The Roman Villages at Brettenham and Needham and the Contemporary Road System.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

Hitherto in East Anglia most of the attention given to the Roman period has been focussed on its more spectacular and substantial remains—on its towns, forts, country mansions and farmhouses—largely to the exclusion of the commoner villages and hamlets which sheltered the majority of the Icenian peasantry. The reason for this is excellent. The remains of dwellings in these settlements are necessarily scanty, and there is little possibility either of elucidating their plans or the lay-out of the settlements and their adjacent fields (except by air-photography). The almost complete absence of stratification makes it unlikely that any development either of material culture or social conditions in these communities can be traced from century to century. It is incumbent on the archæologist to justify, then,

the apparent waste of time and money in investigating two such sites at Brettenham and Needham in south Norfolk.

The spread of Romanisation in East Anglia can only be understood by a study of its highways—the arteries along which the stream of civilization flowed. To determine the date of construction of Roman roads in East Anglia is difficult. They may have been built an indefinite time after the settlements they were designed to link. But if it can be shown that certain villages and hamlets sprang into existence astride a new Roman road because they were essential to the easy passage of travellers, then the settlement and the road should be of approximately equal antiquity. Such settlements in the valleys, close to good supplies of water would perhaps start life as temporary quarters for those engaged in constructing the highway. Later they might contain stables for the horses of the posting service and an inn where travellers might lodge. The crossing of road and river might lead to the transference of goods from one to the other and so to the establishment of a small market, though arable and pastoral farming would naturally be the mainstay of those who congregated around this new settlement. Brettenham, a settlement on the Peddars Way, intermediate between the Wash and Essex, and Needham on the Roman road crossing the Waveney at that point, might thus be expected to throw some light on the date at which the chief Roman roads of East Anglia were laid out.

It is fortunate that during and subsequent to the examination of these sites, similar settlements on these and related highways have been explored at Scole in Norfolk and Stanton in Suffolk by the Suffolk Institute of Archæology, Ipswich Museum and private persons. The writer is indebted to Mr. Ivan E. Moore for an advance communication of the results of this work, considered in the concluding section of this report.

THE ROMAN SETTLEMENT AT BRETTENHAM.

THE SITE

(Ordnance Survey 25 in. 1905, 103—2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11; 6 in. 103 N.E.).

The River Thet is crossed by the road known as the Peddars Way, four-and-a-half miles above its confluence with the Little Ouse River at Thetford. Around this crossing called Droveway Ford stood a Roman settlement extending into the parishes of Brettenham, Bridgham, Rushford and West Harling. Its extent and the sites of discoveries and excavations to be described are shown in Figure 1.

The geology of this valley is fairly uniform, though local variations exist. Above chalk lies yellow sand overlain by local patches of chalky boulder clay up to four inches thick. Where this is absent the yellow sand merges at its upper limit into dark sand and humus up to two feet in depth. The Roman ground surface, covered with large stones resulting from subsequent wind erosion, appears in section as a thin black layer of soil above the boulder clay. It is usually covered by one foot of dark sand or humus, though in places a similar depth of blown sand may be present. The valley floor flanking the Thet is covered by alluvium.

PREVIOUS DISCOVERIES.

The presence of a Roman settlement at Brettenham has been known for at least two centuries. Blomefield[1] mentions the finding of Samian ware and a coin of Vespasian. His contemporary, the Rev. G. Burton of Elveden, mentions coins presumably from this site and records the discovery of an adjacent cemetery which he regarded as Roman, in a letter to

[1] *History of Norfolk*, vol. i., 1739, p. 298; vol. i., 1805, p. 441. *See also* T. H. Bryant, *The Churches of Norfolk*, Hundred of Shropham, 1913, p. 84; *Victoria County History*, Norfolk, vol. i., 1901, p. 314.

the Rev. Dr. Stukeley, Rector of St. George's, Queen Square, London, written from Thetford, January 12th, 1754.[1]

"Dear Doctor,

. . . . . I have lately been highly entertained with a discovery that has been made by a gentleman in this neighbourhood who was heightening a meadow of his, in order to which he was carrying on some sand from a sand-pit that was sunk in the side of a hill, and when they had entered the hill a little way they found a number of broken fragements of Roman urns, they say in the whole to the amount of an hundred already, and they have by computation above three thousand loads of the hill to remove still; but through the carelessness of the workmen they have not preserved above thirteen entire, every one of which are differently wrought. I took draughts of the thirteen whole ones, and have a promise of all those that they shall find (for they continue discovering them daily). There is one among them, a very small one; we examined it, but found nothing in it but pure sand. The rest of them had only sand at bottom and top, and the ashes and bones near the centre of the urn. When they have finished their enquiries I will send you draughts of the urns and further particulars. The spot where they were found is between Rushforth and Brettenham, in Suffolk, and about a furlong east of the great Roman road, and within a stone's cast of the river. In one of the urns was found part of a Roman lady's comb made of box, and a piece of iron. The comb is broken and very brittle. No coins have as yet been found in any of the urns. In a close some distance off was found a very fine medal of the emperor Vespasian, the reverse Judæa Capta, and another of the empress Justina, a medal but of middle size and whitish metal. You see I am not inattentive to affairs of this kind when chance directs me to them. I shall be extreamly glad if I can procure you any further

[1] *The Family Memoirs of the Rev. William Stukeley*, etc., vol. iii., 1887, pp. 197-8. (Surtees' Society.)

discoveries from this fragment of arabia deserta, and that it will raise your opinion of our barren lands as a nursery of antiquity if not fertility.

Believe me, dear Doctor, as ever,
Your affectionate Friend and obliged humble servant,
G. BURTON."

This letter creates several problems. The site of this discovery is not easy to place. If the account is literally correct, the cemetery would be either in the Money Field, Brettenham or the field to the east, or close to Thorpe Farm, West Harling. There are no traces of sandpits at any of these places, and it is impossible for any site east of the Peddars Way to lie between Brettenham and Rushford (both now in Norfolk—though part of the latter was formerly in Suffolk). Burton's description seems muddled, and one is justified in seeking further evidence. The character of the grave goods suggests an Anglian rather than a Roman cemetery. In the Museum of Archæology at Cambridge there is now a stamped Anglian urn full of burnt human bones, fused glass beads and iron, and labelled " 18—Found at Bretenham field near Rushworth, Norfolk, 1763." It was presented by the Rev. R. Daniel to his college, Clare, in 1822, whence it passed to the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Cambridge Antiquarian Society. Daniel held livings in Suffolk and Norfolk, and it is possible that his urn was one of those which came into Burton's possession after the above letter was written. At some later date similar urns were dug up and exhibited to the Royal Archæological Institute.[1] They were found west of the Peddars Way near the carpenter's shop at Shadwell Hall Home Farm in Rushford parish. Three of them were given to Norwich Museum in 1920. There are traces of old pits to the north of the Home Farm. Unless evidence is found of further Anglian cemeteries in the neighbourhood it is safer to regard this site as the source of Burton's pots and those now at Cambridge

[1] *Proceedings* of Norwich meeting, 1851, p. xxviii.

and Norwich. It is of course possible that the two Anglian inhumation burials found at Brettenham in 1907 (*see* post) may form part of another Anglian cemetery of mixed rites. These post-Roman discoveries will be fully published elsewhere.

To return to discoveries of unquestionably Roman age is to note the objects published by the Rev. G. J. Chester in 1847,[1] which were found "in a sandy field close to a river or small stream . . . . on a farm belonging to Sir William Beauchamp Proctor, Bart." They were "constantly found, particularly after a high wind which blows the sand from place to place." Chester saw coins ranging from Nerva to Decentius, three bronze brooches,[2] a blue glass bead[2] and a thimble.[3] About this time coins of Hadrian and Aurelius were found on this estate and some were given to the Bury and West Suffolk Archæological Institute,[4] while the British Museum acquired a brown colour-coated piedish with a six-petalled rosette impressed in the centre.[5] A few years later Mr. J. A. Boby of Thetford exhibited at Bury St. Edmunds a series of bronze brooches, rings and keys and two crystal beads found near the ford of the Peddars Way.[6] Many more coins including Tetricus, Constantine II and Valens seem to have been found in a sandpit and on the Money Field between 1870 and 1880.[7] In 1907 tree planting on the Brettenham-Bridgham boundary bank

[1] *Archæological Journal*, vol. iv., 1847, p. 252.

[2] Ashmolean Museum, 1927 (ex-Sir John Evans' Collection).

[3] Probably the engraved thimble in the British Museum, 1891-4-18.

[4] The former were shown to the Royal Archæological Institute at Norwich (*Proceedings*, 1851, p. liii), and the latter given by Mr. C. A. J. Piesse (*Proceedings of Suffolk Institute of Archæology*, vol. i., 1853, p. 149). These coins appear to be lost.

[5] B.M., No. 1853-10-29—on its date see letter dated 13-2-1901 from Mr. R. A. Smith in Haverfield Papers, Haverfield Library, Oxford. The vessel is figured in Add. MSS. 23,053, f. 199.

[6] *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxvi., 1869, p. 401. Most of these objects are now in the Ashmolean Museum ex-Sir John Evans' Collection, 1927.

[7] Information from Mrs. Maud Buxton and the Rev. H. Tyrrell Green, in whose possession they are.

(Pit 1) revealed a human skeleton with iron spear-head, knife and shield boss while a second skull was found close by. The decorated Samian ware found with the first burial suggested a Roman military cemetery to contemporary observers, but the weapons are undoubtedly Anglian.[1] The significance of the find in 1905 of a skeleton standing upright in the face of a chalk quarry in a " sand pocket " north of the Brettenham-Bridgham road is not clear. No objects were apparently associated. In 1913 a bronze lamp in the form of a dolphin was found and presented to the British Museum.[2]

Scheme of Excavations 1932-5.

In 1932 the Rev. H. Tyrrell Green and the present writer visited the site to locate the exact course of the Peddars Way and to define the limits of the settlement. The former was determined by the cutting of sections across its course where it enters the marsh (at C) and on the heathland (at D) and the latter by diligent searching for potsherds on the surface and by the excavation of four refuse pits widely distributed, three being in Brettenham and one in West Harling. This latter area was planted by the Forestry Commission in 1933.

Trenches were also dug through the Brettenham-Bridgham boundary bank (at H), in the Money Field, in the marsh on the south side of the ford and on the west side of the plantation close to the burials found in 1907. These latter investigations produced largely negative results.

[1] 1907 grave goods now in Norwich Museum. *Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany*, 2nd series, part 2, 1907, pp. 4-5, reprinted in *Saga Book* of Viking Club, vol. v., 1906-7, pp. 234-5. *Memorials of Old Norfolk*, 1908, p. 172; *P.P.S.E.A.*, vol. ii., 1918, p. 56; W. G. Clarke, *In Breckland Wilds*, 1925, p. 125—all regard the 1907 finds as Roman.

[2] B.M., No. 1915-11-8; *Nottingham Daily Express*, March 26th, 1913; *P.P.S.E.A.*, vol. i., 1913, p. 381; B.M., *Guide to Roman Britain*, 1922, p. 46. (Miscalled lamp of Silenus).

The Peddars Way and the Crossing of the Thet.

The course of the Peddars Way between Roudham Heath and the Little Ouse has never been described with precision. Beloe (1896, p. 9)[1] admits a difficulty in ascertaining how the Rivers Thet and Little Ouse were crossed. W. G. Clarke (1915, p. 5) stated that "south of Roudham Heath the Way is obliterated for a short distance and re-appears as the boundary between Brettenham and Bridgham, its course being marked by an earthen balk which ends at the marshland bordering the river Thet." In 1925 (p. 125) he described the Way as being "lost at the marshland bordering the Thet." Now this parish boundary bank (E-G on Figure I) is unlikely to be on the line of the road, apparently represented correctly by the other boundary banks A-B and E-F for this would involve two sharp changes of direction. To prove this a trench 20 ft. long was cut at H revealing an accumulation of blown sand 2 ft. 11 ins. thick above loose flints (an "erosion pavement" resting on black soil (6-9 ins. thick), below which was natural chalky boulder clay. In and on the black soil (presumably the contemporary land surface) were fragments of Roman pottery of the middle of the second century. This section thus repudiates the notion that the bank E-G lies over the Roman road.

