

FIG. 22.—Simplified 6-inch map of the Grimstone End area. (Sheet xxxiv s.w.).

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EXCAVATIONS AT GRIMSTONE END, PAKENHAM

By B. J. W. BROWN, G. M. KNOCKER, N. SMEDLEY AND S. E. WEST.

Half a mile to the S.S.E. of Ixworth, and one mile N.N.E. of Pakenham, in which parish it lies, is an area known as Grimstone End, (Grid Ref. 935692), see map (Fig. 22). The origin of the name is obscure. On a pre-enclosure map of 1804, on which the proposed enclosures are delineated, a triangle is marked off bounded on the south-west by the road known as Broadway, and with its apex at Fulmer Bridge. This seems to indicate that there were surface indications of some structure at that time; if so it had disappeared as time went on and it was not until the operations reported below that the nature of the site was revealed.

The site lies in an area which had already proved of interest to archaeologists. Ixworth itself has produced evidence of occupation in Neolithic or Early Bronze Age times, and in the Roman, Saxon and later periods.

Roman villa sites have been excavated at Ixworth, Stanton Chare and Redcastle, and Anglo-Saxon remains have also been noted at all these places. The Roman road has been examined at Puttock's Hill.

Within a stone's throw of the excavation here described, a Roman kiln of the third century, and a burial of presumably the same date, were discovered a few years ago, (*Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.*, xxv (1951), p. 214). Near the kiln site was the section of a road, probably of Roman date.

The site presented unusual features, and its nature was for some time a problem. Coupled with the difficulties attending effective excavation, these facts warrant, and even demand, a somewhat different approach from that usually adopted in preparing the report on such an undertaking. It is therefore published under the names of four of us mainly concerned with the operations. The excavation was the responsibility of the Ipswich Museum, and one member of the staff (B.B.) was present throughout, and carried out the major part of the actual task of digging. In this he was assisted by a number of helpers from time to time. The co-operation of the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Works resulted from a visit paid to the site by the late Mr. B. H. St. J. O'Neil at an early stage in the proceedings and Group-Captain Knocker worked on the site for a period of ten days in July, 1953, and again, with a team of six men, from the middle of February to early March, 1954. Two other members of the Ipswich Museum

staff (N.S. and S.E.W.) were present when occasion offered. Mr. R. Gilyard-Beer was of great assistance in surveying the site. Mr. S. E. West has carried out the preparation of all the text-figures and is also responsible for the description of the pottery.

To the owner of the land, Mr. Marriage, and to Mr. Godwin of Watermill Farm, who so readily gave permission for excavations to take place, and to the contractors, Messrs. J. & R. Culey, most grateful thanks are due. Our operations were allowed to interfere with the progress both of agriculture and quarrying, and we greatly appreciate the co-operation and interest shown.

THE EXCAVATIONS

In the Spring of 1953, quarrying operations were begun at Grimstone End. These entailed the removal of the top-soil in the first place, and this revealed a state of affairs which was fortunately recognised by the contractors as meriting investigation. They informed Mr. Brown, who is engaged in general archæological field-work in the area as a member of the staff of the Ipswich Museum.

Before the start of commercial operations, the land was cropped under barley which was already well-grown. The removal of the top-soil, complete with the crop, exposed the natural formation of sand and gravel, together with a strip of darker soil about fifteen feet wide, and forming the arc of a circle (Plate XIX). In and near this area appeared a quantity of bones of domestic animals, sherds of Saxon and Roman pottery, and three clay floors of such a nature that Mr. Brown concluded that they were in all probability the remains of some form of kiln. These and other finds will be dealt with in detail later.

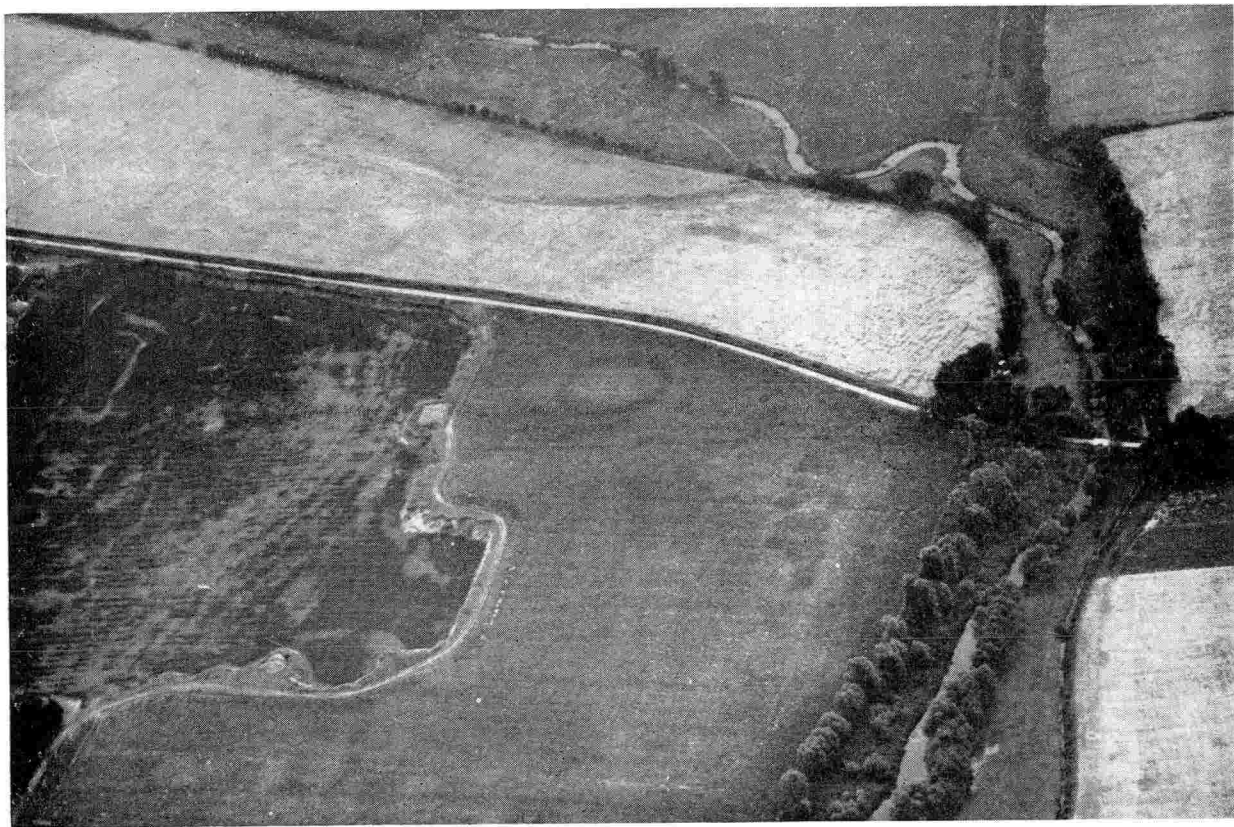
Also exposed at this stage were two series of clay rings, each of the size and general appearance of Saxon loom weights, but less effectively fired than those of the same period already in the possession of the Ipswich Museum.

