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At a Special Meeting, Mr GRAY, President, in the Chair.

EXHIBITION OF OBJECTS FOUND IN OR NEAR
BARRINGTON.

By the Rev. J. W. E. CONYBEARE, M.A.

THESE were derived, for the most part, from my own old parish, Barrington, and with scarcely a single exception from my own Rural Deanery of Barton, comprising the twenty parishes lying immediately to the south of Cambridge.

These objects were all collected between 1873 and 1898, and form part of a much larger store of similar, but less interesting, finds; I may add that at least as many objects, almost or quite as good, escaped me, some of which are now in our Museum, others in the Library of Trinity College and elsewhere.

They were nearly all found during the process of coprolite digging, which turned over many thousands of acres and unearthed the relics of bygone centuries, ranging from the earliest prehistoric developments to the present day.

First in chronological order is the base of the antler of a red deer, found in the gravel terrace which at Barrington lies along the western bank of the Cam, some twelve feet above the present water level, and is full of the bones of hippopotamus, elephant, bison, and other mammals. Associated with these are found such fragments as this one, of which the tines and the brow antler have been cut or sawn off, or in another case, broken off, by human agency. They are fairly numerous. I myself have got at least a dozen specimens, some from shed horns, some broken from the skull. But what purpose they served is unknown. In the Glastonbury museum may be seen one used as an axe-head, the flint taking the place of the brow antler, and the shaft that of the main antler. But none found

in our neighbourhood show any signs of having ever been thus adapted. Nor have I ever come across any of the missing antlers, except, possibly, one solitary brow tine.

To the same period may be referred a burnt pebble, also one of many showing the action of fire, which were presumably heated by the River-bed men to boil the water in their skin vessels, a device known amongst savages not yet come to the possession of fireproof caldrons.

Passing on to the neolithic period Barrington gives us a few flint implements, none calling for any special remark, except an axe-head, which is in the same half-finished state as that to be seen in the Woodwardian Museum embedded in a skull of *Bos primigenius*. From a tumulus in the neighbouring parish of Triplow comes a jadite axe; a fine specimen of the weapons which, having their first origin in Central Asia (where alone the material is found), spread all over Europe and even to North America in prehistoric days.

The weapons of the bronze age are represented only by one arrow-head, which, however, is interesting from the extreme rarity of such finds in Northern Europe, though on the Mediterranean shores they are fairly common.

There is not much undoubtedly British work. One small pot (which contained incinerated fragments of bone when found) looks like it; and one green glass bead exactly corresponds to the description (given in Gough's *Camden* 1789) of the "Druid Glass Rings" or "Adder Beads":

"They are glass amulets, commonly about half as wide as our finger rings, but much thicker, usually of a green colour...curiously waved...with furrows on the outside.... Of these the vulgar opinion in Cornwall and Wales is that they are produced by snakes joining their heads together and hissing, which forms a kind of bubble like a ring.... Whoever found it was to prosper in all his undertakings.... It seems very likely that these Adder-beads were used as charms...amongst the Druids of Britain upon the same occasion as the Snake-eggs amongst the Gaulish Druids¹."

One little bronze swan brooch may, also, perhaps be of

¹ One of these Gallic snake-eggs is described by Pliny, who had seen it, in his chapter on the use of eggs, as a rough round object about the size of an apple, used as a druidical amulet.

British workmanship. An almost exact replica is in the British Museum, labelled as having been found in the Thames when the bed of the river was dug for the foundations of the present London Bridge. But my own opinion is that it is more probably Roman. The spring shows that it is not Anglo-Saxon, for those fibulæ are never so constructed.

The district has furnished many examples of British coinage, of which the best are in the possession of Sir John Evans. I have only a few of quite ordinary type and in poor condition, all from Barrington itself.

Roman coins, on the other hand, I got by the hundred, never from hoards, but scattered singly all over the face of the land. These too are almost all from Barrington, and of little moment, though of interest as completely covering the whole Roman occupation. One *Judæa Capta* is worth notice, for these coins are not often found in Britain, and two of them were found at Barrington; also a Nerva, with its inscription *Vehiculatioe Italiae remissa* and its device of horses loosed from a chariot; and yet more a Valentinian III, which came from somewhat higher up the river, and which, so far as I know, is the latest Roman coin yet found in Britain.

