

THE SAXON SHORE FORT AT BURGH CASTLE

BY A. J. MORRIS

The main task before the writer in compiling this paper was the sifting of a large quantity of published and unpublished records of previous research, and the picking out of definite and reliable information as distinct from the flights of imagination with which many of the local publications abound. The results of this work, together with fresh material which the writer has been able to produce, are now presented in the form of a report which it is hoped may find a use as a basis for future excavation. So far as possible all facts have been verified by personal observation.

The fort, of which nothing remains above ground level except the outer walls, is situated on the western side of the village of Burgh Castle, 3 miles west of Great Yarmouth at the north-west corner of the district of Lothingland, and stands on high ground averaging 30 feet above sea-level overlooking the marshes where the river Waveney joins the river Yare and flows into the western end of Breydon Water. The high ground itself is composed mainly of brick-earth, and considerable quantities were quarried during the past century in the immediate neighbourhood of the fort for the manufacture of bricks.

At the time of the Roman occupation and up to the 7th Century at least, according to Bede, a large part of the district of Lothingland was covered with forest, and it would seem that the fort stood on the edge of this,* but the sandy heaths on the south and south-west sides were probably open country, much as they are now.

In 1846 the site was purchased by the late Sir John Boileau who prevented the walls from being used as a quarry for building material. In 1921 the fort was scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Act, and in 1929 the walls remaining above ground were placed under the care of the Ministry of Works.

Little research of any importance has been done in connection with this site. Except for Ives' account of 1774 the only active research of any note was the excavations of Henry Harrod, F.S.A. on behalf of Sir John Boileau in 1850 and 1855, the main object being the investigation of the presumed western wall. In recent years, although unpublished, a great deal of work has been done by Mr. P. E. Rumbelow.

ADJACENT ROMAN SITES.

So far as it is known at present no other Roman military sites occur in this district, the nearest being the Saxon Shore forts of Branodunum at Brancaster on the north Norfolk coast, a distance of some 50 miles, and Walton Castle near Felixstowe, 45 miles to the south. The Romano-British township of Venta Icenorum is situated due west at Caistor by Norwich, a distance of 15 miles, and 5 miles to the north-east there was a Romano-British settlement at Caister-on-Sea. Roman remains have also been found at Herringfleet and Hemsby and the foundations of a Roman building are supposed to have been uncovered at Reedham. As in the case

* *Bede*, Bk. III, 19.

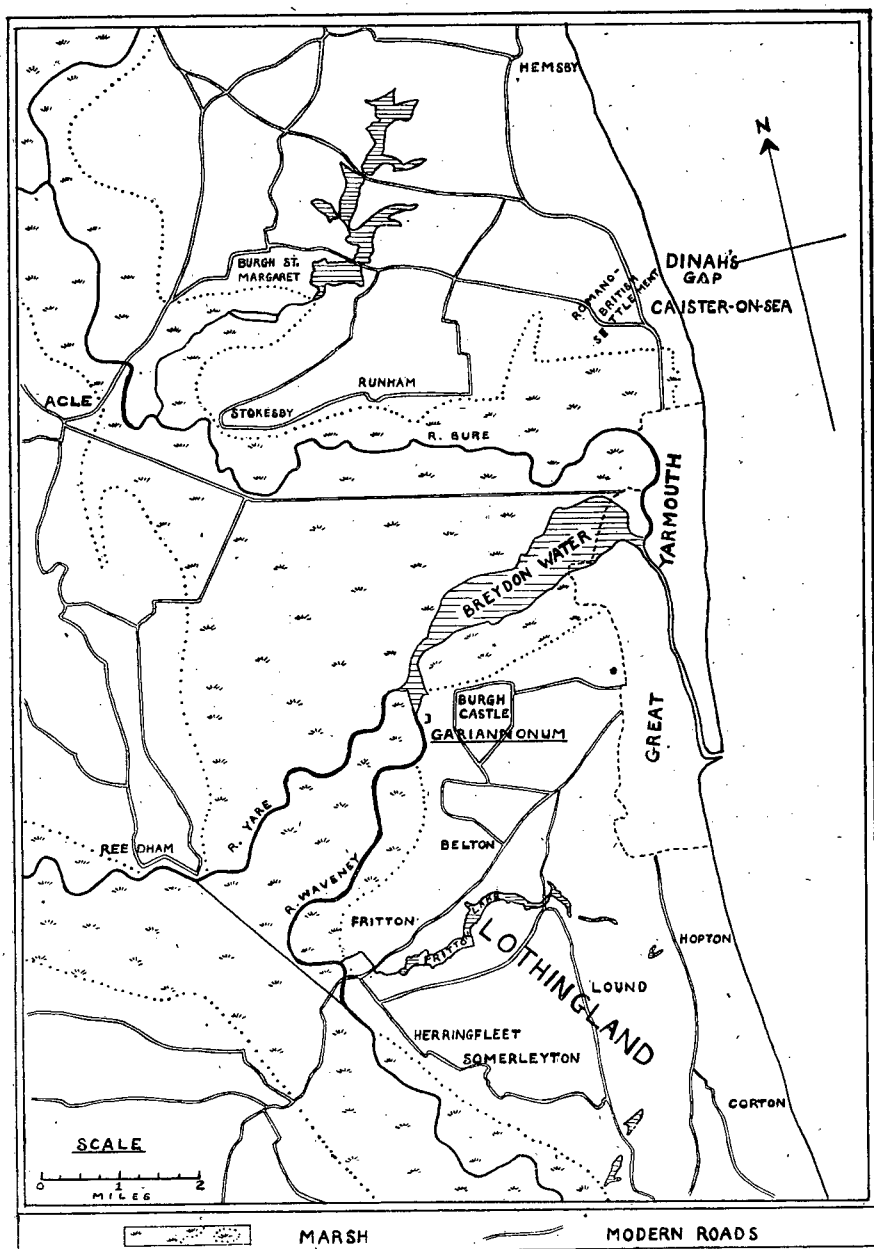


FIG. 1. Map of district near Burgh Castle.

of Brancaster it appears that the fort was not linked up to any of the known Roman roads, but it is quite reasonable to assume that 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. There is little to support this suggestion at the moment except that in 1917 remains of Roman walling 2 feet in thickness, together with Roman coins and kitchen rubbish, were discovered on the cliff edge a little to the north of Caister at a place called Dinah's Gap. At Corton in 1814, cliff falls are supposed to have revealed foundations of a Roman building consisting of "great trees hewn and squared" placed crossways, and with "rubble and flint built upon them." These extended in the form of a square 25 yards each way.* The fact should not be overlooked that the coastline in this district has probably changed considerably since Roman times.

GARIANNONUM.

The Roman name of the fort is generally regarded as "Gariannonum", though this is not yet finally proved. The only mention occurs in the "Notitia Dignitatum"—an official list of 4th Century Roman garrisons. "Praepositus Equitum Stablesianorum, Gariannonensis, in Gariannono residebat."

From this it may be inferred that the "Stablesian Horse" was stationed here. A quantity of horses bones have been found in the "Rectory Hanger",† but their Roman date is open to speculation. The river Yare was known in Roman times as the "Gariennos" and the name "Gariannonum" was apparently derived from this.‡

It is interesting to note that a Roman helmet, now in Leiden Museum, inscribed STABLESIA § VI § TIT(VS) VALON(IVS) URS(VS) LIBR(AM) I and with 37 Constantinian coins in it was found in the river Peel, near Dendre in North Brabant. It was probably discarded or lost in the middle of the 4th Century and raises the question as to whether there was another Roman force at Burgh Castle before the Stablesian Horse took over garrison duties, possibly late in the 4th Century, or whether a detachment of the Stablesian Horse was in Holland at the time the main body was at Burgh Castle or else *vice versa*.

