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OCTOBER 1915—MAY 1916

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Augustan cemetery on the Martinsberg at Andernach, and they appear to have turned up along with Augustan coins in another corner of Andernach¹. The Foxton example may, therefore, also be Augustan; it may belong to the same date and trade as the Foxton chalice. In any case, it cannot be later than about A.D. 50. We may conclude that there was before the Claudian conquest, on the banks of the Cam, half-a-dozen miles above Cambridge, a Celtic population prosperous enough to import and educated enough to use some of the finer products of continental civilisation. Shall we call it a fore-runner of modern Cambridge?

SOME ROMAN AND SAXON ANTIQUITIES FOUND NEAR KETTERING.

By F. R. G. HIEF, B.A., Sidney Sussex College.

Read at the Meeting on February 7, 1916.

Northamptonshire certainly cannot be counted amongst the least of counties that have contributed to the collection of Roman and Saxon remains of this country. In fact it has produced some of the most valuable specimens illustrating the nature of the inhabitants of the country during these early periods.

Compared with the remains of the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods the relics of the Stone and Bronze Ages are scarce. This, however, need not be wondered at if the surmise is correct, that in the early times what is now known as Northamptonshire was to a great extent covered with forest and woodland.

But in the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods the area seems to have been quite thickly populated comparatively speaking. Roman Northants was a district closely resembling the larger part of the southern non-military Britain, both in abundance and the character of its remains. We have one considerable town near Castor in the N.E. of the county, three smaller ones on the banks of the Nene, and numerous villas and rural dwellings. There were two good roads and some industries.

¹ *Bonner Jahrbücher*, lxxvii. 208, xcvi. 96, cvii. 27.

Ironstone seems to have been quarried, and certainly extensive manufactures of earthenware existed at Castor. The Castor potteries preserve in Roman days some faint traditions of the old native Celtic Art.

In short the antiquities of this county present fully and freely the features which characterise the ordinary settled life of Roman Britain, and they add one feature which is less usual, the survival of Celtic traditions in art.

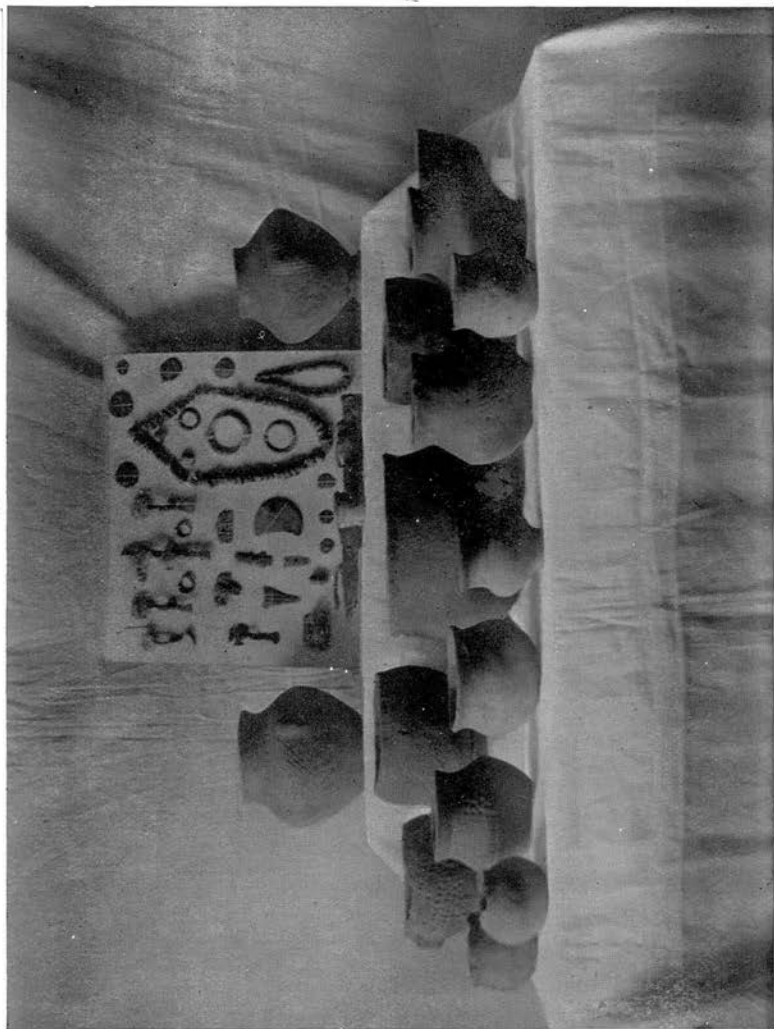
During Anglo-Saxon times the territory was still largely covered with forest, which formed a natural defence; and judging from the remains and interments, the southern portion of the county was the more densely populated. It is very interesting to trace the advance of the Teutonic nations, and later the introduction of Christianity, by the methods of burial.

