

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



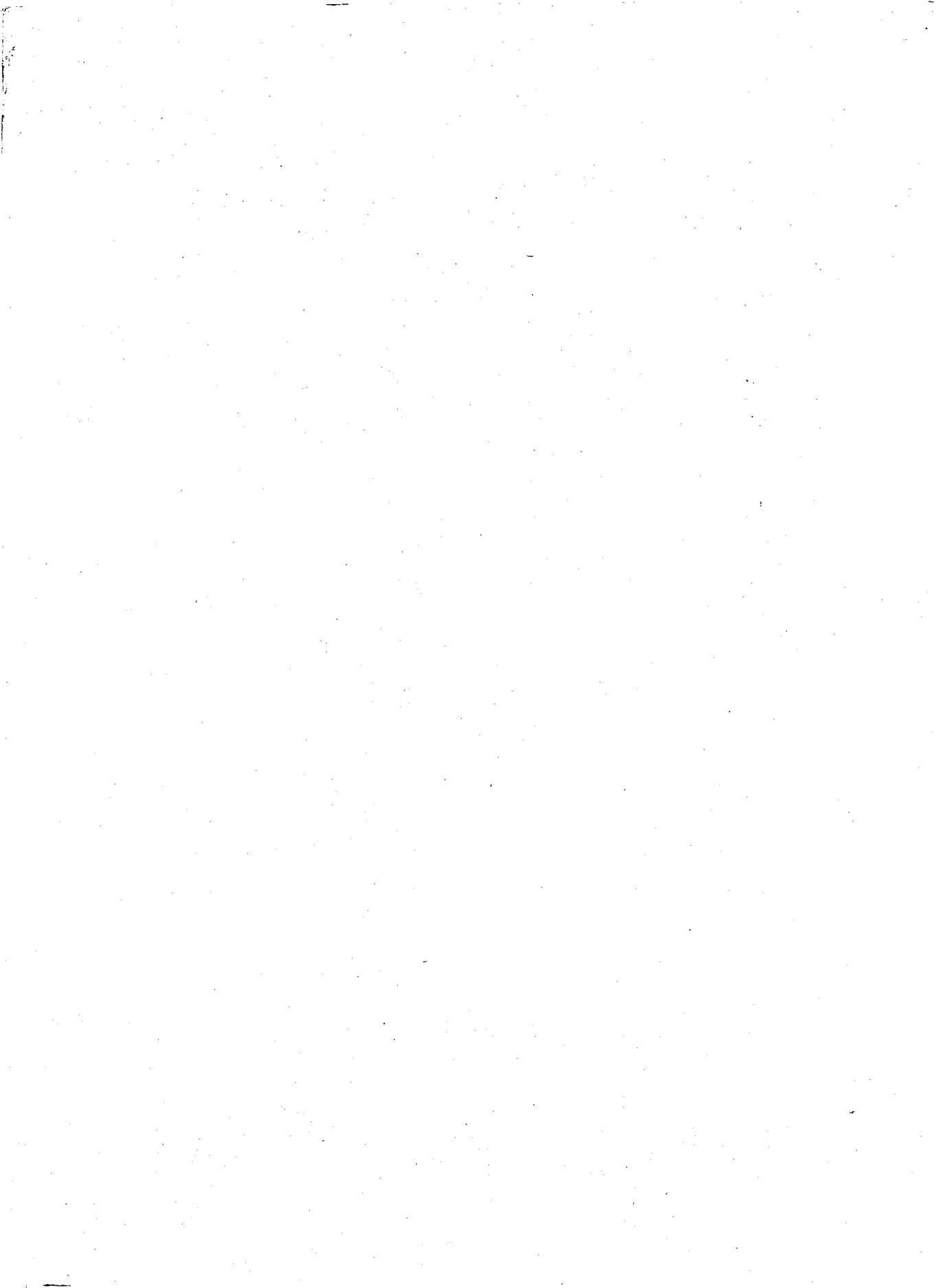
VOLUME LVIII

JANUARY 1965 TO DECEMBER 1965

CAMBRIDGE
DEIGHTON BELL

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES

MARY D. CRA'STER, PATRICIA HUTCHINSON
AND C. F. TEBBUTT

NEOLITHIC POTTERY FROM BUCKDEN, HUNTS

In November 1963 I was examining the subsoil surface at Buckden gravel pit, after about 1½ ft. of topsoil had been taken off, in preparation for gravel digging. Red-coloured pottery appeared, obtruding from what must have been the lower half only of a small, shallow pit, the remaining portion being 2 ft. across and 9 in. deep. It was filled with yellowish loam, darker than the surrounding 'hogging', but with no trace of wood ash.