THE WALLS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

The fort is roughly quadrangular in shape and covers an area of approximately 5 acres. It is now bounded on three sides only by walls, the longest being that on the eastern side, measuring 640 feet in length, the north and south sides being 300 feet and 325 feet in length respectively. The two shorter walls terminate at their western ends upon the edge of the high ground where it slopes down to the marsh. At the north-east and south-east corners the wall is not brought to an angle, but is carried round with a

* *Eastern Daily Press*, 12.4.1933.

† *Dahl*, p. 12.

‡ *English River Names*—Ekwall.

sweep, the outer face making, in plan, part of a circle of 18 feet radius.* The main gate is situated in the middle of the east wall. There are six bastions altogether, pear-shaped and of solid construction, which project boldly from the face of the wall. Two are placed at the corners of the wall, one midway on each of the shorter sides, and the remaining two symmetrically on the east wall between the corner ones and the east gate. The corner ones are 14 feet in diameter and the remainder 12 feet, the projection about equalling the diameter in each case. There are no signs of an encircling ditch at the present day.

The walls are in a fair state of preservation, with the exception of the western half of the south wall which is very ruinous. The bastion on this wall was undermined many years ago by "continual floods of rain, the water of which cut a channel in the earth in making its way through a breach of the wall into the area in its course to the low ground," † and now lies overturned. A section of the eastern half of this south wall which was in danger of overturning was secured by the Ministry of Works when they took over the care of the walls. The bastion on the north wall has fallen a few feet out of plumb, but is now stationary. No signs of a wall are to be seen on the west side.

WALL CONSTRUCTION.

Rubble masonry bonded together with mortar was used for the construction of the core and inner face of the walls. The outer side was faced with split flints with their fractured sides outwards and laid in regular courses, and triple tile bands occur at every four or five of these. These tiles vary between one and two rows in depth, and do not extend through the whole thickness of the wall. Apparently their function was to lace the outer facing of split flints to the core of the wall. The inside was probably left in a rough state, and dual bands of tiles, one or two rows deep, were used at less frequent intervals. It is surmised that the bastions are of a similar construction as no cross sections are available, their faces being identical to the exterior of the wall.

On the average, the walls attain a height of 15 feet, measured on the exterior. The outer face of each wall is vertical, rising from the ground with no plinth. Judging by the positions of the tile courses the inner face was probably stepped back at regular intervals, reducing the thickness of the wall from 11 feet at the base to 5 feet at the top. (See Fig. 3).

The footings of the walls and bastions are very little below the present level of the land surrounding the fort. With the exception of the western half of the north wall, which is covered externally by a large artificial bank, on the outside it is a matter of inches only in some places. The level inside is generally much higher. According to Ives, the foundation upon which the walls and bastions were constructed consisted of a rammed bed of chalk and lime covered with a layer of earth and sand. Upon this were laid oak planks, 2 inches in thickness, and finally a layer of mortar upon which the masonry was erected. Some of these planks were visible in his day, ‡ and some were found intact when the bastion on the south

* P. E. Rumbelow.

† *Fitch*, p. 46.

‡ *Ives*, p. 26.

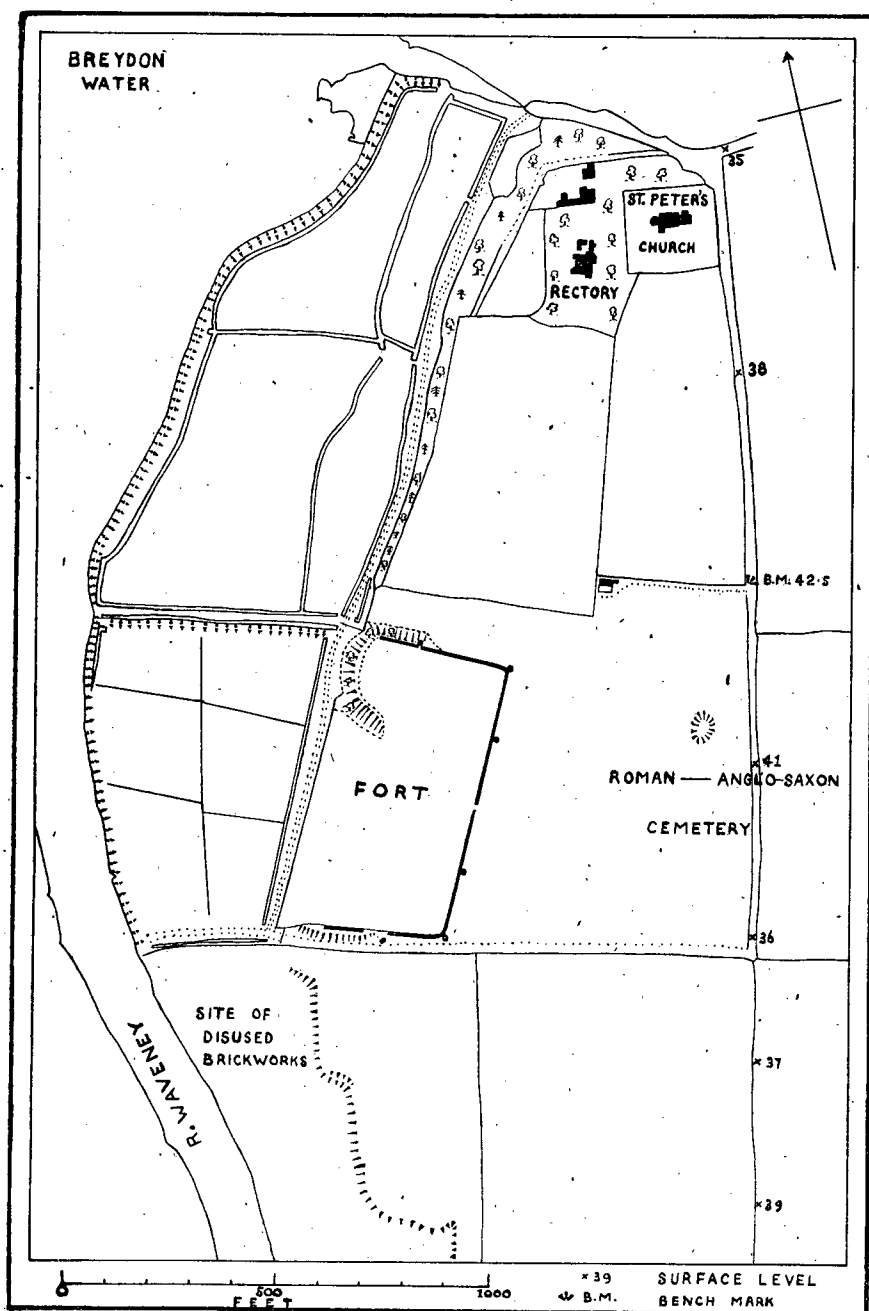


FIG. 2. Plan of fort at Burgh Castle and surrounding fields. (Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map, with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office).

wall overturned.* Other reports give the foundation as being of puddled clay and flints. When, in 1930, the Ministry of Works shored up the leaning section of the south wall, a hole was dug through under the base of it. Mr. P. E. Rumbelow, who examined this, stated that in his opinion no evidence of preparation of the ground was to be seen, and that it appeared that the wall stood on the original land surface with no trenching. The evidence so far is inconclusive. There is, however, a strong case for the statement that timber was used for the construction of at least some parts of the walls.†

The impression of timber framing can be traced on the underside of the fallen bastion on the south wall. Along the foot of the exterior of the north wall can be traced the ends of four transverse holes measuring 10×9 inches in section. They are located at distances of 34 feet 6 inches, 40 feet, 46 feet and 51 feet respectively east of the apex of the angle between the east side of the bastion on the north wall and the fort wall itself. In the underside of the holes there is no sign of any stone or mortar. Compared with the overturned bastion on the south wall, these timber holes are at the same level, i.e. 11 inches below the lowest tile course.‡ Holes left by vertical posts can be seen in the lower parts of the masonry of the western half of the south wall. There are seven of these remaining; two others can be traced in the wreckage that has fallen away;§ and measure 13×12 inches, and are on the average 8 feet 6 inches apart. They occur 1 foot 8 inches in from the inner face of the wall, measured at ground level, the wall at this point being 8 feet 6 inches wide. Their original height is unknown as the wall is very ruinous, but the deepest extends for 4 feet. The posts stood on short lengths of horizontal timber measuring 2 feet 6 inches long by 12 inches wide and 4 inches deep, and which in turn stood on tiles some 8 inches above the base of the wall.|| It is difficult to assign any definite use to these posts.

