



A descriptive account of Roman and other objects recovered from various sites in Chester and District, 1898-1901

BY R. NEWSTEAD, A.L.S., F.E.S., &c.,

CURATOR OF THE GROSVENOR MUSEUM

THIS Paper, written by special request of the Council, is a continuation of former articles, given in the Society's Journal,¹ on similar subjects. All data has been obtained by personal investigation of the various sites; the information thus obtained should form a valuable register for future reference. Mr. F. Haverfield,² and also the writer,³ have dealt with the Roman lead water-pipes bearing Agricola's name, but no detailed account of the find has previously appeared in the Society's Journal.

The records are taken chronologically, commencing with the excavations in Eastgate Street North in July 1898, and ending with the excavations in Bridge Street East in November 1901.

¹ Newstead, *Journal of the Chester Architect., Arch., and Hist. Society*, Vol. VI., pp. 156-162, 395-399.

² Haverfield, *Catalogue of Inscribed Stones, &c.*, p. 86, fig. 199.

³ Newstead, *Reliquary*, Vol. VI., p. 114, figs. 1-4; Vol. VII., pp. 45-51, figs. 1-5.

EXCAVATIONS IN EASTGATE STREET (NORTH) ON THE PREMISES OF MR. GEORGE DUTTON, JULY 1898.

These excavations were made on the west side of Godstall Lane,¹ the northern limit being 163 feet from the frontage of Eastgate Street. The soil was removed to a depth varying from 8 to 11 feet from the surface in Godstall Lane; the floor line of the excavations reaching, practically, to the level of Eastgate Street, and consisted of the upper stratum of the Triassic Sandstone.

Lararium (fig. 1). The first discovery of importance occurred at the western limit of the excavation adjoining Mr. Barber's yard. It consisted of a comparatively small

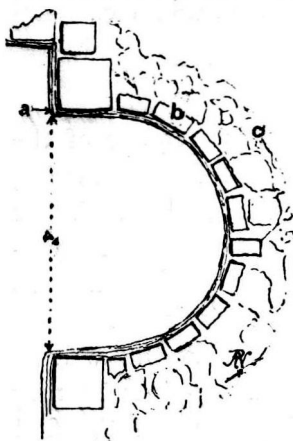


Fig. 1.—Ground Plan of *Lararium*, looking North:

- (a) Wall-plaster;
- (b) Seven-inch tiles, divided;
- (c) Broken rock and mortar, backed up by soil (original).

semi-circular structure of masonry and brickwork, forming a wall about 36 inches high, the opening of which faced almost due west. The three lower and three upper courses were formed of bricks; the three intermediate courses of masonry. The bricks measured 7 inches by 3½ inches, had evidently been made by cutting a 7-inch square tile in two, as one edge of all the specimens was fractured, the fracture in some cases being away from the line or suture made by the

workman. This superstructure rested upon a groundwork of tiles, three sizes being employed: the first course (east) consisting of five 7-inch tiles; the second of five 11 inches square; the third of five, and the fourth of six,

¹ This thoroughfare, previously known as London Bakers' Yard, and more recently as Booth's Court, was so named about 25 years ago, and should not be confounded with an ancient lane of the same name, which formerly existed, probably between St. Werburgh's and the Eastgate.

16 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 11 $\frac{4}{10}$ inches. The wall had evidently been plastered before the concrete floor was put in, as the plaster was continued right down to the base of the structure; it consisted of three distinct layers:—

- (1) Very finely pounded brick (inner);
- (2) Chiefly of coarse sand (middle);
- (3) Of finely broken calcite or calc spar (outer).

The outer layer, formed of innumerable broken crystals, must have presented a very pleasing effect when perfect; but its non-adherent character rendered it very friable and difficult to remove intact. The concrete floor, inclusive of the underlying course of tiles, was 7 inches thick; this was covered first with a layer 12 inches thick, of finely worked clay, upon which rested a second layer of the same thickness, of finely selected gravel. It has been suggested that this structure was a *Lararium* or place for the Gods; but may it not have been used for the storage of *Amphoræ*, the pointed bases of which could easily have been buried in the beds of gravel and clay, which would have afforded the vessels the necessary support. Mr. May suggests that *Absis* would be a better name for this structure.

Hippo-Sandal. An example, in a very fair state of preservation, was found immediately behind the wall of the *Lararium*. It resembles, in almost every detail, the examples found at Silchester, Wroxeter, and elsewhere, but is believed to be the first of its kind found at Chester. It is supposed that these peculiar shaped iron shoes were in some way attached to the horse's hoof by means of straps, and that they acted as shackles or "hobbles," and prevented the animals from wandering far afield. In his *Guide illustré du Musée de Saint Germain*, M. Reinach gives an excellent figure of a Roman monumental stone, on which is represented the figure of a "*Vétérinaire*" or Groom, holding in his left

hand a strap or band, to the end of which is attached a hippo-sandal or iron shoe, which, so far as one can judge from the drawing, is of a similar character to the Chester-found example. The strap in question is shown attached to the long upright piece of iron which forms the toe-piece to the sandal, at the end of which is a loop or hook for its attachment. Whether the strap was attached to the body, or fastened round the leg above the knee, is doubtful. Only one strap is shown in the engraving, but there can be little doubt that a second one was employed, and fastened to the projecting heel-piece, and possibly made secure by passing it round the leg, either above or below the fetlock-joint.