These finds in themselves were of considerable interest, as such an assembly of loom weights had not previously been discovered. Their relation to the site itself posed a problem, but at this stage it appeared that the Saxon occupation, which extended over a considerable area, here overlaid an earlier site. Various theories were put forward; the dark strip was in all likelihood a ditch, and might enclose an Iron Age camp, or possibly a barrow.

An air photograph (Plate XX) of the area taken before it was disturbed, and under crop, clearly showed a ring, and the interpretation of the site as a barrow was further confirmed when trenching to check the existence of the ditch at a point in the south-east of the area brought to light a number of cremation urns of the early second century. The use of an earlier barrow, and particularly



Panoramic view showing ditch & floors, from the north-east.
(from a composite photograph)



Air view of site under crop, from the north-east.
(Crown copyright reserved, by permission of the Air Ministry)

the south-eastern sector, for this purpose was a not uncommon practice in Roman times.

Examination of the central area at first proved fruitless, but eventually, somewhat off-centre, a food vessel of the Early Bronze Age was found, in association with a cremation.

The character of the earthwork was determined by cutting sections across the ditch at various points, and trenching the centre, eventually carrying one staggered trench completely across the area, from east to west. Part of the southern half was carefully gridded, and after the establishment of the fact that a barrow was involved, the south-east quadrant completely cleared.

There would be no point in describing these operations in detail, but a description of the principal features will be given, together with an account of the finds.

The plan of the ring area (Fig. 23) will indicate the relation in which the various features lay to one another. The notes and drawings made by Group-Captain Knocker have been extensively used in preparing this report.

THE BARROW

The barrow, as is frequently the case with other prehistoric sites in the county, lay in the loop of the river, the altered course of which can be traced in the aerial photograph.

The earthwork was in the form of a circle surrounded by a broad ditch. Indications of an outer ditch appear in the air-photograph, but owing to the disturbed nature of the ground surrounding the site, it was only possible to obtain a section in the north-eastern area. Trenches cut in the southern and south-eastern segments were extended well beyond the main ditch and there was definitely no trace of any outer ditch at these points. It is probable that if such a feature existed to the north it was of more recent date and had no relation to the original earthwork.

The circle, excluding the ditch, had a diameter of 88 feet; sections at a number of points showed the ditch to have uniformly sloping sides and an approximate depth of 4 feet below modern ground level and 2 feet 6 inches below the natural surface; the width was approximately 16 feet. No pottery was found in the silt-filling of the ditch except for one small sherd of possible 'Beaker' date.

Within the ditch the surface of the barrow was comparatively flat with indications of a rampart on the inner and not the outer lip of the ditch. This had evidently been much reduced by cultivation.

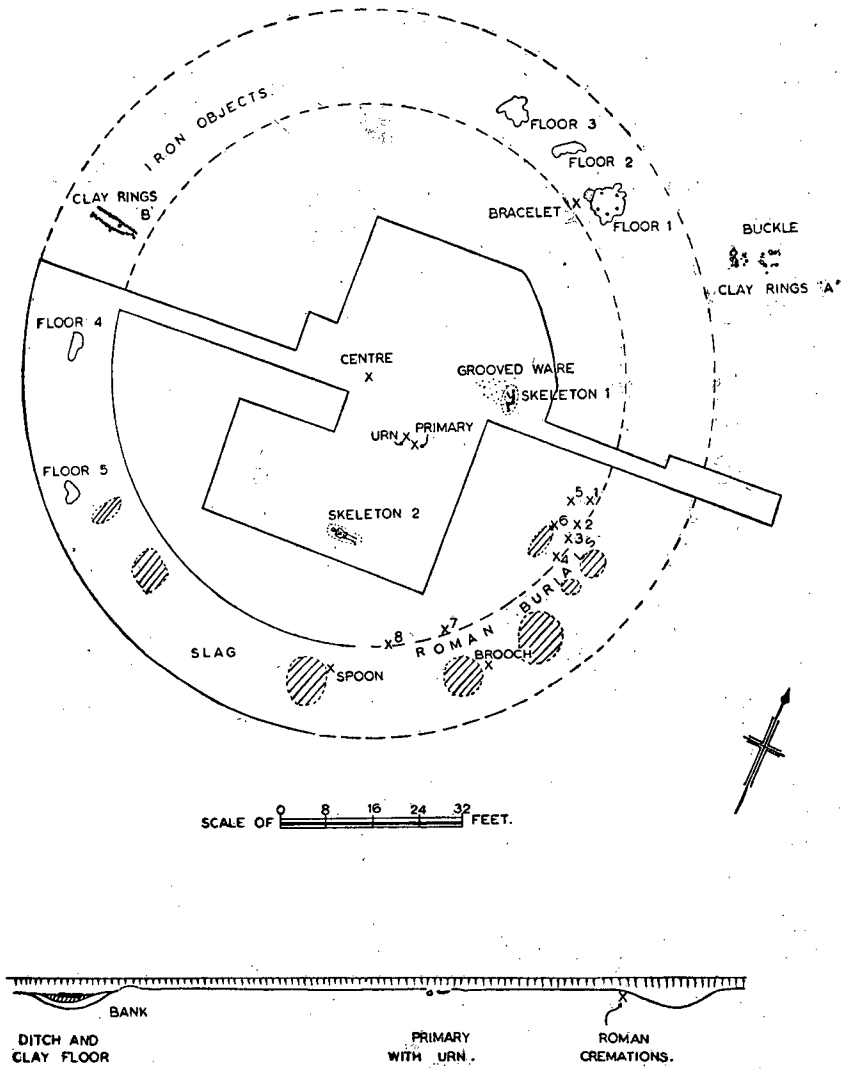


FIG. 23.—Grimstone End, plan and section of site.



FIG. 24.—Rinyo-Clactonian Ware.

