

## REPORTS OF LOCAL SECRETARIES.

THE following notes have been received on local or more general activities :

### CANTERBURY ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE Society had a successful season during 1934-5 with a variety of winter lectures and summer excursions. The membership is well over 170 ; nineteen new members joined during the year. Dr. Cotton resigned the Chairmanship and has been succeeded by Canon R. U. Potts. The Committee suffered the loss of two valuable members by the death of Miss Purdie and of Mr. A. Sandys. A small Library of books on Kent Archæology and Topography for the members' use is being formed and is lodged at present at the local office of the Kent Record Society in Hawk's Lane, under the kind supervision of Mr. Frank Tyler.

The official opening of Canterbury Castle after restoration was performed by Sir Charles Peers on May 7th, 1935 ; the Mayor and Corporation attended in state and many members of the Society were present by invitation.

The ceremony of handing over the only remaining bastion of the north city-wall, known as Trott's house from the sixteenth century occupant, took place in the Guildhall on June 5th, 1935 ; the Mayor on behalf of the City accepted the gift of the title-deeds. This bastion was saved from demolition by the Society's efforts extending over many years, on the initiative of their first Secretary, Mr. Walter Cozens. It was used as a powder-magazine during the Napoleonic Wars, when the great wooden mill, destroyed by fire in 1933, was erected, close at hand, to hold the City's emergency supply of flour in case of invasion. The City Council sold Trott's house into private ownership a century ago ; it is at present used as a cottage ; but it is hoped that the coating of plaster covering the ancient stonework may eventually be removed and the building restored.

Excavations are being carried on in the garden of No. 15 Precincts, to investigate the lower courses of the city wall, which there formed the eastern boundary of the Monastery.

Fragments of Samian ware, much mediæval pottery, bones and oyster shells have been unearthed, but so far no definite conclusions have been reached. A section of the north wall of the Saxon Church of St. Michael under the tower of which the old military lane passed out to the Burgate postern, has been uncovered, showing that like St. Mary's Queningate, the church stood against the city wall.

On the site of the new Post Office interesting Roman finds were made, including portions of a probable river-side wharf. The finds are to be deposited in the Royal Museum by the Board of Works.

Dr. Cotton's letters to *The Times*, identifying with much probability the six Kings on the west choir screen of the Cathedral, aroused much interest. Otherwise no member of the Society has this year ventured into print.

DOROTHY GARDINER.

## REPORT ON FINDS AND EXCAVATIONS ABOUT SEVENOAKS

### OTFORD ROMAN SITE.

Large quantities of Roman tiles on the surface of a field, formerly a hop garden, S.E. of the Church, have attracted attention for several years past, but it was not until October, 1934, that, thanks to the kindness of the new landowner, Mr. E. D. McDowall, it was possible to open a trench. Débris of the usual type—shards of many fabrics, oyster shells, glass, wall plaster, flue tiles, etc.—was at once encountered, but the hope of finding anything definite in the shape of a building was not fulfilled, the remains of the flint walls being in a chaotic state with pieces of ragstone lying about indiscriminately. A small piece of pavement of the latter material was the nearest approach to any surviving construction.

Two other trenches yielded similar results and one is forced to the conclusion that the whole site was completely spoiled by the builders of the church and of successive buildings of the palace of the Archbishop, all of them close at hand. This is very disappointing as the character of the finds, especially the very large number of hypocaust tiles, points to an extensive settlement, corresponding in date and importance to the villa a few hundred yards to the East excavated in 1927 and 1928 (*Arch. Cant.*, Vols. XXXIX and XLII).

The sowing of the field for pasture early this year put a stop to excavation, but it is hoped that work will be resumed next spring.

A further examination of "Becket's Well", which lies on the edge of the field mentioned above, seems to confirm a previous opinion that this structure was used as a fresh water tank by the occupants of the palace, the adjoining pool being a laundry or bathing place with steps down into the water. There is nothing to indicate an earlier date, although the stream below contains Roman debris, presumably washed in from the banks.

#### THE NEWLY-TRACED ROMAN ROAD, NORTH AND SOUTH OF EDENBRIDGE.

A reference to this occurs in our report in Vol. XLVI. Prolonged search along the direct line from the Surrey boundary near Tatsfield to Limpsfield Chart and past Trevereux and Hurst Farm to Rushett on the Edenbridge main road gave no result, but some chance information as to hard metalling found in laying out the garden of Early Lands two or three hundred yards East of the direct line and about the same distance North of Rushett, led to the discovery of a section of the Roman way. (Curiously enough the "hard metalling" referred to above seems to have nothing to do with the Roman road, being, probably, merely an old cart track to Hurst Farm.) The owner of Early Lands, Major Desmond Morton, readily gave permission for

excavation and the road was opened up for some little distance, with a complete trench across the South end.

The road proved to be about 20 feet wide and 1 foot thick at the camber, tapering to two or three layers of metal at the edge. The metal is a local stone, mostly in pieces about the size of a man's hand and deeply stained with iron. On each side of the road are traces of a ditch and on the West side the ditch contained some pieces of Roman pottery, verified as such by the British Museum, but too fragmentary for dating.

