

Wickham Bushes.

A ROMAN SETTLEMENT.

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THIS little known site lies about half a mile south of "Caesar's Camp," on Easthampstead Plain, called in Norden's Map of 1607 "Windmill Hill Fort." It straddles the shortest of the roads from the camp to the Roman road from London to Silchester (known locally as the "Devil's Highway") and extends one hundred and fifty yards to the east and about five hundred yards to the west of the road.

Recent history. It was noticed in 1783 by Mr. Handasyd, who took a labourer over and "found an almost incredible quantity of various kinds of pottery and of shards of brick and tile, the form of which evidently bespoke Roman." (Archæologia, Vol. VII.). He tried in as many as twenty places—and neglected to fill in the holes he had made. There is unfortunately no precise record of his finds. In 1792, during the war with France, seven thousand troops camped on or near the site and, when the king came to inspect them, they fired mines in his honour. (G. A. Kempthorne, "The Devil's Highway.") In 1878 the Wellington College Natural Science Society did a certain amount of digging here. No report was published, except a catalogue in their papers for 1879, which gave no indication of the exact spot on which objects were found. In about 1900, Captain, now Lieutenant-Colonel, Kempthorne made a large collection of coins and pottery and a catalogue of those in the College Museum was compiled by him in 1903, but was unfortunately not published. Everything that was given to the College Museum has been lost or disposed of. About 1917/1918 and later some work was done by two Wellingtonians, W. S. Bristowe and T. C. Lethbridge, who dug with considerable success. We have been unable to find a record of any other investigation until 1932 when we first began digging.

The only suggestion as to the name of this site is that it is the "Bibracte," which Richard of Cirencester in Iter XII. places

20 miles from Calleva and 20 from London. But this itinerary is now known to have been invented by Charles Bertram, an English professor in Copenhagen in about 1745. Stukely rashly published it without seeing the supposed original. The Victoria County History records British and Roman coins from Caesar's Camp, but the only one we have found mentioned by name is that of Cunobelinus (Camden). On Cunobelin's death in A.D. 43, Claudius invaded Britain in person, with Aulus Plautius, and the southern of the three invading armies (Cassius Dio LX. 19), the II. Augusta Legion, under the future Emperor Vespasian (Suetonius, Divus Vespasianus 4), was settled at Caerleon by A.D. 47. Haverfield leads us to suppose that the Devil's Highway was built, or rebuilt, as far west as Somerset, by A.D. 49.

Water is obtainable both at Caesar's Camp and at Wickham Bushes. It appears that the Romans occupied Caesar's Camp and that the Wickham Bushes settlement was a village of civilian hangers-on, which sprang up outside, just as by the hillock of the "Crow Thorn"; in the last eighty years a village has arisen around Wellington College and Broadmoor. Wickham Bushes possibly also served as a wayside station on the Devil's Highway, being 14 miles from Silchester (Calleva) and 12 from Staines (Pontes). The strategic position is bad, the ground being level on all sides but the south. No recognizable boundary remains. It has been suggested that the boundary was a thick hedge of thorns and that Wickham Bushes, recently burnt down, were descended from this hedge, (Handasyd, *Archæologia*, Vol. VII. ; Kempthorne, *Devil's Highway*, p. 8). This is very probably the case, so it is only possible to trace the outline of the settlement roughly by seeing where pottery is found. The sandy soil is unsuitable for corn or pasture, so it is evident that the community was to a large degree dependent on the Devil's Highway for its supplies of provisions; the personal ornaments and Samian ware found show that it was equally dependent on the road for luxuries. Sarsen is quite common and must have been used a good deal for building, though few trimmed blocks have been found. The ground has been much disturbed by spasmodic excavators at various dates, by mine-firing and by the planting and removal of trees. The site was probably

founded soon after the Roman road was made and flourished until the end of the Roman occupation of Britain. The earliest coin is of Agrippa, and the latest of Valentinian II. (383-392).

The finds are numerous and varied, but are what is to be expected in a settlement of this type. Many objects are scattered over the countryside; so far as we have ascertained there are collections in the possession of Major and Mrs. Stapleton, Easthampstead; T. C. Lethbridge, Esq., Shelford, Cambs; and one, made during the last year, by the Wellington College Antiquarian Society. There was also a collection in the College Museum in 1903. Specimens of the following potteries have been identified:—Samian, pseudo-Samian, New Forest Ware, Castor Ware, much Upchurch Ware, some of white clay and one shard of green glazed ware. Mr. Handasyd said in 1783 that there were "almost as many types as specimens" and he was not far wrong. There is much iron and a little bronze.

The more important finds in the possession of Major and Mrs. Stapleton, Parkside, Easthampstead.

Pottery. Samian. Many plain and a few decorated shards, one with a man running past two arches.

Pseudo-Samian. A large quantity, one shard has an illegible potter's stamp.

New Forest Ware. Remains of several thumb-pots.

Castor Ware. A few shards, one with the scale (?) pattern.

Coarse Ware. A few necks of amphorae and ampullae, some fragments of mortaria, and a couple of shards of a strainer.

Iron. Nails. to 8in. long. Fragments of a lock and key (lock brass-plated).

Knife blades. Pair of Forceps.

Small hoes. Spade shoe. Horse or ox shoe.

Iron rings. A fibula.

Bronze. Several rings. Fragments of torcs and bracelets.

