

Reports

REPORT OF FINDS FROM THE ORPINGTON DISTRICT, BY THE ORPINGTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL AND RECORD SOCIETY.

POTTERY found at Bellefield Road, Orpington, 1946 (Kent Sheet, XVI, N.E.) various sherds of large storage jars with stabbing on shoulders, as in *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. LI, p. 179 (1939). Also rims of several shapes, and a base 10 inches across. Also about half a pail of small pieces which can probably be put together. Half of a small bottle of the same ware, size about 3 inches by 1 inch. CASTOR WARE. Fragments as in Collingwood, *Roman Britain*, 1924, p. 72. These put together show the hinder part of a hare. SAMIAN. Fragments of a late 2nd C. mortarium with white grit. Parts of a cup, mid 2nd C., with the potter's name in base (ALBVCI), another cup with the potter's name on the rim, (letters BVR), late 1st-early 2nd C. and other fragments, Drag. 37, showing a dog's or wolf's head Potter CINNAMUS. BELGIC BLACK WARE. Part of a dish about 1½ inches deep, also several rims of vessels. UPCHURCH WARE. Rim and part of a vase (*Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XVII, p. 192) with other sherds.

ROMAN COINS. Found in 1939 in Lower Road, Orpington (Kent Sheet XVI, N.E.). Vespasian, A.D. 69-79. Denarius struck by Titus during his reign. This was found in River Cray about 6 inches deep when cable was being laid. Hadrian, 117-138, found in Bridge Road, Antoninus Pius, 138-168, Denarius, found in Forest Way. Marcus Aurelius, 161-180. Denarius. Septimus Severus, 193-211. Denarius.

TOKEN. This was found in 1942 after a bomb had dropped in St. Paul's Cray. Ann Manning. St. Mary Cray in Kent. 1658. The Manning family lived at Kevington Manor, St. Mary Cray, and their memorial brasses are in the N. and S. aisles of the chancel of St. Mary Cray Church.

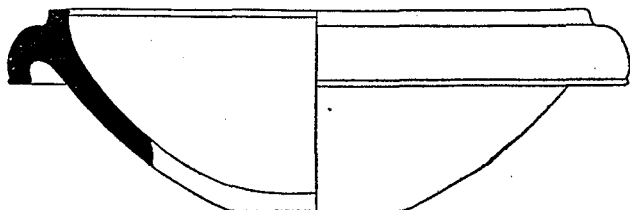
A. ELDRIDGE.

REPORT OF FINDS AND OF EXCAVATIONS IN THE BOROUGH OF WOOLWICH

It is remarkable that nearly all the Romano-British pottery found in this Borough has been associated with burials—some of which have not even yet been adequately recorded, though they were discovered nearly a century ago. Only two indications of definite living sites are noted, one in the grounds of the War Memorial Hospital on Shooters Hill (*Antiq. Jour.*, Vol. V, pp. 174-176) and the other in

Archery Road, Eltham. A full list of local finds is to be found in the *Jour. B.A.A.* (N.S.) Vol. XXXIV, pp. 191-194, and only one of these, a Romano-British quern found at Bostal Heath, points to a domestic site, and the obvious disproportion between the cemeteries, and the homes for the living, suggests that there are many huts, if not houses, waiting to be uncovered.

On the occasion of the Woolwich Antiquarian Society's Jubilee Exhibition held at the Well Hall Art Gallery in the autumn of the year 1946, much of the Romano-British pottery discovered in the neighbourhood was exhibited, and this aroused great interest, especially as most of it had not been shown to the general public before. One result of this was that some more fragments were given to the writer, with, what was of greater value, a clear description of the find



MORTARIUM FROM PLUMSTEAD (½)

spot. There were only two pieces, one a portion of the well-known shallow bowl or plate of grey black ware with a burnished lattice pattern on the outside, and the other, a large fragment of a mortarium of orange buff ware. The latter shows very few embedded particles usual in such vessels and can be dated late 2nd-3rd century. These sherds were discovered about 1932 by the donor while digging in his garden at 20 Waterdale Road, Plumstead. He says that there were other pieces that have not been preserved.

These finds, from the lower slopes of Bostal Hill and by the side of the little stream called, in 13th century documents, the Woghebourne tend to confirm the view that the writer has for long held, that the inhabitants of the several cemeteries at one time lived on the dry gravelly plateau of Bostal, and in the valley adjoining, and that discoveries have been few because the area has not been under cultivation for many years, and that as it is now a London County Council open space, excavation is not very likely in the future.

