

September 24th, 1877.

The REV. J. H. HILL, F.S.A., in the chair.

The Chairman read the following letter, addressed to a local newspaper, relative to the discoveries at Hallaton referred to at the last meeting.

HALLATON,

7TH AUGUST, 1877.

Sir,

To those of your readers who are interested in the archæology of the county, the following *addenda* to the Papers read by the Rev. J. H. Hill at the Library on the 30th, will be of interest.

With regard to the Medbourne tessellated pavement, I may explain that the complete drawing, showing the pavement in its original entirety—as alluded to by Mr. Hill—is now photographed, and is also being chromolithographed. Both will shortly be exhibited.

The exploration of the so-called Castle Hill at Hallaton, has not as yet afforded any decided tokens of occupation earlier than Roman. The mound does not appear to have been a barrow or place of sepulture, but was, I should imagine, a mere stronghold, and (according to the late Mr. Thompson's conjecture) the work of Normans or possibly even of Saxons. It has been interesting to find among evidences of these later nationalities the worn and broken fragments of Roman cinerary urns, and one or two small instruments of bronze and iron and brass, and on the other hand the clean sharp fragments of more recent pottery (*i.e.*, broken and deposited there whilst the mound was building), are there by hundreds, as also pieces of leathern shoes, bones of nearly every animal known in England, wrought wooden staves and pointed stakes, a portion of a ladder, a wooden shovel, and portions of bowls, all in oak. Nor was there lacking evidence—in the ashes of wood fires, and in the burnt and broken pots and splintered bones—of the way in which the rude workmen had fed. Mr. Hill has already referred to the rough oak branches found at depths of fourteen to sixteen feet. The original native ground, on which the tumulus was raised, was distinctly visible at 17 ft. 6 in. from the summit of the present mound; no trace of disturbance could be perceived in it over the whole extent of our shafts and galleries. On this original surface lay a bed, or rather many beds, amounting to four feet thick, of black peaty silt and made ground (containing rough boulder stones), which strikes one as singularly ill-adapted to form a foundation for the great weight of dense yellow clay which forms the summit. Indeed, the numerous slips around the foot testify to the subsidence of the soft stuff which those faulty "engineers" had thus put underneath.

The camp adjoining (of horse-shoe shape) yielded abundant evidence of Roman tenure, such as fragments of crucibles, much smelted iron ore,

articles in worked iron, &c.; and the fragments of pottery correspond with those in the tumulus, being Norman, Saxon, Danish, and Roman, although one or two specimens have strongly the appearance of early British ware. Here, also, it should be noted, there are many signs of comparatively recent occupation, and one cannot avoid the conclusion that the plough, or certainly the spade, has been at work here within the last century or two. It would be interesting to find whether the county archives retain any record throwing light on this.

No trace of any building whatever has been come on, nor do I think that, beyond a rude armoury, or smith's forge, any has ever existed here. Neither were human bones or any coins discovered.

On the whole, I am inclined to think that the theory that the Hallaton Castle Hill is British in origin is not untenable; the finding of a very valuable British gold coin at a spot about 500 yards to the eastward (some 25 years ago), favours the idea. And that it has passed under Saxon or Danish rule is supported by the finding (at the Hill itself, some fifteen years ago) of a fine stone quern, or corn mill, of no doubt Scandinavian origin, and which is now in my possession. Its Roman tenure is simply unquestionable; and the Norman occupation is, I think, attested by the fashion of the leathern shoes, the pottery ware, &c.

I am also disposed to think that the adjacent earthworks—about half a mile and one mile to the west of the Castle Hill—are mere outposts or adjuncts to this, the grand old monument of probably many a savage struggle between the confused races of our wild and brutal forefathers.

Thanking you and the Rev. J. H. Hill for your kindly notice of my labours at this most interesting spot,

I am, yours obediently,

HENRY A. DIBBIN.

