

Ground-plan of Ancaster, Lincolnshire, the Roman Causennæ.

A. Foss of the Roman Station, width 60 ft., depth 10 ft. B. The site of the Roman Wall.  
 C. Ancaster Church. D. The Parsonage. E. The Hall. F F. The Ermine Street, leading north-  
 wards towards Lincoln. G G. The Road from Grantham to Sleaford.

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### ANCASTER, THE ROMAN CAUSENNÆ.

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THE terminal of the name of this place, being the Saxon form of the Latin *castrum*, at once proclaims it to have been a stronghold at a very early period; from the character of the earthwork partly incorporated in the present village, and other vestiges of its ancient occupants, we are sure that these remains may be attributed to Roman labor, and that they were nearly connected with that great Roman road called the Ermine Street, or, more commonly, the High Dyke. Ancaster is, almost beyond doubt, the *Causennæ* of the Antonine Itinerary, supposed to be placed between *Durobrivæ* (Castor), and *Lindum*, or Lincoln, and stated to be 30 miles distant from *Durobrivæ*, which is nearly correct, and 26 miles from *Lindum*, an error which may easily have arisen through a mistaken interpolation, by one of the transcribers of the Itinerary, of an extra Roman numeral, whereby XVI. has been converted into XXVI., the real distance being 14 miles. Some, however, have thought that this was the Roman station of *Crococolana*, now usually assigned to Brough; but Horsley and most modern archæologists have confidently come to the conclusion that Ancaster stands on the site of *Causennæ*, originally a military station on the Ermine Street, and around which a small Roman town subsequently sprang up. It stood at a convenient distance from Lincoln, on the north, and also from Casterton, on the south, which served as an intermediate station between it and *Durobrivæ*, the modern Castor.

It may deserve mention that Ancaster has been supposed

by Mr. Hatcher, and some who have accepted the pseudo Itinerary ascribed to Richard of Cirencester, to be the *Causennæ*, *Corisennæ*, or *Isinnæ* of that compilation, (compare Iter III. and Iter XVII.) between Castor and Lincoln, and which had been placed by Stukeley at Stow Green, Stanfield, Lincolnshire. Mr. Dyer, in his elaborate Commentary on the Itineraries, seems disposed to agree in regard to Ancaster, whilst he points out the discrepancy in the distances stated in the fictitious *itineræ*. The spurious character of the alleged treatise has been so fully set forth by Mr. Mayor in his edition of the writings attributed to Richard of Cirencester, and recently issued in the Series of Chronicles, under direction of the Master of the Rolls, that it were needless to examine in detail the supposed occurrence of Ancaster in the deceptive *Diaphragmata*.

Besides its position on the Ermine Street, this station possessed several advantages—such as a sheltered position removed from full exposure to the bleak wilds of the open heath around it, and its proximity to a spring, now called the Lady Well, on the south, and a streamlet of excellent water that never dries up, running along its northern boundary ; besides which, access to it was supplied by a remarkable natural fosse or narrow valley, cloven as it were through the adjoining eminence on the south, by means of which troops could leave or enter the station privately. The station consisted of nine acres and eleven perches of land, constituting a slightly irregular parallelogram, the eastern side of which is 520 ft. long, the western side 545, the northern and southern sides 445 ft. ; the whole being surrounded by a fosse 50 ft. wide and 10 ft. deep. Parts of this fosse are still perfect, and the whole is easily traceable. Its character may be best seen towards the eastern end of its southern face, where it remains nearly as it was left by the Romans. Within was a wall defended probably at the angles by circular towers, the one at the north-western point still being represented by a well defined circular mound, whence we may presume that the other angles were similarly strengthened, as at Lincoln and Richborough. See the accompanying ground-plan.

No remnants, however, of the walls of this station now exist above ground, and at first we might conclude, from Leland, that he thought it never had been walled ; he says,

—"In tymes past it hath bene a celebrate toun, but not waullid as far as I could perceive."<sup>1</sup> He is here, however, speaking of the subsequent town that grew up round the station, which he terms the Castle, saying, "The area wher the Castelle stood is large, and the dikes of it appere, and in some places the foundation of the waulle:" whilst Stukeley says,<sup>2</sup>—"I suppose Ancaster to have been a very strong city intrenched and walled about, as may be seen very plainly for the most part by those that are the least versed in these searches." Since then considerable remains of the walls have been found from time to time below the surface, both on the north side in the bowling-ground attached to the Red Lion public-house, and on the west side, where the large stones of a very wide wall, running along the top of the fosse within the churchyard, and doubtless constituting the foundation of the Roman wall, were discovered in 1831.