The find spot of this new record is less than a furlong from the Wickham Lane burial group, of which I have the pottery, while the associated leaden coffin is in Maidstone Museum. (*Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XVII, p. 10 and illustrations.)

ROMAN CANTERBURY. THE CITY OF DUROVERNUM

EXCAVATIONS UNDERTAKEN SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1944, CHRISTMAS 1944, EASTER 1945, SUMMER 1945, CHRISTMAS 1945, EASTER 1946 AND AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1946

ALL of these separate excavations can now be read in two pamphlets which have been published as Nos. 1 and 2 at 2s. each by the Medici Society of the work undertaken by the Canterbury Excavation Committee. Full reports of the work, first under the supervision of Mrs. Audrey Williams and secondly of Mr. Sheppard Frere have appeared and will appear in the annual volumes of *Archæologia Cantiana* but the above pamphlets are valuable in that they give a connected story with their illustrations and plans; and a conspectus of our knowledge of the Roman city as far as it has been elucidated. Their sale should help the expenses which are very considerable in spite of the fact that nearly all of the labour used is voluntary.

It is proposed to continue the work of excavation on suitable sites ahead of rebuilding, Christmas 1947, and during other holiday periods. Subscribers to the work, which had been under the guidance, as Hon. Secretary, of Major F. W. Tomlinson and is now under that of Mr. John Boyle, the Town Clerk, will be informed by preliminary reports of the progress of the work undertaken.

W.P.D.S.

MANUSCRIPTS OF THE CORPORATION OF CANTERBURY

IN June 1946, Mr. F. Higenbottam, City Librarian and Curator of the Royal Museum, and the writer, brought to light a large cache of manuscripts. They have proved to be the main bulk of the administrative archives of the City of Canterbury from the 14th to the 19th centuries. The discovery solves the hitherto unexplained references in Bunce's manuscript *Extracts from the City Records* (preserved in the Reference Library of the Beaney Institute) and in the report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, to classes of apparently non-existent MSS. A great deal of sorting has been done, but no real condition of order has yet been established owing to the chaotic state in which the documents were found. They were discovered packed in twenty-five large packing cases in a cellar of the Institute. The collection clearly represents the MSS. stored in the last century in the condemned cell in the Westgate, and noted very briefly by J. B. Sheppard in his account of the City Archives in Historical Manuscripts Commission Report, IX, i, pp. 129-131. Apparently they were removed half a century ago to the cellar in which they were found, and then lost sight of.

The following classes have been found :

Legal : Plea rolls of civil cases tried before the Bailiffs, and subsequently Mayors of Canterbury, 14th-19th centuries, Some of the early cases are reported in very considerable detail, and provide undoubtedly the best picture we have of the ordinary secular life lived in Canterbury in the Middle Ages.

Sessions rolls of criminal cases between the above dates.

Pie Powder Court rolls : isolated rolls of various dates from the 15th century onward have been found.

Sheriff's Court rolls : odd rolls of various dates, 15th century ff.

Every kind of subsidiary document to the above : indictments, jury lists, warrants for distraint, death, etc. ; presentments of ward juries, and all grades of early police activity.

Financial : Tollage rolls of the City, 14th century ff. covering local and national taxation : window-tax, hearth-tax, etc.

Lists of subscriptions for various causes, such as for sufferers from plague, want, and so forth.

Quietus of the Sheriff for payment of the City " Farm " at the Royal Exchequer, 14th-19th centuries (with considerable gaps).

Military : Muster rolls of the City Trainbands, 16th and 17th centuries, together with accounts of arms available at various dates. John Marlow, evidently father of the dramatist, appears as an archer in a roll apparently of 1588.

Railways : A large collection of plans, elevations and other documents relative to schemes for railways passing through or near the City, c. 1840-c. 1860.

Harbledown Hospital : Receipts issued for annual payment for support of the Hospital out of the City " Farm ", 16th century.

Miscellaneous : Large numbers of odd documents of every kind over several centuries : correspondence, petitions, bills, receipts, extents, surveys, rentals, writs, etc., in the greatest profusion. An item of special interest is a leaf of a once magnificent psalter of the 15th century. This leaf was used as a file cover for pleas of 1558. It is badly damaged, but a fine initial " C " survives in fair state. The leaf probably emanates from one of the local scriptoria : it is significant that the MS. it covers dates from the period of the break-up of the monastic libraries.

