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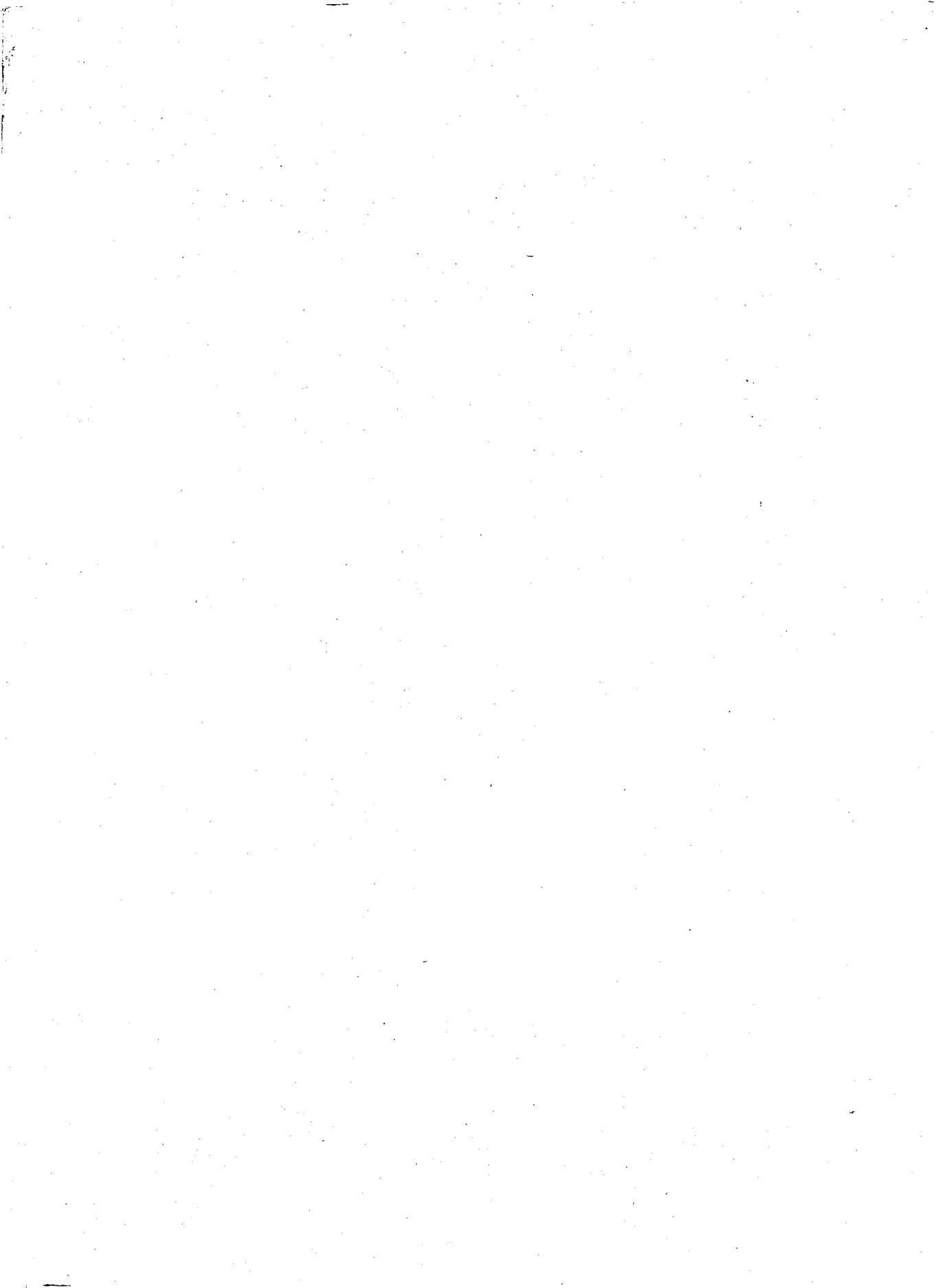
VOLUME LVIII

JANUARY 1965 TO DECEMBER 1965

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DEIGHTON BELL

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THE ROMAN POTTERY FROM COLDHAM CLAMP AND ITS AFFINITIES

TIMOTHY POTTER

INTRODUCTION

IN January 1960 the writer's brother was searching the Coldham¹ area for Romano-British remains. Discussion with labourers on the C.W.S. Farm² revealed that the building of a potato clamp had brought to light a considerable quantity of Romano-British pottery,³ some of which was collected. Unfortunately, the clamp had destroyed a large part of the site, but a small area beside the clamp had survived. Ploughing had disturbed this area to a depth of 15 in. below the surface, but the layers beneath were intact. They rested on silt with a clay subsoil (Fig. 1).

Excavation at Easter 1960⁴ revealed three main periods of occupation. The earliest period comprised the digging of a ditch which encircled a silt mound. The top of the mound was mostly ploughed off, although traces of crumbling brick presumably marked the former presence of some structure. The ditch was subsequently filled by a clayey deposit possibly deriving from the structure on the mound. Period II was separated from the earlier layer by a consistent stratum of ash. This possibly represents the burning of vegetation that had grown over the ditch filling and mound. The Period II layer appeared to be material derived from a structure south of the ditch, attested by large pieces of brick. The latest layer, which contained a great deal of charcoal, was partially disturbed by modern ploughing. The dating of all these periods is discussed in connection with the pottery.

The material finds consisted of pottery, one small insignificant fragment of green glass, several pieces of quernstone, and a considerable number of bones of domestic animals. No metal objects were found.

The value of the Coldham site lies in the pottery recovered. The sherds excavated form the first stratified series to come from this part of the Fens, and give a basis for study of Fenland coarse wares of the first and second centuries A.D. The main purpose of this report, therefore, is to consider the Coldham sherds in detail, and draw comparisons with finds from other sites. The results are considered in the conclusion to this paper.

¹ A small village about five miles to the north of March, Isle of Ely.

² The writer would like to thank the manager and workers on this farm for their invaluable co-operation.

³ Nat. Grid: TL/448027; 4402N in Royal Geographical Society Research Memoir Classification of Fenland Sites. O.D.: 6½ ft.

⁴ The excavation was carried out with the help of boys from March Grammar School Archaeological Society.

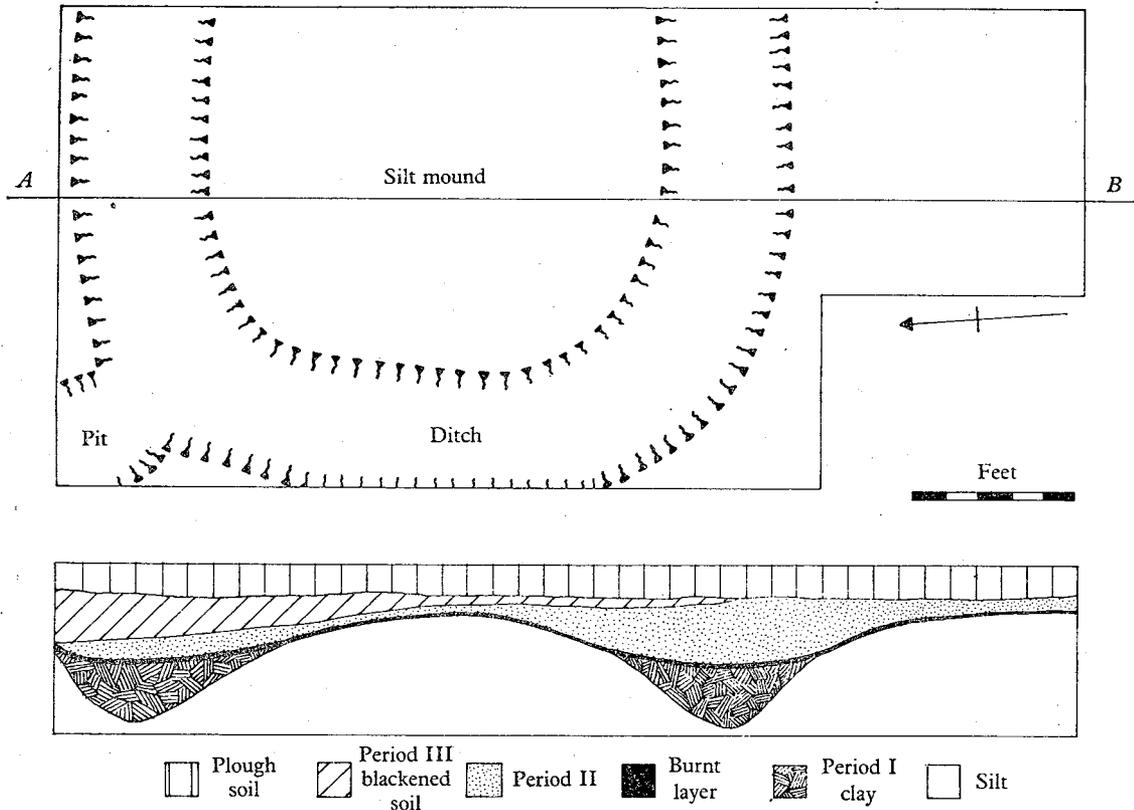


Fig. 1. Plan and section of Coldham Clamp, 1960.

THE COLDHAM POTTERY

(a) *Samian ware*

The comparative rarity of Samian sherds from the site indicates its poverty. A parallel situation was observed at Needham in Norfolk, where Samian practically vanished in levels dated to after the Icenian Revolt of A.D. 60/61—presumably as a result of the devastation of East Anglia by Suetonius—and did not become common until the mid-second century. Unfortunately, the valuable dating evidence that would arise from the discovery of Samian in this context is therefore lost.