Agricultural operations on a straight line through the Money Field (B-C-D-E) have suggested the presence of a metalled road[2] and this course is confirmed by sections at C and D. The former revealed a causeway 16 ft. wide at the base. In the centre under 4 ins. of turf were two undatable fragments of Roman pottery lying on a convex surface of rammed flints with traces of gravel coating, 2 ft. 6 ins. thick in the centre, but decreasing towards the sides. On the

[1] For these abbreviated references *see* select bibliography on p. 160 of literature relating to the Peddars Way.

[2] Information kindly supplied by Mr. A. Stewart of Halland, Sussex, for many years forester on the Brettenham estate.

east the rammed flints at the base of the road continued for a further 4 ft. as a path, until intersected and destroyed by the adjacent ditch. This ditch and another on the west, together with the height of the water table at all seasons, prevented a complete examination of this section, which may be compared with that at D and with that at Fring given by Beloe (1896, 82-3) and one at Buxhall, Suffolk, alleged to be the Peddars Way, though the evidence is inconclusive.[1] In July, 1935, a long trench was dug north of the Brettenham-Bridgham road. At D this intersected a bank of rammed chalky boulder clay running north-west and south-east. The crown of this bank was 5 ins. below the surface and at 3 ft. from the centre on each side the bank was 9 ins. down. Its width was 8 ft. 6 ins. and its thickness in the centre 3 ft. On each side was a ditch 2 ft. deep and 1 ft. wide on a level with the base of the road. These were flanked by banks of the same material 2 ft. 3 ins. wide, slightly convex at the surface with almost vertical sides. It will be noticed that sections C and D vary both in dimensions and in materials. It must be remembered that at C the road is crossing what is now marsh and is therefore a causeway, while at D the road is traversing heathland. In each case the appropriate materials have been utilised.

The course outlined above is confirmed by the cartographic and documentary records set out below. Faden's Survey of 1797[2] shows this as the course of the road and Bryant's Map of 1826 repeats its essential features and labels the road "The scite of a Roman Road called Peddars Way." When the 1st edition of the 1-in. Ordnance Survey (published in 1837) was prepared the road was impassable, though its course is still inserted in the same position as on the earlier maps. The obliteration of the way north of the Brettenham-Bridgham road was completed in 1907 by tree planting.

[1] H. C. Hill, 1924, p. 215.

[2] Reproduced by Davies (1935).

Of equal value are the observations of the Rev. Thomas Leman (1751-1826), one of the first of Norfolk field archæologists, in his manuscript account of the Roman Roads of Britain, now preserved in the Library of the Wiltshire Archæological Society at Devizes Museum.

Fol. 73 Road No. 30 From near Watton towards Ixworth and Stowlangtoft.

" In the year 1788, with Mr. Buxton, I traced a Roman Rd. from Ld. Walsingham's park pale near Watton in Norfolk towards Ixworth in Suffolk. It is at first high crested and very visible. It goes from the pale nearly N. and S. (with a ? point to the East) leaving 3 Tumuli to the Left, then 1 Tumulus to the Right, another to the L., crosses the road to Thetford to R. Ld. Walsingham's plantation to ye R. Tottington ford, Breccles Boundary stone ? S. or L., direction post of 5 hands, Hockham boundary Stone E. Wretham Church ½ m. R. Hockham plants to the L. Stone Bridge, Mr. Colquhon's fir trees to the R. crosses Road from Attleburgh to Thetford (bet. the 23 and 24 m.) near the direction post to Shadwele, over Bridg(e)ham heath, straight down to an old ford now never used, by the name of ye drove way being the boundary of Sir Thos. Beauchamps Estate,----(*crossing out*) goes in a direct line for Blackwater crosses Knoddishall Common, a Tumulus to the left, crosses, still visible, the new Inclosures to Barningham Common, tolerably plain over it, points towards Stowlangtoft . . . . . ".[1]

The value of these observations is that they consist of actual field notes made prior to most of the enclosures in the area. The mention of the road crossing Bridgham Heath indicates that the boundary between that parish and Brettenham had not yet been fixed in its present position.

[1] F. 75 of Leman's MS. describes again part of the Peddars Way and the course of another road through Bardwell, Honington, Ixworth, Pakenham, Bradfield, Melford to Sudbury, which he regarded as Roman, but gives no evidence for this assertion.

The obliteration of the course of the Peddars Way at its crossing of the Thet between Leman's day and the present time has been due to several factors. Modern tree planting has only completed the process begun by agriculture, and the quarrying of its material for road-metal and a parish boundary bank. The creation of Shadwell Lake and the erection of weirs have caused the deposit of alluvium which has partly obscured its causeway across the marsh. It is however quite possible that this sector of the Roman road was destroyed in part before the close of the fourteenth century. Blomefield[1] mentions Hackford Hall or Seckford Manor at Westthorp or Herling Thorp in West Harling. This is probably to be identified with Thorpe Farm, Thorpe Cottages and the remains of a church and burial ground now marked on the Ordnance Survey. The house of this manor was probably destroyed before 1398, for in that year the lord had a pond or pool on the late site of the manor, called Seckford Hall Yard Close. An amorphous embanked enclosure in the marsh north-west of Thorpe Farm may perhaps be identified with this pool. It is likely that for the construction of this house and its out-buildings the Roman road provided a convenient quarry.[2]

There is no evidence to show if the Roman road crossed the Thet by a ford or by a bridge.

The Excavation of the Refuse Pits.

No. 1. As already mentioned, the Anglian burials found in 1907 had been laid in a Roman refuse pit containing ashes, animal bones and potsherds. The only sherd preserved (now in Thetford Museum) is of Samian ware (Drag. Form 37), with animal decoration assignable elsewhere to c. 130-170 A.D.

[1] Vol. i., 1739, p. 202; and *N.A.*, vol. x., 1888, p. 281.

[2] Blomefield, vol. i., 1739, p. 193, mentions that the Register of Thetford Priory (late 12th century) refers to Berdewell's Mill in Herling-Thorp on south of Thet. This may have been near the Ford.

No. 2 at West Harling was indicated on the surface by black soil and potsherds, and was excavated in 1932. It was oval in plan with a maximum diameter of 15 ft. from east to west. The sides were sloping and the bottom flat, the depth being 1 ft. 6 ins. 1 ft. of humus and blown sand had collected above the contents of the pits. The infilling was unstratified and its contents, like those of Pits 3 and 5, are to be regarded as approximately contemporary. These included fragmentary building materials (roofing tiles (tegulae) and mortar), part of a quern of Niedermendig lava, two bone tools, iron objects (hook, bolt, nail, etc.), fragments of window glass and glass vessels and a considerable quantity of pottery. Of this, 30 per cent. were of Samian ware or colour-coated wares in almost equal proportions. This pottery (described and illustrated in the section on Small Objects) dates the pit to the late second century or the early years of the third.

No. 3 was detected in 1933 owing to the pottery brought to the surface by the activities of rabbits. On excavation it was found to be oval in plan, with a maximum diameter of 10 ft., and a maximum depth of 4 ft., with steeply sloping sides. Its contents included a fragmentary quern of Niedermendig lava, a hone of igneous rock, iron nails, a bronze ring with spiral terminals and a large nail and a twisted glass rod. The principal contents of the pit were potsherds, among which the percentage of Samian ware was higher than in Pit 2, while colour-coated wares were almost absent. This material suggests that the pit was filled about 130-160 A.D.

No. 4, a small pit, was dug in 1933 and yielded only a fragmentary pinched jar in grey ware, probably of the second century.

No. 5, dug in 1935, was approximately circular and was 6 ft. 6 ins. in diameter. 1 ft. of humus covered the black soil (also 1 ft. thick), containing the refuse beneath which lay sand, except on the north side. There, 1 ft. 8 ins. from the surface and 4 ins. above the sand, was a thin layer of fired clay associated with

charcoal. On its north was a circular hole (2 ft. in diameter and 2 ft. deep) filled with yellow clayey material and potsherds and sealed by a burnt layer containing charcoal, which included hazel (Corylus Avellana). After this hole was filled a fire must have been lit above it, firing the clay on its edge. There seems to be no difference in date between the pottery in this hole and that from the remainder of the pit. The pit contained oyster and mussel shells, ox jaws and horn cores, pig teeth and other bones, fragments of coarse brick, part of a quartzite quern and one of Niedermendig lava, an iron mount and numerous nails, a silver seal-box and a portion of window glass. The pottery included a small quantity of Samian ware of middle or late second-century date, a larger amount of colour-coated wares than in Pit 3, and numerous jars, dishes and bowls, probably of late second-century date also. The pit can thus be assigned to this period.

THE SMALL OBJECTS FROM BRETTENHAM AND WEST HARLING

from the excavations and from the surface.

(*All the objects here described are in Thetford Museum, unless noted otherwise.*)

A. SILVER OBJECTS.

From Pit 5 came the lower half of a SEALBOX (2.5 cms. diam.), with iron hinge and 8-petalled rosette impressed in centre and border demarcated by raised line (Fig. 5-33).

B. BRONZE OBJECTS (all from Brettenham with one exception).

1. The most remarkable bronze object is the handled LAMP in the form of a dolphin (B.M. 1915-11-8 and Fig. 3 A) found in 1913 (*see* above). Length 12 cms.; height 5 cms. The hole at the back is for filling, and the open mouth forms the spout. It is not possible to quote any very relevant parallels, but bronze lamps in fish-form are found among the early Mediterranean civilizations, and it is probable that the Brettenham example comes from that area, Italy or South Gaul. (For Dolphin lamps *see* H. B. Walters' Catalogue of Lamps in

British Museum, 1914, 6 Nos. 29-30; Catalogue of Bronzes in the B.M. 1899, p. 289. No. 1924; M. C. C. Edgar, Musée du Caire, 1904 Pl. XI, 27. 776 p. 37; De Ridder, Bronzes Antiques du Louvre, 1915, 145 No. 3093. There is a bronze fish-lamp in Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, *ex* Fortnum Collection).

2. ENAMELLED BROOCHES now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (*ex* Sir John Evans Collection). This type was at the height of its popularity during the second century, A.D., and is scarcely found on sites after the third century (*see* F. Henry, Emailleurs d' Occident, Préhistoire, ii, 1933, 65-146).

No. 1927. 252 (Fig. 2. 4). Circular (diam. 2 cms.), enamelled, red on pale blue field, pin lost (*cf.* B.M. Guide R. Britain, Fig. 73 D and Henry, Fig. 36-1A).

No. 1927. 253. Circular (diam. 2 cms.) with triskele design enamelled in blue on a red field, pin lost.

No. 1927. 274 (Fig. 2. 2). Oval (max. diam. 2.6 cms.), enamelled with blue and white borders central setting missing.

No. 1927. 382 (Fig. 2. 8). In form of duck, with back enamelled in red and blue bands (3.5 cms. long; 1.8 cms. wide; 1.9 cms. high).

No. 1927. 402 (Fig. 2. 7). In form of a hare running to right; enamelled blue and (?) in bars; legs broken; pin missing (3.1 cms. long).

These animals may be copied from those on Samian ware.

No. 1927. 440 (Fig. 2. 9). Horseman facing right; enamel and pin now missing (3 cms. long) probably identical with brooch in Arch. J. iv. 1847. 252 (*see* above).

