

EVIDENCE OF A ROMAN FORT AT BILLINGFORD
NEAR SCOLE.

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A grass grown gravel pit is all that is now visible of what may or may not have been a multi fosse Roman fort. The site is ideal for the purpose, situated on rising ground, it overlooks the valley of the Waveney and must have been a necessity to guard the extensive settlement and distributing centre now known to have existed at Scole from the latter half of the first century A.D.

When digging gravel in about 1905, Roman weapons and other articles were found but seem to have attracted little attention at the time, as it was not until some ten years later that Mr. Dutt described the finds in his paper printed in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, Vol. I, 321-3.

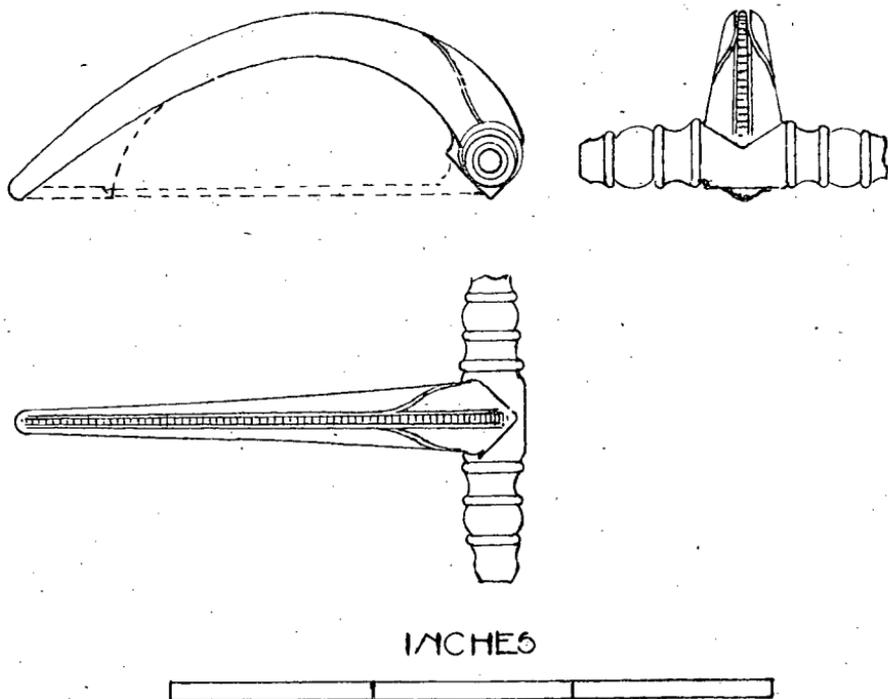


FIG 1

Mrs. Crawshay has now presented to the writer the weapons found (see Plate I) and a bronze Roman brooch (see Fig. 1 in the text), found at the same time. They were in a very poor condition owing to having been stored in a furniture warehouse for about twenty years without attention.

The weapons are now in the safe-custody of the Ipswich Museum, where they can be seen by anyone interested.

- Plate I. Fig. 1. A hook.
 Fig. 2. Staple with hole for padlock.
 Fig. 3. Part of lock.
 Fig. 4. Of unknown use.
 Figs. 5 to 8. Socketed spears.
 Fig. 9. Socketed javelin or throwing spear.

No trace can now be found of the small bronze article and the pot sherds mentioned in Mr. Dutt's paper.

Of those who visited the site at the time, Mrs. Crawshay is very definite about there being "six to eight ditches to the north, south, east and west, in the form of a square."

The writer visited the site with Mr. Spalding, of Scole, who dug the gravel and found the articles. He pointed out roughly the position of the fesses and the place where he found the articles.

On the slope between the site of the fort and the Waveney there is a large depression about 250 feet long, 30 feet wide and 12 to 15 feet deep. This appears to be artificial.

It must be remembered that at the time nothing was known of the recent extensive finds at Scole, which may account for the small amount of notice taken of the occurrence.

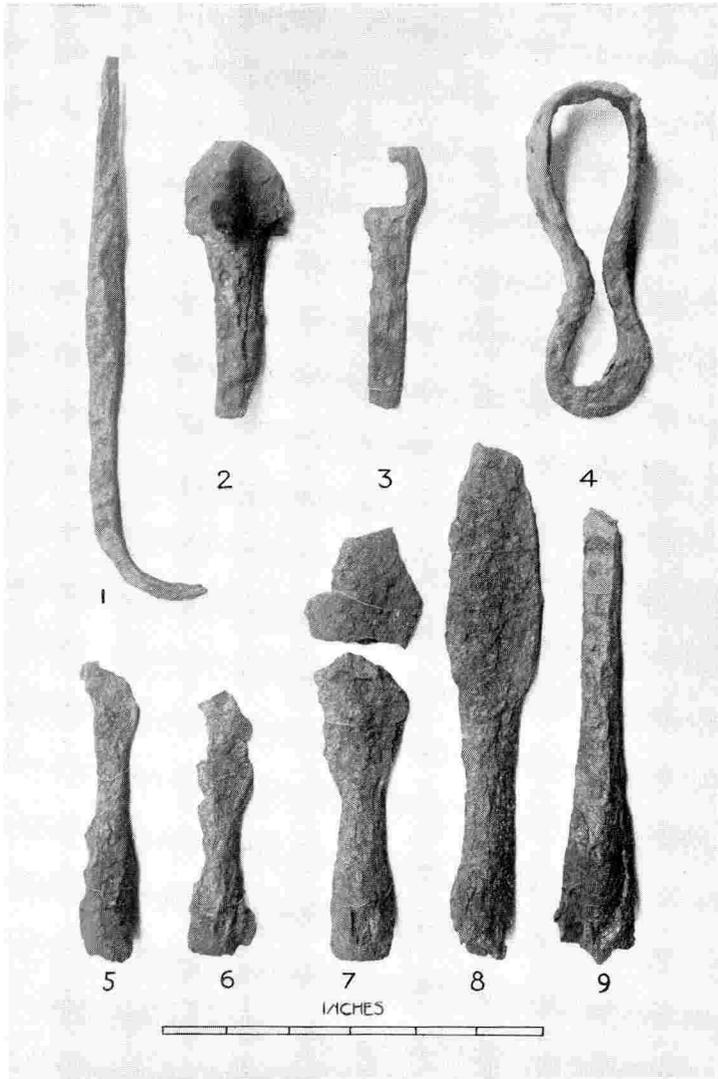


PLATE I.