

CAMULODUNUM.

By the Rev. Prebendary SCARTH.

WHEN the Institute met last year at Canterbury an opportunity was given for investigating the Roman maritime cities of the Kentish coast, the places of landing in Roman times from the opposite coast of Gaul. The remains that mark the period of Roman occupation, and the roads which converged from these landing-places to a central point, Canterbury (the Roman Durovernum), were then pointed out. The controverted point, where the first Roman army under Julius Cæsar landed, is not yet conclusively settled.¹ Three points are obstinately maintained with all the ability and learning which can be brought to bear on the subject. The point, also, at which Cæsar crossed the Thames in his second expedition is still left in doubt, although argument and demonstration seem to show it was Halliford, at the Coway stakes.²

This campaign of Julius Cæsar makes us acquainted with Verulamium³ (St. Alban's), but carries us no further into Britain. So far we are indebted to "Cæsar's Commentaries." We have now to wait for the lapse of nearly 100 years, and we get a further insight into British history, and to the Roman Conquest of Britain. We come to the campaign of Aulus Plautius,⁴ and to the landing of Claudius on this island. There is every reason for believing that to the campaign of Aulus Plautius, and to a camp of that general, London owes its rise. The reasons for this are elaborately given by Dr. Guest in his paper on the campaign of Plautius, with his usual learning and clearness of argument. He fixes the date to A. D. 43, when, in the autumn of that year, Plautius "drew the lines of circumvallation round his camp, he founded the metropolis of Britain." It is in this campaign that we become acquainted with Camulodunum, the

¹ B. C. 55.

² Cæsar, B. G. v. 18. Arch. Journ., vol. xxiii. p. 165.

³ Cæsar, B. G. v. 21

⁴ A. D., 43—50. (Tac. Ann., xii.)

capital of the Trinobantes, a people inhabiting the country represented now by the county of Essex.

We have it mentioned by Pliny, N. H. 2, s. 187. Dio Cassius calls it—

“Το καμουλόδουνον τὸ του κυνοβελλιου βασιλειον.”

In Essex many coins are found having the name *CYNOBELINVS*, son of Tasciovanus. They have also the Mint mark, *Camu* or *Cam*—*Camulodunum*. So much is said of *Camulodunum* in Tacitus, Agric., c. 14, and Ann. xii. 32, and Dio Cassius so fully details the victory of Claudius and the taking of *Camulodunum*, that one would have thought no uncertainty as to the position of the place could have existed; but, like other places, its site has also been questioned, and a controversy has arisen about it.

The expression of Tacitus (Ann., lib. xii., c. 32), “*Ceterum Clade Icenorum compositi qui bellum inter et pacem dubitabant; et ductus in Cangos exercitus. Vastati Agri, prædæ passim actæ: non ausis aciem hostibus, vel si ex occulto carpere agmen tentarent, punito dolo. Jam ventum haud procul mari, quod Hiberniam insulam aspectat; cum ortæ apud Brigantes discordiæ retraxere ducem destinationis certum, ne nova moliretur, nisi prioribus firmatis. Et Brigantes quidem, paucis qui arma cœptabant interfectis, in reliquos datâ veniâ, residere. Silurum Gens, non atrocitate non clementiâ mutabatur, quin bellum exerceret, castrisque legionum premenda foret. Id quò promptius veniret, Colonia Camulodunum validâ veteranorum manu deducitur in agros captivos, subsidium adversus rebelles, et imbuendis sociis ad officia legum. Itum inde in Siluras, etc., etc.*”

This is the passage of Tacitus which has led to a controversy about the site of “*Colonia Camulodunum*,”—Where was it placed? The *Iceni* mentioned here are the ancient inhabitants of Norfolk and Suffolk. The *Cangi* are more doubtful. The “*Ganganorum Promentorium*” seems to place them in North Wales, and the discovery of Roman masses of lead with the stamp *de Ceang*:⁵ in Cheshire. The words, “*Jam ventum haud procul mari quod Hiberniam spectat*,” fixes them somewhere in Cheshire and North Wales. The words, “*ortæ apud Brigantes discordiæ retraxere ducem*,” show that when penetrating into North

⁵ See “*Inscrip. Britannicæ Latine*,” 1873, nos. 1204, 1205, 1206.

