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OF THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

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WITH

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY

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The Reverend F. G. WALKER, M.A., also read two papers, illustrated with lantern-slides, on

(1) ROMAN AND SAXON REMAINS FROM THE GRANGE ROAD, CAMBRIDGE.

The Roman and Saxon remains from the Grange Road are brought before the notice of the Society this evening through the kindness of the Master and Fellows of St John's College on whose property they were found and to whom they belong.

The authorities of St John's College, and also those of several other Colleges, have given me, as your Secretary, authority to take charge of all antiquities found on their several properties. This report is the first result of such courteous confidence on their part.

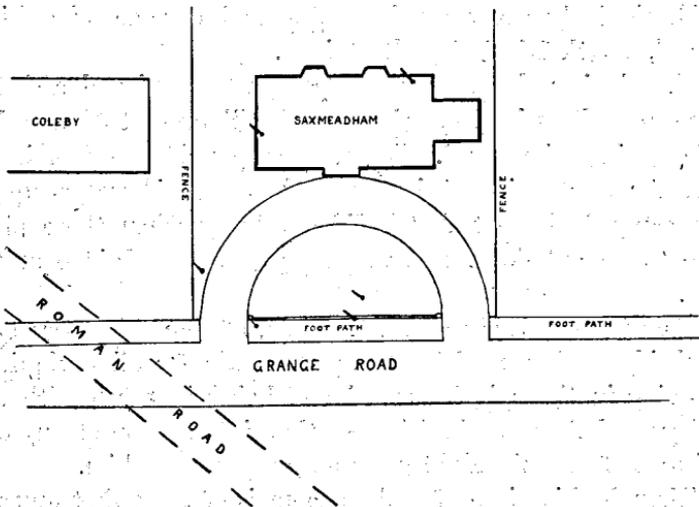
The spot on which these remains were found is very close to where the line of the Roman road from Castle End crosses the Grange Road on its way to the south-west of England—the road commonly known as the Akeman Street. The course of this road was fully dealt with in the paper on *Roman roads into Cambridge* which I had the honour of reading before the Society on February 8th, 1910, so we need not linger on that subject now.

During the building of the house called 'Saxmeadham' last summer—the position of it is marked on the plan—a good deal of ground was broken in digging its foundation trenches and in laying out the garden. Mr F. G. Hopkins of Emmanuel College, one of our members, for whom the house was built, was kind enough to give me every facility for observing the building operations, and thus I was enabled to keep watch over what was done.

Six skeletons, or parts of skeletons, four male and two female, were found, all less than two feet below the surface of the ground, and all but one lying with their heads in a north-easterly direction as shown on the slide. The human remains

were taken to Professor Macalister at the Anatomy School, and Dr Duckworth has been so good as to make a careful inspection of them. His report, which is attached to this paper, pronounces the males to be of Romano-British type.

Two only of the skeletons need be particularized. A male about 5 feet 7 inches in height (the second one described in Dr Duckworth's report) was found in undisturbed ground close to the wall between Saxmeadham and Coleby, the adjoining house. This skeleton was lying with the head towards the south-east. The lower part of the body and the legs were,



Plan of site, Grange Road, Cambridge.

unfortunately, partially destroyed some considerable time earlier, when pipes were being relaid for the conveyance of water to the fountain in Great Court, Trinity College. Touching the left side of the skull was the Roman jug, now shown, which is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, in its present condition, the neck and mouth having been broken off at the time of the interment. It is of red paste containing mica grains, and once had a smooth shining surface, a small portion of which can still be seen near its base. Almost every piece of pottery of this paste I have found in my excavations has lost its polish; long

continued exposure to the moisture in the earth seems to disintegrate the surface of this particular ware.

From among the rib-bones of the skeleton I picked out the broken bone pin, and also a small plain bronze dress or cloak fastener with one hook broken off. I forgot to give it to the photographer and so it does not appear on this slide.

Near the side of the body was a socketed iron spear-head $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, leaf-shaped and flat, exactly like, in shape and size, one found, with several others, in the camp at Newstead, in Scotland, by Mr Curle, described and illustrated by him in his book *A Roman Frontier Post* (Plate XXXVI, No. 6). Also beside the body was one scale of Roman bronze armour, shield shaped, length 1 inch, breadth $\frac{3}{8}$ inch.