Five of the twelve pots recovered may be assigned to the first century, however, which must place the initial occupation to between *c.* A.D. 65–75.

(b) *Colour-coated and painted wares*

Colour-coated wares, probably from the kilns in the Nene Valley, appear in Period II, although examples are rare. In Period III, however, these wares become fairly common. Rough-cast colour-coated ware is very scarce throughout, and bowls with painted flanges only appear in the last phase.

Generally, it would seem that late in Period II (the late second century) wares from the Nene Valley factories¹ began to compete with the burnished grey wares. By Period III the burnished wares were in a minority to colour-coated wares, and it would seem probable, from the quantity and the types of the pottery, that occupation on this site lasted to the early or middle third century.

(c) *Coarse wares*

1. *Flagons*: The mica-dusted pinched-neck type from Period I is the only stratified example (Fig. 2, C11).

2. *Mortaria*: The rim sherd from Period II stamped GARM (anus?) is, according to Mrs Hartley, probably East Anglian in origin (Fig. 3, C5). The iron-gritted types in buff fabric made in the Nene Valley appear with the colour-coated wares.² Generally, *mortaria* are rare.

3. Bowls, jars and dishes:

Period I

The fabric is usually hard, with a grey core, and frequently a burnished surface. Many sherds show a tendency to flake. Fairly angular, carinated jars (e.g. Fig. 2, C4, C118) appear, often decorated on the shoulder with lattice and oblique-stroke motifs. A bowl (Fig. 2, C129), with a bulge instead of a carination, is also found. The jar form, in which the body is defined from the neck by a groove or raised band (e.g. Fig. 2, C133, C134), is common. Rilling is found on the bodies of many of the vessels.

Dating

The first-century Samian, and the close similarity of many of the types to Claudian and early Flavian vessels from East Anglia, suggests a date of *c.* A.D. 65–75 for the beginning of this period. The period probably ended about A.D. 120, although this is by no means certain.

Period II

The fabric of vessels from Period II is harder than in Period I, less inclined to flake, and more frequently burnished. The carinated jars and bowls are less angular than the earlier types, although decoration is more common. Rilling is infrequent. In one case (Fig. 4, C165) the carination appears to have been absorbed into the body, a characteristic of Nene Valley types.³ Dishes include the straight-sided form with pronounced rim (e.g. Fig. 3, C8), and the imitation Gallo-Belgic dish (e.g. Fig. 3, C6). Reeded-rim carinated bowls (Fig. 3, C9) in buff fabric appear, and the tall narrow-necked jar (Fig. 4, C3).

¹ At the *Jewry Wall* site, they started A.D. 170–180 (p. 120).

² *Hartley*, fig. 3, no. 10 and p. 25.

³ Cf. *Standen*, fig. 1, nos. 3–4.

Dating

The date of the beginning of this period is uncertain, although the prevalence of types analogous to those produced at the Caistor kilns, *c.* A.D. 110–40, might suggest a date in the region of A.D. 120–30. The terminal date can be put at about A.D. 200, from the small proportion of Castor colour-coated ware, which was first produced about A.D. 160.¹

Period III

Coarse grey wares show a marked decline in Period III, although examples like C2 and C19 (Fig. 5) suggest the carination of previous periods. Dishes have the chamfer that marks the Nene Valley products,² and highly polished, delicate bowls like C195 (Fig. 5) attest an increase in material living standards.

Dating

The absence of an adequate type-series of pottery for the third century A.D. makes dating of the end of occupation on this site difficult. However, an early or middle third-century date would not be improbable, because of the proportion of second-century types in the Period III stratum.

NOTE: No coins were found with which to confirm the pottery dating.

4. *Gritted ware* (Fig. 6)

Storage jars and bowls, generally with a curved, shallow profile, are common from about A.D. 100. Some examples are hand-made. Gritted ware forms about 30 per cent of the pottery found. The fabric is (a) soft, red, studded with shells and white grit; (b) rather harder, buff with red core; also (c) brown, fairly hard, gritted. There seems to be little chronological significance in the variations of form and fabric.

SAMIAN WARE

There was no Samian from the levels of Period I; all the material listed here is from the second and third levels.³

1. CS 1, 2, 3, 4. Four burnt fragments from the same form 37. The ovolo has been sheared off in finishing the rim, and only part of a festoon and some tendrils survive. For what it is worth, the style is reminiscent of ACAVNISSA. Probably Hadrianic or early Antonine.

2. CS 5, 6, 7, 7a, 7b. Five fragments from the same South Gaulish form 27, with fabric and glaze typical of the Neronian to early Vespasianic period.

3. CS 8. Form 18, South Gaulish. Rivet hole. Flavian–Trajanic.

4. CS 9, 10, 11. Three fragments from the same form 18/31, Central Gaulish. Hadrian–Antonine.

5. CS 12. Form 31, Central Gaulish. Antonine, probably later than A.D. 150.

¹ *J.R.S.* LII, p. 169.

² *Hartley*, p. 25.

³ I am indebted to Mr B. R. Hartley for reporting on the Samian.

Table showing the chronological relationship between pottery of probable East Anglian origin and other wares at Coldham

Samian	Period	East Anglian wares					Total	Approx. proportion* (%)
		Carinated			Other forms			
		Decorated	Undecorated	Weak		Sharp		
First century:	I c. A.D. 65-75	6	3	5	3	5	14	70
					One uncertain			
First-second century:	II c. A.D. 120-30	7	4	8	3	7	18	60
Second century:	III Early or mid third century	1	—	2	—	1	4	20

* Approximate percentage of all wares found, including those sherds not illustrated.

6. CS 13. Form 18 R, South Gaulish. Flavian–Trajanic.
7. CS 14. Form 18 (R?), South Gaulish, riveted. Flavian.
8. CS 15. Form 18, South Gaulish. Neronian or early Flavian.
9. CS 16. Form 18/31 or 31, Central Gaulish. Probably early Antonine.
10. CXS 1. Form 18/31, Central Gaulish. Hadrian–Antonine.
11. CXS 2. Form 29, South Gaulish. Part of the lower zone with straight gadroons, probably over a scroll. The style of decoration was a long-lived one (cf. Knorr, 1919,¹ Taf. 17A—CALVVS; *ibid.* Taf. 33—GALICANVS), but the fabric of this piece, especially its brilliant gloss, suggests manufacture c. A.D. 55–75.
12. CXS 3. Form 18, South Gaulish, with stamp AI (not identified). Probably early Flavian.

COLDHAM POTTERY—COARSE WARE: PERIOD I (Fig. 2)

C129. Wide-mouthed jar with grey core, and black burnished surface. Well-everted rim; a cordon, demarcated by grooves, on the shoulder.

Ancestral type: probably *Camulodunum*, 218 Ca (1). See also *Needham*, 40 (a more debased type than Coldham) c. A.D. 100.

C134. Medium-mouthed jar in light grey fabric; hard black exterior. Rim is sharply everted and the shoulder is deeply scored with horizontal lines. Cf. C133 below.

Similar form to *Claudian Needham*, 39 (not fully decorated). *Caistor Kilns*, Class A. Later example than Coldham: *Arbury Rd*, 27 (c. A.D. 130–60).

C103. Wide-mouthed jar in a hard grey fabric, with a patchy burnt exterior, marked with faint rilling. Unpronounced form.

Similar to C134. Same parallels and *Needham*, 54 (A.D. 100–40).

C133. A form of more pronounced shape than C103; the rim is separated from the body by two grooves. Hard, grey fabric, with light grey core. Shallow rilling on the body.

Similar to C134 and C103; same parallels.

C17. Medium-mouthed jar in a hard, dark grey fabric. Undecorated shoulder.

Cf. *Runcton Holme*, 19.

C118. Carinated jar with grey-brown core, and light grey exterior. Exterior immediately below rim and decoration are burnished. The body below the carination is rilled.

C66. Medium-mouthed jar in grey fabric. Incised, oblique decoration on the shoulder.

C11. Pinched-neck flagon in a light buff-brown fabric with reddish core and mica-dusted surface.

Camulodunum, 157–9.

C4. Carinated jar in a grey, burnished fabric, with light grey-buff core. Burnished lattice decoration on the shoulder.

As C118, although fabric and decoration differ. Exact parallel from *Norwood*, NB2 (Fig. 8).

C14. A strainer bowl, virtually complete as far as the shoulder. Found intact, though in a very flaky and fragile condition, in the bottom of the ditch. Dark grey fabric, with light grey-buff core. The base is pierced all over.

Basic shape *Camulodunum*, 212, and *Claudian Needham*, 31.

C12. Fragment of a cheese press; hard black fabric with grey core. The interior has a crude lattice pattern, deeply incised.

Camulodunum, 199.

C13. A small dish, nearly complete, in soft light-grey, slightly gritty fabric.

Needham, 5 (A.D. 60–80).

¹ R. Knorr, *Töpfe und Fabriken verzierter Terra-Sigillata des ersten Jahrhunderts* (1919).

