



THE ROMAN PIGS OF LEAD DISCOVERED NEAR CHESTER.

BY THE REV. RUPERT H. MORRIS, D.D.

(Read 19th January, 1891.)

WHEN I undertook to make some remarks upon the Roman pigs of lead in the Museum, I purposed merely to call attention, in the briefest form, to the erroneous copying and translation of the inscriptions. It was, however, suggested to me that a short statement about such pigs, collected from various scattered notices, might prove an interesting subject for a paper, especially as some of these notices are in books not always easy of access.

One of these pigs was until lately under my care at Eaton. It was found, as you know, in 1838, by some navvies when making the railway from Chester to Crewe, seven feet below the surface, close to the ancient road from Chester to Delamere Forest. About one hundred and fifty yards off ran the road to London, and in the immediate vicinity is the place where the *Nymphis et Fontibus* altar was found in 1821. This altar, you will remember has its inscription on two sides, showing that it looked two ways.

Some fifty years after this (in 1886) the second pig, in



FIG OF LEAD, FOUND NEAR TARVIN BRIDGE, 1838.



FIG OF LEAD, FOUND AT THE ROODEYE, 1885.

FIGS OF LEAD,
FOUND NEAR CHESTER.

(Now in the Grosvenor Museum, Chester.)

excellent preservation, was found about fifty yards from the Dee, during excavations at the Chester Gasworks for a new gasholder. It was lying in a bed of river-gravel, covered with some twenty feet of silt. Both these pigs bear the same inscription, and they are similar in shape, though not in weight, to forty-three others which have been found in different parts of England.

Professor Ward, in the *Philosophical Transactions*, has shown that these pigs formed part of the tax paid out of the mines of Britain to the Roman authorities. These mines (of white and black plumbum, tin and lead), with the Salinæ or salt works, furnished a considerable portion of the Vectigalia, and so abundant was the supply of lead obtained in Britain, *near to the surface* (as compared with the deep and laborious mines in Spain and Gaul), that a law was made for restricting the output.

The produce was cast into massæ [Dion. ἑλασμοὶ μολίβδινοι], which we call pigs, a term which Wedgwood explains thus: "When the furnace in which iron is melted is tapped, the iron is allowed to run into one main channel, called the 'sow,' out of which a number of smaller streams are made to run at right angles. These compared to a set of pigs sucking their dam."

The mines were worked either (1) for the farmers of the revenue, or (2) directly for the imperial authority. Hence the pigs are marked with (1) the name of the Emperor (probably to authorise the sale) or of the farmer of the mine; (2) the year of office, which would answer the purpose of our A.D.; and occasionally, not always, with (3) the name of the people in whose district the mines lay, or the name of the mine itself. Those which have been found varied in weight from 76lb. to 192lb., the several weights being 76, 83, 89, 153, 156 (2), 163, 179, 184, 190, 192.

It has been suggested that the average pig is made to

consist of the number of pounds which the small horses of the country could conveniently carry, day after day, over bad roads, the heavier pigs being designed for other methods of transport.

The inscriptions on the Chester pigs give the (1) names of the imperial authority; (2) the date, the fifth consulship of Vespasian, and the third of Titus, which, according to our reckoning, is A.D. 74 (four years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus); and (3) on the side are letters which are understood to give the name of the Celtic tribe from whom the lead came.

In the British Museum there are ten others, with various inscriptions, which help us in reading those before us.

1. Found on Hints Common, Staffordshire, near Watling Street, at a depth of four feet, with a date two years later than the Chester pigs, and also bearing on the side the name of the same Celtic tribe—DECEANG

IMP . VESP . VII . T . IMP . V . COS
DECEA G

2. The earliest is that discovered on the northern flank of the Mendips, in Somerset, with date A.D. 49.

BRITANNIC - - AVG FIL -

[Britannicus, the son of that Emperor Claudius who paid a⁷ brief visit to Britain, and assumed for himself the name Britannicus, in celebration of his conquest of Britain].

3. A third, found at Stockbridge, in Hampshire, is dated 59, and bears the name of the bloodthirsty Nero.

NERON'S AVG EXKIANI IIII COS BR†

The emperor's name is in the genitive (not in the ablative), and of the inscription Mr. Roach Smith remarks that "it is interesting as referring to the Cangi (the Celtic tribe whose name is on the Chester pig—the name spelt Kiangi) at an earlier date, just previous to the

reverses of the Romans in Britain under Boadicea." Mr. Smith appears to have misinterpreted the inscription. The reading suggested by others appears more correct. There is no reference to the Cangi. K stands for kalendis, and IAN for Januariis, and the whole should be read: EX K[ALENDIS] IAN[VARIIS] iii CO[N]S[VLIS] BRIT[ANNICI].

