ROMAN SUFFOLK.

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It is now thirty-eight years since the last account of Roman Suffolk appeared. This was the chapter on Roman Suffolk in the Victoria County History by G. E. Fox, based on material previously published by him in a paper in the Archæological Journal. Since the time Fox wrote his survey the whole science of archæology has undergone a radical change and also much additional evidence of the Roman occupation of Suffolk has come to hand. It is the purpose of what follows to review the evidence that we have for the Roman occupation of Suffolk as a whole and to bring together such additional information as has become available since Fox's pioneer work appeared.

The research for this undertaking was carried out largely between the years 1933-1937; a time when there was much activity in the investigation of Roman Suffolk. Pressure of work and World War 2 have been jointly responsible for the delay in the publication of this work, but I cannot feel that this is altogether to be regretted, for in the interval important papers, having a bearing on the subject, have appeared and these have been of great value in compiling this account.

We may begin this account of Roman Suffolk by taking note of the state of affairs that obtained prior to the Roman invasion. The county then lay within the frontiers of the kingdom of the Iceni. The work of Sir Cyril Fox, Messrs. Hawkes and Dunning and Mr. R. R. Clarke has enabled us to place these in a zone running N.W. S.E. across the Icknield Way near Newmarket on the west and somewhere between the Stour and the Deben on the south. Study of the distribution of Iron Age objects in East Anglia by Sir Cyril Fox and a more detailed account of Iron Age Suffolk by Mr. R. R. Clarke has provided a knowledge of the actual areas occupied within these frontiers when the Romans came upon the scene.

From his distribution map of the second phase of the Early Iron Age Sir Cyril Fox concludes that "evidence of occupation in Norfolk and Suffolk is scanty; the Deben and Orwell estuaries are almost completely disused." Clarke's more extensive researches led him to conclude that coin distribution "fixes the nucleus of the Iceniic kingdom in Breckland" and that in this period East Suffolk "may in the pre-Claudian phase have been largely a depopulated no-man's land." Clarke has also commented upon the communications that may have existed between the Iceni and their neighbours. He says, "there is little indication of intercourse with the Coritani of the Midlands across the Fens". Regarding their contact with the Belgic tribes to the south-west and the south, he thinks that this was established "by the time honoured route of the Icknield Way and across the watershed from the Lark to the Stour valleys" but
holds that “the exclusiveness of the coin distribution confirms their essential hostility”.¹

From the opinions that we have just mentioned, and the evidence upon which they are based, it would seem that on the eve of the Roman invasion the greater part of our county was left uninhabited by the Iceni living in the open country to the west, and no attempt was made at colonisation by the Belgic tribes to the south except for the occupation of the Stour valley in the first decades of the first century. The heavily afforested clay lands of central Suffolk may have been too much for the primitive agricultural methods of the Iceni, and the lighter land of East Suffolk too far from their tribal centre for them to contemplate settlement there. So far as colonisation of this latter area by the Trinobantes is concerned it may well be that the hostility of the Iceni towards them acted as a powerful deterrent.

The map of Roman Suffolk, (Fig.1), indicating the sites of all the major Roman “finds” within the county, reveals the change that took place during this period. The map indicates that now our county came to be fairly well populated compared with the previous era, and also that definite areas were preferred by the new settlers. The old Icenic lands in Breckland are still occupied but now there is an extensive occupation in East Suffolk, particularly in the Ipswich area. Both in East and West Suffolk the river valleys were chiefly selected. It will be noted that in Roman times, as well as in the previous period, no attempt was made to settle the afforested clay lands.²

Having noted in general terms the vast change that came over the county in Roman times we may now proceed to elucidate the stages whereby this overall occupation was attained. Suffolk lacks a completely excavated site from which the various stages of development may be adduced. We shall therefore be compelled to fall back upon such excavation reports as we have, “salvage” material that can be reliably dated and such generalisations from Norfolk sites, where investigation has been more thorough, as it may be safe to apply.

Before proceeding to the examination and discussion of the earliest evidence of a Roman occupation the first dealings of the Iceni with the invader must be mentioned.

It is well known that upon the capitulation of the Trinobantes the Iceni came to terms with Rome and received as the reward of their submission a “partial and patronized freedom”.³ It is also equally well known that whatever advantages the tribe may have believed itself to have obtained they proved in a short time to be illusory. The erection of the Fosse Way “limes” cut the Iceni off from their neighbours the Coritani, and when disarmament was enforced upon the Iceni, who had regarded themselves hitherto as “free allies” ⁴ of Rome, they revolted. The revolt was quickly put down by Ostorius Scapula in 47 A.D., but though still forced to disarm, they remained a “nominally independent kingdom”⁵ up to 61 A.D.