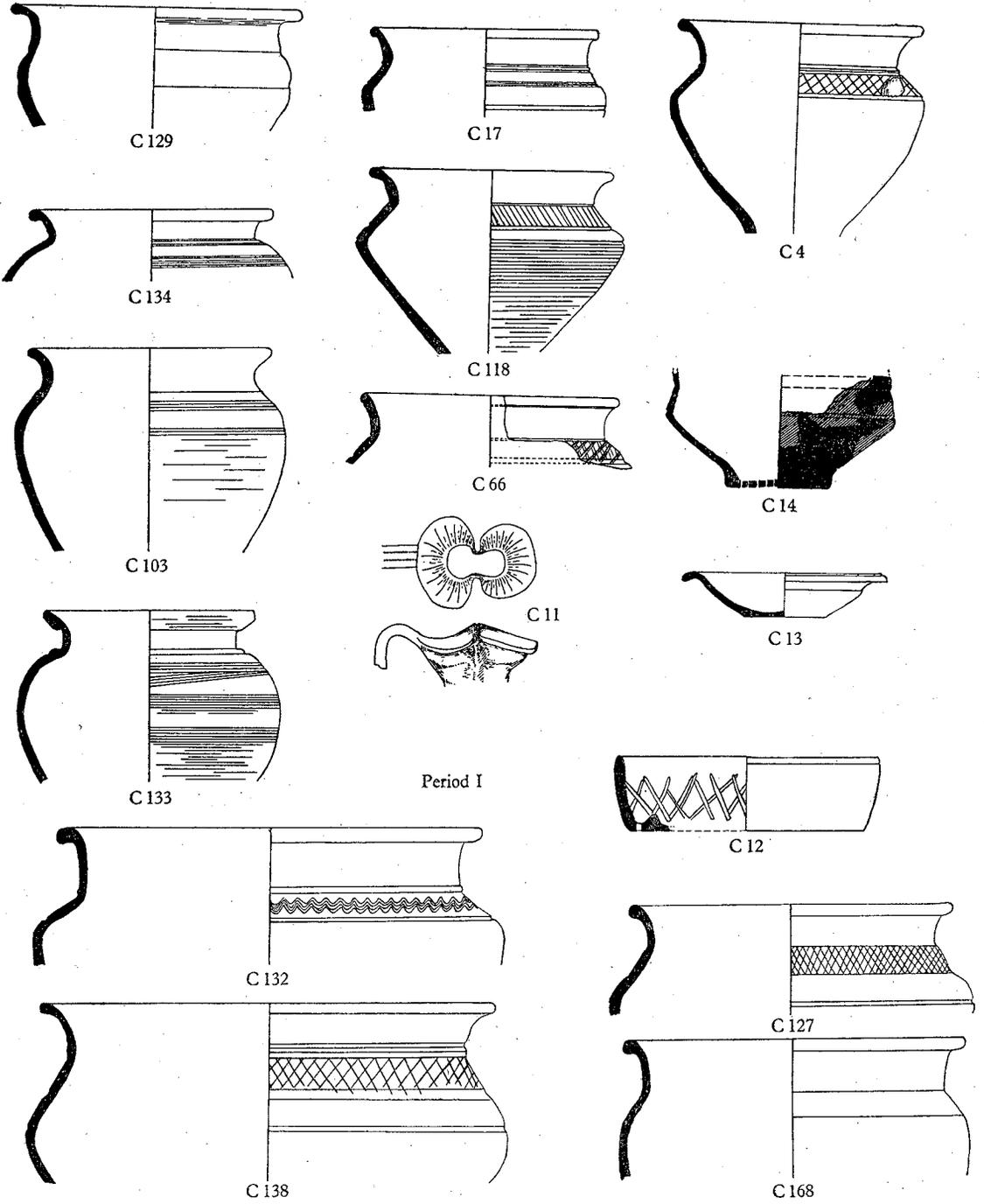


Fig. 2. Coldham: Coarse ware. Period I. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

C132. A large carinated jar in hard grey fabric. The exterior is burnished, and the shoulder decorated with incised wavy lines.

C138. A wide-mouthed jar in hard light-grey fabric. Burnished lattice pattern on the shoulder. *Caistor Kilns*, Group G; *Needham*, 38; *Runcton Holme*, 19, 20; *Arbury Rd*, 20A.

C127. Wide-mouthed jar in burnished grey fabric with grey-buff core. Burnished lattice pattern on the shoulder.

As C138.

C168. Wide-mouthed jar in gritty buff fabric (almost white).

Needham, 59.

COLDHAM POTTERY—COARSE WARE: PERIOD II (Figs. 3, 4)

C90. Large medium-mouthed jar in buff fabric, and decorated with a series of incised vertical lines, very roughly drawn, starting immediately below the neck (Fig. 3).

For the decoration cf. *Needham*, 71.

C5. *Mortarium* in hard red-brown fabric, with orange core. There is no grit. The rim is stamped GARM (ANVS?) with MARCV, retrograde, below in semi-cursive letters. I am indebted to Mrs B. R. Hartley for examining the sherd; she reports that this stamp is previously unknown, although she suspects it to be that of an East Anglian potter (Fig. 3).

Caistor, R15 (A.D. 120-50).

C6. Imitation Gallo-Belgic dish in smooth grey fabric, with an external burnish. Fairly pronounced foot moulding. Internal decoration (not illustrated) comprising brown burnished radial lines at intervals of about half an inch on the basal interior (Fig. 3).

Needham, 4 (A.D. 80-120).

C94a. Medium-mouthed jar in grey fabric, with an external burnish. The shoulder is decorated with burnished wavy oblique lines, and demarcated by grooves. The carination is fairly weak, and there is a girth groove just below the shoulder (Fig. 3).

Needham, 38; *Caistor*, S12 (A.D. 100-30).

C23. Wide-mouthed jar in grey fabric, with external burnish. The shoulder is decorated with regular burnished oblique strokes (Fig. 3).

As C94a.

C34. Wide-mouthed jar in a smooth grey fabric. No decoration (Fig. 3).

Caistor Kilns, C1.

C8. Straight-sided dish with flat rim in dark grey fabric, burnished on the exterior. This is a deep type, with slightly angled sides. There is no chamfer (Fig. 3).

C9. A reeded-rim carinated bowl, in a hard light-brown gritty fabric, with a grey core (Fig. 3).

Caistor, Group V.

C166. A reeded-rim carinated bowl, in a gritty cream fabric, with a reddish core. There is a groove just above the carination (Fig. 3).

As C9.

CX7. A nearly complete jar, most of which was discovered on the surface, but some sherds were recovered in a stratified context. Hard grey unburnished fabric, with light-grey core. The shoulder is decorated with incised oblique lines, and there is rilling on the body (Fig. 3).

Cf. C118.

C48. A wide-mouthed carinated jar, in grey fabric, with grey-brown core. The shoulder is undecorated and the rim ingrooved (Fig. 4).

C18. Wide-mouthed jar in smooth light-grey fabric. The shoulder is undecorated and marked with a cordon at the junction with the neck (Fig. 4). Cf. C168 on Fig. 2.

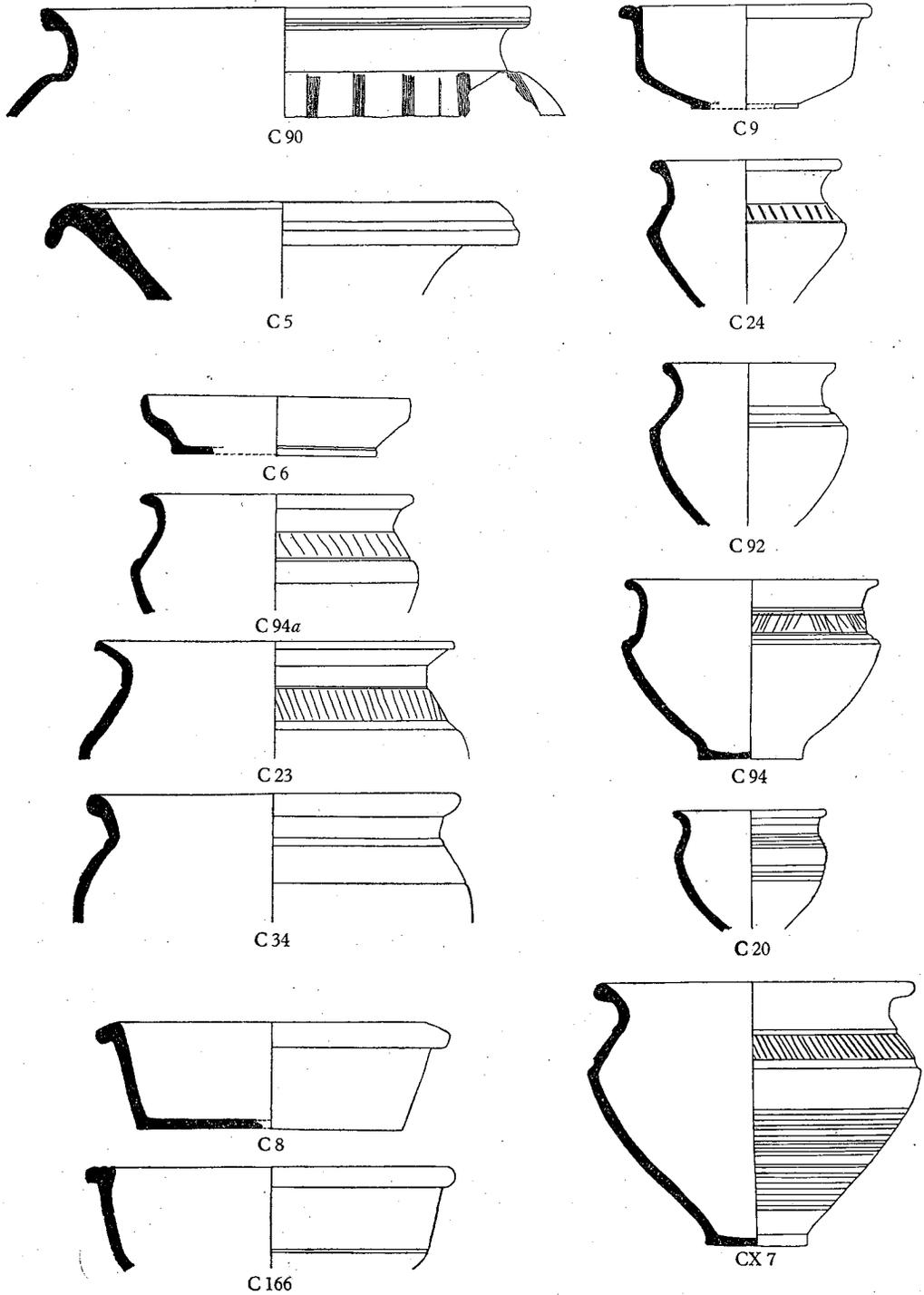


Fig. 3. Coldham: Coarse ware. Period II. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

C24. A small carinated jar in a burnished grey-brown fabric. The shoulder is decorated with oblique, burnished strokes (Fig. 3).