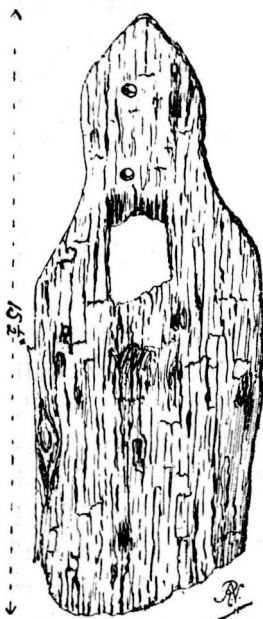


Fig. 2.

Roman Spade, made from split oak (original).

Wooden Spade (fig. 2). This was also found lying on the east side of the *Lararium*, and may probably have been used in its erection. It is made of split oak, scarcely three-quarters of an inch thick; is $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and its greatest width 6 inches; in the centre, opposite the shoulder of the blade, is a large rectangular hole, with the upper and lower sides sloping in opposite directions; and above this, two circular holes, rather wide apart. Apparently, the shaft of the implement was fitted into the rectangular hole, the sloping ends of which gave the shaft the required angle, and was evidently made secure by passing two wooden pegs through the holes from the ventral

surface upwards. Portions of the pegs were still traceable when the object was first unearthed. This implement is

of precisely the same design as the two examples found in certain Roman lead-workings in Shropshire, which were described and figured in one of the early volumes of the *Intellectual Observer*. In the Museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society is a similar implement of wood, differing from the Chester and Shropshire examples in having a long rectangular slit extending from the lower or cutting edge, in addition to the hole at the shoulder. This example, found in a wooden coffin with the remains of an Anglian male, is described as a "paddle."

Concrete Floor. At a higher level, about three feet from the base line of the excavations, or from the base of the *Lararium*, were the remains of a large concrete floor, which extended from about eight feet east of the latter structure to the line of Godstall Lane. It was composed of the ordinary fragments of roofing tiles or *tegulae* and mortar, but presented a very uneven surface, upon which the objects described below were found, indicating that it was probably the floor of a bronze worker's shop.

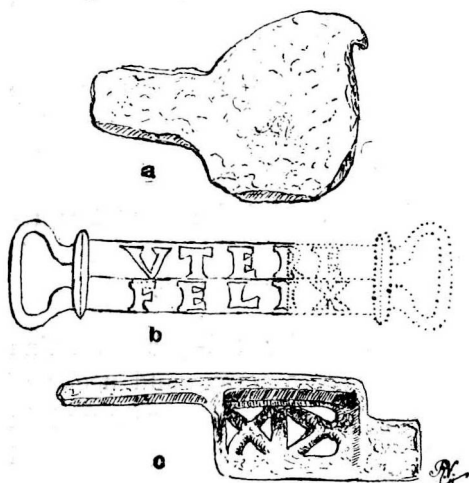


Fig. 3.

(a) Bronze Bit; (b) Personal Ornament; (c) Bronze Bolt of Lock
(All natural size—original).

Bronze Slip
(fig. 3b), bearing
the inscription
VTERE
FELIX

in bold enamelled Roman letters, alternately of green and red. The motto "Use and be thankful," or some such rendering, has been met with elsewhere on a precisely similar strip

of bronze, and is described¹ as a saucepan handle; but I am inclined to think that the Chester specimen formed part of a personal ornament, and that the buckle-shaped terminal was intended for a leather or some such pliable attachment, and that the opposite end was of a similar design, as shown by the dotted lines. The motto has also been found on a drinking vessel,¹ in which case it may have had a slightly different meaning. Length $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches, width $\frac{3}{8}$ inch. The terminal letters in both lines are wanting.

Bronze Bar. $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and nearly $\frac{5}{8}$ inch square.

Bronze Bolt of Lock (fig. 3 c). Perfect, and bearing the ordinary perforated design. Length 2 inches, width $\frac{5}{8}$ inch.

Bronze (?) Umbo of Shield. Circular, $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter, with four equidistant "lugs" or perforated flanges for attachment. Greatest diameter $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, *i.e.*, from tip to tip of flange. The centre is considerably sunk, as if for the reception of enamel.

Bronze Fibulæ. Two examples of the ordinary harp type were found, one of them being in fairly perfect condition but minus the *acus* or pin.

Bronze (?) Centre-bit (fig. 3 a). This implement somewhat resembles a modern joiner's centre-bit, but it is doubtful if it were used for a similar purpose.

Pottery. Fragments of *mortaria*; red-glazed Samian ware; cinerary urns in Upchurch ware; and necks of water-bottles or *ampullæ* in terra-cotta, were found in some numbers; but none of the fragments possessed designs of unusual types.

¹ *Camb. Antig. Soc.*, No. XXII., Vol. IV., pp. 337-341, with a plate.

PLATE 12.



R. Newstead, Photo.

Section of Roman Lead Water-pipe found in Eastgate Street (North) in 1899, bearing an inscription to Agricola. (See page 87).

Actual length of Inscribed Panel, 3 feet $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by 2 inches broad.

It was intended to give also the other Illustrations used in MR. HAVERFIELD'S Catalogue of the *Roman Inscribed and Sculptured Stones*, but the blocks, by inadvertence, have been mislaid while in the temporary possession of the Society of Antiquaries.

Bronze Bell. A small five-sided example, with slight projections on the rim at the point where the radiating ridges terminate. Height $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

Glass. A doubtful fragment of Roman glass was found, which is of such an unusual character and design, that it cannot be correctly assigned to this period.

