a or 78.

This last was certainly Claudian. It is only fair to add that the site lies in an area heavily occupied in the Claudian period so that these two sherds could be accidental but, as we have said, the earth all round the deposit was remarkably clear and the position is not far removed from the site of the kiln found in 1938 and described in Camulodunum pages 105 and 106, which seems certainly to have been destroyed in the year 61 A.D. This kiln was making much the same material as ours.

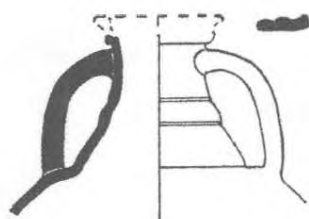
PLATE TWO



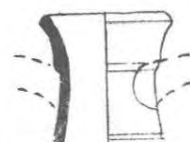
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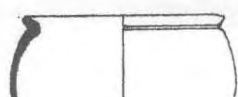
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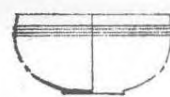
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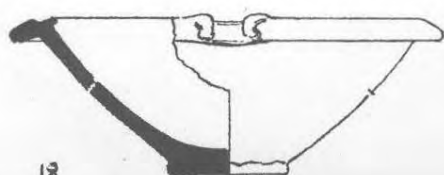
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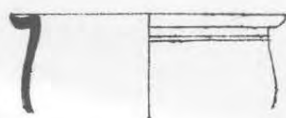
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18



19



20



21

SCALE $\frac{1}{4}$

SUPPOSED DRAIN IN VINEYARD STREET

The demolition of some houses in Vineyard Street and the subsequent removal in the late summer of 1957, of the outbuildings belonging to them, cleared part of the outer southern side of the Roman wall where it runs parallel to Vineyard Street. Immediately to the rear of No. 19 Vineyard Street an arched opening about two feet square was revealed. This discovery was reported to Mr Hull and, at his request, some of our members began an investigation.

It became obvious that the arch was the opening of a small tunnel which appeared to be practically full of rubble and rubbish and we began to clear this as quickly as possible. We soon realised that the existing face was not original and, indeed, it is well known that this stretch of wall was extensively repaired in the time of Richard II. At this point the wall is about twenty feet high and is surmounted by the buildings standing on the south side of Eld Lane. The floor of the tunnel is three to four feet above the present ground level and the height is just over two feet. It will be appreciated that we cleared it out with a certain amount of care because of the considerable amount of unknown material which lay over our heads with a two storey, house and shop on top.

The content of the filling was varied but presented no true picture as to date, being completely unstratified. It was very apparent that the cavity had been used as a refuse tip for many years. We found so many skeletons of what appeared to be cats that we wondered if their deaths had been natural. Of the objects found, it is only necessary to mention the rim of a jar in Roman greyware and a fragment of the neck of a cordoned vessel with scored decoration in black Roman ware, both apparently 1st Century. There was an assortment of sherds of Victorian domestic pottery; various pieces of glass and a chemist's drug pot in white glazed earthenware (height 2.5", diameter at top 3.25" and at base 2"). Among the many pieces of metal was a conical beer muller, over 12" in height with a handle and a spout. One item for which there appeared to be no explanation was a small rectangular shaped piece of oolitic limestone, the size of a cake of soap. Several land snails' shells (*Helix aspersa*) were also found.

We cleared the tunnel as far as the roof vaulting remained unbroken, a distance of just over ten feet. Matches burned freely at this point, indicating a draught, the source of which we could not discover. The walls were made of level courses of flat bricks - 11.5" X 17" X 175", which merged into the vaulting of the roof. The floor was of flat smooth stones. Beyond ten feet the roof had collapsed but, as far as we could discover, the walls and floor went on for at least another 10" without any apparent end. There were traces of the Roman arch inside the existing opening. Taking into account the position, the materials used and the construction, together with the absence of silt, it is probable that only surface water ran through this tunnel and that it was a drain built at the same time as the original wall. Indeed there are other similar examples known. The coping of one can still be seen immediately south of East Gate and William Wyre (d.1857) records in his diary that one was found a short distance east of Scheregate. All three appear to have been very similar and it therefore seems quite possible that other drains may yet be found. So far as we know, no other examples exist of small drains built through a wall of this type.

DETECTING SITES OF DITCHES ETC. WITH A 'WHEATSTONE BRIDGE'.

The instrument we used was designed by Mr Gardner of Coggeshall and kindly loaned by him to the Group for experimental purposes.

The principle concerned is that the electrical resistance of a given length of disturbed ground, such as the site of ditch, is normally less than that of undisturbed ground; due to the respective moisture content. This resistance can be measured by a Wheatstone Bridge. We experimented on sites of various kinds using a distance of six feet between measuring points. The first was alongside the new Girls' High School in Norman Way, where the Clerk of the Works had noticed traces of old ditches. We tried to plot the line of these ditches but the presence of public utility trenches caused the readings to be unintelligible. We then marked

out a six foot grid in the field to the south of the school. It seemed possible that the ditches may have run on this line but our readings were too erratic to be useful. This may have been due to the presence of the roots of some large trees but it is only fair to add that both these experiments took place during a period of marked drought. Our third attempt was in a field to the west of the school. We knew that an archaeological trench had been dug here the previous year and subsequently filled in. The field had recently been ploughed presenting a uniform surface and we were delighted to find the ditch showing itself in a series of low readings. At a later date readings were taken at the site of the old rampart at Berechurch. On the first occasion it was just after rain and the ditches showed up clearly; later after drought, there was little variation.

It is clear that the Wheatstone Bridge provides a form of indication of differences in the subsoil. Ditches and buried masonry can be detected but a marked variation in readings is more readily obtainable after wet weather.

PART 2 JUNE 1958

In introducing the second issue of our Bulletin, we wish to thank all those who have given us their support and encouragement. We are grateful for the suggestions we have received and one which we readily agreed to accept was that the bulletin should be issued in Quarto size, making it easier to file.

Colchester Archaeological Group now numbers 13 individual members and we hope more will join us - the subscription is 5/- a year which includes the Bulletin. We need people to help with drawing and research and especially active enthusiasts who will come down into the trench with us and dig. The Bulletin consists mainly of contributions from Group members and includes an account by Mr. Erith of Ardleigh, of his finds in a Bronze Age Urn-Field on his farm; a dig by Mr. Calver on Mrs. Reid's field; also articles by Mr. Edwards and Mr. Gant.

At the present time we are investigating a roman road the line of which runs from King Coel's Kitchen in a north-westerly direction. There was some difficulty in finding this in a place where it was possible to put down a trench but our latest one is showing favourable developments. We hope to publish details in our next Bulletin.

In July we hope to excavate the site of what is thought to be a Bronze Age barrow near Dedham but we have to arrange our dig to fit in with the crops.

SUMMER SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE - H.J. Edwards

Have you ever tried an Archaeological holiday? No? Well, you might do worse.

Last year I applied and was accepted for the Archaeological Course at the W.E.A. Summer School at Cambridge in the last fortnight of July. We lived in King's College and that in itself was an experience for those of us who had only a tourist view of Cambridge before. The School provided courses in a number of different subjects and we Archaeologists were looked upon by the other students as slightly eccentric, not only for what we did but for the time we spent doing it; for make no mistake, we really did work. Our normal day was from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., on the site; lunch; digging again from 2 p.m. to 6.30p.m.; dinner; and then we finished with a talk or perhaps pottery sorting, for an hour.

Of course we did occasionally relax the bow. There was the Vice-Chancellor's Garden Party one afternoon and, at the other end of the scale, our punting, outings and picnics on the banks of the Cam. One afternoon we combined business with pleasure with a trip to Grimes Graves at Brandon. For those socially inclined there were dances and socials arranged and some students burned the candle at both ends by attending these functions and getting up for a swim before breakfast.

Our class consisted of about a dozen - it varied a little in the two weeks - and the tutor was Mr. John Alexander M.A. Home addresses varied from Yorkshire to Wales and occupations

also varied, though School Teachers predominated.

Our excavations were carried out in Shelly Row, a road near the Castle Mound and within the boundaries of Roman Cambridge or Durolipons. At two spots some fifty yards apart houses had been demolished some months before and before any rebuilding took place we were allowed to do our worst. We divided into two parties for sites A and B and started from scratch, measuring and pegging the trenches. Tiled floors, domestic hearths and sundry odd brick rubble made the going rather hard at first; but as we got lower we had some splendid examples of stratification. We knew that the houses had stood there for two hundred years or more and pits which partly superimposed other pits made for fascinating deductions. Pottery sherds ranged from Victoria back some hundreds of years and sometimes set us some puzzles. For instance, a piece of glass with some queer design had us all guessing until somebody spotted a milk bottle on a doorstep;

Roman sherds and a coin or two were found at lower levels but it was not until the last day (why do these things always happen at the end?) that we found a sizable piece of a Saxon pot. Great rejoicing at the confirmation of a suspected Saxon occupation and frantic searches for more pieces, but no luck.

Next day the fatigue party was filling in and the School was over for another year.

A BRONZE AGE URN-FIELD AT 'VINCES FARM', ARDLEIGH, NEAR COLCHESTER

(We are grateful to Mr. Erith, a member of our Group, for allowing us to include the following account of recent finds on his land.)

Ardleigh is midway between Colchester on the River Colne and Manningtree on the estuary of the Stour. Vinces Farm is on a plateau, 110 feet above sea level and has no particular geographical feature other than its flatness. The soil is medium loam over gravel and requires no artificial drainage. The land has been under arable cultivation for centuries and a map of pre-enclosure times shows it as being strip-farmed.

