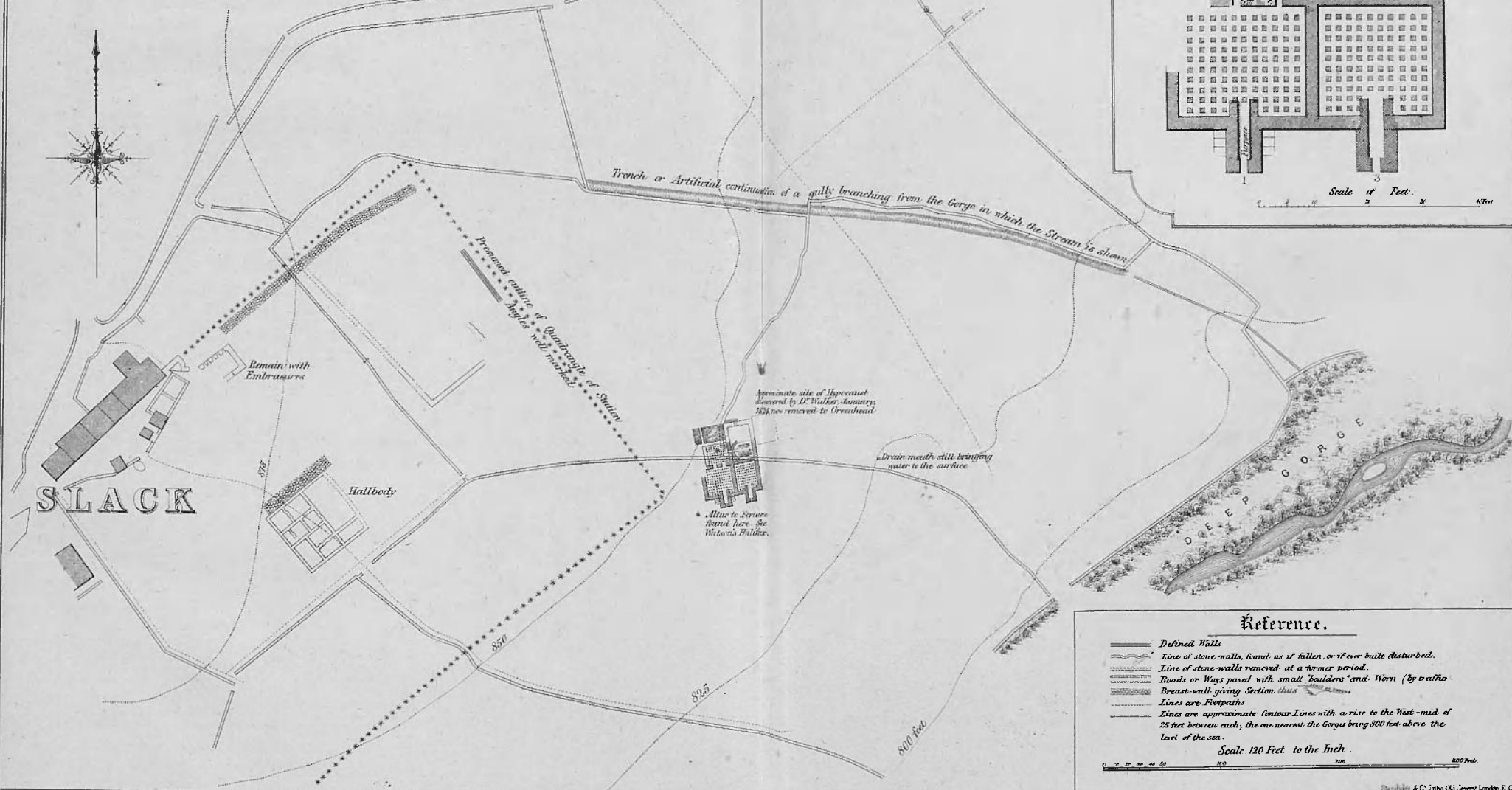
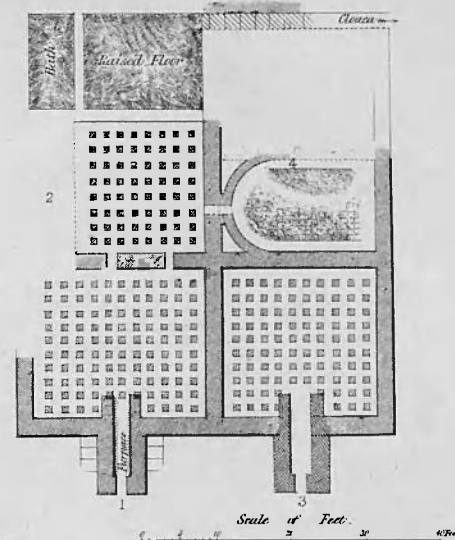


PLAN SHEWING
DISCOVERIES IN 1865-6 AT
SLACK,
THE SITE OF A ROMAN STATION,
SUPPOSED TO BE THE
CAMBODUNUM OF THE ITINERARIES.