The area thus enclosed is irregularly intersected by the Ermine Street, about three-fourths of the space sloping upward from it towards the east, now divided into one large and several small grass closes, the above-mentioned Red Lion Inn, and a few cottages standing next to its eastern boundary; the other fourth consists of level ground, on which stand, as shown in the accompanying ground-plan, the vicarage, the churchyard, and a house belonging to the Calcrafft family. Of the Roman town which subsequently grew up around the station, considerable remains have been from time to time disclosed. Its houses probably chiefly stood on either side of the Ermine Street, just as those of the modern village do now; beyond these there may have been detached villas of other colonists. The cemetery and its *ustrina*, or burning-place, stood about a hundred yards from the southern wall of the station, and on the eastern side of the Ermine Street. On approaching Ancaster, therefore, during the Roman dynasty, many sepulchral memorials were no doubt seen on either side of it; after the manner of that series of similar monuments which fringed the great *Via Appia* before it passed under one of the gates of Im-

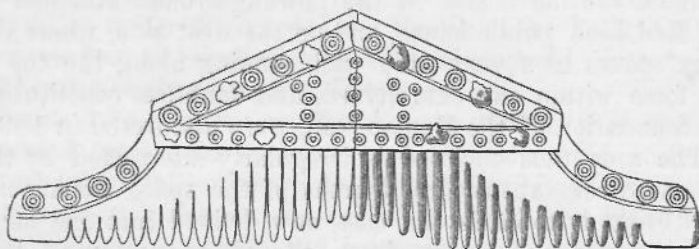
<sup>1</sup> Leland, *Itin.*, vol. i. f. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Stukeley, *Itin. Cur. V.*, p. 86. Horsley, *Brit. Rom.*, p. 432, cites the notices of Ancaster given by Stukeley, and considers it to be the *Causennæ* of the Itinerary. He mentions that "some speak of mosaic pavements discovered there." Salmon,

in his *New Survey of England*, vol. i. p. 247, alludes to the Roman defences of Ancaster, but places *Causennæ* at Brough Hill. Reynolds is of opinion that its position was at Boston. *Iter Brit.*, p. 261.

perial Rome, or that between which the frequenters of the lovely watering-place, Pompeii, approached its pleasures and its mild sea-borne breezes.

Here some skeletons have been found, and many cinerary vases of grey or dull red ware, whose character indicates that the Saxons as well as the Romans made use of this cemetery. About forty of these vases, slightly ornamented with scored patterns, were disclosed a few years ago ; all of them were filled with burnt human bones, and had mostly been deposited in pairs, but without any lid or other covering. Unfortunately they had not been buried deep enough



Bone comb found in a Saxon cinerary urn from the cemetery near Ancaster.

to ensure their preservation, so that most of them fell to pieces on exposure to the air ; but two fragments of triangular-shaped bone combs and a few Roman coins were found here, which had no doubt been deposited in some of these cinerary urns, and subsequently half of such a comb was found by myself in a similar vase of grey ware, containing burnt bones, that was presented to me by Mr. Eaton, the owner of this interesting spot.

In a field a little to the south-west of Ancaster, and called the Twelve-acre-close, a Roman stone coffin was found a few years ago, through the grating of a plough against its lid. It contained the skeleton of a male, but nothing else. It was deposited in a north and south direction. Although rudely formed, it still retains the marks of the oblique Roman tooling upon its surface. Its head is rounded, thus resembling some Roman coffins found at Bath, and it was covered by a slab 4 in. thick. In length it is 6 ft. 10 in. ; in width 2 ft. 2 in. at the head, diminishing to 1 ft. 10 in. ; in height, 1 ft. 3 in. ; depth of the cavity 1 ft.  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. ; thickness of the cover 5 in. This coffin is now in the churchyard at Ancaster. See the woodcut on the last page of this memoir.