Herring-bone Pavement. A detached fragment, measuring 21 inches by 20 inches, was found about midway between the *Lararium* and the concrete floor previously referred to. This example makes the third of its kind found in Chester,¹ which is rather remarkable, seeing that it occurs freely at certain other Roman Stations. This form of pavement was known to the Romans as the *spicata testacea*, from the resemblance it bears to the structure of a spike or ear of corn. The tiles are well-proportioned, and measure, on the upper face, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 1 inch, the depth being 2 inches. They are embedded in a thick layer of concrete, in the same way as tessellated pavements, and were generally employed in open courts, such as the *Basilica*, &c.

EASTGATE STREET (NORTH), UNDER THE PREMISES OF
MESSRS. RICHARD JONES & CO. (FORMERLY OAKES
& GRIFFITHS), AUGUST TO OCTOBER, 1899.

This excavation yielded one of the most important finds of recent years. The first traces of Roman work found were a series of drains, formed of a base-work of broad flat roofing tiles, with the sides and top of roughly dressed sandstone.

Roman Lead Water-pipes. On the 9th of October, 15 feet of lead water-pipes were dug out, and, during

¹ Brushfield, *Jour. Chester Arch. Soc.*, Vol. III. (1885), p. 33, with illustration.

my absence, the longest piece was broken into four convenient lengths for removal. The latter was lying due east and west, and measured 11 feet $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. A shorter length, 4 feet 6 inches long, was lying almost at right-angles to the former, and almost due north and south. The greatest length bears the following inscription, on a raised panel 3 feet $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by 2 inches broad, the letters practically filling the whole space:—

IMP: VESP: VIIII T: IMP: VII: COS CN: IVLIO
AGRICOLA LEG: AVG: PR: PR.

The third section (plate 13, fig. 2a) bears a characteristic joint, upon which are faint traces of a line of letters, and beneath them, more clearly, the letter F (*Fecit*); but the whole is quite illegible, and must remain doubtful. On the opposite side of the pipe, beyond the joint, and on the succeeding section is a repetition of part of the inscription:—

O: AGRICOLA LEG: AVG: PR: PR.

The pipe bearing the remainder of the inscription could be traced eastwards beneath the adjoining property. By kind permission of the owner (Mr. J. B. Royle) the necessary permission to excavate for the remainder of the pipe was granted, and on September the 10th of the following year the relic was unearthed. It measured 5 feet 3 inches long, and bears the remainder of the inscription:—

IMP: VESP: VIIII T: IMP: VII: COS CN: IVL

the fractured end, unfortunately, destroying the lower portion of the L, and the whole of the I in IVLIO; the commencement of the inscription is, however, quite intact, there being $27\frac{1}{2}$ inches beyond it; then follows

a joint 3 inches long, and beyond it a length of 7 inches of slightly thicker pipe.

On discovering the first inscription, a description of it was forwarded to Mr. F. Haverfield, of Christ Church, Oxford, who kindly furnished the following particulars :

"The inscription on your lead pipes is unusually interesting and noteworthy. You have, I think, deciphered it correctly, and I expect it is practically complete, unless something is lost at the beginning. It makes good sense as it is. It gives the date when the pipes were laid, indicated by the names of Consuls and the Governor of Britain. This date is A.D. 79. The Latin can be expanded thus :—

IMPERATORE VESPASIANO IX TITO
IMPERATORE VII CONSVLIBVS
CNAEO IVLIO AGRICOLA LEGATO
AVGVSTI PRO PRAETORE.

"That is roughly in English : 'These pipes were laid when Vespasian and Titus were Consuls for the eighth and ninth times respectively, and when Cnaeus Julius Agricola governed the Province of Britain.'

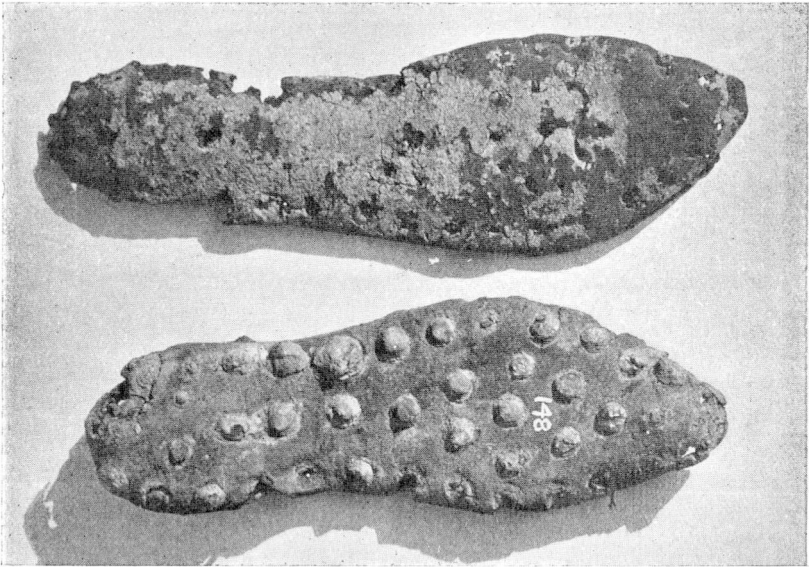
"The date is a pleasant contribution to the history of Roman Chester ; but the great interest of the inscription lies in the mention of Agricola. This is that Agricola whose biography, written by his son-in-law, the historian Tacitus, has made him the most famous among Roman Imperial administrators. He governed Britain from A.D. 78 to A.D. 85, and pursued a forward policy, which was apparently revised on his recall. One might compare him to Sir Bartle Frere, perhaps, or to some of our Indian Viceroyes. Important as he was, no other inscription exists which bears his name, and the new-found pipes of Deva are thus unique, and their discovery is a fact of great interest.