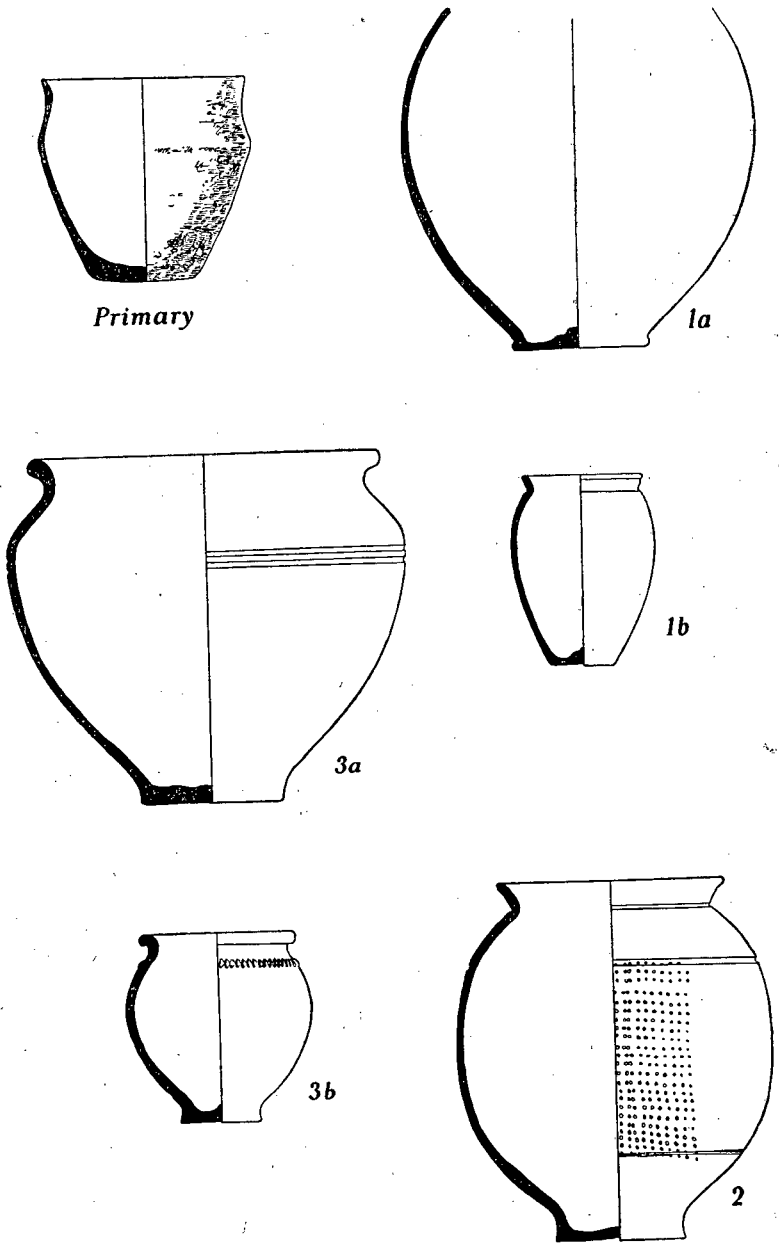


FIG. 25.—The Primary Food-vessel and Romano-British Secondaries ($\frac{1}{4}$).

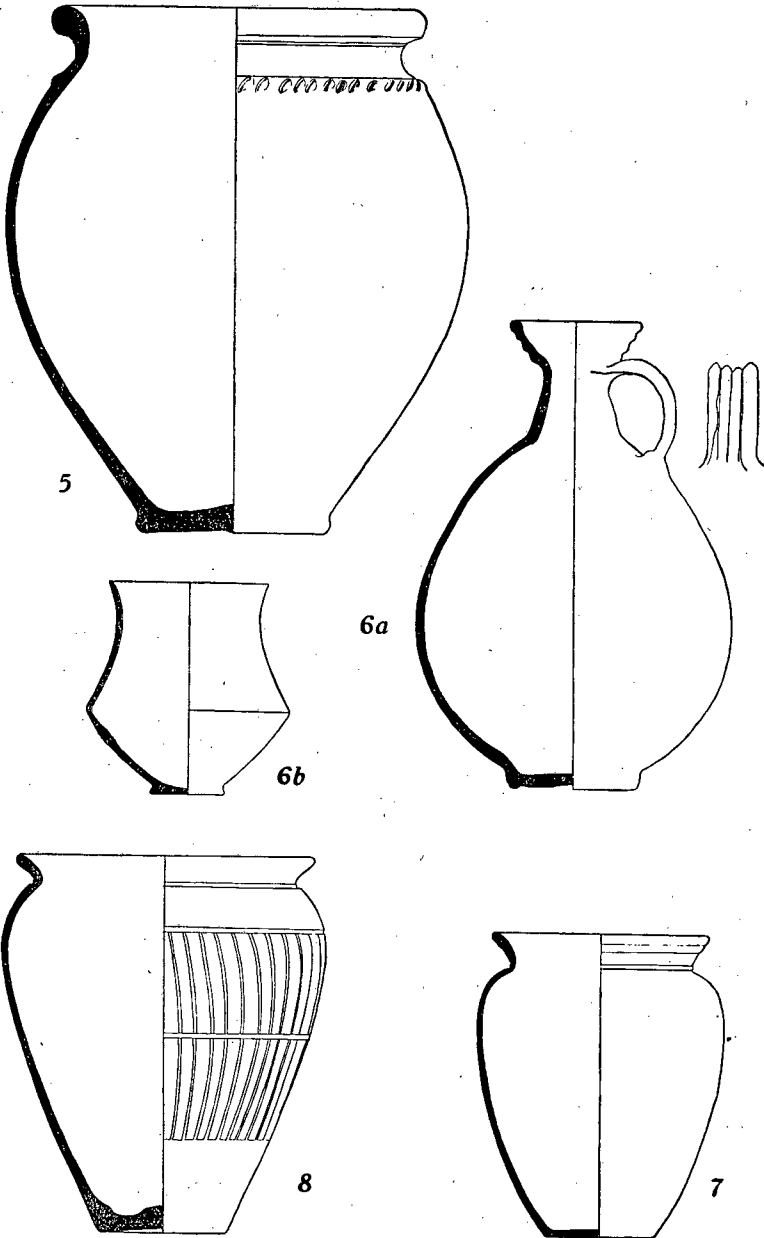


FIG. 26.—Romano-British Secondaries ($\frac{1}{2}$).

The section across the barrow (Fig. 23) showed the natural gravel to be everywhere covered with a layer of stones of an average size of 3 inches; that these were part of the natural gravel was shown by the fact that they extended beyond the outer limits of the ditch. Above this to a depth of about a foot, was a layer of soft sandy loam with dark bands; throughout this, at all levels, occurred a scatter of flint flakes including one core from the upper levels and one scraper from the lowest level.

At the base of the loamy layer to the east of the centre appeared a scatter of small sherds of Rinyo-Clactonian ware (Fig. 24), evidently an indication of an earlier occupation of the site. No other features could be related to this pottery.

The excavation of the geometrical centre proved barren of result; the primary burial, an un-urned cremation, was later found at a distance of 13 feet 6 inches from the 'true' centre; this was accompanied by a food vessel (Fig. 25 and Plate XXI) some 2 feet 6 inches from the cremation, and nearer by that distance to the centre. The vessel was partially inverted, probably indicating some measure of disturbance although the material in which it lay appeared undisturbed.

THE ROMANO-BRITISH INTRUSIVE BURIALS (PLATE XXII)

Trenching to establish the course of the ditch in the south-eastern sector revealed the presence of four cremations, on the inner lip of the ditch, one un-urned and three enclosed in urns, two of which last were accompanied by food vessels. This discovery, which preceded that of the primary burial, established the identity of the earthwork as a barrow. It was therefore decided to clear this, south-eastern, segment and in the course of this work four more cremations were found, one of these being contained in a ring-necked flagon with an accompanying food vessel.