From the relics found in the county the southern part seems to have been the more prosperous, as most of the gold and jewelled ornaments have been found south of a line drawn from Clipston through Desborough to Thrapston (i.e. about midway through the county).

Weapons are not common, so that it may be concluded that the county was in a more or less peaceful condition. This may be due to the protection offered by the woods, and the absence of broad rivers in the southern part of the county.

The collection now exhibited was found in the course of excavations made from 1912—1913, for obtaining ironstone on the north side of Rothwell Wood. The site is on the south bank of the Ise, a tributary to the Nene, not far above the outcrop of the Lias. The valley is quite steep, and the position of the interment commands a good view of the surrounding country.

Among the numerous sites in the county where settlements existed in Anglo-Saxon times, there is a remarkable uniformity as regards physical conditions. About two-thirds are at the junction of the Northamptonshire Sand with the Upper Lias Clay. This is natural, as such positions made on the sand in the immediate vicinity of a clay formation would have a good water supply, also a good amount of timber for fuel, and forest pasture for the herds of swine.



Antiquities found near Kettering.



The ironstone workings started about five years ago, and worked into the hill in a southerly direction. The first indications found of a settlement were four wells made of worked stone situated in a line due north and south. No other information could be obtained, but I imagine that they were disturbed as little as possible.

A constant outlook was kept, but nothing turned up until the pit had reached about 400 yards from the wood, when the two small urns were found. After that our work was continually being rewarded by finds.

In the description of the urns I think it will be best to take them in order of age, so far as can be judged from their form.

The flanged vessel in rough pottery, with seven rows of indents occurring all round, was found 150 yards north of the north side of the wood, at a depth of about 2 feet. It stands about 4 inches in height on a distinct flat base, the diameter of which is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The outside diameter is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches constricted to $4\frac{1}{4}$ inside measurement, with a flat rim sloping into the vessel. The ware is burnt reddish yellow equally on the inside and the outside. A thick wing or flange projects about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from a base $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in length, placed vertically within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the rim. A portion of the side of the vessel has been broken away, but if there had been another flange here, it would not have been symmetrical. The vessel is hand made, and is a type generally recognised as British.

About 250 yards further west the two small vessels were found. They belong to a different age. The small open-mouthed vessel in dark grey ware is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height, the greatest diameter of the body of the vessel, and the diameter at the exterior of the curved back rim being $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It stands on a small base which shows obscurely the marks of the wire by which it was cut off. Two impressed lines round the body near the spring of the neck furnish the only ornament. This seems to be of Roman type, but as such are frequently found in Saxon cemeteries, one cannot feel sure of the age.

The other small vessel is in light-coloured ware, and only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height by $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter. This may be a Roman unguentarium.

The rest of the objects in earthenware and metal seem to indicate a Saxon cemetery in which both cremation and inhumation were practised, and they probably represent a long period. A number of skeletons were found, but detailed information was not taken when they were unearthed.

The urns were found at a depth of about 2 feet, and from 250 to 300 yards N.N.W. of the north corner of the wood. Four of the urns were highly ornamented with the well-known conventional lines and stamps in the form of stars and portcullis-like impressions. The fifth urn found with the decorated ones is of a similar shape, but is unornamented, and has a most peculiar base.