4. Found, in 1734, on Hayshay Moor, Yorkshire, has the emperor's name in the ablative, with a free use of ligulate letters—

IMP . CAES . DOM^TIANO . AVG . COS . VII

Read—Imp[eratore] Cæs[are] Domitiano Aug[usto] Co[n]sule vii.

date 81; and on the side the letters BRIG for Brigantum, the tribe of the Brigantes.

5. Found at Snailbeach, in Shropshire, has the emperor's name in the genitive, date 117-138. IMP. HADRIANI . AVG.

6. Found at Wirksworth, Derbyshire, has the same emperor's name, also in the genitive, with the addition of the mine, Lutudæ (near Chesterfield) [Metallorum Lutudensium].

IMP . CAES . HADRIANI . AVG . METLVT

It is of use to note, as a warning against dogmatic assertion, that MET LVT were taken for some time to mean "memoria Legionis sextæ."

7. Found in the River Frome, near Bristol, with the name of the Emperor Antoninus Pius in the genitive.

IMP . CAESA TINI . AVG . PII P . P

All that I have hitherto mentioned have borne the emperor's name. No. 8, which was ploughed up on the site of an old encampment near Mansfield, Notts, bears the name of a private individual (in the genitive), Caius Julius Protus. It is from the Lutudæ Mines, and is stated to be extracted from silver EX ARGENTO.

9. Also bears the name of a private individual,

L . ARVCONI . VERICVND^I ME^TAL . LVTVD

It was found in 1783, on Matlock Moor, in Derbyshire, and weighs 83lb.

In addition to these, Camden mentions twenty found at Halton, upon the sea shore (in ipso litore erutas), and he adds that on some of them was to be read the name of the Emperor Domitian [IMP . DOMIT . AVG . GER .], and the name of the Celtic tribe, DE CEANG. These, it is added by Foote Gower, were discovered by accidentally pursuing a vein of marl near Runcorn, at the upper end of the Mersey estuary.

Now, what do we glean from the varied form of these inscriptions?

You will have noticed that the only preposition used has been *ex* (1), in *ex argento*, to denote the extraction of the lead from the silver, and (2) in *ex kalendis*, as the starting-point in reckoning a date. There is no preposition to indicate *tribute or tax received* FROM any people. Yet in all the notices given of these Chester pigs, DE in DECANGI has been taken for the PREPOSITION "de," and because that preposition governs the ablative, a final "s" has been supplied—to make an ablative plural—the whole being read and translated as De "from" Cangis the Cangis. In support of this interpretation, a space has been introduced between the De and the Ceangi. It is so in Hübner more than once, in Mr. Thompson Watkin's *Roman Cheshire*—in fact in all the notices of the inscription. There is no such space in the original in the Chester pigs, or in that preserved in the British Museum. C of CEANGI follows closely on the DE.

I have spoken of the name as Ceangi, but I would repeat what I said to the members of the Cambrian Archæolo

gical Association, on their visit here, that the so-called I is not an I, but is an L, and I would point out that the toe of the L, very plain some while ago, still remains to be seen on one of the pigs.

The name then of the tribe in whose territory these leaden masses were worked was DECEANGL or DECANGL. Now what do we know of this tribe? The passage in Tacitus (*Annals*, xii. 31) is well known in connection with this subject. The received text reads thus:

Dux (P. Ostorius) cunctos castris ad Auvonam [al. Trisantonam = Trent] et Sabinam fluvios cohibere parat. Quod primi Icenī abnuere, valida gens, hisque auctoribus, circumjectæ nationes locum pugnæ delegere, septum agresti aggere et aditu augusto, ne pervius equiti foret. Cæterum clade Icenorum compositi, qui bellum inter et pacem dubitabant, et ductus inde in Cangos exercitus. Vastati agri, prædæ passim actæ, non ausis aciem hostibus, vel si ex occulto carpere agmen tentaret, punito dolo. Iamque ventum haud procul mari quod Hiberniam insulam aspectat, cum ortæ apud Brigantas discordiæ retraxere Ducem.

Freely translated, this passage states that Ostorius (in the year 50 A.D.) formed a line of camps along the course of the Severn and Avon to check the Britons. The Icenī, who inhabited Norfolk and Suffolk, and frontiers of Essex and Herefordshire, alarmed at the success of the Romans, instigated the neighbouring tribes to rebellion. A pitched battle was fought—the Icenī and their allies were defeated. The neighbouring tribes who wavered being quieted by the Roman victory, Ostorius then led his forces against the Cangi, laid waste their lands, carried off cattle and other property. He came in the course of this expedition close to the sea which lies opposite to Ireland, when he was called away by a rising among the Brigantes, who occupied Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Westmoreland.

