

length of the defences necessary to protect the open fourth side, as at a number of other early *burhs*.⁹ A site at the edge of Romney Marsh, set on a tongue of land some 400 m. wide surrounded on three sides by water or swampy ground, must thus be sought. At Newenden the distance across the neck of the peninsula, at its narrowest point, is about 385 m.: at the point nearest to the defences the distance is nearer 450 m. The actual earthwork, however, is set back from the edge of the marsh on gently rising ground, and it is difficult at this remove to determine exactly which points of reference might have been used if the site were assessed for hidage in the early 10th century. The most that can be said at present is that the Newenden earthwork fulfils the requirements in terms of strategic position, tactical layout and size. It may be that an alternative site will one day be discovered on the alluvium of Romney Marsh. Until that time, however, the strong possibility must remain that the first fort of the Burghal Hidage list and the unfinished work of 892 are both represented by the earthwork on the Newenden peninsula, where just over three centuries later another, smaller garrison behind new earthwork defences again watched for the enemy from the sea.

B. K. DAVISON

A SAXO-NORMAN POTTERY-KILN PRODUCING STAMPED WARES AT MICHELMERSH, HANTS (FIGS. 36-7)

In his discussion of pottery from pit 37 at Portchester Castle¹⁰ Professor Barry Cunliffe drew attention to a small spouted pitcher with a diminutive loop strap-handle and decoration of applied reticular stamped strips. Cunliffe thought a non-British origin possible for this vessel, but unbeknown to him a S. Hampshire pottery-kiln had already been discovered which produced large numbers of such pitchers, identical in form if not exactly identical in fabric. Rabbit-workings had some years ago brought sherds to the surface in the garden of The Four Seasons, Michelmersh, near Romsey (FIG. 36). A very limited exploratory excavation, no more than a small hole dug into the rabbit-burrows, revealed large quantities of pottery, including cooking-pots, bowls, dishes, and a variety of stamped, spouted pitchers, including one complete, though spalled, example.

Michelmersh lies N. of Romsey on high ground overlooking the Test valley. The area is complex geologically. There is an abundance of fine clay in the near-by outcrop of the Reading beds; and there are sands, chalk and, farther down the valley slopes, gravel. Brick-kilns and brickearth pits in the area today utilize the clays of the Reading beds and similar outcrops elsewhere in S. Hampshire have given rise to pottery industries in Roman, medieval and recent times. The Michelmersh kiln-site is on fine brown sand, which gives way shortly to clay. Following the initial discovery a flux-gate magnetometer-survey was undertaken which located two major magnetic anomalies. One of these has now been excavated. A small kiln has been revealed, with circular firing-chamber some 1.5 m. in diameter, constructed of flints set in puddled chalk. The kiln was set at one end of an oval hole some 2 m. by 2.5 m., with the other end serving as stoke-pit. Large sherds of pottery were found in the stoke-hole, throat and firing-chamber, and it was clear that the complete pot previously recovered must have been within the kiln itself. Very large quantities of pottery were found in the stoke-pit, in the black ashy layers which lay around the kiln, and in the dark sands which lay above it.

While reconstruction of the pots and study of the wares will inevitably take some time, it has been thought worth while to publish a preliminary account of the distinctive stamped pottery, both for its intrinsic interest, and in the hope of its being recognized in other assemblages. All pottery from the kiln appears to have been thrown on a fast

⁹ A. J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (1939), 495; Hill, *op. cit.* in note 2, 91.

¹⁰ B. Cunliffe, 'The Saxon culture-sequence at Portchester Castle', *Antiq. J.*, L (1970), 80, fig. 7, no. 10.

