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Professor HUGHES then read the following paper:

"ON THE EXCAVATIONS IN KING'S LANE."

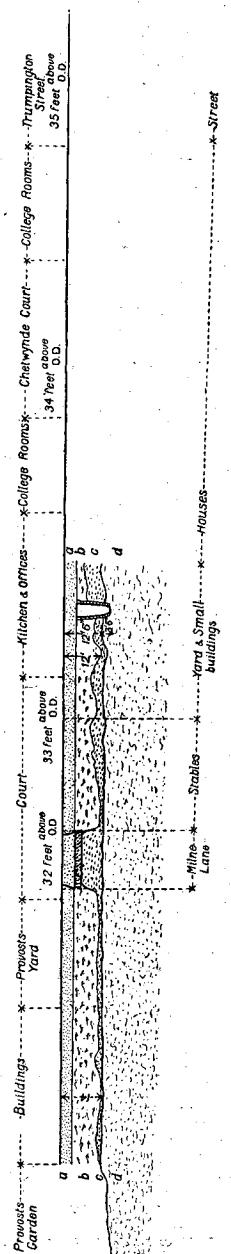
A very interesting section has recently been exposed in the course of digging the foundations for the extension of King's College on the south side of King's Lane.

The whole of the corner between King's Lane and Queens' Lane, where the King's College stables stood, and a considerable portion of the area west of Queen's Lane, have been altogether cleared out down to the gravel, and thus we have had an opportunity of examining the growth of the made ground and soil and reading the history of that part of old Cambridge in the most trustworthy records, that is to say in the earth which has been heaped up by natural and artificial agencies and has held safely buried in it the relics of successive ages of occupation of the site.

It will perhaps be as well to enquire first of all what we can learn from written documents respecting the area and of course we first consult the Architectural History of Cambridge by Willis and Clark. Here we find the site marked as that of Le Boreshede (vol iv. plan 13 fig. 3) and if we turn to the description (vol. i. p. 345) we shall find that "the Founder also commenced the acquisition of property to the south of Plot's Lane by conveying to the College in 1444 a tavern called 'Le Boreshede,' which seems to have been situated at the corner of that lane and Queens' Lane." Old King's Lane, or Nut Lane, or Plutes Lane, it will be noticed, did not coincide exactly with the modern King's Lane, but ran into Queens' Lane about the same place where King's Lane now joins it. So we are certainly excavating on the site of the old Boar's Head acquired by King's about the middle of the 15th century.

Queens' Lane coincides, at this point at any rate, exactly with the ancient way known as Milne Street, whether so called from its leading to the King's Mill, or, as conjectured by

FIG. 1.



- (a) Levelled ground of recent date.
- (b) Old mediæval made ground.
- (c) Mammoth gravel.
- (d) Gault.

Dr Stokes, perhaps from a number of small private horse mills along it, does not matter for our present enquiry.

The area now excavated extends from the terrace of gravel which determined the position of Pease Hill, Market Hill, and High Street—now King's Parade—down the slope towards the river, nearly to where the alluvium comes on below the made ground behind Bodley's new buildings (*Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.* vol. xi. 1907, p. 393).

Gravel was dug from very early times along the western slope of this terrace, and into the irregular hollows and pits thus formed rubbish was shot, while, before any extensive buildings were erected on the site, the whole was levelled up with material carted from a distance. A very interesting fact was observed when the excavation was carried into the street now known as Queens' Lane. The gravel had not been removed below it and none of the early mediæval pottery, such as was found abundantly in the made ground on either side, occurred under the roadway. The obvious inference is that we had there the exact line of the ancient Milne Street, which ran along the dry margin of the gravel terrace and had coarse metal laid on it only in later times when it was necessary to keep it up to the level of the ground raised artificially on either side of it. Nearly opposite the subway from the college there was a well sunk through the superficial deposits into the gault. It had but little water in it, and, when emptied, filled but slowly. The water was obtained from the base of the gravel and this has been locally much dried of recent years by drainage operations, so that it is probable that, when the well was made, a larger supply was obtained. The well was sunk through the older black earth (*b*) but was covered by the newer rubbish (*a*) which was laid on during the last levelling of the ground to a depth of about 3 feet. I was unable to ascertain that any objects had been found in the well. The only clue to the date is in the steining, which was of clunch for about three-fourths of its depth, below which it was lined with bricks, and these were the old red two-inch bricks which are said to have gone out of use in the 18th century. This however does not fix the date, as the bricks like the clunch may have been obtained from old buildings.