Leland, in his *Itinerary*, commenced about 30 Hen. VIII., 1538, gives the following particulars regarding the old town :—“Ancaster stondith on Wateling as in the High Way to Lincoln ; it is now but a very pore strete having a smaule Chirch. But in tymes past it hath bene a celebrate Toune, but not waullid as far as I could perceive. The building of it lay in lenthth by South and North. In Southe ende of it be often founde in ploughing great square stones of old buildinges and Romane coynes of brasse and sylver. In the West end of it, were now medowes be, ar founde yn diching great vaultes. The area wher the Castelle stooode is large, and the Dikes of it appere, and in sum places the foundation of the Waulle. In the highest ground of the area is now an old Chapel dedicate to S. Marie, and there is an heremite.”<sup>3</sup> And he relates local traditions of treasure trove near the station :—“An old man of Ancaster told me that by Ureby, or Roseby,<sup>4</sup> a plough man toke up a stone, and found another stone under it, wherein was a square hole having Romaine quoin in it. He told me also that a plough man toke up in the felde of Harleston,<sup>5</sup> a 2 miles from Granteham, a stone under the wich was a potte of brasse, and an helmet of gold, sette with stones in it, the which was presentid to Catarine Princes Dowager. There were bedes of silver in the potte, and writings corruptid.”<sup>6</sup>

William Harrison, in his *Description of England*, written about 1579, and prefixed by Holinshed to his *Chronicles*, bears witness also respecting the remains of the Roman town at Ancaster, which then existed, and the coins there found.<sup>7</sup> “It seemeth that Ancaster hath beene a great thing, for manie square and colored pavements, vaults, and arches are yet found, and often laid open by such as dig and plow in the fields about the same. And amongst these, one Uresbie, or Rosebie, a plowman,<sup>8</sup> did ere up, not long since, a stone like a trough, covered with another stone, wherein was great foison of the aforesaid coins.” Stukeley mentions that the Castle Close was full of founda-

<sup>3</sup> Leland's *Itin.*, vol. i. f. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Ewerby is about two miles east of Sleaford ; Rauceby is on the north-east of that town, and about a mile from the Roman Way.

<sup>5</sup> Harlaxton, south of Grantham.

<sup>6</sup> Leland's *Itin.*, *ut supra*, f. 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Historical Description of England*, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, edit. 1586, vol. i. p. 217 ; ch. 24. Of Antiquities found.

<sup>8</sup> Namely, a Rauceby laborer. This tale seems to have been copied, somewhat incorrectly, from Leland.

tions in his day, appearing everywhere above ground, the existence of which is still very plainly indicated during dry seasons by the parched appearance of the grass above them. Here prodigious quantities of Roman coins have been found, both formerly and in modern days. Stukeley observes that, for thirty years before his time, many people in the town had traded in the sale of these, procuring them chiefly from the Castle Close, and from a spot south of it towards Castle Pits; "but they are found, too, in great plenty," he adds, "upon all the hills round the town, so that one may well persuade one's self that glorious people sowed them in the earth like corn, as a certain harvest of their fame, and indubitable evidence of their presence at this place. After a shower of rain the schoolboys and shepherds look for them on the declivities, and never return empty."<sup>9</sup> These vestiges are still found, not quite so plentifully as of old, but occasionally in large hoards; in the year 1841, a mass weighing twenty-eight pounds was brought to light in digging a hole for a post, in front of Mr. Eaton's house and the above-named cemetery, close to the edge of the Ermine Street. They chiefly consisted of small brass coins of the Emperors Gallienus, Postumus, Victorinus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, the Tetrici, and Aurelianus. Two thousand and fifty of these were sent to the Numismatic Society for inspection, and are noticed in its proceedings.<sup>1</sup> Very great must be the number of unrecorded coins discovered here, but now dispersed, and never to be again recognized as having issued from the soil of Ancaster. I subjoin, however, a list of such as I have been able to ascertain have without doubt been found here. This extends over more than three hundred years,—from the Emperor Claudius, who assumed the purple A.D. 41, to Valens, who died A.D. 378:—Claudius, Otho, Vespasian, Domitian, Trajan, Antoninus, Faustina, Lucius Verus, Commodus, Severus, Julia Mæsa, Valerianus, Gallienus, Salonina, Postumus, Victorinus, Marius, Tetricus, sen., Tetricus, jun., Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelianus, Probus, Maximianus, Constantius Primus, Helena, Theodora, Maxentius, Constantinus Magnus, Constans, Magnentius, and Valens.

<sup>9</sup> Stukeley, *Itin.*, Cur., Iter V., p. 81. 1724.

A view of Ancaster is given from a drawing by Stukeley, taken July 20,

<sup>1</sup> Numismatic Chronicle, vol. v. p. 157.