This passage clearly speaks of a British tribe, Cangî. Is the name correctly given? I think not, and would adopt the suggestion that in the phrase "inde *in* Cangos," between the *in* and Cangos, the copyist has dropped out the letters "de," misled by the previous "inde," and that the passage should read ductus inde in Decangos exercitus.

What portion of our island did they occupy? Camden is inclined to find a trace of the name in Cannington, near Bridgewater, Somerset, and in Wincanton, or in Cangton, near Bath.

Baxter, in his *Glossary*, contends that most of the British clans had their Ceangi, young men employed in the summer feeding of the flocks and herds, and that the Cori or Coriceni had theirs in Derbyshire.

Whitaker, in his *History of Manchester*, quoted by Ormerod (i. xxiii.), imagines that they must be immediate neighbours of the Iceni, and therefore must have inhabited the wild extent of Cannock Forest in Staffordshire. He distinguishes them from the Cangî, the servants of the Cornabii, and attendants upon their cattle, who lived in the northern borders of their country, and in the marshy grounds particularly, which still extend for many miles by Norton, Runcorn, and Frodsham, along the shore of the Mersey.

Elton, in his *Origins of English History*, calls attention to a similarity of name in a dark-skinned tribe (Gangani), mentioned by Ptolemy as living on the banks of the Shannon. He places them on the high lands round Snowdon, and identifies the Promontory of the Gangani, shown on Ptolemy's map, with the long neck of land which forms the northern limit of Cardigan Bay (containing Nevin and Pwllheli).

But we need not go so far east as Whitaker, or west as Elton. Tacitus' description would lead us to conclude that this people, Cangî or Decangî, held the district between

the part which Ostorius had just secured by his line of camps along the rivers Severn and Avon, and the coast looking towards Ireland. This has generally been understood to be a part of Cheshire and Flintshire. Camden's suggestion on this point seems reasonable enough, though founded on a wrong etymology. He says:

"Hanc regionis partem quod formoso situ intuentibus aridet et in Anglorum potestatem jam olim cesserat, Britanni Tegengle, *i.e.*, formosa Anglia, dixerunt." This district, from its beautiful situation and its early conquest by the Angli, the Britons called Tegengle (Welsh teg = fair), *i.e.*, formosa Anglia, fair England.

I agree with Camden in placing the Decangi in Tegengl. But I do not accept his explanation of the word. I would submit that this name indicates the territory occupied by the tribe we have under consideration, which would coincide with the Deanery of Tegengel as defined in Henry VII.'s time; that the name of the *district* preserves, *in a measure*, the name of the *tribe*, but whilst so preserving it, it assumed, in process of time, a slightly changed form, and gathered round it an altogether different meaning, in accordance with a difference of circumstances.

The district of Tegengl, curiously enough, was not considered at all a portion of *North Wales*; it was *English* territory, marked off from the Welsh domain by Offa's dyke. It formed part of Cheshire, not of Flintshire. As such it was a portion of the district assigned to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and in one old map of Early Britain it was marked off with Cheshire as belonging to Deira and not to Wales.

The name Tegengl appears in several forms. The Mercian Saxons called the district *Englefield*. Giraldus Cambrensis (1191) terms it provincia Tegengel. A charter of Edward's refers to the nobles of Tegengl. Cyndelw, a

Welsh bard (1150-1200), in one of his odes, speaks of Tegeingl. Under 1241, the *Annales Cambriæ* spell it Teygeygell. Englefield and Englefel occur as the usual forms in deeds from 1416 to 1484. In Henry VIII.'s time the syllable Te has degenerated into Ty, and we find it spelt Tygengel. Lord Mostyn in his address to the Cambrian Archæological Association mentioned that a common in Whitford parish is still called Mynydd Tegan, Tegan mountain. Camden gives as the etymology, Teg, fair or beautiful, and Angle for Angli, "formosa Anglia." Others have followed him in part, and have rendered it "fair corner," deriving engle from ongl or engl, an angle or corner.

I would venture to suggest that the last two syllables stand for Eingl, the Angli, as often in early Welsh poems; and that the "tyg" or "teg" represents some word meaning an enclosure or district; such a word as is found in Irish and Manx tigh and teage, with the same signification.

The theory I would suggest is this: T is a common Welsh mutation for D. The name Tegengle preserves for us at once (1) the early association of the tribe Decangli or Decangi with this district, and (2) the subsequent occupation by the Angli.