"I have only to add that the occurrence of his name on the pipes does not imply any special action or presence of his at Chester. It is due to the common official method of dating."¹

¹ See also Haverfield, *Catalogue of Roman Inscribed and Sculptured Stones*, pp. 86-87, fig. 199 ; *Antiquary*, January, 1900, p. 7.

The joints (plate 13, figs. 2*a*, 2*b*) on these pipes are of two distinct forms. That on the last length of pipe (plate 13, fig. 2*b*) recovered is of peculiar interest, in being of a totally different character to the three joints previously found (plate 13, fig. 2*a*). It is only slightly raised above the surface of the pipe, its greatest thickness not exceeding $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of an inch, and it tapers out to a thin layer at both margins; its surface is comparatively smooth and bears faint parallel striæ, as if it had been "wiped" as a modern joint is done. The other joints (plate 13, fig. 2*a*) appear to have been made by forming a mould of earth round the ends of the pipes and filling it in with molten lead, the joints being massive, very thick, and with a broad flat top. The Roman method of joining lead pipes in this locality, therefore, does not appear to have been confined to one set plan, for, in addition to those already described, we have an example from another part of the City in which the metal forming the joint is of almost even thickness throughout, taking practically the same contour as the pipe itself, with the ends or sides squarely or suddenly cut off, and having a seam at the top corresponding with that on the pipe itself.

In summarising these facts, we find that the total length of the inscribed piping now recovered is 16 feet 6 inches long, which, before the workmen broke it into sections, was lying intact in a straight line from east to west. The space between the joints is—longest 8 feet 2 inches, shortest 7 feet; each length, on opposite sides, bearing the same inscription on a slightly raised panel 3 feet 10½ inches long by 2 inches broad; the average thickness of the pipe being 7 mm. Judging from the foregoing figures and the character of the pipe, the lead appears to have been first made into flat sheets of about



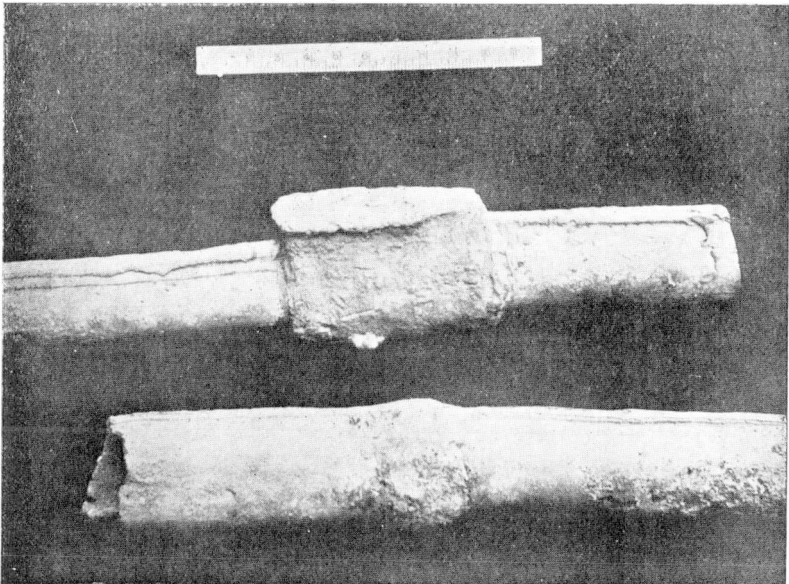
A

FIG. 1.—Soles of Roman Sandals:

A—Example from Kinderton (Warrington).

B—Example from Chester.

A



B

R. Newstead, Photo.

FIG. 2.—Two forms of Joints (A and B) on Roman Lead Pipes.

8 or 9 feet long by about 9 inches wide, and subsequently bent into the desired shape; the suture—always placed uppermost—was then hermetically sealed in a way best known to the Romans. All superfluous lead was then cut away with a sharp implement of some kind, leaving a broad irregular square edge and the marks of the implement used.

The exact site of the find is about 150 feet from the Cross (corner of Northgate and Eastgate Streets), and 75 feet due north from the Eastgate Street frontage of Messrs. Oakes & Griffiths (now Richard Jones'), bordering the western side of the Boot Inn premises. The pipe was buried 6 feet 2 inches from the surface, and rested upon the upper stratum of soft sandstone (*Trias*), locally known as "roach," which would bring it to about 18 inches above the present level of Eastgate Street.

In digging down to the pipe, fragments of Roman tiles (*tegulae*) were first found at a depth of 2 feet; they were mixed with ecclesiastical floor tiles (14th—16th century) and fragments of black Elizabethan pottery. Lower down the pottery was mostly Roman; but a fragment of an Elizabethan "teg" or loving cup occurred almost on the surface of the pipe, indicating that the soil had been much disturbed within comparatively recent times. The covering layer of about 6 inches, surrounding the pipe, was composed chiefly of charcoal and fine black earth, and in one part a quantity of lime; among this debris was a fine bronze fibula; a completely oxidised coin; fragments of mortaria, cinerary urns of Upchurch ware, and Samian bowls.

An analysis of the lead pipes shows the lead possesses eleven pennyweight of silver to the ton, which the

analyst says is precisely the same as found in certain Shropshire ores (*Roman Gravel*), at Minsterley, near Shrewsbury. Mr. Alfred Walker, however, says that the "Minsterley ores contain more than 11 pennyweight of silver per ton of lead. Probably, the lead was made from the litharge (lead oxide) produced in extracting the silver from the Flintshire ores, at the Roman smelting works at Pentre, Flint, where I have seen indisputable evidence of such extraction." It was in this locality that the locally-found Roman pigs of lead were also supposed to have been cast; and, having Mr. Walker's valuable information, there is no valid reason why the pipes in question should not have been manufactured at the same smelting hearths.

