

ROMAN HEREFORDSHIRE.

BY W. THOMPSON WATKIN.

Situated in Silurian territory, Herefordshire was, no doubt, the scene of some of the leading events in the campaigns of Ostorius and Julius Frontinus. Whether the defeat and capture of Caractacus took place in this county, in Shropshire, or elsewhere, I do not however intend to enter into, but simply collate the information we possess of discoveries made, and of traces existing, of the Roman period, with the deductions that can with certainty (and without theorising) be made from the same.

Leaving for the moment the Roman roads, (which will be considered immediately), we find that at the time of the compilation of the *Antonine Itinerary*, A.D. 138-144 (*Archæological Journal*, vol. xxviii, pp. 112-113), there were three stations, named *Magna*, *Ariconium*, and *Bravinium*, which can, beyond doubt, now be proved to have existed in this county; whilst there are, in all probability, the sites of two or three others, named by Ravennas, existing within the same limits, stations of minor importance, and which possibly were not built until some time after the date of the *Itinerary*.

The first and last named of these three stations were on the Roman road from *Uriconium* (Wroxeter) to *Isca Silurum* (Caerleon), and occur only in the twelfth Iter of Antonine, in which, at a distance of twenty-seven miles from Wroxeter, is placed a station, named in some MS. copies of the work *Bravinium*, and in others *Bravonium*. Until very recently the general opinion of antiquaries was, that a square camp on the line of the above road, about a mile south of Leintwardine, and which went by the name of "Brandon Camp" was the site of this station. This camp, which contains from six to eight acres of ground, is on a slight elevation, rising from the middle of a plain, and has a rampart which on the south side is eighteen to

twenty feet high, and on the eastern side is also very perfect. The northern rampart is much shattered, whilst on the west it appears never to have been of any great elevation, owing to the nature of the ground, the hill rising very precipitously on this side. The vallum in some places seems composed of earth, in others of loose stones. The only entrance is on the middle of the east side, and is very perfect. It closely overlooks the Roman road, which is a short distance to the east. At present there appears to be no vestige of a trench round it.

But though this camp occurred very conveniently on the line from Wroxeter to Caerleon, at a proper distance, it was puzzling to antiquaries, that no Roman traces had been found there—not even a coin—whilst its surface presented, even when under tillage, none of the usual signs of a Roman station, in fragments of tiles, pottery, &c. The key to the solution of the site of this station would, however, appear to have been originally given by the Rev. J. Pointer in his *Britannia Romana*, published at Oxford in 1724, in which, when treating of the Roman camps in the various counties of England, he says at p. 54, “*Herefordshire*—in Dindar parish, near Hereford, is a camp called Oyster Hill. Another at *Lanterdin*, between this county and Shropshire. Another at Ledbury.”

This camp at *Lanterdin* or *Leintwardine* appears to have been completely overlooked, but in 1874 the truth was divulged. Mr. Banks, of Kington, in a letter to the *Archæologia Cambrensis* (April, 1874, p. 163), after speaking of the position of Leintwardine at the junction of the Clun and Teme rivers, says,—“From the junction of the rivers a strong and high entrenchment runs on the west of the village in a northerly direction for about 380 yards; its present height above the ground level outside the enclosure is about eight or nine feet, and its width twenty yards; the fosse has been filled up, the inner part of the entrenchment is gradually sloped off to the ground level, and the outward face is steep. Alterations of the ground make it now impossible to trace the form of the vallum, and account for its unusual width. Another old entrenchment runs from the river Teme which forms the southern boundary of the enclosure, northward, for the same distance, leaving a space within about 208

yards wide. Within this area most of the observations have been made. Whenever graves have been dug in the churchyard to the depth of eight feet, two layers of ashes and charcoal intermixed with tiles, broken pottery, bronze articles and coins, have been passed through, the uppermost layer at a depth of six feet, and the lower one about a foot or eighteen inches beneath. A few years since, on the restoration of the church, a drain was cut through the eastern entrenchment, but no trace of the ashy layers was found without the enclosure. The remains from time to time found were generally thrown away as rubbish, or dispersed, until Mr. Evans (the churchwarden) commenced his observations. Among the articles which he has stored away are half of a circular stone handmill or quern, pierced with a hole; the upper part of an earthenware pounding mill, with a lip or rim; fragments of Roman pottery, a bronze ring, and a third brass of Constantine the Great, with a square altar on the reverse. At the north-east corner of the enclosure some grains of wheat in a charred state were found at the depth of a few feet in excavating the foundations of a cottage, and on the south-west fragments of thick brown pottery, apparently roof tiles, were turned up. There can, therefore, be no doubt that this was a Roman station, occupied for a considerable period. I think, therefore, we have now sufficient data to say it is the site of *Bravinium*, which appears in the twelfth Iter of Antoninus to have been situated midway between *Magna* (Kenchester) and *Uriconium*." Mr. Banks was apparently unaware of the Rev. J. Pointer's observation as to the fact of a Roman camp existing at Leintwardine, but I fully concur in his decision as to its being the site of *Bravinium*.