C92. Carinated jar in soft grey fabric, partially burnished externally. Small black grit on the internal surface. Undecorated (Fig. 3).

C94. Nearly complete, carinated jar, in brown burnished fabric, with grey core. The shoulder is decorated with oblique burnished lines, with double cordons above and below the decoration (Fig. 3).

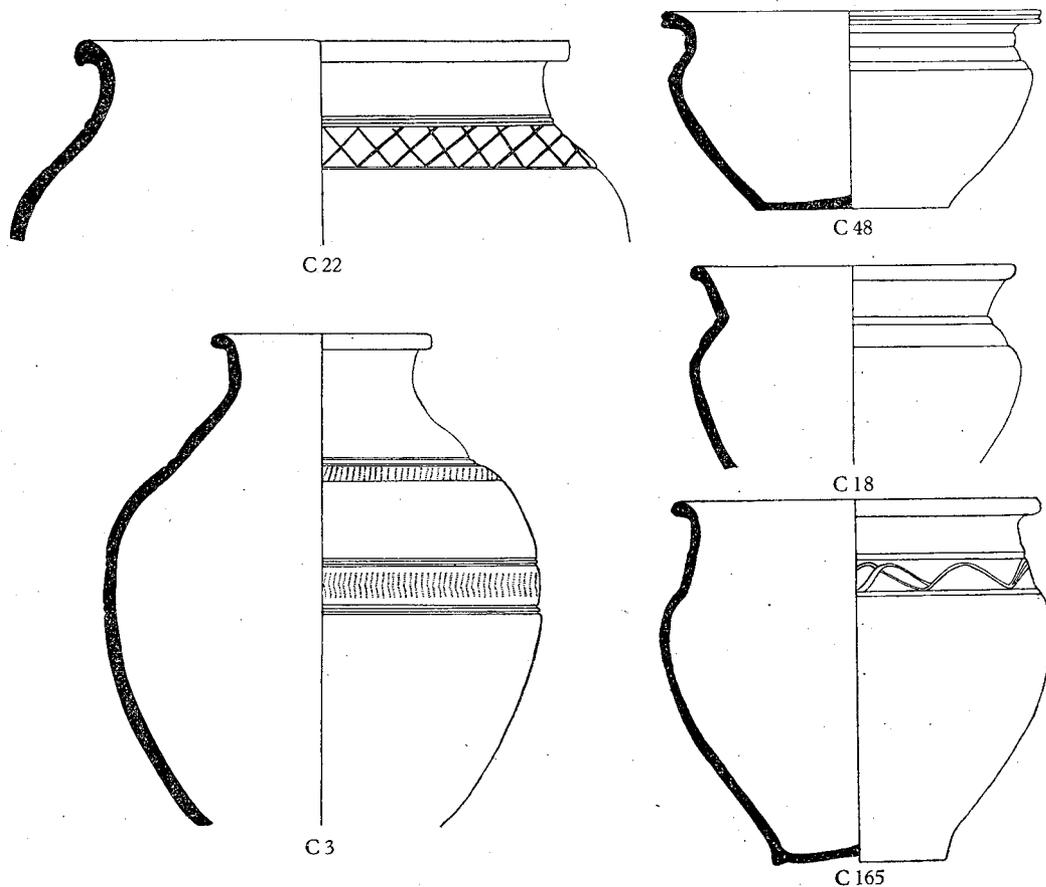


Fig. 4. Coldham: Coarse ware. Period II. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

C20. Small jar in hard black fabric, with brown core. There are two bands of rilling on the body (Fig. 3).

Very small version of *Caistor Kilns*, Group G, no. 6.

C22. Large jar in hard burnished grey fabric, with light grey core. Burnished lattice pattern on the shoulder (Fig. 4).

Caistor, S12; *Needham*, 52.

C3. Large narrow-necked jar in hard grey fabric, with a metallic burnish. Light grey core. There are two bands of decoration, comprising stabbed dots in diagonal lines (upper band) and chevrons (lower band) (Fig. 4).

Caistor Kilns, Group K, no. 4.

C165. Jar in hard burnished, light-grey fabric, with grey-white core. Burnished wavy decoration on the shoulder (Fig. 4).

Cf. *Wisbech Museum*, nos. 1 and 8. Both form and decoration are characteristic of Nene Valley products.

C1. Castor box lid, $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. in width and $2\frac{3}{8}$ in. in height, in white fabric, with an orange colour-coat. The 'wall' is completely covered with stabbed decoration, and the area between the 'handle' and the wall has two bands of rouletted decoration. (Not illustrated.)

Hartley, fig. 4, no. 18.

COLDHAM POTTERY—COARSE WARE: PERIOD III (Fig. 5)

C197. The rim, base and various body sherds (probably from the same vessel) of a small jar, with a red core and a mica-dusted, hard buff surface. Everted rim and foot stand base. The body is decorated with raised circular knobs.

Charleston: *Roman Pottery* (1955), fig. 85 (third quarter of first century A.D.). *Caistor*, T3 (first and early second centuries A.D.).

This jar is presumably residual.

C195. Small bowl in a buff fabric, with a smooth lustrous exterior. There are three ribs on the body, between which are rows of rouletted decoration.

C196. Dish with smooth burnished exterior and white core. Judging from the fabric, probably a Nene Valley product.

C206. Small jar in reddish fabric, with a red colour-coat.

C205. Jar in white fabric, with orange colour-coat. Ingrooved rim.

C207. Beaker with grey core, a light grey-brown interior and lustrous dark-brown exterior. There is a band of rilling on the external surface.

C201. Rough-cast beaker in bright orange fabric.

Caistor, T2 (A.D. 110-60).

C202. Fragment of flange of bowl or dish. Red-buff core and cream exterior. The design is painted in orange.

Jewry Wall, fig. 22.

C200. Dish in white fabric, with orange colour-coat.

CX74. Dish in gritty buff-brown fabric.

C204. Flange of bowl or dish, with reddish core and smooth, cream exterior. Yellow-brown slip on top of flange. The hatched line is painted pale orange, and the black lines pale brown.

As C202.

C26. Jar in white fabric, with purple-grey slip or colour-coat. The shoulder is decorated with incised oblique lines.

Standen, fig. 1, nos. 3, 4.

C7. Straight-sided dish with triangular rim, in smooth grey fabric. Chamfer on the base.

The chamfer and fabric suggest this is probably a Nene Valley product—*Hartley*, p. 25, no. 5.

C28. Small carinated bowl in grey fabric, burnished externally.

CX31. Jar with everted rim. Brick-coloured core, and grey exterior, burnished in bands. Incised vertical decoration.

C98. Butt beaker in coarse buff fabric, with grey core. Incised decoration. This must be a rubbish survival.

Camulodunum, 113.

C19. Jar in light grey fabric. The shoulder is decorated with groups of incised vertical lines.

C33. Jar with everted rim. Groove on shoulder, above which is a band of lattice decoration, too faint to illustrate.

C164. Dish, imitation Samian form 18, in hard grey fabric, with light grey core. The rim and interior are burnished.

C2. Jar in coarse light grey fabric. Burnished oblique strokes on the shoulder.

CX1. Bowl, imitation Samian form 37, with grey core, and highly polished black exterior. The decoration comprises incised concentric half-circles and combed decoration.