The farm came into my possession in the 1930's when the method of ploughing was by horses and a depth of from five to seven inches was usually attained. With the coming of tractors a further two inches was turned over; but it was not until 1955 that a deep digging plough was used, which ploughed to a depth of a foot or more.

In September 1955, one of the tractor drivers, Mr. Frank Brand, reported that some Roman pottery had been ploughed up in the Long Eleven Acres (O.S. 716). The writer investigated and noticed some pieces of much coarser, thicker ware, which Mr. Hull (Curator of Colchester Museum) suggested might be Bronze Age. The clearance of the top-soil revealed a circle of black coke-like structure, which turned out to be the cut through section of the lower half of a cinerary urn. A further clearance of an area of five yards by four revealed seven more urns of the Deveril-Rimbury type, which were photographed in situ and then removed by the Colchester Museum authorities.

When the field was next ploughed, in December 1956, a more organised method was used in anticipation of finding more urns. The method of walking behind the plough is, I maintain, the only practical way of detecting these burial urns. It is, of course, only when the plough is going deeper than ever before that anything will be discovered. The effect of deep ploughing is to give an X-ray to a field for about a square foot a second, if someone is there to watch it.

The second year's ploughing produced a further 65 urns, making the total 73. While there seemed to be a "main body" of the cemetery, there were also five separate detached clusters. This meant that the area to be watched was much greater than anticipated and we realised that we had very likely missed some find spots.

Accordingly, when the field was again ploughed in November 1957, a few odd urns were located near the previous clusters, but again a new site cropped up outside even the greater area under watch. The third year's ploughing revealed 27 more urns, so that the grand total

became 100.

The site turned out to be so extensive (250 yards by 50) that if an orthodox archaeological dig had been done where the first pot was found, then probably all the separate clusters would have been missed. Bronze Age pottery, being so similar in colour and texture to a clod of earth, would not normally be spotted by anyone unfamiliar with it. In the last few years, when nearly every acre in the country has been ploughed deeper than ever before, one might expect to hear of numerous new finds. Actually hardly any have turned up, and one must conclude that those which have not been recognised.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CEMETERY

As is usual in cemeteries of this kind, some urns are placed upside down, and some the right way up. In this case the proportion was about three upside down to one the right way up.

In every case there were ashes and bones in the urns. In the case of one which was inverted, the urn was hollow, (i.e. there was no earth above the ashes).

In some clusters there appeared to be burials without urns. They consisted of a compact sphere of bones and ashes about the size of a football, sometimes a little flatter, as if the burial had been effected in a leather bag.

The depths of the urns varied from 12 inches to 30 inches. Where the urns had been buried deeply, and these were of course the more complete we presumed that the soil had been soft and that the burial had taken place in the Spring or Autumn. When the burial had been shallow, presumably the ground had been hard and the death had occurred either in the Summer when the soil would have been baked or in Winter when it would have been frozen. Many of these urns must have poked up slightly above ground level. One, with a diameter of 18 inches at the rim, was buried 22 inches deep, upside down. The bottom therefore would have been above ground level, especially as the soil would have gained humus in a couple of millenniums rather than lost humus. For this reason it would be fair to assume that the graves were mounded over.

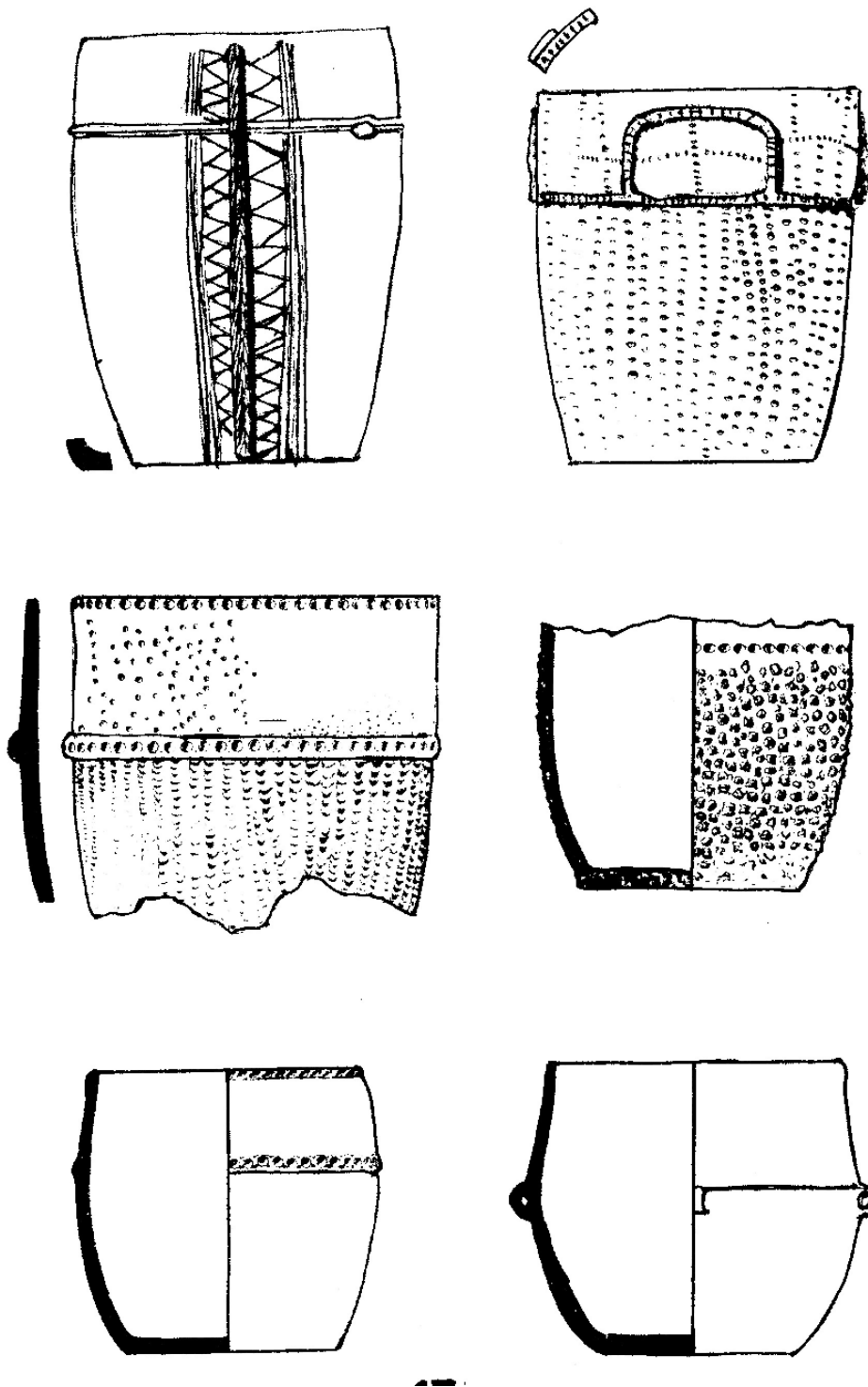
Of the 100 urns, thirteen had been riveted - one of them with five rivet holes. From this one might assume that the urns had been used for domestic purposes before they became cinerary urns.

In one case, an urn had been covered with a piece of ragstone as a capstone and in one case a free burial was covered with ragstone.

.....

Mr. Erith is preparing a detailed account of his finds with full illustrations; meanwhile drawings by Mr. Erith of six urns are reproduced below Plate One. Scale: 1/6

PLATE ONE



MRS. REID'S FIELD, LEXDEN ROAD COLCHESTER

REPORT ON POTTERY

A mutual arrangement had been made between Mrs. Reid and Mr. Calver that he should dig in her field, handing over to her the pottery as found.

Mr. Calver excavated a large hole or pit which he thought at first to be a kiln, because he found some pieces of kiln structure with a vitrified surface, some of which had holes through

for the passage of draught. Having emptied the pit, however, he could find no extension of it there or in the immediate vicinity and he therefore concluded that it was the emplacement only of a kiln which had been so thoroughly broken up that no structure remained in position.

There was only one fragment of Saurian ware, the rim of a Dragendorf Form 35 with a brilliant glaze, decorated with ivy leaves in barbotine.

By far the major portion of the pottery recovered was buff-ware, mostly under-fired and very soft. It falls into two main groups - one consisting of remains of flagons and the other of mortaria. There were very few fragments of anything else.

The mortaria appear to be all of one type - namely that in which the flange rises high above the beading of the lip (see Bushe-Fox - Wroxeter II, figs. 19, 46 and 62. Also Collingwood - 'Archaeology of Roman Britain' page 218).

There are seventeen rim fragments but we cannot say how many mortaria these represent; there are also ten fragments of bases with mixed black and white grit.

There are twelve fragments of flagon handles, two with four ribs, nine with three ribs and one with two. The bases include two types - one with tall foot-ring and flat underside, and the other with low foot-ring and a groove inside. There are seventeen fragments in all which betray some poor potting.

In addition to the flagons and mortaria, there are a few fragments of indeterminate beakers of buff-ware. There is also a fragment of what appears to have been a flat disc, 1/2 inch thick, the upper side bearing three or more concentric grooves and the underside cut off with a wire. We have not seen anything like this and can only suggest that it is part of a lid.

THE FOLLOWING ARE ILLUSTRATED BELOW. PLATE TWO

Fig. 1a - mortarium rim, about half of which was found. It is stamped in a crude way 'SATVR' (retro.) - fig. 1b.