Wales the inhabitants of Lancashire and Yorkshire had become alarmed, and Ostorius was obliged to march northward and to bring them to terms, before he could complete the conquest of Wales—South as well as North,—by bringing the Silures into subjection. “*Id quo promptius veniret,*” says the historian, “*Colonia Camulodunum valida manu veteranorum deducitur in agros captivos.*” The object of this colony was to keep the district lately conquered in order, to prevent any rising in the rear of the general, while he brought the Silures under subjection.

It has been argued that Colchester is too far from the scene of the campaign of Ostorius against the Silures, and that it must have been nearer to their country that the “*Colonia Camulodunum*” was placed; but the distance from Colchester to Gloucester on the confines of the Silures, was not great for a Roman army to traverse—an army which we see had already penetrated as far north as York, or within a short distance of it. That the Roman general did not succeed in keeping the conquered country in his rear in order, we have certain proof in what occurred afterwards.

In the early part of the present century, the Rev. John Skinner, an ardent antiquary and friend of Sir R. C. Hoare, to whom the county of Wilts and antiquaries in general are so much indebted for his intelligent labours, put forth the theory that Camulodunum was in the west and not in the east of Britain, and thought that he had discovered the site of it on the line of the Great Foss Road at Camerton, about seven miles south-west of Bath, the Roman “*Aquæ Solis.*”

He was induced to assert this from Roman remains found on the line of the Foss Road, and from Roman coins which he had collected on the spot. An account of these remains will be found in the 11th volume of the “*Proceedings of the Som. Archæol. and N. H. Soc.,*” p. 174, 1861–2. One single inscription was discovered, which, though imperfect, fixed the date of the building to which it belonged, and the foundations of which were uncovered, to A. D. 289—*BASSO ET QVINTIANO . COS,*—or in the time of the usurper Carausius.

The coins found included a period from the Emperor Claudius to Valentinianus, but no traces of a Roman station are to be found there, and the theory of Mr. Skinner rested

upon the supposed similarity of "Camerton" to Camulodunum, and of "Temple Cloud" to Templum Claudii. Mr. Phelps, in his "History of Somerset," adopted the theory of Mr. Skinner, and embodied in his first volume much of the MS. left by Mr. Skinner, and thus gave publicity to the idea.

Sir R. C. Hoare thought it needful to reply to the argument of Mr. Skinner, and in 1827 printed for private circulation a pamphlet on "The True Site of the Ancient Colony of Camulodunum." In this he examines all the existing historical authorities, and cites them in succession to show that the original site of the ancient capital of the Trinobantes ought to be fixed at Lexden, two miles from Colchester, where he says there are considerable earthworks still visible. "There, I imagine was the British town taken by Claudius, which gained him the honours of a triumph at Rome. This victory, as well as others are recorded in the following inscription at Rome :—

TI . CLAV(DIO CÆS.
AVGVSTO
PONTIFIC . (MAX . TR . P
COS . V . (IMP . P . P .
SENATVS . POPV(L . Q . R
REGES . BRIT(ANNIÆ ABSQ
VLLA . IACTV(RA . DOMVERIT,
GENTES . QV(E . BARBARAS.
PRIMVS . INDICIO . (SVBEGERIT.⁶

It is due to Mr. Skinner to say that the site of Camulodunum was very uncertain until recent times. Thus Camden would fix it at Maldon in Essex; others at Castle Camps in Cambridgeshire, at Saffron Walden in Essex, and even at Doncaster and at Camalet in Somerset. If we derive the name from the god Camulus, there may have been more Camulodunums than Colchester.⁷

⁶ This is Sir R. C. Hoare's restoration of the missing portion of the inscription. It is differently supplied by Fabretti, p. 728, 446. (See "Inscrip. Lat. Select," vol. i., Turici, 1838.) But the purport of the reading is the same.