The camp at Brandon would seem to have been either a temporary camp erected whilst that at *Bravinium* was constructed, or a summer camp to the latter station. Either of these hypotheses will account for the absence of Roman remains within it. At a further distance of twenty-four Roman miles the *Itinerary* places a station of the name of *Magna*, and accordingly at a corresponding distance, we have at Kenchester grand and undoubted remains of a large *castrum*, which has been known and

noticed since the days of Henry VIII, when Leland, in his *Itinerary*, says of it—"Kenchester standeth a three mile or more above Hereford, upward, on the same side of the river that Hereford doth, yet it is almost a mile from the ripe of the Wye. The towne is far more ancient than Hereford, and was celebrated in the Roman's time as appeareth by many things, and especially by antique money of the Cæsars, very often found within the towne, and in ploughing about, the whiche people there call Dwarfe's money. The cumpace of Kencheste[r] has been by estimation as much as Hereford, excepting the Castle. The whiche at Hereford is very spacious. Pieces of the wall yet appear *prope fundamenta*, and more should have appeared if the people of Hereford Towne and other thereabout had not in time past pulled down much, and picked out of the best for their buildings."—Hearne's *Leland*, vol. v, p. 66.

Camden and Stukeley also notice at considerable length this station, which they very erroneously call *Ariconium*. The great antiquary, Horsley, in his *Britannia Romana*, published in 1732, was the first to give it its proper name, *Magna*. The *castrum* is situated about five miles W.N.W. from Hereford; its form, as first described by Dr. Stukeley, is an irregular hexagon. Until about sixty years ago, it appears to have been a waste covered with *debris* of buildings, &c. Leland saw it in this state, for in addition to what I have already quoted, he adds in his *Itinerary*:—"By likelihood men of old time went from Kencheste[r] to Hay, and so to Breknok and Cairmardin. The place wher the towne was is all overgrown with brambles, hazels, and like shrubs. Nevertheless, here and there yet appear ruins of buildings, of the whiche the foolish people caull on (one) the *King of Feyres Chayre*. Ther hath been found *nostra memoria lateres Britannici et ex eisdem canales aquae ductus tessellata pavimenta fragmentum catenulae aureae calcar ex argento*, byside other straunge things." Dr. Stukeley also saw this "Chair" on the 9th of September, 1721, and has engraved it in his *Itinerarium Curiosum*, p. 66, pl. lxxxv. It was again engraved at the commencement of the present century for Britton and Brayley's *Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. vi, p. 583. From these en-

gravings it would appear to have been part of the wall of some public building, containing a niche for a statue. Messrs. Britton and Brayley say of it (p. 584)—“Towards the east-end is a massive fragment remaining, of what is supposed to have been a Roman Temple. It consists of a large mass of cement of almost indissoluble texture, in which are imbedded rough stones irregularly intermixed with others that have been squared. This fragment is called “The Chair,” from a niche which is yet perfect. The arch is principally constructed with Roman bricks, and over it are three layers of the same materials disposed length ways. Here, in 1669, a tessellated pavement and stone floor were discovered, and in the succeeding year, according to Aubrey’s *Manuscripts*, buildings of Roman brick were found upon which oaks grew.—(Gough’s *Camden*, vol. ii, p. 449). About the same time, Sir John Hoskyns discovered an hypocaust about seven feet square, the flues of which were of brick, three inches square, artificially let into one another. Another tessellated pavement of a finer pattern was found about seventy years ago, (1735 ?) but soon destroyed by the ignorant and vulgar. An aqueduct or drain of considerable extent, with the bottom entire, was also opened here about twenty years ago, (1785 ?) and various other vestiges of the ancient consequence of this city are very frequently found.”

It was in the second decade of the present century, however, that the greatest damage (in an antiquarian sense) was done. At that time the site which was, as Mr. Hardwicke (*Archæological Journal*, vol. xiv, p. 83) observes “a complete wilderness of decaying walls and debris,” was cleared, and no doubt many interesting remains were found, only to be again and more effectually lost. The exterior walls, however, remained in many places, disappearing gradually by being from time to time taken down in small portions. It is certainly within the last fifteen years that the last portion of them has been destroyed. In the summer of 1861 I inspected some fragments of them at the north western portion of the site. They were from six and a half to seven feet thick ; where large facing stones had been used they had been removed, and only the core of the wall was seen ; in other places

they were composed of "herring bone" masonry, well cemented with mortar.

In 1840 the late Dr. Merewether (Dean of Hereford), commenced some excavations on the site. Through the courtesy of Mr. Franks of the British Museum, I have copied from some volumes of MSS, &c., in his possession, belonging to the late Sir Henry Ellis, a portion of a letter from the Dean to Sir Henry, dated from the Deanery, Hereford, 24th Oct., 1840, which refers to these excavations, as follows:—

"My dear Sir Henry—During the last three or four days I have indulged myself with a holiday, after a long period of work, in making some examination into the site of Magna Castra (Kenchester), in this neighbourhood, and with remarkable success, at least, such as to prove that the whole extent of the twenty-one acres is replete with Roman remains, and many of the richest character. We have uncovered portions of three tessellated pavements, of different styles or gradations, the second and third being extremely beautiful; the second, the border of a room, the centre of which has been destroyed—composed of red, yellow, blue, and white tesserae; the third being a portion of the area of a room, highly decorated, and shewing the compartments of the various devices, amongst which are a dragon and a fish, beautifully delineated and executed in variegated tesserae."

"The annual ploughing of the land has reduced the protecting stratum of soil to a very thin covering at this spot, and Nos. 1 and 2 had been within an inch of the ploughshare; and of course from that cause a part had been destroyed long since, as it was just on the brow of a slope in the field. My hope is that we may be able to take up in divisions, what has now been discovered; to suffer it to remain would be to sacrifice either to the plough, or to the more relentless hands of the rustics and others (as we have already found), who visit it in our absence. The main piece is covered up now pretty deeply. . . . No. 1., I ought to have said, was a plain pavement of a bluish colour, and the apartment was quite small in which it was found. . . . The walls were well built and faced. Quantities of stone, variously

painted were found, also coins and mill stones." A rough plan of the rooms and pavements is given in the letter.