Patera or Dish. One very large example, in soft red terra-cotta, was found at the commencement of the excavations, and, unfortunately, got into private hands and had to be purchased. It is very badly fractured, but most of the fragments were recovered and can be very well restored. It measures 14 inches in diameter

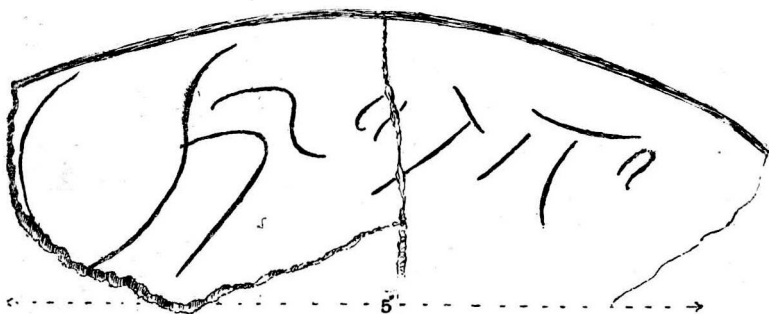


Fig. 4.—Roman Cursive Signature on underside of large flat dish or patera (reduced—original).

and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. On the base of the vessel, outside, is a large cursive signature (fig. 4), which has been

scratched on the vessel before it had been baked, and is probably, therefore, the potter's name. Mr. Day, of Warrington, reads it CRATITV, with the R ill-made, and the V inverted, the name being *Cratitus* (?) but of this he is not quite certain. The actual length of the writing is $4\frac{6}{10}$ inches; the illustration being slightly reduced.

Potter's Implement. This is apparently made from a stag's antler, as it is exceedingly hard and bears a high polish. It is 5 inches long, pointed at one end, and slightly gouge-shaped, on both sides, at the other. It was found during the early part of the excavations, and is almost identical with two examples in the collection at the British Museum.

EXCAVATIONS FOR THE NEW CITY BATHS, 1899.

These premises, situate immediately behind the north-east side of the Roman Catholic Church, form the south-east frontage to the Grosvenor Park end of Union Street. Almost at the commencement of the excavations, the existence of a broad ditch was clearly traceable in the undisturbed glacial boulder-clay, and was subsequently found to extend almost due north, from Union Street, to a distance of 215 feet; it then suddenly terminated, but its course further north may have been obliterated during the erection of the premises intervening between it and Foregate Street, which is distant about 185 feet. The ditch was roughly U shaped, with the sides sloping upwards and outwards, the average depth being 11 feet from the present land surface; the width in the centre 7 feet, and at the base 3 feet. Whether any trace of this ditch was discovered south of Union Street, when the Grosvenor Park was laid out, it is not certain, as no

record of such appears in the Society's Journal; nor does there appear to be any record of its continuation nearer Foregate Street. Judging from the nature of the relics which were discovered in this important earthwork, there can be little doubt as to its Roman origin; and, as it occupies the south flank of the Roman Via (Watling Street), presumably it may have been used for defensive purposes. A description of the objects recovered is given below:—

Objects in Bronze. A slightly mutilated figure of a cupid, of unusually finished workmanship, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, together with a bronze *fibula*, were procured by Mr. Frank Williams; these interesting objects have recently been presented to the Society's Museum by their discoverer. Besides these, an *acus* with a hemispherical head; portions of buckles; badly oxidised and undeterminable coins; and many fragments of waste bronze, were also obtained.

Lead. A trough formed of sheet-lead about $\frac{3}{16}$ inch thick and 18 inches long, having right-angle sides 4 inches high. The metal bears the marks of the workman's tool (*malleus*), which has left sharply indented impressions 2 inches long by $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch broad, which corresponds almost exactly to the rectangular-faced hammers found at Silchester and elsewhere.

Iron. Several unrecognisable objects and imperfect nails.

Hone or Whetstone. One, rectangular in section, 3 inches long, is made from a fine dark micaceous sandstone, but is without bronze attachment or hole for suspension. It is of a type frequently met with, and the Meols Collection is rich in them.



FIG. 1.

Roman Antefixa.

FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.

FIG. 4.

FIG. 5.

Roman Vessels in terra-cotta.

Glass. Portions of the base (5 inches in diameter) and fragments of the body of what must have been originally a magnificent glass vessel; the matrix somewhat resembles red granite in colour, but bluish white predominates, and the whole is sparsely streaked with bright yellow; along the edge of the rim is a series of eye-like markings, ovate in form, with centres of dark rich crimson, surrounded by a broad band of bright yellow. The only other fragment of glass recovered was a rather thick flat piece, which, judging from the character of the grain on one side of it, appears to have been cast upon slate. Roman glass is particularly scarce in Chester, and these fragments are of much interest.

Pottery. The most remarkable find is an object shown in the illustration (plate 14, fig. 4), which may be described as a bottle-shaped drain pipe, in red terra-cotta; It is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches long; its greatest diameter 3 inches; and its average thickness $\frac{5}{10}$ ths of an inch; the neck being 2 inches long and $1\frac{1}{10}$ inches in diameter; it has evidently been made upon the potter's wheel, and has been worked into shape by the hands of the operator, the fingers forming upon it a series of broadly concave grooves. A second example was found at the same time, but this, unfortunately, got into private hands.