THE BASTIONS.

The bastions, although apparently of a similar construction to the walls, are not bonded into them for their total heights. They stand independently against their respective walls for a height of 7 feet, and it is only above this that the bonding occurs. The lower outer wall face is carried on behind and quite separate from the bastion until it reaches the height of 7 feet, above which a single large indent is formed. The lower surface of the indent curves up to about 2 feet higher as it goes back into the wall, and is smoothed over with mortar (See Fig. 3). The indents are about twice as wide as the junction between the walls and the bastions. Good examples of this construction may be seen in the south-east corner bastion and in the bastion on the north wall.

It is generally supposed that these bastions were a later addition, but it may be pointed out that these joins seem to be a deliberate part of the general design. The masonry of both walls and bastions has every sign

* *Fitch*, p. 44.

† *Bushe-Fox*, pp. 64, 65.

‡ P. E. Rumbelow.

§ P. E. Rumbelow.

|| *Bushe-Fox*, pp. 64, 65.

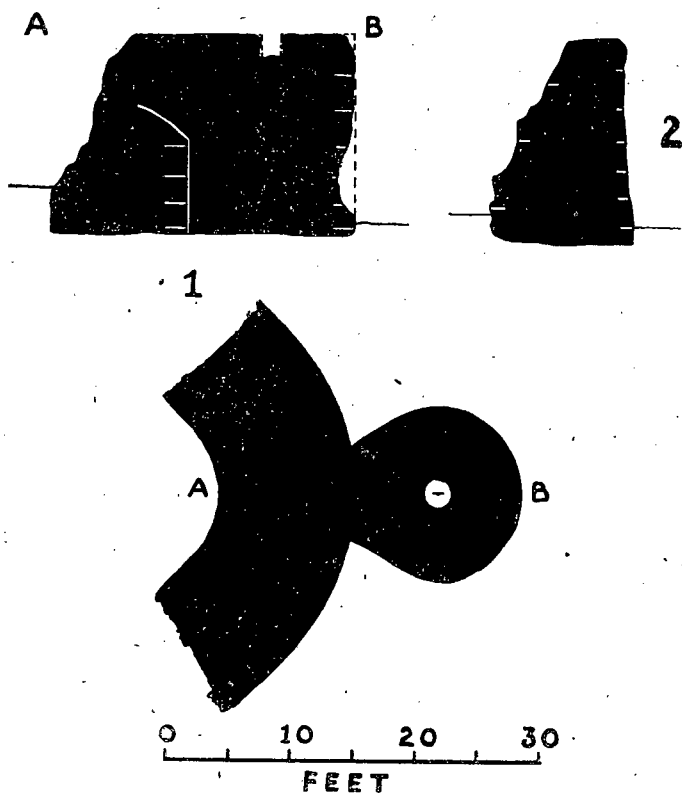


FIG. 3. Burgh Castle. (1). Cross section and plan of north-east corner bastion. (2). Cross section of south wall.

of being the production of the same builders, the tile courses of the bastions correspond with those of the walls and there is nothing to show of any difference in settlement, which would be obvious if the bastions were a later addition.

In view of the fact that considerable lengths of the wall are of a uniform height of 15 feet, and the flat tops of the better preserved bastions are of a similar height, this was probably the original height, less, of course, any long since disappeared parapets of a slighter masonry. In the top of each bastion is a shallow hole, 2 feet in diameter and about the same in depth, perhaps emplacements for revolving spring guns.*

GATEWAYS.

The main gateway situated in the middle of the east wall is at the present day 15 feet 6 inches in width.† It has already been pointed out that the tile courses used in the construction of the walls do not run back across the thickness of the wall, and the remains of the tile courses which can be seen across the section of the wall on each side of the gateway, would suggest that the present opening is very near to its original dimensions. Harrod gives the original width as being 11 feet 8 inches. No outworks to this gate are to be seen, but Harrod, in the course of his excavations, found within the fort area on each side of the roadway the remains of a low wall, 10 feet 7 inches in length, a little wider than the opening, splayed out inside and finished with a short return.‡ This he supposed was intended to prevent the earth of a possible rampart from falling on to the road, but it is far more likely that these formed part of the foundations of guard chambers (See p. 111). Just within the outer face of the wall he found a narrow trench 15 inches in width which seemed to have held a square timber threshold. Fragments of iron nails and flat iron bands found within the gate in 1847§ may indicate some sort of timber gate structure. On the inside of the wall there can be seen on either side of the opening, about half-way up the wall, a patch of mortar of a different composition from that used for the body of the wall and which suggests that some "making good" around the gate fittings was done there.

Postern gates are supposed to have existed in the north and south walls against the bastions. In the case of the south one, the wall is too ruined to draw any conclusions. Behind the bastion on the north wall exists a breach 25 feet wide, caused apparently by the falling away of the bastion. Ives gives the postern as being on the east side of the bastion, but Harrod definitely states that his excavations proved that the position lay west of it, and to be 5 feet wide. At the present day careful examination of the breach by the writer does not confirm the existence of a postern, and the presence of a bank on the outside of the wall, reaching nearly to the top, casts further doubt upon it.

THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE FORT.

In the northern part of the fort the ground level rises from the foot of the wall near the north-east corner to the western extremity of the north

* Richmond in *A Survey and Policy of Field Research in the Archaeology of Great Britain*, 1948. p. 59.

† Harrod, p. 151/2.

‡ V.C.H. Vol. I, p. 302.

wall, where Harrod found it necessary to dig to a depth of 13 feet to reach the foundations. 150 feet west of the north-east corner commences the artificial bank of earth of uncertain date containing potsherds, broken bones and other rubbish, heaped up against the north wall and bastion.

The west end of the north wall stands within a few feet of the edge of the high ground, and tile courses crossing the section of the wall give the impression that here was the definite end of the wall, or at least a portion of it. These tile bands are not aligned either with those on the outside or those on the inside of the wall. Harrod, however, states that beneath the surface "an enormous mass had been torn away from beneath the exposed part of it." The "flint pavement" foundation of the wall was found at a depth of 13 feet, and this was traced westwards for 7 feet from the present end, and seemed to be gradually descending the hill. Efforts to locate it again on the side of the hill were unsuccessful. An apparent mass of masonry has been located by the writer in the side of the hill, one third of the way down and in line with the wall. On this portion of the slope, in 1912, were found broken roof-tiles, potsherds, charcoal and some wall-plaster with the impression of wattles upon it, together with some coins, and it has been suggested that a guard chamber existed here.*

The south wall is also suggested by Harrod to have extended much further westwards. 30 feet west of the present end of the wall, although no wall itself remained, there were considerable indications of its former existence. As has already been stated, the western part of the wall is very badly broken up. The soil is more sandy there, and rabbits have undermined and let down large pieces of the wall. Amongst the wreckage no trace of the tile courses crossing the wall in a similar manner to that at the end of the north wall can be seen.