Five more urns, found a little nearer the wood, are roughly made without any ornamentation; and three found still nearer the wood, that is more to the south, are ruder forms like basins without any attempt at a rim.

These last eight are almost round at the base, being very slightly flattened as if by the accident of having been put to stand on a flat surface while still soft. The more thick and coarse ones are made of clay full of calcined chips of flint, and all the unornamented specimens have flakes of mica disseminated.

The only one that contained bones was the largest; rim $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, greatest diameter 9 inches, height $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Beside it lay a fine socketed spear 2 inches broad, and $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length (i.e. what remains of it, for it is much reduced by corrosion). The relative position of urn and spear is very peculiar, but a similar arrangement occurred at Peterborough with a knife instead of a spear head.

In the two larger ornamented urns, there were the two beautiful strings of beads, seen in the centre of the illustration—the larger string in the larger urn, and the smaller string in the smaller. They consist of glass, pottery paste, amber and jet, and are of very various sizes, form and colour.

It is highly probable that nearly all the urns were used for sepulchral purposes; most certainly the highly ornamented ones, as these coincide almost exactly with some found in Rutland not so very far away, which have been definitely proved as being used as cinerary urns.

Near to the urns were found six bronze cruciform and other fibulae, two brooches, two finger rings, a pin now bent back, and one large plain thick bronze ring $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter, and $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch thick shown on the card in the illustration.

The circular saucer-shaped brooch that is broken, has had an inner portion that was probably of gold. This belongs to a West Saxon type that predominates in the South Midlands. The long brooch is common in the Scandinavian countries. In the specimen shown, one of the three limits of the head presents a knob attached to the edge of an oblong plate of the Scandinavian type. The side knobs served as terminals of the spiral coil of the spring in the earlier types, but in the latter types they simply became ornaments. The method of attachment of the knobs (i.e. by a slot, in the knob, into which the plate is clamped) is very typical of brooches found in Leicestershire, and north-east of that county.

The tendency in England was to flatten the knobs and the bow, and to broaden the extremities. For the plain surface of the bronze was substituted gilding and engraving, and silver plates or discs attached to the terminals and salient points. Thus the broad square-headed brooch points to a late period and is characteristic of Anglian influence.

The decorations on the brooches are very different, one the broad arrow head, and the other a circular device. The former is again typical of later ornaments. The clasp is decorated with a beautiful pattern which is early Saxon, for in the later Saxon varieties, we find a pattern derived from the disjointed limbs of the quadruped which figures largely on decorated monuments of Saxon Age. A very similar one was found at Sleaford (Lincolnshire) fastened with broad leather straps round the arm of a female.

Only two coins were found in the area. Both of them are Roman, but the superscription is almost illegible.

The other specimens were found on the opposite side of the river, about 800 yards west of the church. They consist of a square needle that has been bent, and four bodies made of baked clay with large flints. Similar objects to these have been found at Luffenham in Rutland, and also at Aylesbury, and

have been described as spindle whorls. This may be so, but they are so heavy that it seems somewhat unlikely.

At the same place were found a bronze mirror and cinerary urns, said to be of Celtic age. These are now in the British Museum.

Some Roman coins were found near to this site (see *History of Desborough*, by J. R. Moore, Esq.).

Before drawing conclusions from the specimens, it will be necessary to consider roughly some of the excavations made in other parts of the county. At Desborough, on the other side of the valley, a most important discovery was made in 1876. About 300 yards north of the church, there were many bodies with no coffins, simply laid in pits. The bodies were lying in an east to west position, but in all the pits appeared traces of fire. Near to the head of one skeleton was a gold necklace with jewels. A cross on the necklace seems to indicate that its owner had adopted the Christian faith. This is also supported by the direction of the bodies. At Kettering and Burton Seagrave, south of our site, many Celtic urns have been found, and all point to cremation being universally the custom in that area. At Marston, in the south-west of the county, 37 graves were found, which were characterised by burials of the entire body, but in no definite direction.