I am not aware whether the Dean made any subsequent excavations, but Mr. Wright, in his *Wanderings of an Antiquary*, says that "about 1846" the Dean found a pavement thirteen feet long and two feet wide; the *tesserae* were red, white, blue, and a dark colour. Is this one of the pavements described in the Dean's letter, or another? Certainly, a portion of one pavement discovered by him is in the Hereford Museum, whilst another, as the letter asserts, was covered up again.

From the account of the site given by Mr. Hardwick, the owner, it appears that the soil within the area is very dark, almost black, and quantities of charred wood, and molten iron and glass, have been found. The stones having been removed from the surface as deep as the plough penetrates, very good crops of corn are now raised. The land is loose and friable, and fine as a garden. In the drought of summer, streets and foundations of houses are quite visible in the verdure. The principal street ran in a direct line through the town from east to west, and was twelve or fifteen feet in width. "with a gutter along the centre to carry off refuse water, as is traceable by the difference in the growth of crops. The streets appear to have been gravelled." Mr. Hardwick also says that no doubt many of the buildings were of timber, "for along the lines of streets, at regular distances, the plinths in which the timbers were inserted have been taken up, the holes being cut about four inches square, the plinths measured two feet in each direction, and lay two feet beneath the present surface."

The sites of the gates of the *castrum*, four in number, were until lately (if not at present) plainly visible. They nearly correspond with the cardinal points.

Amongst the most interesting relics found at Kenchester are two inscriptions. The first was found at the close of the last century in the foundation of the north wall of the *castrum*, and is on a *milliarium* or milestone of the Emperor Numerianus, A.D. 282. The inscription as given by Mr. Lysons in the *Archæologia*, vol. xv, p. 391, Appendix, and Pl. 27, fig. 2, is—

IMP. C
MAR. AVR
NVMERIAN
O
R. P. C. D.

The first four lines plainly read *Imp(eratore) C(æsare) Mar(co, Aur(elio) Numeriano*, but the last line, as given in the copy, is unintelligible. Professor Hübner suggests that the letters may be PFAVG. As the letters RP are found in an inscription at Caermarthen standing for *reipublicæ*, I think it probable that BONO has been obliterated from the fourth line, and that the fifth has originally been R. P. NATO. Mr. Lysons gives this last line as very doubtful, it being nearly obliterated. In 1800 this stone was in the possession of the Rev. Charles J. Bird, F.S.A., but has since been completely lost sight of. If any one in the neighbourhood of Hereford can give any clue as to its whereabouts at present, they will confer a boon on archaeologists. This is the only inscription to the Emperor Numerian found in Britain, and they are very rare upon the continent.

The second inscription occurs upon a small square piece of stone, one of the well-known medicine stamps of the Roman oculists. It is inscribed on all four sides as follows :—

(1)
T. VINDAC · ARI
VISTI ANICET

(3.)
*. VINDAC ARI
OVISTI CHLORON

(2.)
T. VINDACIAR
OVISTI NARD

(4.)
T. VINDACARIO
VISTI *****

The asterisks mark missing letters. On the upper surface the stone is inscribed SENIOR, on the lower SEN., the latter doubtless the abbreviation of the former, both being probably made subsequent to the larger inscription, and referring to the owner's name. All four of the sides it will be seen bear the words T. VINDACI ARIOVISTI; to the first is added the name of the medicine ANICET(VM), to the second another medicine NARD(VM), to the third the name of the medicine CHLORON, whilst in the fourth the name of the medicine has been obliterated. The English translation simply is that they are the *Anicetum*, the *Nardum*, and the *Chloron* of *Titus Vindacius Ario-*

vistus. The latter name "Ariovistus" is German. This stamp was exhibited in 1848 to the British Archæological Association at Worcester by Mr. R. Johnson of Hereford, in whose possession it then was. (*Vide their Journal*, vol. iv, p. 280). At the same meeting Mr. Johnson exhibited a horse's head in bronze, apparently made for a knife handle, a bronze fibula, some jet beads, and eight brass coins of Carausius, one of a unique type, all found at Kenchester. Mr. Johnson had in 1867, when the Cambrian Archæological Association held their congress in Hereford, a large collection of coins from the site. They were chiefly of the Lower Empire. Mrs. Hardwick of Credenhill had also another collection, besides a number of fibulæ and bronze figures. Mr. Wright, in *Wanderings of an Antiquary*, p. 38, engraves and describes the figures of a mouse, a lion, a cock, and a small hatchet or *cultrum*, all in bronze, found at Kenchester (probably children's toys), whilst on the 4th December, 1874, Mr. Soden Smith exhibited to the Institute a Roman bronze ring with original intaglio on glass plate, in imitation of niccolo onyx, from the same site. Lewis (*Top. Dict. of England*, edit. 1850, article 'Kenchester') tells us that in the hypocaust found in 1670 by Sir John Hoskyns there were entire leaden pipes.

In 1829 a small bronze image of Hermes was found in excavating some ground in the city of Hereford. It was probably a lar (*Liverpool Times*, March 24th, 1829). There was also found some years ago, in excavations in one of the streets of Hereford, a Roman altar which had borne an inscription, but it was completely defaced. It is now in the local museum. The Rev. H. M. Scarth informs me that in the second line he thought he could trace the letters—

. . . N I I V

and suggests the word MINERVÆ as being contained in the line, but all this is doubtful. Probably both the altar and the *lar* came from Kenchester originally, for there appears to be nothing Roman at Hereford. Many inscribed stones from Kenchester have certainly perished. Mr. Wright tells us that in reply to a query as to whether any inscribed stones had been found, asked of an old villager at Kenchester, the old man replied in the

affirmative, but added that "they meant nought." From the discovery of the molten lead and glass and burnt wood, the destruction of *Magna*, like that of *Ariconium*, would appear to have been by fire.