Figs. 2 & 3 - rim fragments of flagons. There are about thirty-six fragments of flagon rims, mostly of the three ringed type but varying considerably in outline. Though all have departed from the standard Claudian type (Camulodunum 154), these are the only ones which have become at all cup-mouthed.

Fig. 4 - this flagon mouth has been pinched in to make the neck almost in the form of a figure-of-eight. The neck is short with a bold cordon to which the handle is attached.

Figs. 5 & 6 - two more flagon necks.

Fig- 7 - rim of flanged bowl in soft buff-ware

Fig. 8 - large fragment of an incense burner with frilled rim, of good red-ware.

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In looking over the fragments it was noticeable that there were several examples of poor potting, especially in the finish of the bases and the fittings of the necks of the flagons.

The grey-ware, consisting of about fifty fragments, includes nothing which must be first century. It includes a number of rims which cannot, however, be allotted to types; though one can say that there is a good piece of Camulodunum 218, with latticed shoulder, and one rim each of Roman Colchester Forms 39 and 279b in black-ware (see figs. 9 & 10) and one of Roman Colchester Form 268 in grey-ware (see fig. 11).

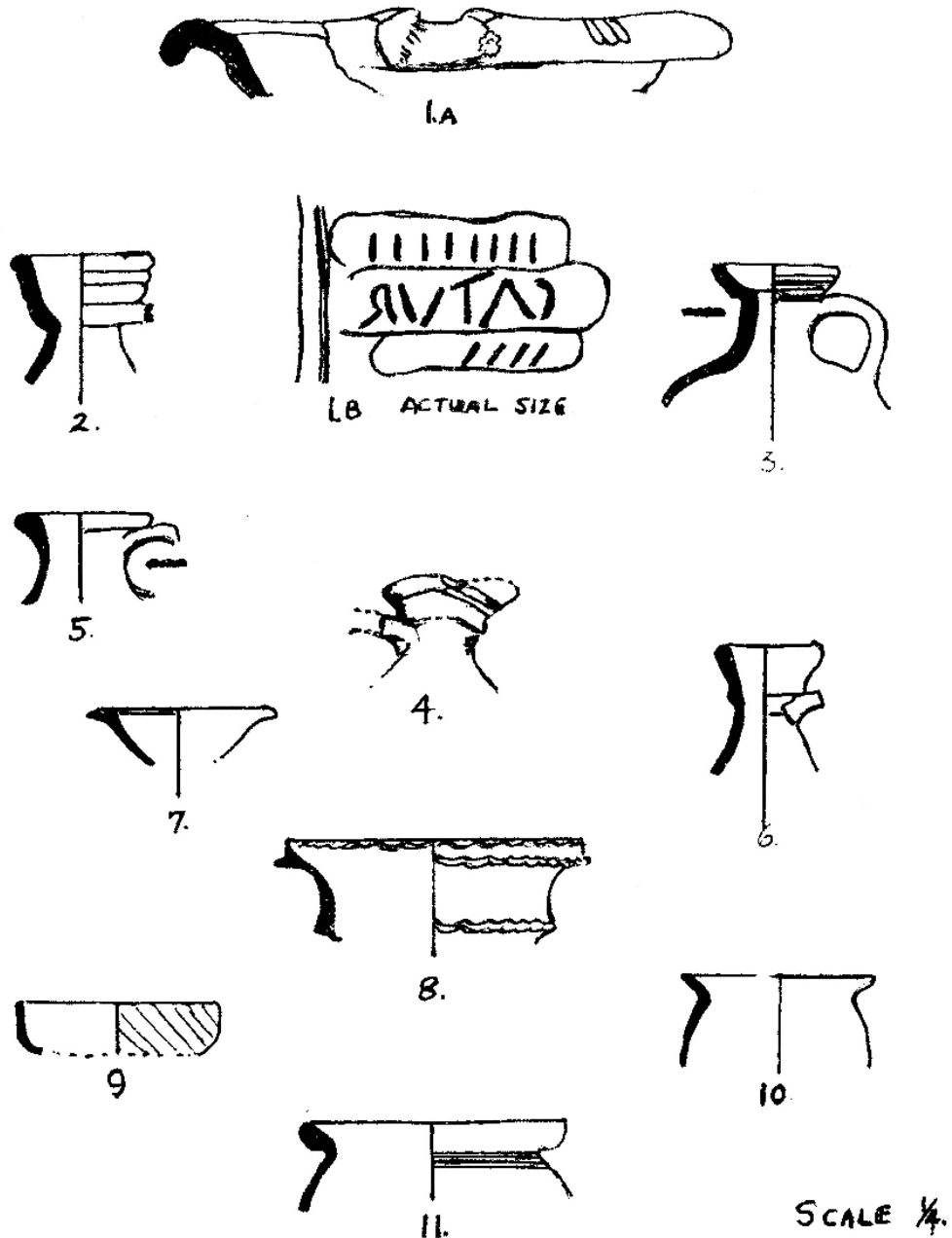
The majority of the pottery belongs to the late first century and early second century, inasmuch as the flagons are not much later than Camulodunum (ends c. A.D.65) while the

mortaria are of Trajanic type (cf. Collingwood Archaeology of Roman Britain page 218).

A later period is attested. Figs. 1, 3, 8 & 9 are of Antonine date or even later (c.A.D. 140 - 200) - especially the mortarium fragments with black grit.

The bronze coins were found, a dupondias and as of Claudius, both show Ceres, seated, on the reverse.

PLATE TWO



EXCAVATION AT ST. HELEN'S LANE, COLCHESTER - Leonard H. Gant

An excavation was carried out during the winter months of 1956/7 by the author, assisted by Mr. W.E. Tucker in a garden on the north side of St. Helen's Lane, Colchester, now covered by Taylor Court.

Surface evidence skewed an abundance of tesserae, Roman brick and tile, and a few large stones probably used for building. A Roman pavement was recorded in the S.W. corner, and is indicated in M.R. Hull's "Roman Colchester" booklet. The deeds of the land were examined and revealed that the parish poor house of St. Nicholas (demolished 1956) bounded the site on part of the S. side and land to the immediate N. (now Flory's Yard) was anciently called "sheepwalk" or "Sheepyard."

It was also noted that the northern boundary was exactly in line with the course of a known Roman road which crosses the Castle Park from E. to W, therefore the trench was begun ten yards south of this boundary and at right angles to it.

The intention of the dig was to discover evidence of Roman occupation and, since it was within the supposed area of the theatre, it was hoped to find some indication of this building. Unfortunately the excavation had to be abandoned after a promising start when the land was purchased for house building by the Colchester Borough Council and definite evidence of the Roman Theatre came later, when an Eastern Gas Board gang uncovered a section of curving wall in St. Helen's Lane.

The Roman material recovered was very comprehensive and included a mass of building brick and tile fragments, one of which had the impressions of a dog's paws. Various scored flue tiles, pottery, glass and coloured plaster were found and the latter was, perhaps, the most interesting. The surface colours found included Pompeian red, blue, gamboge and white, one fragment of white surfaced plaster chewing a black line decoration.

A single coin of Severus Pius (circa 210 A.D.) was found fused to a fragment of grey pottery. The coin, much corroded, was of copper, dipped in silver and displayed the head of the Emperor with a symbolic figure on the reverse.

The Roman pottery ranged over a considerable period. The earliest coarse black pottery, with band decoration of many designs occurred throughout the strata, which was disturbed in medieval times. Small fragments of Castor ware, with milled base decoration, and a thin vessel of black coated ware, having scale-like decoration "on barbotine" were found with Saurian ware, which included a straight sided cup with central groove, late 1st century (Form 7), a flanged bowl, 2nd century (Form 38) and a fragment of a moulded bowl of the Antonine period (2nd century) depicting a running hare.

The careful reduction of a medieval rubbish pit at the N. end of the trench provided fragments of gritty coarse pottery as well as the lovely green splash-glazed Tudor domestic vessels. A number of iron nails, a key and a lozenge shaped lock plate were found, also three knives, one having a decorated hone handle.

An unglazed pot of brittle red ware was found almost complete and a foot of a second similar pot. This pot had a wide neck and a small hole was pierced in the body about one inch from the foot. This appears to be a new form to Colchester and the vessels were probably used for dried herbs either for flavouring food, or for dispensing a pleasant aroma in the house. Many bones of oxen and sheep were identified and numerous tusks of boar confirm the love of pork in medieval times.

As a footnote and record one might add that the builders found a silver penny of Charles I (1630) and a fine 13th century head stop depicting a young lady wearing a coif secured by a jewelled chaplet, possibly from the nearby chapel of St. Helen.

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Mr. Gant writes that objects of interest will eventually reach Colchester Museum.

PART 3 SEPTEMBER 1958

Our activities and membership have increased considerably. It was decided to call a General Meeting of the Group in order to review its structure. This was held on Tuesday, 5th of August, 1958. Mr Hull kindly took the chair and the following were elected:

Chairman:	Mr M. R. Hull, M.A., F.S.A.
Secretary:	Mrs K. de Brisay.
Treasurer:	Mr H. W. Palmer
Excavations Secretary:	Mr A. B. Doncaster.
Public Relations Officer:	Mr L. H. Gant
Committee Member:	Mr F. H. Erith.

It has not been found possible to make a report on our major activities of this season as these are still in progress. Two sites are being worked upon at the present time; the Bronze Age burial site at Jupes Hill, Dedham, and an exploratory dig in Colchester in the hope of finding some trace of the Roman Amphitheatre. We hope to give an interim report on both of these in our December Bulletin.

Our individual membership now stands at thirty-five with many more "unofficial" helpers. We hope to increase this still further. Please address all enquiries to Mrs K. de Brisay, 89, Maldon Road, Colchester.