3. SEALBOX (No. 1927. 601) (Fig. 2. 3). Lozenge-shaped, enamelled with lattice pattern in yellow (3.1 cms. long; 2.1 cms. wide). Possibly late first or early second-century work from south of England (*cf.* Préhistoire, ii, 1933, Fig. 27. 4).

4. MOUNT (No. 1927. 608) (Fig. 2. 18) in form of a bird's claw with two rivets; the point is divided and the back hollow (3.5 cms. long).

5. KEY (No. 1927. 579) (Fig. 2. 13) of barrel type with thick oblong plate between ring and shaft (4.6 cms. long).

6. PENDANT (No. 1927. 527) (Fig. 2. 17) with flat leaf-shaped end; long shaft set in opposite plane and perforated (2.5 cms. long).

7. TOILET-IMPLEMENT (No. 1927. 528) (Fig. 2. 20) imperfect four-sided rod beaten out flat at either end (4.1 cms. long).

TOILET-IMPLEMENT OR KNIFE (No. 1927. 524) (Fig. 2. 14) with ribbed handle and small blade damaged (3.1 cms. long).

8. HANDLE (No. 1927. 520) (Fig. 2.15) consisting of flat circular ring with engraved lines and short round shaft (7 cms. long; 2 cms. diam.).

9. HOOK (No. 1927. 521) (Fig. 2. 16) made of wire beaten out flat with the upper end twisted round the shaft (5.5 cms. long).

10. TWEEZERS (No. 1927. 522) (Fig. 2. 19) with engraved line along edge (4. 2 cms. long).

11. PINS (No. 1927. 523) (Fig. 2. 11) with wire split at upper end and coiled downwards into small spiral on each side (4 cms. long).

No. 1927. 529 (Fig. 2. 12) with moulded neck and round flattish knob (4.3 cms. long).

12. RINGS (No. 1927. 525) (Fig. 2. 10) with hexagonal exterior and diagonal line engraved on each facet (1.9 cms. diam.).

No. 1927. 526 (Fig. 2. 6) with round bezel flanked by facets with notched edges and engraved lines (2.5 cms. diam.).

Thetford Museum from Pit 3 of thin wire twisted with spiral terminals (1.9 cms. diam.).

13. CLASP (probably from a box) with loop and notch at one end (4.1 cms. long) surface find—West Harling-Thetford Museum (Fig. 5.31).

In Thetford Museum (*ex* Russell Collection) are a few fragments of thin sheet bronze with punctured ornament, but these cannot be identified.

C. IRON OBJECTS.

Those found during the excavations were few and badly preserved. Pit 2 yielded nails, a hook (Fig. 5. 29) with loop at its upper end (7 cms. long), a tapering blade (Fig. 5. 28) (7.7 cms. long) with tip bent over at right angles, and a round-sectioned awl found set in the socket of a sawn off stag's antler tine (Fig. 5. 32). (Total length 15.3 cms.—handle alone 9.2 cms.).

From Pit 5 came a mount or bracket (Fig. 5. 30) probably one of the fittings from a wooden box or chest (the arms are 7.5 and 6.5 cms. long).

D. BONE OBJECTS.

Besides the socketed handle of the iron awl just described Pit 2 produced a stag's tine with burr sawn off to form a wedge-shaped butt and a tip burnished by use (Fig. 5. 34) (17.9 cms. long).

E. GLASS OBJECTS.

From Brettenham comes a spheroidal blue glass bead (Ashmolean Museum (No. 1927. 531) (Fig. 2. 5) (8 cms. diam.) and a flattened spheroidal crystal bead (ditto. 530) (Fig. 2. 1) 1.6 cms. diam.). Pit 2 yielded the base of a square bottle (9.5 cms. square), a thin glass jar (very fragmentary) and portions of green window glass.

Pit 3 produced a spiral rod with flattened end (2.5 cms. long) (Third Wroxeter Report, 1916, Plate XXI, Fig. 2. 9).

F. COINS.

The following list includes all identifiable coins known from the site. Incomplete as it is the list gives some indication of the scale of the settlement at various times. At least nine of the coins were minted before 250 A.D., while at least 19 coins belong to the following century and a half, but as Haverfield pointed out (V.C.H. Norfolk, i, 1901, 314) some of these later coins may perhaps belong to a hoard. (The chronological significance of these coins is discussed in the " Summary.")

(*Unless noted otherwise the coins are now in the possession of the Rev. H. Tyrrell Green.*)

VESPASIAN 1. T. Martin Collection 1739—Ob. IMP CAES VESPASIAN AVG COS VIII PP R/Mercury holding an urn SC infield (? Mattingly and Sydenham, Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 2. Type 599 or 757). Perhaps struck at Lugdunum in 77. " Very fine " condition. 2. R/Judæa Capta (Burton).

NERVA. First brass, penes farm-bailiff 1847.

TRAJAN. Denarius ditto.

HADRIAN. First brass, penes Beauchamp Proctor 1847.

MARCUS AURELIUS. First brass ditto.

SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS. Denarius, penes farm-bailiff 1847.

TETRICUS. Several—one with barbarous radiate on ob.

CARAUSIUS. 4 or 5 bronze coins, penes farm-bailiff 1847 (very good preservation).

HOUSE OF CONSTANTINE. Numerous, including several with R/ of wolf and Romulus and Remus, one with R/VICTORI and one barbarous imitation of Fel. Temp. Reparatio Type (1.1 cms. diam.). Ob . . . . ANT . . . and one with Ob: VRBS ROMA bust of Rome left, helmeted and wearing imperial mantle R/She-wolf left suckling Romulus and Remus—S CONST (Arles).

CONSTANTINE I—Third Brass Ob. CONSTANTINOPOL. Left bust of Constantinopolis helmeted with sceptre over shoulder R/Victory with outspread wings standing left with spear and shield placing right foot on prow of vessel TRP (Treves).

CONSTANTINE II—Third brass Ob. CONSTANTINVS IVN NOBC. R/CAESAR (VM NOSTRORVM) VOTV (in wreath) PLON.

CRISPVS coins, penes farm-bailiff 1847.

DALMATIVS. Fourth brass, ditto.

DECENTIVS. Second brass with R/Chi-Ro, penes farm-bailiff 1847.

VALENS. Third brass Ob. DN. VALENS P.F.AVG. R/SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE OF III.—CON (Arles).

G. POTTERY.

Most of the pottery described was found during the excavation of the refuse pits. An equal quantity was easily collected from the surface over the whole site, but most of the sherds are so fragmentary that a description of them would be of little value, and they are therefore considered only in bulk. The pottery is classified for description first by its fabric and then by its form.

I. SAMIAN WARE.

(A) DECORATED.

Only five vessels were represented, four of form 37 (H. Dragendorff's classification in Bonner Jahrbucher, XCVI.-XCVII.), and one of form 30 (Pit 3). Pit 3 yielded the major part of a bowl of F. 37 mended by two lead rivets (Fig. 3 B). This was probably made at Vichy, Central Gaul, c. 110-120 A.D. It bears the following figures classified according to J. Déchelette's types in "Les Vases céramiques ornés de la Gaule romaine, 1904." Boar (828) used by ADVOCISVS, Hercules and Nemean Lion (624) used by MAMMI, Stag and Hound (867) used by CRICIRO, ILLVXO and ATTICVS, Bear (809) used by MAPVLLVS and CRICIRO—all Hadrianic potters. From the same pit came another fragmentary form 37 with Apollo Musagetes and a vine-leaf pattern (Fig. 4. 9). This probably comes from Lezoux and on the evidence of the decoration (used by ARCANVS, DOECCVS and CINNAMVS) was probably produced c. 120-130.

(B) PLAIN.

This was comparatively common. From the surface came several fragments of form 27, and a mid-second century

variety of form 33 (probably Rheinzabern ware). Pit 2 produced forms 18/31, 31 (4 vessels), 33 (4 vessels), 38 (2 vessels), 79 and a few fragments not assignable to any specific form. From Pit 3 came forms 18/31, 31, 33 (3 vessels), 35-6 while Pit 5 yielded forms 33 (2 vessels of campanulate form with external groove), 45 (lion's head spout of mortarium), and a flat plate, a variant of Ludowici's T group—Rheinzabern ware of the middle second century. This is of interest owing to its rarity in Britain (*see* W. Ludowici, Rheinzabern, iii, 1905-8, 277-8; v, 1912-4, 284-6 and Oswald and Pryce, Terra Sigillata, 1920, 206-9 and *cf.* Pl. lxiv. 4-7 and lxvi. 5). In form this fragment approximates to the low-walled varieties Tm′, Tr or Ta′, but borrows the slight moulded lip of Th′.

Two stamps occurred—CERI/ on form 31 (Pit 3) is probably the work of Cerialis the Hadrian-Antonine potter of Rheinzabern.

NAMILI/ is on the base of a form 33 (Pit 2) which had subsequently been shaped as a disc. This is probably the work of Namilianvs of Lezoux, an Antonine potter.

II. COLOUR-COATED WARES.

These wares were rare in Pit 3, and were sparingly represented in Pits 2 and 5. It would seem that colour-coated wares were not in vogue at this site till the close of the second century, but they are exceedingly common on the surface on other portions of the settlement, *e.g.*, a bowl with a red scroll on a black background, and a flanged bowl with red slip (*cf.* Catalogue of Roman Pottery in the Colchester and Essex Museum, 1930, Pl. xlv. 188), but most seem to belong to the third and fourth centuries. Though the term Castor ware may be applied to most of these sherds it is not restricted to the products of that site and may include similar wares from *i.a.* the Colchester kilns.

From Pit 2 came the upper portion of a flagon with ribbed handle in buff Castor ware with a hunting scene in barbotine showing a running hound (Fig. 4. 10). This is probably of the late second century, but exact parallels are not easy to locate. From the same refuse pit comes the top of a small unguent jar in purple slip (Fig. 4. 7), fragments of carinated jar lids with rouletted ornamentation, a thin beaker in brown ware together with a neck of a vase of Rhenish ware.

Only a portion of a rough-cast beaker of Castor ware came from Pit 3.

Pit 5 produced a beaker with everted rim of Castor ware, a rough-cast beaker with bead rim and external groove

(Collingwood, The Archæology of Roman Britain, 1930, Type 77), a hemispherical flanged bowl of slip ware, and a lid with rouletted ornament in bronze-brown slip Castor ware of middle or late second-century date (*cf.* Artis, Durobrivæ, 1828, Pl. 49, Fig. 4 and Walters, Catalogue of Roman Pottery in the British Museum, 424, M. 2732, Fig. 278).

III. COARSE POTTERY

(A) MORTARIA.

From Pit 2 came three types (all in buff clay) and fragments of indeterminate forms (i) Fig. 4.1 an early example of adze-head type (*cf.* Colchester Catalogue, op. cit. Nos. 331-2), Fig. 4. 2 a thick heavy vessel with three incised grooves on exterior of lip (*cf.* Colchester Catalogue No. 338) (ii) with lip incurved and top moulding more projecting than in (i) Fig. 4. 3 and Fig. 4. 4 transitional between adze-head and wall-sided type. Probably early third century (*cf.* Colchester Catalogue No. 334; *Norfolk Archæology,* xxiii, Gaytonthorpe, Pl. xiv, Nos. 14 and 16; First Wroxeter Report, 1912, 79 Fig. 20 Type 238) (iii) Fig. 4. 8 rim with black stripes painted on, parallel to edge.

Pit 3 yielded three buff clay mortaria of normal middle second-century types. Fig. 4. 5 with rim rolled over in sweeping curve may be compared with Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 7 and *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia,* vii, Runcton Holme type 24. Fig. 4. 6 has a more vertical rim (*cf.* Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 8). A further vessel set with white flint crystals (not drawn) is like Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 5.

(B) BOWLS.

