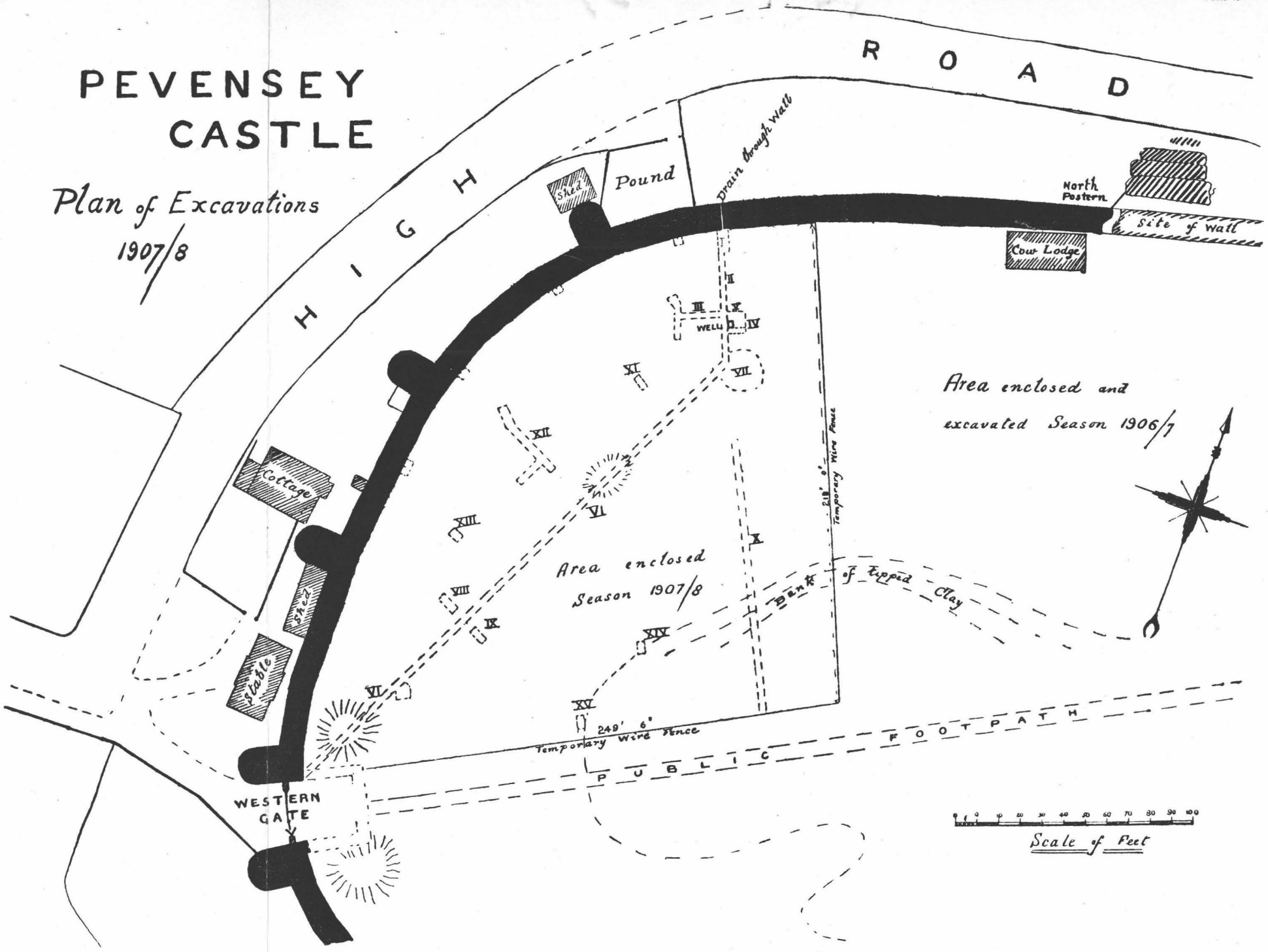


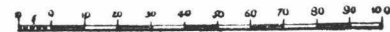
# PEVENSEY CASTLE

Plan of Excavations  
1907/8



Area enclosed and  
excavated Season 1906/7

Area enclosed  
Season 1907/8



Scale of Feet

# EXCAVATIONS AT PEVENSEY, 1907-8.

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BY L. F. SALZMANN.