⁷ The different opinions about the situation of "Colonia Camulodunum" are thus given by Morant in his "History and Antiquities of Colchester," p. 13. R. Talbott, H. Lhuyd, J. Leland, Bishop

Stillington, W. Baxter place it at Colchester; W. Camden, Edm. Burton, at Maldon; Dr. Thomas Gale, N. Salmon, at Castle Camps, in Cambridgeshire; Hector Boethius, in Scotland; Polydore Virgil, at Doncaster or Pontefract. According to the geographer Ptolomy, there was Camunlodunum, *καμουλλοδουνον*, among the Brigantes, where Leg. VI. Vict. was quartered.

That Camulus was the British Mars appears clear from inscriptions. Camulodunum, or Mars Hill, might, therefore, be a name not unfrequent in Romano-British times. But the Roman authorities seem conclusively to fix the Camulodunum of Tacitus and Dio Cassius to Colchester. We have it placed in the east of Britain on the Putingerian Tablet of the fourth century.

By the chorographer Ravennas, we have the eastern towns of Britain placed in the following order, beginning with London :—

LONDINIVM. Augusta.
 CAESAROMAGOM.
 CAMVLODVNO. Colonia.
 DVRCINATE
 DVROVIGNVTO
 DVROBRISIN
 VENTA CENORVM
 LINDVM. Colonia.

These towns all lie in the line of country between London and Lincoln.

It has been observed by Sir R. C. Hoare,⁸ that “there are few places within our island that can boast of such ample claims to Roman splendour as the modern Colchester ; which is not to be wondered at, for it was the first colony established by the Romans in our island. It had its Roman roads issuing from it in various directions, its tessellated pavements,⁹ its temple, its statues, bronzes, and numerous coins, stamped with the figure of Cunobeline ; and its environs at Lexden still retain the rude vestiges of the ancient British settlement, previous to the construction of the walled city of the Romans at Colchester.”

Professor Hübner, in his recent work, “Inscrip. Brit. Latinæ,” remarks that the original name of the Roman colony was probably Claudia or Claudia Colonia. There is, however, no proof of this, and Victricensis is the name given in an inscription probably of the second century—

C . N . MVNATHI . M . F . PAL . AVRELII . BASSI
 PROC . AVG

⁸ See “Letter on the True Site of the ancient colony of Camulodunum,” A. D. 1827. Only 25 copies of this were printed

by Rutter, Shaftesbury.

⁹ See “Archæol.” vol. xvi., p. 145.

CENSITOR. CIVIVM . ROMANORVM .
 COLONIAE . VICTRICENSIS . QVÆ . EST .
 IN BRITANNIA . CAMVLQDVNI .

This cognomen, Victricensis, may have been derived from the Claudian Legion, the 14th (Legio XIV., Martia Victrix), or from the 20th (Legio XX., Valeria Victrix).

Two inscriptions to soldiers of the 20th Legion were found in 1868 at Colchester :

M . FAVON . M . F . POL . FACI
 LIS . > LEG. XX. VERICOND
 VS ET NOVICVS LVB . FOSV.
 ERVNT . H. S. E.

The letters appear to be of the date of the latter part of the first century, and probably the time of the Emperor Vespasian.

The other, which is only a fragment, but contains lettering enough to restore the whole, was found on the site of the Hospital, where another (now in the Disney Museum, at Cambridge) was also found.

We have, therefore, three inscribed stones found at Colchester still extant, with a fragment of a fourth. Another, which is now lost, was discovered in 1764. It is thus given by Hübner :—

NVMINIB
 AVG
 ET . MERCV . DEO
 ANDESCOCI
 VOV . CO MI
 LICO AESVB !
 LINI LIBERIVS
 ARAM OPERE
 MARONIO .
 D . S . D .

