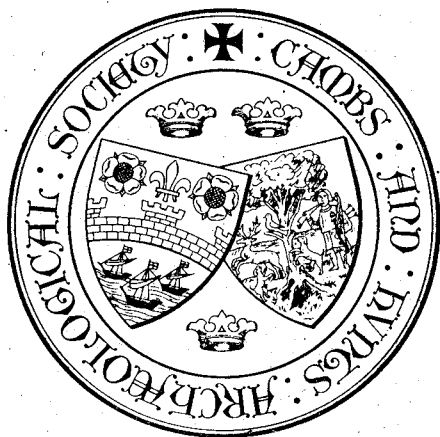


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SOUTHOE MANOR. FINDS ON "TOWN ORCHARD" SITE.

BY G. L. CLAYTON, B.A., A.K.C.

In the field, known as "Town Orchard" (or Town Close), to the south-west of the Church at Southoe, lies a nearly circular moat about 170 feet by 161 feet within the banks. This is one of the two circular moats at Southoe described by Mr. S. Inskip Ladds—fortunately before agriculture largely destroyed their appearance—in his Account of the Huntingdonshire Earthworks.¹

There is (or was) a slight earthwork enclosing half the field and running alongside the lane leading to the Rectory. This bank probably marked the manorial cattle and garden "close." A depression showed the position of an ancient pond, S.W. of the moat, but inside the "close."

Bulldozing and ploughing operations in 1946-1947 have gone far to obliterating the site. In the Spring of 1942, however, with the assistance of parties of Tollington Grammar School boys (evacuated from Muswell Hill, London) and encouraged by the expert advice of Mr. C. F. Tebbutt, the writer dug eight exploratory trenches in various spots, and sixteen trenches about 12 feet by 5 feet and 4 to 5 feet in depth in the enclosure and ditch.

The spade revealed an area of black earth one or two feet thick, 1½ feet below the surface, and roughly 14 yards by 10 yards in extent. No post-holes and very little building material were found. Several hundreds of potsherds, many bronze and iron objects, a spindle whorl, tile, and four hones came to light during the digging, and to several of the objects I have since been unable to find "parallels."

Much pottery resembled closely that from the other circular moat in Southoe, partly excavated by Messrs. T. C. Lethbridge and C. F. Tebbutt;² while great quantities from the filled-in part of the north side of the ditch (see arrow on plan) appear to be of the 13th to 14th centuries.

1. Victoria County History, Hunts., I, 304.

2. Cambridge Antiquarian Society. Proceedings, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 158—163.

The present paper will be concerned with the finds definitely post-Conquest, leaving the "Late-Saxon" pottery to be described on a later occasion.

It should be remarked that, while I follow the evidence of Mr. B. H. St. J. O'Neil, F.S.A., given in the "Antiquaries' Journal," Vol. XV, "Finds from Coity, Ogmore, etc.,"³ and that given in the London Museum "Mediæval Catalogue" when describing the glazed pottery as 13th and 14th Century; yet Mr. E. T. Leeds, M.A., F.S.A., stated in the "Antiquaries' Journal" in his article on the Adulterine Castle at Faringdon⁴ that "Evidence from Faringdon seems to indicate that much glazed ware usually dated 14th Century goes back to an earlier period, even to the middle of the 12th."

PLATE I.

Nineteen fragments of pitcher handles were recovered from the site. Nos. 1—7 came from the filled in part of the ditch where the mass of the 13th and 14th Century potsherds was found. Nos. 8—17 were found elsewhere, some in the ditch bottom, others within the enclosure.