¹ Ibid p. 83. ² A probable villa at Woodrising in Norfolk is in the boulder clay area. (J.R.S. XXXVIII (1948), 91). This statement would require revision should a similar site come to light in our county. ³ Collin p. 87. ⁴ Ibid, p. 92. ⁵ Ibid, p. 93.
Fig. 1—Distribution Map of Roman Remains in Suffolk.
Fig. 2—Pottery from Lattingford, Playford, Exning, Icklingham, Ixworth, Snape Abbey and West Stow.
ROMAN SUFFOLK

MID-FIRST CENTURY IN SUFFOLK, (43-61) A.D.

CLAUDIAN POTTERY FROM SUFFOLK.


It will be noticed at once that this pottery comes from two distinct areas—the Ipswich district and S.W. Suffolk. The distribution of this pottery has already received attention from Mr. S. Frere, who has studied it in connection with the distribution of Belgic material from Butley, Elvedon, Fakenham, Freckenham and Lakenheath of about the same date. He has observed that “truly romanized pottery is in the main restricted to the sites in the neighbourhood of Ipswich”, and that “it was South Suffolk that chiefly felt the first impact of Rome”. The occurrence of Claudian pottery at Exning, Sudbury, (not hitherto noted) and Great Thurlow indicate an attempt in this same period to continue the settlement of the upper reaches of the Stour already begun by the Belge. No evidence of road building in these areas at this time has been noted, nor is there any indication of building having taken place with the possible exception of Great Thurlow. Whether this penetration took place in the years immediately following the conquest or after the capitulation of the Iceni to Ostorius Scapula is hard to say; the latter is more probable. Prof. C. F. C. Hawkes has remarked upon this and other evidence from Norfolk cited by Frere, “a Prasutagan period in East Anglian Archaeology may now be formulated”. Upon the same evidence Frere has commented “Prasutagus, in fact, lacked sufficient wealth or will to impose romanization on his subjects but what he did do was to open his realm to its diffusion.” We may conclude, then, that between the years 48-61 A.D. there was a definite Roman penetration in the S.E. and S.W. of our county and some attempt was made to settle these areas.

1 Frere (1941). 2 Ibid. 55. 3 Ibid. 55. 4 Ibid. 52. 5 Ibid. 55.
Such settlement, however, was obviously limited in extent and superficial in character, and to it the revolt of Boudicca, the next event we are to consider, set a period.

The revolt, to which we have just alluded, as regards its causes, course and final outcome for the Iceni, has been so often dealt with that further description here is unnecessary.\(^1\) It is sufficient to note that with a few possible exceptions no trace of this momentous event is to be found within the county. It may be that the bronze head of a statue of Claudius recovered from the Alde at Rendham is rightly regarded as a relic of the booty seized by the Iceni in the sack of Colchester.\(^2\) Also Clarke may be equally right in interpreting the charcoal and blackened earth associated with the enamelled horse-trappings at Westall, which he thinks were probably concealed in 61 A.D., as the remains of the destruction of the site "at the hands of over zealous Roman troops".\(^3\) If, however, evidence of the revolt is lacking, that of its effect is clearly to be found in the years that immediately follow. It is to such evidence of the "revival" of Roman life in Suffolk after the suppression of Boudicca's revolt in 61 A.D. that we shall now give our attention.

**LATE FIRST AND SECOND CENTURY IN SUFFOLK**

Pottery belonging to the last decades of the first century and the first half of the second century has been noted on a number of sites in the county. On the basis of the presence of such pottery a number of sites may be classified as being occupied during these years.

**SITES OCCUPIED DURING THE LAST DECADES OF THE FIRST CENTURY AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE SECOND CENTURY**


**Brandon.** Terra sigillata. C.M.A.E.

**Capel St. Mary.** In a Council House garden at Windmill Hill remains of foundations, window glass, plaster, iron objects and terra sigillata of the second century were noted; also pair of bronze lions attached by two iron bars leaded into hollow underside, the intervening space being filled with a perishable substance. (Fig. 3). (Information from and objects in Ips. M.).


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Fig. 3—Bronze Lions from Capel St. Mary.  (Photo Ipswich Museum)

Fig. 5—Bronze Boar from Wattisfield.  (Photo Ipswich Museum)
Fig. 4—Rotary Querns from Darmsden. (Photo, Ipswich Museum)

Esning. Dark grey ovoid beaker with roll rim and foot ring decorated with dots; Contained burnt bones and nails. B.M. 53.8.8.15. (Fig. 2, VI.). Blackish-brown thumb indented beaker containing burnt bones, (3rd cent.) Ips. M. 1920-50.13. Also V.C.H. 304. Coins:—Trajan; Maximian.