The burials represented here form a group closely linked in date, by the vessels which contained and accompanied them, to the first quarter of the second century A.D. The un-urned secondary cremation is not datable by any grave-goods but it does in all probability belong to this group of cremations.

- 1a Plain jar with rim missing. Hard light grey ware with smoothed area around base. Early second century. (Fig. 25).
- 1b Food vessel accompanying 1a; a small beaker with everted rim in soft brown ware, parts of the surface of which are blotched with grey. A well finished vessel with a smoothed surface; the small upright rim is indicative of an early date, i.e. *c.* A.D. 100. (Fig. 25).

PLATE XXI



The Primary Food Fessel.



The Romano-British Cremation Urns and related Food Vessels, ($\frac{1}{8}$).

- 2 Beaker of light grey ware with burnished exterior and a panel ornament of barbotine dots. The rim is small and sharply everted; this and the high shoulder are characteristic of an early date. (*cf.* Wroxeter II, p. 50). (Fig. 25).
- 3a Grey bowl, somewhat distorted in the firing. Two girth grooves and plain foot. A common type during the first half of the second century. (Fig. 25).
- 3b Food vessel of soft reddish-brown ware with blackened surface. Slightly undercut rim and row of small, closely placed finger-tip impressions at the junction of the neck and shoulder. The waisted base and the ware indicate a date early in the second century. (Fig. 25).
- 4 Un-urned cremation.
- 5 Large grey urn with burnished base and a row of finger-tip impressions on the shoulder. Early second century. (Fig. 26).
- 6a Ring-necked flagon with pear-shaped body. Handle with four ribs and moulded base. (Fig. 26).
- 6b Food vessel. Thin walled, carinated beaker in soft dark grey ware with a polished black surface. A development of the well-known first century type, this example has lost the domed base but may be regarded as belonging to the first quarter of the second century. (*cf.* Needham No. 17, and Richborough III No. 288, dated 80—120 A.D.) (Fig. 26).
- 7 Beaker with an oblique rim, in hard grey ware, slightly distorted. High shoulder and globular body. (*cf.* Richborough III, No. 319, dated 80—120 A.D., and No. 320, dated 90—140 A.D.); without ornament these are similar in shape. (Fig. 26).
- 8 Beaker with an oblique rim in hard grey ware with almost vertical burnished grooves on the body of the vessel, 100—120 A.D., (*cf.* Needham, No. 34). (Fig. 26).

THE SAXON OCCUPATION

As has already been noted, the first indication of any archaeological significance on the site was the exposure, as a result of the stripping of the top-soil of the northern area of the barrow, of a quantity of pottery sherds of Pagan-Saxon type together with bones of food animals and a number of iron objects.

THE CLAY FLOORS

In the course of this work, there were exposed three clay floors. The largest and most complete, floor No. 1, was roughly square, 6 feet x 6 feet, and consisted of a layer of red burnt clay, 2-3 inches in thickness, overlying a layer of dark brown soil in which were a

few stones and a few sherds of Pagan-Saxon pottery. The margin of the floor was interrupted by a number of indentations which appeared to lead under the floor, which was pierced by a number of holes roughly corresponding in position with the indentations. The presence of large stones immediately under the floor areas in this layer would seem to be intended to support the floor and to provide a passage between the flues and vents. Set into the surface of the clay floor were fragments of Romano-British tiles, including box-, roofing- and floor-tiles.

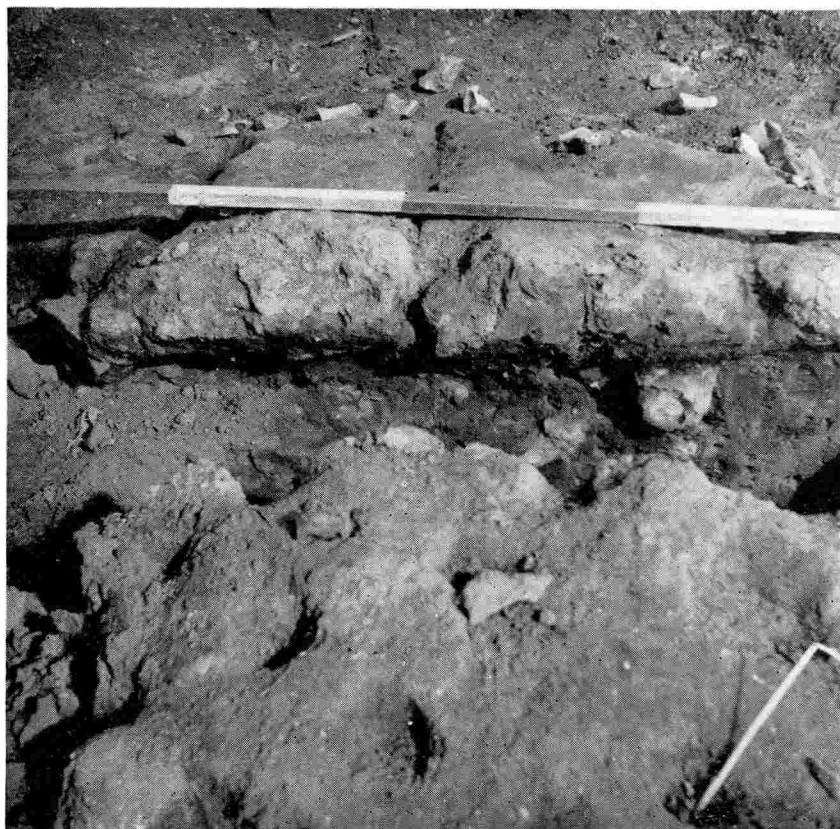
Overfired and fused fragments of pottery were found on and around the floors, (of which five in all were eventually exposed). The probable explanation would appear to be that these floors represent a primitive form of clamp kiln. The pots would be stacked on the floor and covered with a turf clamp, leaving a central smoke hole. There is, however, no direct evidence of such a covering, such as is found in some Roman and later kilns. It must also be admitted that the presence of fused pottery is not incontrovertible evidence of the existence of a pottery kiln. Household debris might well be found in this condition if it had accidentally found its way into a furnace operated for some other industry, e.g. metal-working. On the other hand, the presence of a bed of suitable potting clay on the bank of the nearby stream lends colour to the former suggestion.

Mr. R. M. Cook of Cambridge took samples of floor No. 3, (Plate XXIII), for testing for date by the magnetic variation method, but owing to apparent disturbance, no satisfactory result was obtainable.