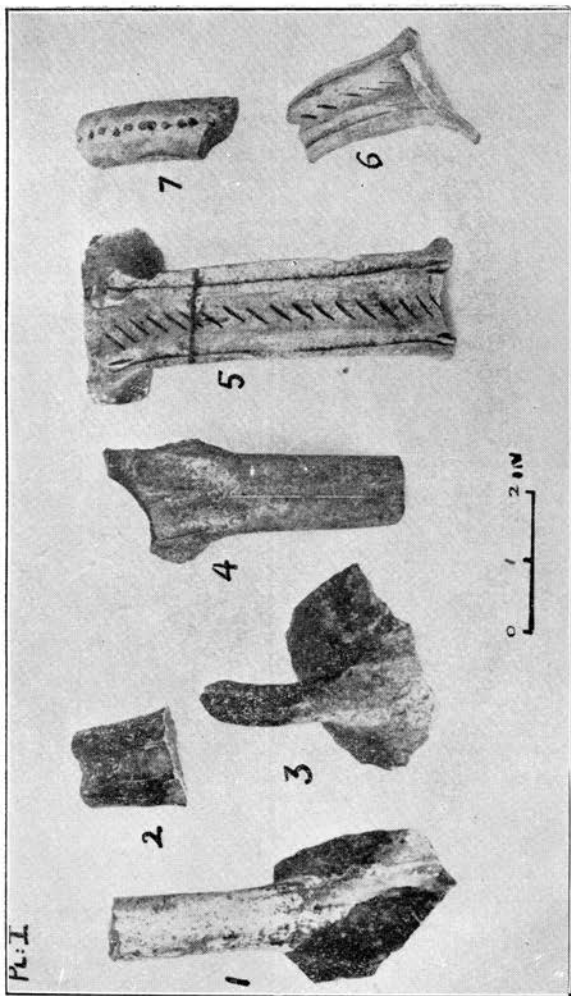
1. Fine red ware. Green glaze with patches of brown, mottled with dark green spots.
2. Blue-grey clay, buff slip, green glaze with blueish mottling.
3. Fine buff ware. Thick brownish olive green glaze. Stab decoration. Finger-hole under base.
4. Dark green ware. Olive green glaze, pinched at base. Ribbed underside (Note.—In the figure this fragment is upside down).
5. Fine buff ware. Yellow glaze. Line and slash decoration (upside down in the figure).
6. As No. 5, but smaller.
7. Pale grey ware. Pale green, mottled with darker green spots. Stab decoration.

PLATE II (Unglazed).

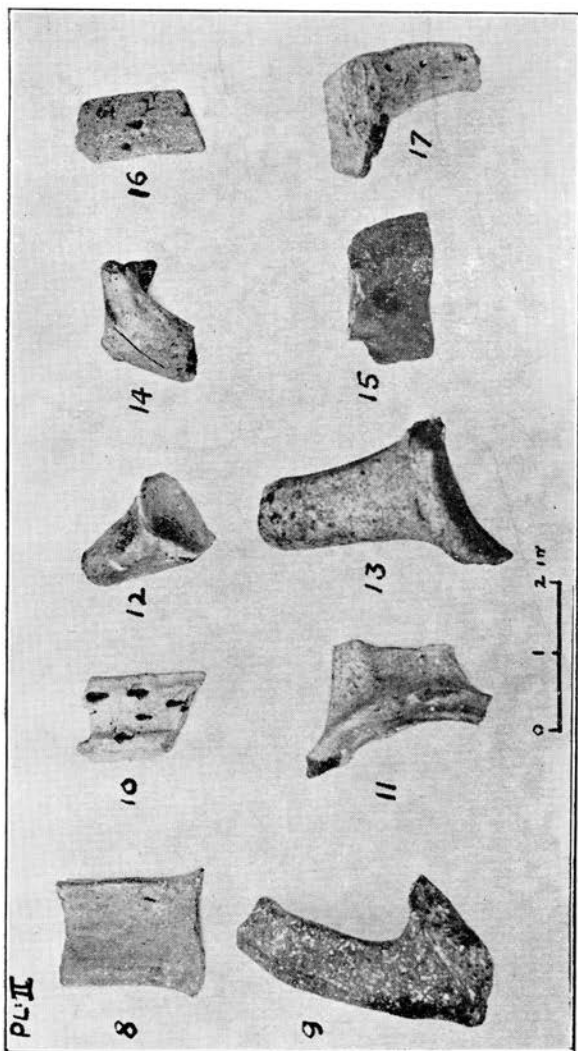
8. Soft light grey ware. Pink-brick outside with crushed shell.
9. Coarse grey ware. Fumed pink shelly paste, "soapy" surface. (8 and 9 at depth of 3½ feet in the enclosure).