Hazlewood. Refuse pits excavated at Barber's point on south bank of Alde in 1907. Sundry finds including terra sigillata F.27, stamp Quintus (La Graufesenque, 1st cent.), F. 18, stamp Tasc (Tascilli, Lezoux Domitian-Hadrian). Coarse Ware. This was not studied at the time of excavation but preserved in Aldeburgh Museum and consists of fragments of jars with cordons and incised decoration imitating Gallo-Belgic forms. V.C.H. 307-B.


Holbrook. Greenwich Royal Hospital. When excavating for swimming bath in 1929 the mechanical grab brought up fragments of coarse pottery, small jug, terra sigillata F.18 (135-200 A.D.), two coins unidentified, from depth of 6-8 ft. Pottery at and information from Greenwich Royal Hospital Estate Office, Holbrook. Pottery examined by Mr. M. R. Hull.


Iworth (Including Pakenham) Priory Farm. Fragments terra sigillata and coarse ware dishes, cordoned bowls and jars. Fragment decorated terra sigillata Vespasian-Domitian, South Gaul. Duck Farm (Pakenham). Fragments terra sigillata, fragment F.36 Antonine. Coarse ware as above. (Notes made when inspecting pottery in the possession of Major G. Kilner). Other Pottery. Decorated terra sigillata bowl F.37 (Antonine). Ash.M. R. 294. Coarse ware:—grey bowl with cordons from Pickerel Inn. (Fig. 2, XI). Ash.M. 1907. R 215. Small grey bowl with everted lip and cordon around girth (Fig. 2, XIII) from Pakenham. Ash.M. Also dark grey beaker with everted lip on shoulder, polished zone on shoulder and at base with incised vertical lines in groups between (Fig. 2, IV) Ash. M. R.212. All three similar fabric to Wattisfield kilns.


Lakenheath. At foot of Maid's Cross Hill, close to meeting place of chalk and fen. Many Roman objects obtained from this site including coins, Philippus-Honorius. About 200 yds. from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted. Terra sigillata:—sherd from this site remains discovered in 1945. Patches of black sand noted.


COIN HOARDS.


From the study of the distribution of these sites and the characteristics of the pottery upon which the classification has been based much light is thrown upon what took place in the county in the years that follow Boudicca’s revolt.

DISTRIBUTION

The Roman sites at Capel St. Mary, Coddenham, Darmsden, Hazlewood, Lattingford and Reydon Smere, and the finds of pottery at Combs, Ipswich and Kirton, in East Suffolk, together with the site at Long Melford in the Stour Valley and the pottery from Exning, demonstrate that the occupation of the areas commenced in Prasutagan times was continued. That new areas were also occupied now is shown by the finds at Great Welnetham, Hitcham, Ixworth and the Wattsfield district. It will be noted that the river valleys are still preferred and the clay lands
avoided. The absence of any considerable finds in Breckland, apart from the kilns at West Stow and the pottery from Lakenheath, is puzzling. It may be that the archaeological record is at fault. Perhaps the nucleus of the Icenic kingdom was slower to recover from the destruction of Suetonius Paulinus than the outlying areas.

CHARACTER OF THE OCCUPATION

The classification of these sites upon the basis of the pottery produced has already been mentioned. Since much of this is salvage material and in some instances consists of fragments only it would be hazardous to place much reliance upon it ifit did not display features that have been noted in that from the more systematically excavated sites in Norfolk (Caistor-by-Norwich, Gayton Thorpe, Needham, Scole and Runcton Holme) and Wattisfield. Prof. Atkinson noted both at Gayton Thorpe and Caistor-by-Norwich that backwardness seemed to be an East Anglian characteristic and observed a "lagging tendency" in the coarse ware, types not to be expected after 120 A.D. appearing with terra sigillata of the Antonine Age. Prof. C. F. C. Hawkes found that the Runcton Holme pottery confirmed Prof. Atkinson's conclusions and remarked upon the influence of Gallo-Belgic forms upon the work of local potters and the absence of pieces common in the Flavian period. The pottery from Needham, Scole and Wattisfield displayed the same features. The coarse ware available for study from Darmsden, Exning, Hazlewood, Hitcham, Ixworth, Kirton, Lakenheath, Lattingford, Long Melford and Reydon Smere is of a piece with that from the Norfolk sites and Wattisfield.

The hypothesis put forward by Prof. C. F. C. Hawkes to account for the backwardness of the pottery from the Norfolk sites may now with good reason be applied to that from Suffolk. Prof. Hawkes holds that "provincial civilization seems to have made but little headway among the Iceni until the second century had well begun" and accounts for this by the ruthless treatment that was meted out to the Iceni after the revolt of Boudicca. We may therefore conclude that the "revival" of the Roman life in Suffolk cannot have commenced much before the end of the first century and did not flourish to any appreciable extent till well on into the second century.