EXCAVATIONS AT BULMER SUFFOLK, by Brian Blake

When the discovery of Bronze Age urns near Bulmer was reported, it was thought that the site might perhaps be another 'Ardleigh'. This proved not to be so and three cremation interments only were found. The site (TL/834384) is on a hill top less than a mile to the south east of the Roman site at Gestingthorpe, which may explain the presence on the Bulmer site of Roman material as there is, as yet, no trace of any Roman structure.

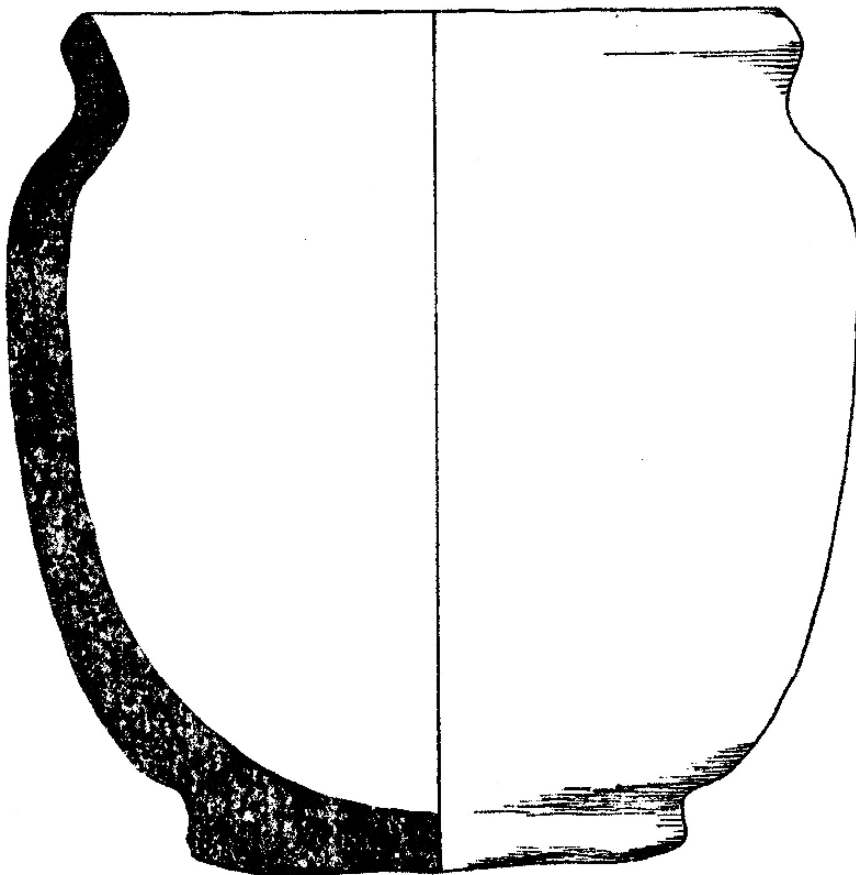
The subsoil of the hill top is a fine soft sand which had, in places, been brought to the surface by the deep ploughing which had disclosed the pottery. The site is well suited for occupation by primitive peoples, a hill with sides rising fairly steeply to flat top some 800 by 500 foot and of oval shape. The soil is light and drains through to a spring line just below the site on the clay of a small valley. A feature that may have significance also is that, at this point in the valley, there occurs near the surface, clay of the Reading Beds. This clay is well suited to the manufacture of both pottery and tile, a fact well attested by the presence at Hole Farm now of a brick and pottery kiln. The owner, Mr L. A. Minter, also farms land nearby and it was whilst his son was ploughing field north of the farm that the site was found. The field was deep ploughed to 14" for sugar beet and this had turned to the surface three patches of black soil containing sherds of pottery.

Preliminary investigations by Mr Minter found two Late Bronze Age urns of the Deverel Rimbury type; the first shattered, the second preserved by a thoughtful 'first-aid' wrapping of surgical bandage. Subsequent excavation at these points found, within the two 10 ft. squares opened, only one other interment. The burnt bones were in a patch of burnt sand containing no pottery at all. There is no further trace on the surface at present of any more interments or other remains of the same period.

The third spot produced an assortment of Roman tile - fragments of "tegulae" "imbrices" and box flue tile, together with decorated Saxon pottery. Excavation at this point showed the dark soil to be derived by the plough from a layer of very dark soil approximately oval in shape, 9 feet by 11 foot. The soil was "saucer shaped" and contained pottery, specks of charcoal and animal remains together with some few abraded sherds of Roman date - obviously residual.

The spreading of the top by the plough and activities of moles and staining of the sand at the bottom of the layer, rendered its exact shape impossible to follow. This was obviously an occupation layer from its soil and content but no building traces were found at all, no floors being distinguishable within it. The pottery is of 5th - 6th century date and forms an interesting group to be published in detail later. One example is illustrated (actual size) on the next page. The ware is of dark fabric with sand tempering material, oxidised in firing, of a brown tone and smoothed on the outside. All are hand made, most with outcurved rims reminiscent of Iron Age forms.

Thanks are gratefully given to the Archaeological Group who supplied much labour and help on the site and, above all, to the owner of the land, Mr A. L. Minter, and his son who farms it. They have shown great interest in the site and have been more than co-operative. A most promising feature of this site is that Mr Minter is ever vigilant and keen to find more and when the field is next cleared he may well do so.



Actual Size.

A DOMESTIC EXCAVATION by H.J. & B.J.N. Edwards.

Not many archaeologists are lucky enough to be able to excavate without leaving their own premises. In the last Bulletin Mr Erith told us of an outstanding example, but Mr Erith is a farmer and operates on a large scale. Our own digging was done in a small back garden and, though it could not compare in quantity with Mr Erith's, it was nevertheless extremely productive and interesting.

We are taught to study maps before excavating and this was an apt illustration of the wisdom of doing so. It is well known that, before it was diverted to what is the modern Head Street, the road to London left Colchester by way of the Balcerne Gate. It is also known that there is a junction of Roman roads under the present Grammar School. What is not so well known is the line of the road to the Grammar School. The area concerned, "Lord's Land" to the Colcestrian, was largely built over towards the end of the last century.

Mr A.F. Hall, to whom we were indebted for both inspiration and supervision, pointed out that a line drawn from the Balcerne Gate to the Grammar School would pass somewhere by our house, so one day we decided to dig and see what we could find.

We were lucky. In a space about twenty feet by six feet we found a ditch with road metalling on one side and remains of a building on the other. In one corner was a piece of red tessellated flooring. It gives one quite a thrill to realise that where one is living now, somebody else had a house eighteen hundred years or so ago. Human nature then being much the same as it is now, the ditch proved a happy hunting ground for occupational evidence.

Pottery, which was found in considerable quantity, covered a wide range. The majority was of the black 'cooking pot' ware but, at the other end of the scale, was Castor, 'hunt cup', Samian, rough cast and mortaria. Bone pins were fairly common but not many metal objects emerged. Part of one brooch of the 'trumpet' type was found and several unidentified pieces of bronze. A few pieces of glass, making the neck of a small bottle, were put together. Among the broken tiles were two pieces of popular interest, one, with the imprint of dog's paw and one with the tile maker's thumb print. Many bones and teeth, chiefly pig and cattle were found and (need I say it ?) large quantities of oyster shells.

The thing which did surprise me was the number of coins which were found, no less than eighteen identifiable and ten too much worn to be placed. They were scattered about, not in a hoard of any sort. I am sure I should not sleep soundly at night if I thought that twenty eight of my coins were lying about for somebody to pick up!

Taking the coins in order of issue, they start with a fairly clear, though damaged, copper coin of Claudius (41-54). This is followed by two large brasses of Trajan (98-117) and Hadrian (117-138); the Hadrian very worn; the Trajan with the inscription still quite legible. Then comes a little group consisting of four Antoninus Pius, one of his wife Faustina, and another of their daughter, the wife of Marcus Aurelius, another Faustina. Marcus Aurelius himself is not represented, though his daughter Lucilla, with her distinctive 'bun' is. These coins are all of brass, though the one of Lucilla is much more copper coloured.

The next Emperor is Commodus (180-192) of which we have a splendid example in very good condition (illustrated below). The coin is over 4 mm. thick and the reverse is a "PROVID AUG" type with a very fine and very detailed ship in high relief. One wonders how far the expression "the ship of state" goes back. The detail on this coin is such that the head of the helmsman, which is less than 1 mm. square, can be clearly distinguished from his 'sou-wester' type of hat.

Next there is a group of three 'radiates' in which the emperor is shown wearing a spiked crown which gives the impression that the head is surrounded by rays. The first of these is our only silver coin and fairly debased silver at that, for there is some green erosion on it. It is of Septimus Severus (193-211). The other two are of Tetricus I (267-273) and Carausius, the usurping admiral of the British Fleet, which bears the legend "PAX AUG" on the reverse. Fine sentiments for one trying to seize power!

The remaining four coins are all fourth century. One which is almost certainly Constantius II (323-361) has on the reverse an altar bearing the word "VOTIS", the legend "BEATUS TRANQUILITAS" and the London mint mark "P.LON" . in the exergue. (illustrated below - fig. 3).

All this goes to show how lucky we Colchester dwellers are in our opportunities for digging.



FIG: 1.



FIG: 2.



FIG: 3.

Double Size.

LEARNING TO DIG by H. W. Palmer

About twenty four of us, ranging in age from 20 to 50, assembled at Wansfell Adult College in Epping Forest on July 5th for a fortnight's course in Field Archaeology, conducted by Dr. John Alexander of the Cambridge Extra Mural Board, and Mr. Robertson McKay, an assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments to the Ministry of Works.