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THE examination of the north-west quarter of the Roman fortress at Pevensey, which had been begun in October, 1906, was re-commenced at the end of October, 1907, and completed in the spring of 1908. The results obtained during the second season's digging were of much value and interest and confirmed the conclusions arrived at after the first season's work.

An examination of the great wall from the outside had revealed the presence of what appeared to be a blocked drain at a point some 40-ft. west of the limit of last season's excavations, and therefore within the area enclosed for examination this season. The mouth of the drain was built into the double plinth, which runs round the wall, and of which the lower member, here forming the bottom of the drain, was originally at the level of the ground, but is now some 12-in. above the surface, the soil having subsided through the drainage of the marshes. Upon removing the blocking stones it was found that the drain, which measures 12-in. by 10-in., ran straight through the wall. A shaft was therefore sunk against the inner face of the wall and the slab of green sandstone forming the top of the inner mouth of the drain was struck at a depth of 10-ft. from the present surface. The sides and bottom of the drain were found to be also of green sandstone, and several blocks of the same material, with a few flints, were lying in the aperture. Just below the mouth of the drain were some fragments of Roman pottery and a coin of the fourth century. From the general appearance of the remains and the absence of any channel or gutter leading to the drain, it would seem doubtful if the latter was ever used,

and it is probable that it was made when the wall was built as part of a scheme which was never carried out.

Acting on the assumption that the building or other object which the drain was intended to serve would most likely be found upon its course, a trench (No II. on the plan) was driven southwards along the presumed course of the drain. Some 40-ft. from the face of the wall the surface of the natural clay, here 4-ft. below the present ground level, dipped rapidly, and further examination revealed the presence of timbering on the east side of the trench. Following carefully round these timbers it was found that they formed the framework of a square well, the mouth of which was about 3-ft. square. The framing timbers, which were much decayed at the top, but in perfect preservation below, were notched into one another, their ends overlapping, on the south side, as much as 18-in. In the south-east angle, formed by these overlapping timbers, a shaft was sunk for some 8-ft. from the top timber, or 15-ft. 6-in. from the present surface. In the earth thus excavated, all of which had been previously disturbed, having evidently been packed round the well as it was built up, there were a few pieces of pottery, unmistakably of Roman date and no remains of any latter period, so that the well may safely be assigned to the Roman occupation.

The opening of the well was anticipated with considerable interest, but its contents proved rather disappointing. There were a few small fragments of pottery, all of Roman make, a pointed bone object—either a “stylus” or an instrument for boring holes—portions of several leather shoes and a large number of animal bones, but only one object of importance. This was the original well rope composed of twisted strands of two kinds of bark, the one identified by the authorities at Kew Gardens as tamarisk, but the other unknown. The rope, which is important as being apparently the only piece of Roman cordage yet found in Britain, was in good condition and must have measured several yards, but was unavoidably cut up in the process



PEVENSEY CASTLE EXCAVATIONS.—THE WELL.

of removal; it was found nearly at the bottom of the well, at a depth of 10-ft. from the top, and close to it were found an oval piece of wood and several flat pieces, which appear to have formed respectively the bottom and sides of a bucket, one of the bronze ears of which was also brought to light.

The well reached a depth of just under 11-ft. from the top of the first timber, each side containing 13 balks of timber, of which the inner, squared, faces averaged 10-in. in depth. The timbers were embedded in clay, but the soil at the bottom proved to be sand. It was clear that to construct the well a hole had been dug through the clay to the water-bearing stratum of sand, sloping from the south, and the timbers built up against the upright face of the undisturbed clay on the north side, the clay thrown out of the hole being packed back again round the other three sides. From the section of the clay obtained during our work it was evident that the timbering had not been continued up to what was then the surface level, but a hollow cup-shaped depression had been left round the mouth of the shaft. This had remained open long enough for a slight but distinct layer of black soil to be deposited, but was then filled up again, and, at the same time, no doubt, the well itself was filled with rubbish and covered up. Everything points to the well having been in use quite a short time and filled up during the Roman occupation. The rubbish with which it was filled contained a large number of animal bones, including skulls of oxen (both the Celtic and larger Romano-British varieties), goat or horned sheep and one example of cat—apparently domestic—and therefore interesting as confirming the evidence already obtained from Silchester, and indeed from last year's excavations at Pevensey, of the presence of domestic cats in Roman times.