The laying down of the pipes just mentioned and the consequent disturbance of the ground will account for no other scales being discovered. It was not possible to search for more for fear of interfering with the aforesaid water-supply. One can only lament that I did not know when these pipes were to be put down and was away from Cambridge at the time.

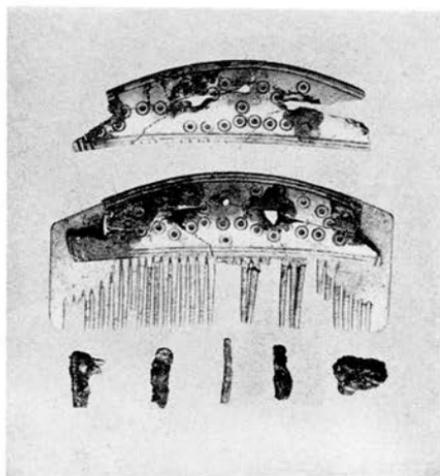
This incident emphasizes the need of some one person in Cambridge being officially deputed to care for all antiquities occurring in the neighbourhood and being in touch with the College and Town authorities, so that information of any disturbance of the soil might be at once reported to him.

Though this piece of scale armour is of somewhat unusual shape and differs from those found at Newstead, at Silchester and along the Wall, it is in the opinion of the British Museum authorities a genuine piece of Roman armour¹.

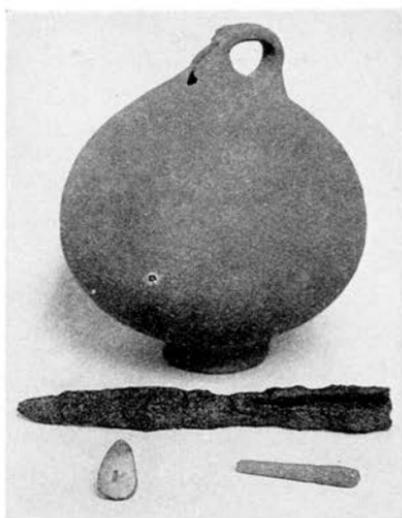
Roman armour was worn over a leather surcoat and was of three kinds:

That usually called *lorica segmentata* which was made up

¹ In order further to fortify my opinion that this is a piece of scale armour I sent it to Mr Curle for examination. He found some hundreds of them at Newstead. His opinion is that it may be an armour scale, but is doubtful on the ground that there are only two holes through it for fastening it to the surcoat. This had been an objection in my mind until I turned to the Report of the Excavations on the Austrian Limes and there, in Part II, Plate xv, are shown several of similar shape with only two holes like this one in question.



Saxon comb with one bronze and four iron rivets.



Roman jug, iron spear-head, bronze armour scale and bone pin.



Saxon urn containing human ashes.

of breast and back plates with overlapping pieces of bronze or iron which protected the lower part of the body and the shoulders.

The *lorica squamata* or scale armour. In this the separate scales seem to have been either fastened together and then hung by means of leather thongs to the surcoat underneath, or were directly fastened to a coat of leather.

The *lorica hamata*, ring or chain armour.

The interest in this find lies in the fact that Roman arms and armour are of most unusual occurrence in England outside the fortified camps of the Roman occupation.

Four iron knife blades, respectively 4, $3\frac{5}{8}$, 3 and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length were found during the digging of the foundation trenches.

I have compared them with those in the British Museum, the Museum at the Guildhall, London, the private museum at Chesters in Northumberland, which contains so many fine relics discovered in the excavations in the camps along the Roman Wall, and also with those I have discovered in Roman sites near Cambridge and elsewhere, and believe them to be Roman.

A good deal of Roman pottery was turned out during the course of the digging—the most interesting fragments are on the table. Nothing whole, except the red jug already described, was discovered.

The second skeleton which needs notice is that of a young Saxon girl of about nine to eleven years of age.

Owing to the extreme dryness and hardness of the ground, consequent upon last summer's heat, the bones of all the skeletons dug up were very brittle and easily broken, which accounts for their fragmentary condition. Especially did this cause act upon the bones of this young child, for scarcely anything except the lower jaw remains intact. It was dug out by the workmen before word reached me that another burial had been discovered, or I might, possibly, have preserved more of it.