The coprolite diggers turned up scores of Roman ashpits, from which endless fragments of pottery were procured, the vessels in some cases being restorable (as in that of the big amphoræ to be seen in Trinity College Library). Most were of coarse and common character, with a little Samian, (one piece here shown bearing the inscription of *Cistio Titi*, not otherwise known), and a solitary bit of highly and most remarkably glazed ware. From these ashpits were also obtained two thimbles, obviously intended to be worn upon the thumb, and two or three horse-shoes. In spite of the distrust expressed last year by Professor Hughes, I see no reason whatever to doubt that these articles were actually found in the ashpits, nor for disputing the conclusion arrived at by Gesner that this method of shoeing horses was introduced by Vegetius under Valentinian II. The earlier shoes mentioned by Catullus and other classical writers seem to have been such coverings for the hoof as are worn by horses drawing mowing machines on College lawns.

But these are nailed on in modern fashion. Millstones of grit, puddingstone, and Niedermendig lava from the Rhine occur with the Roman remains.

It is not however in Roman but in Anglo-Saxon remains that Barrington and its district have proved most fertile. A paper was read before the Society on 15 November 1880 by Mr W. K. Foster, describing his systematic excavation of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery there (presumably of the sixth century)¹. For lack of some proper place to put it in this interesting collection became dispersed; some of the objects are in our Museum, more in the Trinity Library, some were kept by Mr Foster, and a few I have:

- (1) Cruciform fibula and one of the two pair of clasps found in the same grave, all bronze gilt.
- (2) A pair of clasps, bronze tinned.
- (3) Necklet of beads with bronze ring ends.

These were all together under the head of a skeleton. Hundreds of other beads were found, both in this cemetery and throughout the district, but in no other case was it possible to associate them.

By far the greater number of these beads are of amber, which, at least in pre-Roman Britain, was the commonest of all material for ornament, much more so than in any other country.

From the same cemetery come some curious bronze articles, which I take to have been connected with a lady's chatelaine. At first sight they appear to be keys, but this can scarcely be, first from their fragility and secondly because they obviously were originally united by an iron pin at the top. They came from a woman's grave, along with a spindle-whorl. Every such grave contained at least one spindle-whorl, which acted as a fly-wheel for the bone or wooden spindle in daily use by every respectable woman, (and continued to be so used, as a passage by Sir Thomas More tells us, even to the sixteenth century), with, occasionally, a bone needle, but very seldom any ornament whatever. Such vanities were reserved for the men.

¹ This paper will be found in Vol. v., No. II. of our Reports, together with twelve plates of objects found.

Almost every man's grave also contained some kind of weapon, spear-head, or broadsword,—never any form of axe. Such of these as I procured I gave to our museum, along with the many bosses of the shields which formed the only trace of defensive armour. Some of these bosses still bore traces of the wooden bucklers of which they formed the centre. These bucklers must have been quite small; for they were carried by an iron handle across the boss itself (which thus protected the hand), as shown in the figure on the summit of Mount St Michel. I have one, and also an exceptionally good specimen of the *seaxe*, the peculiarly national weapon from which the Saxons derived their name and which chroniclers specially connect with the acquisition both of their insular and their continental dominions. The *Historia Britonum* tells us that the first fray between the men of Hengist and their British hosts was begun by the cry 'Take your seaxes,' and Florence of Worcester says that the German Saxony derives its name from 'the long and victorious knives' with which savage invaders from the North exterminated the earlier inhabitants.

Very few Anglo-Saxon coins have been found in my district, the best being the silver penny of Offa now in the possession of Sir John Evans, and of which a facsimile may be seen in Trinity Library. This was dug up in Barrington parish. I have a *scatta*; it is a rude copy of Roman mintage, the device on the reverse being intended for the Capitoline wolf represented on the local coins of Rome. The bronze rings used for money in the Anglo-Saxon period are however fairly plentiful. Amongst them one heavily gilt specimen is worth notice, as it was obviously intended to pass for gold; the fraud having been detected by breaking it.