THE CLAY RINGS

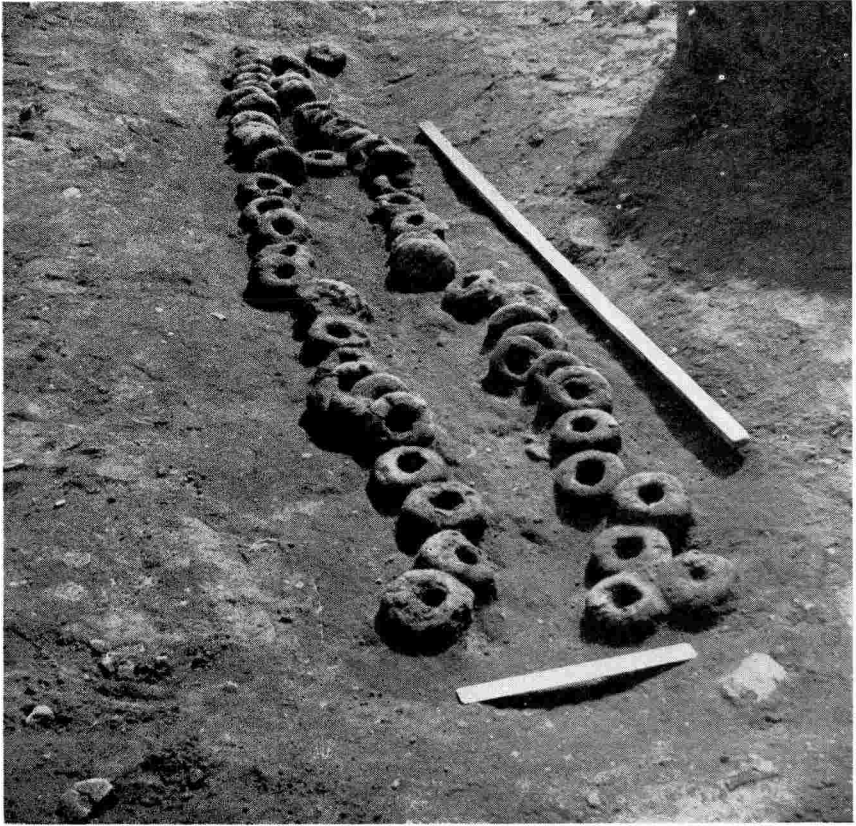
The most unusual and striking feature on this site consisted of two sets of clay rings or loom-weights, one lying on the filling of the inner ditch and one just beyond it. Series 'A' comprised a number of fused and broken clay rings lying in two groups in close proximity to one another. The rings in Series 'B' (Plate XXIV) were of a more orderly arrangement and consisted of two lines of clay rings, numbering 30 and 32 respectively, with an additional ring between the lines. The two lines, 8 feet in length, were 8 or 9 inches apart, transversely across the ditch filling, converging at the eastern end. The series resembled a line of books which had been allowed to slump over, some resting horizontally and some obliquely, one upon another. A possible explanation may be that they had been strung on sticks, supported at either end, to dry before firing. Traces of wood below the rings and an accumulation of wood and charcoal heaped up to the south of the western end of the double line seemed to confirm the view that the rings were in the position

PLATE XXIII



Floor 3, showing supporting flints and section removed for dating.

PLATE XXIV



The Clay Rings, (Series 'B').

in which they had been fired. Brushwood would be heaped over the suspended rings and the whole possibly turfed over with a vent at one end. The subsequent firing would account for the collapse of the rings in the position in which they were found. Firing was not very effective and appeared to be more complete on the upper surfaces.

Consideration was given to the idea that they represented a collapsed loom, but this may be ruled out both on account of their badly fired condition and because 8 feet is too far to throw a hand shuttle.

METAL-WORKING AND OTHER OCCUPATIONAL EVIDENCE

In the southern sector of the inner ditch a quantity of iron slag may be regarded as evidence that this metal was worked on the site. This appeared to be connected with hearths 5 and 6. The latter was a rectangular pit some 5 feet square and 1 foot deep, containing a quantity of calcined flints. The sand around the edges of the hearth was reddened, indicating intense heat, and possibly showing its use as a bloomery. In all, 8 hearths were discovered; the finds associated with them will be discussed in a later paragraph.

INHUMATIONS

During the course of the excavation, two interments were found within the central area, and fragments of bone from a third were later brought to light by commercial operations in the area which was not completely cleared.

Burial 1. This burial lay 28 feet to the east of the geometrical centre of the barrow. The skeleton was lying on its right side with legs and arms flexed. Owing to the fragmentation of the skull and pelvis, the sex of the individual could not be determined. The alignment of the burial was with the head to the N.N.W.

Burial 2. A male skeleton lying extended face uppermost with head to the west was found 26 feet to the south of the centre of the barrow. A circular flint scraper was found between the feet of the skeleton but may be a chance intrusion. Although there was no datable material found with either burial, their closeness to the surface and the attitudes of burial leave little doubt that they belonged to the period of the Saxon occupation.

Burial 3. The disposition of this burial could not be determined with any accuracy but the remains appear to be those of a female of rather more than thirty years of age.