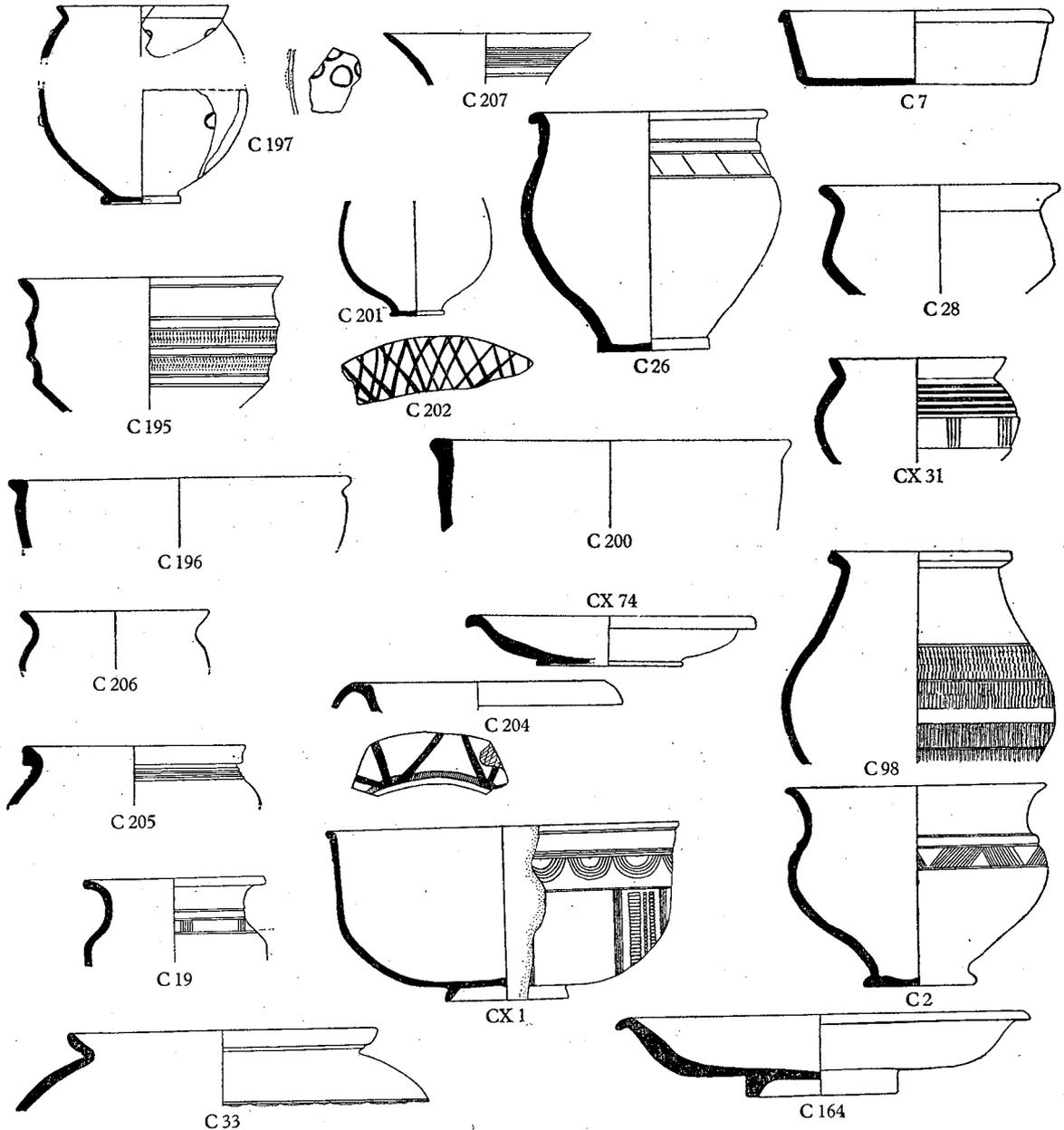


Fig. 5. Coldham: Coarse ware. Period III. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

Needham, 62 (A.D. c. 100); so-called London Ware (*B.M. Guide to Roman Britain* (1958), fig. 17, no. 21); *West Stowe*, fig. 10, nos. 1a, b; C. Fox, *Archaeology of the Cambridge Region* (1923), p. 268 (late second/early or middle third century).

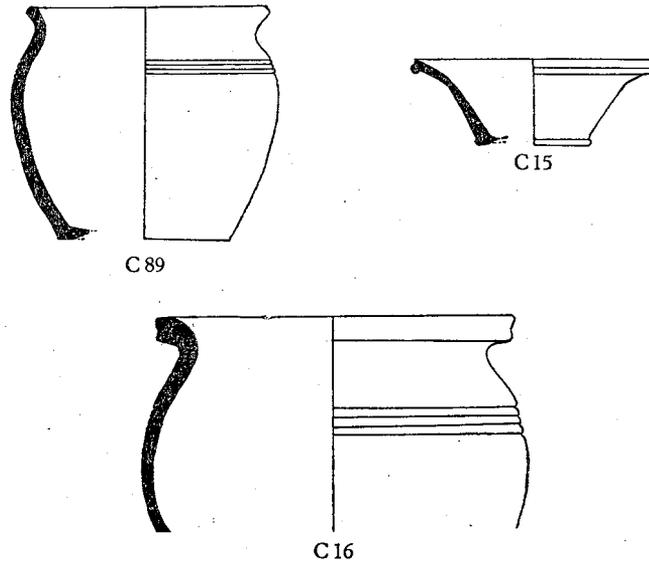


Fig. 6. Coldham: Grittred ware. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

COLDHAM POTTERY—TYPE ORIGINS

The native pottery at Coldham would seem to have close affinities with the Swarling-Aylesford La Tène III family.¹ As Hawkes and Hull have shown at Colchester, the types characteristic of that period were developed into standard, early Romano-British forms.

East Anglia

Camulodunum. These standard forms first appear at Camulodunum in Period IV (A.D. 49–61), and comprise, in the main, beakers, platters, dishes, bowls and jars, in hard-fired fabric, with a well-levigated paste, baked to a uniform clear grey. The forms of particular relevance to the Coldham pottery are the cups and bowls of La Tène type, especially *Camulodunum* forms 212, 214, 216 and 218.

212. Usual native form of carinated bowl with an angular constriction, marked by a single cordon.

214. Standard form, similar to 212, but not constricted, and with two small cordons.

216. Sharp carination of 214, 'but the constriction comes close under the rim, marked by one or two cordons with a slight bulge between'.

218. Very common. Deep carinated bowl, with bulge between cordons on the shoulder.

¹ J. P. Bushe-Fox, 'Excavations of the Late Celtic Urnfield at Swarling, Kent', *Rep. Res. Ctee Soc. Ant.* no. v (1925).

Needham. The site at Needham, Norfolk, was reinhabited after the Boudiccan revolt of A.D. 60/61, and reached its zenith soon after the middle of the second century. It probably came to an end at the beginning of the third century. The pottery has many affinities with that from Coldham, and many of the Caistor types are found at Needham. For example, both 38 and 39 are jars with a weak carination, the shoulder decorated with a lattice pattern; the fabric is also inclined to flake, a common feature of the Coldham pottery.

The pottery from the Claudian ditch at Needham also shows a Romanization of types similar to that at Colchester. Pottery finds here included Samian and Gallo-Belgic imports from the Continent, Belgic wares traded from the Colchester region, and, chiefly, Icenian pottery inspired by these non-local products. Types like 14, 28, 31 and 41 reflect the carinated, cordoned, burnished types at Colchester—and Coldham—and 39 is similar to Coldham's C133, C134 and C103 (Fig. 2).

Needham 14. 'Grey bowl romanized in appearance, though softly baked; sharp carination; two pronounced cordons, bounding a faintly burnished chevron.'

Needham 28. 'Bowl of fine dull dark brown paste, wide shallow grooves at base of neck and above carination.'

Needham 31. 'Bowl or beaker in rough dark grey clay, coarsely smoothed above pronounced carination.'

Needham 41. 'Carinated bowl of grey-brown ware, roughly burnished... burnished trellis... flaky red interior.'

Needham 39. 'Storage jar; coarse grey-brown ware, interior surface almost flaked away.'

Caistor. The kilns at Caistor, which Atkinson deduced were in production from c. A.D. 110-40,¹ manufactured pottery very similar to that found in Coldham's Period II. Atkinson's groups F and G include 'the most characteristic type of vessel found in Kiln III and Kiln II-III stokehole'. These pots have a sharp angle—usually marked by a girth groove—at the widest part of the body, a cordon at the junction of the neck and body, and an out-turned rim with a thickened lip. Fabrics and decoration motifs similar to those at Coldham are found on the Caistor pots; for example, compare G1 and G2 with CX7 (Fig. 3).

G1. 'Coarse, black clay; foot slightly moulded; polished horizontal bands on lower part of body, irregular polished lattice on shoulder; broad rounded cordon.'

Other sites. Other East Anglian sites, such as the villages at Brettenham² and Runcton Holme and the villa at Gayton Thorpe,³ have produced on excavation pottery similar to the sherds described. The 200-acre site at Hockwold-cum-Wilton,⁴ Norfolk, where excavations have established occupation throughout most of the second century, has also produced an interesting sequence of pottery.

¹ *Caistor Kilns*, p. 33.

² R. R. Clarke, 'The Roman Villages at Brettenham and Needham and the Contemporary Road System', *Norfolk Archaeology*, xxvi (1937), pp. 123-63.

³ D. Atkinson, 'The Roman Villa of Gayton Thorpe', *Norfolk Archaeology*, xxiii (1928), pp. 166-209.

⁴ 'Roman Britain in 1961', *J.R.S.* LII (1962), p. 176.

Summary of sites in the March/Wisbech area (see p. 28)

Site	Nat. grid	State	Pottery	Date	Samian	Remarks
Honey Hill	TL/435894	Ploughed excavation, F. M. Walker, <i>J.R.S.</i> (1924)	'Many potsherds... characteristic of coarse Romano-British wares corresponding to the transition from the La Tène period'	Late first-fourth century	S	Probably East Anglian wares
Sparrow Hall	TL/480941	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second-fourth century	S *	*
Stonebridge Farm (a)	TL/463939	Grass	?	?	?	Ditches *
Stonebridge Farm (b)	TL/462942	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second-fourth century	S	<i>P.P.S.E.A.</i> VII, 425
Stoney Golden Lion Inn, Stoney	TL/457942 TL/460934	Ploughed Ploughed	Hut ditch on this site contained early second-early third century pottery. Only about 5% of sherds similar to E.A. wares. Mainly early colour-coated and rough-cast sherds	Early second-early third century	S	Excavation 1960
Fincham Farm	TL/465927	Ploughed	?	?	S	Coin of Antoninus Pius
Hardings Drain (a)	TL/453934	Ploughed	E.A. wares found	Second-fourth century	S †	
Hardings Drain (b)	TL/457934	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second-fourth century	S *	*
Stoney Grange (a)	TL/451936	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Late first-fourth century	S *	*
Stoney Grange (b)	TL/451944	Grass	?	?	?	Ditches ?
Stoney Camp	TL/448931	Ploughed	No. E.A. wares	c. A.D. 50	S	—
Earls Fen Farm	TL/458951	Ploughed	?	?	S	?
Manor House	TL/413908	Ploughed	No E.A. wares; third-fourth century	Third-fourth century	—	—
Stoney Grange (c)	TL/448946	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares.	Second-fourth century	S *	*
Millhill	TL/414937	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second-fourth century	S *	*
Middle Level Yards, March	TL/421968	Built on	Site mostly destroyed	?	S	A. K. Astbury, <i>The Black Fens</i> (1958), p. 165