The two small terra-cotta vessels or finger-cups (plate 14, figs. 3, 5) were probably intended for unguents, but they are made of such rough materials, that one can hardly imagine them to have formed part of a lady's toilet. Fig. 5 is of a red colour, and measures $2\frac{6}{10}$ inches high; $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in its greatest diameter; and 2 inches across the top. The other example, shaped somewhat like an egg-cup (fig. 3) and greyish in colour,

has the rim broken away; it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches high; and $2\frac{4}{10}$ inches greatest diameter.

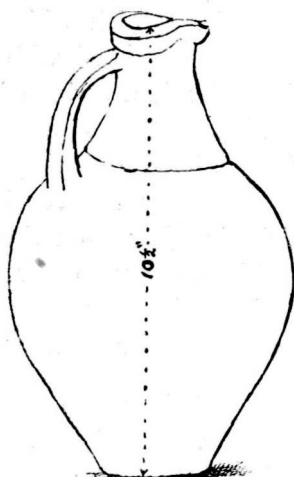


Fig. 5.—Roman *Urseus* (original).

Water Pot or Pitcher (Urseus).

This example (fig. 5) was found in cutting the drain east of the Baths, and was one of the few objects found outside the ditch; it is of dark Upchurch ware, and unusually well designed. Curiously, this vessel is entirely hand-made, and is composed of three distinct parts—base, neck, and handle. Before the vessel was restored the joining of the clay in the interior was seen to form a sharp projecting flange; the exterior appears to have been trimmed or pared into

shape when the clay had partly dried; the mouth of the vessel is strongly compressed, and although of small dimensions compared with other examples found elsewhere, it belongs to that series known as *gutturaria*. Height $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Head of Female in Terra-cotta. This undoubtedly formed the spout portion of the neck of a jug. Similar examples have been found at York, but they appear to be of a rare type in Chester, this being the first recorded example. The facial length of this object is 2 inches.

Samian or Red-glazed Ware. Several fragments of beautiful rare types were procured; and also the spout portion of a *mortarium*, decorated with a lion's head. One other example is in the Society's Collection, but

fragments of this type of vessel are extremely rare. The writer has for some time past made a special study of this ware, and hopes at some future time to give a full description of the Chester examples.

Potter's Names or Marks. An unusual number of Potter's marks occurred upon the fragments of these vessels, and are being dealt with in this Volume by Mr. F. H. Williams, together with those from other sites. Cursive signatures are also sometimes met with, but they are comparatively rare. The only example which occurred in this excavation (fig. 6*b*) had been scratched

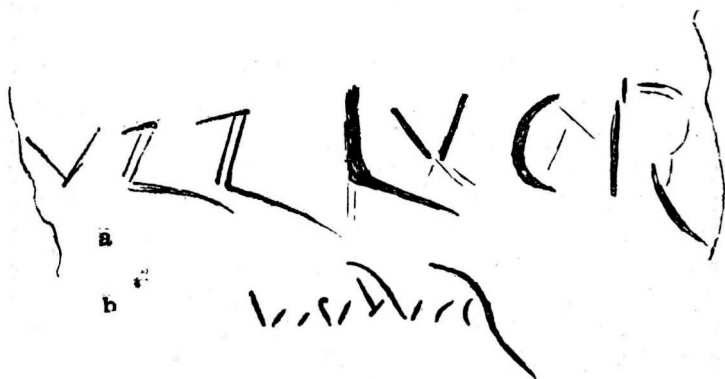


Fig. 6.—(a) Roman Letters scratched on upper portion of Cinerary Urn;
(b) Cursive Signature of Roman Potter on Samian Bowl
(both actual size—original).

originally on the matrix or mould from which the bowl was cast, as the writing upon the bowl is in relief, and is retrograde; it would, therefore, occur upon all the vessels made from the same mould.

Graffiti. These are private marks or names usually cut or scratched upon the vessel after its manufacture; and they consist chiefly of the owner's name. One example occurred in this excavation, on the upper portion of a cinerary urn in Upchurch ware (fig. 6*a*).

The first three letters are very faintly cut, but clearly traceable; but the remaining four are much more deeply scratched.

At the suggestion of Mr. Haverfield, the fragments of pottery bearing the above inscriptions were forwarded to Mr. F. G. Kenyon, Keeper at the British Museum, who very kindly undertook to examine them, and has reported as follows :—

“I have examined the pieces of pottery which you sent me, and am glad that you sent the originals instead of copies or rubbings. The letters on the black vase (fig. 6a) appear to be]VLL LVCR[. The last letter is very doubtful, and if we had the rest of the vase it might be possible to read it differently. I suppose it is a proper name, *e.g.*, [Fab]ull(ius) Luc—.

“The red fragment (fig. 6b) is a greater puzzle, cursive writing being unusual on vases, and the strokes often lending themselves to different combinations. I have tried various of these, but believe the real solution to be that the inscription was written on the mould, and, consequently, must be read reversed or looking-glass fashion. This gives the reading *Marsius*. (It would be possible to read a T for the R, but the resultant name is less probable). This is the best solution I can offer. (*In Lit.* Nov. 27, 1901).”

Statuette of Venus. An imperfect example in white clay (*figlina creta*), with the head and other portions wanting; but sufficient remains to show clearly the nature of this interesting little statuette; in its present condition it measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the shoulder to the base of the circular base. Originally, its greatest height would probably not exceed $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The figure has a suture extending all round it at the sides, clearly indicating that it has been made in a piece-mould of two parts, and the slightly hollow interior bears the impression of the potter's fingers, showing how the clay was pressed into position. Similar statuettes have been

found at other Roman Stations—notably York and Silchester; and they are also said to have been found in great numbers in France;¹ but this appears to be the first example of its kind found in Chester.