The third station, *Ariconium*, which occurs only in the thirteenth Iter of Antoninus, and is there stated to be fifteen miles from *Glevum* (Gloucester), is now generally allowed to have been situated at Bury-hill, near Bollitree, about three miles east of Ross. At this place there is an area of about 100 acres, over which the soil presents a deep black colour, and in which numbers of Roman coins, fragments of pottery, fibulæ, &c., are found. Horsley conjectured *Ariconium* to have been somewhere in this neighbourhood, but was not aware of the existence of the site of any Roman town in the locality. As Mr. Thomas Wright, in his *Wanderings of an Antiquary*, p. 25, says, "But while his (Horsley's) conjectures as to the exact locality fell first upon one spot and then upon another, he was totally ignorant that close within the range of his conjectures, on the bank I have just been describing, an extensive thicket of briars and brushwood only partially covered from view the broken walls and the rubbish of the very *Ariconium* of which he was in search. Such was the condition of the old town at Weston under Penyard, in the middle of the last century. Soon after that period, the proprietor of the estate, a Mr. Meyrick, determined to clear the ground and turn it into cultivation, and when he came to stub up the bushes, he found some of the walls even of the houses standing above ground. All these were cleared away, not without considerable difficulty; and in the course of the clearing, great quantities of antiquities of all sorts are understood to have been found."

In vol. vi, p. 514, of Britton and Brayley's *Beauties of England and Wales*, (published 1805), we have a fuller account of these discoveries. There were found "an immense quantity of Roman coins and some British. Among the antiquities were fibulæ, lares, lachrymatories, lamps, rings, and fragments of tessellated pavements. Some pillars were also discovered with stones having holes for the jambs of doors, and a vault or two in which was earth of a black colour and in a cinerous state. . . .

Innumerable pieces of grey and red pottery lie scattered (at present, *i.e.* 1805) over the whole tract, some of them of patterns by no means inelegant. . . . Some of the large stones found among the ruins of this station, and which appear to have been used in building, display strong marks of fire. During the course of last summer (1804), in widening a road that crosses the land, several skeletons were discovered ; and also the remains of a stone wall, apparently the front of a building ; the stones were well worked and of considerable size. The earth within what appeared to have been the interior of the building was extremely black and shining." The same writer also informs us that the coins, which were chiefly of the Lower Empire, were of gold, silver, and copper.

Mr. Wright further tells us (pp. 25-26) "that all the remains that were near the surface were destroyed, and the antiquities which might have enriched some local museum appear to have been scattered about and lost. . . . The place can hardly be said to have been explored by antiquaries, but Roman antiquities are often turned up by the plough, and Roman coins are so plentiful that they may be procured of almost any of the cottagers. I was told that a gentleman of the neighbourhood riding across one of the fields had recently picked up a rather large Roman bronze statuette. Finding it somewhat cumbrous he put it up in the fork of a tree, intending to take it as he returned, but somebody had discovered it in the interval and carried it away. The present possessor of the land is Mr. Palmer of Bolitre, close to the site of the town called Aske Farm, perhaps from the ashes or cinders in the neighbourhood. . . . One of his (Mr. Palmer's) men, whom we questioned on the subject, (of antiquities) could give us no further information than that he knew such things were found, and he remembered that about twenty years ago when they were digging a trench in the field where the old town stood, the labourers came upon walls and the foundations of buildings. The gentle slope of the ground on the western side of the site of the town towards Penyard is called Cinder Hill, and we have only to turn up the surface to discover that it consists of an immense mass of iron scoriae. It is evident that the Roman town of Ariconium possessed very extensive forges

and smelting furnaces, and that their cinders were thrown out on this side of the town close to the walls. No doubt the side of the hill was here originally more abrupt until it was filled up by these materials. The floors of some of the forges are said to have been discovered, but as I have just stated the place is almost unknown to antiquaries."

In September, 1870, the members of the British Archæological Association, during their Hereford Congress, visited the site, when the above-mentioned Mr. Palmer sent a collection of articles found on the site for inspection, which form the subject of a paper in the *Journal of the Association*, vol. xxvii, pp. 203-218. These consisted of one gold, six silver, and two copper British coins, some of them of Cunobelin; one hundred and eighteen silver, billon, and brass Roman coins, ranging from Claudius, A.D. 41, to Magnentius, A.D. 350-353; twenty fibulæ of bronze, a silver ring, six bronze rings, bronze keys, pins and nails, four intaglios (two of them cornelian), glass beads of various colours, bronze buckles, and other bronze instruments. This site is only eleven English miles from Gloucester, whereas the *Itinerary* gives the distance between *Glevum* and *Ariconium* as fifteen Roman miles; but until we are certain of the Roman method of measuring, whether it was the same in a flat country as in a hilly one, it is useless to attempt to explain the discrepancy. Certain it is, that there is no other site in the neighbourhood which will at all suit the distances from the surrounding stations; and upon these grounds, together with the fact of this ruined town being otherwise nameless, there can be little doubt of the correctness of the conclusion which places *Ariconium* at Bury-hill. The road from Ross to Gloucester, which is probably on the site of a Roman predecessor, passes about half a mile from it, whilst the modern road from Ross to Newent actually passes through the station. In the *Archæologia*, vol. ix, Appendix, p. 368, a figure of Diana, said to have been found at this station, is described.