Resting against the skull of the child was the handsome bone comb, here illustrated. It is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width, with a

curved back measuring $1\frac{5}{8}$ inch at its greatest depth. The comb itself is in four pieces which fit together very accurately and were kept in position by two curved pieces of bone—one on each face of the comb—each ornamented with a design of rings and dots 25 to 30 in number. No regular pattern is made by these rings, they appear to have been carved indiscriminately. Four iron rivets, whose rusting split the comb at its two curved supports into fragments, together with one slender bronze rivet, kept the six pieces which compose the comb in place. It is of usual Saxon type.

Round the neck of the girl was an amber and glass bead necklace fastened by a plain, flat, circular, bronze brooch with, apparently, an iron pin. It is too broken for illustration. The lower jaw of the child is much stained with green from the bronze brooch resting against it.

The necklace is made up of 38 beads, 28 of amber and 10 of glass.

Of the amber ones, 23 are perfect or almost so, while five are broken, from being hit with the pick of the workman.

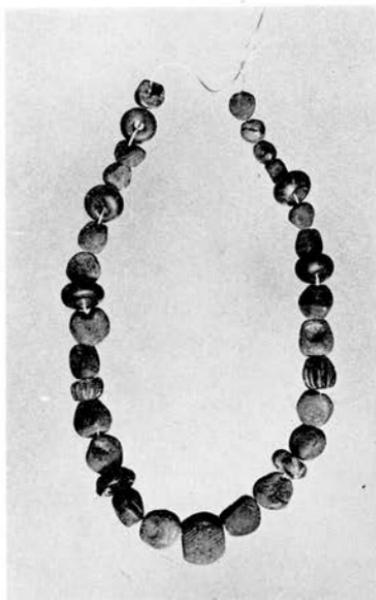
Of the glass beads, six are plain, rather flat, circular ones of dark yellow colour; two with longitudinal ridges, one blue, the other dark yellow; one with characteristic black and white wavy pattern, and one, the largest, of fine twisted red and yellow glass with thin black lines at intervals.

Two Saxon urns, both unfortunately broken and imperfect, were dug up while the drive up to the house was being made.

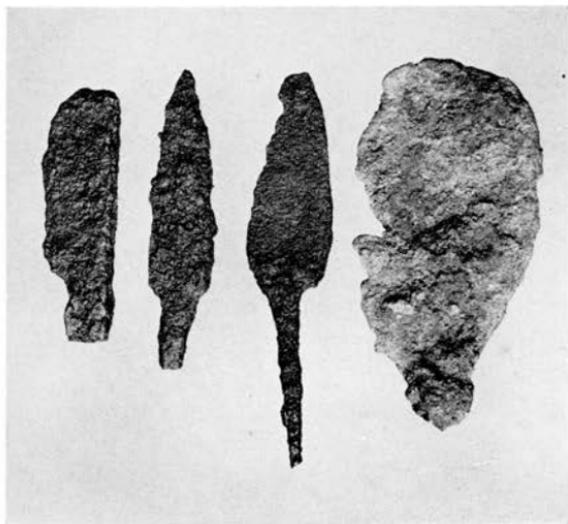
The decorated one contained burnt bones amongst which were fragments of a comb similar to the one already described, and so we may conclude these are the remains of a female.

In the course of the digging two bronze buckles and a Saxon bronze strap fastener were found, all three of a common type. The buckles might be Roman, but are probably Saxon. One buckle of mediaeval date was also found and several pieces of bronze to which it is difficult to assign an age.

There is also the right radius of a cat cut to a point which was probably used as a dress fastener.



Saxon necklace of amber and glass beads.



Roman knives.

The coins found are as follows :

Roman.

A Second Brass of the Antonine period—the inscription mostly defaced.

A Third Brass of the third century and

Two small post-Constantine coins, all much worn.

English.

Henry VI farthing; there is no specimen of this in the Fitzwilliam Museum collection.

Charles I. Two English farthings; their date is after 1626.

One Irish halfpenny.

One farthing token of John Bird, Cambridge, dated 1667.

A few pieces of broken Saxon pottery occurred. These Saxon sherds were not mingled with the Roman fragments, but lay apart with the urns and the Saxon girl.

In many places along this Roman road from Castle End to Cirencester in Gloucestershire, as well as in the opposite direction, through Ely and Littleport to the Ouse, I have found Roman remains, and during the past few years, especially from Castle End to Wimpole and to Old Warden in Bedfordshire. Many Saxon things have been found, both by others and myself, not far from the spot of which we have been speaking.

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