It would have been interesting to have discussed here the character and personal appearance of these people; but I will only quote the inference which Mr. Elton has drawn from Tacitus' notice of them, which implies that the natives showed a tameness of spirit inconsistent with the reputation for courage and skill in the use of the spear for which their posterity were celebrated. The army of Ostorius invaded their country in the march to the Irish Sea, the tribal pastures were ravaged, and a great herd of cattle driven in, but the people would not venture on an open resistance, and, at most, attempted a few insignificant ambushes.

We may speculate on the question whether they would belong to the type of the round-headed, light-haired Celts or to the long-headed dark folk who represented the most ancient section of the Celtic people, such as were found in the excavations at Gop, near Newmarket, in the very district of Tegengl. But this opens a very wide question, and I must leave it.

LETTER ON THE ROMAN PIGS OF LEAD.

BY PROFESSOR JOHN RHYS, OF OXFORD.

Queen's Hotel, Chester, April 10th, 1891.

My dear Mr. Shrubsole,

As you expressed a wish that I should put on paper what I suggested to you to-day with regard to the *Deceangl* on the two pigs of lead at your Museum, I do so now with very great pleasure, especially as I know of no better way to show my appreciation of the civility with which I have been treated by you and other members of your Society.

When I called before, I did so chiefly in consequence of having heard that a member of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, on the occasion of its last visit to Chester, had noticed that what had been read as DECEANGI on the leads was not such, but DECEANGL. I was curious to see for myself, as I had never examined the letters. The result was that I agreed with my brother Cambrian. The examination to-day has confirmed me in that view. I have no doubt as to the final L of both leads, but the G is not quite certain, though I am strongly inclined to think that it is G and not C.

Setting out then from the reading *Deceangl*, I venture to regard it as an abbreviation of a longer name, with which I connect *Tegeingl*, the Welsh name of a district containing the coast from Cheshire to the Clwyd. In the first place, you will notice that the old name begins with *d*, whereas the modern one has *t*; but that offers no difficulty, as *Deganwy* is now more commonly called *Teganwy*, and as *din* is now frequently *tin*, as in *Tindaethwy* in Anglesey, and other names which might be mentioned.

The next question is, what the ancient name of the people alluded to on the leads was in full; and in answer, one could scarcely be far wrong in giving it as *Deceangli* or *Deceanglii*. In that case the country inhabited by the *Deceangl* was probably *Deceanglion* or *Deceanglia*, according as the word was neuter or feminine, but the point of importance is that the *i* following the *l* in either case was a semi-vowel like *y* in the English word *yet*. Suppose, then, we start from an Early Brythonic neuter *Deceanglion*, we can tell with an approach to certainty what the word must in the course of time become: according to the ascertained rule applying to the semi-vowel, it would cause the *a* of the previous syllable to be modulated into *ei*, and the word would then stand as *Decëeinglion*, that is to say, before the whole termination was thrown off, leaving the name in the curtailed form of *Decëeingl*. As might be expected, the *ëli* would be contracted into a single syllable, which would retain the accent, and that explains a fact for which I see no other possible explanation, namely, that *Tegeingl* is a perispomenon, the accent not being on the penultimate, but on the ultima, as reckoned in modern Welsh. That is not a direct proof that *Tegeingl* is related to the *Deceangl* of the leads; but if you suppose the contrary, you have such a combination of accidents to dispose of that for me it has the force of an overwhelming argument for the

view that the names are connected. In other words, the *a* of *Deceangl*, which was at first my stumbling-block, becomes the keystone of my theory. This last confirms your tracing the lead to Tegeingl, namely, to the neighbourhood of the town Flint, and it also overrides any incertainty which might have existed as to the *DE*, whether it was a part of the name, or merely the Latin preposition *de*.

This is all I intended to write, but I may add that I feel utterly ignorant as to the meaning or the origin of such a name as that of the *Deceangli*, which I have suggested. Lastly, as to the words of Tacitus, which have been variously edited in *Decangos* and *inde Cangos*, I should be disposed to give the preference decidedly to the former, and even to regard it as possibly representing an original reading in *Deceanglios*.

That is all I have to say; and now I venture to ask a question which I hope some member of the Society will answer for me. What does *Englefield*, which I have been told means Tegeingl, exactly denote? Where is the name first found, and what else is known concerning it?

Believe me, yours truly,

JOHN RHYS.

Postscript.—May 2. I have just been reading a correspondence in the April number of the *Archæologia Cambrensis* on your "Pigs of Lead." It clears up a good deal that was obscure to me before, and among other things it gives an answer to my question as to the name Englefield; but some one among the members of your Society may have information to add. Lastly, it is needless to say that I do not claim to have been the first to connect *Deceangl* with *Tegeingl*; but, accepting that view, I have endeavoured to show the strength of the philological argument in a way which has never before been attempted: that is all.