The most interesting object found at Ancaster is one connected with the religious worship of its Roman occupants. Wherever the light of Christianity has been wanting, it is not surprising to find the men in all ages believing in the existence of various gods, who could control events and the fortunes of men. Such was the belief of the Romans; and many altars, dedicated by them to the Fates, and to Fortune, have been discovered in this country; while others are inscribed in honor of Nymphs, as having especial influence over groves and springs; and still more to the Genii or Spirits supposed to preside over particular spots, as well as over particular classes, and persons—such as legions, cohorts, or the reigning emperor. Even these, however, were not sufficient to satisfy the religious feelings of a portion of the Roman legionaries, who, building upon the pleasing foundation of a mother's love and sympathy for the weak or wanting, conjured up the shadowy existence of certain protecting female deities, termed "*Deæ Matres*," whose office it was to watch over the interests of particular provinces of the empire in the first place, but also over particular spots, such as stations, houses, or fields. In vain shall we search for any allusion to these protecting Mothers in the works of classical authors, or for their representation in marble or stone, amongst the antiquities of Southern Italy, although they were certainly introduced into Britain by the Roman legionaries.<sup>2</sup> In France and Germany, however, under the term of "*Matronæ*," such representations are not rare. We may therefore conclude that the reverence paid to these deities arose from a Teutonic creed, to which the soldiers levied from these countries still fondly clung, after they had been removed by the will of Cæsar from their native lands; the peculiar *cultus* may have been subsequently adopted by other troops through their instrumentality. These Protecting Mothers are represented, on an altar found at Cologne, as three draped sedent figures, with flowing hair, and having baskets of fruit on their knees. Also, on a bas-relief found at Metz, dedicated by the

<sup>2</sup> At Avigliano, between Susa and Turin, a remarkable sculpture has been recently found, representing five female figures, with a dedication to the *Matronæ*. No other example of such a deviation from the normal number of three *Deæ Matres* appears to have been noticed.

See a communication from the Padre Garrucci to the Society of Antiquaries, and the note by Mr. Wylie on the worship of the *Matronæ*, Proceedings of the Soc. Ant., second series, vol. iv. pp. 287-293.



"Street of Peace" to their honor, they appear in a standing position, but holding fruit in their hands,<sup>3</sup> whilst in this country specimens of either sculptures or altars cut in their honor have been found in London, Lincoln, York, Durham, and at several points along the line of the great Roman Wall in the north, including one group seated on a triple *solium* at Minsteracres.<sup>4</sup> They were supposed to be benevolent dispensers of plenty; and it is interesting to mark how some worshippers invoked the unknown Mothers of the new localities in which they were stationed, to be their peculiar guardians and benefactors, whilst others still trusted to their own original or "transmarine" Mothers, for protection, or good fortune, on a foreign soil.

In digging a grave at the south-eastern corner of Ancaster churchyard, in the year 1831, a very interesting specimen of the personification of the "*Deæ Matres*" was discovered, together with a small incense altar before it—both apparently occupying their original position. A large stone, about 6 ft. in length by 4 ft. in breadth, formed a base, upon which was a rough intermediate stone, and then the above-named figures, looking towards the south. The deities are seated on a "*sella longa*," united below, but having three separate circular backs above. Their hair reaches to their shoulders, and their dresses are carefully gathered up round their necks as well as their waists. The workmanship, though rude, is effective, and some pains have been bestowed in endeavouring to represent the various folds of the dresses, &c. One figure holds a flat basket or measure on her knee with her right hand; the central one supports with both her hands a similar basket, filled with fruit, on her lap; the third holds a smaller basket containing some doubtful object in her left hand, and a small patera in her right hand. The head of the central figure is wanting, and the others are rather mutilated. The group is 1 ft. 7 in. in length and 1 ft.

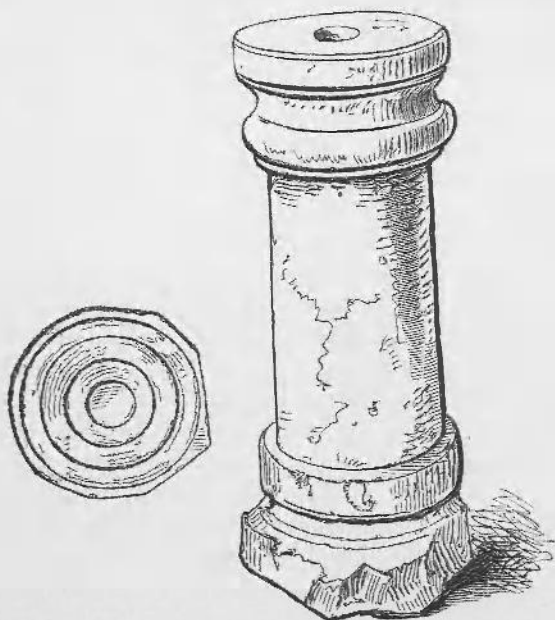
<sup>3</sup> L'Antiquité Expliquée, Supp. vol. i. p. 85. A singular sarcophagus with a sculpture of the *Deæ Matres*, exists in the Museum at Lyons, and has been figured by Mr. C. R. Smith, in his Coll. Ant., vol. v., p. 8. See also his detailed Remarks on these Mythic personages, Journ. Brit. Arch. Assoc., vol. ii. p. 239; Roman London, p. 33. A detailed essay on "*Les Deesses-mères*," by M. Granges, is given in the Bulletin Monumental, vol.

