



The Archæological Survey of Berkshire.

SECOND PAPER.

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LAST winter I glanced casually over the County of Berkshire and remarked on some of the discoveries made therein. Now, the information as to the discoveries of coins, &c., is to be turned to practical account, with the idea of forming from it an archæological map of Berkshire.

Archæological finds are often made by ignorant people who are unable to give an opinion, and unhesitatingly pronounce every interment to be Anglo-Saxon, and every bit of pottery to be Roman. Here is one of the chief difficulties to be encountered in making an Archæological Survey. Another is the inaccuracy as to the precise locality of such finds. This at first may appear of slight importance, but it is not really so, because both tumuli and coin discoveries are a certain and valuable clue to the localization of Roman roads or residences.

As regards Berkshire, we do not *know* of any large city here in Roman times, but several minor colonies or camps existed, and various villas have been found. The vexed question of the true Calleva can now only be settled by a clear and undeniable tracing of all the roads, and the direction and intention of each.

The only early guides for this are the Itineraries of Antonine and the later work of Richard the Monk. Many now believe the last spurious work to have been written by someone whose knowledge of Roman roads was extensive. These differ widely, as might be expected from the difference of time between their being written. That Roman roads were not necessarily straight in detail, although the line was fairly so, we can see in the course of the Portway as it crosses the Downs, or with the Ichnield Way, and many others. The passing of the Enclosure Act in the early part of the

present century was the cause of much destruction of old roads and dykes, but some account of this may be gathered as it occurred in the memory of those still alive.

As a rule roads or remains lie from one to three feet below the present surface of the ground. When only a short depth below much damage is done by the plough as it passes over. The ploughmen know the hard spots in the fields they traverse, and enquiries should be made of them on this point.

Sometimes, too, oral tradition preserves stories of giants' burial places or particular parts haunted by spirits. This is significant, and it is curious to remark that discoveries in tumuli will sometimes confirm the legends so prevalent as to burial in "golden armour"; or of hidden hoards of wealth. There is often more in such old wives' tales than may at first appear. With a large city like Silchester situated so near the boundaries of Berkshire, we can be certain that roads must and did cross from thence to the Thames, and to reach it must have also crossed the river "Canete," or Kennet.

Important fords were paved, and such an one is now traceable over the Thames at Streatley, opposite "The Hollies," but no trace is discernible of any ford across the Kennet.

Tradition says one crossed it near Tile Mill in a field called Puntfield, and the recent discovery of a broad patch of cement and flint stones in the garden of a farm formerly called the Folly seems to suggest that the long-sought-for northern road from Silchester to the Thames may at last be found at this point, as an old ploughman averred that he knew that similar concrete lay along the fields above going towards Ufton Church.

If straight, the direction of this road lay towards Pangbourne or Upper Basildon, but this course lies to the west of "North Street" (a suggestive name, beyond which a ford is known called "Malpas," now localized into "Maypus"). Another speculative road might lead from Silchester out of the extreme north-east of the city, and crossing Mortimer West End, traverse Grazeley Green, formerly called Broad Street Common. Just below this is a field called the Broadway from thence to Sheffield Ford, where a coin was found, on by Nunhide, where a coin of Nerva was dug up, but such a line of road would not lead anywhere.

"The City" at Tilehurst yields no traces of Roman occupation. Mr. Harrison, of Theale, has found indications of roads near, but it could not have been an important place. Far more likely sites of Berkshire towns are at Chinham Farm, the supposed Julianum, or

at Streatley, presumed to be Thamesis—neither of these have been properly investigated.

To return to the subject of the Survey of Berkshire from an archæological point of view. With the uncertain description at present at my command I have hesitated to mark any difference between Celtic and Anglo-Saxon burials. In similar work undertaken in Herefordshire the discoveries are classed under various headings, but here this can only be undertaken gradually. For any work of this kind local knowledge is indispensable, and I now resign the further filling in of the maps into the hands of those more competent to undertake the work than myself, and trust that in time a very full and perfect map of ancient Berrocscir may thus be obtained.

As to the maps themselves, I would suggest their being either framed by being mounted on wooden panels which would fit into the glass frame, but be so arranged as to be taken out when required, or else that they be bound lengthways into a portfolio, the notes of finds being arranged alphabetically in parishes and type-written, leaving spaces and interleaves for additions as they occur.

These if hung up for awhile, either in the Free Library or Silchester Museum, would be seen by everyone, and fresh information might be thus obtained which I have failed by letters or enquiries to elicit.