Only one example came from Pit 2 (Fig. 4. 13). This black vessel has a flanged rim scored on its upper side by diagonal incisions and with punch-marks on the outer face of the bead rim. This rim form has a wide chronological range.

Pit 3 yielded bowls of three types:—(i) one in black ware and two in burnished grey with incurving sides and oblique rim (*cf.* Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 27, (ii) with roll-over rim and girth grooves. Fig. 4. 12 is of black ware with burnished zigzag design beneath the rim. Fig. 4. 11 of black ware with mica content is similar to Group E from the Caistor Kilns (Journal of Roman Studies, xxii) and to type V from Wattisfield, Suffolk (Proc. of Suffolk Institute of Archæology, 1936, xxii). It may well be a product of the latter potteries. (iii) with flanged overhanging rim, as Fig. 4. 14 of light-

brown clay with rough indentations on the upper surface of the flange, Fig. 4. 15 of grey ware with wavy comb decoration above the flange and Fig. 4. 16 of brown and black clay badly fired and undecorated.

From the surface comes a fragment of a bowl in a light-grey fabric ornamented with concentric semi-circles, apparently a late first-century product.

(C) JARS.

Group I. comprises those with pear-shaped body and sharply everted rim, which occurred in Pits 2, 3 and 5. This type was common in the Roman villa at Gaytonthorpe (*Norfolk Archæology,* xxiii, 1929, Pl. xvii, 43, 48, 50-2) and is also found at the Wattisfield kilns only eight miles from our site, and the apparent micaceous content of these jars from Pits 2 and 3 suggests that they are from these kilns (P.S.I.A. xxii. Pl. II. 1. and p. 191), and so probably of the middle or latter part of the second century. A jar of this type was also found reused in the Anglian cemetery at Caistor in 1933. It has been claimed (*Norfolk Archæology,* xxiii. 202) that there is no evidence for the survival of this type into the late second century, but this discovery at Brettenham indicates its persistence into that period. In both Pits 2 and 3 occur jars with similar rim form to the rest of this group, but with elongated indentations on the body (Fig. 5. 17). Fig. 5. 27 (Pit 3) is of black ware with burnished horizontal lines on the shoulder and vertical lines below. Fig. 5. 18 appears both in black and silver-grey fabric, the former with incised grooves on the shoulder.

Group II. comprises cooking pots with roll-over rim dating from the second quarter of the second century onwards.

Pit 2 contained four vessels of this type in light-grey ware, one (Fig. 5. 19) with a frilled rim and two grooves on the shoulder, another (Fig. 5. 20) (16½ ins. in diam. at mouth) having burnished lines on neck and body, and a third (Fig. 5. 26) being quite plain (*cf.* Colchester Catalogue No. 237).

Pit 3 yielded a jar in brown ware (*cf.* Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 66), and a honey jar in grey ware.

From Pit 5 came a pot of the same type as Fig. 5. 26 in burnished black ware.

Group III. comprises large storage jars with thick rims. Two of these came from Pit 2, one (Fig. 5. 24) in hard grey clay has a line at the base of the neck (*cf.* Ospringe Report No. 322—Report of Research Committee of the Society of

Antiquaries) probably second century, and the other (Fig. 5. 25) of coarse pink fabric with shelly grit with rim facetted horizontally (15 ins. in diam.).

Group IV. comprises Rusticated ware—a fragment from the surface with large concentric circles is probably late first century.

(D) DISHES.

Group I. without rims—of this type were two dishes in grey ware Pit 3 (Fig. 5. 21) (*cf.* Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 38).

Group II. with rims—the commonest type was grey-black in colour with a burnished surface and an everted rim (Fig. 5. 23), represented in Pits 2, 3 and 5. This type occurred at Runcton Holme (P.P.S.E.A. vii, Type 13). In Pit 2 was a similar dish (Fig. 5. 22) with burnished lines crossing diagonally (blue-grey ware), (Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 44). Pit 5 produced a shallow black dish with upright sides and bead rim (Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 46).

(E) MISCELLANEOUS.

COVER in grey ware with internal beading from Pit 3.

CULLENDER in grey ware from Pit 2.

AMPHORA with pointed base (Type F, Wheeler, London in Roman Times, 1930).

FLAGONS. Screw-neck type in buff ware in Pit 3, and on surface (Antonine) (Collingwood, A.R.B. Type 51).

JUG of grey ware with two incised lines round girth (Pit 5).

SUMMARY.

The excavations of 1932-5 have identified most of the Peddars Way near the River Thet as shown on Figure I, and have investigated four refuse pits. Of these, Pit 2 to the east of the road in West Harling has been shown to belong to the late second or early third centuries, while Pits 3-5 are of the middle and late second century. In addition, much pottery was collected from the surface. Its distribution strongly suggests a concentration of occupation in the second and early third century north of the Thet alongside the Peddars Way, with a bridgehead on the south side in West Harling. The diffusion of late third and fourth-century wares to the west alongside the river, suggests

that what was at first a roadside settlement later evolved into one of the valleyside. This suggestion is admittedly based on the distribution of refuse, and not on the examination of houses or huts, but the contrast in distribution is too marked to be accidental. No habitations were found, though roofing tiles, mortar and window-glass occurred in Pits 2 and 5 and on the surface. The absence of any substantial remains is probably due to the materials employed (largely wood, wattle and daub), and to the probable destruction of such masonry as existed when the hamlet of Harling Thorpe came into being so close to the site.

The occupation of the site is dated by its pottery, coins and bronzes. The pottery ranges from the late first century to somewhere in the fourth. The Flavian ceramic is from the surface, and is so scanty as to be unsuitable for illustration, but its presence is certain.[1]

None of the pottery suggests the presence of a late Iron Age village on the site, though native as opposed to Roman ceramic influence is apparent in the Flavian sherds, and even survives into the second century (*e.g.*, central " kick " in jar and dish bases). The few coins of the first century may well have continued in circulation into the next century. The uninscribed copper coin of Cunobelinus now in the British Museum[2] is not so easy to explain, but it is isolated. All the material evidence from the site agrees in locating the real foundation here of a substantial settlement in the opening decades of the second century. The close of its existence is more difficult to fix. Apparently the latest coin is of Valens, which may indicate that Roman Brettenham ended in the incursions of the early years of his reign, which shattered rural Britain. The Constantinian coins (whether partly belonging to a hoard or not) and the contemporary pottery indicate occupation until then. Subsequently there seems a

[1] Mr. C. F. C. Hawkes has kindly examined this material and confirmed the dating.

[2] Evans Type G, 12, *Ancient British Coins*, 1864, 120-1; 1890, 579, Pl. xxii., No. 10; Brooke, *Antiquity*, 1933, Map xi.

break in the continuity of human settlement on or near the site before cremated Anglian invaders were deposited near Shadwell Home Farm, inhumated warriors were laid to rest in a second-century refuse dump by the Peddars Way, and a coin of the Empress Justina from the East Roman Empire was lost so far from its mint.

THE ROMAN SETTLEMENT AT NEEDHAM

THE SITE.

(Ordnance Survey 25 in. 1904, 106—15; 6 in. 106 S.E.).

The objects described in this report were found in a gravel pit now worked by Mr. H. Dean, one quarter of a mile north-east of Needham Church and abutting on the south side of the main road to Harleston. The surface by this road stands at about 70 ft. O.D. and thence slopes gently to a northerly bend of the River Waveney. The Roman settlement revealed here by the exploitation of gravel, arose alongside the road running north-west from Peasenhall to Weybread on the south bank of the Waveney, which it must have crossed very close to this gravel pit.[1] But the exact crossing and the further course of the road have become obscure owing to the deflection of traffic over Shotford by the growth of medieval Harleston. It seems most probable that the road ran north-west to join the Roman road through Scole to Caistor-by-Norwich.

This hillside overlooking the Waveney has been dug for gravel for more than a century, but its archæological potentialities were revealed only in 1921, when a Roman pottery kiln was brought to light and attention drawn to it by Mr. A. Bush of Harleston, yet too late to save it from destruction and enable a scientific investigation to be made. Since then

[1] A sketch map of this road and its relation to other Roman roads in East Suffolk and South Norfolk appears in Haverfield, *V.C.H. Norfolk*, vol. i., 1901, pp. 300-1; T. Codrington. *Roman Roads in Britain*, 1918, p. 185.

sporadic digging for gravel has destroyed numerous refuse pits and graves, but a controlled excavation of the site has been impossible. The material here described is thus a pitiful remnant rescued either *in situ* or from the gravel diggers by Mr. Dean, by Mr. A. Bush and Miss W. A. Colman of Harleston, by Dr. T. Fisher of Flixton and by Mr. S. S. Frere of Shimpling. Most of the objects collected by the first four were given in 1934-5 to Norwich Museum, as were those found by the present writer, who owes such information as he is able to present to the efforts of the above-named and to his own observations made in 1935. It must be emphasised that the character of this information is such, that only the most tentative conclusions may safely be drawn from it.

The Kiln.

The gravel pit was started on the marsh-side and extended northwards, till in 1921, not far from the site of the present screening machine, William Barber, a quarryman, cut through the side of a Roman pottery kiln and unfortunately destroyed it. The following details have been obtained from Mr. Barber and Mr. Bush in 1935, supplemented by an account in the *Eastern Daily Press* of September 12th, 1921, and by letters from W. G. Clarke in the Haverfield Library, Oxford, dated February, 1922. The top of the kiln was 1 ft. 6 ins. to 2 ft. from the surface. It was circular in plan, about 4 ft. in diameter with no dome or roof. The walls of clay, light red externally and dark grey in the centre, were 2 to 3 ft. high in the gravel. On the east side the stokehole of light grey clay was about 6 ft. long, 2 ft. broad and the same deep, filled with ashes and charcoal. On the floor of the kiln were the remains of four or five pots of grey or biscuit colour, and a small bronze coin. These have since been lost, but Mr. H. Buckingham of Harleston has a few sherds said to have come from this kiln, but on examination they are not closely datable. One rim was of grey ware with a burnished surface.

The kiln is probably, though not certainly, of Type I in Grimes' classification of kilns.[1]

The clay and sand used for pot-making doubtless came from the adjacent glacial deposits.[2]

The Refuse Pits.

As the pit developed north and west from the area round this kiln, numerous refuse pits were found dug through the top soil into the gravel. From them, about 1925-6, much pottery was collected by Miss Colman and is now in Norwich Museum. Animal remains from these dumps include Horse (radius and ulna of small animal); upper molar and lower end of radius (coloured white, ? Horse); Ox (one lower and three upper molars; one medium-sized horn core (not Celtic ox) hind part of lower jaw); Sheep (hinder part of large hornless skull).

Roofing tiles and fired clay, wattle and daub came from some building, but no foundations have been encountered. A shallow trench 3 ft. wide, running north and south for some distance, may have been for drainage purposes, but this is not certain.

The Cemetery.

By 1934 quarrying had reached the Scole-Harleston road, and in its course westward was cutting into graves, especially in the north-west corner of the pit. At X inhumated burials were found, but without associated objects. These graves were of all shapes, and their long axes were orientated indiscriminately. Usually there is 1 ft. of soil above the gravel. The graves are dug into the gravel from 1 ft. to 2 ft. 6 ins. deep, and are from 2 ft. 6 in. to 7 ft. long. Occasionally they contain human bones, but more often the ashes from cremations. Six fragments from one cranium found in 1935, suggested that it was that of a young adult (probably, though not certainly, male),

[1] *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xli., 1930, Fig. 31.