Antifix or Gable Ornament (plate 14, fig. 2). There is, unfortunately, some doubt as to the exact locality in which this object was found. The donor, Philip B. Davies-Cooke, Gwysaney, Mold, gives Northgate Street, and probably refers to the site of Mr. Vernon's shop, erected by the late Alderman Charles Brown, on which so many objects of Roman antiquity were found. In a former description² of this object the writer gave the above locality for this find, but subsequent enquiries leads the writer to believe that it was found on the site of the City Baths. As the illustration shows, it is a very fine and unusually well-finished piece of modelling, and of a rare type, the chief object in the design being a large central mask, in high relief, probably representing the head of Jupiter. One other example (perfect) is in the Society's Collection; and Mr. Edward Hodgkinson possesses a large fragment of the same type. These, we believe, are the only examples of this form of antifix yet discovered in Chester. The only other type, and the one most frequently found in Chester, is the one bearing the badge of the Twentieth Legion (plate 14, fig. 1). In this, a figure of the wild boar is shown in relief, and above it the letters LEG. XX., the whole being trans-fixed by the pole of the *labarum*, with a variously shaped terminal ornament—a ring or a mask.

Shoe or Sandal (plate 13, fig. 1a). As a Chester example this is quite unique, and, being almost perfect, is of

¹ C. R. Smith's *London*, 109, 110; *Ibid. Collectanea*, VI., 58; S. Reinach, *Guide Illus. d. Mu. Nat. S. Germain*, p. 78, fig. 53.

² Newstead *Reliquary*, Vol. VII., p. 50, fig. 5.

great interest and value. It measures 8 inches long, and is $2\frac{6}{10}$ inches wide at the broadest part of the sole. The inner sole is sewn to the outer by rather broad strips of leather, the stitches forming two widely-separated sub-marginal rows. Between the soles are portions of the thongs for attachment, which passed over the foot; and the sole is studded with bronze hob-nails or studs, the design and arrangement of which are almost identical with certain impressions found here on Roman roofing tiles. From its small size it evidently belonged to a youth of, probably, some twelve or fourteen years. This example answers very well the description of the strong heavy shoe or sandal which was worn by the Roman soldiers, and known as the *caliga*. It is said¹ not to have been worn by the superior officers; and that the common soldiers, including Centurions, were distinguished by the name of *caligati*. And further, that "the Emperor Caligula received that cognomen, when a boy, in consequence of wearing the *caliga*, which his father, Germanicus, put on his son in order to please the soldiers."

HUMAN REMAINS NEAR THE CANAL SIDE, 1900.

In cutting a trench along the side of the Canal, by the bridge which crosses the road a few paces west of "Pemberton's Parlour"—in order to widen the permanent way of the Holyhead Line—five human skeletons were found lying at an average depth of 4 feet 9 inches from the surface. The trench in question extended 20 feet west of the original buttress supporting the railway bridge, the depth and width being 7 feet 6 inches. Four of the skeletons had been removed before the writer was able

¹ Smith, *Dict. of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, p. 233.

to inspect them. The only skeleton remaining *in situ* was lying with the feet pointing east; but all the bones were so badly decayed that it was impossible to recover them. Not a trace of pottery of any kind was discoverable, nor could anything else be found that could in any way lead to the identity of the period to which they belonged.

STOCK'S LANE, BOUGHTON, NOVEMBER, 1900.

Early in the month of November a perfect cinerary urn in Upchurch ware, and fragments of four other urns in red terra-cotta were discovered by some workmen in making a drain for two new cottages, about midway on the east side of Stock's Lane, Boughton; the exact spot being in a direct line with the north wall of the cottages, and equidistant between the front wall of the house and the garden wall, which forms a boundary to the lane—being exactly 12 feet from either walls. The urns were found at a depth of about 7 feet from the surface; but at least 18 inches of the soil had been brought there from the Queen's Head excavations during the previous summer. A good deal of black earth was found surrounding the pots, and it was this which first attracted the workmen and induced them to dig deeper than was absolutely necessary. Height $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches; greatest diameter $24\frac{1}{4}$ inches; diameter of rim $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches; diameter of base $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. When found it was filled with earth and bones, but nearly all of the latter were destroyed. The site of this find is only a few yards nearer the river than the urn which was found and described in 1897.¹

¹ Newstead, *Journ. Chester Arch. and Hist. Soc.*, Vol. VI., p. 156, plate 2, fig. 1.

EXCAVATIONS, GROSVENOR ROAD, ON THE SITE OF THE
NEW SADDLE INN, NEAR THE MUSEUM, 1900.

Here, as on the site of the Museum, the ground had been intersected by tan pits and very few Roman objects were found.



Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.

Iron Spear Head (fig. 8).

This was rather badly oxidised, but its proportions are fairly well preserved. It is a socketed example, and appears to be of Roman workmanship. Length 6 inches; greatest width of blade 1 inch.

Iron Key (fig. 7). Although the bow of the key resembles a certain class of Roman keys, the wards, so far as one can trace them out, are more like those of 14th century work. Length 5½ inches.

Bronze Bell. This example is of the same size and design as that found in Eastgate Street and previously described. There is also a third example in the collections from Great Meols, presented by Mr. T. S. Gleadowe.

UPPER NORTHGATE STREET (WEST), NEAR THE NORTH-
GATE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 1901.

A few old cottages, standing north of the above Church, have recently been pulled down by the owner (Mr. W. Vernon), and in removing one of the tiled floors

Mr. Vernon's workmen unearthed a small imperfect pot, containing 25 silver groats of Edward III., all of them struck in London, and bearing the motto "I have made God my help"; date about 1300. They were buried only about 12 inches from the surface, at a spot 9 feet from the doorway, and 54 feet north from the base of the Church, and 9 feet from the present line of frontage.