The bulk of the material with which the well was blocked consisted of vegetable matter, peat and masses of rushes, which, from the regularity of their stratification, appear to have been used for thatch. A list of

the varieties of woods identified by Mr. A. H. Lyall and of the seeds identified by Mr. Clement Reid from specimens found in the well is given at the end of this paper.

Upon continuing the trench No. II. further south, at some 15-ft. beyond the well, the black earth was found to dip sharply towards the east and two curious pipe-like holes, about 15-in. apart, were observed leading downwards in a slanting direction. Excavation showed that these holes, which were about 2-in. square, had formerly contained wooden shafts, which still remained in their lower portion. These shafts proved to be the sides of a rough ladder, of which one rung, held in place by wooden pegs, remained in position, and traces of other rungs and a number of the pegs were also found. The foot of the ladder was some 17-ft. from the present surface, near it were found a wooden shovel with a rounded handle, 3-ft. 6-in. long, and a flat blade 16-in. long by 7-in. broad, the bottom and staves of an oval wooden bucket, the staves being grooved to receive the bevelled edge of the bottom, and remains of a woven material, possibly sacking. Slightly lower were found two turned saucer-like bowls of beechwood, 8-in. in diameter and about  $1\frac{1}{4}$ -in. deep, a second and shorter flat-bladed shovel, several pointed stakes and some wattling, which had formed part of either a hurdle or more probably a basket. To complete the examination of this pit it had to be dug out to the depth of 19-ft., which proved to be a lengthy and laborious proceeding, as on two or three occasions heavy rains filled the hole, bringing down the sides and necessitating extensive bailing before work could be resumed. From the objects found, and especially from the pottery, much of which was pieced together by the patience of Mr. Frank Maitland, it seemed clear that the pit was dug in the thirteenth century, probably to obtain sand, of which an excellent vein underlies the clay, for building; the sand seems to have been dug away from beneath the clay and no doubt the sides of the pit suddenly fell in, covering up the workmen's tools.

Trench No. II. was subsequently continued, as No. X., to the southern limit of the area into the "dumped clay," to which reference was made in the former account (*S.A.C.*, Vol. LI., p. 107). Another trench, No. VI., was carried from near the well right across the area to the west gate, but this proved very disappointing. Nor did any of the other trenches and holes shown on the plan result in finds of any particular importance.

In several cases, however, notably at XII., patches of mortar occurred, and in other places patches of beach stones, these being clearly places where material for building the great wall had been dumped. The absence of remains below these mortar beds, when they were dug through, suggests that there had been no occupation of the site sufficient to produce any stratum of deposits prior to the building of the wall, while the fact that these beds of building material remained undisturbed shows that the absence of any trace of permanent buildings is due not to their complete removal, but to their not having been erected. It may now be regarded as practically certain that the north-west quarter of the fort was either unoccupied or occupied solely by such temporary erections as the wattle-and-daub huts, of which traces were found during the first season's work. This does not, of course, justify the assumption that there were no buildings in other parts of the fort, and it is to be hoped that the eastern portion may be explored and further light thrown upon the internal economy of Anderida.

The objects found during this season were very similar to those found before, and on the whole of less interest. No more examples of the interesting Honorius tile occurred, but a fragment of tile, or rather brick, bearing the letters BR. was brought to light and clearly belongs to the CL(*assiarii*) BR(*itannici*) or British Marines, though quite distinct in type from the specimen found before, as may be seen by comparing the illustration here given with that in *S.A.C.*, Vol. LI., p. 112. The evidence of coins for dating the main period of occupation may be best seen by a comparison of the two seasons' yield.