This course is primarily intended for those taking the London University Extension Diploma in Archaeology, and about half the students were, attending Extension Classes in the London area for this Diploma. Among the other half were students from Canada, Australia, U.S.A. and Wales.

The course took the form of a dig at Amesbury Banks, an Iron Age hill fort, which could be reached in twenty minutes walk through the Forest - if one had a good sense of direction!

Unlike some courses of a similar nature held at various places during the Summer, this was a 'strictly business' one. The first lecture was after supper on the opening evening, and the following day (Sunday) was well filled with lectures too. Each day was occupied with practical work - digging, surveying, plotting electrical resistivity etc., and the evenings were filled with lectures and writing up the day's work on the site. Visiting lecturers were Mrs Cotton, Mr Frere and Mr Cookson (Archaeological photography).

We were fortunate, in this dismal summer, in having fine weather nearly all the time. An interesting change from the usual routine was a day's visit by coach to other earthworks and the museums at Saffron Walden and Cambridge, at the end of the first week.

A report on a previous dig (in 1956) is given by Mrs Cotton in the Journal of the Essex Field Club and this year's findings will be published in due course. All that needs to be said here is that we found more than we hoped for - the conglomerate and flint revetings of the entrance to the fort.

The keenness and patience of the tutors and the good fellowship of the other students made the course thoroughly enjoyable. It is possible that a similar course will be held at Wansfell next summer.

"Wansfell is a very comfortable place in beautiful grounds with the Forest coming up to the gardens. The catering is excellent and --- well, go next year and see for yourself!

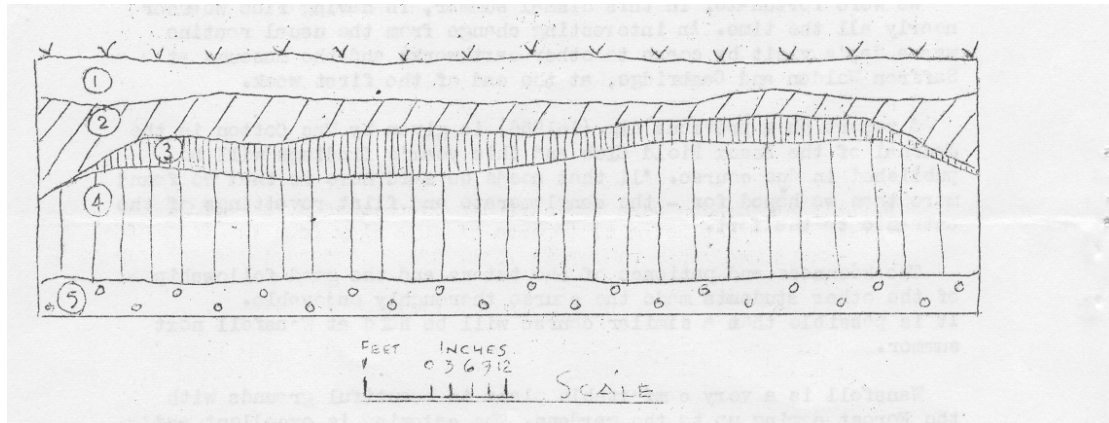
ROMAN ROAD AT STANWAY, COLCHESTER.

Some years ago a drain was dug on the Colchester - Halstead road, on the north western fringes of the town. Mr Hull noted at the time a section of a Roman road resting on faggots. This section was exposed at a point approximately 290 yards to the west of Lamb's Cross. Another section of the same road was also found in the field to the south east of Iron Latch Bridge.

In May of this year, on Mr Hull's suggestion, we opened a trench across the line between these two points. This is in the western corner of Holmwood House School playing fields and permission to dig there was kindly given by the Headmaster, Mr S. Duggan.

The trench was fourteen foot long and exposed a thin metalling stretching for approximately eleven feet and resting on greyish white loam. (See diagram below) The natural gravel was reached at a depth of just over three feet.

There were no signs of faggots in this section of the road and there were no small finds. On such slight evidence we could only conclude that this had been a road of minor importance.



1. Surface Humus
2. Loam turning lighter above 3.
3. Small stones stained rusty
4. Greyish white loam
5. Natural Gravel

CLAY PIPES FOUND AT COLCHESTER by Leonard H. Gant.

The clay tobacco pipe is one of the most common "small finds" in any excavation of either industrial or occupational site dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

These are accounted of importance to archaeologists for they can now be divided into fairly closely datable groups, based on the bowl sizes and shapes, angle of bowl to stem and the size and design of the foot.

Tobacco and pipes were introduced into England in the last quarter of the 16th century and at that time, owing to the scarcity and high cost of the "new weed", the bowls were very small and the whole pipe seldom measured more than six inches. The early type was apparently based on the design of the Aztec pipe and this form, with variations of angle to stem and bowl size persisted for over a century in England.

Clay pipes were cheap but easily broken and this, no, doubt, accounts for the large number found.

The early types were made by hand and polished but moulds were introduced in the early 17th century and decorations in the form of plain or rouletted bands were added to the bowls. Later the maker's initials or rebus were stamped on the foot, but these are not common before 1650. I have one stamped "W P" dating from the first half of the 17th century.

Fragments of clay pipes swept up in ale houses were sold to oyster merchants who spread them on oyster layings for the spat to cling to. I must confess this was rejected by an oyster merchant who assured me that oyster spat prefers a flat base to cling to, and the Second local yarn accounting for the large amount of fragments dredged up off our coast and within the Corporation's jurisdiction was also denied. This asserted that a Dutch boat carrying a cargo of pipes foundered off Brightlingsea in the 18th century. No reference to this incident has been found but I have a barnacle covered pipe of that period which was dredged up in the Pyefleet Channel.

Bristol and London were the earliest centres of pipe making, the earliest reference being to imports of pipe clay from the Isle of Wight, Poole and other places in 1611. Other centres later grow up at Broseley (Shropshire), Hull and Chester, and innumerable small pipe making industries sprang up in other towns.

A contemporary writer described the early pipes as being formed "like a little ladell", which is a very good description.

By 1619 tobacco smoking was widely enjoyed and in that year the Worshipful Company of Pipemakers received a charter and production of great quantities of pipes took place.

The early pipes found in Colchester were probably of London make but local manufacture began in the 17th century when there was a considerable coastwise trade in both finished pipes and the raw clay.

Further study of borough and parish records might provide details of the early local craftsmen. The first published reference appears to be in the "Universal British Directory" (1801) which lists Stephen Chamberlain as the only pipe maker in Colchester. Pigot's Directory of 1839, however, gives three makers, Stephen Rand of George Lane, James Pettit of 38 East Street and Elizabeth Lowthrup (called Lowthorp by Miller Christy in the Victorian County History, Vol 2)

Pipes of both Stephen Chamberlain (below Fig. 7) and his nephew Stephen Rand (Fig. 8) are illustrated. Bonham's Directory (1886), shows J. Jennings at George Lane and he and his two sons carried on the 'business until about 1910, making all types except the long churchwarden from Devonshire clay.

The almost perfect unused specimens of Rand pipes in my possession were found in sawdust filling in a cavity wall of the conservatory at the Minories High St.

Elaborate moulds were introduced in the early 19th century and decorated pipes are still made. Rand used several different moulds with oak leaf and fluting, but London makers produced grotesque bowls bearing masks of literary characters. The invention of mass produced cigarettes and the fashion for smoking briar pipes greatly reduced the demand for clay pipes but these can still be bought for a few pence.

The following notes on types illustrated do not presume to give a chronology of English pipes, the best I know is appended to an article by A. Oswald in the Archaeological Newsletter, Vol. 5, No 12. (1955).

Fig. 1. 1580-1620. The earliest type recorded, hand made and polished bowl with rim ornament projects well forward and heart shaped base droops slightly from the stem. Material of grey colour.

Figs. 2- 4. 1620-1650. Note the development of the stepped foot, bowl pinched below the lip with plain groove or rouletted band. These also appear in larger types of the same bulbous design. A great number of the larger types have been recovered from the Dutch Quarter and elsewhere in the Borough.

Fig. 5. A typical Bristol design characterized by the inward curve of the bowl just forward of the large oval foot.

Fig. 6. 1680-1720. A slimmer and more elongated type in rough yellow clay, having a small spur; bowl inclined well forward. This was found in Long Wyre Street.

Figs. 7 & 8. 1780-1850. The familiar churchwarden evolved from earlier heavier types. Thin walls, and wider bowl with long, slender stem and small spur. The first is stamped S. C. (Stephen Chamberlain, circa 1800) and the second is similar in shape, apart from the spur, but decorated with a line of oak leaves on the forward edge of the bowl. It is stamped S.R. (Stephen Rand, circa 1840), and was found in St Helen's Lane.

Much further research and study needs to be done on this fascinating subject and it is regretted that space forbids illustration of many other types and variants in my collection, which covers over three centuries.

My thanks are due to many friends for the gift of specimens, but particularly to Air Commodore J. S. Chick, John Bensusan Butt and H. Calvar.