[2] W. Whitaker and W. A. Dalton, *The Geology of the Country around Halesworth and Harleston*, 1887, pp. 20, 23, 25.

and somewhere about 24 years old, though he might have been anything from 20-30. Though apparently dolichocephalic, the remains were so fragmentary that one could not be dogmatic as to its racial type, but there was nothing against its being of Roman date.[1]

The graves were filled by black soil and contained furniture, including pottery (some whole when found), flint flakes, coins, iron nails and pebbles, which had passed through the fire. One grave had apparently two if not three distinct strata, probably resulting from successive reburial, but excavation was not possible. Owing to the observations of Mr. Frere it is possible briefly to describe part of the contents of a few graves, though as none were excavated, except in quarrying, the associations are not to be relied upon entirely. It is not always possible to distinguish a rifled grave from a refuse pit.

Grave A contained a bronze steelyard, bronze toilet tweezers, glass jug with ribbed handle, a large pottery jar and a handled jug of second-century date.

Grave B contained a beaker in grey ware and Samian ware of forms 32 and 33.

Grave C yielded a black micacaeous bowl of the mid-second century, and Samian ware of forms 37 and 31 (stamped).

Grave G contained a tin-bronze brooch of Collingwood Type L, an iron hook with annular head, other corroded iron tools, iron slag and a sheep's jaw (possibly a refuse pit).

Grave I produced Samian ware of forms 18/31 and Oswald and Pryce 60.

Grave J contained a brooch with flat strip bow.

Two graves, the exact sites of which are unknown, yielded respectively a pot (Fig. 7, 7) and a sestertius of Trajan and Samian of form 33, a rough-cast beaker with gold wash and a bowl in black ware with panels of vertical lines.

[1] A full anatomical report (of which the above is a summary) kindly made by Dr. A. J. E. Cave, is preserved in Norwich Museum with the cranial fragments.

THE SMALL OBJECTS FROM NEEDHAM.

(*These are in the possession of Mr. S. S. Frere, unless stated otherwise.*)

A. BRONZE OBJECTS.

I. BROOCHES. (i) Trumpet type (Collingwood, A.R.B. Type R. ii) with wire, not cast loop, with pin. Probably c. 125 A.D. (Norwich Museum). (ii) Flat strip bow with three grooves —pin missing (Collingwood A.R.B. Type J) first century and probably early Flavian at latest (Fig. 7. 12) (iii) Bronze strip bow coated with tin, decorated with roundels perhaps in niello—with pin—a version of Collingwood, A.R.B. Type L —of mid-first-century type (Fig. 7. 13).

II. STEELYARD—tip (9 cms. long) graduated in two directions for weighing with moveable weight (Fig. 7. 11).

III. TOILET TWEEZERS (broken) (*cf.* Fig. 2. 19).

B. IRON OBJECTS.

Hook with annular head (9.5 cms. long) and hook key.

C. FLINT OBJECTS.

Flint flakes are common, but no finished implements have been recovered. The only flakes found *in situ* have been in graves, and it may be that these flakes were struck off purely for funerary purposes and had no utilitarian functions, though untrimmed flakes might have been used in the threshing sledge, and in fire-making. The presence of a few cores shows that flaking was probably done on the site, but the differential patination of the flakes suggests (though it proves nothing) that some of the flakes may be older than the graves in which they occur. The flakes are invariably long and thin, and some of the unpatinated specimens are almost of microlithic facies. Two have secondary working—one with steep edge chipping like geometric microliths, and the other with a concave butt freely flaked. (Some of these are at Norwich Museum).

(For Roman flint tools in Britain *see* W. A. Dutt, Romano-British Flint Implements, Knowledge, January 1908, 4-6, Pitt-Rivers, *Journal of the Ethnological Society,* N.S., i, 1869, 1, and H. Taylor, *Proceedings Bristol University Spelæological Society,* ii, 1926, 193-5, 209 (Rowberrow Cavern, Mendip).

D. COINS.

DOMITIAN. (i) found at Thorndon, Suffolk, on heap of sand from Needham Pit. R/Minerva armed on prow of ship with

owl at feet (struck 95-6) (Penes Rev. H. A. Harris, Thorndon). (ii) Dupondius R/FORTVNAE AVGVSTI—95-6 in poor condition through long circulation (Penes Mr. A. Bush).

TRAJAN. Sestertius—Norwich Museum.

ANTONINVS PIVS. (i) as R/Britannia 154-5. (ii) Dupondius R/IMPERATORI S/C Victory (Norwich Museum). (iii) Dupondius R/PROVIDENTIA (Norwich Museum).

CONSTANTINE I. Third brass R/Soldiers holding standard (Penes Mr. A. Bush) Fourth brass (illegible) (Penes Mr. A. Bush).

E. POTTERY

by Ivan E. Moore, M.A.

(*All in Norwich Museum unless stated otherwise.*)

The pottery from this site consists of five coarse pots, and some fragments of others, including a few pieces of Samian ware. On the whole few parallels can be cited, but there seems to be a close relation to the pottery associated with the kiln recently discovered at Wattisfield, Suffolk. For purposes of study the pottery may be considered under two heads:—

I. DESCRIPTION AND COMPARISON OF THE COARSE POTTERY.

Apart from four fragments mica appeared clearly on the surface of all the coarse pottery, suggesting that a method of mica-dusting had been employed. On examination, however, it was revealed that mica existed within the texture of the clay and it was not merely on the surface. This mica content is a characteristic of the pottery at Wattisfield from which Needham is only sixteen miles distant. The four fragments lacking mica are of a very coarse gritty clay.

Although the pottery showed this feature clearly, little can be said with regard to the forms of the pots, but a further note on their fabric may be added. The clay appears to have been fired grey, black and red. The grey ware is hard and polished while the red is coarse with a grey core, almost resembling the texture of a "flower pot." The black ware has a polished surface with grey white interior and is similar to that which occurs plentifully at Wattisfield where it is thought to be an imitation of Belgic "terra nigra" (*cf.* Reports on a Roman Pottery-Making Site at Foxledge Common, Wattisfield—P.S.I.A. xxii, 1936).

The bases of the pots have a moulded foot and polished bottom. The rims are well-moulded, but are not sufficient in

number to attempt a classification. A few odd pieces of dishes and bowls similar to those from Wattisfield were also observed along with two specimens of beakers with applied barbotine decoration.

Seven vessels deserve a more detailed consideration, Fig. 7 (1-7):—

(1) Two fragments of black ware with a decoration of circles and incised lines arranged in panels. From Wattisfield there is a specimen of a pedestal cup or goblet to which form this piece belongs. The decoration in both cases is the same except that the Needham arrangement is vertical, and that at Wattisfield horizontal (*cf.* Wattisfield, P.S.I.A. Pl. II. No. iv).

(2) Fragments of pear-shaped jars with sharply everted rims were noted. An exact parallel occurs at Gaytonthorpe (N.A. xxiii, No. 48), described as mica-dusted whereas the Needham example has a mica content. This type was common at Brettenham (*see* Fig. 5. 17, 18, 27), and at Wattisfield where the incised line under the rim is lacking. (Op. cit. Pl. II. No. 1).

(3) Carinated bowl (almost complete) in black ware with polished surfaces having stone-coloured interior and ample mica content. Bowls approximating to this type at Caistor belong to 120—140 A.D. (J.R.S. xxii, 1932, Pl. XI. M.).

(4) Bowl lacking rim in black ware with polished surface having stone coloured interior and ample mica content. Girth line and Cordon.

(5) Base of thumb-indented beaker in grey ware with mica content. It has a smooth but crudely applied paste. Ridges caused by the moulder's fingers are visible round the base, while finger-prints are apparent on the indentations.

(6) Plate in black ware with polished surfaces having stone-coloured interior and ample mica content. The base rises towards the outside so that the plate rests on two-thirds of the base. In the centre inside there is a graffiti.

(7) Jar, almost complete, brown to grey in colour with two parallel tooled girth lines and roll rim. Mica content. This jar bears a certain resemblance to form B 5 from the Caistor kilns. Probably mid-second century (J.R.S. xxii, 1932, Pl. VIII.).

A few graffiti are worthy of note (Fig. 7. 6, 9, 10), and one stamp on a mortarium. (Fig. 7. 8). From the above description, we may note a Hadrianic form like (3), and a mid-second-century form like (7). A comparison of the coarse pottery from Needham and Wattisfield shows that there is much in common between the two sites—indeed perhaps this may indicate the centre of the pottery industry in these parts.

II. CONSIDERATION OF DATE OF COARSE POTTERY ON BASIS OF SAMIAN WARE PRESENT.

Vessels of Samian ware were relatively few in comparison with those of coarse fabric. Fragments of forms 18, 18/31, 31, 32, 33, 37 and Oswald and Pryce 60 have occurred. On Form 18/31 there is a stamp VENERMID (probably Venermidvs of Lezoux) a Hadrianic potter, and on an early variety of form 31 appears OF CALVI—Calvvs of La Graufesenque a potter working at the end of the first century. Most of this Samian ware is of the second century, but such fragments as the bowl by Calvvs, suggest that some of it dates from late Flavian times.

There was also a mortarium clearly not of local manufacture, coated with red paste and with sprinklings of stone chips resembling a hæmatite wash. The same form at Wroxeter belonged to the late third or fourth century (First Wroxeter Report, p. 80. No. 242)—a date outside the compass of the rest of the Needham pottery. Although the occurrence of this vessel must be noted, both the Samian ware, and the coarse pottery suggest occupation during the first half of the second century, beginning apparently during the last decades of the previous century. This late development characteristic of the region of the Iceni, and the reason for it is becoming increasingly clear, but future discovery must confirm and explain in greater detail what has already been noted at Runcton Holme (P.P.S.E.A. vii), Gaytonthorpe (N.A. xxiii), Wattisfield (P.S.I.A. xxii), and to some degree at Caistor-by-Norwich (N.A. xxiv).

SUMMARY.

The examination of the objects of the Roman period from Dean's gravel pit at Needham, close to the crossing of the Waveney by a Roman road from Peasenhall, has demonstrated the existence of a village with a pottery kiln, and a cemetery with inhumations and cremations. No buildings have been recognised during the extension of the pit to its present limits, but the remains are not likely to have been so substantial as to have attracted the attention of its exploiters. The date of its founding may be fixed by the pottery, coins and brooches from it. Little of the pottery is apparently earlier than c. 120 A.D., but some at least of the Samian ware suggests that someone lived here at least a generation before then. The three

earlier coins of Domitian and Trajan need not have arrived on the site much before 120, as their condition indicates long circulation; but the two brooches with strip bows (first, possibly middle first-century types) can scarcely be treated as survivals into the second century, as they are usually found in pre-Flavian deposits. There must, therefore, have been some Flavian—and possibly early Flavian—occupation, despite the apparent paucity of ceramic and numismatic evidence to support this assertion. Obviously, however, the settlement only developed considerably in Hadrianic and Antonine times. The period of operation of the kiln and the nature of its wares are unfortunately unknown, and the subsequent vicissitudes of this village are uncertain owing to the fragmentary nature of the evidence and its unscientific exploration. Both pottery and coins indicate some sort of occupation, probably on a reduced scale, until about the middle of the fourth century.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ROMAN ROAD SYSTEM ON THE NORFOLK-SUFFOLK BORDER.

I. The Peddars Way.

"It would be fascinating indeed if some day a thorough investigation could be made to discover by whom and for what purpose this road was made" (R. H. Mottram, *East Anglia*, 1933, 54).

In view of the bulky literature relating to this ancient highway, it is surprising that so few serious attempts have been made to describe its exact course, date its construction or define its purpose. Its name is of little importance, for it has been applied indiscriminately to ancient and modern tracks in various parts of East Anglia, most of which have no connection with the road here considered.