ENLARGED, PLAN OF HYPOCAUST.



Reference.

- Defined Walls
- Line of stone walls found as if fallen, or never built disturbed.
- Line of stone walls removed at a former period.
- Roads or Ways paved with small boulders and worn (by traffic)
- Breast-wall giving Section, this
- Lines are Footpaths
- Lines are approximate contour Lines with a rise to the West - mid of 25 feet between each, the one nearest the Gorge being 800 feet above the level of the sea.

Scale 120 Feet to the Inch.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200 Feet.

The Archaeological Journal.

DECEMBER, 1867.

ON THE ROMAN STATION AT SLACK.¹

By FAIRLESS BARBER, Hon. Sec. to the Huddersfield Archæological and Topographical Association.

THE Roman station at Slack, in Longwood, in the parish of Huddersfield, is believed to be the Cambodunum of the Itineraries, but the degree of certainty now existing on the subject has not been attained without much controversy, in which the eminent antiquaries, Camden, Burton, Gale, Horsley, Watson, Whitaker the historian of Manchester, Whitaker the historian of Leeds, and more recently, the late Rev. Joseph Hunter, have taken part. In their several works are to be found exhaustive arguments on the data before them, and the memoir "On the site of Cambodunum," by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, in the 32nd vol. of the Archæologia, supplies a summary of the different opinions that had been held up to the year 1846.

In this memoir Mr. Hunter arrives at the conclusion that the claim of Slack must henceforth be abandoned, and that it is at Greteland that we ought hereafter to fix the site of the long-lost station. It is the purpose of this paper to supply data rather than arguments, but it is proper here to remark that Mr. Hunter's conclusion is arrived at on a very bare balance of probabilities, in which his own opinion as to the suitability of the Greteland site is allowed to turn the scale in its favour, while he omits to consider that the remains at Slack are far greater and more extensive, and moreover situated on a Roman road in the required direction, of which clear traces still exist in the immediate vicinity. It may also be stated, that Mr. Hunter observes, "that all idea of actually tracing this Iter by *indicia* of it still remaining is vain." This may be true, speaking of the

¹ Communicated to the Section of Antiquities, at the Annual Meeting of the Institute, held at Kingston-upon-Hull July, 1867.

Iter as a whole, but if we once admit that as civilization progressed a Roman road would be likely to form, as this still does in parts, an artificial local boundary, we have a clue to the probable line which may be worth following.

At Slack itself, the Roman road is still the boundary between the important parishes of Halifax and Huddersfield, and the occurrence of Maplin Cross, a boundary cross, (probably more ancient than any parochial divisions,) close to the line of the road, where its site is still marked by a short stone pillar, placed there for the purpose, suggests that ancient crosses may be found at other points in the true direction. Thus, at Rastrick, from three to four miles east, we find another ancient cross, and on the hill-side, sufficiently near it, are traces of a road in the cultivated ground, still distinctly visible, and always spoken of by the inhabitants as the "old road." About two miles further east, over a ford still existing across the river Calder, in the line of this "old road," we have another ancient cross, called Walton Cross, on the boundary between Dewsbury and Birstal, and, about a mile to the east again, is Cleckheaton, where a Roman camp formerly existed; while at Beeston, close to Leeds, is a place called Cross Flatts. It is said also that other crosses, or indications of crosses, occur in the interval. In this way, we may infer that the road took a direct course to Leeds, where indications of Roman occupation exist to a greater extent than is generally supposed, and where by some the *Legeolium* of Antonine's Itinerary is placed, instead of at Castleford.

Certain it is, that the line thus indicated is the most direct that could be taken to Tadcaster, and that though all the crosses mentioned are not now, like Maplin Cross and Walton Cross, on actual boundaries, they are all very ancient; Rastrick Cross and Walton Cross, at any rate, being as ancient as the existing early remains at Dewsbury, attributed to the Saxons. Unfortunately only the bases remain, but these are massive, and richly sculptured with foliated and interlacing patterns.