The coins were all of the same mintage, but rather badly oxidised. The inscription reads:—

Obv. EDWARD D.G. REX. ANGL., FRANCE
D. HYB.

(Edwardus Dei Gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ Dominus
Hiberniæ)

Rev. POSVI DEVM ADIVTOREM MEVM.
CIVITAS LONDON.

The base of the old pot in which the coins were found is composed of a fine hard buff-coloured paste, the outside being pale terra-cotta, having portions covered with a bright orange-brown glaze. The base, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, is slightly dilated, and bears on its surface impressions of straw or grass. Although but a fractured vessel, it will serve as an excellent type for fixing the pottery of this period—a task always difficult.

EXCAVATIONS FOR THE NEW OFFICES OF THE
"CHESTER CHRONICLE," OCTOBER, 1901.

These excavations consisted of the formation of an underground passage extending under Mr. Watmough Webster's shop to the premises of the *Chronicle* Office beyond, the base line of which being practically the level of Bridge Street. At the commencement of the excavations, portions of a Crypt, with a small 14th century doorway, were exposed; and the latter, much to the regret of the Editor, had to be removed. Several

encaustic ecclesiastical floor-tiles were also found ; but of Roman work very little. Portions of roofing-tiles, a few fragments of *amphoræ*, and cinerary urns, were apparently all that were recovered.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE PREMISES OF MESSRS. DAVIES &
SHEPHEARD, NOVEMBER, 1901.

The actual site of this excavation was 196 feet from the Bridge Street frontage ; the area excavated being 12 feet 6 inches square, and 8 feet 6 inches deep. At the base of the excavations the remains of two Roman floors were found. The one extending along the northern portion was exposed to a width of 4 feet, and was found to extend further north. This was composed of broken *tegulæ*, and had a base-work chiefly of broken sandstone rock ; the surface being finished with mortar, but no tesserae. The other floor was only exposed about a foot in width, and this was continuous along the southern wall of the excavation, and evidently extended beyond. It was in a very imperfect condition, but sufficient remained to show that it was a tessellated floor, composed of large black and white tesserae like many other examples found in Chester ; the white tesserae being of chalk and the black of lias rock. During the excavation of the old Feathers Inn, which lies south of this excavation, large tessellated floors were found, and it is highly probable that this fragment is more or less continuous with that series. Quite a number of fragments of Roman pottery, consisting of urns in Upchurch ware and terra-cotta vessels, were recovered ; but the only fragment worthy of note consisted of a portion of the rim of a mortarium, also in Upchurch, which, if not unique, is of very rare occurrence, such vessels being usually made of quite different materials.



Fig. 9.—Edwardian Jug
(Original).

By no means the least interesting find was a small jug (fig. 9) of terra-cotta ware, belonging to the Edwardian period. It measures $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches high and is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches greatest diameter at the top. It is difficult at all times to fix even the approximate period of the early English ware, but this compares very favourably in design with vessels claimed to be of this period; and although

it has a much softer "paste" than the fragment found in Upper Northgate Street containing the hoard of Edwardian coins, there can be little doubt that it belongs to this period, although it may be somewhat late.

FRODSHAM STREET OR COW LANE, SEPTEMBER, 1901.

In making the cellar for the new premises on the west side of the street, opposite the new Inn, the workmen found a perfect Roman terra-cotta lamp, which measures $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in its greatest length; the diameter of the reservoir being $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

UPTON, NEAR CHESTER, OCTOBER, 1901.

A silver Denarius of Caius Pollicius Malleolus, date about 89 B.C., was found by a workman while digging in a field. It is in a very fair state of preservation, but has been very roughly scratched in cleaning.

Obv. Head of Mars, with mallet above;

Rev. C.MAL—(leolus). A hero (name of whom is uncertain) standing before a trophy. The AL in MAL is ligulate.

ON THE DISCOVERY OF A NEOLITHIC AXE-HAMMER AT PECKFORTON, CHESHIRE.

A very finely finished weapon resembling the specimen in the possession of Lord Tollemache found near Beeston Castle, but it is a much smaller example. It weighs $7\frac{1}{2}$ oz ; greatest length $4\frac{5}{16}$ inches ; diameter of hole, which is slightly anterior to the centre, 1 inch. It is composed apparently of Cumberland granite, and has undoubtedly been long exposed, as the surface is very deeply pitted and weathered, presenting a very rough texture. It was found on August 15th, 1901, by Mr. George Dutton, Peckforton Farm, near Tarporley. The axe was taken in a load of clover, and while being unloaded at the stack, the axe fell to the ground and was then discovered by Mr. Dutton, who very generously presented it to the Society. The field in which the clover grew had long been under cultivation, and no doubt the axe had been exposed to the weather for a very long time, which accounts for its condition.

It is highly satisfactory to know that nearly all the objects enumerated in this Paper have been placed in the Society's collection, thereby enriching it very materially. In nearly all cases the objects have been presented by the owners of the various properties ; but several important finds, unfortunately smuggled away by the workmen, had to be traced and purchased, although the men had been freely remunerated.

The writer's best thanks are due to Alderman George Dutton and Mr. H. B. Dutton, Messrs. Richard Jones & Co., Messrs. Douglas & Minshull, Councillor W. Vernon, Mr. Coplestone (the Editor of the *Chronicle*), Mr. W. F. J. Shephard, and Mr. George Dutton (Peckforton), for assistance extended to him in investigating the various sites, and for the courtesy at all times shewn to him.