(A) *Course.*—C. C. Babington (1853) gaily conducted the Peddars Way past Mildenhall. To H. Jones (1872) it ran from Brancaster to Swaffham; while Marr and Shipley (1904) started at Brancaster

and ended at Stratford-le-Bow, passing through Brandon and Bishop's Stortford, and even to Astley (1908) it was a road which linked Brancaster and Brandon. Such are the painful results of a vivid imagination. Documentary evidence makes even worse confusion, for while a survey of Castleacre in 1547-8 calls the road here considered "Peddar's Lane," a rental of Henry IV designates a portion of the Icknield Way running through Beachamwell "Le Pedderysty"! The course of the road to which the name is here applied is accurately shown on the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (1928) and in H. C. Davies' copy of Faden's map (1935), while its main features are described by W. G. Clarke (1915) and T. Codrington (1918). It is marked clearly on the large-scale Ordnance Map from Ringstead to Castleacre, along the Sporle-Swaffham boundary, from the west side of Merton Park to the Droveway Ford, Brettenham, along the Rushford-West Harling boundary to the Little Ouse at Blackwater, and for a mile into Suffolk along the Knettishall-Euston boundary. Such is the irreducible minimum accepted course of the Peddars Way. The sectors in dispute may now be considered. Its northern termination presents difficulties. Beloe, W. G. Clarke and Codrington and the Ordnance Survey, conduct it from Ringstead to Holme, where it becomes lost in reclaimed salt marshes, probably of post-Roman date. The road between these two villages called Peddars Way on the Ordnance Map is probably modern and not on the line of the old road. In 1929 Messrs. Crawford and Insall noted a broad band of parched grass at the north end of Ringstead village, veering away to the north-west towards Hunstanton, as if the Peddars Way turned to reach the sea-coast between Hunstanton and Holme (Phillips, 1932, 344). It must, however, be admitted that the proximity of the Icknield Way and the Peddars Way at Ringstead, and the adjacent sea-coast may have led to medieval diversions of the original courses of these two roads, especially if (as will be considered below) the coast-line in this zone has been radically

modified since prehistoric and Roman times. The course of the Way north of Ringstead is quite uncertain and only air-photography, excavation and perhaps old estate maps, are likely to shed any clear light on it.

The Way at Castleacre has been diverted by the erection of the Norman castle and its outworks (*Journal of the British Archæological Association*, N.S. xl, 1934, 59-plan), while to the south its course is lost through Palgrave until the Swaffham-Dereham railway is reached. There seems no reasonable doubt that in this sector the road was straight, linking up the stretches to north and south. In North Pickenham, Houghton, Ashill, Saham Toney and Threxton the way is lost for over five miles. The Ordnance Survey Map gives the name to a winding road, part of which forms the Ashill-Great Cressingham boundary, but this is certainly wrong, and the true course was probably a straight line linking the ends of the adjacent sectors of the Way, passing through the Roman settlement on the borders of Saham Toney and Threxton and probably passing near to Moat Farm, Ashill, and to Houghton Farm. The crossing of the River Thet near Brettenham has been fully considered above, and the Suffolk course of the Way may now be examined. From America Lodge at the junction of Knettishall, Euston and Coney Weston, the first edition of the 1-in. Ordnance Survey Map of 1837 and Leman's notes quoted above, strongly suggest that it ran approximately along the boundaries of Bardwell with Barningham and Stanton. A gravel road on this line is visible across the fields east of Heath Farm, Coney Weston. An old road runs south-west from America Lodge to Fakenham Wood in the direction of Sapiston and Honington, but there is no evidence as to its further course, purpose, or date.

There is no clear evidence for the course of the Peddars Way south of the Sapiston-Barningham road about one mile north of the Roman villa at Stanton Chair, excavated in 1936, and despite ingenious efforts by W. G. Clarke (1924) and H. C. Hill (1924) to trace it across the heavy clay

country of Central Suffolk, neither can be regarded as convincing.

The Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (1928) shows a road running from near East Harling in Norfolk towards the Peddars Way near Stanton, but beyond the straightness of an existing road partly on this line there is little to commend it.

(B) *Date.*—The construction of the Peddars Way has been assigned respectively to the prehistoric past, to the Roman period and the Middle Ages, while some writers have endeavoured to placate all three schools of thought by regarding it as a prehistoric trackway, straightened and remade by the Romans, and utilised in the Middle Ages by pilgrims and the transporters of salt, only to be abandoned when agricultural enclosures obliterated this highway in its wilder stretches.

Beloe, Jessopp, Clinch, W. G. Clarke (1915, 1925, etc.) and others have argued for its prehistoric origin. They point to its location on the West Norfolk ridge, to the numerous tumuli flanking its course near Merton and Tottington and north of Castleacre, to the prehistoric relics found in the parishes through which it passes, and to the few recognised Roman settlements astride it.

Before the publication of Beloe's paper, Peddars Way was content to be a Roman road, and even after that event, Haverfield, Codrington and Phillips (1932 and 1935), and the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (1928), still regarded it as such, for its layout was so characteristically Roman.

The advocates of a medieval origin for this highway have been few. Rye (1927) thought it a salt-way, but produced little evidence.

The problem was complicated in 1923 by W. G. Clarke's publication of his attempt to trace the Icknield Way northwards from Thetford to Hunstanton. He demonstrated that a prehistoric track ran parallel to the Peddars Way for nearly forty miles, and suggested in the light of this that the latter was perhaps not constructed till after 200 A.D. and was "thought to have superseded the Icknield Way in Roman times,

when engineering difficulties were more easily surmounted" (Smith 1924).

This solution seems inadequate when it is remembered that Haverfield (1901) pointed out that the chief concentration of Roman settlements on the West Norfolk ridge lay a few miles west of the Peddars Way (*i.e.*, on and close to the Icknield Way). This sinuous western trackway was thus the chief route for local inter-communication between Roman villages in that area, and could not have been superseded by the Peddars Way, which avoids most of them. The problem of the relationship of these two roads can only be settled by dating them independently. The Icknield Way in Norfolk has been shown by W. G. Clarke (October 1923) to be prehistoric in origin, but well used in Roman and later times.

To enumerate the stray objects of prehistoric date and the burial mounds of that period in the parishes flanking the Peddars Way, as do the advocates of its prehistoric origin, is irrelevant to the problem, though valid evidence for the general settlement of man in that area. The only sites which appear to satisfy the conditions outlined in the "Introduction" are at Ringstead, Castleacre, Saham Toney-Threxton and Brettenham, all in Norfolk. The villa at Stanton, recently investigated, is not of equal evidential value, as its relationship to the Peddars Way has yet to be demonstrated, though if its site was selected partly in obedience to this pre-existing road, it would show that this must have been in existence at least by the end of the second century. Ringstead may be excluded from consideration, as there is no proof that the flint implements, probably of Bronze Age date, found over a wide area traversed by the Way, bear any but a fortuitous relation to it.

At Castleacre Haverfield considered that at the most a cottage or two stood beside the Peddars Way about 300 A.D., but there are earlier coins of, *e.g.*, Vespasian, which may perhaps indicate traffic or settlement near the ford of the Nar in the first or second centuries. At Saham Toney-Threxton there is evidence for a

considerable second-century occupation (collection of Mr. F. Barton, Threxton House), but a few Icenian coins and a bronze thistle brooch and Samian ware of forms 27 and 29, contemporary coarse wares, and a coin list beginning with a consular coin and Domitian, cannot be dated later than Flavian times.

From this evidence, fragmentary though it is, and from that gleaned from an investigation of the settlement at Brettenham-West Harling, it seems safe to conclude that the Peddars Way in Norfolk was constructed during Flavian times, but whether early or late in that period cannot yet be determined. This does not exclude the possibility that in the area north of Castleacre it may partly coincide with a bronze age trackway, a true ridgeway ancestral to the iron age Icknield Way to the west, though such an earlier trackway has been obliterated. The Peddars Way, as we know it, is a Roman highway constructed during the last third of the first century A.D.

(C) *Purpose.*—The Peddars Way is really no rival to the Icknield Way, for on reaching the Little Ouse the former continues southward while the latter keeps to the chalk-ridge and veers south-west for Royston and the Thames. They are parallel in W. Norfolk because of its geology—especially the long narrow chalk ridge favourable to settlement and to traffic. The function of the Peddars Way is open to speculation, for neither its southern nor northern terminus is known. For the former Colchester, Chelmsford and Stratford St. Mary are candidates, for it is most unlikely that this devastatingly direct road vanished when it encountered the wooded clay areas of Central Suffolk. Its southern terminus, we may be certain, was somewhere in that zone of precocious Romanisation in Essex, formerly under Belgic domination. Its northern goal is more difficult. The only constructive suggestion is that in Roman times the Wash was narrower and that a ferry plied across Lynn Deeps from some small port near Hunstanton to the Lincolnshire coast south of Skegness, whence an otherwise aimless Roman road leads to Lincoln and

the North. Haverfield (1901) considered this idea, but rejected it on account of the physical difficulties involved. Ten years later Canon Tatham revived it, and H. Belloc (1923) supported it enthusiastically, while the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (1928) made it clear that the alignment of roads on both sides of the Wash was inexplicable on any other hypothesis. C. W. Phillips (1932) examined the problem in detail with reference to geological changes, and concluded that "a crossing shorter in distance than the modern one was thus made across waters which were strongly tidal, but which were comparatively land-locked."

This suggests that the Peddars Way was part of a line of communication constructed after the repression of Boudicca's rebellion, from the Romanised area of North Essex through Icenian territory to this Wash ferry, to convey troops and other official traffic to the north of England as an alternative route to the Ermine Street. Its construction may also have been in part government propaganda, to impress the disgruntled rebels with the might of Rome by laying out a trunk road avoiding all previous settlements.

The settlements at Castleacre, Threxton and Brettenham may thus have been posting-stations or military police posts (mansiones) for the traffic which flowed along this highway. Their equi-distance from one another (10-11 miles) is partly due to the position of the river valleys, which provided their essential water supply, but cannot be explained solely by this for no settlements of this period have yet been identified at the intervening water crossings of the Little Ouse, a stream at Wretham, the Wissey near the Pickenhams and the Heacham River.

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II. The Pye Road and its Subsidiaries.

This name, beloved of eighteenth century topographers, may conveniently be applied to the Roman road from Colchester to Caistor-by-Norwich. Its course follows the Colchester-Ipswich road to near Copdock, and then the modern by-pass road to the west of Ipswich, crossing the Gipping near Baylham (where it was examined in 1935) to join the Ipswich-Norwich road. It coincides with this through Stonham to Scole, where it was examined in 1936 immediately west of the modern bridge over the Waveney, and passes on through Dickleburgh (the present road here is probably a medieval diversion), Long Stratton and Swainsthorpe, whence it probably crossed Dunston Park to reach the west gate of the Roman town at Caistor (*Norfolk Archæology*, xxvi. 1936, 120-1). This road was constructed approximately contemporaneously with the founding of the settlements at Stonham and Scole, and is likely to have been made just before or soon after the cantonal capital of the Iceni was set up at Caistor about 70 A.D., for the establishment of this administrative centre presupposes effective communications with the older

town of Colchester, and Pye Road is the only Roman highway traceable to the former town. This is supported by the discoveries made at Scole in 1936, which show that a village must have stood by the Waveney crossing from the last decades of the first century onwards. The evidence from Stonham is similar, and investigations at Baylham produced late first-century pottery in the ditches of the road, which in this sector was probably laid out about 70 A.D.

The only subsidiary of Pye Road here considered is that from Peasenhall passing through Needham, presumably to join it near Pulham. Its layout in relation to Pye Road suggests that it is contemporary or later. The evidence of the Needham settlement (*see* above) indicates that this road was in existence by Flavian times and probably not long after 70 A.D. Pye Road must again, therefore, be of much the same date or older.

In summary, one may conclude that the main Roman roads of Norfolk and Suffolk, and some at least of their subsidiaries, were laid out in the last generation of the first century A.D., probably only a decade after the suppression of Boudicca's uprising in 61 as the first measure of that Romanisation which only flowered belatedly in the early second century.

