

ROMAN SITE AND FINDS, STOUR STREET, CANTERBURY.

BY H. T. MEAD AND K. H. JONES, M.B., F.S.A.

WHILST digging the foundations of the new Automatic Telephone Exchange in Stour Street, Canterbury, during the summer of 1935, there were exposed a number of large balks of oak timber which had evidently been mortised and tenoned together, and apparently had formed a part of a wooden quay, bordering the River Stour. Although the nature of the excavation only permitted of a partial plan being made, it was evident that the quay had been of considerable size.

The timber structures were found at a depth of from eighteen to twenty feet below the present ground level and were imbedded in black mud. They were for the most part well preserved and showed the marks of the tools used to trim them into shape. A large number of finds were discovered and these were identified by Mr. Bertram W. Pearce, M.A., F.S.A. They are described by him below.

Several soles of men's and child's sandals were found in good condition. Metal objects were not very abundant but included the bronze rim of the bottom of a bucket, iron nails, and sundry remains of tools.

A very thin strip of gilt bronze with holes in it for small tacks or rivets was probably part of the casing of a wooden box. Oyster shells and the bones of domestic animals, with horn cores of cattle and pieces of deer antler were fairly abundant. An awl or piercer of red deer horn rubbed down was also found.

A corner of an inscribed marble slab, perhaps of a funereal character, was found but with not enough of the inscription to make translation possible.

A large flat square stone was probably part of a frieze of a large building, as it was moulded in a way to make such

220 ROMAN SITE AND FINDS AT CANTERBURY.

employment likely. From the nature of the ware found it is probable that the quay was in use during the first, second and third centuries.

Very great help in connection with these discoveries has been given by the Architect responsible for the proposed new buildings, Mr. D. N. Dyke, O.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., and who has very kindly arranged for the relics to be handed to the Beaney Institute at Canterbury. The excavations were under the supervision of Mr. H. Silverston, L.R.I.B.A., of H.M. Office of Works, who has reported upon and explained the exhibits.

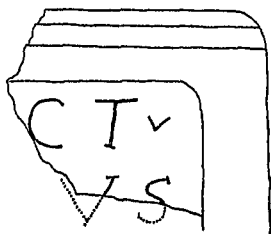
REPORT ON THE ROMAN POTTERY, ETC.

COINS (2).

- (1) Obv. A VITELLIVS GERMAN IMP TR P Head laureate, r.
Rev. CONCORDIA P R Concordia seated l. holding patera and cornucopia. M. and S. 2. Denarius, A.D. 69.
- (2) Obv. FAVSTINA AVGVSTA Bust diad. r.
Rev. MATRI MAGNAE S C Cybele holding drum seated r. between two lions. M and S. (M. AVREL) 1663. Sestertius. Faustina the Younger, wife of Marcus Aurelius died A.D. 175.

INSCRIPTION.

The right-hand top corner, roughly $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches, of a marble slab.



POTTERY.

Samian Ware. Decorated.

- F 30. Two fragments of the same bowl: medallions. South Gaulish, early.
- F 37. (1) Seven fragments of a bowl:—ovolo with large rosette, wavy line below, shrub as used by potter Mommo, Cupid r. Flavian.
- (2) Large, coarse, heavy base—late second or early third century.
- (3) Fragment indeterminate.

Plain Ware. Some first century but mostly second.

- F 15/17 One fragment.
- 18 Fragments of six to eight plates.
- 18/31 Base with rouletted band.
- 31 Single fragments of c. five bowls.
- 27 (1) Small cup, bright glaze stamped VITAL First century.
- (2) Similar, dull glaze, stamped TRONM obscured by fingerprint.
- (3) Large cup, stamp broken away.
- Six fragments.
- F 33 (1) Stamped MARTIO. For shape cf. Oswald and Pryce, Pl LI, II. Base and two fragments. Lezoux.
- (2) Stamped ALBVCIANI base. Antonine.
- (3) Stamped ENIM base.
- (4) Base with illegible stamp.
- (5) Fragments of two other cups.
- F 35/6 Two fragments.
- F 43 (?) Two fragments of rim and flange.
- F 45 (1) Four fragments making up the greater part of one bowl, bright glaze, no spout, inside studded with grit.
- (2) Fragment of another.