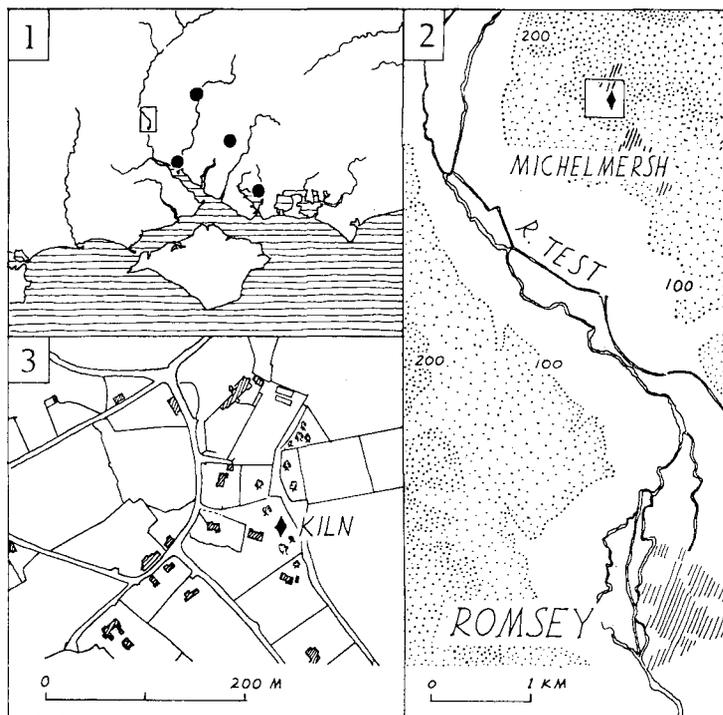


FIG. 36
MAPS SHOWING LOCATION OF POTTERY-KILN AT
MICHELMERSH, HAMPSHIRE (p. 127)

or fairly fast wheel, and most of the pots have sagging bases. Almost all is unglazed in a sandy fabric, with surface ranging from fine smooth to coarse sandy. There is a wide colour range, from very pale yellow through buff and red to black. The kiln produced the following types:

1. *Cooking-pots*. These mostly had simple rounded or, less frequently, squared off, out-turned rims. Some had widely-spaced pairs of finger-mouldings on the top of the rim and very occasionally finger-mouldings in groups of three. Others had the closely-set finger-mouldings normally associated with 12th-century pottery. A very small number of the cooking-pots, certainly produced in the kiln, had the distinctive broad horizontal rilling and general form of Cunliffe's proposed *Portchester Ware* of type 1.¹¹ There are other general resemblances to pots in the Portchester series, and there can be little doubt that the two groups are contemporary.

2. *Spouted pitchers* (FIG. 37). Large numbers of sherds were found, all of pitchers of similar form and size, but with a variety of decoration. All have small strap-handles, small O-spouts, and the distinctive ribbed rim and shoulder. The shoulder rib may be decorated either by careful cutting (FIG. 37, *a*), or by moulding (*b*) or by impression (*c*). Only a few sherds have decoration of applied reticular strips, but almost all have stamped decoration. The stamps are occasionally large eight-sector stamps (diam. 11 mm.), usually used as the centre of designs; but the normal stamp is a small four-sector stamp, used lavishly to produce patterns of varying complexity. The patterns

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 75, fig. 9, nos. 1-11.

include: 1. Broad upturned arrows; 2. Horizontal lines on the shoulder; 3. H-patterns on the shoulder; 4-6. Arcs and double arcs, combined in at least three ways to produce diamonds or single and double lenticles; 7. Swags with circles in the loops; 8. Double swags with circles in the loops; 9. Spirals; 10. Alternate large and small circles with large stamps at the centre; 11. Staggered large circles in two rows; 12. An ambitious layout with small circle containing a cross eccentric within a larger circle, flanked by four smaller circles containing arcs.

3. *Less frequent types.* There were a few flat, open dishes with squared off rims, and some remarkable upright necks, presumably from jars or jugs with deeply-moulded bulbous profile, in one case with finger-moulded applied neck-cordon. Other rare types will be described in the full report.

Students of Saxo-Norman ceramics have expressed surprise that so distinctive a type of pottery should have remained unrecognized for so long, especially in an area where many excavations have taken place. As a search begins in local collections, however, it is clear that the stamped wares are represented, in Winchester, for instance, in contexts clearly assignable to the 11th century, though the cooking-pots might have been thought to have been later. Small sherds of the distinctive pitchers have also been noted in at least two contexts at Southampton, one from a layer in the castle