The nature of the metal ware found here is extremely similar to that found near Rothwell.

The view taken by Charles Roach Smith was, that in cases where cremated remains and skeletons were found in the same cemetery, the urns belong to prior interments, which were disturbed when the graves were dug, the urns being afterwards carefully replaced. Wherever found, these mortuary urns must be ascribed to the earliest Teutonic tribes that settled in Britain, for many of the urns resemble Roman ones in form, and may in many cases be of Roman fabric.

Evidence from various excavations in the county allows us to fix a general rule, that instances of cremation are met with north of Watling Street and the Tore Valley, while extended burials of pagans are characteristic of the southern half of the county. Now in the area under consideration, we find that both

methods of interment were in vogue, either together or successively; and as urns containing burnt bones are mainly confined to Anglian districts, and skeletons to Saxon and Jutish cemeteries, we may say that a tribe with Anglian affinities barely penetrated into the uplands between Rugby and Naseby before the spreading of Christianity.

In the vast acreage of the Fenland there lived a tribe mentioned by Bede, known as the Gyrwas. This tribe probably attempted to advance into Northamptonshire and, avoiding Rockingham Forest, came up the Nene and its tributaries. This seems to be supported by the fact that Anglo-Saxon sites in Northamptonshire, where urn burial has been traced, are all similarly situated on the banks of that river, and it is found that settlers east of Northampton seem to have practised cremation exclusively, till the introduction of Christian burial, whilst the south-west portion was more under western influence, and is characterised by burials of the entire body.

Thus with a view of the information gathered from the excavations made in this neighbourhood, we may conclude that the district was inhabited before the Roman invasion, but only scarcely populated. Yet what population there was, seems to have been prosperous, if we may judge by the beautiful mirror that was found on the side of the river opposite to where these urns were found.

During the Roman period the district seems to have been very peaceable and not greatly affected by the Roman influence, as Roman remains are scarce in the centre. This is only natural, as most of the Roman population was at Castor in the north, and in the district around Daventry and Northampton in the south. Those are the districts where the two main roads cut across the county, hence the natives in the centre near Kettering would not come much into contact with the Romans. It is also probable that during this period a greater part of the population would withdraw from the central wooded part of the county, and settle near to the large towns.

When the Romans left, it seems that the towns began to decline, and the natives returned to the centre of the county. This was followed by an invasion by the Teutons, who brought

with them new customs and new ideas. Their pottery was inferior to that of the Romans, and we get a return to hand-made vessels.

Now it is obvious that the same people did not make the highly decorated ware, and this other crude ware, and it seems likely that they represent the work of two totally different tribes. As regards the metal ware, we see a brooch typical of the Leicestershire type, one of the South Midland type (i.e. of West Saxon influence), and one pointing to Anglian influence. Thus it appears that two or three tribes inhabited the district successively, and if some light could be thrown on the district from which the clay came, out of which urns were made, it might be possible to trace from whence the invaders came.

As was noted before, the clay of the crude urns is very different from that of the highly decorated ones, but all contain mica flakes which do not occur in the Lias of the neighbourhood.

It is probable that the Gyrwas were the tribe that penetrated most deeply into the county, as they had only to come up the Nene and the Ouse, but even these did not get much further than the Rothwell district, before the introduction of Christianity (i.e. about 700 A.D.). Which type of urn they brought it is difficult to say, but as they practised cremation exclusively, it is natural that their urns would be of a highly decorated type. Hence this would put the decorated urns to the Angles; but as it has been pointed out, the district is one situated on the border line of the areas invaded by the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles respectively, and therefore any such statement is extremely doubtful. Much more material is needed to form a satisfactory theory, and much valuable evidence has been lost by our not having information as regards the skeletons and other objects, that were passed over by the workmen. Still there is a great deal that remains, and a systematic excavation should bring to light all the details required to form an exact history and description of the inhabitants of the district in these early periods.

In conclusion I should like to offer my sincere thanks to Professor Hughes for his valuable help, and I only hope that some day the excavations may be carried on in the same place under more systematic methods.

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