The documents as a whole have suffered from damp : damage is not so severe however, as at first anticipated, owing to the capacity of recuperation possessed by the MSS. when dried. Some papers are quite ruined, mainly window-tax books, 18th-19th centuries. The percentage of the collection rendered completely unserviceable is very small.

It is depressing to record that some items specifically mentioned in the Historical Manuscripts Commission Report have not materialized, e.g. :

Quietus of the Sheriff of Canterbury, for the " Farm " of the City. A large number of examples have been found, but no trace at all appears of either " the membranes belonging to the reign of Mary Tudor . . . filed upon a string " or " those for the . . . reign of Elizabeth . . . stitched end to end to form a roll nearly fifty feet in length.¹ Also the following

Note-book of a Town Clerk. " A thick paper volume with parchment lids compiled by a law-student of the 17th century . . . It is neatly written and contains a list of Chancellors . . . from the time of Edward the Confessor to the early part of the reign of Charles I . . . Fees payable to the officers of the Chancery, rules of the Court, and a large collection of ruling cases ", etc.²

Book of Murage. " A thin paper book, dating from (perhaps) the middle of the fifteenth century, and recording, in a coarse handwriting the various sums in which the several citizens were assessed for the repairs of the city gates and walls ", etc.³

Court of Burghmote. Plea roll for 20 Edward III, containing cases Rolf v. Kynott, Fex and wife v. Plomer and wife, Wicham v. Taillour, etc. This has been printed in part.⁴

Recognizances of debts under the Statute of Acton Burnell temp. Edward III; " several narrow strips of parchment . . . indented down one side ".⁵ Documents probably in the form of rolls. Some rolls of this series are in hand but do not seem to be the ones noticed in the Historical MSS. Report.⁶

The most prolonged searches have failed to bring any of the above to light. That alienations of Corporation Manuscripts have taken place is established as some of the most important documents belonging to the City were recovered from private hands after a lawsuit a quarter of a century ago, and the authorities of the British Museum some years back returned to Canterbury an extensive collection of strayed local MSS. with which they had been presented.

If any reader of *Archæologia Cantiana* knows of the whereabouts of MSS. answering to the description of any of the above, information will be most gratefully received by Mr. F. Higenbottam, City Librarian and Curator of the Royal Museum, High Street, Canterbury.

Another discovery, not related to the above, has been made in

¹ *H.M.C.*, IX, i., p. 129.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 130-131.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

connection with the lost Coroners' Rolls of the City of Canterbury. William Somner quotes frequently from what he calls the "Crown Rolls" of various dates in the 14th century.¹ Close watch has been kept for these in the archives for a long time. Trace of them has now been found in the shape of the envelope round the seal of the City Charter of Henry VII. This envelope seems to be all that is left of the medieval Coroners' Rolls, and is a pointer to the fate of the remainder, i.e. they were probably cut up and used for binding and repair purposes. The fragment discovered relates to the year 1338.

WILLIAM URRY.

EXCAVATIONS AT DOVER, 1946

In *Arch. Cant.* (Vol. LVIII, 1945, pp. 74-75) a report appeared describing the work carried out in 1945. In 1946 another area, again under the direction of Mrs. Murray-Threipland, was excavated. This site towards the western side of the suggested Roman fortress, and south of that of St. Martin's le Grand, showed some 7 feet down a road probably 22 feet wide running N. and S. with two shallow gutters dividing it up into three carriage-ways. This was flanked on the E. by a wall of squared chalk blocks still preserved to a height of some four feet, although cut into by medieval pits. Two periods of walling join this wall at right angles, and, from their nature, indicate perhaps a row of shops or barracks, with clay floors and unplastered walls. In one place a few tiles and stones laid down in a scattering of cement gave a firmer footing.

The finds of pottery and small objects point to the occupation of the above rooms in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. The later levels must have been destroyed by the medieval builders for 4th century material occurs frequently at their tips in this area. Among the more important objects is an enamel brooch, while a good deal of the medieval pottery is especially welcome as much is identical with similar fabrics found at the site of the medieval town of Stonar.

An appeal has been sent out by the Committee for funds to continue this work before the inevitable rebuilding takes place. Donations should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, c/o The Manager, Westminster Bank Ltd, 5-6 King Street, Dover, or to P. V. Marchant Esq., A.M.I.C.E., Hon. Secretary, Maison Dieu House, Dover.

W.P.D.S.

¹ *Antiquities of Canterbury*, ed. of 1703, pp. 17n, 18n, 41, 166, etc.