	1906-7.	1907-8.
Gallienus [254-268] .....	1	0
Claudius Gothicus [268-270] .....	1	0
Probus [276-282] .....	1	0
Carausius [287-293] .....	1	1
Allectus [293-296] .....	0	2
Constantius Chlorus [292-305] .....	1	1
Maximianus [292-311] .....	1	0
Helena [died 328] .....	1	0
Constantine I. [307-337] .....	4	2
Maximinus [307-313] .....	0	1
Crispus [317-326] .....	0	1
Constantine II. [337-340] .....	1	4
Constans [327-350] .....	0	4
Const . . . ? [4th century] .....	0	3
Constantinopolis [4th century] .....	2	2
Urbs Roma [4th century] .....	1	4
Magnentius [350-353] .....	0	1
Valentinian [364-375] .....	1	0
Valens [367-378] .....	0	3 (?)
Gratian [375-383] .....	0	2
Uncertain .....	16	11

The pottery also bears witness to the comparatively late date of this military settlement, for though the bulk of it is of a common domestic type which might belong to almost any period of the Roman influence, there is a notable absence of any distinctively early forms. Thus the fine red ware, commonly known as "Samian," which appears to have gone out of use about the end of the third century, is scarce at Pevensey, forming less than 1 per cent. of the fragments catalogued—and this in spite of the fact that every piece of this ware was noted, while of the commoner wares only such distinctive pieces as rims, bases or marked fragments were recorded. Moreover, of the painted and stamped red wares, which form some 14 per cent. of the recorded specimens, a large proportion may be definitely assigned to the fourth century.

The bulk of the potsherds are of the common black and grey wares. These wares may be divided into (a) a close-grained body, and (b) a body of much coarser grain with a surface rather slimy to the touch and suggestive of lead glaze. Of the close-grained wares some specimens are distinctly superior and finer than the bulk of the fragments and the range of colour is considerable,





POTTERY MASK.



INSCRIBED BRICK.

PEVENSEY CASTLE EXCAVATIONS.

varying from a very pale grey to black. The coarser ware also varies in colour, some pieces being black and others of a straw or reddish colour, presenting a half-baked appearance. Some of the finer specimens of the better class are ornamented with broad bands of black and white, and others, as well as many pieces of the coarse ware, have a rough decoration of shallow incised lines resembling pencil marks. In cataloguing the examples of these black and grey wares found last season only specimens with rims or distinctive markings were recorded and, as much care was taken to put together any pieces belonging to the same vessel, it may safely be asserted that the numbers given represent distinct vessels. To have enumerated the large quantities of indistinguishable fragments would have involved much probable duplication—there might well be a score of small pieces of one jar, and that jar already recorded amongst the rims. At the same time, having regard to the very fragmentary condition of most of the pottery, it is clear that a large number of vessels are represented by pieces other than rims, and so the totals given below must be increased considerably, possibly even doubled, to give an idea of the number of vessels represented.

Two types that are very common among the grey wares are the "bowls" (Fig. 1) and the "pots" (Fig. 2). The numbers of these found during the season were as follows:

BOWLS.		POTS.	
A.	{ Finest quality . . . . . 12	A.	{ Finest quality . . . . . 44
	{ Medium . . . . . 134		{ Medium . . . . . 125
B.	{ Coarse . . . . . 48	B.	{ Stone-coloured, fine . . . . . 1
			{ Coarse . . . . . 29
	—		—
	194		199

Mr. Ray, who has catalogued the pottery of the first season, gives as the numbers of these types found in 1906-7:

BOWLS.		POTS.	
A.	{ Grey . . . . . 48	A.	{ Grey . . . . . 113
	{ Black . . . . . 42		{ Black . . . . . 60
B.	{ Coarse . . . . . 93	B.	{ Coarse . . . . . 56
	—		—
	183		229

Besides these two prominent types there are large quantities of rims of the types shown in Figs. 3, 4, 5, with slight variations. Of these there were found last season:

A.	{ Finest quality (mostly pale grey) .....	67
	{ Medium .....	367
B.	Coarse .....	285
		—
		719

The figures for the first season being:

A.	Close-grained.....	402
B.	Coarse .....	335
		—
		737

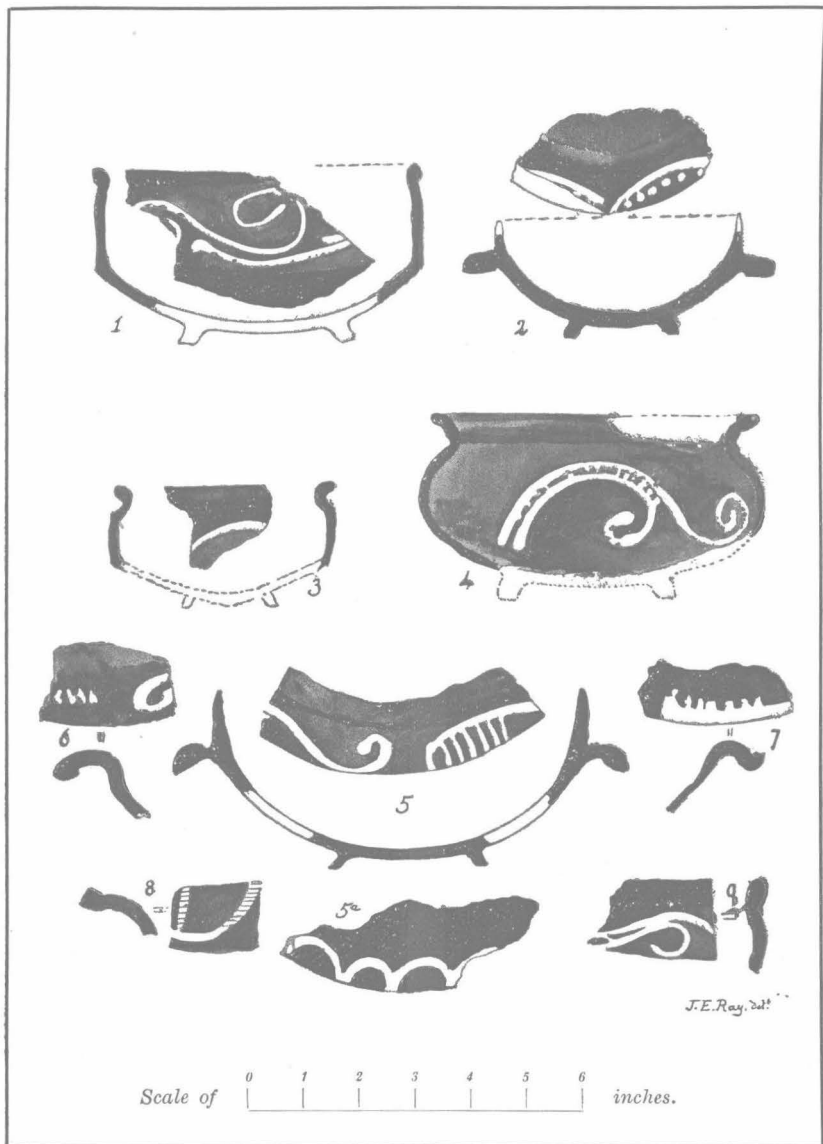
The final section of the grey wares is composed of those examples which bear distinctive markings:

A.	{	Grey with broad bands of black.....	16
		"    "    "    white .....	18
		"    regular lattice markings .....	20
		"    irregular crossing lines .....	19
		Similar, but pottery about $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. thick .....	11
		Grey with "combing" <sup>1</sup> .....	16
		"    "    (about $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. thick) .....	14 <sup>2</sup>
		Impressed circles .....	4
B.	{	Rudely scratched crescent and dots .....	1
		Various .....	12
		Reddish grey with lattice and irregular diagonal markings .....	98
		Combing on inner and outer surfaces .....	1
		Patterns formed of dots .....	6
			—
		236	

From these details we obtain a total of 1,348 pieces belonging to the various types of grey wares. It is possible that a few of these fragments ought to be assigned to mediæval times, but as practically all the varieties of paste here classified occur in the typically Roman type, No. 2, such intruders must be few, and bearing in mind what has been said about the large number of shapeless fragments unclassified, it is evident that, at a moderate computation, we had turned up this

<sup>1</sup> Pattern of four or five parallel lines, as if impressed by drawing teeth of a comb over the surface.

<sup>2</sup> In seven cases combined with broad bands of black or ruddy brown.

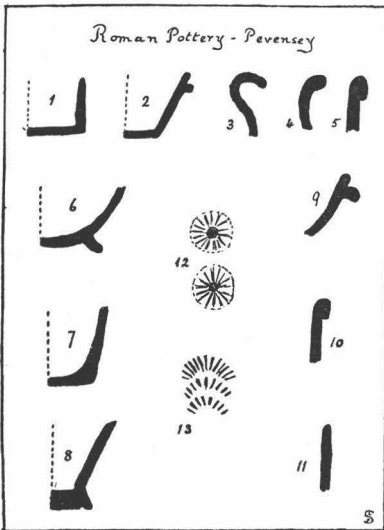


PEVENSEY CASTLE EXCAVATIONS.