The depth beneath the existing ground surface is less than a foot, whilst the alignment is a little to the East of North. If this alignment is followed for a few hundred yards it leads to an old steading, recently demolished and known by the significant name of "Stone Street". This name had not, of course, been unnoticed before the Early Lands discovery, but no trace could be found of the road there, before or since that discovery. The route from the above house to Kent Hatch remains uncertain and owing to probable coincidence, or near coincidence, with the modern main road, may never be established. The section at Early Lands was seen and approved by Mr. I. D. Margary, of the Sussex Society, who was so successful in tracing the road South of Edenbridge, and by Mr. James Graham, of the Surrey Society, who has this spring (1935) discovered another section on the line, predicted by him a year or two ago, along the Titsey-Tatsfield parish boundary. This section is extremely well defined, thick flint metalling on rammed chalk as opposed to the ironstone in the Kentish section and the solid rammed furnace slag in the Sussex section near Holtye excavated by Mr. Margary.

The discovery of this way from London into Sussex, in which Mr. Margary has taken so great a share (Sussex Arch. Society's "Collections", Vol. LXXIII) is a very valuable example of recent archaeological work in the South of England. In connection with it, the writer has conjectured the possibility, if not probability, that Harold's army marched along it to Maresfield, turning thence along the ridges to the assembly hill above Battle. This route

would only be about five miles further than by the muddy tracks through Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Salehurst, and offers the added advantage of crossing the Medway and Rother, in their higher reaches. The fact that his main army marched some 420 miles, having fought a battle in the North and taken up a position in Sussex, in something less than three weeks, surely indicates that the Roman roads throughout were still in fair order at that fateful time.

F. GODWIN.

## ARCHÆOLOGY IN KENT, 1935.

### PALÆOLITHIC.

The occipital portion of a human skull was discovered in the middle gravel of the 100 ft. terrace at Swanscombe. This horizon produces flint implements of St. Acheul type and the find is important in that it is the only human fossil in England that has been recovered from a deposit whose archaeological age is well-determined.

### NEOLITHIC.

Polished flint axe found by Mr. N. French in his garden at Parish Well next to the church at Burham.

A polished flint axe was found at the bottom of a stream at Headcorn.

### BRONZE AGE.

A bronze palstave found when making a new green on Ashford golf links in January.

A large urn was found inverted in a sandpit near Potters Corner, Ashford.

A crouched human burial was uncovered by men excavating chalk at the Westwell limeworks, Charing. The bones were sent to Sir Arthur Keith, who says that he presumes, from the identity of the grave with many that he has seen on the chalk round Brighton, that it is a late Bronze Age burial, crouched on the left side, face looking south over the Weald. Important support for this identification

was found some months later when a workman discovered fragments of a pot within a few feet of the site of the burial. When restored, this pot was seen to be a bucket-shaped urn with a ring of finger-nail ornament round the rim, which dates either from the end of the Bronze Age or the beginning of the early Iron Age.

#### EARLY IRON AGE.

A large bucket-shaped pot was discovered by S. Nicholls, Esq., in a brick earth field called "The Quintan", Milton-next-Sittingbourne. It has an applied band of clay with finger-tip impressions just below the rim.

A mass of potsherds, dating 50 B.C. to A.D. 50, were found at Hythe, when excavating the foundations of a house above the old Hythe-Sandgate railway. It was not possible to discover whether the sherds were buried in pits, or whether they were associated with any other structure.

#### ROMANO-BRITISH.

The South Suburban Gas Company have kindly sent finds from two localities to me for identification. The first consisted of an amphora handle and a dish of Terra Sigillata, form 18/31 Drag. stamped OF. MACCAR. These were found at Springhead. The second site was that of a building estate called Northfield Hall, Orpington. From here were recovered burials of the second and third centuries A.D. The Terra Sigillata consisted of two Drag. 33 cups and a small dish Ludovici type Tg.

The garden of Dr. Taylor of New Hayters, Aldington, has produced two Roman sites, the first yielding sherds of the mid first century and the second foundations of a building. Post holes sunk in the second site came upon piers built of square tiles which suggested the remains of a hypocaust.

A first century 1st Brass was found in a garden at Pembury Road, Tonbridge, and Dr. Welch sends me the following list of other Roman coins. Dartford district: coins of Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Aquilia Severa wife of Elagabalus, Claudius II, and a coin of Heraclius

A.D. 610-631 struck at Alexandria. Rochester district : bronze coin of Constantius Chlorus.

At the end of December 1935 a hoard of coins belonging to the end of the second century A.D. was dug up in Church Street, Maidstone.

Circular markings in a crop of corn at Fawkham were inspected by J. M. Brander, Esq., who submits the following report :—

“ At point long. O. 17' 40" E., lat. 51, 23' 43" N., just on the 200 ft. contour line and to the west of the letter ' S ' in Salt Farm, there is clearly visible in a field of wheat the outline of a circle, of about 40-50 yards in diameter. As it was impossible to go into the field to make a close inspection or take any measurements and my observations were therefore made from the high ground to the east of the road and from the railway embankment to the north-east of the field, a distance of some 400 yards in each case, you will understand that my description is necessarily vague. Immediately to the north of this circle are two smaller circles, whose perimeters appear to overlap at one point. There are also three round marks in proximity to the large circle, and a number of other markings of vague shape whose form I was unable to determine. As the light was unsuitable I could take no photographs. It is impossible to hazard any opinion as to what these circles and marks may be, but I suggest that an examination of the ground after the corn has been cut may possibly reveal something worthy of further investigation.

Mr. Raine also showed me, in the wood at the back of his house, Woodside, two banks with, in each case, traces of a ditch, and apparently ancient. It is again impossible to offer any opinion on these, but the geographical situation on high ground at the entrance to a valley is one on which one might reasonably expect to find an earthwork. Mr. Raine moreover told me that he has found numerous worked flints at the back of his house, though he has not kept any.”

NORMAN COOK.

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