Regarding the western side of the fort, Harrod excavated for the express purpose of determining the former existence of a west wall and published a report on his work.† His trenching (See Fig. 4) near the fence at the foot of the hill revealed at a depth of 3 to 4 feet a stratum of clay free from broken tiles and potsherds, and resembling a deposit left by a series of inundations. This extended downwards for 1 foot 6 inches to 2 feet, and beneath this was found a stratum of broken mortar surmounting large quantities of flints, tiles and broken mortar. In one trench at this level was found a layer of stones placed on clay and surmounted with a thin layer of gravel. These foundations were traced through trenches 2, 4 and 5, but no solid mass of masonry was found.

Trench 6 revealed at a depth of 4 feet 9 inches a double layer of large flints placed upon a bed of seemingly puddled clay which extended to a depth of at least 6 feet. Trench 3 revealed a fragment of wall in situ nearly 4 feet from the surface. It was smooth and perfect on the inner side, but 5 feet from the inner side it was broken up, the soil and stones beyond for several feet being very wet. Beneath this were found a number of decayed oak piles, extending for a distance of 11 feet from the inner face of the wall. In trench 1 was found at a depth of 5 feet, a layer of clay, mortar and flints. Under this were situated more piles, about 1 foot apart and with clay, lumps of chalk and mortar, rammed between them for a

* *Dahl*, p. 22.

† *Harrod*, p. 156 seq.

depth of 18 inches. Beneath this filling was black mud. These piles were exactly in line with the foundations found in the other trenches and again extended to a width of 11 feet.

In trench 15 a solid mass of mortar was found at a depth of 7 feet.

To the writer it does seem quite possible that the foundations which Harrod discovered carried the missing wall across the marshy ground at the foot of the hill. A point to be noted is that the width of the piles roughly coincides with the thickness of the base of the remaining walls.

It is extremely unlikely that a fort would ever be constructed with one side left open, as this would leave the fort vulnerable to attack by hostile forces, even though as is generally regarded in this case, perhaps wrongly, that the sea washed the foot of the high ground upon which the fort was built.

The destruction of the wall was probably due to quarrying for building material in the Middle Ages. As road transport was very bad and water provides the easiest means of transport, it may be suggested that the west wall was the obvious victim as it was the nearest to the river. At the present day Roman bricks and roof-tiles may be seen in the walls of some of the local churches, Burgh Castle, Burgh St. Peter and especially Reedham where a large number have been used in the north side. It is quite possible that the foundations discovered were not sufficiently stable to support the weight of a high wall, and the wall collapsed at a fairly early date, thus making the quarrying much simpler. The case of the fort at Brancaster may be cited where excavation revealed the fact that in many places the fort wall had been quarried away altogether, leaving only traces of mortar upon which it had stood.*

INTERIOR BUILDINGS.

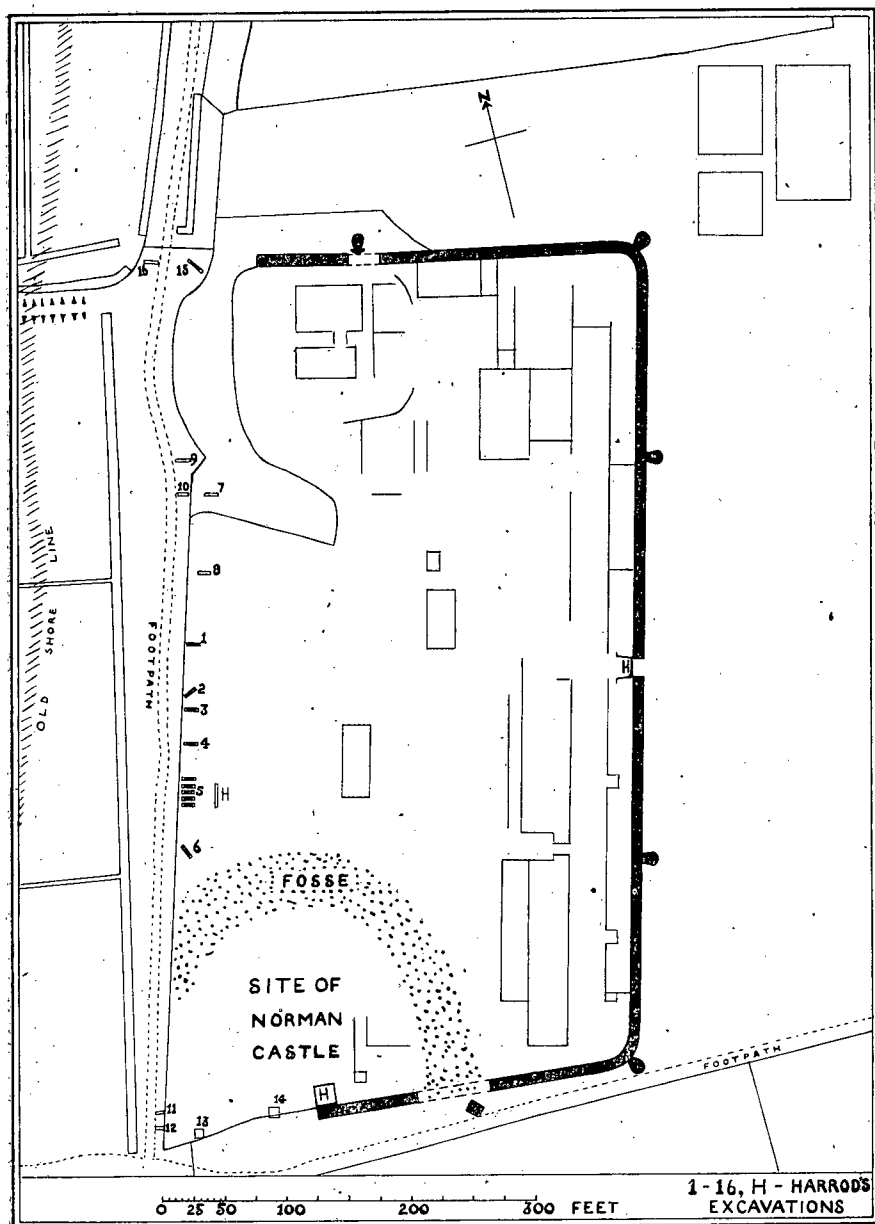
As has already been mentioned no remains of buildings inside the fort are to be seen above the surface, but fragments of daub and broken roof tiles indicate timber-framed buildings, perhaps with masonry footings, and with tiled roofs.

Harrod located a small building † on the south side of the fort abutting onto the fort wall just to the west of the series of post holes. (See Fig. 4). It was 16 feet 6 inches square and the foundations only were the principal remains. These were 2 feet from the surface and consisted of a shallow bed of clay surmounted by a layer of flints and the whole was covered with a layer of fine gravel. Little of the walls themselves remained except a large fragment of the western wall where it joined onto the wall of the fort. Some red coloured wall plaster remained on the inner side of this. A flue existed along the southern side, and there were indications of a furnace on the exterior of the south-east corner. An offset in the fort wall, 6 inches deep and 16 feet 6 inches long, seems to coincide with the south side of this building.

Harrod also trenched in a straight line due west from the east gate to the crown of the hill, but says he did not come across any building, however, he also adds that he later considered that he did not trench deep enough and was wrong in keeping to a straight line. He also noted

* *St. Joseph*, p. 447 and 449.