Glass. Fragments of window (?) glass and a blue bead.

Miscellaneous. A few pear-shaped loom weights, many spindle-whorls made from bases of broken pots. A blue stone, engraved with a human figure, from a ring, has unfortunately been lost.

A diminutive flint arrow head.

Finds once (c. 1903) in the possession of Wellington College, now lost.

Pottery. Samian or pseudo-Samian. A few very inferior shards, mostly of plates, but one decorated with a running hare (?).

Coarse ware. Fragment of large olla and patera. Fragment of a pot of white ware ornamented with black spots, like one from Colchester now in the British Museum.

Iron. Many nails. Two fairly perfect door-keys. Some knife blades. An article resembling a butcher's hook, and a perfect specimen of a candlestick, like one in the Silchester collection.

Bronze. A small bracelet. A small plate with two projections, which may have been fastened to a leather belt.

Miscellaneous. A handmill found by Mr. Monckton and given to the Museum.

In the possession of T. C. Lethbridge, Esq., Shelford, Cambs. Pottery. Samian. A few good shards, one with a female figure and a lead rivet. Also many fragments of a brown clay bowl, with pattern incised which has been fitted together.

Grey painted ware. Portions of a glazed pot, the colour of galvanized iron, with varied patterns and many large fragments of mortaria.

Further pottery. Shards of many varieties and a nearly complete black vase. Portions of a brown pot with painted patterns.

Iron. Small iron shovel. Two rings, viz. a man's with the gem missing and a woman's with blue stone with a minute bird engraved. Hoe. Broken door key, large spike, remains of knife, hook, 3 door-keys (one found with small knob-headed nails) piece of iron for holding pan of balance.

Bars for the balance. Fibula.

Bronze. Enamelled brooch. Left hand of statuette holding cornucopia. Small pin. Small hollow cylinder.

Other metals. Silver foil off box. Lead weight with iron scale piece.

Glass. Half of a blue bead. Portion of vase. Portions of bowl with letters scratched round top "L." Portion of octagonal glass bowl. Ribbed piece of glass. Black bead with blue stripes.

Miscellaneous. Kimmeridge Shale. A disc ("coal money") Portion of bracelet.

Jet. Portion of bangle.

Flint. Plane (burnt). Flake knife. Broken knife.

Rough scraper.

Also a red clay spindle whorl.

A bronze brooch, nearly circular, but slightly longer than broad, with raised centre. Gutter border of blue and white enamel. Centre of green (red decayed), with intaglio possibly representing a human head and neck (similar type Silchester).

In the possession of Miss Monckton, Crowthorne, Berks, a complete pot of red clay $5\frac{1}{2}$ centimetres high.

Finds at present at Wellington College, collected by the "Antiquarians," 1932.

Pottery. Samian. Very few shards of good quality. One rim has egg and dart design and a chip has the same.

Pseudo-Samian. A few shards.

White clay. A few shards, one painted brown and one handle.

Castor ware. A few fragments of the lower half of a hunt-cup, similar to those in the Reading Museum, with roulette work.

Other pottery. Much coarse ware : about fifty different types have been collected. There is also a coarse white clay ware with a green glaze, probably much later.

Iron. Many nails. Two staple fasteners, one knife blade, one possible dagger and one cock-fighting spur.

Bronze. One bent ring for the finger, square in section. One small bar about 1½ in. long and square in section, twisted at one end. Probably part of a bucket handle or shaft of a boss-headed pin.

This site is undoubtedly worthy of a more detailed excavation than we or our predecessors have been able to afford it, and we

hope that a proper investigation will be carried out in the near future

Our most sincere thanks are given to Major and Mrs. Stapleton, Parkside, Easthampstead ; C. E. Lethbridge, Esq., Shelford, Cambridge ; Mr. J. Allan, of the British Museum and to the Curator and Mr. W.A. Seaby of Reading Museum for identifying the coins.

COINS.

The following is a list (as accurate as can at present be made) of the coins found up to this year and classified according to the collections in which they at present are :—(chronological order).

	" Anti-quarians."	Mrs. Stapleton.	Mr. Lethbridge.	Lost by College Museum.
Agrippa ...			I	
Nero ...	5			
Vespasian ...	I		I	
Trajan ...		I	I	
Hadrian ...		3		
Antoninus ...		3	2	I
Faustina ...		3	I	
M. Aurelius ...		2	2	
Commodus ...		I		
Caracalla ...		I		
Opilius Macrinus		I		
Elagabalus ...			I	
Julia Mammæa ...		2		
M. Philippus ...		I		
Treponianus Gallus			I	
Gallienus ...		I	I	
Victorinus...		I	I	
A. Marius ...				I
Claudius II. ...		9	I	
Tetricus I. ...		9		
Tetricus II. ...	2	2		
C. Gothicus ...		5		
Aurelian ...		I		
Tacitus ...		I		
Probus ...		2		I
Carus ...			I	
Diocletian ...		I		
Carausius ...		3		I
Allectus ...		3		I
Constantine I. ...		5	I	I
Helena, c. 324	I			
Constantinopolis ...	2		I	
Urbs Roma (330)			I	
Constantius II.			I	
Dalmatius ...		I		I
Constantine II. ...		2	2	
Valentinian I. ...		I	I	I
Valens ...		4	I	
Gratian ...		I	3	
Valentinian II. ...		I		