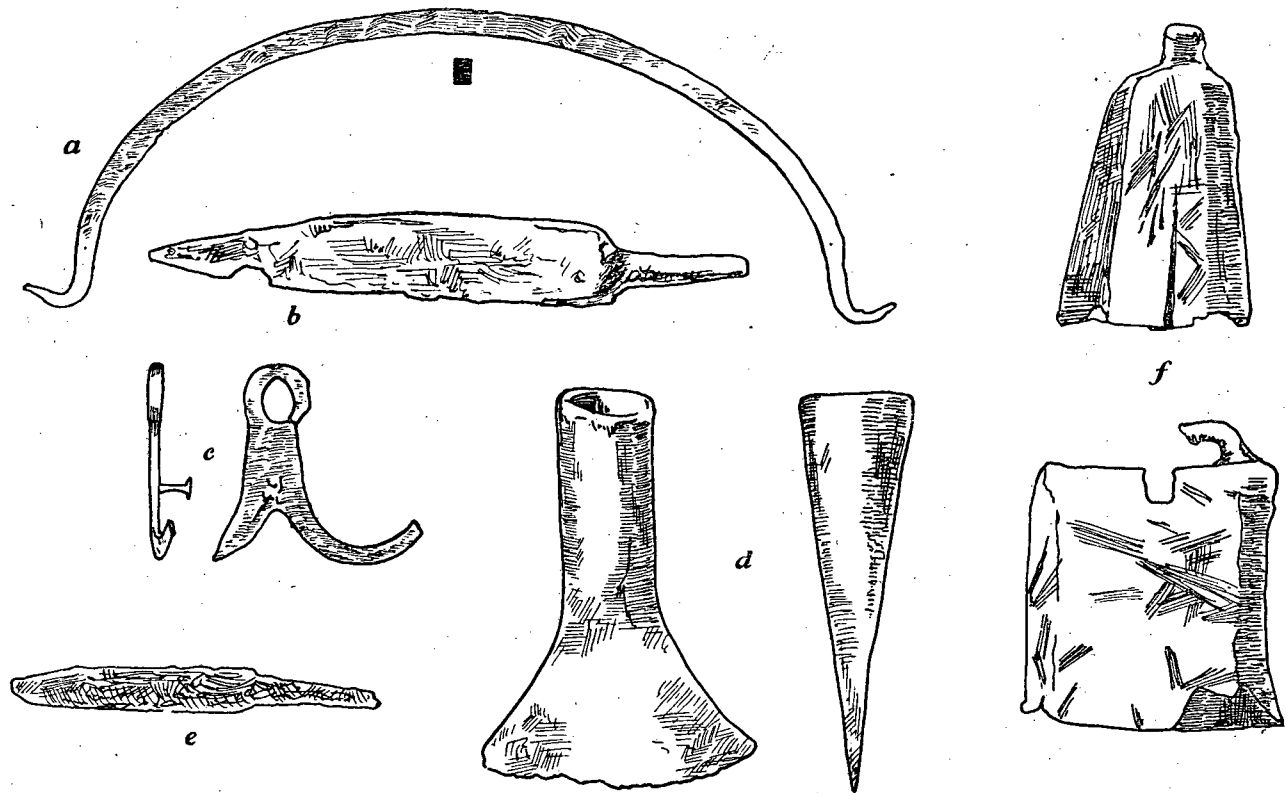


FIG. 27.—Pagan Saxon Iron-work. ($\frac{1}{2}$).

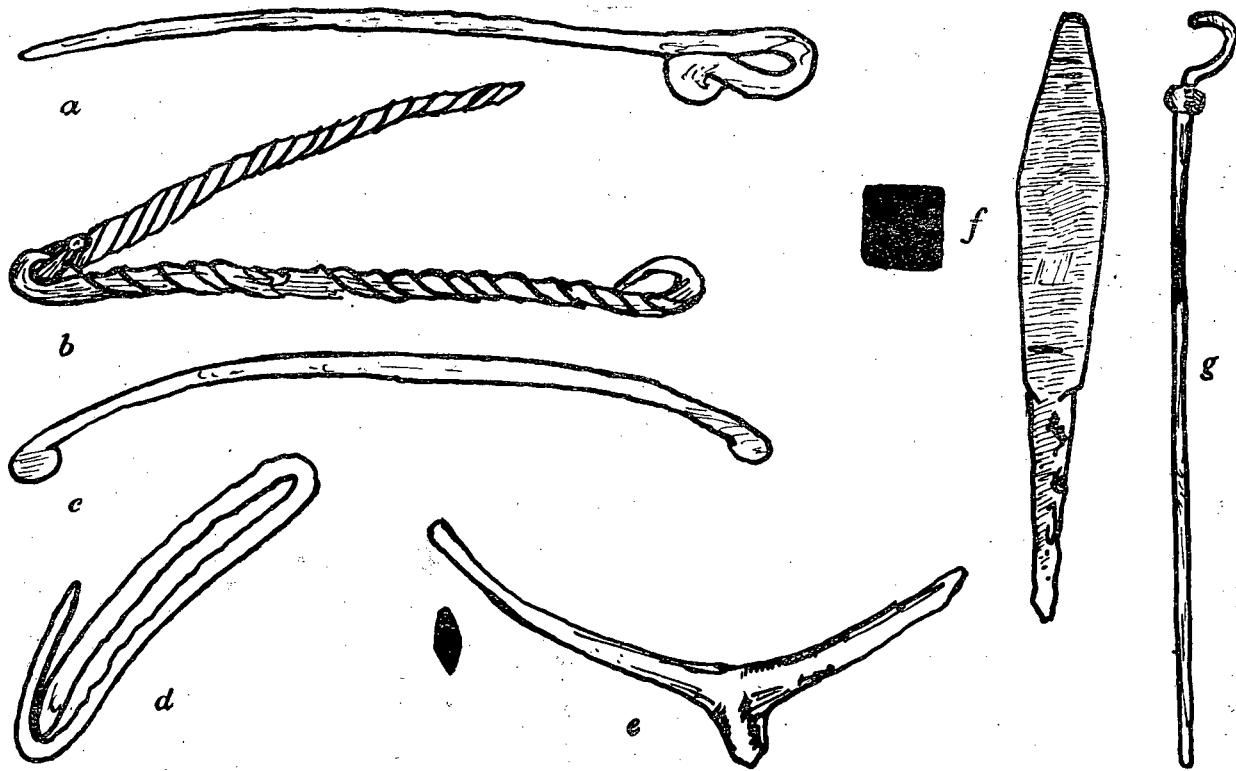


FIG. 28.—Pagan Saxon Iron-work (†).

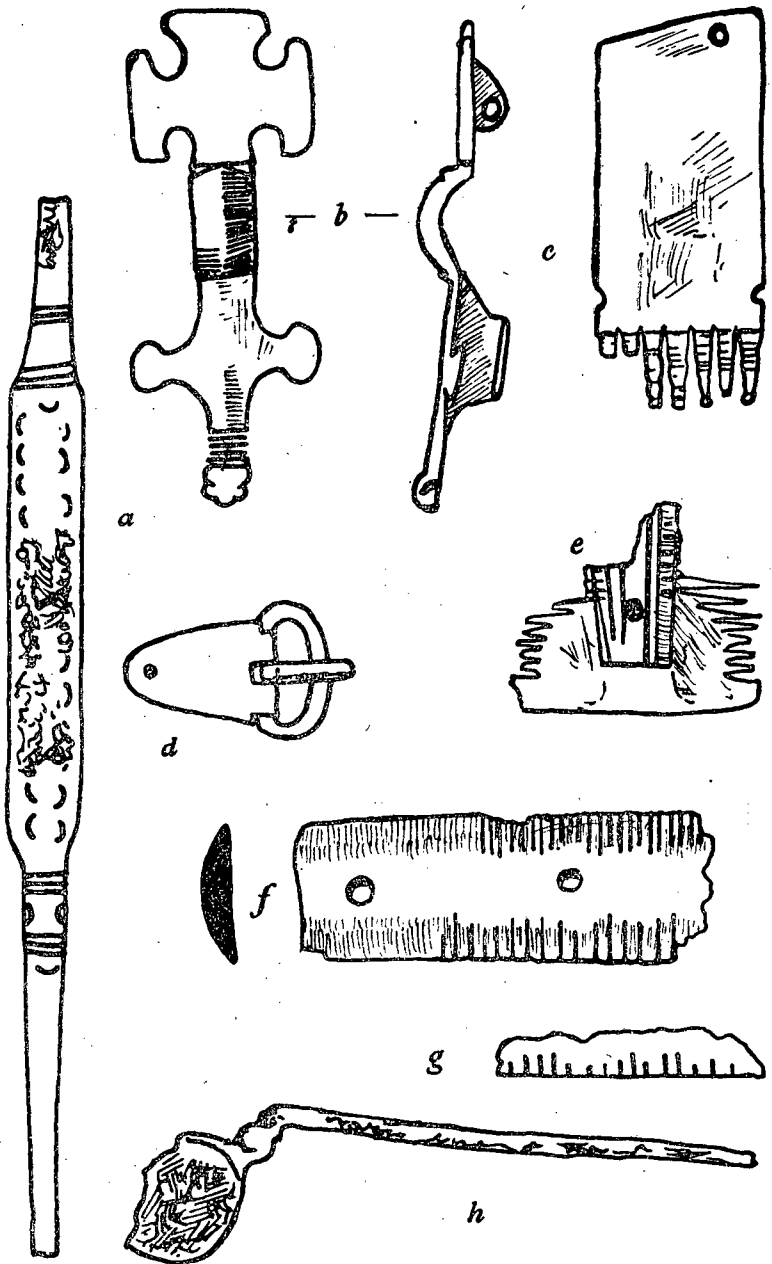


FIG. 29.—Objects of Bronze and Bone (†).