This method of arriving at the probable direction of this Iter may be fallacious: but many other arguments might be urged in favour of the line thus indicated, at any rate between Slack and Leeds, and the idea is suggested as one worth following, though for the purposes of this memoir it is

unnecessary, even if time would permit, to pursue it further.¹ Enough has been said to shew that the position of Slack possesses antiquarian features of more than ordinary interest; and though the recent excavations there have not yet added much to what Watson and Whitaker have already described, they have at any rate reopened and exhibited in considerable detail to the present generation the indications which Watson and Whitaker examined under less advantageous conditions.

The plan (see map) is reduced from an accurate survey, on a scale of 30 feet to the inch, of the traces recently brought to light; but it shews the eastern portion only of the area over which the remains are believed to extend.

The enclosure near the farm house is called the Croft, and the indications shewn there no doubt represent the remains referred to by Watson as "The Hall Body." The three other fields to the east of the croft are "The Eald Fields," and it was at the intersection of the three fences of these that the altar to Fortune, mentioned by Watson, was discovered, which it is only reasonable to suppose was originally in some manner connected with the building there shewn.

This building will be better understood by a reference to the larger plan and section (see map), and to it might properly be added another hypocaust, further to the east, found in January, 1824, removed at the instance of Dr. Walker, an eminent local antiquary, and re-erected in the grounds of B. H. Allen, Esq., Green Head, Huddersfield, where Joseph Beaumont, Esq., the present occupier, most kindly permits its inspection by the curious.

It will be seen that these remains exhibit the ordinary arrangement of a Roman hypocaust. The south-west room was that first opened, and here in one corner a small portion

¹ The argument from the ancient crosses is not intended to do more than support the antiquity of the roads on the line indicated, and may be thus summarised:—Whatever the object of the crosses, they would be placed where readily accessible (all that have been mentioned are near cross roads), and when they are met with at such short intervals, it is reasonable to assume that one of the roads leading to them would follow a continuous course, and connect

cross with cross, and however ancient the crosses, more ancient still would be the road thus continuously connecting them.

Mr. F. A. Leyland, of Halifax, who has paid great attention to this subject, has arrived at the same conclusion as the writer, for reasons stated in a paper read in 1861, at the 57th meeting of the W. Riding Geological and Polytechnic Association.

of the floor remained perfect, shewing the arrangement of pillars of small square tiles, bearing a larger tile as a cap, and then a larger slab nearly 2 feet square : a series of such slabs covered the area and supported a thick layer of strong concrete, large masses of which, broken in, were presumed to have been disturbed by Mr. Whitaker in the researches recorded in his History of Manchester. In the next chamber opened (No. 2) none of the concrete remained *in situ*, but traces of the pillars, nearly all of which were of stone rudely squared, were found. This chamber had been heated from No. 1 through two arches, the sides and springers of which are still in position. Immediately to the north of No. 2 a concrete floor was met with, raised on debris to the level of the upper floor of the hypocausts ; and in the north-east corner of the building, level with the lower floor of the hypocausts, was a slab of concrete, with a lip all around, shewing that there had once been raised sides round it. This slab was quite perfect, and bore traces of having been worn with water : its dimensions are 13 ft. by 6 ft. The removal at a previous time of the stones composing the surrounding walls had destroyed the sides ; but there can be no doubt that this slab was once the bottom of a bath, which, when complete, must have been an interesting specimen of Roman work. When water was poured on to it, by buckets full, it followed the lines worn by use in the surface, and found its way at once to the N.E. corner into a drain, the existence of which was not previously suspected.

The hypocaust in No. 3 is similar in all respects to No. 1, but heated independently. No. 4, on the other hand, has been heated from No. 2, and bears traces of alteration, which may be noticed in detail.

The original floor is of concrete, on a level with the lower floor of the hypocausts. Upon this, at a period subsequent to the original erection of the building, has been deposited a layer of rubbish about a foot in thickness, and on this another floor, composed of red tiles, has been laid, and on this again has been raised a shallow hypocaust with shorter pillars, some of stone and some of tile, bearing a floor level with the upper floor of the rest of the building. To the north of No. 4 there appears to have been a small open yard, under which the drain above referred to ran. The covers of it are still in position, and one of them is pierced

with four holes, like a modern dish stone, to receive any surface water from the area.