It is a very interesting inscription. An altar dedicated to the divinity of the Emperor, the god Mercury, and the god Andesco, probably a local divinity worshipped at Camulodunum as Sul was in Bath. Colchester has been rich in other remains, as the stone sphynx seated above the head and bones of a human victim. The sphynx seems to have

been emblematical of the colony, as we find it upon coins. Sacrificial implements have also been found.

All these discoveries confirm the importance of the place, and show that, if on no other grounds, it has a claim above the other places I have mentioned. It is not improbable that it may have been the station of the 14th Legion, the *Domitores Britanniae*, but no bricks or inscriptions have yet been discovered to confirm this opinion.

In two of the Antonine Iters mention is made of *Colonia* and *Comulodunum*,—the fifth and the ninth.

The fifth begins with London, and notes the stations along the eastern side of Britain, till it terminates at Carlisle in the western—a course of more than 400 miles. It passes through Essex, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, and Lincolnshire, along the eastern side of the island, until it comes to York, when it passes to the western.

The stations with which we are now concerned are—

Londinio (the starting point)	M. P.
Cæsaromago	xxviii.
Colonia	xxiii.
Villa Faustini	xxxv.
Icianos	xvii.
Camborico	xxxv.
&c. &c., &c.	

The distances here given fix *Colonia* to Colchester. There is some difference of opinion as to the exact position of the stations on each side of it, but these are points not needful here to determine.

The ninth Iter, starting from *Venta Icenorum*, gives the stations to London.¹ *Venta Icenorum* is identified with *Caistor*, near Norwich. The stations are as follows :—

¹ The ninth Iter of Antonine runs from *Venta Icenorum*—*Caistor*, near Norwich—through Colchester to London. *Venta Icenorum* is a Roman station on the river Tese, three miles south of Norwich, containing an area of 32 acres, and once surrounded by a strong wall, with towers at the angles, which are rounded. That on the west side, close to the river, and washed by it, is 33 ft. in circumference. The walls are composed of alternate layers of Roman tile and of flints.

This Iter passes on to Thetford (*Sitomagus*, see Camden), and on by *Combretonium* (*Brettenham*) to Colchester. The

road left Colchester by the Balcerne Gate, and passed between the Hospital and Grammar School, and entered the parish of Stanway, so called on account of the Roman causeway which can be traced on the Hall farm, it proceeded across a small stream, called the Roman River, to Birch, in Domesday Book written "*Briccia*." In a field adjoining the churchyard of Great Birch may still be seen portions of a small earthwork, with ditch and rampart, known as Birch Castle. It is quadrangular in construction, and the Roman way passed near it, and on the side of the way was formerly a tumulus, in

A. Venta Icenorum	M. P.
Sitomago	xxxī.
Combretonio	xxii.
Ad Ansam	xv.
Camaloduno	vi.
Canonio	ix.
Cæsaromago	xii.
Durolito	xvi.
Londinio	xv.

Beginning here from the north-east, the Iter runs south, passing in an opposite direction to the former, but running into the same line of road and into some of the same stations, and making Colonia coincide with Camulodunum. This fixes Camulodunum in the east part of Britain, and we have Colonia and Camulodunum brought together under one name by the geographer Ravennas in his list of cities in the east of Britain.

The remains found at Colchester, as well as the strength of the walls, and their undoubted Roman construction, seem to mark it as a place of no ordinary importance, and as intended to keep in subjection that part of the island. The walls, however, that now exist were not built until after the destruction of the first colony planted there in the reign of Claudius. The first colony had no walls, and fell an easy prey to the enraged Britons. Roman pavements are said to have been found running under the line of the present wall, which confirms the truth of what is related by Tacitus of the remissness of the first colonists, who neglected to fortify themselves.

Camulodunum was one of the towns destroyed in the revolt of Boadicea, A.D. 61. The account of all that here occurred clothes it with a deep historic interest. The pages of Tacitus and Dion² cast a light around it which will ever impart to the student of his country's past history a charm, sad and melancholy though it be, yet a charm which no lapse of time can efface, but which becomes deeper the more we contrast the past with the present.