xxi., 1856.

<sup>4</sup> The Roman Wall, by the Rev. J. Collingwood Bruce, LL.D., p. 403. See also his observations on this class of deities in the Lapidarium Septentrionale, p. 16, where a well preserved example found at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and now in the collection in the Castle there, is figured. The dedication in that instance is *Deabus Matribus tramarinis*.

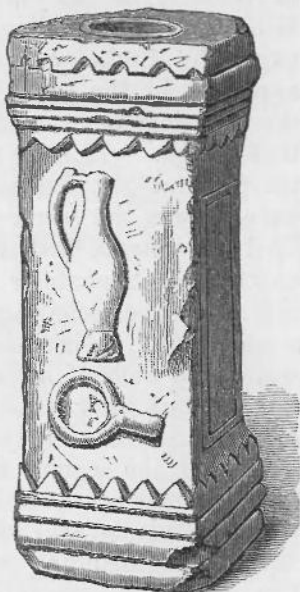


Group of the Deae Matres. (Length 19 in. Height 16 in.)



Small column (height 20 in.) and stone disk placed upon it (diam. 7 in.). Found with the sculpture of the Deae Matres in 1831.

4 in. in height. Towards the southern end of the base in front of these deities, and upon a wrought stone, 15 in. square and 5 in. in depth, was placed a small pillar 1 ft. 8 in. in height, surmounted by a circular slab 9 in. in diameter, forming a support for a diminutive incense altar, 1 ft. in height and 5 in. in width. In front is a plain panel; on one side are carved some of the sacrificial requisites, viz., a *capis* or jug, and a *patera*; and, on the other, a hand grasping a ring—the emblem of eternity. On the top is a shallow cavity, or *foculus*. The mouldings have been considerably injured by the lapse of time, but their classical character may still be distinctly recognised.<sup>5</sup>



Altar found 1831, with the sculpture of the *Dea Matres*.  
(Height 12 in. Width 5 in.)

Ancaster was so attractive in Stukeley's opinion that he, with the aid of Maurice Johnson, the first Secretary, and afterwards President of the Gentlemen's Society at Spalding, succeeded in forming a society of literati, which he proposed should meet there twice a year in the assize weeks. Johnson had suggested Sleaford as the place of assembly, but Stukeley, after a conference with the members of his own locality, wrote the following letter to Johnson, addressed to him at "the Widow's Coffee House," Devereux Court, Strand, and dated February 15th, 1728:—"I told them of the scheme projected between you and me; they approve of it much, but desire the place may be Ancaster, where we shall not be so much exposed to vulgar observation, and have as good accommodation. 'Tis not above five miles out of yr way, and all heath road, which is but an hour's ride, beside 'tis a Roman castle seated in the very bosom of the most delightful heath imaginable. I admire the place every time I see it.

<sup>5</sup> These relics were exhibited in the Temporary Museum at the Meeting of the Archæological Institute at Lincoln, in 1848, by the Rev. Z. S. Warren. Cata-