The clunch was roughly trimmed into shape and sometimes, when the fragment was large, it was dressed so as to accommodate itself to the curvature of the side of the well. One fragment was part of a pillar about 14 inches in diameter and on the surface of this names and figures were cut (see Pl. VI), such as are commonly found on the softer stones in any school or church or other place of public resort. We should have been glad if the practice had in this case preserved a date. The well is obviously much more recent than the black earth with pottery through which it has been sunk, and the thin bricks, if then new, would carry us back 150 or 200 years, but the fragment of clunch was part of a building pulled down before that time, and the graffiti seem as if they had been made when the pillar was standing. What building it came from is a matter of conjecture. Perhaps from St John's Church on the north, perhaps from some Carmelite ruins on the south-west or perhaps from quite a different part of the town.

Mr Arthur Gray of Jesus College sends me the following interesting note on the graffiti.

"I read the lighter scratch as Jordan (a very common name in mediæval times) but you may remember that I first read it Johan, and I think this is right. In my *Nunnery of St Radegund Charters* No. 113c is a deed of one John Elys—Henry VI. 27. The bigger scratch is certainly Elys. The date curiously corresponds with that which I assigned to the style of writing, latish 15th century, and corresponds with the date of the demolition of St John's Church."

These points come out very well on the photograph (Pl. VI) for which I am indebted to the skill of Mr Cecil H. Nichols.

We now turn to the objects found in the black earth, which are of much higher antiquity and of great interest.

First we notice that the mode of occurrence of the lower part of this soil indicates, not so much that it was carried from a distance to fill up depressions, as that it is the gradual growth of soil in rubbish pits or middens. Its character does not suggest that it was derived from many different sources, for there was not the great variety, nor the heaps and layers of pottery and household rubbish which we so commonly find on similar sites, but the broken ware occurred sporadically through the soil.



Next as to its age. There was not as far as I saw or could ascertain any trace of fayence or porcelain, i.e. no delft, no china. These classes of ware came in, I am informed by Dr Glaisher, in the 16th century and therefore this bit of negative evidence points to an early date for the deposits.

There were a few odds and ends, such as a tobacco pipe, which had evidently fallen in from the top soil.

The absence of metal was remarkable. There was no tool or instrument nor any indication that there had been iron which had rusted away. The only iron object found was a horse shoe and this had nothing very distinctive about it. It was a broad shoe tapering to the heels with apparently eight nails but no calkins.

There were very few bones compared with what one usually finds in the rubbish around mediæval houses. Those I saw belonged to horse, ox, pig, and sheep, broken as we generally find them in kitchen refuse. The ox was of the small domesticated breed derived chiefly from *Bos longifrons*, and the sheep was of the old horned breed.

There was also a portion of the antler of red deer sawn off, and showing marks of the saw on the shank higher up, where there is a circular hole bored through the antler similar to another hole in the flat area near the top, near which the antler is ground or whittled off.

There is one small piece of stained glass, not whole coloured but with the colour burnt on to the surface.

A very pretty bit of Venetian glass highly iridescent and covered with bubble-like protuberant ornamentation is exactly like some exhibited in the Colchester Museum where it is referred to the 15th century.