It was hoped that the debris on which the concrete floor near the bath is raised, and the rubbish under the tile floor in No. 4, would yield some coin or other remain that might indicate the date to be assigned to their deposition, and on a more complete examination they may possibly do so. In the debris under the concrete have been found several pieces of wall stucco, made of fine lime, with small particles of brick and brick-dust mixed with it. In some cases layers can be detected, and in all a fine smooth surface has been obtained by rubbing; so that it is clear there had been a permanent and somewhat finished structure either stripped or destroyed which supplied the debris. The tiles also forming the middle floor of No. 4, though flat on the surface, are found on the underside to have had flanges, as roof tiles, which have been broken away, either by design or accident, before they were laid on their present bed.

The other indications in the survey are either paved roads or foundations of walls, one of which is battered at a considerable angle, and appears to have had a trench outside it. This is in a direct line from N.W. to S.E., and forms part of one side of an oblong about 320 ft. by 450 ft., the angles and lines of which are clearly discernible in the present surface of the land.

A singular remain close to the farm-house requires special notice. Supposing the oblong above mentioned to be the original camp, this remain would be near the centre of the north side of it, the one nearest to the Iter, and its position is thus associated with the probable entrance to the station. The shape of this remain is rectangular, with embrasures at regular intervals of 4 ft. 6 in. in the external wall. These embrasures are about 6 in. wide on the outside, and rather more than 2 ft. within. They commence level with the original groundline externally, and with the floor of the building on the inside; about 2 ft. in height of the walls remain, and there is nothing to show that the embrasures may not have been considerably higher. Seven have already been opened, and as excavations are continued further westward, more may be found. No explanation of the object of these openings has been suggested, and it was at first thought that they might form part of a structure much later

in date than the station, but on a close examination the walls were found to rest on the original surface, where fragments of Roman tiles and bricks in large quantities still remained as they had fallen.

In construction all the walls are very rude, being built of undressed stones laid for the most part in tempered clay, and even the battered wall, where workmanship was necessary in order to get the chamfered edge in the different courses of stone forming the slope, is of the rudest kind. The bricks and tiles on the other hand are excellent, and have been made with great care and skill. They exhibit all the varied forms that would be used in the flues, pillars, and floors of the hypocausts and for roofing purposes, and on several fragments and some whole roof tiles, is found the now well-known impression COH. IIII. BRE., which has been the subject of almost as much controversy as the site of Cambodunum itself—but of this more hereafter.

On the supposed site of the station itself no human remains that can be referred to the Roman period have been found, but about 400 yards to the N.E., near the line of the Iter, and about 2 ft. below the present surface, a sepulchre was discovered in 1866, which is of such an interesting character as to merit a detailed description.

As originally erected, it would present to the eye a large rectangular block of rough walling, 10 ft. long, 5 ft. wide, and 2 ft. 6 in. high. On removing the stones from the upper surface, this block was found to contain a rectangular cavity about 6 ft. long by 1 ft. 6 in. wide. In this were arranged nine roofing tiles, each measuring 21 in. \times 16 in., in the following order:—three on each side leaning against each other, so as to form in the section an equilateral triangle with the ground for its base, two vertically at the east end, and one at the west. The flanges of the tiles were placed uppermost; along the ridge and over each joint were ridge-tiles, 1 ft. 6 in. long, with a span of 7 in. at one end and 5 in. at the other. Each flat roof-tile bears on its external surface the stamp COH. IIII BRE. A similar tomb of tiles stamped LEG. IX. HISP. found near York, 1768, is figured, *Archæologia*, vol. ii. pl. xi.; also in Wellbeloved's *Eburacum*, pl. xi., with a like tomb found at York, 1833, and now in the Museum there. In the angles of the cavity above the tiles was coarse sand, on which the

stones forming the upper surface rested, and beneath the tiles lay the contents of the sepulchre.

These are all preserved, and present fragments of glass (possibly unguentaries) and of an earthenware cinerary urn of the pale colour of an ordinary fire-brick, lumps of charcoal, with a heterogeneous mass of decayed matter containing calcined bones, and a large number of nails of the same type as the ordinary wrought-iron nails of the present day. Some of these had been present in the charcoal during the cremation, or had been in wood subsequently burnt, and the outside of them thus carbonised had been preserved as a shell, while the rest of the nail had oxydised and corroded away.² There were no indications that cremation had taken place on the spot, and the broken condition of the contents has probably been the result of their collection and removal to the place of interment.

Now that a veritable tomb has been found *in situ*, it is hoped that further researches will disclose others, and that some monumental inscriptions may turn up which will settle conclusively, not only the name and approximate date of the station itself, but the true interpretation of the letters BRE so intimately connected with it. These have, since the time of Camden, been a puzzle to antiquaries. They have been read as signifying Bretannorum, Bretonum, Bre-menensium, Bremetacensium, Brennorum, and Breucorum.