As the Rev. J. Pointer was the first to point out (in the extract I have quoted) the site of *Bravinium*, so I think that when he says that there is "another (camp) at Ledbury" he points out the site of another station of which there is now even less visible above ground than

at Leintwardine, though at the commencement of the present century this was not the case. In Brayley and Britton's *Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. vi, p. 593, we gather a little more information as to this camp. It is there said that at a mile-and-a-half north-west from Ledbury there is a conical eminence called Wall Hills, the lower part of which is surrounded by large trees, and the upper part is crowned by a spacious camp, the area of which is between thirty and forty acres. It was then (1805) under cultivation, and had a single rampart and ditch, then half levelled. There were three entrances, one called the "King's Gate." In ploughing the area, spear and arrowheads had been found, with brass coins, antique horse shoes, and human bones. This camp has now entirely disappeared. Baxter, in his *Glossarium Antiquitatum Britannicarum* (1733) places *Magna* here, but very erroneously. From the combined evidence of Baxter and the Rev. J. Pointer I think that a *station* rather than a temporary camp existed here, though it might have been a British town originally, and subsequently made use of by the Romans, especially as there appear to be some traces of a smaller summer camp at Haffield.

The Roman villas in the county, if we may judge by the number discovered, appear to have been singularly few. The first one to which any notice was prominently given was discovered at Bishopstone, about a mile and a half westward from Kenchester, three and a half miles from Credenhill, and seven miles from Hereford, in the year 1812, when digging a drain for the parsonage house. In the *Archæologia*, vol. xxiii, p. 417, there is an account of a tessellated pavement found in it, of which a drawing was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries, June 10, by Thomas Bird, Esq., F.S.A.¹ This gentleman says,—“It appearing to me, that from its having been laid on a common bed of clay without any foundation, it was in great danger of being destroyed by the worms or by persons treading upon it in wet weather, I have had a plan taken upon a scale of one inch to a foot, for the

¹ From the sonnet written by the poet Wordsworth on these remains, which he saw at the time of their discovery, the

colours of the pavement would appear to have been as bright as when it was first laid.

purpose of preserving so beautiful a remnant of antiquity, which you will have the goodness to exhibit to the Society. The principal injury which this pavement has received is on the north side, where a path appears to have been made from the north-east corner to the western end. The centre part is entirely destroyed, which is much to be regretted ; but from a careful and attentive consideration of the pattern, which was found to correspond diagonally, my draughtsman has been enabled to restore the whole pavement, with the exception of the centre." (I have been recently informed that this plan of the pavement has been published by A. Friedel, 15, Southampton-street, Strand, but have not been able to see a copy). The pavement, from information which I have gathered upon the spot, was afterwards removed into the cellar of the rectory, but has now disappeared. There is little doubt but that the rectory stands upon a portion of the villa. Mr. Bird, in the above-named article, says that he had addressed some queries to the then (1830) rector of Bishopstone, the Rev. A. J. Walker, and gives a portion of his reply, from which I extract the following :—" At distances of one and two hundred yards round this house we have dug up on every side Roman bricks, pottery, both coarse and fine, and many fragments of funeral urns, and I am rather surprised that only three coins have yet been found ; a regularly pitched causeway or rather foundation has been found repeatedly ; and in June, 1821, in my kitchen garden, south-west of the house, a foundation of *sandstone* (which seems also at Kenchester to be the *only* stone the Romans employed) at the east end about three feet deep, and at the west deepening to about five feet deep, was discovered. This foundation is full three feet wide, and increases towards the angle, where it turns to five feet. I traced it to fifty-five feet ; it was substantially laid, but without cement. I found also a twenty-inch foundation wall, most strongly cemented, on the east side of the house. Considerable quantities of black earth, near the places where fragments of urns have been found, are also discovered. Bones have likewise been collected at about the general depth of sixteen or eighteen inches, at which most of these Roman remains are met with at Bishop-

stone.

"I ought to remark that the foundation above mentioned of fifty-five feet, with its right angle turn, was parallel as far as I believe with the respective sides of the tessellated pavement; there was no appearance of walls round the pavement."

Another Roman villa (though not yet explored) exists on the boundary of the parishes of Whitchurch and Ganarew, at the extreme southern part of the county, and in the midst of the Roman iron mining district (of which more immediately). A tessellated pavement has been found and a number of coins, but no further researches have been made, although there are considerable inequalities of surface. It is situated in a meadow on the right hand of the road to Monmouth. (Lewis, *Top. Dict.*, edit. 1850, article 'Whitchurch;' Wright, *Wanderings of an Antiquary*, p. 14). Coins have also been discovered. Mr. James Davies, in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. ii, 2nd series, p. 50, says that in a Roman camp at Walterstone vestiges of a Roman tessellated pavement have been found. This probably implies the site of a villa, unless the camp is full of foundations, in which case a considerable station may have been here.¹

At p. 46 of the same vol., the same gentleman says in a note—"In making excavations, during the construction of the Gloucester and Hereford Canal, which crosses the parish of Stretton Grandison, several Roman remains were found, consisting of several pieces of pottery, a small weighing balance, resembling in form our common steel-yards, and other curiosities, which are now in the custody of Mr. Philip Ballard, Widemarsh Street, Hereford, civil engineer to the Canal Company." There was probably another villa at this place.

The only other villa known to me has been quite recently discovered at Putley, about five miles west of Ledbury. At a meeting of the Woolhope Club, at Hereford, March 9th, 1876; and at a meeting of the British

¹ In *The Archæologia*, vol. vi, p. 13, Mr. Strange says that a Roman tessellated pavement had been discovered at a place called *Cored Gravel*, which he says was two miles north of Old Castle. This spot is in Herefordshire, and barely half a mile

from the camp at Walterstone. Does Mr. Davies refer to the same pavement? His remark that it was *in* the camp would seem to make the pavement he names totally distinct from that named by Mr. Strange.