Grandford	TL/393998	Grass and ploughed	Excavation has produced stratified sequence from A.D. 65-75 to 400. Identical sequence to Coldham	A.D. 65/75-400	S †
Westry Farm	TL/403989	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second to early or middle third century	S *
Norwood	TL/418995	Ploughed	Considerable amount of E.A. wares	Late first-fourth century	S †
Flaggrass	TL/433983	Ploughed	E.A. wares well represented	Late first-fourth century	S †
Rodham Farm	TL/458982	Ploughed	None	Third-fourth century	— Proc. C.A.S. XLIII, II
Frank's Farm	TL/453996	Ploughed	?	Second century (?)	S ?
Graysmoor	TL/413007	Ploughed	?	Second-fourth century	S ?
Whitehouse Farm	TL/444008	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second-fourth century	S *
Livermere	TL/449001	Ploughed	?	century ?	? ?
Stags Holt	TL/438001	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Late first-fourth century	S *
Rutlands	TL/431009	Ploughed	?	Second century (?)	S ?
Whitemill Drain	TL/451011	Ploughed	?	Second to ?	? ?
North Rutlands	TL/429016	Ploughed	?	Second century (?)	? ?
Coldham Field	TL/434016	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	?	? *
Coldham Bank	TL/448018	Ploughed	Many E.A. types in Wisbech Museum. Considerable proportion of E.A. wares	Late first or early second-fourth century	S † †
Coldham Clamp	TL/448027	Ploughed	Type site	A.D. 65/75—early or mid third century	S †
Waldersea	TL/451034	Ploughed	Small proportion of E.A. wares	Second-fourth century	S *

? Nothing known. * Small proportion of East Anglian wares (0-5%). † Moderate proportion of East Anglian wares (5-10%).

† Considerable quantities of East Anglian wares (over 10%). E.A. = East Anglian.

NOTE: The information is from surface finds, unless otherwise indicated. Only the general range of data is given.

From the parallels quoted above, it seems clear that the Coldham series belongs to an East Anglian tradition, strongly represented on Norfolk sites. We may now attempt to estimate the incidence in the Fens of the typical carinated cordoned wares found at Coldham. They are referred to below as *East Anglian* wares. Any definite conclusions regarding the incidence of East Anglian wares in this area are limited by the cursory nature of present knowledge. The work of locating sites is still incomplete, and for most only surface finds are available. However, the table (pp. 26-7) attempts to summarize the evidence afforded by sites in the vicinity of March and Wisbech.

NORWOOD, MARCH—COARSE WARE (Fig. 7)

The Romano-British site at Norwood, March (Nat. Grid: TL/995418; Royal Geographical Research Memoir Classification: 4199S) has been systematically explored for surface finds. A dyke cutting, which runs across the site, was cleaned out in 1959, and subsequent weathering revealed the group of pottery illustrated. The sherds lay in a heap on top of a layer of rubble, and seem to form a roughly contemporaneous group.

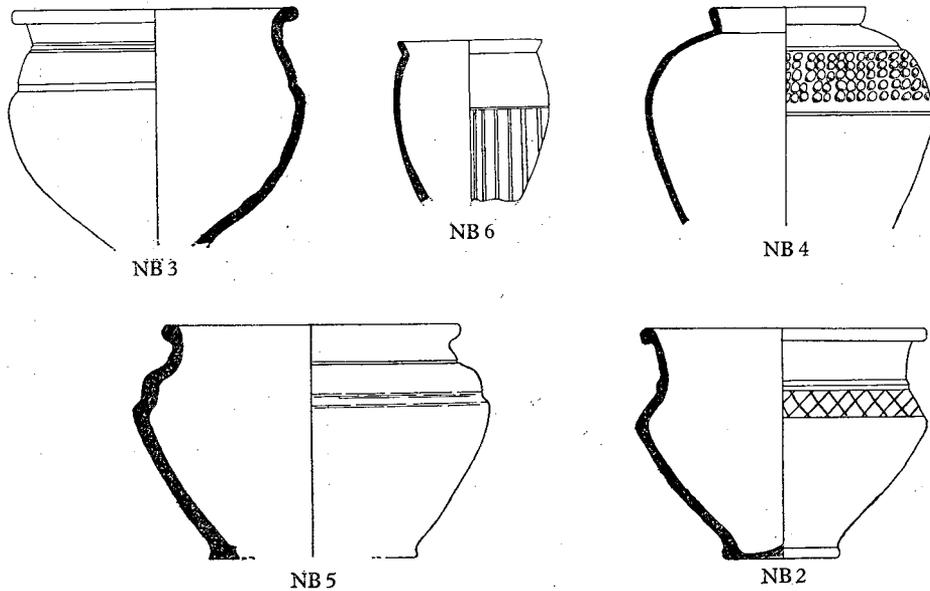


Fig. 7. Norwood: Coarse ware. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

NB2. Carinated jar in black fabric, externally burnished. Reddish core. Burnished lattice pattern on the shoulder.

Coldham nos. C4 (Fig. 2) and CX7 (Fig. 3).

NB3. Jar in black fabric, with burnished exterior. Undecorated.

NB4. Jar with everted rim and globular body, in brown-black fabric, with burnished surface. Reddish core. Horizontal band of decoration, demarcated by grooves, comprising rows of rather elongated depressions, puckered up at one end.

Caistor, T3 (c. A.D. 70-110) undecorated; *Needham*, 29; J. P. Bushe-Fox, *Wroxeter*, vol. II (1913), p. 50 (c. A.D. 80-150).

NB5. Jar in a thick, heavy, coarse black fabric, with black core and burnished surface. Weakly carinated. Bulge on the shoulder, demarcated by grooves. Undecorated.

NB6. Beaker with everted rim, in polished light grey fabric. Vertical burnished lines on the lower half of the body.

Arbury Rd, 10; *Needham*, 34-5.

From the association of colour-coated sherds with this group, a date towards the end of the second century would seem to be applicable to the sherds.

STONEA CAMP (Fig. 8)

This fortified 'camp' is situated on the south-west edge of the island of Stonea, about 10 ft. above sea level. The earthworks cover an area of approximately 2½ acres. The site is important in that Samian of the Claudian period has been found on the surface and thus forms the earliest group of Roman pottery known from this part of the Fens.

Samian

SCS1. Form 29, South Gaulish. Lower zone with intersecting arcades. The style is used only by pre-Flavian potters, such as ALBINVS, AMANDVS, CADMVS, INGENVVS (Knorr, 1919 *s.v.*). c. A.D. 40-55.

SCS2. Form 24/25, South Gaulish. Pre-Flavian.

SCS3. Form 18 R, South Gaulish (still with kiln grit). Pre-Flavian.

SCS4. Form 18, South Gaulish. Pre-Flavian.

56.268 (Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology). Form 24/25. Dated as Neronian.

Coarse wares

The pottery is generally made with a poor-quality clay, on a slow wheel. There are two main classes of fabric: (i) grey core and orange-brown fabric; (ii) a blackish surface, with grey core. Neither fabric is particularly hard, and the first is by far the commoner.

Rim: the jar with the rolled-over rim is very common, the thickness of rim varying considerably.

Base: there are examples of both the foot-ring and the flat base.

Decoration: many sherds are scored, either in rows or all over. One sherd (S6) is decorated with a deeply incised wavy pattern, with horizontal lines.

S1 and 2. Wide-mouthed jars.

S3. Open-mouthed jar.

S4. Jar with unpronounced rim.

S5. Coarse sherd, possibly hand-made, decorated with combing.

S6. Heavy jar, in orange fabric. Incised wavy decoration.

S7 and 8. Foot-stand and flat bases.

The association of Claudian Samian with the sherds, and the discovery in the last century of about 35 Icenian coins at Stonea,¹ suggest a date of *c.* A.D. 50 for most of these sherds. The absence of features normal in the East Anglian series is notable.

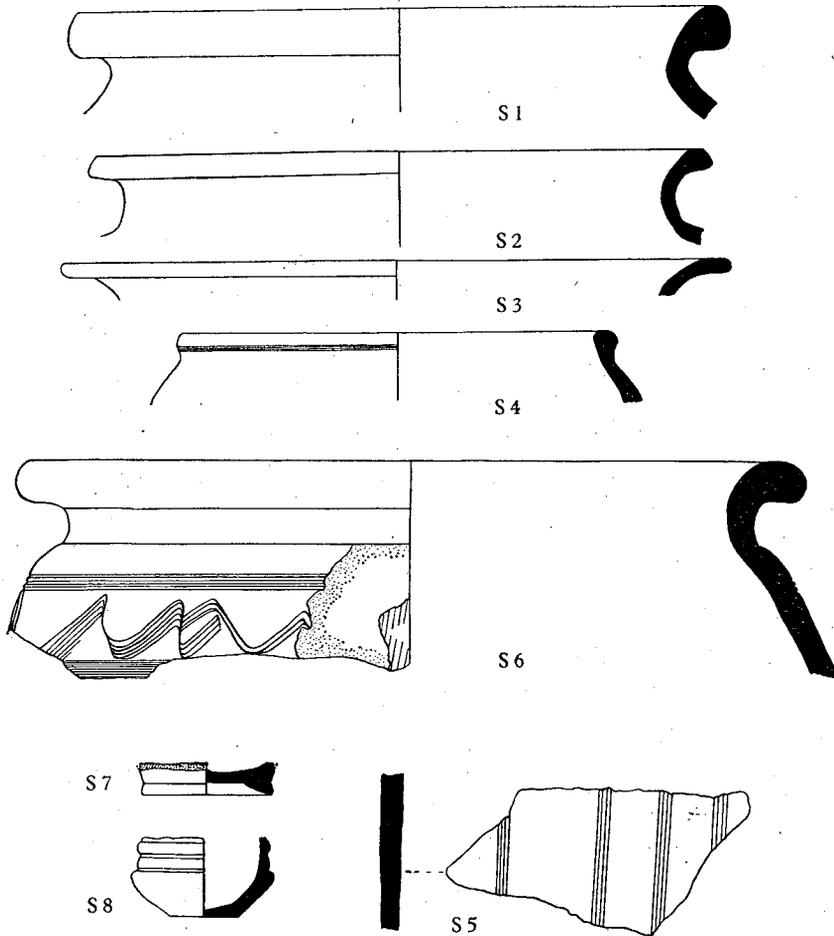


Fig. 8. Stonea Camp: Coarse ware. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

WISBECH MUSEUM: POTTERY (Fig. 9)

The drawings, made at the Museum by kind permission of the Curator, Mr W. L. Hanchant, illustrate some examples of Romano-British coarse wares. Colour-coated wares are not considered, as they are not relevant to this paper.

