

ART. IX.—*A Gold Ring found at Maryport.* By JAMES LITTLE, M.D.

Read at Durham, June 20th, 1901.

DURING the laying of the new bicycle track on the cricket field at Maryport, several articles were found, the most interesting of which was a gold memorial ring. It was dug up from a depth of 2ft. 9in. whilst making a hole to hold a post. The surface is a sandy soil to the depth of about 12ins., whilst below that is a light coloured clay in which the ring was embedded. It is in an excellent state of preservation and has the following inscription on its inner surface:—"Mem^o Ann' C,ape, ob^t 22 Aug' 1709."

At first sight it would appear that the first letter in the surname was a G, but on closer examination of the lettering it seems likely that it is meant for a C and that the tail of the letter is merely a flourish. There is another similar flourish at the upper part of the letter; also quite unnecessary ones over the second n in Ann and over the g in Aug. I can find no record locally of any such name as Gape, whilst Cape is comparatively common. The vicar of Dearham, Rev. E. H. Sugden, and the vicar of Cross Canonby, Rev. W. J. Marsh, have kindly searched their registers for me, but have not found any trace of the name, so that it is quite likely that Ann Cape may have been a stranger to the locality.

It is not easy to account for the ring getting into the position in which it was found. It is at least eighty yards from the public road. The finder, Mr. T. Brown, jun., of Maryport, asserts positively that it did not fall in from the surface, but that it was sticking firmly in the clay with the upper portion exposed. The field shows

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signs of having been ploughed and it is possible that the ring may have been conveyed in ashes or manure and then ploughed in. Even in that case it could scarcely reach the depth at which it was found.

At the date on the ring, and for forty years after, there was no such place as Maryport. It was founded by Humphrey Senhouse, fourth great grandfather of the present H. P. Senhouse, Esq., of Netherhall, and was named after his wife, a daughter of Sir George Fleming, Bishop of Carlisle. The first ground rent bears the date 31 Jan. 1749, and all the first grants up to and inclusive of No. 23, dated 22 Sept. 1752, make mention of the highway from Ellenfoot, as it was then called, to Allonby by the shore. Much of this road has been removed by the inroads of the sea.

A considerable number of copper coins were also found, but they were within a few inches of the surface. Amongst them were an Irish harp half-penny and farthing. The lettering on the half-penny is much defaced and I cannot make it out, but the farthing is more recent and is well preserved; date 1808.