Though buildings have been noted at Capel St. Mary, Coddenham, Hitcham, Lattingford and Reydon Smere not enough is known about them to make their history clear. That they had their beginnings in the second century is certain, and it is almost equally certain that they were not occupied later than the first decade of the third century. It is probable, however, that they were deserted at an even earlier date. Since there was a more extensive occupation of our county in the third and fourth centuries the discussion of the demise of these buildings will be deferred to the latter part of this account when the evidence of the occupation for these centuries has been presented.

In 1843-4 four Roman barrows, within 250 yards of remains of buildings, were investigated at Rougham. The second contained among other objects terra sigillata belonging to the first half of the second century; a fourth at Eastlow Hill contained a small chamber in which was found a leaden coffin with a skeleton within. Other Roman barrows in Suffolk have been noted at Blaxhall and Stonham. The Rougham barrows were interpreted by Sir Cyril Fox as a survival of a La Tène custom in our area, while the absence of grave furniture in the fourth at Eastlow Hill he held to indicate a "Christian burial" probably of the fourth century. Messrs. Dunning and Jessop in a more extended survey of Roman barrows concluded that no barrow was built later than the second century though Eastlow Hill was regarded as a possible exception. On the ground that outside Britain Roman barrows are found to be concentrated in Eastern Belgium, these writers reached the conclusion that the custom was introduced into Britain by merchants from Rhineland who participated in its commercial development.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

It has already been noted that no road making was undertaken in our county before 61 A.D. and that access was obtained by routes not yet discovered, with the exception of the Icknield Way. Roman roads however, are recorded for our county on the O.S. map of Roman Britain and the evidence for them is discussed by Codrington. Our purpose here will not be to set out again the evidence for the Roman roads in our county but to bring together such additional knowledge about them as has become available since the publication of the latter work.

The chief Roman road passing through our county is that from Colchester to Caistor-by-Norwich, to be identified with Iter IX in the Antonine Itinerary, and known to antiquaries as the "Pye Road". Entering Suffolk at Stratford St. Mary it proceeds, by way of Capel St. Mary, to cross the Gipping at Baylham Mill and thence to Scole along the main Ipswich-Norwich Road. A branch leaves this road north of Coddenham and goes via Pettaugh and Earl Soham to Peasenhall, where it makes an angle with another which runs through Weybread possibly to join the former road at Pulham, Norfolk. Nothing is known of this route beyond Peasenhall apart from alleged tracks across the heath at Dunwich. Clarke regards the Colchester-Caistor road as having been constructed "just before or soon after the cantonal capital of the Iceni at Caistor" about 70 A.D., and the Weybread-Peasenhall road as "contemporary or later." Frere, writing later, put the Weybread-Peasenhall road "not earlier than the second century". Sections were cut across the Colchester-Caistor road at Coddenham in 1935 and showed it to be 18 ft. in diameter buttressed with ramps and ditches. In the latter fragments of late first and early second century pottery were found. At Stratford St. Mary, where the road is presumed to have crossed the Stour, old piles of a bridge at the end of a road leading from Colchester, a coin.
of Antoninus Pius, and an amphora, have been found.

Another road has been shown to enter our county at Bungay, parallel with the Weybread-Peasenhall road, and then to follow the line of Stone Street. (Ilketstall St. John to Halesworth.) A spread of coins, mostly third century have been noted at Bungay, a coin of Postumus from Ilketstall St. John. A statuette of Venus is recorded as from Blyford Bridge in which direction the road is supposed to have proceeded upon reaching Halesworth. No trace of the road has been discovered beyond Halesworth though suggestions as to the possible route have been forthcoming.

In West Suffolk there is little trace of road building. Attention has, however, been directed to the Peddars’ Way. Clarke regards any attempt to trace its route across the heavy clay lands of central Suffolk as unconvincing but suggests, wherever its route may lie, that it was part of a line of communication constructed after the repression of Boudicca’s rebellion, to impress the disgruntled rebels with the might of Rome. Fox has made the suggestion that there may have been a route from Colchester through Haverhill to Cambridge and Godmanchester passing the head of the Stour valley in the vicinity of Great Thurlow. In Roman times the Icknield Way still presumably performed its ancient function of linking Norfolk across N.W. Suffolk with southern England. A section of a road running in an east-west direction has been noted at Hitcham. Another in the same direction along the Waveney valley has also been supposed, by Frere.