The most interesting objects, however, are the potsherds, which, by variety of texture, form, and ornamentation, defy description. There is plenty of the rough plain red, brown and grey coarse ware, with small calcined chips of flint in it, also black cooking pots, fine close textured grey jugs and other vessels and urns, often with burnished ornament; all of which are undistinguishable from vessels commonly found associated with Roman remains. But here we have nothing distinctively

Roman. No Samian—no Durobrivian—no coins, and on the other hand there are plenty of examples of vessels showing a gradual change from those which resemble Roman types into a new kind of ware, which is never found with Roman remains but is associated with mediæval objects. These are all mixed up with ordinary mediæval glazed ware till in the upper layers the whole facies is different, and we seek for analogies not so much among the vessels of Roman origin but among the foreign ware still found in the Low Countries and in the south of Europe.

It is not as though this were a solitary example of the mixture of several types of pottery. We have around Cambridge plenty of examples of purely Roman remains, including in this of course Romanized British, as for instance at Chesterford¹ and the area round St Sepulchre's². We have in all probability at Horningsea³ an example of a pottery carried on from Roman far down into post-Roman times. We have in and around Cambridge plenty of examples of the ware used by the people whom the Normans found here and of those who have continuously occupied the same sites ever since.

I have already⁴ so often urged the improbability of the Roman types of pottery being given up, and adduced conclusive evidence from excavations in the neighbourhood that it was not, that I will not go into that question again, but merely point out that we appear to have in this new section at King's another example from ancient laystalls of the continuity with gradual modification in respect of domestic ware from Roman times to the present day.

Many unusual forms occur among the vessels, for instance a long spouted vessel of black and red ware with a coarse green glaze which looks like a rough sauce boat, and a large red earthenware unglazed shallow pan with an elongated lip or spout.

There are pieces of very large heavy vessels of black ware surrounded with handle-like loops as if for passing a cord

¹ *Proc. Hunts. and Cambs. Arch. Soc.* Vol. II. 1907, p. 125.

² *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.* Vol. XI. p. 410.

³ *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.* Vol. VI. 1885, p. xxxii; Vol. X. 1901, p. 174.

⁴ *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.* Vol. VIII. 1892, pp. 22, 255; Vol. XI. p. 435; *Archæol. Journ.* Vol. LIX. 1902, pp. 219, 237.

through, and roughly ornamented with bands of clay laid on and symmetrically impressed finger marks. Some of these were probably not less than 18 inches in diameter.

There were some highly ornamented jugs. One of these was deeply marked with perforations along the handle, which was made more secure by having the clay of the body of the jug driven into the attached handle when soft.

Another was ornamented with drops of green or brown glaze symmetrically covering the surface and overlapping like scales or feathers.

On the west side of Queens' Lane the ground had been more recently disturbed. In the deep trench in the south-west corner at a depth of about 10 feet a number of human bones occurred irregularly, as if the skeleton had been dug up during previous excavations and the bones had been thrown in again. There were some deep foundations of walls here and a great thickness of made ground, much of which has probably been laid on since the interment was made, so that we must not infer that the original grave was 10 feet deep. The site here approaches the burying ground of the Carmellites.

One specimen is unique in my experience and so I must state the evidence as to its position in these excavations. Mr Hill, the clerk of the works, himself extracted portions of it from the same ground in which the human bones were found. This as I have pointed out had been disturbed in the course of laying foundations in times later than the accumulation of the laystall. The workmen brought me a piece among other ancient fragments, which, when cleaned, I found could be fitted on to the vessel. In the Colchester Museum Dr Laver and Mr Arthur Wright showed me early mediæval pottery of the same type. The fragment consists of the neck and upper part of the bowl of a large jug in reddish grey ware covered with a heavy dark green glaze. A rounded handle curves from rim to bowl opposite which there is a straight spout in the corresponding position. Between these, placed two on either side of the vessel, in high relief are four knights on horseback with battlement-like helmets and long Norman shields covering the body from neck to ankle.

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