The site (52/202680) is on a high-level gravel terrace near the 100 ft. contour, and was rich in remains of the Iron Age, Roman and early Saxon periods.

The pottery, which is of Peterborough-Neolithic type, consists of sherds of three different vessels; it has been placed in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge (64. 13). I am grateful to Miss Cra'ster for the drawings (Fig. 1).

C.F.T.

NEOLITHIC AXES

Dungate Farm, Balsham

In the spring of 1963, Mr D. A. Clarke of Valley Farm, Balsham, found a flint axe about 100 yards from the Fleam Dyke (Grid ref. 563530). It is flat in section, with a slightly waisted outline, flaked, and with a finely ground cutting-edge. It was brought to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology for identification by Mr R. G. Gibbs of Caius College, but remains in Mr Clarke's possession.

Isleham

In the autumn of 1963, Mr I. A. Moore of Newmarket reported to the Museum that a flint axe had been found by Mr Webber at Burnt Fen Farm, Isleham. The implement is probably an adze, as one face appears to be slightly concave. It is flaked, with a ground cutting-edge, and is 8 in. in length. Mr Webber has since presented it to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (64. 193).

Cambridge: Newmarket Road

Mr S. L. Ruse has presented a flint axe to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (64. 177); he dug it up in his garden at 41 Stanesfield Road, between Coldham's Common and the Newmarket Road, and brought it into the Museum