Archæological Association, March 15th, 1876, (*vide their Journal*, vol. xxxii, p. 250), Mr. T. Blashill exhibited several Roman flue tiles, flange tiles, bricks having the marks of sandals, woven cloths, cat's feet, and thumb marks, together with Roman pottery, &c., found in the foundation of the north wall of the church at Putley. Subsequently (Feb. 21st, 1877), the same gentleman reported the discovery of a number of Roman wall tiles, roof tiles, pottery, and other objects, found by John Riley, Esq., on his estate at Putley; thus confirming the previous anticipations of a villa being on the spot. It is not, however, yet explored.

Another important feature in the Roman antiquities of the county is the immense beds of iron scoriae and cinders, which cover nearly the whole of the southern part of the county, a great part of Monmouthshire and a portion of Gloucestershire. The parishes of St. Weonard's, Hentland, Peterstow, Tretire, Bridstow, Weston-under-Penyard, Llangarran, Walford, Goodrich, Welsh Bicknor, Ganarew, Whitchurch, &c., abound with them. Hand blomerics, with ore imperfectly smelted, have been found on Peterstow Common. The beds of cinders are in some places from twelve to twenty feet thick. Many Roman coins and fragments of pottery are found in them. Round Goodrich Castle the writer has traced them for many miles, and the number of mines and smelting places in this neighbourhood must have been immense. The hills called the Great Doward and the Little Doward have been considerably mined. In the first named, the entrance to one of the Roman mines still remains in the hill side. It is a large cave-like aperture, with galleries running from it into the hill, in several directions, following of course the vein of the iron. It is now called "King Arthur's Hall." *Ariconium* would seem to have been the capital of this district, but there were doubtless other small towns, which remain to be discovered. At Tretire, about forty years since, Mr. Charles Baily, F.S.A., discovered a Roman altar, which had been cut into the shape of a font, and used as such in the parish church. It is over twenty-nine inches in height, by sixteen inches in breadth, and contains the remains of an inscription, as follows:—

DEO TRIVIL
BELLICVS. DON
AVIT ARAM

(*Wanderings of an Antiquary*, p. 17, and *Proceedings, London and Middlesex Archæological Society at Evening Meetings*, Session 1874, p. 147). It is to my mind very doubtful whether this is not an early Christian inscription, reading DEO TRIVNI, but it is at the same time scarcely probable that any Christian in that period *would erect an altar* "to the Triune God." Dr. Mc Caul, in a recent letter to me, expresses the same doubt, and indeed, it is only just to say that Mr. Wright, when he first published the inscription some twenty-five years ago, made much the same remark. But so far modern antiquaries (including Professor Hübner, of Berlin) have read the inscription as *Deo Trivii, Bellicus donavit aram*. "To the god of the three ways, Bellicus gives the altar." No doubt three ways or roads converged on the spot where the altar was first set up.¹

In most of the English counties the discovery of hoards of Roman coins buried in the earth (not necessarily near a Roman station) is a very common occurrence, but in Herefordshire there are few discoveries of this nature recorded. At "Copped Wood Hill," close to Goodrich, a large collection of coins of the Lower Empire was dug up about 1817 (*Wanderings of an Antiquary*, p. 14); and in 1855 a deposit of many thousands, of the same period, were found during draining operations in the Coombe Wood at Aston Ingham, in the south-east corner of the county, on the Gloucestershire border. They appeared to have been deposited in two chests, and ready for transport. Thirty-seven of them (now in the Gloucester Museum) were exhibited at the Gloucester Meeting of the Institute by I. Irving, Esq. They were all small brass, and were of the reigns of Maximianus, Maximinus Daza, Licinius, Constantine the Great, his wife Fausta, Crispus, Constantine II, and Constantius II. The most singular fact connected with the discovery is, that near the spot where the coins were found "there is a gate, and according to local tradition the spot was considered to be haunted, and after nightfall persons

¹ It was announced a few months since that the present rector of Tretire, the Rev. E. F. Owen, was about to present

this altar to the Hereford Museum, but I am not aware whether this intention has been carried out.

preferred taking a long circuit to venturing through the gate.”—*Catalogue Gloucester Temporary Museum*, p. 10.

At Longtown, close to the Roman road leading to Abergavenny, there is a spot called “Money Farthing Hill,” which has, no doubt, derived its name (as is the case elsewhere) from either the discovery of a large hoard of coins, or the fact of their having been for a long period occasionally picked up.¹

The Roman camps in the county, or such British camps as were subsequently occupied by the Romans, in addition to that at Brandon, already described, must now claim attention. The first of these is the great camp at Credenhill, probably originally British, and after its capture converted by the Romans into a summer camp to the station at Kenchester. Situated on the summit of a hill, at about a mile and a half from the latter place, it is of an oblong shape, with the exception of one of the shorter sides, that to the south-west, being rounded. It encloses an area of about eighty acres, and has an entrance on each side, but, instead of their being in the centre of the sides, they are all near the angles. Generally a single rampart and ditch suffices, but in weaker places there are two. The rampart is from ten to twelve feet high in places. Roman coins and other remains have been found within the area, and at the south-east angle is a covered way, leading to the Roman road from *Magna* to *Bravonium*. The close proximity of this immense camp to Kenchester, and its intimate connection with it by means of the covered way, and the fact of the latter station being only about one-fourth the size of the camp, seems to have been the origin of the name “*Magna*,”—the Romans considering them both as one large town. In all probability the suburban buildings of the *castrum* (like similar cases on the Roman Wall) reached from the latter to Credenhill camp. This seems confirmed by the fact that in the cuttings for the Hereford and Brecon Railway, near Credenhill, quantities of coins, pottery, horse shoes, and various other articles, were reported as