MR. HILL also laid on the table an account of some tiles which had recently been found at Bubbenhall, near Leamington. Of these he gave the following account:—

In the month of June labourers were employed to pull down some outbuildings at Bubbenhall, near the seat of Mr. Bromley Davenport, M.P., with a view of remodelling and erecting them. These buildings were apparently roofed with the ordinary red tiles of the neighbourhood, and as they were taken off they were piled under a hedge, and in an adjoining field. Nothing appeared extraordinary about them until almost by chance one of them was found to bear an inscription in Roman letters. Altogether seven or eight were found to be thus stamped, though many, perhaps twenty or thirty, were obviously of the same age, make, and material. One of these was taken to Mr. Henry Davis, chemist, of Leamington, who subsequently handed it to Mr. J. Tom Burgess. Two were taken to Ryton-on-Dunsmore, and four remain at Mr. Grimes' of Bubbenhall. Mr. Burgess sent a description of the tiles to several well-known antiquaries, and on Saturday last a brief description—not altogether accurate—appeared in *Notes and Queries*. This note has given rise to some

correspondence, the gist of which is embodied with the "note and query" in the following letter:—

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to a paragraph which appeared in last week's *Notes and Queries*, page 28, reading as follows:—

“ OLD ROMAN INSCRIPTION.

“In repairing the roof of an old house at Bubbenhall, near Leamington, a quantity of Roman tiles were removed, on seven of which the appended inscription was plainly visible. The house is said to be more than two hundred years old, and its roof had evidently been built of these ancient tiles, which, from their number, had doubtless been found in the neighbourhood. Tradition is silent respecting the occupation by the Romans of the spot. It is, however, not far from the Fosseway. Perhaps some of your readers can throw light on the name of the cohort of which L. Æmilius Salvianus was tribune:—

DEO INVICTO
HERCVLI SACR
L. AEML SALVANVS
TRB. CoH IVANGI
VS. P.M.

Do these contractions read *Voto suscepto* and *Posuit merito*?

“ VICAR.”

Now, Sir, this is an exact copy of an inscription found at the great Roman station at Risingham, in Northumberland, nearly three centuries ago. It occurs upon an altar, which is now preserved at Trinity College, Cambridge. It was first described by Camden, in his 1607 edition of his *Britannia*. It is the “Northumberland XXXI.” of Horsley in his *Britannia Romana*, and is described by Dr. Bruce in the *Lapidarium Septentrionale* (No. 598, page 310). The latter author, from an inspection of the stone *in its present state*, says that he cannot make out the last letter but one as P, but that all now visible is I. He, therefore, takes the last line to be the usual formula on altars, V.S.L.M. These tiles, however, seem to confirm Camden's and Horsley's readings of P, the expansion of the phrase not being, as “Vicar” considers, *Voto suscepto* and *Posuit merito*, but *Votum solvit posuit merito*. The cohort named is COHORS. I. VANGIONVM, many inscriptions having been left by it at Risingham. Lucius Æmilius Salvianus commanded it, as we know by another inscription, in the year A.D. 205. Whether the tiles found bear modern copies of the inscription, or whether they are of the Roman period, is a most interesting question; I am inclined to think the first-named hypothesis the correct one.

I remain, Sir,

Yours very truly,

W. THOMPSON WATKIN.

39, Plumpton Street, Everton, Liverpool,
July 18th, 1877.*

* *Notes and Queries*, 5th S. viii. pp. 28, 74. See also pp. 133 and 195.

A close examination of the nine stamps—for two of the tiles are stamped twice—revealed the name to be Salvianus, and that he was tribune of the First Cohort of Vangiones, a people of Germany inhabiting the district of Hesse Darmstadt, and their capital was called Borbetomagus, and is now known as the City of Worms. These people are mentioned by Lucan i. v. 431, and by Cæsar G. i. c. 51, and by Tacitus.