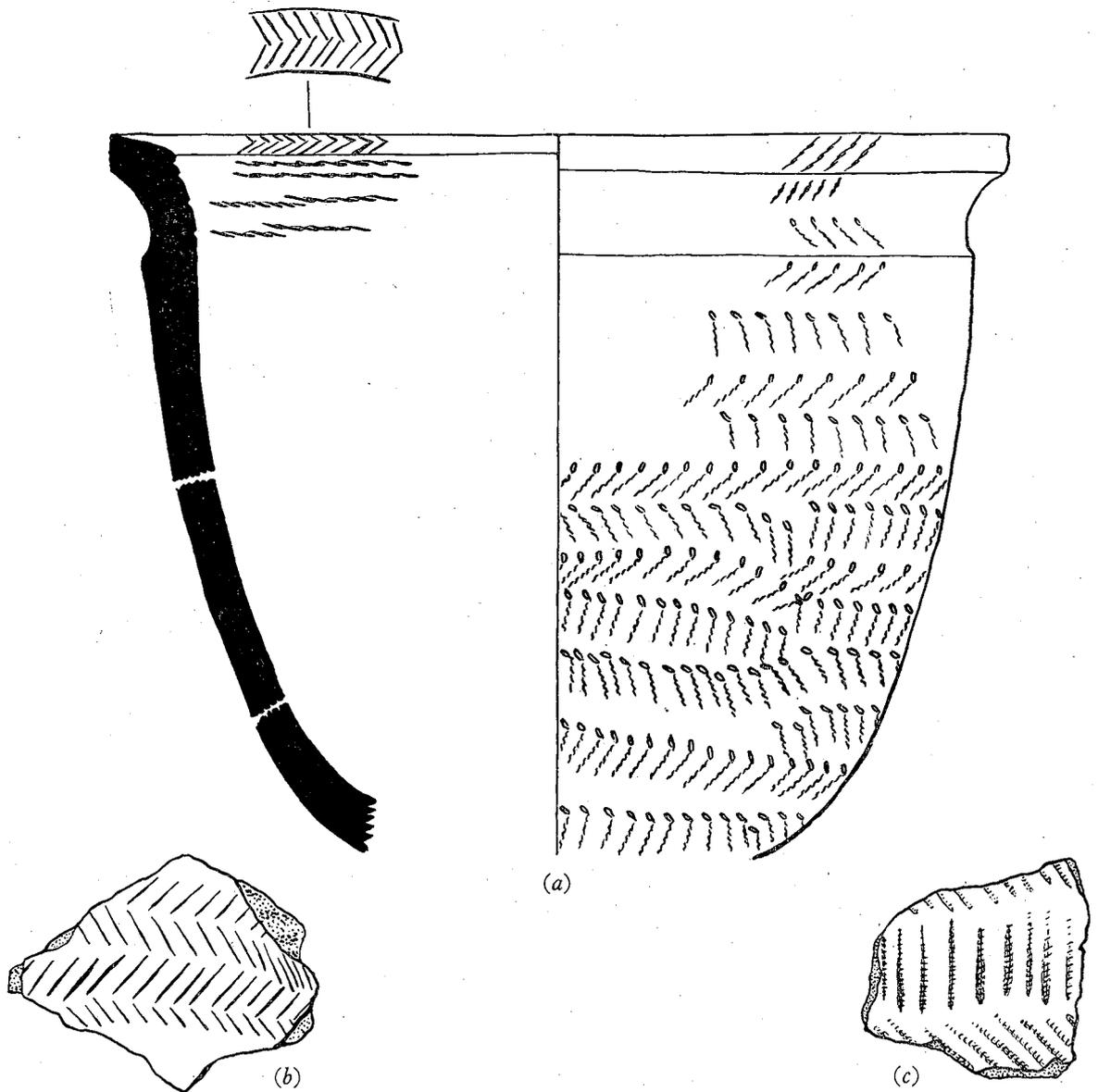


Fig. 1. Neolithic pottery from Buckden. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$. (a) This drawing has been reconstructed from three large fragments, almost certainly from the same pot. The outer surface of the rim sherd is badly worn and broken, so that the decoration of this portion is partly conjectural. The chevrons on top of the rim are plain incisions, while the lines on the inside appear to have been made with loosely twisted cord. The decoration all over the outside of the pot is not a simple cord-impression; while the implement used seems to have had a fine thread wound round its lower part, there is a definite knob at a constant angle at the top. (b) The decoration here is composed of simple incisions, made with a very fine, smooth implement, perhaps of bone. (c) The implement used for decorating this sherd is a fine-edged object, round which a thin string has been wound.

after having read an article on local archaeology in the *Cambridge News*. It is of brown flint, straight-sided, with a flat section and almost straight cutting-edge, which has been ground; its length is 4 in.

M.D.C.

BRONZE AGE IMPLEMENTS

Adventurers' Ground, Swaffham Prior

In the autumn of 1963, a flat axe was found by Mr J. T. Norris in the field known as the Slates, Adventurers' Ground (Grid ref. 740750). It remains in his possession (Fig. 2).

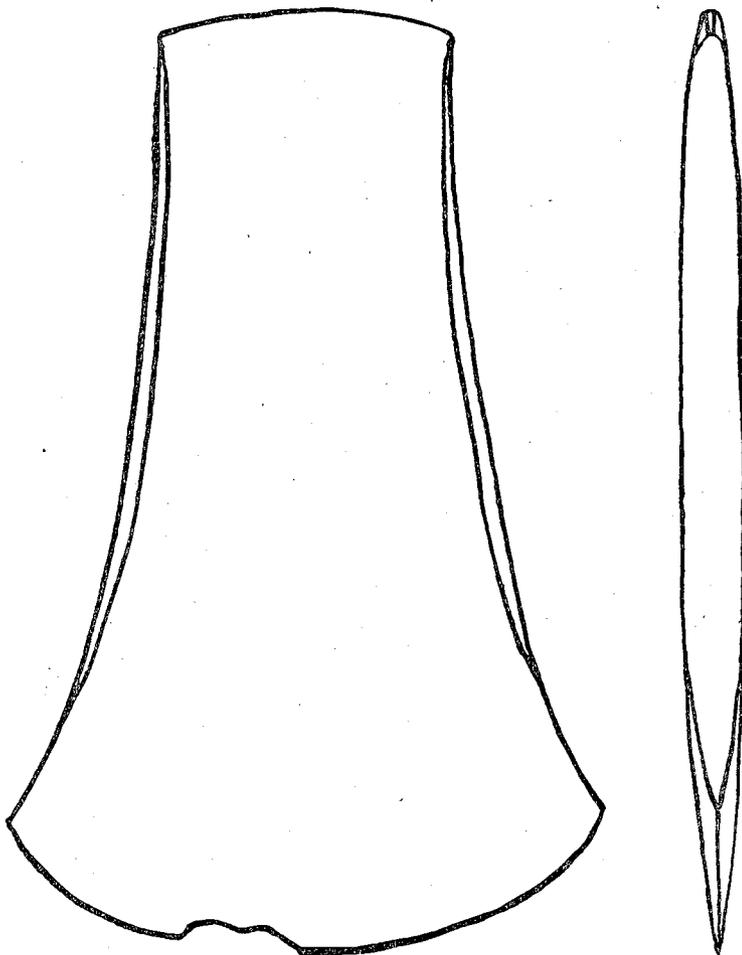


Fig. 2. Early Bronze Age axe, Swaffham Prior.