Upon the foregoing account, derived from recent work on the Roman roads in our county we may now comment. It is now evident that the construction of the Colchester-Caistor road may be dated to 70 A.D. or thereabouts and this indicates that it must have been used to develop Roman life in Suffolk. Indeed it provided a means of easy access to Colchester on the south and Caistor in the north and its branches enabled settlers to penetrate into the north-east. If Clarke’s suggestions regarding the Peddars’ Way be accepted we shall see that some attempt was made to establish a direct contact with West Suffolk; and furthermore, should we accept the view that there was a route along the Waveney Valley contact now was made between East and West Suffolk thereby. It may, therefore, be supposed that by the second century a system of communications was in operation. When it is recalled that Capel St. Mary, Coddenham and Lattingford lie on the Colchester-Caistor route and that Hitcham was in the vicinity of the Peddars’ Way, and also the Wattisfield kiln sites would have adjoined the Waveney route the impetus that these roads gave to the settlement of the county cannot be in doubt. Moreover, presumably their construction made for unity in the life of our area in this period.

1 J.R.S.XVII, p. 203. 2 Cam. No. 183c. 3 See R. R. Clarke “Roman Norfolk”. N.A. XXX. 4 VCH 301. 5 Ibid. 310. 6 Ibid. 301. Heichelheim 69. 7 N.A. XXVI, pp. 155 and 159. 8 Fox (1923), 169. 9 G.S. Roman Britain Map. 10 N.A., XXXIII, 190.
THE THIRD AND FOURTH CENTURIES IN SUFFOLK.

To enable us to consider these centuries it will be necessary first to list the sites occupied and also to furnish a separate list of coin hoards belonging to the period.

THIRD AND FOURTH CENTURY SITES

1. **Burgh Castle.** This site may be treated summarily as it has been the subject of comprehensive study in these Proceedings. The author concludes that "the Saxon Shore fort was probably built in the late 3rd or early 4th century, and the occupation seems to have reached its peak during the reign of Constantine I. It was occupied continuously down to the time of Honorius, at the beginning of the 5th century, at which time the Anglo-Saxons may have commenced to settle in the neighbourhood". P.S.I.A. XXIV. p. 120.


**Figure 6.**


II. Small red jar. Saxorn ornamentation B.M. 53.8.15.7.

III. Coarse grey jar with four faintly incised lines on shoulder Ips. M. 1920-50.12.


V. Grey dish, angular flange B.M. 53.8.15.6.


IX. Black cooking pot with oversailing rim Ips. M. 1920-50.44.

X. Small black Castor beaker, "found 1843". M.H.B.

XI. Grey bowl with out-turned lip on shoulder. Ips. M.
Fig 6—Pottery from Felixstowe.
Fig. 7—Pottery from Icklingham.
**Roman Suffolk**

**Coins.**


**Roman Finds.**


**Foxgrove Gardens, (Cul de Sac) Fragments of pottery in garden.**

**Jarrah Gates.** Two urn burials in garden. (Notes from Mr. G. Maynard).

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**Pottery.**

1/ Jar (12½ ins. high). Upper part glazed black, lower buff coloured. Decoration of two incised lines and two wavy lines above black band around girth. M. H. B.


3/ Grey wide-mouthed jar (9½ ins. high). M. H. B.

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**Pottery.**

I. Red bell-mouthed jar. M. H. B.

II. Black Dish, polished surface, mica content, central kick B.M. 54.4.12.18.


IV. Light grey flanged dish. Ash M 1907 R 194.

V. Bottle with stepped shoulder, hollow foot, red ware. M. H. B. (Two specimens)

VI. Flagon with spout, foot and two reeded handle. M. H. B.

VII. Funnel necked flagon, blackish with painted decoration two reeded handle. Ash M. 1907 R 230.

VIII. Black dish with tooled girth line. Ash M.1927 R 3347.


X. Two handled flagon, buff coloured with incised band round neck, reeded handle. B.M. 54.4.12.16.


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Stoke Ash. Site stated to be in fields east and west of main Norwich-Ipswich road at "White Horse Inn." Amphora with stamp ENNIV L. Fragment of terra sigillata, stamp ALBVCI (Hadrian Domitian). Coins including Crusps (317-26) V.C.H. 316.

Stonham. Numerous Roman objects from Little and Earl Stonham noted by Hamlet Watling. Site described as "in valley intersecting two parishes of Earl Stonham and Little Stonham". Pottery, one fragment with mark on base G/F A/F. Terra sigillata stamp SEVERI (Trajan-Antonine). Coins:—Claudius II, Diocletian, Carausius, Constantius, Constantine II, Magnentius, Valens. V.C.H. 317. See also Hamlet Watling Map at Ips. M. Skulls from here examined and stated to be Icenic J.R.S. XXV p. 46.


COIN HOARDS

Hoards of coins without precise details noted from Ickworth (V.C.H., 310); Lakenheath (Ibid., 312); Bungay, 1,000 minimi (Ibid., 301 and Sutherland, 102); Bury St. Edmunds, "The Tetrici" (Sutherland, 160; plate X, 2 & 3; XI, 22. "radiate minimi").