Worthy, too, of notice is this bronze bracteate, the only specimen found hereabouts of that form of ornament so common amongst the Norsemen¹. It is a sham curio, stamped with quasi-Arabic characters, and was presumably passed off by some Constantinopolitan dealer on one of the Varangian guard as a genuine Saracen article. Similar sham curios, stamped with quasi-hieroglyphics, are frequently to be seen in museums,

¹ See Du Chaillu, *The Viking Age*, p. 332.

and were presumably passed off on Greek travellers as ancient Egyptian.

Passing on to mediæval and later times my most interesting finds have been two bullæ. One of them, found near the site of the ancient chapel of Our Lady of Whitehill, between Barrington and Haslingfield, bears the name of Pope Martin V. The other bulla is the seal of Guerin de Montaigu, Grand Master of the Hospitallers in 1232. It bears his name; and on the reverse a highly conventional representation of the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre. The Order had a house at Wendy, the accounts of which for the year 1338 are still extant and will be found in my *History of Cambridgeshire*.

Two armorial badges are presumably connected with the Barons' War. One bears the royal arms, the three lions, the other a butterfly; perhaps the device of the Papillon family.

Mediæval coins are, as might be expected, abundant. My series includes a few rare specimens; a penny of John, and another of Alexander King of Scots. I have also a jetton of Mary Queen of Scots, which seems to be unique. It bears on one side the arms of Scotland and France impaled, only the latter being dimidiated, and on the other the device now borne by the Earls of Galloway. The Divine hand pruning a barren vine, with the motto 'Virescit vulnere virtus.' Among the remaining coins is one of the gun-metal shillings struck by James II in 1689.

Nuremberg and Abbey tokens by the score, and a good show of the later local tradesmen's tokens complete my list; the result obtained by a single collector in one small area of Cambridgeshire, an area which there is no reason whatever to suppose specially fruitful from an archæological point of view. It is a measure of that fertility of the whole district insisted on by Professor Hughes, and a measure of our need for a new Museum.

Professor RIDGEWAY spoke upon the rarity of the bronzed arrow-head in Northern Europe.

Professor HUGHES spoke upon the geological conditions which had determined the occupation of the district through successive ages.

Baron von HÜGEL remarked on the jadite stone.

Professor RIDGEWAY drew attention to the frequency with which papal bulls were found buried in walls.

Mr H. D. CATLING exhibited a mediaeval ring which had been discovered at Much Hadham in Essex.

ANNUAL REPORT.

THE Council record with regret the deaths of the following Members of the Society: The Reverend Charles Lawford Acland, M.A., F.S.A., Member of Council; The Rt. Hon. The Lord Acton, LL.D., F.S.A.; The Reverend Norman Macleod Ferrers, D.D., F.R.S., Master of Gonville and Caius College; John Lewis fytche, M.A. (Oxon.), F.S.A.; Edmund John Mortlock, M.A.; The Reverend John William Pieters, B.D.

The Members of the Society now number 234 and the Honorary Members 13.

During the past session ten meetings have been held, at which the average attendance has been 31.

Eighteen communications have been made, namely: By Mr C. P. Allix: *On traces of an early settlement at Swaffham Prior* (read at a meeting on the site). By Mr J. W. Clark: (a) *On the work done to the library of Exeter Cathedral in the year 1412; with a transcript and translation of the fabric-roll in which the receipts and expenses are recorded.* (b) *On two pieces of furniture in the same Cathedral which were probably intended for the protection of books.* (c) *On some French and Belgian libraries.* (d) *On the wheel desk in the Church of St Nicholas, Great Yarmouth.* By the Rev. J. W. E. Conybeare: *Exhibition of objects collected in the neighbourhood of Barrington.* By Mr F. M. Cornford: *On a fresco at Cortina.* By Mr H. G. Fordham: *Exhibition of a small bronze ornament in the form of a hog found in the neighbourhood of Guilden Morden.* By Mr J. E. Foster: *On a charter relating to Anglesey Priory.* By Mr C. J. B. Gaskoin: *On the University Wills in the Probate Registry at Peterborough.* By the Rev. R. A. Gatty: *On*

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