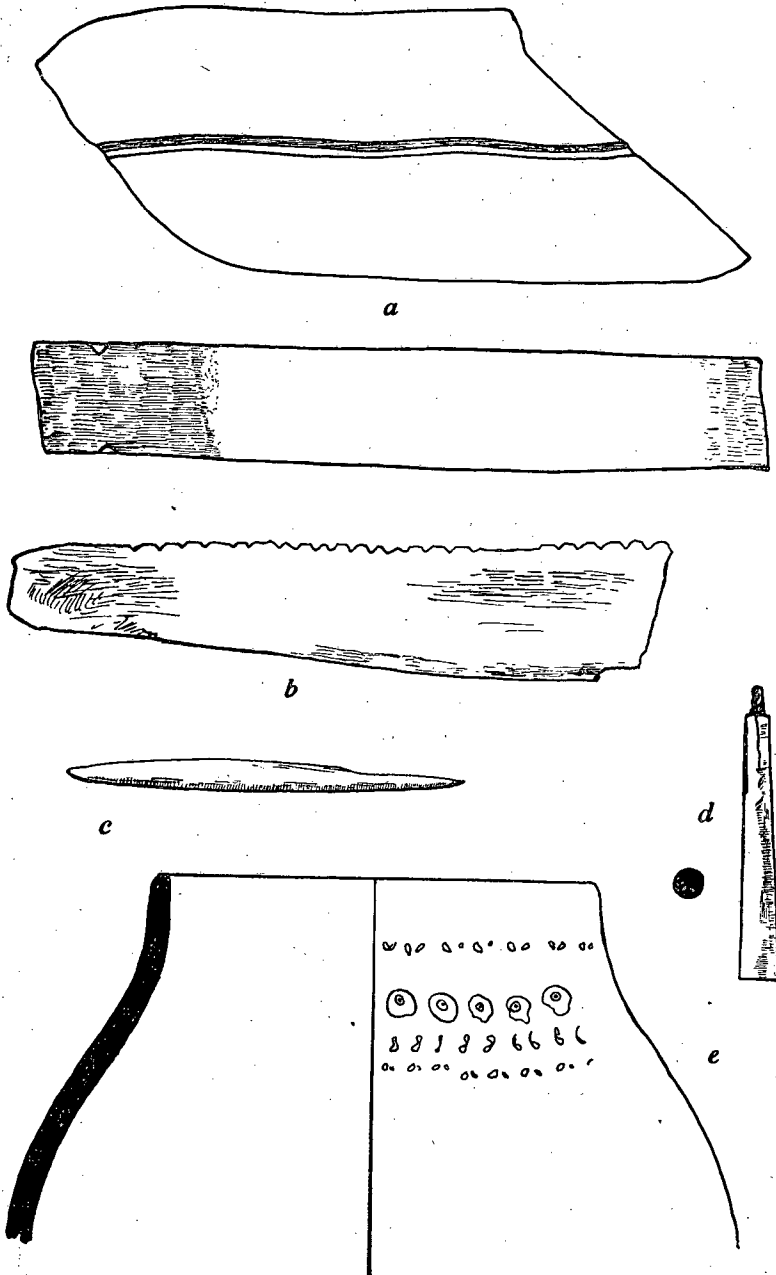


FIG. 30.—Miscellaneous finds from the Saxon level ($\frac{1}{2}$).

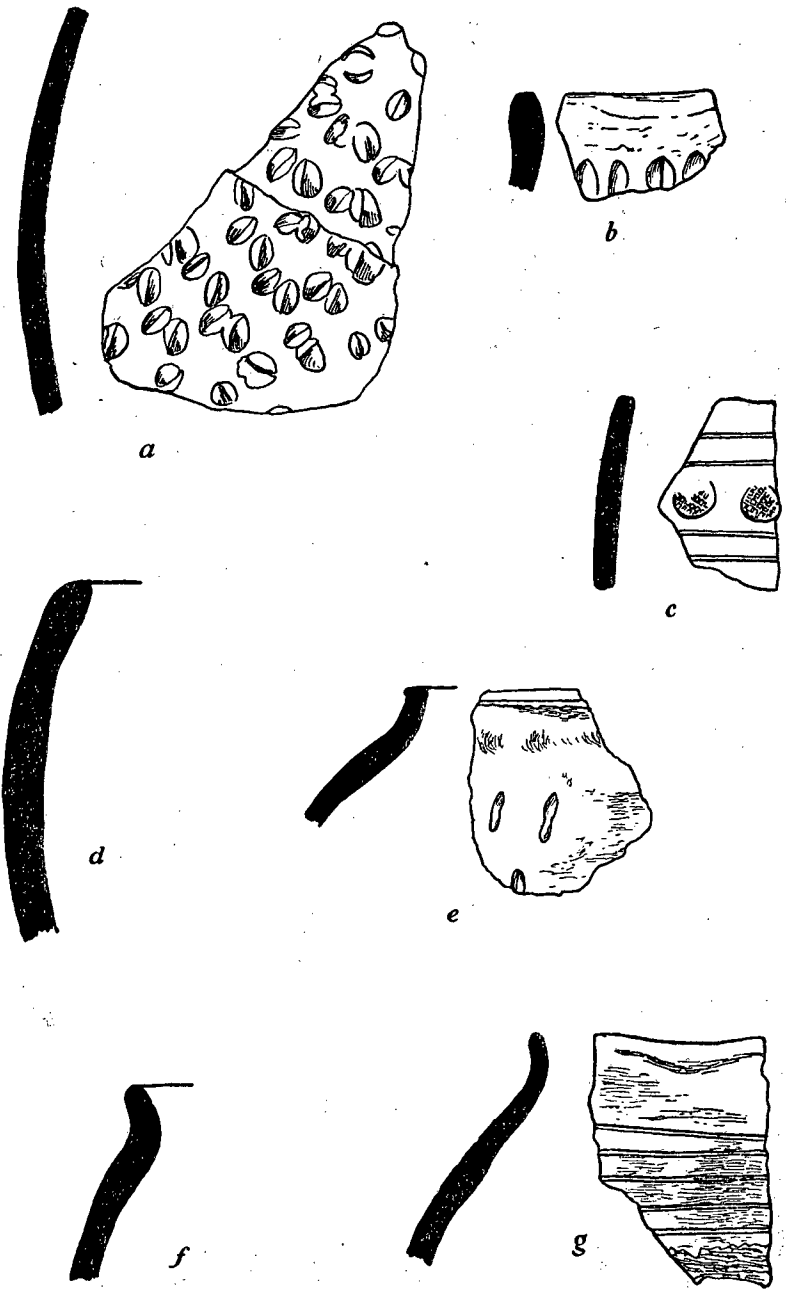


FIG. 31.—Pagan Saxon Pottery ($\frac{1}{2}$).