Brandon. (Wangford Heath). 3,000 silver and bronze coins of Gallienus (253-268) found in grey jar with slight cordon on shoulder. Jar, M.H.B. Coins missing.


Eye. From Clint Farm upwards 600 gold coins in leaden cist including Valentinian, Senior & Junior (364-392) Gratian (375-83) Theodosius (379-95), Arcadius (395-408), Honorius (395-423) V.C.H. 305. Sutherland 92. adds "600 solidi" apparently closing with Constans III. Ibid 168.

Holbrook. Large quantity of large brass coins Diocletian (284-305) to Constantius II (324-361) V.C.H. 308. Sutherland 164.


The above sites, and the objects from them, together with the coin hoards provide the material for the consideration of the third and fourth centuries in our county. Haverfield wrote:—"Despite the ill name that attaches to the third and fourth centuries they were for Britain, as for part of Gaul, a period of progressive prosperity. Certainly the number of British farms and country houses inhabited during the years 280-350 must have been large. Prosperity culminated in the Constantinian Age."1 Although it is known that this statement must now be modified, particularly with regard to Romano-British towns,2 it does in fact adequately represent the condition of Roman life in Suffolk in these centuries.

The third and fourth centuries in our county present two features that call for separate consideration. In the first place there is an occupation in East Suffolk of a military character, and in the second there is evidence of extensive buildings.

THE MILITARY OCCUPATION

Burgh Castle has long been recognised as one of the Saxon Shore Forts listed in the Notitia Dignitatum and has been equated with Gariannonum. The fort, standing on Breydon Water, has recently been the subject of an illuminating study and further description is unnecessary.

1 Romanization of Britain, 57. 2 Collin, 216.
Another such fort has been presumed by previous writers to have existed at Felixstowe (referred to as Walton Castle). This claim must now be examined.

The existence of an extensive Roman settlement on the cliffs at Felixstowe, a mile south of the mouth of the river Deben and extending inland, is well established from the quantity of Roman objects that have come to light, many of which have been preserved. Whether a Saxon Shore Fort, of a type comparable to Burgh Castle ever existed here is open to question. The evidence, upon which the claim has been made comprises, (1) the opinions regarding the remains of masonry seen on the cliff tops in the 18th century and now fallen into the sea, (2) drawings of the same period of a fort of a Saxon Shore type. That much of the site has fallen into the sea is beyond doubt, but whether these 18th century accounts are to be accepted as accurate descriptions of what was to be seen then is far from certain. There is a discrepancy of eighty-seven yards between the measurements of the wall remaining as given by Knight and Kirby respectively. Also it is not clear whether the drawings are reproductions of the actual ruins or an artistic creation. Further the attempt to assign the name “Portus Adurni” to Felixstowe by Fox does not commend itself. In view of the unreliable character of the evidence available the claim for the existence of a Roman Saxon Shore Fort at Felixstowe can hardly be substantiated. It seems better to regard Felixstowe as the site of an extensive commercial settlement and port though the possibility of its having received a small garrison, or indeed having been a base for a naval detachment cannot be ruled out. A date for the founding of this settlement is on the present evidence unobtainable; that it flourished during the third and fourth centuries and continued to the end of the Roman occupation of our island seems certain.

OTHER COASTAL SITES

Between Burgh Castle and Felixstowe, Roman sites have been noted at Corton, Covehithe, Easton Bavents and Dunwich, while some pottery has been found at Kessingland and a bronze stewpan at Herringfleet. Pottery and coin hoards have also been found in the Bawdsey area. The discoveries at Covehithe and Easton Bavents were regarded as “wells” and a coin of Constantine is recorded for the former site. The site at Corton was more accurately surveyed and the remains of a building 25 yards square recorded. Roman objects from Dunwich appear in museum collections but no site is known.

Close dating of these sites is impossible but there is evidence for a fourth century occupation at Covehithe and the Bawdsey area, and it seems likely that the other sites are of the same date. In seeking to give some account of Burgh Castle’s communications, Morris remarks “there must have been some method of communication between this fort and the neighbouring Saxon Shore Forts, and a tentative suggestion may be put forward that a series of signal stations were situated along the coast”. 

He adds "there is little to support this suggestion at the moment" but calls attention to the find at Corton already mentioned, and some other remains at Caister-on-Sea. When the present evidence is added to that already cited by Morris it is apparent that there is ample ground for envisaging such a series of signal stations along the Suffolk coast. A more certain dating of the sites mentioned here would greatly enhance the theory. The suggestion is now advanced that there may have been in existence in the third and fourth centuries some "defence plan" for our area which included Burgh Castle, Felixstowe and the coastal sites in its scope.