It is a narrow-butt, flat axe, belonging to the Migdale tradition.¹ Most moulds for this type have been found in Scotland, though the distribution of the axes themselves is widespread throughout the British Isles. They are presumed to be contemporary with the early part of the Wessex Culture.

¹ D. Britton, *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* XXIX (1963), pp. 258-325.

Great Wrating

In the autumn of 1964, Mr Tulloch of Rook Tree Farm, Great Wrating, brought a bronze socketed gouge to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology for identification. It had been ploughed up a few years ago in the field immediately to the south of the village (Fig. 3).

It is slightly collared, a form represented in North-west Scottish and Irish hoards, as well as in the East Anglian ones. The type is strictly British and not earlier than c. 750 B.C.

M.D.C.

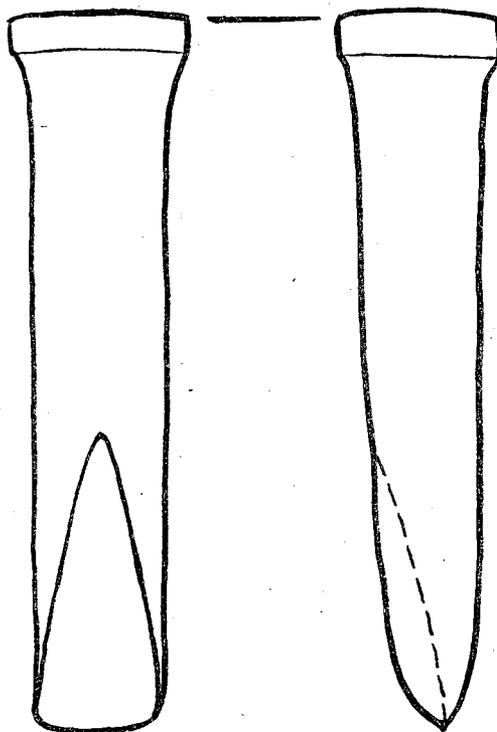


Fig. 3. Late Bronze Age gouge, Great Wrating.

ANGLO-SAXON DISC FROM HARSTON

In February 1962, at Rowley's Hill, Harston, Cambridgeshire (Grid ref. 427497), a gilt-bronze disc was found on the surface of a field which had been ploughed the previous autumn. The disc bears a design of three lanceolate cells filled with garnets radiating from a central circular cell filled with green glass. The cell walls are cast in one with the rest of the piece and the whole design is contained within a plain rim. In one of the cells the loss of part of the garnet exposes a whitish mounting paste beneath. The interspaces are each filled by a single disjointed animal poorly executed in chip-carving (Pl. VII).

This animal ornament and the technique of manufacture suggest a date in the sixth century A.D. Both the animals and the lanceolate cells filled with garnet and glass can easily be paralleled on some of the large square-headed brooches of this date and from this area, particularly on the B8 group of Leeds,¹ while cast saucer brooches combining animal ornament with a central quatrefoil are known from Abingdon, Berks, and from Bishopstone, Bucks,² but a more complete parallel to this piece has not been forthcoming.

Its exact function is hard to determine, since it has no obvious means of attachment and quite certainly is structurally undamaged.

The finder, Miss Doreen Austin, has very kindly given the disc to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge (63. 298).

P.H.

THE CAMBRIDGE TO ELTISLEY ROAD

The A 45, running west from Cambridge to Eltisley, is almost certainly an ancient trackway connecting Cambridge with the Ouse crossing at St Neots. It is a watershed road and is continuously a parish boundary (*Arch. Camb. Region*, Fox, p. 157). It has been suggested that it might also be a Roman road, especially after the finding of Roman burials in stone coffins along its south side during the making of Bourn aerodrome (1939-45).³

Early in 1963 a pipe-line trench was cut across this road near the corner of the road leading to Bourn (52/336599), and I was able to examine a section across its whole width and extending about 30 yards to the south of it. The pipe-line was deep in solid unmoved clay and there was no metalling to be seen anywhere, except that immediately connected with the present surface.

This would seem to disprove the theory of the existence of a Roman road here, at least along the present line.

C.F.T.