† *Harrod*, p. 155.



4. Plan of Burgh Castle fort showing Harrod's excavations and suggested layout of buildings as seen in air photograph.



PLATE 1. Burgh Castle. Oblique air photograph of fort. (*Reproduced by permission of the Norfolk and Norwich Aero Club*).

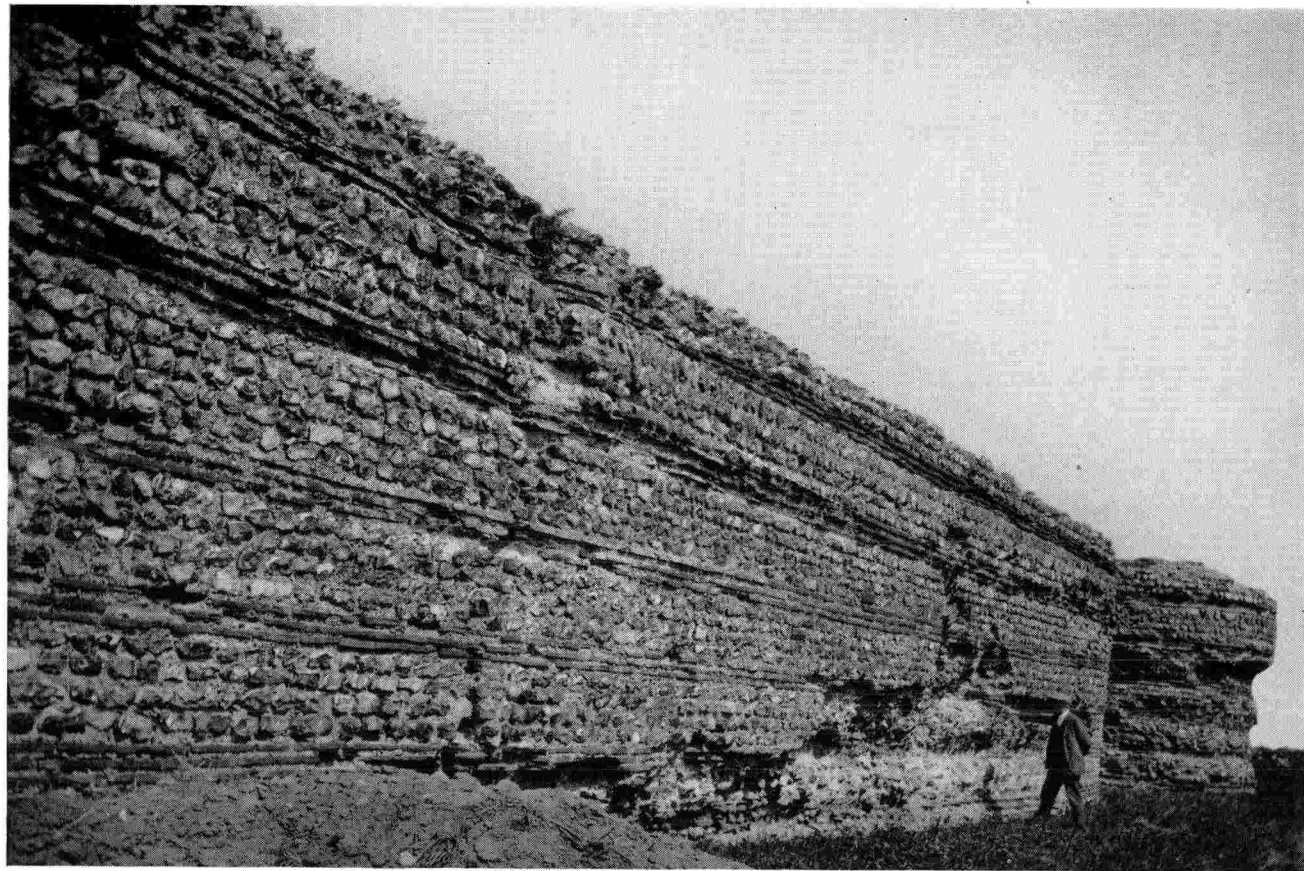


PLATE 2. Burgh Castle. South wall looking east.

that the ground had in parts been considerably disturbed.

Thirty feet in from the fence at the foot of the hill and 3 feet below the surface he located what is described as a mortar bed. The floor was pink with pounded tile and a quantity of refuse lime remained in one corner. It is just possible that this was the remains of a building, but was not recognised as such. Apart from these excavations no attempts have been made to explore the internal layout of the fort.

In 1929 the R.A.F. took four vertical air photographs of the fort but these showed nothing of any interest as they were taken at the wrong season of the year. In July 1933 an oblique air photograph was taken by the Norfolk and Norwich Aero Club from the height of 5,000 feet, and this has revealed something probably unique amongst Saxon Shore Forts—indications of the internal layout (See Plate I). The implications of this were apparently not realised at the time. As to whether the reader agrees with the writer's interpretation is left to the reader's judgement, (See Fig. 4), but it must, however, be remembered that only excavation can show if these suppositions are correct.

Extensive ranges of buildings appear to be located in the northern part of the fort. A line of buildings extending very nearly the whole length of the fort appears to abut onto the east wall, and it is probable that the foundations which Harrod discovered inside the east gate formed part of these. The existence of these buildings casts doubt upon the old idea that the walls were lined internally by an earthen bank. An extra band of tiles at the foot of the inside of the outer wall, about 1 foot above ground level, seems to roughly coincide with the centre section of the building abutting onto the northern half of the east wall. They exist in a single layer, carefully lined so as to show a fair front edge, but some flints above show that the tiles were built in and not left like a step. Each end of the line ends abruptly commencing 43 feet from the gateway and extending for 49 feet 6 inches. To the west of this line of buildings there appears to be a roadway about 25 feet wide running north and south, and then two long buildings. Buildings are also apparently located outside the north-eastern corner, but there are no signs of any roadways in the ground around the fort. On the marsh to the west of the fort appears to be a silted up water course, and nearer the fort what may be an old shore line.

Fragments of bricks, flue tiles and pottery have been found at a spot some distance outside the fort walls,* but it has not been possible to trace the site.

COINS.

Of the large number of coins found on the site the majority have unfortunately been lost. Ives' great grandfather possessed a considerable number of silver ones and two gold ones † and in 1829 over 100 were in the possession of Mr. John Thacker.‡

A schedule is given below of all the coins which the writer has been able to trace, together with a graph showing coin density (See Fig. 5). The greater part of the information has been extracted from literary sources,

* *Eastern Evening News*, 22.10.1931.

† *Ives*, p. 30.

‡ *Fitch*, p.22.