CIVILIAN OCCUPATION

In the first and second centuries traces of buildings are rare in our county but in the third and fourth centuries there is ample evidence of them. Buildings of this date are to be found in S.E. Suffolk at Burgh, Nr. Woodbridge, and Whitton. In the N.E. of the county there is an isolated example at Eye and settlements of an undefined character at Stonham and Stoke Ash. By far the greater concentration is to be found in West Suffolk, at Icklingham, Ixworth, Mildenhall and Stanton Chare. These buildings may be rightly regarded as "villas"; the term being interpreted to mean the headquarters of some local magnate engaged in agriculture and its associated industries.

It will be recalled that the account of the first and second centuries in our county ended with noting the "dying out" of sites occupied in that period and the desertion of buildings erected in that period. The appearance of this extended occupation of the third and fourth centuries now calls for discussion in the light of the previous observations.

In seeking an explanation three facts about Romano British life may be noted at the outset. (1). With regard to the Romanization of native villages Collingwood writes "a native village may obtain its pottery and implements from a civilised world without using them in a particularly civilized way". (2). Collingwood also regards the decay of village life in Roman Britain as due to "a deliberate transplantation of village dwellers to serve the policy of capitalistic landlords". 3 3. Collingwood further notes a general movement from the town to the country estate in the third and fourth centuries. 4 Taking these considerations into account a theory to account for the development of Roman life in our county may now be put forward.

While scattered finds were noted for our county during the first and second centuries building was confined to the south and south-east district with the exception of the outlying example of Reydon Smere. It is now suggested that the Roman pottery noted in districts where building did not take place was used by the native who had escaped destruction after Boudicca's rebellion and its use by him indicates the infiltration of Roman culture into our area to a greater extent than in Claudian times. The desertion of the buildings of the first and second century and their replacement in the third and fourth centuries by a more elaborate building

programme may be due to the appearance of magnates in our county seeking a better investment for their funds and also an outlet for their dissatisfaction with town life. An impetus to what was a general movement throughout Britain may perhaps be found in our county in another consideration.

It has been suggested that the presence of Roman armies in Gaul and Britain gave an impetus to agricultural operations as they provided a ready market for the produce. May not the presence of troops in the coastal belt, at Burgh Castle, other presumed coastal signal stations and also the settlement at Felixstowe have encouraged the agricultural development of the county and particularly in the more secure area to the west.

The presence of extensive building in this period may account for the appearance of the "Tile Works" at Melton and it is to be presumed that the potting industry which clings to the wooded boulder clay areas or areas where the clay is thinly masked by sand or gravel also received fresh stimulus. It has been held that they served a "local market" but whether the West Suffolk kilns served the coast of the county is by no means clear. No kilns, however, have been noted in East Suffolk. The history of the potting industry in our county in the third and fourth centuries is unfortunately by no means certain.

Beyond noting the rural character of the Roman occupation of our county no general account can be given of daily life in the period. Heichelheim has called attention to the distribution of statuettes of Mercury, Hercules and Venus as being located in specific areas in Suffolk. A jet plaque of a figure wearing a Phrygian cap found at Whiton has been interpreted as indicating the presence of the cult of Mithras. The Christian monogram, has been noted on a leaden cistern from Icklingham and on spoons of the Mildenhall treasure. The religions of the Roman world, it may be concluded, were represented. Furthermore, remains of two small Roman structures, perhaps temples, which appear to have been destroyed "at a period which is likely to fall within Anglo-Saxon time" have been noted on Mill Heath, Cavenham, where bronze crowns of Roman date were previously found. The report of the discovery of the temples adds "whether this was the work of the pagans or of their Christian successors is not clear."

THE END OF THE OCCUPATION.

Some attempt must now be made to describe the close of the Roman occupation of our county. First it will be noted that coin hoards appear in our county in the fourth century with great frequency. This, it is suggested, indicates that life was becoming unsettled through presumably the Saxon raids for which the century is notable. Further it is to be observed that several of them are dated to the fifth century. (Little Dealings,
c 400 A.D.; Eye, after 410 A.D.; Icklingham 2, c 410 A.D.; 4, c. 470 A.D.; Mildenhall, c 407 A.D.; Tuddenham St. Martin, c. 410 A.D.). Secondly, Roman pottery with Saxon ornament has been found at Burgh Castle, Icklingham and Felixstowe; and traces of Anglo-Saxon occupation of Roman sites at Cavenham, Ixworth and Great Fakenham.¹ May it not be that the end of Roman life in our county came about by the gradual submergence of Roman ways among the local population by the rising tide of Anglo-Saxon culture. When the Roman troops were withdrawn from the area, possibly by Constantine III, the wealthier inhabitants deposited their savings and fled, never to return; the poorer remained, soon to be lost among the newcomers whose ways, as the pottery shows,² they were quick to learn.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