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3

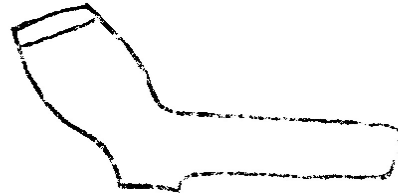


Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6

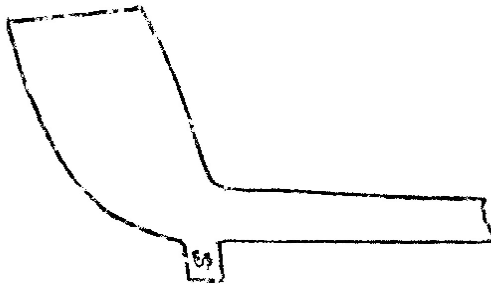


Fig 7



Fig 8

PART 4 DECEMBER 1958

We wish all our readers a Happy Christmas and good digging in the New Year.

This issue completes our first year of quarterly bulletins and the individual membership of the Group is now forty.

Our last Bulletin was particularly rewarding in that Mr L.H. Gant's article on clay pipes brought him some very interesting letters on the subject and also some pipes for identification. He asks us to say how grateful he is for these and that he will be glad to hear of any others. This proves how useful an interchange of bulletins can be, especially if it leads to an exchange of ideas and to the development of individual hobbies and sidelines.

This Bulletin includes an unofficial account of the excavations at Dedham and articles by A.F. Hall and R.H. Farrands.

The Group is now meeting every Tuesday evening from 7 - 9 p.m. in the Castle Museum for practical work, study and discussion. All members are welcome.

All enquiries are welcome and may be addressed to Mrs. K. de Brisay, Corner Cottage, Layer de la Haye, Colchester CO2 OLE. Telephone 274.

A BRONZE AGE BURIAL SITE AT DEDHAM, ESSEX

During the summer of 1957 some crop marks were noticed in a field of sugar beet by the side of a road at Jupes Hill, Dedham. Mr. Frank Girling was so interested that he took a photograph of these from the top of his Land Rover. He also plotted the position as closely as he could. The photograph showed the formation quite clearly - a vaguely circular shape with a smaller incomplete circle inside where the beet was growing more strongly. The diameter of the outer shape appeared to be about 70 feet.

It is interesting to note that an Early Bronze Age burial urn had been found in 1914 in the gravel quarry which immediately adjoins the site. A replica of this urn is in the Colchester Castle Museum and it is understood that Messrs. Carters Seeds have the original.

The field in which the quarry and the site under discussion are situated were once part of the Manor of Dedham and even then were considered to be some of the best arable land. On an old map the corner covering the site is named "Crab Meadow"; the remaining and larger part of the field is called "Common Meadow". No boundaries show at the present time. One wonders if the name "Crab Meadow" may have derived from some odd formation of the ground which has since disappeared. The field, as it is now, is completely flat and the hedge and ditch which used to border the road were levelled a few years ago.

Having seen the photograph of the crop marks Mr. Hull arranged with the owner of the land, Mr. Moorhouse of Jupes Hill Farm, that the site should be investigated when free. A crop of potatoes had been planted and when these were harvested, in June of this year, preparations were made for an excavation under the direction of Mr. Brian Blake. The site turned out to be of some importance and an official report will be published by Mr. Blake in due course. This account of the operation is only from the point of view of the "diggers".

Work actually began on Sunday 22nd June when a square was laid out to cover the area plotted by Mr. Girling. The base line was fixed along the road verge from east to west and measured 100 feet. This was plotted a to j along the base line and 1 - 10 along the sides, making a grid of ten foot squares. The first exploratory trenches were on the south side of squares h4, i4 and j4 and on the east side of squares b4 and c4. These are indicated by three horizontal lines on the plan given below, this also shows the grid.

The weather on this first day was of the usual 1958 summer variety with sudden downpours of driving rain. The land, being gravel, drained quickly at first so that work could go on spasmodically. There was no cover and picnic lunch was eaten under the lee of a very sparse and prickly hedge. By early afternoon water was standing in pools and work had to stop. Mr. Moorhouse was very sympathetic and arranged for a covered bullock cart to be pulled on to the edge of the site and it became a very welcome refuge during the ensuing weeks. His cans of hot tea were also very much appreciated.

Subsequently work went on on Sundays and during the week as helpers were available. Traces of the ditch were found in the trenches in squares F3 and 04. More trenches were opened up and later extended into eight foot squares. Eventually all the squares D to G and 3 to 6 were opened up with two foot baulks between each, except the central dividing baulk which was four feet. One other square (C4) was opened outside this main block to check the line of the ditch. This first stage is shown in double diagonal shading on the plan.

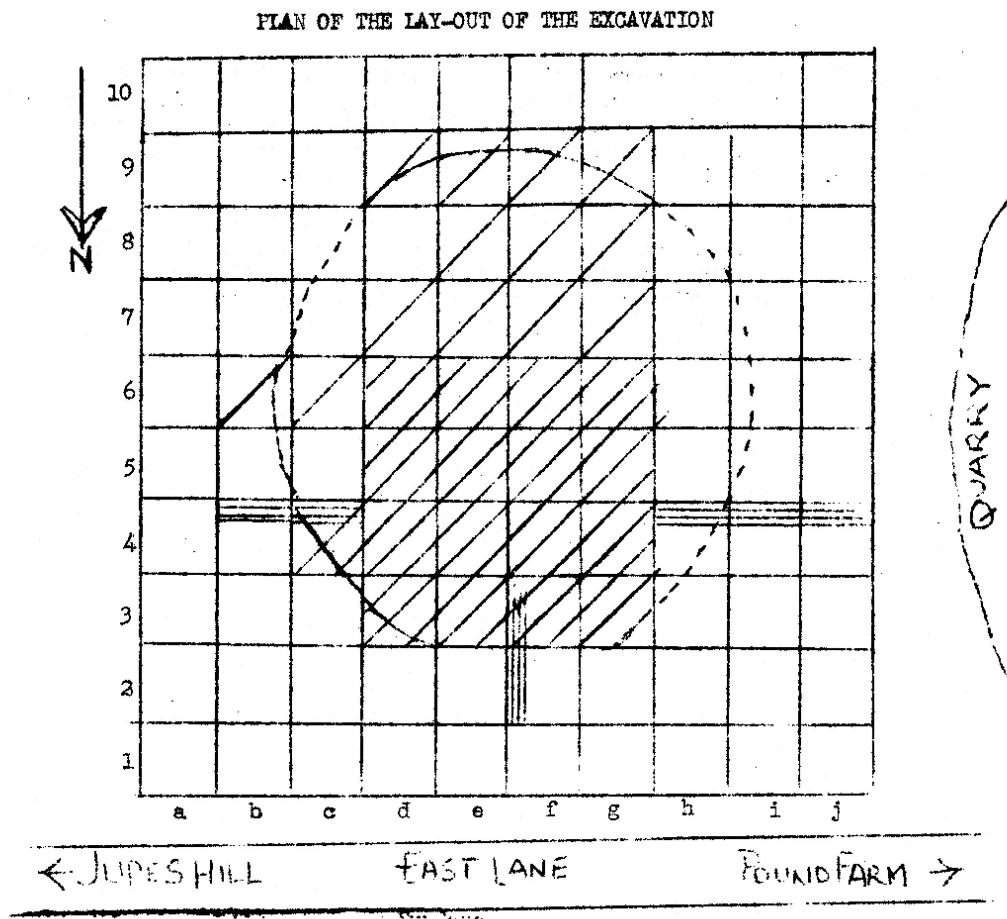
On Sunday, 13th July, in a howling gale which whipped up the dry surface till it resembled a dust storm, a burial urn was found in square E5 under a spot where very considerable marks

of burning had been observed. The urn was almost complete and contained ashes and charred bones. It had been buried in an upright position. It is of the Early Bronze Age type with a collar about four inches deep, tapering below this to the base. The height over all is thirteen inches, the diameter across

the top eight inches and across the base four inches. There are indented decorations round the collar. On the same day another urn of the same period but rather different in pattern was found in the baulk between squares d6 and e6. This appeared to be a secondary burial, and the urn was in fragments and was incomplete. It was thought that this was buried broken.

Other finds include a food vessel of similar date about two to three inches in height, a clay loom weight and many sherds of pottery, mostly of the same period. The main finds are now on view Colchester Castle Museum. One completely unrelated find was that of two American army buttons which appear to date from the first World War but there seems to be no knowledge of any local American "occupation" in that war.

Next it was decided to open up the whole area occupied by the main square, (shown by double diagonal shading in the plan below) and all intervening baulks were removed. It was then possible to get a more accurate picture of the general formation. This appeared to be a large elliptical ditch, about three foot six inches at its deepest. No bank is traceable. The central area appeared to consist of a series of apparently meaningless convolutions dug out of the natural gravel. There was a semi-circle of post holes at irregular intervals on the south side of the central formation.



Subsequently further boxes were dug down to the natural gravel outside the main rectangle, twelve on the south side and two on the east, as another check on the line of the outer ditch. These were squares d to g and 7 - 9 and b6 and c6. These are shown in single diagonal shading on the plan. The line of the ditch is shown by a continuous line - with a dotted line

where it is conjectural.

Besides digging, measuring and drawing, we also plotted the height above sea level from the nearest bench mark which was found after an exhaustive search among nettles which screen the farmyard wall at Pound Farm. This gave us good practice in the use of the dumpy level and Sopwith staff.

The dig was completed by the end of September and the many Group members who helped at various times were privileged to have taken part in such an interesting excavation. Mr. Blake is to be congratulated on his patience and forbearance. The local press was generous in their publicity and the group gained more members as a result. Mention must also be made of all the local people, men, women and children, who joined us and worked so hard.

Another result, of a more mundane nature, was the decision to display a collecting box for the "Excavation Fund" on this and other sites and, though this was only started at the end of August, the result was most gratifying.

To sum up, it may be said that the beginners among us feel we have learnt a lot but we also realise what a lot more we have to learn and we hope similar opportunities may come our way next season.