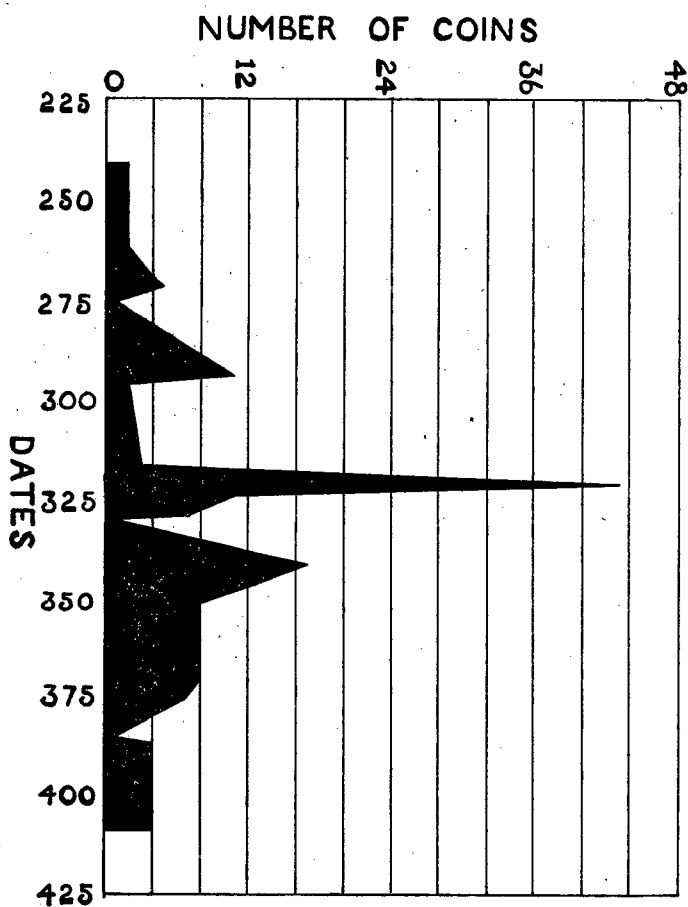


FIG. 5. Graph showing coin density.

COIN LIST.

					In N.C.M.	Seen and identified at N.C.M.	Private possession *	Literary Sources †	Bushe-Fox (previously known omitted)	TOTAL
Domitian 81-96	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	1	—	1
Antoninus Pius 138-161	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	2	—	2
Faustina	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	1	—	1
Postumus 258-267	..	..	..	..	—	—	1	1	—	2
Gordian III 238-244	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	2	—	2
Gallienus 253-268	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	2	—	2
Victorinus 268-270	..	..	..	..	—	—	1	2	—	3
Claudius II 268-270	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	1	—	1
Tetricus I 270-273	..	..	..	..	1	—	—	1	—	2
Aurelianus 270-275	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	3	—	3
Tacitus 275-276	..	..	..	..	—	—	1	—	—	1
Diocletian 284-305	..	..	..	..	—	—	2	—	1	3
Maximian 286-308	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	2	—	2
Allectus 293-296	..	..	..	..	1	—	1	1	—	3
Constantius I 293-296	..	..	..	..	—	—	2	1	—	3
Theodora	..	..	..	..	—	—	1	—	—	1
Helena 293-296	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	1	—	1
Constantine I 306-337	..	..	..	..	4	—	20	18	1	43
Constantine II 317-340	..	..	..	..	—	1	2	4	—	7
House of Constantine	..	..	..	..	1	—	3	—	—	4
"Urbs Roma "	..	..	..	..	1	—	4	2	—	7
Licinius 308-324	..	..	..	..	—	1	—	—	—	1
Crispus 317	..	..	..	..	—	—	2	—	—	2
Constantinopolis	..	..	..	..	—	1	—	—	—	1
Constantius II 324-361	..	..	..	..	1	—	1	1	1	4
Constans 333-350	..	..	..	..	4	—	3	5	1	13
Magnentius 350-353	..	..	..	..	—	1	3	3	—	7
Decentius 351	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	1	—	1
Valentinian I 364-375	..	..	..	..	1	—	2	2	—	5
Valens 364-378	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	2	1	3
Gratian 367-383	..	..	..	..	—	—	3	3	1	7
Maximus 383-388	..	..	..	..	—	—	1	—	—	1
Theodosius 379-395	..	..	..	..	2	—	—	1	1	4
Arcadius 395-408	..	..	..	..	2	—	—	2	—	4
Honorius 395-423	..	..	..	..	1	—	1	2	—	4
Illegible	..	..	..	..	3	—	27	—	—	30
British or Gaulish imitations of 4th Century coins	..	..	..	..	—	—	—	2	—	2

TOTAL 183

* Information supplied by Lt.-Col. M. C. Castle. One coin in possession of writer.

† *Ives, V.C.H., Dahl, Harrod, Fitch*, P. E. Rumbelow's notes, notes of late Mr. Hodgkinson, *Antiquities of Suffolk*—Suckling, Journ. Brit. Arch. Assn. XXXVI, 98-9.

and so it has been impossible to check their identity. Every effort has been made to avoid duplication.

Regarding the interpretation of this evidence, the coins of Domitian, Antoninus Pius and Faustina are obviously strays or antiques. A group about the time of Victorinus (268-270) may indicate a late 3rd Century occupation of the site. The reign of Constantine I seems to have been a period of great activity, very nearly one quarter of the total number of coins belong to this era, and a steady flow of coins after this seems to suggest a continuous occupation of the fort right down to the time of Honorius.

POTTERY, ETC.

None of the pottery which is known to have come from here has been found in stratified deposits under scientific excavation. The majority of it consists of surface finds and a few more complete pots have been found nearby during the course of agricultural operations, etc.

The pottery is predominately of the late 3rd—4th Centuries and consists principally of coarse grey ware and the late colour coated wares. Samian ware is very nearly non-existent though fragments of 4th Century imitations are found.

Fig. 6

1. Portion of mortaria rim with spout. Smooth brown clay, lined with chips of quartz. Diam. $10\frac{1}{2}$ ins. Early 3rd Cent. cf. Collingwood (*Archaeology of Roman Britain*) type 9.
2. Fragment of mortaria. Hard white clay, lined with chips of pottery. Diam. $9\frac{1}{2}$ ins. 3rd—4th Cent. date.
3. Fragment of mortaria rim. Dark grey clay. 3rd to 4th Cent. date.
4. Jar with rather delicate rim and neck. Hard grey clay. Diam. $5\frac{1}{2}$ ins. cf. Brancaster, type 16.
5. Fragment of rim of small jar. Hard light grey clay. Diam. 4 ins.
6. Portion of rim of jar. Brown clay covered with blackish slip. Diam. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins.
7. Fragment of bowl. Hard grey clay with blackish coating on outside. Diam. 8 ins. Probably late 2nd or early 3rd. Cent.
8. Fragment of sloping sided dish. Grey clay with black slip. Diam. 7 ins. Probably 3rd Cent.
9. Fragment of bowl. Buff clay with brownish clip.
10. Flanged bowl. Grey clay with dark grey slip. Diam. 7 ins. 4th Cent. type.
11. Fragment of conical flanged bowl. Grey clay. Diam. 5 ins. 3rd—4th Cent. type.
12. Fragment of rim of bowl with sloping side and external flange. Diam. 6 ins. 3rd—4th Cent. type.
13. Fragment of sloping sided flanged bowl. Hard grey clay. Diam. 6 ins. 3rd—4th Cent. type.

Numbers 3, 5, 10, 11 and 13 in N.C.M., remainder in possession of writer.