¹ Mr. Banks, in describing the site of *Bravonium*, at Leintwardine, says that “about twenty years ago a quantity of Roman coins were found on the drainage of part of the Bampton Brian estate,

near Walford, and that fragments of pottery are often turned up in a field a little higher up the valley, opposite to Coxall Knoll.”

having been turned up ; also a Roman road running from Kenchester to Credenhill, which the engineer (Mr. Roberts) reported to have been cut through transversely about two feet below the surface of the ground. (Mr. Jas. Davies, in *Hereford Times*, Aug. 17th, 1867, reports these latter facts.)

At Acconbury Hill, four miles south of Hereford, is another large Roman camp of a square form ; the rampart on the east side is comparatively perfect. At Dinedor Hill, three miles south east by south of Hereford, there is another conspicuous Roman camp—the one alluded to by the Rev. J. Pointer as “Oyster hill.” It is also called “Oster hill,” and has been said by various writers to have derived its name from Ostorius Scapula, one of the Roman governors of Britain. There is not the least probability of such an origin of the name. Far more likely, that, as is usual on most Roman sites, quantities of oyster shells have been discovered, and the hill afterwards called “Oyster hill.”

At Bishop Eaton, about four miles west from Hereford, another Roman camp occurs on the banks of the Wye. It is from thirty to forty acres in extent, and is situated on the banks of the Wye ; with a single rampart and ditch. The area is under cultivation. Vestiges of another occur at Eardisley, five miles south by east from Kington. Britton and Lewis both report the existence of a small square camp at Pyon Grove, in the township of Yatton, parish of Aymestrey, seven miles north west from Leominster. It overlooks the Watling street, on the opposite side of which is the large British camp of “Croft Ambrey.” Lewis says that “the embankments of both are well worth the visit of the antiquary.”

A little to the south west of the village of Michael Church is a large square camp ; the turnpike road to Hereford runs through it. It is marked in the Ordnance Map as “Camp Field,” and is known in the locality as “Gaer Cop.” This is close to Tretire, where the altar was found. At Burghill, four miles north west of Hereford, Mr. Britton says that a square camp exists. This probably is a reference to the earthworks adjoining the churchyard at Burghill, which are well defined, and to which the “Portway” seems to have led. They were

visited by some of the members of the Cambrian Archæological Association, on 15th August, 1867. Britton reports the existence of another *square* camp, three miles to the north west of this, and about a mile from Canon Pyon. I have no information as to it. On Bradnor mountain, near Kington, there is a square camp of small size. In the Golden valley, on an eminence above Vowchurch, there is another small square Roman camp, with extensive views to the south east. This overlooks, though at the distance of two or three miles, the Roman road from *Magna* to *Gobannium* (Abergavenny). Further to the south there is another camp overlooking the line of this road. It is about a mile to the west of the railway station at Pandy, on a spur of the Black mountains. The original camp is rectangular—485 feet by 240 ; but attached to its south east side is a similar sized camp, of a semicircular shape, and having a double ditch and rampart. At nearly two miles north east of this, there is, above Walterstone, another camp ; which, I presume, is the one referred to by Mr. Davies, as containing a tessellated pavement. Its shape, however, being circular, it must have been merely occupied, and not made, by the Romans. About a mile north of Brockhampton there is on Caplar Hill, another large camp, probably occupied by the Romans ; whilst three miles further northward is the camp at Blackbury, clearly made, as I think, by that people. Mr. Duncomb, in his *History of Herefordshire*, vol. ii, p. 236, from information derived from the MSS. of Silas Taylor, says that in the park of the Bishop of Hereford, at Whitbourne, there was a Roman intrenchment, (and on the opposite side of the valley a British camp, which was circular). Another fine square Roman camp exists about a mile east south east of Upper Sapey.

On the line of the Roman road from Kenchester into Worcestershire there exist some traces of a square camp at Stretton Grandison. Baxter in his *Glossarium Antiquitatum Britannicarum*, from this circumstance, placed the Roman station *Cicutio*—named, with five others, by the anonymous Ravennas in his *Chorography* as existing between *Caerleon* and *Kenchester*—at this spot. Mr. James Davies (in several papers), from the slight discoveries of pottery, &c., made on the site, promulgates

the same idea, for which I cannot see the shadow of a foundation. Nothing but future discoveries of inscriptions can decide the situation of any of the above named stations.

In addition to these *Roman* camps, I think there is little doubt, from the course of the Roman roads, that the British camps at Sutton Walls (three and a half miles north of Hereford and containing thirty acres) at Risbury, St. Ethelbert's camp above Mordiford, another camp formerly existing (if not at present) half mile north of Fownhope, and the great camp at Thornbury called "Wall Hill," were occupied at one period or another by the Romans. It is possible that there may be other decided Roman camps in the county, but unless that at Ivington be classed as one I am ignorant of any others; however, in such a case, some local antiquary may be able to supply the omission.

Having thus considered the Roman stations, camps, villas, iron works, and other remains in the county, it is necessary to speak of the means of communication between them in the shape of roads.