THE OLD CASTLE

by A.F. Hall

(figures in brackets refer to sketch map)

When in 1955 it was proposed to build on land behind "The Oaks", the Office of Works was concerned to know if this field (1081) showed the same signs of ancient occupation as had been found at Sheepen to the north; and so I was enjoined by our Chairman to collect the pottery from as many points as possible. With the help of the Headmaster of the Royal Grammar school some 100 man hours were devoted to the job before the pottery was duly handed in; but on the principle that the ox that treads out the corn must not be muzzled we managed to insinuate into the programme two little- private investigations of our own. Owing to preoccupation with the main programme, and further to the drought which slowed the going to more than 3 hours per square yard, of excavation, the private operations ended inconclusively, the results (such as they were) being very briefly as follows.

THE OLD CASTLE - according to a local gardener this is the popular name of a pronounced spur which here juts out (4) towards the Balcerne Gate. On topographical grounds there is the highest probability that it must have been from hereabouts that Fairfax's gunners in 1648 let fly at St. Mary's Church; and since the word castle may be applied to earthworks (Oxf. Dict.) there is reason to expect the gun-site to have been on this spur so named. What to look for we did not know, but what we found is a metallated platform, a foot thick, sunk into the surface of the glacial sand - with a probability, not fully checked, that the soil removed in the process had been thrown forward to form a mound on the brow of the spur. The platform's frontage towards St. Mary's is 20 yards - range 600 yards, and the depth where measured was 7 yards, giving a presumably rectangular area of 140 square yards. We enquired of the R.A.. Institution if such a platform would be a normal feature of a 1648 gun-site, and they kindly, but without comment, passed on the query to Colonel A.H. Burne, the authority on tactics. He assured us that any gun heavier than a demi-culverin would require a prepared platform, either of timber or metallating. Thus not every unexplained patch of metallating in the countryside need be Roman - a point that sleuths on the trail of the 1648 leaguer-lines may care to note.

DATING - of the post-Roman remains it is remarkable that clay-pipe (50 frags) was almost as numerous as pottery (54 frags); and for this reason the material was sent to Mr. A. Oswald of Birmingham Museum before it was deposited at Colchester Museum. The date-range given for the pipes is 1680 - 1730. Dating has been given to us for less than one-third of the pottery - medieval - 2; late 17th century - 1; 18th century - sundry; 19th century - nil. It is sad that no dating is available for a brickbat and some post-Roman shards taken from the metallating itself. If this is indeed a 1648 gun-site it will have been occupied then for only a few weeks and the

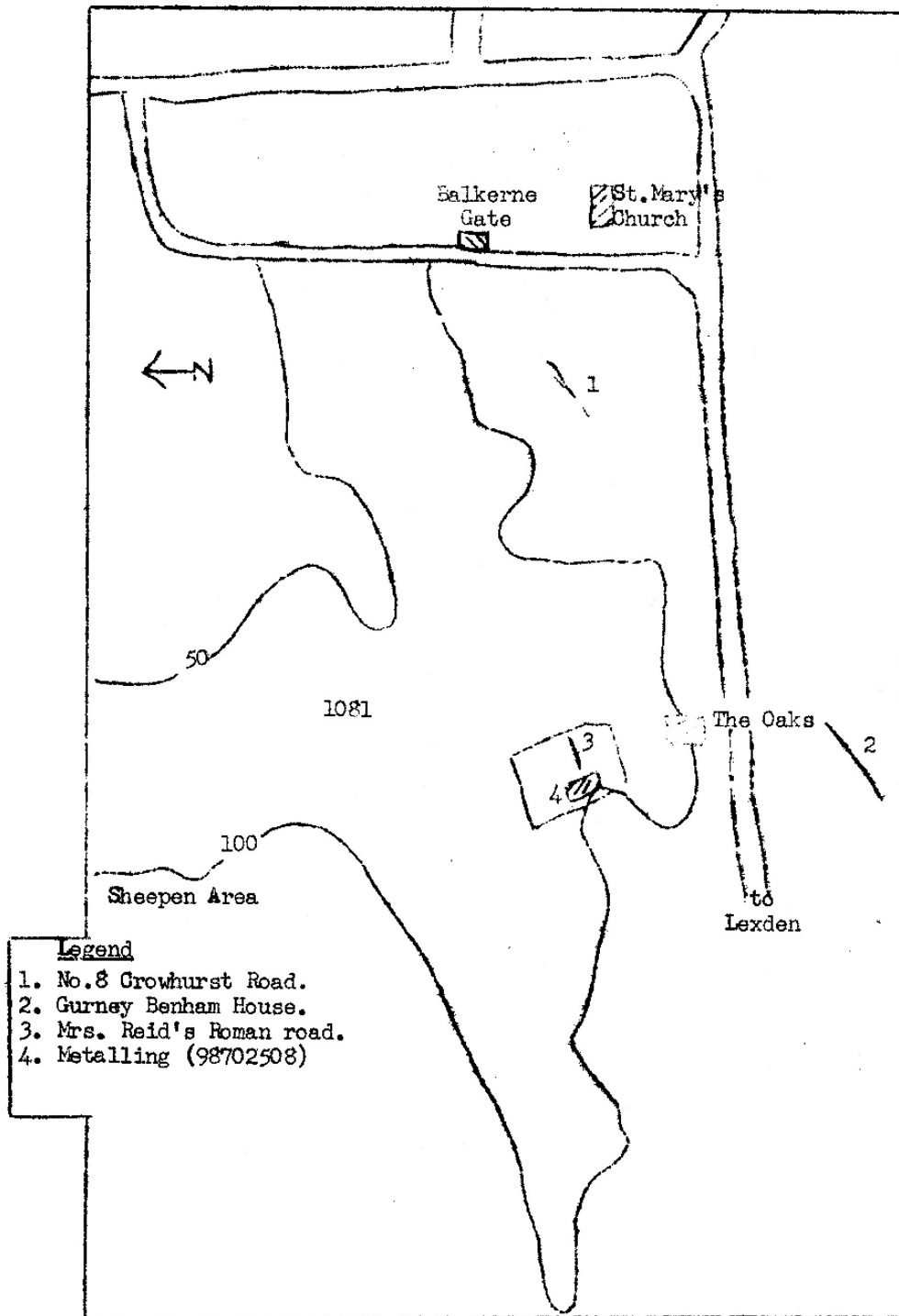
dating of the pottery may indicate that the place was visited thereafter for some time, perhaps until it was enclosed. If on the other hand, against reason perhaps, one is tempted to date the platform by the adjacent pottery, that will mean the 18th century, and a reason must be guessed for then undertaking so considerable a labour.

RECOIL OF 17th CENTURY GUNS - When we found the metalling where we expected a gun-site we wondered whether this might be to allow the guns to run back in recoil; but when the matter was broached to those likely to be informed (e.g. gunners) a certain coyness was observable.

In the end the problem was presented to the Library Research Department of the Encyclopaedia Britannica by Sgt. S. Simister of the Royal Signals, a subscriber to E.B. In a delayed but extremely interesting reply they furnished him with lucid summaries about recoil in early naval practice and with land artillery before the introduction of the wheeled carriage; but they regretted, perhaps with surprise, that they could not name any book dealing with recoil in wheeled cannon. The Imperial War Museum agreed that some method must have been used to counteract recoil, not improbably that suggested by us. The only specific information I have is from the landlord of the Cherry Tree Inn, who tells me that the method of taking recoil could until recently be seen on Yarmouth jetty, where there were heavy cannon furnished with long concave chocks to the wheels, so that they must have run back up an ever increasing gradient until the recoil was absorbed. These were fortress pieces, four-wheeled.

POSSIBLE ROMAN ROAD IN F.1081 - The topographical reasons that had led us to expect a gun-site on the Old Castle had led the owner of the land, Mrs. Reid, to expect a Roman road to have run up there from the Balcerne Gate on to the 100 foot plateau. Only one road seems to be accepted on any course from this gate, and that rather from the number than the precision of its recordings; but recently it has twice been pin-pointed: (a) in the back garden of No.8 Crowhurst Road by Mr. H.J. Edwards, (1) (C.I.G. Bulletin 1(1958) and (b) under the east face of Gurney Benham House at the Royal Grammar School (2). But other roads must have issued from the gate and here it is to be recorded that exactly on the course forecast by Mrs. Reid (3). There are two ditches, parallel, 15 foot apart and aiming for the Balcerne Gate. Those could be traced for about 50 foot and where we lost track of then there were all the signs of thorough-going disturbance; Roman and later pottery were mingled and even oyster shells reduced to fragments. The precise siting of those ditches was reported (copy at C.R.G.S.) so that if like evidence is later found elsewhere on this line it will be possible to form a sober judgment on Mrs. Reid's theory.

THE OLD CASTLE
Sketch-map - about 12 ins : 1 mile



A ROMANO-BRITISH VILLA , AT LITTLE OAKLEY
by R. H. Farrands.

The first recorded report of a Romano-British villa at Little Oakley was made by S. Hazzledine Warren in 1939 when he observed that a trench for a large sewer pipeline had cut through foundations (Nat. Grid 222292) some 700 feet SW of Foulton Hall. He observed foundations again after the war when a road of 'pre-fabs' was constructed along the line of the sewer, although his main interest was a Cromerian channel deposit some 700 feet to the north.