FINDS AT DIDDINGTON RESERVOIR (GRAFHAM WATER), HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Roman period

In making the new road from Buckden to Perry, the whole course was scraped free of topsoil. At a spot about 300 yards north of Hangman's Spinney, near where the new road crosses the Southoe with Midloe and Great Staughton parish boundaries, a human skeleton (said to be headless) was found, lying east and west in a shallow grave.

Along a length of the newly cut roadside ditch on the south side could be seen in section a number of large and small ditches. They occurred up to about 100 yards east and 50 yards west of the grave site. In nearly all were found Roman potsherds, animal bones, and in one case the handle of a Roman glass vessel.

¹ E. T. Leeds, *A Corpus of Early Anglo-Saxon Great Square-Headed Brooches* (1949), p. 70, figs. 108-116.

² E. T. Leeds and D. B. Harden, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Abingdon, Berkshire* (1936), p. 56, fig. 31.

³ One of these coffins has recently been erected outside the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge (65. 93).

Among the ditches was also seen a wide but shallow depression, filled with black ash containing a great amount of burnt clay lining material and sherds of pottery kiln wasters. This depression was excavated back to the edge of the road metal, in the hope of finding the kiln itself, but with no success. Later much more kiln material, including kiln-bars, was found in the soil from the actual road, and it was evident that the kiln had been below it.

A bronze brooch, found among the kiln material in the depression, belongs to Collingwood's Group K, of the first century A.D.¹ The pottery is probably first century.

This evidence would seem to show an early penetration and clearance of the woodland areas with heavy clay subsoil, away from the Ouse valley.

Besides the above finds, a sherd of decorated Samian ware was found near Diddington Wood (52/168664).

Medieval Period

Redhill (52/171669). This site is on the left bank of Diddington Brook, just below Redhill Bridge where the old road (to be submerged) crossed the stream.

When the topsoil was scraped off, a considerable area of red burnt clay was exposed and, sealed within it, a layer of dense black wood ash. Mixed with the burnt clay and wood ash were numerous broken soft red bricks and plain tiles. Many were obviously kiln wasters, and some were so overburnt as to be nearly black or even glazed. The bricks were all 2-2½ in. in thickness. Amongst the black ash were several fifteenth-century potsherds, including one of the well-known type of jar with a spigot-hole just above the bottom. Although no trace of the actual kilns was found, it was obvious that they must have been close at hand.

Later, in 1964, another brick-making site was partly exposed during the cutting of the trench for the intake pipe, between Shooter's Hollow Farm and Diddington Wood, about 60 yards north of Diddington Brook (52/175666). The floors of two kilns, at least 10 ft. across, could be seen, and also a large pit filled with clay, mixed with wood ash and waste bricks.

Samples of the bricks were taken for comparison with early brick buildings in the neighbourhood. They were found to match exactly those used in the Bishop of Lincoln's palace at Buckden (late fifteenth century), Diddington church tower (early sixteenth century), Southoe church (late fifteenth to early sixteenth century), and a screen across the interior of the refectory at St Neots Priory.

The evidence seems to confirm the local origin of the bricks used in the earliest brick buildings in the area, and the derivation of the name Redhill.

I am very grateful to Mr Winder and Mr Arah, engineers to the consultant, and their assistants, who drew my attention to the sites described above, and gave me every facility and help in examining them before they were covered up or destroyed.

The finds will go to the Norris Museum, St Ives.

C.F.T.

¹ *The Archaeology of Roman Britain*, fig. 60.

MEDIEVAL BRICK YARD AT SHIPPEA HILL FARM

In May 1964 Mr M. Hopkin reported that a floor of old, small bricks was being uncovered during bulldozing operations at Shippea Hill, Isle of Ely. There had been a grange there belonging to the Abbey of Ely in the Middle Ages, and remains of sixteenth-century arched doorways are still to be seen in what is now a rather derelict barn at the south-western corner of the existing farm buildings.

On closer inspection, it appeared that a large area in the upper part of the sloping field immediately south of the present farm was covered with stacked bricks and tiles; these were innocent of mortar and had evidently never been used for building. The bricks were in stacks at least 10 ft. square, laid neatly on top of each other, in places still seven or eight bricks deep; they were $2 \times 9 \times 4$ in. in size. The tiles were ranged in long rows of up to 15 ft., stacked on edge leaning against each other; they were flat, rectangular tiles, $11 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ in. big, with two holes pierced near the top corners.