The injured British queen succeeded in stirring up her

which Roman urns were found. The earthworks on Lexden heath are said by Morant to have been traceable once to Birch Castle, and beyond it. (See Journ.

of Arch. Assoc., 1863, p. 275.)

² "Hist. Rom.," lib. lxii., c. i. Xiphilinae.

countrymen to cast off the Roman yoke, and 200,000 of her own people, of the Trinobantes and the other tribes, were ranged under her banner. They took London, Verulam and Camulodunum, and, according to Tacitus, 70,000,³ but, according to Dion, 80,000 citizens and allies were slain and massacred. Minute account is given of what took place at Camulodunum, for here the Temple of Claudius seems to have been a special object of detestation, "*Arx eternæ dominationis.*"⁴

The spot where the decisive battle took place which riveted the Roman dominion upon this island is not known; it probably has not been as carefully investigated as other points of our early national history, but it is one of the turning points upon which so much of national growth and character depends. A double-trenched Roman camp at Haynes Green, near Messing, has been mentioned, where the Roman station of Canonium was afterwards fixed; but this is uncertain, as no proof has been brought by which the site of the battle might be fixed with any degree of certainty.⁵ All that Tacitus says of it is very brief. "*Jam Suetonio quartadecima legio cum vexillariis vicesimanis et e proximis auxiliares, decem ferme millia armatorum erant: cum omittere cunctationem et congregi acie parat: deligitque locum arctis faucibus et a tergo silva clausum; satis cognito, nihil hostium nisi in fronte, et apertam planitiem esse, sine metu insidiarum.*" It was a narrow defile backed by a wood; the enemy were all in front of the Roman Legion, without the opportunity of attacking it in flank or rear, and no chance of an ambush. A plain opened out upon this defile. Many points may present themselves, but it is evident that the spot must be situated between London and Colchester. "This battle seems to have put an end to all hostilities from the Britons in the country of the Trinobantes and Iceni, and we hear no more of Camulodunum. The town was probably rebuilt, after having been laid waste by Boadicea, and the numerous fragments of Roman bricks, tiles, etc., interspersed in the walls and other buildings of the town of Colchester still remain to attest its former situation. But still I entertain a doubt (says Sir R. C. Hoare) whether, at the period of this victory, there was a

³ "Tac. Ann.," xiv. 32.

⁴ See "Tac. Ann." lib. xiv., 31.

⁵ See Journ. Arch. Assoc., 1863, vol. xix. p. 277.

walled town at Camulodunum, but I am rather inclined to think that the original British settlement was on Lexden heath."

Much careful examination of the earthworks on Lexden Heath in the month of August last has led me to the same conclusion as the above writer. The remains in Mr. Errington's Park are evidently British, and form *one* of the principal entrances, if not the principal, into the ancient British city. The earthworks remain to a certain distance on each side of this entrance. The road is worn into a deep hollow, and is protected by an earthwork on each side, after entering the precinct of the city. The ramparts on either side of the gate cease after a while, and seem to have been levelled, probably by the Romans after their conquest, who, it may be, left the gate with its earthworks as a token of the strength of the city they had taken. The earthworks at Lexden appear to have been more considerable in Morant's time,⁶ and much in past times has been taken away for the sake of the gravel, of which the mounds are composed. This is greatly to be regretted, as they should be allowed to remain as historical monuments. The mounds, however, in Lexden Park are now carefully preserved, and form a very interesting feature in that beautiful residence. The city of Boadicea seems to have been of great extent, as the circuit can be traced at intervals over a large area, but the want of an accurate map in which each portion of earthwork is noted down, renders it very difficult to obtain a correct idea of the whole extent. The forthcoming Ordnance Survey, in which it is stated that every vestige will be noted, may afford to future antiquaries a means of ascertaining accurately what was the actual circuit of British Camulodunum.

⁶ Vol. ii., p. 123; also Journ. of Brit. Arch. Assoc., 1863, p. 276.