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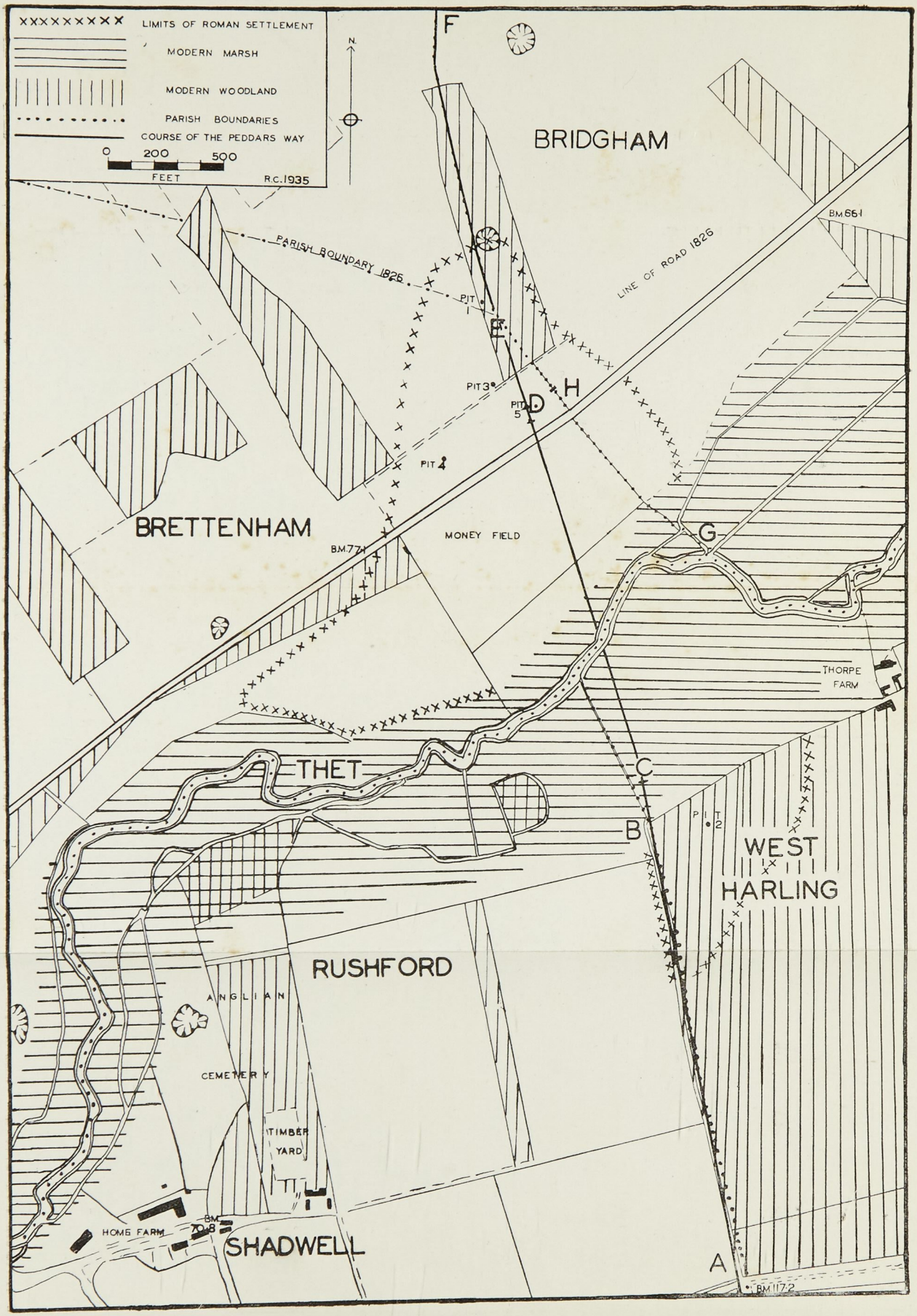

Fig. 1. Plan of Roman Settlement at Brettenham, Norfolk, showing relation to the Peddars Way.

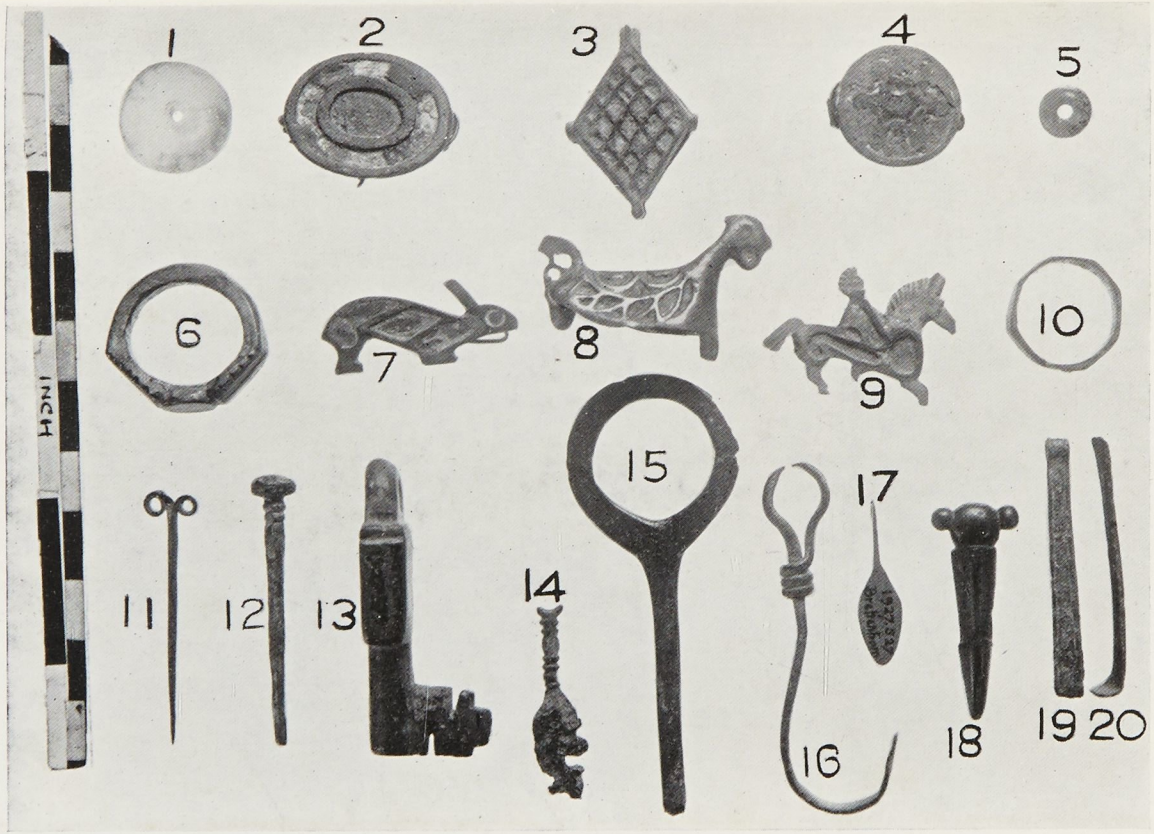

Fig. 2. Bronze ornaments and beads from Brettenham, now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. (*See* pp. 136-8.)

A.

B.

Fig. 3. A.—Bronze lamp from Brettenham (now in the British Museum); B.—Bowl of Samian ware (Form 37) with lead rivetting from Pit 3, Brettenham (now in Thetford Museum). (*See* pp. 135, 139.)

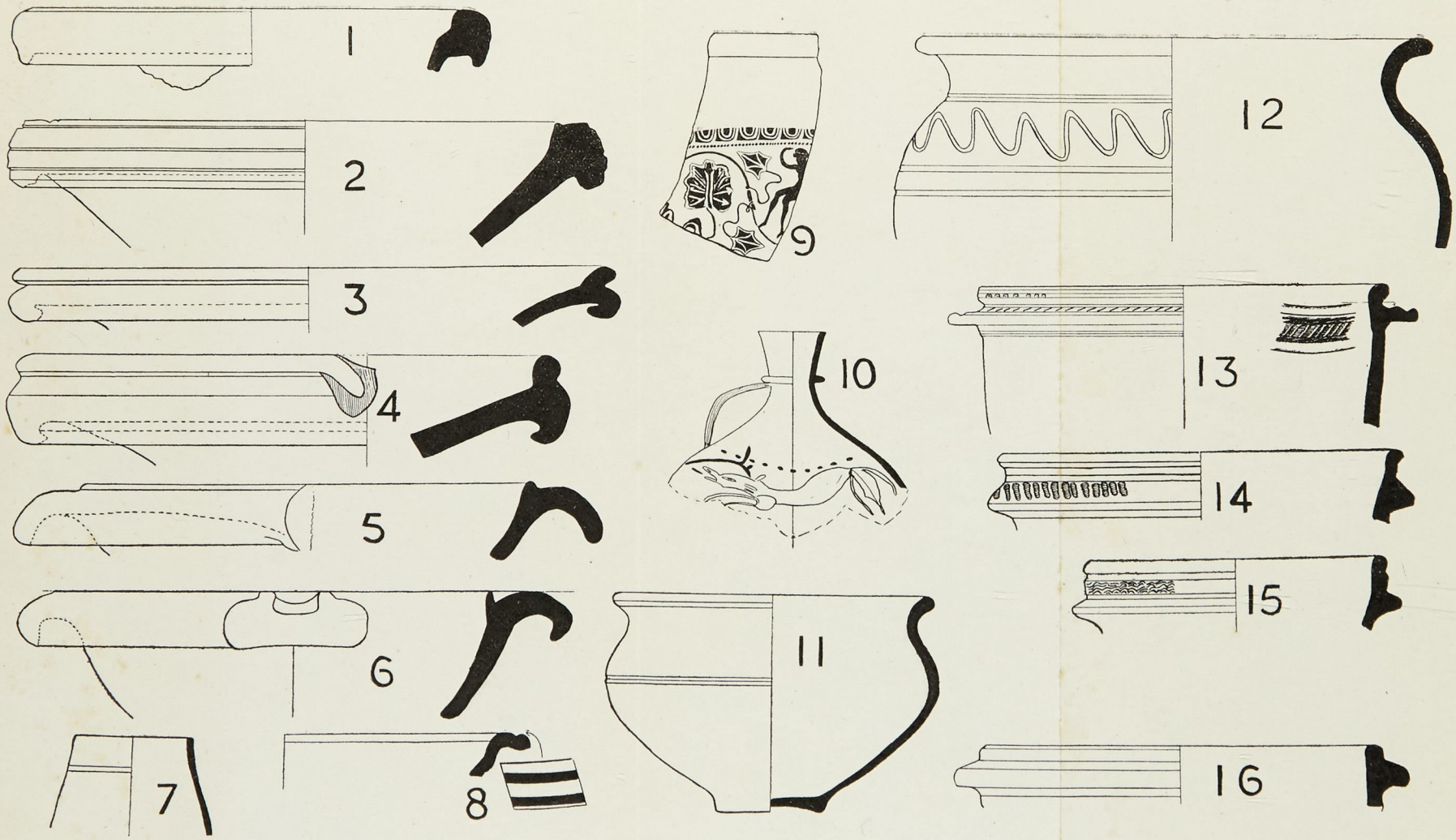

Fig. 4. Pottery sections from Brettenham Excavations. Pit 2 (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13). Pit 3 (5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16) Scale one-third. (*See* pp. 141, 142.)