Samian

A précis of Mr B. R. Hartley's unpublished report, kept at the Museum, is reproduced here, since his remarks have an important bearing on the dating of the coarse wares.

¹ Evans, *Coins of the Ancient Britons* (1890), p. 586.

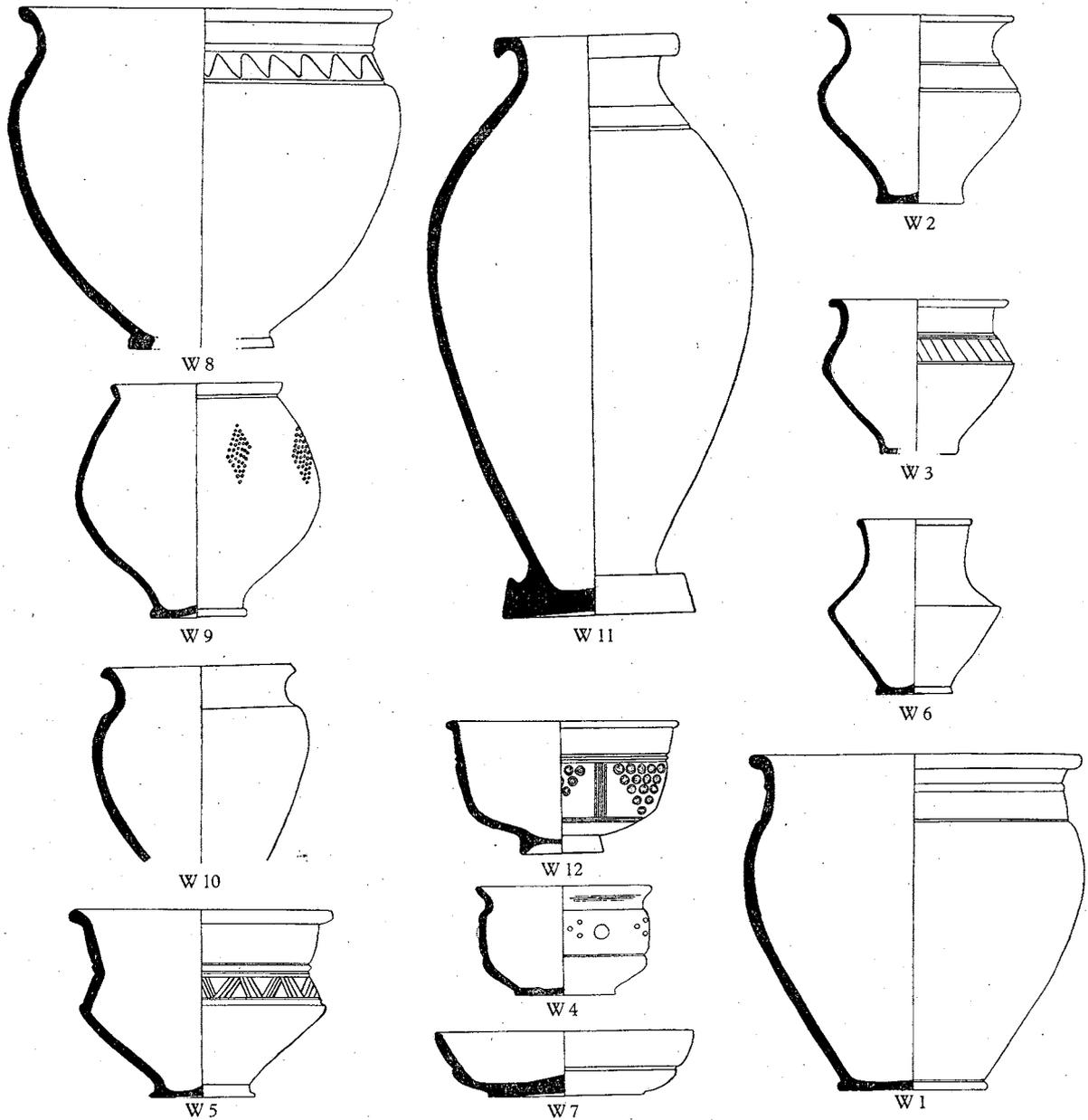


Fig. 9. Wisbech Museum: Coarse ware. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

Fragments of forty-five decorated Samian vessels are included in the museum collection. Of these, seven are of South Gaulish manufacture (La Graufesenque, Montans or Banassac wares) and first century date, two are East Gaulish bowls made at Rheinzabern and the rest are all Central Gaulish—mainly Lezoux, though one or two pieces are from Les Martes de Vègre.

It is unfortunate that the provenance of many pieces, including the only Claudian fragment (D8), is unknown.

The known distribution is as follows:

Coldham Hall: many Hadrianic and Antonine pieces.

Laddus Drove, Elm: two Antonine pieces only.

Stags Holt: one Flavian/Trajanic, several second-century fragments.

Flaggrass, March: three Hadrianic and Antonine pieces.

Needham Lodge: one Hadrianic-Antonine piece.

Throckenholt: one Antonine fragment.

The potters' stamp list confirms the picture given above, the only difference being the presence of one late Flavian bowl at Coldham Hall (by CRVCVRO, whose wares sometimes survive in second-century deposits).

Judging by the evidence afforded by Samian ware, then, it appears that occupation of Fenland sites began in the Flavian period, probably in Vespasian's reign, and that new sites were being founded in the early and middle second century.

Coldham Hall: some Flavian occupation with a more intense settlement in the Hadrian/Antonine period.

Stags Holt: Flavian and second-century site.

Laddus Drove: Samian exclusively Antonine.

Flaggrass, March: Hadrianic-Antonine pieces only.

Dixon's Field, Coldham: Antonine only.

Coarse wares

The collection of coarse wares include several early or even pre-Flavian pots (e.g. W7, W11. The carinated jar, derived from *Camulodunum*, 212, is abundantly represented, and there is a notable collection of sherds of this type from Eldernell,¹ near Whittlesey. A very common form is illustrated by W1, exactly paralleled by Coldham 165. This type, which is probably a Nene Valley product, has a shoulder, often undecorated, marked by cordons and grooves. Finally, mention should be made of the hoard of unused, colour-coated bowls and dishes found in 1920 at Gorefield. An example of Belgic 'terra nigra' (*Camulodunum*, 108 A b, c) was included among these pots.

W1. Jar with white core and hard grey exterior.

Cf. Coldham 165 (Fig. 4).

W2. Jar in grey-brown fabric with grey core. 'From west of King Edward's Farm, on the land of Mr S. T. Grout (5. 3. 53).'

W3. Small carinated jar, in brown burnished fabric. The shoulder is decorated with burnished oblique lines. Found at Laddus Hill (1935).

W4. Small bowl in polished orange ware, with decoration of raised and insunk circles. Provenance unknown (and possibly, therefore, not Fenland).

Fox dates this bowl to the La Tène IV period (note in Museum), but see J. N. L. Myres, 'Romano-Saxon Pottery' in *Dark Age Britain* (1956), fig. 4, no. 1.

W5. Carinated jar, in smooth black fabric, with reddish-grey core. The shoulder is decorated with incised oblique lines. Found at Eldernell, Whittlesey.

W6. Carinated beaker, in a polished, slightly gritty, black fabric, with a red core. Found at Eldernell, Whittlesey.

¹ E. M. Beloe, 'On the Great Fen Road', *Proc. C.A.S.* VII, no. 32 (1889), pl. xxix.

A fairly common type, although not represented at Coldham. Cf. *Camulodunum*, 120 A (general Claudian to early Flavian type); but see *Needham*, 28 (Antonine); *Caistor*, T5; J. P. Bushe-Fox, *Richborough*, vol. III, *Rep. Res. Ctee Soc. Ant.* no. x (1932), p. 288 (A.D. 80–120).

W7. Gallo-Belgic dish in coarse dark-grey fabric. Found at 'Bishops Land near Turf Fen Crossing'.

W8. Jar in smooth grey fabric with buff-grey core. The shoulder is decorated with a wavy line. From Coldham (1946).

W9. Jar with an everted rim, and barbotine dot decoration in diamond groups. Hard polished black fabric, with reddish core. Found at Eldernell, Whittlesey.¹

Cf. M. R. Hull, *Roman Colchester* (1958), no. 122 (A.D. 150–350).