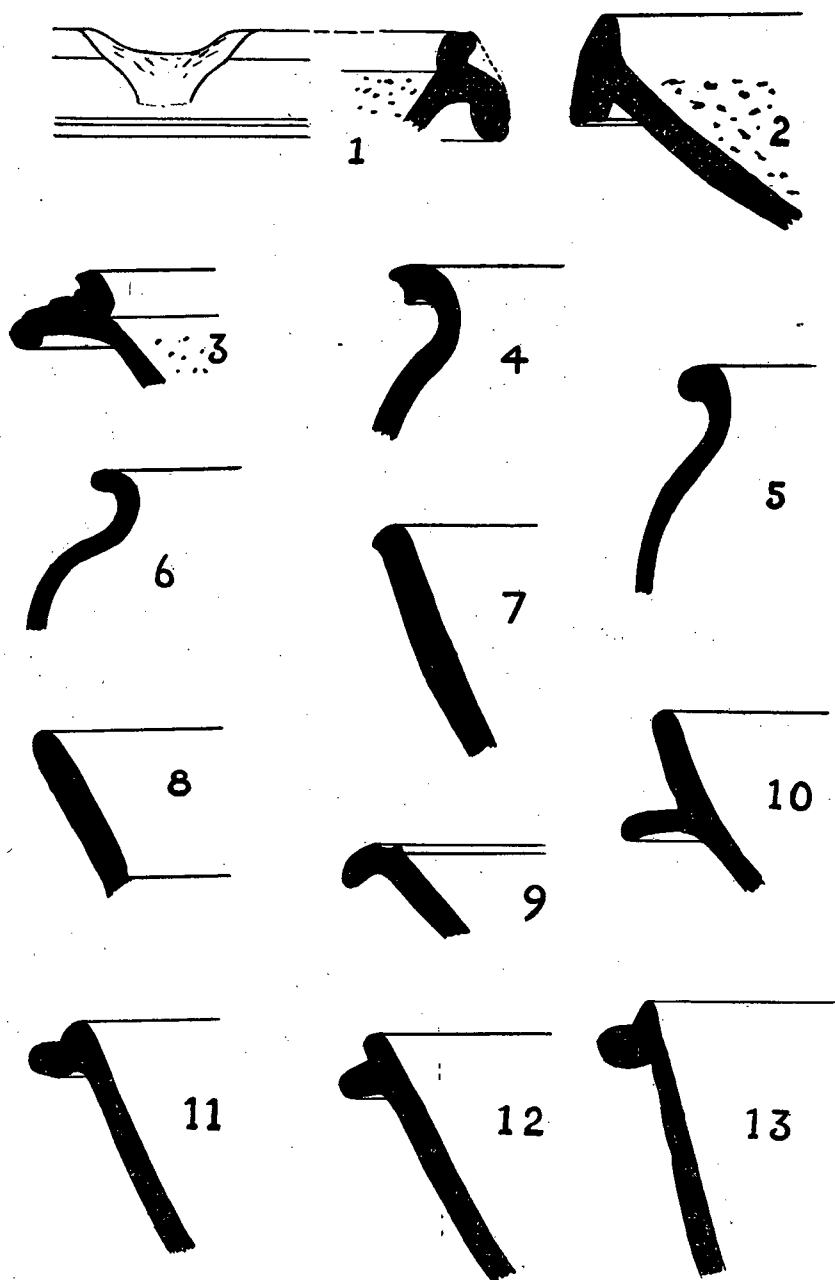


FIG. 6. Pottery. (4). (see p. 114).

Fig. 7

1. Rhenish ware flask. Red clay with brown slip and cream barbotine decoration. Neck in form of woman's head. Rouletted band around girth and another around shoulder. 3rd Cent. date. N.C.M.—158/932. (See below).
2. Cross bow brooch. Size unknown. Illustrated by Ives. Late 3rd—4th Cent. cf. Collingwood Group T.
3. Portion of double-edged comb made of bone, coarse teeth on one side and fine teeth on the other. May be Roman or Anglo-Saxon. Found in "fosse" in 1847. N.C.M.—98/50.

Plate 3.

Small bronze plaque c. $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{4}$ ins. bearing figure in walking attitude, facing right and carrying spear in right hand; possibly Mars. It is probably a badge or token of membership of some body or organisation.

ANGLO-SAXON REMAINS.

It is generally thought that when the Roman forces left the fort it remained deserted until the time of Saint Fursey, who founded a monastery within the fort walls in the 7th Century according to Bede.*

It is significant, however, that fragments of pottery have been found of wheel-made Romano-British type but with the Anglo-Saxon form of embossed decoration (Fig. 7, No. 5), probably dating about 400 A.D. One may suggest that there were possibly Anglo-Saxons living in or near the fort at the same time as it was occupied by the Roman forces, and it may be further suggested, to revert to an old theory, that the Saxon Shore was so named, not because of the Anglo-Saxon raids, but because Anglo-Saxons settled in the district along with the Romano-Britons.

Past publications, notably Ives', have illustrated "Roman" urns, found containing calcined bones, unearthed in the field to the east of the fort, (Fig. 7 Nos. 7, 8 and 9). These are, however, undoubtedly of Anglo-Saxon manufacture. In 1756 an excavation in this field revealed 2 feet below the surface bones of cattle and burnt coals, etc., together with a number of urns, apparently broken by ploughing and by farm carts. One urn was covered with a "large thick stone operculum" and contained a considerable quantity of bones and ashes, some coins of Constantine, and a short spear or javelin,† (Fig. 7, No. 10).

It seems certain that this field is the site of an Anglo-Saxon burial ground, and indicates the presence of Anglo-Saxon settlement in the immediate neighbourhood. This field was probably also the burial ground of the Roman garrison. In 1851 a 3rd Century Rhenish ware flask, (Fig. 7 No. 1) was unearthed in or near this field at a depth of 4 feet.‡ The circumstances in which it was found are unknown, but it is possible that it was associated with a Roman burial, and would lead to the conclusion that here is a joint Roman/Anglo-Saxon burial ground; or on the other hand an Anglo-Saxon burial ground superimposed upon a Roman one.

* *Bede* Bk. III. 19.

† *Ives*, p. 34.

‡ *Nfk. Arch.* Vol. III, p. 415.



Plate 3. Burgh Castle. Small bronze plaque.