RED WARE.

last season pieces representing some 1,500 vessels of these grey wares alone.

Turning to the red wares, we have first some 17 fragments of the so-called "Samian." Of these only one bore any trace of the moulded decoration so often found in this ware, the pattern in this case being circles, apparently containing heads of Isis (?), separated by conventional foliage. Two other pieces had borne potter's stamps, but in neither case were any letters legible. The other specimens of red wares, varying in fineness from pottery closely resembling "Samian" down to earthenware little superior to the modern flower pot, may be classified under bases and rims. Of the bases



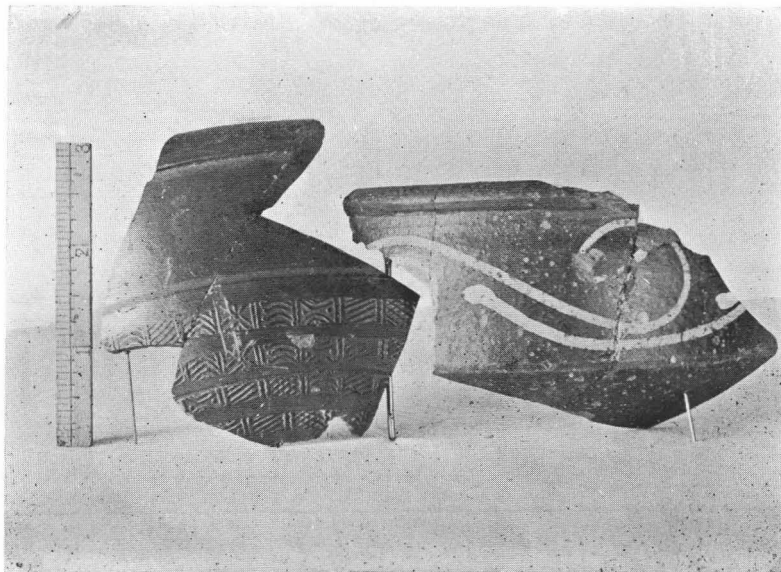
the commonest types were Fig. 6, of which there were some 45 examples (the previous season yielding almost exactly the same number). The types shown in Figs. 7 and 8, with slight variations, accounted for another 18. The rims presented a considerable variety of shape, the commonest types being those shown as Figs. 9 and 10. Varieties of Fig. 9 amounted to 58, of which the greater number showed in section a grey core, only seven being red through-

out. Next in number came Fig. 10, with 44 specimens, almost all being of a fine paste, and Fig. 11 with 27 examples, most of these also being of good quality. In addition to these there are another 30 rims of various types and some 50 fragments not apparently belonging to any of the rims or bases, so that altogether some 210 vessels of red wares are represented.

All these are plain and without decoration, but there are also some 15 pieces of a Gaulish ware painted a

sealing-wax red and decorated with conventional patterns in white slip. Plate 9 represents some of the more striking specimens of this rather uncommon ware found at Pevensey. All the shapes there shown are also found in the unpainted red wares. There are 260 fragments of red and brown wares bearing impressed decorations. Of these about 30 have variants of what we may call the "daisy" pattern (Figs. 12 and 13). Half a dozen pieces were found of the fine fourth century ware attributed to the potteries of Marne, decorated with horizontal bands of small squares, containing simple geometrical patterns (see illustration), and there were four pieces of a hard stone-coloured paste with similar ornamentation, but with a light brown glazed surface. Of New Forest, or similar pottery eight examples were found, and 14 fragments may belong to the British potteries of the Castor type or to those of the Low Countries. Add to these some 60 pieces of miscellaneous brown, black and stone-coloured wares and 30 examples of "Mortaria," and we obtain a grand total of rather over 2,000 vessels of all types.

Mr. Ray's figures give a result for the first season approximating to the same number. We have therefore fragments representative of at least 4,000 vessels (not one of them complete and hardly half a dozen approaching completeness) attributable to the period of the Roman occupation—or rather of the Roman influence, for many of them must no doubt be assigned to the century that elapsed between the withdrawal of the Roman troops and the fall of Anderida. Comparing the amount of soil shifted during our work with the amount left undisturbed, it would seem that at a moderate estimate this north-western quarter of the fortress must have contained the remains of some 30,000 vessels. If we could assume that this portion of the area was typical of the remainder we should have for the whole the imposing total of 150,000 vessels, which would represent the breakages of about 200 years. Unfortunately no classical writer has left any record of the average smashing capacity of the Roman servant, so that it is not possible to deduce from these figures the probable population of Anderida.