W10. Small jar in a dark, grey/black coarse fabric, with rilling on the body. Found at 'Bishops Land, Turf Fen Crossing'.

Cf. Coldham 103 (Fig. 2).

W11. Pedestal urn, in a grey-buff fabric, with red core. A Romanized La Tène form. Found 'ten feet below the surface of Walderssea Fen' (1845).

Fox dates this pot to the first century A.D. (note in Museum). Cf. *Camulodunum*, 206.

W12. Bowl, imitation Samian form 37, in lustrous black fabric, with grey core. Decoration comprises groups of impressed circles, divided by combing. Found at Eldernell, Whittlesey.²

CONCLUSIONS

Origins of Fenland settlement

The origin and nature of the early Roman settlement in the Fens is obscure. Godwin³ has demonstrated that the Fens were probably uninhabitable during the early Iron Age, but—probably owing to a marine regression⁴—became suitable for occupation in the early Roman period. This is reflected in the archaeological record. The discovery of Icenian coin hoards at March⁵ and Stonea,⁶ and individual coins from near Wisbech St Mary⁷ and Wisbech⁸ (minted A.D. 43), forms the only conclusive evidence of pre-Flavian occupation⁹ in the Fens, although some of the pottery in Wisbech Museum may be pre-Flavian in date. The group of pottery from Stonea Camp, which probably dates to c. A.D. 50, displays no particular affinities, and the black burnished fabrics (e.g. Coldham, no. C3) are notably absent.

The Early Iron Age background

1. *East Anglia*. The excavation of sites like Runcton Holme and Needham have defined the nature of the Icenian culture at the time of the Claudian conquest.¹⁰ The pottery at such sites¹¹ generally includes Samian and Gallo-Belgic wares, imported

¹ *Op. cit.*

² *Op. cit.*

³ Godwin and Clifford, 'Studies in the Post-Glacial History of British Vegetation', *Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc. B*, no. 562, vol. 229 (1938), pp. 323–406 and *ibid.* no. 570, vol. 230 (1940), pp. 239–303.

⁴ Fairbridge, 'Eustatic Changes in Sea Level', *Physics and Chemistry of the Earth*, IV (1961).

⁵ *Num. Chron.* 1 (1839), p. 73.

⁶ Evans, *Coins of the Ancient Britons* (1890), p. 586.

⁷ Evans, *ibid.* p. 410, pl. XIV, no. 10.

⁸ Wisbech Museum.

⁹ Excluding periods earlier than the Iron Age.

¹⁰ Cf. R. R. Clarke, 'The Iron Age in Norfolk and Suffolk', *Arch. J.* xcvi (1940), p. 55.

¹¹ This refers primarily to sites in Norfolk.

from the Continent; Belgic pottery from the Colchester region; and Icenian products, modelled on or inspired by these non-local types.

2. *East Midlands.* The influence of the East Midlands on the Fens would seem to have been negated by the 'barrier' of the peat fens. However, pottery with East Anglian affinities has been recovered from the Nene Valley.¹

The historical background

The Boudiccan revolt of A.D. 60/61 was followed by the savagely repressive measures of Suetonius, which are reflected in the archaeological record. At Needham, for example, decorated Samian, quite common before A.D. 60, virtually disappeared until Hadrianic times. Several authorities² have suggested that at this time an influx of East Anglian peasants into the Fens took place, being forced by the Romans to drain and then farm the land. The archaeological evidence would not seem to support this theory, however:

(i) It seems certain that the canal network was not all laid down at the same time. The Car Dyke³ may have been dug about A.D. 50-60, but, as Fowler has pointed out,⁴ must have been primarily for transport, and certainly not for drainage. The Lynn Ouse was—to judge from Fowler's pottery⁵—cut in the second century.⁶ Also, an early date does not look likely for such canals as the Elm Leam and March Nene.

(ii) The Samian⁷ and coin evidence⁸ point to a Flavian date for the start of a number of Fenland sites. This date is confirmed by the Coldham excavations.

On this evidence, there seems little justification for the theory that the Fens were organized as an Imperial Estate in the second half of the first century A.D. Indeed, it seems probable that many of the so-called drainage canals were in fact dug for transport purposes, and that the preliminary occupation of the Fens was the result of a gradual expansion of population.

Affinities of the Coldham site

A discussion of the pottery parallels will have made clear the similarity of the form and fabric of the Coldham sherds with pottery from Norfolk. Also, the absence of metal objects and the paucity of Samian at Coldham reflect the poverty of sites like Needham after A.D. 60. Therefore, it does not seem extreme to suggest that the settlement at Coldham was founded by East Anglian peasants. They drew their

¹ E.g. Charleston, *Roman Pottery* (1955), pl. 48.

² E.g. Prof. Sir Ian Richmond, *Roman Britain* (1955), p. 121; R. R. Clarke, *East Anglia* (1960), ch. 7.

³ J. G. D. Clark, 'Report on Excavations in the Cambridgeshire Car Dyke, 1947', *Ant. J.* xxix (1949), pp. 145-63.

⁴ G. Fowler, 'Fenland Waterways, Past and Present, Part I', *Proc. C.A.S.* xxxiii (1932).

⁵ G. Fowler, 'Fenland Waterways, Past and Present, Part II', *Proc. C.A.S.* xxxiv (1933-4), pp. 18-25, and appendix 2.

⁶ A. K. Astbury, *The Black Fens* (1957), p. 147.

⁷ Cited in connection with Wisbech Museum.

⁸ Besides the Icenian coins, the earliest recorded coins are those of Vespasian (four recorded from March-Stonea-Manea area).

pottery from traditional series fairly rigidly during most of the second century A.D., and the presence of probable Caistor kiln forms points to the maintenance of trading contacts with Norfolk (probably by means of the *Durobrivae*-Caistor 'Fen' Causeway). However, the growth of the Nene Valley kilns about A.D. 160-80 was soon reflected in the Coldham pottery record, by the diminishing quantity of East Anglian wares.

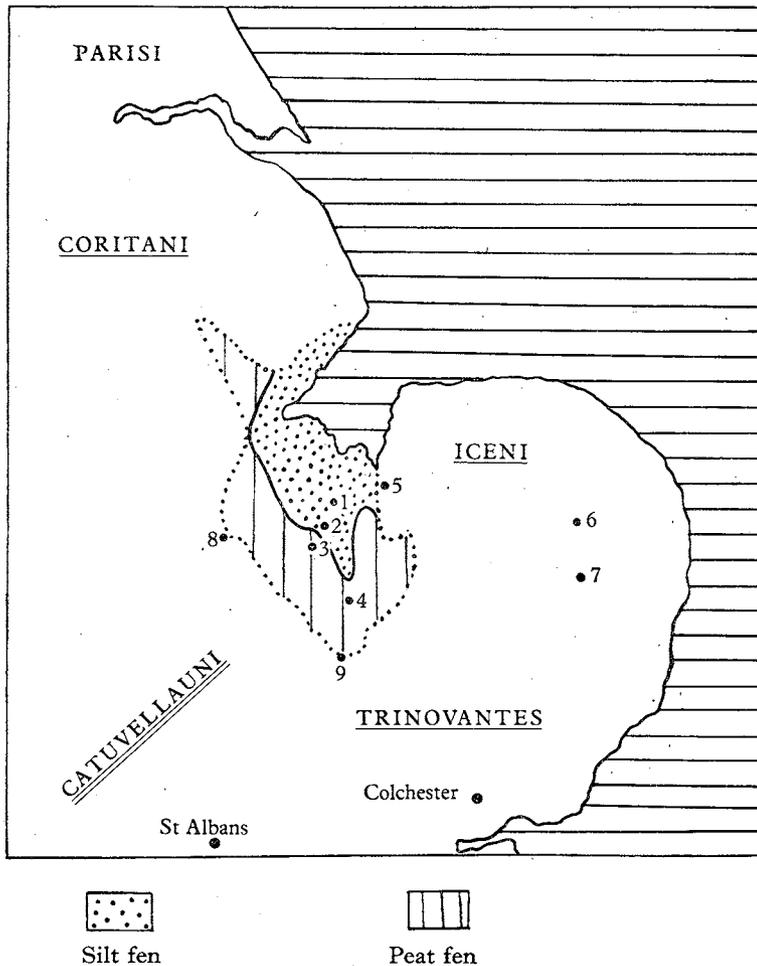


Fig. 10. Map showing the relation of the Fens to tribal divisions. Belgic tribe, CATUVELLAUNI; other tribes minting coins, CORITANI. 1. Wisbech; 2. Coldham; 3. March; 4. Ely; 5. Runcton Holme; 6. Caistor; 7. Needham; 8. Peterborough; 9. Cambridge. Scale: approx. 1 in. to 25 miles.

Distribution of East Anglian wares in the Fens

The virtual absence of Fenland archaeological excavations makes observations on the distribution of East Anglian wares difficult. However, the evidence detailed in this report indicates that a small number of Icenian settlements were founded during

the Flavian period. The pottery evidence (*Wisbech Museum*, p. 18) suggests that further settlements began during the Hadrianic period,¹ and as Dr Salway has pointed out² 'this was roughly contemporary with the reorganization of the defences of Britain, which included the construction of Hadrian's Wall, and is signalled in the Fens by the appearance of "straight-line feature"—canals, roads, droves and associated settlements'. The area of origin of these Hadrianic settlers is unknown, but it may well be that this marked increase in settlement was connected with the organization of an Imperial Estate. The East Anglian wares from Norwood and in Wisbech Museum cannot be closely dated. It is possible, however, that these sherds may represent either other settlements of East Anglian peasants, or settlers influenced by them.

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² *The Times*, 1 February 1963.

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