3. Antiquaries Journal, XV, p. 320.

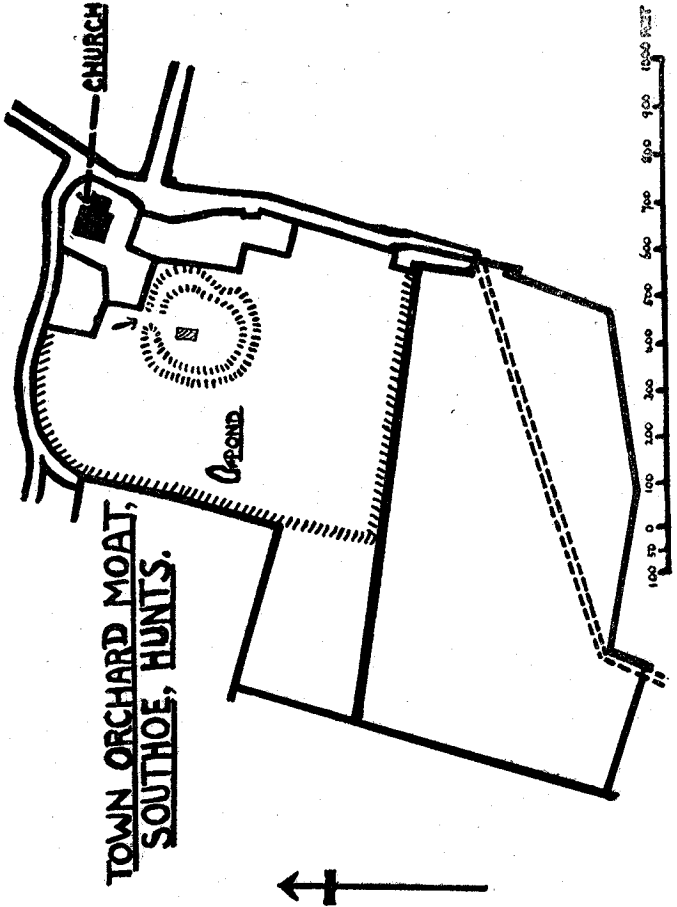
4. Ibid, XVI, p. 176.



POTTERY FROM SOUTHOE.



POTTERY FROM SOUTHOE.



**TOWN ORCHARD MOAT,
SOUTHOE, HUNTS.**

SKETCH PLAN OF MOAT AT SOUTHOE.



10. Light grey with pinkish sandy shelly paste surface. Stab decoration.
11. Shelly paste grey ware, buff exterior with the inverted pot rim characteristic of the "Late-Saxon" period.
12. Light grey and red shelly paste, stub form.
13. Buff core and pink surface, gritty ware.
14. Coarse grey with reddish slip. Faulty potter's technique due to inadequate admixture.
15. Hard gritty ware, finger-holed at base.
16. Light grey ware, with reddish slip. Stabs.
17. Hard gritty ware, very coarse. Stabs.

PLATE III.

IRON OBJECTS.—A variety of iron fragments was found, including shears, knife, buckle, nails, unidentifiable objects and two arrowheads.

No. 5 appears to be a pre-Conquest form which lasted until, but probably not beyond, the 13th Century.⁵ This came from the first foot of earth in the enclosure.

No. 8 again can be dated not later than the end of the 13th Century.⁶ This came from a depth of 2 feet in the ditch.

BRONZE OBJECTS comprised chain mail, other fragments of equipment, strap ends, a piece of a bronze bowl, two thimbles, etc.

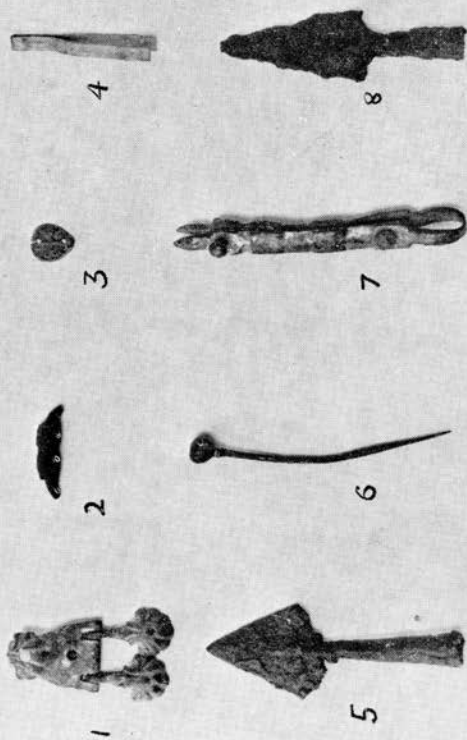
No. 1.—Pretty green patinated bronze. The tongue at the top suggests a clasp either for part of the dress or more probably (in view of the four rivet holes) for a book. After visiting many museums and experts on Mediæval Antiquities I have been unable to find a parallel to this. Facing P. 272 of the Mediæval Catalogue of the London Museum there is an illustration of "a bronze strap-end buckle in the form of a scallop-shell." This form of decoration was widely used in the Middle Ages, first of all by pilgrims as holy souvenirs and proofs that they had visited the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spanish Galicia. The sanctity of such objects was felt to be of power in warding off evil. We are reminded of the passage in Piers Plowman (Wm. Longland, 1330-1400) which speaks of a palmer bearing "many a cross from Sinai, scallop shells from Spain."