The principal doubt respecting these tiles is their rarity. An inscription similar to this has never been recorded as found on any tile before. The tile is of the ordinary shape, 10 by 7½ inches, and a little more than half an inch thick, with one "stub" in the centre of the upper part. The stamp, 4 by 3 inches, has been cut in relief like type on a block of metal, which has evidently had a polished surface. The T in Invicto, and the I's in Aemil, Salvianus, and Trib are all carried above the line. If some one saw the inscription in Camden's *Britannia*, Gibson's Edition, 1695, p. 451, and imitated it, he must have had some knowledge of antiquity, for Gibson gives the last letter but one as L, "Libenter," whilst on the tiles it is P, "Posuit," or, as some have rendered it, "Pietum." If they are genuine, it is, as Mr. M. H. Bloxam, F.S.A., remarks, the most important discovery of Roman remains in Warwickshire since the finding at Alcester, upwards of 200 hundred years ago, of silver aenarii and fourteen or fifteen Roman aurei.

Mr. Charles Roach Smith, F.S.A., one of the greatest authorities on Roman antiquities in England, points out how many eminent French antiquaries have been taken in by similar so-called inscribed antiquities. Tiles, we know, are frail articles, and the preservation of thin tiles whole like these through sixteen and a half centuries of storms, wars, and tempests, is a strong argument against their antiquity.

When Mr. Tom Burgess visited the spot the building itself had been removed, but much of the *debris* remained. The fire-place and chimney stack had evidently been built of strong mortar, in which pounded brick had been freely used with binding courses of similar tiles. The roof itself was not all composed of these so-called Roman tiles, but there were other tiles of similar appearance, but broader and stouter, and not made of so fine a material.

Of course it is a mere matter of conjecture as to where the tiles, if genuine, came from. There is a well-defined Roman Camp at Wappenbury, and Mr. C. Twamley went with Mr. Burgess to visit what appears to have been the site of a Roman Station, or Castrum, at Wolston. In the early numbers of the *Archæological Journal*, Mr. Moultrie, of Rugby, describes the opening of a low barrow at Ryton-on-Dunsmore, in which he found a large plate of iron, apparently Roman. In the line of early entrenchments and camps along the Avon, there is a vacancy

about this place. The matter is worth attention, and, though much more might be said about the Roman sites in the neighbourhood, it is sufficient to record the fact and make the doubt of experts known.*

The REV. W. H. MARRIOTT exhibited a flint, partially worked, found on his glebe at Thrussington; also several coins in very good preservation, found at Aldborough, Yorkshire.

CAPTAIN WHITBY produced a Book of Common Prayer, with illustrations, printed by Bill, Barker, Newcomb, and Hills, London, 1678, the property of P. A. Jackson, Esq., of the Newarke.

November 26th, 1877.

The REV. J. H. HILL in the chair.

A letter having been read from the Venerable Archdeacon Trollope, F.S.A., announcing that in consequence of his appointment to the Suffragan Bishopric of Nottingham he would be unable as heretofore to take an active part in the publication of the Associated Societies' Volume, and suggesting that (whilst he himself was willing to retain the office of "General President"), a "General Secretary" should be appointed to perform that work, and further asking whether this Society would approve of the appointment of the Rev. G. T. Harvey, of Leicester, as such General Secretary,

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Committee of this Society, whilst learning with satisfaction of the appointment of the Venerable Archdeacon Trollope to the Suffragan Bishopric of Nottingham, regrets to lose his valuable services in connection with the publication of the Associated Societies' Annual Volume of Reports and Papers, and begs to tender to him their hearty thanks for his invariable kindness and courtesy shown to them during many years. They rejoice to find that his long connection with the Associated Societies is to be preserved by his consenting to continue to act as General President.

It was further RESOLVED that the Committee of this Society will gladly avail themselves of the services of the Rev. G. T. Harvey as General Secretary, for the superintendence of all matters connected with the printing and publishing of the Annual

* Mr. John Evans—an undoubted authority—in a later communication to *Notes and Queries* (5th S. viii. p. 436), finished his remarks by writing:—"All that can be safely said is, that the tiles are modern and not of Roman date." This may be considered conclusive.—EDITOR.