The site stands at about 85 feet above O.D. on the southern edge of a plateau between the Ramsey river and Hamford water with a magnificent view of the latter and the Naze on the skyline. The subsoil is a capping of Walton Crag with Pleistocene pockets and which overlay the London Clay. It would have provided a good site for prehistoric settlement, being well drained and only supporting light scrub, as confirmed by the name Oakley, derived from 'ac-leah' - an oak clearing.

At the SE end of the road of 'pre-fabs', Seaview Avenue, are some allotments where a surface spread of villa debris was observed in 1951. Permission by one of the allotment holders was given to investigate and a trial trench in the winter of 1951 revealed evidence of Romano-British building and the presence of Iron Age A and C pottery. Tendring Rural District Council kindly gave permission to rent one of the allotments which was some 30 feet wide in the NE - SW direction and 100 feet long. Excavation in this strip has revealed the plan of a building as shown below.

Difficulties and disappointments were soon encountered. During a year of average weather it was found that the ground hardened to such an extent that it was unworkable from May to September and necessitated Winter excavation. It was found that in this portion of the villa, ploughing had removed all Romano-British floor levels and that after removal of the topsoil there remained some nine inches of sandy earth containing a spread of Iron Age A and C pottery before reaching the natural subsoil.

A Belgic ditch, as shown on the plan, lay under the villa here but, as in the Iron Age pottery spread, the proportion of C to A is very small. The density of the spread increases towards the 'pre-fabs', possibly indicating a dwelling under them. Directly below the site and just inside the sea wall are the remains of nine Red Hills and probably those engaged in working on this industry were living in the villa area.

As in the case of most Romano-British building in NE Essex, where there is a lack of natural building stone, the villa had been methodically robbed and in the area excavated, only 10% of the dry stone footings of septaria remain, although in the allotment to the west the footings of the outside wall remain and these were plotted by probing. The base of the outside wall footings is some 24 inches below present ground level whilst that of the internal cross walls is 18 inches.

Room 5 had been excavated to a depth of 5 foot 3 inches by its builders and probably contained a hypocaust. No trace of the walls or flooring was found in the part excavated. Room 3 has been identified as a cold plunge bath. It was 3 foot 7 inches deep and part of the floor foundation remained, consisting of a layer of septaria covered with mortar. Part of the footings of the south wall of this room remained and were of a different construction, being in large blocks of septaria set in mortar. Two drains have been found leading from the cold plunge bath, one of hollow log type running SE; its connecting iron rings were 3½ inches in diameter and 6 foot 1 inch apart. The other, running south, had a 10 inch square internal section and its nails were still in position.

With the permission of the holder of the allotment to the east, a further area was excavated and this produced an inhumation whose grave was lined with septaria and built into the footings of the north wall of the corridor. The skeleton was aligned east and west. Unfortunately there were no grave goods and all that could be said was that it post-dated this portion of the villa and pre-dated the stone robbing. Stone robbers, in lifting the footings, had burst into the grave as evidenced by the gap in the stone lining and the absence of the pelvic bone.

In the rubble silting of rooms 3 and 5 were blocks of large red tesserae, 14 to 12 inches square and also the smaller mosaic tesserae, ½ inch square, in. black, white and red, septaria, clump chalk and brick, respectively. Fragments of painted wall plaster were in brown, red, purple, yellow, blue and green.

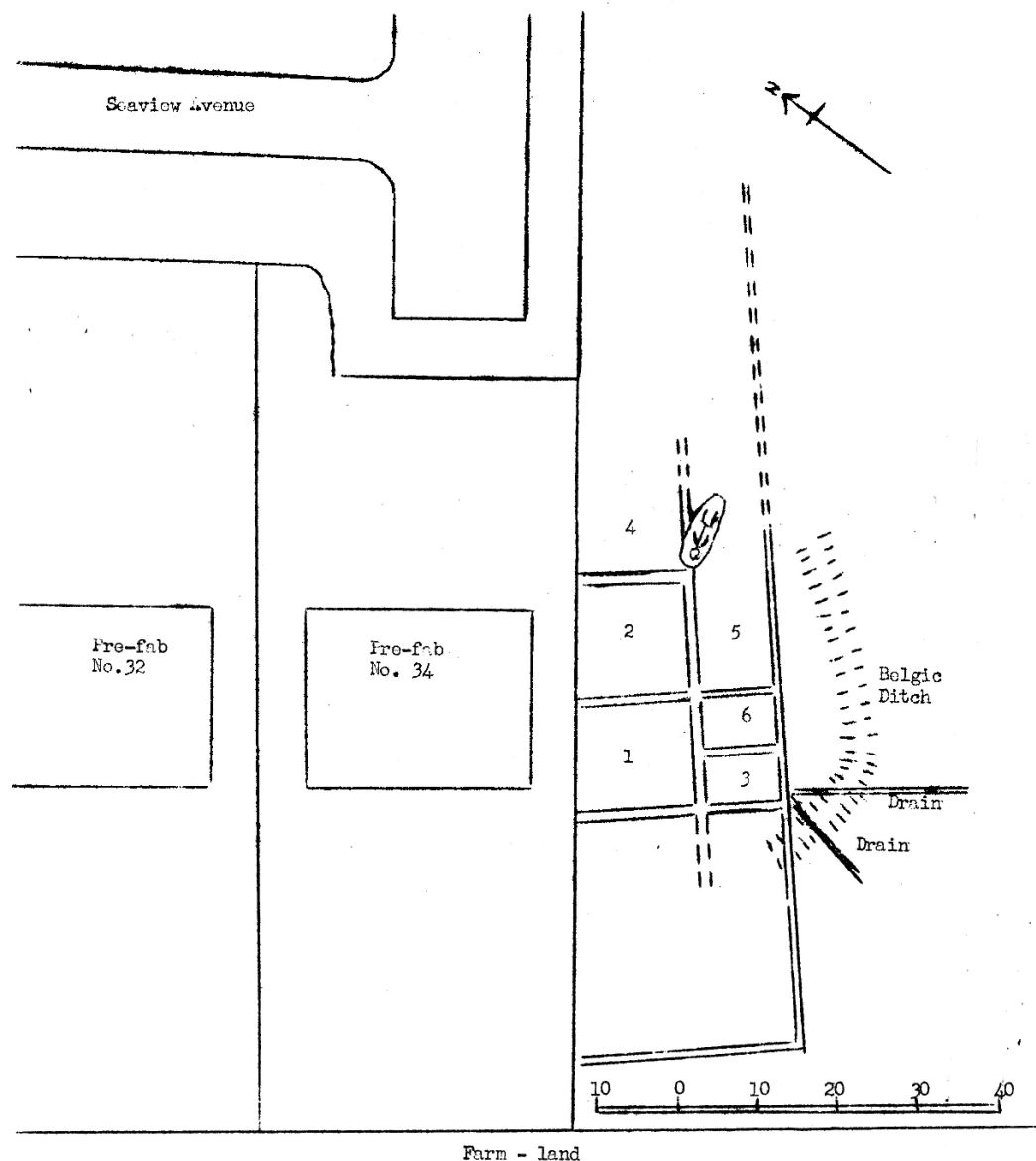
Dating of this portion of the villa is uncertain as no floor levels remain. One of the wall footings

cut through a gully containing late 1st century Romano-British ware. The pottery in the two drain trenches was late 1st century and 2nd century ware but also containing a few small pieces of red ware with white barbotine decoration, probably 3rd or 4th century. The silting of room 5 contained a coin of the house of Constantine and pottery of the late 1st to 4th centuries.

Earlier this year a timber framed building was found some 200 foot to the west. Only a 3 inch layer of debris remained under the plough level and this contained late 2nd and 3rd century ware with four very worn coins:- two of Trajan, one of Marcus Aurelius and one barbarous radiate of the late 3rd century.

Some 400 foot to the NE a number of Romano-British field and demarcation ditches have been found also two 6 foot deep Iron Age A ditches. Whilst sectioning these two large pagan Saxon pits were discovered with some surprise. This autumn a further Saxon hearth has come to light some 120 feet south of the villa and adjacent to Romano-British footings which, as a welcome surprise, are 30 inches below ground level.

Thus continuity of occupation of the site of some 1000 years has been proved, with the hope that evidence will come to light on the transitional phases between the various cultures.



IRON AGE ESSEX

The Map of Iron Age Essex contained in this issue of the Bulletin has been produced at the suggestion of Mr. M. R. Hull, and we hope in due course to produce a copy of it, on a larger scale, for display in the Castle Museum.

We are much indebted to Mr Hull for his advice and for the provision of sources of material used in compiling the information shown in the map; though, of course, any errors are the responsibility of the compilers.

The sources referred to were:

(a) The annotated set of 6" Ordnance Survey Maps of Essex maintained at the Castle. This set contains hundreds of archaeological sites marked - mainly by Mr Hull - in manuscript as reported from time to time.

(b) Mr Hull's typescript of the, as yet, unpublished Victoria County History Volume which covers the period in the new V.C.H. series.

(c) The old Victoria County History of 1902.

(d) A few entries have been based on sites mentioned by other authorities.

All the Iron Age Sites of which the compilers could find records have been entered on the map save for some of the Red Hills which exist in such numbers along the Essex seaboard that it is impracticable to enter them on a small scale map. For similar reasons we have had to omit linear earthworks such as the well-known Lexden Banks.

The most noticeable feature of the distribution of known sites of the Iron Age period in the County, is their paucity in the Great Chesterford - Canvey Island - West Ham triangle; though this may be partly due to comparative scarcity of field archaeologists in that district.

If any reader of the Bulletin has knowledge of sites not shown on the map, Mrs K. Brisay (Hon. Secretary of the Group) would be pleased to have particulars so that they can be included on the map which is being prepared for the Castle.