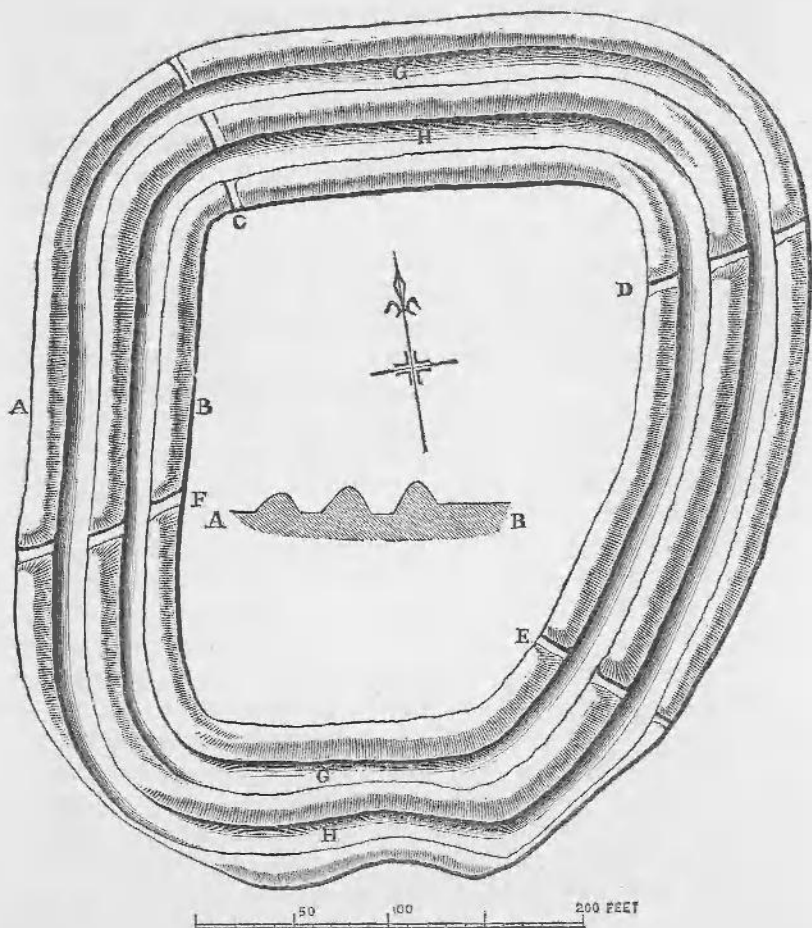
logue of the Museum, Transactions of the Lincoln Meeting, p. xxviii. They have been figured also with a memoir by Mr. Roach Smith, Coll. Ant., vol. v. p. 149.

I shall meet you there on the Thursday of the Assize week, by noon." Accordingly the first of these meetings was held at Ancaster, on the 14th of March, 1728, and from the MS. Minutes of the Spalding Society, vol. ii. p. 4, we learn that a paper by Stukeley was then read, "which was highly approved by the society, being very ingenious, pertinent to the occasion, and much to the honor of this society and that design." In it he endeavoured to prove that Laundenthorpe and not Trekingham (as the vulgar tradition will have it) was the scene of the famous battle between Algar, Earl of Holland, with his fen forces, and the Danes, which took place September 22nd, 870. Stukeley thus congratulated the society upon their assembling at so interesting a spot,—“If we consider the place of our meeting, we are within the walls of an old Roman city, upon the most considerable of their roads in the Island of Briton, viz., the Hermen Street. Many are the Roman Emperors and innumerable the legions that have marched past the door in their journies northward to guard the Scottish frontiers, and we may truly be said to be on classic ground.”

On a commanding eminence in the adjoining parish of Honington is a strongly entrenched earthwork, pronounced by Stukeley to be a "*castrum exploratorum*" of the Romans, but this must certainly be of British origin, as it in no respect resembles a Roman camp.<sup>6</sup> It consists of an area containing about an acre and a quarter of ground, of irregularly quadrangular form, surrounded by a triple vallum and a double fosse, occupying two more acres. The area, as shown in the section with the accompanying plan, is about 3 ft. 6 in. above the level of the surrounding field. The average height of the outer vallum is 3 ft., that of the other two 7 ft., but the level of the enclosed space is 3½ ft. above that of the bottom of each fosse. The width of the inner vallum is 19 ft. 4 in., of the middle one 27 ft. 4 in., of the outer one 15 ft. 4 in. As the slope of each vallum can be easily surmounted, perhaps there were no regular entrances to the central area, but there are slight depressions at four different points through the valla, which may or may not be of

<sup>6</sup> A ground plan is given, in Camden's *Britannia*, edit. Gough, vol. ii. pl. lviii. See also Stukeley, *Itin. Cur.*, Iter V. p. 81. In a letter from Stukeley to Roger Gale, Jan., 1727-8, he states that coins

were found very frequently at Honington, and that he had recently received several. *Bibl. Top. Brit.*, vol. iii., Reliqu. Galeanae, p. 51.



Plan of the Entrenchment on Honington Heath, Lincolnshire.

(From a Survey by Mr. Thomas Ogden, taken in 1854.)