The last reading is supported by a correspondent of Notes and Queries,³ subscribing himself "Queen's Gardens;" and more recently the Rev. Thomas James, F.S.A., of Nether Thong, near Huddersfield, has advanced the following negative and affirmative reasons for preferring Breucorum to Brennorum, which may be considered as the interpretation second to it in point of probability. "On the negative side," he observes, "that no cohorts of the Brenni, who inhabited a portion of the ancient Illyricum now forming part of Bavaria, are known to have been enlisted by their Roman conquerors. The name Brenni does not occur in the lists

² The process of case-hardening iron, by bringing it, when in a state of gradually increasing heat, into contact with crushed bones, hoof-parings, or other animal matter, so as to introduce carbon into the open pores of the metal, is well known and commonly used at the present

day: it suggests the idea that the process here has been analogous, though accidental, and that the bones and other matter of the body that would give off carbon when burnt, have contributed to the case-hardening of the nails.

³ N. & Q., 3rd series, vol. ix. p. 225.

of Roman legions and cohorts which have been preserved, nor can it be found in any ancient military inscription extant. A collection of the abbreviated Latin sentences which were more frequently to be met with on ancient stones, and marble monuments, and in books, was made by Sertorius Ursatus, a learned professor at Patavia, in Italy, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century. It was published in a volume in Paris in the year 1723, and contains upwards of five thousand different inscriptions, with the explanation in full of each added. In this collection there is no cohort of the Brenni mentioned. But, on the affirmative side, the abbreviated titles of three separate cohorts of the Breuci are inserted. The title of the first is COH. III. BREUC. The title of the second is the same as that on the tiles dug up at Slack, namely, COH. III. BRE. ; and the title of the third is COH. VII. BREU. It is worthy of notice that the last term in these three examples varies in its abbreviated form, from which it may be inferred that each cohort had a recognised rule of its own for the manner in which it inscribed its designation. The Breuci, of which nation it is maintained that the cohors quarta, equally with the cohors tertia and the cohors septima, above specified, consisted, were of Celtic origin, and inhabited the ancient Pannonia, which is represented by the modern Hungary. They were conquered by the Romans in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, and being naturally of a warlike disposition, and trained for military service, numbers of their youths were soon draughted away from their own country, to swell the imperial legions in other parts."

In coins and other objects the recent excavations have been singularly barren, when it is remembered that the increased height of the present surface over the original level of the station leaves a layer varying from one to three and even four feet in thickness, in which any objects left on its abandonment might be preserved. Of coins only twelve have been found that can be identified. These run from Vespasian to Trajan, and comprise one Judæa capta. A plain bronze fibula, a small bronze loop with rivets in it, two small hemispheres of white marble, and a bronze enameled ornament (figured at the close of this memoir) are all that demand notice.

Fragments of coarse pottery and of leaden pipes have

been met with, and a large quantity of galena, but this, from its position in a wall of the hypocaust, may have been deposited at a comparatively recent period.

The results above detailed, though meagre when compared with those obtained elsewhere, are not without a direct bearing on the early history of Yorkshire; and this bearing is greatly enhanced when they come to be considered in connection with surrounding remains, and illustrated by an examination of the local etymology.

This at once supplies us with no inconsiderable addition to the arguments in favor of Slack as the site of *Cambodunum*; for not only does the position satisfy the meaning of the word, "a fortress on or near to a crooked hill," as Mr. Watson and others have observed, but the echo of the name itself may be still detected in the name of an adjoining township, *Scammonden*, which, on early rolls of the manor of Wakefield, is, as the late deputy steward, Mr. Lumb, has stated, found written "*Scamoden*." It has also been suggested that Gosport, a place immediately to the north of Slack, is "*Cohortis porta*," a derivation which its position seems to justify, though the British prefix *gos*, little, and the British etymon of our word "porch," might equally explain it.