The first road, which was probably also formed earlier than the others, and now bears the name of "Watling street," enters the county at its north-west extremity from Shropshire near Marlow and runs to the station *Bravinium* at Leintwardine, past its summer camp at Brandon, by Wigmore, past the small square camp at Pyon Grove, through Aymestrey, and Mortimer's Cross, past Street Court, through the parish of Eardisland, to Bainstree Cross, and Stretford. Thence it runs through the valley between Dinmore and Canon Pyon to Burghill. Here it bears the name of the Portway, and turning to the south-west it passes through the village of Credenhill under the camp, and so on to Kenchester. As the author of the *Itinerary* considers the road south-west from Kenchester to Abergavenny and Caerleon to be a continuation of this one, it is best to consider it as such in the present instance rather than treat it as an independent road. After leaving Kenchester it proceeds to the bank of the Wye, crossing that river near the "Old Weir," and runs south-west by Wormhill to Wyddyats Cross at Madley. Here it is very conspicuous, and has

long been known as Stone or Stoney street. Thence it proceeds by Brampton Hill, but is much obliterated beyond ; traces of it are, however, found at Abbey Dore and Ewyas Harold, at which latter place we find the name " King street " applied to it. It then passes near Old Castle, by the camps at Walterston and Pandy, and immediately afterwards enters Monmouthshire and proceeds to Abergavenny (*Gobannium*). This road, part of the twelfth Iter of Antoninus, is decidedly, from its remains, one of the Higher Empire. The other road mentioned in the *Itinerary* (thirteenth Iter) enters the county from Gloucester, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Aston Ingham (where the find of coins occurred), and proceeds to Bury hill (*Ariconium*). It is now altogether obliterated. Its direction after leaving *Ariconium* is uncertain. According to the *Itinerary* it led to a station called *Blestium*, eleven miles from *Ariconium*, which has been fixed at Monmouth, though upon no sure grounds. In any event its course through the southern part of Herefordshire is a short one. Another fine Roman road coming from Bulth, eastward, crosses Offa's Dyke, near Down's hill, and running south of Bishopstone enters Kenchester, upon leaving which it proceeds by Stretton Sugwas and Holmer, crossing the Lug at Lug Bridge, past the " Black Hole " by Moor-end and Purbrook to Street lane, and on to Stretton Grandison, after which, passing Frome hill, it enters Worcestershire, running by Malvern and Worcester. Near the " Black Hole " another Roman road appears to cross it, which, in a southern direction, passes by Hagley and Bartestre Chapel, and points towards Mordiford. Sir R. C. Hoare traced this road southward to *Ariconium*. It apparently went by Fownhope, under the large camp on Caplar hill, by Brockhampton and How Caple to Bury hill (*Ariconium*). In vol. xxvii of the *Journal* of the British Archaeological Association, p. 381, Mr. James Davies says that there was a road from *Bravinium* branching off the Watling street at Wigmore, by Croft, Stockton, Ashton to Corner Cop, " thence to a place called the ' Trumpet,' by Stretford, and along a lane called Blackwardine lane, under Risbury Camp to ' England's Gate,' and so on to Stretton Grandison, where *Cicutio* was situate. This is

the only road in Herefordshire which is not noticed by Sir R. C. Hoare, but there is the evidence of nomenclature in support of it in many localities."

As far as "England's Gate" I can endorse Mr. Davies's remarks, but, instead of leading thence to Stretton Grandison, I think he will find that it is a continuation northwards of the road I have just described as starting from the cross at the Black Hole. Northwards this road leads through Withington, and just beyond this is called "Duck Street," pointing direct (through Preston Wynn) towards "England's Gate." But another road may be traced south-east from Stretton Grandison, leading very straight through Ashperton, Pixley, east of Aylton, and Little Marcle, where it is only a mile from the Putley villa, and a short distance from the large camp at "Wall Hill," near Ledbury. It then enters Gloucestershire by Preston and Newhouse Bridge, leading through Dymock to Newent. About a mile from the latter town a "Cold Arbour" occurs upon its route.

From the occurrence also of "Street Field," near the great camp at Thornbury (Wall Hill), it is probable that a Roman road ran in that direction, but if so it has not yet been traced.

I also incline to the opinion that a cruciform earthwork at St. Margaret's, described in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. x, p. 358, and vol. xi, p. 55, was a Roman *botontinus* similar to several found in recent years in Yorkshire, and described by Mr. Monkman, of Malton, in the *Yorkshire Archæological Journal*.

Such, as far as I am able to trace them, are the footprints of Rome, in the county of Hereford. I by no means assert that I have reached perfection in the matter. Far otherwise. The subject is a difficult one; and local antiquarians may be in possession of much information which it is impossible for a non-resident of the district to obtain. If so, I would ask them, for the benefit of archæology in general, to make public whatever knowledge of the subject they may possess. In the meantime, I trust that my imperfect endeavours to mould into shape and form, the scattered fragments which we possess of "Roman Herefordshire," may not be without interest to

the members of the Institute, when meeting in the city around which they radiate.

Mr. Thomas Wright, in his *Uriconium*, p. 48, makes the branch road which I have noticed as passing through "England's Gate," run to Brodert's Bridge, near Worfer-ton, and adds—"In fact, Blackwardine appears, by the great quantities of Roman remains found there, to have been some rather important station."

Since then I have made several important enquiries as to this place, and find that it takes its name from the black colour of the soil, different to all the land around it, like the site of many other Roman stations. I cannot hear of any foundations being discovered, but Roman coins of brass, silver, and copper have been found, among them those of Augustus, Trajan, Constantine the Great, and coins of the *Urbs Roma* type, with the reverse of Romulus and Remus being suckled by the wolf; also great quantities of Roman pottery, bones of animals, human bones, and various other relics. Several local antiquaries make the road, passing this station, fall into the Watling street at Wigmore.