In conclusion acknowledgment must be made to those who have made this account of Roman Suffolk possible. To the authorities of the Aldeburgh, Ashmolean, British, Cambridge (Archæology and Ethnology), Ipswich, Southwold and Thetford Museums acknowledgment is made for the facilities afforded for examining and recording pottery and objects in their possession. Mr. Basil Brown has afforded me much information about sites of which he has an unparalleled knowledge, and I am indebted to him. Mr. M. R. Hull, F.S.A. has helped me with opinions on pottery. Many others have answered my queries and to them I express appreciation. To Mr. Guy Maynard, F.R.A.I. I owe much. He encouraged this work from its inception and has made available to me his own notes. Mr. Maynard also furnished me with the photographs that accompany this article (kindly taken by Mr. F. M. Cullum) and secured reproductions of my pottery drawings. Mr. R. R. Clarke, M.A., F.S.A. has assisted me by supplying references to publications and giving me helpful suggestions upon the composition of the article which he read in its initial stages. To Mr. Maynard and Mr. Clarke I express my appreciation for help freely given.

¹ For Cavenham & Ixworth, see above. Great Fakenham, Ips. M. ² The possibility that the Saxon ornamentation on the Roman pottery at Burgh Castle and Felixstowe was due to the presence of Saxon mercenaries should not be overlooked.
APPENDIX

SITES AND ANTIQUITIES NOT REFERRED TO IN TEXT.

1. Parishes listed in V.C.H. for which there is no additional information.

Ashbocking, Bardwell, Barrow, Barsham, Belton, Bergholt (East), Blythborough, Brandon, Cavendish, Clare, Cockfield, Debenham, Easton, Fritton, Glemsford, Grundisburgh, Hickworth, Ingham, Kelsale, Kesgrave, Mellis, Mickfeld, Newton, Poslingford, Sotterley, Stowmarket, Stowlangtoft, Stratford St. Andrew, Southwold, Thorington, Wainford, Wingfield, Woolpit, Worlingworth and Wratting (Great).

2. Parishes additional to V.C.H. and those yielding further objects.

Akenham. Sard Intaglio. Figure of Mercury. Larinus Orientalis Rubrius. Ips. M., 1926.96


Brettenham. Site near Money Field (Mr. Basil Brown, 1945).

Bromeswell. Much Roman debris found in making bunker near last "tee" on Woodbridge end of Golf Course.


Between Bury St. Edmunds and Thetford. Light grey pot with broken rim, decorated with dots in zones. Contained earth and burnt bones (Fig. 2. IX). N.C.M. 128.12.


Mendham. Grey jar, rim with undercut lip on slight shoulder. N.C.M. 22.928.

Newton, Old. Glass amphora, transparent green with two heavy handles, doubled and attached to body at three points. Glass jug transparent green, body cylindrical, flat lip with broad fluted handle. Contained burnt bones. Glass jug olive green, narrow cylindrical neck lobed body on foot, broad handle. Small glass bottle, greenish, clear. Fragments of coarse pot. B.M. 1912. 5.28.1-5. Found with these were 2 bronze handles, 3 beads, 5 bronze pins, bronze spear head, 10 glass counters. P.S.I.A. XIII.255.

Octold. Urns reported found here in filling up pond in 1945. (Note from Mr. G. Maynard).


Stuston. Flint foundations of wooden hut on Stuston Common. Fragments of 1st-3rd century coarse pottery. Coins Claudius to Tetricus. P.S.I.A. XXII.


Wattisham. Area of Roman debris found during construction of aerodrome. Sheet of drawings prepared by resident engineer at Ips. M. (Information from Mr. G. Maynard).

Westleton. V.C.H. 319. Two silver denarii of Antoninus Pius from Scots Farm. (Note from Mr. Guy Maynard).

Wherstead. V.C.H. 319. Fragments of pottery from Gyppeswick Hall. Ips. M.

ABBREVIATIONS

Ant = Antiquity.
Arch. J. = Archaeological Journal.
B. M. = British Museum.
E. A. D. T. = East Anglian Daily Times.
E.A.M. = East Anglian Magazine.
Fox (1923) = Sir Cyril Fox, The Archaeology of the Cambridgeshire Region.
Fox (1933) = Sir Cyril Fox, The Distribution of Man in East Anglia. P.P.S.E.A. Vol. VII. pp. 149-164.
Ips. M. = Ipswich Corporation Museum.
M.H.B. = Moyse's Hall, Bury St. Edmunds.
N.A. = Norfolk Archaeology.
N.C.M. = Norwich Castle Museum.
N.C. = Numismatic Chronicle.
P.S.I.A. = Proceedings of Suffolk Institute of Archaeology.
Sutherland = C. H. V. Sutherland, Coinage and Currency in Roman Britain.
V.C.H. = Victoria County History (Suffolk).