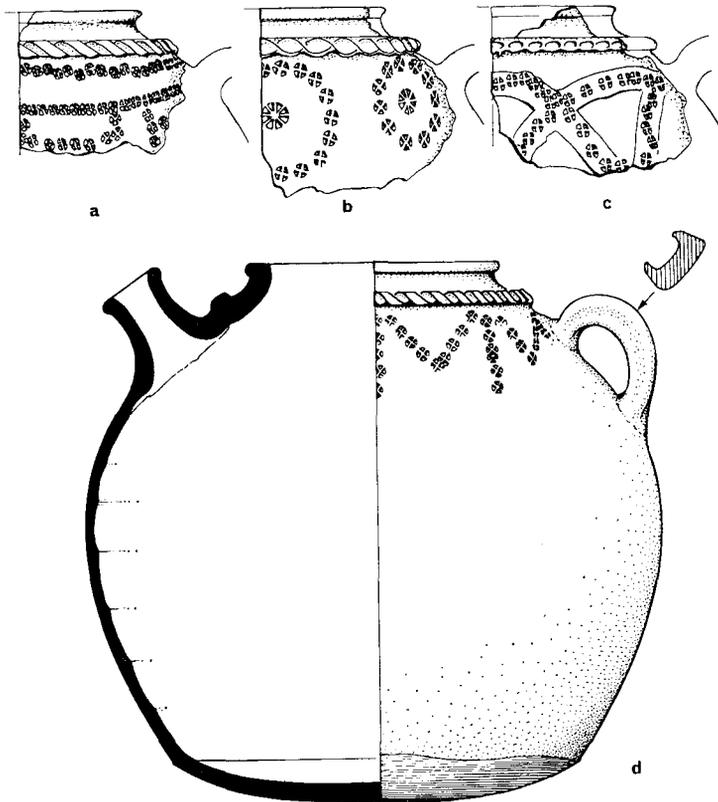


FIG. 37
SAXO-NORMAN STAMPED POTTERY FROM KILN AT
MICHELMERSH, HAMPSHIRE (p. 128 f.). Sc. $\frac{1}{3}$

area which should be earlier than the construction of the castle, thus corroborating the impression of a 11th-century date for at least some examples and, by association the remainder, since the kiln is unlikely to have had a long life. A sherd has been recognized in an assemblage, assignable in general to this period, from K. J. Barton's excavations at Bishops Waltham.

The general similarities of a few of the Michelmersh products to pottery from groups at Portchester has already been noted. Cunliffe does not argue the date of this pottery closely, but he assigns it to the 10th and early 11th century, and the stratigraphic position of the pits in which it was found is clear enough. There seems no reason, therefore, why the products of this kiln should not, in retrospect at least, be seen as a perfectly natural and predictable element in the late Saxon and Saxo-Norman ceramic spectrum. Their distribution, and in particular the extent to which they reached Romsey, Winchester, Southampton, and perhaps E. Wiltshire markets, and even Salisbury, will be an interesting research project, made all the easier by the distinctive nature of the product.

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A 12TH-CENTURY STONE LAMP FROM LLANGWM UCHAF, MONMOUTHSHIRE (PL. XII; FIGS. 38-9)

Llangwm, three miles east of Usk in Monmouthshire, contains two parish churches, Llangwm Isaf (=Lower Llangwm) dedicated to St. John, and Llangwm Uchaf (=Upper Llangwm) dedicated to St. Jerome. Standing by the font at the W. end of St. Jerome's is an hourglass-shaped stone decorated with interlace and with its top surface hollowed out into a bowl. This stone had been built into the fabric of the church and was found during the rebuilding of 1858-71. The vicar at that period, the Rev. William Price, was responsible for saving both the Llangwm churches from total destruction, following a long period of neglect in which two largely unaltered medieval structures retaining their rood-screens and lofts, medieval altars and wall-paintings were allowed to fall into semi-ruin. St. John's has now been almost totally rebuilt, but St. Jerome's still has many of its medieval features, including a magnificent rood-screen and loft.

According to the Book of Llandaff,¹² Llangwm was granted to Llandaff in the time of Bishop Grecielis, a cleric believed to have lived in the 9th century. We are perhaps on firmer ground with a grant of 1071-5,¹³ by which one Caradoc ap Rhiwallon granted land at Llangwm to the church at Llandaff and to the four saints of Llangwm, Mirgint, Cinficc, Huui and Ereun. Among the witnesses is Elinui, described as a monk of Llangwm (*monachus de lanncum*). From this grant it would seem probable that we are dealing with a pre-Norman monastic foundation which passed into the sphere of influence of the church of Llandaff. In 1119 a bull of Calixtus II¹⁴ confirmed 'the vill of Lann Cum, with the churches' to Llandaff, showing that both St. Jerome's and St. John's were already in existence.

The stone (PL. XII, A, B; FIG. 38), 20 in. (50.8 cm.) high and circular in section, is a fine grained pale cream oolitic limestone of non-local origin. It consists of two bucket-shaped elements joined at their bases by a cylindrical central collar, the collar and upper part being decorated with a broad, loose ribbon-plait. The lower element or base is solid, the upper part hollowed out into a bowl, $4\frac{3}{4}$ in. (12 cm.) deep, and $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. (19 cm.) wide at the top. At some date the stone has been reused as a stoup, for it is perforated by a circular hole 1 in. in diameter, set $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. below this rim. This

¹² *The Text of the Book of Llan Dav*, ed. J. G. Evans and J. Rhys (London, 1893), 173-4, 373.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 274-5, 384; *Episcopal Acts Relating to Welsh Dioceses, 1066-1272*, ed. J. Conway Davies (Cardiff, 1948), II, 608-9 (l. 6).

¹⁴ *Op. cit.* in note 12, 89-92; Conway Davies, *op. cit.* in note 13, II, 615 (l. 27).