A B. Section of the Works on the west side. C. D. E. F. Four Entrances, shown by depressions in the triple vallum. G. The Outer fosse, width about 12 ft. H. Inner fosse, average width 12 ft. The area within the inner vallum is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acre.

subsequent formation. The whole remains in a very perfect state, a portion only of the outer vallum having been partially cut away at two points.

This earthwork was undoubtedly occupied by the Romans, for in 1691 an urn containing a peck of Roman coins was discovered within its area, and subsequently two other urns were found full of coins, a score of which were presented to Stukeley in 1728. Amongst these he names a large brass of Agrippa, another of Julia the daughter of Augustus, and one of Magnentius. Fragments also of spears, bridles, and swords, had been ploughed up not long before his visit to the place in 1724.<sup>7</sup>

In June, 1865, a Roman kiln was brought to light at Ancaster, close to the eastern side of the Ermine Street, and a little to the north of the village and ancient *castrum* of *Causennæ*. The discovery occurred in excavating the ground for the purpose of erecting a mill, and it was promptly made known to me by Mr. Bruce Tomlinson.

In form the kiln was oval, 5 ft. long and 4 ft. 6 in. wide at the bottom, gradually increasing to 6 ft. by 5 ft. 6 in. at the top. The floor was composed of rude stone slabs, the sides were built of neatly cut stones 3 in. in thickness, each course being slightly set back as the work was carried up, so as to produce the desired increase of the size of the kiln above. The lower courses were in good preservation, the stones resembled bricks, from their uniform bright red color and general appearance, but on examination the material proved to be marl-stone profusely abounding with fossil shells, chiefly consisting of the *Rhynchonella tetraedra*, and a species of *Terebratula*. Such marl-stone containing a profusion of the same liassic *Brachiopoda* is found in the adjacent parish of Barkstone, so that the Romans had not far to go for a supply of material suited for their purpose; from their wonderful practical intelligence they appear to have used this compact crystalline rock for the construction of a kiln or oven as being well adapted for exposure to a continued high temperature. Portions of the same rock, in a half calcined state, have been found from time to time by the borders of the Roman road on the outskirts of Stamford, and the use of such a material seems to have been continued, as pieces of

<sup>7</sup> Camden, *Britannia*, edit. Gough, vol. ii. p. 359.

the same marl-stone or "red rock," as it is locally called, from the color it has acquired through exposure to heat, are often found among the foundations and débris of the older buildings of Stamford.

The entrance to the kiln at Ancaster had been previously disturbed; but its site was filled in with stones of the oolitic



Roman pottery found near Ancaster. Height of the central urn 10 in., the other two 7 1/4 in.

kind found almost upon the spot, and for which Ancaster is so noted. Some pieces were blackened and others partly reddened, through exposure to fire. Close to the kiln were found numerous specimens of Roman pottery of the usual pale red, grey, and cream-colored wares. Among these were portions of gracefully shaped vases and pitchers, one of which has the three-lobed mouth and small handle often seen in the choicest examples of the Roman *capis*. A few small coins were found intermingled with these relics, including one of Arcadius, several of Constantine the Younger, and others, but none of any particular interest. A group of six or seven skeletons was also discovered deposited in a regular manner, but unaccompanied by any vases or other ancient relics.<sup>8</sup>

Passing northwards out of Ancaster, the Ermine Street is very conspicuous, both from its width and embankment, particularly at those spots where it surmounts the successive undulations of the heath before alluded to—now, however,

<sup>8</sup> Twenty-second Report of the Architectural Society of the Diocese of Lin-

coln; Associated Architectural Societies' Reports, 1865, vol. viii. part i. p. 11.



universally invaded by the plough, and dwarf stone walls inclosing a succession of vast fields.

"Upon our road," as Stukeley observes,<sup>9</sup> "there are many stones placed; but most seem modern, and like stumps of crosses—yet probably are mile-stones. It would be of little use to measure the intervals,—for one would find that the whole distance between two towns was equally divided by such a number of paces as came nearest the total."

And again,<sup>1</sup> "I have seen bases of milliaries, and one or two fragments of milliaries, on its sides." These have now disappeared; but, a few years ago, the upper portion of a milliary was discovered at about a quarter of a mile north of Ancaster,<sup>2</sup> and close to the western edge of the Ermine Street, with this inscription:—"IMP. C. FL. VAL. CONSTANTINO. P. F. INV. AVG. DIVI CONSTANTII. PII AUG. FILIO.," which may be read thus:—"Imperatorī Cæsari Flavio Valerio Constantino Pio Felici Invicto Augusto Divi Constantii Pii Augusti Filio."<sup>3</sup> It is merely a rough slab, 2 ft. 3 in. in length, 1 ft. in width, and 7 in. thick. The base appears to have been broken off, otherwise the now un-

certain appellation of the adjoining station might very possibly have been ascertained from this stone beyond all doubt; for thus the milliarium discovered near Leicester, and



Milliary stone found on the Ermine Street, near Ancaster.  
Length 27 in., width 12 in.