It is possible that an irregular, water-filled hollow, due south of the modern farm house, might have been a clay-pit; it was in order to fill this that the bulldozing had been undertaken. No sign of a kiln was seen, though there were large quantities of burnt earth over and amongst the stacked bricks. In this connection, it is perhaps interesting to note the name Burnt Ground Plantation for the former coppice, half a mile to the west on the Mile End road.

M.D.C.



(a)



(b)

Groat of Henry VII from the Hartford hoard. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.



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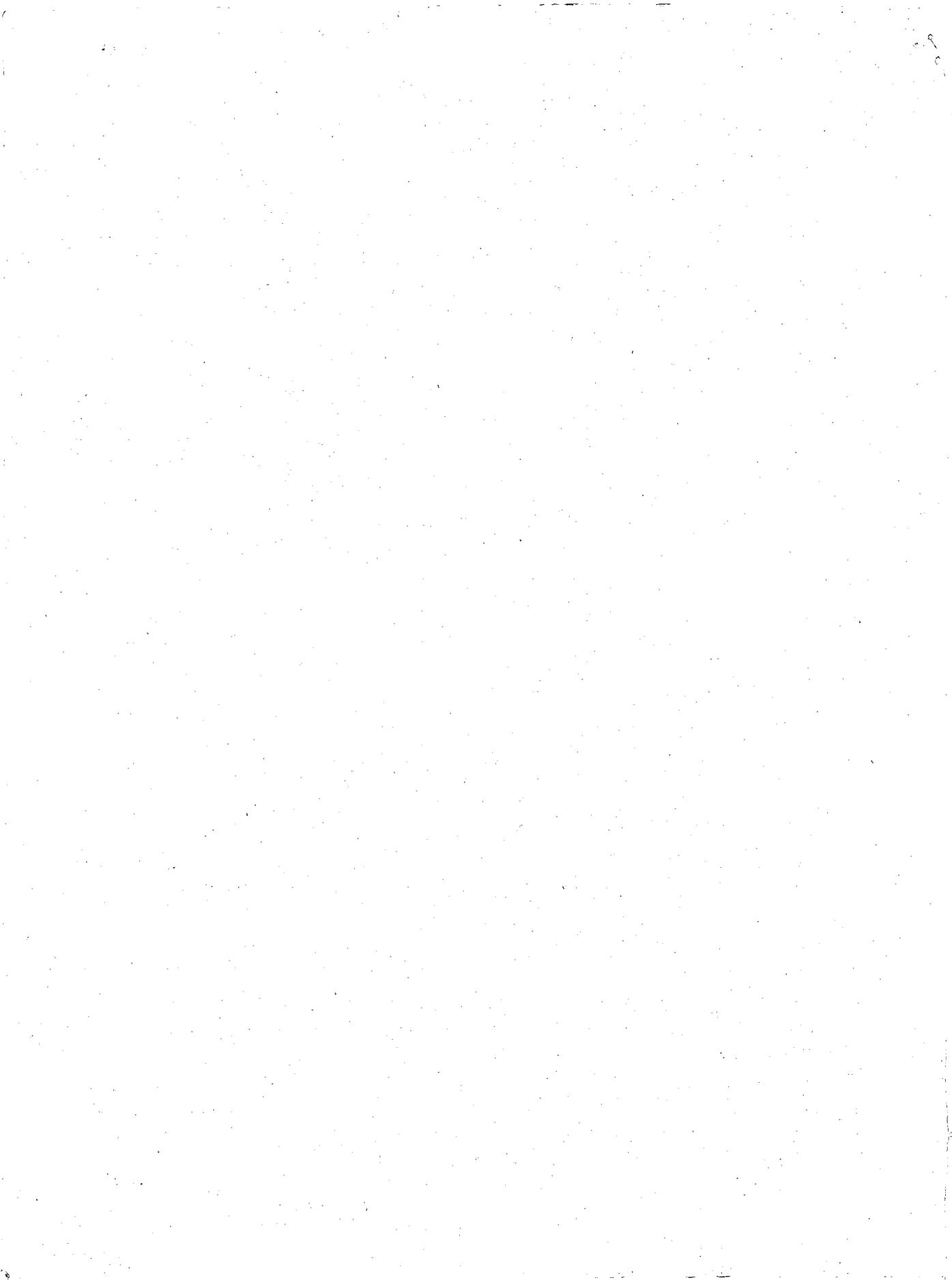
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Anglo-Saxon disc, Harston, Cambridgeshire.

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