The word *Cambodunum* is itself Celtic, and it occurs not only here, among the Celtic Brigantes, but also among the Celtic inhabitants of Noricum, in the Rhoetian Alps, and, singularly enough, not far from a Brigantian lake. This circumstance has given rise to an ingenious suggestion, that the cohort here quartered were Breuci, and named this station after the Rhoetian *Cambodunum*, from the neighbourhood of which they had sprung. But is it not more natural to infer that our Celtic Brigantes, whose extensive occupation of the district is still testified by Celtic names on every side, had here, on their southern frontier, a stronghold named by them *Cambodun*, for the same reasons that had influenced their Celtic brethren in giving the same name to their town. It may, moreover, and with reason, be maintained, not only that the Brigantes held the forests and hills here in great strength, but further, that it was here that that warlike tribe, after maintaining a doubtful contest with *Petilius Cerealis*, were met and ultimately subdued by some of *Agri-cola's* forces; and that this was one of the chain of posts

which Tacitus informs us were established by that general along the frontier of the several districts which had submitted, with so much care and judgment, that no part of the country, even where Roman arms had never penetrated, could think itself secure from the vigor of the Conqueror.⁴

As he formed at Mancun (as we may call it) and Caer Ebrauc, Celtic towns, which became Mancunium and Eboracum, so here he would find Cambodun and make it Cambodunum.

And if to him we ascribe the first Roman occupation of the site, there are reasons, both negative and affirmative, why the alterations made in it should be considered the work of the Sixth Legion, which came over with Hadrian. It is stated that the fourth cohort of the Breuci were at this time part of that legion. Their name does not occur on the tiles in the broken flanges forming the middle floor of the hypocaust No. 4, but does occur in profusion on the tiles found on the surface.

That part of the sixth legion was here at a period subsequent to the alteration, is also certain, from the altar to Fortune, which bears the inscription which may be thus read *in extenso*, "Fortunæ sacrum Caius Antonius Modestus centurio legionis sextæ victricis piæ fidelis votum solvit lubens merito." This altar, which has a focus, and a step at the base as if to kneel on, was found immediately over it near the apsidal end of No. 4. What more likely than that the Centurion Modestus, finding the quarters of his predecessor unsuitable, should alter them, and mark the commencement of his occupation by an appropriate dedication to the goddess who had favoured him?

The limits of this memoir preclude further remarks; a volume might be written on the points of interest above alluded to.

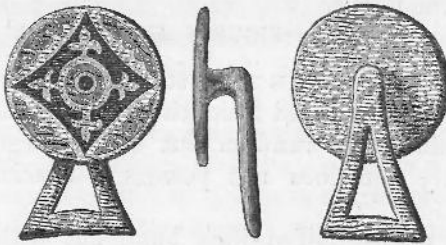
It is hoped, however, that enough has been said to keep alive the interest felt by archæologists in the matter, and to record, though somewhat scantily, the results that have attended the labours of the Huddersfield Archæological Association, under the direction of whose late secretary, the Rev. George Lloyd, F.S.A., the funds subscribed for the Slack explorations have been for the most part ex-

⁴ Tac. Agricola, c. 20.

pended; and who have collected, and preserved in a dwelling-house at Outlane, close to Slack, all the objects of interest discovered.

NOTE ON AN ENAMELED ORNAMENT FOUND AT SLACK.

THE most interesting of the minor relics brought to light during the excavations in the "Eald Fields," commenced in 1865, is a little relic of bronze enameled, of which mention has been made in a previous page, and which presents considerable elegance



Roman Ornament of bronze enameled, found at Slack. Original size.

in decoration, and the rich, strongly contrasted colouring, that mostly characterizes enamels of the Roman period. The central circlet is of small blue, surrounded by a circle of light vermillion; the foliated cruciform ornament within a lozenge-shaped compartment is of the same rich blue; the four surrounding spaces, extending to the margin of the circular head of this pretty little ornament, are filled in with bright red, as before. It is difficult to define precisely the purpose of this object; it has, however, doubtless served as an appliance of dress or of harness, and seems formed for attachment to a riband or a strap. Relics of the same fashion have occurred on Roman sites in England, and examples of enameled work, chiefly on *fibulae*, are not uncommon. Amongst many beautiful specimens may be mentioned a little mounted warrior, from Kirkby Thore (*Archæologia*, vol. xxx. p. 284); a horse, from Painswick (*Arch. Journ.*, vol. xii. p. 279); a *petta*-shaped fibula, from Leicester (*Ibid.*, vol. xxii. p. 69). The process of art in all is technically termed *champ levé*, the fused vitreous colours being affixed to the bronze in portions of the field that have been removed or chased out. The most precious relic of this beautiful art in Roman times is the cup found at a villa at Rudge, Wilts, and inscribed with the names of stations in Northumberland, *per lineam valli*. It is now preserved at Alnwick Castle. There are several beautiful enameled ornaments in the museums at York, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Caerleon.

A. W.