<sup>9</sup> Stukeley, *Iter V.*, p. 87.

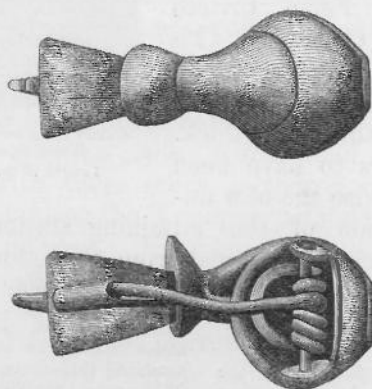
<sup>1</sup> *Iter I.*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> This milliary was found near the spot where the Roman kiln and other relics have recently been brought to light, but on the other side of the ancient *Via*.

<sup>3</sup> Compare dedicatory inscriptions to Constantine given by Horsley, Northumberland, No. lxxi. p. 231; and West-

morland, No. ii. p. 297. A milliary stone bearing an inscription much resembling that above given was found in 1812, near Cambridge, on the road to Huntingdon, *Gent. Mag.*, vol. lxxxiii. 2, p. 524. See also another like inscription found in the walls of the church of St. Hilary, Cornwall; *Arch. Journal*, vol. xii. p. 283; *Trans. Penzance Nat. Hist. Soc.*, vol. ii. p. 290.

now preserved in the museum of that town, not only denotes that it was set up in the reign of Hadrian, but that it marked the second mile from *Ratae*, or Leicester. A miliarium found at Castor also bears a similar dedication to the same emperor, which I here allude to for the purpose of dispelling any idea that might be formed of fixing the date of the formation of the *Via* itself from such slender evidence on its borders, although so intimately connected with it; as we might hence be led to suppose that the line Castor was formed between the years 117 and 138, and that about Ancaster between 306 and 337. Doubtless these mile-stones were renewed from time to time by the official *Curatores Viarum*, either when the older ones had been injured by the lapse of time or by accident, and also when it was wished to pay a compliment either to a reigning or a passing emperor, in whose honor the new ones would of course be inscribed, although such would have no connection with the formation of the line. After the young Constantine had made an extraordinarily fast journey from the Palace of Nicomedia, in the East, by the aid of the established *Mutationes agminales* (where relays of horses could be procured along all the military ways of the empire), for the purpose of joining his father, the Emperor Constantius, in Britain, and had found him at Boulogne on the point of embarking for this island, he accompanied him upon his expedition against the

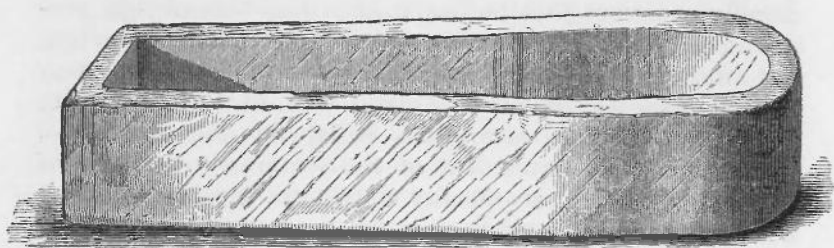


Bronze fibula, found at Ancaster. Original size.

Caledonians. There can be little doubt that on this occasion both the reigning and the future mighty emperors passed the very spot where this stone was shortly afterwards

set up, probably by some who had actually seen them and their legions marching northwards in all the pomp of war and had also witnessed the return of Constantine, who, in the interim, had lost his excellent father by death, at the imperial palace of York. This milliary stone was probably not found in its original position ; but having perhaps been broken, seems afterwards to have been used to mark the depository of some human ashes, such relics, together with fragments of pottery, and a red deer's horn, carefully sawn off, having been found with it.

Among other small Roman articles found here, in 1861, was a beautiful little bronze fibula, shaped like a horse's foot, and illustrating, as it is believed, the manner in which the Romans shod their horses (see woodcut).



Roman coffin of stone found near Ancaster. Length 6 ft. 10 in.; height 1 ft. 3 in; width 2 ft. 2 in. at the head, 1 ft. 10 in. at the foot. See page 4, *ante*.