222 ROMAN SITE AND FINDS AT CANTERBURY.

F 79-80 Two fragments of the same dish.

F 82 Fragments of two bowls, one with flat, the other with curved flange.

Two large flat bases each with narrow band of rouletting.

Colour coated Ware.

Fragment of red flanged bowl Rich. 110.

Two other fragments, red and brown.

Jug necks. Large.

Black with pinched-in mouth.

White clay, black slip inside and out. Two handles.

Jug necks. Small.

White and drab 5, red 2, black 1, all first or early second century types.

Stump footed Beakers.

- (1) Large, indented, metallic slip inside, black outside, the indentations separated by vertical rows of black and brown scales.
- (2) Fragments of beaker, black outside, reddish brown inside, decorated with lines and clusters like grapes in light red barbotine.
- (3) Bases :—black 6, red 5 (two very small).
- (4) Narrow jar, cf. Rich. 327-8.

Mortaria.

Stamped MARTIANS in a border all round of lattice work shading. There are two impressions on the rim, one below the other. Smooth light drab clay, flanged type rim, sharply undercut. Second century. 1.

Other second century types. 6.

Third or early fourth century, hammer head, types. 2.

Black and grey ware.

Small jar, flat bottom, two bands of rouletting round the middle with a polished band between, narrow neck. 1. Fragments of a similar larger jar. 1.

One fragment of Upchurch ware, polished, decorated with semi-circles and radiating lines as in Rich. 283, no lip.

Poppy head beakers, fragments of four to five, one with panel of raised dots.

Carinated bowls Rich. 216, hard grey sandy clay, level lip. 4. Another, but with lip curved.

Polished cup imitating the Samian form, F 35/6.

Flanged bowls. Third or fourth century. 2.

Bead rimmed bowls. 2.

Bowls with curved outbent rims, polished, one with vertical striations. 5-6.

Large jar, outbent mouth, slight constriction at neck, vertical side, lattice work decoration in middle, coarse.

Bowls with thickened outbent rims. 6 fragments.

Large store jars, thick outbent rim, one decorated on shoulder with row of crosses, ? made with roulette : combing below. 2.

Bases various, about 12.

Light grey high shouldered beaker, hard sandy clay.

Large jar, grey, smooth clay.

Red, white and yellow ware.

Bowl or jug, flat base, two grooves on middle, light red.

Fragment of bowl, brown slip outside, light buff inside, late.

Fragment of bowl, hard rough yellow clay, plain mouth.

Part of mouth of jar, thin, slightly outbent, red.

224 ROMAN SITE AND FINDS AT CANTERBURY.

Part of plate, flat rim with groove, polished inside, light reddish brown.

Bases of large jar or jug, and small jar ; drab ware.

Part of small lid.

Tiles—flanged, curved and box tiles.

Amphorae. Top of two-handled, bulbous amphora, and handle of another.

CONCLUSIONS.

The Samian ware was about equally divided between the first and second centuries, none however being essentially pre-Flavian. Of the coarse ware, the second century material was more plentiful than that of the first, and about equal to that of the third. A few pieces might be either of the third or fourth century, but none definitely fourth.

The evidence suggests an occupation which began about A.D. 70, and continued steadily till about A.D. 300, when it ceased.

The discovery of burnt daub indicates the presence of a wattle and daub house which was destroyed by fire, from the kitchen refuse of which came a large number of animal bones found near by. Another striking discovery was masses of reeds matted together as they had grown. The river was evidently silting up or shifting its bed. The beginning of the fourth century is perhaps too early a date to suggest for the general silting up of the Stour, which caused Fordwich to become the port of Canterbury, but the burning of the house may have been followed by the abandonment of the wharf and a subsequent neglect of this reach of the river, so permitting the growth of a bed of reeds which would otherwise have been cleared away to keep the channel open.

BERTRAM W. PEARCE, M.A., F.S.A.