*From "The Antiquary," by kind permission.]*

## PEVENSEY CASTLE EXCAVATIONS.

POTTERY.



Moreover, it is possible that the area at present explored is by no means typical of the whole.

It is, of course, rash to theorise while so much remains yet to be uncovered, but a comparison of the results obtained during the two seasons certainly appears suggestive. In the area examined during the first season two of the most noticeable features were the very frequent traces of fires, the ground being burnt in many places and the soil full of ashes and charcoal, and the occurrence of numerous beds of oyster, mussel and other shells. In the portion explored this last season these shell beds do not occur, nor is there the same evidence of fires. On the other hand, the potsherds were here even more fragmentary and more numerous (the quantity of soil shifted during the first season was practically double that shifted during the second, but the number of fragments found was, as we have seen, approximately equal in each case); this, taken with the evidence of non-occupation given above, suggests that this more westerly portion may have been a vacant space where broken crockery, &c., was thrown away, while the more easterly part of this quarter may have been the place where the food for the garrison was prepared and cooked.

Amongst the objects found mention must not be omitted of two pottery masks which had formed part of the ornamentation of vases. The larger, which measures  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -in. square, possesses a considerable barbaric vigour of modelling, as may be seen from the photograph (Plate 8). Glass was present in very small quantities, and of bronze only a portion of a "ligula" and a "fibula" of the simplest design were found, but nails were plentiful and a small iron knife was taken out of the well.

The remains of post-Roman date were, as a whole, of little importance, the chief exception being the wooden objects found in the pit, as already mentioned, and the pottery accompanying them, which included two large jars of simple but effective design, and part of another jar with vertical strips of "pinched ribbon" ornamentation. Various glazed fragments, as well as many pieces

of the common coarse red and black mediæval earthenware were found, and a certain number of iron spear and arrow heads similar to those turned up the previous season.

As has already been mentioned, samples of the earth from the Roman well were submitted to Mr. Clement Reid, F.R.S., who identified seeds of the following plants :

- Flax (*Linum usitatissimum*).
- Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*).
- Wild Radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*).
- Fool's Parsley (*Aetusa cynapium*).
- Turnip (*Brassica campestris*).
- ? Groundsel (*Senecio sylvaticus*).
- Henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*).
- Swine's Cress (*Senebiera coronopus*).
- Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*).
- Knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*).
- Black Bindweed (*Polygonum convolvulus*).
- Persicaria (*Polygonum persicaria*).
- Fiddle Dock (*Rumex crispus*).
- Sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*).
- Stinging nettle (*Urtica ureus*, and *U. dioica*).
- Dead-nettle (*Lamium purpureum*).
- Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*).
- White Campion (*Lychnis alba*).
- Orache (*Atriplex patula*, and *A. hastata*).
- Seablite (*Sueda maritima*).
- Sowthistle (*Sonchus asper*, and *S. oleraceus*).
- Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*).
- Vetch (*Vicia*).
- Sedge (*Carex*).
- Bracken (*Pteris aquilina*).

Of these, Henbane had not previously been found on any Roman site in Britain. With the possible exception of Flax and Turnip, none of the plants represented were cultivated species.

In addition to these plants, Mr. A. H. Lyell, F.S.A., has identified among the pieces of wood from the well submitted to him :

- Oak (*Quercus robur*).
- Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*).
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*).
- Willow (*Salix alba*).
- Maple (*Acer campestris*).
- Hawthorne (*Cratoegus oxyacantha*).

Beech (*Fagus sylvestris*).  
Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).  
Mountain Ash (*Pyrus aucuparia*).  
Furze (*Ulex europaeus*).  
Heath (*Erica arborea*).  
Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*).  
Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea vesca*).  
Cherry (*Prunus cerasus*).

The presence of beech is satisfactory as confirming the evidence of last season when a piece of beech-charcoal was found. The interest of this find lies in the fact that it has sometimes been doubted whether the beech grew in Britain at the time of the Roman occupation.

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