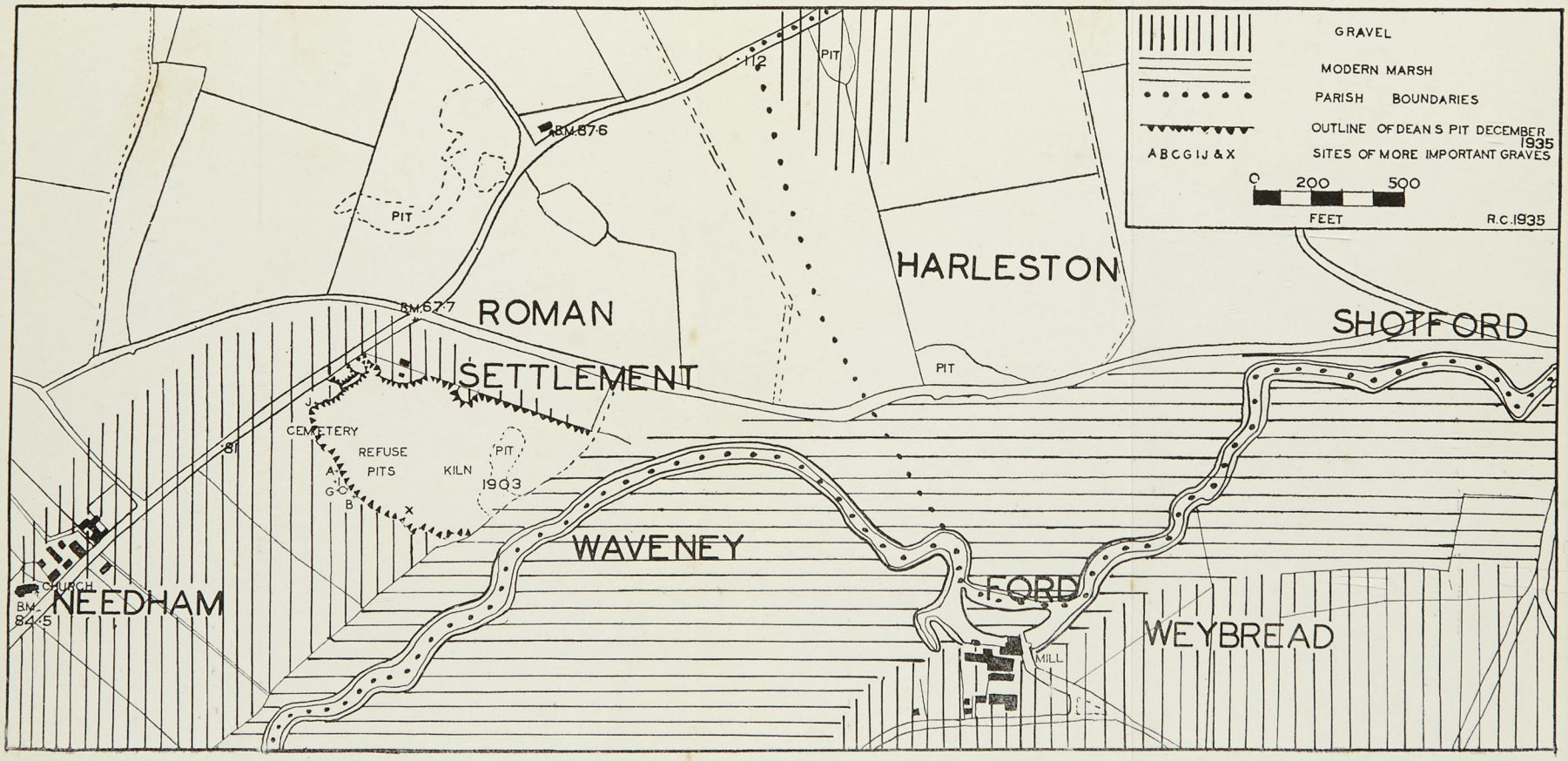

Fig. 6. Plan of Roman Settlement at Needham, Norfolk.

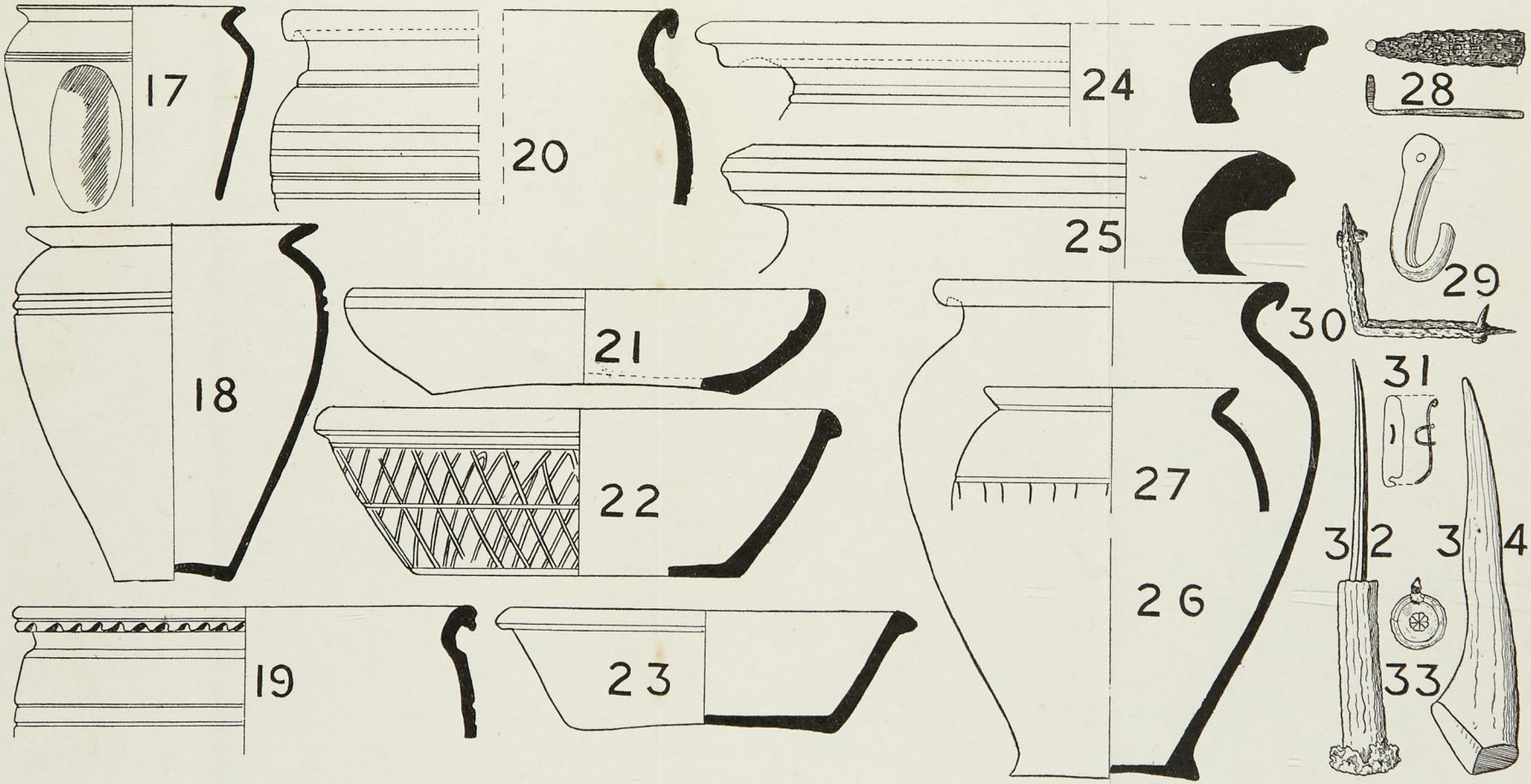

Fig. 5. From Brettenham Excavations—Pottery sections 17—27. Iron objects 28—30; Bronze object 31; Bone object 34; Bone and iron object 32; Silver object 33. Pit 2 (18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 34). Pit 3 (17, 21, 23, 27). Pit 5 (30, 33). Scale one-third. (*See* pp. 135, 137, 142, 143.)

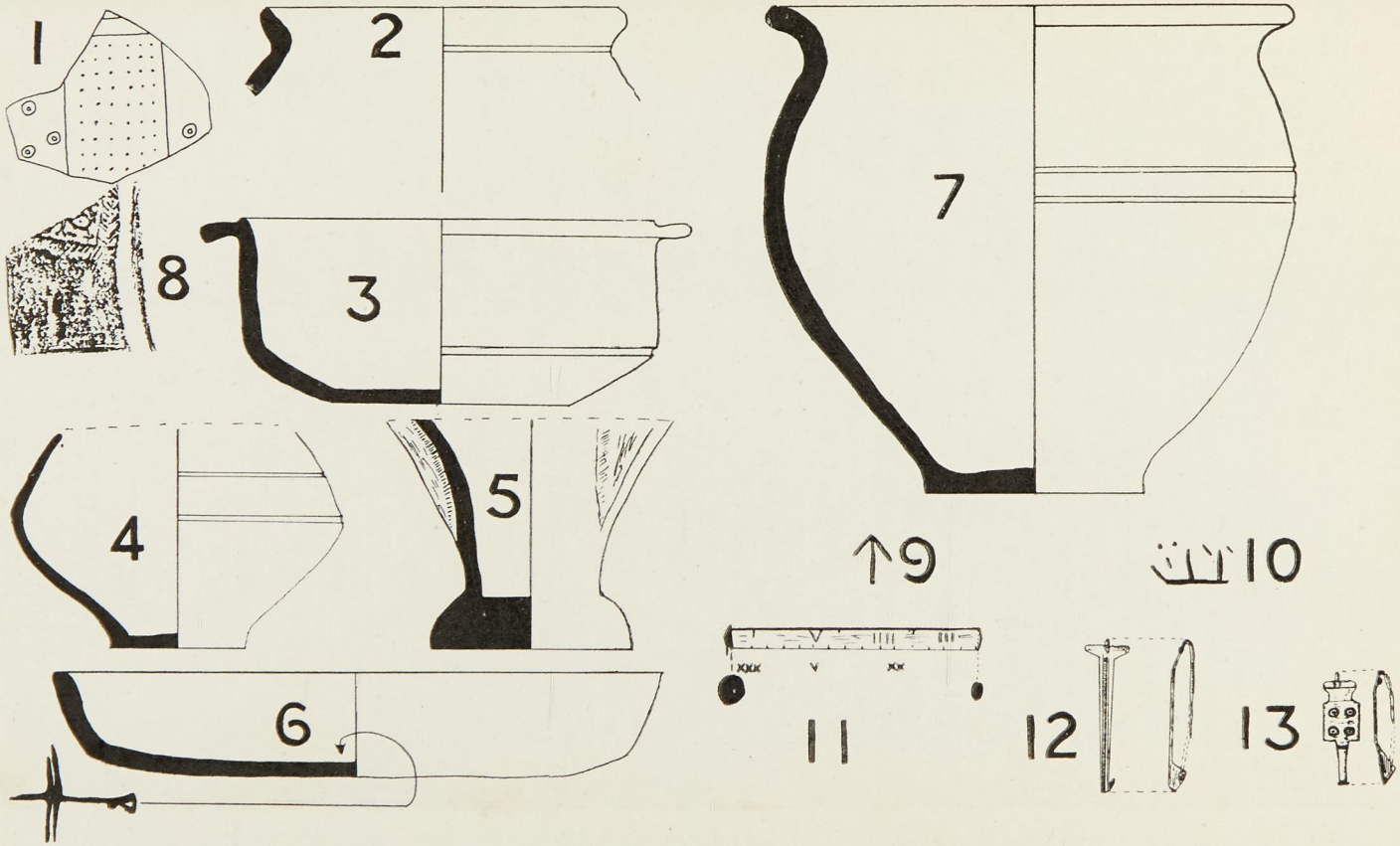

Fig. 7. From Needham. 1—10 Pottery; 11—13 Bronze objects. Scale, two-fifths. (*See* pp. 149, 151.)

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