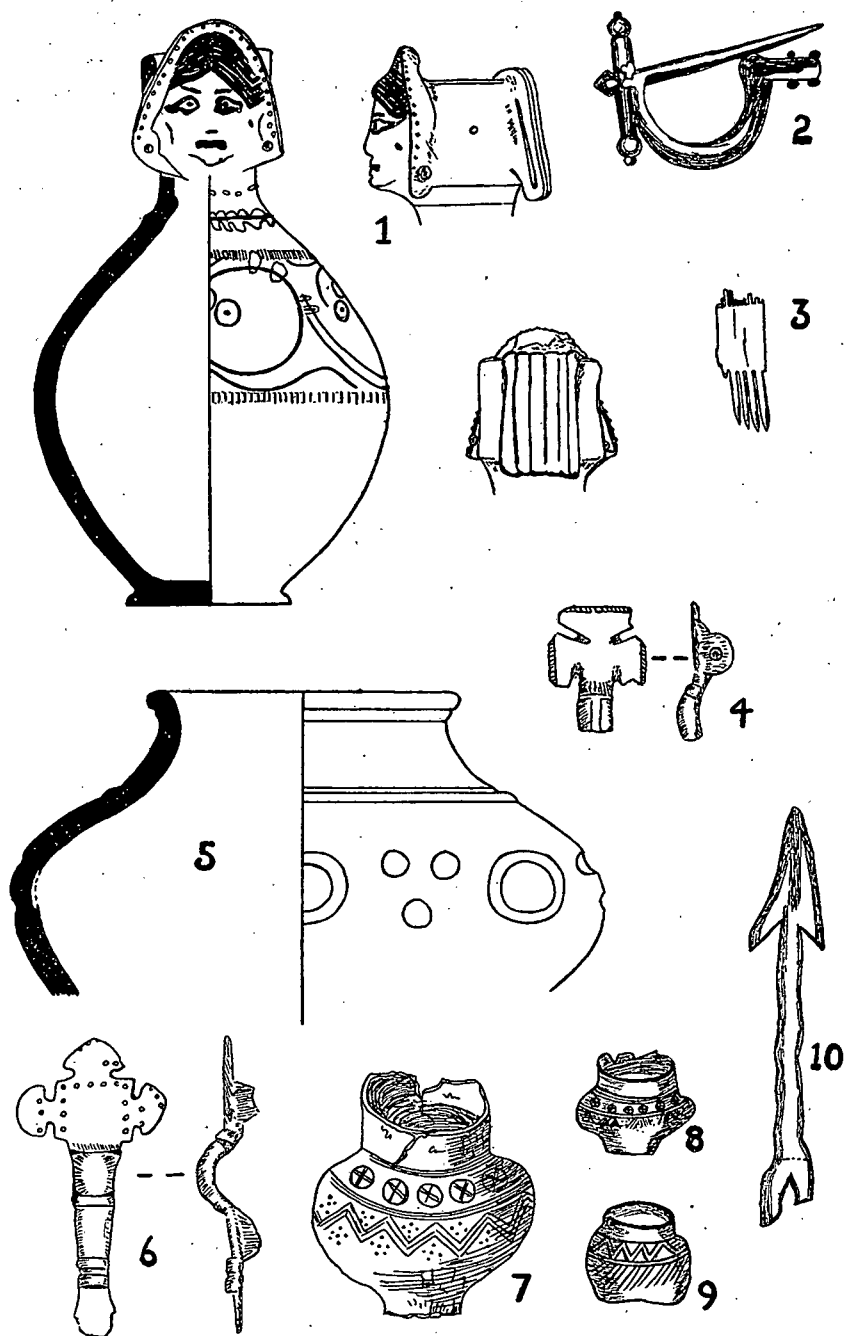


FIG. 7. Miscellaneous finds (see pp. 116, 118, 119.) (½).

Two Anglo-Saxon brooches have been found, one being a fragment of a brooch of the cross pattee type (Fig. 7 No. 4). The other (Fig. 7 No. 6) is of the trefoil-headed small long type, and probably dating about the middle of the 6th Century. According to Leeds (*The Distribution of the Angles and Saxons Archaeologically Considered—Archaeologia* (Vol. XCI) this type is probably of Saxon origin, and it appears that this is the sole specimen of this type yet found east of the Icknield Way (cf. Leeds Fig. 4 type g.)

Two Saxon coins have been found. One a silver sceatta of late 7th or early 8th Century date.* The other of Ceowulf,† King of the Mercians, c. 820 A.D. and found within the fort.

The site seems to have been of sufficient importance in the 7th Century for St. Fursey to select it as the scene of his missionary headquarters. It is reasonable to suppose as the archaeological evidence and the following place name evidence suggests, that St. Fursey found at and around Burgh Castle a thriving community, and not a deserted wilderness as it is generally regarded.

Bede records that it was "a monastery pleasantly situated in the neighbourhood of woods and the sea; built in a fortress which in English is called Cnobheresburg, that is the town of Cnobheri. Later on Anna, King of the province, and many noblemen adorned and embellished this town with loftier buildings and more splendid donations."‡ Dr. O. K. Schram has expressed the opinion that the identification of Cnobheresburg with Burgh Castle, which was first made by Camden, is fairly certain. On the opposite side of the river Waveney, in Norfolk, is the Hundred of Clavering, and he points out the fact that there is a striking similarity between the personal name in Cnobheresburg, or Cnoferesburg as it appears in the old English translation,—the Cnof, and the name that forms the base of the name Clavering. Clavering appears in early documents as Gnaveringe, Cnaveringe, Knaverynge, which suggests an old Anglo-Saxon tribal name "Cnaefheringas"—the people of Cnaefhere. It is suggested that it is a remarkable coincidence that the Burgh at Burgh Castle should be called Cnofhere's fortress and the adjoining district the territory of the people of Cnaefhere, and it may be that Bede who got his information from a lost East Anglian source misread or mistranscribed Cnaefhere as Cnof—, in his script Cnobheri.

Fig. 7

4. Fragment of brooch, cross pattee type. N.C.M. 732. 76. 94.
5. Jar of Roman wheel turned manufacture. Grey clay. Diam. at girth 6 ins. Ornamented with Anglo-Saxon form of embossed decoration. Probably dating about 400 A.D. (See p. 116). N.C.M.
6. Trefoil headed, small-long type of brooch. Probably dating mid. 6th Cent. (See above) N.C.M. 625. 76. 94.
7. Anglo-Saxon pot, apparently found in field to east of fort. Illustrated by Raven (*Burgh Castle*—Rev. J. J. Raven, D.D.). Size unknown.

* *Nfk. Arch.* Vol. V, p. 233/5.

† *Nfk. Arch.* Vol. VI, p. 38.

‡ *Bede* Bk. III, 19.

8. & 9. Anglo-Saxon pots found in field to east of fort. Sizes unknown. Illustrated by Ives.
 10. Probable iron head of javelin. Date unknown. Illustrated by Ives. (See p. 116).

NORMAN REMAINS.

At the south-west corner of the fort, and completely covering the western half of the south wall as well as the site of Harrod's building once stood a large mound. A cutting 8 feet deep also extended through the gap in the middle of the south wall into the area of the fort for a distance of some 100 feet or more, and then turned and ran directly west to the marsh, so as to isolate this mound from the remainder of the fort. This ditch may have been partially caused by the rainwash previously mentioned.

Part of this mound was removed about 1770 and led to the discovery * of large quantities of pottery and ashes together with a stratum of decayed wheat, and also a silver Roman spoon with a long sharply pointed handle. The mound was finally completely removed in February 1839 when there was found at a depth of 3 feet a large quantity of human bones.† The site of this mound and the encircling ditch may be clearly seen in the air photograph (Plate 1). The dark semicircle in the south-west corner of the fort marks the site of the ditch.

In the absence of any evidence to the contrary a suggestion may be made that this mound was the motte of a Norman castle of the motte and bailey type, the Roman fort walls being utilised by the Normans as a bailey as was done at Pevensey and Porchester where Norman castles have been built in corners of Saxon Shore forts. King says that "it may be suspected, from its form, and situation, to have been rather an additional work in Saxon or Norman times, raised in imitation of those circular mounds, which we meet with in so many Saxon, and Norman fortresses."‡

In corroboration of this, at the time of the Domesday Survey the lands of the Manor were vested in Ralph the Engineer and later his son Roger assumed the name "de Burgh."§ In view of the fact that this family name was based on the name of the Manor it may be assumed that the Manor was their seat, and this castle would be their residence.

It must not be overlooked, however, that there is at the moment no surviving archaeological evidence to substantiate this theory, except the fact that this mound must have been built in late Roman times or later as it covered the remains of a Roman building. The fact that Roman rubbish was found in the mound does not mean that the mound was of Roman origin, and there is nothing to indicate that the human bones were not thrown in indiscriminately as would have happened if the earth to build the mound had been removed from an inhumation burial ground.

The mound is showed in illustrations by Ives in his "Garianonum of the Romans" (1774), Stukeley in his "Itinerarium Curiosum" (1724) and King in his "Munimenta Antiqua" (1801) prior to its destruction.

* Ives, p. 35.

† Fitch, p. 19.

‡ King, p. 53.

§ Dahl, p. 103.

SUMMARY.

This report shows 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 Anglo-Saxons may have commenced to settle in the neighbourhood. The Anglo-Saxon settlement reached sufficient importance in the 7th Century for St. Fursey to select it as his missionary headquarters. After the Norman Conquest, a castle of the motte and bailey type was probably built in the south-west corner of the fort, the Roman fort walls being used as a bailey.

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Ives "Remarks upon the Garianonum of the Romans" (1774), 1803 edition refers.
King "Munimenta Antiqua" (1801).
Nfk. Arch. Norfolk Archaeology.
N.C.M. Norwich Castle Museum.
St. Joseph "The Roman Fort at Brancaster"—*Antiquaries Journal* Vol. XVI. (1936).
V.C.H. Victoria County History of Suffolk, Vol. I.

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