THE SAXON POTTERY

Pottery from the late Saxon site at Thetford bore cruciform and grid-iron decoration made by the impression of the metacarpal bones of sheep from which the head had been removed. Similar bones were found at Grimstone End but no pottery of this description came to light.

OTHER FINDS

Iron

1. Bucket handle: diameter: $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches. (Fig. 27a).
2. Lugs with central rivet $\frac{3}{10}$ inch long, giving the thickness of the wooden staves of the bucket. (Fig. 27c).
(The bucket handle and one lug were found close to floor 3 and the second lug close by floor 4).
3. Steelyard arm, part of. (Fig. 28a).
4. Chain links. Two bars of *c.* $\frac{3}{16}$ inch in thickness and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, of twisted metal linked together, and a third, curved but not twisted, were found near the second series of clay rings. They appear to be links of a chain, the use of which is not clear. They are comparable in technique with the chain links illustrated on Plate xvii of the Vendel Report¹ and in shape with the chain links on Plate xxxii. (Fig. 28 b, c).
5. Punch or awl, square in section, $\frac{4}{10}$ inch at the widest point and tapering to either end. Signs of hammering at one end; the other extended and probably broken: length, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. (*cf.* 'London in Roman Times', *London Museum Catalogue*, No. 3, 1930, Plate xxxii, Fig. 11). (Fig. 28f).
6. Hook: length $2\frac{1}{10}$ inches. Identified as a fish-hook by Mr. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, F.S.A., of the British Museum. (Fig. 28d).
7. Spud or hoe with a vertical socket. It is interesting to compare this with a similar object but having a hollowed blade on Plate xxi, Fig. 2, of the Vendel Report, described as an instrument for fashioning shoes. Length: 4 inches; diameter of socket: $\frac{4}{5}$ inch. (Fig. 27d).
8. Hook. (Fig. 28g).
9. Sheep- or cow-bell. (Fig. 27f).
10. Bow of iron prick-spur. (Fig. 28e).
11. Two small knives. (Fig. 27 b, e).

¹ Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitetsakademien, Monografiserien No. 17: *La Néropole de Vendel*, Stockholm, 1927.

Bronze

12. Buckle of seventh century type. Close to clay rings, Series 'A'. (Fig. 29*d*).
13. Fibula. Fine cruciform fibula of unusual pattern found near hearth 1. Length: 2 $\frac{2}{5}$ inches. (Fig. 29*b*).
14. Bracelet. Flat, width: $\frac{3}{8}$ inch. Ornamented with two rows of punched half-circles along the bow. Shown as a strip. Actual diameter of object: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. (Fig. 29*a*).
15. Small spoon of Roman type. (Fig. 29*h*). *The Ashmolean has another spoon from P., 1844 (1927-755)*

Bone and Stone

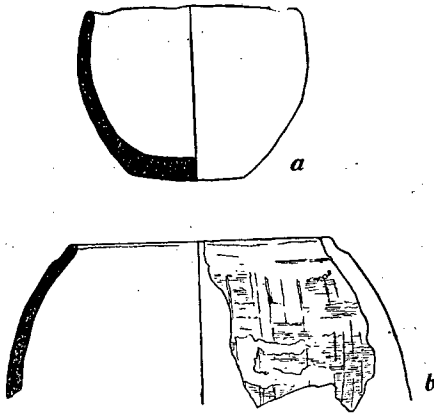
16. Bone weaving implement. Length: 4 inches. (Fig. 30*c*).
17. Section of bone comb, with much polish on the rounded teeth. (Fig. 29*c*).
18. Fragment of double sided bone comb with attached centre rib. (Fig. 29*e*).
19. Two fragments of centre ribs of combs. (Fig. 29*f, g*).
20. Fragment of ox rib with serrated edge. (Fig. 30*b*).
21. Handle of bone with tang of iron knife remaining. (Fig. 30*d*).
22. Fine whetstone with central groove on both sides, from close by floor 5. (Fig. 30*a*).

OTHER EVIDENCES OF OCCUPATION

A very considerable area beyond the barrow to the east had already been worked by the mechanical excavator and patches of burnt earth showed signs of an occupation of considerable size. To the south-east of the barrow, traces of huts were found and one of these, hut 9, was sectioned, which showed a circular hut delimited by a ring of stones, the total diameter being 13 feet. A sherd of creamy Romano-British pottery was found, just above the natural and beneath the hut, and two fragments of Pagan-Saxon pottery were found below floor level.

PAGAN-SAXON POTTERY

1. Restored bowl from area of floor 1. Hard dark grey-black ware with roughly smoothed surface. (Fig. 32*a*).
2. Rim of urn with slight shoulder. Faint vertical striations occur but are masked by horizontal smoothing. (Fig. 32*b*).
3. Neck of urn of hard dark grey ware. Neck and shoulder decorated with impressed concentric circles and small indentations made with a sharp implement. The ornamentation is badly applied and very faint in some parts. From ditch filling. (Fig. 30*e*).

FIG. 32.—Pagan Saxon Pottery ($\frac{1}{4}$).

4. Sherd of hard brown ware with a decoration of irregularly placed finger-tipping raised in pairs by pinching the surface. (Fig. 31a).
5. Rim of brown ware vessel with traces of finger-tipping of a coarser nature than on No. 4. (Fig. 31b).
6. Fragment of dark grey-black ware with incised lines and stamped hatched circles. (Fig. 31c).
7. Fragment of bowl with inturned rim. (Fig. 31d).
8. Fragment of vessel with small out-turned rim (Fig. 31f).
9. Rim fragment with flattened top and small shallow impressions on the shoulder. (Fig. 31e).
10. Rim fragment with incised lines. (Fig. 31g).

SUMMARY

The site, as already described, consisted of a ring barrow containing an un-urned Early Bronze Age cremation, with secondary cremations of Romano-British origin, three presumably Pagan-Saxon interments, and evidences of Pagan-Saxon occupation.

This association of Romano-British and Pagan-Saxon burials around an Early Bronze barrow is of particular interest in view of a similar association around the platform barrow at Snell's Corner, Horndean, Hants., an account of which is at present in the hands of the Editor of the *Proceedings* of the Hampshire Field Club.