

## ANCIENT ROMAN SETTLEMENT AT LONG MELFORD.

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Between the River Stour and the village of Long Melford, near St. Katherine Road, lies some flat meadow land, partly used as garden ground. The subsoil consists of drift valley gravels, and when the alluvium, which is about a foot thick, is dug through, portions of broken pottery, bones, horns, and oyster shells have frequently been found in the gravel.

Eleven years ago, Mr. Henry H. Almack found, when digging in this meadow, at the rear of his garden, a skeleton, six feet long, and three from the surface, the head laid towards the east, the bones were too friable for removal. Numerous fragments of Roman pottery were found in its vicinity.

About two years ago Mr. Vertigan, who has a nursery garden in this meadow, was excavating gravel, when he exposed a very similar skeleton. Hearing of this I visited the place some time afterwards, but the skeleton had been interred deeply in the gravel. However, a number of interesting Roman vessels were discovered while extending this gravel pit; most were in fragments, but the following were intact:— 2 food vessels, some plates, one glass incense cup, and one guttus. The latter was of rather a rare shape. I therefore had the accompanying photograph taken of it.

Early last year Mr. Vertigan informed me of his exposing more skeletons in this gravel pit. I at once

went there, and found three skeletons near together, about three feet from the surface and their heads towards the east. I had them carefully removed and packed in a large box, which I sent to Professor A. Keith, at the Rôyal College of Surgeons, who, after examining them, wrote me that the skulls did not appear to be Roman, but belonged to the natives of Suffolk, during the Roman period, and exactly the same as the people Mr. Reid Moir found at Ipswich.

From the foregoing evidences there can be no doubt but that a Roman Settlement or Camp had at one time existed in this locality. I cannot find any trace of earthworks; still, such may have existed, though long since swept away by centuries of floods from the overflowing river during wet seasons. Such floods still occur over this meadow land.

NOTE.—Some members of the Literary Committee thought that this photograph might be that of a Simpulum and not of a Guttus. I referred the question to Mr. A. G. Wright, of the Colchester Museum, who says that the photo is certainly that of a Guttus. The Simpulum is a ladle or cup with a long handle for taking wine in small quantities out of the crater, or other large vessel, in order to make libations. The Guttus is also very different from the Gutturium, this latter was a water jug or ewer, with a large mouth, employed especially for pouring water on the hands before and after meals.



#### GUTTUS.

This was a jug with a very narrow neck and small mouth used in Roman sacrifices to pour wine in small quantities or drop by drop upon the victim, also used for pouring wine into the patera to make a libation.

In this Guttus a small hole was bored near the handle to admit air so as to make the flow more rapid.