No. 2.—Probably a kind of brooch resembling a pair

5. See London Museum Mediæval Catalogue, pp. 66, 67.

6. Ibid.

PL. III



($\frac{1}{2}$)

BRONZE OBJECTS FROM SOUTHOE.

of horns. It has twin decorations in the form of a triangle, not visible in the photograph.

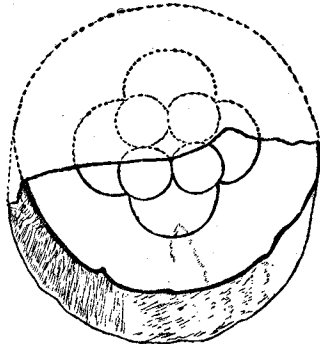
No. 3.—A very thin pear-shaped bronze with rivet holes and enriched with a cross moline.

No. 4.—A lovely pair of tweezers with line decoration visible in the picture under a magnifying glass. I have found no parallel to this specimen. Roman, Norman and early Mediæval tweezers, of which I have seen very many, are more sophisticated in shape, but with no such decoration. This pair was found in the belt of black earth in the enclosure not far from No. 6 and so may be Roman or late Saxon.

No. 6.—A Roman hair pin, bronze throughout, so fragile as to break on slight finger pressure. The bulge in the lower half of the pin (to make fastening easier) is characteristic of the Roman pins. There is a near parallel in the Guildhall Museum, London. Near this specimen was found a tiny fragment of Roman glass.

No. 7.—Solid bronze, found associated with the 13th and 14th Century pottery of the ditch. Rectangular decoration. Evidently a metal strap from the end of a leather thong or cord. Two rivets remain. There is a curve through wear, as though the object had been suspended from a belt. The loop at the bottom is worn, probably through pendant, key or other object. Bright green patina.

TILE AND HONES.—From the ditch bottom, under $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet of filling, came a crudely cut tile, line-impressed, and showing patches of bright yellow glaze. The design was probably made with a stamp.



Four hones in fragmentary form were found in the black soil of the enclosure; one of grey-blue micaceous schist with a cream band at its edge; another (in the shape of a beak) of a rose-tinged grey schist; the third of light grey schist. The second and third were grooved along the edge and had a thickness of $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches. None of the three had the usual hole for suspension. The fourth, also of grey schist, was cylindrical in shape and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter.

Mr. G. C. Dunning has identified the first one as a type probably hailing from Brittany, before the end of the 12th Century, when trade with England in such schist hones ceased.⁷

Scores of fragments of green glazed pottery with various decorations—chevron, curvilinear, striped and rosette—came from the spot which yielded handles 1-7. One decoration consists of a human face with sharp nose, stamped circles for eyes, incised line for mouth, and small slashes for beard. The rim of this jug fragment is slightly inverted. Other jug necks are cylindrical and sometimes ribbed. A few are unglazed, but most are glazed, the glaze being rich in quality. The green is thick with dark patches. It has a lead basis and various shades of mottled yellow, green and brown, caused by the addition of copper, iron or manganese salts, appear in quantities of sherds from the site. Such ware, in the London Museum and Guildhall Museum, is marked as belonging to the 13th Century. Some of the bases of the jugs have been pressed down by thumb marks round the edge to give steadiness to the vessel.

My thanks are due to Messrs. C. F. Tebbutt and S. Inskip Ladds for the help they have given me in making this paper.

7. J. C. Dunning, F.S.A. Proceedings of the Isle of Wight Archæol. Soc. Vol. II, part VII.