

Archæological Reports

A CARVED HEAD FOUND AT RADBURNE.

By the Rev. Canon ARTHUR HOPKINS, M.A.

SHORTLY after becoming Rector of Radburne seven years ago, when I was visiting a cottage near the church I noticed, in a small rockery near the door, a piece of dressed stone with indications of carving on it. Later when I came to know the people I asked about the stone, but they said it was there when they came to the house and that was all they could tell me. They let me look at the stone but would not allow me to move it or to dig it up. From what I could see the carving was some form of head-dress and there was a dowel hole in the top for joining this stone to the next.

I had to wait five years before I could do more in the matter, and then in the spring of 1954 the people moved from the cottage. I had to act swiftly because the new tenants moved in the same day as the old tenants left, so with the permission of the landowner, Major J. W. Chandos-Pole, I dug up the stone and took it away.

It turned out to be a carved head, which I date towards the end of the twelfth century. Considering that it had been knocking about for some time it is in a fair state of preservation, and the expression on the face of it is of quiet dignity, and is remarkably "alive". The head is surmounted by a covering, the ornament of which is rather like some inverted battlements.

The point that arises is from where did it come? We know that at the end of the eighteenth century the original south doorway, which was Norman, was blocked, and for some unknown reason a new doorway was made in the "Gothic" style a few feet west of the original doorway, and a classical porch added.

My suggestion is that this newly found stone head was the capital of one of the door pillars of the Norman doorway then destroyed. And this is further strengthened by the rough dowel hole in the top of the head from which the first stone of the arch of the door would spring.

I have learned from some of the older people in the parish that a former sexton dug up the head somewhere near the church many years ago, and that he put it in his garden.

The carving has been carefully cleaned and put on to the south wall of the chancel near the double sedilia, which is of transitional Norman style, and which Dr. Charles Cox dates as between 1150 and 1175.

A PALEOLITH FROM HOPTON.

By R. W. P. COCKERTON, LL.B.

IN the Spring of 1953 at the invitation of Col. Gell of Hopton Hall I walked over some of his ploughed fields with him in the hope that some scattered stones turned up in ploughing might provide clues to the ancient road system near Hopton.

On a field near Ibet Low I picked up a fragment of flint, which on subsequent examination disclosed no traces of secondary working, but on a ploughed field, just south of Sycamore Farm at national grid reference 267533, I picked up an ovate implement, which was lying loose on the surface of the field hitherto entirely unnoticed.

Col. Gell told me that some time previously field drains had been laid at that point to a depth of some two or three feet below the surface. It is reasonable to infer that it was during these operations, rather than in the ploughing, that the implement had been brought to the surface.

On reaching home and on further examination of the implement I realised that it was of the paleolithic period belonging to the type known as Acheulian.

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